FREE PRESS

Houston

Arts Film Music Technology World & Local News



4 Year Anniversary Issue
Issue #76
4 More Years!

- Electric Chair Mini
- Red Spring
- Whither Movies?
- Where to find Shelby....

NO ONE HAS A MORE POWERFUL NETWORK

KATANA by sanyo

Buy one for $49.99

It's all about design!

Super thin body
Two color display screens
Digital Camera
Bluetooth Ready
Mobile web access

Offer valid on new activations only



Sprint Fusic by LG
$79.99 after a $70.00 mail-in-rebate.
w/ 2 year service agreement
on a new line

FM Transmitter
1.3 Megapixel camera/video cam
External Navigation pad
Ring tone composer
Interchangable faceplates
64 MB MicroSD Card
Optional memory up to a gig
MP3 Player



Sprint®

Together with NEXTEL

Preferred Retailer

WESTERN TALK, L.C.

11 convenient locations

north

11423 Veterans Memorial
Corner of Veterans and Greens Rd.
281.895.8522

4610 FM 1960 W.
West of Veterans Memorial
281.895.9400

8620 Spring Cypress
East of Champions Forest
281.251.9961

17504 Hempstead Hwy
Jones Rd. and 290
713.466.3242

6078 Fry Rd.
at West Little York
713.869.5505

7640 Airline Dr.
North of W. Little York
281.931.3773

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

south

11618 SW Fwy @ Wilcrest
832.328.4663

8104 SW Fwy @ Beechnut
713.541.4552

8000 Gulf Fwy
45 and Broadway, big yellow building
713.645.8808

3341 Telephone Rd.
45 & Wayside behind Wings & More
713.921.6461

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

central

514 Elgin
Next to Late Nite Pie
713.861.0811

**Rates exclude taxes & Sprint Fees (including USF charge of up to 2.26% that varies quarterly, cost recovery fees up to $2.83 per line, & state/local fees that vary by area). Sprint Fees are not taxes or gov't req'd charges.

Coverage not avail. everywhere. Avail. features & services will vary by phone/network. Nationwide Spritn PCS Network reaches over 250 million people. Offers not avail. in all markets. Subject to credit approval, $36 activation & $200 early termination fee per line. Deposit may be req'd. Add'l terms & restrictions apply. See store or Sprint.com for details. Offer ends 2/17/07 or while supplies last. Instant Savings: Activation at time of purchase required. Mail-in Rebate: Rqrs purchase by 2/17/07 & activation by 3/3/07. Rebate amount can't exceed purchase price. Line must be active 30 consecutive days. Allow 8 to 12 weeks for rebate. Sprint Nextel. All rights reserved. Sprint, the logo and other trademarks are the trademarks of Sprint Nextel.

ThisIssue February **2007** what you'll find



Music, pg 14
Shelby's Picks



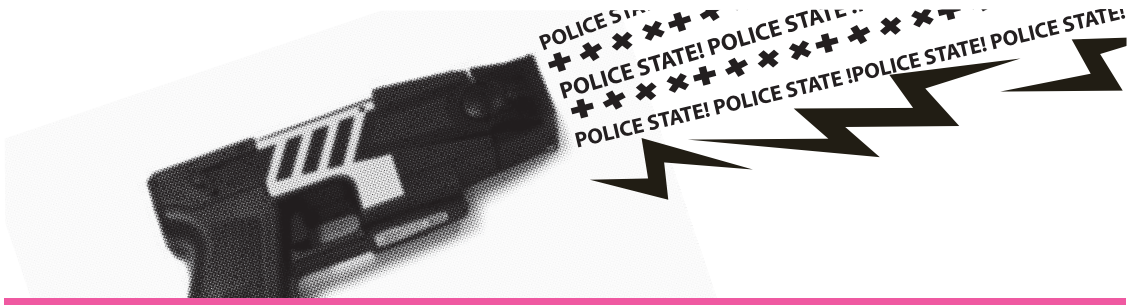
World, pg 22
Dreams & Nightmares



Tech-knowledge, pg 18
Review: Lost Planet: Extreme Conditions



World, pg 28
Ice-Storm Apocalypse



World, pg 20
The Electic-Chair Mini

Also:

• **Editors,** pg 4: Swirly Fun
• **Art,** pg 6: Red Spring
• **Film,** pg 8: Whither Movies?
• **Music,** pg: 10 Music is so Cliché
• **World,** pg 26: Aetna Nightmare

cover art | **Rueben Levi**

The Free Press is an open forum. Public submissions are encouraged. The Free Press will never refer to itself in third person. We do not endorse any of the ideas, products, or candidates included in this publication. The Free Press does not knowingly accept false advertising or editorial nor does the publisher assume responsibility should such advertising or editorial appear. The Free Press is not liable for anything, anywhere, ever.

AWN
editors@freepresshouston.com
713.527.0014

Publishers Andrea Afra, Omar Afra, Omar Al-Bochi

Associate Editors
Arts Sean Carroll
Film Michael Bergeron
Local Alex Wukman
Music Kwame M. Anderson
Managing Editor Omar Afra

Contributors & Staff
Writers Lance Walker, Brandon Montes, Tyler Barber, Devin McNulty, Jeff Storm, Alex "Asshole" Wukman, John Fergusin, Timothy O'Brien, Brittany Bly, Shelby Kelly, Nick Cooper, Eric Anthamatten
Photographers Anthony Rathbun, Mark Armes
Art Director Tyler Barber
Designers/Illustrations Jody Worthington, Lyndia Haryanto, Omar Al-Bochi, Ryan Ottea, Shelby Kelly, Tim Dorsey, Tyler Barber
Delivery Jeff Storm, Mark Galveston, Tony Kaelin, Jerri Huston, Evan Dunivan, Ozcan Ozcelik

Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07

Feel free to take us seriously

-editors



Last summer, I lost my wedding ring. At the time I noticed it, it was a sweltering afternoon and I was on the Dunlavy Bridge protesting the Israeli-Hezbollah War by displaying signs to rush-hour traffic. I thought the ring must have slipped off my sweaty finger onto the 59 traffic. Well, today, my toilet was apparently clogged and has been over-flowing for the last hour or so without me knowing. My wife discovered it and was ***very*** happy. After moving all the bed-room furniture to attempt to dry up the room, I found my ring. There it was, looking at me in the face as an ugly, ugly reminder of my monogamy.

Moral of the story:

1. Don't eat Taqueria for breakfast and lunch.
2. There is always a silver lining to a toilet flooding. Well, not really.
3. The Illuminati hates me.
4. War has repercussions that permeate distant worlds.
5. I will never touch another set of boobies for the rest of my life.

Oh yeah, Free Press turns four this month. Is that not when you should get potty trained? Thanks Houston. We love you despite your inherent suckiness. We hope you feel the same.



MUSICIAN'S DREAM



CUSTOM T-SHIRTS

832-203-8225

LOCATED AROUND I-10 & SHEPHERD

THE CHEAPEST PRICES IN TOWN!!!!

NO SCREEN CHARGES!!!

FREE 1" BUTTONS ON ORDERS OF 24 T-SHIRTS OR MORE!!!

NO SET-UP FEES!!!

CALL FOR DETAILS

1-Color Print 1 side, Color T-shirt:
12 Shirts $6.50/ea 24 Shirts $5.75/ea
36 Shirts $5.50/ea 48 Shirts $5.25/ea
50-100 $5.00/ea 101-200 $4.75/ea
***Add $.50 cents for 2-Side Print

www.myspace.com/musiciansdream





Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07

Arts

DEBRIS: Red Spring

by Buffalo Sean



Surprise, surprise! Looks like art is coming to Montrose for once as underground exhibits pop up and established hipster non-profits vie for the attention of all those beer drinking kids. After years of focus on the east side of downtown and rumors of Midtown's ascension to prominence the last few months have seen a DIY explosion off Westheimer. **Catbirds** has promoted successful shows since last summer, with regular sales and diverse talent courtesy of Lindsay. **Refuge**, four apartments off of Taft Street, opens this month with a premiere exhibit featuring Leila Dallal, and a night of performances January 27th. (302 Saulnier to those who use mapquest) **Diverseworks** brought the bubbly Gina to Poison Girl a few weeks ago, and between the smokers getting in their last indoor cigarettes and a loud kick in the nuts it was quite a fun night.

Montrose galleries still stagnate, as **Rudolph/ Artscan** goes with the tepid Kate Petley and atmospheric Anderson Wrangle in a new show for a new year. Sandwiched in-between the two is a lovely collection of R. Crumb prints of the life of Charles Bukowski, if you are obsessed with either character make sure to stop by the next time you are across the street at Tapatia's margarita happy hour. "The Block" (4411 Montrose) holds the curiously clueless **Wade Wilson Gallery** putting up with Jill Moser's scrawly machines, **Joan Wich** with an exhibit of all dogs, **Anya Tish** with Polish artist Agnieszka Sandomierz toeing the pornography line a little too close to Warhol and a little too far from feminism, and **Barbara Davis'** *Overdrive*; which sounded good on paper, but the names overshadow the work (mostly prints).

I'm intrigued by artist **Amy Granard** in New York; using physical manipulation of film she scratches, mars, and marks the reel, then projects it. Similar to Man Ray's film *The Return of Reason*, 1923 (ubu.com/film/ray.html); if this really gets some press it may lend some credence to 'instant film', where images are only on the screen for a second- blurring disparate moments into the gestalt we know of as a scene.

Next month brings Houston artist **Francesca Fuchs** to the Contemporary Arts Museum, a delightful product of the MFAH's CORE program that actually stuck around. **Andrea Grover** of Aurora Picture Show is another member of that small group; it's easier than ever to see what she's up to since their offices are now next door to the Menil's bookstore!

February 23rd opens a beautiful mess of a show at the Menil, *Cardboards and Related Pieces* by **Robert Rauschenberg**. One of the most reviled bodies of work of the last century when it was created in the 70s, Rauschenberg's cardboard constructions reeked of 60s minimalism when the new thing was anti-material conceptualism. Over time this has grown into a real appreciation for these "Fuck You" artworks by art historians hailing them as "a continuation of the found object tradition and the exploration of the boundaries between painting and sculpture". All works in the show, except two, were bought by Europeans back in 1971- now they return to the US to be fawned over.

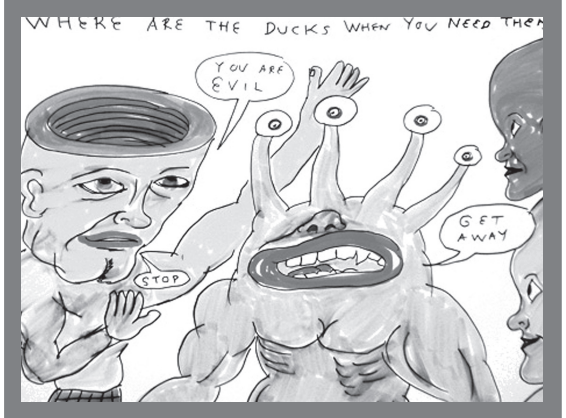
Michael Jones McKean's monstrous installation at Diverseworks (up through February 24th) is surely something to gawk at; recommended viewing while really high. Ignore the molasses-thick writing on the exhibit and just go see it. Familiar motifs are juxtaposed bluntly, the space utilized brilliantly. Cuidado, you may feel seasick after a bit.



Chiho Aoshima: City Glow
Museum of Fine Arts Houston 1001 Bissonnet
opens Saturday, January 27
Through April 29. (713) 639-7300



Judy Pfaff: . . . . . all of the above
Rice Gallery 6100 Main st.
opens Thursday, February 1
Through April 1. (713) 348-6069



Daniel Johnston: Where Are The Ducks When You Need Them?
Domy Bookstore 1709 Westheimer
opens Friday, February 16, 6 - 8 pm
Through March 1. (713) 523-3669



Hamish Fulton: Geronimo Homeland
Texas Gallery 2012 Peden Street
Through February 10. (713) 524-1593

WALTERS
ON
WASHINGTON

+ + + + + + + + +

1/27
Job for a Cowboy, Psyopus
See You Next Tuesday
The Acacia Strain, Daath
+ + + + + + + + +
1/31
God Forbid
Goatwhore, Mnemic, Arsis
the Human Abstract,
Byzantine
+ + + + + + + + +
2/2
The Paper Chase
w/ Motion Turns It On, Radio
Pioneer
+ + + + + + + + +
2/3
Pride Kills, Iron Age, Lie and
Wait, On My Side
+ + + + + + + + +
2/4
The Jonbenet, The American
Black Lung, Blues, Fight Pretty,
The Orangeburg Massacre
+ + + + + + + + +
2/10
Sound Team w/
Gulf of Mexico, Folsom,
Palehorse, Fight Like Hell, Die
Young, Knuckle Up
+ + + + + + + + +
2/11
Sworn Enemy, Kataklysm, Too
Pure Too Die, As Blood Runs
Black
+ + + + + + + + +
2/12
From a Second Story Window,
Heavy Heavy Low Low, Cancer
Bats, FIght Pretty, Scale the
Summit
+ + + + + + + + +
2/14
Destruction, Into Eternity,
Hirax, Insect Warfare
+ + + + + + + + +
2/15
Young Love, Moros Eros
+ + + + + + + + +
2/17
Complete Control, Signal Lost,
Silence Kills, Los de Verdad
+ + + + + + + + +
2/22
Midlake w/ Tacks the Boy
Disaster, St. Vincent
+ + + + + + + + +
2/23
Red Sparowes
+ + + + + + + + +
2/24
Krum Bums,
World Burns to Death

+ + + + + + + + +

WWW.4215WASHINGTON.COM
713-862-2513

Why wouldn't you get your Free Checking from the bank rated #1 in Customer Satisfaction five years in a row?

Unbeatable Free Checking MADE POSSIBLE WITH WACHOVIA

- Free Online Banking
- Free Online BillPay
- Free Balance Alerts
- No direct deposit required
- No monthly service fee
- No minimum balance
- Free Check Card
- Free Visa Extras rewards program
- Unlimited access to Wachovia Financial Centers and ATMs

STOP BY YOUR LOCAL
WACHOVIA FINANCIAL CENTER TODAY,
OR CALL 800-WACHOVIA (800-922-4684).
TO FIND THE TEXAS FINANCIAL CENTER
NEAREST YOU, VISIT WACHOVIA.COM/LOCATOR.



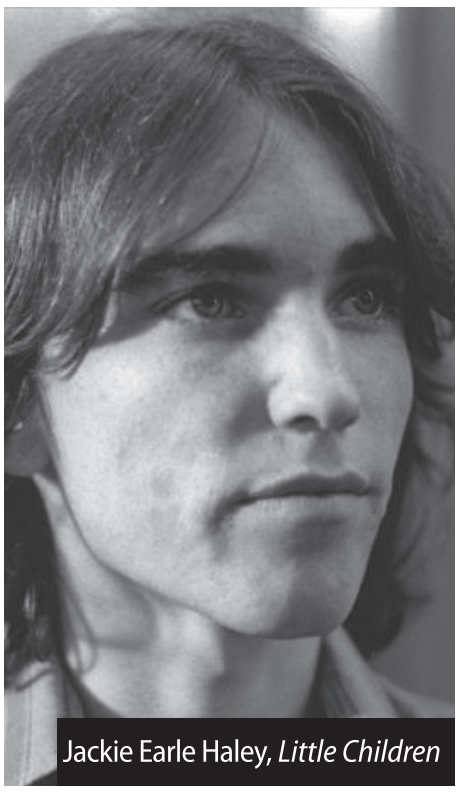
WACHOVIA

Rating based on 4th quarter ACSI customer satisfaction results of the largest U.S. retail banks. Free Checking is for personal accounts only. Wachovia Bank, N.A., and Wachovia Bank of Delaware, N.A., are Members FDIC.
© 2006 Wachovia Corporation

Film

Whither Movies?

by Michael Bergeron



Jackie Earle Haley, *Little Children*



Kate Winslet, *Little Children*



Eddie Murphey, ***Dreamgirls***

They hype surrounding the Academy Awards was deflated on Tuesday morning as (once again) the pundits who had been predicting their choices were proved wrongo and the blogs starting, well, backtrack blogging. As is always the case: nobody knows nothing. Of course your humble scribe is above the fray and has a plus-70 percent accuracy record in picking the eventual winners. Natch, my superhero code of conduct prohibits me from engaging in personal office betting. However, I will gladly answer questions so you can ace your office Oscar pool. Think about it, a corp with 187 employees each throwing down half a sawbuck to choose the winners. (mtbergeron@houston.rr.com)

Seriously, the credibility of the Academy stands unblemished as they spread the wealth on what, for the most part, are the cream of the crop. I make my predictions based on a combination of industry analysis, guild awards, and cold hard facts provided by a coterie of inside contacts.

