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March 09

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**Mission Creek turns 4!**

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## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

AH, MOONBAT! WELCOME TO THE NEW **BASEMENT HEADQUARTERS** OF MY BOY DETECTIVE AGENCY! IT'S **MUCH** BETTER FORTIFIED THAN THE OLD TREEHOUSE, IN THE EVENT OF WIDESPREAD SOCIAL DISORDER AMONG THE LOWER CLASSES!

UM--ARE YOU OKAY? YOUR MOM SAYS YOU'VE BEEN SPENDING A LOT OF TIME DOWN HERE...



INDEED I **HAVE**, MOONBAT! I'M HOT ON THE TRAIL OF ONE OF HISTORY'S **GREATEST COVERUPS!**

YOU SEE, I RECENTLY BEGAN TO WONDER WHY LIBERALS WERE **STILL** TALKING ABOUT GEORGE W. BUSH--EVEN THOUGH HE IS **NO LONGER** IN OFFICE!

UH--BECAUSE HE'S ONLY BEEN GONE A MONTH AND HE LEFT THE COUNTRY IN HORRIBLE SHAPE--?



OH, MOONBAT! SOMEDAY I REALLY MUST INTRODUCE YOU TO MY CLOSE PERSONAL FRIEND, **REALITY!** NO, AS MY INTERNET INVESTIGATIONS SOON REVEALED, IT IS BECAUSE THEY WANT TO DRAW ATTENTION AWAY FROM THE **REAL** CULPRIT OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS--



--**JIMMY CARTER!** THE SINISTER PLAN HE SET INTO MOTION MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS AGO HAS FINALLY REACHED ITS CULMINATION-- AND HAPLESS REPUBLICANS HAVE BEEN **POWERLESS** TO STOP IT!

ER--SO **BUSH** IS IRRELEVANT-- BUT **JIMMY CARTER**--

**SILENCE, MOONBAT! THAT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING!**



FROM THERE, I UNCOVERED A MASSIVE CONSPIRACY STRETCHING BACK **DECADES**--ENCOMPASSING SEVERAL GENERATIONS OF LIBERAL ACADEMICS AND JOURNALISTS-- ALL WORKING IN TANDEM TO CONCEAL FROM THE AMERICAN PUBLIC THE STUNNING HISTORICAL TRUTH--



--THAT **F.D.R. CAUSED** THE GREAT DEPRESSION--WITH HIS **LIBERAL SPENDING PROGRAMS!!**

YOU KNOW, YOU REALLY MIGHT WANT TO THINK ABOUT LEAVING THE BASEMENT OCCASIONALLY.

HAH! DO YOU THINK ALL THIS DETECTIVE WORK IS GOING TO DO **ITSELF?**



NEXT: GROVER CLEVELAND'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE **TARP FIASCO!**

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# Easy Riders

**M**y thighs burned as I pushed the pedals up another asphalt-covered hill. Each climb was harder than the last and a personal battle, which was to be followed by a spectacular view of snow-patched cornfields as far as the eye could see—and a nice long coast.

These rolling Iowa hills guide the joyrides of the 322 members of Bicyclists of Iowa City or BIC. This 33-year-old club was started with the intention of promoting bicycling and the interests of bicyclists.

I have a less than significant history on a bike. I go on one or two substantial rides a year at best, usually as big family trips in the summertime. The rides are easy and relatively flat, but even as my parents follow me on those routes, they're a bit leery of my shaky balance. (They are glad that I just purchased my first helmet since the hot pink one I used when learning how to ride.)

My recent two-wheeled jaunt was led by BIC's president of five years, Steve Rudin. Rudin, a bicyclist and member of BIC for the past 11 years, met me on north Dodge Street and led me all the way out to the Coralville

from 15 to 50 miles, or even more. The trip Rudin led me on was one of BIC's year-round weekend tours. Rides are more popular and frequent in the warmer months, which was no surprise to me when I pedaled along on a 40



*Keeping up with Steve Rudin was a challenge.*

degree day in February. That icy wind-chill made a hot day in August sound like heaven.

Most rides typically occur between April and October, including several different weekly rides. More experienced bicyclists or those looking for a challenge can attend 2sday 2wheelers (on Tuesday mornings) or Wednesday Evening Escapes. These are longer rides, but they make for great opportunities to be with fellow bicyclists and have some fun.

The Thursday Evening Leisure Ride travels fewer miles than most BIC rides and stays on more metropolitan trails. This is a great ride for newer or more casual rider. The trip Rudin took me on probably more closely resembled these Thursday rides; although we traversed outside the hustle and bustle of Iowa City, it was slower-paced. Rudin stayed with me the whole time even though he was much more capable than me to take on the terrain. Rudin explained that when newer bicyclists attend the rides, the ride leaders make sure they aren't in the back of the pack riding alone. It was comforting to have him there to give me a few tips as we pedaled along discussing biking.

Rudin began riding to improve his health, which in my limited opinion seems to be working out well for him. He appears to be

doing pretty well while I'm struggling up the road. (I'm willing to argue with anyone who says Iowa doesn't have mountains.) The scenic roads we traveled on our ride are pretty good training for RAGBRAI. Rudin has already made the long-haul across the state 11 times as a member of BIC. It is one of the special rides the group participates in each year. He is one of 150 BIC members, some from across the country, who will be banding together this July for RAGBRAI, from river to shining river.

BIC also hosts a few other special rides throughout the year. Bigger trips are taking place on Memorial Weekend and Independence Day. In September, they will continue a new trend in the group of reaching out to the community. BIC will be hosting their annual Courage Ride. This special event, also known as the Amish Harvest Tour to Cure Cancer, puts bicycling together with food, music and other festivities in an effort to raise money for cancer research at the UIHC Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center.

**The route of about nine miles was no stretch for the seasoned president, but left my more inexperienced legs working overtime.**

The members of BIC help support this cause, but their membership also helps the club promote the rights of bicyclists and bicycle issues, maintain rides, and provide information and education on biking. The members of the club, like Rudin, are passionate about biking, which is exciting for someone like me who is interested in moving around a bit more on two wheels. And as I learned from my Sunday adventure, there's something a little inspiring about a man 40 years my senior flying past me as I trudge up another hill. **IV**

*Kelly Ostrem is Little Village's editorial intern and Live Healthy Iowa team captain. Her biggest 100-day challenge will be to prevent Little Village's lethargy-loving managing editor, Melody Dworak, from staying home and watching Hulu.*

## The best deal on two wheels

- A BIC membership costs \$20 to \$35 a year.
- Membership fees help support The Courage Ride, BIC's work of promoting the rights of bicyclists and bicycle issues, group rides and educational outreach.
- Members travel to and during RAGBRAI is taken care of by the group.
- Local bike shops give discounts to BIC members.
- On the web at [www.bicyclistsofiowacity.org](http://www.bicyclistsofiowacity.org).

Reservoir and back. The route of about nine miles was no stretch for the seasoned president, but left my more inexperienced legs working overtime.

A nine-mile trip is a pretty short ride for BIC members, who usually travel anywhere

# Growing excitement

You've waited all winter to start planting. Wait a little longer so you don't overdo it.

Just about everyone I know has been pouring over seed catalogs for the last month. Eagerness to plant supplants many other priorities and they begin rifling through each newly arrived issue like a 12-year-old boy with a lingerie catalog. Plans for this year's garden become an obsession that quickly grows out of all reasonable proportions, resulting in a seed and seedling order that could be better use feeding a small African country.

The thing they should remember is they need not order everything now, and if they wait to order some of the species that should be planted later in the year (that is, May or June), the enthusiasm that germinated in the short, icy days of February will have subsided, and the realism needed for a successful spring planting will yield a healthy harvest.

When planning your garden, be reasonable about how much space you actually have, and how much work you are really willing to put into tilling, preparing, and weeding. Remember that planting and harvesting are the two easiest parts of gardening, and it's all the stuff that comes in between that can be back-breaking if you overdo it. There are only a few things you should order now, the heartier greens and early spring vegetables that are the harbingers of the summer bounty.

If you would like to start your own peppers and tomatoes from seed, you'll want to get them going now, indoors, under a grow light and with proper warmth and water. If you are

not equipped for that, you can select seedlings from the Seed Savers Exchange Catalog ([www.seedsavers.org](http://www.seedsavers.org)) and they'll send them to you later in the spring when it's actually time to put them in the ground. Seed Savers is the best choice for the true "heirloom" varieties that lend delicious diversity to your garden.



If it is a new garden, get a soil sample kit from the county extension office, where for just a few bucks they can tell you what's good and bad about the soil.



This is not to say that there is necessarily anything wrong with hybrids. Even the best heirlooms are in a sense hybrids, having been carefully selected over generations to be the best to grow for a particular climate and soil. But do avoid genetically modified seed. This type of Frankenfood could contain genes spliced from any organism, even fish. Setting aside the "yuck" factor for a moment, the health and allergy implications are unknown, and the potential impact of this on the ecosystem could well be catastrophic.

So on this first order, just get your early spring greens like mache and kale. Radishes are wonderful and are among the first things you will be able to plant, as soon as you can dig the soil. Sweet peas love the early spring cold as well. Take a look at the planting instructions for each, consider how much you really do have room for, and don't order too much.

Meanwhile, take a look at your compost (as discussed here last month). Give it a good turn and make sure your compost bin handled the winter intact. Check the soil, and start pulling back last fall's layer of mulch.

If it is a new garden, get a soil sample kit from the county extension office, where for just a few bucks they can tell you what's good and bad about the soil in that spot so that you can decide what will grow best there or what kind of nutrients it needs (always organic, please!).

When your spring fever begins to break in April, you can start thinking about the giant pumpkins, award-winning squash, and more delicate greens you want to plant. And can we ever have enough herbs in our gardens? Oops, there I go. **lv**

*It's About the Food is a monthly feature of Little Village. Chef Kurt Michael Friese is co-owner, with his wife Kim, of the Iowa City restaurant Devotay and serves on the Slow Food USA Board of Directors. Comments may be directed to [devotay@mchsi.com](mailto:devotay@mchsi.com).*

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# Nature's Economy

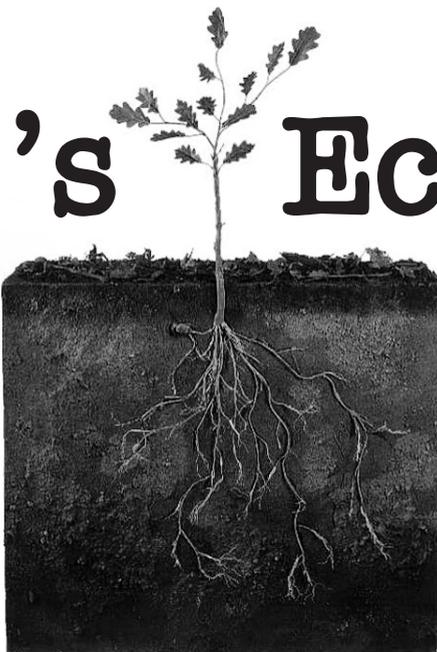
As the global economy crumbles around us, I have been writing about relocalization as a way toward sustainability, last month expanding on the concept of abundance as the foundation upon which it could work. One more important fundamental concept for a sustainable economy is looking to the natural world as a model, so I'd like to complete my local economy trilogy focusing on nature's economy.

There is a system right before our eyes, right outside our doors that works: nature. Nature knows how to provide for itself, to do so in abundance, and to keep itself going. Wes Jackson, president of the Land Institute in Kansas, writer and innovative agriculturalist, is

There is a system right before our eyes, right outside our doors that works: nature.

researching how we can develop a sustainable agriculture by using "nature as measure"—actually, an ancient idea that we have forgotten. His basic concept is really quite simple. Nature works on two principles, sunlight and recycling. We've developed an industrial agricultural that in large part uses neither—we use oil and chemicals instead. Nature perpetuates itself; industrial agriculture depletes and pollutes nature. Let's figure out a new method based on a model that we know works, says Jackson.

In brilliant ways, Wes Jackson extends his nature as measure idea beyond agriculture to culture writ large in *Becoming Native to This Place*. Other authors and thinkers have as well, and they extend the nature-as-model idea to the economy. Wendell Berry is among the most well-known, and Jackson himself even defers to his friend as articulating such ideas before him. Berry is certainly in sync with Jackson on community development, responsible and sustainable agriculture, and the



necessity of local economies. And nature-as-model is at the heart of all of it.

"Economy" in its generic sense means, according to Berry in "Two Economies" (from *Home Economics*), "principles and patterns by which values or powers or necessities are parceled out and exchanged." In practice, there is a "Great Economy"—which is, in essence, the natural world and the exchanges, processes and mysteries that create and sustain the earth—and the human economy, with a small "e"—our own exchanges and processes that sustain our lives and cultures. Berry insists that our human economy must always remain a subset of the Great Economy. When we try to do nature better by pushing its productive capacities beyond their natural limits, we destroy not only the earth but ourselves.

In "Conservation and Local Economy" (from *Sex, Economy, Freedom & Community*), Berry says, similar to Jackson, that "the standards are not set by us but by nature...The true source and analogue of our economic life is the economy of plants, which never exceeds natural limits, never grows beyond the power of its place to support it, produces no waste, and enriches and preserves itself by death and decay. We must learn to grow like a tree, not like a fire." In the tree's economy, there is creation, return and rebirth (recycling). In the human "fire economy," there is production, consumption and waste. The essence of Berry's two-economy argument is that nature really produces no waste (its byproducts are recycled), and almost all that the human economy produces, after its energy is used, is waste.

We need to at least introduce the idea of "return" into our economy. As Berry says,

"It is the principle of return that complicates matters, for it requires responsibility, care, of a different and higher order than that required by production and consumption alone, and it calls for methods and economies of a different kind" ("The Use of Energy," *The Unsettling of America*). In plainer language, as Bill McKibben says in *Deep Economy*, "That's about as basic as it gets: we're taking too much, not replacing enough."

And here is where the local community and local economy come in. On a practical level, and in more traditionally economic terms, Robert Thayer, Jr. in *LifePlace: Bioregional Thought and Practice* says the bioregional economic paradigm is "trading natural values," which requires us to "use local resources and materials locally; then trade only surpluses." But Wendell Berry and thinkers like him (including Thayer) suggest something even deeper and more profound: that "care"—for the earth and for each other—can really only happen, or at least happen most effectively, at

You can't build the bonds of community through an anonymous, detached purchase of a Tickle-Me Elmo made in China and ordered through Amazon.com

the local level. Stewardship of the land and responsibility for others require presence in place. So the only way truly to introduce care into an economy—which is the way to introduce return (or recycling) of resources and energy into an economy and to respect the limits of nature—is to do so at a local level.

Once we remain local in our economy, we are more able to practice not only environmental sustainability, but also another important principle of nature's economy: community. The exchanges that lead to abundance in nature are possible because of biodiversity

**NATURE CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 >>**

# how do you like your eggs?

Fight or Flight? Iowa's egg-laying hens don't have an option.

<< Many of us city-folk may not notice this hen's beak deformity, a result of the practice of debeaking.

