FREE PRESS

HOUSTON

MUSIC - NEWS - PUBLIC OPINION - ARTS - EVENTS

Issue 67
07/06

The price of fuel continues to rise

Happy 4th of July

Houston History: A Laughing Matter,

Summer Sucks !!!

The War on Children,

Video Games Live: Preview,

Summer of Love,

Free Press Houston
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super happy fun land

June 28th:
Peter & the Wolf
Listen Listen
Inoculist

June 29th:
Astronautalis
Maaster Gaiden
The Generic Tribe
News Travels Fast

June 30th
Regg Solo
Jeremiah David
In The Pocket

July 1st:
Quintron and Miss Pussycat

July 2nd:
Michael Draper Art Opening 7pm-9pm

July 2nd:
The Twilight Showdown
PLID
Provision

July 3rd:
Ballroom Dancing
The Lion's Lunch
The Cocker Spaniels
The Bluebirds
The Dimes

July 6th:
Chris Hamlett
Vinyl Dharma
Ballroom Dancing

July 7th:
Carla Bozulich
Dead Science
Anni Rossi
Friendship Bracelet

July 8th:
Open Dialog on Education Workshop
(organized by The Real School a.k.a.
Dragon Valley) 2pm-5pm

July 8th:
Wordstock
Featuring NW, Shay, Blue and Moses
Coachwood and Poetry Open Mic

July 9th:
Notes
North
Headwhurk

July 11th:
Djizoes: (Switzerland)
The End of Silence
Lanterns
Artistry of Warfare

July 12th:
The Low Ends
D-Rail
Tha Fucking Transmissions
Brains for Dinner

...TUBULAR...

July 13th:
The Build, Matchstick

July 14th:
Ennui Jolt, The Boxing Lesson
Since Always, Tzar Bomba

July 15th:
Extemp-O-Rama sponsored by Jam Houston
BlaBat w/Jarle Lillemoen of Austin's "Grass"
Muzak John
Friendship Bracelet, Drop Trio

July 16th:
Awesome Cool Dudes, Zom Zoms, Mystechs
Like, Whatever

July 17th:
Dust From 1000 Years

July 18th:
Park

July 19th:
W-S Burn, Poopy Lungstuffing

July 20th:
Harmonious Monk
Jimmy Smith, Mt. Gigantic, Ooga Booga

Friday July 21:
Supersonic Regulators, Latin Dynasty
Skandhas

Sat July 22nd:
The Asylum Street Spankers
Doors open at 7pm show at 8pm
(2-60 minute sets - $15)

July 23rd:
Ferveur Noire, Gil San Marcos
TEF, Dot Heaven

July 24th:
Treasure Mammal, Asleep in the Sea

July 25th:
EL OLIO WOLOF
The Red Faced Laughter
Shine Shunshine

July 26th:
Cosmogirl
Fortress of Attitude

Thursday July 27th:
Jay, Leatherbag and the Cows
Jude/Ross

David Israel and the Elders of Zion

July 28th:
Kristi Rae, Raj Pickens
Obed-Edom, Dimas, Paige,
Clock Hands Strangle

July 29th:
Girls Rise With Heat

July 31st:
Wildebeest
The Bluebirds
Rabbit Haven
Hussy Hicks

Super Happy Fun Land is Houston's venue for experimental electronic music, underground jazz and outsider art, featuring: Patio & Outdoor Stage, The SHFL Theater 2/ room for 200 folks, The Super Happy Fun Cafe, The SHFL Art Gallery. Available for fundraisers & private parties

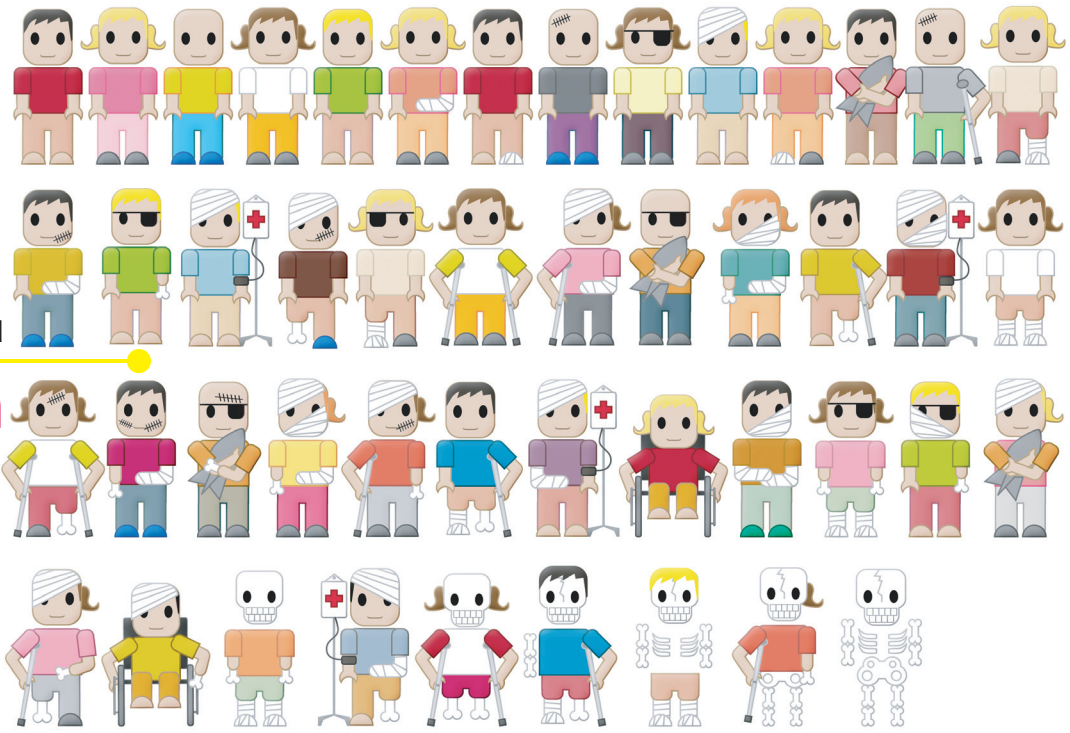
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| Cover Art: Carlos Latuff

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Letter from the Editor

Goodness Gracious.

It is fucking amazing that the *New York Times* is under fire for printing an article that reveals a "secret" anti-terrorist program that surprisingly enough follows overseas bank records. Republican lawmakers are calling for the paper to be indicted under an anti-espionage statute from 1917. Watch this one closely kiddos, it very well may be the single precedent the reptilian warlords are seeking for carte blanche to put the hammer down on the press whenever they deem their content to be "a national security issue." Or, I could just be paranoid. Time will tell.

In more pressing matters: If my anus were large enough, I would take an enormous dump on the entire city of Bellaire. Fuck Bellaire Police Department. Also, as is customary in July, let us smite the wretched name that is Reliant Energy. If Reliant were one person, I would make him pick up his teeth with broken fingers. Now that that is said, lets move on and spread some loving-kindness.

Local editor Alex Wukman is single again. He is now accepting applications for a new lady friend. All qualified applicants at least 17 and a half years in age must submit a 1,000 word essay as to why they deserve the whirlwind of sexual prowess that is Wukman. Essays must be received in triplicate no later than July 23. Space is limited so act fast Send to alexlovesboobies@freepresshouston.com

Death to the infidels,

Editors

The following is a brutal exchange on Free Press' myspace.com message board. It is simply too profound and eloquent not to be made public. Beware as it is rife with misogynist rhetoric, racial ephitets and bad taste. Get clutch. Now. Sansabelt slacks.

Dear the two drunk cunts at Electric Eel Shock the other night (Trixie and Sonya, apparently),

Nobody paid to see you repeatedly grab the microphone away from the band so you could babble nonsense all night long. I would point out the painfully obvious parallels about what it'd be like if someone came to where you work and slapped the dicks out of your mouths, but that's a cliche ten times over, and besides that I am a gentleman. At any rate, paying a cover and drinking three bottles of wine does not make you more entertaining than Electric Eel Shock.

Sincerely,

Common Sense

FUCK THE MINK

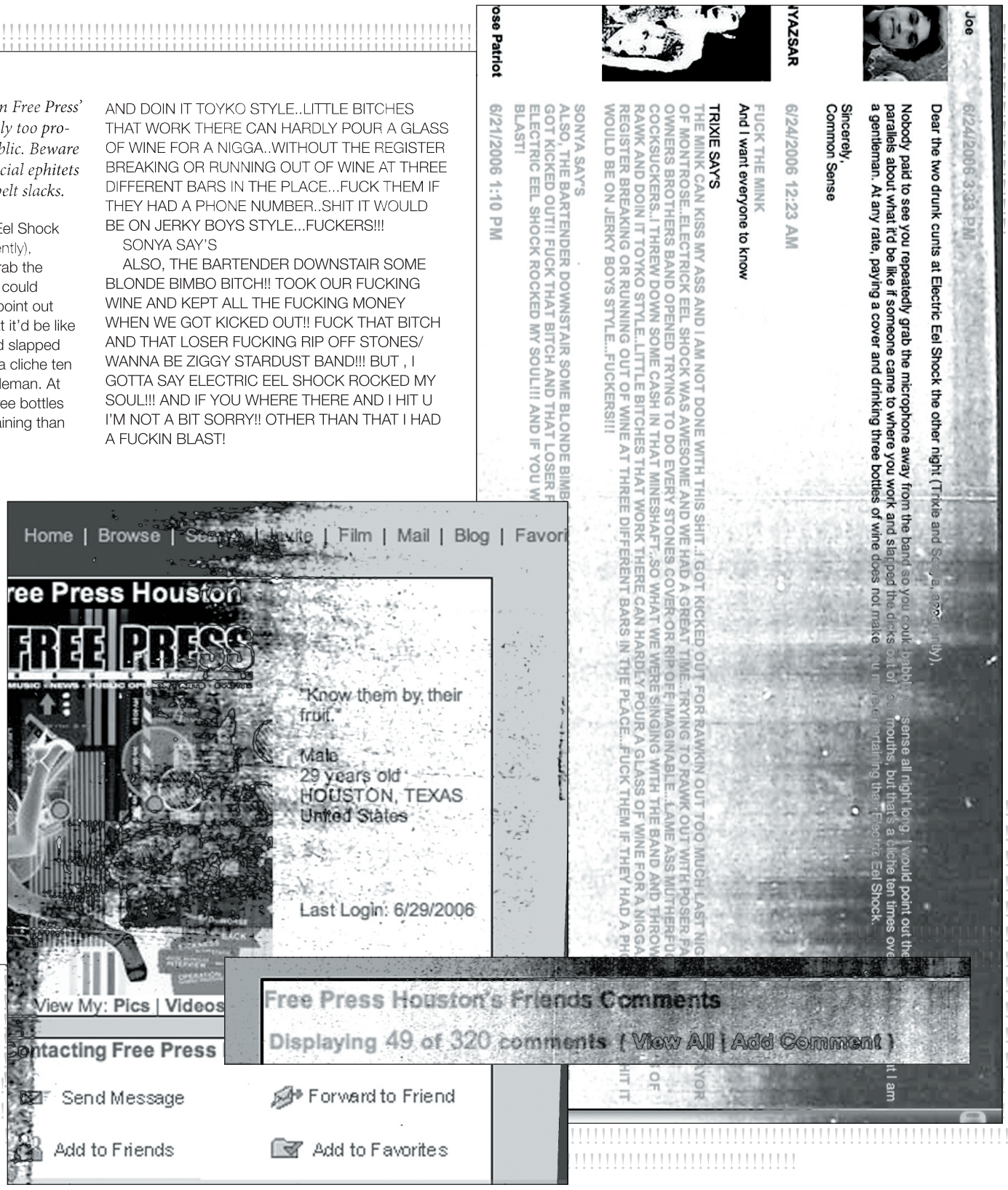
And I want everyone to know

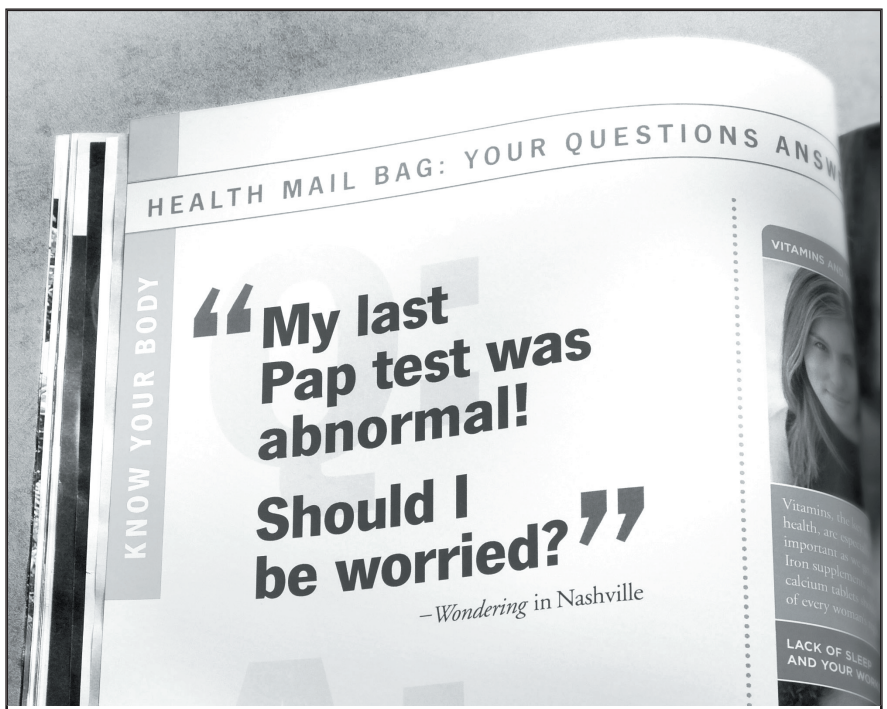
TRIXIE SAY'S

THE MINK CAN KISS MY ASS AND I AM NOT DONE WITH THIS SHIT..I GOT KICKED OUT FOR RAWKIN OUT TOO MUCH LAST NIGHT WITH THE MAYOR OF MONTROSE..ELECTRICK EEL SHOCK WAS AWESOME AND WE HAD A GREAT TIME..TRYING TO RAWK OUT WITH POSER FAGGOTS. THE OWNERS BROTHERS BAND OPENED TRYING TO DO EVERY STONES COVER OR RIP OFF IMAGINABLE...LAME ASS MUTHERFUCKIN COCKSUCKERS..I THREW DOWN SOME CASH IN THAT MINESHAFT..SO WHAT WE WERE SINGING WITH THE BAND AND THROWING THE HORNS OF RAWK AND DOIN IT TOYKO STYLE..LITTLE BITCHES THAT WORK THERE CAN HARDLY POUR A GLASS OF WINE FOR A NIGGA..WITHOUT THE REGISTER BREAKING OR RUNNING OUT OF WINE AT THREE DIFFERENT BARS IN THE PLACE...FUCK THEM IF THEY HAD A PHONE NUMBER..SHIT IT WOULD BE ON JERKY BOYS STYLE...FUCKERS!!!