Dreamgirls, a modern musical with its share of good and bad scenes, got the recognition Eddie Murphey and Jennifer Hudson, its costumes, sound mixing and art direction deserve. Plus, three, count them, three noms for best song. Albeit, Paramount would have everyone believe Dreamgirls was a lock for best picture and director.

Here's how that works. Dreamgirls has been gestating as a David Geffen project for years, and Geffen is one of the trio who owns DreamWorks. At the beginning of last year Paramount bought DreamWorks. Sumner Redstone the old dude who looks like a Shar Pei and who owns the multinational corp that owns Paramount decreed that Dreamgirls was the Paramount Oscar winner a year ago. Sumner also canned Paramount's deal with Tom Cruise, but in reality Cruise had the best ever points on the DVD release of MI:3, a deal which netted him so much that Paramount barely breaks even. That's what that was about. And ask yourself, if Cruise was an Ayn Rand fanatic and went of on a Rand tirade insisting that Matt Lauer was glib about the existence of objective reality instead of Scientology would the press reaction have been similar? Be assured that Sumner left no budget unturned in making Dreamgirls a household topic of discussion through media ads and cultural perception. Likewise the Golden Globes composed of less than 90 entertainment reporters choose Paramount's Dreamgirls and Paramount Vantage's Babel as their best films. That series of awards should be for best junket.

Just as Dreamgirls got what it deserved so did Little Children achieve the kind of accolades that suggest its true quality. Best actress (Kate Winslet), best supporting actor (Jackie Earle Haley, more on him in a minute), and best adapted screenplay (director Todd Fields and source author Tom Perrotta). This little seen film, it never opened last year wider than 50 screens, delivers in a timeless manner with strong storytelling and acting and adult plotlines. Fields is a disciple of Kubrick (he played Nick Nightingale in Eyes Wide Shut) and Little Children is laced with Kubrick style camera moves as well as an askance look at the human condition.

Don't get caught up in the top three, picture, actor, actress, to the point of excluding what the various branches of the Academy indicate about various films. Despite Black Dahlia tanking at the box office it nabs a cinematography nod because it contains the single most elegant long take in a movie in 2006. Ditto to Children of Men, which didn't score in the top categories but placed in cinematography, adapted screenplay and editing. Marie Antoinette lives on in costume design. A complete list of nominees can be found at: (www.oscars.org/79academyawards/noms.html)

What strikes an amazing chord is how fast a quality film like Perfume: The Story of a Murderer was in and out of theaters. A two week engagement and now its nowhere to be found. The Tom Tykwer adaptation of the historically set novel has made over $100-million in Europe and does zilch domestically. Once again it's all about what people write about and what they ignore. Read any coverage of the current Sundance Film Festival and you're likely to come across mention of the documentary Zoo. It's the story of a group of men who have sex with horses. Not exactly your average cup of mulch. But nobody's writing about the retro screening of X: The Unheard Music, a 1986 musical doc that shows the germination of one of the best rock bands in the last generation.

Interview

The Free Press Houston spoke with Jackie Earle Haley by phone last month in anticipation of the larger rollout of Little Children. Although Haley was in Dallas at the time, he lives in San Antonio where he runs JEH Productions, a corporate communications firm. To hear Haley tell it he couldn't get arrested much less a film role and his resume has a gap from 1993 until 2006 when he re-entered the scene with striking performances in All the King's Men (Haley was Sugar Boy, the governor's enforcer) and Little Children.

Haley may not be a household name but as a child actor you would immediately recognize him. He was an original slugger for the Bad News Bears and was one of the kids in Breaking Away. There was a bunch of TV guest roles, one that sticks out was his 3-lines on The Partridge Family.

Haley's chilling portrait of a child molester on parole in Little Children brings his career to a mobius strip of a full circle. In his first feature The Day of the Locust (1975) he was the precocious child. (In Day of the Locust Donald Sutherland plays molester Homer Simpson. Yes Matt Groening got the name for the paterfamilias of the popular cartoon from a Nathanael West novel about decadent 1920s Hollywood.)

Haley recalls getting the Little Children script from his agent. "I made a tape and sent it to Todd Fields even before he began auditioning," Haley said. Haley was flown to New York to read and his All the King's Men co-star Kate Winslet was there to read with him for Fields.

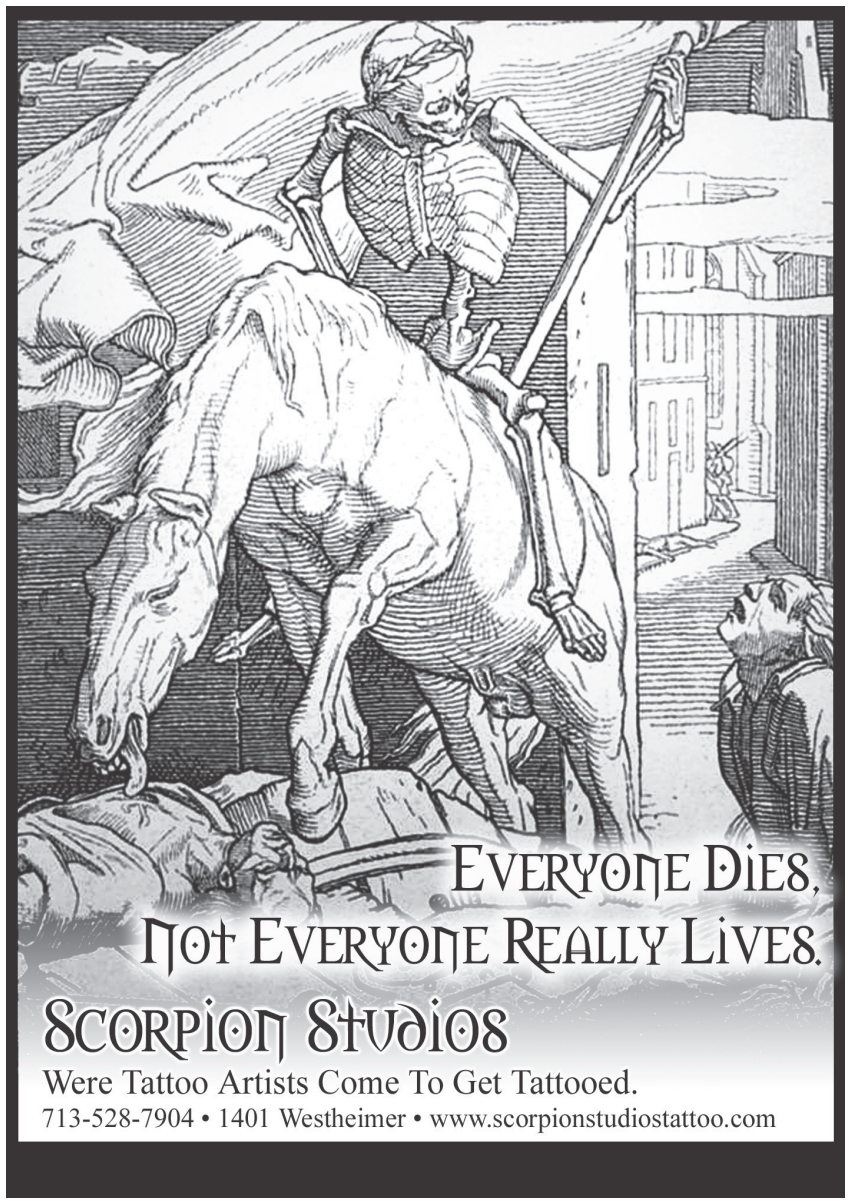
"Todd can be an actor's director because of all the roles he's had in front of the camera," states Haley, "But he's also a visionary. There's not an aspect of the production that he doesn't know about or oversee." As for the creepy interpretation that Haley gives his sex offender character of Ronnie that was a process that "evolved from day to day as I would focus on different aspects of his character."

Little Children may be the best of the least seen films of 2006 and if you haven't caught it you will probably have to wait for the DVD (unlike films like Last King of Scotland or The Departed which return to screens this Friday).

Excel Contractors
for home, business, galleries

Specializing in:
Remodeling
Room additions
Painting
Carpentry
Plumbing
Electric

Call 832.623.7366



1533 Westheimer
Houston, Texas 77006
713-533-1239
World renowned
713 Body Piercing
Houston's Largest Studio
Professional, clean, and sterile
Largest selection of the highest quality body jewelry
www.713tattoo.com
www.hotrodstudio.com

Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07

Music

Music is *so* Cliché

by Kwame M. Anderson

Upon hearing about Marnie Stern's debut album, In Advance Of The Broken Arm (Kill Rock Stars), I was intrigued. She is a guitar virtuoso that writes songs. Simple enough, right? No, it's never that simple, or at least it shouldn't be. Stern, on one hand, is influenced by bands such as The Boredoms, Hella, Don Caballero, US Maple, and while she employs the finger picking style used by Spencer Seim (Hella) and Ian Williams (Battles, Storm and Stress, ex Don Caballero), she takes the technique and puts it into songs. This is rare because most of the time guitar playing of this nature is relegated to instrumental music, but Stern has possibly done something, dare I say, new.

"Well, I when I started writing songs…I've always written 'song' songs, you know melody regular chord progression, and then a bunch of years ago I started listening to the bands you were talking about and I was so obsessed with them, but I still wanted to write 'song' songs, but I wanted to figure out a way to bring, I honestly think the feminine part of me is attracted to melody and that kind of thing, and the other part of me that likes that crazy guitar stuff, um I just wanted to bring them together. But for a long time I was trying so hard to fit into their world style wise or the other world style wise until I was like forget it. I mean it was really embarrassing to me at first when I was writing them (her songs) because I was like what is this, you know what I mean, and then I just kept going with it, and I was like this is it, this is what's…this is real, so I'm just going to keep going."

Stern's songs are unique, but not in the sense that they should be cast off to eccentric island to only be appreciated by the "informed" music listener, or whatever. Her songs are full of melodies that are catchy and many of them fit into the time structure of what we define as pop music, but there is an added dose of goodness that pushes these songs beyond the line in the sand some of us have drawn. But the thing is this, she has a style that is her own. Many albums are good because they remind you of another album, or a time (the 70's, the 90's, the 60's, etc.), but Stern's music exists in a space that completely hers. There are elements of things, but nothing that can be cross referenced can really come close to what she is actually doing.

Another thing is Stern is one of the few artists signed to Kill Rock Stars on demo alone. And what a demo it must've been, because upon hearing it Zach Hill (drummer supreme, member of Hella, did I mention bad ass drummer) agreed to not only play on the album but produce it as well.

"I sent in the demo and then Slimm (Moon, onetime president of KRS, now employed by Nonsesuch, his wife now continues the legacy) called me and said they were going to put out the record, and when I had recorded the demo originally it was a drum machine so he wanted me to do live drums. So I was looking around for drummers and someone at the label had given Zack a demo, and then he called Slim and said 'Oh, I wanna produce and work on it.' Can you imagine? I mean I was, I can't even tell you how excited I was."

While all of this may be a lot to digest, February 20th her album drops, and February 25th Marnie Stern plays the Proletariat. This will be a chance at seeing some of the most exciting guitar work of our time, possibly witnessing the phoenix before it's rising, and it will be a chance to buy her album and chat her up, she's extremely nice. But, as I have heard the masterpiece, it seems almost impossible to replicate live. The idea of her playing and singing these songs seems unthinkable, and the duplication of the drum parts is even more mind numbing. But, Stern assures me that this reality can come into fruition.

"I practice a lot, so I can do it, and in terms of looking down (to change the chords) I just point the microphone down, so if I have to look at the guitar I can still sing into the mike. But yeah, I just practice it, and practice it, and practice it, so I can totally do it, I mean, it's hard going one way, the vocals going a total other way, and then I want to be like charismatic and like having fun with the audience, so I don't know I've been managing to somehow do it."

One last thing, as certain things tend to color our experience. One thing that is sort of agitating is that in preparation for this piece I read many things about Marnie Stern mostly focusing on her as "indie-girl guitar wiz" or something. I implore you to look past these things and listen the music. While the guitar playing is great, the songs are equally great. This awful world of rock critique that we inhabit, makes thing only seem valid by association or some sort of circus value, which in some ways debilitates our ability to APPRECIATE music rather than just hear it, and jump to references.

"I guess there aren't that many female guitar players out there



Free Radicals
2/15 @ Super Happy Fun Land



Yonder Mountain String Band
2/3 @ Meridian



DJ Sun
2/17 @ Warehouse Live



Of Montreal
2/17 @ Number's



The Euforquestra
2/23 @ Last Concert Café



Jesu
3/1 @ Numbers

Upon hearing about Marnie Stern's debut album, In Advance Of The Broken Arm (Kill Rock Stars), I was intrigued. She is a guitar virtuoso that writes songs. Simple enough, right? No, it's never that simple, or at least it shouldn't be. Stern, on one hand, is influenced by bands such as The Boredoms, Hella, Don Caballero, US Maple, and while she employs the finger picking style used by Spencer Seim (Hella) and Ian Williams (Battles, Storm and Stress, ex Don Caballero), she takes the technique and puts it into songs. This is rare because most of the time guitar playing of this nature is relegated to instrumental music, but Stern has possibly done something, dare I say, new.

"Well, I when I started writing songs…I've always written 'song' songs, you know melody regular chord progression, and then a bunch of years ago I started listening to the bands you were talking about and I was so obsessed with them, but I still wanted to write 'song' songs, but I wanted to figure out a way to bring, I honestly think the feminine part of me is attracted to melody and that kind of thing, and the other part of me that likes that crazy guitar stuff, um I just wanted to bring them together. But for a long time I was trying so hard to fit into their world style wise or the other world style wise until I was like forget it. I mean it was really embarrassing to me at first when I was writing them (her songs) because I was like what is this, you know what I mean, and then I just kept going with it, and I was like this is it, this is what's…this is real, so I'm just going to keep going."

Stern's songs are unique, but not in the sense that they should be cast off to eccentric island to only be appreciated by the "informed" music listener, or whatever. Her songs are full of melodies that are catchy and many of them fit into the time structure of what we define as pop music, but there is an added dose of goodness that pushes these songs beyond the line in the sand some of us have drawn. But the thing is this, she has a style that is her own. Many albums are good because they remind you of another album, or a time (the 70's, the 90's, the 60's, etc.), but Stern's music exists in a space that completely hers. There are elements of things, but nothing that can be cross referenced can really come close to what she is actually doing.

Another thing is Stern is one of the few artists signed to Kill Rock Stars on demo alone. And what a demo it must've been, because upon hearing it Zach Hill (drummer supreme, member of Hella, did I mention bad ass drummer) agreed to not only play on the album but produce it as well.

"I sent in the demo and then Slimm (Moon, onetime president of KRS, now employed by Nonsesuch, his wife now continues the legacy) called me and said they were going to put out the record, and when I had recorded the demo originally it was a drum machine so he wanted me to do live drums. So I was looking around for drummers and someone at the label had given Zack a demo, and then he called Slim and said 'Oh, I wanna produce and work on it.' Can you imagine? I mean I was, I can't even tell you how excited I was."

While all of this may be a lot to digest, February 20th her album drops, and February 25th Marnie Stern plays the Proletariat. This will be a chance at seeing some of the most exciting guitar work of our time, possibly witnessing the phoenix before it's rising, and it will be a chance to buy her album and chat her up, she's extremely nice. But, as I have heard the masterpiece, it seems almost impossible to replicate live. The idea of her playing and singing these songs seems unthinkable, and the duplication of the drum parts is even more mind numbing. But, Stern assures me that this reality can come into fruition.

"I practice a lot, so I can do it, and in terms of looking down (to change the chords) I just point the microphone down, so if I have to look at the guitar I can still sing into the mike. But yeah, I just practice it, and practice it, and practice it, so I can totally do it, I mean, it's hard going one way, the vocals going a total other way, and then I want to be like charismatic and like having fun with the audience, so I don't know I've been managing to somehow do it."

