# FPH

FREE PRESS **HOUSTON**



NOVEMBER 2009 | ISSUE 109

***NEW BEGINNING'S IS A GREAT NAME FOR A DOUCHE***

WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY STAGE GUIDE

THE HOUSTON MUSIC SCENE 40 YEARS AGO

BAD ART AS GENOCIDED

INTERVIEW: HOLLYWOOD FLOSS

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ARTHUR BATES

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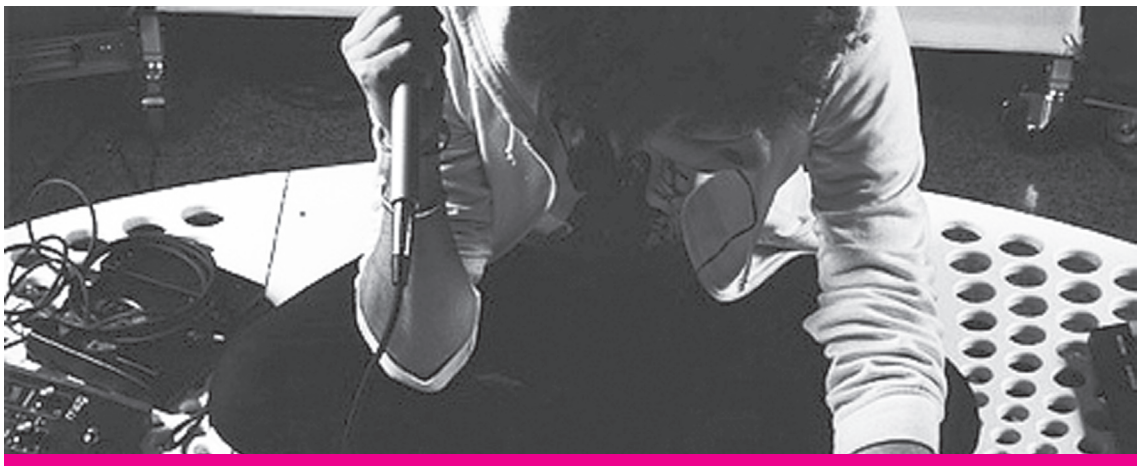


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# WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY STAGE GUIDE NOVEMBER 14, 2009

**Austin Layne - Music Heals St**

2:30
-1:20

00

4:40

**Dead Prez, Japanther, Eastern Sea ongress (upstairs), and DJ Melodic**

### FPH/KTRU Main Stage

2:00-12:30

### Helios Upstairs

Chin Xao Ti Twon 12:00-12:30
Tony Bananas 12:50-1:20
Make Your Own Escape 1:40-2:10
Dead Roses 2:30-3:00
Pistoleras 3:20-3:50
Alkari 4:10-4:40
O'Doyle Rules 5:00-5:30
National Electric 5:50-6:20
ListenListen 6:40-7:10
Perseph One 7:25

Together, We are Instruments 12:50-1

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Nov 6
Russian Circles, Young Widows, Red Sparowes, Coliseum

Nov 7
500 Megatons of Boogie, Ghost-town Electric, Bright Men of Learning

Nov 13
The Volunteers, DuneTX

Nov 14
Dollyrockers, World's Most Dangerous, Trian Woodburns

Nov 17
Bootown Presents: Grown Up Storytime

Nov 20
Flamin' Hellcats

Nov 21
Vicarious Me

Nov 22
Americans In France

Nov 27
Rich Hopkins & the Luminarios, Lisa Novak

Nov 28
Automatic Thrill, Defending the Kingdom

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**WEEKLY SHOWS** (FREE)

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**UPCOMING SHOWS**

11/2 Thomas Function

11/3 Surfer Blood, Buxton, Muhammad Ali, F.G and The Gunz $5

11/4 Soul Clap Dance Competition $7

11/5 Sugar and Gold, Brett Koshkin, BOLT, Mystery Flavor $8

11/6 An Albatross, The Coathangers, Dark Meat,The Roller, Black Congress $8

11/7 Health, Lovvers, Somosuno, Ghost Mountain $10

11/8 Shonen Knife, Dead Roses $11

11/13 Grandchildren, Limb Caddywhompus

11/14-15 Westheimer Block Party

11/17 Larkin Grimm

11/19 Free Radicals, Capybara

11/20 Musique Non Stop

11/27 Nosaprise

12/4 Jesse Podunk of Polyphonic Spree, Arthur Yoria $8/9pm doors

12/6- Mango's portion of Slack Fest 2009; 2 bands & 1 DJ TBD (4-6pm)

12/10 Born Liars

12/11 The MockTigers (ATX)

12/18- Dickey Hands

12/26 Fat Tony vs. B L A C K I E, Supreeme, Caddywhompus, Hosted by Yougenius + DJ iPodAmmo - $5 all ages

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

## FEEL FREE TO TAKE US SERIOUSLY

**DEAR EDITOR,**

**WE ARE FAST APPROACHING** the two-year anniversary of the Free Press Houston's declaration to Bill White of our intention to secede from the City of Houston and become the City of Montrose.

As part of that declaration, I was appointed the Mayor of the City of Montrose and Catbirds was recognized as our City Hall. As you may NOT be aware, I never asked to be the Mayor, but when called upon, I was proud to represent the city I have called home for the last 25 years. In fact, I was so proud that I went down to Houston City Council and stood before the members to read our declaration into the city records. I remember the look on their faces was one of confusions and shock as I told them that they were no longer welcome in our piece of paradise.

That was November of 2007 and a lot has changed since then: some good things and some very sad things to be sure. Yes, we had some wins during this time including the repeal of the bicycle registration ordinance and the Montrose being chosen as one the nation's top 10 neighborhoods in which to live! We also witnessed some very sad events, including the loss of our own Leigh Boone, due in no small part to the lack of safe pathways for our bicycling populace.

During these two years, we also have seen the destruction of historical family housing in our neighborhoods, being replaced with oversized, resource-stealing, community-destroying mega townhouses whose only benefit is to the developers who build them and then leave town before they can fall apart.

If I am at fault for allowing these things to occur, then it is only because I failed to engage our community to come together to fight these issues. There are already laws on the books to prevent developers from coming in here and converting space intended for two families into space for 8 families without providing for the increased water, waste and traffic needs imposed by such expansion. Alas, by the time the proper city officials are alerted, and CONVINCED to intervene, the building has already begun and there is no recourse for the neighborhood. Even well-meaning civic associations who have tried to organize against such issues have been thwarted because the Houston departments responsible for enforcement either do not care or do not have the time to deal with these complaints.

I will admit responsibility in that there is more I could have done and there is more that I can do. In fact, there's more that we can all still do. As I said after our win on the bicycle ordinance, there is nothing that I did that every single one of us could not have done. We all have the right and the responsibility to go down to Houston City Hall on Tuesday afternoons and speak directly to those who are responsible for these codes and ordinances.

Perhaps I have not worked hard enough to bring you all in and show you how to do this. If I could change anything, it would be spending more time and energy organizing trips to the city to let everyone see how easy it is and how much we can change, together, if we only take the time to try.

In light of the comments I have heard from Mr. Afra and others after the "letter to the mayor" was published, I am renewing my pledge to represent this great city and would welcome the opportunity to debate how best to do that with any all who truly wish to represent one of the greatest cities and neighborhoods in our country. I also encourage anyone who loves this city as much I do to throw his or her hat into the ring, as long as you aren't another unctuous newspaper editor with your own nefarious, rights-trampling, baby-eating agenda in mind. I welcome the chance for everyone to see your vision of the future for our community

In closing, I look forward to the election ahead and, if I were so honored, in serving the City of Montrose for another two years.

*Cheers to all of you!*
***Chris Hutto***
**Mayor of the City of Montrose**

*P.S. Ralph, Robin, Helen, others! Please take up the challenge and run against me for the Mayor of the City of Montrose. It only works if we all want it to!*

# OOPS!

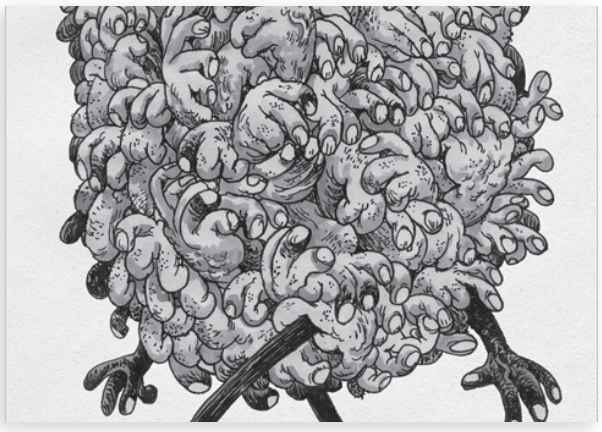
We forgot to mention last issue that the wonderful and talented Anthony Rathbun took the photo of the cross on the side of St. Joseph's Professional Building. Sorry Homie- We loves you!

## ART SHOWS THIS MONTH

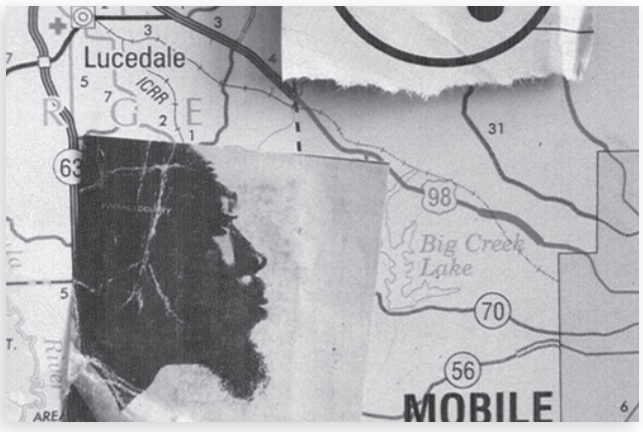
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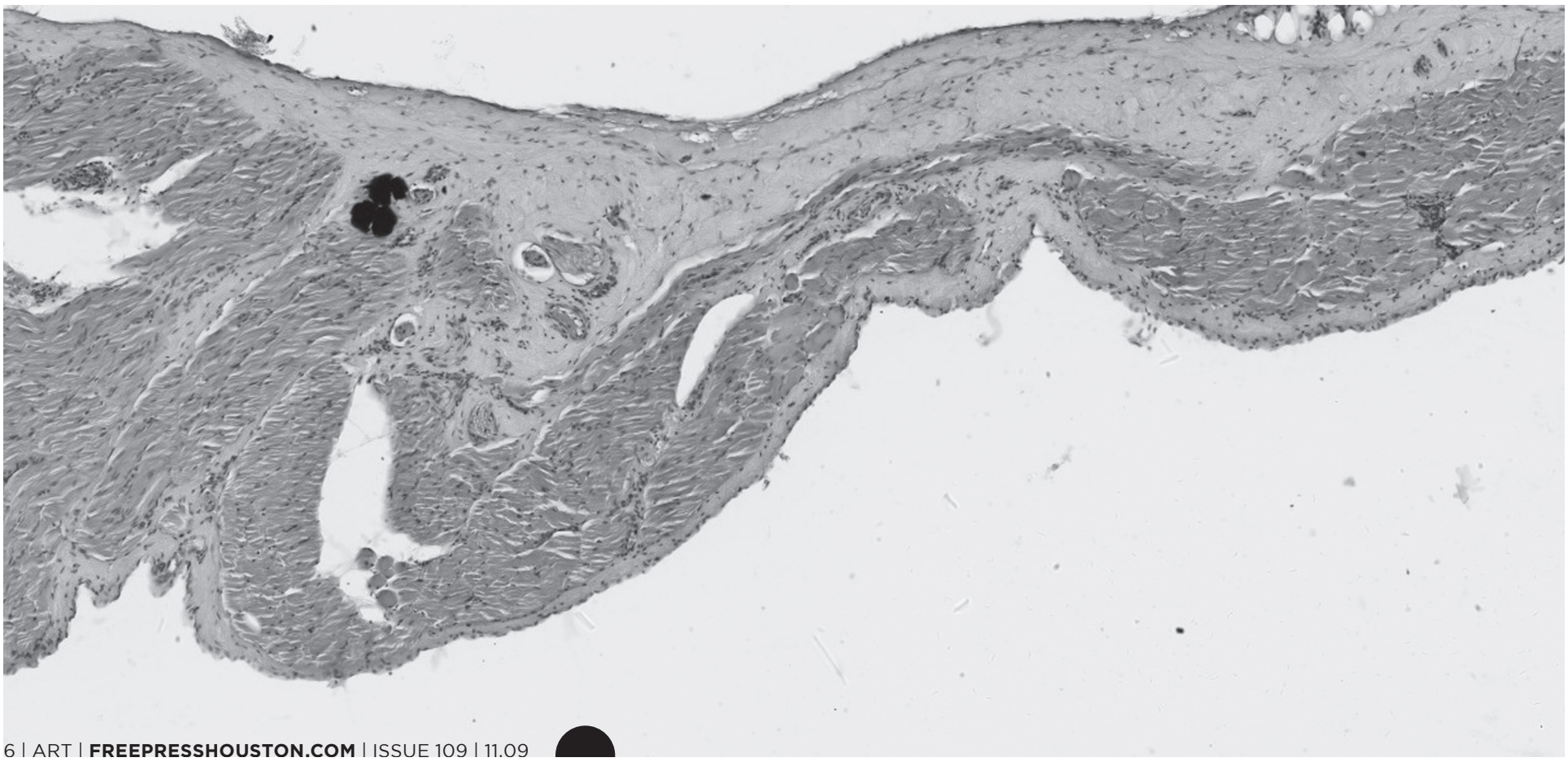

# DEBRIS:
# NO ROOM FOR MORE

by BUFFALO SEAN

**IT FEELS LIKE HOUSTON IS A SMALL TOWN OUTSIDE OF DETROIT IN THE ARTWORLD; NO JOBS AND NO SATISFACTION. FOR TOO LONG THIS TOWN HAS BEEN A PRODUCER, NOT A CONSUMER, AND NOW AS FORTUNE TURNS AWAY FROM US A BLACK HEART IS REVEALED AS THE OOZING CENTER OF THE SCENE, THE STRUCTURE AND THE SOUL.**

**FOR ALL THE CATS AND KITTENS** gobbling cheese and slurping wine at openings their shallow agendas suck the air out of the room. In like fashion even a purchase is a strong-armed exchange of influence perpetuating bourgeois respectability that simply makes me sick. The navel-gazing bored wives and ex-wives who open galleries operate on this exchange and drag their circle of friends into the money pit of art, like the Avon lady gunning for a pink Cadillac, without a shred of decency. For every big wig buying his way into the echelons of Houston's plastic surgeon elite or cementing his place as a cuntbag with too much money to spend there is a gallerist willing to suck their toes- and an artist ready to lick their balls.

If our alternative spaces insist on selling off their spaces to bad artists with bank accounts, if our minor museums persist in spinning bullshit out of New York halfwits, if the MFAH dumbs down their programming and reaches into the history museum for content, if the CAMH doesn't wise up and start a collection- then I don't want any part of it. In a moment of weakness I relish the work on the walls, the game of aesthetic b.s., the meandering society of artists ducking in and out of shows, but soon enough I am reminded of the dark heart of the whole thing. I've been working crap jobs for too long and applying for too many art jobs to be happy about it all. I've had three art jobs in the past few years and they have all imploded in short shrift. I worked for a gallery for a week before the owner lost his backing and cut me from the payroll. I wrote online for a site for three months before the budget wasn't there for me anymore. Last month I was offered a job at a non-profit that disappeared before I even started. I can't help it that I'm crushed. Maybe I am just unemployable. Maybe I write and speak too frankly to maintain the glassy-eyed stare necessary for artworld sustenance. One way or another I'm sick of it. Curating, writing, painting, blogging, buying art and bullshitting are still my favorite hobbies- but that's all they'll ever be. Screw this shit. I'm gonna go be a street vendor. FPH








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Nov 7- Fall Fest: Stephanie Briggs, Arthur Yoria and Live Oak Decline

Nov 13 - Cowjazz

Nov 20 -Congas by Carlos

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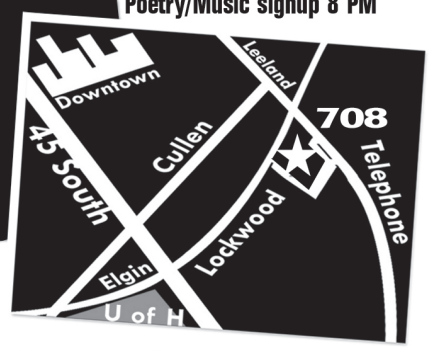
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# SERIOUS MOONLIGHT

BY MICHAEL BERGERON

## A SERIOUS MAN

**THE NEW FILM** directed by Ethan and Joel Coen will both baffle and confuse. A Serious Man is a serious film, one that starts with a prologue performed in Yiddish that unfolds nearly a century before the main story. In this short sequence the concept of a dybbuk is introduced. I asked a couple of acquaintances who grew up Jewish if they knew what a dybbuk is and they didn't, which doesn't actually mean much in regards to enjoying the film. The Coen Brothers also make up a word, a Mentaculus, or a book that explains everything in the universe as scribbled by supporting character Uncle Arthur.

