

THE **AUSTIN** CHRONICLE

FEBRUARY 15, 2013



EVIDENCE ROOM or HOARDER'S BASEMENT? JORDAN SMITH DESCRIBES THE HORRORS OF CRIME EVIDENCE IN TEXAS 26

'MORTIFIED' READS TEEN DIARIES! 34 ■ **DUMPLINGS!** MICK VANN LOVES THEM 42 ■ **'SEARCHERS'** RE-SEARCHED 46 ■ **SABRINA ELLIS'** JEALOUS DOG! 50

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CONTENTS

VOLUME 32, NUMBER 25 ★ FEBRUARY 15, 2013



10 POSTMARKS

ONLINE ONLY THIS WEEK

NEWS: Calling political consultant Peck Young on the truth, and Sen. Rodney Ellis' modest proposal on climate change

BOOKS: Q&A with speculative fiction writer Robert Jackson Bennett

SCREENS: We've got the latest on SXSW Film's just-announced Closing Night Film and other assorted goodies

FOOD: Rachel Davila dispels rumors about the closing of Nuevo Leon

NEWS

15 POINT AUSTIN
BY MICHAEL KING

16 THEN THERE'S THIS
BY AMY SMITH

18 Not Your Average Freshman; the Pain of Change at Barton Springs; Legelines; and more

24 THE HIGHTOWER REPORT
BY JIM HIGHTOWER

26 WHERE'S YOUR EVIDENCE?

Advances in forensic science have made physical evidence increasingly crucial in criminal justice — but the practice of preserving that evidence is often underfunded, poorly managed, or just plain sloppy

BY JORDAN SMITH

ARTS

33 All Over Creation: Mozart Was an Austinite; and Robert Jackson Bennett on his new novel, *American Elsewhere*

34 MISERY LOVES COMPANY
Mortified turns teenage writing into performance
BY ROBYN ROSS

36 EXHIBITIONISM
Design for Living, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, and 'They Never Die They Just Go to Sleep One Day'

38 AFTER A FASHION
BY STEPHEN MACMILLAN MOSER

FOOD

41 Gold Star for Black Star, Daisies Cafe, Food-o-File, and Meal Times

42 SEEKING XLB
In search of the mystical soup dumpling, xiao long bao
BY MICK VANN

53 NEWS OF THE WEIRD

SCREENS

45 AFS Essential Cinema launches 'Children of Abraham/Ibrahim 7'; and director Susan Youssef on her forbidden-love drama, *Habibi*
Rasak Kharban

46 SEARCHING FOR CYNTHIA ANN
Glenn Frankel's new book untangles the true story behind *The Searchers*

BY AMY GENTRY

MUSIC

49 MUSIC NEWS
Behind the scenes of Emo's sale to C3 Presents

BY RAOUL HERNANDEZ

50 A GIANT DOG/BOBBY JEALOUSY
Two bands, one frontwoman: Sabrina Ellis

BY KEVIN CURTIN

52 TEXAS PLATTERS
What Made Milwaukee Famous, Terry Allen, Dustin Welch, etc.



Read our comics online at austinchronicle.com/comics

CALENDAR

54 THIS WEEK

Don't need a weatherman to know about the Climate Change Rally this Sunday

THE ARTS

GAY PLACE
BY KATE X MESSER

DAY TRIPS
BY GERALD E. MCLEOD

SOCCER WATCH
BY NICK BARBARO

62 FILM *A Good Day to Die Hard*, *Beautiful Creatures*, *Safe Haven*, *Chasing Ice*

64 SHOWTIMES

70 MUSIC RECOMMENDED
Checking in Johnny Bush for KOOP's 18th birthday, plus Joe Lovano & Dave Douglas Quintet, Rakim, Neurosis, Graveyard, the Hives, Flesh Lights, Ra Ra Riot, Shearwater, Marmalades, Same Sac, Churchwood CD release, the No Idea Festival, and much more

72 VENUES

76 ROADSHOWS + CLUB LISTINGS

BACK

87 SHOT IN THE DARK

THE LUV DOC

COMIX

MR. SMARTY PANTS

89 CLASSIFIEDS

94 FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

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| Andrew W.K. | Everything Everything | Sarah Jaffe |
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| Baauer | Flume | Shakey Graves |
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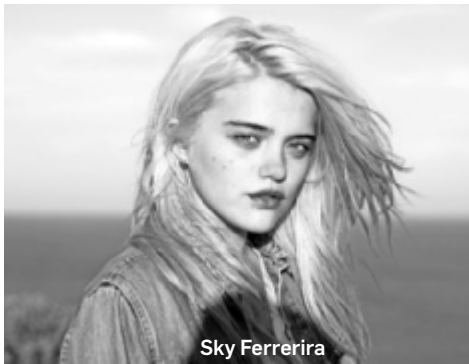
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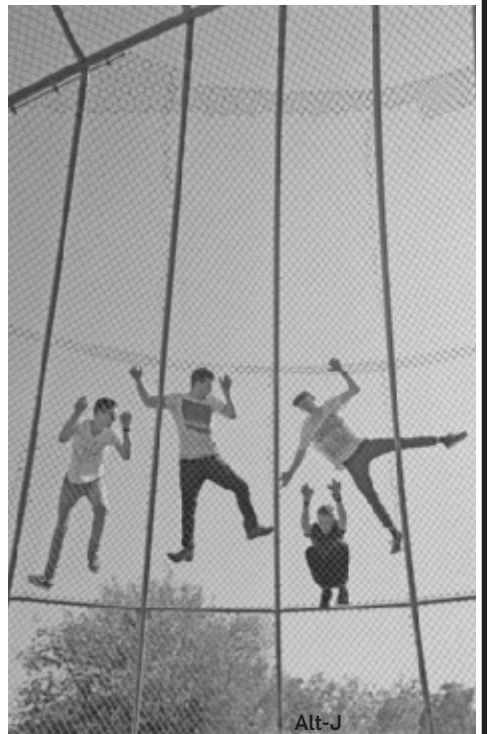


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CONCERNS ABOUT HOW HE WAS REPRESENTED

Dear Editor,
 I have several concerns about "A Failure to Communicate" [News, Feb. 8] but I am limiting this letter to the way I'm represented.

I am quoted as "Former Trustee Mark Williams." I would like to point out that I have not spoken to Mr. Whittaker since I left office in November. Nor have I been "openly critical of PRMO's results." I did comment in late 2011 that the district's process regarding IDEA was poor. But I didn't attribute that all to PRMO [Public

Relations and Multicultural Outreach]. Further, I didn't ever make a blanket statement or criticism about the district's public outreach, as seems to be implied in the article. In fact, while there is certainly room for improvement, I believe there has been much effort and good work by PRMO to better reach out to all of the district's diverse stakeholders.

I also believed that there was (and likely still is) a workload imbalance for PRMO. As indicated by Mr. Whittaker, Mr. Sánchez's department is understaffed relative to other urban districts, especially with the increased demands placed on the current PRMO staff – demands that are far more than was expected (or thought capable of being delivered) by his predecessors.

Finally, I am described as a "rules martinet." I realize that snarky criticism can play well to

audiences, but I do think that term is intentionally misleading. For the Citizens Communications over which I presided for six years, I think you'll find that I was not "hanging on the clock" – I let speakers go over their allotted time on numerous occasions (too often, some have said). I did believe that persons who signed up should speak for themselves and not take a slot to just let someone else speak. But I only had to deal with that issue a few times, and the issue only escalated during the IDEA deliberations.

Mark Williams

and the show because he's living the dream, moving up. How amazing for someone to go from nothing to everything! We should all be so lucky. On the other hand, I felt betrayed. Like the show is just ditching the people in Austin who helped them get to be so big. I feel ridiculous even writing that, let alone feeling that all week! I don't listen to country music, and I just don't know if I will listen to them on a new station, in a new city, with no common thread to what the show is to me now. I love the show but will I love it in a new format? In a way I feel like I would for sure listen if they were still in Austin switching to a country station. Moving to a new city to do a new show feels like they used Austin as a stepping stool to get to a bigger, better thing. Is that even wrong

continued on p.12

**"PAGE TWO"
 IS TAKING A BREAK.**

Reader COMMENTS

On Bobby Bones moving his radio show to Nashville:
 "This finally expresses the feelings I've been trying to figure out all week. I feel excited for him

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of them? Who wouldn't take the opportunity to do bigger, better things in life? Why do I even feel like what I think matters? The show being in Austin always made everyone on the show seem so accessible. Like you'd see them at any time, anywhere around Austin. I think I feel like my best friends are leaving, and I'm left in an empty room wondering what to do next." - Mandy

"Bye Bye Bobby Bones," Earache! Music blog, Feb. 7
austinchronicle.com/comments

RADIO RANCH'S BASSIST

Dear Editor,
Quick correction regarding the courtship of Bruce Robison and Kelly Willis ["The Bandera Way," Music, Feb. 8]. The bass player in Radio Ranch with Mas Palermo, Mike Hardwick, and David Murray was Brad Fordham. The band lasted quite a while including a lot of touring and the MCA record years. Full disclosure: I am now married to Brad but I saw the band quite a bit during that time.

Thanks,
Lisa Pankratz

NEED 3-D PRINTERS?

Dear Editor,
Re: "Letters at 3AM: The Revolution Will Be Printed" [Feb. 8]: I need these [3-D printers] to make my car insurance, mortgage, electricity, and gasoline. If they can make my bed and make my kid do algebra at grade level, I'm all for it. What terrifies me the most is that local governments will use them to make more taxes.

Meredith Poor

WHAT HAPPENED TO 'RUNNING MAN' STATUE?

Dear Editor,
What happened to the iron "running man" statue that popped up on the south side of Cesar Chavez just west of the Buford Tower right after Christmas? And for that matter, where did it come from? Has it returned to its own planet?

Brad Blodgett

Reader COMMENTS

Regarding our review of Death's 'Spiritual Healing' album:

"[M]ore Master of Puppets than Morbid Angel.' Ha! What the hell is that suppose to mean?" - Lester

"Metallurgy," Music, Feb. 8
austinchronicle.com/comments

Oops!

In last week's "Then There's This" column on unfair wage issues related to the construction of a new Downtown JW Marriott hotel, the last name of the Workers Defense Project's Gregorio Casar was misspelled. The Chronicle regrets the error.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW 101 with Professor Droney

HELLO, CLASS!

TODAY WE'LL BE DISCUSSING THE LEGALITY OF ASSASSINATING AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO HAVE BEEN DECLARED ENEMIES OF THE STATE!

IN SHORT, IT IS VERY, VERY LEGAL!

NOT TO MENTION ETHICAL AND WISE!

SURE, THE CONSTITUTION DOESN'T SPECIFICALLY STATE THAT ITS CLAUSES ON DUE PROCESS AND TREASON CAN BE DISREGARDED WHEN DEALING WITH A REALLY BAD GUY--

--BUT WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPLIED.

YOU SEE, SOMETIMES THE DANGER IS IMMINENT! AND BY 'IMMINENT' WE MEAN THERE'S A POSSIBILITY THAT SOMETHING BAD MAY HAPPEN SOONER OR LATER.

IT'S A LEGAL THING.

BUT OUR SYSTEM OF CHECKS AND BALANCES CAN'T BE DISREGARDED! THAT'S WHY ALL SUCH DECISIONS MUST BE APPROVED BY AN INFORMED HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIAL!

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WHOEVER THEY ARE!

WELL--SINCE THE LEGAL MEMOS ON TARGETED KILLING REMAIN CLASSIFIED--THAT'S IT FOR NOW!

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HEH HEH! JUST A LITTLE DRONE HUMOR THERE!

CLASS DIS-MISSED!

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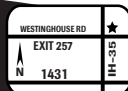
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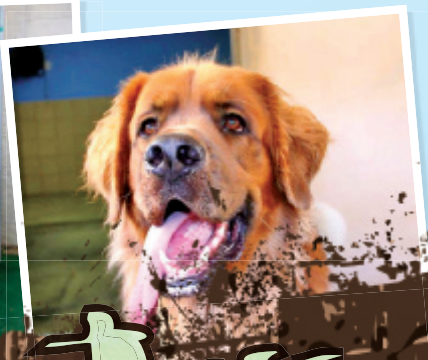
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STRAVA



JOHN ANDERSON

Gun rights supporters turned out last month for Gun Appreciation Day at the Capitol.

Headlines

- > Federal District Judge **Lee Yeakel** on Tuesday denied an attempt to unseal internal police department documents related to the May 2011 police killing of **Byron Carter**, ruling that the documents should remain confidential unless a civil rights suit filed in the aftermath of the shooting death goes to trial in July.
- > At its Tuesday work session, **City Council** agreed to spend a \$14.3 million 2013 budget surplus on a range of needs, including \$10 million for **affordable housing**. See "Council: Valentine's Day Expenses," p.22.
- > Today's (Thursday) headline item is a controversial proposal to create an independent board to manage **Austin Energy**. With the backing of at least four Council members, a resolution to kick-start the process is expected to move forward today, but not without plenty of resistance from environmental and consumer activists. See "Then There's This," p.16.
- > The special court of inquiry convened to investigate prosecutorial misconduct in the **Michael Morton** case concluded Friday, Feb. 8, with the judge expected to rule later this spring. The inquiry considered allegations that former Williamson County District Attorney **Ken Anderson** withheld evidence from Morton's defense in his trial for the murder of his wife; he spent 25 years in prison before DNA evidence cleared him.
- > A funeral procession for former **Navy SEAL Chris Kyle** made its way from North Texas to Austin on Tuesday for burial services at the state cemetery in East Austin; Kyle was killed at a **shooting range** south of Fort Worth.
- > **KLBJ's Barbara McCarley** died Wednesday after a car crash on RM 2222. Station director Todd Jeffries mourned her loss on his Facebook page, saying he and his co-workers were "heart broken." She leaves behind a husband and two kids.

Doing What We Can

Public Safety Commission takes a stand against gun violence

As I've noted here before, thus far the most substantive outcome of the current gun control debate has been a tremendous increase in gun sales. ("Shoot First ... Think Later," Jan. 25.) In the world of conspiracy theorists, nefarious gun-control forces are engaged in a plot to "seize Americans' guns." The actual evidence seems to suggest a quite successful plan by gun manufacturers to boost their profits.

I hadn't expected to return to this subject so soon, since the only local initiative, by the Travis County Commissioners Court, was apparently short-lived. But last week, the city's public safety commissioners took it upon themselves to get the ball rolling again, with a memorandum to City Council that recommends concrete steps to regulate local gun sales and illegal possession of firearms.

The memo makes five recommendations:

- Ban the leasing of city facilities for gun shows, or require that all show sales be subject to purchaser background checks;

- Restrict gun possession (except with a license) at certain public events;
- Collect information about the sources of guns used in crimes;
- Disinvest from manufacturers of assault-type weapons;
- Pursue the feasibility of gun "buyback" programs.



The resolution's sponsor, attorney and former prosecutor Kent Anschutz, describes it as frankly "working around the margins" allowed by state law. He noted that state law forbids the possession of "brass knuckles, machine guns, switchblades, even tire-deflation devices," while allowing possession of semiautomatic assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. The memo urges the Council to "utilize all powers [with state limits] granted to a municipality" to restrict the carrying of firearms.

Closing Loopholes

Anschutz told me that, like many others, he had been motivated by the Newtown

shootings and his frustration "with the inability or unwillingness of state or federal politicians to do anything." If it were possible, he said, "military-style assault weapons and high-capacity magazines" should be banned altogether. He considers these proposals "better than nothing - but [they still don't] get to the assault weapon issue at all." The strongest recommendation is to close the "gun-show loophole" - either all vendors must conduct background checks (already required of federally licensed dealers), or else public facilities (e.g., the Expo Center) should not be leased to gun shows.

Anschutz had sharp words for Attorney General Greg Abbott's lawsuit threat against Travis County commissioners for even considering action on gun shows. "Greg Abbott is a disgrace to the office of the attorney general, the purported chief law enforcement officer of the state of Texas," he said. "Instead of looking for ways to

continued on p.16

QUOTE of the WEEK



"The American people don't expect government to solve every problem. ... But they do expect us to put the nation's interests before party."

- President Barack Obama, in his State of the Union address Tuesday night

POINT AUSTIN *continued from p.15*

reduce gun violence, he's threatening local communities that are seeking ways to do so." Anschutz hopes the county will revisit the issue when the current lease contract (to Saxet Gun Shows) runs out. "Let's say al Qaeda or the Pornography Association of the U.S., or the Nazi Party wants to rent our facilities – is Greg Abbott going to say we have to rent to them?"

Building Momentum

Another recommendation is that the city disinvest in any companies that manufacture assault-type weapons (except for use by law enforcement). Anschutz's co-sponsor, Ramey Ko, acknowledged that the locally available tools are limited, but said they could help lead to something bigger. The PSC action, he said, adds "our weight to the collective weight of the public. We have limited power and limited jurisdiction, but we can at least speak to this as part of our responsibility. ... Federal and state law limit us, but this is how we can act. You're not going to see federal action until you see a lot of local actions."

At the PSC meeting, Ko proposed the amendment that would gather information on the sources of weapons used in gun crimes; one of the results of gun-lobbying at the federal level is that even research into gun violence has been restricted. "The biggest problem," said Ko, "is that there just isn't any data to back up the arguments on either side," though small studies suggest a sizable percentage of guns used in crimes were purchased without background checks.

Neither man is under any illusion that these small local efforts can have substantial effect unless they spread and receive reinforcement at the state (quite unlikely) and federal level (a slightly better chance, with the recent Obama push). "What's so puzzling to me," said Anschutz, "is why the law-abiding gun-owner thinks that to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and the mentally ill somehow threatens them." He dismissed the absolutist interpretation of the Second Amendment as both misguided and historically inaccurate. "If you believe in the strict interpretation of the Second Amendment," he said, "then I support your right all day to own a single-shot flintlock rifle and pistol. ... You can't have it both ways: a literal interpretation of the amendment but the right to own guns that didn't even exist at the time."

The next steps are up to the elected officials; presumably the recommendations could land on a Council agenda soon, as – in the spirit of President Obama's State of the Union – they "deserve a vote." "Our actions will not prevent every senseless act of violence in this country," acknowledged the president. "But we were never sent here to be perfect. We were sent here to make what difference we can."

The public safety commissioners should be applauded for their willingness to make a difference on gun violence. They've set a good example for the rest of us. ■

The full Public Safety Commission memorandum is posted with this column online. Follow @PointAustin on Twitter.

Who Should Control Austin Energy?

A FAST-TRACKED PROPOSAL POSES RADICAL CHANGES FOR CITY-OWNED UTILITY

For the second time in a couple of weeks, an attempt to "professionalize" a key function of city government is facing stiff resistance from skeptics who believe such efforts place business interests ahead of the public's interest.

Late last month, a City Council proposal to allow registered lobbyists to help rewrite the **Land Development Code** cratered in the face of loud opposition. This week, however, a Council majority appears to be in place to pass a resolution that would activate a rather radical process of transferring control of the city-owned **Austin Energy** to an independent board of trustees.

The seven-member board would include the mayor, and trustees would be paid for their work (the amount could be decided today). The proposal – Item 46 on today's agenda – is led by Mayor **Lee Leffingwell**, with co-sponsors **Sheryl Cole** and **Bill Spelman**. The proposal follows Sen. **Kirk Watson's** Feb. 6 filing of Senate Bill 410, which would exempt the Council from following the City Charter by putting the governance question to the voters.

Mike Martinez is said to be on board with the governance switch. **Chris Riley's** vote is less certain, although he did seem satisfied with assurances from Leffingwell and Spelman that the new board would be subject to the Texas **Open Meetings Act**, and that Council would have the final word on big-ticket items such as electric rates and major capital projects. **Kathie Tovo** and **Laura Morrison**, on the other hand, each voiced objections to the resolution and raised a number of detailed questions that couldn't be readily answered. Tovo advocated instead for the creation of a Council subcommittee, which would include

at least one member to represent the interests of ratepayers from outside the city. That's the proposal put forward by Public Citizen's **Tom "Smitty" Smith** and others.

Karen Hadden, vice chair of the city's **Electric Utility Commission**, which recommended the governance change, says she voted for the measure in the belief that the idea of a Council subcommittee that includes outside ratepayers would get more serious consideration. Speaking personally, she said she opposes the resolution because it allows "corporate headhunters" to stack the board with industry-friendly reps who aren't keen on green energy or affordability programs to assist low-income ratepayers.

Watson's bill and the Council resolution are designed, the argument goes, to ward off persistent legislative attempts to deregulate the billion-dollar-plus municipal utility. In a statement from Watson's office Wednesday, the former mayor sought to temper fears that the governance change would close the door on accountability and Austin's community values. "Over more than 15 years of public service in Austin, I have worked to prevent legislative actions that undermine Austin's ability to steer its future," he said, noting last session's unsuccessful effort to dismantle AE. "That bill," he said, "would have moved Austin into the state's volatile deregulated market, potentially harming ratepayers across the region and endangering not just Austin Energy but also the role it plays in the economy. We were able to block that bill, but the legislative threats facing our utility have not gone away."

The Legislature is not the city's only headache. AE is currently under fire at the **Texas Public Utility Commission** as officials there

consider an appeal of last year's rate increase. That challenge, filed by suburban ratepayers outside the city, gained new ground last week with the merciless findings of a forensic accountant representing the PUC's consumer advocacy arm. In sum, the outside accountant recommended a \$91 million decrease from AE's current rates – an amount that would cripple the city's operations. The rate case goes to a hearing in March, with a final decision expected in June.

WHAT'S IN THE RESOLUTION?

The proposal before Council today is not altogether bad; it carries some **long overdue reforms** that would establish an independent rate hearing process with input from a **consumer advocate**. Also, a "professional search firm" would tap potential nominees, with the final picks left to a Council subcommittee. The new board would assume control of the utility by the end of this year. Trustees would serve up to three four-year terms, and any bad apples among them can't be removed without a 75% super-majority vote of Council.

The person charged with getting the ball rolling on this changeover – City Manager **Marc Ott** – has strongly advised against a governance shift. In a six-page memo to Council last December, he outlined several logistical challenges the move would create, including budget oversight, environmental compliance, and the overall costs of implementing the restructuring. In short, it would add another layer of bureaucracy, at a steep price. Notwithstanding Ott's objections, the resolution directs him and the legal staff to fashion an ordinance, or at least a transition plan, and report back to Council in 30 days.

Most assuredly, this grand governance plan, concocted more out of fear than out of necessity, doesn't immediately inspire confidence that Austin would be any better off under an "independent" board with no accountability to the utility's owners. (That would be us.) ■



CIVICS 101

FRIDAY 15

THE ASSAULT ON HUMAN RIGHTS conference has workshops on marriage equality, immigration rights, workers' rights, mass incarceration, and gender-based discrimination. 7:30pm. St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 14311 Wells Port Dr. \$10 suggested donation. www.staopen.org.

SATURDAY 16

10-1 COMMISSION The League of Women Voters of Austin shows you how to apply to serve on the Redistricting Commission that will divide the city into single-member districts. 1:30-3pm. South Austin Rec Center, 1100 Cumberland. lwaustin.org.

THE ASSAULT ON HUMAN RIGHTS (See Friday.)

TUESDAY 19

VOLUNTEER DEPUTY REGISTRAR TRAINING Help register voters for the May 11 election; attend a one-hour training session. Feb. 19-22. Travis Co. Tax Office, 5501 Airport, 854-9473. www.traviscountytax.org.

WEDNESDAY 20

10-1 COMMISSION See Saturday. 5-8pm. Austin Firefighters Assoc., 7537 Cameron. lwaustin.org.

AISD COMMUNITY MEETING Discuss academic programming for career and technical education, and a future South Austin high school. 6:30pm. LBJ High, 7309 Lazy Creek. www.austinisd.org.

SIERRA CLUB FUNDRAISER Celebrate 2013, the Year of Food Waste Prevention and Recovery, with a screening of the documentary *Dive! Living Off America's Waste*, plus local beer and wine. 7-9pm. *In.gredients*, 2610 Manor Rd. \$10. www.meetup.com/Austin-Sierra-Club-Outings.

MT. BONNELL LANDSCAPE MEETING PARD wants the community's input on proposed landscape improvements at Mt. Bonnell. 6:30-7:30pm. Mayfield Park, 3505 W. 35th. reynaldo.hernandez@austintexas.gov.

THURSDAY 21

UT ENERGY FORUM Policy wonks and energy enthusiasts discuss energy from a cross-disciplinary perspective. Scott Tinker keynotes. 7:30am-7pm. Texas Union, UT campus, 24th & Guadalupe. \$150 (\$85 academic/government; \$50 student). www.utenergyforum.com.

TEXAS OBSERVER'S RABBLE ROUSER features entertainment from Rosie & the Ramblers and keynote addresses from Sen. Wendy Davis and state Rep. Mary Gonzalez. For more from Gonzalez, see "Not Your Average Freshman," p.20. 6-9pm. White Horse, 500 Comal. www.texasobserver.org.

POLITICS OF THE U.S.-EGYPT ALLIANCE Jason Brownlee, associate professor of government and Middle Eastern studies at UT, discusses his book, *Democracy Prevention: The Politics of the U.S.-Egyptian Alliance*. 7pm. MonkeyWrench Books, 110 E. North Loop.

UPCOMING

SAVE TEXAS SCHOOLS Join Diane Ravitch, former TEA Commissioner Robert Scott, and Houston's Kashmere High marching band to stand up for kids and schools. Say no to brutal budget cuts, a broken testing system, and looming school vouchers. Say yes to a quality education for all kids! Sat., Feb. 23. www.savetxschools.org.

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The Pain of Change at the Springs

It's hardly a secret that making changes to **Barton Springs Pool** is no easy task. For context – repairs to the culvert and dam that are currently under way took more than four years to get a stamp of approval from the Austin City Council. And they were considered an emergency.

Cosmetic changes, like those suggested in the ongoing master plan process, have been revised again and again at the city and have, at times, brought out the worst in each side. Last week, at the **Environmental Board**, the discussion had barely begun before “bringing in security” was mentioned by the chair (an act which, thankfully, didn't need to happen.)

Each phase of the plan has been the staging ground for a separate battle. The most recent: a thwarted south gate redesign. The most legendary: the scrapping of the extremely ill-advised plan to raze 30 trees in 2009. And, perhaps, with that attempt in the rearview mirror, every aspect seems larger than its actual size, no conspiracy too outlandish, no facet above suspicion.

It might be considered a triumph, then, that after more than four years, there are only two major sticking points with the current incarnation of the plan. Designs for the north side, which sees the most traffic, are currently without controversy.

The biggest remaining beef is with an ADA-compliant path and overlook to a south side historical monument. It would enable Austinites with disabilities access to the south slope for the first time. At a meeting held at the pool, those with disabilities were assisted out to the monument for the first time. Those in attendance describe the moment as “emotional,” and many, including Environmental Board member **Mary Ann Neely**, see the creation of the path as simply “the right thing to do.”

Opponents argue that the path defies the master plan, which calls for the south slope to remain as natural and unchanged as possible. They worry about the changes a path could bring to the south hill, which is frequently described as “spiritual.”

David Wittie with **ADAPT of Texas** told the *Chronicle* that his group had compromised over many south slope details in the past. He explained that they had agreed to move ramps and backed away from intruding into the depths of the south lawn – where people had expressed concerns that a path would interfere with yoga practiced in the area. However, they were unwilling to forsake access to the south hill and monument entirely.

Critics are also wary of plans for the south parking lot, which will expand the current 80 gravel spaces to 125 paved spaces – doubling its area and increasing impervious cover in a move that **Bill Bunch** of the **Save Our Springs Alliance** has called a dangerous precedent for development.



Barton Springs Pool's south slope

JOHN ANDERSON

Engineers on the project assure stakeholders that the switch will benefit water quality by reducing the silty runoff that currently plagues the lot. They say the current lot is dusty and badly engineered so that it funnels dirty runoff during storms. The new lot will control storm runoff, using grading to disperse water, and use a vegetative filter to treat water before it hits the springs.

Some people remain incredulous. The Environmental Board demanded more information about the lot, among other things, and will reconsider the project at their next meeting Feb. 20. **Dean Rindy**, who sits on the **Waterfront Planning Advisory Board**, endorsed the plan with the rest of his cohorts, but not without an ominous proclamation:

“I'm going to vote for the parking lot on the basis of being assured that it will actually do more to control pollution and runoff than the existing caliche pit,” said Rindy. “I have been on city boards before and have been told things before that were not true. I'm sure that the staff is telling me things tonight that are absolutely true – to the best of your knowledge – but I want to be absolutely clear ... that's why I am voting on the increased parking.”

Right now, City Council is slated to weigh in on March 7 if everything, improbably, proceeds on schedule from this point forward.

If you find this fills your heart with a sadness that this signals an end to conversation over Barton Springs Pool, fear not. Not only are renovations for the bathhouse on the horizon – on Tuesday, the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board successfully roused a discussion about whether Austin ought not to limit the number of people allowed in Barton Springs – staff said that discussion had started earlier that very morning, prompting nervous laughter from those at the meeting.

– Elizabeth Pagano

Hanging TEA Fire at Eastside High

After years of feeling alienated by AISD, **Eastside Memorial High School** community members are praising the administration for seeking genuine input about the future of their school. But Texas Education Commissioner **Michael Williams** has set a clock ticking that puts pressure on that process.

On Saturday, Feb. 9, educators and stakeholders met at Eastside Memorial to discuss options for the campus, now that trustees have reversed their plan to turn the entire vertical team into an in-district charter under **IDEA Public Schools**. Both **PRIDE of the Eastside** spokesman **Vincent Tovar** and **Education Austin** President **Ken Zarifis** praised AISD for the roundtable event: That's a big step forward, since both have regularly criticized the district for a top-down approach to community outreach. However, their enthusiasm may be muted by Williams' statements that, since the AISD board voted to cancel the IDEA contract, he expects them to deliver a replacement plan for Eastside before the end of the 2012-13 academic year in June.

The state's reconstitution plan for the embattled campus gives the **Texas Education Agency** the authority to close or take over the campus if state administrators are dissatisfied with the district's plans. Community members and educators came away from their meeting with one point of consensus: that they need more time to develop and endorse an effective and successful proposal. Any imposed plan could result in the same kind of backlash the district saw when they first signed up IDEA, and they have asked AISD Superintendent **Meria Carstarphen** to relay this to the commissioner. However, at the Feb. 11 board meeting, members said they were concerned about asking for a formal written statement from Williams, since that could limit their options.

Even though he has no background in public school policy, former Railroad Commissioner Williams has been aggressive in implementing TEA policy. Since his appointment by Gov. **Rick Perry** in August 2012, he has already instructed that the failing **North Forest ISD** be annexed by Houston ISD, and he replaced the elected **El Paso ISD** trustees with an appointed board in the wake of a testing scandal. On Feb. 10, Williams told KXAN that it was premature to gauge what the district will present for Eastside, but that he would expect something that would perform at least as well as IDEA. However, since the Legislature is reviewing the entire school accountability system – and there have been no state ratings for Eastside since it was reintegrated in 2011 – Eastside's supporters hope Williams will give them the time to create a community-developed project.

– Richard Whittaker

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Not Your Average Freshman

The dominant image of the 83rd Legislature's freshman class is that of the white male Tea Party rep armed with a budget-slashing agenda to keep chiseling away at women's access to health care, "reforming" education, and making campaign hay out of a bevy of other social issues. El Paso state Rep. **Mary Gonzalez**, on the other hand, is not your garden-variety House newcomer. Only the second openly gay rep to serve in the Legislature (former Austin Rep. **Glen Maxey** was the first), she describes herself as "pansexual" – no doubt mystifying her conservative colleagues in the House. No stranger to the Capitol, or to the Austin area, she served as an aide to Laredo Rep. **Richard Raymond** and former longtime El Paso Rep. **Paul Moreno**. Most recently, she was a visiting instructor at **Southwestern University** in Georgetown, and she's currently working on her doctoral degree in curriculum and instruction at UT-Austin. We spoke with Gonzalez on a wide range of topics during the recent Leadership Institute at Texas State University in San Marcos. Here's an excerpt from that interview, which appears in full at austinchronicle.com.

□

Austin Chronicle: Education seems to be very important, not only in your personal life, but in your platform. What are some of the other big issues facing your district?

Mary Gonzalez: Education will be a primary focus, but there are over 250 *colonias* in my district – unincorporated communities that usually have a high immigrant or high Latino population. A lot of these communities still don't have roads or water or sewer. ... Providing basic infrastructure is something that I really am passionate about, want to really work on, and make sure we address.

AC: How involved do you plan to be in some of the LGBT initiatives?

MG: Obviously, I've been very open about my identity – not only because I want to be

transparent, but also because I want to be considered a leader for the community. ... I'm joint-authoring a bill with Rep. **[Rafael] Anchia** [D-Dallas] regarding adoption and how to make sure that same-sex parents who adopt children are able to be part of birth certificates. Also, LGBT youth struggle to feel accepted in schools. ... At this point, we don't yet have anything like that filed on our legislative agenda, but it's something that we are looking into.

AC: What were some of the biggest issues you faced during your campaign, and how did you overcome these challenges?

MG: There were a lot of questions regarding a lot of my identities: my gender, my sexuality, my age. At the time when I was campaigning, I was 28; I'm 29 now. ... I quit my job to campaign, so just the fact that I didn't necessarily have a "profession" when I was running. All these identities played a central role to my race, because I live on the margins of so many different identities. ...

AC: You had experience at the Capitol prior to your campaign. What have you learned on the campaign trail and in the first few weeks of office?

MG: Sometimes my chief of staff has to remind me that I'm no longer a staffer – that I've actually won the election. My prior experience at the Capitol provided me with the ability to hit the ground running. After only being in office 18 days, officially, we held our first **town hall meeting**, and we were able to present to our community a strong legislative agenda, as well as non-legislative initiatives we're working on. ... So in 20 days, I actually have a full legislative agenda, non-legislative initiatives, and a strong communication effort to my district to help them understand what's going on. If I hadn't previously worked at the Capitol, I would still be looking for committee rooms. ... I think what I had already felt as a staffer is definitely more magnified as a legislator.



Mary Gonzalez

GONZALEZ CAMPAIGN WEBSITE

For example ... there are very few other women staffers. I was a female intern in a male-dominated space, and I always struggled with the idea of sexism at the Capitol. And now to be the female legislator ... those differences have only been magnified.

AC: Do you have any anecdotes about feeling dismissed because of your age or your gender or identity?

MG: When I meet state reps – there are 150 of us, there's a lot of us, it's hard to keep us all straight – sometimes they'll meet me, and they'll say, "Oh, you're *Mary Gonzalez*," and then there's a pause. "*The one from El Paso*." And you know they're thinking, "The one who has the ambiguous sexual identity that I don't understand." ... I'm glad to be bringing some awareness. ... We haven't really talked about third-gender identity or the gender spectrum in the public political sphere. All of the ways in which we have talked about gender or sex in politics is very binary. So at least my presence allows for a conversation to potentially open up what we think about gender, to lead that conversation, to kind of disrupt people's world view regarding gender.

AC: How and why did you become involved with politics?

MG: I came to Austin to better understand politics. But if you would have told me a year ago that I would be running for office or sitting in the Capitol, I would have told you, "No way!" This was never part of my plan in life.

AC: From your perspective, when's Texas going to turn blue?

MG: Obviously, if I had my say, it's 2014 – sooner rather than later. I'm excited about Texas turning blue soon. ... I think we have some great shining stars coming up in the trenches: [Fort Worth Sen.] **Wendy Davis** is absolutely amazing; [Austin Sen. **Kirk Watson**], of course, has always played a big role politically statewide; obviously **Joaquin and Julián [Castro]**. Joaquin is a good friend of mine, and I can't wait until he runs for U.S. Senate. I think when all of our stars start to come up, we'll see a lot of changes. I think no later than 2018.

– Jordan Gass-Pooré and Kate X Messer

Rep. Mary Gonzalez will join Sen. Wendy Davis as keynote speakers at The Texas Observer's annual Rabble Rouser fundraiser, Thursday, Feb. 21, 6-9pm, at The White Horse, 500 Comal St.

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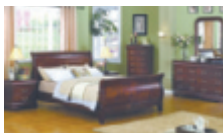
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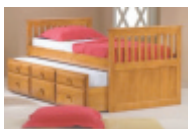
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NEWS

Council: Valentine's Day Expenses

At 83 items, Thursday's **City Council** meeting (Feb. 14) doesn't appear particularly daunting, but there may be a few depth charges lurking in the underbrush. Some of the explosives were gingerly handled at Tuesday's work session, where Council attempted to divvy up **\$14.3 million** in unexpected midyear "surplus" funds over the 2012-13 fiscal year budget; some things hadn't cost as much as budgeted, and sales tax receipts had been higher than initially estimated. It took several hours to work out how that money might be spent; the big bite – \$10 million – ended up dedicated to **affordable housing**, although it was not immediately clear if all that amount will all be spent. Staff indicated that of the handful of projects in development (seven are listed on Thursday's agenda), two projects costing \$4.6 million were most likely to garner state (tax credit) matching funds. After much discussion, with Council Members **Kathie Tovo** and **Laura Morrison** pressing hardest for the money to go to housing, the motion passed 4-3, with Mayor **Lee Leffingwell**, Mayor Pro Tem **Sheryl Cole**, and CM **Bill Spelman** voting no.

That meant that Cole's initial proposal to earmark \$4 million for "**property tax relief**" was no longer on the table, although Morrison and others suggested that the staff estimates on this year's anticipated revenues

are too low, and that there would be more wiggle room in the upcoming budget year. Leffingwell argued that even if that proves true, Council should rely on the funds they actually have before them; CM **Mike Martinez** suggested that it might make more sense to consider next year's tax relief under next year's budget. In the end, spending won out over saving.

Also on the lengthy list of potential expenditures were such items as more Police Department **forensic chemists** and more staff for **Planning and Development Review** – both departments are backed up, the former badly enough that district judges are officially complaining. Those both received additional funds, as did a handful of smaller projects ranging from **Head Start** support to Fire Department **wild-fire mitigation**.

Thursday's agenda also lists (again) the third reading on the proposed **Little Woodrow's Bar & Restaurant** for North Burnet Road, which has been holding at 4-3 in favor. Officially, that public hearing is closed, but the neighborhood associations are still simmering, and the outcome remains in doubt.



Council dedicated \$10 million to affordable housing.

All of this may be a sideshow to **Austin Energy** matters, as Item 46 (Leffingwell, Spelman, Cole) would direct the city manager to draft an ordinance to change AE governance (currently directly under Council) to an independent board of trustees – a proposal vehemently opposed in some circles. (See "Then There's This," p.16.) By coincidence, the morning briefing is AE's quarterly report – which occurs under the cloud of the pending rate case at the state **Public Utility Commission**, where the utility is already getting raked over the coals for spending too much money on non-utility city priorities. Expect to hear plenty more on that subject down the line.

– Michael King

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THERE GOES THE SURPLUS On Feb. 11, the House Appropriations Committee voted unanimously to send House Bill 10, the *supplemental* appropriations bill, to the floor. What's that? Why, that's all the spending that lawmakers knew was coming when they passed the current state budget in 2011 but decided to punt into the current session. That includes \$3.4 billion for the Health and Human Services Commission for **Medicaid** and the **Children's Health Program**, \$1 billion for the **Department of Aging and Disability Services**, plus a deferred payment of \$630 million for the **Permanent School Fund**. Remember, this is not new money: Instead, it repays schools and health care providers for what they already spent and decreases the state's estimated general revenue unexpended reserve from \$8.8 billion to \$4 billion.

LESSON LEARNED Rep. **Trey Martinez-Fischer**, D-San Antonio, almost forced the House GOP's hand on school finance with an early vote. On Feb. 11, he tried to bring House Resolution 408 to the floor; that would allow the House to take up a school finance bill before the 60th day of the session (under the Texas Constitution, that's the first day such matters can be heard on the floor). Speaker **Joe Straus** derailed it on a procedural issue, and Republicans breathed a sigh of relief. They are trying to hold off on any school finance reform until the anticipated appeal of Judge **John Dietz's** ruling that the current system violates the Texas Constitution (ideally, they'd like to hold off until after primary season).

THE ROMANCE IS OVER Tea Party darling Sen. **Donna Campbell**, R-New Braunfels, is learning the painful lesson that you can never be far right enough for the far right. On Jan. 12, she took to Facebook to explain – in a waffling, roundabout way – that she did not support calls for Texas to secede from the Union. She wrote, "I believe we can and should honor our Constitution as both Americans and Texans." Cue comments from fringers outraged that she is not backing the **Texas Nationalist Movement's** call for a secession referendum.



NO EVOLUTION AT THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Barbara Cargill, Gov. Rick Perry's appointed SBOE chair, faced tough questioning from the Senate Nominations Committee Feb. 11, as her creationist stance came under the microscope. In 2007, the Senate rejected the nomination of her predecessor, **Don McLeroy**, because of his opposition to the teaching of evolution. When Perry selected Cargill as his replacement, there was some hope she would run the board with more deference to academic expertise than dogma. But questions have been raised since about her anti-science stances, including her proclivity to rank her fellow SBOE members on how Christian they are, and hiring conservatives to write the curriculum. Senators will vote on her confirmation next week.

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Jovita's Trial Begins

To hear the feds tell it, **Jose Pardo** and **Jorge Carrillo** were key to a vast heroin-trafficking enterprise operating for years out of **Jovita's** Tex-Mex restaurant in South Austin. Defense attorneys counter that the feds lack any definitive proof that either man was involved at all. A jury seated this week will be tasked with deciding which story is true.

Pardo and Carrillo are among 15 individuals who last summer were charged federally with being part of a conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute large quantities of heroin, the result of a yearlong joint investigation called **Operation Muerte Negra**, or Black Death. Jose Pardo is the older brother of recently deceased **Amado "Mayo" Pardo**, 64, the Jovita's patriarch who the feds allege was the kingpin of an extensive heroin-trafficking operation.

Although Amado died last month, he was a clear focus during the first two days of testimony, wherein he was described as a criminal ringleader. Assistant U.S. Attorneys **Daniel Guess** and **Elizabeth Cottingham** read aloud for jurors transcripts of various phone conversations between members of the alleged drug ring – including conversations where Amado Pardo arranged for dealers to score more product, asked his wife to come show him where on their Milton Street property she'd hidden the drugs, and talked with Carrillo about dropping by with a "piñata" and "candy" – references that Department of Public Safety investigator Dwayne Urbanovsky said were not literal.

Notably absent in the first two days of testimony was any substantial mention of Jose Pardo or of any direct evidence implicating Carrillo. According to defense attorneys Rip Collins and Stephen Orr (representing Carrillo and Pardo, respectively) the feds have very little at all to connect their clients to the alleged heroin ring. In the case of Carrillo, who allegedly supplied the heroin to Amado Pardo, Collins told jurors that the feds never caught Carrillo with any heroin. When he was arrested, Carrillo gave law enforcement permission to search his home in **Caldwell County**; no drugs were found there either, though agents did find roughly \$22,000 in a plastic bag.

The money is easily – and legally – explained, Collins said: Carrillo is into quarter



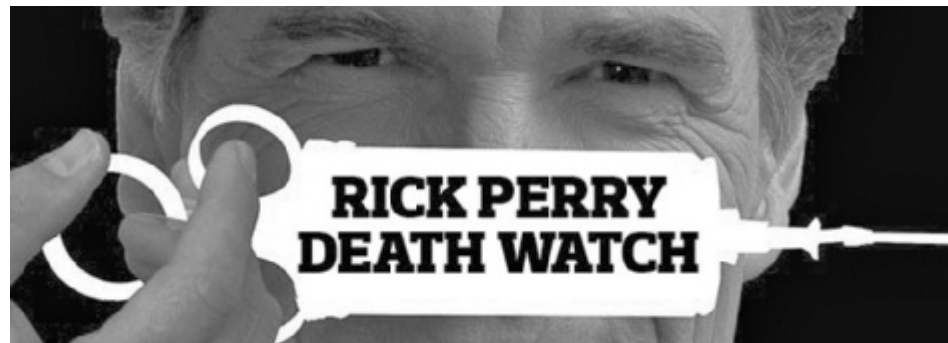
Amado "Mayo" Pardo, now deceased, was the clear focus of the first two days of testimony.

horse training, not heroin dealing. (Of course that doesn't necessarily clear him either; recall the federal indictments handed down last summer charging members of the Los Zetas drug cartel with laundering drug money via American Quarter Horse racing.) As for Jose Pardo, Orr told jurors that when law enforcement searched his home, they did find heroin and related paraphernalia, but that doesn't mean that he was part of the alleged criminal enterprise. Back in July, when Orr was trying to get Pardo out on bond, he said that Jose had recently detoxed from heroin use.

Nonetheless, Guess appeared confident that the government would be able to prove its case. In addition to several hundred transcribed, wiretapped phone calls, Guess said prosecutors would call to testify other members of the conspiracy who have pleaded guilty to their crimes and who will describe their roles in the drug gang, as well as the roles of Pardo and Carrillo. The government is "going to show you how a heroin-trafficking organization really works," he said.

Testimony in the trial is ongoing. Follow along on [Newsdesk](#) for the full reports from court.

– Jordan Smith



Man Who Functions at Third-Grade Level Sentenced to Die

On Aug. 19, 1994, **Carl Blue** stood outside the College Station apartment of his former girlfriend, **Carmen Richards-Sanders**, holding a cup of gasoline. When she opened the door to leave for work, Blue tossed the liquid onto her, flicked his lighter, and set her afire. When **Lawrence Williams**, who was also in the apartment, tried to come to her aid, Blue allegedly doused and set him ablaze too. Williams survived, but Richards-Sanders died in the hospital two and a half weeks later. Blue was convicted of the crime and sentenced to die.

Unless his final appeals are successful, Blue will be the first person executed in Texas in 2013 when he is taken to the death chamber on Feb. 21. He would be the 493rd inmate sent to death in Texas since reinstatement of the death penalty, and the 253rd to die under the watch of Gov. **Rick Perry**.

Blue was first convicted in 1995, but his death sentence was overturned by an appeals court, which ruled that a state witness improperly testified that because Blue is black he is more likely to be dangerous in the future. Although Blue was given a new sentencing hearing and again sentenced to die in 2001, questions still remain about whether his punishment fit the crime. At issue now is whether the court-appointed attorney who represented him in that retrial was ineffective, in part for failing to present evidence related to Blue's troubled background and mental impairments. To wit: Blue was born prematurely to a 13-year-old mother in a severely impoverished family; at birth he weighed less than 3 pounds. Because he

was born at home in a two-room shack shared by 22 people, the family could not afford to take him to the doctor; they warmed him in an oven for a week before taking him to the emergency room. He remained there in an incubator for two months, but even then weighed only 5 pounds, according to an appeal filed Jan. 22 in Brazos County by his current lawyer, **Michael Charlton**. Blue's premature birth and seriously low birth weight make it more likely that he would suffer from hypoxic brain injury. Furthermore, Blue only functions at the level of a third-grader – he can barely read or write – and was bullied and abused as a child. Yet none of these issues were raised – mitigating factors that Charlton argues might have persuaded jurors to spare his life.

