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OCCUPANCY LAWS: THE CITY MUSTERS UP A RESPONSE

GROTESQUE & PARALYZING

APRIL 2010
ISSUE 114
LOGIC IS A HANDICAP

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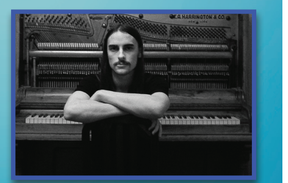

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APRIL





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Apr 8
Mr.Gnome, Fired For Walking

Apr 9
The Jonx, 500 Megatons of Boogie, Muhammadali, Woozyhelmet

Apr 10
Golden Axe, Black Congress (7" release), Omotai

Apr 15
Chris Bell Band

Apr 17
Lance Smith, The Greg Wood Band, Teresa
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Apr 25
Bitch, Christine Havrilla (6:30 Show)

Apr 27
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Screaming Females

4/2
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4/3
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4/5
Giant Battle Monster

4/9
Grandfather Child,
Warpaint, Balaclavas, Buxton

4/10
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Duncan Johnson and the
Gentleman, Wife

4/15
DJ Remedy

4/16
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4/17
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4/19
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4/22
Cley and the Rockers

4/24
Local Natives

4/25
The Carper Family

4/27
Awesome Color, Hair Police

4/30
Danneurysm

5/7
Something Fierce

5/8
Tax the Wolf, Papermoons,
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR
FEEL FREE TO TAKE US SERIOUSLY

I love getting calls from bill collectors. It is one of my few true joys in this life. It is the rare opportunity to be a complete moron with someone I do not know and will never see. So I often tell the collector the reason I refuse to pay the credit card, cellular, or medical bill is that hey will stop calling me if I pay the bill. " I love you and enjoy our conversations. I will only pay this bill if you send me a notarized letter via certified mail stating you will continue to call me after I resolve the debt." So far I have not had any takers.

Keep on keepin' on, Houston. You are doing great things and we are well on our way towards the promised land.

OMAR AFRA



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ART SHOWS THIS MONTH

DEBRIS:
BESOS PARA GOLPES

THAT GIANT ENGINE, INCESSANTLY GORGING ALL THE INTELLECTUAL SAP OF SOCIETY, INCESSANTLY VOMITS NEW MATERIAL FOR ITS WORK. THE ENTIRE CITY IS ITS SCAFFOLDING.



EVERY MIND IS A HIVE. Even the humblest soul may spark a trend or alert the whole to an issue. Every day a new deposit is laid. Certainly, these structures grow and pile up upon each other in endless spirals. There is a confusion of languages, untiring labor, incessant activity, a furious competition of all humanity, a promised refuge for intelligence against a deluge of noise, against another submersion by barbarism. Connected by wires, freed by wireless, the bonds that hold Houston together are nothing more than minds.

If you were to receive from the city an impression of its whole, do not ascend to the highest peak of downtown or the Galleria, behold, the millions of minds, blogs, twitters, conversations, transactions and robberies starting from their sleep at any moment of the day. At first you hear only scattered tinklings from point to point, as when musicians are giving one another notice to begin. Then, all of a sudden, behold—for there are moments when the mind can actually see—behold, ascending at the same moment from every person a column of existence, as it were, a cloud of harmony. At first, the vibration of each seems clear, direct, and isolated from the rest in the splendid blue sky. Then, by degrees, as they expand, they mingle, unite and are lost in one another. All are confounded in one magnificent concert. They become a mass of sonorous vibrations, endlessly sent forth from the innumberable minds—floating, undulating, bounding, and eddying over the town, and extending far beyond the horizon the deafening circle of its oscillations. That sea of harmony is not chaos. Wide and deep as it is, it has not lost its transparency: one may perceive the winding of each group that escapes from the mass; one can follow the dialogue by turns grave and clamorous, of Screw music and the jackhammer; one can perceive the octaves leaping from chattering phone to phone; you observe them springing aloft, winged, light and effortless from laptop to laptop; falling broken and limping from voice to ear. You can admire among them the undulating sea of observations and deprecations on twitter, whose moods incessantly flicker. You see clear and rapid trends running across the list, in luminous zigzags, vanishing like flashes of lightning. Down in myspace is a shrill and broken scene; nearer is the sinister voice of facebook; farther away emails are forwarded in showers of badly cropped photos and garish fonts. Then, again, from time to time that mass of sublime noise half opens, and gives passage to an actual person, who glitters like a cluster of stars.

To anyone who thought that the internet would kill the edifice, that one art would dethrone another art, don't forget how long that edifice took to make. The 21st century began like the last epoch. First was literacy. Later they made programs. Phones became verbs, computers nouns. On servers across the globe visual culture and gobs of writing accumulated, forming societies that lived their lives over months or a few years, evolving and metastasizing. It was the liberty of humans from architecture of thought. Hence the countless number of avatars online, a number so prodigious that it is unbelievable. All the intellectual forces of society converge on the same net. In this matter, under the pretext of erecting monuments to commerce, art will develop to a high degree.**FPH**

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Mar 6 - Spoonfed Tribe with Subroutine
Mar 7 - Opie Hendrix
Mar 12 -Crossing Toigo
Mar 13 -Pepper Lane with Pot Belly
Mar 19 -Private Event
Mar 20 - 2:00P Praia Urbana
Mar 26 - Plump
Mar 27 - Carolyn Wonderland
Apr 2 - Funkotron
Apr 10 - The Cold Front, Reverend Butter Ice Sculpting Rock Show
Apr 16 - Champagne with Friends



WRAPAGE

by MICHAEL BERGERON

SXSW WRAP

THERE WERE LINES aplenty but I never had a problem getting into a seminar or screening, albeit I did arrive in a timely manner for either. The recently wrapped South By SouthWest Film Festival and Conference once again provided enough cinema fuel to power anybody's film mojo from now until the end of the year. Another columnist was heard saying that SXSW is the new media clusterfuck of the next decade. As the entire convention overlaps film , internet and music venues that statements not too far off the mark.

Certainly realize that SXSW isn't the only film festival in the state of Texas. This month sees the 43rd annual Houston Worldfest unwinding April 9-18 (http://www.worldfest.org) at the AMC Studio 30, a.k.a. the Studio Drive-by 30 and next month the Marfa Film Festival (http://www.marfafilmfestival.org) unreels at select screens in harmonic West Texas from May 5 though 9. Winners and favorites of this year's SXSW can be found at: http://sxsw.com/film

SXSW Film divides its selections into categories that include films that will soon be playing at a megaplex near you. This year kicked off with the comic book parody Kick Ass (opening wide April 16) . Teen rejects find their inner elf by coming out as upper heroes. Nicholas Cage in a supporting role himself dons a superhero costume. Here, Cage is channeling the Adam West Batman. Cage is too good for an Oscar in this role, I would suggest a Nobel Prize. On a smaller scale the crime thriller The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo had an Austin showing. This Swedish film opens at the Landmark River Oaks in early April and has already stirred Hollywood interest in a remake. In a way that's good and bad. After all this 2008 serial killer mystery already has three films, based on the novels,

in worldwide release so why don't they just release all three existing movies with subtitles. Duh? On the other hand the remake is currently attached to David Fincher, not exactly a slough when it comes to cinematic mayhem.

On a lost weekend of magical proportions I saw the following films. Hubble 3D was an absolute showstopper. While just a 43-minute IMAX 3D documentary this film takes the viewer on a fly-through of our universe based on imagery obtained from the Hubble telescope. This isn't CGI, but rather data that is rearranged in a way that allows the viewer to zoom though our Solar System at warp speed until we're hovering on the edge of a black hole or a birthing star in the Orion Nebula. Locally this amazing production is currently playing at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Hubble 3D also include stupendous views of Shuttle launches. True as opposed to faux IMAX 3D is the wave of the future.

Music docus included The White Stripes: Under Great White Northern Lights a film that follows Jack and Meg on a tour of Canada. The film wisely allows ignorant American viewers to understand the different provinces of Canada. The White Stripes played throughout Canada and would always include a free show (think Cactus Records) during this tour. The charm of the film means that it's not about being an in your face study of the performers so much as it captures the moment. Years ago when I saw Magnetic Fields at Numbers nightclub I wondered why Stephin Merritt was such a douche bag to the audience. The docu Strange Powers: Stephin Merritt and the Magnetic Fields explains the matter in full detail.

Lovers of Hate offered up a cool Polanski vibe a la Cul de Sac about a romantic triangle but I really prefer director Bryan Poyser's debut film Dear Pillow. A NY Thing was a thoughtful sex farce set amongst big apple slackers. American: The Bill Hicks Story plays like a labor of love regarding the late influential comedian.

The two best films I caught at SXSW were Mars and American Grindhouse. The former weaves a fictional account of a trip to Mars and uses roptoscoped live action although in a different style than the Waking Life style of that type of animation. American Grindhouse covers the waterfront. The film offers coherent facts about exploitation films from the beginning of film history to the present. Freaks, Mom and Dad, the films of Herschell Gordon Lewis, Hitchcock and Wes Craven, women in prison and even Jesus versus Nazi genre films are mentioned in detail. If there's any justice in the cinematic universe by the end of the year every film fan on the planet will have the chance to see these two films. SXSW is just a shot away.

ALSO ON

YOU REMEMBER IN THE MOVIE Swingers how Vince Vaughn tells Jon Favreau he doesn't want to be the PG guy that everything turns out okay for, he needs to be the R-rated guy that you don't know if you really like, you don't know how he's going to end up. Well, Ben Stiller as Greenberg is that guy. There's not much to like about the misanthropic character played by Stiller yet it's Noah Baumbach's easiest to like film, perhaps not an odd accomplishment considering the nihilism and sarcasm dripping from the populace of his two most recent films The Quid and the Whale and Margot at the Wedding. Baumbach also collaborates with Wes Anderson but those films, particularly Fantastic Mr. Fox, are infused with Anderson's own special brand of altruism.

In Greenberg, Stiller playing a guy that's a kind of dick, attaches himself to people with esteem issues; he goes out on a date with his brother's personal assistant and 15 minutes into the date he's eating her pussy. Greenberg's not so much of a womanizer as he's a sort of psychic vampire, sucking talent and inspiration away from those around him. This becomes readily apparent as the movie progresses and we meet the members of Greenberg's former band that he abandoned on the eve of signing with a major label.

