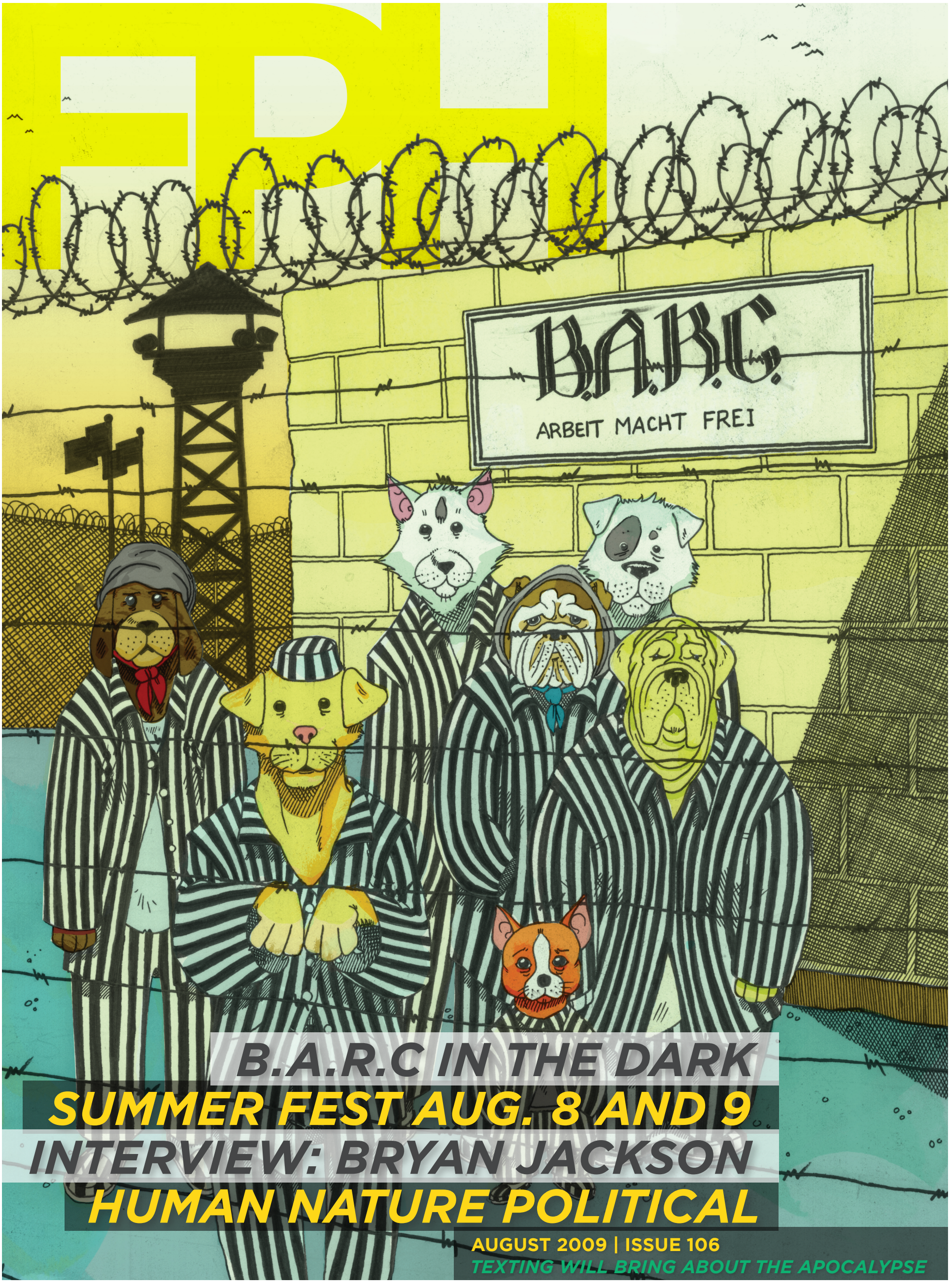
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B.A.R.C IN THE DARK

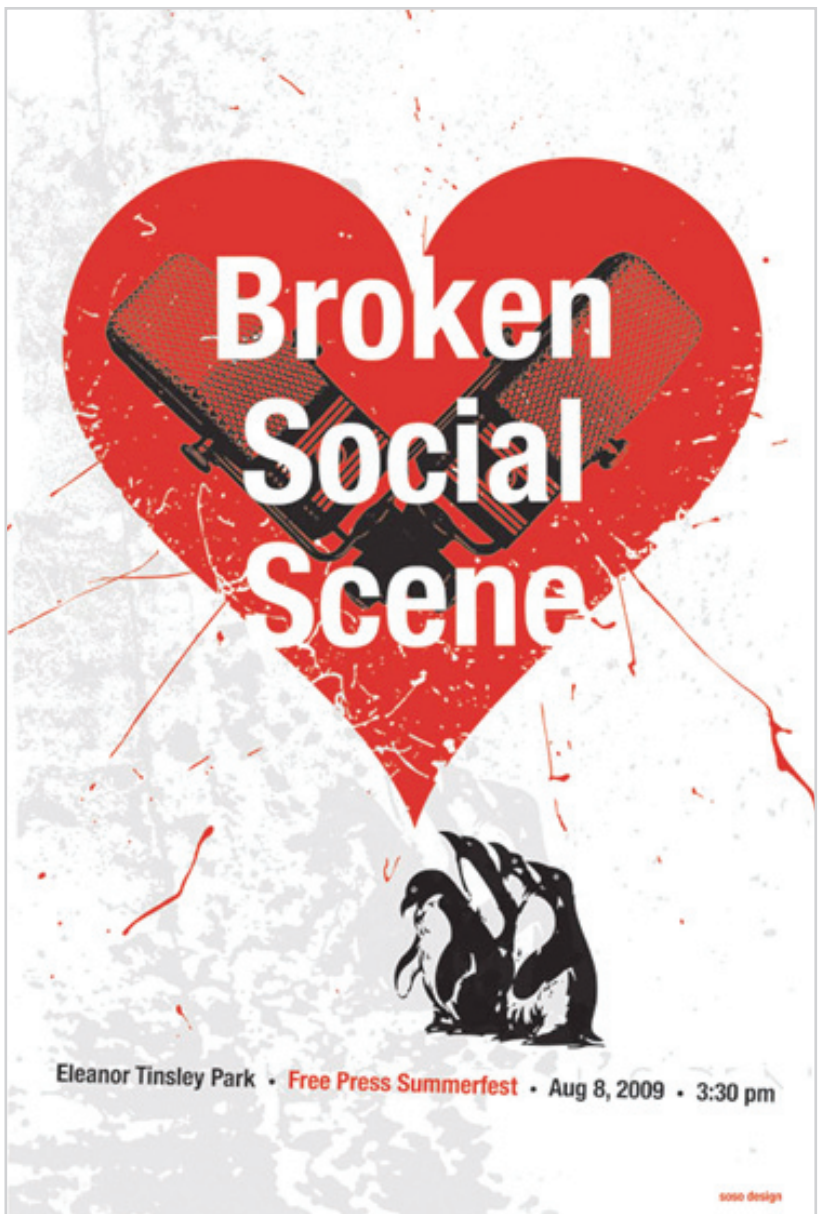
SUMMER FEST AUG. 8 AND 9

INTERVIEW: BRYAN JACKSON

HUMAN NATURE POLITICAL

AUGUST 2009 | ISSUE 106

TEXTING WILL BRING ABOUT THE APOCALYPSE


Broken
Social
Scene
Eleanor Tinsley Park • Free Press Summerfest • Aug 8, 2009 • 3:30 pm
sose design


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THIS ISSUE AUGUST



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Mammalcide



LOCAL, page 22
BARC In The Dark



FEATURE, page 18
Summer Fest Schedule



LOCAL, page 26
Too Big To Fail

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- **pg 6: ART, how ya'll doin**
- **pg 10: MUSIC, maybe somwhere**
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- **pg 28: LOCAL, mayoral forums**
- **pg 30: WORLD, brute logic of big guns**
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AWN

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FREE PRESS - SUMMERFEST
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Aug 4
Th' Legendary Shack Shakers, Bobby Bars Jr.

Aug 6
Generation Landslide

Aug 7
White Rhino, Whorehound, Trian Woodburns

Aug 8
Chris Hawkes, Bob Barney

Aug 13
Thunderbolt Suit

Aug 14
The Lonely H

Aug 18
Grown Up Storytime

Aug 19
The Start, The Boxing Lesson, Osirus

Aug 20
Wayward Sons

Aug 21
MacAdams

Aug 22
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EVENT CALENDAR

8/1
William Fitzsimmons + Jenny Owen Youngs

8/3
PLF

8/5
Dark Party

8/8
Official Summer Fest After Party w/Ramesh from Voxtrot

8/14
Mutating Meltdown, The Wiggins

8/15
The Mathletes

8/16
Guerilla Foco Clan, Juzcoz

8/17
Davilla 666

8/27
Opus Carnage

9/18
Listen Listen CD Release!!

9/19
Leg Sweeper, Electric Courage Machine, Muhhammadali,

10/1
TITUS ANDRONICUS, The So So Glos, +1 TBA

11/5
Sugar and Gold

ALL SHOWS ALL AGES
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I WANT TO TAKE THIS MOMENT TO PERSONALLY BEG EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU TO ATTEND FREE PRESS SUMMER FEST AUGUST 8TH AN 9TH. THIS PROMISES TO BE A HUGE EVENT FOR OUR CITY AND WE HAVE HIGH HOPES THAT IT WILL CHANGE PERCEPTIONS OF HOUSTON AS A LIVE MUSIC CITY. BUT BESIDES THOSE AND THE OBVIOUS REASONS OF THE GREAT BANDS AND ARTS THAT WILL BE ON HAND, I PERSONALLY HAVE A LOT RIDING ON THIS. I ENCOURAGE ALL OF YOU TO EAT AND DRINK HEAVILY, INVITE ALL OF YOUR FRIENDS, AND MAYBE BUY A T-SHIRT OR TWO. PLEASE. IF NOT, I AM IN TROUBLE.

PLEASE GOD, LET THIS GO WELL.

ART SHOWS THIS MONTH

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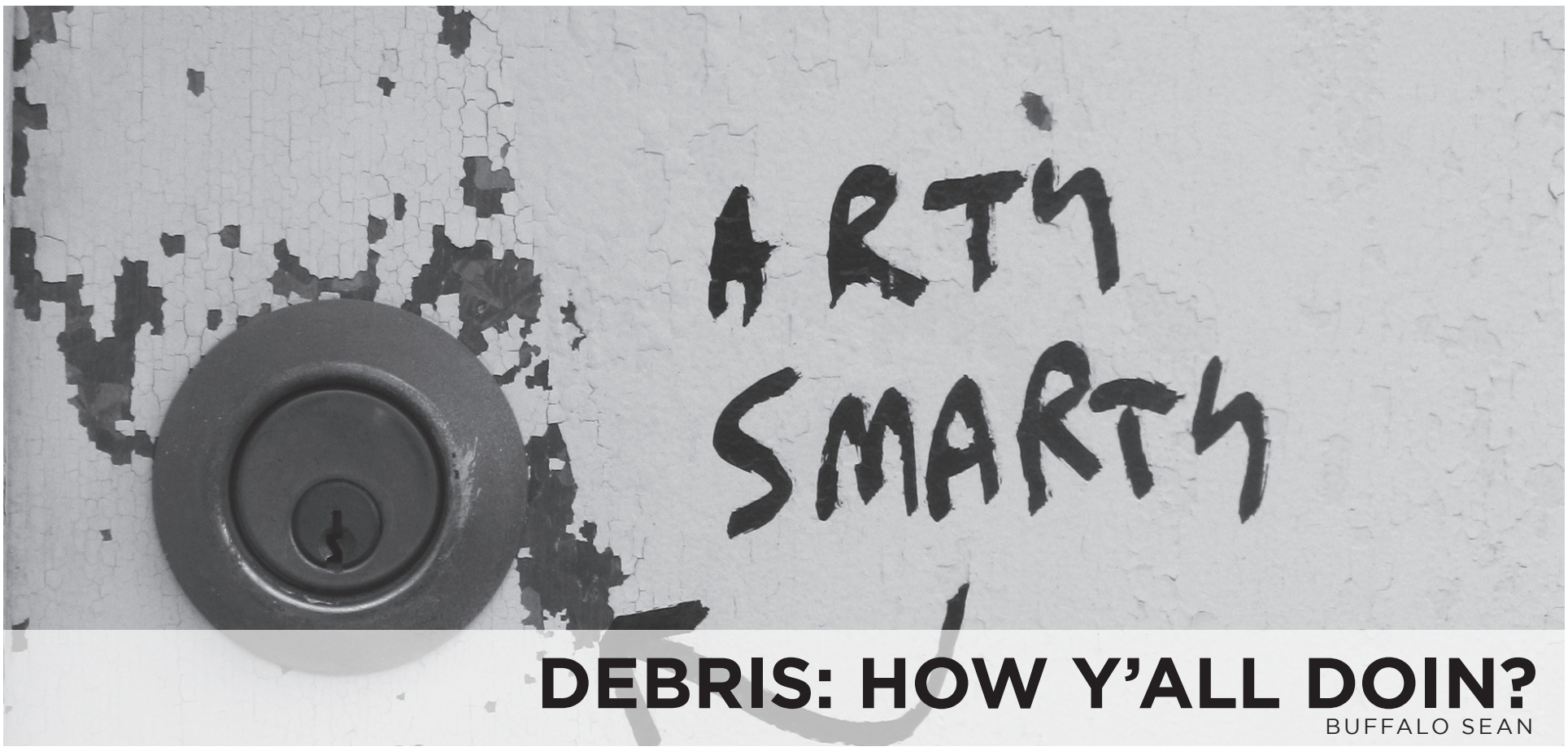


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DEBRIS: HOW Y'ALL DOIN?