SONYA SAY'S

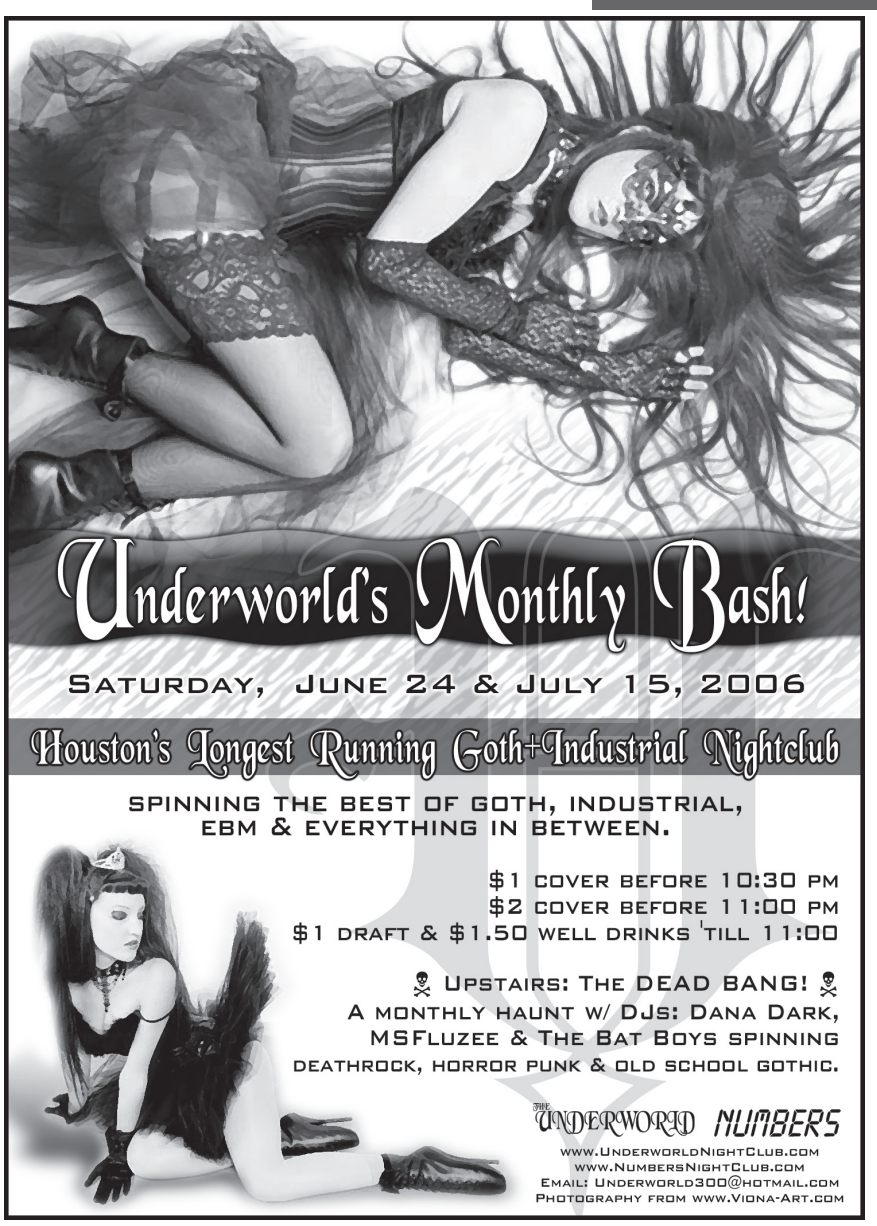
ALSO, THE BARTENDER DOWNSTAIR SOME BLONDE BIMBO BITCH!! TOOK OUR FUCKING WINE AND KEPT ALL THE FUCKING MONEY WHEN WE GOT KICKED OUT!! FUCK THAT BITCH AND THAT LOSER FUCKING RIP OFF STONES/ WANNA BE ZIGGY STARDUST BAND!!! BUT , I GOTTA SAY ELECTRIC EEL SHOCK ROCKED MY SOUL!!! AND IF YOU WHERE THERE AND I HIT U I'M NOT A BIT SORRY!! OTHER THAN THAT I HAD A FUCKIN BLAST!





It's not uncommon to worry about an abnormal Pap test result, which could be caused by a number of things. This includes high-risk HPV (Human Papillomavirus), a common sexually transmitted infection which may cause problems of the cervix, and rarely, even cancer. A medical research study for women with cervical high-risk HPV is being conducted by physicians in your area. To find out more, call Planned Parenthood of Houston and SE Texas, Inc. at (713) 831-6561 or visit www.indigo4women.com today.

INDIGO
for women's health





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DEBRIS: Baudrillard's Beach

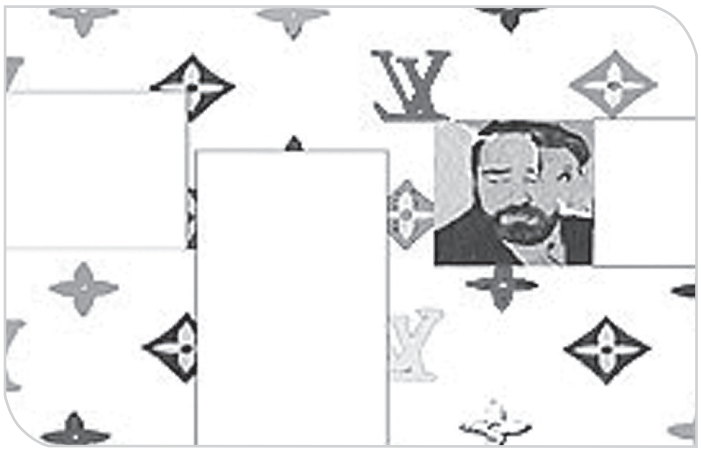
Buffalo Sean



Play!
Commerce St Artist Warehouse 2315 Commerce
Through July. (713) 236-0359



Michael Draper
Super Happy Fun Land 2610 Ashland
July 2nd 7pm 713 880 2100



Jason Kunke & Jason Villegas: What I Learned My First Year in Grad School
Buffalo Bayou Art Park 5106 Center Street
Through July 21. (713) 502-9454



Gavin Perry / Christopher Deeton
Barbara Davis Gallery • 4411 Montrose
Reception July 8, 6:30 pm 713 520 9200

From BBAP's new show that opens June 30th: "Two of Houston's youngest and hottest artists--Jason Kunke and Jason Villegas--report back from their first year in Grad School (Cal Arts and Rutgers respectively) to tell us what, if anything, this mountain of debt has taught them." Visit the show during the next Buffalo Bayou Art Park Slide Show Happy Hour; Friday July 7th from 7:30 till 9- three artists including Diana-Sofia Estrada (just out of her Diverseworks social experiment) and Frank Olson's dizzying power-point explanation of BLOWJACK. Oh, and free beer too. 5106 Center Street.

It is the hour of the giant group shows, as these monsters balloon out of control like city budgets Try to get out to something small and intimate. It's like we're having art fair weeds. These lists are friggin' enormous, they must be shrunken…

Poissont Gallery 5102 Center Street; June 30th from 6-9 pm. "*Off The Wall* is an exhibition that allows the art collector the opportunity to take the work home the same day the purchase is made. The work will then be replaced by another selection, making this shows an ever changing event." Sounds like the best work will be gone pretty soon.



Robert Tracey Brown, Nina Craig, Jonathan Davies, Jeff Dell, Susan Dory, Daniel Dove, Mary Fischer, Paul Flippen, Seneca Garcia, Eric Gibbons, Tommy Gregory, Dan Havel, George Hixson, Rick Illingworth, Sam Jones, Joyce Joe, Michael King, Jawshing Arthur Liou, Lee Littlefield, Liza Littlefield, Jason Makepeace, Che Mandala, Marjorie Moore, Carrie Olsen, Mari Omori, Randall Reid, Patrick Renner, Anthony Shumate, William Steen, Prince Thomas, Laine Whitcomb, Joshua Y'Barbo, Carol Gerhardt, as well as some surprises.

Diverseworks Luck of the Draw 5 July 13th, 6:30-8pm Participating Artists: Daniel Adame, Seth Alverson, Claire Ankenman, Andis Applewhite, Paul Arensmeyer, Cameron Armstrong, David Aylsworth, Hillevi Baar, Robert Barrientes, Maggi Battalino, Deborah Lynn Bay, Angela Beloian, Blakely Bering, Robin Berwick, William Betts, David Brown, Evie Browning, Christine Bruni Fondren, Scott Burns, Scott Calhoun, Grady Carter, Magdalen Celestino, Penny Cerling, Candelario Cervantez, Isabelle Scurry Chapman, David Chien, Hazuki Chino, Kristin Cliburn, David Cobb, Lucinda Cobley, Jason Colburn, Rachel Cook, Miguel Cortez, Rene Cruz, Claire Cusack, Leila Dallal, Bill Davenport, Sasha Dela, Nancy Diamond, Greg Donner, Donna Durbin, Jonathan Durham, Jane Eifler, Brenda Emery, Sharon Englestein, Diana Sofia Estrada, Russell Etchen, Daniel Fabian, Joey Fauerso, Orna Feinstein, Amy Ferrari, Kristin Flanagan, Heyd Fontenot, Angela Fraleigh, Francesca Fuchs, Tony Gaines, Lynn Ganschinietz, Dixie Friend Gay, Ryan Geiger, Thomas Glass, Lisa Marie Godfrey, Michael Godoy, Lisa Graham, Lane Hagood, Kathy Hall, Mary Margaret Hansen, Erika Harrsch, Ellen Hart, Dan Havel, Mary Hawkins, Rachel Hecker, Michael H. Henderson, Patricia Hernandez, Trish Herrera, J Hill, Patrick Holderfield, Keith J. R. Hollingsworth, Vinod Hopson, Perry House, Thomas A. Hughen, Allison Hunter, Austin James, Terrell James, Sara Kellner, Michael King, Tina Kotrla, Jason Kunke, Bonnie Lambourn, Laura Lark, Cody Ledvina, Vicky Lee, Wendy Levine, Zane Lewis, Bert L. Long Jr., Begoña Lopez, Gile Lyon, Alyssa Mallett, Tierney Malone, Carrie Markello, Arielle Masson, Amanda Matt, David McGee, Michael Jones McKean, Michael Meazell, Lester Julian Merriweather, Arnold Mesches, Pen Morrison, Zach Moser, Carrie Moyer, Derek Mroz, Dennis Nance, Rebecca Novak, Teresa O'Connor, Mari Omori, McKay Otto, Adrian Page, Trevor Paglen, Patrick Palmer, Aaron Parazette, JoAnn Park, Eric Pearce, Mitch Pengra, Donna Perkins, Patrick Phipps, Barbara Pollack, John Pomara, Nadezda Prvulovic, George Ramirez, Paul Henry Ramirez, Ray Rapp, Jon Read, Debbie Riddle, Whitney Riley, Nina Rizzo, Susie Rosmarin, Yumi Janairo Roth, Dean Ruck, Lynne Rutzky, Chad Sager, Kellye Sanford, Chris Sauter, Dolan Smith, Al Souza, John Sparagana, Stephen Graham Starr, Ann Stautberg, J. Michael Stovall, Charles Tatum II, Andy Taylor, Martha J. Terrill, Frank X. Tolbert, Toby Topek, Rachelle Vasquez, Mark Dean Veca, Noel Waggener, Wendy Wagner, Linda Walsh, David Wang, Bob Warren, Allison N. Wiese, Hilary Wilder, Diane Wilkinson, Bill Willis, June Woest, Jill Wood, Eric Zapata, Marina Zurkow, Weihong, The Yes Men

I wanted to talk about Extremely Shorts 9, but I missed it. Aurora Picture Show takes a summer vacation for the month of July.

From Wayne Gilbert, "So, I have decided to have a small BBQ at my Studio/Home on July 8, 2006, for the first 125 people who contact me and submit payment.

continued pg. 7

The cost of the **"Bring it On BBQ"** fundraiser will be $250 per person. You will make out your checks to **"Kinky Friedman for Governor Campaign"** or have the option of paying by credit card. The festivities will begin at 7 pm. **PS, Kinky will be there Talkin', Eatin' and Speakin'.** The fixin's will be by Crawford's Custom Catering and the music will be provided by Dan Workman Productions. Ad Work by "Chuck Carlberg." There will also be a raffle for a piece of art. You can contact me at my email address wayne@digimg.com, Mobile 713-822-4842, or Daytime 713-802-9466."

Congratulations go out to Michael Bise, Soody Sharifi, Darryl Lauster, and Janaki Lennie on the opening of their first museum show. It's great to see local institutions picking up on Houston artists. *Perspectives 152: 4 Artists 4 Stories* at the Museum of Contemporary Art Houston runs through September 10th.

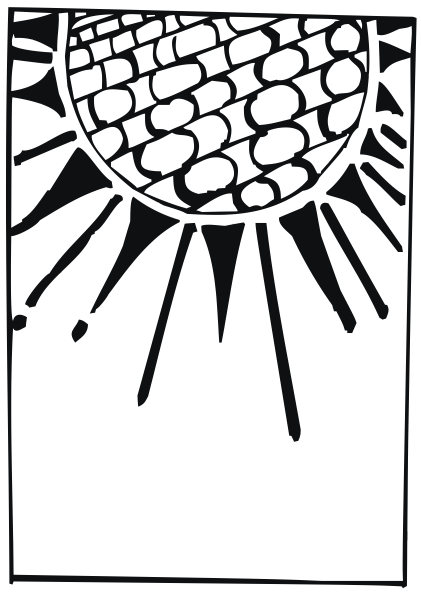
Darryl Lauster does double duty (two openings at once last Thursday) at Space 125 Gallery as well as the CAM. His work consists of photo-lithographic dinner plates- innocuously bland and printed in blue at 125; pointedly political and printed dark ochre at the CAM. Take your pick! *expositions* also features work by Angela Fraleigh and Beth Secor.

Break out the acid! Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* is at the Houston Museum of Natural Science all summer (till September 4th). From the press release: "Pink Floyd's legendary album returns this summer in full-dome, full-color computer animation, using all of the capacities of the Museum's new high-definition full-dome video system. Fantastic sound and incredible images create an unforgettable experience. It's not a laser show - but a totally new digital revolution in sight and sound - surrounding you, immersing you, losing you in the *Dark Side of the Moon*. If you loved the sound when you were a kid or you're a kid just finding Floyd, you must experience DSM under the Dome!" Haha… no really. If you're totally stoned or tripping your balls the science museum is the place to be.

Gilad Efrat and Carl Suddath break out of the CORE routine at Inman Gallery with a twofer show opening July 7th. Coming soon! Cats and Dogs at the MFA- paintings of cats and dogs. Cute, real cute. Michelle Hempton's A/V Film Swap will be up on the big screen Wednesday, July 26th at 7pm. A homegrown annual art project, the swap will be showing at the MFA! A real coup for small independent work. Everyone check their jeans. If they say 550 on them, throw 'em out. That's the worst shape pants can be. They make you look like you crapped your ass in a bag.

Summer Sucks III: Fast and Hot

David Ubias, Frances Trotter, YAR, Derek Shumate, David Chien, Elaine Bradford, Sasha Dela, Jenny Schlief, TubeZomZom, Nick Meriwether, Atton Paul



Saturday, July 29th 7:30- 11pm (when it's cooler)
Commerce Street Artists' Warehouse
2315 Commerce Street (cross the tracks)
Houston, TX 77002

Summer Sucks is the third installment of Aimee Jones' celebration of the hellacious summers in Houston through reckless abandon and contemporary art. The exhibition will present four installations by Elaine Bradford, David Chien, David Ubias in collaboration with Frances Trotter, and Derek Shumate with street artist YAR representing new talent and broadened expectations for Houston. Summer Sucks also features Sasha Dela, Rodney Elliot, Nick Meriwether, Jenny Schlief, The Turkeys, and TubeZomZom.

Elaine Bradford is determined to make this summer hotter than two rats in a wool sock- her innovative knit and crochet work covering environmental spaces, trees, and animal heads comforts and softens usually; but even their sight in one hundred degree weather can cause heat stroke. Elaine's work in last year's "Big Show" at the Lawndale really stole attention from lackluster award winners with it's bold lyricism and surreality. Self-effacing melting popsicles and soggy sugary snacks sliding off spray-painted doors prelude the collaboration of David Ubias and Frances Trotter; these two artists working together for the first time are modest in person, ostentatious in artwork. Derek Shumate is an enigma of an artist- devoting much of his time to design and working behing the scenes with the collective Lollipauperz; here he is a catalyst for street artist YAR, known citywide as a street representative of the changing face of grafitti today, bridging the gap between gallery and felonious act. David Chien rounds out the main gallery with his monsterous 2D work. Coming off a well-received exhibit of large installation at Art League Houston- Chien even designed a video game- look for ever bigger and better things from this ambitious artist.

Look forward to performances by performance-artist musicians TubeZomZom out of Austin and into the hot seat, ruckus-starters The Turkeys featuring members of Satin Hooks and artist Will Boone, and bar-brawler Rodney Elliot on guitar. Jenny Schlief will be there, tongue firmy in cheek, with one of her hilarious sickly-sweet social performances. Sasha Dela takes film on in a new work modeling the hellish humid solitude of a summer drive in the East Texas countryside, the land responsible for spawning Bottle Rocket, Urban Cowboy, and Texas Chainsaw Massacre.

Help Commerce Street this summer with the purchase of a limited edition collection of great serial work by CSAW residents and their artist friends. Gift baskets feature work donated by the ever-generous Teresa O'Connor, Vicki Fowler, I Love You, Baby, Nick Meriwether, Sean Carroll, Daniel Garson, Daniel Adame, Lollipauperz, Rodney Elliot, Andrea Chin, Hancock Brothers, Laura Lark, Matt Lucas (NY), Miguel Cortez (CHI), Edra Soto, (CHI), FAILURE, Derit Biho, Frances Trotter, Lisa Godfrey, and Gael Stewart. Available July 29th, please contact Frances Trotter at 713-498-2576 for more information.

CSAW has been at the fore of emerging art in Houston for over 12 years. Look for us this fall with great visiting artists Barna Kantor and Douglas Ballas, and as a cornerstone of this year's 14th annual Artcrawl. Summer Sucks is curated by Sean Carroll and Frances Trotter and will hopefully be carried kicking and screaming into the future by someone else.



