

November 2008
ISSUE 97

PRESIDENT WHO?

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NOISE AND SMOKE FESTIVAL

B L A C K I E

ARTCRAWL GUIDE

IRAQI ARTISTS IN EXILE

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this issue NOVEMBER



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editors

FEEL FREE TO TAKE US SERIOUSLY

THANKS HOUSTON!

Allahuakbaaaaar! That was such a clutch-tastical Block party last month! At one point, I really felt as if we opened Pandora's Box when I saw a man with a shopping cart with Christmas lights on it that was surrounded by about 40 people dancing and climbing the Metro stop. There were more people, more great shows, and more joyful/disturbing moments than any Block Party past. For one brief, brief millisecond... it felt like Mardi Gras. We always come up short on thanking people and I am gonna be a touch over zealous here as I want you readers to know the folks in the community that bring you such a great FREE music and arts fest. If you see any of them, I encourage you to extend your gratitude because they do this not for fiscal gain but just to build community and keep arts and music on the streets of Montrose.

Thanks to:
Mark and Shelby Martin (The Hidden Hand behind the Block Party)
George at GJG Productions
Paul Holzhauer...My Muse
Zero and Wassi
Kerry Melohnson
JD from Secret Saturday Shows
Shelby Hohl Shelby Hohl Shelby Hohl Shelby Hohl Shelby Hohl
Jeff Storm Jeff Storm Jeff Storm Jeff Storm
Tim Dorsey
Ramon Medina
Tyler Barber
Brittany Bly
Mills McCoin
Andrea Afra
Amy Simon
Benito
and the rest of the FPH staph
ADR, Dusti Rhodes, Matt Wettergreen, Marlo Blue, Jeremy from SCR, for helpin' spread that word
Mariana, Rudy, Eduardo, Wes Wallace, Delinda, and all the other property managers
CeePlus
Jacob Calle! Motherfucker!
Giant Battle Monster
Donny Hall for the AMAZING commercial
Alexandre Rosa
Frank Zwee
Copy.com
Bruce Wiggins
Ali Nahhas from Aladdin (Best hummos in town)

MOST IMPORTANTLY:
The more than 104 bands that came to play for free just because they love to play music. There has been this silly narrative in other publications, on message boards, and blogs about some ostensible lack of the presence of a music scene in Houston. However- Anyone at yesterday's Block Party could NEVER make such an assertion in the face of thousands of people getting down for so many bands. People are hungry! They just need art and music 'contextualized' in the right way.
Anyways, all the bands really WENT HARD and put on grrreat performances and if you see em' on the streets, thank them.

-Thanks
Omar



Cop Warmth Vs. B L A C K I E destroying gear outside La Strada

photo courtesy of breakfastontour.com

DEBRIS

You and I should meet.

| Buffalo Sean

YOU AND I SHOULD MEET. I'M WRITING THIS ON OCTOBER 20TH. YOU ARE READING THIS ON OR AROUND NOVEMBER 4TH. IF EVERY ANXIETY THAT IS TEARING ME UP TODAY CONTINUES UNABATED, PLEASE COME FIND ME AT BEN TAUB.

I'M ADDICTED TO THE NEWS. I can't sleep and I drink a lot of coffee. I feel like Tweak from South Park, really. No amount of calm and soothing tea and progress is able to squash the horrible aches and pains of my hysteria. Tell me what happens. No, no, don't, I'll find out myself. This is horrible. It's exciting.

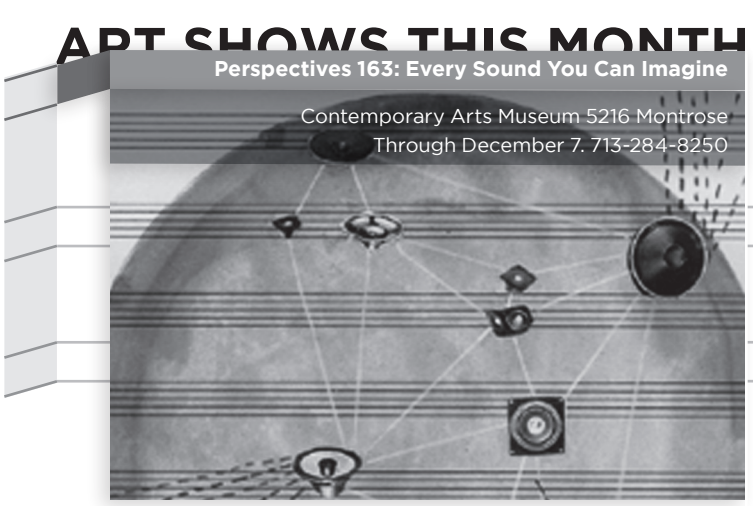
Politics, culture, time, space and entertainment aside, there are a good art shows that should be fun this November. Rice Gallery is letting Michael Salter create a giant styrofoam robot; the Museum of Printing History an exhibition by aboriginal Australian artists from Mua Island in the Torres Strait and The Station Museum has contemporary work by Iraqi artists in exile. As Houston grows by leaps and bounds there are art spaces opening everywhere. The two newest opened in October, **Optical Project** at 11th and Studewood in the Heights and **=SKYDIVE=** (the name comes with wings), just stop on the ninth floor and knock on 907 before you head up to Skybar (3400 Montrose Boulevard). Optical is showing Brit painter Maggie Hills through November, while the Dive= has an LA exhibit about sprawl through two weeks after the votes are counted (I'm freaked out about the context you reading this in right now) and the day before Thanksgiving A.J. Liberto of Supreme Court death metal band "Penultimate Justice" will curate the next show. But what about old things, you say? Well, The Museum of Fine Arts has a new Rembrandt. The Menil has 75 Max Ernsts for a festival of mid-afternoon acid tripping on the distorted memories and mesmerizing hallucinations of a mind going though international and personal trauma. You can always drive out to Katy and see all those terra-cotta guys if you need something older and crazier.

Well, it will be nice and cool in the afternoons in November, and it may be very lovely where you're at, I just don't know yet. I know I'll be out on November 22nd for the Artcrawl on the eastside of Downtown (artcrawlhouston.com). It'll be a nice, cold day and I can walk in and out of buildings, take a bike ride, sit on street corners and take pictures. Until then I'm not sure if I may melt my insides with bile or suffer a massive aneurysm. Well I hope the Phillies win. And a couple more good people too.

FPH

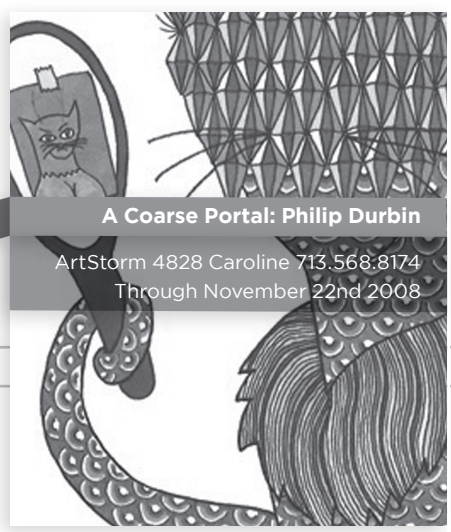


ART SHOWS THIS MONTH



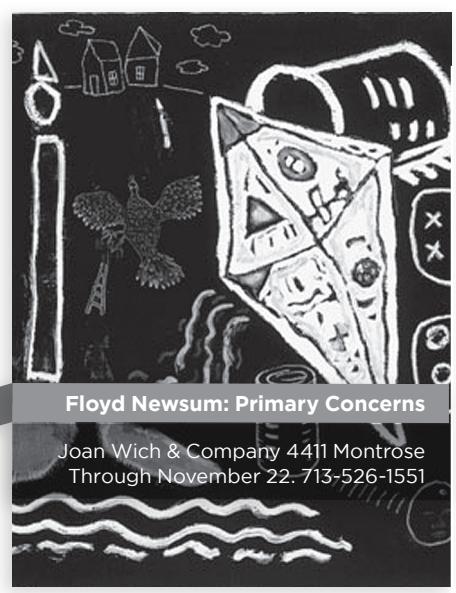
Perspectives 163: Every Sound You Can Imagine

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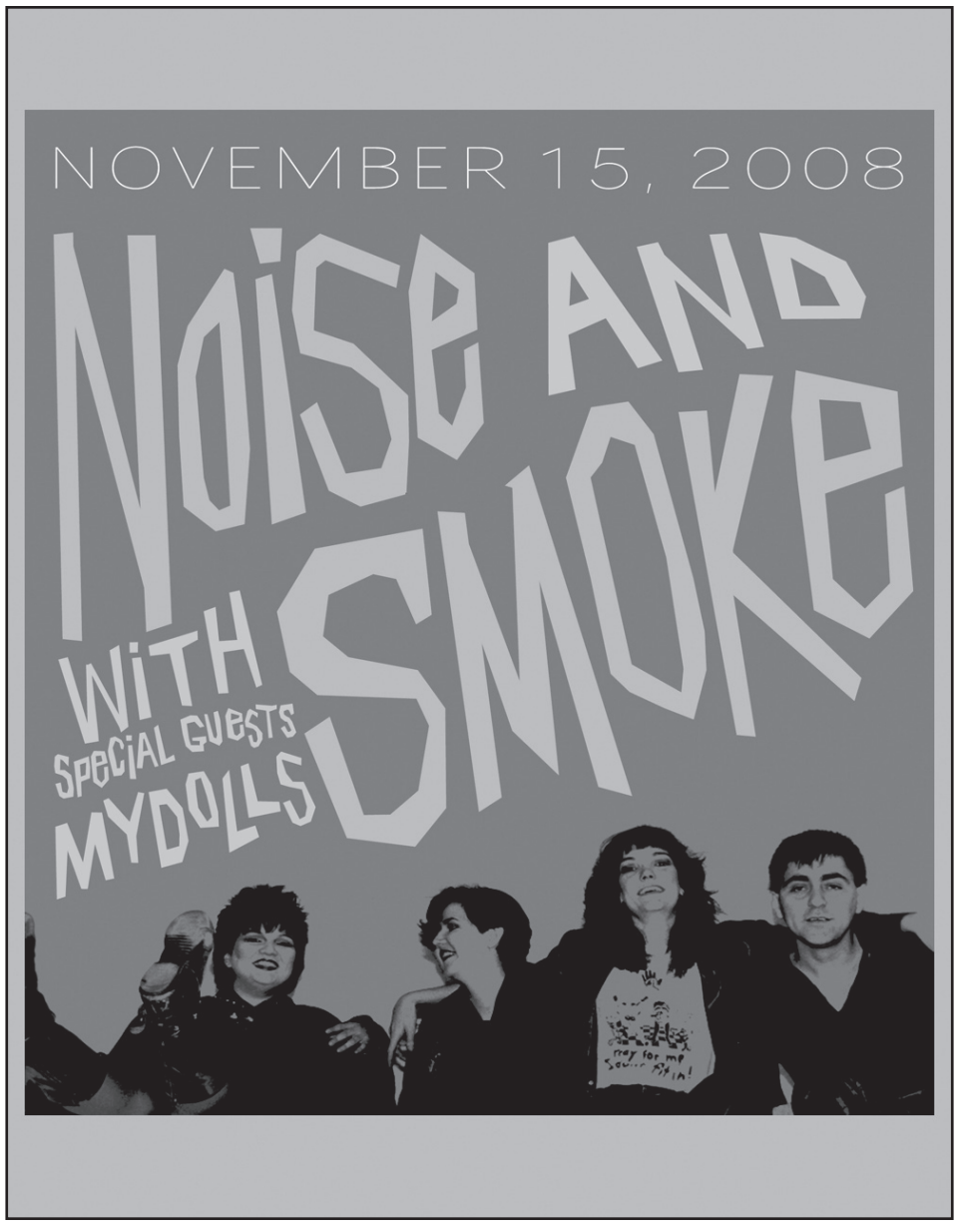