A Serious Man takes place in a predominately Jewish neighborhood in the 1960s in Minneapolis, coincidentally where the Coens also grew up. Some scenes in Fargo also took place there. A Serious Man offers humor but it's not laugh out loud like, say, The Big Lebowski. There are brief moments of violence like a car crash or a crescendo of dream sequences that end with abrupt jolts but nothing on the scale of No Country For Old Men. A musical cue involving "Somebody to Love" by The Jefferson Airplane is one of the best uses of pop music ever in a movie. (Again shades of "Just Dropped In to See What Condition My Condition Is In" from Big Lebowski.)

For A Serious Man the Coens seem to prefer intellectual spines rather than action dominated sequences, a move that will win them new respect among a certain set that aims for high standards in movie ambiguity. If you complained because you thought NCFOM had too subjective an ending you're be left stunned at the twisting end of A Serious Man.

The main thrust of the plot revolves around moral decisions being made by the father and, in a subplot, his son The last thing you want to do is to go into a Coen Brothers film being the man who knew too much. You won't recognize any of the actors (unless you frequent Broadway). A Serious Man ranks among the best of the many films of the Coen Brothers.

## THE DAMNED UNITED

**THE DAMNED UNITED** gives a warts and all view of one of England's most famous sports personalities. Michael Sheen plays Brian Clough a soccer coach who takes the helm of championship team Leeds United. Previously Leeds' coach was Clough's archrival Don Revie (a winning Colm Meaney). This is a sports movie that pushes the actual sport to the background and pulls the ego of the lead character to the foreground.

The action starts in 1974 with Clough taking over the Leeds team even after bad mouthing them in the press. Flashbacks take the story back six years to establish how Clough built his reputation. Events bounce back to the present only to once again flashback a few years to illustrate how Clough and Revie's leadership methods clash. The flashbacks also depict the relation of Clough with his loyal assistant coach Peter Taylor (Timothy Spall). Only Taylor has refused to join Clough at Leeds.

No sooner has Clough shown up for work at Leeds than the hatred of his players to the new coach surfaces. It doesn't help that Clough makes outspoken remarks to the press and verbally spars with his employers, the owners of the team. The main focus of Damned United seems to be the joy of revealing how Clough brandishes his hubris.

As penned by Peter Morgan (of Frost/Nixon and The Queen fame) The Damned United wants to examine a place and time as seen through the eyes of a larger than life personality. Not being British didn't prevent me from enjoying the various 70s-era newscasts (both real and recreated) that chronicle Clough's public squabbles. Sheen gives this role all he's got, preening about with a stiff upper lip and slick hair. At one point he drunkenly calls Revie in the middle of the night to berate him, a scene that mirrors one of Morgan's best sequences from Frost/Nixon. Sheen has the determination of a man who'll win at any cost. Even the sanctity of his home and longtime friendships are bargaining chips, if only in the short run. The Damned United shows, with great affection for its characters, how goals should be set on a higher plane. The air up there is sublime when the goal is accomplished.

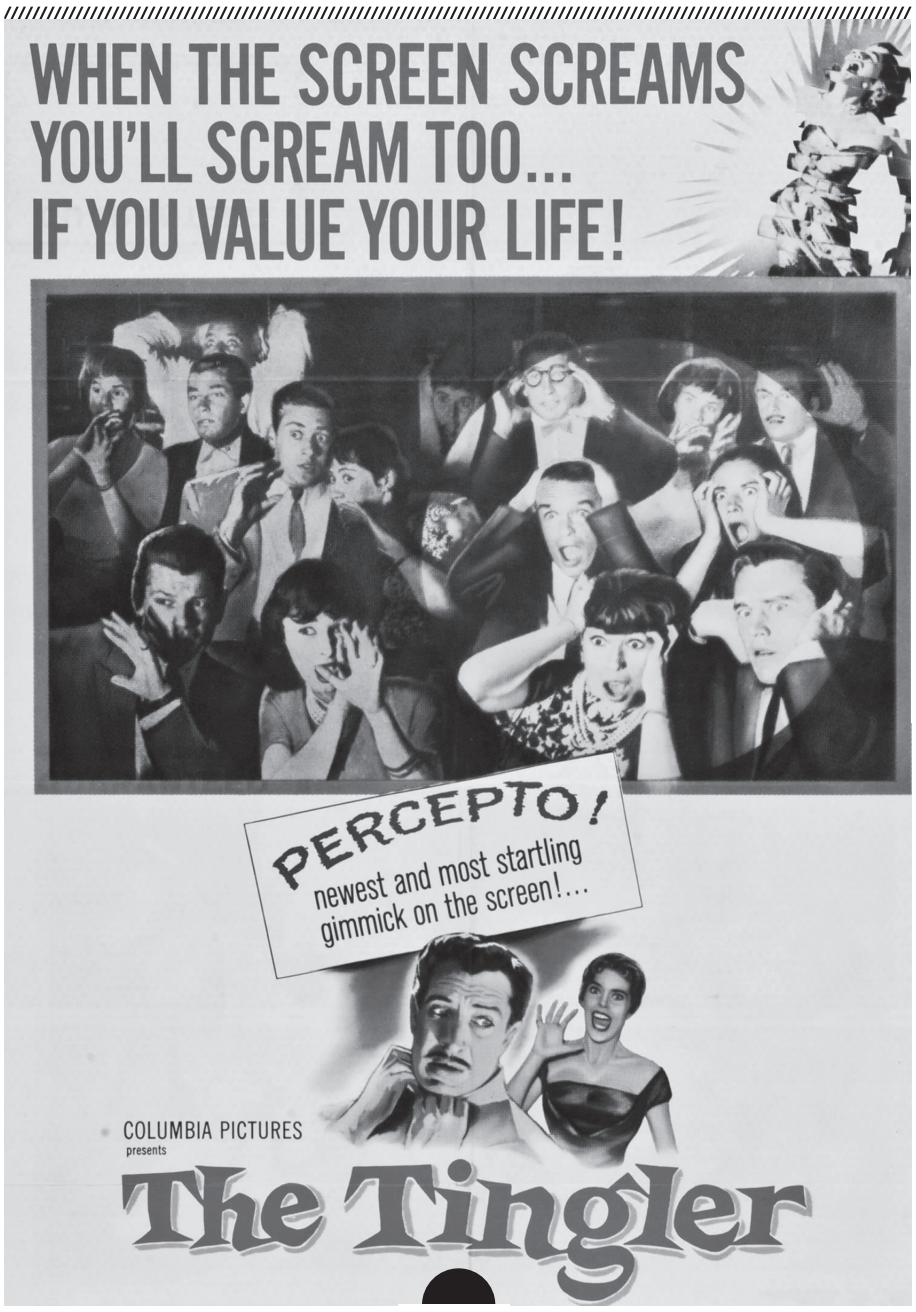
## WILLIAM CASTLE BOX SET

**WILLIAM CASTLE** is a one-of-a-kind filmmaker who created a body of work that has as many imitators as admirers. Castle was a flamboyant showman, providing his movies a singular kind of promotional push that even today guarantee several of them cult status. Films like Gremlins 2 and Matinee (both directed by Joe Dante) are tributes to Castle and involve some of the cinematic tricks he's known for.

For instance, in The Tingler (1959) certain seats in the audience were wired to vibrate at a pivotal time in the movie, a gimmick Castle called Percepto. The tingler monster actually gets loose in the very theater where it would be playing. For 13 Ghosts (1960), a black and white film, the ghost sequences were tinted blue with ghostly silhouettes and attendees given a card with a transparent red and blue viewer, or Illusion-O. You look through the red and you see the images, you look through the blue and the image is erased. The current film Paranormal Activity takes a few pages from the William Castle playbook what with its unique internet promotion and, like 13 Ghosts, use of a Ouija Board.

While both The Tingler and 13 Ghosts are great fun to watch I wouldn't put them on the same level as something like Invasion of the Body Snatchers, or compare 13 Ghosts to the superior The Haunting.

Yet this revels the true nature of cult cinema. The films of William Castle have a




tongue-in-cheek humor mixed with cinematic tricks that break the fourth wall.

In Homicidal (1961) Castle gives the audience a "Fright Break." The action stops and a clock appears, counting down to zero from 45 seconds, letting the audience know how much time left to leave the theater if they don't want to be scared. Similar graphics are used in recent films like Tony Scott's Man on Fire or Gasper Noe's I Stand Alone.

The William Castle Film Collection contains eight films plus a documentary, Spine Tingler! The William Castle Story, that details Castle's illustrious career. The films include The Tingler, 13 Frightened Girls, 13 Ghosts, Homicidal, Strait-Jacket, The Old Dark House, Mr. Sardonicus, and Zotz!

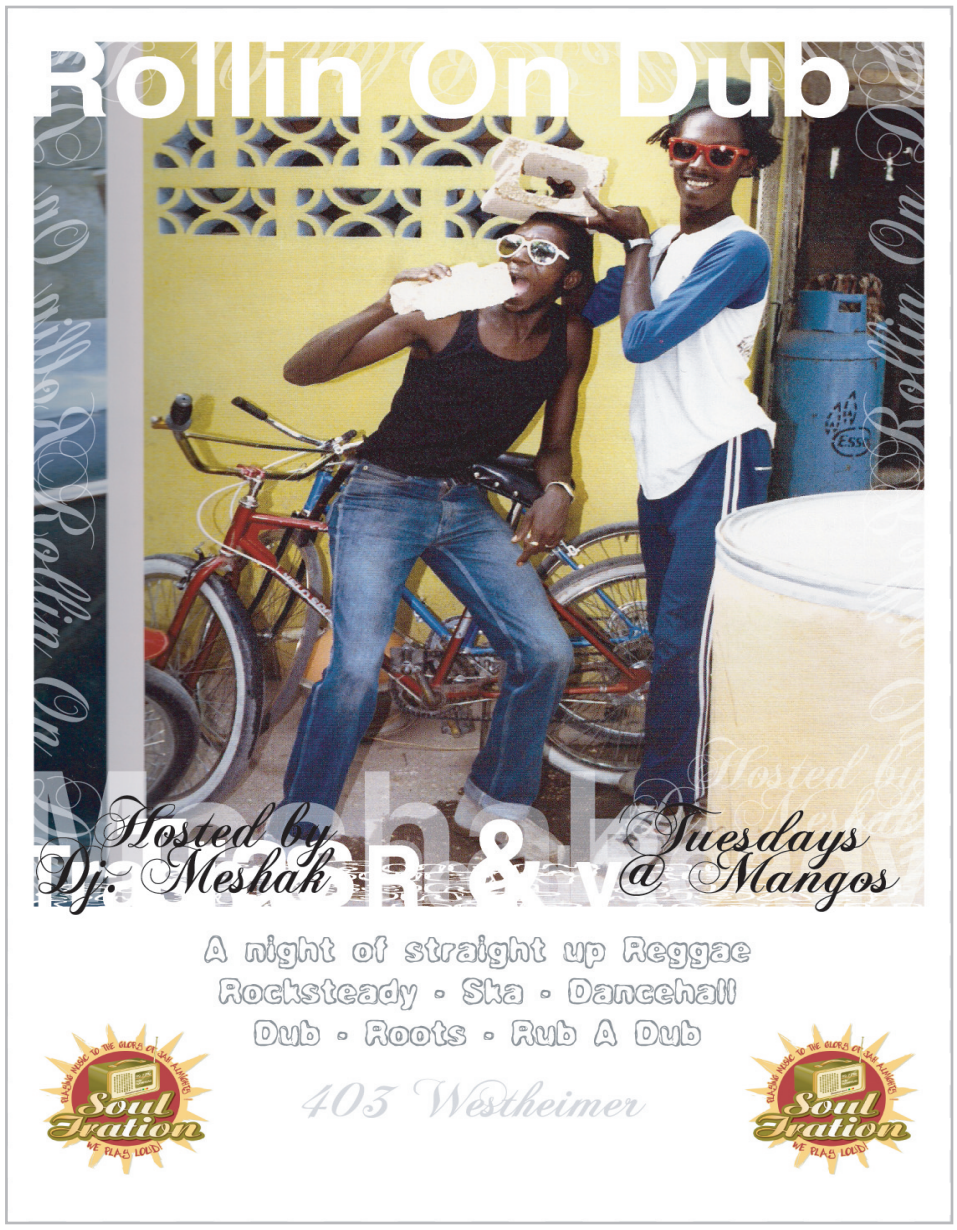
The latter film is basically a kid's film about an ancient magical coin. However one sequence where the hero uses the coin to slow time obviously was an influence on the rooftop confrontation in The Matrix involving bullet time. Zotz! will charm with its political satirical masquerading as a kid's fantasy flick.

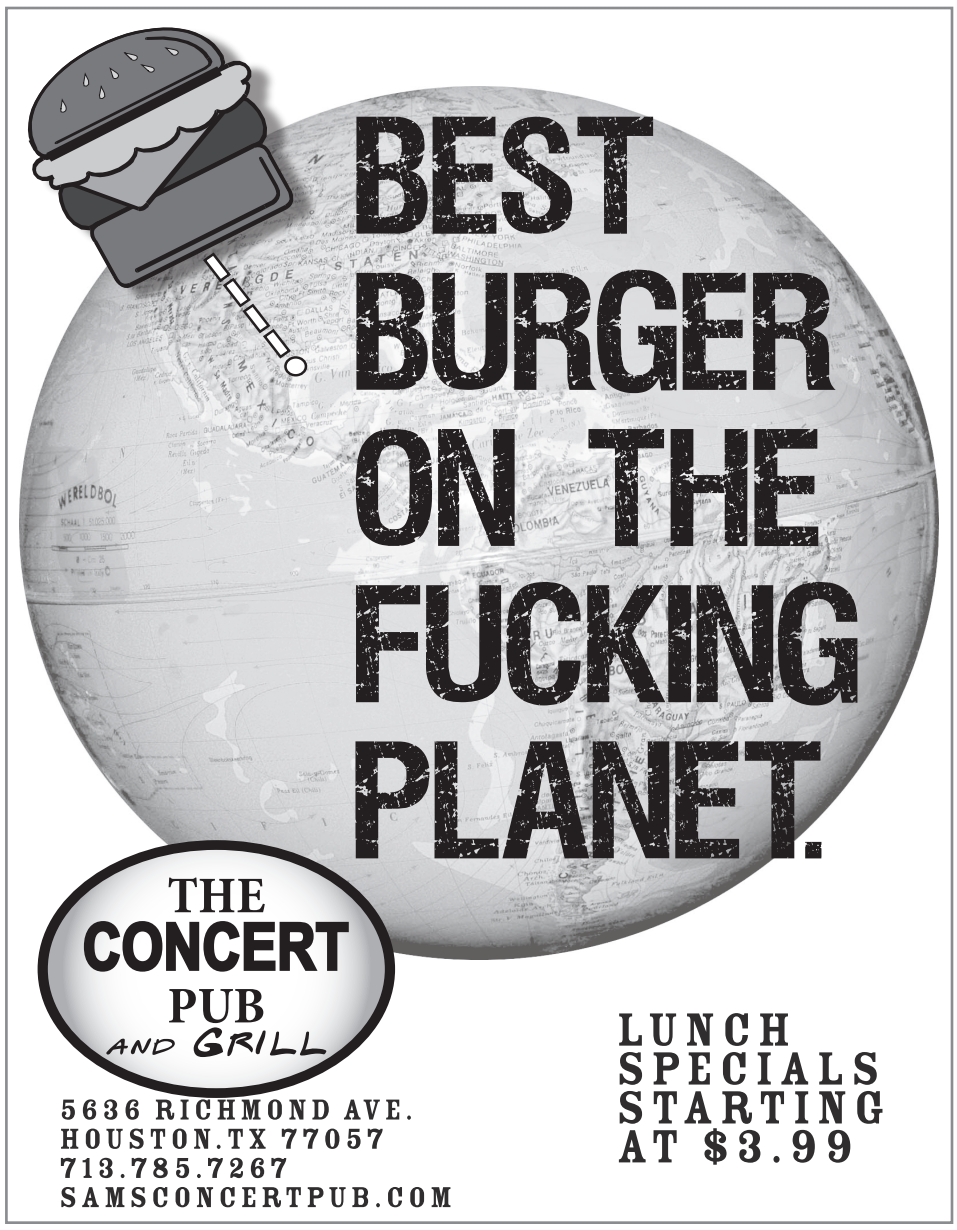
Castle had the moxie to buy the rights to Rosemary's Baby before it became a best seller, which forced Paramount Pictures to give him producer credit. Looking over a list of his other credits Castle has at least another eight films that would complete a set if another DVD series was issued. This box set is smartly packaged and among the crunk extras are a couple of episodes of Ghost Story, an early 70s television show Castle produced.