One last thing, as certain things tend to color our experience. One thing that is sort of agitating is that in preparation for this piece I read many things about Marnie Stern mostly focusing on her as "indie-girl guitar wiz" or something. I implore you to look past these things and listen the music. While the guitar playing is great, the songs are equally great. This awful world of rock critique that we inhabit, makes thing only seem valid by association or some sort of circus value, which in some ways debilitates our ability to APPRECIATE music rather than just hear it, and jump to references.

"I guess there aren't that many female guitar players out there who play like that I guess, so that's been the focus, I've been noticing, and, you know, I'm happy about that, you know, I have been playing guitar for a long time because I love it, trying to get good at it, but a the same time, I've been working on songs just as long, so yeah, I'd like the focus to be on the songs (rather than gender and technique) but, you know…I mean, honestly, not a lot of people have ever heard my music, so I can't really say… I don't care if people really are just focused on the guitar or what, I'm just psyched that people

continued pg. 12

WES THEI MER B LOCK PA RTY
3.24
FOR INFO:
EDITORS@
FREEPRESS
HOUSTON.COM



are listening to it, I mean I know that's a cliché silly thing to say, but it's true."

OH YEAH AND HERE'S SOME ALBUMS YOU MIGHT DIG

The FINCHES

HUMAN LIKE A HOUSE

(Dulc I Tone)

There were a lot of folk inspired album released in 2006, and it has become a tiresome tactic. The Finches while closely related to this style are much more than one might assume at first lesson. Human Like H House is a collection of songs that gets progressively better with each listen. The first listen will reveal the melodies and Carolyn Pennypacker's voice which gives a shimmer to each note sung. Pleasant and restrained, but still able to unveil hints of disappointment and humor, her voice accented by Aaron Morgan's baritone back up, gives the songs an almost conversational feel, which each song seem more familiar. One thing this CD does not share is a reliance on the guitar strums and stories as rhythmically it establishes a pace that can lead to a head nod if so inclined. "The Last Favor" is a special pop song that bids farewell to a friend (in whatever connotation). "O L A" is somewhat folky, but it is also a little reminiscent of 60's British pop. This album is a favorable start to the new year for me. The songs are strong, the lyrics are strong, and melodically this album is satisfying, as the title implies it is human, it's strength is it's subtlety.

DEERHOOF

FRIEND OPPORTUNIY

(Kill Rock Stars)

Deerhoof have proven to be consistently one of the most creative and inspiring bands of our time, and with their new album, none of this changes. "The Perfect Me" kicks off the album and it's almost like Deerhoof rock meets D.C. Go-Go music, if you know what that is. The percussive aspect of this song is truly amazing, it is a Deerhoof standard with a twist. As last year the band did loads of touring, but some of the groups they played with were hip hop bands, and there is a touch of hip hop stylee on tracks such "Believe E.S.P," in addition to some raga funk. "Choco-Fight" is another banger that continues in the mixed fruit bowl of styles that the band dishes so well. The album closer "Lookaway" is epic, haunting, and beautiful, it sweeps it implodes it explodes, it shakes you to the inner core, and it's a great song too. The loss of one member has not heard this band only cause them to somewhat re-invent themselves as amazing from being extremely superb.

MOS DEF

TRU3 MAGIC

(Geffen)

Rap music has become so pretty, so glistening, and many of us have forgotten the true gritty nature of the music. Well, Mos Def's latest album is in no way pretty, it seems very organic, and almost like a home tape, something sitting around the room that he just put out. Now, unlike others, I am not wanting to see what Mos could do, I'm just happy he's doing something. This album addresses the thug universe (Thug Is A Drug), the neglect of the government (Dollar Day), and the comedy that hip hop and youth culture has become (A-Ha). On his debut Mos Def said hip hop is representative of the people, to know where hip hop is going, you have to ask yourself; Where am I going? On "Fake Bonanza" he states "Fuck what you heard you believe what you want/ The truth is what it is, it be what it's been." Probably the most honest statement any of us can make. The album also contains the track "U R The One" which I'm guessing is about his ex-wife. Regardless, it is honest about love, the good and the bad. When he says "We went from we gon' conquer it all to nigga I'm a see you in court" it's so so real, it hurts, because some of us have been there. Even when there's a line like "I wished we never touched/ I wish I could forget how you feel, how you (woman moans)," it mirrors the thoughts that float around your head after the dissolution of love. But just as the song states, which is true about life in general, "The things that make you smile, now make you cry."

RIP ALICE COLTRANE

"BEST NEW CLUB 2004" -HOUSTON PRESS

MERIDIAN

1503 CHARTRES

SUN. - JAN. 28 -
KILL HANNAH W/THE PINK SPIDERS ACTION REACTION. LOVE ARCADE

SAT. - JAN. 27 - 'RENT' 42

WED. - JAN. 31 - THE QUEERS

FRI. - FEB. 2 -
BOB'S 50TH BIRTHDAY BASH W/POOR DUMB BASTARDS FLAMETRICK SUBS GHOULTOWN DJ SEAN CARNAHAN DJ BIG E HOUSECAT CABARET GIRLS

SAT. - FEB. 3 -
YONDER MOUNTAIN STRING BAND

THUR. - FEB. 15 -
BIG HEAD TODD & THE MONSTERS W/ RECKLESS KELLY

FRI. - FEB. 16 -
CARTEL W/ COBRA STARSHIP FROM "SNAKES ON A PLANE". BOYS LIKE GIRLS

SUN. - FEB. 18
DIR EN GREY FAIR TO MIDLAND BLEED THE DREAM

WED. - FEB. 21 - DAUGHTRY

THUR. - FEB. 22 - OLD CROW MEDICINE SHOW

FRI. - FEB. 23 -
CRADLE OF FILTH

SAT. - FEB. 24 - 'RENT' 43

TUE. - FEB. 27 - SPARTA WITH MEWITHOUTYOU

SUN. - MAR. 4 - SEVENDUST

FRI. - MAR. 9
KRACKER NUTTZZ ANNIVERSARY

BOOK MERIDIAN FOR YOUR OWN PARTY OR SPECIAL EVENT
www.MeridianHouston.com
BOX OFFICE HOURS
NOON-6:00 pm MON-FRI
713.225.1717

HATETANK
WWW.HATETANK.ORG

Wednesday, January 31st
THE QUEERS, THE HEART ATTACKS
THE RIPTIDES, I AM WOLF

The Meridian 1503 Chartres
Doors @ 8pm All Ages $10

Wednesday, January 31st
GOD FORBID, GOATWHORE
MNEMIC, ARSIS, BYZANTINE

Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors @ 7:00 All Ages $13

Saturday, February 3rd
TEN CROWNS, IRON AGE
LIE AND WAIT, ON MY SIDE

Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors @ 7:30 All Ages $8

Sunday, February 4th
THE JONBENET
THE AMERICAN BLACK LUNG
BLUES, FIGHT PRETTY
THE ORANGEBURG MASSACRE

Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors @ 7:00 All Ages $10

Saturday, February 10th, 2007
FOLSOM , PALEHORSE
FIGHT LIKE HELL, DIE YOUNG
KNUCKLE UP

Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors @ 7:30 All Ages $10

Sunday, February 11th
SWORN ENEMY, KATAKLYSM
TOO PURE TOO DIE
AS BLOOD RUNS BLACK

Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors@7:00pm All Ages $12

Sunday, February 11th
BLITZ, RESILIENCE
THE QUARENTINES
THE JERRYHATRICKS

The Meridian 1503 Chartres
Doors @ 8:00 All Ages $10

Monday, February 12th
FROM A SECOND STORY WINDOW
HEAVY HEAVY LOW LOW
CANCER BATS, FIGHT PRETTY
SCALE THE SUMMIT

Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors @ 7:00 All Ages $10

Wednesday, February 14th
DESTRUCTION, INTO ETERNITY
HIRAX, INSECT WARFARE

Walter's 4215 Washington Ave.
Doors@ 8:00pm All Ages $15

Buy Tickets online from Indie Tickets or place your order over the phone at (888) 690-9875.

sponsored in part by

FREE PRESS Houston

Arts Film Music Technology World & Local News

NOISE AND SMOKE 2007

FRIDAY MARCH 9

NOTSUOH (314 MAIN)

UME

KA-NIVES

SATIN HOOKS

BRING BACK THE GUNS

FINALLY PUNK

JANA HUNTER

EAT GRAPES

COP WARMTH

SATURDAY MARCH 10

WALTERS (4215 WASHINGTON)

INDIAN JEWELRY

SOMETHING FIERCE

SKULLENING

GODS TEMPLE OF FAMILY DELIVERANCE

THE WIGGENS

BLADES

THE DIMES



Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07

Where to find Shelby if he fucked your girlfriend/wife

Shelby's Picks

by Shelby Kelly



From A Second Story Window

2.12.07

From A Second Story Window w/ Cancer Bats at Walter's on Washington

A friend of mine from Arizona introduced me to From A Second Story Window about a year ago, by shoving the CD he had of theirs into a friends little brothers truck CD player. My boy Dustin and I drove around downtown Houston, circling the Harris County Jail blasting this shit through the roof. It kind of hits like Dillinger but with even less order to the song structure, and lot more Converge-style grit to the recording quality. I checked out some pictures of this band playing live and it looks like they fucking go off, guitar players climbing rafters and doing flips off of walls and shit. Cancer Bats I have not heard yet but I am assuming they will be decent because they've been fortunate enough lately to get some pretty clutch opening spots on tours lately. I will go to this to see a guy actually do a flip off a wall with a guitar in his hand and not miss a beat.



Cancer Bats



Cradle of Filth

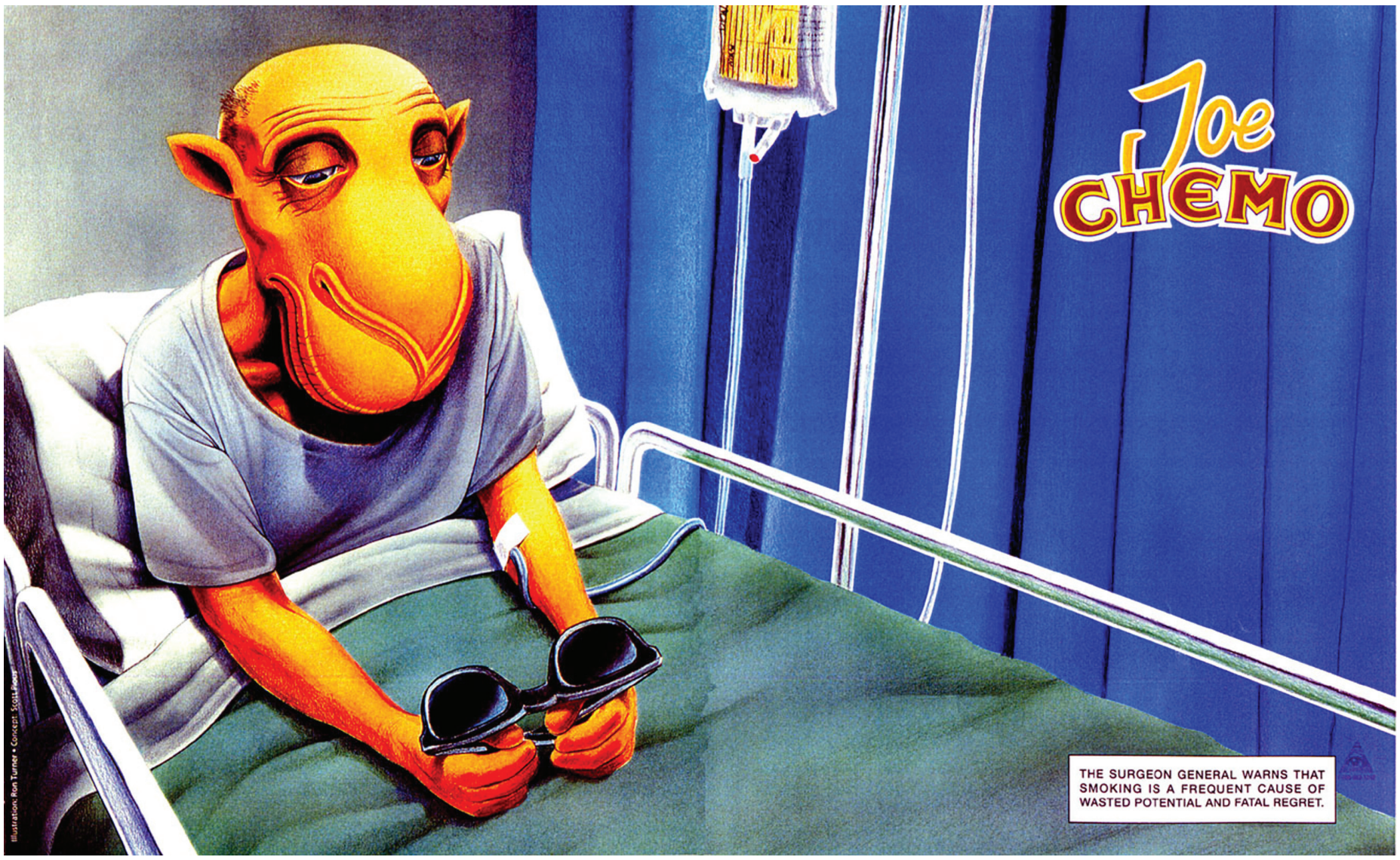
2.23.07

Cradle of Filth at the Meridian

YEEEESSSSSS!!! The last time I went to a black metal show, I was with my friend Dustin again, and Jeff Storm. We left that bitch knowing every single style possible to throwing up the horns that you could imagine. This show will be no exception, or at least I hope it won't. Cradle of Filth has a new album out and will most likely be playing tracks off of that but I could really give a fuck less because as long as there are sweaty goth chicks with high contrast neon lip liner, I will be in pig heaven. I'm not kidding at all, I know it kind of sounds hokey or whatever but these traditional metal shows are really the closest thing you're going to get to the way you see concerts portrayed on television. Cradle of Filth has a new album out and will most likely be playing tracks off of that but I could really give a fuck less because

continued pg. 16

"I WILL GO TO THIS TO SEE A GUY ACTUALLY DO A FLIP OFF A WALL WITH A GUITAR IN HIS HAND AND NOT MISS A BEAT."



It's only natural...

to share
what we
believe in.



We believe natural tobacco without additives tastes better.

We believe in contracting with farmers to use earth-friendly and organic practices to grow our tobacco.

We believe using alternative energy like wind power for our offices is the right thing to do.

We believe once you try Natural American Spirit...
you won't want to smoke any other cigarette.

No additives in our tobacco
does **NOT** mean a safer cigarette.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.

TRY A FEW PACKS WITH
$20 IN GIFT CERTIFICATES
visit www.nascigs.com or
1-800-872-6460 ext 67700

offer expires 07/01/07

Offer for two $10 Gift Certificates good toward any Natural American Spirit Products of greater value. Offer restricted to U.S. smokers 21 years of age or older. Limit one offer per person per 12 month period. Offer void in MA and where prohibited. Other restrictions may apply.

SMOKING "Light" filtered cigarettes does not eliminate the Health risks of smoking. Actual levels of tar and nicotine experienced by the smoker may vary widely depending on how you smoke. For more information, see www.nascigs.com. Natural American Spirit® is a registered trademark of Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company. © SFNTC 1

Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07

"AS LONG AS THERE ARE SWEATY GOTH CHICKS WITH HIGH CONTRAST NEON LIP LINER, I WILL BE IN PIG HEAVEN."

as long as there are sweaty goth chicks with high contrast neon lip liner, I will be in pig heaven. I'm not kidding at all, I know it kind of sounds hokey or whatever but these traditional metal shows are really the closest thing you're going to get to the way you see concerts portrayed on television. You know how like when you're watching TV, and you see a band play in concert and you're like "wait, I don't remember them doing any of that shit?"No, that shit doesn't happen with black metal. You can bet your last fucking dollar that the fog machines, fluorescents, and archaic organs will be fucking DIMED. GO TO THIS SHIT!