BUFFALO SEAN

ANOTHER MOLTING IS UNDERWAY IN TOWN; I SEE THE SIGNS OF DESPERATION EVERYWHERE. THEY'RE AT THE MARKET ON AIRLINE, OUTSIDE THE FIRE MUSEUM IN MIDTOWN, AT LEE HIGH OFF HILLCROFT, ON 45 AND 59, IN EVERY PARKING LOT.

THEY SAY Kentucky, Michigan, Tennessee, California, Mississippi. There are thousands, but I can only profess to have seen a small sliver of their subtle symbols. Their reasons for being here are numerous, if not wide-ranging. There are jobs to be had. Like New York, except for the occasional Chihuahua state license plate. Houston as the air-conditioned city was a 20th century feat, but it remains to be seen what a doubling in the city's size between 2000 and 2030 will do. Poised to surpass Chicago in population in the 2010 census, Houston will soon be the third largest city in America.

Houston's artworld has always been driven by ex-pats from all places "lower 48" and across the world and it is richer for being so. While in this winding bayou, the binding force of Texas' rich tradition of expressionism doesn't touch all of its artists, but those who delve into it are better for doing so. Thirty years into the velvet revolution sparked by James Surls at the Lawndale Annex in the East End the evolution of characteristic Houston artists is a mature subject replete with heroes, villains and muses. Characterized as Imagist by Walter Hopps, enraptured with the battle between outside influence and outsider art, populist and vulgar, kitschy yet ashamedly folk, Houston artists have built a conscientious covenant with their environment, the wet, hot, green overgrowth punctured by steel and concrete. Ink has been spilled lauding and eviscerating individual merits- building a body of criticism that is sufficiently historical as to be said to exist. It won't take long for it to be written into history books.

In figures like John Biggers, James Surls, Lucas Johnson, Sharon Kopriva, Mel Chin and Mark Flood a protagonist is present for trials and tribulations. In every good story there is an apropos foil. To wit, the ideals and sensibilities of Jermayne MacAgy, Dominique deMenil, Alison de Lima Greene, Joe Havel and Linda Cathcart represent the other side of the city's cultural coin, refined, intellectual and cunning. Stories flesh out a scene set to a rolling boil for decades. Transplants took sides in the local debate and Texans travelled and lived the world over. Surrealists, conceptualists, abstract expressionists and pop artists touched both sides of the debate in significant and real ways, a notion glazed over in petty territorial skirmishes. Modernism's local distortion is manifest in confusion, terror and bliss in any and all media. The only thing that seems to fall flat here is smart commentary, the taste bends toward the sweet of emotion over the salt of thought. Visceral reality, tortured fantasy, it will all be part of a great story one day.

Naked Lunch
The Wild Boys
Les Miserables
The Hobbit
Trainspotting
The Fuck-Up
A History of Paris
After the End of Art
The Magnetic Fields
Impossible Lightness of Being
Big Sur
Catcher in the Rye
Roots
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Aug 7: Plump
Aug 8: Brains For Dinner & Natty Turna
Aug 14: The Lovers (Austin TX)
Aug 15: Praia Urbana
Aug 21: Hamilton Loomis
Aug 22: Donna to Dusk
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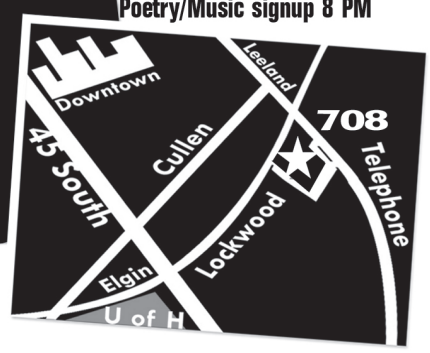
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7-4 TATE - Pantrix - Holy Hand Granade
7-10 More Cowbell - Mandy Smith
7-17 Maria de Negro - El Tlazho
7-18 Avenger - D-Fyant - Floppy & Akward
7-24 Dr. Rick & The Burners-BayouMonster
7-25 Chango Man-Los Guerreros de la Musica
7-31 The Distracted-Possum Attack-3Colored Bananas

LUNCH OR DINNER



MAMMALCIDE

BY MICHAEL BERGERON

THE COVE

HUMANS BREATHE UNCONSCIOUSLY, for instance we breathe in our sleep. Dolphins are mammals that breathe on purpose. With every breath they take they make a conscious decision to inhale air.

The Cove is a provocative hard-hitting documentary about dolphin killing. The film provides momentum from footage that was obtained by stealth. An Ocean's 11 style team, including a couple of paramilitary ringers and a Hollywood special effects company, are brought together to expose the illegal practices that exist in Taiji, Wakayama, Japan. Because of its remote geography and small population (a few thousand) certain city officials and local fisheries are able to get away with slaughtering dolphins by herding them into a narrow cove with boats, sonic noise and nets. The few dolphins that are captured are sold upwards of $150,000 to theme parks worldwide. While dolphin drive hunting goes on everywhere around the globe the practice is especially egregious in Taiji.

Director Louis Psihoyos emphasizes the H. P. Lovecraft nature of the secluded area. Minus the supernatural element of course, the cove and its inhabitants exist apart from general humanity. Psihoyos and Richard O'Barry, a major player in the film, are recognizable by sight to the locals, and thus are hounded, stalked and arrested whenever they show their face. One bizarre character calling himself Private Space follows them with a camcorder, occasionally yelling at them (all in Japanese). But a few townspeople (among them city council members) are on their side, dishonored at the town's participation in the cover-up.

O'Barry's story will cement your choice of siding with the good guys. His story of how he became a cetacean activist will sink the listener who fondly remembers the 60s television show Flipper. O'Barry was the dolphin trainer and Cathy was one of five dolphins who played Flipper on the show. O'Barry relates how Cathy, after the show's over, commits suicide in his arms. "She gave me a look that said she'd given up and just stopped breathing," he gravely recalls to the camera. Since that time O'Barry gets arrested with frequency for freeing dolphins that are confined in tourist or research enclosures.

Flash forward to the present time and O'Barry's in his senior years but more than athletic enough to head a covert team to Taiji recruited by himself and Psihoyos that includes seasoned swimmers, night vision photography, and digital cameras hidden in rocks designed by ILM as well as underwater sound equipment.

The effect is overwhelming in its snuff film intensity; the forceful death twitch of a tail, the screeching sounds of mayhem, and the aftermath shot of all the sea water in the cove so blood red it looks like a cranberry and tomato juice cocktail.

The story unfolds in a linear style. At the mid-point when the members of the team arrive and secretly rendezvous for their mission to hide the cameras in the middle of the night the action becomes oddly riveting. While not quite on the top shelf with last year's caper genre docu Man on Wire, The Cove provides plenty of food for thought not the least of which is the high-in-mercury-level dolphin meat being sold around the world. Dolphins are hardly on an extinction list yet their physical state mirrors our own pollution of their watery atmosphere. Some areas I thought the documentary would go but that are not approached include John C. Lilly's contribution to dolphin research. Lilly was the model for the George C. Scott role in Day of the Dolphin (1973) and O'Barry must surely have crossed his path at some point. Also the use of dolphins by the Navy or military sonic sound experiments killing sea mammals. Although these are all subjects worthy of their own documentaries. Stick around past the closing credit roll for an extended sequence that shows how The Cove team got one camera past a police blockade because it was hidden inside a giant floating whale balloon.

HUMPDAY DIRECTORLYNN SHELTON

REMEMBER THE DOUBLE-DOG DARE from A Christmas Story? It's not a money issue like a bet; we're talking personal pride at stake. A drunken challenge gets jacked up to even higher levels in the movie Humpday.

Two former college buddies, one now married and the other a self-professed drifter, dare each other to participate in a porn film. Only because it's an art project they will fuck each other in celebration of their irrepressible machismo. Naturally complications ensue.

"Someone said casting the right actors is 90-percent of the movie," Humpday writer-director Lynn Shelton tells Free Press Houston in a phone interview. "Try 99-percent." Shelton speaks from experience, having worked both in front and behind the camera as an actress, an editor, and a director. Her approach to helming she describes as "a natural style, a method that is organic."

Shelton shot Humpday over the period of a dozen days. "Actually we had the actors for a



12 day window but shot with the leads for ten days and used a couple days to rest. We did a few pick-ups later on." Shelton works out situations with the actors before shooting and talks about character but doesn't actually rehearse. "I want the electric dynamic of the actors going through the scenes for the first time."

Using two digital cameras Shelton lensed master shots of sequences that lasted "20 to 30 minutes" in some cases. Her expertise as an editor allowed her to compose with attention to detail and continuity in the editing bay. "I always got what I needed in three or four takes," Shelton added.

Playing the two friends are Puffy Chair and Baghead director Mark Duplass as Ben and Joshua Leonard (The Blair Witch Project) as Andrew. Ben believes there's still a six-pack under his rapidly expanding gut and Andrew thinks he's cool because he's been to Machu Picchu. Both characters are flawed. Ben in particular has the inability to tell the truth to his wife (a strong debut performance by Alycia Delmore) while Andrew's not nearly as boho as he thinks.

Humpday has a clever structure that leads to the two men's verbal dissection of their desires and friendship in the finale in a hotel room that lasts an entire reel. There's plenty of hilarity but also a dose of biting realism especially from Delmore's Anna.

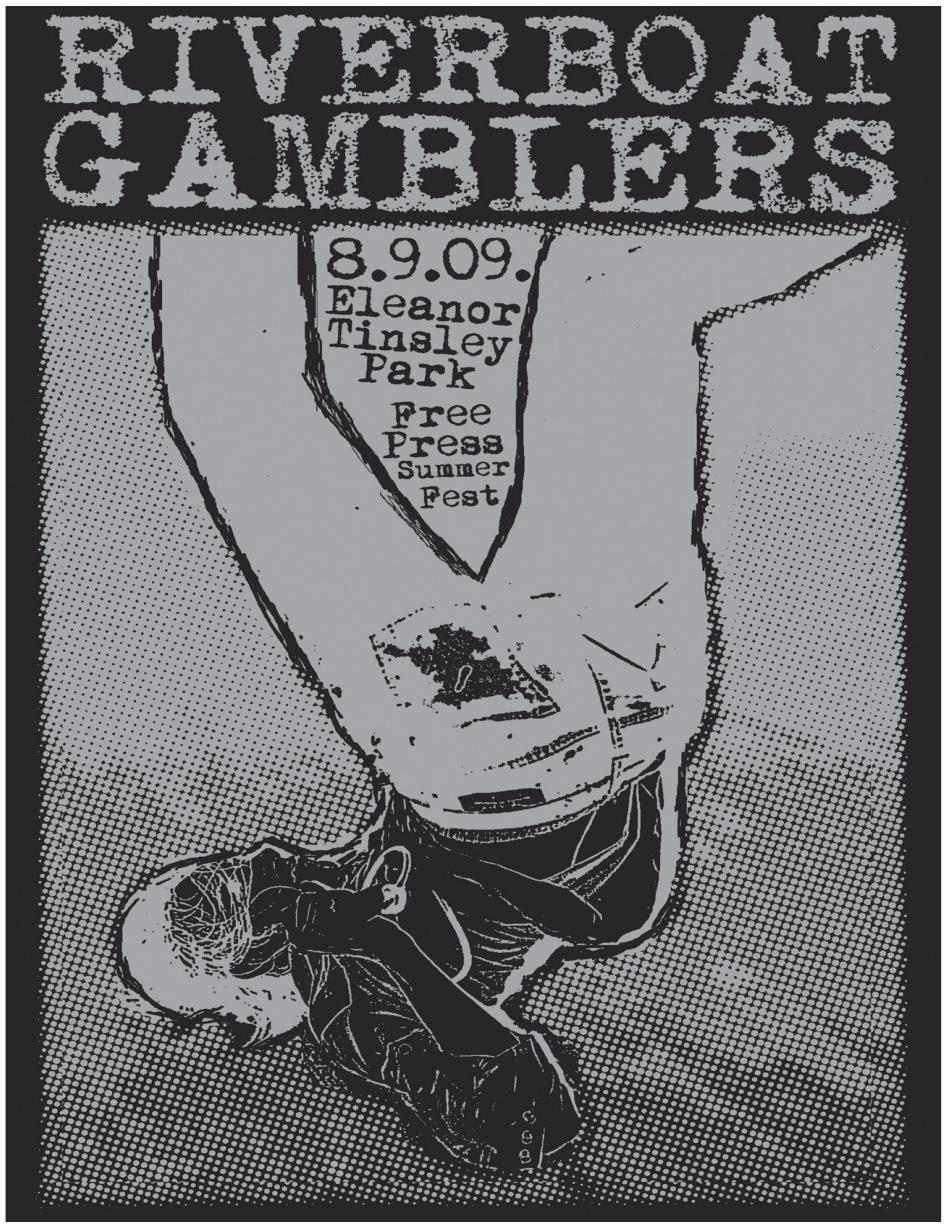
Even though Shelton used a small crew, sometimes as little as six people, she would ask extra members to leave the set while shooting leaving only herself, the camera and sound crew and thesps. "The actors have the most difficult job on the set," remarks Shelton. Something about her method must have validity because Humpday pays off both as an indie comedy and a compelling drama.

