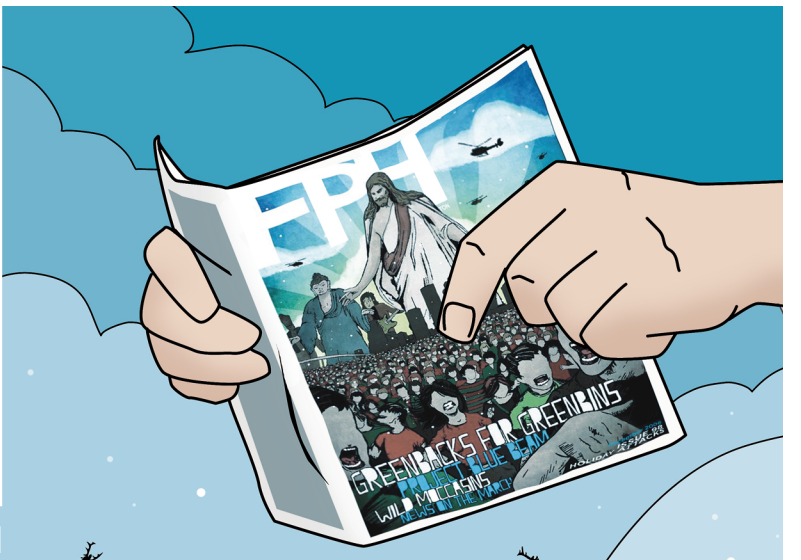
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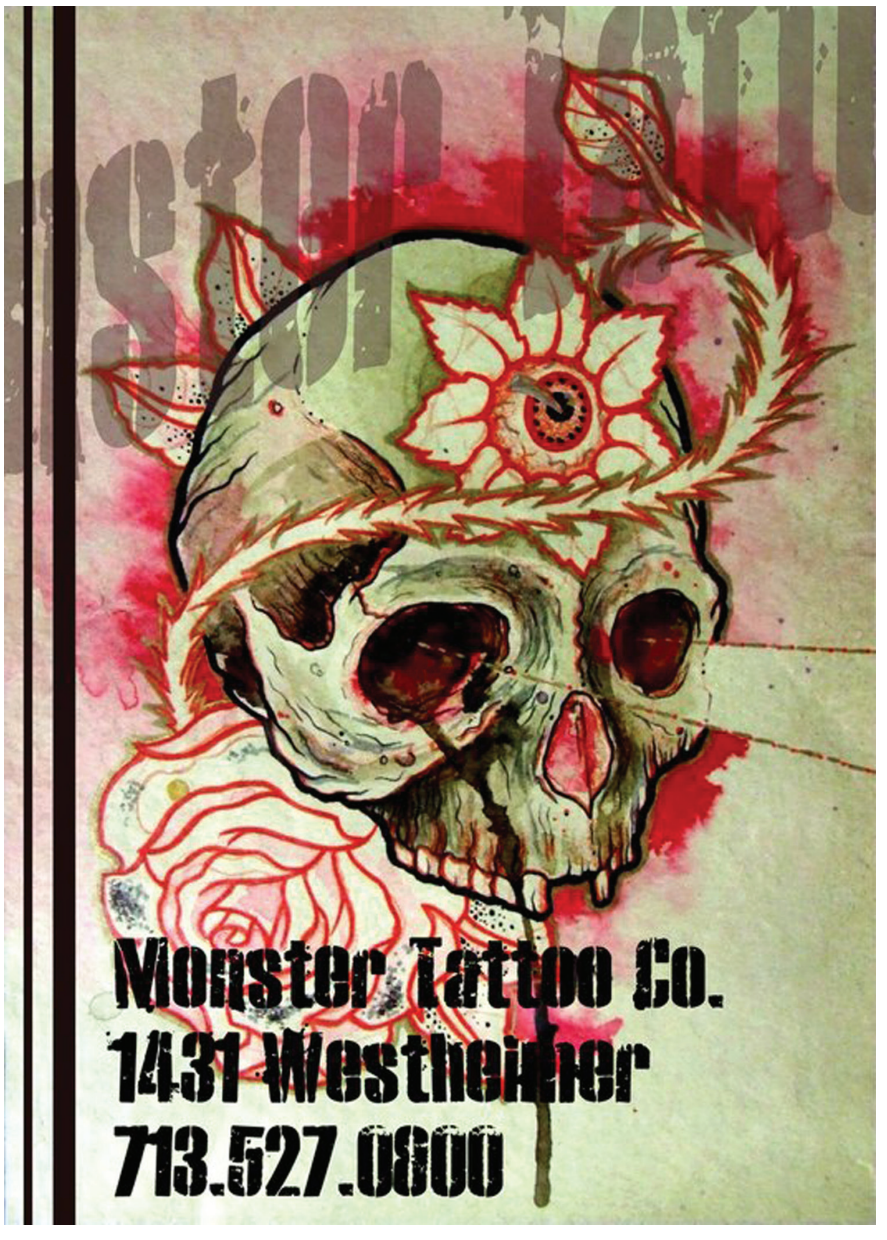
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december







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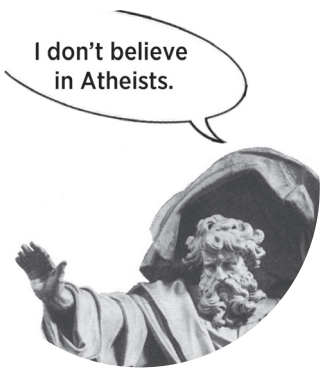
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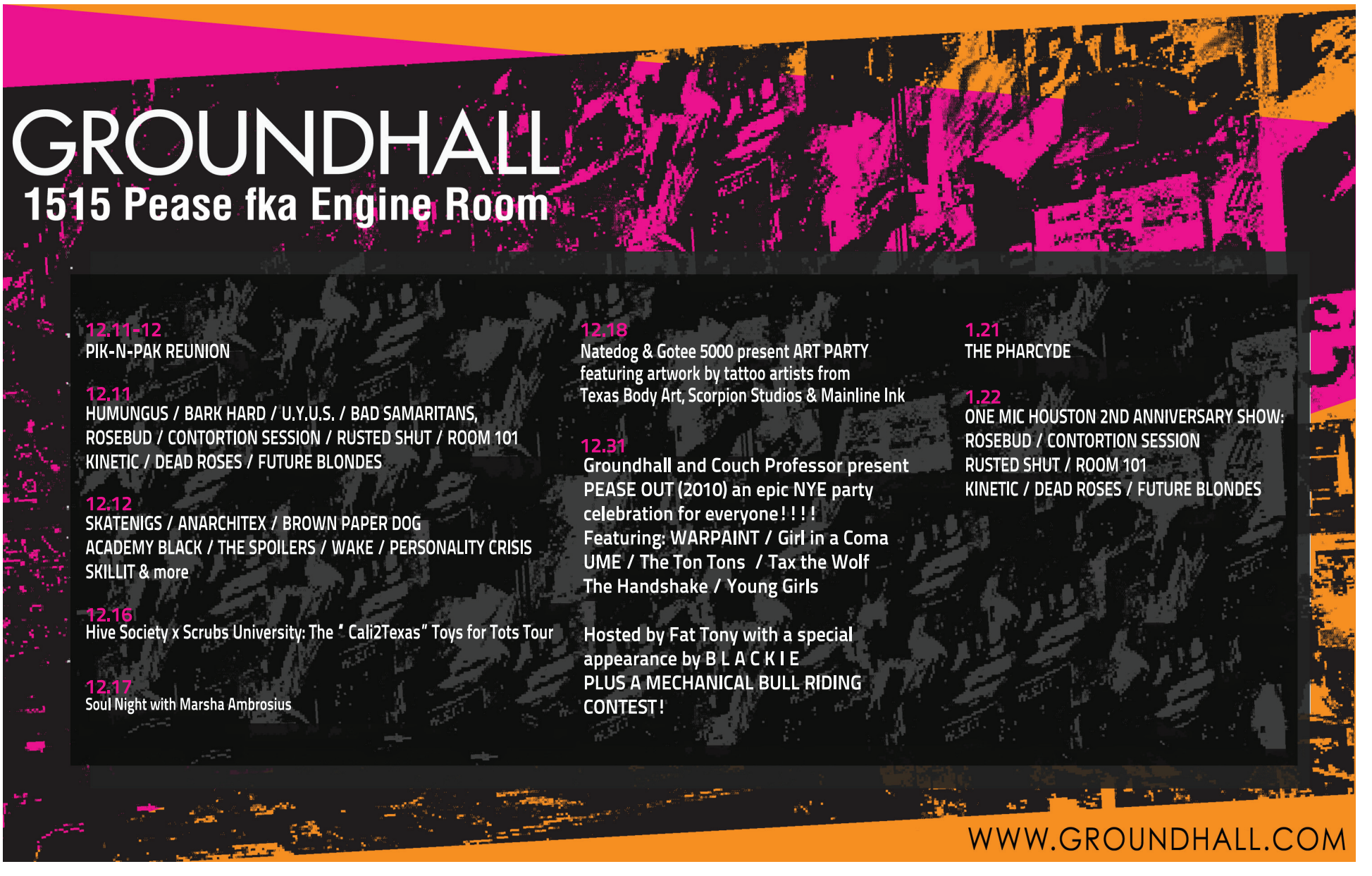
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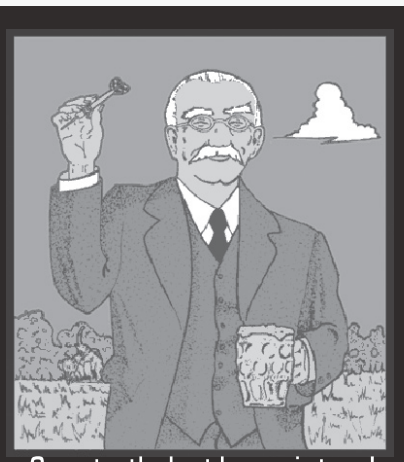
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SKILLIT & more
12.16
Hive Society x Scrubs University: The " Cali2Texas" Toys for Tots Tour
12.17
Soul Night with Marsha Ambrosius
12.18
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- Fri. 3
  Caveman Electric, Black Powder Poets, Clyde and Clem's Whiskey Business, Campfire Suicide
- Sat. 4
  Black Queen Speaks, The Tyburn Jig
- Thu. 9
  Vertigo Blue, Yellow Journalism, Pura Pharm
- Fri. 10
  Pik n Pak Reunion Show (Line-Up TBA)
- Thu. 16
  Beer Tasting Featuring BrewDog Beer
- Fri. 17
  Runaway Sun, Clory Martin
- Sat. 18
  Linus Pauling Quartet, Anarchitex, Omotai
- Tue. 21
  Grown Up Story Time
- Thu. 23
  Elise Davis
- Sat. 25
  Weird Party, The Energy (free downstairs)
- Sun. 26
  Project Grimm, Clouded
- Thu. 30
  Burn The Boats
- Fri. 31
  Rudz New Year's Eve (Line-Up TBA)

