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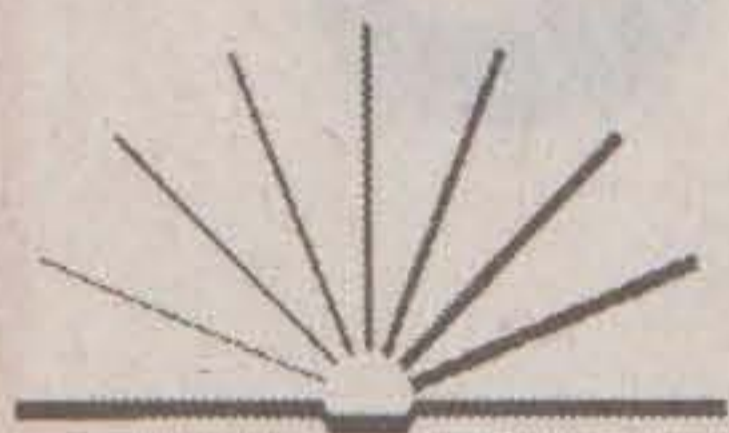
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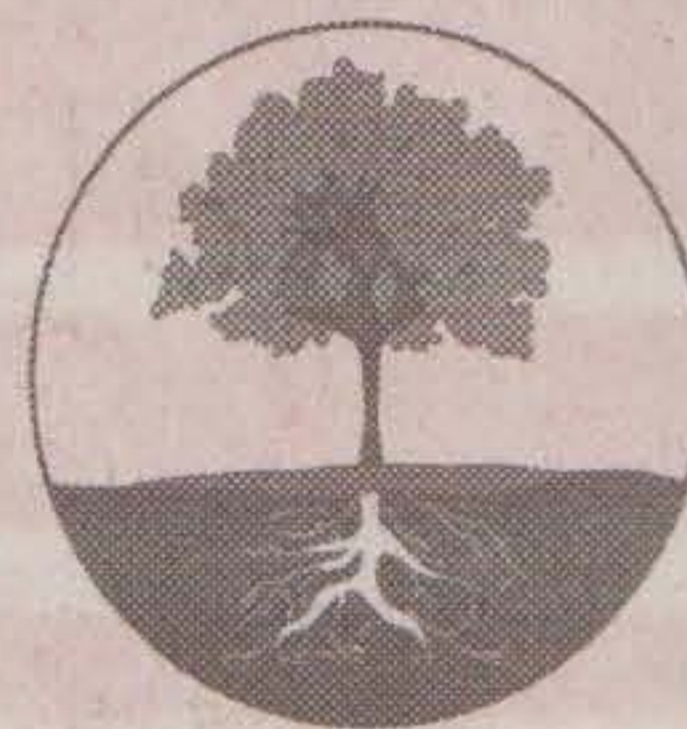
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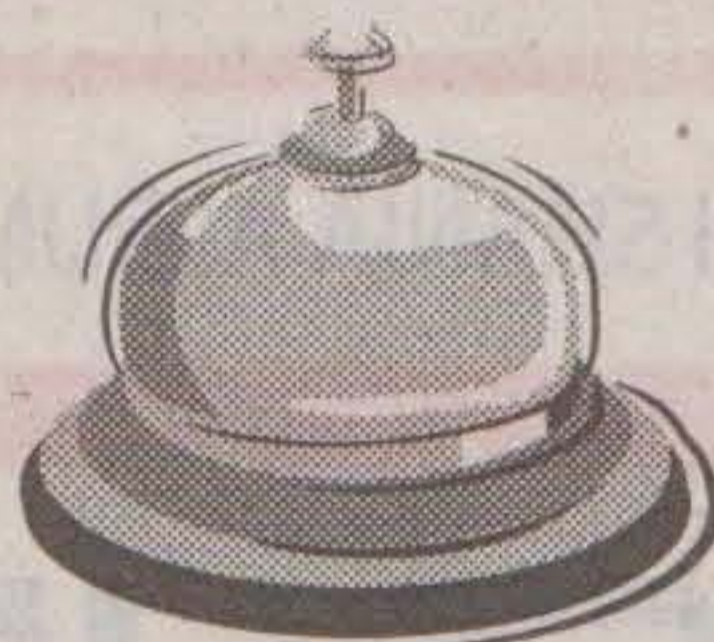
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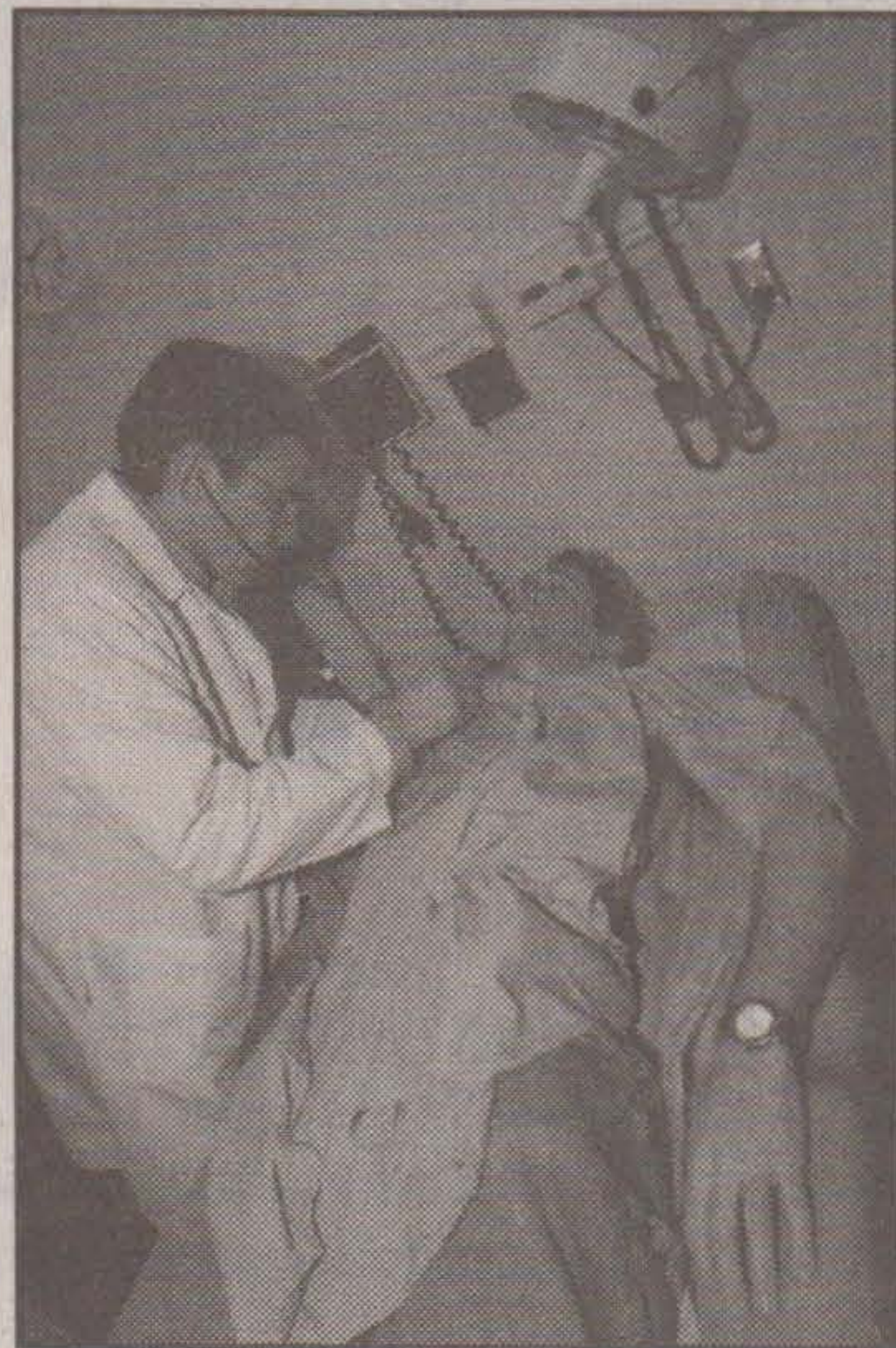
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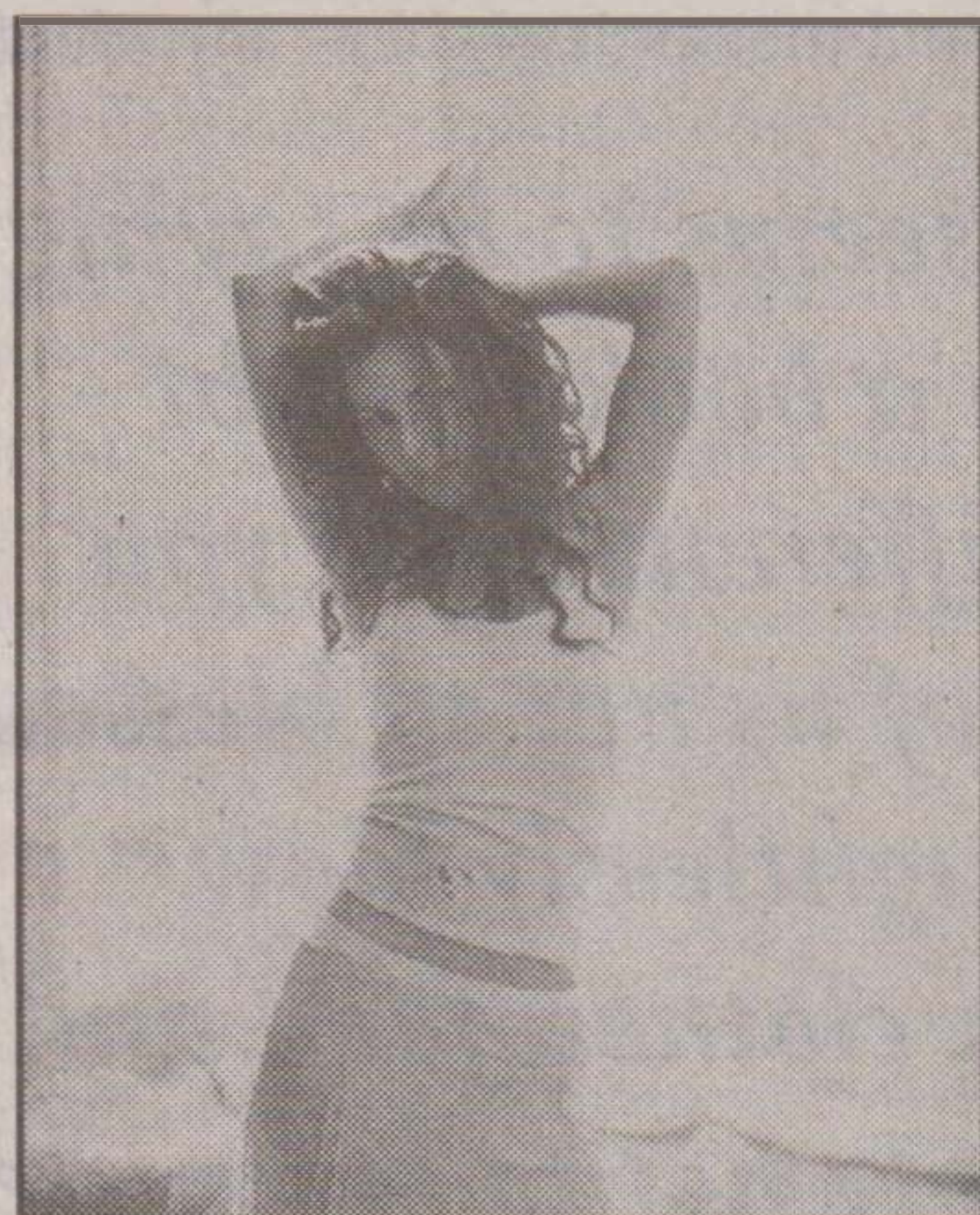
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Actors take the stage on the hospital floor

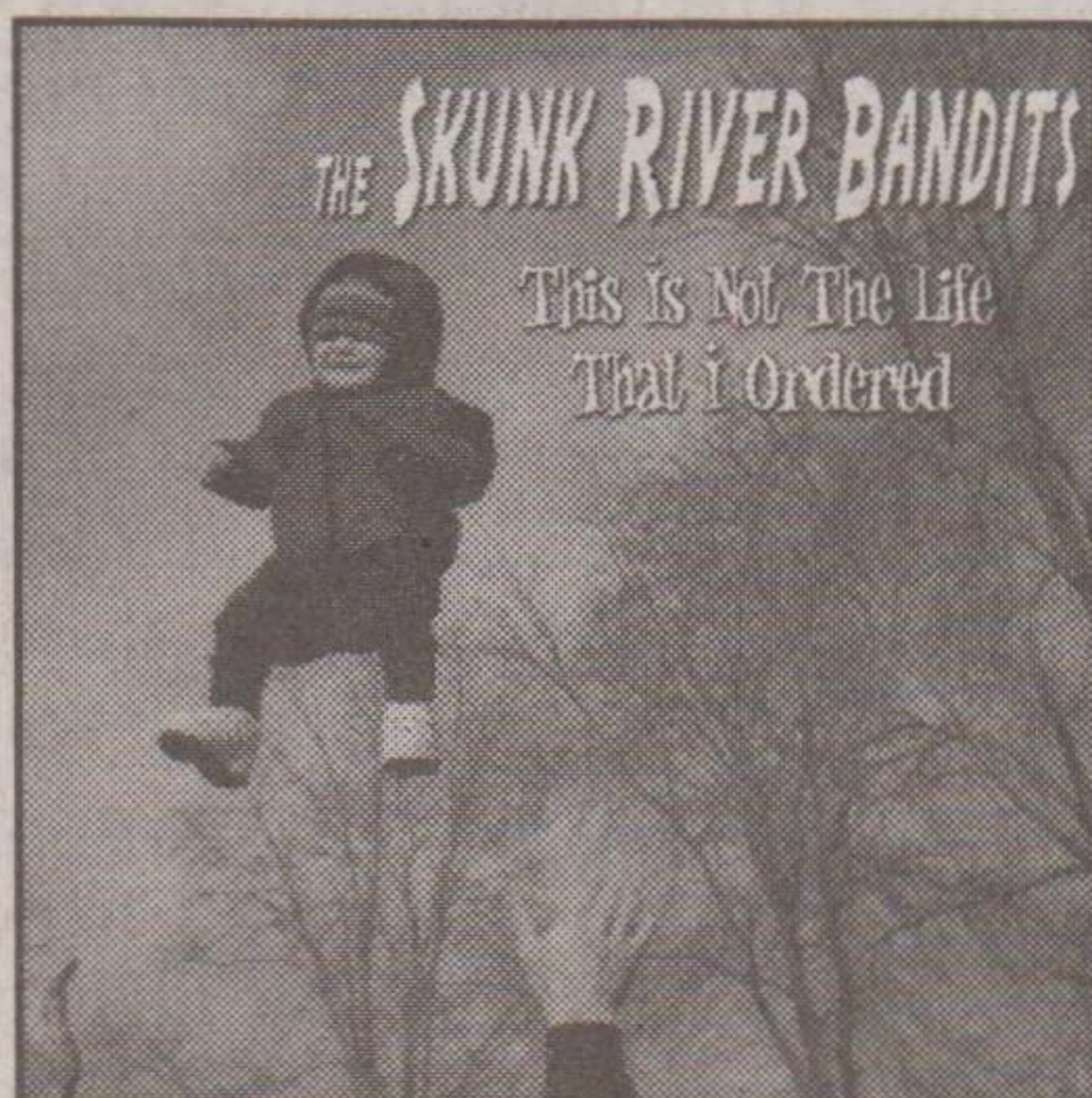
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

