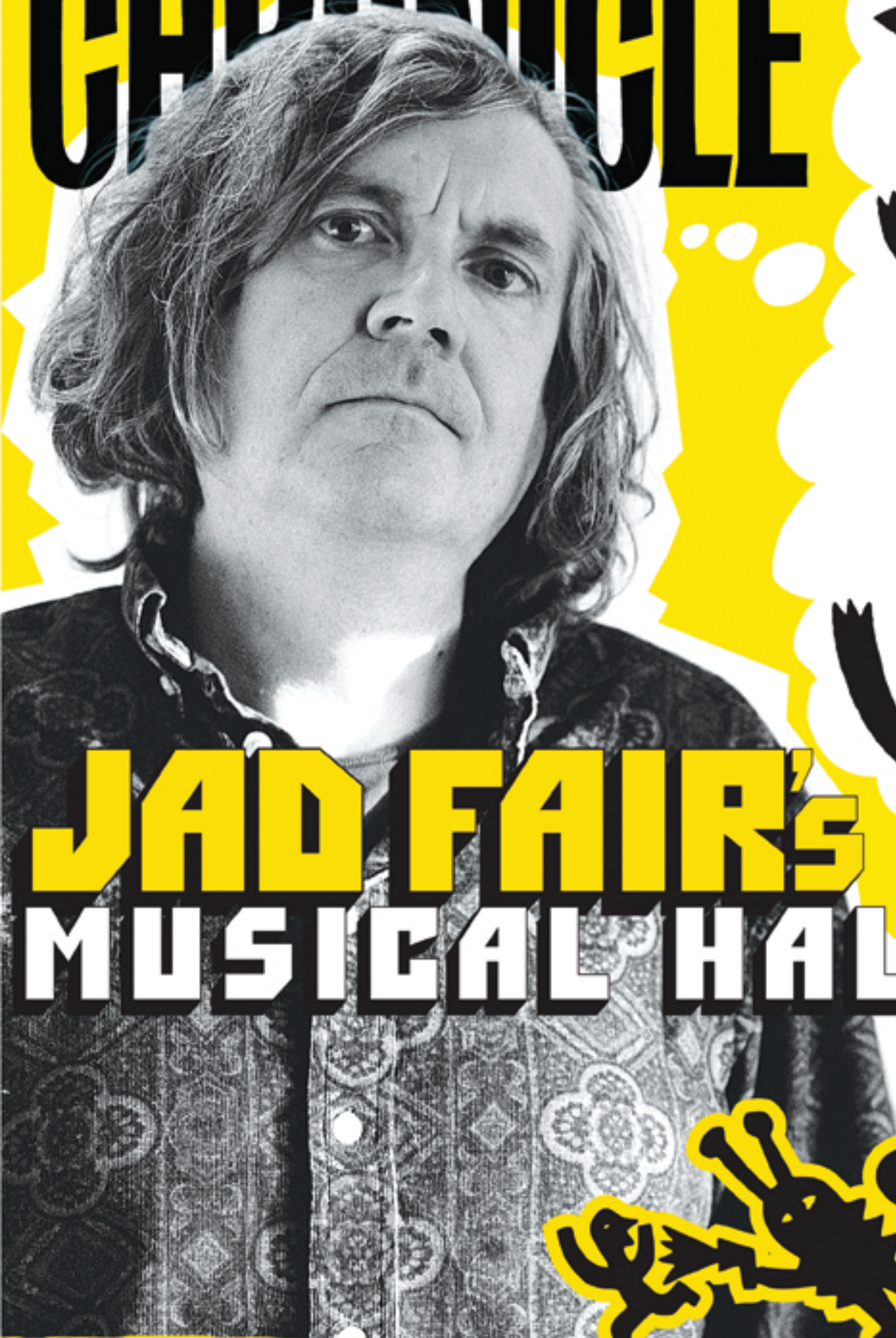


THE AUSTIN

CHRONICLE



JAD FAIR'S MUSICAL HALF-LIFE

BY AUDRA SCHROEDER • P.58



Vol. 27 No. 21 ★ January 25, 2008

PRIMARY-ELECTION PREVIEW A 'PORGY AND BESS' FOR AUSTIN PRIMIZIE: PUTTING THE OSTERIA IN AUSTIN 'TEETH' SINKING IN

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After 27 years, you know the drill: This is your chance to duct-tape the critics' mouths shut and speak up about Austin music. Not sure whom to vote for? Turn on the radio, drop by the local record store, or head to the clubs. Your favorite band is probably playing.

AUSTIN BAND OF THE YEAR:

AUSTIN MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR:

AUSTIN SONG OF THE YEAR:

AUSTIN ALBUM OF THE YEAR:

BEST NEW AUSTIN BAND:

Best Performing Bands

ROCK:

PUNK:

METAL:

INDUSTRIAL/GOTH:

DJ:

INDIE:

JAZZ:

BLUES:

HIP-HOP:

INSTRUMENTAL:

EXPERIMENTAL:

COUNTRY:

BLUEGRASS:

ROOTS ROCK:

FOLK:

LATIN TRADITIONAL:

LATIN CONTEMPORARY:

WORLD MUSIC:

COVER BAND:

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NOVELTY:

NONE OF THE ABOVE:

Best Austin Musicians (BAND IF APPLICABLE)

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RADIO MUSIC PROGRAM (SHOW, DEEJAY, STATION):

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CONCERT POSTER (BAND, CLUB, DATE, ARTIST):

LOCAL LABEL:

Texas Music Hall of Fame Nominations

Is Biscuit in the Hall of Fame? What about Roky and Willie? Previous winners are listed on the Web at austinchronicle.com/musicpoll/fame. (The answer is yes.) Please circle one or fill in the blank*:

The Skunks
The Dicks
The Motards
American Analog Set
Bad Livers
Byron Scott
Rosie Flores

Spot Barnett
Barbara Lynn
Major Burkes
Roy Head
Uncle John Turner
Pinetop Perkins
Gary Primich

OTHER NOMINEE*

Who are these people and why should you vote for them? Visit the poll ballot online at austinchronicle.com/musicpoll for more information!

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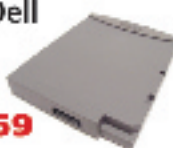
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CHRONIC HABITUALLY UPDATED BUZZ

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Chronic is now your one-stop blog shop for buzz on politics, sports, music, film, television, gaming, technology, design, gay stuff, and - do we even need to say it? - opinion. Our blogs as you knew them still exist, but now all posts will also feed into one crazy mash-up - newest on top, just like you like it.

NEW THIS WEEK!

EARACHE!: Three new blogs cannonball: **BUMP & HUSTLE** gets on the good foot, **SOUTHSIDE OF THE TRACKS** stirs up alt.country dust, and **SHUT UP!** tells you where to go. Plus, Geezerville chats up **CHUCK PROPHET**, Schadenfreude spins French synth and acoustic Crass, and more!

PICTURE IN PICTURE: **ROBERT RODRIGUEZ** spills his guts at Fangoria's Weekend of Horrors

CHRONIQUE: Notes on **CLEARVIEW**, the latest in **TASER/MP3 PLAYERS**, and more stunning design news

THE GAY PLACE: **HRC GALA: WHOOT!** Plus: The Kates & friends keep it real. Real gay.

NEWSDESK: **HOLLYWOOD HENDERSON** doesn't know when to quit, plus endorsement extravaganzas and extemporaneous state and local entries

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Welcome to the Funhouse

Republicans' rhetorical sleight of hand distorts our founding principles while seeming to uphold them

BY LOUIS BLACK

When I was in my early teens, my mother took a group of us to Freedomland, a New York amusement park. One of the attractions was a house where everything inside was slanted at the sharpest angle, almost but not quite 90 degrees. Even though everything was on a startling downward angle, objects seemed to defy gravity. On the pool table, the balls rolled upward, as did the cans placed on the kitchen counter. Our guide pointed out every incident of this seeming defiance of scientific law. Very mystifying.

Eventually, it was explained that the foundation of the house was even more dramatically angled in the opposite direction. Placing the sharp angle on a diametrically opposite sharper angle accounted for the seeming anomaly. Witnessing things that seem to be contradictions of known rules of science, we discovered, was deceptive. Scientific laws and the power of gravity prevailed, no matter how it looked.

This situation seems an ideal visual metaphor for many issues – political, religious, and social. What something or someone appears to be in actuality often turns out to be nearly the opposite. The Republicans' brilliant manipulation of language lends itself to this construct. It's not that the Democrats or other politicians are above this, but none has concentrated on separating language from meaning with the Republicans' brilliance. Certainly government has long had such tendencies, draping the difficult-to-stomach in sterilizing language – using terms like “collateral damage,” “acceptable casualty rate,” and “friendly fire.”

Still, over the last decade, the Republicans have taken this to heights only George Orwell previously imagined. Not only do they drape activities in reassuring language;

they've managed to recast much of the long-established language of the progressive agenda to mean its almost exact opposite.

Given Bush's relationship with language, it might be considered odd that the most sustained semantic study, other than that of Noam Chomsky and colleagues at MIT, has been going on among Republican strategists. Unlike the Cambridge academics, they are not just into study but its implementation as well, actively engaging in linguistic reorientation, corruption, and manipulation.

The Republican right has not only reimagined but reconstructed the basic language of civil rights, labor, social justice, constitutional mandates, human rights, and societal fairness. Let's accept that Reagan's administration was transformative – although, quite clearly, this is meant in historical terms without implying any approval. By the same standards, the Bush administration must be considered the most transformative of at least a century, even more so than FDR's or Reagan's. It took the fall of the Roman and Greek civilizations, famine, the bubonic plague, endless civil wars, oppression, and all manner of persecution for a few centuries of European history to be labeled the Dark Ages. In this country, the struggle toward human rights and universal suffrage, as well as social and economic justice as described in the Constitution and Declaration of Independence, has been slow (except when it was nonexistent), hard-fought, and painful. Opposition to any and all progressive change not only came from traditionalists, reactionaries, racists, religious bigots, and those who benefited from these many forms of oppression but just as often from the federal and state governments. Over the last 150 years, this country has moved gradually,

jerkily, and, at best, sporadically toward these goals. This has been achieved through the efforts of a vast number of individuals and organizations, including those that are conservative, religious, philanthropic, and charitable as well as progressive, all of them involved in the struggles for such issues as religious freedom, universal suffrage, unionizing, quality public education, civil rights, the environment, feminism, and justice.

In six years, this administration has successfully reintroduced the social attitudes of this country from at least a half-century back; moreover, they haven't even stuck to merely archaic, mainstream values but rather included more extreme and sometimes even dishonored ones. Once again (though the behaviors never really went away), disparaging, stereotyping, and demonizing large segments of the American public is acceptable in public discourse. Semantic dishonesty, derogatory labeling, and persuasive contempt, as well as an all-encompassing assault on “political correctness,” have led this country to an open embrace of the values of the “good old days” – including racism, sexism, religious bias, and bigotry accompanied by a new, finer blend of jingoism, national chauvinism, and discrimination.

Just look at civil rights. Those who don't trust the government at all, in any way, to do anything are usually especially militantly opposed to anything that hints of idealistic social-engineering projects. The sole exception is the civil rights legislation of the mid-Sixties. Whereas many conservatives oppose it specifically, they glowingly declare it an immediate universal success. Despite more than 200 years of slavery and more than 100 of segregation (institutionalized, government-approved racism), they

now declare all races are equal. These militant defenders of colorblindness and loving, absolute human equality don't limit this to race but find it applicable to every citizen. History be damned; the playing field is level for all. Hallelujah!

Forget the centuries of the dominance of white, Protestant, middle- and upper-class, landowning men. Forget institutionalized prejudice, bigotry, and racism. Forget any reasonable study of the impact of social and family history on the individual. Now, those who have enjoyed centuries of privilege are the same as illiterate ghetto orphans. Isn't this a great country?!

The Republicans have chosen their candidates with no unseemly consideration of human differences but simply by human merit (older, white men with conservative values who privilege their religious beliefs and honor the existing economic, social, and political class system). Meanwhile, those miserable Democrats, in the most overt display of prejudicial bigotry since slavery, are running a black man and a woman to play the race card and pander to the women.

One has to admire not only the blinders-on focus of this disdainful stupidity but the absolutely arrogant insistence that this view represents a pure, holy vision of human equality rather than a pasteurized, sterilized, and shrunken take on pre-Civil War ideology. Bless them; they know not what they do. Still, even loving them, we should clarify their real positions. Just read the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States of America, then imagine documents of diametrically opposed values, beliefs, and politics. It's almost just that simple. ■

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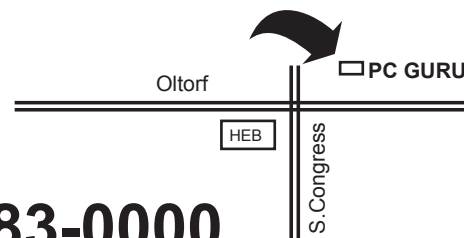


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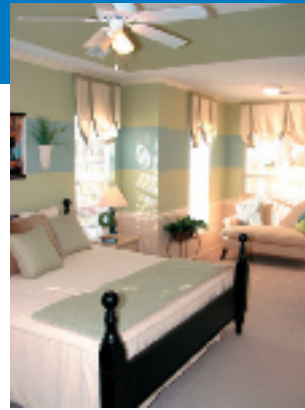
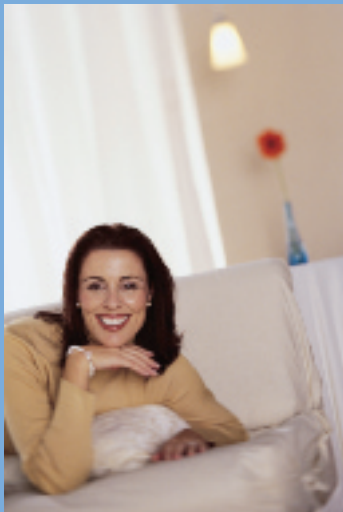
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Come on have some nerve, Erv
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General e-mail address: mail@austinchronicle.com Postmarks forum: austinchronicle.com/forums/postmarks
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Death Penalty Won't Protect Children

Dear Editor,

In response to Jordan Smith's Jan. 11 [News] article "Child Sexual Assault and the Death Penalty": It is a slippery slope we endeavor upon when the states begin to expand the use of the death penalty. The line will inevitably become very, very gray. Yesterday, it was the death penalty for committing homicide. Today, it's the death penalty for a child molester. What crime will warrant the death penalty tomorrow? Will this open the door for a slew of other inhumane punishments such as chopping the hands off of thieves?

The tendency to make examples of others for one's own political advancement is too great in this world for me to ever feel comfortable about expanding the use of capital punishment. Why would a state consider expanding the use of capital punishment when it is evident that innocent people have already been wrongfully convicted for crimes they did not commit and were sentenced and put to death?

The Louisiana Supreme Court reasoned that "since children cannot protect themselves, the state is given the responsibility to protect them." Protecting a child can be done through less barbaric means than killing an already incarcerated person. Capital punishment has nothing to

do with protecting children and more to do with a society's desire for vengeance. In fact, it will only place children at greater risk for the very reasons that the National Association of Social Workers cites. It gives a perpetrator little motivation to spare a victim's life, and it also discourages children from speaking up by imposing too much pressure on them. If a child realizes that his or her coming forth could potentially contribute to the death of someone who might possibly even be a family member, then a child will be more inclined to keep the silence and endure the abuse.

Regards,
Allissa Chambers

Wal-Mart Works for People

Dear Editor,

I'm almost afraid to say that I like Wal-Mart. Since I make so much money as an elementary school teacher, Wal-Mart works for my budget. I can actually afford to feed and clothe my family with goods from Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart might even provide jobs for some of my neighbors and convenience for my elderly neighbors who don't own a car. I will still patronize Zingers, Sun Harvest, and the other stores close by because they offer something unique that Wal-Mart does not. The amount of whining by RG4N is sickening, and they waste both the time and money of the city

and the courts ["RG4N Vows to Fight On," News, Jan. 18]. RG4N does not speak for all the residents in this area. Some of us are actually looking forward to Wal-Mart. Please don't hate me.

Leslie Pearlman

AISD Needs a PAC but Where?

Dear Editor,

The Austin Independent School District's Citizens' Bond Advisory Committee is reviewing and discussing its recommendations for a proposed bond program in 2008. Current, future, and prospective Mueller residents (Pioneers) and members of the city-appointed Mueller Commission have been working to get the elementary school named on the bond ["Postmarks" online, Jan. 20].

Families with children are moving in, and we want to be a part of a positive boundary discussion that benefits not just our new neighborhood but the surrounding area, as well. Too many parents in the area are sending their kids to private schools. We want to work to change that. We believe in public schools. An elementary school has always been in the Mueller master plan. It has been mentioned in past AISD bond program recommendations. Catellus has donated the land, which would save \$2,574,880.

Enrollment projections from the district suggest that neighboring campuses can accommodate the influx of Mueller students until the 2012-13 school year. A school put on the 2008 bond probably wouldn't be built until 2012. Not waiting until neighborhood schools are at 125% capacity makes sense. Planning for growth makes sense.

There is a chance that the AISD Performing Arts Center is going to be plunked down next to that needed elementary school. This was never presented as a possibility to the Mueller

Commission or the Mueller Pioneers. The judgment on whether AISD needs a PAC is not the question. The effect on the Mueller master plan and its principles has not yet been discussed.

Mr. Dick Rathgeber's generosity is appreciated; however, Mueller is not the best place for the PAC. Participants from the entire district traveling to more than 200 events a year are going to impact this community that is striving to be a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood. Whether AISD needs a PAC is not in question. We wish McCallum could be the location, as our kids will be students there eventually. AISD already owns land at 183 and Loyola. To say that two miles east of the Mueller location isn't central is just not acceptable when the Delco Center is nearby.

The careful planning that the city has put into Mueller should be respected and continued.

Kim Wine

Even a Stopped Clock Is Right ...

Dear Editor,

Matthew Langston, thank you for your insightful commentary ["Postmarks," Jan. 4]. I have personally known Josh Rosenblatt for many years, more than 15 to be exact, and I would agree that he knows absolutely nothing about movies. However, *I Am Legend* is still an awful movie [Film Listings, Dec. 14]. I believe the movie *Home Alone* with Macaulay Culkin more appropriately creates the feeling of terror from being alone.

Eliot Tretter

Now Call Them 'Gypzee Heart'

Dear Editor,

Thanks for the review of Gypzee Soul ["Texas Platters," Music, Jan. 18], but we changed our name to Gypzee Heart in September to avoid



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legal hassles. Sorry I didn't send a new CD yet, as it has a few new songs and the correct name. Did you know that even if your band name is spelled differently, you can't use the name if there is another artist that has been using the name longer? We didn't know that. We learned a lot and even trademarked our new band name.

I think it is a really good review, almost offset by my inability to get out a press release and new CD. Please come hear us live at the Full Moon Barn Dance, or check our MySpace listing and come groove with us, musical capital of the world!

Peace,
Leeann Atherton/Zhenya Rock
Gypzee Heart

Composting Made Easier

Dear Editor,
Thank you for your articles on recycling and composting ["Can Austin Waste Not?," News, Jan. 18]. I started composting a few weeks ago using something called the Sun-Mar 200 that we bought at Eco-Wise. It makes composting very easy. We stuffed a bunch of dry leaves in there, and now we just throw our food scraps on top, and it all mixes together. The door slides shut and keeps out any pests. Doing that, we have cut our curbside garbage by nearly half. We also started separating paperboard, and we take that down to Ecology Action when we fill a large box. The last thing we did was start bringing reusable bags for all our shopping. That cut down on the tons of plastic bags we normally collect. It is really exciting to see the difference a couple of changes can make. We hope to expand our efforts as the year goes on. Just wanted to encourage the environmental journalism you are doing. It helps bring about more attention to a really important issue. Also loved the energy challenge last summer [Kill-a-Watt Challenge]. Keep up the great work.

Kate Walker

Proud to Stand With Kim

Dear Editor,
In response to Mr. Lee Nichols' Jan. 18 [News] article "RG4N Vows to Fight On," I write to make clear why I have chosen to work on Jennifer Kim's re-election campaign.
I have known Jennifer for a while, and I support her because of her integrity, support for small business, dedication to the environment, and willingness to listen to the community.

Jennifer worked closely and continuously with us during our efforts to prevent redevelopment of Northcross Mall that will be in contrast with the values and characteristics of the surrounding neighborhoods. She continues to support and fight for the neighborhoods.

I am proud to stand with Jennifer Kim as she seeks a second term as Austin City Councilwoman for Place 3, so she can continue to take a stand for us.

Regards,
Paige Hill

Founder, Responsible Growth for Northcross

Time for a New Mueller School

Dear Editor,
As the Mueller Airport redevelopment project is a high-profile, urban, public/private collaboration that has served as a national model of community planning, the Austin Independent School District should contribute to the project by building the Mueller Elementary School. While the Mueller ES was on the list of original school-building projects for the 2008 bond, the school has been removed by the Citizens' Bond Advisory Committee for failure to qualify as a present, critical need.

The Mueller neighborhood is finally taking shape after a decade of collaborative planning. Mueller is projected to add 100 elementary-age students per year for the next 10 years. That would require that the existing Mueller-area elementary schools receive critical overcrowding assistance during 2011-12, precisely when schools from the 2008 bond would be completed.

Why can't the district allocate for well-planned civic growth when it is forced to consistently react to sprawl-oriented growth? It's time to reward good planning.

Dusty Harshman

Debunking McDonald

Dear Editor,
Uh-oh. Vance McDonald's padded cell is blocking transmission again ["Postmarks" online, Jan. 14]. May I assist? Here we are with more anemic thinking from another member of the Republican marshmallow brigade. Reality check: In many places in the world, America is considered to be one of "the dark forces of tyranny." It's complicated when you try to identify an entire people as evil, isn't it? That's thinking like a fundamentalist Muslim terrorist.

continued on p.10

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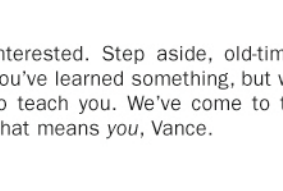
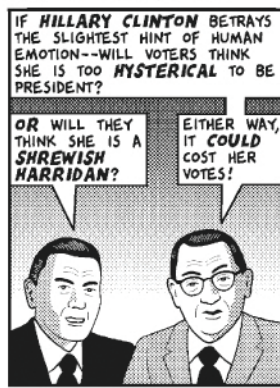
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



Any one half-literate who views our recent foreign policy prudently would vote for a Democrat at this point. Vance can keep his head buried in the sand, but the fact is we've been meddling in Middle East affairs so much over the years, we're experiencing the backlash. McDonald wants to make it about ideological clashes (while accusing Democrats of the same). It's unsurprising that he's so lost in space he doesn't even realize that the Democrats could win if they nominated a used tampon. People are backing Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton because they are different from Republicans, not because they're black or female. Furthermore, for McDonald, of all people, to grumble about people placing ideology above the "issues" is so beyond ridiculous, it's mystifying. As for big government, yes, Democrats will raise taxes, but I'm sorry, it's a drop in the Grand Canyon compared to, for instance, the grievous mess of GOP-sponsored military spending on antiquated weaponry. The halls of Congress smell like the inside of a pig's ass, thanks to Bush and the GOP Way to keep government small, guys! And much of the funding has gone to pre-9/11 programs, so just secure that bullshit. Tragically, the spike in Pentagon spending doesn't denote technological advancements. These half-wits are buying the same shit they did during the Reagan era; we're just paying more. And while Lockheed Martin/Boeing/Halliburton execs soil their pants with delight, no one notices (cares?) the corporate monster eating itself, along with the citizens who are forced to subsidize its outlandish profits. All in the name of "freedom" and "dynamic economic opportunity," eh? As for the Republican version of freedom, which laughs in the face of humanism and denies children health care and an education, I ain't

interested. Step aside, old-timers. It's nice if you've learned something, but we haven't come to teach you. We've come to take your place. That means you, Vance.

Sincerely,
Teighlor Darr

Unhappy but Will Be Back

Lee Nichols,

Our first trip to BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse [Restaurant Review, Food, Jan. 18] was two days ago, and my wife and I had our son with us, so

we were unable to sample any adult beverages. That part of the menu would probably bring us back without our son. The food, on the other hand, left us wishing we were somewhere else. The fish tacos (which we both ordered) were served with a stale wheat tortilla with a piece of fish that resembled something that came out of a Mrs. Paul's box. Just a friendly warning if you go back.

Thanks for the great writing,
James Felps

Bigger Property-Tax Exemption

Dear Editor,

So I heard this guy Brian Thompson (running for Dawnna Dukes' job) supports a bigger property-tax exemption. That's all you gotta tell me.

For the past two years, I've made about \$7,000 and paid \$3,500 in tax on my homestead. That doesn't even include my "housing expenses" (mortgage/interest and insurance, utilities and their separate taxes). My income is below poverty level, and I pay half my income for tax on my homestead.

Oh, but they say all the property-tax money goes to public schools. But then they say the public schools are starving.

Can anyone tell me how this isn't complete insanity?

Beky Hayes

Creationism to be Labeled 'Science'

Dear Editor,

Texas is poised to call creationism science. On Jan. 24, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will vote on a recommendation from an advisory panel to certify the Master of Science Education degree program from the Dallas-based Institute for Creation

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Research. The ICR is a young-Earth creationist group. With this certification, the ICR would be producing teachers, fully equipped and with the Texas stamp of approval, to teach kids that the Earth is about 10,000 years old and that our global geology is a reflection of a recent flood described in the Old Testament. Thankfully, of course, they won't be teaching this in public schools, since it would be illegal. Nevertheless, letting these "degreed" teachers loose in a society that is more and more dependent on a correct understanding of how the world works is a burden we can all do without. Indeed, this certification would also be a burden on Texas' reputation, and we can probably throw in the burden of the cost of a constitutional challenge. I might also point out what a slap in the face this decision would be to students and graduates of actual science programs at universities all over this state.

There is no debate or controversy in the research community about the accuracy and usefulness of the theory of evolution in explaining the nature and diversity of life on Earth. The theory of evolution is an extraordinarily powerful tool that improves our knowledge and our technology and that underscores our connection to the family of life on Earth.

Texas Citizens for Science has more information on this issue at their website, www.texscience.org.

David Barker

Americans Shouldn't Only Speak a Foreign Language

Dear Editor,

It's disappointing that the Georgetown City Council did not follow through on their proposal not to hire contractors for city work who employ illegal immigrants. It was a smart proposal (more cities should consider) that was naturally tagged with the discrimination label. It is disconcerting to have the Spanish language so prevalent in our culture. Beyond that, it is negligent for our government to enforce heavy taxation on the income and spending of legal citizens then provide that money to illegal immigrants. People who remain here illegally and refuse to assimilate into our culture should not have access to free health care, free food, discounted housing, utility assistance, and so on, which is government assistance kindly provided with taxpayer dollars. The latest decision in Georgetown is another example of big business running the

continued on p.12



Concert Series 3 Schedule

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show and not having any accountability. Legal, working citizens are clearly held to a higher standard of accountability than elitists and illegals. Being disgruntled at the inability to understand billboards, public notices, public television, and advertisements in your city because they are in a foreign language (Spanish) is undeniable. When consumers cannot communicate in English with employees at the local big-box store, that is unacceptable ["Postmarks" online, Jan. 13]. Our country doesn't need a wall to curtail illegal immigration. Stop the enabling by not providing the American way of life in a foreign language. And save the taxpayers' dollars for the taxpayer.

Regards,
Colette Michalec



KUT Too Commercial?

Dear Editor,

Re: "KUT - Once a Commercial-Free Station" ["Postmarks," Jan. 4]: Bryce Welch is correct in his comment on KUT. I complained to the management some months ago about their relentless commercial announcements, with no effect other than being told that their Federal Communications Commission license-renewal as a "public" station wasn't for several more years. I guess that doesn't prevent listeners from contacting the FCC to mention KUT's violation of the spirit, if not the letter of the rule. Of course the station is a creature of the University of Texas, which makes it more or less invulnerable to any criticism.

John Callaghan

Defending Signs

Dear Editor,

Let me assure you there are much uglier things in Austin than political signs ["Postmarks," Jan. 18]. At least when the election is over, those signs are taken down. In the part of town where I live, I have a cocaine dealer who recruits the neighborhood kids to work as lookouts, and if they "prove themselves," he eventually starts giving them dope to sell. He has built a 2,400-square-foot house with his dope money. It took me nine months to get the crack house around the corner shut down. It had been in business for more than 12 years now, and on Friday and Saturday night the street it was on looked like a McDonald's parking lot at lunch. The area around Burton and Oltorf is riddled with prostitutes, drug dealers, and various other shady characters. Montopolis and East Austin is covered in gang graffiti. It is everywhere, and the people that did it never take it down. It doesn't help anyone and usually spreads gang messages. About a month ago, an Austin Police Department officer was shot by a 70-year-old man in a drug raid.

The part of Austin you live in may be beautiful, and I'm happy for you, but the part I live in needs a lot of work, and many of those candidates that you have said you would never vote for because of a simple little thing like their signs, those same politicians have all been very instrumental in helping me to bring about change in a part of Austin that very much needs that change. I have and will keep their large signs posted on my front fence. I guess life is a matter of priorities, and I can only wish that campaign signs were the biggest problem in my neighborhood. Must be nice to live in ivory towers.

Sincerely,
Delwin Goss

Problems With Bush's Tax Plan

Dear Editor,

President Bush is working on another tax rebate scam ... I mean plan. I believe this time he is proposing to fix the economy by giving all single taxpayers approximately \$800 and married families around \$1,600. There are a couple of problems with this. First, if you are already among the poor people, then you don't get a check (because you don't pay any taxes). I believe to get the full amount of the rebates you will have to have an income well in excess of \$24,000. In other words, if you don't really need the money, you will get the full amount.

The second problem with this plan is that the median credit card debt per household in America is between \$6,000 and \$10,000 (depending on the source). So, the rebate checks will at best pay 7.5% of the average credit card debt? However, this is not what the president wants you to do with the "free" money. The money is meant to be spent on stuff to stimulate the economy. How much sense does this make? Most people stop buying things when one of two things happen. One, they run out of money. Two, they are out of credit.

In summary, our leader's plan is this: The people of the country are not buying enough stuff, due to being out of money/credit. So, even though our federal government is out of money and running out of credit, they will give the people some money to spend on more stuff.

Steven McCloud

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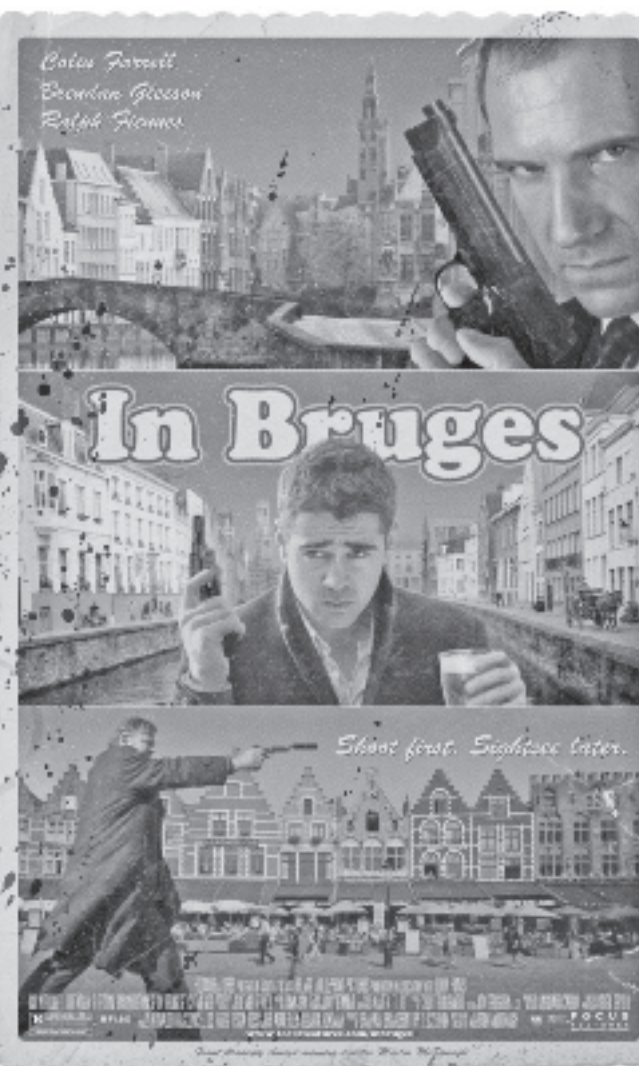
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In Theatres Friday, February 8

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Gift Horse

A rich guy wants to give AISD \$7 million. What's the catch?

BY MICHAEL KING

Largely below the public radar, for many weeks the Austin Independent School District's large Citizens' Bond Advisory Committee has been diligently working to present to the board of trustees an interim bond package intended for a May 10 vote. Last night the CBAC held its final meeting, hoping to whittle down about 300 million (or more) dollars' worth of school needs into a total closer to \$200 million, including: new schools, new infrastructure, technology upgrades (a surprisingly big hit of \$70 million, for technical and curriculum reasons), and that's hardly all of it. Also on the wish list, for several years now, is a much-needed districtwide performing arts center, location yet to be determined. Indeed in 2004, voters approved \$8.8 million for a center – but made it dependent on the raising of matching funds that never appeared, while simultaneously, construction costs exploded.

With the freestanding construction estimates now closer to \$30 million, the CBAC explored a \$20 million proposal to expand the Long Center to accommodate district needs, but in recent days that already uncertain proposition appears to have imploded – there's just no room to build it at Long. So out of the gloom rode a rich man with a big idea: Developer/philanthropist Dick Rathgeber has offered to "donate" to the district a tract of land at the Mueller neighborhood development (and a couple million dollars more) to site and jumpstart the project.

There are, alas, more than a few small problems with Rathgeber's offer: 1) The math only works if the gift can still be considered "matching" funds for the 2004 bonds, which likely will require the attorney general's review. 2) Would the location be part of the new bond vote – and if the site doesn't work out for any reason, does the bond crater again? 3) At this very late date in the bond process, how are the CBAC and the board and the public supposed to evaluate this (admittedly very well-dressed) pig-in-a-poke?

The most curious and comical obstacle is one that has been entirely missed in the early public spinning of Rathgeber's offer: Rathgeber *does not own* the property he is so generously offering to donate to Austin's schools.

Shakespeare They Ain't

I was alerted to that last, rather significant detail by Mueller neighborhood advocate Jim Walker, who was hung out to dry last week by the *Statesman's* editorialists, falling all over themselves to applaud "Rathgeber's opening act" and to denounce Walker as an obstructionist. In its cutesy-poo Jan. 17 editorial literally casting Rathgeber as "the protagonist" and Walker as "the antagonist," the daily insisted that the district should simply take the money and run and not bother with any of those tedious public

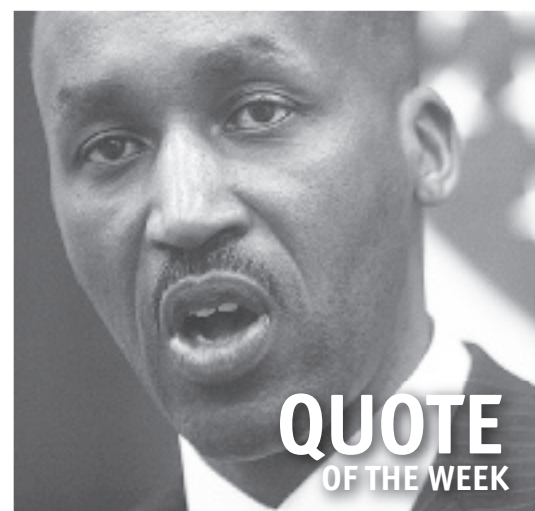
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JOHN ANDERSON

Tuesday, the political action committees of Austin's public-safety unions – the Austin Police Association, the Austin Firefighters Association, and the Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services Employees Association – issued combined endorsements for May's City Council races, a historic first. Lee Leffingwell got the nod for Place 1 re-election, while in the race to fill newly open Place 4, Cid Galindo

was endorsed. In Place 3, newcomer Randi Shade was endorsed over incumbent Jennifer Kim; the associations cited Kim's inaccessibility in making their decision. "We looked at the candidates," said Wuthipong "Tank" Tantaksinankij (l), senior police officer and APA vice president. "We also did our homework. These are the ones that have reached out." – Wells Dunbar



QUOTE OF THE WEEK

JANA BIRCHUM

"You know, there's a first time for everything. I was struck by Council Member [Sheryl] Cole's comments about ... the first African-American city manager, and I certainly understand the significance of that. There always has to be a first in order for there to be a second. I understand that, and I understand the responsibility that comes with that. And I certainly intend to stand very tall in that regard."

– From the acceptance speech of Marc Ott, Austin's new city manager

HEADLINES

- Amid a week of wet, cold January weather, Austinites honored the memory of **Martin Luther King Jr.** in a march through town and a celebration at Huston-Tillotson University.
- The Citizens' Bond Advisory Committee to the Austin Independent School District board held its final meeting Tuesday night to discuss recommendations for the proposed May **interim bond election**, battling the perennial constraints of too many needs and too few resources. See "Point Austin," at right.
- In a brazen attempt to confuse already addled voters, the city's public-safety unions issued endorsements for the May 10 **City Council elections**, even though we're still trying to determine who's running in the March 4 party primaries.

NAKED CITY

- The Austin legislative delegation – red and blue – has united against the plan by the **State Preservation Board** to remove the **Capital Metro bus stop** from 11th Street in front of the Capitol grounds. The busy stop serves at least 1,400 riders on a typical week-day, providing a direct stop to 27 different routes and effectively serving as a transfer point for 20 other routes nearby. The board says the stop must be removed to facilitate what it says are needed security upgrades to the Capitol. In a letter to Gov. Rick Perry, the eight lawmakers serving the city of Austin called for reconsideration of the issue and wrote, "[O]f concern to us is that the decision to move this Capital Metro bus stop from its current and long-time location was made without input from Capital Metro, the City of Austin or the hundreds of citizens who use this stop daily." The new security plan calls for all Capitol traffic to exit through the south gates, and the board demanded the stop's removal because of fears that buses stacking up at Congress and 11th would block that gate. The legislators refuted that: "Many of us in the delegation exit the south gate of the Capitol at all times of the day and night, and never once to our knowledge has the exit been blocked by bus traffic."

– Lee Nichols
continued on p.17

processes that have been the hallmark of the Mueller master plan. In their scramble to endorse Rathgeber's unilateral determination that a Mueller tract of his personal choosing is the best place to put the center ("There is no doubt that a venue that provides live music, dance, and theater would enhance the Mueller redevelopment"), the editors somehow failed to mention that "the protagonist" doesn't even own the land – rather, he's proposing to buy it from the current owners, the city of Austin, via the Mueller developer, Catellus, just as soon as AISD and everybody involved can agree, pronto, that wherever Midas puts his golden thumb on a city map is where El Dorado must be.

That's me talking, not Walker, who instead generously described the largely undefined Rathgeber proposal as "a good idea terribly misplayed." At length and with some irritation ("You know me; I'm the guy that hates kids who play instruments"), Walker explained several of the more obvious pragmatic problems with the proposal: The Mueller areas dedicated for "regional" uses have always been on the opposite, western side of the development; the land in question is planned for schools/residential, with limited road access, not for a 1,200-seat public venue in heavily trafficked use for more than 200 events a year; the complex CBAC bond proposal was nearly completed when this personal, private bombshell was dropped, and now everybody is expected to genuflect.

"It's not a deal that Dick can make," said Walker bluntly. "He knows there's a process." (Rathgeber has been indirectly involved in Mueller plans through his land donations for the "children's village" of social service agencies to be located nearby.) Walker is justifiably proud of the communitywide public involvement in planning and creating Mueller, and he's speaking from long experience when he says, "You can't have a community process just when it's convenient." ■

Welcome to the New School

Catellus apparently agrees with Walker. Last week the developer sent a letter to Mueller residents noting that Rathgeber would have to buy the land before he can give it away and continuing, "In keeping with the history, vision and spirit of the community, Catellus will not contract for or agree to a facility of a performing arts center until there is a thorough public process that is open to residents, neighbors and other stakeholders in order to properly weigh the local impacts of this type of facility." That seems simply rational and also requiring enough community time and effort that it can't instantly be plopped on a ballot as a "done deal" ready for rubber-stamping by Austin voters.

But in prematurely promoting the proposal through a frankly misleading (and blatantly unfair) *Statesman* editorial, somebody has once again decided that the Usual Suspects should lead and the rest of us politely get in line. "This is 'old school' development in action," said Walker. "Somebody gets a bright idea, decides unilaterally what should happen, and wherever the shit falls, someone else has to clean it up.

... For years, we have had a community-driven plan at Mueller that is creating a diverse, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood. We cannot allow the old school way of developing to undermine that."

Nobody wants to gainsay Rathgeber's generosity. If there really is "no doubt" that a performing arts center plunked down willy-nilly into the middle of an unsuspecting neighborhood is a good idea, then it will be obvious to those neighbors when they get a real, thorough chance to consider it. But if not, maybe the folks at AISD should get cracking on that fundraising they explicitly promised when they first put this matter before the voters in 2004.

Maybe they can even persuade Mr. Rathgeber to kick in. ■

In a cutesy-poo Jan. 17 editorial literally casting Rathgeber as "the protagonist" and Walker as "the antagonist," the *Statesman* insisted that the district should simply take Rathgeber's money and run.

BESIDE THE POINT Don't Forget Your Vest

BY WELLS DUNBAR

In the press conference immediately following **Marc Ott's** naming as **city manager** last Thursday, he sought to impart to the assembled jurnos his hands-on, in-the-field style. "I know what it's like to stand there," Ott said – "there" being outside a crack house in the night air, "with a bulletproof vest on, watching the K-9 unit go in first." After getting a point-blank barrel blast of Austin democracy in action, he's probably wishing he'd already packed the Kevlar. After that morning, he could be excused for thinking he needs it.

Ott's selection had been leaked to the 10 o'clock talking heads the night before, and the chambers were crowded with cameras and onlookers with Ott; his wife, Pamela; and their children, Gabriel and Carly, sitting in front-row seats marked "Reserved." The idyllic, historic moment was interrupted minutes later, when council gadfly and Eastside politico **Gus Peña**, signed up to comment on the item naming Ott, used the occasion to embarrass himself, frantically attacking council for a lack of public input in Ott's hiring and decrying the process as flawed – without once mentioning what input might have been required or what specific flaws compromised the search. (A more politically jaundiced observer might argue that Peña, a self-fancied Latino political power broker, didn't raise any such objections until Assistant City Manager **Rudy Garza** was out of the race.) All in all, Peña's histrionic performance made the next speaker, **Jennifer Gale**, and her suggestion that we keep runner-up **Jelynn Burley** around in a co-city-manager capacity, by comparison sound well-reasoned.

Things calmed once council chimed in – for a minute, at least. **Lee Leffingwell** offered Ott his "full support going ahead," while **Mike Martinez** intoned, "Your success is our success; your failure is our failure." (Distressingly, he then stole BTP's joke about Major Applewhite being Austin's next city manager – we gotta hide our notes.) **Betty Dunkerley** lauded Ott's "warm and open and outgoing personality," while **Brewster McCracken** called him a "major figure" on Texas transportation and land use. A visibly moved **Sheryl Cole** added: "It is a change, it is historic, and in the words of the old Negro gospel [hymn], it is a 'Happy Day.' I cannot tell you how ecstatic this entire community

is to have you, including the African-American community, and it pleases me to tell you that this council has unanimous support behind you."

The reference to council support wasn't exactly a throwaway. **Jennifer Kim**, while "thrilled" over an African-American city manager and certain Ott will "do a tremendous job," said that due to a lack of "adequate public input in the process," she could not vote for Ott and the process that selected him. To audible gasps, murmurs, and scattered applause, Kim said, "It is because of this lack of process that I must, in good conscience abstain from today's vote."

Kim's abstention was instantly seized upon by her May campaign opponent **Randi Shade**, who argued the council member had ample time to raise such concerns earlier in the process – instead of at the end, after the *Statesman* and the Better Austin Today PAC (strange bedfellows, indeed) started complaining. "Protesting in the 11th hour, and only after it appears politically advantageous to do so, is classic Jennifer Kim. Instead of working with the council to create good process on the front end, Jennifer Kim consistently waits until the last minute and then cries foul," Shade said. Afterward, Kim told BTP her concerns were "raised with [search firm] **Arcus** earlier to ask them how we could get public involvement, and that response always was: 'This is not something you want to do. This is not how this is done.' ... I wish we had really had more of a discussion about it, gone beyond them to get advice and find out what other cities do."

At the press conference afterward – in between questions about public-safety contract talks, broached courtesy of the *Statesman's* monomaniacal obsession with police spending (if not with union salaries for Austin's workforce in general) – BTP asked Ott how he plans to serve effectively in the midst of such consternation. He answered: "I may be a slim guy, but I have broad shoulders and a thick skin. ... There is no facade here. What you see is what you get."

Mr. Ott, we wish we could say the same about the Austin politics you experienced. Welcome, and good luck.

Council takes a breather this week, returning to the dais Thursday, Jan. 31. In the meantime, write to BTP at wldunbar@austinchronicle.com.

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Charged with finding ways to “transform Austin into a world class bicycling city,” by creating and promoting the best environment for the friendly coexistence of bicycle riders and other transportation users, the city’s **Street Smarts Task Force** has met regularly over the past 10 months to draft a set of recommendations, which council will review for inclusion in the ongoing update of the city’s 12-year-old, spottily implemented **Bicycle Plan**. The task force released a final draft of its recommendations last week, expected to reach council by Feb. 28. The draft is a conglomeration of some of the best ideas of the last several years for increasing local transportation cycling viability and safety that haven’t yet found their way into policy. Task force Chair Sara Krause, who bike-commutes into town once a week from Circle C Ranch, thinks “the will of council is there” to make the recommendations a reality and pointed out how complementary the traffic and greenhouse-gas reductions associated with car-to-bike converts are to the city’s stated objectives. Check out the Street Smarts draft recommendations at www.ci.austin.tx.us/council/streetsmarts.htm.
— Daniel Mottola

Physically weakened, 15 pounds lighter, and more than slightly frustrated, **Uri Horesh**, an Arabic lecturer at the University of Texas, ended his seven-day hunger strike – a nonviolent protest of the fact that the university does not provide health benefits for same-sex partners of faculty members. However, the university is held accountable to state law, which says coverage can only be provided to an employee’s married spouse. (And we all know that Texas voters in 2005 overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment to define the word “marriage” as “a man and a woman” only.) Horesh, though eating again without an adjustment in university policy, believes his strike did much for visibility and exposure of the need for change concerning this issue. “[F]rom now on, same-sex spousal benefits at the University of Texas is an issue at the forefront of the public discussion in this community,” he said in a statement. “The people in charge of diversity and institutional equity at UT will now have to begin delivering their promise and live up to their job titles. Because we are now a large group, a diverse one at that, of people who are on the lookout.”
— Kate Getty

AISD trustees appointed two new administrators at their meeting last Monday. **Texana Turner** will take on the position of director of middle grades at the **Ann Richards School** for Young Women Leaders. Turner is a former teacher and has been assistant principal and principal of Sims Elementary since 1999. **Nancy Johnston Phillips** has been appointed director of **state and federal accountability**. Phillips has been the director of ESL and bilingual programs/instructional technology at the Corsicana Independent School District and an adjunct professor at Texas A&M University-Commerce.
— Michael May

BEYOND CITY LIMITS

Former Bastrop Co. Sheriff **Richard Hernandez** and current Precinct 1 Commissioner **David A. Goertz** pleaded guilty on Jan. 22 to charges of **official corruption** in connection with allegations that they’d misused taxpayer funds and other resources – including inmate labor and county vehicles. Under the terms of his plea agreement, Hernandez, who served as sheriff from 1997 until resigning his office after he was indicted in May, will serve 90 days in jail and 10 years on probation and will forfeit his peace officer’s license, the Texas Attorney General’s Office announced Tuesday. Hernandez, who, among six felony charges, was accused of using inmate labor and county materials to install doors on a barn located on his private property, will pay \$16,000 in restitution to the county. Goertz, who took office in 2005, pleaded guilty to a class A misdemeanor for “abuse of official capacity,” also connected to the misuse of inmate labor (notably, to perform “electrical wiring projects” at his private residence) and other county “equipment and materials.” He received a probated jail sentence and must pay \$1,499 in restitution, plus a \$1,500 fine, and must perform 120 hours of community service.
— J.S.

Georgetown City Council put out a fire Tuesday, as another roared. Responding to protests over an ordinance that would require employers to certify **employees’ legal status**, the council approved, to a standing ovation, a dampened requirement that contracts should comply with state and federal law. Earlier that day, Texas Civil Rights Project Director Jim Harrington announced the Texas Indigenous Council had filed suit alleging the city had violated ordinance protesters’ rights, when on Jan. 8 police threatened permitless protesters, some carrying signs reading, “Honk for Justice,” with arrest. The complaint also slams a catch-22 stipulation for a 30-day notice of a protest “event” as implausible, because agendas change weekly. “The history of the United States is filled with examples of spontaneous ... peaceful demonstrations,” the complaint states. Moreover, there is time to deny a permit to “suppress political expression.” A sense of “subliminal racism” is pervading the legal status flap, Harrington said, and no wonder. In support of the beefier ordinance, the tad reactionary blog Williamson Republic (www.williamsonrepublic.com) screamed, “A large percentage of the felony indictments in this county are made on people ... suspected to be illegal.” In addition, protesters reported they’d been labeled at City Hall the not-so-subtle pejorative “Mexican Mafia.”
— Patricia J. Ruland

Audience members at a **Pedernales Electric Cooperative** meeting Monday asked members of the board – especially the advisory board – to resign their posts and allow the beleaguered, massive, rural co-op to address the

issues posed by the recent member lawsuit that revealed widespread credit card abuse and inflated salaries among top officials. The 16-member board did not respond to any of the comments – some kind and others cruel – though members did applaud an audience member who said the co-op members were not fully to blame for the problem and should not be forced to resign. One speaker noted that the board had not followed Open Meeting laws in voting on unposted business, but counsel Walter Desmond said the co-op structure is not regulated under the Texas Open Meetings Act. Sen. Troy Fraser, R-Horseshoe Bay, has pledged Lege meetings on the co-op; his office says he’s waiting for interim charges from Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst.
— Kimberly Reeves

The state of Texas will soon begin to test **high school athletes for steroids**, now that a testing services provider has been selected. State officials announced Tuesday that they selected the National Center for Drug Free Sport, a provider of testing services for the National Collegiate Athletic Association, to test some 23,000 student athletes for performance-enhancing drugs. The Texas program will be the largest in the country. The Lege had hoped for testing to begin before football season last fall, but there were delays in finding a contractor.
— Justin Ward

In the ongoing, slightly scaled-back rush to build new **coal-fired power plants** in Texas, the state’s historically industry-chummy environmental commission has been roundly criticized for failing to assess the cumulative air-quality impact of proposed coal plants, as well as whether they’re necessarily based on Texas’ true energy needs, prior to handing out new permits. But thanks to language written into the 2008 federal appropriations bill by Waco-area Democratic Rep. Chet Edwards, the federal Government Accountability Office will be called in to conduct such a study. Among Edwards’ concerns, as the Environmental Protection Agency prepares to tighten ozone pollution standards, is that Waco and several other cities statewide (including Austin) will become federal violators, forcing local governments to take costly countermeasures. Edwards says the study should analyze cumulative emissions in Central Texas from existing and planned coal burners for an entire ozone season. Currently, permitting procedures only address cumulative impacts within 37 miles of a plant. Gov. Rick Perry reportedly called for GOP attacks on an earlier version of the bill, due partially to its focus on not-yet-regulated carbon-dioxide emissions, apparently fearing the results could somehow make Texas look worse than its present status as the nation’s No. 1 emitter of CO₂.
— D.M.

Also in the air: “In Texas, we’ve got a state environmental agency more interested in serving industry than in enforcing our pollution laws,” said Environmental Integrity Project senior attorney Ilan Levin in a statement. “This is a state renowned for lax environmental enforcement, issuing weak permits, and basically thumbing its nose at federal law, so we’re asking EPA to do its job.” Levin fled a petition this week with the EPA on behalf of several environmental nonprofits, alleging that the **Texas Commission on Environmental Quality** routinely violates the **Clean Air Act** and its own air-quality programs through wimpy permitting decisions concerning power plants and other large polluting facilities. Environmental Defense Regional Director Jim Marston said the TCEQ’s failure to consider the best and cleanest technology in four recently issued coal-plant permits, per the Clean Air Act, ultimately prompted the petition. It asks that the EPA use its authority to impose one or more of the following sanctions: Prohibit construction of new large power plants or refineries, withhold highways funds, or implement reduction of offsets from other pollution sources in the state. For more, see www.texas.sierraclub.org.
— D.M.

Veteran newspaper journalist **Terri Burke** has been named executive director of the **American Civil Liberties Union of Texas**, replacing former state ACLU leader Will Harrell, who left the post last year to take on the job of chief ombudsman for the Texas Youth Commission. Burke, most recently editor of the *Abilene Reporter-News*, was a deputy managing editor of the *Austin American-Statesman* in the mid-Nineties. She was selected for the job from a pool of 50 applicants, ACLU board President Paul Asofsky told the *Reporter-News*. Burke told the *Abilene* daily she applied for the job because it seemed like a continuation of her “life’s work” in journalism. “I wanted to be a journalist because I thought journalism was a way to further the democratic process,” she said. “At its heart, journalism is about the First Amendment. All my life, I’ve been interested in those kinds of issues.”
— J.S.

On Jan. 22, the 35th anniversary of the landmark U.S. Supreme Court abortion decision in *Roe v. Wade*, the national **Planned Parenthood Action Fund** announced its intention to step into the electoral ring in an effort to bring 1 million voters to the polls in November – a plan dubbed the One Million Strong Campaign. “Under President Bush, women have seen access to basic health care like birth control become increasingly unaffordable and inaccessible. ... And now they’ve seen the White House and state governments pour more than \$1.5 billion into ineffective and dangerous abstinence-until-marriage programs that do nothing to prevent unintended pregnancies,” PPAF President Cecile Richards said in a press release Tuesday. “To keep our doors open and continue serving [millions of women], it’s clear that we need to step into the electoral arena. ... Women voters and young adults already trust Planned Parenthood’s health information – and this year they’ll be able to rely on the Planned Parenthood Action Fund for election information.” The goal, of course, is to elect pro-choice candidates during the fall’s general election, Richards said. For more on the new campaign, see www.plannedparenthoodvotes.org.
— J.S.

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Texas Memorial Museum's Ed Theriot, with tracks

“They say it’ll be next week, and then next week comes, and they say it’ll be another week. And that can go on forever and ever.”
– sculptor Mike O’Brien

The first request drew no bidders, so it was redrafted and submitted again in July 2007. The second time around, five conservationists attended a presubmittal conference, and two submitted proposals. Though the contract hasn’t officially been awarded, UT officials have reportedly settled on **Conservation Solutions** out of New Mexico, which submitted another proposal in late December, and now they’re moving on to the next stage, which involves hammering out the specifics, said **Daniel Heath** of Project Management and Construction Services for UT-Austin. The project is taking so long because it can’t be carried out by a garden variety contractor, Heath said. As he put it: “It’s not like fixing a toilet.”

Despite the snags, Theriot said he’s satisfied with the way things have progressed thus far. “The pace that we’re moving forward with reflects the careful deliberation that is need[ed],” he said, adding: “They’re still in very good shape. We’ve caught it before it has become critical.”

But local sculptor **Mike O’Brien**, who has campaigned for years to have the tracks restored, begs to differ. O’Brien said the tracks’ deterioration is obvious, even to a layman. “[Theriot] and I are friends, but for him to say that the tracks aren’t in bad condition. ... They’re in appalling condition!” O’Brien is also skeptical the project is moving forward. He says he’s heard the same song and dance ad nauseam. “They say it’ll be next week, and then next week comes, and they say it’ll be another week. And that can go on forever and ever.”

Even after the contract is awarded, the specific funding remains uncertain. Once the conservator is officially named and cost estimates come in, said Theriot, the university will likely have to find a private donor to underwrite the project. O’Brien says he hopes the university will take action soon, because he wants to get on with his life. “I would just like UT to say when it is going to happen. I want them to commit to some type of schedule.” — Justin Ward

Dinosaur-Track Rescue Mission Under Way at UT ... Slowly

A legendary set of dinosaur tracks that have been deteriorating outside **UT’s Texas Memorial Museum** for nearly two decades could soon have a new home – if the project can make it over the last of a long series of bureaucratic hurdles.

While making a plaster cast of the tracks in 1988, sculptor **Pam Maceo** noticed that the tracks’ stone surface was literally turning to dust and informed the museum’s director. For five years, nothing was done about the tracks until a 1993 report called attention to them once more. The report suggested monitoring, cleaning, and making alterations to the antiquated track house.

Despite the university’s efforts, however, the tracks continued to decay. The problem was the track house itself, which was built in the 1940s

when the fossils were first brought to the university from the excavation site near Glen Rose, Texas (now the site of a creationist museum claiming the tracks provide evidence of human-dinosaur coexistence). **Ed Theriot**, director of the Texas Memorial Museum, said that because of poor storage, the tracks essentially started breaking down the moment they were excavated. “Sixty years ago, they really didn’t have an idea of how to treat and conserve these things. They thought, ‘Hey, these tracks were safe in the ground. Why wouldn’t they be safe above ground?’” Theriot said. “Now technology has really caught up with our desires.”

The house afforded the tracks little protection from the elements. Not only were the fossils exposed to the devastating effects of humidity, the report said, but squirrels and

other animals were slipping into the track house and using the tracks as a toilet. In 1997, a second report came out recommending the fossils be relocated inside. But the wheels of the university bureaucracy were slow to turn, and for the next decade, the project remained mired in red tape.

The university took no steps toward a relocation project until 2004, when contract architects were inspecting the museum for repairs and noticed the state of the tracks. Shortly thereafter, College of Natural Sciences Dean **Mary Ann Rankin** met with the architects and Theriot and determined the fossils were in a state of “emergency.” Rankin tasked Theriot with finding a conservator, but heels would be dragged for another two years before a request for qualifications was put out in fall 2006.

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City Council Election Money toward May

While most political eyes remain focused on the national and March 4 Texas primaries, and the May 10 municipal election is months away, **City Council candidates** are already raising money and their public profiles – and broadcasting the results.

The Jan. 15 deadline to report funds raised last year turned into a PR battle for the big three candidates looking to fill incumbent Mayor Pro Tem **Betty Dunkerley's** term-limited Place 4 seat. The candidates issued dueling press releases trumpeting their fundraising prowess. Downtown Austin Alliance board member and urban-planning maven **Cid Galindo** raised \$7,350 in December and \$3,800 this month, for more than \$11,000.

However, he has already spent more than \$14,000 on campaign expenses, including \$6,250 in consulting retainer fees to **Kelly Vidovic**; a \$10,000 loan to himself has closed the difference.

Development consultants **Michael Casias** and **Tom Stacy** are among Galindo's contributors.

Environmentalist and

Friends of Barton Springs Pool founding member **Robin Cravey** reported \$13,900 raised, plus another \$4,400 in January. As of filing, he's spent nearly \$12,150, \$3,000 of that in consulting fees to **Stanley-Garrison & Associates**; former Council Member **Beverly Griffith** and Planning Commissioner **David Sullivan** are among his contributors. (Parks liaison to the Downtown Commission **Jeb Boyt** contributed to both Cravey and Galindo.)