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editor's letter

An open letter to the Messiah

Dear Jesus,

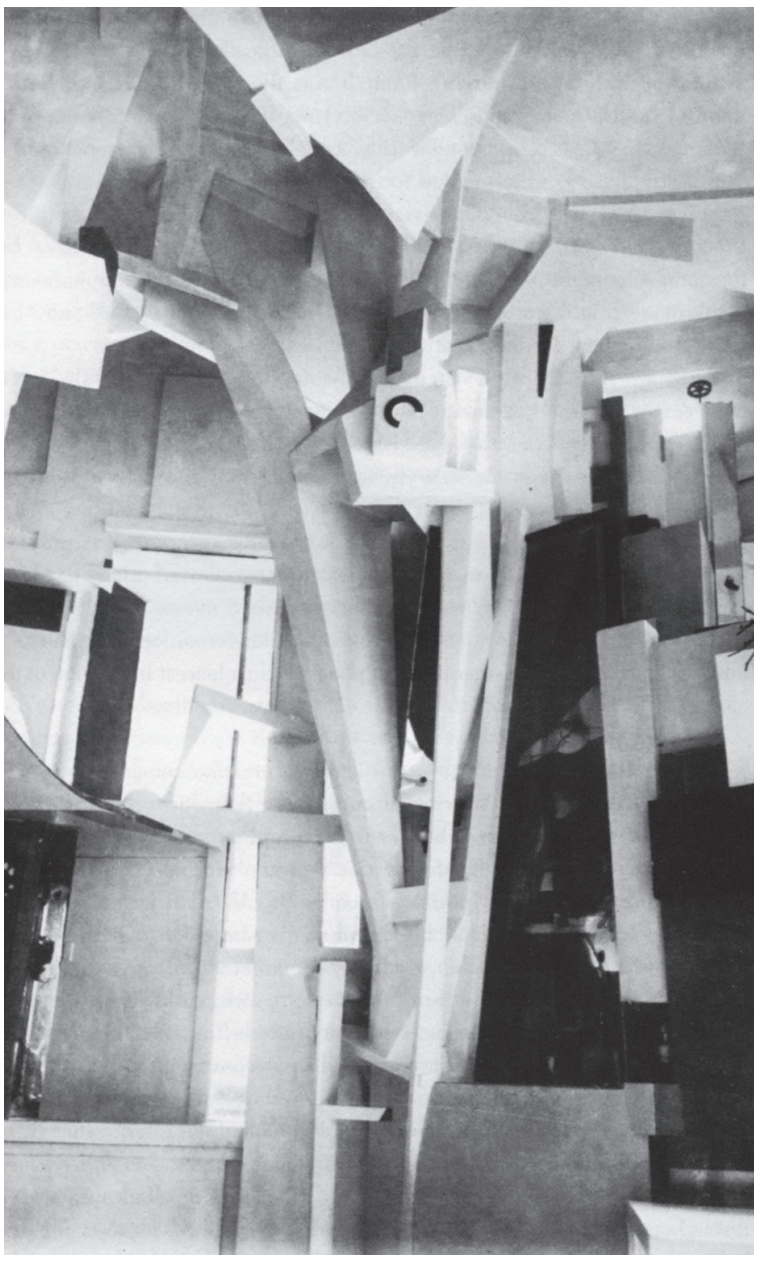
What it do? It is me, Omar Afra. You know, Beirut 1978? Yeah, you were there. As a good Muslim boy, I was always taught to honor and revere you but never to refer to you as God or the Son of God. But let's just be friends for now. Work for you? Anyways, there is so much hooplah this time of year about you and your significance that I just can not see the forest from the trees. You once said " know a tree by it's fruit" but your fruit has been kinda rotten lately. How come all the people that say they are your buddy are running around the world acting like total assholes? I guess maybe they are posers? Maybe they are just like that kid that says " I know the bouncer" in order to get free access places? Really, these guys are running around the planet blowing shit up in your name. Naturally, no one can be as peace-loving as us Muslims but is there nothing you can do about this? I know you have a small penchant for violence despite all the 'turn the other cheek' talk. Seriously, you shoot lazer beams out of your eyeballs and destroy billions of people in Revelations !? But I guess all is well that ends well. I just want you to speed up this whole end times shenanigans and take out some of these assholes a few millennia earlier. No biggie. Just call on your buddy Krishna, Jehovah, Poseidon, or any of the other more violent gods. In the meanwhile, we can stay friends and I will casually dismiss all the douchefucks who claim to be your buddies . Thanks for your time.

P.S.- I am very sorry your birthday fell on Christmas. I hear that whole 'double-gift' thing is a bummer.



DEBRIS: Candy Wrappers & Collages

BY BUFFALO SEAN



DID YOU EVER DO A DOUBLE TAKE at a movie theater ticket? Maybe following the lettering, smeared in places and printed in a blocky font, made you consider the background and the forms it creates in negative space. Ponder the rough edges of a torn advertisement, the wrinkles of a paper bag, the sheen of a plastic wrapper- elements of the natural world, landscapes and abstractions can originate anywhere. Dramatic, energetic, imaginative and narrative, found art can be as engaging as any abstract or representational image. Think small and all the wonders of a Fellini film can unfold in front of you.

In this day and age of electronic overload, glittering 3D televisions and instant gratification it may seem improbable to take a step back and examine society's detritus for signs of inner life- but it may be a bridge to the past that can give us a foothold in the future. Creating, playing, growing, cooking, building and crafting have almost been deleted from our lives. It has taken us a century to forget the familiar sights and sounds of agriculture, industry and crowds that defined humanity for 3,000 years. Our struggle to emancipate ourselves from backbreaking work has yielded a world of forlorn souls missing a connection to the creation of the objects and architecture that fill our everyday existence.

Barely discernable as art, nearly indistinct from the cutting room floor, Kurt Schwitters' greatest works defined Modernism's obsession with the found object from Rauschenberg's combines to Okay Mountain's immersive installations. Open at the Menil Collection (1515 Sul Ross) through January 30, 2011, **Kurt Schwitters: Color and Collage** is the first solo exhibition of the artist's work in this country in a quarter-century. Present at the genesis of Dadaism and grand-uncle of Modernism, Schwitters created an immense amount of small collages in his lifetime that form the bulk of his work. Abstractions with clear and present compositions, they carry with them textures and colors as well as the specificity of their time and place of creation in words, adverts and snippets of contemporary culture. What to us is merely an artfully balanced composition was a very specific political and sociological statement in Weimar Germany's cultural landscape, at times even autobiographical.

In addition to his collages Schwitters experimented with art forms that would not come into their own for fifty years like sound art and installations. One of the most fascinating works included in the Menil exhibit is a recreation of Schwitters' *Merzbau*, an encapsulating installation first built in the artist's house in Hanover, Germany between 1923 and 1940. The sculptural environment took on elements of Russian Constructivist and proto-Modernist abstraction in a grotto-like space punctuated by artwork from his favorite artists and random ephemera like sticks, figurines and scraps of paper. In the two decades of its existence the *Merzbau* expanded throughout the house, annexing two rooms, a balcony, cellar and the attic. An obsession and a refuge, Schwitters' installation evolved as Germany descended into Nazism- finally ending with the artist's escape to Norway and then England. His artwork was ridiculed as degenerate in his home country. The *Merbau* was destroyed in an Allied bombing raid in 1943. Despite the loss and his exile Schwitters continued to work on his installation concept, creating second and third *Merzbaus* as he shuffled across Europe. His collages also morphed with the times, taking on pop culture as it emerged from the first half of the century. Within a decade of Schwitters' death America asserted its dominance in the artworld, owing no small part to the artist's wide-ranging influence.

It may only be a walk through the hallowed halls of Renzo Piano's Menil but the chance to explore the best of Kurt Schwitters' work is a chance to reconnect with a time when people knew what it was like to carry water from a well, start a fire, pluck a chicken, barter at a market, darn a sock or pick a pocket- and want to get away from it all. Mechanization, communication and entertainment have stripped the earth from our lives; as we aim to reconnect with the world the struggles of the 20th century to rid society of that same earth we yearn for hold lessons we can apply to negotiating technology and hands-on experience today. Just be aware- it may take over your life. FPH







←

ART SHOWS THIS MONTH

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Opens Saturday, December 4, 6-8
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EDUARDO GIL: EXTRA
Sicardi Gallery 2246 Richmond
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Through December 23. 713.529.1313

THE HOLOCAUST: AN ARTIST'S GLIMPSE OF THE PAST
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MONDAYS
OPEN MIC
Original Cafe Dudes

TUESDAYS
Steve Straker
Jambolism

WEDNESDAYS
Clory Martin
Potroast

THURSDAYS
Leslie Newman
Hightailers

FRIDAYS
Jimmy Deen

COMING SHOWS

DEC. 3
PLUMP

DEC.4
VibeSquad

DEC.5
Seed Love

DEC.9
New Riders of the Purple Sage

DEC.10
Toubab Krewe

DEC.11
Anders Osborne
Stanton Moore Trio

DEC.12
Michelle Buzz

SEE WEBSITE FOR MORE SHOWS



Diva in real life

BY MICHAEL BERGERON

WHY WOULD ANYBODY EVER want to watch a movie again when they can spend all their time on the internet watching Angelina Ballerina and Baby Wee Wee? Someone asked me why movie reviewers didn't review Youtube videos since they had so much charm and personality and were only three minutes instead of three hours. It's a rhetorical question. Let me remind that I do know that the actor playing a small role as the Winklevoss lawyer in the Social Network is David Selby who played television's best werewolf ever, Quentin Collins in Dark Shadows.

One thing that seemed to stand out thematically after watching several movies last week was the fact-based movie experience. I Love You Phillip Morris chronicles the criminal exploits of a man who's now serving a life sentence, not for being a violent reprobate but for the three strikes rule that landed him, a common embezzler with a penchant for escaping jail, an uncommonly long penal term. Many of the crimes the protagonist (played by Jim Carrey like you've never seen him) commits took place in Harris County. One of his jail breaks involved dying his white prison garb medic green with the aid of his cell's toilet and a green marks-a-lot, snagging a therapist ID and walking out. The movie's based on a book by Houston based reporter Steve McVicker, and the author noted during a recent Q&A that many of his book's facts have been artistically mutated for comic relief.

Okay this guy, Carey's Stephen Russell, was a jerk who ripped off identities, credit card and insurance scams as well as millions from one company, where he'd finagled a job as CFO. Yet you can take Russell's financial motives and cumulative scams and compare them another real life figure, also no stranger to Harris County, Tom DeLay, as portrayed in the film Casino Jack. Do you think DeLay's going to get a life term?

Not oddly, the Russell character fakes his death another time to escape imprisonment by forging medical records. This device is also used in the recent film The Next Three Days. Russell stole less than they typical Wall Street executive as seen in the film about the current financial meltdown The Inside Job. Yet those guys sit in ivory towers while Russell sits in solitary, 23-hours per day.

Casino Jack lays waste to the true-life story of lobbyist Jack Abramoff, himself currently serving a six year prison stretch. Kevin Spacey gives his usual attention grabbing perf as Abramoff, a guy who "works out every day." Sadly, Casino Jack's director George Hickenlooper died of natural causes during last month's Denver Film Festival where his film was playing, and no less during the week of his brother Jack Hickenlooper being elected governor of Colorado. Abramoff presided over a three-ring circus of comic mob slayings, corporate shenanigans in Malaysia and casino cruise subterfuge, all in the name of lobbying Congress on behalf of his clients.

When you make films based on real life, even real life end up being more real. Both Casino Jack and I Love You Phillip Morris open in Houston later this month.

The Black Swan

Darren Aronofsky will never be accused of making middle of the road movies, although his next project is a prequel to Wolverine and that just makes the head spin. Black Swan reverberates on so many things at once that it's impossible to just nail it down to a specific genre. Perhaps the psycho meltdown suppressed sexuality movie: Repulsion. Or the repressed artist film with a slasher-twist: Peeping Tom. Or the dancer tormented-artist film: Red Shoes, Waterloo Bridge, Turning Point, there are others like The Company or All That Jazz. Don't worry, it's not just stage dancers, all artists eventually get

their own flick – just look at self-loathing cellists in recent artiste-turmoil films like Hillary & Jackie or The Soloist.

Black Swan takes place on the field of the highest level of professional ballet performance, a New York Ballet production of Swan Lake. Before all is said and done Aronofsky has transformed the highest accolades of the world of ballet into the most horrific demons reserved for psychological thrillers. The Tchaikovsky music for Swan Lake is itself a transformative work of art, and the strains of its melody can be heard all through the history of cinema, like in The Mummy (1932), as well as incorporated into Clint Mansell's Black Swan score.

Natalie Portman is the lead swan on and off the stage, with her domineering mother (Barbara Hershey) and ballet horndog artistic director (Vincent Cassel) seeking to undermine, or maybe perfect, her career trajectory. Aronofsky keeps our expectations at bay, even while taunting us with scene after scene between Portman and fellow troupe member Mila Kunis that finally explodes into a full-on lesbian makeout session. But Aronofsky isn't through with us just yet; there's the actual execution of the ballet itself, seen in terrific dark interiors that heighten the performance before us even while distracting us from Aronofsky's tragic take off the swan princess.

Black Swan will never arch the crest of common interest, BS's too cerebral for that. But Black Swan is a film that seeks to challenge horror and art film cinephiles alike.

DVD slight return: Walt & El Grupo

There are many urban myths about Walt Disney. Some of them are addressed directly in the documentary Walt & El Grupo. As much as I enjoyed this look at the nascent Disney company in the early 1940s it took a while for its lingering images of a corporate journey to South America to settle. Watching the DVD a second time but with the commentary track activated the film became an entirely new experience, highlighted by director Theodore Thomson and film historian J.B. Kaufman providing astute background facts on the time and place.

The trip was underwritten by the United States government as a goodwill mission to neutral nations in August and October of 1941. Disney was not a major player in that era. Disney films were distributed in the 30s and 40s by a succession of Universal, United Artists, and RKO, themselves major studios of the time. But there was no greater agitprop figure for American values against the Axis powers than Mickey Mouse.

Thomson certainly has his finger on the pulse of what made Disney become the workhorse it is today, his father was one of the studio's classic animators. Thompson also previously directed the Disney documentary Frank and Ollie. All in all this is one great year for Disney docs, with Walt & El Grupo as well as Waking Sleeping Beauty. The latter film looks at the studio during a transformative phase in the late 80s and early 90s.

Walt & El Grupo includes, as an extra, the unexpurged Salutos Amigos one of two South American themed cartoons produced by Disney after the trip. During its initial DVD release years ago Salutos Amigos clipped a few second of Goofy taking a drag off a cigarette. The 1940s are like Las Vegas – everybody smoked.

Thompson, speaking to Free Press Houston by phone talked about the amount of research that went into Walt & El Grupo. Thompson lets the viewer hang over the issue of whether Walt Disney was frozen at death. Disney was not frozen, repeat not frozen at death, this isn't the Ted Williams tale. Yet Thompson introduces the controversy at the film's midpoint only to cleverly disclose the truth during the final credit roll. Much of the story's told through letters written by members of the trip to their families. "There was no photography allowed on the plane flights in South American," Thompson explains about the large amount of drawings and animated footage seen in Walt & El Grupo. "All the letters have censor stamps," he adds.