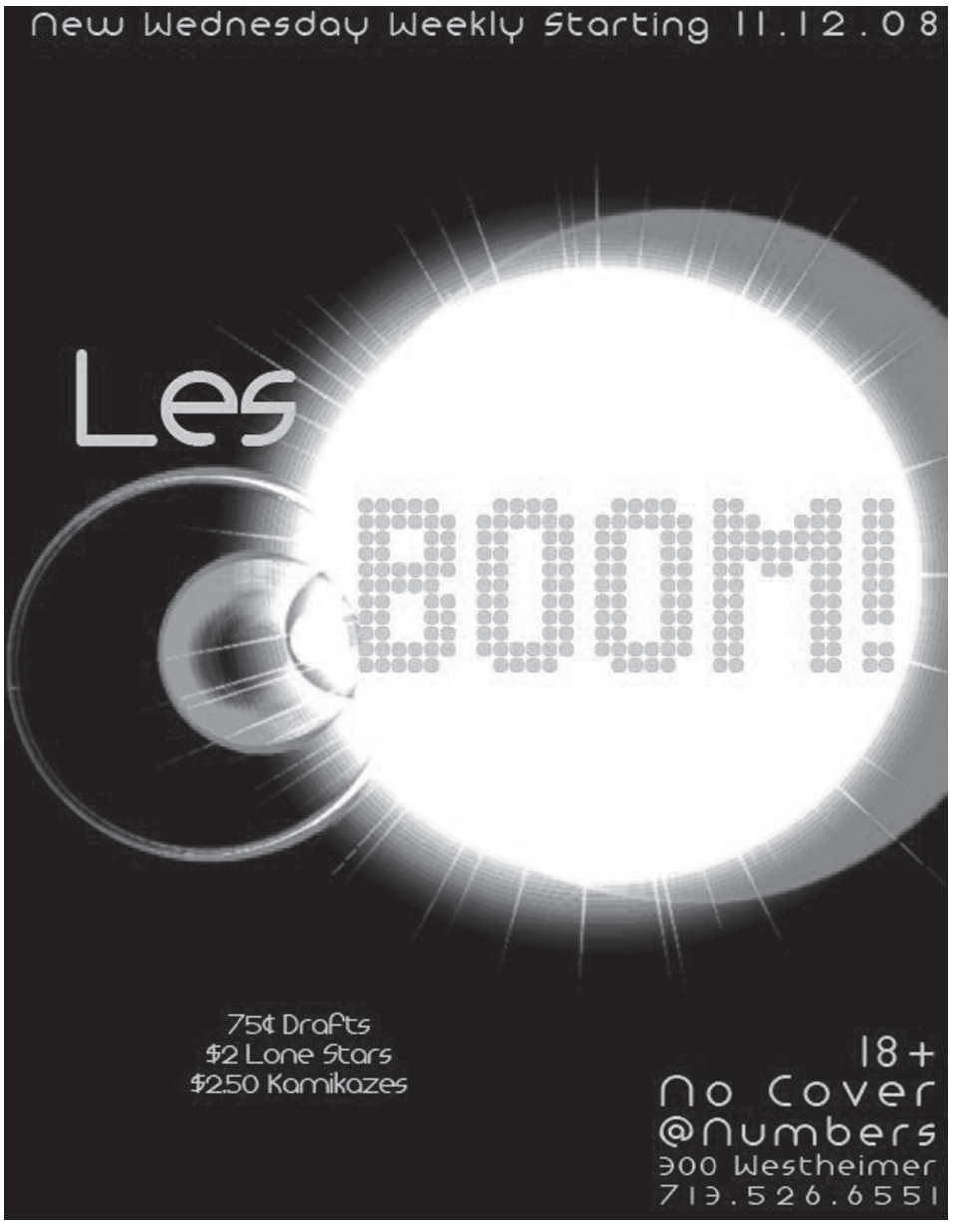
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GETTING WISDOM THE HARD WAY

| Michael Bergeron

A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE TRADES LAMENTED THE NUMBER OF ONCE POPULAR DIRECTORS FROM THE 70S AND 80S WHO ARE NO LONGER A FORCE IN FEATURE FILMS.

NAMES LIKE JOHN LANDIS, PAUL BRICKMAN, JOHN CARPENTER, AND LAWRENCE KASDAN no longer get the respect from the major studios they once had. The obvious choice is to reinvent oneself. That's how everyone described Sidney Lumet after he directed the hyperactive crime drama Before the Devil Knows You're Dead. Lumet's daughter Jenny wrote a script with an acerbic edge called Rachel Getting Married and Jonathan Demme thought it would be the perfect vehicle to return to form.

Demme has never been one to shy away from self-expression and indeed his passion for cinema finds him galloping from the documentary format (The Agronomist, recent films on Neil Young and Jimmy Carter), to studio remakes (The Truth About Charlie, The Manchurian Candidate. Rachel Getting Married shows Demme traveling the art house circuit. Make no mistake; despite a wacky trailer Rachel is not a comedy. Rachel's not so much a return to form as its Demme playing with the spine of indie filmmaking.

Rachel is a serious film with stunning performances and proof that Demme's a filmmaker that refuses, like so many of his contemporaries, to go silently into the night. While Rachel uses the structure of a wedding and an ensemble cast to tell its tale, Anne Hathaway has the biggest role as Kym, fresh out of rehab if only for the duration of the ceremony. Family relations, equally portrayed by Rosemarie Dewitt as Rachel, Bill Irwin (the Dad although divorced) and Debra Winger, feel properly lived through. If you look closely you'll see brief appearance by the likes of Roger Corman (in the movie about as long as he was in Silence of the Lambs) and Robert Castle as the Judge who performs the wedding. Castle is Demme's cousin, a priest in real life who was the subject of Cousin Bobby, Demme's 1992 film between Lambs and Philadelphia.

Rachel feels indie not because it confounds our expectations but due to the way Demme goes off on tangents. He's subtle when leaving clues as to the basis of the family dysfunction yet after the vows are exchanged concentrates on different people we haven't met yet as they dance in a sequence that goes on for nearly ten minutes. The film celebrates its diverse racial mix with its mixed wedding and even Irwin has hooked up with Anna Deavere Smith. The docudrama style works a kind of magic weaving music throughout by a couple of bands providing the wedding's theme but who also appear to be staying in the same house. Rachel presents unsympathetic characters we're not supposed to like but just identify with.

Kym carries a lot of personal baggage while Rachel, just short of her doctorates in psychology, can't help deigning to those around her. Dad seems resigned to indecisiveness while Mom (Winger) takes a swing at one of her daughters. The resentment isn't bubbling under so much as dripping off the walls.

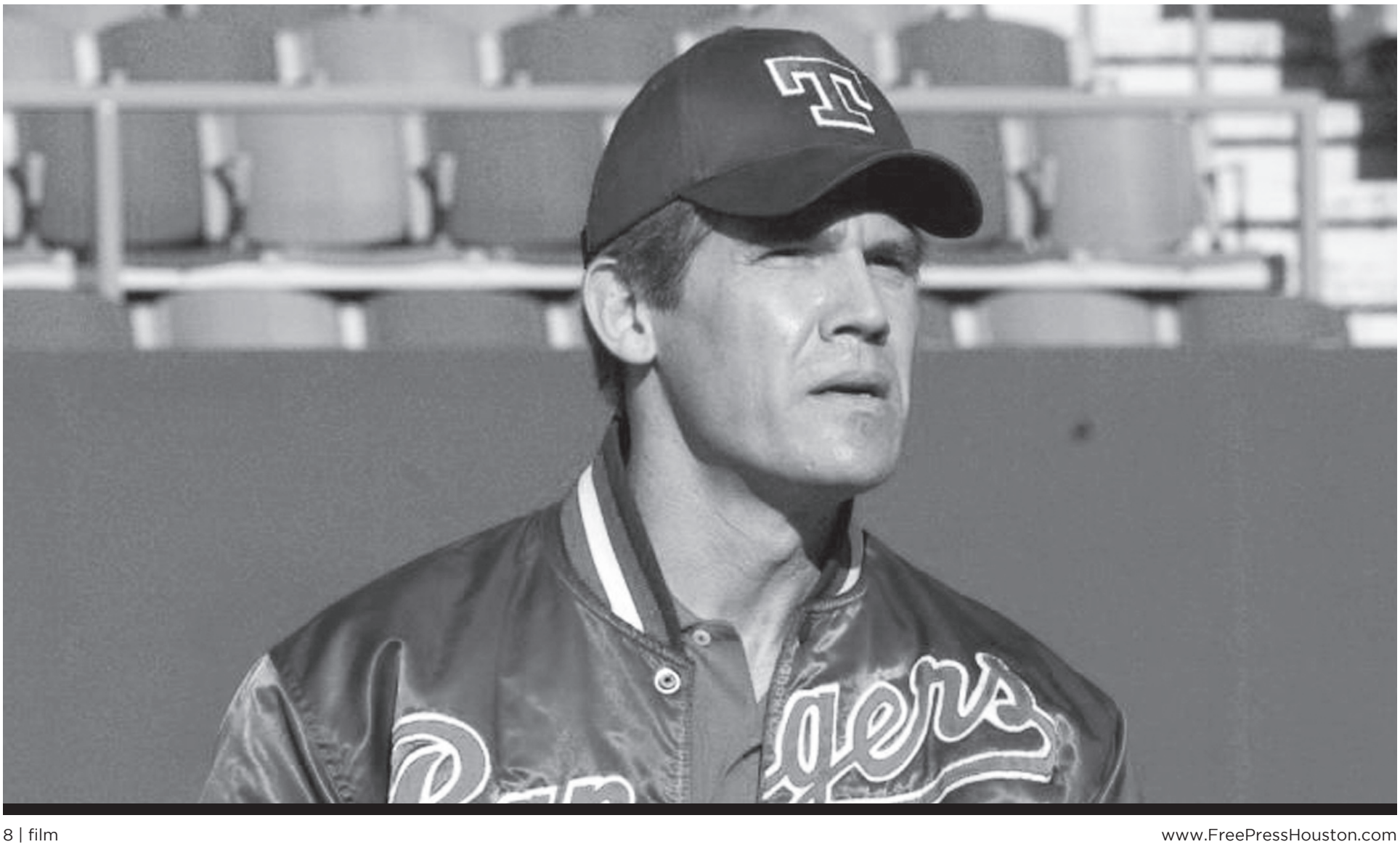
That doesn't mean people aren't glad to be there. They are and everyone adjusts around any lasting tragedy. Rachel Getting Married has the sense to make it real enough to turn some people off with its abrasive reunion.

Also On

- Another Jonathan Demme film, the Talking Heads rock concert intensive Stop Making Sense plays as a Midnight show at the River Oaks Three, November 21-22, the weekend before Thanksgiving.
- The Louis Malle documentary God's Country (1986, 55 minutes), an in-depth look at a small Minnesota town plays Thursday, November 13 (7 pm.) as part of the series Documentary and Authorship.
- On Saturday, November 15 (8 pm.) and Sunday, November 16 (3 pm.), The Aurora Picture presents Tapas: A Sampler of Cinema and Media from the Americas: A selection of experimental, narrative and non-fiction works from women directors and artists.

North by North W.

One sequence in Oliver Stone's newest biopic W. shows President George W. Bush's cabinet walking behind him at his Crawford ranch. The long shots of the group strolling distinctly reminded me of a similar shot of the cast walking along a country road in The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie. In the latter film by Luis Bunuel the shot is repeated throughout and the set-up implies that the cast are dead and are walking on a road in the afterlife.





