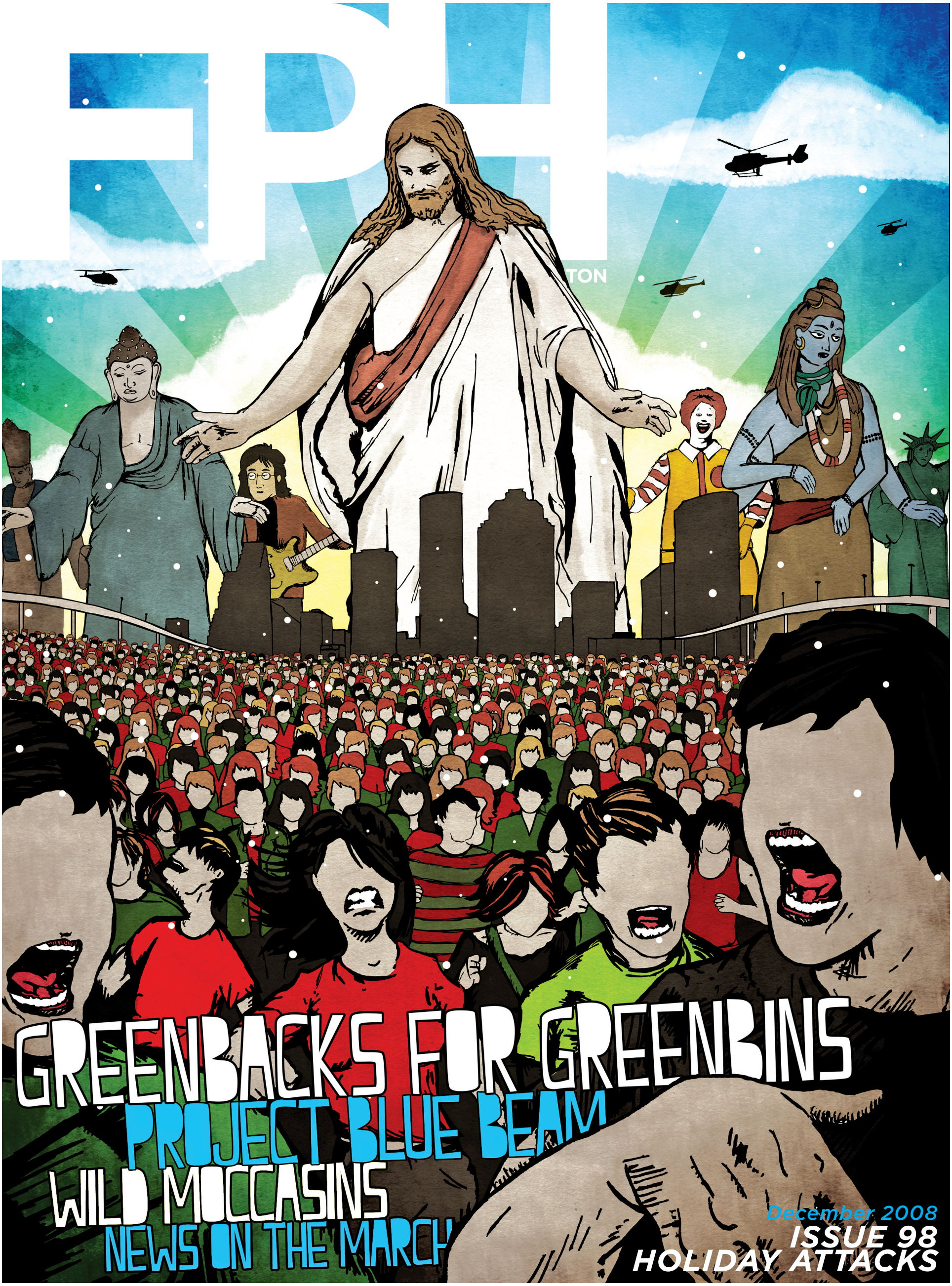


December 2008
ISSUE 98
HOLIDAY ATTACKS

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TOYS FOR TOTS

THE RIFF TIFFS

AMERICAN BLACKSHARKS

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Boogers.



Let me start this *Letter from the Editor* with the pre-requisite condemnation of white people: Damn you honkeys, damn you scensters, and damn you Tim Dorsey. Ok, I feel better now. Anyways, we have a splendiferous issue here loaded with goodies like an expose on **Project Blue Beam**, a look at the **Wild Moccasins**, a **Guide to Recycling in Houston**, and a few local record reviews. Also, on **Saturday December 20th,** FPH will host our always clutch-ass-clutch **Holiday Bash** featuring **Satin Hooks, Eastern Sea, Ozeal, Piano Vines, Nick Greer, Chase Hamblin, and Female Demand all at AvantGarden (Helios _411 Westheimer).**

Lastly, we are opening our **CALL FOR ENTRIES** for our **4th Annual Worst of Houston Awards.** As always, we will be shining a bright light on all despicable Houston phenomena from municipal government to local culture.

Send your submissions to editors@freepresshouston.com

Thanks and enjoy!

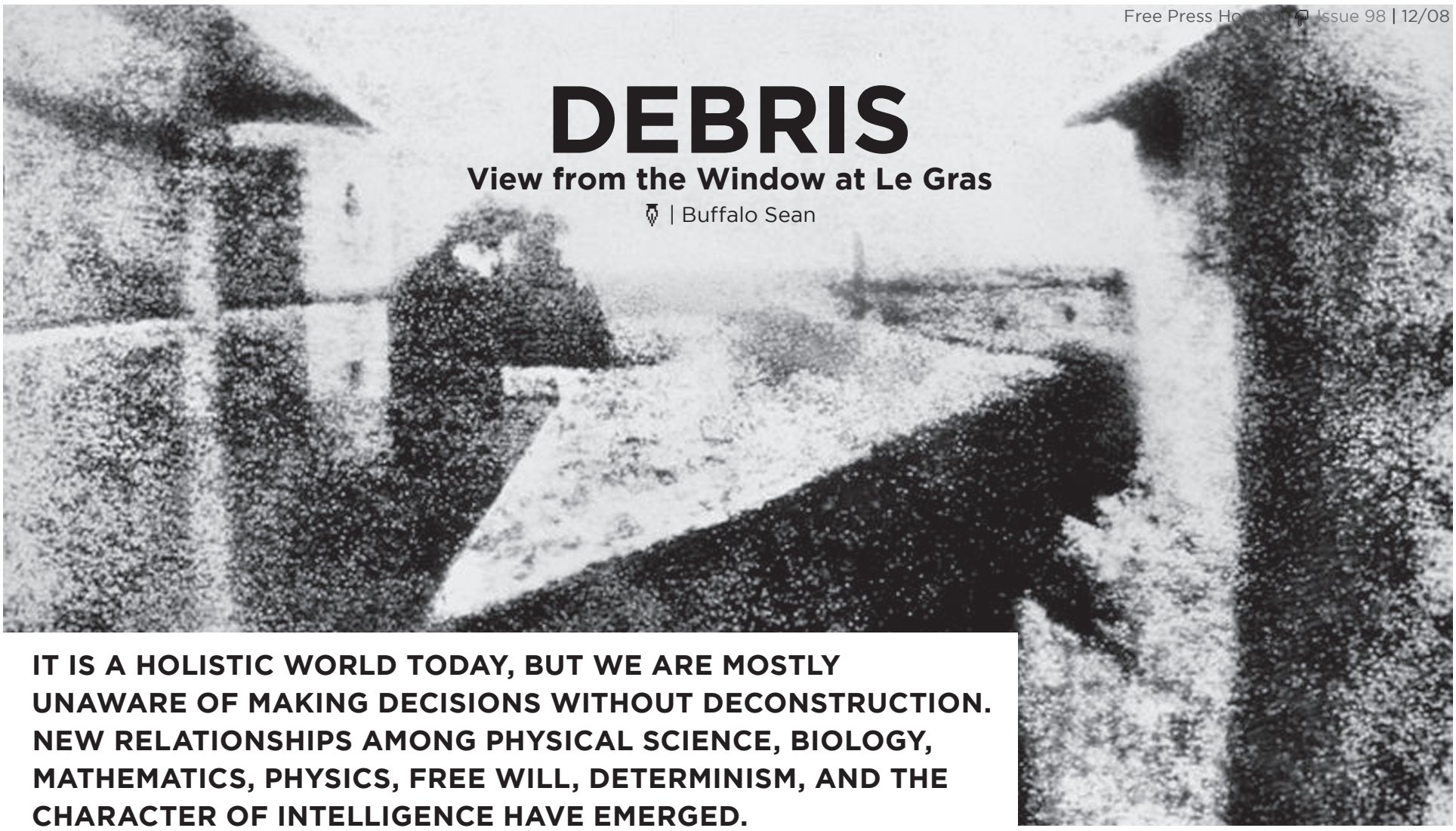
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On the Cover



Our cover this issue is graced by the artwork local hero **Michael C. Rodriguez.** Michael is known for creating several local bands album artwork, including the Papermoons and Mechanical Boy, and many a flyer seen around town including the one for the HEALTH show last October. This cover was inspired by the **Project Blue Beam** article in this month's issue. Talent pours out of this kid's ears and you will probably see much more work from him in coming FPH issues.

Thanks Michael!



DEBRIS

View from the Window at Le Gras

| Buffalo Sean

IT IS A HOLISTIC WORLD TODAY, BUT WE ARE MOSTLY UNAWARE OF MAKING DECISIONS WITHOUT DECONSTRUCTION. NEW RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PHYSICAL SCIENCE, BIOLOGY, MATHEMATICS, PHYSICS, FREE WILL, DETERMINISM, AND THE CHARACTER OF INTELLIGENCE HAVE EMERGED.

JETTISONING THE PAST century's obsessive categorization might never become conscious, but the functions of culture are changing. Organic, fluid corporate planning is catching up with American employment's ever-shrinking job security and rapid career changes. Social networking allows for differentiation of mutualistic relationships, for once taking a bite out of cronyism and corruption. All in all, we should be more prepared for economic instability than we would have been five years ago. Plugged-in people may make more hay than the baby boomers relying on old networks, but only time will tell if any of us get to retire before we're 85.

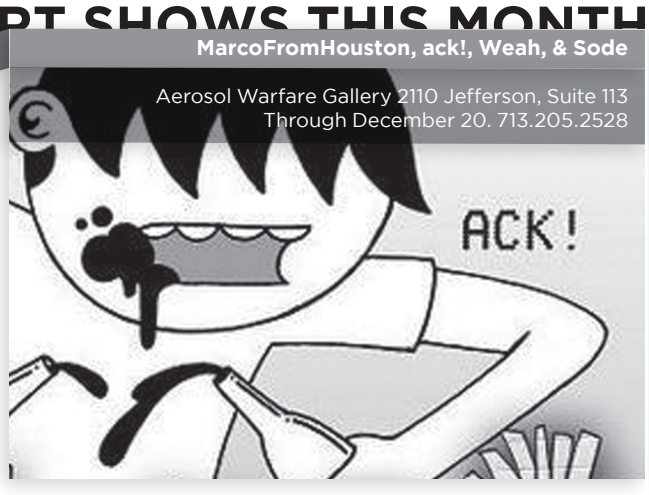
As organic systems demonstrate the irreducibility of complexity and chaos theories, things are going to change rapidly. We won't have computers in our homes in just a few years- their power transferred to hand-held electronics. Old age facilities will utterly fail in their ability to care, reforming along social networking lines. Art will be completely redefined, ephemeral and populist. Immersion is the holistic response to objecthood, and even an object can be immersive and fascinating when included in an easily googleable network of contexts. As Google develops its own meta-regulatory systems, alerting the government to spikes in "flu" searches and selling satellite photographs across the world, even that revolution (that put one on a conversational basis with the internet) will be codified and eventually obsolete.

I hope that an exhibition of technologically complex artwork can demonstrate how our views are changing in the 21st century. Artists and scientists have always advanced each others' agendas- notably in the concurrent inventions of the photograph in 1839 by English scientist Fox Talbot and French artist Louis Daguerre. **Mike Field + Frank Olson** have made new technological processes work aesthetically, at a time when art is open to new veins of inspiration. Mike Field is a professor of mathematics at the University of Houston. This American/English/Australian artist constructs his own Linux computers and software to manipulate complex visual equations and construct aesthetic variables. Frank Olson is a pseudonymous artist intensely interested in the 20th century development of the study of consciousness, especially the work of Terence McKenna, Ramana Maharshi and Ram Das.

This December 13th at **the joanna Gallery** (4014 Graustark) join the American Wandering Club for an experimental exhibit between art and science. Coming from radically different philosophies, both artists have advanced fractal computer-based art by applying aestheticism and shamanism to an impersonal medium. Their surreal landscapes and textural abstractions hum with energy, echoing the building blocks of science and the structures of microscopic organisms. Field and Olson both exude passion through color, form and composition in much the same way that early Modernists like Wassily Kandinsky explored emotion through abstraction. Kandinsky's abstractions look terribly related to biological diagrams, DNA structures and celestial formations that give them dual meanings as both emotional explorations and science-fiction. Appropriately our contemporary art may be simply an unconscious advance on a future reality, proving perhaps for once and all that constructing the world is a human endeavor, not an absolute.

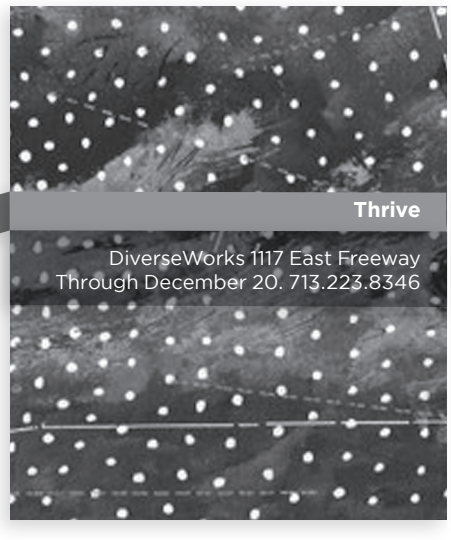
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FULL ON CELLULOID SPOOL

| Michael Bergeron



SOME FILMS ARE LIKE A FORCE OF NATURE, DRIVEN BY A GALE OF ACTING THAT LITERALLY BLOWS YOU OVER. KRISTIN SCOTT THOMAS KNOCKS YOU DOWN WITH THE STRENGTH OF HER PERFORMANCE THAT ANCHORS I'VE LOVED YOU SO LONG (IL Y A LONGTEMPS QUE JE T'AIME).

THIS IS THOMAS' SECOND APPEARANCE in a French film that American audiences have seen this year. She also plays a supporting role in the well-reviewed thriller Tell No One.

I've Loved You So Long measures its appeal solely in terms of how you cotton to Thomas' brooding and powerful turn as a woman with a secret. This is a one-performance film in the sense that the film and all the characters revolve around revealing, layer by layer, how and why Juliette Fontaine (Thomas) got to her present state. This is a film that actors like because it's a virtual how-to manual in letting nuances of behavior slowly reveal the depth of a person. Notably this film and two others released this year by Sony Pictures Classics spotlight a trio of great female performances including Thomas, Melissa Leo (Frozen River), and Anne Hathaway (Rachel Getting Married).

I've Loved You seems detached from the other characters who react with various degrees to Juliette's reintroduction to society. First we learn that Juliette has just completed a long prison sentence as she moves in with her sister and her sister's husband and small child. There's a spiral of revelations that are best viewed fresh rather than spilled here. I've Loved You So Long never wavers in its serious tone nor sugarcoats its character's fragile shells. Be assured it's French to the point of a big dinner scene where one drunken lout compares Juliette to a mysterious figure in a lovelorn French film. The introspection on display is deep and when you let the film punch its buttons the grief is real.

It was just ten years ago that Philip Seymour Hoffman was making his face known as a capable supporting actor in films like Boogie Nights and The Big Lebowski. Now he's charting a path as an award winning thesp topping movies with audacious acting choices like a neo-Dustin Hoffman. But wait, Charlie Kaufman wasn't even a blip on the radar screen until 1999 and Being John Malkovich (unless you paid attention to the writers of obscure television shows like The Dana Carvey Show) demonstrated his uncanny grasp on the thin veneer of absurdity that coats modern existence. **Synecdoche, New York** is a film you need to see before you die. Not before you die, like we all die, but in the last couple of hours of your life. Because truly this film charts a course for the last inhalation a person breathes.

Synecdoche, New York is a downer, make no mistake. Also Synecdoche, New York is one of the most original films you will ever see. Intelligent literate types will find it pretentious and pleonastic, but movie mavens will ravish this celluloid candy for its mastery of the medium. What director Kaufman, whose writing credits include Adaptation and Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, has accomplished is no less than the Death of a Salesman of cinema, a one of a kind excursion into the realm of Charliethink that charts a setting to a land where movie dreams are turned on their head. Actually the style resembles Thornton Wilder's Our Town even more than Arthur Miller. You get the feeling that as a kid Kaufman was bullied a lot, although compared to Todd Solondz he got off easy.

