

little village

Iowa City's News & Culture Magazine • July 2001



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Premiere Issue



★ **Amanda Coyne on Gary Sanders**

★ **Greg Brown** exclusive interview



Chris Offutt on drug movies

plus naked pregnant women

rotation

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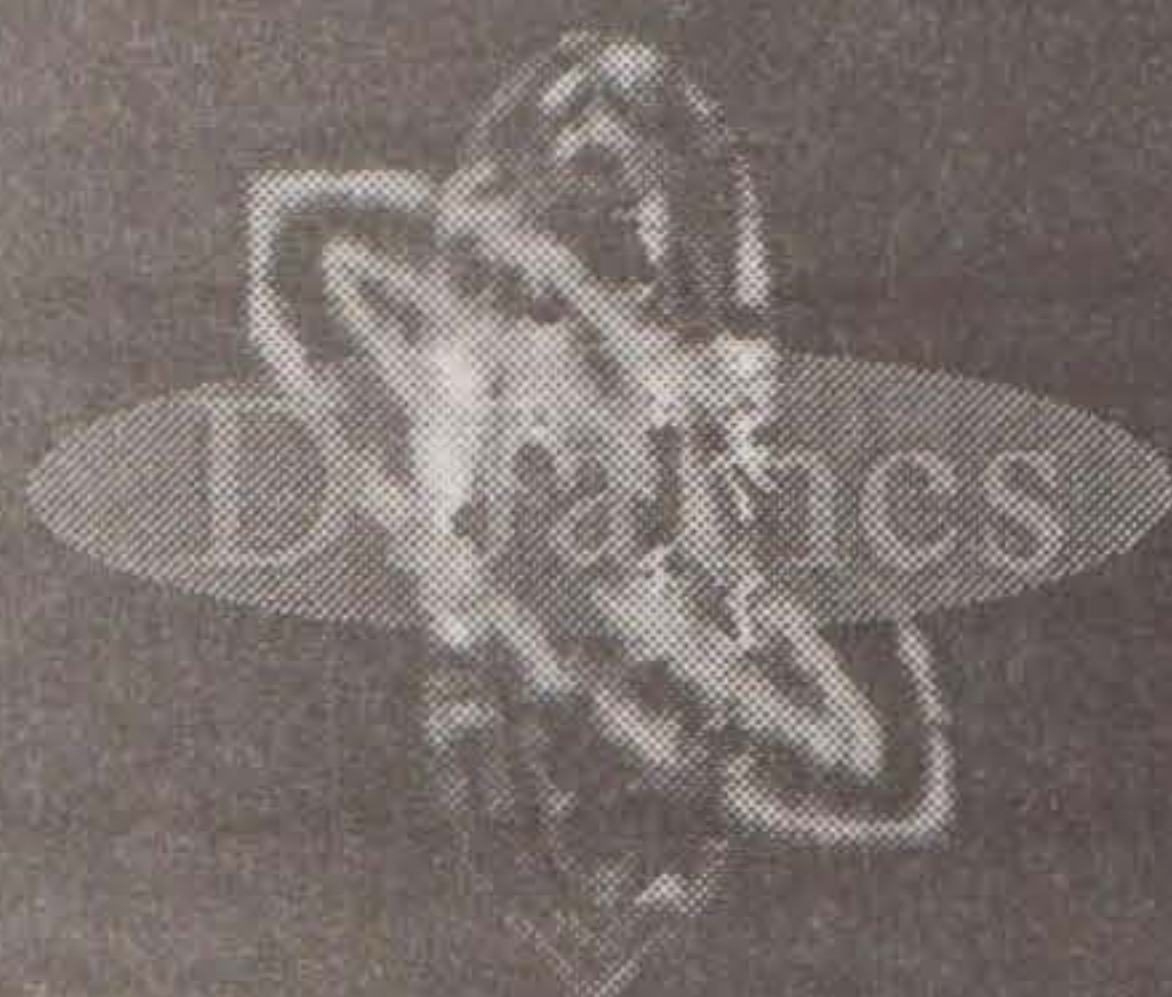
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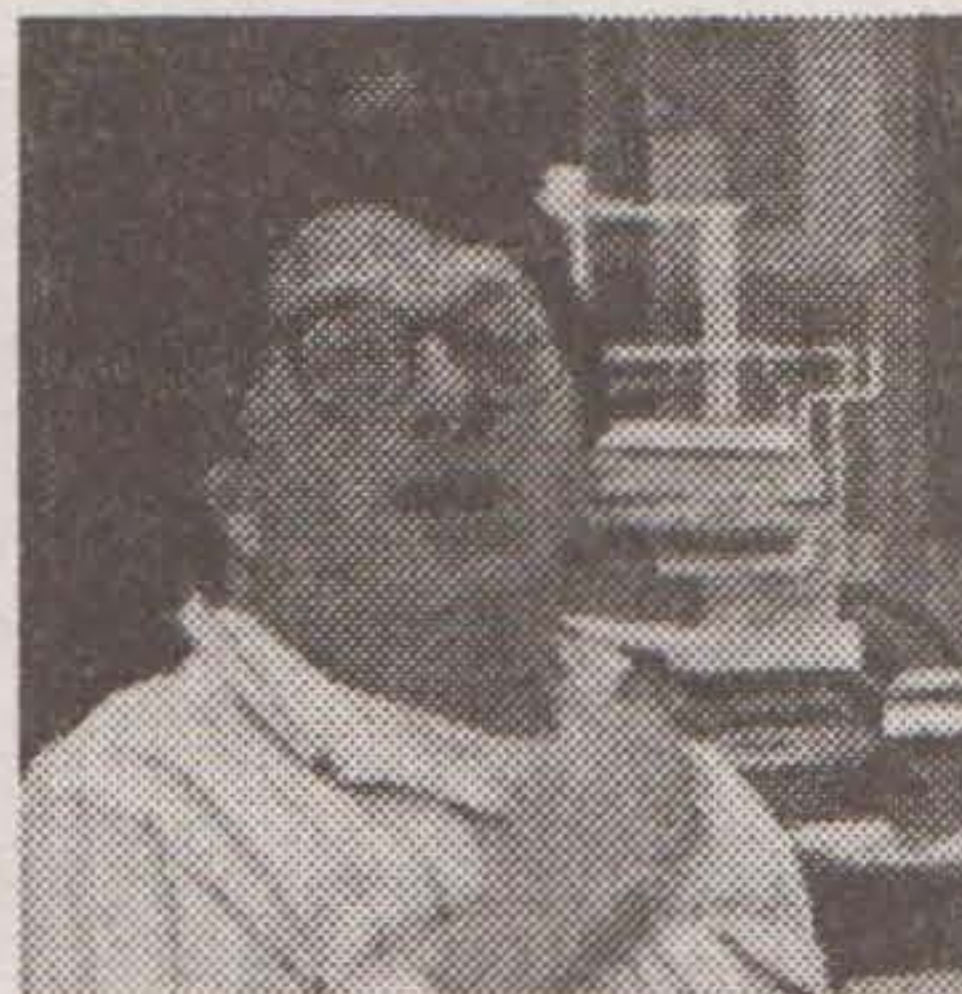
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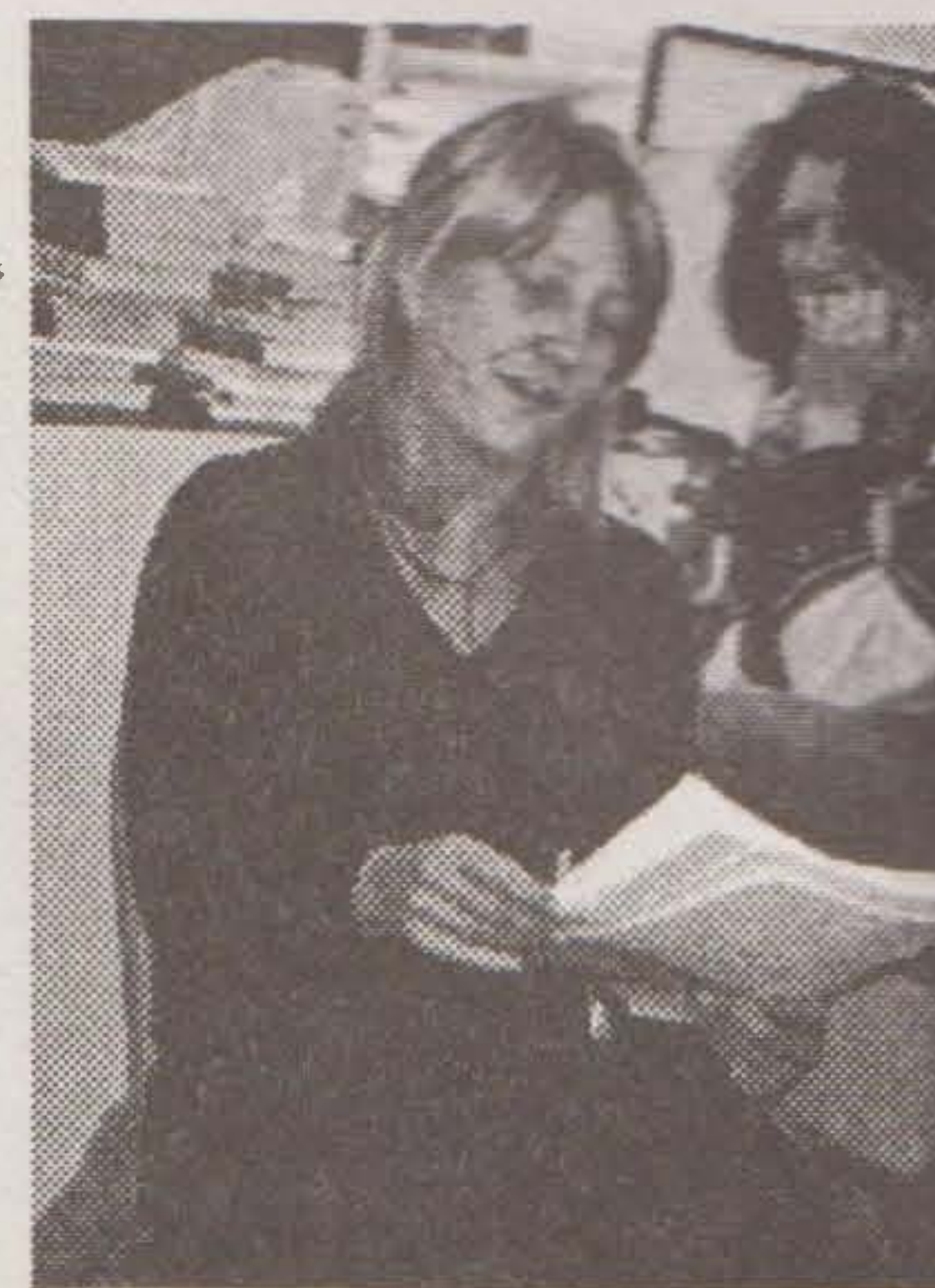
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• Gary Sanders

King of the Iowa City ped mall

For three brief, shining (and bitterly cold) months this past winter, Gary Sanders attempted a one-man downtown renaissance. He opened a used-book store on the Iowa City ped mall. He hosted readings and rounds of provocative conversation—but it was not to last. Gadfly groupie and Iowa City writer Amanda Coyne was there, and now when it's a lot warmer and a little easier to dream, brings back Gary's Arthurian reign.

10

Greg Brown

*Iowa's best ambassador
to the world*

Although rumors of his hiatus are greatly exaggerated, Greg Brown took some time to kick back with Rick Zollo and muse about things ranging from the call of Hacklebarney to the exoticness of Iowa.



little village

P.O. Box 736 • Iowa City, IA 52245

Welcome to Little Village

Had enough of Mega-this, Super-that and Big-whatever? Fed up with being treated like a dumbass by your local corporate newspaper?

Say hello to the first issue of *Little Village*, your recipe for relief in 32 pages of words and pictures. Less-is-more is cool right now, but we're not necessarily jumping on any bandwagons here. Still, if Lucinda Williams can sing "purdy hairdos, purdy hairdos" over and over and call it a song, if Radiohead can pass off blips as art, then we can get away with some minimalism too. But enough musical references.

Iowa City is a special town, and we think it deserves a special publication. *Little Village* is a bi-monthly magazine (that's twice a month, starting in August) covering news and culture from a refreshing perspective. *Little Village* favors the small and local, champions the sustainable, yet believes in considering more than one side of an issue. *Little Village* reflects a town that is complex, often contradictory and always extraordinary; a town that is home to both the Iowa Hawkeyes and the Writers' Workshop; to both Greg Brown and Steve Atkins; Karen Kubby and Terrence Neuzil.

We're local and we're independent. Although we're silly with former *Icon* people, please don't think of us as a diminutive *Icon*. (And while we're asking favors, it'd be great if you wouldn't start calling us *The Little Village*.) *Little Village* won't fill the same role in Iowa City as *Icon* did (or failed

to do), and that's really not our goal. Our goal is to start fires and put them out, to raise expectations and lower the limbo bar, to be serious and to be stupid. If you don't like one thing, you might like another.

Little Village also seeks to export the stories of Iowa City to the state at large. Distribution won't be limited to Iowa City, and neither will coverage. Just as *The Village Voice* goes beyond the confines of Greenwich Village (and is in fact read throughout the world), *Little Village* will show off Iowa City to the state at large. At the same time we want to bring the stories of greater Iowa to the streets and ivory tow-

ers of Iowa City. Consider it an exchange. Iowa City doesn't have to be so intimidating to the rest of the state, and the rest of the state can be more than a third-world country to those of us lucky enough to reside in the Athens of the Midwest.

More than anything, we want to listen to you and make *Little Village* your magazine. If you have something to say, consider writing us. If you have an idea for an article, give us a shout or consider doing one yourself (contact us first!). We're always on the lookout for good write rs.

What can you give the town that has everything? *Little Village*. Welcome to town. *

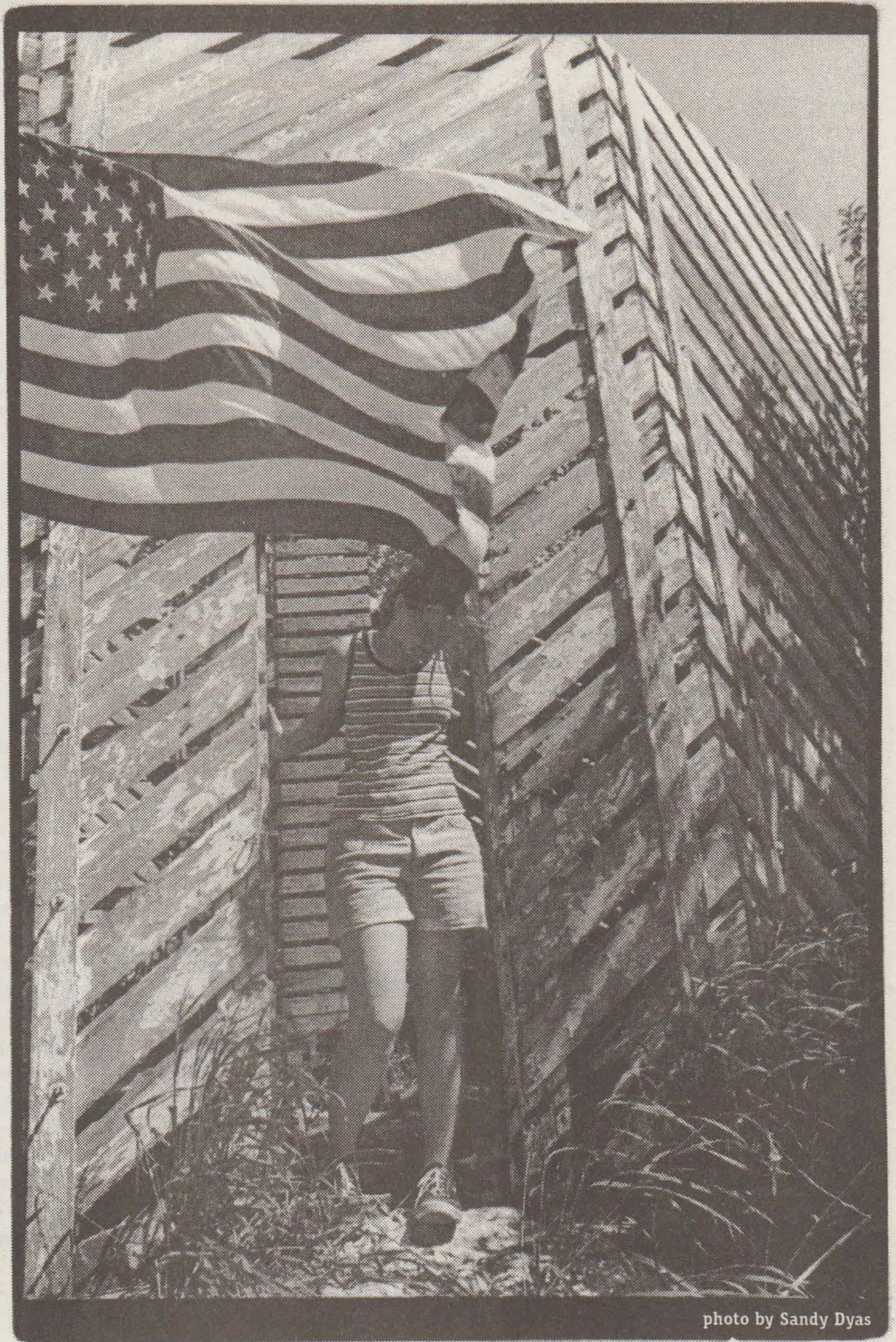


photo by Sandy Dyas



Outside the Walls

Stop the flood-protection arms race

Now that the Mississippi River is receding and the sandbags are removed, federal, state and local leaders need to address more than the cost of clean-up after the flooding.

We need to determine why floods occur more often and at higher flows than predicted and address the root problems that have led to the more frequent flooding.

The mindset of everyone involved in the life of the Mississippi River needs to shift from flood protection to flood-plain management if Davenport and hundreds of other cities along the Mississippi River (with or without floodwalls/levees) hope to reduce future flooding and flood damage.

Numerous studies have shown floodwalls/levees built along the Mississippi in the past 100 years have pushed up flood levels as more water is restricted into a smaller and smaller channel.

More recent information suggests the use of drain tiles by farmers, increased urban development and continued loss of wetlands accelerate runoff and push streams and rivers higher and faster than ever before.

Focusing on flood-plain management has earned Davenport the distinction as "the largest city on the Upper Mississippi River without flood protection."

Davenport should not shirk from that description. We should use our notoriety as a catalyst for changing how we and others view the Mississippi River basin and the policies and practices that affect America's greatest river.

The city need not apologize for its decision to pursue flood-plain management rather than floodwalls and levees. Flood-prone homes have been purchased, businesses have relocated out of the flood plain and new structures built in the flood

plain have been flood-proofed.

The questions should not be about what decision the city made 20 years ago, but the actions of other cities and residents along the Mississippi that have contributed to the flood-protection "arms race."

We should ask how to better fund farm programs to retain and restore wetlands. We should ask how farm programs and practices encourage the use of tiling to drain rainfall from fields.

We should ask if there should be standards to control urban stormwater runoff by all communities, not only along the Mississippi but all of its tributaries.

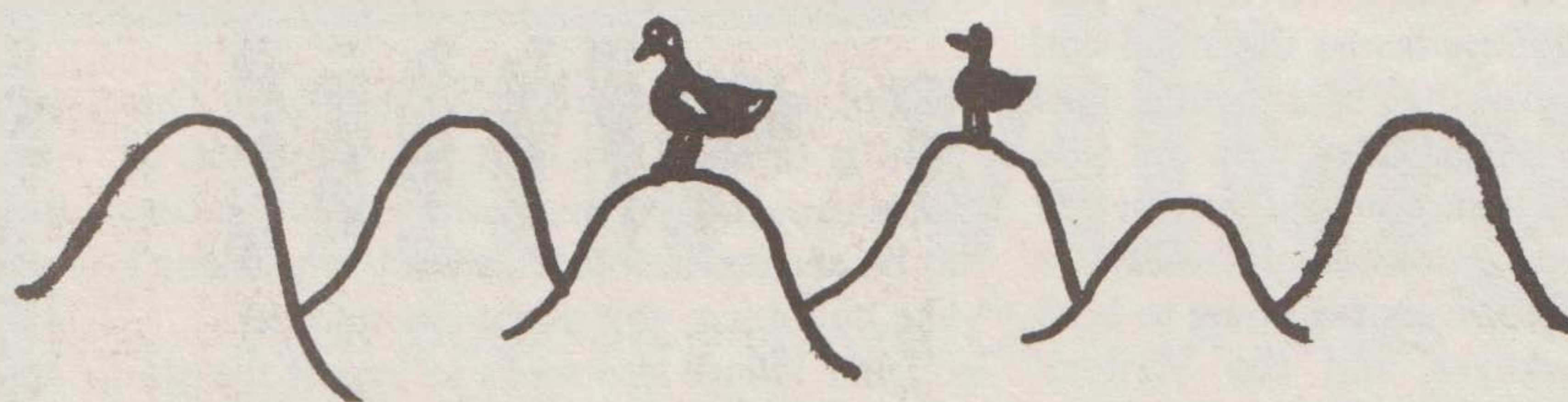
And, we should ask why so little attention and so few dollars are spent on flood prevention measures like wetlands as opposed to flood-protection structures that drive the river ever higher.

Our community has been a good steward to the river, its residents and the American taxpayer by focusing on flood-plain management rather than flood control.

We need to take that story to all communities and residents of the Mississippi River basin and seek funding and actions that better manage our flood plain and watershed and address the root causes of our increased flooding on the Mississippi River.

Even those communities with large and high floodwalls should be seeking answers to Davenport's flooding, because if answers aren't found and actions aren't taken to better manage the river basin and watershed the water will keep rising.

*Kathy Wine is executive director of River Action, Inc., a not-for-profit citizens action group dedicated to fostering the environmental, economic and cultural vitality of the Mississippi River and its riverfront in the Quad City region. It's Web site is <http://www.riveraction.org>, email riveraction@netexpress.net. **



Little Village welcomes your signed letters. Letters should not be longer than 400 words and may be edited for length, libelous content and clarity. Letters may be e-mailed to little-village@usa.net or mailed to PO Box 736, Iowa City, IA 52244. Please include a daytime phone number and city of residence. Letters and other submissions become the property of Little Village and will not be returned without an SASE. We look forward to hearing from you.

Not to be confused with a regular advice column, *Good Advices* dispenses wisdom gathered from both the distant winds and local gurus and experts. If you have some good advice on pretty much any topic, call or email us with it. If, on the other hand, you need advice, do the same and we'll see what we can do.

Book blurbs

Never buy a book that has a blurb by Pat Conroy. Conroy is a blurb whore. A book hasn't been written that he doesn't like. On the other hand, if you see a book that has a blurb by Thomas Pynchon or Don DeLillo, both of who very rarely write blurbs, you've got yourself a pretty good book.

Source: Paul Ingram, Prairie Lights Bookstore, Iowa City

Summer wines for \$10 or less

Chardonnay, with its oaky flavors and buttery texture, is a great match for grilled fish and chicken but is often too heavy for lighter summer meals. Le Pouy from Gascony in France is a perfect alternative. Its crisp green apple-and-melon fruit character pair up with a bright, dry finish to complement salads, chicken and pork dishes. Meridian Pinot Grigio from Santa Barbara Co., California, is a

Good Advices

lush new release made for steamy Iowa summers. Refreshing and food-friendly (think shrimp and shellfish), this one is a candidate for anyone's house wine.

If you're a fan of white zinfandel or just looking to try something different, chill a bottle of Maison Nicolas Rosé and find out what the French learned long ago. France shuts down for the month of August when everyone vacations in Provence. They contemplate the startlingly blue waters of the Mediterranean and quaff Provencal rosé. Fifteen million Frenchmen can't be wrong (except about Jerry Lewis and Mickey Rourke)
Source: Wally (Plahutnik) the Wine Guy, John's Grocery, Iowa City

What should I do if I think my car is a lemon?

Write the manufacturer and ask for a refund or replacement vehicle. Your refund should include the full purchase price, sales tax, any finance charge, and repair costs, minus a reasonable amount for mileage. If you get a replacement vehicle, the manufacturer should refund your repair costs and charge nothing for mileage.