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Summer of Love

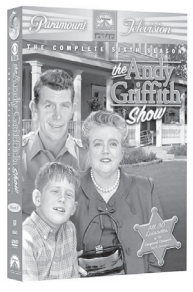
So bad it's good

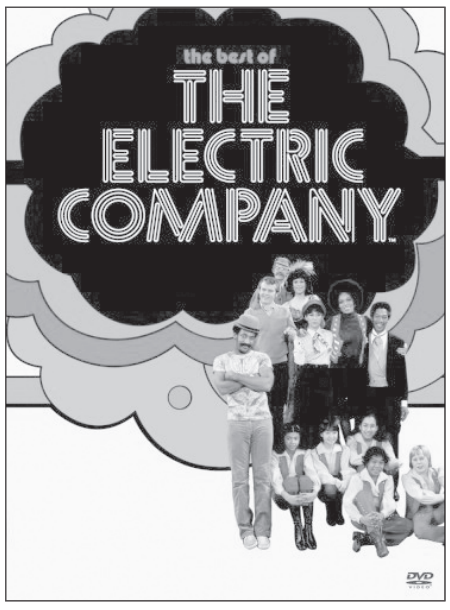
by Michael Bergeron

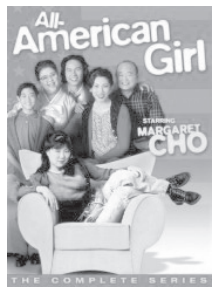
It was the summer of love. Or to paraphrase Peter Fonda in The Limey: "The 1960s was really 1966 and the first couple of months of 1967." My memory recalls that time as the golden era of television.













Star Trek, The Time Tunnel, That Girl, The Andy Griffith Show - all religiously observed by your humble scribe on their original broadcast dates. Only watching several new releases of complete season series on DVD I now realize that the recollections of a child are far more forgiving than the serious movie viewing habits of an adult. On November 17, 1966 the first part of the two-part Star Trek episode The Menagerie ran. That was a Thursday night. The second ep would run the following Thursday night, which was also Thanksgiving Day. As is usual on such a holiday Aunts and relatives visit, break bread and get to decide what to watch on television. My cousins Butch, Andrea, and Buzzy were older and Buzzy in particular had it in mind to watch The CBS Movie of the Week. Regardless of the coolness of that film being the Ray Harryhausen effects-laden Jason and the Argonauts, Buzzy got his wish and that movie was seen in the Bergeron household at 8 o'clock. You know what's coming next. Star Trek aired at 7:30 and that means I had to miss the last half-hour, the conclusion of the two-parter, and forever wonder how it ended. As you are no doubt aware, The Menagerie was composed of scenes from the original Star Trek pilot, which starred Jeffrey Hunter and also featured Leonard Nimoy as Spock (the episode won a Hugo award). We see scenes of the pilot as flashbacks interspersed with the current cast. The Menagerie also co-stared Susan Oliver (The Monitors) a forgotten actress who graced several 60s era projects. In November of 1966, reruns didn't start until, bare minimum, May of the following year. There was no way I could suspend my sense of discombobulation at having to find new ways to remember television shows. Perhaps it was at that moment I realized that in some far-flung future there would be a way of accessing any television show ever made at your own discretion. And thus this month's review of a cornucopia of DVD releases of classic television shows.

The Time Tunnel – Although this Irwin Allen produced sci-fier that launched in 1966 only lasted one season it spawned 30 episodes, available in two DVD sets (eps. 1-15 & 16-30). This series was for years my favorite show. Imagine the shock at watching TT for the first time in 40 years. Open-mouthed stupefaction best describes fond memories giving way to hammy acting and ridiculous situations. The two scientists (James Darren, Robert Colbert) float in time from the Titanic to the Alamo to the French Revolution to Krakatoa, yet each show has them begin anew in fresh clothing (one of the effects of time travel?). Darren in particular is always trying to tell people that they are in danger: "Captain, I can't explain how, but this ship is going to sink." This show is literally so bad it is good; it's practically golden. Some amazing performances grace the goofy hi-jinx at Operation Tic Toc: including a dual role played by Carroll O'Conner, as well as early appearances by thesps like Robert Duvall and Ellen Burstyn (billed as Ellen McRae). The Sci-Fi Channel has tried to revive this show, but stick with the original for its unparalleled take on history.

That Girl (Season One) – On five discs, the complete 30 episodes from the 1966 season are all about Marlo Thomas dressed fabulously as a New York model. How does she afford that Manhattan apartment and where does she get all those clothes? Don't ask questions like that when discussing a television show. Despite the show's corny plots and characters it lasted five seasons and Thomas' bang haircut and penchant for mod dresses are still being imitated today. It's no secret that Marlo's father Danny Thomas was a heavyweight in 50s and 60s television production. Thomas also established the St. Jude Hospital for Children's Research after praying to the patron saint of the hopeless for career guidance.

The Andy Griffith Show (The Complete Sixth Season) – This was the year that Andy went to color and Barney Fife was replaced by Deputy Warren Ferguson (Jack Burns from the comic duo of Burns and Schreiber). Andy goes to Hollywood in a story that arcs over several episodes; Don Knotts makes two guest cameos; and Ron Howard practices good citizenship like getting a job to pay for repairs on his bike. Of course he is a kid so it's no surprise that Opie also hides a walkie-talkie in a dog's collar to convince Goober that the animal can talk. Andy Griffith lost something as the series wore on, and despite the fact that Jack Nicholson guest stars in two episodes from season's seven and eight, many consider the sixth season a sort of swan song for Mayberry. Truly endearing or perhaps downright damning is the show's small town skewed vision of the era. For instance, Aunt Bee and her friend Clara write a song ("A Singer in Town") and it gets picked up by a famous rockabilly singer who wants to perform it on television complete with electric guitars and go-go dancers. Aunt Bee throws a shitfit and refuses to allow them to perform the song unless it is sung as a sensitive ballad. Television held a plastic mirror up to reality then as it does now.

The Best of The Electric Company – This four disc box set showcases 20 episodes from what could be best described as a teen version of Sesame Street. Covering the show from 1971 through 1977, the eps are loaded with psychedelic video effects and double entendre. All in the name of education. More to the point are the regulars, including Morgan Freeman (as young as you're ever going to see him) and a free spirit actress currently residing in the where-are-they-now-file Judy Graubert.

Dr. Katz, Professional Therapist (Season One) – Just to show we're not lost in nostalgia we recommend this set with all six episodes from the 1995 debut season on Comedy Central. Animated with Squigglevision (things appear wavy), Dr. Katz reminds one of a more cynical version of the psychiatrist played by Bob Newhart. Divorced, Katz lives with his loser mid-20s son who refuses to get a job, while treating a variety of outwardly neurotic clients (voiced by stand-ups like Dave Attell, Wendy Liebman, and Ray Romano).

All-American Girl (The Complete Series) – Margaret Cho plays an updated version of the kind of single girl spawned by Marlo Thomas in the 60s. It's definitely the only time you will see a PG Cho. Margaret Kim (Cho) lives half in the world of 90s coolness with the other half acceding to her parent's ethnic ideals (dating Korean doctors and staying in college wile living at home). The show lasted one season on ABC (1994-95) and all 18 episodes are included as well as four with Cho commentary. Of special interest: A Night at the Oprah, which has not only Oprah Winfrey but also Jack (Nacho) Black as a rocker who wants Margaret to manage his band. The season's penultimate ep was Pulp Sitcom, a half-hour take-off of Pulp Fiction that features Quentin Tarantino positively beaming in the kitsch he has created.

LIQUID

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Free Press Houston
Issue 67 | 06/06

my silhouette CAN'T BE TOUCHED

By Kwame M. Anderson

As I write this, the streets are running wild with rainwater and the cars are a skidding. People have to miss work and take care of their (gasp) own children because the summer schools are closed. I thought, why not write an article with some of this free time. You know, work in my spare time which doesn't make it spare time. It's makes it unexpected time then allotted to another task, such as criticizing, or praising bands**. As I was typing this, I messed up and spelled "brands" instead of "bands". It's weird how accurate the subconscious is.**

I saw the Al Gore movie, An Inconvenient Truth. It made me think, "Wow man, nature, damn, the current administration, gosh, the environment…man…responsibility." You know ? So I've decided that I need to move somewhere that supports the science behind global warming. Houston is hot. Warm water fuels hurricanes.

On another note, recently the President said he may have used the wrong language, sent the wrong message, in talking about the war. The thing is: what is the right message behind a war? "Yeah, we came to kill a bunch of people in your country, but we don't want you to take that as us being evil, or criminals, or whatever, we're liberators, those people had to die, because we're going to finish the mission, and people will die, just not the people spinning this situation, not the media analysts, not the pundits, not the policy and decision makers, but people will die, and that's the message. Is that not a positive outlook?"

SHOWS

Danielson 7-06-06
Walter's On Washington

I wish I could wax the poetic about the Danielson Famil. Nor will I claim too much about Daniels Smith, the conceiver, leader, vocalist, behind the band. But this I do know: Danielson's new album, Ships (Secretly Canadian), is one of the best records of a) This year b) The last ten years ,or, c)This band's career (you can choose one). Either way, all might be true. And guess what? He's coming to town to support the album. While Deer hoof and Sufjan Stevens both played on the album, this show will be different. More stripped down. The basis of the songs are his lyrics and melodies and that can be present with or without the hoopla. So it's a social event, it's a chance to see a good band, it's July 7th at Walter's

Court And Spark 7-13-06
Walter's On Washington

Court And Spark play very traditional rock n' roll. But on their latest album, Hearts (Absolutely Kosher), they get a little spacy. But not in a threatening way, as I know some of you aren't fans of that. Anyway think maybe Neil Young, Magnolia Electric Co, um…and speaking of that Magnolia Electric Co. alum Jason Molina guests on the album. It is the first recorded in their own studio. "Capaldi" is the song I play while wandering through the city streets looking for the dude who stole the soul. It's a groovy trip, classic rock reminiscent of the 70's. Long hair and tight pants. Don't people now have long hair and wear tight pants? These references are becoming useless. Should be great show; the record has a rather expansive sound that it will be interesting to see in a live context. Be there in the square.

ALBUMS

THE EVERY OTHERS
Pink Sticky Lies
(Kill Rock Stars)

The name of this album is "Pink Sticky Lies'" and on the album cover is a picture of girl blowing a bubble who looks like she might've rollers skated or disco-ed once upon a time. The first song on the album is called "Too Far," and one of the lyrics goes "Turn on that Motor City charm for me/ I'm much more loaded than I wanted to be." You know what that says to me: these dudes are awesome and they're music exudes more attitude than their words. It's the reason why rock was seen as dangerous or why you go to rock shows to find ladies. It's earth quaking butt shaking fun. The songs may start of one way and go left while the track starts brooding and almost bossa nova. It explodes into a rocker that brings to mind Cheap Trick. It could also have been a Pavement song, but that could just be me. If you're tired of the angst and agony, the gut wrenching tales of loneliness and rejection and heartbreak, and used to remember which music was entertaining and not journal entries, then this is the CD for you.

THOM YORKE
The Eraser
(XL Recordings)

OK, let's get this out now. Anyone expecting this to sound like Radiohead may be disappointed. By that I mean, there is no "Karma Police." In fact, there is no band. This album is like Bjork's "Vespertine" album. I believe a lot was done by just Yorke. There are very few instruments. There is the occasional guitar here and there is keyboard but no traditional drum and bass. There are drums and bass. It could be likened to "Everything In Its Right Place." Musically, it kind of rolls like a hip hop album: some of the lyrics even have a rap like delivery (The Eraser, Skip Divided). "And It Rained All Night'" is maybe the nost familiar sound but "Atoms For Peace" is clearly the centerpiece of the album. However, the grandeur is contained in the synthesized wonderland that is the musical track. The organs arrive like a revelation in the middle of the song, a sun ray. It's a good album, forget the "is it better thans" and what not. It's a good album.

EXTRA GOLDEN
OK- OYOT SYSTEM
(Thrill Jockey)

This album is a collaboration between the band Golden (or at least two members Ian Eagleson and Alex Minoff) and two

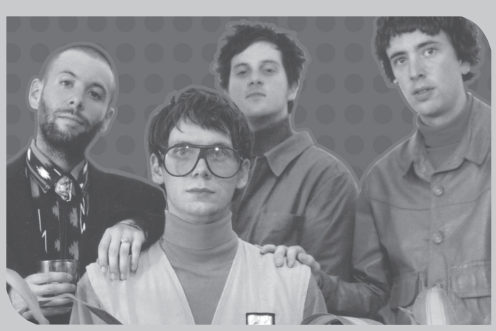
More Shows



bojones 7/9 @ Warehouse Live



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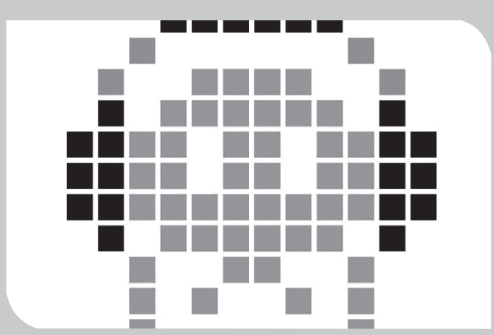
Awesome Cool Dudes 7/15 @ Meridian



Vinyl Dharma 7/6 @ Super Happy Fun Land



Bowel 7/26 @ Walter's



Video Games Live 7/14 @ Jones Hall

members of the Orchestra Extra Solar Africa (Otieno Jagwasi and Onyango Wuod Omari) who are based in Kenya. I, a diehard fan of the band Golden, heard this release and was (and still am) stunned. Sure, Golden has always found a way of incorporating African rhythms and touches of Middle Eastern music into their hard rocking structurally bent music, but here nothing seems out of place. The songs styled to suit the music of The ESA (Illando Gima Onge, Ok-Oyot System) work, even in context of the solos and noodle lings, and a song like "It's Not Easy" could be a Commodores song. "Tussing and Fighting" would be a t home on Allman Brothers Band album or a Fela Kuti album. It's one of the rare cases where one sound truly meshes with another, while listening to the album, there is never this feeling of listening to something forced, it's very natural, the history of the musicians becomes irrelevant. Sadly, Otieno Jagwasi succumbed to kidney and liver disease as a result of the HIV virus currently wiping out portions of Africa, so the music remains as part of his legacy.

Oh, one more thing, go see **ONEIDA** at **Rudyard's July 27th**

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Kottonmouth Kings
HED p.e., Subnoize Souljaz

Thur. - Jul. 13
Elemental Harmonics
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Thur. - Jul. 13
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The Easy Kings
The Hates
DJ The Big E

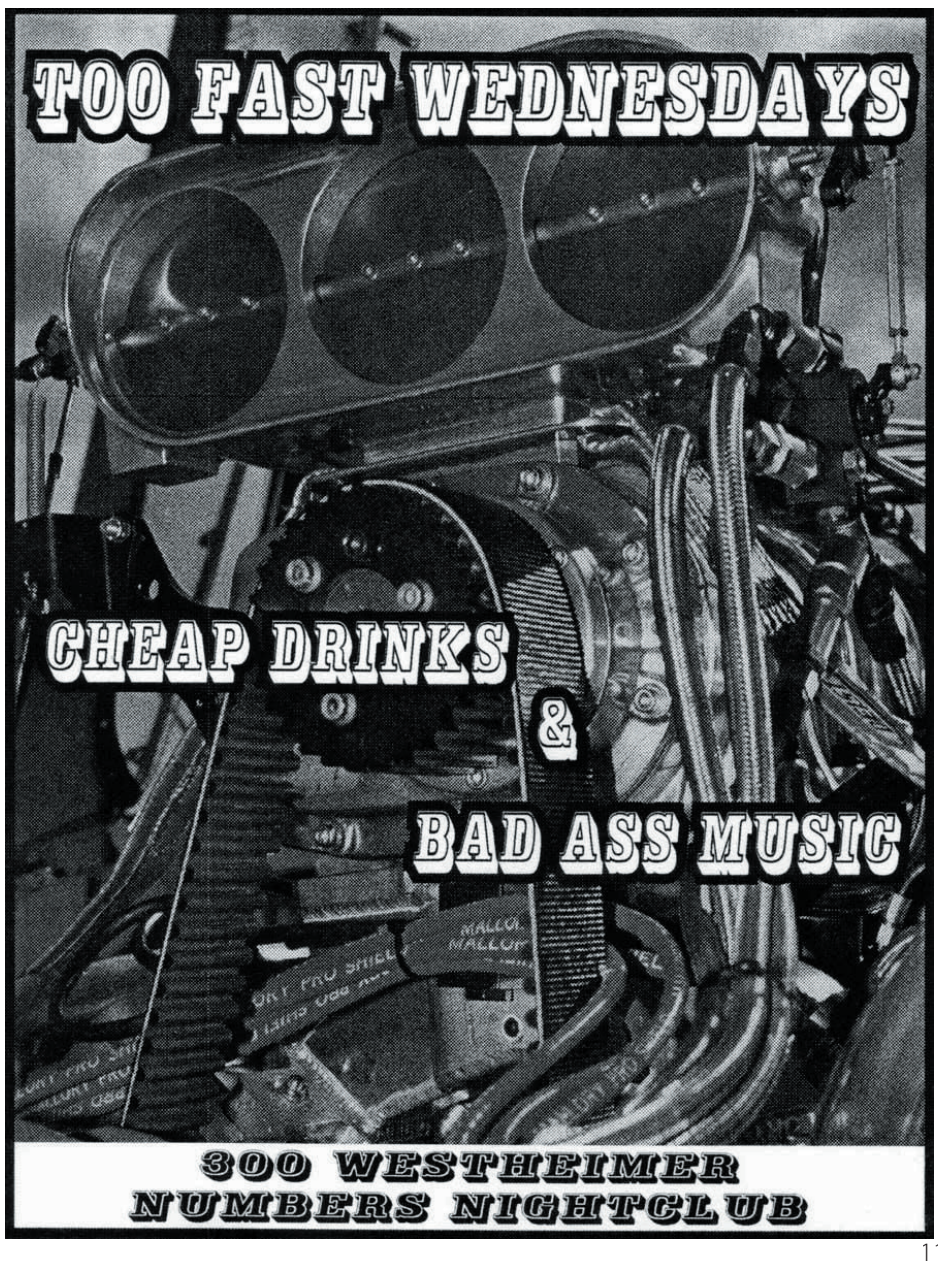
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SONIC DIRGE

By Lance Scott Walker

The title and graffiti cover art infer it from the outset: Sonic Youth has gone rawer on this record, the last of their contract with Geffen. It's a beast they've successfully swam upstream against for the last 15 years or so, and it has been a dirge of sorts for Sonic Youth fans – none of whom honestly believed that there wasn't another *Daydream Nation* or *Evol* ready in the wings, waiting to happen when the major label contract expired. Considering the shrinkage of the once massive gulf that divided independent and major labels from one another, it would be difficult to imagine Sonic Youth putting themselves back under the wings of a major. That said, the band has made no announcement of their plans once the touring and promotion behind *Rather Ripped* has run its natural course.