Photo courtesy of Farm Sanctuary

**M**y guess is we would tell the same story, despite our age. The egg figures prominently into our childhood. White or brown, a full tray of them were always inside the refrigerator door. They made their way into many meals in various forms, from the simple (scrambled and hard boiled) to special (omelets, poached, and soft boiled) to the exotic (deviled and as batter for French toast)—and into an array of baked desserts. I recall failed attempts at cracking an egg like

**The number of our farms is decreasing while the concentration of poultry is rapidly increasing.**

my mom or dad could—"just so," so the shell didn't fall into the yolk—as well as successful ones of ensuring the shell remained intact while dipping an egg, perched precariously on that weirdly shaped wire, into PAAS dyes for Easter.

To this day I associate eggs with fond memories of family time and good-tasting food.

Where the eggs came from was also memorable. In mid-to-late 1970s Ames, the neighborhood kids and I frequently would spy the "The Egg Lady," a figure who seemed to appear out of nowhere. Huffing up the hill of our university-town neighborhood by bike, with

wire basket prominently attached in front and brimming with eggs, she sold her goods door to door. Her mode of transport conveyed that she clearly came "from around here" so was a known quantity. Happily serving as one of few sources of the then-coveted brown egg, she was all smiles and pleasant chit-chat—qualities her loyal customers considered another plus.

Thirty years later and two-and-a-half hours southeast of my hometown, some things haven't changed. Many people cherish memories associated with the egg, and hold dear a positive image of where eggs come from—often a lush green farm with red outbuildings, out of which a chicken may scamper to peck at the seed she's been thrown and into which she later nests and lays an egg.

This image, however, so often does not reflect the reality.

## Iowa's Egg Empire

As the No. 1 producer of eggs in the nation, Iowa is home to 57 million hens laying approximately 14.25 billion eggs each year, according to the Iowa Egg Council. The sheer number of lives put to constant work so people can have eggs makes the hen and her eggs everyone's business. According to a 2003 study of the state's concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) commissioned by then Governor, and now U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, the number of our

farms is decreasing while the concentration of poultry is rapidly increasing. With concentration comes confinements—and with confinements come risks to the health of animals, humans and the environment.

The layer hen often contends with a life of health problems tied to reproductive manipulation, mutilation and confinement. Their lives are cut short—and the methods used to do

**57 million**

The number of hens in Iowa

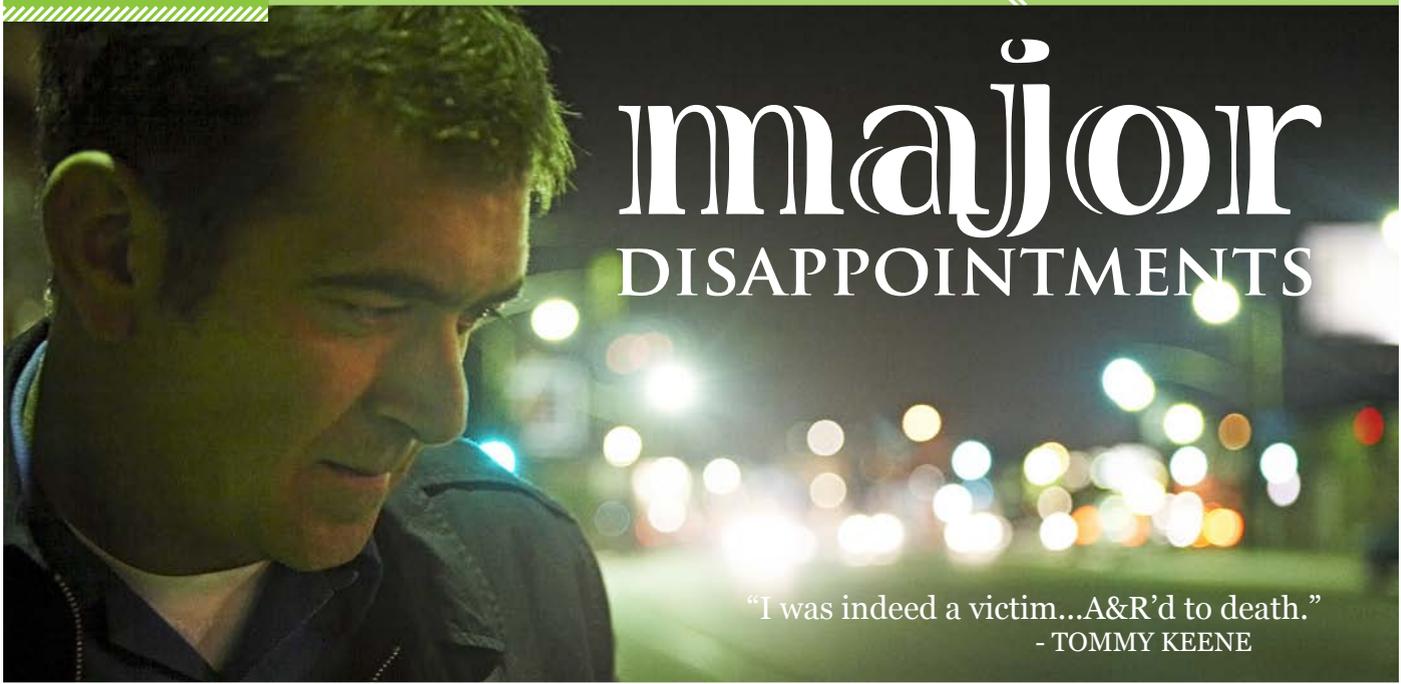
**14.25 billion**

The number of eggs laid in Iowa each year

**#1** Iowa's ranking amongst egg producing states

this can cause the birds to suffer. In a paper presented at the National Institute of Animal Agriculture, animal scientist Temple Grandin wrote, "The more I learned about the egg in-

**EGGS CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 >>**



# major

## DISAPPOINTMENTS

“I was indeed a victim...A&R’d to death.”  
- TOMMY KEENE

I’m guessing that many of you have never heard of Tommy Keene. He’s a working musician who has accumulated a fairly deep catalog over the past 30 years, but he has never scored major hit and, in fact, the man has had his share of setbacks. Keene’s experience with Geffen Records in the 1980s, for instance, is a classic cautionary tale—one variation on an infinite number of horror stories about the big, bad music industry.

In the time since he began playing professionally in the late-1970s with the late, great power pop group The Razz, the music industry has gone through massive changes—from the introduction of the compact disc and the

**The majors didn’t think that what they called “college rock” was instantly sellable.**

goldmine sales bonanza that followed to the radical transformations made possible by the internet. As Notorious B.I.G. once said, things done changed.

“Radio is gone, MTV doesn’t play music, and no one buys records anymore,” Keene tells me. “I’ve been lucky because I’ve always found people who want to put out my records.”

I first saw him live in 1987 when he opened for The Replacements (a quintessential 1980s “college rock” group, what they called “indie”

or “alternative” back then). Keene blew me away that night with his finely tuned guitar pop, and since then he has delivered consistently stellar records. *Into the Late Bright*, his most recent release, continues a killer streak that began when he reemerged in the mid-1990s on Matador Records. The new album’s stand-out track, “Tomorrow’s Gone Tonight,” is classic Keene—complete with instantly hummable melodies and the kind of Byrds-influenced, chiming guitars that R.E.M. helped popularize in the 1980s. And the closing song on *In the Late Bright*, “Hide Your Eyes,” seamlessly brings the past and present together.

“It’s a very old song, written in ’84,” he tells me, “and it has that jangly guitar sound I used a lot during that period.”

Discussing the early-1980s, Keene explains, “The goal back then for most artists was always to get signed to a major label, but after about

three years of me banging around, getting nowhere—I noticed that a lot of bands around that time were figuring out how to put out their own records.” The punk movement had opened up a space for left-of-the-dial music through a national network of music venues, independent record companies, and college radio. “The majors didn’t think that what they called ‘college rock’ was instantly sellable,” he says. “Of course, later in the 1980s the major labels came around when they signed groups

like The Replacements and Hüsker Dü.”

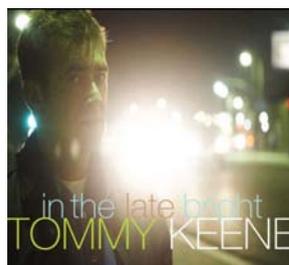
Keene took his own leap to the majors in the mid-1980s—though the experience was far from satisfying, plagued by cigar-chomping record men, ill-conceived company directives, and plain old bad luck. The problems began in the recording studio. By and large, major

labels did not turn musicians loose in studios without the guiding hand—or two, three, and often more. The meddling came from name-brand record producers, label executives, and shadowy figures named A&R reps who were supposed to be looking out for the artists’ interests but who usually were there to make sure a radio-ready hit was delivered. This setup typically resulted in slickly overproduced albums (see The Replacement’s 1988 album *Don’t Tell a Soul* for a case-in-point).

Discussing his time at Geffen, Keene says, “It was the perfect example of too

many cooks in the kitchen. Sometimes having a lot of outside input can be helpful, but usually not,” adding, “I was indeed a victim or A&R’d to death.”

Compared to most rock albums from that era, Keene got off pretty easy; his two Geffen releases don’t suffer much from the era’s overcooked sonic excesses. “Nowadays,” he says, “I don’t have that problem, but I run ideas by various people whose opinions I trust if I need a little guidance.”



*In the Late Bright*, released in February, is Tommy Keene’s eight studio album. He has also released 4 EPs, including *Places That are Gone*, which was chosen as the #1 pop album of 1984 by Village Voice.

Today, he has a home studio, which allows Keene to do virtually everything himself. (He's a multi-instrumentalist: "I started taking piano lessons when I was six-and-a-half, and then I took up drums and guitar—in fact, I played drums until I was 16.")

The next problem occurred upon the release of his record. "The thing about the major label experience was that if your record doesn't sell within six weeks, they moved on to other projects." And unfortunately for him--when *Songs from the Film* was set to debut in 1986--a major scandal rocked the industry, one that was prompted by the fact that major labels typically broke new acts back then by offering bribes to radio.

**If your record doesn't sell within six weeks, they moved on to other projects.**

"I remember talking to the head of promotion at Geffen," Keene recalls. "He was this complete Mafia guy with a cigar, and he said, 'We can't hire anyone to push your record so it's basically dead in the water.'" He adds, "All this build up and then, poof, the momentum just evaporated."

Keene released one more record for the label and then went back to life as an unsigned act, spinning his wheels and doing a lot of touring in the early-1990s. A fan of his, Gerard Cosloy—who founded Matador Records, home to Pavement, Liz Phair, and other classic alt-rock artists—tried to get Keene signed to Virgin Records during this time, but it didn't work out. Another major label became interested, but that opportunity dried up as well. (In both cases, the executives who wanted to sign him were ultimately fired.) After being dealt three strikes by the major label system, Cosloy and Keene decided to release his records on Matador, to much critical acclaim but no R.E.M.—or Nirvana—level sales.

I ask him if, since the Geffen debacle, he has ever held on hope for a hit. "The last time I might have had a shot at a radio song is the Matador EP *Love Is a Dangerous Thing*, back during the whole alternative rock explosion. And in '96 we did a video and hoped to have it on MTV's 120 minutes program, which also didn't happen," he says, chuckling. "After that, to be honest with you, I just continued making records to for my own pleasure, and if there's an audience for that, great." **IV**

*Kembrew McLeod has been spending the winter months practicing with Lynne Nugent to develop their excellent Rock Band skills.*

**EGGS FROM PAGE 7 >>**

dustry the more disgusted I got. Some of the practices that had become ‘normal’ for this industry were overt cruelty.”

Because some of these practices can be carried out off-site to the breeding facility, hatchery or slaughterhouse, it’s easy to not associate them with the farm where the hen lays her eggs.

The layer hen has been selectively bred to lay almost four times as many eggs as she would in nature. The consequences to the hen are many, including painful conditions such as prolapse and becoming egg bound. With prolapse, the hen’s set of muscles that expel her eggs and those that expel her waste weaken to the point where her interior anal muscles stick out and are then vulnerable to infection and to attack by other birds. Being egg bound means that soft-shelled, malformed or oversized eggs become stuck inside the reproductive tract.

**Caged Flight**

The domesticated hen’s natural behaviors remain firmly fixed despite the reproductive alteration, according to scientific evidence summarized by Farm Sanctuary in the report “Welfare of Hens in Battery Cages.” The hen is a social creature who carries out the daily, critical duties of pecking, dustbathing and perching with her group—but at a certain distance from one another, both to perform the task properly and to maintain social order.

Access to nature is very important, as it provides dust for bathing to keep bodily oils in check and lice at bay, firm surfaces for pecking to investigate surroundings, and tree branches as perches for safe dozing while night predators

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**Some of the practices that had become “normal” for this industry were overt cruelty.**  
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roam. The need for space and natural environs becomes even greater when the hen performs the solo work of foraging for food and nesting materials, building her nest and nesting on her eggs. No matter the type of egg she carries and will lay—fertilized or unfertilized—the hen takes pre-nesting and nesting very seriously. The process demands privacy.

None of these needs—pecking, dust-bathing, perching, foraging, pre-nesting or nesting—can be carried out properly when the hen is crammed into a small cage along with three to eight other birds. United Egg Producers

(UEP), the industry’s main trade association, estimates that 95 percent of eggs produced in the United States come from caged facilities as do 90 percent of those produced in the world. Given these statistics, a caged existence is the reality for most layer hens. Confined in the layer house when sexually mature at five months, the hen remains in that cage the rest of her one-to-two-year lifespan, according to animal welfare scientists Drs. Sara Shields and Ian Duncan. Each hen in the cage has at



narian Timothy Cummings recommends that industry call “beak conditioning,” makes the otherwise easy tasks of eating and drinking and preening difficult for the bird as a chick as well as later in life. It causes pain, and, like any procedure that might be carried out in haste, can be botched.

**Give Us This Day Our Daily Birth**

A hen’s life lasts six to eight years in nature. Her shorter life in confinement entails laying about one egg a day, day in and day out, throughout much of the year, for at least one year—as opposed to seasonally, as is natural. Producing just one egg requires a significant amount of calcium for the formation of a shell. Over time, daily production leads to severe calcium depletion. Mench notes that this ramped-up production rate, coupled with an utter lack of bone-building exercise, brings on osteoporosis. When

<< This hen arrived at the Farm Sanctuary with 1/2 pound of feces and matted feathers stuck to each leg.

the hen can no longer produce eggs, she is pulled from

the cage to meet one of several possible ends. Whatever this end entails, handling her can result in breaking (if not breaking off) her brittle bones.

The layer hen’s egg-laying rate begins dropping off after about a year, at which time the producer will either arrange to kill her and the rest of the flock—and replace them with younger chickens—or “force-molt” her and the other birds; either way, egg laying will commence again. In nature, a hen begins a fast after she finishes seasonal egg laying for the purpose of molting. This way, all energy goes into the growing of replacement feathers so she is kept warm in colder months. Then, in warmer months, she lays eggs again—a time when her chicks, too young to regulate their own body temperatures, can hatch out of their shells into the heat of the sun. To save money, the producer simulates and speeds up this normally months-long seasonal shift with three weeks of a nutritionally inadequate diet and much time spent in darkness, followed by the provision of a standard diet and exposure to extreme lighting, according to the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). These drastic changes shock the hen’s system into laying eggs again.

**Who’s Regulating the Regulators?**

Because states lack consistency in regulating and investigating of even marketing claims of “cage free” or “free range,” the role of federal agencies—or independent third-party regulators—is important. A representative

best less than nine square inches of space.