If you don't get a refund or replacement by

writing the manufacturer, consider using your manufacturer's complaint arbitration program. In arbitration, panelists decide how your complaint should be settled. You may want to consult a lawyer first, although some people proceed on their own. ... A court may need to decide if your vehicle is a lemon and what settlement you deserve. If you sue the manufacturer and you win, you could get double the vehicle purchase price and repair costs plus other costs and attorney fees

Source: http://law.freeadvice.com/general_practice/lemon_law/car_lemon.htm

Kissing (a woman)

Act! Lift your lips away slightly, center them so that when you make contact there will be a perfect union. Notice, only momentarily, the picture of her teeth in her lips, and, then, like a seagull swooping gracefully down through the air, bring your lips down firmly onto the lips of the girl who is quivering in your arms.

Kiss her! Kiss her as though, at that moment, nothing else exists in the world. Kiss her as though your entire life is wrapped up into the period of the kiss. Kiss her as though there is nothing else that you would rather be doing. Kiss her!

Source: How to Make Love: The Secret of Wooing and Winning the One You Love by Hugh Morris (1936/reprinted 1987)

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Editor: Todd Kimm

Sales/Administration: Andria Green

Art Director/Production Manager: Beth Oxler

Contributing Editor: Steve Horowitz

Distribution Manager: Jon Lonngren

IT Director: Phil Maul

Contributors: Sandy Dyas, Dan Tamer us, Joe Sharpnack, Kathy Wine, Amanda Coyne, Rick Zollo, Rob Cline, Chris Offutt, Julia Fierro, Justin Feinstein, Joe Derder an, Dr. Star

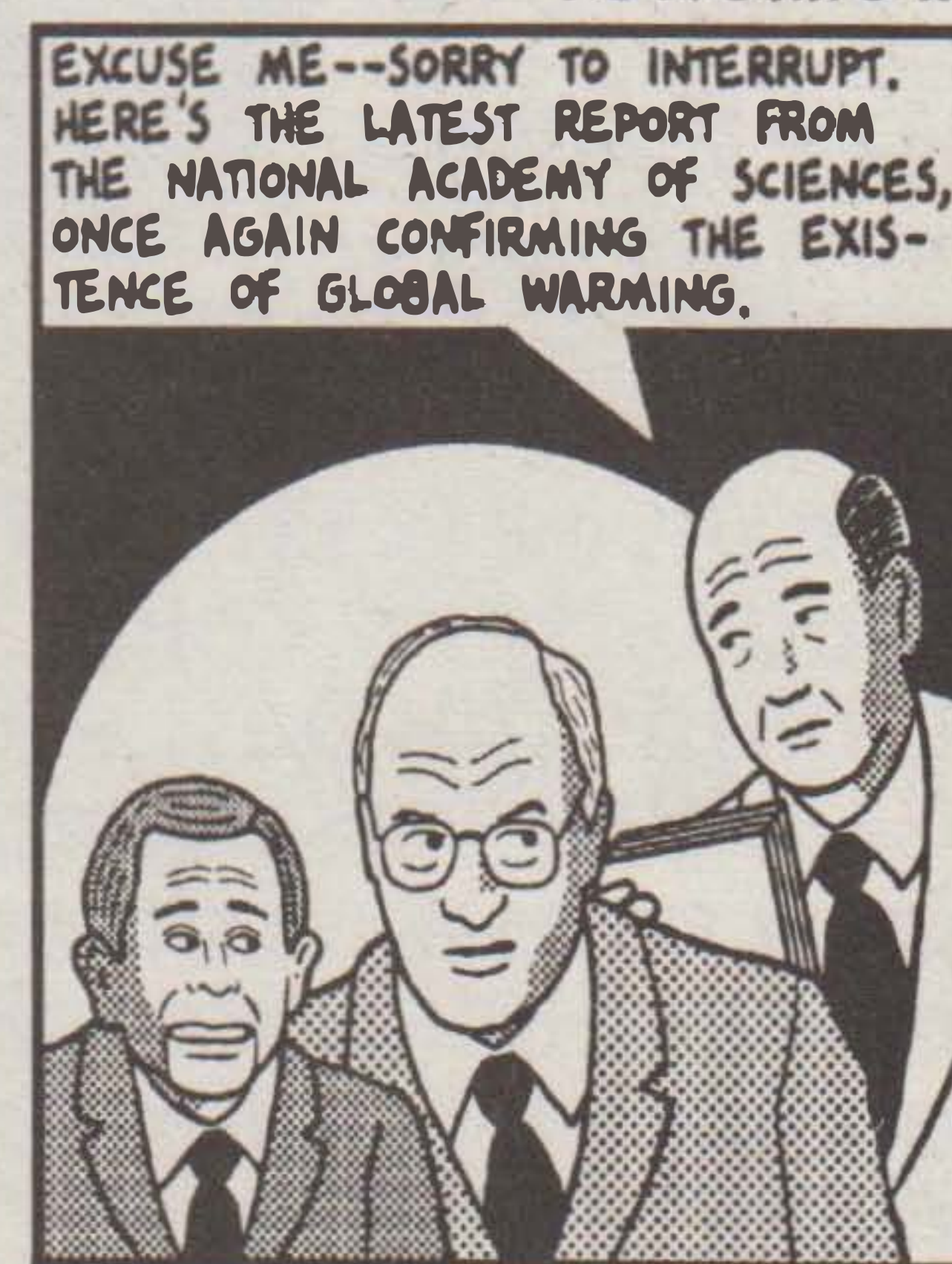
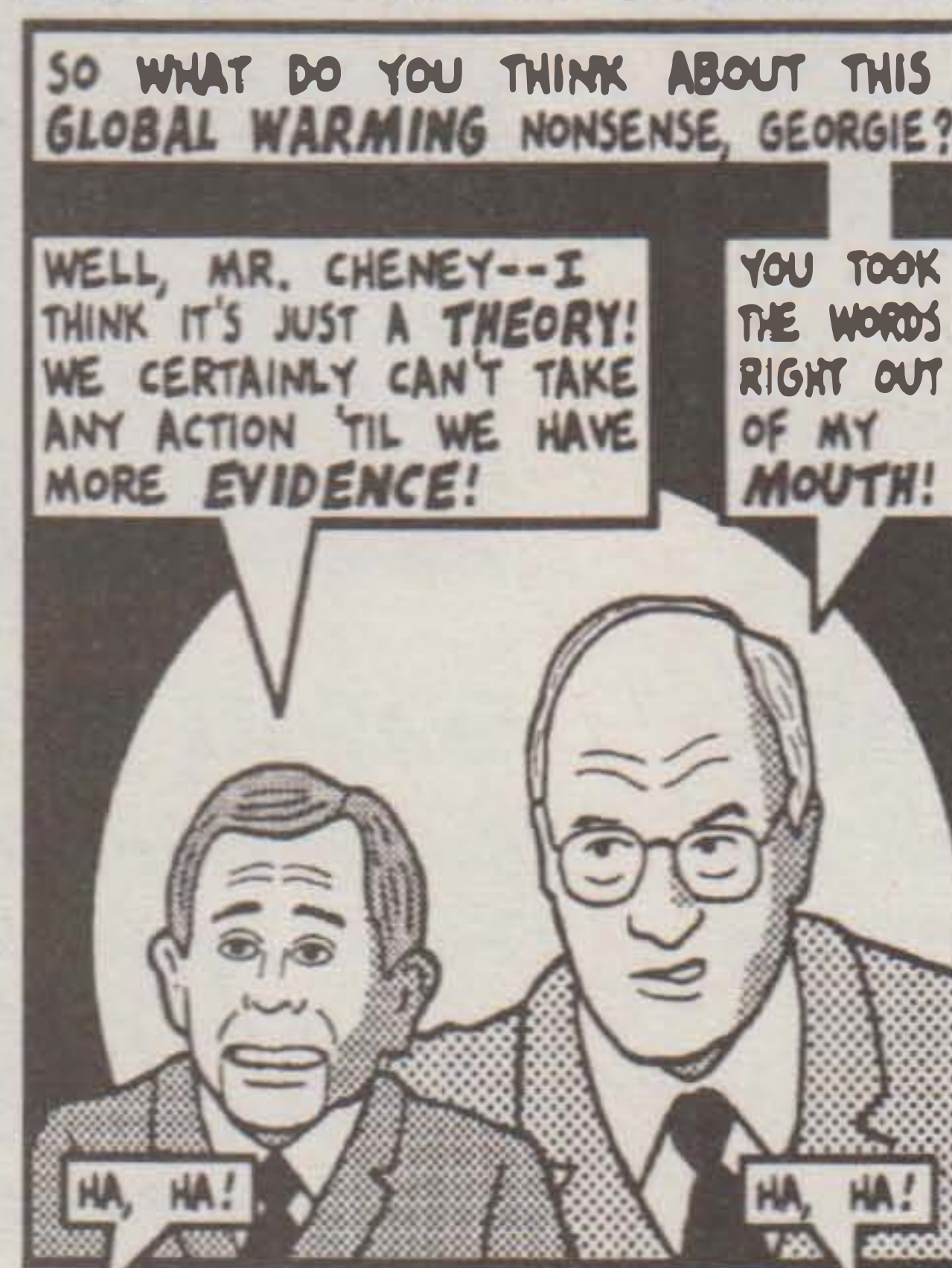
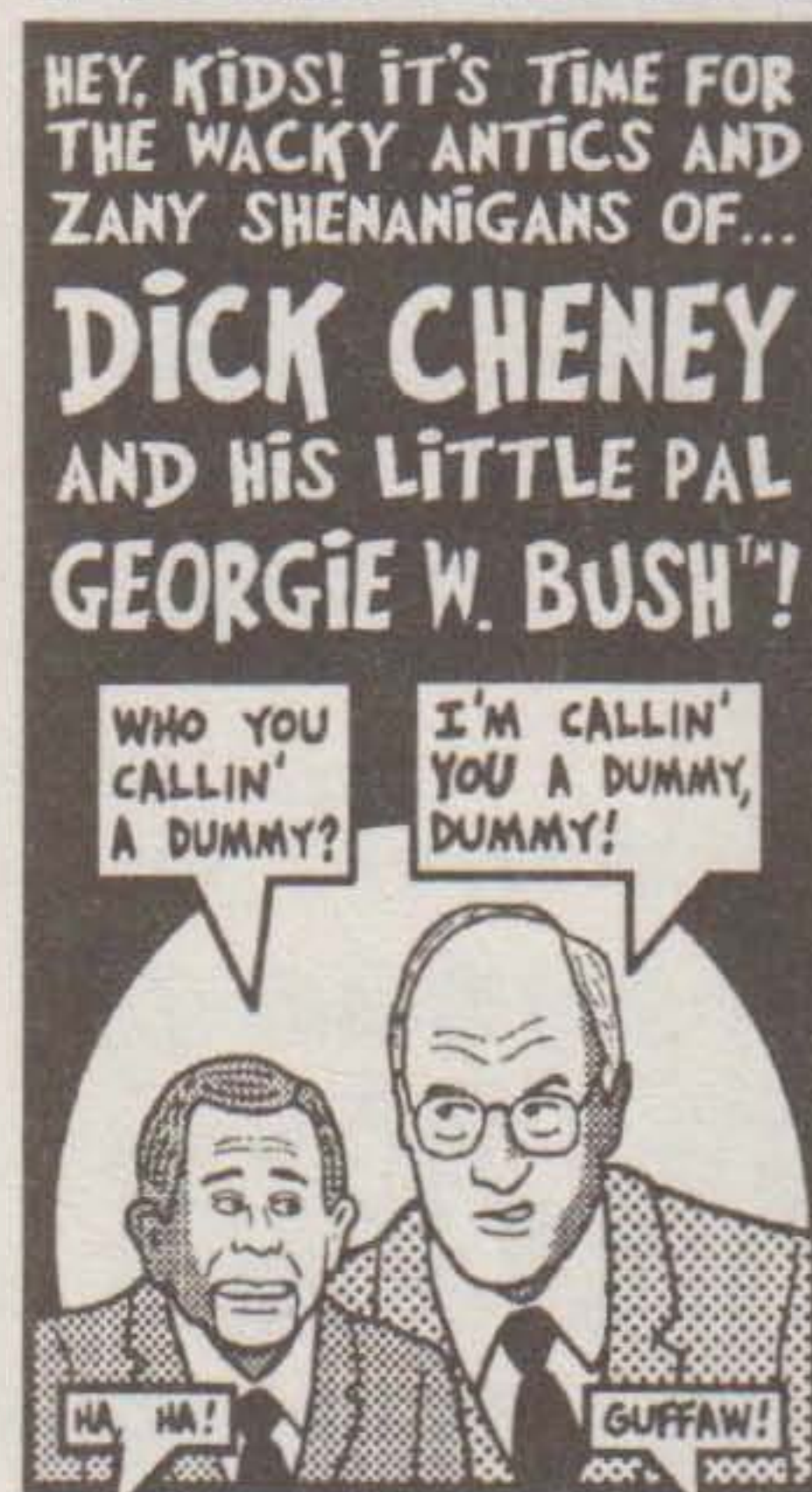
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PO Box 736
Iowa City, IA 53344

little-village@usa.net

THIS MODERN WORLD

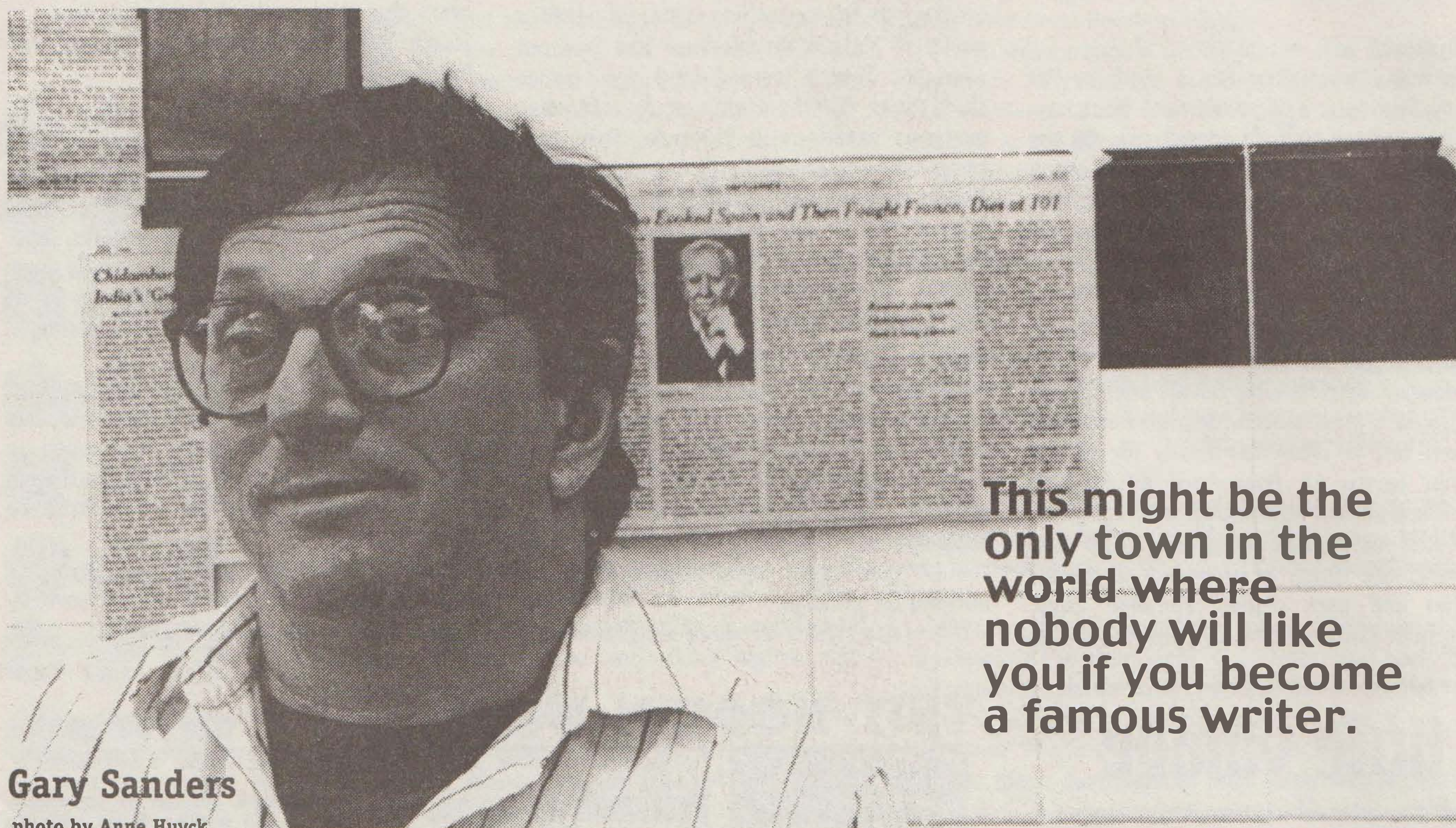
BY TOM TOMORROW



Amanda Coyne

Gary Sanders

King of the Iowa City ped mall



This might be the only town in the world where nobody will like you if you become a famous writer.

Gary Sanders

photo by Anne Huyck

For three brief, shining (and bitterly cold) months this past winter, Gary Sanders attempted a one-man downtown renaissance. He opened a used-book store on the Iowa City ped mall. He hosted readings and rounds of provocative conversation—but it was not to last. Gadfly groupie and Iowa City writer Amanda Coyne was there, and now when it's a lot warmer and a little easier to dream, brings back Gary's Arthurian reign.

*"Born on a mountain top on Tennessee
Greenest state in the land of the free
Raised in the woods so I knew every tree
Killed me a bar when I was only three
Gary, Gary Sanders king of the wild frontier"*

I give him a look. "OK, OK. Detroit," he admits. "I was born in Detroit." I decide to discontinue the questions. But he continues the answers: "And don't forget about the time I sailed across the Pacific on a homemade boat, with two complete strangers."

"I've heard this story, Gary."

"How about the time Bob Novak sat in on the 'Sanders Group?'"

That gets my attention. But because I want to talk about Robert Novak, and not him, he gets coy: "But you'll just have to watch it, now, won't you?"

"How about the times I hitchhiked across

the country?" he offers. "You want that story?"

"Gary. This piece is about me and about being in Iowa City, still, and about January and about getting old. It's not about you. You're just a backdrop, just a foil, an excuse. This an excuse to write about me."

Excuses he understands, and they shut him up, for now. He picks up a newspaper, and I commence to staring out the window of Gary Sanders' latest temporary endeavor: formerly Freshens Yogurt, now temporarily The Best of Books, The Worst of Books. He opened it, he told the papers, because he couldn't stand to see another business in downtown Iowa City's pedestrian mall shut down. But all who know Gary know he just wants an excuse to be downtown during the days in winter, and he can't quite reconcile himself to being a public library catnapper. Besides, he'd have to be quiet in the library. And he's not a quiet man.

He puts down his paper and bellows, "On January 21, at 12:30 p.m.—are you getting this down?—I hereby declare that I, Gary

Sanders, am a genius!"

He takes off his glasses and heaves a the-world-is-too-much-for-a-man-such-as-I sigh.

"Did you get that down?" he asks.

"On January 21, at 12:32 p.m.," I read from my notebook, "I hereby declare that Gary Sander's is a big stupido."

He considers. "Is that how my obit's going to read? 'Gary Sanders. Big Stupido. Dead?'"

"How about this? 'Gary Sanders. Iowa City rabble-rouser, gadfly, talk-show host, owner of weird bookstore, man of mysterious means, general aggravation, Big Stupido. Dead.'"

He smiles. He likes that. He's obsessed with *New York Times* obituaries. He has several of them taped haphazardly on the walls, their headings screaming against a backdrop of cheery white-and-red tiles, posters of yogurt cones and yogurt sundaes topped with cherries and nuts:

"Rupert C. Barneby, 89, Botanical Garden Curator and Expert on Beans, Is Dead."

"John S. Morrison, Scholar, 87, Rebuilt Lost Greek Warship, Died."

"Al Gross, Inventor of Gizmos with Potential, Dies at 82."

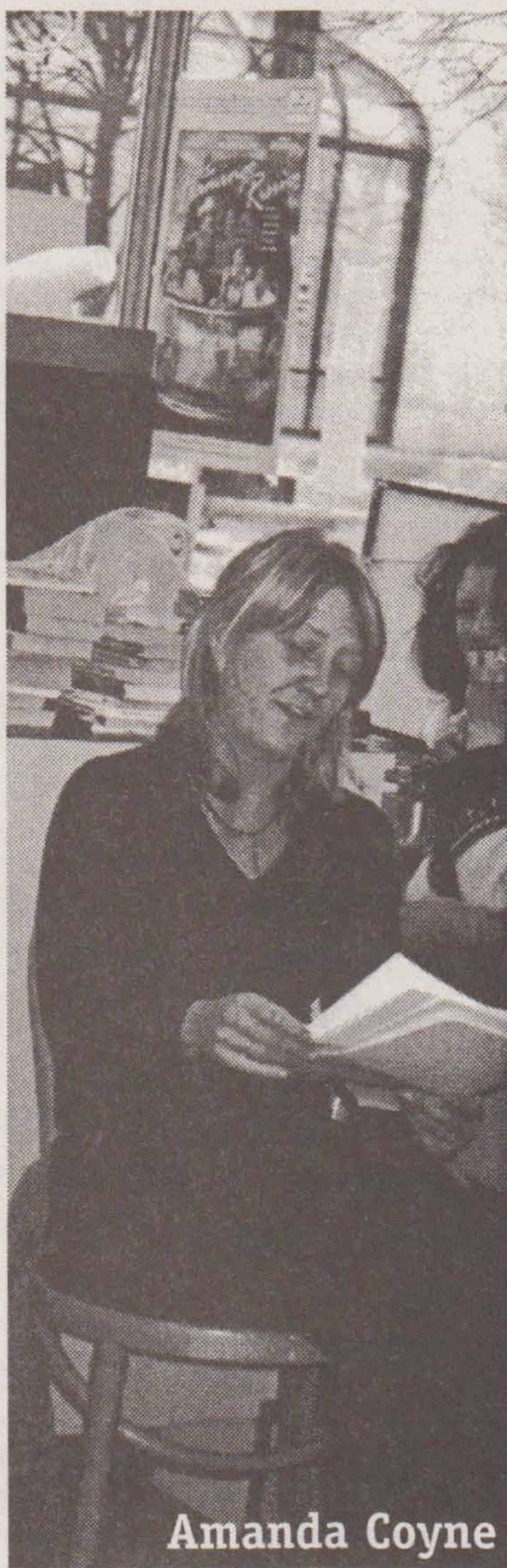
"It won't be long," he sighs. He's getting morose; and so I'm glad when a man enters the store carrying an empty watering can in one hand, a stack of flyers in the other. I pick up Mao's "Little Red Book," and, in my best Marilyn Monroe imitation, purr, "Reading is so sexy. I just love a man who reads."

I am middle management for the day. My job is to sell the books. My reward is a piece of Lindts chocolate I spotted in Gary's "briefcase"—his omnipresent, grease-stained box filled with old newspapers; old political flyers announcing old protests; dirty paper coffee cups; half-wrapped, half-eaten mysterious things.

"Cut it, Amanda," he says, and pointing to the man with the watering can: "Friend."

Gary's friend informs him that tomorrow there will be a rally protesting Bush's inauguration. The day after tomorrow, a second rally will protest sweatshops. The day after, nuclear energy. Apparently, a few aging white men will be spending all winter on the street corner, freezing, getting angry, holding signs, looking like they are rehearsing for a Midwestern "Monty Python."

They start talking McGovern. I tune them out and stare out the window at Jim Leach's office across the way. For the 20 or so years I have called Iowa City my home, I have never, ever seen anybody come in or out of that office. But they're in there, I know. Behind the drawn shades, I imagine evil things to be transpiring: deals are being cut with corporate hog-lot owners, ethanol sub-



Amanda Coyne

● **"Gary. This piece is about me, and about being in Iowa City, still, and about January and about getting old. It's not about you. You're just a backdrop, just a foil, an excuse. This an excuse to write about me."**

sides are being slashed, a man named Abraham is sacrificing his first born.

"Weird things are happening over there," I say after the friend leaves. "Can't you feel it? The energy, Gary, can't you just feel it?"

A few years ago, Gary would have played

along. His eyes would have gotten wide, his face taken on an exaggerated, conspiratorial grimace. He would have said, "Corporate welfare."

Me: "Prayer in schools."

Him: "Jew Bashing!"

Me: "Clitorectamies."

But he's grown out of Amanda games. And sometimes the look in his eye lets me know that I should too. My presence seems more often to exhaust than uplift him. Now, mostly he looks at me and shakes his head. "I grow old," he says, when I try.

Once, years ago, when we he both in love—me with a greasy masseuse, him with a Hawaiian honey—we danced in the parking lot of the Kirkwood Learning Center where we both worked, and he, wearing shorts with dress shoes and mismatched socks, sang at the top of his lungs, "Love Train." We even got the welfare mothers, the high-school dropouts, to join in.