In W. Stone uses a repeating motif of Bush (played with veracity by James Brolin) playing major league baseball in center field only there's nobody in the stands. This sporting image pops up sometimes with Bush in his Ranger's jersey (he once owned the Texas Rangers and the script notes he traded Sammy Sosa) and even once in a business suit. On one hand it recalls another sports movie that Stone directed with high-octane energy (Any Given Sunday) yet W. unwinds in a dramatic low-key manner that eschews any hyperkinetic motion. W. is a tough movie to swallow and that demands spectators versed in drama to appreciate its nuances.

On a side note, when I wrote for another paper and listed JFK as best film of that year the publisher's wife said I should be replaced because I was just a conspiracy freak. A week later when Roger Ebert listed JFK as film of the year she retracted her statement. There's strength in numbers baby. This isn't the Stone of Platoon or JFK or even U-Turn or NBK yet there's an unmistakable touch that defines the director. When we progress in one scene from the White House to the Bush ranch we hear the song "Robin Hood" in the background. With this campy theme song from a 50s children's show the moment elicits grins and recalls that scene in Monty Python and the Holy Grail where Eric Idle is being serenaded as "Brave Sir Robin."

The tone quickly switches to pathos as we sit in conferences with Bush and his cabinet discussing WMDs. Scenes like this and lunch scenes are played for heavy dramatic effect. Dick Cheney (Richard Dreyfuss) tries to explain to his boss the logic behind going to war over WMDs even if the probability is 1-percent. This is scary stuff and even the comic implication of Bush using his finger for a toothpick or the fact that he's eating a baloney sandwich (served from a silver platter) doesn't make you laugh out loud so much as send a chill down your psyche. Later after the war is in its disastrous stage and Bush tells everyone he's sworn off desert until there's a resolution to the conflict we see Daniel Rumsfeld (an unrepentant Scott Glenn) gobbles down the pecan pie. Thandie Newton plays her part of Condi Rice as a sycophant, Elizabeth Banks plays Laura Bush as a woman who stands by her man, and Jeffrey Wright gives Colin Powell a conscious, just witness his wrathful aside to Cheney in one scene. There are illuminating bits like when W. wakes up one morning with one too many hangovers and decides to kick his addiction to booze. As admirable as that is it results in his zealous religious ideals that include praying after Presidential staff meetings.

Stone has made a bio that stands alongside his other bios like Nixon and Alexander. If there's any downside it's the nominal scenes where characters react to events to propel the plot rather than add convincing character traits. It's complicated, researched and opinionated, and something like that will only appeal to a narrow audience. Fortunately they will not be narrow-minded.

DVD Slight Return

Johnny Cash Christmas Specials were a tradition of sorts in the later 70s that saw Cash coming into the holiday living room from 1976 though 1979 repeating the glory of his late 60s TV show. Last year saw the release of the 1976 and 1977 specials, and now the set becomes complete with the addition of The Johnny Cash Christmas Special 1978 and 1979, released on DVD last month, just in time for the holidays.

Frankly these last two years are the better of the set mainly because the guest comics include Steve Martin (he was so much funnier in the 70s than now) and Andy Kaufman.

1978's special guests include Kris Kristofferson and Rita Coolidge, and like Cash and June Carter they were a married couple that electrified audiences with their duets. The 1979 guest vary from Anne Murray to Tom T. Hall, but nothing comes even close to Kaufman when he channels Elvis. Here Kaufman wows the crowd with as good an imitation of the King as anybody ever did, doing one of E's early Sun recordings "That's When Your Heartaches Begin." Combine that with Johnny and June singing "If I Were A Carpenter" and you can see why this Cash special deserves to be a part of your permanent collection.

FPH





TIME, TIME, TIME, WHY DON'T YOU RELAX

| K.M.A



IT IS A COLLAPSE OF INTERESTS; too many to name. The world has crumbled before me, and yet it in its debris has appeared a family and a purpose. So, faithfully, I must follow that purpose into the apocalypse and smile as if this was always the plan. Amidst the charred scent of burned flesh and the symphonic screams in the distance I stand limping toward paradise, or so it is called. What is over that mountain? Perhaps there is a better land, perhaps a better world, or perhaps another collapse waiting for me to unwillingly kick the stick that supports its shoddy stand. Know not I said the maker of the pie. The commitments we make to please or appease the snarls of the wolves and the fairies in the trees. "Rescue me," he screamed only to be told "Save yourself!"

IN FRONT OF YOU

DEERHOOF w/ Experimental Dental School & Flying

11/6/08 | Numbers

Deerhoof in a lot of ways is a conundrum. They are a consistent band of weird tendencies, but tendencies nonetheless. While you know not really what to expect, you sort of know what to expect. As much as it is hard to pinpoint the band, they do have a "sound." It is a sound that they faithfully produce and reproduce. They toy with the structure, adding to and subtracting from, but still it is a sound. It has become more polished over the years but a scientist who once wore rags and now wears a suit is still a scientist. I'm all about science. Their live show is consistently great. Greg Saunier as a drummer is legacy and celebration and John Dieterich's guitar prowess is amazing. I don't know much about the newest guitarist Edward Rodriguez but from my experience with *Deerhoof* lineage, the leaves don't fall far from the leaf bearer. (There's a word for that).

PARTS AND LABOR

11/7/08 | Walter's On Washington

Parts And Labor are a far different creature than the band that I heard on their split with *Tyondai Braxton*. But hey, that was like 4 years ago. The idea of pop, or the idea of pop sensibility is truly dependent upon what one views as popular and sensible and in line with that definition, I believe that *Parts And Labor* have a pop sensibility. The blips and beeps and the mechanic guitars all seem to fall in line with the melodies of the songs. The shards of feedback and the kinetic drums are all the fireworks of emotion. I can feel the love.

DANIELSON

11/19/08 | Walter's On Washington

Danielson's music can be called many things although none would be aligned with bad adjectives. Unless, of course, we were talking about 'bad' in the sense of a righteous detective patrolling the mean streets not jiving with the turkeys and whatnots. Rock music is full of moments and *Danielson* performances are moments in the history of rock music. Do with that what you will.

FOR YOU

DEPARTMENT OF EAGLES

In Ear Park, (4AD)

Department Of Eagles is a name that evokes many images as does their second release *In Ear Park*. Comprised of Daniel Rossen and Fred Nicolaus, their music is the type that turns 5 minutes into an eternity. It is the trickling of water down a window in the rain into a portrait. It is music capable of being everything without attempting to do so. As Rossen is a member of *Grizzly Bear* (whose members join in for the fun) some of these songs are shades of those colors but they are something else entirely. Folksy, psychedelic, rhythm and blues, mildly baroque. I could throw around a lot of words, but none could truly describe the vibe. ***Teenagers*** is a Phil Spector- esque romp of space-jangle. ***Balmy Night*** is the thing you see right before your consciousness disintegrates. It moves from a white to a blue light. ***Around The Bay*** is the song that reveals the power of angels, mystic yet song.

ANTONY AND THE JOHNSONS

Another World, (Secretly Canadian)

Antony Hegarty is this generation's voice of a singer. This EP is rumored to be about his feelings of Alaska and the disappearance of nature and all that God as created that has been destroyed. The title track is sad enough that you can taste the salt of the tears and mucus in your mouth. ***Shake That Devil*** is chitlin-circuit soul and free jazz. ***Sing For Me*** ghosts my feelings and shivers my heart-strings.

I HAVE A DAUGHTER NOW...

FPH



Grupo Fantasma
11/7 | Continental Club



The Eastern Sea
11/29 | Walter's



Invincible Czars
11/14 | Rudyard's



Dropsonic
11/5 | Notsuoh

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Nov 7
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Nov 8
Pat Todd & the Rankoutsiders, Hickoids, Born Liars

Nov 13
The Lonely H

Nov 14
Invincible Czars

Nov 15
Two Star Symphony, listenlisten, Golden Arm Trio

Nov 18
Grown Up Story Time

Nov 20
Year Long Disaster

Nov 21
The Alice Rose

Nov 26
Born Liars, Guitars, Lazy Horse

Nov 28
Pura Pharma

Nov 29
MacAdams

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WED Nov. 5
DAVID DONDERO
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THU Nov. 6
CRO MAGS (jam)
Iron Age, Your Mistake, Roots of Exile, On My Side
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SAY WHEN
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MON Nov. 10
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LATCH KEY KIDS

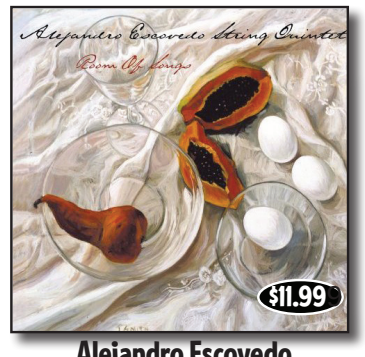
SAT Nov. 22
TORCHE
Black Cobra, Clouds
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FRI Nov. 28
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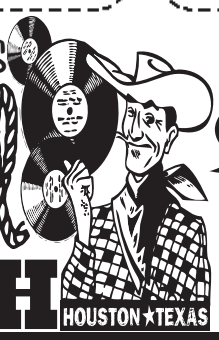
- The Hickoids w/ Stevie Tombstone - Sat. 11/08 @ 1:00pm
- Annuals - Sat. 11/08 @ 4:00pm
- Tom Gabel (of Against Me) - Mon. 11/10 @ 2:00pm
- Drew Smith's Lonely Choir - Sat. 11/15 @ 1:30pm
- Johnny Falstaff - Sat. 11/15 @ 4:00pm
- Ruby James - Sat. 11/22 @ 1:00pm
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SUGAR SHACK

| Ramon Medina | Photography by Rosa Guerrero

OVER THREE SEPARATE DECADES, SUGAR SHACK SEEMED TO BE A NAME YOU COULDN'T ESCAPE. FROM ITS PRIMORDIAL BEGINNINGS IN THE SEMINAL TEXAS-PARTY-PUNK OF THE PARTY OWLS, TO ITS EARLY LONG-HAIR-PUNK / GRUNGE YEARS, AND ON THROUGH THE GARAGE ROCK YEARS, THE BAND HAS BEEN ONE OF HOUSTON'S BEST EXPORTS.

WHILE THE LIST OF DRUMMERS and bassist could likely fill this entire page, the 10th* and final line-up of the band (Andy Wright - guitar, Mark Lochridge - vocals, John Gibson - bass, Kyle G. Otis – guitar, and Stefanie Paige Friedman – drums) was no less impressive and passionate as any other. That final line-up is reuniting this month and their reasons for doing so are hardly the standard litany of money, recaptured glory, or other self-serving reasons you see so many times with aging Rock musicians but, instead, show a group of friends with a clear idea of what is truly important.

At Sugar Shack's rehearsal space, Stephanie explains how the reunion came about, "Our son does surf contests in Galveston and we found out through a blog last summer that one of the kids (Johnny Romano) had Leukemia – a nine-year-old kid. His cancer had gone into remission but then relapsed and then he got an infection. As parents, we'd look at our son and immediately want to help. We can all relate to this. Johnny just had a baby. We all surf, skate, and have kids. I gave blood but what they needed was money. So we thought what can we do? We thought this would be a good reason to get back together and it just snowballed from there. Unfortunately, Johnny passed away on September 23rd. Then Ike hit Galveston and his family and friends' homes were demolished. All these events just sunk these people into a depression and we said 'Let's do this to give a break to the misery around these people who are surrounded by grief and tragedy.' And these people are excited to have something to celebrate. So we're having a silent auction, surf artists from as far away as Hawaii, a surf car show…it's a big weekend. Before this, we'd never met them but we just felt we'd better give back in one way or another."