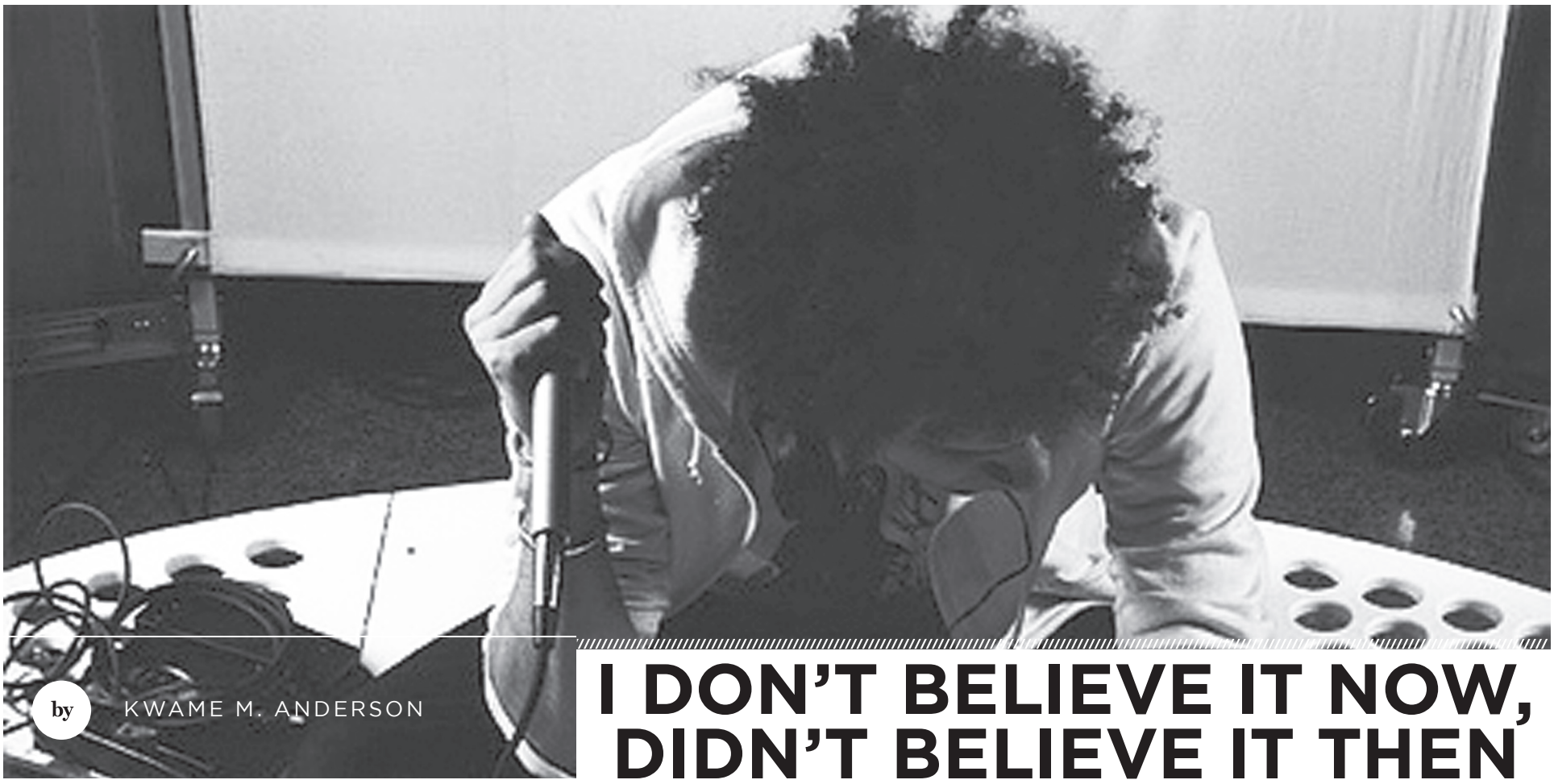
## HOU CINEMA ARTS

**THE HOUSTON CINEMA ARTS SOCIETY** kicks off its first film festival November 11 through 15 at various locations around Space City (Rice Media Center, MFA, Angelika, Warehouse Live). A complete rundown of events can be found on their website (www.cinemartsociety.org).

A list of films reveals some artistic gems, like Picasso and Braque Go To the Movie a wonderful one-long docu on the first decade of films and how they influenced the Cubist movement. Singular events include dual opening night films: Precious at the Angelika and Me and Orson Welles, a new film by Richard Linklater, at the MFA. Tilda Swinton fans need look no further than her appearances at various venues showcasing films. A particularly special screening will be the silent dinosaur flicker The Lost World (1925) unreeling to the strains of Cambodian-American psychedelic rock band Dengue Fever at Warehouse Live. At least one of the Yes Men will present their latest film at the RMC. The Cinema Arts Society currently has offices and offers a video installation called H-Box at now abandoned lobby of the former Alabama Theater that's open to the public between now and the end of the festival. **FPH**





by KWAME M. ANDERSON

# I DON'T BELIEVE IT NOW, DIDN'T BELIEVE IT THEN

**I LIVE LIFE, YOU TALK ABOUT THE LIFE YOU WANNA LIVE. IT'S BEAUTIFUL, IT'S FUCKED UP, IT'S WONDERFUL, IT'S TERRIBLE. I WAKE UP EVERYDAY READY FOR WHATEVER JUMPS OFF IN THIS MOTHERFUCKER.**

**HELLO WORLD!** November, it's that time for family dinners and colder weather. I have a family now, I have to think about things like family time, and my influence on my daughter, and yet I still use motherfucker freely, as I can't find a better adjective. The music is phenomenal, I have so much to say, that even this rant seems pointless (I mean they all are a little pointless), but I care not, I feel energized, rejuvenated, life in dangerous times. I got a computer recently, I waste a lot of time being productive. I could play with my child or balance my checkbook. Or I could write this article while my daughter makes faces at me as if to say "Daddy, I'm here!" But sorry honey, daddy has to write about obscure music for free. Priorities people!

PERFORMANCE
## MELT BANANA
**11/9/09 | WALTER'S ON WASHINGTON**

When you are watching a building or car explode on television it is beautiful: the wreckage, the flames, the colors inside of the fire, the bombast. Melt Banana is like watching and hearing an explosion, beautiful for many of the same reasons. The colors of sound, the possibility of going deaf, the collision of sound in your face. Still, when can you see a Melt Banana show without a Melt Banana show? You can't, it comes and when it comes, you armor up and you prepare for battle. There are no bystanders, the rock is coming for you.

## WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY
**11/14 & 15/ 09 | WESTHEIMER**

All of the bands in Houston and Dead Prez. Will Dead Prez take it easy on an entire swarm of cracker ass crackers? You would have to go to find out. I bet that if they even if they did, the hoards of drunken partygoers would scream, "Hell yeah, I am part of an imperialist fascist regime, whooooooo!"

RECORDED
## TYONDAI BRAXTON
**CENTRAL MARKET (WARP)**

Before Tyondai Braxton joined Battles he was a reputable solo artist. Most of his music was a fusion of live instrumentation and loops which he created. However, he felt that this time he wanted to go in a different direction and record with an orchestra. This is intended to be sort of a classical album, and whatever it is, it is off the chain. The songs have movement and texture, moving you from an almost playful place to the depths of an ocean of sound. The closer, "Dead Strings", sounds like the music of the villain starship in a sci-fi movie and a Lee Perry jaunt. It is dark and funky, it is daunky, it is funkark. Music sometimes allows us to realize possibilities rather than limits, I think that if some kid heard this as their introduction to music,

**DEAD PREZ**
WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY



**JAPANTHER**
WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY



**ELAINE GREER**
WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY




**LEG SWEEPER**
WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY





what would their idea of impossible be? It's a beautiful time to be alive people.

### LIGHTNING BOLT
**EARTHLY DELIGHTS (LOAD)**

This album is the aural comparison of an ass whippin. It is wild, it is confusing, you are gasping for breath, there are semblances of light that are then replaced by the darkness of pummel. You want to escape, it 's everywhere, you cover your head, it's beating your hands. This is a metal album, it is an art album, it is a highly distorted reggae album. My daughter heard it, and she began to bang her head, and flail her arms; she has no concept of style or genre, it just attacked her senses, there were no words, only action and emotion. It is visceral, it is primal, I want to throw this computer of a window and kick my…hold on…you get the point.

### NEAL MORGAN
**TO THE BREATHING WORLD (DRAG CITY)**

I bought a Milford Graves album, a solo drum record without vocals, so in a sense I thought I was familiar with the concept of a solo drum album, but this is not th at (though that was great). Neal Morgan is a singer and a drummer, not one or the other, but both. Vocally he can hold his own. The songs are beautiful, melodic, but as a drummer, he provides an element, a pulse that drives the songs, and by pulse I mean a vibrant heartbeat. The mystery instrument is the space between vocal and drum, the silence is a presence. The haunting creates an effect of suspense, something is happening when nothing is happening. I could compare the drumming to something, and I compare the singing to something, but I cannot compare the combination to anything. It is it's own thing. It's a beautiful time to be alive. **FPH**

**PERSEPH ONE**
WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY



**TSU JAZZ ENSEMBLE**
WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY




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Best Place To Buy Music - Best of Houston Press 2009
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Flamin' Hellcats *St.Arnold* DJ Joey McKeel




Rock legends live beyond the grave in Carlos Hernandez's "Never Die" Day of the Dead Rock Stars on display at Record Ranch-Gallery Hernandez's unique exhibit will memorialize deceased music icons from rock, country, and blues in the tradition of Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead. Artworks will include Freddie Mercury, Michael Jackson, StevieRay Vaughan,Freddy Fender, Otis Redding and others. Affordable prints available for $80.



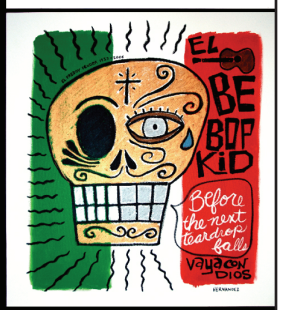




Exhibit On Display Through January 2010

Free Live Music! Refreshments by St. Arnold
11/3 - Nirvana "Bleach" Listening Party @5:30pm
11/6 - Bee vs. Moth @ 5:30pm
11/7 - Vince Bell @ 1:00pm
11/14 - Meese @ 4:00pm
11/17 - Mansions @ 5:00pm
11/21 - Runaway Sun @ 3:00pm
NEW ITEM! Get your 'Day of the Dead: Rockstars Never Die!' Pint Glass for only Limited Edition $5
*Check out www.cactusmusictx.com for more instores*

Recommended Listening... All titles listed below are on sale for the month of November




Jason Yates "Jason Yates" (Vapor Records)
The sound of the songs on Jason Yates could come from almost any period. The free-flowing feel has elements of the best soul music from the '60s and early '70s, but it's obvious this music has been made in 2009.




The Swimmers "People Are Soft"
"To start again, we're the lucky ones" opens "Shelter," the first track on People Are Soft, with the sound of a band reinventing itself. A towering, vulnerable sophomore album that is a debut in its own right (MADDRAGON RECORDS)

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# HOLLYWOOD FLOSS

by OMAR AFRA

There is a quote on Hollywood Floss' webpage that says" I Wanna Save The World But I Gotta Get My Stacks First." We could not agree more.

**BUT THIS PHILOSOPHY** plays directly into his music, as it is both conscious and ambitious. Floss rhymes are confident and aggressive yet he address a gamut of topics ranging from freeing ones thoughts to older women who like to bang younger men. Transcendent indeed. Either way, Floss' sound is sparkly clean and he is making moves.

**TELL US ABOUT THE SLICK PRODUCTION ON YOUR RECORDINGS - ARE YOU RESPONSIBLE AND WHAT KIND OF APPROACH DO YOU TAKE TO SONGWRITING?** ¶ I like the title of that "slick production". Yea I'm def. 80% of my production. If it says Hollywood FLOSS then it's me crafting the beat from start to finish unless I ask someone to play a live instrument for me. I'm giving them the melody by humming it out or referencing a vibe to where I want it to go.

Songwriting is different track by track - Sometimes it's with the beat and sometimes it starts as poetry and I craft sounds around it. Rarely do I use the fashionable Jay-Z approach of writing in my head.

**YOU TEND TO HAVE POSITIVE CONTENT TO YOUR LYRICS YET SPIT THEM OUT AGGRESSIVELY. IS THERE A PARADOX HERE?** ¶ The theme behind Hollywood Floss has always been a positive approach. I remember when I first met Fat Tony, it was refreshing to hear someone from my hometown who was able to convey the same expression ... lol, it def. is a paradox, but nah that's the only way to attack it for me, because if you don't believe in your own lyrics who will? So I spit aggressively to show you I'm serious about what I write

**WHO ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE MUSICIANS IN HOUSTON?** ¶ Favorite musicians Neon Collars, hasHBrown, Kidd The Great, Dustin Prestige, John Dew, DnN, Fat Tony, Check Other, Thurogood Wordsmith, The Tontons, Karina Nistal, Mic Skills, Hip Phoenix, Black Rose

Mainstream - K-Rino, Scarface, Bun-B

**DO YOU FEEL AMY FRUSTRATION TRANSLATING YOUR MUSIC TO A LIVE CONTEXT?** ¶ I don't think I ever have a problem translating my music live because I purposely create songs and shows to create to different crowds... ex: if its a mostly woman crowd - then I have a set list for them (its still me but it might be a diff. side to me)

Same for a "hip-hop" crowd or an avant-garde crowd

Plus I have my DJ and a backing band so it only gets better with each show

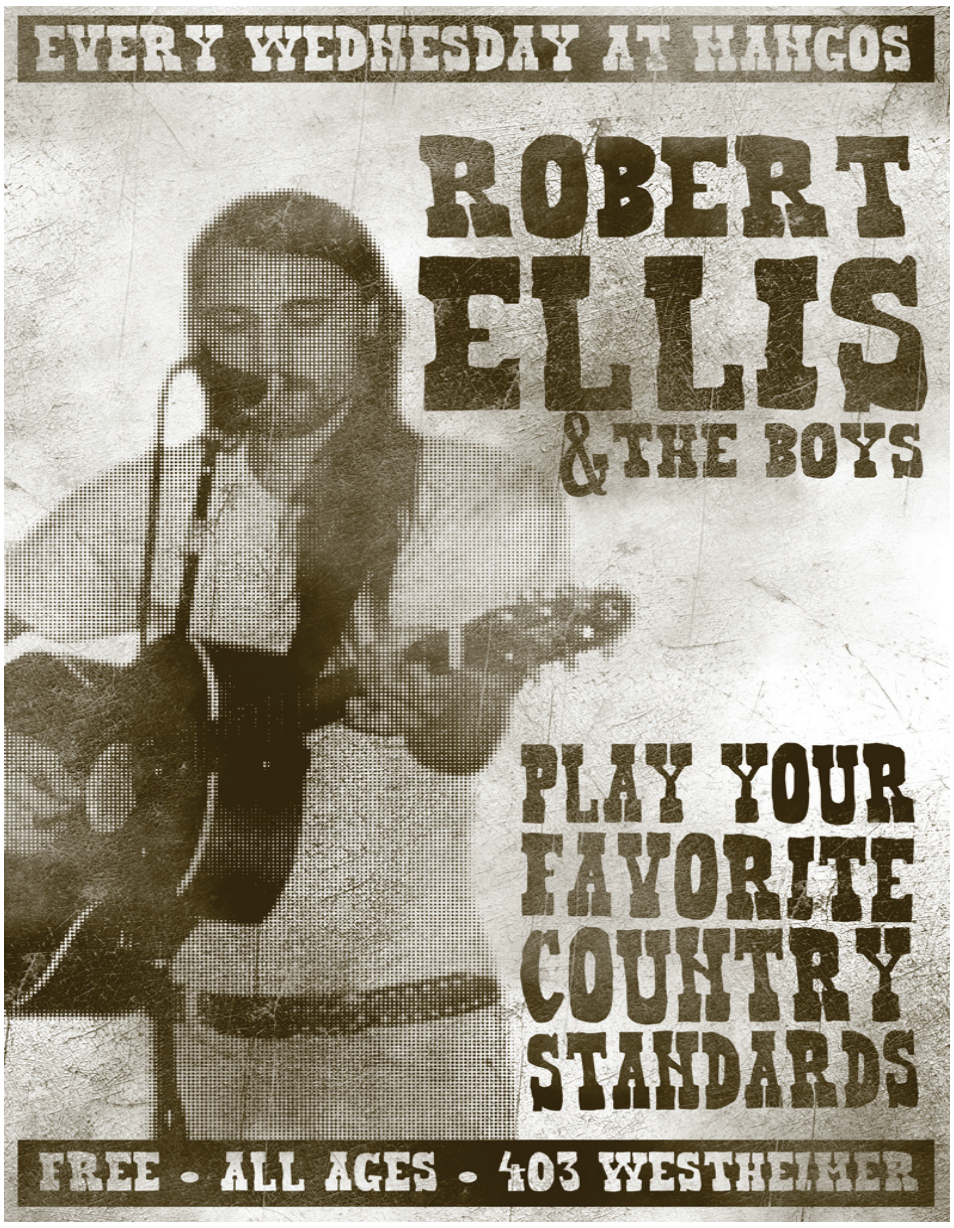
**WHAT'S NEXT FOR HOLLYWOOD FLOSS: PROGRESSION? REGRESSION? TRANSGRESSION?** ¶ Always Forward Progression... I have a new album House of Dreams and I feel it's progression for me and it shows my growth as an artist. Musicians should write what you like and if people feel you, that's a bonus!