Aloha

2.27.07

Aloha at the Meridian

I know, I know, there are more bands playing this show that are probably easier to name drop to get you to go to this show, but I'm not going to because those bands suck hose, and I will not promote them. However, Aloha has ex-members of one of my favorite bands ever, Milemarker, who broke up I believe two years ago, leaving many listeners wondering where those talented musicians would go next. Aloha is almost too clutch. Yeah, even though they will be opening the show or whatever, I am sure this band will have a great set. My friend Trent saw them about a year ago or so, and came back to the spot raving all fucking night about how sick they were. All I know is that if this band has Milemarker's old drummer, then it will be worth the full price of the show to only watch 20 minutes of it.


Torche


Isis

3.1.07

Isis w/ Jesu, Torche at Numbers

GRRRRUNNNNNNNNN-----GRUNNNN GEEERRRRUNNN!!! Sludge is on the come-up so hard it's not even funny anymore. People used to shrug off drony, stoner rock bands as novelties and almost jokes. Isis, I have to say have busted that ass to get some recognition and are now one of the most respectable forces in rock.


Jesu

Lead singer Aaron Turner runs HydraHead Industries which released Botch's "An Anthology of Dead Ends" and that in itself is testament enough as to how far ahead of the game these guys are. Isis' is also releasing a new album very soon, or have they released it already? Expect new tunes from them. I have never personally heard Jesu, but I know that Wil Spent loves the shit, and homey has never steered me wrong on music, so I'm gonna run with them being gold too.





1533 Westheimer
Houston, Texas 77006
713-533-1239
World renowned

713 Tattoo

Houston's Largest Studio

"Tattoos that make you want to slap your momma"
www.713tattoo.com
www.hotrodtattoostudio.com

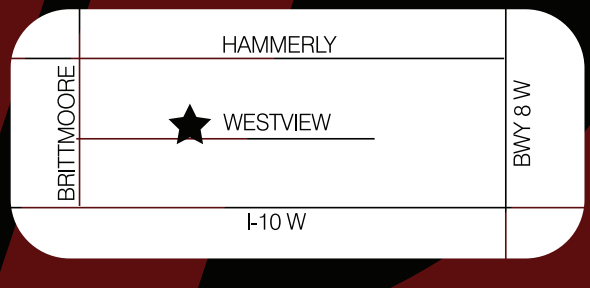


The Rhythm Room

713.465.6122

COME EXPERIENCE HOUSTON'S SAFEST
AND CLEANEST REHEARSAL COMPLEX

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE • MONTHLY RATES • 24 HOUR ACCESS



Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07

+Tech-knowledge

by Tyler Barber





Review: Lost Planet

Xbox 360
1-16 players, online

FORMULAIC GAME DESIGN PERTURBS AUDIENCES

Before its release, both a single-player, and online-multiplayer demo of Lost Planet were released on Xbox Live gaining hype for the final product (see side bar for multiplayer review). So why is a game that we enjoyed playing before getting a ho-hum score? Simply, Lost Planet is a perfect example of how game design (as opposed to game mechanics, or game play) can hamper a gaming experience. Or, the more complex answer may be that the new generation of games are creating a more apparent rift between Eastern and Western game design, as opposed to the bridge between the two.

From the games beginning its clear, Lost Planet's graphics and special effects are top notch. However, just as the graphics open the show with awe, the controls celebrate the reverse in acclaim. You'll find yourself thumbing through the five different control schemes in-game to find the best one for you. Simple things like getting in mechs, picking up the weapons you want, and reloading your weapon have you doing the noobie-gamer-look-at-the-controller-maneuver. The pay-off comes when you find your control scheme and everything becomes second nature.

Lost Planet drops you into a freezing world infested with Akrid (alien critters a la' Starship Troopers), and snow pirates to dispense of. The planet's frozen condition forces you to keep your thermal energy in check by collecting fallen thermal energy from baddies. While this is a great way to force the action, it falls on its face when you are given either copious amounts of T-energy to keep you alive, or not enough. Each stage, and boss battle have a seemingly random amount of T-energy, and in some levels, that take place inside a fucking volcano!, still force you to track down T-energy to keep the protagonist warm. Like the Akrid, the snow pirates too are as dumb as a pile of bricks. You'll walk into each enemy encounter to see lifeless beings standing still, waiting to engage you in battle like statues. And when your fighting against enemy mechs (giant robot suits you pilot) indoors, you be blinded by more smoke than can be found in Snoop Dogg's limo.

What will make you stick around for the games end is the balls-to-the-wall action. Sure there are moments between skirmishes where your hero is plodding through a barren tundra looking for fun (Lost Planet: Extreme Hiking Conditions could be an alternate name). But the moments where you are jumping in and out of mechs, and using your grappling hook to get to cover are when the game begins to shine. There are about six different types of mechs in Lost Planet, each with its own controls, strengths and weaknesses. And while their control is a bit cumbersome, their bang is worth the buck. A few mech types allow you to transform, making you feel like a total bad-ass when you speed up to some snow-pirates in your snow-sled-like mech and transform into a 10 foot death machine. In addition to the towering feeling the mechs bring is the option to customize its weaponry. You can rip the weapons off of (almost) any mech and put them on yours to create your own weapons combo. More reason to pilot the mechs are the tasty fireworks-display that their weapons unload. The grappling hook too, is another element to Lost Planet that deserves attention. Like Captain Commando (NES) before it, Lost Planet gets you zipping to far away ledges in no time, and its not just a gimmick, there's depth and plenty of strategy in using your hook.

While there are some sweet innovations in Lost Planet, its worst problems are when it relies on old standards in game design. Public enemy number one: uninspired boss battles. We love the boss battles in Resident Evil 4, and The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess, but the difference with Lost Plant is that the boss battles feel forced, and like they were put in just to meet a check-list of game design features. Some levels will put you in only one small fire-fight before introducing you to the stages boss. And even then, when you come in contact with a boss, their difficulty will spike all over the place. One boss I met very early in the game took me over twenty times to defeat, with the successive bosses taking one time to thwart. Just like the epileptic difficulty of the boss battles, the stages too jump all over the place in difficulty. You'll breeze through later stages while early levels will send you packing.

Lost Planet is a ton of fun, frustrating, and outright fucking retarded. If that doesn't make since, play the game, and you'll see for yourself. You'll be cheering its uber-explosions one minute, and curse the haphazard game design the next. The new generation of gaming is raising the bar to unprecedented heights, and in turn, is lowering gamer's tolerance to bad game design. But, if you love the dogmatic game design of the East, you may find little to complain about (the nail that stands out gets hammered down right?). Still, most Western gamers are voicing disappointment with this title. Hopefully, Lost Planet is merely a growing pain in the fusion of East and West game design, and not its nail in the coffin.

final grade: B

A Better way to play

Multiplayer Fun

Lost Planet's multiplayer aspect pushes this game's score from a C to a B. The chaotic gameplay is best served on a dish of dead noobs, and when you jump online, you'll find plenty to mow down. The pacing of the online game is more akin to Halo than Gears of War. With respawns aplenty, you'll run haphazardly into fire fights without worrying too much about letting your team down. Three of the four game types are playable. Fugitive, the fourth is broken in its concept, 12 hunters try and track down one fugitive in a number of Lost Plant's HUGE multiplayer maps. The maps are so big that fugitive matches usually end with not a single shot fired, boring!

The great thing about Lost Planet's multiplayer is in how it rewards exploration. There are plenty of hidden away weapons, nooks and crannies, and buried mechs to uncover in Lost Planet's maps. Another difference in Lost Planet's multiplayer is the amount of emphasis on fun. The multiplayer aspect to games like Rainbow Six: Vegas and Gears of War are very competitive, rely on expert skill and punish weak players. And even though a mech against a human is an unfair fight, taking down a mech as a human gives you that David and Golioth rush, which is cool in my book.

Higly recommended for casual fans of shooters, and arcade-style games.



+Tech-knowledge

not as dramatic as Meerkat Manor

Review: Viva Pinata

Xbox 360
1 player w/ online content

WHEN DRUG CULTURE MAKES A KID'S GAME

Teletubbies, Gumby, The Smurfs and Care Bears all share an ambiguous disposition for hallucinogenics. Viva Pinata falls in the same rabbit hole. With its bright colors, adorable animals and over-the-top "human" characters, Viva Pinata serves your visual predilection for a digital domain closest in relation to an acid trip. Though the game was released in conjunction with a Viva Pinata children's cartoon, child's play this is not. Which is why it's unfortunate that the cuddly pinatas, and the land they inhabit, will turn off mature gamers (oxymoron?). Still, Viva Pinata's developer, Rare (creator of Golden Eye for Nintendo 64), has managed to release a gem among the pile of crap they've been churning out lately.

Viva Pinata is a sandbox game. For those uninitiated to gamer diction, "sandbox" games are games like The Sims, Animal Crossing, or Spore where gamers are given a plot of land and the resources to nurse that land into a prosperous utopia. Not one to rely on formulae, Viva Pinata differs from the latter games in its execution. When the very first pinata enters your garden, you feel honored and obliged to meet the needs of the cute critter. Before you know it, you're multitasking a playful ecosystem that rewards experimentation. Early in the game, you'll attract pinatas by planting certain vegetables, fruit, flowers, or trees, but as the game progresses, the requirements to attract higher-level pinatas become more complex.



What does Winnie the Pooh like?

When you build unique homes for the pinatas in your garden you can breed and sell them. A game all about meeting the needs of your residents, Viva Pinata sets different requirements for each pinata to mate. It may be as simple as providing the right fruit for them to eat, or as complex as outfitting your Cinnamonkey (chimpanzee), with a fez hat. Once you've provided the romance requirements, you'll engage a bird's-eye view maze/obstacle course breeding mini-game. These, too, become more complex throughout the game and at its completion, a pinata egg is delivered to your garden.

But Pinata Island, the world of Viva Pinata, is not all candy, flowers and rainbows. Ruffians, and Sour Pinatas can invade your garden and cause mischief destroying plants, killing pinatas, or by dropping poisonous candy. Also, there exists a food-chain which can cause other pinatas to either fight, or eat each other. For example, the Raisant (an ant & honey connoisseur), and the Buzzlegum (honey bee) are mortal enemies, so when you have your Buzzlegums producing honey, the Raisant will covet its yield and the two will fight each other until one pinata makes the other ill. In exchange for some chocolate coin currency you can call one of the many "human" characters in the game to heal your ill pinata. Aside from calling a doctor to heal sick pinatas, a builder can be hired to construct pinata homes, helpers can water your plants, and so on.

The pacing of Viva Pinata is very fast, so you'll level up quickly, and in turn, unlock better tools, resources and pinatas. Therein is the hook in Viva Pinata: how quickly the game rewards players. If the 60 different pinatas seem like a small number, know that variations, and new sub-breeds of all pinatas can be unlocked depending on what you feed your them.

Viva Pinata is not a game for everyone. Some will frown upon its over-emphasis on multitasking or its open-ended game design. But, if you have a warm, fuzzy spot for cute animals, then digging into this agriculture-on-LSD-sim may be just what your looking for.

final grade: +A

super happy fun land

Jan 28th:
Art Show
Bands-
Monkey #7
Placid Blue
From Within
artist-
Joshua Jones
Tony Almaguer
Quique411

Feb 1st:
Static Radio
MK Ultra

Feb 2nd:
Sonia & Disappear Fear

Feb 3rd:
Rise Over Ruin
The Summerside Project
Searching For Signal
Doo Doo Butter

Feb 4th:
Paleo

Feb 7th:
The Fonzarellies
Los Desconocidos
The Velcro Secret

Feb 8th:
Chin Up, Meriwether!

Feb 9th:
Black Mayo (ohio)
Oveo (Denton)
Tahka Yyul
Church of Apocolypse (Dallas)

Feb 10th:
The Texas Steamers
Dungeon Masters
Organ Failure
Byron House

Feb 12th:
Fatback
Violet Sun

Feb 13th:
Darwin's Finches
Mirabai
Authentic Keys

Feb 15th:
The Karl Walters Jr Trio
Defenstration Unit
Free Radicals
The Rudyments

Feb 16th:
Patrick Period
Caleb Jehl
The Storybook Weavers
The Bluebirds

Feb. 17th:
The Red Headed Stepchildren
(featuring the world's largest cowbell)
Helicopter Jones

Feb 18th:
Chinese New Year
Year of the Boar theme show
Muzak John
Organ Failure
Friendship Bracelet

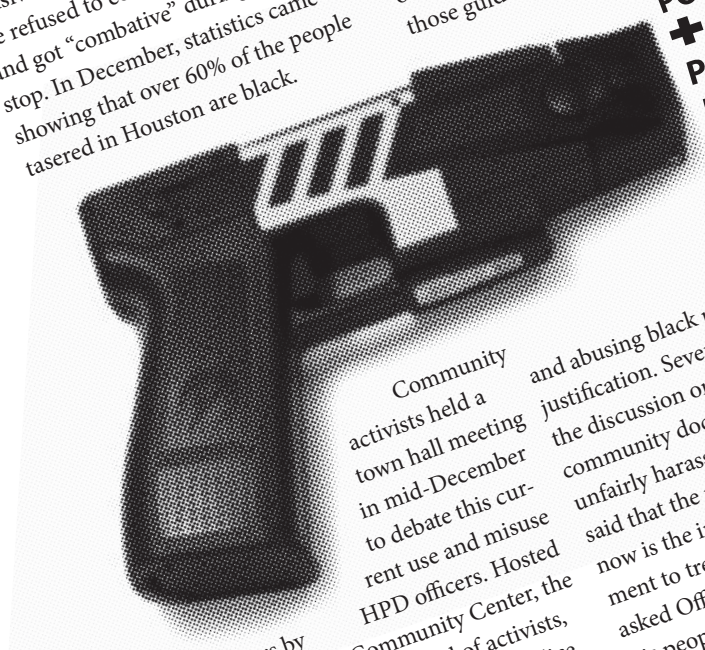
2610 Ashland St. @ W.27th in the Heights
713.880.2100
www.superhappyfunland.com

Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07

World

THE ELECTRIC-CHAIR MINI: HPD, TASERS & THE NEW LYNCHING

by Gislaine Williams



POLICE STATE! POLICE STATE !POLICE STATE! POLICE STATE!
POLICE STATE! POLICE STATE !POLICE STATE! POLICE STATE!
POLICE STATE! POLICE STATE !POLICE STATE! POLICE STATE!

In October 2006, HPD Officer GM Rodriguez responded to a noise complaint during a Two Gallants show at Walters by attacking band members and tasering a 14-year old and his father. In November, another HPD officer made headlines when she tasered Texans offensive lineman Fred Weary, saying that he refused to comply with her orders and got "combative" during a traffic stop. In December, statistics came out showing that over 60% of the people tasered in Houston are black.

Community activists held a town hall meeting in mid-December to debate this current use and misuse of tasers by HPD officers. Hosted by the SHAPE Community Center, the meeting included a panel of activists, lawyers, and three Houston police officers. The debate was dominated by an emotionally charged discussion about police brutality, racial profiling, and institutionalized racism.

While the police officers present defended the current policy on tasers, ensuring that strict guidelines are placed to prevent officers from misuse of the weapons, several people from the audience stood up and shared stories of being unfairly harassed and tasered by Houston police officers.

Assistant Police Chief Charles McClellan insisted that the use of tasers is under highly scrutinized guidelines and stated directly that "being verbally combative is not a justification for using a taser." McClellan said that it takes a physical threat to justify tasering and as long as people follow instructions, they won't get tasered. Officers go through trainings and watch instructional videos teaching them proper procedures, with a focus on prohibiting using verbal abuse a justification for using a taser, he said.

But some panelists argued that what's really happening is that police officers are still violating those guidelines, profiling, and abusing black people without justification. Several panelists focused the discussion on the issue of race. One community doctor, who said he had been unfairly harassed before by HPD officers, said that the problem we're facing right now is the inability of the police department to treat black people correctly and asked Officer McClellan to stand up for his people. The same sentiments were shared New Black Panther Party leader Quanell X when he said that the police officers "see their uniform before they see their own people."

Deloyd Parker of SHAPE questioned the HPD officers about the disproportionate use of tasers against blacks. Parker said that racial profiling is real and present. "We are living under a system of domestic neocolonialism," he said.