Accumulating the most treasure thus far, however, is former Austin Neighborhoods Council leader **Laura Morrison**, reporting \$40,015 raised by the reporting cutoff – not counting any funds raised this year. Beverly Griffith also contributed to Morrison, as did Zoning and Platting Commission member **Clarke Hammond**. Morrison has spent \$21,200; Consultant **Matt Glazer** (editor of *Burnt*

Orange Report) has received \$1,375; **Ignite Consulting** got \$3,375 for yard signs and another \$955 for "design services."

A fourth filed candidate, **Samuel Osemene**, a Navy veteran pursuing a political science master's degree from UT, has spent \$1,300 of his own money. (Perennial candidate **Jennifer Gale** reports \$12 in contributions, none of it yet spent.)

Over in Place 1, incumbent **Lee Leffingwell** collected \$46,900 by the end of December. He has several \$600 bundled contributions from couples, including **Paul Carrozza** (owner of RunTex) and his spouse and developer **Larry Warshaw** and wife Meredith Page

Warshaw. At filing time, Leffingwell had spent a relatively modest \$1,300. His only declared opponent, **Allen Demling**, running on a bike-friendly transit and arts-supportive platform, reported \$650 in contributions, including a \$150 donation of ad space in local zine *Misprint*. He has loaned himself \$2,500. (Both Responsible Growth for Northcross

Communications Chair **Jason Meeker** and FixAustin spokesman **Ryan Clinton** are reportedly considering Place 1 runs, but neither had yet filed or announced as of press time.)

The Place 3 throw-down between incumbent **Jennifer Kim** and Internet charity entrepreneur **Randi Shade** has the council member reporting \$56,700 in end-of-year contributions to Shade's nearly \$62,200. Kim has spent \$12,765, more than \$9,950 of that to Ignite Consulting for "consulting fees, ad printing [and] data/voter lists," and also loaned \$7,700 to herself. Shade has loaned herself \$10,000; so far, she has spent \$3,316, with \$1,727 of that going to printing. (A third candidate, Texas Army National Guardsman **Ken Weiss**, has collected \$860 in contributions and another \$120 in loans and reports expenditures of \$923.)

– Wells Dunbar

CITY COUNCIL RACES

The following candidates have filed contribution and expense reports for the May 10 City Council election.

Place 1

Lee Leffingwell*
Allen Demling

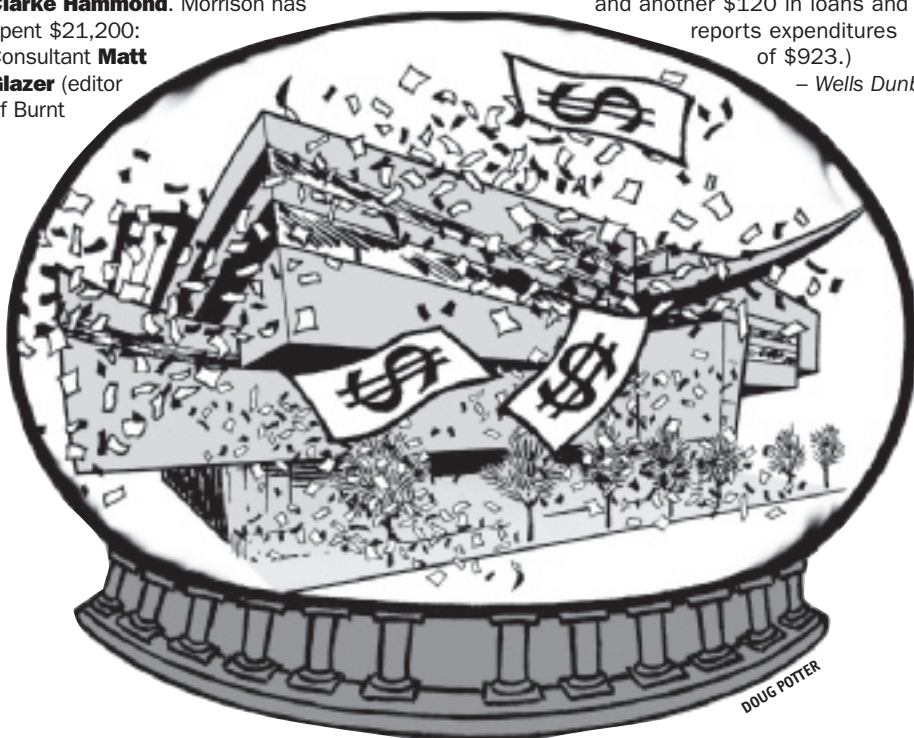
Place 3

Jennifer Kim*
Randi Shade
Ken Weiss

Place 4

Cid Galindo
Robin Cravey
Laura Morrison
Samuel Osemene
Jennifer Gale

*= incumbent



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Downtown Mural Awaits a New Home

On the corner of Sixth and Guadalupe, the **Starr Building** has sat empty of business since the state comptroller moved out in 2005. But remaining inside is a unique piece of Texas art history that the state and federal governments are working to save from the threat of the wrecking ball.

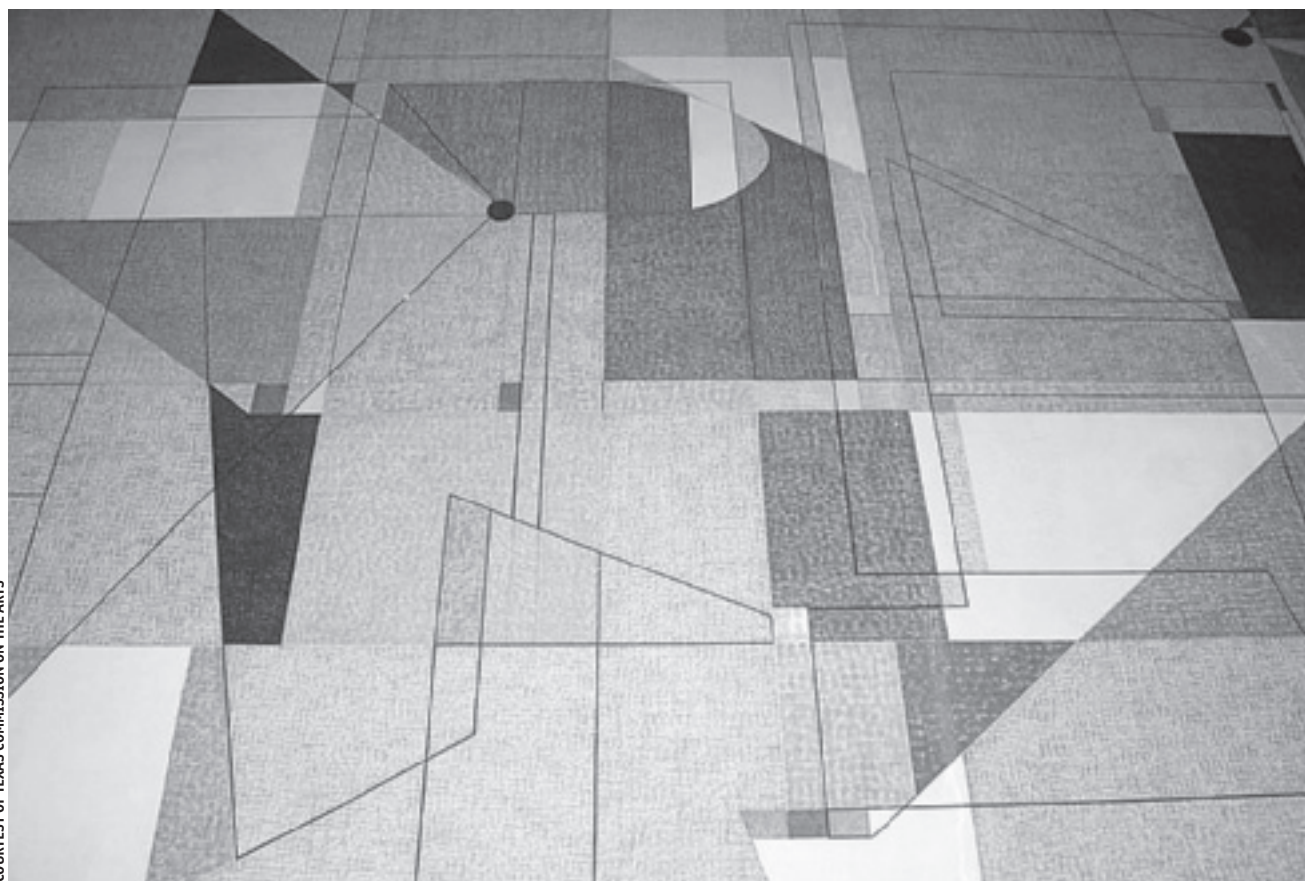
The untitled mural by leading Texan modernist artist **Seymour Fogel** fills a wall on the second story of the former tax office. In 1954, Fogel, an apprentice of **Diego Rivera** and a staff member at the University of Texas College of Fine Arts, was commissioned by **American National Bank** to create a mural for the bank's new Austin branch. The result, a 28-foot abstract swathe of geometric shapes, has survived in remarkable condition – except for a hole punched through it for a fire alarm. “It's important, because it was nationally one of the first examples of the integration of art and architecture,” said attorney **Robert Summers**, who first saw the mural in 2003 when a custodian let him in. “I made him promise to tell me if he would ever see a wrecking ball there.”

When the comptroller moved to the Lyndon B. Johnson State Office Building, the Starr Building – and the mural – were transferred to the **General Land Office** for eventual sale. With the doors locked, the mural is untouched. “Our role is to do nothing, which is good,” said GLO spokesman **Jim Suydam**. “It's doing nothing but rising in value.”

“The best preservation would be to find a developer interested in preserving the mural and the building,” said **Lisa Harvell** of the **Texas Historical Commission's** Architecture Division. But in case that doesn't happen, steps are being taken to find the Fogel a new home. Made of concrete on a steel frame, it can be moved in one piece. So Summers contacted Judge **Lee Yeakel** and Magistrate Judge **Andy Austin** of the U.S. Western District, and they proposed moving it to Austin's new **federal court building**. Architect **Mack Scogin** approved, and the U.S. General Services Administration, the federal government's acquisition agency, began negotiations with the GLO. “Everyone's on the same page,” said GLO marketing manager **Laura Rogers**.

Texas has already lost two Fogels, in 2002, when Houston's **Petroleum Club** was converted into condos. But the Starr mural seems safe, as the administration's Fine Arts Division this week sent a letter recommending accepting the mural. Now Summers, with the **Friends of the Texas Historical Commission**, plans to raise \$500,000 for renovation and relocation. “After many months of trying to get everyone together, things seem to be moving,” Summers said. — *Richard Whittaker*

For fundraising-effort details, call 936-2241 or see www.arts.state.tx.us/fogelmural/fogel.asp.



COURTESY OF TEXAS COMMISSION ON THE ARTS

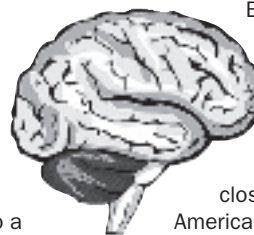
UT AND VA COMBINE FORCES TO STUDY BRAIN TRAUMA IN IRAQ VETS

Lucky us; it looks like Austin's a pretty good place to have a head injury. At an open house at **UT's J.J. Pickle Research Campus** in North Austin last Thursday, officials announced plans to conduct **brain-imaging research** on combat soldiers in hopes of better understanding traumatic brain injury and **post-traumatic stress disorder**. They'll be using a state-of-the-art brain scanner and \$4.2 million in funding from the **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs** to address a growing population of veterans surviving the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan with brain injuries.

“There's a lot more art than science,” in modern rehabilitation methods, said Dr. **Robert Van Boven**, UT's brain-imaging lab director, in a keynote address to a roomful of men and women in uniform, doctors, and others who came out to avail themselves of the tasty breakfast buffet at the research center's wooded campus.

The VA and UT hope to combine scientific research with qualitative methods like psychological analysis to determine new, more effective treatments for soldiers returning from war with brain trauma. Of 1.6 million deployed troops, there may

be as many as 150,000 who ultimately suffer brain trauma, according to Van Boven, who consulted with the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** for the estimate. The imaging lab at UT is remarkable because of the methods its researchers will combine to create images of the brain.



Blood flow to the brain is tracked via magnetic resonance imaging, then magnetic resonance spectroscopy measures chemicals in the brain, and diffusion tensor imaging tracks water movement, all while volunteer subjects are stimulated by images, objects, and sounds.

Sen. **John Cornyn** attended the open house and closed out the event with a speech about “Great Americans,” “heroes,” “pride,” “angels,” “God,” “blessings,” “service,” “honor,” “dignity,” etc.

The 150 servicemen and -women who have volunteered for the study are all first-time combat soldiers. Their brains and behavior will be analyzed before and after deployment to track the effects of trauma, which according to Van Boven, “will create a new standard” for comprehensively diagnosing brain trauma. — *Andrea Grimes*



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Hollywood 1, OCEAN 0 Council fumbles Eastside McMansion amendments

While the chill outside confirms it's that sad time of year for the annual Cowboys collapse, **Thomas "Hollywood" Henderson** (former line-backer for America's Team) has won a big one – with a special teams assist from City Council.

During zoning hearings last week, council unanimously voted against more restrictive **McMansion** regulations for some 655 lots in the **Central East Austin Neighborhood Planning Area**, an area roughly bound by I-35, Chicon, MLK, and Seventh Street. Home sizes are currently limited to either a 0.4 floor-to-area ratio – basically 40% of the lot size – or 2,300 square feet (whichever is larger). But the **Organization of Central East Austin Neighborhoods** proposed a McMansion amendment that would eliminate the 2,300-square-foot option, leaving only the 40% FAR requirement – a necessity, they believe, to slowing overbuilding, gentrification, and the spiraling property taxes concurrent with larger houses or developments on the historically smaller lots. The **Planning Commission** agreed, forwarding OCEAN's request in its 7-0 recommendation to council.

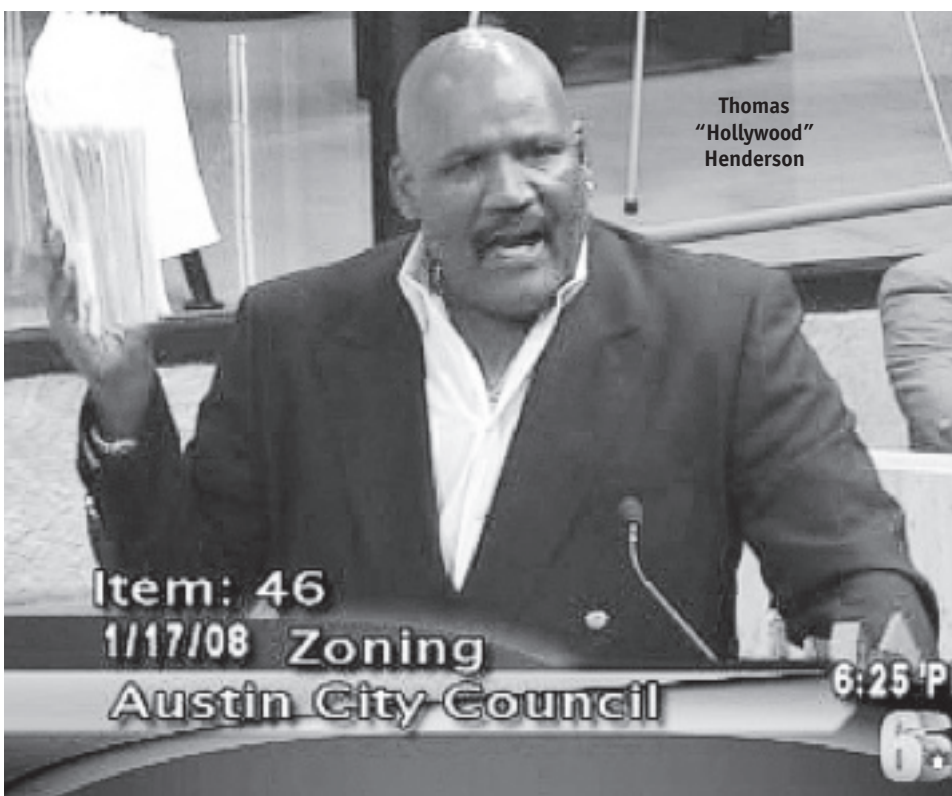
Enter Henderson. Following the commission decision, the grizzled gridiron vet and Lotto Texas winner, who has a homestead and owns Eastside lots on Cotton Street, distributed an incendiary letter blasting "big government trying to control our Historically Black Community." The four-page screed defending "property rights" included a petition against the amendment, which Henderson submitted to council. At the Thursday hearing, Zoning staffer **Jerry Rusthoven** reported receiving "about 266 letters in opposition" to OCEAN's 45 or so in support.

Speakers in favor denigrated Henderson's petition, saying it was sent to the entire 78702 ZIP code – not all of which would be affected by the amendment – and was riddled with overstatement and oversimplification. OCEAN President **Rudolph Williams** didn't address

Henderson directly but spoke to the amendment's need, saying small single-family houses are being razed and "replaced with \$300,000 houses. ... The pressure to tear down those small houses because of the appraisal system and because of the taxes is just tremendous." Henderson defended his petition effort, saying he "probably would have got 800 if I would have put a return stamp on the envelope." Citing not-entirely-exclusive needs like increasing density and affordable housing and preserving the neighborhood's character and property values, he excoriated OCEAN for what he called its "clandestine meetings at the Carver Library," where the organization voted (narrowly, in his telling) to support the ordinance. Another speaker, saying she wasn't "hoodwinked or bamboozled" into signing Henderson's letter, declared, "I'm not a slave. ... Either you have a right to own property, or you are property."

Ultimately, the petitions and pitched rhetoric might not have even been needed; before the hearing even began, Mayor Pro Tem **Betty Dunkerley** said she "probably won't be supporting this" due to concerns "the impact is going to be too great." **Brewster McCracken** called the 2,300-square-foot option an "incredibly important part of the compromise." With the protracted 2006 squabbles over the McMansion Ordinance still fresh in their minds, the council members were visibly hesitant to revisit the issue, voting 7-0 to leave things just as they are.

Not one for winning graciously, following the amendment's defeat Henderson sent an all-capped e-mail to Williams announcing, among other things, "A COMMITTEE THAT MEETS AT THE CARVER LIBRARY DOES NOT HAVE THE RIGHT OR POWER TO PULL OFF WHAT YOU TRIED TO DO. THAT 7-0 VOTE WILL HOLD YOUR MONKEY ASS. YOUR LAST ARGUMENTS TO COUNCIL JUST CLARIFIED HOW OUT OF TOUCH AND STUPID YOU ARE." – *Wells Dunbar*



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City Still Cleaning Up Waller

Cleanup crews have removed the worst of a leak that coated **Waller Creek** with 4,000 gallons of fuel oil. But two weeks later, the city is still cleaning up and checking for injured or poisoned wildlife.

On Jan. 10, a water main in the alley between the **Littlefield Building** and the **Driskill Hotel** on Sixth Street poured into an underground storage tank containing an estimated 9,000 gallons of fuel oil. About half was flushed out and went directly into the storm sewer to be dumped into the creek. Luckily, this meant the oil was contained to a relatively small area. The city immediately called San Antonio-based **Eagle Construction and Environmental Services LP**, Austin's rapid remediation contractors. Municipal workers deployed floating skirted booms, basically flexible floating strips, at every intersection from Sixth Street to Cesar Chavez to block oil from reaching the sensitive wetlands near Lady Bird Lake. Under city instructions, the cleanup crew used hoses to suck up the heaviest deposits, then soaked the rest up with pads and sponges. No detergents or dispersal chemicals, which can also damage ecologically sensitive environments, were used.

But the cleanup is still ongoing. Recent heavy rains flushed out some oil that had been soaked up by the porous bedrock, and an oily sheen can still be seen around the Fourth Street bridge. **Stan Tindel**, an environmental compliance specialist for the city, said it's fortunate a similar leak hadn't happened before. "We didn't expect for this one to turn up, but with all of the relevant construction, this is the only one that's been encountered."

Like any waterway, Waller Creek is a home for wildlife. **Turtles** are regularly sighted on the stretch worst affected, and the creek is also an occasional home to **American coots** and **yellow-crowned night herons**. "The turtles stayed away and out of the oil. We've checked daily, and we haven't seen any dead or distressed wildlife," Tindel said. The city plans to keep checking until at least the end of the month, however.

Part of the problem is that the tank is thought to be almost a century old, and it's still unclear to what building or business it was originally attached. Oddly enough, the spill isn't considered a regulation-enforcement problem. That's because underground fuel-oil tanks, which are commonly used to store heating oil for homes in colder parts of the country, are still exempt from federal Environmental Protection Agency and state regulations if the oil is meant for consumption on-site.

— Richard Whittaker



The aftermath of a fuel oil spill in Waller Creek

RICHARD WHITTAKER

newsdesk

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NINE-DAY MONTH

It seems the state wants to cram in a lot of public education about the risk from stalkers at the end of the month. On Wednesday, Jan. 23, first lady **Anita Perry** and Rep. **Valinda Bolton**, D-Austin, proclaimed January 2008 the first-ever **Stalking Awareness Month** in Texas.

Which sort of prompts the question: If they wanted to make this Stalking Awareness Month, wouldn't it have been a good idea to do it, say, before the beginning of the month, rather than with nine days to go? Especially since it coincides with **National Stalking Awareness Month**, which has been going since 2004. — Richard Whittaker
Posted Monday, Jan. 21, on the Chronicle News blog, austinchronicle.com/newsdesk.



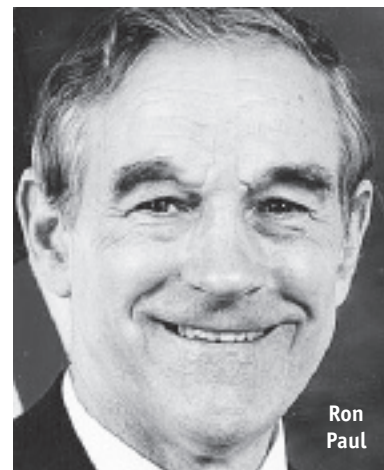
ELECTION NOTES

► Good news for **Ron Paul** fans: The Libertarian-friendly Republican presidential hopeful from Texas is the party's No. 5 candidate in terms of delegates. He currently has six convention pledges (four from Nevada, two from Iowa). This means, going into the Florida primaries, he's ahead of Rudy Giuliani, who only has two. Two other GOP contenders have dropped out. Rep. Duncan Hunter, who won the Republican Party of Texas presidential straw poll last September, has abandoned the race and his sole Wyoming delegate. Citing his failure "to gain traction in conservative states," he said he would return to Congress to concentrate on the 2008 Defense Appropriations Bill. And on Tuesday, former U.S. senator from Tennessee and lobbyist Fred Thompson also withdrew. Running a distant fourth with eight delegates, Thompson said, "I hope that my country and my party have benefited from our having made this effort."

— Richard Whittaker

► A concerned citizen named Mike Conwell contacted the *Chronicle* as we were going to press and said while working as a Travis County poll worker in the November 2007 election he encountered several voters who thought they were registered to vote but instead had been purged from the rolls. This led him to audit records at the **Travis Co. Tax Office**, and he believes that as many as 1,400 active voters may have been **improperly removed from the rolls** shortly after casting ballots in recent elections. The *Chronicle* wishes to emphasize that we have not had a chance to review Conwell's research or get a response from Travis Co. officials, but even if Conwell is wrong, it still doesn't hurt to confirm your voter registration. The easiest way to do so is by going to www.traviscountytax.org/showVoterSearch.do. Or you can call 854-9473. If you received a new voter-registration card within the past couple of months, you're OK. If you are not registered and want to vote in the March 4 primaries, you have until Feb. 4 to get signed up (also by going to that website or calling the above phone number).

— Lee Nichols



Ron Paul

CROSS-BORDER CRAZINESS

Frankenfence, pollution, and racists, oh my!



The federal government has won the latest round in the U.S.-Mexico border's **Frankenfence** battle. On Monday, Jan. 14, U.S. District Judge **Alia Moses Ludlum** ordered the city of **Eagle Pass, Texas**, "to 'surrender' 233 acres of city-owned land" to Uncle Sam for fence construction, according to the Associated Press. "The **Justice Department** sued the municipality for access to the land. ... The government had warned the city, which opposes the fence, it would sue under **eminent domain** laws to secure access to the property, declaring it is 'taking' the property for 180 days," reports AP, adding, "The Justice Department is expected to file 102 lawsuits against landowners for access to property the **Border Patrol** and **Army Corps of Engineers** want to survey to decide where to put border fencing or other barriers." According to Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, the government filed a dozen of those suits last Friday against landowners in Cameron County, of which Brownsville is the county seat.

The strongest opposition to the 700 miles of fence planned for the Texas portion of the U.S.-Mexico border has been east of Eagle Pass in the Rio Grande Valley, which has a history of particularly close ties to its sister cities and towns on the Mexican side of the border, and is home to multiple sensitive ecological areas the wall is slated to run right through.

Also on the environmental front, the **Ciudad Juárez-El Paso** area hasn't been a clean-air oasis in decades, but post-North American Free Trade Agreement, the region's air has been even more polluted, thanks mostly to an increased number of factories, or *maquiladoras*, and vehicle traffic, especially from big rigs loaded with goods destined for both sides of the Rio Grande. This is nothing unique among border sister cities. The real news is that the "municipal administration of [Juárez] Mayor **José Reyes Ferriz** has drafted a set of goals to attack" air pollution, reports Frontera NorteSur, an online border news site based at New

Mexico State University. At a Nov. 8 meeting in Sunland Park, N.M., **Hector Sandoval**, director of Juárez's ecology department, "laid out 13 **clean air policy goals** established by the Reyes administration. Highlights of the strategy include installing four air quality monitoring stations, requiring air emissions stickers on private vehicles, conducting inspections of private businesses, promoting a car-pooling lane on the heavily-traveled, international Bridge of the Americas, and bringing the municipal environmental ordinance up to date," reports Frontera NorteSur. Now, whether Juárez will actually follow through on any of this is an entirely different story. For more on the plan, see www.nmsu.edu/~frontera; check out "The Hightower Report," p.27, for unrelated NAFTA commentary.

Finally, here's some immigration-related info that shouldn't fly under Austinites' radar. The **American Renaissance Conference**, put on by *American Renaissance* magazine, which Google Directory describes as "A conservative monthly publication [promoting] a variety of white racial positions," will take place Feb. 22-24. The conference website (www.amren.com/conference/2008/index.html) certainly lends credence to Google's description: "In all parts of the world, whites are afraid to speak out in their own interests. Racial differences in IQ, the costs of 'diversity,' the challenges of non-white immigration - politicians and the media dare not discuss what these things mean for whites and their civilization." The biannual event is booked at the Crowne Plaza Dulles Airport Hotel in Herndon, Va., and activists are busy making plans to protest the gathering outside the hotel all day Saturday, Feb. 23, starting around 9:30am. Up for a trip to Herndon? Shoot an e-mail to soloagent1@yahoo.com, the address of protest organizer **Marco Del Fuego**, a member of **Resistance and Solidarity**, a self-described "DC-based collective opposing racism, fascism and the cruelties perpetrated by the capitalist system." — Cheryl Smith

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Seaholm East

What future for Green?

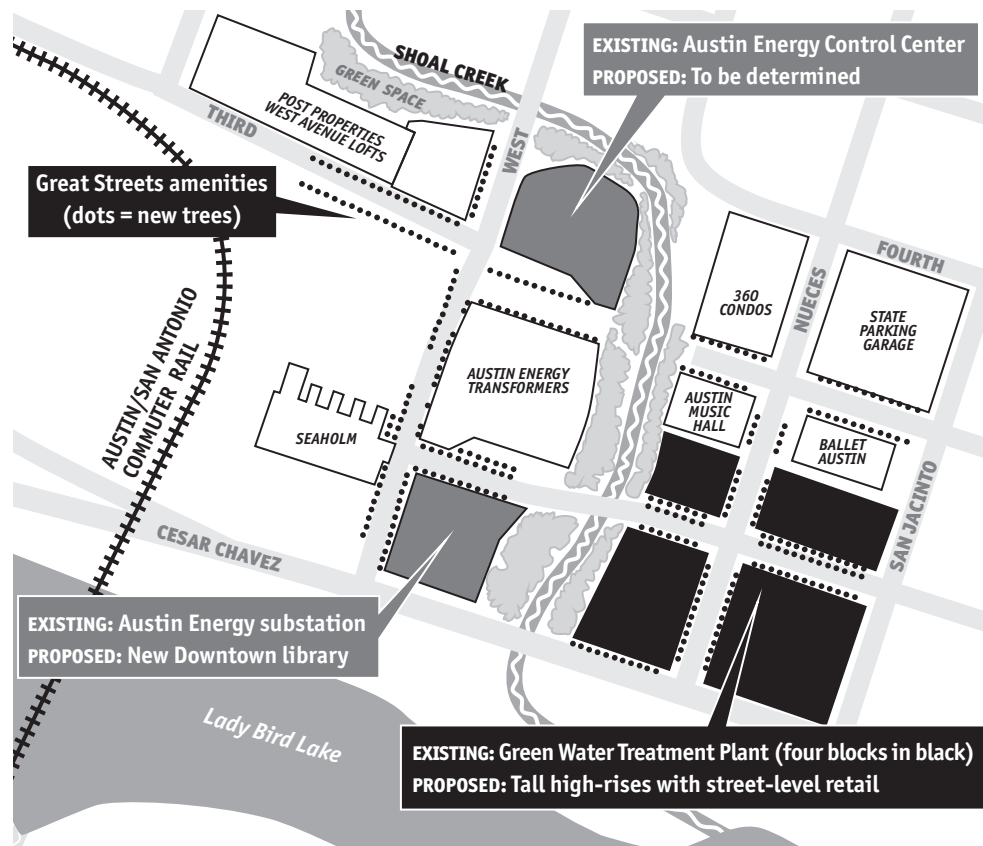
In anticipation of issuing requests for proposals from development teams in February, City Council has drafted a resolution establishing its “**guiding vision and policy principles**” for two large city-owned tracts of land in the Seaholm east redevelopment district: 1) the 4.5-acre site of the decommissioned **Green Water Treatment Plant** and 2) neighboring parcels that house **Austin Energy** structures. The resolution officially reserves the south substation site, which faces Lady Bird Lake, for a **new central public library**.

The resolution reiterates relevant council policy and goals, including: Downtown revitalization, the Downtown master plan, completing the Second Street retail corridor, and connecting to Seaholm proper. For the library site, the resolution specifies a stand-alone building, an analysis of best-practice design and construction methods, and “the inclusion of a public process in the city’s selection of the best design.” All proposals should include integrated parking structures – preferably owned by the public, with net parking revenues earmarked to fund transit and trails. A key goal, of course: growing the city’s tax base by selling the land for redevelopment in a manner that “achieves other community values.”

Some activists question whether a sell-off of citizen-owned land isn’t innately antithetical to protecting community values, and advocates have been begging council members to require affordable housing at Green. Most sympathetic has been Council Member **Jennifer Kim**. “Personally, I would like to see designs that preserve green space,” she said recently, “as well as provide homes and a quality day care that are affordable to Austin families.”

The resolution does explicitly establish that 40% of property-tax proceeds “go [to] the **Austin Housing Trust Fund** to be spent to provide affordable housing in the urban core,” which in theory could mean as much as \$1 million annually. Projected future revenues could also be bonded to create a larger pot of money for affordable housing now. Housing advocate **Heather Way** recently expressed the hope that, if affordable housing is not required on-site at Green, council would dedicate a portion of its sale proceeds upfront for the purchase of other Downtown tracts.

Instead, council proposes that Green sale proceeds would cover direct project costs. The multimillion-dollar infrastructure costs anticipated include decommissioning and removing the Green plant, reconfiguring the sites, building new streets and a bridge over



Shoal Creek, and financing new parking structures. If there’s anything left over, it would be spent on “additional public amenities, to be identified” on-site. — Katherine Gregor

To see the resolution, check for the related item on the Jan. 31 council session agenda (to be posted online Jan. 25), unless delayed.

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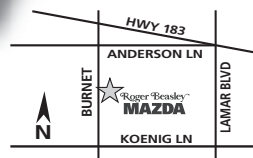
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HAPPENINGS

For more events, see Community Listings, p.66.

THURSDAY 24

LIVING IN A PORN CULTURE: HOW PORNOGRAPHY SHAPES OUR POLITICAL & PERSONAL LIVES A presentation from feminist scholars Gail Dines and Rebecca Whisnant. 7pm. Thompson Conference Center, Dean Keeton & Red River, 471-1990. Free. www.thirdcoastactivist.org.

FRIDAY 25

COMMUNITY TAX CENTERS KICK OFF FREE TAX SERVICES Starting today, nine area locations provide free tax-preparation services to income-qualifying households. See www.communitytaxcenters.org for locations, hours, and details on income qualifications. Rep. Lloyd Doggett speaks. 10am. Foundation Communities, 3036 S. First #200. Free.

UT SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS SUMMIT Find out how environmentally-friendly companies are creating economic opportunities at this two-day conference featuring business leaders and faculty from the McCombs School of Business. Jan. 25-26. Fri., 7-11pm: Texas Union, 24th & Guadalupe. Sat., 8am-9pm: UT campus, McCombs School of Business. \$10-50. www.utsummit.com.

SATURDAY 26

BIG BEND LETTER-WRITING PARTIES Write TxDOT and ask it to reconsider its plans to build a truck corridor through Big Bend National Park, or call 800/517-4652 to protest. 1-3pm. Jo's Coffee: 1300 S. Congress, 242 W. Second. www.stopthetrucks.org.

HARRY BELAFONTE delivers the Live the Dream keynote address to conclude the Austin Area Heritage Council's MLK events, accompanied by a performance from Sweet Honey in the Rock. 6:30-8:30pm. Riverbend Centre, 4214 Capital of TX Hwy. N., 327-9416. \$25 (\$15, hearing impaired), online and at Mitchie's Gallery, 6406 N. I-35 #2800. www.mlkcelebration.com.

SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATION SERVICES PROVIDER FAIR invites parents to learn about free weekend and afterschool tutoring services (at program centers or at home) available to students of Austin schools that have not met the Adequate Yearly Progress requirements under the No Child Left Behind law. Sat., Jan. 26, 9:30am-noon. Delco Center, 4601 Pecan Brook, 414-0012. www.austinisd.org.

SUNDAY 27

PUBLIC AFFAIRS FORUM: Special guest Leslie McCulloch speaks on past and present efforts to create a cabinet-level U.S. Department of Peace. 11:30am-12:30pm. Free. First Unitarian Universalist Church, 4700 Grover, 452-6168. www.austinuu.org.

TUESDAY 29

PHILANTHROPY DAY LUNCHEON The Association of Fundraising Professionals hosts this annual luncheon to honor those who've had the most positive impact over the last year on the quality of life in



Council will decide during its Jan. 31 meeting whether to designate the Henry Colley House at 718 Norwalk in the Deep Eddy neighborhood as a historic landmark. The home, built around 1909, was originally owned by former slave Henry Colley – who reportedly bought it from former Texas Gov. Elisha Pease's widow, Lucadia Pease. Although city staff concluded there is "insufficient information to justify a designation as a historic landmark" – noting the current owner would like to relocate the home to a parcel of family property in Liberty Hill – a supermajority of the Historic Landmark Commission voted late last year to approve the designation. The Colley House – owned by the family of William and Evie Hays since the 1940s – is arguably the best-known of the neighborhood's older homes and serves as both a symbol of and link to the neighborhood's original fabric and feel, which the construction of large custom homes is consuming.

– Jordan Smith

Central Texas. 11:30am-1pm. Hilton Downtown, 500 E. Fourth. \$75 (\$60, AFP member). www.afpaustin.org.

TOWN HALL MEETING: CITY WEBSITE REDESIGN The first of six meetings inviting input on the city's websites. 6pm. Austin City Hall, 301 W. Second, 974-2260. www.ci.austin.tx.us/austingo.

WEDNESDAY 30

ARTIST INFO MEETING: BRAZOS STREETSCAPE PROJECT Take a tour of the area, listen to a presentation from the Austin Public Works project manager overseeing the streetscape project, and find out how artists can participate. 7-8pm. International Center of Austin, 201 E. Second, 974-9314. www.cityofaustin.org/aipp.

CENTRAL TEXAS GROWTH SUMMIT Sen. Kirk Watson leads a presentation on regional trends likely to affect Central Texans in the future. Register online. 11am-1:30pm. Hilton Hotel Downtown, 500 E. Fourth, 494-2548. \$60. www.bizjournals.com/austin.

THURSDAY 31

COME BACK TO GARRISON UT reopens Garrison Hall with the Institute for Historical Studies. Faculty discuss such topics as: Torture, Past and Present; Rewriting the Vietnam War: New Evidence From the

Johnson Library; The Second World War in Global Perspective; and Jesus at the Movies, The Silent Era. 10am-5:30pm, Garrison Hall; 4-7pm reception at the UT Tower; free. 7pm dinner, \$65. Full schedule: www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/history/comeback/schedule/.

FIGHT PROPOSED NUCLEAR PLANTS IN TEXAS This presentation from Nuclear Free Texas features information about two new plants proposed for Texas. 8pm. MonkeyWrench Books, 110 E. North Loop, 407-6925. www.nukefreetexas.org.

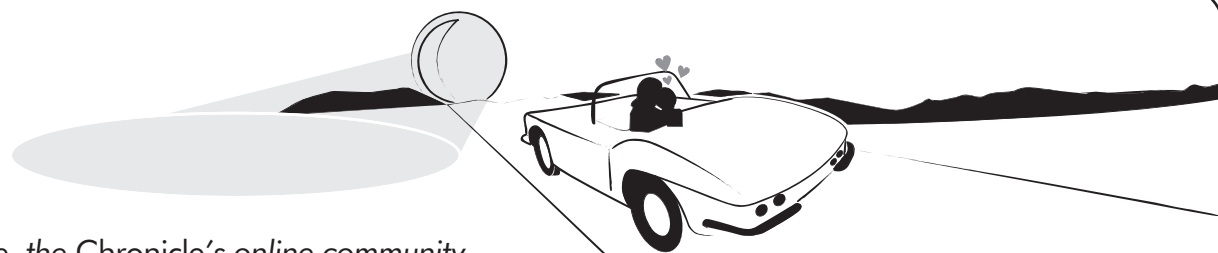
ONGOING

REVEALING CAPITOL TREASURES The Capitol Visitors Center's newest exhibit features artifacts found during archaeological digs on the Capitol grounds, historic artwork, and more. Through Jan. 27. 112 E. 11th, 305-8400. www.texascapitolvisitorscenter.com.

TEXAS GROW HOME DESIGN COMPETITION EXHIBIT showcases the 160 designs submitted by architects, affordable-housing developers, policy leaders, and Hurricane Rita survivors in the Texas Grow competition. Three winning designs will be built and sold with interest-free mortgage loans to Hurricane Rita survivors. Winners will be announced Thu., Jan. 31, noon, in the Capitol ground-floor rotunda. Jan. 25-31. Texas Capitol. www.capitol.state.tx.us.

FIND A MATE IN '08

Start your new year right by turning onto Lovers Lane, the Chronicle's online community for hooking up with real people from the Austin area. On Lovers Lane you can read profiles, look at pictures, and listen to voice greetings from people right here in Austin – absolutely free. You can also place your own profile, upload pictures, and record a voice greeting for free. You could be meeting new, interesting people right now. Check out Lovers Lane at austinchronicle.com/loverslane. Plus, if you place a profile with a picture before 5pm Monday, Feb. 4, you could win a \$150 gift certificate to TABU!



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THE HIGHTOWER REPORT

BY JIM HIGHTOWER

FACTS FOR ACTION ON HEALTH CARE

Widely reported fact No. 1: Our country faces a growing health-care crisis that leaves 47 million Americans with no health insurance – an increase of 7 million people since the year 2000.

Little-reported related fact: The health-care crisis not only affects the uninsured but also the growing number of insured families that find themselves paying more and more money for policies that deliver less and less care. Out-of-pocket costs for health coverage are skyrocketing – some 61 million Americans are now in families that will spend more than 10% of their incomes on medical costs this year, according to a recent report by Families USA, a nonpartisan advocacy group. That's a jump of nearly 20 million people since 2000, and the vast majority of them has insurance. More astonishing is the finding that nearly 18 million Americans are in families now paying more than 25% of their incomes on health costs.

Widely reported fact No. 2: Credit-card debt continues to pile upon the backs of American families, and there's now a worrisome surge in the number of serious delinquencies and defaults.

Little-reported related fact: More and more financially squeezed families have been paying their ever-rising health-care bills with their credit cards.

These interrelated facts explain why American voters are telling pollsters and politicians that access to affordable health care is their No. 1 domestic concern in this year's elections. Not only does a large majority want the federal government to guarantee every American has health coverage, but 60% of the people say they are willing to pay higher taxes to get it done.

For information and action on health-care reform, call Families USA: 202/628-3030.

PAYING THE PRICE FOR NAFTA

New Year's Day is normally considered a harbinger of hope, but this new year dawned as a day of dread for hundreds of thousands of small farmers just to the south of our border with Mexico.

Their unease is the product of their real-life experience with the North American Free Trade Agreement – the corporate-generated trade scam that Mexico's ruling elite had promised would be a boon for that country's rural people. The promised boon was a bust. Fifteen years after NAFTA was approved, some 3 million Mexicans have lost their farms or their farm jobs, 19 million more Mexicans have been added to the country's poverty rolls, and millions have had to leave their homeland and cross into the U.S. to try to lift their families from abject poverty. Of the 400,000 Mexican people who migrate to our country each year, 80% are from rural areas.

NAFTA did have one safety valve in it, however. Corn and beans – which are economically and culturally the two most important Mexican crops – were protected for 15 years from a deluge of exports that would otherwise have come from subsidized corporate farms in the U.S. On Jan. 1, that protection expired, and the full corporate arrogance of NAFTA is about to come down on the remaining small farmers of Mexico.

Corn and beans have been both a staple dish and an essential part of Mexico's identity since the Aztecs. Now, Mexicans will be made dependent on Cargill, ConAgra, and other U.S. exporters for these basics. Many more Mexican farms and farm jobs will be lost – and additional hundreds of thousands of Mexican people will have no choice but to head north.

If we are ever to deal with the waves of illegal Mexican immigrants in our country, we must stop looking down at the hordes of desperate people crossing over – and instead start looking up at the corporate elites in both countries. It's their insider, self-serving deals like NAFTA that are causing this mass displacement.

For more information on Jim Hightower's work – and to subscribe to his award-winning monthly newsletter, The Hightower Lowdown – visit www.jimhightower.com.

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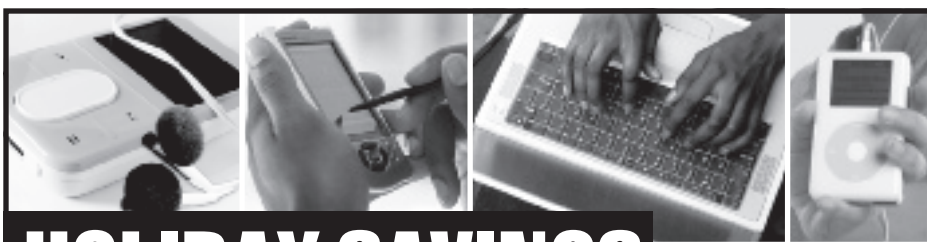
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Looking for 'Real' Democrats

A report from the endorsement circus

BY LEE NICHOLS

Unless you've been living under a rock for the past few months, you might have noticed: There's an election coming up. But you might not yet have realized there will be names on the ballot other than Clinton, Obama, Huckabee, and McCain. The primaries are coming to Texas March 4 (early voting runs Feb. 19-29), and the Texas politicking is just hitting full stride; battle lines are being drawn and endorsements declared.

Unlike the rest of Red Texas, the dominant Travis County party is of course the Democrats. Last week, seven Democratic clubs held a four-hour clusterfu ... er, forum, bringing together almost every candidate who will be seen on the spring ballot. Six of the clubs handed out endorsements at the end of the night. It wasn't exactly a foolproof process: Each candidate made a one-minute opening statement, followed by two questions, asked by rotating clubs selected at random. An even deeper weakness is the loose membership of some of the clubs – interested parties could pay dues that night and instantly become voting members of a particular caucus, which leads to understandable charges of candidates mobilizing supporters to stack the votes (see "Election 2004: Endorse-o-rama!" March 5, 2004).

However poor a method of picking favorites, the evening was great for something else: sound bites and catfights. While a variety of issues crucial to Travis Co. and Texas was raised, these are the party primaries, so one issue bubbled repeatedly to the surface only of importance to the blue side of the ballot: loyalty to the Democratic Party. At this particular junction in Texas history, this is no mere pettiness. Written off as a joke only two election cycles ago, the Dems clawed their way back to relevance in 2004 and 2006, taking back three fairly conservative House districts here in Travis and coming within five of a House majority. On this night, any candidate who ever dared stray from the flock got his or her nose bloodied.

Foremost among the targets was seven-term state Rep. Dawnna Dukes, whose District 46 covers East and Northeast Austin. She's drawn the ire of local Dems by her apparently unwavering loyalty to Republican dictator – excuse me, speaker of the House – Tom Craddick. And because of that, she has also drawn a challenger, 27-year-old lawyer Brian Thompson, who moved to Austin in 2002 and the Eastside in 2006. Dukes has steadfastly insisted that her votes to keep Craddick in the speakership – votes that have to some degree thwarted bipartisan hopes of removing the autocratic Midland Republican from power – were necessary for precious committee assignments (most notably, Appropriations) and the advancement of bills benefiting her constituents.

"I believe that our leaders have an obligation to lead with a set of principles that cannot be sold to the highest bidder and that cannot be exchanged for committee memberships," Thompson told the crowd to loud applause. When Dukes took the stage, the Capital City Young Democrats asked if she would pledge not to vote for Craddick next year. "I will look at every person who is running for speaker of the House and make a decision in 2009 based on who will do the best job to help me represent the people of District 46. If the Democrats take over the House, that will be a Democrat." She also delivered impassioned speeches reminding Democrats that back in 2003, she was one of the Ardmore 51, who broke quorum to try to stop Republican re-districting, and about how she worries about her constituents' struggles for good schools and against garbage landfills.

The endorsers were not impressed – five of the six groups voting that night went for Thompson; the Austin Tejano Democrats did not endorse in the District 46 race. (Ultimately, it may not matter heavily: None of the five clubs is specifically African-American or even Eastside in orientation.)



Similar spats took place in races for Travis Co. Precinct 3 commissioner and constable and the 353rd and 427th District Court races. Incumbent Precinct 3 Constable Richard McCain charged that challenger Robert Eller is a closet Republican who took campaign money from former state rep and current Craddick parliamentarian Terry Keel (Eller's current campaign finance reports do not show any contributions from Keel). "If he wants to be a Democrat, we welcome him back over, but don't run against incumbents." Eller, a 22-year county employee, admitted that in 2000 he worked for a Republican friend's constable campaign but denied that he's a Keel crony and said he has "voted for the people who were best for the job. ... I may be naive in the workings of politics, but I'm not naive on the workings of the constable's office."

Scott Ozmun, 353rd District Court candidate, pointed out that his opponent, Madeleine Connor, ran for the 299th District Court as a Republican (Connor did not attend the forum). And apparently no sin was too old: Another fight flared when 427th

Court candidate Karyl Anderson Krug was asked why she voted in the Republican primary in 1998. She said she couldn't remember for certain, but perhaps it was to vote for then-Republican Judge Julie Kocurek (who has since turned Dem). When someone yelled that Kocurek didn't take the bench until 2000, Krug replied, "That is Mr. [Jim] Coronado's campaign operative, so thank you for that, and by the way, Mr. Coronado is not really a judge, but we won't go into that." "Please do!" the audience member yelled. Krug angrily fired back, "Oh, I'd love to!" but the moderator cut off the exchange. (Coronado, the Travis Co. Criminal District Court magistrate, bills himself as "Judge Jim Coronado" in campaign literature – possibly skirting judicial ethics standards.)

The loyalty question might have counted for something in those races – neither Eller, Connor, nor Krug picked up a single endorsement.

Precinct 3 commissioner candidate Karen Huber, vying to take on GOP incumbent Gerald Daugherty, was apparently

continued on p.32



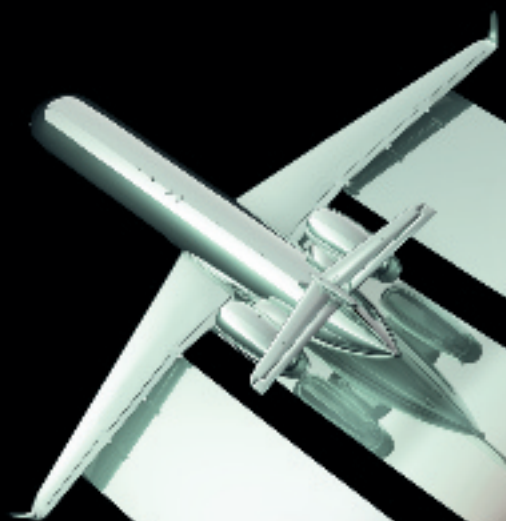
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Dukes Under Siege

District 46 race pits veteran incumbent vs. newcomer Thompson

BY RICHARD WHITTAKER

For nearly 13 years, Rep. Dawnna Dukes has been a fixture in East Austin Democratic politics. But now she faces angry Democratic criticism over her tactical support for House Speaker Tom Craddick and for failing to deliver real results to her district and a primary challenger in the form of attorney Brian Thompson. "If the narrative from the Dukes campaign is that, 'I did this for my district; I supported Craddick so I could get on the committees I need to be on to bring something home,' well, what has she done?" asks Thompson.

Dukes says she's not surprised that she faces a primary opponent, having heard rumors of a search for a candidate well before Thompson announced his candidacy. "There were a handful of people," she said, "most of them outside my district, looking for a challenger against me. So that's no secret." These unnamed opponents, she added in a conversation last week, argue "that an individual should vote their conscience or what they think is best for their district. But in reality, if you do that, then you get a primary challenger."

Thompson, who currently sits on the Austin Human Rights Commission, calls his campaign a response from a district that has seen little from Dukes, either in the form of investment shepherded its way or in essential programs protected. "I'd heard rumors that there was some anger in the community over her voting record," he said. "I'd also heard rumors about her general absenteeism, not just from the Capitol but the community itself."

Much of Thompson's most vocal early support originated from strongly anti-Craddick blogs like Burnt Orange Report. But BOR Editor Matt Glazer called the idea that Thompson's candidacy is a creation of the blogosphere "a silly notion. Anytime someone runs against a [longtime] incumbent, there has to be a lot of community support. HD 46 is no different."

Now both candidates are running as the "real" District 46 candidate, and criticism goes both ways. Thompson has been accused of being a newcomer and Dukes of fleeing to the suburbs. A native of Birmingham, Ala., first-generation college graduate Thompson came to Austin in 2002 to attend the University of Texas School of Law. In 2006, he moved to East Austin. Dukes notes that her family has lived in East Austin since the 1800s, though she now lives in Pflugerville. Referring to Thompson as "the one that's lived in the district 13 months," Dukes dismisses the issue. "I've lived in that district for 44 years and five months. End of subject." As for her move, she said, "The district is the district."

But the issue on which Thompson is targeting Dukes most strongly is her connection to Craddick and her failure to pass meaningful legislation. "It's not just her speaker vote," he said. "It's the fact that she failed to vote to fully fund [the Children's Health Insurance Program], that she voted against ethics reform time and

time again, that's she's voted against environmental bills." On the CHIP vote, Dukes points out that as a member of Appropriations, she supported the budget compromise that came out of committee – a standard floor strategy. The pattern is repeated for her green voting record: While the Texas League of Conservation Voters gave her an "A" on their "2007 Legislative Scorecard," she lost points for votes against four



Dawnna Dukes

JOHN ANDERSON

"Even when the House was Democratic, it was still either conservative or liberal. ... If you marginalize yourself on the floor, so you don't have that majority of relationships, you're not going to pass anything."

environmental proposals – all of which were proposed floor amendments to the budget.

Craddick's shadow falls on more than just this one race. After the brutal 80th session, in which Craddick fought off an attempt to remove him, many Republicans and Democrats face criticism and challenges over their connection to a speaker described by Republican Byron Cook as "bullying." Dukes has been saddled with the term "Craddick D," partly due to her membership in the Democrats for Reform. Group spokesman Colin Strother says the group is simply a loose affiliation of 15 House members, committed to pursuing a

progressive agenda, who signed off on a 16-point agenda to protect and extend vital services. "This doesn't have anything to do with Craddick and had some pretty ambitious and progressive goals," he said. The list was compiled, he said, because there had been no agenda set by the Democratic leadership.

But due to the support several of its members showed for Craddick during the unsuccessful challenge by Jim Pitts and later in the session, they have been tagged as Craddick Ds. Strother, who is also Dukes' campaign spokesman, called it "comparable to using a slur, whether it be a racial or sexual. It's a lowbrow way." Since no Democrat was running for speaker, he said, "The difference between Pitts



Brian Thompson

"If the narrative from the Dukes campaign is that, 'I did this for my district; I supported Craddick so I could get on the committees I need to be on to bring something home,' well, what has she done?"

and Craddick is different right-wingers blocking legislation." Still, several other members of the group have since distanced themselves; District 45's Patrick Rose went from seconding Craddick's speaker nomination at the opening of the last session to disavowing him on the floor by sine die.

Dukes describes her tactics, including her de facto support for Craddick, as essential to building working relationships and getting a strong voice in powerful committees, like the budget-building House Appropriations Committee on which she sits. This, she argues, is the only realistic way to fight back against

even greater cuts in vital services like CHIP. Calling the selection of floor votes to use against her "cherry-picking," Dukes argued that this ignores the battles where regulation is derailed on procedural motions and the intricate deals struck in committee. "Even when the House was Democratic, it was still either conservative or liberal," she said. Taking radical postures may appeal to primary voters, but "if you marginalize yourself on the floor, so you don't have that majority of relationships, you're not going to pass anything." Even now, she says, she would not rule out backing Craddick as speaker again next session.

Thompson accepts that explaining the sometimes esoteric workings of the Lege will take a lot of block-walking. "We're going to get out on the ground and explain to voters who don't know the harm that having someone like Tom Craddick as speaker and having someone that supports Tom Craddick as speaker as representative does for this community," he said.

But for a rookie candidate running against a popular seven-term incumbent, Thompson's campaign has gained traction. At a group endorsement meeting at the AFL-CIO building on Jan. 18, he received official backing from six Austin-area Democratic groups, including the South and Southwest Austin Democrats and Austin Tejano Democrats. (See "Looking for 'Real' Democrats," p.28.) Dukes, on the other hand, has earned the support of the influential Austin Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO), an umbrella group of local unions. There has also been one surprise, out-of-town endorsement for Thompson: Democratic state Rep. Lon Burnam of Fort Worth, who called his support for Thompson "a clear statement that a vote for Tom Craddick is not only bad for your district, but it is also un-Democratic." Burnam is often a lone wolf on the House floor, and his stance in opposing "Craddick-crats" is simple. He believes that the deals that the Craddick Ds struck did not justify keeping Craddick and have borne poor results. "Just because they got incremental changes in the law doesn't mean they're really representing the people," he said. Dukes responded sardonically. "Lon Burnam? Who? You never know what he's going to do."

Thus far, Dukes has out-raised and outspent Thompson. In the semiannual financial reports the Dukes campaign filed on Jan. 16, Dukes had \$51,761 cash in hand, compared to Thompson's \$11,272, which includes a \$5,056 loan of his own money. (There's a separate controversy brewing over Dukes' insufficient accounting of campaign fund expenditures.) Thompson's biggest donation was \$500; Dukes has received several large donations from industrial political action committees, including the Craddick-connected HillCo PAC. Dukes pointed out that many Democrats, including Valinda Bolton, took HillCo cash. But after the \$25,000 it gave Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst, the next three biggest donations were \$10,000 each to Dukes and her fellow Democrats for Reform Kino Flores and Kevin Bailey. All three face primary challenges – Bailey from Armando Walle, a former staff member for U.S. Rep. Gene Green, and Flores from educator Sandra Rodriguez. All three face the same accusation that Thompson levels against Dukes: "If you sell your soul to the devil," he said, "you need something to show for it." ■



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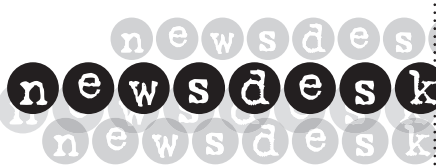
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- * CAPITAL AREA ASIAN AMERICAN
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- * NORTH BY NORTHWEST DEMOCRATS
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more convincing. Opponent Albert Gonzales attacked her for being a lifelong Republican until this election, but Huber described herself as a “zealot convert” who had been raised in a Republican family. “I just thought I was Republican,” she said. As she began to get involved in political issues, “I began to realize my core values were Democratic.” Huber is running as an environmentalist devoted to protecting the Hill Country – in recent years she’s been quite visible in those battles – and she got the nod from the Texas Environmental Democrats and the Capital Area Asian American Democrats, while Gonzales was favored by the Austin Tejano Democrats and Southwest Austin Democrats (of which he is the president).

Now comes the drive to primary day: Endorsements, name ID, and money will all clash. The results in many races are anything but predetermined.

In the constable race for Precinct 1, Willie Joe Madison racked up more endorsements Wednesday evening, but Danny Thomas has bigger name ID as a former Austin City Council member. (Janie Serna is also on the ballot.) For Precinct 2, Adan Ballesteros easily took more endorsements over Paul Labuda, but Ballesteros reportedly had a troubled employment history with the Department of Public Safety – ending in a lawsuit – so that may shadow his campaign. For Travis Co. Democratic Party chair, Andy Brown gives a better speech, but Fidel Acevedo won the endorsement of the very active South Austin Democrats.

And then there are the highest-profile races:

It would appear that the Congressional District 10 race is breaking toward Dan Grant – at least to observers in Travis County, which has the strongest influence in the Democratic primary. But without

any news organizations taking polls, it’s hard to determine how the money, celebrity, and Houston connections of trial lawyer and former *Texas Justice* TV star Larry Joe Doherty are playing at the other end of the district. Dems of every stripe – urban, suburban, and rural – will have to decide which of the two is more electable against the cash and incumbency of Republican Michael McCaul.

The next Travis Co. district attorney will be determined on March 4 – since there’s no Republican entrant – but who will it be? Gary Cobb and Rick Reed would seem to have an uphill struggle against the cash and political experience of Mindy Montford – but Montford will have to fight against what might be the biggest hammer of all, the endorsement of retiring DA Ronnie Earle for Rosemary Lehmborg.

Realistically, the tax assessor-collector race will be decided on that date, too, as conventional wisdom doesn’t give Republican Don Zimmerman a chance. But just getting to March 4 has already turned into a bloodbath, as Glen Maxey’s challenge to 16-year incumbent Nelda Wells Spears has caused a huge rift in the county party, with the loyalists that Maxey built up during his 12-year tenure as a state representative arguing that the office needs revitalization, while others (most notably, former tax assessor and county Judge Bill Aleshire) stand by an incumbent who has been successful by most measures of the office. Minority issues are no small factor: In addition to lawmaking success, Maxey will forever be remembered as Texas’ first openly gay legislator, while those standing by Spears are appalled at the thought of turning out a black female incumbent.