Synecdoche, New York (if you can say it, you can't necessarily spell it) follows the career path of dramatist Caden Cotard (Hoffman) as he simultaneously wins a MacArthur Grant and loses his wife (Catherine Keener as Adele Lack) herself an artist on the rise whose miniature paintings have become a sensation in Berlin. Cotard decides to use his winnings to produce a play where he recreates New York City in a giant warehouse. Reality merges with surrealism as we meet a woman, Hazel (Samantha Morton), whose house is always on fire. Cotard has the hots for her but shifts his attention to his lead actress Claire Keen (Michelle Williams), even marrying her but not before she subserviently dyes her hair the color of Hazel's and bears a child just like Adele. Have we even gotten to the stalker (Tom Noonan) that Cotard casts as himself in his play or his weird therapist (Hope Davis) who wears shoes so tight they cause her feet to swell? Is this a good time to mention the three colors of shit (green, black, grey) that Synecdoche, New York displays like the colors of a flag?

Eventually the play has been in rehearsal for over 15 years and Cotard has substituted Emily Watson for Morton, and Dianne Wiest has replaced Noonan and we haven't even gotten to Cotard's first daughter and her mentor (Jennifer Jason Leigh) who are more German than New York. As bizarre as it may sound, it's only more so on screen. Kaufman keeps the proceedings blazing at full speed, with some scenes lasting less than a minute and the following scene occurring years afterwards. Synecdoche, New York will be embraced by critics and effete movie snobs and shunned by your average fan. Somehow you get the feeling that's the way Kaufman planned the whole thing.

Read more reviews of current films like Milk, Australia, Let the Right One in, and other on the Free Press Houston website. (http://www.freepresshouston.com/archive/blog_film.html)

ALSO SPINNING

The most striking aspect of The Gonzo Tapes: The Life and Work of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson (a five-CD box set) is how the performance of Johnny Depp in Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas exactly captured the phrasing and nuances of Thompson's voice. If I didn't know better I would say the recordings (Thompson dictated his travels and much of what would become portions of his books into a portable tape recorder.) were made by Depp himself, spoofing us as if he was the legend in making. Bill Murray also portrayed Thompson memorably in the 1980 Where the Buffalo Roam.

The Gonzo Tapes lets us into the world of Thompson as he parties with and observes the habits of Hell's Angels (CD 1). A crazy sounding flute or recorder being playing during the Las Vegas trip (itself on 2 CDs) puts the listener in the same disori-

ented haze as Thompson and his lawyer and partner in lunacy Lazlo. Any yes Benicio Del Toro nailed that baritone too. Hearing Thompson ramble on elicits grins but then the car radio blasts forth with some typical 70s top-40 pap like "Jesus Christ Superstar" and it transports you to the car with them on their demented ride. The set includes notes by Alex Gibney whose documentary from earlier this year (Gonzo: The Life and Work of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson) utilized the Taco Stand segment, which is heard in its nutty entirety here. Original artwork by Ralph Steadman reminds one of the impact of Rolling Stone magazine in that era. If you received a phone call from Thompson inquiring about the American Dream what would you answer?

Disc 4 includes Thompson's sojourn to cover the Rumble in the Jungle (Ali-Foreman) in Kinshasa, Zaire while Disc 5 covers Fear and Loathing in Saigon. Listening to Thompson discuss assignments with Rolling Stone publisher Jann Wenner reminds one how many stories he never bothered to finish. Despite his penchant for phoning in work Thompson does record himself taking the last commercial airliner leaving Vietnam before it fell to the North. The Gonzo Tapes beckons repeat listens, and if you're familiar with Thompson's books you'll spot noticeable landmarks.

DVD SLIGHT RETURN

Are we in the last phase of DVD dominance as digital downloads seek to supplant the DVD disc as a primary source of traditional entertainment? Most probably. People I know like to watch DVD seasons of recent cool shows like Arrested Development or Lost. But I'm old school and I need to luminous glow of 50s and 60s dramas and sit-coms to lull my dreams to fruition.

Even though I spent hours (typical seasons were 28 or more episodes then) viewing eps it only took minutes to realize the shows sucked on so many levels. Yet I couldn't turn away as what I though would be a nostalgic reverie was replaced by a sociological tract of the simplicity of the times.

In 1963 the seventh season of **Wagon Train** expanded to 90-minute color episodes. Time must have been leisure because later 60s westerns also went that route (The Virginian, Cimarron Strip). The scenery of Lone Pine enhances the tales of the pioneers on display but the stories seemed mired in typical Indian scenarios (like a kidnapped child now grown and raised as Comanche and referred to as a squaw played by Carolyn Jones with her Indian brother played by teen pop singer Fabian). Barbara Stanwyck shows up pre-Big Valley to provide justice but the politics of the day dictate otherwise.

Lee Marvin played a mean cop who tries to rationalize his righteousness with tough talk for three seasons (1957–1960) in **M Squad**. All 117 episodes are available in a monster set of 15 DVDs. The show while faded and black-and-white has a seedy atmosphere to go along with its urban crime sleuthing.

McHale's Navy in its fourth and last season moved the crew of the PT 73 from the Pacific theater to Italy. Ernest Borgnine speaks in Italian a lot and Tim Conway has a flair for drag comedy. It speaks volumes that this comic version of war where nobody get killed, complete with bathing suit beauties from the local villa, was popular while the Vietnam war was trudging along. **Father Knows Best** doesn't fare much better with its standard situations and lily white depiction of 50s America. Still in Season Two it seems this show paved the road for all the family shows to follow. There's a spirited wisdom to Robert Young's dad that was lacking even with the paterfamilias in Leave it to Beaver, Donna Reed and Ozzie and Harriet. One episode was even a stand alone western (Stage to Yuma) with Young that featured none of the other cast members. I guess running a pilot during the season was considered experimental in 1955.

Shelly Duvall's Faerie Tale Theatre amazes with 26 enchanted stories that were first broadcast on Showtime cable in the mid-80s. Each story, whether a classic like Pinocchio (Paul Reubens) or a more obscure tale like Rumpelstiltskin (Herve Villechaize) gets the star treatment with a guest director and superlative cast. Take the Three Little Pigs with Billy Crystal as a pig and Jeff Goldblum as the big bad wolf. Not every story has a happy Disney ending such as The Little Mermaid's Pam Dawber who must outsmart whiny witch Karen Black. In Little Red Riding Hood Malcolm McDowell comes as close to Alex (Clockwork Orange) as he ever has even though he's also a big bad wolf. As great as James Earl Jones always is I daresay his evil genie is definitive in Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp. The latter episode was directed by Tim Burton early in his career yet still shows his distinct visual style. For the most part the sets are like color enhanced live television and the biggest players are the flowing costumes, grandiose like you expect with fairy tales. This set will keep you going for weeks and it comes with a playing card deck of characters for downtime.

The Films of Budd Boetticher Box Set may be one of the best current releases for avid film buffs. Those who know Boetticher and his series of mid-to-late-50s westerns with Randolph Scott are familiar with his influence on everything (Eastwood, Costner) that's come since. These five films – The Tall T, Decision at Sundown, Ride Lonesome, Buchanan Rides Alone, Comanche Station – are known for many things including the ensemble work of the cast: some of the conflicted bad guys are James Coburn, Lee Van Cleef, Richard Boone, Henry Silva and Claude Akins. Boetticher used the background of Lone Pine in the same way Ford used Monument Valley. You can occasionally recognize Mt. Whitney's sharp peak in the background. You sense the character's feeling of being surrounded by this vast country,

Randolph Scott plays a taciturn loner in all the films. While his name is always different the titles suggests (lonesome, alone) how his rugged style, matched by the scenery, is really an archetype of the western era.

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I'M JUST LIKE YOU, I NEVER HEAR THE BAD NEWS

| K.M.A



THE OBLIGATORY YEAR-END ISSUE is where you reflect on the past 365 days and try to sum them up in moments referenced to months and events. Well, I for one tend to look forward with the belief that it all essentially means nothing. It is just another year, another 365 days, and another sequence of occurrences, that ends in inevitable circumstance. But I am of the list-reader ilk. The voyeuristic urge to peer into others' lives via their opinions on purchases and art, leads me to make a list of things (albeit abbreviated). And since I do not feel like feeding into the "it's all about to be different/ black president/ new day" Joel Osteenish rhetoric that decorates the aforementioned phenomenon, I'll just talk about albums. Five, to be exact. The top five I've heard and why:

Q TIP
The Renaissance (Motown)

Tribe Called Quest stands as one of my favorite hip hop groups. Even as part of the Native Tongues and the boho-rap phenomenon that critics and others attempted to connect them to, they were, in my mind, just like me. That idea connected me to rap. We had similar likes and distastes and we had similar interests. Well, these days, I don't feel that so much. I'm at that crossroads in rap music. Crack rap is basically ridiculous. Even as I came up on The Geto Boys and N.W.A., it didn't seem as if "reality" rap had anything to do with "reality." Young Jeezy is to crack as Kanye West is to Ralph Lauren. Rap is a fashion accessory and the hood is the cufflink that matches the suit jacket. It's marketed as lifestyle. "I am these belt-less pants." At the other end, Jay Z and others with their "I can buy everything under the sun, I hang with Madonna, I sold crack once" thing, are very Liberace to me. So, just as I was about to give up on rap, I heard Q Tip's "The Renaissance" and I felt relieved, overjoyed even. Q Tip is 38, and I'm 33, and a lot of what he sees in rap, I see too. "Who can make it up, dark ages here in rap, and the constant conversation has been let's bring it back. Corny rap style niggas they lack the pedigree…with soliloquies of trash affirming that you got clout, homey what's that about, you should revisit your scheme, before the thing that seems real reverts back to a dream…" These are words from the track Dance On Glass. This is what I've been waiting for, real rap. It's not richer than me, it's not tougher than me, it's not prettier, too high or below me; it speaks directly to me, like good music should. Q Tip refers to himself as a "common man," not a pimp, or gangster, or hustler, or prophet. Baby, baby, where did our love go?

THE WALKMEN
You And Me (Gigantic)

"Well, it's back to the battle today…" These words begin The Walkmen's future classic album "You And Me." It is the after party; it is the sobering up as you sit on the edge of the bed after the wild weekend. The fading club stamp on your hand, the pain in your back you didn't feel 5 years ago. It is the belched taste of whiskey before the first cup of coffee as you look at the one you used to love, that you sort of still do. But rather than acting on the emotion, you smile and attempt to laugh genuinely as you hear about her new child and family and life, while in your mind you tell yourself how age hasn't tarnished her beauty. It's the day you try, again, to give up the vices you've sworn off for the last ten years, only to slip again, and realize that you will have to eat those words as you face the broken promise. These songs touch a place in the psyche that is hidden and looks away, and chuckles at inside jokes. These songs are the thoughts that strike you when you stare out the window at work. "Will I ever get it together?" "Is this what it comes to?" "You And Me" is dark not because it's spooky; it's dark because it's true. Tomorrow is a new day; let's try again to leave today behind, like we did yesterday.

STEPHEN MALKMUS & THE JICKS
Real Emotional Trash (Matador)

"Of all my stoned digressions, some have mutated into the truth. You are the bold expression of all your parent's laws, makes you pause." These lyrics at the beginning of any album distinguish it from the "uh huh" and "oh yeah" ones; these lyrics are existential. Malkmus is an institution. While bred in indie rock, he belongs to the classic rock family. He is a guitarist and a lyricist, and the debate between the two is his great strength. This album does not resolve or abolish that debate. This time Malkmus has something he has never had before, even with the band Pavement. The rhythm section, composed of Joane Bome and Janet Weis, gives each of these songs the punch, the bottom, the brick and cement by which they stand. Mike Clark's subtle but important splashes of color only help, adding detail to the portraits Malkmus steadily paints with his stories or guitar explorations. "Out Of Reaches" and "Cold Son" may be some of the finest songs of Malkmus' career, which says a lot if we're charting how long he's been in the game. Malkmus has already won a championship with Pavement; now, years later, older and wiser he wins again. It's a classic rock album, it's progressive rock, there are 10-minute psych fests, there are 4-minute pop jams, and there is "Elmo Delmo." This bottle of whiskey has aged well. Now somebody take my car keys.

SINGER
Unhistories (Drag City)

Singer's album "Unhistories" does not care or desire to be on a list. It is its own entity- the kid in class who's not concerned about friends and is content to sit at his desk and draw in silence; he does not care who you are, or what you think. In a time when rock, rap, and damn near everything else is overly concerned with populist notions, Singer is that much more expressive. "Slow Ghosts" is mellow jazz rock, Robert Wyatt doing Led Zeppelin with Sunny Murray on drums. The pragmatic rock things are there: some solos, some riffage, some bass lines, harmonies and breakdowns. "Oh Dusty," more AM real than FM top-40, is as rock as it gets, but I'd put it up there with "Jamie's Crying" or whatever. With most rock albums you can hear the lineage: Sonic Youth's eyes with David Bowie's lips, acts like ZZ Top but wants to be Prince. This album is not so easy to peg. I hear many things, but nothing obvious. Regardless, there is only one Singer, and in a world where there are 50,000 of everything else, that is ultimately refreshing.

MARNIE STERN
This Is It And I Am It And You Are It And So Is That And He Is It And She Is It And That Is That (Kill Rock Stars)

Marnie Stern wants to make your favorite song and she doesn't know how. Her songs are all of the great things about guitar music in the first minute and thirty of the song. In her mind, these are pop songs and this is pop music, and you know what, I agree. Look at the great pop rock guitar virtuosos: Peter Frampton, Eddie Van Halen, J. Mascis. There's something about being a boss guitarist and writing a pop song that's almost at odds. Pop songs are mundane, least common denominator, respond before you think, kind of affairs. "I'll tell you what I want, what I really really want, I wanna, I wanna, I wanna, I wanna ziigy zick uh." Marnie Stern says she listened to a lot of AC/DC when she was making this record, and you can hear that. You can hear that classic 70's rock big drums, anthem chorus, and guitar sheen. It's ELO all over again. In "Transformer" she sings, "How can I be all of these things to you?" She's beckoning, she's pleading but reconciled. "The Future is yourself, fill this part in." I can't be what you want, if you don't want anything. You are the future so what you want is what it will be. Is this self-affirmation, is she convincing you, or trying to convince herself? The honesty, the earnestness, the desire is in every song, and it reaches for the heavens. "The Package Is Wrapped" is a Sleater Kinney groove with a Pat Benatar twist. Ultimately this is pop rock, attempting to get you to wave your hands in the air and fist pump. Like the scene in Little Miss Sunshine where the little girl dances to the Rick James song, part of it is weird, but the other part is innocent: it's her aspiration versus the judgment of the crowd. This is sold as a "female guitar god finger-taps weirdo rock", but nothing could farther from the truth. Her head is in the clouds-get your head out of your ass.

FPH



Fat Tony
12/6 | Contemporary Arts Museum



Hearts of Animals
12/13 | Walter's



Satin Hooks
12/20 | Helios



Dissent
12/26 | Punxmas Fest 4

CACTUS MUSIC

LIVE MUSIC

12/13 - Little Brother Project @ 1pm

12/16 - Justin Townes Earle @ 6pm

12/19 - Lower Life Form & Duo Begins @ 5:30pm

12/20 - J'ando @ 3pm

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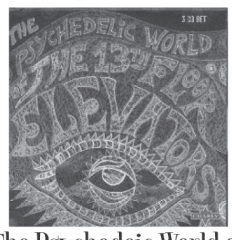
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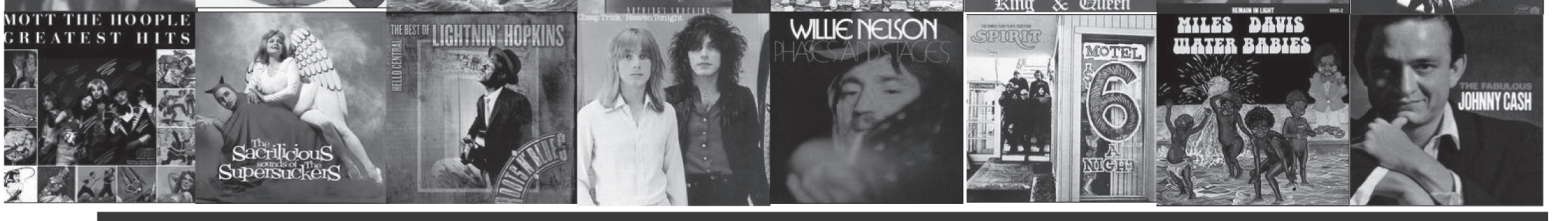
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If you've given up browsing the lame-o greatest hits type sales at other music retailers, we've got a sale for you. Near the entry to the record ranch you'll find bins jam packed with classic catalog and hard to find albums from your favorite artists. In addition to the obvious (Pink Floyd, Led Zep, Kiss, Doors, Bob Dylan etc), you can pick up gems from Box Tops, Kris Kristofferson, Jorma Kaukonen, Patti Smith, Matthew Sweet, Uncle Tupelo, Emmylou Harris, Taj Majal, Son Volt, Gil Scott- Heron, Galactic, Otis Redding, Bela Fleck and many more essential discs that you won't find on sale at other stores. Show off your good taste and pick up a few for early holiday gifts. Most titles are $7.98. Some are more and some are less.

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NOTSUOH TO CLOSE?

Owner may sell our favorite, weird Downtown 'club'

By Omar Afra

IT SEEMS VENUES FOR LOCAL MUSIC MAY BE DOOMED AROUND HERE. IN THE RECENT PAST WE HAVE SEEN PROLETARIAT, ORIGINAL SHFL, AND ENGINE ROOM GO THE WAY OF THE DODOBIRD.