Kyle adds, "It's better to get together for someone else; it's cooler that way."

Andy points out another reason why this isn't that hard a decision, "See, Sugar Shack never officially broke-up."

"Yeah," says Kyle, "we were just taking a break. Our last show was January 2004 and that was a good show so we can't muck-up this show."

Johnny scratches his head and says, "I thought we had a bad show and that's why we broke up."

"No," insists Kyle, "it was a good show! Remember that girl that kept picking up men and throwing them onto the stage?" and suddenly the band trails off in a string of amusing details about that show. After a while, Kyle returns to his point that "We actually did plan on having shows after but our schedules never worked out."

Stephanie jokes, "Getting Andy to do this was like pulling teeth."

"I still don't want to do it!" laughs Andy. "Last week, Mark arrived late and Johnny had to leave early - basically NOTHING has changed."

But this is a band that has been through a lot of changes in everything in personnel and music styles over its lifetime, so I ask them about everything from their forming on the ashes of the Party Owls to the early heavy sound to their stylistic shift to garage.

Andy takes the first question, "When Robbie [original Party Owls singer] left, we realized that Mark could actually sing, so we changed the name of the band and kept going."

Kyle continues, "Early pre-grunge Sugar Shack was kind of "long-hair-punk" style music, like Tales of Terror. The guitars in Sugar Shack were tuned down because of the sax that the Party Owls had used which added to the perceived 'heaviness' of the band."

"Then," says Andy, "Grunge came about and we rode that wave but we still liked and played 60's punk style music, having been inspired by Poison 13 and other similar bands of the time.

Kyle and Andy explain that "Ultimately, we felt it was more fun to play higher energy garage rock type material. Charmer [1992] has both heavy tunes and more garage Rock tunes on it. Shortly after that album, we dropped most of the heavy tunes.

Mark adds, "Grunge got so commercial and hair metalish we just wanted to distance ourselves."

Stephanie makes it clear that this wasn't strategic; "It definitely wasn't a career move. It seemed to alienate most of our fans and it took quite awhile to build-up a new following. It was just what we were into at the time and had the most fun playing."

Given that the band then went on to tour nationally and see a spate of releases with Estrus, I ask them about how they see their success and how that success measures up with what's expected of bands these days.

Andy explains the big cultural shift in terms of how some people viewed a band's success, "In our time Punk bands weren't being signed to majors and now you're gauged on having a major deal."

"I always thought we were very successful." says Stephanie.

"We were spoiled." says Kyle. "We didn't do anything to promote our shows and still people would show up."

"Every tour was successful." boasts Andy. "We'd play for 500 in Chicago on a Sunday. But we never made the big push and quit our jobs. We'd tour while on vacation and afterwards we'd head back to work. We were too old to care but we were old when we started."

That's not to say that major labels weren't listening. Andy remembers one call Sugar Shack received from a major label, "I came home and there was this message from some guy from Geffen…on my machine! I didn't call back…we came from a background where that wasn't done. Any advance they could have offered was likely less than our combined salaries. I think we were realistic about how popular our kind of music could be and that we weren't going to get on MTV."

Stephanie, for one, wasn't one to abide by the restrictions of a major label deal. "I was in King Sound Quartet and there was this list of restrictions [a major label] gave us like I couldn't play in other bands but I was having too much fun so we didn't do it."

Andy shakes his head at all this discussion and adds, "All the talk about major labels…the thing is we were totally stoked with all the labels that did put out our records because those were the labels putting out the records of the bands we were into."

Before I leave them to their rehearsal I ask them about playing music now compared to when they were young and Stephanie replies, "Honestly, I don't have that anger – that young angst anymore. I don't spit loogs anymore. But you see that all the time; older people putting on 'a show'. We've all seen that. We're not like that. We're just good friends whose Rock came from a love of the music."

FPH

*You can see Sugar Shack at the Johnny Romano Tribute on November 9th with Tiesco Del Ray, The Neptones, Luxurious Panthers, and Uncle Charlie at the Continental Club***

**Gunnen Rocks: http://www.grunnenrocks.nl/bands/s/sugarshack.htm*

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Dec. 3 - Sunny Brook

FRIDAYS
Nov. 7 - Rick Marcel
Nov. 14 - Mambo Jazz Kings
Nov. 21 - Alter Ego
Nov. 28 - Funksion

SATURDAYS
Nov. 1 - Abbey Rode (Beatles Tribute) and Already Gone (Eagles Tribute)
Nov. 8 - Frush *(Rush Tribute)*
Nov. 15 - Vince King (Elvis Tribute
Nov. 22 - Black Dog *(Led Zeppelin Tribute)*
Nov. 29 - Fab 5 (Beatles & 60s Tribute Band)

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NOISE AND SMOKE FESTIVAL 2008

✍ | Brigitte B. Zabak 📷 | Tracy Hart

ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO ENSURE THAT YOU GET AN OPPORTUNITY TO SEE BANDS YOU THINK KICK ASS IS SIMPLY TO ORGANIZE THOSE SHOWS YOURSELF.

CONCEPTUALIZING AND EXECUTING A GIG with just a few bands on the bill can be overwhelming, so just imagine how daunting it must be to coordinate shows that feel larger than life. Despite all the hard work that goes into making one of these bad boys a success, there are a handful of local music appreciators that are obsessively dedicated to the bands they love – and they want you to share in their admiration. With everything from the Secret Saturday Shows to the Hootenanny – Houston has mastered the fine art of bringing a bunch of bands together to play in a venue with an easily accessible bar. These shows allow bands the creative freedom to rock out in whatever fashion they so choose and it gives fans a centralized location to enjoy a lot of different music at a cost that won't break the bank for the little extras like beer and tacos.

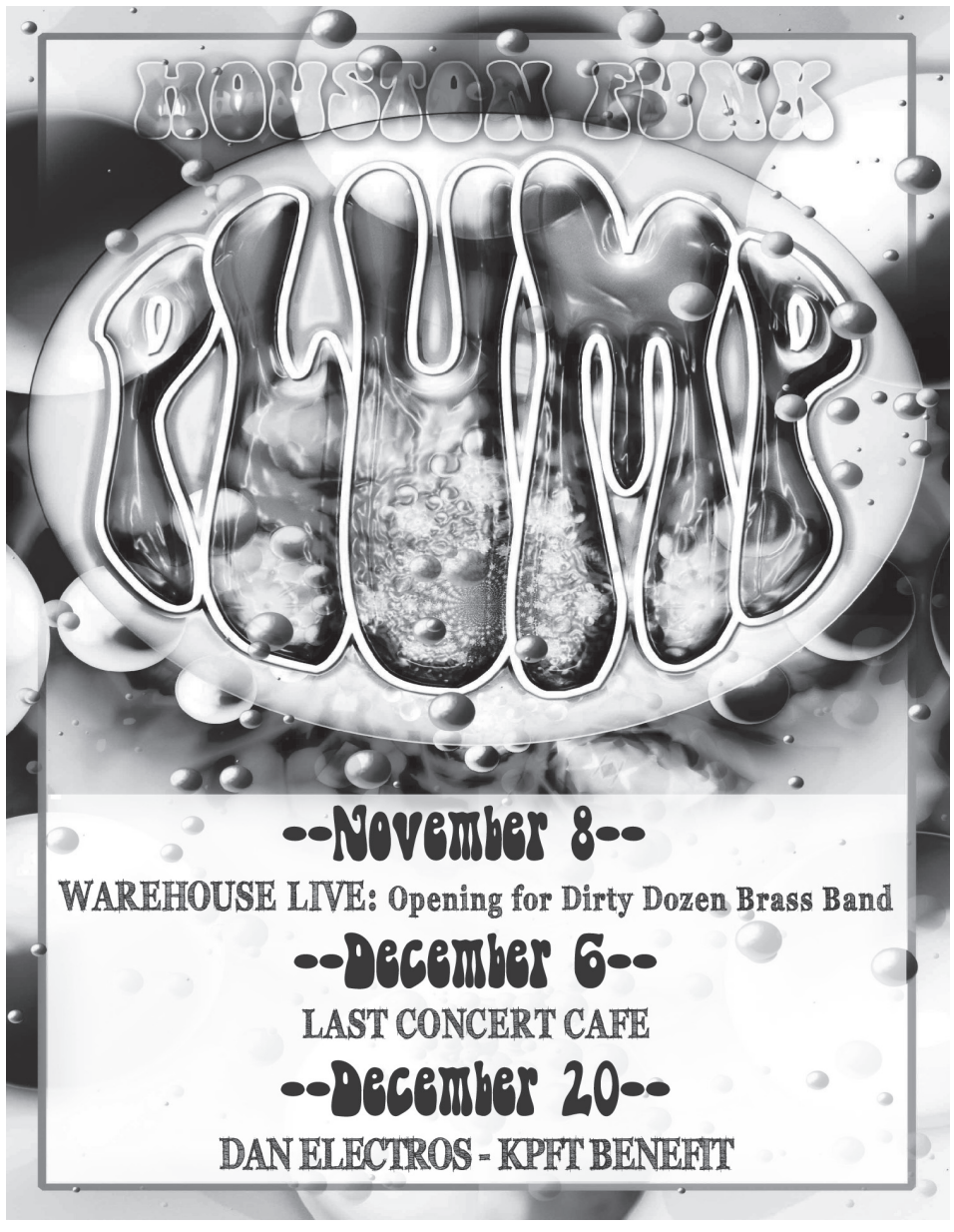
For one such local collaboration, the festival concept is all about showcasing the best and the brightest from Houston and the surrounding areas. N&S Festival organizers Liz Molina and Joey O' Mahoney concocted the idea for the festival back in 2007 as a way to give a musical platform to their favorite local bands. Although they both live outside of Houston now, the duo had planned on coming back to town once a year to keep the festival goodness going. O'Mahoney was unable to get involved in the 2008 preparations so Molina brought on two Houston-based female powerhouses within the local music scene, Rosa Guerrero and Anna Garza, to ensure they put on another groundbreaking and fun event.

The Noise and Smoke Festival debuted last year as a two-day festival that took place downtown at both Notsuoh and Axiom. The lineup included some of the most innovative and talented musicians to come out of Houston – even if said musicians don't technically live in Houston anymore. Ume, Indian Jewelry, Jana Hunter, Something Fierce and Bring Back the Guns were just some of the bands to participate in last year's event. And even though it doesn't seem like future lineups could top that first year, this year's organizers will gladly prove you wrong.

The 2008 Noise and Smoke Festival is a little different than last year's. It will only be a one day event and will take place back and forth between Notsuoh and Dean's downtown. The festivities kick off at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 15th and won't stop until the last band has you writhing on the floor with ears ringing and sweat dripping from places you didn't know sweat could form. This year's lineup includes everything from punk to hip-hop with a little experimental noise fusion thrown in for good measure. Line-up from last to first includes: The Born Liars, The Homopolice, Balaclavas, Mydolls, El Desmadre, Vincent Trails, Patsy, The Takes, Blackie vs. Copwarmth and Teenage Kicks.

Tickets will be available at the door the day of the event for a mere $8 bucks. If you are worried about the fun times selling out before you can get inside to join in on the madness, don't fret. There are 50 tickets waiting to be purchased over at Sound Exchange up until the day of the show. All ages are welcome – just remember to behave yourselves….or not.

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B L A C K I E
Q&A

| Omar Afra | S. Theriot





B L A C K I E
WILDERNESS OF NORTH AMERICA

B L A C K I E HAS TAKEN TO THE LOCAL MUSIC SCENE WITH A VENGEANCE IN RECENT MONTHS.