Walt & El Grupo cuts between reading of the letters, contemporary footage of the same places visited nearly 70 years ago, and actual footage shot in 16mm Kodachrome, some of it lensed by Uncle Walt himself. That same hand wound Bell & Howell camera is on display at the Disney headquarters, Thompson informs. Of the many things that resulted from the trip was the introduction of cartoon parrot Jose Carioca and the domestic acceptance of the Samba dance. FPH





IMAGINE A MAN SO PROUD, HE BUILDS A MONUMENT TO HIMSELF

BY KWAME M. A.

01. KANYE WEST | My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy
02. BEACH HOUSE | Teen Dream
03. FREDDIE GIBBS | Str8 Killa No Filla EP
04. BOTTOMLESS PIT | Blood Under The Bridge
05. MARNIE STERN | S/T
06. THE ROOTS | How I Got Over
07. HIGH LIFE | Bess Bless EP
08. ERYKAH BADU | New Ameryka Pt. II - Return Of The Ankh
09. LOWER DENS | Twin Hand Movement
10. THE ROOTS & JOHN LEGEND | Wake Up
11. FUTURE ISLANDS | In The Evening Air



























BEST TV SHOW

LUCKY LOUIE



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MUSIC SHOWS THIS MONTH

YELLO ECHO
12/14 at Super Happy Fun Land

INDIAN JEWELRY
12/18 at Fitzgerald's

DEAD REVOLT
12/23 at The Mink

100 MONKEYS
12/29 at Warehouse Live

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SUNDAYS
Rock Night featuring The Liars
8:00 - Mid.
Drink Specials

MONDAYS
Industry Night!
Drink Specials!
and
MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL!

TUESDAYS
STEAK NITE!
Battle of The Bands!

WEDNESDAYS
Ladies Night
$2 U-CALL-ITS
FEMALE ROCK BANDS!

THURSDAYS
BIG BEER NIGHT!
Live DJ

FRIDAYS
Live Bands Inside!
Live DJ Outside On The Patio

SATURDAYS
Live Bands Inside!
Live DJ Outside On The Patio

DECEMBER EVENTS

Tuesday Nights!
"Battle Of The Bands"
Over
$5,000 in Cash & Prizes!
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$1000 - 2nd Place,
$500 - 3rd Place

WEDNESDAYS
Dec. 1 - Rock Radio
Dec. 8 - Retroburn
Dec. 15 - Texas TNT
Dec. 22 - Black Rose
Dec. 29 - TBA

FRIDAYS
Dec. 3 - Infinity's Twin
Dec. 10 - Sex Panthers
Dec. 17 - Victim
Dec. 24 - Open For Christmas Eve
Dec. 31 - New Year's Eve Bash 2011!!!

SATURDAYS
Dec. 4 - Love And War with Mike Conde Band
Dec. 11 - Mary Jane Mayhem, Rock Radio, Flicker System
Dec. 18 - *Original Showcase!* Dimitri's Rail - Paris Green The Crisis
Dec. 25 - Open Christmas Day

THURSDAY, DEC. 9
Scars Heal In Time

THURSDAY, DEC. 16
Bike Night with JD's Throwdown Band featuring Sherree B.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31
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SATURDAYS
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LIVE DJ Outside On The Patio

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Wednesdays
La Raza Connection
with very special guest
Marcie Chapa
(Beyonce's Backup Singer and Percussionist)

FRIDAYS
Dec. 3 - 8EPlus
Dec. 10 - Outlaw Dave's Christmas Show
Dec. 17 - Flicker System
Dec. 24 - We're Open
Dec. 31 - Eightyplus

SATURDAYS
Dec. 4 - Adrenaline
Dec. 11 - Alter Ego
Dec. 18 - Santana Tribute featuring La Raza Connection
Dec. 25 - We're Open
Entertainment TBA
Jan. 1 - Mr. Hands Revenge

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CLASSIC MADE NEW

Roky Moon & BOLT Are Out to Conquer the World



I'LL BE HONEST: when I first heard about Roky Moon & BOLT (then just known as "BOLT," all caps), I thought it sounded fun, but I seriously doubted it would last. It seemed like one of those one-off things a bunch of scenesters do when they get bored with their usual bands, starting up a semi-ironic retro-rock side project just for grins.

Then I actually saw the band play, and it hit me partway through — "holy shit…these guys are fucking serious. They mean it." And from everything I've seen and heard since, that's absolutely the case. Roky Moon & the BOLT crew play '70s-tinged, theatrical, piano-heavy, fist-in-the-air boogie-rawk not for novelty effect but because they honest-to-God love it, and they don't care what anybody else thinks about it.

None of which would matter, naturally, if they sucked, but they're about as far from that as you can get. A BOLT show comes off like a celebration of all things glam and dramatic, like what might've happened if Jerry Lee Lewis had every been asked to play a Rocky Horror touring show, with Marc Bolan on lead vocals. They're like a band playing a great, obscure rock opera you've never even heard of before. It's raw, it's loud, and most of all, it's a total freaking blast, every time.

In spite of my initial fears, the music these folks make never seems to get old — I've listened to their most recent, self-titled album, upwards of two dozen times through now, and it just gets better with each listen. It's music that's new and grin-inducing and cool but still familiar and (yeah, I'll say it) somewhat comforting in an age of who-can-play-loudest/fastest/heaviest.

To mark the band's release of the new album, we here at SCR were able to chat a bit with drummer Jeaof Johnson and frontman/guitarist Roky Moon, all about their old-school musical loves, new label ZenHill Records, and why/how their fans just "get" it. Here goes…

BY JEREMY HART
PHOTO BY
JEFFREY KILMER

ALRIGHT, IT'S BEEN BUGGING ME FOR A WHILE: WHY THE NAME CHANGE? WERE THERE LEGAL THREATS FROM SOME PREVIOUS "BOLT"? ¶ Jeoaf Johnson: Nah, no legal threats. We just thought it sounded cooler and we wanted to set ourselves apart from other bands with similar names. Bolt Thrower, Lightning Bolt, Bolt from Arizona, the cartoon dog…

WHERE THE HECK DID YOUR OVERALL SOUND COME FROM? I HAVE TO ADMIT THAT THE FIRST TIME I HEARD YOU GUYS, I WAS PRETTY DUMBFOUNDED, GIVEN THE BAND MEMBERS' PRETTY MUCH STRAIGHT-UP PUNK ROCK PAST… ¶ Jeoaf: Well, I think Chad [Pinter, bassist] and I are the only ones with significant punk rock pasts, really. He's a southern California, pop-punk skater boy at heart, and I've done my time on the national house-show circuit, but Roky [Moon, singer/guitarist] and Aaron [Echegaray, lead guitarist] are pretty much misplaced children of the '70s. And then Cassie [Hargrove, keyboardist]'s cut from another bolt of cloth entirely!

There's obviously the American Sharks connection, but I think any punk rock element of that band comes more strongly from the other guys. Our common thread is our love for the bands like Queen and T. Rex. Our deal is basically trying to update that classic, '70s rock sound that we all love so much.

ARE YOU OKAY WITH COMPARISONS TO ROCKY HORROR AND MEATLOAF? I KNOW I'VE MADE A FEW, AND I SWEAR, THAT'S A LOT OF WHAT I HEAR IN YOUR MUSIC, BUT I'M CURIOUS TO SEE YOUR REACTION… ¶ Roky Moon: I have been watching Rocky Horror Picture Show since I was like eight years old. My mom showed it to me, and I never looked back. It is a huge influence on me and my songwriting, so I feel that comparison is natural. Meatloaf, on the other hand, I never listened to, but I can definitely see the comparison there, as well.

Jeoaf: I'm absolutely okay with those comparisons! My first introduction to Meatloaf was actually the Rocky Horror soundtrack. My sister was obsessively into it in high school, so we'd listen to it over and over. She had the poster on her wall, and I've been to midnight screenings and stuff, so yeah, Rocky Horror is definitely an acceptable reference point.

As far as Meatloaf himself, the first thing I remember being aware of was that "I Would Do Anything for Love" song from the '90s. Wasn't too thrilled by that one. But I eventually got turned on to the Bat Out of Hell record and some of the really classic stuff and realized his true genius. And y'know what? Looking back at it now, "I Would Do Anything for Love" is pretty damn awesome, too!

HOW DO YOU THINK THE SOUND'S EVOLVED SINCE YOU FIRST CAME TOGETHER? ¶ Roky: I would say that we have grown tighter. In the newer material, you can feel a shift from the chugging riffs that are present on this first album to a more full sound. I think we have become more comfortable with the writing process, and it's allowing for more intricate material to come out.

Jeoaf: I don't know that the overall sound has really changed that much from the beginning. I think the songwriting has improved a bit in the two years-ish that we've been playing, but it started pretty strong, too, so…

WHO DOES MOST OF THE SONGWRITING? AND HOW DID THE RECORDING PROCESS FOR ROKY MOON & BOLT GO? ¶ Roky: I write the songs, and the guys stitch 'em up for me. I take a lot of care in crafting all aspects of our music, including our "only one break in the set" live show. The great thing is the guys in the band never let me down by giving back just as much care and working just as tirelessly on their own individual parts. The songs just wouldn't work if everyone wasn't so talented, but also professional and hard-working. The recording process was cut and dried. Get in. Throw down your parts. Experiment a little, and get out. It was a really fun session, though, and I made two really good friends — Steve Finley, Lord Hightower — out of it.

Jeoaf: Roky writes the songs. He brings us basic ideas and structures, then we flesh them out. He's Igor, digging up graves and bringing body parts back to the lab, and we're Dr. Frankenstein, shooting electricity into the body and bringing it to life. But Roky is like Dr. Frankenstein, too, 'cause it's all his idea, so, um, I guess that's a pretty bad analogy.

WHERE DID YOU RECORD THE ALBUM, BY THE WAY? ¶ Jeoaf: Digital Warehaus, with Stephen Finley and Lord Hightower. Stephen mastered it, too.

I SAW YOU GUYS HAD SIGNED TO THE NEW ZENHILL RECORDS LABEL — HOW'D THAT COME ABOUT? IS THE NEW ALBUM ON ZENHILL? ¶ Jeoaf: We did a Live at Sugarhill session, and Ross [Wells] and Dan [Workman] both made it very clear that they were really into the band and liked what we were doing, so when they came up with the idea to do ZenHill, we met with them a few times and really liked their ideas. They said things like "CMJ," "Red Rocks," "researching key demographics," and, most importantly, "royalty checks," so we signed.

HAVE Y'ALL DONE MUCH TOURING YET? ANY PLANS TO HIT THE ROAD? ¶ Jeoaf: We did three weeks before SXSW last year that went really well, and I think it's pretty inevitable that we're gonna have a hefty touring schedule in 2011. That was basically the only thing ZenHill asked of us. "Go…be your band…we'll take care of the rest."

WHAT'S THE RECEPTION BEEN LIKE, BOTH HERE AND ELSEWHERE? DO PEOPLE SEEM TO GET IT? ¶ Roky: The reception has been fantastic so far. There are plenty of people that don't get it, sure, but they still have fun. There is no denying the power of being on stage, having a blast, and boogie-ing. It's contagious, and then before you know it, everyone is having fun.

If you aren't having fun and smiling at one of our shows, you don't get it. If you think we are a silly joke band, you don't get it. If you can't find the beauty in a five-minute-long guitar solo, you just don't get it.

Jeoaf: I think people here seem to like us and seem to get it. At first, I thought that maybe it was because most of the people at the shows were our friends, but then we started seeing people that we'd never met, older people our parents' age, people that we wouldn't expect or don't see out all the time, and we started realizing that word is actually getting out about the band and somehow we're kinda appealing to folks all across the board.

It's a really unique situation to be in. Elsewhere has been interesting. I think we're a somewhat difficult band to be exposed to without any preparation. It's a lot to take in. When we played in Birmingham, the venue was this little warehouse/garage space that seemed like it maybe used to be a firehouse or something, and we played to these young, folk-punk type kids. Certainly not our usual crowd. I'm not sure that they really understood what was going on in front of them, but we kept their attention for the whole set, at least.

We have enough rockers in the set to keep people who only want party-time dance numbers interested, but the epic, theatrical stuff appeals to people who might be looking for something a little bit more than that.

SPEAKING OF PLANS, WHAT'S NEXT? I KNOW IT'S A BIT PREMATURE, SINCE THE FULL-LENGTH'S OUT JUST NOW, BUT STILL… ¶ Jeoaf: I think Homeskool [Records] and ZenHill are working things out right now to re-release this first record, so they can work together on it and get it out there on a larger scale than we originally planned. Then we're gonna start the second record sometime around New Year's. Then tours.

Roky: Currently, I'm writing some of the best songs I have written yet. We've been in the studio rehearsing the songs and preparing to record a new album. Is it too soon to say that we are looking at SugarHill, with Dan Workman producing? On top of that, I have a real full-on rock opera I would like to focus some attention to next. Also we want to hit the road and see the world! **FPH**

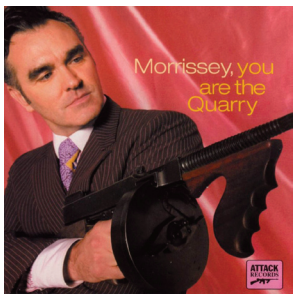
Top Ten Favorite Albums

Notable locals & their top ten faves

Ready, Set, Go













OK, MINE FIRST. WHY?
BECAUSE MINE ARE OBJECTIVELY CORRECT.