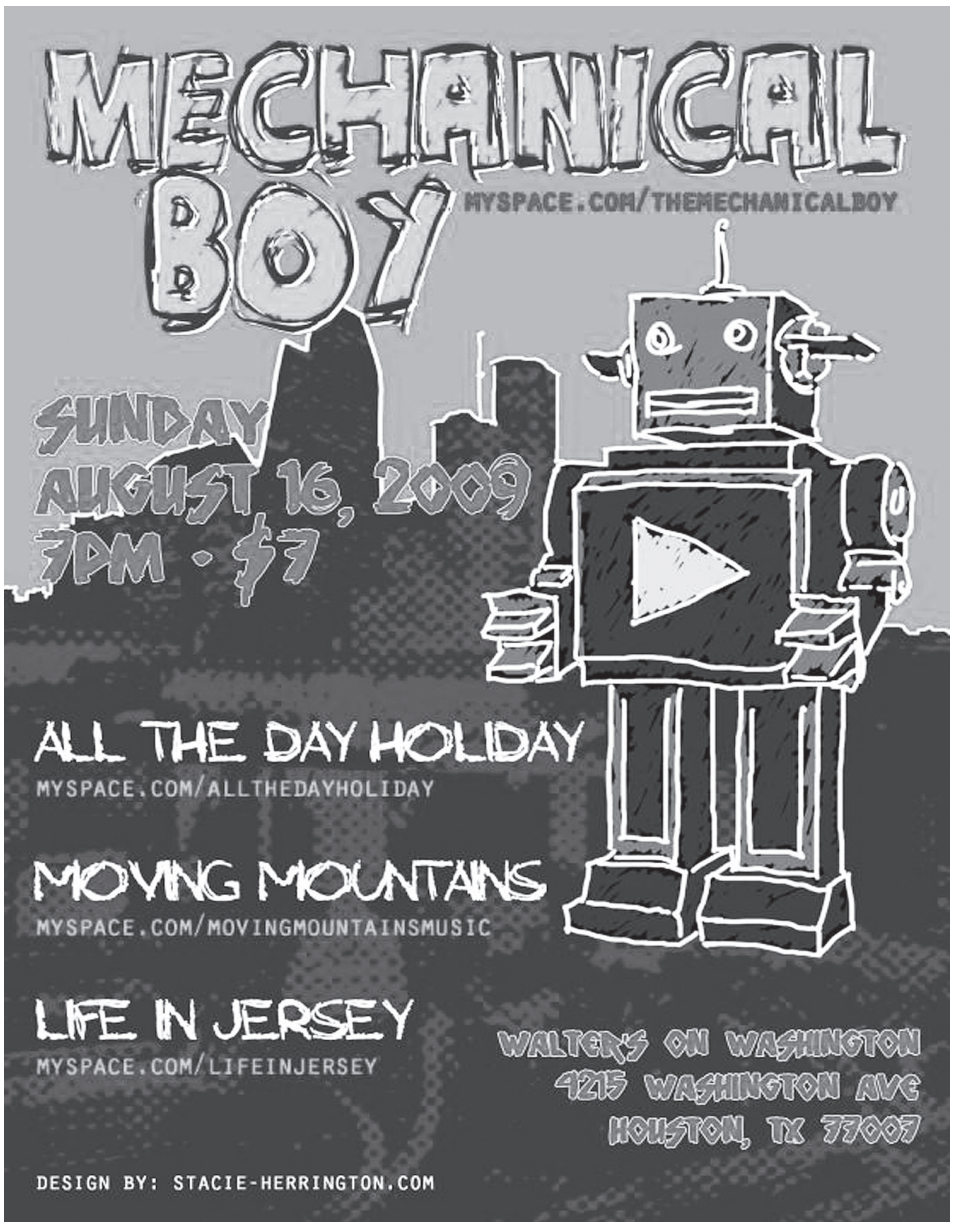
MFA ITALIAN RETRO

THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, HOUSTON has run retrospectives of Italian films for the last three years, each annual event showcasing archival quality prints from Cinecitta via the local Italian consulate. This year shines the light on Leading Ladies of Italian Cinema.

The series starts the weekend of August 21 and runs for a solid month and includes 15 films in addition to guest speakers before certain screenings. If names like Sophia Loren, Monica Vitti, Silvana Mangano, Gina Lollibrigida, et al. spark your interest you know where your hearts are headed. Full details, titles and times can be obtained at the museum website under the film category. www.mfah.org/film FPH









DE LA SOUL

MAYBE SOMEWHERE I WOULDN'T NEED TO BE SATISFIED

BY K. ANDERSON

...AND SO THE SUMMER COMES TO AN END SOON. OH, WHAT A SUMMER IT HAS BEEN. WE LIVE IN WHAT IS CALLED A GLOBAL COMMUNITY.

DUE TO THINGS SUCH AS the internet, Facebook, and Twitter, we are everywhere all the time, and yet we are only in our bedrooms, offices, living rooms, or on our phones watching the world happen, updating the status. And yet, for the most part, not much is happening. One of the more memorable things about a vacation was the illusion of disappearance, the idea you were going away. But now, with all of this access, you never really go away... unless you don't sign in. So, though I'm in Mexico, I can still communicate as if I am still t/here. (Sure, I can't actually attend things over t/here, but if I wait long enough they may show up on YouTube and then I can see a badly recorded visually shaking version of it.)

So, apparently Michael Jackson died, and The Free Press has some sort of festival. What is there to talk about this August? (Well there is that Free Press Festival...and whatever else I can concoct from the web and/or prior knowledge.) So, here, I will be brief, but let me assure you that when I return to the States it will be on (cough, Polvo interview). Oh, and though I never thought I would, I miss the Houston police. Shit, of all things, I never thought I would miss the HPD but the Mexican police, are…

AMPLIFIERS AND MICROPHONES

DE LA SOUL

08/02/09 | House Of Blues

De La Soul has always been a great live hip hop act, even if you haven't heard an entire album from them since Buhloone Mind State (I stand accused). Every time you see them makes you want to give the overlooked albums a chance. I remember seeing De La Soul, Souls Of Mischief, and Tribe Called Quest, and it was one of the greatest shows I have ever seen. I look forward to going to a show and seeing some 35 to 40 year olds rocking and knowing that, if only for a moment, hip hop will not stop…until about 2:15 AM.

ATMOSPHERE

08/04/07 | Warehouse Live

Atmosphere's name usually is synonymous with the term, or idea, of emotional rap. I think Tupac was the first emo rapper—shit maybe even Scarface—but Atmosphere was liked by an entirely different (read: Anglo) audience, so with every supposed phenomenon there comes a term. Nonetheless, Atmosphere is a rapper who puts heart and soul and (gasp) emotion into his music all while displaying an acute verbal dexterity (read: flow). This may be one of the last times Atmosphere takes his show on the road, which makes it a must-see event, unless he reconsiders next year, which would still make this a should-see event.

FREE PRESS SUMMER FEST

08/07 & 08/08/09 | Eleanor Tinsley Park

Yes, Broken Social Scene and Devin The Dude will be awesome, but the reason to go to Free Press Summer Fest is that it is a Houston festival featuring (mainly) Houston bands. If there is a group in Houston that is not playing this two day festival, they should probably quit or fire the person who books their shows. From the Young Mammals to The Hates to Perseph One and all points in between, the ENTIRE Houston music scene will be covered at this festival, and unlike Lollapalooza or Austin City Limits (which you can attend as well), this is one of the few festivals nationwide which showcases the music of its city as well as the corporate sponsors and local vendors. As I'm sure this festival will be covered extensively in this issue, my selling point as to why you should go is simple: support the home team. There are a lot of great bands playing, and most of them are from here.

SPEAKERS AND HEADPHONES

MAXWELL

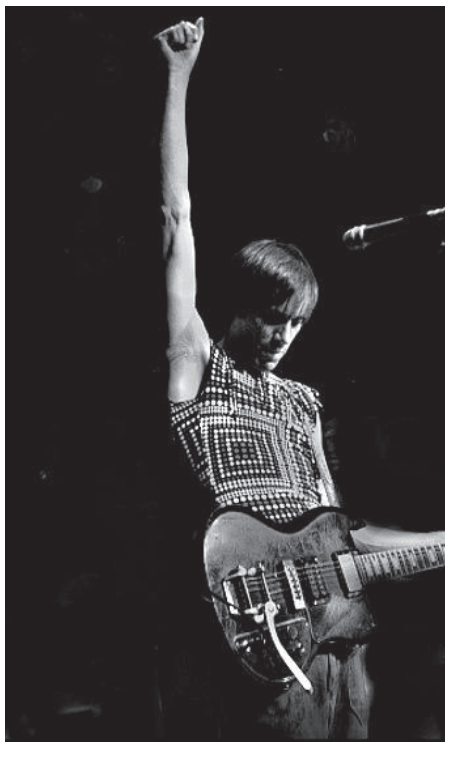
Blacksummer's Night (Sony Music)

I rarely review huge CDs, unless they are wor-

BROKEN SOCIAL SCENE
08/08 | FREE PRESS SUMMER FEST



OF MONTREAL
08/09 | FREE PRESS SUMMER FEST



THE LONELY H
08/14 | RUDYARD'S



THE MCKENZIES
08/15 | MANGO'S





thy of my pithy barbs, but in the case of this CD, I will express my fondness. First of all, I loathe the term or idea of neo soul—the notion that by somehow aping black music's "golden age" you are doing something authentic. Good music is good music, and a horn section doesn't signify a classic, but Maxwell's latest Blacksummer's Night may well be a classic soul record. The feelings are not the one-sided, contrived, love you forever or booty juice fare of recent R&B. Love is not perfect and sometimes it doesn't work out, so it's refreshing to hear songs such as "Pretty Wings" or "Cold" express this nuance vividly, but then "Stop The World" declaims a sentiment that anyone in love (or lust) could understand--let the craziness continue outside we'll stay here and (love) each other. Soul music should be renamed sold music (as in anything to make a dollar), but in the case of Blacksummer's Night you feel the soul more than the targeted demographic.

SIX ORGANS OF ADMITTANCE
Luminous Night (Drag City)

Six Organs of Admittance's Ben Chasny has always been in touch with all things psychedelic and spacious and moody (and all other words that describe music that is as much atmosphere and setting as it is rocking tunes.) While on vacation, I had to abbreviate the good times in order to come home for a day and handle something. During the few hours I was home, I heard the Luminous Night CD as an aural representation of all the things I had seen and felt while traveling and staring at vacuous scapes of land and trees. The music takes you to a place that is beyond your body while keeping you present enough to feel it. It is not just spacey trip music—it is multidimensional, it arouses many feelings and goes many places—and believe me, the ride is worth the price of admission. **FPH**

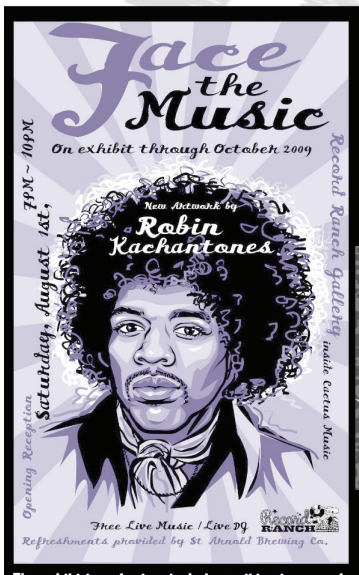
GALACTIC COWBOYS
08/15 | WAREHOUSE LIVE



TWO STAR SYMPHONY
08/16 | SUPER HAPPY FUN LAND



CACTUS MUSIC
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Face The Music
Illustration Exhibit in the Record Ranch



Get up close & personal with many of the great musicians of the 20th century at the Face The Music exhibition showcasing new works from award-winning illustrator Robin K. The exhibition of prints includes striking images of groundbreaking female rockers Patti Smith, Debbie Harry, Annie Lennox & Tina Turner. A series of prints featuring Texas blues legends Blind Lemon Jefferson, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Freddie King is included as well as work by pioneer rockers such as Iggy Pop, Jimi Hendrix, Elvis Presley and more.

Affordable prints are available of all images. Signed show posters and t-shirts that feature the Jimi image are also available.

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Refreshments provided By St. Arnold Brewing Co.
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8/8 - T-Bird & The Breaks @ 3:00pm
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8/22 - Hot Club of Cowtown @ 4:00pm
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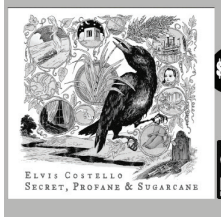
DAY OF THE DEAD ROCKSTARS By Carlos Hernandez



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Day of the Dead III opens Fall 2009

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INTERVIEW: BRYAN JACKSON

BY OMAR AFRA



I HEARD THE NAME BRYAN JACKSON ATTACHED TO CONTROVERSY 1000 TIMES BEFORE BRIEFLY MEETING HIM A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO AT AVANT GARDEN. WHETHER IT WAS STEALING COMEDIAN JACOB CALLE'S RECORD COLLECTION AND RETURNING IT, STEALING B L A C K I E'S TOUR MONEY AND RETURNING IT, OR STEALING JAY MERRIT'S BIKE AND RETURNING IT, JACKSON IS ALWAYS SURROUNDED BY SOME NEW, INTERESTING SHIT-STORM.