Moreover, Charlton argues that an ineffective assistance of counsel claim was never before raised because the same attorney, **John Wright**, represented Blue both at trial and on appeal. "Clearly ... Mr. Wright had a conflict of interest that materially and adversely affected the representation of Mr. Blue," Charlton wrote.

Whether the court will grant a stay in order to consider whether Wright was ineffective remains to be seen. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled last year that the failure to raise an ineffective assistance claim in an initial appeal does not necessarily preclude a later appellate review. If the Brazos County court rejects the appeal, it will be up to the Supremes to decide whether to stay Blue's date with death.

– Jordan Smith

THE HIGHTOWER REPORT BY JIM HIGHTOWER

WHO'S FEEDING THE BUSH PUPPY?

Guess what? George Bush is back!

Not "Poppy" Bush, as **George H.W.** was known. Nor the George known simply as **"W."** Rather, farther down the family tree, a brand new Bush is trying to use his powerful family name and connections to sprout a career in the rich soil of right-wing Texas politics. Meet **George P. Bush** – already dubbed "Puppy."

Son of former Florida governor **Jeb**, this 36-year-old has been a corporate lawyer and a private equity hustler, and he's presently in energy investments. But lately, George P. has been working the family Rolodex for his fledgling effort to grab the statewide office of **land commissioner**.

He has already sacked up about \$1.4 million – a wad of start-up cash that would have been impossible to get if his name was George P. Bust. Practically all of this bankroll came from family (including \$50,000 from Uncle Dubya) or from special interest donors long tied to the Bush political network, including donations of \$10,000 to \$65,000 each from seven Texas oil operators and assorted far-right-wing billionaires.

Among his billionaire backers are Bob Perry, a Houston-based housing developer, and Harold Simmons, a Dallas-based waste-disposal baron. Both dumped tens of millions of

dollars into the GOP's ferociously negative attack ads against Barack Obama last year. Also, both are infamous pay-to-play corporatists who like to buy into up-and-coming politicians

who can be trusted to deliver governmental favors to them over the long haul. So it's not for nothing that they are the two biggest donors nourishing young Bush's run for this little-known Texas office.

George P. has the pure Bush pedigree and is already on the corporate leash. One watchdog group tracing the money interests feeding and training this pup is Texans for Public Justice. Find them at www.tpj.org.

For more information on Jim Hightower's work – and to subscribe to his award-winning monthly newsletter, "The Hightower Lowdown" – visit www.jimhightower.com. Hear his radio commentaries on KOOP Radio 91.7FM, weekdays at 10:58am and 12:58pm.

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Where's Your Evidence?

Advances in forensic science have made physical evidence increasingly crucial in criminal justice – but the practice of preserving and maintaining that evidence is often underfunded, poorly managed, or just plain sloppy

BY JORDAN SMITH

For more than a decade, lawyers for death row inmate Hank Skinner fought prosecutors – in Gray County and the attorney general's office – for the right to DNA-test certain items of evidence. Skinner was convicted and sentenced to die for the 1993 murder of his girlfriend Twila Busby and her two grown sons in the home they shared in the Panhandle town of Pampa. The crime scene was bloody – Busby was bludgeoned, her sons repeatedly stabbed – and while some DNA tests have been performed, there was plenty of evidence that hadn't been tested, including a sweat- and blood-stained windbreaker. The jacket is crucial, attorney Rob Owen has argued; found next to Busby's body, the tan snap-front jacket resembled one regularly worn by Busby's now-deceased uncle Robert Donnell, who the defense claims was obsessed with Busby and may have been her real killer. In short, testing the jacket might help prove Skinner's innocence – or confirm his guilt.

On June 1, 2012, the state finally dropped its opposition to the testing. Just two weeks later, Owen was again frustrated when the AG's Office informed him that the windbreaker was missing. "According to the state, every other piece of evidence in this case has been preserved," he said at the time. "It is difficult to understand how the state has managed to maintain custody of items as small as fingernail clippings, while apparently losing something as large as a man's windbreaker."



A key piece of evidence that went missing in Hank Skinner's murder case.

GRAY COUNTY EVIDENCE PHOTO

No one seems to know when or how the jacket went missing. The Pampa Police Department, which investigated the murders, originally held all of the evidence related to the case. When the time came for Skinner to be tried, the evidence was handed over to Gray County. Some time after Skinner was tried, the jacket simply disappeared – and no one knows where it went, said Gary Noble, a 41-year veteran of the Pampa PD and custodian of its evidence and property storage. Over the years, he said, a number of law enforcement types have called looking for it – including officials with the AG's Office. "As far as I know of, no one's ever been able to find that thing," he said. Skinner remains on death row as DNA testing on other items of evidence continues.

Skinner's case is not unusual. Unfortunately, missing evidence is "way more common than you'd think," says evidence expert John Vasquez. Vasquez worked in property and evidence management for 25 years, first for the military and then for the Fort Worth and Wichita Falls PDs, before starting his own evidence-control consulting business. More often than not, the evidence hasn't actually been removed from a law enforcement storage facility – though scandals involving stolen evidence are unnervingly common, as officials with the Houston PD can readily affirm. Instead, says Vasquez, missing evidence is generally misplaced evidence – logged into one area of a storage facility and then moved without anyone noting the new location, or overlooked when a department's evidence-tracking system is upgraded.

While state laws firmly mandate the preservation and maintenance of evidence that may contain biological material, there is little consistency in how these laws are actually carried out, including wide disparities in how evidence is packaged and maintained.

That is, perhaps, the good news – though having something and not knowing where it is, or not being able to find it, is hardly less damaging than discovering that an item has been stolen or destroyed outright.

Indeed, an investigation by the *Chronicle* into the state of criminal evidence storage and retention in Texas reflects that while state laws firmly mandate the preservation and maintenance of evidence that may contain biological material, there is little consistency in how these laws are actually carried out, including wide disparities in how evi-



An evidence room in disarray. Officials asked that it not be identified.

dence is packaged and maintained. Legislation enacted in 2011 extended by decades the length of time that items of evidence that may contain DNA must be stored, and directed a group of stakeholders to come up with guidelines and best practices for the handling and storage of that evidence. However, many law enforcement officials see the legislation as merely a good first step, and moreover, an unfunded mandate.

Property and evidence technicians and managers are often poorly paid and receive very little training, if any, on how to do their jobs, says Vasquez. That's a combination that can quickly lead to scandal for a police department working within a criminal justice system that increasingly relies on science to make evidence meaningful.

As forensic science evolves and DNA testing becomes more precise, the amount of material being collected has also increased, thrusting the maintenance of evidence – once considered the "red-headed stepchild of law enforcement," says Vasquez – into the legal spotlight, and expanding the need

the guilty, but also in freeing the innocent – the system is in serious trouble, officials warn. "Evidence has been one of the biggest issues we're dealing with in law enforcement," says Tony Widner, chief of the Graham PD, a small department south of Wichita Falls. "You're not just talking about the credibility of the department; you're talking about a victim seeing justice."

Everything ... and the Kitchen Sink

In legislation alone, Texas is actually "one of the leading states" when it comes to property and evidence-related procedures, says Vasquez, former president of the Texas Association of Property and Evidence Inventory Technicians, which advocates for training for evidence technicians. "Texas is pretty much at the forefront." Gayla Robison, who serves as TAPEIT secretary and oversees property and evidence for the Bursleson PD, agrees; it's far worse in Arkansas or New Mexico, she says, where there are few evidence laws. Yet law enforcement agencies are tasked with keeping safe enormous quantities of material evidence.

Across Texas, municipal police departments and sheriff's offices are the primary repositories for all kinds of items – from a bloody shirt collected by detectives in a murder investigation to marijuana grow-lights, plants, and cash seized in a narcotics raid; from a wallet found on the sidewalk to the personal belongings of county jail inmates; from vials of blood extracted from drunken driving suspects to sexual assault examination kits collected from alleged rape victims. Each item must be maintained in the same condition as it is brought in until the law says it can be disposed of. Texas statutes cover it all: when and how to destroy drug evidence, what procedures need to be followed before abandoned property can be auctioned off, how long materials that may contain biological evidence must be kept.

for skilled inventory management. "We are somewhat overrun by stuff," says Belton Police Chief Gene Ellis, a representative of the Texas Police Chiefs Association who was among a group of stakeholders involved last year in the creation of best practices for evidence preservation in Texas. DNA testing "has enhanced so that we're able to process things and come up with DNA evidence where we couldn't before."

Without sufficient understanding of the critical role that the proper preservation of evidence now plays – not only in convicting

Texas has one of the nation's strongest laws covering the retention of evidence that might contain biological material. In 2011, after a number of DNA exonerations, lawmakers expanded the definition of "biological material" to include any item that contains blood, semen, hair, saliva, skin tissue, fingernail scrapings, bone, bodily fluids, or "any other identifiable biological material" that may exonerate or incriminate a person suspected of a crime. Lawmakers further required that evidence in all unsolved felony cases be retained for at least 40 years, or kept until an inmate is executed, dies, completes the adjudicated sentence, is released on parole, or completes probation. The law requires all parties to receive notice of any planned destruction, and that process can be halted by the defendant, prosecutor, defense attorney, or court.

To address the added costs, lawmakers designated the Texas Department of Public Safety the depository for all biological evidence for counties with populations under 100,000. But that was all they did to ease significant operational and financial burdens that now fall on the more than 2,000 law enforcement agencies across the state, including roughly 800 local police departments. More evidence will have to be saved for far longer periods of time – in part because the law doesn't limit the retention of biological materials to those collected in connection with violent felonies, but rather requires keeping material collected in every felony case.

The new law "creates opportunities to solve many cases," notes Belton Police Chief Ellis, but it also raises questions. For example, should a letter that likely has a person's DNA on it be kept as evidence in connection with a felony fraud case? he asks. "If you follow the letter of the law, you're going to need to retain that."

Lawmakers and law enforcers are trying to anticipate scientific developments and guarantee that evidence will be around for coming advances – as with the extraction of so-called "touch DNA." That, says Vasquez, is a fancy name for the shedding of skin cells onto objects merely touched or picked up – like a salt shaker on a table. DNA remains on nearly every item a person comes into contact with, and DNA scientists are steadily perfecting the ability to extract individual DNA profiles from a pool of donors – perhaps being able to isolate the DNA of one person from among many who have touched a restaurant salt shaker over the course of a day. When that evidence is readily accepted by courts, the realm of potential evidence will increase exponentially. "[T]his philosophy has never changed: When a detective gets on a crime scene, [he] has to think like [a] suspect," Vasquez explained during a meeting with Robison, Mansfield PD evidence manager Vincent Hunter, and the *Chronicle*. "What has changed is thinking about it in a way of his touching something. Is there

continued on p.28

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Photography by ArtGives.org Left to right: Jeff Prutzman, Ray Mata, Troy Wise, Yvonne Robles, Robert Cordova, James Southers, Jeff Prutzman

evidence there? We always taught officers, 'Bring us everything and the kitchen sink, and we'll go from there.' Robison laughed wryly; she's had an officer bring in a kitchen sink, she said. So has Hunter. "They are literally bringing in kitchen sinks," Vasquez said.

Generously, only 7% of what is brought in as evidence is actually used in court, but all of the items collected by police are regulated by retention laws, so the cost to individual departments adds up. The Austin Police Department, for example, maintains a roughly 62,000-square-foot evidence warehouse (purchased and outfitted for roughly \$3.2 million, says APD's evidence manager James Gibbens) where it stores an estimated 600,000 items, with approximately 60,000 items brought to the unit each year, at an annual cost of about \$1.1 million.

Disorder Is the Norm

State lawmakers have done much to beef up evidence retention requirements – but they've done very little to ensure that the laws are followed with any consistency. For example, they haven't provided financial assistance to train evidence technicians or to provide for proper long-term storage. The 2011 law also directed a group of stakeholders to develop best practices for collection, retention, and retrieval of evidence, but they remain suggestions, and without financial incentive it is difficult to ensure those practices are followed. The sizes and budgets of law enforcement agencies vary wildly across the state: APD has a vast warehouse, tightly maintained and managed, but that's not the norm. According to Vasquez, the norm for most agencies is, at best, disorder.

And then there's the really bad: He's seen chemicals seized from a meth lab stored in cardboard stacked atop other boxes of evidence and leaking a corrosive brew; he's seen a human skull stored without packaging or any identifying information; he's seen a grenade, stored in a glass jar and kept in a locker easily accessible to county jail inmates; and he's seen boxes of evidence quite literally pitched into a closet, without regard to how the agency might later locate any individual items.

Lawmakers have so far failed to pass legislation that TAPEIT has spent a decade advocating: one code for all the laws governing evidence destruction. Currently, those laws are spread throughout different government codes. "How do you know what to do with found property, if you don't know to look in the [Code of Criminal Procedure] chapter on 'Search Warrants'?" Vasquez asks. If the state won't consolidate evidence and property laws into one place, won't require training or certification for evidence technicians, and won't provide a pool of money to help law enforcement agencies comply with best practices, serious problems – lost or stolen property, or the untimely and improper destruction of evidence – remain quite likely. If the state wants to standardize procedures, that's great, Vasquez, Robison,



Austin Police evidence manager, James Gibbens

The Austin Police Department maintains a roughly 62,000-square-foot evidence warehouse, where it stores an estimated 600,000 items, with approximately 60,000 items brought to the unit each year, at an annual cost of about \$1.1 million.

and Hunter agree, but they each insisted that to get it right, "you need to train the end users."

That's not happening, not only in Texas, but across the country, says Joseph Latta, a retired 31-year veteran of the Burbank, Calif., PD who serves as executive director of the International Association for Property and Evidence. There's "no consistency, anywhere you look," he says. This isn't particularly surprising, he notes, since police officers are, by and large, in charge of evidence: "In the police department, we chase bad guys; we don't take care of stuff," he says. "It doesn't matter whether you're in Houston or Corpus Christi, Albuquerque or L.A. We may end up with the stuff, but we don't know how to take care of it."

Open any number of evidence rooms across the country and "you just want to cry," says Rebecca Brown, a policy advocate at the Innocence Project who was among the stakeholders tapped to develop Texas' new best practices and who, along with Latta, has been part of a U.S. Department of Justice-funded group working on a set of national standards. "Evidence rooms have often been ... I wouldn't say forgotten, but not [a] resource-heavy" focus for law enforcement, she says. Texas "does have good statutes," she says, "but the question is how [they're] being translated" into practice.

Unfortunately, says Latta, there is often little focus on implementation unless and until a department faces scandal – which, he notes, happens almost daily somewhere in the U.S. "It's unfortunate," he says, "but [the evidence room] doesn't get to [be] the top [priority] without a problem."

Remember Goliad

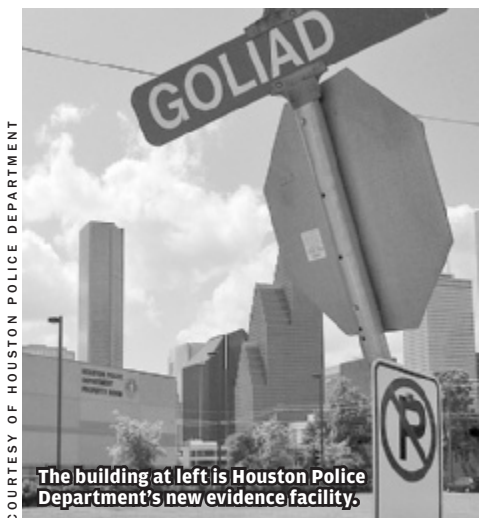
That was certainly the case in Houston, where years of neglect and mismanagement routinely put the HPD's evidence operation in the headlines. No one understands this better than HPD Capt. Charlie Vazquez, who oversees the 44 people in the department's property division. On average, the HPD takes in 65,000 items per year and stores nearly 400,000 at any given time – not including narcotics evidence, which is kept at a separate facility. "We made mistakes so bad they actually made a movie out of us," Vazquez says. Indeed, that 1981 made-for-TV movie (*The Killing of Randy Webster*) starred Hal Holbrook as the father of 17-year-old Randy Webster, killed in 1977 by a Houston cop who said the teen threatened him with a gun. As it turned out, the gun found next to Webster's body had been taken into evidence by the HPD in the Sixties and had long been recorded as destroyed; the weapon had instead been taken from evidence and was ultimately used as a throwdown in the Webster shooting.

Yet it wasn't until 2007, after HPD acknowledged that some 30 firearms had been stolen from evidence over the course of six months and likely returned to the streets, that officials made the move to upgrade the department's evidence operations. Security at the decrepit facility, used continuously since 1902, says Vazquez, was lax at best; two years and some \$14 million later, HPD moved its operations into a state-of-the-art warehouse facility. In 2011, Vazquez was tapped to take over the division, and he has earnestly vowed that the department will not repeat the mistakes of the past – a point he has impressed upon HPD command staff. "When I was put over

here, I was trying to point out ... just how important this operation is. I went through all of the [scandals] – the missing weapons, missing DNA," and then, he said, he offered up a lesson in Texas history. Remember the massacre at Goliad? he asked the HPD brass. In that case, Mexican President Santa Anna ordered the execution of more than 300 captured Texas soldiers; the slaughter horrified the country, and just a month later, during the decisive Battle of San Jacinto, after which Texas gained independence from Mexico, troops rallied with battle cries that included "Remember Goliad!" Vazquez paused and looked at the command staff: "I said, 'We need to remember Goliad as well,'" he said, putting up a photo of 1103 Goliad Street in Houston, the site of the department's century-old evidence facility. "Just like people came from Ohio, Tennessee, and New York [to fight at San Jacinto], I need people – [command staff], homicide, patrol – to fight for property," he told his colleagues. "Otherwise you're back to where you were."

And, frankly, going backward in a time of fast technological advancement is not an option, Vazquez says. Every item of evidence must be carefully considered and painstakingly tracked. "Instead of just being a fork, now it's a fork with possible DNA on it," he says, meaning it may have to be retained for decades – as well-preserved and easily retrieved in 30 years as it is the day it's brought in. With this level of heightened scrutiny comes the need for more thorough and carefully implemented policies; other than a jail, notes Belton's Chief Ellis, a department's evidence operation is the "largest liability in an organization."

That is indeed the case, says Ed Harris, APD's chief of field support operations. Harris remembers well the day he first toured the department's evidence storage facilities more than a decade ago. There were guns dumped in rubber trash cans in the basement of the department's Downtown headquarters, and evidence was locked inside a simple metal cage erected in a corner of the HQ's outdoor garage. "Oh my God, what have I gotten myself into?" he recalls thinking after the tour. "We had stuff everywhere. We were just like a lot of agencies." For years he fought to get the



The building at left is Houston Police Department's new evidence facility.

situation cleaned up, and, in 2010, the department finally moved its operation into its new facility. There are secured vaults for guns and money and drugs, two commercial refrigeration units for all manner of biological material, and aisles and aisles of blue plastic tubs and white bankers' boxes branded with bar codes that help to track the evidence stored inside. Applicants for Austin evidence jobs are vetted as rigorously as police cadets; it slows down the process but ensures integrity, says manager Gibbens. "I fought like hell to get where we are," Harris says. "I knew it was a ticking time bomb, and we had to take care of it before it went off."

Hillsboro Police Chief Tony Cain understands that intimately. Some eight years ago, Cain's property manager stole money from evidence; she said she intended to pay it back before anyone knew it was gone. She was fired. And Cain's "heart was broken, not only from the criminal side of it, but also that this person who we really trusted would steal from us," says the 18-year veteran. The incident made Cain realize that he needed tighter security and better training for employees handling evidence. "Probably most departments our size don't put the same resources towards this, but we know the importance of it," he says. And whenever the opportunity presents itself, he lets other Texas chiefs know exactly how high the stakes are. "What makes it so important is that it's the glue that binds us with the community. It's about trust," he says. "You do a good job of catching the crook, but because of the system it sometimes takes [a long time] to get adjudicated." Evidence is what makes that happen, he says. "The evidence part is not the fun part; the fun part is arresting people. But the evidence is about following rules and getting the community to trust us to get them justice. If we don't do the dirty work, justice can't be done."

Regulating a Hodgepodge

For Cornelius Dupree, it took more than 30 years for justice to open his Texas prison cell. In 1980, Dupree was sentenced to 75 years in prison for a rape and robbery he did not commit. It wasn't until 2011 that he was finally exonerated - precisely because Dallas County had maintained for more than three decades the evidence that would set him free. Indeed, with 24 DNA exonerations since 2001, Dallas County has freed the most wrongfully incarcerated men in the state that leads the nation in exonerations. But exactly why Dallas saved all that evidence, decades before there were any legal requirements to do so, is something of a mystery. Certainly, in that regard Dallas is a state, and perhaps a national, standout: nowhere else in the state does there exist such a comprehensive library of evidence. And District Attorney Craig Watkins has been widely applauded as a prosecutor unafraid to use that evidence to uncover past mistakes. But even Watkins isn't entirely sure how or why he's been fortunate enough to have the evidence in order

continued on p.30

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to set right so many wrongs. "I don't believe that when Dallas stored this evidence they thought of DNA advancing to this level, but for whatever reason, we stored it and science has caught up," he says. Watkins suspects that the motive for keeping the evidence wasn't so that the county would be able to review its own work for error, but so that it could "protect the conviction."

Of course, evidence does both – and that's the point, he says. "We're responsible for some of the most important acts forced upon human beings – the taking of freedom or, in the worst cases in Texas, the taking of life." And being sure evidence is protected is key to fostering certainty within the criminal justice system, he says. "When the determination is made [that] there may be mistakes in the process, we don't want to destroy our ability at some future date to right that process." Watkins says the story of Dallas' exonerations should serve as a cautionary tale for the rest of the state – and that his county's experiences demonstrate the need for mandatory, standardized evidence-handling policies throughout the state. "I think that's critical. You go from one county to the next, and you have different policies," he says, and there's "no excuse" at this point not to ensure compliance by all law enforcement agencies. "Dallas is positioned to redefine prosecution because we have the old evidence and we [are] able to advocate – and we will – for statewide standards" and policies, not only for storage, but also for training for employees tasked with ensuring evidence is properly retained and easily retrieved.

That is music to Gregg County Commissioner Darryl Primo's ears; in his county – as in many others – there are no written policies about who handles evidence, or where or how it should be stored. An 18-year official in the Northeast Texas county that includes the city of Longview, Primo has become passionate about the problems of evidence storage and retention, an interest

prompted by the growing number of exonerations in Dallas County. The more he read about it, the more he wondered whether his own county would be able to put its hands on key evidence if the need arose to revisit a prosecution. He decided to find out; he made calls across the county, to the D.A., to the sheriff, to the district clerk. Did anyone have a policy in place regarding the storage and retention of evidence? No, he was told. Well, then who was responsible for keeping evidence in criminal cases, he wondered. The county had evidence stored in any number of locations – "a locker at the sheriff's office, in a closet" for some items, he says; biological evidence, he learned, was being stored in a small dorm fridge kept by the district clerk. The materials were stored next to Cokes and candy bars, and the refrigerator was accessible to all employees. Primo was stunned. "It was a little old dorm fridge in her office," he recalls. "A defense lawyer would disqualify that evidence in a heartbeat." The clerk has since moved evidence to a locked refrigerator – but only after Primo made a stink about the situa-



Ector County didn't save a phone and cigarette butts tied to a 1981 murder case.

ECTOR COUNTY EVIDENCE PHOTO

counties keep ... evidence. That's the law legislators have passed ... but who is to keep it or how it is to be kept is a hodgepodge." Responses to an informal questionnaire emailed to Texas sheriffs and to the state's district and county clerks by the *Chronicle* confirmed wide disparities in the way evidence is handled and stored. Many clerks said they did not have any policies governing the storage of criminal evidence, and many said those duties are handled by someone else in the county. While many sheriffs responded that they do refrigerate biological evidence, for example, many also responded that they do not segregate drugs from other stored evidence. Primo believes strongly that the state must step in and require that policies be written and standards be followed. Funding the enterprise can be accomplished with an extra fee on court filings, he suggests. "Nobody foresaw this coming," he says of the DNA revolution. "We can't undo what we did in the past, but we can take steps now to ensure this stuff is protected from now on for someone 20 years down the road."

"It's the law in the state of Texas that counties keep ... evidence. That's the law legislators have passed ... but who is to keep it or how it is to be kept is a hodgepodge!"
 – Gregg County Commissioner Darryl Primo

tion to a local newspaper. "She had no idea that if the evidence gets contaminated that it is not admissible in court," he says, that she was "sealing the fate of anyone who might need that evidence."

Primo has been pushing local officials – including judges, the sheriff, and the D.A. – to take seriously the need to develop stringent policies about how evidence will be handled and who will be responsible. So far he hasn't had much success, he says. The county's "never had an incident" that

would warrant that, he says he's been told. In July 2012, he penned a letter to the county's five criminal court judges, again suggesting that the county "adopt a written policy to govern" storage and preservation of criminal case evidence. To date he hasn't gotten a single response. "I was very surprised," he says. "You would think they'd care."

Primo doesn't think his county's experience is unique. "We're all over the map," he says. "It's the law in the state of Texas that

Setting Things Right

The crime scene inside room 126 of the Sand and Sage motel in Odessa revealed the aftermath of the violent and bloody death of Father Patrick Ryan, a well-liked Catholic priest stationed in the tiny Panchhandle town of Denver City. Two years after the 1981 murder, James Harry Reyos, who was friendly with Ryan and says he'd had a sexual encounter with the priest days before he was murdered, was sentenced to 38 years in prison for Ryan's killing. Reyos is adamant that he is innocent, and virtually everyone who knows the case well agrees. Importantly, Reyos had a solid alibi for the time of the murder that included a speeding ticket issued to him in New Mexico, hundreds of miles from the scene of the crime. Unfortunately, Reyos, an alcoholic who has

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expressed deep shame over his homosexuality – and the unexpected sexual encounter he had with Ryan – later told law enforcement officials while in a drunken stupor that he was “responsible” for the crime. That was considered a confession and was apparently enough for jurors to ignore other concrete details that point to Reyos’ innocence. Reyos has long tried to clear his name and has had champions along the way – notably both from law enforcement and from famed and now-deceased *Dallas Morning News* investigative reporter Howard Swindle – thus far without success.

Had the crime happened in Dallas County instead of Ector County, there is good reason to believe that the quest to clear Reyos would already have been successful. Ryan was found inside the motel room naked and badly beaten, his hands bound tightly with a white sock. There was blood spatter and bloody fingerprints throughout the motel room, open beer cans on a dresser, and discarded cigarette butts littering the floor – all of it evidence that today might be subjected to DNA testing that could definitively reveal the identity of his killer. Unfortunately, none of that evidence still exists; Ector County discarded it long ago, officials there told us in 2005. (See “Who Killed Father Ryan?” June 17, 2005.)

Of course, it is hard to know exactly how many people may be serving sentences for crimes they did not commit – and that worries Primo, as he struggles to get his county to enact policies that might prevent that outcome. “The issue becomes, how many other cases could have, or would have, been resolved in a more just manner if the evidence had been retained?” he wonders. To think that the state could be preventing miscarriages of justice but simply isn’t because of a lack of will or even a minimal amount of funding for training and preservation, disturbs Primo. “To a person sitting in a jail cell who knows they’re innocent who wants testing, to find out that the county hasn’t cared about that evidence ... that’s really sad.”

Indeed, UT law professor Bill Allison knows well the power of long-held evidence; he represented Michael Morton back in 1986 after Morton was accused – falsely – of murdering his wife Christine at their home in Williamson County, a crime for which Morton spent nearly 25 years behind bars before finally being exonerated in 2012, thanks to DNA testing of evidence that had until recently been ignored by the state. “We ought to be looking five to 10 years down the road,” toward scientific advancements and should be working toward them, he says. “We ought to know what’s coming.” Dallas D.A. Watkins agrees. “Out of an abundance of caution,” he says, Texas needs to act now to ensure compliance with evidence laws and to mandate proper training for all in law enforcement who handle evidence. “Science will progress, and science allows us not only to find mistakes that were made in the past and to make them right, but also to go forward to ensure that we don’t repeat these mistakes in the future.”

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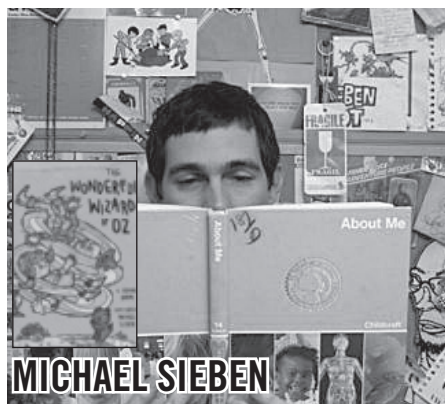
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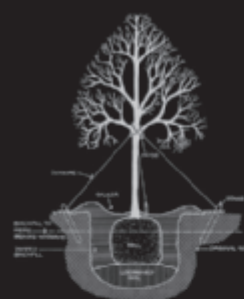
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THE ARTS

Mozart Was an Austinite

THE SPIRIT OF INNOVATION THAT DROVE THE COMPOSER LIVES ON IN OUR CITY

The music had the feel of a bad dream, where things are out of place; they don't fit. You know, you're in your house, but it looks nothing like your house. The notes toss and turn, edging too close to one another and making unsettling chords – ominous, foreboding. Before it was played by the Aeolus String Quartet, Austin Chamber Music Center Artistic Director Michelle Schumann had alerted the crowd that the work wouldn't sound terribly discordant to ears a century past the cacophonies of Stravinsky and Schoenberg – indeed, today's standard-issue B-movie thriller comes with more jangling disharmonies than this Classical-era chamber work. But if you could recalibrate your aural sensibilities to 1785, you could tell why music dealers of the day accused the publisher of printing wrong notes in the opening, why a Hungarian nobleman ripped up the sheet music after hearing it played, why the piece was instantly nicknamed “Dissonance.” The music sounded jarringly off. Off and new.

Here was the 29-year-old musical firebrand of Vienna, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, giving Austria's powdered wigs another good shake, showering them with sounds they hadn't heard before. That aspect of the composer is easily forgotten at a 200-year remove from the man. Mozart is now the object of so much cultural reverence – really, when's the last time you heard him described without the word “genius” attached? – that his humanity and history are obscured. Schumann's tip-off about *String Quartet No. 19* at ACMC's Mozart's Birthday concert created enough of an opening in Mozart's honor-encrusted rep to let us hear his experimental streak, his drive not only to write the most exquisitely beautiful music in his power, but also to push musical forms in new directions. The disquieting tension that Mozart establishes in that brief dissonant opening – two minutes out of almost half an hour – has no real precedence in the string quartets of

Joseph Haydn, the master and innovator of the form to whom Mozart dedicated this string quartet and five others. It's a bold gamble on Mozart's part, and it pays off when the music breaks into a sunnier mood, magnifying joy the way that waking out of a nightmare does – the world as it should be looks that much better after seeing it in some distorted, unfamiliar form. Its shadow lingers, though, much as the memory of a bad dream does, adding poignance and perhaps purpose in the moments when the four instruments come together in striking unity, with a potent consonance. Mozart has taken a masterfully developed form and enriched it, deepened it in revolutionary ways.

I carried that understanding of Mozart into Austin Lyric Opera's ebullient production of *The Marriage of Figaro* a week later. As Maestro Richard Buckley burst into the overture at a gallop, I tried to attune my ears to the times in which the composer was writing, to hear the change that Wolfgang – now all of 30 – was making in opera. It really hit me as Figaro, his fiancée, and the countess hatch a plot to catch the amorous count in a phony tryst, and a comic set-piece involving the page hiding from the count in his wife's closet is set in motion. A duet between count and countess becomes a trio with Susanna,

Figaro's intended. Then Figaro enters, transforming it into a quartet, which is interrupted by the gardener, building it into a quintet. And so it goes for some 20 minutes, growing to sextet and septet – a spectacular expansion of the scene, voice by voice, continually flowing and growing, like a river being fed by tributary after tributary. And it isn't merely the structure and its scale that are radical; it's what happens *within* that structure: the sustained tension among the characters and constantly shifting emotions they express throughout a complex series of revelations and reversals. What could have been conventional *opera buffa* is transmuted by Mozart into a comedy of full-blooded human beings.

In the week between these two events, Golden Hornet Project sponsored a screening of the Milos Forman film *Amadeus* to raise funds for its *Mozart's Requiem Undead* project. The film, which is – let's all say it together – fiction and not history, nonetheless is valuable for giving us a Mozart of a specific age and time, a figure as full and human as one of his *Figaro* characters. We get to see him as a working artist, driven to create and innovate. Considering what GHP is doing with Mozart right now – “finishing” his unfinished *Requiem* by commissioning a dozen different composers to create a new version of one of the work's

movements – you can see a direct connection between their work and his. GHP co-founders Graham Reynolds and Peter Stopschinski are always making new music and perpetually playing with form and structure to try to make the new *newer*. Whether it's in the score – Reynolds deconstructing and reconstructing Bach for Ballet Austin, Stopschinski and playwright Kirk Lynn partnering on an opera about Houston Oilers coach Bum Phillips – or the format – the Final Four-styled, audience-vote composition competition *String Quartet Smackdown* – these artists are innovating. And that's true of so many in Austin's creative community: musicians, actors, directors, game designers, filmmakers, poets, visual artists, choreographers, novelists, and so on. We live in a city that attracts and supports the original and the new. I'm not saying that we necessarily have a Mozart living among us, but our artists are part of the trailblazing tradition that he belonged to, and as someone who was striving to break new ground the way our artists are, he was one of us. We're not exactly Vienna, but I think that Mozart was an Austinite. ■



Robert Jackson Bennett



America, With Tentacles

SPECULATIVE FICTION WRITER ROBERT JACKSON BENNETT TRAVELS BACK TO THE FUTURE

by Amy Gentry

Robert Jackson Bennett's writing professor at the University of Texas gave him just one piece of advice: “Don't try to write a novel right out.”

Luckily, Bennett ignored him. Six years, four published novels, and two book awards later, he has no reason to regret it. With a dark, philosophical sensibility and prose that has grown crisper and more even with every book, the Austin-based novelist has quietly acquired a reputation as a powerhouse of inventive speculative fiction that defies categorization, a trend he continues with his latest, *American Elsewhere* (Orbit).

Borrowing from every genre and fitting comfortably in none, Bennett's books combine elements of horror, sci-fi, and fantasy against backdrops often inspired by

America's haunted past. In his award-winning debut, *Mr. Shivers*, hobos hunt a supernatural serial killer across the Depression-era Dust Bowl; *The Company Man*, which won the Edgar Award for Best Paperback Original last year, sets a noirish sci-fi thriller in an alternate version of the 1920s. Bennett's third novel, *The Troupe*, which features travelling vaudevillians with a mysterious mission, topped *Publishers Weekly's* fantasy picks of 2012.

American Elsewhere evokes yet another bygone American era: the dawn of the atomic age, something Bennett says he's been “hooked on” since he was in college. “What's kind of weird is that this is a book that couches the idea of the ‘bright new future’ firmly in the past,” Bennett says. In the book, ex-cop Mona Bright arrives in the tiny town of

Wink, N.M., to claim a house left to her by a mother she barely knew. Built around a top-secret, Los Alamos-like research lab in the early Sixties, Wink resembles a Norman Rockwell painting by way of David Lynch: white picket fences, housewives in aprons and high heels, and an apple-pie perfect diner where everyone knows your name. Predictably, there is more to the squeaky-clean townfolk than meets the eye, but Bennett's flare for creatively mixing up genre conventions carries the story into unexpected territory. (Let's just say there are a lot of tentacles involved.)

The *Chronicle* spoke to Bennett recently about *American Elsewhere*, our nostalgia for the future, and whether his aliens have a mommy complex. To read the interview, go to austinchronicle.com/blogs/books. ■

Misery Loves Company

'Mortified' turns teenage writing into performance

BY ROBYN ROSS

In high school, I hid my diary in a dresser drawer. Two decades later, I squinted into the stage lights and read it aloud to 150 beer-swilling strangers.

I was performing in *Mortified*, the show where everyday people read embarrassing things they wrote before age 21. *Mortified* originated in Los Angeles with Dave Nadelberg, who in the late Nineties rediscovered an awkward adolescent love letter he'd written (and never sent) and started sharing it with friends. By 2002, he'd turned the impromptu readings into a live show with others reading their own past material. Today, *Mortified* is staged by local chapters in cities across the U.S., including Austin.

Anything that's unintentionally funny – journal entries, poetry, artwork, song lyrics, home movies – can make it into *Mortified*. For audiences, the show is both disturbing and cathartic. It becomes clear that your peers felt just as awkward as you did in high school, even though back then you felt completely alone. To paraphrase Tolstoy, happy adolescents are all alike; every angry teenager despairs in her own way.

Out of curiosity, I wanted to see what my diary would contribute to this conversation.

"Before the project," says local performer Roxy Castillo, "I would read through my journal and wonder, 'If people found this, what would they think?'"

"And then having to present it to a crowd of strangers was like, 'Oh, okay. That's what they think.'"

Mortified's not an open mic show. One Saturday morning, when the Austin producers were seeking new performers, I brought them my diary and read a few passages aloud. It would be the only time I've shared my work and actually hoped people would cringe.

Producers are careful to call these meetings screening sessions rather than auditions. "That's because it's not a talent tryout," Nadelberg says. "But the other reason is, we try to keep an environment where we don't want people to feel ashamed or weirded out. People often cry during our sessions. When you come face to face with the words that you wrote as a kid, it can be a big head trip for a lot of people."

One of them was Castillo, a comedian and burlesque performer who found *Mortified* to be more revealing than her usual shows.

"When I first heard about *Mortified*, I thought, 'I've totally got this; my journals were meant to be read aloud,'" she said. "But having [the producers] validate the pain and confusion I went through, and

having someone interpret it for me, was actually very therapeutic."

After the screening, I met Erica, my story producer, who would become a combination theatre director-therapist-detective-friend. We pored through my high school diaries, looking for writing that was unintentionally funny. We also had to find a theme. I would be playing a character who was my former self. Erica's job was to pinpoint her identity.

"Who were you in high school?" Erica asked. I skipped a grade and was the youngest kid in my class, I told her. "So were you considered a nerd?" By some, but I was also really school-spirity and on the drill team. Choosing my *Mortified* identity was unnerving. For the five minutes I'd be onstage, I'd be identified completely by a single dimension of my personality.

But the limited view is necessary for storytelling, Nadelberg says.

"Stories are windows into a house," he says. "That house is your life. You can look into as many as you want, and they're all accurate, but you only have a limited time onstage. It's about figuring out what window we should peek through."

Erica and I ultimately decided to present me as "the girl who wanted an awesome, all-American high school experience." My grades were good, and I was in a host of clubs. More importantly, I approached everything with incredible earnestness, framing routine events as milestones in an epic narrative.

Nov. 9, 1991: *I am awesome! Drill team is awesome! Marble Falls is awesome! We are awesome! We played Llano last night and beat them at district. It was the best night of my life.*

Castillo read from diaries she kept in eighth grade.

"I had a very strong sexual urge," she says of her 12-year-old self, "but I didn't do anything about it because I had so many insecurities. But on the Internet, I could go into AOL chat rooms, talk to guys, form relationships, and lie to them about being 16 and a model for Hot Topic, so I could validate all the sexual energy."

Castillo's story producer suggested the label "virginal slut," and she immediately agreed. "It was so nice to put a title to it," she says, "like when you're sick and then you get diagnosed with an illness."

Together, Erica and I chose excerpts from my diary, applying the mortification test: "The passages you don't want to read are the things we need to use." In most aspects of life, we edit out the embarrassing bits. Here, we were intentionally keeping them.



Roxy Castillo performs in *Mortified* while her eighth-grade self looks on.

As we created my script, Erica coached me on where to pause for laughs and how to amplify the earnestness of my delivery.

Oct. 8, 1994: *I'm so happy – we got a '1' at band contest. Once we got to Glen Rose, I was like, 'This is everything.' We did 'to the ready' and drill #1. I was going, 'This ... is everything.' I kept thinking, 'I'm going to miss my aerial, I'm going to drop it – no, I'm not! Then it was over and Mr. Davis said it was now between us, 3 guys in the press box, and God Almighty, and we already had 2 of those 3 on our side.*

Erica was scribbling notes. "That's good, but play it up," she said. "Don't be afraid to go a little over the top – that's who your character is. *This ... is everything.*"

My own words sounded ridiculous. It wasn't the first time they'd appeared in the diary. *Everything?* How could I have believed that a color guard routine was that important?

But the more I thought about it, the more I realized I still treated some experiences as "everything." Job interviews. Cocktail parties with Important People. I still obsessed about opportunities to prove myself, as though each one was my last chance.

It was liberating to realize how I was the same as that high school kid – and to decide consciously to change. Nadelberg had a similar experience with the letter that started *Mortified*. The letter – which he read during an Austin show last fall – introduced himself to a potential love interest and made the case that she should date him.

"The guy writing the letter is sincere, but he's trying a little too hard," Nadelberg says. "He's a bit of a salesman. Those are key elements that have driven my own triumphs and failures as an adult."

"Reading it allows me to be like, 'I'm not that guy anymore,' and it also allows me to be like the parts of me that are still that guy." By laughing – publicly – at ridiculous things we once did, we are simultaneously claiming and casting off our past selves.

Mortified turned 10 this year, a milestone for Nadelberg, 38. "I've spent the majority

of my adulthood surrounded by and immersed in other people's childhoods," he says. That unusual vocation has led him to encourage everyone to participate in what he calls the "Mortified process."

"Even if you have zero interest in performing," he says, "go home and dig up one thing from your past, especially if it embarrasses you today, and share it with somebody – your sibling, your best friend, your spouse – out loud. Have the person ask questions about the kid who created that artifact. Whatever neuroses and skill sets you have as an adult, you can trace a lot of those back to your childhood and these pieces of paper."

When my turn came to perform, I stepped up to the microphone with my heart pounding. This, I wisely realized, was not everything. "Hi, I'm Robyn, and when I was a teenager, I wanted the quintessential high school experience ..."

The passage that got the most laughs was where I compared myself, with no sense of irony, to a more famous diarist: *I finally borrowed Carl's letter jacket! I feel like Anne Frank, but I would like to describe what it feels like to wear it.*

My performance wasn't the edgiest or the funniest, but I'm glad it's part of *Mortified* history. I now have a go-to story to tell around the campfire or to my seatmate on long flights. Besides, once you've stood onstage and read your ninth-grade secrets to a tipsy crowd, not much can scare you.

The process helped Castillo finally look directly at the awkward past: "It's not just a show. At first it just seems like a funny concept, but at the end of the day the audience is connecting with you, and I think that's really important in an art form. To be able to share ourselves with each other – to be honest with each other about our human plight – that we're all just 12-year-old horn-dog insecure weirdos. And that's okay." ■

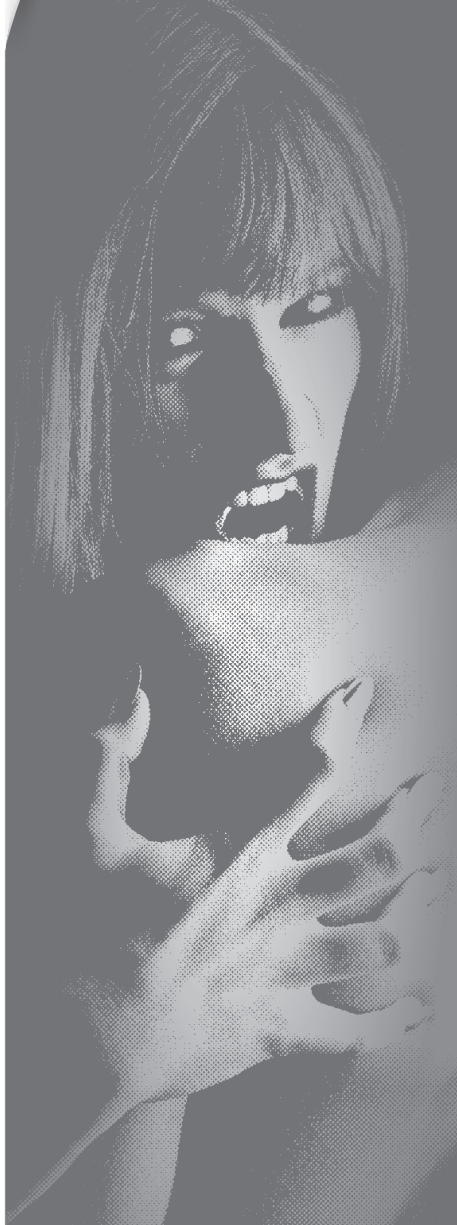
Mortified Austin: Doomed Valentines Show will be performed Friday and Saturday, Feb. 15-16, 8pm, at the Spider House Ballroom, 2908 Fruth. For more information, visit www.getmortified.com.

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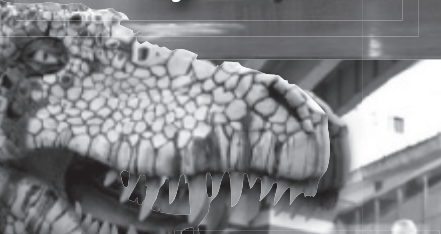
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IMAGES: Andy Coolquitt, Installation view of andy coolquitt: attainable excellence at The Jones Center, AMOA-Arthouse, 2012, Courtesy of the artist and Lisa Cooley, Photo by Ben Aqua.

Michael Menchaca, (detail) Dios De La Noche, 2011, Serigraphy: 15 x 20 inches, Courtesy of the artist.

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I know what you're thinking, and yes, you're right. This play is a few minutes shorter than *Titanic*. But trust me: *Design for Living* is taut, smart, and lively from curtain to curtain call. It's the second non-Shakespeare offering we've seen from Austin Shakespeare this season, but you won't hear me complaining; Artistic Director Ann Ciccolella seems to have hit her stride recently with more contemporary plays, like last year's *Arcadia*, which won an Austin Critics Table award for Outstanding Drama. *Design for Living* rises to that level of all-around excellence, thanks in no small measure to Ciccolella's keen direction and outstanding performances from Martin Burke, Helen Merino, and Michael Miller as the *ménage à trois* in question.

Sir Noël Coward's 1933 farce chronicles the tightly wound love triangle between Gilda (Merino) and the artists she loves: painter Otto (Miller) and playwright Leo (Burke). The trio fails miserably at operat-

ing under the day's standards for amour because, well, they all love each other, as Leo says, "far too much." Various combinations of infidelity and abandonment break up Gilda–Otto, then Gilda–Leo, then Otto–Leo, until they finally realize that tri-amory is their only way to happiness; "no one else's way is any good."