Get ready: February is gonna be intense. ■

Endorsements Who’s Zooming Who?

Here’s a selection of announced endorsements in Travis County Democratic primary races.

Endorsing groups (see key below)		Other notable endorsements
Congressional District 10		
Dan Grant	1 3 4 5 6 8	Ted Ankrum
Larry Joe Doherty		Barbara Ann Radnowsky, Richard Morrison
Travis Co. Commissioner, Precinct 3		
Albert Gonzales	2 5	
Karen Huber	1 3	
Travis Co. District Attorney		
Rosemary Lehmborg	1 3 7	Ronnie Earle, John Sharp
Mindy Montford		Austin Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO)
Gary Cobb	2 5	
Rick Reed		
Travis Co. Tax Assessor-Collector and Voter Registrar		
Glen Maxey	3 6 8	
Nelda Wells Spears	5 7	Austin Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO)
State House, District 46		
Dawna Dukes		Austin Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO)
Brian Thompson	1 3 4 5 6	Lon Burnam (D-Fort Worth) Texas Progressive Alliance
98th District Court Judge		
Rhonda Hurley	7	Austin Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO)
Andy Hathcock	5 6 8	
Robert D. Ettinger		
Judge, County Court at Law No. 8		
Carlos Barrera	2	
John Lipscombe	3 4 5 6 7 8	Austin Central Labor Council (AFL-CIO)
Key/Endorsing Groups:	4) Capital Area Progressive Democrats	
1) Texas Environmental Democrats	5) Southwest Austin Democrats	
2) Austin Tejano Democrats	6) South Austin Democrats	
3) Capital Area Asian American Democrats	7) West Austin Democrats	
	8) Latinos for Texas	

OTHER CONTESTED DEMOCRATIC RACES

Travis Co. Constable, Precinct 3

Richard McCain*
Robert Eller

Travis Co. Constable, Precinct 1

Willie Joe Madison
Danny Thomas
Janie Serna

Travis Co. Constable, Precinct 2

Adan Ballesteros
Paul Labuda

Travis Co. Constable, Precinct 4

Maria Canchola*
Alonso “Al” Reyes

353rd District Court Judge

Scott Ozmun
Madeleine Connor

427th District Court Judge

Jim Coronado
Karyl Anderson Krug

Travis Co. Democratic Party Chair

Andy Brown
Fidel “Ace” Acevedo

*= incumbent

The Early Money Race

Money can’t buy votes – but it sure can buy a lot of TV time.

The latter is already in play in the district attorney’s race, a short-notice, high-speed contest born of District Attorney Ronnie Earle’s mid-December announcement that he would not seek re-election.

While most other candidates for Travis County’s elected offices have been on the fundraising circuit for the last six to eight months, pity the poor DA hopefuls who have only a matter of weeks to put together economic stimulus plans to get themselves known and make themselves viable candidates – the campaign equivalent of a reality-TV series.

First out of the chute with television ads was Mindy Montford, one of four of Earle’s deputies jockeying for the high-profile office. Her Jan. 15 campaign finance reports show she raised \$45,550 between Dec. 19 and 31. She reportedly bought \$50,000 worth of TV time, which put her image and campaign message of “change” in heavy Central Texas rotation. Montford is blessed with strong ties to the tithing business lobby. Her father, John Montford, a former state senator and conservative West Texas Democrat who presided over the powerful Senate Finance Committee, is now the chief lobbyist for AT&T. Her campaign filings report \$10,000 apiece from her father and stepmother, plus another \$10,000 donation from former Gov. Dolph Briscoe. A trust fund run by another former governor, Mark White, gave Montford \$1,000, while former mayor-turned-lobbyist Bruce Todd kicked in a relatively frugal \$500. Montford’s campaign treasurer is Junior Leaguer and Austin Community Foundation leader MariBen Ramsey.

Next up on TV will likely be Rosemary Lehmborg, Earle’s longtime top deputy and his endorsed candidate. A latecomer to the race, Lehmborg still raised \$35,500 in the few days remaining before the Dec. 31 cutoff for this reporting cycle. Most of her contributions came from family members; other donors included former Comptroller John Sharp, who gave \$1,000. Lehmborg’s first major fundraising effort kicks off next week. Financially speaking, her late entry into the race does not bode well for fellow candidate Gary Cobb. Lehmborg is expected to siphon a good chunk of change from the same progressive and establishment Democrats that Cobb had hoped to tap. Like Montford, Lehmborg has a stellar campaign treasurer in bank founder and civic booster Bill McLellan.

Cobb is the only candidate without a financial report posted on the county’s website, but he told the *Austin American-Statesman* he had raised less than \$4,000 by the end of December. Cobb’s own campaign website bears a who’s who list of liberal and moderate supporters, but whether that support can translate into dollars and votes remains to be seen. His campaign treasurer is Capitol lobbyist and Travis County Healthcare District board Chair Carl Richie.

A fourth candidate, Rick Reed, is not expected to gain much financial traction beyond the \$314 he’s reported raising so far.

In another closely watched county contest, fundraising records in the tax assessor’s Democratic primary race show incumbent Nelda Wells Spears on top, with \$47,925 collected at year’s end. After expenditures totaling nearly \$40,000, she has \$8,183 in cash on hand. Her opponent, former Austin state Rep. Glen Maxey, reported raising \$20,544, spending a little more than \$14,000, and having \$6,023 in cash at the end of

the year. His contributors include Austin developers Larry Warshaw (\$2,500) and Perry Lorenz (\$1,000).

Spears’ supporters had initially feared that Maxey’s campaign would be partially funded by attorneys of an Austin law firm seeking to take control of the county’s multimillion-dollar delinquent tax-collection business. Spears has steadfastly fought against farming out one of the county’s biggest revenue generators to a private collection firm. Now she has the support of Dale Linebarger, the founder of the firm that has long lusted for the part of the county’s business. Linebarger, who last year sold the firm to some of the younger lawyers there, contributed \$1,000 to Spears’ campaign, along with a glowing letter praising her skills. “I unequivocally support you in your reelection campaign,” he wrote.

Linebarger’s gesture hardly closes the book on the firm’s county privatization efforts. One partner at the firm – former County Attorney Ken Oden – has vowed to continue his pursuit of the county’s delinquent tax-collection operation. Toward that end, Spears’ supporters are keeping a close eye on a political action committee that formed in July – Progressive Action PAC, to which Oden has written a \$10,000 check. A similar Oden-backed PAC played a prominent role in securing the 2006 re-election defeat of former county Commissioner Karen Sonleitner, an outspoken opponent of Oden’s privatization campaign.

At the state level, Rep. Dawna Dukes is the only local candidate to face opposition in the Democratic primary. Newbie challenger Brian Thompson reported raising \$11,272, more than \$5,000 of which is his own money. During the same time period, Dukes raised \$73,972, with a good share coming from the usual business PACs. – Amy Smith

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This year's event also features more than 150 panels on topics ranging from "Kill Your Mouse: Kinetic Computing Arrives Main Stage" to "Top Ten Lessons Learned in E-Commerce." Read more at sxsw.com/interactive.

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Asarco's El Paso smelter has contaminated the air and land for far too long and should not reopen.



Faces Against Asarco

Over 90% of the more than 10,000 public comments received by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality during the latest comment period were against Asarco reopening.

Governor Rick Perry appoints individuals to the TCEQ (MC 100, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087, (p) 512-239-5500, (f) 512-239-5533), whose three Commissioners will make the decision on Asarco's permit application #20345.

Please contact Governor Rick Perry (P.O. Box 12428, Austin, TX 78711, 1-800-252-9600, (f) 512-463-1849), and ask him to use his influence over his TCEQ appointments to deny Asarco's permit application #20345.

The science is done. Asarco's permit application #20345 if approved by TCEQ will allow the annual emission of 7,560 tons of pollutants each year in the form of Sulfur Dioxide, Particulates, Lead, and Arsenic.

Administrative Judges from the State Office of Administrative Hearings have already heard the arguments and concluded that Asarco should not be allowed to reopen because of its pollution potential and their dismal environmental compliance record. Their report states, "A staff member experienced heaviness in the chest, periodic increases in heart rate, sulfur odor and tastes, and general feelings of discomfort... consistent with the... respiratory illnesses that sulfur dioxide exposure can produce." (p. 91, http://shapleigh.org/system/reporting_document/file/191/582-05-0593-pfd.pdf or Google Shapleigh Asarco Files). Asarco was fined \$20 million by the EPA for illegally burning hazardous waste from 1992 to 1997 (New York Times, 10/11/06, "Copper Plant Illegally Burned Hazardous Waste, E.P.A. Says." (<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/10/11/us/11toxic.html?ex=1318219200&en=3ee634faa2197f28&ei=5088&partner=rssnyt&emc=rss> or Google New York Times Hazardous Waste).

Asarco only measured contaminants from three of the 103 emission points. Even so, Sulfur Dioxide emissions were double what they had been allowed. Nitrogen Oxide emissions were at 2 1/2 times the allowable levels. The smelter

mitted 11 times the authorized levels of Carbon Monoxide and its toxic Arsenic and Lead emissions were exponentially higher than permitted (<http://www.ci-el-paso.tx.us/asarco.asp>, or http://shapleigh.org/system/reporting_document/file/191/582-05-0593-pfd.pdf or Google El Paso Asarco /ideo).

If Asarco reopens, "El Paso would potentially have the distinction of being home to the facility with the HIGHEST LEVEL OF LEAD EMISSIONS IN THE UNITED STATES (capitalization added)"...Asarco would emit 12 TIMES the sulfur

dioxide and DOUBLE the particulates of the next highest El Paso emitter. http://www.ci-el-paso.tx.us/_documents/article%20-%20Why%20Asarco%20-%20longer%20version%20for%20website.pdf

Other industry in El Paso is relatively clean. Asarco, in a dubious class all by itself, should not reopen.

El Paso is out of compliance with the EPA on particulate emissions. Asarco's contamination of tons of particulates into the air per year will put El Paso even further in violation. Good employers will locate elsewhere rather than subject their employees to all that Asarco air contamination. Significantly more jobs will be lost than the few provided by Asarco.

Many prominent people are against Asarco reopening, including City of El Paso Mayor John Cook and the City Council, builder and member of the University of Texas System Board of Regents Woody Hunt, State Senator Eliot Shapleigh, and US Congressman and Chair of the House Intelligence Committee Sylvestre Reyes ("Reyes: Don't permit Asarco to reopen," July 28, 2007; <http://elpasotimes.typepad.com/capitol/2007/06/reyes-to-teeq-t.html> or Google Reyes Asarco).

Numerous officials in New Mexico and Mexico have come out against Asarco, to protect the health and economic well being of their residents (<http://newspapertree.com/politics/1450-2-countries-3-cities-take-stand-against-asarco-asarco-fights-back> or Google 2 Countries 3 Cities Against Asarco). We deserve no less from Governor Perry. Please contact Governor Rick Perry today at the address and phone/fax numbers above, and ask him to help stop Asarco's permit application #20345. Thank you!

If you can, please also come to the final hearing at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (12100 Park 35 Circle, Austin, TX 78753 512-239-1000), on February 13th, 2008 at 1 PM.

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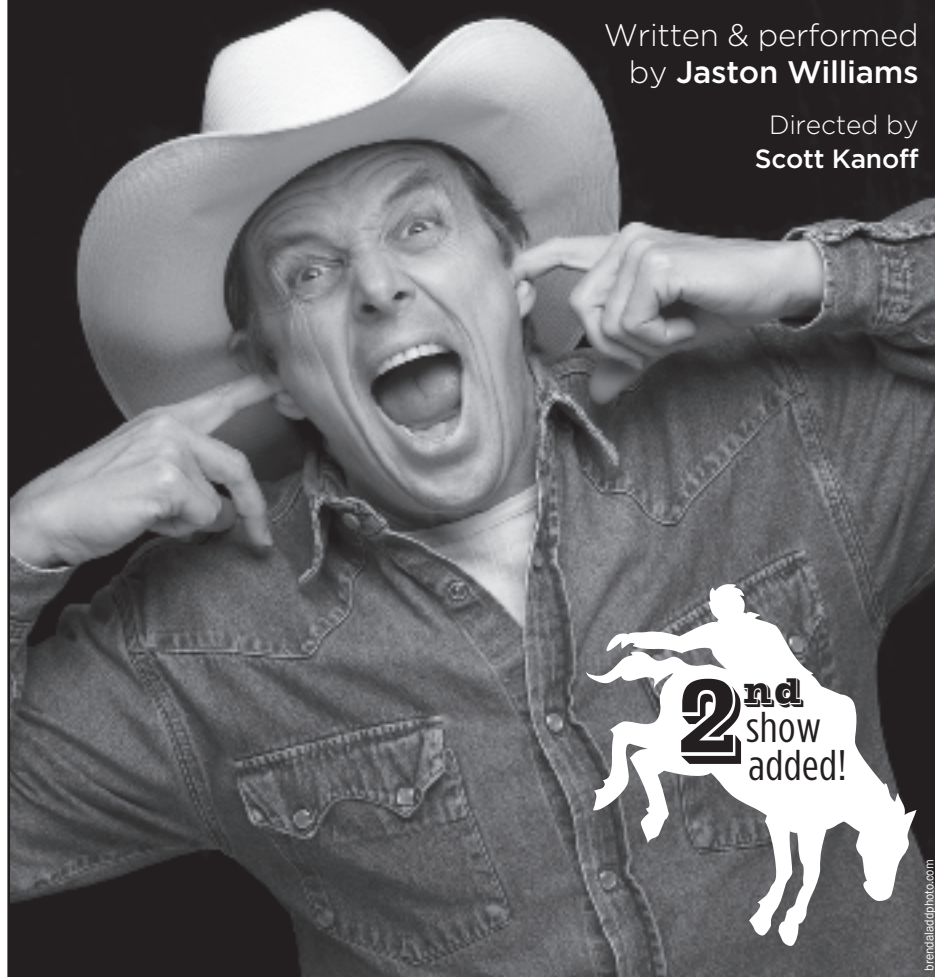
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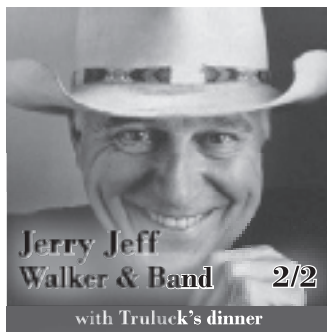
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'Fritz Haeg: Attack on the Front Lawn' Activism disguised as art

Unless you're a moron, morally blind, or possibly a Republican, it's easy to see, in both the microcosm and the macrocosm, that as a nation and a people we are becoming more and more isolated from one another and from the world. While the party line focuses on diversity and acceptance, anyone who has ever hung around the halls of a high school can tell you that those who differ from the norm are ridiculed and shut out. We don't know our neighbors, and if we do, we probably don't like them. And despite the sniggling innuendos of conservative editorialists, anyone with half a brain and the ability to sense changes in the weather knew the world was getting a lot hotter 10 and even 15 years ago. We're in denial, folks. We have been for a long time, and no landscape is more barren than the landscape of denial.

Thank the powers that be, then, for individuals like Fritz Haeg. An architect/artist/teacher, Haeg began his attack on denial July 4, 2005, by launching his Edible Estates project, replacing a residential front lawn in Salina, Kan., the geographical center of the U.S., with a vegetable garden. Since then, Haeg has done the same in Los Angeles, New Jersey, and London, and this coming March, in conjunction with an exhibition at Arthouse opening this week, Haeg will plant his fifth such garden in front of a residence in the Austin area.

"Why are we attacking lawns?" asks Arthouse curator Elizabeth Dunbar. "Why not? They suck up lots of water, and there's chemical runoff. And there are a host of other issues associated with having a front lawn. For the most part, the lawn is nothing more than a decorative space

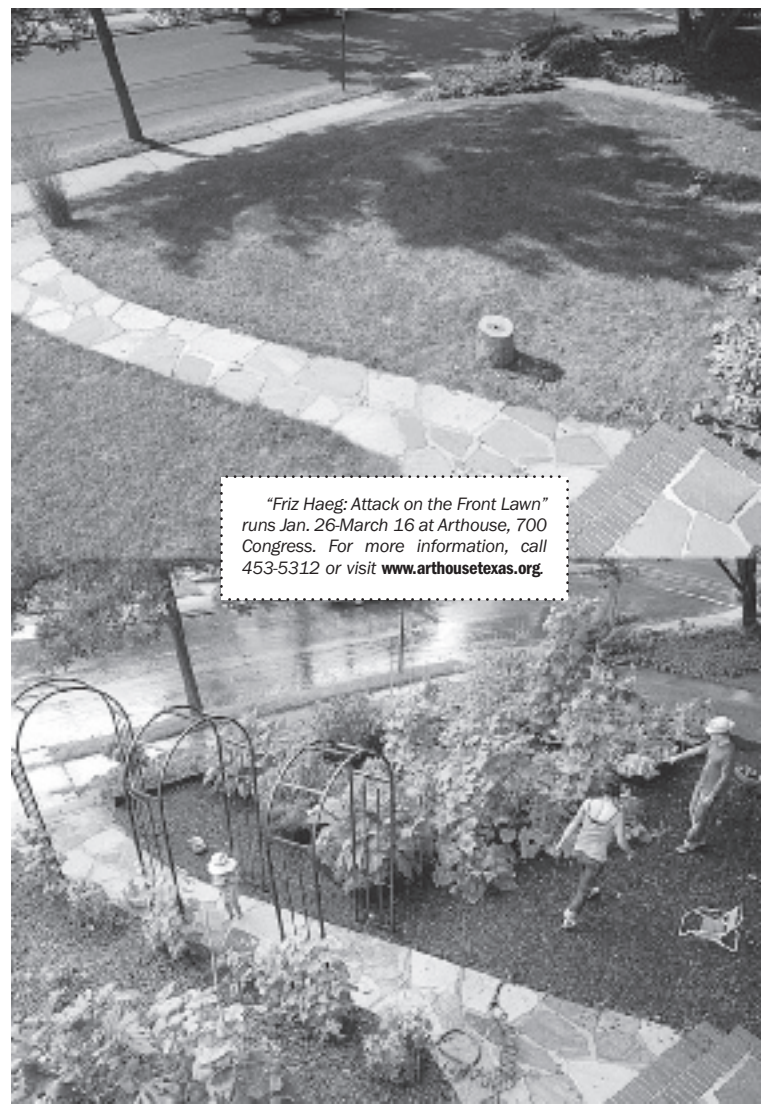
with no real function other than just sitting there and sometimes being pretty. A lot of times it isn't even that.

"Edible gardens weren't really considered something to hide until fairly recently. Fritz is reversing that trend by putting them in the front yard, making them functional, making them aesthetic, and also making them sites of conversation and social interaction. At the same time, he's asking us to think about where our food comes from. Most of our produce is shipped something like 1,500 miles before it gets to us in stores. Fritz wants to inspire people to become more involved in thinking about where their food comes from and considering what kind of environmental and sociological impacts food production has on our world today.

"In a way, Fritz's project is social activism wrapped in the guise of art. I think he really expands the definition of what art can be. Fritz also fits in with many other artists who are working today in what is called relational aesthetics, whose artworks consist of working within communities and involving themselves in facilitating social interactions."

In addition to the Arthouse exhibition, which will feature photographic and video documentation from the Edible Estates project, a series of workshops titled How to Eat Austin will be held every Saturday, 3-5pm, in a large geodesic tent inside Arthouse's main gallery space. The workshops will focus on subjects such as composting, planting, and caring for a garden; cooking the food you grow; and possibilities for selling what you grow. Haeg will attend the workshop on Jan. 26, as well as return to Austin for another of the workshops and, of course, the planting of the garden itself.

— Barry Pineo



"Fritz Haeg: Attack on the Front Lawn" runs Jan. 26-March 16 at Arthouse, 700 Congress. For more information, call 453-5312 or visit www.arthousetexas.org.



'Portrait of Allison' Kid pix

How long has it been since you've seen the world through the eyes of a child? The annual photography exhibition "Portrait of Allison," now in its fifth year, gives you the opportunity to see the world around Allison Elementary School through the eyes — make that the lenses — of the school's fifth- and sixth-grade photography students. The works in the show, which is up for one night only, are available for purchase, with all proceeds going directly to the individual students. Refreshments will be served, and music will be provided by DJ Sugar Bear. "Portrait of Allison" is on view Saturday, Jan. 26, 6-10pm, at the Austin Figurative Gallery, 301 Chicon Unit F. For more information, call 296-6624.

— Robert Faires

see.hear.speak.three They said 'yes and' and had a festival

Anyone paying any attention at all to the Austin comedy scene over the last couple of years couldn't help but notice ColdTowne. In 2006, it won the *Chronicle* "Best of Austin" Readers Poll award for Best Improv Group and in 2007 received the B. Iden Payne Award for Outstanding Improvisational Theatre Ensemble and the "Best of Austin" award for Best Comedy Troupe. While these accomplishments are impressive all on their own, they take on even greater significance when you consider that ColdTowne wasn't anywhere to be found in the Austin area in mid-2005. "We started out in New Orleans," says Michael Jastroch, one of the five people who officially make up ColdTowne, "and we kind of washed up here after the hurricane, which seems to be the story that's going to be perpetually written about us for the rest of our lives, no matter what."

While the ColdTowners, like so many local comedians, started out working wherever they could, they managed to quickly establish themselves in their own venue on Airport Boulevard and 48½ Street, right next to I Luv Video. "Opening our own space was something we all decided we wanted to do when we got here," says Jastroch. "Fortunately, Tami Nelson, who's in the group, lived here for a number of years before she moved to New Orleans, so we had contacts with the people that owned I Luv Video and also Spider House. They helped us out a lot in terms of finding the space and helping promote us. That's one of the reasons we stayed in Austin, because people are so eager to promote the arts. We opened the theatre a little over a year after we moved here, but we were doing events at the Space, that's now the theatre, before that."

One of the events they did was a little festival called see.hear.speak. Says Jastroch: "An underlying rule of improv is to 'yes and' each other. For instance, you say, 'Look; I have an apple,' and I'll say, 'Yes, and the apple is green.' That's one of the fundamental building blocks of an improv scene, which, in a metaphoric sense, translates to the rest of our lives." In the case of see.hear.speak., the ColdTowners yes-anded themselves into a popular comedy festival. "Someone said, 'Hey, let's do a special event,' and then we just kind of kept yes-anding each other and making it into a bigger thing, and eventually see.hear.speak. was born."

The festival, spread across three nights, breaks down into one night of "see" (comedy with video), one of "hear" (comedy with music), and one of "speak" (comedy in a solo format). This year, for the first time, the ColdTowners are flying in acts from around the country, including Jill Bernard, who'll perform in both "hear" and "speak." "In the improv world, Jill is kind of an icon," says Jastroch. "She's teaching a bunch of classes on Saturday [Jan. 26] during the day. Last year, that was a little fantasy dream we had of actually bringing in people we like to perform for an Austin audience. And to be able to actually pull it off this year is really exciting. And we're throwing a fairly large afterparty after 'speak.' Someone yes-anded and got a bunch of sponsors, so we'll have free food and probably some drink specials and all sorts of crazy stuff."

see.hear.speak.three runs Thursday-Saturday, Jan. 24-26, with shows at 8 and 10pm, at ColdTowne Theater, 4803-B Airport. For a complete listing of acts and events, visit www.coldtownetheater.com. And make sure you get your tickets early. Seating is extremely limited.

— B.P.

Jazzin' Up Catfish Row

After 70 years, Zach creates a 'Porgy and Bess' for Austin

BY GRAHAM REYNOLDS

Porgy and Bess is often considered America's first significant addition to the opera canon, the masterpiece of one of this country's greatest composers at the height of his artistic powers and popular success – a 3½-hour epic that is both accessible and sophisticated, satisfying but enigmatic. A love story set in a fictional tenement on the waterfront in Charleston, S.C., *Porgy and Bess* has found new audiences in each of the more than seven decades since its creation.

The star-studded audience at the show's Broadway premiere in 1935 was full of names we still recognize: Joan Crawford, Katharine Hepburn, Virgil Thomson, Ben Hecht, Jascha Heifetz, Paul Whiteman, and Condé Nast, to name a few. Todd Duncan and Anne Brown took the lead roles, and it helped make them stars. Due to the incredible cost required to keep the huge production open, the initial run closed after a respectable but unremarkable 124 performances. Just a few years later, though, the show was retooled and reopened to greater success, eventually leading to national and European tours and worldwide acclaim.

With each decade, the piece has been renewed and reborn. The Forties brought international recognition; the Fifties brought several key recordings of reinterpretations and the release of the Sidney Poitier film. In the 1970s, after decades of stubbornly ignoring it, the opera establishment finally accepted the work, with a full production by Houston Grand Opera, and in 1985, the Metropolitan Opera put its stamp of approval on the piece with its entry into their repertoire. Now, in the 2000s, *Porgy and Bess* meets the Zachary Scott Theatre Center, with Artistic Director Dave Steakley reinventing the work from a jazz/R&B perspective. Austin-based composer and orchestrator Greg Bolin is providing new instrumental and vocal arrangements, while music director Lyn Koenning provides additional music for this new, shortened version of the classic.

Of course, the story is not really so simple. *Porgy and Bess* has been surrounded by controversy throughout its life span, and any new production raises some of the same questions. For many people, these controversies are long resolved; for others, they may never be.

Accusations of Racism

Despite the accolades and hype associated with George Gershwin's score, *Porgy and Bess* encountered rockiness from the beginning. During the opera's development and after its premiere, accusations of racism arose around the piece. Actors refused to take parts in it, and prominent African-American voices wrote and spoke in protest against it.

Director Steakley explains that "original cast members had concerns that their characters played into a stereotype that African-Americans lived in poverty, took drugs, and solved their problems with fighting. At that time, there were very few positive depictions of African-Americans in plays or films, and those roles were generally restricted to house servants, tap-dancing entertainers, or low-life characters. When a community is working so hard to achieve equal rights, every artistic depiction before the people holding the power becomes very important in order to create positive change." Harold Cruse, professor of African-American studies at the University of Michigan, called *Porgy and Bess* "the most incongruous, contradictory cultural symbol ever created in the Western world."

All the primary creators were white: composer George Gershwin; his brother Ira, who contributed to the lyrics; DuBose Heyward, who wrote the original novel, *Porgy*, and most of the opera's libretto and lyrics; and his wife, Dorothy, who first adapted the novel to the stage. As almost all the characters and cast members were African-American, the question of cultural thievery and exploitation followed almost automatically.

continued on p.38

ROBERT FAIRES



GREG BOLIN NON-AUSTIN AUSTIN COMPOSER



Greg Bolin

In November, Greg Bolin was hired to do an unenviable task: reassess, edit, and rewrite a masterpiece, *Porgy and Bess*. And not only did Bolin have to work with George Gershwin's intimidating score; he also had to work with the signature reinterpretations of it by some of America's best known and highly skilled musical artists: Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald, Cleo Laine and Ray Charles, and Nina Simone, among others. To take all those artistic voices and visions and put them together into one work that retained the best of each while creating a cohesive larger whole is, at the least, a challenge. The end result would need to serve and support the narrative; rather than simply be a revue that skips around the decades and styles, Bolin's version had to capture a singular place and time.

The Zachary Scott Theatre Center found the right person for the job, as there is probably no composer in Austin better prepared for this particular assignment. Bolin's doctoral thesis was in opera, he has an interest in musicals, and while possessing a personal style in his composition, he is also accustomed to the submission of ego and relative invisibility of the job of orchestration. Bolin knew right away that this

wasn't a bullhorn for his personal signatures, that his voice would be subtle in the final product. He also understood that while Ray Charles' version of "Summertime" could be influential, the audience couldn't immediately recognize it as such. They needed to accept Porgy as Porgy, not as an iconic pop star. "The biggest thing that's tricky is, yes, we want to do this piece that takes these numbers and gives them a contemporary jazz or R&B or gospel [style]," Bolin notes. "That's terrific as long as you also keep an eye on how those things work into the piece dramatically." The reinterpretations did not have to tell a story; Bolin does.

Opera and musicals are not the same thing, and one does not easily become the other. Bolin asks the obvious first question: "How do you make an opera into a musical theatre piece like this? Because opera happens in slow motion – that's why it's 3½ hours long. If you read those lines between the songs, there would be something like 45 seconds of lines, then another song. When they're sung, that's six or seven minutes of music. That's why the opera is so huge."

"What I've basically done," Bolin explains, "is gone through and taken a look at the opera itself, a 3½-hour opera that's solid music, and it's difficult; it's seamless. It's hard

to say, 'Well, this is a number.' It's a lot more integrated that way, so I just started by taking the score and sort of dissecting it into what I thought was recitative and what I thought was a number. Then I just spent a good while making sure I understood where each song was falling in the dramatic context of the piece."

Bolin is a native of Montana, and much of his national network of connections stems from his roots there. His pieces have been performed from Buenos Aires to Japan, Chicago to Missoula, and now, with his re-setting of *Porgy and Bess*, Austin. Bolin landed in Austin to pursue his doctorate in composition, which he completed last year. Asked to describe his music – always a challenging question at best – Bolin offers: "I guess at its core, it's contemporary concert music, but that's probably a little misleading, because it's all informed by my other musical interests, including theatre and jazz. If Debussy and John Adams had a love child named Stephen Sondheim?" So, French impressionism, American minimalism, and the most sophisticated of recent Broadway composers. Clips of his pieces can be heard at www.gregbolin.com. Listen and welcome a new compositional voice to the Austin scene. You'll find that his description is not far off at all. – G.R.

DEATH AND THE KING'S HORSEMAN

BY WOLE SOYINKA

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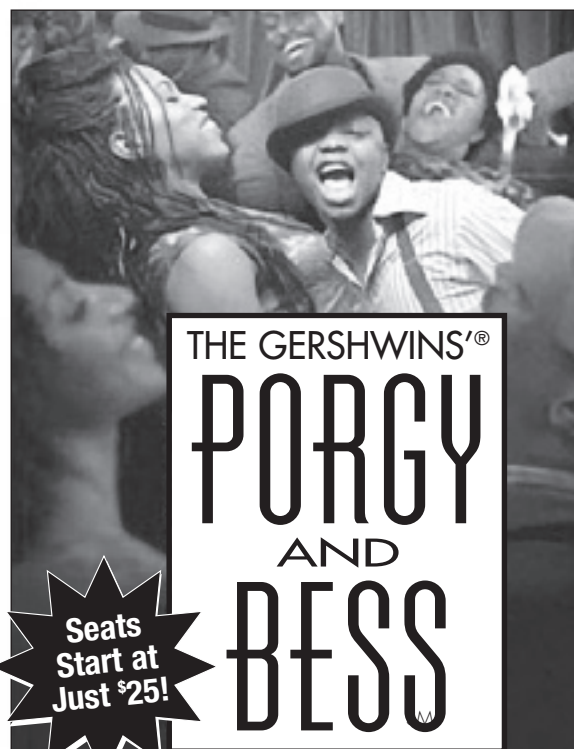
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Not all response to the work was negative, however, and some in the African-American community found promise and opportunity – and even progressive politics – in the piece. The opera brought African-American artists onto stages they had never been allowed to grace and in numbers never before seen. (Gershwin stipulated that the show couldn't be cast with white actors; he didn't want it to become a blackface minstrel show.) And in at least one example, the production forced a change in the segregationist policy for audience seating, starting with the National Theatre in Washington, D.C. As for the piece's social commentary, historian John Hope Franklin wrote, "[The drug dealer] Sportin' Life clowns but not for white audiences. Porgy's clowning is a deliberate frustration of white power. Porgy also plays Uncle Tom, but he is never servile and lives for no white master."

For better or worse, the questions of racism and racial politics will likely always live with *Porgy and Bess*. But even so, the opera's artistry continues to move and inspire audiences.

An Opera or Not?

The question of whether or not *Porgy and Bess* was truly an opera, as the creators called it, created a second controversy around the work. As Steakley puts it, "*Porgy and Bess* is a hybrid of musical theatre, folk songs, spirituals, Tin Pan Alley popular music, jazz, and opera. Because it is not 'pure' in its form, it is not considered by some to be an opera." After all, the initial production took place in a Broadway theatre, not in an opera hall. When the work was revived on Broadway in 1942, the operatic aspects were cut back and spoken dialogue was inserted between songs, making it more like a musical than an opera. (And that production was more of a success than the original, playing 286 performances and getting revived on Broadway twice more over the next two years.) Most major opera companies did not touch the piece for decades, and when

they did, it was considered a big deal. But the original version is a stage narrative, sung though, not with songs between spoken dialogue, traditionally considered the key difference between an opera and a musical. Additionally, classical Western opera singing style was applied, even with the songs based in other styles.

Gershwin realized that his work didn't fit into preconceived categories, explaining to *The New York Times* that "because *Porgy and Bess* deals with Negro life in America, it brings to the operatic form elements that have never before appeared in opera, and I have adapted my method to utilize the drama, the humor, the superstition, the religious fervor, the dancing, and the irrepressible high spirits of the race. If I have created a new form, which combines opera with theatre, this new form has come quite naturally out of the material."

From Opera to Musical Theatre

For the creators of the Zach Scott production, the issue is decided: Both Steakley and Bolin consider the original Gershwin *Porgy and Bess* to be an opera. Ironically and boldly, they are removing the operatic elements and transforming the work into a piece of musical theatre. For Steakley, this production is as rooted in famous interpretations of the music as the original Gershwin score: "In 1997, I directed a production of *Dreamgirls* for Zach at the Paramount Theatre, and after a performance, my friend Joe York said to me, 'You should really tackle *Porgy and Bess* next because you have assembled the talent to pull it off.' I was not very familiar with the opera, and even though I knew some of the music, I didn't know the story at all. So I started digging, and being a soul music fan, I was delighted to discover that Ray Charles and Cleo Laine had made a wonderful recording of *Porgy and Bess*. It became for me a perfect introduction to this beautiful score. Digging deeper, I discovered Nina Simone's moving recordings and the

wonderful recording made by Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong. These recordings became my window into this terrific music by George and Ira Gershwin. My dream was that we would create a version of *Porgy and Bess* that was inspired by these legendary recordings I have grown to love so much." Last November, he hired Greg Bolin to combine the original score and the recordings and create a new version of the piece that also held together on its own. (See "Greg Bolin: Non-Austin Austin Composer," p.36.)

Steakley's vision of a rescored version of the opera from a jazz/R&B angle is in line with his ongoing efforts to develop Zach into a theatre that stages ambitious projects not just exciting for Austin audiences but worthy of attention on the national theatre scene, shows such as *The Gospel at Colonus*, *Angels in America*, *The America Play*, *Jouet*, *The Laramie Project*, and *Keepin' It Weird*. But because this concept of *Porgy and Bess* originated at Zach, it has greater potential to draw interest from around the country. The project has already earned Zach a \$40,000 American Masterpieces grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and more national attention may be coming.

Messing with a classic is always a risky proposition, as these creators realize. Revisions have been tried many times with *Porgy and Bess*, not always with satisfying results. But making a piece one's own is also a tool for revitalizing and personalizing a piece while preparing it for a new audience. Dave Steakley is Austin's most established and acclaimed director of musicals, Greg Bolin adds a powerful and intelligent musical voice, and the cast, featuring David Jennings and Marva Hicks in the title roles, is stellar. The opportunity to see this 20th century classic staged is rare. To see it created by this exceptional Austin team is a privilege. ■

Porgy and Bess runs Jan. 25-Feb. 3 – Wednesday-Friday, 7:30pm; Saturday, 2 & 7:30pm; Sunday, 2:30pm – at the Austin Music Hall, 208 Nueces. For more information, call 476-0541 or visit www.zachscott.com.

'PORGY AND BESS' A SELECT CHRONOLOGY

- 1925:** DuBose Heyward writes the novel *Porgy*.
- 1926:** George Gershwin reads *Porgy* and writes Heyward to ask about creating a musical version of it.
- 1927:** Dorothy Heyward adapts the novel into the play of the same name as a surprise to her husband. In October, the play opens on Broadway and runs 367 performances.
- 1935:** Renamed *Porgy and Bess*, the opera version premieres in New York, a collaboration among the Heywards, composer George Gershwin, and George's lyricist brother, Ira.
- 1942:** Producer Cheryl Crawford revives the opera for Broadway with the operatic score cut back and spoken lines from the Heywards' play inserted between songs. Etta Moten joins the revamped production as Bess but protests use of the word "nigger" in the libretto, refusing to sing it. With the full support and participation of Ira Gershwin, the word is removed from the text.
- 1943:** The Danish Royal Opera premieres the first of many overseas productions, a version in Danish with an all-white cast in Copenhagen on March 23, 1943. Despite the strong audience response, repeated and threatening warnings from the Nazis force it to close.
- 1952:** A European tour is developed starring William Warfield and Leontyne Price, with Cab Calloway as Sportin' Life. A second tour the next year adds a young Maya Angelou as Ruby.
- 1955:** The international touring version of *Porgy and Bess* becomes the first American theatre performance in the Soviet Union since the Bolshevik revolution.
- 1956:** Arranged by Russell Garcia and Duke Ellington, the second "complete" recording of the opera features jazz singers and musicians, including Mel Tormé and Frances Faye as Porgy and Bess, Johnny Hartman, Betty Roche, and the Duke Ellington Orchestra.
- 1957:** Russell Garcia continues his work on the piece, this time on a shortened "highlights" album featuring Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald.
- 1958:** Miles Davis, in collaboration with arranger and conductor Gil Evans, records an instrumental jazz album of *Porgy and Bess* interpretations.
- 1959:** Otto Preminger directs a truncated film version starring Sidney Poitier, who later regrets taking the role.
- 1976:** Ray Charles and Cleo Laine record *Porgy & Bess*, featuring highlights from the opera, this time with a more R&B tilt but including a 78-piece orchestra.
- 1976:** The Houston Grand Opera performs *Porgy and Bess*, the first major and influential classical opera company to do so.
- 1985:** The Metropolitan Opera adds *Porgy and Bess* to its repertoire, a final surrender by the opera establishment over whether the piece is an opera.
- 1993:** Acclaimed stage director Trevor Nunn's version of the "complete" *Porgy and Bess* is released on video, a distinct alternative to the heavily edited and adapted 1959 film version.
- 2008:** One of the flagships of Austin's bustling and internationally recognized theatre scene, the Zachary Scott Theatre Center, not only takes on *Porgy and Bess* but edits, adapts, and orchestrates its own version.



GEORGE GERSHWIN FROM THE ALLEY TO THE CONCERT HALL



George Gershwin

One of the most significant musical phenomena of the 20th century was the blurring of what had been the relatively distinct lines between popular culture and "high art." Owing in large part to the invention and spread of recording and duplication technologies, as well as the relative universality of public education, musical literacy and expertise was no longer the exclusive domain of a tiny wealthy elite. In the West, the sophistication of jazz had already started to confuse those lines, but the institutions of classical music still fell relatively secure in their exclusivity. Then in 1924 came Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, and the invasion

had begun in earnest. Gershwin was a Tin Pan Alley composer who wrote pop songs and didn't even have the background to orchestrate his own score. (This was done by another composer, Ferde Grofé.) Nonetheless, here Gershwin was, writing music for the concert hall and breaking the superficial physical barriers right along with the more substantial and subtle musical ones. By the time of his *Concerto in F*, Gershwin's skill set had evolved, and he orchestrated his own material from there on out. *Porgy and Bess* took this branch of his career to its grandest point.

Born in Brooklyn in 1898, Gershwin started his career on "the Alley" plugging other people's songs. But he quickly moved up the ladder, composing his own songs, then Broadway hits, Hollywood hits, and, of course, orchestral concert pieces, which led him to become the most powerful, recognized, imitated, and sought-after songwriter in the era of the Great American Song. Just a few of the standards he contributed to the repertoire include "I Got Rhythm," "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off," "'S Wonderful," "Summertime," "Somebody Loves Me," "Swanee," "Someone to Watch Over Me," "I Got Plenty o' Nuthin'," and "A Foggy Day." His most frequent lyrical partner was his brother Ira, but he collaborated with others throughout his career.

As with so many musical greats, Gershwin's career was cut tragically short. In 1937, the composer succumbed to either overwork, brain cancer, medical negligence, or some combination of the three (reports vary). But whatever the cause, he was gone. The July 19, 1937, issue of *Time* magazine reported, "Serious musicians joined pluggers and crooners to mourn the 38-year-old composer who had made the world sing his songs and who never, even in his most pretentious work, disdained the antic, impertinent data he had picked up in Tin Pan Alley." The world had lost a musical bridge-maker whose bridges are still in use today.

– G.R.

– G.R.

BROOKLYN WAS MINE

edited by Chris Knutsen and Valerie Steiker
Riverhead Trade, 232 pp., \$15 (paper)

The first time I went to Brooklyn was in 1995 and doesn't count – I spent one night in Williamsburg, which reminded me of Sesame Street. The second time, also Williamsburg, 1997, doesn't count either: At the time I had no inkling of the magnitude of the Brooklyn myth. The first time I really went to Brooklyn, I was reading – make that consumed by – Jonathan Lethem's *The*

Fortress of Solitude. I stayed in Prospect Heights but made a pilgrimage to Dean Street, took pictures, confirmed the existence of Pintchik's, and, unbelievably, saw the drummer for Holly Golightly get shaken down on a dark, leafy, brown-stoned street, just like the kid in the book does.

It's a place that pretty much demands to be understood literarily, whether the literature of choice is Walt Whitman's or Jay-Z's. "Brooklyn has become an idea, a symbol, and a contested one at that," writes Phillip Lopate in his

introduction to *Brooklyn Was Mine*; titled after a line from *Leaves of Grass*, this new collection of essays gathers some inheritors of the borough's writerly mantle to hold forth on that hallowed and embattled ground.

For all that, there's something prim about *Brooklyn Was Mine*. While its title implies contentiousness and claim-staking, aside from Lethem's "Ruckus Flatbush" – a very funny, dystopian disaster scene followed by a provocative apologia – and Lara Vapnyar's "I Hate Brighton Beach" – ambivalent and nuanced, title aside – most of the pieces are both smitten and

vaguely rootless. Quite a few are soft odes to mostly predictable things that make Brooklyn at once small-townish and mythical: its baseball diamonds, Prospect Park, its toxic sludge, Coney Island, its (relatively) open skies, its jarring mix of the majestic, the industrial, and the verdant.

Other pieces in the collection, such as Alexandra Styron's "A Sentimental Education" and Lawrence Osborne's "Riding in Red Hook," deploy place to negotiate personal history. But because all of Brooklyn, as Philip Dray writes

about the Williamsburg area in particular, "has an almost bottomless past," quirky histories of the borough's forgotten corners – Jennifer Egan's "Reading Lucy" (about a woman who worked at the Brooklyn Navy Yard during World War II), Emily Barton's "Eli Miller's Seltzer Delivery Service," and Elizabeth Gaffney's "Down the Manhole," about the excellence of Brooklyn's 19th century sewers – work best.

While the volume makes no claims of representation, the space where African-American Brooklyn should be is rather gaping, not to mention mysteri-

ous. The collection focuses heavily on early Eastern European immigrants, their descendants, and contemporary immigrants, for the most part skipping over the generations of U.S.-born African-Americans who undeniably and indelibly shaped the borough.

What's left, then, is the writing, which holds its own in Brooklyn's literary legacy. That these tales are masterful, elegant, and sweet makes it difficult to hold their slightness and occasional sentimentality against them. It must be said, however, that fewer mentions of the Kentile Floors sign wouldn't have hurt anyone.

– Cindy Widner



THE PULPWOOD QUEENS' TIARA-WEARING, BOOK-SHARING GUIDE TO LIFE

by Kathy L. Patrick
Grand Central Publishing, 334 pp., \$13.99 (paper)

So you've written a novel. That's the hard part, right? Well, next comes finding a publisher to throw gobs of cash at it. You're set! Uh, there's that sticky issue of readers. You see, your friendly neighborhood bookstore has lots of books. Lots and lots of books. Oodles and caboodles of books, books, books. Yours will be on the shelf. Over there in the corner. Way over there. Good luck, my writerly friend. Fantasize that your book is being tub-thumped by Oprah Winfrey. Better yet, imagine Kathy Patrick finds your scribbles and introduces you to her tiara-wearing friends. They'll be dressed in pink.

Meet the Pulpwood Queens and Patrick, Texas' answer to Oprah and perhaps just as important a name in the word biz. For the uninitiated, Patrick is a Kansas native who moved to East Texas and opened Beauty and the Book, a combo hair salon/bookstore that has taken on legendary status. Winfrey herself has even taken notice. A hairdresser-turned-publisher's-rep who was laid off when the number of independent bookstores

started tumbling in the onslaught of Amazon.com and the corporate bookstore chain, Patrick had the odd notion of melding two careers and then, for good measure, added the Pulpwood Queens, fun-filled book clubs spreading across the country and around the globe.

Patrick loves books, and now she's written one. It's not a masterpiece, but it's enough to make her fellow authors applaud. It tells of a shy girl from a dysfunctional family who learned to believe in herself and her dreams. A teacher introduced this shuddering waif to books, and she saw the light. Books and beauty parlors. Both are about community, Patrick tells us. Ring up Beauty and the Book (I did), and she'll explain all. You'll be convinced you've found the nicest, most vibrant person on the planet. The same earnest happiness glows from the pages of this memoir. Patrick wants you to turn off the television and read a good book. And she

gives you lists to guide the way. That and recipes, both for sticky, icky, gooey treats and for how to start up your own chapter of this book club on a mission. It may change your life, if not your hairstyle.

– Joe O'Connell

Kathy L. Patrick will appear at BookPeople (603 N. Lamar) on Wednesday, Jan. 30, at 7pm.



Love is in the Ear



LOVE IS A MIX TAPE

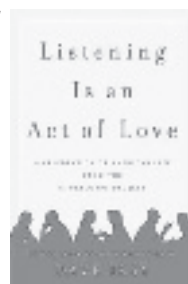
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Random House

Rob Sheffield, rock critic, *Rolling Stone* contributor, and BookPeople favorite, will be making a special appearance today at 5PM. His heartbreaking and hip memoir, *Love is a Mix Tape*, documents Sheffield's idyllic five-year marriage to his unforgettable wife Renee through songs on his personal mix tapes. Stitched together, the songs help to tell the story of their love, marriage and her tragic death. This touching story will strike a chord in anyone who has used songs to try to express the ineffable.

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StoryCorps is the largest oral history project in American history. It was founded on the belief that everyone has an important story to tell. Since 2003, StoryCorps has collected recorded stories from people all over America. Isay has garnered some of the most heartbreaking and poignant of those stories in his beautiful new book. Legendary radio producer and StoryCorps founder Dave Isay will be at BookPeople tonight at 7:30 PM to discuss his new book *Listening is an Act of Love*.



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AFTER A FASHION BY STEPHEN MACMILLAN MOSER

PARTY PIG Okay, it's true – I'm partying like I'm possessed these days, attending everything from the big glam events to the opening of a new check-cashing business in Hutto (just kidding). Last Saturday was the always-fab **Jingle Ball** (okay, I'm just going to have to get over the fact that very few people understand the term "black tie"), always so fun and completely agenda-free. I hung with my old friend **Andy Brown**, candidate for chair of the **Travis County Democratic Party**, as well as friends like **Gail Chovan**, **Evan Voyles**, and so many others. But primarily my attention was devoted to my friend and former Austinite **Mark Sullivan**, who called me from Houston at 5pm and slyly said, "I hope you're going to be at the same party I'm going to tonight." I was so excited to know he'd be here that I just about peed on myself. Mark's PR firm in Houston, **Studio Communications**, is doing the PR for Austin's **W Hotel**, so he'll be around more regularly. But since it was such

a special occasion, I orchestrated an awesome afterparty – shameless and unapologetic I rounded up a charming crew, each with his or her own special talent or contribution (said Mark, quoting from **Mommie Dearest**, "I might have known you'd know where to find the boys and the booze"). Well, duh. I think I made it home around 11am the next morning. Believe me, there's something innately trashy about arriving home in broad daylight – the festive outfit that was so fun at the club looks pretty tawdry by the light of day. I just pretend that I'm one of those movie stars who has to arrive at the Oscars completely decked out in evening wear at 3 in the afternoon. I wish I could say that this was an uncommon scenario, but, well, I'd be lying.



COURTESY OF CELESTINO COUTURE

A cream-colored silk gown made a splash on the runway of the Celestino Couture by Sergio Guadarrama collection, presented by St. Thomas Boutique.

THE FASHION TRACK The former **Vertigo Hats**, on Sixth Street across from the Driskill Hotel, is now **Hatbox: A Modern Haberdashery**, with a hot new website (www.hatbox.com) and a complete product line that



SEABROOK/JUICYTHIS.COM

Enthusiastic riders raise money while biking through glorious wildflower country at last year's Hill Country Ride for AIDS.

good. Imagine. The event was the kickoff party for the **Hill Country Ride**, which provides life-giving support for our neighbors with HIV/AIDS. And frankly, it's just about the only event I can think of where Lycra/spandex is not only for-

includes **Kangol**, **Resistol**, and **Borsalino of Italy**. Go ahead; try one on. You know you want to... Accessories designer **David Hall Hodges** is turning out some pretty cool work in his Dripping Springs studio. Using exotic skins like alligator, python, stingray, crocodile, or ostrich leg, he designs bracelets, women's belts and purses, and even a custom guitar strap. Drool over his work at www.dhdesign.com... *Teen Vogue* did a photo shoot at the **South Austin Museum of Popular Culture!**... The wonderful **Sage Salon** is back in its newly renovated space at 4111 Medical Pkwy. See their services at www.sagesalonaustin.com, and make an appointment, dammit!

given but encouraged. Hill Country Ride Director **David C. Smith** is an inspiration to the riders, and this year's ride is expected to raise more money than ever. The ride is April 26, and you can sign up or pledge support at www.hillcountryride.org... Last Sunday was the sponsor party for **Project Transition's** huge annual fundraiser, **Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?** With dinner parties spread across 20 Austin homes, this event is just about the coolest fundraiser I can think of. Sometimes the most desirable parties do not have an open guest list, so this year, I finagled and whined until I got invited to just the right party. I'll be sure and reveal all after it's over.

DOING GOOD It was not the usual crowd at **La Zona Rosa** last Thursday. These people were all perfect, healthy specimens out to do

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image by M. Confined

BY VIRGINIA B. WOOD

Over the past year I've heard from several people about their interactions with inspectors from the **Austin/Travis County Health & Human Services Department**. A few of the people who wrote were event planners or local food artisans, which was understandable, but what made me realize there was a column in the making was that some of the others were grocery store and farmers' market shoppers, members of church congregations, and even gallery owners. Some people contacted me about what they perceived to be an injustice at the hand of inspectors, but the gist of most of the correspondence was that people are aware of greater permit regulation enforcement efforts on the part of the Health Department and were curious about why this is happening now. So I had a conversation with **Shannon Jones**, assistant director of public health, to discuss this issue. We discussed the tremendous growth in the local food industry in recent years and the overall increase in the number of public events that include some kind of food service. (The department did 1,000 inspections of public events offering food in 2005 and 1,119 inspections in 2007.) Jones said that inspecting the safety and cleanliness of all food-service establishments and guarding the public against food-borne illness have always been the department's mandate. They do this primarily by issuing permits for food preparation locations, inspecting those locations on a regular basis, responding to complaints from the public, and doing research about events where food is being offered to the public, so they can check to make sure that necessary permits are in place. That last component is where most of my recent correspondents have gotten hung up – folks who wanted to know why their nonprofit benefit, annual church barbecue fundraiser, art show opening, or customer appreciation day party with refreshments suddenly needed a **temporary food-service permit** after operating safely and successfully without one, sometimes for years. Said Jones: "Public events that serve food have always required a temporary food-service permit and inspections, even if they've operated under the radar successfully for years without one. Once we know about the event, we are obligated to contact the organizers and educate them about the need for temporary permits and inspections." Jones also made the distinctions very clear – private events at your home, church, or place of business that serve food to your family and guests, congregation, or employees, are your own business and do not require a permit. Any event where open, unpackaged food will be *given or sold to the general public* does require a temporary food-service permit or proof of an existing permit. If there are multiple vendors serving food, each will need a permit or proof thereof. This is necessary to help the Health Department determine the source of any food-borne illness, should one arise. Permit fees vary depending on the number of days the event runs and should be built into the event budget during the planning stages to avoid unexpected last-minute costs. Jones shared another crucial piece of information: Health Department employees do research event calendars, articles, and advertisements in local print and online publications for notices about food products and events where food will be offered. This is simply a word to the wise – if you're sending out advertisements or public service announcements about a food-related event or giving interviews about the availability of a food product, it is a good idea to make sure your permits are in order first. Contact **Sabrina Vidaurri**, temporary event coordinator, at 972-5671, if you have questions about temporary food-service permit requirements or need an application.

MORIMOTO: THE NEW ART OF JAPANESE COOKING

by Masaharu Morimoto
DK Publishing, 272 pp., \$40
www.chefmorimoto.com

From a first glimpse of Morimoto-san on the old Japanese *Iron Chef* series, I knew he was the emperor of Japanese fusion cuisine: He's a classically trained traditional chef with total disregard for tradition, borrowing heavily from Japanese, Chinese, and Mediterranean components paired with French technique. His recipes are playful takes on established dishes and methods, incorporating 21st century artisanal ingredients. His training in sushi and *kaiseki* cuisine (a perfectly balanced meal composed of many small artistic plates) has polished his creative plating technique to a fine edge. These and many more talents of the amazing Morimoto are displayed for all to learn in his new cookbook.

He sets the stage admirably, describing traditions, definitions, and common misconceptions, while techniques such as slicing, curing, pickling, and many more are gorgeously photographed step-by-step. There are detailed descriptions of ingredients such as nori, dashi, and the like, but some of these pages are printed over a blinding horizontal pattern of earth tones (the book's designer should be whipped). The numerous photographs are of the highest food-porn quality, and all 125 of the recipes are well-written, easy to follow, and logical in progression.

When you examine some of the dishes, you begin to get a real feel for Morimoto's playful brilliance: raw tuna "pizza" on a flour tortilla; tempura with a Gorgonzola sauce; chips and guacamole, but with chips made from pounded-out snapper; seafood and white miso baked in orange shell; grilled onions stuffed with pancetta-wrapped scallop. This is food that will wow your friends, and it's easy to produce with Morimoto's guidance. – Mick Vann



WOMEN OF THE VINE: INSIDE THE WORLD OF WOMEN WHO MAKE, TASTE, AND ENJOY WINE

by Deborah Brenner
John Wiley & Sons, 256 pp., \$16.95 (paper)

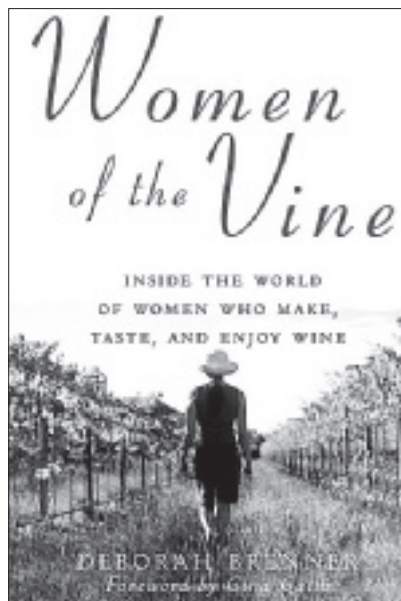
I had high expectations for this book when I first heard of it. With women taking an increasingly active part in an industry previously dominated by men, it seemed that the publication was indeed timely and would offer new insights into gender issues in the wine industry. Instead, Deborah Brenner's *Women of the Vine* left me a bit cold.

Through informal interviews, Brenner – a marketing executive-turned-wine label owner – portrays the success stories of a group of women in many aspects of the wine industry. She starts with a description of the wine-making process and defines winemakers' jobs clearly and concisely, painting a picture of the incredibly complex work that this job entails. The glossary at the end of the book will be useful to those unfamiliar with wine terminology. While most of the interviews are with winemakers, several are with aficionados such as Stephanie Browne, founder of Divas Uncorked, a wine group for African-American women, and top industry scholar Dr. Ann Noble, inventor of the Wine Aroma Wheel.

These women's stories of overcoming adversity, gender discrimination, and family tragedy are clearly meant to serve as inspiration à la Oprah. However, it is hard for me to believe that anyone with the last name Gallo would find it difficult to make it in the wine world. And the lack of geographical diversity is a disappointment. All of the women featured in the book are in the U.S. wine industry, and the winemakers are from some of California's most prestigious vineyards. Understandably, writing a comprehensive book of women in the industry would be daunting, but there are plenty of successful women in the global wine world such as Argentina's Susana Balbo, Sicily's Barbera sisters, and our very own Susan Auler – just to name a few – who deserve equal praise.

This book will be entertaining to beginning wine enthusiasts who want to learn more about the industry. To me, *Women of the Vine* is a "girly girl" book that reminds me of those annoying Kathy Womack paintings of upper-class women drinking wine on the veranda.

– Claudia Alarcón



As Food Editor Virginia Wood says, off with my head. There was a miscommunication between myself and **Kobrand**, the importers of the wonderful **Christian Moueix** wines I wrote about last week. They should be available widely, but they won't be in Austin until late April. Sad as I am about the delay, they are worth waiting for. I'm sorry for the mistake. – Wes Marshall

recently reviewed

CHAIN: BJ'S RESTAURANT & BREWHOUSE Beer snobs have been impressed with the selection of ales from this California-based chain. Don't skip the food, though: Try the creamy spinach and artichoke dip, the Santa Fe spring rolls, and the avocado egg rolls. 5207 Brodie #300, Sunset Valley, 512/892-3800. www.bjsbrewhouse.com.

ITALIAN: TRATTORIA LISINA The view of a busy kitchen makes us hungry: Homemade charcuterie cures, meats turn on the rotisserie, baked dishes and thin-crust pizzas emerge from a wood-fired oven, while the corps de cuisine toss pasta dishes with sauce. 13308 FM 150 W., Driftwood, 512/894-3111. www.trattorialisina.com.

EVENT MENU JAN. 26-FEB. 3

The **Blair House Inn** (100 W. Spoke Hill Dr., in Wimberley, 877/549-5450; www.blairhouseinn.com) has announced their **2008 Vintner Dinner Series**, with weekly events scheduled for January and February. Next up, the **Trincherio Family Estates** of Napa Valley present their wines with a five-course meal prepared by Executive Chef **Mark Malowski**. Dinner is \$159.03 per couple, all inclusive; reservations are necessary. Saturday, Jan. 26, 6:30pm.

The **Texas Conference on Organic Production Systems: Nourishing Agriculture** takes place next weekend at the Hilton Conference Center in College Station. The event is open to all aspiring or current farmers and gardeners and members of the public with an interest in sustainable agriculture and healthy eating. It will include educational seminars, farm tours, movie screenings, plus organic luncheons and dinners. For more info, or to register, call 979/836-3135 or see www.tofga.org. Friday-Sunday, Feb. 1-3. – V.B.W.