HIS SELF-RELEASE OF WILDERNESS OF NORTH AMERICA has been getting quite a bit of attention, and for good reason. We had the chance to ask him a few questions and his responses were as enigmatic as his music and character. He, thus far, is the only person I have interviewed that has responded in 'flow'. (See #5) Ultimately, copy-editing the responses was doomed to be an exercise in futility. So, here is the raw and real B L A C K I E.

1. Tell a little bit about the evolution of your sound and what gear did you begin with?
I started with two tape decks in 9th grade. I went to college at 16, with accolades. BLACKIE failed out, now he gotta get paid=night shift at Whataburger flipping burgers and serving lemonade. I started using computers now and somehow. Everything I was making had Li'l Jon sounding like Wayne Brady.

2. Your album title is 'Wilderness of North America' and I feel like I am the only one who gets it. This is an obvious reference to Elijah Muhummad's groundbreaking work. I have a similar distaste for white people as him. Particularly hipsters. How do you feel about these people latching on to your work?
AHA! NAW! I LOVE ALL PEOPLE! The title is an inside joke. Anyone who wants to latch on, needs to latch on and grasp the humour. But understand, its funny but I. AM. NOT. JOKING. HaHa, I do not know any hipsters though? Are they really latching on my ish??? That is dope! GOTTA LAUGH TO KEEP FROM CRYING

3. Who are some of your favorite local Houston musicians?
Pink Cloud/FUTURE BLONDES got this track "Joi 2" that is my SHIT!

Close personal alliances = Giant Princess, Buxton, Cop Warmth, S.O.S., FatTony+SmashBro. Insect Warfare, DJ CEEPLUS, and By The End Of Tonight [and all their side projects].

4. Tell us about the massive rig you drag to shows that is unprecedented in hip-hop: Marshall stack, 2 8x10 Ampeg cabs, 2 subs…elaborate please.
FIVE KILO-WATTS MY MAN. Four PA cabs, two 8x10s. BEATING DOWN YOUR BLOCK KNOCKING PICTURES OFF YOUR WALL. I had a dream I was riding a wave of sound and so I decided to assemble this to live my dream.

5. Your 'versus' performances with Cop warmth have become legendary. How did this start?
Lemme explain: Call us "THE ALSACE LORRAINE". I would play with a live drummer and played at Alvin Bowling Alley one night. Hol' up dog, that shit was a bummer. I met Warmth comma Cop and we got it popping through mutual hoes, literally. Playing mutual shows, physically/ ill with our flows/ my drummer bailed out, I said, "You already know."/ There ain't no stopping/ It's BLACKIE all caps and./ Cop Warmth got his back and./we ready to smash and crash that/ if them shots is warranted black.

6. What is next for B L A C K I E?
Split 7" w/ Giant Princess on The Paper Stamp Record Company.

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B L A C K I E performs November 15th at the Noise and Smoke Festival at Notsuoh

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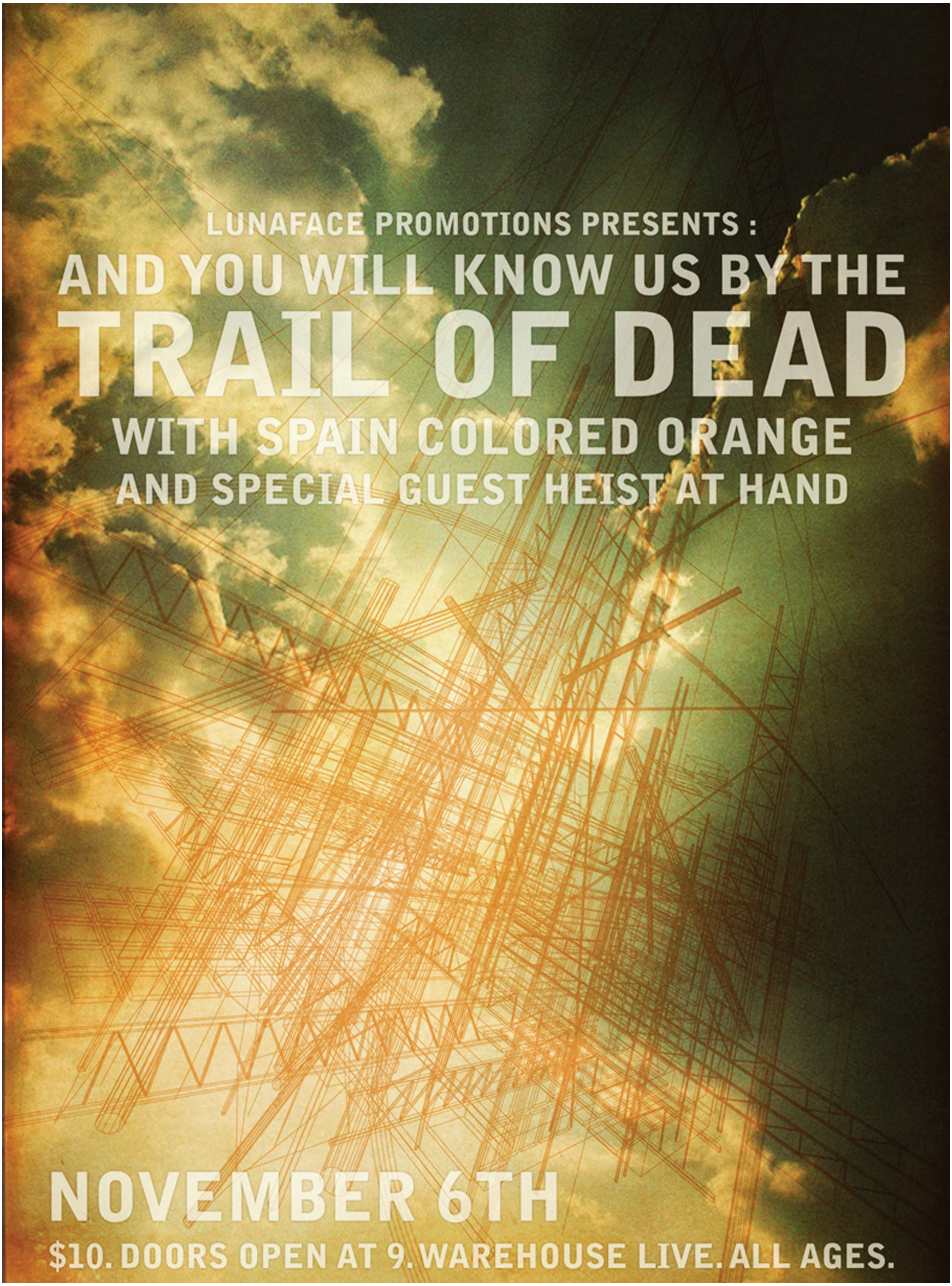
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A LIGHT IN A DARK ROOM

MAYOR OF MONTROSE REPEALS HOUSTON'S CITY-WIDE BIKE ORDINANCE

| Mills-McCoin | Lorie Lee Leopard



"In a nation ruled by swine, all pigs are upwardly mobile—and the rest of us are fucked until we can put our acts together: not necessarily to win, but mainly to keep from losing completely. We owe that to ourselves and our crippled self-image as something better than a nation of panicked sheep." - *The Great Shark Hunt* 1979

WITH OUR NATION IN THE GRIPS OF ECONOMIC DOWNTURN AND OUR CITY RECENTLY RAVAGED BY A HURRICANE, THERE'S ONE MAN THAT STANDS ABOVE IT ALL AND SERVES AS A BEACON IN THE NIGHT- CHRIS HUTTO, THE MAYOR OF MONTROSE. HE'S A HUMBLE MAN WITH THE WISDOM AND GUMPTION TO MAKE CHANGE.

MANY OF YOU take pleasure in riding your bicycles around our lovely town; but most of you do so unaware of a rather ridiculous city ordinance mandating that you register your bicycle with the fire department. The price of such registration is one lowly dollar; and has been since 1968.

As I understand it, you bring your bike to the fire department and fill out the registration form. After that, the form and the dollar are stapled together. What happens after that... well I'm not sure. But I do know that whatever it is that happens is a complete waste of taxpayer time and money.

There are several theories behind the ordinance. In theory, registration aids in the recovery of stolen bicycles. Well, that would make sense if it weren't so very very easy to steal a bike and then go register it with the fire department as though it were yours.

Thieving Bastard: Hi, I'd like to register this bike.

Fireman: Is it yours?

Thieving Bastard: Yes.

Fireman: Okay.

In theory, bike registration deters traffic violations. Nope. Not true at all because bike registration does not make you any smarter or better at cycling. This is, after all, a bike permit we're discussing here; not an M-1 Abrams Tank permit.

Finally, again "in theory", bike registration helps citizens report reckless cycling. Sure, if you're a bitter person with 20/20 vision and capable of memorizing the license number as it "recklessly" passes you by.

Now that we've established the fact that 40 years ago some people had a stupid idea on a hot day, let's get to the heroics of one Chris Hutto. He may not be as hot as Sarah Palin, but at least he knows what he's doing.

Some local bicycle gang members approached Mayor Hutto with knowledge of this red tape and asked him if he might know how to cut it to pieces. Inspired by several beers and the opportunity to fulfill civic duty, Mayor Hutto signed up to be heard at the following City Council public hearing (always on Tuesdays).



Now, Mayor Hutto is no slouch. In preparation for his coup d'état of this crap city ordinance, Hutto notified the Police Department (HPD), Fire Department (HFD) and the Administration and Regulatory Affairs Department (ARA); and explained to them that he was going to attempt to have this law destroyed. He even went as far as to ask for their help in the matter. And they did.

On the day that Mayor Hutto was to appear before the City Council, all three departments sent a representative to stand behind him in support. Not only that, but the ARA sent Hutto a summary of the Bicycle Permit, claiming it "to be outdated, not cost efficient, impossible to enforce, and no longer necessary." The ARA also found that the City of Houston issues about 10 bicycle permits per month. Time for ***A Quick Math Lesson To Remind The Public During An Economic Downturn.***

If ten people per month register their bikes for the price of one dollar for forty years, how much money have you taken in? 10 x 12 x $1 x 40 = $4,800

In forty years, the City of Houston has (theoretically) generated only $4,800 of revenue through this ordinance. I've seen some bikes on sale for $4,800. It's not farfetched to assume that the printing and distributing costs of the registration materials are more than $4,800 PER YEAR.

So that's why Christopher Hutto, the Mayor of Montrose, backed by his three-headed Department dragon, yelled with a bellowing, God-like voice, "Mayor White, TEAR DOWN THAT BICYCLE ORDINANCE!"

To which, Mayor Bill White said, "What?" And that's when he did it. Mayor Hutto presented his case and it was agreed that a vote would be cast.

My fellow Houstonians, you may rest well tonight knowing that there is a man out there (typically found at Catbirds) that is looking out for all of us. He doesn't ask for money. He finds no need for heralding; and humbly refuses the praise he deserves. This man is a true statesman. Mayor Hutto heard the call of the oppressed and jumped at the opportunity to remedy wrong.

Are you inspired? Well damn it, I AM! Mayor Hutto, in his own actions, has outlined for us a strategy for change. Identify the problem, sign up to be heard, let the appropriate people know that you're coming and then yell!

This is a story about a man who pisses on complacency. He didn't wait for some questionably elected official to act on the people's behalf. Instead, Hutto did it himself.

This is a story about a man that does not complain about the process. He makes the process his bitch. Hutto recognized that the process is there to be used. So he used it.

This is a story about George Washington, about Martin Luther King, about Stephen F. Austin.

This is a story about YOU and who you are supposed to be when it comes to civic duty: passionate, unafraid and pro-active.

If you think that bike registration is the only ordinance that costs the city more money than it makes, then you aren't looking close enough. Silly, little impediments like this are all over the place and it's our responsibility to purge them from our system.