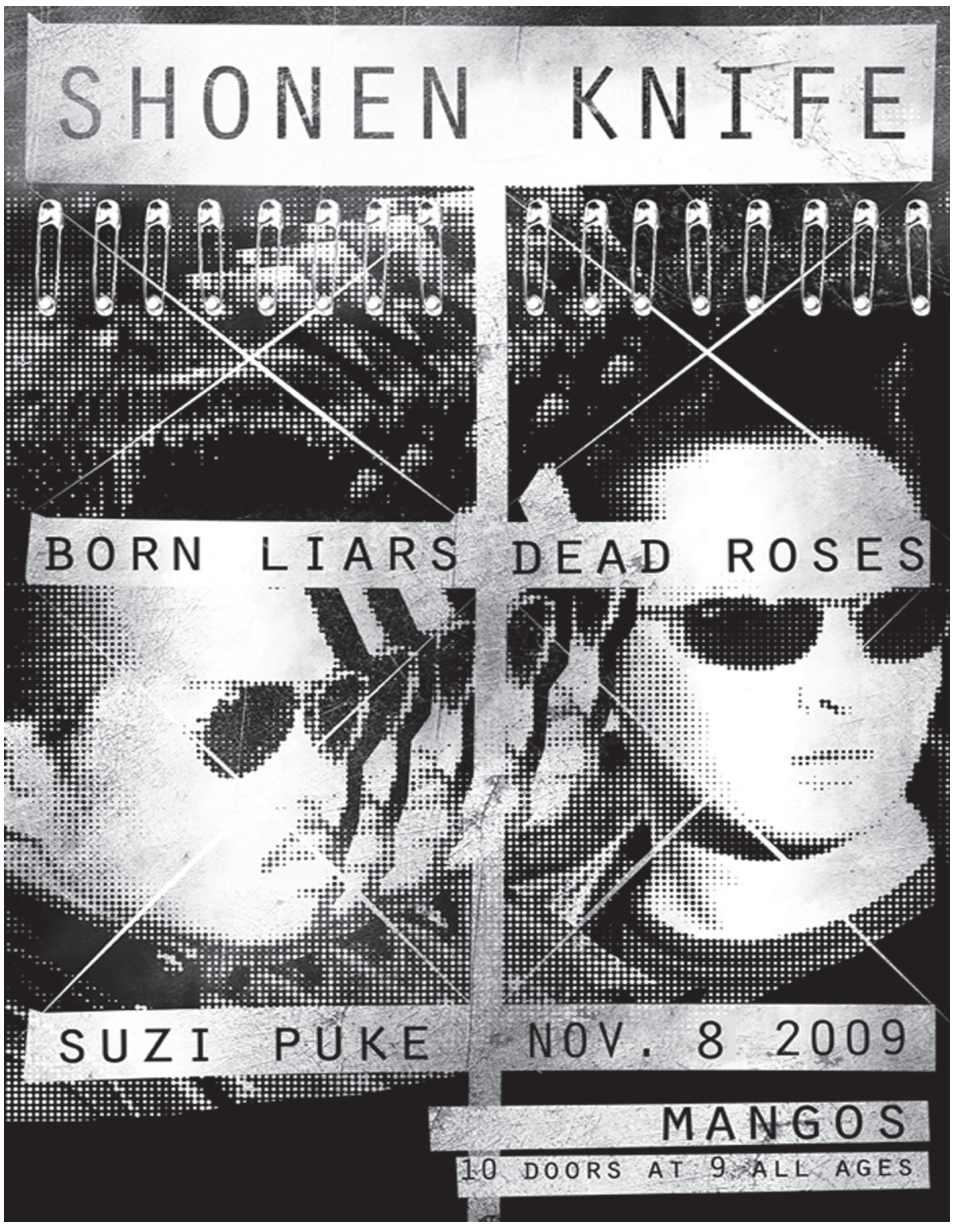
**WHAT SAY YE?: HIP-HOP IS DEAD OR BETTER THAN EVER?** ¶ Better Than Ever my friend... I'm just getting warmed up! FPH

*Hollywood Floss plays the Westheimer Block Party this month along with everybody else plus Skynyrd.*

*www.myspace.com/hwflossss*






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**WEDNESDAYS**
*Ladies Night*
*$2 Specials All Night!*
*DJ Larry Spinning!!*

**THUMPIN' THURSDAYS**
with DJ REAL
*Spinning Your Favorite Mixes & DJ Jason On The Patio*

**FRIDAYS**
Live Bands Inside!
*DJ IDOL Outside On The Patio*

**SATURDAYS**
Live Bands Inside!
*DJ Jason Outside On The Patio*

## NOVEMBER BAND LISTINGS

**WEDNESDAYS**
**Ladies Night**
**$2 Drink Specials**
**DJ Larry & Karaoke**

**FRIDAYS**
Nov. 6 - Rock Band
*The Reds ?*
Nov. 13 - Electric Bite
Nov. 20 - Less Than Serious
Nov. 27 - 8Eplus

**SATURDAYS**
Nov. 7 - Chili Peppers Trio
*(Red Hot Chili Peppers Tribute)*
with The Core
*(Stone Temple Pilots Tribute)*
Nov. 14 - Unchained
*(Van Halen Tribute)*
Nov. 21 - Joe's Birthday Bash
*A Tribute To Joe Dreamz*
Nov. 28 - Powerload
*(AC/DC Tribute)*

**MONDAYS**
**TX HOLD'EM TOURNAMENT**
@ 7:00PM & 9:30 PM
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A Tribute To Joe Dreamz

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# ARTHUR BATES

by MARK ARMES PHOTO BY MARK ARMES

INTERVIEW

**SEVERAL YEARS AGO, A FRIEND PERSISTED ON TELLING ME OVER AND OVER ABOUT A LOCAL BAND CALLED WICKED POSEUR. TURNS OUT, THE BAND IS A ONE MAN SHOW CONCEIVED, POWERED, AND PRODUCED BY LOCAL ARTIST AND MUSICIAN ARTHUR BATES.**

**AS TALENTED AS HE IS,** Arthur is equally low key. His DIY music and art projects have generated national attention and secured Arthur's place as one of Houstons most elite mind-fuckers. Yet, he remains a mysterious character in the Houston music scene. He produces massive amounts of music and art from his home yet plays very few live shows. Wicked Poseurs latest album "Maximum Jazz" is one of the most refreshing albums to come out of Houston in quite some time. The album is rife with droning guitar riffs, catchy drum patterns, and well crafted lyrics that will make you move like your balls were cupped with a fistful of Tiger Balm. His new project, The Energy, promises to be as exciting as it's namesake and they are slated to play the Westheimer Block Party. He is also working tirelessly on his uber-tedious artwork. We had the chance to have him give us some short yet concise answers to a few questions.

**WHAT ARE YOU DOING LATELY?** ¶ I've been working on songs with Josh and Tom and Chris. We have a new band called The Energy....it's a rock n roll group. We have a good creative process going - they write all the music and give me blank slates to write words over. It's a true collaboration. I'm also writing and recording new Wicked Poseur songs. My friend Ryan is starting a mail order label called Bombs By Mail when he gets back from Afghanistan in December - I'm trying to get something together to put on it.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR MUSIC TO SOMEONE?** ¶ Loud with lots of words... synonymous with awesome.

**HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR VISUAL ART TO SOMEONE?** ¶ Dense, black and white, confusing to the eye, obscene, the best.

**WHAT MUSIC HAVE YOU BEEN LISTENING TO?** ¶ I've been listening to The Energy demos over and over trying to remember the words. Besides that, I listen to Buzzcocks and I listen to Coast to Coast with George Noory almost every night - the music for that show is great, like synth fairy flutes....I like listening to callers talk really seriously about bedside visitors pinning them to their bed or lightning orbs flying around their room - then cut to this happy-synth-flute-hobbit-dance music.

**HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED ANYTHING SUPERNATURAL LIKE THAT?** ¶ Yeah, I was born on a farm in Nacogdoches. It used to be a plantation a long time ago. When I was like three I had an "imaginary" friend who I described as an old black man. I obviously didn't know the history of the house at that age...so the only logical explanation is that when I was three my only friend was the ghost of a dead slave. Did I give you goose bumps?

**ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY?** ¶ Gimme some money! FPH

*The Energy performs November 14th at the Westheimer Block Party along with everyone else, ever.*



# THE EASTERN SEA

**ALAS, THE DANGERS OF BEING A INDIE-FOLK-BUTTON-PLAID-ACOUSTISH-BAND ARE MANY. BUT THE EASTERN SEA HAS ONE ACE IN THEIR HOLE THAT DIFFERENTIATE THEM FROM THE LEGIONS OF OTHER BEARD-CLAD BANDS THAT COMPETE WITH THEM IN THIS NEW YET POPULAR GENRE.**

**THE EASTERN SEA HAS DYNAMIC.** Dynamic is a rare quality many new bands lack as they are unable to musically build a narrative, create rising and falling action, and crescendo into something greater than the individual parts the musicians play. This is what makes good songs great and the Eastern Sea has exemplified this on their soon to be released self-titled EP. The total band is comprised of about 10 people yet a handful of them makeup the core. This core took the time to answer a few questions about white people getting decapitated, songwriting, Puma stores, and Cardi's 2000.

**TELL US ABOUT WRITING AND RECORDING THE NEW EP. WAS IT ONE OF THOSE SEAMLESS, EASY PROCESSES OR A CHALLENGING ORDEAL?** ¶ ***ZACH:*** Well, it was seamless in comparison to making our last EP. But at the same time, it took a lot out of us. We started recording in July of 2008 and are just now putting it out, so it definitely took longer. Drum wise it simplified because I got to do all the drums at once, unlike the last EP where we recorded snare, bass drum, high hats, and cymbals all separately. Also, a lot of the bass guitar and drums were recorded once and then re-recorded after everything else was laid down. We went through a lot to get the perfect sounds. But even considering all of these factors, it was still more seamless than the first EP.

**WITH 9 POTENTIAL MEMBERS IN THE BAND, IS THE RECORDING PROCESS DIFFICULT?** ¶ ***JESS:*** Yes it is difficult. Luckily we haven't had to deal with that yet, as you'll find out when you get EPII

**'THE SNOW' IS A STELLAR TUNE. WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?** ¶ ***MATT:*** The Snow was written about 3 and a half years ago and it was originally just a really washed out acoustic guitar tune that I had played a few times at some shows at coffeeshops. I wrote it, originally, as another one of my bitter attempts at summing up a very unusual friendship I had, this time with a girl named Caitlin.

When I wrote the song, I had known her for about one or two years since she had first came to the university I was attending, St. Edward's in Austin, and at the time she was dealing with a pretty harsh break up with her long time boyfriend. She was completely convinced, as most people are when they are going through an emotionally wrenching time in their lives, that she was going out of her mind and that it was her mental instability that was causing the majority of her problems. I was a confidant for her in a lot of ways, but over time, I began to resent my position as her friend and begin to see our relationship as painful because of my inability to help the situation or even convince her that the kind of care I was willing to provide her was beneficial.

So I wrote that song to tell her that she was wrong about a lot of things. And in the process I realized I was wrong as well. We continued being close friends all through college and began seeing each other romantically the last semester we were both at St. Edward's. Now we are in love, she moved to Berlin and I'm going to stay with her for Christmas. Haha. It's strange; no one really knows the end of the story to the Snow. For me, it's a pretty happy song because none of it was necessary. For others, it just ends with you're not dead. Our full length record that we are writing right now, in a way, follows up on the snow (not necessarily musically) and develops a lot of the complex things about the continuation of that story for me.

**SO YOUR MYSPACE SAYS YOU ARE AN AUSTIN BAND YET MANY OF YA'LL HAIL FROM HOUSTON. PLEASE TELL US SOMETHING DISPARAGING ABOUT AUSTIN AND SOMETHING WONDERFUL ABOUT HOUSTON.** ¶ ***JESS:*** Austin is a playground for people who don't wish to grow up. Houston makes you feel 10 years older (and wiser).
***MATT:*** Austin is home to many hipsters and trustfundafarians. Houston is home to their parents.
***ZACH:*** Austin is without the Eastern Sea on November 14th. Houston has the Eastern Sea for the weekend.
***TOMAS:*** Austin Colt McCoy sucks ass. Houston, The Puma store at the Sharpstown Mall has a sweet selection.
***KEVIN:*** Austin, whalebones. Houston, whalebones

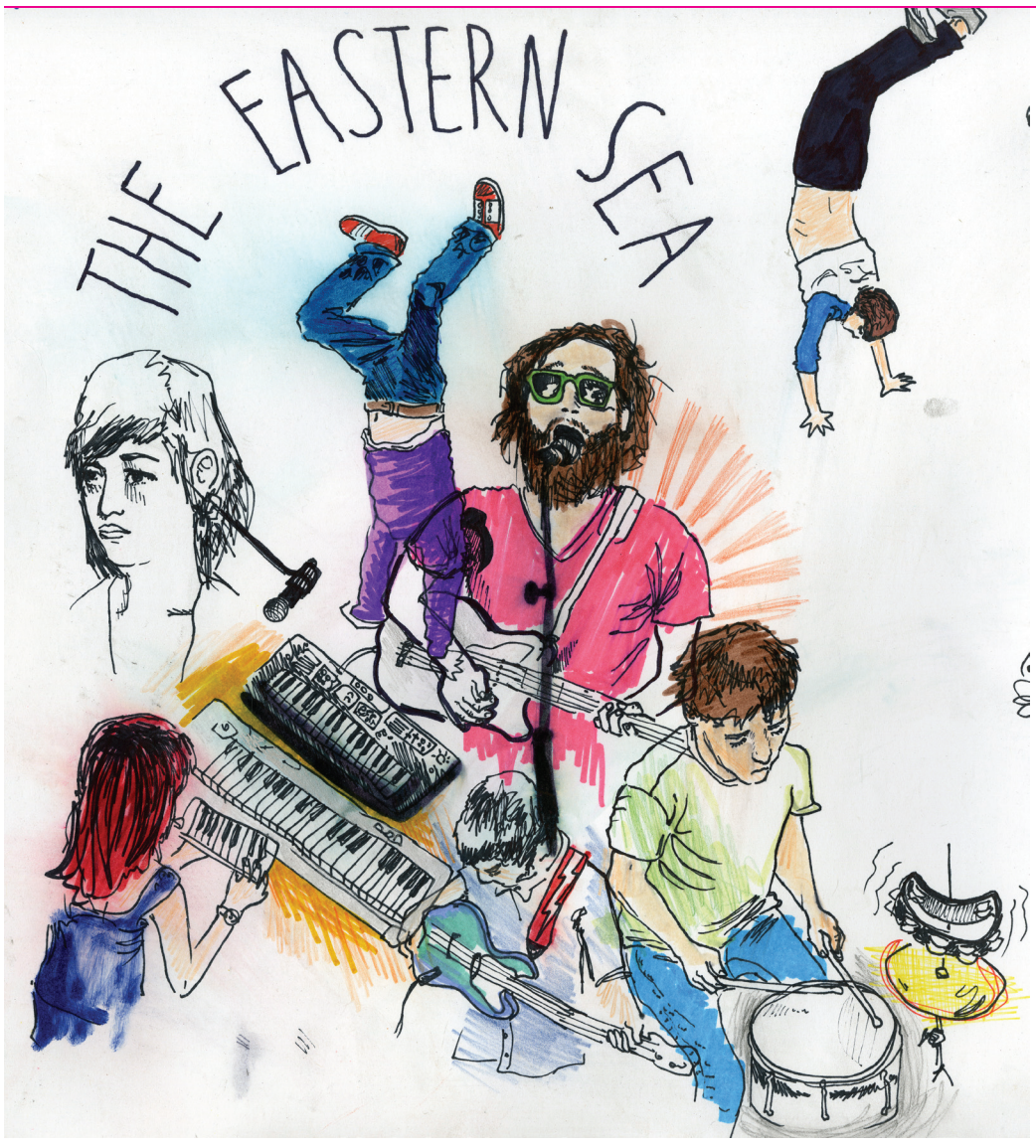
**YOUR EP RELEASE IS SCHEDULED THE EVENING OF NOV. 14TH FOLLOWING THE BLOCK PARTY AT NUMBERS ALONGSIDE DEAD PREZ. ARE YOU A LITTLE AFRAID THEY MIGHT DECAPITATE ONE OF YOU CRACKERS?** ¶ ***KEVIN:*** Yes.