THOSE SPOTS DEMISE WERE MARRED BY TRAGEDY having been squeezed out, under-capitalized, or run into the ground. However, the potential sale of Notsuoh is the rare happy ending to the closing of a favorite hang. Ya see, Jim Pirtle has gotten an offer for 2.8 million bucks. No sob story here. He can now afford endless jars of mayonnaise that he famously eats on stage for his vomit-inducing performance art. But seriously, downtown will suck balls if Notsuoh is gone and an era in Houston tomfoolery will clearly have ended. Per my last conversation with Mr.Pirtle, the offer was still merely an offer and nothing concrete had surfaced.

EXCERPT FOR PIRTLE'S BLOG REGARDING THE POTENTIAL SALE:

It makes you want to vommit

I don't really want to write this blog..... it will be depressing for many of you....but my heart and soul is for sale....I am asking 2.8 million dollars....and you can own property downtown....I thought that this was such an outrageous price that no one would even call....I'm wrong someone called and i gave this investment banker a tour this morning....he will get back to me next friday with an offer...he already has his financing.... his assisstant was some hot French woman in spiked heels...I kept expecting her to fall as we went to the roof....trip on an extension cord get caught on a Lone Star bottle...I gave an honest sales pitch....yes the 2nd floor can be an events room for weddings and corporate parties....oh yeah a rooftop bar with live music ...yeah that's a nice idea but that hotel over there is bitchy...blah blah 3rd electric elevator blah blah Sakowitz building in 1919 blah blah electrical grid and water capacity are in place for development...yeah I'll remove the trash....yeah your right it is like Soho buildings in new york....in an inverse fashion as he and frenchie got more excited I got more depressed...I had ketchup stains on a white shirt and holes in my blue shorts.... he had on a $400 suit and and some high priced call girl with a notepad..."hey I'll take $50,000 off the price if I can have 15 minutes with your assisstant".....maybe it was the french woman carefully examining all the vagina art got me frisky

all i want to do is pay my bills but i feel a responsibility to my daughter ...to care for her future...I care about my community but owning a bar and a building is beyond the pale in bullshit....but I'll continue to be just getting by or a very rich man by next week.... if you know me at all this is a very nasty decision...I love this building and no one but me would have gotten how cool it was and stuck to keeping it painfully authentic....if i leave 314 Main a part of this cities soul and international cool will vanish and I promise you it makes me want to vomit"

FPH







"The Ultimate Def Leppard Tribute"



Saturday, December 20

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X'S WHISKEY
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December 6

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J.D.'s Throwdown Band
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WEDNESDAYS
Live Music
No Cover
Happy Hour til 9:00PM

THURSDAYS
Karaoke - College and Party Night!
Big Ass Beer Night
Only Party People Allowed!

FRIDAYS
Live Music

SATURDAYS
Live Music

DECEMBER BAND LISTINGS

WEDNESDAYS
Dec. 3 - Sunny Brook
Dec. 10 - Houston's Live Music Party
Dec. 17 - Citizen X

FRIDAYS
Dec. 5 - Slam N Clams (Big John's Birthday)
Dec. 12 - Unique Soul
Dec 19 - Aeromyth (Aerosmith Tribute)
Dec. 26 - Mambo Jazz Kings
Jan. 2 - 13 Passes

SATURDAYS
Dec. 6 - X'S Whiskey (Van Halen Tribute)
Dec. 13 - Fearless (Pink Floyd Tribute)
Dec. 20 - Pyromania (Def Leppard Tribute)
Dec. 27 - Surprise Tribute Band TBA
Jan. 3 - The Fab 5

December 7
Hurricane Ike Benefit
Live Music
Drink Specials

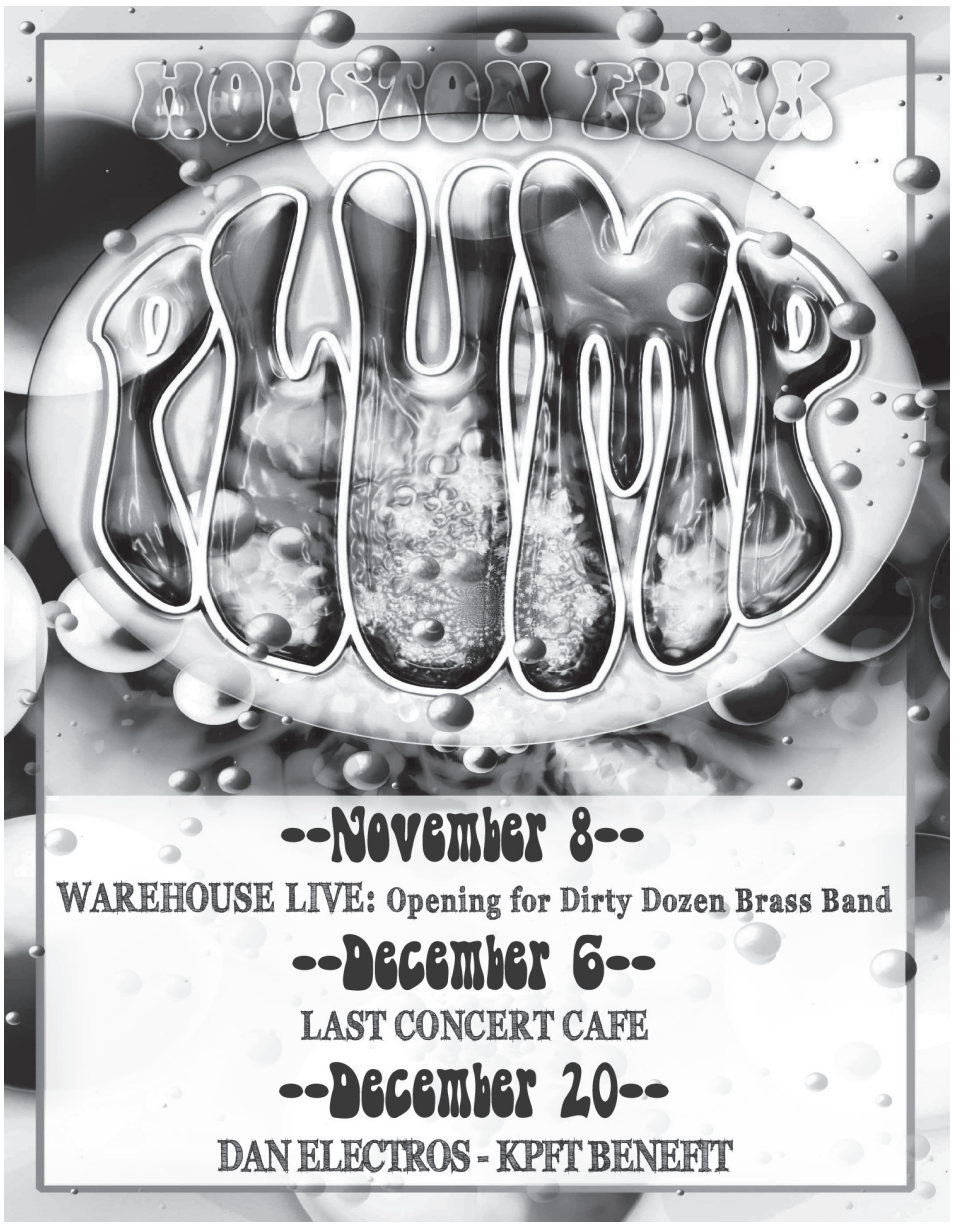
Tuesday, Dec. 9
J.D.'s & Joe's Christmas Party And 1st Year Anniversary Blowout!
Thanks For Making Us No. 1!

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New Year's Eve Party!
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Dec 6-9:00P
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TUE. DEC. 2 & THU. DEC. 4: 2 PART MC BATTLE

FRI. DEC. 5: MARINE TOYS FOR TOTS WHISKEY MYERS BAND, RODNEY HAYDEN, BO COX, CHARLIE SHAFTER BAND

SAT. DEC. 6: RED ROOM: TEXAS THRASH W/ DEVASTATION & FRIENDS TEXAS METAL ALLIANCE, INSECTICIDE, THE DRUNKS, TEMPLE OF WRATH

SAT. DEC. 6: MAIN ROOM: ANDY ROURKE OF THE SMITHS DJ SET W/ FREDSTER & DAMON ALLEN OF B&G CLUB, LES BOOM! AND SHOE OF DANSEPARC

SUN. DEC. 7: LIVING COUTURE FASHION SHOW

MON. DEC. 8: FISHBONE W/ HEAVY MOJO, NATIVES OF THE NEW DAWN, WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS BAND

FRI. DEC. 12: ICE CUBE W/ TRICK TRICK, FIVE DOZA, AND WINNER OF THE MC BATTLE AT MERIDIAN DEC. 2 & 4

SAT. DEC. 13: BATTERY- METALLICA TRIBUTE

SUN. DEC. 14: TBA

FRI. DEC. 19: TBA

SAT. DEC. 20: KING'S X

SAT. DEC. 27: JMG METAL SHOWCASE

SUN. DEC. 28: H-TOWN SNEAKER SUMMIT

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Terry's B-day Party

Dec 5
Amplified Heat, The Big Green Machine, The Bexar County Bastards

Dec 6
News on the March(EP release, The Unbearables, Elaine Greer, Phillip Foshée

Dec 11
Eugene Chadbourne w/ Walter Daniels

Dec 12
Arthur Yoria

Dec 13
Little Brother Project, Water

Dec 15
Wheels On Fire, Guitars

Dec 16
Grown Up Story Time

Dec 20
Come and See My Dead Person, Two Star Symphony, Whorehound

Dec 25
Tody Castillo

Dec 26
LL Cooper

Dec 27
Born Liars, No Talk, Wrong Ones

Dec 31
Rudyard's New Year Bash

Every Tuesday:
Houston Comics Presents
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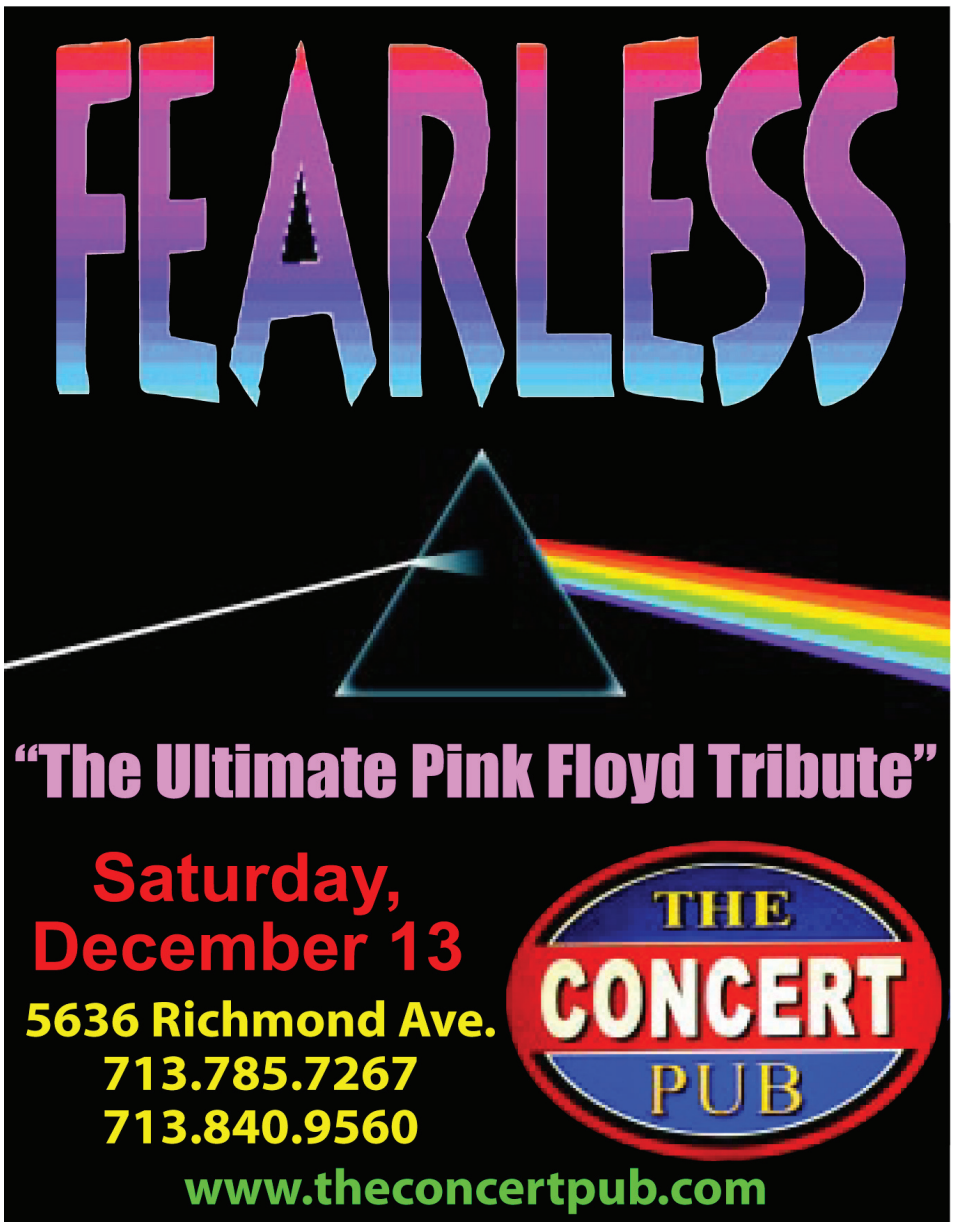
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NEWS ON THE MARCH

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan a stately pleasure dome decree..."

| Brigitte B. Zabak | James Patrick Dillon

ONE OF THE GREATEST THINGS ABOUT HOUSTON BANDS, in this writer's humble opinion, is that even when a given band seems uncomplicated - they rarely are. The process of making the music they do is the result of countless hours of hard work and dedication spawned from the minds of musicians that are anything but predictable.

News on the March hasn't been in the scene for very long, but in the short time that they have been writing, performing and producing their music, they have proven themselves to be one of those bands that cannot be taken at face value. The music they play – which the band describes as "60's pop meets Western swing with a dash of tin-pan alley" - may seem effortless on stage, but what their audience may not know is how much time and energy goes into making sure their songs sound flawless when you listen.

The production of their soon to be released EP *Glory Be!* has not been an easy task. Set to release pre-Hurricane Ike, *Glory Be!* had to be placed on the back burner due to extensive damage to their home and studio. Drummer Ryan Odom talked about the issues he and his band members had to endure in order to get this gem of a record out to the indie music masses, "It's been quite the struggle trying to get this little release out. We had a hurricane destroy our studio/home and were lucky enough to save our instruments and recording equipment, but not lucky enough to make the deadline we gave ourselves."

And the actual making of the EP in and of itself is a testament to how special News on the March really is. They are musicians before they are anything else and every twang-filled note is a reflection of how much they just love to make music. "We recorded *Glory Be*! in our home with a very minimal setup. We had 2 inputs running into a ten year old computer. What was great about doing it this way is that we spent a lot of time getting comfortable in the studio together and really got involved in the production of our songs, which we think really shows in the new songs we've recorded since then. Joe [NOTM's guitarist] has since built what he calls Master Bedroom Studios into a very legitimate studio," explains Odom.



The loveable quintet are avid fans of other local musicians and are always racking their collective craniums to come up with a show or a concept that can propel not only the band but also Houston indie music into a new realm. Anyone who attended the Halloween madness that took place at Walter's this year can attest to the band's ingenuity, humor and ability to have a fucking great time.

The universe always has a plan and while the originally scheduled EP release soiree would have no doubt been epically entertaining, their upcoming show will prove to be one you will kick yourself for missing. They have had a little more time to polish their performance and put that little something extra into the music. Besides, how can you go wrong spending an evening at Rudyard's watching a band of bearded men (and one lovely, non-bearded cellist) belting out original tunes that they worked darn hard to create?

FPH

News on the March will be releasing their much awaited EP Glory Be! on December 6, 2008 at Rudyard's.

The Unbearables (from Austin), Elaine "MORE DUCKS!!" Greer and Phillip Foshee will also be performing.

Doors open at 9 pm.
21+ *| $6 Cover*



WILD MOCCASINS

| Ramon Medina | Molly Rodriguez (molly-rodriguez.com)

POP. IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT PEOPLE REGULARLY ASSOCIATE WITH HOUSTON. FAIR OR NOT IT'S A CITY MORE FAMOUS FOR SPRAWL, HEAT, MOSQUITOES, CROOKED BUSINESSMEN, AND MASSES OF TRUCKS, CARS AND NEIGHBORING CHEMICAL PLANTS BELCHING POLLUTION INTO THE SKY THAN FOR BEING A HOME FOR BRIGHT MELODIES, SHARP HOOKS, AND YOUTHFUL ENERGY.

YET, OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, there has been rising tide of great Houston pop bands that have redefined this city's sound. Many come to mind but none this year has captured the restless and vigorous spirit of what is exploding out of Houston more than Wild Moccasins.