SOME PEOPLE THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO REDUCE OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL--

YOU SEE, IF WE COULD JUST RAISE FUEL EFFICIENCY STANDARDS SLIGHTLY--

YEAH, SURE! AND I SUPPOSE NEXT YOU'LL WANT US ALL TO DRIVE GRANOLA POWERED CARS MADE OUT OF GORETEX OR SOMETHING!

HA, HA!

--BUT CLEARLY, THEY JUST DON'T GET IT! IF WE HAVE TO ADJUST OUR STANDARD OF LIVING IN ANY WAY WHATSOEVER--WELL--HAVEN'T SADDAM AND HIS TERRORIST BUDDIES ALREADY WON?

OUR PLAN TO HUMILIATE THE AMERICANS BY FORCING THEM TO DRIVE SMALLER AND MORE FUEL EFFICIENT VEHICLES HAS BEEN A FAILURE!

CURSES! WE DID NOT ANTICIPATE THE DEPTH OF THEIR RESOLVE!

[A DRAMATIZATION]

SO WE'LL WASTE AS MUCH GAS AS WE WANT, THANK YOU VERY MUCH! AFTER ALL, ISN'T THE PROFLIGATE CONSUMPTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES OUR GOD-GIVEN BIRTHRIGHT AS AMERICANS?

BUT DIDN'T GOD GIVE THE SPECIFIC RESOURCES IN QUESTION TO OTHER COUNTRIES?

YES--BUT HE GAVE US AN ENORMOUS MILITARY BUDGET!

ENOUGH THEOLOGY, YOU TWO! LET'S GO FOR AN AIMLESS RIDE IN MY LINCOLN NAVIGATOR!

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little village

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Dubyanomics 101

FOR ALL THE MEDIA ATTENTION AND ANALYSIS PAID TO THE BUSH STIMULUS PACKAGE SINCE its announcement, I find it hard to believe that there was a single political observer in this country who couldn't have told you the basic theme of the package weeks before. When it comes to the economy, the tiller on the ship of state has been lashed down completely since well before inauguration day, meaning the administration's take on the economy was going to be the same as it's always been—cut taxes. Surplus? Cut taxes. Deficit? Cut taxes. Recession? Cut taxes. Stagnant recovery? Any guesses?

The only variables that enter into the singular equation of what we might call Dubyanomics are those of scale. Economic trouble? Cut taxes. Economic crisis? Cut more taxes sooner. The course is the same—only the speed changes.

It is an approach to the management of the American economy that shows neither analysis nor forethought, equally heedless of economic history, present reality and future consequence. It is the product of a carelessness so remarkable as to result in a "stimulus package" the majority of which has no stimulative effect whatsoever until 2004. It is a program of such little proven economic value as to inspire many hard questions about the true motives of those introducing it.

As to the ceremonial raising of the Bolshevik bogey man of "class warfare" as a defense for a program whose benefits apply preponderantly to the wealthiest 1 per cent of the population, I just have to wonder what war that was and how I could have missed it. The rich, obviously, won in a rout. The centerpiece of the Bush "jobs and growth" plan, the elimination of the tax on dividends, pays an estimated 86 percent of its benefits to the upper 10th of the population. The president, as if to throw the entire mix into greater incoherence, has posited the existence of an "investor class" that is something other than the "upper class" (in the main, it is not—see the previous statistic) and has further described them as "middle class taxpayers" (as if the 90th percentile could conceivably be near the middle of anything).

More to the point, the not-rich obviously lost. It isn't just that Bush's tax cuts are targeted toward the wealthy—most of the cuts are quite explicitly designed to exclude those who are not. While Bush and his spokespeople like to pretend that there is an "investor class" in this country that includes the middle class, the elimination of the dividend tax would have little effect on most middle-class investments. Unlike the rest of the "investor class," those in the middle income brackets tend to invest for retirement or their children's education, and do so in IRAs, 401ks and educational savings accounts that are already tax-deferred. Net effect on the majority of middle-class investment income—nil. The estate tax, known to most Republicans as the heinous "death tax," is, despite its macabre mass appeal and its prominent role in Republican anti-tax rhetoric, only applicable to estates in the upper percentiles. The rest of us, as my granny used to say, should live so long...

In choosing these particular tax cuts, Bush has ignored a host of

others—the payroll tax holiday being the most acute example—that would have inarguably greater stimulative effect (if only for the fact that they have some stimulative effect in calendar year 2003) and have a net cost to federal revenues several hundreds of billions lower than the staggering six hundred billion dollar-plus Bush plan. Apparently, the problem with these cuts is that the wrong people get the money. If there is a class judgment that stands out in these dealings, it is the administration's judgment that the economic behavior of people who make their money off investments, and have plenty of it, is infinitely more beneficial to the economy than the economic behavior of people who make their money by working for it and could use some. The rich, Bush seems to be saying in a quote from a book I doubt he's read, are different from you and me. Those of us not so blessed, who would thoughtlessly blow any windfall on

The rich, Bush seems to be saying in a quote from a book I doubt he's read, are different from you and me. Those of us not so blessed, who would thoughtlessly blow any windfall on clothes, food and shelter, are simply not to be trusted with money.

clothes, food and shelter, are simply not to be trusted with money.

More ominously, the Bush plan's enormous expense is already inspiring calls for budget cuts to make up the "fiscal discipline" so utterly lacking in the plan itself. The most recent heads on the chopping block have been such frivols as unemployment insurance and home-heating assistance. Expect the announcement of the revised "Leave Only A Few Children Behind" education policy any day now.

In effect, the Bush plan provides the upper 10 percent of income with several billion dollars in tax relief, and leaves the lower 90 percent with a far more nominal tax reduction, a greater share of the tax burden, a reduction in government services, and a vast sea of red ink. The end result could be deemed a classic Bush oxymoron—a depressing stimulus package. One is in the end forced to wonder if the Bush team itself believes it is offering any help on the economy through a program that largely (coincidentally?) rewards its campaign contributors and social peers at the expense of the majority, or whether those rewards have always been the point of the exercise. The performance of the Bush economy so far doesn't offer any comfort. LV



THOMAS DEAN

Be a PIMBY

WE NEED TO BECOME A NATION OF PIMBY'S. FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE WORLD, WE NEED TO COP the attitude "Put In My Back Yard"—PIMBY; instead of NIMBY—"Not in My Back Yard."

Being place-oriented—having a value system grounded in your immediate community and environment—sensitizes you to effects. If you're willing, even imaginatively, to put a landfill in your back yard, you'll be more likely to support waste (and consumption) reduction. Wouldn't an expressway, an auto plant or an oil refinery in your yard make you think long and hard about modern transportation? Perhaps you'd think more about what you eat if you would agree to a slaughterhouse or a hog confinement lot next door.

The PIMBY idea is really just the "Golden Rule," the foundation of most religions. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." "PIMBY" means "I will act on the world only if I am willing to accept its effects and consequences in my own back yard." Proximity breeds invested care. We do not want to foul our own place, so we should not be willing to foul others'.

The NIMBY/PIMBY dichotomy has global implications. Before we, as a nation, agree to go marching off to war with Iraq, or wherever George W. Bush decides to take our pre-emptive belligerence this month, we should think about our willingness to take what we dish out. Before we embark on war, we need to sear its human and environmental consequences into our consciousness and conscience. We cannot simply ignore war's horrors because they are thousands of miles away. Take a long, hard look at Peter Turnley's website "The Unseen Gulf War" (http://www.digitaljournalist.org/issue0212/pt_intro.html). Previously unseen, if not censored, pictures of Bush I's foray into Iraq show that the Gulf War was not the clean video game the Pentagon and a complacent press showed us. Are we really willing to inflict the horrors of charred bodies (including those of children), devastated lives and communities, and destroyed environments on another people's home ground?

Of course, there are all the political arguments—terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, axes of evil, etc., etc. After all, "they" started it. "They" violated world sanctions against building weapons. "They" are brutal dictators. "They" attacked us on 9-11. Some, many, perhaps all of those arguments are true. But, even in the face of nearly 3,000 dead on 9-11-01, we must realize the larger context. The Bush II administration is using the tragedies of that day, and the specter of "homeland security," as pretext for larger, even insidious purposes.

The foreign policy of the moment is not merely defensive reaction against others' current actions. US military action in Afghanistan within moments (historically speaking) after 9-11 was swift because the playbook had been written long before that monstrous day. Bush administration officials had threatened—

and planned—military attack against the Taliban in the months before 9-11 if the mullahs didn't cooperate in building a natural gas pipeline in the Caspian Sea region. "Coincidentally," that pipeline is now being built across post-9-11 Afghanistan.

Certainly much of today's US military adventuring in the Middle East is about oil and energy. The Bush I and II administrations' close ties to oil and energy make that obvious. But "it's about oil," a truth disgusting enough, is too simplistic. W's belligerence against the world has been planned over the past decade by the shadow leaders of our government, who claim to be merely lieutenants. Although couched in soothing language about democracy and freedom, Bush I's "New World Order" was the inauguration of the Republican defense intelligentsia's aspirations to post-Cold War world domination. This imperial agenda is now manifested by the government of his son and called "The War on Terror."

George W. Bush's foreign policy team, along with its official and semi-official influences (such as the Defense Policy Board), is rife with conservative thinkers (Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, Donald Rumsfeld, Richard Perle) who have plotted an American global hegemony since the waning days of Bush I. "The Project for the New American Century" (<http://www.newamericancentury.org/>), which advocates a comfy sounding "Pax Americana" of "widespread economic growth" and "the spread of American principles of liberty and democracy" (even into space!), and which has its origins in a late Bush I defense review by then-Defense Secretary Cheney, can only be seen as a front for a particular type of American economic and military imperialism, especially given the public records and private interests of its masterminds.

Oil and energy, as well as the military-industrial complex itself, are the economic media by which these same people, who are to a great extent coincident with the current administration, will profit—personally, professionally and ideologically. The latest iteration of this scheme manifests itself in Bush II's "National Security Strategy of the United States of America" document of September 2002, which justifies a doctrine of pre-emptive attack against sovereign countries under the guise of defense against terrorism.

Amidst this world vision of a militarily and economically dominant US, Iraq sits as a strategic lynchpin for political control of the Middle East and control of the region's energy resources. Conservatives have had designs on Iraq as a client state for years. This grand and frighteningly wrong strategic vision has much more to do with our current pre-emptive belligerence against Saddam Hussein than the incoherent claims about terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

My point here is that Americans need to know the larger, shadowy motives of the Bush administration. Bush is rousing patriotic

Bush II heads the most dishonest, mendacious, politically motivated, and politically ruthless administration in recent decades, perhaps ever.



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fervor and exploiting "homeland security" paranoia in order to accomplish its preconceived goals, at least a decade old. Bush II heads the most dishonest, mendacious, politically motivated, and politically ruthless administration in recent decades, perhaps ever. Americans must see through the fog of "principle," "honesty" and "security" with which our national leaders are attempting to cloud our minds.

The "PIMBY" questions I posed earlier actually go far beyond our willingness to inflict violence and devastation on other people of the world. One might—*might*—justify destroying another's back yard in self-defense. But our current global posture is overflowing with ulterior motives and lies. Would we want an imperial, economically and militarily hegemonic presence in our own back yard, especially one that gained support from its people through their leaders' lies and exploitations of their fears? I think not. Do we want to impose the same on someone else's back yard? I hope not. Doing so goes against all principles of the integrity of nations, of humanity, and of place.

We are an enormously creative people. I would hope that we, as a nation, could construct a relationship with the world based on peace, mutual care and mutual respect. Those principles will defeat terrorism and brutal dictators, and give us our best security. Those principles would also expose, and I hope extinguish, the lies and immoral ambitions of a corrupt administration. LV

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Food for thought

WHEN DECIDING WHAT TO HAVE FOR LUNCH YESTERDAY, WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCED your decision? Perhaps you considered the convenience of a take-out meal from that place that was on the way to your next class. Conceivably, you got a beef & bean burrito from one of the downtown area's multitude of "convenience stores." Maybe your sugar fixation required a Coke and Kit-Kat bar from a vending machine. Or did you perchance go home and make your own lunch?