Stiller has stepped up to the serious movie acting plate in the past (Permanent Midnight, Zero Effect, Royal Tennenbaums, Your Friends & Neighbors) and much of the appeal of Greenberg rests on your, well, not liking his character. Don't be surprised if you find yourself recognizing in Greenberg's solipsism parts of yourself you'd rather keep submerged.

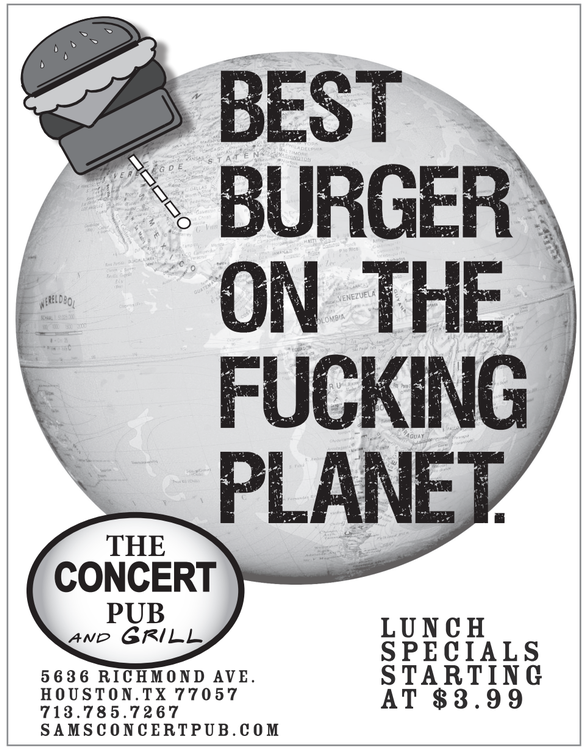
THE MFA ROLLS OUT two evenings of rare rock films featuring the Beatles and Bob Dylan on Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24, show times at 7 pm. All films are from the archives of rock historian Bill Shelley who will host both screenings.

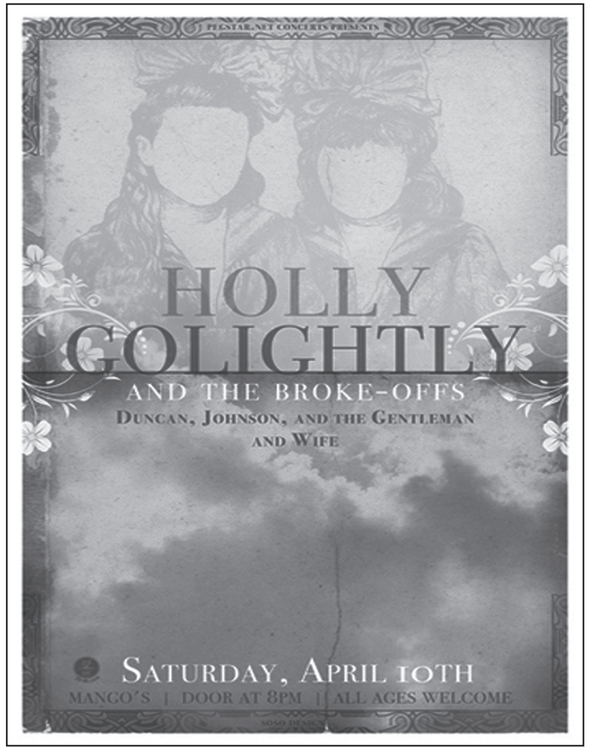
DVD SLIGHT RETURN

A SERIES OF DVDS from the History Channel takes your mind on the kind of diversion one gets from listening to Coast to Coast AM; a conspiratorial view of historic events. And even if the facts presented in The Real Wolfman, Holy Grail in America, and Jesse James' Hidden Treasure were true it wouldn't matter in the grand scheme of things. Yet the ring of verisimilitude resounds from the testament of these programs. To wit: an 18th century series of murders in the French town of Gevaudan form the basis for all subsequent fictional accounts of men who turn into animals when the moon is full; a rock with ancient runes, the Kensington Stone, was unearthed in 1898 in Minnesota and may harbor clues that prove the Templar Knights came to America before Columbus bringing with them holy relics; infamous outlaw Jesse James faked his death and funneled stolen gold into the Knights of the Golden Circle, a secret Southern org that was waiting to reboot the Civil War. Like the character in The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance says: "This is the West, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend."

IT'S UNBELIEVABLE THAT a film as totally bizarre yet accessible as Gentlemen Broncos never played theatrically in Houston yet was made under the auspices of a major studio distributorship (Fox Searchlight) and found its way to DVD last month. I mean, for the sake of the Cosmic Muffin, Fox Searchlight dumped this film late last year yet they released Amelia like it was a champ. FS can market the shit out of a film, witness The Wrestler or more currently Crazy Heart. All they had to do was advertise "from the director of Napoleon Dynamite."

Gentlemen Broncos revolves around science fiction foo, and plagiarism foo and dysfunctional nuclear unit foo. A young lad (Michael Angarano) shows his first draft of a sci-fi novel called Yeast Lords to a lecturing artist (Flight of the Conchords' Jermaine Clement) who steals the idea verbatim and publishes same to great success. Director Jared Hess intercuts versions of Yeast Lords, starring a hysterically funny Sam Rockwell as well as his pet lynx, with Angarano's rite of passage from Oedipal boy to man adding heft to the story. DVD commentary from Hess and wife and co-scripter Jerusha Hess puts puzzle pieces into place. Best ever use of the Zager and Evans song "In the Year 2525."FPH









YOUR ONCE & FOR ALL MEANS SHIT TO ME

by KWAME M. ANDERSON

WARPAINT



EVERYONE HAS THIS LOOK ON THEIR FACE: "OH MAN, I REMEMBER THIS FROM LAST YEAR." (VIA TWITTER FROM FREE PRESS HOUSTON).

I DID NOT MAKE SXSW THIS YEAR, but the great thing is that many of the bands I wanted to see either didn't play SXSW, or they are playing here this month. Here is what technology hath wrought, with the constant Twitter, Facebook, Pitchfork, Stereogum, and pretty much every other from of digital media you can virtually be at SXSW minus the aura (crowds, smells, stench of beer and BBQ) that is the festival. Some people like to see animals, some people like to go to the zoo. SXSW is like the zoo of music, you get to see the animals and smell the animal shit. Anyhoo, let me quit talking or at least talk shit about something else.

This is usually the time when I complain about the state of music, but instead of flogging that dead horse, I will talk about something good: Music is returning to Houston! I will give a lot of credit to Mango's, a lot of touring acts are coming through our city again. This month we get Local Natives, Warpaint, this summer we get The Flaming Lips, and it is an all around good time to see live music in Houston again. Now while I have missed a lot of it, it's good to have the option to not go, as opposed to not having that choice. It's good to say something's going on and I'm missing it, rather than nothing's going on. So let me provide you with some events that you have the option to attend and/or not attend.

WARPAINT
04.09.10 | Mango's

Warpaint is one of the more exciting bands playing music today. They say that their music is inspired by the «heads» (Blonde Redhead, Talking Heads) and while not directly seeing the connection there is an aesthetic that is similar. Adventurous structures, Joy Division-esque rhythms and drama, guitars that suspend and interchange. Their song "Elephants" is one of the best songs I've heard in years. They are one of those bands you hear and want to see live, if for another no other reason than to see whether the hype is nothing more than that. The band has been co-signed from Akron Family and John Frusciante which means nothing other than I thought those words might arouse curiosity in some and lead them to the show.

BEACH HOUSE
04.23.10 | Walter's

Beach House's latest album Teen Dream (Sub Pop) was said to be informed by their live performance. The album therefore contained more live instrumentation, more experimentation with tempo, and less reverb echo delay on the vocals. Well, I would say that the tinkering with the formula proved successful as Teen Dream is easily one of the best albums this year. Now, the band will bring those wonderful songs to Walter's which will, in one way be great, hearing the songs in a smaller intimate setting, but may also be bad, as the show may be insanely crowded. Either way, I anticipate this to be one of the highlights of a pretty good year for live music in Houston.

LOCAL NATIVES
04.24.10 | Mango's

Local Natives have received a great deal of press as a reaction to their fabulous album Gorilla Manor. It has exuberance, emotion, melody, and it sounds as if the band was as excited to make it as you will be after hearing it. Local Natives' harmonies match the inventiveness of their tunes. It could be a pop record, but not this is not necessarily a pop group; it could be rock album, but it doesn't mine the worn territory of rock. This is another one of those live rock albums, meaning it is organic enough that you feel that it is more man than machine, the music is physical, it has action. This show will be the equivalent to a bag of Smarties on a beautiful spring night (which might not be much to you I realize).

THE GARY
04.30.10 | Rudyard's

GO TO THIS SHOW!!!!! (refer to the March issue for my profile on the band). FPH

MUHAMMADALI
04/09 | RUDYARD'S



MURDER BY DEATH
04/16 | MANGO'S



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04/20 | WAREHOUSE LIVE



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- SubPop20: Casual Nostalgia Fest
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- Owl City - Fireflies/Vanilla Twilight
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HOUSTON JAZZ

by SPENCER SCHYMA



FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER THERE APPEARS TO BE ALMOST A COMPLETE LACK OF JOURNALISTS COVERING THE JAZZ SCENE AROUND TOWN. CHRIS GRAY, MUSIC EDITOR OF THE HOUSTON PRESS, HAS ADMITTED THAT JAZZ IS "THE MOST UNDERGROUND MUSIC IN HOUSTON" AND HAS CLAIMED TO ENJOY IT, YET HIS STAFFERS RARELY EVER WRITE ABOUT IT.

WE HAVE SOME VERY TALENTED Jazz musicians here in Houston and it's about time we start appreciating them. So far Brasil and Avant Garden have definitely been the best places for the Jazz as far as my findings are concerned but one day when I meet the drinking age limit I aspire to see what Cezanne's has to offer. I thought I would share a couple of favorites who play weekly Monday through Wednesday at these two places. Check it.