But he's changed since those years—actually, since he came back from Hawaii with a lei and a frown. Although when summer comes he will inevitably still be loping after fleeing coeds, a mass of papers in hand, a zealot's look in his eyes; ever since his public-access television show, "Who Wants to Marry a Short, Middle-aged Cranky Guy with No Money?", failed to fetch him the shiksa of his dreams, he seems for the most part to have given up on love.

These days, Gary, in his middle age, is interested in getting down to business. "Down to business," he reads from his horoscope. "The time has come to *resist* temptation and get *down* to business—are you writing this down? The time has come to resist temptation and get down to business." He raises his hands in the air and yells, "Halleluiah. Praise the Lord." I do not shush him, because his preacher's voice is preferable to some of his others.

Down to business. The phrase runs through my head, and all and all, it doesn't sound too bad. Preferable to what most of us in this tiny dot of a town in the center of the country have been doing. Preferable to staring out at a gray January day waiting to catch a glimpse of a real-life Iowa City Republican. Suddenly, a fourth-grade teacher is in my head, and she's telling me to "Take the bull by the horns," and that "Today is the first day of the rest of your life." "Wake up and smell the coffee," she says. Another voice, this time with a jeer, says, "Shit or get off the pot."

My body begins to vibrate, my legs want to move. I want things—something, anything—to happen. I want to sell a book.

"Enough of this!" I say. I pick up a copy of Dennis Rodman's *Bad As I Want To Be*, jump on the ledge and thrust my hip out in



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a model's pose. When a group of boys walk by, I mouth, "Uh, ah, reading is soooo sexy."

One of them stops, stares and mouths back with real concern, "Is something wrong? Do you need help?"

"Good job," Gary says.

"Gary!" I jump off the ledge and run my hands frantically through my hair. "Why don't we create a marketing plan, get a small-business loan, apply for one of those tax-relief thingamajigs. We could actually do something. We could make a go of this."

I'm having a vision. It's the bookstore/coffeehouse of my dreams. I see plush couch-

● But he's grown out of Amanda games. And sometimes the look in his eye lets me know that I should too. My presence seems more often to exhaust than uplift him. Now, mostly he looks at me and shakes his head. "I grow old," he says, when I try.

es and leather binding. I see a place where people actually converse. I see poets talking iambs with politicians. I see career criminals and starving artists embracing. I see myself having a scintillating conversation about French literature with a mysterious man.

"Upper management will consider your ideas," Gary says. "But in the meantime, why doesn't middle management begin by organizing the books?"

I look around at the 300 or so ratty books arranged in no discernable order—*What to Expect When You're Expecting* next to *Great Expectations*. Danielle Steel next to Dante. Wally Lamb next to Charles Lamb.

A wave of exhaustion runs through me. I sit down and resume staring out the window, this time at Hawkeye World Travel, from which perky, tanning-boothed blondes bounce in and out constantly. I look at the recently deceased and papered Treasures knickknack store. It's sad when a store with such a blithe name goes under, even though I always felt sympathy for the farmers' wives who'd stumble upon the store—while doing Christmas shopping, say, or before the Iowa/Iowa State Game—scratch their heads and say under their breath, "Don't

people have better things to do with their money?" "Gold-plated roses? Giraffe-shaped coffee mugs? Elephant snout vases?" "That's different," they'd say, as they handled a bronze corn cob infused with a grenade pin.

But that, of course, has always been one of the things that separates Iowa City from its state. We are different. We are the types of people who buy such things, and we are proud of it.

And we—the best and the worst of us—are the types of people to always buy books.

Or maybe not any more. The ped mall's awfully empty these days. Maybe now we're buying our picture frames at Target, ordering our books online.

I've been here for two hours, and the only people who have entered looking for anything other than yogurt are Gary's friends. And either they've given up on books because they read somewhere years ago that literature is dead (they'll tell you so with a knowing look, a touch of feigned sorrow in the shrug of the shoulders), or it's their books that Gary's peddling.

We are also within spitting distance of the anti-fountain fountain. There's something vaguely depressing about that fountain, even in the summer. The way the water refuses to return back into the holes, and instead clops on the marble like a herd of horses, making bricks slick, causing children to fall and cry, adults to yell over the noise, and the guy strumming some awful rendition of "Sugar Magnolia" to strum even louder. But in the summer, despite all the cacophony, there's still that air that glides across the skin like a silk shirt, there's the deep shadows and the Disney-blue sky and the whiff, occasionally, of earth: the smell that reminds us that this world is being nourished by the land around us, and that despite Steve Atkins or R.J. Winklehake, good things are happening here.

But in the winter, everything feels doomed in that Greek tragedy kind of way, when an infraction against the gods (the killing of Eric Shaw) ensures that all the money and energy and good intentions in the world will not bring about a workable fountain, kiosks with telephones and newspapers, or keep Iowa City—the treasure of Iowa—from dying.

Or maybe it's just me. Maybe it's the frost-bitten January sky, the post-holiday blues, the dirty snow and the sallow complexions. Or maybe it's the fact that once you reach a certain age—mid-30s apparently—optimism takes a certain kind of energy that belongs to the perky blondes who, on the first day of the semester, are already planning spring break in Cancun at Hawkeye World Travel.

A college-aged woman enters. "A customer!" I whisper to Gary.

"A customer!" He repeats. "A real one!"

She browses. Gary and I sit, very silently, for awhile.

"Stay cool, Gary. Just keep it cool."

Partly because she's pretty, partly because he's incapable of reserve, it's too much for him. He stands up suddenly, knocking over a chair, and on his way toward her trips over a table. He's coming at her, arms pinwheeling, head in a matador position. She takes a few quick steps back with a horrified look on her face.

"Hello!" he bellows, after he rights himself. "My name is Gary Sanders, and she..." he says pointing to me, "is my middle manager, Amanda Coyne. Let us know if we can help you."

She continues to browse. He moves toward her. She moves away.

"If there's anything at all we can do for you..."

"I'm just looking," she says and picks up a copy of Ann Tyler's *Ladder of Years*.

"How much?" she asks.

Gary leafs through the book. "Let me see," he says. "A hardcopy? Published recently? Let...me...see..." He places one finger on the side of his temple and taps. "So, what do you do?"

"Five dollars," I tell the girl. She reaches into her backpack for her wallet.

"Hold on," he says. "Just one second." Her wallet goes back into her backpack.

"She," he says, pointing to me, "is just middle management. Just hold it right there. These are difficult times. Middle management be running around giving product away. For you though, today and only today, I'll sell you this fine book for 218 dollar and 30 cent." Now he's stumbled into some kind of mutant ped-mall slacker voice. "218 dollar and 30 cent."

The girl chuckles nervously. She begins to slide toward the door.

"Now seriously. You look like a nice young lady. What is it you say you do?"

She's getting scared. She's halfway out the door.

"Seven dollars," he yells at her back. "Seven dollars is my final offer. Take it or leave it. Today and today only."

She escapes.

Another customer; this one has purpose. This one makes us both decidedly uncomfortable. She immediately spots a gardening book, takes it off the shelf and shoves it into

Gary's face. He doesn't quite know how to handle this. He actually looks serious for a moment. But then he begins to hem and haw. "For you, Mary. Today and today only..."

"Cut the crap, Gary," she says. "I've got to get back to work."

"Five dollars," he says quickly. The deal is done. It has not been fun for him. He looks like he might start crying. This, obviously, is not his idea of getting down to business.

"I'm depressed, Gary," I say. "I'll never get out of this town. Nothing will ever happen and I will never leave. I'll be stuck here, with you, forever. Can I have that chocolate, please?"

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"You sell a book, you get the reward," he answers. "Has anyone ever told you, by the by, you be one high-maintenance girl? You be all the time need some attention." This is punctuated with a homeboy pointing of the finger; a downward movement of the arm; a short, intellectual, radical leftist imitating Dr. Dre.

But that's not his worst. His worst is his hillbilly impersonation. And this he commences with a whooping, "Hey Bubba," when Larry Baker, Iowa City's number-one southern-writer boy enters. Let me rephrase that. Larry Baker does not just come in, he struts in, in the way that a *New York Times* best-selling author struts. Or maybe I'm projecting. Maybe I'm just imagining myself walking into a little used bookstore after such a success.

Introductions are made, and I—just like any other wanna-be writer in this town—pretend to only have vaguely heard of him and his book. He tries to talk to me, but I answer in monosyllables and become interested in the life of Malcolm X.

This might be the only town in the world where nobody will like you if you become a famous writer.

They start talking McGovern. I stretch and yawn and think deep thoughts. I think about how downtown Iowa City is doomed: how it will never get a Gap or J Crew or

Ann Taylor. I think about no matter how many times it changes ownership, loud, bad muzak will always blare out of the old Holiday Inn's loudspeakers. I think that no matter the money I spend at Dombies, I will never look like one of the girls who work there. I think about how the Englert will inevitably become a sports bar, and about how those of us who don't frequent such places will forever spend our days caffeinated and frustrated at the Java House of sexual repression.

I am brought back by Gary yelping, "Ya'll come back now, you hear?" at Baker's back.

During my revery someone has added black streaks of charcoal to the dusky sky and cranked this spot on the earth a notch

away from the sun. The mercury's dropping, fast. Tonight it's going to be a cold one. The wind's gotten louder and has taken on the cry of a lonesome child. Later, it will become a mad-woman's screech. Everywhere, blinds are being drawn, furnaces are kicking in, bundled children are walking away, fast, from school. College students are wondering why they didn't

choose a university down south. Farmers are cursing their forefathers for not making it farther west. Halos of light surround lampposts, storefront windows are fogging, and everybody, including Gary and I, is heading home.

Gary adds more old newspapers to his briefcase, wraps up his half-eaten sandwich and turns off the lights. We stand outside the shop for a moment. He is wearing his pile cap and a down coat that reaches his feet. His glasses are spotted and fogged, and his gloves don't match. I have a nearly overwhelming desire—archetypal almost—felt by hundreds of Iowa City women since that fateful day in 1977 when Gary disembarked off a Greyhound bus—to hoist him over my shoulder, take him home, feed him and clean him up.

I start singing:

"Gary, Gary Sanders,
King of the Iowa City ped mall."

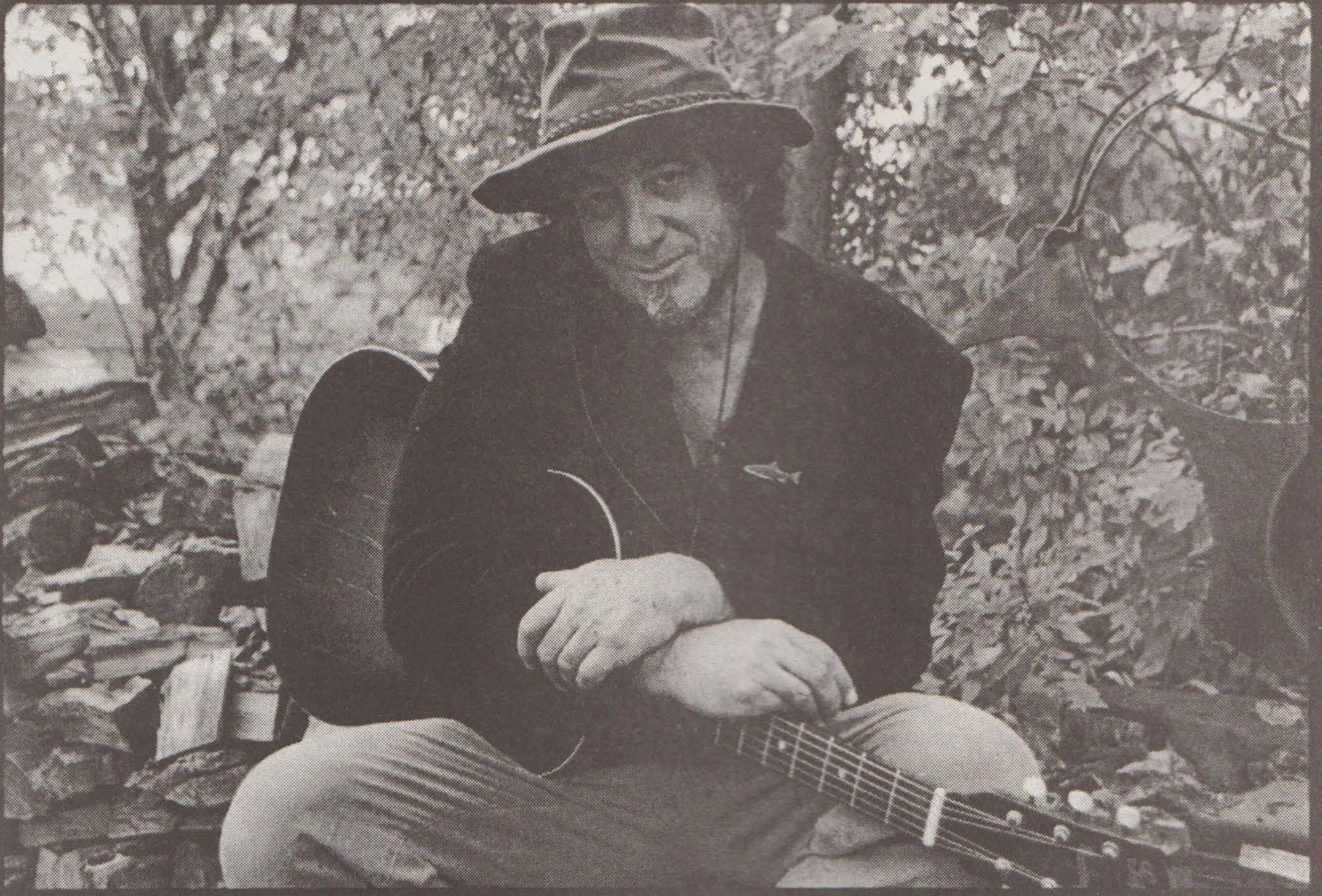
"There you go," I say, "Gary, there's your obit."

"Cheer up," he says. "This place ain't so bad. Besides, spring's right around the corner."

We part ways and walk toward the warmth. Toward home. He is humming his obit. I have a hand in my pocket, fingering my stolen piece of Lindt's chocolate. *

Rick Zollo

Iowa's best ambassador to the world



Although rumors of his hiatus are greatly exaggerated, Greg Brown took some time to kick back with Rick Zollo and muse about things ranging from the call of Hacklebarney to the exoticness of Iowa

* Part 1 of a 2-part series

Geoffrey Himes of the *Washington Post* called Greg Brown "Iowa's best ambassador to the world at large through his evocative, intelligent folk songs." Considerable praise, and an accurate reflection of this two-time Grammy nominee's status. The year 2000 saw a tremendous burst of creativity from Brown. He released *Covenant*, his 15th record for Red House (a label he founded, and which has now become a national force in folk music). *Over and Under* was then released on Iowa City's independent Trailer label, and a collection of prose

poetry, *The Watsonville Sonata*, was published by Felix Press. All the while, Brown toured the nation in support of his records. Such creative foment earned the artist some time off in 2001 to build a house, develop new material and get a respite from the grueling schedule. But things never go as planned, as I discovered after catching up with the artist at his Iowa City home. Following are some of his remarks on Iowa City, his Iowa roots and the world at large.

How would you describe this year off

you're taking, this hiatus?

I call it "hiatus my ass." [Laughs] I had decided to take this year off. Then I agreed to do some benefits. Ani DiFranco invited me to New York to do some shows. Other things came up. It hasn't been anything like touring, but it hasn't been a hiatus. Right now I'm not doing much. This summer I'm doing a few folk festivals, a couple of benefits. In the fall, I'm making sure I'm not doing anything, because I want to record in the fall.

Didn't I read somewhere that you were doing over a hundred gigs a year, and you wanted to cut back to something like 80 or so?

Right. That was some time ago. I wanted to cut back, and I even did for a while, but then the number of gigs crept back up, and

That's the people I come from; and the storytelling from that way of life, it's a rich vein of storytelling, because it was a hardscrabble poor, but not a sad poor. We had eggs, meat, garden—vegetables. There was storytelling, and music. The great thing about that kind of American music, whether it's church music or music made in bars, both musics are connected. I feel fortunate to have been born into such a rich culture.

last year I played even more. **2000 was a creative year for you.** It was, and it was also a real cramped year. My booking agent announced I was taking the year off, so offers started pouring in. What happened is, I got to touring, and I was on the road. When you're on the road, you're not sure whether you're coming or going. The agent would say, "Want to do some more gigs?" and I'd say, "Sure," so I ended up doing a lot more than I intended to. That's why I decided to just stop, go on this hiatus, and when I start up again, I'm doing even less.

As for the two records, they just happened. I recorded *Covenant*, songs I had written the previous year, then all of sudden these songs that I had heard in my head the previous summer just came back to me, like they were on the radio. I didn't think they'd amount to much, 'cause they were written so quickly, but when I played them for Bo [Ramsey], he said, "You better pay attention to these." I had always wanted to make a record for Trailer,

so we went in and made that record in two days. What I like about that record [*Over and Under*] was it got me back to how I like to make records, just sitting around playing with my friends. The songs were based pretty much on where I grew up.

You were raised in the area outside Ottumwa?

I was born in Ottumwa. My dad was a TV repairman in a town nearby, and we stayed there a few years. Then my dad was called to the ministry. We moved to St. Louis—Dad's family's from Missouri—so he could go to Bible School. Then we had churches in Kansas. When I was 12, we moved back to Iowa. All during that time we'd always come back [to the Ottumwa area], 'cause that's where my mom's folks were. The area was the closest I had to a home, 'cause Dad was moved from church to church every two years or so.

You've been an Iowa City-based artist since '74?

I moved back to Iowa City in '73 or '74. I lived here before then—went to college [at the University of Iowa] my freshman year. I moved back in '73 or '74, stayed 'till '83, when I moved up and did the "Prairie Home Companion" show for two-and-a-half years, then lived in Chicago for a year, and then came back again.

So now you're moving back to native ground?

Yeah, well, I love Iowa City, but like they say about Anchorage in Alaska, "The nice thing about Anchorage is that it's close to Alaska." Iowa City's a great place, but it's nothing like Ottumwa, or Fairfield.

So you're going back to Hacklebarney country. What made you want to go back? Because you inherited some land?

A combination of things. I've always wanted to live in the country, and for some time I'd been looking up in the driftless area, Northeast Iowa by Decorah. I love that country. My grandfather passed away in 1991, and my mother and uncle inherited the

land—a 40-acre plot [in Southeast Iowa's Van Buren County]. My mom's in New Mexico, and she told me I could have it. I had been spending time down there, and it didn't take long to realize it would mean a lot more to me to build on the old home ground. So much of my heart and memories are down there. And I didn't realize until two years ago—my Uncle Roscoe told me—that old plot of ground has been in the family since statehood. My grandfather's—what?—great-great grandfather got that land around 1840. I built a cabin down there, and once I had a roof, I started spending more time down there.

Are you leaving Iowa City?

I'll be here a lot. My friends are up here. It's very isolated down there. Hardly ever see a car along that gravel road. I like the isolation, but my friends are up here, so I don't plan to hide down there.

You're an Iowa artist. [I read him the Himes quote from the *Washington Post*.] That, plus the *New Yorker* profile from last year, your productivity and your touring, you have come to represent Iowa on a national level. How do you feel about that?

[Laughs] I had no idea I was representing the state. I've always gotten a kick when I travel around—doesn't happen as much as it used to—but I'll be introduced in places like Harvard Square as "Greg Brown, from Iowa." When other folk singers appear, it's never Tom Wilson from Kentucky, or Michigan. Iowa, I think, is exotic, mysterious to places like Harvard Square, or the West Coast. Know what I mean? I've always wanted to record an album with the title—there's this Cabeza de Vaca book, *Adventures in the Unknown Interior of America*, amazing book—and I've always wanted to make an album with that title about Iowa.

What I like about that record [*Over and Under*] was it got me back to how I like to make records, just sitting around playing with my friends.

You've carved an independent place for yourself in music. Was this your plan?

Had no plan. My plan was just to write and sing. I've been doing music since I was 12. Growing up in Hacklebarney, the music we played, what Grandpa liked, was hill music, a lot like what was being played in places like West Virginia and the Carolinas. I never traced it, but I think that type of music came up the river, plus there was the railroad and coal mines. All my people came from English and Irish on both sides. That music came over in the form of folk songs. Grandpa

played banjo. I was raised in that tradition. When I heard about the folk music revival growing up—that was the stuff I was raised on.

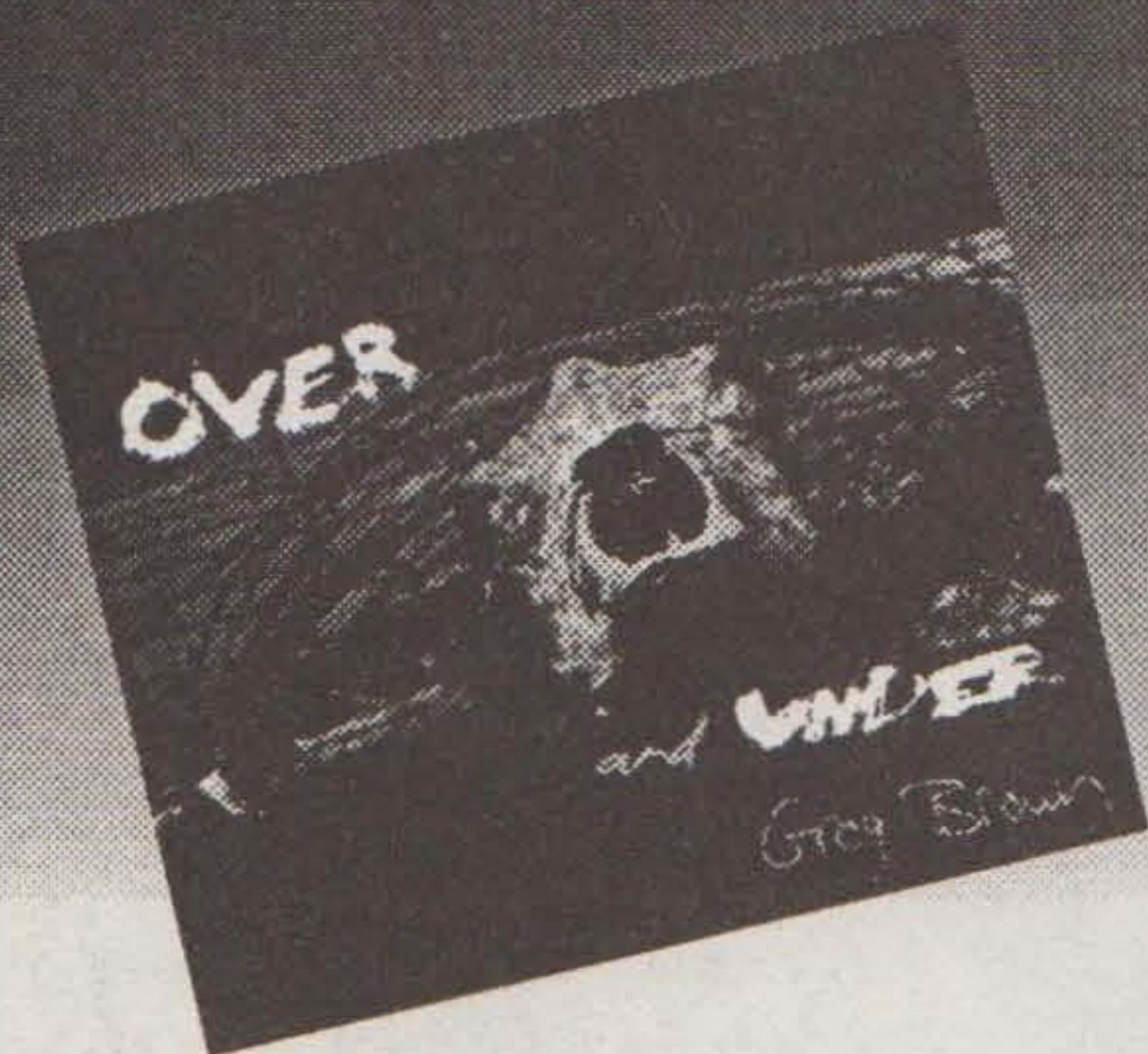
Where did the term "Hacklebarney" come from?

Hacklebarney is a place-name. Before you had towns, you had stretches of hills. Hacklebarney is a section, like Turkey Scratch, whatever name's been given to that place-area. Grandpa said it means "tail-end of nothing."

As an Iowa artist, what do you think Iowa lends to your music?