Burke, Merino, and Miller are a comedic dream team, wringing every last drop out of Coward's dry British humor. But they also soar through the play's surprising moments of poetry and sweeping emotion, as when Otto describes his impending affair with Gilda as "a flicker of ecstasy sandwiched between yesterday and tomorrow." Burke, in his first Austin Shakespeare production, again proves deserving of the title "Austin's favorite actor" – he consistently ratchets the onstage energy to an 11. Merino meets him there, oozing womanliness such that anyone who witnessed her Hamlet must see to believe, and Miller supports the trio as an unironic straight man, wielding some of the play's best lines. And we mustn't forget Michael Dalmon's hair-raising turn as the group's fourth wheel, Ernest, or Kathy Lagaza's humorous interludes as a self-righteous housekeeper.



COURTESY OF BRET BROOKSHIRE

Three's company: Helen Merino, Martin Burke, and Michael Miller

With Ciccolella's help, the production is not only cohesive and thoroughly entertaining, but its more serious themes – questions about the effect of success and whether life is a game to be played – also surface. Emilie Houssart's slowly unfolding deco set, Haydee Antunano's tidy period costumes, and dual intermission interludes of Coward songs from chanteuse Kara Bliss and pianist Jason Connor

bring us into Coward's early Thirties dandyism. Nonetheless, the play's content feels fresh, and its length is by no means prohibitive. Dalmon and Lagaza's characters impose their moral standards on the threesome in a way that smarts of our raging debate over gay marriage. As Otto bellows, "You're making a mistake in daring to disapprove of something that has nothing to do with you whatsoever." – *Jillian Owens*

'They Never Die They Just Go to Sleep One Day'

MASS Gallery, 507 Calles #108

www.massgallery.org

Through Feb. 23

"They Never Die They Just Go to Sleep One Day," showcasing Austin artist Scott Eastwood's latest series of illustrations and sculpture, is a study in mirrored imagery. Life and death are juxtaposed in a series of ink-on-paper drawings and culminate in a poignant installation that stands as the focal point for the exhibition.

Eastwood's pieces are large, and much of their strength comes from their size. His illustrations show complex images woven together: A bloody hand juts over a skateboard with a Lone Star can in the bottom right corner in *Big Wheel*, while the reverse image, *Negative Big Wheel*, maps out the original image's negative space in an intricate webbed fashion. The diptych *Big Eye on Big Apple* reflects both an eyeball and an apple juxtaposed against various ephemera, including natural elements and an inane clutter of materialism. Without the benefit of their size, these components would become lost amidst all the details. However, the illustrations are more engrossing in concept than in realization. While the nuanced minutiae are interesting to try and capture, it feels almost like a game of *Where's Waldo?* as you search through periphery doodles to undertake the entirety of the piece.

Eastwood's *Time Machine* is the most noteworthy component of the exhibition. Audiences are invited to peer into the darkness of *Forever Mountain* and are confronted with a rotating, glowing casket. *Time Machine* smoothly turns, flashing primary colors and emitting a low hum with its movement. The



installation contains no pomp that would indicate enriched significance for the mausoleum. The facade of *Forever Mountain* is a smattering of gray, black, and white paint on cardboard and wood that render it somewhat unremarkable on first glance. It's only when you look inside that you see *Time Machine*, beautifully constructed and eerily soothing in its repetitive movement. The installation offers a glimpse of memorials of the future. In all its current grandeur, it could easily become commonplace as a means of burial. It is in this conceptual reconciliation that Eastwood succeeds: for what we revere in the moment quickly becomes the norm.

Eastwood aspires to synchronize life and death but seems to be caught up in the details of both, instead of creating an overarching concept about the transition from one to the other. While *Time Machine* and *Forever Mountain* stand as remarkable renderings of this ideology, Eastwood's illustrations feel oversaturated. The exhibition as a whole was a risky endeavor, and it will be interesting to see if Eastwood's work is able to garner attention for its content outside of the enthusiasm for MASS Gallery's newly established brick-and-mortar. – *Caitlin Greenwood*

Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune

City Theatre, 3823-D Airport, 524-2870

www.frankieandjohnny.brownpapertickets.com

Running Time: 1 hr., 30 min.

One day a few years back while co-teaching an acting class, I remarked to some students rehearsing their scene that "it's not interesting to watch people do utilitarian things onstage." Although it was an off-the-cuff reaction to their acting choices in that moment and I haven't thought much about it since, I was reminded of this observation as I took in FrogDog Productions' debut production, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune* – except that this time, my reaction didn't regard matters of acting. The prolific Terrence McNally's play about two middle-agers finding one another and themselves in the course of an evening is well-cast, well-directed, and well-acted in FrogDog's rendition. It's just that the play itself is, well, pretty uneventful. And while everyday situations can turn intriguing when you're dealing with the wordplay of Will Eno, the heightened dramatic conceptualizations of Thornton Wilder, or even the slightest twist of Arthur Miller, this play doesn't boast any of those elements. There's just not much to grab onto – or that grabs you – in terms of the material itself.

This is a shame, because Summer Lyn Bryant and Benjamin Weaver (who play Frankie and Johnny – respectively, of course) are such great fits for their roles, and they portray them well. Ronnie Dobel Prior's direction is both practical and smart, doing its best to create dimension from the fairly flat script. The set (unattributed in the playbill) is one of the best I've seen on City Theatre's stage, and Lee Reid's sound and lighting round out production aspects nicely. Aside from McNally's script, in fact, the production marks a very fine debut for FrogDog, one with a warmly homespun feel. (Bryant addresses her producer's note to "Cast, Crew, and Mom.") It's evident that this play has been brought to the stage by people who are passionate about this new company, and their connectivity shows throughout the production in sincere ways. Certainly, it's a production that deserves to be seen by far more than the 18 people present on the night I attended.

It's not that I'm not a McNally fan – the book of *Ragtime*, for instance, is stunning, and shows like *The Full Monty* illustrate his ability to make a "typical" situation into an experience that's anything but mundane. McNally is often a great playwright, but, Frankie and Johnny, there's only so much time you can spend talking about a sandwich.

– *Adam Roberts*

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TASTERS' CHOICE

As it does annually, **Project Transitions** recently held its **Guess Who's Coming to Dinner** fundraiser, which features seemingly hundreds of chefs developing jaw-dropping and mouthwatering menus for exotically themed parties hosted at local residences. I did not attend this year, though I thoroughly enjoy the event every time I go. So it wasn't me making an appearance there, but my editor, **Kate X Messer**, and the comely and charming photographer **Devaki Knowles** at the Mambo Italiano dinner at the faaabulous **Gateway Guesthouse** in Travis Heights, owned by **Bess Giannakakis** and **Blaise Bahara**. Kate reported that the seven-course event was a "crazy orgy of culinary extravagance, pairing courses with selections from the book *Big Night* read aloud by guests as each new dish was delivered to the table." Her favorites were the timpano and the risotto. She ran into old friends, like **Cowgirls & Flowers** diva **Kathryn Miller** (who, along with her partner **Wendy Smith**, donated the evening's floral arrangements) and **Bud Twilley**, who appeared at last year's Guess Who event at the **Studio 54** dinner in a bad 'fro wig, dripping in polyester, and looking like his nose had been motorboated into too many powdered doughnuts. Well, I went to Studio 54 late in its heyday (waaay late), but that's a particular look that somehow never changes. This year's Guess Who wrapped, as it has traditionally, with a wild dessert and Champagne reception at swank furniture gallery **Nest**, on West Sixth. "Dapper and dandy Twenties-inspired fashion was peacocked by the gents," says Kate. Clearly I need to make an appearance again next year.



WEARABLE HISTORY

After a family trip to Paris, Austinite **Paul Bedell** grew frustrated that he couldn't find any mementos from the trip that were not just trinkets. So he purchased a section of the **Eiffel Tower's** original spiral staircase, which was removed in 1983 for safety reasons. He then left his 25-year career in the financial industry and is now incorporating pieces from that staircase into beautiful jewelry designs with his company, **Korbella Jewelry** (www.korbella.com). The limited-production collection is made with authentic pieces from the Eiffel Tower and reflect the famous latticework that the iconic landmark is famous for. Known as the **Eiffel Tower Forever** collection, the seven designs (five of which are limited-production and include real pieces of the Eiffel Tower), come in sterling silver, 18-carat gold vermeil, or solid 18-carat gold (by special order). See and own these beautiful pieces at Korbella's website.

BYTE ME

When my beloved **PowerBook** started having problems charging, I discovered a Mac repair place near me, **That Bytes! Computer Repair** (1204 W. Slaughter, www.thatbytesaustin.com). A simple charger/port problem snowballed into one thing after another, winding up with the machine having to be either completely rebuilt or trashed. I was mystified how it could all fall apart so quickly and called my personal computer pro (Miss **Jacki Oh**, of course), who sold me the laptop in the first place, and confirmed that these were indeed pre-existing problems. Apparently the tech, Lance, who trained under **Paul Mullen** of **PC Guru**, had diag-



Dapper dandies take on Project Transitions' Guess Who's Coming to Dinner Champagne & dessert reception at Nest.

nosed everything correctly and assessed my options succinctly. My laptop was trashed. But he broke it to me gently. Jacki came to my rescue with an extra MacBook, and Lance transferred all my data to the new hard drive. Astonishingly, he waived the fees for the previous repairs, only minimally charging me for all the work he had done plus the cost of the data transfer. I was a very unhappy camper who came out of the situation a dedicated customer due to the tech's honesty, integrity, and level-headedness. Good work, That Bytes!.

DEAR MARGARET

As with all the experiences in our lives that have bound us together for over half a century, we now share the bond of cancer. The profound sadness from knowing what you're going through makes my heart ache unbearably. Please know that I am with you every step of this journey. I love you more than words can say.

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Even on a packed night like the recent **So-LEED Gold Party** celebrating their historic certification, the Black Star Co-op brewpub produces less than one trash bag of garbage.

"You won't see a lot of garbage cans around Black Star," said **Jeff Young**, beer team leader at the co-op. "You just see bins where you put everything. That allows us to take all of the food and napkins – and even our plasticware is compostable, because we buy the special stuff – and put it in the compost. ... We make sure everything goes where it needs to go."



This attention to detail, from the plasticware to water collection in the brewery and efficient toilets and lightbulbs, has earned the building the second-highest distinction from the U.S. Green Building Council. The **Leadership in Energy and Environmental**

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"I guess it's good for press to say that you're the first something, but what really matters to me is that people are starting to care," said Young. "Five or ten years ago, breweries weren't an industry that could be thought of as leaders in sustainability. ... The directive to be green came from our member owners, and so did the investment." More efficient and more expensive HVAC and



PHOTOS BY JOHN ANDERSON

plumbing systems increased Black Star's building costs by about \$80,000, a hefty sum for a brewpub. "We had to ask more of our investors," he said.

Member owners at Black Star don't appear to be experiencing any buyer's remorse. At the time of this writing, a social media search turned up an excess of exclamation points and plans to drink about the LEED Gold announcement.

Ivy Le, a new and thirsty Austinite, hails from Dallas, but has been writing in Georgia for the last 11 years. Follow her on Twitter @UrbanHaiku.

Daisies Cafe

2320 Hancock Dr., 524-1904
Tue.-Fri., 7am-3pm; Sat., 10am-3pm
www.daisiescafeatx.com

Amidst the noise and panache of almost weekly restaurant openings in central Austin's Allandale and Rosedale neighborhood, there is a hidden gem of a cafe that few outsiders know about.

Daisies Cafe is easy to miss. Attached to a gas station and convenience store at the busy intersection of Hancock and North Loop, at first impression, the location is charmless. But owner **Angela Tyler** has remarkably transformed a nondescript gyro joint into a sunny diner for breakfast and lunch. And it hasn't taken long for local residents to catch on; Daisies is becoming a neighborhood favorite for its eclectic take on comfort food. Home-cooked **breakfast tacos** form the core of the morning fare, while lunch generally features a mix of sandwiches, soups, and salads to appeal to meat lovers and vegetarians alike. Think fat, well-seasoned **hamburgers** (\$6.99-7.99) and **chicken shawarma** (\$6.99) alongside homemade **vegan burgers** (\$6.99) with a side of thick-cut, seasoned fries. I



Angela Tyler of Daisies Cafe

will confess to some disappointment with the "**Angie**" **Reuben** (\$6.99), which I found to be a bit soggy. Toasting or grilling the bread would help. Daily specials such as **Salisbury steak, chicken and dumpling soup**, and mouthwatering **crème brûlée French toast** with homemade whipped cream (brunch only) keep the small menu fresh and exciting.

But sampling the goods can be no simple feat. Daisies Cafe keeps absurdly short hours. No dinner. Closed Sunday and Monday. The place is closed by 3pm, and on Saturday, it doesn't open until 10am. And on one recent Saturday, the cook (who was not the owner) seemed to have some trouble with timing a meal for four. There are only five tables at Daisies, which means it doesn't take much for the place to feel full, and I think a full house can put a stress on the one-person kitchen. Still, it's hard not to like the bright interior, friendly staff, and terrific burgers this truly neighborhood spot offers. Daisies is worth venturing off the beaten path; just make sure you check their hours first.

– Rachel Feit

Meal Times Feb. 15-21

▶ **TEXAS HUMANE HEROES CHILI COOK-OFF** Chili cooks and chili lovers alike are invited to attend this fundraiser for Texas Humane Heroes. Registration fee for teams/individual contestants is \$30 in advance or on the day of the event. CJ's Catering will provide chili for all paying guests, who will also get to taste samples of the competing chilis and vote on their favorites. Prizes for the top three recipes. Sat., Feb. 16, 1-3pm. *Texas Humane Heroes*, 10930 E. Crystal Falls Parkway, Leander, 512/260-3604. \$10 (\$5 for kids under 10). www.texashumaneheroes.org.

- ▶ **MERLOT AND CHOCOLATES** Delysia chocolatier of Austin will be at Becker Vineyards with chocolate truffles to taste and buy, along with Becker Merlot. Sat.-Sun., Feb. 16-17. 464 Becker Farms Rd., Stonewall. www.beckervineyards.com.
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- ▶ **FARM FRESH DINNER AT THE SWOOP HOUSE** Chef John Bullington presents a multicourse early spring meal at the Swoop House. As usual, check out the menu online and BYOB. Reserve online or by phone. Thu., Feb. 21, 7pm. *Swoop House at 2 Dine 4 Fine Catering*, 3012 Gonzales, 467-6600. \$55, plus tax and tip. www.2dine4.com.

food-o-file

BY VIRGINIA B. WOOD

It used to be that restaurateurs tried to time their openings for the fall when the local economy was awash in new student and football season money. Now that River City is home to year-round festivals and attractions that feed the financial generator, restaurant openings are a weekly occurrence. There are several in the news just now, along with the verification that a longtime East Austin Tex-Mex mainstay is indeed still in operation: I sat down with **Nuevo Leon** owner **Rachel Davila** recently to discuss the persistent rumors that her restaurant (1501 E. Sixth) is closed or closing. Check out our *On the Range* blog for the full story, but suffice it to say Nuevo Leon is still open. If and when it closes, Mrs. Davila herself will be the one to make the announcement.

After losing his lease on the charming cottage south of the UT campus in a dispute with the landlord, chef/restaurateur **Gabriel Pellegrini** has relocated **Sagra Trattoria** to 1050 E. 11th, the former home of Ms. B's, and has been open for business there for about a week... Another restaurant that lost its lease due to the vagaries of Downtown real estate is also about to reopen. Look for longtime Mediterranean favorite **Marakesh** to resume operation in a North Central strip mall (3301 Steck Ave.) after their soft opening earlier this week... We've also heard from readers curious about the fate of **Titaya's Thai Cuisine** (5501 N. Lamar), and we've been assured that the busy Thai restaurant beloved of so many *Chronicle* readers is merely undergoing an extensive renovation and expansion in order to better serve their fiercely loyal clientele.

Another reemergence on the local scene that is definitely not a rumor is that of **John Mueller**. After flirtations with Houston and Shiner, the third generation of the Mueller family meat men is back in East Austin, where John started out on his own at the turn of this century. The Feb. 20 opening of the **John Mueller Meat Company** was announced in an official press release rather than a breathlessly overhyped blog post: Mueller will be serving his signature smoked meats and sides in a large fenced area behind **Kellee's Place** (2500 E. Sixth), where guests can buy beer and eat inside, or commune with nature at the picnic tables. The newest aspect to the company harkens back to John's family heritage in the grocery and meat market business: JMMC will offer a line of handcrafted sausages and seasoned cuts of fresh meats in addition to homemade relishes and barbecue sauces. We are also cautioned to expect Mueller's trademark "crotchety brand of customer service," as well as free beer in long waiting lines, although with increased pit capacity, perhaps that won't be as big a problem as it has been in the past. Hours at JMMC will be Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:30am until the meat runs out.

Tyson Cole announced that he has chosen **Jeramie Robison** as chef de cuisine at **Uchi**, while **Tim Dornon** will be leaving **Uchiko** to join **Paul Qui's** new restaurant. Italian native **Mattia Lambertini** is the new executive chef at **Gusto Italian Kitchen**, and **Jason Donoho** is the new research and development chef for the **Alamo Drafthouse** corporation.

Seeking XLB

In search of the mystical soup dumpling, xiao long bao

BY MICK VANN

Chinese soup dumplings, translated into English as *xiao long bao* (known as “XLB” to aficionados), are the ultimate of all forms of dim sum. Once you’ve had soup dumplings, you’ll look for them on every dim sum menu you cross, and in every steam basket on every cart that rumbles by your table. Soup dumplings are not wontons or dumplings plopped into a bowl of soup. They are small, semitranslucent steamed buns that contain ground pork (or better yet, pork mixed with shrimp, or, even better still, pork with crab meat and roe). Inside each little bun is a mini lake of the richest gelatinous broth of chicken or pork, or a combo of the two. I’m Homering-out just describing them.

XLBs are not that easy to find here in Austin. Residents of cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco, Houston, and New York City have the luxury of arguing over who makes the best from the many choices they have; we are not so lucky, but they are available at three places (see sidebar). I spoke with the owners at a couple of my favorite Chinese restaurants and heard the same refrain: People here don’t know what xiao long bao are, they’re a pain to make properly, and they take up too much kitchen space in the process.

Chinese dumplings are said to have begun near the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty with Zhang Zhongjing (AD150-219), a famous northern Chinese medicinal herbalist known as “The Medicine Saint.” He noticed many people with frostbitten ears upon returning to his home village one winter and decided that a viable cure might be minced mutton, medicinal herbs, and chile wrapped in dough folded into the shape of a human ear. These were boiled in water and distributed to the poor during the coldest part of winter (winter solstice to New Year’s Eve) to help warm the body and promote blood flow. A side effect was that they tasted great, and folks loved them.

They are still eaten today and considered essential for the Spring Festival (Chinese New Year) as a symbol of home, warmth, and wealth. The dumplings were originally called *jiao’er* for their shape (a crescent-shaped horn or ear), but the name morphed over time into *jiaozi*, indicative of a folded crescent-shaped dumpling, and then *bao* emerged, referring to a purse-shaped dumpling. Xiao long bao might be a subset of jiaozi, but the two are never confused in China, since they are shaped differently, and xiao long bao are always steamed, never boiled or pan fried. *Tang bao* is another term sometimes confused for xiao long bao. It translates to “soup dumpling,” but refers to a large steamed bun from Jinjiang, in Fujian, that completely fills a small bamboo steamer, and is served with straws to sip the broth before the wrapper is eaten; there is no filling other than the broth.

Soup dumplings are traditionally a specialty of Shanghai and Wuxi, eaten as part of the morning or afternoon tea snack, or as a form of dim sum here in the States. They are served in the bamboo, aluminum, or steel steamer in which they were cooked, usually lined on the bottom with a leaf of napa or Chinese cabbage or lightly oiled parchment, to keep them from sticking. They get dipped into a sauce of Chinkiang black vinegar and julienned slivers of ginger and sometimes a little splash of soy; some diners take advantage of the accompanying chile oil or paste on the table to add some heat.

The dough differs from that of the conventional steamed bun by the thickness of the wrapper and (sometimes) the flour used to make it. A regular steamed bun is much thicker than a silky soup dumpling skin, which is made with high-gluten flour and boiling water; occasionally, a degree of tapioca starch, wheat starch, or corn starch is



Soup dumplings at Ivy’s Deli

JOHN ANDERSON

blended into the dough, lending suppleness and a degree of translucence to the soup dumpling wrapper.

The uniformity, alignment, and number of pleats at the top of the dumpling, where the circular edge of the wrapper is gathered, are an indicator of the cook’s skill. The more pleats and the smaller and tighter together they are, the better; delicate pleats cannot be made with a dough that is thick and ungainly. If the dumpling maker is particularly good, there will be a small cup molded into the very crown of the soup dumpling, meant as the repository for a small mound of orange crab eggs. Ideally, XLBs are made to order, although these days, with refrigeration in modern kitchens, this is less likely; they can even be made in advance and frozen.

The broth inside is very rich chicken or pork broth, or a combination of the two. The stock is made using lots of chicken feet or pork skin (with a pork trotter or two, or a Chinese ham bone thrown in for good measure); they all have

XIAO LONG BAO IN AUSTIN

Fortunately, XLBs are available in our fair city at three restaurants.

Chinatown

3407 Greystone Dr., 343-9307
107 W. Fifth, 637-8888
www.chinatown-mopac.com,
www.chinatown-downtown.com

Ronald Cheng’s Chinatown is one of the grand dames of Chinese in Austin and does our favorite dim sum in the city proper at his Greystone location (weekends only). It’s a little pricey, but the quality is first rate and the soup dumplings are superb (\$5.95 for three), with a silken wrapper and rich stock. Other treats: bacon-wrapped shrimp mousse, and coffee-glazed spareribs. Expect a slight wait, as tables don’t turn that fast for dim sum.

Shanghai

6718 Middle Fiskville Rd., 458-8088
Austin old timers will remember the Yim family from the original Shanghai and Marco Polo restaurants. They do a very popular dim sum cart service on Saturday and Sunday, and it packs the house with natives seeking authentic dim sum. They offer a reduced menu of dim sum appetizers at other hours. Shanghai serves good soup dumplings (\$3.25 for three), weekends only; other must-haves include tofu skin rolls, fried pork belly, and braised baby squid.

tons of unctuous, gelatinous collagen that cooks out over time, causing the broth to set up like firm, jiggly Jell-O once it chills. The cook can also “cheat” by adding a little bit of gelatin to the broth while it’s still warm; ideally you want decidedly firm aspic. That aspic gets diced into little cubes, which then get mixed into the cold forcemeat filling before the dumplings are filled and pleated; sometimes a cook will just place a larger cube of aspic over the forcemeat filling, without incorporating it into the mixture. Once the filling gets steamed inside the wrapper, the gelatin melts, forming the internal pool of rich, viscous “soup”; it’s all about the soup. Back in the day, before refrigeration was commonplace, soup dumplings were seasonal and made only in the cooler months because it was difficult to keep the gelatin firm enough in hot weather. In the south they used agar instead of gelatin, since it sets up in warmer temperatures (agar can set up at room temperature and stays firm at higher temperatures that would cause gelatin to melt; agar is plant-based, while gelatin is derived from bones, hides, and pig skin).

There is a definite art to eating soup dumplings; doing it wrong can lead to maxillary damage from the near-boiling-hot liquid inside the dumplings. You also have to be very careful when picking them up from the steam basket so that you don’t spill the liquid core by breaching the skin. Using chopsticks, gingerly pick up the dumpling by opposing sides, being careful not to pierce the delicate wrapper. Carefully place the dumpling onto the soup spoon. Using the end of a chopstick, pierce a small hole near the middle of the dumpling, allowing the steam and a little of the broth to run out into the spoon. This allows the broth to cool just enough before you eat it. You can also just carefully slide the dumpling onto the soup spoon and proceed from there (easier with a flat-bottomed metal spoon than with porcelain or plastic). Some folks take the added precaution of holding the spoon over an empty tea cup, to catch any precious broth overflow from the spoon. Once you have the broth cooled down, you can scoop in a dab of dipping sauce and ginger, and then pop the whole thing into your mouth and enjoy the liquid lusciousness.

Frozen brands of soup dumplings are available locally in the freezer case at MT Supermarket in Chinatown Center. Look for packages titled “Mini Buns”; we recommend the pork and crab made by Wei-Chuan (nicer wrappers, tougher meat), and the pork made by Prime (less polished wrappers, tastier filling). Grab a bottle of black vinegar and a chunk of ginger root, and you’re ready to steam and eat soup dumplings at home.

Feeling motivated? See this story online for a recipe to make your own soup dumplings from the award-winning *The Appetizer Atlas: A World of Small Bites* (Wiley, 2003) by Art Meyer and myself. The soup dumplings aren’t that difficult to make, although there is a learning curve on pleating the tops of the wrappers; they are guaranteed to be ugly the first couple of times you make them. ■

Ivy’s Deli

201 University Oaks Blvd. #1350,
Round Rock, 512/574-4608
www.ivysdelidimsum.com

A new(ish) location for Ivy’s is situated behind the Ikea in Round Rock. They’ve expanded their menu to include more dishes and have added a packed lunch special during the week, but we go for the dim sum. Their soup dumplings (\$4.30 for four) are just fine. As far as I know, Ivy’s is the only place offering the amazing fish skin dumplings (a wrapper of fish skin, with fish paste filling). We also love their sour and spicy wontons and the shau mai supreme. Many dim sum offerings, served daily.



Micklethwait Craft Meats

JOHN ANDERSON

RECENTLY REVIEWED

CLARK'S OYSTER BAR Blessed by Neptune is this thoughtfully curated seafood menu. We tried the decadently rich Lobster & Farm Eggs en Cocotte – basically a classic French *oeufs en cocotte* with a large lobster claw and a piece of the tail meat. The accompanying wood-grilled carrot and asparagus salad was good enough to make a tasty entrée itself. 1200 W. Sixth.

MELVIN'S DELI COMFORT This shiny red trailer at 53rd and Duval serves up tasty sandwiches using housemade meats. The pork jelly confit is paired with mustard greens and Brie; and the croque monsieur is filled with home-made ham. 501 W. 53rd.

MICKLETHWAIT CRAFT MEATS Tom Micklethwait's vintage 1960 Comet food trailer has a smoker on the back that produces terrific brisket, as well as moist chicken, baby back ribs, and pork loin. We want the sweet-spicy-garlicky sauce by the gallon, and, while we're at it, we'll take as much mayo-mustard potato salad and sweet and sour slaw as we can fit in the car. Did we mention the housemade sausage? 1309 Rosewood.

GOURDOUGH'S PUBLIC HOUSE I'll have the Count Gour dough, if you'll have the Dirty Plucker (fried chicken atop a doughnut, slathered in maple icing and honey). For dessert, let's get the Sin-a-Bomb or Salty Balls. 2700 S. Lamar.

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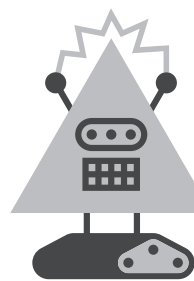
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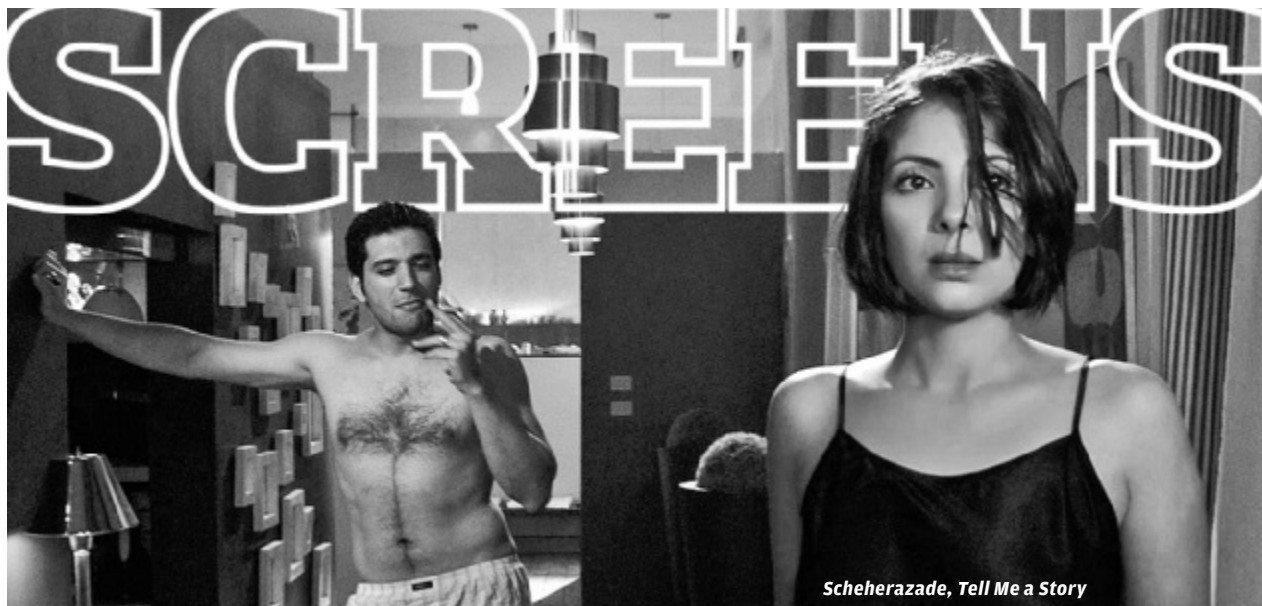
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Scheherazade, Tell Me a Story

Modern Tales as Old as Time

NEW AFS SERIES TRAVELS BACK TO THE SEAT OF CIVILIZATION by Jessi Cape

To categorize a collection of stories originating in the birthplace of civilization is nearly impossible, but the Austin Film Society's latest Essential Cinema series illuminates the beauty and pain of life in the Middle East through seven films that connect the dots of humanity.

AFS' seventh iteration of the Children of Abraham/Ibrahim series begins with *This Is Not a Film*, a documentary that is part peaceful rebellion against the Iranian government, part creative compulsion. *This Is Not a Film* offers a rare glimpse into 24 hours in the life of internationally acclaimed filmmaker Jafar Panahi following charges against him for disseminating propaganda against the Iranian government. Banned for 20 years from filmmaking, Panahi enlists friend and documentary filmmaker Mojtaba Mirtahmasb to masterfully circumvent legalities and record the essence of a trapped artist. Reportedly smuggled from Iran on a flash drive hidden in a cake, the feature illuminates the surface simplicity of Panahi's routine daily tasks as he constantly battles his creative urges. Panahi views life through a lens, and there is a special poignancy to a fireworks festival erupting just outside his apartment: He can tell a film, but he cannot make one.

Bare-bones media portrayals of the modern ramifications of an ancient struggle between Palestinians and Israelis often avoid the deeply emotional circumstances of a suicide bomber. But director Dror Zahavi's fictional film *For My Father* forces the audience to consider the whole story: the humanistic tendencies of a man embroiled in the perils of familial woes and complicated political convictions. Strapped with explosives, Tarek (Shredi Jabarin) is unable to free himself, mentally or physically, even as he finds unlikely companionship with an Israeli shopgirl and a curmudgeonly older man.

Yousry Nasrallah's fantastically entertaining *Scheherazade, Tell Me a Story* examines an Egyptian TV host, Hebba (Mona Zaki), who finds herself at the mercy of patriarchy's constraints. When her political ladder-climbing husband informs her that reporting on the sad and destitute will ruin his career, Hebba begins her initially unintentional reenactment of Scheherazade's quest for survival by way of storytelling via journalistic spotlights. The film fires through rubble and rules of engagement as Hebba hosts several women on her talk show stage. Everything is political in these human-interest stories, from homicide to celibacy to abortion, and on Hebba's TV platform, these so-called women's issues become *everyone's* issues.

From Eran Kolirin, the director of award-winning *The Band's Visit*, comes

oramic ocean shots in a gorgeous depiction of star-crossed love in the Palestinian territories. Former University of Texas student Susan Youssef weaves autobiographical memories with the story of culturally universal soul connections to portray the dichotomy of passion in violence and tenderness. As a modern-day Romeo and Juliet, Qays (Kais Nashif) and Layla (Maisa Abd Elhadi) are ensnared in an even more complicated story riddled with traditional obligations, stray bullets, and gut-wrenching poetry painted in red on city walls. (For more, see "Fusing a Parable With the Personal," right.)

In writer/director Tolga Karacelik's *Toll Booth*, the maddening monotony endured by Kenan (Serkan Ercan) as gatekeeper of a Turkish tollbooth transfixes the audience as it transforms the protagonist.

AFS ESSENTIAL CINEMA: CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM/IBRAHIM 7: FILMS OF THE MIDDLE EAST AND BEYOND

The Austin Film Society's latest Essential Cinema series runs Tuesdays at 7pm through April 9 at the Alamo Drafthouse Village Cinema (2700 W. Anderson). See www.austinfilm.org for ticket info.

Feb. 19: *This Is Not a Film*

Feb. 26: *For My Father*

March 5: *Scheherazade, Tell Me a Story*

March 19: *The Long Journey*

March 26: *Habibi Rasak Kharban*

April 2: *Toll Booth*

April 9: *Conquest 1453*

The Long Journey, a 2004 film about a lonely Israeli boy setting his sights on basketball while his family hyperfocuses on their own problems. Actor Alon Pduat will attend the screening on March 19, and a Q&A is scheduled to follow. (*The Long Journey* wasn't made available for preview, nor was *Conquest 1453*, a late addition to the series.)

Based on an ancient parable of lovers, *Habibi Rasak Kharban* mixes expert acting with symbolic sunsets and pan-

Nicknamed Robot by a co-worker, Kenan follows his days at the cash register with dull-toned evenings at home with his aging father, watching television reports of a pending meteor collision with Earth. Everything changes when a psychological hiccup results in his transfer to a remote tollbooth where lady love inspires a smile, and hallucinogenic views of fields of sunflowers wreak havoc. A cinematic art installation, *Toll Booth* is riveting in all of its staccato glory.

Fusing a Parable With the Personal

Q&A WITH 'HABIBI RASAK KHARBAN' DIRECTOR SUSAN YOUSSEF

Former University of Texas student Susan Youssef recently answered a few questions between international flights on a media blitz for *Habibi Rasak Kharban*. Youssef will be in attendance for the March 26 AFS screening of her award-winning film.

— Jessi Cape

Austin Chronicle: I understand *Habibi* is loosely autobiographical and also based on the classic Arabic story of star-crossed lovers, Layla and Majnun. Tell me about the implications of creating a film so close to your own heart as well as the hearts of many across the globe.

Susan Youssef: Via bringing to the screen poetry and the parable, the film shows that at the basis of Palestinian society is a desire for an expression of love, not violence. *Habibi* transcends violence as the definition of the Arab world to include the cultural beauty, history, and diversity of the Arabic language and Palestinian people.

AC: The character of Layla faces so many paradoxical themes stemming from the disparities between modern and traditional values for women. Her veil seems to signify shifts throughout the film. Please talk about the feminine perspective in *Habibi*.

SY: *Habibi* challenges the stereotype of the oppressed Arab woman both on and off screen. I, the writer, director, and producer of the film, am a woman of Arab descent. Layla, the main character in *Habibi*, is an educated woman whose parents permitted her to leave Gaza in order that she may study and live on her own in the West Bank. Back in Gaza, Layla takes assertive action to fight for her love affair. The men in her life defer to her actions.

AC: Education is essential to this film as well. Did you write these pieces of the story with your own experiences in mind, or is this more indicative of the cultural significance of education issues in the modern Palestinian territories?

SY: My first journey to Gaza was in 2002, and this was when I fell in love with a director there. Based on my experience with him and the other people in Gaza at the time, I constructed the *Habibi* story — specifically focusing on the loss of young people's dreams and aspirations around education. At the time, I was a graduate student and this storyline really struck me. I knew how much I dreamt of actualizing myself as an artist, and my heart went out to young people who would never accomplish their dreams because of the occupation. This is a storyline that weaves through each of the young people's lives in *Habibi*.

AC: What's next for you?

SY: I am currently making *Marjoun and the Flying Headscarf*. With her father imprisoned on dubious terrorist-related charges, a Lebanese-American teenager in Arkansas searches for identity in the headscarf and a motorcycle. This feature is an extension of the short by the same name that screened at the Sundance Film Festival. *Marjoun and the Flying Headscarf* is the first fiction feature that explores coming of age into the hijab.



Habibi Rasak Kharban

Searching for Cynthia Ann

Glenn Frankel's new book untangles the true story behind 'The Searchers'

BY AMY GENTRY

How did one girl's story become one of the most enduring legends of the American West?

That's the question at the heart of Glenn Frankel's new book, *The Searchers: The Making of an American Legend* (Bloomsbury USA). Frankel, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and director of the University of Texas School of Journalism, investigates the true story that inspired John Ford's 1956 film *The Searchers*: the kidnapping of 9-year-old Cynthia Ann Parker by Comanche raiders on the Texas frontier in 1836. The book starts by providing a detailed history of the kidnapping and surrounding events, then takes the reader on a guided tour of the story's many retellings over the next century, including the many embellishments and exaggerations, guesswork and lies. At the end of the trail lies Ford's grim Western, starring John Wayne as a man obsessed with finding his kidnapped niece, a film that influenced a generation of American filmmakers.

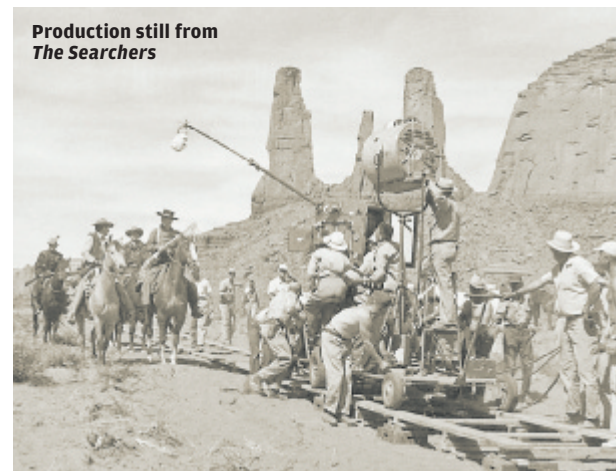
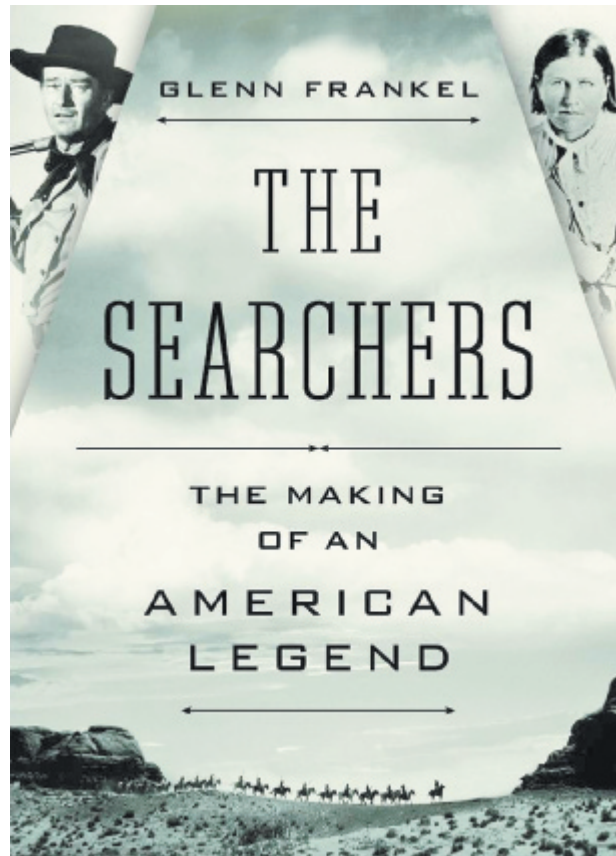
Before it was a legend, Cynthia Ann's story was a tragedy. Abducted at the age of 9, she was raised as a Comanche, eventually marrying a Comanche warrior and bearing him three children. Twenty-four years later, having fully assimilated to her captors' culture and all but forgotten her origins, she was found and forcibly "rescued" along with her infant daughter, only to live out the remainder of her adult life in misery among whites whose ways were foreign to her. The details of her death are disputed, but it is probable that she died shortly after her young daughter succumbed to an epidemic, another casualty of America's westward expansion.

Frankel bases his account of the story on the Parker family's papers, located at UT's Dolph Briscoe Center for American History. However, the historical record is full of gaps and contradictions. From the beginning, Cynthia Ann's story seemed to lend itself to exaggeration, a process that started with those who were there when she was captured. "They were saying, 'There were hundreds of Indians there!' Well, maybe there were, but it doesn't seem likely. It could have been 10 Indians, nobody knows," explains Frankel a couple of weeks shy of the book's Feb. 19 publication date.

"So the ball gets rolling right then, and continues on. Each population and subgroup tells the story in a way that makes sense to them, and that explains their own actions, who they are. And gradually it becomes not just a simple story about a little girl in Texas – it becomes a sort of American legend about the settlement of the frontier."

Frankel first began looking into Cynthia Ann's story when he heard it mentioned in a documentary about *The Searchers*, one of his favorite films. Frankel fell in love with *The Searchers* in the fall of 1969, watching it in a film class at Columbia taught by Andrew Sarris, who was at the time a *Village Voice* film critic. "It was thrilling. It was just so beautiful, for one thing," he says.

The Searchers is, indeed, beautiful. The action unfolds against a Technicolor backdrop of hulking red mesas and brilliant blue skies in Monument Valley, where Ford made his most famous Westerns. Shot using VistaVision, a film format that produced widescreen shots with unusually sharp detail, the majestic landscapes almost seem bigger than the screen itself. Contrasted with domestic interiors that are symmetrical, neat, and filled with carefully choreographed activity, the irregular, jagged buttes appear haunted and desolate. In the famous final shot, Wayne's character stands at the threshold between these two worlds, framed in a doorway, but relegated firmly to the natural wasteland as the door closes, leaving him outside. This "visual poetry," as Frankel calls it, is part of what makes the film so appealing to film scholars and moviemakers.



Even more than the film's beauty, however, Frankel was attracted to its themes. "It's kind of, in the end, about love and hate," he explains. John Wayne plays Ethan, the kidnapped girl's uncle, who sets out to find her with the only other surviving member of the family, his adopted nephew. A rugged loner who can out-ride and out-track all the other men in the film, Ethan is also a virulent racist and Indian-hater. As his obsessive quest to find his niece stretches from months to years, the central question shifts from whether he will find her to what he will do if he does find her – restore her to her family or kill her, since by that time, he decides, she will be old enough to have been either raped or cajoled into sexual contact with the racial other. Wayne's character is alternately sympathetic and repellent, and Ford, with careful, restrained direction, avoids tipping his hand about which way the story will end.

Frankel attributes the movie's greatness to this ambiguity, the result of Ford's highly visual form of storytelling. Comparing the original screenplay to the finished version, Frankel sees evidence of Ford's restraint as a filmmaker. "Every time they're different, he's eliminating exposition and dialogue and explanation, and simply leaves you with the visual storytelling. And therefore it's more ambiguous, because you have to decide why they do this stuff. ... You have to decide. And that's the art of the film."

Frankel acknowledges that this openness means audiences will disagree about Ethan's character and intentions. "You might decide differently than I decide," Frankel says. "That's what raises it, in my way of thinking, from a very good movie to a great movie."

Some of the most important American directors from the first generation to attend film school would agree. Martin Scorsese, Peter Bogdanovich, and Steven Spielberg are among those who testify to its formative influence, leading film critic Stuart Byron to proclaim in 1979 that "all recent American cinema derives from John Ford's *The Searchers*." In light of the vast influence those directors have had on subsequent filmmakers, there may still be some truth to Byron's decades-old observation.

If all American cinema derives from Ford's *The Searchers*, which derives itself from the 1836 kidnapping, poor Cynthia Ann has a lot to answer for. Given how many changes the story has undergone, it's worth asking whether there's anything left of the lost, scared little girl on the Western frontier in Ford's quintessentially macho film. After all, the movie, based on Alan Le May's novel of the same name, barely concerns the character of the kidnapped girl at all, focusing instead on the men who went to look for her, the "searchers."

Frankel still sees strong connections between the original story and the fictional film. "The one thing that pulled it all together in a lot of ways is gender, the way women are looked at. Because that's out there from the very beginning, in the way that polite society deals with [Cynthia Ann] while she's a 'white Comanche' they can't find, and then when she

does return and she's so different from what they expected. And the way the Comanches deal with her, too. In *The Searchers*, this whole question of rape and honor killing all rises right up to the surface. It's no longer a psychological thing that they're not talking about – it's the heart of the movie. This uncle is out to get her back, but he's not planning to restore her to her family. He's going to kill her. And there's only one reason why."

Frankel points to the female characters who



Glenn Frankel

influence Ethan's final act of mercy, suggesting that even though they are rarely onscreen, the story is as much about their moral strength as it is about Ethan's physical strength. "I think of course the movie's about men, running around Monument Valley trying to find this little girl. But behind it all, and triumphing in the end, are the representatives of the women who want her to live."

Does Frankel's account lay Cynthia Ann Parker's ghost to rest? Or is he, like past generations, merely appropriating her tale for his own purposes?

"I would never pretend that this is the end of the story, or the tellings of it," Frankel says, shaking his head. "It's just one more, by somebody from 2013."

In the end, he admits, he's just another searcher. ■

Glenn Frankel will appear at BookPeople for a reading and book-signing on Wednesday, Feb. 27, 7pm.

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C3 Presents Sufjan Stevens at Emo's, Dec. 1, 2012.

The Pros & Cons of Hitchhiking

C3 PRESENTS ACQUIRES EMO'S

Late Monday afternoon, not long after banking hours had ceased, **Emo's** owner **Frank Hendrix** was headed to the East Riverside music venue for a drizzling, 6pm rendezvous with **C3 Presents** principal **Charles Attal**.

"I'm handing over the keys to the building," announced Hendrix over a dying cell phone. "And he's giving me a check."

With that, Emo's became the property of Austin's reigning concert promotions group (see "Emo's Sold," Earache! Music blog, Feb. 11). The news blindsided most in the local music community, because not until the convivial entrepreneur revealed to the *Chronicle* two weeks ago that he and C3 had been in negotiations since Dec. 5 did anyone suspect such a deal being in the works. In fact, the scene was still reeling from Hendrix's announcement a week earlier that he was uprooting **Antone's** from Fifth Street for a new home in Emo's sister venue, the **Beauty Ballroom**, which shares the block with the punk high-rise and was promptly shuttered to make way for the "Home of the Blues." All of a sudden, one of the Live Music Capital's captains of industry appeared ready for full divestment.

"We got real big, real fast," admitted Hendrix last week as the sale to C3 neared completion. "When you get real big, you spend all your time just writing checks."