**SOME OF THE NEW TUNES HAVE THE POTENTIALITY TO BE EXPRESSED LIVE WITH A LARGER CAST OF MUSICIANS. CAN WE EXPECT THE LINEUP TO EXPAND OR SIMPLIFY?** ¶ ***ZACH:*** This lineup for the show at numbers will be the first show to feature 8+ people in the band, including string players and plenty of other new instruments. Who knows if it will expand or simplify. I think we're just happy knowing we can do it with everyone or revert back to the four of us and still be proud of the product we're putting out there.

**FILL IN THE BLANKS: HOUSTON IS THE MUSIC CAPITAL OF THE UNIVERSE BECAUSE OF _____?** ¶ Cardis 2000. **FPH**

*The Eastern Sea will be releasing the EP in Houston at Numbers following the Westheimer Block Party on November 14th alongside the unlikely coupling of Dead Prez and Japanther.*

by OMAR AFRA






"AUSTIN IS HOME TO MANY HIPSTERS AND TRUSTFUNDAFARIANS."

WESTHEIMER

# BLOCK PARTY

NOV. 14-15, 2009



## DEAD PREZ • JAPANTHER

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# WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY
# STAGE GUIDE
# NOVEMBER 14, 2009

## Numbers Inside

The Live Lights 12:00-12:30
10th Grade Cutie 12:50-1:20
Fucking Thief 1:40-2:10
Legendary Kotix 2:30-3:00
T.H.E.M. 3:20-3:50
Guerilla Foco Clan 4:10-4:40

**Doors open at 8:30 for Dead Prez, Japanther, Eastern Sea (CD Release), Black Congress (upstairs), and DJ Melodic**

## Numbers Outside - FPH/KTRU Main Stage

Generation Landslide 12:00-12:30
Caddywhompus 12:50-1:20
Robert Ellis 1:40-2:10
Marzi 2:30-3:00
Hollywood Floss 3:20-3:50
Defend the Ghetto 4:10-4:40
Young Mammals 5:00-5:30
Roky Moon & BOLT 5:50-6:20
Buxton 6:40-7:10
Golden Axe 7:25

## Mango's Inside - Funwunce Stage

The Wrong Ones 12:30-1:00
Skurge 1:15-1:45
Battle Rifle 2:00-2:30
Ghost Town Electric 2:45-3:15
DISSENT 3:30-4:00
Leg Sweeper 4:15-4:45
Muhammid Ali 5:00-5:30
The Energy 5:45-6:15
Born Liars 6:30-7:00
PLF 7:15-7:45
Chocolate Crucifix 8:00
In Beds 9:00
Satannabis 10:00
Corners 11:00
DJ Meshak 12:00

## Mango's Outside - SHFL Stage

The Handshake 12:00
Behind Buildings 1:00
Searching For Signal 2:00
Components of the Modern Age 3:00
Gamma Ringo 4:00
HRStrut 5:00
Wighead 5:50
Delta Block 6:20
Rusted Shut 7:00
Organ Failure 8:30
Dustin Wes 9:15

## Austin Layne - Music Heals Stage

Chin Xao Ti Twon 12:00-12:30
Tony Bananas 12:50-1:20
Make Your Own Escape 1:40-2:10
Dead Roses 2:30-3:00
Pistoleras 3:20-3:50
Alkari 4:10-4:40
O'Doyle Rules 5:00-5:30
National Electric 5:50-6:20
ListenListen 6:40-7:10
Perseph One 7:25

## Helios Upstairs

Together. We are Instruments 12:50-1:20
Football Etc. 1:40-2:10
Uzoy 2:30-3:00
The Niyat 3:20-3:50
The Manichean 4:10-4:40
Winter Wallace 5:00-5:30
MyNameIsJohnMichael 5:50-6:20
Peekaboo Theory 6:40-7:10
The Gold Sounds 7:25-7:55
Chase Hamblin 8:15-8:45
Co-Pilot 9:00-9:35
Focusyn 9:55-10:30

## Helios Outside - IndieHouston Stage

Holy Hand Grenades 12:00-12:30
Nosaprise 12:50-1:20
David Lascoe 1:40-2:10
Mermaids of Judaism 2:30-3:00
Ghormeh Sabzi 3:20-3:50
Literature (ATX) 4:10-4:40
Springfield Riots 5:00-5:30
100 Flowers (ATX) 5:50-6:20
Flowers to Hide 6:40-7:10
Paris Falls 7:30-8:00

## Helios DownStairs

CeePlus Bad Knives Reprogramm Music Stage

## Helios Front Patio

Joe B. and The Rebel Crew

# WESTHEIMER BLOCK PARTY
# STAGE GUIDE
## NOVEMBER 15,2009

### Numbers Inside

The Cocker Spaniels 12:00-12:30
The Swervys 12:50-1:20
Margot 1:40-2:10
Flow Factory 2:30-3:00
Fly Nice 3:20-3:50
A Dream Asleep 4:10-4:40
Journey Agents 5:00-5:30
Fired for Walking 5:50-6:20
Lisa's Sons 6:40-7:10
Satin Hooks 7:25-7:55
Forests 8:15-8:45

### Numbers Outside - FPH/KTRU Main Stage

More Cowbell 12:00-12:30
Springfield Riots 12:50-1:20
Dirty N Nasty 1:40-2:10
Tyagaraja 2:30-3:00
Plump 3:20-3:50
I Am Mesmer 4:10-4:40
Grandfather Child 5:00-5:30
Wild Moccasins 5:50-6:20
D.R.U.M. 6:40-7:10
Spain Colored Orange 7:25 - 7:55
Sideshow Tramps 8:00 - 8:30
Woozyhelmet 8:45 - 9:15
Giant Princess 9:30 - 10:00

### Mango's Inside - Funwunce Stage

Room 101 1:15 - 1:45
Bowel 2:00 - 2:30
Cavernous 2:45 - 3:15
Future Blondes 3:30 - 4:00
The State vs. Judd Nelson 4:15 - 4:45
Female Demand 5:00 - 5:30
Fight Pretty 5:45 - 6:15
The Burden 6:30 - 7:00
Hell City Kings 7:15 - 7:45
Two Star Symphony 8:00
The Bamaz 9:00
Fat Tony 10:00
V Zilla 11:00

### Mango's Outside - SHFL Stage

Jane Frequency 12:00
The Watermarks 1:00
The Cadences 2:00
Clement 3:00
Jody Seabody and the Whirls 4:00
The Misfires 5:00
Poopy Lungstuffing 5:50
Free Radicals 6:20
Thou Shalt Not Kill...Except 7:00

### Mango's Outside - SHFL Stage (cont.)

Cop Warmth 7:20
Exterminating Angels 8:00
Love Field 8:30
Hero 9:15

### Austin Layne - Music Heals Stage

A.T.W. 12:00-12:30
White Guilt 12:50-1:20
Jennifer Grassman 1:40-2:10
TSU Jazz Ensembles 2:30-3:00
TSU Jazz Ensembles 3:20-3:50
Framing Strangers 4:10-4:40
Tax the Wolf 5:00-5:30
Something Fierce 5:50-6:20
Check Other 6:40-7:10
The Julys 7:25

### Helios Upstairs

Fiskadoro 12:00-12:30
The Goods 12:50-1:20
Smoky Mountain 1:40-2:10
News on the March 2:30-3:00
Idegenous 3:20-3:50
Left of the Dial 4:10-4:40
Ben Wesley 5:00-5:30
Bright Men of Learning 5:50-6:20
Some Others 6:40-7:10
Whorehound 7:25-7:55
Mechanical Boy 8:15-8:45
Come See My Dead Person 9:00-9:45

### Helios Outside - IndieHouston Stage

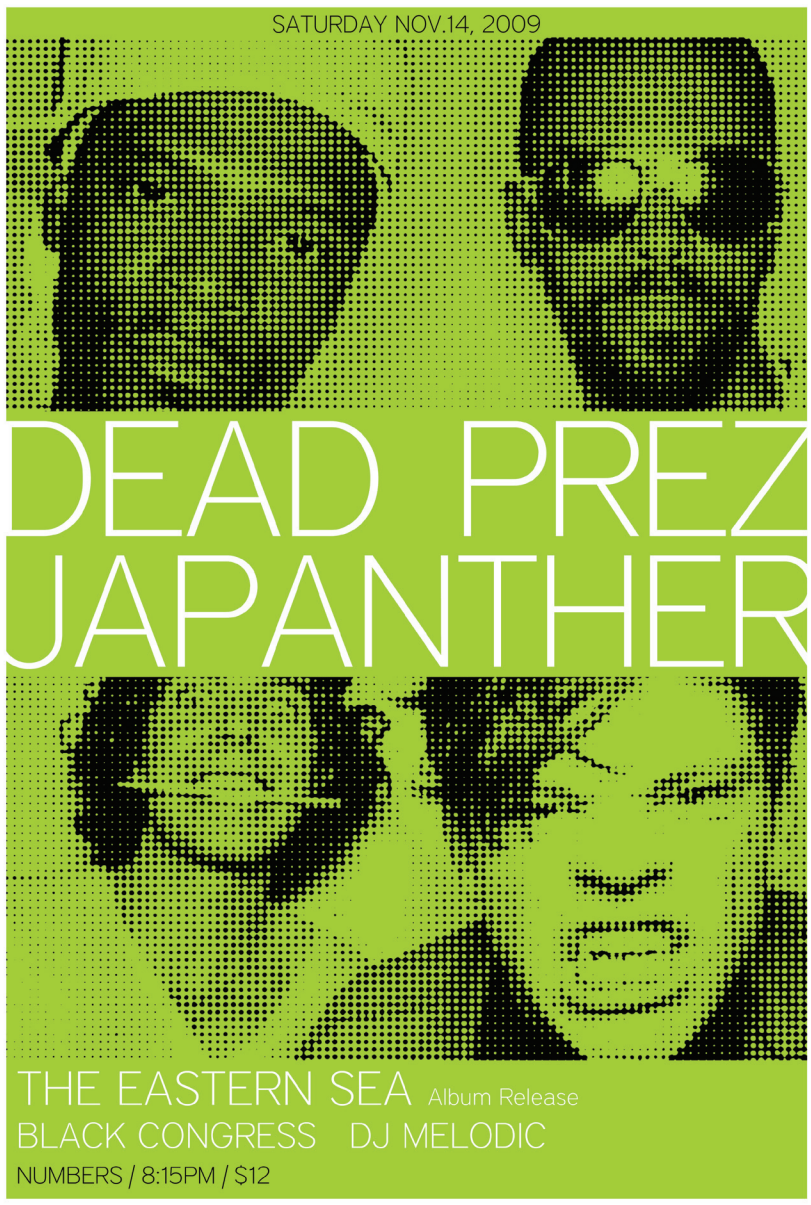
Holy Fiction 12:00-12:30
Horse 12:50-1:20
Giant Battle Monster 1:40-2:10
Eddie Terrell 2:30-3:00
Wine and Revolution (ATX) 3:20-3:50
Elaine Greer 4:10-4:40
The Sour Notes (ATX) 5:00-5:30
Alpaca 5:50-6:20
Sings 6:40-7:10
Ghost Mountain 7:30-8:00

### Helios DownStairs

CeePlus Bad Knives Reprogramm Music Stage

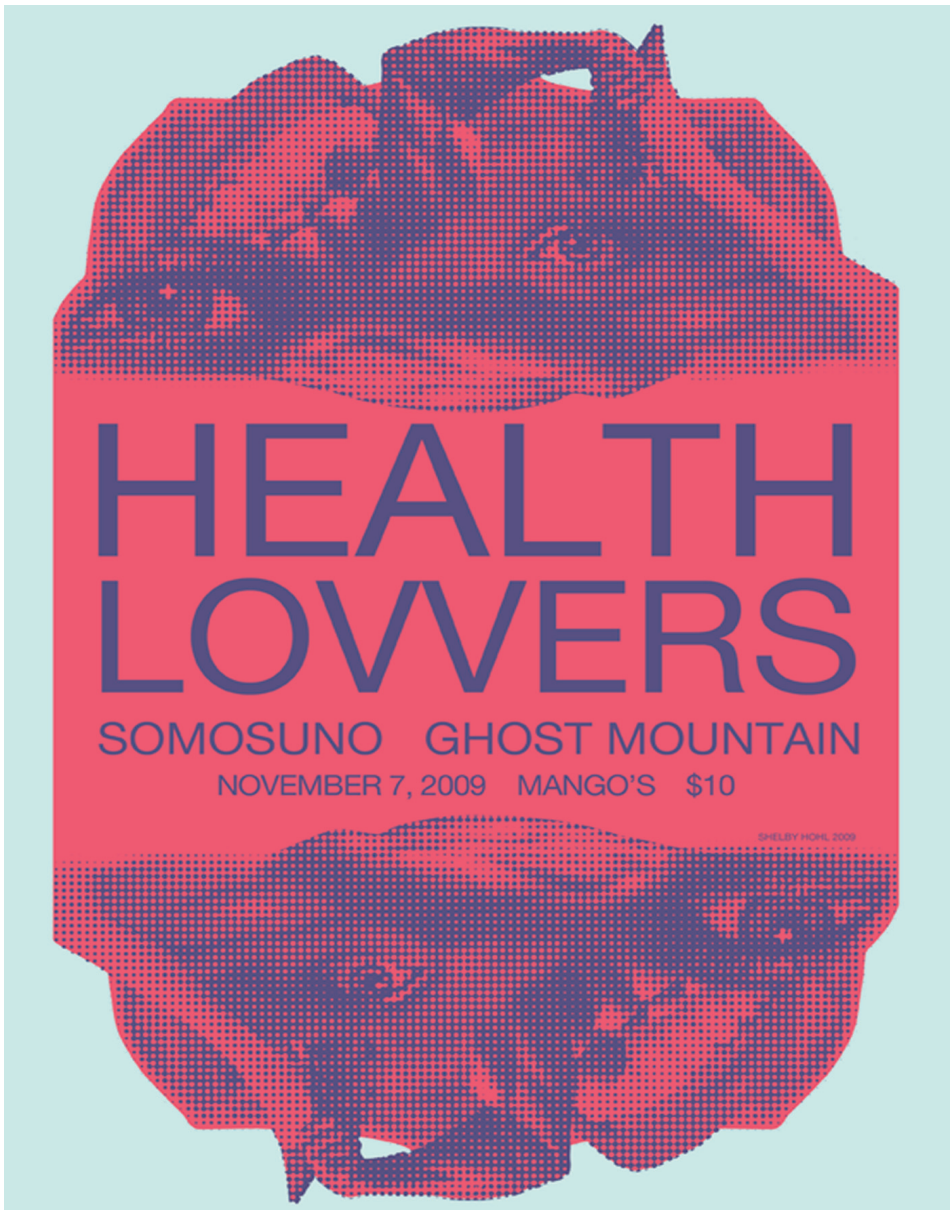
### Helios Front Patio

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music by
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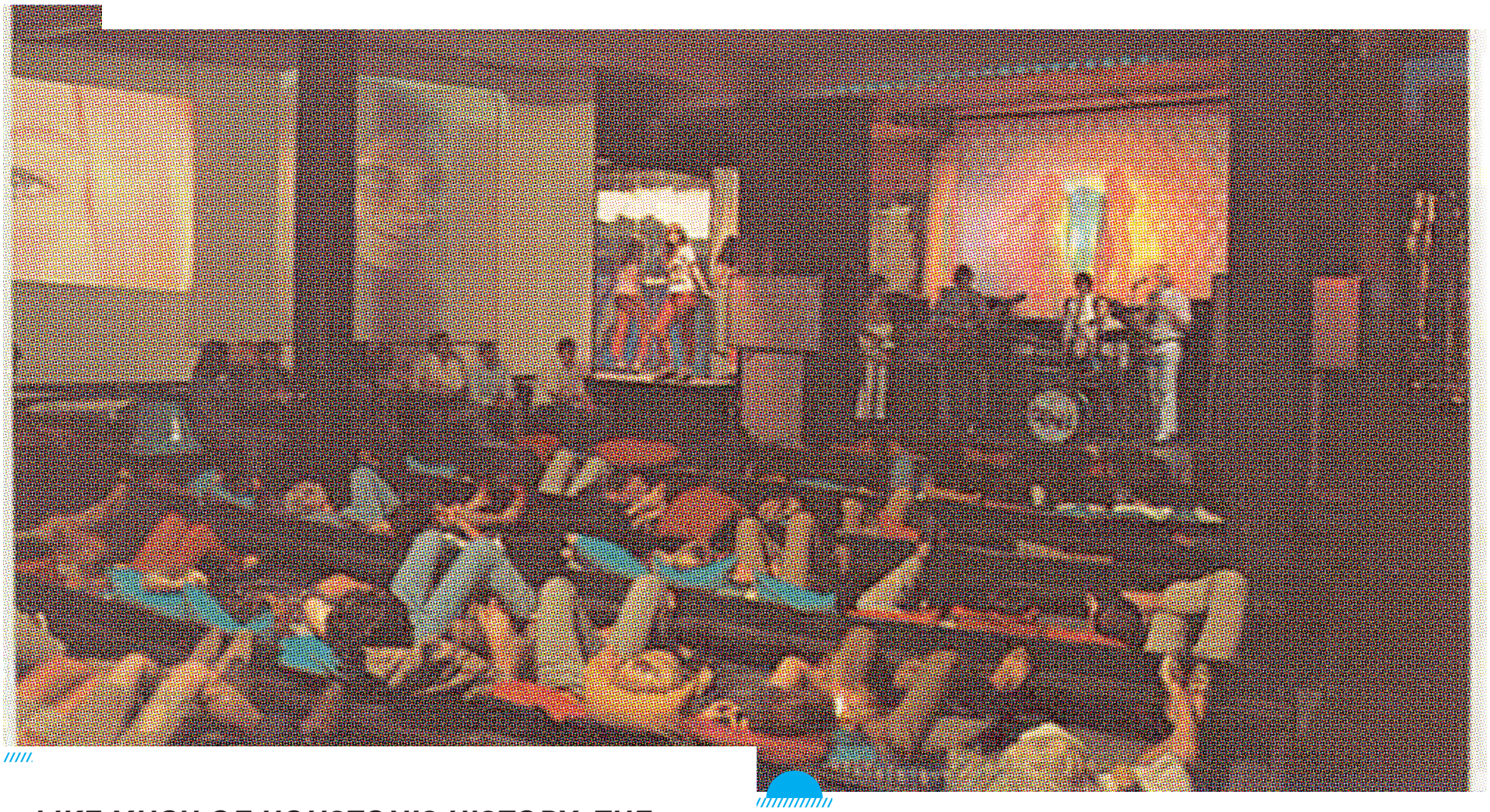




# HOUSTON HISTORY

## THE HOUSTON MUSIC SCENE FORTY YEARS AGO

by ALEX WUKMAN



***LIKE MUCH OF HOUSTON'S HISTORY, THE HISTORY OF ITS MUSIC VENUES IS ALWAYS ON THE VERGE OF BEING FORGOTTEN.***

**THERE ARE FEW** 'historic venues' in Houston (Fitzgerald's and the El dorado Ballroom not withstanding) and most of the lineage of Houston's music history has fallen to the bulldozer while the story of Texas' impact on the psychedelic music scene of the 1960s and 1970s is only just now beginning to be told.