The Bike Permit Law has been rescinded and you have one man (speaking for many) to thank for this. His name is Chris Hutto, the Mayor of Montrose. For God's sake and the sake of our city, go to City Hall (again, Catbirds on Westheimer) and greet this man with a cold beer and a handshake. Cheers.

Before I go, I'd like to quote the very last paragraph of Carolyn Feibl's article in the Houston Chronicle concerning the Bike Law. While I agree with everything that is stated in the article, I found the final paragraph to be.... socio-economically disturbing. It reads:

"Please. It's not a car," the Tanglewood resident said. "If people haven't gotten a chain on it, or that bar, then they deserve to get it stolen."

If this guy "accidentally" leaves his Mercedes Benz unlocked in the circle driveway of his huge house in Tanglewood, then by his logic his car "deserves" to be stolen. This guy is a scumbag and probably voted for McCain because he's old... and white.

FPH





IKE UPDATE

FEMA's Ike response still developing

| Matt Robinson | Anthony Chapman



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A POORLY HANDLED EVACUATION,

chaotic distribution of commodities such as food, water, and ice to stricken communities, and a housing program that became a disaster in and of itself gave FEMA a black eye three years ago, and caused millions of Americans to doubt the agency's ability to carry out its critical disaster response mission.

Over the last few weeks, FEMA's response to Ike has shown mixed results. As far as the distribution of food and supplies in Texas, the agency is still perfecting its strategies. FEMA's Chief Operating Officer, Admiral Harvey Johnson, Jr., acknowledged last month in testimony before the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure that, despite efforts to pre-position commodities in staging areas, the distribution of supplies was problematic. Flooded roads and hazardous conditions kept goods from being delivered to some areas, and the daily provisioning of "points of distribution," or PODs, was uneven.

"It didn't work very well," Johnson conceded to congressional representatives at the September 23 hearing. Glitches in the supply chain slowed the delivery of aid, and in Houston, "the plan got put together too late," he admitted, generating confusion and frustration among storm survivors. It took two days to straighten out the snafus there, but by the third day, distribution was going more smoothly. "It eventually worked itself out," Johnson noted.

Local officials echo these problems. In Texas, Orange County Judge Carl Thibodeaux, acknowledges that the agency has helped, but he lays credit for the successes of the evacuation, search and rescue efforts, and early distribution of supplies on local agencies, including the Orange County Department of Emergency Management, and volunteers from storm-affected communities themselves. Orange County lost not one citizen directly to the storm, Judge Thibodeaux says, although three people died in the aftermath. Search and rescue teams deployed at daybreak the day Ike roared ashore, composed of local emergency response and law enforcement personnel. The Judge says that teams rescued around 300 people from rooftops and flooded houses in the county.

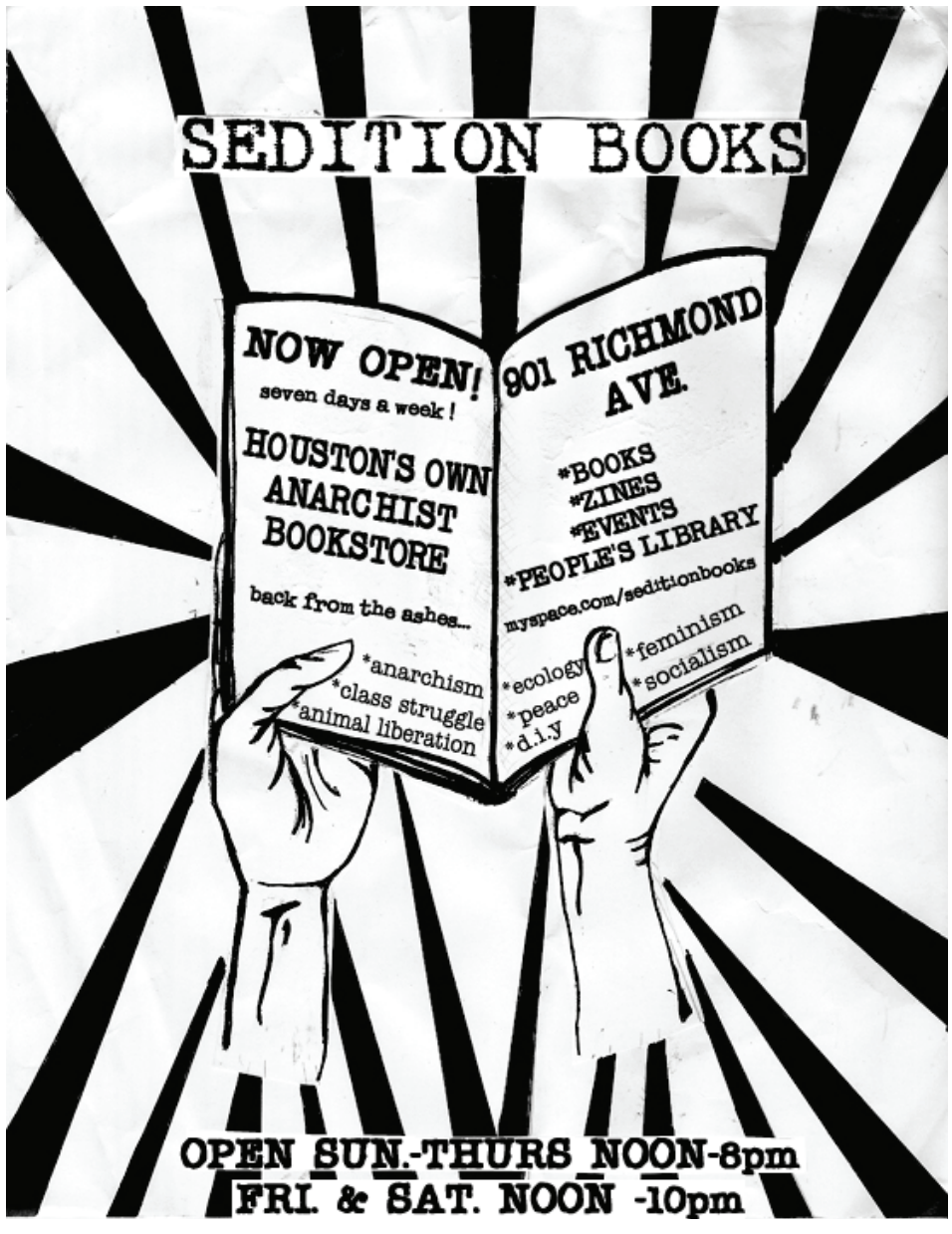
Early emergency relief supplies were distributed to stricken areas with local help, although not without impediments. Some distribution sites were set up before reliable routes of supply could be established, due to hazardous road conditions. "We actually got ahead of our supply train," Judge Thibodeaux says.

Picking up where locals' efforts left off, the state of Texas responded to the catastrophe by backing up distribution sites and coordinating immediate relief. Then FEMA took over. The agency has been helpful, but when they first took charge, the pace of relief slackened. Storm survivors experienced delays in distribution of supplies. Regarding FEMA's efforts, the Judge says, "Everything slows down to a crawl until they get their act together. FEMA's response time needs to be improved on." The agency's response has improved lately, he notes.

Communication with FEMA has grown less reliable though, and it has become difficult to get information from the agency

continued pg. 26







in a timely manner. Judge Thibodeaux is awaiting a report by FEMA on the status of Orange County recovery efforts. "That's basically always the story with FEMA," he says, "they're just slow to get information out. It's always like that."

In Brazoria County, where Ike's damage was less extreme, FEMA is currently experiencing different complications. Steve Rosa, Emergency Operations Center Manager for the county, says the agency's performance has been adequate thus far. "I think they've done alright," he says, but he notes that staffing at Disaster Recovery Centers has become an issue. "We've got about three DRCs, and they're having problems with finding folks to staff them." On the other hand, Rosa says, "The Public Assistance side [which deals with infrastructure repairs] has actually stepped forward and is ahead of the state."

The current situation regarding one critical aspect of FEMA's response – providing temporary emergency housing – is still developing. Richard Scorza, spokesperson at FEMA's Austin Joint Field Office, says that the number of unlivable homes in Texas has yet to be reckoned. Out of 365,000 requests for damage inspections, 266,000 have been completed, and $160 million in housing assistance has been given to over 50,000 households. Scorza didn't know how many inspected homes were uninhabitable, but, he says, "by and large, we're finding there is extensive damage in [emergency] declared counties."

FEMA's housing assistance includes rental vouchers as well as home repair money for residents whose insurance settlements fall short of the full cost of repairs. But in devastated areas, available rentals are insufficient. And even though a newly designed Transitional Sheltering Initiative – a program that pays directly for hotel stays – has provided a stop-gap roof for many families, long term solutions are desperately needed. FEMA's 2008 Disaster Housing Plan recognizes the need for manufactured housing to augment the range of housing options, and municipal authorities in Texas have all but pleaded for any available units.

FEMA has cautiously introduced manufactured housing for eligible families in the state, and as of mid-October, Scorza says, 62 families have been given 3-bedroom mobile homes or 2-bedroom park model trailers for temporary shelter, mostly in Jefferson, Chambers, and Orange Counties. Scorza emphasizes that travel trailers, the bane of the 2005 housing mission, won't be used at all. "None have been deployed, and none will be deployed," he says.

A report earlier this month in the Beaumont Enterprise claimed that 14 mobile homes have been occupied by survivors in Orange County. Judge Thibodeaux says that figure "sounds about right," but concrete numbers from FEMA have yet to cross his desk.

What he does know, though, is the scope of the calamity that has struck his constituency. He estimates that up to 300 Orange County residents remain in emergency shelters, and that over 4,000 residents won't have a livable home to return to, roughly 30% of Orange County's population. "Power has been restored to the community," he says, "the big issue is temporary housing."

Over 32,000 Texans sought refuge in shelters for Hurricane Ike. As of mid-October, less than 1,000 people remained in emergency shelters, and that number, says Scorza, decreases every day as storm survivors find housing with family or friends, or are given rental assistance or hotel accommodations. FEMA has recently extended the hotel sheltering initiative cutoff from October 14 to the 28th, but when this program runs out, the need for temporary housing units, such as the mobile homes, will sharply increase. In Brazoria County, EOC Manager Steve Rosa believes FEMA is well-positioned to help address impending need. "FEMA's already here, they're well into the process" of evaluating potential sites for mobile homes, he says. Rosa estimates, though, that his county will need this type of housing for only about 200 families. "Our need is very small," he says.

However many mobile homes or trailers are needed, formaldehyde levels in the units remain a central concern throughout the state. In a letter from Texas Governor Rick Perry to David Paulison, the head of FEMA, Perry emphasized the need for "mobile homes and park models that meet acceptable formaldehyde standards as determined by state health officials." The governor specified that, although FEMA's standard for formaldehyde levels in newly-purchased units is 16 parts per billion, for units already in FEMA's inventory which might be used for the Texas housing mission, that acceptable level is two and a half times higher, or 40 parts per billion.

In a letter to the Governor's Division of Emergency Management, Dr. David Lakey, Commissioner of the Texas Department of State Health Services, asserts that "maintaining residential levels as low as reasonably possible is desirable," but that "for existing FEMA units, should they be deployed, we recommend a clearance level of 40 ppb" for the gas. Lakey states, "this level is without appreciable risk for adverse health effects."

Support documents included in the letter recommend a proactive approach to identifying possible health complications among trailer occupants, but several messages left with the Texas DSHS to learn what specific steps will be taken toward this end have not been returned. Texas appears to have taken the issue of formaldehyde in temporary housing seriously, but it is too early in the housing mission to judge the success of their efforts.