CORY WILSON'S QUARTET

MONDAYS AT AVANT GARDEN

To be a part of a generation who believes being interested in Jazz is synonymous with being fascinated with the sounds of an elevator or the weather channel, it's very refreshing to see some talented individuals around my age keeping jazz alive. My first time watching the Cory Wilson Quartet, I walked in while they were beginning a cover of "Take Five." I remember hearing that infamous four note bass line followed by Wilson chiming in with that beautiful sax melody, from there he went into one of the most majestic sax solos I've heard yet. Matching the odd 5/4 meter perfectly while the splash of the cymbals left puddles of sounds surrounding the bass and guitar. Paul Desmond would be proud. These guys aren't just limited to cool & bop though, they also play funky Herbie Hancock/Freddie Hubbard flavored groove songs. See em every Monday at Avant.

LE HOT CLUB OF BRASIL

TUESDAYS AT THE BRASIL

Every Tuesday night, the swing infected rhythms of 1930's France comes alive again and manifests itself again in Montrose's own Hot Club of Brasil. A group that includes the talents of Hilary Sloan and Lukkas Aberer. Hilary recalls violinist extraordinaire, Staphane Grappelli in her weeping fiddle melodies and Lukkas resurrects gypsy jazz virtuoso Django Reinhardt through his luxurious guitar solos and blazing fast scale runs. Geoffrey Muller also plays the walking bass, anyone that knows what's up knows whenever Geoffrey's on stage you're more than likely to hear some great music. There's no better place to be on a Tuesday night.

THE FREE RADICALS

WEDNESDAYS AT AVANT GARDEN

Few if any bands in Houston are as diverse and unique as the Free Radicals. Their sound can be described as a jazzy collage of reggae, Latin, funk, punk, soul, hip hop and maybe even a bit of Jewish kezmer too but attempting to describe this group's sound is probably futile -- you need to listen to them for yourself. No two people will get the same experience from a Free Radicals show. Some people will be enticed to dance with the Latin grooves, some will bob their heads to the funky percussion, some will listen closely for the next jazzy horn solo. Since almost the mid 90's multicultural diversity is what they have thrived in exploring, winning the Houston Press best Jazz award seven times. They rock Avant Garden every Wednesday.

OSAMA & THE JAZZMEN

WEDNESDAYS AT THE BRASIL

I'd say a great bop group is about keeping the flow of a song strong and clear, being simple and intricate simultaneously, never letting listeners get exhausted by an overflow of notes and most of all keeping the listeners ears tied down and hooked on every solo. Osama and the Jazzmen fit that description well. They play bop standards, exchanging sophisticated & exciting solos that will leave you wishing you knew your instrument better. The leader of the group is an extremely talented Lebanese drummer by the name of Osama Raad who's drums evoke Elvin "Tones" Jones, they also have a brilliant guitarist who's influence is a mix between Kenny Burrell and Wes Montgomery. Come out on Wednesday and show them some love why don'tcha? FPH

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FRIDAYS
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APRIL BAND LISTINGS
Saturday, April 17
Santana Tribute
performed by
La Raza Connection
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FRIDAYS
April 2 - Rock Radio
April 9 - The Slags
April 16 - The Spicolis
April 23 - Sunset Stripperzz
April 30 - Less Than Serious
SATURDAYS
April 3 - Abbey Rode (Beatles Tribute) with Already Gone and Nightbird
April 10 - Aeromyth (Aerosmith Tribute)
April 17 - La Raza Connection (Santana Tribute)
April 24 - Sublime and Red Hot Chili Peppers Tribute
May 1 - Judith Priest (Judas Priest Tribute)
Love It To Death (Alice Cooper Tribute)
April 3 - 3 TRIBUTE BANDS
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APRIL SHOWERS

by SPENCER SCHYMA

WHEN IT RAINS, YOU GET WET

JEFF BECK

APRIL 24TH | VERIZON WIRELESS THEATER

Out of all the Rock guitarists that blessed the 60's, Jeff Beck has been as innovative, technically, and (besides Hendrix) creatively gifted as anyone. Not only that, but no group or artist still performing from the sixties has consistently evolved their style and even sharpened their musicianship quite like Beck has. Over the course of his career, he's changed the language of electric guitar. The haphazard way he approached his career and his idiosyncratic style however has prevented him from achieving the amount of commercial popularity that Clapton, Page or Hendrix have attained. Beck, saying in a recent interview with Rolling Stone: "You can go up to any guy on the street and they know who Eric Clapton is….They don't know who I am." Having said that however, his website boasted 2009 as "his most successful year ever" and as it stands 2010 looks like it will be even better for the guitar virtuoso. He's dropped his typical reclusive behavior and finally putting himself out there more than ever. At the Grammys this year, he performed an incredible tribute to Les Paul with Imelda May in front of a national audience and won an award for best instrumental performance for an equally amazing cover of "A Day in the Life." He's also putting out his first studio album and touring America extensively for the first time in seven years. There has NEVER been a better time to see this man. At 66 years of age this guy is playing like he's in his twenties. If you play guitar, see this show.

BEACH HOUSE

APRIL 23RD | WALTER'S ON WASHINGTON

Riding the tidal wave of excitement over their new "sub pop" album 'Beach House', the duo out of Baltimore will have a very busy April ahead of them making a stop at Walter's On Washington as one of their 26 shows this month. Their distinctive brand of Indie pop has caused quite a bit of buzz among Pitchfork junkies lately. Drawing their listeners into a world filled with the soulful siren swoons of Victoria Legrand over trippy organs and repetitive drum beats. Embellishing their pop melodies by utilizing David Gilmour-like slide guitar and sleepy keyboards Beach House's beauty relies on their ability to craft hypnotic landscapes and psychedelic textures that wash the listeners ears in cascades of sounds. Dream pop fans, where ever you are, you won't wanna miss this one.

ESPERANZA SPALDING

APRIL 24TH | JONES HALL

Esperanza Spalding is truly a marvel. She has been hailed as a prodigy of the double bass at the age of 15 and at 21 she became an instructor at the prestigious Berklee College of Music. By blending Afro Cuban and Bop influenced Jazz, with her multilingual soulful singing and pop appeal, she has become one of Jazz's brightest young stars. With an incredible sense of melody and song craft, a gorgeous voice, and virtuosic bass playing, in her early twenties Esperanza's a triple threat. Her self titled, Esperanza, proved to be exciting at every turn a wonderfully diverse and exceptionally well executed set. It makes you wonder how the hell a 23 year old could accomplish such a feat. She's already done more than most Jazz musicians accomplish in their whole lifetime. Catch this sexy maple-skin afro jazz queen at Jones Hall the 24th. She's the sexiest thing to hit Jazz since Billie Holiday and sure to knock them old yuppies dead.

LUPE FIASCO

APRIL 26 | HOUSE OF BLUES

The past decade saw an array of extremely talented emcees arise from the Chi-Town underground Rap scene. Initially lead by the formidable talent of Common, the Chicago Rap scene blossomed into the strongest in the country producing artists like Rhymefest, Kanye West, Consequence, Pharrell Williams, Typical Cats, and arguably the most talented: Lupe Fiasco. The Muslim MC spits the most intricate and articulate rhymes to bless Hip Hop since Mos Def's early recordings. His last two albums despite having radio hits with both "Superstar" and "Kick, Push", have been relatively ignored by the mainstreamers and even the critics. With masterful storytelling and absolutely magnetic productions (courtesy of Soundtrakk), both albums have both been bonafide hip hop masterworks. The album he's putting out this year and touring for, Lasers, is exploding with expectations among fans. I don't know if he'll ever be able to follow up his last two efforts but I'm willing to put in the effort and time to download it for free and find out. Let's hope he hasn't gone all mainstream and turn into a radio whore like Common and Kanye. See Alternative Rap's highest hope at the House of Blues on the 26th. FPH



SXSW 2010
THANK !@#& IT'S OVER

by BRIGITTE B. ZABAK | PHOTO BY IMAN SAQR

ANOTHER SXSW HAS COME AND GONE AND AUSTINITES CAN BREATHE A COLLECTIVE SIGH OF RELIEF NOW THAT BALANCE HAS BEEN RESTORED TO THEIR FAIR CITY. IPHONES FELT THE STRAIN, BUT HAVE BEEN RESTORED TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, AND HIPSTERS NATIVE TO AUSTIN CAN FEEL A LITTLE LESS THREATENED AFTER THE MASS EXODUS OF GLOBAL HIPSTERS WHO TEMPORARILY INVADED THEIR MUSICAL TURF.

TEN DAYS OF SXSW is enough to make anyone, especially this woman right here, crave normalcy and routine. Though this was my first time attending SXSW Music without press credentials or a wristband of any kind, I found it was generally painless to attend shows I wanted to see. Granted, I wasn't delusional enough to think I could get into the bigger shows at choice venues, but the smaller events I opted to check out were manageable and affordable, and by affordable, I mean free. So, I didn't get to swoon at the adorableness of **Zooey Deschanel** (but, mark my words, that day *will* come!) or stand in a ridiculously long queue to see whatever amazing show was playing on any given night at Stubb's, and I've come to terms with these facts.

Instead, I picked a couple of awesome day shows that had a good variety of bands that I had a genuine interest in wanting to learn more about. And, for the sake of transparency, I will admit, ashamedly, that I went into SXSW this year with very little knowledge of noteworthy new acts to check out or any overwhelming desire to see any one musician in particular. I am happy to report that, despite my neglect as a reformed music journalist, I was still surprisingly impressed with a respectable handful of the bands I was fortunate enough to see.



'It' band Local natives

VILLAGE VOICE MEDIA "THE SHOWDOWN"

This showcase won on multiple levels – namely because they managed to land **Superchunk** as one the bands on the lineup. Last year, I got the chance to fulfill a lifelong dream of seeing **PJ Harvey** live, and this year VVM gave me the opportunity to relive the 90s with **Superchunk** at La Zona Rosa. Their raw pop-punk performance was so reminiscent of my high school youth that it was hard for me not to visualize the audience as a room full of grungy teens. In my head, everyone was adorned in ripped jeans with plaid button-down shirts around their waists, clunky Dr. Martens and unwashed hair in various shades of Manic Panic while bobbing their heads to the oscillating raucous on stage.