HOWEVER, DESPITE HIS ANTICS, he is not merely another scum-fuck prankster without any talents. Jackson sings for Black Congress and they are on the verge of releasing a stellar 7-inch record loaded with grimy but calculated sludge. I managed to get him to answer a few questions and it has yielded a splendid bounty of venom, trash talk, and talk of defecating in pool tables.

WHO HAS ARRIVED HERE TODAY: THE FOLKSY, FRIENDLY BRYAN JACKSON OR THE INFAMOUS SITH-LORD? IS THE SITH-LORD MERELY A MARKETING PLATFORM FOR THE NICE GUY OR DOES HE REALLY EXIST? ¶ Man, it really all depends on how many beers I've drank... I'm on 13 right now; so needless to say I'm pretty shitfaced. What? Gotta problem? If you make me look stupid in this interview I will burn Mangos to the fucking ground and take a shit on the smoldering ashes. I can be a crabby drunk sometimes. Usually I'll give you the shirt off my back or I'll just steal a shirt off someone else's, but sometimes I can be a real motherfucker. I know, I know, some dickheads say, "Fuck that guy, he's the worst dude." All I can really say is, "YOU MAD!" If you know me, then you know that 60% of the time I'm just joking and the other 40% is just me taking it out on the world. Boredom is my worst enemy. When I get bored, I start to think like a criminal.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE TUNE ON THE NEW 7" AND WHAT IS IT ABOUT? ¶ Well, "London's Burning" was the first song I wrote with Black Congress and it's about the first wave of bombing in London during the Second World War. I watched a documentary about the survivors and it made me sick how all the city cared about was their fucking stupid church. They saw it as a beam of hope during the bombing and many people were out on top of St. Paul's cathedral during the attack putting out fires. I have issues with god, I couldn't see myself risking my life trying to save a church... ever. I don't care if Jesus or Allah or Buddha or Charlie Manson came down from the sky and told me so. And it really was interesting to me that the Nazis dropped incendiary devices first. They wanted everything to burn so that the waves of bombers to follow could see the city and bomb the fuck out of it. Evil. Pure fucking evil. The second song is "Davidians". I wrote that song about drugs and David Koresh. He wanted to be close to god and sometimes when I get stoned I see shadows out of the corners of my eyes. I think its some higher power trying to get me to understand it, pull me to it, make me believe. Weed is a sacrament and I pray all fucking day. To answer your question, "Davidians" is my joint.

EXPLAIN TO ME THE BLACK CONGRESS SLOGAN OF 'WAR. DUB. WAR. WEED.' ¶ Listen to our record and you'll understand.

DID YOU REALLY TAKE A SHIT IN THE POCKET OF A POOL TABLE? ¶ Yes. I shut the bar down for a week. I had a bad problem with Xanex 4 years ago. It was the worst time of my life. Anyway… some dumb fuck bartender yelled at me for sitting on the edge of the pool table. He was a real prick and was eye fucking me all night. Eventually his attention was on someone else, so I pulled my pants down and let the blackest bukowski shit drip out of my asshole into the pool table pocket, it was the kind where you gotta pay for games so my shit just poured into the innards of the table. Immediately you could smell it. People started to leave and the bartender started to get wise to my dookie game. So I grabbed a pile of bar napkins and ran out of the place wiping my ass. My friend Ryan was right behind me as we were running out and one of my shit napkins hit him in the face.

LIST ME SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE LOCAL BANDS AND THEN TELL ME WHICH ONE OF THEM WOULD SURVIVE BEST IN THE POST-CIVILIZATION PRIMAL ENVIRONMENT OF NUCLEAR FALL-OUT? ¶ First of all, I wanna quote a friend of mine, "the girl from the Wild Moccasins is cute. I bet rainbows and unicorns fly out of her pussy... real mystical shit." *(Editors note: When contacted in regard to this mention, Zahira from Wild Moccasins quipped, "Who the fuck is Bryan Jackson?")* The Wild Moccasins are a decent band if you have a vagina that still has it's hymen, you live in the 'burbs, and are so uptight you can't squeeze a greasy B.B. up your ass. Psychedelic pop? Sure... out look on the surviving: they'd melt during the regular Houston heat. Those kids are made of sugar.

YOUNG MAMMALS: Solid band, solid dudes, weirdo guitar player (not Carlos). I could see them doing something with themselves. Chance of survival: sorry bros, not a chance.

BEAU BEASLEY BANDS: I happen to like Beaus' bands. I like punk music. Not stinky "I don't shower and live on the street" punk. Chance of survival: Beau would morph into a cockroach and survive the blast only if he were promised that there would only be a paradise of hairy, mustache heavy, dick ready men.

GUITARS: Wait. I don't give a fuck about J.D.'s drumming. Chances of survival: everyone in the band, yes, except J.D. He's a li'l too ginger to be outside.

BALACLAVAS: These guys have a distinct sound, the sound like the guts of Houston. I would love to spend a day in Tyler Morris' head. I can't wait for "Roman Holiday" (phonographic arts) to come out (very soon). I truly think that they are the best band in Houston. Nobody is doing what they do and they carry themselves a lot differently than other bands in the city. They have smart music that makes you wanna move. Between Tyler's gifted guitar playing and hypnotic voice, Bryans' "dumb as fuck" bass lines and Charlie's violent beats, I don't know where you can go wrong. Chances of survival: optimal. I don't think a nuclear bomb can stop these guys. Do not underestimate these guys; I've seen them give glorious beatings.

BEST TEX-MEX IN HOUSTON, HAND DOWN IS: ¶ I fuckin' hate Tex-Mex. Perfect example of a horrible idea. Some non-Hispanic motherfucker ruining what Mexican food really is. So I go to the Oaxaca taco truck near Soundwaves. Barbacoa tacos, please. I like face meat.

IF YOU COULD PLAY A SHOW TONIGHT WITH ANY BAND, DEAD OR ALIVE, WHO WOULD IT BE? ¶ Too many to say. The list goes on and on. I'm just happy to be in a band with my friends. I like the music I play and I like doing it live. I love the anxiety, the pressure, and the release I get. It's a high I can't get from anyone or anything. It's like cumming for 30 minutes. And I don't care as long as I get paid.

FILL IN THE BLANKS ⬇

ROY MATA: don't fuck with an angry bear. I've done it once, just once.

EVERYDAY: I want to start my own crime wave.

GUITARS: Booooooorrrrrrriiiiiinnnnnng.

CADILLAC: I haven't driven a car for 8 years now.

I took a Darvocet halfway through this interview because of a broken hand. I typed it with one hand and now I want to die. FPH

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Aug. 12 - Lounge 4407
Aug. 19 - Nite-Shift
Aug. 26 - The ONS

FRIDAYS
July 31 - MODOC
Aug. 7 - 8EPlus
Aug. 14 - The SLAGS
Aug. 21 - 80s Dance Party
Aug. 28 - Steven Chadwick

SATURDAYS
Aug. 1 - Chili Peckers
(Red Hot Chili Peppers Tribute)
Aug. 8 - American Boogie
Plenty Of Fish "Singles Party"
Aug. 15 - Ozzmosis
(A Real Ozzy Tribute Band)
Aug. 22 - XES Whiskey
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The Tontons Roky Moon & Bolt The Small Sounds skyblue72 O Pioneers! Riff Tiffs Chase Hamblin Wild Moccassins Young Mammals
The Hates Sideshow Tramps Grandfather Child Juzcoz Ceeplus Bad Knives Ryan Scroggins and Trenchtown Texans
Eastern Sea Southern Backtones Muhammidali The Watermarks B L A C K I E vs Cop Warmth Perseph One I am Mesmer
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12:30 Mechanical Boy
1:00 The Ton Tons
1:30 I am Mesmer
2:05 Los Skarnales
2:35 Young Mammals
3:05 Fat Tony
3:30 H.I.S.D
3:50 DJ Cee Plus/ Grrl Parts
4:35 Octopus Project
5:40 The Sword
6:55 Broken Social Scene
8:20 Explosions in The Sky

Stage 2

12:20 JuzCoz
12:50 Perseph One
1:15 The Watermarks
1:45 Muhamadali
2:20 Ryan Scroggins
2:50 Blackie VS Copwarmth
3:20 O Pioneers!
3:50 Riff Tiffs
4:20 The Fucking Transmissions

*schedules subject to change and tomfoolery

Day Two

Stage 1

12:05 The McKenzies
12:35 Chase Hamblin
1:05 The Small Sounds
1:40 News on The March
2:10 Sky Blue 72
2:40 Grand Father Child
3:15 Eastern Sea
3:45 Sideshow Tramps
4:15 Wild Moccasins
4:50 Prince Paul
5:40 Voxtrot
6:30 What Made Milwaukee Famous
7:20 Devin The Dude
8:15 Of Montreal

Stage 2

12:15 Come See My Dead Person
12:45 Elaine Greer
1:15 The Hates
1:50 Rocky Moon & Bolt
2:20 Southern Backtones
2:50 The Manichaen
3:25 Hearts of Animals
3:55 Buxton
4:25 UME
5:00 The Riverboat Gamblers