If you don't believe that the H-Pop scene isn't one of our youngest and most vibrant scenes, just walk into any Wild Moccasins show. Out in the audience you'll see it: a floor shaking, hands rising in the air, voices singing along, and the joyous sweat of people dancing! Yes, people dancing! In Houston! To a live band! Bassist Nick Cody and drummer Andrew Ortiz are the kind of sprightly and agile rhythm section that demands a henie-shaking tithe from all who dare stand before them. Guitarist Andrew Lee's clean reverbed sound may not be the distorted long-haired crushing sound of some bands but, much like David proved with a slingshot, there's more to kicking ass that just being big and heavy. Front and center is Zahira Gutierrez (pronounced Zaira – the H is silent) whose stand-out vocals and (by comparison underappreciated) keyboards are the perfect compliment to principal songwriter Cody Swann's guitar and vocals. It's a band where each member throws in little flourishes in which their voice rises above the chorus but never dominates.

Surprisingly, this is Cody Swann's first band and the songs on the EP are the first he's ever written. Cody and Zahira worked on songs together but soon Andrew Ortiz came in and gave the folky music a much needed kick. Nick Cody came into the picture when he heard them rehearsing at their friend Mary's house with just drums and acoustic guitars and felt, not only that they needed a bass to fill out the sound but, that he'd be the right person for the job. Then, at a Dimes/Hearts of Animals show at Sound Exchange, they hit it off with a lead guitarist by the name of Andrew Lee from local ska band Dumbarton, brought him home, and recorded some tracks.

"I love those tracks," says Andrew Ortiz, "because you can hear Zahira playing Mario Kart and cursing in the background."

"Yeah," says a red-faced Zahira laughing, "I kind-of really get into it."

Andrew Lee says of his first impression, "I thought it was going to be a country folk thing but, once you put everyone together, that wasn't the case."

"The evolution from folk to pop was natural." explains Cody, "It was a lot easier to play alone with an acoustic rather than an electric for me. 'Shiny Strings' was just a two and a half minute folk/pop song without drums. As we all practiced it, it became this poppy song - we added changes and it gained that minute and a half ending. That's typical. I'll write lyrics and chords, bring in a 'skeleton,' and [the song] changes. I tried with a new song to keep it set in stone and after a few practices realized it wasn't working for us. Now we're very much what happens happens."

That anything goes attitude was on full display at the last block party where the band seemed to shake the stage to near collapse. Andrew Ortiz loves energetic live shows, "I've been going to shows since I was 13 and there are bands that go, do shows, and just do their thing but then there are those bands that are into it - visually into it - and yet don't sacrifice their sound."

"It's about being spontaneous." says Andrew Lee, "When you see us live, it's not like we sit there and say 'OK, when I do this, you do this.'"

"For me," says Andrew Ortiz, "it's not about focusing on what I'm doing [as a performer], it's about putting everything into what I'm doing but it takes a toll; I get tired."

Mickey Mouse Club is a label that popped-up on Hands Up Houston and Nick responds to it with a laugh, "We've been called a pre-teen band."

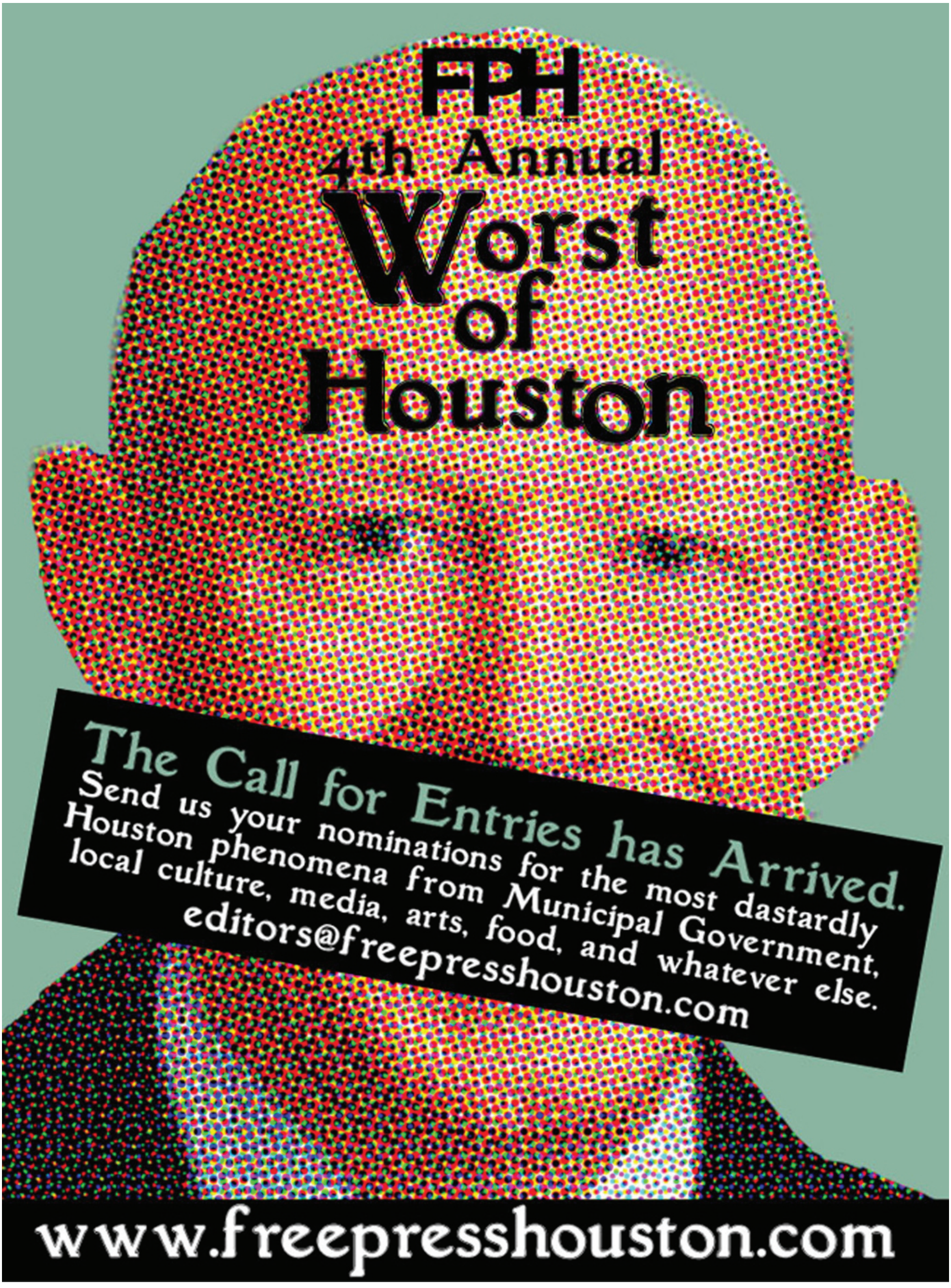
Zahira interjects, "I think it's because we aren't aggressive - people are wary of upbeat and happy music even when the lyrics may not be happy and upbeat."

"Nobody called The Who a teen band and they were young." says Nick Cody Andrew Ortiz seems equally perplexed and amused by this, "Criticizing our youth is cool. Not that I'm on a high horse but there's this new community of kids and we're all young and supportive. In Houston, all we have is each other; that's cool!"

That camaraderie was on display in a recent regional tour with Young Mammals, Woozyhelmet, and The Mathletes What was simply a chance to play with some of their favorite Houston bands turned into a little goodwill tour where the Moccasins found themselves performing to rowdy crowds, having a blast, and redefining this city to outsiders. Yet, that gritty Houston stereotype is still a tough one to crack as Nick found out in Austin when someone, hearing they were from Houston, said, "Oh, sorry I'm not from Houston; I'm not into metal." Clearly their work as H-Pop ambassadors has just begun.

FPH

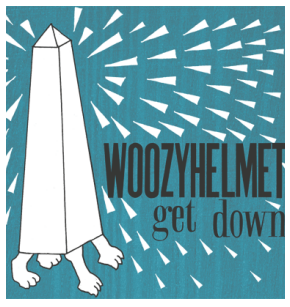
The new Wild Moccasins EP, Microscopic Metronomes, is scheduled for release in January of 2009. In the meantime, you can see them December 9th W/ Peter & The Wolf & listenlisten @ Arstorm/Caroline Collective ($5 ; 7-10pm) and also on December 19th at the Mink Backroom Toy Drive W/ Buxton, News On The March, Elaine Greer, Giant Princess, and B-L-A-C-K-I-E.


FPH
4th Annual
Worst of Houston
The Call for Entries has Arrived.
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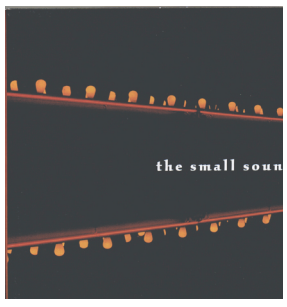
HOMEGROWN SCHEIZZER

Local albums make me happy. Mostly.

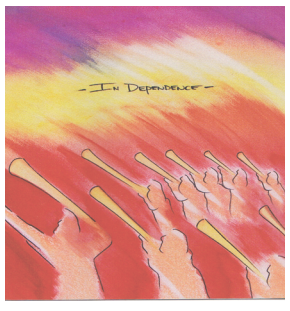
| Omar Afra

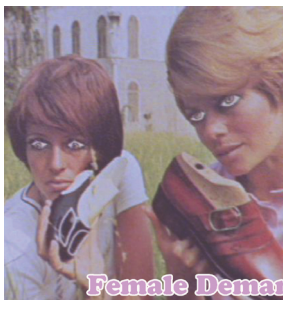












Woozy Helmet
Get Down

Get Down is an apt title for this album. Haha. Not funny. OK. Anyways, Woozy Helmet is one of the most crunktastic things in the state of Texas and this album exemplifies that paradigm in every way possibly. The songs on this album range from broken glass massaged into your testicles to being spoon fed vanilla custard. You could call this album a 'recording' but it is really more a snapshot of their kick-you-in-the nuts-tight live show. *What respect means to Jose* captures the serrated edges of Woozy Helmet while maintaining the melody and fun they pull off so seamlessly. Other clutch songs include *New Bear, Strawberry,* and *Hopeless*. Like I fucking said, their live show awesomeness as they so exemplified last month at Artstorm for their CD release. Though their myspace says they hail from Austin, a sordid town full of dubiously gay frat boys and hippies who advocate a kinder gentler for of capitalism', we like to claim them as our own as FRONTMAN Jay is a fellow Montrosian. Or at least I run into him at Catbird's enough for him to qualify.

See em' live in Austin December 6th at Elysium.

myspace.com/woozyhelmet

Check Other
Westheimer Traffic: The Mixtape

Despite having produced this stellar mixtape, local 'monsters' Check Other perform hip-hop live with the tenacity of any heavy band around. To be honest, that tenacity is missing from most H Town rappers live performance. Check Other's members hail from NYC to the Left Coast as well as right here in Houston. Comprised of Sunny D. Cypher, Mention78, Sid, and Tommy Bumps, Westheimer Traffic is rife with whimsical rhymes and audacious claims. *Love (What I need), Corona Light,* and *Get U Down* are no doubt the golden tracks on this mixtape. You will hear allot of De LaSoul in their sound as they generously borrow from them and are honest about their influence as they cite it with ease. Nowadays, who better to be inspired by?

myspace.com/checkother

The Small Sounds
Self Titled

The Small Sounds have carved them selves an album out that is more country than 'Indie Country' but waaaaaay to the left of 'orthodox' Nashville Country. This 12-song full-length album has grit, tenacity, stellar vocals and playing, and sounds quintessentially Houston. The haunting tale of *Mothers and Daughters* is a pretty Texas country ditty played within the framework of a Beatles-esque progression (without sounding contrived). This album is recorded simply and cleanly without the corny sounding, over washed reverb that all the indie kids are using these days to record their brand of Indie Country. Or whatever. As for live performance, The Small Sounds pull off all their antics on stage with ease and their harmonies are a delight. **They play the Armadillo Palace on December 13th.**

myspace.com/thesmallsounds

Room 101
Demo

Angular guitar playing, impassioned vocals, and meditative beats make Room101 one of Houston's most interesting new acts. This sometimes sounds like Jeff Buckley mating with Fantomas then rapidly dips into a garage aesthetic. *Plastic Bag Hat* is a bright spot on this demo recorded and performed entirely by 'one man band' Robert Ruynolds. He would just as easily fit in onstage with local acts ranging from Hearts of Animals to Rusted Shut. **Catch him at The Artery on December 5th.**

myspace.com/room10101

Jacob Meador
In Dependence

Jacob Meador has been engineering thousands of albums at Houston's famed Sunrise Studios for several years now. Sitting back and watching bands record for dozens of years while hiding away your passions and music has to be frustrating. Meador puts this frustration to use in his ode to 'modern rock' In Dependence. Slickly recorded and engineered, this 8 songs album misses the mark yet leaves the door open. Nonetheless, though I may think this sort of music is a dead horse, those of you who enjoy the stylings of Incubus and other comparable acts may enjoy this. Guest appearances are made by several local notables such as Nolan Burke and Winter Wallace. **Jacob Meador performs live December 6th at Fitz.**

myspace.com/jacobmeador

Female Demand
Self Titled

2-piece drum and bass duo Female Demand wore Bumble Bee and Banana costumes while they performed at last October's Westheimer Block Party. As the sound of their erratic riffage escaped the inside on Mangos, attendees poured in to see what all the fuss was about. Those who did got a collective kick in the nuts from this fierce some duo. This self-titled ep captures that spirit in more ways than one. This roughly cut collection of songs is Lightning Bolt meets Zeppelin recording their music in the hole they dug Saddam out of. Despite the piss poor drum recording, check this out, then go see Female Demand live, and then load up on B12. **Come to Helios on December 20th to see them as well as Satin Hooks, Piano Vines, Eastern Sea, Nick Greer, Ozeal, and Chase Hamblin.**

myspace.com/femaledemand

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annual

celebration of the Christ

Dec. 20

Helios

411 Westheimer

Satin Hooks

the Eastern Sea

Piano Vines

Ozeal and the Eulypians

Chase Hamblin

Nick Greer

Female demand

Doors at 8 • 8 Dollars



Design by Shelby Hohl

FALLOUT 3 & LITTLEBIGPLANET REVIEWED

IT'S WHAT YOU MAKE IT

TYLER BARBER





Fallout 3

PLAYSTATION 3,
XBOX 360 & PC

I'M A SLAVE TRADER.

I PROFIT FROM KIDNAPPING and imprisoning people for life. Doctors, security guards, shop owners... children, I enslave them all. My malevolence wasn't inert though. It slithered out of me slowly, gaining strength from the toxic wasteland of Washington DC. But that's skipping ahead. Nineteen years ago, in 2258, all I knew of the world was the sterile, but radiation-free under-ground Vault 101. I went to school and had friends, but when my father mysteriously left the vault — something that's not happened in the 200 years since nuclear war ravaged the Earth's surface — everything I've known to be true has become undone.

Fallout 3's stage is a grim, and articulate one. The parable "it's not the destination, but the journey that matters" aptly sums up the Fallout 3 experience.

Though it may look like it from the back of the box, Fallout 3 is not a typical first-person-shooter. In fact, it doesn't even play like a FPS (not in the beginning at least). Like developer Bethesda's previous game, Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion, Fallout 3 relies on role-playing elements like skill-building and leveling-up to push the player deeper into its rich world. Roaming the massive wastelands, you'll come across all manner of individuals that need help. It's the typical questing for some poor sap, but it's the context of Fallout's world that sets it apart from other RPG experiences. For example, I happened across a Ghoul (humans horribly disfigured from too much exposure to radiation) that felt discriminated against. He wanted access to a town of "smooth skins," but everyone inside was bigoted against his kind: Leaving me with a moral choice, fight for his rights, or exterminate his settlement. It wasn't a necessary quest to complete the main story, but this, and many other side-quests like it, are too compelling not to see through.

Slave trading, too, isn't necessary. It's all up to you. I just happened to discover the slave trading mecca ironically named Paradise Falls. It's here that I've been making my fortune, but out of all my friends playing Fallout 3, none earn their cash this way. Some play valiantly, freeing slaves, and some haven't even stumbled across this unfortunate town.

Gameplay wise, if you're not drawn into the story telling by-product, there's still plenty to enjoy. That is, if you're not expecting first-person-shooter gunplay. See, you build your character's stats throughout the game, so if you're not investing any experience points into your firearms skill, you'll end up shooting more scenery than enemies. Everything in the game is based on behind-the-scenes 'die-rolls' that factor the level of your skill for the particular action your performing. Everything from how much weight you can carry, to how accurate you are with grenades needs to be nurtured if you want to excel in any particular area.

But, it's not just your character traits that you alter, you literally have an impact on the world in Fallout 3. When I discovered the city of Megaton, for example, with its dormant nuclear bomb in the center of town (hence the name), I learned that I could either disarm or detonate the bomb (vaporizing the town and all of its inhabitants from the map). And the consequences are real, everything from quests you can only get from certain villagers, to shops and items that you can only buy in Megaton are gone for good. What did I do? I blew the town to hell. The blast, seen from a mile away on the balcony of a barely-standing high-rise, was so gloriously intoxicating I reloaded my most recent save to see it again, this time in the light of day.