Surfer Blood and **The xx** were also on the bill and were both apparently on the shortlist of bands to watch. **Surfer Blood's** music is akin to that of **Vampire Weekend's**, only a lot less boring; they're kind of like The Beach Boys on Mad Dog. **The xx** – well, they aren't anything you haven't heard before. The music is pretty standard indie pop, but on morphine; the tempo of their songs is snail's-pace slow. If you have the patience to listen to them unravel, you will be rewarded but getting there is a battle.

UNDER THE RADAR SXSW 2010 DAY PARTY

After last year's stellar lineup, (**Loney Dear, Mumford & Sons, Camera Obscura** and **Chairlift**) it's hard to imagine that UTR could pull off yet another great showcase. Their day party featured my favorite band of SXSW 2010 **The Invisible** - a UK band without a US label. The affable trio makes funkified indie music that unfold in the most beautiful and unexpected ways. It's the first time in a very long time that I've been silenced and stunned by truly original melodies. **Sondre Lerche** was as adorable and dynamic as ever – bringing an animated but quieter vibe to an otherwise boisterous showcase. **The Veils, Plants and Animals, Avi Buffalo** and **Everything Everything** were all equally enjoyable to experience. The UTR day party showcased a number of talented bands that represented a balanced range of subgenres across the indie music spectrum.

OTHER NOTABLE EXPERIENCES FROM SXSW:

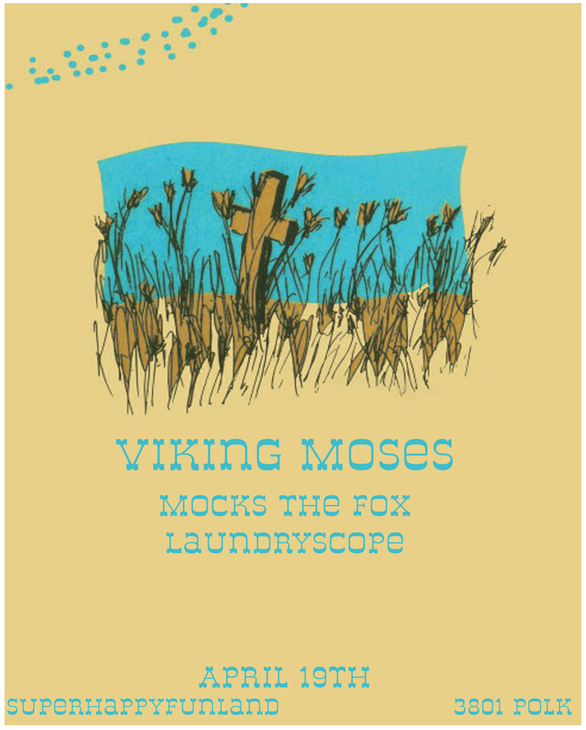
Local Natives – I'm pretty sure every writer on the planet has covered this band and rather than wax intellectual about the goose bumps these dudes gave me, I'd simply encourage you to check them out for yourself at Mango's on April 24.

Robert Ellis – I never actually saw Robert perform anywhere in Austin, he would just randomly appear on some corner or in front of some building just chatting away as I meandered towards my intended destination. He was like my Where's Waldo of SXSW 2010.

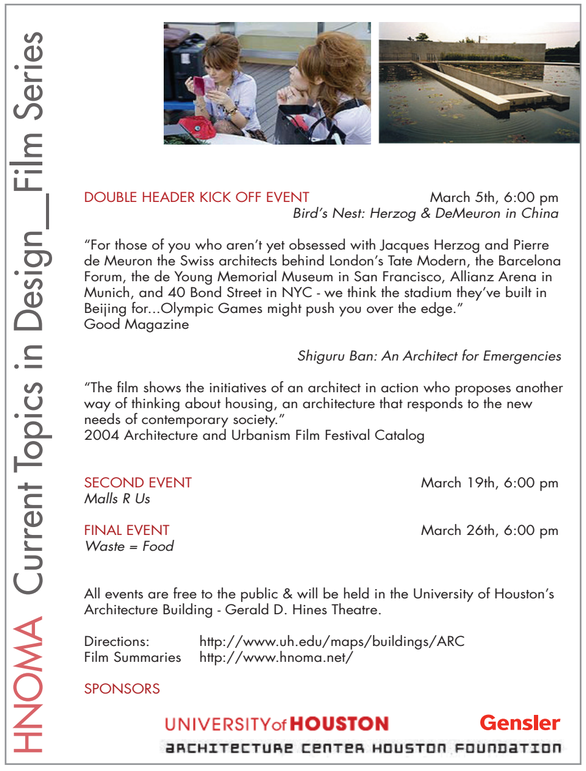
HitRECord.org – This was a really interesting *open collaborative media project* started by **Joseph Gordon Levitt** (*500 Days of Summer*). The event featured collaborative work from artists who utilize the HitRECord website, as well as an intimate musical performance from **Sean Lennon** and **Charlotte Kemp Muhl's** project **The Ghost of a Saber Tooth Tiger.**

No matter how much general merriment is had during SXSW - the best part is, almost always, the end. FPH

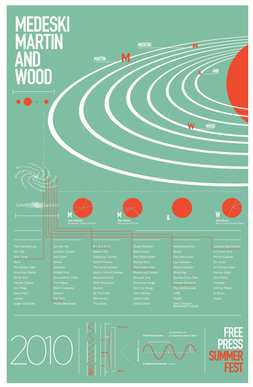




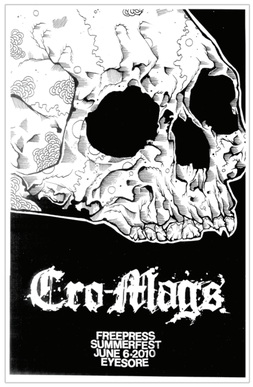




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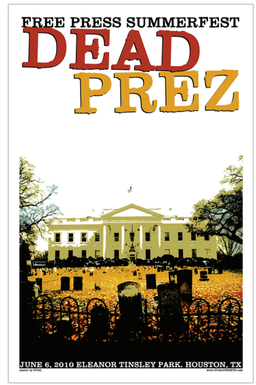




























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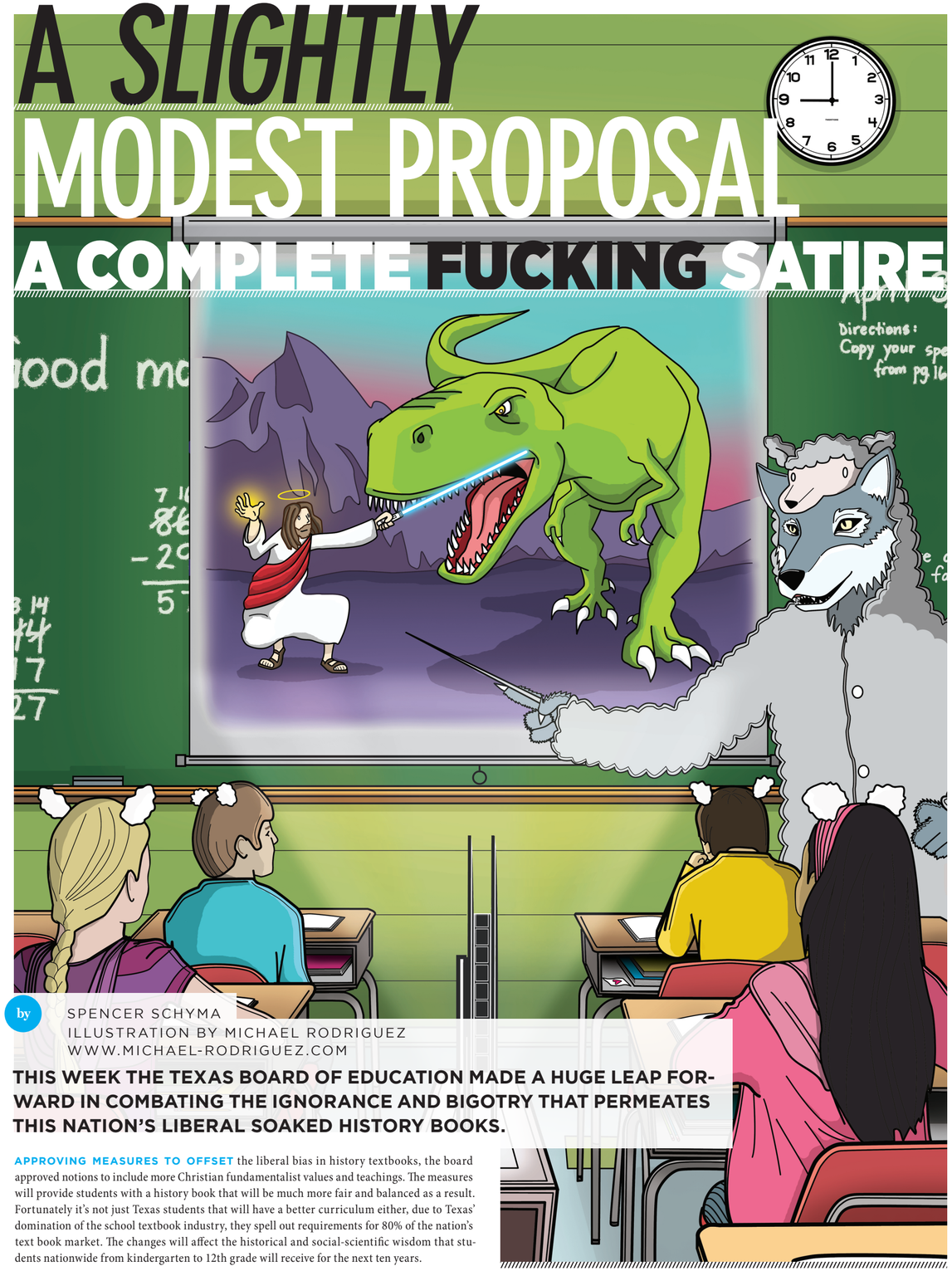
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by SPENCER SCHYMA
ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ
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THIS WEEK THE TEXAS BOARD OF EDUCATION MADE A HUGE LEAP FORWARD IN COMBATING THE IGNORANCE AND BIGOTRY THAT PERMEATES THIS NATION'S LIBERAL SOAKED HISTORY BOOKS.