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PHOTOS BY JOHN ANDERSON

sausage (which I initially read from across the room to my horror as “horse-made sausage”), caramelized onions, roasted red tomatoes, and wilted fresh spinach (\$12). My husband went with the gnocchi with corn, chanterelle mushrooms, and sage (\$11). I started with a side Caesar salad (\$5), a dish I used to adore but which has become so ubiquitous, it seems to be included on all menus by law, where it rarely amounts to more than romaine overly dressed with vaguely cheesy, mayonnaise-based dressing. At Primizie, you’re treated to the pale interior leaves of romaine (usually not my favorite part) tossed with a delicate, olive-oil-based dressing and topped with pickled red onion, shavings of Parmesan, and Primizie crisps, their version of the necessary crouton. It was an ideal example of the care lavished on the most rudimentary dish at the osteria. Our entrées delighted both of us, as well. The sausage was fully flavored with fennel, and the accompanying vegetables created that delicious Italian trifecta of sausage, peppers, and onions. The bed of golden polenta on which the stew sat was perfectly textured and flavored. We were equally smitten with the gnocchi cooked to a lovely, fluffy texture. The crisp corn kernels provided a sweet and crunchy contrast to the dumplings. The entrées were accompanied by squares of a curious sort of bread that resembled a mildly herby tortilla more than anything. Despite the midday hour, we couldn’t resist a glass of wine each to go along with our lunches, a lovely Tiamo Sangiovese (\$7) and Bong Bong Shiraz (\$8) respectively. We just had to prolong the experience, so we perused the bakery case and picked a sample of the offerings including a pignoli cookie (75 cents), a citrus ricotta treat (75 cents), a brownie (\$1.50), and a lemon bar (\$1). A couple of cups of coffee and several shared nibbles later, we were perfectly satisfied.

Our second visit was on the aforementioned crowded Saturday night. This time, our 15-year-old joined us. The bustling room and repeated greetings from friends and acquaintances from adjoining tables gave the room the ambience described on the mural. For starters this time, I opted for the spinach with ripe dolce Gorgonzola, candied pecans, and balsamic vinaigrette (\$5), while my husband had the Insalata Misto (\$10) with grilled avocado, pancetta, and red-chile and black-olive vinaigrette. Grilling avocado is an excellent idea, and it provides a silky and mild counterpoint to the snappy and salty wafers of pancetta.

Our entrée selections were Ravioli di Caprino con Burro di Oliva (\$13), triangles of pasta filled with goat cheese and scallion in a black-olive butter; Taglitelle Alla Bolognese (\$13), which was rich with beef and sausage; and one of the evening’s specials, scallops with grilled corn and pomegranate seeds atop mashed potatoes (\$13). Each dish was a success, enthusiastically shared and tasted among the three of us. The Bolognese, meaty and hearty and soul-satisfying, felt like a hug, though it would have benefited from a bit more defatting. The tang of the goat cheese in the pasta pillows went beautifully with the briny olive butter (although more butter than necessary dressed the plate), and the crisp kernels of sweet corn and pomegranate contrasted nicely with the silky scallops. The same curious flat bread accompanied the entrées and came in handy to wipe the plates.

We weren’t exactly hungry, but we managed to sample desserts just the same. I went with the semifreddo (\$6), a charming dish of two petite scoops of deeply vanilla gelato dusted with cocoa, a steaming cup of espresso, and a hazelnut biscotto. Our daughter tried the Torta di Limone (\$6), a tangy round of lemon cheesecake served with a white-chocolate straw and dabs of lemon curd, while my husband made another pass at the dessert case and chose a chocolate/pecan bar (\$1.50). Steaming cups of cappuccino (\$2.65) provided the ideal accompaniment and finale.

Owners chef Mark Spedale and his wife, Lisa, have a hit in Primizie, thanks to their clear vision of the friendly osteria they wished to create and its careful realization. Upon departing, you’re thinking of the next time you can return with friends; you also get the feeling that if you found yourself moved to sing a few tunes, diners at adjoining tables and the staff would approve.

– Barbara Chisholm

Restaurant REVIEWS

RED CAP CHICK

2510 S. Congress, 416-1134

Monday-Saturday, 10:30am-10pm; Sunday, 11:30am-9:30pm

The letters KFC have a new meaning in Austin: Korean fried chicken, the food craze that took New York City by storm about a year ago, which is now colonizing the West Coast. The dish is *yang nyum tong dalk*, or seasoned fried chicken, a concept which springs from Korea’s love of platters of fried chicken as a bar food, meant to be snacked on with beer or *soju*, the Korean version of vodka. It became hugely popular in Korea back in the early 1990s and is typically a dish that a person eats in a specialty restaurant or bar, since it’s too time-consuming and laborious to cook at home.

Red Cap Chick, located on the west side of South Congress, a bit south of Oltorf, started up a little over a year ago and several months back was purchased by husband and wife team Hayeal and Heewon Lee. Red Cap also serves conventional fried chicken and tenders (including gizzards and livers for all of you organ lovers), as well as fried catfish, with all of the conventional Western trimmings, but Korean fried chicken is their specialty. Making it is a complicated process, and it is *not* fast food; it’s prepared in small batches, to order, so you’ll wait 10 minutes or so for the order to cook.

The chicken is first hacked Asian-style into 2-inch-wide pieces, bone and all, and then marinated with a spicy dry rub overnight. Heewon would not reveal the secrets of her seasoning mix, but subtle hints of garlic and red chile come through. It is then dunked in a thin batter, deep-fried at 350 degrees until it’s partially cooked, and then drained and chilled. “We use potato starch in the batter because it makes a thin crust that’s extra crispy,” says Heewon. When the KFC order comes in at the counter, the chicken goes back into the batter and then into the fryer to finish cooking and turn golden and crispy. At this point it gets served either plain or covered with a sticky, reddish hot-pepper glaze or a sweet garlic glaze. In talking about the all-natural sauce ingredients, Heewon mentioned kiwi fruit as one component, but she was tight-lipped about the other ingredients. A regular order of about six pieces is \$6.99, while the large order of 16 pieces is \$12.99.

We loved all three versions, finding the skin especially crispy and delicious and the meat within very moist and tender. We would prefer the glaze to be thinner so that it gets absorbed lightly into the skin. The spicy version could have been much spicier, and the sweet garlic could have been much more garlicky for our tastes; the Korean flavor profile is normally more aggressive, so perhaps they’ve toned it down for Western tastes. On our next visit, we’ll see if they can bump up the heat and garlic.

This is definitely a meal where you’ll be licking your fingers, as the glaze tends to stick to your digits. And expect to nibble around the bones for all of those juicy tidbits. It comes with the traditional accompaniment, *mool*, delicious cubed sweet pickled daikon radish, which nicely balances the sweetness of the glaze.

We have to mention the amazingly good catfish. We got the plate with four pieces (\$6.89), which was essentially two good-sized fillets with the dark vein in the middle trimmed away. The coating is well-seasoned, light, and crispy; the flesh, moist and sweet. It’s served with your choice of sides and two onion hush puppies, and for the price, it’s a bargain.

Red Cap Chick is unique, bringing Austin its first taste of Korean *yang nyum* chicken. It’s a taste well worth the brief wait and Heewon’s considerable efforts, and don’t forget their catfish.

– Mick Vann



PRIMIZIE

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www.primizieaustin.com

Painted on the short, western wall of Primizie is a mural depicting a group of merry people quaffing wine and having a decidedly great time. Included in this scene is a dictionary definition of an *osteria* – a traditional meeting place for family, friends, and neighbors to imbibe, share a meal, and enjoy one another’s company. The term “trattoria” has been in the common American restaurant lexicon for a long time, but we weren’t as familiar with the term “osteria.” If this is what Primizie purports to be, then what is a trattoria? We checked with our source of Italian expertise, our friend Stefania who hails from Bologna, and she revealed the subtle differences between the two. In an osteria, Stefania said, you can drink a lot of wine with your friends and bang your hands on the table and sing songs, and no one will mind. A trattoria is traditionally operated by a family, and such behavior will likely get you tossed out. Got it!

We didn’t bang our hands on our table and sing songs, but on a recent Saturday night at the new 11th Street eatery, we recognized friends at no fewer than three of the 20 or so tables, all of whom appeared to be enjoying the savory food, liberally imbibing in wine, and having a fine time. Primizie opened to crowds that quickly embraced the sleek but casual cafe. Situated on the thriving 11th Street corridor in a new, multipurpose brick structure, Primizie features a long, expansive wall of windows facing 11th Street. During the day, the dining room is bathed in natural light; at night, the twinkling lights of the urban location lend a sophisticated air to the room. The decor is sleek and minimalist without being cold: polished concrete floors, wood tables, and stylish hanging light fixtures. At lunch, orders are placed and checks settled with the cashier at the counter. There’s full table service at dinner.

My husband and I enjoyed a rare late lunch out together in the bright dining room on a recent Friday. The menu, including specials listed on the chalkboard, features the three big Ps of Italian eateries: pizza, panini, and pasta. On this day, a fourth “P” was offered as a special: polenta topped with house-made



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In 1955, producer Charles H. Schneer and special-effects guru Ray Harryhausen began their long-running collaboration, creating 12 fantastic films in 26 years that profoundly influenced future filmmakers such as Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, Peter Jackson, and Terry Gilliam. The duo's first two films, 1955's giant-octopus tale *It Came From Beneath the Sea* and 1956's *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* (self-explanatory), transformed movie storytelling by using revolutionary stop-motion techniques to produce realistic-looking monsters, aliens, and even spaceships.

Handsomely packaged using the original movie posters, both reissues feature the remastered films in their original black and white and in newly crafted, Harryhausen-supervised, colorized versions. As Harryhausen mentions repeatedly throughout the extras, he and Schneer conceived the films in color but were limited financially. The colorization, far superior to the misguided Turner-sponsored attempts of the previous decade, sparkles and actually looks natural. The less engaging *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* especially benefits from the new process, making the revamped incarnation actually better than the original.

The films, which come in separate 2-DVD sets, feature a plethora of extras cursed with poor editing and direction. The exceptions – intriguing Harryhausen remembrances of both films, a lively conversation between Tim Burton and Harryhausen (unfortunately, the same short appears on both sets), entertaining film commentaries by Harryhausen and others, and a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the colorization process – manage to salvage the bonus features. Another notable fault of the extras is the omission of the still-living Schneer, who, while mentioned frequently throughout, fails to appear anywhere.

– Rick Klaw



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Tradition in Transition Previewing the sixth annual Austin Jewish Film Festival

BY JOSH ROSENBLATT

One of my favorite quotes in movie history comes from Woody Allen's *Deconstructing Harry*. While arguing against the longstanding conventions of Judaism with his devoutly religious sister, atheist Harry Block (Allen) snaps, "Tradition is the illusion of permanence." It's a great line, and not just because it's funny and cold-blooded, but because it gets right to the heart of several of humanity's, and Judaism's, most pressing concerns: Where is the line between tradition and superstition, between knowledge and faith? How does the individual find his way with the weight of thousands of years of history bearing down on him? And what value is there to all of that tradition when it conspires to keep mankind at war with itself? This battle between individuality and tradition resides right at the core of Judaism, with its 5,000-year history of inherited rituals and social struggles, and it has become increasingly relevant with the maturing and passing of the 20th century, which saw the Jewish people live through the depths of deprivation in Europe, the height of cultural fecundity in America, and the dark mire of political and moral ambivalence in Israel.

That great discussion continues here in Texas, Jan. 26, with the opening of the sixth annual Austin Jewish Film Festival. Funded by donations from groups like the University of Texas' Schusterman Center for Jewish Studies, Congregation Agudas Achim, the Austin Film Society, and this newspaper, this year's festival will feature 25 movies over one week, movies from all over the world (including Israel, the U.S., Canada, and Portugal): documentaries, features, shorts, comedies, dramas, even musicals, all of them about the Jewish experience or created by those who have been defined by it. The themes common to that experience are all over this year's festival: anti-Semitism, the never-ending struggle between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East, the joys and disasters of assimilation, the prevalence of humor, the ongoing battle between religion and the temptations of secularism, and the push and pull of family and individuality. Now if someone would just make a movie about the difficulty of finding a decent sandwich in Central Texas, all the relevant angles would be covered.

This year's festival opens on a dark note, with David Gow and Mark Adam's 2006 drama *Steel Toes*, which is about a Jewish lawyer (*Good Night, and Good Luck's* David Strathairn) who's appointed to represent a Nazi skinhead (Andrew Walker, star of, among other things, *The Beach Party at the Threshold of Hell*) on trial for the racially motivated killing of a West Indian immigrant. As the relationship between the two men grows more ambiguous and entangled, the film begets a discussion about racial tolerance in our increasingly multihued Western society.

Festival Co-Chair Cindy Pinto says that, though there's never an official theme for the Austin Jewish Film Festival, a sort of de facto motif tends to suggest itself during the film-selection process to give each year's iteration



In its far-reaching exploration of the Jewish experience, the AJFF will screen *The Bubble*, an Israeli-made interracial love story.

a particular identity. This year, she says, that motif is tolerance – racial, religious, cultural, political – which is one of the primary reasons why *Steel Toes*, with its tale of two diametrically opposed world-views butting heads, was chosen to kick off the festival.

The tolerance theme is all over Israeli director Eytan Fox's excellent comedy/drama *The Bubble* (which also screened this past year at the Austin Gay & Lesbian International Film Festival). Following the lives of a young Palestinian named Ashraf and his Israeli lover Noam, *The Bubble* dares to take on not just the intractable conflict between Arabs and Jews but also the even more slippery issue of homosexuality in traditional Arabic culture. Poor Ashraf is heir to and victim of a cultural, political, and religious legacy of intolerance and willful ignorance (coming from all sides) that he has no hope of escaping. Watching him attempt to do so is to witness joy, terror, resignation, and true tragedy.

All is not dark and racially suspect in the

world of Jewish film, however. The Jews have been laughing in the face of daunting historical reality for centuries, and the Austin Jewish Film Festival is filled with comedies and documentaries about the role of humor in modern Jewish life. These films include *Local Call*, Arthur Joffe's absurdist French narrative about a young man who's abandoned his Jewish faith and is now receiving expensive, nagging collect calls from his father – who has been dead for two years. Then there's Rachel Talbot's *Making Trouble*, a feature-length documentary about female Jewish comedians, including Fanny Brice, Joan Rivers, Wendy Wasserstein, and Gilda Radner. The film looks at the nature of the female Jewish comic psyche through interviews, performances, and archival footage.

One of the gems of the festival will be Michael Tully's documentary about indie-rock musician David Berman, *Silver Jew*, which I was lucky enough to see at last year's South by Southwest Festival. *Silver Jew* is a fascinating look at the spiritual reawakening of a secular American pop-ironist and former drug addict confronting himself in the back alleys of Old Jerusalem while on tour with his band. Seeing a pop-music poet of disaffection, the spokesman for a generation of bearded and bedraggled postgraduate cynics, break down at the Wailing Wall was one of the unexpected joys of my movie-watching year, and one of the purest expressions of religious revelation one could hope to witness onscreen.

The festival will close Friday, Feb. 1, with *True to Life: Stories by Ramla Youth*, a collection of short films about life in the mixed

Arab/Jewish city of Ramla, in central Israel. Producer Moshe Levinson gave video cameras to local teenagers and allowed them to direct

their own stories about life in their culturally diverse hometown. The films they made – shot in Amharic, Arabic, Hebrew, Russian, and Turkish – shed light on the next generation of Israelis as they struggle with the same issues Israelis have been struggling with forever: racial mistrust, religious division, economic disparity, and cultural integrity.

All of these issues can be neatly summed up as the weight of history and the strain of tradition, two things the Jews know something about. And since these concerns aren't going anywhere, it seems appropriate to end the Austin Jewish Film Festival with a view of the future created by those who have a vested interest in shaking off the shackles of the past and moving on to freer days. ■

The Austin Jewish Film Festival runs Jan. 26 through Feb. 1. For a complete schedule and ticket information, visit www.austinjff.org.

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This Kitty's Got Claws

'Teeth' tears into everything from abstinence programs to rape culture. Is Austin grownup enough to handle it?

BY MELANIE HAUPT

The scene: Saturday night, Alamo Drafthouse South Lamar, the sold-out 7:30 screening of *Juno*. The hipsters on dates and mummies on an evening pass pulled on pints and giggled over glasses of wine as the theatre darkened for the trailers. And there it was in all its somewhat-deceptive intensity: the preview for *Teeth*, which was filmed locally, to some controversy. "There's something wrong with me," wails a teenage girl in voiceover as a towel-clad young blonde sits at the edge of a bathtub, clutching her crotch. "*Dentata*," she hisses, her voice trembling in fear and dismay. The audience titters; a few men groan. "Eww!" a woman protests, realization dawning. The laughter grows louder as the film's tagline fades in: "Every rose has its thorns." Cue outright guffaws.

It seems that, even in our ultraprogressive 21st century, vaginas – even fictional ones – have a way of making people uncomfortable.

Teeth is, simply put, a horror-comedy about a chaste teenage girl who discovers, quite by accident and in a rather grisly circumstance, that she has teeth in her vagina. The myth of the vagina dentata is a pervasive one across temporal, cultural, and geographic borders, from certain Plains tribes of the Americas to Christians in the Middle Ages, Shelob the spider in *Lord of the Rings*, and Sarlacc, the desert-pit-dwelling creature from which Luke Skywalker rescues himself in *Return of the Jedi*. The term is often attributed to Freud, who spilled much ink on men's castration anxiety and spoke to a primal male fear of the female sex organ. According to the myth, the hero must conquer the vagina dentata, thereby rendering her a more appropriate receptacle for the male organ.

Feminist film theorist Barbara Creed writes, "The myth about woman as castrator clearly points to male fears and fantasies about the female genitals as a trap, a black hole which threatens to swallow them up and cut them into pieces." It is precisely this gynophobic myth that captured writer/director Mitchell Lichtenstein's imagination, one he decided was due some tweaking, inserting his narrative alongside films like *Carrie* and *Ginger Snaps* into a genre well-versed in fear of young, female sexuality.

"The pervasiveness of the myth in so many cultures does say something about primal male fear, and it does say something about men and their attitude toward women," he says. "The goal was to take a misogynist myth and turn it around." Lichtenstein does so by writing his heroine, Dawn (played with admirable intensity by newcomer Jess Weixler), as a naif who slowly learns to accept and love her body, especially the power it enables her to exert over men who might attempt to violate her or add her to a list of conquests. Along the way, Lichtenstein, son of the prominent pop artist Roy Lichtenstein (who, coincidentally, is

the subject of a current exhibit at the Austin Museum of Art), takes jabs at teenage abstinence movements, as well as a Lynchburg, Va., school board that insisted upon censoring the image of a vagina in a high school textbook. According to Lichtenstein, these little digs at the right wing are all metaphors for Dawn and her complicated relationship with her body.

"These abstinence groups want to delay experience and restrict knowledge," he explains. "It seemed to me that it would make perfect sense for her to join such a group." Lichtenstein also notes that the abstinence movement sends teens – especially girls – into the world ill-prepared for the vagaries of hormonal surges, something Dawn experiences firsthand and with no small amount of trauma. "Research shows that the [abstinence] movement doesn't really delay sexual activity for very long, and when you fall off the wagon, it's spontaneous. The girls don't know about birth control and are more likely to get pregnant." Or, in Dawn's case, likely to discover that her va-jay-jay is full of den-tay-tay, which is initially a frightening liability but, by the film's end, is an asset when she finds herself vulnerable in the face of salacious dudes.

Kirk Honeycutt of *The Hollywood Reporter* writes that *Teeth* "is the most alarming cautionary tale for men with wandering libidos since *Fatal Attraction*." And yes, it is fun to play a bit of wink-nudge in regard to a movie about a girl whose cooch bites off unwelcome penises (and fingers), but such subject matter is not without its ethical and political problems.

While it's all well and good to reimagine and defang a hateful cultural construct, such an act has the potential to turn back upon itself, thus undermining the power and intent of said reimagining. For example, many feminists might have a problem with the fact that sex (or, more accurately, her vagina) is the *only* site of Dawn's power, a classic no-no within the world of feminist rhetoric. And while queer theorists might argue that penetration as passivity is merely a construct of the patriarchy, Dawn must be penetrated in order to exert her power, which some might argue neutralizes her agency. Weixler, whose turn in *Teeth* won the Special Jury Prize for Acting at Sundance last year, sees things differently.

"She comes away fairly scot-free metaphorically in that she never gets blood on her; blood is always on the guy. She's able to step out of it knowing that she took their weapon away.



Teeth

It is fun to play a bit of wink-nudge in regard to a movie about a girl whose cooch bites off unwelcome penises (and fingers), but such subject matter is not without its ethical and political problems.

It's not so much, 'Oh, they penetrated me'; it's like, 'You don't deserve to have this anymore because you keep abusing it.'" Within Lichtenstein's fantasy world, the toothed vagina serves a policing function. According to this logic, one could argue that rape as a social, rhetorical construct serves to police women's bodies and behaviors (a woman is "asking for it" if her skirt is too short/she's walking alone at night/she has too much to drink/she flirts too much); in this way, the vagina dentata serves the same sociocultural purpose that rape does. That the film's solution to male violence against women is horrific, violent revenge is cold comfort.

Lichtenstein is quick to acknowledge the ambivalence and problematic nature of his subject. "I definitely see that it can be controversial; the very fact of a character embodying the original gynophobic myth is gonna be risky. And my big fear is that it would be taken as misogynist," he says evenly. "There is always the danger, since you're dealing with the same thing, of it being exactly what you're talking about."

On the other hand, engaging in such subject matter reveals to a community its own vestigial fear and loathing of the yoni, as evidenced by the twittering reactions to the film's trailer at the Alamo Drafthouse. Lichtenstein cites numerous factors in his decision to film *Teeth* in Austin, from the favorable weather conditions that made filming outdoor swimming scenes possible in early spring to the availability of a seasoned local crew. However, it was Hamilton Pool's "naturally formed vagina dentata, the overhang with the stalactites,"

in combination with Krause Springs, that was the deciding factor in choosing this location. Funny, then, that residents of a progressive town like Austin would get their panties in a twist about this movie.

Windsor Park is one of those Eastside neighborhoods euphemistically described as "in transition." In other words, the upwardly mobile yuppies with small children and disposable income are snapping up the real estate and putting down roots (or flipping midcentury modern homes at rather outstanding profits). It's a haven for lefties who plant Obama and Edwards campaign signs in their front yards and recycle assiduously. By all accounts, most residents in the blocks surrounding the corner lot that served as Dawn's celluloid home considered it pretty cool that a movie was in the works in the 2-3. However, word got out – vaguely – that the movie was about a girl with teeth in her vagina, and two and two quickly became five. "I think the neighborhood was like: 'They're making a porn. It's about a vagina; it must be porn,'" says Weixler. "They didn't care about reading the script; all they needed to know was that it had to do with a vagina with teeth." Windsor Park resident Silver Chisum raised the hue and cry and got others on board, calling news crews to the scene of the imagined crime. Eventually, then-newly appointed Texas Film Commission Director Bob Hudgins had to step in and hose down the controversy, asserting that "it's in incredibly bad taste, but it's not pornography."

This incident reveals that some of us still regard vaginas as unclean things that should remain wrapped in chaste cotton. Perhaps what Lichtenstein is suggesting with his film is that to marginalize and pathologize the vagina is to run the risk of underestimating its profound power. Tom Cruise in *Magnolia* told us to "respect the cock!" Perhaps we should apply the same philosophy to the lady garden, because you'll never know when your snake will get bitten. ■

Mitchell Lichtenstein



TV EYE

Rewriting the Rules

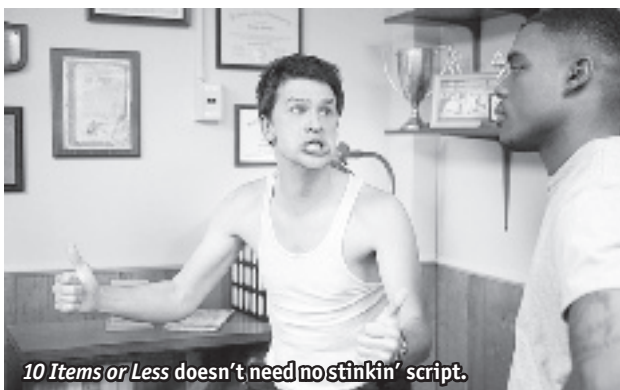
BY BELINDA ACOSTA

When the writers' strike began, there was speculation that TV would be filled with cheaply produced reality programming, second-tier series that were originally passed on, and, of course, reruns. All of this is true. But there is another form of TV that is appearing, probably more by coincidence than by planning: the unscripted series that relies on the improvisational skills of its actors. Three of them launch this month.

10 Items or Less (TBS) returned for a second season with an eight-episode run earlier this month. The cast remains the same — series creator **John Lehr** stars as Leslie Pool, the owner/manager of a locally owned grocery store that he inherited from his father. The Green & Grains grocery store is barely surviving, thanks to the Super Value Mart chain store down the street and Pool's ineptness. Still, he manages his oddball staff with a stubbornly sunny disposition. His staff has other goals beyond the Green & Grains — all of them pipe dreams — but sticks around out of respect for the elder Pool, whom they all loved.

Like all unscripted series, a loose outline provides direction for the improvised dialogue. The eight-person ensemble features several live-theatre and improv veterans. This, in addition to a cast fully warmed up in its second time at bat, makes **10 Items or Less** considerably tighter and funnier than its first season.

New to the unscripted scene are two workplace comedies, **Head Case** and **Hollywood Residential**. Although the preview screeners I watched were very rough, it's clear that the laugh potential is high in **Head Case**. The series stars **Alexandra Wentworth** as Dr. Elizabeth Goode, therapist to the stars. Coming in for time on Dr.



Goode's couch (as themselves) are **Andy Dick**, **Jeff Goldblum**, **Joel Madden**, and **Jonathan Silverman**, among others. **Greg Grunberg** (*Heroes*) has a particularly uncomfortable (and funny) appointment with Goode, in which he describes his messy sexual fantasy featuring the good doctor.

As if being on the receiving end of her very public patients' private problems weren't bad enough, Goode's own dysfunctional family does its part to cultivate her neuroses outside the office. That family includes a lascivious mother, a sister referred to as the "young, pretty one," and a father who has an uncomfortably close relationship with his youngest daughter. In short, **Head Case** is willing to skate very close to the edge; fortunately, it manages to do so without tipping over into bad taste. **Steve Landesberg** (*Barney Miller*) also stars as Dr. Myron Finkelstein, Goode's office partner.

Also set in La-La Land is **Hollywood Residential**. The title of this unscripted series takes its name from the fictional celebrity-home makeover show that aspiring actor Tony King (**Adam Paul**) hosts while waiting for his big break. Unfortunately for him, Tony's acting chops are as lame as his handyman skills. Hosting the small

cable show allows Tony proximity to the star power he wants. All the celebrities want is a free remodeling. Tony's schmoozing would be harmless if it didn't always lead to trouble, as when he parties a little too hard with **Tom Arnold**. Arnold ends up in rehab, derailing the makeover show's tight shooting schedule and inciting the wrath of the *Hollywood Residential* producer and director. Paul is particularly brilliant in a scene where he pulls off the bad actor audition with such finesse it makes you wince. **Paula Abdul**, **Chris Kattan**, **Jamie Kennedy**, **Cheryl Hines**, and **Beverly D'Angelo** are among the celebrities starring as themselves.

10 Items or Less airs Tuesdays at 10pm on TBS. **Head Case** airs Wednesdays at 9pm on the Starz network. **Hollywood Residential** airs Wednesdays at 9:30pm on the Starz network.

What Else Is On?

The *Independent Lens* series brings a writer's life to light in the sublime **How Is Your Fish Today?** Set in modern-day Beijing, the film follows **Hui Rao** (who co-wrote the script with director **Xiaolu Guo**), a struggling screenwriter who writes soap operas for a living. After a film producer rejects his last script, Rao goes into a funk, then begins rewriting. In doing so, he recalls a place he learned about as a boy, Mohe, a distant village near the Russian border. Mohe was a mythical place in Rao's young imagination. That memory gets Rao imagining his main character, Lin Hao, traveling to the distant Mohe. A visual depiction of his screenplay unfolding, interspersed with Rao's personal story, makes for a fascinating study of imagination, a writer's process, and how much characters drive their creators. Stunning, not only in how seamlessly the film accomplishes this marriage of fiction and nonfiction but also in its subtlety. A 2007 Sundance Film Festival selection, the film is presented in Mandarin with English subtitles. **How Is Your Fish Today?** airs Tuesday, Jan. 29, at 9pm on PBS.

As always, stay tuned.

E-mail Belinda Acosta at tveye@austinchronicle.com.

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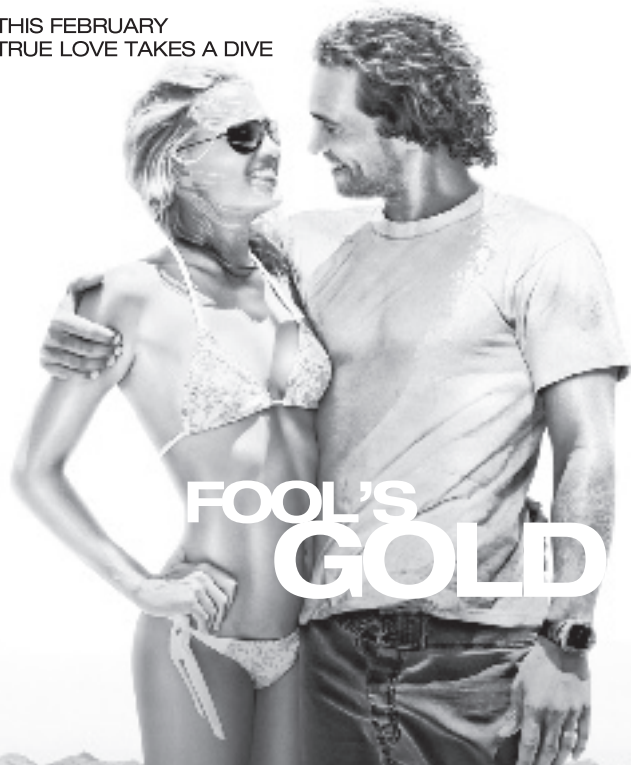


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AUSTIN JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL
January 26 - February 1, 2008

Film Schedule

Everything
Subject
to Change

Regal Arbor Cinema
9828 Great Hills Trail Austin, TX 78759

Sat. Jan. 26
7:00 pm STEEL TOES
9:30 pm JELLYFISH

Sun. Jan. 27
12:00 n SWEET MUD
2:30 pm SIXTY-SIX
6:00 pm MAKING TROUBLE
9:30 pm STEEL TOES

Mon. Jan. 28
12:00 n OUT OF SIGHT
4:00 pm A MOTHER'S JOURNEY
7:00 pm WEST BANK STORY with
MY FATHER MY LORD
9:00 pm VOICE WITHOUT A FACE
with ALMOST

Tues. Jan. 29
12:00 n THE GIRLS FROM BRAZIL
4:00 pm MY FATHER MY LORD
7:00 pm Screen 1: WEST BANK STORY
Screen 2: DISPOSSESSION with
THREE MOTHERS
9:00 pm LOCAL CALL

Schusterman Center at UT
shown at Garrison Hall 0.102

Mon. Jan. 28
7:00 pm WEST BANK STORY
with MAKING TROUBLE

Wed. Jan. 30
7:00 pm WEST BANK STORY with
THE GIRLS FROM BRAZIL

FREE ADMISSION to films at UT and
Hill: through the generosity of the
Schusterman Center for Jewish Studies

Wed. Jan. 30
12:00 n HER STORIES MY HANDS
with STEAL A PENCIL FOR ME
4:00 pm SILVER JEW
7:00 pm ARRANGED
9:00 pm A DIFFERENT DISH with
WRESTLING WITH ANGELS:
PLAYWRIGHT TONY KUSHNER

Thurs. Jan. 31
12:00 n JELLYFISH
4:00 pm VOICE WITHOUT A FACE
with ALMOST
7:00 pm BLUES BY THE BEACH
9:00 pm THE BUBBLE

Fri. Feb. 1
12:00 n "QUADRUPLE FEATURE!"
HER STORIES MY HANDS
SHABBOS MOTHER
CHEFTZI ON AIR
WEST BANK STORY
4:00 pm TRUE TO LIFE: STORIES
BY RAMLA YOUTHS

Texas Hillel
2105 San Antonio St.

Tue. Jan. 29
7:00 pm SILVER JEW

City Lights Theatre
Georgetown, TX

Thur. Jan. 31
12:00 n ARRANGED



**AJFF Badges, Passes and Tickets
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• **FRIEND of the FESTIVAL FILM BADGE** - Valid for Admission to all films at
all venues during the festival with VIP advance seating 15 minutes before showtimes. Special Sale
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• **GENERAL ADMISSION TICKETS** - \$8 adult, \$6 student/seniors. A limited
number of individual general admission tickets will be sold in advance online. Any remaining tickets
will be sold at the theatre box office 15 minutes before the start of each film, after priority seating is
given to Film Badge and Flex Pass holders.

A Service Charge will be added to all online and credit card purchases.

CHRONtourage

Thursday, Jan. 24, 8pm

ALMADRIGAL

Cap City Comedy, 8120 Research #100
www.capcitycomedy.com



Friday, Jan. 25, 5pm

GREYBOY ALLSTARS

Waterloo Records, 600-A N. Lamar
www.waterloorecords.com



7:30pm

ZACH's George Gershwin's musical

PORGY AND BESS

Austin Music Hall, 208 Nueces
www.zachscott.com



Sunday, Jan. 27, 5pm

ROBSHEFFIELD: LOVE IS A MIXTAPE

BookPeople, 603 N Lamar
www.bookpeople.com



Check out photos of what you missed at

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58 JAD FAIR 62 PHASES & STAGES 90 MUSIC LISTINGS

OFF THE RECORD music news

BY AUSTIN POWELL

HOUSE OF PAIN

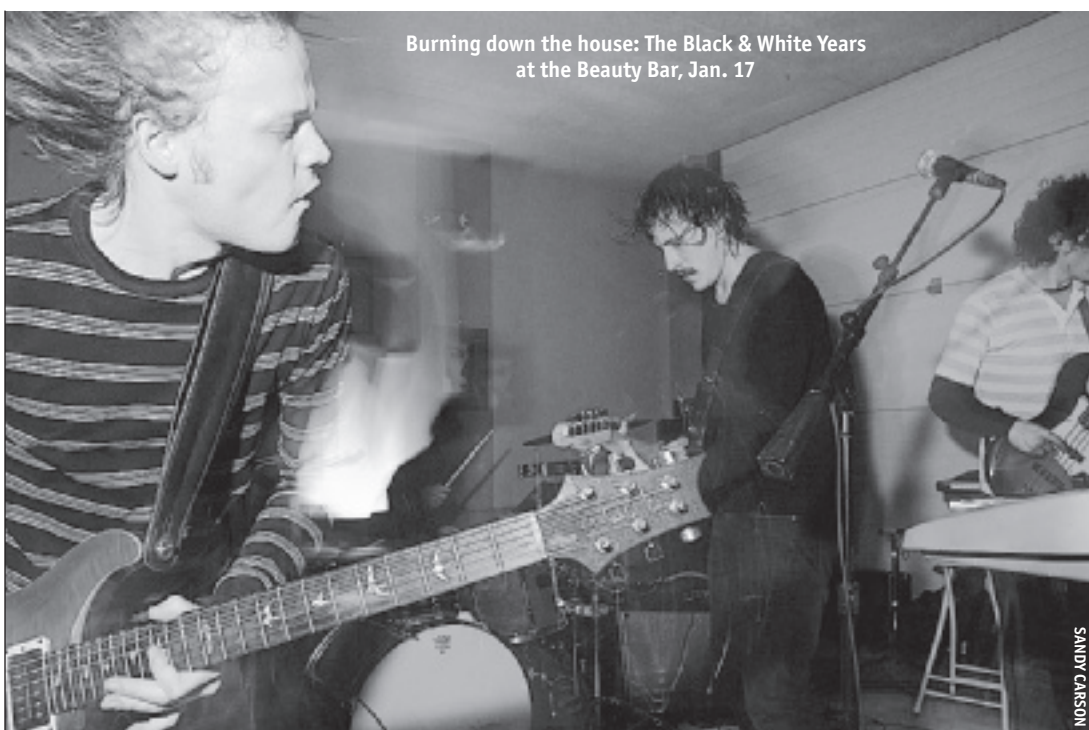
Considering the rising **Red River Flats** condominiums and the booking battle taking place between the two venues at extreme ends of the strip, the **Red River Entertainment District** is starting to resemble a hotly contested game of **Monopoly**. While no ink has officially dried, **Transmission Entertainment** is close to purchasing **Red 7** (see "DIY or Die," June 22, 2007), although head talent buyer **Graham Williams** declined to comment. **Emo's** owner **Frank Hendrix**, who in turn is investing in Sixth Street bar **Bourbon Rocks**, initially showed interest in the property, but the owner was reluctant to sell at that time. "I wanted to make it happen," Hendrix said last August. "Red 7 reminded me of what Emo's used to be, a crusty punk rock club." Transmission has been booking shows there since September, and the local promotion venture has already secured the **Vandals'** only Texas appearance (March 1), along with upcoming dates for **Converge** and **JFA** in April. Rumor has it that a **Hot Water Music** reunion is also in the works for an unofficial day party during **South by Southwest**. Expect the walls to shake this Friday for the **Don't Tread on Me** showcase, a protest against the proposed amendments to the current Austin sound ordinance, featuring the **Bread**, the **Stones We Throw**, **Like Dogs**, **Rend**, and the **Anchor**.

LIVING LIFE

"The play is essentially the dramatization of his psyche, dealing with the iconic figures from his drawings and songs," says **Kathy McCarty** of **Daniel Johnston**-inspired rock opera **Speeding Motorcycle**. "It's all pretty trippy." Following two successful stints in Houston in 2006, rehearsals began on Monday in Austin for the local edition, which is scheduled to run Feb. 14-April 13 at **Zach Scott Theatre**. One of the first local musicians to recognize the depth of Johnston's oeuvre with her celebrated 1994 tribute, **Dead Dog's Eyeball**, the **Glass Eye** guitarist and **Chronicle** Food writer will be appearing as an angel, a nurse, and a skeleton, among other iconic characters, and closing the show with a duet of the unreleased Johnston tune "Loving Feelings." Rounding out the house band for the performance are the **Meat Purveyors' Bill Anderson** and **Sherry Lane**, **Terri Lord**, and members of the **Invincible Czars**, all of whom will appear at some point as **Joe the Boxer**. "I regard him as a universal figure," says director and creator **Jason Nodler**. "We all have the conditions that Daniel has; the volume is just turned up for him."



Daniel Johnston's interpretation of Kathy McCarty from her *Dead Dog's Eyeball* CD.



SANDY CARSON

Burning down the house: The Black & White Years at the Beauty Bar, Jan. 17

REMAIN IN LIGHT

Only seven people attended the **Black & White Years'** official **SXSW** showcase last year at **Opal Divine's**, but as fate would have it, that included **Velvet Revolver** shredder **Slash** and former **Talking Head** and **Modern Lover** **Jerry Harrison**. "He came to our house, and we played a set for him in our living room, two nights in a row," recalls singer/guitarist **Scott Butler** of the latter. A month later, the Austin art-punk quartet was in California's **Sausalito Sound** studio with Harrison and **Heartbreakers** drummer **Steve Ferrone**, hammering out the follow-up to the B&WY's debut EP, *Real! In Color!* "When we walked in,

they were remastering the **Talking Heads** catalog for 5.1 surround sound," recalls keyboardist/guitarist Landon Thompson. "David Byrne's guitar was bouncing around the room." The resulting eponymous LP, to be released by Houston's **Brando Records** at **Stubb's** on Feb. 22, carries all the Heads' trademarks: scattershot guitar, snaking synths, and quirky, hyperintelligent lyricism. This weekend the band tries its luck at the European counterpart to SXSW, the **2008 MIDEM conference** in Cannes, France. "We're too broke to be overwhelmed," Butler concludes, "but things are looking good."

MIXTAPE MESSIAH

Rob Sheffield's *Love Is a Mix Tape: Life and Loss, One Song at a Time* is an emotional tribute to his late wife, explored through the music the two shared ("Rock & Roll Books," Nov. 30, 2007). The **Rolling Stone** contributing editor sent OTR his most recent playlist, which includes **Spoon's** "The Underdog." "It's actually not easy to imitate **Billy Joel**, not without sounding like **Springsteen** or **Harry Chapin** or somebody," Sheffield writes of the song. "But this sounds so precisely like B.J., from the lyric to the acoustic guitar to the way the singer says, 'riiight.' I have to assume this is fully intended as yet another scene from that Italian restaurant." View the annotated playlist at the Off the Record blog (austinchronicle.com/earache), and catch Sheffield at **BookPeople** on Sunday, Jan. 27, 5pm.



EVERYTHING LOUDER THAN EVERYTHING ELSE

Toni Price's abrupt exodus from Austin, following her 15-year Hippy Hour residency at the **Continental Club**, wasn't without reason. "It's just dreadful what they've done to that town," the blues chanteuse told *San Diego's North County Times*. "Condominiums, condominiums, and more condominiums. And they sure don't want any hippie singers there. They just tear down everything and build a condominium that I can't live in, and I don't know anybody who can afford to live in." That's part of the reason why local musician **Troy Dillinger** is campaigning for City Council to proclaim 2008 **the Year of Austin Music**. "It's an upside-down pyramid, where the city of Austin enjoys high amounts of revenue generated by musicians, but those musicians and venue owners aren't seeing any of the benefits," says Dillinger, who's calling a town hall meeting on Monday at the **Austin Moose Lodge** (2103 E.M. Franklin) to discuss the organization's five-tier plan of action. "It can't go on many more years in the state that it's in."

- Louis Jordan**, "Don't Worry 'Bout That Mule"
- Bob Wills & His Texas Playboys**, "Oozlin' Daddy Blues"
- Erase Errata**, "He Wants What's Mine," **Spoon**, "The Underdog"
- Sade**, "Smooth Operator," **Of Montreal**, "Trouble"
- Fleetwood Mac**, "What Makes You Think You're the One"
- Mary J. Blige**, "Just Fine," **Mission of Burma**, "2wice"
- Stephen Malkmus**, "Real Emotional Trash"
- Gladys Knight & the Pips**, "Midnight Train to Georgia"

RANDOM PLAY

- Six months after **Stephen Bruton's** return at **Road to Austin** following his bout with throat cancer, the local guitarist is receiving additional treatment at **M.D. Anderson** in Houston. According to manager **Ken Kushnick**, the procedure is only a precautionary measure and should not slow down Bruton, who proceeded with his weekly residency at the **Saxon Pub** with the **Resentments** last Sunday.
- **Broken Teeth's** latest lightning bolt, *Electric*, storms **Encore Records Video & Apparel** (1745 W. Anderson) this Saturday, Jan. 26, 7pm, with free refreshments provided by **Live Oak Brewing Co.**
- This is the last week to cast a ballot for the annual **Austin Music Poll**. Get it done.



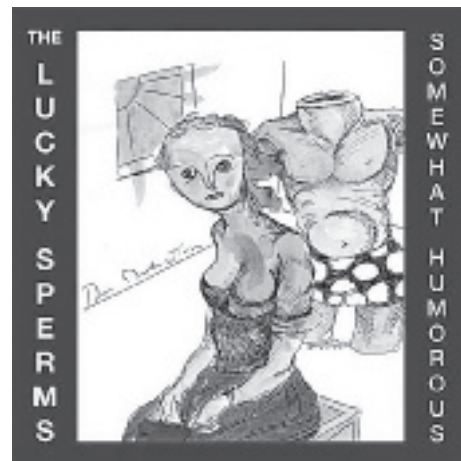
- Monday: **Margaret Moser's** Girlie Action
- Tuesday: **Thomas Fawcett's** Bump & Hustle
- Wednesday: **Jim Caligiuri's** Geezerville
- Thursday: **Doug Freeman's** Southside of the Tracks
- Friday: **Darcie Stevens'** Shut Up!

With the *Chronicle's* music cyberspace station firmly established, our staff is revamping its blog log beginning this week. Every weekday brings a weekly post from the roster at right, with additional roving posts from yours truly, OTR; **Raoul Hernandez's** Death Valley Nights; and **Audra Schroeder's** Schadenfreude: austinchronicle.com/earache.

Fair, balanced, with horse Scout



SANDY CARSON



STRANGE BUT TRUE

HUMAN DYNAMO JAD FAIR

BY AUDRA SCHROEDER

On a slate-colored Sunday afternoon in January, a dead dog lies in the tall grass under a street sign. Upon closer examination, its mottled orange and black fur makes it resemble something less, well, canine. Further examination reveals that it's indeed a dead dog and not some sort of errant chupacabra or mythical Texas dog-beast. A gang of vultures lingers, some flapping their wings as if shrugging, "Eh, we'll get to it."

Of course, this is the street that leads to Jad Fair's house.

A spherical silver roof is the only thing visible from where the vultures sit and gossip. It looks like a UFO straight out of *Plan 9 From Outer Space* has landed in the middle of farm country. Which is wildly appropriate if you know Jad Fair's work. Many don't. Jad Fair isn't exactly a household name.

Here on the outskirts of Manor, where he's lived for a year and a half, Fair isn't recognized at the Exxon station, nor maybe even in Austin. The 53-year-old musician and artist lives here with his wife, Patty, their dogs, and a stable of horses. His trademark round, black glasses are gone thanks to LASIK surgery, and his chin-length hair is gray and wavy, making him look a little like Robert Plant.

Several of his folk art paper cuts, a new batch of which is now on display at Yard Dog on South Congress, line the walls and shelves of his house. A large wooden cabinet holds miniature tin robots as well as assorted alien and monster figurines, and a framed print of Daniel Johnston's famous "Hi, How Are You?" frog-lien greets us at the front door.

Living in the sticks hasn't diminished Fair's flair for the odd; really, it only makes his "outsider artist" tag more literal. His careerlong fascination with monsters, aliens, and other outsiders fuels his music and art and carries over to the custom-built cylindrical house he lives in, which overlooks miles of pasture and a slightly dilapidated mansion to the east. "Someone bought it on eBay," Fair explains.

As co-founder of the rock group Half Japanese with his brother, David, Fair's music hasn't been either conventional or immensely

laboration, a 45-song beast fittingly titled *Half Monster*, is finally issued on local experimental label Misc. Music this month.

Austin Chronicle: Did you move out here to focus on art or music or both?

Jad Fair: I do enjoy staying at home, so the art became more my focus. The only way to make money is to play live, which I still do, but I've cut way back.

AC: So the album that's coming out now, how did you meet Nao –

Here on the outskirts of Manor, where he's lived for a year and a half, Fair isn't recognized at the Exxon station, nor maybe even in Austin.

profitable. Their shambolic noise arose from Michigan in the mid-1970s and then slouched toward Maryland, blending free jazz and loose improv with songs largely about love and monsters, spewed from a soft spot for the Modern Lovers and the Velvet Underground. The group launched Fair's career into constant project, whether art, music, or a dizzying array of collaborations.

His most recent endeavor is with Japanese noise artist Naofumi Ishimaru, whom Fair met in the 1990s while touring Japan. Their musical coupling yielded mutant albums *Half Robot* and *Half Alien*. The third arm of the col-



JF: What I'm doing now?

AC: Yeah, no ... with Nao, the stuff you did with Nao ...

JF: Oh! Naofumi. Well, he started using my artwork on his CDs and tapes, and we eventually started corresponding, and when I toured Japan, I asked if he

would do those shows with me. Then he came to America and to my house, and we recorded an album. Then I went to Japan to his house, and we recorded two albums. We were working 10-hour days, and one day, towards the end when we were mixing, I told him I was kind of tired and was probably going to go to bed, and he called me a lazy American!

Certainly not. So far, Fair's teamed up with a who's who of underground and indie artists: R. Stevie Moore, Teenage Fanclub, Maureen Tucker, the Pastels, Sonic Youth's Steve Shelley, Kramer, John Zorn, Yo La Tengo. Last summer at Emo's, Jad Fair opened for the Danielson Famile, a young band whose quirky pop – and especially singer Daniel Smith's squeaky voice – seems a half-breed of Half Japanese. Fair's currently working on an album with Smith, he and brother David have another album coming out soon, and he's recording with Norman Blake of Scots Teenage Fanclub and Isobel Campbell of Philly drone rockers Bardo Pond.

It's Fair's recordings with fellow singer-songwriter Daniel Johnston that appeared especially predestined. Jagjaguwar reissued 1989 lo-fi pairing *It's Spooky* in 2001, and it's truly a meeting of the minds. Monsters and love songs, subjects dear to both artists, get equal treatment, along with "I Did Acid With Caroline," "McDonald's on the Brain," and "I Met Roky Erickson." Johnston and Fair later worked together as the Lucky Sperms, whose *Somewhat Humorous* also received the reissue treatment from Jagjaguwar.

AC: You're a big fan of collaboration.

JF: Artistically, yes, and I'm friends with so many of the people I've collaborated with. Yo La Tengo – they were my neighbors when I was living in Hoboken. I've been very lucky to collaborate with people I really admire.

AC: Who's someone you'd like to collaborate with?

JF: I'm a big fan of Steve Earle.

AC: What do you like about him?

JF: Steve's a great musician, and I like that he stands up for what he feels is right, and he's willing to take risks. He could easily stick to one style of music and be successful, [but] I think it's great that he shows as much range as he does. Steve's a smart guy. He knows full well that some of his choices musically and politically are not in the direction of the dollar sign, but he still does it.

AC: Do you still talk to Daniel Johnston?

JF: You know, not as much as I used to. I see him every once in a while. I think we're going to do a split single that'll be on [Misc. Music], with Danny & the Nightmares.

AC: What's recording with him like?

JF: The first time around, we did so much in, I think it was something like seven days, mixing and everything, so we kept really busy, and Daniel had very decided mood swings. When things would start going south, I would suggest that we would go out and get a pizza, and that would be fine.

AC: Everything would go back to normal?

JF: [Laughs.] Well, he'd go back to being Daniel. He's so talented, I left it up to him to choose the direction of the album, but when that direction was one I didn't feel comfortable with, it was pizza time.

AC: Did you and Daniel both meet Roky Erickson?

JF: Daniel wrote the lyrics of that song; he used to go to Roky's home to watch monster movies. I've met Roky a few times. It's great that he's playing music again. He's in fine form.

AC: The same director who did the Half Japanese documentary, Jeff Feuerzeig, also did Daniel's. What did you think of it?

JF: I thought it was very well done, and such an undertaking. I was surprised there was so much video and audio to go along with pretty much any story there was.

AC: And there's a story about you and Daniel.

JF: Yeah, they had just done a bunch of renovations on the Statue of Liberty, so everything was nice and new, and when we were walking up the spiral staircase to the top, Daniel was behind me, so I couldn't see what he was doing. He had a marker and was drawing fish on the wall all the way up and down. Quite a bit of graffiti by Daniel, which would now be worth quite a bit of money. The police didn't see it that way.

New Brides of Frankenstein

Fair was born and raised in the small town of Coldwater, Mich., where he says his childhood had "good parts." He and his brother, David, two years older, got along well enough to form Half Japanese in 1974 while in college, with Jad on drums and David on guitar, neither particularly skilled. Their approach to playing is outlined in David's widely circulated essay, "How to Play Guitar," reiterating that yes, anyone can. To wit: "If you ignore the chords your options are infinite and you can master guitar playing in one day."

Jeff Feuerzeig's great 1993 documentary, *Half Japanese: The Band That Would Be King*, is a snapshot not just of the band but of the underground cassette and record culture they inhabited. It's filled with deadpan hyperbole and ringing testimonials, so much so that it often comes off like a Christopher Guest film.

The Fair brothers' humor has always been subtle, as illustrated in one of Feuerzeig's interviews: David, hulking and bespectacled, stands slightly to the left of Jad, wiry and also bespectacled, like a family photo. He explains that 1980's *1/2 Gentlemen/Not Beasts* was originally titled *Half Gentlemen/Half Beast*, but they changed it because "We're nice guys." They were like a male version of the Shaggs, impervious to technical skills or knowledge of chords and quite self-possessed.

AC: Growing up, did you and David have similar tastes in music?

JF: David had a good record collection, so I was listening to the Stooges, Captain Beefheart, MC5, the Velvet Underground, a lot of bands that weren't popular in the town I lived. I was very lucky I had my brother to buy records.

AC: What was it like growing up in Michigan?

JF: I ... I'm glad to be away from it. You don't realize how bad a place is until you're gone, though.

AC: In a small town like that, did you feel the urge to do something to stand out?

JF: I was very aware that I stood out. Everyone around me made me aware that I stood out.

Jad and David moved to Uniontown, Md., in 1975, and that's where Half Japanese began playing out and eventually solidified their classic lineup – one that will play South by Southwest this year – including guitarist Mark Jickling and brothers Ricky and John Dreyfuss, on drums and sax respectively. 1977 saw the release of their *Calling All Girls* 7-inch on friend and fan (and magician) Penn Jillette's 50 Skidillion Watts label, which he started solely to release Half Japanese records.

In 1980, the UK-based Armageddon Records offered them an unprecedented three-record box-set deal. By 1981's *Loud* LP and 1982's monster-themed *Horrible* EP, they had channeled their noise into an atonal, primal smack of fractured feedback and free-jazz sax, helmed by Fair's desperate yelps.

On "I Know How It Feels ... Bad," one of Half Jap's classic love songs, Fair pines with the self-assured half-smirk of his colleague

continued on p.60

Jad (l) and David in the bedroom, 1978



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JAD FAIR
COURTESY OF JAD FAIR

Jad in his element, age 4



AC: Does songwriting feel like a compulsion for you?

JF: Compulsion is the exact word for it. At times I feel a bit like Horatio Caine on the show *CSI Miami*. He has a compulsion for fighting crime. I, too, have a compulsion.

Jonathan Richman: "I think about you. You're already in love, I know ... I wouldn't want you to break up because of me." Fair airs his revenge fantasies on the ambling "Dumb Animals," where he takes several of his high school teachers to task, and "High School Tonight," where he dreams of trashing the principal's office. On "Thing With a Hook," Fair squeals, "There's a thing with a hook, pulling heads off girlfriends! Down on lover's lane!" over a Stooges-inspired squall. Drag City reissued the 29-song collection *Loud and Horrible* in 2004, an excellent overview of this nascent, gnarly era of Half Japanese.

Live, they must have looked like they were from another planet. *The Band That Would Be King* includes footage of the group playing "Live in Hell" on a cable access show in 1985. Fair stumbles, twists, and roughs up his guitar, the total opposite of his reserved nature. Guitarist and longtime collaborator Don Fleming adds the appropriate noise to the white-hot set, filmed in front of a green screen with images of hellish things floating around and featuring an inspired cover of "You're Gonna Miss Me," alternately titled "You're Going to Regret My Departure." Through it all, Jad Fair smiles like this is the most fun he's ever had.

AC: Did you feel *Half Japanese* was doing something different?

JF: Yes, but that seemed normal to me. That's when it dawned on me that my definition of normal is not everybody's.

AC: What's the monster connection?

JF: Well, as a kid I always enjoyed monster movies. On weekends I would go to sleep very early because I knew I would want to wake up a few hours later, around midnight, when all the monster flicks would come on.

AC: What was the allure? Your monsters don't seem too scary.

JF: No, they just seemed cool to me.

AC: I noticed your collection of robots and aliens over there. I guess the robots are aliens?

JF: Right, I doubt any of them are from this planet.

Destroy All Monsters

This message can be found on his website: "I Jad Fair pledge to uphold the highest quality standards in my work, and never waver in my quest to push the envelope in both art and music, and to raise the bar of musical excellence to new heights. On that you have my word. Should I fall short of that goal I promise to shave my head and

wear my clothes inside out for at least five years time."

His recent work has shifted more toward his artwork and paper cuts, something at which he's quite prolific and something he began doing to alleviate the boredom and headaches related to reading in the van on tour. Latest book *Blue Skies and Monsters* is filled with eyeball-twitching, scissor-cut creatures slightly menacing and oddly mesmerizing. It's been 14 years since he worked a day job, Fair's able to sustain himself through a combination of art and music. He takes a workhorse approach to his craft.

AC: What's this mission statement about? Have you had to shave your head?

JF: No, I haven't. *Webster's Dictionary* defines a human dynamo as a highly energetic and indefatigable person. That pretty much sums me up. There have been times when I've felt like taking a break, but I know if I did, I would let my fans down, and there's no way in hell I'd ever do that.

AC: Do you feel you've matured as you've gotten older?

JF: Very little about me has matured.

AC: How so?

JF: Well, I go the straightest, simplest direc-

tion, and there's not that much thought process. It's a very childlike approach.

AC: Does songwriting feel like a compulsion for you?

JF: Compulsion is the exact word for it. At times I feel a bit like Horatio Caine on the show *CSI Miami*. He has a compulsion for fighting crime. I, too, have a compulsion. I feel compelled to do my part in making the world a better place in which to live.

AC: For \$300, you'll write a personalized song for anybody.

JF: I've done quite a few birthday songs, songs for weddings. I did one marriage proposal, which was kind of odd, but she said yes. And I've done several songs about baby births. I tell them, please mention anything you want in the song, so I go into it knowing they want me to say something about Uncle Joe or whatever.

AC: What's the strangest you've had to do?

JF: I did a birthday song for a guy, and the girlfriend wanted me to mention that he enjoys smoking meat.

AC: Smoked meats?

JF: Yeah. Not normally something I would put in a song.

AC: Do you feel like you know how to play guitar now?

JF: When I was first picking up guitar, I paid more attention to what it looked like than what it sounded like. I would see Pete Townshend do the windmill arm thing, and I thought that's cool, that's how you play guitar. That stuck with me more than learning chords.

Peel Slowly and See

"What is that?" a companion asked one night late last May as we stood outside of Mohawk. A familiar voice – well, more like a midrange screech – wafted from the inside stage. Investigating, we realized it was Jad Fair, playing his heart out solo, gray hair obscuring his face. We both squinted to make sure it was him. It was the voice that gave him away – having cleared the room – but remember that you've got to pay more attention to what it looks like than what it sounds like.

"Half Japanese played a show in Germany, and this guy comes over and says he wants an album," Fair relates. "I say, 'Well, we have these Jad Fair albums, then we also have these Half Japanese albums.' He says he wants Half Japanese, that he hates Jad Fair. So he buys the Half Japanese album, then asks me to sign it."

"Was he embarrassed?"