OMAR AFRA

STEVIE WONDER - Songs in the Key of Life ✻
MARCEL KHALIFE - Taqasim
CHARLIE MINGUS - Mingus in Wonderland
OUTKAST - Aquemini
METALLICA – Ride the Lightning
AC/DC – Back in Black
RADIOHEAD - The Bends
TOOL - Aenema
BEATLES - Abbey Road
OTIS REDDING - The Quintessential Otis Redding

BRIGITTE ZABAK

THE SMITHS - Strangeways, Here We Come
MORRISSEY - Kill Uncle
DOVES - The Last Broadcast
THE POLICE - Outlandos D'Amour
JEFF BUCKLEY - Grace
IRON & WINE - The Shepherd's Dog
RADIOHEAD - Kid A ✻
LUSH - Spooky
MY BLOODY VALENTINE - Loveless
PJ HARVEY – Dry

ADAM P. NEWTON

JOHNNY CASH - Live At Folsom Prison
RADIOHEAD - Kid A
JOY ELECTRIC - The White Songbook
MORRISSEY - You Are The Quarry ✻
PEDRO THE LION - Control
R.E.M. - Murmur
THE SMITHS - The Queen Is Dead
STARFLYER 59 - Leave Here A Stranger
U2 - Achtung Baby
WILCO - Yankee Hotel Foxtrot

ERIC DEAN

THE SMITHS - Louder Than Bombs
NINE INCH NAILS - Downward Spiral
MORRISSEY - Viva Hate
RADIOHEAD - The Bends
THE SHINS - Wincing The Night Away ✻
BAND OF HORSES - Cease To Begin
IMOGEN HEAP - Speak For Yourself
PETE YORN - Music For The Morning After
BUILT BY SNOW - Mega
THE OLD 97'S - Satellite Rides

PETER LEE

LINKIN PARK - Hybrid Theory
BUSH - Razorblade Suitcase
KORN - Follow the Leader
STAIND - Break the Cycle
SLIPKNOT - s/t
LIMP BIZKIT - Significant Other
STATIC X - Wisconsin Death Trip
EVERLAST - Whitey Ford Sings the Blues
PUDDLE OF MUDD - Come Clean
GODSMACK - s/t

MARK ARMES

WICKED POSEUR - Maximum Jazz
THE SMITHS - Louder than Bombs
DEVO - Are We Not Men?
TALKING HEADS - 77'
THE STROKES - Is this It?
LCD SOUNDSYSTEM - This is Happening
PFFR - United We Doth
THE RAMONES - Self Titled
OLD DIRTY BASTARD - Nigga Please ✻
U.G.K. - Ridin Dirty

DIEGO P. ARCIENEGA

GAL COSTA - s/t
CAETANO VELOSO - s/t
OS NOVOS BIANOS - Acabou Chorare
SMASHING PUMPKINS - Mellon Collie
ROBO ARIGO - Sexy Thing
GORKYS ZYGOTIC MYNCI - Spanish Dance Troupe
Z-RO - Still Living ✻
FATLIP - the Loneliest Punk
BELLE AND SEBASTIAN - Books EP
TOWNES VAN ZANT - Live at the Old Quarter

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UME

THE TON TONS

TAX THE WOLF

THE HANDSHAKE

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HATER magazine

GRAHAM'S TEXAS TEA

TREATY OAK PLATINUM RUM

Interview: Fat Tony

BY OMAR AFRA

FRESH OF THE HEELS OF HIS NEW RECORD RABDARGAB, Fat Tony is in a great spot right now. Sitting comfortably at the nexus between the underground and straight pop, Tony has found a niche that others spend lifetimes trying to find.

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE WITH THIS RECORD? ¶ The biggest challenge was getting it done! Tom Cruz, the producer, and I spent years going back and forth making songs for this album. Damn near every song has been revamped at least twice and some as many as five times. Mostly production changes but some lyrical changes here and there too.

Doing an album definitely shouldn't take as long as this one took. We started in 2008 and finished it in October 2010 right on time for its release date. It is my one shot at a debut album though so on one hand I'm glad we took our time and got it exactly how we want it to be.

Another challenge of us living in different cities while making the album. Tom Cruz is from Atlanta but moved to New York earlier this year. So, we've been together working on this album in Houston, Austin, New York, and Atlanta the entire time whenever we'd get a reason to be in the same city together. We preserved the magic in the emails and mp3 files though.

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN REGARD TO BEING HETROSEXUAL? EVER 'DABBLE'? ¶ No. I enjoy being a boy.

AS A LYRICIST, HAVE YOU EVER FOUND YOURSELF BITING YOUR LIP, RETRACTING SOMETHING AND SAYING TO YOURSELF " NAH, I CAN'T SAY THAT"? ¶ Nah, I let it all out. The power of artistry is expressing it all even the vulnerable sides of yourself. An artist can't connect with a listener if he/she's gonna play it safe the whole time. Save that shit for no name pop singers with swarms of tween fans.

BRING BACK ONE MUSICIAN FROM THE DEAD. WHO? ¶ Pimp C. So we could hang out and talk about things we hate. I'd also like to bring back Kurt Cobain for the same reason. If I could bring back a couple more I'd bring back 2Pac so we could thug it out, and Aaliyah so I could be inspired by her beauty. But really I just want to bring all these people back so we can "collab" and "vibe out".

IF YOU DID NOT RAP, WHAT WOULD YOU BE DOING? ¶ I'd be spending a lot more time at university studying, taking out loans, and worrying about how the hell I'm going to pay them back. I'd probably be going out to bars and clubs a lot less too. I'd also be much more focused on writing about music I like and dislike. I'm trying to get back into writing more but I get distracted pretty easily. I have been writing a bit for Hater magazine and it's been pretty enjoyable. Their latest sex issue has an article I wrote about getting head, and their food issue before it had an article I wrote on dinner table etiquette (and how I don't give a fuck about it).

HOPES AND AMBITIONS FOR HOUSTON AND FAT TONY IN 2012? ¶ More traveling, more great records, more fans, more fun, more Hennessy, more burgers, more pizza, more tacos, more Vans, more more more. Hopefully more money to afford my expensive tastes too. Just going to keep it pushing as far as it can go. Living in punk time kinda makes it hard to think any further than a couple days away but I know what my goals are. And more importantly, I know how I want to reach them on my own terms. I'm really looking forward to it all. **FPH**



PHOTO BY CLYDE GRANT

Best Betz for New Year's Eve



Even for the native Houstonian, it can be overwhelming to figure out which New Year's Eve functions are going to be the best. Everyone with a bar is going to be billing their event as the party to end all NYE parties but here are some helpful suggestions to cut through the hype and get to the real celebrations.



Super Happy Fun Land

If you missed out on SHFL's Dead Audio Fest in Novemeber or you just couldn't get enough, their NYE party will help to satisfy your thirst for noise music. The lineup includes noise bands the Annoysters, Oblive, Boar, and more.
superhappyfunland.com



Fitzgerald's
FPH New Year's Eve Cataclysm

For a NYE experience with a distinctly local flavor, come to Fitz. The docket for the night includes all manner of Houston bands including B L A C K I E, Weird Party, LIMB, Fat Tony and the world famous Fitz house band, Delicious Milk. Coming all the way from Austin will also be punk act Hex Dispensers. There will be freebies and giveaways including T-shirts and tickets to Free Press Summer Fest 2011. The show is free for 21 and up, ten bucks for under.
fitzlivemusic.com



Continental Club: Allen Oldies NYE show

The always classy Continental Club will be sweatin' to the oldies with the lively Allen Oldies band who play 50s and 60s rock ranging from numbers like 96 Tears to Secret Agent Man.
continentalclub.com/Houston.htm

Glowrama on Discovery Green

Houston's art car community will get a second opportunity to show off their creations in an illuminated procession. There will also be a performance by Dallas band ArcAttack who create their music with unlikely instruments like tesla coils.
discoverygreen.com



Stereo Live
Benny Benassi New Year's Eve Show

Get your satisfaction this new year's eve with Benny Benassi at Stereo Live. He'll be doing a DJ set consisting of remixes of popular songs of 2010. Regular tickets are 30 and VIP passes are 45.
stereolivehouston.com



Groundhall: Warpaint NYE

Up and coming, all-female, experimental rock act, Warpaint will be gracing Houston for the fourth time this year. In addition to San Antonio band Girl in a Coma, they will also have support from local bands UME, the Ton Tons, Tax the Wolf, the Handshake, and Young Girls. Tickets are 17 dollars.
groundhall.com

BY
JACK
DANIEL
BETZ

SUPER HAPPY FUN LAND

Dec. 2nd:
Moomaw
Gravid Wives
Arthur Yoria

Dec 2nd:
Organ Failure @ Fitzgerald's

Dec 4th:
Paige Lewis
Adrian Bourgeois
Ricky Berger

Dec 9th:
REFUEL INDIE Houston Fest & Conference Showcase
10am-6pm

Dec. 11th:
Steve Steele
Vertigo Blue

Dec. 14th:
Kadets
Bethany Smoker

Dec. 18th:
Free Ticket
Yello Echo

Dec. 19th:
Collective Dreams
Valley of the Mariner
We Go Way Back

Dec. 26th:
Animal City
Muhammad Ali

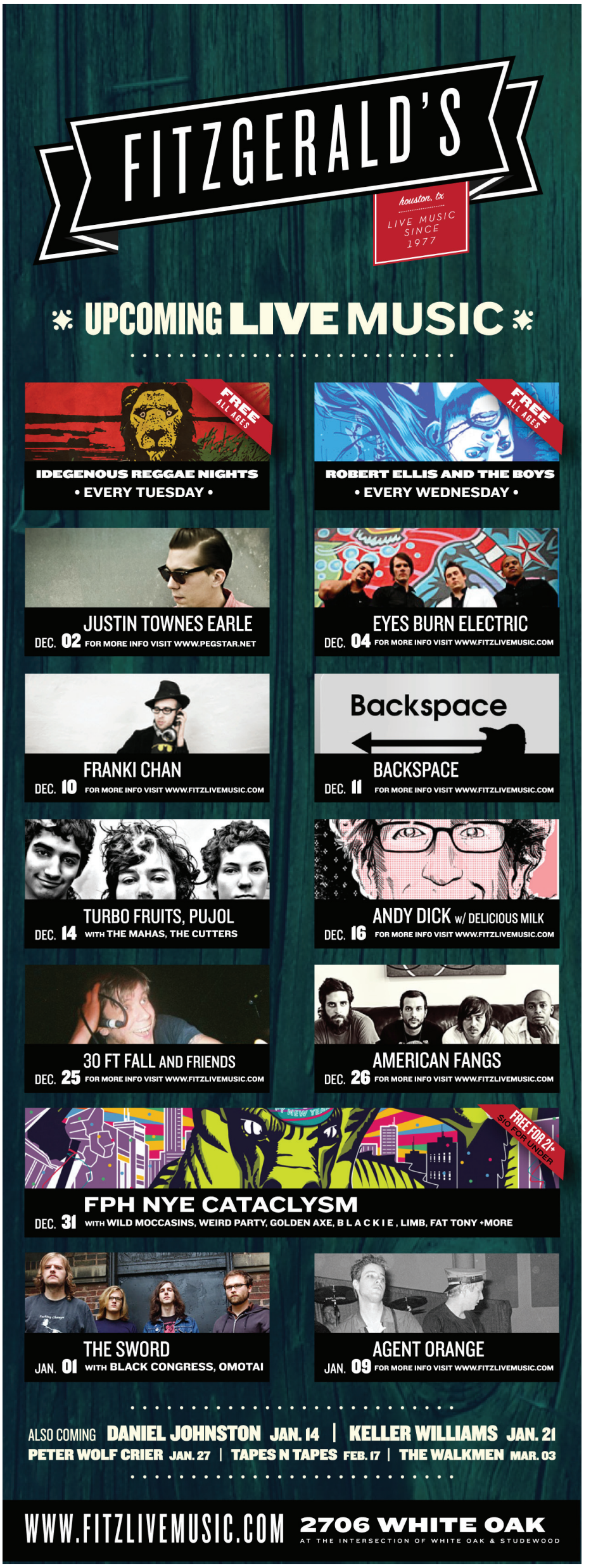
Dec 28th:
Wasp And Pear
Aliens

Dec 31st:
New Years Noise - NYN7
OBLIVE (St. Louis Harsh Noise Walls)
BOAR (Iowa Harsh Noise)
I LIKE YOU, GO HOME (Iowa Harsh Noise/Power Electronics)
The Annoysters
A FAIL ASSOCIATION (Fort Worth)
T.E.F.
Deadskeleton (Dallas)
Serum Fantis
Illicit Relationship
Protists Of Nebula

Jan 1st:
Annual Hangover Party with:
The Backpockets
The Abyss

Jan 7th:
Estrogen Highs

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SuperHappyFunLand.com



In Focus | A snapshot of some of Houston's most talented female photographers

BY BRIGITTE B. ZABAK

IF YOU WRITE ABOUT MUSIC, chances are you've also had to take a photo or two during a gig. I've found myself in countless photo pits over the years, and the anxiety of taking a decent photo never goes away. Concert photography, especially, is a beast. There are so many elements (lighting, movement, claustrophobic crowds when a photo pit isn't available) working against a photographer looking for the just-right shot of a live band.