So Free Press Houston decided to compile as much of a list of the clubs that shaped the city's scene forty years ago as could be found. Unfortunately, like most live music venues, many of these clubs have left little or no trace of their passing. While many bars and venues get wakes when they die almost none get obituaries; which makes piecing together their history almost impossible. However, the first club from the period that could be identified was Jimmie Menutis' Lounge and Club, which was operating from the early to mid 1960s at 3236 Telephone Road. Jimmie Menutis' Lounge has been described by Scarlet Dukes' 1960s Texas Music website as "being as close to a 'nightclub' as anything in Houston at the time."

Dukes went on to write that, like many of the supper clubs from the big band era, the venue featured a single bandstand surrounded by tables covered with red cloth. Dukes also stated that the club was filled "dark, short, white guys walking around" while acts like Bo Diddle, King Curtis and Jimmy Reed played onstage. Like many of the clubs from Houston's hippie days the date and reason why Jimmie Menutis' closed is lost to history and the wrecking ball. The second well-known establishment to open was Dome Shadows on 9218 Buffalo Speedway. Dome shadows opened in December 1963 and went through many different incarnations until it closed in the early 1980s. According to domeshadows.com, the club was initially founded by Marshal M. Stewart who had a policy that all men in uniform, regardless of age, would be allowed in and treated well. For the first few years' local bands like The Jokers, The Pastels and The Good Stuff held court in the shadow of the Astrodome.

Then in 1965 Houston wunderkind Roy Hoffheinz filed a lawsuit for copyright infringement against Stewart. The suit came about because a few years earlier Hoffheinz had been sued for infringing the copyright of the Colt Arms Company. Apparently Colt didn't like Hoffheinz naming a baseball team The Colt .45s. Hoffheinz lost the suit and changed the name of the team to the Astros. He paid off the judgment and went looking for ways to make his money back. Hoffheinz hit on the idea of suing anyone he felt was infringing on his Astrodome trademark, so he sued Stewart for $ 1million. Stewart countersued for $1 million, he claimed that the word "dome" wasn't trademarked. Unfortunately for Hoffheinz the judge who ruled on the case agreed that the word dome wasn't trademarked.

Stewart ran the club up until 1970 when he leased it to AM radio DJ Paul Berlin. Berlin, who would later go on to gain notoriety for playing bands like Herman's Hermits and The Animals on KBME, introduced such high concepts as the best leg and wet t-shirt contests to what had been a stalwart of Houston's hippie Dom.

However, Berlin did book some skinny young kids in leather jackets from New York for their Houston debut in 1977. You might have heard of them. They went on to be pretty big. They were called The Ramones. In the late 1970s Berlin subleased Dome Shadows to a high stakes gambler named Martin Kramer. Kramer's tenure at the club was short lived, mostly because he was shot dead in a card game. While Hoffheinz and Stewart were slugging it out in court another club catering to the counterculture crowd opened in what has come to be known as the Midtown area but at the time was considered part of Montrose.

La Maison opened in 1964 and stayed in business until 1966. Founded by George Massey and originally called La Maison du Café, the club was located in a house on the corner of San Jacinto and Wichita.

It started primarily as a small folk club, but by the summer of 1965 folk had given way to rock and roll and the club had outgrown its homey location. Massey decided to bring in a partner named Larry Kane and the pair moved the club to a defunct church on the corner of Bagby and McGowen.

After the move Massey and Kane decided to drop the café portion of the name and became the first club in Houston to use go-go dancers. The club became closely associated with bands like the Baroque Brothers and Sixpentz who were the house bands. However, the good times wouldn't last and the club had to move to 1420 Richmond at least for a little while.

However they had to move again and went back to the old church, but under a different name. The last time anyone was mentioned performing there was in late 1966 when the chronicle listed Red Krayola as playing at a fashion show in a closed church. Around the time go-go dancers were grooving to the sounds of the Baroque Brothers and Massey and Kane were trying to figure out where to move to a club called the catacombs opened up in an area that would later be associated with the Galleria.

The club would be called the Catacombs and it was located at 3003 Post Oak. It would go on to become one of the best-known clubs in Houston's hippie phase. The Catacombs played host to such seminal 1960s bands as the Mothers of Invention, Country Joe and the Fish and Jethro Tull. Since the club was open before the Texas legislature passed laws allowing the sale of liquor by the drink the Catacombs had a "membership application. " Membership to the club was limited to people aged 15-20 years old and it prohibited members from bringing in "intoxicants of any kind" and required to them wear "school clothing."

The age limit requirements were common amongst Houston's teen clubs of the time and the lack of intoxicants didn't prevent the Catacombs from hosting Houston's first "pop festival" on August 31, 1968. Like La Maison and other clubs from the period, The Catacombs had to move after the lease expired. In the late 1960s the club relocated to University and Kirby in the then burgeoning Rice Village area.

It's unclear as to whether the club changed management or ownership after relocating, but what is clear is that in 1970

the club located at University and Kirby was no longer called The Catacombs and was now known as Of Our Own. Despite the new name the club continued booking some of the biggest touring acts of the time including MC 5 and Ten Years After.

Like Jimmie Menutis', the reason for and date of the Of Our Own's closing is lost. Despite the incompleteness of the record, the history of The Catacombs/Of Our Own is fairly well documented. On the other hand, the history of The Living Eye, which was located on 1493 Silber and was open from 1966 until sometime in the mid 1970s, can be described as spotty at best. The Living Eye was owned by Scott Holtzman and is perhaps best summarized as being the location of a minor footnote in the annals of Texas' drug war history.

In 1967, at the start of a six-month residency at The Living Eye, local Houston band The Misfits became the first Texas music group to get busted for possession of LSD. According to the website www.garagehangover.com, the charges against the band were dropped because the drug wasn't illegal, but the notoriety of the bust was having a negative effect on the band so they changed their name to The Lost and Found.

Aside from being the location of the first acid bust in Texas, the only other notable thing about The Living Eye was its marketing. A promotional flyer for the club touts its 15-20-age limit by saying "If you're 21…you're too old. If you're 14…you're too young." The text of the flyer goes on to invite those "in between" to "take a fantastic voyage into the heart of an android."

The date of the closing of The Living Eye is also lost to the annals of history.

While the dates of operation for the Houston branch of The Cellar are known the location is not. On December 7, 1964 Pat Kirkwood opened a Houston location of the venerable Forth Worth bar The Cellar.

The Cellar's Houston location would operate until 1974. Like the five other bars in The Cellar chain, three in Fort Worth, one in Dallas and one in San Antonio, the Houston location was known for progressive music bookings, a relaxed atmosphere and gorgeous waitresses in skimpy clothing.

According to multiple sources, the waitresses at each of The Cellar locations wore bikinis while serving drinks. It is also said that at some of the locations girls in the audience would stand on a two foot high, two foot wide divider that separated the crowd from the band and due an impromptu strip tease to music from bands featuring the likes of Frank Gibbs and Roky Erickson. While The Cellar was well known amongst the Houston music community it didn't achieve the type of breakout notoriety that the Love Street Light Circus did.

Despite being only open from 1967-1970 Love Street became something of a legend for its innovative visuals. Founded by local artist David Addickes after a trip to San Francisco in the mid 1960s, Love Street featured 24 slide projectors, which would be used to show things like birds flying around the room. Addickes has stated that he would take photos of patrons using slide film on one night, develop the pictures and put them in the projectors the next day.

"If someone came back the next night they could see themselves on the wall," Addickes said at a 2007 lecture. Love Street was located in a three story building on the banks of Buffalo Bayou, standing on what is currently Allen's Landing.

The house drew a 1019 Commerce Street address and featured a mural painted throughout the lower story of the building. The mural has been described as an optical illusion that shows a mid 1960s Houston skyline. Love Street was also known for not having a seating area, instead it featured cushions for customers to recline on and watch the bands and lights. Love Street was located just a few blocks from the Market Square area of downtown that was also the home of La Bastille. Founded by Ernie Criezis in the late 1960s as a jazz club the venue expanded into jazz influenced blues.

Criezis told Billboard magazine in September 1973 that booking the likes of Dizzy Gillespie, Herbie Hancock, Buddy Rich and Muddy Waters proved to be financially lucrative. However, Creizis stated that since Houston was so far off the touring track paying to fly down big name talents was expensive. Another club that opened in the late 1960s was Anderson Fair. Located at 2007 Grant Street, Anderson Fair is one of the few Houston musical venues that have been in constant business for over 40 years.

Anderson Fair gained notoriety for booking the emerging country folk acts that came to dominate Texas Music during the 1980s and 1990s. Despite the renown many of the Houston venues achieved it was Liberty Hall that became the most famous of Houston's 1960s and 1970s venues. Originally built as a church the building, which stood at 1610 Chenevert, was converted into an American Legion Hall. Mike Condray, Lynda Herrera and Ryan Trimble then converted it into a music venue.

From 1971-1978 while it was a music venue Liberty Hall hosted everyone from Bruce Springsteen to the Velvet Underground . It was so well known that Springsteen even referenced it in one of his songs. It seems that no matter how big a club was at the time when it closes there isn't much of a reference.

The same holds true for the closure of Liberty Hall. There doesn't seem to be much written about why a music venue that hosted artists that came to define much of the last two decades of the 20th Century closed their doors. However, after it closed Liberty Hall became a Chinese movie theatre, but like many of the venues it was knocked down. Now, in the spot where the New York Dolls and Ted Nugent played, stands an empty lot with a view of the Toyota Center's parking garage.

It seems that every year a small venue goes out of business and leaves behind no record of what happened there or what happened to it. Like the songs played on stages night after night throughout the city, all too often the history of Houston's music scene only remains in the minds of the people who were there. **FPH**







# ANNISE PARKER & ROBERT SANBORN PROMOTE ENLISTMENT

***A CRITIQUE OF THE COMMENTS BY ANNISE PARKER ON GROWING UP IN AMERICA ON KPFT***

by NICK COOPER

Houston Mayoral candidate Annise Parker, was a guest on the KPFT show "Growing Up in America" on August 24th. The show seems widely respected among listeners, and this critique is not to disparage the vast majority of the show's efforts. Parker came out encouraging enlistment for our students, and host Robert Sanborn chimed in, in absolute agreement.

**ANNISE PARKER:** "[the] military has been, has a long proud tradition of moving people into the middle class in our society."

**DR. SANBORN:** "absolutely, and with the new GI Bill, it's gonna even do even more for that but you're right absolutely."

**THE MILITARY HAS A LONG PROUD TRADITION** of moving people into the middle class? They could have mentioned that the military has a long proud tradition of moving 10% of its people into coffins, into vegetative states, into rooms in their parents house in which they can barely take care of themselves, and into wheelchairs. Then there is the long proud tradition of leaving veterans in the streets. According to the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans, 33% of the homeless male population is made up of veterans. In any given year, 3% of all veterans experience homelessness. One percent or more of veterans are in jails. There is an epidemic of suicides and severe depression among veterans.

According to "Army of None" by Aimee Allison and David Solnit, after military service, only 35% get any money for college. 85% never receive their college degree. So, even if Parker and Sanborn imagined that the entire15% of veterans who graduate college end up joining the middle-class, the odds would still be about the same, 15%, that they will be killed, seriously injured, become homeless, suicidal, or imprisoned.

This would seem to indicate that Annise Parker was playing up the benefits and playing down the risk, but it turns out that the topic of whether or not it ends up being financially advantageous to have been in the military has been specifically studied. Two Vietnam studies of Vietnam vets destroy the myth. A National Bureau of Economic Research Project Report from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, entitled: Military Service and Civilian Earnings of Youths, by J.R. Crane and D.A. Wise concluded that not joining the army correlates with 12% more in earnings. Another study from the Harvard School of Economics, by J.D. Angrist, published in The American Economic Review found that veteran earnings are 15% less than they would have been had they not served.

Reading these studies, one can conclude that Annise Parker and Robert Sanborn are not just exaggerating the traditional economic benefits of joining the military. they have it dead wrong and in fact it is quite the opposite. Even setting aside the risk of being killed, enlisting in the military will reduce your earnings on average 12 - 15%.

I readily admit that Parker's remark about transitioning into the middle class was not an official statement, on her part, nor was Sanborn's agreement a clear statement from him. It was just an off-the-cuff discussion, and what was said may well reflect widely-repeated assumptions. However, it is important that we not echo the deceptive presentations of military recruiters. Powerful voices in our communities can be forgiven giving out incorrect advice, even to vulnerable children, so long as they later retract it. Annise Parker and KPFT's own Robert Sanborn should both do so. FPH



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# 2009 ART CRAWL

## SATURDAY NOVEMBER 21ST

by HELEN TELLEGEN

Saturday November 21st, over eighty artists located in the Warehouse District will open their doors to the public for 17th Annual Art Crawl. From 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., you can rummage around the dozens of open artist warehouse studios. The artists encourage those attending to bring their children as well.

**THE EVENT,** financed and planned by the artists, exposes the viewer to the art work outside of the sterile swanky galleries. The Art Crawl, a mainstay of the art scene, has earned a national name for Houston's diacritic art community. To add to the list of things that makes this event unique, it exposes those from all over the Houston area to new art.

Like exploring dozens of old attics, the Art Crawl allow you to poke around artists' studios cluttered with found objects, paint splatter, and sketches. You walk through each of the artist's' studios and see the mess, smell the oil paint and turpentine. The exposed pipes and plywood floors allow you to sense what the warehouses were like a hundred year ago

A few decades ago, a handful of artists moved to a district that the rest of Houston viewed as an elephant's grave yard. The old shipping warehouses northeast of downtown were used as shanties for drifters from the local jail. Artists like John Runnels and Charlie Jean Sartwelle found the area had the ingredients for artists' paradise, ample space and cheap rent. In 1984 they founded the Mother Dog Studio, which became the ring leader of the Art Crawl. Mother Dog found the atmosphere of the Warehouse District an asset, as it tied them to the roots of working-class Houston.

Mother Dog wanted to organize a different kind of art festival. To get complete community involvement they enlisted the support of the nonprofit organizations Diverse Works and Photofest. Part of their goal was to attract the part of the community that typically has little interest in local art. This included those living in the suburbs and in areas of Houston with little art exposure.

Thirty-six year old Artist Whitney Riley is entering her 5th year in the Art Crawl. While studying physics in college, she took a painting class. The class was an epiphany – she abandoned physics and became a professional artist. She and seven artists have founded Box 13, a warehouse studio that focuses on experimental work. Its welcoming environment and family atmosphere have caused it to grow to 16 artists. Her most recent work is a series of paintings depicting Sports Illustrated swimsuit models doing housework. Her concept is to juxtapose the two contrasting stereotypes for women.