APPROVING MEASURES TO OFFSET the liberal bias in history textbooks, the board approved notions to include more Christian fundamentalist values and teachings. The measures will provide students with a history book that will be much more fair and balanced as a result. Fortunately it's not just Texas students that will have a better curriculum either, due to Texas' domination of the school textbook industry, they spell out requirements for 80% of the nation's text book market. The changes will affect the historical and social-scientific wisdom that students nationwide from kindergarten to 12th grade will receive for the next ten years.

*CONTINUED ON PAGE **23***

SUPER HAPPY FUN LAND

April 1st:
Spazzathon
Thou Shalt Not Kill... Except
Yatagarsu, Poopy Lungstuffing
PSA, Flakey

April 2nd:
PONG
One Man Machine & The Powers That Be
Fiskadoro

April 3rd:
Private Party

April 6th:
Mad Happy, God's Favorite Animal
Tran Tran

April 7th:
The White Mice (Providence)
Useless Children (Australia)
Wall With One Side
Golden Axe

April 8th:
Hello Shark, Attic Abasement
The Former Machine

April 9th:
Dug Faulk (CD Release)
Dave Dove, Muzak John

April 10th:
CAHR, Marissa
HAHA 90, Days N' Daze
U NOT I

April 15th:
Shat, Rusted Shut
Thou Shalt Not Kill... Except
Nashville's Snake

April 19th:
Viking Moses, Mocks The Fox

April 20th:
Stretch Dawson, The Westbound Band
Robin Kirby

April 23rd:
Bee vs. Moth, Chairs

April 27th:
Jerry Fels and the Jerry Fels
Poopy Lungstufing

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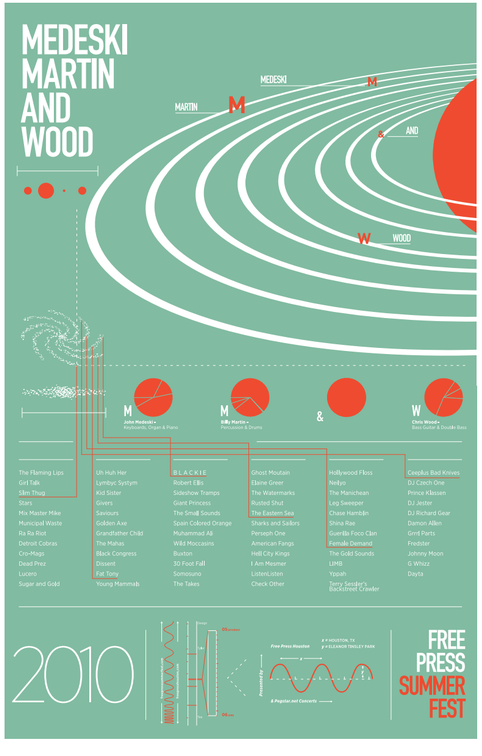
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IN A DECISIVE 10 TO 5 VOTE the Board approved the following altercations in the history curriculum: No longer will Joe McCarthy wrongly be portrayed as a man who utilized a communist "witch-hunt" to gain political ground. Terminology like "capitalism" will now be free market and "imperialism" will be called expansionism. No longer will Thomas Jefferson be considered one of the intellectual thinkers that gave our country shape, teaching the rationale for separation of church & state will disappear hopefully forever. Emphasis will now be placed on the Founding Fathers having been guided by strict Christian beliefs and values. Recommendations to include a wider scope of Latino culture and history such as to include mention of Tejanos as among the fallen heroes of the Alamo have luckily been shot down. Also shot down was a recommendation to include hip hop on a list of important cultural movements, while, country music was added. A greater emphasis will also now be placed on "the conservative resurgence of the 1980s and 1990s"; the NRA and Phyllis Schlafly will finally get their rightful places in our students history books.

All of the above recommendations are definitely a step in the right direction. The liberals have slowly contaminated our history books with their shady agendas for years now. In an interview with ABC, board chairman Don McLeroy said it best: "Somebody has got to stand up the experts." (By experts I'm sure he means radical liberal nuts.) Board member Terri Leo declared the changes «world class» and «exceptional» and I'm sure any logical and objective person would agree but I have some proposals that I believe would further those changes, make them even more exceptional and world class:

1. Start the American History book with Christopher Columbus. We used to start with him, why not now? No one wants to hear about Indians supposedly walking across ice, populating our beautiful land.

2. Omit lessons on the slave trade. All of those unnecessary descriptions of slave boats and "atrocious" conditions portray the colonists in an unfavorable and unfair light. They were just responding to economic conditions of the times.

3. Remove any mention of Karl Marx. His works are products of the most evil kind. Exposing students to such evil philosophies could be a detriment to all of our futures.

4. Skip Charles Darwin. This one's self explanatory.

5. Include a Biblical section. This country was built on Christian values and beliefs and we would be committing an injustice to our founding fathers to not make our students examine God's word in the classroom.

6. De-emphasize civil rights leaders. Chairman McLeroy says it best: "The women's right to vote, the women didn't vote on it, the men did, the men passed it for the women, eventually the civil rights act ... in other words the minorities were not able to do it by themselves,"

7. Increase emphasis on diseases killing the Indians. We already do this well but it wouldn't hurt to increase that emphasis. The liberals portray it like our country was founded on mass genocide or something.

8. Portray Manifest Destiny in a better light. The liberals have obscured everyone's opinion on this. It really was our destiny to spread Christianity from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It had nothing to do with greed or bigotry like they claim.

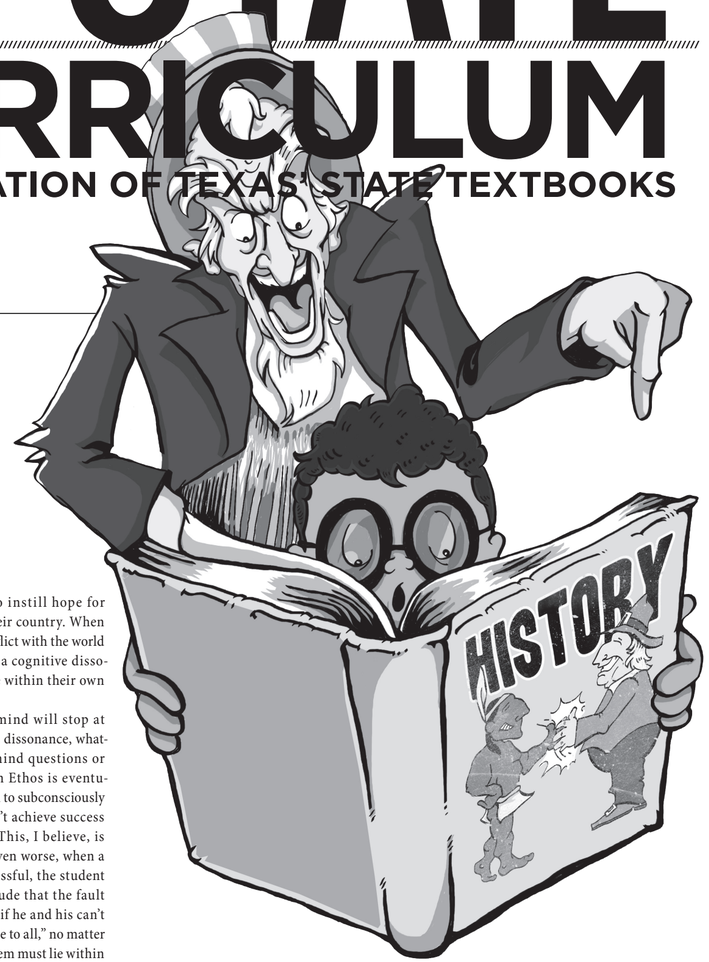
9. Change all mentions of "Native Americans" to Indians. Calling them native makes it seem like we stole something from them but it was really God's will that they all died from those diseases and their tyrannous hold over this land ceased. WE are the native Americans.

Given the conservative cast of the board, the changes it has proposed will most likely stand when the last vote is taken in May. I can only pray they include some of my proposals. Liberals will see these proposals and act like I'm urging everyone to start eating babies or something but I'm just wanting to spread the truth like McLeroy says, to reflect "what has actually happened in the country." Hopefully liberal nut job board members won't get in the way like Mary Helen Berlanga who accused the board of trying to "rewrite history, not only (for) Texas but of the United States and the world,» and of trying to "pretend this is a white America." These crazy deluded liberals need to give it a rest already. FPH

SAD STATE OF CURRICULUM

MORE ON THE RETARDATION OF TEXAS' STATE TEXTBOOKS

by MELISSA WRIGHT
ILLUSTRATION BY SHELBY HOHL



THE TEXAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION'S RECENT 7-7 SPLIT VOTE THAT BARELY ALLOWS TEXAS (AND THE NATION'S) TEXTBOOKS TO PRESENT EVOLUTION IS INDICATIVE OF THE EXTREME POLITICAL POLARIZATION THAT HAS OVERTAKEN OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

THE LIBERAL/CONSERVATIVE BICKERING regarding our science textbooks has overshadowed but should be drawing attention to an equally important issue: The importance of providing all of our history to our students.

American Exceptionalism describes the core American mantra that our unique origins and political institutions create a superior niche among nations that we alone inhabit. The American Dream promises prosperity to all who are willing to work hard. Manifest Destiny is a historical term that has evolved over time and today refers to the concept that America's mission is to expand, promote, and defend democracy across the world. I shorthand this conceptual triumvirate as The American Ethos.

The American Ethos has damaged the psyches of generations of American students, possibly irrevocably, and its ideological ground zero is the Texas State Board of Education.

Students are intelligent, curious, and sense narrative leaks. They are able to see that many aspects of our society are structured in ways that keep the poor poor and the wealthy wealthy. Students question The American Ethos when it doesn't match their own observations and experiences. When questioning students turn to their history textbooks, the very books purporting to explain how and why America is what it is, their questions remain unanswered.