Unable to carry out her hard-wired routine, let alone reap the physical and mental benefits of exercise, the hen may begin exhibiting neurotic behaviors. Unable to peck at the ground—something she would do thousands of times a day in nature—the hen will begin pecking at the only firm and natural surface available to her: the other hens. Unable to perch, let alone flee, her victims have no protection from attack and can die.

**When Hens Attack**

Farmers learned about hen-on-hen attacks the hard way back in the 1920s when caged layer facilities had their start. Something had to be done to prevent such inevitable mass deaths and subsequent losses in profit—and producers turned to beak mutilation. Davis explains that debeaking—developed in the 1930s, commercialized by the 1940s and used ever since—is a surgical procedure the female chick undergoes, in which neither anesthesia nor painkillers play a role.

As early as the first day out of the shell, the female chick has a nerve-ridden portion of her beak cut off. This procedure, which veteri-

of Farm Sanctuary walked me through the labeling labyrinth at the federal level. If a carton of “cage free” eggs has a U.S.D.A. grade shield on it, the U.S.D.A. Agricultural Marketing Service verified,

*At the Farm Sanctuary, >> birds and other farm animals receive treatment and room to walk.*



Photo courtesy of Tom Glorfield

through on-site inspection, that the hens who laid the eggs were not caged. Such hens are not guaranteed a certain amount of space, however, let alone access to the outdoors. Eggs in a carton bearing a U.S.D.A. grade shield may be labeled “free range” if they are certified organic, because federal organic regulations stipulate that animals must have access to the outdoors. Because “access” is not defined, though, outdoor areas may be small, barren and difficult to reach.

“Cage free” and “free range” hens can still be bred in a way that causes painful complications, and they are typically debeaked. Farm Sanctuary noted that only third-party certifier Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) completely prohibits debeaking. Only two producers in the state of Iowa—Cathy and Chris LaFrenz with their Donahue farm, and Tai Johnson-Spratt and Tom Spratt with their Foxhollow Farm in Elkhart—are accredited members regulated by this independent agency.

At the state level, farm animals are exempt from most states’ anti-cruelty statutes. At the federal level, only two laws protect livestock—the Humane Slaughter Act and the 28-Hour Law—and they only pertain to matters relating to slaughter and transport, respectively. Because poultry (chickens, turkeys, ducks, etc.) are not considered livestock, chickens

born into the egg industry are afforded no legal protection.

**Free Bird**

There is hope, thanks to the hard work of volunteers and organizations. Farm Sanctuary and HSUS have been working to pass a federal bill to protect “downers,” farm animals too ill or injured to stand. And in November, California’s Proposition 2, “Standards for Confining Farm Animals,” passed and will ban by 2015 the use of battery cages for egg lay-

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**“Cage free” and “free range” hens can still be bred in a way that causes painful complications, and they are typically debeaked.**  
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ing hens (among other animal confinements) because these holding areas do not provide the animals enough room to turn around, stretch their limbs or even lie down comfortably.

In view of the wide range of cruel practices chickens in egg production are commonly subjected to, the initiative’s objective may seem

a small gesture to make in the name of recognizing the importance of animal well-being. However, it addresses a big aspect of the layer hen’s life that is the direct cause of many of the problems that plague her in production: confinement, in a cage whose cramped interior does not allow the bird to be a bird.

During a volunteer stint at Farm Sanctuary’s New York shelter last summer, I witnessed for myself the behaviors of poultry in a natural environment. National Shelter Director Susie Coston estimates that of the 3,000-some chickens rescued from the egg industry that have found their home at one of Farm

Sanctuary’s two shelters over the past two decades, about a third have come from operations described as a “family farm,” “organic,” “free range,” and “cage free.”

At Farm Sanctuary, their shelter is daily cleaned and new bedding is supplied. Twice daily, they receive fresh food and water. They have a dedicated and devoted health care staff looking after them. The shelter provides them room to walk, boxes to nest in, places to perch and security from night predators. They also have adequate space to establish and maintain social order. Still, whether I was bringing them food, which they loved—or tending to their wounds, which they did not love—every hen made her way to the outdoors in short order, where she would peck the ground, take baths in the dust and puddles and forage into the grassy beyond, among trees and bushes. Though not as active as the other hens, the birds with healing feet still managed to sit down and enjoy a dust bath. **IV**

*Elizabeth Cummings is not hunting for Easter eggs next month. For details about an April benefit for Farm Sanctuary, please email Elizabeth.Cummings@littlevillagemag.com.*

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# Designing Woman

For UI President Sally Mason and others, the outfit may not

make the woman, but it matters.

**P**ragmatism may soon skirt the runway as more people struggle with employment and basic needs. But still, fashion parlance ought to remain, albeit for a serious purpose: business.

Such is Sally Mason's wardrobe. Business first, pleasure second. And especially in today's economic climate, sales are important. Which is just fine by Mason.

"Sale is just my favorite word," Mason, 57, said late last fall during an interview. "I can't ever stand to pay full price for anything. I look at a price tag and think, 'That's more than this brain can figure for clothes,' if there's no sale. Then I keep going."

On a chilly autumn day some months ago, Mason wore high-heeled pumps, a cocoa-colored business suit, and an amber medallion that rested against a cardinal-red turtleneck. On her hands, rings winked and glimmered.

Any trace of slovenliness? Not a chance—not during a weekday when appearances and first impressions matter as much as they do for the high-profile, not when dressing to impress is more than a luxury and a lifestyle, it's a professional necessity.

"Women who are in power need to be conscious of what they wear and how they come across," said Loyce Arthur, UI associate pro-

"I always think twice about what I'm wearing and check to see if I'm comfortable being scrutinized in it."

— **Regina Bailey**  
IOWA CITY MAYOR

fessor of theater costume designer. "It is armor. When you put something out there, it's a conscious effort to project an image. The fact she's so open about what she wears says she wants to let people in on her personality."

While talking fashion that afternoon in her office around a circular table that would rival King Arthur's in size, Mason wasn't the UI President, but a fashionista. Her presidential side meticulously plans university tuition, regularly meets with academics as far flung

as Seoul, and has calculated a way out of the mishandled Hillcrest sexual assault investigation that earned her the ire of the community and state lawmakers last semester.

In the culture and age we live when every outfit Michelle Obama climbs into is scrutinized and dissected

(TV pundits: *Can you believe she wore that red dress! She simply glowed!*) appearance matters. For many in power, clothing is a finely nuanced language that demands fluency.

For someone like Mason, arguably the most important education official in the state and one who manages a roughly \$2.1 billion operating budget at the UI, fashion is a serious matter; even if shopping is pretty damn fun. She embraces her keen fashion antenna, and uses it.

"Your appearance conveys a message," she said. "There's power in it. And there's also respect. If I show up to a business meeting not business dressed, I don't get respected. Whether it's power or respect, [fashion] does send a message."

What that message is, however, differs from business meeting to dinner party to Hawkeye football game. Every outfit, every pair of earrings becomes an effort to broadcast the right persona. The question then for this Iowa icon becomes: What message should be sent?

## Fashion is power

But the child who once tore through a bevy of garment stores with her mother in Manhattan is still with her.

On June 21, 2007, Mason was named UI president. Hugging her at the honorary ceremony was a jet-black women's business suit that would surely make slacks queen (and



Secretary of State) Hillary Clinton beam: creased, professional, un-self-consciously evoking confidence.

It was then that she brought to Iowa a fashion taste that began in New York City, was refined in California and Kansas, and matured in Indiana—a melting pot of high-end blazers and top-shelf dresses. All for a reasonable price, she assures.

She sometimes strolls about campus in

"Your appearance conveys a message. There's power in it. And there's also respect."

— **Sally Mason**  
UI PRESIDENT

leather coats, leather vests, and size 9 Pikolinos shoes, every so often stopping to discuss this latest fashion trend or that particular outfit. When asked why she loves leather so much, she gave a sly look, saying, "I like clothes that feel good." She pauses. "And I just got (a leather jacket) for \$50!"

If anything, such fashion consciousness has grown in salience by the day with the emergence of Secretary Clinton and the new first lady as major players on the national picture. The evidence? Google. Type in "Michelle Obama fashion" and the search yields nearly seven million sites; and for Hillary more than three million. Meanwhile, for the often-reticent Laura Bush, only 600,000 hits appeared. Google spokespeople say that online searches for whatever designer the first lady wears to a public event spike shortly after the appearance.

Does all this attention paid to the clothes of women with authority detract or empower?

Opinions vary. Mary Lynn Damhorst, an Iowa State professor and expert in the sociological aspects of clothing, said both arguments ring true. To scrutinize a woman's dress is to objectify her, she said. But yet, to scrutinize a woman's dress is to award attention that otherwise wouldn't have been received.

"There are so many options to play with (in women's clothing) that it's a creative self-actualizing activity for many women," she said.

“It’s fun. But also gives messages as women are more allowed to engage in symbols.”

Regenia Bailey, Iowa City Mayor, bemoans the attention paid to her dress: Can’t she just throw on a pair of blue jeans and be done with it? She said she forgot herself, and her position, one recent Friday when she went to a public event garbed in a jacket and jeans, only to be later criticized slightly for her casualness.

“People absolutely notice,” she said. “I always think twice about what I’m wearing and check to see if I’m comfortable being scrutinized in it.”

Whether right or wrong, high-profile women are often forced to meld elements of professionalism, feminism, and individuality—and for Mason, respect.

It’s a charge she can’t help but enjoy. Even in the fall of 2007, when Mason, Dean Linda Maxson, and Iowa Foundation President Lynette Marshall traveled to Okoboji to fundraise, she needed to steal some time to shop in the city and mull the local discount racks. Not that there were any objections.

She and shopping buddy Marshall say such

impromptu shopping sprees are unusual, but cherished the mixing of business and pleasure. Because it’s this pleasurable exercise that lends itself to objectives that are paramount for someone in power: staying relevant, commanding respect.

“We both enjoy a good sale and we don’t want to spend a lot of money,” Marshall said. “Just like a man who is in a professional role, we all want to be taken seriously. Wardrobe is an important part of that.”

### The foundations of a shopping affair

Though roughly a half-century ago, Mason says she still remembers her first introduction to shopping along the strip malls of downtown Newark. She was younger than 10 when her mother took her out to the stores, Bamburgers and Kresges. Up and down the streets, people teemed in and out of the boutiques like bees in a honeycomb.

Mason hated it, she said. People were harried and rude, crazed with bargain lust. But this scene may be one of the closest things to a

family craft in Mason’s family. Both Mason’s grandmother and mother were entrenched in the fashion industry. First, her grandmother as a retailer for L.S. Ayres in Indianapolis, then her mother with Gimbles in New York City.

“Growing up with my grandmother, my mother knew the business,” Mason said. “And like we always joked, ‘She could tie a mean

Mason’s mother raised her to love fashion as she did—and to love sales.

bow.’ So she started in gift wrap.”

Mason’s mother raised her to love fashion as she did—and to love sales. Mason’s father was a World War II veteran and eventually a truck driver in New Jersey, while her mother was mostly a housewife. Money was tight. So the family had no choice but to live frugally. This lifestyle was an imprinting experience on

**FASHION CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 >>**

## We Can’t All Be Snappy Dressers

I’ve never been able to dress myself.

I know the singsong directions about which limb goes in which hole, that the tag goes on the inside of your shirt, and all those other Puritan rules. I get it, okay. But when people talking about clothing as an extension of power, of a critical element of self-expression, they lose me.

All because I’m the continued victim of dress code.

My scientific ally, Wikipedia, assures me that these rules are present in all societies—“built in rules or signals indicating the message being given by a person’s clothing and how it is worn.” A wise definition, anonymous updater. Yet for the majority of my life, clothing has been used as a personality bandit rather than re-enforcer: signifying that, well, my dress doesn’t reflect my supposedly glowing inner self.

At least that was the idea.

Before I entered the wonderfully open environment of Iowa City, I was for 13 years confined to Catholic school hallways. The experience wasn’t horrible, which is disappointing—traumatic Catholic school stories are an easy road to ice-breaking sympathy. And despite the potentially sexy image of myself in a plaid uniform, we didn’t have those either.

And so, my dress for 13 years: khaki or black dress pants, topped by a usually plain polo shirt

(sweaters required the polo underneath; nerdy always). Our not-quite-uniforms kept us in dress code purgatory—neither as boring and safe as those of old, but not as free as our supposedly anarchic public school contemporaries. Oh, we had precious jean days where we were let loose from the shackles of the non-denim, but after years of regularity, even my days off were bland.

Forays into trends were comically misguided: I had one overlarge Tommy Hilfiger shirt that likely wasn’t even legit (a factory outlet? Really parents?) and one later outfit combining JNCO Jeans with

I gradually developed a bland if socially acceptable sense of style—a blend of trendiness and solid colors, all designed to fit well (I think).

ever-so-spiffy “Yo Quiero Taco Bell” t-shirt. I ended up adopting the thrift store technique a few years before that became trendy too—thus always being on the unfortunate outside. High school was filled with too big handmedowns that I wore for years on end (baggy was cool maybe?). And by the time I got to college? I didn’t even own a pair of jeans. I probably had four t-shirts, all giveaways.

Fast forward five years. I’m out of school, back into the job world. I gradually developed a bland if socially acceptable sense of style—a blend of

trendiness and solid colors, all designed to fit well (I think). Yet now, again, insert the dreaded word: dress code. A symptom of the professional world. An inevitability.

So imagine my disappointed dread when my current job posted an updated dress code: essentially asking for the same drab attire as my pre-college days. And be disappointed, too, about my imagined future in any field save adventure journalism (which I likely just made up)—which will surely ask for an ill-fitting suit and pre-tied tie (I purposefully never learned how to knot one) on a formal whim.

Maybe these are just the complaints of a spoiled American individualist; maybe there’s room for gender-infused criticism about how I have it easy. I’ll accept both. But after years of being girlfriend-subjected to fashion TV shows and arguments, schooled by suited-up colleagues in my unfortunate mock trial stint, and currently bombarded by inane exclamations that Michelle Obama is “rewriting the rules”—perhaps it’s appropriate to mourn the inevitable: we’re stuck.

Pick a decade and gender and social class. Pick interests and friend circles. Pick geography, pick genetics. Dress follows. Perhaps there’s some quasi-activist statement to drop about being paper dolls, but I’m not feeling nearly snippy enough. All I’d ask is that whomever demands the code come over each morning and dress me themselves. I won’t make it weird; it’s the least you can do.

*Paul Sorenson is naked.*

St. Paddy's Day in Iowa City can easily devolve into a grotesque debacle, a cavalcade of fake accents, leprechaun abuse, green beer and vomit—the traditional parade of steering stereotypes. Did St. Patrick go to the trouble of ridding Ireland of snakes (even if he really didn't) for this? But in spite of it all, certain Irish pubs find a way to maintain their dignity. What, then, is the cliché-proof appeal of a *real* Irish pub?

Sara Morgan, a bartender at Iowa City's Dublin Underground on Dubuque Street, suggests a few basic elements: a variety of Irish whiskeys, good people, good Guinness and perhaps a certain understated assurance. "Any place that yells and screams 'This is an Irish bar!' probably isn't."

When you order a pint at a real Irish bar, it should be understood you mean a pint of stout. And don't trust a bartender who hurries the pour. "If you get a pint in under three minutes you aren't getting a real one," says Morgan.

Indeed there is an art to drawing a proper pint insists Rory (Ruardhi on the birth certificate) Brown, owner of the Dublin Underground. "You've got to build a good pint of Guinness," says Brown. "Build. Not pour. When it's three-quarters full, let it settle. The head's got to come just proud of the rim of the glass."