To me, it's not specific to Iowa so much as I come from subsistence farmers. My father's people came from the Ozarks; they made a living by having a couple of cash crops, raised sorghum molasses, worked the ground with mules. My mother's people: Grandpa had a little sawmill, the 40-acre place, a big garden, a couple of cows, pigs. They had to do a lot of things to get by. That's the people I come from; and the storytelling from that way of life, it's a rich vein of storytelling, because it was a hardscrabble poor, but not a sad poor. We had eggs, meat, garden—vegetables. There was storytelling, and music. The great thing about that kind of American music, whether it's church music or music made in bars, both musics are connected. I feel fortunate to have been born into such a rich culture.

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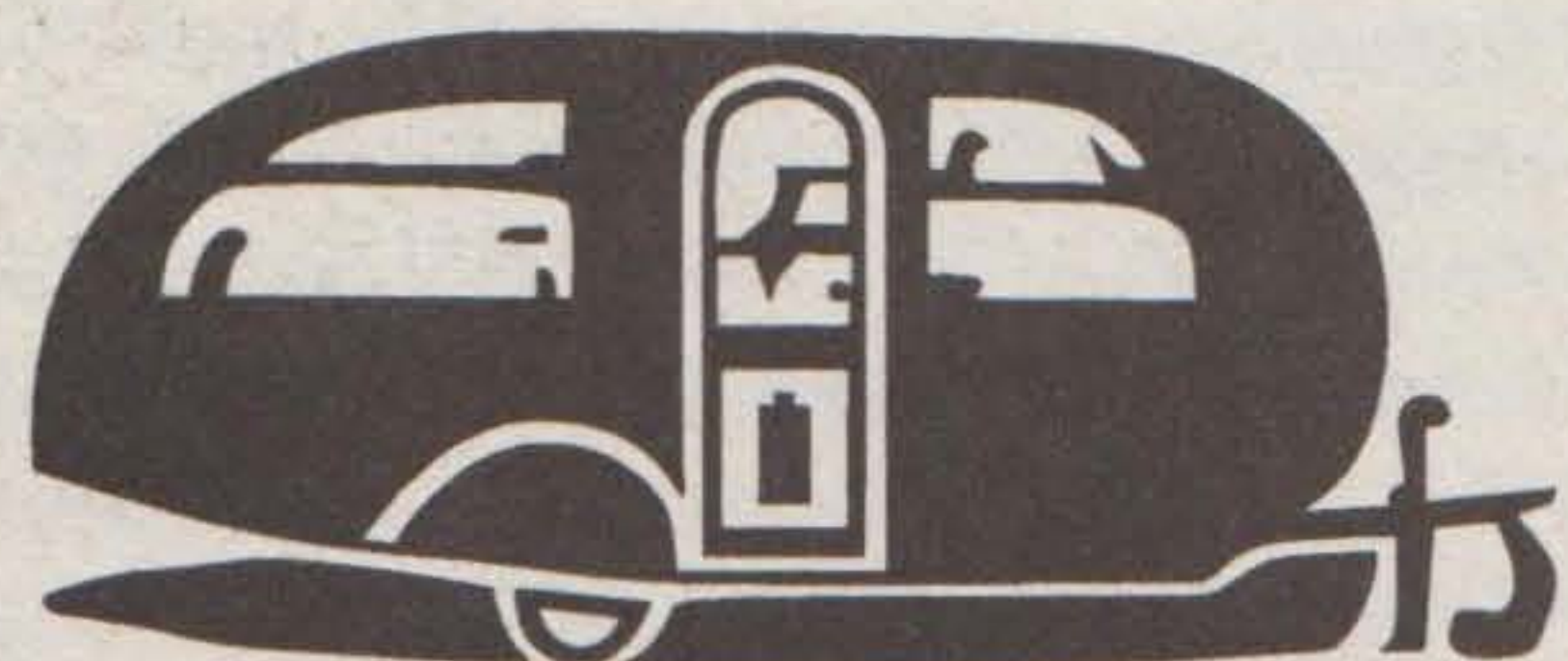


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I had been spending time down there, and it didn't take long to realize it would mean a lot more to me to build on the old home ground. So much of my heart and memories are down there.

do and do it. And it's getting harder to do, because with the corporate process, you come up with an idea, and now you sell it to a corporation, and if it's good, you make a million dollars. In Alaska, I still feel the spirit, the frontier quality. People don't need a degree; if you can do it, you get the job, and if you can't, you lose the job. That spirit is still in the old-time music, even in the mournful songs. And that spirit, I think, we're losing. Whether it's a bookstore, a grocery store, a garage, a record label. If we lose that independent spirit, then as far as I'm concerned, the story of America is over. It's all about McDonald's and all the others. It becomes their story. In a way, my job is to play for people who don't like what's going on. People can come together and meet. The power of music, I think, is how it can bring people together.

Iowa City has an interesting culture. It's Iowa but a different kind of town. It's a hang town, like a lot of college towns can be. I think it's insular in some ways. It can be too comfortable for people to hang out, if you're looking not to be hassled too much. Iowa City's a great town for that. Before I left to do "Prairie Home Companion," I was at my limits with restlessness. From my perspective now, it's wonderful to tour and then come back here. If I want to hear some music, I don't have

Your life, in a way, has been a rebellion against the corporate process. It's been about staying independent.

I think one of the beautiful things about America—and it's not a myth—is that independent streak, where a person can think of something to

to worry about paying \$50 to park, and then get mugged along the way. But when I was just living here, I got pretty restless. I always encourage young musicians to get out of here. This is a great town for musicians, and there are a lot of great musicians here for a town this size. But it can get to be too comfortable. One thing I have noticed is the town has gotten more conservative. The police force—that shooting of that boy—I see them hassling kids on the ped mall. And the politicians in town are getting more conservative, too. The river of society flows right through here. They've got that mall in Coralville, they're talking about building a rainforest, when the money could go to help some kids. The town is drifting the same way the country is heading, with money being the arbiter of all things.

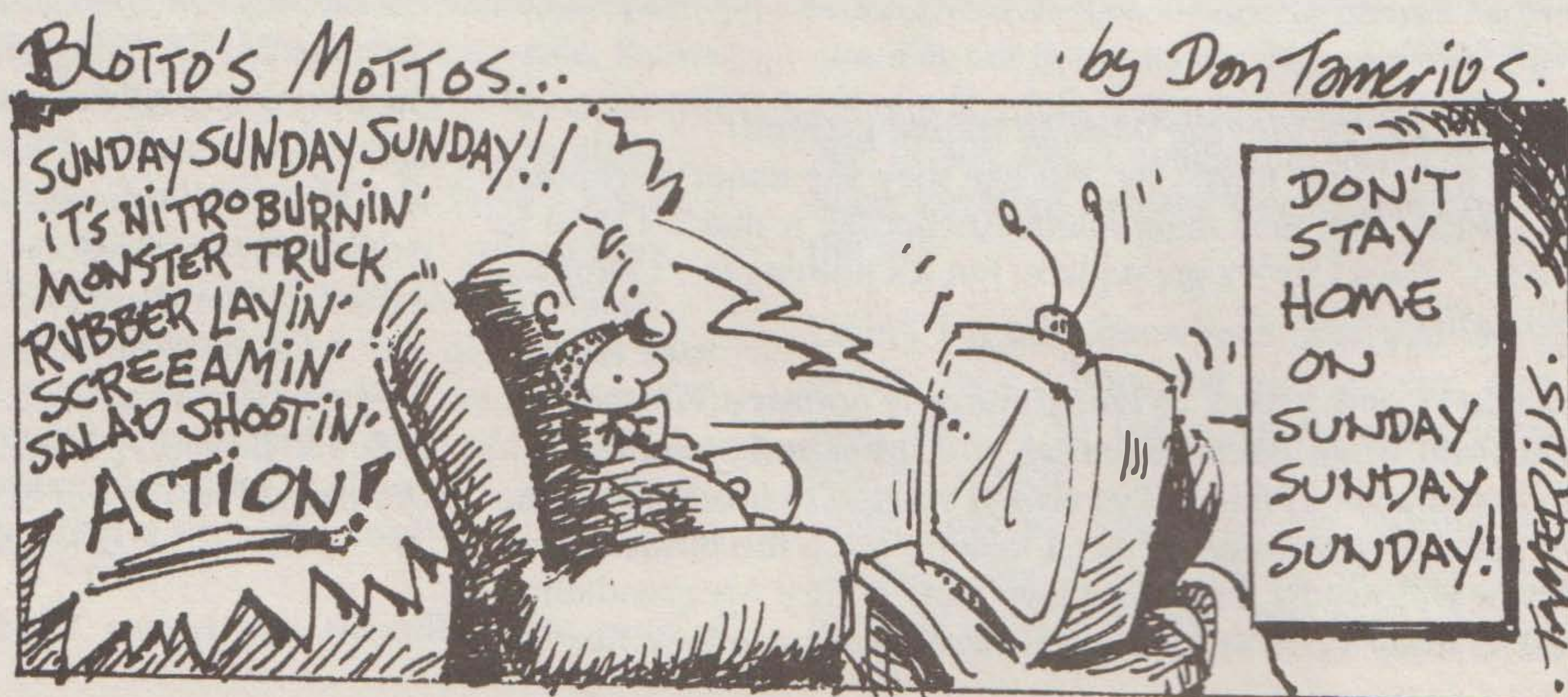
The river of society flows right through here. They've got that mall in Coralville, they're talking about building a rainforest, when the money could go to help some kids. The town is drifting the same way the country is heading, with money being the arbiter of all things.

So what's next for Greg Brown? I've got two projects coming up, a disc of traditional folk music I'll make late-summer for Trailer, make it again with old friends from around town. In the late fall, I'll cut a Red House record that will be released next spring, when I start touring again. Then, I'll only be playing about 40 gigs a year.

Do you write songs all the time?

I'm always working. I plug away, not always on songs. I write other kinds of things, sometimes learn other people's songs, write poems, other stuff. I don't see it as work. I like doing it. And out of that process comes songs. *

Continued in the August issue...



Let the bedbugs bite

Iowa City poet aims to keep you up at night with new book

The cover of Iowa City poet Spencer Short's first book of poems, *Tremolo* (HarperCollins), bears a large photograph of a golden-orange bedbug. This striking bug refers to the centerpiece of Short's debut collection, "The Bedbug Variations," seven formal variations on the sonnet form. These lively and inventive poems illustrate Short's range, intellect and talent.

The 20-something Short has a boyish face, an earnest expression and an articulate vocabulary. He currently works as one of the "wine guys" at John's Grocery, although he'll soon be moving to Manhattan. Short appears enthusiastic and somewhat shy talking about the "Bedbug" poems over a cup of coffee at the Java House.

"The first and seventh poems are linear palindromes," he explains. "The first one reads backwards as well. The third and fifth are acrostics that spell 'crown of sonnets' on the left-hand column—the third one going down and the fifth one going up the left side." Short pauses and acknowledges that many readers won't see the patterns or even realize they are scanning sonnets. "I didn't want the formal things I was doing getting in the way of people reading the poems," he says.

Consider the opening stanza of the "Bedbug" sonnet from which the volume gets its name:

Arduous, Night atop its grey grey horse.
Night-bees gathering in the tremolo.
And shadow-branches. Black gum. Tupelo.
The globe of light. The grafted course

Short's use of repetition ("grey grey," "Night" used twice in the first two lines) are echoed in the word "tremolo," a wonderful term that evokes vibrating and staying still at the same time, not to mention the sound of bees buzzing. The personification of [a] "Night" on a horse, the color of the horse—not just grey, but "grey grey"—the southern tree species (black gum and tupelo), and the full moon ("globe of light") all give the poem a gothic feel. There's something spooky going on.

As the poem continues, we learn the narrator is having a restless night, watching television until the station goes off the air—the "Star Spangled Banner" is sung and the screen goes empty. Short says he named these poems "Bedbug" because they work through the issues that "keep one up at night and kind of itch at you." Short's poetry is meant to disturb readers as they engage the poems.

The poems creatively interweave thought and association in a way that mimics how the mind operates. They function as little machines that take the reader through the process of discovery. While Short acknowledges a myriad of influences—his collection contains references to works by classic 20th-century writers like T.S. Eliot and Rainer Maria Rilke—the so-called "New York School of Poets" has clearly affected his writing. Short freely acknowledges this. His poems mention and address Frank O'Hara and Kenneth Koch, and his use of wordplay, aesthetic and philosophical references and dialectical spontaneity clearly recall the New York poets' best work.

"It's not as if there were an actual school in New York where O'Hara, Koch and [John] Ashberry went or taught," Short says. "I came into contact with their work late in my literary development. They taught me an important lesson. I used to be too serious and I thought this was somehow linked to being honest. Their work lightened me up. I realized one could be serious and still have fun in a poem." A good example of this can be found in Short's brief poem "And I Have Mastered the Speed & Strength Which is the Armor of the World." (Short laughingly concedes his shortest poems engender the longest titles.) The poem begins:

And so.

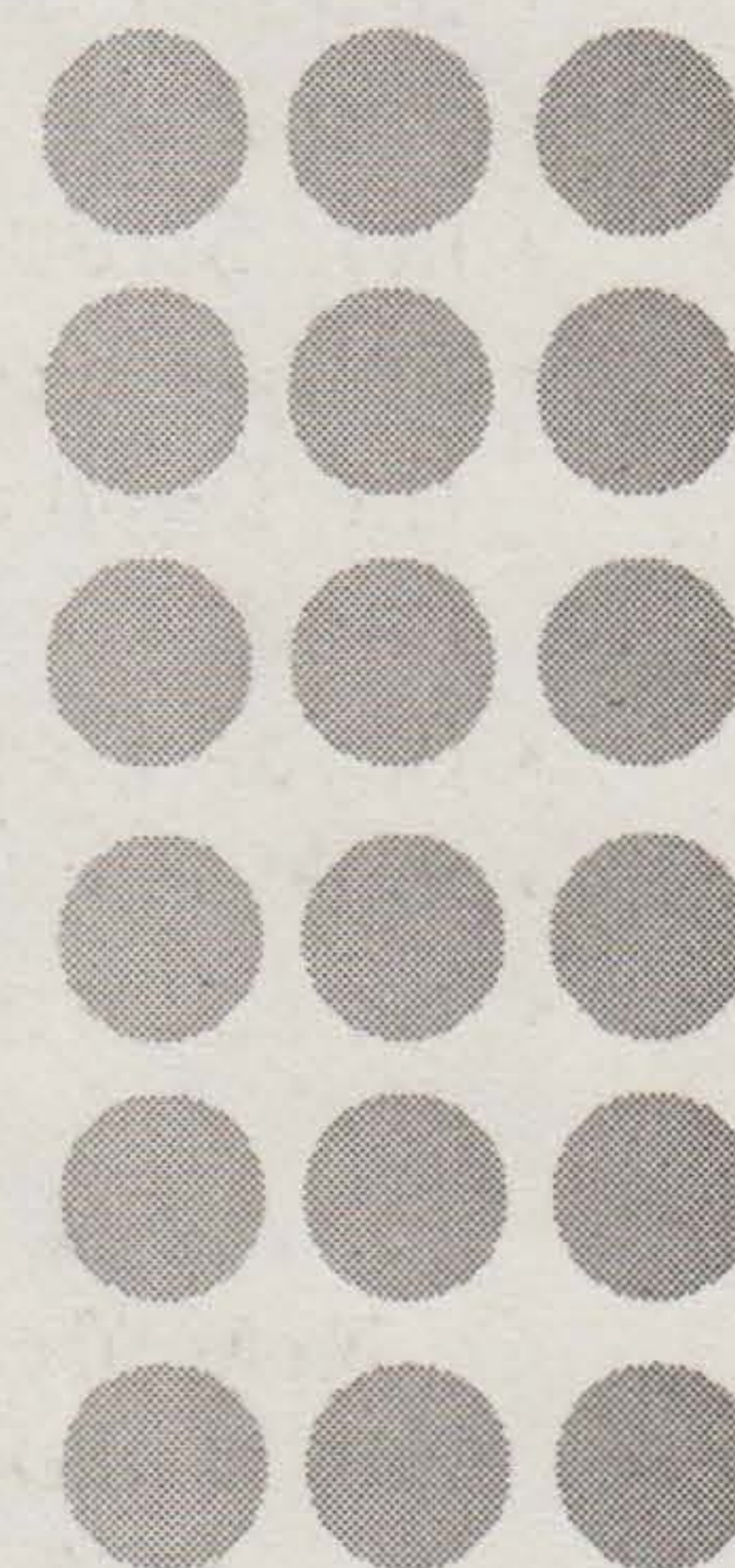
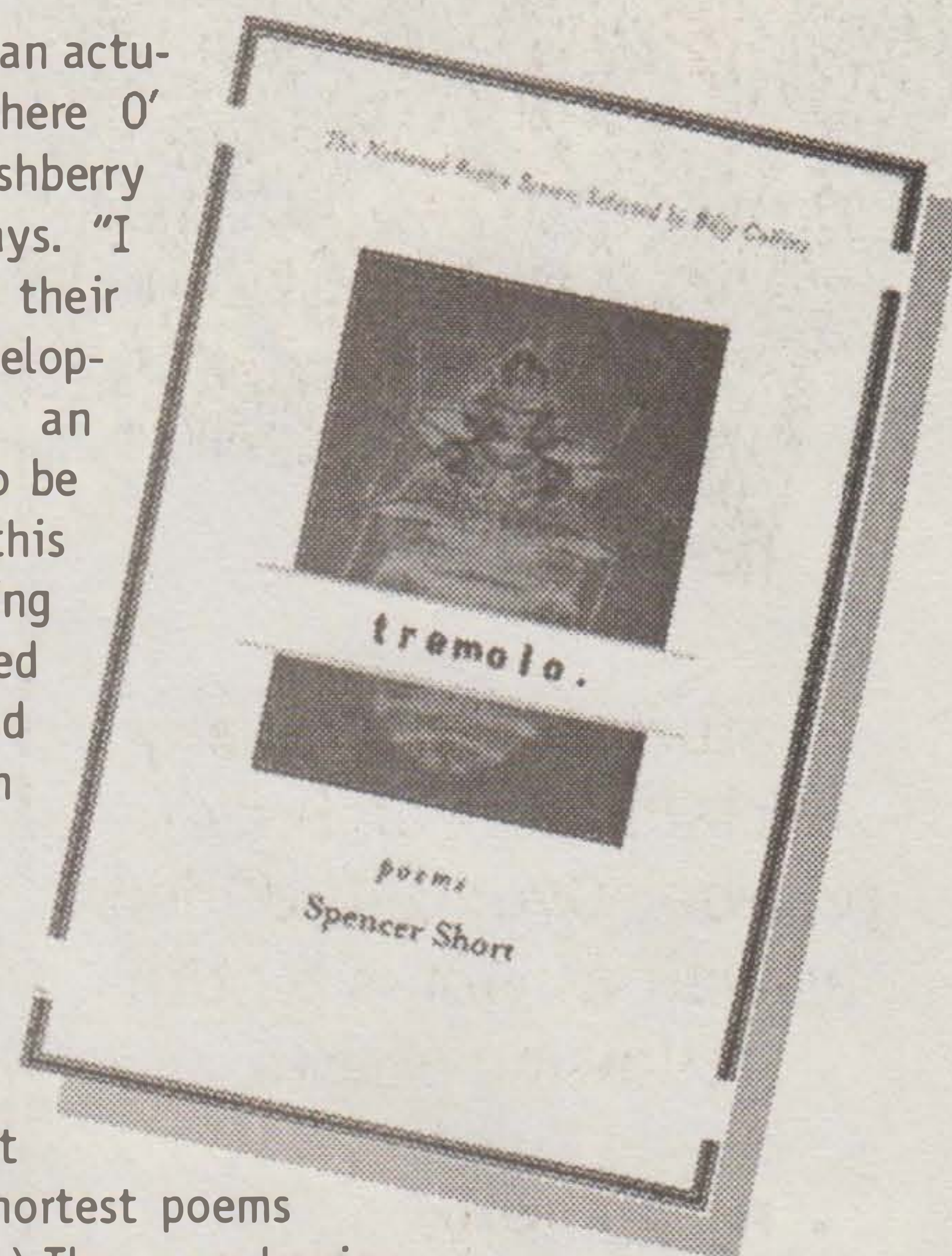
Someone has written Fuck You in empty
beer cans
across my neighbor's lawn. It turns out it
was my neighbor.

The mix of classical quote and obscenity adds both weight and humor to this poem about the ephemeral nature and power of love. Short ends the poem in a similar manner:

... "I love you"
you say & the night goes off like a gun
in a car

The combination of a tender "I love you" with the metaphor of a gun going off in a car reveals love's erotic energy and danger. The result is sexily funny and true to the work as a whole.

Although Short is gladdened by the success of his poetry (*Tremolo* is published as one of this year's National Poetry Series winners), the recent Iowa Writers' Workshop graduate says he's working on his prose. "You write poems because you have to, there's an inner need. Prose writers get six-figure contracts," Short says a bit uncomfortably. Despite the publication of his first book, and all that entails (royalties, reading-and-signing tours, etc.), Short still needs to earn a living. In the meantime, he hopes his knowledge of wines, honed here in Iowa City, will help him gain employment in the Big Apple. *



Spencer Short

What: Reads from his prize-winning first book of poetry

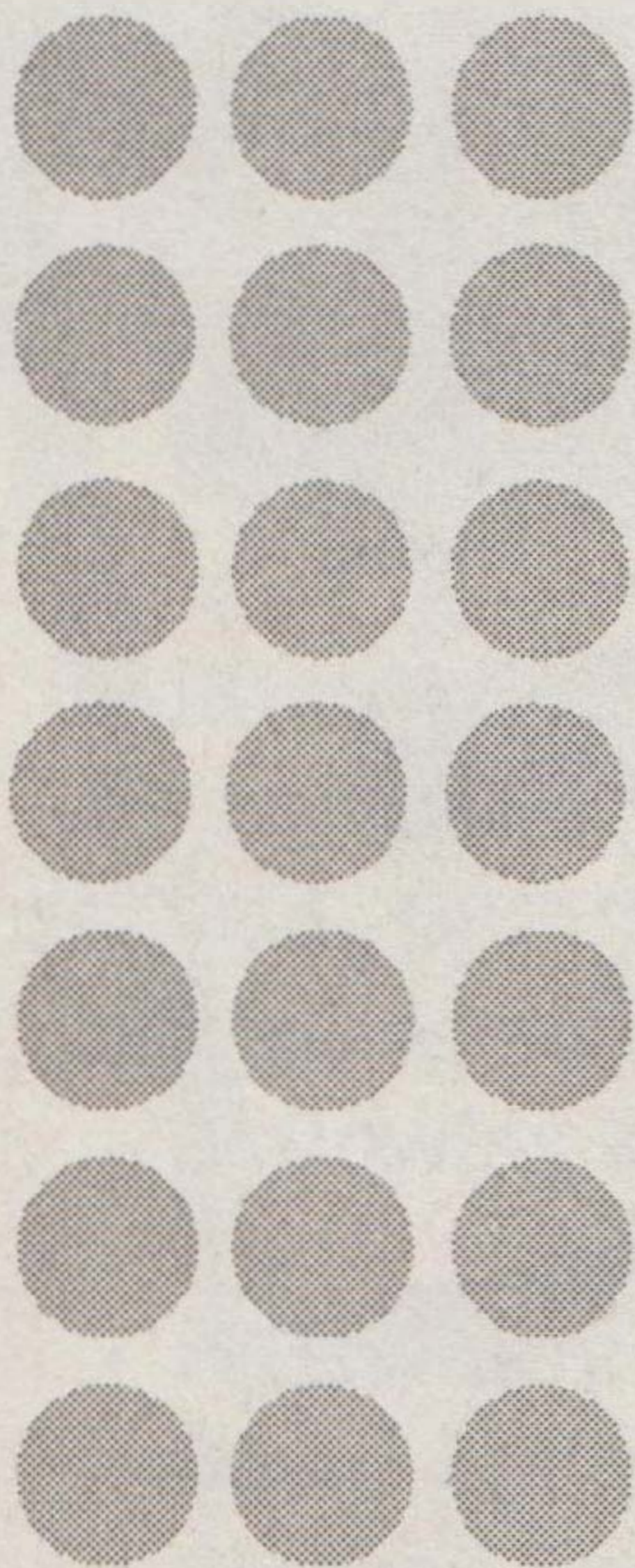
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Rob Cline



Stephanie Braun
(Amiens), Ron Clark
(Duke Senior) and
Jackson Doran
(2nd Lord) in 2001
Riverside Theatre
Shakespeare Festival
production
of *As You Like It*

Three plays in June

Hippie Shakespeare, a gay Jesus and Walker straight

Iowa City theater companies offered patrons a wealth of options in late June. The Riverside Theatre Shakespeare Festival wrapped up its extended run of *As You Like It*, Dreamwell Theatre presented Terrance McNally's *Corpus Christi*, and the University of Iowa Summer Rep season opened with *Escape from Happiness*, one of three comedies by George F. Walker that the company will present this year.