Lucky for us, Houston is home to a number of truly talented photographers. And among the many, three in particular stand out. They are women with a real eye for telling a story through their lens, and we wanted you all to get a little more acquainted with them.

Trish Badger

trishbadger.com

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE MEDIUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY? MORE SPECIFICALLY, HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH CONCERT/MUSIC PHOTOGRAPHY? ¶ I've always loved taking photos and I've always been really passionate about music. When I decided to finally let go of my fears and pursue photography I knew I wanted to focus on music and bring my two loves together. There's a lot more artistic freedom allowed with music photography, which makes even more appealing.

WHAT ARE THE MOST INTENSE/FUN/TRAUMATIC SHOOTS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IN THE LAST FEW YEARS? IS WORKING A SHOW IN HOUSTON DIFFERENT THAN SHOOTING IN OTHER CITIES? ¶ One of the most fun shows I've shot was Coldplay. I hadn't been shooting big concerts for very long and I was in shock that I even had the opportunity. It was so visually incredible. I remember music critic Craig Hlavaty saying, "It's so pretty" about a hundred times. The music was just as amazing... I mean, it's COLDPLAY!

Also, getting to shoot John Mayer was literally a dream come true. I've been a huge fan of his since 2002 and seen him live over 20 times, but never quite as close as the photo pit. It was extremely exciting when his management team posted some of my photos on his website with photo credit and even a link to my site.

I've shot smaller shows in several other cities while in tour with The Alternate Routes and shooting each show just depends on the venue more than the city it's in. In larger venues (no matter what city), photographers usually have a 3 song limit (and no flash) and sometimes even shorter, depending on what the bands allow. Most of the time photographers can shoot from the pit, but sometimes we have to shoot from the soundboard or somewhere else. Again, that has more to do with the venue and band than the city.

WITH OTHER ASPECTS OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY (MUSIC JOURNALISM, PLAYING CERTAIN GENRES OF MUSIC, ETC.) THERE SEEMS TO BE A DEARTH OF WOMEN. DO YOU THINK GENDER PLAYS A ROLE IN THE PHOTO PIT AS WELL? ¶ I know I don't see many other women shooting concerts, but I'm not sure why that is. When I decided I wanted to shoot concerts I didn't know that I'd usually be the only woman in the photo pit, but that definitely wouldn't have stopped me! I also didn't let my gender keep me from traveling several times with the five guys of The Alternate Routes, and I'm glad it didn't stop them from asking me. I love traveling with a van full of amazing musicians, female or male, and I hope to do more of it in the near future.

DREAM SHOOT? ¶ My dream shoot would be to do a cover photo of one of my favorite musicians or bands for Rolling Stone Magazine.I really need to get serious about working towards that! I'd also love to shoot all the major music festivals.

IF SOMEONE OFFERED YOU THE CAMERA OF YOUR DREAMS, WITH THE CONDITION THAT YOU MUST LISTEN TO BRIGHT EYES AND ONLY BRIGHT EYES FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, WHICH CAMERA WOULD YOU CHOOSE? ¶ The Canon 5D Mark II would be a great companion to my Canon 7D!

Veronica Ramos

flickr.com/photos/veronicaramos

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE MEDIUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY? MORE SPECIFICALLY, HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH CONCERT/MUSIC PHOTOGRAPHY? ¶ The yearbook staff was looking for photographers, so I skipped math class one day and went to Houston Camera Exchange. I bought my first 35mm. A Nikon FG with a 17mm wide angle lens. I shot with that thing from '99-'05. Good times. It wasn't until late '03 that I started shooting shows. I was, at the time, building a fashion photography portfolio, but wasn't having as much fun shooting bitchy models. I ditched my photo shoot one night in DC to go push my way up on stage while the Stones were playing at the National Mall. That was the night that did it.

WHAT ARE THE MOST INTENSE/FUN/TRAUMATIC SHOOTS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IN THE LAST FEW YEARS? IS WORKING A SHOW IN HOUSTON DIFFERENT THAN SHOOTING IN OTHER CITIES? ¶ I would say the most fun shoots I've worked are definitely Summerfest. I think it's because of the mixture of having friends and booze while shooting. Both those things and music reign supreme in my life.

I feel like shooting in Houston is pretty chill. In other cities photographers get pretty aggressive and can be rude. Maybe it has to do with being southern? We aren't assholes down here. I've learned not to take anything personal in the pit; everyone is working and focused on getting that shot.

WITH OTHER ASPECTS OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY (MUSIC JOURNALISM, PLAYING CERTAIN GENRES OF MUSIC, ETC.) THERE SEEMS TO BE A DEARTH OF WOMEN. DO YOU THINK GENDER PLAYS A ROLE IN THE PHOTO PIT AS WELL? ¶ Good question! Now, let me sleep on this and come back with something concise and un-feminist sounding.





DREAM SHOOT? ¶ Oh geez, tough one. Tie between Iggy Pop and Tom Waits. Actually, both at the same time. Naked and lots of cigarettes.

IF SOMEONE OFFERED YOU THE CAMERA OF YOUR DREAMS, WITH THE CONDITION THAT YOU MUST LISTEN TO BRIGHT EYES AND ONLY BRIGHT EYES FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, WHICH CAMERA WOULD YOU CHOOSE? ¶ HECK YES! Hasselblad H4D-60. Yes, it's a $30 thousand dollar camera! I would totally listen to Bright Eyes happily even though in reality I'd probably be really depressed after listening to him for a while, which in turn would probably lead to some sort of drug addiction and then lead me to sell the Hasselblad for drug money...

Iman Saqr

undertheradarmag.com

WHAT DREW YOU TO THE MEDIUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY? MORE SPECIFICALLY, HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH CONCERT/MUSIC PHOTOGRAPHY? ¶ As a kid, I was always interested in perception and perspective and how people played with both to view their world. I wanted to understand how and why people saw differently than each other and began to experiment with photography and film. One year, my father gave my sister,

Sommer and me each a camera and I remember being so excited to see how each of us could capture the same thing differently. She has an amazing eye and her photography inspires me all the time. She is one of the reasons why I picked up my camera again and started shooting.

It was my love of cinema that threw me into my love of photography. I was fascinated with how filmmakers frame a shot, play with camera movement and alter camera angles to express emotion and intensify meaning. Whether that image is still or moving, it tells a story. From that moment on, I knew I wanted to tell stories with the photographs I took and hope that they resonate with the viewer.

I started out shooting concerts a few years ago, and fell in love with it. I love the energy between the band and the crowd and being able to capture that dance between the two is challenging. Concert photography is like shooting a conversation between the music, my lens and my eye.

WHAT ARE THE MOST INTENSE/FUN/TRAUMATIC SHOOTS YOU'VE EXPERIENCED IN THE LAST FEW YEARS? IS WORKING A SHOW IN HOUSTON DIFFERENT THAN SHOOTING IN OTHER CITIES? ¶ This fall in Los Angeles, I had the honor of shooting at The Hollywood Bowl for the first time. I didn't know whether I was going to be shooting from the soundboard or the photo pit, and that uncertainty caused a bit of panic. All I knew was that there was a possibility of being 250 feet away from my subject during the show, thus causing me to experiment on different lenses. I ran around that city measuring out 250 feet, trying to figure out how far it really is. I even downloaded a measuring tape app on my iPhone (which wasn't helpful) as I repeatedly walked through parking lots, across Sunset and around my sister's home simply to find the ideal lens that would work in such a situation. Let's just say measuring tape has found a new home in my camera bag. PHOENIX played a brilliant show at the Hollywood Bowl that night and I can't wait to shoot at that beautiful hilly outdoor venue again.

WITH OTHER ASPECTS OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY (MUSIC JOURNALISM, PLAYING CERTAIN GENRES OF MUSIC, ETC.) THERE SEEMS TO BE A DEARTH OF WOMEN. DO YOU THINK GENDER PLAYS A ROLE IN THE PHOTO PIT AS WELL? ¶ Yes. It's quite rare to see mostly women or even more than one woman in the photo pit, but you have to just focus on why you're there and have fun with it. It really comes down to the images you produce. It's not about what gender you are, the gear, the camera or the lens, it's about composition and exposure of the photographs. It's honestly about being nice and respectful of the band, the crowd, your fellow photographers and the crew.

I still get a bit nervous going through the crowd, when there isn't a photo pit to shoot from, but sometimes you have to make your way through and say, "Excuse me, I need to get through. I'm only going to be standing here for a few minutes." And then once you get through, you focus on your job. Most people are very cool about it. I mean who wouldn't want someone standing in front of them blocking their view and moving around for about 10 minutes?

DREAM SHOOT? ¶ Dream shoots? On tour with PHOENIX. I get really excited at the thought of shooting on tour. There is so much to capture and I'd love to be there for the whole process.

Teaching the basics of photography and filmmaking to children living overseas.

Photographing my mom in the 60s and 70s.

The one thing I really hope to accomplish through my work is to inspire individuals, especially those who might not always have a voice, to share their stories by taking photographs and making movies. For us all, an image is a powerful tool for understanding.

IF SOMEONE OFFERED YOU THE CAMERA OF YOUR DREAMS, WITH THE CONDITION THAT YOU MUST LISTEN TO BRIGHT EYES AND ONLY BRIGHT EYES FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, WHICH CAMERA WOULD YOU CHOOSE? ¶ Am I allowed to answer this question with a question?!? So, Brigitte Zabak, what did Bright Eyes ever do to you? It's not all about the camera. I mean yes, the camera is a very important tool, and Canon makes brilliant ones, but the real camera is your eye. Plus, listening to music of all genres is just one of the things that inspire a lot of the images I create, so I don't think I could listen to one band or type of music for the rest of my life. If you happen to see me running through the crowd at a show (with frizzy hair and a camera in hand) and you let me get through or you have done so in the past, I'd like to take the time and say THANK YOU. **FPH**

- TRISH BADGER
- IMAN SAQR
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The Great Basket Caser

Montrose Hero Combats Grocery Carts and Local Slums

BY ANDREA AFRA

IN A WORLD where injustice seems to prevail, from famine and poverty, to war and environmental calamity, there is finally hope to be found in the emergence of a local anonymous hero whose evasions for our request to identify himself have left us to dub him 'Slumtastic Max.' His primary antagonists are listed on MontroseSlums.com, where he hosts his virtual headquarters, cleverly disguised behind a uglesome prefabricated HTML template, booby-trapped with passwords and server errors.

In his e-Manifesto, he reproaches his foes, the neighboring low-income multi-family dwellings he calls 'slums' that surround his civilian domicile, and declares his mission to eliminate them from Montrose. While a slum is defined by the United Nations agency UN-HABITAT as 'a run-down area of a city characterized by substandard housing and squalor and lacking in tenure security,' such as the slums of Mumbai where millions of their poor live on, under and next to each other, in fear of being bulldozed at any moment, in this sense Slumtasic Max is referring to the eyesores that dot his otherwise high value neighborhood. It is the slumlords and non-English speaking tenants alike that are responsible for making Montrose 'an undesirable place to live.'

That's not the only dark force Slumtastic Max has to reckon with. The tenants of these houses of infamy employ a menacing tactic of planting grocery carts from Fiesta in strategic locations that have been known to cause property damage and injury to innocent citizens. Clandestinely procured photographs posted on the website document eight different occurrences of the basket-munitions left on sidewalks and the roadside. In his war cry against Fiesta, whose total disregard for the neighborhood has allowed the streets to become places of potential bloodshed and car dings, Slumtastic Max asks those who have been victimized by the carts to come out of the shadows and join him in a lawsuit against the notorious arsenal that fronts as a grocery store. Never mind the fact that many of the locals who shop there are friendly with their employees, often joking and chatting about their children or social lives. This is just a ploy to lull their loyal masses until they are too subdued to rebel against their oppressors.

We wish our hero luck in the challenge he is facing, but on the public guestbook, there are more Montrosians ruthlessly denouncing his efforts than in support. One such post by 'Kerry':

"This site is some loser's way of proving to the world of their meager, boring, halfwitted existence. I really hope your car is dented by a shopping cart."

Kerry and their ilk are obviously enemies of good and should be dealt with accordingly. Or at least deleted. Slumastic Max has used the power of IP block for those who attempt to thwart his operation, but surely he knows they can still access the site through the cache.

Slumtastic Max, we salute you and hope that you continue to crack down on the corruption that plagues our society. Now, how about those wheat-paste vandals? FPH



This site is some loser's way of proving to the world of their meager, boring, halfwitted existence. I really hope your car is dented by a shopping cart.



God

Let's figure out if God exists. Do you believe in God?