We make this decision every day, and like other everyday decisions, this one is usually given less consideration than the morning choice between boxers or briefs. These choices become reflex, they become habit. Habitual behavior is a tough thing to change. That is why it's called habitual. I do not suggest that fast food is addictive (though who knows?). As with many addictive pastimes such as smoking and drinking, though, there is an impact that fast food has on our culture, and it's just as insidious as second-hand smoke or drunken driving. It isn't just you who has to live with your decision to get that #4 Value Meal and super-size it. Indulge me for a moment while I explain.

I took my first job in what would eventually become a career in food service 25 years ago at a greasy hole-in-the-wall pizza joint in suburban Columbus, Ohio. Scrubbing dishes for minimum wage wasn't glamorous, but it put gas in my '67 T-Bird and I got to hang out with my friends. I knew nothing and cared even less about the troubling trends in American food consumption that had started 50 years earlier, but they were really beginning to take hold at that time. Just four years earlier McDonald's had installed its first drive-thru in Sierra Vista, Ariz., and by the time I could drive and deliver pizzas, half of the McDonald's restaurants in the country featured drive-thru service (nearly 3,000). A lot of my tip money went toward those famous fries.

A few years and several jobs later, bachelor's degree in hand, I decided that cooking was really the only thing I knew how to do at which I could make a living (legally, anyway). While my friends went off to fancy East Coast graduate schools, I went off to a highly touted East Coast culinary school. It was there that a long transitional process began. The more I learned about how to make good food, the more I began to notice what ingredients were required in the recipe to ensure quality.

The first ingredient is freshness. This does not simply mean fresh as in "not spoiled." It means that a tomato picked off the vine right outside the restaurant's kitchen the same August day that it is served with a little olive oil and basil is going to taste a lot better than the Mexican tomato picked green in January and gas-ripened in train cars on the way to Chicago. It also has the benefit of requiring far less energy to produce and transport it.

The next ingredient is tradition. New, innovative cuisine has swept the US over the last 50 years based on the efforts of visionaries like James Beard, Julia Child and Alice Waters. In the last 15 years, people like Thomas Keller of the French Laundry in California have helped make this country the home of the best restaurants in the world. All of them base everything they do on real, classical foundations.

Most importantly, this recipe for quality requires love. Love and respect not just for the preparation of the dish, but for the source of the ingredients, the farmers who produced them, and the people who are going to enjoy that meal. If you cook without passion, the best ingredients in the world cannot help you.

Everyone knows that a meal made from scratch tastes better than

one from a can, but very few people stop to think why. Similarly, everyone believes that the canned meal will cost less and be faster, less trouble, more *convenient*. Convenience is overrated. Anything easy, one old Ohioan once said, "ain't worth a damn." When you stop to consider the true, hidden cost of cheap food, the impact can be startling.

Back to that super-sized #4 Value Meal. When you buy that burger, jumbo fries and colossal cola, you set a long chain of events into motion. The kid who sold it to you will hold that job for an average of seven months, having been trained in a tightly controlled system

Far from being elitist, we are trying to bring these great foods, once reserved only for the ruling class, to the masses who are forced to eat junk by a global corporate complex that mistakes frenzy for efficiency.

that has a stated goal of eventually creating a restaurant that requires zero training. Coerced overtime for no additional pay is the norm. Benefits are rare and rewards are few.

The meat in the burger can come from as many as 400 different cows that are fed an energy-intensive diet of corn, hormones and antibiotics. It was processed by a meat-plant worker who is part of an industry where one in three workers are injured to the point of hospitalization every year. It was then flash-frozen in giant freezers at minus 20 degrees F, packaged and shipped an average of 1,800 miles on a truck burning Iraqi oil before another unskilled fast food worker placed it on a griddle. The potatoes in those fries undergo a similar journey. As for your drink, study of the impact of Coca-Colonialism on the world would require a dissertation.

Learning all this not only has kept me out of fast food restaurants for years, but also has led me to the discovery of an international educational and eco-gastronomic organization called Slow Food. Two years ago I helped found a local chapter of Slow Food, called a convivium. Last year we were partly responsible for the *Field to Family Festival* that celebrated local farmers and their connection to you. For our principled stand in favor of old-world, artisanal foods and local, sustainable agriculture, we are often labeled "elitist." This really pins my ears back. Far from being elitist, we are trying to bring these great foods, once reserved only for the ruling class, to the masses who are forced to eat junk by a global corporate complex that mistakes frenzy for efficiency.

For the next several months, right here in the pages of *Little Village*, I will be bringing you stories of local farmers, undiscovered food treasures and culinary history. It is my goal to show you how, as Slow Food's Manifesto says, "A firm defense of quiet material pleasure is the only way to oppose the universal folly of fast life," with "guaranteed sensual pleasure and slow, long-lasting enjoyment." Far from an ordinary cooking column, *It's About the Food* will show you how to improve your life and the world around you by thinking globally and eating locally. **LV**

Questions and comments invited at [AboutFood@Devotay.com](mailto>AboutFood@Devotay.com)

I'M NOT A

I JUST PLAY

Used to be waiting tables survived the lean times. Now they're students bone up on their bedside the motives of these aspiring professionals, as well with that "distinctive" look or risk waking up one

After graduation, several of my friends immediately join touring companies or head for one of the coasts. I land my first paid acting gig, a role in UI Summer Rep. I spend my days going back and forth between rehearsal and my university food-service job, where I help make the \$10 box lunches that will be sold to patrons at the following night's Rep performance.

IN THE LAST YEAR OR SO OF my UI undergraduate theater education, the professors start reminding us that over 90 percent of professional actors are unemployed at any given time. They show us documentaries about vapid aspiring celebrities who hover at the fringes of the industry, endlessly hustling in pursuit of roles like Bikini Girl #3 on "Baywatch." If theater is your passion, the professors tell us, you can make a career for yourself... but you should make certain you wouldn't be happy doing anything else.

After graduation, several of my friends immediately join touring companies or head for one of the coasts. I land my first paid acting gig, a role in UI Summer Rep. I spend my days going back and forth between rehearsal and my university food-service job, where I help make the \$10 box lunches that will be sold to patrons at the following night's Rep performance. It occurs to me that this is what my life may be like for the next five to 40 years, depend-

ing on when I get my big break. *Are you really ready to commit yourself to this work, I ask myself, or do you just want to be rich and famous and avoid a desk job?* I decide to stay in Iowa City for a year, finish my geology double major and avoid theater. I need to see if I can live without it.

Before long, dispatches start coming in from my peers. Some of them have landed low-paying but important entry-level jobs in the business. Others are rumored to have come home thousands of dollars in debt.

My friend in Los Angeles gets an apartment downtown, near a bar that was featured in *Magnolia*. He lands non-speaking roles in "Providence" and "That 80's Show." He meets Craig T. Nelson, shares a smoke break with Vince Vaughn and sees Jules Asner out for a stroll. Come out to LA, he says; there's space for one more roommate. Matinee-handsome guys are everywhere, but people with a distinctive look are in demand. "You'd cash in," he says.

My resolve wavers. I start to take a few

PATIENT, ONE ON PBA

was how aspiring actors making ends meet helping medical manner. Actor Charles Monson queries as his own. Should he gun to be the next hot actor morning a miserable 36-year-old earth-science teacher?

local acting roles. In late spring 2002, I hear that the College of Medicine is looking for actors.

MED STUDENTS ARE SMART AND BUSY

My interview for the College of Medicine program takes place at the Medical Education and Biomedical Research Facility. MEBRF is the kind of place that can make a theater major wish he'd gone to med school. The facility is part of a \$125 million renovation of the UI health-care campus and has an expensive air of simultaneous indulgence and efficiency. The foyers and halls are cavernous, and the lobby directory is a computer touchscreen. The cushy theater-style seats in the lecture halls are each equipped with an electrical outlet and Internet jack.

I meet with Ellen Franklin, coordinator of the new Performance Based Assessment program. Ellen is putting together an ensemble of experienced performers who will pretend to be patients. The actors will

learn to reproduce a pre-determined personality and set of symptoms. They will then go to mock appointments with individual medical students. The students will try to diagnose their "patients" correctly, and the actors will evaluate the students on their bedside manner.

"Medical students are very smart," Ellen told me at a more recent interview. "They're good test takers. They learn how to make good use of their time." They don't, however, necessarily learn how to interact with patients. Many working doctors, when asked how their medical education served them well and how it failed them, will say that they have ample scientific knowledge but are less able when it comes to communication. Medical students are busy, so they put most of their energy into learning facts and procedures on which they will be graded. The PBA program is designed to reemphasize interpersonal skills by making them a testable quantity.

BYLINE: CHARLES MONSON
PHOTOS BY MIKE BREAZEALE

Simulated patients are not a new concept at the UI. Women from the community have been hired to stand in for pelvic exams since the 1960s. In the 1970s, medical faculty would occasionally recruit their spouses to feign illness for medical students, and various community members have since filled the role. As a new emphasis on interpersonal skills began to take hold in American medical education, however, UI faculty felt the need to further hone their simulated patient program. They wanted to up the ante in terms of scope and realism. That's where Ellen's 40-strong actors' ensemble comes in.

just another acting job

In some ways, PBA is just like any other

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- ⑦ **Liquid Soul**
Bohemian Soul Tribe
- ⑧ **Roots Stem and Branches**
- ⑬ **East 18**
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Not exactly tearing up the scenery, Charles Monson gets his pressure checked.

acting job. For one thing, there are fleeting moments of fame. The program is extensively publicized, and many of us get our pictures in the newspaper. The *Daily Iowan* runs an enormous front-page photo of me grimacing in feigned agony as a doctor examines me. Even little things like this can bestow slight, temporary notoriety on a person; occasionally people will recognize me in the aisles at the grocery store or while I'm out for a jog. One of my friends thinks that many actors are overcompensating introverts at heart. If so, then this is one of the perks of being in the public eye: It inspires strangers to strike up conversations with you.

PBA has its own special requirements that distinguish it from an ordinary gig, though. Usually one expects a good actor to put his own unique twist on a character, but PBA rehearsals are all about homogenization. Several different actors are trained in each case, and they practice together in order to standardize their performances. If one actor decides to play his character as a

sullen misanthrope who refuses to volunteer information, the medical student who meets with that actor will be at a disadvantage. We are therefore given extensive character writeups that spell out our personalities in great detail.

Rehearsals are used to cultivate accuracy. PBA director Dr. George Bergus has a little book that offers methods for convincingly faking various symptoms. Some involuntary responses, like temperature readings, defy simulation; for these, we simply slip the student a little piece of paper listing the correct result.

During rehearsal, Bergus, or some other medical professional, plays the medical student's part.

Bergus is affable and respectful, but one evening, in a rehearsal for the "Matthew Sibowski" case, he decides to show us how an unprofessional doctor might conduct himself. He breezes into the examination room without knocking. He introduces himself by saying, "Well, Mr. Sibowski, it sounds like you're in bad shape." He listens to Sibowski's problems with the disinterested air of an auto mechanic diagnosing a cracked engine block, then says,

Medical students are busy, so they put most of their energy into learning facts and procedures on which they will be graded. The PBA program is designed to reemphasize interpersonal skills by making them a testable quantity.

"Well, that doesn't sound too good. You should have come in sooner." When Sibowski asks whether lifestyle adjustments might improve the situation, Bergus says, "A little late for that now." In short, he accurately feigns the callous indifference of many real practitioners. This is what PBA is about: keeping UI medical students from developing the insensitivity shared by the worst doctors of Bergus' generation.