When the mic opened up to the audience, several people shared personal experiences of police brutality and being tasered in Houston. One shared the story of being pulled over and verbally harassed by a police officer who quickly changed his demeanor when a media crew arrived on the scene. Another man told of how police officers tasered him and split his eye open with a pistol when he was trying to protect his own son from being injured. Another man explained how a police officer had threatened to taser him if he kept asking questions.

The meeting also included a discussion on the health effect of tasers. The officers said a committee of national experts agreed that the use of tasers does not have a permanent effect on a person's health. Officer McClellan explained that the max voltage going through a person's body from the shock is 1200V, but what really affects the body is the amp of the shock – which is only 0.04. But a local doctor on the panel argued that voltage affects you more because that's what penetrates the body. "There is no way the body can handle that – it has to have some permanent effect," he said. According to an Amnesty International Report published in March 2006, more than 150 people have died as a result of taser shocks.

Reforms to current taser use policies may be enacted in 2007. Mayor Bill White has called for an independent study to look at the use/misuse of tasers. At the December town hall, Officer McClellan showcased a new taser that will be used by HPD that includes a video/audio recorder to hold police officers more accountable. Once the new Texas legislative session starts up, state representative Lon Burnam of Forth Worth will be proposing HB 418, a bill that will make it illegal for officers to use tasers in cases justified in using tasers only if they face a threat of deadly force.

Activists at the SHAPE town hall meeting called for more radical reforms. Quanell X demanded a moratorium on all use of tasers until a comprehensive medical study is conducted on the health effects of tasers. Many others demanded that there be a bigger focus placed on the issue of racial profiling. Parker said that plans are in the works for more meetings to discuss local taser abuse and police brutality.

60% of the people tasered in Houston are black



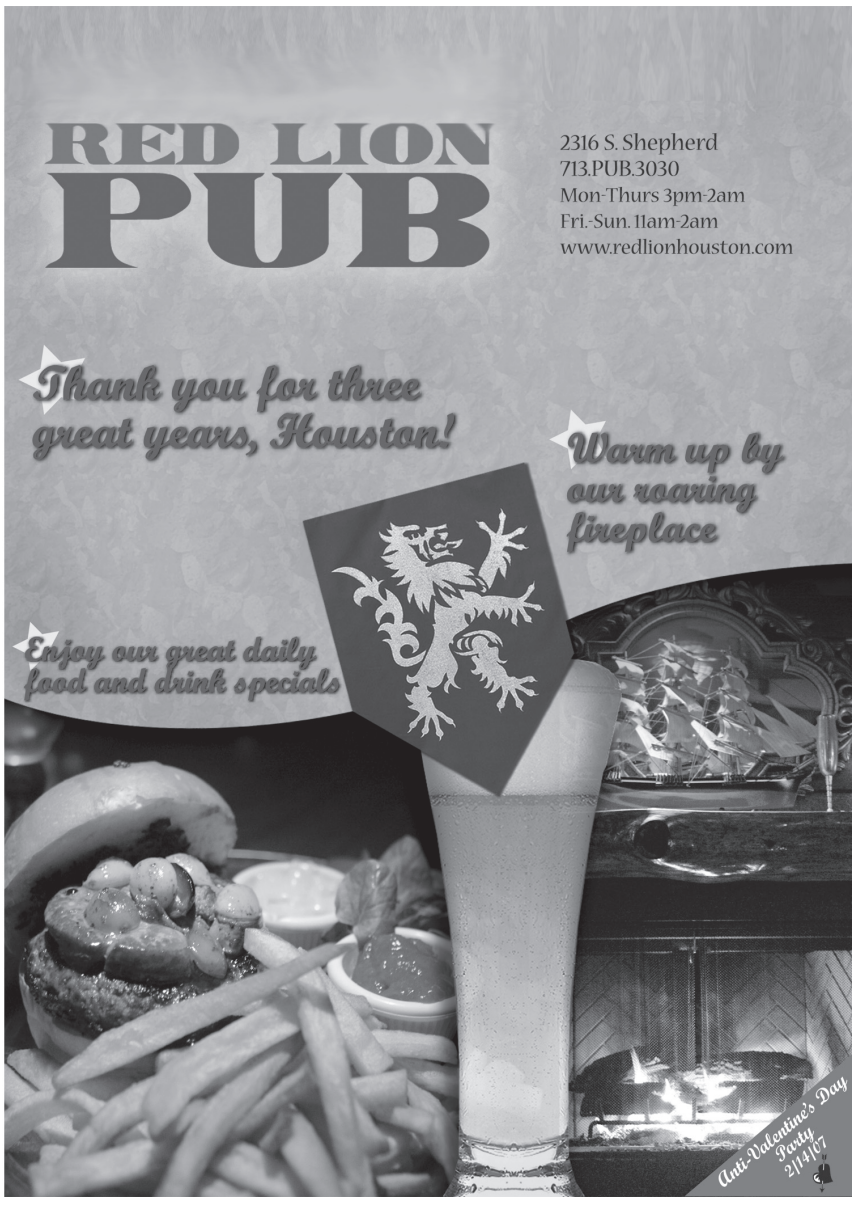
LUNCH • DINNER • DINE IN • DELIVERY • TO GO
NEW YORK
pizzeria
713.432.1121 2250 W. Holcombe @ Greenbriar

PANHANDLER
publishing

The Panhandler, a poetry quarterly, is now
accepting submissions for the Spring issue.
While we are open to all topics and all styles,
we are looking for well-crafted, cohesive poems.
Whether drawn from your daily life, the daily news,
or spawned by the imagination, this is your chance
to show your fresh ideas & charged language.

Send 3-5 poems to
submissions@thepanhandler.org
or to:
Panhandler Publishing
P.O. Box 30407
Houston, TX 77249

The Panhandler can not return hard copies.
E-mail submissions are preferred.
Poetry must be submitted in the body of an e-mail.
No attachments accepted.
Simultaneous submissions
& previously published okay.



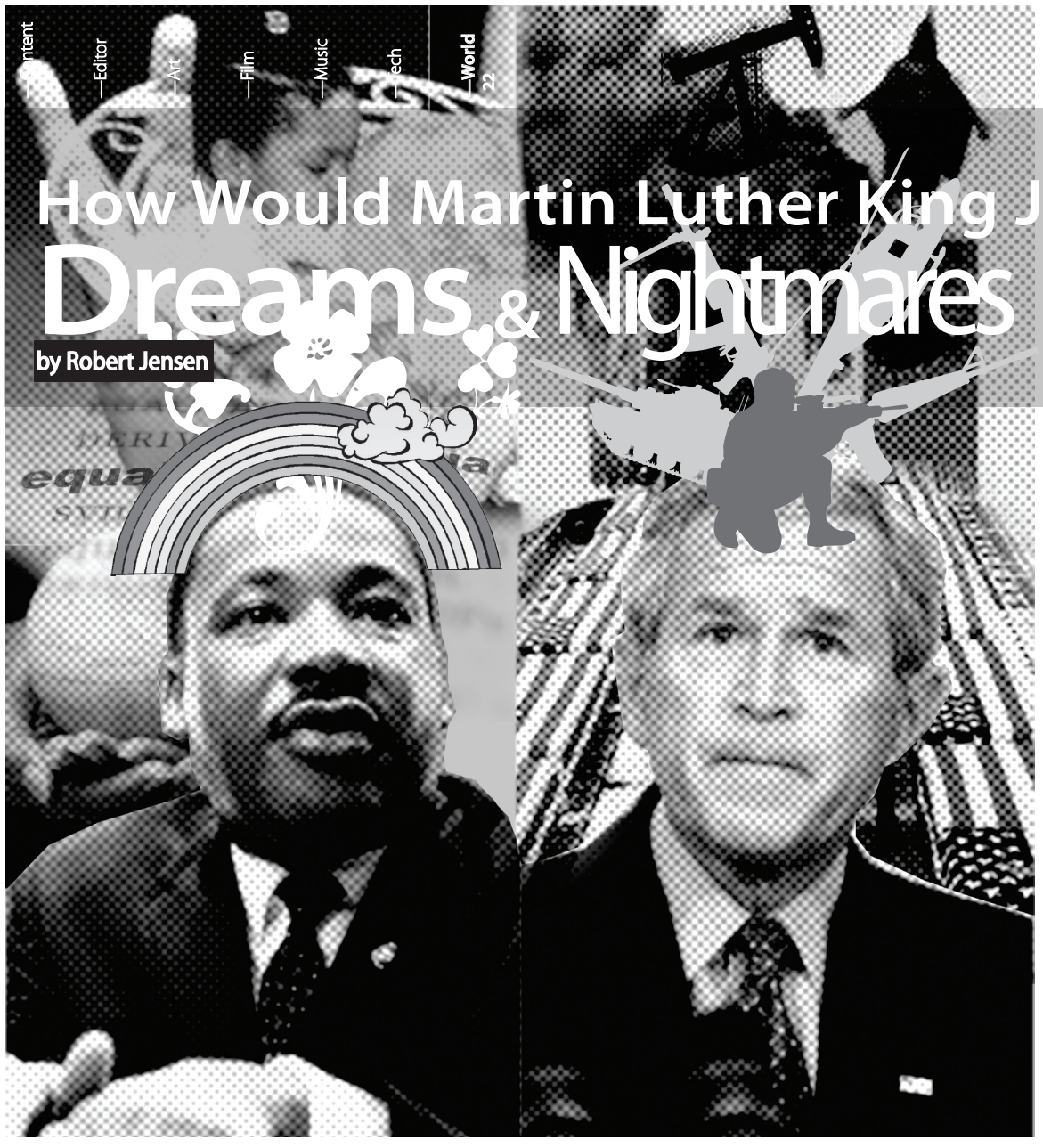
LAST CONCERT CAFE

Sundays Fahl and Folk	**Tuesdays** Scott Daniels Band
Wednesdays Pot Roast Midnight Drum Circle Hula Hoopers, Poi spinners	**Thursdays** The Hightailers Drum circle @ 10:30 Bring a drum to get in Free Unescorted ladies get in Free
Fridays	**Saturdays**
2/2 GENERATION LANDSLIDE	2/3 FREE PRESS 4TH ANNIVESARY RAGE OF AQUARIUS BASH
2/9 Brother to Brother	2/10 PLUMP

Don't forget...Last Concert CAFE
Is home to a very tasty lunch and dinner menu

1403 Nance 713.226.8563 lastconcert.com

Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07



How Would Martin Luther King Judge America?

Dreams & Nightmares

by Robert Jensen

WHO SHARES YOUR DREAMS?

In Martin Luther King Jr's most famous speech, he had a dream.

But in another of King's important addresses, he faced the depth of our nightmare.

We all know the famous words -- "I have a dream" -- delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963: "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

On this day that we mark with his name, all over this country, that speech will be played, as it should be. King articulated -- perhaps more eloquently than anyone had to that point -- the demand that the United States make good on the American dream, for all its citizens.

But on April 4, 1967, at the Riverside Church in New York City, in a speech titled "Beyond Vietnam," King spoke just as eloquently of the nightmare that lies underneath that dream. In that speech to Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam, King not only made a compelling case for ending the U.S. attack on Vietnam, but went beyond that to diagnose a failed society.

On this day that we mark with his name, we owe it to King -- and to ourselves -- to face that failure honestly.

This might sound crazy in a world in which the United States dominates as no nation has ever dominated. After all, we won the Cold War. We are the largest economy in the world. Our cultural products circulate everywhere. The world fears our military. We are the most affluent nation in the history of the world. And we have a black secretary of state. A failed society? The United States? To borrow from a younger generation, "We rule!"

Yes, we rule, sort of, for a time. But we also are a failed society, a society heading toward collapse. We might remember that nothing looks quite as invincible as a great army on the morning of its greatest defeat.

The majority of King's Riverside speech was dedicated to an analysis of the Vietnam War and an argument for a political settlement of that conflict. Although many wanted him to avoid the controversial subject of the war, King said he was moved "to break the betrayal of my own silences and to speak from the burnings of my own heart," to go "beyond the prophesying of smooth patriotism to the high grounds of a firm dissent based upon the mandates of conscience and the reading of history."

When he did that, King reached a difficult conclusion, that "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today" was "my own government." He saw what imperial war does not only to the target, to those on whom the bombs fall, but also to the aggressor society: "If America's soul becomes totally poisoned," King said, "part of the autopsy must read Vietnam. It can never be saved so long as it destroys the deepest hopes of men the world over."

We might pause to consider what that means for us today, as the United States fights another imperial war, this one in the Middle East. If we were to go beyond a "smooth patriotism" and let conscience guide us to a "firm dissent," what actions are required of us?

But I want to put aside for now the issue of wars, past and present, and speak of King's deeper analysis in that speech. He knew that simply condemning that war was "seductively tempting," but that his principles demanded that he "go on now to say something even more disturbing." King was blunt: "The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit," a condition that had left the United States "on the wrong side of a world revolution." He continued:

"I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered."

"Our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Every nation must now develop an overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole in order to preserve the best in their individual societies. This call for a world-wide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all men."

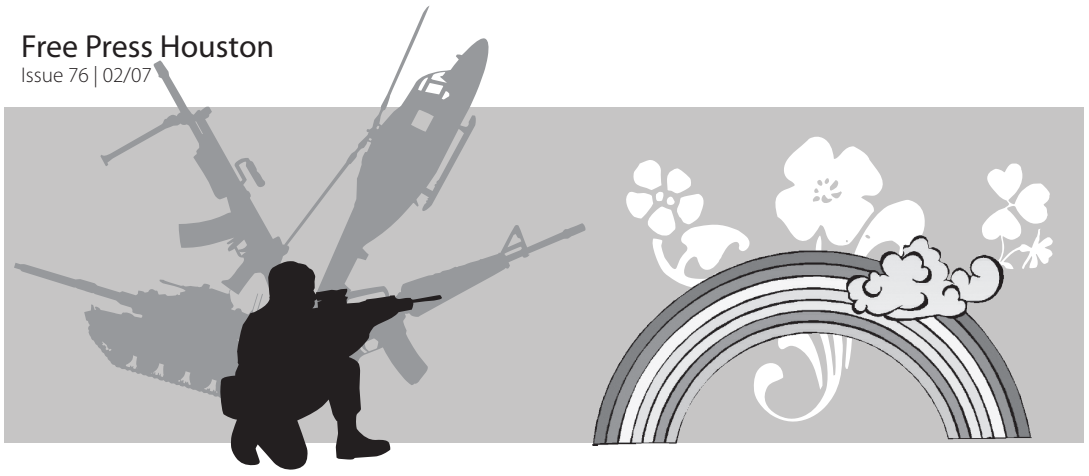
In short, Martin Luther King Jr. saw that the task of the United States was not simply to transcend racism. He saw racism as inextricably connected to militarism and materialism. And he saw a hyperpatriotic nationalism not as virtue but as a problem to be overcome.

So, we find ourselves today in an odd place: In a country in which we routinely repeat the phrase "God bless America" with no sense of shame; in which conventional politicians all clamor to be "tough" on national security and support bloated military budgets; in which the shopping mall is the real temple where people go to worship -- in that country, King is a hero. That means the King who condemned not only racism but nationalism, militarism, and materialism has to be pushed aside, forgotten -- "whitewashed," if you'll allow the term. King's radical political analysis and vision have to be rendered invisible if we are to name a holiday after him. After years of calling him a traitor and a troublemaker, white America is willing to allow King is to serve as the icon for a national quest for racial justice, but only so long as we don't actually listen to what he had to say or take it seriously.

None of this is surprising; it's the nature of power: When faced with demands for justice by a movement of oppressed people, dominant groups tend to concede only as much as necessary to relieve the pressure. When enough time has passed and the threat to the system has been contained, then the importance of the movement and some of its leaders can be acknowledged, but only if their legacy can be constructed in a way that doesn't undermine the existing distribution of power.

The nature of privilege is to ignore these realities when they make us uncomfortable. We white people have that privilege. We have that privilege because we live in a white-supremacist society. It is true that the United States made enormous progress on race in the last half of the 20th century, but we still live in a white-supremacist society. What do I mean by that?

By "white supremacist," I mean a society whose founding is based in an ideology of the inherent superiority of white Europeans over non-whites, an ideology that was used to justify the inhuman crimes against indigenous people and Africans that created the nation and its wealth, an ideology that also has justified legal and extralegal



exploitation of every non-white immigrant group in our history.