BY OMAR AFRA & THE PEOPLE HE QUIZZED

With all the holiday reveling, it is important to re-explore this question and bring some grander issues the surface. However, this question is bigger than our own beliefs as to whether or not God exists. No, this questions cuts at the baggage we attach to language, the way our idea of God can change (if we have one at all), and puts us in the peculiar position of articulating our world-view. So here goes mine:

Omar Afra

OCCUPATION: MANAGING EDITOR, FREE PRESS HOUSTON
AFTER-LIFE STATUS: 72 VIRGINS

The word God is loaded with so much baggage. The very explanations of what constitutes God were much more sophisticated one thousand years ago. This is really a question on whether we believe in ANYTHING immaterial or not. I gotta say YES. Love is definitely immaterial. There are just too many stupid things we do that do not jive in an simply evolutionary context. See, I have this ugly dog. This ugly dog offers me no companionship, does not fetch slippers, shits where he pleases, hates me, and is a general burden on my life and resources. There is no Darwinian explanation on why I love this dog and continue to allow him to drain me of treasure and life force. Some people would argue that love is merely a collection of chemicals in the brain which force you to make dumb decisions. No, I think those chemicals a only symptomatic of something immaterial going down. But this is very well one of those instances where human language fails us. Art and music are more adept at exploring such questions. Either way, boobies. That's right, boobies.

Paul Smollen

OCCUPATION: SCIENTIST
AFTER-LIFE STATUS: ETERNAL BLISS

I'm a deist. I don't belong to or believe in most of any of the major organized religions. I simply believe there is a higher being that created our spirits and who probably created, at some point, the universe. Because, there is no other way to explain the unique spirit and consciousness each of us has. It is clear to me consciousness can't just be explained as appearing when matter is rearranged in a specific way, to make cells and to make a brain. Consciousness is more than just matter, it is different than substance. Thus it must have been created by a higher being. That being is probably also guiding the future of the universe in a very subtle way that does not contradict scientific laws. Beyond this, I don't know much about this God, and I don't see how one can learn enough to claim one or another of the major religions is right.

Kwame Anderson

OCCUPATION: TEACHER
AFTER-LIFE STATUS: JOY ON TAP

The question was asked whether or not I believed in God. The difficulty in answering this question lies in the thought of God Is vs. God As. Anytime that a new land is colonized, de-colonized, or re-colonized, first comes the army, next comes the doctors and the priests. The idea of God "as" connected to the religion controlled by some dominating entity in order to make oppression more palpable is a reoccurring phenomenon throughout history. The reverence of the lord has led many to just change the lord while maintaining the reverence amidst the subtraction of rights and liberties. The idea of the will of the "chosen," the divine birthright and such are all factors which contribute more to God as thing, as idea, as the unchallengeable authority used to control and/or maintain/create willful submission. Also, there is Claus-ian idea of the "man in the sky" who purports goodness, while allowing evil, the idea of the deserved suffering of man, the tolerance of hell on Earth in order to live in the eternal happiness only achieved in death, well that too is a point of contention. However, if one (such as I) believes that God lives in and around us, and that man's many interpretations do not overcome the force and power of God, that faith in God does not have to be justified or proven to man. They say to only pray if you believe, I've prayed and believed, and I believe those prayers have been answered. God is, regardless of what he/she has been used as.

Lina Dib

OCCUPATION: ARTIST (UN-EMPLOYED)
AFTER-LIFE STATUS: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

The question isn't about God. Who is that anyway? We like to name things. I mean that's what we do right? We point and name because otherwise we'd be back to the beginning – to noise. Noise is God. Gods are noise and we enjoy defining. Or maybe its closer to the french root of the word devine, which means to guess. Indeed it is an extreme delight to feel as though we can get closer to that which is unnamable, to abandon oneself to the divine pleasure of dancing to the noise.

Nick Cooper

OCCUPATION: DRUMMER (NOT REALLY A 'JOB')
AFTER-LIFE STATUS: STUCK IN LIMBO BETWEEN PLANES OF EXISTENCE

To the extent that I can imagine a spiritual power, it is connected to systems of life on Earth, not to heaven, the afterlife, nor any narrative. It has always seemed strange to me when others think they know the truth about the spiritual or supernatural. I can't take it seriously when people try to convince others about their beliefs and put

on a whole show about it. When someone walks up to me and says that Jesus loves me and wants to save me from eternal torture but cannot unless I transform, it is no more convincing than being told that Zeus demands I hand over my wallet.

Tyler Barber

OCCUPATION: ART DIRECTOR, FREE PRESS HOUSTON
AFTER-LIFE STATUS: ETERNAL TORMENT!

Cramming Thousands of Years' of Debate, into 300 Words

I do not believe god exists. That may sound like a very resolute statement, and no doubt it will be misinterpreted. It is important to make a distinction between what type of belief we're talking about. There are three ways in which one can believe in god: 1) monotheism, 2) polytheism and 3) deism. As for agnosticism, it exists in the overlap between where deism ends and atheism begins (so for the sake of brevity and focus, we'll leave agnosticism aside for now).

As with mono- and polytheism, belief in either of these systems has to allow for miracles and supernatural intervention into our personal lives. With monotheism in particular, one has to take the position, for example, that god hears your prayers and takes sides in wars -- assertions that seem absurd and childish in my view. No matter how progressive the individual, the belief in one, personal god, at some point, must yield to supernatural explanations of the natural world.

Deism, on the other hand, is the belief more-or-less in what Aristotle (and later St. Thomas Aquinas) described as the "unmoved-mover." Or, that which started the universe. Whenever you hear a religious person attach belief in god to a famous scientist (namely, Einstein) they're trying to wedge a monotheistic, personal god onto what's clearly a deistic outlook (and one that is fundamentally different). Still, to me, deism is a weak assertion, and its claims are sitting ducks. Every few weeks the Large Hadron Collider in Geneva, Switzerland is unboxing the remaining puzzle-pieces of what Aristotle's "unmoved-mover" is.

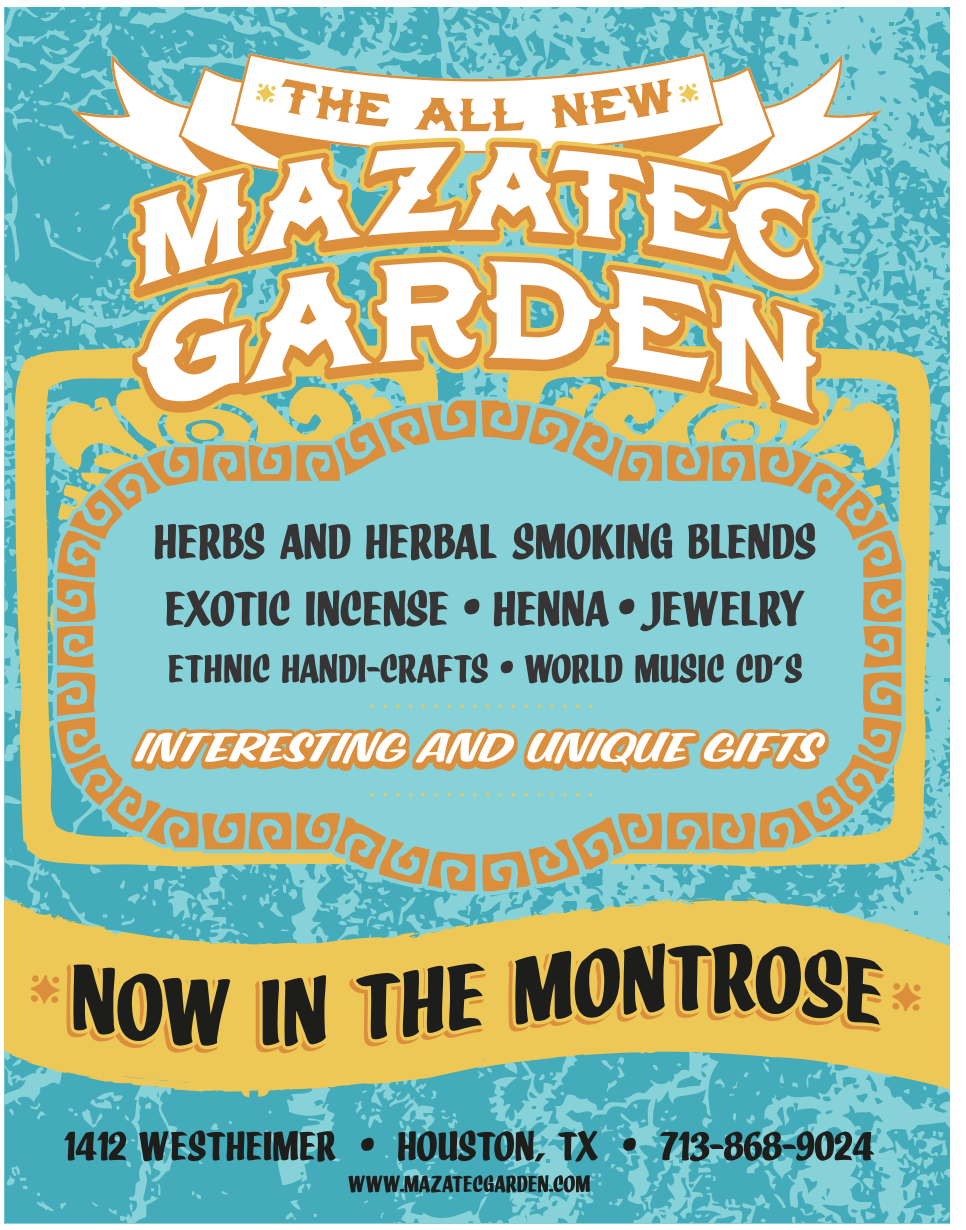
I believe in an evidence-based world. Philosophical Naturalism is the best doctrine that describes my "belief." I do not believe in miracles or any supernatural intervention in the universe. Nor do I believe in a supernatural beginning to our universe. To me, all we have is this amazing, intricate, ever-fascinating reality to explore. And I'm not wasting any of my time here dreaming of some place "better," where the grass is greener after death. Rather, I am not content, but elated, to think, wonder and discover our real world.

Johnny Brannan

OCCUPATION: ROCKER
AFTERLIFE STATUS: WHERE STRYPER GOES

The universe is such an infinite, unknown place. To assume that man is it's central figure is a narrow view. We do not and may never fully understand everything there is to know about our universe. If you can admit that other forms of life may exist elsewhere, then you should also admit that we cannot be certain how these non-human entities exist or in what realms/dimensions they occur. For example, humans exist on Earth and occupy the time/space, physical continuum. But what about life in other parts of the universe? There is a possibility that non-human life exists in realms other than the physical. So can there be a God (or Gods, angels, demons, aliens, etc.) that exists in a non-physical realm (i.e. spiritual, etc.)? If you adopt a broader view of the universe, then this assertion is entirely plausible.

However, the Bible is purportedly the word of God and tells us, "God created man in his own image." This implies that God is a human-like, male creature, and is a narrow, anthropocentric view. It assumes –again– that man is the universe's central figure. Given the infinite and unknown nature of the universe, this assumption could very well be incorrect. Perhaps our understanding of what is meant by the term "God" is inaccurate. You must abandon the classical notion of a bearded king in the clouds to gain a greater understanding. The Bible was written thousands of years ago and has been translated across many languages. Perhaps it needs an update – remember: religious authorities once claimed that the Earth was the center of the universe! So the term "God" may simply signify a non-human entity existing in another realm of our universe who may or may not have an interest in us. Anyone can believe in this. FPH





Amnesia & the City

City government tries to work to preserve our historic neighborhoods

ON OCTOBER 13 many people interested in preserving what remains of Houston's historical structures celebrated the fact that Houston City Council had finally passed an ordinance that, as Richard Connelly the Houston Press quipped, had "some teeth" in it. Mayor Annise Parker described the ordinance as compromise and a victory.

Others felt it was too watered down. Jonothan Smullian an urban planner and preservationist told the Houston Chronicle immediately after the ordinance was passed that he was "feelong very good for the city and very concerned for our districts in the Heights." What concerns Smullian, and others, is that while the new ordinance does protect historic buildings by eliminating many of the things that made the previous ordinance the receipient of so much scorn from the historic prservation groups it also opens the door to challenges to historic districts.

The strengthening to building came in the elimination of the 90-day waiting period. Previously, if the demolition of a historic building was prevented by the City of Houston all a homeowner had to do was wait 90 days before tearing the buillding down. Now the ordinance has what the Chronicle, unimaginatively and incorrectly, termed a "no means no" provision that, essentially, states if the destruction of a historic building is prohibited by the city then that's that, only it isn't.

The new ordinance allows the residents of a historic district to very easily force City Council to reconsider whether or not an area should be a historic district and what the boundaries of the district should be. To begin the process of reconsideration, as the simple petition describes it, all a group has to do is gather signatures from 10 percent of the homeowners in a district. The low threshold led Houston real-estate blog Swamplot to ask "what neighborhoods… won't be able to rustle up the signatures of the owners of a measly 10 percent of tracts in their districts who want out?" This has led to some speculation among Houston's aspiring pundits that, if a homeowner is denied the ability to demolish his or her historic building, he or she could very easily demolish a historic district.