As You Like It

Performed at the outdoor theater in City Park, was the most eagerly anticipated production of the summer, with five shows being added to the original schedule a month before opening night due to brisk ticket sales. The plot of this comedy revolves around the efforts of Rosalind (Wendi Weber), daughter of a banished duke, to determine the steadfastness of her would-be suitor Orlando's (Charles Picard) affection. This effort is complicated by Rosalind's decision to disguise herself as a man once she too is banished. In the forest Arden, Rosalind, in her role as a man, tests her suitor's love by offering to "pretend" to be Rosalind so that Orlando can experience the ever-changing tempers of a woman. The plot is complicated by a young woman who breaks the heart of her suitor by falling for Rosalind's male persona.

Director Mark Hunter chose to portray the kingdom from which the main characters are banished as the modern corporate world, complete with cell phones, computers and a stylized mode of business dress. The forest Arden, by contrast, is populated by members of a sort of 1960s commune, led by the banished duke (Ron Clark, who also plays the usurper duke back in the city). The play is full of songs sung by various members of the forest band, and Hunter replaces Shakespeare's songs with folk ballads ("Morning Has Broken" and "The Circle Game") and alternative rock ("When You're a Boy"

and "Let's Pretend We're Bunny Rabbits").

The results of Hunter's efforts to interject modern trappings into *As You Like It* were, at best, mixed. While it is certainly true that the modernizations added humor in several places, these additions often detracted from the humor inherent in the play's language. The biggest laugh of the night, for example, was awarded to the forest dwellers when they ripped off some boy-band choreography rather than to any wit of Shakespeare's devising.

The production boasted several strong performances, however, particularly that of Weber as Rosalind. Weber's comic timing and ability to reveal Rosalind's inner conflict were at the heart of the production's success. Memorable performances were also delivered by Martin Yurek as the fool Touchstone and David Q. Combs as the melancholic Jaques.

Corpus Christi

McNally's *Corpus Christi*, directed by Matthew Brewbaker, is a retelling of the story of Christ, in which Jesus—or Joshua as he is usually called in the play—is gay. Though that aspect of the play has received the most attention and caused the most controversy, the story drifts from traditional accounts in several other ways. For example, Joshua (Jeff Hansen) is unsuccessful in completing one miracle and dismisses his admonition to "turn the other cheek" as something he must have said when he was in a very good mood. But the homosexual themes are central to the play in a number of ways, not the least of which is the reason behind Judas' betrayal of Joshua. McNally imagines Judas as a jealous



lover displeased by Joshua's sharing of his body with the other disciples; and he betrays Joshua with a much less chaste kiss than is usually portrayed.

Corpus Christi is a demanding play, asking most of the 13 actors to drop in and out of a number of different characters throughout the performance. While the play is anchored by the strong performances of Hansen as Joshua and Scot West as Judas, the other actors did a remarkable job capturing the essence of various personas quickly and abandoning them just as rapidly for a new identity. The result was a production by turns humorous, thought-provoking and tragic. From the opening moments of the production to the final crucifixion scene, Dreamwell's production was deeply felt theater performed by a talented cast.

Escape from Happiness

Escape from Happiness, directed by John Cameron, is the madcap story of a family whose members are struggling to determine why they are under investigation by the police, just as they struggle to interact with one another in any useful manner. Nora (Deborah Mayo) is the matriarch of a household that includes her youngest daughter, Gail (Mollie Mook), and Gail's husband, Junior (Tony Bingham), as well as Tom, the man Nora refused to acknowledge as her husband (Richard McWilliams). When Nora and Gail find Junior bleeding on the kitchen floor, they enlist the help of Nora and Tom's other two daughters, Mary Ann (Mary Fons) and Elizabeth (Dana Hardy), to try to determine what has happened.

Mayo's performance as Nora is the glue that holds this farce together. Nora, living in an advanced state of denial, offers quirky advice at inopportune moments with an abundance of goodwill that would drive any child or spouse insane. Mayo has perfect pitch when it comes to delivering her often outrageous lines, and she also finds the right tone at a critical moment when Nora must be serious. Hardy, as the "competent" sister Elizabeth, provides the perfect foil for Nora in both the humorous and serious scenes, coming into her own late in the first act when she goes on the offensive against the powers that threaten her family.

The strength of Mayo's characterization and timing is highlighted in the one major scene in which she does not appear. A difficult ensemble scene requiring good timing and better characterization falls just short of success. On the whole, however, the cast of *Escape from Happiness* kept the audience laughing from beginning to end, suggesting that this edition of Summer Rep is destined to have a strong run.

The play continues July 1-12 at David Thayer Theatre. *

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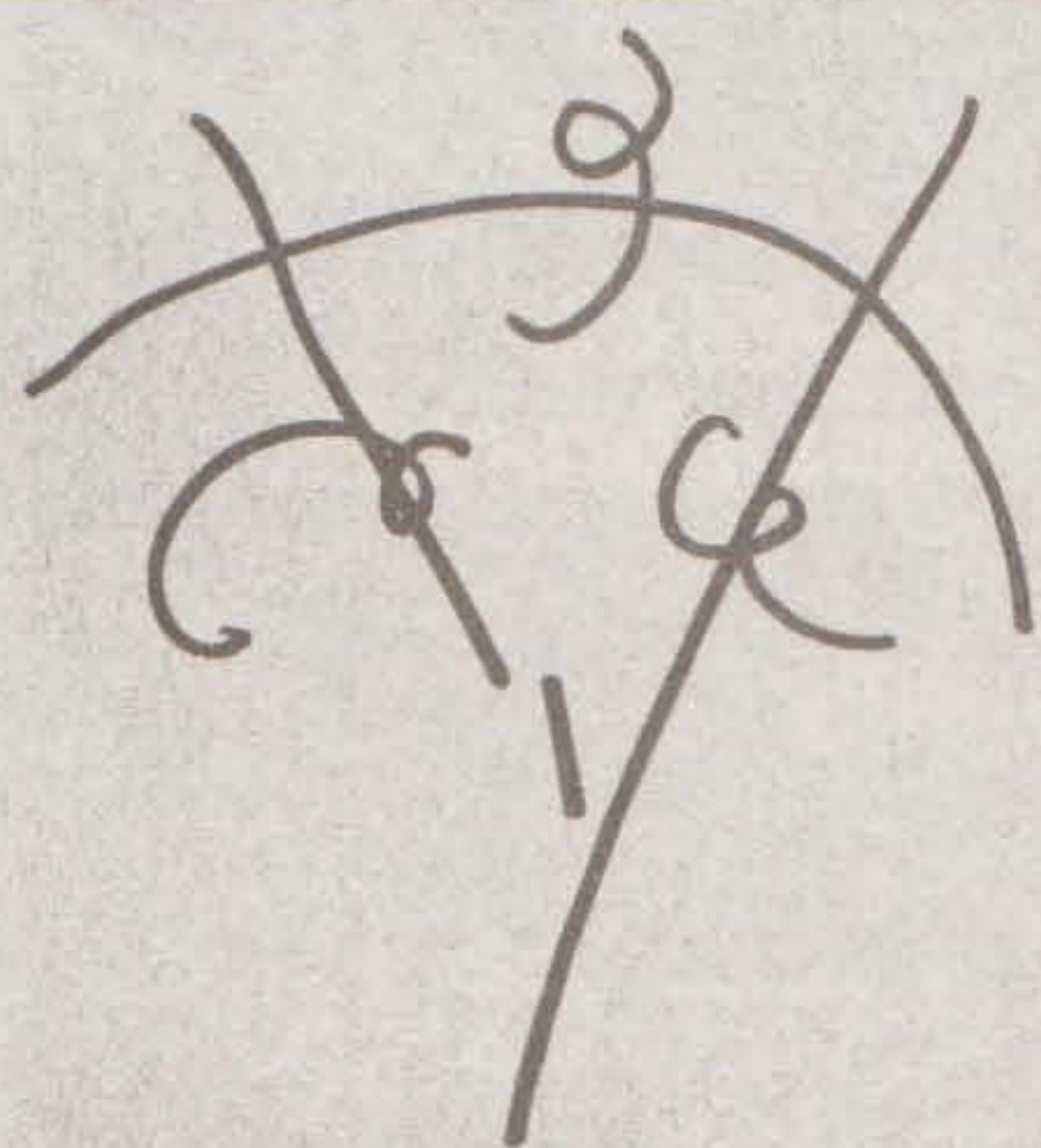
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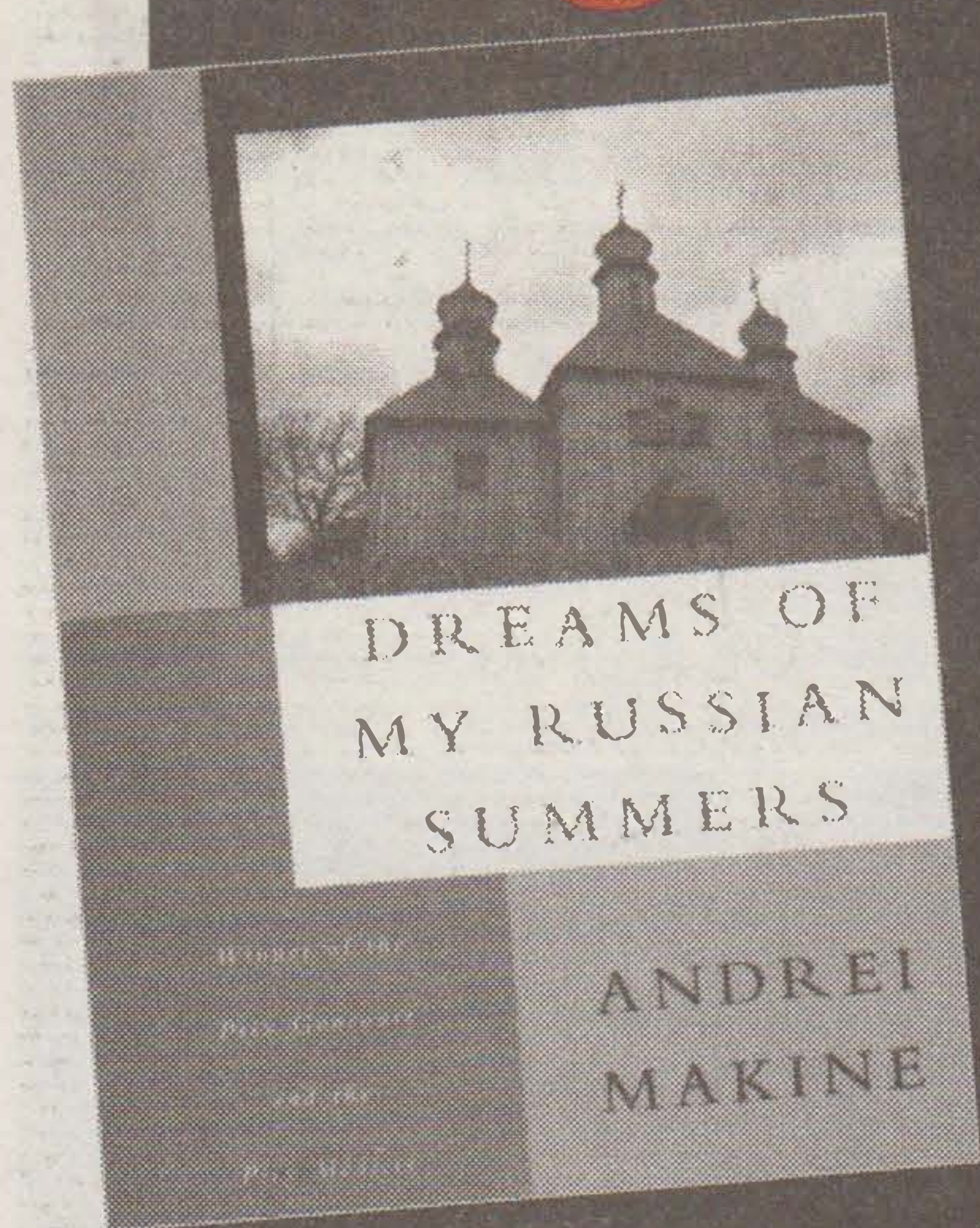


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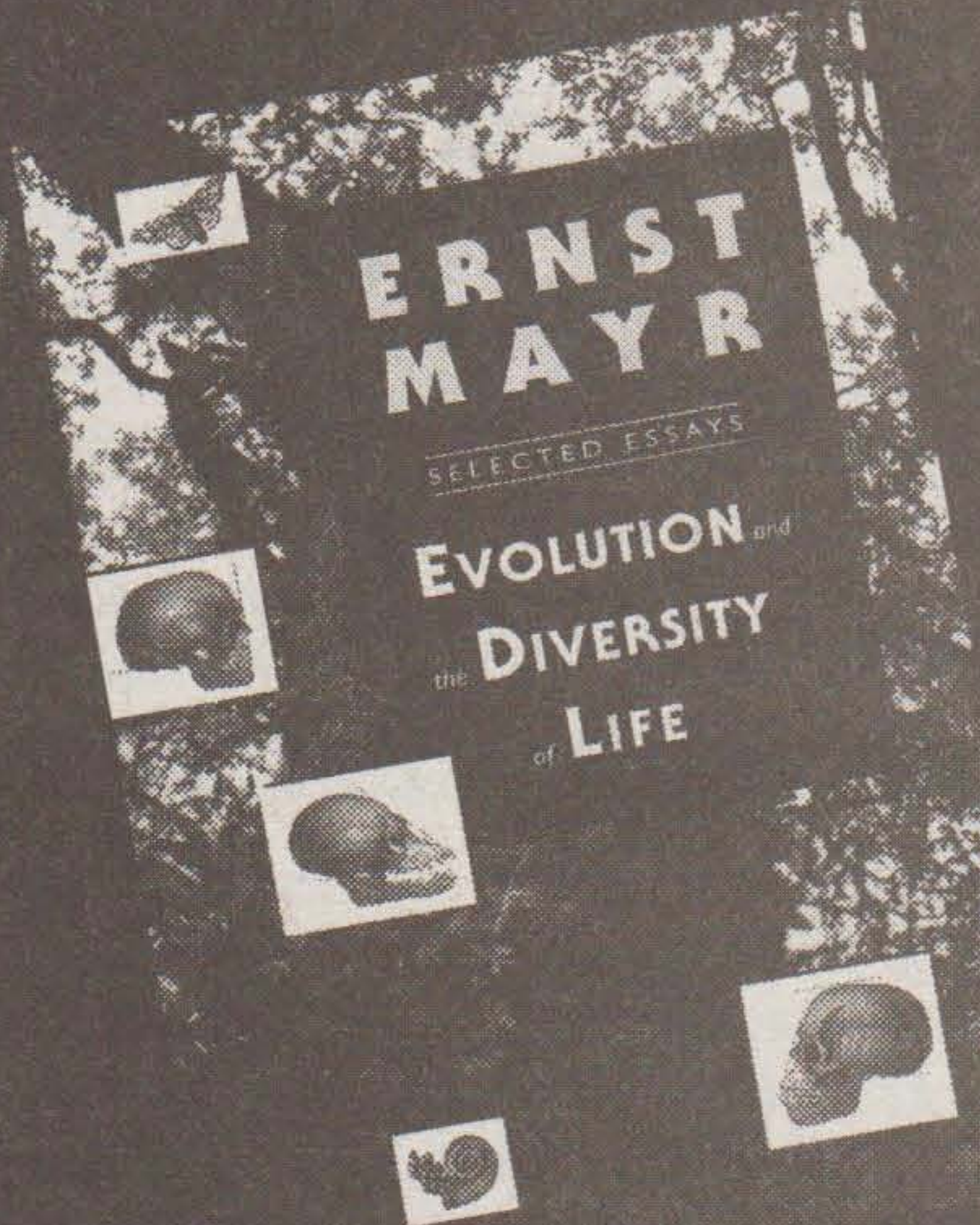
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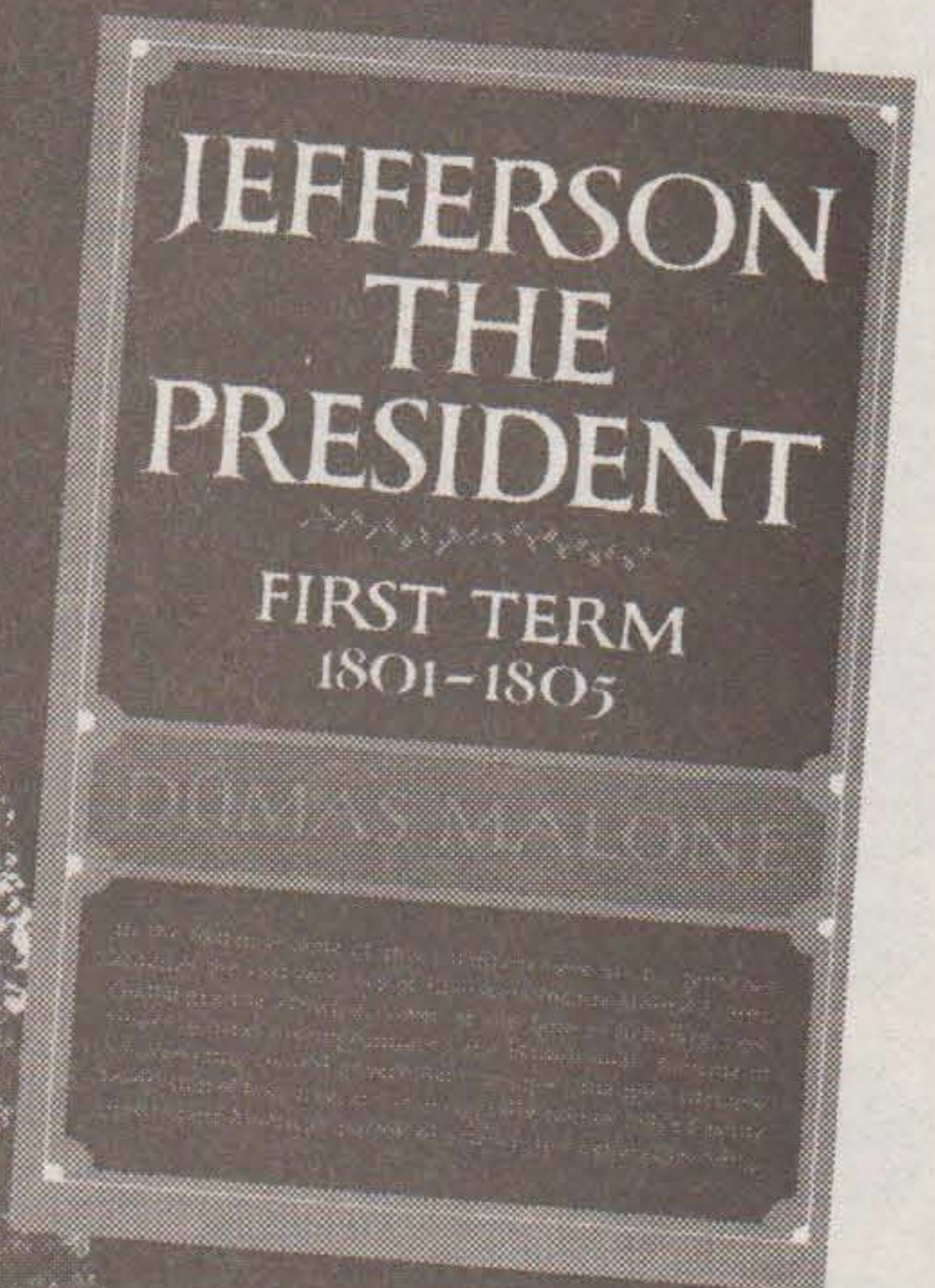
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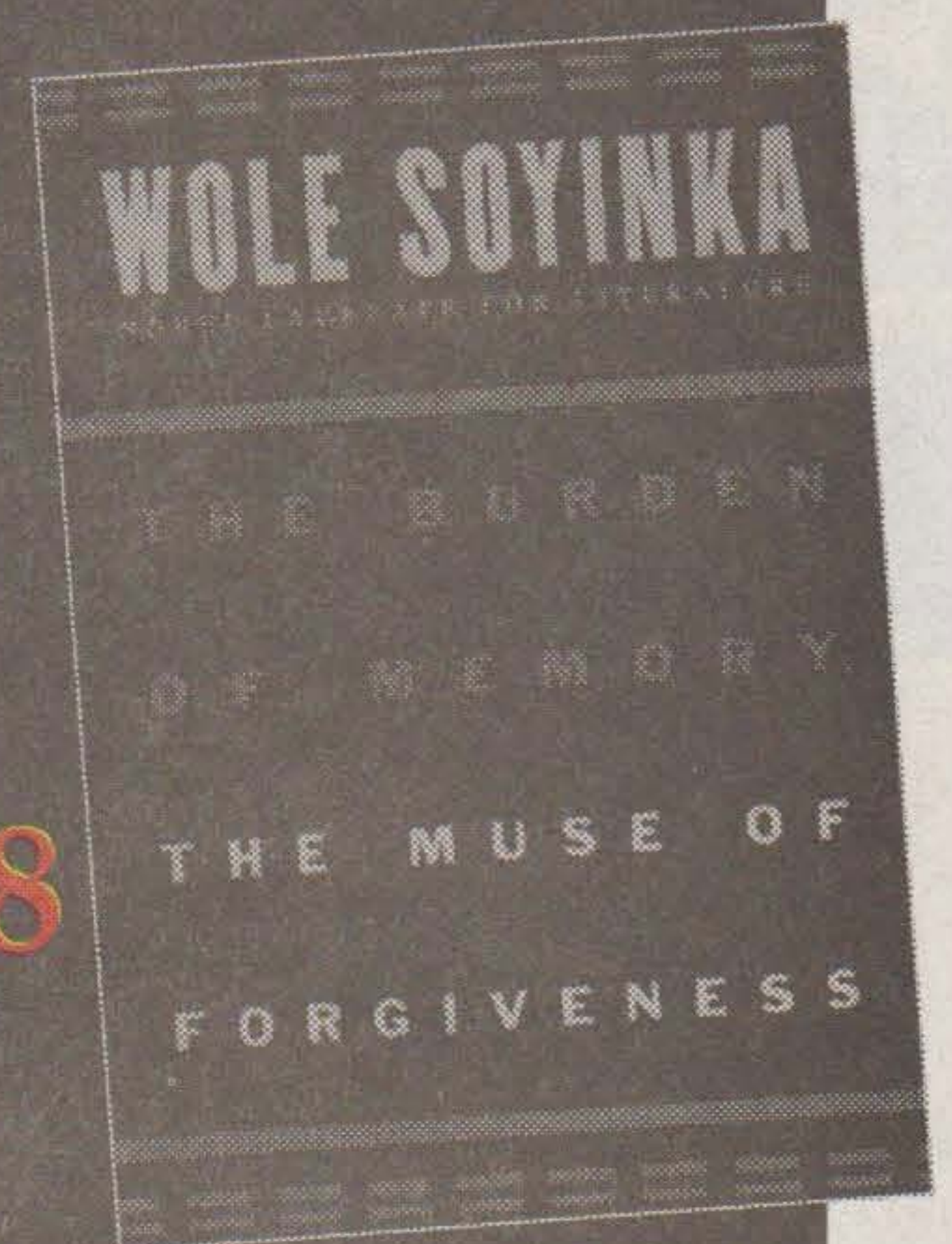
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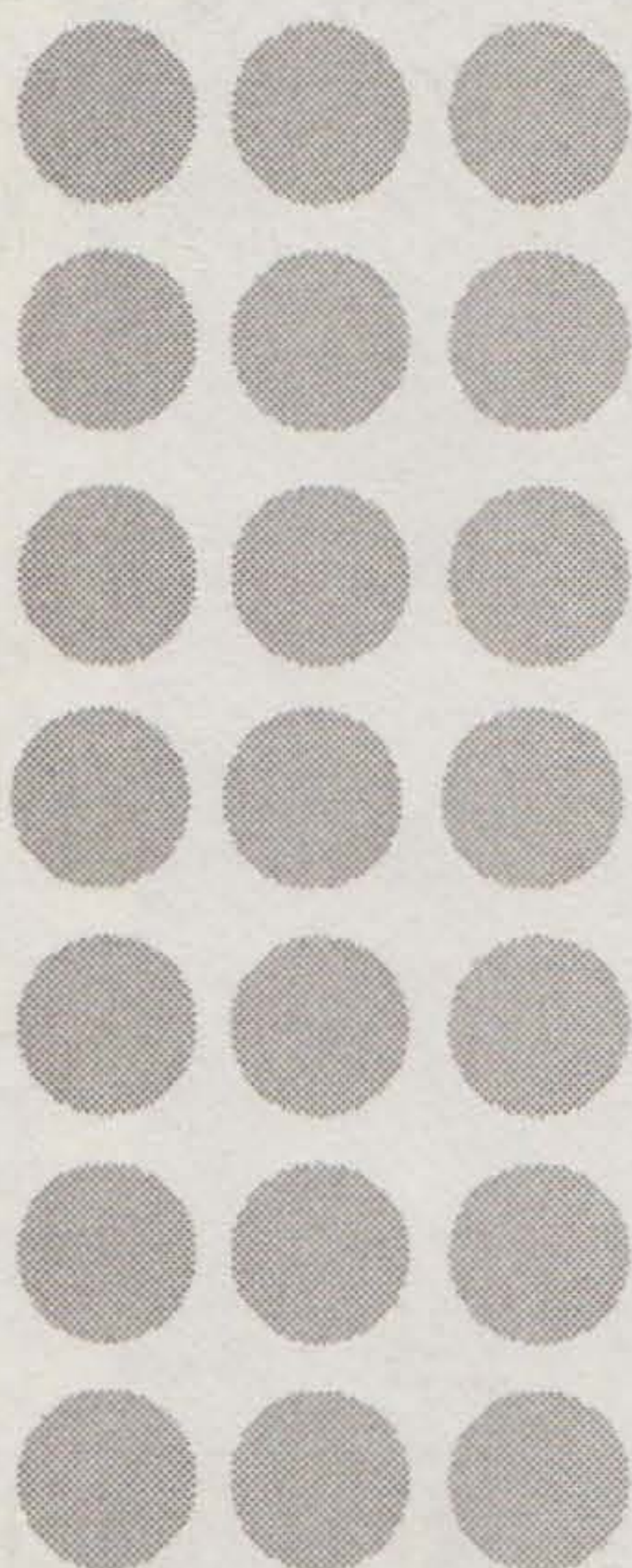
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Chris Offutt



Iowa City author wants teen-agers to see controversial 'Requiem for a Dream'

Confessions of a drug-movie addict

I don't do drugs, I do drug movies. I crave them on long winter nights. I race recklessly from one video store to the next seeking my fix. Drug movies make my complicated life easier by providing escape into the bliss of an alternate world. I'm not talking about the crime genre of movies about cops and robbers caught up in the so-called "War on Drugs"—best depicted in last year's *Traffic*. I'm talking about movies in which the main dudes are addicts. I love these movies. I do them on a regular basis. But I can quit any time I want to. Really.