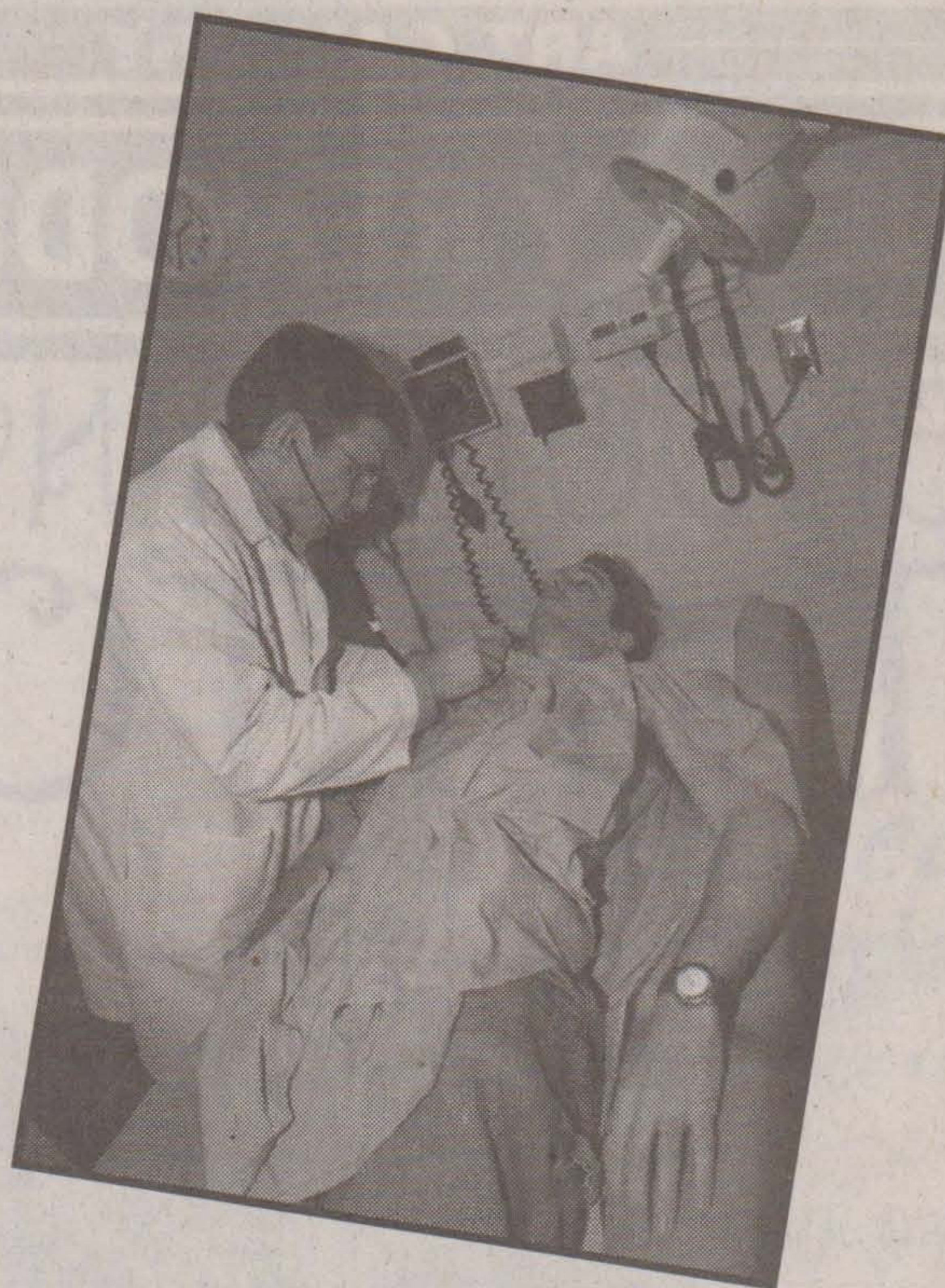
THE VIEW FROM THE RONALD REAGAN TABLE

As is often the case with a large ensemble, many of the PBA actors have worked together before. One of my fellow performers is Robert Wray, who I met when he was a UI graduate student. Robert is a playwright, actor and globetrotter. Before coming to Iowa, he spent seven months in Los Angeles trying to break into the screenwriting business; he hopes his next step will be Juilliard. He recently traveled to Russia to perform in *The Nina Variations*. He was in *Basquiat* and "Days of our Lives." At the moment, he's a cook at Z'Mariks and a creative writing teacher at Lincoln Elementary. (None of us are making a living doing PBA. Exams come only once a month and each yield just five to 10 hours of paid work.)

I arrange a breakfast meeting at the Hamburg Inn so I can interrogate Robert about the theatrical life. We sit at the Ronald Reagan table, and he mentions stopping for gas in Reagan's hometown on his way back from a weeklong residency in Ohio. He orders oatmeal and coffee. When he tries to open the creamer, the top film of paper peels off but the lid stays in place. "This is what it's like being an artist," he says as he scrabbles at the sealed creamer, trying to find another way in.

Robert isn't working three jobs just because of the sluggish economy; this is what his life is usually like. "You don't make a lot of money as a playwright," he says. "Nobody gets into it unless they're insane. Your primary passion is creating worlds, but at the same time you need to pay for typewriter ribbon."

As Robert tells it, the life of an artist seems to be one of brief, exhilarating highs followed by long lulls. Consider his recent trip to Ohio, where he traveled to see one of his plays produced: "They give you \$1,000. They put you up at a nice hotel, give you a reception, treat you like a king—and then it's over and you're at Ronald Reagan's birthplace, begging for a can of gas. It's like a dream, and then it's back to slogging. But that's the life of a playwright for sure. You can get awards and be on



Charles reclines to accommodate Dr. George Bergus' practice examination.

Broadway, but at some point you've got to pay the piper...It's fucking hard. Sometimes I wonder why I put myself through it."

He's talking about writing, of course, but anyone who's ever watched "E! True Hollywood Story" can make the obvious extrapolation to acting: Even hard-won success may vanish overnight. I press Robert further: "Why *do* you put yourself through it?"

"There are some things I have to say that only I have the words for," he replies. "There's an element of salvation to it. I feel like my life has some sort of meaning because of what it is that I do."

Robert started writing poems to God when he was 5 or 6 and hasn't really looked back since. "I had the schizophrenic experience of flunking out of my math class but having my poetry up with green stars. What other recourse does a kid have? A kid like me, anyway? It's the arts or bust."

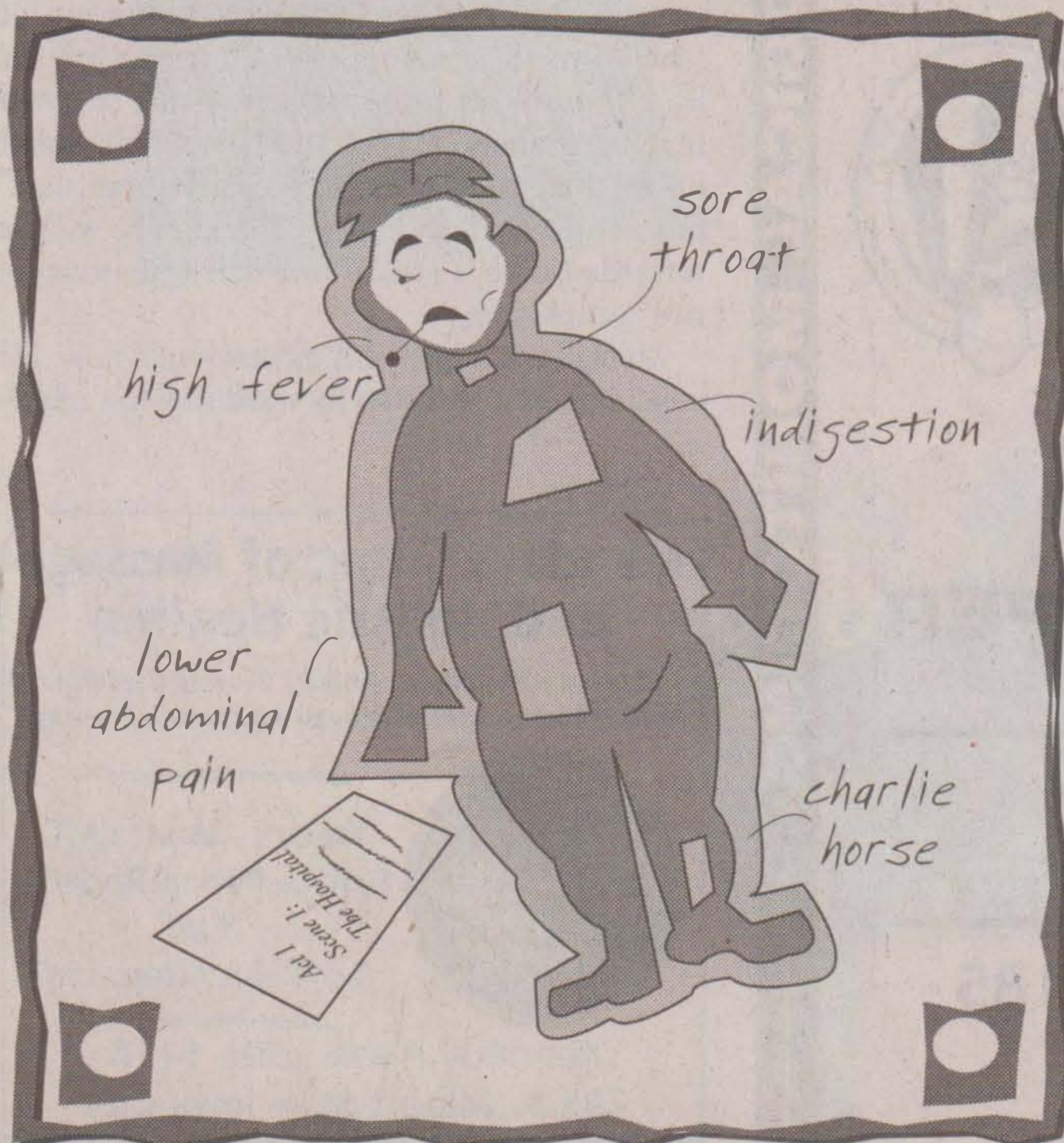
By this point, he's not only managed to open that first creamer, he's gone through four more of them. "It's still the metaphor for the art," he says. "You've got to open it up, as painful as it might be."

DIAGNOSIS: ACADEMIC BULIMIA

Not everyone involved with PBA is following a lifelong dream. Forty-one-year-old medical student Tom McNalley started out as a teacher but grew bored with repeating the same lessons year after year. Medicine offered "something new to learn every day," so at age 36, he started pre-med classes.

"The first two years were very challenging, very mercenary," he tells me. "It's not an aesthetically pleasing mode of learning." McNalley calls it the "binge and purge" method: "You binge as much information as you possibly can, try to regurgitate it on the exam, and then move on to the next exam and hope some of it sticks. From the point of view of being a learner, it's not very satisfactory."

Scholarly satisfaction isn't the only thing he's sacrificed. Third- and fourth-year medical students spend their time rotating through the hospital, doing different clerkships in order to gain basic familiarity with different aspects of medicine. They have little control over their schedules. "I've lost a lot of time with my friends and immediate family," McNalley says. "More poignantly, I've *really* lost touch with my brothers and sisters and my mom. Now I see them every three months



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instead of biweekly or weekly." This situation won't improve anytime soon. According to Bergus, a medical school graduate is only half done with training; s/he still must face a three-to five-year residency in a specialty.

Just like an actor laboring in obscurity, McNalley motivates himself by keeping his ultimate goal in mind. The difference, of course, is that McNalley's career prospects are less tenuous than, say, Robert's: The rate

"It's really a sacred relationship doctors have with their patients. They tell us things that they wouldn't tell anyone else. It's daunting and exhilarating at the same time."

—Tom McNalley,
medical student

of attrition from medical school is less than 5 percent, and, he says, "anyone coming out of [the UI medical school] should have a job for life. If you want to be an orthopedic surgeon in San Francisco, and you absolutely insist upon that, then you may be disappointed," but people with a degree of flexibility will be rewarded with a stable and "fairly remunerative" profession.

McNalley's taken PBA exams twice now. He considers it "a real step forward in what medi-

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cal education can be," although he confesses that some of his "institutionalized" colleagues, who are used to traditional tests, don't like the program much. McNalley seems to appreciate PBA because he's motivated by genuine interest in people. "It's really a sacred relationship doctors have with their patients," he says. "They tell us things that they wouldn't tell anyone else. It's daunting and exhilarating at the same time."

Unfortunately, McNalley says, time crunches and managed care often leave doctors with only six or seven minutes per patient, affording the doctors little time to "sit and be empathic" and leading to common mistakes like "being too brusque, listening poorly, [and] letting interactions be controlled by emotions that are not therapeutic."

One of my acting classes at Iowa included Meisner training, which involves learning to pay careful attention to one's acting partners and to monitor and modulate one's own emotional responses. The PBA medical students are practicing the same set of skills: They are, McNalley says, learning to "be fully present when in the room with a patient. That means facing them, listening carefully...[and] knowing what your emotions are," so you can control them. "I have a copy of an article by [a well-known medical educator]. He says that when undergraduates asked him what class to take outside of the basic science curriculum, he always told them to take acting."

EXAM DAY

Exam day is a one- to three-hour marathon of dozens of performances. Each medical student meets with three different actors, each of whom is presenting a different case. After each encounter, the student writes up a synopsis or talks to a superior, and the actor fills out a form evaluating the student's performance.

A few of the medical students are already amazingly confident and warm in these situations. Others need work—they mumble; or show little empathy, or don't have a good sense of the patients' boundaries. One student rests his nose against my cheek as he checks my pupil dilation. Another unsympathetically blurts out a life-changing diagnosis. One just rolls his eyes and pointedly refuse to take the process seriously.

The students occupying the middle ground—the ones who are neither cynical nor socially gifted—are in the process of trying to develop their professional personas. They must find a balance between sympathy and professionalism, staying involved without being vulnerable or exploitative...and, like other actors, they must stay in character in order to do their jobs correctly. One of my "appointments" is with somebody I used to hang out with, and the unexpected sight of me pretending to be a psych patient seems to shatter his concentration. He conducts a disjointed interview and then, with five minutes left to fill, shrugs his shoulders and says, "I've hit a roadblock." I

continued page 21

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Shania!

America's best-paid lap dancer gets weird—and good

IT DOESN'T GET ANY MORE WEIRDLY CYNICAL, OR CYNICALLY WEIRD, THAN THIS. HERE WE HAVE A trio of albums—one red, one green and one blue—containing the same 19 songs all differently recorded and catering to three target audiences. It's an album tailor-made for a format-driven Clear Channel world. Shania's a rhinestone cowgirl (demographic one, check) and a midriff-baring pop slut (demographic two, check). Demographic three...new age electro-rockin' Bollywood enthusiasts? Judging by the blue disc (green=country, red=pop), she thinks this niche will push her global album sales over the top. In every country but the US and Canada, *Up!* chucks the country disc in favor of a CD that contains an inexplicable musical-cultural pile up of tablas, sitars, flutes, fiddles, electronic beats and, yes, cash registers.

But first, the country disc. No one is going to mistake Shania for Lucinda Williams or any other celebrated deity of "authentic" country. That's not the point. Explaining Shania's appeal, alt-country statesman Steve Earle quipped, "It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure it out. She's America's best-paid lap-dancer." In a post-Madonna, post-feminist age, that might be considered a compliment, but somehow I don't think Mr. Earle meant it that way. Why criticize a musician for trying to be sexy? Elvis tried. So did Jagger. It's kind of a sexist, double standard cheap shot from a balding, bulging, bearded guy who won't be gracing the pages of *Playgirl* anytime soon. The green disc opens with the album's title track, fusing fiddles 'n' mandolins onto a *chuga-chug* rhythm worthy of an ELO outtake. (The song really sparkles and shines on the red disc, where it shows its true colors and becomes a stick-to-the-roof-of-your-brain ELO hit, complete with multi-tracked backing vocals and a candy-coated production.) It's ironic that, as someone who is supposedly a country artist, the green disc is the loser of the bunch—it drags too much and is unconvincing as any sort of roots record.