Still, it leaves open a wealth of possibility for the band's future endeavors. They have largely operated as a typical rock band for the better part of the last 15 years, and they've done it brilliantly. But they have also never failed to disappoint when given the latitude to experiment – something that has been obvious from their live shows over that span of time, which haven't lost a step from days past. If anything, they've just gotten better, wilder. There are still drumsticks being jammed underneath guitar strings, guitars being beaten to splinters, Thurston Moore knocking microphone stands into the moat and every night a set list as unpredictable as the tuning of Lee Ranaldo's guitar.

With the exception of these last three records (when grouped together) Sonic Youth has continuously proven themselves one of the most capricious bands in rock – changing costumes as effectively as they did from noise to experimental to pop in their earlier days. 2002's *Murray Street* was the warmest, most engaging record the band had made in years – and depending on preference, that could go all the way back to 1987's *Sister*. *Murray Street* returned on the promise shown by 1998's *A Thousand Leaves* that was so caustically interrupted by the spotty *NYC Ghosts and Flowers* two years later. *Sonic Nurse* touched on the same brilliance, but the album as a whole was a lot less engaging.

And so a new record brings them back to Houston, this time sans Jim O'Rourke and with former Pavement bassist Mark Ibold in tow (temporarily?) instead. They'll be showcasing a much faster set,

crammed tight with pop songs that are shorter than anything they've done since *Goo*. Most of the songs on *Rather Ripped* also eschew the '90s SY format of allowing every track to dip down into cavernous guitar solos that only served to break up and soften the song (ala "The Diamond Sea"). Some of the songs on this one just drop off before they ever even get to that point, thus giving the entire album a quicker pace from front to back – as if every song is handing the baton over to the next. It makes for an incredibly tangible, complete record.

Those huge spots of solos in the middle of their songs do appear in two places on this record, though. First in the big, beautiful passage of noise in the middle of "Turquoise Boy," which invokes the spirit of the gorgeously dynamic records they were doing in the late '80s. Remember when Steve Shelley used to pound the shit out of the drums? Like when Sonic Youth themselves released the *Live at the Continental Club* bootleg that showcased every song from *Evol* right before its release? He smoked. He destroyed. The guy sounded like a machine gun. He almost… *almost* touches on that again here. Not quite, though.

In another visit to their days of old, "Do you believe in Rapture?" even visits the old spaced-out, chirping harmonics from the days of *Evol* before pushing forward into what some will argue is the same song they've been playing for years.

The second place that the old verse/chorus/verse/chorus/long solo works is in the nearly 7-minute "Pink Stream," where that usually hollow gap in the middle is turned into a power alley with soaring solos traded back and forth on cue between Moore and Ranaldo. The static, impatient bookends of that song beg for a huge break in the middle, and the solos help build up a vivacity that it would lack were it any shorter.

And though that might sound like a closer, they instead shut the door on *Ripped* with the static "Or," the backing track of which sounds like a sort of muted tribal drumbeat, like some great gathering storm behind the band. With the same ringing, tinny guitars heard on the genesis of 1981's *Sonic Youth* screeching to the foreground Thurston closes it out with the same removed, Jandek-esque narrative as heard on George Harrison's "Blue Jay Way," with ominous words which (although taken out of context) almost seem to make a reference to the band's undetermined next step:

Where are you going next/ What comes first?

You tell us, Thurston.

Sonic Youth plays with Awesome Color - Thursday, June 22nd at Warehouse Live. www.superunison.com



Left to right in chronological order:
Sonic Youth (1981), Evol (85), Sister (86), Live at the Continental Club (92), A Thousand Leaves (97), NYC Ghosts and Flowers (2000), Murray Street (01), Sonic Nurse (04) & Rather Ripped (06).



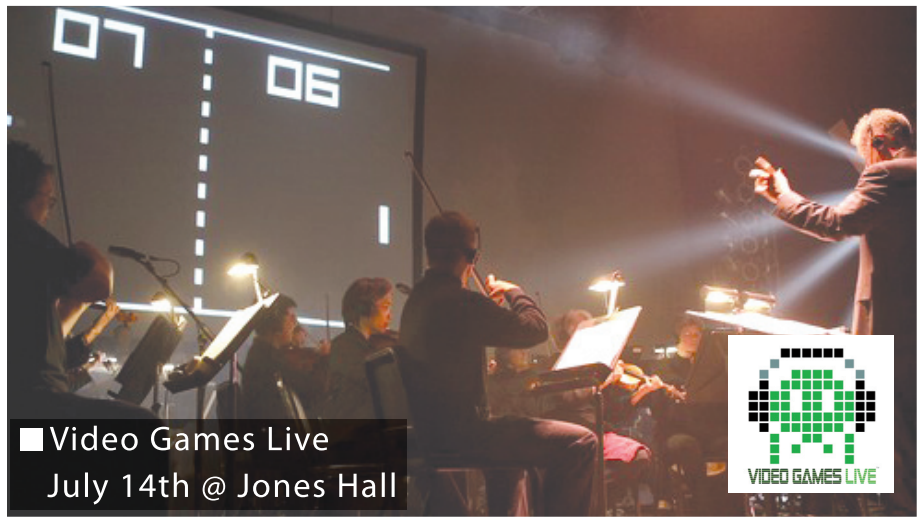


From Midi to Masterpiece

Houston gamers get a rare chance to materialize their digital dreamscapes

By Tyler Barber

Houston gamers, Video Games Live is gracing Houston with its presence. With only a handful of cities on its tour, we should feel privileged to experience this critically acclaimed event in our home town. With contests, cost-playing, and Guitar Hero II playable demos (marking the first time the public can get their hands on the sequel of the wildly popular music game), pre and post show events are like perfectly buttered buns wrapping the best burger you've ever had. Of course, the meat of the event is the symphonic performance of our favorite game compositions. Among them, Halo, Super Mario Bros., Final Fantasy, World of Warcraft, and Metal Gear Solid will grace your ears with tangible reflections of their digital counterparts. In other cities, an audience member was picked to "control" a huge version of Space Invaders as the symphony scored the game, getting faster as the enemy ships' descent neared the player. The lucky audience member controlled the game not with a joystick, but with their body, running back and fourth on stage inviting laughs and a look into what us gamers imagine playing out behind the pixelated graphics. This will probably be the hippest event our kind will experience. Don your nicest suit, or your favorite Mario costume, and get your tickets early. Plus, Free Press staffer, Jody Worthington, will be singing in the choir!



Internet pianist Martin Leung rocked Philly with a blindfolded Mario medley. Will he show for Houston?

Edler Scrolls IV: Oblivion

Xbox 360

By Tyler Barber

Tie on a tourniquet and tap the vein. Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion is going to make a junky out of you.





Enemies level up along with your character so you are always in for tough a fight.

It's 10 a.m., my roommate is leaving for work and I'm booting up my last save on Oblivion for the Xbox 360. Fast-forward to 11 p.m., my roommate has returned from work, and I'm still playing Oblivion. Judging a game solely on how immersed it makes you feel would give this game a perfect score. The day-to-day life in Oblivion feels more real than any game I've ever played. Still, a few bugs, and staggering difficulty keep Oblivion from being flawless.

Oblivion doesn't force the player to finish the main quest. When you first step out into Tamriel (the setting for Oblivion) you are told that you can roam freely, and so I did for the first twenty-five hours. Every small village or large kingdom I came across had its own unique personality, architecture, populous and quests. Feuding married couples, racisits, needy homeless people, paranoid conspiracy theorists all populate Oblivion. Every side quest I completed for the everyday folk inhabiting Tamriel was just as rewarding as completing the major quest.

Aside from helping out townsfolk, and the main quest, you can also join different guilds and factions which will commission odd jobs for you. Want to be a sneaky thief? Join the Thieves' Guild and shoplift your way up the totem pole to obtain higher paying gigs. There are many guilds and factions to choose from each with its own complementary missions that build specific skills.

In the beginning, your character quickly builds on the major skills you choose. The leveling system doesn't lock you into any one archetype. Instead, your character builds the attributes you use in the game. One issue I had was that, especially early on, it is easy to create an unbalanced character. This will lead to many quick deaths at the hands of lowly bandits that should otherwise pose little threat. Though easily fixed by lowering the difficulty, (to allow you to balance out your character) I had to keep my difficulty level just below average throughout the game.

Graphically, seasonal changes, miles of traversable landscape, and realtime lighting effects packs Oblivion with a plethora of eye-candy. Still, though the landscape is drop dead georgous, some of the character models look like a Down-Syndrome worst-case scenerio. Other problems manifest in choppy frame-rates, (mostly near high populated areas or near Oblivion Gates) and quest bugs. One bug in particular has barred me from completing the Mage Guild Quests, and regardless of the patches distributed over Xbox Live, some of the bugs may never be fixed.

Not afraid to be overzealous, every time I load up my game, I am excited to jump into the boots of my noble thief. Sometimes I am so immersed I'll stop whatever I'm doing just to watch the sunrise over the horizon, or to the point of shouting battle-cries running into a fight. Hunting deer, and picking alchemical ingredients are as rewarding and engaging as the intense combat. When I'm not playing Oblivion I find myself day-dreaming about the world. I imagine what types of flora and rocks are found in uncharted parts of Oblivion. I map out "to-do" lists for the game the way I do in real-life. The beauty of Oblivion is all the little things in between the main story, between the combat, between the character leveling, that make the world real. I've never felt like a bigger nerd like I did when my roommate came home to find my right where he left me. But, isn't that why we love video games in the first place?

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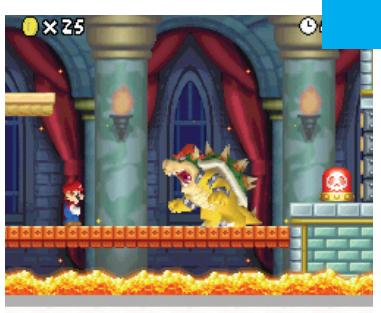
Review

New
Super Mario Bros.

Nintedno DS
By Tyler Barber

Shit-ass! Fucking-hell-piece-of-cock! New Super Mario Bros. looks like a kid's game, but the gameplay is so fun, intense and tough you'll say very un-kid things.







Noticeably absent: Yoshi, WTF?

Toush the DS screen to use your extra power-up.

The earliest memory I have is playing Star Wars on Atari. No joke. Naturally, Super Mario Bros. for the NES was a mainstay in my wonder years of gaming. Excitement and expectation ran high when I popped New Super Mario Bros. (NSMB) into my Nintendo DS Lite. With years of lame ass mascots, carbon copies and abominations on the platformer genre NSMB offers a refreshing—show em' how its done— platformer.

The first level in NSMB is a tribute to the first level in Super Mario Bros. (NES). The portly plumber's new physics gains momentum and has a natural flow that makes the genre staple [jumping onto platforms (hence, platforming)] difficult, but fun to navigate. The moves are so precise, that I found myself dying alot in the beginning. I had to remind myself that though NSMB is cute and fun, I had to bring my A-game. The Mario franchise is known for rewarding expert play, and NSMB is no exception. I'll bet soon you'll find youtube.com videos of players expertly finishing the game from start to finish in minutes.

The levels, while fun and brilliantly laid out, are nothing unfamiliar. Every locale in NSMB has been visited before. There are three new power-ups, [Mario can now grow to super-mega size, shrink to teenie-tiny size (and jump a la Luigi in Mario 2) and can dawn a koopa shell for some koopa/gumba bowling] but they're nothing to get excited about. I found little use for the new power-ups (other than to reach secret areas) and preferred the trusty fire-ball power up. The "new" in NSMB to be excited about is Mario's wall jump. Now, skilled players can thwart untimely falls into the pits of death with some mad wall jumping!

The art-direction in the NSMB is the series' best yet. From the enemies to the levels, Mario has never been so well envisioned. The bright colors and over-the-top mushrooms translate perfectly on the DS Lite's bright screen. The sound gets top notch treatment too. The sound effects are crisp, and the stereo speakers add a depth to the sound that enhances the gameplay. Plus, all the familiar tunes of past Mario World's get reworked.

I need to point out that NSMB offers a host of mini-games that can be played with friends over the DS's wireless internet capabilities. However, since none of my friends own a DS (chumps) I have yet to play them. But, the reviews are in, and the multiplayer aspect of NSMB is getting as much critical acclaim as the single player game. So buddy up, (and call me too!) for some killer Mario four-way action (wait, that doesn't sound right at all).

While playing New Super Mario Bros., it almost feels good to get frustrated when you miss a jump, because you know you can return and execute the feet with graceful bad-assitude. Throw in a slew of solid multiplayer mini games, and its becomes apparent that Nintendo may once again don the crown of the king of video games.