Then the head is decorated with the outline of a shamrock, a crowning flourish beyond the ken of many bartenders. "An Irishman will travel an extra distance for a properly built pint of Guinness," says Brown.

Beyond the booze are intangibles—a strong core of friendly regulars, bartenders who can tell good stories and jokes, the possibility of carrying on a conversation without screaming at the top of your lungs. "You're

paying as much for conversation as anything," says Morgan.

Kate Gadiant is something of a regular at the Dublin and a friend of Morgan. Her surname is Swiss, but her middle name is Eileen, which she says makes her sufficiently Irish. She isn't "a connoisseur of Irish bars per se, but of dive bars generally, which line up with the qualities of a good Irish bar pretty well."

"But unlike bars in Ireland," Kate says, "there's no drunken band in the corner here."

The word pub, short for public house, reveals a community-oriented intent. "It's a place where people meet after work," says Brown. "It's not a meat market.

A real Irish bar is not a 'party-till-you-puke'-kind of place."

Brown's parents come from Cork, Ireland, but he grew up in Iowa City. They spoke Gaelic only when they didn't want the children to understand what they were saying, but they didn't push the

"Irishness." Brown did pick up a few essential Gaelic phrases along the way, such as "Erin go bragh" and "Pog mo thoin" ("Ireland forever" and "Kiss my ass"), if not from his parents. He graduated from Regina High School and received a bachelor's business administration from The University of Iowa in 1996.

Brown opened the Dublin Underground 17 years ago to escape the clutches of a career in retail. But being your own boss isn't all sweetness and light. Over the years some other nominally Irish bars opened by his Regina classmates—Hanrahan's, Rock's Road House, and Fitzpatrick's—have all closed. It's a struggle for Brown, too, with constant repairs and upkeep. The drop ceiling of the Dublin is pocked with rectangles cut out to accommodate the installation of a new fire suppression system.

"That was going to be a Harley Davidson," says Brown. "The truth is it's a lot of hard work making it look easy. You have to deal with the fire department,



Like a saint's relics, remnants of the original Donnelly's bar—in one form or another—can be found in other places around town.

An excerpt from **Parting Glass** by John Birkbeck

And we were there so many haunted autumns ago twirling barstools at Donnelly's place veterans of each other hard recollections and confabulatory troothes put right and otherwise failure-bound fair starters we and soddenly so from roots to split ends running to grey hairs and age a great disguise for long past error and settling in to finely tunes versage . . .

Let's dampen the glasses again dearest old conspirators not lacking of manner and banterisms before the soddenness of parting for midnight comes well into the dearth of night for such as we are.

And where are they all now and all who've become ghosts of this place alive or maybe not somewhere else?

building inspector, police department, health inspector, and they all want you to do something different next year, and none of it is cheap.”

When it comes to Irish bars in Iowa City, Harold Donnelly set the standard. His namesake downtown tavern was a landmark for 40 years until the city-mandated “urban renewal” put it in the way of the wrecking ball in 1974. As Jerry Schmidt wrote in the March 1992 issue of *Iowa City Magazine*, Harold Donnelly presided over a uniquely congenial mix of town and gown—businessmen, farmers, writers, students, professionals, laborers and artists. The bar’s sad end, sacrificed on the altar of “progress” inspired



appreciations and laments, including John Birkbeck’s “Parting Glass,” from his 1976 book of poems, *Donnelly’s Beverage* (see sidebar).

Like a saint’s relics,

**“An Irishman will travel an extra distance for a properly built pint of Guinness.”**

**Rory Brown**

Owner, Dublic Underground

remnants of the original Donnelly’s bar—in one form or another—can be found in other places around town. The magnificent old oak and mahog-

any bar from the original Donnelly’s resides now at the Jim Mondanaro-owned Micky’s on Dubuque Street. When Mondanaro wanted to open another Irish-themed bar on College Street in 2005, he named it “Donnelly’s.”

Rory Brown speaks with a certain reverence

when asked about the original Donnelly’s. Its heyday was before Brown’s time, but he’s duly aware of the pub’s pre-eminent position in the firmament of Iowa City pub lore.

Reflecting on my queries about the past, Brown climbed up on a counter behind the bar, scanning the bric-a-brac antique shop curiosities on a high shelf. He was looking for a glass from the original Donnelly’s with a placard signed by Harold himself, but it’s gone missing for the time being—lost, broken, stolen, hiding behind a dusty mug or God knows where.

Brown was able to find one treasured artifact: a yellowed matchbook from the original Donnelly’s. The green text reads, “Beer, Cocktails, Food and Kind Words.” That will have to do. **lv**

*David Henderson studies journalism at The University of Iowa. His reports have aired on WSUI, the Alaska Public Radio Network and the Third Coast International Audio Festival. His words and pictures have appeared in this publication, the Bristol Bay Times, NYTimes.com, and with terrible frequency at www.hendutimes.blogspot.com.*

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**B**artender, here's \$50—hook me up with a festival pass and a pint of Fat Tire. That statement is one organizers of the Mission Creek Music Festival anticipate hearing often over the next two months. Marking its fourth year, this multi-day, multi-venue event runs April 1-5.

Modeled after the successful Mission Creek Music & Arts Festival in San Francisco, Mission Creek: Midwest has blown through its original design and struck out on its own to make a reputation in Iowa City.

One of the Midwest's producers, Andre Perry, previously lived in San Francisco and worked on the original Mission Creek festival with its founder Jeff Ray. After moving here to enroll in the University of Iowa's creative nonfiction writing program, Perry and fellow founder, Tanner Illingworth, came up with the idea to put together a Midwest version of Mission Creek.

"We had heard about Iowa City," said Perry. "Gabe's was one of those venues that I even knew about before moving here and the writing community is renowned across the country here, so we just figured that something like Mission Creek could happen here."

The basic philosophy remains the same behind these two events. Organizers seek to pair smaller independent bands with a handful of notable headliners in order to showcase a variety of music.

"The idea is to expose local and regional talent to a larger audience and to match them up with national acts that might share some of the same interests," said Illingworth, a festival producer.

The difference between these two being that San Francisco has many more established acts to choose from locally, making it easier to draw crowds. There are far fewer bands and

performers here, so to pull off a similar festival in Iowa City requires booking a greater mix of acts to try and pique public interest.

This is no small feat. The festivals producers, Craig Eley, 27, Illingworth, 24, Todd Olmstead, 25, and Perry, 31, aimed to have everyone booked by October, but it was hard to nail everything down. Considerations had to be given to the relationships between acts and venues and who play against each other.

Organizers and doing a good job of selling the Iowa City community.

"Bookers recognize this is a special event and if their client is going to ever appear in Iowa this is the chance to do it," said Perry. "We're not Coachella and we can't pay them Coachella dollars but this is still a cool and artistically worthy place for them to play," added Olmstead.

Organizers are also consciously attempting to break down stereotypes associated with the live music venues in this college town. Over at the Picador there's an alternative and metal crowd, while the Yacht Club is known for its get-high jam band scene, and the Mill is heavily folk-influenced.

Often it proves difficult for one venue to attract crowds from another, even if the entertainment is comparable. Mission Creek wants to turn this on its head and unify the different scenes as much as possible, so no matter

where a person stops to take in some of the festival there will be something of interest.

"One thing we've done, successfully, is take a lot of bands out of their atmosphere and take them into a different venue, in front of a different crowd," said Pittsburgh native Craig Eley, who also contributes a monthly music column in Little Village. "We'll throw a big, crazy indie-rock show at the Yacht Club because it just doesn't happen very often."

While the music is the driving force behind Mission Creek, a strong second is Iowa City itself. The organizers point out that in addition to the

literary and indie-rock scenes here, there also are a variety of subsets underneath the obvious, such as the underground music and noise scenes and poetry or spoken word. Mission Creek's objective is to shine a spotlight on all these different happenings in town so people can identify them and become involved.



GZA and The Fruit Bats are two of the headliners at this year's festival.

Some shows can be booked in a couple weeks, but others, like The Mountain Goats, are four years in the making.

Dividends are already appearing by Mission Creek bringing in acts to Iowa City that would not come here normally. There is no medium-sized club in town where national touring acts can play on a regular basis. The Iowa Memorial Union can put on shows of this level, but they are alcohol free, and that just won't do. Mission Creek offers the chance to see a sweet band in a tiny venue.

"A band like Beach House or The Mountain Goats, at this point in their careers, are going to bypass the state of Iowa," said Olmstead. "We use what we have here to get someone to play a smaller venue than they might otherwise."

This is made possible through a little arm twisting on the part of Mission Creek's orga-

**"I support innovative ideas for the arts and the Mission Creek guys are innovative."**

—City Councilwoman Connie Champion

“That’s the other thing about the festival—its really about Iowa City,” said Eley. This festival is in downtown venues, it supports the downtown economy, but more than that, we all live here and we love this place and if we can get one or two national news stories because of this festival it promotes Iowa City as well.”

Something the Mission Creek folks are noticing this year is the attention they are getting from people in the community. Organizers

“I support innovative ideas for the arts and the Mission Creek guys are innovative,” said City Councilwoman and Mission Creek contributor Connie Champion.

The festival is a nonprofit organization, something the organizers get help with from Paul Burns at the law firm of Bradley & Riley, on a pro bono nature. Mission Creek is always on the edge of the cliff financially but has run in the black each year.

**“We can’t pay them Coachella dollars but this is still a cool and artistically worthy place for [bands] to play.”**

—Organizer Todd Olmstead

went out of their way in reaching out to the city and local businesses and they have been rewarded for their efforts.

For the first time, the city council and City of Iowa City are backing the festival. Mission Creek is also partnering with Summer of the Arts on the literary component of the festival. An agreement also was reached with the university to partner with Scope, and host some events on campus.

“We try to pay people as much as we can, as a rule,” said Perry. “Sometimes people do favors for us because they know we’ve got some financial stress and they will take down their rates so we can pull it off.”

“Everyone gets paid except us,” said Olmstead.

The first two years the festival was only as big as its founders’ bank accounts. But there has been steady growth annually, from 1,200 attendees the first year, to 3,500 in 2008. This year organizers are looking to draw 5,000

**MCMW CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 >>**

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## Mission Creek Midwest Confirmed Acts

44 musical and literature acts are confirmed for April's Mission Creek Midwest Festival with more acts to be announced. For an up-to-date schedule visit [www.missionfreak.com/festival](http://www.missionfreak.com/festival).



### ■ Acoustic/ Folk (17)

THE MOUNTAIN GOATS  
BEACH HOUSE  
JOHN VANDERSLICE  
FRUIT BATS  
BOWERBIRDS  
GOLDEN BIRDS  
THE TALLEST MAN ON EARTH  
SIMON JOYNER  
CALEB ENGSTROM  
ESCAPE THE FLOODWATER JUG BAND  
CARTRIGHT  
ROOMMATE  
FULTON LIGHTS  
PIETA BROWN  
JOE PUG  
THESE UNITED STATES  
SHAME TRAIN

### ■ Rock (13)

NO AGE  
DIPLOMATS OF SOLID SOUND  
THE WESTERN FRONT  
HEADLIGHTS  
EL PASO HOT BUTTON  
THE GGLITCH  
DAVID ZOLLO & THE BODY ELECTRIC  
BIRTH RITES  
MANNIX!  
ILL EASE  
THE PACK A.D.  
DEAD LARRY  
PETIT MAL

### ■ Rap (1)

GZA/GENIUS (OF WU-TANG CLAN)

### ■ Electronic (5)

PORNO GALACTICA  
SCHOOL OF FLYENTOLOGY  
ANAVAN  
THE HOOD INTERNET  
THE BROWN NOTE

### ■ Literature (8)

EDMUND WHITE  
CHARLIE D'AMBROSIO  
STEVEN KUUSISTO  
MARK LEIDNER  
ANDREW MILWARD  
STEVE HANSON  
FORKLIFT: OHIO  
ANTHOLOGY

## >> MCMW FROM PAGE 17

people in order for the festival to reach its financial goals.

"The biggest marker will be the fifth year, if we can stay alive through this year," said Perry.

The additional support coming in for 2009 has enabled Mission Creek to expand. It was four days, now it's five. More venues are involved, like Public Space ONE (PS1), which is alcohol free and allows more all ages shows to be thrown.

"It's not that we're just growing by throwing bigger shows and having bigger bands, which we so have, but it's also growing down into the community, said Eley.

It's this philosophy that drew New Belgium Brewery, the makers of Fat Tire amber ale, to sign on as a sponsor. It is a small sustainable company with local roots that appreciates what Mission Creek is trying to accomplish.

Although Mission Creek started out as a Midwest edition of its San Francisco counterpart, its producers now compare the festival's style and experience, on a smaller level, to Noise Pop in San Francisco and SXSW in Austin, Texas. These too are multi-venue events that occur in downtown locations.

Events this year will be held at the Englert Theatre, the Iowa Memorial Union, the Java House, the Mill, the Picador, Prairie Lights bookstore, PS1 and the Yacht Club.

With over 60 announced performances so far, Mission Creek drops the hammer on the first night, bringing GZA or The Genius to the Englert. Iowa isn't exactly a hot bed for hip hop acts, so booking one of the Wu-Tang Clan is a huge get for Iowa City and Mission Creek.

"The Wu-Tang Clan and GZA's work has been a huge part of all of our lives," said Illingworth. "Listening to the Wu for so many years, it's just awesome to get them in here finally, especially at a place like the Englert."

It's unknown how this show will play out, but anticipation is high for it to be a memorable night. Tickets can be purchased separately,

**"We're really trying to lay ourselves down as one of the cutting edge things in music and literature."**

—Organizer Andre Perry

but are included in the price of a festival pass. An after-party is being arranged at the Yacht Club, where a tour of indie-hip hop artists will be kicking it. Admission is free for anyone who goes to the Englert show.

Beach House brings their atmospheric experimentation from Baltimore to the Picador Thursday night. Also on the bill that evening is The Fruit Bats, a side band of the Shins' multi-instrumentalist Eric Johnson. "People will be floored by how good they are," said Perry.

The Mill hosts a homecoming of sorts Wednesday for The Bowerbirds, which feature two former Iowa City residents. Then Friday The Mountain Goats and John Vanderslice step to the stage with their intriguing brand of acoustic guitar work. "He is never uninteresting," said Eley of The Mountain Goats' John Darnielle.

Of the numerous all-ages shows, notable is Tallest Man on Earth. This Swedish folksinger plays a late one Saturday night at PS1. This has great potential on the weirdness scale, but remember to get your drink on before, this is a dry affair. Also Cartright and Polite Sleeper should be engaging at the Java House.

Local favorites Dave Zollo, Pieta Brown, Dennis McMurrin and Public Property are also playing this year.

On the literary side of things, organizers intend to dispose of stuffy readings and breathe some fun into the presentations. PS1, Prairie Lights and the Mill have events scheduled. There also is a film screening at the university.

"The literature aspect of the festival is becoming national, and is a serious part of the festival," said Perry. "We're really trying to lay ourselves down as one of the cutting edge things in music and literature."

If five days of clubbing isn't enough to scratch your live-music itch, the night before the festival begins there is a pre-festival party at the Mill's Tuesday Night Social Club. The show is free and will include Brighton, MA and Fourth of July.