Ultimately, Fallout 3 is a game that's as fun as you make it. And that's the greatest asset of Fallout 3: its narrative isn't solely dependent on the main quest line. In fact, what I like the most about Fallout 3 is its oratorical nature. Trading stories with friends on what perks they invested in, how that affected their game, some of the crazy characters they ran into; it all inflates the otherwise desolate world into something epic.

LittleBigPlanet

PLAYSTATION 3

GROWING UP I ALWAYS WANTED TO DO TWO THINGS:

MAKE MY OWN VIDEOGAMES and build my own rollercoaster. LittleBigPlanet (LBP) lets me do both. From the very beginning until the... well there is no end, personality gushes out of LBP that's not only charming, but inspiring. The mascot, Sackboy, too is the perfect avatar to match the whimsy, and downright enchanting allure of this beautifully realized game. Mario has never made me smile this big.

At first glance, the entire game looks like a Michel Gondry musicvideo. Every thing in the world has its curtain drawn back to show you exactly how it was made. Playing through the story mode shows you how diverse the physics-based platforming can be. Each stage engages even the hardest of hardcore platformer-fans, but is also accessible to those less-dexerous with a joystick. My girlfriend and I, for one, found no problem keeping up with one another, and even found the game a little easier when we playing together. Only phsycologically though, the emotive sackpeople bekon you on with their playful glare. The game sinks its hooks in you before you realize it, providing a muse for when you want to start creating yourself, by showing you how fun and simple creation can be.

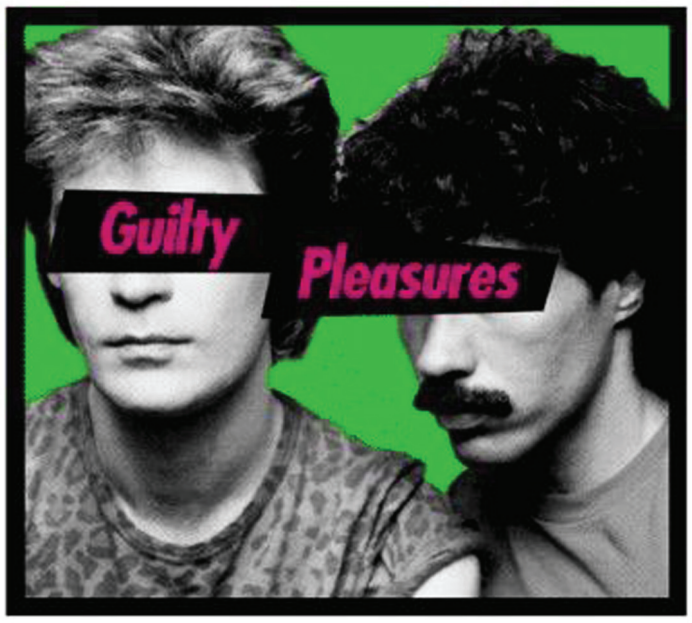
When you do sit down to create your own level, it's overwhelming the amount of options you're given. First thing I did was try and build a giant Ferris wheel. I wound up the bolts, attacked some sponges (so my little sackboy can hold on), and let it go. I had fun for hours just constructing this machine, and really, I don't plan to do anything with it. I was just goofing off. And LBP really supports that. When you do want to get technical and design a serious level, check out the literally thousands of levels already created and uploaded to the internet from other players. There's a lot of crap out there, but there's also stuff so inspired, so brilliant, that you'll almost not even want to attempt. In the few weeks since its launch, I've already seen not only excellent stages proper, but other stuff like a working calculator, a re-creation of the side-scrolling shooter Gradius, and a photo gallery.

LBP is one of those rare games that never gets old. And with a steady flow of new levels created by players around the world, you'll have a very big sustainable planet.

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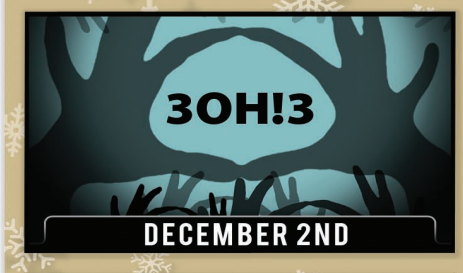
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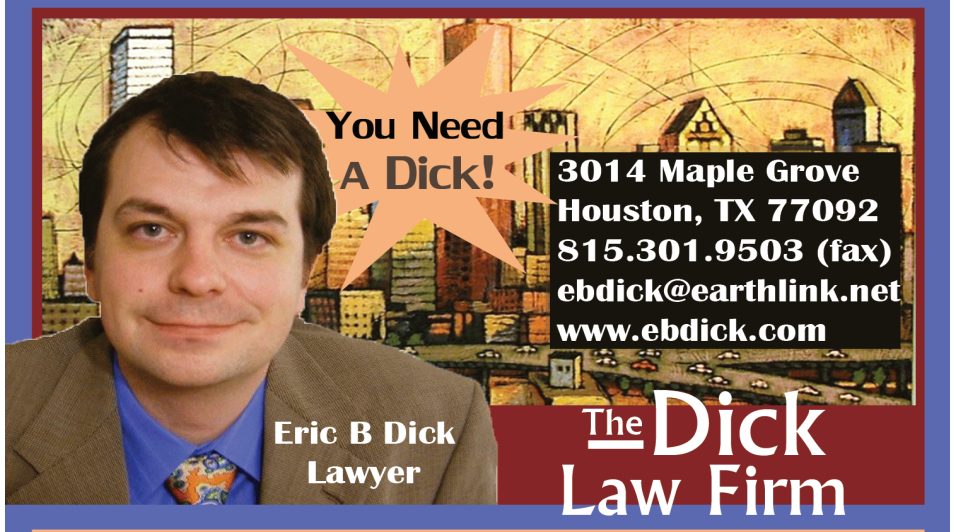
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END TIMES 2.0

The Blue Beam Blueprint

| Nave Navinud

"LOOK! UP IN THE SKY. WHAT IS THAT? IT'S A BIRD... A PLANE... OH WAIT, IT'S JUST A HOLOGRAPHIC DEPICTION OF THE SECOND COMING."

THOSE WHO ARE PRIVY to the top secret NASA/U.S. government project tentatively titled "Project Blue Beam" may just be some of the very few who aren't going to be fooled by their space show in the sky that involves projecting holographic images into the ionosphere. This technology will be used to scam us into everything from believing an alien invasion is imminent, to coming to the realization that all the great prophets from Jesus and Buddha to Krishna and Ronnie James Dio are really just one interstellar savior that will be represented on Earth by our great One World Leader. Doesn't sound like such a bad time to be living in after all. And for those who aren't fortunate enough to know of Blue Beam, allow me to explain the Conspiracy of all conspiracies that dwarfs any other manufactured Michael Bay Apocalypse depiction imaginable.

The implementation of the New World Order via Blue Beam is set to take place in a four-step process. Step one will begin to take effect with the breakdown of religious belief systems of old when 'new' archeological discoveries are brought forth from numerous earthquakes that will occur in unexpected places. These new findings will be staged to shine light on all of our previous religious misinterpretations and provide the solution of an all-encompassing One World Religion as a replacement. As all falsified doctrines are laid to rest and the dust is cleared from the eyes of Man, the Magnum Opus of conspiracies will begin to unfold. Naturally, there will be some skepticism towards such claims. This is when step two will need to occur to really send things over the edge.

In order for step two of Project Blue Beam to be successful, we will have to imagine that the sociological, economic, and overall state of affairs leading up to this scenario will be so fucked that many of the people of Earth will already be leaning towards some sort of assumption that we are in the End Times or at least New Times. In a moment's lapse the entire world will be stunned when a three-dimensional holographic space show appears in the sky across the entire planet. The purpose of such an event, you ask? Why of course it's to beam specific cultural imagery, language, and sounds into the hearts and minds

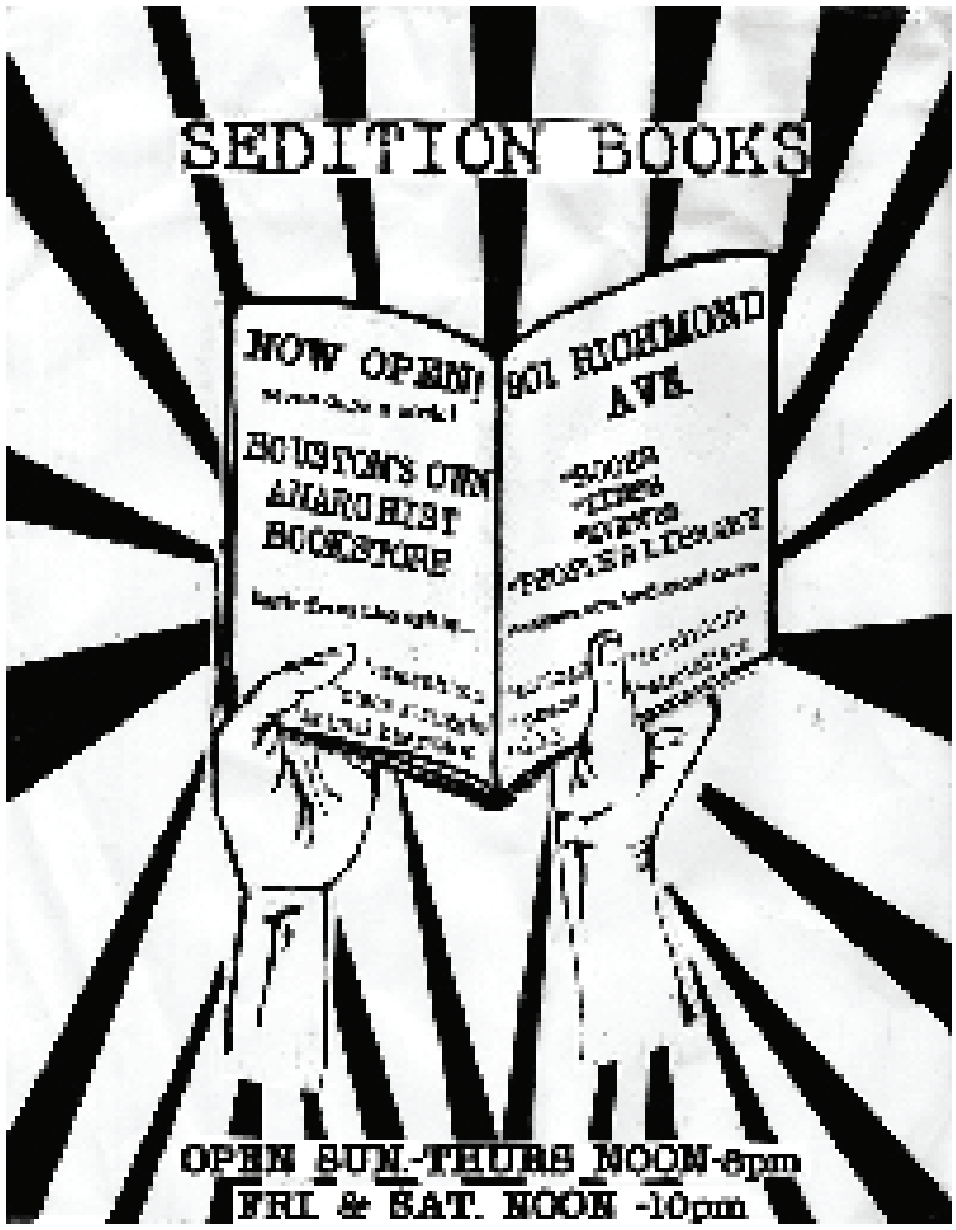


of each Earthling with the hopes of reshaping his entire worldview. Every culture will receive their very own movie with a relative explanation for where things went wrong and how they really should be. That's right. Christians will see Christ, or maybe the Pope. Jews will see their long awaited Messiah, gold. Hindus will be shocked to find that their God is a very modest eight-armed Deity. The Muslims will see Muhammed bathing his sword in the blood of infidels. And Floridians? Ronnie Van Zant will resurrect from the dead playing the solo to 'Freebird'. They will use the sky as a global movie screen to unravel ancient prophecies and simultaneously prepare citizens for the arrival of their well-planned One World Leader/False Prophet scenario. All of the great spiritual leaders of time will ultimately merge into one badass super leader that will offer both the peaceful prose of Gandhi and the charismatic demeanor of Hitler. At this point you may be thinking that the present author, or at least whomever thought up Blue Beam, has maybe taken one too many bong hits in his spare time which sparked increasingly paranoid and irrational views of the World. While this may be true for at least one of us, I challenge you to review some very interesting documentation of the subject and see if you think this is such an implausible scenario after all.

For starters, take a look at an Army Research Laboratory document from February 1998 titled "3-D Holographic Display Using Strontium Barium Niobate" in which an innovative technique for generating a three-dimensional holographic display is discussed in length. The resultant image is a hologram that can be viewed in real time over a wide field of view. The document states, "The holographic image is free from system-induced aberrations and has a uniform, high quality over the entire field of view. The enhanced image quality results from using a phase conjugate read beam generated from a second photorefractive crystal acting as a double pumped phase conjugate mirror (DPPCM). Multiple three dimensional images have been stored in the crystal via wavelength multiplexing." With this technology, which is most likely far more advanced by now, real-time viewing of holographic imagery would be possible using photorefractive crystals as a medium, thus eliminating the inability to produce real-time holographic images, especially in 3-D form. For more information on the theory and experimentation of this technology, reference the Defense Technical Information Center online. This is just one of several methods available for simultaneously projecting these holographic images in real-time across the entire planet. In a December 2004 article in Wired magazine entitled "Apocalypse Now: How a Hologram, a Blimp, and a Massively Multi-player Game Could Bring Peace to the Holy Land", the work of Israeli cybernetics expert Yitzhaq Hayutman is discussed. Hayutman has a very different view of how to bring about peace in the Middle East. He plans to project a holographic temple above the Dome of the Rock via an array of high-powered, water-cooled lasers and then fire them into a transparent cube suspended beneath a blimp. This would fulfill the ancient Jewish prophecy that the temple will descend from the heavens as a manifestation of light. He even has a plan to generate the virtual temple via an online role-playing game that allows users from across the world to assist in constructing this electronic apocalypse.

Now that several possible scenarios have been discussed for the visual aspect of Blue Beam, questions will arise concerning the technology available to achieve step three of this project, the voices of God. In step three, the souls of Man will be touched by the voice of their Divine reference point speaking to them in their native tongue. Each citizen plagued by this psychological torture will believe that they are receiving a Divine message properly molded to their cultural belief system that will accompany the light show in the sky in clearing up any past misunderstandings of our planet's mysteries. They will be ushered into a new age of wisdom that essentially paves the way for the all-knowing Leader. I'm sure many people will be curious to know how it would be the least bit possible to beam such specific messages directly towards each and every individual on the planet. Well one way could certainly be with the use of long-range

continued pg. 24 ☞





[redacted]

[redacted]

acoustic devices (LRAD). Beginning in 2004, American soldiers in Iraq were equipped with LRADs by the American Technology Corporation (ATC) for both land and naval-based operations. Long-range acoustic devices are capable of transmitting a highly directional beam of sound up to 150 decibels, which is 50 times the threshold of human pain. For any person within 300 meters of the device, there is always the possibility of irreversible damage to his eardrums. This technology is also effective for beaming a message towards a specific direction in very noisy areas. For several years, U.S. Naval officers have been using LRADs for giving directions in the busy waters of the Persian Gulf to fishermen and other small boats in the area. If you wish to give orders to a specific person or group in a large area, you simply point the LRAD towards them within a preferred range of 270 meters on land or 500 meters on water and within a beam width of about 30°. The message is then transmitted to the specific target, leaving it nearly inaudible for those outside of that area. With the ability to generate messages in almost any language, the long-range acoustic device certainly possesses the technological capability to fool millions of people into believing they are receiving a spiritual awakening from a source in the sky that is nothing more than a hologram designed to implement Earth, Inc.

Now that we have covered the voice of God aspect of Blue Beam, we are prepared to address the most important and final stage of this grandiose conspiracy. This fourth stage is a two-part process that concerns multiple facets of universal supernatural manifestations via holographs seen by billions worldwide. In the first part, the people of Earth will be made to believe that an alien invasion is imminent in every major city around the globe. Each country will be encouraged to band together to fight off this extra-terrestrial presence that poses a threat to Earth. Of course this is just what President Ronald Reagan said when addressing the United Nations: "Perhaps we need some outside universal threat. I occasionally think how quickly our differences worldwide would vanish if we were facing an alien threat from outside this world".

In the second part of stage four, the apocalyptic Christians will be fooled into believing that the End of Days is here and the Rapture is going to occur. They will be led to believe that some sort of 'off this planet' source is coming to save the Earthlings from the grip of the evil Imperial Force. The goal of this would be to neutralize any significant opposition to the New World Order's plan by making the gullible Christians think Judgment Day is here and they were right all along. While they maintain their complacency in preparation to be beamed up, the true plan of sticking it to the sheep of Earth will be in full effect.