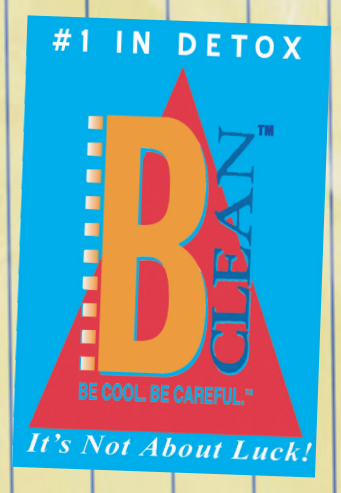
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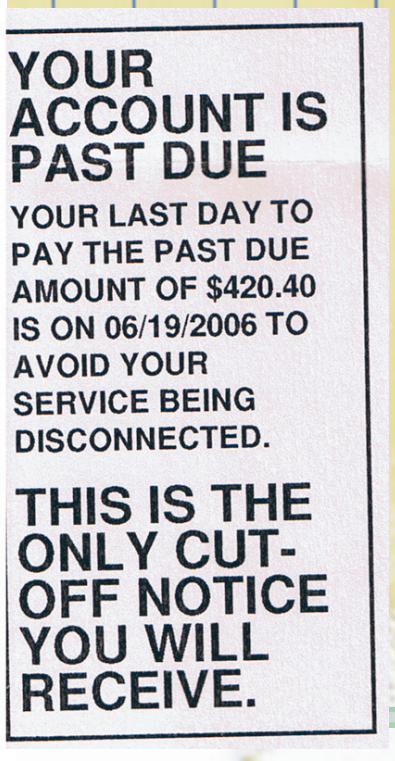












MONDAY

The Medicine Show, The Trade@ Helios
American Eyes@ Engine Room
DJ Sun@The Flat
Open Mic Comedy@ Laff Stop
The Mighty Orq@ Big Easy
Ballroom Dancing
@ Super Happy Fun Land
Texas Jazz@ Red Cat Jazz Cafe
Tango Piano Hour@ Continental
Pool, Darts, Ping Pong@Fitz
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library 3

Ironhead@ Rudyards
DJ Sun@The Flat
Pool, Darts, Ping Pong@Fitz
Open Mic Comedy@ Laff Stop
The Mighty Orq@ Big Easy
Acoustic Open Mic@ Mucky Duck
Texas Jazz@ Red Cat Jazz Cafe
Tango Piano Hour@ Continental
The Medicine Show, The Trade@ Helios
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library 10

Dust of 1000 Years
@ Super Happy Fun Land
The Medicine Show, The Trade@ Helios
Open Mic Comedy@ Laff Stop
The Mighty Orq@ Big Easy
Acoustic Open Mic@ Mucky Duck
Texas Jazz@ Red Cat Jazz Cafe
Tango Piano Hour@ Continental
DJ Sun@The Flat
Sixstitch@ Engine Room
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library 17

Blues Traveler @Warehouse Live
Reel Big Fish@Meridian
The Medicine Show, The Trade@ Helios
Open Mic Comedy@ Laff Stop
The Mighty Orq@ Big Easy
Acoustic Open Mic@ Mucky Duck
Texas Jazz@ Red Cat Jazz Cafe
Tango Piano Hour@ Continental
Treasure Mammal
@ Super Happy Fun Land
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library 24

TUESDAY

Comedy Workshop@ Rudyards
Los Lonely Boys@ Tinsley Park
DJ Sun@Onion Creek
Bayou City Showcase@ Cosmos
DJ Red@ Bond
Lucky and the Lightsabers@ Helios
Scott Daniels@ Last Concert
Aaron Loesch@ Dan Electro's
4th of July 4

Rancid@Warehouse Live
DJ Sun@Onion Creek
Comedy Workshop@ Rudyard's
Kottonmouth Kings
@Meridian
Lucky and the Lightsabers@ Helios
Scott Daniels@ Last Concert
Aaron Loesch@ Dan Electro's
Djizoes
@ Super Happy Fun Land
City Council Public Session 11

English Beat@Meridian
Comedy Workshop@ Rudyards
5 Bolt Main@ Engine Room
DJ Sun@Onion Creek
Bayou City Showcase@ Cosmos
DJ Red@ Bond
Lucky and the Lightsabers@ Helios
Scott Daniels@ Last Concert
Park
@ Super Happy Fun Land
City Council Public Session 18

DJ Sun@Onion Creek
The Church@ Meridian
Comedy Workshop@ Rudyard's
Lucky and the Lightsabers@ Helios
Scott Daniels@ Last Concert
Aaron Loesch@ Dan Electro's
Bayou City Showcase@ Cosmos
Shine Shunshine
@ Super Happy Fun Land
City Council Public Session 25

WEDNESDAY

Secret Agent Bill@ Fitzgerald's
Poetry Open Mic@ Helios
Too Fast Wednesdays@ Numbers
Commune Music@ Proletariat
Pot Roast, Drum Circle
@ Last Concert
Irish Session@ Mucky Duck
Light Rick Express@ Big Top
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library 5

Rob Bell@ Numbers
The Low Ends
@ Super Happy Fun Land
Too Fast Wednesdays@ Numbers
Commune Music@ Proletariat
Pot Roast, Drum Circle
@ Last Concert
System of a Down@ Woodlands
Irish Session@ Mucky Duck
Light Rick Express@ Big Top
Poetry Open Mic@ Helios
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library 12

Commune Music@ Proletariat
All Star Karaoke@ Fitzgerald's
Turbojugend@ Rudyards
Too Fast Wednesdays@ Numbers
W-S Burn
@ Super Happy Fun Land
Pot Roast, Drum Circle
@ Last Concert
Irish Session@ Mucky Duck
Dashboard Confessional@Verizon
Poetry Open Mic@ Helios
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library 19

Diplo@Warehouse Live
Too Fast Wednesdays@ Numbers
Cosmogirl
@ Super Happy Fun Land
Pot Roast, Drum Circle
@ Last Concert
Irish Session@ Mucky Duck
Light Rick Express@ Big Top
Poetry Open Mic@ Helios
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library 26



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THURSDAY

Danielson@ Walter's
Anthrax @Warehouse Live
Chris Hamlett @ Super Happy Fun Land
Open M ic@ Helios
Havok @ Numbers
The Spinns@ Rudyards
Avenger@ Engine Room
Rockbox Pelvic Thrust@ Proletariat
Luther and the Healers @ Big Easy
6

Rockbox Pelvic Thrust@ Proletariat
Open M ic@ Helios
Jarod Birmingham@ Blancos
Havok @ Numbers
Lisa Novak@ Continental
The Hightailers@ Last Concert
The Build @ Super Happy Fun Land
13

The Format@ Numbers
Blackberry Smoke@Meridian
Rockbox Pelvic Thrust@ Proletariat
Open M ic@ Helios
Havok @ Numbers
USS Horsewhip@ Rudyards
Lisa Novak@ Continental
The Hightailers@ Last Concert
Harmonius Monk @ Super Happy Fun Land
20

David Israel & the Elders of Zion @ Super Happy Fun Land
Rockbox Pelvic Thrust@ Proletariat
UME, Oneida@ Rudyards
Open M ic@ Helios
Havok @ Numbers
Lisa Novak@ Continental
The Hightailers@ Last Concert
Luther and the Healers @ Big Easy
27

FRIDAY

Joel Stein@ Helios
The Slow Signal Fade@ Rudyards
The Wheel Works@ Fitzgerald's
Classic Fridays@ Numbers
Funk-Jazz fridays@ Cafe Brasil
Fahl and Folk @ Dan Electro's
Molly& the Ringwalds @ Continental
Carla Bozulich @ Super Happy Fun Land
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library
7

King Yellow Man @Meridian
Belleville@ Rudyards
Phil Pritchett@ Fitzgerald's
Hot Tuna @Warehouse Live
Classic Fridays@ Numbers
Funk-Jazz fridays@ Cafe Brasil
Fahl and Folk @ Dan Electro's
Ennui Jolt @ Super Happy Fun Land
Brazilian Nights@ Helios
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library
14

Supersonic Regulators @ Super Happy Fun Land
Los Skarnales@ Fitzgerald's
Circa Survive @Warehouse Live
Alpha Ren@ Rudyards
Classic Fridays@ Numbers
Joe Bonamassa@Meridian
Fahl and Folk @ Dan Electro's
Molly& the Ringwalds @ Continental
DJ Sun@ Gravitas
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library
21

The Travis Ritter Extravaganza @ Rudyards
We Landed on the Moon @ Engine Room
Molly& the Ringwalds @ Continental
Classic Fridays@ Numbers
Funk-Jazz fridays@ Cafe Brasil
Fahl and Folk @ Dan Electro's
Obed-Edom @ Super Happy Fun Land
P!NK @Warehouse Live
Food Not Bombs @ Downtown Library
28

SATURDAY

Virgins, Last Place you Look @ Fitzgerald's
Sound Team@ Walter's
Sex Slaves@ Jet Lounge
Cure Tribute@ Numbers
Derrick Carter@ Meridian
The Squishees@ Rudyards
Quintron and Miss Pussycat @ Super Happy Fun Land
LL Cool J, Mary J Blige @ Reliant Arena
1

Danseparc@ Numbers
Permanent Daylight@ Rudyards
Soul Hat @Warehouse Live
Bobbindoctrin Puppet Theater @Meridian
Lonestar Pornstar@ Fitzgerald's
The Samples@ Engine Room
Wordstock @ Super Happy Fun Land
8

Awesome Cool Dudes @Meridian
The SKimonos@ Rudyards
Blue Cheer@ Walter's
Extemp-O-Rama @ Super Happy Fun Land
Angels & Airwaves@ Reliant
Pimpadelic@ Engine Room
Prognosis@ Fitzgerald's
15

30 Foot Fall, Eye Against, Virgins, O'doyle Rules@ Fitzgerald's
Popsy, Channel@ Engine Room
Three Fantastic@ Rudyards
Slightly Stoopid @Warehouse Live
Asylum Street Spankers @ Super Happy Fun Land
James Hand @ Mucky Duck
22

RENT@Meridian
The N Crowd, Placid Blue @ Engine Room
Girls Rise with Heat @ Super Happy Fun Land
Sean Reefer and the Resin Valley Boys@ Rudyards
Simpleton, The Contingency @ Fitzgerald's
29

SUNDAY

Brand New @Warehouse Live
Joe B, Free Radicals@ Helios
Brand New Heavies@Reliant
Comics Jam @ Super Happy Fun Land
Chrome 44 @ Scout Bar
Acoustic Jam@ Last Concert
Blue Monks@ Sambuca
Live Zydeco@ Big Easy
2

Bo Jones@Warehouse Live
From Boy to Martyr @ Engine Room
Joe B, Free Radicals@ Helios
Headwhurk @ Super Happy Fun Land
Fiona Apple @ Woodlands
Texas Buzz @ Scout Bar
Acoustic Jam@ Last Concert
Live Zydeco@ Big Easy
Blue Monks@ Sambuca
9

Pensive@ Engine Room
Fan Appreciation@ Fitzgerald's
Joe B, Free Radicals@ Helios
Awesome Cool Dudes @ Super Happy Fun Land
Texas Buzz @ Scout Bar
Acoustic Jam@ Last Concert
Live Zydeco@ Big Easy
Blue Monks@ Sambuca
16

Teddy Geiger@Meridian
Joe B, Free Radicals@ Helios
The Black Diamond Revue @ Fitzgerald's
Ferveur Noire @ Super Happy Fun Land
Texas Buzz @ Scout Bar
Mon Frere@ Engine Room
Acoustic Jam@ Last Concert
Live Zydeco@ Big Easy
Blue Monks@ Sambuca
23

Junior Brown@Meridian
Sect of Fate@ Numbers
Joe B, Free Radicals@ Helios
The Channel@ Rudyards
Acoustic Jam@ Last Concert
Live Zydeco@ Big Easy
Blue Monks@ Sambuca
Comic Jams @ Super Happy Fun Land
30

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Letters from Palestine

Houstonian Hadeel Assali continues to give us the real deal on the ground.



I walked into D's humble home in Kufr 'Ain, a small village in the West Bank of Palestine. Instantly stuffed with fruit and tea and stories of the nightly Israeli army incursions in the small, peaceful village. For the past month, between the hours of 1 and 4 am, military jeeps had been roaming the village, entering and searching houses in what they claimed was a search for weapons. D explained that no one hides weapons in their homes. The reality is they are looking for wanted individuals who took the risk of coming to visit their families after several months of hiding in the Palestinian city of Ramallah. In one of the houses searched, one young man was severely beaten because they found a picture of him posing with a gun (which was the gun of a friend of his, who is a Palestinian police officer).

D is a schoolteacher who, like all government employees, had not been paid for nearly three months at the time. During the conversation, D's sister was silently knitting a yarmulka (jewish skullcap), which she sells to Israelis for maybe a couple dollars. Afterwards we all ate Ma'louba (means "upside-down"), a Palestinian rice dish with chicken. I was almost embarrassed to eat such an expensive meal at their house – but they would not have it any other way.

Fast-forward a couple weeks.

I receive a phone call from my friend S, another Palestinian-American who was in Ramallah. "I don't know what is going on, there are maybe 20 or more army jeeps and tanks driving past the building where I am…wait…now there are a bunch of journalists running behind them. Maybe I should get my camera and follow them, what do you think?"

I respond, baffled "I don't know, are they shooting? Be careful, just try to assess the situation before rushing there. And be sure to keep me posted, ok?"

"Ok, I'll call you back and let you know what happens."

A few minutes later, she calls back. "I came down into the street and everyone is pulling the garbage bins into the street. I can hear gunshots, but I can't see anything because someone set a van on fire. There is black smoke everywhere…oh shit… (gunshots in background) people next to me are pulling out guns and shooting towards the Israelis."

"How far are you from the soldiers and the gunfight? Get somewhere safe! You are there alone, so be careful! Especially if you can't see anything and people are shooting next to you, they will be shooting back!"

"Ok, I'm in the doorway of a building now, but everyone is out on the street, I think it's ok."

This continued for several minutes, and I called a friend of mine, M, who is a resident in Ramallah to go and find her. It turned out he was heading that way anyway and managed to find S. But he lost her a few minutes later in all the chaos. Later that day, after S told me everything was ok and she was back home, I called M to thank him. Turned out he was being released from the hospital because he was hit with shrapnel from a live bullet in the forehead. I rushed to Ramallah immediately to see him, fortunately he only needed a few stitches. But a few others around him were not so lucky.

I got the full story from M and a friend of his who was working with ambulances at the scene. At approximately 2pm, Israeli undercover agents entered the center of Ramallah in a white unmarked van. They parked the van in front of a building in the center of the city and entered the building to arrest two men. Someone identified them as Israeli forces and people instantly began to inform everyone else to block them from arresting the men. Minutes later, the city was filled with army jeeps, tanks and soldiers, and a gun battle erupted. People blocked off the streets, one person drove their van away and it was set on fire. Four Palestinians were killed, several others were injured, and the wanted men were arrested and taken away.

Fast-forward another week.

We are returning from a café in the late evening in the Bethlehem area. It is a beautiful night and we decide to stop the car on the top of a hill so we can take in the air and the moon… As we are outside chatting, a man comes up from the hill. It seemed strange for someone to be in the hills at that time of night, and as he spoke to a friend of mine, I looked closer and realized there were a few other men in between the large stones. The man who came up asked who we were, why we were there…and my mind went to a statement made to me by a young man from Dheisheh refugee camp over year ago: "The days are for us. The nights are for them (the Israeli army)". We realized we should move along and headed back to where we were staying. I was a bit shaken and explained to our host, Z, what happened. "Ah, il-matloobeen (the wanted men)," he said. "Often wanted men hideout at night either in the hills or sometimes in people's homes."

He then laughed and laughed, looked at me and said, "Welcome to Palestine."

Love,
Hadeel


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Magistral

Metal Moment



by Jeff Storm

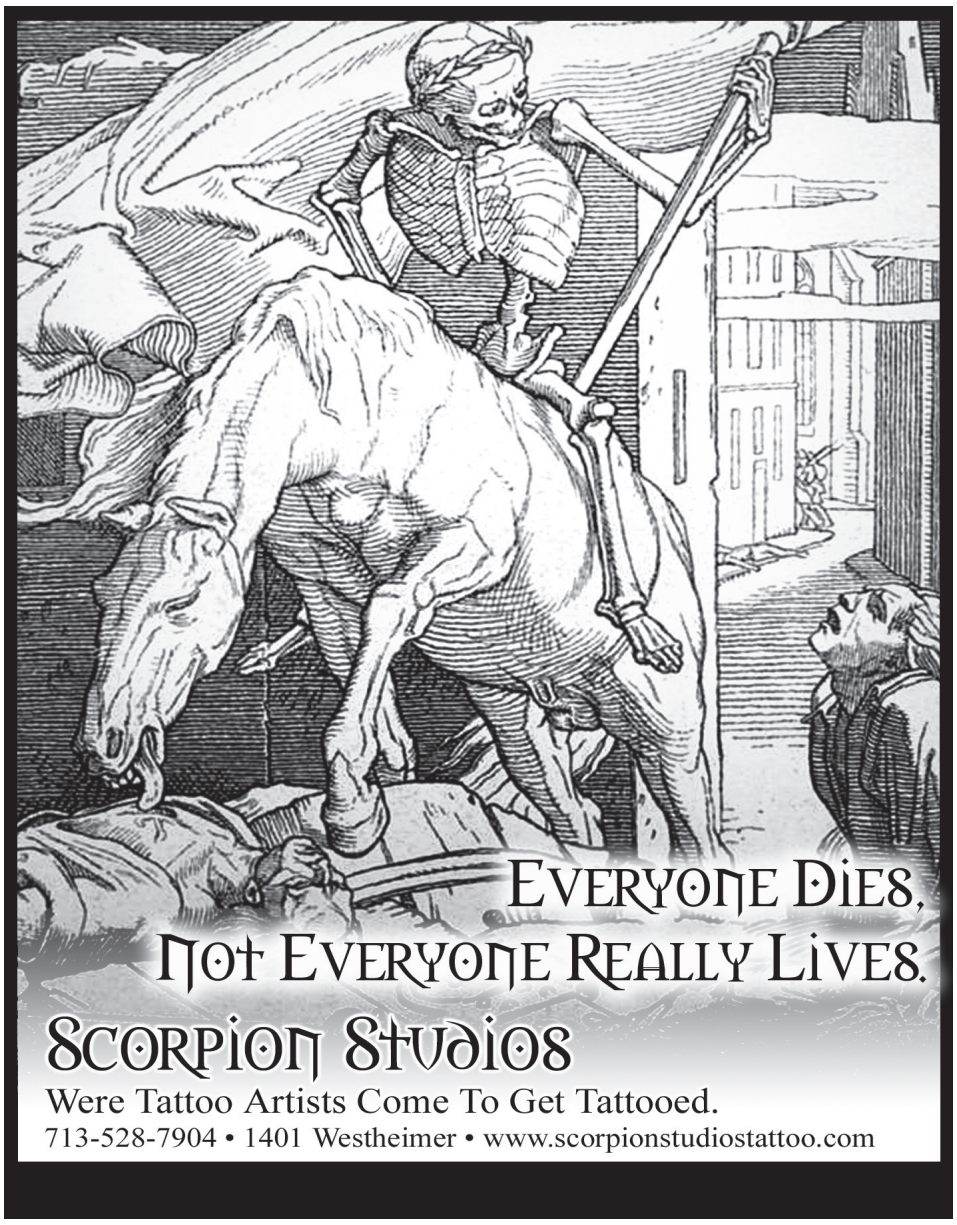
This past weekend Magistral tore it up at Forgetta Bout it Too. Before I get to the music I gotta say that it was my first time at Forgetta Bout it Too and it was refreshing to have a respectful, non-arrogant person working the door. Anyway, this is the first time I've seen Magistral in a while and even with how impressive they've been in the past, their musicianship just keeps on improving. Magistral's twin guitar attack was as sharp as ever, guitarist Dani Vargas pulled out some sick screaming harmonics, and drummer Moises Zapata did a bad ass drum solo. The makings of power metal greatness indeed! They even played a few songs off the new album.