Whether Charles Attal can relate to writer's cramp wasn't on the agenda late last week when he confirmed the imminent transaction, but one of the country's most successful live music providers knows all about growth and its potential pitfalls.

"Do I worry about growth?" he laughed nervously. "I'm worried about whether I sell

out Stubb's junior tonight! I worry about everything. If you're a concert promoter, it's such an up-and-down business. You worry about every show.

"Yeah, [the **Austin City Limits Music Festival**] is a big endeavor. We worry. That's all we do sometimes, is worry."

Not necessarily what one expects to hear from Austin's preeminent concert strategist, but he's heard the grumbles about C3's size and success. In that sense, besides now sharing a landlord with Hendrix on the same strip of the Eastside – the latter didn't own the building, just the 10-year lease and brand – Attal can probably relate to the vilification Hendrix endured from vocal components of the Austin music map, who decried the ruin of the punk club when he purchased it from its namesake in 2000. Spin in this notoriously DIY burg will doubtlessly tilt toward corporate *Pac-Man*ship in C3 acquiring Emo's, but the issues underlying the deal matrix into a far more complex set of realities driving the city's musical supply, demand, and consumption.

Ultimately, in Austin or anywhere else in the U.S., concert promotion remains about property, leases, brands, and most crucially of all, *booking*.

When Hendrix bought the Sixth Street punk pit, he paid in the mid-five figures for the lease and the name "Emo's Austin" because **Emo's Houston** didn't close until the following year. Having acquired the actual property, the locally raised car baron sold it in 2011 to would-be hoteliers for, by his own account at the time, "seven figures." By then, he'd bailed out a struggling Antone's, partnered with the property owners of **Ruta Maya** and the future **Emo's**

East, and spun off the Beauty Ballroom with the partners of the **Beauty Bar**. Assembling music blocs meant leveraging booking muscle against the mighty C3, which Attal tallies at 14 bookers putting on 1,500 shows on three continents in 2012 alone. By contrast, **ACL Live at the Moody Theater**, whose meteoric rise on the local show front over its first two years rivals **Stubb's** in star power and sellouts, thrives largely on a single booker.

"I had drinks with **Colleen Fischer** the other day at the Moody," points out Attal.

Not coincidentally, perhaps, one collateral news nugget to emerge from the Emo's sale is the Moody's recent booking acquisition of the **Belmont**.

"We're not looking to take over the world," laughed the Moody's vice president of business development, **Tim Neece**, who arrived in Austin in 1971 as a drummer from Abilene, began booking three years later before leaving for California to manage **Christopher Cross**, then returned in 1996 to become director of operations of **Direct Events**. "To us, it makes sense to get involved with acts early in their career and eventually get them over to the Moody."

Bid out an agent's marquee act and take its baby band as well.

"They will sell us their band, and a month later when they have a baby band, we're going to place it," affirms Attal. "That's our business. That's how our business started, was developing artists out of the very smallest levels. When we booked our first ACL, that all came out of the clubs."

Unfortunately, Hendrix kept losing his bookers – to C3, **Transmission Entertainment**, and most recently the Moody – so he threw in with someone who can fill rooms, both large (**Long Center**, **Cedar Park Center**, **Frank Erwin Center**) and more intimate (**Parish**, **Lamberts**): Charles Attal. In the past couple of weeks alone, C3's announced giant shows (the **Avett Brothers**, **Lumineers**, **Jimmy Buffett**) at forthcoming **Formula One** tie-in the **Tower Amphitheater**. Meaning that if C3 was already coloring in Emo's gig calendar, what impact will the sale have, practically speaking? A huge one for C3, via an inside stage during winter months when tarps cover Stubb's (**Sufjan Stevens'** Christmas extravaganza, for example), and a big stage at that now that both **La Zona Rosa** and the **Austin Music Hall** have fallen away from Direct Events.

"Timing's great," agrees Attal, who nonetheless bristles slightly at the perception that C3 employs outside rooms to accommodate some sort of booking overflow. "It's more of a collaboration with the band as to what's best for the band. I've been a part owner of Stubb's since day one, and sometimes a show doesn't fit there, and I'm not going to

force-feed it into a room where the band doesn't belong.

"Emo's is a room people like to go to – the old one and the new one – but we're not territorial where we put shows. We do shows in gymnasiums. If we have a good partner to work with in the building, whatever building it is, we'll do a show there."

Better to own the property, though, right?

"Of course, we all love to own the building we're operating in, but we only had the option to take a lease with Emo's, and we're comfortable with that. It's a long-term lease, and for me, I can't look that far down the road other than the next couple of years."

He laughs, citing the plight of the promoter ("You're only as good as your last show"), the Austin native born at **St. David's** and schooled in part at the **Continental Club** in punk bands. Attal dismisses the notion that the booking wars in Austin might be termed cutthroat by some. "Competitive, sure," says Neece, while the C3 head cites **Transmission**, umbrella to the **Mohawk**, **Red 7**, **Holy Mountain**, **Fun Fun Fun Fest**, and more: "I talk to [Transmission's **James Moody** every couple of months and we're cool." Which leaves only brands, really. What's in a brand?

"I don't really know the value of a brand except for musically," shrugs **Susan Antone**, minority partner in Antone's, which C3 will continue to help book. "There's integrity behind the music, and the name on it is Antone's. My brother [**Clifford**] had so much to do with that. I think Frank wants to do the best by it, too, so this is just another move. Another move."

"And you know, it could be really cool out there on Riverside."

Eric "Emo" Hartman, now general manager of the **Alamo**

Drafthouse Ritz, walks past

his old Sixth Street haunt most days on his way to work, calling the dark, empty space "sad." Worse, sometimes, is driving past Emo's East, "a punk rock palace" far removed from the **CBGBs**-like dive he named after his "self-inflicted nickname," acquired in his early bar years when he attempted to scare off a persistent female by

throwing the name Emo at her – as in hometown Chicago comedian **Emo Philips**.

"There's definitely value to the brand," asserts Hartman, who was approached by Emo's minority owner and **Buzz Mill** proprietor **Jason Sabala** in a last-minute bid to buy his namesake back. "People know the name. 'Remember that show at Emo's?' Especially in this town, where clubs have come and gone, Emo's is still strong. It's never closed.

"I don't wanna see the name go away. I'm proud of it. I'm proud of what we did. It could've closed and been a distant memory like **Liberty Lunch**. Or the **Electric Lounge**. Now with C3 taking it over, I'm sure it'll be around a lot longer." ■



Reckless & Romantic

A Giant Dog and Bobby Jealousy, respectively

BY KEVIN CURTIN

Negotiating a lam traffic jam of denim and leather in a packed Hotel Vegas proves no easy task. Then the music erupts. As a graceless crowdsurfer passes over me, A Giant Dog singers Andrew Cashen and Sabrina Ellis hit a double-barreled harmony:

Yeah, I wanna get drunk/Fuck another eyesore/ Take it with my clothes on/Same as with the last one/Because that's how we have fun/ Yeah, I wanna get drunk.

Orville Neeley, brow furrowed, lips narrowed, and arms flexed as he beats sixteenth notes like pistons firing, looks pissed. To his left, Graham Low speed picks a sturdy bass line that finds leverage in the distorted guitar of Andy Bauer, who stands calmly at the edge of the mayhem in front of him. Dressed as if she just pillaged your grandmother's vacation drawer, Sabrina Ellis marches in place while belting out meteoric melodies.

When the beer she orders arrives onstage, the singer dumps it onto her messy red hair and shakes it over the front row. The band fires up another song, and Cashen, the deceptively collegiate looking frontman, spins around and drops to his knees, violently raking his guitar strings into a swell of noise before turning around, climbing a speaker, and shoving his axe into the faces of the congregation.

Performances like this demand a deep breath afterward. And a shower.

What Are Friends For

A Giant Dog was born on an East Austin rooftop in 2008, but the band came forged in friendships going back to their school days. All five grew up in the Houston area, where music, in the form of teenage punk bands, competitive choir, and even the school orchestra, provided vital escape.

"At 16, we didn't think we'd get dates to homecoming, so we started a band that would play at school dances," remembers Cashen. "We covered a Stevie Wonder song, R.E.M.'s 'It's the End of the World as We Know It,' and 'Earth Angel.'"

The initial rehearsal for the band, Youth in Asia, also marked the first time Cashen and Ellis sang together.

"That was also the first time I saw her vagina," Cashen recalls from the bee-swarmed patio of a Mexican eatery.

Ellis sets down her chimichanga: "You saw my vagina?"

"Yeah, I think me and Orville did. You were sitting open-legged, and we looked at each other like, 'We made a good decision picking her,'" he nods. "Well, we've seen it a bunch of times since then, but when you're 16, you think you're never going to see one again."

If it hadn't been for another teenage band, Cashen, Bauer, and Neeley's punk trio the WeeBeasties, Graham Low wouldn't have gotten the same opportunity.

"I wasn't interested in playing in bands until I started going to their shows in high school," recalls the onetime cellist in the school orchestra. These days, he's bassist for three bands.

"The only thing I listened to back then was Minor Threat and Black Flag," Cashen offers.

"The influence punk rock had on us carries on into what we're doing now," agrees Bauer.

Post high school diaspora sent each member of A Giant Dog to a different city, but none journeyed farther than Ellis, who enrolled in NYU's Experimental Theatre program. While they seemed impractical at the time, the Afro-Haitian dance and improvisation classes she took fed the stage presence she demonstrates today. To be a successful actress, her teachers told her, she had to let go of her idiosyncrasies. Instead, she



SHELLEY HIAM

Cardboard cutthroats: (l-r) Bobby Jealousy's Brian Patterson, Seth Gibbs, Adam Harlow, Sabrina Ellis; and A Giant Dog's Orville Neeley, Andy Bauer, Andrew Cashen, and Graham Low

Forget about money and success. Those ideals have nothing to do with music anymore, and those who pursue them deserve the failure that awaits them. For small-time bands, the only thing that matters now is the bond.

let go all together, enduring a hellish patch of bad jobs, bad boyfriends, and bad drugs.

Eventually, she sought refuge in Austin at Bauer's house, crashing on his couch for three months while she kicked drugs and recharged. Afterward, she scored a rental house with a rooftop made for entertaining, so she and Cashen, who'd recently moved to town to study at UT, made a practice out of getting wasted and writing songs atop the domicile. Their supercharged harmonies literally rang from the rooftops.

"I wasn't trying to start a band," laughs Cashen. "I was just getting drunk with Sabrina and it happened."

through the quartet's disheveled, punky exterior. A Giant Dog parlayed Ellis' propensity for the party into one of the first big successes of 2013, third album *Bone*, which charges forward at the knobs of producer Mike McCarthy (Heartless Bastards, ...And You Will Know Us by the Trail of Dead) and doesn't let up until penultimate campfire sing-along "Ghostcest." Ellis and singer/guitarist Andrew Cashen form the unholy vocal union this go-round, with the pair's theatrical declaration toppling "All I Wanted" and recycled Sundae records single "The Grand." Elsewhere, the guitars on "Lady Slut" keep your ears ringing, and the over-too-quick "Virgin Girl" suggests there should be a few more horn sections rolling through Beerland every week. *Bone's* not altogether different from last year's *Fight* in attitude, performance, or ethos, but this one doesn't sound like it was recorded in drummer and Bad Sports/OBN Ills ringer Orville Neeley's garage. "Can't Complain" about that upgrade.

(Bobby Jealousy) ★★★

(A Giant Dog) ★★★

— Chase Hoffberger

Dog Days

A Giant Dog pulses of youth. Its short, fast, triumphant songs capture all the desperation, lust, and wildness of the young spirit. In the oversaturated local garage punk scene, the band's commanding live performances inspire both emotion and rowdiness.

"Screaming Jay Hawkins – that was the most entertaining motherfucker on the face of the planet," says Cashen, shaking his head. "To come out with a bone in his nose back in the day and scare the shit out of people is amazing. If someone pays \$5 at the door and \$20 at the bar to see us play, I want to give them a good time."

Cashen and company's aesthetics remain more reckless fun than calculated theatrics, but the effect's the same.

Continuing the title pattern of earlier releases *House* and *Fight*, new full-length *Bone* upgrades the fivesome's feral take on oldies melodies with higher fidelity, courtesy of producer Mike McCarthy (Spoon, Crooked Bangs). Outta the garage and into the studio, *Bone* marks the first A Giant Dog LP that wasn't recorded in drummer Orville Neeley's garage.

"So much pressure was taken off Orville because he wasn't having to be the engineer," remarks his partner in rhythm, Low. "He could just focus on playing his drum parts, as well as adding guitar and other instruments. It made a big difference."

A Giant Dog threw itself a *Bone*.



Bobby Jealousy
The Importance of Being Jealous
(Superpop Records)

A Giant Dog
Bone
(Tic Tac Totally Records)

A tale of two LPs for Sabrina Ellis and her alarmingly outrageous pipes, which flex, jive, and wait for more than an hour this week on two releases from a couple of Austin's most entertaining gutter balls. The first, Bobby Jealousy's *The Importance of Being Jealous*, finds the rowdy singer bobbing alongside hubby Seth Gibbs, who recorded the album in his East Austin studio and lends a healthy dose of self-started Superpop Records charm to the 12-track effort. The sophomore effort arrives lively ("Falling on My Face"), lighthearted ("Bang Bang"), and sometimes straight-up silly ("Fall Asleep in Your Arms"), with "Children of God" and "The Agreement" revealing a pop sensibility that bleeds



If I Was Your Man

Forget about a romantic evening alone. This year, Sabrina Ellis and her husband, Seth Gibbs, will celebrate Valentine's Day onstage at Red 7. Their infectious pop rock band, Bobby Jealousy, releases second LP *The Importance of Being Jealous* on the lovers' holiday. Perfect fit.

As much as Ellis' punk band, A Giant Dog, was born out of deep friendships, Bobby Jealousy spawned true love.

"What happened was, Sabrina and I fell madly in love the moment we really spent time together. Then we realized we just had to write music together," smiles Gibbs. "Then we got married."

The couple's first date doubled as a recording session for his long-running solo project, Brother Machine. He asked Ellis to contribute vocals, then surprised her with a bottle of wine and flowers. "It was a ploy," she recalls. "But it worked."

"I told her on that night that we were going to get married," says Gibbs, his trademark knit cap pulled down almost to his eyeballs.

They put a ring on it in 2011. At home, they're a good-natured couple with an enviable domestic life. Onstage, they're Ike & Tina Turner, burning down the house with a passionate connection both musical and romantic.

Hump Day

Bobby Jealousy drummer Adam Harlow happens upon yours truly one night outside a bar. Questioned about Seth Gibbs' musical abilities, his tone turns rapturous.

"I knew Seth for a while before I heard his music. When I finally did, I was like, 'Damn, I knew he was up to something good!' Seth plays every instrument, he's played with everybody, and he's so over giving a shit about what other people think of his music. Him and I both love the Nineties, so everything we do has that touch."

The rare songwriter who wears his affinity for the alt-era on his sleeve, Gibbs cites Beck and the Eels as influences and insists that, despite popular opinion, Sugar Ray was, in fact, a "really good band." Bobby Jealousy takes the catchiness and flamboyance of that era and blends in timeless elements of soul, R&B, rock, and pop that ache with nostalgia while breaking new ground.

Bobby Jealousy's briefly physical debut, last year's *A Little Death*, and *The Importance of Being Jealous* were both recorded in Gibbs' tranquil home studio, where, along with playing an impressive array of instruments and singing, he employs clever production techniques, like looping his farts into a beat and recording Sabrina slapping her ass into a microphone.

Those recording methods might seem unorthodox to some, including the band's newest member, Brian Patterson, a cunning guitarist who cut his teeth on the worship circuit performing at large Christian retreats and conferences. He rolls with it, shrugging.

"They're singing about what they're going through, and I think that's great," he

reasons. "It may be a little crass for me at times, but I love the music they're making."

"What about when I hump your leg onstage?" asks Ellis.

"You've never done that," he says dismissively.

She will.

La Petit Mort

Sweet in tone and tragic in content, Bobby Jealousy's lyrics offer a poison apple.

You know what death is/You must expect it/Don't hang on honey/Sometimes it's time to go/Don't ask why it's time to die/We don't need to know.

Death, one of the authoring couple's favorite themes.

"We've approached death in different ways," agrees Gibbs. "When Sabrina and I first fell in love, we found ourselves contemplating and imagining death a lot."

"At first, it was like, 'This love is so great that we can die now and it will be alright,'" says Ellis, pausing like she's never said this out loud. "Then, as we entered the next phase of our relationship, I've found myself touched by something that makes life matter to me and that manifested into a dreaded fear of death."

"Before we were together, I was reckless and wild," she continues. "Now, Seth is more important than anything has ever been to me, and, in turn, he's made mortality an issue. That feeling was part of this record."

Gibbs interrupts her, smiling, his bright eyes fixed on her like she's the only one in the room. "I can't believe we survived to be together."

Bobby Jealousy doesn't advertise its marriage onstage, but it becomes recognizable when you witness the stagy cover of Jimmy Soul's "If You Want to Be Happy," or when Ellis fixes Gibbs' hat or encourages him to zip up his pants. If there's a downside to being lifemates and bandmates, it's a matter of managing multiple roles.

"One night, me and Seth were lying in bed naked talking intimately about life, and he called me his bandmate. I was like, 'Whoa, Seth! I'd like you to think of me as your sexy lover first, your friend second, your bandmate third, and your wife fourth.'"

"I guess that's where it gets weird," chuckles Gibbs. "I've got to know when to turn the business off. We get mixed up sometimes."

Forget about money and success. Those ideals have nothing to do with music anymore, and those who pursue them deserve the failure that awaits them. For small-time bands, the only thing that matters now is the bond. The band's your team, your gang, your family. At the heart of that pact beats friendship and love. These two local underground bands, joined at the lips by Sabrina Ellis, embody those ideals. ■

Bobby Jealousy celebrates Valentine's Day tonight (Thursday) at Red 7, while A Giant Dog digs up its Bone, Friday, Feb. 15, at Hotel Vegas. Look also for Bobby Jealousy at the Chronicle's Paper Cuts music series on Feb. 26: austinchronicle.com/paper-cuts.

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CIGARETTES

What Made Milwaukee Famous *You Can't Fall Off the Floor*

As evidenced by the last five years, What Made Milwaukee Famous isn't afraid to make us wait, often with little live play in between. Following the locals' pair of full-lengths for Seattle indie label Barsuk, 2008's *What Doesn't Kill Us* being the most recent, Michael Kingcaid & Co. return with third LP *You Can't Fall Off the Floor*, marked by the revamped quintet's dramatic disposition. In the midst of what's become a permanent musical sea change, each WMMF album takes on a different approach to polished pop. "Silence Is the Loudest Answer" opens with intended austerity, a subtle, guitar-plucked march that slowly swells to a well-calculated and sudden end. What follows hovers somewhere between unapologetically hooky guitar rock and twanged-out country revival. The steel guitar weep of "Sorry (Again)," fuzzy bass sludge driving "Just Run," and elated horns on "Down" play out as if three altogether different acts cut them. The album thus zooms between influences, all executed aptly, but not quite seamlessly. Maybe to its own chagrin, the band remains at its prime when working within the lighter pop that marked its early career. Acoustic whirls and delicate harmonies on "Rosewood," guesting Ottawa's Kathleen Edwards, make for a starkly elegant highlight, shedding some of the verbose tendencies of *You Can't Fall Off the Floor*. Yet the clear album centerpiece the first time through and many listens afterward remains "Gone and Done It Now," smartly ornamented but at its base an irresistible, anthemic pop song.

★★★

— Abby Johnston



TEXAS PLATTERS

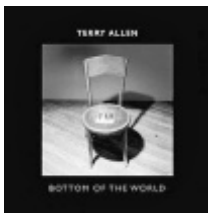
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Terry Allen *Bottom of the World*

His first album in 14 years, *Bottom of the World* picks up right where Terry Allen left off. He's been busy with multimedia installations, but each side of his Panhandle-fed artistry, be it visual, musical, or theatrical, feeds another. *Bottom of the World* opens with a reimagining of the enigmatic "Four Corners," keeping alive the tradition of including a song from his 1975 debut *Juarez* on each following album. With no drums it's perhaps his most intimate recording to date, and there are a number of fever dreams that could only come from Allen's fecund imagination. "Do They Dream of Hell in Heaven" he asks, sonic clouds floating past. Long time Lubbock compadres Lloyd Maines and Richard Bowden add gray-light pedal steel and fiddle respectively, along with Bukka and Sally Allen, Terry's son and daughter-in-law, and Brian Standefer, all of whom bring their magical Screen Door Music shadings to play. Admittedly not for everyone, Allen's music continues to breathe rare air, both haunting and delightfully thought provoking.

★★★★★

— Jim Caligiuri



to the Walls" and "God Will Be the One to Blame," but shines brightest when negotiating the jagged angles of "Brownstar," Becker's cleanly picked riffs locked into Sandlin's nimble bash-n-crash. Elsewhere, "Goon," "32," and "Another Black Beauty" turn on Becker's distinctive ability to mesh Sixties R&B and heartland folk rock with Captain Beefheart-like twists, skewing left when you expect them to go straight and keeping your cochlea on its toes. Challenging enough to require time spent, but shot through with memorable melodies and soulful rock & roll verve, 2 rolls like thunder and aches with heart.

★★★

— Michael Toland

Dustin Welch *Tijuana Bible* (Super Rooster)

It's taken Dustin Welch nearly four years to release the second installment of his proposed debut trilogy. He spent that time shaping the songs on *Tijuana Bible* into something distinct, yet with a tendency towards themes and sounds similar to those on his bow *Whisky Priest*. The songs aren't overtly religious or even spiritual. Instead, his songs bear a Southern Gothic edge, and he succeeds with a palette of sounds ranging from forcefully Celtic and windblown rock to deeply introspective. As with his first disc, a plethora of local talent assists Welch. Besides producer Eldridge Goins, there's Bukka Allen, Trisha Keefer, Jeremy Nail, and Drew Smith, which makes the album a fair representation of Austin's root sound. Except for seasick pirate rant "Lost at Sea," Welch shares perpetually riveting stories including twangy anthem "Party Girl," a floating "St. Lucy's Eyes," and the devilishly stomping title track.

★★★

— Jim Caligiuri



RTB2 2

Denton's Ryan Thomas Becker stirs many pots, but RTB2, his long-running duo with drummer Grady Don Sandlin, results in the most satisfying stew. The pair's second full-length and fifth overall, 2 motors on two things: the musicians' telepathic interplay and Becker's songwriting excellence. The twosome burns on ass-kicking rockers "Wire



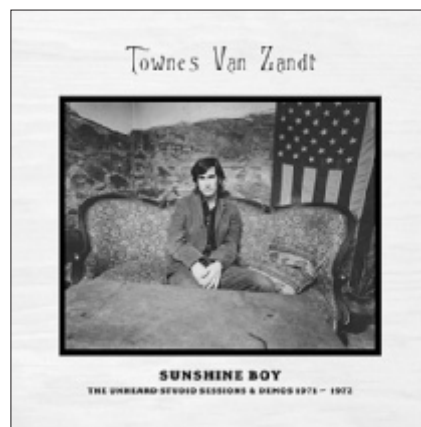
Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble *Texas Flood* Texas Flood Legacy Edition (Epic/Legacy)

Shocking. Thirty years ago feels almost ancient now, prehistoric. Like it might as well be the 1930s, when Delta blues inventors Charley Patton and Robert Johnson still walked the earth. And yet, 1983 not only stirred up those ghosts with Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble's debut *Texas Flood*, the whole of the blues sat up, if not from beyond the grave then from its armchairs and obscurity to the bandstands in-between. T-Bone Walker, Johnny Winter, and Jimmie Vaughan in the Fabulous Thunderbirds defined the Lone Star bloodline of the genre's (oaken) family tree, but in the latter's Dallas-born little brother, the blues strode onto MTV. Even the acronym fit: SRV. If any century begins and/or ends within a 20-year swing either way of the actual dateline, our post-millennial tech era begins at the union of music and television. With his trademark sombrero pulled low and serape thrown back, Austin's Stevie Ray Vaughan, Tommy Shannon, and Chris Layton brought Muddy, Jimi, and the three Kings (B.B., Albert, and Freddie) into the digital age on the frontman guitarist's hurricane flurry of shuffles, slides, and New Wave-defying string-bending. This 30th anniversary *Texas Flood Legacy Edition* finds those grooves still worn down to the nub, but its opening combo of "Love Struck Baby" and "Pride and Joy" today sounds like standards – pop songs composed for Stratocasters. Dizzying solos on the title track signal the emergence of a new standard bearer, warmth and facility of tone emptying into a blistering wormhole of blues. Howlin' Wolf cover "Tell Me" showcases Vaughan's woolly fusion of rhythm and lead, while huffing shuffle "Rude Mood" rifles an instrumental so silky fast and sure that it feels as though its author just invented the ballpoint pen. Languid backside book-end, "Lenny," and bonus track "Tin Pan Alley (aka Roughest Place in Town)" set like the sun. The second disc, an hour-long radio simulcast from that same year, plays out pleasingly raw, rough edges intact and Hendrix's "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)" connecting the dots for a new generation of blues lovers. Stevie Ray Vaughan died seven years later in a post-concert helicopter crash, and today Gary Clark Jr. assumes his mantle, but SRV birthed 21st century blues as sure as music defines the Texas state capital.

★★★

— Raoul Hernandez

Reissues



Townes Van Zandt *Sunshine Boy* (Omnivore)

Unlike other musical icons who left us too soon, there's been only a trickle of releases from the Townes Van Zandt estate since the Fort Worth-born singer-songwriter passed away on Jan. 1, 1997. *Sunshine Boy*, subtitled *The Unheard Studio Sessions & Demos 1971-1972*, rectifies the situation somewhat, not that what he recorded in his 52 years isn't enough. Nevertheless, listening to this 2-CD set is a bittersweet reminder of just how much Van Zandt, the poet, the bluesman, remains missed. The first disc contains 16 studio tracks recorded around the time of his *High, Low & In Between* and *The Late Great Townes Van Zandt* albums. The second disc compiles solo demo recordings. Between the two, most of his best tunes are here. He's at the peak of his powers on "Pancho & Lefty," "To Live Is to Fly," "White Freight Liner Blues," "Two Hands," and his doleful cover of the Rolling Stones' "Dead Flowers." Yet previously unheard tunes like the sinister sounding title track and the Lightnin' Hopkins rip "Diamond Heel Blues" add to the set's value. Hank Williams' biographer Colin Escott offers exceptionally insightful liner notes, which are accompanied by previously unseen photos from the time of the recordings. Overall, *Sunshine Boy* delivers a stirring reminder of Townes Van Zandt's genius, as if we could ever forget.

★★★★

— Jim Caligiuri

NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepherd



As if 9/11 and the resultant air travel restrictions had never happened, travelers for some reason continue to keep Transportation Security Administration agents busy at passengers' carry-on bag searches. From a TSA weekly summary of confiscations in January: 33 handguns, eight stun guns and a serrated wire garrote. Among highlights from 2012: a live 40mm grenade, a live blasting cap, "seal bombs" and six pounds of black powder (with detonation cords and a timing fuse).

CAN'T POSSIBLY BE TRUE

Spare the Waterboard, Spoil the Child: William Province, 42, was arrested in Jefferson County, Mont., in December and charged with waterboarding four boys, two of whom were his own sons, at his home in December. (Also in January, Kirill Bartashevitch, 52, was charged with making "terroristic" threats to his high-school-age daughter after he allegedly pointed his new AK-47 at her because her report card showed two B's instead of all A's. He said he had recently purchased the gun because he feared that President Obama intended to ban them.)

Emma Whittington, of Hutchinson, Kan., rushed her daughter to the ER in December when the girl, seven months old, developed a golf-ball-sized lump on her neck. Two days later, at a hospital in Wichita, a doctor gently pulled a feather out of the lump and hypothesized that it had been in the midst of emerging from her throat. Doctors said the girl probably swallowed the feather accidentally, that it got stuck in throat tissue, and that her body was trying to eject it through the skin.

A man with admittedly limited English skills went to a courthouse in Springfield, Mass., in December to address a traffic ticket, but somehow wound up on a jury trying Donald Campbell on two counts of assault. Officials said the man simply got in the wrong line and followed jurors into a room while the real sixth juror had mistakenly gone to another room. The jury, including the accidental juror, found Campbell guilty, but he was awarded a new trial when the mistake was discovered.

THE REDNECK CHRONICLES (TENNESSEE EDITION)

1) Timothy Crabtree, 45, of Rogersville, was arrested in October and charged with stabbing his son, Brandon, 21, in an argument over who would get the last beer in the house. 2) Tricia Moody, 26, was charged with DUI in Knoxville in January after a 10-minute police chase. The officer's report noted that Moody was still holding a cup of beer and apparently had not spilled any during the chase. 3) Jerry Poe, 62, was charged in a road rage incident in Clinton on Black Friday after firing his handgun at a driver in front of him "to scare her into moving" faster, he said. (Poe said he had started at midnight at one WalMart, waited in line unsuccessfully for five hours for a sale-priced stereo, and was on his way to another WalMart.)

SOUNDS LIKE A JOKE

Twin brothers Aric Hale and Sean Hale, 28, were both arrested on New Year's Eve in Manchester, Conn., after fighting each other at a hotel and later at a residence. Police said a 27-year-old woman was openly dating the two men, and that Sean thought it was his turn and asked Aric for privacy. Aric begged to differ about whose turn it was.

UNCLEAR ON THE CONCEPT

Voted in December as vice presidents of the U.N. Human Rights Council for 2013 were the nations of Mauritania and the Maldives, both of which permit the death penalty for renouncing Islam. In Mauritania, a person so charged has three days to repent for a lesser sentence. An August 2012 dispatch in London's *The Guardian* reported widespread

acceptance of slavery conditions in Mauritania, affecting as many as 800,000 of the 3.5 million population. Said one abolitionist leader, "Today we have the slavery (that) American plantation owners dreamed of (in that the slaves) believe their condition is necessary to get to paradise."

Non-medical employees of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center have been campaigning for union representation, suggesting that their current wages leave many workers dangerously close to poverty. Though raises have not materialized, UPMC (according to a November Pittsburgh City Paper report) has now shown sympathy for its employees' sad plight. In a November UPMC newsletter, it announced that it was setting up "UPMC Cares" food banks. Employees (presumably the better-paid ones) are urged to "donate nonperishable food items to stock employee food pantries that will be established on both (UPMC campuses)." One astonished worker's response: "I started to cry."

In December, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* revealed, through a public records check, that the appointed Collector of Revenue for St. Louis County has failed since 2008 to pay personal property taxes. Stacy Bailey and her husband owe taxes on three cars and in fact filed for bankruptcy in 2011. Bailey's boss, Director of Revenue Eugene Leung, told the *Dispatch* that he had checked Bailey's real-estate tax status but not personal property taxes. Nonetheless, he said, "Knowing what I know now, she's still the most qualified person for the job," among the 155 applicants.

PERSPECTIVE

First-World Problems: Before "cellulite" appeared in popular culture around 1972, almost no one believed the condition especially remarkable, wrote London's *The Guardian* in December. Similarly, the new concern about "wobbly" arms – flesh dangling loosely when a woman's arm is raised horizontally – seems entirely made-up. However, Marks & Spencer and other upscale British retailers now sell "arm corsets" to fashionably hold the skin tighter for sleeveless tops. Wrote the *Guardian* columnist, "I wish I didn't know that my arms weren't meant to wobble. I'd be happier."

ONE FOR THE ROAD

Cliche Come to Life: The Kerry, Ireland, county council voted in January to let some people drive drunk. The councillors reasoned that in the county's isolated regions, some seniors live alone and need the camaraderie of the pub, but fear a DUI arrest on the way home. The councillors thus empowered police to issue DUI permits to those targeted drivers. Besides, reasoned the councillors, the area is so sparsely populated that such drivers never encounter anyone else on the road at night. (The councillors' beneficence might also have been influenced, reported BBC News, by the fact that "several" of the five voting "yea" own pubs.)

Visit Chuck Shepherd daily at www.newssoftheweird.blogspot.com (or www.newssoftheweird.com).

Send your weird news to: Chuck Shepherd, PO Box 18737, Tampa, FL 33679 or weirdnewstips@yahoo.com. ©2012 Universal Press Syndicate

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S p.16
T Civics 101

C p.41
O Meal Times

N p.56
T Theatre
E Comedy

T p.58
A Dance
B Classical Music
L Visual Arts
E Gay Place

S p.59
T Litera

S p.60
T Community
I Out of Town
N Sports

I p.61
N Kids

S p.62
T Film

L p.70
I Music

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Valentine's Listings
austinchronicle.com/valentine

MUSIC:
Spray Paint
Trailer Space

COMMUNITY:
Year of the Snake Celebration
Chinatown Center, 10am-3pm

KIDS:
Sesame Street Live
Frank Erwin Center, 1 & 4:30pm

FILM:
56 Up
Stateside, 7pm

LITERA:
Michael Sieben
BookPeople, 7pm

MUSIC:
The Hives
Emo's East

CIVICS 101:
UT Energy Forum
Texas Union

THURSDAY
14

GAY PLACE: **One Billion Rising** Texas State Capitol, 10am-1pm
FILM: **Purple Rain** Galaxy Highland, 7:45pm
THEATRE: **Strike: Martial Arts and I Am the Machine Gunner** Salvage Vanguard Theater, 8pm
COMMUNITY: **HAAM Sessions** Driskill Hotel
FILM: **Midnight in Paris** Blue Starlite Drive-In, 11:15pm

FRIDAY
15

VISUAL ARTS: **Face to Face** Harry Ransom Center, 7pm
LITERA: **Mortified Valentine's Special** Spider House Ballroom, 8pm
OUT OF TOWN: **Public Star Gazing** Fountainwood Observatory, 8-10:30pm
MUSIC: **Joe Lovano & Dave Douglas Sound Prints Quintet** Bass Concert Hall
FILM: **Eva From Argentina** EsquinaTango, 8:30pm
GAY PLACE: **Soul Shake Love's Hangover Pajama Party** Lipstick24, 9pm

SATURDAY
16

FILM: **Return to Oz** Alamo Ritz, 11am
MUSIC: **KOOP Birthday With Johnny Bush** Antone's
MUSIC: **Churchwood** Hole in the Wall
GAY PLACE: **Beargasm** The Iron Bear, 9pm-2am
COMEDY: **Cameron Buchholtz** Velveeta Room, 9:30 & 11:30pm

SUNDAY
17

FILM: **Zombieland** Alamo Ritz, 4pm
SPORTS: **TXRD Lonestar RollerGirls** Palmer Events Center, 6pm
GAY PLACE: **Naked Girls Reading** The Vortex, 8pm
MUSIC: **Rakim** Mohawk
MUSIC: **Neurosis** Emo's East

MONDAY
18

MUSIC: **Weee Fest** Frontier Bar
FILM: **Paul Williams Still Alive** Alamo Ritz, 10:30pm

TUESDAY
19

KIDS: **A Day in Africa** Willie Mae Kirk Branch Library, 2pm
SPORTS: **UT Baseball** UFCU Disch-Falk Field, 6pm
MUSIC: **Dave Mason** One World Theatre, 7 & 9:30pm
FILM: **This Is Not a Film** Alamo Village, 7pm
CLASSICAL MUSIC: **Wu Man & the Knights** Bass Concert Hall, 8pm
COMMUNITY: **Pretty Things Peepshow** The North Door, 8-10:30pm

WEDNESDAY
20

CIVICS 101: **10-1 Commission** Austin Firefighters Association, 5-8pm
VISUAL ARTS: **Texas Modernism** Umlauf Sculpture Garden, 6pm
FILM: **25 Watts** Mexican American Cultural Center, 8pm
MUSIC: **Ra Ra Riot** The Belmont

THURSDAY
21

GAY PLACE: **Texas Observer's Rabble Rouser** The White Horse, 6pm
FILM: **High Noon** Belo Auditorium (UT campus), 7pm
MEAL TIMES: **Farm Fresh Dinner** Swoop House, 7pm
MUSIC: **No Idea Festival** Performance Loft, 8pm
MUSIC: **Graveyard** Emo's East

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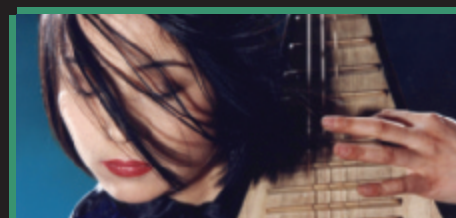
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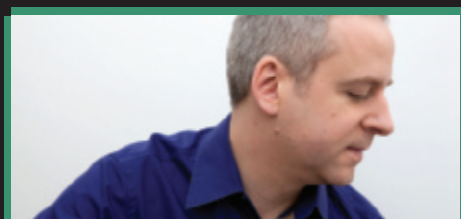
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 DAVE DOUGLAS
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FEB 15 | 8 PM | BASS CONCERT HALL



**THE KNIGHTS
 WITH WU MAN, PIPA**

FEB 19 | 8 PM | BASS CONCERT HALL



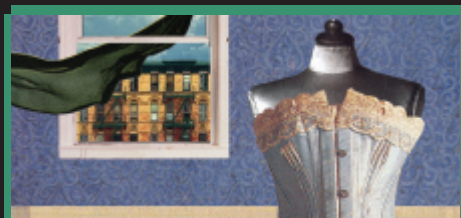
**JEREMY DENK
 PIANO**

FEB 27 | 8 PM | BASS CONCERT HALL



**MASTERS OF
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FEB 28 | 8 PM | BASS CONCERT HALL



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February
22



THEATRE

OPENING

MEASURE FOR MEASURE William Shakespeare's last (and darkest) comedy is directed by Michelle Polgar and features Jeremy Lee Cudd, Greg Holt, and David Stahl tromping the bardic boards at St. Ed's. *Feb. 14-24. Thu.-Sat., 7:30pm; Sun., 2pm. Mary Moody Northern Theatre at St. Edward's University, 3001 S. Congress, 448-8484. \$20 (\$15, students, seniors, SEU community). www.stedwards.edu/theatre.*

STRIKE: MARTIAL ARTS AND I AM THE MACH-GUNNER The celebrated Russian playwright Yuri Klavdiev's pair of gritty shows, directed by **Graham Schmidt**, is held over from Breaking String's **New Russian Drama Festival** this weekend. Because you want to see **Joey Hood** as a thug with a heart, among other things – here's another few chances for you. *Thu.-Sat., Feb. 14-16, 8pm. Salvage Vanguard Theater, 2803 Manor Rd., 474-7886. www.breakingstring.com.*

OTHELLO William Shakespeare's timeless tale of love, deceit, jealousy, and murder. Directed by Jeff Hinkle for City Theatre. *Feb. 21-March 17. Thu.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 5:30pm. City Theatre, 3823-D Airport, 524-2870. \$15-25 (\$10, Thursdays). www.citytheatreAustin.org.*

ONCE THERE WERE SIX SEASONS Austin's own Glass Half Full Theatre, a cadre of virtuoso puppeteers, offers this workshop production of their newest work, wherein the acclaimed company manipulates vast miniature landscapes, highlighting how the accelerating pace of human-caused climate change has outstripped the ability of traditional cultures to adapt their lifestyles. Written and directed by **Caroline Reck**, performed by people who seem able to bring dead objects to life. *Feb. 21-March 3. Thu.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 6pm. Salvage Vanguard Theater, 2803 Manor Rd., 474-7886. \$12-20 (pay what you can, Feb. 24). www.glasshalfthelater.com.*

RICHARD II This production of Shakespeare's not-frequently-seen tragedy, directed by Christina Gutierrez, is partly an exercise in probability, as which actor – Kevin Gates or Aaron Black – plays which main role will be decided each night by the toss of a coin. Holy Two-Face, Batman, these are some Bardic shenanigans! Note, though, that the **Poor Shadows of Elysium** company is otherwise quite serious here. *Thu.-Sat., Feb. 21-March 9, 8pm. The Curtain Theatre, 7400 Coldwater Canyon. \$15. www.poorshadows.com.*

A STEADY RAIN This **Keith Huff** drama is inspired by actual events involving two police officers, a Vietnamese boy, and serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer. Starring **Kenneth Wayne Bradley** and **Tom Green** as two cops getting to the bottom of things in an interrogation room, directed by **Melissa Livingston** for **A Chick and a Dude Productions**. *Thu.-Sat., Feb. 21-March 9, 8pm. Hyde Park Theatre, 511 W. 43rd, 921-4264. \$10-\$25. www.achickandadude.com.*

CLOSING

33 VARIATIONS Dave Steakley directs **Moisés Kaufman**'s drama in which a present-day music-scholar mother struggling with her daughter is contrasted with Ludwig van Beethoven struggling with the demands of his genius. Zach Theatre's got somebody coming in from New York to play Beethoven, but this show stars **Beth Broderick** and pianist **Anton Nel**. *Through Feb. 17. Wed.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 2:30pm. Zach Theatre, 1510 Toomey, 476-0541. \$25-65 (\$18, student rush tickets). www.zachtheatre.org.*

ALMOST, MAINE The Trinity Street Players present John Cariani's romantic comedy, directed by Cathy Jones, just in time to spark your Valentine's Day dreams. *Through Feb. 17. Fri.-Sat., 7:30pm; Sun., 2:30pm. 901 Trinity, 402-3086. www.trinitystreetplayers.com.*

ONGOING

THE PICNIC PLAYS: READINGS ON SUNDAYS The **Paper Chairs** company presents free staged readings of plays they're considering for production. Most of these gems are locally scripted, all of them voiced by a sharp cast, each in a different venue every Sunday in February. **THERAPY 11LV42** by Dallas Tate; *Sun., Feb. 17, 2pm; Frazier & Johnson Dentistry, 7333 E. Hwy 290.* **Murder Ballad Murder Mystery: Redux** by Elizabeth Doss; *Sun., Feb. 24, 2pm; Longbranch Inn, 1133 E. 11th. 520-6128. Free. www.facebook.com/paperchairs.*

OTHER DESERT CITIES Jon Robin Baitz's acclaimed drama – his Broadway debut in 2011 – is a complex of family secrets, lies, and betrayals playing out against a backdrop of Californian affluence and restraint. The cast boasts the talents of Lara Toner, Babs George, Rick Roemer, Jacob Trussell, and Bernadette Nason – directed by **Don Toner** for **Austin Playhouse**, currently staging productions in Highland Mall. *Through Feb. 24. Thu.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 5pm. 6001 Airport. 476-0084. \$28-37 (student discounts available). www.austinplayhouse.com.*



Joshua Jay: Tragic Magic

JOSHUA JAY: TRAGIC MAGIC The internationally acclaimed magician and lecturer Joshua Jay offers a presentation on the fascinating lives and deaths of magicians, their assistants, and audience members – with an emphasis on Jewish magicians throughout history. Bonus: the man's own sleight-of-hand work.

Tue., Feb. 19, 7pm. Jewish Community Association of Austin, 7300 Hart, 735-8000. \$15-18 (\$8, students, seniors). www.shalomaustin.org/magic.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (ABRIDGED) The hilarious Long-Singer-Winfield deconstruction and twisting of Sweet William's oeuvre gets a fresh airing from the Paradox Players, featuring Jason O'Brien, Cameron Bergeron, and Michael Jastroch (!) under the direction of Ben Schave. *Through Feb. 24. Fri.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 3pm. First Unitarian Universalist Church, 4700 Grover, 452-6168. \$15 (\$10, students, seniors). www.paradoxplayers.org.*

DESIGN FOR LIVING This Austin Shakespeare production of Noël Coward's provocative comedy of 1933, directed by **Ann Ciccolella**, stars **Martin Burke**, **Helen Merino**, and **Michael Miller** as a romantically entangled trio of artists. Featuring chanteuse **Kara Bliss** and pianist **Jason Connor** performing Coward songs. *Through Feb. 24. Thu.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 3pm. Long Center for the Performing Arts, 701 W. Riverside, 474-5664. \$17-34. www.austinsakespeare.org.*

BETRAYAL **Harold Pinter**'s heartwrenching drama about an adulterous seven-year affair that's presented backward – from end to beginning – is directed by Andrew Black for Chaotic Theatre Company. *Through March 2. Thu.-Sun., 8pm. The Off Center, 2211-A Hidalgo, 476-7833. \$15. www.chaotictheatre.org.*



Sloppy Sean

FRONTERAFEST 2013: BEST OF THE FEST! FronteraFest's all over for another year, people, except for this **Short Fringe: Best of the Fest** part – and I'm glad to tell you that any night of this lineup is worth seeing, because you'll laugh, you might cry, you will be extremely fucking entertained at all times. [Full disclosure: I helped decide which shows got to be presented again this week.] And "Austin's Best Monologist" – it's true! – **Steven Tomlinson** debuts his new "How to Use Evernote" piece in the Wild Card Bill. You'd best hurry, though, because these nights (and one matinee) of no-fail theatrical enjoyment are selling out so fast you'd think they were Tim Doyle prints or something! See website for full schedule details. *Thu.-Sat., Feb. 14-16, 8pm. Hyde Park Theatre, 511 W. 43rd, 479-PLAY. www.fronterafest.org.*

TRU Jaston Williams, known to many Austinites as That One Greater Tuna Actor, is directed by **Larry Randolph** in this revealing and humorous Jay Presson Allen play about Truman Capote. Back at Zach after 12 years – by popular demand! *Through March 10. Thu.-Sat., 8pm; Sun., 2:30pm. Zach Theatre, 1510 Toomey, 476-0541. \$40. www.zachtheatre.org.*

AUDITIONS

HIT The gangster-riddled *Hit* that was an award-winning hit for **A Chick and a Dude** returns, all revamped for the next clip in May. They're looking for a man (age: 40-60) to play the role of Ervin. Send headshot and résumé for appointment. *Sat., Feb. 23. achickandadude@gmail.com.*

COMEDY

IN THE CLUBS

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

Felipe Esparza Out of the streets of East L.A. – OK, maybe not the streets, but at least the neighborhood of Boyle Heights – comes a man ... a funny man ... a man so funny that he won NBC's *Last Comic Standing* in 2010. Or maybe you caught this popular up-and-comer's recent one-hour special on Showtime? Anyway, you can catch him here this weekend. *Feb. 20-23. Wed.-Thu., 8pm; Fri.-Sat., 8 & 10:30pm. \$9-19.*

Leanne Morgan From Appalachia to San Antonio by way of comedy stardom? You go where you wanna go when you can make people laugh the way this woman does. **Chip Chantry** opens. *Feb. 14-16. Thu., 8pm; Fri.-Sat., 8 & 10:30pm. \$9-19.*

COLDTOWNE THEATER 4803-B Airport, 814-TOWN. www.coldtowntheater.com.