Thus far in FEMA's response to Hurricane Ike, the agency has demonstrated some measure of improvement since the glaring mis-steps that followed Katrina and Rita in 2005. Its ability to provide safe temporary housing to potentially thousands of storm survivors in 2008, though, has yet to be proven.

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MY CYNICAL ELECTION DAY SCENARIOS

| Nick Cooper, nickcooper.com



WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION, IT IS LIKELY THAT BOTH THE ANTI-OBAMA AND PRO-OBAMA SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION WILL COME OUT OF IT OUTRAGED, FURTHER SPLITTING SOCIETY.

INSTEAD OF WORKING TOGETHER to fix any of the serious problems, Americans might put energy into fighting each other. Here are some possible scenarios…

If the Republicans allow Obama to be accepted as the winner without a big fight, a significant portion of the population will still think that the government has been taken over by socialists or terrorists. Various groups and maybe some governmental agencies could organize to impede the Obama government through spurious lawsuits and a massive PR campaign. These could resemble or outdo the Whitewater / Lewinsky investigations. Obama may try to reach compromises and if so, may be seen by his base as corrupt or collaborating.

If the Republicans manage to disenfranchise enough votes, rig enough voting machines, initiate damaging lawsuits, or assassinate Obama, they could possibly give McCain the presidency, or try to leave Bush in office until it is cleared up. Significant portions of the population might riot, giving the government pretext for more extensive police state tactics.

A right-wing leader figure could emerge who lacks McCain's "centrism." It could be someone like Palin, or possibly someone from outside the realm of politicians. This leader would probably be a white, and could use divisive issues like gay marriage or immigration to rally the masses, either trying to win a 2012 election or to develop extra-governmental power through associations with armed groups or clandestine services.

Another option is that we could all come together and live in peace and harmony, and get to work on fixing the messes we have made.

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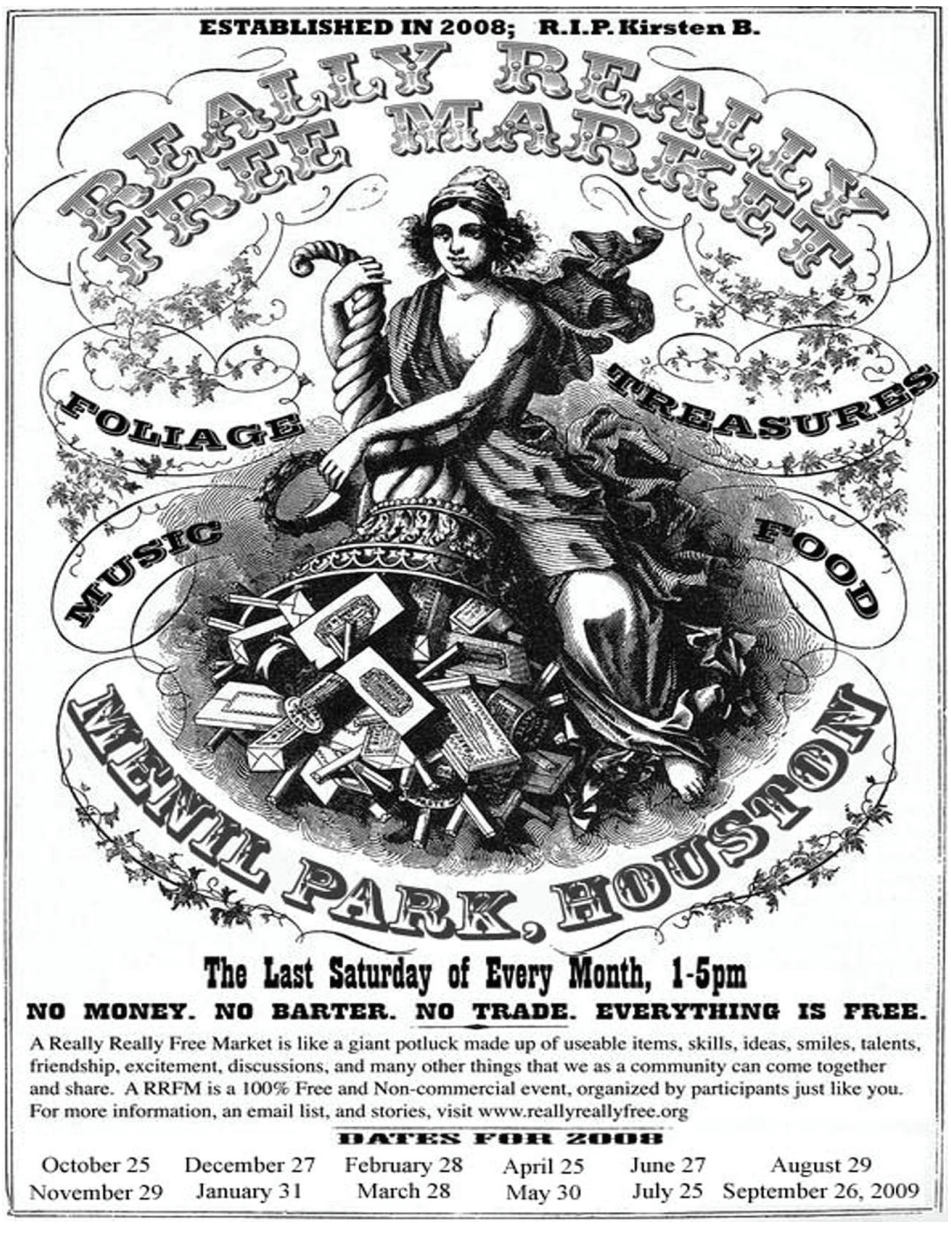
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10/14 Nanon Williams Appeal lands in 5th circuit court - Convicted by faulty HPD Crime Lab Evidence

The 3-judge panel was composed of Judges Barksdale, Jolly and Haynes. Barksdale was appointed by Ronald Reagan and is an old southerner from Mississippi. Jolly is an even older southerner from Mississippi and was appointed by Bush the First. Haynes is young, born in 1963, and appointed just 4 months ago by G. W. Bush.

Morris Moon did an excellent job despite being constantly interrupted mid-sentence with questions. The judges listened intently to Morris and all three were very familiar with the case. Judge Haynes seemed to side with Nanon, sometimes verbally expressing Nanon's own arguments.

There are three judges on the 5th Circuit that are really horrible, very conservative and the ones we did not want on Nanon's panel. Unfortunately, we got two of those three.

Morris Moon and Walter Long were the attorneys for Nanon and a young woman named Carol Callaghan was the attorney for the state of Texas. Each side was given 40 minutes to present their case and answer questions. This is a summary of what I heard and I will say that I really didn't understand all of the legal talk, but maybe the majority of it. I also couldn't hear Judge Jolly—he spoke softly and mumbled a bit. Nanon's attorneys said there should be a ruling in 2-3 months.

Nanon Williams was sentenced to death for a crime he didn't commit when he was a juvenile. After the US-Supreme Courts decision to abolish the death penalty for juvenile offenders in march 2005, Nanons sentence had to be reversed to "life in prison", which in Texas means prison until death.

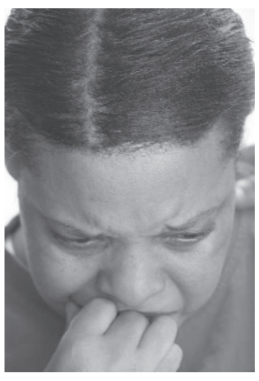
10/12 Ten years after James Byrd's Death: a death by dragging in Paris Texas

by Jesse Muhammad

On Saturday, October 4, I received a serious phone call from Krystal Muhammad of the New Black Panther Party (NBPP) in regards to a possible dragging death in Paris, Texas which is located about five hours north of Houston. The first thing that immediately came to my mind was that 2008 is the tenth anniversary of the lynching of James Byrd, Jr. in Jasper, Texas. Liken unto that case, the victim in Paris was said to be a 24-year-old Black man and his killers were two white men.

I immediately Googled the town and saw that there were only a handful of media outlets that had covered the story which involved Brandon McClelland and these two White males. One reason possibly that there was hardly any coverage was that this killing took place on September 16, which was the tail end of Hurricane Ike hitting landfall so I am sure the town officials were hoping this would be swept under the rug. Too bad, because the Final Call is on top of it!

We caravaned over to the home of the McClelland family where Brandon's mother sat on the porch with tears in her eyes. Ms. Jacqueline McClelland and her family gave recorded statements to me for my Final Call story as well as the NBPP for an independent investigation. We were also joined by local activists, a head of the State NAACP chapter and other friends of the family.





10/9 Women Healing and Empowering Women hosts Second Chance Conference

Most women are incarcerated for charges that stem from domestic violence situations. Last Saturday, WHEW (Women Healing and Empowering Women) explored these and other issues facing women of color in a two day conference which took place at the SHAPE Community Center and Diverse Works.

The Second Chance Project explores our cultural heritage through creative mediums (such as sharing stories from essays and journals) that reflect issues specific to women who have experienced domestic violence, homelessness, or incarceration through the Counseling via Arts Workshops. The Second Chance Project also encourages healing through the Connect-the-Dots Workshops that not only discuss the problems we face, but also demonstrate how those problems are interconnected.

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10/9 Police Continue Harassment of Texas Activists in Wake of RNC

from the open publishing newswire: Over a month after the conclusion of the Republican National Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota, the FBI continues to harass and intimidate activists who chose to voice their opinions about the status quo. In the last ten days, five activists in Houston and Austin have received subpoenas to appear before a Federal Grand Jury in Minneapolis on October 21. Several other activists have had their homes, or those of parents and friends, visited by the FBI.

According to the FBI, the Texas activists, like the RNC Welcoming Committee, fell victim to an FBI informant. As a result, two Texans, David McKay and Bradley Crowder, remain incarcerated in Minneapolis, facing ten years each for allegedly possessing Molotov cocktails. Because the Grand Jury in the McKay–Crowder case has already returned an indictment, it is suspected that the current subpoenas relate to a separate case.

The Texans ask that you stand with them in their continued struggle against the government's war on activism and the First Amendment, the archaic and oppressive Grand Jury system, and the imprisonment, surveillance, harassment and intimidation of activists everywhere. They ask that you educate yourselves and your communities about the history and tactics of political repression, and how to resist it, especially in relation to Grand Juries. They also ask that you continue to raise money for all the activists who face long and costly legal battles resulting from the RNC protests.

10/1 Galveston's public housing residents ordered out with nowhere to go

Residents of Galveston's storm-devastated public housing projects were ordered to clear their belongings out by Friday September 27th -- but they're still waiting for answers about where they're supposed to go. Many of the residents never signed a lease, and there's concern they might not quality for federal assistance. In order to stay in a hotel paid for by FEMA, hotels may require a credit card -- but many residents don't have one.

Galveston Mayor Lyda Ann Thomas testified before Congress this week about her city's needs, but she did not discuss public housing in her prepared statement. Also this week, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and Federal Emergency Management Agency announced an 18-month housing assistance plan for families displaced by Ike, but it's not slated to begin until November.

From Comments: A friend who has family on Galveston Island contacted me this evening. She said the City of Galveston was threatening to bulldoze homes below a certain value REGARDLESS OF DAMAGE and had given poor residents until Friday (Oct 3rd) to remove their belongings. She stated that the poorest residents of Galveston were bused the farthest away and many have no way of returning to claim their belongings by the deadline.