It's still definetly Magistral, it's still definetly power metal, but some of their other influences like Rush and Evergrey are more clearly heard.

If you're into power metal, even just a little bit, Magistral's new album is killer, and I've only heard the studio rhythm tracks! The album should be out in about a month, so be sure to check them out on myspace or at their website, www.magistralweb.com.



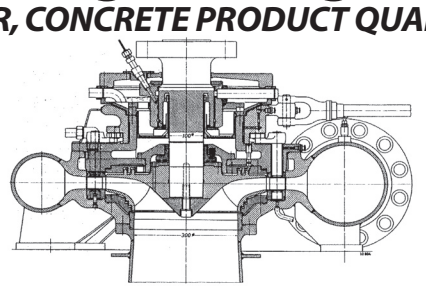




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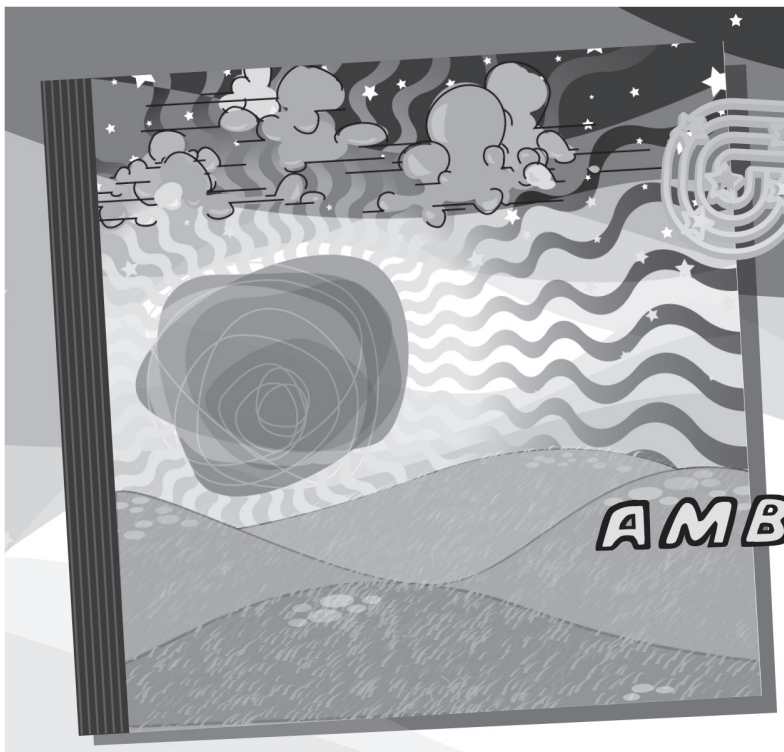
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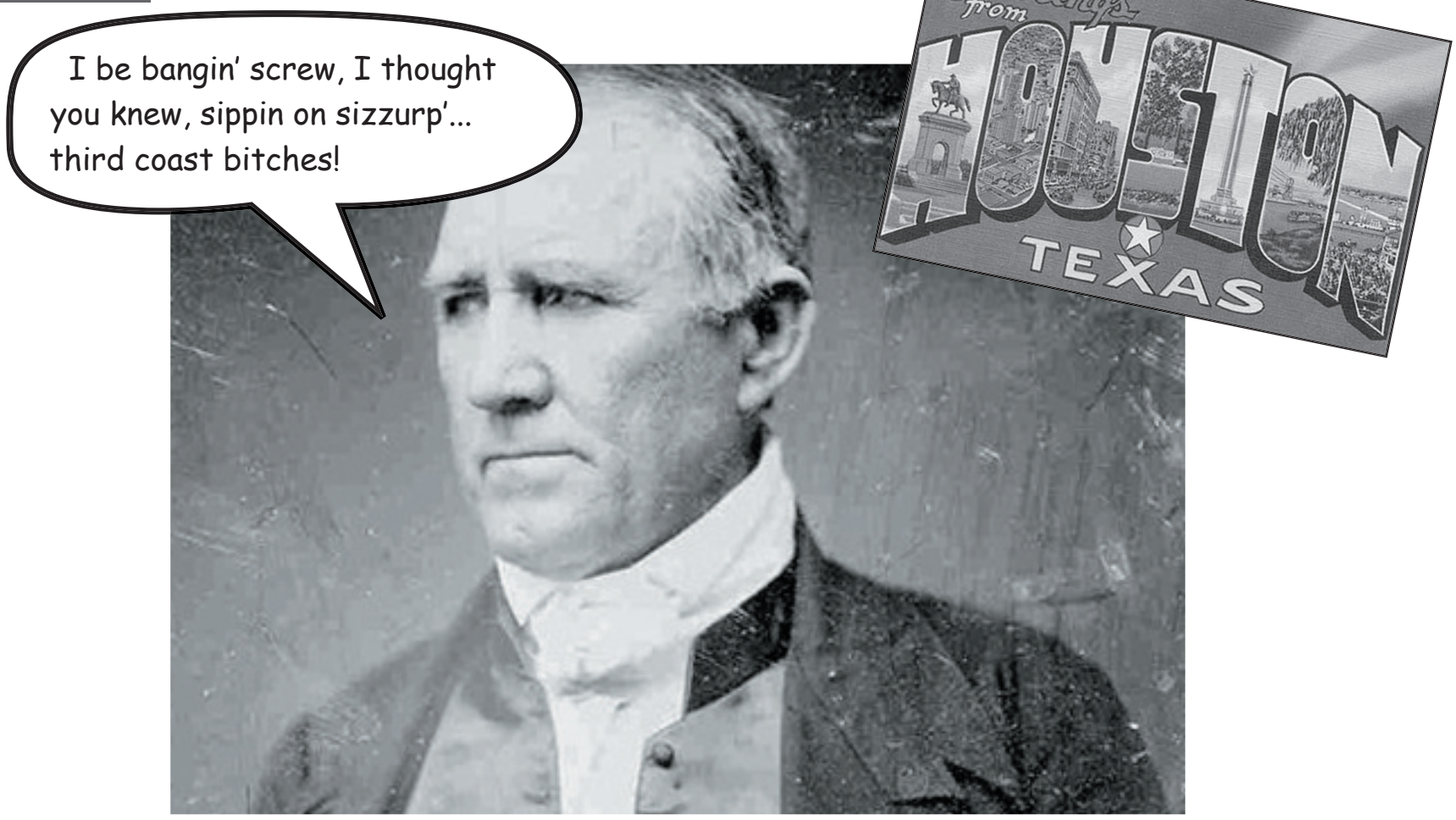
"from **Ween** to **Talking Heads**, their music is basically the equivalent of the fizzy, crackling candy, **Poprocks**. What that candy did for your mouth, this music does the same for your mind."
-CD Baby

"their extensive acid-tinged output includes music that ranges from **psychedelia** to **rockabilly**, only to be interrupted with **hip-hop** breaks and **Middle Eastern** chants in a somewhat confounding stuff-it-all-in-there approach."
-Rhapsody

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Free Press Houston
Issue 67 | 07/06



Sam Houston

Houston history a laughing matter

There are many amazing things about this concrete swamp we live in. Things that continue to surprise and mystify the mind—like how it can be 100 degrees with 100% humidity; how the Texans GM can fail to grasp the basics of the NFL draft or my favorite how we canlive in the heart of the petrochemical industry and still be paying almost $3 a gallon for gas.

However, the one thing that mystifies my mind more than anything else is how the past disappears so quickly here. I'm not referring to the temporal dislocation that has arisen as we have increased our entertainment and lifestyle choices. That isn't isolated to Houston, although it seems that people in Houston has embraced that dislocation in ways no one else has, I'm referring to the complete disregard for Houston's history shown by the majority of the citizens.

The examples of this are too numerous to list so I'll just cite some specific examples. The conversion of Freedman's town—the first free slave community in the state of Texas—into what is now Midtown; there are less than 10 of the original houses left. The conversion of old third ward into what is now Midtown, regardless of how important the building was. 100 years ago, right around the intersection of Caroline and Wheeler, stood a small bungalow that housed a man who the world would come to know as O. Henry.

However, before he could pen such endearing classics as *The Gift of the Magi* he had to earn a living. This he did by working as a bank teller, until he was forced to leave town just ahead of an arrest warrant for embezzlement. The house he lived in when he was an aspiring writer and wanted felon has now been bulldozed to make way for a Perry Homes built condo.

Twenty years ago on Shepherd right across from what is now the K Food Mart stood a little nightclub called the Comedy Store. It was at this long retired venue that a young teenager named Bill Hicks went onstage for the first time. It was also here that an angry young man named Sam Kinnison crucified himself as his performance.

Sadly that comedy club was demolished to make way for a strip center. So was another venue that provided the place for another comedic giant to take his first tentative steps on the road to stardom. About the same time that Bill Hicks and Sam Kinnison were laying the groundwork for a revolution that never materialized a young playwright was down from New York to iron out the kinks in the premiere production of one of his plays.

Apparently when The Alley was performing a play written by a man we all now know as Lewis Black he got fed up. To hear him tell the story he'd had it. Shrinking budgets, disappearing cast members, it all proved too much. So he went over to Spellbinders and asked for an audition. He did ten minutes, was offered three nights at three times what the alley was paying him and a rental car. The building where Lewis Black did his first monologue was knocked down almost ten years ago.

Although I don't know why it would surprise me. After all that's progress, which is defined as what…"an idea whose time has come." Like spending millions of dollars to build light rail along Richmond instead of putting a line in on the old trolley tracks that run along Commerce. Progress is what leads future generations to marvel at the things that were paved over and demolished by their elders.

Like the giant cement block found in the middle of an intersection a couple of years ago. No one knew what it was for or why it was there, and rather than dig it up they paved over it again. Just like they did to the cobblestones under Houston Avenue.

Just like they did to the confederate shipwreck in Buffalo bayou. What many of us don't realize is that before there was the Houston ship channel or the interstate highway system barges use to come up the bayous to trade. There was one problem with the idea of using the bayous for commercial purposes; they were too shallow. A fact that led a Confederate steamer to run aground by Allen's landing. The wreck stayed there for many years until it was dynamited because it was impeding commercial traffic. To commemorate the event the state of Texas erected a historical marker on the shore.

Years later—after the construction of the ship channel and the death of bayou traffic—the state decided that it was a bit silly to have a monument marking the place of something that wasn't there. Ah progress, how much I love thee.


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Free Press Houston
Issue 67 | 07/06

Good 'ole fashioned moral consistency
ORWELL, AL-ZARQAWI, HADITHA, AND GITMO

by Dominguez



"…(T)here is now a widespread tendency to argue that one can only defend democracy by totalitarian methods. If one loves democracy, the argument runs, one must crush its enemies by no matter what means. And who are its enemies? It always appears that they are not only those who attack it openly and consciously, but those who 'objectively' endanger it by spreading mistaken doctrines. In other words, defending democracy involves destroying all independence of thought… These people don't see that if you encourage totalitarian methods, the time may come when they will be used against you instead of for you. Make a habit of imprisoning Fascists without trial, and perhaps the process won't stop at Fascists…The result of preaching totalitarian doctrines is to weaken the instinct by means of which free peoples know what is or is not dangerous…But how much of the present slide towards Fascist ways of though is traceable to the 'anti-Fascism' of the past ten years and the unscrupulousness it has entailed?"

From George Orwell's short essay "Freedom of the Press", his proposed preface to Animal Farm (the preface was censored), 1943

A snapshot of the past few weeks: three detainees at Guantanamo hang themselves in despair, having never been formally charged nor having the right to appear before a court to defend themselves. A 76-year-old Iraqi civilian, wheelchair ridden because of diabetes, is gunned down by American soldiers, fired upon at such a close range that the bullets went through his body and were embedded in the house walls. A press conference is held with a large framed photo of a bloodied human head, given as evidence of "winning"; on the Internet, you can click the picture of the bloody head and watch streaming video of the bombing itself, crosshair in the middle of the screen, eerily similar to an advertisement for the latest Tom Clancy X-box game. In the background, a Marine with a guitar proudly sings: "I grabbed her little sister and put her in front of me. As the bullets began to fly, the blood sprayed from between her eyes, and then I laughed maniacally."

If somehow we could look at these events in themselves, without a biased and blind adherence to such labels as Iraqi, American, terrorist, but simply as co-participants in the category "human being," I hope that most of us would recoil in horror. More so, if we knew that such atrocities were committed by those who claim to be defenders of democracy, fighters for freedom, and advocates of justice, we just might be slightly upset to our stomach, give pause and ask, "Do such actions undermine the very things for which we claim to fight?"

When I look in the mirror, I see my country

Which brings us to Orwell, whose prophetic words, once again, provide an all too necessary warning. Though his emphasis in this particular essay is freedom of the press, he implicitly addresses the important issue of good old-fashioned moral consistency. Orwell is writing in the context of WWII and the war against Nazi fascism, as well as the context of the rise of Stalin and his deadly perversion and misuse of socialist ideas (which Orwell foresaw and is essentially the theme of *Animal Farm*). At the time, the British government, intelligentsia, and aristocracy kow-

continued pg. 26

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towed toward Russia (being a crucial ally in the War), and conveniently overlooked evidence revealing the brutalities of Stalin's regime. There was heavy censorship of anything anti-Russian or anything that portrayed the Soviet leadership in a bad light. Conversely, there was censorship of anything that made Trotsky look good. Also, because of the anti-Fascist fervor that permeated the country, many fascists (or accused fascists) were jailed without charge or a right to *habeas corpus* (most notably, Orwell mentions, the British fascist Oswald Mosley).