Textbooks hammer The American Ethos into the developing minds of students year after mind-numbing year. Parents, teachers, politicians, counselors, and everyone else in authority echo these sentiments almost religiously, attempting to instill hope for themselves and pride in their country. When these messages directly conflict with the world that students actually see, a cognitive dissonance regarding their place within their own culture develops.

Because the human mind will stop at nothing to resolve cognitive dissonance, whatever piece of a student's mind questions or argues with The American Ethos is eventually silenced. Students begin to subconsciously believe that those who don't achieve success must not be worthy of it. This, I believe, is the root cause of racism. Even worse, when a student's family is unsuccessful, the student has no choice but to conclude that the fault is theirs. Because, after all, if he and his can't achieve the "success available to all," no matter how hard they try, the problem must lie within them. Self-esteem is eradicated, self-hatred begins, and these conditions are often life-long without the student even knowing why.

The American Ethos drumbeat takes its toll.

Students who are lucky enough to, later in life, learn about the darker parts of our history that our textbooks eliminate often develop a certain resentment towards towards their own country for those lies of omission. When (if) students discover that the historical narrative holes they sensed are filled with things as ugly as the Tuskegee syphilis experiments, indigenous genocide, and Japanese American internment camps, they become ashamed of their own American heritage, distrustful of authority, and irate with The American Ethos programming to which their textbooks and authority figures relentlessly subjected them.

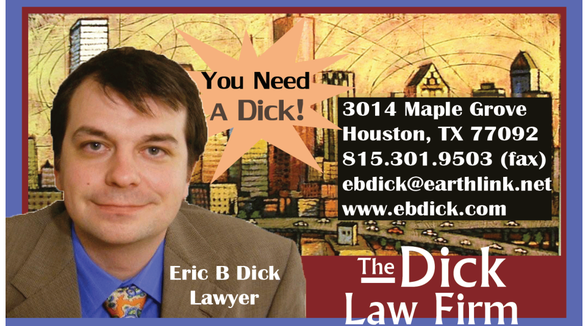
Because there is no discussion during history education, no opportunity to develop critical thinking skills exists. Due to the resulting lack of critical thinking skills, once students find out more about our history, the cognitive dissonance appears again. As a result, they swing to one extreme or the other: They either continue feeling defective, useless, and hopeless, or they fill with impotent rage and resentment. Neither product is ideal.

The treatment our history textbooks and curricula give to The American Ethos has inadvertently prevented the development of critical thinking skills in and convinced generations of students that either they are fundamentally defective or America is. This is a false dichotomy that we've been teaching our children for generations.

The time has come to change American History education for the better. America is a great country for many reasons, and one of the most important is how/what we learn from our missteps and darker periods. The American Ethos doesn't allow this. Our students deserve to learn about everything that makes America great, and we cannot continue to allow the perceived benefits of our current method of American Ethos indoctrination to prevent this. **FPH**

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WHAT NOW?

by M. MARTIN

THE PASSAGE OF THE RECENT "HEALTH CARE REFORM" LEGISLATION IS MORE THAN A LITTLE REMINISCENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARIES OF 2008.

IN BOTH CASES, a long and hard-fought battle was closely won — and in the process incorporated numerous compromises, repugnant to party Progressives, in order to win the the tepid support of the party's so-called conservatives.

Just as Democratic Nominee Barack Obama was a far more "centrist" figure than had initially been Candidate Obama (the adoption of that contemptible political prop, the American Flag lapel pin, pretty much let us all know what to expect), the government-mandated (if hardly supervised) transfer of wealth from the pockets of American citizens into the bank accounts of insurance companies bears only the vaguest resemblance to the "reforms" promised by Candidate Obama — or, indeed, any other Democratic Presidential contender from '08. Then, as now, progressives are left with the choice of supporting something that is only slightly better than boycotting the process altogether.

Another striking similarity is that both the 2008 Democratic Primary and the 2010 health insurance legislation are entirely Democratic affairs. Despite a year of futile efforts at "bipartisanship" and a Democratic passivity that enabled the worst of demagogues to take control of the public debate, not a single Republican voted in favor of a "reform" little different from what Richard Nixon once proposed — and essentially identical in structure to the measures passed in Massachusetts under the leadership of former GOP Governor Mitt Romney. Then, as now, the sole contribution of the Republican Party has been to ramp up the background noise of racist paranoia, once again convincing those most in need of progressive policies to vote and demonstrate against their own class interest.

What is different is that both the stakes and the consequences are far greater — and also that it is beginning to look like the Republican Party can no longer control what they have created. There has been a wave of real and threatened violence against legislators who voted for the reform act. Under other circumstances, it would be merely sad and amusing that anyone is sufficiently ill-informed as to regard this bill as some sort of harbinger of "socialism" in American society. But when the GOP's misinformed bubba brownshirts begin to take up arms against the supposed threat and act to overturn the democratic process through intimidation, it ceases to be a joke.

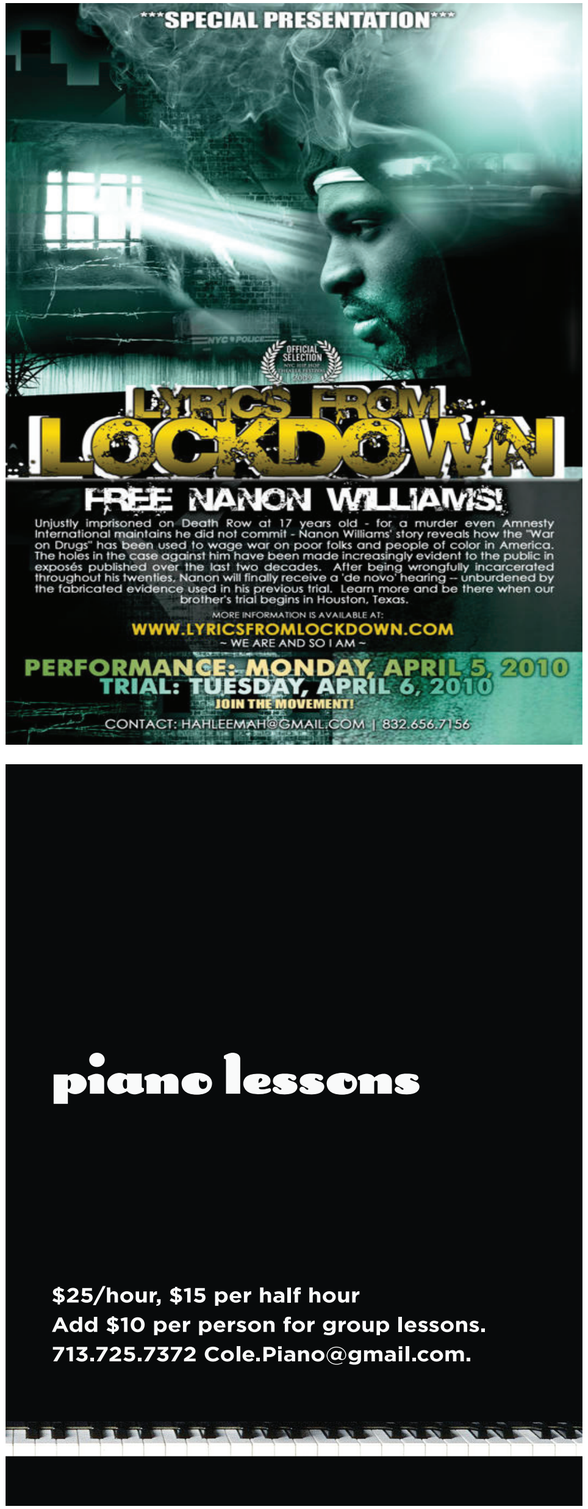
A proposed "Second Amendment March" on the April 19th anniversary of Timothy McVeigh's terrorist bombing in Oklahoma should tell any thinking American all they need to know about who is actually behind the "Tea Party" movement and give a pretty clear insight into their intentions. McVeigh was the product of the militia movement of the 90's, which was itself a clear reaction to the GOP's loss of power that started with the election of Bill Clinton. Even though the GOP was able to regain power in Congress and set much of the agenda in Clinton's Washington, the militia movements remained.

The militias would like have been renewed as a consequence of any Democrat becoming President. But when that Democrat happens to an African-American with the unlikely name of "Barack Hussein Obama", it can come as no surprise that they are back and bigger than ever.

So, really....what now? The GOP realized rather belated that they needed to distance themselves from the nutjobs they've spent the last two years funding and empowering. Accordingly, they've turned down their own rhetoric and instructed their toadies in the Mainstream Media to accuse Democrats of the deadly sin of "politicizing" the recent wave of violence by way of using it in campaign contribution solicitations. But with the 2010 midterm congressional elections looming into view, the GOP can no more cut loose their pet right-wing crazies than the Democrats, hurting from the self-inflicted wounds of the last year, can refrain from capitalizing on the GOP's reliance on thugs to re-energize their own base.

Absent another Oklahoma City Bombing, don't expect the GOP to disown their pet loonies anytime soon. If they are to buy back any measure of lost power in November, they need to to keep the irrational angers and resentments they've stirred up over the last year somewhere short of the boiling point. And even though the Democratic Party excels at passive and self-destructive ineffectualism, the same high stakes make it impossible for them to not exploit a possible backlash against GOP-sponsored extremism. Recent polls indicate that approval for the reform legislation began to escalate dramatically almost as soon as it passed. If these measures can have a noticeable impact on people's lives between now and the fall elections, there is a very real chance that usual midterm election gains experienced by the minority party could be offset this year.

But in order for the Democrats to turn this election into a third straight win, they are going to have to do more than paint the GOP as obstructionists and enablers of potential domestic terrorists — even though that ought to be more than enough. The Democratic Party, starting with their leader and current chief resident of the White House, need to start acting like they actually won the last election... and actually meant the things they said in order to win. FPH



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SPACE JAM

OCCUPANCY FLAWS: PART DEUX

by OMAR AFRA | ILLUSTRATION BY TIM DORSEY

THE MANY INCONSISTENCIES IN THE CITY OF HOUSTON'S BUILDING OCCUPANCY LAWS HAVE RAMIFICATIONS FAR BEYOND THE ONES THAT EFFECT BUSINESS OWNERS AS LAID OUT IN THE FIRST PART OF THIS SERIES.