The drug-movie habit is safer on all fronts—better for my body, softer on my wallet, not to mention the legal issues. Movies are also much easier to obtain than drugs. And let's face it, movie-lovers are far more interesting to be around than druggies. (No one ever boosted a VCR to raise money to rent movies.) Perhaps the best part of this habit is that after an overdose of bad movies, you can still wake up alive. You never find yourself in jail. And late-video fines are a lot cheaper than lawyer fees.

The godfather of drug movies is *Reefer Madness*, made in 1938 as a warning to young people about the dangers of marijuana. It was re-released to great comedic appeal during the 1970s. The top dog of the serious, early drug movies is *The Man with the Golden Arm*, an Otto Preminger film based on a Nelson Algren novel, and starring Frank Sinatra as an ex-junkie who slides into old habits. In 1955, its depiction of drug addiction was very controversial—in fact, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) refused to give the movie its seal of approval. Until recently, the strongest drug movie was 1992's *Bad Lieutenant* with Harvey Keitel as a junkie, gambling, drunk cop. The perennial cult-favorite drug movie is 1989's *Drugstore Cowboy*, directed by first-timer Gus Van Sant, with its blend of romance, burglary and substance abuse. Matt Dillon never did better work, but the movie tends to glamorize addiction, which is very bad indeed. If you want to see how stupid dope makes you, watch Cheech and Chong.

Movies attempting to depict the effects of drugs on one's consciousness is a sub-genre that I try to avoid. Examples include *Naked Lunch*, *Trainspotting*, *Fear &*

Loathing in Las Vegas and Iowa City's own *Jesus' Son*. There's no way that camera gimmickry can duplicate a drug-induced hallucination. In fact, these movies wind up catering to viewers who enjoy drugs. Another sub-genre is movies based on actual people who succumbed to drug use; these include *Lenny*, *Sid & Nancy*, *All that Jazz*, *Basquiat* and *My Life and Times with Antonin Artaud*. Obviously, it helps if the film's subject is a famous musician, poet or painter.

Last year brought *Requiem for a Dream*. Based on a novel by Hubert Selby Jr. and directed by Darren Aronofsky, the film was Aronofsky's second offering after the cult-classic *Pi*, a religious-math thriller. *Requiem for a Dream* shows the genuinely horrific results of drug addiction on four characters over the course of several months. Harry is a young man who



Ellen Burstyn in *Requiem for a Dream*

repeatedly hocks his mother's TV in order to buy drugs. He and his buddy Tyrone hatch every junkie's dream—the big score, raising money to buy heroin in bulk and peddle it at Coney Island. They make oodles of dough, get plenty of smack, and keep themselves and their girlfriends happy.

Ellen Burstyn (who received an Academy Award nomination for her role) plays the TV-obsessed, diet pill-addicted mother. In the film's second act, Mom gets hooked on speed and downers to the point of hallucinating freely. Tyrone gets robbed of both stash and cash. Harry and his girlfriend, Marion, have seriously escalated their addiction but are out of dope. Marion sleeps with her old boyfriend and borrows enough money for some smack, but the buy goes south fast and everyone is out of luck. The last 20



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minutes of the movie are phenomenal. A sequence of literally hundreds of cuts depicts the terrifying reality of an addict's life.

Requiem for a Dream is quite simply the strongest anti-drug movie ever made. It should be seen by every teen-ager in America. The problem is that, due to the absurdity of the MPAA rating system, very few teen-agers got to see it on the big screen. The MPAA board gave *Requiem* an NC-17 rating, basically an X-rating in sheep's clothing and the kiss of death for the theatrical release of a movie.

The MPAA is a board whose salary comes from the eight major studios in Hollywood. That's right, the studios pay the people who make decisions about rating movies. That's right, the MPAA is a paid jury. Naturally, they favor the money—just look at the R-rating they gave Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*, which featured the most violent opening sequence in movie history. Violent movies such as *American Psycho* and *8MM* also received R ratings, while independent movies like *Kids*, *Happiness*, *Dogma* and *Summer of Sam* were hounded to death.

In *Requiem's* case, director Aronofsky rebelled and convinced his distributor, Artisan Entertainment, to release the movie unrated. But when two big theater chains complained, Artisan agreed to make clear in print ads for the film that no one 17 or younger would be allowed to see it. (Aronofsky was contractually obligated to turn in an R-rated film, but Artisan decided to support him. It's a little ironic then, that he caved in on the video release, cutting scenes to ensure an R-rating.)

This war of censorship versus artistic freedom is a bad one. The true losers in this case were the teen-agers who, due to an artist's hubris and the fascism of an anonymous board, weren't allowed to see the movie.

Requiem for a Dream is the best anti-drug movie ever made, but the MPAA and theater chains didn't want teen-agers to see it. If this climate of censorship continues, pretty soon it will be harder to get into a drug movie than it is to get drugs. *



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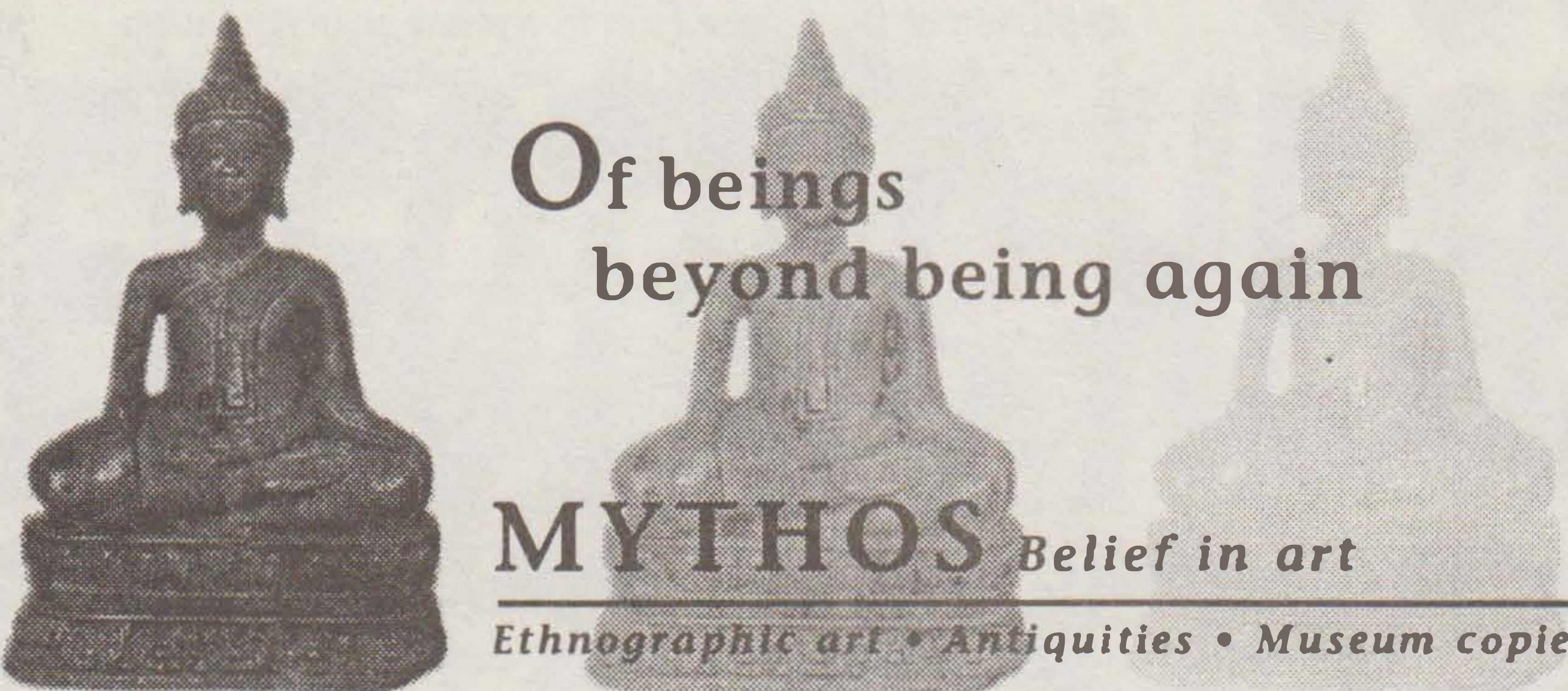


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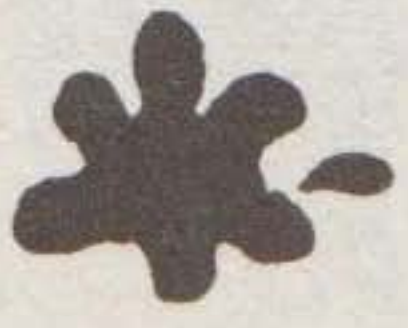
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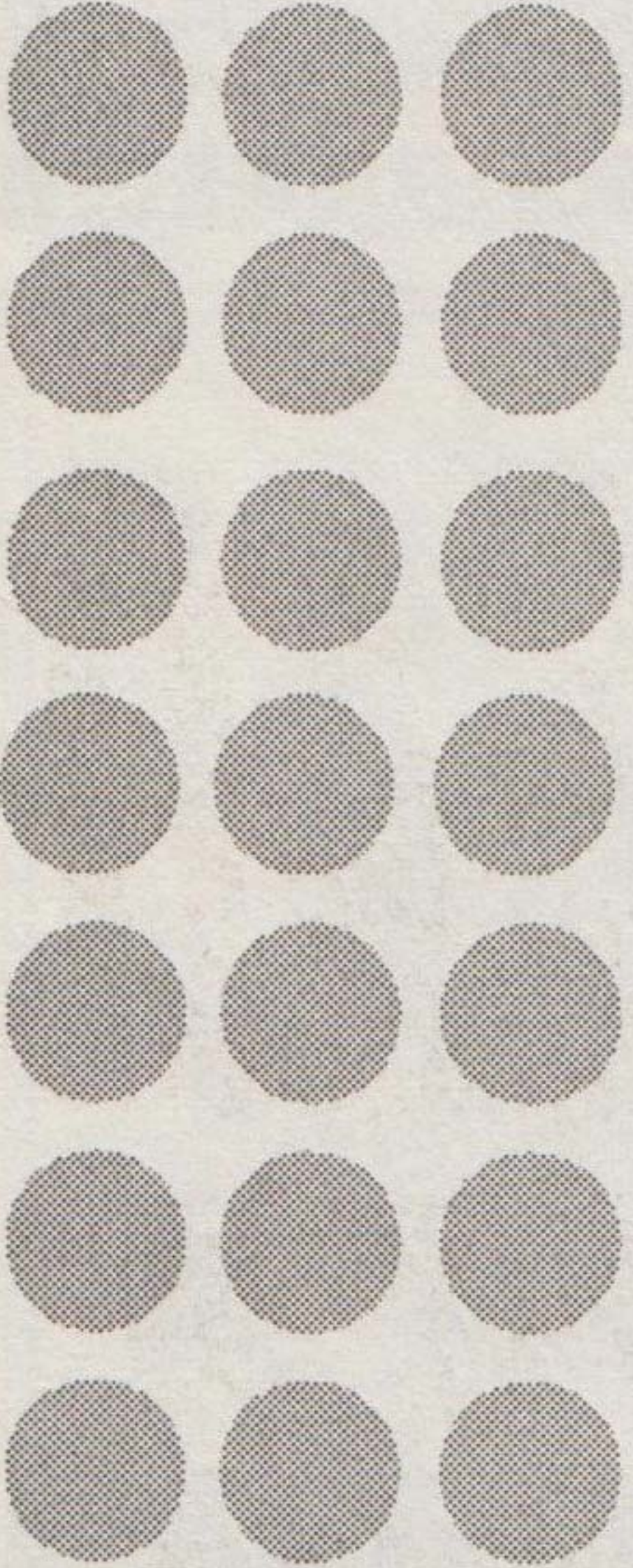
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ART



Julia Fierro



Great with Child

David Trawick's photographs offer a rarely seen glimpse of the female form

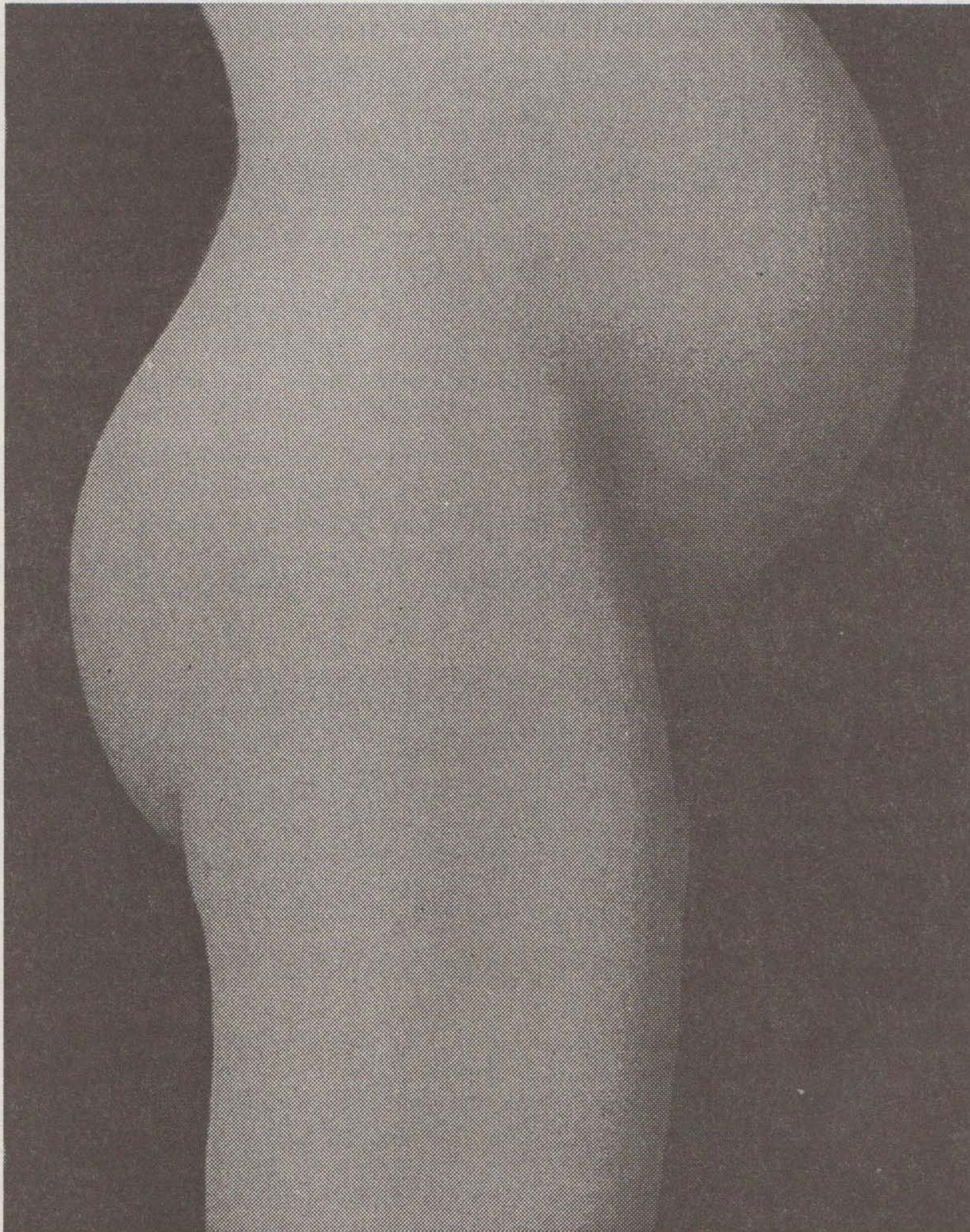
One might look at the 16 photographs of nude pregnant women and call them shocking. Natural. Beautiful. Unexpected. It is a perspective of the female form rarely seen. Each of us has had our attention drawn to a pregnant woman walking down the street or passing through a crowded café. What is so provocative? Is it the dramatic physical change in a woman's body, or the change within? In the 16 black-and-white photographs that make up David Trawick's *Great With Child*, it is the honesty in the portrayal of the body that is captivating. This depiction of the female form in a phase scarcely shown is a refreshing contrast to the culturally idealized image that is more familiar. The pregnant body is photographed for what it is—a body, in a natural phase of change.

"There exist similarities of form in all natural objects, whether living or not. I use these similarities to open a discussion of the connectedness of all life on earth and the planet itself," Trawick says. This is the essence of *Great With Child*, where the pregnant form is "a natural object"—the same as a lake, a mountain or a hill covered with snow. The rounded lines, luminous against a black background, seem to

shift the way natural landscape changes with time.

Life is change, and the necessity of change in life is apparent in the body of a pregnant woman. The piece that introduces the exhibit, #127, shows the remarkable physical transition a pregnant woman experiences through five photos within one frame. The first two photos of the series show the woman in early pregnancy. The viewer's focus moves over the woman's body—the slight swelling of the stomach, the sharp angles of her arms above her head and waist. As the series progresses, the pregnancy advances and the focus shifts to the stomach and the rounding breasts. In the last photo, the focus rests completely on the stomach, allowing the viewer to participate in the gradual physical change, with one sweeping glance.

Few artists, male or female, have represented this phase of the female body. For many, photography of the nude pregnant body brings to mind actress Demi Moore on the cover of *Vanity Fair*. This glamorization of the pregnant Moore sends out a false image of the body in pregnancy. The raw beauty of Trawick's exhibit shows that the pregnant body does stray from the ideal, and that the change is natural and beautiful, absent of the stereotypical notion of female beauty. In #143, a woman's hips tilt forward, pushing her stomach out in an exaggerated pose, almost separating it from her body. This intentional warping of the idealized form creates an unexpected beauty that rivals Moore's overtly glamorous pose.



Great with Child #108

Great With Child

What: Black-and-white images of nude pregnant women by Iowa City photographer David Trawick

Where: Studiolo, 415 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City

When: Through July 15

One of the most fascinating aspects of the exhibit is that it sprung from the mind of a man. Trawick is able to capture the physical experience of pregnancy without eroticizing his subjects. Of the women photographed, one is a professional artist's model and the rest acquaintances or women Trawick met—some he just stopped on the street. The inclusion of inexperienced models creates an organic setting in which the poses appear casual, as if the models have grown within the environment of the photograph itself.

The connection between pregnancy and natural landscape is best expressed in the photos that come in close on the body. #88 is a true depiction of female landscape in the flux of pregnancy. The focus rests on the contrast of two long curves, the stomach and thigh, magnifying the point at which the two curves meet and then disappear into shadow. It is easy to see how the shape of the body could be mistaken for the smooth curves of a stone washed over by centuries of waves.

The perspective is drastically different in #49. The viewer's focus starts at the woman's neck and moves down over the breasts. The eye follows the steep slope of the stomach and ends on the toes, barely visible on the horizon. This dream-like distortion gives the illusion of a landscape that stretches on endlessly. The confusion of physical reality allows a multiplicity of perspectives to rise from one image.

Not all the photos achieve this standard. Pieces #52 and #21, photos that include the full body and face of a woman, ultimately disrupt the exhibit's unity. The eye is pulled to the face, denying attention to the body—the main focus of the exhibit. The face removes the quality of abstraction and its potential to attain diverse viewpoints.

Some may interpret this focus on the body as objectification of women. Again, it's Trawick's honesty in the depiction of the pregnant body that overcomes the possibility of objectification and makes his risk a successful one.

The exhibit as a whole is an honest and striking representation of the connection between the female body in pregnancy and the natural landscape that sustains that body. *Great With Child* allows the opportunity to contemplate the physical reality of creation, in both humans and nature, and the necessity of change in both. *



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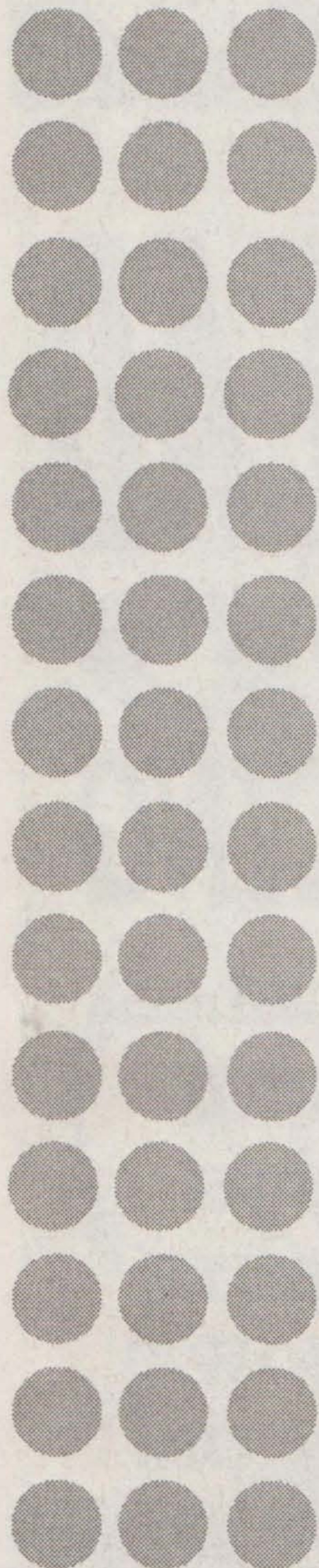
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Jeremy Erwin



Bug in your ear

The Bug Dance Rhythm Band emerges as one of the most sensational electric-blues outfits in the Midwest

During the '60s, rock musicians constrained by 12 bars and four chords threw their blues guidebooks out the window and let their music go wherever their minds or drugs took them. Upon reaching the other side, however, they realized blues music wasn't about form but feeling. The formula worked well for the Stones, the Byrds and the Who. Each dove headfirst into musical experimentation only to resurface a few years later with their own mutation of blues-based rock 'n' roll. In this sense, The Bug Dance Rhythm Band is a throwback to those days. Within the last three years this Morton, Ill., quartet has fearlessly taken bare-bones acoustic blues to psychedelic peaks and gritty honky-tonk valleys, only to emerge as one of the most sensational electric-blues outfits in the Midwest.