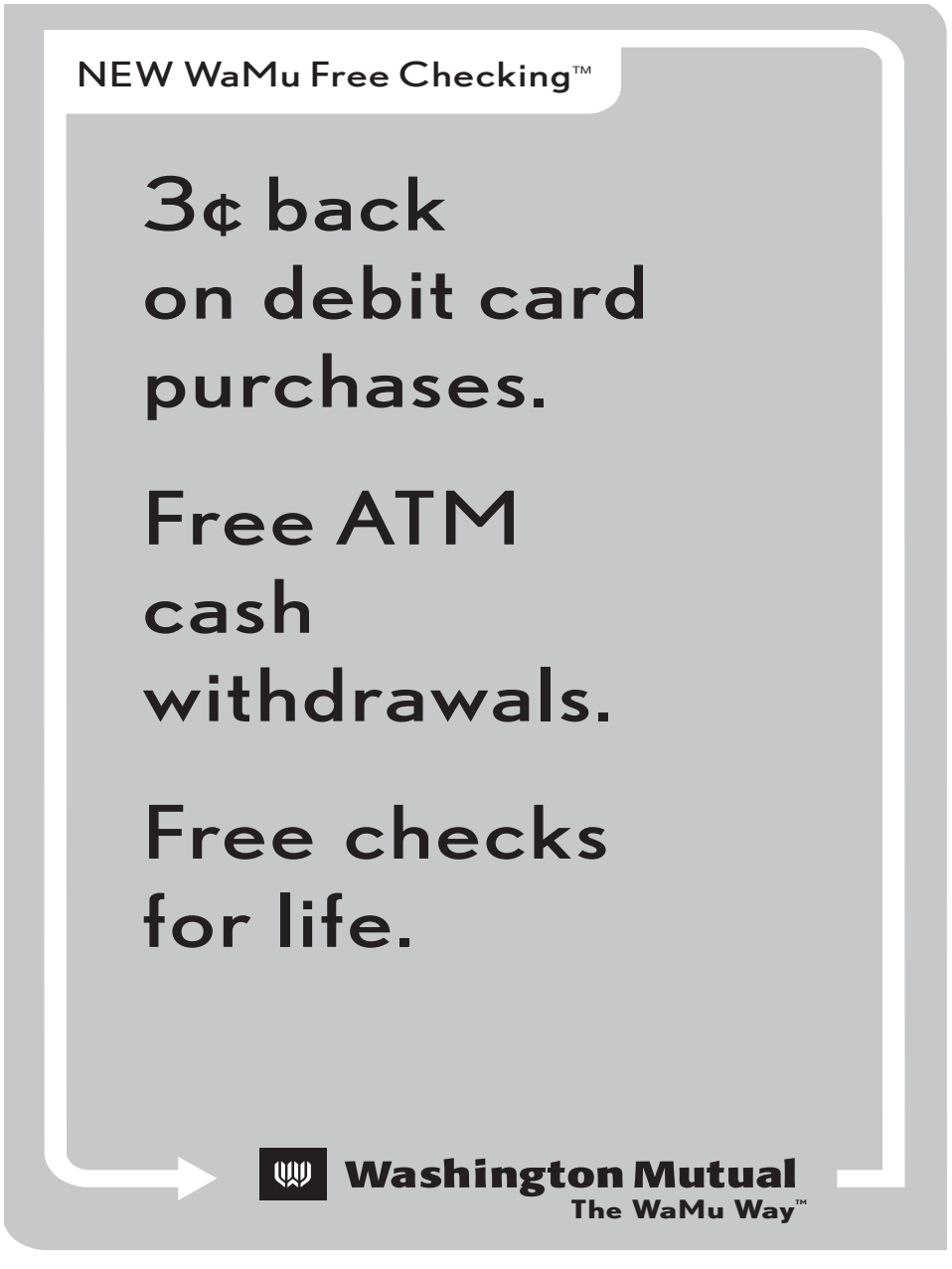
By no means was Orwell a champion of fascism (he fought against them in the Spanish Civil War), nor am I. But he saw the hypocrisy and danger in foregoing the very ideas that separate us from fascists to persecute fascists. I read this in the context of our country's current situation. How easy it is (and not at all farfetched) to replace the word "Fascism" in Orwell's essay with the word "Terrorist." We berate "the Terrorists" for their heartless killing of civilians and their brutal tactics of beheading, yet we don't bat an eye when we hear of the massacre in Fallujah or Haditha, nor is there any cognitive dissonance when we place a blown-up (and framed) picture of al-Zarqawi as the "main exhibit" at a press conference. We vow to bring democracy, freedom, and individual rights to Iraq, yet we detain hundreds in secret prisons without formal charges or the right to appear before a judge.

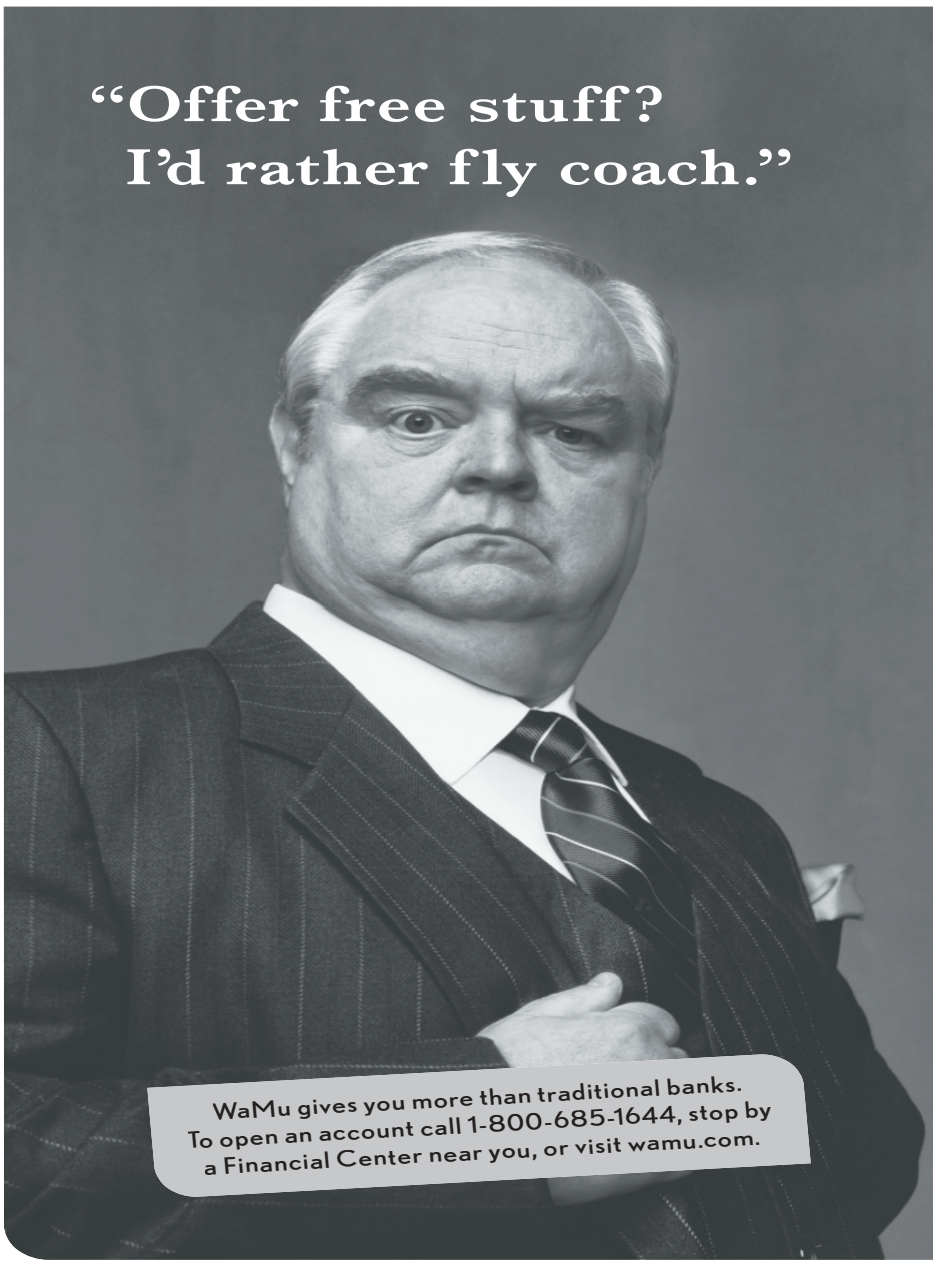
"But this is war! These barbarians killed innocent people. They are hell-bent on destroying everything this great country stands for. If they don't play by the rules, why should we?" Hardly a justification for retaliating as such and stooping to the same terroristic methods. Even a four year-old is completely suspicious and unsatisfied with the response: "Do as I say, not as I do." The instinctual revulsion we feel after a terrorist attack is because it is random, inhumane, indiscriminate, and nihilistic. We are disgusted because it is antithetical to our values as Americans. America, supposedly the most advanced and enlightened nation, the land where dreams come true, the "City upon a hill" that the world strives to emulate. Democracy, freedom, justice…this is my America, and I too am willing to stand by those ideals. But merely saying this is hot air. We must *act*, and make these ideals tangible realities, fervently defend them for sure, and expose those things that contribute to their demise. Oh, but how freedom has become the suffocating smoke following a bomb blast, how democracy has become blood stains in the desert, how justice has become a starving stomach in protest, force fed through the nose.

When I look at my country, I see me

Now, all that being said, one response might be: "Another one of those pansy liberals that hates America. All you guys do is focus on the negative." But, what if, just maybe, this is written in the spirit of patriotism, motivated by piety towards America, what it represents, and the morals it should maintain. Certainly, there is a tone of utter disappointment in these words, even hostility, but if my outrage was not motivated by the most sincere love, I would not even be motivated to write this or express discontent. We don't argue with people we don't care about. In fact, some of the most heated and passionate debates arise precisely because we are so intertwined with the person or idea with which we struggle and dance. In many ways, that person or idea shapes our own unique identity and is a direct reflection of who we are. When I look in the mirror, I see my country. When I look at my country, I see me.

Perhaps I am a Pollyanna. Perhaps it is an unchangeable fact that all-powerful nations must ultimately pray at the altar of Machiavelli. Perhaps Hobbes was right about the unchangeable selfishness of human nature. Perhaps the fruit that Tantalus strains his neck for is called "hope" and the water for which he eternally thirsts is called "freedom." And perhaps, I love this country just a little too much.





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Free Press Houston
Issue 67 | 07/06



SOME PREDICTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

WE'RE IN FOR A TREAT...

by Rick Smith

SEPT 2006:
Terrorists linked toal Qaeda destroy two more WTC buildings at Ground Zero, to ensure public foment and taxpayer funding of the new 9-11 Memorial Mall, Gift Shoppe and Arcade of America. Coincidentally the destroyed buildings will have contained the records of ongoing investigations of corporate and government fraud.

JULY 2007:
The immigration issue comes to a head as millions of middle class Americans of European descent are deported to Mexico. All illegal Mexican immigrants are granted amnesty and employment, as they work harder and longer for smaller wages and don't complain about inadequate health care. The NASDAQ is up.

AUG 2007:
Economic historians, after measuring fiscal data, budget analysis and economic management over last century, publicly announce that John Hinckley Jr. may have been on to something.

OCT 2007:
America's most popular reality-show ever, M.U.S.H., debuts on the Patriot Channel. The show pits triage surgeon vocalists against each other in the Alaskan outback.

JAN 2008:
Desperate for issues besides war, the shredded Constitution, and corporate and government corruption, Republicans launch a full investigation into the ties between terrorism, flag burning, and lax leash-law enforcement.

MARCH 2008:
The last real Democrat is killed in a mysterious one-car accident on the New Jersey Turnpike as the remaining members of the DNC realize they are all Republicans that had been paid in NewsCorp stock to infiltrate the Democratic Party.

MAY 2008:
In coordinated attacks, right-to-life extremists fire bomb SPCA clinics all over the US mainland.

JUNE 2008:
Homosexuals flock to Cuba and Venezuela to be married by Fidel Castro and Hugo Chavez, both having become ordained.

AUG 2008:
Chelsea Clinton announces she is pregnant by Herb Walker Jr., a cousin of the Bush family. Accordingly, all blue and red states are deemed purple. Citizens will vote while they shop by scanning their Kroger Plus cards. Flashing your Diebold Voting/Electronic Cashier receipt at Starbuck's gets you a free medium espresso or latte.

FEB 2009:
As the Avian Flu spreads through the Southern United States, citizens line up to be immunized by Monsanto M.I.V.s (Mobile Immunization Vehicles). African-Americans suddenly become extinct.

MARCH 2009:
Brazilian scientists discover a means to create endless energy out of magnetic fields, seaweed and bubblegum. Unfortunately they all commit suicide by ingesting massive amounts of untraceable poisons before their research can be properly analyzed.

APRIL: 2009
The Dow Jones collapses as investors rush Wall Street to cash in their US dollars for randomly sized sewing buttons, paper clips, Post-It notes and other small office supplies.

MAY 2009:
A would-be assassin takes a shot at Arnold Schwarzenegger during a speech at an Amway convention in Sacramento. The frangible slug only dents the dense, Cro-Magnon cranium, leaving Arnie with a concussion and bouts of amnesia. A few days later Arnie, not recognizing his wife Maria at an Amway banquet in Martha's Vineyard, slips her an Amway date rape drug. As she tries to drive-fly them back to their resort, the Amway date rape drug takes effect, causing her to lose control of their vehicle over Chappaquiddick Island. Shriver lives but will never again run for public office. Arnie drowns on a mouthful of his own teeth, Amway brand steroids and brackish brine.

The couple's destroyed HH-FZ 5000 (Hover Hummer-Fantastic Zoom) exposes technology that had only been reserved for the elites of society, which explains nearly every UFO sighting to date.

Radiation cannons and concussion grenades contain and disperse the few protestors.

JUNE 2009:
Iraq is Balkanized into three separate countries, Sunniland, Shiitesville, and Khurdington, each with their own theme park. Meanwhile the US occupied Green Zone grows just large enough to encompass the parts where the oil is.

Lockheed-Martin and Halliburton merge to form LolliBurtin, utilizing modern techniques of simultaneously destroying and rebuilding resource-rich, third world civilizations. The newly privatized Dow and NASDAQ trading entities, now located on regulation-free Native American reservations, see stock prices soar.

OCT 2010:
A Russian scientist invents an automobile that runs on seawater. The US invades and occupies the Pacific Ocean indefinitely.

DEC 2010:
Mandarin becomes the official language of the US and Western Europe. Hip Hop reaches new peaks in rhythm/rhyme options. The Grammys are now known as the Glammys.

JULY 2011:
Christ returns to earth in his Rapture "Diamond Thorn" Tiara and Pimp Staff, only to Tasered to death by the LAPD.

Construction of the first Wal-Mart on the Moon begins in order to support the millions of employees of the maximum security Earth-Moon U.N. Federal Prison, the largest prison in mankindâ€TMs history. The construction contract is awarded to LolliBurtin.

DEC 2011:
A family of giant septuplet test-tube babies begins their domination of pro tennis for the next 22 years.

MARCH 2012:
Cancers have become so advanced that several strains begin campaigning for Congress.

Contact Rick Smith at rixmyth@pdq.net

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Houston delegates protest at the Democratic State Convention

Fort Worth Representative Lon Burnham hosted the Peace in Iraq caucus at the Democratic State Convention to encourage democratic peace activists to hold elected leaders accountable for invading Iraq and for the occupation aftermath.
Representative Burnham said that three times the office of republican senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson threatened him with arrest for trying to deliver petitions related to peace issues. Both republican senators Kay Bailey Hutchinson and John Cornyn refuse to hear any alternatives other than the Bush Administration's pro-war stance. Burnham said the only way to reach uniformed voters and closed minded politicians it to keep taking it to the street. While Hadi Jawad and Rahul Mahajan spoke, delegates blew up beach balls for the: Got Balls? End the War protest to be held outside the convention center. Dallas and Ft. Worth peace activists worn pairs of balls around their necks and tossed beach balls around in the 99 degree heat while delegates attended all day caucuses inside the convention. As caucuses ended protesters where joined by delegates.
Texas democrats as a whole are not being represented by their elected leaders. In precinct and senate district conventions, democrats have overwhelmingly passed resolutions calling for impeachment of both Bush and Cheney, and withdrawal from Iraq. Democratic leaders have refused to support these demands. Lon Burnham's message to delegates was simple, a war-mongering democrat is no better than a war-mongering republican. Neither deserve your support.

On the 6th Anniversary of Shaka Sankofa's Execution

On the 6th Anniversary of Shaka Sankofa's Murder by the State of Texas and George W. Bush

I met Shaka Sankofa face to face for the first time in the winter of 1998. It was a bitterly cold and oppressive morning on death row. Two nights before, I and 6 six other men had been captured during a failed escape attempt and as a result the prison was under a system wide security lockdown. There would be no recreation and no hot meals for the indefinite future.

The cage that I was place in was without a mattress and my clothes were effectively stripped away. I paced back and forth for most of that night to stay warm but by dawn I was so utterly exhausted that I laid down on the cold steel bunk. With a toilet paper role as my pillow, I slept until the next day.

When I finally came to, a Black man in handcuffs was standing in front of my cage arguing with a group of guards. By the way the guards kept anxiously look into my cage, they were obviously talking about me. I got up to listen.

After a better look, I realized the Black man was Shaka. He was spitting out a fiery lecture on the constitutional rights of prisoners, demanding my bare necessities and refusing to return to his cage until they allowed him to speak with me. I, on the other hand, was getting in the best position to reach through the bars and grab one of the guards. It was all that I could do to help the brother. I knew he was soon to get jumped on. But to my surprise, the guards conceded. I was brought a pair of boxers with the promise of a mattress and a blanket later in the day.

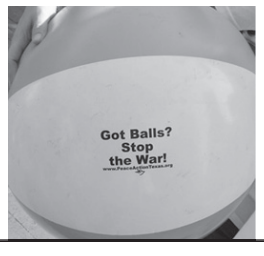
Shaka was facing a pending execution date at that time. But when the brother stepped to the bars to speak with me, his concern was entirely about MY well-being. Shaka Sankofa was willing to sacrifice himself for me. We became friends in that moment and remained so until his final execution date. Shaka Sankofa was a leader. A father. A student of revolutionary ideology. A strong, analytical, intelligent Black man with the heart of a lion. But above all, Shaka Sankofa is a selfless spirit, a constant flame in the struggle, reminding us all of our right to stand strong and our duty to fight relentlessly.