This Week in Coldness: They're right there on Airport Boulevard, where the goodness is funky and the funk is getting good. **The Mating Game** Who wants to get it on? *Thu., 8:30pm. \$5.* **The Hustle Show** Sketch, sketch, and sketch! *Thu., 10pm.* **Bad Boys**, featuring improv by boys who are, well, somewhat rude, let's say. *Fri., 8:30pm.* **Live at ColdTowne** is stand-up comedy. *Fri., 10pm.* **Sci-Fi Saturdays** Getcher alienated, laser-gun improv right here, folks! Quant Suff! *Sat., 8:30pm.* **The Frank Mills** and their smart, character-driven improv, run rampant with **Midnight Society**. *Sat., 10pm.* **Midnight Special** and **Gong Show** *Sat., 11pm.* And don't forget the rest of the week: stand-up with the **Jam** (with **Oh, Science!** on Sundays, **Maggie Maye's** stand-up mic on Mondays, the ongoing **Stool Pigeon** on Tuesdays, improv antics with **Miller and Purselly** on Wednesdays, and – yes, check the website!

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

Esther's Follies Musical comedy skits, magic, and a political satirical revue with the bustling backdrop of Sixth Street on view through the stagefront window! And now the gang's getting goofy with February's **Liplocks & Gridlock** show: "DC – The Musical!" and "Hilary's Turn" and "2013, Gangnam Style!" and more – new skits and classics bring the laughs all evening long. Bonus: the large-scale illusions and arch antics of magician **Ray Anderson**. Reservations recommended. *Thu., 8pm; Fri.-Sat., 8 & 10pm. \$22-27.*

THE HIDEOUT THEATER 617 Congress, 476-0473. www.hideouttheatre.com.

It's Hideostrageous! Here's your one-stop emporium of laughter and sweet coffee drinks Downtown, run like a brilliant clockwork made from Del Close's skull. **Love Is a Funny Thing** Improv! Chocolates! Flowers! A Valentine's special that provides too

much fun for your and your sweetheart to do other than fall even more madly in love! *Thu., 8pm. \$30.* **The TV Set** Ripped from the boob tube's greatest hits. *Fri., 8pm. \$5.* **The Spectacle** presents "Best of Austin" winners **Parallogrammophonograph** with **Two Guys from Yonkers**. *Fri., 10pm. \$12.* **FANDOM: Improved Fan Fiction** A different 'verse improvised each week! Now: **Harry Potter** *Sat., 6 & 8pm. \$12.* **Maestro** It's improviser against improviser, a whole stage full of them, battling for victory. *Sat., 10pm. \$12.* **Another Weekender** brings the students and **Elevator Action**. *Sun., 8pm. \$5.*

INSTITUTION THEATER 3708 Woodbury, 895-9580. www.theinstitutiontheater.com.

It's Institutional! Lovefest If you love love, then you'll love loving this show: three different troupes improv-riffing on all things couplish and relational. Post-coital badinage? Love in the apocalypse? Missed connections? Yes. *Fridays, 8pm, through Feb. 22. \$12.* **The Crapshoot** Roxy Castillo and Jon Mendoza host a show that combines the best and worst parts of stand-up and improv. *Fridays, 10pm. \$5.* **Bitterfest** Like "Lovefest," but for the broken-hearted and disgusted. Someone done you wrong, but this will do you right. *Saturdays, 8pm. Through Feb. 23. \$12.* **Triple Scoop** Three diff improv troupes, hosted by Paul Shotwell. *Saturdays, 10pm. \$5.*

NEW MOVEMENT THEATER 616 Lavaca, 788-2669. www.newmovementtheater.com.

The New Movement It's the laugh-packed *underground*, literally, rocking all subterranean there at the corner of Seventh and Lavaca. And this is what's up: the **Green Team** Sketch show brought to you by Ariel Greenspoon and Rob Gagnon. *Thu., 8pm. \$5.* **Block Party** *Thu., 9:30pm.* **Lights Up!** New troupe showcase, hosted by the Mean Girls. *Fri., 8pm. \$5.* **The Franchise** *Fri., 9pm. \$5.* **Heckle Factory** They want you to heckle, baby. *Fri., 10:30pm. \$5.* **Point of Order** Joe Faina hosts a comedy debate. *Sat., 9pm. \$5.* **Competitive Erotic Fan Fiction** OK, seriously, what part of that didn't you understand? *Sat., 10:30pm.* And look a week ahead to the **Megaphone Show: Wednesdays, 9:30pm. \$5. And there's **Clubhouse**, where **Kath Barbadoro** hosts the open mic. *Mondays, 9pm. Pay what you wish.***

VELVEETA ROOM 521 E. Sixth, 469-9116. www.thevelvetaroom.com.

Friday Night Fracas Chillin' with Kat Ramzinski The Kat is back for a new year with new guest comics. *9:30pm. \$5.* **The Late Slot** Katie Pengra presents the sweetest locals doing their nastiest, most offensive jokes. *11:30pm. \$5.*

Cameron Buchholtz This Oklahoma native has done "theater shows with the likes of Doug Benson and Todd Barry, rock clubs with Michael Ian Black and Neil Hamburger, and festivals such as Fun Fun Fun Fest and the Norman Music Festival." OK? OK! And **Mitch Mekulsia** opens. *Sat., Feb. 16, 9:30 & 11:30pm. \$5.*

BUT WAIT – THERE'S MORE!

AVALANCHE COMEDY & MUSIC This weekly showcase is hosted by the incredibly funny **Chris Cubas**, who unleashes a few of his own stand-up stylings and presents comedians from all over the country. And some of his favorite bands, too. *Mon., Feb. 18, 10pm. Holy Mountain, 617 E. Seventh, 391-1943. Free. www.holymountainaustin.com.*

THE SECOND CITY: LAUGHING MATTERS The current touring troupe from the legendary Chicago phenomenon that's brought the world, what, some of the finest sketch comedians and performers of the past several decades? Yes, that Second City, doing their thing here in the fanciest venue Downtown. *Feb. 20-23. Wed.-Thu., 8pm; Fri.-Sat., 7 & 9:30pm. Paramount Theatre, 713 Congress, 472-5470. \$38-48. www.austintheatre.org.*

GNAPITIME FRIDAY NIGHT SPECIAL Double Feature **Dynamite** Where else you gonna see Shannon McCormick & Shana Merlin as **Get Up**, followed by a fully improvised musical from **Girls Girls Girls?** Nowhere but here, friend. *Fri., Feb. 15, 8pm. \$5.* **No Shame Theatre** This is a performative open mic – a local classic – where you can strut your stuff before or after watching others strut their stuff. Their weird, maybe experimental, perhaps embarrassing stuff. With your host, **Kerri Lendo**. *Fri., Feb. 15, 10pm. Free. Salvage Vanguard Theater, 2803 Manor Rd., 474-7886. www.gnapitheatre.org.*

THE PIE AND EAR SHOW Improv and sketch veterans **Tyler Bryce**, **Les McGehee**, **Owen Egerton**, **Jodi Egerton**, **Megan Flynn**, and friends cut hilarious capers like in the old days, and who knows what short-form or long-form madness the classic troupe will stir up each week? *Wed., Feb. 20, 8pm. The Vortex, 2307 Manor Rd., 478-5282. \$10 (\$5, in advance). www.vortexrep.org.*

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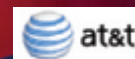


**GOODNIGHT
THE MUSICAL
MOON**

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Music Direction by **Allen Robertson**
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Jill Blackwood and Amy Downing

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PUMP PROJECT: THE DRAWING SHOW This second annual exhibition explores the many methods and styles of drawing through the work of 40 Austin artists. From the abstract to the hyperreal, with surfaces manipulated by pencil, marker, ink, charcoal, pastel, etching, burning, and puncturing. Recommended like wow: This show shouldn't be missed. *Through Feb. 16. Wed. & Sat., noon-5pm. 702 Shady, 351-8571. www.pumpproject.org.*

WARDENCLYFFE: OPTIC ORGY, A VISCERAL CELEBRATION OF UNCERTAINTY Jenna Foster's paintings incorporate forms that have physical properties as a point of departure, reinvented through intentional divergence from their recognizable properties and gravitational laws into newly biomorphic intermingling forms. *Through Feb. 16. 1101 Springdale. www.wardencllyffegallery.com.*

ONGOING

AMOA-ARTHOUSE Nick Cave: Hiding in Plain Sight Oh, those strange and glorious Soundsuits! **Andy Coolquitt: Attainable Excellence** The relentlessly inventive Austinite attains some excellence, alright. Both shows: *extended through Feb. 24. 700 Congress, 453-5312. www.amoa-arthouse.org.*

DAVIS GALLERY: NO MORAL JUDGMENT STANDS ALONE Contemporary collage artist and civil-rights attorney **Philip Durst** showcases a new body of work in this solo exhibition. Tell you what: If the man's lawyering is as good as his artwork, the people are in for good news. *Through March 2. 837 W. 12th, 477-4929. www.davisgalleryaustin.com.*

LORA REYNOLDS GALLERY: A ZONE OF REDUCED COMPLEXITY Here's a solo show of the work of Swedish artist **Carl Hammoud**, comprising graphite drawings, watercolors, oil paintings, and paper sculptures – capturing scenes and objects from laboratories, museums, libraries, archives, offices, and classrooms. *Through March 16. 360 Nueces #50, 215-4965. www.lorareynolds.com.*

MASS GALLERY: SCOTT EASTWOOD AND SCOTT GELBER This two-man exhibition is also the rebirth of MASS Gallery, featuring Eastwood's "They Never Die They Just Go to Sleep One Day" and Gelber's "DOOM II: Hell on Earth." *Through Feb. 23. 507 Calles #108. www.massgallery.org.*

MEXIC-ARTE: MASKED: CHANGING IDENTITIES More than 200 Mexican dance and popular masks from the museum's permanent collection and the Benson Latin-American Collection highlight vibrant colors and anthropomorphic designs reflecting Mexican traditions of indigenous craftsmanship, mythic narratives, and dance rituals. *Through May 5. 419 Congress, 480-9373. www.mexic-artemuseum.org.*

MEXICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER: HEAVEN & EARTH Here's a compelling reason to visit the MACC: an exhibition of new paintings by **Fidencio Duran**. Also, in the Community Gallery there: *The Big Red Bus*, a retrospective by music legend **Oscar Martinez**. *Through March 30. 600 River. www.maccaustin.org.*

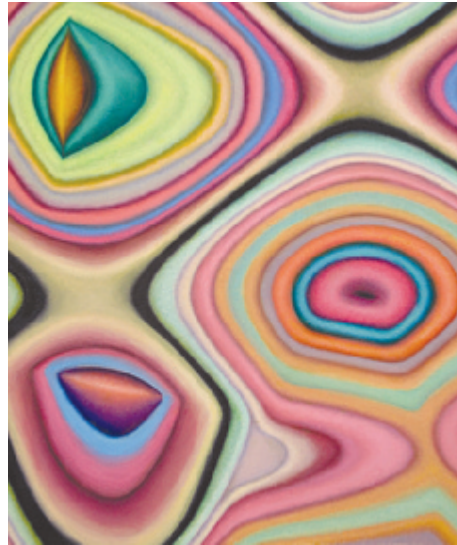
THE RUSSELL COLLECTION: CONFLUENCE **Michael Kessler**'s biomorphic and exquisitely textured paintings are matched with **Matt Devine**'s superb metalworks in this two-man exhibition. *Through Feb. 28. 1137 W. Sixth, 478-4440. www.russell-collection.com.*

TINY PARK: INFINITE PERFECTION This is a show of new works by **Joseph Phillips** – one-third of **Sodalitas**, three-thirds of Joseph Phillips – featuring an exploration of mankind's conflicting desires to embrace and control nature. These beautiful renditions are like something from the architectural-rendering appendix to the *Codex Seraphinianus*. *Through Feb. 23. Saturdays, noon-5pm, or by appointment. 1101 Navasota. www.tinyparkgallery.com.*

UP COLLECTIVE: MOST FOLKS Marcus Mataga draws almost exclusively from photographs, using ballpoint pens and highlighters to render his Instagram-popular portraits. This show features selections from more than 300 of his works. *Through Feb. 22. 2326 E. Cesar Chavez. 981-7539. www.upcollective.org.*

VISUAL ARTS CENTER UT's almost overwhelming fortress of creative beauty opens the new season with fresh exhibitions "Lead Pencil Studio: Diffuse Reflection Lab," "Diego Bianchi: Into the Wild Meaning," "New Prints 2012," "Overlapping Impressions: A Study in Contrasting Cognition," and "Zoe Berg: Til sjøs (At Sea)." *23rd and Trinity, 471-1108. Free. www.utvac.org.*

WALLY WORKMAN GALLERY: THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS **Malcolm Bucknall**'s imaginative drawings and paintings feature mash-ups of anthropomorphic creatures that inhabit Elizabethan courts and Wild West brothels alike: It's as if some Old Master in 1600s Rotterdam had tried to render the possibilities of genetic engineering and Photoshop in traditional pigments. Weirdly beautiful and recommended. *Through Feb. 23. 1202 W. Sixth, 472-7428. www.wallyworkmangallery.com.*



WOMEN & THEIR WORK: LOOK TO THE LEFT This new solo show by Houston's **Wendy Wagner** presents "a distinctive make-believe world using painting, drawing, ceramic, soft sculpture, and animation," inspired by childhood, pets, family, and fantasy. *Through March 14. 1710 Lavaca, 477-1064. www.womenandtheirwork.org.*

YARD DOG: BLOCKHEADS Small portraits of astronauts, cowboys, indians, saints, and *all the U.S. Presidents* – painted on wood blocks, from indefatigable Pennsylvania artist **Kurt Herrmann**. *Through March 3. 1510 S. Congress, 912-1613. www.yarddog.com.*

LITERA

READINGS, SIGNINGS, AND PERFORMANCES

BOOKWOMAN READINGS **Liza Wolff-Francis** The feminist poet (and blogger of *Matrifocal Point*) reads from her work, with an open mic to follow. *Thu., Feb. 14, 7:15pm. NovelMusic Tour: Sharisse & Lee Coulter* Book signing and acoustic music from this husband-and-wife duo. *Fri., Feb. 15, 6:30pm. Christina Arylo* presents *Madly in Love With Me: Becoming Your Own Best Friend*. *Thu., Feb. 21, 7pm. BookWoman, 5501 N. Lamar Ste. 105-A, 472-2785. Free. www.ebookwoman.com.*

TWO TRANSLATORS WITH A SWEDISH TATTOO A conversation with Steven Murray (translator of Stieg Larsson's *Millennium* trilogy) and Tiina Nunnally (translator of *Kristin Lavransdatter*). *Fri., Feb. 15, 6pm. Li'l Tex Auditorium, UT Commons Learning Center, 10100 Burnet Rd. 560-5444. \$12 (\$8, students). www.aatia.org.*

LUNCHTIME LIT AT THE O. HENRY MUSEUM with docent emeritus J.C. Elkins reading "The Marry Month of May." *Fri., Feb. 15, 1pm. O. Henry Museum, 409 E. Fifth, 472-1903. www.cityofaustin.org.*

MORTIFIED: VALENTINE'S SPECIAL The international phenomenon returns, with grown men and women confronting their past with "tales of their first kiss, first puff, worst prom, fights with mom, life at Bible camp, worst hand job, best mall job, and reasons they deserved to marry Jon Bon Jovi." *Fri.-Sat., Feb. 15-16, 8pm. Spider House Ballroom, 2906 Fruth, 480-9562. \$15 (\$12, in advance). www.getmortified.com.*

NAKED GIRLS READING Girls with a literary bent who love to read, naked? Exactly. Featuring, this time, readings by Austin burlesque favorites DoubleDown Dixie, Gemmi Galactic, Ruby Lamb, Zaftigg Von BonBon, and more. *Sun., Feb. 17, 8pm. The Vortex, 2307 Manor Rd., 478-5882. \$20 (\$15, in advance). www.vortexrep.org.*

MICHAEL SIEBEN: THE WONDERFUL WIZARD OF OZ The international pop-culture phenom – posters! skateboards! streetwear! graffiti! – that is Austin's own Michael Sieben has illustrated a gorgeous gift edition of L. Frank Baum's classic tale (published here by Harper Design), and he presents it at BookPeople tonight. *Tue., Feb. 19, 7pm. BookPeople, 603 N. Lamar, 472-5050. www.bookpeople.com.*

BEDPOST CONFESSIONS It's the popular monthly show where an array of writers and performers represent a wide range of sexualities through storytelling and performance. Featuring presentations by **Teacher Kate**, comedian **Holly Lorka**, singer **Brooke Axtell**, ASL interpreter **Mandi Wolfe**, and more – with your host, **Sadie Smythe**. *Thu., Feb. 21, 8pm. The North Door, 502 Brushy, 485-3011. \$10. www.bedpostconfessions.com.*

SCANLAN GALLERY: FAILED ATTEMPTS

AT GREATNESS Ah, disregard the humble title: **Jon Eric Narum**'s work is most often *successful* at painterly greatness – in a variety of styles: figurative pieces, abstracts, landscapes (OK: skyscapes, really; they call him the Sky Guy), and so on; he accommodates the differences via two distinct alter egos, and by now has built up a body of art so well-wrought and enchanting that you'll be surprised the Austin native's never had a solo show before. Exhibition: *through March 22. Reception: Sun., Feb. 24, 2-5pm. 6500 St Stephens Dr., 329-0964. www.theskyguy.com.*

WRITING/BOOK GROUPS

WRITE BY NIGHT Write, read, collaborate, or just kick back and dream: This is the writerly sanctum you've been looking for, right there near Downtown. See website for details. 322-5242. www.writebynight.net.

APL GRAPHIC NOVEL CLUB *Kick-Ass* by Mark Millar. *Wed., Feb. 20, 7pm. Jo's Coffee Downtown, 242 W. Second. 974-7400. Free.*

FINNEGANS WAKE Be prepared to read aloud from this masterpiece, thunderous friends. And to write in wretched abecedaria. *Tue., Feb. 19, 7pm. Twin Oaks Branch Library, 1800 S. Fifth. www.finnwakeatx.blogspot.com.*

OPEN MICS

NEO-SOUL LOUNGE Where great poetry gets its flavor. Hosted by South Flavas. *Thursdays, 9pm-12mid. 1050 E. 11th. \$6. www.southflavas.com/neosoul.html.*

OPEN MICS Austin Poetry Slam *Tuesdays, 8pm. Spider House Ballroom, 2906 Fruth. Ruta Maya Poetry Tuesdays, 6-9pm. 1209 S. First. Fair Bean Fridays, 5-7:30pm. Fair Bean Coffee, 22101 S. First. Full English Tea Room Thom hosts. Saturdays, 6-9pm. 2000 Southern Oaks. Spoken & Heard Sundays, 7-10pm. Kick Butt Coffee, 5775 Airport #725. More listed online!*

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If murder, mayhem, and voodoo are your thing, come meet Pamela Fagan Hutchins, the award winning author of bestseller *Saving Grace*, on Sunday February 23 from 2-4pm at Barnes & Noble in Round Rock. Pamela is a UT-Law grad and lives in Houston, where she writes mysteries, women's fiction, and relationship humor, including the USA Best Books winner on blended families, *How to Screw Up Your Kids*.

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poem of the issue

It's all very clear
i don't own anything
i'm not doing all this
everything is fine
all i have to do is
be amazed
and say thanks
and relax
but the brain is restless
and wants to take
a bite out of something.

— David Jewell

COMMUNITY

FREE TAX PREPARATION Go online for a list of locations, hours of operation, a list of forms to bring, and other helpful tips to prepare your tax returns with the help of a professional. Participants must make under \$50,000 a year. *Through April 15.* 610-7374. Free. www.foundcom.org/get-financially-stable/get-your-taxes-done.

BIG GUITARS FROM TEXAS REUNION They're getting the band back together for fellow guitar slinger Evan Johns. *Thu., Feb. 14, 8:30pm-12:30am. Antones', 213 W. Fifth, 320-8424. \$10.* www.antones.net.

HAAM SESSIONS AT THE DRISKILL Four hours of live music every second Thursday of the month hosted by Tje Austin. The event is free, with donations going to the Health Alliance for Austin Musicians. *The Driskill Hotel, 604 Brazos, 474-5911. Free.* www.driskillhotel.com/blog/tje-austin-hosts-the-haam-sessions.

JIGGLEWATTS BURLESQUE: SECRET RENDEZVOUS The shimmering troupe does what its name implies. *Fridays through Feb. 22, 8 & 11pm. Maggie Mae's, 323 E. Sixth, 478-8541. \$20-25.* www.thejigglewattsburlesque.com.

CELEBRATE URBAN BIRDS Austin Parks and Recreation and the Travis Audubon Society educate Austin about its local birds with activities, nature walks, a birds of prey demonstration, kids' activities, and more. *Sat., Feb. 16, 10am-2pm. Austin Nature & Science Center, 301 Nature Center Dr., 974-3888. Free.* www.austintexas.gov/ansc.

WOMEN.DESIGN.BUILD BIKE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP Register online and learn to keep your bicycle in tip-top shape. *Sat., Feb. 16, 10am-noon. Yellow Bike Project Headquarters, 1216 Webberville Rd. Free.* www.austinyellowbike.org.

Day Trips

BY GERALD E. MCLEOD

Sycamore Creek House Concerts are a great deal for musicians and music fans. In a hardscrabble valley between Dripping Springs and Pedernales Falls State Park, Thomas and Gail Chapmond have filled the hills with the sound of music.

Unlike most house concerts that are actually in someone's living room, the Chapmonds have built a beautiful stone "music barn" off a winding country road. The small stage is acoustically designed to project the sound over the small crowd and into the glowing sunset outside the open doors.

The audience is limited to about 70. For the 7pm show, folks arrive early carrying lawn chairs, a covered dish to share, and maybe an adult beverage. It's a relaxed and friendly house where regulars welcome newcomers.



GERALD E. MCLEOD

For Austin-based musicians, it's an opportunity to work close to home. All of the gate, usually a \$20 suggested donation, goes to the artist, as well as any CD sales. Singer-songwriter Carrie Elkin summed it up: "We spend about 300 nights a year on the road. I'm looking forward to sleeping in my own bed tonight. Thank you, Thomas and Gail."

I can't tell you exactly where the Sycamore Creek music barn is at; you have to go to www.sycamorecreekconcerts.com and join their email list to get an invitation and a map. Another house concert series in the area worth checking out is at www.rawhidetrailconcerts.com.

YEAR OF THE SNAKE CELEBRATION Lamar Boulevard's massive Chinese market goes all out for New Year's with dragon dance teams, martial arts performances, firecrackers, and lots of other family activities. While you're there, buy some non-Western foodstuffs to challenge your palate. *Sat., Feb. 16, 10am-3pm. Chinatown Center, 10901 N. Lamar, 343-3688. Free.* www.chinatownaustin.com.

AUSTIN SUSTAINABLE SWAP Bring the bounty from your garden or a craft you made, or just offer your services to folks in exchange for something you want or need. It's bartering at its best to keep waste at a minimum. Untraded items can be donated to local nonprofits. *Third Saturdays of the month, noon-4pm. Hot Mama's Espresso Bar, 2401 E. Sixth, 476-6262. Free.* www.austinsustainableswap.net.

CAPITAL AREA DENTAL FOUNDATION CASINO NIGHT Get dressed for an evening of vintage Hollywood glamour and gambling to help local volunteer dentists provide care to those in need. *Sat., Feb. 16, 6-11pm. Four Seasons Hotel, 98 San Jacinto. Individual tickets: \$175 (includes dinner and two drink tickets).* www.capitalareadentalfoundation.org.

GOLD A GO-GO Celebrate 50 years of Blanton's art awesomeness with this afterparty featuring cocktails, cupcakes, dancing, and a live performance from Kathy Valentine of the Go-Gos. *Sat., Feb. 16, 9-11:30pm. The Blanton Museum of Art, 200 E. Martin Luther King Jr., 475-6013. \$150 (\$125, members).* www.blantonmuseum.org.

AUSTIN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE RALLY Thousands are converging on the National Mall to rally for action on climate change and to express displeasure with the Keystone XL pipeline. For those who can't make it to the district, visit this Austin outpost instead. *Sun., Feb. 17, 2pm. Fifth & Lamar. geoffry.martin1211@gmail.com, www.facebook.com/events/121998384644026.*

WEIGHT LOSS SURGERY SEMINAR Let the experts explain your options for losing excess fat. *Tue., Feb. 19, 6:30pm. St. David's Medical Center, 919 E. 32nd, 476-7111. Free. assist@christianpr.com.*

TRAGIC MAGIC Joshua Jay tells the tales of magicians, their assistants, and audience members who died tragically and magically. Jay will also showcase some of his award-winning sleight of hand. *Tue., Feb. 19, 7pm. Dell Jewish Community Center, 7300 Hart, 735-8030. \$15 (\$10, members).* www.shalomaustin.org/magic.

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY MEETING Learn to make a seed bank worth bragging about. *Tue., Feb. 19, 7pm. Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve, 805 Capital of TX Hwy. N., 453-2289. Free.* www.npsot.org/Austin.

PRETTY THINGS PEEPSHOW The performers of yesteryear are given new life with the help of these talented (and saucy) ladies and gents. Vaudeville, burlesque, circus acts, and more thrilling acts for your peepers to peep. *Tue., Feb. 19, 8-10:30pm. The North Door, 502 Brushy, 485-3011. \$12 (\$10, advance).* www.ndvenue.com/event/215643-pretty-things-peepshow-austin/.

CAMP FIRE PROMISE TO CHILDREN AWARD LUNCHEON Recognizing those who support and fight for the well-being of local children. *Wed., Feb. 20, 11:30am. Mansion at Judges' Hill, 1900 Rio Grande, 349-2111. \$50.* www.camp-fire.org.

CONTESTING RACISM IN THE AFRO-AMERICAS This three-day conference explores the racial ideologies of Latin America and how they compare to a supposed "post-racial" United States. *Wed.-Fri., Feb. 20-22. The Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, 495-4520. Free.* www.facebook.com/events/481903808488513.

SON OF ENFIELD, FATHER OF TEXAS Elisha M. Pease came from Connecticut to Texas and went on to be the state's governor, a Unionist, and all-around shaper of 20th century Texas. Learn about his contentious tenure from historians and experts. *Wed., Feb. 20, 6:30pm. Thompson Conference Center, Red River & Dean Keeton, 275-6027. Free.* www.cle.austin.utexas.edu/informalclasses/index.php/son_of_enfield/?num=IC13312.

YOUNG WOMEN'S ALLIANCE MEETING Learn the importance and the art of mentoring with other members and nonmembers of the YWA. *Wed., Feb. 20, 6:30pm. Austin Women's Club/North-Evans Chateau, 708 San Antonio, 472-1336. \$10.* www.youngwomensalliance.org/en/cev/620.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND MUSIC Henry Mollicone of Oregon's Ernest Bloch Music Festival discusses the use of "Music to Build Bridges in Society." *Wed., Feb. 20, 7pm. Jones Auditorium, St. Edward's University, 3001 S. Congress. 233-1678. Free.* meris@stedwards.edu, www.think.stedwards.edu/kozmetksky/.

UT ENERGY FORUM Policy wonks and local energy enthusiasts get together to discuss energy from a cross-disciplinary perspective at this two-day enviro event. Come for the career fair, enter the research competition, or just learn the latest deets on fracking. Not "fracking" in the *Battlestar Galactica* sense of the word. Register online. *Thu.-Fri., Feb. 21-22. Texas Union, UT campus, 24th & Guadalupe. \$150 (\$85, academic/government; \$50, student).* www.utenergyforum.com.

AUSTIN RV EXPO Time to start planning your next cross-country vacation in the deluxe, supersized RV of your dreams. *Feb. 21-24. Thu., noon-8pm; Fri.-Sat., 10am-8pm; Sun., 10am-5pm. Austin Convention Center, 500 E. Cesar Chavez, 404-4000. \$8 (\$4, kids).* www.austinvexpo.com.

CAAAD AWARDS & LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION The Capital Area Asian American Democrats honor local activists and legislators with awards while also honoring the Year of the Snake with food and cultural performances. *Thu., Feb. 21, 6-8pm. Satay, 3202 W. Anderson. \$10.* www.austinasianadems.com.

WORLD TRAVEL 101 Plan your trip, from packing to transportation options to safety, with the help of the traveling experts from Hostelling International. *Thu., Feb. 21, 6:30pm. REI, 601 N. Lamar, 444-2294. Free.* www.hiusa.org/austin.

OUT OF TOWN

PUBLIC STAR GAZING The evening begins with a crescent moon, followed by the bright winter constellation wheel overhead and brilliant Jupiter with viewing through a variety of telescopes led by faculty, students, and volunteers. *Fri., Feb. 15, 8-10:30pm. Fountainwood Observatory, Southwestern University, Georgetown, 512/863-1242. Free.* www.southwestern.edu/offices/observatory.

HUG-IN AND VALENTINE BALL Come early and stay late to enjoy the picker's circles around the campfires, because you won't want to miss Gary P. Nunn as he fills the dance floor in the old dance hall. *Sat., Feb. 15, 9pm. Luckenbach, 830/997-3224.* www.luckenbachtexas.com.

ASIAN FESTIVAL Celebrate the Year of the Snake with the music, cultural performances, food, crafts, and artwork of the Asian cultures that contribute the diverse fabric of Texas life. *Sat., Feb. 16, 10am-5pm. Institute of Texan Cultures, San Antonio, 210/458-2300. \$5-10.* www.texancultures.com.

JAMES DICK IN CONCERT In a rare concert presentation, the Institute's founder and artistic director, James Dick, gives a piano recital of works by Bach, Beethoven, Francis Poulenc, and Sergei Prokofiev. *Sat., Feb. 16, 3pm. Festival Institute, Round Top, 979/249-3129. \$30.* www.festivalhill.org.



COURTESY OF UT

SPORTS

THE HOME TEAMS

✦ **TXRD LONESTAR ROLLERGIRLS** The Hellcats and Putas Del Fuego battle in the first banked-track Roller Derby bout of the year. *Sun., Feb. 17, 6pm. Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Rd.* www.txrd.com.

✦ **TEXAS STARS** The Stars host the Oklahoma City Barons for two nights back-to-back. *Fri., Feb. 15, 7:30pm; Sat., Feb. 16, 7pm. Cedar Park Center, 2100 Avenue of the Stars, Cedar Park, 512/600-5000. \$11-64 plus fees.* www.texasstars.hockey.com.

ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY Women's Basketball Vs. St. Mary's: *Thu., Feb. 14, 5:30pm.* Vs. Texas A&M-International: *Sat., Feb. 16, 2pm.* **Men's Basketball** Vs. St. Mary's: *Thu., Feb. 14, 7:30pm.* Vs. Texas A&M-International: *Sat., Feb. 16, 5pm.* **Softball** Vs. Incarnate Word: *Fri., Feb. 15, 1pm (doubleheader).* Vs. Colorado Christian: *Sun., Feb. 17, 11am (dh).* Diane Daniels Field. www.stedwards.edu/athletics.

✦ **UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS Baseball** UT has been selected in the Big 12 Preseason Coaches' Poll to finish third in the conference behind Oklahoma and TCU. Catch their regular-season openers against Sacramento State: *Feb. 15-17; Fri., 6:30pm; Sat., 2pm; Sun., 1pm.* Vs. UT Arlington: *Tue., Feb. 19, 6pm. Disch-Falk Field, 1300 E. MLK.* **Women's Basketball** Vs. Houston Baptist: *Wed., Feb. 20, 7pm. Frank Erwin Center, 1701 Red River. \$8-16.* **Men's Tennis** Vs. UT-Arlington: *Thu., Feb. 21, 1:30pm.* Vs. Texas A&M Corpus Christi: *Thu., Feb. 21, 6pm. Penick-Allison Tennis Center, 1701 Trinity St.* www.texasports.com.

WRESTLING STATE TOURNEY The best grapplers in Texas converge on Austin. See website for details. *Thu.-Sat., Feb. 21-24. Austin ISD Burger Center, 3200 Jones Rd.; and AISD Delco Center, 4601 Pecan Brook Dr. \$5-18.* www.uiltexas.org/wrestling/state.

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY Women's Basketball Vs. Sul Ross State: *Thu., Feb. 14, 5:30pm.* Vs. Howard Payne: *Sat., Feb. 16, 1pm.* **Men's Basketball** Vs. Sul Ross State: *Thu., Feb. 14, 7:30pm.* Vs. Howard Payne: *Sat., Feb. 16, 3pm.* **Softball** Vs. Trinity: *Fri., Feb. 15, 4pm (doubleheader).* Vs. George Fox: *Sun., Feb. 17, noon (dh).* Vista Ridge High School, Cedar Park. **Baseball** Rudy's Country Store & BBQ Tornado Classic: *Thu., Feb. 14.* Concordia vs. Texas Lutheran: *7pm; Fri., Feb. 15.* Concordia vs. Sul Ross State: *10am.* Texas Lutheran vs. Ozarks: *1pm;* Texas Lutheran vs. Sul Ross State: *4pm.* Howard Payne vs. Ozarks: *7pm; Sat., Feb. 16.* Concordia vs. Ozarks: *10am.* UT-Dallas vs. Sul Ross State: *1pm;* Concordia vs. Howard Payne: *4pm.* UT-Dallas vs. Howard Payne: *7pm; Sun., Feb. 17.* Concordia vs. UT-Dallas: *noon.* athletics.concordia.edu.

SOUTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY Men's Basketball Vs. U. of Dallas: *Fri., Feb. 15, 8pm.* Vs. Colorado College: *Sun., Feb. 17, 2pm.* **Women's Basketball** Vs. U. of Dallas: *Fri., Feb. 15, 6pm.* Vs. Colorado College: *Sun., Feb. 17, noon.* **Softball** Vs. Concordia: *Tue., Feb. 19, 1pm.* **Baseball** Vs. Centenary: *Sat., Feb. 16, 1pm; Sun., Feb. 17, 1pm.* Vs. Hardin-Simmons: *Tue., Feb. 19, 6pm.* www.southwesternpirates.com.

1,124th in a series. Collect them all. Day Trips, Vol. 2, a book of "Day Trips," is available for \$8.95, plus \$3.05 for shipping, handling, and tax. Mail to: Day Trips, PO Box 33284, South Austin, TX 78704.

HUSTON-TILLOTSON UNIVERSITY Men's

Basketball Vs. St. Thomas: *Thu., Feb. 21, 7:30pm. Women's Basketball* Vs. St. Thomas: *Thu., Feb. 21, 5:30pm. Mary E. Branch Gymnasium, 900 Chicon. Baseball* Vs. Howard Payne: *Tue., Feb. 19, 1pm.*

TEXAS STATE Men's Basketball Vs. UT-San Antonio: *Sat., Feb. 16, 4pm. Baseball* Vs. Missouri State: *Fri., Feb. 15, 2pm. Vs. Tulane: Sat., Feb. 16, 1pm. Vs. Sam Houston: Sun., Feb. 17, 3pm. \$6-9. Women's Tennis* Vs. UTSA: *Fri., Feb. 15, noon. Vs. Northwestern State: Sat., Feb. 16, 11am. Softball* Vs. North Texas: *Thu., Feb. 21, 5pm. Vs. Baylor: Thu., Feb. 21, 7pm. \$4-6.*

www.txstatebobcats.com.

RECREATION & FITNESS

BLONDES VS. BRUNETTES RECRUITMENT PARTY Powder-puff football league Blondes vs. Brunettes is looking for female players (and men as coaches and committee chairs) to join in on the fun. "Practices, happy hours, and 'gala' style events" lead up to the benefit game with proceeds donated to the Alzheimer's Association. *Wed., Feb. 20, 6-8pm. Molotov Lounge, 719 W. Sixth. Free. www.bvbaustin.com.*

COPA ESPERANZA 7v7 co-ed soccer tourney sponsored by the Austin Coed Soccer Association and benefiting Casa Marianella and Villa Esperanza. For more, see "Soccer Watch." *Sat., Feb. 16, 8am-5pm. North East Metro Park, 2703 E. Pecan St., Pflugerville. \$30 per player. www.acsasoccer.org.*

JACK & ADAM'S SHOP CORE WORKOUT Free classes featuring a "cross training combination of core and calisthenic workouts," Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:30-6:30pm. *Jack & Adam's Bicycles, 1210 Barton Springs Rd., 472-5646. Free. www.jackandadams.com.*

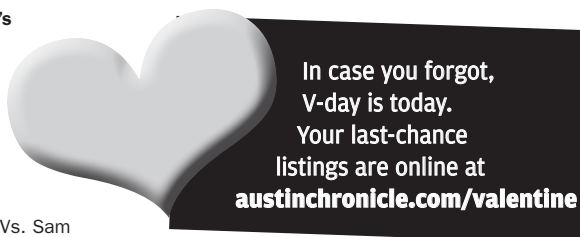
NFL VS. NFL ALUMNI BOWLING CHALLENGE NFL greets bowl to benefit the UT Neighborhood Longhorns Program. *Sat., Feb. 16, 1pm. Highland Lanes, 8909 Burnet Rd., 458-1215. www.nflaustin.org.*

AUSTIN TEXANS SOCCER ELITE INVITATIONAL For boys and girls. See website for a schedule and to register. *Sat.-Mon., Feb. 16-18. Old Settlers Park, 3300 E. Palm Valley Blvd., Round Rock, 512/218-5540. www.elitetournaments.com.*

CAPTAIN'S WEEKEND Learn the finer art of fish handling at 11am, 1pm, and 3pm, and kids can fish the stocked tank from 10am-3pm. Goodie bags for the first 50 kids. *Fri., Feb. 15. Cabela's, 15570 I-35, Buda, 512/295-1100. Free.*

RUNS, WALKS, & RIDES

TRAILS OF WESTERN OAKS VOLKSMARCH Leisurely walk with two 5-kilometer loops. *Sat., Feb. 16. Abiding Love Lutheran Church, 7210 Brush Country Rd., 928-9301. www.coloradriverwalkers.org.*



In case you forgot,
V-day is today.
Your last-chance
listings are online at
austinchronicle.com/valentine

THURSDAY NIGHT SOCIAL RIDE Between 250 and 300 cyclists are expected to take part in this friendly, socially paced ride of 12 to 15 miles. Riders will stop for cars and try not to block intersections along the way. This adult ride concludes at a different bar each week. *Fiesta Beach, N. I-35 and Lady Bird Lake. Free. www.socialcyclingaustin.com.*

LIVESTRONG AUSTIN MARATHON, HALF MARATHON & PARAMOUNT BREAK A LEG 5K 7:13 Congress. *Sun., Feb. 17, 7:30am. 692-0519. 5K: \$37 (\$32, youth.) www.austintheatre.org/5k.*

KIDS

HAPPY HERPETOLOGY Get your 3- to 4-year-old dressed for the outdoors so they can play nice with the turtles, salamanders, and lizards. *Thu., Feb. 14 & 21, 9am. Austin Nature & Science Center, 301 Nature Center Dr., 974-3888. \$10. www.austintexas.gov/ansc.*

SESAME STREET LIVE Surely Elmo is getting up to no good again, and we guess that there will be no shortage of singing, learning, and dancing as the Sesame crew works to restore order to their neighborhood. *Thu., Feb. 14, 7pm; Fri., Feb. 15, 10 am & 7pm; Sat., Feb. 16, 10:30am, 2, & 5:30pm; Sun., Feb. 17, 1 & 4:30pm. Frank Erwin Center, 1701 Red River, 477-6060. Free. www.uterwincenter.com.*

FARFALLE (BUTTERFLIES) Take an interactive, technological, and theatrical trip with the kids through the life cycle of a butterfly. *Feb. 14-24, except on Wednesdays. Scottish Rite Theater, 207 W. 18th, 472-5436. \$12.50. www.scottishritetheatre.org.*

FAERIE LUMINARIES Register online, dust off your fairy garb, and hang out in the woods making crafts. *Sat., Feb. 16, 9:30-11:30am. Zilker Botanical Garden, 2220 Barton Springs Rd. \$5. www.zilkerfaerie.com.*

GOODNIGHT MOON The iconic children's book comes to life in this musical complete with puppets, tap dancing bears, and a constellation light show. For ages 3 and up. *Saturdays through March 23, 11am & 2pm. Zach Theatre's Kleberg Stage, 1421 W. Riverside, 476-0594 x1. \$16 (\$14, kids). www.zachtheatre.org.*

FLYING THEATER MACHINE: SNOWBALL FIGHTS Two groups of improvisers go head-to-head, and the

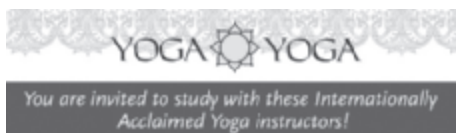
audience throws simulated snowballs at the team they like more. Kids are encouraged to get in on the improv action. *Sundays through Feb. 24, 2pm. Hideout Theatre, 617 Congress. \$7. www.hideouttheatre.com.*

KIDS' DAY-OFF CAMP: HAPPY CAMPERS Kids between the ages of 5 and 7 are invited to spend the day off school exploring nature. That means pitching a tent, roasting a marshmallow or two, and doing some hiking. *Mon., Feb. 18, 8am-5pm. Austin Nature & Science Center, 301 Nature Center Dr., 974-3888. \$45. www.austintexas.gov/ansc.*

ANANSI & THE GOLDEN BOX OF STORIES This puppet show tells the story of the original Spider-Man who quests to bring stories to the world. Will Anansi complete the tasks necessary to win the box of tales? *Tue., Feb. 19, 10:15am, Carver Library, 1161 Angelina; Wed., Feb. 20, 3:30pm, North Village Branch, 2505 Steck; Thu., Feb. 21, 10:15am, Manchaca Rd. Branch, 5500 Manchaca. Free. www.library.austintexas.gov.*

STORYTIME AT THE FRENCH LEGATION MUSEUM Activities and stories perfect for the 3- to 5-year-old in the brood. *First and third Thursdays of the month, 10am. French Legation Museum, 802 San Marcos St., 472-8180. Free. www.earlyaustin.org.*

A DAY IN AFRICA African history, music, stories, poetry, and dance courtesy of the African Safari Program. *Tue., Feb. 19, 2pm. Willie Mae Kirk Library, 3101 Oak Springs Dr. Free. www.library.austintexas.gov.*



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ROD STRYKER Feb 22-24
Puro Yoga® and the Gurus: The Principles of Enlightened Practice

Widely respected as one of the leading teachers of Yoga and Tantra, Rod Stryker will present an in-depth weekend that will help you fulfill the higher potentials of your practice. Open to all levels of dedicated students.

GURUCHARAN KHALSA, PHD March 2-10
The 21 Stages of Meditation

This transformational course is ideal for the long-time meditator as well as the beginning practitioner. No yoga experience or prior meditation practice is needed to benefit from this training.

SADIE NARDINI April 12-14
Core Strength Vinyasa Yoga Weekend

Transform your practice from the inside out with Ultimate Wellness Expert, author, and founder of Core Strength Vinyasa Yoga. Sadie reaches tens of thousands of students and teachers all over the world.

GONG CONCERT Friday, April 12

Join Mehtab and friends for a multi-gong extravaganza! All the gongs will be in the house in preparation for our yearly gong training!

LEARN TO PLAY THE GONG April 13-14

This 16-hour course, taught by Mehtab, author of *Gong Yoga*, Sri Bahadar and other master teachers will teach you techniques to play this transformational instrument, and explore the applications in meditation, therapy and relaxation. Limited space available.

SARAH POWERS April 26-28
Insight Yoga: The Four Jewels of an Enduring Practice

Join internationally revered meditation and yoga teacher for an experiential, fully balanced weekend of yoga practice. By clarifying the basic tenets of a skillful practice, Sarah will help us make meditation a joyous endeavor, reminding us of its essential place in our lives.

KUNDALINI YOGA AND MEDITATION RETREAT May 3-5

Join us at the Margaret Austin Center in Chappell Hill Texas for a weekend filled with Kundalini Yoga, deep meditation, fun, food & friendship. Over a dozen of your favorite teachers will participate including Mehtab and Guru Karam.

SIGN UP NOW TO RESERVE YOUR SPACE!

For detailed class and workshop descriptions, as well as teacher bios, visit us on the web and follow us

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WHERE CAN METRO RAIL TAKE ME THIS WEEKEND?

SESAME STREET LIVE Surely Elmo is getting up to no good again, and we guess that there will be no shortage of singing, learning, and dancing as the Sesame crew works to restore order to their neighborhood. *Thu., Feb. 14, 7pm; Fri., Feb. 15, 7pm. Frank Erwin Center, 1701 Red River, 477-6060. Free. www.uterwincenter.com*

JIGGLEWATTS BURLESQUE: SECRET RENDEZVOUS

The shimmying troupe does what its name implies. *Fridays through Feb. 22, 8 & 11pm. Maggie Mae's, 323 E. Sixth, 478-8541. \$20-25. www.thejigglewattsburlesque.com*

THE NEW MOVEMENT

It's the laugh-packed underground, literally, with live comedy – stand-up, improv, sketch – rocking all subterranean in the remodeled basement there at the corner of Seventh and Lavaca. 616 Lavaca, 788-2669. www.newmovementtheater.com

AMOA-ARTHOUSE

Nick Cave: *Hiding in Plain Sight – Oh, those strange and glorious Soundsuits!* Andy Coolquitt: *Attainable Excellence – The relentlessly inventive Austinite attains some excellence, alright. Both shows: Extended through Feb. 24. 700 Congress, 453-5312. www.amoa-arthouse.org*



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'til midnight

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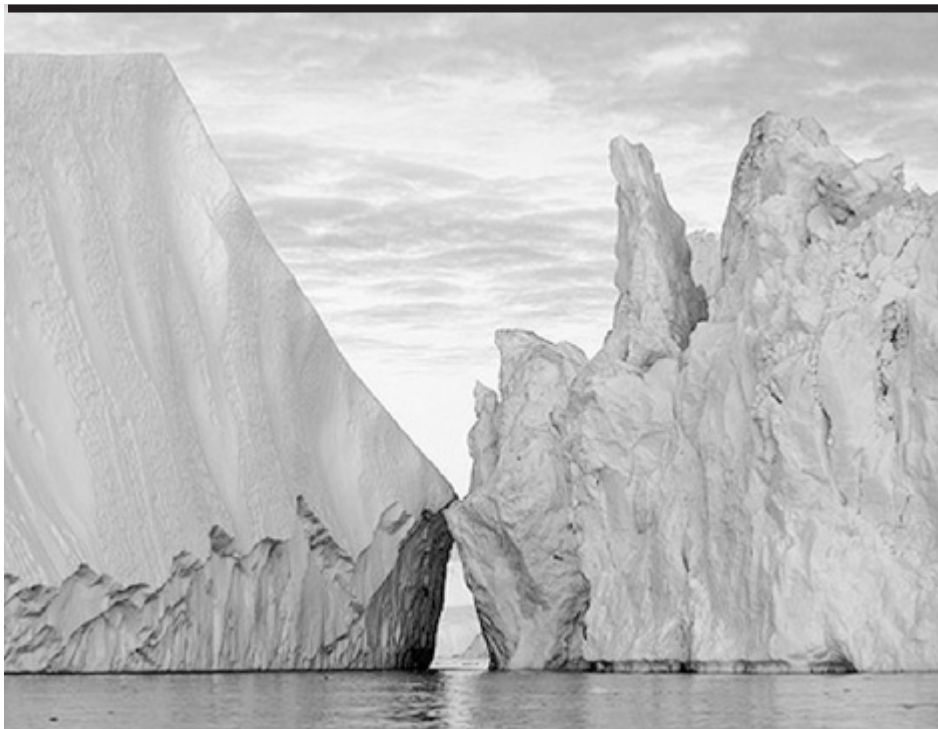
Soccer Watch BY NICK BARBARO

The **Austin Aztex** made their first 2013 roster announcement Wednesday – returning players include team captain **Zack Pope**, top scorer **Kristopher Tyrpak**, and assist leader **Jesus "Chuy" Cortes**, along with **Travis Golden** (starting central defender most of the season), **Leone Cruz**, **Justin Franz**, and **Josh Mikulewicz**. New additions to the squad: **Damian Rosales** (SMU), **Oumar Djiba** (Huston Tillotson), and Westlake High twin brothers **Tucker and Walker Hume** (Rollins), an attacker and defender who both stand 6 feet 5 inches. There'll be two more tryouts – a collegiate trial March 9-10, and open/community trial April 6 – see www.austinaztex.com for info. The season starts May 11 in Oklahoma City.