The process of destroying a historic district is fairly easy because once the reconsideration process begins all it takes is for 51 percent of homeowners in an area vote to have an area's historic status repealed. A 51 percent no vote will force the city to redraw the boundaries of the area to maintain 67 percent support.

The only two districts that are exempt from the reconisderation process are Old Sixth Ward, south of Washington Ave., and Market Square in Downtown. Surprisingly the Old Sixth Ward and Market Square are two of Houston's oldest historic districts and they have been able to successfully brand themselves as such.

The ease with which a group can gather the amount of signatures needed to force reconsideration led some to speculate that a district could be brought before city committees almost indefinitely. Fortunately the ordinance states that reconsideration is a one-time event and puts a time limit on how long residents have to force a change to the historical designation of a district. According to the ordinance those wishing to repeal an area's historic district status have 30 days from the time the city releases the petitions to gather the signatures.

And since the city released the petitions on Tuesday, October 19, homeowners in certain parts of the heights are already getting a decidedly different type of late October door-to-door visitor.

Various groups throughout Houston have already pledged to get parts of various historic districts off the roles so homes can be demolished and replaced with more up-to-date models or have extra rooms added on for growing families.

However, Parker has vowed that she will fight to maintain the size and integrity of the city's already existing historic districts. Sadly that sentiment doesn't seem to have extended to the desire to create new districts.

The new ordinance makes it more difficult for residents who want to get their neighborhood declared a historic district. Previously slightly over 50 percent of the homeowners in a neighborhood had to sign a petiton before the city would consider creating another historic district. However, the new ordinance requires 67 percent of the homeowners in an area to sign petitions before an area will be considered historic. There are other requirements as well, such as a certain percentage of homes in the area have to be over 50 years old, but those don't come into play until after the needed signatures have ben gathered.

Despite all the changes to the historic preservation ordiance, no matter how old a home is a homeowner can do what ever they want to the inside of the building. So feel free to turn the back bedroom of the mid-century Craftsman style bungalow in the Heights into an S&M dungeon. Just make sure that you don't need to knock out a wall for your torture devices. FPH

This image of Whitney Houston clearly has nothing to with Houston's historic neighborhoods yet one must marvel at the stunning beauty portrayed here.



ANDY DICK



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Let's face it.
David is one
Adonis of a man.
Sheesh, he is sexy.

facebook.com/littlejoy.recycling
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Interview: David Fernandez of Little Joy Recycling

BY JACOB CALLE (STILL NOT A REPREHENSIBLE HUMAN BEING)

DAVID FERNANDEZ COULD POSSIBLY BE turning the page of going green. He is changing the recycling movement in Houston, as we know it. With Little Joy Recycling, David will recycle the material for you from your aluminum coke can to an old rusty car hood. David will pick it up so that you don't have to.

140 billion cans will not be recycled this year. That is 25 billion kWh of electricity. It takes about 0.22k/hr of electricity to make one can. To recycle a can we use only 4% of this figure. Hence every time aluminum can goes to the landfill we waste 0.21k/hr of electricity. So if the US wastes around 140 billion cans that is equivalent to wasting 24 billion kWh of electricity. This is enough electricity to power New York City households for more than six months. Now, we know that David is not the next Captain Planet by not recycling these 140 billion cans, but he does his great share in the Houston area and would like for you to join his service.

David has created this company from ground up with little in his pockets. Now he has household name clientele and is improving the earth with one plastic bottle at a time.

HOW DID YOU COME UP WITH THE IDEA OF LITTLE JOY? ¶ It has always been left to the consumer to be responsible for recycling. However, in the United States businesses as a whole produce more carbon emissions than cars do. I decided to create a service to fill this void efficiently.

WHAT BROUGHT YOU THE NAME "LITTLE JOY RECYCLING"? IT'S GOT QUITE THE CATCH. ¶ I wanted a name that someone would remember. I wanted to offer color and character to an industry that was filled with bland corporate logos. The name "Little Joy" was taken from one of my favorite bands and they took it form a bar in L.A.

NICE! SO YOU'RE RECYCLING ALREADY! SO WHO ARE YOUR CLIENTELE? ¶ We primarily focus on local businesses. However, we do service residential needs as well. We are servicing over 20 businesses locally. Ruggle's Green, Fitzgerald's, Audi, Volkswagen, Poison Girl, Antidote, all Houston My Fit Food locations, and more. It all ranges from recycling glass and paper at a bar or coffee shop to scrap metal and pallets from a dealership. Our services are quite broad. Because we are an independent business we are able to customize our clients recycling needs to what they produce. There isn't much we cannot recycle or who we cannot service.

SO WHAT IS LITTLE JOY RECYCLING'S IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT? ¶ We diverted well over 100 tons of material so far since last May. When we started. I give out waste reduction charts to my larger clients to track what they have diverted into landfills.

SO FROM WHAT I HEAR YOU ARE A ONE-MAN WOLF PACK. THAT'S A LOT OF WORK FOR YA THERE BUDDY! ¶ I stated this business out of my apartment along with almost next to nothing in my bank account. It's been very grassroots. It has been me up until just this past month. I will be looking for another Little Joy Recycler to do more pick-ups!

HOW DOES IT WORK AND WHAT SERVICES DO YOU OFFER? ¶Little Joy Recycling will pick-up the recycled goods based on the production of the business and charges based on the pick-up. Much like a commercial trash company. You have the option of recycling everything or as little just one item. No pressure here. We can recycle, glass, plastics, mixed paper, metal, cardboard, aluminum, scraps, wood, and all electronics. As long as there is a place that will properly process a material here in Houston, we will make sure it is recycled.

SO BY WORKING WITH LITTLE JOY THIS WILL REDUCE YOUR COMMERCIAL TRASH FEE, YES? ¶ Yes, definitely. What most business doesn't realize is that they can be recycling up to 90% of their waste. You can almost eliminate your trash bill by using our service. I have saved businesses lot of money. In return, freeing up capitol to pay for the recycling service.

OFF FROM WORK HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT YOUR EVERYDAY LIVING TO PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL FRIENDLINESS? ¶ I recycle at home. I get my daughter very involved with the issue as well. I remind friends and family the importance of recycling and keep them in check. I limit my meat intake and make sure almost all the food I eat is locally grown. I try to support local businesses with these ethics as well. Most of my clients already practice these ideas. Even the products I purchase for my businesses like using Southland Hardware versus Home Depot. I reuse a lot of things. Even my recycling bins are used. Part of being green is more than just recycling, new urbanism is something I try to promote as well. I don't have a bike though. My beach cruiser was stolen so I guess I need to get over to Fixed Gears. The TCE has introduced me to the overwhelming epidemic we face here in the states known as e-waste. Over the last year I have become very passionate about this issue as well and I promote this very much with my customers. On January 9th I held an e-waste event to promote proper electronic recycling for the community and offered an outlet to have all old electrons properly recycled. With the Help of Technocycle we saved over 7,000 items of e-waste from entering the landfill or shipped over seas. Check out www.ban.com for more information.

HOW CAN WE REACH YOU TO WORK WITH YOU? ¶ Call me 713-412-1668, or email me at littlejoyrecycling.com

DO YOU KNOW THE 3 R'S? ¶ Reduce - Reduce your waste by choosing fresh food carefully, noting the sell-by dates, and being aware of the amount of packaging around any goods you are purchasing.

Reuse - Plastic shopping bags are a good example, reuse both for shopping and lining your kitchen garbage can.

Recycle - Try to buy goods made from recycled materials. Sort your recyclables and get them to a recycling center. FPH

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1984 Lately?

After Houston Votes Out Red Light Cameras, Homeland Security Installs Hundreds of Surveillance Cameras Downtown

IN A DESPOTIC ACT against our citizens who recently voted out red light traffic cameras throughout Houston, the city has allowed the Department of Homeland Security to install 250-300 surveillance cameras throughout downtown in the name of crime and terrorism prevention.

A 2008 study, "Evaluation of the City of Houston Digital Automated Red Light Camera Program," by Dahnke and Stein of Rice University Center for Civic Engagement and Timothy Lomax of Texas Transportation Institute of Texas A&M University, found: The comparison of data between monitored and non-monitored approaches supports the conclusion that red light cameras are mitigating a general, more severe increase in collisions.

The traffic cameras were rejected for their ineffectiveness and also because red light tickets are classified as civil penalties, yet the city was illegally enforcing fine collection and even tried to enlist Harris County in the enforcement by refusing vehicle registrations and renewals for those who held an unpaid red light fine.

While the red light cameras have been voted out, a judge issued an injunction on their removal because the private company that the city has leased the cameras through, American Transportation Services, or ATS, has filed a lawsuit for breech of contract. The city pays ATS over $2,000 for each of the 70 cameras per month, plus $1.75 per ticket issued, or around $30,000 per month in fine commissions. To break the contract would cost over $600,000. The city and ATS both would benefit should the judge rule in favor of ATS.

In the midst of these actions, the City of Houston has spent around $14 million on installation of the cameras. In an Orwellian quote in a Chronicle interview, Dennis Storemski, Houston's director of Office of Public Safety and Homeland Security said, "We live in an age right now where there's really no expectation that there would be no video in a public space. Everybody that has a cell phone has a video camera. This happens all the time. We're just doing it for public safety purposes."

The cameras will provide live footage to the police and record the data for future recall.

Gary Blankinship of the Houston Police Officer's Union reported a 30-50% shortage in staff to the mayor in September. Rather than hire an addition 200 officers or offer more overtime hours with the federal security grant, the city opted for cameras. But in order for them to be effective, they must be monitored at all times by an HPD staff that is already spread too thin.

Whether the red light cameras will be taken down per the vote of the people only to be replaced 3-1 by surveillance cameras remains unknown. Whether we will ever have a chance to vote out the new surveillance cameras also remains unknown. Yet, soon enough we will find out whether our voices and our votes truly hold any power. **FPH**



BY ANDREA AFRA

MERIDIAN
DEC. 3
DAVID ALLAN COE
DEC. 4
SMILE EMPTY SOUL, EAR SHOT, EDISUN
DEC. 5
SLAVE TO THE METAL FESTIVAL
DEC. 10
JB BEVERELY & THE WAYWARD DRIFTERS, CAMPFIRE SUICIDE, MOOSEKNUCKLE TX, THE LONESTAR TALL BOYS
DEC. 12
WU-TANG
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3
Antic Romantics w/ Guests

4
Chin Xoau Ti Won w/ Glasnost

7
Riddim Tuesdays - Dubstep

10
The Batusis, Chelsea Hotel, Blower, Zipperneck

11
Elbodo w/ Saxton Fox

14
Riddim Tuesdays - Dubstep

17
Searching for Signal w/ The Easter Sea

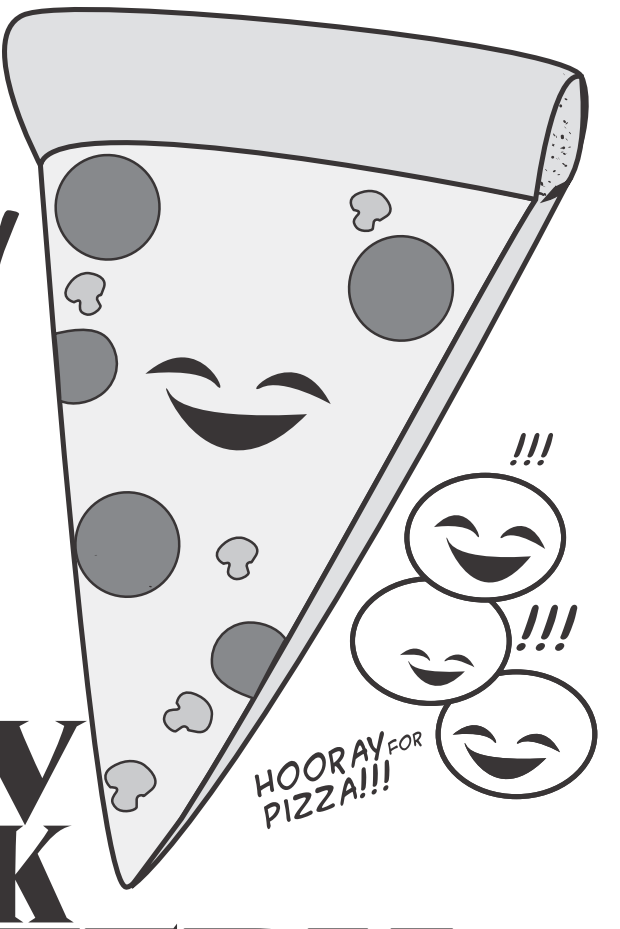
18
Omega Prophets Christmas Party W/ Letters To Voltron and more!