"Oh, yes." ■

HALF JAPANESE

Selected Discography

- 1/2 Gentlemen/Not Beasts** (Armageddon, 1980)
- Loud** (Armageddon, 1981)
- Horrible** (Press, 1982)
- Charmed Life** (50 Skidillion Watts, 1988)
- The Band That Would Be King** (50 Skidillion Watts, 1989)
- Fire in the Sky** (Safe House, 1993)
- Loud and Horrible** (Drag City, 2004)



JAD FAIR

Selected Discography

- Jad Fair & Kramer, Roll Out the Barrel** (Shimmy-Disc, 1988)
- Jad Fair & Daniel Johnston** (50 Skidillion Watts, 1989)
- Jad & Nao, Half Robot** (Paperhouse/Sakura Wrechord, 1993)
- Jad & Nao, Half Alien** (Sakura Wrechord, 1997)

Jad Fair & Yo La Tengo, Strange but True

- (Matador, 1998)
- 26 Monster Songs for Children** (Kill Rock Stars, 1998)
- Jad Fair & R. Stevie Moore, FairMoore** (Old Gold, 2002)
- Jad Fair & Teenage Fanclub, Words of Wisdom & Hope** (Alternative Tentacles, 2002)

Bibliography

- The Attack of Everything** (Slab-o-Concrete, 2000)
- Blue Skies and Monsters** (Map, 2006)



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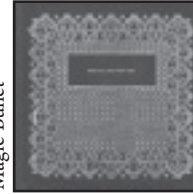
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WHERE MUSIC STILL MATTERS



MGMT

Oracular Spectacular (Columbia)

Disheveled Brooklynites Andrew VanWyngarden and Ben Goldwasser seem unlikely to offer up a scorching, beat-laden debut on a major label, but then the new millennium's grooves have already been entrusted to an odd assortment of freaks and geeks. Slicing Bowie's sound and vision with the bluest-eyed bits of Barry Gibb, *Oracular Spectacular* proves the pair playfully conscious of their untested success with the hipster-irony of opener "Time to Pretend": "I'll move to Paris, shoot some heroin, and fuck with the stars" harmonizes the duo with disaffected vocals reminiscent of Her Space Holiday. Underlying the mock-star attitude of modern futility lies MGMT's attempt to stem the inevitable tide of maturity. The anthemic carpe diem of "The Youth" juxtaposes the cryptic lost innocence of "Kids," which kicks with a skuzzy Ratatat riff, but the irresistible disco-glam groove of "Electric Feel" rises as a centerpiece. The ringing acoustic reverb of "Pieces of What" wraps youthful anxiety in T. Rex, while the prog wash of "4th Dimensional Transition" and "Of Moons, Birds & Monsters" hearken further 1970s UK. Helmed by Flaming Lips producer Dave Fridmann, MGMT's eccentric electro twists are well-managed, even as closing numbers "The Handshake" and "Future Reflections" bring the album full circle with a nostalgic regret at selling out that which they've hardly had time to cultivate.

★★★★

— Doug Freeman



DRIVE-BY TRUCKERS

Brighter Than Creation's Dark (New West)

The Drive-By Truckers create albums that sprawl, epics not consumed one song at a time but full listening experiences that arc like a premium-cable-channel series. At 19 songs and more than 75 minutes, *Brighter Than Creation's Dark* just barely slouches to excess, mainly because it finds the Athens, Ga., quartet at its most tuneful. The upheaval associated with losing guitarist/singer-songwriter Jason Isbell in 2007 has served them well. Bassist Shonna Tucker (Isbell's ex) makes her debut with three songs, one of which, "The Purgatory Line," shimmers and aches in all the right spaces. Mike Cooley contributes patented Stones rip "3 Dimes Down" and closes up the honky-tonks on "Lisa's Birthday." Of the nine tunes written by frontman Patterson Hood, the ragged glory of "That Man I Shot" and "Daddy Needs a Drink," a meditation on some kind of domestic bliss, amply display his deft range. Trimming a couple of throwaways, like the silly "Bob," wouldn't have hurt, and the Skynyrd factor the Truckers are known for is kept to a bare minimum. Yet as always the attitude is: Fuck it, this is where we are. Let it sprawl. Let it rock.

★★★★

— Jim Caligiuri

ROGUE WAVE
Asleep at Heaven's Gate (Brushfire)

The difference between Rogue Wave's third LP and their second, 2005's *Descended Like Vultures* (Sub Pop), is clear from the first note of the opening track, "Harmonium." Where earlier "Bird on a Wire" swooped and swayed melodically, the *Asleep at Heaven's Gate* kick-off starts out with an allegro-paced drum solo and a long instrumental introduction that sets a tone for the entire album. The Oakland quartet, now on Jack Johnson's Brushfire imprint, has a greater sense of urgency, sharper edges, and a more mature sound overall. And yet, tunes like "Chicago x 12" and "Christians in Black" remain relentlessly pretty, while the opening strains of "Own Your Own Home" embrace the ugly, occasional discordances of life. All bands should demonstrate this kind of growth between releases, resulting in a Janus-like miniepic that encompasses the beauty that came before but also welcomes the vagaries of the future. **(Rogue Wave matures at the Parish Friday, Jan. 25.)**

★★★★

— Melanie Haupt



WEEN

La Cucaracha (Chocodog/Rounder)

Half the fun of listening to Ween is trying to discern how much gravitas informs their strange and singular musical ambiguity song by song. Next to 2003's comparatively straight-shooting *Quebec*, Ween's first studio album in four years is flush with quick right turns. It's easy enough to ferret out intentions when Mickey "Dean Ween" Melchiondo bellows, "She's gonna be my cock professor" on big, dumb rock opus "My Own Bare Hands," but what about "Woman and Man"? The 10-minute guitar-shredding epic bears more than a passing resemblance to Santana, but is it truly a soul sacrifice? Likewise, "Spirit Walker," with its string arrangement and lyrics, wouldn't be entirely out of place on a John Denver LP. By the time David Sanborn shows up to play cocktail sax on "Your Party," you don't know whether to laugh or sway in time to the music.

★★★

— Greg Beets



smoky wanderlust. "Ramblin' (Wo)man" sluices Hank Williams with a sultry, feminine surge, while Bob Dylan's "I Believe in You" receives an electric jolt. Strangely enough, Marshall infuses the songs with such personal ache that their emotional rawness can overpower; "Woman Left Lonely" quells Janis Joplin's ferocity with resignation, and Billie Holiday's "Don't Explain" is pure aural depression. Original "Song to Bobby" missteps with narcissism far removed from Dylan's "Song to Woody," and traditional "Lord, Help the Poor & Needy" sags without a glint of conviction, but Marshall recovers with George Jackson's "Aretha, Sing One for Me" and unrestrained reworking of her own "Metal Heart."

★★★

— Doug Freeman

BABYSHAMBLES
Shotter's Nation (Astralwerks)

Not even the Clash's Mick Jones, who hosted both Libertines albums into Britshod culthood, could salvage Babyshambles' gutter bound 2005 debut LP *Down in Albion*. Free of his former band's birthplace, Pete Doherty now exacts revenge on *Shotter's Nation*, whose opening briar "Carry on up the Morning" rings instantly Libertine, as does the stumbling tempo and frontman's stutter-step lyricism on "Side of the Road." Rife with riff, *Shotter's* jangle-n-crank revs with "Delivery," which posts the album's title while piercing another Doherty melody "straight from the heart of misery." Curb-kicking vulnerability ("Unstookie Titled"), bass driven bluster ("French Dog Blues"), and the celebrity shuffle of guitarist Mick Withnall's hollow-body cabaret ("There She Goes") include not a single rotter among them. Folk surgeon Bert Jansch carves a stream of acoustic crystal upon which Doherty's sordid past washes up on closing farewell "Lost Art of Murder," the best shot on *Shotter's Nation*. Damon Albarn isn't Ray Davies yet.

★★★

— Raoul Hernandez



THE HIVES
The Black and White Album (A&M/Octave)

Despite uneven attempts to branch beyond their explosive pop-punk, the Hives' fourth full-length ultimately delivers the goods. Lesser bands would kill for just one number as charged and catchy as "Tick Tick Boom," but the impeccably dressed Swedish quintet boasts several. "Try It Again" is jet-propelled by a cheerleader-styled chorus, while the Pharrell Williams-produced (non-Buddy Holly cover) "Well All Right!" swings like a mod progeny of Ray Davies and Paul Weller. The album stumbles on "T.H.E.H.I.V.E.S.," a dance-oriented contrivance that sounds like a N.E.R.D. outtake, but the unabashed teeth-rotting silliness of "Giddy Up!" is at least as amusing as a high school pep rally skit. With that out of its system, the Hives get back to work on "Square One Here I Come," a dynamic lament on the rat race. Even when they misfire, the next hook is only seconds away.

★★★

— Greg Beets



IN BOX
PINK FLOYD

Oh by the Way (Capitol/EMI)

Trapped in a mirror on the front of *Oh by the Way*, the late Syd Barrett's shadowy influence lingers long after his estrangement from Pink Floyd following the UK quartet's playfully psychedelic 1967 debut, *The Piper at the Gates of Dawn*. Housing the band's complete studio album discography, remastered and repackaged as miniature replicas of the original LPs (posters and postcards included but no bonus materials), the 16-CD box set proves the proverbial window into Barrett's creation. His cryptic composition "Jugland Blues" closes the following year's *A Saucerful of Secrets*, an exploratory work that balances prismatic pop ("Let There Be More Light") with solar flares ("Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun"), while Barrett's "Astronomy Domine" opens the powerful live half of double album *Ummagumma*, recorded in Birmingham and Manchester in June 1969. Then, of course, there's 1975's poignant tribute to the departed founder,



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LEAD STORY

Joshua Hoge, a schizophrenic confined to Washington's Western State Hospital, is claiming at least part of his late mother's estate even though he's the one who killed her in 1999. Washington law prevents profiting from the "unlawful" and "willful" taking of another's life, but Hoge was found "not guilty by reason of insanity," and the legal issue is still unsettled. Furthermore, according to a January report in *The Seattle Times*, it appears that the mother's estate consists almost totally of the \$800,000 the estate won in a lawsuit against a county health clinic because it was negligent in delaying Joshua's medications, which probably led to his killing her.

CAN'T POSSIBLY BE TRUE

Convenience-store manager Carol Mendenhall told reporters in December that among the police citations she had recently received for a disturbance at her home in Dibble, Okla., (pop. 282) was one for allowing her four goats to have sex in her front yard in public view, which was illegal in Dibble. She admitted that her billy goat, Adam, had been attending to three females who were in heat at the same time. (The city council has since repealed the ordinance, following a campaign Mendenhall conducted.)

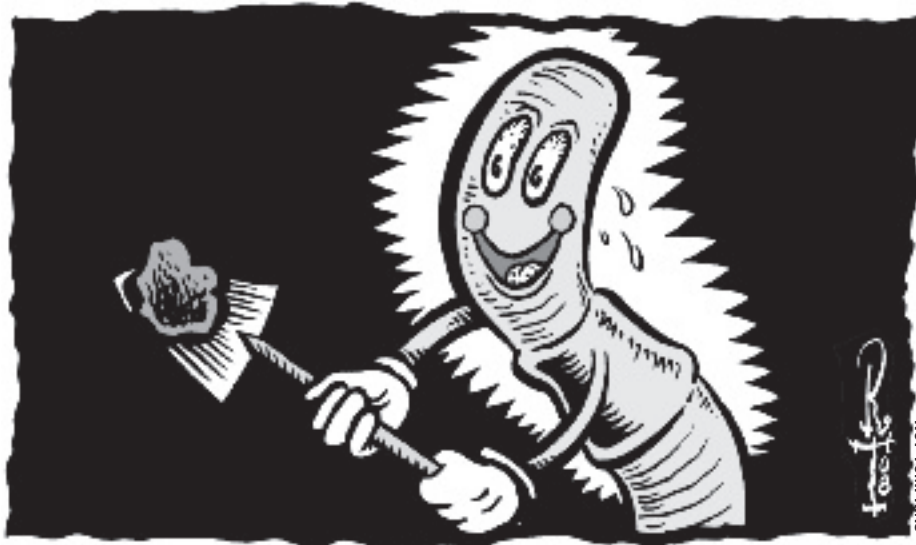
INEXPLICABLE

Police in Mount Lebanon, Pa., said in December that no illegal acts were involved, but some parents still want to know why the nondenominational Christian Mount Lebanon Young Life club had staged a teenagers' social event during which boys wore adult diapers, bibs, and bonnets and sat in girls' laps while being spoon-fed. Said youth minister O.J. Wandrisco, the skits were not "dirty," but "to break down the walls and let [the kids] have fun." A previous skit involved, according to a parent, kids eating chocolate pudding out of diapers.

In November, accused armed robber Steven McDermott, 49, was finally captured after leading California Highway Patrol officers on a high-speed chase in a commandeered taxicab, causing two minor collisions before McDermott fled on foot. When McDermott was finally cornered, officers said, he reached toward his waistband, leading one officer to shoot him, though the object McDermott was reaching for turned out not to be the gun used in the robbery but a sex toy, tethered to his belt loop.

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

BY CHUCK SHEPHERD



Mr. Coll Bell, a New Zealander who invented a composting toilet supposedly superior to a septic system and who wanted permission from the Auckland Regional Council to install one at a campground, said an ARC bureaucrat had queried him on whether the worms he uses would be traumatized by the volume of work required in the annual two-week period of intensive campground use. Coll told Agence France-Presse in December that vermiculture expert Patricia Naidu had assured him that the worms would be "happy."

CHUTZPAH!

Ingrates: 1) "Get in here and do your [word omitted by the *Allentown Morning Call*] jobs, you dumb [omitted]," said Donald Reidnauer Sr., 56, after summoning police to investigate a BB pellet fired at his house in Richland Township, Pa., in November. "I pay taxes. I am your boss. Get in here and do your jobs or I'll have to kick your [omitted]." Reidnauer then lunged at officers and was arrested. 2) Marjorie Kelley, 50, called 911 in Sarasota, Fla., in January after feeling chest pains, but she requested that no sirens or lights be used by the ambulance. When EMTs arrived using sirens and lights, Kelley reportedly jumped up and chased them down the street, wielding a rolling pin, according to WWSB-TV.

INJUDICIOUS JUDGES

In Dhanbad, India, Judge Sunil Kumar Singh has been trying to settle a 20-year-old land dispute involving temples of the Hindu gods Ram and Hanuman and has become impatient, according to a December BBC News dispatch from Patna. One priest claims the land belongs to him, but most locals say the temples own it, and Judge Singh, exasperated, recently placed ads in local newspapers asking Ram and Hanuman to come to court personally and address the issue. Judges Fond of Probation: 1) An unnamed Children's Court judge in Melbourne, Australia, sentenced eight boys to probation in November even though he had found them guilty of sexually assaulting a teenage girl, setting her hair on fire, spitting and urinating on her, and filming

the episode. (There was no jail time, but the youths were assigned to a rehabilitation program teaching "positive sexuality"!)

2) Britain's Judge Francis Gilbert in November sentenced a 28-year-old woman to probation for her eighth conviction for false claims of rape, involving seven men over a six-year period. In one case, police said, she called them "every two or three days" to keep the investigation alive.

A Jury Fond of Probation: A Brownsville, Texas, jury in December found Traci Rhode guilty of shooting her husband to death in his sleep but rejected the prosecutor's recommended sentence of 60 years, opting instead for 10 years' probation and a \$10,000 fine. (She did serve two days in jail after the guilty verdict was announced, but before sentencing, but Rhode's lawyer was outraged even at that: "Can you imagine the shock," he told the jury, "of being locked up for two days in a 4-by-8 cell with cement walls, in isolation?") Texas subsequently passed a law banning probation as the punishment for murder.

PEOPLE WITH ISSUES

Serious Substance Abuse: 1) Bill Long, a former member of the county council in Daytona Beach, Fla., was charged with DUI in December after he, allegedly speeding, hit another car. "When officers arrived at the scene," reported WKMG-TV (Orlando), "[Long] was found drinking ... suntan lotion." 2) Joseph Cardillo, reportedly a certified therapist in tantra, kundalini, and other spiritual arts, was arrested by sheriff's deputies in Boulder, Colo., in November for, among other things, drinking an 8-year-old girl's urine, which he allegedly caught in his cupped hands, according to a report in Boulder's *Daily Camera*.

PEOPLE WITH TOO MUCH TIME ON THEIR HANDS

1) According to a report in Britain's *Bolton News* in December, the House of Lords has recently been discussing the need to reduce the thickness of slices of bread, which Baroness Gardener of Parkes said would help alleviate Britons' alarming levels of obesity. 2) TV's Weather Channel recently released a CD comprising 12 of what it called the most popular jazz selections that play on its "Local on the 8s" weather screens (tunes presumably requested by those who watch the Weather Channel often enough to actually have favorites).

Visit Chuck Shepherd daily at newssoftheweird.blogspot.com

(or www.newssoftheweird.com). Send your Weird News to:

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SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

The *Austin Chronicle* is published every Thursday. Info is due the Monday of the week prior to the issue date. **The deadline for the Feb. 8 issue is Monday, Jan. 28.** Include name of event, date, time, location, price, phone number(s), a description, and any available photos or artwork. Include SASE for return of materials.

Send submissions to the attention of the appropriate writer (see roster below). Mail to the *Chronicle*, PO Box 49066, Austin 78765, fax 458-6910, or e-mail:

Kate X Messer or Kate Getty (The Gay Place): gayplace@austinchronicle.com.

Mark Fagan (Sports): gameplans@austinchronicle.com.

Nora Ankrum (everything else): calendar@austinchronicle.com.

Questions? Contact Wayne Alan Brenner, listings editor, 454-5766 or brenner@austinchronicle.com.

the GAY place

BY KATE X MESSER AND KATE GETTY

HRC AUSTIN GALA DINNER New year! New date! New location! New attitude! This is the **Human Rights Campaign's** big'un, the once-a-year gala (previously held in mid-March during spring break and South by Southwest)

where local folks, like **Kitty** from Foodies and **Lloyd Doggett**, are recognized for their contributions to the cause. What cause? Equality. Justice for all.

And a fabulous wardrobe. (We threw in that last part.) Silent auction, live entertainment. Y'all heard of **Ruthie Foster**, **Josh Duffy**, and **Gabriel DeJoy**? Oh, boy. We have.

And after the **Afterparty** (the hotel lobby?), hosted by AGLCC, with \$35 tickets (for those without gala tix) that include an HRC membership. Sat., Jan. 26, 6pm. *Hilton Hotel Downtown*, 500 E. Fourth, 800/494-TIXS (\$492). \$200 (\$35, afterparty or free with gala ticket). austindinner@hrc.org, www.hrcaustin.org, www.boxofficetickets.com/hrc.

POWERHOUSE OF PRIDE United we stand. Divided, we don't ... thus, eight local LGBT-affiliated groups in Austin have banded together to form the **Pride Coalition**. (Parenthetical alert!) Check out all the acronyms standing together for change! Power in numbers (and letters!): **AGLCC** (Austin Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce), **ALLGO** (Austin Latina/o Lesbian/Gay Organization), **Atticus Circle** (y'all need an acronym!), **PFLAG** (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), **ET** (Equality Texas), **HRC** (Human Rights Campaign), **OY Austin** (Out Youth), and **TACT** (Transgender Advocates of Central Texas). community@aglcc.org, www.aglcc.org/75/strengthen_the_community.htm.

DIGGIN' IN THE GARDEN Tennessee Williams is pretty gay. And this play, no doubt, follows suit. "Garden District: Something Unspoken"/"Suddenly Last Summer" are two of Tennessee's wee pieces, directed here by **Norman Blumensaadt**, and featuring you-may-have-heard-of-her **Rebecca Havemeyer** (aka Paul Soileau, don't ask, we told). Look, it's fit for queens. And full of 'em. Fri.-Sat., 8pm. Through Feb. 2. *Austin Playhouse*, 3601 S. Congress, Bldg. C, 476-0084.

BLOGGIN' THE GAY PLACE Come visit us in cybersphere. Check for a slew of Louisiana and Texas **Mardi Gras** fun on the **Gay Place Blog** and on our design blog, **Chronique**. Maybe win yourself a nice unicorn or T-shirt or something. Or go naked for all we care. 454-5766. gayplace@austinchronicle.com, austinchronicle.com/gayplaceblog, austinchronicle.com/chronique.

WHEN (MORE) PIGS FLY They told us more than 120 full costume changes in 90 minutes. Is that even possible, Blake Yelavich? Do show. Do show. Here is one fabulously gay costume musical, ready for the taking. Through Jan. 26. Thu., 8pm; Fri.-Sat., 7:30 & 10pm. *Arts on Real Theatre*, 2826 Real (behind Flatbed Press), 472-2787. www.artsonreal.com.

TUESDAYS TOGETHER This last-Tuesday-of-every-month at rotating locations event for **Human Rights Campaign** is back for January. Check the HRC website for more info on events and news about the big gala! 289-2198. info@hrcaustin.org, www.hrc.org/austin.

PORGY & BESS DINNER ON CATFISH ROW Take your pick of one of eight show nights and get NOLA-fied! TRIO presents a preshow feast where you may ravish a grand spread of three beautifully designed courses (by award-winning culinary artistes) to celebrate the Big Easy inspiration of Monsoir Steakley's re-imagined take on *Porgy & Bess*. Catfish Row (of Charleston, S.C., in the original) transforms into New Orleans for this Zach Scott Mardi Gras-fueled version of the compelling (and often controversial) opera. Come taste the inspiration! The package includes valet parking and a gift certificate for spa services. Show tickets sold separately. And don't miss the **Opening-Night Afterparty**. Preshow dinner at TRIO: Jan 25-27, 30-31, Feb. 1-3; Grand Opening Afterparty at Austin Music Hall, Sat., Jan 26. TRIO at the Four Seasons, 98 San Jacinto 685-8300. \$49. www.opentable.com.

WILDE PARTY, O LAWD, I'M ON MY WAY A Mardi Gras themed preshow mixer with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, King Cakes, and beads, beads, beads, hosted by L Style G Style's **Lynn Yeldell** and **Alisa Weldon**. Just a two-block walk to Catfish Row, aka the French Quarter, aka the Austin Music Hall, where you will then revel in all the glory that is Gershwin's American folk opera reinvented a la Zach Scott, *Porgy & Bess*. Thu., Jan. 31, 5pm. Rain on 4th, 217 W. Fourth, 494-1150. www.rainon4th.com.

THEIR SHIT IS HOT The last day of the first month of the new year, and what else would you want to be doing? Feasting your musical senses on talented kids who know how to rock. Khatie and her gang the **Hot as Shits** play with **Nicky Click**, who Austin is very, very, very, very lucky to welcome to our third coast. Live music queer capital. And yippee. Thu., Jan. 31, 9pm. Chain Drive, 504 Willow, 480-9017.

GP LIKES TO TEASE It's just a teaser, but keep your eyes peeled for 'mo' info, and yes, now is the time to buy your tickets. For not one, but two, homo happenings on the horizon. First. Dance. **The Glamorous Life: Baile XXIII**. Sat., Feb. 9, 8pm, Mexican American Cultural Center, 600 River, 472-2001 x101 or lorenzo@allgo.org. \$30 (\$25, advance). That's a cha-cha-cha. Now, what about love? It sucks, doesn't it? How about some kings and queens to really let you have it. **Kings N Things** presents: **Love Is a Four-Letter Word**: Fri., Feb. 8, 9pm, Elysium, 705 Red River, 478-2979, 21 and over, \$10. Everyone likes a li'l tease now and again, don't they?

UPRISE! FOR VALENTINE'S They ask for what they want: divas, dominatrices, kings, queens, and coquettes. Already feels warm, down there. **UpRise! Productions** is looking for volunteers and performers for their sexy and sassy **Hot Thang!** (Haven't heard yet? It's a sex-positive valentine's ball at the Monarch Event Center.) Wanna help usher, set up, strike, and perform in the interactive maze. Yes, we said "interactive maze." Interested? Give a call. 928-5864.

WHOA. WET MANTIES. New year, new nights at the old bars. So you've started getting lunch at **Charlie's**. But Monday nights, you can get dessert. Second helpings, even. And get your undies in a wad. (In a good way.) Welcome to the **Lobo Andrew Christian Wet Underwear Contest** (oh, he of world-famous **Show-It Technology**), every first night of the week. Why not? Because boys, having a case of the Mondays ... well, it can get pretty hard. And when it does, you want it to look good. Mondays. *Charlie's*, 1301 Lavaca, 474-6481.

GAYRIBBEAN HALLOWEEN CRUISE 2008 Yes, it's January. That gives you about nine months to get that perfect costume for all the perfect parties aboard (and ashore), for this spooky cruise. Sail from Galveston aboard *Carnival's Conquest* to Montego Bay, Grand Cayman and Cozumel., 877-560-8318. From \$568. info@gayribbean.com, www.gayribbeancruises.com.

For more gay stuff, see *Calendar* online: austinchronicle.com. Send gay bits to gayplace@austinchronicle.com.



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Debra Winger -- March 5

Texas Monthly's Evan Smith interviews Debra Winger to discover why she left Hollywood at the height of her career. The interview will be followed by a screening of one of her films!



Pat Metheny Trio -- March 4

One of the most successful and critically acclaimed jazz musicians to come out of the 1970s and '80s.

Upcoming Shows...

Madeline and the Bad Hat -- February 3

Pilobolus -- February 6-7

TexARTS' Damn Yankees -- Feb 28 - March 1

Louis CK -- April 4

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This project is funded in part by the City of Austin through the Cultural Arts Division, by a grant from Texas Commission on the Arts, and is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

HISTORY. PERFORMED NIGHTLY.

Saturday 2 6

AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN & BOYS CONFERENCE This monthly gathering brings young and old together to resolve important issues facing African-Americans. Today, you'll be celebrating the 25th anniversary of Pearce Middle School, and parents, educators, and students are welcome to attend the day's workshops and seminars featuring special guests Austin Police Department Assistant Police Chief Sam Holt, Austin Police monitor Cliff Brown, and keynote speaker Chance Lewis of Texas A&M's College of Education and Human Development. This month's theme: dropout prevention. 10am. Pearce Middle School, 6401 N. Hampton, 585-6696. Free.

★ ALL-CITY MARIACHI FESTIVAL Former Sen. Gonzalo Barrientos hosts today's festivities featuring mariachi bands from schools throughout AISD and other Texas school districts. 7pm. Mexican American Cultural Center, 600 River St., 414-4489.

ARTIST'S MARKET Most Saturdays, 10am-6pm (check website for changes). Mother Egan's Irish Pub, 715 W. Sixth, 535-5761. Free. www.downtownartismarket.com.

AUSTIN AREA LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS hosts a talk this evening from employment law attorney Sheila Gladstone, who'll present the **Inns and Outs of the Texas Public Information Act**. 6pm. Central Market North, 4001 N. Lamar, 451-6710. www.lwvaustin.org.

AUSTIN FARMERS' MARKET Saturdays, 9am-1pm. Republic Square Park, 422 Guadalupe, 974-6700. Free. www.austinfarmersmarket.org.

BIRDING FIELD TRIP TO COMMONS FORD RANCH This park's winter birds include 106 species, making it one of the most diverse areas in the city's park system. Dress accordingly; you will get the chance to bushwack for sparrows. 7am-noon. Commons Ford Ranch, Commons Ford Road, just west of Bee Caves, off Cuernavaca, 300-BIRD. Free. fieldtrips@travisaudubon.org. www.travisaudubon.org.

BULL CREEK PRESERVE ENTRY PERMIT HIKE Today's hike (ranked easy to moderate) is required if you hope to earn an entry permit for hiking in Bull Creek Preserve during the upcoming breeding season of the endangered golden-cheeked warbler (March 1-July 31). 1-3pm. Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge, 24518 FM 1431, just past Lago Vista, 263-6437. gail.mcglamery@ci.austin.tx.us. www.cityofaustin.org/water/wildland/bullcreek.htm.

★ CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY TEXAS OPEN HOUSE In anticipation of Concordia's impending relocation to a new campus, today's events will commemorate the current campus, which has been home to the school since 1926. The festivities kick off with a prayer walk and building tour, followed by a chapel service, art opening, Austin Children's Choir performance, storytelling for kids, and basketball games featuring Concordia's men's and women's teams as well as an alumni team. University President Tom Cedel hosts a special reception to close out the day's events. 10am-6pm. Concordia University, 3400 N. I-35, 486-1926. Free. www.concordia.edu/celebrationevents.

FAREWELL, PROPER GANDER The 9-year-old Austin zine is closing shop but not before this one last hoorah. Join Delicious Foods (featuring Brown Whornet's Peter Stopchinski), Fambly, Indian Jewelry, and Attic Ted in wishing them a final farewell. 10pm-2am. Scoot Inn and Bier Garten, 1308 E. Fourth, 392-4728. \$5. atticted@yahoo.com, www.atticted.com.

FRANKEN BIKE All are welcome to buy, sell, or trade bike parts and gear at this friendly once-a-month swap meet. Location changes monthly; see website for details. Noon-4pm. Free. www.frankenbike.org.

HAND TALK This weekly sign language class for hearing and nonhearing participants kicks off with a special storytime session for kids (1-2pm) before the adult session begins at 2pm. Saturdays, 2-3pm. Mitchie's Gallery, 6406 N. I-35 #2800, 923-9523. Free. www.mitchie.com.

★ HARRY BELAFONTE Who better to wrap up the Austin Area Heritage Council's series of events honoring Martin Luther King Jr. than Harry Belafonte, a former friend to the reverend and a lifelong supporter of human rights, beginning with his work with the Peace Corps under JFK and continuing with his civil rights activism, his pivotal role in organizing "We Are the World," his Goodwill ambassadorship under UNICEF, and much more. The legendary entertainer, humanitarian, and activist will deliver the **Live the Dream** keynote address today, accompanied by a performance from Grammy Award-winning a cappella ensemble **Sweet Honey in the Rock**. 6:30-8:30pm. Riverbend Centre, 4214 Capital of TX Hwy. N., 327-9416. \$25 (\$15, hearing impaired). Tickets available online and at Mitchie's Gallery, 6406 N. I-35. www.mikcelebration.com.

INTRO TO THE NIA TECHNIQUE No experience necessary. Call to register. 1-2:30pm. JoyMoves, 2501 Capital of TX Hwy. S., 328-4440. Free. www.joymoves.com.

ORIENTATION FOR FREE COMPUTER CLASSES CTTC offers preparatory, beginner, intermediate, and advanced computer classes for adults Monday-Thursday evenings, with weekday-evening and Saturday-afternoon drop-in lab times available along with professional development seminars.

day TRIPS

BY GERALD E. MCLEOD

The **National Museum of the Pacific War** in Fredericksburg hosts an in-depth study of the Pacific Theater of Operations of World War II. Through photographs, artifacts, and stories, the exhibits cover the era from the causes of the war to the ultimate end at Nagasaki, Japan.

"More than anything else," says Dolores Young, public relations officer for the museum, "it is the story about the people who fought the war." From the trenches to the home front, few details of the war are overlooked.

Originally called the Admiral Nimitz Museum, the history display honored all of the service personnel in the Pacific and was housed in the old Nimitz Hotel. The commander of the U.S. fleet in the Pacific, Chester W. Nimitz, spent much of his early childhood with his grandfather at the hotel.

Charles H. Nimitz Sr. went to sea with the German merchant seaman as a 14-year-old. He landed in Charleston, S.C., in 1844, and was among the first German settlers to arrive in Fredericksburg in 1846. By 1855, grandpa Nimitz had opened a six-room hotel on the road from the Gulf Coast to California.

The business prospered, as Nimitz offered travelers the only hot baths between San Antonio and San Diego. The hotel grew to include a basement brewery, a concert/dance hall, and one of the best meals west of the Mississippi. By the mid-1870s, the hotel had a three-story front that resembled a steamboat.

The future fleet commander was born on Feb. 24, 1885, a few blocks from the Nimitz Hotel. After his father died, Chester and his mother moved into the hotel, and his grandfather became a father figure in his life. Although his mother remarried and moved to Kerrville, the old man remained a strong influence on his grandson. Nimitz moved to the Naval Academy in 1901 and never lived in the Texas Hill Country again.

By 1963, the hotel was sold by the family and was closed. The steamboat front had been removed in the 1920s, and the building had fallen into disrepair. A group of concerned citizens saved the building from the wrecking ball in 1966. Three years later it became a state historic site, and by 1981 it was being administered by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

For many years the museum was a dark maze of exhibits honoring the men and women who fought in the Pacific Theater. The one bright spot was the Japanese Garden donated by the Japanese and built by Japanese gardeners in 1976. The beautifully kept sanctuary remains a monument to the peace shared between the two countries.

When President George H.W. Bush cut the ribbon to the George Bush Gallery in 1999, he opened a new phase in the museum's



development. Most of the exhibits were moved out of the cramped quarters in the hotel and the building was remodeled to more closely resemble its original floor plan.

In 2005, the museum became a Texas Historical Commission property administered by the Admiral Nimitz Foundation. ("Day Trips" No. 861 mistakenly said the property was transferred between state agencies in 2007.) The foundation has greatly expanded the museum's fundraising and educational programs.

The Admiral Nimitz Museum is now five museums rolled into one - the Nimitz collection, the George Bush Gallery, the Memorial Courtyard, the Japanese Garden of Peace, and the Pacific Combat Zone (a collection of war machinery). Experiencing the exhibit feels like walking through a history book. Each major battle of the Pacific War is highlighted with details and illustrated with equipment and photographs. Not only does the collection include a miniature Japanese submarine captured at Pearl Harbor and a PT boat, but also soldiers' letters home, women's underwear woven from whatever materials were available, and an American flag made by POWs. It is an inspiring journey back in time when uncommon bravery was a common virtue.

The National Museum of the Pacific War is at 340 E. Main St. in Fredericksburg. Doors open daily (except Thanksgiving and Christmas) at 9am and close at 5pm. Museum admission for adults begins at \$7, with discounts for students, veterans, and seniors. Admission to the grounds is free. For information, call 830/997-8600 or go to www.nimitz-museum.org.

864th in a series. Day Trips, Vol. 2, a book of "Day Trips" 101-200, is available for \$8.95, plus \$3.05 for shipping, handling, and tax. Mail to: Day Trips, PO Box 33284, South Austin, TX 78704.

out of town

BY GERALD E. MCLEOD

ARTIST OF THE YEAR SHOW showcases works of the local artists distinguished as Artist of the Month throughout 2007. Through Jan. 31. New Braunfels Art League Gallery, 239 W. San Antonio St., New Braunfels, 830/629-8022. Free. www.newbraunfelsartleague.com.

SOUTHWESTERN EXPOSITION LIVESTOCK SHOW & RODEO The nation's oldest stock show offers something for everybody with carnival games and rides, barns full of blue-ribbon animals, and the world's original indoor rodeo. Through Feb. 3. Will Rogers Memorial Center, Fort Worth, 817/877-2400. www.fwstockshowrodeo.com.

COWBOY MARDI GRAS puts a country twist on Cajun-style music and food. Fri.-Sun., Jan. 25-27. Downtown Bandera, 800/364-3833. www.bandercowboycapital.com.

WAY OUT WINERIES MARDI GRAS ROAD TRIP lets the good times roll with Cajun food, wine tastings, music, and Mardi Gras beads. Fri.-Sun., Jan. 25-27. From Lampasas to Comanche to Granbury, 325/356-9100. \$25, per couple (good for eight wineries). tina@brennanvineyards.com, www.wayoutwineries.org.

LUCKENBACH BLUES FESTIVAL chases the winter blues away with a rocking show that includes W.C. Clark, Johnny Nichols, Shelly King, and more. Sat. & Sun., Jan. 26. Luckenbach, 830/997-3224 or 888/311-8990. www.luckenbachtexas.com.

ARTS ENCOUNTERS AT BENINIS presents an afternoon with Vermont sculptor Pat Musick, Grammy Award winning soprano Cynthia Clawson, a concert of Tibetan bowls by Kenny Parker, and more. Sat. & Sun., Jan. 26-27, 1-30pm. Benini Foundation Galleries and Sculpture Ranch, 377 Shiloh Rd., Johnson City, 830/868-5244. Free. www.artseventsatbeninis.com.

WHOLISTIC RODEO features information, tools, products, and services that support health and wellness, personal and spiritual growth, and ecology. Jan. 26-27. Sat., 10am-6pm; Sun., 11am-5pm. Inn of the Hills, 1001 Junction Hwy., Kerrville, 877/454-3411. \$10 for two-day pass. www.wholisticrodeo.com.

INDIAN ARTIFACT & COLLECTIBLE SHOW displays arrowheads, books, jewelry, pottery, and more. Sat., Jan. 26. Pioneer Pavilion at Lady Bird Johnson Park, Fredericksburg, 830/626-5561. richard.mentzer@sbcglobal.net.

EXHIBIT: FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF COLUMBIA TRAGEDY presents two large models of the Columbia and a history of the NASA program in honor of the seven astronauts who lost their lives when the space shuttle disintegrated over East Texas on Feb. 1, 2003. Through Feb. 10. Mon.-Fri., 9am-5pm; Sat., 10am-5pm; Sun., 1-5pm. Wyatt Building next to City Hall, downtown Nacogdoches, 936/468-6100. Free.

Attendance at an orientation session like tonight's (scheduled twice monthly) is a mandatory pre-requisite. *noon-2pm. Reagan High School, 7104 Berkman, 323-6773 x122. Free. www.skillpointalliance.org.*

PERMACULTURE BASICS WEEKEND kicks off this spring's Permaculture Design Certificate course taught by the Austin Permaculture Guild. The series will teach you how to create sustainable human environments through gardening, green building, activism, alternative business models, and more. Completion of the entire course will earn you your certification, but you may also choose just to attend individual classes. See www.permie.us for further details. *Sat.-Sun., Jan. 26-27, 9am-6pm. TreeFolks, 10803 Platt, 619-5363. \$120 (\$500, entire course). austinperm@permie.us.*

SAHAJA YOGA MEDITATION aims to help you achieve balance, inner peace, and resistance to stress, depression, and anxiety. *Saturdays, 11am-noon. Austin Recreation Center, 1301 Shoal Creek Blvd., 828-0129. Free. www.austinsahajayoga.org.*

SAVE BIG BEND: LETTER-WRITING PARTIES The Texas Department of Transportation wants to build a truck corridor right through Big Bend National Park. Apparently, they're hoping exhaust and traffic congestion will be the park's biggest new tourist draw. If you think otherwise, join fellow clean-air breathers today to write letters asking TxDOT to reconsider its plans. (Interested in host-

ing a letter-writing party yourself? Send an e-mail to bigbendletters@yahoo.com. Or just call TxDOT at 800/517-4652, and tell them what you think.) *1-3pm. Jo's Coffee: 1300 S. Congress or 242 W. Second. www.stopthecrucks.org.*

SEEDS TO STARTS WORKSHOP Learn about the bio-intensive gardening method as you help the Green Corn Project folks prep their spring gardens. Call for details and registration. *10am-1:30pm. Free. www.greencornproject.org.*

SELF-DEFENSE SEMINAR Designed to be simple and effective, this class promises you'll remember what you've learned when you most need it. *1-3pm. Martial Way Academy, 160-E Ohlen Rd., 821-3637. Free. martialway@hotmail.com, www.martialway.net.*

SPRINGTIME IN JANUARY Join the American Association of University Women for a light buffet and fashion show benefiting the **Legal Advocacy Fund**. *10:30am. Church of Christ, 310 W. 43rd, 338-1254. \$20.*

STARS ON PARADE Join students and faculty of Huston-Tillotson for an evening of music, fashion and talent shows, food, door prizes, and more to benefit the **United Negro College Fund**. You'll also be watching a screening of *An Evening of Stars Tribute to Smokey Robinson*. Call or e-mail to RSVP. *6-9pm. Huston-Tillotson University, 900 Chicon, 505-3073. \$25. events@htu.edu, www.htu.edu.*

ZILKER BOTANICAL GARDENS VOLUNTEER MEETING Anyone interested in providing tours of Zilker's gardens is welcome to attend today's meeting. *10am. Zilker Botanical Garden, 2220 Barton Springs Rd., 477-8672. zilkerdocents@aol.com.*

UT SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS SUMMIT (See Friday.)

ART OPENINGS (See Visual Arts.)
4 Walls, Art on 5th, Concordia University, Laura Reynolds Gallery

SPECIAL SCREENINGS (See Film Listings.)
Rocky Horror Picture Show @ Alamo Village, 12mid

MUSIC (See Music Listings.)
Rattletree Copa Bar & Grill
AI Stewart Cactus Cafe
Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings Antone's
The Slackers Flamingo Cantina
Golden Arm Trio Lamberts

ART & ARCHITECTURE EXHIBIT

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- Milan, Lake Como & Venice - June 30/July 8

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Les Liaisons Dangereuses

Austin Playhouse,
through Feb. 24
Running time:
2 hrs, 45 mins

Christopher Hampton's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, adapted from the novel of the same title, is a brilliantly written play – a tragedy masquerading as a comedy of manners. The language is delicious to hear, and the characters' machinations are fun to watch. Underneath its shiny surface, this world is savage. In the end, every single character is destroyed in one dark way or another. Austin Playhouse's lively production makes for a satisfying night at the theatre. The gorgeous costumes, the harpsichord intervals, and the smart set feed together into a world that exposes the cruelty of a mannered culture. Although some of the script's nuances are lost, all the broad strokes are in place.

Set in Paris in the 1780s, the play centers around the relationship between the Marquise de Merteuil and the Vicomte to Valmont, two born plotters. When we meet them, they are devising their next schemes. Merteuil hopes to get revenge on a former lover, while Valmont aspires to ruin a virtuous woman. Over the course of the play, their plots weave together, and they are both partners and opponents. One brilliant aspect of the script is the way it makes the audience complicit in the schemers' crimes. In one scene, a young virgin is essentially raped by Valmont, leaving us horrified by him and by the scenario. In the very next scene, however, Merteuil convinces the girl (and the audience) that this is a good thing, that in the end she will find great freedom in the arts of lovemaking and deceit. We find ourselves accepting things that should not be accepted. Such is often the case when the hero and heroine of a play are also the villains. They take pleasure in the destruction of lives, scoring each new victory against their previous conquests. Ultimately, Valmont and Merteuil are not above the effects of their own games. In discovering his own capacity to love, Valmont sets in motion his eventual (and bizarrely sudden) death. Like a cockroach, Merteuil is one of the few creatures left standing after everything has been destroyed, but one gets the sense that she has not made herself happy.



The direction by Don and Lara Toner creates a cohesive world. The elaborate costumes by Buffy Manners match the set, which is sparse but well-employed. The few pieces of furniture and a changing backdrop serve to create many different settings. The result is a monochromatic mural of manners – little splashes of color here and there, but mostly one big cage. The cast is strong and though there was some fumbling of the language on opening night, overall the actors live very comfortably and believably in this other world. Babs George plays Merteuil, and the production rests happily on her shoulders. She is so vibrant and ruthless, even in silence, that it is hard to take your eyes off her. As Valmont, Gray Haddock is improbably charming. His wig is a mess, and he is not confident in his posturing, but what Haddock lacks in physical prowess, he makes up for in verbal skill, being at total ease with the language. As the virtuous Tourvel, Janet Hurley Kimlicko is powerful in her piety. The minor roles in this play are well-cast and well-fulfilled. Jessie Tilton, who plays Cecile, the bubbly doomed virgin, is lovely in both her joy and her sadness. Dancery, played by David Gallagher, is breathlessly eager to be Cecile's lover. In minor roles, Amber Dupuy is deft with the language, Ben Wolfe provides great comic relief, and Mary Agen Cox is an anchor of sobriety in this volatile world of whims.

The only shortcomings are in the nuances of the intricate script. Haddock nails the rakish aspects of Valmont, but the character lacks sincerity, and Valmont's sincerity is a hinge for some major plot twists. Similarly, Hurley Kimlicko's Tourvel is so extreme in her virtue as to be sexless, making it hard to buy her free fall into sin. However, Hampton's script is strong enough to provide the total picture. There are some jaw-droppingly eloquent lines. In a fierce monologue about the role to which women are condemned in society, Merteuil says, "I learned how to look cheerful while under the table I stuck a fork into the back of my hand." When breaking the heart of a victim, Valmont says, "I just can't bring myself to regret leaving you." There's nothing like a well-phrased dagger to the heart. Austin Playhouse's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* provides a pleasurable escape from our world of straight talk and minimal etiquette. But what one finds is that etiquette is a most dangerous weapon. – Hannah Kenah

Theatre

OPENING

AMERICA: LOVE OUT OF CONTEXT The Austin Project Performance Company presents a word-and-movement-based work that "challenges audiences to question what it means to be an American." *Fri., Jan. 25, 8pm. UT's Winship Building, #2.180. 803-4332. Donations accepted. www.americaloveoutofcontext.blogspot.com.*

PORGY AND BESS The classic musical by the Gershwins, reinvented along the lines of Ray Charles, Ella Fitzgerald, and Louis Armstrong and directed by Dave Steakley? It's likely to be such a hot and jazzy time, Zach Scott Theatre might just spontaneously combust. David Jennings and Marva Hicks lead a big cast of talents in this roof-raising revival. (See "Jazzin' up Catfish Row," p.36, for more.) *Jan. 25-Feb. 3. Wed.-Fri., 7:30pm; Sat., 2 & 7:30pm; Sun., 2:30pm. Zachary Scott Theatre Center, 1510 Toomey, 476-0541. www.zachscott.com.*

CATHERINE OF SIENA: A WOMAN FOR OUR TIMES Dominican nun Sister Nancy Murray performs her acclaimed one-act play about the life of St. Catherine of Siena. *Fri., Jan. 25, 7pm. UT Catholic Center, 2010 University Ave. 476-7351. Free. www.utcatholic.org.*

DOOMSDAY WRESTLING: THE PINK MENACE Didn't get enough of hilarious faux wrestling from last year's *Assumption?* These crazy brawlers might even go that masterpiece one better, coming up from Houston to wreak massive havoc between the ring ropes to devastate all comers with such scientific maneuvers as the Atomic Knee Drop, the Flying Leg Scissors, perhaps even the dreaded Cobra Clutch of Ivan "the Russian Bear" Koloff. Pimped by avant-music powerhouse Church of the Friendly Ghost, this'll be an unbeatable night of mirth and mayhem. *Sat., Jan. 26, 9pm. Salvage*

Vanguard Theater, 2803 Manor Rd., 474-7886. \$15 (\$12, in advance). www.doomsdaywrestling.com.

HENRY V The Velvet Rut Theatre Company, under the direction of Japhy Fernandes (who also plays the title role), provides a, we reckon, unique look at Shakespeare's classic of war and leadership. *Jan. 31-Feb. 23. Thu.-Sat., 8pm. Velvet Rut, 1612 E. Seventh, 236-1092. Donations accepted.*

THE SHAPE OF THINGS City Theatre presents this dark comedy by Neil LaBute that shakes up the lives of a trio of friends and explores modern love, jealousy, and (of course: It's LaBute) manipulation. Directed by Skip Johnson. *Jan. 31-Feb. 10. Thu.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 5:30pm. City Theatre, 3823 Airport Ste. D, 524-2870. \$15-25 (\$12, students; pay what you can, Thursdays). www.citytheatreAustin.org.*

CLOSING

BEIRUT Alan Bowne's stark and compelling drama, set in a near future where people are imprisoned for contracting a sexually transmitted (and potentially fatal) disease, returns to the Vortex stage after many years, starring the (newlywed) husband-and-wife team of Matthew Patterson and Melissa Vogt-Patterson. Directed by Bonnie Cullum and rife with nudity and explicit material; for adults only. *Through Jan. 26. Thu.-Sun., 8pm. The Vortex, 2307 Manor Rd., 478-5282. \$10-30 (two-for-one with two nonperishable food items for SafePlace, Thursdays). www.vortexrep.org.*

ONGOING

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS: GARDEN DISTRICT This is a double bill of Williams' classic one-acts – *Suddenly Last Summer* and *Something Unspoken* – directed by Norman Blumensadt for Different Stages, featuring Sharon Elmore, Jenni Underwood, and other fine actresses. *Through Feb. 2. Thu.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 2pm. 474-8497. \$15-30. www.main.org/diffstages.*

MARATHON Greek myth and local legend merge in this reading (with live music) of a new play by Jesse Sublett and Darden Smith. Directed by Richard M. Isackes. *Feb. 10 & 17, 7pm. Continental Club gallery, 1315 S. Congress. Free.*

LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES Austin Playhouse presents Christopher Hampton's stage adaptation of the sexy French novel by Choderlos de Laclos. Co-directed by Don and Lara Toner, featuring Babs George as La Marquise de Merteuil, Gray G. Haddock as Valmont, and Janet Hurley Kimlicko as Tourvel. (See review above.) *Through Feb. 24. Thu.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 5pm. Austin Playhouse, 3601 S. Congress Bldg. C, 476-0084. \$24-28 (half price for students). www.austinplayhouse.com.*

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM Stephen Sondheim's classic and fast-paced comedy is given a go by the Palace Theatre out in Georgetown, with Ron Watson directing the funniest Roman farce since Caligula made his horse a senator. *Through Feb. 10. Fri.-Sat., 7:30pm; Sun., 2pm. Palace Theatre, 810 S. Austin Rd., Georgetown, 512/869-7469. \$20 (\$18, seniors; \$8, students, children). www.thegeorgetownpalace.org.*

SHAKESPEARE IN HOLLYWOOD It's 1934, and Shakespeare's most famous fairies, Oberon and Puck, have magically materialized on the Warner Bros. Hollywood set of Max Reinhardt's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Instantly smitten by the glitz and glamour of show biz, the two are ushered onto the silver screen to play themselves ... and hilarity ensues. Written by Ken Ludwig, directed by Lynn Beaver. *Through Feb. 9. Thu.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 2pm. Sam Bass Community Theatre, 600 N. Lee, Round Rock, 512/244-0440. www.sambasstheatre.com.*

DINNER THEATRE

A CRUISE SHIP CRIME Gary Payne and his madcap Capital City Mystery Players present this humor-laced, interactive sleuthing caper where you help to solve the mystery of thefts and murder

aboard "the luxury cruise ship *Titanium*." With full-course Italian fare sating your appetite as you go. *Through Feb. 2. Saturdays, 7pm. Spaghetti Warehouse, 117 W. Fourth, 404-9123. \$29.95. www.meatballs.com.*

THEATRE CALL BOARD

ACTORS, WRITERS, DIRECTORS: YOU CAN NEVER GET IT NEAT Paula Russell will lead you "from deep physical and relaxation work to unique text and character study to planned accidents and welcoming surprises" in this professional workshop. Introductory session: *Thu., Jan. 24, 6-10pm.* Two-day intensive: *Sat.-Sun., Jan. 26-27, 10am-6pm. 1426 Toomey. \$50-195. www.paula-russell.com.*

FUNNY LADIES WANTED! Wanted, specifically, for the second annual **Ladies Are Funny Festival**, April 24-26, at the Hideout Downtown, sponsored by Girls Girls Girls and the Austin Improv Collective. It's a big deal and a great event to be involved with. They're looking for all-female improv and sketch troupes, one-woman shows, dance troupes, stand-up – anything, really, as long as it's funny and a live performance by females. Submit via snail mail: 1) a good-quality DVD or VHS tape of a recent (no more than 1-year-old) performance (or a link to your video on the Web); 2) the name of your contact person, phone number(s), and e-mail address; 3) a list of names of performers/tech/musicians/roadies you'll be bringing; 4) your website URL if you have one; 5) a disc containing a 300-dpi photo of your troupe/self and a logo; 6) a paragraph describing your troupe/act, for inclusion on the LAFF website and marketing materials; 7) any press, etc., on your act. Note: *There is no submission fee.* Mail to: *Girls Girls Girls: LAFF, PO Box 301026, Austin, TX 78703. Deadline: Feb. 15.*

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Roy Lichtenstein, *Reverie* (from *11 Pop Artists, Volume II*), 1965, Screenprint, edition 81/200, 30 1/8 X 24 inches, Collection of the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation, 2001.88d, © Estate of Roy Lichtenstein

Organized by the Museum of Art, Washington State University and the Jordan Schnitzer Family Foundation. Additional support is provided by Bullock Community Partners. The Austin Museum of Art 2007 Exhibition Sponsors are Berman Family Foundation, Michael A. Chesser, Luanne and Charlie Cullen, Green Family Foundation, Mattsson-McHale Foundation, Bettye and Bill Nowlin, Still Water Foundation, Vinson & Elkins LLP, and Joan Hohlt and J. Roger Wich Foundation. 2007 Education Outreach is generously supported by 3M, James Armstrong, Bank of America, Katelena Hernandez Cowles and Jay Cowles, Kathy and David Escobedo, Tomas Esteves and Riley Esteves de Silva, A Look...for Love Foundation, Institute of Museum and Library Services, Kate Ludeman and Eddie Erlanson, Mattsson-McHale Foundation, The Moody Foundation, Nordstrom, Bettye and Bill Nowlin, donors to the Education Fund and the Laura W. Bush Endowment for Education and Outreach. The Austin Museum of Art is funded in part by Art Alliance Austin, Museum Trustees, Members, and Patrons. Additional support is provided by the City of Austin through the Cultural Arts Division and by a grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts and support from the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.



FronteraFest Short Fringe Week One

Hyde Park Theatre, Jan. 19
Running Time: 2 hrs, 25 min



Buddy Daddy

The 2008 FronteraFest Short Fringe kicked off last week with a sold-out show for Saturday's Best of the Week compilation. A large group of waiting-list hopefuls milled about in the Hyde Park Theatre foyer to see if they could catch the five pieces deigned the cream of the first week's crop.

"Brain Big" tells the tale of Big, a woman reading a doomed woman's hospital chart when it slowly dawns on her that she's looking at her own body at death's door. Big then proceeds to narrate her journey to her deathbed: She started out a rail-thin, "heroin-chic" model before gaining too much weight for the camera. "Brain Big" has been abridged for FronteraFest, and you can feel the script's pages rushing by you – Big's descent into obesity happens at breakneck speed, with jobs, husbands, and friends coming and going quickly. It's a bit strange that a cautionary tale of obesity is delivered by an actor who still has a model-esque frame at the end of the production, but the nature of the festival perhaps prevented more extreme measures than representational water jugs as added weight.

"The Weiner Chronicles" is a gay man's take on *The Vagina Monologues*. In six vignettes, Alex Garza portrays six different men concerned with – you guessed it – weiners. Garza delves into the formative experiences of homosexuality with a comic eye, bashfully explaining the pain of a gay man losing his virginity and describing how sex with a girl on her period helped complete his conversion. Garza also has one serious contemplation: an exploration of a gay man's remorse at not having a son. Full of energy and humorous insight, "The Weiner Chronicles" leaves no inch of the weiner unexamined.

The first director I ever had told me this important adage: "Never go onstage with an animal or a baby – you'll always be upstaged." ColdTowne's Arthur Simone, however, has thrown such caution to the wind with his improv show Buddy Daddy, featuring just a man and his dog. Luckily, Simone knows how to handle both an audience and Robin Goodfellow, his adorable beagle/dachshund mix. Armed with only the suggestions "beach" and "Doublemint gum," Simone created scenes for himself and his

pooch that varied from vacationing honeymooners to soldiers in battle to a nail salon. Robin, whose disposition changes from mild discontent only when he's offered a dog treat, can slay an audience just by sitting on his bed. It's nice to have an easy escape button in Robin's precious puppy eyes, but Simone's considerable comedic talent made Buddy Daddy a hilarious hit.

Continuing the canine theme, Hank Schwemmer's "Ballet for Dog and Red-Haired Girl" tells the story of self-proclaimed "jigsaw puzzle oracle" Marlys, 15, and her dog, Dale, born on the very same day. This aged pooch, however, is played by David Yeakle (replete with a definitively doggy bandana). The play is set at 4:33 on the day John Cage died, and something of Cage's esoteric, avant-garde style certainly dwells in this piece: "Ballet" reveals itself in strange, sharp pieces, with the narration bouncing between the philosophizing, Chinese-speaking scientist of a dog and the precocious puzzle teen. Though at times a bit too philosophical, "Ballet" captivates because it has something at stake. There's conflict, something to be lost, something urgent, and its climax didn't disappoint.

Kelli Bland's "A Genuine Plea to My Insides" capped off the night with a cute, wonderful look at irritable bowel syndrome. Bland is irrepressibly bubbly onstage, with a "gee-shucks" demeanor even when talking about the pains that ravage her bowels (e.g., mucus in her stool). Bland proffered lots of lists about her struggle with IBS – the pros and cons of Zoloft, what it's like being off Zoloft, what she's tried to relieve her pains, etc. – then journeyed inside herself for a conversation with said irritable bowel. Her white clothes bathed with blotchy pinks and reds, Bland naively asked her guts questions like, "Insides, why do you hurt so much?" Bland's truth, subtle humor, and demeanor made "Insides" a perfect balance of comedy and genuine – at times painful – exploration.

The first week of Short Fringe brought packed houses, captivating shows, and the promise that the rest of the fest will be just as magical. Reserve your seats in advance, because it's a hot ticket to some hot shows.

– Avimaan Syam

FRONTERAFEST 15 The five-week juggernaut of short theatre returns to brighten the dark of what passes for winter here in the capital city. Austin Script Works and Hyde Park Theatre team up to present this sprawling anthology of original works – no longer than 25 minutes each – from locals and intrepid out-of-towners. That's the renowned Short Fringe, but there are full-length works, too, in the Long Fringe that starts next week. Brilliant monologues? Plays in progress? Comedy improv? Cabaret singers? Avant-garde dance? Short films? Multimedia? Yes: any of those, any given night. Call for reservations, check the HPT website for details.

SHORT FRINGE AT HYDE PARK THEATRE, 511 W. 43rd, 479-PLAY

Thu., Jan. 24: "Austin 3275," by Stuart Hersh. **Get Up** master improvisers Shannon McCormick and Shana Merlin. "The Ballad of the Three Actorteers," by Alan Metoskie, Jason Newman, and Chuck Watkins. "Sublet," by Deborah Goldstein and Andrea Middleton. "Dale Duncan," by Chris Sykes.

Fri., Jan. 25: "The Startling Story of My Not Suicide as Told by the Creepy Suicide Story Guy," by Paul B. Joiner. "That Diana Look" monologues by Maggie Gallant. "[blank] the Musical!" by Girls Girls Girls. "The Wager," by Janet Heimlich. "A Breathing Machine for Carmella Beautain," by Rebecca Wadlinger.

Sat., Jan. 26: **Best of the Week** Tue., Jan. 29: "A Life for Love and Pleasure: Remembering Mata Hari," by Miriam Robinson Gould. "The Artist Behind Closed Doors," by Jessica Arnold. "Pushkin Ploshiti," by Shelia Gordon. **Parallelogramophonograph** comedy improv. "Talk to Me Like the Rain," by Tennessee Williams.

Wed., Jan. 30: "Parents Are People," by Sarah Saltwick. "Based on the Lives of True American Heroes," by Jesse Donaldson. "Group Therapy," by Espie Randolph. "A Necklace for Each of My Lovers," by Meghan Dwyer. "Play It by Ear," by Leticia Rodriguez.

Thu., Jan. 31: "Plum," by Cris Edwards. **I Snood Bear** improv by Wesley Bain and Christina de Roos. "Grading on a Curve," by A.V. Phibes. "Stewardess," by Don Carr. "The Wussy Boy Chronicles Episode Four: A New Hope," by Big Poppa E.

LONG FRINGE AT THE BLUE THEATRE, 916 Springdale, 479-PLAY

You Are Happier Than You Think: Recalibrating Your Emotional Scale by Max Langert. (60 min.) An esteemed lecturer is invited to give a happiness seminar aboard an ocean liner. But his daughter has a compulsion to throw people overboard, and his wife has run out of anti-depressants ... Thu., Jan. 31, 9:15pm; Sat., Feb. 2, 6:15pm; Sun., Feb. 3, noon.

Luna Tart Died (of a Broken Heart) by Laura Freeman. (75 min.) One woman. One ukulele. One long-suffering pianist. This musical spiral into loneliness and despair is a full-length version of the 2007 Best of the Fest musical. Fri., Jan. 25, 7pm; Sat., Jan. 26, 10:30pm; Sat., Feb. 2, 4:15pm.

Dance Carousel curated by Spank Dance Company. (75 min.) Forty dances in 40 minutes by 10 local choreographers, each of whom creates four one-minute dances. Sat., Jan. 26, 8:30pm; Mon., Jan. 28, 8:45pm; Sat., Feb. 2, 2:15pm.