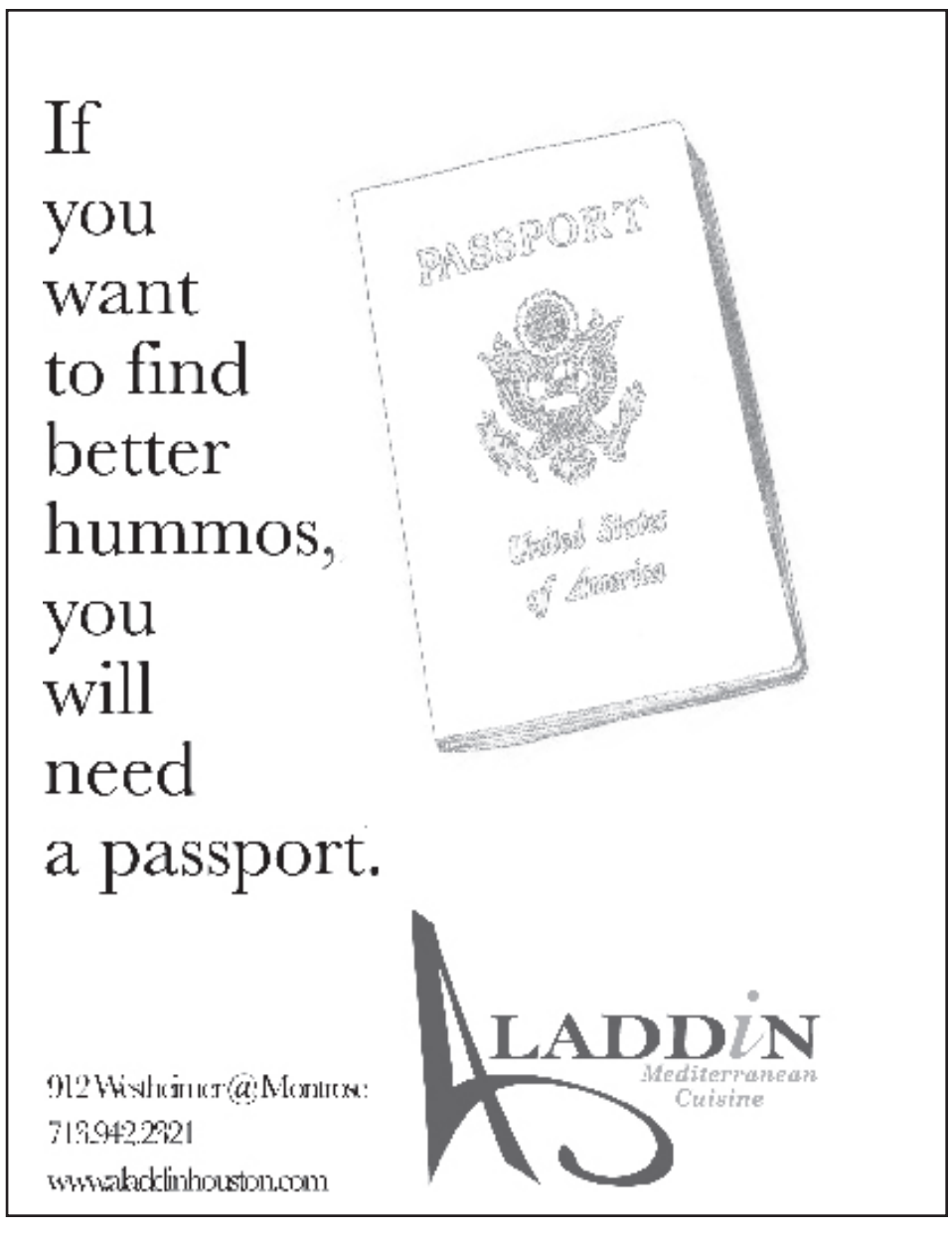
If you are part of the 5% of the population who would even give this discombobulated conspiracy the time of day, then you might be wondering what kind of signs will we see as the age of Blue Beam approaches. Well, according to some guy from Canada named Serge Monast who wrote all about Blue Beam for the International Free Press in Canada and then turned up dead in classic conspiracy fashion, it will begin with some sort of worldwide economic disaster: "An in-between currency will be used to force anyone with savings to spend or turn in their cash because they understand that people who have money and are not dependent upon them might be the very ones who will mount an insurrection against them. If everyone is broke, no one can fund a war of any kind: paper currency will cease to exist. This is one of the first signs".

A big portion of Blue Beam concerns the attempt to orchestrate ancient prophecies such as a Messianic arrival and the rapture and to make the respective religious communities of the world believe they are actually taking place. Contemplating the idea of staging prophetic fulfillments immediately poses questions about the operations of time and how we see it in linear fashion. Are the puppet-masters behind Blue Beam actually creating an outcome to these prophecies by acting them out? Or were such visions of old actually foreseeing nothing more than the future, when this technological spectacle in the sky actually takes place? Whatever the case may be, it certainly gives anyone with an overly active imagination plenty to think about.

Now that all of the ins and outs of Blue Beam have been addressed, I must give the basic disclaimer that I am merely covering the epic legend of what Project Blue Beam entails and am clearly not responsible for any holes or contradictions that you may find in this secret project. Please forgive them…it is a work in progress.

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Greenbacks for Green Bins

A Letter of Thanks and Clarification for West Coast Donation to City of Houston

By Andrea Afra

To: Mr. Stephen Elliot, Author and Founder of the Progressive Reading Series, San Francisco, California

From: Andrea Afra, Assistant Minister of Propaganda for the City of Montrose, Texas

Re: Donation for recycling bins from San Francisco

> "25,000 Houston residents have been waiting as long as 10 years to get recycling bins from the city"

Dear Mr. Elliot,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the San Francisco Progressive Reading Series for raising money to donate to the City of Houston for the purchase of recycling bins, as it will benefit not only Houstonians but Montrosians alike. We apologize for the red tape you faced when trying to make the donation, however it was not known who the proper parties were to handle the contribution, then the mayor's legal department had to be consulted with which determined that your signature needed to be obtained for a waiver stating that the mayor's acceptance of your contribution was not an endorsement of any political candidate or party. Again, thank you for your donation of $1,250 as it will help offset the taxpayers' cost of the Mayor of Houston's $600,000 green marketing campaign that has yet to show any progress.

We are aware that you became familiar with Houston's recycling program after reading a July 2008 New York Times article reporting on a national study of the thirty most populous cities in the country published by Waste News that ranked San Francisco as the top performing recycling city at 69%, while Houston, the fourth largest city, came in last place at 2.6%. San Francisco not only generates good money from recycling but sets a prime example of how to succeed without depending on public funds to do so. A private company handles SF's recycling service and gives part of that money to the city. There is no charge for bins or for collection as all of the costs are more than covered by reselling the materials.

The NY Times article stated that: "...25,000 Houston residents have been waiting as long as 10 years to get recycling bins from the city...but the city says it cannot afford more bins." As you wrote in your article published by Huffington Post, you felt that you could help out with this problem and raised enough money to purchase 276 bins, at $6.25 per unit. Here again we must apologize for any confusion. If you would have read further into the article you would have come across the quote from Mayor Bill White saying, "We (Houstonians) have an independent streak that rebels against mandates or anything that seems trendy or hyped up."

What this translates to, Mr. Elliot, is "Houston doesn't give a shit about recycling." That is the overall attitude here. We are the energy capital of the world, yet we are the nation's worst recycling city. Over 160,000 residents have curbside recycling pick up service, but in many neighborhoods so few residents actually use the bins that it is not worth the cost of sending out the trucks. It won't get any easier than having someone come to your house twice a month and make your soda bottles and beer cans disappear, yet it is clear that people don't value the service enough to use it. Those who do utilize their bins run the risk of losing the service if their neighbors don't improve on their recycling efforts.

The citizens of Montrose would like to say that they are champion recyclers, leaders in the green movement, however we are just as apathetic as everyone else. We forget to put our bins out, we're not sure if we can recycle #2 plastics or #6, we don't even know our recycling day. Those who don't have city recycling pick up deem themselves exempt from having to recycle, which is bullshit.

We will be the first ones to say that one shouldn't depend on their city for anything. There are plenty of ways to get rid of waste responsibly and we've devised a simple how-to guide for recycling in Montrose and Houston, and while it includes instructions on using public recycling services, we encourage the citizens to put other methods into practice as well.

Again, Mr. Elliot we'd like to thank you for your donation and hope to clear up the misconception that our atrocious performance may be contributed to by our need for more bins, when in truth our shoddy ranking is just a reflection of the value we place upon our environment. In the future, you may send contributions directly to the City of Montrose Recycling Fund which goes towards the purchase of unopened glass and aluminum containers of beer and other spirits so that they will be consumed and disposed of properly by responsible citizens, aka the Mayor and his loyal staff.

Our sincerest thanks and regrets,

The City of Montrose

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The UnOfficial Guide to Recycling in Montrose, Texas
and outlying Houston areas

Do I have city recycling service in my neighborhood?

To find out if your neighborhood is serviced by the City of Houston's recycling pick up call 3-1-1. Ask for the date of your pick up and for a bin to be delivered to your house. Write your date down below and stick this on your icebox to keep you on your pretty little toes.

My recycling date is every other _____.

What can I recycle and how do I sort the items?

The city picks up many items but not all plastics and not glass. Accepted items are: Newspaper, magazines, color ad inserts, office paper, unwanted mail and telephone books; tin, aluminum and empty aerosol cans; and plastic bottles and jugs with a narrow neck and broad base (marked with a #1 to #5, and #7, recycling symbol, but not #6).Keeping all paper items segregated, you may place all of these materials together in your bin. Overflow materials can be put in a separate paper grocery bag and place on top or on the side of your green bin. Corrugated cardboard must be broken down into 3x3 foot squares. Used motor oil, if placed in its original container or an empty 1-gallon milk or water jug will also be accepted.

This information is from the City of Houston's Solid Waste web page at: http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recycling.html

Dagnabbit, I don't get city service. Now what?

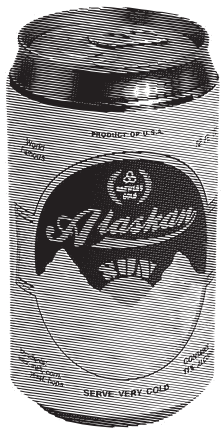
If you don't have recycling pick-up service in your neighborhood, or can't wait for the two weeks to get rid of your recyclables, don't fret! There are several privately operated companies that gladly accept your drop-offs and even some that will pick up from your door. Knock on a few of your neighbors doors and offer to collect their recyclables as well to make the trip even more worthwhile. You might start a neighborhood wide trend that everyone will want to be involved with. You could even ask for a little gas money to offset your costs. Hmmm, is that the smell of capitalism or an empty cottage cheese carton?

the LIST



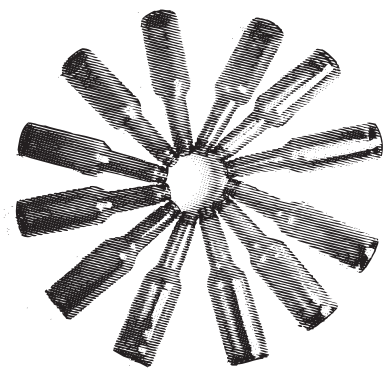
Paper

Every year, American's throw away more than 30 million trees worth of newsprint each year. The majority of our generated solid waste is paper based and is recyclable. Recycling a six foot stack of papers saves a 35 foot tree. Paper Retriever's bright yellow and green recycling dumpsters are all over town, especially at schools and university areas. Save up all your newspaper and magazines, then go to PaperRetriever.com and search for a bin near you.



Aluminum

Recycling your next six pack could save enough energy to fuel a car for five miles. Total up the damage after your next party and call WeCanRecycle.org., a local service that will pick up your aluminum cans for free. There is a minimum amount for each pick up, so go to the website for more information.



Glass

A recycled glass container can go from recycling bin to store shelf in as little as 30 days and is infinitely reusable. More than 18% of glass containers are used by restaurants and bars, and with Houston having more restaurants per capita than any other city, it might boost our ranking if we encouraged our favorite bars and restaurants to recycle. Ask them what they do with their empty bottles and cans and let them know about services like WeCanRecycle.org that will come pick up their recyclables. While the city doesn't offer glass pick up, it is easy to start a glass box and maybe even encourage your neighbors to do the same. Then once a month you can drop off your accumulated glass at one of the area recycling locations. There are two city operated drive-through facilities including the Westpark Consumer Recycling Center located at 5900 Westpark. Also, there is a convenient RecyclExpress drop-off West U location at 5400 Dincans St. and Westpark, just a block west of Kirby.