By "white supremacist," I also mean a material reality. Forty years after the victories of the civil-rights movement that ended legal segregation, dramatic racialized disparities in wealth and well-being endure. On some measures, such as family income and unemployment, the gap between white and black America is wider today than it was in the immediate aftermath of the civil-rights legislation of the 1960s. On other measures where there has been some progress, such as home ownership, closing the gap will take decades or centuries if current trends continue.

This is a society in which white people occupy most of the top positions in powerful institutions, with similar privileges available in limited ways to non-white people if they fit themselves into white society. It is a society in which many white people hold to that supremacist ideology, believing the culture, politics, philosophy, and art that comes out of white Europe to be superior to all others (even if they won't admit in public that they believe this).

If white America were truly interested in racial justice, would we not ask, simply, "why?" Why do so many still believe that? Why are the racialized disparities still with us?

We don't ask because the answer is all too clear and painful: Most white folks don't much care, and privilege allows us not to care.

What will it take for the United States to transcend white supremacy? It seems obvious that it requires a revolution. But what kind? King called for "a true revolution of values" based in a rejection of the fundamental injustice of the systems in which we live. In King's words:

"A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. With righteous indignation, it will look across the seas and see individual capitalists of the West investing huge sums of money in Asia, Africa and South America, only to take the profits out with no concern for the social betterment of the countries, and say: This is not just."

"A true revolution of values will lay hands on the world order and say of war: This way of settling differences is not just. This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation's homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into veins of people normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice and love."

In 1967, King laid it out clearly: "A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death." In 2006, that spiritual death is closer than ever, as it is clearer than ever that it is not "military defense" on which we spend but "military offense."

At some level, I believe we all know this to be true. We all know the grotesque and widening inequality -- within our own society and between the First and the Third worlds -- cannot continue indefinitely. We know that the belligerent militarism designed to secure resources cannot continue indefinitely. At some level, somewhere within us all, we know that the path this society is on is not the road up to a better future, but a spiral down to something that will look like hell made real in the world. We rule, for now. But how long can that continue?

We know the cost to the world of the quest for domination. About half the world's population lives on less than $2 a day, and a quarter on less than $1 a day. Iraqis count their dead in the tens -- perhaps hundreds -- of thousands as a result of U.S. liberation. Those are the bills being paid elsewhere.

What of the cost to us? What of our spiritual death?

"the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today" is "my own government."

-Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

The shopping malls are full. Does it fulfill our longing for community? Does it make us feel loved?

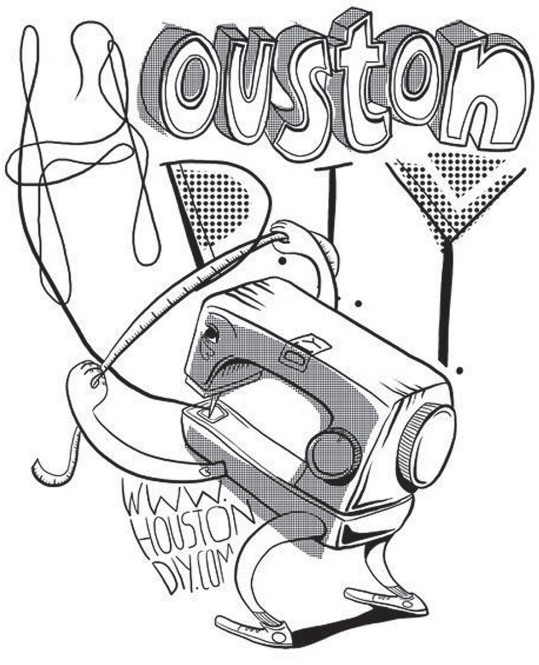
We "support the troops." Does it fulfill our obligations to the world? Does it make us safe?

What judgment would Martin Luther King Jr. render if he were with us today? Lucky for us, we don't have to face that. The great thing about dead heroes is that they can't speak. The theologian and historian Vincent Harding quotes a poem by Carl Wendell Hines:

Now that he is safely dead
Let us praise him
build monuments to his glory
sing hosannas to his name.
Dead men make
such convenient heroes: They
cannot rise
to challenge the images

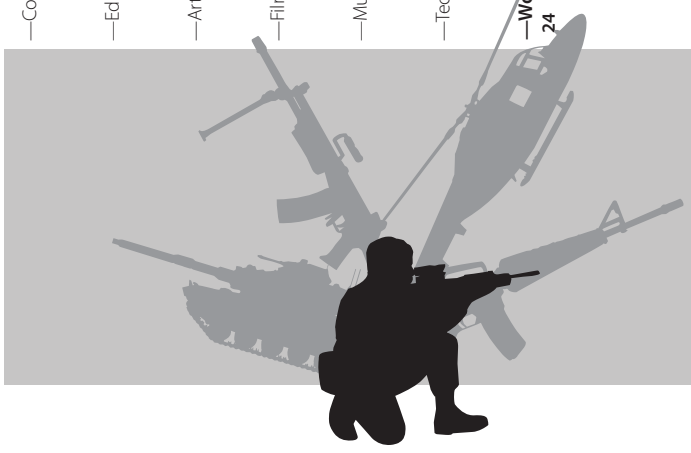
continued pg. 24

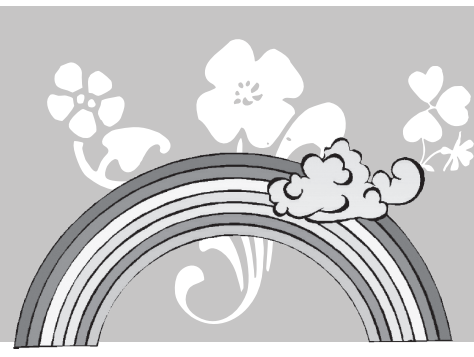




Arts, Crafts, Photography,
Baked Goods, and lots more!

March 3rd 2007
at Taft Street Coffee
3-7pm and it's FREE!
Vendor Booths available.
for info go to www.houstondiy.com
2115 Taft St
Houston, TX 77006
(713) 522-3533





we would fashion from their lives.
And besides,
it is easier to build monuments
than to make a better world.

But, of course, it doesn't matter what King would say. It matters what we say, and -- as King always pointed out -- it matters what we do.

If you live in privilege, as I do, one thing is for sure: You haven't done enough. I haven't done enough. We haven't done enough. If we had, this world would look very different than it does.

We all carry that burden, one that is more than we should have to face. In this world, it should be enough to just be a decent person -- to work hard, treat folks around us fairly, care for those we love. That's difficult enough in a world full of disappointment, disease, and death. Just being an ordinary person is hard enough.

But at this moment in history, being decent in our private lives is not enough. There is too much at stake, and too little time to correct the course. We face crises on all fronts: Political, economic, cultural, and most dramatically, ecological. We cannot know how much time is left before destructive forces set in motion cannot be turned back. We should be scared, and that fear should motivate us.

King was scared. In the new book, *At Canaan's Edge: America in the King Years 1965*-68, Taylor Branch writes about how King was tired and struggling with depression in the last months of his life. I believe King understood how little time there was, not just for him but for us all.

So, we have to face what one writer has called "the long emergency." There can be no illusions about the nature of the struggle required to create a different world, a world based not on domination but on a new communion among peoples. The choice still remains the one King asked us to face: "nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation."

Privilege makes it easy to hide, but soon there will be no hiding from the need to act. To turn from this knowledge of the world and its demands on those of us with privilege is to turn from the values of justice and equality that we claim to hold. Worse than that, it is to turn away from our own humanity. And if the call to justice, the yearning for our own humanity isn't motivation enough, realize this: Soon, to hide will be to resign ourselves to that hell on earth that we are creating.

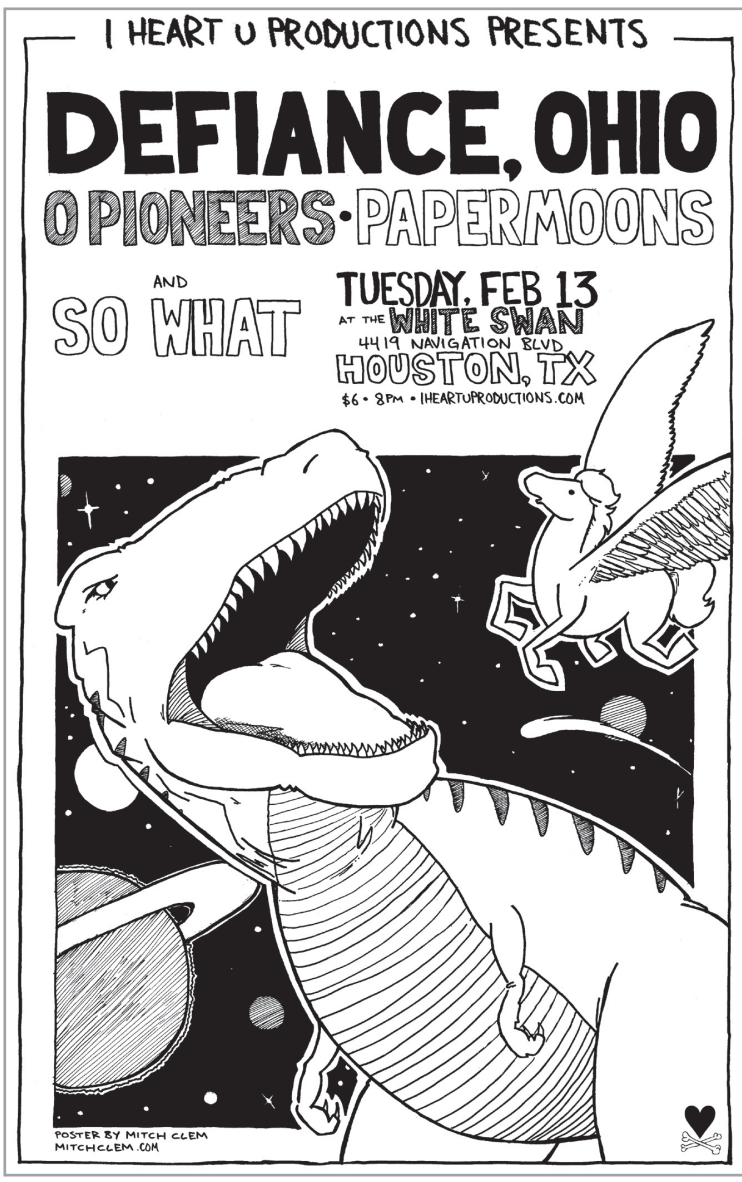
To act is to have faith, in ourselves and in the possibility that there is time. If King were alive today, we can be sure he would ask that of us. And we can look to King's words on that April night in New York in 1967 for a reminder of what fate awaits us if we turn away:

"If we do not act we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight."

If we act, there is no guarantee that we can make right all that has been torn asunder. We cannot wait for certainty, but must act out of love, with hope. It is through our action that we learn to love and feel hope. That action is the way we make love real in the world and find hope in our hearts.

I don't pretend to know what King would say if he were alive today. I don't know what analysis he would offer or what strategy he would propose. But he would certainly challenge all of us to act -- every one of us here today, everyone in this country, which has the opportunity to turn its power away from wealth and war, toward justice and peace. Whatever else King would say, he would say this:

Act. Now. Before the only path before us is that long, dark, shameful corridor, which ends at a door we should all pray is never opened.



I ♥ U PRODUCTIONS

QTY	1 COLOR	2 COLOR	3 COLOR	4 COLOR
20	$4.40	6.00	8.50	10.75
30	$4.30	5.80	8.00	10.60
50	$4.25	5.55	7.25	7.90
75	$4.20	5.30	5.70	6.27
100	$4.10	5.10	5.40	5.70
150	$4.00	4.97	4.85	5.50
200	$3.90	4.89	4.70	5.30

these are prices for 5.5oz HEAVYWEIGHT SHIRTS
[the most popular shirts, with the most popular feel]

these prices are also based on the following sizes:
Youth Small, Youth Medium, Youth Large, Small, Medium, Large, and Extra Large

There is no screen charge after 75 shirts
The following applies for 50 shirts or less:
$25 screen fee for one color shirt
$20 screen fee for each color after that

Screens are held for two weeks and then erased

These are a few of the bands we have had the pleasure of working with:

Against Me!, Alex Ander, American Black Lung, Amy's Ice Cream, A New Desire, As The Cancer Spreads, Astoria TX, Before There Was Rosalyn, Belt Of Truth, Blatant Skateboards, Blues, Bright Men Of Learning, Bring Back The Guns, Buxton, By The End Of Tonight, Chemical X Magazine, Color Tonite Red, Dillinger Four, The Drafted, The Eastern Sea, Fake Problems, Fear Factory, Fighting The Air, Forever Dies Tonight, Gates Of Acheron, Glory Glory, God's Temple Of Family Deliverance, The Graces, Grant Olney and the Brokedown Gospel, Hardin Store Road, Hemyah, High Noon, Imperial, Johnny Switchblade, The Jonbenet, KMFDM, The Knife Club, The Last Surprise, Latterman, The Last Starfighter, The Letting Go Process, Love For LaWanda, The Low Ends, Mama Donde Esta Mis Zapatos?, Margot, Matt and Kim, MC Chris, Monster, My Happy Ending, Nail The Casket, Noah's Apathy, Nothing Nice To Say, Novice, O Pioneers!!!, Oh God It's Back, Pluto Records, The Ravens Society, Red Star and the Solar Federation, Rhinestone Fargus, San Antonio Rock City, Scene Of The Escape, School Girl Knife Fight, Seraphim, Sharks and Sailors, Spain Colored Orange, The Sterling Stitches, Stoked Skate Shop, Super Chango Tattoos, Tha Fucking Transmissions, This Will Destroy You, Until Death, What The Hell Video, While You Were Gone, Yesterday's Portraits and many more!

IF YOU ARE A REPEAT CUSTOMER, YOU CAN RECEIVE 15% OFF WHEN YOU MENTION THIS AD!
IF YOU ARE A NEW CUSTOMER, YOU CAN RECEIVE 10% OFF WHEN YOU MENTION THIS AD!

For more information just visit our website at IHEARTUPRODUCTIONS.COM!

Management -

Dir. of Commercial Strategy & Admin., Houston, TX: Develop & execute commercial strategies aimed at creating growth opportunities; develop commercial strategies for acquisitions, customer retention, customer up-sell/cross-sell & product pricing. Require MS in Bus. Admin. or foreign equiv. & 2 yrs exp. in job offered or as Fin. Mgr/Analyst. 2 yrs exp. must incl. cement mfg. & budgeting exp. CEMEX will accept 2 yrs post BS exp. in lieu of post MS exp. Any suitable combination of edu., training or exp. will be accepted.