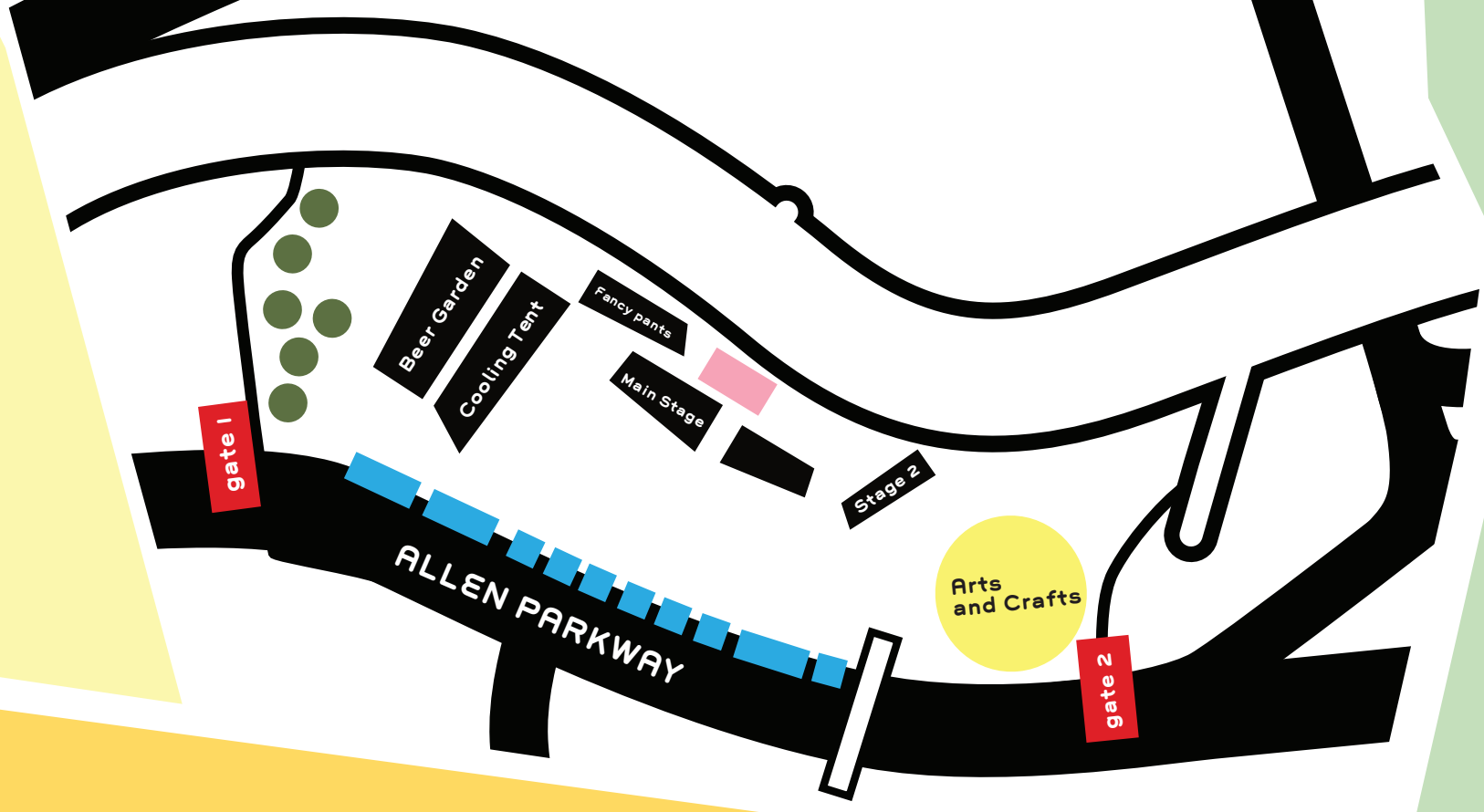
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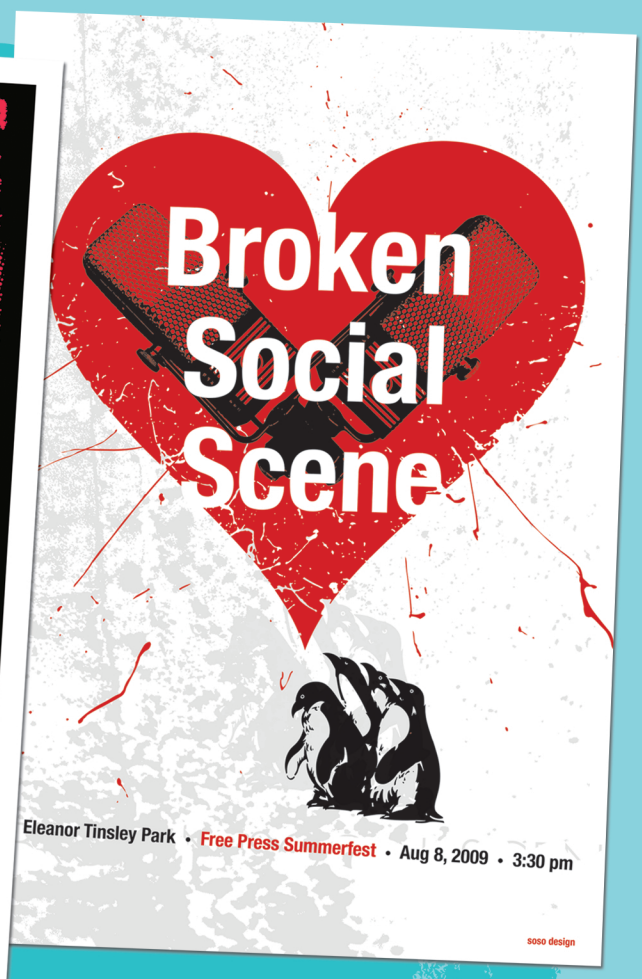
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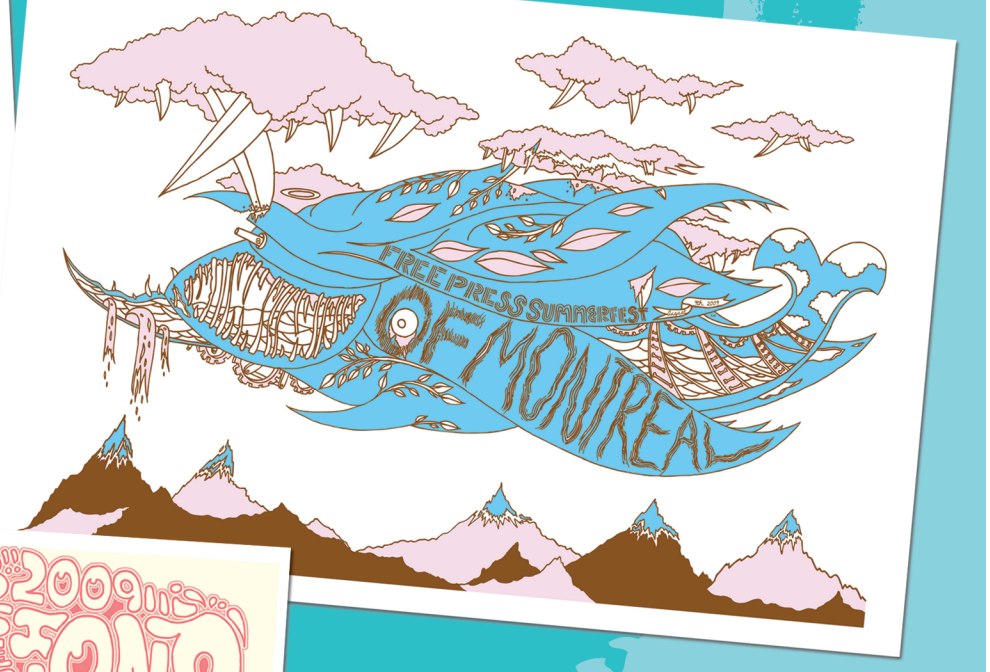
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Battle!
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Babar
2
a Fat Lot of Gold
as Time Passes
Daytes
Cavernous
Sunrise &
Amunition
3
August is National Goat Cheese Month
4
Wildcat Revival
Rainbo Video
Ghost Mountain
the They
full moon
5
the littlest viking
They Mean Us
Perkasie
We Leave at Midnight
the Boxcar Bandits
the Goods
Hollywood Black
6
the Ornery Theatre
late show with
Floating Action
Generationals
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the Ornery Theatre
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a Love like Pi
Asletio
Theater Brooks Lonsr
Gubriel the Marine!
9
the Ornery Theatre
10
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11
12
Static Thought
Society's Parasites
Blackmarket Syndicate
Hat Talk
Molotov Compromise
AIUA
Dead to the World
13
Krunk Ninja Party
El Nino
TOBZ
Twinkdogg
w/ GUESTS:
Brad Slack & Zakiside
14
Benefits for Sedition Books
15
Anarchitex
Room 101
1000 Cranes
Delta Block
P.S.A.
Quintron and Miss Pussycat
2 star symphony
I am Mesmer
Sad Gorilla
16
Focus Group
Falcon Bubbies
Lil
Watercolor Paintings
Fishboy
Paint Factory
17
Xrin Arms
Freddie Ghonerea
and the Guns
18
Head Trip Conception
Data Recovery
Lapel
19
poopy's birthday
20
Lost Gutter Rats
Riot Upfront
Final Warning
The Quarantines
Pseudo Section
PenDayHoes
21
the annual
LEO PARTY!!
& ukulele fest
22
a Lull
Firs of Prey
the Ocean Floor
23
Bamboo
Shoots
24
DidiMao
Micose and the Maws Maus
25
I was a Lover
pelorian was
dealer
Paula May
26
meet Puppetrina!
27
August is National Psoriasis Month
28
Brains For Dinner
King Sheaty
King Young
Young Militia (I.O.)
the Light of the Trinity
(Man of Light-Illucio
29
Check our online calendar for periodic updates
and info on the bands
We value neuro-diversity
30
31


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BARC IN THE DARK

INFAMOUS DOG SHELTER ATTEMPTS TO CLEAN UP IT'S ACT

BY ALEX WUKMAN | ARTWORK BY NICK HOFF

OFF U.S. 59 NORTHBOUND, IN A HARDSCRABBLE NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE STRAY DOGS CROSS STREETS WITH IMPUNITY WALKING PAST HOMES WITH BLUE FEMA TARPS ON THEIR ROOFS AND HURRICANE DEBRIS IN THE FRONT YARD, SITS THE DOMED FRONT ENTRANCE OF THE CITY OF HOUSTON'S BUREAU OF ANIMAL REGULATION AND CARE (BARC).

FOR MOST OF THE LAST EIGHT MONTHS, BARC has been a flashpoint between the animal rights community and the city government, and reports of problems at BARC have kept the local blogosphere buzzing.

Allegations of abuse and neglect, coupled with photos of what appeared to be malnourished dogs, shot around the internet for most of the spring and early summer.

In June, the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners fined Eunice Ohashiegbula-Iwunze, BARC's chief veterinarian, $500 for violating Rule 573.43 (b), Misuse of DEA Narcotics Registration.

The veterinary board found that Ohashiegbula-Iwunze had allowed David Rundell, another veterinarian, to use DEA regulated substances without being properly licensed.

Later in June, a December 2008 memo to Ohashiegbula-Iwunze from Gil G. Costas, a veterinarian who formerly worked at BARC, was released by the city to the Examiner.com.

The memo referenced an incident report filed by Costas that "exposes issues of animal cruelty... and violations of [the] Texas Department of Public Safety Texas Administrative Code...and Title 21 of the United States Code, Controlled Substances Act."

As the allegations continued and the pressure mounted, the city was forced to take action. In early July, the city dismissed BARC Director Ray Sim just two months after hiring him. Sim's dismissal meant that BARC had hired and fired four bureau chiefs in five years.

A temporary Incident Command Team (ICT) was brought in from the city's Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), BARC's parent organization, to oversee BARC while the mayor's office conducted a search for what Mayor Bill White described as "a change agent."

When questioned about Costas' incident report, the City of Houston's Incident Commander for BARC Management, Judy Harris, stated that she was more interested in looking forward.

"I'm not going to spend a lot time looking backward, except to learn from it," said Harris. Her statement came despite the fact that allegations have surfaced that BARC may have retaliated against a supposed whistleblower.

According to Marguerite Matthews, a writer for *Houston Pets Examiner*, BARC volunteer Shelby Kibodeaux has been charged with allegedly falsifying a report.

Matthews wrote that Kibodeaux had to post a $500 bond and appear before the Harris County Criminal Court on July 24.

Harris continued to state that she was not interested in investigating previous allegations of abuse.

She said that she and the rest of the ICT are moving forward and are introducing many of the changes that BARC's critics have been clamoring for.

"They just need to fire everyone over there and get a whole new staff," said Bett Sundermeyer, President of No Kill Houston, an organization dedicated to making BARC into a no-kill shelter.

"They had volunteers over there who weren't feeding dogs, or just feeding dogs a little bit because they didn't want to pick up feces," said Sundermeyer.

Harris stated that the ICT is in the midst of performing an "HR re-org" in order to, "make sure the right people are in the right place."

Sundermeyer laid out a blistering indictment of BARC that listed dozens of problems including animals that were being kept in buildings without air conditioning.

One of the criticisms mentioned by Sundermeyer was that BARC was storing small dogs and puppies in cages with four-inch-wide drains.

Animal rights blogs throughout Houston were filled with accounts of dogs that had fallen into the drains.

LeJeane Thompson, an animal control officer for BARC, stated that the city has spent $60,000 on new cages for the puppies and small dogs.

Harris also stated that the city has ordered new grates to cover the drains, which have yet to arrive.

In response to Sundermeyer's allegations regarding the lack of air conditioning, Thompson said that all animals are now housed in air conditioned areas, and that BARC has now added an area for cats.

She points to what used to be an intake

area that is now filled with cats.

"These animals would have all been killed because we didn't have any place to keep them," said Thompson.

The main criticism has been BARC's euthanasia rate. The 2005 Report of the Mayor's Animal Protection Task Force estimated that BARC euthanized up to 80 percent of the animals brought in.

Thompson said that in the three months that she has worked for BARC the euthanization rate has dropped from 56 percent to 40 percent.

She went on to state that during her tenure with the Montgomery County Animal Control Services Center they were able to reduce Montgomery County's kill rate to zero percent.

"It took three years in Montgomery County. We can do it here but it's not going to happen overnight," said Thompson.

Thompson stated that Montgomery County's zero percent kill rate does not include injured, sick or feral animals.

The main way Montgomery County reduced their kill rate, said Thompson, was by increasing the number of off-site adoption events.

She points to the success of such efforts by BARC as proof that those results can be replicated. Over the weekend of July 18 and 19, 71 animals were adopted from BARC off-site.

"If we could have 20 events on a weekend," she said, "we could empty out a room like this."

Still, despite changes, problems remain. She gestured to a grate in one of the kennels under the dome.

"All this moisture is where disease can breed," said Thompson.

Along with the euthanasia rate, diseases have been one of the main concerns about BARC. Animal rights blogs and reports in the media are filled with stories about pet owners who adopted dogs from BARC, only to have them die from distemper days or weeks later.

Harris said that BARC has begun encouraging people to keep newborn puppies at home until they can be vaccinated. Additionally, animal control officers are vaccinating more animals in the field.

However there has been concern about the amount of animals that are vaccinated in the field.

At the beginning of June, DHHS's Chief Public Information Officer Kathy Barton stated that up to 90 percent of animals coming into BARC were vaccinated.

Within two weeks, news emerged that the number was far lower. A request for information regarding vaccination records for the animals brought in was not returned by press time.

"Someone is working on it right now, but it will take some time," said Harris, but Sundermeyer is not holding her breath.

Harris stated that BARC currently cannot test the animals that are brought in for distemper, and Thompson added that, despite all the concern and focus on distemper, many dogs are often misdiagnosed.

"A dog may have discharge coming out of its eyes and nose and it could be canine flu, upper respiratory [infections], or pneumonia," Thompson said, "and will [get] diagnosed with distemper. Upper respiratory and pneumonia are really common in shelters."

Even with all the attempts at change, some in the animal rights community remain very skeptical of BARC.

"They don't do a really good job," said Sundermeyer. Sundermeyer is also asking why BARC is not moving faster towards transforming itself into a no-kill shelter.

Thompson said she understands the drive, and that the shelter is working on it.

"If we can do it in Montgomery County," said Thompson, "we can do it here." FPH

Editor's Note: On July 22 the City of Houston hired business consultant Gerry Fusco as the "change agent."According to statement from DHHS spokesperson Kathy Barton Fusco, who has no experience operating an animal shelter, will receive $208,000 to study BARC's problems, make recommendations and fix things.





GO ON, ADMIT IT

YOU REALLY DON'T LIKE THE POLICE, EITHER

BY TED RALL

THE CURRENT NATIONAL CONVERSATION ABOUT RACE AND THE POLICE REMINDED ME ABOUT AN INCIDENT THAT OCCURRED WHEN I WAS IN UZBEKISTAN.

AS I WALKED INTO AN APARTMENT COMPLEX for an appointment I noticed the decomposing body of a man lying on the side of the road.

"How long as he been there?" I asked my host.

"Three, maybe four days," he said.

"What happened to him?"

"Shot, maybe," he shrugged. "Or maybe hit by a car.

Something."

I didn't bother to ask why no one had called the police. I knew.