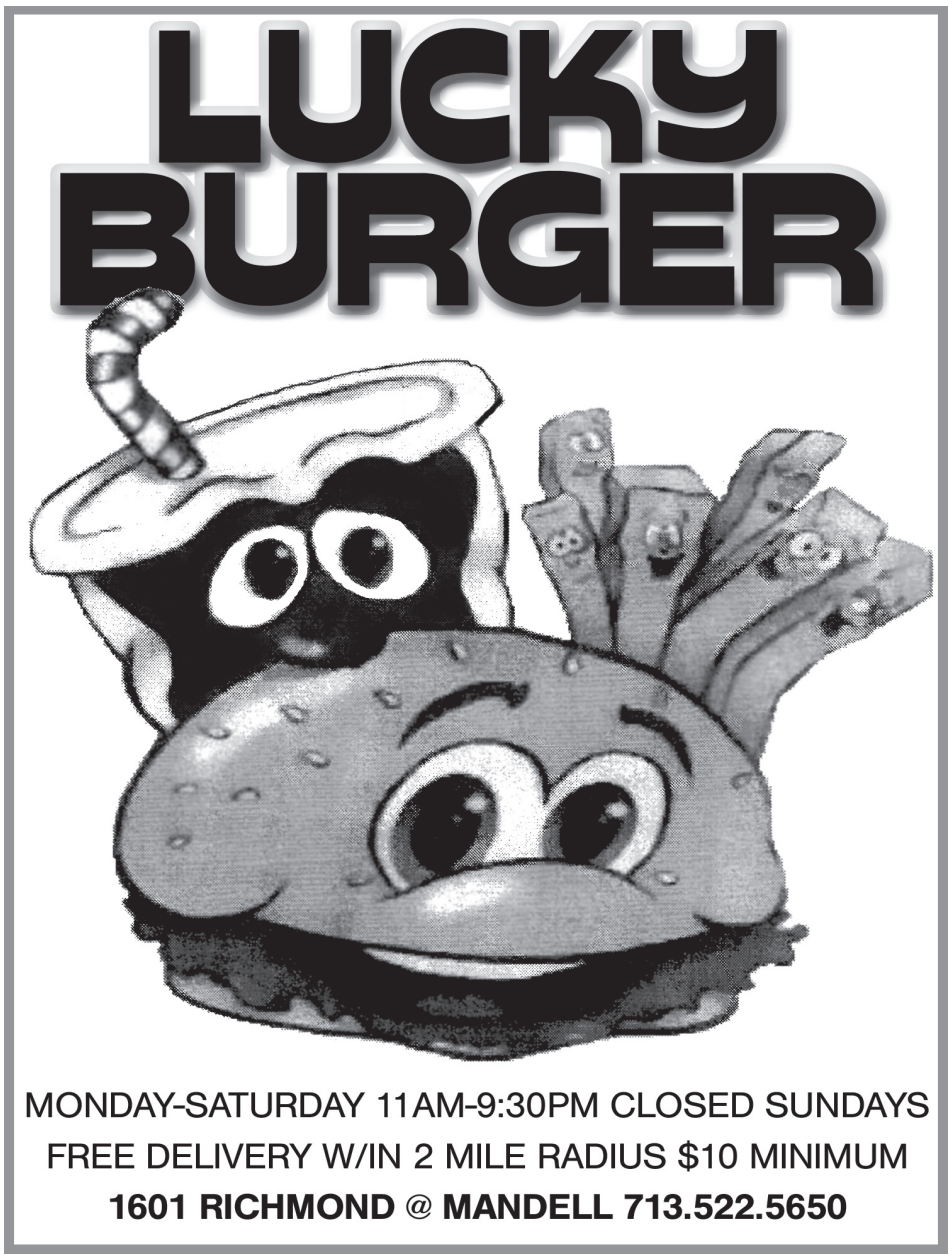


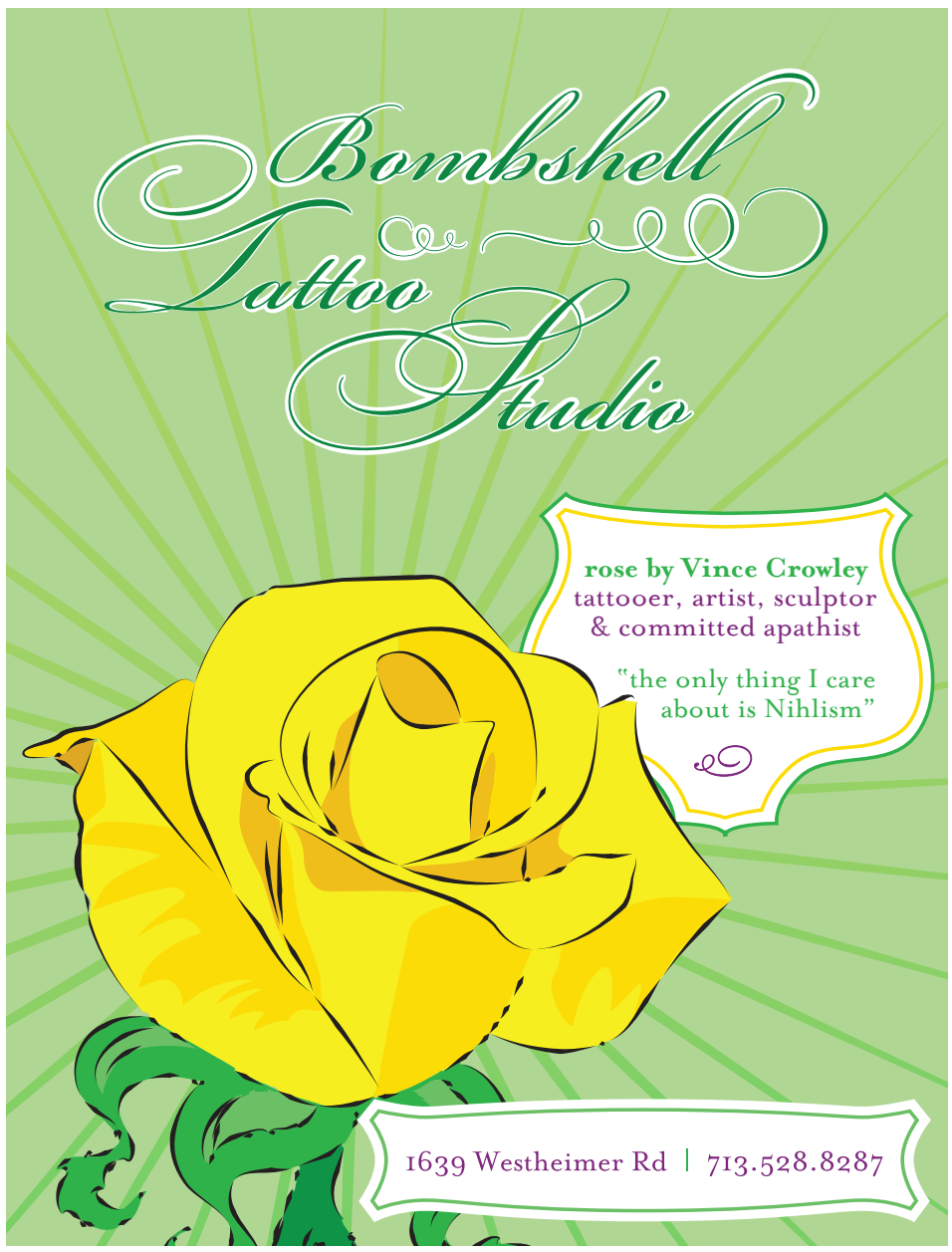
Plastic

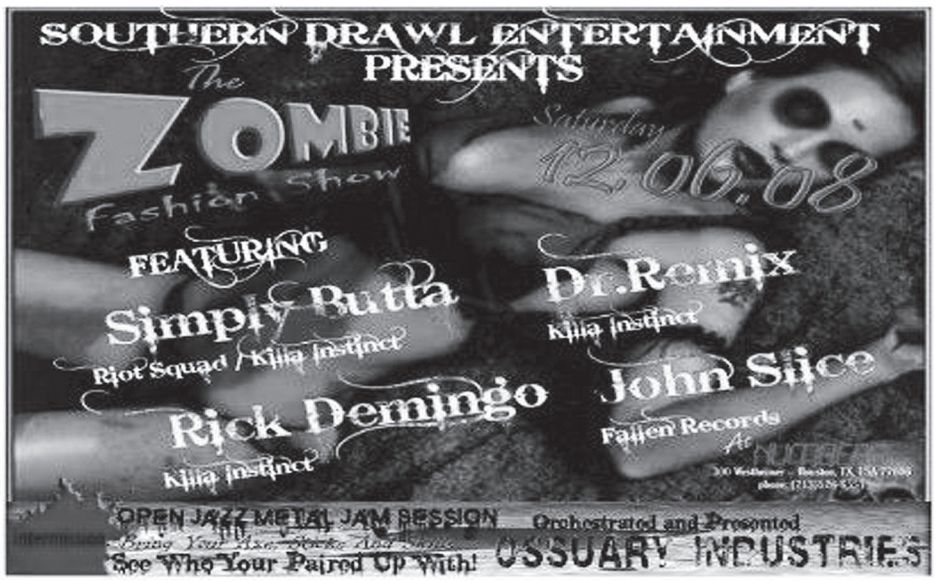
While it may be a little harder to get rid of on your own, plastic is probably the most space consuming material you will accumulate. One ton of recycled plastic can save four barrels of oil that would be needed to create new materials. Also, plastic bottles can be made into many new things like polyester for clothing and even paint. So squish your empties down and take them to one of the depositories listed above or search the internet to find a location closer to you. Please note that plastic grocery bags are usually not accepted but Central Market and most Kroger stores do have a collection bin for these pesky and numerous items.

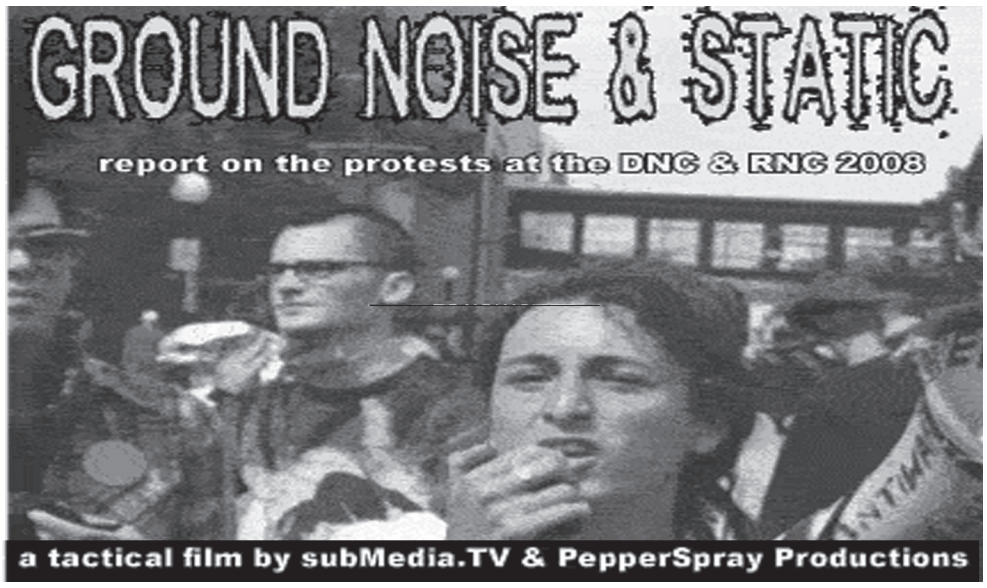
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We want to let our readers know which local businesses are doing their part to recycle and those that are not, so if you know of anyone that deserves recognition or a firm public tongue lashing please let us know about it at: ***Andrea@FreePressHouston.com.*** Remember to be constructive, not just critical. (We know it's easier said than done.


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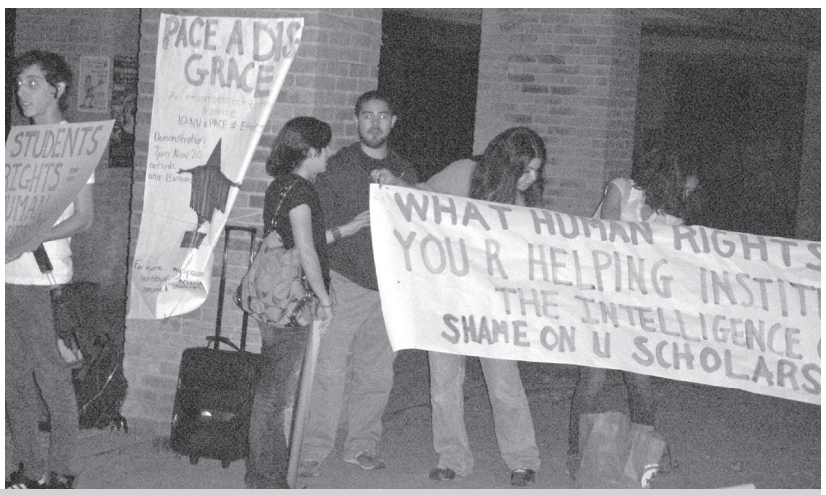

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VAGUE TERMS, HUMAN RIGHTS

CONFRONTING THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO TO THE UNITED NATIONS

| NICK COOPER | ALEX PAULSON
(more info at friendsofbradwll.org)





LUIS ALFONSO DE ALBA IS NOT ONLY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MEXICO TO THE UNITED NATIONS, BUT ALSO WAS THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL.

SO, HIS SPEECH ON THURSDAY
November 20th at the University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) was an opportunity to speak to a powerful figure who has worked for human rights causes. He was the keynote speaker for the Ethics in Intelligence, Security and Immigration: The Moral and Social Significance of Gathering and Managing Information and Borders in the Global Community Conference. I was present and brought up Brad's case and got a vague response. Meanwhile, outside, students held a protest over influence of the CIA and the Department of Homeland Security on their campus. Specifically, the IGKNU, (Integrated Global Knowledge and Understanding Collaboration) is seen by protesters as Homeland Security and the CIA using a partnership with the University to recruit for and legitimize the role of covert and surveillance agencies. Homeland Security is responsible for implementing many problematic policies for those living close to the border who have seen their families separated by recent border policies, increased violence and militarization, and destruction of local economies. A presentation by leftist professors earlier in the day highlighted the history of abuses of the CIA.

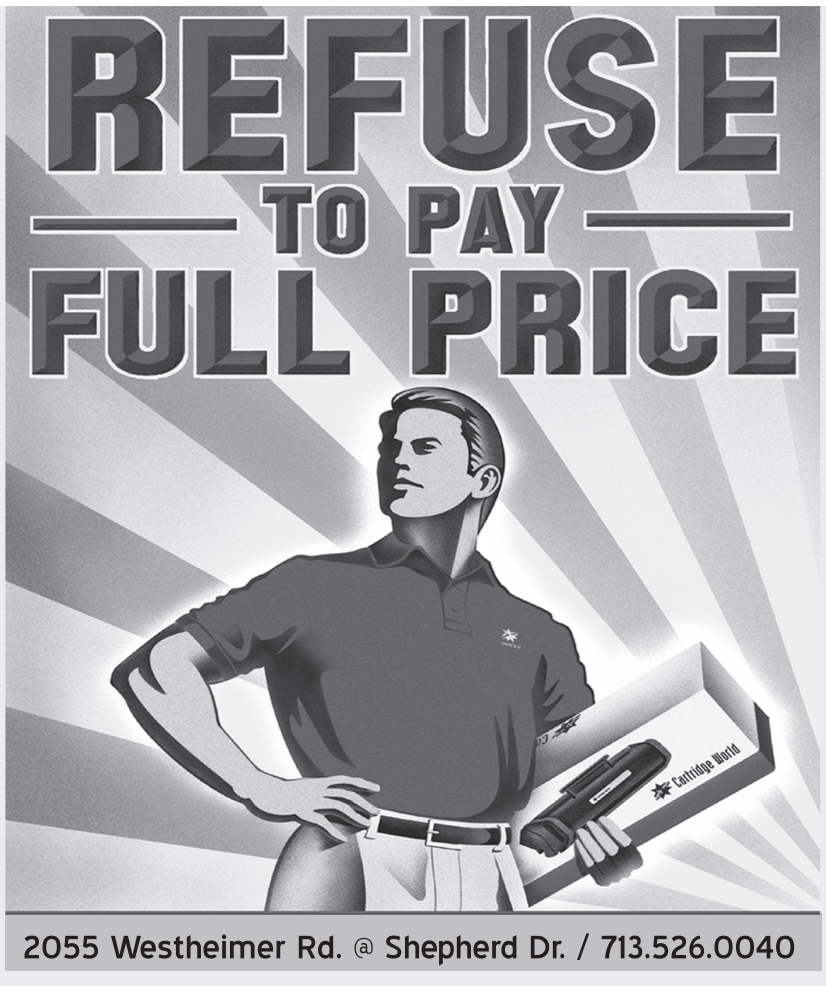
NICK: My name's Nick Cooper. I work with the group Friends of Brad Will, The American journalist who was killed in Oaxaca two years ago. I've been very concerned about the human rights situation in Mexico because instead of charging the off-duty policemen who were shooting at Brad from across the street during the protest in Oaxaca, the Mexican government has gone along with a very strange narrative that it was the members of the Popular Assembly of Oaxaca… 20 people have been charged now with complicity in a murder of their friend. And the people who were shooting guns from across the street and are on video shooting guns were detained for a couple hours and let go, and I'm very concerned about the human rights issue for my friend who was killed in Oaxaca.

DE ALBA: Well, that's not precisely a question but I can tell you that I share your concern. The conflict involves the local authorities and the federal authorities. The National Commission on Human Rights has also made an investigation on it. As in several conflicts, what I think is the fundamental point is that we need, as a government, we need to commit to clarify all the facts and to prosecute whoever is responsible, and we have not been able to do it in all cases. But the will to do it -- we have even opened some of the processes including in Oaxaca to foreign assistance and participation of NGOs and institutions to clarify the situation. We should be aware that the situation in the country because of a lot of reasons does not allow us always to reply, but we need to try to clarify the situation and the facts. We have the video that you claim -- I am not a lawyer, I can not tell you exactly whether it has been used properly or not by the authorities. But this is an investigation that I hope as well as you that it will be clarified.

NICK: I was hoping that the PGR would consider this fact, but I feel in some ways since none of the other deaths during the uprising in Oaxaca were actually investigated, just this one, and instead of going after the people who were firing the guns they went after other activists, it thought it was particularly trying to punish us for demanding human rights. It was almost as if they said -- "You want a human rights investigation? We'll tell you what -- we'll arrest his friends, these activist." It was kind of a way of showing that concern about human rights -- they can just snub it in the face in a way.

DE ALBA: Not only in Mexico, in a lot of places, human obstacles to enhance security or to develop certain policies -- the question of human rights needs to prevail. Certainly you can not claim to protect human rights and then disregard them on a particular situation. You have to understand also that we need to work on different levels. The commitment of a government is something that takes time. It's the same case in the U.S. So that it takes a commitment from the very policemen to the judge to the tribunal to the society. And then you can have a system that develops and can address the violators. I don't know what to tell you but unfortunately it's not the only case. We have been trying to do, and I am certain that information that we have about the investigations - keep an eye on the issue. We have some periodic reports that we'd certainly be willing to share with anyone interesting. We normally share it with concerned NGOs and other institutions. We certainly report frequently to the human rights commission, High Commission on those topics so we can share that information.

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Journey for Justice drops knowledge about the School of the Americas at Sedition Books

from the open publishing newswire: Tiel and Frankie have been caravaning from Los Angeles to Fort Benning Georgia to raise awareness and help build a movement to close the US Army School of The Americas (now WHINSEC), and connect social movements for justice across the Americas. On Tuesday November 18th, they stopped at Sedition Books in Houston. Around 20 people came to hear the event, which is nearing maximum capacity for Sedition's space, it was a nice fit. The event started with brief intros by Tina and Cale, and then a screening of School of Assassins, an oldie (produced in 1995) but still really great film about what the School of the Americas is about.

11/17 Statement From the Subpoenaed Texans: RNC Grand Jury called off

from the open publishing newswire: In early October, six activists from Texas were subpoenaed to testify before a federal grand jury in Minneapolis in relation to the protests during the Republican National Convention in September. The subpoenas were part of a much larger campaign of repression and intimidation against people organizing against the RNC that included raids, vehicle seizures, arbitrary detentions at gun point, infiltrators, and more. The last couple months have been an emotional roller coaster for us, as we dealt with the uncertainty of our situation and the constant level of stress we all felt. But today we can declare victory: in the past week, all six of us have had our grand jury subpoenas canceled, without ever saying a word to the Feds!

In hard times it can be easy to forget what we are fighting for and lose sight of the victories we win every day. However, sometimes we get to see our communities strengthen in a way we may not have thought possible. Throughout this experience we have received support and solidarity that has been incredible and overwhelming. Many groups across the country stood in solidarity with us through our struggle by offering support, raising and donating money, setting up grand jury teach-ins and trainings, and publicly decrying the grand jury process. Through our community building and educating ourselves and others, we can support each other in ways that are truly liberating, even through the darkest times. When we reject the broken methods of the state, and instead embrace community, solidarity and each other, we create something worth fighting for. With every show of support we received, we felt even more empowered to stand up for our movement and more able to support each other.

11/16 Iraq War Resisters speak at Rice from Houston and Toronto

On Friday November 14th in observance of Veterans Day, Houston Indymedia, Chapter 49 of Iraq Veterans Against the War, Chapter 12 of Veterans for Peace, Rice for Peace and Military Families Speak Out cosponsored screenings of Winter Soldier: Iraq and Afghanistan and Deserter at Rice Cinema.

Following these films, Iraq Veterans and War Resisters in Houston and in Canada spoke to the audience about their military service in Iraq and Afghanistan and their reasons for becoming anti-war activists. Using Skype, we were able to facilitate a discussion with Ryan, of California and Dale of Mansfield Texas who are currently in Canada seeking asylum to avoid deployment to Iraq in this illegal war. While Canadian Parliament has passed legislation to allow conscientious objectors to stay in Canada, the Conservative Government of Stephen Harper has continued to deport US servicemen who are seeking asylum. Ryan spoke with Houston IMC Radio Before the Film Screening, take a listen.