COULD YOU BELIEVE these ordinances actually encourage people to drive to bars as opposed to walking, taking mass transit, riding their bikes, or taking cabs? Simply put, City of Houston requires a bar to facilitate many more parking spots and hence more drivers. Why would a bar be required to have more parking spots than any other business if the city has any interest in deterring drunk driving? This is a question I simply could not get answered.However, I did get Alvin Wright, the director of the Public Information Office of Houston Public Works, to answer a few questions.His answers were straightforward and concise yet were missing any analysis as he is not a maker of policy, rather an applier of policy.Nonetheless, you can extract the simple fact from his answers that the city would do well to analyze the transit trends in respective neighborhoods and custom fit parking requirements accordingly.

THE CITY OF HOUSTON REQUIRES MORE PARKING SPOTS FOR A BAR THAN IT DOES FOR A RETAIL BUSINESS OF THE SAME SIZE. DOES INCREASED PARKING AVAILABILITY AT A BAR ENCOURAGE DRINKING AND DRIVING? ¶ Bars are usually places for social gatherings such as parties so more parking is required for them. Retail shop customers come and go in short periods of time. Chapter 26 of the code of ordinances establishes the number of spaces based on the use. The table can be found in Chapter 26 of the code of ordinances. The ordinance does not address what occurs at those establishments.

THE CITY OF HOUSTON MAKES INCREASED ALLOWANCES FOR CAPACITY AND OCCUPANCY OF A BUILDING BASED UPON THE AMOUNT OF PARKING FOR CARS BUT DOES NOT MAKE ALLOWANCES FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT, BICYCLES, OR FOOT TRAFFIC. WHY ARE THERE NO SUCH ALLOWANCES? ¶ There is no measureable way to account for on-street parking associated with a bar or a retail shop. Parking spaces is one method to determine occupancy for a business.

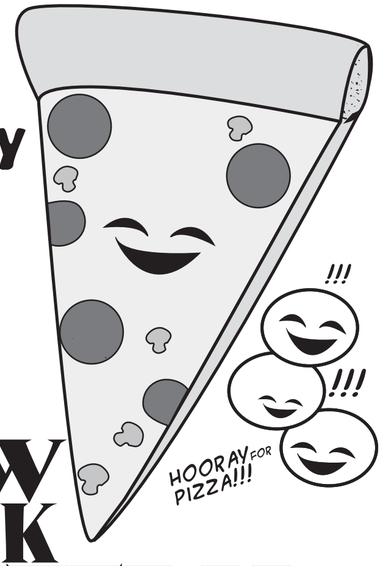
There is a way to make an allowance. A business can seek a variance to the parking ordinance. Those hearings are heard by the Houston Planning Commission which meets bi-weekly. They have granted variances if the requestor presents evidence that a lesser amount of parking spaces will be needed.

WHY NOT LET BUSINESSES USE STREET PARKING IN OBTAINING OCCUPANCY PERMITS? ¶ We can't accurately determine who parks on street to patronize a business. In many areas, this would cause undue hardship to the surrounding area and make it difficult for emergency vehicles to pass. Off street parking is required.

WHAT LAWS CAN THE CITY CHANGE TO PROMOTE GREEN FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION? ¶ All ordinances can be contested via the council committee meets. Held routinely.

More next month... FPH

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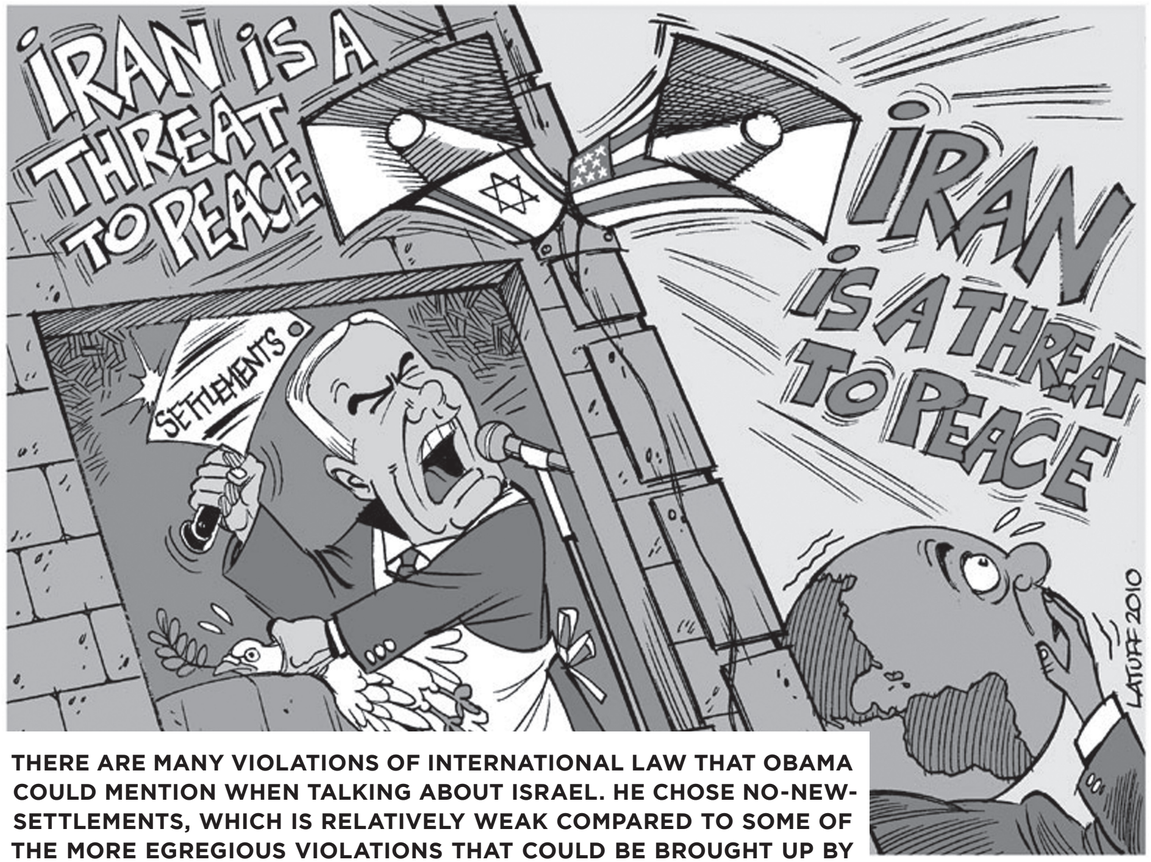
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RHETORICAL BATTLE ABOUT SETTLEMENTS

by NICK, NICKCOOPER.COM



THERE ARE MANY VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW THAT OBAMA COULD MENTION WHEN TALKING ABOUT ISRAEL. HE CHOSE NO-NEW-SETTLEMENTS, WHICH IS RELATIVELY WEAK COMPARED TO SOME OF THE MORE EGREGIOUS VIOLATIONS THAT COULD BE BROUGHT UP BY ANY SO-CALLED "HONEST BROKER" IN THE MIDEAST.

BUT, OBAMA AND THE US are not honest brokers. We are pretty upfront about it, preferring the word 'special' to 'honest' when we describe our relationship to Israel. Obama said the other day "Israel is one of our closest allies, and we and the Israeli people have a special bond that's not going to go away." 'Special' here implies, at the very least, that our bond with Israel is stronger than our bond with Palestine. Maybe we should appoint some other "honest broker" since our bond seems out of balance.

While it is surprising that Obama, Clinton and Biden have actually gone as far as they have to condemn Israeli disobedience, it is simultaneously a smoke-screen for business as usual policies. While these policies mean constant suffering for those living in occupied territory, waiting for action, Israelis seem to lack any sense of urgency. Rhetorical intensity from the U.S., even at shocking levels, doesn't compensate for a lack of real demands for substantive change.

Many seemed convinced that AIPAC, America's pro-Israel lobby, is so powerful that nothing can be done. Instead of treating it like any other powerful group, people bestow AIPAC with supernatural powers. It is true that there are some dark forces in Washington that seem capable of running politicians out one way or another. If AIPAC is indeed some mafia capable of having Obama impeached or otherwise silenced, the no-new-settlements line-in-the-sand is probably about as much as he can get away with.

Of the many issues involved in any potential Israel / Palestine peace process — existing settlements on Palestinian land, water rights, borders, refugees, and Jerusalem — Obama has chosen to focus on one, new settlements. Obama's choice may be a good one in the sense that twice as many Americans support a settlement freeze as oppose one according to the latest Rasmussen poll. Had he chosen something much more complicated like the drawing of borders, or dealing with refugees, most Americans would be confused by the details. If he had demanded something much tougher like the right of return, fewer checkpoints, equal citizenship for all Palestinians and Israelis, or ending use of certain types of illegal munitions, he would have to contend with charges of "impossible due to security concerns," "caving into terrorism," or "anti-Semitism." But, no-new-settlements is just so reasonable, even to the average American, that it's almost impossible to discredit. It's a good wedge issue because it's simple, reasonable, and hard to dismiss.

Over time, the American public may galvanize against the injustice of the settlements, but it wouldn't be quick. This is frustrating for those worried about those suffering right now. In health-care and Israel / Palestine, if Obama's compromises don't do much, or outright fail, it is hard to imagine the public supporting another such mandate any time soon. **FPH**



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March For Dignity and Reform on Houston's East Side in Solidarity with March on DC

by Hector A. Chavana, Jr. (Tlacaelel) of OurNewAnahuac.net

The March For Dignity and Reform provided a platform for Houston organizers and residents to sound off about their support for Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR). Chants of "Obama Escucha Estamos En La Lucha" and "Nuestra Tierra" rang out. The March started at the corner of Canal and Cesar Chavez and progressed to Hidalgo Park. The gracious hosts from "The Coalition" have hit back to back jonrones, after the well attended event last Saturday with Luis Jimenez.

Maria Jimenez, addressed the crowd live from Washington DC, where the big march took place. Pancho Arguelles reminded us that peoples' movements are continually told that victory is impossible, pointing to the people's struggle in Bolivia which produced an indigenous president after "500 years" of oppression. Ajua.