Calling the Uzbek militsia amounts to a request to be beaten, robbed or worse. So desperate to avoid interaction with the police was another man I met that, when his mother died of old age at their home in Tashkent, he drove her body to the outskirts of town and deposited her in a field.

With the exception of New Orleans after Katrina, it's not that bad here in the United States. Consider Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr.: he shouldn't have been arrested by that Cambridge, Mass., police officer, but he came out of the experience physically unscathed.

Nevertheless, the Gates incident has illuminated some basic, strange assumptions about our society. Cops think they have a constitutional right to be treated deferentially. And black people think cops are nice to white people.

Yeah, well, take it from a white guy: we don't like cops, either.

Miami Herald columnist Leonard Pitts Jr. references "the African immigrant killed while reaching for his wallet, the Maryland man beaten senseless as he lay in bed, the Miami man beaten to death for speeding, the dozens of men jailed on manufactured evidence in Los Angeles and manufactured police testimony in Tulia, Texas, the man sodomized with a broomstick in New York. Are we supposed to believe it coincidence that the men this happens to always happen to be black?"

Of course not. Blacks are 30 to 50 percent more likely to be arrested than whites for the same crime. Their prison sentences are longer. In the notorious "driving while black" New Jersey trooper case, blacks made up 70 percent of those randomly pulled over on the New Jersey Turnpike — but fewer than 17 percent of motorists. Blacks are more likely to be stopped, frisked, arrested, beaten and murdered by the police than members of all other ethnic groups. American racism against blacks remains systematic, pervasive, and murderous. When there's a policeman in the picture, it's best to be white.

Still, whites and blacks have more in common than they think when it comes to their feelings about the fuzz. When those flashing lights appear in the rearview mirror, even the biggest right-winger's day is ruined.

No one should be less scared of cops than me. I'm white, clean-cut, middle-aged, invariably polite: "Hello, sir. Is there a problem, officer?" Yet I can't point to a single positive experience I've ever had with a cop. Neutral ones, sure — basic, cold, bureaucratic interactions. But no great ones.

And lots and lots of negative ones.

Where to begin?

I'll never forget the New York traffic cop who stepped off the curb in front of my car on Madison Avenue and ordered me to turn right. He wrote me up for an illegal right turn. "But you told me to," I protested. "Wrong place, wrong time," he smirked. $165 plus three points on my license. I appealed. The cop lied under oath. The court believed him.

Or the Nevada highway patrolman who pulled me over. I was doing 80 in a 70. He wrote me up at 100 mph. My brother-in-law, never the suck-up, confirmed I was going 80. I was so furious — the fine would have been $400 — that I spent double that to fly back and challenge the ticket in court. I won.

When my 20-year-old self forgot to turn on my headlights as we pulled out of a parking lot while on a road trip with my druggie roommate, a Massachusetts cop pulled us over. I couldn't begrudge him probable cause; pot smoke billowed out the window, "Cheech and Chong"-style, when I opened it.

Still, what came next was unforgivable: he handcuffed my arms so tight that the metal cut to the wrist bone. (The scar lasted 10 years.) When we got out of the town lockup the next morning, $400 was missing from my wallet. (A judge, examining my wrist a few months later, dropped the charges. My $400, of course, was gone forever.)

An LAPD cop — it bears mentioning that he was black — arrested me for jaywalking on Melrose Avenue. I wasn't. I didn't resist, but he roughed me up. Upon releasing me, he chucked my wallet into the sewer, laughed and zoomed off on his motorcycle. I filed a complaint, which the LAPD ignored. And so on.

I admit it: I don't like cops. I like the idea of cops. The specific people who actually are cops are the problem. My theory is that cops should be drafted, not recruited. After all, the kind of person who would want to become a police officer is precisely the kind of person who should not be allowed to work as one.

But I didn't start out harboring this prejudice. It resulted from dozens of unpleasant interactions with law enforcement.

Race long has been a classic predictor of attitudes toward the police. But high-profile cases of police brutality, coupled with over-the-top security measures taken since 9/11 that targeted whites as well as blacks, have helped bring the races together in their contempt for the police. In 1969, the Harris poll found that only 19 percent of whites thought cops discriminated against blacks. Now, 54 percent of whites think so.

Don't worry, Professor Gates. We don't care what you said about the cop's mama. A lot of white guys see this thing your way. **FPH**



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TOO BIG TO FAIL

FPH VISITS A JOB FAIR

BY JOE THE COLUMNIST

RECESSION PORN—IT'S EVERYWHERE. YOU'VE HEARD THE STORIES ABOUT HOW EVERYBODY'S SCALING BACK AND GETTING BY WITH LESS. IT'S THE HOTTEST TOPIC ON TV, ON THE RADIO, IN SO MANY CONVERSATIONS.

CORPORATIONS ARE SHARING or leasing jets instead of buying them outright; rich folks are abandoning their yachts because they can't keep up their maintenance, and having to choose between keeping the nanny or the gardener because they can't keep them both. The middle classes are cooking mac and cheese at home rather than going out to Applebee's, and young singles are packing thermoses of home-brewed coffee rather than splurging on Starbucks. And the unemployed? We're having to attend job fairs in search of cheap entertainment.

I got the email about a week earlier. A forward about the Behemoth.com job fair from a helpful friend of my mother's. They touted it as some kind of rock concert—a local stop on the Roll Up Your Shirtsleeves Tour. Yeah, right. I laughed.

Not that I'm above that sort of thing, but the kind of people who find workers at job fairs are the kind of people who don't call workers "workers"—they're more likely to call them Senior ASSociates or Junior ANALysts or Customer Branding Administrators. The kind of people who, despite how "interesting" they might find us, don't hire people like me. But I didn't delete it, and every time I checked my email (which, as an unemployed procrastinator, I am not ashamed to say is pretty often) it became more and more attractive.

It's not like I had anything better planned for Wednesday morning. It would be like that time I woke up early on a Sunday to check the mega-church in the former sports arena—I still tell stories about that. I pictured myself at a party, surrounded by a cluster of people—them laughing and hanging on my every word, urging me on—as I regaled them with tales of my epic hero's journey across the toxic bog of new carpet smell, through the cubicle labyrinth of florescent light sameness with it's minotaur of a manager, his blinding cardboard smile and firm handshake that's rendered countless, once proud, warriors impotent. Plus, it'd get my mom and girlfriend off my back for at least a week.

So, I updated my resume to include my latest job. I posted it on Behemoth.com and registered for the job fair (I mean the "Roll Up Your Shirtsleeves Tour"). I considered what sort of answers to give if somebody asked me about the gaps in my resume, why I move cross-country so often, and how much information to volunteer about that felony and that misdemeanor without appearing cagey or defensive. (They are both entirely unrelated to work!)

I tried on different outfits. Would a suit come off as trying too hard? I opted for slacks and a shirt, ironed them, flossed and brushed, and went to bed early. In the morning, noting the importance of a balanced breakfast, I had coffee, cigarettes, and cereal instead of the usual (just coffee and cigarettes). Then I had a nice drive down to a fancy hotel near the Galleria.

* * *

AT REGISTRATION, I'm handed a fancy, space-age, Velcro-clapsed folder bearing logos for Behemoth.com and the Roll Up Your Shirtsleeves Tour.

"And here's your drink ticket!" The enthusiastic young man at registration is all exclamation. He raises his eyebrows and maintains sincere eye contact as he beams a broad smile at me. "It's good for one free drink at the Behemoth.com bar!"

This might not be so bad after all. I slip the drink ticket into my shirt pocket and tap it once as I stride towards the entrance. The first booth I notice is from Merrill Lynch. That's right, Merrill Lynch, one of the main "Too Big to Fail" juggernauts that led us into this mess. They're recruiting "Financial Advisers" at the Roll Up Your Shirtsleeves Tour. Makes me feel safer about the "recovery" already. I think about applying—I'm sure I could do better than whoever was calling the shots there a year ago—but then the blonde woman in a headset delivering a PowerPoint presentation catches my eye. The four rows of chairs set up in front of her stage are all occupied, so I take my place at a standing-room table near the back (beside the "bar," which, alas, is serving only tea and lemonade) to dig her message and check out the crowd.

She gestures dramatically with her hands as she talks about streamlining the career search to integrate, optimize, and leverage your value-added customer-oriented solutions in this risk-averse environment. You have to be proactive and maintain an active network, she says. You have to check the right boxes to prove that you think outside the box. It's a dog-eat-dog world out there, after all, and, at the end of the day, the only way to break through the clutter and get the your foot in the door, to get the face-time needed to make your case in person, to take it to the next level, if you will, is to utilize the best-practices expressed through action-packed verbs, thereby convincing your prospective employer that hiring you would be a win-win situation. It's just that simple.

There's a dingy, faded sadness hanging in the room, despite the fine wallpaper and ostentatious chandeliers. Everybody's sporting their Sunday best—starched shirts tucked in to pleated khakis and women in power suits—but a glance at their scruffy shoes brings everybody back down to earth. A thin, mullet and mustached young man in an ill-fitting, double-breasted suit is talking to his similarly attired buddy about Worlds of Warcraft. I look through the fancy folder, which is mostly empty, containing specially designed pockets for business cards, resumes, and these oversized index cards bearing helpful, bullet-point advice on how to hype up your boring old jobs for your resume. There's even a blank "Thank You" note to serve as an example of a way to continue groveling to your Human Resources overlords even after the interview has ended. There's list of employers represented at the fair—some big names, no doubt—but most of them seem to be seeking entry-level, telemarketing kind of sales jobs.

I spot my buddy Jack, a former coworker,

and we head over to the bar to catch up over lemonade. He's been out of work since March, but he's got the kind of "diverse skill set" that insures he won't be jobless for long. I notice that the middle-aged lady serving lemonade—a hotel employee—is sporting braces, and I'm jealous of her dental plan.

Jack and I swap resumes just for kicks and he tells me he left out one of his degrees, the Bachelor of Science, in favor of listing more work experience. I tell him I had to leave some BS off my resume, too. We're having too much fun hanging out so we make plans to meet up later and part ways to do what we came here for.

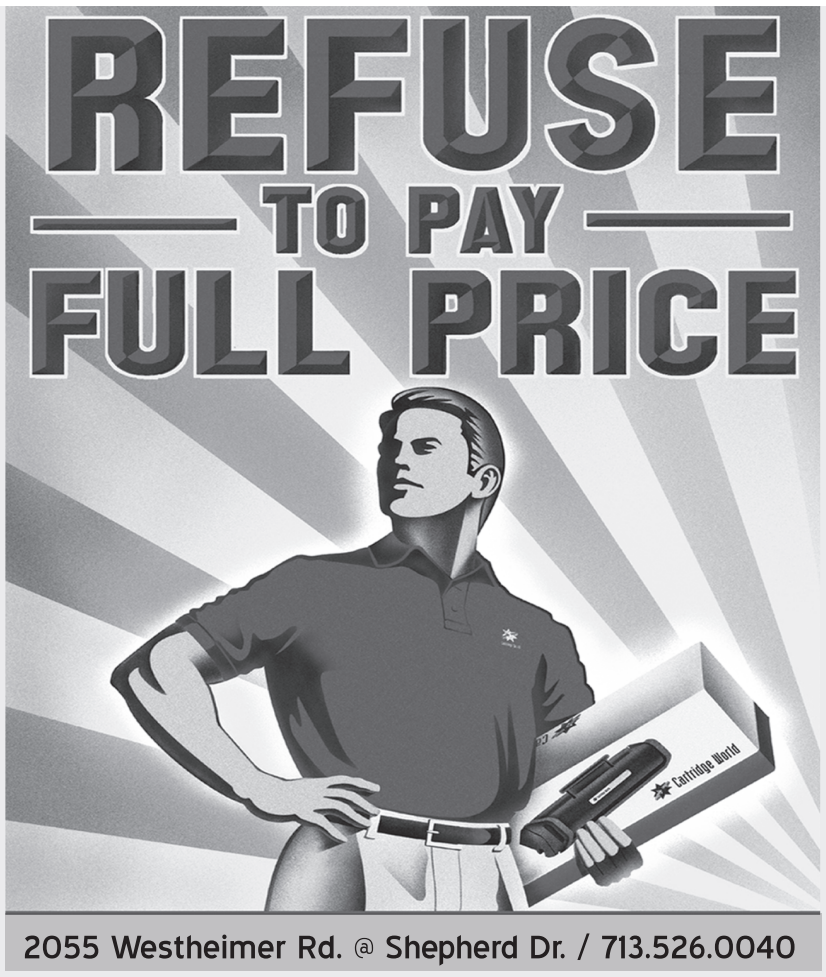
I notice that the longest lines are for people waiting to talk to temp agencies. Only half the booths are occupied, like the organizers had expected a lot more employers to show up. I talk to people in line.

I meet Debra, who lost her job of 16 years last January. She's also lost her house and car, and had to move in with her parents. She's 42 and has three kids. She's signed up with more than ten temp agencies already, goes on five to six interviews per week, but hasn't got a call back. I wonder if she's sending out the wrong kind of thank you card.

I talk to Wei, a seven months pregnant Chinese woman, whose husband's company wants to transfer him back to China. They don't mind going, but with her about to give birth to their first child, it's not a good time. They're here on his L-1 visa and hoping to find a new job that will let them stay here a little bit longer, until they can make the move more comfortably.