As we celebrate Shaka's life today, may we also embrace and carry on his fight against injustice.

Long live that African! Long live Shaka Sankofa!

Written by Howard Guidry, June 22, 2005, from the Harris County Jail

(Howard Guidry is an innocent man who has spent the last decade on death row in Texas after being forced into confessing to a crime he knew nothing about. In September, 2003, Federal Judge Vanessa Gilmore threw out the forced confession, overturned his conviction and ordered Harris County to release or retry him in 180 days. Texas appealed her ruling but lost, so in April of this year Howard was sent from the Polunsky Unit to the Harris County Jail. He is now set to be retried on July 17. Without the coerced confession, the Houston DA has no evidence on Guidry. Support this young man's fight for freedom! Attend the next meeting of the Howard Guidry Justice Committee on Tuesday, June 27, at SHAPE Community Center, 3815 Live Oak, in Houston, TX at 6:00 PM. For more information call Sister Njeri at 713-237-0357 or email Abolition.Movement@hotmail.com



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The War on Children

The most vulnerable people in Gaza are suffering the worst acute mental and physical trauma as a result of Israel's actions: almost half the population is under 15.

By John Pilger

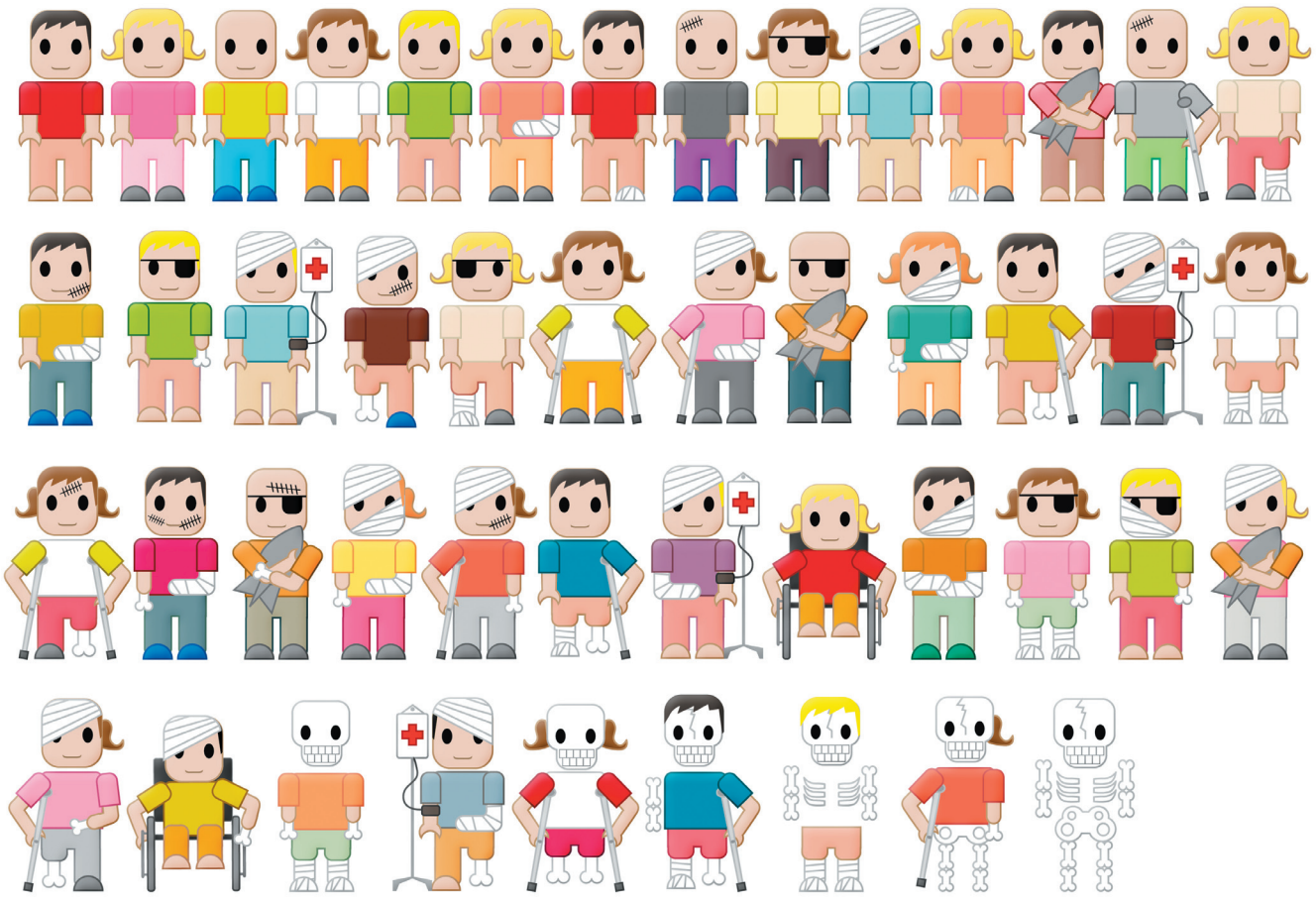


Illustration by Renato Klieger

Arthur Miller wrote, "Few of us can easily surrender our belief that society must somehow make sense. The thought that the state has lost its mind and is punishing so many innocent people is intolerable. And so the evidence has to be internally denied."

Miller's truth was a glimpsed reality on television on 9 June when Israeli warships fired on families picnicking on a Gaza beach, killing seven people, including three children and three generations. What that represents is a final solution, agreed by the United States and Israel, to the problem of the Palestinians. While the Israelis fire missiles at Palestinian picnickers and homes in Gaza and the West Bank, the two governments are to starve them. The victims will be mostly children.

This was approved on 23 May by the US House of Representatives, which voted 361-37 to cut off aid to non-government organisations that run a lifeline to occupied Palestine. Israel is withholding Palestinian revenues and tax receipts amounting to $60m a month.

Such collective punishment, identified as a crime against humanity in the Geneva Conventions, evokes the Nazis' strangulation of the Warsaw ghetto and the American economic siege of Iraq in the 1990s. If the perpetrators have lost their minds, as Miller suggested, they appear to understand their barbarism and display their cynicism. "The idea is to put the Palestinians on a diet," joked Dov Weisglass, an adviser to the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert.

This is the price Palestinians must pay for their democratic elections in January. The majority voted for the "wrong" party, Hamas, which the US and Israel, with their inimitable penchant for pot-calling-the-kettle-black, describe as terrorist. However, terrorism is not the reason for starving the Palestinians, whose prime minister, Ismail Haniyeh, had reaffirmed Hamas's commitment to recognise the Jewish state, proposing only that Israel obey international law and respect the borders of 1967. Israel has refused because, with its apartheid wall under construction, its intention is clear: to take over more and more of Palestine, encircling whole villages and eventually Jerusalem.

The sniper's wound

The reason Israel fears Hamas is that Hamas is unlikely to be a trusted collaborator in subju- gating its own people on Israel's behalf. Indeed, the vote for Hamas was actually a vote for peace. Palestinians were fed up with the failures and corruption of the Arafat era. According to the former US president Jimmy Carter, whose Carter Centre verified the Hamas electoral victory, "public opinion polls show that 80 per cent of Palestinians want a peace agreement with Israel".

> 99.4 per cent of the children we studied suffer trauma

How ironic this is, considering that the rise of Hamas was due in no small part to the secret support it received from Israel, which, with the US and Britain, wanted Islamists to undermine secular Arabism and its "moderate" dreams of freedom. Hamas refused to play this Machiavellian game and in the face of Israeli assaults maintained a ceasefire for 18 months. The objective of the Israeli attack on the beach at Gaza was clearly to sabotage the ceasefire. This is a time-honoured tactic.

Now, state terror in the form of a medieval siege is to be applied to the most vulnerable. For the Palestinians, a war against their children is hardly new. A 2004 field study published in the British Medical Journal reported that, in the previous four years, "Two-thirds of the 621 children . . . killed [by the Israelis] at checkpoints . . . on the way to school, in their homes, died from small arms fire, directed in over half the cases to the head, neck and chest - the sniper's wound." A quarter of Palestinian infants under the age of five are acutely or chronically malnourished. The Israeli wall "will isolate 97 primary health clinics and 11 hospitals from the populations they serve."

The study described "a man in a now fenced-in village near Qalqilya [who] approached the gate with his seriously ill daughter in his arms and begged the soldiers on duty to let him pass so that he could take her to hospital. The soldiers refused."

Gaza, now sealed like an open prison and terrorised by the sonic boom of Israeli fighter aircraft, has a population of which almost half is under 15. Dr Khalid Dahlan, a psychiatrist who heads a children's community health project, told me, "The statistic I personally find unbearable is that 99.4 per cent of the children we studied suffer trauma . . . 99.2 per cent had their homes bombarded; 97.5 per cent were exposed to tear gas; 96.6 per cent witnessed shooting; a third saw family members or neighbours injured or killed."

These children suffer unrelenting nightmares and "night terrors" and the dichotomy of having to cope with these conditions. On the one hand, they dream about becoming doctors and nurses "so they can help others"; on the other, this is then overtaken by an apocalyptic vision of themselves as the next generation of suicide bombers. They experience this invariably after attacks by the Israelis. For some boys, their heroes are no longer

football players, but a confusion of Palestinian "martyrs" and even the enemy, "because Israeli soldiers are the strongest and have Apache gunships".

That these children are now to be punished further may be beyond human comprehension, but there is a logic. Over the years, the Palestinians have avoided falling into the abyss of an all-out civil war, knowing this is what the Israelis want. Destroying their elected government while attempting to build a parallel administration around the collusive Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, may well produce, as the Oxford academic Karma Nabulsi wrote, "a Hobbesian vision of an anarchic society . . . ruled by disparate militias, gangs, religious ideologues and broken into ethnic and religious tribalism, and co-opted collaborationists. Look to the Iraq of today: that is what [Ariel Sharon] had in store for us."

The new "body count"

The struggle in Palestine is an American war, waged from America's most heavily armed foreign military base, Israel. In the west, we are conditioned not to think of the Israeli-Palestinian "conflict" in those terms, just as we are conditioned to think of the Israelis as victims, not illegal and brutal occupiers. This is not to underestimate the initiative of the Israeli state, but without F-16s and Apaches and billions of American taxpayers' dollars, Israel would have made peace with the Palestinians long ago. Since the Second World War, the US has given Israel some $140bn, much of it as armaments. According to the Congressional Research Service, the same "aid" budget was to include $28m "to help [Palestinian] children deal with the current conflict situation" and to provide "basic first aid". That has now been vetoed.

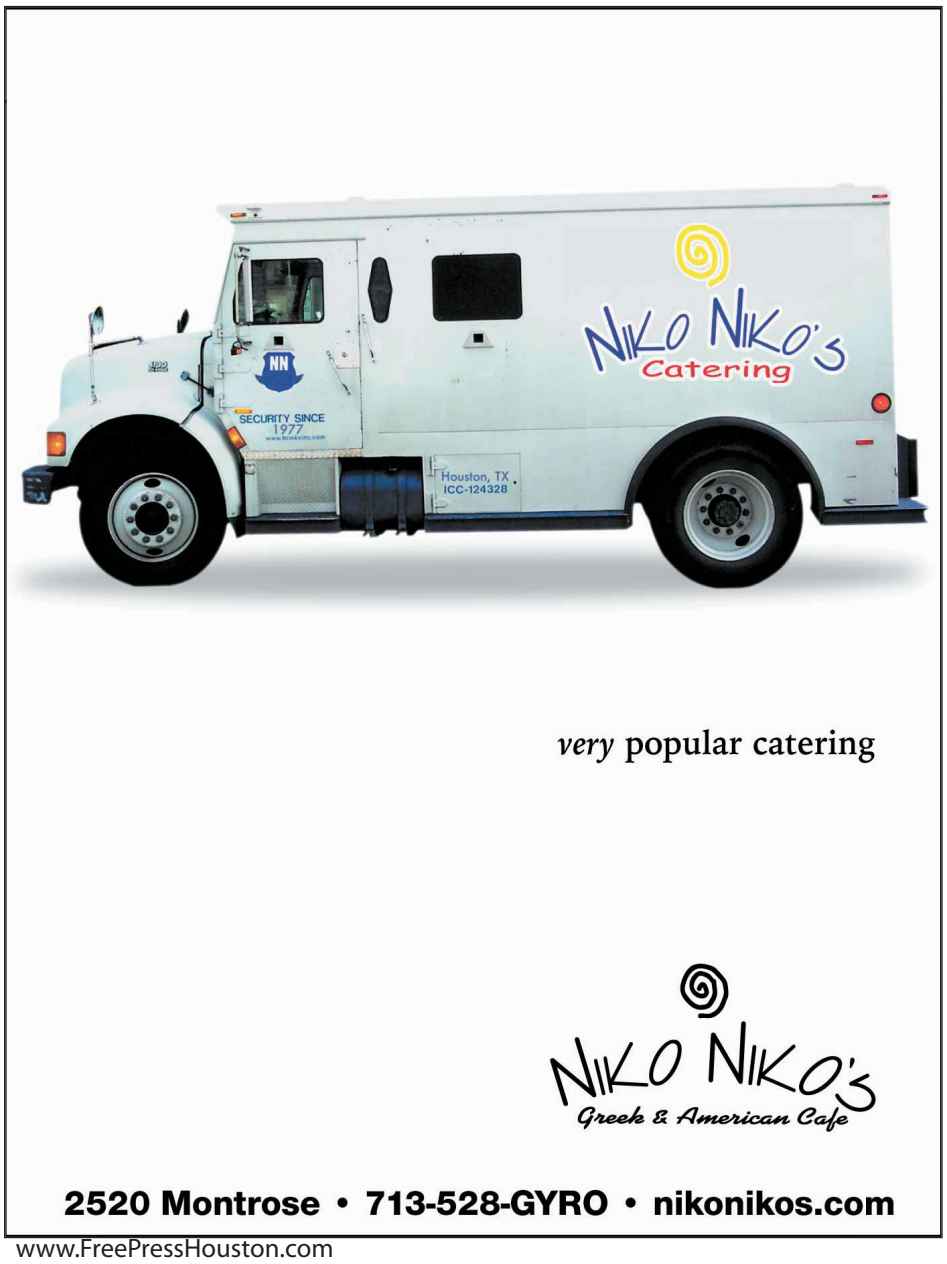
Karma Nabulsi's comparison with Iraq is apposite, for the same "policy" applies there. The capture of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was a wonderful media event: what the philosopher Hannah Arendt called "action as propaganda", and having little bearing on reality. The Americans and those who act as their bullhorn have their demon - even a video game of his house being blown up. The truth is that Zarqawi was largely their creation. His apparent killing serves an important propaganda purpose, distracting us in the west from the American goal of converting Iraq, like Palestine, into a powerless society of ethnic and religious tribalism. Death squads, formed and trained by veterans of the CIA's "counter-insurgency" in central America, are critical to this. The Special Police Commandos, a CIA creation led by former senior intelligence officers in Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party, are perhaps the most brutal. The Zarqawi killing and the myths about his importance also deflect from routine massacres by US soldiers, such as the one at Haditha. Even the puppet prime minister Nouri al-Maliki complains that murderous behaviour of US troops is "a daily occurrence". As I learned in Vietnam, a form of serial killing, then known officially as "body count", is the way the Americans fight their colonial wars.

Put out more flags

This is known as "pacification". The asymmetry of a pacified Iraq and a pacified Palestine is clear. As in Palestine, the war in Iraq is against civilians, mostly children. According to Unicef, Iraq once had one of the highest indicators for the well- being of children. Today, a quarter of children between the ages of six months and five years suffer acute or chronic malnutrition, worse than during the years of sanctions. Poverty and disease have risen with each day of the occupation.

In April, in British-occupied Basra, the European aid agency Saving Children from War reported: "The mortality of young children had increased by 30 per cent compared with the Saddam Hussein era." They die because the hospitals have no ventilators and the water supply, which the British were meant to have fixed, is more polluted than ever. Children fall victim to unexploded US and British cluster bombs. They play in areas contaminated by depleted uranium; by contrast, British army survey teams venture there only in full-body radiation suits, face masks and gloves. Unlike the children they came to "liberate", British troops are given what the Ministry of Defence calls "full biological testing".

Was Arthur Miller right? Do we "internally deny" all this, or do we listen to distant voices? On my last trip to Palestine, I was rewarded, on leaving Gaza, with a spectacle of Palestinian flags fluttering from inside the walled compounds. Children are responsible for this. No one tells them to do it. They make flagpoles out of sticks tied together, and one or two climb on to a wall and hold the flag between them, silently. They do it, believing they will tell the world.





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