But, whoa boy!, red rocks. Or, should I say, red "rocks," as I'm not referring to rocking in the Hives sense of the term. The red disc rocks in the same way that ABBA rocks. It's bursting with the kind of giddy pre-fab energy that makes "Take a Chance on Me" and "Dancing Queen" such classic singles, the kind of songs that weathered ridicule and triumphantly emerged to sit proudly atop the pop throne. Don't get me wrong. This is pop music. It's not going to change the world. Nevertheless, pop music's wafting, ephemeral melodies often help pick us up, raise the spirits and help battle life's little indignities and day-to-day interpersonal skirmishes. The red disc's opening one-two punch is secured with song number two, "I'm Gonna Getcha Good!," which features the same kind of unbelievably catchy backing

vocals that only a self-loathing math-rocker could hate (don't hate the playa, hate the game). Speaking of ABBA, Shania jacks the melody of "Dancing Queen" for the chorus of "C'est La Vie," one of the red disc's highlights, a song that works far better as a pop song than as a country song, as you might imagine. All this is not to say that every track on red disc is great. Far from the truth. At 19 songs, *Up!* is overlong and filled with too much, well, filler—especially when we pass the midpoint. Which is where the blue disc comes to the rescue...

The blue disc, on which she turns Dollywood into Bollywood, has to be one of the all-time weirdest pop music catastrophes/works-of-genius I've heard in my years as a music fan and critic. Produced by famed Def Leppard producer Mutt Lange in Mumbai, India, the album's liner notes list the following instruments: drum machine, tabla, dholak, keyboards, star, bouzouki, tumbi, flute, harmonium, violin, mandolin and santoor. If you told me 15 years ago that a country star would record a "worldbeat" album in India with Def Leppard's producer, whom she married, I would have told you that was about as likely as scum-rockers the Butthole Surfers having a hit single. But the Butthole Surfers *did* have

a Top 40 hit, "Pepper," officially qualifying them as one-hit wonders and allowing them to join the ranks of Haircut 100, Toni Basil and Right Said Fred. It's a weird, wonderful and scary world.

To enhance Shania's newly found worldbeat cred, on the CD art she even dons a faux-Indian/hippie-chick dress—and on her forehead, what's this? A bindi! The title track is once again transformed into, well, it's kinda hard to describe with a straight face. Opening with a sitar riff straight outta a Ravi Shankar record, this is ELO-goes-to-Bollywood, via Nashville. Don't let my ironic tone mislead you. It's abso-fucking-lutely brilliant. "When You Kiss Me" mutates from a slow, slightly boring ballad into an uptempo dance ditty with synths, strings, tabla breakbeats and a vaguely Middle-Eastern melody. It's Wal-Mart worldbeat, where Shania tosses exotic sounds in the shopping cart, kind of like a trailer park Peter Gabriel or Paul Simon. We get the same upward gear shifting on "Nah!," wherein the green disc's lumbering, boombastic pour-some-sugar-on-me drums accelerate to inspire dance fever. Each blue song retains the same vocal melody, but not much else, and in doing so, she pumps life into some of the duller shades of red and green. Individually, all three discs are hit-and-miss, but if you mix-and-match, *Up!* is an almost perfect pure pop album, despite (or perhaps because of) its creepy focus group-inspired origins. You know the old saying. There's art, there's commerce, and never the Twain shall meet... except on my own private CD-R compilation. LV

It's Wal-Mart worldbeat, where Shania tosses exotic sounds in the shopping cart, kind of like a trailer park Peter Gabriel or Paul Simon.

CD Reviews

Alto Heceta *This Distance This Weekend* Synaptic Tactic Records

The debut full-length from Iowa City band Alto Heceta recalls the Chicago band Seam in their heyday. Seam inspired such still-touring acts as Toulouse and their ilk—the not-quite-pop, not-quite-grungy soar, crunch and mumble rock that has established itself a seemingly permanent niche in the Indie Rock pantheon. Alto Heceta is a respectable exemplar of this somewhat emotionally stunted genre. But don't expect any more from them in their current incarnation. Seems the boys are parting ways, although Matt Heideman will still play with Burn Disco Burn and Matt and Dino Balocci will continue with Racecar Radar.

As for the current effort, Heideman, Balocci, Adam Penly and Tim Borkowsky have put together a musically tight ensemble. The rhythm section particularly stands out: The nimble interplay of drums and bass keeps mid-tempo tracks from drowning in maudlin excess ("wistful" is too optimistic an adjective for the overall mood—the ungenerous might say "sad-sack") and gives the upbeat numbers real sparkle. The vocals have a sort of Radiohead/Starsailor aspiration but don't quite make it; that's OK by me, but I wouldn't mind a little more expressive range. The guitar alternates between wobbly arpeggios and distortion wash—again, respectable but not all that alluring. The band sets itself apart on beautiful, dreamy numbers like the title track, with its vocal harmonies and soaring chorus. To roast an old chestnut, God gave us Indie Rock, but I'm not so sure He intended everyone to be a rigid fundamentalist.



Margaret Schwartz

The Skunk River Bandits *This is Not What I Ordered* Self-Released

If The Skunk River Bandits weren't from Iowa City, you'd swear they were from some backwoods place down south. The group embodies the positive qualities of redneck rock as the members sing and play catchy tunes about whiskey, women, cigarettes and whiskey in a ragged but right way. There's a manliness about the music that evokes cheap alcohol, rusty pick-up trucks, red plaid flannel shirts and cheap alcohol.

The foursome (Jason Berge, Ofer Sivan, Torrey Johnson and Joe Nichols) create soundscapes that are simultaneously bluesy and happy, like the way you feel when you're one drink over the limit. You know you shouldn't have had that one last shot, but, boy, it feels so good to know you're no longer quite in control. On songs like "Saving Grace," "Todd's Prayer," "Solitary Drinker," "If Whiskey Were a Woman," and others, the prevailing sentiment could be described as pissing in the wind. The music is exhilaratingly stolid and blissful, even though you kind of realize that your fingers are getting wet.

Nichols (bass) and Johnson (drums) do a good job of propelling the music forward while Berge's guitar and vocals and Sivan's keyboards dance in the forefront. On songs like "Borrowed Time" and the title cut, the band gets into a serious groove that sounds like it will never end. And the unnamed instrumental bonus track that ends the disc, tempts you to stick it on repeat and honky tonk the night away. The Skunk River Bandits take their name from an Iowa waterway that sometimes floods and spills over its banks. The same could be said about the group's music; mostly it flows, but there is always the threat that it's going to go outside the boundaries and take you on an unexpected journey where anything might happen.



Steve Horowitz

While we may not make a habit of having local musicians review the work of other local musicians, we were intrigued when Sam Knutson offered to send us his review of Tom Jessen's new CD, Night. For the record, we agree that Jessen's CD is one of the best local releases of last year (maybe surpassed only by Knutson's own jelly-boned hoe-down, Gone).

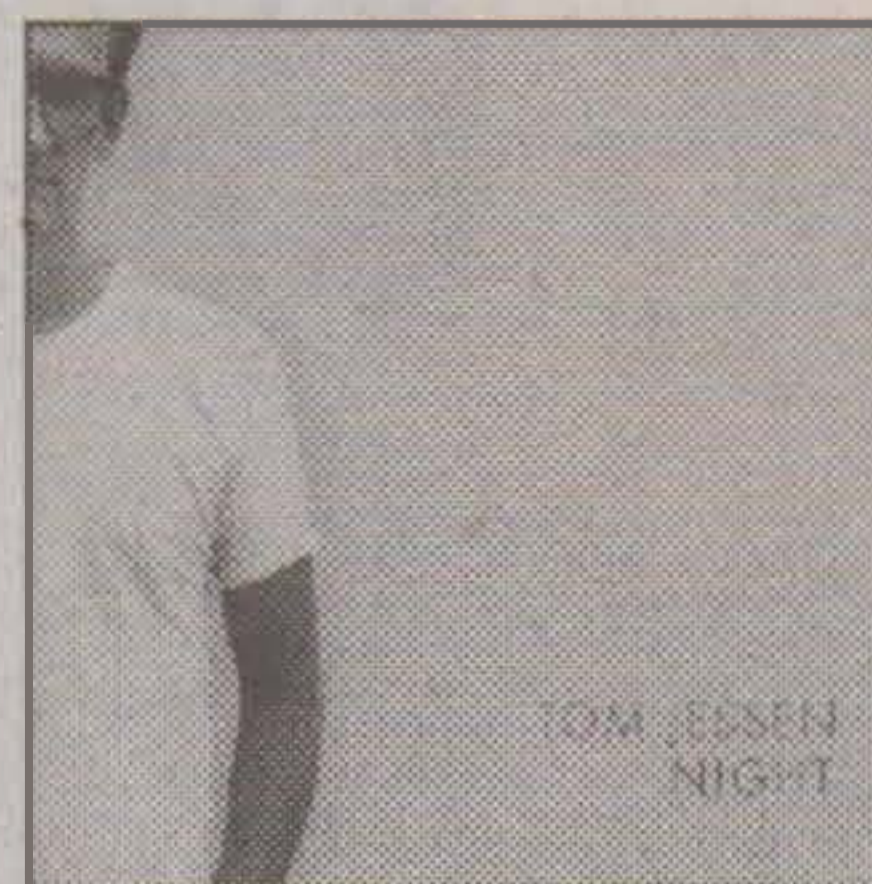
Tom Jessen *Night* East Elm Records

Renowned local musical genius, Tom Jessen came around to the Mill and I chased him out to his car after the show to score an advance copy of a disc I'd been bugging him about for months: "Is it done yet? Is it done yet, Tom?" It's been in a few stores for months now, but that night I wrote this while I sat with my last beer and listened.

Dramatic, barrel chested and swooping arranged, Tom follows 1996's *Redemption* (which blew its local contemporaries out of the Americana water) with a fucking winner, drenched in strings, horns and Nathan Basinger's distinct organ and accordion work. *Night* recalls an array of influences far too broad to list, and nothing that came before it. It cuts turf.

Fearless, ethereal, bent on the earthly goods we all wade in, troubled with the grocery store regularity that is us, universal and personal—it's Tom being Tom, but it gets you, poetically like an artistic (and I mean it) picture of a naked girl you can't take your eyes off. Not porn—art, art.

Having seen Tom play some of these gems in acoustic sets, I was juiced to hear them fleshed-out, spell-bound and studiofied to a perfection that could only wear Jessen's own moniker. Self-produced in a new PZM Studios headed up by local recording giants Patrick Brickel, who engineered the recording, and John Svec, who mastered it, *Night* is a triumph and a must-have.



Sam Knutson

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LIST

Calendar listings are free, on a space-available basis. Mail entries to Little Village, P.O. Box 736, Iowa City, Iowa 52244 or email little-village@usa.net

The Letterpress Opry CD release party

The Yacht Club • Saturday, Feb. 8

The Mayflies of Johnson County's first release, *Sycamore Tree*, showcased the band's ability to create dark and brooding Americana-style music. Their story songs' eclectic lyrics conveyed a haunted past of lost love, death and the afterlife, where croaking birds, blooming flowers and buzzing insects operate as sinister omens, and something strange and wicked is always just around the corner. Combined with



the pulsating mix of Patrick Brickel's bass and James Robinson's drums, Annie Savage's swirling fiddle and Stacy Webster's clanging

guitar, the music transcended any particular genre and would go from country blues to Celtic-flavored swing to an almost heavy-metal thunder, often on the same tune.

After a short hiatus (the two married members, Savage and Webster, recently had a baby), the band is back, and with a new name, The Letterpress Opry. The group originally changed its name from just *Mayflies* to *The Mayflies of Johnson County* in order to appease another band in North Carolina with the same name. But the similar names still confused booking agents and record stores so the band decided to invent a new one. The Letterpress Opry has a new disc out soon, called *Americana Gothic*, and will no doubt be playing songs from it this month at two shows. The first will be Friday, Feb. 7, from 10 to 11am at the downtown Java House as part of the Iowa Talks radio program. (If you can't make it there, just turn on 910-AM and listen.) The following night the band will put on a full-length show at the newly refurbished Yacht Club to celebrate the new CD release. Since they haven't gigged live for a while, the Letterpress Opry should be ready to kick out the jams. Tom Jessen will open the show, which promises to make the night even sweeter. 13 South Linn Street, Iowa City.

Steve Horowitz

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Song Swap

The Mill • Sunday, Feb. 2

A show featuring a fat chunk of Eastern Iowa's finest songwriting talent performing each others' songs. The night will include performances by Tom Jessen, Ben Eaton, Dave Olson, Ben Schmidt, Kelly Pardekooper, Becca Sutlive, Mike and



Amy Finders, Sam Knutson and Andy Flemming (from Brother Trucker). Should be interesting to see how these guys interpret each others' songs. If they're taking requests, we'd like to hear Amy sing Tom's "No Place Unlike Home." 7pm. 120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City, 351-9529.

ART

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4 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 351-1227

Recent Work: *Ceramics By Posey Bacopoulos*, work by this New York City potter, February 7-28; opening reception Feb. 7, 5-7pm.

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

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

Charles Biederman: *A Retrospective Exhibition*, through March 16 • *From Dürer to Blake: Images of War & Peace from the Collection*, through June 8 • *What's so Funny?: Art with Humor*, through Sept. 28. (See Words listing for more)

Coe College

Marvin Cone and Eaton-Buchan galleries, 1220 First Ave. NE, Cedar Rapids, 399-399-8647

Third Grade Clay, through Feb. 14 • Larry Fink, photography, Feb. 28-March 21; opening reception Feb. 28, 5-7pm.