Lost/Found by Surface Tension Dance Group. (90 min.) This new company of dancers, musicians, and visual artists explores the theme of lost and found literally, abstractly, personally, and spiritually. Sat., Jan. 26, noon; Sun., Jan. 27, 8:15pm; Sun., Feb. 3, 5:30pm.

Devil in the Details: An Office Musical by Rain Nox. (75 min.) A kindhearted geek becomes embroiled in a crazy love triangle – between him, a co-worker, and his computer. Thu., Jan. 24, 7pm; Sun., Jan. 27, noon; Tue., Jan. 29, 8:45pm; Sun., Feb. 3, 3:30pm.

Sad, Sad, Sad: Parts 1 & 2 by You're Wicked! Repertory Theatre Company. (90 min.) Two thrill-ing and surreal one-acts by Duncan Coe and Nigel O'Hearn. Sat., Jan. 26, 2:15pm; Thu., Jan. 31, 7pm; Sat., Feb. 2, 10:15pm.

The Mommy Confessions by Rhonda F. Kulhanek. (90 min.) A one-woman show of 12 characters struggling to survive their maternal lives, including a memaw raising her grandkids, a former beauty queen

who comes clean at Mommies Anonymous, and an unwed mother-to-be. Sun., Jan. 27, 2pm; Fri., Feb. 1, 9:15pm; Sat., Feb. 2, 8pm.

Jack and the King by the Striking Players. (60 min.) Austin Alexander's political satire questions authority while making fun of it. Directed by Sesar Sandoval. Sat., Jan. 26, 4:30pm; Mon., Jan. 28, 7pm; Fri., Feb. 1, 11:30pm; Sun., Feb. 3, 7:45pm.

Prepare for Arrival and Cross Check by Steve Barney. (60 min.) This new work is based on the real-life experiences of flight attendants: atrocious passenger behavior, heartless airline management, post-9/11 flying, and more. Fri., Jan. 25, 9pm; Sun., Jan. 27, 6:30pm; Tue., Jan. 29, 7pm; Sun., Feb. 3, 1:45pm.

I Google Myself by Capital T Theatre. (90 min.) Jason Schafer's comedic thriller features three different men with the same name – a stalker, a gay porn star, and a stoner mechanic – brought together by an internet search engine. Fri., Jan. 25, 10:45pm; Sun., Jan. 27, 4:15pm; Wed., Jan. 30, 9:15pm; Fri., Feb. 1, 7pm.

Paper Weight by UT doctoral and Master's of Fine Arts students. (90 min.) Michelle Dvoskin, Kristin Leahey, Elizabeth McKetta, Priscilla Sample, and Meg Sullivan portray diverse women (Virginia Woolf, Joan Nestle, Zelda Fitzgerald, Margo Jones, and Margaret Bourke-White) in separate solo performances. Thu., Jan. 24, 9pm; Sat., Jan. 26, 6:15pm; Wed., Jan. 30, 7pm; Sat., Feb. 2, noon.

BRING YOUR OWN VENUE AT THE HIDEOUT, 617 Congress, 479-PLAY

Shoeless, or the Advantages of Not Knowing Exactly Where You Are Going by Devin Moss and Bree Perlman, from a story by Donald Barthelme. (75 min.) Who Am I? is America's favorite game show. The stakes are too horrible to even talk about. The prize is a ridiculous compensation considering the infamy. is a ridiculous compensation considering the infamy. Dreams shattered. Identities destroyed. Now, that's entertainment! Sat., Jan. 26, 8pm; Thu., Sat., Jan. 31, Feb. 2, 8pm. www.hydeparktheatre.org.

Comedy

IN THE CLUBS

CAP CITY COMEDY CLUB 8120 Research #100, 467-2333. www.capcitycomedy.com.

Al Madrigal "Fresh and funny" is what they say about this feller who's one of the stars of Fox's *The Ortegas* and has had his own Comedy Central special and was a jury selection for Best Stand-Up at the big comedy fest in Aspen. And **Joy Gohring** opens. Jan. 24-26. Thu., 8pm; Fri.-Sat., 8 & 10:30pm. \$5.50-44.95.

Bengt Washburn His first name is pronounced "bent." OK, and he's a former winner of the San Francisco Comedy Competition, and he tours the hell out of these United States. He's soon to hit Cap City, with opener **Paul Oddo**, because you can never have too many unusual names onstage at one time, am I right? Jan. 29-Feb. 2. Tue.-Thu., 8pm; Fri.-Sat., 8 & 10:30pm. \$5.50-44.95.

COLDTOWNE THEATER 4803 Airport. www.coldtownteater.com.

see.hear.speak. festival. Yes, the ColdTowne Comedy Complex shifts into a weekend's worth of overdrive with this third annual gathering of talent. Particularly? See our "But Wait – There's More" section for details!

ESTHER'S POOL 525 E. Sixth, 320-0553. www.estersfollies.com.

Esther's Follies: World Gone Wild The most popular troupe in town returns with their riotous musical send-ups of local and national politics and cultural phenomena, with the incredible and – *all! all! all!* – spicy illusions of master magician **Ray Anderson**. Thrills! Chills! Ripped-from-the-headlines events turned into comedy gold! *Reservations highly recommended.* Thu.-Fri, 8pm; Sat., 8 & 10pm. \$20 (discounts available Thursdays & Fridays for seniors, students, military). Additional \$5 for special reserved seats.

Banana Puddin' Time Tom Booker, comedy impresario from L.A., has moved to Austin and is running this new show at Esther's Pool: A mixture of comedic sketches, improv, stand-up comedy, and silly songs. Austin's most entertaining talents are promised, and you'll get free banana pudding with each paid admission. *Thursdays, 9:30pm. \$9.95.*

How She Move

D: Ian Iqbal Rashid; with Rutina Wesley, Dwain Murphy, Tre Armstrong, Kevin Duhaney. (PG-13, 98 min.)

Minus any telltale punctuation, one may not initially know how to read the title – is it a question? a warning? a declaration of intent? – but once the feet start flying in this Canadian film about step dancing, any numskull can

finish the sentence: She move something fierce. But we'll get to that. In an awkward opening narration, Raya (Wesley) lays it out for us: Her family's savings have been wiped out in an unsuccessful attempt to get her older sister clean, forcing Raya to leave her tony boarding school and rejoin her Jamaican-born parents back in the projects. Raya isn't happy to be home, and neither is her old crowd: Turns out she lit out of the neighborhood fast and burned a few bridges along the way. Some people, at least, remember her fondly, like Bishop (Murphy), who runs an underdog step crew (the film introduces him midperformance, his step keeping time to the apropos refrain "I Love My Boots"; should the film's current title not translate internationally, I suggest *I Love My Boots* as a more-than-adequate substitute). Raya shrugs off his advances; at first glance, she seems a serious, maybe humorless, girl who looks far younger than her years. Looks are deceiving – when a rival girl challenges her to a step battle, Raya drops her jacket and goes to town. Sure, she gets schooled, but so it goes in any competition film – you gotta start at the bottom and climb your way up. *How She Move* hits most every beat the genre has to offer, even borrowing a few moves along the way (the ripping-off of a rival's routine also figured prominently in *Bring It On*). In short, there aren't many surprises here, and even if there were, they'd be low-lit and fuzzy (*How She*



Move, which screened at last year's Sundance, wears its low budget on its sleeve; the upshot is a cast of unknowns who are naturals). Following the genre's natural trajectory, this one culminates in Raya and Bishop teaming up for the annual Stepmonster Competition in Detroit, where the competition flies fast and furious in a montage that accents step's astonishing meld of artistry and brute physicality (although any highlight reel must begin and end with a glorious slow pan of denim-clad booty). This kind of a dance film lives and dies by the routines, and this one wins: Mixing elements of gymnastics, karate, and break with the almighty step – an exceedingly polite term for what is really an awesome stomp – the dance sequences'll root out the beat in even the sorriest *Bandstand* bystander ... although, manifest in this white-girl wallflower, the beat resembled nothing so much as restless legs syndrome. We can't all move something fierce, you know.

– Kimberley Jones
★★★ Barton Creek Square, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South

MEET THE SPARTANS

D: Jason Friedberg, Aaron Seltzer; with Sean Maguire, Carmen Electra, Ken Davitian, Kevin Sorbo, *Method Man*. (PG-13, 84 min.)

Not reviewed at press time. We're tempted to say that one upshot to the writers' strike is that fewer new movies means less fodder for this sort of lightning-round turnaround riff/regurgitation. The working title says it all: *Not Another Scary Epic Teen Date Movie*. And, honestly, any jokes about 300 pretty much write themselves. – Kimberley Jones
Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Lakeline, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

RAMBO

D: Sylvester Stallone; with Stallone, Julie Benz, Matthew Marsden, Graham McTavish, Reynaldo Gallegos. (R, 99 min.)

Not reviewed at press time. Stallone's running the show here as star, writer, and director in the fourth outing for former Green Beret John Rambo. This time out, Rambo's tasked with saving Christian missionaries in Burma. – Kimberley Jones
Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse Village, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Lakeline, Tinseltown North, Westgate

TEETH

D: Mitchell Lichtenstein; with Jess Weixler, Hale Appleman, Vivienne Benesch, Lenny von Dohlen, John Hensley. (R, 87 min.)

Mitchell Lichtenstein, son of pop art godhead Roy, takes the thrusting, violence-implicit, and pointedly sexualized imagery of his father's famed *Whaam!* canvas several seriocomic steps further into the realm of cinematic literalism: *Teeth*, shot in and around Austin, leaves marks both figuratively and literally. In the process, it also explodes the dual myths of sexual freedom and freedom from sex while making castration anxiety and teen-female empowerment fun – or at least *weird* – again. Weixler embodies abstemious good-girl Dawn with just the right amount of repressed naivete to make things semi-believable when she discovers, to her horror, that her naughty bits are bitey. She's the living embodiment of the *vagina dentata* (literally, "toothed vagina") myth, and as such her incipient lust-crush over new-geek-at-school Appleman leads from blue lagoon to black and beyond. As if hormones weren't hell enough, Dawn is also saddled with a vile stepbrother whose most fervent wish is to deflower his virginal relation. Played to the death-metal hilt by *Nip/Tuck*'s Hensley – who could also double as a young Jello Biafra in *I Was a Teenage Dead Kennedy* – this evil sib almost steals the show, until his pet rottweiler beats him at his own game. As an ultradark comedy pitched somewhere between the transgressive spot gags of Charles Addams and Sam Gross (with a healthy dose of John Waters salt-of-the-earth lasciviousness sprinkled throughout), *Teeth* is all over the tonal map, veering from surrealist ABC *After School Special*-ness to crimson-drenched Grand

New Reviews

MAD MONEY

D: Callie Khouri; with Diane Keaton, Katie Holmes, Queen Latifah, Ted Danson, Adam Rothenberg, Roger Cross. (PG-13, 104 min.)

Move over, Gordon Gecko: The new poster boy for American greed in the movies isn't a silver-tongued corporate hustler with pomaded hair and a closet full of \$10,000 suits. In fact, the new poster boy for American greed in the movies isn't a boy at all. I know you won't believe me when I tell you, but you've been replaced by Diane Keaton. That's right: Little Annie Hall has grown up and traded in her quirky vests and aw-shucks Midwestern naivete for some good old-fashioned late-capitalist avarice. For Keaton's upper-middle-aged, upper-middle-class suburban housewife-turned-bank-robber Bridget Cardigan, greed isn't good because it's good for America or good for the species; greed is good because it's good for her. How's that for evolution? In *Mad Money*, *Thelma & Louise*

screenwriter Khouri once again sets her sights on scorned women getting their revenge on a callous society, but the goal here isn't freedom; it's opportunity, vindication, good times, and the promise of bottomless bags filled with cash money. Bridget is a wealthy woman whose world comes crashing down after her husband, Don (Danson), loses his job and they're suddenly faced with the prospect of bankruptcy. To make ends meet, she takes a job as a janitor at a local federal reserve, where she realizes that the bank's endless supply of soon-to-be-shredded bills presents the perfect opportunity for a brash, enterprising woman dangling from the lowest rungs of the employment ladder. Enlisting the aid of two of her fellow danglers – one a single mother named Nina (Latifah) looking to give her kids a better life, the other an attractive, young space cadet named Jackie (Holmes) looking for more quirky trinkets for her trailer home – Bridget concocts a heist that succeeds in relieving the bank of millions of dollars while changing the three thieves' lives for good. If *Mad Money* had stopped there,

there'd be nothing much to talk about. Just another lightweight comedy about women dabbling in the fleeting pleasures of self-indulgence before retreating behind life lessons about the emptiness of material gain and the true and lasting joys of spiritual fulfillment. But *Mad Money* is less a movie than it is an advertisement for unfettered capitalism, with a hero who wants, desires, covets, and takes without shame or apology. Nina may be trying to help her kids, and Jackie may be trying to find herself, but Bridget's mantra is "more, more, more" – more jewels, more cars, more flat-screen TVs – and she's not above lying, cheating, stealing, or even pimping to get what she wants. Just when I thought there was no way a movie like this could possibly show me anything new, *Money* goes and makes Ivan Boesky out of Annie Hall, paints redemption green, and paves the road to heaven with gold. Color me surprised.

– Josh Rosenblatt
★★★ Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Lakeline, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

Guignol atrocity exhibitionism, often in the same scene. In any other film I'd say that was a flaw, or at the very least the sign of a conflicted script or muddled directorial viewpoint, but *Teeth's* whirling moral compass actually provides the perfect metaphor for the teenage sexual urge in postpubescent overdrive. Dawn's dimpled, wholesome, all-American exterior conceals the lurking erotic fear and body-loathing within to an extent that would make *Shivers*-era David Cronenberg proud. Reflecting the jungle laws of its high school setting, Lichtenstein's gleeful and polymorphously perverse take on the eternal quandry that is teen sexuality pits the revealed against the reviled, loved vs. loathed, and girl vs. boy(s). Tellingly, however, Lichtenstein opts out of showing Dawn's brave new snatch, although plenty of severed male members litter the screen. Turnabout is fair play, to be sure, but ultimately virtually everyone in *Teeth* ends up using sex as a weapon, edged or otherwise, to the detriment of all concerned. Just say "Ow." — *Marc Savlov*

★★★ Alamo Drafthouse South, Tinseltown South

UNTRACEABLE

D: Gregory Hoblit; with Diane Lane, Billy Burke, Colin Hanks, Joseph Cross. (R, 100 min.)

Let's cut to the chase here and now, since this tepid, borderline-offensive cyber-serial-killer thriller takes what feels like ages to rehash both better and worse examples of the current, vapid clamor for so-called "torture porn." *Untraceable* strives to gussy up its narrative cheat sheet (stolen from the still-warm bodies of *Saw*, *Se7en*, and *FearDotCom*, among others) with an outraged tone, but the blatant, transparent hypocrisy inherent in the story is what's really annoying. The always-reliable Lane is cast as FBI Cyber Crimes Agent Jennifer Marsh, a doting mom and widow working out of Portland, Ore., who with trusty hack-happy partner Griffin Dowd (Hanks) nightly trolls the dingy back alleys of the Internet for the usual collection of predators, frauds, and scam artists. Things take a turn for the obvious when she's tipped off to the existence of a live-streaming site called KillWithMe.com that allows visitors to participate virtually in a real-time execution: The more people log on to the site, the faster the victim dies. Agent Marsh, who should know better, is initially shocked at the exponentially rising hits the site attracts and at one point even goes so far as to drop a none-too-subtle reference to murdered *Wall Street Journal* reporter

Openings

How She Move (PG-13)

Meet the Spartans (PG-13)

Rambo (R)

Teeth (R)

Untraceable (R)

Ratings

★★★★★ As perfect as a movie can be

★★★★ Slightly flawed, but excellent nonetheless

★★★ Has its good points, and its bad points

★★ Mediocre, but with one or two bright spots

★ Poor, without any saving graces

🔪 La bomba

Daniel Pearl into an ill-conceived harangue on the bloodthirsty, voyeuristic tendencies of your average American. (Her Portland PD buddy muses aloud, "When did the world go insane?") Apart from the fact that mankind, and in particular, America – Google Earth anyone? – has always been fascinated with voyeurism, not to mention the viewpoints of Eros and Thanatos and the intersection thereof, *Untraceable* renders the audience complicit in the film's violent shenanigans by virtue of watching the gore onscreen. It's a weird, schizophrenic tack for a film about a deranged serial killer to take, and it leaves you feeling as if you'd just been scolded for going to the movies in the first place. God forbid anyone should ever want to watch footage of a Baghdad MASH unit to survey the real – as opposed to reel – hyperviolence of *Our Insane World*. — *Marc Savlov*

★ Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Lakeline, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate



Teeth

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 Sat. 10:20 12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10 11:40
 Sun. 10:20 12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10
 Mon. - Thu. 12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

MEET THE SPARTANS (PG-13) Fri. 1:20 3:20 5:20 7:20 9:20 11:25
 Sat. 11:20 1:20 3:20 5:20 7:20 9:20 11:25
 Sun. 11:20 1:20 3:20 5:20 7:20 9:20
 Mon. - Thu. 1:20 3:20 5:20 7:20 9:20

UNTRACEABLE (R) Fri. 12:15 2:30 4:45 7:10 9:25 11:45
 Sat. 10:00 12:15 2:30 4:45 7:10 9:25 11:45
 Sun. 10:00 12:15 2:30 4:45 7:10 9:25
 Mon. - Thu. 12:15 2:30 4:45 7:10 9:25

HOW SHE MOVE (PG-13) Fri. 12:30 2:35 4:40 7:10 9:20 11:30
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CLOVERFIELD (PG-13) Fri. 12:30 2:35 4:40 7:05 9:10 11:20
 Sat. 10:25 12:30 2:35 4:40 7:05 9:10
 Sun. 10:25 12:30 2:35 4:40 7:05 9:10
 Mon. - Thu. 12:30 2:35 4:40 7:05 9:10

27 DRESSES (PG-13) Fri. & Sat. 12:05 2:30 4:55 7:20 9:45 11:59
 Sun. - Thu. 12:05 2:30 4:55 7:20 9:45

MAD MONEY (PG-13) Fri. 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45 11:50
 Sat. 10:15 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45 11:50
 Sun. 10:15 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45
 Mon. - Thu. 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45

FIRST SUNDAY (PG-13) Fri. 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:40 9:55 11:59
 Sat. 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:40 9:55 11:59
 Sun. 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:40 9:55
 Mon. - Thu. 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:40 9:55

THE BUCKET LIST (PG-13) Fri. 12:15 2:30 4:45 7:10 9:25 11:45
 Sat. 10:00 12:15 2:30 4:45 7:10 9:25 11:45
 Sun. 10:00 12:15 2:30 4:45 7:10 9:25
 Mon. - Thu. 12:15 2:30 4:45 7:10 9:25

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS (PG) Fri. 12:30 2:35 4:40 7:10 9:20 11:30
 Sat. 10:25 12:30 2:35 4:40 7:10 9:20
 Sun. 10:25 12:30 2:35 4:40 7:10 9:20
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James Thomas, KDNL-TV (ABC) / "FIRST LOOK"

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D I A N E L A N E

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ALIENS VS. PREDATOR: REQUIEM

D: Greg Strause, Colin Strause; with Steven Pasquale, Reiko Aylesworth, John Ortiz, Johnny Lewis, Ariel Gade. (R, 86 min.)

This sequel to the much-maligned (though, to be fair, probably just misunderstood) *Aliens vs. Predator* is an orgy of mindless violence, a random collection of bloody bodies, alien misanthropy, and slobbering carnage designed to bore straight into the pleasure centers of 13-year-old boys and leave the rest of us wondering when the movies got so damn loud. I won't go too deeply into the film's plot because I don't want to ruin it for you, but I can tell you that a UFO carrying a pack of salivating aliens like those that tormented Sigourney Weaver back in the Eighties crash-lands in the woods outside a small town in Colorado, followed by the arrival of a predator (of the dreadlocked variety that tormented Jesse "the Body" Ventura back in the Eighties), who's hunting down the aliens one by one. Needless to say, it isn't long before the first human being gets caught in the cross fire. (12/28/2007) - Josh Rosenblatt

★ Tinseltown North

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS

D: Tim Hill; with Jason Lee, David Cross, Cameron Richardson, Jane Lynch; with the voices of Justin Long, Matthew Gray Gubler, Jesse McCartney. (PG, 92 min.)

What's it all about, Alvin? Apparently it's about rebranding a musty old comic conceit for a whole new generation of proto-Willards. The adenoidal animated vermin of Ross Bagdasarian Sr. and Jr. have arrived via CGI in this live-action update/companion to the Bagdasarian family's lengthy *rodentia comicus*-related history, the pinnacle of

which remains 1958's holiday novelty tune "The Chipmunk Song (Christmas Don't Be Late)." Hill's Chipmunk tale is a strictly by-the-numbers affair, aimed in the most generic direction conceivable. Lee plays Dave, a well-intentioned but bumbling songwriter aided and abetted in life and love (and icky-sweet pop music) by My Three Chipmunks. Mr. Show's Cross is a duplicitous record mogul, who plays nice with Dave while conniving behind his back (boo!), and Richardson is the mutant-model-photographer-chick-thing Dave's all goey on. Will true love prevail? Will Dave grow a backbone (and some real songwriting talent)? They shoot rodents, don't they? (12/14/2007) - Marc Savlov

★ Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Lakeline, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North

AMERICAN GANGSTER

D: Ridley Scott; with Denzel Washington, Russell Crowe, Josh Brolin, Ruby Dee, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Cuba Gooding Jr., Ted Levine, Armand Assante, John Hawkes, Roger Guenveur Smith, Clarence Williams III, RZA, Carla Gugino, Joe Morton, Common. (R, 157 min.)

Based on Mark Jacobson's *New York* magazine article, *American Gangster* does a crackerjack job at nailing the look and feel of New York City's bad old days, when mayors Lindsay and Beame (mis-)ruled over the Manhattan canyons and Bronx tenements aided and abetted by a police department riddled with more internal corruption and outer rot than a smack-head's corpse. At the height of the Vietnam War, it was Frank Lucas (a sizzling, ferocious Washington) who figured out a whole new angle on the heroin trade and built an empire. Only when a sudden fit of pimpy ostentation hit did he come to the attention of Jersey cop Richie Roberts (Crowe). Roberts is uniformly loathed and scorned by the NYPD's dirty cops (led by a great Brolin), who view him as a dupe for not going with the bribery flow. Crowe has rarely been better, and the same goes for director Scott. (11/02/2007) - Marc Savlov

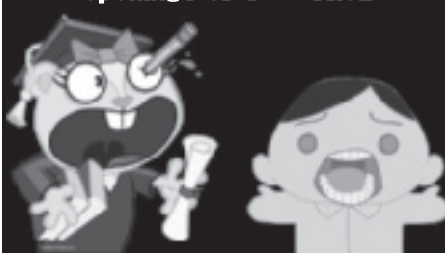
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★ **ATONEMENT**

D: Joe Wright; with Keira Knightley, James McAvoy, Saoirse Ronan, Romola Garai, Vanessa Redgrave, Benedict Cumberbatch, Brenda Blethyn, Juno Temple, Daniel Mays. (R, 130 min.)

Imagination typically should be encouraged in children, but an excess of it leads to tragedy in more than worthy adaptation of Ian McEwan's novel. Thirteen-year-old Briony (the wonderfully unnerving novice Ronan) is indulged, but also largely ignored, by her family, which includes her headstrong 19-year-old sister, Cecilia (Knightley, seductively husky, wincingly angular). One day in 1935, Briony witnesses a bewildering act that involves Cecilia and the housekeeper's son, Robbie (McAvoy). Only later does she realize how one person's vantage, one person's truth, doesn't always square with another's. But that epiphany doesn't arrive until the film's second of three sections, when a now-18-year-old Briony (Garai) attempts to write a novelization of that day in 1935. (The film's epilogue takes place in modern times.) *Atonement* is a work consumed with the nature of storytelling and the moral responsibility of the storyteller. The film is not quite as brutalizing as McEwan's brilliant source novel, but it ravishes nonetheless in its grand exploration of the sins of the daughter and a lifetime spent making reparations. (12/14/2007) — Kimberley Jones

★★★★ Arbor, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate

AUGUST RUSH

D: Kirsten Sheridan; with Freddie Highmore, Keri Russell, Jonathan Rhys Meyers, Terrence Howard, Robin Williams, William Sadler, Leon G. Thomas III, Jamia Simone Nash. (PG, 104 min.)

August Rush is a rather prosaic, oddly anxious, contemporary take on Dickens' *Oliver Twist*, with Williams — in nasty-man twee mode, a newish one for him — thrown in for bad measure. Highmore's parents are ably essayed by Russell and Rhys Meyers, one a classical cellist destined for greatness with the New York Philharmonic, the other a scruffy Irish ne'er-do-well who fronts a vaguely Poguesy band of rockers. After spending a magical night coupling on a rooftop overlooking Manhattan's Washington Square Arch, they promptly go their separate ways. Neither one realizes that,

U2 3D

U2 3D (2008) *D: Mark Pellington and Catherine Owens.* (G, 85 min.) Filmed in Argentina during U2's Vertigo tour, *U2 3D* is a landmark film for its creative use of the medium. For once 3-D is being used not for wowzy effects and startling nature photography but in a way that complements and enhances the performance. It helps that U2 is equal to the magnitude of the 3-D format. On the IMAX screen, these Irish rockers really rattle and hum. (*) Friday-Saturday, 6, 7:45, 9:30pm; Sunday-Thursday (1/31), 6, 7:45pm.



via a quick (if narratively convenient) switcheroo on the part of Russell's overprotective dad, they've sown the seed of August Rush. Will his parents, through a magical, utterly unlikely yet strangely compelling turn of fate, come running once they hear the longing in their little maestro's edgily hip, borderline Ani DiFranco slap-strumming? Oh ho! Far be it from me to state the obvious. (11/23/2007) — Marc Savlov

★★ Movies 8

BEE MOVIE

D: Steve Hickner, Simon J. Smith; with the voices of Jerry Seinfeld, Renée Zellweger, Matthew Broderick, Patrick Warburton, John Goodman, Chris Rock, Kathy Bates, Barry Levinson, Oprah Winfrey, Rip Torn, Larry King. (PG, 90 min.)

Bee Movie is an agreeable though tame animated picture. Seinfeld plays Barry B. Benson, a bee who, having just graduated from college (with "perfect grades — all Bs"), must choose a career. Visually, *Bee Movie* never fully capitalizes on the reality-bending possibilities of the animated form. The story zips along at a fast clip so that the film's nifty and not-so-nifty moments are swept along in its current, including some pertinent though gentle messages about the ecological balance of the universe. *Bee Movie* works best when it sticks to the insect world; when Barry leaves the hive with the Pollen Jocks and breaks the cardinal rule of beedom by speaking to humans, the film becomes more earthbound and prosaic. No nectar of the gods this, but we can still be thankful that *Bee Movie* is a sweet morsel that's devoid of any jokes about bee farts and poop. (11/02/2007) — Marjorie Baumgarten

★★★ Movies 8

BEOWULF

D: Robert Zemeckis; with Ray Winstone, Anthony Hopkins, Robin Wright Penn, Brendan Gleeson, Crispin Glover, Angelina Jolie, John Malkovich. (PG-13, 115 min.)

The irony inherent in using 21st century motion-control technology to tell a tale approximately 1,400 years old is just one of many bizarrely entertaining aspects of *Beowulf*. High school English teachers may breathe a collective sigh of relief: Although this version of *Beowulf* (the script, ricocheting between thrilling, heroic, and hilarious, is by Neil Gaiman and Roger Avary) does take some liberties, it's as faithful to the extant version as it needs to be. There's no doubt *Beowulf* is cracker-jack popcorn entertainment. The 3-D effects are jaw-droppingly immersive and realistic, but thanks to the witty, zippy script, they never detract from the story. The sticking point, for many people, will be Zemeckis' reliance on the imperfect technique of motion-control animation, which still exhibits a certain *Shrekness* when it comes to such complex, expressive textures as the human face. Then again, the technique allows one hell of a kickass dragon. (11/16/2007) — Marc Savlov

★★★ Movies 8

THE BUCKET LIST

D: Rob Reiner; with Kirk Nicholson, Morgan Freeman, Sean Hayes, Beverly Todd, Rob Morrow, Alfonso Freeman, Rowena King, Annton Berry Jr., Verda Bridges. (PG-13, 97 min.)

Apart from their advanced years, their shared hospital room, and terminal cancer, Edward Cole (Nicholson) and Carter Chambers (Freeman) have nothing in common — which means, of course, they're destined to become best friends. In Reiner's latest exercise in syrupy nonsense, Cole and Chambers leave behind their depressing hospital beds and chemotherapy sessions and jump into Cole's private jet to check items off their bucket list (that being the list of things they want to do before they kick the bucket). For an hour, they drive sports cars at high speeds, travel to exotic countries, and check out the Himalayas, whooping and hollering as they go. They also aim for slightly vaguer, more "mystical" goals, such as laughing until they cry, witnessing something majestic, and finding the joy in their lives, making *The Bucket List* the 400th movie to come out of Hollywood in the last 10

years to mistake bumper-sticker self-help platitudes for spirituality. (01/11/2008) — Josh Rosenblatt

★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse Village, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Lakeline, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate

CASSANDRA'S DREAM

D: Woody Allen; with Ewan McGregor, Colin Farrell, Tom Wilkinson, Hayley Atwell, John Benfield, Clare Higgins, Sally Hawkins. (PG-13, 108 min.)

Cassandra's Dream is the former master's latest plunge into irrelevance. Like 1989's brilliant *Crimes and Misdemeanors* and 2005's considerably less brilliant *Match Point*, *Dream* is a meditation on the consequences of immorality, this time the murder of a London man by two affable but down-on-their-luck brothers (McGregor and Farrell). Goaded by a rich uncle (Wilkinson) to do the deed in return for enough money to set both their lives straight, the brothers respond by indulging in lengthy discussions about the nature of evil and weighing the benefits of financial security against the risks (both legal and spiritual) of cold-blooded murder. McGregor and Farrell do their level best to communicate some of the philosophical ambivalence and moral murkiness that accompany acts of brutality, but they're up against inertia working with Allen. It's old news to say the director likes to take a hands-off approach with his actors, but there's a fine line between "hands-off" and total disengagement, and Allen has tumbled (Buddha-like) right over it. (01/18/2008) — Josh Rosenblatt

★ Alamo Drafthouse South

CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR

D: Mike Nichols; with Tom Hanks, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Julia Roberts, Amy Adams, Ned Beatty, Denis O'Hare. (R, 97 min.)

Accents by way of *Hee Haw* aside, not once in this would-be political romp do we forget that the man and woman before us, embodying such outré real-life characters as a hard-partying congressman and a born-again Houston socialite, are anyone other than the beloved institutions of Tom and Julia. Based on George Crile's book, *Charlie Wilson's War* tells the true-life story of how Texan Rep. Wilson (Hanks), best known for boozing and keeping company with *Playboy* Playmates, managed to raise \$1 billion with the help of socialite Joanne Herring (Roberts) to secretly fund Afghanistan's mujahideen in their fight against the invading Soviet Union in the early Eighties. Sounds a little wonky, I know, but, as adapted by *The West Wing*'s Aaron Sorkin, the historical context and current affairs are laid out clearly and engagingly. That said, there's a hokeyness afoot. Same goes for Nichols' flat direction. This is a visually and emotionally soft affair, and the material calls for something with far sharper edges. (12/21/2007) — Kimberley Jones

★★ Alamo Drafthouse Village, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, Gateway

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CLOVERFIELD

D: Matt Reeves; with Michael Stahl-David, Mike Vogel, Odette Yustman, Lizzy Caplan, Jessica Lucas, T.J. Miller. (PG-13, 85 min.)

Cloverfield isn't a horror film – it's a pure-blood, grade A, exultantly exhilarating monster movie in the grand tradition of *The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms* and *It Came From Beneath the Sea*. What makes *Cloverfield* so memorable and such a genuinely riveting filmgoing experience has less to do with the creature itself, whatever it is, and everything to do with Reeves' direction and a whip-smart, stylistically invisible screenplay that dispenses entirely with any and all genre rules and, brilliantly, views the catastrophic, literally earthshaking events through the lens of one character's digital video camera, complete with rough, nerve-jangling, in-camera edits and an "official" Department of Defense Eyes Only time stamp. It's *Blair Witch* meets *Godzilla*, with the audience allowed only as much information about what, exactly, is happening as the characters have themselves, and it works fantastically well. And that's key to the film's second stroke of genius: its nearly subconscious evocation of our current paranoid, terror-phobic times. (01/18/2008) – Marc Savlov

★★★★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse Village, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Lakeline, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

THE DIVING BELL AND THE BUTTERFLY

D: Julian Schnabel; with Mathieu Amalric, Emmanuelle Seigner, Marie-Josée Croze, Anne Consigny, Patrick Chesnais, Niels Arestrup, Olatz López Garmendia. (PG-13, 112 min., subtitled)

In his brilliant new film, painter/sculptor/director Schnabel defies dozens of moviemaking conventions to tell the true story of Jean-Dominique Bauby, the French writer and editor who suffered a massive stroke that left him with a rare condition called locked-in syndrome. This may sound like the makings of the dulllest protagonist in motion-picture history, but Bauby was able to write a 150-page bestselling memoir by using a dictation system developed by his speech therapist that involved an adjusted alphabet and repetitive blinking. Schnabel uses his stunning visual sense to blur the line between experience and memory, desire and reality, to create an original world that exists almost entirely inside Bauby's head. It's equal parts reverie, despair, and social experiment. His Bauby (Amalric) is no pity case; he's a sophisticated ironist aware of the confusion and fear he engenders in those around him, and his memoir is a testament to human ingenuity and the beauty that can be found in resignation. (01/11/2008) – Josh Rosenblatt

★★★★ Arbor

ENCHANTED

D: Kevin Lima; with Amy Adams, Patrick Dempsey, James Marsden, Susan Sarandon, Timothy Spall, Rachel Covey, Idina Menzel. (PG, 107 min.)

It's difficult to describe the mixture of romance, dry satire, and musical comedy that is the new Disney film *Enchanted*. But one thing's for certain: Adams (*Junebug*) is its heart and soul. Her ability to play wild-eyed innocence with a biting comic edge never disappoints. And as Giselle, she's perfectly cast as an amalgam of every fairy-tale maiden. The film begins in an all-too-familiar animated wonderland. Giselle is an innocent forest-dwelling babe who sings with animals and dreams of finding her true love before she is cast out by a jealous queen (Sarandon) and lands in the center of Times Square. What's more, she's no longer animated. Though writer Bill Kelly's script takes extreme liberties with plot development and never really leaves you guessing about who will get the girl, the jokes rarely miss, and the result is a refreshingly sardonic fairy tale. (11/23/2007) – Toddy Burton

★★★★ Gateway

FIRST SUNDAY

D: David E. Talbert; with Ice Cube, Tracy Morgan, Katt Williams, Loretta Devine, Chi McBride, Michael Beach, Keith David, Regina Hall, Malinda Williams. (PG-13, 98 min.)

It's become increasingly difficult to recall that Ice Cube was once upon a time one of the most incendiary and trenchant voices in hip-hop. He's now Public Enemy Number Fun, although *First Sunday* is only fun if you're in dire need of a modernist urban take on the strain of comedy

Films and Videos by Scott Stark

Films and Videos by Scott Stark AFS Avant Cinema: Getting Nowhere Slow.

A collection of shorts by experimental media artist Scott Stark kicks off a new AFS directive to highlight on a bimonthly basis the avant-garde works of local filmmakers. Stark, who will conduct a Q&A afterward, will screen seven of his shorts, including "More Than Meets the Eye: Remaking Jane Fonda," in which Stark re-enacts Fonda's exercise tapes in public places. See www.austinfilm.org for more. @Austin Studios, Wednesday, 7pm: \$6 general, \$4 AFS members and students.

Abbott and Costello used to practice, which, let's be honest, wasn't that funny to begin with. Cube plays Durell, an air-conditioning-repair whiz whose best pal, the criminally stupid LeeJohn (30 Rock's Morgan) convinces him to take part in a scheme to rob the local church in order to score the cash necessary to a) save LeeJohn from a bloodthirsty posse of Jamaican drug thugs and b) pay the lease on a salon for Durell's ex (Hall). The robbery, needless to say, goes awry with robbers, preachers, and parishioners getting plenty of "values" dialogue but almost no laughs. (01/18/2008) – Marc Savlov

★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North

THE GAME PLAN

D: Andy Fickman; with Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson, Madison Pettis, Kyra Sedgwick, Roselyn Sanchez, Morris Chestnut, Brian J. White, Hayes MacArthur, Jamal Duff. (PG, 110 min.)

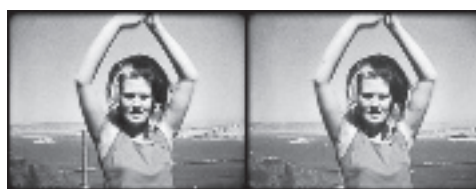
How's this for a movie slogan: "The Rock Cries!" Maybe it doesn't have the same ring to it that "Garbo Laughs!" did when *Ninotchka* was first released in 1939, but dammit if it isn't something remarkable seeing a professional wrestler put away his muscles and turn on the waterworks. It's like watching middle-American machismo itself wilt in your hand. The reason the Rock is crying is because he's playing a self-centered superstar football quarterback whose perfectly empty, materialistic little life is being turned upside down by an 8-year-old daughter (the absurdly doe-eyed Pettis) he didn't know he had. *The Game Plan* was written by two women, Nichole Millard and Kathryn Price, and their female take on the world of professional football – though ridiculous – gives their movie a comic flavor that is refreshingly free of the masculine chest-bumping that defines other football films (and football in general). (09/28/2007) – Josh Rosenblatt

★★★★ Movies 8

THE GOLDEN COMPASS

D: Chris Weitz; with Nicole Kidman, Daniel Craig, Dakota Blue Richards, Ben Walker, Eva Green, Jim Carter, Tom Courtenay, Sam Elliott, Christopher Lee, Simon McBurney; with the voices of Freddie Highmore, Ian McKellen, Ian McShane, Kristin Scott Thomas, Kathy Bates. (PG-13, 113 min.)

Although *The Golden Compass* rejects the anti-organized-religion bent of the source material, British children's author Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials* trilogy, the film interprets the novels' evil Magisterium – a society-controlling organization meant to stand in for the church (any church, really) – as something just as evil but more Nazi-inspired. The film charts the coming of age of Lyra Belacqua (Richards, a dirtied delight), a 12-year-old



orphan living in a steampunk universe parallel to Oxford, England, whose fate – which has something to do with a holy, multiverse war yet to come – was long ago predicted by witches. Yup, it's that kind of world: witches, gyptians (seafaring gypsies), and, most delightfully, daemons, which are the animal manifestations of human souls. This is a terrifying world in which trouble is visited regularly on small children. Writer/director Weitz far exceeds here, in vision and ambition, the perfectly passable entertainments of *American Pie* and *About a Boy*. The special effects are mostly spectacular. (12/07/2007) – Kimberley Jones

★★★ Metropolitan

THE GREAT DEBATERS

D: Denzel Washington; with Denzel Washington, Forest Whitaker, Nate Parker, Jurnee Smollett, Denzel Whitaker, Kimberly Elise, John Heard. (PG-13, 123 min.)

In his second outing as a director, Washington chooses an inspirational story; yet even though *The Great Debaters* is a historical story worth telling, the film is hobbled by the narrative predictability that inevitably governs this type of drama. Like his first directorial effort, *Antwone Fisher*, *The Great Debaters* is based on a true story in which Washington casts himself in the role of the elder leading man, the guiding figure who helps characters from the younger generation overcome the damage of their past and grab hold of the opportunities for their future. Although Washington is perfectly fine in his performance here as the professor and coach of Wiley College's national-championship-winning debate team in 1935, the role calls for no special showmanship on the part of the dependably brilliant actor. So, too, as the director, Washington brings no special stylistic flourish to the film, instead placing himself at the straightforward service of the Oprah Winfrey-produced story. (12/21/2007) – Marjorie Baumgarten

★★★ Gateway

I AM LEGEND

D: Francis Lawrence; with Will Smith, Alice Braga, Charlie Tahan, Salli Richardson, Willow Smith, Dash Mihok, Darrell Foster, April Grace, Joanna Numata. (PG-13, 100 min.)

Smith plays Robert Neville, a military immunologist who is the only real human left in New York. By day he wanders the city's empty avenues with his German shepherd, scavenging for food and gasoline; by night he barricades himself in his apartment with his rifle to wait for the living dead to break down the door. All this happens during the film's first 10 minutes, so initially I was optimistic. First of all, Lawrence's desolate Manhattan is a wonder to behold. And secondly, Smith's Neville is no unblinking model of action-film courage; he is terrified, lonely, and racked with guilt over his



inability to save the lives of ... well, anyone – a guilt he tries to assuage by working on a vaccine to save humanity, not to mention his own soul. Unfortunately, after the first 10 minutes, it's all downhill for *I Am Legend*, as the film descends into a monster-movie malaise starring a horde of balding CGI monsters. (12/14/2007) – Josh Rosenblatt

★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Gateway, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North

INTO THE WILD

D: Sean Penn; with Emile Hirsch, Marcia Gay Harden, William Hurt, Jena Malone, Brian Dierker, Catherine Keener, Vince Vaughn, Kristen Stewart, Hal Holbrook. (R, 140 min.)

On April 28, 1992, a scraggly 24-year-old tramp and adventurer named Christopher McCandless walked into the Alaskan wilderness and was never heard from again. These events were brilliantly chronicled in 1996 by Jon Krakauer in his bestselling book *Into the Wild*, which was permeated by a sense of sadness and distance that left readers with the unsettling feeling that McCandless' haunted life and solitary death would remain forever unknowable. Unfortunately, an unknowable character makes for a stubborn film protagonist. And though Penn has conjured up a beautifully acted, visually bracing film that captures all the romantic energy and freedom of a life spent outside the bounds of society, somewhere along the way he misplaced that melancholy that made McCandless' story so devastating. Penn's McCandless (a wiry Hirsch) is a 21st century Hollywood hero, armed with a mouthful of self-help platitudes about following your heart and living life to the fullest but possessing precious little mystery. (10/19/2007) – Josh Rosenblatt

★★★★ Dobie, Metropolitan

JUNO

D: Jason Reitman; with Ellen Page, Michael Cera, Jennifer Garner, Jason Bateman, Allison Janney, J.K. Simmons. (PG-13, 92 min.)

When 16-year-old Juno (Page) pays for her pregnancy test with the stick still in hand, the cashier wisecracks, "This is one diddle that can't be undid, home skillet." That quip, care of screenwriter and freshly minted Hot New Thing Diablo Cody, almost had me audibly groaning: So it's gonna be like that, is it? Well, yes and no. The quips keep coming, but they slow, and *Juno* settles into a sharp, winning relationship comedy. But, like everything else in the winsome *Juno*, what plays for laughs has an undeniable ring of real emotion. Spend enough time with Juno's deadpan and her irony, and you learn how to read between the lines, to the scared, confused, and royally pissed teenager underneath the brazen, Buddha-bellied exterior (a "cautionary whale," she calls herself). Page (*Hard Candy*) is marvelous, especially considering what a balancing act the role is between bitchy and twee, and she's backed by a terrific ensemble cast. (12/21/2007) – Kimberley Jones

★★★★ Alamo Drafthouse South, Arbor, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Dobie, Lakeline, Tinseltown North, Westgate

LIONS FOR LAMBS

D: Robert Redford; with Redford, Meryl Streep, Tom Cruise, Derek Luke, Andrew Garfield, Michael Peña, Peter Berg. (R, 92 min.)

"Wake up, America!" That's the fervent call to action in *Lions for Lambs*, a well-intentioned and often nervy critique of America's current complacency during a time of war. It's also a bold film, structurally speaking, in that it's little more than three interwoven stories in which two characters are simply engaged in a conversation. Even though there's little action in the visceral sense, *Lions for Lambs* can be captivating, especially in the vigorous give-and-take exchange in the senator's office about the failings of our country's leadership and the popular press with respect to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Cruise's controlled acting style works well in the role of a powerful man doing his best to sell a tough bill of goods, while Streep (as usual) is nothing short of miraculous as the reporter who must acknowledge her own complicity for today's political state of affairs. The other two segments are less captivating (though never boring). (11/09/2007) – Steve Davis

★★★★ Movies 8

★ MICHAEL CLAYTON

D: Tony Gilroy; with George Clooney, Tom Wilkinson, Tilda Swinton, Sydney Pollack, Michael O'Keefe. (R, 119 min.)

This meticulous legal thriller – a smart and thoroughly entertaining film – thoughtfully asks the question of where a lawyer's ethical responsibility to zealously represent a client ends and the societal interest in achieving justice begins. In *Michael Clayton* the truth is a slippery thing, particularly when billions of dollars are at stake in a class-action lawsuit. When the brilliant lead attorney for the corporate defendant suffers a public meltdown during a deposition, his high-powered law firm brings in the titular character to "fix" the situation. Michael Clayton (Clooney) is the firm's highly paid "janitor," a man who cleans up messes before they become something unmanageable. The irony is that Clayton is unable to clean up his own mess of a life. Director/screenwriter Gilroy has crafted a streamlined screenplay that is both sleek and provocative. The acting is superb across the board. (10/12/2007) – Steve Davis

★★★★ Gateway, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South

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MR. MAGORIUM’S WONDER EMPORIUM

D: Zach Helm; with Dustin Hoffman, Natalie Portman, Jason Bateman, Zach Mills, Ted Ludzik, Rebecca Northan, Matt Baram, Kiele Sanchez. (G, 109 min.)
Mr. Magorium’s Wonder Emporium has whimsy coming out of its ears. Writer/director Helm is the writer of *Stranger Than Fiction*, which was also whimsical but had the common decency to be cynical, as well. Now the brakes are off, and Helm can feel free to give voice to all his passion for child-like eccentricity without all the baggage that comes with making a movie for adults. What he’s come up with is a toy store run by a gleeful 200-year-old man-child (Hoffman). At his side are Molly Mahoney (Portman), a former child-prodigy; 10-year-old Eric Applebaum (Mills); and Henry Weston (Bateman), an accountant who wears a tie to work, meaning he’s lost touch with his inner child (God bless him). With his incessant cackling and jiggling and adorable lisp, Hoffman is an unbearable force of nature, while Portman is disappointing as a young adult stuck in neutral. The film’s one saving grace is Bateman. (11/16/2007) – Josh Rosenblatt
 ★▶ Movies 8

NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS

D: Jon Turteltaub; with Nicolas Cage, Jon Voight, Ed Harris, Helen Mirren, Justin Bartha, Diane Kruger, Harvey Keitel, Bruce Greenwood. (PG, 124 min.)
 Less twisty than its 2004 predecessor and yet somehow more incoherent, *National Treasure: Book of Secrets* plays like a duplicate schematic of the first. Treasure hunter Benjamin Franklin Gates (Cage) lights on a noble cause; enlists a plucky cast of fellow hunters, code crackers, and danger enthusiasts (including the unsung Bartha, as Gates’ geekboy Friday); then goes on a globe-hopping quest that amounts to a cinematic series of Russian nesting dolls – crack one clue, and you’re awarded with another, equally inscrutable one. I don’t mean to sound like a sourpuss: There’s certainly a place for this kind of entertainment, and the first outing – same director, same screenwriters (husband-and-wife team Cormac and Marianne Wibberley), same cast – was pleasantly rompy and even sweetly patriotic in its history-buff bent. *Book of Secrets*, however, isn’t so much a romp as a long trudge through American history factoids and conspiracy-theory gobbledygook. Cool car chase, though. (12/28/2007) – Kimberley Jones
 ★★ Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Gateway, Lakeline, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate

NO COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN

D: Joel Coen, Ethan Coen; with Tommy Lee Jones, Javier Bardem, Josh Brolin, Kelly Macdonald, Woody Harrelson, Garret Dillahunt, Barry Corbin, Tess Harper, Stephen Root. (R, 122 min.)
 It seems at first like an odd pairing: the Coen brothers, they of the dark-humored film genre con-fiations, and Cormac McCarthy, the modern laureate of the Southern Gothic novel. Yet the Coens’ adaptation of McCarthy’s as-if-written-for-the-screen *No Country for Old Men* becomes a marvelous meld of sensibilities. The film is essentially a crime drama, although also something of a chase film. It holds up against the Coens’ earlier genre masterpieces like *Miller’s Crossing* and *Fargo* and makes recent genre misfires like *Intolerable Cruelty* and *The Ladykillers* more forgivable. The *No Country for Old Men* storyline is as old as the template for the brothers’ first film, *Blood Simple*: Follow the money. At least three characters are chasing a satchel filled with \$2 million. One of them is Anton Chigurh (Bardem), a character who immediately leaps to the forefront of indelible American monsters. As it unfolds, the cat-and-mouse chase is a sheer delight to watch. The performances are captivating, too. (11/16/2007) – Marjorie Baumgarten
 ★★★★★ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Alamo Drafthouse South, Arbor, Barton Creek Square, Dobie

ONE MISSED CALL

D: Eric Valette; with Ed Burns, Shannyn Sossamon, Ana Claudia Talancón, Ray Wise, Azura Skye. (PG-13, 87 min.)
 The J-horror trend initiated by Hideo Nakata’s 1998 viral freakout *Ringu*, which along with nearly every other film in the genre has been remade multiple times throughout Asia and the U.S., is way past its expired-by date, asphyxiated on soggy tendrils of lank, black hair and kabuki-doomy, fright-faced shock cuts. Takashi Miike’s 2003 foray into technophobic Japanese horror (the source

for this ill-advised American remake) was a creative dud for the Japanese director. Valette’s film, whose premise involves cell-phone calls from the soon-to-be-deceased to their predeceased selves, is even less engaging than the original. Since Burns is on board as a stodgy, tired-looking detective who has lost his sister to the ring tones o’ woe, female lead Sossamon has someone to furrow brows with and mull over the unummable. Apart from some borderline-clever cinematography courtesy of Glen MacPherson, there’s precious little to make anyone want to answer this doleful call. (01/11/2008) – Marc Savlov
 ▶ CM Round Rock, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North

THE ORPHANAGE

D: Juan Antonio Bayona; with Belén Rueda, Fernando Cayo, Roger Princep, Mabel Rivera, Edgar Vivar, Geraldine Chaplin, Monserrat Carulla. (R, 100 min., subtitled)
 At the risk of ticking off producer Guillermo Del Toro, the Spanish shocker *The Orphanage* is no *Devil’s Backbone*. It’s hardly spineless, but neither is it on par with several of the other scary movies from which it borrows heavily, either in tone or tale, chief among them *The Omen*, Alejandro Amenábar’s *The Others*, Mario Bava’s *Kill, Baby ... Kill!*, and at least a deuce of Dario Argento *gialli*. It has, neo-Gothic style to spare and a dense, suffocating atmosphere. It strives mightily to have a heart in the midst of all the miasmatic, ghostly goings-on. Bayona and his cast pull out all the stops, and for a while, you’re immersed in the increasingly creepy story of married couple Laura (Rueda) and Carlos (Cayo) and their adopted son, Simón (Princep). Sergio Sánchez’s lyrical, occasionally poetic script is played out in a tragic key that feels far too minor, and ultimately the composition comes off as both overplayed and underdone. (12/28/2007) – Marc Savlov
 ★★▶ Alamo Drafthouse South, Dobie, Metropolitan

THE PERFECT HOLIDAY

D: Lance Rivera; with Morris Chestnut, Gabrielle Union, Faizon Love, Terrence Howard, Queen Latifah, Charlie Murphy, Katt Williams, Rachel True. (PG, 96 min.)
 Far from perfect and about as much fun as a holiday in Cambodia, this is lightweight yuletide fluffery, offensive neither in tone nor spirit but entirely unnecessary. Ben (Chestnut) is a singer-songwriter moonlighting as a department-store Santa; his possible paramour, single mom Nancy (Union), is pregnant with implausibility, having already spawned too-cute hood rat Emily (Khail Bryant) with previous alpha male gajillionaire J-Jizzy (Murphy). The moment of introduction into a Christmastime story of a character tagged with the debatably profane name of “J-Jizzy” is usually when I opt out, but Murphy, all dumbass rap snaps and oily hip-hop overkill, turns out to be the savior of the film, if not humanity. Ben and Nancy, smart and sweet and fated to be together yet living with the perpetual torment of “normal” names, don’t stand a chance against Murphy’s superfly Jizz-bomb, who steals the show without even breaking a dookie rope, yo. (12/14/2007) – Marc Savlov
 ★▶ Movies 8

THE PIRATES WHO DON’T DO ANYTHING: A VEGGIETALES MOVIE

D: Mike Nawrocki; with the voices of Nawrocki, Phil Vischer, Cam Clarke, Laura Gerow. (G, 85 min.)
 Yo-ho-ho and a bottle of ... V8? That’s what you get when you cross *VeggieTales* characters with a pirate yarn. I have to say that before now, I wasn’t personally familiar with this popular series’ animated, direct-to-video, faith-based, vegetable characters, and I also somehow missed their 2002 big-screen debut, *Jonah: A VeggieTales Movie*. As I wasn’t expecting much, I must say that *Pirates* doesn’t disappoint. Yet in spite of its flat, computer-generated animation and a G-rated joke-a-thon, *Pirates* is an understandable kiddie attraction. The action and patter is nonstop, and there’s just enough message about the ability to overcome one’s fears, laziness, and self-disparagement to make it suitable for the young ’uns without insulting their intelligence. Those unfamiliar with the characters, however, may find their absence of appendages alarming. They hop everywhere because they have no feet, and their lack of arms makes their sword-brandishing a surreal sight. (01/13/2008) – Marjorie Baumgarten
 ★★ Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Tinseltown North, Westgate

THE SAVAGES

D: Tamara Jenkins; with Laura Linney, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Philip Bosco, Peter Friedman, Gbenga Akinagbe. (R, 113 min.)
 Don’t pay any attention to the synopsis of this film. It’ll make it sound like something for nonmasochists to sidestep, and nothing could be further from the truth of this smart, funny, thoughtful, and exquisitely realized film. Jenkins’ movie is a deft blend of realism and playful touches of structural whimsy and Brechtian distancing. Jon (Hoffman) and Wendy (Linney) are the grown and distant children of Lenny Savage (Bosco), who is showing the first signs of senile dementia. The subtlety of the interplay between siblings is one of the joys of *The Savages*. The film is likely to play differently to people of different age groups, maybe even sexes. To what extent one identifies with, recognizes, and fears each of the characters may govern the viewer’s disposition toward the subject matter. Younger viewers may have to wait awhile before they’re able to locate their inner Savage. (12/28/2007) – Marjorie Baumgarten
 ★★★★★ Arbor

SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET

D: Tim Burton; with Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter, Alan Rickman, Timothy Spall, Sacha Baron Cohen, Jamie Campbell Bower, Laura Michelle Kelly, Jayne Wisener. (R, 117 min.)
 Like some religious fanatic, Sweeney Todd (Depp) plays the same note over and over again: “Revenge, revenge, revenge,” he crows. Watching Burton’s adaptation of Stephen Sondheim’s 1979 stage musical, I was struck by just how dull violent retribution can be when it’s all someone ever talks (or, in this case, sings) about. Burton’s gorgeously grim film (his sixth with Depp) is loyal to Sondheim’s original, both in spirit and structure;

it’s dark and Gothic and drenched in blood, and it forgoes excessive dialogue in the name of getting quickly to the next murky, malevolent, yet strangely forgettable tune. Poor Depp, though, isn’t up to the challenge of a musical. So by the time he gets that long-wished-for shot at restitution, I didn’t care anymore if he succeeded or not so long as he stopped singing about it. By that point I’d already decided life would be better inside a quiet meat pie. (12/21/2007) – Josh Rosenblatt
 ★★ Alamo Drafthouse South, Barton Creek Square, Gateway, Tinseltown South

THERE WILL BE BLOOD

D: Paul Thomas Anderson; with Daniel Day-Lewis, Paul Dano, Kevin J. O’Connor, Ciarán Hinds, Dillon Freasier. (R, 158 min.)
 Opening at the dawn of the 20th century, this film epic is a compelling portrait of capitalism gone mad and the collective shams we hold on to as truths. Anderson’s saga is one that rivals films like *Giant* and *Citizen Kane* in our popular lore as stories about how we came to be the people we are. Ambition and greed drive the ascent of Daniel Plainview (Day-Lewis in, hands down, the most gripping film performance of the year), a gold-pro prospector-turned-wildcatter-turned-oil tycoon. Anderson, the director of such culture-rattling films as *Boogie Nights* and *Magnolia*, here tones down his signature visual and narrative flamboyance in favor of a more classically composed story, while leaving intact the trenchant omniscience of his storytelling. The film also tackles America’s reliance on faith and the gnarled intersection between pragmatism and belief. At its most forthright, however, *There Will Be Blood* is a rich character study of a fascinating individual who is by turns likable, loathsome, admirable, monstrous, and driven. (01/18/2008) – Marjorie Baumgarten
 ★★★★★ Alamo Ritz, Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Arbor, Barton Creek Square, Southpark Meadows, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

THIS CHRISTMAS

D: Preston A. Whitmore II; with Delroy Lindo, Loretta Devine, Idris Elba, Chris Brown, Columbus Short, Keith Robinson, Laz Alonso, Regina King, Mekhi Phifer, Sharon Leal, Lauren London. (PG-13, 117 min.)
 I have to ask: What could possibly explain the presence of two first-rate actors like Lindo and Elba in a movie as bland as *This Christmas*? They star in this glorified TV movie about an estranged family reuniting after four years to discover the true meaning of Christmas. Elba plays the Whitfield family’s prodigal son, who decides it would be best to go home for Christmas after a run-in with two impatient bookies forces him to leave town with little more than the leather cap on his head. He arrives home to find most of his family members living lives of not-so-quiet desperation. Add to the mix a couple of extended all-family dance sequences in the living room and a soundtrack composed of jazzed-up Christmas carols that will make you feel like you’re trapped in a shopping mall, and you’ve got the perfect formula for holiday cheer: It’s redemption through sentimentality, salvation through schmaltz. (11/23/2007) – Josh Rosenblatt
 ★★ Movies 8

27 DRESSES

D: Anne Fletcher; with Katherine Heigl, James Marsden, Edward Burns, Judy Greer, Malin Akerman, Melora Hardin. (PG-13, 107 min.)
 Those 27 dresses mark the time Jane (Heigl) has spent, as one character puts it, in the taffeta ghetto of bridesmaidery. When Jane’s boss and secret object of her affection (Burns, forever toady) falls in love with her sister (Akerman), Jane is stuck planning their wedding while simultaneously dodging the dogged attentions of Kevin (Marsden), a cynical journalist covering the wedding beat. Heigl anchors the film with a spazz-tastic charm, but the real star-making turn here belongs to Marsden, as a mixed-drink of frat boy and existential downer (or is it tall drink of water?). The jokes only hit about half the time – the best bits have an off-the-cuff feel – and the film is pocked with the kind of rom-com clichés that are practically written in stone, including the well-worn, improbable group sing-along – albeit this one, hinging on Elton John-inspired malapropisms, is pretty cute, and what validation to know others have mistaken Bennie’s electric boots for electric boobs. (01/18/2008) – Kimberley Jones
 ★★▶ Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Highland, Gateway, Lakeline, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate



Meet the Spartans

WALK HARD: THE DEWEY COX STORY

D: Jake Kasdan; with John C. Reilly, Jenna Fischer, Kristen Wiig, Tim Meadows, Chris Parnell, Matt Besser, David Krumholtz, Jack Black, Paul Rudd, Jason Schwartzman, Harold Ramis, Martin Starr, John Michael Higgins. (R, 96 min.)