Resume to LaToya Skinner,
CEMEX, Inc.,
840 Gessner,
Suite 1400,
Houston, TX 77024.
Reference: 123600. EOE

Employment Opportunity

Accounting - Cash & Treasury Analyst, Houston, TX: Resp. for cash forecasting, treasury & month-end reporting, mgmt. of banking processes, funded-debt exposure. reports, supervising daily cash activity & managing special projects as necessary. Must have MS in Bus. Admin./ foreign equiv. & 1 yr exp. in job offered /as Cash Flow/Credit Analyst. 1 yr exp. must incl. cement operations exp. Any suitable comb. of edu., training/ exp. will be accepted. Resume to LaToya J. Skinner, CEMEX, Inc., 840 Gessner, Suite 1400, Houston, TX 77024. Reference: 113110. EOE

Save 50% On Inkjet/Laser Cartridges

Cartridge World

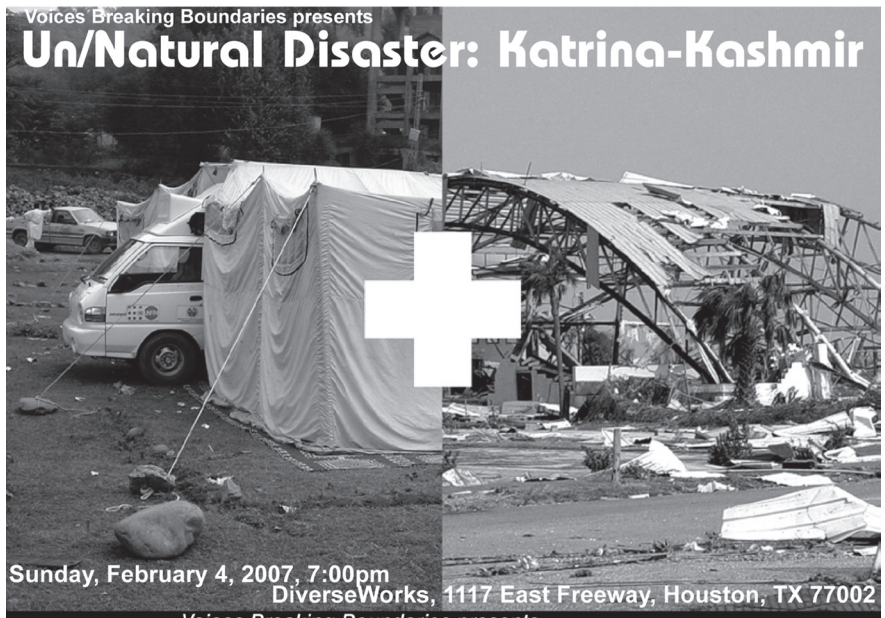
Westheimer @ Shepherd (Shepherd Square)
2055 Westheimer Ste.165 Houston, TX 77098
713.526.0040



LUCKY BURGER



MONDAY-SATURDAY 11AM-9:30PM CLOSED SUNDAYS
FREE DELIVERY W/IN 2 MILE RADIUS $10 MINIMUM
1601 RICHMOND @ MANDELL 713.522.5650



Voices Breaking Boundaries presents

Un/Natural Disaster: Katrina-Kashmir

Sunday, February 4, 2007, 7pm

General admission: $5 (no one turned away)

DiverseWorks, 1117 East Freeway, 77002

This event focuses on Hurricane Katrina and the Kashmiri earthquake, and features:

- spoken word by **Sunni Patterson**, **Kangsen Wakai**, and **Barbara LeBanks**
- Kashmir + New Orleans media piece by **Renee Feltz**
- ***Katrina/Kashmir*** theater work by **Autumn Knight** and **Nicole Eugene**
- audio dialogue between Kartina and Kashmir evacuees
- drumming by New Orleans native **Baba Ifaldade**
- documentaries ***After the Storm*** and ***Half a Year After the Earthquake***
- earthquake update by **Aamer Ahmed Khan**; Katrina + Kashmir psychosocial update by **Siddharth Shah**

Un/Natural Disaster: Katrina-Kashmir has been collaboratively produced and organized by Nicole Eugene, Renee Feltz, Autumn Knight, Nusrat Malik, Sehba Sarwar, Oskar Sonnen, and Willie Wright. This event cosponsored by DiverseWorks, KPFT 90.1 FM; with special thanks to Surviving Katrina and Rita in Houston, Ambreen Ali, PAKCAST and Nasir Aziz, Omar Asghar Khan Development Foundation, and The News on Sunday (Pakistan). This event is funded in part by the City of Houston through the Houston Area Arts Alliance, Houston Endowment, and Texas Commission on the Arts.

Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07

Digital Nightmare

Sarah vs. the Giant Aetna

By Andrea Afra



Just because you have health insurance doesn't guarantee that you will receive the treatment you will need. Ask Sarah Gajkowski-Hill, who is living with three afflictions diseases that a lot of people have never heard of. The first is Scleroderma, which affects the body's connective tissues, causing overproduction of collagen. The second is a symptom of Scleroderma. Reynaud's Syndrome causes blood vessels to spasm and constrict, prohibiting proper circulation. Many people with Reynaud's have blue fingertips from lack of proper blood flow. Sarah often has painful lesions form on her fingers that become infected. Her third affliction, Kienbock's disease, is a result of poor circulation to the lunate bone of her wrist. Bone is a living tissue and without blood to deliver oxygen, bone can die. It will become brittle and crumble and affect the rest of the surrounding tissue. It is painful and difficult to treat. She has tried many different treatments to stop infections from occurring but they never quite did the job. During her last pregnancy she had a partial amputation of her right index finger, which turned out to be a botched procedure. The pain was too excruciating and eventually she lost the whole digit.

Having so many problems affecting her hands is truly a devastating because Sarah is a writer as well as a teacher. There's a good chance you've seen some of her work. She has written for the *Free Press, Arts Houston, Cuizine Magazine*, *Houston Press,* amongst other local publications. She is 27 years old, married to a schoolteacher, and a mother of three young children.

Sarah has already endured more pain than most of us ever will. In order to provide knowledge on these conditions and to garner support, her friend set up a website at www.LottaLoveforSarah.com, where Sarah says in her own words what her life is like each day with these debilitating diseases. One of the hardest parts to read is about how on some days she is unable to even assist her children with tasks like bath time and pouring juice.

What is even sadder is that she lost a finger to this disease because her insurance company, Aetna, failed to provide her proper care in time. It didn't have to happen that way. To this day she is still fighting to get what she rightfully deserves in time to save the rest of her digits. Imagine being in her condition and unable to do anything about it because of some bullshit red tape. There are many reasons that insurance companies deny their clients' claims but the most infuriating is when it is against the doctors' advice.

A few months ago Sarah sent out a series of emails in which she wrote of being approved then denied, then approved and denied again of a spinal catherization. Repeat this out loud: Spinal catherization. You don't even know what it is but it sounds like part of an alien torture session. It is a procedure in which an electrode is inserted into the spinal cord in order to treat chronic pain and improve microcirculatory blood-flow. This is one of several treatment options.

The July 25, 2006 issue of Newsweek reported that a little girl named Bailey Buffalow was born three months premature and 'suffered from pulmonary hypertension, a rare condition in which the artery carrying blood from the heart to the lungs becomes constricted.' Does the artery constriction part sound familiar? Reynaud's also causes this constriction. Both Bailey and Sarah's doctors provided the same prescription for these problems—sildenafil, better known as Viagra. It makes sense that the same medicine that would increase blood flow to one region would help other regions as well. Even after this big discovery was made and other doctors were allowed to practice their expertise unhindered and prescribe Viagra for other uses, Aetna still denied Sarah's prescription coverage and rightful attempt for treatment. Without a prescription, this leaves the cost at eleven dollars per little blue pill, three times daily, for a total of nearly a thousand dollars a month. That's nearly two hundred hours of work at minimum wage.

Another treatment she was prescribed was heliotherapy, an innovative way of using light to heal deep wounds. However, somewhere, deep in the heart of Aetna, someone was working on profiting off of her pain. The powers that be decided that it would be a better idea to hire a therapist to administer light therapy with their anodyne machine, rather than purchase one for Sarah to use at home. The machine only costs $3000 and had she possession of one in her home she would have been able to use it more frequently which would have helped speed up the healing process. Instead, Aetna approved a therapist that would cost $12,000 to visit three times a week for two months, not nearly often enough to do any good.

Two months ago, Sarah sent out a letter to her friends asking to send complaints to Aetna, regarding the urgent need for their compliance. This letter broke all the hearts that it reached. It was a final plea for help before throwing in the towel on a long and unfairly matched fight.

10/29/06
Subject: Giving Up

Dear All,

The spinal catherization I had prepared myself for was cancelled by my insurance company, Aetna. At this point, I'm feeling like it's worthless to keep fighting. I feel like giving up. I don't know what will happen to the left index and right middle fingers but spending every second I'm not working or getting kids to and from school fighting with companies who pawn me off on the next "supervisor" or "advocate" is too exhausting. Please continue to pray for me and for my family. There's info below if you have a moment to fax or write in to Aetna.

Love,
Sarah Hill

In response to this letter, the Free Press contacted the public relations department at Aetna.

10/29/06
Subject: Free Press inquiry

This is in regards to one of our writers who has met great resistance from Aetna who refuses to provide her with the necessary care that she needs. This mother of three has already lost a finger to amputation that would not have occurred had Aetna provided the treatment she needed. That is just the beginning. We would appreciate a response as soon as possible as she is about to lose two more fingers. We plan on pursuing this until a favorable decision is made by the powers that be at Aetna.

Within an hour someone had responded that they "*forwarded your note on to the medical director in Texas for expedited review. The appropriate representative will follow up with Ms. Hill directly.*"

That same day, Sarah was contacted, "By a nurse named Cathy who said my issues were very important to her and I said I would need to talk to my lawyer since I had gotten mentally prepared a second time for a spinal catherization only to have it cancelled by Aetna."

Four days later, Sarah sent out this letter:

10/03/06
Subject: Media & Law

Thanks to some pressure last week from the Free Press and a letter from Brandt, my lawyer friend, both the Anodyne machine and spinal stimulation decisions were overturned yesterday! Now Aetna will cover them both! Thanks everyone--I knew everyone was ready for some good news from me!

Love,
Sarah

Thirteen days later, she sent this one.

10/17/06
Subject: Update

I am officially the bionic woman (Advanced Bionics is the company that implanted this spinal cord stimulator device). The nurse

who brought me out of anesthesia was the first (and I'm certain not the last) who did a robot dance when I was trying to figure out how to program my remote. I was laughing super hard but I thought, 'what would she have done if I had just burst into tears and buried my face in the pillow'?! It could've been awkward. Thankfully, I feel great! Except for when the level is set too high. Have you seen the old Simpsons' episode where they can all shock each other? It feels like that, like my entire body has been knocked back from an open electrical socket. The electrode is moving around in my epidural space b/c I haven't formed any scar tissue to keep it in one place, so the doctor explained that it's like a pencil moving around in a jar of water. Soon it will be like a pencil NOT moving around in a jar of peanut butter. But right now, when I turn it on, it's any guess what starts vibrating--the soles of my feet, my knees, etc. Soon it will stop pulsating and jumping around and will be just affecting the shoulder to fingertips area! Yay for modern science!

Love you all & thanks for your prayers!
Sarah

covered by Aetna, show this story to your employer

While the first procedure was just a trial run, it did provide major pain relief. In Sarah's words, 'It was amazing! They took it out so they can surgically implant it in a few weeks. The stimulator reroutes pain signals and translates them into a feeling of vibration instead of pain. It's like my brain is pretending I'm not in pain—it's awesome!'

Sarah received the final surgery and is now enjoying the benefits that should have been hers for a long time now. So yes, Sarah won a part of the battle, but what of the amputation of her first finger? Aetna should be responsible for the unnecessary loss if they are now approving the treatment that would have helped save it in the first place. It is an outright admission of guilt for them to finally offer what was rightfully hers in the first place. Her children and husband have had to witness Sarah in pain everyday for as long as they can remember.

Employers need to take note: There is no point to even purchase these expensive plans through insurance companies such as Aetna if their workers will never reap the benefits that they offer. Unhealthy employees cannot reach their full potential productively. The red tape and small print and independent reviews are all in place to ensure that Aetna will save a few bucks at the expense of some one else's quality of life. It's a running joke that HMOs are known for their unscrupulous practices but it's time we stop laughing and start holding them responsible. If you are covered by Aetna, show this story to your employer. Let them know that you are concerned about the quality of coverage and to please make sure that they know what all you are receiving.

One email from the media made a difference. That says that these companies care more about their public image than their own customers' well being. One email from you also can make a difference for the next person in line to be denied. Let them know we are all watching them and that their actions will not go unnoticed.

Sarah's story tells us that we should not give up hope and never stop fighting for our rights. Her story is one of millions like her. However, her story is also one of victory. We all have a responsibility to resist those that will try to profit from our apathy. Sometimes the smallest efforts can make the biggest difference.



Chapultepec
Lupita
Mexican Restaurant

813 Richmond
2 blocks East of Montrose
713.522.2365
OPEN 24 HOURS for
Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Tired of missing **Happy Hour** *somewhere else? Don't worry! Come to Chapultepec Lupita, where our Happy Hour is from* **11am-9pm everyday!** *Try our new flavored* **Ritas and Martinis**- *We have all of the flavors! Plus check out our new* **Tequila Bar**- *We now have more than* **100 Tequilas** *and counting.* **Our full service bar is now open! Big screens, and bigger drink selection for Happy Hour!!!**

Champion Screen Printing
Quality Apparel Screen Printing
281-507-7820

Free Press Houston
Issue 76 | 02/07

Houston Ice-storm

Cue the gruff, echoing, radio announcer voice.

by Mirrorz



I'm glad you made the 2 hour drive outside of Houston's limits to find a chunk of ice to shock us.

SUNDAY! SUNDAY! SUNDAY!

Experience the Arctic Ice Blitzkrieg versus the Masses!!!

It's the Be All, End All Battle Royal Cage Match of the Millennium that can only result in the death of millions!! Admission is free and you have no choice but to attend!

That sounds completely ridiculous doesn't it? Of course it does but you heard the same thing with every newscast in the Houston a couple weeks ago. It's called hype and it's the name of the broadcasting game.

I'm almost certain nothing was happening outside of Houston for at least a week. It's not like a war is going on anywhere or any major changes are taking place within the United States government, right? There's no way anything like that would occur so I take comfort in knowing that we had every news reporter in town standing on a different street corner waiting to see if a puddle will freeze.

I actually saw a reporter standing next to a street sign that had about an inch long icicle hanging off of it while he rambled on about how dangerous the roadways have become. "Oh my god, there's an icicle on a metal sign when the temperature just fell to 32 degrees in College Station?"

You're right! That is dangerous… if I were lying underneath the sign while shooting it with my Red Rider BB gun. Here's a real newsflash: Metal transfers temperatures extremely well so of course it froze faster than everything else. I'm glad you made the 2 hour drive outside of Houston's limits to find a chunk of ice to shock us.

Granted the weather was cold by Houston's standards, but the temperature didn't drop below 35 degrees for the majority of the time. Then the news reported heavy rains were about to strike us down with great vengeance so people hopped on the train to hysteria. Aside from the cold, how is this any different from the other 70% of the year when we are bombarded with torrential rain? It's not, but there's a warming trend in the weather so obviously the water could freeze…if a tanker full of liquid nitrogen overturns on all the roads.

In a complete contradiction, the guy on television said you're going to die if you get on a roadway so you should swarm to the nearest home improvement and sporting good stores. "Remember to load up on pipe-wrap and space heaters so you can burn your house down to give us a story for the morning!" So we all wake up to check the weather before heading to work and we hear, "There were a pile-ups on I-45, US-59 and I-10 blocking traffic for miles due to this horrendous weather."

No. There are wrecks there every single business day of the year. This is not news.

Approximately 5% of the populous is intelligent enough to realize that the *News* is just another form of entertainment trying to increase their ratings and smother their competition. Another 89% were thrown into panic while the remaining 6% doesn't exist and this information comes from the department of, "Made up Statistics" which is just as credible as most of what you get from the news.

You would think after the whole Hurricane Rita Evacuation Fiasco that people might learn to make better decisions using the facts presented in lieu of the banter passed between the news anchors. It was the same scenario then with field reporters on every corner for 24 hours a day describing the quarter mile an hour breeze. "Well Dave, as you can see the winds are really picking up out here. I'm barely able to stand up. There's debris like this styrofoam cup literally being thrust down this hill."

Did anyone happen to notice the weather radar was showing a Category-3 hurricane two days before landfall but they were still "reporting" a catastrophic Category-5 fast approaching? Of course they didn't. Everyone was out of gas, and parked on the freeways caught in the largest traffic jam we've ever seen.

The Black Ice Coverage is over but Spring is fast approaching so be on watch for the edge of your seat action from *Seasonal-Rain-Storming Death,* and *Murderous Pollen Invasion 2007*. Tickets go on sale next week. Will you be able to handle the excite?! Don't forget to panic!

houston.indymedia.org

MEXA visits and maintains memorial to deceased immigrants

A few members of MEXA at the University of Houston main campus took at trip out into Victoria Texas this past weekend to remember the 19 immigrants who passed away on May 14, 2006. The memorial was also fixed and cleaned along with the building of 10 crosses on the ground.



It was a rainy morning as several of us loaded a van and headed out to Victoria Texas. After getting lost a few times and after a few Chicano U-turns we arrived at the memorial of the 19 immigrants who passed away inside an 18-wheeler as they made their way to Houston, TX. The purpose of the trip was to clean up and update the memorial by adding new flowers and crosses along with toys and other items. However this trip soon turned into an incredible journey because the images were to much to handle. After arriving and beginning the hard work of cleaning with rakes and fixing objects, along with building 10 white crosses on the ground ; we all took time to think about the tragedy of the story. When the stomach rumbles for food and there is no work in town the danger and fear are no obstacle to the immigrant who embarks on a journey to America.