CSPS

1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580

Units, new sculpture by Katey Carr, Israel Davis, Lance Edmonds, Brian Harper, Josh Krahn, David Marquez, Colin McDonald, Nnenna Okore, and Calvin Spinka, through March 2; artists reception Feb 21, 5-7pm • *Illuminated Landscapes*, scenes of Western Ireland by New York photographer Bill Jordan, through March 2.

Falconer Gallery

Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell, 641-269-4660

Layers of Brazilian Art/Camadas da Arte Brasileira, contemporary art from Brazil Jan. 31-April 13; opening reception Jan. 31, 5-7pm. (See Words listing for more)

Hudson River Gallery

538 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 358-8488

John Badger, abstract expressionist watercolors, through February • Diolanda Barrera, foil prints, through February.

Lorenz Boot Shop

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

Authentic Spaces, photography by Robert Fox; *A Bee's Eye View*, paintings by Cathmar Prang; *Range of Motion*, photography and drawing by David Trawick; *Student Viewpoints*, work by UI art student Karlee Morehead.

Northside Books

203 N. Linn St., Iowa City, 466-9330

Graven Image, recent works by Iowa City artist John Coyne.

Senior Center

Old Post Office Gallery, 28 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5220

Wonder World, watercolors by Mary W. Wall, through March 2.

UI Hospitals and Clinics

Project Art of UIHC, Iowa City, 353-6417

Watercolors by Davenport artist Don Muller, through February, Boyd Towers West • Oil paintings by Iowa City artist Gianna Commito, through April, Patient and Visitor Activities Center, eighth floor John Colloton Pavilion • Impressionistic oil and acrylic paintings by Iowa City artist Suzy Maktabi, through May, Boyd Tower East • Paintings by Iowa City artist Jered Sprecher, through May, Pomerantz Family Pavilion, fifth floor Dentistry.

UI Museum of Art

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

READ Zine-Making Party, Feb. 20, 7:30pm • *Spatial Intersections*, intermedia event, Feb. 27, 7:30pm • *Pioneers on Paper: Works by Women from the Collection*,

through Feb. 23 • *Top 40! The Stoner Collection of 20th Century Sculptors' Drawings*, exhibition of 40 works from the private collection of former Iowans and radio station moguls Tom and Kitty Stoner, inspired by the concept of a radio play list, the show features 40 drawings by 40 European and American sculptors of the past 100 years, through Feb. 23 • *The Cultured Body: African Body Adornments*, ongoing. (See Words listing for more)

MUSIC

Adagio

325 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 339-4811

Jazz Brunch every Sunday with Saul Lubaroff Duo, 11am-2pm.

Clapp Recital Hall

University of Iowa campus, Iowa City, 335-1160

Craig Kramer, organ, Jan. 31, 8pm • Electronic Music Studios, Feb 2, 8pm • Maia Quartet, Feb. 7, 8pm • Stephen Swanson, baritone; Mark Weiger, oboe; Delbert Disselhorst, organ; and Maia Quartet, Feb. 9, 3pm • Honors Choir, Feb. 10, 7pm • Piano Festival: Daniel Shapiro, piano, Feb. 13, 8pm • Piano Festival: Alvin Chow and Angela Cheng, Feb. 16, 3pm • Annette-Barbara Vogel, violin; Aaron Janse, viola; Joel Becktell, cello; and Hikari Nakamura, piano, Feb. 16, 8pm • William Street, saxophone, and Roger Admiral, piano, Feb. 18, 8pm • David Finckel, cello, and Wu Han, piano, Feb. 19, 8pm • John Chappell Stowe, organ, Feb. 21, 8pm • Center for New Music, Feb. 23, 8pm • Christine Rutledge, viola, Feb. 24, 8pm • Iowa Woodwind Quintet, Feb. 27, 8pm.

CSPS

1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580

8pm unless noted otherwise

Ferron, Tret Fure, Jan. 31 • Mark Erelli, Feb. 4 • Nerissa & Katryna Nields, Feb. 7 • Jess Klein, Feb 9, 7pm • Ruthie Foster, Cyd Cassone, Feb 11 • Songwriter and spoken word artist Evalyn Parry, Feb. 20.

First Presbyterian Church

2701 Rochester Ave., Iowa City

Musick's Feast, "An Evening with Music Ala Carte," Feb. 8, 8pm.

Gabe's

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

Nefesh, Jan. 31 • DJ Alert, OJ Mishuggah, Jethro, Justone, Feb. 1 • Dead to Fall, Preacher Gone to Texas, Provoke, Last American Virgin, Feb. 3 • Coheed and Cambria, One Line Drawing, Hopesfall, Code Seven, Feb. 4 • Nad Navillus, Rabbit Rabbit, Feb. 5 • Filmmaker benefit, Lucky James, deathships, My Business Failed in Three Weeks, Jack O'Wilder, Serrated Blades, Feb. 6 • Bent Scepters, The Goldstars, Feb. 7 • The Frogs, Feb. 8 • Roger Miret and The Disasters, Feb. 11 • Tim Easton, Feb. 12 • Ten Grand, Little Joe Gould, Feb. 13 • Human Aftertaste, Feb. 15 • Rise Against, Feb. 16 • Luther Wright and the Wrongs, Feb. 19 • Bob Log III, The Horrors, Feb. 20 • Destrophy, Feb. 22 • Sage Francis, Gruvis Malt, The Bad Fathers, Feb. 24 • Jucifer, Feb. 27 • Manplanet, Feb. 28.

The Green Room

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

Blues Jam Mondays, Jazz Jam Tuesdays

Winegarden, Saraphine, Feb. 1 • Lotus, Protostarr, Feb. 2 • Family Groove Company, Band for Life, Chasers, Feb. 6 • Liquid Soul, Bohemian Soul Tribe, Feb. 7 • Roots Stem and Branches, Feb. 8 • East 18, Swizzle Tree, Grasshopper Takeover, Feb. 13 • Burn Disco Burn, Nolan, The Stumblebums, The Cool People, Feb. 14 • Skunk River Bandits, Mr. Baber's Neighbor Solar String Band, Feb. 15 • Three Times Bain, Feb. 20 • Clean Livin', The Absurd, Feb. 21 • Oswah Greggori and the Enforcers, Filling Space, Feb. 22.

Hancher Auditorium

UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160

Jazz diva Dianne Reeves, Feb. 1, 8pm • Symphony Band, Feb. 15, 8pm • Honor Band, Feb. 16, 2:30pm • University Symphony, Feb. 26, 8pm • Joshua Bell, violin, Feb. 28, 8pm.

Iowa Memorial Union

UI campus, Iowa City

Indigo Girls, Kim Richey, Feb. 3, Main Lounge • OK Go, Rooney, The Donnass, Feb. 17, Wheelroom.

The Java House

211 E. Washington St., 341-0012

KSUI's "Iowa Talks Live from the Java House," Fridays, 10am

The Letterpress Opry, Feb. 7.

The Marketplace

511 P St., South Amana, 622-3750

All 7:30-11:30pm

Molly Hammer, Jan. 31 • Merrill J. Miller, Feb. 1 • Mad River Band, Feb. 7 • Bryce Janey, Feb. 8 • Scott and Michelle Dalziel, Feb. 14 • Kevin BF Burt, Feb. 15 • Open Mic with Kimberlie Lambert, Feb. 20 • Dave Olson, Feb. 21 • Jasmine, Feb. 22 • Bob Heller, Feb. 28.

Martini's

127 E. College St., Iowa City, 358-2833

Shows at 9:30pm

Kelly Pardekooper, Jan. 31.

The Mill

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

Friends of Old Time Music acoustic jam session Tuesdays, 9pm; all shows 9pm unless otherwise noted

Lojo Russo, Kimberli Lambert, Feb. 1 • Song Swap with Ben Eaton, Becca Sutlive, Kelly Pardekooper, Tom Jessen, Andy Flemming, Sam Knutson, Mike and Amy Finders, Dave Olson, Ben Schmidt, Feb. 2, 7pm • Nikki Lunden, Feb. 6 • Ben Schmidt Trio, Feb. 8 • The Horrors, Lucky James, Feb. 13 • Dennis McMurrin and the Demolition Band, Feb. 14 • Dave Zollo and the Body Electric, Feb. 15 • Sweethearts Serenade with Mike and Amy Finders, Joe and Colleen Peterson, Bob and Kristi Black, Al and Aleta Murphy, Stacy Webster and Annie Savage, Feb. 16, 7pm • Maggie Drennan Band, Feb. 19 • Bohemian Soul Tribe, Feb. 21 • Wylde Nept, Feb. 22 • Alastair Mook and Bob Hillman, Feb. 23, 7pm • Greg Brown, Feb. 27, 7pm • Big Wooden Radio, Feb. 28.

Northside Books

203 N. Linn St., Iowa City, 466-9330

Tunesmith, original acoustic folk-jazz-blues, Frank Eischens (guitar) and Kathy Ruestow (vocals), Feb. 7, 6pm • Matt Maybanks and Jeremy Hay (of Greener), acoustic funk jam, Feb. 23, 2pm.

Old Brick

26 E. Market St., Iowa City, 351-2626

Low, Feb. 26, 4-8pm.

Paramount Theatre

123 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888

Broadway Maybies, Jan. 31, 7pm • Metropolitan Orchestra Festival, Feb. 1, 7:30pm • Cedar Rapids Symphony, Serenata and Scheherazade, Catron Finch, harp, Feb. 15, 8pm, 366-8203.

Scattergood Friends School

1951 Delta Ave., West Branch, 643-7600

Barn dance, begins at 8pm

Barn Owl Band; Martha Tyner, caller, Feb. 21.

Sanctuary

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

Jazz Jam, Thursdays

David Huckfelt and Ben Ramsey, Feb. 1 • Matt Berneman Trio, Feb. 7 • GIZMO, Feb. 8 • Saul Lubaroff, Feb. 14 • Birth, Feb. 18 • Dead Cat Bounce, Feb. 19 • Guaranteed Swahili, Feb. 20 • Dave Moore, Feb. 21 • Paul Geremia, Feb.



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27 • Dave Moore, Feb. 28.

UI Hospitals and Clinics

Project Art of UIHC, Iowa City, 353-6417

John Colloton Pavilion Atrium, 12:15-1pm (unless noted otherwise)

The Spectacles (UIHC's Ophthalmology Singing Quartet), Feb. 7 • Gary Nassif sings a collection of classic favorites with Dick Watson on piano, Feb. 11, 12-1pm • David Finckel, cello, and Wu Han, piano, Feb. 17, 12:30-1:15pm • Waco High School Choir performs movie melodies, Feb. 25, 11:45-12:15pm.

UI Museum of Art

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

Diane Kenney-Handler, soprano, and Tek Winesberry, piano, jazz standards, Feb. 7, 7:30pm • KSUI Know the Score LIVE!, Feb. 14, 5-7pm.

Uptown Bill's small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 339-0401

The Unsung Forum, open mic for songwriters, Feb. 6, 8-10pm • Mark Erelli, Boston folkie, Feb. 3, 7-9pm.

US Cellular Center

370 First Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888

Toby Keith, Rascal Flatts, Feb. 28, 7:30pm.

Voxman Music Bldg.

UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1603

Institute for Sacred Music 2003, Feb. 20, 1-7:30pm, Feb. 21-22, 9:30am-12pm, registration required, 335-1630 • American Handel Festival 2003, Feb. 28, 8am-5:30pm; through March 2, registration required, 335-4141.

Yacht Club

13 South Linn St., Iowa City, Iowa City

The Diplomats of Solid Sound, Jan. 31 • Dennis McMurrin and the Demolition Band, Feb. 1 • Brother Trucker, Feb. 6 • Kelly Pardekooper, Feb. 7 • The Letterpress Opry, CD-release party; Tom Jessen, Feb. 8 • Shane Johnson's Blue Train, Feb. 13 • Pieta Brown and the Sweethearts, with Bo Ramsey, Feb. 14 • Clean Livin', Feb. 15 • Johnny Kilowatt, Feb. 21 • John Resch and the Detroit Blues, Feb. 22 • Skunk River Bandits, Feb. 27 • The Instigators, Feb. 28.

DANCE

Arts a la Carte

20 E. Market St., Iowa City, 354-1526

Iowa City Dance Jam, dance to eclectic music, second and fourth Fridays, 8pm-12am, 354-5814 for more info • Salsa Breaks, Tuesdays, 10pm-12am.

The Mill

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

Salaam Dance, Feb. 7, 9pm.

Scattergood Friends School

1951 Delta Ave., West Branch, 643-7600

Barn dance, begins at 8pm
Barn Owl Band; Martha Tyner, caller, Feb. 21.

Space/Place Theater

North Hall, UI campus, Iowa City

Dance Faculty Concert, Feb. 6-8, 8pm • Dancers In Company, Feb. 27-28, March 1, 8pm.

**THEATER/
PERFORMANCE**

CSPS

1103 third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580

Manny and Chicken, by Iowa's Lisa Schlesinger, presented by Atlanta's Pushpush Theatre, Feb. 27-March 1.

Iowa City Community Theater

Exhibition Hall, Johnson County Fairgrounds, Iowa City, 338-0443

Fri. & Sat. 8pm; Sun. 2:30pm

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turn to pg. 10

SK8★SK8★SK8

Award-winning musical from 1962, Feb. 20-March 16.

Owl Glass Puppetry Center

319 N. Calhoun, West Liberty, 627-248

Puppets and Pastries Dessert Theatre for Adults, vignettes by Eulenspiegel Puppets, music by Drabbletails Fancy, fund-raiser for Owl Glass Outreach programming, Feb. 15, 8pm; Feb. 16, 2pm.

Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 338-7672

Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 2pm
Proof, Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning play by David Auburn examining the complex interplay of a father in decline and a daughter struggling for survival, through Feb. 16.