Gabriel Kadiev, a 19-year-old Chechnyan, became the first **Muslim** ever to play for the Israeli club **Beitar Jerusalem** last Sunday, despite violent protests prior to the game, including a fire that destroyed the team's offices two days before the game against Bnei Sakhnin, an Arab team whose players were escorted to and from the field by policemen on horseback. Kadiev received a standing ovation on entering, from Beitar supporters wanting to show that their majority is not racist. Beitar has strong ties to Israel's right-wing Likud party; their followers have included **Ariel Sharon**, **Ehud Olmert**, and **Benjamin Netanyahu**.

The **European Champions League** knockout stages kicked off this Tuesday-Wednesday, with no home wins among four games. Italian champs **Juventus** stole a 3-0 win at Glasgow Celtic; **David Beckham's** new team, **Paris Saint-Germain**, won 2-1 at Valencia; and **Manchester United** managed a 1-1 draw at **Real Madrid**, putting further pressure on Spain's proud champions, who are already pretty much out of the Spanish league race. This week (on FSC at 1:45pm), it's **Bayern Munich at Arsenal** on Tuesday, and **Barcelona at AC Milan** on Wednesday; the return legs follow two weeks later.

Quote of the month: U.S. National Team coach **Jurgen Klinsmann** to the *Wall Street Journal* on his 2006 German national team: "We said the only way was, we got to attack, we got to go forward, maybe it's in our DNA, maybe it was wrongfully in our DNA in two world wars. Who knows that? I don't know; I was not even born yet."



Chasing Ice

D: Jeff Orlowski. (PG-13, 84 min.)

The Earth's glaciers are dying – and not at a pace that was once called glacial. Global warming is causing the ice to melt at an ever-increasing rate,

and the consequences are already changing the shape of life on this planet. Most scientists predict that over the next few decades hundreds of millions of people around the globe who live in low-lying areas near water will be displaced by the oceans' rising volume. This documentary likens the situation to canaries in the coal mines: the harbingers of the geological devastation to come.

Daredevil *National Geographic* photographer James Balog decided that pictures might be worth more than words in sounding the alarm. He devised an ingenious study called the Extreme Ice Survey in which cameras were stationed at fixed locations in Iceland, Greenland, Alaska, and Montana, and programmed to take time-lapse pictures of the glaciers before them. The findings were astonishing. After three years, the glacial panoramas in most of these locations had melted to such a degree that they were unrecognizable. There had been a two-and-a-half-mile retreat over the course of three years. Even more alarming is the evidence that the rate is increasing: Over the last 10 years, the

glaciers have retreated further than they had in the previous 100 years.

The images captured by Balog and his team are revelatory. As startling as the before and after pictures are, there is also a great beauty to the images. Even though *Chasing Ice* is probably wise to have made Balog – a human being rather than a large swath of ice – the focus of the film, I could have done with less focus on the individual. Balog has risked life and limb (he has had multiple surgeries on one knee) in his quest, and has courted dan-

RECOMMENDED



Arbor

ger many times over in the process of putting the most delicate electronics in the harshest environments. Of course, there's the constant fundraising that the task entails, too, as well as the family sacrifices that must be made. And for an extra kick of pop appeal, Scarlett Johansson croons the movie's theme song over the closing credits. Still, if all this helps sound the alarm, so be it. If seeing equals believing, then this film's documentation ought to sway the world. But daredevil heroes and sexy screen goddesses probably help the medicine go down.

NEW REVIEWS

BEAUTIFUL CREATURES

D: Richard LaGravenese; with Alden Ehrenreich, Alice Englert, Jeremy Irons, Viola Davis, Emmy Rossum, Emma Thompson, Eileen Atkins, Margo Martindale, Zoey Deutch, Thomas Mann, Pruitt Taylor Vince. (PG-13, 124 min.)

Beautiful Creatures is a fascinating amalgam that demonstrates that a movie can be smart and dumb at the same time. Its blend of Southern Gothic and supernatural teen love story makes the movie a strange creature, indeed – it's as if some paranormal activities were dropped onto a set created by William Faulkner or Flannery O'Connor and then mixed with heavy doses of teenage libido and magical hokum. The film seems to have a keen awareness of what it is doing while also fully succumbing to the dopiness of its storyline about the forbidden love between a mortal and a witch – or a “caster,” as they prefer to be called here.

Clearly, *Beautiful Creatures* is aiming to fill the void left in the world following the conclusions of the *Twilight* and *Harry Potter* film series. Fantasy fans needing to sink their teeth into something new could do worse than this film adaptation of the first book of Kami Garcia and Margaret Stohl's *Caster Chronicles*. Richard LaGravenese (who will always be best known as *The Fisher King* screenwriter, but has also penned such notable screen adaptations as *The Bridges of Madison County* and *Beloved* before branching out into directing) wrote the *Beautiful Creatures* screenplay and directed the film. From reading a synopsis of the novel, it appears that LaGravenese has condensed many aspects of the story and characters and created a solid foundation for future sequels. An impressive cast and the warm imagery of expert cinematographer Philippe Rousselot clinch the deal.

The story is set in the fictional small town of Gatlin, S.C. – a community with 12 churches and no Starbucks, as we're told by the story's narrator, Ethan Wate (Ehrenreich, who's a little too old to plausibly play a high-schooler, but has enough swagger and appeal to keep us interested). He's an inveterate reader, partial to banned books like *Slaughterhouse-Five* and *Tropic of Cancer*, which makes him distinct from his bible-thumping classmates even though his easy charm sustains his popularity. Ethan dreams of a girl whom he's never met, and then one day she walks into his classroom as a transfer student. Lena Duchannes (Englert – who happens to be the daughter of Jane Campion) lives at the decaying Ravenwood mansion with her mysterious Uncle Macon (Irons), where the townspeople suspect devil worship and other blasphemous things take place. Indeed, Lena is a caster, but this interspecies love story is then larded with lots of supernatural detail about Lena's approaching 16th birthday, the day on which a female caster is claimed for good or evil – for evermore. Cousin Ridley (Rossum) and Lena's mom, Serafine (Thompson, who plays two roles in the film and devours them both with great brio), are the examples of casters gone evil. The thick but dodgy Southern accents heard throughout are especially delicious coming from the mouths of the film's numerous British actors, with Irons joining Thompson in the all-out camp. And, before I

forget, there's also the annual Civil War battle reenactment that happens to occur on Lena's 16th birthday.

Yet, for all its magical nonsense and overstuffed lore, *Beautiful Creatures* is also a simple story about kids who just want to be normal teenagers in love. There's also the film's strong broadsides against banning books and bigoted Christians – these kids quote Charles Bukowski, for Chrissakes. Yes, *Beautiful Creatures* proves that dense and dopey can coexist.

★★★

– Marjorie Baumgarten

Alamo Lake Creek, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Cinemark Stone Hill Town Center, Flix Brewhouse, Highland, Galaxy Moviehouse, Gateway, iPic, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate

ESCAPE FROM PLANET EARTH

D: Cal Brunker; with Brendan Fraser, Rob Corrdry, Sarah Jessica Parker, Jessica Alba, Jane Lynch, Sofia Vergara, William Shatner, Ricky Gervais, Craig Robinson, Paul Scheer, Jason Simpson. (PG, 89 min.)

Not reviewed at press time. In this 3-D animated movie, which was not screened for press, a famous astronaut from another planet becomes trapped on Earth – aka the Dark Planet. Interplanetary shenanigans ensue.

– Marjorie Baumgarten

Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Cinemark Stone Hill Town Center, Flix Brewhouse, Highland, Galaxy Moviehouse, Gateway, iPic, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

A GOOD DAY TO DIE HARD

D: John Moore; with Bruce Willis, Jai Courtney, Sebastian Koch, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Yuliya Snigir, Cole Hauser, Radivoje Bukvic. (R, 97 min.)

Daughter Lucy McClane (Winstead, who has a cameo role here) played a major role in 2007's *Live Free or Die Hard*, but in this fifth entry in the *Die Hard* series we meet John McClane's son, who was featured only briefly in the background of the first movie. McClane (Willis) thinks his son, Jack (Courtney), is a massive screwup and probably involved with drugs, so he's not surprised when he learns that Jack is in jail. He immediately heads to Russia to help, but soon finds the trouble is even deeper and more complex than he originally thought.

Assuming no other explanation than his son's ineptitude, McClane moves into full action mode when there occurs a massive assault on the courtroom where Jack is being tried. It looks as though Jack has become inadvertently involved in a prison break, along with one of the country's leading prisoners, who is a former billionaire (Koch). McClane steps in to help straighten things out. It turns out that the son has an equally low opinion of the father, whom he continually tells to get lost. The plot – which takes a while to get going, not in terms of action but in creating interest – is a series of long, violent set-pieces. These include convoluted twists and turns, narrative feints and parries, as it moves ahead at ever-increasing speeds. An extended car chase across Moscow seems to destroy a significant percentage of the city's automobiles.

Australian actor Courtney does the honors as the younger McClane, skillfully matching Willis in action sequences, one-liners, and more extended repartee. The issue of Willis'

BY MARJORIE BAUMGARTEN



Beautiful Creatures

age is readily acknowledged, but doesn't create a problem since the character has always been more about perseverance than superhuman strength. The *Die Hard* films, including this one, are like *Road Runner* cartoons – a collection of oversized acts of brutal destruction with McClane on the receiving end as Wile E. Coyote, who is always in the wrong place at the wrong time, encountering explosions, car crashes, endless volleys of ammunition, and large falling objects aimed straight at him, but which he somehow manages to survive. A strong cast of fresh faces is directed here by John Moore, who last helmed *Max Payne* in 2008. Appropriate to a series about pyrotechnics rather than consequences, exaggeration rather than mimetic reality, cinematic joyriding rather than any attempt at meaning, the film has an enclosed and somewhat apocalyptic ending at Chernobyl. (*Die Hard* fans will probably want to add an extra half-star to this review.)

★ ★ – *Louis Black*
 Alamo Ritz, Alamo Lake Creek, Alamo Slaughter Lane, Alamo Village, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Cinemark Stone Hill Town Center, Flix Brewhouse, Highland, Galaxy Moviehouse, Gateway, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate

SAFE HAVEN

D: Lasse Hallström; with Josh Duhamel, Julianne Hough, David Lyons, Mimi Kirkland, Noah Lomax. (PG-13, 115 min.)
 Sometimes a person just wants to take a hot bath and quick-skim a paperback romance. And that's okay. Novelist Nicholas Sparks has built an empire chunking out exactly that kind of waterlogged romance, and Hollywood has been more than happy to send his bestsellers down the factory line

toward multiplexes. Artistry occasionally happens in a Sparks adaptation – 2004's *The Notebook* caught lightning with its superior production values, sensitive direction by Nick Cassavetes, and two-cats-in-a-bag breakout performances by Ryan Gosling and Rachel McAdams – but artistry is by no means a requirement for getting audiences into seats. Put another way: Sometimes you just really want to take a damn bath, even as you're staring down soap scum and limescale. The heart wants what it wants.

That isn't to say the heart doesn't long for something far better than this plodding pot-boiler romance about domestic-abuse survivor Katie (Hough, a *Dancing With the Stars* alum), who flees to a North Carolina beachside town, takes a new name, and takes up with Alex (Duhamel), a widower and single father. Director Lasse Hallström previously helmed a Nicholas Sparks adaptation with the 2010 sudser *Dear John* and managed to utterly sap all charisma from Channing Tatum – yep, the same guy who reduced grown women to girly giggle-shrieks when he disrobed in last summer's *Magic Mike*. Here, Hallström has no more luck coaxing complexity or vibrancy from Hough and Duhamel: The leads project a sunny patina of wholesomeness and share marvelous tans, but beyond that, it's a shrugging love match. Adding further frustration is the been-there, seen-that quality that dogs the film. Sure, Sparks is known for recycling material (cancer and epistolary romance are regular plot hatchings), but Hallström and scripters Leslie Bohem and Dana Stevens really push the limit by poaching the iconic canoe-in-a-rainstorm scene from *The Notebook*. Perhaps they thought the callback would make audiences feel more affectionate toward this second-rate production. Nice try: The effect is more like splashing around in somebody's else bathwater.

★ ★ – *Kimberley Jones*
 Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Cinemark Stone Hill Town Center, Flix Brewhouse, Highland, Galaxy Moviehouse, Gateway, iPic, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

SPECIAL 26

D: Neeraj Pandey; with Akshay Kumar, Kajal Agarwal, Jimmy Shergill, Manoj Bajpayee. (NR, 143 min., subtitled)
Not reviewed at press time. This Bollywood heist movie was inspired by real events that took place in Mumbai in 1987.
 – *Marjorie Baumgarten*
 Tinseltown South

openings

- Beautiful Creatures* (PG-13)
- Chasing Ice* (PG-13)
- Escape From Planet Earth* (PG)
- A Good Day to Die Hard* (R)
- Safe Haven* (PG-13)
- Special 26* (NR)

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

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AMOUR

D: Michael Haneke; with Jean-Louis Trintignant, Emmanuelle Riva, Isabelle Huppert, Alexandre Tharaud. (PG-13, 127 min., subtitled)
Amour provides an unsentimental portrait of the indignities of a body – and a shared life – in decline in a story about the end-of-life stage of a Parisian couple. Curiously, this film by the award-winning Austrian filmmaker Michael Haneke, whose work is best known for its emotional austerity, is the most tender and poignant work of his career. At the film's core are the supple performances by those titans of the French cinema, Jean-Louis Trintignant and Emmanuelle Riva. They haven't the nubile bodies and uncreased faces we're accustomed to seeing magnified on the big, silver screen, but their vulnerable and unadorned presence commands our attention and sympathies nevertheless. Younger viewers nearer to voicing their vows of "til death do us part" may find *Amour* more of a daunting, cautionary tale than older viewers, who are likely to find in the film a respectful and decorous treatment of the inevitable. (01/25/2013)
 ★★★★★ – Marjorie Baumgarten
 Arbor, Violet Crown

ARGO

D: Ben Affleck; with Ben Affleck, Bryan Cranston, Alan Arkin, John Goodman, Victor Garber, Tate Donovan, Clea DuVall, Scoot McNairy, Rory Cochrane, Christopher Denham, Kerry Bishé, Kyle Chandler, Chris Messina, Zeljko Ivanek, Richard Kind. (R, 120 min.)
 Ben Affleck has reinvented himself as one of Hollywood's top-notch directors, and this third feature fully proves that the filmmaker knows what he is doing. *Argo* is a terrifically entertaining thriller that's based on a true-life incident. Latino CIA operative Tony Mendez (Affleck) has been called in to help six American embassy employees who managed to escape when their compound in Iran was taken over by Islamic fundamentalists on Nov. 4, 1979. As the CIA contemplates extraction, Mendez hatches a crazy plan: creating the cover of a location-scouting expedition for a science fiction movie called *Argo*. As we follow every step of the mission, Affleck's deft craftsmanship and casting instincts are on full display. Not allowing well enough to be, however, is the multiple-pronged coda, which slackens *Argo's* taut pace to a crawl. But I can hear the filmmakers saying, in the cadence of the film's running joke, "Arrhh, go fuck yourself." (10/12/2012)
 ★★★★★ – Marjorie Baumgarten
 Alamo Ritz, Alamo Lake Creek, Alamo Slaughter Lane, Arbor, Barton Creek Square, iPic, Tinseltown South

BROKEN CITY

D: Allen Hughes; with Mark Wahlberg, Russell Crowe, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Jeffrey Wright, Barry Pepper, Alona Tal, Natalie Martinez, Michael Beach, Kyle Chandler. (R, 109 min.)
 Allen Hughes' first feature to direct without his twin brother, Albert, *Broken City* evokes the sociological breadth and gallows humor of the Hughes Brothers' early movies (*Menace II Society*, *Dead Presidents*). Wahlberg stars in this private-eye mystery as Billy Taggart. He isn't the stealthiest gumshoe in the world, so it seems too good to be true when the mayor of New York (Crowe) personally hires Taggart to track down the lover of his wife (Zeta-Jones). Naturally, there's a dead body, an iceberg of corruption, and a cloud of doom looming over third-party innocents. The plot, frankly, is a little confusing. Four or five subplots wander off into oblivion, and it's occasionally hard to tell whether Hughes is winking at clichés or merely adhering to the genre handbook. Still, a white-knuckle mayoral debate about zoning policy – and *Broken City's* terrifyingly realistic car chase – are alone worth the price of admission. (01/18/2013)
 ★★★★★ – Leah Churner
 Metropolitan

BULLET TO THE HEAD

D: Walter Hill; with Sylvester Stallone, Jason Momoa, Sarah Shahi, Christian Slater, Sung Kang, Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje. (R, 91 min.)
 Sylvester Stallone may no longer be the box-office superstar he once was – commercially, at least – but his newest entry, *Bullet to the Head*, seems a return to peak form – pure, primal Stallone, in control and bedecked with gleaming muscles. After taking out a corrupt ex-cop, hit man James Bonomo (Stallone) and his partner Louis (Seda) are celebrating their suc-

High Noon

D: Fred Zinnemann; with Gary Cooper, Lloyd Mitchell, Thoyd Bridges, Katy Jurado, Grace Kelly. (1952, NR, 85 min.)
UT Department of Radio-TV-Film: Community Screenings. A quintessential showdown caps off this enduring Western morality tale. After the screening, Professor Charles Ramirez Berg will lead a discussion of the film's cinematic techniques. @Belo Auditorium (BMC 2.106, UT campus), Thursday (2/21), 7pm; free.



cess when ex-mercenary Keegan (Momoa) kills Louis. Seeking vengeance, Bonomo finds Detective Taylor Kwon (Kang), who is interested in the link between both killings. With great hesitation on both sides, and a bevy of corrupt cops after them, Bonomo and Kwon team up to solve the case. What follows is a pulpy action film of double-crosses, ambushes, detective work, and villains – all set to a constant chorus of shooting, explosions, and physical combat. The film hits the target, but it's a big, obvious one, a soap-opera-predictable cavalcade of violence. (02/01/2013)
 ★★ – Louis Black
 Metropolitan, Tinseltown North

DJANGO UNCHAINED

D: Quentin Tarantino; with Jamie Foxx, Christoph Waltz, Leonardo DiCaprio, Kerry Washington, Samuel L. Jackson, Laura Cayouette, Don Johnson. (R, 165 min.)
 Quentin Tarantino is back with another whip-smart wish-fulfillment history adventure. *Django Unchained* has obvious roots in the spaghetti Western, yet it's also a love story, a revenge picture, and an action comedy. The love story, in which the former slave Django (Foxx) seeks to rescue his wife Broomhilda (Washington) from the plantation owner to whom she was sold, is vivid and palpable. The revenge drama is violent and bloody, with whippings and near-castration added to Tarantino's vast arsenal of sanguinary mayhem. Even the comedy has its moments to shine. As entertaining and eye-opening as *Django Unchained* is, the film also suffers from a certain slackness. Toward the end of the two-hour-and-45-minute epic, the film seems ready to conclude – but not before Tarantino stages another obligatory, Mexican-standoff flourish. Despite these quibbles, *Django Unchained*, with its embarrassment of riches (and tiny cameos), was one Christmas present we couldn't wait to unwrap. (12/28/2012)
 ★★★★★ – Marjorie Baumgarten
 Alamo Lake Creek, Alamo Slaughter Lane, Barton Creek Square, Southpark Meadows, Gateway, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate

GANGSTER SQUAD

D: Ruben Fleischer; with Sean Penn, Josh Brolin, Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone, Nick Nolte, Robert Patrick, Michael Peña, Giovanni Ribisi, Anthony Mackie, Austin Highsmith. (R, 110 min.)
 A virtual catalog of uneven filmmaking, *Gangster Squad* is loosely based on historical incidents and characters, though the film takes great liberties with them. New Los Angeles Police Chief Parker (Nolte) is installed in 1950 to deal with the East Coast mobs that have been establishing themselves in L.A. Unofficially, he asks Sgt. John O'Mara (Brolin) to create a renegade band of honest cops to go after the worst of these gangsters, Mickey Cohen (Penn). Familiar stereotypes abound: There's O'Mara's sidekick, the wise-cracking Sgt. Jerry Wooters (Gosling); Coleman Harris (Mackie), the streetwise African-American; legendary sharpshooter Max Kennard (Patrick); his young Hispanic protégé Navidad Ramirez (Peña); and communications genius Conway Keeler (Ribisi). Director Ruben Fleischer (*Zombieland*, *30 Minutes or Less*) delivers no real cinematic surprises other than his unevenness of tone, style, and narrative development. Despite the unrelenting action and the terrific cast, *Gangster Squad* comes up more scattered than successful. (01/11/2013)
 ★★ – Louis Black
 Gateway, Tinseltown South

HANSEL & GRETEL: WITCH HUNTERS

D: Tommy Wirkola; with Jeremy Renner, Gemma Arterton, Famke Janssen, Peter Stormare, Pihla Viitala. (R, 88 min.)
 In this retooling of the original Brothers Grimm tale, the candy-loving kid sibs survive a witch attack to become professional assassins. The title may be on the nose, but the tone is hopelessly confused. *Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters* isn't exactly a comedy: Director Tommy Wirkola (*Dead Snow*) forgoes fresh humor for clunking wannabe-catchphrases that Renner and Arterton, as the titular hunters, deliver as if they're acting in one long trailer. The film might plausibly be filed under horror, but while it is indeed squishy with spattering brains and other gore, the scares are few and far between. *Hansel & Gretel* also raises hopes for inspired action, but that, too, soon drops away, leaving the same battering-ram-to-the-senses, hand-to-hand combat choreography of every other B-movie actioner currently clogging multiplexes. In his English-language debut, Wirkola dabbles in everything but commits to nothing, making for an unmemorable brew best left untried. (02/01/2013)
 – Kimberley Jones
 CM Cedar Park, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Gateway, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North

A HAUNTED HOUSE

D: Michael Tiddes; with Marlon Wayans, Marlene Forte, Essence Atkins, David Koechner, Dave Sheridan, Nick Swardson, Alanna Ubach, Cedric the Entertainer. (R, 86 min.)
 Actors, at the behest of writers, directors, and producers, have had to suffer all sorts of indignities onscreen. Star and co-writer Marlon Wayans, however, has some measure of control here, which is why it boggles the mind that he's at least 50% responsible for a scene that requires him to take a dump on the living room floor. And here's the real rub: By the end of this witless *Paranormal Activity* spoof, you'll think the soiled carpet got off easy. Some of the *Scary Movie* series' architects have reassembled for this joylessly raunchy comedy about a ghost causing trouble for couple

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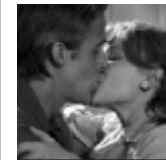
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This Is Not a Film

D: Jafar Panahi and Mojtaba Mirtahmasb. (2011, NR, 75 min.) **Austin Film Society: Children of Abraham/Ibrahim 7.** Under house arrest and banned for 20 years by the Iranian government from making films, writing screenplays, or giving interviews, the master filmmaker Jafar Panahi (*The White Balloon*) managed to smuggle this “effort” out of the country. It tells the filmmaker’s own story, capturing a day in his life confined to his apartment. @Alamo Village, Tuesday, 7pm.



Malcolm (Wayans) and Kisha (Atkins). *Ghost Hunters* and *The Exorcist* are some of the eye-rolling springboards for parody, while Wayans and co-writer Rick Alvarez flog gross stereotypes about gender and race to zero comedic effect. It’s like watching a snuff film, only it’s the audience who’s dying inside. (01/18/2013)

♦ – Kimberley Jones
Metropolitan

THE HOBBIT: AN UNEXPECTED JOURNEY

D: Peter Jackson; with Ian McKellen, Martin Freeman, Richard Armitage, Andy Serkis, Graham McTavish, Ken Stott, Stephen Hunter, Hugo Weaving, Cate Blanchett, Christopher Lee, Barry Humphries. (PG-13, 166 min.)

All aboard: The Middle-earth Express has once more pulled into the station. Though this initial offering in the planned trilogy of J.R.R. Tolkien’s 1937 fantasy novel feels regrettably slight in terms of narrative adventure and fantasy revelations, that hasn’t prevented director Peter Jackson from painting Middle-earth with abundant visual detail and technical bravura. *The Hobbit* introduces us to a few new creatures – trolls, the dragon Smaug – and old ones, too – Gollum (Serkis) reappears, creepy and deranged as ever – but the hobbit Bilbo Baggins (Freeman), the wizard Gandalf (McKellen), and an indistinguishable clump of 13 good-natured, hairy-headed dwarves are the primary protagonists here. To sum it up, there is little that is unexpected in *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*. Rather than an epic continuation of Jackson’s Middle-earth obsession, the film seems more like the work of a man driving around a multilevel parking garage, unable to find the exit. (12/14/2012)

★★★★ – Marjorie Baumgarten
CM Cedar Park, Southpark Meadows, Gateway, Tinseltown North

HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA

D: Genndy Tartakovsky; with the voices of Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Andy Samberg, Selena Gomez, Fran Drescher, Steve Buscemi, Molly Shannon, David Spade, CeeLo Green, Jon Lovitz. (PG, 91 min.)

Throwing a bunch of Universal classic monster archetypes into an animated film and then using a generic coming-of-age, father-daughter relationship as the linchpin might’ve seemed like a good idea on paper, but onscreen Tartakovsky’s *Hotel Transylvania* is as generically vacant as Mrs. Bates’ eye sockets. The 118th birthday of Dracula’s daughter, Mavis (voiced by Gomez), has finally arrived and the overprotective Drac (Sandler), now the manager of the “for monsters only” Hotel Transylvania, wants to keep her under his wing forever. But, when Jonathan (Samberg), a lost human backpacker, stumbles stonily into the hotel, love passes between the vampire’s daughter and the displaced skater dude, much to Drac’s chagrin. Not a whole lot ensues that you haven’t already figured out on your own. Universal should sue for damages to the reputation of its classic movie monsters. As for *Hotel Transylvania*, no need to put a stake in it – it’s dead already. (09/28/2012)

♦ – Marc Savlov
Movies 8

IDENTITY THIEF

D: Seth Gordon; with Jason Bateman, Melissa McCarthy, Amanda Peet, Jon Favreau, “T.I.” Harris, Genesis Rodriguez, John Cho, Morris Chestnut, Robert Patrick, Eric Stonestreet. (R, 111 min.)

Sandy Bigelow Patterson (McCarthy) is not only living the good life – the very good life – but she is taking barloads of people along with her. However, as the title implies, the character’s name is not Sandy. An accomplished and somewhat daring identity thief, her latest victim is the real Patterson (Bateman), a business executive, straight shooter, father, and husband. When he figures out that the woman who has stolen his identity is in Florida, he decides to head down there, capture her, and bring her back home. McCarthy is a comedic storm system, brilliantly exploding in every direction, but, tonally, the film is all over the place. *Identity Thief* only grows more and more uneven as it tries to follow several narrative lines, and outrageous scenes are topped by even more outrageous scenes. Seth Gordon’s film is ultimately unsatisfying, not as laugh-out-loud funny as it promises. (02/08/2013)

★★ – Louis Black
Alamo Lake Creek, Alamo Slaughter Lane, Alamo Village, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Cinemark Stone Hill Town Center, Flix Brewhouse, Highland, Galaxy Moviehouse, Gateway, iPic, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

THE IMPOSSIBLE

D: Juan Antonio Bayona; with Naomi Watts, Ewan McGregor, Tom Holland, Samuel Joslin, Oaklee Pendergast. (PG-13, 107 min.)

You don’t have to be a parent to feel this film in your bones. *The Impossible*, Juan Antonio Bayona’s dramatization of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, begins when a British family – Henry (McGregor), Maria (Watts), and their three young sons – travel to a resort in Thailand for Christmas. Based on a true story, but dressed with the usual cinematic embellishments, *The Impossible* tracks what happens two days later, when a 30-foot wall of water rends the family apart. It’s a mess-maker, this movie. *The Impossible* narrows like no other film in recent memory, from its visceral depiction of the natural disaster to an intensely emotional landscape of lost children and boundless kindnesses done by strangers. Still, there are missteps. The material is so innately powerful – and potentially portrayed – that it needles when Bayona gilds the lily with forehead-slapping missed connections and heart strings overplucked (see: usual cinematic embellishments). (01/04/2013)

★★★★ – Kimberley Jones
Barton Creek Square, Hill Country Galleria, Tinseltown South

JACK REACHER

D: Christopher McQuarrie; with Tom Cruise, Rosamund Pike, Richard Jenkins, David Oyelowo, Werner Herzog. (PG-13, 130 min.)

Although I’ve only read one of Lee Child’s Jack Reacher novels, my expectations for this film were very low for the same reason many fans of the series have disparaged it: Cruise lacks the inherent violence and visceral menace (as well as the oversized stature) of Child’s Reacher. I was thus quite surprised by how well this violent suspense thriller works. *Jack Reacher* opens as five civilians are shot dead in a city mall. Barr (Sikora), the seeming culprit, is soon arrested, but on the pad provided for his confession, he instead writes: “Get Jack Reacher.” After arriving in the city, Reacher gradually comes to suspect that Barr may have been set up, and begins to work on the case with Helen (Pike), Barr’s defense attorney. Often dark and, at times, quite brutal, writer/director Christopher McQuarrie’s *Jack Reacher* is occasionally predictable and slow-moving, but mostly the film is very suspenseful, enthralling stuff. (12/28/2012)

★★★ – Louis Black
Metropolitan

THE LAST STAND

D: Kim Jee-woon; with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Johnny Knoxville, Forest Whitaker, Rodrigo Santoro, Luis Guzmán, Jaimie Alexander, Genesis Rodriguez, Eduardo Noriega, Peter Stormare, Zach Gilford. (R, 108 min.)

After serving as governor of California, and despite his acknowledged age, creaking bones, and reduced nerve, Arnold Schwarzenegger still delivers quite a performance in this fun, straight-ahead action film. *The Last Stand* begins by chronicling the peaceful life of Ray Owens (Schwarzenegger), who is the sheriff of a small border town in Arizona. Meanwhile, in Los Angeles, the leader of a notorious cartel, Gabriel Cortez (Noriega), escapes from an armed caravan.

56 Up

D: Michael Apted and Paul Almond. (2012, NR, 144 min.) **Stateside Independent.** This now mythic documentary series in which 14 Britons have been interviewed every seven years throughout their lives is now back with its eighth entry. Each offering in the series provides a fascinating study of individuals, the contrasts among them, and the effects of public scrutiny on personal development. @Stateside at the Paramount, Monday & Tuesday, 7pm.



Making a mad drive – via race car – toward Mexico, Cortez constantly outwits his pursuers ... until he reaches Owens’ border town, where the sheriff and his deputies (Knoxville and Guzmán) are set up for a last stand against the escaped kingpin and his gang. South Korean genre director Kim Jee-woon is perfect for this kind of taut, nonstop action. Still, this is Schwarzenegger’s film: By knowing what to do, and what not to do, he brings it home. (01/18/2013)

★★★★ – Louis Black
Tinseltown South

LES MISÉRABLES

D: Tom Hooper; with Hugh Jackman, Russell Crowe, Anne Hathaway, Amanda Seyfried, Eddie Redmayne, Helena Bonham Carter, Sacha Baron Cohen, Samantha Barks, Aaron Tveit, Daniel Huttlestone, Colm Wilkinson, George Blagden, Isabelle Allen. (PG-13, 157 min.)

The quality-assurance boast of monster-hit stage musical *Les Misérables* (based on Victor Hugo’s 1862 novel) might as well be “Successfully Wringing Tears Since 1985!” A lot of hysteria attends director Tom Hooper’s extravagant adaptation ... and I loved it. Jackman is commanding as the former convict Jean Valjean, who hides his past to become a devoted factory owner. Soon, the closing-in of his onetime jailer, Inspector Javert (Crowe), forces a spiritual crisis and another flight from the law. When *Les Misérables* is good, it is very, very good, and when it is bad, it’s usually because Russell Crowe has opened his mouth. Shot to shot, Hooper’s vision careens between grotesque hyperrealism and tinny movie artifice. It is a little pitchy, this seesaw between grit and gloss, but it’s those wobbles in performance, the so-called mistakes, that make *Les Misérables* human and heartfelt and – ultimately – a potent piece of cinema. (12/28/2012)

★★★★ – Kimberley Jones
Arbor, Barton Creek Square, CM Round Rock, Metropolitan

LIFE OF PI

D: Ang Lee; with Suraj Sharma, Irrfan Khan, Rafe Spall, Tabu, Adil Hussain, Gérard Depardieu. (PG, 125 min.)

Demonstrating a delicate mastery of 3-D, Ang Lee has made a movie that had me in its visual thrall even before the opening credits were through. Soon, however, the magical spell lifts and the film clunks toward Earth as a man nicknamed Pi (Irrfan Khan) promises to tell a character called the Writer (Rafe Spall) a story that will make him “believe in God.” Setting aside the story’s fuzzy theological concerns, *Life of Pi*, which is adapted from Yann Martel’s best-selling novel, is extraordinarily accomplished. The story is gripping, and when adrift with teenage Pi (Suraj Sharma) and the Bengal tiger on the open sea, the film is at its most wondrous: a ravishing spectacle that treads judiciously on the infinite line between what’s possible and impossible. *Life of Pi*, ironically, soars when it confines itself to land and sea; when it grasps for the celestial, the film goes beyond its reach. (11/23/2012)

★★★★ – Marjorie Baumgarten
Hill Country Galleria, Gateway, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

LINCOLN

D: Steven Spielberg; with Daniel Day-Lewis, Sally Field, David Straithairn, Tommy Lee Jones, Joseph Gordon-Levitt. (PG-13, 149 min.)

Adapted from historian Doris Kearns Goodwin’s *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*, Spielberg’s film stitches together history lesson and TV procedural in its detailing of Lincoln’s struggle to abolish slavery. First and certainly foremost: Master shapeshifter Daniel Day-Lewis delivers a monumental performance. He inhabits the character bodily and temperamentally, too, as he shifts to present different angles on the storied president, from formidable politician to keen wit, devoted father, and unhappy husband. On the subject of the latter: *Lincoln*, for all its grand-canvas ambitions, is at its chiest when dramatizing Lincoln’s relationship with his nervous wife Mary (Field). But the bygone manner of speaking – formal and florid – doesn’t come easily to all the actors, and the result is like an inferior Shakespeare production: The mouths are moving, but the eyes don’t always connect with the meaning. No worries, Spielberg’s gonna spell it out for you anyway. (11/16/2012)

★★★★ – Kimberley Jones
Arbor, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, Metropolitan

MAMA

D: Andrés Muschietti; with Jessica Chastain, Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, Megan Charpentier, Isabelle Nelisse, Daniel Kash. (PG-13, 100 min.)

Haunting and extremely atmospheric, *Mama* is a horror film imbued with an unsettling and affecting power. Having killed his wife, a father flees with his two small daughters to an abandoned house in the woods. He soon disappears, but his brother Lucas (Coster-Waldau) continues to search for the girls. Five years later, Lilly (Nelisse) and Victoria (Charpentier) are found (how – and whether – they survived alone in the house is the troubling, main question). Lucas plans on raising them with his girlfriend, punk rocker Annabel (Chastain), but the couple face several problems in their newfound roles as parents. As in the best horror films, it is what is suggested that has the most power. *Mama*’s creepiness is achieved through cinematography, score, and editing. Andrés and Barbara Muschietti, the husband-and-wife team behind this film, are not just new and valuable assets to the horror genre, but to film in general. (01/18/2013)

★★★★ – Louis Black
CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Cinemark Stone Hill Town Center, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate

MONSTERS, INC.

D: Lee Unkrich, David Silverman, Peter Docter; with the voices of Billy Crystal, John Goodman, James Coburn. (G, 92 min.)

This collaboration between animation behemoths Disney and Pixar is wildly entertaining and has now been retrofitted for 3-D. In the film, Goodman and Crystal supply the voices of goodhearted monsters on a mission to scare the bejesus out of tots (screams = energy to the power company in Monstropolis), and their interplay is both wacky and charming. The film is a funky little tone poem on the nature of friendship and reconciliation – with monsters. The animation is top-notch. (11/02/2001)

★★★★ – Marc Savlov
Metropolitan

OSCAR-NOMINATED SHORT FILMS 2013: ANIMATION

D: Various. (NR, 80 min.)

The five films the Academy anointed as nominees for this year’s Best Animated Short category take to heart the old saw that a picture is worth a thousand words: Save the odd harrumph, these shorts skip dialogue altogether. So what of the pictures then? Minky Lee’s painterly “Adam and Dog” reframes Eden from the perspective of man’s first best friend. Timothy Reckart’s stop-motion “Head Over Heels” illustrates a long-married couple’s separate ways by giving them two opposing centers of gravity. In John Kahrs’s black-and-white “Paperman,” a serendipitous new love gets a boost from magical realism. “Fresh Guacamole” is a blast of pure inventiveness, in which one’s perception of a simple meal preparation is upended. Finally, “The Longest Daycare,” David Silverman’s comic short about Maggie Simpson doing battle with a demon baby, taps the pleasure centers of children and adults alike with its nimble blend of cleverness, irreverence, and compassion. (02/08/2013)

★★★★ – Kimberley Jones
Alamo Slaughter Lane, Violet Crown

OSCAR-NOMINATED SHORT FILMS 2013: LIVE ACTION

D: Various. (NR, 115 min.)
 All serious dramas, these five Oscar selections also share certain themes – childhood, aging, and geographic diversity. The cream of the crop is Québécois actor Yan England's beautifully executed "Henry," an initially mysterious portrait of an elderly pianist who suddenly finds his life turned upside down. Vying for runner-up are Shawn Christensen's "Curfew," in which a Brooklyn man's suicide attempt is interrupted by his estranged sister, who needs a babysitting favor; and Bryan Buckley's "Asad," the surprisingly humorous story of a Somali boy who must choose between the life of a fisherman and a pirate. The other nominees – Tom Van Avermaet's "Death of a Shadow," about a soldier from World War I who's become unstuck in time; and Sam French's "Buzkashi Boys," which follows two impoverished youths in Kabul as they dream of growing up to play the national sport, buzkashi – are no less masterful in their visual flair. (02/08/2013)

– Leah Churner

★★★★
 Alamo Slaughter Lane, Violet Crown

PARENTAL GUIDANCE

D: Andy Fickman; with Billy Crystal, Bette Midler, Marisa Tomei, Tom Everett Scott, Bailee Madison, Joshua Rush, Kyle Harrison Breitkopf. (PG, 104 min.)

It's that time of year when we head to the multiplex with people we normally wouldn't see movies with. And when it comes to spending two hours in the dark with our fretful aunts and reactionary in-laws, the less nudity, violence, and politics a movie has, the better. On this score, you could do worse than *Parental Guidance*, a family comedy with the same rating as its name. Just don't expect the

luxury of dozing off. Things get noisy, as you can imagine, when a pair of progressive parents (Tomei and Scott) leave vaudeville-ready hambones Billy Crystal and Bette Midler in charge of their three coddled, soy-milk-drinking kids for a weekend. Dated generational jokes about speaker phones, tofu dogs, and Facebook "pokes" ensue, but they are soon drowned out in a tsunami of bathroom humor. But the actors deserve credit, if only for the professionalism they bring to this stinker. (12/28/2012)

★★
 Hill Country Galleria, Tinseltown South

PARKER

D: Taylor Hackford; with Jason Statham, Jennifer Lopez, Michael Chiklis, Wendell Pierce, Clifton Collins Jr., Bobby Cannavale. (R, 118 min.)

I have never doodled during a movie before in my life, but holy hell, *Parker's* two-hour running time takes a lifetime. Plenty of time for mental doodling, too, sampled forthwith: Why did they need two hours to tell this story? "Honorable thief Parker gets double-crossed by his gang and is left for dead; he recovers, seeks righteous revenge; much blood is spilled." There – I did it in 22 words. Also, was Parker this joyless in Donald E. Westlake's original novel? I get that Jason Statham is an international action hero, and that is serious stuff, but would it kill him to crack a smile? Oh, and Jennifer Lopez needs a new agent. Truth be told, I haven't loved one of Taylor Hackford's movies since his Mikhail Baryshnikov/Gregory Hines Cold War dancing-buddy movie *White Nights*. Snicker all you want: *Parker* would have been better with tap dancing. (02/01/2013)

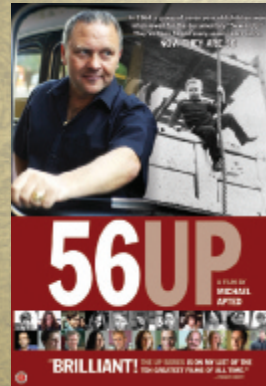
★
 CM Round Rock, Tinseltown North

– Leah Churner

– Kimberley Jones

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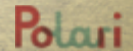
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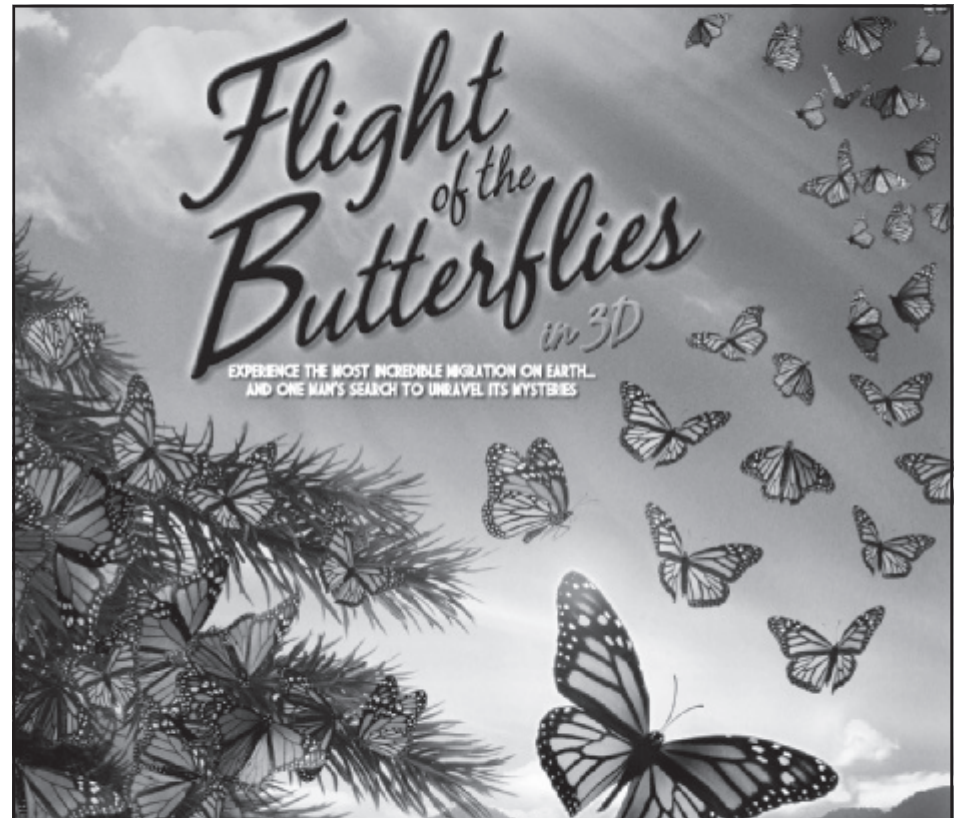
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25 Watts

D: Juan Pablo Rebella and Pablo Stoll; with Daniel Hendler, Jorge Temponi, Alfonso Tort. (2001, NR, 92 min.) **Cine Las Americas: A Decade of Comedy in Latin American Cinema.** In this Uruguayan comedy, three young men pass the time in Montevideo studying, drinking, sleeping, flirting, and having odd encounters. @MACC, Wednesday, 8pm; free.



PROMISED LAND

D: Gus Van Sant; with Matt Damon, John Krasinski, Frances McDormand, Rosemarie DeWitt, Hal Holbrook, Terry Kinney, Scoot McNairy, Titus Welliver, Tim Guinee, Lucas Black. (R, 106 min.)

Set in rural Pennsylvania, *Promised Land* tells the story of a moral conflict in which there are no true villains or heroes. Damon plays a man named Steve Butler, who has been hired by a big energy company to buy up land from area farmers so the new owners can drill for natural gas using the controversial practice of fracking. Steve just about has things sewn up when an environmentalist named Dustin Noble (Krasinski) shows up and proceeds to work the community – and Steve – into a froth. Dustin also vies for the affections of Alice (DeWitt), the local woman who has caught Steve's eye. Until a big, third-act revelation, not much else happens here. *Promised Land* doesn't offer great drama, nor does it offer the great debate on fracking that some might have hoped for. Still, the film has lots of small moments that make it a worthy effort. (01/04/2013)

★★★ – Marjorie Baumgarten
Movies 8

QUARTET

D: Dustin Hoffman; with Maggie Smith, Billy Connolly, Michael Gambon, Tom Courtenay, Pauline Collins, Sheridan Smith, Gwyneth Jones. (PG-13, 98 min.)

Witty, randy Wilf (Connolly), his wife Cissy (Collins), growing senile, and their proper, restrained friend Reginald (Courtenay) are former opera singers living in a home for retired musicians. They used to perform together as members of a quartet, and they have stayed tight friends. But the dynamic is disrupted when Jean Horton (Smith), the fourth member of the quartet and Paget's former wife, moves into the home and complicates an upcoming gala to celebrate Verdi's birthday. This film is Dustin Hoffman's first directorial outing since 1978's underappreciated *Straight Time*, and he does right by it, allowing his A-team of actors the leisure and breathing space to do their best. This is a worthy entry into that drama/comedy/romance hybrid genre of ensemble-acted older-retired-Brits made popular by 2011's *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*. Charming, funny, and sentimental, the film is exactly what you expect it to be, but very satisfying in achieving that goal. (01/25/2013)

★★★ – Louis Black
Arbor, Violet Crown

RISE OF THE GUARDIANS

D: Peter Ramsey; with the voices of Hugh Jackman, Alec Baldwin, Jude Law, Isla Fisher, Chris Pine, Dakota Goyo. (PG, 97 min.)