After three years of flying under the radar of many folks, Mission Creek's organizers feel they have a roster of events that will cure that problem and raise its profile.

With a festival pass running a cool \$50—a bargain for six nights of entertainment—attendees can customize their viewing experience. And with New Belgium as a sponsor, Fat Tire will be on special throughout.

"There's not one show that we booked that I'm not pretty psyched to see, or that I wouldn't go to if it wasn't part of our festival," said Eley. "Even Yak Ballz...it's going to be awesome." **lv**

*Pete Wilson is a Kentucky boy who landed in Hawkeye country after Katrina did its number on New Orleans. He covers music and culture related events, and occasionally dabble in public interest reporting.*

## &gt;&gt; FASHION FROM PAGE 13

Mason, she and Marshall say.

**The uniform of past UI presidents**

Mason's dress code and its use of color and different fabrics has offered a presidential fashion that's in a way more varied and individualistic than her predecessors, Gary Fethke and David Skorton. Both men adhered strictly to business attire. Charcoal two-piece and a Windsor knot, anyone?

Such fashion first became ubiquitous in the early 19th century when the United States stepped out of the industrial era and began to make money as fast as it could be printed. Business became a very serious endeavor and the dress code needed to mirror that, Arthur said.

"It was important for men then not to appear flighty, so they adopted a uniform of sorts that was very much a uniform—black, brown, gray suits, a subdued tie," Arthur said. "It was a business man's uniform."

Though the uniform has become more subdued since, vestiges remain and show no signs of relinquishing their grip on the American business man. There's usually no surprise in what a man will wear to a business meeting—his uniform.

Recalling his time as UI president between 1969 and 1981, President Emeritus Sandy Boyd said he normally wore dark sports coats most days, without a tie.

From the moment he started teaching until the time he retired as president some 40 years later, Boyd donned mostly the same thing every day, dubbing himself "clueless" when it comes to fashion.

"I didn't think much about how I was dressing," Boyd said. "I just wore what I wore."

This mindset for many males isn't unusual: putting little to no thought into it. Such disinterest evokes manliness, Professor Damhorst said.

"One of the great things about being a man is that you don't have to think about what you're going to wear," said Mason's husband, Ken Mason, a UI professor of biology. "But (my wife) has to think about it."

Sometimes however, the biology professor's clothing belies his described fashion indifference. His casual wear frequently consists of finely-tailored earth-toned blazers complemented by size 11 Allen Edmonds leather loafers. Looking eerily like Sean Connery,

the 49-year-old is a vigorous man of average height and build with gray-flecked hair and a salt-and-red-pepper beard.

His one accessory? A black ceramic Rado watch that cost thousands of dollars and sits like a beacon on his wrist.

It's fair to say the university's first man likes fashion. "The challenge is to find very nice clothes but to find them as cheaply as possible," he said. "And right now, with the economy in bad shape, there are a lot more sales in retail—so we'll do our part to stimulate the economy."

And at the couple's pay, that's not hard to accomplish. The UI President makes roughly a half-million dollars per year, while her husband earns \$50,000 in salary, then an additional \$50,000 for his work in university fundraising.

"Our fashion definitely was different many years and many income levels ago," Mason's husband said. But even all those years ago, 19 in fact, when the couple first met on the picturesque campus of the University of California, Davis, fashion played a part in bringing them together. Mason's air of regalness in her dress code immediately attracted him to her—though he was a just a graduate student then and "wore whatever was clean."

Now, Mason's husband said he continues to be surprised at the thought and creativity Mason puts into her outfits—a Nordstroms blouse here, Van Maur trousers there, and voilà! That she's routinely able to strike a complex balance between fashion, comfort and frugality, while upholding the socially appropriate appearances in each fashion circumstance.

The saying goes that new leaders gain respect only when they show they deserve it. Maybe that's why high-profile women seemingly have to be so careful with what they wear. There's power in their versatility of dress, but pitfalls lurk. With so much choice, it's that much easier to scrutinize. And maybe that's why Mason may seem rather bashful about any clothing item or accessory item that could appear opulent. She, like her husband, wears a black ceramic Rado wristwatch.

"Well,"—pause—"I got it for \$1,000, but it was on sale from \$2,000!" **lv**

*Terry McCoy has been a staff writer at four newspapers. He recently graduated from the Iowa journalism school and is living in Iowa City until departing for Asia in early summer to teach English as a Peace Corps volunteer.*

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A still frame from Leighton Pierce's new multimedia work *Agency of Time*.

# A Wrinkle in Time

## Leighton Pierce *Agency of Time*

Coe College, Sinclair Auditorium Galleries  
1220 First Ave NE, Cedar Rapids  
[www.leightonpierce.com](http://www.leightonpierce.com)

Through March 20, daily 3-5pm

In his latest work, film and video artist Leighton Pierce gives visual manifestation to one of modern society's greatest fears: lost time.

*Agency of Time (Toward part 2)*, a five-channel video, two-channel audio installation, uses lush, abstracted imagery and sound cues to draw the viewer into a world of broken visual lines where time is in control. Compared to some of Pierce's past pieces, such as the all-encompassing 13-channel video, eight-channel audio installation *Warm Occlusion* (2005-06), this is a fairly spare work—but

nonetheless thought-provoking.

The installation, on display in Coe College's Sinclair Auditorium Galleries through March 20, is just one part of Pierce's most recent long-term project, which groups several artistic ventures under the umbrella title *Agency of Time*. There are three tiers to the project: multi-channel video/audio/photographic installations like the one at Coe (other installations have been at the Sheldon Museum of Art in Lincoln, Nebraska and The New Frontier On Main lounge during this January's Sundance Film Festival), single-channel videos, and a book of still photographs.

Pierce constructed this alternative visual landscape in *Agency of Time* by building his video from still photographs. In his artist's statement for the Coe exhibition, he writes: "I shoot each photograph to contain a marker of time/movement. I then build the video component by stringing and layering these images together."

The installation consists of five videos projected on one long wall. Two sets of horizontal projections, which predominantly feature natural images of leaves and trees, act as a frame for the more active, squarish center projec-

tion. A soundtrack that includes dripping water, footsteps crunching leaves, and powerful blowing winds accompanies the images.

For the most part, the visual pieces are abstractions of recognizable objects. Occasionally, though, Pierce includes a clear shot—a square water well, a stone staircase, a

## You may also like...

### *Animated Painting*

Grinnell College  
Falconer Gallery  
Sixth Ave and Park St, Grinnell  
[www.grinnell.edu/falconergallery](http://www.grinnell.edu/falconergallery)

Through April 19  
Sun-Wed Noon-5pm, Thu-Sat 10-8pm

If you find that the fourth dimension (that's time, you know) is a welcome addition to your gallery-going experience, check out another local exhibit mixing traditional and contemporary art forms. *Animated Painting* includes thirteen animated pieces in a show curated by the San Diego Museum of Art.

woman looking out over a rocky bluff.

It is during these moments of focus that the loss of time becomes apparent.

For example, one section of film focuses on a moss-covered stone bench. Rather than a smooth visual approach as a person walking would normally see, Pierce has juxtaposed drastically different views of the bench. It is as if distinct visual moments in time have simply dropped out—as if time is toying with us, jerking us back and forth. The human eye, used to a seamless visual landscape, is faced with images that look both familiar and strange. It's an unsettling experience.

The accompanying soundscape both contributes to the visual uncertainty and offers relief. The rise and fall of sounds, alternatively soothing (calm, dripping water) and agitating

(powerful, rushing winds), creates a rhythm that structures the viewing experience, which might otherwise overwhelm.

Pierce shoots gesturally to create his abstract pictures, moving his hand in circular motions around objects. "I'm playing with that repetition of time through motion," he says. "If I want a second of time of a cup, for example, I'll take eight to 16 photographs. Regular video might have 30 frames per second. There might be eight in mine. I'm interested in the time you miss."

It is no coincidence that we feel discomfort viewing this installation. By offering entry into a world where time acts unexpectedly, Pierce forces us to confront what we intuitively feel but never want to admit: Our time is not ours to control. **IV**

*Maggie Anderson is an Iowa native who has lived and worked in Iowa City for the past five years. She is currently the marketing and media manager for The University of Iowa Museum of Art.*

## NATURE FROM PAGE 6 >>

and the interdependencies that flora, fauna and larger systems practice amongst each other. Civic engagement specialists like Robert Putnam (*Bowling Alone*) speak much of dense

"We must learn to grow like a tree, not like a fire," says Berry.

networks of engagement as the foundation of social capital. These dense networks happen most effectively when there is, as James S. Coleman calls it in *Foundations of Social Theory*, social network closure, or social interaction in multiple contexts. In other words, community bonds—care of and responsibility for each other—are much stronger when your neighbor is also your barber is also your fellow church congregant is also your daughter's friend's father, etc. So our economic exchanges become much more meaningful, and we build and renew (not destroy) the bonds of community much more readily, when we trade with our fellow community members, with whom we also work, play, worship and create. You can't do that through an anonymous, detached purchase of a Tickle-Me Elmo made in China ordered through Amazon.com. When we trade locally, the economy becomes part of our social network closure, similar to one of the interdependencies of a healthy, self-sustaining natural world abundant with biodiversity.

Wendell Berry characterizes the process of nature's economy as creation-care-and-return. Our human economy is based on production-consumption-waste. The latter destroys, the former burgeons with ongoing life. So we must ask ourselves these questions as we enact our economic lives: Am I building or destroying community? Am I respecting or exceeding the limits of nature? Am I harming or caring for the natural world? When we answer those questions rightly, we will discover that our economic actions are most likely occurring locally. We know how nature makes a field or forest of glorious abundance. And by following those lessons, we can create a local community of abundance. **IV**

*Thomas Dean heard E.O. Wilson speak at The University of Iowa in February. He hopes you did, too.*

## The Sit-Down with LEIGHTON PIERCE

**Little Village:** You've got a lot of your works online. Some artists are reluctant to do that.

**Leighton Pierce:** "For a while, I didn't put much online. Then I put online only older things. Now I'm thinking, why not let people get some sense of the work? Let it capture their interest. The two-inch screen online is not the same as the actual experience."



**LV:** How has new technology changed how you work?

**Pierce:** "The main thing is that I can work much faster now and see results that look like the thing itself. When I'm editing, what I see on the screen is what I get. It's like a painting in that way, I guess. When you paint, what's on the canvas is what you get."

**LV:** What do you think of the idea that we are becoming a "video society"? What does this mean for the future of art museums and artists?

**Pierce:** "I think it is true that we are living in a video age. I think of video as the new writ-

ing, in a way. Everyone has access to video now, like writing. Everyone enters into college with some writing skill. Now, you're hard-pressed to find anyone who hasn't shot at least some video as well. Of the students I have, few are saying I've never shot video. Few say they've never edited video. It's the same for artists: all artists are now making video, and they need training. Some are

very naive. I think video classes should be a requirement for students. Of course, I think film and video people should learn something about the other arts as well. All these arts relate to each other."

**LV:** How do you think the economic downturn will affect artists?

**Pierce:** "I'm trying to imagine it as a benefit. The art market has already crashed. I'm hoping it's an advantage for people who are interested in ideas and will show work without expectations of value. For me, not much changes because in a way, I've always worked that way: What are my resources and what can I do to make it work."

# Tears of a Clown

In the early morning hours, at the end of a spirited drinking party, as passed-out sophisticates snore on the couches, an old man lectures two weary writers that tragedy and comedy have the same source, and that one who truly understands their root should be able to compose both with equal felicity. Though a very Fellini-esque scene, which I could easily imagine in *La Dolce Vita*, it is actually from one of the great Greek directors and can be found in his mysterious screenplay *The Symposium*. The Greek's wisdom is nicely illustrated by a scene in *La Strada* (1954), one of Federico Fellini's early masterpieces, playing March 6th through the 10th at the Bijou. In the middle of the night, two clowns commiserate on otherwise empty bleachers. One moans in tears, "What am I here for on this earth?" The other bursts with laughter, "My God, but you're homely!"

*La Strada* is about a dim-witted but spirited girl named Gelsomina (Giulietta Masina, Fellini's wife and muse) who is sold by her mother into servitude to a performing strongman named Zampano (Anthony Quinn). Zampano is capable of bursting an iron chain with his chest; Gelsomina learns to do some rudimentary clown tricks and play the trumpet. It's all pretty pathetic, yet somehow en-

## *La Strada*

directed by Federico Fellini  
1954, 108 min

Bijou Theatre

Mar 6, 9pm • Mar 7, 7pm

Mar 8, 3pm • Mar 9, 9pm

Mar 10, 7pm • Mar 12, 9pm

tertaining; I'd put my spare lire in their hat. They ramble around Italy on a ramshackle motorcycle and eventually hook up with a circus, where a tightrope-walking Fool (Richard Basehart) befriends Gelsomina and makes it his bizarre mission in life to torment Zampano. These comic characters incline toward tragedy, but the movie is ultimately about who we are beyond the masks of comedy and tragedy. The Fool seems to know all along; Gelsomina



Giulietta Masina and Anthony Quinn in *La Strada*.

learns from the Fool; and Zampano's moment of self-discovery is delayed, awfully, to the end. André Bazin once observed that Fellini's characters don't develop, they ripen. At the end of *La Strada*, we realize, they also rot.

Fellini movies are often described as poetic; that's right, provided by that abused adjective we don't simply mean "arty and boring." They are unabashedly made things. They feel warmly human. Though I don't know but a handful of details about Fellini the man, I feel like I share with him the intimacy of a friendship. His movies all have Giulietta Masina in them; freaks and performers inevitably march through; at some point someone is suspended in mid-air; characters drift to the sea; everyone puts on acts and airs, which tend to crumble; Nino Rota's haunting music wafts in from the distance. Put all that together, and you somehow get the soul of Fellini—or so you end up believing. Though De Sica and Rossellini, his fellow neo-realists, in many ways have made more fully realized movies, they're just not as lovable as Fellini's.

Italian neo-realism, among other things, was a movement to liberate cinema from theatricality. Here is where Fellini does transcend the movement: He sees theatricality as an important part of a realism worthy of human life. On the whole, *La Strada* has been lavished with critical praise, but a number of critics have pronounced Giulietta Masina's performance too theatrical, which is sublimely idiotic. True enough, hers is a very dramatic mug of knowing smiles and clownish pouts. But theatricality is at the core of the roles Fellini

imagines for her. As far as Fellini is concerned, theatricality is at the center of all

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There are moments, often in solitude, when we no longer smile or frown to ourselves and face the humiliating ways we've played out our lives.

---

roles, on screen or off. There is a scene toward the beginning of *La Strada* where Gelsomina goes off to be by herself, right after having been sold by her mother to Zampano. When nobody is watching, she curls a big, knowing, childish grin. She's trying out on herself the emotion of being excited at the prospects of her coming adventures. Gelsomina is putting on an act all for herself; it's her ingenious way of coping with the trauma. Of course, we're watching, too. Giulietta is acting for us, the popcorn-munchers of the darkness.