I meet many more people with similar stories—cooks, engineers, graphic designers, EEG techs—and a slew of hiring managers who are thrilled to shake my hand and assure me everything's going to be fine. The whole thing strikes me as a masturbatory exercise in cheap feel goodism, but then I take a look around at the hordes of people and all the literature they're exchanging and realize what's really going on. Think about it—the folders, the displays, the schwagge, the catering, the a/v installations, the promotion—this whole job fair must have put hundreds of copy writers, designers, printers, collators, greeters and administrators to work. Even the recruiters and head-hunters on the other sides of the booths might have been sitting at their desks twiddling their thumbs and brainstorming ways to justify their continued employment if they didn't have this fair to come to today. They are not here helping the unemployed find work, rather, the unemployed are here to give the recruiters something to put on their own timesheets!

On the way out I'm handed a business card by a short Asian man wearing cargo shorts and Wayfarers who reminds me of Frank Chu or that mobster from *The Hangover*. I ask him what it's for but he says he doesn't know, he just gets paid to hand them out. It's for a website called kookoo.ws, so I check it out when I get home. It's for a pyramid direct-marketing scheme. His honesty is refreshing. **FPH**



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KEN LAY, CITY MONEY, SMALL POLYNESIANS, AND MAYORAL FORUMS

BY MILLS-MCCOIN | IMAGE BY SHELBY HOHL

I MADE THE DECISION TO ATTEND ONE OF THE MANY MAYORAL FORUMS THAT GENE LOCKE, ROY MORALES, ANNISE PARKER AND PETER BROWN HAVE BEEN ATTENDING SINCE THE START OF THE MAYORAL RACE.

THEY SEEM TO BE DOING THEIR PART; so I should do my version of due diligence. There's a mayoral forum on August 18th from noon to 1:30PM put on by the Houston Area Table, Houston Tomorrow and the FPH. For more information, please call 713-782-8833.

My odd and questionable preparations for this forum included a plane ride to visit a semi-forgotten Houstonian- Kenneth Lay.

If you really believe he's dead... well, that's adorable. Ken Lay lives on a remote island in the south Pacific... because *that's* how much money he stole.

Don't forget, Ken Lay lived in Houston for a very long time; and is well-versed in how his city operates. Ken Lay was a baaaaaad man; there's no doubt he shook the Devil's hand a few times. So I figure he could probably shed some light on what exactly I should ask a candidate running for Mayor of Houston.

After I landed on the makeshift airstrip, I made a direct route to the beach which is where I was told I would find Ken Lay. Sure as shit, there he was- donned in tropical attire and large and in charge... of some of the smallest polynesians I've ever seen. He was sitting in a beach chair, being fanned, with a drink in one hand and a stick in the other. There was a medicine bottle at rest on the table next to him.

I approached softly.

"Hey asshole! Get off my property!" I yelled at the top of my lungs. He turned around and smiled at me, which was very creepy at the time.

"HA! I've literally never heard that one before. So who the hell are you?" he asked as though he'd been a gentleman his entire life.

"Just a concerned citizen of Houston, TX," I answered.

"Oh... well come on down."

As I walked down to the shore, I saw several of Ken Lay's pint-sized manservants run to fetch me a beach chair and a drink. Oddly, the drink was not served in a coconut. It was served in a chalice covered in jewels.

"Sorry, we ran out of coconuts. Soooooo, how can I help you?"

"Mr. Lay, you can tell me everything I need to know about a Mayoral Race in Houston."

"Oooooh yeah, that's comin' up, isn't it? Probably in November."

"*Probably.* But there's a mayoral forum on the 18th of August that I'm preparing for."

"Well, my strange visitor, you should definitely look into Ordinance #2006-1001. Also known as the Limited Use Banner Sign ordinance. It requires businesses to obtain a permit to display any sign constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric or other light material, not to exceed 40 square feet in size."

"How much is the permit?"

"Altogether it's $150. And that gets you seven consecutive days in any 30-day period to use the banner."

"You're kidding?"

"**Hell no! I'm not kidding.** It's a travesty; a horribly non-creative way of using small businesses as revenue capillaries. Not to mention it puts a shit load of red-tape out there making it harder for small businesses to advertise and generate revenue for themselves," he exclaimed in a squirrelly voice.

I began writing frantically on my notepad.

"Okay, ok, ok... you got anymore?"

"Damn, son! Wake up. There's probably hundreds of these knick knack permits and fees and ordinances that take money out of modest pockets," he said as began to pick up the momentum of a crazy man. He picked an odd time to be honest, I thought.

Ken Lay ranted and raved, continuing to open my eyes about the red-tape injustice that comes out of City Hall. He detailed the levels of vanity in which these ordinances are founded; claiming they "help keep the city stay clean and maintain a proper metropolitan appearance." He referenced innane bike ordinances, poor pay structure for city workers, ridiculous street closure prohibitions, etc... And by that point, Ken Lay was standing up, yelling and swatting the polynesians with the stick. I was forced to get him another drink and calm the crazy crook down.

He popped a pill out of the medicine bottle and slowly explained to me the approach I needed to take.

"Listen, you're a smart kid. Obviously. *You found me.* So channel that energy into finding where the City's money comes from and where it's going. That applies to these Mayoral Candidates as well. They have donors. They have big name contributors. Peter Brown wants a giant fast train that stretches *from* Houston *to* Dallas *and* San Antonio. So, I'm betting there's some contractors that contribute to his campaign... blah blah blah... Boy, this is basic politics."

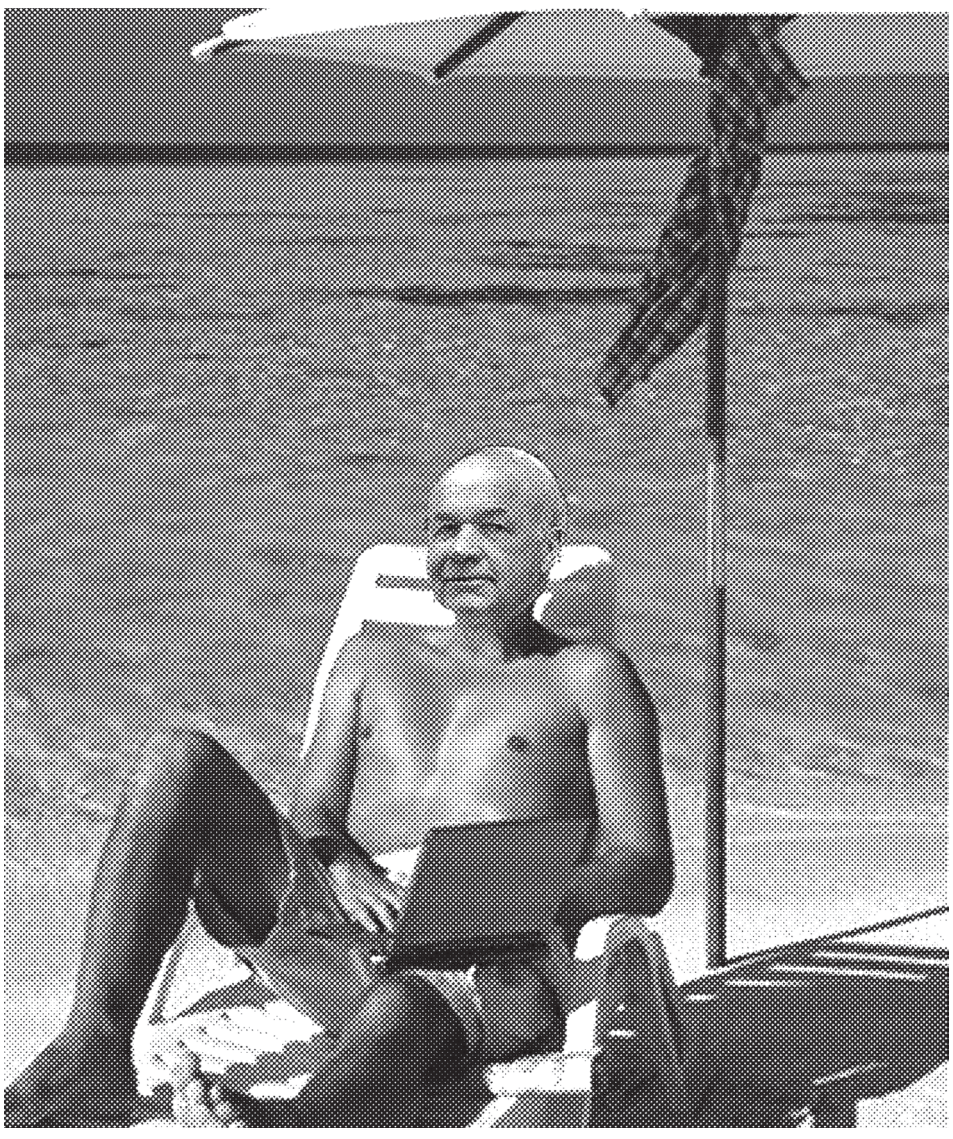
I could tell he was getting tired from a lonely life on an island, exiled from the world for his wrongdoings. I felt sorry for him almost. Ken Lay made me realize that there are some silly evils that go unnoticed because we spend most of our time gawking at the giant ones. Like Enron.

His eyes were growing weary, as well. I think it must've been the pills because I didn't taste any alcohol in the drinks. So, I gathered my things and got up to leave.

"Mr. Lay, thank you for your time. I really appreciate the lesson," I said with the utmost sincerity.

"No problem, strange visitor. I'll be rootin' for ya. Come back anytime... Hey, I heard Mattress Mac torched his ware-..." his voice trailed off as I made my way through the jungle, back to the plane. **FPH**

Don't forget. Mayoral Forum, August 18th. 713.782.8833 for more information.



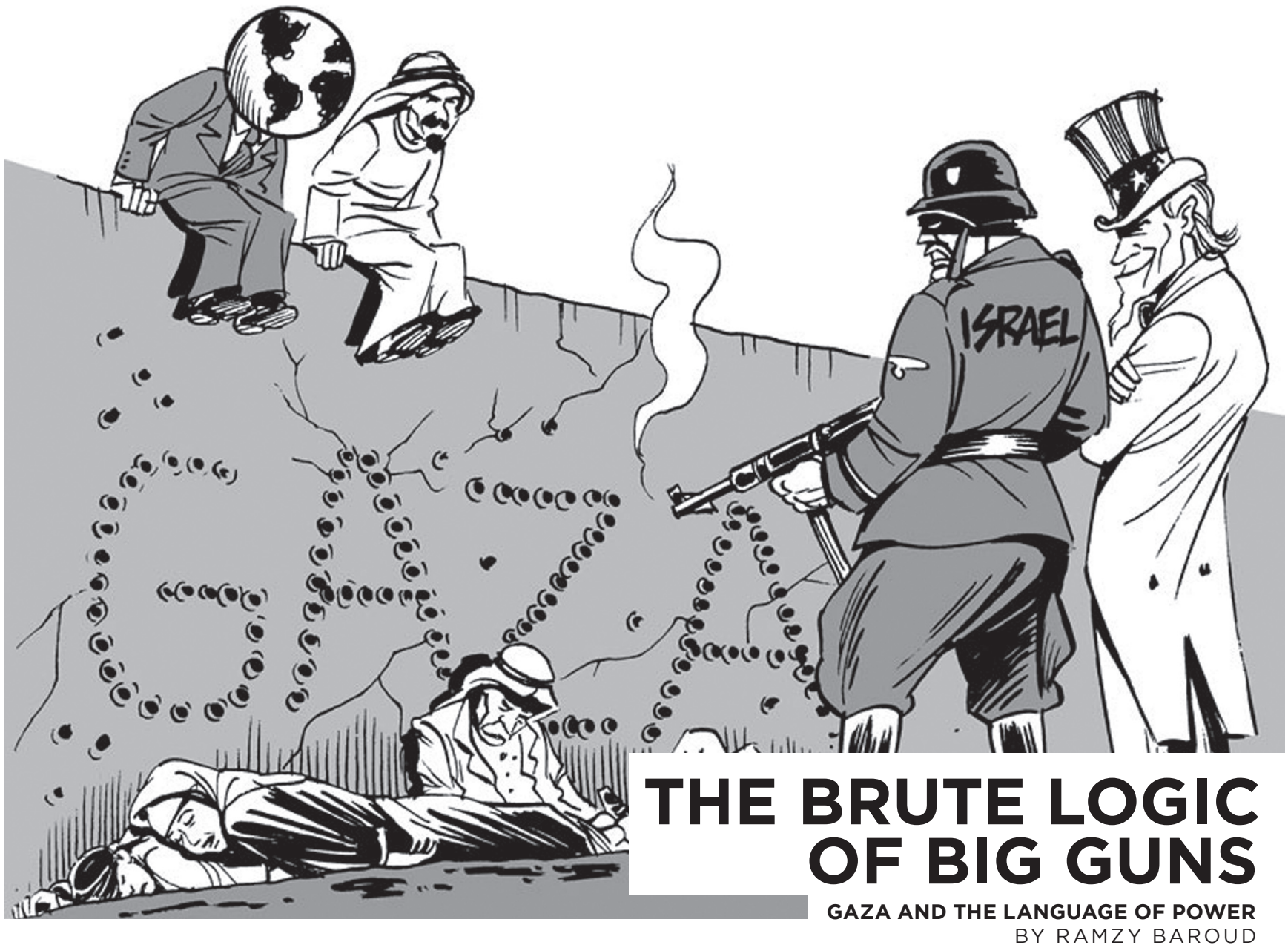

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THE BRUTE LOGIC OF BIG GUNS

GAZA AND THE LANGUAGE OF POWER

BY RAMZY BAROUD

NEARLY SIX MONTHS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE ISRAELI ARMY CEASED POUNDING THE TINY STRETCH OF LAND THAT IS THE GAZA STRIP.