In contrast, Ron Gordon studied art in college, but didn't become a professional artist until age 48, when he retired from teaching. The Warehouse District was perfect place for him to set up studio and reenter the art world. Within ten years Gordon is a successful muralist, but he notes that he also likes to explore other genres of art. As he has advanced in his career he's been able to buy time to work on abstract painting. To Gordon, the Art Crawl is liberating because galleries expect you to have one genre of work. He finds the atmosphere of the Warehouse District perfect for his eclectic work and thrives on the artistic inspiration he finds there.

The artists in the district feel their settling of the area has been a gift to the city. Unfortunately, the success of the district is attracting other developers. The paradox that artists face is that their move to cheap places eventually makes those places so attractive and expensive that the artists can no longer afford them. Runnels feel the days of the artists in the Warehouse District may be numbered. However he quotes Robert Hughes to say that "artists are as tough as weeds and can grow in the cracks of concrete." FPH

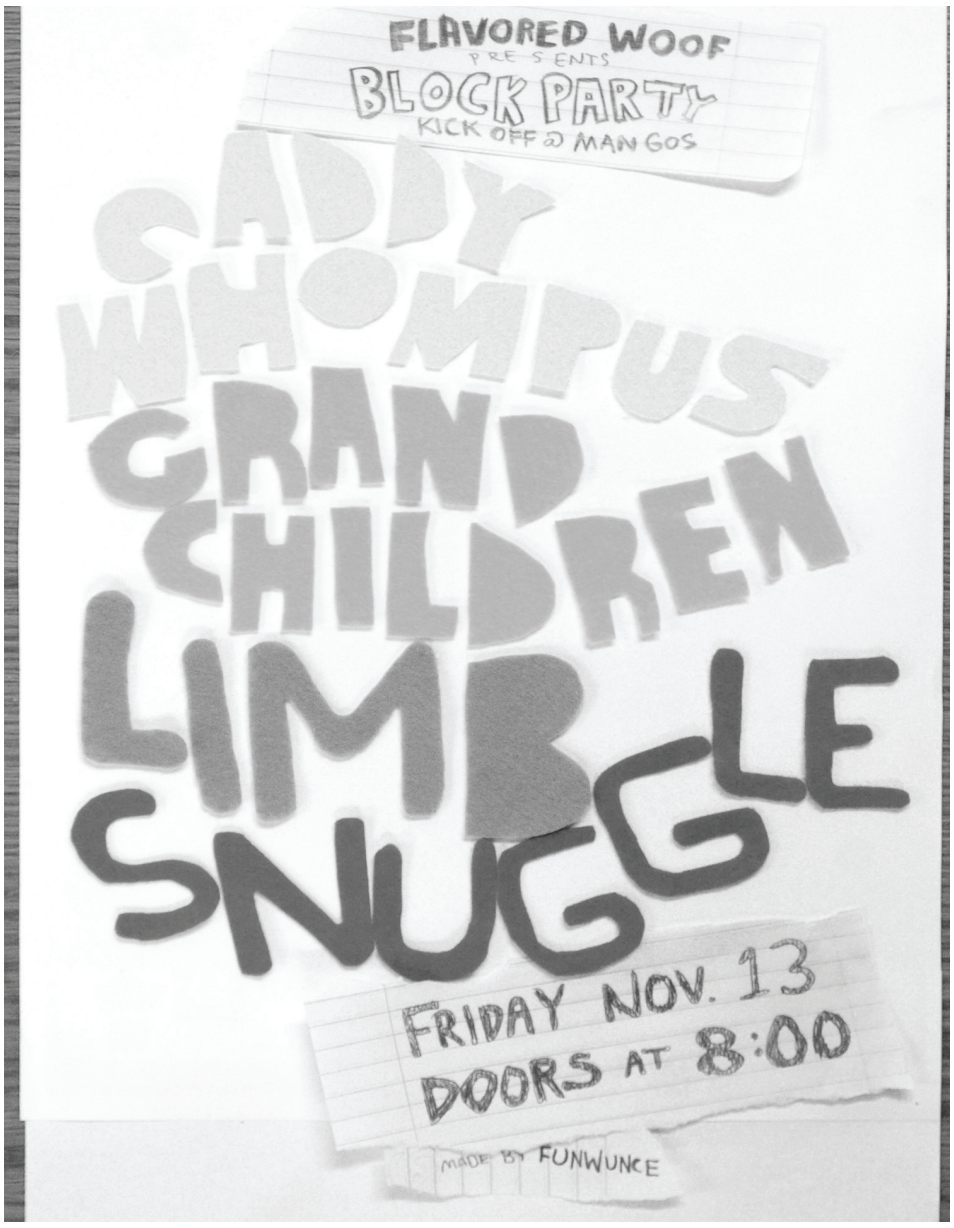
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# TEXAS

## THE EYES OF JUSTICE ARE UPON YOU

On October 13, we lost a resolute champion of the law, a man who left his impact on the lives of untold numbers of Americans.

His very name made his life's work almost inevitable, a matter of destiny. William Wayne Justice was a Federal judge for the Eastern District of Texas.

by MICHAEL WINSHIP




**THAT'S RIGHT, HE WAS "JUSTICE JUSTICE."** And he spent a distinguished legal career making sure that everyone — no matter their color or income or class — got a fair shake. As a former Texas lieutenant governor put it last week, "Judge Justice dragged Texas into the 20th century, God bless him."

Dragged it kicking and screaming, for it was Justice who ordered Texas to integrate its public schools in 1971 — 17 years after the Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision made separate schools for blacks and whites unconstitutional. Texas resisted doing the right thing for as long as it could. Many of its segregated schools for African-American children were so poor they still had outhouses instead of indoor plumbing.

This small town lawyer appointed to the federal bench by President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered Texas to open its public housing to everyone, regardless of their skin color. He looked at the state's "truly shocking conditions" in its juvenile detention system and said, repair it. He struck down state law that permitted public schools to charge as much as a thousand dollars tuition for the children of illegal immigrants.

And Justice demanded a top-to-bottom overhaul of Texas prisons, some of the most brutal and corrupt in the nation. He even held the state in contempt of court when he thought it was dragging its feet cleaning up a system where thousands of inmates slept on the dirty bare floors of their cellblocks and often went without medical care. The late, great Molly Ivins said, "He brought the United States Constitution to Texas."

Some say that justice stings. William Wayne Justice certainly did — and his detractors stung back with death threats and hate mail. Carpenters refused to repair his house, beauty parlors denied service to his wife. There were cross burnings and constant calls for his impeachment.

After he desegregated the schools he was offered armed guards for protection. He turned them down and instead took lessons in self-defense.

You need to understand that while so many Texans have fought and are fighting the good fight in the Judge Justice tradition, others believe in the law only when it sides with them. They long for the good old days of Judge Roy Bean, the saloonkeeper whose barroom court was known in the frontier days as "The Law West of the Pecos." His judicial philosophy was simple: "Hang 'em first, try 'em later."

The present governor of Texas seems to be channeling Judge Bean. During his nine years in office, Rick Perry — "Governor Goodhair" as Ivins called him — has presided over more than 200 executions, dwarfing the previous record of 152 set by his predecessor in the Governor's Mansion, George W. Bush. (The most, it is said, of any United States governor in modern history.)

Lethal injection is practically a religious ritual in Texas. In fact, before their sentencing verdict that will send Khristian Oliver to die in just a couple of weeks — on November 5th, to be exact — jurors in the East Texas town of Nacogdoches consulted the Bible and found what they were looking for in the Book of Numbers, where it reads, "The murderer shall surely be put to death," and, "The revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer." Although it was noted that referencing holy writ was an inappropriate "external influence," two appeals courts upheld the jury's sentence and the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the case.

Governor Perry will do almost anything to please the vengeful crowd in the Coliseum with their thumbs turned down. Did we mention that next year he's up for reelection? When it turned out recently that five years ago the state may have wrongfully executed a man for a crime he didn't commit, Perry pulled some particularly shady moves.

In February 2004, Cameron Todd Willingham was put to death for allegedly setting a fire that killed his three young daughters. Governor Perry has willfully ignored evidence from top arson investigators that the blaze was not homicide but an accident.

Now Perry has fired the chairman and three members of the state's Forensic Science Commission just as they were about to hear further scientific testimony that might prove Willingham's innocence. This week, Perry told reporters that the controversy is "nothing more than propaganda from the anti-death penalty people across the country."

They can be short on mercy in Texas. All the more reason to mourn the loss of Justice — William Wayne Justice. Rest in peace, your honor. FPH

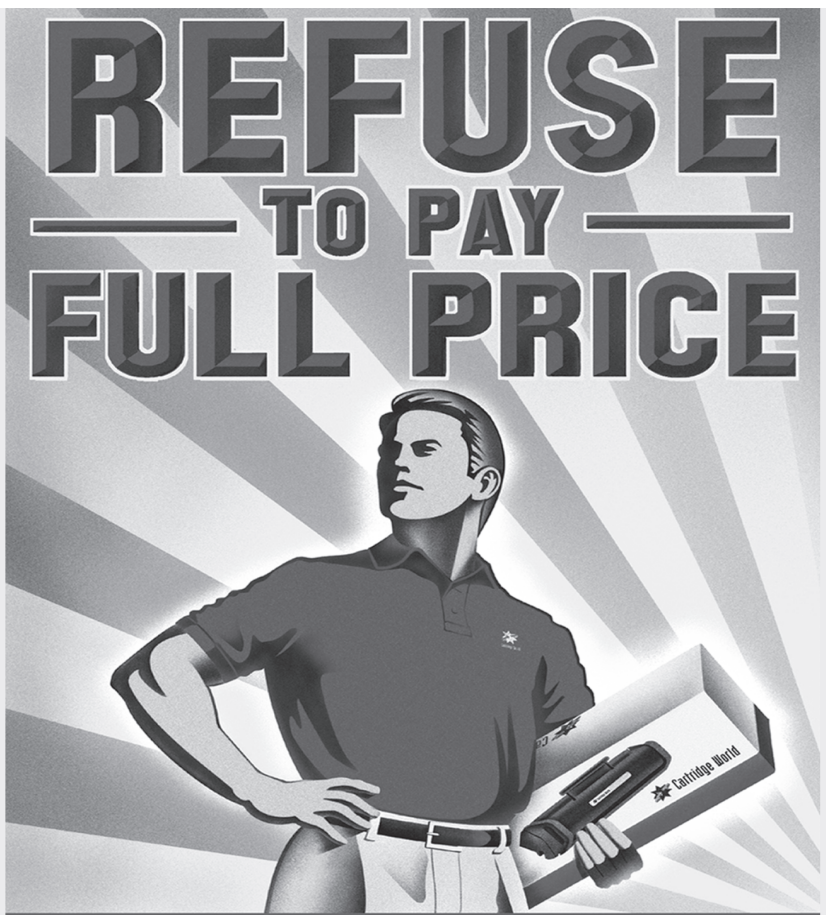
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RANT OF THE MONTH

# BAD ART AS THE BEGINNING OF GENOCIDE

THIS IS INCOHERENT AND THOUGHTFUL AT THE SAME TIME

"Hi Liz. Miffy here. How are you? How are things in Iowa? As you know, I just moved here to Houston, and it is SO non-cornfield here in this bustling, dynamic, romantic city. I live in the COOLEST AREA called MONTROSE, but the cool people call it "THE TROSE!"

by MARTIN BOOBER

**SO MANY COOL PLACES** and funky old houses, (but I hope they get rid of a lot of them. They are musty and scary and, well, old. Besides, everyone who is on the go in this town wants new, new, NEW and those that don't can just go die.) There are cool, cool, cool restaurants and bistros here, (a bistro is a cool way of saying restaurant) and things to do. Like last weekend, I went to this art show at this cool place called the Contemporary Arts Museum, but everyone in the know calls it the CAM. There was lots of stuff there and gobs of interesting people, I had to text and sext a lot, so I wasn't sure what was going on but they were cool things, I know. Some cheesy guy sang a song about a house, and then this guy with a HOT BOD carried a big piece of wood around wearing only a g-string, (watching him made me wet, OMG). I wore a knee length gingham print dress, my yellow Donald Duck hair berets, and looked cute in my clunky black leather service station worker shoes that I got half price. Pretty edgy, huh? Oh, and I met this McDreamy guy there named Harmon. Harmon is tall and designs modern urban dwellings (they used to be called apartments, but that is SO yesterday). Harmon is very intellectual, and says he doesn't even think about sex at all. Isn't that wonderful? I'm a lucky girl. He is picking me up tomorrow night in his black Honda Element, and we are going for pasta at this cool place called Café Nexpresso or something like that. Well, I hope you move down here, Liz. I have my double chocolate honey-lime latte and am ensconced in my reading nook, with the latest issue of "Jealousy" magazine. A girl has to keep abreast of what is happening, you know? Please write soon. Love, Miffy!"

Genocide does not begin with a tortuous train ride to a hinterland shooting pit. Genocide begins with ignorance, denial, a notion, an inconvenience, an intolerant whim, an annoying unconformity, a perception, a projected shame, a disconnect from feeling and common human experience, a dulling of awareness, an absent point of reference. Art is to be experienced, not understood. Once art is said to be "understood", it is killed. A Chagall, "understood" by a magnate, is, conversely loved warmly by an unsophisticated wage slave, who enters the museum for both shelter from the cold, and for spiritual rejuvenation. He is not a master of the universe. A Friedrich can melt a cold heart and gladden a sad one, but it is not understood. Five shots from a revolver, fired into a large, blank canvas may strongly reflect to the audience the fact that people without a sense of irony are terribly dangerous, but it is not fully understood. Much has been written about the artist's responsibility, but the trauma of recent years renders those of WWI, and its child Dada, to the foggy, overlooked memories of yellowed silent newsreels and print in heavy, unread books.

Everything is Dada now, it is said. Vive irrelevancy, vive expediency, vive fame and flippancy. It makes what is really going on more palatable. "It is not that we have outlawed Shakespeare! We have merely created a society that renders Shakespeare irrelevant!" Laziness, fear, lack of thought and inspiration replacing artistic courage. A splash of paint here-and-there kind of guy can be profound, or a plagiarist of the other splash of paint here-and-there guy whose works are hot sellers at the moment. Bad art for its own sake. Active nihilism, and a still naked emperor. King Canute, wrapped in a clean white sheet. Presto. So cool. What indeed can move one if one has no point of reference? Point of reference—diluted, obfuscated, minimized, dumbed down.

What is viewed then may appear to be a refined joke, but it might be a naked emperor. What such art really is, is a little murder. It is a murder of aesthetic, of integrity, (as are all lies big and small. More and more, we are seduced into lying, to support larger lies). Little murders. Little art murders, a murder of sensitivity, (sensitivity—that curse of efficiency and groupthink), and awareness, of intelligence, of critical thought process. The ethic that began as a joke between a small group of obscure academics known as "postmodern deconstruciton" has become what it was never intended to be, a movement. Even more than a movement, an attitude, a TREND. Well, we all know that, when boiling a frog, one never throws the frog into a pot of already boiling water. One places the frog in a pot of cool water, and imperceptibly, slowly increases the heat. In this manner, once the frog realizes it is being cooked, it is too late.

The recent "No Zoning" exhibit at the CAM was the "Sunset Boulevard" for many early, non-corporate, alternative Houston artists. ("I'm ready for my close-up, Mr. Demille.") It was a congenial, back-slapping celebration, joking and hobnobbing, not even realizing that they were experiencing a collective throat-slitting and expulsion into oblivion. This is the NEW Houston after all, and where, indeed, will it end? The new new NEW Houston—gleaming, shining, awash in foreign cash and shady mega-deals, swarming with smarmy developers spewing sloppy solipsisms, forcing the public into reail-line friendly, overpriced, poorly-built shoeboxes constructed with planned-obsolescence integrity, (ever try suing a builder lately? Good luck). Pressboard shells built on shifting mud faults, and Miffy is perplexed as to why her print doesn't hang straight on the wall. Many dwellers just forego having anything on their walls. After all, their surroundings must be as empty as their souls, and art, after all, might make them THINK and FEEL, and that is simply not politically correct. CAM is the riverboat pilot over the River Styxx for artists, local and otherwise. Once you've made it, you've had it. Several artists and movements from the period who could have been featured in this exhibit are far less annoyed at being excluded than one might assume.



Everything becomes illusion, for illusion is far more comfortable, entertaining, and downright easier. Illusion is easy to manufacture. Illusions of love, of fame, of quality, of beauty, of hope, of change, of prosperity, of freedom, of aesthetic. Bad art is the beginning, subtly, of genocide. FPH

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## 10/2 Organizing lessons from Allen Parkway Village

by Tim O'Brien

Houston hero Lenwood Johnson has been organizing residents of Freedmen's Town in 4th Ward for over 30 years, fighting demolition and gentrification of the city's oldest Black neighborhood. He reminds everyone of the price paid by the founders to make a home for their people in perpetuity: The bricks that pave many of the historic streets in Freedmen's Town were hand made over a century ago by formerly enslaved Africans.