Everyone in a Fellini film is an actor—that is, an actor playing an actor. He adores the performers and freaks of life, in part because they contain some quintessence of heartbreaking humanity. But those who truly see that the world's a stage also see that in the end we are more than just players. There are moments, often in solitude, when we no longer smile or frown to ourselves and face the humiliating ways we've played out our lives. The end of *La Strada* is such a moment, a devastating scene of Zampano on the seashore. As memorable as it is, I wish the movie ended on a smile (as Fellini's *Nights of Cabiria* so perfectly does). Rilke once observed, "Beauty is the last veil we lay over the horrible." No, beauty is the second-to-last veil. The last veil we put over the horror is a smile. **IV**

*Scott Samuelson teaches philosophy at Kirkwood Community College. He is also sometimes a moderator on KCRG's "Ethical Perspectives on the News" and sometimes a cook at Simone's Plain and Simple, the French restaurant in the middle of nowhere.*

# Spring Breakdown

March in the actual world might be known for St. Patrick's Day or warmer weather (hopefully), or a certain kind of basketball madness, but in the music world, it's all about one thing: the SXSW music festival and conference in Austin, Texas. Perhaps the biggest and most indulgent exercise in industry self-love ever to be conceived, it's basically filled with huge megastars performing for record execs while unsigned bands slog it out for hipsters following the trail of free Tecate. With the official SXSW website now boasting the truly absurd—1800 bands!—this translates into literally every band in the world being on the road. Iowa City will catch some acts coming and some acts going, but either way March is rich with national talent and local gems.

The most noteworthy show of the month has to be Bonnie "Prince" Billy at The Picador on the 17th. The Kentucky-born songwriter is perhaps best known for his masterful album *I See a Darkness*, released way back in 1999, or his collaboration with Matt Sweeney, Superwolf. Recent years have seen slew of Bonnie "Prince" Billy releases, however, including last year's excellent *Lie Down in the*

**Blimey!—there is St. Patrick's Day madness going down all over town, with perhaps no one doing it in truer style than the Yacht Club, which will open their doors bright and early at 7am.**

*Light.* Amazingly, he's already prepared the follow up to that record, *Beware*, which comes out on Drag City the same day as this show.

Also touring behind a new record is Canadian rocker Dan Boeckner and his wife Alexei Perry, who perform as the Handsome Furs. You know Boeckner from his other band, Wolf Parade, but that expansive indie rock sound is swapped out here for drum machine, synthesizer and guitar. The minimal instrumentation and dark sound really highlight

Boeckner's talents as a songwriter. Their excellent new record, *Face Control*, comes out on Sub Pop records on the 10th, and the band will take the stage on the 28th at the Mill.



If your leanings are more experimental, two shows at Public Space ONE this month will highlight the best in what's new and weird. On March 15th AIDS Wolf (also Canadian!) will perform their brand of punk/noise rock, which is different from but related to their Lovepump United label mates, HEALTH. AIDS Wolf (and, I mean, that name: love it or hate it?) is touring with tape/experimental musician U.S. Girls, who floored everyone with a show at PS1 back in August. It should be a welcome return. Local band Wet Hair, self-described as making "synth pulse annihilation pop tuners," will open the show. On the 24th the critically-loved Crystal Stilts will bring their hazy, noisy, surf-influenced pop songs to PS1 along with Woods. Should be pretty far out.

Speaking of welcome returns, everyone's favorite giant-mohawk sporting badasses, the Bad Fathers, are coming back to town and playing The Picador on the 12th. Known for their antics as much as their brand of rap-rock/hip-hop, all I know is that they moved to Los Angeles, are coming back with a new album in tow, and that something will probably get broken. Do they still have the mohawks? Are the new songs good? Are they reggae jams? Expect the answers to all of these questions, as well as an overabundance of shirtlessness. Also, if you're into reggae and hip-hop, you need to catch Heatbox at the Yacht Club with Public Property on the 6th. Heatbox is like Rahzel crossed with the sound effects dude from *Police Academy*, with a love of reggae, hip-hop and

dub. There're YouTube clips aplenty.

If you like your music performed with actual instruments—made out of wood!—then there are, as usual, some great shows this month.

Po'Girl (guess what? Canadian!) are a roots/acoustic/folk trio that have a really strong sense of melody and delicateness in their arrangements. If the title track from the upcoming album *Deer in the Night* is representative, then fans of everyone from Patti Griffin to Neko Case to The Boy Least Likely To will find something to love. They play the Mill on the 4th. Classically trained cellist and violist Anna Rossi will play PS1 on the 6th, touring behind her new album, *Rockwell*, which was produced by the legendary Steve Albini (!). Local songwriter Alexis Stevens will play the show, along with upright bass loop

artist Olivia Rose Muzzy.

And—blimey!—there is St. Patrick's Day madness going down all over town, with perhaps no one doing it in truer style than the Yacht Club, which will open their doors bright and early at 7am and keep going until bar close at 2am. If someone makes it all day, they get not only special prizes, but the kind of respect

**Everyone's favorite giant-mohawk sporting badasses, the Bad Fathers, are coming back in town to the Picador on March 12.**

that comes mixed with disgust by all of their peers. A full lineup of bands, including Ed & The Reds, The Mayflies and Hunab, will start around 4pm. Later in the evening, local whisky-soaked fist-pumpers The Broken Spokes will bring their Ireland-via-the-Java House Celt-punk to the Mill as part of the ongoing Tuesday Night Social Club. **lv**

*Craig Eley is a music writer, promoter and American studies grad student, usually in that order. Got news on the music scene? Write to him at [craig@missionfreak.com](mailto:craig@missionfreak.com).*



## William Elliott Whitmore

### *Animals in the Dark*

ANTI-

[www.williamelliottwhitmore.com](http://www.williamelliottwhitmore.com)

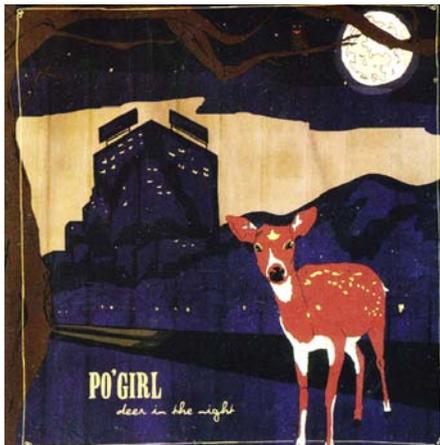
William Elliott Whitmore's fourth album (and major label debut), *Animals in the Dark* kicks off with what will likely be the most divisive track in his catalog: "Mutiny." The call and response chant cribs lyrics from both Dr. Dre and The Bloodhound Gang, rides a wave of a militant snare, and will either be viewed as the welcome emergence of the artist's sense of humor or evidence that even the best songwriters falter. But more than that, "Mutiny" establishes the anti-government arc of the album with an extended metaphor about taking a the ship from a (power-) drunk captain.

The polemic trend extends with an indictment of crooked cops on live favorite "Johnny Law," a denouncement of Uncle Sam on the familial narrative "Hard Times Made Us," and the rollicking, country-shuffle "Old Devils" decries oppressive government. Anywhere Whitmore has seen power abused, he has called it out.

Yet *Animals in the Dark* avoids the major pitfalls of a political album. Firstly, Whitmore keeps things general. All of his grievances could be registered during any administration, merely apply his language to your particular quagmire. He also maintains a degree of levity. Specifically, the boisterous "Johnny Law," which is flush with humorous, anti-establishment rabble-rousing. Ultimately, and maybe most importantly, Whitmore gives us all hope. Specifically the hope that lies within the individual to rise above the muck and mire.

The best example of this hope is found on "Who Stole the Sole." After Whitmore bemoans the sapping of the arts and the silencing of dissenting voices, he pulls back from the pain as his guitar and a cello build to a crescendo then Whitmore sighs, "I got back that spark / from inside of me / And I can finally breathe / hear the shuffle of my dancing feet."

*John Schlotfelt is a University of Iowa graduate and staff writer for missionfreak.com.*



## Po' Girl

### *Deer in the Night*

[www.pogirl.net](http://www.pogirl.net)

Canada is, like, this whole other country. They apparently are secretly responsible for about half of the music we think of as American. Joni Mitchell, Neil Young, Leonard Cohen? All Canadian. Comes now Po' Girl—two women, Awna Texeira, and Allison Russell, one Torontonion, one Quebecois—sneaking across at Windsor, Ontario, to conquer us all over again. They'll be at the Mill March 4th. Be sure and make them show their passports.

For all their sneaky, English-speaking foreignness, I think these women are exactly the sort of music that fits perfectly in Iowa City. The banjo and accordion and minimal drum kit would go down great with Will Whitmore and the Escape The Floodwater Jugband. They write sweet songs that fit their voices like old clothes too, and their unruly dueling vibratos recall their fellow countrywomen Kate and Anna McGarrigle. But while they're acoustic folkies in the broadest sense, what intrigues me about their sound is that they're much odder and more interesting than that. Touches of jazz idiosyncrasy in their their vocal lines, echoes of French chanson, hints of the deliciously odd Nova Scotian folk, all mix together into an organic whole.

What makes this CD special is their unique approach to vocal harmony. Their voices always add up, but each singer's natural rhythm is different, so they sound perfectly together and ready to fall apart at the same time. One has husky voice with reedy overtones, one has the edgy sweetness of Emmy Lou Harris. All joking about Canada aside (and who can resist that?), Po' Girl is rough and smooth, sweet and tart, and would be huge stars in that super-cool alternate universe I've always wanted to live in. And, they sent me a picture postcard of Ontario, how cool is that?

# Checking Fares?

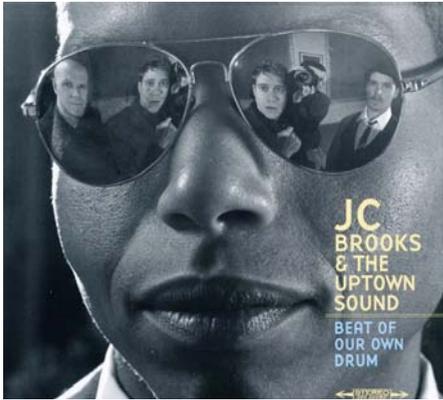
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## JC Brooks & The Uptown Sound

*Beat Of Our Own Drum*

[www.myspace.com/theuptownsound](http://www.myspace.com/theuptownsound)

JC Brooks comes from Chicago, but recently played at the Yacht Club, and from all reports, burned the joint down. I wasn't able to make it out to that show, but this CD gives me a strong idea of the sort of fireworks of which these guys are capable. First of all, JC Brooks has a voice and half—maybe two or three. I can hear hints of Prince, Little Richard, and even Lou Rawls in his voice. The guy was born to make the girls cry and get men into knife fights.

From the "Stereo 360 Sound" Logo pirated from Columbia Records to the sharp suits, these guys are consciously going for a Retro-soul vibe. While that's great theater, it's a little bit of a straight-jacket. Sure "Love One Another" sounds great, like Otis Redding sweating one out at Stax studio. But you can still hear Otis himself—I hear he's still holding it down on iTunes. On some of these songs, I can appreciate how hard they work at trying to capture that '60s soul vibe, but I want them to find their own voice.

And occasionally they do, as on "75 Years of Art Sex," which owes more to Television and Talking Heads than Muscle Shoals. Those little bits of punk rock that poke through make this record. On the instrumental number "How To Stop Loving Someone," they obviously had The Meters on their mind, but the guitar is just a little too loud and the back beat too hip hoppy to be a mere imitation. And sometimes, as on the ballad "Here Comes the Fall," they manage to fully embrace soul music and transcend mere re-creation or imitation. These guys obviously have enough talent for 10 bands, and the best tracks on this CD make mincemeat out of the other neo-soul poseurs.



## Bonne Finken

*Soul on Display*

[www.bonnefinken.com](http://www.bonnefinken.com)

It takes some gut for a white girl from Knoxville, Iowa, to use "Soul" in her debut CD's title. But Finken can, as they say in the parlance, bring it. She has a voice and delivery with the buttery depth of Annie Lennox, the effortless blues edge of Bonnie Raitt, and the complete lack of fear that marks Aretha Franklin's singing. She's more of a rock

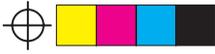
belter than a soul singer, but that's okay—she doesn't add those annoying, pointless melismatic curlicues so popular in modern R&B.

Of course, you'd have to be fearless if you're a female singer and you cover a song made famous by Aretha Franklin, "Do Right Woman." Finken transforms it into a more up-tempo funk idiom, and does okay, but there isn't a singer on earth that should invite comparison with Aretha. More successful are songs like "Possible Impossible," which brings to mind Alanis Morissette's mid-tempo songs. But in a good way. Really. It's catchy, with expensive sounding flourishes like a string arrangement, and where Morissette bawls, Finken stays sweet.

The very next song "Knee Deep" is just Finken and a slightly out-of-tune piano, and lord can the girl sell it. The real hook to Bonne Finken's work is that she never looks before she leaps. The belting climax of "Knee Deep" may seem a bit much to some people, but I like that she seems to go to that extreme naturally, and not as some sort of American Idol-esque bathetic pandering. "My City of Industry" shines as much for the interesting arrangement as her singing—based around programmed dance beats with echoey synth lines, it's an unholy of '80s British synth pop and Finken's very un-British emotional delivery.

If you visit Ms. Finken's website, you can read her inspiring back story, but I won't repeat it here, because while it might inform her music, the music itself doesn't need any propping up by the singer's biography. The songs, and the voice behind them, can stand by themselves.

*Kent Williams is an optimist who loves life, sport, and hates lies. He is Little Village's arts editor.*

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## ART/EXHIBITS

### African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa

[www.blackiowa.org](http://www.blackiowa.org)

Check website for locations

No Roads Lead to Buxton through Mar.