Houston IVAW talked about their experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, how being in war has impacted their physical and mental health, the awful benefits provided by the Veterans Administration, and with the rest of the audience strategized about how we can rebuild an anti-war movement in Houston. Listen to the full audio of the panel of Radio Indymedia.

11/15 Houstonians Protest California's Proposition 8 and Demand Marriage Rights for all

from the open publishing newswire: Hundreds of Houstonians gathered in downtown starting at noon, as similar rallies and protests against proposition 8 and in favor of the rights of marriage for gays and lesbians took place all across the country and abroad. There were a number of speakers from the GLBT community, and the democratic party. The crowd was diverse in terms of age and gender, it was predominately white, thought there were many people of color. While you cant tell sexual orientation by looking at folks, it seemed to me that definitely the majority of the crowd was GLBTQ and there were many straight folks, most of us young, that also came out to support the struggle for civil rights. Speakers included Garnet Coleman, Jessica Farrar, Ray Hill (who was fantastic, as usual), people from faith communities, lawyers and others. People seemed happy to be there and eager to take action, It was not made clear what will happen next in Houston for folks who want to fight for GLBTQ rights.

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U.S. Soldiers Say 'Stop the War'

from the open publishing newswire: Members of Veterans for Peace, chapter #12 (Houston) marched in the Houston Veterans Day parade again this year on Nov. 11, joined by other peace activists. Responses from the crowd were overwhelmingly positive, with at least ten positive responses for every negative one. When onlookers saw the signs and banners, many of them broke into applause and shouted "Thank You" and similar slogans, while showing peace signs, waves, and thumbs up. Some onlookers reached out to shake the hands of the VFP group or give them high fives. A few onlookers uttered negative comments, but they were obviously in a minority. [full story and photos]

This Veterans Day, U.S. Soldiers Say 'Stop the War': On this day, Veteran's Day, we would like to express to the American public why we, veterans of the Global War on Terror, have chosen to refuse orders to reactivate into military service. We are direct witnesses to the horrors of this war, having experienced its atrocities at their source, and we have decided that we can no longer carry out these illegal and immoral policies.

We believe that veterans and active duty G.I.s are in a key position to stop illegal and unjust war, and we are inspired by the resistance of troops who stood against the war in Vietnam. One of the preeminent reasons for the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam was increasing dissent among the active duty troops stationed abroad and at home.

11/9 Border Wall Construction on hold in 3 Texas Towns

The most thorough story about the decision to put off construction of the border wall in Roma, Rio Grande City, and Los Ebanos was in the Rio Grande Guardian, but there was an interesting pair of quotes in the San Antonio Express-News story:

"Cuellar, who sits on a subcommittee on the House of Representatives' Committee of Homeland Security, said he was told the decision to defer segments in Starr and Hidalgo counties was made weeks ago, but not shared until Friday."

If politics had nothing to do with this, why did the Department of Homeland Security wait until after the election to announce a decision that was made weeks ago? Why didn't they inform Congress? Why didn't they inform the mayors? Why didn't they inform the landowners?

It looks like DHS knew that there was no way to build the border wall in these three sections without endangering the lives and property of Mexican citizens in the event of a flood, but they did not want to admit it until after the election so as not to damage the Republican party's reputation as being tough on immigration and border enforcement. Once again, they show that the wall is nothing more than a hollow symbol, a political prop that looks great behind the candidate in a campaign ad, but which has no impact on border crossings.

11/7 Lockdown on Polunsky Unit continues

from the open publishing newswire: When Texas death row inmate Richard Tabler was busted in his cell in October 2008 speaking to a news reporter on a cell phone, the whole state of Texas was ordered by Governor Perry to go on lockdown. A state wide prison search was ordered to search for more cell phones and contraband. Texas has 111 prison units, and all inmates were locked in their cells, without visitation, necessary hygiene, and nutritional food, being "shaked down" and facilities being searched.

Although some of the units are open for visitation, and getting back to normal, the death row unit Polunsky, in Livingston Texas is more "horrific" than usual. The Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement alleges the conditions these death row inmates are under is a violation of prisoners rights. They are working to end the lockdown and are asking abolitionists, prison and human rights activists, family and friends, and concerned people to proceed with action to help end the lockdown on the death row unit. At approximately 7 p.m. on Monday October 20, 2008 Governor Rick Perry made public his order for a system wide lock-down of all prisons in the state of Texas. The lock-down was ordered after a prisoner on Texas death row (the most active death machine in the industrialized world) made a reportedly threatening cell phone call to a state representative.

The consequences for those of us within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice have been quick and extreme. All movement has ceased. All work, school, rehab programs, recreation and family visits have come to a screeching halt. We are being subjected to excessive and humiliating searches. Our meager personal possessions are being broken or confiscated, our bed linen and clothes trampled under the boots of guards and returned unwashed. We are having to listen to listen as staff insults our families, as it is insinuated that they are the root of the problem.

It has been reported that multiple cell phones have been discovered on death row with upwards of 2,000 calls being made from those phones. There is no contact visitation for prisoners on death row. They have no physical contact with anyone who is not an employee of TDCJ. Like the vast majority of all contraband, in the Texas prison system, cell phones are brought in by the guards and sold to prisoners who are desperate to maintain contact with the outside world. It is not prisoners or their families smuggling these things in, but the prison staff; and yet, it is the prisoners and their families who are easy targets for retribution and increasingly repressive measures.

10/27 Friends of Brad Will Meet with Mexican Diplomat

Since Brad's death, Ulises Ruiz' government has been attempting to bring charges for Brad's killing against Brad's friends, APPO people, witnesses, and those who risked their lives trying to get Brad to a hospital. We join the National Commission on Human Rights, and Reporters Without Borders in finding these attempts to be an absurd and outrageous attempt to divert attention from the real killers. We demand an end to this smokescreen and the punishment of innocent people including Juan Manuel Martínez Moreno, Hugo Colmenares Leyva, and Octavio Perez Perez.

Our Demands on the 2nd Anniversary of Brad's Death: Arrest the Killers, Drop False Charges, Release Political Prisoners, Justice for Brad, Freedom for Oaxaca, No to Neo-Liberalism and Femicide, No to Plan Mexico!

Press Conferences also took place in San Francisco, Portland and New York on the 2nd Anniversary of Brad's Murder. Social Movements in Oaxaca have called for support of political prisoner defense

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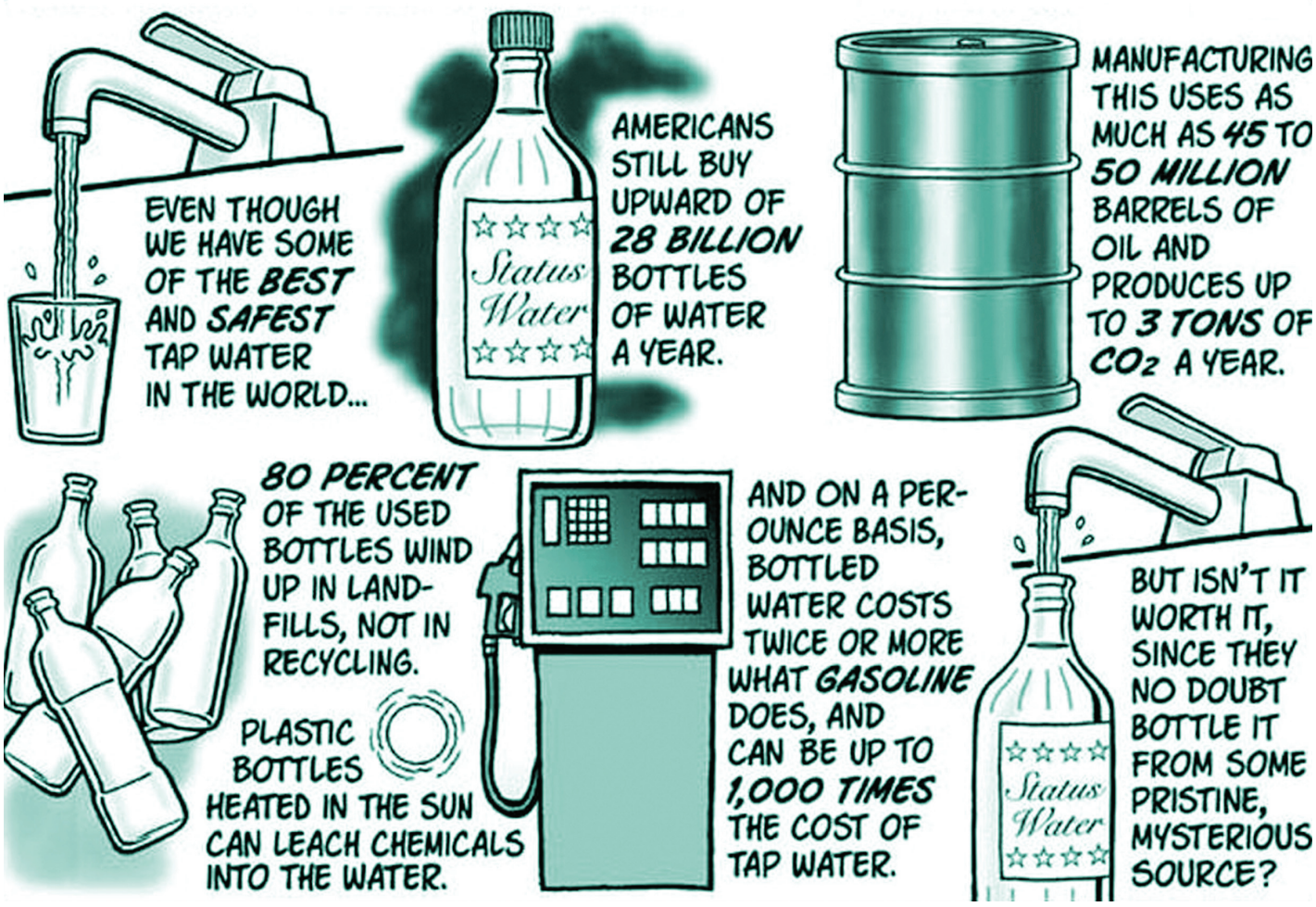
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THE BOTTLED WATER CON

BUYING THE MESSAGE ON THE BOTTLE

| WENDY WILLIAMS



WITH A SLEW OF BRANDS for basically the same product, image marketers have pushed the envelope — the bottle itself. My favorite absurdity: "Bling H2O," with the motto "More than a Pretty Taste." You can buy this water in a "Limited Edition" frosted-glass bottle encrusted with crystals for $40.

The surprising truth is that an estimated 25 to 40 percent of bottled water comes from public drinking reservoirs. Pepsico's Aquafina label shows high-peaked mountains, but the water is from municipal systems, including that of Ayer, Mass., a town next to a military base and a short drive from Boston. Coca-Cola's brand, Dasani, also uses municipal systems.

I remember a Dennis the Menace cartoon showing Dad, dazed and bleary-eyed at 3 a.m., holding out a glass of water. Dennis says, "That's bathroom water! I wanted kitchen water!"

It's all in the marketing.

At some restaurants, "water sommeliers" have pushed $75-a-bottle water for each course. I once took my husband for his birthday to a restaurant where the waiter asked if we would like our water bottled or — with curled lip — "native." That convinced us. We absolutely had to go local.

We still laugh about that.

For years, the joke's been on consumers. We spend all that money on water and plastic, and toss the plastic. It litters America from sea to bottle-bobbing sea.

"We estimate that fewer than 20 percent of those get recycled," says Betty McLaughlin, executive director of the Container Recycling Institute.

Elizabeth Royte, author of the highly readable "Bottlemania: How Water Went on Sale and Why We Bought It," says America uses about 17 million barrels of oil each year to make plastic water bottles.

"If you have good tap water, if bottled water is redundant, why wouldn't you go for the low-impact option?" she asks. "Bring your water over to the Stairmaster in a reusable bottle."

That message finally seems to be getting through. Today I see the beginnings of a bottled-water backlash. At my gym, almost no one wants to be seen swigging from throw-away plastic anymore.

Some restaurants have abandoned bottled water. New York City's Italian restaurant Del Posto, where it's easy to drop hundreds of dollars on dinner for two, has a 61-page wine list with many bottles priced over $1,000, but you can't buy bottled water at any price. Says one of the restaurant's owners: "To spend fossil fuel trucking water around the world is absurd."

At colleges nationwide, students take the "no bottled water" pledge. Realizing that spending taxpayer funds on bottled water is careless environmental stewardship, Illinois has canceled contracts for bottled water. The city governments of Fayetteville, Ark., and Albuquerque, N.M., won't buy the stuff. Chicago has a tax of 5 cents per bottle to cover disposal costs. Michigan may extend its 10-cent deposit on soft-drink bottles to bottled water.

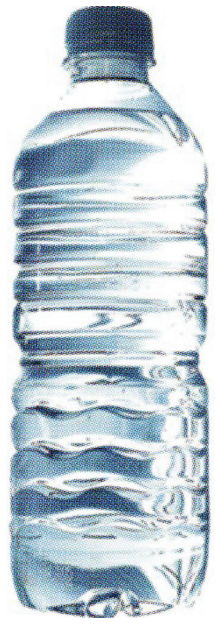
For a while, bottled water had a good thing going. In 2006, the industry worldwide grew 7 percent in dollar sales. Some forecasters suggested 40 percent growth over the next five years.

But recently, those phenomenal growth rates have slowed worldwide.

"Bottled water sales have gone flat for the first time in 30 years, at both Coke and Pepsi," says ad executive Erik Yaverbaum, founder of Tappening, which encourages people to drink tap water. "I think people are realizing they are wasting money buying water that's the same as what comes from their tap."

If I'm going to the gym now, I drink a glass of water before I go. If I'm going on a long car trip, I fill up a clean glass jug. My mom did that. And we never went thirsty.

FPH



Bottled Water Facts:

- **MOST WATER BOTTLES** are made from polyethylene terephthate (PET), a polymer derived from oil. Antimony is used in the production of PET and leaches into bottled water.
- **THE LONGER THE WATER** remains in its plastic bottle, the higher the antimony levels will be.
- **TAKEN IN SMALL DOSES,** antimony can cause dizziness and depression, in large doses it can cause nausea, vomiting, or death.
- **CONTAMINANTS SUCH AS** arsenic, mercury, and bromides have also been found to have leached into the water via scientific studies.
- **MASSIVE AMOUNTS** of fossil fuels are burned in the fabrication and transportation of bottled water, which contributes to global warming.
- **TAP WATER IS** 240-10,000 times cheaper than bottles water.
- **UP TO 40%** of bottled water in Canada and the U.S. originates from regular municipal tap water.
- **TAP WATER IS TESTED** much more stringently than bottled water, as a matter of fact it is filtered several times in one day before it reaches a tap.
- **USING AN ALUMINUM** water bottle to carry drinking water is much safer as the metal will not release toxins into the water.

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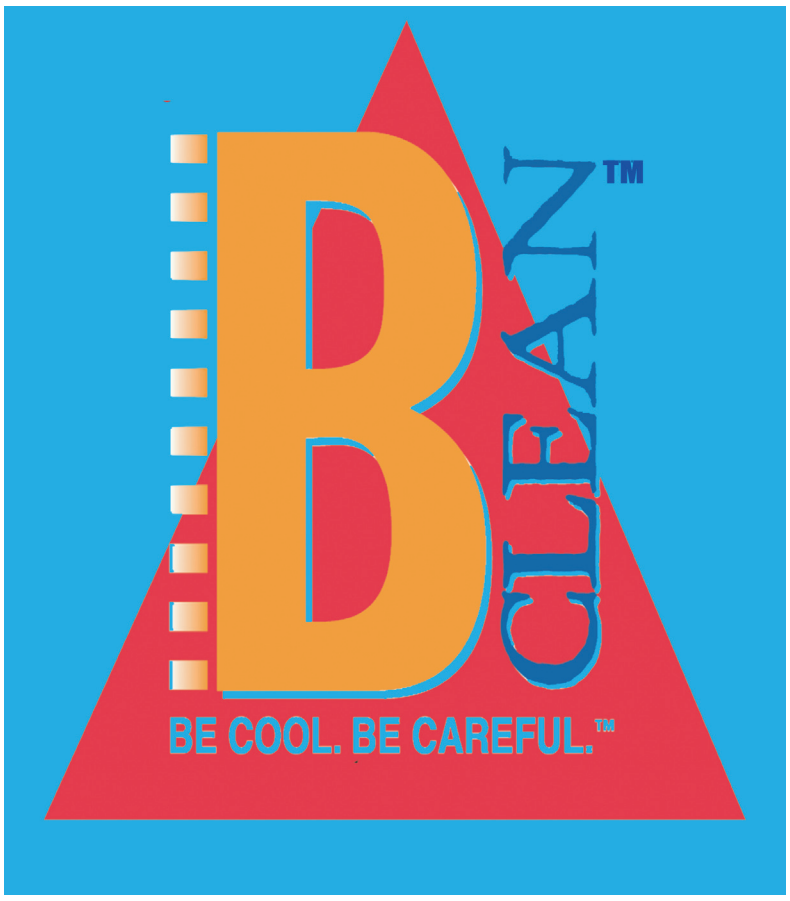
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