9/30 Mother of Murdered Air Force Airman Blanca Luna Seeks Justice

On March 7, 2008, Senior Airman Blanca Adriana Luna of Chicago was found stabbed to death in her hotel room on Shepherd Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Texas. Blanca was due to graduate from her training course and return to Chicago in three days. Since then a veritable Kafkaesque tale has been emerging. Members of the Air Force visited Blanca's mother, Gloria Barrios, to inform her that her only child had been the victim of a homicide, "but not to worry - she had a $400,000 life insurance policy"! Now there have been intimations of suicide even though her body displayed signs of a defensive struggle. The Air Force's Office of Special Investigation fails to provide straight answers to anything. Moreover, they have refused to release any personal property, a death certificate, or a police report (the claim is there is none!).

This case fits into a pattern of violence against members of the military - particularly, women - being swept under the rug. The Air Force would rather explain a suicide than receive the negative publicity of a homicide on base; plus, the family would lose beneficiary rights to Blanca's insurance payout. However, for Gloria, it is about justice, not money.

Mrs. Gloria Barrios, mother of US Air Force Senior Airman Blanca Luna has requested to met with officials of the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) at Sheppard Air Force (in Witchita Falls Texas) base on Friday, October 3, 2008 to determine the status of the investigation into her daughter's death.

Ayers vs. McCain vs. Obama: Bloodstains

by Nick Friday

nickcooper--at--indymedia.org

A quick rough analysis of how much blood is on folks hands.

Bill Ayers of the Weather Underground was a bomber who may have been connected to the killing of one policeman and the wounding of another.

John McCain:

- voted for the Iraq War Resolution in October 2002, killing at least 88 - 96 thousand civilians (confirmed) according to Iraq Body Count, at the time of the writing of this article. The estimate including the unconfirmed deaths is 674 thousand according to The Lancet, at the time of the writing of this article.
- voted in September of 2002 to authorize force in retaliation for the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, which launched the war on Afghanistan, which has killed an estimated 3, 485 at the time of writing this article according to Unknown Casualties.
- voted in 1989 to authorize the use of force in Panama, killing hundreds.
- was a bomber in a campaign that killed millions of civilians in Vietnam.

Barack Obama may not have killed anyone yet. Give him a chance to catch up, he's young.

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ARTSTORM STARTED OUT IN THE HEIGHTS, north of 610, hard to find, on narrow streets. But once you located ArtStorm you were welcomed in an upstairs garage apartment sized space with imaginative drawings and art, along with stein-sized portions of wine and beer.

Now ArtStorm has moved near the Montrose and Museum District, in the Caroline Collective Building at 4828 Caroline Street. The beer still flows like, well, wine. And the backyard is big enough and far away enough from residence to allow bands free reign with the larger crowds this new venue attracts.

Last month (October 24) ArtStorm opened A Course Portal featuring the work of Houston artist Philip Durbin. Durbin contributed the strange animal imagery found on the November 2005 cover of Free Press Houston as well as the cover to Jana Hunter's most recent album There's No Home. A Course Portal runs until November 22.

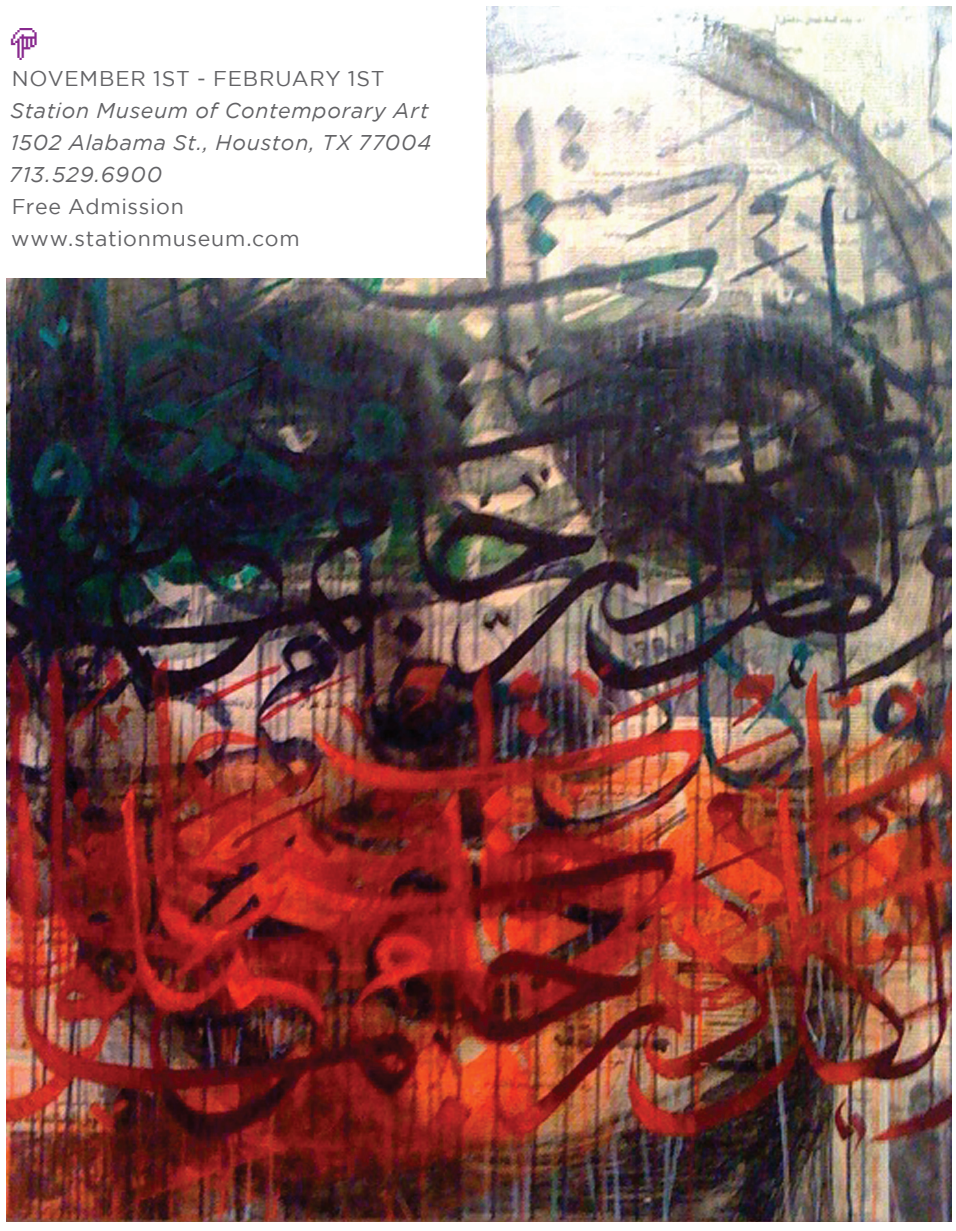
Durbin produces paintings, drawings and wearable art all of which is on display. An ArtStorm press release describes Durbin as "provocative, all-at-once playful and humorous while also brooding and dark." Durbin's graphics are colorful and combines the combination of hand painted and printed material. His opening coincided with an ArtStorm in-house store where Durbin's silk-screened shirts are available. To give you an idea of his style, imagine geometric shapes contorted and anointed with anthropomorphosis oils.

Like many of the ArtStorm board, Durbin attended Houston School for the Performing and Visual Arts. A Course Portal features Durbin's largest exhibit to date.

The exhibit will feature multi-media work on paper, canvas and vellum, as well as limited-edition prints and wearable art available for purchase in the ArtStorm store.

IRAQI ARTISTS IN EXILE

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ORGANIZED BY STAFF AT THE STATION MUSEUM, Iraqi Artists in Exile is produced in solidarity with the Artist Rescue Mission of Houston as part of a comprehensive aid program to help artists in Iraq. The exhibition consists of 15 Iraqi artists whose pieces are uniquely Iraqi yet have a common thread with much Western contemporary art. The artists are Ali Talib Alkayali, Abdel Karim Khalil, Ayad Alkadhi, Dia Azzawi, Faisel Laibi Sahi, Hanaa Malallah, Himat Mohammed Ali, Jananne Al-Ani, Kareem Risan, Nedim Kufi, Mahmud Al Obaidi, Mohammed Al Shammarey, Rafa Nasiri, Sadik Kwaish Alfraji, Shakir Hasan Al Said.

Their artwork is not only representative of modern Iraqi culture but also makes a significant contribution to contemporary world culture because of its unique and timely aesthetic. This aesthetic consists of references and symbols that often date back thousands of years and that bind the modern Iraqi aesthetic to the ancient past. It is important to note that the arts have flourished in Baghdad for seven thousand years.

Many exiled artists now live in small towns and cities in many parts of the world or in exclusively Arab neighborhoods that are not easily accessible to outsiders. Many of them have suffered the loss of their careers' work. Most of the artists had important works in Baghdad's Museum of Modern Art that was completely looted during the initial stages of the occupation. Others had to leave much of their artwork behind. Nevertheless, these exiled artists have gone on to create new artworks that reflect not only the pain but also the collective creative imagination of the Iraqi people. M. Al Shammarey, one of the artists, has said, "It would be impossible to call yourself an artist if there is no reference to the war in your work. The war is the time we are living in."

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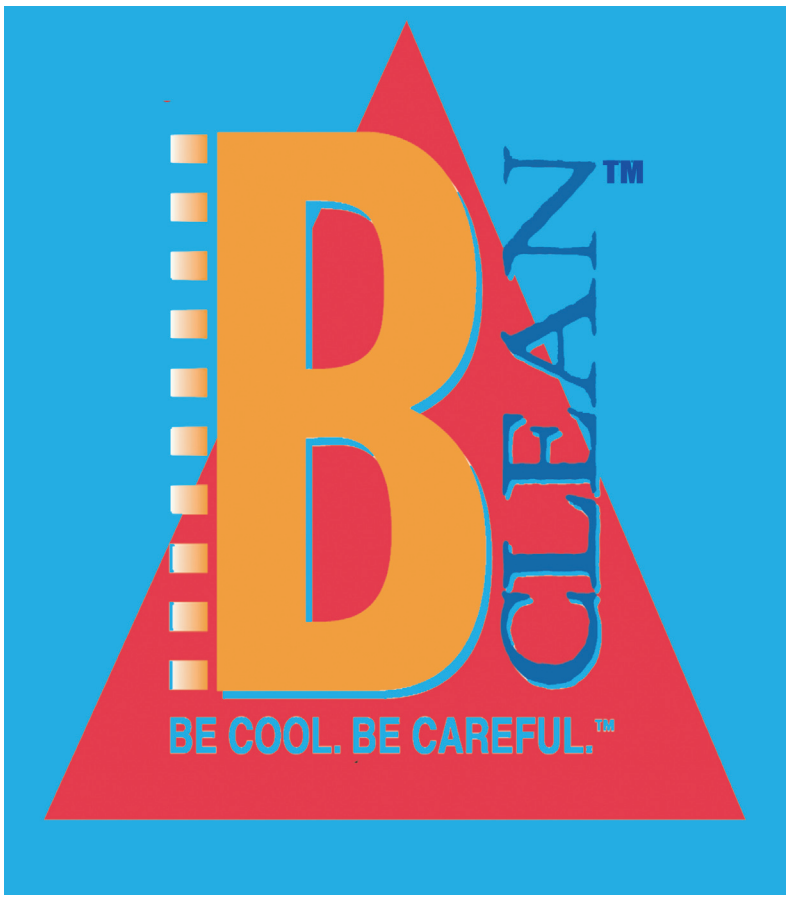
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Works in one hour, effective up to five hours.

EFFERVESCENT TABLETS
Works in one hour, effective up to five hours. Water soluble formula tastes great.

HAIR CLEANSING SYSTEM
Effective up to eight hours, eliminates external barriers and lowers toxins within.

DAILY CAPSULES
Supplements detox process 12 to 24 hours prior to cleansing deadline, powerful companion to other toxin reduction products.

ASK FOR B-CLEAN PRODUCTS AT YOUR FAVORITE SMOKE SHOPS!