### AKAR

257 E. Iowa Ave. Iowa City

[www.akardesign.com](http://www.akardesign.com)

New Porcelain: Ayumi Horie, through Mar. 13 • Recent Ceramics Stacey Stanhope & Christopher Baumann, Mar. 13-25 • 2009 Yunomi Invitational, Mar. 27-Apr. 17

### Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids

[www.crma.org](http://www.crma.org)

Grant Wood Studio and Visitor Center, Guided tours of Grant Wood's home and studio, Saturdays & Sundays, hourly 12-4pm

Persian Visions: Contemporary Photography from Iran, through May 10 • American Narratives, Mar. 14-May 31

### The Chait Galleries Downtown

218 E Washington St., Iowa City

[www.thegalleriesdowntown.com](http://www.thegalleriesdowntown.com)

Fresh Paintings, through Mar. 13

### Faulconer Gallery/ Bucksbaum Center for the Arts

Grinnell College, 1108 Park St., Grinnell

[www.grinnell.edu/fulconergallery](http://www.grinnell.edu/fulconergallery)

Animated Painting, opening night Feb. 6, 4:30pm, exhibit through April 19

### Iowa Artisans Gallery

207 E. Washington, Iowa City

[www.iowa-artisans-gallery.com](http://www.iowa-artisans-gallery.com)

Family Portrait, through Mar. 22 • Norma Wolff, Mar. 26-Apr. 26

### Iowa City Gallery Walk

Downtown Iowa City

Gallery Walk in 18 locations downtown, Mar. 6, 5-8pm

### UI Museum of Art

[www.uiowa.edu/uima](http://www.uiowa.edu/uima)

Check website for locations

Trenton Doyle Hancock, Suzanne L. Tick and Terrance Mowers Distinguished Visiting Artist, Seamans Center, Room 1505, Mar. 5, 7:30pm

## MUSIC

### Clapp Recital Hall/Harper Hall/ Hancher Auditorium relocated events

[www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa](http://www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa)

Check website for locations

UI Chamber Orchestra, Mar. 1, 3pm • Rossitza Jekova-Goza, violin, and Jeffrey Lastrapes, cello; Mar. 2, 8pm • Iowa Bach Festival, Mar 3-6 • Juan de Marcos & the Afro-Cuban All Stars, Mar. 10, 7:30pm • Musicians from Marlboro, Mar. 11, 7:30pm • The Academy of Ancient Music, Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, Mar. 25, 7:30pm • Camerata, David Puderbaugh, conductor, Mar. 27, 8pm • Percussion Spectacular, Mar. 29, 8pm • Composer's Workshop, Mar. 29, 8pm • Timothy Shafer, piano, Mar. 30, 8pm • UI Symphony Orchestra, Mar. 31, 8pm

### CSPS/Legion Arts

1103 Third St SE, Cedar Rapids

[www.legionarts.org](http://www.legionarts.org)

Duncan Sheik, Lauren Pritchard, Mar. 3, 8pm • Richard Shindell, Mar. 8, 7pm • Patty Larkin, Mar. 12, 8pm • Karan Casey, Mar. 14, 8pm • Susan Werner, Mar. 20, 8pm • Occidental Brothers, Mar. 21 8pm • Beppe Gambetta, Mar. 22, 7pm

### Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City

[www.englert.org](http://www.englert.org)

The Beggarmen, Mar. 8, 8pm • Madeline and the Bad Hat, Mar. 28, 3pm • Rod Pierson Big Band, Mar. 29, 2:30pm

### The Industry

211 Iowa Ave., Iowa City

[www.myspace.com/theindustryic](http://www.myspace.com/theindustryic)

All shows at 8pm unless noted

Thumpday every Thursday

Irie Sol & River and the Tributaries, Mar. 6 • Kidnap the Sun, Mar. 13

### The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City

[www.icmill.com](http://www.icmill.com)

Shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

Sunday Night Pub Quiz, Sundays, 9pm-Midnight

Open Mic with J. Knight, Mondays, 8pm, call 338-6713 to sign up

Tuesday Night Social Club, Tuesdays, free

Mint Wad Willy, Old Panther, Viking F\*ck, Mar 3 • Po' Girl, Mar 4, 8pm • The Blend, Mar. 5 • Grooveship, Mar. 6 9pm • Dave Zollo & the Body Electric, Mar. 7 • Weekend Warriors, Mar. 9, 8pm • Mannix!, Light Pollution, Datagun, Mar. 10 • Burlington St. Bluegrass Band, Mar. 11, 7pm • Red and the Eds, Mar. 12 • Mad Buffalo w. Scott Cochran & Flannel, Mar. 13 • Stickman w. Liberty Leg, Acoustic Guillotine, Bad Accidents, & Illinois John Fever, Mar. 14, 7pm • St. Patty's w. Broken Spokes, Slaughterhouse 6, Mar. 17 • Mike Mangione w. Shame Train, Mar. 20 • Dave Moore, Mar. 21, 8pm • University of Iowa Jazz Performance, Mar.

24 • Burlington St. Bluegrass Band, Mar. 25, 7pm • Michigan Bailout Tour w. My Dear Disco, The Hard Lessons, Great Lake Myth Society, & Deastro, Mar. 26 • Jumbies & Samba Nosso, Mar. 27, 9:30pm • Handsome Furs w. the Cinnamon Band, Datagun, Mar. 28 • Brighton MA, Fourth of July, Wolves in the Attic, Mar. 31

### Musick's Feast

2701 Rochester Ave., Iowa City

Iowa Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, Mar. 1, 7pm

### Old Capitol Museum

Pentacrest, UI Campus, Iowa City

[www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap](http://www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap)

Piano Sunday, Mar. 1, 1:30pm • John Manning, tuba, and Richard Gloss, piano, with the Java Jews Klezmer Band; Mar. 5, 8pm • Maurita Murphy Mead and friends, mixed chamber music, Mar. 10, 8pm • Anthony Arnone, cello, Mar. 28, 8pm

### The Picador

330 E. Washington St., Iowa City

[www.thepicador.com](http://www.thepicador.com)

All shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted

4 Lo, Tone D Boss, Mar. 5, 6pm • Murder By Death, Fake Problems, Sam Lowry, Mar. 6 • Lucky Boys Confusion, Blue Island Tribe, Heart Set Self-Destruct, Backdrop, Mar. 7 • Karate High School, Watchout! There's Ghosts, After Midnight Project, Kidnap The Sun, Mar. 8, 6pm • Snow Demon, Admiral Black, Lord Green, Mar. 9 • From the Pawn, No Wings to Speak Of, Buck Nasty, High Five, Victim or Victory, Mar. 10, 6pm • Dear in the Headlights, Reubens Accomplice, Miniature Tiger, Happy Chromosomes, Mar. 11, 6pm • D Allie, United States of Mind, St. David, Clancy Clark aka drunk, Mar. 11, 10pm • Bad Fathers, DJ Von Marxen, Mar. 12 • The Broken West, Blind Pilot, Mar. 13 • DREDG, Pelican, Tombs, Mar. 15, 6pm • Bonnie Prince Billy, Mar. 17, 7pm • Surtsey, Daylight Savings Account, The Wheelers, The Happy Chromosomes, Mar. 18 • Senses Fail, Inept, Senseless Beauty, Mar. 19, 6pm • Bleeding Through, The Acacia Strain, As Blood Runs Black, Impending Doom, Mar. 21, 6pm • Church Burner, 5th Dawn, Dylan Shiv & The Shanks, Mar. 21, 10pm • Dr. Manhattan, Keepers of the Carpet, Hold For Swank, Mar. 25, 6pm • Eleni Mandell, Mar. 25, 9:30pm • Rude Punch, Roadblok, Mar. 26 • Band From Town, Mint Wad Willy, Red and the Eds, Mar. 27 • Samuel Locke Ward, Sleepy Sun, Manhorse The Meatbag III, Mar. 28 • Cloud Cult, Ice Princess, Mar. 29, 6pm

### Public Space One

115 E. Washington St., Iowa City

[www.myspace.com/publicspaceone](http://www.myspace.com/publicspaceone)

Shows at 8pm unless otherwise noted

Anni Rossi w. Olivia Rose Muzzy, Alexis Stevens, Mar. 6 • AIDS Wolf, US Girls, Wet Hair, Talk Normal, Mar. 15 • La Strada < France, Twelve Cannons, Mar.



## Persian Visions: Contemporary Photography from Iran

### All month

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art  
410 Third Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids  
Tues-Sat, 10am-4pm • Thur, 10am-8pm •  
Sun, noon-4pm

Those who have not seen the 2007 film *Persepolis* might not have thought about the contemporary history of women wearing the veil in Iran. And why should one? The nation has been marketed to U.S. citizens as red-button-pushers, as anti-intellectual fundamentalists, but it might look differently through a non-Karl-Rovian lens. What would be different if we Americans saw it through the lens of a camera carried by Iranians themselves? The Cedar Rapids Museum of Art (CRMA) is bringing Eastern lowans just that kind of chance.

In this show, CRMA exhibits more than 60 works that hit on the major issues of every people: history, family, language, memory and more.—all those very human needs that are not unique to lowans craving a sense of cultural belonging. *Persian Visions* is on tour right now, developed by Hamid Severi for the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Iran. See it while you can, if you want to be a good, culturally curious lowan.

Oh, BTW, despite the incredibly rich history of the country (and the sultanate before that, etc), the exhibit is the first survey of contemporary Iranian photography to travel to the states, so BOOYAH.

16 • Pretty Peninsula, Morgan Orion, Mar. 19 •  
Crystal Stilts, Woods, Mar. 24 • Moon + Stars, the  
Sticky Bandaid, Contranamo, Kate Feldman, Mar.  
25 • Andy Zipf, Damion Suomi, Mar. 29

### Uptown Bill's Small Mall

401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City  
[www.uptownbills.org](http://www.uptownbills.org)  
Open Mic, Fridays, 8pm; Sign-up, 7:30pm

### U.S. Cellular Center

370 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids  
[www.uscellularcenter.com](http://www.uscellularcenter.com)  
Cedar Rapids Community Concert Association  
presents Side Street Strutters, Mar. 26, 7:30pm

### Yacht Club

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City  
[www.iowacityyachtclub.org](http://www.iowacityyachtclub.org)  
*Shows at 9pm unless otherwise noted*  
*Mondays Blues Jam, Tuesdays Dance Party,*  
*Wednesdays The Jam*  
Toubab Krewe, Mar. 4, • The Bridge, Mar. 5, •  
Heatbox, Clawthroat, Roster McCabe, Frankie Lee,  
Mar. 6, 8pm • The Histrionic, Johnny On Point, Mar.  
24, • 6th Annual St. Patrick's Day Massacre w/  
Hunab, Mar. 17, all day • Five in a Hand, How Far to  
Austin, Substatic, Mar. 21, • Law Law Polloza XVI,  
Mar. 26, 8pm • Nirvana Tribute with Nevermind,  
Nifty Mtn. PowWow, Merlin, Mar. 27, • Ephraim  
Zenh, Black Bloom, Daylight Savings Account,  
Mar. 28, • A No Coast November, Lots more, Mar.  
29, • Split Lip Rayfield, Mar. 30

## THEATER/DANCE/ PERFORMANCE/

### Amana Heritage Society

Downtown Amana  
[www.amanaheritage.org](http://www.amanaheritage.org)  
Progressive Dinner and show, Mar. 28, 6pm

### CSPS/Legion Arts

1103 Third St SE, Cedar Rapids  
[www.legionarts.org](http://www.legionarts.org)  
Cedar Rapids Famous & My Father's Imaginary  
Friend, Mar. 27 & 28, 8pm

### Englert Theatre

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City  
[www.englert.org](http://www.englert.org)  
Into the Woods, Mar. 6-8 • Alley Cabaret, Mar. 27  
& 28, Midnight

### Eulenspiegel Puppet Theatre

New Strand Theatre, West Liberty  
[www.puppetspuppets.com](http://www.puppetspuppets.com)  
Dessert Theatre, Feb. 28-Mar. 1

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**Thurs. Mar 5 --** ALL AGES 6PM  
**4 Lo** Tone D Boss

**Fri. Mar 6 --**  
**Murder By Death** Fake Problems Sam Lowry

**Sat. Mar 7 --**  
**Lucky Boys Confusion**  
Blue Island Tribe Heart Set Self Destruct Backdrop

**Sun. Mar 8 --** ALL AGES 6PM  
**Karate High School**  
Watch Out There's Ghosts After Midnight Project Kidnap the Sun

**Mon. Mar 9 --**  
**Snow Demon** Admiral Black Lord Green

**Tues. Mar 10 --** ALL AGES 6PM  
**Victim Or Victory**  
High Five Buck Nasty No Wings to Speak Of From the Pawn

**Wed. Mar 11 --** ALL AGES 6PM  
**Dear and the Headlights**  
Ruebens Accomplice Miniature Tiger Happy Chromosomes

**Wed. Mar 11 --**  
**D Allie with United States of Mind**  
St. David Clancy Clark aka drumk

**Thurs. Mar 12 --**  
**Bad Fathers** DJ Von Marxen

**Fri. Mar 13 --**  
**The Broken West** Blind Pilot

**Sun. Mar 15 --** ALL AGES 6PM  
**Dredj and Pelican** Tombs

**Tues. Mar 17 --** ALL AGES 7PM  
**Bonnie Prince Billy** White Magic

**Wed. Mar 18 --**  
**Surtsey**  
Daylight Savings Account The Wheelers the Happy Chromosomes

**Thurs. Mar 19 --** ALL AGES 6PM  
**Senses Fail** Inept Senseless Beauty

**Sat. Mar 21 --** ALL AGES 6PM  
**Bleeding Through**  
The Acacia Strain As Blood Runs Black Impending Doom

**Sat. Mar 21 --**  
**Church Burner** 5th Dawn Dylan Shiv and the Shanks

**Wed. Mar 25 --** ALL AGES 6PM  
**Dr. Manhattan** Keepers of the Carpet Hold For Swank

**Wed. Mar 25 --** **Eleni Mandell**

**Sat. Mar 28 --**  
**Samuel Locke Ward**  
Sleepy Sun Manhorse the Meatbag III

**Sun. Mar 29 --** ALL AGES 6PM  
**Cloud Cult** Ice Princess

**THE PICADOR**  
330 E. Washington Iowa City [www.thepicador.com](http://www.thepicador.com)

## Penguin's Comedy Club

Clarion Hotel, 525 33rd Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids  
[www.penguinscomedyclub.com](http://www.penguinscomedyclub.com)

*Check website for showtimes*

T.C. Hatter and Marcianne, Mar. 6-7 • James Johann and Kris Shaw, Mar. 13-14 • Kevin Meany and David Beck, Mar. 20-21 • Orange Barrels Todd Yohn, Mar. 27-28

## Riverside Casino

3184 Highway 22, Riverside  
[www.riversidecasinoandresort.com](http://www.riversidecasinoandresort.com)

Dick Hardwick, Mar. 6, 7pm • The Smothers Brothers, Mar. 29, 5pm

## Riverside Theatre

213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City  
[www.riversidetheatre.org](http://www.riversidetheatre.org)

Walking the Wire: Monologues at Riverside + Food, Mar. 5-7, 7:30pm, Mar. 8, 2pm

## Summit Restaurant Comedy Night

10 S. Clinton St, Iowa City  
[www.thesummitrestaurantandbar.com](http://www.thesummitrestaurantandbar.com)

*Shows start at 9:30pm*

Toby Kid, Jeff Wozer, Mar. 4 • Elliott Threatt, Aaron Gnirk, Mar. 11 • Jay Wendell Walker, Adam Lee, Mar. 18

## Theatre Cedar Rapids

Lindale Mall, Cedar Rapids  
[www.theatre.org](http://www.theatre.org)

*Check website for showtimes*

Fences, Mar. 20-29

The University of Iowa Dance  
 Space/Place Theatre, North Hall

[www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa](http://www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa)

Dancers in Company, Mar. 5-7, 8pm; Mar. 8, 3pm

## The University of Iowa Theatre

Thayer Theatre, UI Campus  
[www.uiowa.edu/~theatre](http://www.uiowa.edu/~theatre)

Painted Skin by Joe Luis Cedillo, Mar. 1, 2pm, Theater Building, University Theatres Gallery • Kid Simple, Mar. 5-14

## The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City  
[www.icmill.com](http://www.icmill.com)

Talk Art Cabaret - Writer's Workshop Readings, Mar. 11, 10pm

## Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City  
[www.prairielightbooks.com](http://www.prairielightbooks.com)

*All shows at 7pm unless otherwise noted*

Yiyun Li, fiction, Mar. 3 • Abraham Verghese, fiction, Mar. 4 • Brad Gooch, fiction, Mar. 5 • Keith Donohue, fiction, Mar. 6 • Anne Fadiman, nonfiction, Mar. 9 • Zach Savich, poetry, Mar. 25

## University of Iowa Arts

[www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa](http://www.uiowa.edu/artsiowa)

*Check website for locations*

John Taggart, poetry, Mar. 26, 8pm • Charles D'Ambrosio, "The Slick Story," Mar. 27, 4:30pm

## CINEMA

### Bijou Theater

Iowa Memorial Union  
[www.bijoutheater.org](http://www.bijoutheater.org)