Theatre Cedar Rapids

102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8592

Over the River and Through the Woods, comedy by Joe DiPietro about two sets of colorful grandparents determined to keep their grandson, Nick, from moving cross-country for a new job, Jan. 31, Feb. 7-8, 13-15, 7:30pm; Feb. 1, 9 & 16, 2:30pm.

UI Theatre

Theatre Bldg., UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160

A Streetcar Named Desire, by Tennessee Williams, University Theatres Mainstage production, Feb. 13-15, 20-22, 8pm; Feb. 16 & 23, 3pm, E.C. Mabie Theatre • *Flying Lessons*, by Lisa Day, University Theatres Gallery production, Feb. 21-22, 8pm; Feb. 23, 3pm, Theatre B • *Uncontrollable Mystery*, by W.B. Yeats, Mainstage production, Feb. 27-28, 8pm, through March 9, David Thayer Theatre.

AUDITIONS/CALLS/ OPPORTUNITIES

Uptown Bill's small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 339-0401

Volunteers needed to help administer Uptown Bill's Small Mall, an employment project for persons with disabilities; areas of need include fund-raising, communications, volunteer coordination, and coffeeshop management.

An acoustic guitar in a hard case is now on silent auction to benefit Shelter House (formerly EHP, Emergency Housing Project), and may be seen at Northside Books, 203 N. Linn St., Iowa City, 466-9330, bidding ends at noon, Feb. 13.

WORDS

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

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

"Looking at Prints: Process and Product," gallery talk with Charles Helsell, Feb. 5, 12-1pm • Family Fun Day, activities and tours, Feb. 8, 1-3pm • "The ABC's of Constructivism: the Birth of Kindergarten and its Influence on Geometric and Abstract Art," slide lecture with Roy Behrens, Feb. 20, 6-7pm.

CSPS

1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580

8pm unless noted otherwise

Songwriter and spoken word artist Evalyn Parry, Feb. 20.

Faulconer Gallery

Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell, 641-269-4660

Artist Talk by Ana Maria Tavares, installation artist from São Paulo, Brazil, Feb. 2, 2:15pm • "A Conversation on Brazilian Art," with Lesley Wright, director, Faulconer Gallery, and Donald B. Doe, lecturer in art, Grinnell College, Feb. 6, 4:15pm • "From Mucamas to Mulatas: Gender, Race and Sexuality in Brazil," with Maria José Barbosa, associate professor, department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Iowa, Feb. 27, 4:15pm • Guided tours of *Layers of Brazilian Art* every Sunday, 2:15pm.

The Green Room

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

Poetry Slam, Feb. 5 & 19, 9pm.

IC Public Library

123 Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

"Dwarf Conifers in the Home Landscape," Glenn Harold, professor of Horticulture at Illinois Central College, Feb. 9, 2pm.

The Mill

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

Talk/Art/Cabaret, Feb. 12 & 26, 9pm.

Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City (unless otherwise noted), 337-2681

All 8pm (unless otherwise noted)

Broadcast live on WSUI (unless otherwise noted)

Betsy Brown, reads from her first collection of poems, *Year of Morphines*, Feb. 6 • UI Workshop grad Lewis Robinson Workshop reads from his new story collection, *Officer Friendly and Other Stories*; UI Workshop grad Aaron McCollough reads from his book of poetry, *Welkin*, Feb. 7 • Cartoonists and social critics Joe Sharpnack and Andy Singer present a show of their work from the best-selling book, *Attitude*, no radio, Feb. 8, 5pm • South African novelist Etienne Van Heerden reads from *The Long Silence of Mario Salviati*, Feb. 12 • Paula Morris, the current Glenn Schaeffer Fellow at the Writers' Workshop, reads from her novel, *Queen of Beauty*, Feb. 14 • Marvin Bell, Feb. 25 • Sanjay Nigam reads from her second novel, *Transplanted Man*, Feb. 27 • UI Workshop grad Nick Arvin reads from his first collection of stories, *In the Electric Eden*, Feb. 28.

UI Art Building

UI campus, Iowa City

Sculptor Paul Chaleff lectures on his work, Feb. 5, 8pm, Room E109 • David Carrier, Champney Family Professor at Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Institute of Art, speaks on "The Art Museum," Feb. 6, 8pm, Room E109.

UI Museum of Art

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

KSUI Know the Score LIVE!, Feb. 14, 5-7pm • Guided tours of *Top 40! The Stoner Collection of 20th Century Sculptors' Drawings*, Feb. 9 & 23, 2pm.

Voxman Music Bldg.

UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1603

"Handel meets Nero: Hamburg, Venice and Imperial Rome," Wendy Heller, speaker, part of American Handel Festival 2003 (see listing under *Music*), Feb. 27, 7:30pm, Harper Hall.

Women's Resource and Action Center

130 N. Madison St., Iowa City, 335-1486

Discussion groups: Facing Discrimination Post 9/11, Sundays 6-7:30pm, starts Feb. 2, pre-registration required; The Gender Puzzle, people of any gender identity and sexual orientation encouraged to join, Mondays 7-9pm, starts Feb. 3, pre-registration required; Dealing with Divorce: Healing and Finding Personal Power, drop-in support group, Tuesdays 7-8:30pm, starts Feb. 4; Lesbian Reading Group, semester-long discussion group designed to give lesbian women an opportunity to learn from one another and build a sense of community, third Thursday of each month, 7:30-9pm; Recovering from Abuse: Rebuilding Your Life, eight-week support group, Tuesdays 6:30-8pm, starts Feb. 11; Single Hip Mamas Group, drop-in support group, Mondays 5:30-7pm; Transitions—Transgender Support Group, six-week support group, Tuesdays 7-8:30pm, starts Feb. 11, pre-registration required; Whites for Racial Equality Discussion Group, six-week group, Wednesdays 7-8:30pm, starts Feb. 19, open to both men and women.

Zion Lutheran Church

310 N. Johnson St., Iowa City, 338-0944

"Judaism in the 21st Century," by Gerald Sorokin, director of the Aliber/Hillel Jewish Center for Students at the University of Iowa, Feb. 16, 2-4pm.



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NATURE

Kent Park

Rural Oxford (Highway 6 west of Tiffin), 645-2315

Ice Fishing Event, limited amount of equipment available, registration required, Feb. 15, 12pm • Beekeeping, with David Irvin, East Central Iowa Beekeepers, Feb. 15, 1-3pm, registration required • Winter survival skills program, with County Naturalist Brad Freidhof, Feb. 8, 1:30-3pm, registration required.

Johnson County Administration Building
913 South Dubuque St., Iowa City, 645-2315

Wildlife diversity display, through Feb. 11.

EVENTS

Ruby's Pearl

Anniversary Celebration

323 East Market St., Iowa City, 248-0032

Anniversary Party, Feb. 7, 12-7pm • Erotic Reading, Feb. 8, 5pm to close • Artist show, R. Elschlager, Feb. 10, 6pm to close • Sex Toy Workshop, Feb. 13, 4pm to close (\$2 suggested donation for workshop participants).

MISC.

Mercer Aquatic Center/Scanlon Gymnasium

Iowa City, 356-5109

5th-6th Grade Swim, Pizza, and Dance Party, February 7, 6:30-9pm.

New Pioneer Co-op & Bakehouse

City Center Square, Hwy. 6 West, Coralville,
358-5513

Discerning Palate Game, distinguish organic carrots from non-organic, peanut butter from almond butter ... benefits the Table to Table food rescue project, Feb. 9, 1pm, call Theresa at 338-9441 to register.

Paramount Theatre

123 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids.

Chinese Golden Dragon Acrobats, February 11, 7:30pm, 363-6254.

CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

Owl Glass Puppetry Center

319 N. Calhoun, West Liberty, 627-248

"Animated Object Theatre—A Workshop for Adults," Feb. 22-23, 9:30am-5:30pm.

Voxman Music Bldg.

UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1603

Master class: Daniel Shapiro, piano, Feb. 12, 2:30pm, Harper Hall • Master class: David Finckel and Wu Han, Feb. 18, 12:30pm, Harper Hall.

KIDS

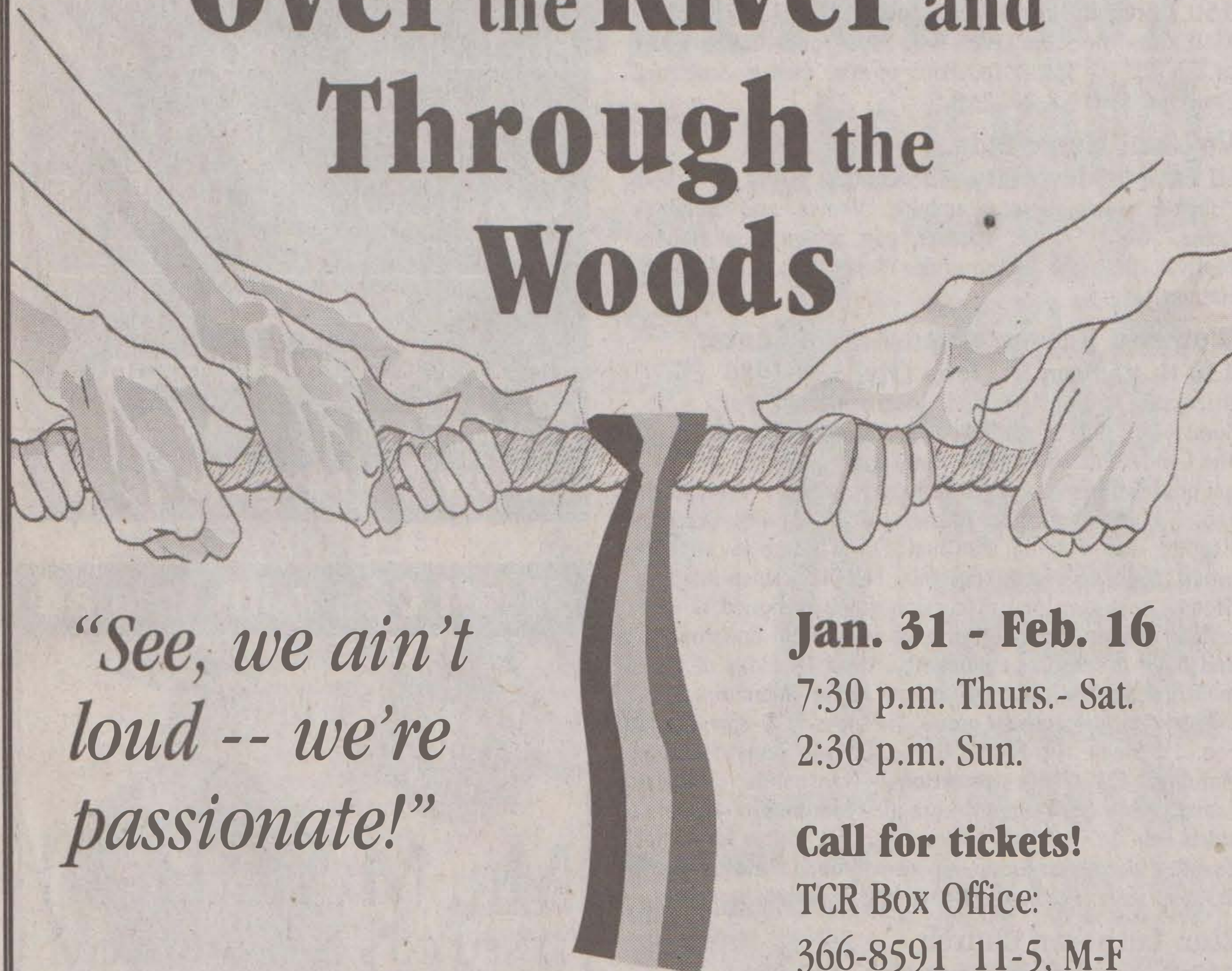
IC Public Library

123 Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200

The Frosty Fun Festival, stories, puppet show, crafts and games, Feb. 15, 10:30am-1pm, Westgate Story Room & Meeting Room A • Preschool Pet Parade, with Misha Goodman and animals from the IC Animal Care Center, Feb. 6, 10:30am, Meeting Room A • Preschool "Popo & Dave" Puppet Show, Feb. 13, 10:30am, Meeting Room A • Preschool Music & Storytelling, with Deanne Wortman and Tom Nothnagle, Feb. 27, 10:30am, Westgate Story Room.

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continued from page 13

make a note on his evaluation saying that the graders should go easy on him.

In between exams, the actors socialize. There are a wide variety of people on the payroll—professionals, students, retirees—and I find that I can read their career progress from their behavior. The ones who are still safely in school are comfortable and confident, but the recent graduates look a little haggard. They're treading water in jobs that aren't going anywhere and wondering when they're going to get to move on to better things. The people who've been pursuing acting careers for some time seem less disquieted. They're made peace with their gently sloping career trajectories. One woman tells me she's just auditioned against 600 other people for one of the 14 spots in UI's graduate theater program, and she speaks blithely of trying again in another three years if it doesn't work out this time around.

The people who strike me as happiest are the Community Theater crowd, who usually sit together and who all seem to know one another extremely well. I never hear any of them talk about moving to New York or getting an agent. As far as I can tell, they see theater as a hobby and a social venue, and they are calmer for it. I can't bring myself to actually ask any of them whether they have professional aspirations, though. It pleases me to think of them as contented pragmatists, and I do not wish to be disabused of this notion.

CASHING OUT OF THE GAME

During the seventh or eighth performance of my Summer Rep show, something changed for me. It was the last scene, and I was tied to a

chair, my head lolled back, playing unconscious while I waited for one of my fellow performers to "wake me up" by throwing a pot of soup stock on me. Ordinarily, the cold liquid gave me a little adrenaline rush, which helped me spring to life and finish the scene...but that day, I was tired, and the scene was dragging, and my neck was aching. When the soup hit me, I had a split-second awareness of myself sitting there, soaked, trussed, smelling of broth and festooned with little bits of carrot and celery, and my future flashed before my eyes: endless auditions, endless rehearsals and evening shows and matinees, and the permanent, perpetual obligation to be "on." You can't *be* tired any more, I said to myself. You don't have the luxury. This is your *job*. Suddenly I realized that I was going to have to work for a living after all.