SINCE THEN, Gaza continues to appear on the news once in a while, as a recurring subject of human misery.

The tireless efforts of British MP George Galloway, and the courageous endeavors of the Free Gaza movement have managed to push Gaza back into the spotlight, even if momentarily and with political context which is lacking at best.

Aside from that, the three-week Israeli onslaught in Gaza, starting December 27 – and the catastrophic conditions endured there – have served the purpose of a footnote in many news reports. The event is generally cited as such: "Israel moved against Hamas in Gaza to quell the firing of militants' rockets, resulting in the death of such and such number." Hamas, according to media conventional wisdom, is the "militant group that ousted Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' forces in a bloody coup in mid 2007."

Sadly, ones worse fears have actualized, where the post-Gaza massacre world and the one which existed prior are exactly the same. Israel is trying to prove that political and military might overpower all human rights reports combined, and that public opinion - which turned against Israel as it wantonly killed and wounded thousands – will eventually turn back in Israel's favor. One does not need to be an expert in the art of propaganda to predict the public relations model that would allow Israel to deceive millions into believing that the belligerent state is in fact a victim in a sea of hostile Arabs hellbent on subjugating the Jewish State. Thus it was hardly a deviation from the script when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu used a most shrewd term to depict his governments' refusal to respect international law regarding the dismantling of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, all considered illegal under international law, specifically the Fourth Geneva Convention. He said during his recent trip to Germany that the West Bank will never be "Judenrein" a Nazi term meaning "cleansed of Jews".

And once again, Israel is resorting to its traditional propaganda (such as equating Palestinians with Nazis), drawing on people's historical sympathies, guilt and ignorance of false analogies.

More, Israel's National Security Advisor Uzi Arad is in fact reviving the discredited Israeli rhetoric that Israel has no partner in peace, in comments made to Israeli newspaper Haaretz on Friday, July 10. He questioned whether there is in fact a Palestinian leadership that is capable of delivering peace with Israel. If such a Palestinian state would exist, say in 2015 – according to Arad – it would be a "fragile structure. A house of cards." But he chose to omit that Israel purposely besieged and weakened the democratically elected Palestinian leadership in Gaza, while painstakingly propping and legitimizing Abbas. using with astounding mastery, the carrot and the stick metaphor.

Only Israel can cleverly spawn a dependent, weak leadership, and accuse the Palestinians of not being a worthy peace partner; only Israel can murder thousands of Palestinians and demand security from its very victims; only Israel can caution of a Nazi past, yet cage Palestinians in concentration camps, punish them for recklessly subscribing to the wrong God, or foolishly falling into the wrong race.

It has six months since the unprecedented and savage war against Palestinians in Gaza, and here we are making the same argument, referencing the same deceit and quoting the same outrageous claims. During those same months, unsubstantiated Israeli accounts were countered with carefully composed reports by highly regarded organizations, such as the Red Cross, among others. Bombarded Gaza neighborhoods "look like the epicenter of a massive earthquake," said a recent Red Cross report, entitled: "Gaza: 1.5 million trapped in despair."

UN human rights envoy, Richard Falk summed up Israeli behavior in more direct terms, on Thursday, July 9. "There will be no peace between these two peoples, until Israel shows respect for Palestinian rights under international law," Professor Falk said.

Israeli leaders however pay no heed to international law. In fact there is little evidence that Israel's history was shaped, in any respect, by international standards, neither those pertaining to war nor peace. Israel only understands the language of politics and power. It is a state that has been constructed, and sustained upon Machiavellian wisdom. Advisor Arad is perhaps the most visible manifestation of the logic that propels the Israeli state. In his recent interview, he demanded that once a state deal is reached with the Palestinians, Israel should be granted a NATO membership as a "quid pro quo". To counter nuclear threats by others, he said, Israel must have "tremendously powerful weapons". Considering that Israel already has nuclear arms, one has to wonder to what other "tremendously powerful weapons" Arad is referring. Arad must've been encouraged by US Vice President Joe Biden who said in a recent interview with ABC's "This Week" that "If the Netanyahu government decides to take a course of action different than the one being pursed now (by the US and its allies), that is their sovereign right to do that."

Once again, it is the brute logic that "might makes right" pursued by those with the bigger guns, that continues to menace the Middle East, with Gaza being the most devastating example.

One must remember that Israel never heeds to statements, and is hardly moved by reports and random condemnations. Only pressure, constant and focused, will grab the attention of Israeli policymakers. Only the language of an international campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions will translate in Tel Aviv to a legible political language.

As for Gaza, civil society must not wait for President Obama or any other to save the slowly starving population, but must take every possible and urgent effort to help an oppressed yet proud community to redeem its basic rights and freedom. **FPH**

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Racist and Sexist oppressive behaviors running rampant in Houston Fire Department

Members of the Houston Black Firefighters Association are pressing the Federal Bureau of Investigation to probe a recent noose incident and the alleged discriminatory treatment of members. One of the group's members, Jesse O'Quinn, discovered a hangman's noose at a Houston fire station located on the east side of town. As reported by KHOU Channel 11 News, the noose was hanging in a White supervisor's partially opened locker door. Mr. O'Quinn spotted it and reported it to the assistant fire chief only to be reprimanded for not following the chain of command

"We are outraged by this incident and the fact that they would reprimand him (Mr. O'Quinn) for reporting it. That's crazy," said Capt. Otis Jordan, president of Black firefighters group, to The Final Call. He has served in the field for 29 and has led the organization for nine years.

7/6 Free Minds Free People promotes youth education for liberation

"There is no more apt theme for this conference at this fear-driven moment in political history."

With those words, journalist and scholar Charles E. Cobb Jr. kicked off his keynote address Friday to the national Free Minds Free People Conference in Houston, which took place at the city's convention center from June 25 to 28. The gathering drew a diverse crowd of about 400 U.S. teachers, high school and college students, researchers, parents, and community-based activists/educators build a movement developing and promoting education for liberation by engaging youth of color and low-income youth in the fight for social justice. The second Free Minds conference, with the first taking place in Chicago in 2007, this year's event was organized by Houston's S.H.A.P.E. Community Center, The Brotherhood/Sister Sol of New York, Chicago Freedom School and the Education for Liberation Network.

7/3 From El Paso to Houston: Texas protests the Coup in Honduras

More than 40 people braved the heat and many drove long distances to hold a demonstration in opposition to the military coup in Honduras, the subsequent violations of human rights, repression of media outlets in Honduras and demanding a return of the democratically elected Manuel Zelaya to office as president of Honduras.

People held signs and banners condemning the coup, and speakers spoke their piece from the Centro de los Trabajadores Agrícolas Fronterizos of El Paso, The Southwest Workers Center of San Antonio and Rio Grande Valley, The Central American Resource Center of Houston, Students for a Democratic Society of Houston and many other groups and individuals.

On June 28th, the Honduran military ousted the democratically elected government of Honduras, detaining and then exiling President Manuel Zelaya to Costa Rica. The crisis in Honduras began when the military refused to distribute ballot boxes for an opinion poll on a new Constitution. President Zelaya fired the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Romeo Orlando Vasquez Velasquez, who refused to step down. The heads of all branches of the Honduran armed forces quit in solidarity with Vasquez. Vasquez, however, refused to step down, bolstered by support in Congress and a Supreme Court ruling that reinstated him. Vasquez, along with other military leaders, graduated from the United States' infamous School of the Americas (SOA). According to a School of the Americas Watch database compiled from information obtained from the US government, Vasquez studied in the SOA at least twice: once in 1976 and again in 1984.

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anti-racist action


klansmen in Houston


Following a decision by Fort Bend Independent School District administrators to move the Electronic Engineering academy from predominantly African American Marshall to Elkins High School, the African American community of Fort Bend took to the streets





democracy in Honduras

MANILA, Philippines. Members of the Freedom from Debt Coalition staged a protest action in front of the World Bank office to demand the total andunconditional cancellation of all debts it is claiming from the Philippines.



6/28 Nazis not welcome: Antifascist victory in Houston

June 27th, white supremacists attempted to distribute hate literature in downtown Houston. Antifascists mobilized to confront the gathering and sent a clear message to the fascists - not in our city! White supremacists intended to hold a memorial for a dead nazi creepball David Lane. Dave was a member of an armed white supremacist group called "the Order," and kicked the bucket in federal prison in 2007 where he was serving time for the murder of Jewish radio host Allen Berg.

When the so-called "Aryan Front Line Skinheads" declared their intention to distribute copies of Dave's racist rants in the Houston area, antifascists immediately went on the alert. The boneheads tried to be clever by waiting until 11pm the night before to post an actual location, but antifa were already standing by. The call went out, and in the morning our scouts were on location at the downtown federal building where the fascist goons planned to gather. Antifascists from around the city began gathering in a downtown park at 10 am. By eleven there were over 40 of us, and still no sign of the nazis.

6/23 Building Reuse Warehouse is Ready for Your Stuff

The City of Houston Building Reuse Warehouse officially opened this morning around 10:45. Living Paradigm group played a large role in this project. Habitat for Humanity also participated. The City of Houston will take reusable building materials from anyone in order to divert material from landfills. Over 20 tons have been diverted already. The goal for this year is 150 tons. The building materials go to non-profit building organizations. After a few small kinks get worked out, donations will be tax deductible.

Plywood, lumber, glass, windows, doors, plumbing parts, electrical parts, shingles, bags of dry redimix concrete, nails, screws, cabinets, all that stuff . . . as long as it can be reused, bring it on in. _Location: 9003 N. Main at Whitney (The end of Main Street just North of Crosstimbers Drive in Independence Heights). From Mayor's Office of Environmental Programming: More than one-third of the waste stream in the Houston area is made up of construction and demolition material, much of which could be diverted and re-used. By storing the materials until they can be used by community groups, the Warehouse will keep these valuable resources out of our local landfills.

6/21 March and Vigil at Hutto Immigrant Family Dentention Center for World Refugee Day

On June 20, 2009, over a hundred people traveled from the border region, the valley, the gulf coast and central Texas and met up with residents of Taylor to march on the T. Don Hutto Immigrant Family Detention Center to honor World Refugee Day. After the march from downtown Taylor, a vigil and rally was held outside the Center to demand immediate liberty for the children and families being held. Another demand was the closure of the Hutto facility, which is essentially a prison being privately run by the notorious CCA, Corrections Corporation of America.

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HUMAN NATURE POLITICAL

BY DEAN LISCUM

WHETHER OR NOT THE END IS NEAR, ITS CLOSE ENOUGH. CHARITY IN THE BILLIONS IS DOLED OUT TO THE ÜBER-RICH BY THEIR OWN UNDERLINGS. THE POOR LIVE AND DIE WITHOUT AIR CONDITIONING OR BASIC MEDICAL CARE.

IF THE PUNDITS WON'T PROFESS IT, at least artists will paint the picture. The installation *Human Nature Planted* does not present itself as overtly political, but it plays out that way. Curated by June Woest and Claudio Franco of Urban Artists at the Nature Discovery Center of Bellaire, *Planted* is a group sculptural installation by twelve innovative Texas artists. The official theme of the show is to "explore the human handprint in the natural world and how it positively and negatively influences the environment," but the show resonates with current socio-political-economic turmoil. Nathaniel Donnett's *Myke's Clubhouse* captures the crisis from the vantage point of the forgotten poor and vulnerable; Cornell West accusing Obama of neglecting those most in need. Merging fantasy with nightmare, Donnett constructed a tree house and foreclosed it, with a red sign and a foreclosure listing in the paper. June Woest's *Pharmacy Domesticus* forms a field of bamboo-like columns out of plastic prescription bottles, makes a visually stunning side-effect of our fascination with better living through pharmaceuticals. Lucinda Cobley's *tree+cipher* proposes a vibrant new taxonomy for nature that makes one cry out for a new political discourse. Amie Adelman's *untitled,* Mari Omari's *Gifts* and Orna Feinstein's *Eco-librium* enhance or alter the existing environment; binding, weaving, and clumping leaves, stems, branches, and grasses; regulating nature in quirky, unanticipated ways. Kathy Hall's *I say Poaceae, You say Poaceae* introduces non-native grasses into the park and forces us to confront the unpredictable nature of complex systems.

Recessions depress but they can inspire innovation and reinvention, every tool becomes a weapon when held just right. Kathy Kelley's *The birth of destruction* deconstructs automobile tires and fashions them into boulder-sized spheres that remind one of objects of play or meditation. Andis Applewhite's *Soul* distills man-made and natural fragments to serve as objects for meditation. Jason Dean Moul's *Water, Seed, Pollen, Leaf* hints at moving away from Christian salvation through salary and inserts customer designed stain glass windows in the intersections of the pecan tree branches. The trees etched on plexiglas in Keith Hollingworth's *Arboretum* may serve as a memento mori for the park in anticipation of a coming environmental crisis. Michael Crowder's frozen birds will have melted before this exhibit even ends, but you could find yourself, decades from now, peering at the two glass ones-- wondering how quickly the next ice age will come. FPH



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