Victor Ibarra from Alianza Mexicana, Henry Cooper from the radio show Proyecto Latinoamericano and other usual suspects, myself included, gave our flavor of revolution, reform and prayer. Mike Espinoza and Maria Xiquin, along with scores of SEIU members lent nola.indymedia.org their support, while Teodoro Aguiluz proclaimed that CRECEN had sent 14 people to Washington DC along with many, many others from Houston.

3/22 Mistrial for Immigrant Rights Activist Rama Carty

by Austin Indymedia

The trial of immigrant rights activist Rama Carty ended in a mistrial Friday afternoon (March 19th, 2010). Carty, who led hunger strikes last summer at the Port Isabel Detention Center in south Texas, was being charged with assaulting immigrant detention guards while being forceably hand-cuffed during a transfer to another detention center. Carty has consistently claimed that it was he, and not the officers, that was the victim of the assault in the incident.

The day before the alleged assault, Amnesty International visited Carty about the conditions at immigrant detention centers and the hunger strike in which Mr. Carty was participating with other detainees. Following this visit by Amnesty International, Immigration and Customs Enforcement transferred Rama Carty to another detention center in Jena, Louisiana.

Rama Carty spoke with Austin Indymedia the night before the trial about why he believes the government has charges against him. The Federal Government has not announced yet if there will be a re-trial of Rama Carty for assault. Mr. Carty is currently fighting his deportation and speaking out against immigrant detention.

3/20 Report on Anti-War Rally at Mason Park

by David and Rona

Thanks to the 45-50 people who participated in yesterday's anti-war rally at Mason Park despite the rain and the cold. The weather was so awful that we were delighted that we didn't have to cancel the event altogether. Instead, we were able to have a nice little gathering under the gazebo. All things considered, we think it went pretty well.

We didn't see any coverage on TV 11, whose camera man was present early in the rally. However, there is an Associated Press article in the Houston Chronicle today which reports on the large protest in Washington, D.C. and also mentions the rally in Houston and actions in other cities. Art from the Green Party has posted a nice video clip of our event on this website, and we urge everyone to check it out.

3/16 Urgent Action Needed: Unjustly Accused Mexican Still in Danger

The Houston Chapter of Friends of Brad Will, a network of activists demanding accountability for the murder of our friend, U.S. journalist Brad Will, is calling for your important human rights assistance in the case of the man unjustly accused of the crime. Meanwhile, the off-duty police who were shown on video to be Brad's true assassins are still on the job.

Juan Manuel was released from the Ixcotel prison on the 18th of February after spending 16 months unjustly accused of murdering the North American journalist, Bradley Roland Will on Oct. 27th 2006. For quite some time, Juan Manuel and his family have received threats and intimidation. While in prison he was often threatened and told, "Remember, you have a wife and three kids". The threats and intimidations continue today which make it important to take action in order to live in peace and freedom. This is why we are demanding the physical and psychological protection of Juan Manuel Martínez Moreno and his wife, children, brothers, sisters, and parents. See: friendsofbradwill.org

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3/14 Israeli Apartheid Week at UH round up

by SDS Media Team

Students for a Democratic Society at the University of Houston hosted a week of events marking Israeli Apartheid Week.

In addition to the panels, we held a street theater demonstration on campus on Tuesday (link includes coverage by Daily Cougar and Jewish Herald Voice), and a demonstration against Caterpillar on Friday their sales of bulldozers used to build apartheid to the Israeli Military and in observance of the murder of Rachel Corrie by the IDF driving Caterpillar bulldozers.

The goal of Israeli Apartheid Week is to draw attention to Israels policies against Palestinians, and encourage a Boycott, Divest and Sanctions strategy to push for justice in Israel/Palestine.

3/11 First Texas SFA Regional Encuentro A Success

by Texas SFA

The first-ever Texas SFA Regional Encuentro brought students and youth from cities accross Central, South and North Texas to the University of Houston for a weekend of strategizing, conviviendo and taking action around the CIW-led Campaign for Fair Food.

Saturday's Encuentro started with an introduction to SFA, CIW, and the Campaign for Fair Food. We had folks brand new to the campaign as well as veteran@s from the days of the Taco Bell Boycott - including UTSA, where mechistas successfully organized to keep Taco Bell off their campus [PDF] - who shared history and their reflection on what SFA and the CIW have meant to them over the years. The most exciting part of our Encuentro on Saturday was the March to Kroger in the afternoon. Over 20 students and community allies marched the streets of Houston passing out cards to people in the community and putting pressure on the local Kroger. We were kicked off the Kroger property by the manager and then monitored by the police but we were able to get the manager to talk to us and make a couple of calls to his supervisors. People in the local community came out and were supportive of the rally. Several shoppers turned away after we passed out information on why we were protesting.

3/1 Four decades of peace on Houston's airwaves

KPFT was started in about 1968 by a group of people who thought Houston was in dire need of a Pacifica station. Larry Lee, KPFT's founder, organized other people, raised money, and persuaded Pacifica to apply for a Houston license. After much difficulty, KPFT went on the air on March 1, 1970.

The political climate of Houston in 1970 was repressive. The Vietnam War and the protests it spawned were at their height. There were numerous attacks against alternative or underground groups in Houston as well as against various civil rights organizations. KPFT went on the air with controversial programming and was twice bombed off the air in its first eight months of operation, first on May 12, 1970, and again on October 6, 1970. KPFT received massive publicity after the first bombing.

KPFT just completed their winter pledge drive this weekend raising 261,000 dollars, 95% of the goal. This included a pledge of $400 delivered with a brick by a self-described Klansman.

Houston Indymedia began a program on KPFT in 2002 covering local news and social justice struggles in Houston and across the globe. Our show continues to this day, airing every Friday at 7:30pm. Many of the radio shows reports are uploaded to the news wire and on to the Radio Page. Thanks to everyone who pledged to support us this past pledge drive!

Willacy County "Tent City2/26 "Dignity Not Detention" Campaign Calls for Closure of South Texas Detention Centers

Faith leaders, formerly detained immigrants, and human rights activists from across Texas today participated in an action and letter-delivery as part of a launch of a "Dignity, Not Detention" campaign. Activists gathered to call on Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to close two south Texas detention centers – the Willacy County "Tent City" detention center and the Port Isabel Detention Center (PIDC). Both facilities have been racked by allegations of human rights abuses, and PIDC has been the site of hunger strikes lead by detained immigrants over conditions of confinement and due process concerns.

Activists delivered a letter to ICE outlining their demands along with a petition by hunger-strikers. The protest included members of Grassroots Leadership, Southwest Workers Union, Texans United for Families and other groups.

Over 300,000 immigrants a year are detained in a secretive web of 350 private, federal, state and local jails, and prisons at an annual cost of more than $1.7 billion to taxpayers. Over 10% of detained immigrants in the U.S. are held in these two detention centers in Texas. The more than 4,000 immigrants detained at these facilities are held in conditions considered to be substandard by numerous human rights organizations.

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GROTESQUE & PARALYZING

by SWAY YOUNGSTON

WHILE HOUSTON IS A SMORGASBORD OF ART AND CULTURE, NO CREATIVE OUTLET IN THIS CITY HAS EVER THRILLED AND APPALLED ME LIKE PERFORMANCE ART. THANK HEAVEN THIS ART FORM IS NOW BEING CULTIVATED IN OUR FAIR CITY.

IN 2007, Elia Arce, a veteran of the decadent 80s LA performance art scene, designed a course at the University of Houston, *Performance Art Lab*, that continued for four semesters. Students enrolled in the course were guided through exploratory exercises designed to intensify their creativity- yielding shocking and fantastically grotesque performances. From that wonderful, festering fetus grew projects that touch everyone's lives in downtown Houston



Most notably, Julia Wallace teamed up with other artists to birth the guerrilla project *Sexy Attack*. According to Sexy Attack's blog (sexyattack.blogspot.com); "Sexy Attack is a two-minute and fifty-two-second sexually invigorating group movement inspired by Eric Prydz' erotic workout music video." As they brought their writing performance to the streets, some businesses - River Oaks Theater and Greenway Palace Theater among others- weren't too keen on having risqué movements and pounding techno brought into their establishments unannounced. Sexy Attack's viral videos spawned copycats across the US and their fair share of detractors.

Performance Art Lab metastasized into a killer party/art show/night of insanity called *Rainbow Evil Death Blood Fuck* at The Foundry in May 2009, featuring blood wrestling, mermaids in vitrines, interpretive dance, performance art, and plenty of booze to wash it all down.

Another ridiculously awesome project with which the Performance Art folks have blessed Houston was seen at Free Press Houston Summerfest in the oppressive heat of August 2009. Eleanor Tinsley Park's steep hill provided the force for a multi-colored paint slip-n-slide conceptualized by Patrick O'Brien. As streaks of the rainbow blended from the bodies of sliders to become a dirty purple, a passerby grabbed a hose, hosed down festival-goers and watched as folks shot down the tarp to the muddy pit accumulating below.

Since Summerfest, PAL (Performance Art Lab) has taken a more organized role in the formation of Performance Art Night at Notsuoh, helmed by the denizen of Houston performance art- Jim Pirtle. Pirtle is infamous for giving himself wine enemas, puking entire containers of salsa and reciting gibberish, dada poetry. PAL founder Julia Wallace expressed to me that she founded Performance Art Night "to create a platform for experimental performance; as a way of introducing the medium". Many of the early performers were students of the original course, but events became more popular with local artists - including myself - who were infants in the performance scene, and we were invited to contribute their creative expressions

After six successful Performance Art Nights, the events were moved from Notsuoh to the alternative art space, El Rincon Social. According to curator Julia Wallace, "our exhibitions include works that explore the shocking, intimate, sexual, provocative, simple and spiritual" nature of performance art. Recent PAL artists include: Daniel Adame, Jacob Calle, Aisen Caro Chacin, Bethany Fort, Melanie Jamison, Travis Kerschen, Brian and Stevie McCord, Patrick O'Brien, John Richie, John Sambrano, Emily Sloan and NICKTEEL. Information on performances found at performancearthouston.blogspot.com. From its first genus as a vehicle for the expansive teaching of Elia Arce to today, performance art has blossomed in the fertile soil of Houston. If history is any indicator, we'll have- at least- blood, sex, and rainbows to look forward to. FPH



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