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28
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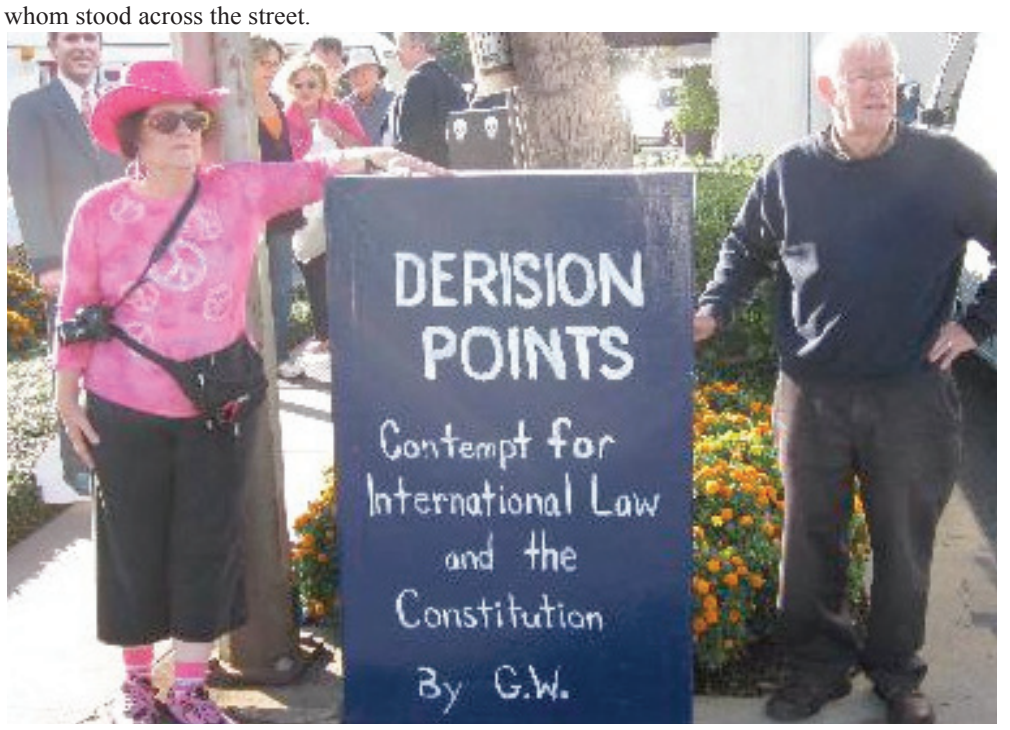


houston.indymedia.org

George W. Bush book signing protest

By Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement to the open publishing newswire: It was bright and sunny morning in Houston when war criminal George W. Bush came to River Oaks to sign copies of his book "Decision Points." Fans of Bush camped out as early as 5 a.m. to get in line. The police and Secret Service were out in force blocking off parking spaces and harassing peaceful protesters. The Houston Police department had five of it's officers on horseback and one directing traffic. Besides Abolition Movement members, Code Pink and the Revolutionary Communist Party turned out to raise awareness of Bush's war crimes and torture policies.

Bush has admitted during interviews for the book that he ordered water boarding which has long been considered torture. The large crowd of people getting their book signed was almost entirely white. During the hour and a half Abolition Movement members protested we only counted two people of color in the book signing line. Several of the people purchasing the book were angered by the protesters and yelling out comments like "Go back to your mom's house," "Get a job," "Bush is a good president." Although the corporate media (Houston Press) claimed that only seven people protested there were actually about 20 - 25 protesters, some of whom stood across the street.



Free Mumia Abu-Jamal, Free All Political Prisoners!

By 'The People' to the open publishing newswire: On Tuesday, November 9th, 2010, in cities all across the world, people marched and rallied in support of Mumia Abu-Jamal, on the day of his final appeal and his final chance to not be murdered by the state of Pennsylvania. Houston, Texas joined Philadelphia, Toronto, Mexico City, Paris and countless other cities in holding a march in opposition to the wrongful imprisonment and the impending execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has come to be recognized as a symbol and representation of all political prisoners.

The rally and march in Houston was organized by Peoples Party III and Houston Anarchist Black Cross. Demonstrators gathered at Emancipation park in 3rd ward between 4 and 5 oclock. Many banners and signs were made by participants. At 5:00 pm, between 50 and 60 protesters began marching down Elgin towards downtown, lead by a banner that read "FREE MUMIA". Members of Peoples Party III led the crowd in chants saying "Brick by brick, wall by wall, we gotta free Mumia Abu-Jamal" and "Free Mumia, guilty or not, racist cops deserve to be shot".

Galveston County Sheriff/Klansman11/1 All Communities Against Brutality organize and agitate against Police Brutality

By Parce, published to the open publishing newswire: All Communities Against Brutality or A.C.A.B. is an organization that works with people targeted by cops and have experienced their true role in our communities as enforcers of white supremacy who uphold the demands of government, politicians, and business people in keep-ing the working class and poor in their place at the bottom of the social pyramid.

No Change Will Come: Police Brutality in Houston

You take these handcuffs off, and I'll whip all of your asses. You're just a bunch of pigs.—José Campos Torres. With police brutality and murder running rampant in our communities here in Houston and nationally it is extremely important that we not look at these recent occurrences separately, but rather as a collective history of abuses and murders.

We need not go back that far in time to find just one instance of murder by the hands of the Houston police. On the night of May 5, 1977, HPD officers arrested José Campos Torres at the 21 Club located on Canal St. after a scuffle with the bar manager.

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10/30 Free Taita Juan - Indigenous Leader Detained in Houston

On Tuesday, October 19, 2010, indigenous Colombian healer Taita Juan Agreda Chindoy was detained in the Houston International Airport. He was formally arrested by ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) for possession of his traditional medicine Ayahuasca. He is now being charged as a federal criminal and is facing up to 20 years in federal prison.

Taita Juan is certified by his community and by the Colombian ministry of health as a traditional healer. He is one of the few remaining indigenous spiritual leaders in the world that holds the ancestral medicinal knowledge of an ecosystem that is rapidly disappearing. Taita Juan is a father, a husband and a godfather to more than 20 children. With more than 3000 supporters from several countries in the world, his life and work have touched many.

10/27 Report Back From O22

The day of October 22nd started with an event at Yates High School put on by the paper pushers known as the RCP. Several people attended to be in solidarity with the students of Yates (early in September an HISD cop attacked and broke the jaw of a student, story here, and also to keep the RCP in check on pushing their propaganda down the throats of the young students.

The school had a HEAVY police presence. There were plain clothes cops (about 10) with binoculars and cameras on top of the school, and in several unmarked cars taking pictures of concerned community members. As well as uniformed police (HISD and City) blocking roads and thoroughfares to redirect students out the side of the school opposite the rally.

The day moved on quickly and with great anticipation leading up to a rally and BBQ at Emancipation Park at 6 P.M.. Around 5:45 as the sun started its slow decline and the warm humid air began to ease, BBQ grills were lit up as signs ("No Peace Till There's No Police", "Who Do You Serve and Protect HPD?", "2.3 Million in US Prisons", and others) and a banner ("END POLICE TERROR", featuring a freehand spray-painting of hands in chains with a menacing blood dripping effect) were hung up facing the streets surrounding the park.

Around 7:15 People's Party 3 busted out the megaphones, speaking to/firing-up passerbys and folks in the park about different issues including re/oppression, political prisoners, getting free, and Revolution! By 8 o'clock the crowd was ready, and within 5 minutes of discussion a group of 40 were lined up, ready to march!

Exiled Allen Parkway Village Residents hit TSU

by Gregory Library Watch, Nov. 19, gregorylibrarywatch@gmail.com

Exiled Allen Parkway Village Residents held a press conference to expose Mickey Leland Center asst. director and corrupt black bourgeoisie Jew Don Boney regarding his wasting money that was appropriated for making late congressperson's Mickey Leland and Barbara Jordan's papers available.

Njeri Shakur and Lenwood Johnson former Allen Parkway Village public housing residents (read their history here: http://tinyurl.com/nbfcyb) held a press conference in front of the Mickey Leland Center on Thursday morning November 18, 2010. After his death in a plane crash, Leland's widow donated his congressional papers to TSU twenty-one (21) years ago. TSU has allowed more than two decades to elapse without doing anything to make these important documents available. Not only has this inaction has resulted in blocking access to Leland's papers for researchers but it also obscures all the important work Leland did for people in his district including the APV tenants.

Shakur and Johnson are angered by the fact that Texas Southern University received $450,000 to make Leland and Jordan's papers available and instead of using those funds for what they were appropriated for, TSU has sucked much of it down for "administrative costs."

During the press conference Shakur said, ""They've got Jew Don Boney there (at the Mickey Leland Center) and his history is of betraying the community."

Back in August 2009, the Texas State Legislature appropriated $150,000 to preserve and make available Leland and Jordan's papers. The taxpayer-funded appropriation was split over fiscal years 2010 and 2011. Fiscal 2010 came and went and TSU did not make one piece of Leland or Jordan's papers available. Boney and TSU continue the usual TSU shenanigans of lining their own pockets at the expense of the taxpayers.

In May 2010 the federal government awarded a $300,000 grant for the same purpose, to process Leland and Jordan's papers. The unqualified Jew Don Boney is in charge of this grant also. Shakur and Johnson are concerned that Boney and other TSU personnel will just pocket the money like they have pocketed the state funds. In the meantime, Leland's legacy suffers because historians and others cannot write about him without access to his documents.

Just a few years have passed since TSU president Priscilla Slade was dumped and her CFO was imprisoned for their financial misappropriations. Boney himself has history of ethical violations. (see picture 2 below). Now Boney's actions and inactions dredge up the sorry history of the black bourgeoisie using TSU for their private piggybank. Boney only has the job at TSU because it is his reward for his betrayal of the black community. String pullers like State Senator Rodney Ellis use TSU as a retirement community for term limited politicians like Boney who served on the Houston City Council and lost his bid for a state office in 1992.

With the corporate media's complicity, particularly the Houston Press and Channel 13 ABC, this issue will remain hidden, thereby allowing Boney and other crooked TSU administrators to continue their corrupt ways.

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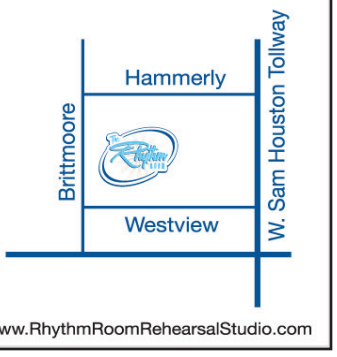
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"We think that our family brought integrity and honesty to this, and we want to make sure we put it in good hands to where we can feel that what we built can be added to."

- Drayton McLane, current owner of the Houston Astros

The Devil & Drayton McLane



BY MILLS-MCCOIN

I HAD JUST POURED A GLASS OF JAMESON to celebrate Drayton McLane finally putting the Houston Astros up for sale- when, again unannounced, the Devil burst into my writing room dressed as Santa Claus.

DEVIL: "Merry Christmas! Don't say I never gave you nothin'."
M-M: "It's not even Thanksgiving yet."

"True, but I designed Thanksgiving to be a one time affair. Why you Americans insist on annually celebrating the actual moment your systematic eradication of a race began, I'll not bother trying to understand. I just know it worked."

"You never fail to make me feel uncomfortable."

"Thank you. So, did you watch Uncle Drayton's presser?"

"Yup."

"But did you watch the Uncle Drayton Presser/Uncle Kracker 'Drift Away' Mash Up?"

"No, because that sounds insane. Please don't do the TV thing aga- oh God damn it, you jackass!"

Of course, the Devil had to render his silly plasma TV again with his wicked finger; and in the process he knocked over the Jameson bottle onto my laptop.

"Ooooo sorry about that. But isn't this video hilarious? I mean, seriously, who has the time?"

"No. But why is Drayton McLane selling the team anyway?"

"Beats me. With the team valued at $453 million, the Houston Astros rank eleventh in

Team Value amongst all of Major League Baseball. They have little debt and one of the lowest operating costs... it's like running a storage facility basically."

"They certainly perform like it."

"I wasn't going to say anything but... yes."

"They're really bad. The Astros don't even toy with success, which is what the Houston Texans do. It's so cruel. They win a few games in the beginning of the season then pack up shop and suck for the remainder."

"Well..."

"What? Out with it."

"That's actually by design."

"Explain yourself, evil one."

"Bob McNair, the owner of the Houston Texans football franchise, has no interest in a winning team because 'winning' disrupts the tranquility of his revenue streams. A football team constantly 'on the verge of making the playoffs' generates more income than those teams that make the playoffs every couple of years or so... and God forbid your team win the Superbowl. He's mesmerized an entire city of sports entertainment consumers with hope and suspense. Having not personally been involved in this swindling, I'm quite impressed with his work."

"So you're saying the Houston Texans will never make the playoffs?"

"Basically. NFL owners like Jerry Jones of the Dallas Cowboys insist that exposure and media coverage generate fan fare along with good team performance. But some of the more unique owners like Bob McNair, a guy who sold his company to Enron in 1999, would rather rely on the spending power of their host city."

"That's really depressing. So what's with the Santa suit?"

"SANTA SUIT!?! This isn't a Santa suit. This is my winter wardrobe, jerk. You think someone else is the icon for the grotesque materialism that gives rise to violent fits of shopping and hoarding? Hell no. Red is my color. Always has been."

"Are you saying..."

"I'm saying... I wear the beard and fat suit during December because it makes me look stately and wise... and also it's cold outside." **FPH**

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