Fronted by a harmonica player who rivals even the great Sugar Blue, and a songwriter/guitarist/pianist who comes off like one of Bob Dylan's unclaimed sons, The Bug Dance Rhythm Band presides over a melting pot of blues, R&B, rock 'n' roll and country influences, without a trace of imitation. Making regular weekend appearances at Sam's Pizza, the band stuffs its three sets so full of train-ridin' hobo tales, lonesome dirges and clever revisions of rock 'n' roll standards that, even on an off night, they should have every blues band within the Iowa City limits shaking in its boots.

The humble beginnings of The Bug Dance Rhythm Band can be traced to a series of demos recorded in the basement of songwriter/guitarist Joe Park's Morton home. Created under the moniker The Vegetables, the recordings featured only Park and harmonica player/vocalist Matt Swartzendruber, the two having performed together with a sparse guitar-and-harmonica setup for a few short months. The tunes recorded in Park's basement, however, were hardly a reflection of their stripped-down live performance, as the pair fleshed out the tracks with honky-tonk pianos, organ, layers of tinkling electric

guitars and hypnotic backwards vocals.

"It's basically a collection of four-track demos," Park explained, "and yeah, a lot of it's kind of weird; but it was just a chance to elaborate on what we were doing live without having a million people up on stage with us, and to just put together some of the other ideas I had that couldn't be done with just an acoustic guitar and harmonica."

Around the time of the Vegetable sessions, Park and Swartzendruber pieced together their first full-fledged band, a six-piece collective named Squib Potential. Far removed from the acoustic blues the duo performed live—and the playful head music recorded in Park's basement—Squib Potential was a jam band tried and true. Anchored by two

pianos and Swartzendruber's vicious harmonica, Squib Potential performed a combination of original material with a healthy dose of covers. With the band gaining momentum and winning over crowds across its home state, Squib Potential fizzled out after less than two years when the interests of Park, Swartzendruber and bassist Aaron Eleam turned to the British blues of the early '60s.

"I'd look out into the crowd at these shows and—I don't want to say this because it'll look bad—but you look out

there and everybody's a hippie, and you're just like, 'What am I doin'? I'm not really a hippie, so why should I only be playing to these people when I could be playing to all kinds of people?'" said Park with a laugh.

And so, Park, Swartzendruber and Eleam parted company with Squib Potential and began trying out drummers, ultimately recruiting Josh Barnhart from a local band called Bonanza Jelly Beans. Essentially picking up where the Vegetables experiment left off, the quartet landed their first gigs as after-hours entertainment. During parties at a friend's house, the band would practice and perform in the garage from midnight until sunrise, honing their abilities and seemingly telepathic musical interaction. After several of these sessions, it was clear the band had become much more than simply The Vegetables Part 2. With their jam

The Bug Dance Rhythm Band

What: Plays

Where: Sam's Pizza, 321 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City

When: Saturday, July 7, 9pm

influence still lingering, three-minute blues covers became 10 minutes of honky-tonk piano runs, lightning-fast harmonica solos, and a rhythm section that chugged it all along like a steam train.

Taking their name from the chorus of a song by comedy-jazz duo Slim & Bam ("bug dance rhythm/let your feet go down"), the Bug Dance Rhythm Band—now emulating their blues influences by wearing identical three-piece suits—added the final ingredient when Eric Davis of Bonanza Jelly Beans joined on lead guitar. A band that already put together an astonishing live show managed to become even better. The addition of Davis' lead-playing created music that bridged the gap between The Band's *Music From Big Pink* and The Rolling Stones' *Sticky Fingers*.

"When Eric played with us we'd become so much more of a rock band than we ever were," Eleam said. "And while he's a great rock guitarist, he could also play the banjo, so we'd try doing some of our songs as bluegrass tunes. We'd also do some weird ones, like, I remember one time in Chicago we did a bluegrass version of [Guns N' Roses'] 'Patience'...which actually went over really well."

It came as a blow then when Davis recently left The Bug Dance Rhythm Band for Kentucky. Before his departure, though, the band made its first trip to the studio and recorded a soon-to-be-released EP titled *Coping with the Bug Dance Rhythm Band*. A collection of six Joe Park originals, the EP includes some newly re-vamped material from The Vegetables days, the slow, Pink Floyd-style "Faces," a jazzed-up "Man with the Boots" and one of the band's live favorites, "Hobo Joe."

While the return to a four-piece lineup and the release of its first studio recording all but ensure a change in direction for the band, just how they'll mutate is still up for grabs. Park said the band is now experimenting with vocal jazz standards by the likes of Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and Ray Charles. One thing is certain, though—anyone with an ear to The Bug Dance Rhythm Band won't be disappointed. *



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Lucinda Williams

Essence

Lost Highway

Eastern Iowans
know that Bo

Ramsey can say more with one guitar lick than the average musician can express in a whole song. So it's no wonder that Lucinda Williams' latest release, whose basic tracks were produced by Bo, sounds so eloquently stark. As the title *Essence* suggests, Williams distills her music from the basics: the sound of her voice, a quiet drumbeat, plucked and looped guitar tones, and such. This album is no party but contains a certain sweetness and dignity. If it were a wine, it would be a dry Semillon that could be drunk without food accompaniment; one would chug the bottle between sips to get the taste and the buzz simultaneously.

Maybe because Williams' father is a famous poet (Merle Williams), critics have always lavished praise on her lyrics. Sure, she has written some fine turns of phrase, but Williams' secret strength has always been her raspy, quavering voice. Williams' lyrics on *Essence* are particularly bare. For example, on the refrain of the opening cut, "Lonely Girls," Williams sings the words "Lonely Girls" four times overtop Bo's quiet electric guitar and other sparse instrumentation. Hence the constantly changing expressive vocals (her singing is backed up by Jim Lauderdale) become more important than the words and even the melody. And despite the sad words, the song is as comforting as a lullaby. Williams' vibrato reveals her inner strength and confidence. Sometimes being lonely is a good thing.

Essence is an emotional album, but Williams doesn't get gooey about life's problems. She knows that humor, pride and even just acting tough can shake the blues away. When Williams sings about the spiritual, as in the down and dirty "Get Right With God," she finds salvation in blasphemy, and redemption in the sound of a guitar—actually three guitars: she strums a resonator, Bo plays slide and Charlie Sexton joins in on tremolo slide and rhythm guitars. But it's Williams' voice calling, "I want to get right with God" that transforms the song from a plea into a prayer into an answer.

* **Steve Horowitz**



Orlando "Cachaito" Lopez

Cachaito

World Circuit

The latest solo album from a member of the Buena Vista Social Club is much more than just that. Bassist Orlando "Cachaito" Lopez and visionary producer Nick Gold have experimented with both instrumentation and production here—and the results are spectacular. Lopez is the nephew of legendary Cuban bass player, and co-inventor of the mambo, Israel "Cachao" Lopez; and he has inherited his uncle's musical ambition. Listeners beware: this is not traditional Cuban music by any means. On *Cachaito*, piano is replaced by funky organ-playing and surf-like electric-guitar montunos handled excellently by Bigga Morrison and Manuel Galban. The musical fabrics they weave are an essential backdrop to the album with Galban taking occasional solo duty, most notably on "Mis Dos Pequeñas." Morrison is one of several non-Cubans brought in by Gold to give the album a fresh and cross-cultural sound. Former James Brown saxophonist Pee Wee Ellis contributes horn arrangements on "A Gozar el Tumbao" and "Wahira," soloing and playing organ on the latter. On the spacious and beautiful "Tumbanga," Hugh Masekela appears, playing flugelhorn. The production and use of heavy reverb and other effects give the album a psychedelic and contemporary sound. This is most effective with Demetrio Muñoz's ambient string arrangements on "Redencion," "Conversacion" and "Oracion Lucumi." "Redencion," the opening track, sets the mood as Cachaito's rich bass line lays down a foundation that continues throughout the album. The percussion section of Amadito Valdes, Carlos Gonsalez and prodigious conguero Miguel "Anga" Diaz is solid, only occasionally straying too far from the groove. *Cachaito* is marked not by catchy hooks or choruses (there is only one vocal number) but by an overall mood and continuity (despite the ill-advised hip-hop track "Cachaito in Laboratory") that can only be thoroughly appreciated after a second or third listen. This album will make you want to lounge with a drink and float away; it has a unique and beautiful feel throughout and is a bold step forward in the fusion of Cuban and contemporary music.* **Justin Feinstein**



Shuggie Otis

Inspiration Information

Luaka Bop

Back in the early

'70s, Shuggie Otis, the son of Bay-area bandleader Johnny Otis, was creating and recording groundbreaking music. Unfortunately, it has taken the musical world almost 30 years to figure it out. Luaka Bop's re-release of *Inspiration Information* (1974) has finally given Shuggie the credit he deserves. Otis was a musical prodigy, a masterful blues guitarist and multi-instrumentalist. His playing of guitar, bass, organ, piano, vibes, drums and assorted percussion on *Inspiration Information* is a study in musical texture, composition and production. Shuggie's creative arrangements of horns and strings add depth to his musical vision. The opening title track—which could have easily been a top-10 hit—effectively introduces Otis' soft vocals and tastefully restrained guitar playing. Shuggie's experiments with form occur throughout the album. Many songs abandon traditional structures in favor of long instrumental sections used not as a forum for solos but to convey a strong mood or texture. This is best illustrated by "Sparkle City," which opens with a funk guitar-based groove, and builds steadily for two minutes before the vocals glide in. The four consecutive instrumental tracks on the album though sketch-like in their simplicity, sound so fresh they could easily be hip-hop or down-tempo electronica tracks. These instrumentals, and many of the vocal tracks on the album, are marked by the use of an early drum machine reminiscent of Sly Stone's *Fresh* (worth picking up). The four additional tracks off *Freedom Flight* (1971) have a distinctly different feel—raw and less produced. Regardless, they are a welcome addition to the album with the most noteworthy contribution being the original version of "Strawberry Letter 23," later made popular by the Brothers Johnson. *Inspiration Information* is a must-buy for fans of early '70s funk and soul but will sound surprisingly fresh to contemporary R&B and hip-hop listeners as well. There isn't a wasted cut on the album; it's a lost treasure that'll leave you thrilled that it was re-discovered.

* **Justin Feinstein**



Joe Henry *Scar*

Mammoth Records

The image of a man's breast, stenciled with the crudely hand-inked prison tattoo "AMOR," graces the cover of Joe Henry's latest (and, so far, best) album, *Scar*. The protagonists of Henry's songs have been similarly "scarred"—sometimes begrudgingly, sometimes willingly—by *amor*.

Henry has always possessed a gift for striking lyrical imagery, but *Scar's* characters are so immediate, so simultaneously understandable on metaphorical and allegorical levels, that you're completely drawn into their situations. From "Edgar Bergen": "That bird of yours, he just bit me/And all I said was 'hello'/All I did was, I answered him/And sort of shook his foot, you know"

Henry has always enjoyed placing his insights into "traditional" American music contexts (see 1996's *Trampoline* and 1999's *Fuse*). *Scar* goes even further, with the electric-blues free-fall of "Richard Pryor Addresses A Tearful Nation" ("Love me like you're lying/Let me feel you near/Remember me for trying/and excuse me while I disappear"), the snake-charming Middle Eastern tango of "Stop" ("Tell me everything I'm not/but don't tell me to stop"), and the funky jazz instrumental "Nico Lost One Small Buddha." Regardless of context, Henry always sounds—more self-assuredly than ever here—like himself.

Though the genre-mixing of his last two albums was sometimes unsuccessful (witness two-third's of *Trampoline*), Henry understands—and *Scar's* protagonists are learning—that the most important and difficult thing about reinventing yourself (as Henry has done markedly since 1990's low-key, acoustic *Shuffletown*) is remain-

ing true to yourself in the process.

At times, *Scar* strikes a groove reminiscent of early Brand New Heavies, but the album defies such simple comparison. Henry's outstanding taste in backing talent (including guitarist Mark Ribot, pianist Brad Mehldau, drummer Brian Blade, bassist Me'shell Ndegeocello and free-jazz legend Ornette Coleman) alone lifts his lyrical visions to new heights.

Wounds heal, but scars remain. Joe Henry's *Scar* is a cathartic tour of the flipside of love; it reminds us that freeing ourselves from bad situations like a dead-end job, the expectations of others or an unfulfilling relationship (while temporarily painful and seemingly impossible) ultimately allows something more—beyond expectation—to be discovered. * **Joe Derderian**



Trailer Bride *High Seas*

Bloodshot Records

Crawling from the swamps of Chapel Hill, N.C. (if there really are swamps in North Carolina), Trailer Bride returns to haunt with *High Seas*, their third release on Bloodshot. Creeping via singer/guitarist/banjoist/saw-player Melissa Swingle's feminine swagger, a most able group of fellas (Daryl White on bass, Scott and Brad Goolsby on guitar and drums, respectively) keeps you watching your back.

Reminiscent of early 16 Horsepower, but with a smoother intensity and a slower, smokier burn, *High Seas* is a fitting complement to the unnerving still before those mid-summer thunderstorms.

Like crossing Tony Joe White with the banjo player from *Deliverance*, this is easily some of the coolest swamp music since Slim Harpo.

Particularly humid are "Bird Feet Feelings," "Crickets" and "Thankful Dirt," but the whole of *High Seas* is well-suited to breathing in the thick, inky blackness of upcoming summer nights. Get out of the air conditioning and soak in this sweltering voodoo on your front porch—with a jug, if appropriate. * **Joe Derderian**



The Gossip *that's not what i heard*

Kill Rock Stars

The Gossip come across as swampy country cousins of the Cramps—soaked in raunchy backwoods blues, spiked with just a hint of Southern gospel and set on fire with the healthy spark of relentless NW punk-rock attitude. It's especially heartening to realize that this is The Gossip's *first* full-length album; never mind that it clocks in at under 25 minutes—that's more than enough time to have you (in the words of the band) "shake dat fat ass, baby!"

Certainly, you've never heard a more upbeat and driving cover (sort of) of "Swing Low," and hey—isn't that the hook from Depeche Mode's "Personal Jesus" twisted into the evil crawl of "Heartbeats"? If the Go-Go's had been raised in Searcy, Ark., on catfish and RC, listened to nothing but gritty blues and '70s-era AC/DC and Black Sabbath, moved to NYC in '76-'77 and—the clincher—were managed by Howling Wolf, you'd capture the sound and spirit of The Gossip's *that's not what i heard*. This album grrr-inds, modern lovers—seek it out! * **Joe Derderian**

The Gossip appears July 6 at Gabes.



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JULY

THE A-List

iCubanismo!

Iowa City Jazz Festival Downtown
Iowa City • July 1 • 6pm

Although the 2001 edition of Iowa City's premier outdoor music festival brags some incredible performers (Dizzy Gillespie's tenor saxophonist Benny Golson and Carla Bley with Steve Swallow, to name only three), the iCubanismo! show is where the real dehydration will be achieved. iCubanismo! laid the groundwork for the whole Cuban invasion—including the more low-key ramblings of the Buena Vista Social Club—with their

1996 self-titled debut. That CD re-introduced traditional Cuban instrumental dance styles like dazon and pa'ca alongside more familiar forms like rumba, cha-cha and son montuno. Three CDs later, the band explores connections between Havana and New Orleans with *Mardi Gras Mambo: iCubanismo! in New Orleans*. This big band is led by former Sierra Maestra trumpeter Jesus Alemany, who was convinced by producer Joe Boyd (Fairport Convention, Nick Drake) to forge the group from the ranks of Cuba's best jazz musicians.



16

Justin Cronin

Prairie Lights, Iowa City • July 16 • 8pm

The title characters of Justin Cronin's *Mary and O'Neil* are a man and woman who date, get married, settle down, have babies. Cronin, who attended the Writers' Workshop with Elizabeth McCracken and Chris Offutt, represents a return to the glory days of understated domestic fiction, when Updike, and Cheever were in vogue. But he doesn't seem to care that today's critics gather round the excesses of writers like David Foster Wallace or that readers don't even gather. "For these characters, the death of their parents, the birth of their first child, these are the biggest things that ever happened to them," he said in an interview with the *Philadelphia Citypaper*. "Most readers are ordinary people; they get married, grieve the dead. *Mary and O'Neil* tries to show how these things feel, how they change us." Also broadcast live on WSUI AM-910 and WOI AM-640. 15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 337-2681.

Art

Akar Architecture and Design
4 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 351-1227

- Maren Kloppmann, contemporary ceramics, through July 14.

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503

- *Making Waves in the Midwest: The Art of Asian Paper*, a variety of pieces by 25 artists, many local, who use handmade Asian paper in their work, through Aug. 5.
- Related events: "Asian Papermaking: Throughout the Far East," Thursdays on Third lecture by Lynn Amlie, director, UICB Research and Production Paper Facility, July 12, 6pm;
- "Paper Innovations: An Historic Craft in the Artist's Hands," Thursdays on Third lecture by artist Karen Stahlecker, July 19, 6pm;
- Asian Papermaking workshop, co-instructed by Karen Stahlecker and Lynn Amlie, July 14-15, 10am-5pm, register by July 6
- Open-Book Tour of exhibit with Lynn Amlie and CRMA curator Jane Milosch, Art Sandwiched In, Aug. 1, 12pm.
- *Michelle Acuff: Recent Sculpture*, features installation piece called Shelter by this Iowa City artist, through Aug. 12
- Art Sandwiched In gallery talk with the artist,

July 11, 12pm.

Iowa Artisans Gallery

117 E. College St., Iowa City, 351-8686

- *NEWS*, mixed-media paintings by Iowa City-native Stefan Knorr, through July 9.
- *Jewelry Invitational: Baby Jane & Carla Reiter*, July 12-Aug. 10.
- *With Wooden Handbags: Schinichi Miyacaki*, July 12-Aug. 10.

Lorenz Boot Shop

132 S. Clinton St., Iowa City, 339-1053

- Photographs by Sandra Louise Dyas; mono-prints and monotypes by Lucy David; sculpture, photos and prints by Chris Burd, all Iowa City, through Oct. 1

MC Ginsberg Objects of Art

110 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 351-1700

- *Modern Day Tiara*, handmade felt hats accented by vintage jewelry brooches, through July 15.

Mythos

9 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 337-3760

- Ethnographic art, antiquities and museum copies; specializing in African, Mayan Indian from Guatemala and Asian, ongoing.

Senior Center

28 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5220

- *Patterns and Colors from the World of Nature*, photographs of wildlife and flowers by Dick Sjolund, through Aug. 2.

Studiolo

415 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 341-8344

- *Great With Child*, photographs by Iowa City's David Trawick, through July 15.

University of Iowa Museum of Art

150 N. Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727

- *Lee Allen*, paintings by this Grant Wood protégé and medical illustrator, through July 29.

UI Hospitals and Clinics Project Art of UIHC

Iowa City, 353-6417

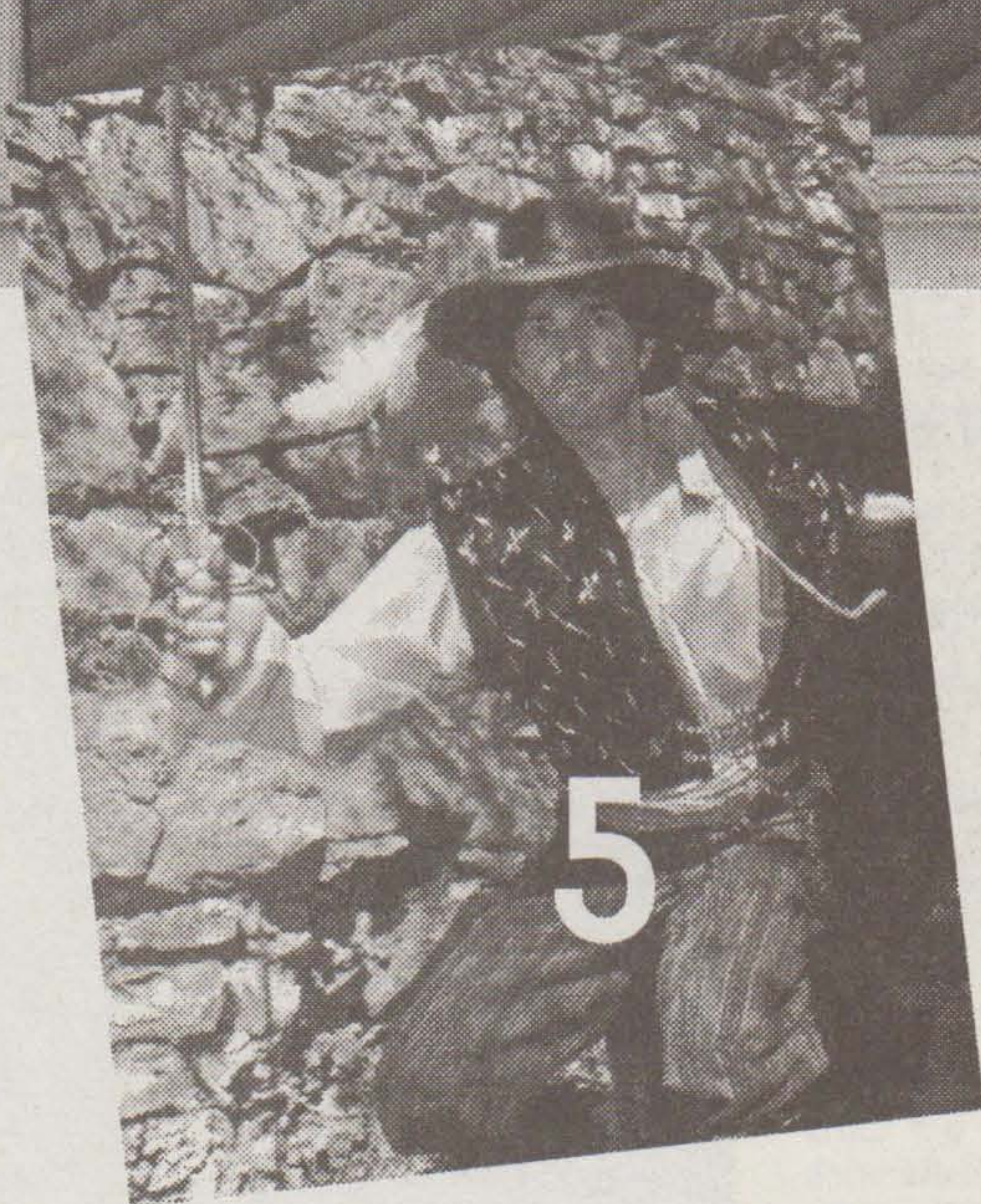
- *UI Printmaking*, thesis Prints; 1992-1995, through Sept. 10, Hospital Dentistry Gallery, fifth floor Pomerantz Family Pavilion
- Linda Graves, painted gourd sculptures, through July 31, Main Lobby
- Ina Loewenberg, photography, July 2-Aug. 31, Patient and Visitors Activities Center
- Tom Aprile, oil paintings, July 2-Aug. 31, Boyd Tower East Lobby
- Michael Harker, photography, July 3-Sept. 3, Boyd Tower West Lobby.



Corn Country (1935, oil on canvas; UI Museum of Art, gift of Dr. Clarence Van Epps)

Lee Allen

UI Museum of Art, through July 29
Although Lee Allen began his career working with Grant Wood on WPA art projects, he is best known for his achievements in medical illustration and ocular prosthetics. This exhibit explores Allen's work in both art and science. Regionalist work from the 1930s is included, as well as work from the past two decades when he returned to painting following his retirement from the UI Department of Ophthalmology. 150 N. Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727.



Zastrozzi: The Master of Discipline

UI Theatres, Iowa City • July 5-14

This comedy by Canadian playwright George F. Walker has been described as "an odd hybrid of melodrama, revenge tragedy and grand opera, with bodies all over the place at play's end." The Iowa Summer Rep festival of Walker comedies wraps up with *Zastrozzi* July 5-14. One of Walker's most popular plays, *Zastrozzi* is an Italian fable that follows this self-proclaimed master criminal of the world as he seeks revenge on his arch nemesis, the hapless impressionist painter Verezzi—Zastrozzi believes Verezzi has killed his mother. A review in the *Washington Post* said Walker creates a world "where humor and horror waltz drunkenly around in each other's arms." The play contains material of an adult nature. E.C. Mabie Theatre, Iowa City, 335-1160.

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Music

Gabe's

330 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 354-4788

• Lawrence Arms, June 30 • Alejandro Escovedo, July 1 • River City High, July 2 • Drowning Man and Darkest Hour, July 5 • The Gossip, with Har-Mar Superstar, July 6 • Groovy Ghoulies, July 9 • Cee Knowledge and the Cosmic Funk Orchestra, July 14 • Rocket from the Crypt, July 20.