The creative forces behind *Walk Hard* adhere to one simple rule: If it's funny once, it'll be funny 10 times over. And throughout this absurdist spin on musical biopics, the good news is that sometimes they're right. Taking cues very specifically from *Ray* and *Walk the Line*, this film spans 70 years in the life of its hero, the fictional music legend Dewey Cox (Reilly). The story follows a rise-fall-and-rise-again structure as Dewey meets the love of his life (Fischer), develops multiple drug addictions, loses his love, finds her again, and along the way falls prey to every generational music trend in the book. Whether traveling to India with the Beatles, writing protest songs, or hosting a variety show, Dewey manages to enact all the rock & roll clichés. Simultaneously dumb and enjoyable, the silliness manages at times to be both wonderful and cringe-worthy. In the end, Reilly's oblivious swagger successfully carries much of the film. (12/21/2007) — *Toddy Burton*

★★★ Alamo Drafthouse Village, Metropolitan

THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP

D: Jay Russell; with Alex Etel, Emily Watson, Ben Chaplin, David Morrissey, Priyanka Xi, Marshall Napier, Brian Cox. (PG, 111 min.)

A family film in the best sense, *Water Horse* plays like a cross between a World War II-era *Boy's Own* adventure and *Baby: Secret of the Lost Legend*, minus the soppy treacle of the latter but with just the right amount of RAF fighter flybys to qualify it as a rather ripping yarn, indeed. Set on the coast of Scotland, the ingratiatingly plucky Etel plays Angus, a young dreamer whose mother and sister tend to Lord Something or Other's sprawling country estate, while he skitters around the tide pools digging up neat stuff. The discovery of a barnacle-encrusted egg reveals the titular "water horse," aka the Loch Ness beastie, and coincides with the arrival of a pair of dueling surrogate father figures for Angus. With its *Shrek* ears and newborn, puggy snufflings, the water horse is extremely — and unthreateningly, to younger members — well designed, via CGI and more tactile effects work. Despite the title, however, this is Etel's film all the way. (12/21/2007) — *Marc Savlov*

★★★ Hill Country Galleria

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THURSDAY 2 4

The 90s One-Hit Wonders Sing-Along: Vol. 2 @Alamo Ritz, 9:45pm.

Cybernator Tromatic Thursday. In a not too distant future – one that sounds suspiciously like James Cameron's future – cyborg assassins run amok. @Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, 10pm; free.

Real Genius Quote-Along (1985)

D: Martha Coolidge; with Val Kilmer, Gabriel Jarret, Michelle Meyrink, William Atherton, Jon Gries, Patti D'Arbanville, Stacy Peralta. (PG, 108 min.) @Alamo Ritz, 7pm.

Spirit of the Marathon (2008)

D: Jon Dunham. (NR, 120 min.) The feature documentary captures the drama, unique spectacle, and individual journeys of six runners as they prepare for and ultimately face the challenge of Chicago's famed 26.2-mile race. Filmed on four continents, the movie brings together a diverse cast of amateur athletes and marathon veterans including Deena Kastor and others. @Tinseltown North, Metropolitan, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Gateway, 7:30pm; \$8.50, \$6.25 seniors/children.

Tales From the Quadead Zone (1987)

D: Chester Novell Turner; with Shirley Latanya Jones. (NR, 62 min.) **Terror Thursday.** Reanimated adulterizing clowns, transparent children, and hungry white people are just some of the antagonists in this homemade horror anthology. @Alamo Ritz, 12mid; free.

SPACES

Crime Novel (2005) *D: Michele Placido; with Kim Rossi Stuart, Anna Mouglalis, Pierfrancesco Favino, Claudio Santamaria. (NR, 152 min.)* **II Circolo Italiano.** Italian gangland drama is set in the Seventies. @MEZ B0.306 100 (basement of Mezes on the UT campus), 8pm; free.

Shoot 'Em Up (2007) *D: Michael Davis; with Clive Owen, Paul Giamatti, Monica Bellucci, Stephen McHattie, Daniel Pilon. (R, 87 min.)* There's not a lot to this action-movie satire other than a seemingly endless fusillade of projectiles. (*) @Rounders Pizzeria, 8pm; free.

FRIDAY 2 5

SPACES

Lori 16mm Varga Concert/Cinema (2008) *D: Lori 16mm Varga.* Varga's film installation is hand-cut and hand-painted and set to four Austin music acts: Bright Duplex, Balmorhea, Gary Barft*ts, and A New Low. @Salvage Vanguard Theater, 9pm; \$5 suggested donation.

Tying the Knot (2004) *D: Jim de Sève. (NR, 81 min.)* **Community Movie and Discussion Night.** Documentary looks at the current debate over gay marriage in the United States. @Wells Branch Community Library, 7pm; free.

Offscreen

501 Studios: Soundstage + HD Theatre 501 Studios' historic soundstage in Downtown Austin now doubles as one of Texas' largest public theatres – with a Sony Qualia HD projector, a 28-foot screen, 180 (removable) seats, a vintage popcorn machine, and affordable rates. Need a venue for premieres, wrap parties, and concerts/plays/performances featuring projection? This could be the place. Also still available as a soundstage/green screen. thomasallen@501studios.com.

Screen It Like You Mean It Austin Studios has a state-of-the-art screening room, and, lucky you, they've opened it up on a rental basis to the public, which means you can finally toss out that old Sony Watchman you've been thrusting in potential distributors' mugs for the past three years. Community and indie rates are available for the room, which sports an 18-foot-by-7-foot screen, 28 fixed theatre seats, and a surround-sound system and supports Super-35, 35mm, 16mm, VHS, and DVD formats. Handicap accessible, restrooms – the works. They also have a "break room" suitable for presentations, meetings, and general cinematic tomfoolery. 322-0145. www.austinstudios.org.

Spring Classes From the Austin School of Film Lighting for Film and Video Workshop and DV and HD Camera Basics Workshop are coming up – and, hallelujah, they're being taught by **Spencer Parsons**. Register now; see the Austin Film School website for details and other upcoming classes available. www.austinfilmshool.org.

SATURDAY 2 6

The Breakfast Club (1985) *D: John Hughes; with Emilio Estevez, Judd Nelson, Molly Ringwald, Anthony Michael Hall, Ally Sheedy, Paul Gleason. (R, 97 min.)* **Master Pancake Theater.** Watch as the Master Pancake cutups fire more spitballs at this John Hughes teen classic than juvenile delinquents in study hall. (*) @Alamo Drafthouse Village, 10pm, 12mid.

D.A.R.Y.L. (1985) *D: Simon Wincer; with Mary Beth Hurt, Michael McKean, Kathryn Walker, Colleen Camp, Josef Sommer. (PG, 99 min.)* **Kids Club.** A young boy with strange powers is found wandering without any memory of who he is. @Alamo Drafthouse South, noon; free.

The Rocky Horror Picture Show (1975) *D: Jim Sharman; with Richard O'Brien, Barry Bostwick, Susan Sarandon, Tim Curry. (R, 95 min.)* Austin fans have been dressing up and doing the "Time Warp" thing live for 31 years straight. For more info, see www.austinrocky.org. @Alamo Drafthouse Village, 12mid.

SUNDAY 2 7

Amadeus: Director's Cut (2002) *D: Milos Forman; with F. Murray Abraham, Tom Hulce, Elizabeth Berridge, Simon Callow, Jeffrey Jones. (R, 180 min.)* **PKW Productions.** Forman's 1984 tour de force will screen in honor of the anniversary of Mozart's 252nd birthday, and P Kellach Waddle and his ensemble of musicians will present music never performed before at any previous Amadeus show. @Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, 7pm.

SPACES

Blades of Glory (2007) *D: Josh Gordon and Will Speck; with Will Ferrell, Jon Heder, Will Arnett, Amy Poehler, Jenna Fischer, William Fichtner, Craig T. Nelson, Nick Swardson, Rob Corddry. (PG-13, 93 min.)* **Moonlight Cinema – Waterloo Video.** Dinner specials. Jerm Pollet hosts. (*) @Belmont, 8pm; free.

TUESDAY 2 9

La Zandunga (1938) *D: Fernando De Fuentes; with Lupe Vélez, Rafael Falcón, Arturo de Córdova, Joaquín Pardavé. (NR, 107 min.)* **Austin Film Society: 3 Mexicanas en Hollywood.** In the first of her two Mexican films, Vélez stars as a young woman courted by three suitors: one who will fight to win her, another who will extort her father to win her hand, and the one whom she loves but is an outsider and therefore unacceptable. See austinchronicle.com/gyrobase/issue/story?oid=oid:575556 for more on the series. @Alamo Ritz, 7pm; \$4, AFS members free.

SPACES

Napoleon Dynamite (2004) *D: Jared Hess; with Jon Heder, Efen Ramirez, Jon Gries, Aaron Ruell, Tina Majorino, Diedrich Bader, Sandy Martin. (PG, 86 min.)* Free. (*) @Rounders Pizzeria, 8pm.

WEDNESDAY 3 0

Daughter of Death (1983) *D: Paul Nicholas and Maurice Smith; with Sybil Danning, Anthony Franciosa, Isabelle Mejias.* **Weird Wednesday.** This erotic thriller stars Austrian-American B-movie queen Sybil Danning as a stepmother under attack. @Alamo Ritz, 12mid; free.

Groundhog Day (1993) *D: Harold Ramis; with Bill Murray, Andie MacDowell, Chris Elliott, Stephen Tobolowsky. (PG, 103 min.)* **Food and Film Events.** In a screening benefiting the Austin Family Institute, whiz chef John Bullington will riff on this Bill Murray classic – about a cranky weatherman forced to relive the same day over and over again, in the process regaining his humanity – by cooking up a multicourse menu using the same ingredients over and over again. Genius, no? (*) @Alamo Drafthouse South, 7pm; see www.originalalamo.com for more.

Justin Timberlake's Birthday Party Sing-Along The sexy? It's cool. J.T.'s already bringing it. @Alamo Drafthouse Village, 10pm.

Married to the Mob Feast (1988)

D: Jonathan Demme; with Mercedes Ruehl, Matthew Modine, Michelle Pfeiffer, Dean Stockwell. (R, 103 min.) See www.drafthouse.com for the menu. @Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, 7:30pm.

SPACES

Films and Videos by Scott Stark AFS Avant Cinema: Getting Nowhere Slow. See p.84.

Monsters, Inc. (2001) *D: Lee Unkrich, David Silverman and Peter Docter; with the voices of Billy Crystal, John Goodman, James Coburn, Jennifer Tilly, Steve Buscemi, Bonnie Hunt. (G, 92 min.)* Goodman and Crystal supply the voices as goodhearted monsters on a mission to scare the bejesus out of tots. (*) @Rounders Pizzeria, 6:30pm; free.

THURSDAY 3 1

Blood Car (2007) *D: Alex Orr; with Mike Brune, Anna Chlumsky, Katie Rowlett, Matt Hutchinson. (NR, 75 min.)* **Austin Film Festival.** In this dark comedy, Archie's wheatgrass-powered car decides it likes the color red better than green when it decides its alternative fuel of choice is blood. @Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, \$4, AFF members free.

The Digital Prophet (1995) *D: Christopher Romero; with Blake Bahner, Jeffrey Combs, Annie Biggs.* **Tromatic Thursday.** A pair of detectives track an Internet killer. @Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, 10pm; free.

Lost (2007) TV @ the Alamo. No commercials, back-to-back screenings of last week's episode followed by the newest. @Alamo Drafthouse Village, 8pm; @Alamo Drafthouse Lake Creek, 9pm; free.

SXSW Volunteers Needed Wanna see what happens behind the scenes at the Music, Film, or Interactive Festivals; earn a chance to see shows; and generally be *involved* in the glory and the grime? Volunteer! Jobs range from festival production to conference activities including registration, information, trade show, technical support, and more. Day and night positions are available. Volunteers must be able to work a minimum of 30 hours or four nights during the event, depending on their crew type. Sign up today. See website for details. www.sxsw.com/volunteer.

Texas All-Star Nobility Dinner is a fundraiser at the Four Seasons, to benefit *One Peace at a Time*, the sequel to *Nobility*. Guest of honor is Nobel laureate Steve Weinberg; your dinner hosts are Owen Wilson, Ricardo Chavira of *Desperate Housewives*, Kinky Friedman, Martie Maguire of the Dixie Chicks, the *Greater Tuna* stars, Mike Judge, Harry Anderson, Shawn Colvin, Joe Ely, Jimmie Dale Gilmore, Lawrence Wright, and more. Cocktail reception precedes the dinner. Much live music and entertainment throughout. *Sun., Jan. 27, 6-9pm. Four Seasons Hotel, 98 San Jacinto, 478-4500. \$10,000 for a table of 10. www.fourseasons.com.*

The Network Austin Mixer Mingle with local film and media talents at these casual events, rubbing like-minded elbows and getting a load of who's filming who and what's up in the industry. The featured speaker this week is the multitalented and highly acclaimed force of nature known as **CK McFarland**. *Wed., Jan. 30, 7pm. Mother Egan's Irish Pub, 715 W. Sixth, 478-7747. www.networkaustinxmixer.com.*

TheFilmSchool Application Deadline *Thu., Jan. 31. 206/709-2555. \$2995 (scholarships are available). www.thefilmshool.com.*

Without Warning (1980) D: Greydon Clark; with Jack Palance, Martin Landau, Cameron Mitchell, David Caruso. (NR, 89 min.) **Terror** Thursday. Or: *Alien vs. Hillbillies*. From the director of cult fave *Satan's Cheerleaders*. @Alamo Ritz, 12mid; free.

SPACES

Eagle vs Shark (2007) D: Taika Waititi; with Jemaine Clement, Loren Horsley, Brian Sergent, Craig Hall, Rachel House, Cohen Holloway, Joel Tobeck, Morag Hills. (R, 88 min.) *Flight of the Conchords'* Clement stars in this Kiwi romantic comedy for misfits. (*) @Rounders Pizzeria, 8pm; free.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

The *Austin Chronicle* is published every Thursday. Info is due the Monday of the week prior to the issue date. **The deadline for the Feb. 8 issue is Monday, Jan. 28.** Include name of event, date, time, location, price, phone number(s), a description, and any available photos or artwork.

Send submissions to the *Chronicle*, PO Box 49066, Austin 78765, fax 458-6910, or e-mail.

Contact Marjorie Baumgarten (Special Screenings): specialscreenings@austinchronicle.com

Contact Wayne Alan Brenner (Offscreen): calendar@austinchronicle.com.

IMAX Theatre

For ticket prices call 936-IMAX or 936-TSHM or see www.thestoryoftexas.com. See Showtimes for dates and times.

African Adventure 3D: Safari in the Okavango (2007) D: Ben Stassen. (NR, 40 min.) Come face-to-face with hippos, crocodiles, elephants, lions, and many types of antelopes and bird species. Closes Friday. (*)

Sea Monsters 3D: A Prehistoric Adventure (2007) D: Sean MacLeod Phillips; narrated by Liev Schreiber. (NR, 40 min.) National Geographic uses photo-realistic, computer-generated, 3-D animation to transport audiences back to the late Cretaceous period more than 65 million years ago, when a great inland sea divided North America in two. (*)

Texas: The Big Picture (2003) D: Scott Swofford; narrated by Colby Donaldson. (NR, 39 min.) Panoramic shots of Texas grace the screen as Texas is shown to be a land capable of growing everything from grapefruit to microchips.

U2 3D (2008) See p.82.

Wildfire: Feel the Heat (1999) D: Mike Slee; narrated by Andre Braugher. (NR, 40 min.) Crews put out really big fires around the world.

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Sharon Jones is the 5-foot, 51-year-old reigning queen of soul whose dynamic stage presence comes as close as anyone to rivaling the late James Brown. She and the eightpiece Dap-Kings are the crown jewel of the fiercely independent Brooklyn-based Daptone Records, which has been spearheading a soul revival for a decade plus. Thankfully, mainstream audiences are beginning to catch on.

"I hear all this stuff about Amy Winehouse and Mark [Ronson] and all these people bringing back the funk, bringing back the soul," Jones says. "Nobody's bringing it back because we never left it! I'm just glad we're being recognized right now."

Ironically, that recognition can be partly attributed to Winehouse, who nabbed the Dap-Kings for her platinum-plus *Back to Black* album and subsequent tour. Watching a skinny white girl reach paparazzi-level popularity with her band was no shock for Jones. She's been dismissed by record suits since the late 1970s.

NYC gypsies Ivan Milev Band open.

"I didn't have the look," she explains. "I was too dark, too short, too fat, and once you got past a certain age, I was too old."

Jones spent much of the last 20 years as a corrections officer, begrudgingly performing Jennifer Lopez covers at wedding receptions. Only a few short years separate her stint as a wedding singer and headlining a sold-out Apollo Theater, where she and the Dap-Kings celebrated the release of their third and most recent album, 2007's *100 Days, 100 Nights*.

Thanks in part to last year's South by Southwest performance at Antone's, Jones landed a small role as a juke-joint singer in the new Denzel Washington film *The Great Debaters*. For now, however, nothing makes her happier than rocking with the Dap-Kings.

"I don't care about what other people think anymore; I just have to make me happy. We're putting out some good music right now, and when we get onstage, that's my happiness."
— Thomas Fawcett



Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings

ANTONE'S, SATURDAY 26

In-Stores

Friday: The **Greyboy Allstars**, Waterloo Records, 5pm
Saturday: **Broken Teeth**, Encore Records Video & Apparel, 7pm;
Sharon Tate's Baby, **Prom Nite**, **Dumb**, MonkeyWrench Books, 7pm
Tuesday: **This Will Destroy You**, Waterloo Records, 5pm

John Hammond

CACTUS CAFE, FRIDAY 25

With a career spanning more than 40 years, John Hammond has earned his blues stripes. Whether fronting a tight band or performing solo with just a guitar and harmonica, Hammond's collected an astonishing repertoire of classic blues songs encompassing the entire history of the genre. He'll no doubt draw from the many styles that characterize his most recent album, *Push Comes to Shove* (Back Porch).
— Jay Trachtenberg

Chuck Prophet

CONTINENTAL CLUB, FRIDAY 25

After spending most of 2007 working on songs for Alejandro Escovedo's next album, San Fran's Chuck Prophet and the local hero share a stage for one of the most anticipated shows of the new year. Prophet's latest, *Soap and Water* (Yep Roc), finds him at his most sonically creative, though some of that finesse might be lost live, replaced with grit and volume. Houston's Lisa Novak teams up with L.L. Cooper and Rich Hopkins to open. Escovedo headlines. Visit austinchronicle.com/earache for more with Prophet.
— Jim Caligiuri



Terp 2 It MOHAWK, FRIDAY 25

Following the second night of ColdTowne Theater's three-day comedy festival (see "see.hear.speak.three," p.35), shoot on down Red River for a grab bag of inspired musical curiosities. Local rapper Terp 2 It harnesses hip-hop hilarity from debut *The Freshest Dude*. By contrast, Alexander's Dark Band skews positively pastoral with wind, strings, and quirk-laden wordplay. Cover enthusiasts the Promise Breakers and Mr. Susan add to the mirth.
— Greg Beets

Rattletree

COPA, SATURDAY 26

Who knew four guys banging on marimbas could be so entertaining? Led by local musicologist Joel Laviolette, this sixpiece Austin percussion ensemble is highlighted by four handmade marimbas, including the absurdly large bass marimba, which requires either a stepladder or a musically inclined Yao Ming. The trance-inducing Zimbabwean chants and Afro-pop stylings can make audiences spellbound. Beware of flailing limbs.
— Thomas Fawcett

Pharoahe Monch

PARISH, SUNDAY 27

New York's Pharoahe Monch built a reputation as a progressively conscious lyricist among his contemporaries while remaining a stranger to radio play. Though he helped ghostwrite part of Diddy's *Press Play*, Monch's catalog, augmented by 2007's triumphant *Desire*, spins closer to what Mos Def and Talib Kweli are doing than anything coming out of Bad Boy. RSVP at www.scion.com/livemetrom.
— Chase Hoffberger



T-Bird & the Breaks

ANTONE'S, MONDAY 28

The bassist and backup singers may look too young to vote, but newcomers T-Bird & the Breaks are old souls bringing serious R&B heat. The local 10-piece indulges the requisite Wilson Pickett and Sly & the Family Stone covers but is at its best pounding out originals by dynamic frontman Tim Crane, a slick-haired, gravel-voiced shouter in the mold of blue-eyed Texas soul sensation Roy Head. Starts at 7pm.
— Thomas Fawcett

Gram Rabbit PARISH, TUESDAY 29

Given the Joshua Tree, Calif., quartet's lepro-ridian fascination, playful industrial beats, and fronting bombshell Jesika von Rabbit, Gram Rabbit seems like the spawn of an absurdist vision. Developing their psychedelic desert trance since aptly titled 2004 debut, *Music to Start a Cult To* (Stinky Records), last year's *RadioAngel & the RobotBeat* (Royal Order) sounds like Shirley Manson reigning over VNV Nation. Local fivepiece Death Is Not a Joyride guns the goth swell.
— Doug Freeman

Bee vs. Moth

CAROUSEL LOUNGE, THURSDAY 31

Trumpet-infused quartet Bee vs. Moth bounces around jazz, post-punk, and ska, igniting the senses with a mix of Elfmanesque melodies and brainy exploration. There's plenty of instrumental gold to be mined on last year's animated *Soundhorn*. Former Bad Liver Ralph White's rough-hewn take on Americana triangulates between Appalachia, Acadiana, and Africa first.
— Greg Beets

The Bangles

LA ZONA ROSA, THURSDAY 31

If you can't hear "Walk Like an Egyptian" without flashing back to the time you permed your bangs, you're not alone. The Bangles were the quintessential 1980s girl group, pop and jangly rock that birthed insta-hits like "Manic Monday" and "Eternal Flame." The touring trio — guitarist/singer Susanna Hoffs, bassist Vicki Peterson, and drummer Debbi Peterson, minus original bassist Michael Steele — has a handful of other gems from the Reagan years up to 2003's *Doll Revolution*. Say farewell to locals Tammany Hall Machine first. — Audra Schroeder



Soundcheck BY AUDRA SCHROEDER

NICKY CLICK

Chain Drive, Thursday 31
Olympia, Wash., sex-rap that'll make you drop your cell phone. The Hot as Shits open.

THE GREYBOY ALLSTARS

La Zona Rosa, Friday 25
The San Diego funk-tet walks the walk.

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Scout Inn and Bier Garten, Friday 25
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THE SLACKERS

Flamingo Cantina, Friday 25 & Saturday 26
NYC ska vets bring the two-tone.

GOLDEN ARM TRIO'S DUKE

Lamberts, Saturday 26
Piano man Graham Reynolds channels Duke Ellington's shuffle and glow.

AL STEWART

Cactus Cafe, Saturday 26
The Brit folkie purrs "Year of the Cat."

ROBIN TROWER

La Zona Rosa, Sunday 27
The former Procol Harum axeman majors in "guitar face."

CODE RAINBOW!

Red 7, Tuesday 29
Teenage kicks, electro-pop.

VELVET REVOLVER

Stubb's, Thursday 31
Scott 'n' Slash slither back into town.

GRAND CHAMPEEN'S 15TH ANNIVERSARY

Beerland, Thursday 31
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live music VENUES p.92
CLUB LISTINGS + roadshows p.94

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JAMES HAND
CHARANGA CAKEWALK

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PATRICIA VONNE

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 AND SCRAPPY JUDD NEWCOMB



11:30PM
DAVID GARZA



WEDNESDAY JAN 30
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JAMES McMURTRY



10PM
JON DEE GRAHAM



THURSDAY JAN 31
 HAPPY HOUR
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BLACK JOE LEWIS
 AND THE HONEYBEARS



12AM
BARFIELD
 TYRANT OF TX FUNK



10PM
DALE WATSON
 AND HIS LONESTARS



11:30PM
THE WAYMORES



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 MATINEE 3-7PM
JAMES HAND
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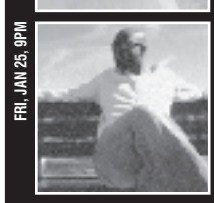
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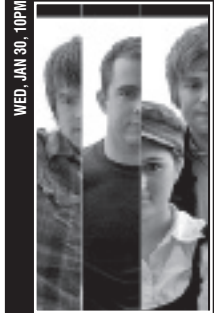
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AUSTIN FARMERS' MARKET DOWNTOWN, Fourth & Guadalupe, 236-0074
AUSTIN MOOSE LODGE NO. 1735, 2103 E.M. Franklin, 926-0043
AUSTIN'S PIZZA, 1817 S. Lamar, 795-8888
B.B. ROVERS, 12636 Research Ste. B-101, 335-9504
B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB, 204 E. Sixth, 494-1335
BABY ACAPULCO'S NO. 5, 9505-B Stonelake, 795-9000
BASTROP SENIOR CENTER, 1008 Water, Bastrop, 512/321-7907
BEAUTY BAR, 617 E. Seventh, 391-1943
BEERLAND, 711½ Red River, 479-ROCK
THE BELMONT, 305 W. Sixth, 457-0300
BENNIGAN'S, 301 Barton Springs Rd., 472-7902
BLIND PIG PUB, 317 E. Sixth, 472-0809
BOOMERZ, 6148 Hwy. 290 W., 892-3373
'BOUT TIME, 9601 N. I-35, 832-5339
BROKEN SPOKE, 3201 S. Lamar, 442-6189
THE BROWN BAR, 201 W. Eighth, 480-8330
CACTUS CAFE, Texas Union, UT campus, 475-6515
CAFE CAFFEINE, 909 W. Mary, 447-9473
CAFE MUNDI, 1704 E. Fifth #100, 236-8634
THE CANARY ROOST, 11900 Metric, 836-6360
CAROUSEL LOUNGE, 1110 E. 52nd, 452-6790
CEDAR STREET, 208 W. Fourth, 495-9669
CENTRAL MARKET NORTH, 4001 N. Lamar, 206-1000
CENTRAL MARKET SOUTH, 4477 S. Lamar, 899-4300
CHAIN DRIVE, 504 Willow, 480-9017
CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE, 119 Cheatham, San Marcos, 512/353-3777
CHEZ ZEE AMERICAN BISTRO, 5406 Balcones Dr., 454-2666
CLEMENTINE COFFEE BAR, 2200 Manor Rd., 472-9900
CLUB 973, 104 W. Carrie, Manor, 512/350-8724
CONTINENTAL CLUB, 1315 S. Congress, 441-2444
COOL RIVER CAFE, 4001 Parmer, 835-0010
CAFA BAR & GRILL, 217 Congress, 479-5002
COTTON CLUB, 212 E. Davilla, Granger, 512/859-0700
CREEKSIDE LOUNGE, 606 E. Seventh, 480-5988
THE CROSSINGS, 13500 FM 2769, 258-7243 x4101, 877/944-3003
CUBA LIBRE, 409 Colorado, 472-2822
DONN'S DEPOT, 1600 W. Fifth, 478-0336
EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE, 301 E. Fifth, 472-1860
EGO'S, 510 S. Congress, 474-7091
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EL RINCON ROUND ROCK, 1208 N. I-35, Round Rock, 512/388-7600
EL SOL Y LA LUNA, 1224 S. Congress, 444-7770
ELEPHANT ROOM, 315 Congress, 473-2279
ELYSIUM, 705 Red River, 478-2979
EMO'S, 603 Red River, 477-3667
ENCORE RECORDS, VIDEO & APPAREL, 1745 W. Anderson, 451-8111
END OF AN EAR, 2209 S. First, 462-6008
EVANGELINE CAFE, 8106 Brodie #110, 282-2586
FADÓ, 214 W. Fourth, 457-0172
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 901 Trinity, 476-2625
FLAMINGO CANTINA, 515 E. Sixth, 494-9336
FLIPNOTICS AT THE TRIANGLE, 4600 Guadalupe, 380-0097
FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE, 1601 Barton Springs Rd., 480-8646
FRANK ERWIN CENTER, 1701 Red River, 471-7744
FRENCH LEGATION MUSEUM, 802 San Marcos, 472-8180
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GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON, 5434 Burnet Rd., 458-1813
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GRUENE HALL, 1281 Gruene Rd., New Braunfels, 830/606-1281, 830/629-5077
GUERO'S TACO BAR, 1412 S. Congress, 447-7688
HANOVER'S, 108 E. Main, Pflugerville, 512/670-9617
HEADHUNTERS, 720 Red River, 236-0188
THE HIDEOUT COFFEEHOUSE, 617 Congress, 476-0473
HILL'S CAFE, 4700 S. Congress, 851-9300
HOLE IN THE WALL, 2538 Guadalupe, 477-4747
HOMER'S BAR & GRILL, 1779 Wells Branch #114, 251-5554
JAVA LOUNGE AT AUSTIN JAVA, 1206 Parkway, 476-1829
JO'S COFFEE, 1300 S. Congress, 444-3800
JOVITA'S, 1619 S. First, 447-7825
LA PALAPA, 6640 Hwy. 290, 459-8729
LA ZONA ROSA, 612 W. Fourth, 472-2293
LAMBERTS, 401 W. Second, 494-1500
LAS PALOMAS, 3201 Bee Caves Rd. #122, 327-9889

THE LOADING DOCK, 708 S. Austin St., Georgetown, 512/864-2100
LOCKER ROOM SPORTS BAR, 629 W. Ben White, 444-9329
LOUIE'S 106, 106 E. Sixth, 476-1997
LUCKY LOUNGE, 209-A W. Fifth, 479-7700
LUCY'S ON THE SQUARE, 141 E. Hopkins, San Marcos, 512/558-7399
MAGGIE MAE'S, 323 E. Sixth, 478-8541
MANUEL'S, 310 Congress, 472-7555
MARIA'S TACO XPRESS, 2529 S. Lamar, 444-0261
MEOW, 618 W. Sixth, 472-2037
MERKABA LOUNGE & GRILL, 14106 N. I-35
MOHAWK, 912 Red River, 482-8404
MOMO'S, 618 W. Sixth, 479-8848
MOMKEYWRENCH BOOKS, 110 E. North Loop, 407-6925
MOONRIVER, 2002 N. Pace Bend Rd., Spicewood, 512/264-2064
MOTHER EGAN'S IRISH PUB, 715 W. Sixth, 478-7747
MULLIGAN'S, 900 RR 620 S., 263-3305
NASTY'S, 606 Maiden, 453-4349
NORTH BY NORTHWEST, 10010 Capital of TX Hwy. N., 467-6969
NUOVO LEON, 1501 E. Sixth, 479-0097
NUNO'S ON SIXTH, 422 E. Sixth, 833-5133
NUTTY BROWN CAFE, 12225 Hwy. 290 W., 301-4648
THE OAKS, 10206 FM 973 N., 278-8788
THE OASIS, 6550 Comanche Trail, 266-2442
ONE 2 ONE BAR, 121 E. Fifth, 473-0121
OPAL DIVINE'S, 700 W. Sixth, 477-3308
THE OPERA HOUSE, 2209-K S. First, 440-1401
PARAMOUNT THEATRE, 713 Congress, 472-5470
THE PARISH, 214 E. Sixth, 479-0474
THE PARLOR, 100-B E. North Loop, 454-8965
PARMER LANE TAVERN, 2121 Parmer #1, 339-0663
PATSY'S COWGIRL CAFE, 5001 E. Ben White, 444-2020
PLUSH, 617 Red River, 478-0099
POODIE'S HILLTOP BAR & GRILL, 22308 Hwy. 71 W., Spicewood, 512/264-0318
RABBIT'S LOUNGE, 1816 E. Sixth, 473-3771
RACK DADDY'S, 4410 E. Riverside, 389-1577
REALE'S PIZZA & CAFE, 13450 Research, 335-5115
RED 7, 611 E. Seventh, 476-8100
RED EYED FLY, 715 Red River, 474-1084
RED FEZ, 209-B W. Fifth, 478-5120
RENAISSANCE HOTEL, 9721 Arboretum, 343-2626
RILEY'S TAVERN, 8894 FM 1102, Hunter, 512/392-3132
RIVERBEND CENTRE, 4214 Capital of TX Hwy. N., 327-9416
ROADHOUSE, 1103 Wonder, Round Rock, 512/218-0813
ROADHOUSE RAGS, 1600 Fortview, 762-8797
THE ROCK ROOM, 101 E. Main, Round Rock, 512/244-5450
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ROMEO'S, 1500 Barton Springs Rd., 476-1090
ROOM 710, 710 Red River, 476-0997
RUTA MAYA, 3601 S. Congress Ste. D-200, 707-9637
SALVAGE VANGUARD THEATER, 2803 Manor Rd., 474-7886
SAM'S TOWN POINT, 2115 Allred, 282-0083
SAXON PUB, 1320 S. Lamar, 448-2552
SCOOT INN AND BIER GARTEN, 1308 E. Fourth, 478-6200
SHAKESPEARE'S PUB, 314 E. Sixth, 472-1666
SHENANIGANS, 13233 Pond Springs Rd., 258-9717
SHERLOCK'S BAKER ST. PUB & GRILL, 9012 Research Ste. C-1, 380-9443
SHOAL CREEK SALOON, 909 N. Lamar, 474-0805
SHOOTERS BILLIARDS, 11416 RR 620 N., 401-2060
SPAZIO, 1214 W. Sixth, 474-5768
SPEAKEASY, 412 Congress, 476-8017
STARDUST CLUB, 11940 Manchaca, 280-8590
STUBB'S, 801 Red River, 480-8341
SULLIVAN'S STEAKHOUSE, 300 Colorado #200, 495-6504
T.C.'S LOUNGE, 1413 Webberville Rd., 926-2200
TEXAS BAR & GRILL, 14611 Burnet Rd., 255-1300
THE THIRSTY NICKEL, 325 E. Sixth, 473-8891
THREADGILL'S WORLD HQ, 301 W. Riverside, 472-9304
THUNDERBIRD COFFEE HOUSE, 1401 W. Koenig, 420-8660
TREE HOUSE ITALIAN GRILL, 2201 College, 443-4200
TRIPLE CROWN, 206 N. Edward Gary, San Marcos, 512/396-2236
TROPHY'S, 2008 S. Congress, 447-0969
UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 2203 San Antonio St., 476-5321
VICTORY GRILL, 1104 E. 11th, 902-5057
THE WATER TANK, 7309 McNeil Dr., 331-9831
THE WATER TANK TOO, 15821 Central Commerce, Pflugerville, 512/989-8100
THE WATER-HOLE SALOON, 5244 Hwy 71 E., Del Valle, 512/247-5119
WATERLOO ICE HOUSE, 6203 Capital of TX Hwy. N., 418-9700
WATERLOO ICE HOUSE, 1106 W. 38th, 451-5245
WATERLOO RECORDS, 600-A N. Lamar, 474-2500
WHOLE FOODS MARKET, 601 N. Lamar, 476-1206
Y BAR & GRILL, 7720 Hwy. 71 W., 394-0220
Z'TEJAS, 1110 W. Sixth, 478-5355

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Thu 1/24
ONE EYED DOLL
ADRIAN & the SICKNESS
NANCY SILVA PROJECT
FULL STRIDE 8pm: Amanda Loure

Fri 1/25
OKLAHOMAS
WHOREHOUD
DEATH HELL BATTLE TANK
8pm: Tia Carrera **SPLIT HOOF**

Sat 1/26
Happy Birthday, Ivan
THE ENDS
FLASH BOYS
HOODRATS
THE EXTRAVAGANZA

Sun 1/27
MERCY
SCRAPS OF LIFE
SMOKIN' TOADS
THE OCCIDENTALS

Mon 1/28
HEART & SOUL
SOUND SYSTEM
THE THUNDERCHIEFS
TACO LEO

Tue 1/29
JO HELL & the RED ROOSTERS

Wed 1/30
ERIN IVEY
STATION
D - MADNESS PROJECT
8pm: Daylight

UPCOMING SHOWS!
1.31 The Skeletons, Bridge Firmers, Brass Wreck, Bill Burke, Deane Coates
2.1 The 20, Black Jew, Coyote Rose, 2.2 Burt Rose, Trauma, Blood of Birds

RED 7

611 E. 7TH STREET
www.red7austin.com

Thu 1/24
Inside: **U.S. BOMBS**
The Johns, Orange, Career Criminal
Outside: Warwolf, The_Network, Cabaret

Fri 1/25
Outside: The Anchor, The Bread, Rend
The Stones We Throw
Inside: Johnny Hootrock, Ese
The Malpractice

Sat 1/26
Vex, Vesparian Sorrow
Ruins of Honor, Ethereal Architect
Enemy of Mankind

Sun 1/27
Lady Ellouise (ex Withie White Shadows)
Andrea Gail, For The Most Part
Strength Behind Tears

Wed 1/29
Consider The Source
Great Northern Guns, Make Your Own Maps

Thu 1/31
Bangladesh, Inner Vision
Dead By Knight, Death Got Killed + more!

 *Beauty* BAR
JAN

24th La Snacks w/ Pata
Physics & Stay Gold Dj's

25th Awesome Cool Dudes
Diagonal / Those Peabody's

26th Car Stereo War's w/
The Alway Already

28th Soundcheck Presents
Ladyfingers / Some /
Team Fabrication

29th Dans La Lune w/
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th 24 Megazilla, Styrofoam Duck, Dumb,
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fr Chili Cold Blood, Possessed by Paul

25 James, Bigfoot Chester, Ghostwriter

sa **Dazzling King Solomon, The Black,**
Hacienda, The Gospel Truth

su **The Banner Year, Matches for**
Memories, Oak is Keeping,
For Sake of the Ruins

mo 28 **Karaoke @9pm-- no cover**

tu 29 **Some Say Leland, Reverend**
Glasseye, Clay Nightingale,
Country Willie

we 30 **Worst Bands in Austin Showcase**
Comanche Abortion, Firehorse and
more!

th **GRAND CHAMPEEN 15TH ANNIVERSARY**
Broken Gold, AJ G.

fr **Ready Steady Go**
THE UGLY BEATS
Box Spring Nogs @ 7pm

sa 2 **Flametrack Subs**

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HEADHUNTERS

720 Red River www.headhuntersclub.com (512) 236-0188

THU 1/24 > GRINDING WHEELS, THE WAYHIGH MEN, SABBATH CROW, GOODMAN COUNTRY
FRI 1/25 > BELIGERENT 86, THE 13TH VICTIM, BLOODMOON HOWLERS, EXILE, EXPIRATION UNKNOWN
SAT 1/26 > BLACK NOVAS REUNION SHOW, POOR DUMB BASTARDS, SLIPPIN MICKIES, SHIT CITY HIGH
SUN 1/27 > CASY JUST & THE PSYKOPHONIKS, CHARLIE HURTIN
TUE 1/29 > FULL STRIDE, MERCY - WED 1/30 > REDLINE RIOT

THU 1/31 - BRICKS ATX, SORE LOSERS, QUEEN ANNES REVENGE, SECULAR END
FRI 2/1 - TRASH ROCKETS, THE LITTLE MORTS, EARTHTONE PLAYERS, RED HERRINGS, WILSON
SAT 2/2 - BLACK TOE DOWN, PRISON FROK ROCK, MESCALERO, STAMEN, CHARLIE HURTIN
SUN 2/3 - SHOKING TOADS, SUPERCRASH, SUPERBOWL PARTY: GIANTS VS. PATRIOTS-POT LUCK & DRINK SPECIALS!

***** PARTY CATERING : LIQUOUR & FOOD EVENTS (825-5600) *****



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THURSDAY JANUARY 24
HEAVYWEIGHT IN ACTION
THE OFFICIAL DART SINGING PARTY FOR
GOODNIGHT GONDS
DRIVER F
EXETER

FRIDAY JANUARY 25
ADRENALINE FACTOR
GENTLEMENS SOCIAL CLUB
NO WANT CRUICIFIXERS
RUBBERMONSTER
AXLE WOLF

SATURDAY JANUARY 26
WAR AGAINST SLEEP
SEAFLEA
BUILT BY SNOW
WARM WINTER
THE EL GUAPOS

SUNDAY JANUARY 27
TREECLIMBER
THE COUCH
BALANCE ACT
WINDMILL VIADUCT

MONDAY JANUARY 28
THE GUNS OF DETROIT
THE LOWDOWN
RIDE AT ANCHOR

TUESDAY JANUARY 29
THESE ARE WORDS
REVEREND JONNY FLASH
MINIMAX PLEASANT
EDDIE DINERO

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 30
TRYNITY'S
ANNUAL BIRTHDAY BASH
THE CABARET
A SILENT HEART
ANDREA GAIL
GO ACTION TEAM

ELYSIUM

705 RED RIVER ST.
Thursday • Jan. 24 **SPECIAL EVENT!**

P.D.A.
Indie, Electro, Britpop, New Wave, & Postpunk
WITH DJs FILTHY RICH & SIREN SUMMER

Friday • Jan. 25 **LIVE MUSIC!**
CYANIGHT
a night of live psy world, dubtek, breakbeat,
electro, dubstep & more

Performance by:
Production Unit Xero/
Dubnautica 12:30AM
www.myspace.com/productionunitxero
www.myspace.com/dubnautica
Happy Panjoma 11:30PM
www.myspace.com/happypanjoma
In-Fin-It 10:00PM
www.myspace.com/infinite
with **DJ KLAK**
spinning
throughout
the night

Saturday • Jan. 26 **HAVEN**
goth, industrial, synthpop, & EURODANCE
HAVEN WITH DJs VOID &™™ GOTHFEATHER

Sunday • Jan. 27 **REGRESSION**
RETRO 80's **RETRO 80's** RETRO 80's
REGRESSION WITH DJ PUMPKIN SPICE

Tuesday • Jan. 29 **90'S NIGHT**
SO LAST CENTURY... 90's Night
WITH DJs BOBA FETT & MINIMUS

Wednesday • Jan. 30 **MID-WAVE**
UNDERGROUND retro & OLD SCHOOL goth
WITH DJs PUMPKIN SPICE & EDMINISTER

UPCOMING EVENTS
Fri. Feb. 1 • **A TRIBUTE TO**
HANDSOME JOEL - live music from
Dixie Witch, Brewtality, Inc. & more

Thu. Feb. 7 • **Live!** Lucid Dementia,
Tungsten Coil, subNatural, gfire

Fri. Feb. 8 • **KINGS N' THINGS**

Sat. Feb. 9 • **Live!** DE/VISION

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THE WHO

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GUITAR GODS

FEB 1, 7 PM & FEB 2, 7:30 PM

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THURSDAY JANUARY 24 • 7PM
CRAIG TOUNGATE
FRIDAY JANUARY 25 • 10PM SE

DON LEADY'S
TAILGATOR REUNION
MONDAY JANUARY 28 • 6:30PM

CHARLES THIBODEAUX
TUESDAY JANUARY 29

BRENNEN LEIGH 6PM
KEVIN GALLAUGHER & GREG ANDERSON 8PM

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 30 • 7PM
BOB CHEEVERS

ALL ARE WELCOME

Mohawk

AUSTIN, TEXAS

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Front Gate TICKETS

THU 24 GREEN MOUNTAIN GRASS
TRAMPLED BY TURTLES [MN]
ADELINE

FRI 25 SEE. HEAR. SPEAK.
TERP 2IT, PROMISE BREAKERS
ALEXANDER'S DARK BAND, MR. SUSAN

SAT 26 KANKO, THE PUNKAROOS
DJ ORION

TUE 29 GRIZZLY BAR SALOON
HAPPY HOUR ALL NIGHT LONG!!!
5PM TIL CLOSE

WED 30 WHISKEY WEDNESDAY
\$1 WHISKEY SHOTS ALL NIGHT
CONSOLES AFIRE TOUR WITH
LAROMLAB, COWBOY ROBOT,
THE CALM BLUE SEA

THU 31 THE VIET MINH [MEMBERS OF BLACK ANGELS]
TOKO RI GET HIGH, THE STEPS,
CAVEDWELLER

FRI 1 AM SYNDICATE
ATTACK FORMATION, THE BLACK,
BIG SOY

SAT 2 CENTRAL BOOKING PRESENTS
THE PARTY

TUE 5 AUSTINIST'S INDIEROKE
NO COVER + HAPPY HOUR ALL NIGHT LONG!

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PRESENTS
Ruta Maya
WEEKENDS

THURS 1/24 FREE MUSIC HAPPY HOUR!
7PM MEGAN TURB & THE SHAZY PEOPLE
9:30 J BIZ R SHOWCASE!!!
DENTED MINDZ, PAIN KILLAZ,
DOVE HOUSE CLICK

FRI 1/25 7-9:15 PM PAUL GREEN SCHOOL OF ROCK
PRESENTS MUSIC OF THE WHO
10PM COUNCIL CHIEF ALFRED DOUCETTE
PRE-MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION
COUNCIL CHIEF ALFRED DOUCETTE, BIG
CHIEF KEVIN GOODMAN, THE NELSON SAGA
BAND, AUSTIN NIGHTS BRASS BAND

SAT 1/26 7-9:15 PM PAUL GREEN SCHOOL OF ROCK
PRESENTS MUSIC OF THE WHO
10PM FRENCH LAUNDROY TO PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS
TAMMANY HALL MACHINE
FAREWELL SHOW 9:30 PM
TAMMANY HALL MACHINE, THE BOXING LESSON

www.myspace.com/rutamayaweekends

3601 S. Congress, Suite D 200, Penn Field, South Austin,
(Behind Expose), 512-707-9637, Rutamaya.net for details

Ruta Maya

FREE KIDS SHOW 10:30 AM EVERY SUNDAY

SUN 1/27 7 PM B Miller Band
Kalu James, Soul Kitchen

MON 1/28 7:30 PM Matt Delrossi
8:30 PM Josh Halverson
9:30 PM Vermicious Canids

TUESDAYS ARE OPEN MIKE - NO COVER!
6 PM Poetry Open Mic
9 PM Music Open Mic
8 PM Poetry Karaoke on Porch

TUE 1/29 CUBAN DANCE NIGHT
FREE Salsa Lesson 7:30 PM
Live Salsa 9 PM with CIENFUEGOS

WED 1/30 Fresh Organic Coffee!
FREE YOGA - Check Online Calendar

club listings

Thu 24

- 219 WEST** Acoustic Jungle (8:00)
311 CLUB Joe Valentine (8:30)
ANTONE'S Carla Cameron CD Release (9:00)
ARTZ RIB HOUSE Boomer Norman
AUSTIN MOOSE LODGE NO. 1735 Homer Henderson (9:00)
B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Wynn Taylor, Hosea Hargrove
BEAUTY BAR Pataphysics, La Snacks
BEERLAND Expensive Shit, Pepperonis, Dumb, Styrofoam Duck, Megazilla
THE BELMONT Dysfunkshun Junkshun (8:00)
BENNIGAN'S Andy Fiegal (7:00)
BLIND PIG PUB Ben Burgess
BROKEN SPOKE Jesse Dayton
THE BROWN BAR DJ gmau
- CACTUS CAFE** Malcolm Holcomb (8:30)
CAROUSEL LOUNGE Jackson Edwards
CEDAR STREET Kent Mayhew, Radiostar (6:00)
CENTRAL MARKET SOUTH Lost & Nameless Orchestra (6:30)
CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Paris 49 (10:00); In the Club: Izzy Cox, Dash Rip Rock, Barfield (6:30)
COOL RIVER CAFE Newsboyz
COPA BAR & GRILL Salsa Lessons w/ Tony, the Brew (8:00)
COTTON CLUB Texas All-Stars (8:30)
DONN'S DEPOT Murphy's Inlaws
EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Mark Goodwin Trio (7:30)
EGO'S Robert Banta, 2 Hoots & a Holler
ELEPHANT ROOM Joe Cordi & Giant City, Ron Westray (6:00)

Acts are chronologically listed. Schedules are subject to change, so please call clubs to confirm lineup. Times are given where known and are PM unless otherwise noted.

LISTINGS ARE FREE AND ARE PRINTED ON A SPACE-AVAILABLE BASIS.

HELLO, CLUBS AND BANDS: Club listings deadline is Monday, 9am, for that week's issue, published on Thursday. Send venue name, address, phone number, acts, and times to: Club Listings, PO Box 49066, Austin, TX 78765; fax 458-6910; phone 454-5766 x159; or e-mail clubs@austinchronicle.com.

roadshows

JANUARY

THU 24

- Styrofoam Duck**, Beerland
Malcolm Holcomb, Cactus Cafe
Dash Rip Rock, Continental Club
Miley Cyrus, Frank Erwin Center
The Wayhigh Men, Goodman Country, Headhunters
Trampled by Turtles, Mohawk
Harry Bodine, North by Northwest
Little Richard, Paramount Theatre
U.S. Bombs, Orange, Red 7
Exeter, Red Eyed Fly
Flamin' Hellcats, Riley's Tavern

FRI 25

- Drug Rug**, Beauty Bar
Possessed by Paul James, Beerland
John Hammond, Cactus Cafe
Chuck Prophet, Lisa Novak, L.L. Cooper, Rich Hopkins, Continental Club
Sole, Capillary Action, Emo's
The Slackers, Ryan Scroggins & the Trenchtown TXans, Flamingo Cantina
Moist Boys, Bent Eye Bolt, Hanover's
Greyboy All-Stars, Leon Mobley, Da Lion, La Zona Rosa

- DJ Jester the Filipino Fist**, Lamberts
Matt Wilson, Meow Rogue Wave, Midnight Movies, the Parish
Ese, the Malpractice, Red 7
Chief Alfred Doucet, Ruta Maya
Harry Bodine, Saxon Pub
The Lonely H, Stubb's
Beth Bladen, Thunderbird Coffee House
Paleo, Trophy's
Greyboy All-Stars, Waterloo Records

SAT 26

- Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings, Ivan Milev Band**, Antone's
Hacienda, Beerland
Al Stewart, Cactus Cafe
Beth Bladen, Ego's
Drug Rug, Emo's
Scott Drake, End of an Ear
The Slackers, Ryan Scroggins & the Trenchtown TXans, Flamingo Cantina
Keller Williams, WMD's, La Zona Rosa
Vex, Red 7
Warm Winter, El Gato, Red Eyed Fly
Harry Belafonte, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Riverbend Centre
Within Chaos, Stubb's
Joker, Stubb's
Moist Boys, Triple Crown
Novice, Trophy's

SUN 27

- Terri Fann, B.B. Rovers**
Wheatfield, Cactus Cafe
Joker, Jovita's
Robin Trower, La Zona Rosa
Pharoahe Monch, Orgone, DJ Eleven, the Parish
Strength Behind Tears, Red 7
Smokin' Toads, Room 710

MON 28

- Nanosmash**, the Parlor

TUE 29

- Rex Foster**, Cactus Cafe
Gram Rabbit, the Parish
Geisert 8, Red 7

WED 30

- Frenetica**, Flamingo Cantina
The Soldier Thread, Lucky Lounge
Laromlab, Cowboy Robot, Mohawk
Jennifer Nicely, Momo's Ursula 1000, the Parish
Make Your Own Maps, Red 7
Blue Light Special, Sam's Town Point

THU 31

- Total Vengeance**, Beauty Bar
Nicky Click, Chain Drive
White Williams, Emo's
The Spores, Flamingo Cantina
The Bangles, La Zona Rosa
Matt Wilson, Meow Dog Men Poets, Merkaba Lounge & Grill
Velvet Revolver, Stubb's
Sassy Goose, Trophy's

for your benefit

THU 24

- PLAN of Central Texas Benefit** w/ Eddy Hobizal, Tina Marsh, **Spazio**

FRI 25

- Evening Under the Oaks, French Legation Museum Benefit** w/ Johnny Goudie, **French Legation Museum**

SAT 26

- Kirk Watson's Register to Rock** w/ Noise in Action, Joker, Shockraid, Fire Ants, A.J. Vincent, Max & Henry, Blues Mafia, the Daze, **Stubb's**

SUN 27

- Proper Gander Benefit** w/ Delicious Foods, Famby, Indian Jewelry, Attic Ted, **Scout Inn and Bier Garten**

MON 28

- Nolapalooza: The Porch 7th Ward Cultural Organization Benefit** w/ Little Elmore Reed, Belleville Outfit, Warren Hood, **Mercury Hall**

TUE 29

- Grounded in Music Fundraiser** w/ Vallejo, **Gibson Guitar Showroom**

WED 30

- Shotgun Party **Caritas Benefit, Continental Club**

THU 31

- Ron Paul Liberty Ball** w/ the Story Of, Golden Bear, Ruta Maya

See austinchronicle.com
for complete listings.



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MANEJA BETO 9-10:30pm
EL TOLE 11pm-12am
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ERIN IVEY 9P

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PERFECT PANTS 12MID
JAMES BULLARD 10P

SATURDAY JAN 26
FOOT FOOT 12MID
EASY PILLS 11P
THE BUBBLES 10P

SUNDAY JAN 27
PAUL MINOR'S UNREHEARSED ORCHESTRA 10P

MONDAY JAN 28
LANDIS ARMSTRONG'S GUILTY PLEASURES 10P

TUESDAY JAN 29
CLYDE & CLEM'S WHISKEY BUSINESS 10P

WED JANUARY 30
LONESOME HEROES 12:30A
DARWIN SMITH 11:30P
BALTIMORE HARBOR 10:30 P
THE LENNINGS 9:30P

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GEORGE DEVORE 10:15 \$5
UNCLE LUCIUS 12:30 \$5
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THURSDAY JAN. 24

GUY FORSYTH 11:00 \$10
LISA HAYES 9:30 \$10
HARRY BODINE 8:00 \$10
No Cover Happy Hour 6:00 every Friday with **The REGULARS**
FRIDAY JAN. 25

MICKY & THE MOTORCARS 11:00 \$10
PAUL SANCHEZ from COWBOYMOUTH 8:30
DANA COOPER 8:00 \$10
SATURDAY JAN. 26

THE RESENTMENTS 7:00 \$7 cover
SALINGERS 12:00
SHELLEY KING 10:15 \$5
SUNDAY JAN. 27

BOB SCHNEIDER'S LONELYLAND 8:30 \$10
MATT THE ELECTRICIAN 7:00 \$10
JAMES BULLARD 10:30 \$5
BRANDON JENKINS 12:30 \$5
MONDAY JAN. 28

BRUCE HUGHES 5:00 10:00
SUNNY SWEENEY 8:00
DEADLY VIPER ASSASSINS 12:00
No Cover Happy Hour at 6:00 **Julleane Banks**
TUESDAY JAN. 29

monte montgomery 10:00 \$10
PAULA NELSON 8:00 \$5
MEAGAN TUBB 12:00 \$5
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WEDNESDAY JAN. 30

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WED 30 > Marshall Jones & the Frontier Phrenologists
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FRI JAN 25
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FORMERLY BLACK WATER GOSPEL
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SAT JAN 26
COURSE OF RUIN
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SUN JAN 27

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SUN MAR 2

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- HOLY -

WED JAN 30
JEFF KLEIN
WITH **ESKIMO JOE**

THU JAN 31
ADAM RAVEN
WITH **GRAHAM WILKINSON**
AND **THE UNDERGROUND TOWNSHIP**
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INDOORS AFTER VELVET REVOLVER

SAT FEB 2
THE BOXING LESSON
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THU, JAN 24 **JESSE DAYTON** 9PM
DANCE LESSONS 8-9PM

FRI, JAN 25 **ALVIN CROW**

SAT, JAN 26 **GEEZINSLAW BROS. W/SAM & SON**

TUE, JAN 29 **DEBRA PETERS & THE ACCORDION ROUNDUP** NO COVER

WED, JAN 30 **DOUG MORELAND**

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FRIDAY, JAN 25 **MEMPHIS TRAIN REVUE** 9:30PM

SATURDAY, JAN 26 **RAYVON** 9:30PM

MONDAY, JAN 28 **S.I.N. JONATHAN TERRELL ON TERRACE 59**

TUESDAY, JAN 29 **BLACKTOOTH**

WEDNESDAY, JAN 30 **LATIN WEDNESDAY THE BREW** 9:30PM
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Sun 27

ARTZ RIB HOUSE Eddie Collins
AUSTIN MOOSE LODGE NO. 1735 Joe Gee (9:00)

B.B. ROVERS Open Mic w/ Missoula Slim, Terri Fann (7:00)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Irish Tune Session (8:00)

BEERLAND For Sake of the Ruins, the Banner Year, Matches for Memories, the Murdocks

BLIND PIG PUB Joe Vega

'BOUT TIME Karaoke w/ Clayton Adams

CACTUS CAFE Wheatfield CD Release (7:00)

THE CANARY ROOST Karaoke w/ Brian

CENTRAL MARKET SOUTH Cienfuegos (12:30)

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Mike Flanigin's B-3 Trio (10:00); In the Club: Heybale! (8:00)

COTTON CLUB Can't Hardly Playboyz (7:00)

EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Kris Kimura Quartet (7:00)

EGO'S Atomic Honky Tonk w/ Mallory Valentine, Horse Operas, Robert Banta

EL RINCON ROUND ROCK The Brew

ELEPHANT ROOM Marc Devine Quartet w/ Denia Ridley (9:30)

ELYSIUM Regression: Retro Eighties w/ DJ Pumpkin Spice

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH Mozart's Birthday Concert w/ AMF Chamber Orchestra (3:00)

FLIPNOTICS AT THE TRIANGLE Andrea Campise (8:00)

FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE The Dialtones (8:00)

FRIENDS Open Mic Blues Jam (8:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Dale Watson (4:00)

GREEN PASTURES Jacques Vilmain (11:00am)

GRUENE HALL Belleville Outfit (4:00)

THE HIDEOUT COFFEEHOUSE Austin Sketch Group (1:30)

HOMER'S BAR & GRILL Karaoke w/ Brian

JAVA LOUNGE AT AUSTIN JAVA Kinkt (11:00am)

JOVITA'S Joker, Blues Mafia (6:00)

LA ZONA ROSA Van Wilks, Robin Trower

LOCKER ROOM SPORTS BAR Ted Hall's Blues Church & Jam (8:30)

LOUIE'S 106 Angelo Lambesis (6:30)

LUCY'S ON THE SQUARE Melting Social Project (9:00)

MANUEL'S Suzi Stern (11:30am)

MERKABA LOUNGE & GRILL DJ Tetsuo

MOMO'S Michael Dart, Marshall Ford Swing Band, Warren Hood & the Hoodlums (6:30)

MOTHER EGAN'S IRISH PUB Strong Medicine (noon)

NEWEO LEON Mariachi Relampago (1:00)

NUNO'S ON SIXTH Ray McCarty, Rusty Trapps & the Blue Lites (8:30)

NUTTY BROWN CAFE Java Jazz (11:00am)

THE OASIS The Brew

THE PARISH DJ Eleven, Orgone, Pharoahe Monch

THE PARLOR Shand Walton, Jim Keaveny

RACK DADDY'S Karaoke w/ Robert Wagner (10:00)

RED 7 For the Most Part, Andrea Gail, Strength Behind Tears, Andrea Gail

RED FEZ DJ Kurupt (10:00)

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golden arm trio

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COMING SOON: 2/6 NINA NASTASTIA [HAWK] • 2/9 WILL JOHNSON (CENTROMATIC) [HAWK] • 2/15 GRANT HART (HUSKER DU) [HAWK] • 2/16 LIARS/NO AGE/ CEX [HAWK] • 2/21 BABY DEE [LAMBERT'S] • 2/23 SPECTRUM (SONIC BOOM/SPACEMEN 3) [HAWK] • 2/26 JOE LALLY (FUGAZI) [HAWK] • 2/28 LESLIE AND LY'S [BEAUTY BAR] • 3/1 108 [RED 7] • 3/2 DR. KNOW [RED 7] • 3/21 TIME AGAIN (EPITAPH/HELLCAT) [HAWK] • 3/28 BENGUE FEVER [DEVIL] • 3/28 FLESHONES [HAWK] • 3/29 FU MANCHU [HAWK] • 3/29 UNSEEN [RED 7] • 4/5 XIU XIU [HAWK] • 4/17 DIRTY PROJECTORS [HAWK] • 4/18 JFA [RED 7] • 4/19 DEADBOLT [RED 7]

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10:00-2:00

SATURDAY DJ Kurv 10:00-2:00

SUNDAY DJ Kurupt 10:00-2:00

MONDAY DJ Jeff Jupiter 10:00-2:00

TUESDAY Twist Up w/DJ Manny 10:00-2:00

WEDNESDAY Atash 9:00-12:00

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DJ HONEYCOMB & DJ FUCKIN' A
INSIDE: **THE STONES WE THROW**
PROM NITE • SECULAR END
WALKINGWITHAGHOST

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25

INSIDE: **SOLE**
TELEPHONE JIM JESUS
CAPILLARY ACTION • DANIEL FRANCIS DOYLE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 26

INSIDE: **PEEL • DRUG RUG**
FRANK SMITH • DANS LA LUNE

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29

INSIDE: **SILENT LAND TIME MACHINE**
TINY TIN HEARTS • HEY LA LA

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30

LOUNGE: **FIREKILLS**
HOMEGROWN 101X
SAY HELLO TO THE ANGELS • WHITMAN

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31

WHITE WILLIAMS
RINGS • CRY BLOOD APACHE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1

INSIDE: **BEDOUIN SOUNDCLASH**
WESTBOUND TRAIN
BEAT UNION

LOUNGE: **SUMMER WARDROBE**
MAGNET SCHOOL • DEAD TWINS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2

OUTSIDE: **SUPER FURRY ANIMALS**
HOLY FUCK TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

LOUNGE: **LUNATIC FRINGE BURLESQUE PRESENTS:**
LAISSEZ LES BON TEMPS ROULEZ!
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MARDI GRAS BURLESQUE EXTRAVAGANZA!