When Lenwood E. Johnson, the son of Texas sharecroppers, moved into Houston's Allen Parkway Village project housing, the Freedmen's Town section of the city had yet to be designated historic and the village had yet to be saved. By the end of the 1990s, the village was preserved and Johnson had proved to be something of an unlikely hero here in Houston's 4th Ward, historically one of the poorest sections of the city – but always ripe for redevelopment because of its proximity to the downtown.

Opened as San Felipe Courts in 1944, the 1,000-unit Allen Parkway Village (APV), whose namesake is the parkway named for Houston founders John and Augustus Allen, was the crown jewel of the Housing Authority of the City of Houston (HACH) and the largest one in the South.

As APV aged, Houston property developers began eyeing the 37.5 acres of prime inner-city real estate that it occupied – an area where freed slaves settled after the Civil War.

The developers' lust for the land can be traced back to November 1977. HACH director Robert Wood crafted a letter proposing demolition to the Department of Housing and Urban Development claiming that the APV land values had escalated "beyond a cost where housing is the highest and best use."

In 1979 Houston Mayor Jim McConn's Urban Policy Board blamed the state of public housing on the city's lack of leadership, which they found "inexcusable in the midst of such wealth and well-being." McConn's board wrote that the city had no "central single focus for dealing with housing issues."

Allen Parkway Village residents were given some hope that their decaying project would be rehabilitated when HUD authorized $10 million to modernize it in 1979. Unfortunately, HACH failed to spend the money to revitalize the project. Congressional hearings held nearly 15 years after the HUD authorization revealed that roughly $8.6 million of the fund was untouched. Of the remaining $1.4 million, HACH had receipts documenting $700,000 used for repairs, but the rest of the cash disappeared.

The remaining $8.6 million of the original $10 million from 1979 was used when the renovations began in 1996 – though the residents filed a federal injunction in 1991 that stopped the Housing Authority's request to HUD to use the remaining $8.6 million for other programs.

But long before that fact was disclosed, Johnson was continually bothered by the decaying condition of the housing project.

He began to organize.

Johnson became the mastermind organizer of the struggle to save APV. He always held the moral high ground because of Houston's paucity of public housing

The tenants elected Johnson as the president of the APV's Residents Council in 1983. By 1984 the Houston City Council had passed a resolution approving the HACH plan to raze APV. Local and regional HUD offices approved the plan in 1985.

During the fight Johnson used several tactics and strategies to stop the destruction of APV – strategies that included empowerment, education, coalition building, litigation and legislation. Johnson told Shelterforce that his most important strategy was teaching the residents that they could gain the power to help themselves. After that, Johnson and his supporters were able to use the courts to stall the demolition.

Lawsuits allowed the facts to become public information and kept the issue in the media. Once the residents got into federal court they could conduct discovery to produce facts that would support their cause, Johnson remembered. "Legislation was useful but without support from people, it fails," he said.

After Johnson organized the residents, he turned to non-residents, including credentialed members of the community. Johnson's allies convinced U.S. Representative Henry B. Gonzalez, from Texas' 20th district in San Antonio, to hold a Housing and Community Development subcommittee hearing in Houston about the proposed APV demolition.

As president of the Residents Council, Lenwood Johnson said his most important strategy was teaching the residents that they could gain the power to help themselves.

After the October 1985 hearing, Gonzalez ordered the General Accounting Office to launch an investigation into the APV plan and a similar plan to raze public housing complexes in Dallas. Gonzalez also asked Samuel Pierce, then-secretary of HUD, to withhold a decision until more hearings could be held. Gonzalez' actions stalled the city's demolition plans.

Although the APV residents got Gonzalez on their side, they could not get any support from their own congressman, Mickey Leland, despite the fact that the public housing issue fit with Leland's public persona as a champion of the poor. His record in Congress included co-sponsoring a bill that created the House Select Committee on Hunger.

In 1985 he was elected to the chairmanship of the Congressional Black Caucus. He pushed for affirmative action in broadcasting, led initiatives that created the National Commission on Infant Mortality and visited soup kitchens and homeless encampments.

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read more: http://houston.indymedia.org/news/2009/10/68868.php

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## SDS works to build student support against 287(g) program in Houston/Harris County

On Monday October 12th, Houston SDS distributed fliers in front of the MD Anderson Library on campus and performed street theater about the racist nature of the 287(g) program, which gives local law enforcement the ability to enforce immigration law, which is a federal responsability. The text of the flier is below, as well as uploaded as a jpg and pdf that we encourage supporters of immigrant rights and racial justice to distribute.

On Wednesday October 14th, we hosted a workshop by the Houston Interfaith Worker Justice Center about the 287(g) program and the efforts taking place in Houston to get the city and county to terminate their agreements with the federal government through this program. We are working on a letter writing campaign to the Harris County Commisioners and the mayoral candidates for them to strongly oppose the implementation of this program, which is a waste of local resources and a violation of civil rights. 287(g) is a program that should be scrapped in Houston and nationwide. Right now the city of Houston has ended its agreement with the Department of Homeland Security. Mayor Bill White has declared "Rather than letting us simply write the agreements on our own terms, they want to put language in there that we object to. We don't want anything that creates obligations on the part of the city, or that would be inconsistent with our policies not to divert patrol o-cers from solving crimes." However Harris County continues the 287(g) program in its jails. We oppose this program and want Sheri ff Adrian Garcia and the County Commisioners to end this program as soon as possible to defend our rights and our pocketbooks. Tell them you oppose 287(g) www.co.harris.tx.us/elected_offi-cials.asp






## 10/15 Over 700 stand in unity in Houston for the Justice for Janitors Convention and March

In 2006, Houston janitors stood up to win better jobs for Houston after they were forced to go on strike. They won a collective bargaining agreement that gave them access to affordable healthcare and raised their wages to $7.75. Their contract expires in November.

With negotiations to improve more than 3,200 local jobs set to start at the end of the month, Houston janitors hosted this convention and march to call for an economy that works for everyone. Speakers included representatives from Service Employees International Union (SEIU), U.S. Representive Sheila Jackson- Lee and Houston Mayoral candidate Annise Parker.

At the conclusion of the convention, we marched through the intersection of Post Oak and Westheimer, the scene of the janitors' first civil disobedience during their '06 strike. The crowd swelled to over 700 with four more bus loads showing up at the Williams Tower. Houston City Council member Jolanda Jones marched the entire time at the front of the line stretching for blocks.

## 10/10 Houston SDS hosts teach in on Afghanistan, one of 25+ actions against the war

Houston SDS hosted a Teach in on Afghanistan that was attended by about 70 people, overwhelmingly students, on October 7th. We screened an excerpt of Rethink Afghanistan and had presentations by University of Houston History Professor Bob Buzzanco about the history of Afghanistan focusing on the period during the cold war, and by Afghanistan Veteran Matt Dobbs about his experiences in two tours of duty in Afghanistan, and how he has come to oppose the war on a civilian population which is fighting a battle of self-defense against the US lead occupation.

This event kicks of the work of our anti-war and occupation working group which will be hosting additional events about Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine this semester. We'd like to thank Matt Dobbs and Professor Buzzanco for taking the time to prepare and give statements to this teach in, as well as to all the other folks who helped put together and promote this event.

On Wednesday October 7, students on 26 campuses across the United States protested eight long years of war against and occupation of the people of Afghanistan. Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), a nation-wide student organization committed to activism for peace, justice and equality, organized the protest.



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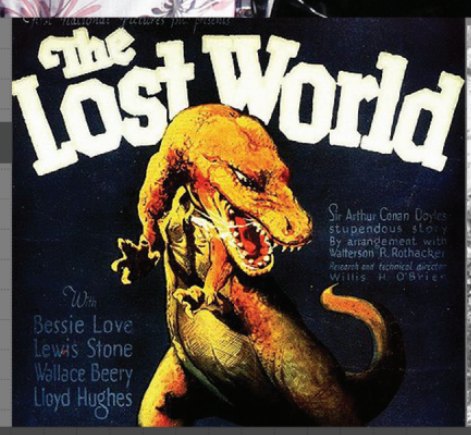
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# OFF MESSAGE

THE FOUNDERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH AND CODE PINK

by NICK COOPER | NICKCOOPER.COM

**TWO IMPORTANT PEACE AND JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS ARE HAVING INTERNAL CONFLICTS OVER RECENT COMMENTS BY THEIR FOUNDING MEMBERS. HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH'S ROBERT L. BERNSTEIN CRITICIZED HIS OWN GROUP FOR OVERLY DENOUNCING ISRAEL, AND CODE PINK'S MEDEA BENJAMIN STOPPED DEMANDING AN IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS FROM AFGHANISTAN.**




**ON OCTOBER 19,** Bernstein published a New York Times editorial in which he declared he was joining the critics of his own organization, Human Rights Watch (HRW). I'll try to summarize his points:

**1)** Open, democratic societies shouldn't be held to the same standards as the "non-democratic worlds." This was the policy of HRW for years, to stop the Soviet block from "playing a moral equivalence game with the West." However, recently HRW has been dropping this policy, especially in the Middle East.

This idea is reminiscent of Orwell's "some animals are more equal than others." The people living in democracies have a voice and a vote and therefore should be held more liable than the people living under authoritarian rule for any war crimes by their leaders and military.

**2)** "Human Rights Watch has written far more condemnations of Israel for violations of international law than of any other country in the region," even though Israel has the checks and balances of an open society. The Arab regimes pale in comparison, and their people need the help of HRW reports.

If Israel's checks and balances were functioning, wouldn't it be much more likely than a "nondemocratic" state to respond to human rights criticisms and to improve its behavior?

**3)** Hamas and Hezbollah attack Israeli citizens, use their own people as human shields, get support from Iran, "which has openly declared its intention not just to destroy Israel but to murder Jews everywhere," an incitement to genocide.

I wish he had included the exact Iranian quote, I hadn't heard anything that extreme before.

**4)** Israel is "the repeated victim of aggression," but nonetheless "faces the brunt of Human Rights Watch's criticism." Israeli wrongs should be considered as occurring in the context of self-defense. Human Rights Watch should get back on track and accept that Israel is genuinely trying to conduct war according to the rules.

I am not open to the idea that bombing schools, UN facilities and using white phosphorus munitions in densely populated zones lives up to any rules of war.

Human Rights Watch wrote a response in which they said that every country should be scrutinized equally and that they stand by their work. They also explained that in April, the HRW Board of Directors had unanimously rejected Bernstein's suggestion that Human Rights Watch should report only on closed societies.

I have written articles before about the history of Israel / Palestine (houston.indymedia.org/news/2008/11/65540.php), so I won't repeat here my efforts. But for those of us who are convinced that Israel is and has always been the greater aggressor, we need to try to stop it from painting itself as the greater victim because we know the history of that technique. Anti-fascist psychiatrist Wilhelm Reich described it like this: "We have found out how the emotional plague operates. Having decided to gobble up Poland, it accuses Poland of planning armed aggression." Nazi war criminal Hermann Göring described the same technique as "The people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is to tell them they are being attacked."

I am not calling Bernstein a Nazi, but after a war with a civilian death toll ratio of over 100 Palestinians to every 1 Israeli, it seems quite a feat to convince himself and others that Israel is the main victim.

**CODE PINK** is an organization started by women that fights for peace and justice in often humorous and flamboyant ways. Upon returning from Afghanistan, Code Pink's activist-celebrity Medea Benjamin declared that she "found very few people who would like the troops out now. Most say that the country would collapse into civil war or be taken over by the Taliban if the US troops were to leave." She also said "I feel we have to have a responsible exit strategy that includes pressure on this government to get rid of people who were responsible for crimes, to build up a justice system that can actually function."

Many people involved with Code Pink around the country had been demanding immediate withdrawal for years, and so were shocked. In Houston, some Code Pink participants have started organizing to repudiate Benjamin's statements.

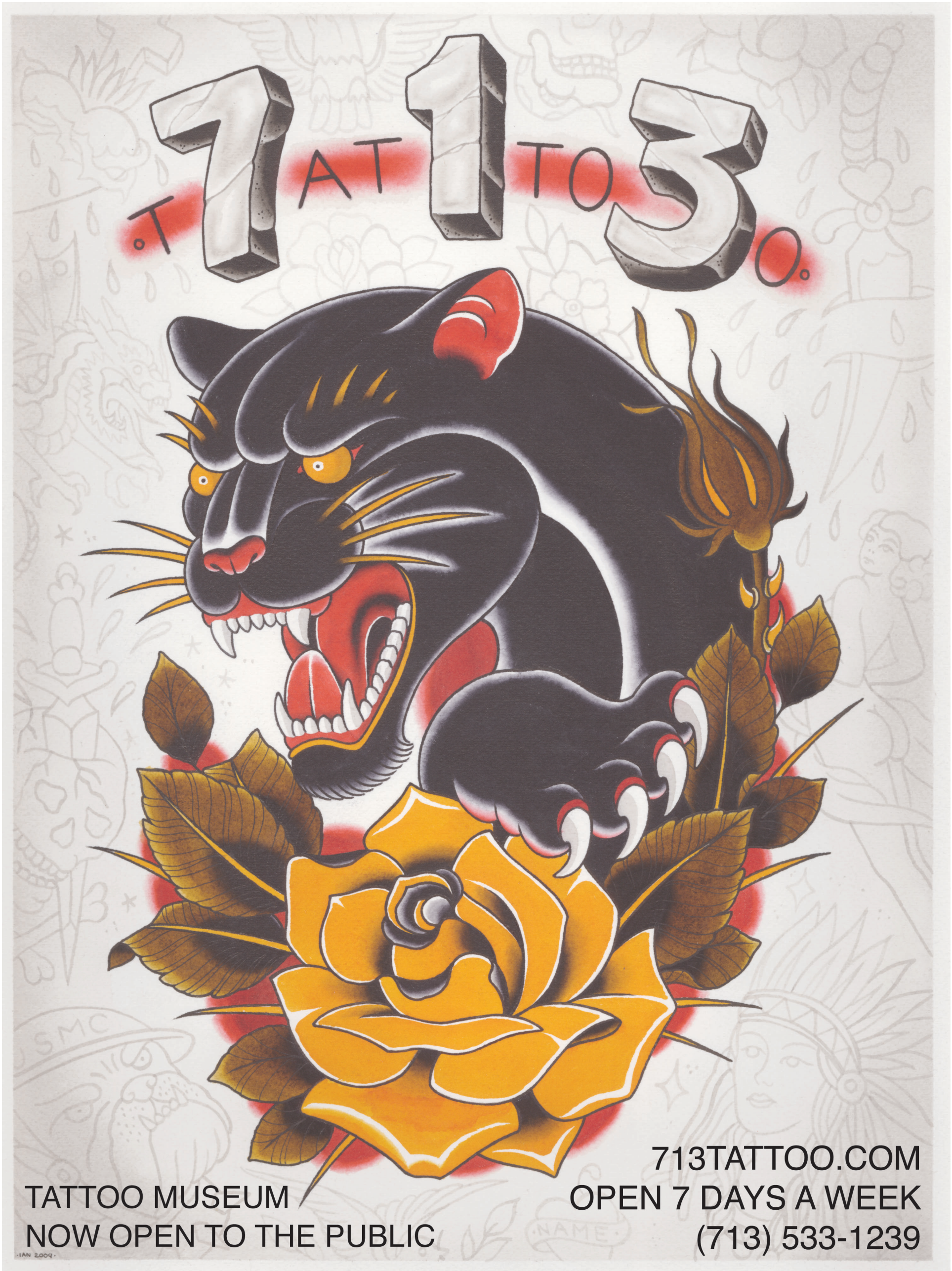
Benjamin claims she met with an extremely diverse group in Afghanistan, but acknowledges that she didn't meet with anyone outside of Kabul. Her critics go much further, including Counterpunch writer Sharon Smith who accuses Benjamin of meeting a "hand picked group of politically connected Afghan women that included President Karzai's sister-in-law..."

While it is important to consider the voices of those that Benjamin met in Kabul, it is hard to imagine how an anti-war organization representing women's voices can go against the wishes of Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), who have demanded "as soon as possible, the US/NATO troops must vacate our country." RAWA has a legitimacy to speak about Afghanistan that Code Pink cannot ever have, but of course Code Pink has the bigger megaphone.

If it turned out that RAWA represented a minority view among Afghan women, and that the majority wanted the U.S. to withdraw slowly while meanwhile implementing some other changes such as talks with the Taliban, reconstruction, prosecution of U.S. contractors who commit crimes, etc. then it could be an interesting debate as to what position U.S. anti-war groups should support.

Americans imagine leaving Afghanistan would be similar to leaving Vietnam -- a mess that eventually ends. However, the Vietnam withdrawal happened in the context of Nixon's collapsing presidency. The macho nature of presidents at war might make getting Obama to withdraw just as far-fetched of a goal as getting the U.S. to become better occupiers. These wars are quagmires because options other than stay-the-course / escalate are hard to imagine.

Peace and justice organizations might be turning inward on themselves under Obama. If we agree that our messes in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, etc. are never going to be cleaned-up by Presidents, then the people and our organizations have a huge burden. We need to organize and we need to listen. It seems like asking about what the women of Afghanistan really want should have started at the beginning of Code Pink's efforts, not years later. FPH


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