The Green Room

509 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 354-4350

Blues Jam Mondays, Latin Night Tuesdays

• El Nino with Dr. Z's Experiment, June 30 • Orquesta de Jazz y Salsa Alto Miaz (Salsa Band), July 1 • Kelly Pardekooper & the Devil's House Band with Brother Trucker, July 6 • Conspire, July 7 • The Trolleys w/ Tastes Like Burning, July 12 • Skunk River Bandits w/ Slopsycle, July 13 • Bohemian Soul Tribe w/ Phat Albert, July 14 • Evil Imposters, July 18 • Catherine Musilek w/ Kat Parsons & Ben Schmidt, July 19 • Hopesfall w/ 7 Angels 7 Plagues and Innocence Broken, July 20 • Euforia w/ Cosmic Fools, July 21 • Clean Livin' w/ Guva, July 26 • Still Gravy, July 27 • Westfall w/ Hop on Johnny, July 28.

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City, 351-9529

• Greg Brown, July 1 • Nate Basinger, July 5 • John Lake, July 6 • Dancing Andy, July 7 • Singer/songwriters, July 11 • Eric Straumanis, July 13 • Ben Schmidt, July 14 • Stuart Davis, July 15 • Open mike, July 16 • Joe Price, July 20 • Jennifer Danielson w/ Too Much Yang, July 21 • Wylde Nept, July 28.

Northside Books

203 N. Linn St., Iowa City, 466-9330, Sunday Live!, all 2-3pm

• July 1: Jade, guitar and vocals; folk, popular and originals • July 8: Nica's Dream, clarinet and string bass, jazz • July 15: TBA • July 22: Mary Eagle, mountain dulcimer and a cappella, folk • July 29: TBA

Sal's Music Emporium

624 S. Dubuque, Iowa City, 338-7462

• The Star Death, former IC folkster Blueberry's new punk vehicle, with 86'd, July 1, 5pm • Stuart Davis, July 13, 6pm. • Kat Parsons, with Gravity Shackles, July 19, 6pm

Sanctuary

405 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 351-5692

• Mike Spiro, jazz percussionist, July 5 • Chris Merz Trio, jazz sax, July 6 & 7 • Anton Hatwich Trio, July 13 • Thompson, Cunliffe & Hatwich, July 14 • Dave Moore, July 20 & 21 • Jazztet, July 27 • Tom Jessen, July 28

UI Hospitals and Clinics Project Art of UIHC

Iowa City, 353-6417, 12-1pm, John Colloton Pavilion Atrium, by elevator F

• July 3: Alan Swanson, piano improvisation • July 11: Piano Students of Nancy Cree • July 25: Piano Students of Nancy Cree.

Festivals/Series

Friday Night Concert Series

Plaza Fountain Stage in front of the Sheraton City Plaza Hotel, Iowa City, 6:30-9:30pm

• July 6: Poetic Justice • July 13: Tornados • July 20: Shade of Blue • July 27: Johnny Kilowatt

Iowa City Jazz Festival

June 30 & July 1 Downtown Iowa City

Saturday, June 30

Main Stage: Chris Merz Trio 2pm • Kenny Werner Trio, 4pm • Benny Golson Quartet, 6pm

• Carla Bley/Steve Swallow & The Iowa All-Star Big Band, 8pm

Stage A: Dick Watson, 1:30pm & 3:30pm • Saul Lubaroff, 5:30pm & 7:30pm

Stage B: Fred Woodward Trio, 1:30pm & 3:30pm • Doliho, 5:30pm & 7:30pm.



Poetic Justice

UI Latino Native American Cultural Center 30th Anniversary Gala

IC ped mall, IMU, UI campus • July 6-8

In 1971, three UI students founded the Latino Native American Cultural Center as the Chicano Indian American Cultural Center.

The Center celebrates its anniversary with a free performance by tribal-jazz-reggae band Poetic Justice Friday, July 6 on the ped mall. The band features poet Joy Harjo, a graduate of the UI Writers' Workshop. Other events July 6-8 include workshops, an art exhibit, a banquet and a dance, all at the Iowa Memorial Union. Advance registration is required for meals and the Saturday dance. Call Adele Rodriguez at 335-0591 for more information.

Youth Stage: Independence HS, 1:30pm; • Eisenhower HS, 3:30pm • Independence HS, 5:30pm • Eisenhower HS, 7:30pm.

Workshops: Hosted by jazz pianist and author Kenny Werner, 11am, IMU Wheelroom • hosted by saxophonist and composer Benny Golson, 12:30pm, IMU Wheelroom.

Sunday, July 1

Main Stage: Dave Zollo, 12pm • Greg Osby Quartet (featuring Jason Moran), 2pm • Pat Martino & Friends (with Joey DeFrancesco & Billy Hart, 4pm • ¡Cubanismo!, 6pm.

Stage A: The Moe Band, 11:30am & 1:30pm; • Funk Farm, 3:30pm & 5:30pm.

Stage B: UNI Jazz Combo, 11:30am & 1:30pm
 UI Jazz Combo, 3:30pm & 5:30pm
Youth Stage: IC West HS Jazz Combo, 11:30am & 1:30pm • Northwest Jr. High, 3:30pm & 5:30pm.

Market Music

Chauncey Swan Park, Iowa City, musicians entertain Farmers Market-goers, 5-7pm, Wednesday evenings through August

• July 4: Radoslav Lorkovic • July 11: Dave Zollo • July 18: Aleta & Al Murphy • July 25: Robert Morey

Saturday "Just Jazz" Series

Plaza Fountain Stage in front of the Sheraton City Plaza Hotel, Iowa City, 6:30-9:30pm

• June 30: Jazz Fest • July 7: Saul Lubaroff • July 14: Oddbar • July 21: Jim Hall Quartet • July 28: Daugherty/McPartland

Other Music Events

JUISE

• A summer jazz ensemble comprised of local jazz professionals, educators and select students from the UI School of Music, July 5, 8pm, Riverside Festival Stage, lower City Park, Iowa City.

The UI Latino Native American Cultural Center 30th Anniversary Gala

• Tribal-jazz-reggae band Poetic Justice performs July 6, 6:30pm, Iowa City ped mall.

Theater

Old Creamery Theatre

39 38th Ave., Amana, 800-352-6262
Performance times: Wednesday, Friday & Saturday 8pm; Thursday & Sunday 3pm

• *Anything for a Laugh*, original screwball comedy by Old Creamery Company members Tom Johnson, Meg Merckens and Sean McCall, starring Merckens and McCall in different parts, through July 22 • *Over the River and Through the Woods*, new comedy by Joe DiPietro about a young executive and his two sets of grandparents who try to keep him from moving away, July 27-Sept. 2.

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City 887-1360

• *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, presented by Riverside Theatre's Young People's Company, July 19, 7pm; July 20-21, 8pm; July 22, 2pm.

Theatre Cedar Rapids

102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8591

• *Tommy*, The Who musical about a pinball wizard, 8pm July 13, 14, 20, 21, 27, 28; 7:30pm July 19, 26; 2:30pm July 15, 22, 29.

UI Theatre

Theatre Building, UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160, all performances 8pm except where otherwise noted

• Iowa Summer Rep 2000: Three Comedies by George F. Walker, *Escape from Happiness*, July 1 (2 & 8pm), 4 (6pm), 8, 10, 12, David Thayer Theater; *Risk Everything*, July 3, 8 (2pm), 11, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, Theatre B; *Zastrozzi*, July 5, 6, 7, 13, 14, E.C. Mabie Theatre • *Problem Child*, staged reading, July 15, 2pm.

Words

IC Public Library

123 Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

• Summer Reading Program (K-six grades only): "Steve Thunder Maguire and Great Bicycling Stories," July 5, 3pm • "Dennis Warner Kids' Concert: Life as a Road Trip," July 12, 3:15pm • "Dave Panther: Tales of the Boundary Waters," July 19, 3pm • "Peter Chan and the Chinese School: Let's Visit China," July 26, 3pm; all Room A • "Women's Issues, Women's Lives" Book Discussion Group, presented by ICPL/ Rape Victim Advocacy Program, community welcome, Call 335-6001 for book titles, July 22, 2pm, Room B.

Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City, 337-2681, 8pm unless otherwise noted, broadcast live on WSUI AM-910 and WOI AM-640

• Mary Monica Pulver, mystery writer who sometimes writes under the name Monica Ferris reads from her fiction, July 9 • Judith Tannenbaum, reads her memoir, *Disguised as a Poem*, about how she came to teach writing to prisoners, July 10 • William Kent Krueger, reads from his new mystery, *Purgatory Ridge*, July 12 • Max Alan Collins, Muscatine author of detective fiction reads from *Angels in Blue*, July 13 • Justin Cronin, UI Fiction Workshop grad reads from new book, *Mary and O'Neil*, July 16 • Charles Holdefer, Workshop grad reads from his latest work, July 17 • Doug Bauer, fiction writers reads from his new book of essays about writing, *The Stuff of Fiction*, July 19 • Thomas Fox Averill, reads from his novel, *Secrets of the Tsil Café*, July 20 • Spencer Short, Workshop grad reads from new book of poetry, *Tremolo*, July 23 • Deborah Tall, reads from her new collection of poetry, *Summons*, July 24

Events

Jaycees Fireworks Festival

• July 7, 4pm (fireworks 9:30pm), City Park,

Iowa City

The UI Latino Native American Cultural Center 30th Anniversary Gala

• Tribal-jazz-reggae band Poetic Justice performs July 6, 6:30pm, Iowa City ped mall • workshops, art exhibit, banquet, dance, July 6-8, Iowa Memorial Union, advance registration required for meals and Saturday dance, call Adele Rodriguez at 335-0591 for more info.

Classes

IC Public Library

123 Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

• World Wide Web Class, a one-hour hands-on introduction to the World Wide Web, call 356-5200 ext. 125 to register, July 18, 7pm, Room D.

Meetings

City of Iowa City

Civic Center, 410 E. Washington St., Iowa City (unless noted otherwise), 356-5236

• July 9: Special Council Work Session, 6:30pm, Council Chambers • July 10: Police Citizens Review Board, 7pm, Lobby Conf. Rm.; Special Council Formal, 7pm, Council Chambers • July 12: Historic Preservation Commission, 5:30pm, Council Chambers • July 16: Planning & Zoning Informal, 7:30pm, Rec. Ctr. Rm. B • July 19: Council Economic Development Committee, 9am, Lobby Conf. Rm.; Planning & Zoning, 7:30pm, Council Chambers; Housing & Community Development Commission, 6:30pm, Lobby Conf. Rm • July 24: Human Rights Commission, 7pm, Council Chambers • July 30: Special Council Work Session, 6:30pm, Council Chambers • July 31: Special Council Formal, 7pm, Council Chambers.

Film

Bijou

Iowa Memorial Union, UI Campus, Iowa City, 335-3041

• *Calle 54*, collection of Latin-jazz performances by director Fernando Trueba, subtitled, 7pm July 6, 8, 10; 9:30pm July 7, 9, 11 • *The Circle (Dayereh)*, director Jafar Panahi looks at the oppression suffered by women in Iran, subtitled, 7pm July 7, 9, 11; 9:30pm July 6, 8, 10 • *Center of the World*, Wayne Wang's film about a young computer whiz who convinces a stripper to spend three days with him in Las Vegas, 7 & 9pm, July 12-18 • *Waiting for Guffman*, mockumentary starring Christopher Guest that does to small-town community theater what *Spinal Tap* did to hair bands, 7 & 9pm, July 19-25

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5 Techno Nite
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6 Kelly Pardekooper & the Devil's House Band
w/ Brother Trucker

7 Conspire

8 Comedy Night
hosted by Mike Brody

11 Hip Hop Party

12 The Trolleys > Tastes like Burning

13 Skunk River Bandits
w/ Slopsycle

14 Bohemian Soul Tribe
w/ Phat Albert

18 Evil Imposters

19 Catherine Musilek
w/ Kat Parsons & Ben Schmidt

20 HOPESFALL 5pm • \$5
7 angels & 7 plagues
+ Proto + Innocence Broken

21 Euforia w/ Cosmic Fools

25 Kelly Pardekooper's Songwriter's Night

26 Clean Livin' w/ Guva

27 STILL GRAYVY

28 Westfall w/ Hop on Johnny

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STARS OVER



Iowa

City

by Dr. Star



ARIES (March 21–April 19) We've become quite a big frog in our local puddle, and comfy, too. But the neighborhood is getting noisy and visions of a new life in a distant Utopia beckon. The tension between life as you know it and life as you would like it could get worse. Don't bust your budget trying to cope, though. Events will soon ease pressures all around, giving you room to maneuver and presenting new possibilities. Be your confident and sure-footed self. You'll make it.



TAURUS (April 20–May 20) There's a financial crisis brewing. Be prepared for a rash of money-related power struggles. But you Tauruses are on top of that. Mid-month, it could seem like people are lining up just to step on your toes. No matter. Draw strength from those daydreams of a more peaceful life in a better place. An old magic is trying to reenter your life. Let it in...slowly and carefully.



GEMINI (May 21–June 20) Did your lover leave suddenly without a forwarding address? Are you and your spouse having uncharitable thoughts about each other? Are your business associates consulting lawyers? Are you doing the work of three people? Do you need a double atomic-powered latté to get started in the morning? You'd like to have a nice emotional blowup or nervous breakdown and run away, but you can't? Please relax. Wise friends in high places are going to see that you get through this.



CANCER (June 21–July 22) Work has been getting to you. The issues are big and annoying. They follow you home. In reality, work concerns are causing positive changes in your personal attitudes and in your approach to life. You are about to get a BIG leg up, too. Dramatic improvements in how you and the world see each other are around the corner. Finances should ease quite a bit, also. But do keep an eye on your weight. The vibes involved are expansive.



LEO (July 23–Aug 22) Awhile ago, your relationship-life turned into a kind of fun house: distorting mirrors, jack-in-the-box monsters, wildly unpredictable turns, strange encounters. Recently, it got easier. Stability began to return. It will soon get even easier. Healing energies will soon arrive in your aura. A serious battle is heating up in someone else's back yard. Participation is optional for Leos, though. You understand human nature a lot better nowadays, so you could help a lot. But tread lightly.



VIRGO (Aug 23–Sept 22) Two of the biggest challenges of your life all at once! Two of the most important things in your life, career and family, hanging in the balance. The scales will tip soon, though, one way or the other. The planets are quietly working the angles on your behalf. A lot more help will come before the deadline, too. Your relationship with young people is also about to change dramatically. They will help you fulfill your fondest hopes.



LIBRA (Sept 23–Oct 22) Many born under other signs are facing outsized challenges. But the planets have put Librans out

of harm's way and in a perfect spot to help the rest of us and benefit from it, too. The planets are also going to begin transforming home and work life for Librans. A new, more flexible and gratifying life is taking shape. The extra static Librans might face in July will not outweigh their pleasure at the overall turn of events.



SCORPIO (Oct 23–Nov 21) Relationships of all kinds have, until recently, been a strain, even a drain. The family scene has been at a rolling boil. Now there is a financial crisis-and-a-half brewing. Very soon, pathways you thought were impassable will open, though. Old, familiar, worn-out pathways will slowly but surely close—for good. You will explore the new and unfamiliar paths because you must. Inspiration will flow. Confidence will surge. You will find a way beyond any impasse.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22–Dec 21) The three keys to understanding you these days are: motivation, motivation and, well, motivation. Sagittarians are driving and being driven by changes all over their stomping grounds. You haven't seen eye to eye with your partners, friends and associates lately, either. You inspire and explain and motivate and they come back with objections and obstructions. There could be a parting of the ways. You must put your own plans and dreams uppermost. Long-term financial developments, especially, will require your attention.



CAPRICORN (Dec 22–Jan 19) Capricorns love power; you were born to wield it. But it's harder to exercise power these days. There is commotion on your turf, but you can't get a handle on it. The ball keeps bouncing into everybody else's court. New sources of power are developing, but you can't use them yet. Personal and work concerns could undermine your well-being. Your circle of friends and associates is rapidly changing. Form alliances with your benevolent new associates. They can help you reinvent yourself.



AQUARIUS (Jan 20–Feb 18) You're doing just fine, thank you, in a very turbulent time. Problems related to your living situation are clearing up nicely. Exciting, inspiring, stimulating forces circulate through your life everywhere that counts. Your creative life and your ideals are in for a thorough reexamination, but that is going well and is well along. Some deep, healing energies will soon pour into your being. Obstacles that might have blocked emotional healing and growth in the past will start melting away.



PISCES (Feb 19–March 20) You are entering a long period of fun and playful self-expression. The stars want you to learn more about yourself and to express it. Your creativity will be greatly stimulated and/or generously supported. Old obstacles to self-expression will disappear. This will provide a happy outlet for the inspiration and rebellion that has been driving your inmost thoughts for some years now. It should also help you resolve the serious tensions building up at home and at the office.

Write Dr. Star at doctortwinkler@home.com

News Quirks

Compiled by Roland Sweet

Strange but True!



Curses, Foiled Again

Michael A. Moore stole Michelle Greshak's car but was arrested after he tried to sell it back to her. The Philadelphia woman said Moore called her and claimed to have just bought her car from a man for \$600, explaining he traced her through the car's registration. After negotiating, Moore agreed to sell the car for \$200, telling Greshak, "I'll take whatever you give me." Greshak notified police, who nabbed Moore when he showed up with the car to claim his money.

Way to Go

John L. Bower, 85, a national defense expert who built his own bomb shelter after the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, was killed while doing electrical maintenance work on the underground shelter. Authorities said a leaky propane tank that fueled the shelter's electrical generator triggered an explosion that ripped through the steel-walled shelter.

Khamurat Berdyev, 41, the head of the railway company in the central Asian state of Turkmenistan, died while crossing a railway line when one of his own trains hit him from behind.

Xu Xiaodong, 18, a zookeeper in Jinan, China, was mauled to death by a tiger after apparently defecating on it. Authorities who found toilet paper, human excrement and a loosened belt at the scene concluded that Xu had climbed on the tiger cage to relieve himself over four Bengal tigers, then either slipped or was dragged in by one of the angry animals.

Wonderful World

Researchers in Croatia discovered that some trees were so badly contaminated from the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident in the Ukraine that people spending just 10 hours a day in a cabin made from the wood would receive a dose of cesium-137 equal to one-third the international safety limit.

Vatican Radio agreed to cut its transmission output in half after Italian Environment Minister Willer Bordon gave the papal state two weeks to reduce what he called excessive electromagnetic levels or be shut down. New Scientist magazine said that when the Vatican's radio transmitters were built 50 years ago, their site outside Rome was relatively unpopulated. Now, however, about 100,000 people live nearby, and some residents fear the station's 33 antennas are responsible for leukemia cases. Saying the Vatican was astonished by Bordon's threat, since the territory is a sovereign state, a Vatican spokesperson said Vatican Radio had agreed to reduce its medium-wave transmissions as an act of good faith.

Sperm in the News

Sperm reserves have become so low in Sao Paulo, Brazil, that the Department of Human Reproduction at the Albert Einstein Hospital there launched an aggressive campaign to boost sperm-bank donations. One advertisement shows a baby boy holding a Playboy magazine with the tagline: "Give it a hand so that he can be born."

Recycling's Finest Moment

The McGhan Medical Corp. announced the development of a biologically engineered human collagen that is awaiting approval by the Food and Drug Administration. The source of the cells for the new collagen is the circumcised foreskins of infant boys.

Going Out in Style

Collegiate Memorials has introduced special burial caskets and urns emblazoned with a university's insignia. The Tuscaloosa, Ala., company said 40 schools have agreed to participate.

Southern Caskets Direct of Atlanta, Ga., offers coffins featuring bright lithographed designs and catchy titles. NASCAR fans, for example, can rest in peace in caskets that announce "The Race Is Over," which show a checkered flag. Golf fans can be buried in one that says, "Fairway to Heaven." Company president Thomas Hicks said, "Typically, the families that buy them are freethinkers and like to do things differently."

Eternal Reefs of Orlando, Fla., suggests memorializing loved ones with underwater reefs made from the ashes of the departed. The cremated remains are mixed with concrete, then molded into "reef balls" and placed on the ocean floor in government-approved areas like the Florida Keys. Prices range from \$850 to more than \$3,000.

The Answer Is Blowing in the Wind

British police said they were investigating a complaint that an officer farted while searching a London home during a drug raid. "An allegation has been received from a person in the house that one of the male officers broke wind and did not apologize to the family for his action," said a letter from Scotland Yard to the officers involved in the raid that was printed in the Daily Mail newspaper. "The complainant felt it was rude and unprofessional."

Two New Jersey men were charged with spraying gas designed to mimic the odor of flatulence inside a Washington Township supermarket. After assistant store manager Rick Calabrese notified police, the two suspects were spotted ordering food at the deli counter. "The police officer asked one of them what he had in his shirt pocket. He had two cans of fart spray," Calabrese said, noting suspects Geremino T. Ranallo, 64, and Warren G. Jacoby, 49, were the same men spotted in the store two weeks earlier carrying what he described as a "fart machine," which merely mimicked the sound of flatulence, not the odor.

Fetishes on Parade

Christopher Simms, 34, of Willow Grove, Pa., was charged with being a Peeping Tom after he set up an elaborate videotaping system to spy on two nursing mothers who used a breast pump in a storage closet while at work. According to Montgomery County prosecutors, the scheme fell apart after one of the women spotted the camera hidden in a trash bag and rigged to his computer.

Compiled from the nation's press by Roland Sweet. Send original clippings, citing source and date, to P.O. Box 8130, Alexandria, VA 22306.

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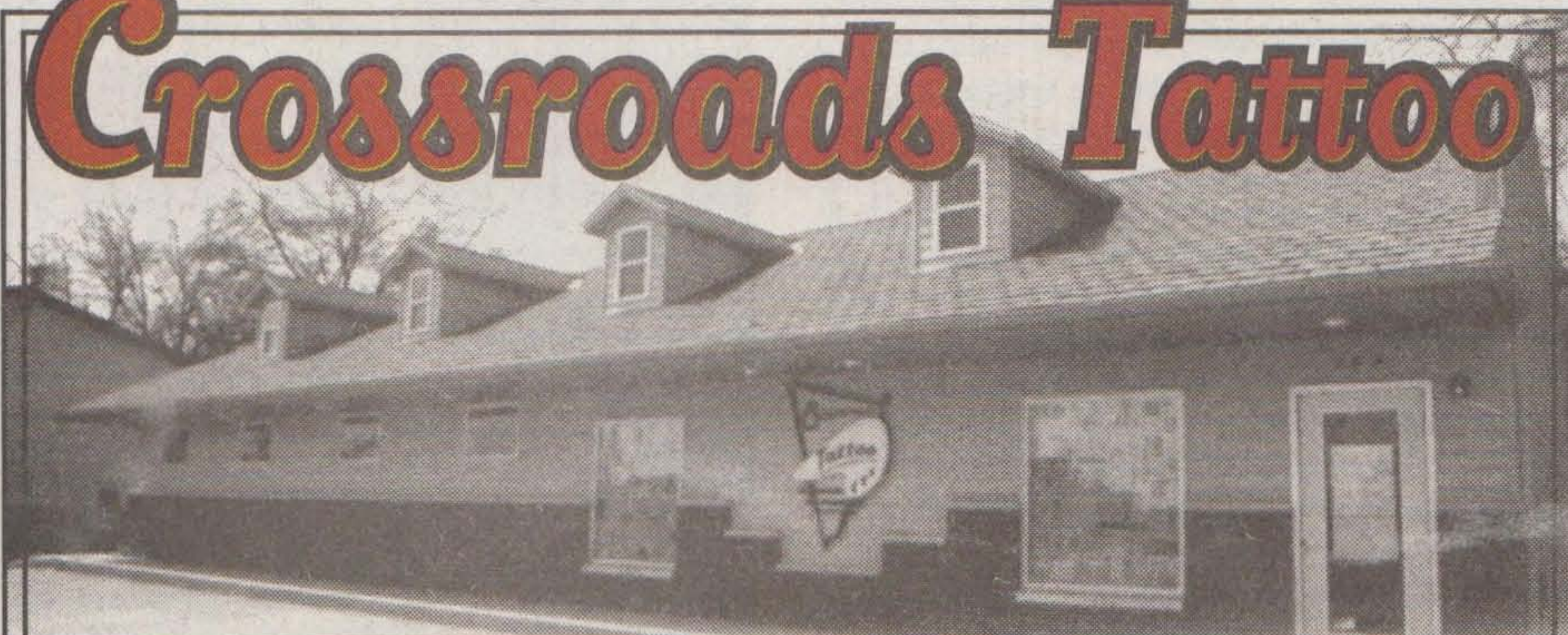
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