Of course, everyone has to give up something for their career. Bergus' ever-present beeper is a reminder that many of the medical students are also signing up for a lifetime of obligation; the difference is that their benefits package is a lot more generous than the average actor's. I can give up my fame-and-fortune lottery ticket or I can give up my security, and I begin to suspect that I am the kind of person who would rather give up the ticket. I decide to keep taking geology classes...but I also decide to keep watching the local audition notices. The pernicious thing about theater is that you never have to completely walk away. I will keep a toe in the water. If I wake up one morning as a 36-year-old earth-science teacher, sick to death of explaining the sediment cycle, and suddenly feel the need to go to Hollywood, at least I won't be the first person to change horses midstream. LV

Performance Based Assessment is looking for performers of all ages. Contact coordinator Ellen Franklin at 335-6787 or ellenfranklin@uiowa.edu.

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31 JANUARY - 13 APRIL 2003

CURATED BY LESLEY WRIGHT, DIRECTOR, FAULCONER GALLERY



Relieve the winter doldrums with a visit to *Layers of Brazilian Art*, an exhibition of contemporary painting, photography, sculpture, mixed-media works, and site-specific installations by 24 Brazilian artists. The exhibition will reflect the cosmopolitan richness of urban Brazil. Programming will include speakers from many disciplines, visiting artists, Brazilian music and children's events.

Free admission. Call 641.269.4660 or visit the website for more information.

Faulconer Gallery, Grinnell College, 1108 Park Street, Grinnell, Iowa 50112

www.grinnell.edu/faulconergallery

Detail images from left to right: Sandra Cinto, Nina Moraes, Luis Flavio, Sonia Müller, Nelson Leirner

GRINNELL COLLEGE



The Mill Restaurant

Bar • Music • Coffee

Sat Feb 1 **Lojo Russo** 9PM

Sun Feb 2 **Song Swap** 7PM
w/ Ben Eaton, Becca Sutlive, Kelly Pardekooper, Tom Jessen, Andy Flemming, Sam Knutson, Mike & Amy Finders, Dave Olson, Ben Schmidt

Thur Feb 6 **nikki lunden** NO COVER 9PM

Fri Feb 7 **Salaam Dance** 9PM

Sat Feb 8 **Ben Schmidt Trio** 9PM

Thurs Feb 13 **James Gang Productions** 9PM
w/ The Horrors and Lucky James

Fri Feb 14 **Dennis McMurrin & the Demolition Band** 9PM

Sat Feb 15 **Dave Zollo and the Body Electric** 9PM

Sun Feb 16 **Sweetheart Serenade** 7PM
w/ Mike & Amy Finders, Joe & Colleen Peterson, Bob & Kristi Black, Al & Aleta Murphy, Stacy Webster & Annie Savage

Wed Feb 19 **Maggie Drennan Band** 9PM

Fri Feb 21 **Bohemian Soul Tribe** 9PM

Sat Feb 22 **Wylde Nept** 9PM

Sun Feb 23 **Alastair Moock & Bob Hillman** 9PM

Thur Feb 27 **Greg Brown** CALL FOR TICKETS 7PM

Fri Feb 28 **Big Wooden Radio** 9PM

Sun Mar 2 **Stuart Davis** CALL FOR TICKETS 7PM

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FORECAST FOR FEBRUARY 2003 • BY DR. STAR • Write Dr. Star at doctorwinkler@home.com



AQUARIUS (Jan 20-Feb 18) A combination of events will soon trigger a lengthy series of irresistible changes in Aquarian lives, especially the financial aspects of their lives. At issue will be the proper balance between short-term and long-term financial needs. You have wanted these changes for a long time and have made progress toward them, but they never fully materialized. The bits that would make them real and permanent were always missing. Now, you will be able to make positive financial changes permanent. However, achieving this will require choices, compromise and willpower.



PISCES (Feb 19-March 20) If people were hoping to surprise or rattle you this month, they will be sadly disappointed. Pisceans have seen this day coming for a long time. They've learned all the appropriate lessons and made all the necessary preparations. Pisces should find that any long-term attitude adjustments they have made are adequate to any new emotional challenges. Changes initiated on the home and work fronts should enable you to get safely past any obstacles. There is no need for second thoughts or backward glances.



ARIES (March 21-April 19) Lots and lots of avenues are opening up. Old obstacles are melting away. Everything seems at least a little tempting, and all the possibilities seem to have at least some degree of potential. The world and the future that seemed so completely and forever defined all of a sudden don't seem that way at all anymore. And there is a lot more to come. The key to picking your way through this expanding maze of possibilities is your pocketbook. Put something together you are sure will not break the bank.



TAURUS (April 20-May 20) You've had the same idea for an ideal lifestyle for years now. For about as many years, you've experienced only modest, somewhat satisfying progress. A familiar set of obstacles to real change remained. All the really appealing options lay in the indefinite future. February will bring lots of real possibilities for immediate change and improvement. Even those obstacles to fundamental change will start disappearing. However, you will need something to guide your choices. Pick the things that generate money, as opposed to things that absorb money—if you can.



GEMINI (May 21-June 20) Circumstances and events will force your hand, again, and push you in directions you might not have chosen by yourself. Needs, desires and outside pressures will combine to determine your course. Partnership matters will reach a major turning point. Interests in distant places will rise to a new level. Altogether, a month of big pressures, big decisions and burgeoning possibilities. Keep your wits about you. Take it one step at a time and do not be drawn into overextending yourself, physically, emotionally or financially. There are more and bigger changes coming.



CANCER (June 21-July 22) Cancerians have long had to stand by, protected, but without much power or influence over events. However, your powerlessness saved you from burdensome responsibilities and bruising political entanglements. More turbulent events over which you have no power will begin soon. You will not only be safe from the negative effects of these events, they will actively benefit you, gradually but steadily improving your situation. Your continuing powerlessness is a blessing in disguise. You will soon want every available personal resource, material and non-material, to

start rejuvenating your inner Cancerian.



LEO (July 23-Aug 22) Your friends and creative partners have had too much power over your situation for a long time now. This was true even though you often had to foot most of the bill, make most of the compromises and do the lion's share of the work besides. Another wave of joint creative endeavors will begin in February. The sacrifices will seem about as unevenly divided as before. However, you will soon find a way to guide events in a way that brings substantial, long-term benefits for you, financial and otherwise.



VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 22) February will see the launch of major initiatives in two crucial areas of your life: home and work. Fortunately, these new initiatives will be mutually supportive and reinforcing. But you will have to be both self-assertive and self-sacrificing, pushy and patient. No time for brooding or hesitation, but no room for haste, either. And you certainly can't turn back the way you came. Fortunately, many burdens, annoyances and obstacles are on their way out of your life, forever. Major financial improvements are on the horizon, too.



LIBRA (Sept 23-Oct 22) In only a few weeks the elements of your life will be rearranged. You will shortly find yourself taking something you regard as play, or recreation, and using the leverage you have established through your everyday relationships, turn it into a career. You are being pushed toward independence and self-sufficiency. Initially, you must settle for personal satisfaction as a reward and submit to the standards of authority figures. However, your continuing ability to work constructively with demanding authority figures will help you build influence and establish financial security.



SCORPIO (Oct 23-Nov 21) Surprises, often unwelcome, have challenged Scorpios for a number of years, striking close to home at odd and inconvenient moments. It seemed like there would be no end of it. There might be another surprise or two in February, but this time, you'll be able to maintain control. Soon the forces of change will begin to surprise you in a more agreeable and uplifting manner, transforming your life in positive ways. And from now on, you'll be able to direct the changes. Those financial pressures will soon ease, too.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22-Dec 21) Sagittarian drive and energy will be more than enough to keep pace with a burst of unexpected changes in everyday relationships. Your impatience with existing partnership arrangements will reach a new pitch, too. Another series of profound changes related to home and self-understanding will soon begin, also. This is all part of a transition to a new, independent position in life. It will be more orderly, better defined and more widely recognized than similar changes in the recent past. Be sure to pay close attention to financial issues throughout.



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 19) It will become abundantly clear this month that you must do something to alleviate burdensome, work-related pressures—long term. It is equally clear that you must bring short-term expenditures into line with long-term financial goals. Change will soon start sweeping through the lives of all those closest to you in your daily life. Many of the changes will be unexpected and unavoidable. You can bring about the conditions you need by helping others cope effectively with these changes. LV

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Deadline for March
issue is February 20.*

Strange but True!

News Quirks

Compiled by Roland Sweet

Slightest Provocations

Sharif Cook, 27, of Camden, N.J., was indicted on charges that he fatally shot his boss because he failed to pick Cook up for work.

Milwaukee police said they were looking for a 13-to-15-year-old suspect who shot Tyrone Turnage, 17, twice during a basketball scrimmage at a church recreation center after a dispute over a foul.

A charity fund-raiser in Revere, Mass., hosted by New England Patriots linebacker Willie McGinest ended in a brawl involving 300 people. Police said the fight was caused by tensions over long coat-check lines as people left.

Police in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., reported that Irving Rosenberg, 74, died when he fell and hit his head on the sidewalk after being punched by Seymour Schuss, 68. Witnesses said that Schuss' wife complained that Rosenberg was taking too long to buy movie tickets. Rosenberg told her to shut up, and Seymour Schuss attacked him.

Police in St. Paul, Minn., who arrested Richard Brian Bruestle, 38, for murdering his 50-year-old aunt said that he told them he shot and stabbed the woman after an argument over the way her chili tasted. When he complained, she ordered him to leave and tried to call 911. He stopped her, then chased her to a neighbor's house, where he stabbed her about 15 times in the back, chest and stomach with a butcher's knife. According to the criminal complaint, Bruestle told police "he decided to 'finish this right,' so he went back to the house and got the gun and went back to the neighbor's house and fired it repeatedly at the victim."

Career Move

Koko, the 31-year-old lowland gorilla who is famous for using sign language to communicate with humans, has written lyrics for a musical album. According to Koko's keepers, the album, titled *Fine Animal Gorilla* after Koko's term for herself, runs the musical gamut, from lullabies to rap to reggae. Producer

Skip Haynes explained that although Koko doesn't perform on the album, she approves the lyrics sung by human vocalists and "actually listens to different mixes and tells us what mix she likes."

The Price of Free Speech

Two years ago, the town of Virgin, Utah, passed a law requiring every home to have a gun for self-defense. The ordinance was later declared a violation of state law. Last year, Virgin Mayor Jay Lee decided that town council meetings were too long, so he began charging residents that wanted to speak at them \$25. In October, dozens of people packed the council chamber for a meeting, only to have Lee announce that this time he was canceling the public comment period to save time.

Homeland Security

Richard H. Barnes Jr. bolted a trailer with a 100-gallon fuel tank to his Mazda sedan, then set off from San Antonio, Texas, determined to make it to New York City without refueling in honor of Veterans Day. On the way, Barnes stopped in Washington, D.C., where Capitol police spotted his rig in a no-parking zone outside the US Capitol. After seeing the sign on the trailer, "One 100 gal tank on all way to NYC," and noticing decals mentioning the Fire Department of New York and the World Trade Center, officers summoned fire department officials, who declared it a "potentially very dangerous situation." Police confiscated the trailer and ticketed Barnes for operating an unsafe vehicle.

Thanks for Nothing

New Orleans police accused Herbert Toney, 36, and Latisha Washington, 29, of instructing their 8-year-old son to steal groceries and beer from a supermarket, then when he was caught denied knowing him. The boy set off a security scanner alarm when he tried to leave the store with a shopping cart containing the stolen items, but he said his father, who was outside the store, had a receipt. Toney and Washington told store security officers they didn't know the child and walked away. Sheriff's deputies brought them back to the store, where they said they recognized the boy from their neighborhood. After more questioning, the mother admitted he was their son.

Siren Song

Government Acquisitions LLC of Charlotte, N.C., has begun selling advertising space on patrol cars owned

by cash-strapped police departments around the country. Departments that agree to put ads on their patrol cars, usually on the hood or on the side and rear, receive new patrol cars for \$1 from the company, which replaces them every three years and keeps the ad revenue. So far, 20 mostly smaller municipalities have signed up. "Due to a lack of government funding and tight budgets, police departments across America don't have the equipment they need," Ken Allison, president of Government Acquisitions, said. "If you're home at night with your wife and kids, and some maniac breaks into your house, you call 911 and you want a police car there. You don't care if there's Burger King logo on the trunk."

Lesson Learned

When an armed man broke into the home of Theodore and Marion Golden of Chatham, Mass., he demanded \$10,000 in cash. The couple, both in their 80s, told him they only had \$450 but offered to write a check for the balance. Police said Theodore Golden deliberately filled out the check wrong, listing the payee as "Ten thousand dollars" and never filling in an individual's name. Vadim S. Kharichkov, 21, was arrested the next day when he tried to cash the check. The Russian citizen told detective David R. Hagstrom that he wasn't familiar with US banking procedures.

Instant Karma

Two days after Evelyn Krzeminski, 82, of Adams, Mass., was convicted of vehicular homicide for running down a 61-year-old woman in a pedestrian crosswalk, she was knocked to the ground in a parking lot by a car driven by a 74-year-old man who had stopped to close his trunk but neglected to put the transmission in park. The fall seriously injured Krzeminski's left hand.

Oy-Vey-Sters

Louisiana oyster distributor Leroy "Lee Lee" Chauvin, 70, received complaints after he perfected a process for purifying oysters and began advertising them as "Certified Kosher." Shellfish, he learned, cannot be kosher. Chauvin explained that he labeled his oysters because he remembered a Jewish cook he met in the 1950s telling him that kosher meant food was pure.

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