Counter protesters drown out US Border Watch

About 50 immigrant rights supporters gathered at Airline&Aldine Bender Saturday, January 6 to protest the US Border Watch, a group that has been video taping day laborer sites in order to gather "national security" intelligence. The group claims they report all immigration violations to I.C.E., or Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Spring native is 3,000th US Soldier to die in Iraq



Thursday December 26th saw US Army soldier and Spring native Dustin Donica killed by small arms fire in Iraq (according to the Department of Defense). His death was the 3,000th death of US service people in Iraq. Donica, 22, was a graduate of Klein high school and attended the University of Texas.
269 soldiers from Texas have died in Iraq, 25 from the city of Houston and more than a dozen from the surrounding area including 4 others from Spring. Casualties of Iraqis vary from a minimum of 52,000, to estimates of as much as 654,965
Veterans for Peace and Military Family Speak Out will be hosting a 4 day memorial to victims of the iraq war in Memorial Park. From the open publishing newswire: A four-day memorial to all casualties from the war in Iraq will occupy a portion of Memorial Park at the intersection of Memorial Dr. and the east entrance to Picnic Lane on the south side of Memorial Dr. The observance will begin on 14 January and end on the 17th.
The opening ceremony on the 14th will begin at 4:30pm. Short ceremonies will be held at sundown on the 15th and 16th. A gathering up of the flags will begin at 5:30pm on the 17th. This memorial is designed to help educate the public on the cost of war to our servicemen, Iraqi civilians, and private contractors. [full article with details]

Solidarity with Oaxaca & The Other Campaign takes root in Houston

Solidarity with radical movements in Mexico has been growing in Houston. Following months of resistance and repression faced by the Popular Assembly of the Pueblos of Oaxaxa (APPO), and the murder of Indymedia journalist Brad Will. Activist across the world have taken action in Solidarity with the people of Oaxaca, locally this took place most recently on December 22nd outside the Mexican Consulate:
Members of Grupo MAIZ shouted chants, passed out flyers, and made announcements outside of Houston's Mexican Consulate today. By 9:00 am the Houston police were also there in a disproportionate number compared to the number of protesters; four to five police cars lined the street and multiple policemen stood nearby, looking on. Two horses were also spotted underneath a nearby bridge.



El Independiente launches a radical voice from occupied Mexico



"El Independiente" is a new independent spanish newspaper that diffuses information from independent media as Houston indymedia,Mexico Indymedia. It is distributed in the southwest of Houston.
The first issue addresses the uprising in Oaxaca Mexico and the death of indymedia journalist Brad Will, Political Prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal, The Janitors Strike in Houston, and Jailed journalist Brad Wolf as well as directing people to events and resources for radical hispano-hablantes in the Houston area.
Get it touch with questions, contributions and offers to distribute it in your neighborhood: el_independiente_houstonAThotmailDOTcom

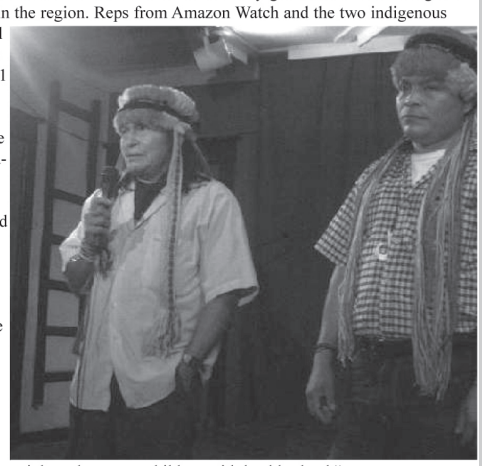


Rice removes Kleenex products, students protest Kimberly Clark

Rice University students delivered a four-foot letter to the office of Kimberly-Clark Board Member and Rice Board Trustee, Marc Shapiro. The letter confirmed removal of all Kleenex brand products from the Rice Housing and Dining Department.
Students worked with University Administrators to remove the Kleenex brand because the product is produced using trees clearcut from North America's largest ancient forest, the Boreal.
"The removal of Kimberly-Clark products from our university is a strong indication that the company is not producing an environmentally sound product, " said Kyle Saari, Rice University student."Kimberly-Clark claims to be an environmentally responsible company, but it uses wood pulp that is clearcut from the Boreal to make throwaway products like tissues and toilet paper. Universities can use their purchasing power to demand that Kimberly-Clark use recycled paper and stop wiping out this important forest."
Earlier this year in August, immigrant rights supporters led a boycott against Kimberly Clark in protest of House bill 4437, an anti-immigration bill authored by Jim Sensenbrenner, who holds large investments in the company.

Achuar leaders visit Houston to discuss oil drilling in the Amazon

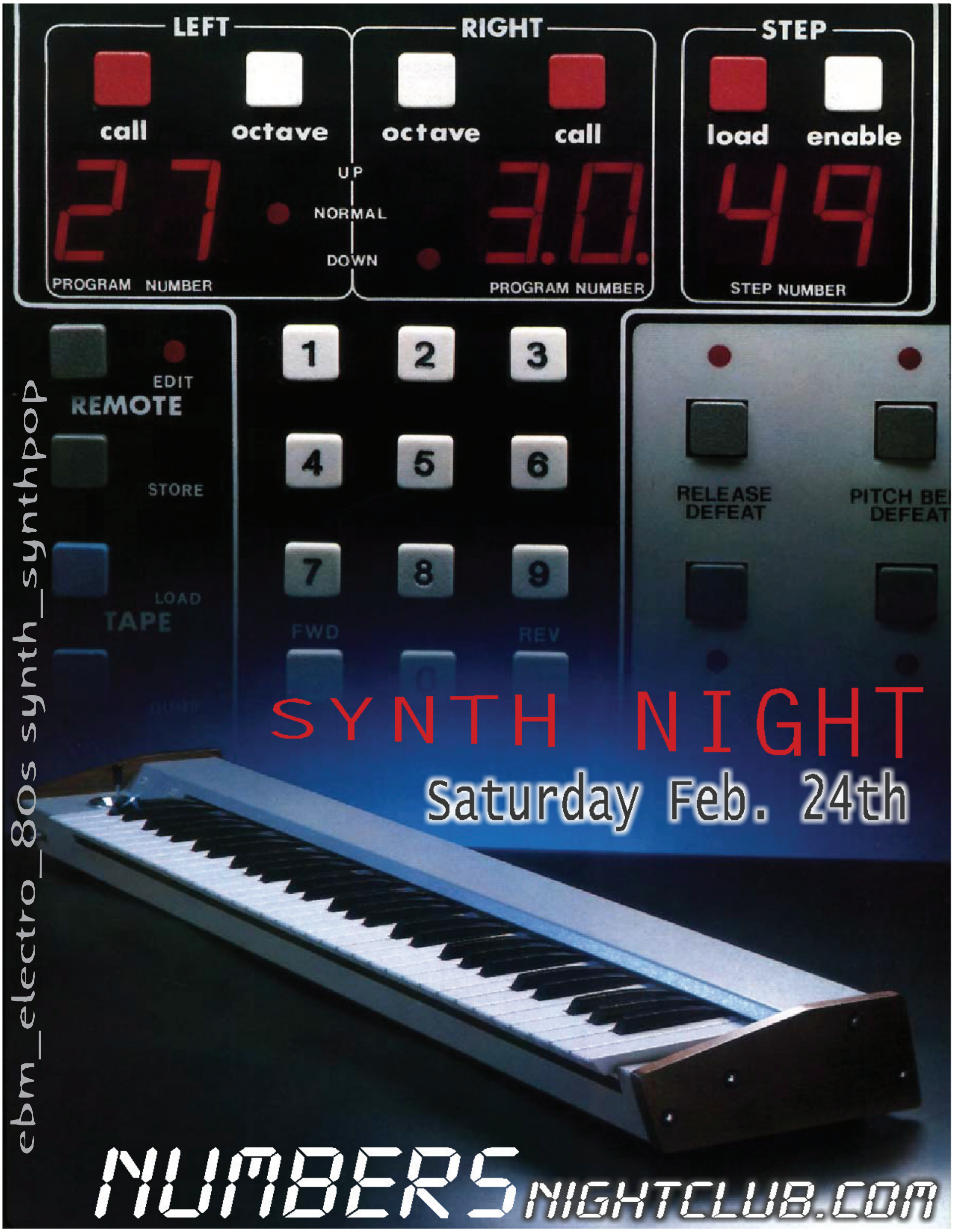
Two Achuar indigenous leaders from Peru came to Houston to talk about the effects of oil drilling in their Amazon territories. The Achuar recently gained two victories against major oil companies in the region. Reps from Amazon Watch and the two indigenous leaders spoke to a full room at the Artery on Monday, December 11 Oil drilling in the Amazon: An Apu, or tribal leader, from one of the Achuar communities spoke first. In his native language, he said they'd traveled far to come here and thanked everyone for supporting them. He said that since oil companies have come into their territory (during the 1970s), their resources have been destroyed. "We don't want any more companies," he said. "We want to defend our right to leave our children with healthy land."

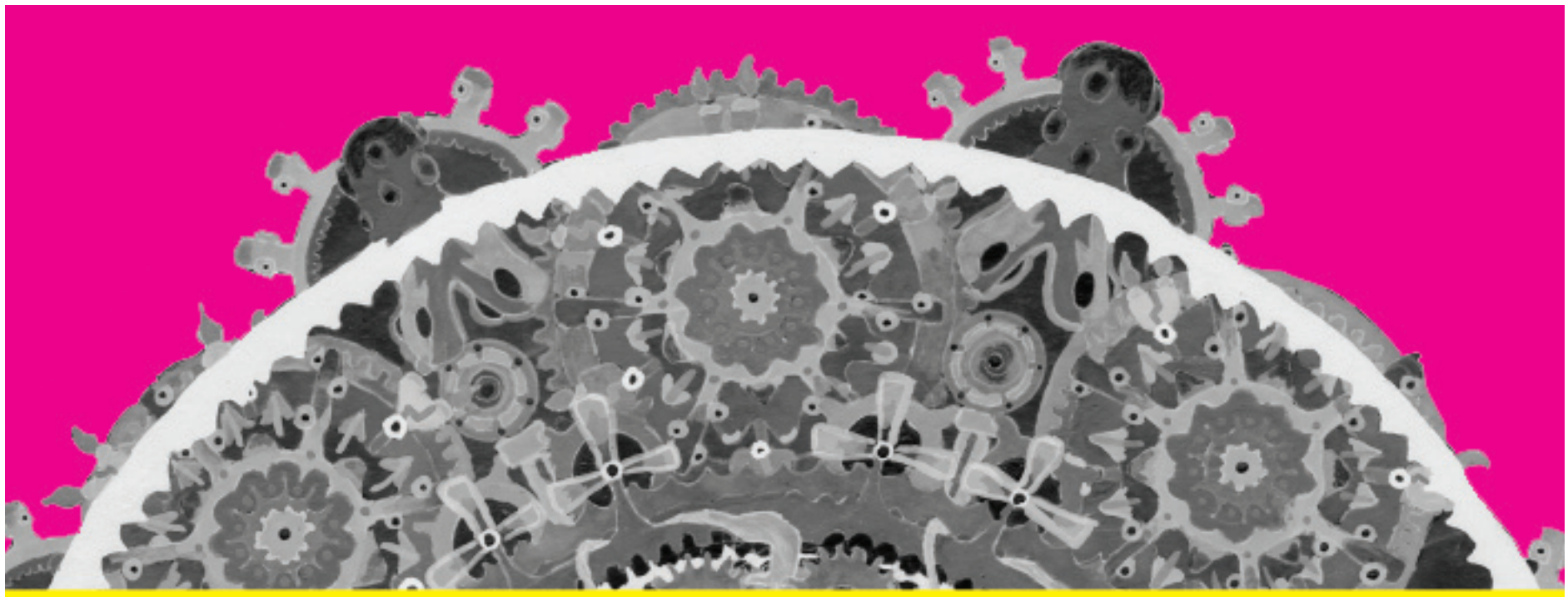


Resistance and Victory:In October 2006, 31 Achuar communities and over 100 leaders united to resist the oil companies and demand change. For two weeks, they blocked roads, airports and rivers and were able to completely halt 50% of the oil processes in Peru. They also split up 800 men, women, and children into groups of 25 to cut all the electricity wires running to oil wells in their lands.
Leila from Amazon Watch gave a run down of the two victories won by the united Achuar communities. Earlier this month, the US oil company Oxy said it would be ending its activities and leaving Peru. Additionally, the Peruvian government and Argentina-based company Pluspetrol, which is currently drilling in the territory, agreed to almost all of the demands put forth by the Achuar.

the houston independent media center
media for social & economic justice
get involved! houston@indymedia.org
fiscal sponsorship for himc provided by
the southwest alternate media project
www.swamp.org

NUMBERS
(300 WESTHEIMER RD. - NUMBERSNIGHTCLUB.COM)
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17th
OF MONTREAL
w/ ELEKIBASS. TICKETS AT TICKETWEB.COM, SOUND EXCHANGE, VINAL EDGE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17th
EXPLOSIONS IN THE SKY
w/ ELUVIUM. TICKETS AT TICKETWEB.COM, SOUND EXCHANGE, VINAL EDGE
THURSDAY, MARCH 1st
ISIS
w/ JESU (ex-GODFLESH) TICKETS AT TICKETWEB.COM, SOUND EXCHANGE, VINAL EDGE
SATURDAY, MARCH 10th
DEERHOOF
TICKETS AT TICKETWEB.COM, SOUND EXCHANGE, VINAL EDGE
THURSDAY, APRIL 5th
TED LEO AND THE PHARMACISTS
SUNDAY, APRIL 22nd
TAPES N' TAPES
superunison
TICKETS AND INFO FOR ALL SHOWS AT:
SUPERUNISON.COM
WALTER'S On Washington
4215 Washington Ave. - (713) 862-2513
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15th
YOUNG LOVE
MOROS EROS
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22nd
MIDLAKE
TACKS THE BOY DISASTER
FRIDAY, MARCH 2nd
DR. DOG
WHAT MADE MILWAUKEE FAMOUS
THURSDAY, MARCH 6TH
MONEEN
PISTOLITA, DAMIERA, STADIUM
FRIDAY, MARCH 9th
HOWLING HEX
(NEIL MICHAEL HAGARTY)
SATURDAY, MARCH 10th
TODD BARRY
TUESDAY, MARCH 13th
COLOUR REVOLT
DIOS (MALOS)
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14th
PELICAN
DAUGHTERS, RUSSIAN CIRCLES
SUNDAY, MARCH 18th
AQUEDUCT
FRIDAY, APRIL 14th
SEBADOH


LEFT
RIGHT
STEP
call
octave
octave
call
load
enable
27
30
49
UP
NORMAL
DOWN
PROGRAM NUMBER
PROGRAM NUMBER
STEP NUMBER
EDIT
REMOTE
STORE
LOAD
TAPE
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
FWD
REV
RELEASE DEFEAT
PITCH BE DEFEAT
SYNTH NIGHT
Saturday Feb. 24th
NUMBERS
NIGHTCLUB.COM
ebm_electro_80s synth_synthpop



superunison
PRESENTS

of Montreal

with Elekibass

NUMBERS
(300 WESTHEIMER)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17th

ALL AGES - TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM:
TICKETWEB.COM, SOUND EXCHANGE, VINAL EDGE



Great Taste!
Great Results!

B CLEAN™

BE COOL. BE CAREFUL.™

#1 IN DETOX

It's Not About Luck!

B-CLEAN PRODUCTS FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TOXIN REDUCERS

- **B-Clean Formula**
  Works in one hour, effective up to five hours. In Hawaiian Tropical & Orange.
- **B-Super Clean and Turbo Clean**
  Extra Strength Formula
- **Effervescent Tablets**
  Works in one hour, effective up to five hours. Water Soluble formula tastes great.
- **Hair Cleansing System**
  Effective up to eight hours, eliminates external barriers and lowers toxins deep within.
- **Daily Capsules**
  Supplements detox process 12 to 24 hours prior to cleansing deadline, powerful companion to other toxin reduction products.

Ask for B-Clean at your Favorite Smoke Shops!