Kids who can stomach mixed holiday fare should be able to ride out this stereoscopic superstorm of snow globes, Easter eggs, magic portals, enchanted crystals, moon worship, fruitcakes, *matryoshka* dolls, and lost teeth. Others may be confused. Despite the Thanksgiving-week release, *Rise of the Guardians* is not quite a Christmas movie. It's like a public-domain version of *Cartoon All-Stars to the Rescue*: Santa (voiced by Baldwin), the Easter Bunny (Jackman), the Tooth Fairy (Fisher), and the Sandman (a mute) team up with Jack Frost (Pine) to defeat the Boogeyman, aka Pitch (Law), who is threatening to enshroud the world in fear and darkness. Adapted from author and illustrator William Joyce's *The Guardians of Childhood*

book series, *Rise of the Guardians* displays little evidence of Joyce's acclaimed artistic hand; the visual style of this DreamWorks film, directed by Peter Ramsey with visual consulting by Roger Deakins, is retro in the worst way. (11/23/2012)

★★ – Leah Churner
Movies 8, Millennium, Tinseltown South

SIDE EFFECTS

D: Steven Soderbergh; with Jude Law, Rooney Mara, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Channing Tatum, Vinessa Shaw, Ann Dowd, Polly Draper. (R, 105 min.)

Steven Soderbergh claims this is the last movie he intends to make, so it's nice that the filmmaker leaves us with this sterling example of his skills and talent. *Side Effects* begins as a story about the pitfalls of antidepressants, fiscal misfortune, and general depression, but then morphs into a curious murder mystery. It's just one of the jagged turns the movie takes on its road to resolution. Emily Taylor (Mara) is a twentysomething New Yorker whose debilitating depression reoccurs just as her husband (Tatum) is released from jail. Following a suicide attempt, she comes under the care of psychiatrist Dr. Jonathan Banks (Law). But soon, the narrative veers sideways into the investigation of a murder. With stellar performances and deft camerawork, *Side Effects* is a smart, effective thriller. You never really see any of it coming, which is what makes the film such a marvel – and so difficult to discuss. (02/08/2013)

★★★★ – Marjorie Baumgarten
Alamo Lake Creek, Alamo Slaughter Lane, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Cinemark Stone Hill Town Center, Flix Brewhouse, Highland, Galaxy Moviehouse, Gateway, iPic, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South, Westgate

SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK

D: David O. Russell; with Bradley Cooper, Jennifer Lawrence, Robert De Niro, Jacki Weaver, Chris Tucker, Anupam Kher, John Ortiz, Shea Whigham, Julia Stiles. (R, 122 min.)

"Negativity is a poison like nothing else," says bipolar Pat (Cooper), who is newly released from a state institution following a violent episode. Pat is convinced that exercise and a positive outlook – his "silver linings" philosophy – are all it takes to get his estranged wife back; his family, however, thinks some serious meds are in order. The smartest solution may lie in some balance between the two, and *Silver Linings Playbook* similarly rides the center line in its empathetic but facile look at mental illness. When Pat meets Tiffany (Lawrence), a young widow raw with grief, a tentative friendship forms, and Pat's days gain new purpose and direction. Writer/director David O. Russell, adapting Matthew Quick's novel, is in his element here: *Silver Linings Playbook* is consistently funny and very sweet fun. But one wishes Russell's ambition had tilted a few clicks away from comic absurdity, toward something more probing. (11/16/2012)

★★★★ – Kimberley Jones
Alamo Village, Arbor, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Galaxy Moviehouse, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Violet Crown, Westgate

SKYFALL

D: Sam Mendes; with Daniel Craig, Judi Dench, Javier Bardem, Ralph Fiennes, Naomie Harris, Bérénice Marlohe, Albert Finney, Ben Whishaw, Rory Kinnear, Ola Rapace. (PG-13, 143 min.)

What's in a name? Lately, less and less. With Daniel Craig's third go at 007, I'm not sure there's much to distinguish Bond from Bourne from Batman. They're all slurping from the same soup – think: death-haunted, self-righteous, tight-lipped parkour enthusiast. That isn't to say there isn't entertainment to be had in *Skyfall* – there's giddy gobs of it – but whither the insouciance, huh? Director and noted kill-joy Sam Mendes (*Revolutionary Road*) turns out to be acres with action set-pieces, Javier Bardem is a sheer pleasure as the franchise's international baddie du jour, and Roger Deakins' cinematography makes startling artistry of even the transitionals – as when Bond takes a (very) long gondola ride. He stands ramrod, all-business, for the duration, and the effect is at once silly and emblematic of the film's humorlessness about its hero. Would it kill him to just sit back and enjoy the ride? (11/09/2012)

★★★ – Kimberley Jones
Movies 8

Heat

D: Michael Mann; with Al Pacino, Robert De Niro, Val Kilmer, Diane Venora, Ashley Judd, Amy Brenneman, Jon Voight, Tom Sizemore, Wes Studi, Ted Levine. (1995, R, 170 min.) **Classic Movies.** Michael Mann returns to the mean streets of his underrated *Thief* and *Manhunter* with *Heat* – a sprawling crime epic with a to-die-for cast. (*) @Flix Brewhouse, Tuesday, 7:30pm.



TEXAS CHAINSAW

D: John Luessenhop; with Alexandra Daddario, Dan Yeager, Tremaine "Trey Songz" Neverson, Scott Eastwood, Tania Raymonde, Shaun Sipos, Keram Malicki-Sánchez, James MacDonald, Thom Barry, Paul Rae, Richard Riehle, Bill Moseley, David Born, Sue Rock, Gunnar Hansen, Marilyn Burns. (R, 92 min.)

The cannibalistic Sawyer clan still grabs our attention, even after decades of remakes, reboots, and sequels to the 1974 original. This new film survives primarily on formulaic horror mechanics and the powerful image of a chain saw wielded in 3-D. The film opens by showing what follows the closing scene of the original: Angry townsfolk burn down the Sawyer farmhouse. A baby girl survives, however, and a married couple raise her as their own. Twenty years later, the girl, Heather (Daddario), unaware that she is adopted, inherits a house in Texas from a grandmother she never knew she had. So, off she heads with her boyfriend (Trey Songz) and another couple, as well as a hitchhiker. Her companions quickly become cannon fodder for Leatherface (Yeager), who also survived the fire. Much running around in the cemetery and woods ensues, but the twist in this new installment is the revelation that mob mentality may be as hideous as Leatherface. (01/11/2013)

★★ – Marjorie Baumgarten
Movies 8

THIS IS 40

D: Judd Apatow; with Paul Rudd, Leslie Mann, Maude Apatow, Iris Apatow, Albert Brooks, Jason Segel, Megan Fox, Robert Smigel, Annie Mumolo, Charlyne Yi, Chris O'Dowd, Melissa McCarthy. (R, 134 min.)

"We have to choose to be happy," says wife and mom Debbie (Mann), who has whorled herself into an existential tizzy after turning 40. Is happiness a choice? It's an idea worth exploring, but writer/director Judd Apatow isn't exactly laserlike in his focus; he's more like a dog licking the entire kitchen floor just to find that one tile smudged with bacon grease. Debbie and husband Pete (Rudd) – supporting characters from 2007's *Knocked Up* – are moving reluctantly toward middle age. They absolutely seethe with resentment while dealing with bickering daughters; emotionally distant, financially dependent fathers; and missed mortgage payments. I wonder if Apatow meant it all to come off so bleakly? At its desperate and raw, clogged-artery core, *This Is 40* is a powerful evocation of family life as war zone. It's a deeply funny movie, but it leaves an ugly stain: Does Apatow understand his heroes are assholes? (12/21/2012)

★★★ – Kimberley Jones
Movies 8

THE TWILIGHT SAGA: BREAKING DAWN – PART 2

D: Bill Condon; with Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Taylor Lautner, Peter Facinelli, Mackenzie Foy, Elizabeth Reaser. (PG-13, 115 min.)

So here it is: the last installment of the *Twilight* saga, or "our long national nightmare." *Part 2* picks up with the formerly human Bella Swan (Stewart) getting her first taste of vampire life, after her bloodsucker husband Edward Cullen (Pattinson) turned her to save her life after the difficult childbirth that concluded *Part 1*. The plot kicks in when Bella and Edward's new progeny Renesmee – half-vamp, half-human – is spied by another vampire, who runs to tattle to the

Volturi (the undead tribunal) that the Cullens bit a kid – a capital offense. Sanitized bloodlust, decapitated heads, and mixed messages swathed in a soft-focus shimmer ensue. If a late-in-the-film montage of Bella and Edward's swooniest looks seems familiar, that's because you've seen the same supercut on YouTube already, spliced together by a small army of sighing girls. Kiddos: I'm sighing too, but only from relief it's all behind us now. (11/23/2012)

★★ – Kimberley Jones
Movies 8, Tinseltown South

WARM BODIES

D: Jonathan Levine; with Nicholas Hoult, Teresa Palmer, Rob Corddry, Analeigh Tipton, Dave Franco, John Malkovich. (PG-13, 98 min.)

"What am I doing with myself? Why can't I connect with people?" These are the sort of questions that turn humans sleepless and despairing; the twist of *Warm Bodies* is that the same questions keep zombies up at night. Red-hoodied, decomposing R (Hoult) can't remember his name or string together a complete sentence, but he's still chasing a reason to live. He finds that reason while hunting with his best friend, M (Corddry), when he spares the life of human Julie (Palmer), and then protects her from less scrupulous zombies. To call *Warm Bodies* a zombie romantic-comedy is both accurate and reductive. Working from Isaac Marion's source novel, writer/director Jonathan Levine has created that rare thing in moviemaking – a consequential universe. Hits hurt. People die. Small kindnesses somersault into bigger things. In animating the inner workings of the undead, Levine has made a movie that is both clever and heartfelt. (02/01/2013)

★★★★ – Kimberley Jones
Alamo Lake Creek, Alamo Slaughter Lane, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Southpark Meadows, Cinemark Stone Hill Town Center, Flix Brewhouse, Highland, Galaxy Moviehouse, Gateway, iPic, Metropolitan, Tinseltown North, Westgate

WRECK-IT RALPH

D: Rich Moore; with the voices of John C. Reilly, Sarah Silverman, Jack McBrayer, Jane Lynch, Alan Tudyk, Ed O'Neill, Mindy Kaling, Brandon Scott, Joe Lo Truglio, Dennis Haysbert. (PG, 101 min.)

Candyland meets *Tron* by way of Nintendo's *Donkey Kong*, a splash of treacly Disneyana, and a gooey series of sugar-bomb, high-fructose, racing set-pieces: Such are the ingredients of *Wreck-It Ralph*. The end result isn't a disaster, but it is unfocused, and most of the gags hit with all the punch of a well-suckled gumdrop. The titular Ralph (voiced by Reilly) is the "bad guy" in a fictional video game called *Fix-It Felix Jr.*, who dreams instead of being a hero. Miffed, Ralph abandons his own game and crosses over to others: from the bug-infested, first-person shooter *Hero's Duty* to *Sugar Rush* – a Wonka-fied go-kart racer. There, he meets Vanellope von Schweetz (Silverman), the pair form a wary alliance, and, hey, what do you know, they learn some serious life lessons. Sweet enough but in the end a bit of a corny-syrupy wipeout, *Wreck-It Ralph* is middling, candycorn-saturated family-night fare. (11/02/2012)

★★ – Marc Savlov
Movies 8, Tinseltown North, Tinseltown South

ZERO DARK THIRTY

D: Kathryn Bigelow; with Jessica Chastain, Joel Edgerton, Chris Pratt, Jason Clarke, Jennifer Ehle, Kyle Chandler, Harold Perrineau, Mark Strong, Edgar Ramirez, Fares Fares, James Gandolfini. (R, 157 min.)

As a cinematic experience, Kathryn Bigelow's *Zero Dark Thirty* can be downright punishing – a word not chosen lightly, given that U.S.-sanctioned torture figures prominently here. But you don't tell this story – of the CIA's decade-long manhunt for Osama bin Laden – without including torture. The film charts CIA analyst Maya's (Chastain, riveting) evolution from a green-around-the-gills observer to several years into her tenure in Pakistan, where she now leads the interrogation. Bigelow is not a kid-glove kind of filmmaker and doesn't underscore harrowing and intense moments with close-ups or psychoanalytic monologues. This isn't that kind of movie. It's a mistake to confuse *Zero Dark Thirty* for "truth" – that would be a disservice to the high level of craftsmanship at work here – but there is admirably little fat on its bones. *Zero Dark Thirty* is as ruthlessly, relentlessly single-minded as Maya is about the hunt for bin Laden. (01/11/2013)

★★★★ – Kimberley Jones
Alamo Lake Creek, Alamo Slaughter Lane, Alamo Village, Barton Creek Square, CM Cedar Park, Hill Country Galleria, CM Round Rock, Galaxy Moviehouse, Gateway, iPic, Tinseltown South, Westgate



Riding the Whiskey River: KOOP's 18th Birthday, With Johnny Bush & Justin Trevino

Since Johnny Bush's birthday falls on Feb. 17, he may well

turn 78 onstage at Antone's. The "Country Caruso" lives in San Antonio and doesn't get to these parts often, but he's been busy since last we spoke for the release of 2007's *Kashmere Gardens Mud* and his autobiography *Whiskey River*, named after the song he wrote that forever tops Willie Nelson's set lists.

"I'm busy enough," he chuckles. "I couldn't keep Willie's schedule, I tell you that."

Bush recently logged studio time to revisit some old tunes for the upcoming *Reflections*.

"I recorded a couple of songs with Randy Rogers," he reveals. "We seemed to gel real well. We worked the Austin County Fair together a while back and became friends."

In his early days, Bush worked in Ray Price's band, the Cherokee Cowboys. As far as Price's reaction to

Blake Shelton's recent words about the state of country music, Bush thinks both singers are right.

"When Shelton attacked the jackasses and grandpa's music and old farts, that was a bit over the top, but mostly he said today's music seems aimed at the younger market. CD sales are down for everybody. Ray had good points, too, but ultimately the music's always changing. Remember, when the Grand Ole Opry started it didn't allow electric instruments or drums. It was basically hillbillies.

"When Ernest Tubbs came in with an electric guitar, they were just horrified. I think traditional country music has its place, because it's about real life situations. Being that the divorce rate is 50 percent, somebody out there is hurting. That Shelton thing helped everybody. A hit song doesn't care who sings it." — Jim Caligiuri

Antone's, Saturday 16

Sarah Fox & Joel Guzman, New Mystery Girl, the Krayolas

NO IDEA FESTIVAL

Austin, Saturday 16-Sunday 24

Celebrating its 10th year, the No Idea Festival highlights the fringes across two weekends in Austin and San Antonio. This year's event brings together everything from the electronics of Bonnie Jones and Bryan Eubanks to jazz drummer Alvin Fielder, as well as a host of experimentalists from Mexico City and Paris joining Austin's own avant-garde elite in loose, improvised sets. More information at www.noideafestival.com.



— Doug Freeman

SUNDAY, 17

Dafne Vicente-Sandoval and Xavier Lopez; Catherine Lamb; Bonnie Jones (**Salvage Vanguard Theater**, 8pm)

THURSDAY, 21

Jonathan Horne; Catherine Lamb and Bryan Eubanks, featuring Lunch Money; Alvin Fielder, Damon Smith, Remi Álvarez (**Performance Loft**, 8pm)

FRIDAY, 22

Damon Smith, Sandy Ewen; Catherine Lamb, Bryan Eubanks; Alvin Fielder, Ingebrigt Håker Flaten, Milo Tamez, Misha Marks (**Museum of Human Achievement**, 8pm)

SATURDAY, 23

Lunch Money (Chris Cogburn, Bob Hoffnar, Aaron Allen); Dafne Vicente-Sandoval, Xavier Lopez, Bonnie Jones; Bryan Eubanks, Maggie Bennett; Milo Tamez, Ingebrigt Håker Flaten, Remi Álvarez (**Museum of Human Achievement**, 8pm)

SPRAY PAINT LP RELEASE

Trailer Space, Friday 15

Clattering post-funk, Butthole Surfers-like live, wakes an even older Austin post-punk predecessor on Spray Paint's debut full-length. *Spray Paint LP* — literally spray painted by S.S. Records out of the California state capital — bumps and grinds, quakes and shakes, like no less than the Big Boys. Rooted in the convulsion therapy of the Tuxedo Killers and gargantuan rumpus of When Dinosaurs Ruled the Earth, the local trio follows up two 7-inches with a quivering Taser of home-grown catharsis.

— Raoul Hernandez

JOE LOVANO & DAVE DOUGLAS SOUND PRINTS QUINTET

Bass Concert Hall, Friday 15

If either sax titan Joe Lovano or trumpet ace Dave Douglas were coming to town, it'd be notable. Having both of these internationally acclaimed jazz stars together in the same band constitutes a reason to celebrate! Both musicians remain leading voices on their respective instruments, plus their quintet features the rambunctiously creative veteran drummer Joey Baron. Inspired by the musical visions of Wayne Shorter, this night promises superb modern, progressive music with a distinctive edge. — Jay Trachtenberg

CHURCHWOOD CD RELEASE

Hole in the Wall, Saturday 16

Launching its latest Saustex Records release, 2, Churchwood hypnotizes the Hole in the Wall with Beefheart blues and brain-bent poetry. The cast of local music vets, starring LeRoi Brother Joe Doerr as a lysergic lounge singer and his Hand of Glory bandmate (and Poison 13 standout) Bill Anderson teamed with Crack Pipes six-stringer Billy Steve Korpi, always leave eyes dilated. Corn eating, cowpunk smut peddlers the Hickoids knock out taco rock after Chablis, the wacked-out Americana offshoot of Brown Whornet. — Kevin Curtin

RAKIM

Mohawk, Sunday 17

Third time's the charm for this iconic NYC rapper who broke his foot then couldn't get his Benz working and thus canceled two Fun Fun Fun Fest appearances at the 11th hour. Considered a hip-hop forefather, Rakim's dexterous wordplay and propensity for complex narratives remain two tactics that still rub off on more major MCs than you can count on your hands and toes. Hosted by a local who absorbed such lessons, Zeale, the stacked outdoor bill boasts DJ Chorizo Funk, Tee Double, Phranchyze, and Da'shade Moonbeam.

— Chase Hoffberger

NEUROSIS, PAIN TEENS, RWAKE

Emo's East, Sunday 17

Barely a week after Scott Kelly growled through Austin with the Corrections House project, he's back with his day job Neurosis to bash and crash. Given *Honor Found in Decay*, its most brutal LP in a decade, the Oakland art metal quintet should take few prisoners and torture the ones it does. Houston's reunited industrial goths Pain Teens and Little Rock sludge pounder Rwake blast first. Co-presented by Chaos in Tejas. — Michael Toland

THE HIVES/ GRAVEYARD

Emo's East, Wednesday 20/Thursday 21

They come from the land of ice and snow, but the Hives' combustion still transforms the Fagersta five's Swedish pedigree into something resembling the Rolling Stones hammered R&B in a London basement circa 1964. Last year's *Lex Hives* melted fast on our shores, but adopting ATX punks the Flesh Lights makes the local reunion red-hot. Locals Act Rights open. Sweden's second-largest city after Stockholm, Gothenburg sends metallic psych-blues-doom-folk in Graveyard, whose third LP, *Lights Out*, lands a knockout blow alongside the quartet's raw 2008 debut. L.A. rattlers the Shrine detonate their own *Primitive Blast*. Eagle Claw first. — Raoul Hernandez

soundcheck

BY RAOUL HERNANDEZ

LUCERO

Mohawk, Friday 15

Memphis punk rednecks.

THE HAPPEN-INS

Swan Dive, Friday 15

Stonesy locals with up-and-coming rockers the Sweet Nuthin.

THE MOTHER HIPS

Continental Club, Friday 15 & Saturday 16

Bay Area jams.

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The Parish, Saturday 16

Homegrown wildlife, feral, and fun.

JIMMY LAFAVE, MICHAEL FRACASSO

One-2-One, Saturday 16

ATX singer-songwriter master class.

SAME SAC

Legendary White Swan, Sunday 17

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MORELAND & ARBUCKLE

Antone's, Wednesday 20

Kansas duo revisits WWII-era Delta blues.

RA RA RIOT

The Belmont, Wednesday 20

New York pop dramatists return with *Beta Love*.

AUSTIN PSYCH FEST PRESENTS

Red 7, Thursday 21

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OBN III'S TOUR KICKOFF

Beerland, Thursday 21

Explosive garage rock triple bill with Crooked Bangs and Dikes of Holland.

DON WILLIAMS

Paramount Theatre, Thursday 21

Famed Texan, Pozo-Seco Singer, and Western balladeer.

in-stores: Friday: **Spray Paint** LP release, **Coma in Algiers**, **Plutonium Farmers**, **Ghetto Ghouls**, **Burnt Skull**, Trailer Space, 7pm; Saturday: **Jezebeam**, **Spoils of War**, **Alchahest Libations**, **Lumens**, Trailer Space, 7pm; Tuesday: **Clitfit**, Trailer Space, 7pm; Thursday: **Little Father**, **Jacob Elliot**, **Ruby Fray**, Trailer Space, 7pm

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Mo. 2/18 **LOUNGE** Samaria Guitaria, Cinco Barnes, Snapping Chowksy, LP Sessions
Tu. 2/19 **LOUNGE** Aaron Cole, Karen Eubanks, Daniel Eiseman, Doug Blank
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THU 21 7PM SMOKESTACK REVIEW
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VICTORY GRILL, 1104 E. 11th, 291-6211

THE WATER TANK, 7309 McNeil Dr., 331-9831

WATERHOLE SALOON, 5244 Hwy. 71 E., Garfield, 512/247-5119

WATERLOO ICE HOUSE, 1106 W. 38th, 451-5245

WATERLOO RECORDS, 600-A N. Lamar, 474-2500

WELLS BRANCH COMMUNITY LIBRARY, 15001 Wells Port Dr., 989-3188

WHIP IN, 1950 S. I-35, 442-5337

WINE SENSATION, 3021 S. I-35 #120, 255-0526

Z'TEJAS, 1110 W. Sixth, 478-5355

TEXAS CLUB
BAR & GRILL

THURSDAYS BIKE NIGHT
 NO COVER! FREE FOOD \$3 WELLS & SHOTS

MARKY LEE
 TUESDAYS KARAOKE AT 9PM
 HIP HOP WEDNESDAYS W/ DJ WIZARD

\$10 DOMESTIC BUCKETS
 M-TH ALL NIGHT • NO COVER!

4914 Burlleson Road (512)541-7621

SATURDAY, FEB. 16

thesaxonpub.com
THE Saxon Pub
 1320 S. LAMAR 448.2552

Thu, Feb 14
Patrice Pike
 Troy Dillinger 8:00 - \$10
 10:00-\$7/\$10
 Carson Alexander 12:00-\$5

Eightysixxed
 6:00-NO COVER Happy Hour

Fri, Feb 15
Malford Milligan
 9:00 - \$10/\$12

Eric Tessmer
 11:00 - \$10

Denny Freeman
 6:00-NO COVER Happy Hour

Sat, Feb 16
Matt the Electrician
 8:00 - \$10/\$15

Hector Ward
 & the Big Time 10:30 - \$10
 Dustin Welch 12:00 - \$7
 Bobby Bridger 3:00 - \$10

Sun, Feb 17
THE RESENTMENTS
 Bruce, Scrappy Jud, Miles, Plankenhorn & John Chipman
 7:30 - \$10

Kem Watts 12:30 - \$5
Marshall Hood 10:30 - \$5
Paula Nelson 3:00 - NO COVER
John Gaar 5:30 - NO COVER
 Benefit for Deborah Oregon, 2:00-5:00

Mon, Feb 18
LONELYLAND
 8:30 - \$10
 Reserve \$25 seats at:
 outhousetickets.com/Artist/Bob_Schneider

Cari Hutson 7:00 - \$10
The Leavers 11:00 - \$5
Elizabeth Von Santillan 12:30 - \$5

Tue, Feb 19
Bruce Hughes & the All Nude Army
 8:30 - \$5

Shawn Pander 10:30 - \$5
Carson McHone 12:15 - \$5

David Grissom
 6:00 - NO COVER Happy Hour

Wed, Feb 20
Walt Wilkins & The Mystiqueros 9:00-\$10
Cody Bryan 11:00 - \$7
Tessy Lou 12:30-\$5

Johnny Nicholas & Hellbent
 6:00 - NO COVER Happy Hour

NAKIA
 Feb 22
Carolyn Wonderland
 Feb 23
James McCartney
 Apr 30

f FOLLOW US FOR DAILY TICKET GIVEAWAYS **t**

DAELO + REMMINGTON STEELE
 REAL MUSIC PRESENTS
 JOHN DAHLBACK - LAZRTAG
 AFTERHOURS: OHMS // JDUBZ - STEEL GROOVES

REMMINGTON STEELE
 AFTERHOURS: DETENTION // FRANCIS PREVE

EATX PRESENTS T.H.R.I.V.E.
 103 EAST 5TH STREET
 10PM - 2AM AFTERHOURS 2:30AM - 4:30AM

HOLE IN THE WALL AUSTIN TEXAS

THU 14 TH 9PM	FRI 15 TH 10PM \$5	SAT 16 TH 10PM \$5
JASON BLUM CHRISTY HAYS EMILIE CLEPPER BILL DAVIS	EMPIRE MACHINES HOLIDAY EAGLE EYE WILLIAMSON	HICKOIDS CHURCHWOOD (CD RELEASE) CHABLIS
SUN 17 TH 8PM	MON 18 TH 8PM	TUE 19 TH 10PM
CORELIA L. OMEGA SEEKER UGLY TWIN	DAVE INSLEY THE AUSTIN STEAMERS DEVIN JAKE	ESTELLINE DAWN & HAWKES
WED 20 TH 9PM		
D-MADNESS PROJECT & FRIENDS		

2/21 Chateau Nowhere * 2/22 CJ Edwards * 2/23 WXWC After Party
 2538 GUADALUPE • HOLEINTHEWALLAUSTIN.COM

The Belmont
 COCKTAILS + MUSIC + PALM TREES

Friday, February 15 9pm
BUGGIN' OUT
 ALL VINYL, SF, & CHICAGO HOUSE
 DJs JONENE, THOMAS SAHS & HERB

Sunday, February 17 • 8pm
MOVIES ON THE PATIO:
 THIS IS SPINAL TAP & RUN, LOLA, RUN

Wednesday, February 20 • 8pm
RA RA RIOT

Thursday, February 21 • 8pm
RAW NATURAL BORN ARTISTS

Thursday, February 28 • 7pm • All Ages
LINDSEY STIRLING
 FT. THE VIBRANT SOUND

Saturday, March 2 • 6pm
ST. FRANCIS SPRING GALA 2013

Thursday, March 7 • 10pm
KISHI BASHI

Friday, March 22 • 8:30pm • All Ages
BEN RECTOR

Wednesday, March 27 • 7pm • 18+
FLYLEAF
DROWNING POOL

Sunday, April 7 • 8pm
STICK FIGURE
 TICKETS ON SALE FRIDAY, FEB. 15TH AT 10AM 18+

Saturday, April 13 • 8:30pm
REBIRTH BRASS BAND

305 WEST 6TH ST
 512-476-2100

thebelmontaustin.com
 *all events are 21+ unless noted

SIXTH STREET
MAGGIE MAE'S
AUSTIN TEXAS

THURSDAY 2/14
 DECK 11PM **JO HELL** \$3 DRINK SPECIALS
 THE JIGGLEWATTS BURLESQUE
Secret Rendezvous
 GRAND TOUR OF TEASE

FRIDAY 2/15
 CLUB 10PM **PALACIO BROTHERS**
 THE JIGGLEWATTS
 BURLESQUE AND CABARET
 DJ KENN ROOFTOP DJ KID IN THE GIBSON ROOM

SATURDAY 2/16
MICHAEL DILLARD
 CLUB 10PM
SUNGLASSES & MUSHROOMS
 GIBSON LOUNGE 11PM
 DJ KENN ROOFTOP DJ KID IN THE GIBSON ROOM

MONDAY 2/18
 BLUE MONDAY BLUES JAM W/
MIKE MILLIGAN & THE ALTAR BOYZ 8PM
 \$3 DRINK SPECIALS

TUESDAY 2/19
AARON NAVARRO 8PM
 DRINK SPECIALS

WEDNESDAY 2/20
BIRDLEGG AND THE TIGHTFIT
 BLUES BAND \$3 DRINK SPECIALS

maggiemaesaustin.com sixth street 478.8541
 Text MAGGIESROCKS to 22828 for Music & Event Updates!

EVERY FRIDAY
 MAGGIE MAE'S GIBSON LOUNGE PRESENTS
 "AUSTIN'S FINEST
 BURLESQUE SENSATIONS"
 THE JIGGLEWATTS
 COMING FEBRUARY 14

♥ Secret ♥
 ♥ Rendezvous ♥
 GRAND TOUR OF TEASE
 CHOCOLATE COVERED
 STRAWBERRIES AND
 CHAMPAGNE TOAST!
 ♥ LONG STEM RED ROSES
 FOR THE LADIES! ♥



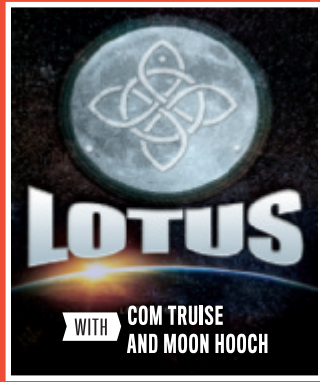
MAGGIE MAE'S
 Tickets Available at the door or online
 Front Gate Tickets

WALLER CREEK AMPHITHEATER

801 RED RIVER 480-8341 → BAR-B-Q—COLD BEER—LIVE MUSIC →

STUBB'S

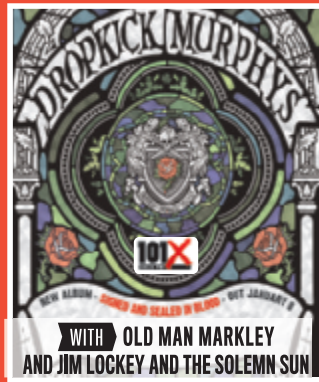
SAT FEB 16



THU FEB 21



WED FEB 27



THU FEB 28



IN THE CLUB

THU FEB 14 DOORS 8:30PM

KUTX WELCOMES
MY JERUSALEM WITH TUMP

FRI FEB 15 DOORS 9PM

SCORPION CHILD
WITH BURNING AVALANCHE AND THE WELL

SAT FEB 16 DOORS 11PM

FREE WITH LOTUS TICKET
HOLDING SPACE

WED FEB 20 DOORS 8PM

JOE TAYLOR GROUP
WITH DANNY BROOKS

THU FEB 21 DOORS 10PM

OFFICIAL REBELLION
AFTERPARTY (FREE FOR REBELLION TICKET HOLDERS)

FRI FEB 22 DOORS 9PM

RONNIE FAUSS
WITH SHAWN NELSON & THE GOOD BUDS AND GREG MULLEN & THE COSMIC AMERICAN BAND

SAT FEB 23 DOORS 9PM

JUKEBOX THE GHOST
WITH MATT POND AND LIGHTHOUSE & THE WHALER

SUN FEB 24 DOORS 8PM

ELECTRIC SIX
WITH GABRIEL THE MARINE

THU FEB 26 DOORS 10PM

FREE INSIDE AFTER TAME IMPALA
FEATHERS AND THE SOUR NOTES

WED FEB 27 DOORS 10PM

FREE INSIDE AFTER DROPKICK MURPHYS
BLACK IRISH TEXAS

THU FEB 28 DOORS 10PM

INSIDE AFTER BIG GIGANTIC
ELIOT LIPP

FRI MAR 1 DOORS 11PM

FREE INSIDE AFTER COHEED AND CAMBRIA
BLACK THORN HALO

SAT MAR 2 DOORS 11PM

FREE INSIDE AFTER YONDER MOUNTAIN STRING BAND
WOOD & WIRE

WED MAR 6 DOORS 8PM

CARSON BROCK & THE EFFECT CD RELEASE
WITH EN ROUTE AND OTHER SPECIAL GUESTS

FRI MAR 29 DOORS 10:30PM

INSIDE AFTER DWIGHT YOAKKUM
MIKE & THE MOONPIES

SAT MAR 30 DOORS 10:30PM

INSIDE AFTER DWIGHT YOAKKUM
MICE AND RIFLES

THU APR 4 DOORS 8PM

DANA FALCONBERRY AND BUXTON

THU APR 11 DOORS 10PM

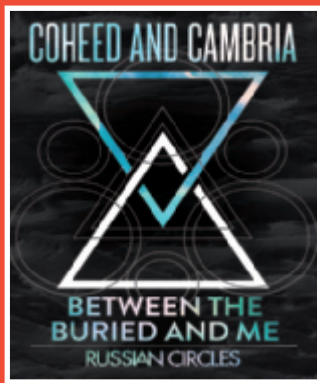
INSIDE AFTER SLIGHTLY STOOPID
FUTURE ROCK W/DJ THUBAULT

ON SALE SAT FEB 16 10AM

FOR PRIVATE EVENTS CALL 444-2001 | TICKETS AVAILABLE AT STUBB'S & C3CONCERTS.COM

FOR PRIVATE EVENTS CALL 444-2001 | TICKETS AVAILABLE AT STUBB'S & C3CONCERTS.COM

FRI MAR 1



SAT MAR 2



FRI & SAT
MAR 29 & 30



TUE & WED
APR 9 & 10



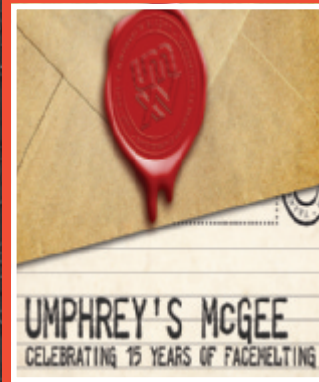
THU APR 11



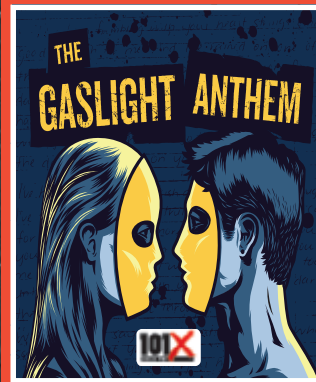
FRI APR 12



SAT APR 20



FRI APR 26



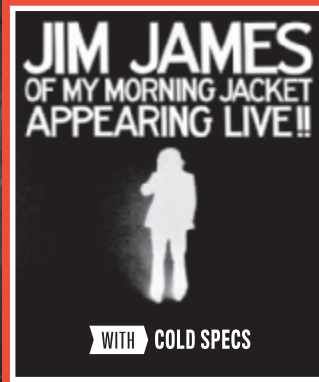
SUN APR 28



TUE APR 30



MON MAY 6



MON JUN 3



FOR PRIVATE EVENTS CALL 444-2001 | TICKETS AVAILABLE AT STUBB'S & C3CONCERTS.COM



THE
LUMINEERS

FRIDAY APRIL 26TH

TOWER AMPHITHEATER
AT CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS

TICKETS ONSALE THIS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH AT 10:00AM
TICKETMASTER.COM OR CALL 1-800-745-3000

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POODIES

NO BAD DAYS
LIVE MUSIC EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 16
MICHAEL MYERS

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 21
★★ SHARON'S BIRTHDAY BASH ★★
BOBBY BOYD
TESSY LOU & SHOTGUN STARS

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 22
JAKE KELLEN

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Flipnotics

HAPPY HOUR DAILY
4PM - 8PM
Come try our new wine selections

THURSDAY (2.14)
• Harrison Brown 6pm
• Open mic hosted by Lisa Kettyle 8pm

FRIDAY (2.15)
• Wild Bill & the Lost Knobs 7pm
• Chris Wilson 9pm
• Tequila Trio 10pm

SATURDAY (2.16)
• Tina & Her Pony 6pm
• Soulwriters in the Round Season Finale (\$5) 8pm

SUNDAY (2.17)
• Javelina 9pm

MONDAY (2.18)
• Bottom Dollar String Band 7pm
• The Bluegrass Outfit 9pm

TUESDAY (2.19)
• These Fine Moments 8pm
• Erik Hokkanen's Laboratory 9pm

WEDNESDAY (2.20)
• Starlings, TN 6pm
• Nick Marcotte and the Restless Troubadours 8pm

COFFEE • BEER • WINE • DAILY SPECIALS
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THURSDAY 02.14
NO COVER
2 PC WITH JUDGE & DR. DUBBIST "Dub is in the Air"

FRIDAY 02.15
\$5 AT DOOR
BUS STOP STALLIONS
LZ LOVE, SOUL SATTELITE

SATURDAY 02.16
\$5 AT DOOR
LIKKLE SHANX + DUB GIDEON
LEROY SHAKESPEARE + THE SHIP OF VIBES

WEDNESDAY 02.20
NO COVER
FREE REGGAE!
MAU MAU CHAPLAINS
WINSTON'S COOKING

TICKETS ON SALE NOW FOR WARRIOR KING!

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BROKEN SPOT

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442-6189
PHOTO BY M. DAPRA

THU, FEB 14 6-8PM
8-9PM
9:15PM
TONY HARRISON
DANCE LESSONS
JESSE DAYTON

FRI, FEB 15 8-9PM
9:30PM
DANCE LESSONS
CORNELL HURD

SAT, FEB 16 8-9PM
9:30PM
DANCE LESSONS
THE DERAILERS

TUE, FEB 19 6-8PM
8PM
AMANDA WELDON HENSON

WED, FEB 20 6-8PM
8-9PM
9PM
SUNSET VALLEY BOYS
DANCE LESSONS
CHAPARRAL w/ JEFF HUGHES

THREADGILL'S dang.

SOUTH ON RIVERSIDE

Sat Feb 16
Sarah Sharp
Robert Sarazin Blake
Rachel Ries 8pm
\$10

Sun Feb 17
The Seekers 11 am
no cover

Sun Feb 17
Devon Sproule 8pm
Marshall Ford Swing Band 9pm
\$10

NORTH ON LAMAR

Sun Feb 17
AJW 11 am
no cover

Wed Feb 20
Braken Hale 7pm
no cover

South: 301 W. Riverside Dr (512)472-9304
North: 6416 N. Lamar Blvd (512)451-5440

LIVE MUSIC

Central Market
CENTRAL PARK
40th & North Lamar • 512-206-1000
LIVE MUSIC SHOWS TIMES 6:30-9PM
unless otherwise noted

Thursday, February 14
A special Valentine's Day Family Show @ 6PM
THE BISCUIT BROTHERS
children's entertainment

Friday, February 15
GINGER LEIGH & WENDY COLONNA
singer-songwriters

Saturday, February 16
WOODY RUSSELL
Americana

Thursday, February 21
PATRICIA VONNE
Latin Americana

Friday, February 22
BLACKBIRD 3
jazz

Saturday, February 23
DJEMBABES
African

Thursday, February 28
ROB ROY PARNELL
Blues

Friday, March 1
SON Y NO SON
Cuban

Saturday, March 2
SWING CENTRAL SWING DANCE CONTEST
Sponsored by the Austin Swing Syndicate with a contest DJ & Live Music by Alice Spencer & Her Rubberband

THE WESTGATE LIVE MUSIC PROGRAM WILL REOPEN AROUND THE END OF FEBRUARY WITH A NEW LIVE MUSIC ROOM AND AN ENHANCED PA SYSTEM.

Café hours: 7am-9pm Sun-Thur; 7am-10pm Fri & Sat
Check out our Central Market Music "You Tube" site:
www.youtube.com/user/CentralMarketMusic

CLUB LISTINGS

ALL AGES VENUE ROADSHOW RECOMMENDED HEAR MUSIC ONLINE

THURSDAY 4

ACL LIVE AT THE MOODY THEATER Valentine's Day w/ Lex Land, Shakey Graves, Tosca Strings, Bob Schneider & the Moonlight Orchestra (6:30) ♪

AMAYA'S TACO VILLAGE Johnny Gonzales (5:00)

ANTONE'S Evan Johns Benefit w/ Big Guitars From Texas (7:30) ♪ ♪

BAR LOUIE Tish & Misbehavin' (8:00)

BAR MIRABEAU Paula Maya ♪ (7:00)

BAT BAR John Frischer, Phil Luna (4:00)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Kristen Smith (8:00)

BEERLAND The Quitters ♪, Ghetto Ghoulis, the Best (9:00)

BILLY'S ICE HOUSE Armadillo Road (8:30)

BOURBON GIRL Derik Kroetz (4:30), John Reynolds & the Stoneface Cowboys (8:30)

BROKEN SPOKE Tony Harrison, Dance Lessons, Jesse Dayton ♪ (6:00)

BUENOS AIRES CAFE Glover Tango & Justin Sherburn (7:00)

CACTUS CAFE Leah Nelson & the Kithara Duo, Tom Echols (8:00) ♪ ♪

CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE Dustin Welch (9:00)

CHUGGIN' MONKEY Mike V. Trio (9:00)

CLUB DE VILLE Josh Buckley, Amber West, Will Rhodes, Darwin Smith, Ashleigh Daniel, Mike Booher, Will Cope

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Dan Dyer ♪, Tameca Jones (8:30); In the Club: The Whiskey Sisters (6:30), Loves It!, White Ghost Shivers, Urban Achievers Brass Band (9:30)

DIZZY ROOSTER John Chavez (4:30)

DONN'S DEPOT Murphy's Inlaws

EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Mark Goodwin Trio (7:00) ♪

EL SOL Y LA LUNA Tish Hinojosa (8:00) ♪ ♪

ELEPHANT ROOM Violet Crown Revue, Ron Wilkins (6:00)

EMMA S. BARRIENTOS MEXICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER Una Noche Romantica w/ Los Tres Reyes, Cowboy Donley (7:00) ♪ ♪

FREDDIE'S PLACE Justif (6:00) ♪

GIDDY UPS Open Mic w/ Greg Duffy (8:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Alvin Crow (9:00)

GRUENE HALL Valentine's Dance w/ Moot Davis (6:00) ♪ ♪

GUERO'S TACO BAR The Fabs ♪ (6:30)

HOLE IN THE WALL Emilie Clepper (10:00)

HOLY MOUNTAIN Lovers' Ball w/ T Bird & the Breaks, Roxy Roca ♪ (9:00)

HOTEL VEGAS Beat Your Heart Out w/ Pharoahs, Ditch Witch, American Sharks ♪ (8:00)

LAMBERTS Masumi & the Gentlemen (7:30)

LONGBRANCH INN El Pathos (8:00)

LUCKY LOUNGE Heartbreakers Ball w/ Scientist ♪, After Edmund, Nathan Hubble (9:00)

MIMI'S CAFE Kim Kafka (6:30)

NEWORLDEL Bluegrass Open Mic w/ Eddie Collins

THE NORTH DOOR 10YR, Lex Land, Meiko, Jazz Mills (8:30) ♪

ONE-2-ONE BAR Jack Burton Trio, Progress CD Release (7:00)

OPA! John McDonough (7:00)

THE PARISH David Wax Museum, Tift Merritt (9:00) ♪

PATAGONIA Feathers (6:30)

PATSY'S CAFE Jodi Adair (6:30)

ROAD SHOWS

February

THU 14
Big Guitars From Texas, Antone's
Tom Echols, Leah Nelson & the Kithara Duo, Cactus Cafe
Tish Hinojosa, El Sol y la Luna
Los Tres Reyes, Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center
Moot Davis, Gruene Hall
Meiko, the North Door
Tift Merritt, David Wax Museum, the Parish
Dropdead, Shitstorm, Churchwhip, Rapturous Grief, Red 7
Suzanne Vega, Stateside at the Paramount
Lee Coulter, Stompin' Grounds Coffee & Cocktail Lounge
The Flying Buttresses, Emily Herring, Triple Crown

FRI 15
Joe Lovano & Dave Douglas Sound Prints Quintet, Bass Concert Hall
Jenny & the Reincarnations, Beerland
Lee Coulter, BookWoman
Adam Johnson, Cheatham Street Warehouse
Mother Hips, Continental Club
Kellye Gray, Paul Geremia, Elephant Room
Velvet Acid Christ, Twilight Garden, Elysium
Letting Up Despite Great Faults, Frank
Lucero, J. Charles & the Trainrobbers, Mohawk

SAT 16
Johnny Bush, the Krayolas, Antone's
Mother Hips, Continental Club
The Used, We Came as Romans, Crown the Empire, Mindflow, Emo's East
Piney Grove Ramblers, Patsy's Cafe
Oxblood, the Beltones, Broadsiders, Red 7
Bamako Airlines, the Sahara Lounge
Lotus, Com Truise, Moon Hooch, Stubb's

SUN 17
The Toasters, Mrs. Skannotto, Antone's
Neurosis, Pain Teens, Rwake, Emo's East
Mike Stinson, Ginny's Little Longhorn Saloon
Seeker, Hole in the Wall Cause & Effect, Lucky Lounge
Rakim, Mohawk
Next 2 the Tracks, the Parish
Dafne Vicente-Sandoval, Xavier Lopez, Catherine Lamb, Bonnie Jones, Salvage Vanguard Theater

MON 18
Gory Details, Hotel Vegas

TUE 19
Tiger Waves, Holy Mountain
Dave Mason, One World Theatre

WED 20
Moreland & Arbuckle, Antone's
Weaponizer, Steel Bearing Hand, Beerland
Ra Ra Riot, the Belmont
The Hives, Emo's East
Next 2 the Tracks, Headhunters
Gory Details, Holy Mountain
Jimmie Dreams, Lucy's Retired Surfers Bar & Restaurant
Unknown Mortal Orchestra, Wampire, Ramona Falls, Social Studies, Mohawk
Andrea Gibson, the North Door
Lee Coulter, Hooka Hey, the Parish Underground
Black Taxi, the Parish
Every Time I Die, the Acacia Strain, Vanna, Hundredth, No Bragging Rights, Red 7
Joe Taylor Group, Stubb's

THU 21
John Denver Tribute, ACL Live at the Moody Theater
Aaron Neubauer, Carousel Lounge
Tish Hinojosa, El Sol y la Luna
Graveyard, the Shrine, Emo's East
The Black Watch 3rd Battalion, Band of the Scots Guards, Frank Erwin Center
White Walls, Hotel Vegas
Don Williams, Paramount Theatre
Remi Alvarez, Damon Smith, Bryan Eubanks, Catherine Lamb, Misha Marks, the Performance Loft
Psychic Ills, Red 7
Rebellion, J Boogie, Stubb's

LISTINGS ARE FREE AND PRINTED ON A SPACE AVAILABLE BASIS. ACTS ARE LISTED CHRONOLOGICALLY. SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE, SO CALL CLUBS TO CONFIRM LINEUPS. START TIMES ARE PROVIDED WHERE KNOWN AND ARE PM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: MUSIC LISTINGS DEADLINE IS MONDAY MORNINGS, 9AM, FOR THAT WEEK'S ISSUE, PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY. PLEASE INDICATE ROADSHOWS AND RESIDENCIES. SEND VENUE NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, ACTS, AND START TIMES TO: CLUB LISTINGS, PO BOX 49066, AUSTIN, TX 78765; FAX, 458-6910; PHONE, 454-5766 X159; EMAIL, clubs@austinchronicle.com.