INSIDE: PLATFORMS' 1ST ANNUAL
GROUNDHOG DAY PARTY
THE YUPPIE PRICKS
THE MIDGETMEN • DJ HOOKER

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OUTSIDE: **III BRAVERY**
DOORS @ 6PM: 101X PRESENTS
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INSIDE: **ZOROASTER • SOUR VEIN • THE ROLLER**

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• 2/23 BLACK LIPS, WHITE DENIM AND THE STRANGE BOYS (OUT, ON SALE NOW) • 3/4 THE BLACK SWANS
• 3/7 BEACH HOUSE, PAPER CUTS (LOUNGE, ON SALE NOW) • 3/8 SILVERSTEIN, THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
• 3/17 ADD MOTHERS TEMPLE (IN, ON SALE NOW) • 3/27 THE DIRTYBOMBS, KELLEY STOLTZ, BLACK JOE LEWIS (IN, ON SALE NOW)
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• 5/17 NEW BOMB TURKS, QUADRANTS • 5/23 CLINIC (OUT, ON SALE NOW)

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INSIDE: **DANIEL FRANCIS DOYLE**
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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8

INSIDE: **UME • HAUNTING OBOE MUSIC**
CAMP X-RAY • PRAYER FOR ANIMALS

LOUNGE: **ZYKOS • ZOOKEEPER**
FRANK SMITH
ALEX DUPREE AND THE TRAPDOOR BAND

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9

INSIDE: **GREG LEWIS & RYAN ROONEY'S**
BIRTHDAY PARTY:
THE JUNGLE ROCKERS
MR. LEWIS & THE FUNERAL 5 • KANKO
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COMING SOON:

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22



OUTSIDE: **COBRA STARSHIP**
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THE CAB TICKETS ONSALE NOW

SATURDAY, MARCH 29

OUTSIDE: **TICKETS ONSALE FEB 2**
YELLOWCARD Acoustic



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4

OUTSIDE: **RJD2**
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Fri, Jan 25 **DAVID LEE** 6PM
LC ROCKS 10PM

SAT, JAN 26 **TEXAS HOLD 'EM POKER**
4:30 & 7:30PM NO ENTRY FEE
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EMBER 10PM
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DJ TETSUO 9PM
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MON, JAN 28 **TEXAS HOLD 'EM POKER**
6:30 & 9:30PM NO ENTRY FEE
\$200 CASH PRIZE

TUE, JAN 29 **PIANO BAR**
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FRI, FEB 1 **JJ USHER** 9PM
ALPHA REV 10PM

SAT, FEB 2 **TEXAS HOLD 'EM POKER**
4 & 7PM NO ENTRY FEE
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FELIX TRINIDAD 7PM

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MON, FEB 4 **TEXAS HOLD 'EM POKER**
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club listings << FROM SUNDAY

RILEY'S TAVERN Open Mic w/ Glenn Allen
ROADHOUSE RAGS 2 Hoots & a Holler (4:00)
ROMEIO'S Rob Greenfield
ROOM 710 Occidentals, Smokin' Toads, Scraps of Life, Mercy
RUTA MAYA Kalu James, Soul Kitchen, B. Miller Band (7:00)
SAXON PUB The Resentments, Shelley King, Leeann Atherton (7:00)
SCOOT INN AND BIER GARTEN Proper Gander Benefit w/ Delicious Foods, Fambly, Indian Jewelry, Attic Ted
SHENANIGANS Karaoke w/ Billy D
TEXAS BAR & GRILL Karaoke w/ Michelle
TRIPLE CROWN Open Mic w/ Pat Pankratz, Holly Aiken, Nate Hinds
TROPHY'S Azoustin
WATERLOO ICE HOUSE Sunday Brunch w/ Buzz Guerra

LA PALAPA Baby Dallas
LOUIE'S 106 Mac Bynum (6:30)
LUCY'S ON THE SQUARE Robbie's Open Mic (9:00)
MOMO'S Jon Napier, Bukka Allen, Dustin Welch (7:00)
NUNO'S ON SIXTH Ray McCarty, Rusty Trapps & the Blue Lites (8:30)
THE PARLOR Nanosmash
PLUSH Brownstars
POODIE'S HILLTOP BAR & GRILL Ru Coleman & Texas Boogie
RABBIT'S LOUNGE Blue Monday w/ Willie Sampson (8:00)
RED FEZ DJ Jeff Jupiter (10:00)
ROOM 710 Heart & Soul Sound System (8:00)
RUTA MAYA Matt Delrossi, Josh Halverson, Vermicious Canids (7:30)
SAM'S TOWN POINT Breck's Stormy Open Blues Jam (8:30)
SAXON PUB Matt the Electrician, Bob Schneider, James Bullard, Brandon Jenkins (7:00)
SCOOT INN AND BIER GARTEN Jennifer Leonhardt
SHERLOCK'S BAKER ST. PUB & GRILL Brent Wood
SPEAKEASY Jonathan Terrell
THE THIRSTY NICKEL Patty David
THREADGILL'S WORLD HQ Lee Duffy, Joe Manuel, Warren Hood, Floyd Domino, Marvin Dykhuis (8:00)
TRIPLE CROWN Cody Richardson, Triple Tronica w/ Jon Dishon

EGO'S Bonnie Holmes, Suzanne Sherwin
ELPHANT ROOM Stanley Smith (6:00), New Syxx Project (9:30)
ELYSIUM 90's Night w/ DJ Boba Fett, DJ Minimus
EMO'S Hey La La, Tiny Tin Hearts, Silent Land Time Machine
EVANGELINE CAFE Brennen Leigh, Kevin Gallagher, Greg Anderson (6:00)
FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE Los Jackalopes (8:00)
FRIENDS Erin Jaimes & Her Bad Habits (7:30), Andy Macintyre & the Primal Groove (9:00)
GIBSON GUITAR SHOWROOM Grounded in Music Fundraiser w/ Vallejo (6:00)
GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Roots Day w/ T. Jarrod Bonta (9:00)
GUERO'S TACO BAR Trio Indiano (6:30)
THE HIDEOUT COFFEEHOUSE Singer/Songwriter Open Mic Night w/ Chase Holbrook (8:00)
HILL'S CAFE Singer-Songwriter Night w/ Bill Rice
HOLE IN THE WALL Clyde & Clem's Whiskey Business (10:00)
HOMER'S BAR & GRILL Karaoke w/ Brian
JAVA LOUNGE AT AUSTIN JAVA Mathew Lebon (7:00)
JOVITA'S The Love Band, Tim Henderson (6:00)
LAMBERTS Jitterbug Vipers (6:30)
LOUIE'S 106 Mac Bynum (6:30)
LUCKY LOUNGE DJ Rapid Ric, Boombox w/ Carlos Sosa (10:00)
LUCY'S ON THE SQUARE Scott Wiggins (10:00)
MERKABA LOUNGE & GRILL Piano Bar w/ Mikey & Matt
MOMO'S Sahara Smith, La Tampiquena, Joanna Barbera, Dana Falconberry, Charlie Faye
THE PARISH Death Is Not a Joyride, Gram Rabbit
THE PARLOR Black Jesus
PATSY'S COWGIRL CAFE Jim Stringer & the AM Band (8:00)
POODIE'S HILLTOP BAR & GRILL Troubadillos
RED 7 Geisert 8, Daemoon Fly, Code Rainbow
RED FEZ Bruce James Quartet, Twist Up w/ DJ Manny (10:00)
RILEY'S TAVERN Beverly Hensley, Dance Lessons w/ Li'l Bit & the Customatics
ROOM 710 Jo Hell & the Red Roosters, Taco Leg, Thunderchiefs
RUTA MAYA Poetry Open Mic, Music Open Mic (6:00)
SAM'S TOWN POINT Open Mic w/ Dewey Lyon & the Heathers (9:00)
SAXON PUB Julieann Banks, Sunny Sweeney, Bruce Hughes, Deadly Viper Assassins
SCOOT INN AND BIER GARTEN Hilary York, Aimee Bobruk (8:00)
SHENANIGANS Karaoke w/ Rae Rae

Mon 28

ANTONE'S T-Bird & the Breaks (7:00)
ARTZ RIB HOUSE Sarah Elizabeth Campbell & the Banned (7:30)
AUSTIN MOOSE LODGE NO. 1735 Rhino Room (9:00)
B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Walter Higgs & the Shuffle Pigs
THE BELMONT Chadd Thomas & the Crazy Kings (6:30)
BLIND PIG PUB Ben Burgess, Upstairs: Aaron Navarro
'BOUT TIME Karaoke w/ Clayton Adams
CHEZ ZEE AMERICAN BISTRO Rich Demarco (6:30)
CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Crybear (10:00); In the Club: Paris 49, Dale Watson & His Lone Stars (6:30)
THE CROSSINGS Craig Hella Johnson (6:00)
DONN'S DEPOT Chris Gage
EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Kris Kimura Quartet (7:00)
EGO'S Wes Nickson, Open Stage w/ Robert Banta
ELEPHANT ROOM Three Jazz Collective, Michael Mordecai's Jazz Jam (6:00)
EVANGELINE CAFE Charles Thibodeaux (6:30)
FLIPNOTICS AT THE TRIANGLE T. Jarrod Bonta (8:00)
FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE Nueva Cosa (8:00)
GUERO'S TACO BAR Trio Indiano (6:30)
HANOVER'S Kudzu Carnival
THE HIDEOUT COFFEEHOUSE Open Mic Poetry & Reading
HOLE IN THE WALL Landis Armstrong's Guilty Pleasures (10:00)
HOMER'S BAR & GRILL Karaoke w/ Brian

Tue 29

311 CLUB Soul Kitchen, Station, Diasporic (9:30)
ANTONE'S Blue Tuesday w/ Derek O'Brien, Malford Milligan (11:00)
ARTZ RIB HOUSE Texas Old Time Fiddlers Jam (7:30)
B.B. ROVERS Buster Gutbucket (7:00)
B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Suzanne Smith
BASTROP SENIOR CENTER The Kitchen Pickers (6:30)
BEERLAND Clay Nightingale, Reverend Glasseye, Some Say Leland
THE BELMONT Dale Watson & His Lone Stars (7:00)
BLIND PIG PUB Joe Vega
BROKEN SPOKE Debra Peters' Accordion Roundup
CACTUS CAFE Karen Mal, Rex Foster (8:30)
CEDAR STREET Kelly Doze, Ray Primm
CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Ephraim Owens Experience (10:00); In the Club: Casper Rawls' Planet Casper w/ David Grissom, Warren Hood (6:30), Alejandro Escovedo, David Garza (10:00)
DONN'S DEPOT Donn & the Station Masters
EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Mark Goodwin Trio (7:00)

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 THIRD LANGUAGE
 FRIDAY 9:30

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THU 24	KENT MAYHEW	RADIO STAR
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SAT 26		RADIO STAR
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MON 28	HIGHLY LIKELY	THE ACTIVATES
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WED 30	TRENT & DAVE	SPAZMATICS



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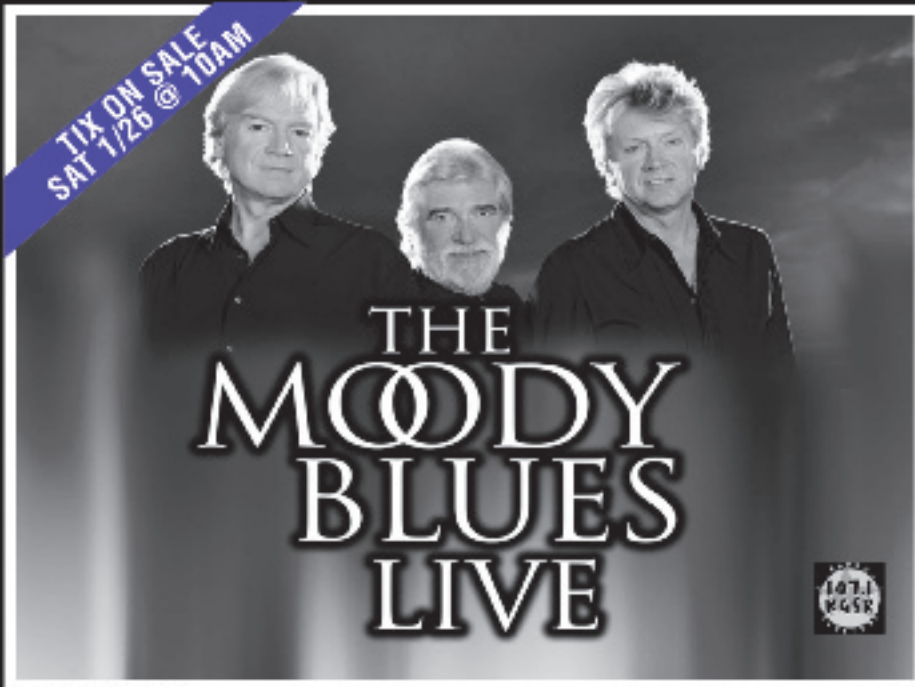
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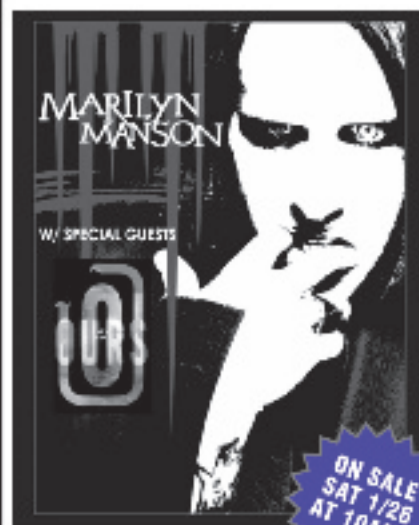


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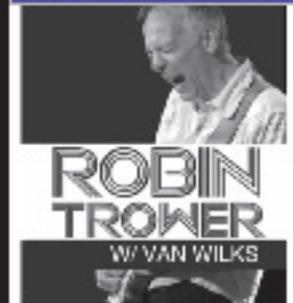
FRI JAN 25 8PM

+ THIS SATURDAY! +



SAT JAN 26 8PM

+ THIS SUNDAY! +



SUN JAN 27 8PM



THU JAN 31 8PM



SAT FEB 23 8PM



WED APR 9 8PM



THU APR 10 TIX ON SALE WED 1/30 AT 10 AM



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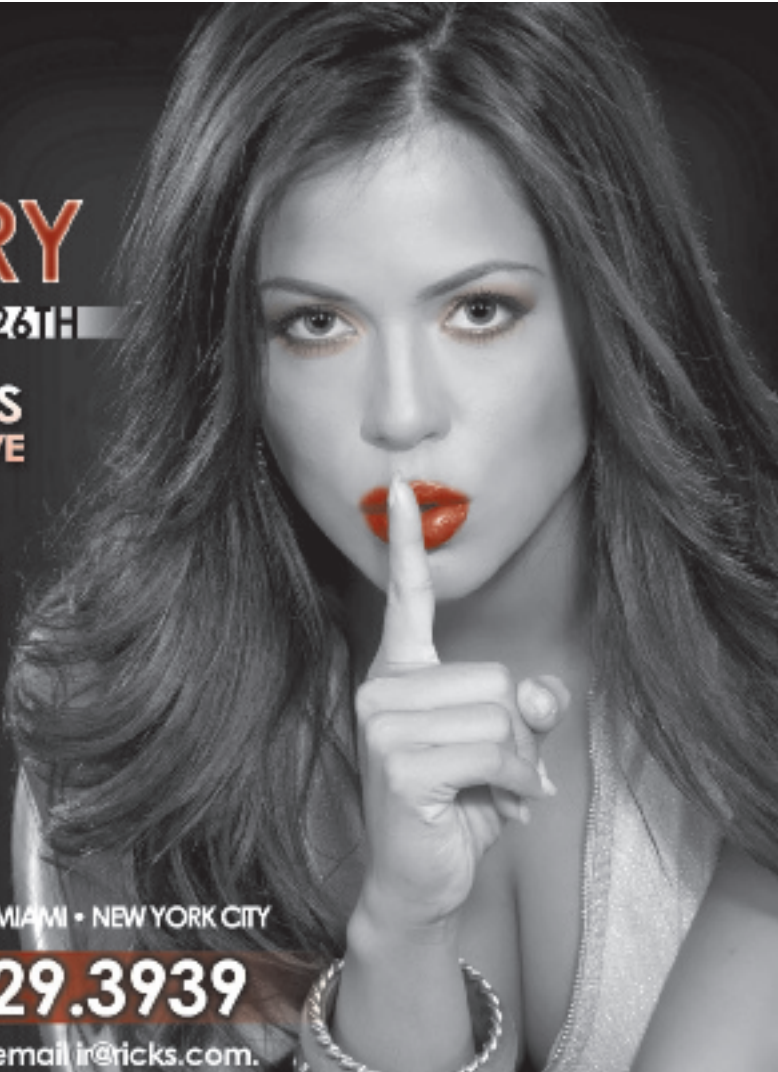
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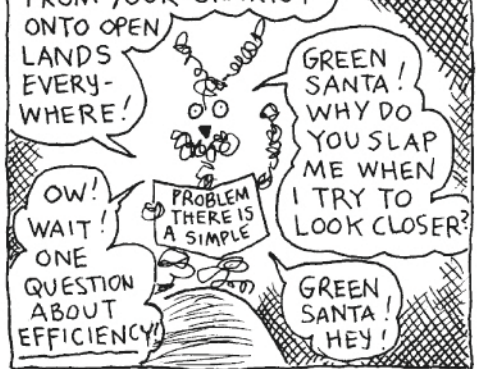
by Shannon Wheeler



He sees you when you're sleeping



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YOU RUN FROM SCRUTINY AND I SEE YOUR FAT CORPORATE BOTTOM IS BARE!



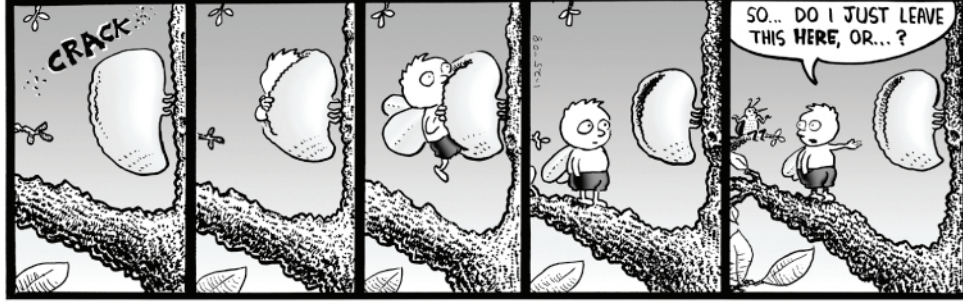
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TROUBLE 9-11 TRUTH TOWN

BY LLOYD DANGLE



MR. SMARTY PANTS KNOWS



Scientists in Maryland have built the world's first entirely hand-crafted chromosome – a large looping strand of DNA made from scratch in a laboratory, containing all the instructions a microbe needs to live and reproduce.

All U.S. nonmilitary engagement with the world accounts for only 1.2% of the federal budget.

Japanese researchers have developed a frog with skin so transparent that its internal organs are visible, a boon to squeamish teens and to biologists who can study how organs develop and respond to tumors or toxins.

Hugh Hefner has a zoo license. He owns peacocks and spider monkeys.

The jagged border between Texas' Travis and Williamson counties follows the divide separating the Colorado River and Brazos River watersheds.

The above is information that Mr. Smarty Pants read in a book, a magazine, or the newspaper; heard on the radio; saw on television; or overheard at a party. Got facts? Write to Mr. Smarty Pants at the Chronicle, or e-mail mrpants@austinchronicle.com.

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330 Computers
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345 Furniture
350 Garage/Estate Sales
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380 Tools
385 Trades
390 Wanted to Buy</p> | <p>400 SERVICES</p> <p>410 Business
415 Computers
420 Counseling
425 Health/Wellness
430 Home
435 Financial
440 Fitness/Training
445 Legal
450 Licensed Massage
455 Psychic/Astrology
460 Travel
465 Miscellaneous</p> <p>500 NOTICES</p> <p>510 Activities
515 Classes/Workshops
520 Discussion Groups
525 Events
530 General
535 Lost & Found
540 Volunteers
545 Legal Notices</p> <p>600 MOTOR</p> <p>610 Cars
615 Trucks
620 SUV's
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640 Repairs</p> <p>700 MUSIC</p> <p>710 Equipment for Sale
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115 BEAUTY SALON/SPA

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125 GENERAL

ALL High Speed Copier Operators wanted. Must have experience. 3 Shifts available. Call 472-5353

ALL Weekends, evenings & holidays off - Experienced & reliable, Grill/line cook needed for busy N Austin Cafe. Call 342-8817 for appt or email resume to joiousoccasion@yahoo.com

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BILINGUAL SALESPeople NEEDED Growing locally owned furniture store needs bilingual salespeople for full or part-time positions. Must speak English and Spanish, have some sales experience, good communication skills and able to work weekends. Commission and Bonuses paid. Apply in person at:
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Gain experience in the afternoons with elementary age kids. Position includes paid ongoing training, and the opportunity to work on 64 school campuses. Spanish speakers needed. Work hours 2:15-6:15 p.m. M-F. Starting pay \$9.00-\$9.80/hr. EOE. Apply at Extend-A-Care for Kids, 55 North IH 35, or download an application from www.eackids.org, or call 472-9929 x408.

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GENERAL

Jimmy Johns is Now Hiring!

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130 HEALTHCARE

CAREGIVER Free room for part-time assistance w/active disabled woman.Lovely home near Zilker Park. 328-1761.

SPEECH PATHOLOGIST Health Force Pediatrics Outpatient Rehabilitation has an immediate opening for a Speech Language Pathologist to work full time. Apply in person at: 1501 N DeLeon St. Victoria, Texas 77901 or Call: 361-582-0611 or Fax 361-582-0555 email: health4s@zamigo.net or apply online at www.healthforcevictoria.com

EMPLOYMENT

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Working for the man?

Well, we can't help you with that ... but we can help you find a job where they have casual Fridays. Austin Chronicle Employment section. It's a start.

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Apply in person at 4131 Spicewood Sps Rd N4 Mon-Thur 5 - 8 pm

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We need Support Home Living staff to work various part time hours/ week working with cognitive challenged clients in their homes in Austin and surrounding areas. \$9/hr. Flexible hrs. Call 1-800-867-0047 for Dana. Apply at 1106 Clayton Lane, Ste. 250W, Austin, TX 78723; fax resume to 512-338-1555; email resume to dmcbride@empowermentoptions.com

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GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

ALL

Open Interviews
Hilton Garden Inn
500 North IH 35
Feb 9&10th
9am-4pm

**BEAT THE HEAT!
Just don't feed the bears!!!**

Glacier Park, Inc. operates the 7 historic lodges in Glacier National Park. We are actively seeking the following positions for the 2008 summer season (May-Sept):

*Tour Drivers
*Waitstaff/Servers
*Line / Prep Cooks
*Retail Associates
*Night Audit
*Housekeeping
*Laundry
*Warehouse
*Front Desk
*Bartender

Internships available where applicable

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WEBSITE Looking for something more? Check out austinchronicle.com/classifieds for even more great ads online.

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- ⊗ Waitstaff/Servers
- ⊗ Line / Prep Cooks
- ⊗ Retail Associates
- ⊗ Night Audit
- ⊗ Housekeeping
- ⊗ Laundry
- ⊗ Warehouse
- ⊗ Front Desk
- ⊗ Bartenders
- ⊗ Internships available where applicable

Meals and housing plans available

Added incentives for management/bonus potential. Visit our Web site at www.gpihr.com to apply or call (406) 892-6719

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Time Warner Cable is looking for men and women to join our Customer Care Team in Austin and Waco. You will provide outstanding customer service through sales and retention initiatives. FT with various shifts, flexibility required.

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Time Warner Cable is looking for men and women to join our Warehouse Team in Austin. This position receives and distributes materials, converters and supplies from the warehouse and maintains plant inventory. Valid drivers license and clean driving record required.

We offer excellent benefits including Free Digital Cable, High-speed Internet Service, and much more!

Submit your resume online at www.timewarnercable.jobs. Many other opportunities are available, please visit our website for a current job listing.

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Pedernales Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Lineman

Pedernales Electric Cooperative is looking for dependable individuals to join our operations team in various PEC district locations. District locations include:

- Austin
- Canyon Lake
- Johnson City
- Kyle
- Bertram
- Cedar Park
- Junction
- Marble Falls

Positions are available for both experienced and entry level Linemen. Linemen perform duties required in the operation, maintenance, construction, and repair of PEC's transmission and distribution systems. The ideal candidates will have experience or desire a career in the electrical field, be team players, and enjoy working outdoors.

Minimum Job Requirements:

- A high school diploma or GED
- A valid Texas driver's license (Class A CDL preferred; must obtain if selected)
- Must be available for call-out duty

Salary is based on experience. PEC offers a generous benefits package which includes a matching 401(k) plan, health, dental, and life insurance.

PEC is the nation's largest and fastest growing cooperative. We provide exceptional customer service and reliable electric service to over 220,000 members in the Texas Hill Country.

For more information about Pedernales Electric Cooperative please visit our website:
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Mail, email or fax application/resume to:
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Pedernales Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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San Marcos, Texas

Pedernales Electric Cooperative is looking for a dynamic customer service professional to join our 24/7 call center located in San Marcos, Texas. The Customer Care Supervisor will train, schedule and supervise the daily activities of our telephone representatives. Proven leadership qualities and excellent communication skills are a must. The ideal candidate will have call center operations experience. Bilingual (Spanish) skills are a plus.

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- Bachelor's degree
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- Must be able to work any schedule which may include weekends, holidays, and nights

Salary starts at \$24.00/hour. PEC offers a generous benefits package which includes a matching 401(k) plan, health, dental, and life insurance.

PEC is the nation's largest and fastest growing cooperative. We provide exceptional customer service and reliable electric service to over 220,000 members in the Texas Hill Country.

For more information about Pedernales Electric Cooperative please visit our website:
www.pec.coop

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P. O. Box 1
Johnson City, Texas 78636
Email: careers@peci.com
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No Phone Calls Please
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Logistics Technicians
Time Warner Cable is looking for men and women to join our Warehouse Team in Austin. This position receives and distributes materials, converters and supplies from the warehouse and maintains plant inventory. Valid drivers license and clean driving record required.

We offer excellent benefits including Free Digital Cable, High-speed Internet Service, and much more!

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Are you a steroid nasal spray user?

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CEDRA Clinical Research is seeking participants for a 3-night research study on an investigational medication. To qualify you must be:

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This study does not require keeping a daily diary and dosing will not be done daily. Study-related lab tests, physicals, meals, wireless Internet, computers, satellite TV, video games and pool tables are provided at no cost.

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HAS SEXUAL ABUSE AFFECTED YOUR LIFE?

Researchers at the University of Texas at Austin are conducting a treatment study for women with a history of sexual abuse who are experiencing sexual difficulties. Treatment is free of charge, and compensation for time and travel is provided. The study involves answering questions and writing about personal experiences, including sexual behavior. If you have a history of sexual abuse you may qualify.

For more information, please call
(512) 232-4805
All calls are confidential.

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Help the Dems, HRC, & Amnesty Int'l. Up to \$16/hr w/guaranteed base, Flexible PT& FT schedules. Call 916-4001 for interviews. www.Telefund.com

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A clinical research study for an investigational medication is being conducted for people 40-80 years of age with Osteoarthritis of the hips and knees.



Qualified Participants:

- Must experience Osteoarthritis pain for 4-7 days a week
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Qualified Participants May Receive:

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- Financial compensation for time and travel up to \$500.00

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A premier central-Texas non-profit serving individuals, youth and families has the following openings in Austin:

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FT position assists in the residential food service operation of the Emergency Shelter and Transitional Living Services. Visit www.lifeworksweb.org for more information. Minority and bilingual candidates encouraged to apply. Resume/cover letter to Lifeworks, Attn: Brian Baldonado, 3700 South 1st St, Austin, TX 78704. brian.baldonado@lifeworksweb.org. EOE

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Tired of the daily grind?
The rat race?
Working for the man?
Well, we can't help you with that
... but we can help you find a job where they have casual Fridays.
Austin Chronicle Employment section. It's a start.

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IT MANAGER Alamo Drafthouse Cinemas

Alamo Drafthouse Cinemas is seeking a full time IT Manager. Responsibilities include managing and maintaining the Alamo Drafthouse Cinemas website, as well as all store-level terminals, servers, and computer operations. Skills required include knowledge of Windows OS; Network configuration, troubleshooting, and set-up; PHP, Javascript, and HTML; CSS familiarity a plus. Pay is commensurate with experience, and includes excellent perks- best in Austin. Please email resumes and salary history to owner@drafthouse.com. No phone calls please. www.drafthouse.com. EOE.



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SEX ABUSE HAS SEXUAL ABUSE AFFECTED YOUR LIFE?

Researchers at the University of Texas at Austin are conducting a treatment study for women with a history of sexual abuse who are experiencing sexual difficulties. Treatment is free of charge, and compensation for time and travel is provided. The study involves answering questions and writing about personal experiences, including sexual behavior. If you have a history of sexual abuse and it has affected your sexuality you may qualify. For more info, please call **(512) 232-4805**. All calls are confidential.

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HAVE YOU BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA?

Community Clinical Research is conducting a research trial of an investigational medication for the treatment of schizophrenia. Participants will receive study related:
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• Medical/psychiatric assessments at no cost
• Financial Compensation
Call to participate in an investigational medication study.
512-323-2622
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MENSTRUAL CRAMPS PAINFUL MENSTRUAL CRAMPS?

Millions of women experience painful cramps immediately before or during menstruation. If you are one of these women, SCIREX may be able to help. SCIREX is looking for qualified individuals to participate in a clinical study that will evaluate an investigational pain medication to treat menstrual cramps. Qualified Study Participants Must:
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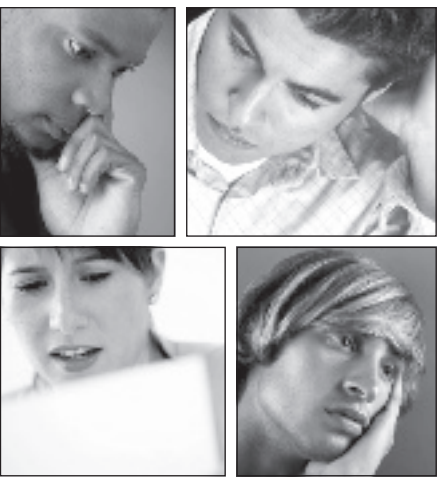
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Qualified Study Participants May Receive:

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1806 Eva St. Fantastic 2 story in popular Bouldin neighborhood. 3/2 1/2 baths plus study. Tree top master has vaulted ceilings, large covered balcony and jetted tub. Kitchen has granite counters, glass front cabinets and looks out onto large deck and well landscaped yard. Hardwoods on first floor. Walk to South Congress to eat and shop. **\$640,000**. Contact **Kris Hyatt**, Eva Street Properties (512) 762-8235.

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• Recognize the scope of massage therapy and refer to other health care professionals when appropriate for the client's/patient's health and well-being.
• Administer all treatments in a professional manner with respect for client-patient confidentiality, boundaries, safety and privacy.
• Maintain honest and accurate records, a clean and professional work environment, and high standards of personal hygiene.
• Respect the client's/patient's right to continue, modify, or discontinue massage therapy at any time, and respect the integrity of each person by avoiding any sexual conduct or activities involving their clients/patients.
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(see note below) you are hereby required to appear before this Court and answer to a complaint filed against you in this action and in case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment by default will be taken against you as demanded in the complaint, for

Witness my hand and the Seal of the Court this 30th day of July, 2007.

DENISE ABRAMSEN

Clerk of the Court
By: /s/ Sharlene Turnbull
Court Clerk #

/s/ Lee J. Rohn, Esquire
Law Offices of Rohn and Cameron, LLC
1101 King Street

Christiansted, VI 00820
Telephone: (340) 778-8855
Facsimile: (340) 773-2954

Note: The defendant, if served personally, is required to file his answer or other defense with the Clerk of this Court, and to serve a copy thereof upon the plaintiff's attorney within twenty (20) days after service of this summons, excluding the date of services. The defendant, if served by publication or by personal service outside the jurisdiction, is required to file his answer or other defense with the Clerk of this Court, and to serve a copy thereof upon the attorney for the plaintiff within thirty (30) days after the completion of the period of publication or personal service outside of the jurisdiction.

X98-08658

CONSTABLE'S NOTICE OF SALE

REAL PROPERTY DELINQUENT TAXES

BY VIRTUE of a certain Order Of Sale issued by the clerk of the 98th District Court of Travis County, on the 21st day of December, 2007 in a certain cause numbered X98-08658, wherein Austin Independent School District, City of Austin, Travis County, Austin Community College and

Travis County Hospital District are plaintiffs, and Walter Langdon, Jr., Walter Langdon, III, Paula Campbell, City of Austin (In Rem Only) and Travis County, Austin Community College, Austin Independent School District, City of Austin and County Education District (In Rem Only) are defendant(s), in favor of said plaintiffs, for the following sums: **Tract One: Billing Number 81111 = \$15,439.72 and Tract Two: Billing Number 81130 = \$29,324.92** Dollars, together with all costs of suit, that being the amount of judgment recovered by the said plaintiffs, in the 98th District Court of Travis County, Texas, on June 23, 2006.

I, on the 28th day of December, 2007, at 2:00 o'clock P.M., have levied upon, and will, on the 5th day of February, 2008 at 10:00 o'clock, A.M., at 1000 Guadalupe in the City of Austin, within legal hours, proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder, all the rights, title and interest of defendants in and to the following described property, levied upon as the property of defendants, to-wit:

TRACT ONE: Billing Number 81111

Lot 1 and the East 1/2 of Lot 2, Block 12, Belcher Re-subdivision of a portion of Glenwood Addition, Plat No. 232/618 as described in Volume 2147, Page 520 and Probate Cause No. 55,671 of the deed records of Travis County, Texas

TRACT TWO: Billing Number 81130

Lot 6, Block 4, Glenwood Addition (Oit. 32 & 33, Div. B), Plat No. 2/154 as described in Volume 614, Page 395, Volume 621, Page 414 and Probate Cause No. 44,335 and 55,671 of the deed records of Travis County, Texas.

THE ABOVE SALE to be made by me to satisfy the above described judgment for the following sums: **Tract One: Billing Number 81111 = \$15,439.72 and Tract Two: Billing Number 81130 =**

\$29,324.92 Dollars in favor of plaintiffs, together with the costs of said suit, and the proceeds applied to the satisfaction thereof.

Witness my hand this 28th day of December, 2007.

BRUCE ELFANT,
CONSTABLE PRECINCT 5
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

BY /s/ Joe Rosser DEPUTY

ON THE PROPERTY SOLD, THERE ARE NO WARRANTIES, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY AND FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. YOU BUY THE PROPERTY "AS IS". BIDDERS ARE FURTHER ADVISED THAT PURCHASE OF THE PROPERTY AT THIS EXECUTION SALE MAY NOT EXTINGUISH ANY LIENS OR SECURITY INTERESTS ON THE PROPERTY. YOU ARE SIMPLY PURCHASING WHATEVER INTEREST THE DEBTOR HAS IN THE PROPERTY. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU NEED TO CONSULT COUNSEL OF YOUR CHOICE.

X99-09504

CONSTABLE'S NOTICE OF SALE

REAL PROPERTY DELINQUENT TAXES

BY VIRTUE of a certain Order Of Sale issued by the clerk of the 261st District Court of Travis County, on the 21st day of December, 2007 in a certain cause numbered X99-09504, wherein Austin Community College, Austin Independent School District, City of Austin, Travis County and Travis County Hospital District are plaintiffs, and Jay Cooper, Jay Cooper, Trustee and Michael B. Suffness, PC (In Rem Only) are defendant(s), in favor of said plaintiffs, for the sum of **\$75,659.92** Dollars, together with all costs of suit, that being the amount of judgment recovered by the said plaintiffs, in the 261st District Court of Travis County, Tex-

as, on November 17, 2006, I, on the 28th day of December, 2007, at 2:00 o'clock P.M., have levied upon, and will, on the 5th day of February, 2008 at 10:00 o'clock, A.M., at 1000 Guadalupe in the City of Austin, within legal hours, proceed to sell for cash to the highest bidder,

all the rights, title and interest of defendants in and to the following described property, levied upon as the property of defendants, to-wit:

Lot 28, Block B, Violet Crown Heights, Section 1, Plat No. 4/256, Travis County, Texas and being more particularly described in Volume 3756, Page 486; Volume 10628, Page 583, Volume 13185, Page 265 and Volume 13207, page 166 of the deed records of Travis County, Texas.

THE ABOVE SALE to be made by me to satisfy the above described judgment for **\$75,659.92** Dollars in favor of plaintiffs, together with the costs of said suit, and the proceeds applied to the satisfaction thereof.

Witness my hand this 28th day of December, 2007.

BRUCE ELFANT,
CONSTABLE PRECINCT 5
TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

BY /s/ Joe Rosser DEPUTY

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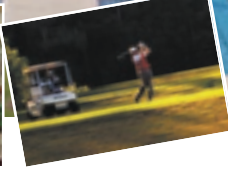
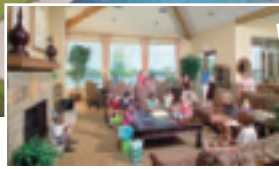
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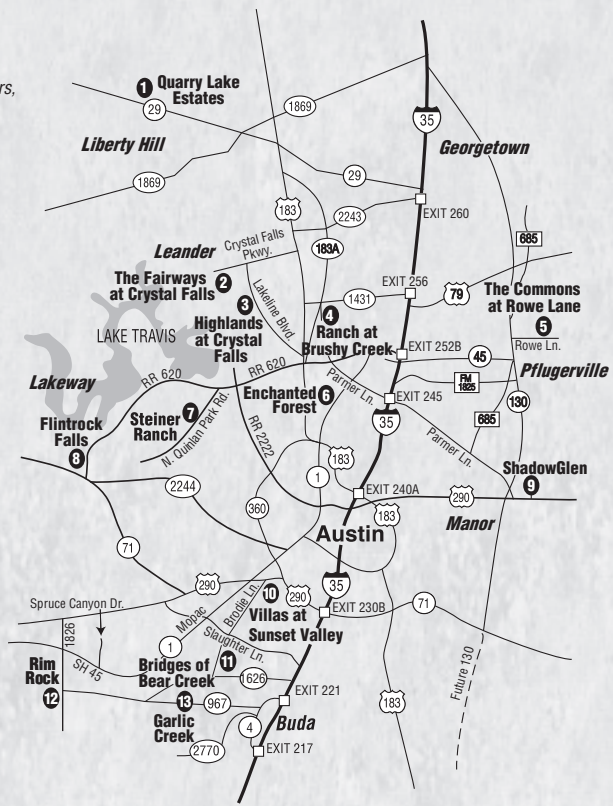


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THE 'CHRONICLE'S NOD TO LIVING SOUTHERN by Kate X Messer

With all the big-box chains taking their cue from that four-letter word for Scandinavian, it's totally easy to succumb to the design-in-a-box mentality – that IKEA-fication behind so much contemporary decor that has so many Downtown lofts looking like boring Swedish theme parks. While refreshing on the outset, a little bit of stark, clean line goes a long way and can be just as overdone as the Eighties love of dusty rose and slate blue or the Nineties affinity for the overstuffed.

Hence our salute to Southern living. No, not so much the mag (although we won't deny the occasional guilty page turn), but more the *mise-en-scène*, the genteel

feel, the eclectic shotgun wedding of tacky and taste. Southern style is not all mint juleps and bourbon & branch (a little sip can, however, prime the creative juices). It's as breezy as a streetcar, as languid as a Georgian drawl or a slow pungent draw from a Cuban cigar, as cozy as a backyard barbecue or as mannered as an afternoon tea: elaborate, excessive even, yet deliberately modest and understated just as often. Hopefully some of our suggestions herein will help slow down your interior design process, inspire you to reconsider some classic Southern home decor elements. It's time, darlin', to stop and smell the gardenias.



Show Us Your Bulbs

RECYCLING ARTISTS TAKE NEW ORLEANS TRASH AND MAKE ILLUMINATING MARDI GRAS TREASURE

by Richard Whittaker

"So what did you *do* to get them?" This leering question is inevitably asked to anyone decorating their home with Mardi Gras beads. Wouldn't it be nicer if they asked, "Where did you get those?" With

Mardi Lights made from the recycled

plastic baubles, designed by New Orleans-based **Unique Products**, they will. Based out of a little gallery and workshop in the historic Crescent City Garden District (although eagle-eyed Austinites may recognize the lights from last October's Maker Faire at the Travis County Expo Center) recycling artists **Heather MacFarlane** and **Mark Kirk** gather the thousands of necklaces that are left to litter the streets after being thrown to the crowds from the floats during the city's monthlong parade season.

As legend has it, Mardi Gras beads must be caught. When the bead-thrower looks you in the eye, he or she is deeming you worthy of the beads and the magic they contain. If you miss the beads, they "lose their magic" and are to stay on the ground. Plus, considering the size of cramped parade crowds and the increase in pickpockets, it's not safe to scramble for them. Needless to say, New Orleans city streets are covered with the trinkets after each parade.

Each Mardi Light takes roughly 2 pounds of beads, but they're easy enough to find. "They're literally hanging from the trees," explained MacFarlane. While tourists and partygoers will scabble on the ground, aggressively elbow innocent bystanders, and even expose

themselves for the treasured strings of doubloons and prized pendants, it's the small, cheap beads that catch the attention of these artists. They collect them, take them home, unstring the beads, and pass them through a series of kilns and ovens to melt them into flat sheets. They then shape the delicately translucent and uniquely patterned plastic into everything from wall sconces to sun jujus (the voodoo equivalent of a dream catcher).



"The joke around here is that it took a thrifty Scot to work out what to do with all those beads," said MacFarlane. She's originally from Edinburgh, and Kirk is from the cold, wet Northern English town of Macclesfield (famous only for being the place where Joy Division's Ian Curtis decided to kill himself). It was beads that brought them together. Ten years ago, Kirk was driving from San Jose, Calif., to Pensacola, Fla., and decided to detour to New Orleans for Mardi Gras. He met MacFarlane on the street when they were both collecting beads, and now these migrants are helping the city deal with an eternal problem of very shiny trash.

How many beads are thrown during Mardi Gras each year? "No one really knows, because there are 10 major businesses importing them," said Mardi Gras historian Arthur Hardy, "and they don't want to tell each other." Many are left on the streets or get hung up on overhead obstacles. This means a real headache for the city, with the parade routes looking all year-round like they're bearing a strange, plastic fruit. "We're less than one month away from this year's Mardi Gras," said Mary Beth Romig, communications and public relations director for the New Orleans Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau, "and we've still got beads hanging from trees up and down Saint Charles and from balconies in the French Quarter."

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uses themselves. The artists of Unique Products have taken some of New Orleans' distinctive trash and turned it into something gorgeous and maybe even lucrative. As well as the lamp shades, the company makes messenger bags out of recycled Federal Emergency Management Agency tarps and desk lamps out of detergent bottles and transforms old fiber-optic cable into garden lights shaped like – like so many ornaments in the city – a fleur-de-lis.

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Pinkies High

ELEGANT OR FUNKY, TEA SETS SPIFF UP ANY DECOR by Terry Ornelas

When most Southerners think of tea, the first thing that comes to mind is a cold, sweaty tumbler full of iced sweet tea. That is certainly steeped in tradition, as long as the day is hot. But for many generations we've tipped our teacup to an adopted tradition from our British brethren – the tea service.

The days of big hats and white gloves are no longer de rigueur for serving tea, but there's something to be said for dressing the part if you're so inclined. Either way, no true Southern home is complete without the tools of the trade. You'll need a cream pitcher, sugar bowl, strainer, tea tray, teacups, and of course, a teapot. There are a million embellishing accessories out there you can use to accompany and accent, but this list fills your basic needs.

Now if you want to do it up right, get an unglazed earthenware or ceramic steeping pot, as well as a serving pot. The serving pot should be porcelain, as it retains heat better. You can strain the tea when changing pots. Also, an electric kettle is fantastic for boiling water quickly. Let the water sit for a moment once it's boiled so you don't risk scalding the leaves.

Locally, all the big-box shops like Crate & Barrel, Bed Bath & Beyond, Macy's, Sur la Table, etc., will carry sets and accessories. But our tea leaves tell us to buy Austin! Locally brewed **Breed & Co.** (with their fantastic china selections), **Faraday's Kitchen Store**, and the ever-popular **Tea Embassy**.



JOHN ANDERSON

Hands down taking the cake as Austin's premier tea experience, Tea Embassy offers a mind-boggling assortment of more than 150 teas from all over the world. They come the local market on selections, with a wide array of green, black, oolong, white, pu-erh, South African rooibos, and a large selection of herbal tisanes (medicinal herbal infusions). For flavored teas, they carry combinations of unimaginable concoctions such as Love Story (chocolate and rose petals) and Genmaicha

(rice and popcorn-flavored). They even stock a margarita black tea – lime with a hint of salt – that was featured in December's *Southern Living* magazine. All of the flavor, none of the hangover. Add to that a selection of tea sets, and knowledge and service that would impress the queen. They don't offer afternoon tea or lunch in their shop, but they do encourage you to attend one of their catered tea events.

If you want to trade in white-glove service for fingerless knitted *très* chic service, check out **Top Drawer Thrift**, **Uncommon Objects**, **Room Service Vintage**, or any of Austin's myriad secondhand stores, and build your

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own tea set out of a vintage assortment. Tea poured from a funky, made-to-order, mismatched service can be just as fabulous as antique-fancy rose bone china. It's all in the hospitality. One lump or two, how you choose to give and take your tea can be as original as you.

As far as the perfect cup goes, there are a hundred ways to achieve it, each method insisting on its own superiority. Your best

bet: Always use fresh, cold, purified water. Tea connoisseurs far and wide cannot insist on this one enough. Don't oversteep your tea. If you insist on using bagged tea, never squeeze the bag, or you'll release too many tannins and spoil the flavor. Finally, always add milk to the cup *before* pouring in the tea and not the opposite. Enjoy with gorgeous nibbles of your choice, and keep your pinkie finger raised high.

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Nice Knobs

IT'S AMAZING WHAT A FEW SMALL THINGS CAN DO FOR AN ENVIRONMENT

by Matt Patin

The big things – couches, armoires, end tables, and the like – are definitely the staples of any home decor, but nothing showcases how freakishly attentive to detail you are like some thoroughly researched and meticulously placed knobs and switch plates. Yes, you read correctly: knobs and switch plates.

Knob may be one of the least inspiring words in the English language. Few other words connote an object so devoid of aerodynamics, elegance, refinement, or subtlety. But there are few things as practical as knobs in your homestead. Without them, *su casa* would be a wasteland of naked, inaccessible drawers and cabinetry, and doors would be limited to the kinds that swing and slide (like those Western saloon doors that keep you in constant fear of spur-wearing gunmen).

But, despite the stark utility of this essential hardware, knobs can, in fact, be very, very slightly interesting. In fact, there is a dizzying variety of knobs in the knob family, crafted from several materials that each say something different about your aesthetic tastes. (Insert private-parts joke in five, four,

three, two ... “The knobs purchased from Adult Megaplexxx, for instance, are made from silicon or glass. Snare, bass, cymbal crash. But seriously, folks, careful with those glass ones. Ouch!”)

So, if knobs could talk, what would they say?

Wooden Knobs I’m old-fashioned but timeless, and I can accommodate most of your drawer and cabinet accessibility needs. Be careful placing me in rooms that are often wet or damp, though, like kitchens or laundry rooms, as I don’t want to get moldy. Oh, or bathrooms either. I’d rather not be privy to your antics in there anyway.

Plastic Knobs I’m the most versatile knob of them all. I come in limitless colors and designs, and can be placed almost anywhere. Boo-yah!

Aluminum and Stainless Steel Knobs I’m sleek, I’m sexy, I’m rust-resistant, and I love getting wet. Place me on antique-inspired chest of drawers and dressers to create some interesting juxtapositions. Plus, I’m great for accenting your kitchen or bathroom cabinets and drawers. (I’ll be discreet!)

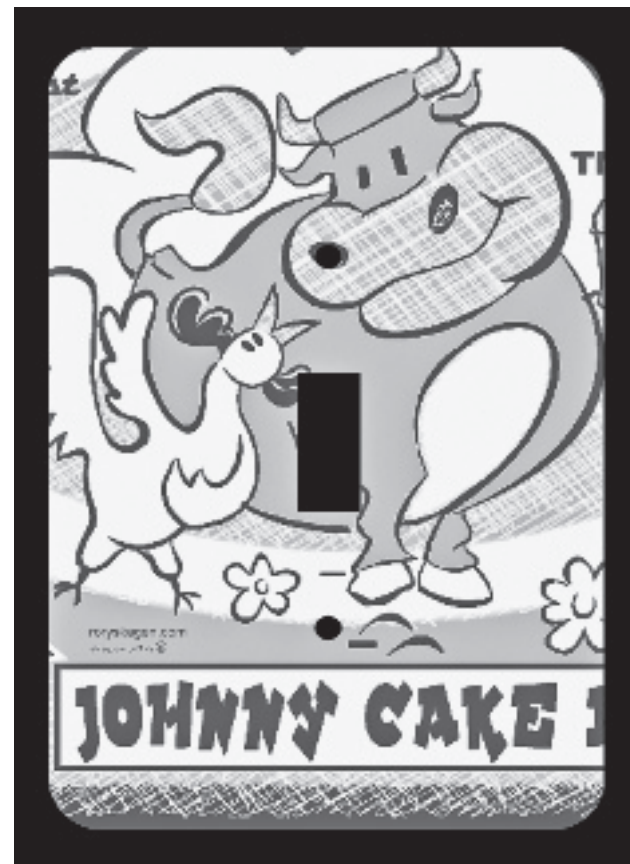
Oh, that’s just the beginning. There are even more options for the fanatic knob lover. Austin’s own **Carina Works** – who, no kidding, once created a \$30,000 diamond-encrusted metal tile – manufactures and sells their sea glass series knobs starting at \$14 each. Some glass colors include periwinkle, ice, amethyst, and – perfect for those Southwestern accented homes – gunmetal. Those are some of the more affordable knobs in the Carina catalog. More expensive knobs and pulls have, errr, well, birds, bunnies, and bears wearing sunglasses on them. These are part of Carina Works’ handcrafted, artsy and craftsy collection of knobs and pulls for children’s rooms.

Enough about knobs already, you say? Well, all right. How about switch plates then?

Nothing says “I want to turn you on!” like a light switch ensconced in a \$14.50 switch plate shaped and painted to look like a cowboy boot. That’s just one of thousands of switch-plate designs for New York-based SwitchHits.com. You know the drawl: *New York City*?! Hold your horses. It’s Hamburg, N.Y., which is almost rural enough to be Texas-like. **SwitchHits.com** has more than 50 categories of switch plates to browse through, including a Western section that includes 36 different designs. Take your pick: Barbwire Black, Longhorn Brown, Bull Rider, Big Ol’ Cowboy, and more. Some are made of plastic and some are ceramic, but – and we speak from experience on this one – be careful when buying plates made of metal, particularly the ones that frame electrical outlets. We’ve paid for this mistake with an occasional electrical shortage.

Here’s a mind bender: What do the giant armadillo atop Threadgill’s, the Aztec and Mayan artwork at Casino el Camino, and the Paul Cézanne-inspired mural in Central Market have to do with switch plates? Stumped? They’re all the products of Austin’s own **Blue Genie Art** and its CEO and art director **Rory Skagen**, who just so happens to design and paint his own brand of decorative switch plates. Check them out online.

Now you know how knobs and light plates can help you dress your home to impress. So let the search begin. And to make your search more interesting – even intrepid – seek further advice from that burly, hairy mountain man in the big-box hardware store and ask him to kindly show you his favorite knob.



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Table with 3 columns: Product, Interest Rate, APR. Rows include Conforming, 40-Year Fixed, 30-Year Fixed, 15-Year Fixed, ARM 5, Jumbo, 30-Year Int. Only, 30-Year Fixed, 15-Year Fixed, 5/1 ARM, 10/1 ARM, and FHA.



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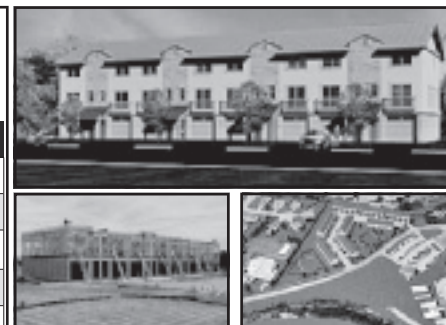
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Green Building, Energy Efficiency, Water Efficiency, Indoor Environmental Quality & Materials Features

Lakeline Square

Table listing features and certifications for Lakeline Square, such as Energy Star label home, LEED certified home, 5-star rated Austin Energy Green Building program, etc.

Local and National Green Building Certification



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Most energy efficient town homes ever built in Austin
Each unit is 1358 square feet
Stone and stucco exterior
3/2 bedrooms with 2 private baths
One half bath
Granite counter tops in Kitchen
All appliances: dishwasher, refrigerator, stove/oven/microwave, washer/dryer included
Bamboo hardwood floors in Living Room, Dining Room and Kitchen
Game room with wet bar and sliding glass door to private patio/possible 3rd bedroom
Tile baths with Kohler HET 1.28 gallons per flush toilets
Private balconies

- Private and fenced rear yard
Energy Star certified home
Energy Star rated windows
Energy Star rated light fixtures and ceiling fans
Energy Star rated appliances
Blown-in high density wall insulation thermal barrier tested
Foam insulation at underside of roof- reducing heat exchange
14 SEER HVAC system with programmable thermostat
Sealed and insulated ductwork
Superior Indoor Air Quality
Water Efficient landscaping
Home is tested by RESNET accredited, HERS certified rater at completion
Home qualifies for Green Mortgage products
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Blind Items

**WITH PLANTATION
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by Stephen Macmillan Moser

Shades of Miz Scarlett, plantation blinds (sometimes called plantation shutters) have made a huge comeback. No longer a relic of dilapidated antebellum mansions, the thick, louvered wooden blinds are the window treatments of choice, from summer cottages to Manhattan pieds-à-terre. Gone, gone, gone are the hideous miniblinds and vertical blinds of yesteryear (and don't even mention Roman shades), replaced with the more substantial look that recalls sturdier construction, better quality, and permanence.

Unlike miniblinds, vertical blinds, drapes, or shades, plantation blinds can retain their value better than almost all other window coverings.

And of course there is a range of quality from vinyl to faux wood to genuine and sometimes exotic wood. Faux wood is often recommended for damp areas such as bathrooms and pool enclosures, as well as for areas frequented by children and pets. Vinyl is great for outdoors, or indoors for the budget-conscious homeowner, and the wood, well ... the wood bespeaks hearth, home, and heritage ... and a larger budget.

Regardless of the materials, the effects of the plantation shade are many. Sometimes just used across the bottom of the window, the adjustable louvers allow you to filter, regulate, and direct the light, and they provide effective insulation when closed. And just imagine the luxury of having them motorized so that they can all open and close just the right amount all at once.

The plantation blind can work with virtually every decor; the beauty of is in its simple, clean design. Used in single or multiple panel installations, they can even be ordered to fit arched or unusually sized windows. Many prefer to use them unadorned, but they may also be hung with drapes.

From \$27 for a small single window (at Lowe's) to the sky's-the-limit pricing for custom work, virtually any style and material is available. Locally, **Blinds of All Kinds** offers their showroom on Highway 620 and free in-home consultations. **Austin-tatious Blinds & Shutters** also offers free in-home estimates and gives a single price that will include everything from measuring to installing. Family-owned **Window Fashions of Texas** is one of the largest factory-direct sources for plantation shutters in the nation and on their website, under Specials, has coupons for discounts and upgrades.

Choosing plantation blinds, as with choosing any home-improvement item, can be an exercise in frustration, endlessly searching stores, catalogs, and the Internet for just the right look. Often these choices are best made with professional design advice. Buy an hour of a designer's time to get a different viewpoint. But shop carefully. Plantation blinds, like good intentions, can easily go awry. There is one particular website that shows you how to cut artwork into strips and apply the strips to the blinds so that when you turn the blinds, they look like those annoying and distracting billboards that change every few seconds. *Don't* try this at home.

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1017 Hwy. 620 S., #101
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www.blindsforallkinds.net

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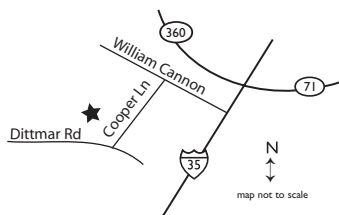
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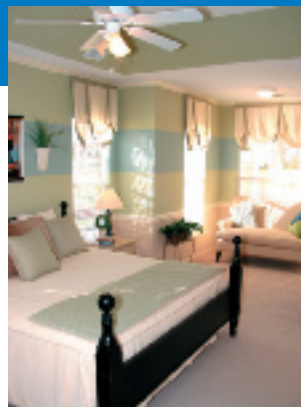
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