AUSTIN BANDS: WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU. IF YOU HAVEN'T REGISTERED AND UPLOADED YOUR MP3S TO THE MUSICIANS REGISTER, GO TO AUSTINCHRONICLE.COM/REGISTER. ANYWHERE YOUR BAND IS MENTIONED, YOUR MUSIC WILL BE FEATURED.



THE BACKYARD

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WWW.THEBACKYARD.NET
13801 BEE CAVE PKWY 78738

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APRIL 28

LIFE IN COLOR
REBIRTH
WITH EVERY END IS A NEW BEGINNING
WORLD'S LARGEST PAINT PARTY



AUSTIN, TX
04.6.2013 | THE BACKYARD

ON SALE NOW EARLY BIRD TIX: JAN.28

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AT
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COMING SOON
EVERY TUES. IN FEBRUARY
ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO
3/1 **SCOTT BIRAM**
3/2 **BILL CARTER**

THURS FEB 14
HAPPY HOUR NO COVER
6:30PM
12AM **THE WHISKEY SISTERS**
THE URBAN ACHIEVERS BRASS BAND
10:30PM **WHITE GHOST SHIVERS**
LOVES IT!
9:30PM FRI & SAT FEB 15 & 16

TWO BIG NIGHTS
MOTHER HIPS

FRIDAY FEB 15
HAPPY HOUR 6:30PM NO COVER
THE LEGENDARY **BLUES SPECIALISTS**
12AM **MOTHER HIPS**
10PM **THE PRESERVATION**

SATURDAY FEB 16
MATINEE DOORS 3PM
REDD VOLKAERT
12AM **MOTHER HIPS**
10PM **DARREN HOFF AND THE HARD TIMES**

SUNDAY FEB 17
MATINEE 3PM NO COVER
WITH **PLANET CASPER**
DAVID GRISSOM, DAVID CARROLL AND JON HAIN
7:30PM
THE WAGONEERS

WEYDALE WITH
REDD VOLKAERT, EARL POOLE BALL PLUS DALLAS WAYNE
10:30PM

MONDAY FEB 18
HAPPY HOUR NO COVER
10PM **PETERSON BROTHERS**
TWO HOOTS & A HOLLER

TUESDAY FEB 19
HAPPY HOUR 7PM
12AM **GRADY**
ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO
SESSIONS ON SOUTH CONGRESS

WEDNESDAY FEB 20
HAPPY HOUR 6:30PM NO COVER
12AM **RICKY STEIN**
JON DEE GRAHAM & THE FIGHTING COCKS

THURSDAY FEB 21
HAPPY HOUR NO COVER
10PM **WHISKEY SISTERS**
12AM **DUSTIN WELCH**
CD RELEASE PARTY

FRIDAY FEB 22
H. H. 6:30PM
10PM **BRANDON ZDAN**
THE LEGENDARY **BLUES SPECIALISTS**

SATURDAY FEB 23
MATINEE DOORS 3PM
12AM **REDD VOLKAERT**
TWO HOOTS & A HOLLER
10PM **BRUCE ROBISON**
KELLY WILLIS
CD RELEASE PARTY

UPSTAIRS IN THE GALLERY
THU 10:30 **TAMECA JONES**
8:30 **DAN DYER**
FRI & SAT 10:30 **MIKE FLANIGIN TRIO**
FRI WITH **JOHNNY MOELLER & FROSTY**
SAT WITH **DENNY FREEMAN & FROSTY**
SUN 10:30 **DUPREE** w/ **MIKE FLANIGIN, JAKE LANGLEY & KYLE THOMPSON**
FRI 8:30 **ROBERT KRAFT**
SAT 8-10 **PRIVATE PARTY**

ART BY
ERIKA JANE MALLETT

GALLERY OPENS AT 8:00PM
SUN 8:30 **JON DEE GRAHAM & FRIEND SHOW**
MON 10:30 **SIT DOWN, SERVANT**
8:30 **CHURCH ON MONDAY**
ELIAS HASLANGER & DR. JAMES POLK AND JAKE LANGLEY
TUE 10:30 **EPHRAIM OWENS EXPERIENCE**
8:30 **DUSTIN WELCH**
WED 10:30 **TRUBE, FARRELL, SNIZ**
8:30 **BARBARA K HECTOR MUNOZ & MIKE HARDWICK**

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SAT 2/16 **SHEARWATER**
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FRI 2/22 **HE'S MY BROTHER SHE'S MY SISTER**
w/ PAPER BIRD, SHAKEY GRAVES
(c3concerts.com)

SAT 2/23 **THE MACCABEES**
w/ REPUTANTE, GAMBLES

WED 2/27 **TRISTAN PRETTYMAN**
w/ ANYA MARINA
(c3concerts.com)

DOWNSTAIRS AT...

the PARISH underground

SAT 2/16 **THE LOVE LEIGHS,**
BO DEPENA, MILES PITTMAN,
SIMPLE MINDED PREDATORS

MON 2/18 **JODY JONES & JACOB FURR**

TUE 2/19 **BEASLEY PRICE**

WED 2/20 **HOOKA HEY** (RESIDENCY)

TUE 2/26 **BEASLEY PRICE**

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THOSE-KNOW-IT-
ALLS & THEIR
MIGHTY CAUSES,
ROOSEVELT ELK

SUNDAY 2/17
SECRET LOVER,
DAZE OF HEAVEN,
WHITE CRIME

TUESDAY 2/19
\$2 TECATE TUESDAYS W/
SUSAN TORRES
Y CONJUNTO
CLEMENCIA &
GUMBO CE SOIR

WEDNESDAY 2/20
THE
REBELATIONS,
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HARRISON
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THURSDAY 2/21
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PARTY

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CLUB LISTINGS

FROM THURSDAY

POODIE'S HILLTOP ROADHOUSE Texas K.G.B., Woot Talley (6:00) A

POODLE DOG LOUNGE Fred Walser & the Dust Storm Rattlers (9:00)

RED 7 Outside: Rapturous Grief, Churchwhip, Shitstorm, Dropdead (9:00); Inside: Roky Moon & the Kiss Goodnight, Bad Lovers, Shapes Have Fangs, Bobby Jealousy (9:00) B

RILEY'S TAVERN Dry River Religion (9:00)

THE SAHARA LOUNGE LZ Love, Nakia, Topaz (8:00)

SANTORINI CAFE Thomasina Russell (7:00)

SATELLITE BISTRO & BAR Continental Graffiti (7:00)

SAXON PUB Eightysixxed (6:30), Troy Dillinger, Patrice Pike (8:00)

THE SCOOT INN Meowlentines w/ Hikes, Holiday Mountain, Little Lo

SHOAL CROSSING EVENT CENTER Jeff Lofton's Jazz Supper Club w/ Suzi Stern (7:00)

SPEAKEASY The Vurdicit (9:00)

THE STAGE ON SIXTH Jonny Gray (9:00)

STATESIDE AT THE PARAMOUNT Suzanne Vega (7:00, 9:00) B

STOMPIN' GROUNDS COFFEE & COCKTAIL LOUNGE Lee Coulter (9:00) B

STRANGE BREW LOUNGE SIDE Van Wilks, Cari Hutson (7:00) A

STUBB'S Tump, My Jerusalem (8:30)

SWAN DIVE Secret Society Ball

THE THIRSTY NICKEL Next Exit (9:00)

TRAILER SPACE RECORDS Machete Western, Gorgeous Hands, Kniflight, Dangersesque (7:00) A

TRIPLE CROWN Emily Herring (6:00); Are You Crazy?, Spaces, Canvas People, the Flying Buttresses (9:00) B

THE WATER TANK Chris Beirne & the Hot Plates (8:30)

WATERHOLE SALOON Open Mic w/ Mark Allan Atwood (7:30)

Z'TEJAS The Brew (6:00)

FRIDAY 15

AMAYA'S TACO VILLAGE Johnny Gonzales (5:00)

ANDERSON MILL TAVERN Fusion

ANGEL'S ICEHOUSE Aaron Einhouse A

ANTONE'S Darren Hoff & the Hard Times, Shinyribs, Reckless Kelly (8:00) A

BAKER ST. PUB & GRILL The South Austin Moonlighters

BAR LOUIE Clay Compania (9:00)

BASS CONCERT HALL Joe Lovano & Dave Douglas Sound Prints Quintet (8:00) B

BASTROP BREWHOUSE Chubby Knuckle Choir (9:00)

BAT BAR Colt Landon Baker (4:00)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Sean Orr (10:30)

BEERLAND Tijuana Bible, Cheap Curis, Jenny & the Reincarnations (9:00) B

BOOKWOMAN Lee Coulter (6:30) B

BOURBON GIRL John Reynolds (4:30), Fond Kiser (8:00)

BUDDY'S PLACE Son Geezinslaw, Glenn Collins (8:00)

BUENOS AIRES CAFE Mauricio Callejas (10:00)

CACTUS CAFE Terri Hendrix (8:30) A

CAROUSEL LOUNGE Daylight Titans, Mike Nicolai & the Sensations (9:00)

CENTRAL MARKET NORTH Ginger Leigh (6:30) A

CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE Adam Johnson B

CHERRYWOOD COFFEEHOUSE Robert Steel J, Sam Hadfield, Jeff "Horti" Hortillosa (7:00) A

CHUGGIN' MONKEY Aaron Navarro (9:00)

CLUB DE VILLE Other Lovers, Burgess Meredith, Paraguay

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Robert Kraft Trio, Mike Flanigin Trio (8:30); In the Club: The Blues Specialists (6:30), the Preservation, Mother Hips (10:00) B

DIZZY ROOSTER Aaron Navarro (4:30)

DONN'S DEPOT Donn & the Station Masters

EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE James Speer (8:00) A

EL SOL Y LA LUNA Mariachi Los Toros (9:30) A

EL TORO NEGRO LOUNGE The Soul Supporters (9:00)

ELEPHANT ROOM Paul Geremia (6:00), Kellye Gray J (9:30) B

ELYSIUM Twilight Garden, Velvet Acid Christ B

EMO'S ANNEX Salesman, the Mole People J, Love Inks (9:00)

EMO'S EAST Talking Heads Hoot w/ Roxy Roca J, Heartbyrne (9:00) A

FAIR BEAN COFFEE Open Mic w/ Amy Zamarripa, Daisy O'Connor (5:00)

FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE Wild Bill & the Lost Knobs (7:00) A

FRANK Shortwave Party, Borriskokane, Letting Up Despite Great Faults B A

GIDDY UPS Bob Appel, War Horses (5:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Dane Sterling, Scott Angle & the Cold Cold Hearts (6:00)

GUERO'S TACO BAR Bobby Fuentes (6:30)

HOLE IN THE WALL Eagle Eye Williamson, Holiday, Empire Machines (10:00)

HOLY MOUNTAIN DJ Hobo D

HOTEL VEGAS A Giant Dog, Spray Paint, the Young (9:00)

IRON CACTUS NORTH David Massey

KINGDOM NIGHTCLUB DJ Andrew Parsons (9:00)

LUCKY LOUNGE Rusty Bros., DJ Swan (9:00)

MARIA'S TACO XPRESS Leeann Atherton (7:00) A

MOHAWK Outside: Cartright, J. Charles & the Trainrobbers, Lucero (9:00); Inside: East Cameron Folkcore, Greg Mullen & the Cosmic American Band (11:30) B

NEWORLDELI Kiya Heartwood

ONE WORLD THEATRE Bobby Caldwell (7:00) B A

ONE-2-ONE BAR Little Brave J, Super Water Sympathy, Bipolar Bears J (7:00) B

OPA! Roger Len Smith (8:00)

THE PARISH Broadway, Red Jumpsuit Apparatus B

PATSY'S CAFE Rosie Flores Trio (6:30)

POODIE'S HILLTOP ROADHOUSE Hunter McKithan, Deann Rene (9:00) A

POODLE DOG LOUNGE Happy Campers, Mouseabout B

RATTLE INN Shinyribs

RED 7 Little Wesley, the Laughing, New York City Queens (9:00) B

RILEY'S TAVERN Them Duquines (9:00)

ROADHOUSE The Rhythm Dawgs J

THE SAHARA LOUNGE James Hinkle, Suspirians, the Early Stages, James Arthur's Manhunt (7:00)

SANTORINI CAFE John McDonough (6:00)

SATELLITE BISTRO & BAR T. Jarrod Bonta (7:00)

SAXON PUB Denny Freeman (6:00)

THE SCOOT INN Roosevelt Elk, Those-Know-It-Alls & Their Mighty Causes, Auroravore

SHOAL CROSSING EVENT CENTER Jeff Lofton's Jazz Supper Club w/ Hope Morgan (7:00)

SHOOTERS BILLIARDS NORTH Check 1 (9:00)

SQUARERUT KAVA BAR Los Kavaleros

THE STAGE ON SIXTH Tish Lancaster & the Mizzbehavin Band (8:30)

STRANGE BREW LOUNGE SIDE Suburban Beat, Don Harvey & A Is Red, Patricia Vonne (6:00) A

STUBB'S The Well, Burning Avalanche, Scorpion Child (9:00)

SWAN DIVE The Happen-Ins

TEXAS BAR & GRILL Stooch (9:00)

TEXAS MIST DJ Joe Hernandez (9:00)

THE THIRSTY NICKEL Rock Hard (9:00)

TRAILER SPACE RECORDS Burnt Skull, Ghetto Ghoulies, Plutonium Farmers, Coma in Algiers J, Spray Paint LP Release (7:00) A

TRIPLE CROWN Eric Hisaw (6:00); Kabomba, Loose Leaf, Jericho (10:00)

WELLS BRANCH COMMUNITY LIBRARY Open Ears w/ Susan Gibson, Elizabeth Wills (6:30)

WINE SENSATION Justif (8:00)

SATURDAY 16

AMAYA'S TACO VILLAGE Johnny Gonzales (5:00)

ANDERSON MILL TAVERN Spark

ANTONE'S KOOP Birthday w/ Joel Guzman & Sarah Fox, New Mystery Girl, the Krayolas, Justin Trevino, Johnny Bush (7:00) B A

BAKER ST. PUB & GRILL Roxy Roca J

BAR LOUIE Spitfire (9:00)

BASTROP BREWHOUSE Dawn & Hawkes (9:00)

BAT BAR Derik Kroez & Jessi Arnold (12:30), Charlie Murphy (4:00)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Altar Boyz (10:30)

BEERLAND Creationists, Elvis, the Gospel Truth (9:00)

THE BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART Anniversary Gala Afterparty w/ DJ Mel, Charlie Sexton, the Bluebonnets

BOURBON GIRL Danny Smith (4:30), John Reynolds & the Stoneface Cowboys (8:00)

BUENOS AIRES CAFE Flamenco Symphony (10:00)

CACTUS CAFE Emily Wolfe (8:30) A

CAROUSEL LOUNGE The Rite Flyers, Austerity Measures, Why Not Satellite? (9:00)

CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE Sons of Fathers

CHERRY CREEK CATFISH RESTAURANT Off the Grid (6:00)

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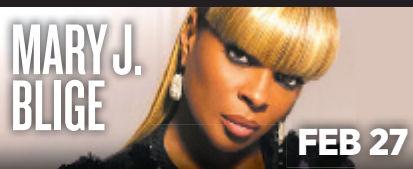
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FEB 21

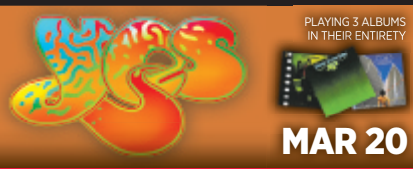
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Wed. 2/20 Nancy Scott

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w/JUSTIN TREVIÑO
THE KRAYOLAS
SARAH FOX & JOEL GUZMAN
NEW MYSTERY GIRL

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SAT 16
SOUP
Doors 9:30PM \$6.00 All Ages
Eric Wilson, Under The Sun

MON 18
MOM ATX (MOWTOWN ON MONDAYS)
Doors 9:00PM FREE All Ages MOM DJs and
Friends of Sound Records present MOM Weekly
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THU 21
DANI VARGAS GROUP
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FRI 22
MIRANDA DODSON CD RELEASE
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Mark Stoney, Matt McClosky

SAT 23
THE NEW DAY
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MON 25
MOM ATX (MOWTOWN ON MONDAYS)
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Friends of Sound Records present MOM Weekly
Dance Party. Resident DJs coolhands & B Sears

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CLUB LISTINGS

FROM SATURDAY

CHERRYWOOD COFFEEHOUSE Juliana Murphy (7:00) **A**

CHUGGIN' MONKEY John Chavez (4:30), Tish & Misbehavior (9:00)

CLUB DE VILLE Through the Trees, Ted Nesseth, Basvra

CONANS PIZZA Pamela Allen, the Biscuit Rollers (7:00) **A**

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Scarlett Olson, Mike Flanigin Trio (8:30); In the Club: Redd Volkaert (3:30), Darren Hoff & the Hard Times, Mother Hips (12mid) **B**

DIZZY ROOSTER Mike V. (4:30)

DONN'S DEPOT Danny Britt & Red Dawg

EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Lucky Strikes (8:00) **A**

EL SOL Y LA LUNA Kristen Smith (8:30) **A**

ELEPHANT ROOM James Polk & Centerpeace (9:30)

ELYSIUM Frisky Fet-Tease Burlesque (10:30)

EMO'S EAST Mindflow, Crown the Empire, We Came as Romans, the Used (7:00) **B A**

FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE Tina & Her Pony (6:00) **A**

FRANK Under the Sun, Eric Wilson, Soup **A**

GIDDY UPS Brad Manosevitz, Jimmy & the Lunar Rollers (7:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON JWW & the Prospectors (9:00)

THE GRAPEVINE Dan McCoy (3:00)

GRUENE HALL White Ghost Shivers (1:00), Micky & the Motorcars (9:00) **A**

GÜERO'S TACO BAR Texas Tycoons (6:30)

HOLE IN THE WALL Chablis, Hickoids, Churchwood CD Release (9:00)

HOLY MOUNTAIN La Guerilla, Orthy, 10YR

HOTEL VEGAS Night Fever w/ DJ Chorizo Funk, Jeremy Sole

LUCKY LOUNGE Exit Wonderland, DJ Dtwr (9:00)

NEWORDELHI Melancholy Ramblers

ONE-2-ONE BAR Michael Fracasso, Jimmy LaFave, Alan Haynes (8:00)

THE PARISH Marmalakes, Shearwater (9:00)

PATSY'S CAFE Piney Grove Ramblers (6:30) **B**

POODIE'S HILLTOP ROADHOUSE Michael Myers, Jason James (7:00) **A**

RED 7 Concrete, Broadsiders, the Beltones, Oxblood (9:00) **B**

RILEY'S TAVERN Amanda Cevallos (9:00)

THE SAHARA LOUNGE Bamako Airlines, Zoumountchi (10:00) **B**

SANTORINI CAFE Guiliana Millanta (8:00)

SATELLITE BISTRO & BAR Riley Osbourne (7:00)

THE SCOOT INN The Soul Supporters (9:00)

SHOOTERS BILLIARDS CEDAR PARK LC Rocks (9:30)

THE STAGE ON SIXTH Austin Heat (9:00)

STRANGE BREW LOUNGE SIDE David Holt & Gabe Rhodes, Amanda Pearcy CD Release, Mike June CD Release (7:00) **A**

STUBB'S Outside: Moon Hooch, Com Truise, Lotus; Inside Later: Holding Space (11:00) **B**

TEXAS BAR & GRILL 620 Band

THE THIRSTY NICKEL Bootleg Jenny (9:00)

TRAILER SPACE RECORDS Lumens, Alchahast Libations, Spoils of War, Zezbebeam (7:00) **A**

TRIPLE CROWN Stegosaurus Lips, Hurricane Taco Sunday (10:00)

SUNDAY 17

ANTONE'S Black Irish Shivers, Mrs. Skannotto, the Toasters **B A**

BAT BAR Amber Lucille, Sam Pace (7:00)

BB ROVERS Open Mic (7:00) **A**

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Joe Gee (noon), Irish Tune Session (9:00)

BLIND PIG PUB Clay Compania

BOURBON GIRL Greg Talmage (4:30), War Horses (9:00)

CHERRYWOOD COFFEEHOUSE Groundwork Music Orchestra (10:30am) **A**

CHUGGIN' MONKEY Bob Floyd (9:30)

CLUB DE VILLE Heart & Soul Sound System

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Jon Dee Graham, Dupree (8:30); In the Club: Planet Casper (3:30); The Wagoneers, Heybale! (7:30)

COTTON CLUB Can't Hardly Playboyz (7:00) **A**

DIZZY ROOSTER Danny Smith (4:30), Sonny Wolf (9:00)

EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Kris Kimura (7:00) **A**

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thu 14 Bracken Hale 8p, Jeremy Stedding 10:30p-1a

fri 15 Deuce Coupe 11p-1a

sat 16 Doodlin' Hogwallops 9p, Brad Dunn 11p-1a

sun 17 Ray's Backstage Jam with George Devore 9-12a

mon 18 Brennen Leigh and Friends 9-11:30p

tue 19 Scott Angle & The Cold Cold Hearts 9-12a

wed 20 Shinyribs 8p, Shawn Nelson & The Good Buds 10:30p-12a

thu 14 Mike Barfield 10:30p-12:30a



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SAT FEB 16
RIDING THE WHISKEY RIVER

SUN 17 FEB **ANTONE'S PRESENTS**
THE TOASTERS
MRS. SKANNOTTO
BLACK IRISH TEXAS
DOORS: 7PM

WED 20 FEB **ANTONE'S PRESENTS**
MORELAND & ARBUCKLE
JOHN GAAR
CODY JASPER BAND
DOORS: 8PM

SAT 23 FEB **ANTONE'S PRESENTS:**
PAPA GROWS FUNK
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w/ HEARTBYRNE • ROXY ROCA
ANNEX: DOORS @ 8PM: **KVRX PLEDGE DRIVE LOVE INKS • THE MOLE PEOPLE • SALESMEN**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16
DOORS @ 6PM: **101X PRESENTS: TAKE ACTION TOUR 2013 FEATURING THE USED • WE CAME AS ROMANS CROWN THE EMPIRE • MINDFLOW**
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SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17
DOORS @ 8PM: **EMOS & CHAOS IN TEXAS PRESENT: NEUROSIIS • PAIN TEENS • RWAKE**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20
DOORS @ 8PM: **101X PRESENTS: THE HIVES FLESH LIGHTS • ACT RIGHTS**
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CLUB LISTINGS

FROM SUNDAY

ELEPHANT ROOM Austin Jazz Society (9:30)

EMO'S EAST Rwake, Pain Teens, Neurosis (9:00) (A)

FRIENDS J.T. Coldfire (5:30), Blues Jam (9:00)

GIDDY UPS Felix Pompa & Old School (6:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Mike Stinson (4:00) (R)

GREEN PASTURES RESTAURANT Jacques Vilmain (11:00am) (A)

GRUENE HALL Ruby Jane Smith (12:30) (A)

GÜERO'S TACO BAR Mitch Webb & the Swindles (3:00)

HOLE IN THE WALL Ugly Twin; Seeker; I, Omega; Corelia (9:00) (R)

HOTEL VEGAS Tweedy, Grandmaster Flush, Sit Down, Servant, Bushwick Bill (11:00)

HOUSE WINE Justin Landers (6:00)

LEGENDARY WHITE SWAN Same Sac

LUCKY LOUNGE Cause & Effect (9:00) (R)

MOHAWK Outside: Zeale, Da' Shade Moonbeam, Phranchyze, Tee Double, DJ Chorizo Funk, Rakim (9:00); Inside Later: LNS Crew, Worldwide (10:30) (R)

NEWORLDELI Jenifer Jackson

NUTTY BROWN CAFE Java Jazz (11:00am) (A)

ONE-2-ONE BAR The Derailers (7:00)

OPA! Kurt Grein, Dylan Goodhue, Blue Bear (1:00)

THE PARISH Next 2 the Tracks (9:00) (R)

POODIE'S HILLTOP ROADHOUSE Tessa Lou & the Shotgun Stars (4:00), Bracken Hale (7:30) (A)

RATTLE INN Backstage Jam w/ George Devore (7:00)

THE SAHARA LOUNGE Bavu Blakes (Scholarship Fund Benefit w/ Reggie Coby, B.L.A.Xsmith, Crew 54, Bavu Blakes); Frontier Live (7:00)

SALVAGE VANGUARD THEATER No Idea Fest w/ Bonnie Jones, Catherine Lamb, Xavier Lopez, Dafne Vicente-Sandoval (8:00) (R)

SATELLITE BISTRO & BAR Katie Holmes (11:00am)

SAXON PUB Paula Nelson (3:00), John Gaar (5:30), the Resentments (7:30), Marshall Hood, Kem Watts (10:30)

THE SCOOT INN White Crime, Daze of Heaven, Secret Lover

SPEAKEASY Adam Rodgers (10:00)

SPIDER HOUSE BALLROOM Tina & Her Pony (7:00)

STRANGE BREW LOUNGE SIDE Chop Shop, Matt Butler Quartet (3:00); Jeff Lofton, Brannen Temple (7:00) (A)

TRIPLE CROWN Open Mic w/ Grant Ewing, Holly Aiken, Nate Hinds

Z'TEJAS Trés (6:00)

MONDAY 18

ANTONE'S Austin Blues Society Open Jam (A)

BOURBON GIRL Erik Zamora (4:30), Sound Advice (9:00)

BUENOS AIRES CAFE Morena Soul (7:00)

CACTUS CAFE Lost & Nameless Orchestra (8:30) (A)

CAROUSEL LOUNGE Open Mic w/ Matthew & Daniel (7:00)

CEDAR STREET Open Mic

CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE En Route (10:00)

CHEZ ZEE Rich Demarco (6:30) (A)

CHUGGIN' MONKEY The Bomb Squad (9:00)

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Church on Monday; Sit Down, Servant (8:30); In the Club: The Peterson Bros. (6:30), Two Hoots & a Holler (10:00)

DIZZY ROOSTER Colt Landon (4:30), Lloyd Miller (9:00)

THE DOGWOOD Aaron Navarro (8:00)

DONN'S DEPOT Chris Gage

THE DRISKILL HOTEL Driskill Bar: Patricia G. (6:00)

EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Kris Kimura (7:00) (A)

ELEPHANT ROOM The Jitterbug Vipers (6:00), Jazz Jam w/ Freddie Mendoza (9:30)

EVANGELINE CAFE Charles Thibodeaux & the Austin Cajun Aces (6:30) (A)

FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE Bottom Dollar String Band, the Bluegrass Outfit (7:00) (A)

FRIENDS Dave Scher, Eric Tessmer (7:00)

FRONTIER BAR Medosevo, Single Lash, Ouiness, Magic Helmet, Destroyed for Comfort (A), Abgal

GRUENE HALL Brett Graham (6:00) (A)

HALCYON Roberto Riggio (10:00) (A)

HOLE IN THE WALL Devin Jake, Austin Steamers, Dave Inasley (8:00)

HOTEL VEGAS Gang Signs, Gory Details, Lola Cola (10:00) (R)

LA PALAPA Baby Dallas

MOZART'S COFFEE ROASTERS John Wilson (8:00) (A)

NASTY'S DJ Mel

NEWORLDELI Open Mic w/ MT Heliton (6:00)

THE NORTH DOOR Dorkbot 41 (7:30)

ONE-2-ONE BAR Ray Prim, Tom Meny, Meggan Carney (7:00), MatchMaker Band, Ryan Harkrider & the Night Owls (9:00)

OPA! Jason Stone & Juliette Buck (7:00)

POODIE'S HILLTOP ROADHOUSE Songwriters Night w/ George Ensle, Leeann Atherton (A)

RILEY'S TAVERN Songwriter Showcase w/ John Whipple (9:00)

THE SAHARA LOUNGE Matt Meyer, Izzy Cox (8:00)

SAXON PUB Cari Hutson, Lonelyland, the Leavers, Elizabeth Von Santillan (8:00)

SPEAKEASY Clay Compania (9:00)

STRANGE BREW LOUNGE SIDE Jodi Adair, Scrapy Jud Newcomb (6:00) (A)

THE THIRSTY NICKEL Jason Patton (9:00)

TRIPLE CROWN Scott Wood & the Kyle Project (6:00), Chief & the Doomsday Device (9:00)

VARSITY BAR The Union League Sessions (9:00) (A)

VICTORY GRILL Open Pro Blues Jam w/ Matthew Robinson, Harold McMillan (9:00)

WHIP IN Brittany Shane, Nic Armstrong (9:30) (A)

TUESDAY 19

AUSTIN JAVA CAFE & BAR Open Mic w/ Marc Dulang (8:00) (A)

BAT BAR Colt Landon, Phil Luna, Danny Smith (4:00)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Suzanne Smith (7:00)

BEERLAND The Nimbus, Bloody Knives (A), Haints (9:00)

BLIND PIG PUB Nothing Left

BOURBON GIRL Erik Zamora (4:30), Stewart Mann & the Statesboro Revue (9:00)

CACTUS CAFE Hayes Carll (8:00) (A)

CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE Brett Hauser, Will Arrington (9:00)

CHUGGIN' MONKEY Sonny Wolf (9:00)

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Dustin Welch, Ephraim Owens Experience (8:30); In the Club: Toni Price (6:30), Alejandro Escovedo, Grady (10:00)

DIZZY ROOSTER Aaron Navarro (4:30), Tish & Misbehavin' (9:00)

DONN'S DEPOT Donn & the Station Masters

EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Mark Goodwin Trio (7:00) (A)

ELEPHANT ROOM Stanley Smith (6:00), Three Jazz Collective (9:30)

ELYSIUM Revenge of the 90's (10:00)

FIREHOUSE LOUNGE The Love Leighs (10:00)

FLIPNOTICS COFFEESPACE Erik Hokkanen's Laboratory (9:00) (A)

FRIENDS Erin Jaimes, Clay Compania (7:00)

FRONTIER BAR Pan Pan Pan, Petkus Ono, Cabrini Green (A), Pilgrimage, Null Hypothesis (8:00)

G&S LOUNGE Alan Haynes (10:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Mike & the Moonpies (9:00)

HOLY MOUNTAIN Geography, Tiger Waves, Borrissokane (R)

LA PALAPA Baby Dallas

MOHAWK Glasgow, Other Lovers (9:00)

MOJOE ROOM BAR & GRILL Love & Harmony Open Mic (9:00) (A)

ONE WORLD THEATRE Dave Mason (7:00, 9:30) (R, A)

ONE-2-ONE BAR LZ Love, Karl Morgan (A), Chesterfield (7:00)

OPA! Treachery of Others (7:00)

THE PARISH UNDERGROUND Beasley/Price (9:00) (A)

POODIE'S HILLTOP ROADHOUSE Kem Watts, K. Phillips & the Concho Pearls, Little Brave (A), Brandy Zdan (6:30) (A), Jordann Mitchell (11:00) (A)

RILEY'S TAVERN Steven Roloff (9:00)

RUSTY'S Country Dance, Open Mic (9:00)

THE SAHARA LOUNGE The Avocados, Black Cadillac (10:30)

SAXON PUB David Grissom (6:00), Bruce Hughes & the All-Nude Army, Shawn Pander (A), Coke Hendry, Carson McHone (8:30)

THE SCOOT INN Gumbo Ce Soir, Susan Torres y Conjunto Clemencia

SPIDER HOUSE BALLROOM Austin Mic Exchange Hip Hop Open Mic (11:00)

STRANGE BREW LOUNGE SIDE Durawa, Apostles of Manchaca, Miles Zuniga (7:00) (A)

THE THIRSTY NICKEL MC80 (8:00)

TOM'S TABOOLEY Open Mic w/ Jesse Gregg (7:00) (A)

TRAILER SPACE RECORDS Cliffit (7:00) (A)

TRIPLE CROWN Daniel Phipps (6:00); Dan Holmes Group, South Austin All-Stars (9:00)

WATERLOO RECORDS The Whiskey Sisters (5:00) (A)

WHIP IN White Horse Orchestra (A), Vana Mazi (9:30) (A)

Z'TEJAS Robert Kelly (6:00)

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CLUB LISTINGS

WEDNESDAY

AMAYA'S TACO VILLAGE Johnny Gonzales (5:00)

ANTONE'S Cody Jasper, John Gaar, Moreland & Arbuckle 6A

BAT BAR John Reynolds, Jenna G., Kevin & the Krawlers (9:00)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB C.K. Bailey (10:00)

BEERLAND Khridge, Steel Bearing Hand, Weaponizer (9:00) 6

THE BELMONT Ra Ra Riot (8:00) 6

BERNADETTE'S Lizzy Caroloke (9:00)

BLIND PIG PUB MC80

BOURBON GIRL Colt Landon Baker (4:00), Jason Boland & the Stragglers (8:00), the Selfless (9:00)

BUNGALOW Stewart Mann & the Statesboro Revue (8:00)

CACTUS CAFE The Hillbenders (8:00) A

CEDAR STREET The Spazmatics (9:30)

CHEATHAM STREET WAREHOUSE Kent Finlay's Songwriters Circle (11:00)

CHUGGIN' MONKEY Aaron Navarro (9:00)

CLUB DE VILLE J. Wesley Haynes Trio J. Girling

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Barbara K; Trube, Farrell & Sniz (8:30); In the Club: Hot Club of Cowtown (6:30) 6, Jon Dee Graham (10:00)

DIZZY ROOSTER Stephen Hernandez (4:30), the Bomb Squad (9:00)

THE DOGWOOD Jonny Gray (8:00)

DONN'S DEPOT Frank & the Station Masters

THE DRISKILL HOTEL Driskill Bar: Bruce Smith (8:00)

EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE James Speer (8:00) A

ELEPHANT ROOM Jazz Pharaohs (6:00), Monster Big Band (9:30)

EMO'S EAST The Act Rights, the Flesh Lights, the Hives (9:00) 6A

FRIENDS Swamp Sauce, J.T. Coldfire (8:00)

G&S LOUNGE Jason Allen (9:00)

GIDDY UPS Singer-Songwriter Night w/ Shad Blair, the Poontwangz (7:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Alan Haynes (9:00)

GUERO'S TACO BAR Larry Monroe Radio Show (6:30)

HEADHUNTERS Next 2 the Tracks (11:00) 6

HOLE IN THE WALL Texas Tycoons, D-Madness (7:00)

HOLY MOUNTAIN Tijuana Bible, Gangster Rainbow, Gory Details, Pharaohs 6

HOTEL VEGAS Rat Trap Ball w/ Aaron Blount, Motel Ball Band (9:00)

LUCKY LOUNGE Francis (8:00)

LUCY'S RETIRED SURFERS BAR & RESTAURANT Jimmie Dreams, Urban Achievers Brass Band (7:00) 6

MOHAWK Outside: Wampire, Foxygen, Unknown Mortal Orchestra (6:30); Inside Later: Social Studies, Ramona Falls (9:30) 6

THE NORTH DOOR Andrea Gibson (8:00) 6

ONE-2-ONE BAR Silk Road, Black Red Black, Dave Scher Trio (7:00)

OPA! Taylor Baker

THE PARISH UNDERGROUND Hooka Hey, Lee Coulter (9:00) 6A

THE PARISH Black Taxi (9:00) 6

PATSY'S CAFE Nancy Scott (6:30)

PEDRO'S PLACE La Moña Loca (9:30)

POODIE'S HILLTOP ROADHOUSE No Bad Days Open Mic w/ Andrea Marie (8:00) A

REALE'S PIZZA & CAFE "Frankly" Singing w/ Ken Kruse (6:30)

RED 7 No Bragging Rights, Hundredth, Vanna, the Acacia Strain, Every Time I Die 6

RILEY'S TAVERN Josh Mrozinski (9:00)

THE SAHARA LOUNGE Kathryn Legendre EP Release, the Hang, Slowtrain, Forever Changes, Midnight River Trail (7:00)

SAM'S TOWN POINT Open Blues Jam w/ Breck English (8:40)

SAXON PUB Johnny Nicholas & the Hellbent w/ Cindy Cashdollar (6:00), Walt Wilkins & the Mystiqueros, Cody Bryan, Tessa Lou Williams (9:00)

THE SCOOT INN Harrison Anderson, Ivory Gear, the Rebelations

SHENANIGANS DJ Rob, DJ Trick

SPEAKEASY Colt Landon Baker (9:00)

STRANGE BREW LOUNGE SIDE Will Knaak & Kacy Crowley, Alex Ruiz & the Night Mothers (7:00) A

STUBB'S Danny Brooks, Joe Taylor Group (8:00) 6

THE THIRSTY NICKEL Lloyd Miller (9:00)

TOM'S TABOOLEY T. Tex & the Texwardians (8:00) A

TRIPLE CROWN David Harris (6:00); Andy Evans & the Brotherhood, Garrett Snowden (9:00)

VARSITY BAR Jack Higginbotham (9:00) A

Z'TEJAS Stephen Doster, Bill Carter, Randy Weeks (6:00)

DIZZY ROOSTER John Chavez (4:30), Aaron Navarro (8:00)

DONN'S DEPOT Murphy's Inlaws

EDDIE V'S EDGEWATER GRILLE Robert Kelley (8:00) A

EL SOL Y LA LUNA Tish Hinojosa (8:00) 6A

ELEPHANT ROOM The Jitterbug Vipers (6:00), Wacko Fajazz (9:30)

EMO'S EAST Eagle Claw, the Shrine, Graveyard (10:00) 6A

FRANK Boca Abajo, Vitera, Dani Vargas A, Vitera (11:00) A

FRANK ERWIN CENTER Royal Regiments of Scotland w/ Band of the Scots Guards, the Black Watch 3rd Battalion (8:00) 6

GIDDY UPS Open Mic w/ Greg Duffy (8:00)

GINNY'S LITTLE LONGHORN SALOON Alvin Crow (9:00)

GRUENE HALL Jamie Wilson (6:00) A

GUERO'S TACO BAR Chop Shop (6:30)

HOLE IN THE WALL Baby Got Bacteria, Holiday Mountain, Chateau Nowhere (10:00)

HOLY MOUNTAIN J Dilla Tribute w/ Applied Pressure, DJ Chozizo Funk

HOTEL VEGAS Orthy, White Walls, Love Inks (10:00) 6

KINGDOM NIGHTCLUB DJ Andrew Parsons

LAMBERTS Masumi & the Gentlemen (7:30)

LUCKY LOUNGE Ian McLagan & the Bump Band, the Brothers Vinyl (6:00)

MIMI'S CAFE Kim Kafka (6:30)

MOHAWK Growl, Major Major Major, Henry + the Invisibles J, Sip Sip (9:00)

ONE-2-ONE BAR Harry Bodine J CD Release, Lucas Cook, Phillip Thomas (7:00)

PARAMOUNT THEATRE Don Williams (8:00) 6A

THE PERFORMANCE LOFT No Idea Festival w/ Misha Marks, Jonathan Horne, Catherine Lamb, Bryan Eubanks, Alvin Fielder, Damon Smith, Remi Alvarez (8:00) 6

POODLE DOG LOUNGE Fred Walser & the Dust Storm Rattlers (9:00)

RED 7 Psyche Fest w/ Deep Space, Holy Wave, Christian Bland & the Revelators, Psychic Ills 6

RILEY'S TAVERN Jeff Smithart (9:00)

THE SAHARA LOUNGE The Smokestack Revue, Nakia (7:00)

SATELLITE BISTRO & BAR Soul Wagon (7:00)

SAXON PUB Eightysixxed (6:30)

SPEAKEASY The Vurdicit (9:00)

THE STAGE ON SIXTH Jonny Gray (9:00)

STUBB'S Hot Rain, J Boogie, Reblution (6:00) 6

THE THIRSTY NICKEL Sonny Wolf (8:00)

TRAILER SPACE RECORDS Ruby Fray, Jacob Elliot, Little Father (7:00) A

TRIPLE CROWN Joel Hofmann Band (6:00); Those Nights, Summer Swells, Three Leaf J (10:00)

WATERHOLE SALOON Open Mic w/ Mark Allan Atwood (7:30)

WINE SENSATION Jonathan Fox

Z'TEJAS The Brew (6:00)

THURSDAY

ACL LIVE AT THE MOODY THEATER John Denver Tribute (6:30) 6

AMAYA'S TACO VILLAGE Johnny Gonzales (5:00)

BAKER ST. PUB & GRILL Justif

BANGER'S SAUSAGE HOUSE & BEER GARDEN The Soul Supporters (9:00)

BAR LOUIE Carson Alexander (8:00)

BAR MIRABEAU Paula Maya J (7:00)

BAT BAR John Frischer, Phil Luna (4:00)

B.D. RILEY'S IRISH PUB Kristen Smith (6:00), Eric Tessmer (9:30)

BEERLAND Dikes of Holland, Crooked Bangs, OBN III's (9:00)

THE BELMONT Carson Brock & the Effect (9:30)

BOURBON GIRL Derik Kroetz (4:30), John Reynolds & the Stoneface Cowboys (8:30)

BROKEN SPOKE Tony Harrison, Dance Lessons, Jesse Dayton J (6:00)

BUENOS AIRES CAFE Adam Carney & Martina Li (7:00)

CACTUS CAFE Will T. Massey (8:30) A

CAROUSEL LOUNGE Topsy (7:00), Aaron Neubauer (9:00) 6

CHERRYWOOD COFFEEHOUSE Tony Redman (7:00) A

CLUB DE VILLE Honey Son, Gentlemen Rogues, Pageantry

CONTINENTAL CLUB Gallery: Dan Dyer J, Tameca Jones (8:30); In the Club: The Whiskey Sisters (6:30), Brandy Zdan, Dustin Welch (10:00)

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♥ THURSDAY ♥

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Don Harvey & A is Red 8PM

PATRICIA VONNE 10PM

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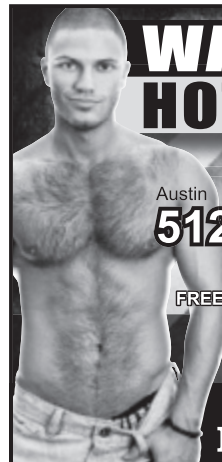
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UT ALUMNI GAME

Me: Sitting behind you.
You: took pictures of my buddies and me. I loved your enthusiasm for the game, especially when the Alumni started throwing the game. Wanna catch a ball game sometime?
When: Saturday, February 2, 2013. Where: UT Alumni Game. You: Woman. Me: Man. #905717

RUDY @ HEB

You texted me your #, but my phone isn't receiving text. Was nice meeting you. I'd like to talk again. I can FB messaged at my first and middle name.
When: Sunday, February 3, 2013. Where: HEB. You: Woman. Me: Man. #905716

DIRT DERBY CX

Me dressed as Dorothy. You in a Jack & Adams kit. You said hello, I was too chicken to say anything back. You might be the man of my dreams.
When: Tuesday, October 30, 2012. Where: Dirt Derby. You: Man. Me: Woman. #905715

SAXON PUB GIANT

New Year's Eve, Saxon Pub Giant - loved dancing with you. Not many men can flip a 6' women up in the air. Great muscles. Would love to meet you.
When: Monday, December 31, 2012. Where: Saxon Pub. You: Man. Me: Woman. #905714

VERONICA, MIAMOORE, AVA

You were regulars with the Amazing organization and I would love to meet up with you again. Hope to hear from one of you soon.
When: Friday, March 14, 2008. Where: Northwest Austin. You: Woman. Me: Man. #905713

The LUV DOC



LuvDoc,

My 18-year-old son wants to get a tattoo. I am against it because I think he is too young. He says he is old enough to do it without my permission, but I have told him that I will stop supporting him financially (school, car insurance, etc.) if he does. I don't want to drive him away, and I know that ultimately it's not that big of a deal, but I am worried he will regret it. Am I being unreasonable?
- Susan

"Tattoos!"

tika tattoo for that matter. (Yeah, I'm talking to you, Ed Norton's character in *American History X*.) I'm just going to come out and say it: Swastikas are uncool. Let me climb further out on that dangerous limb and say that just about any tattoo inspired by xenophobia, homophobia, misogyny, ignorance, or hatred is uncool. Not surprisingly, there are a lot of those in the world, so it's entirely understandable that you might have reservations about tattoos in general. You might also be concerned that 18-year-old boys aren't the best decision makers. True there as well, but here's the deal: A bad tattoo is a good character builder. First of all, a bad tattoo teaches you how to overcome stereotyping. For instance, if your fiancée's father asks you about your YOLO neck tattoo, you can throw him a curveball by saying it stands for "Young, Opportunistic Loan Officer." Hopefully you won't have to explain your Train tramp stamp until after the wedding. He may not understand that "Drops of Jupiter" was a Grammy winner and not a reference to your cellmate's money shot. Some tattoos are so undeniably bad, you can't explain them away. That's where tattoos can teach humility. We don't always have to admit our mistakes, but we eventually have to explain our tattoos. Sure, you'd probably prefer to not have to admit to certain people that you had a weeklong drunken dalliance with a cross-dresser named Mizz-tee in the early Nineties that ended badly, but doing so ultimately reveals your humanity - and those hearts and roses are still artfully rendered. The good news is that tattoos fade just about the same time your memory does. What was once crisp and well-defined becomes blurry and indistinct. Your vision tanks about that time as well ... and you become blissfully indifferent to what other people think about your physicality. Ashes to ashes, eh? So are you being unreasonable? Not in the least. As long as junior is still sucking on your money tit, you still get to call the shots. You're the boss. However, you might want to talk to him about what kind of tattoo he wants and why he wants it. Either way, he may surprise you.

**NEED SOME ADVICE FROM THE LUV DOC?
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The phrase "lunatic fringe" was coined by Theodore Roosevelt in 1913; he was commenting on an art exhibition featuring Cubists.

Facebook is blue and white because Mark Zuckerberg is colorblind. So is 7% of the population. Maybe someday more websites will be designed with colorblindness in mind.

The international standard used to define the kilogram has gained tens of micrograms from surface contamination over the decades.



At left 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 email mrpants@austinchronicle.com.

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