*Check website for showtimes*

Ballast, Silent Light, Feb. 27-Mar. 5 • The Betrayal (Nerakhoon), La Strada, Mar. 6-12 • Josh Raskin Event, Mar. 11, 7pm • Wendy and Lucy, High and Low, Mar. 27-Apr. 2

### Cedar Rapids International Film Festival

Collins Road Theater, Cedar Rapids  
[www.crfim.org](http://www.crfim.org)

Apr. 3, 6-11pm • Apr 4, 10am-11pm

### Iowa City Public Library

Ped Mall, Iowa City  
[www.icpl.org](http://www.icpl.org)

American Teen, Mar. 6, 7pm • Out of Control: AIDS in Black America, Mar. 9, 7pm • Man on Wire, Mar. 13, 7pm • Farming with Nature, Mar. 15, 3pm • King of Kong, Mar. 27, 7pm

## Barnes & Noble

Coral Ridge Mall  
 1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville

*All Storytimes begin at 10am unless noted*

Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss, Mar. 3 • Biscuit, Mar. 6 • Charlie and Lola, Mar. 10 • A Penguin Story, Mar. 13 • St. Patrick's Day, Mar. 17 • First Day of Spring, Mar. 20 • Tough Chicks, Mar. 24 • Princess Baby, Mar. 27 • Harry the Dirty Dog, Mar. 31

## The Iowa Children's Museum

1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville  
[www.theicm.org](http://www.theicm.org)

Dr. Seus' Birthday, Mar. 1, 11am • Art Adventure: Animal Masks, Mar. 5, 3pm • Arkansas Bear, Mar. 6-8, 13-15 • Aviation Day, Mar. 8 • Art Adventure: Pop Up Pet, Mar. 12, 3pm • Celebrate Green, Mar. 17 • Art Adventure: Texture Hunt, Mar. 19, 3pm • Dan Wardell from IPTV Kids Clubhouse Story Times, Mar. 20, 11am & 1pm • Family Free Night and Art Adventure, Mar. 27 • Art Adventure with Jafar, Mar. 29, 3pm

## MISC

### Brucemore

2160 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids  
[www.brucemore.com](http://www.brucemore.com)

Pruning for Produce, Mar. 10, 6pm

### Crisis Center of Johnson County

1121 Gilbert Court, Iowa City  
[www.jccrisiscenter.org](http://www.jccrisiscenter.org)

Suicide Survivors Support Group, Mar. 5, 7-8:30pm

### Critical Hit Games

89 Second St, Coralville  
[www.criticalhitgames.net](http://www.criticalhitgames.net)

Check website for daily gaming events

### Iowa City Public Library

Ped Mall, Iowa City  
[www.icpl.org](http://www.icpl.org)

Iowa City Spells, Mar. 7, 2pm

### Old Capitol Museum

Pentacrest, UI Campus, Iowa City  
[www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap](http://www.uiowa.edu/~oldcap)

Know the Score with Joan Kjaer, Mar. 6, 5pm

## WORDS

### Barnes & Noble

Coral Ridge Mall  
 1451 Coral Ridge Ave., Coralville

Scrabble Night, Mar. 11, 6:30pm • The Writers Workshop, Mar. 12 & 26, 7pm • Coffee and Crime Book Group, Mar. 17, 7pm

## KIDS

### African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center of Iowa

[www.blackiowa.org](http://www.blackiowa.org)

*Check website for locations*

Learning Safari events at 10:30am

You Can Be a Superhero, Mar. 6 • If That Bus Could Talk, Mar. 11 • How to Grow Olympic Feet, Mar. 12

### Curses, Foiled Again

- Police investigating a credit card theft in New Britain, Conn., identified Joel Rubin, 42, as their suspect. They said that after using the stolen card belonging to a co-worker to make an \$11 purchase, Rubin handed the clerk a store discount card in his own name.
- A man entered a business in Nicholasville, Ky., waving a gun and demanding money. When an employee told him there was no money, police official Scott Harvey said the robber insisted, "I know you have money. It's a bank." After being told the bank moved four months earlier and that it was now the office of the Jessamine South Elkhorn Water District, the robber looked around, realized it wasn't a bank and left empty-handed.

### Bush's Legacy

- Shoe-throwing has gained a foothold as a form of protest since Iraqi journalist Muntazer al-Zaidi hurled his size 10s at President George W. Bush during a December news conference in Iraq. The Washington Times reported six incidents within days of each other in January.
- During a council meeting in Ithaca, N.Y., an antiwar protester identified as Robin Palmer threw three shoes at Mayor Carolyn Peterson. Palmer was removed from the meeting but not arrested.
  - Benny Dagan, Israel's ambassador to Sweden, was hit on the leg by a barrage of shoes, as well as books, during a student gathering at Stockholm University.
  - A Ukrainian reporter shoed a local politician over taxes.
  - Several hundred Bosnians threw their shoes at effigies of local officials.
  - A lone British protestor threw a shoe that missed Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao during a speech at Cambridge University.
  - Brazilian President Luiz Lula da Silva threatened to throw his shoes at unfriendly journalists.
  - Meanwhile, the Iraqi town of Tikrit, home of Saddam Hussein, unveiled a 6-foot, ton-and-a-half monument to Zaidi that depicts a bronze-colored shoe, filled with a plastic shrub. The "Statue of Glory and Generosity" by artist Laith al-Amiri bears the inscription, "Muntazer: fasting until the sword breaks its fast with blood; silent until our mouths speak the truth."

### Hooray for Science

In a dispatch about German scientists

having reconstructed the genome of Neanderthals, the New York Times reported that Dr. George Church, a genome researcher at Harvard Medical School, estimated a Neanderthal could be brought to life using present technology for about \$30 million. Doing so, he said, would satisfy the deep-seated human desire to communicate with other intelligences.

### Second-Amendment Follies

- Steve Tapp, 59, reached into his pocket for money to pay for lunch at a hospital cafeteria in Lafayette, Colo., and shot himself in the right thigh with a gun concealed in that pocket. He was treated at the hospital and released.
- Joseph Lyle, 31, was killed by his own hunting rifle while driving his pickup truck in Rutherford County, Tenn. Detective Sgt. Dan Goodwin said evidence indicated that Lyle was handling the loaded weapon with the safety off when it accidentally discharged.
- Police in Fargo, N.D., said a woman sleeping with a shotgun in bed rolled over on it, causing the gun to fire and send a pellet through the wall and into the headboard of her neighbor's bed. Sgt. Jeff Skuza couldn't say why the woman was sleeping with the gun but told the Fargo Forum individuals who keep guns in the bedroom rarely sleep with them. "It's not something we recommend," he said.
- A woman trying to commit suicide in Tallahassee, Fla., instead accidentally shot her boyfriend in the shoulder, according to police Investigator Derek Friend. The victim was treated at the hospital and released.
- While a 15-year-old boy was sitting on a couch with his girlfriend on his lap at a home in Syracuse, N.Y., he pulled out a .25-caliber semi-automatic pistol. The girlfriend objected, but the boy insisted the safety was on. Police Sgt. Tom Connellan said the boy tried to prove his point by aiming the gun at his face twice and pulling the trigger. When he pointed the gun at his face a third time and pulled the trigger, the gun fired. The boy was hospitalized in serious condition.

### Fugitive of the Year

Assuming that police were after him on drug charges, Bennie Wint faked his own death in Daytona Beach, Fla., and then spent the next 20 years hiding from the law. He fled to Alabama, changed his name to William Sweet, married and had a son. His secret was exposed in January when

police stopped him in Asheville, N.C., for not having a light bulb on his car license plate. When the name he gave police failed to show up on their computer, he blurted out his story and admitted his real name. Officers informed him there were no outstanding warrants. "He believed he was wanted when he really wasn't," Sgt. Stacy Wyatt said after Wint, 49, was ticketed for driving without a license and giving a false name to police.

### The Name Game

- Thai police charged the singer of a band with negligence for setting off fireworks that started a nightclub blaze and killed 66 patrons in Bangkok. The singer, Sarawut Ariya, 28, was performing with the band Burn.
- British dairy farmers who call their cows by name reported higher milk yields than those who don't, according to a study by Newcastle University's School of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development. Reporting in *Anthrozoos*, an online journal devoted to the "interactions of animals and people," the researchers said they interviewed 516 dairy farmers, 46 percent of whom said their cows had individual names. Dairy farmers who named their cows got 2,105 gallons during a 10-month lactation cycle, compared with 2,029 gallons from unnamed cows. "Just as people respond better to the personal touch, cows also feel happier and more relaxed if they are given a bit more one-to-one attention," researcher Catherine Douglas said.

### Gezundheit Sex

Sneezing may be a sign of sexual arousal, according to British doctors Mahmood Bhutta and Harold Maxwell. Citing the case of a middle-aged patient who suffered uncontrollable fits of sneezing whenever he thought of sex, the doctors gathered further evidence from Internet chat rooms, where 17 people of both sexes reported sneezing immediately upon thinking of sex and three others who said they sneezed after orgasm. The doctors, who reported their findings in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, believe the phenomenon is more widespread than thought and might even be inherited.

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

# Are Americans dumber than Europeans?

In a Straight Dope staff report I read online, the writer kindly reminded readers that € is the symbol for the euro. As a European, it seemed to me to be unnecessary until I recalled the old stereotype that we, the Europeans, so enjoy believing about the general American populace: that they're stupid and/or blind as far as the rest of the world is concerned. So, my question to you, an American who is no doubt *not* stupid or blind as far as I know, is how close to the mark are we Europeans in assuming that Americans are generally dumb? Where do "y'all" rank globally? And, while we're on it, where do European countries rank? And, if it turns out we were all wrong about our neighbors across the pond, is there a reason why Europeans would spread such filthy lies about your noble and intelligent nation? Please help restore my faith in America.

—Geert S., the Netherlands

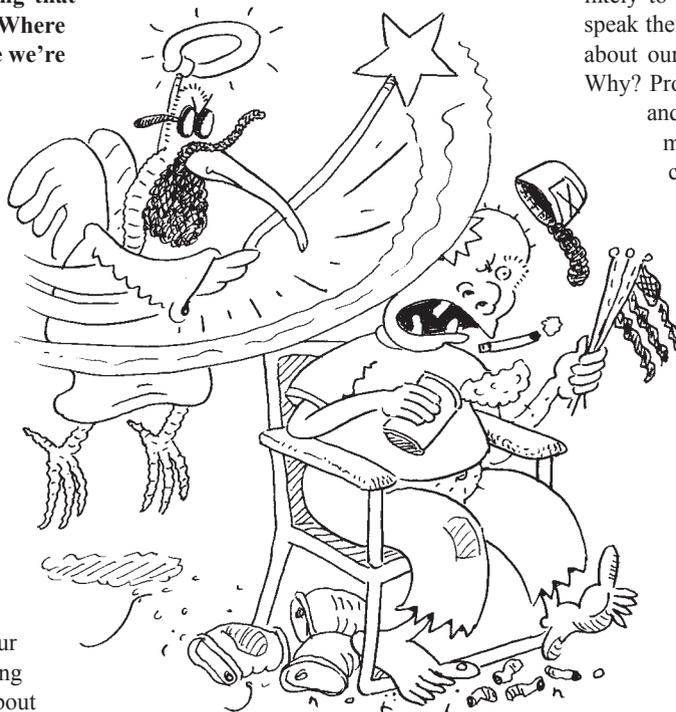
You think we're stupid? Just because we let a smirking doofus steal our presidential election and lead us into a bogus war? Come on, that was years ago! Let bygones be bygones. Besides, didn't we just elect the most fab president ever?

Maybe you think we're stupid because a bunch of slicks who went to our fanciest schools just trashed the banking systems from here to Iceland (sorry 'bout that), after which we gave them a ton of money so they could take home huge bonuses and laff it up while the rest of us eat tainted peanut butter. OK, OK, mistakes were made. But we gave you the Internet, didn't we? Jeez, cut us a little slack.

Actually, Geert, as unbelievable as it seems, you can't find much solid evidence that Americans are any dumber than Europeans or the rest of the world, for that matter. Not saying we're not—just that proof is hard to come by, mostly because of the utter impossibility of even defining, let alone measuring, smartness and dumbness.

In *IQ and Global Inequality* (2006), a couple of European academics named Richard Lynn and Tatu Vanhanen took a stab at rank-

ing the intelligence quotients of 190 countries. Not surprisingly (given that Western scientists cooked up the tests), they found the U.S. and other industrialized nations clustered right around the average score of 100. They listed the mean IQ of the U.S., France, and Denmark at 98, Germany at 99, the UK and the Netherlands at 100. At the top of their list were Japan, Taiwan, and China at 105, North and South Korea at 106, and Hong Kong and



Singapore at 108. Of course the very idea of the intelligence quotient is highly controversial, and some of the authors' figures have been roundly criticized; in certain cases they seem to have been little better than guesses. If you want proof that Europeans are smarter than Americans, help yourself, but me, I'm not so sure.

Maybe we can use literacy as a measure of smarts. According to the CIA (and we all know how smart *they* are: intelligence is their middle name), adult literacy in the United States is about the same as in Australia, Canada, and Europe. If you want to use higher education as your yardstick, the U.S. fares a little better: a 2005 study by the Educational Policy Institute showed the U.S. had the highest college attainment rate of 13 peer countries (10 in

Europe plus the U.S., Canada, and Australia), with 31 percent of those between ages 25 and 34 having completed a four-year degree.

But even if Americans aren't innately dumber than Europeans, that doesn't mean we ain't ignorant. The question before us asks if Americans are "stupid and/or blind as far as the rest of the world is concerned," and on the second part of that formulation we have to plead guilty as charged. All it takes is a vacation to know that Europeans are way more likely to speak our language than we are to speak theirs, and to know and care a lot more about our business than we do about theirs. Why? Probably because we're greedy, smug, and self-centered. But in our defense let me point out that we live in a big, big country. Travel 500 miles in Europe and you might go through several languages and national histories.

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Maybe you think we're stupid because a bunch of slicks who went to our fanciest schools just trashed the banking systems from here to Iceland (sorry 'bout that)

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(And only ten years ago you would have needed several currencies.) If I travel 500 miles, I'm in Pennsylvania.

Or Nebraska. Same language, same money, same media, same bad food. As a nation we're just a little unclear on the concept of foreign countries.

Besides, we apparently don't really *need* to know much about the rest of the world. According to Baylor University polling, 55 percent of Americans believe they have an advantage that surely outweighs any intellectual deficiencies:

A guardian angel.

—CECIL ADAMS

*Comments, questions? Take it up with Cecil on the Straight Dope Message Board, straightdope.com, or write him at the Chicago Reader, 11 E. Illinois, Chicago 60611.*

## ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR MARCH 2009

**FOR EVERYONE**—New directions. In March, decisions will be made, directions will be chosen, steps will be taken, trends will finally emerge. The tension and uncertainty of the last few months will ease. The ground beneath our feet will begin to feel more solid. As uncertain as many things remain, we will find the beginning of a path forward, through the maze of loss and difficulty. The steps we are taking, though tentative, will be leading us somewhere. An image of our future will emerge. That image might shift and waver, but it won't be a mirage.

 **ARIES**—Time out. The challenges are matched by the opportunities. Both bring pressure. You can't avoid the demands being made on you by family and dependents. Growing recognition in your field is bringing greater demands at work. A leadership role beckons. The pace of change in the world around you isn't letting up, either. The price of a misstep would be high. You might need to call a time out. Simplify and reformulate your goals and ideals. Clarify what others can rightly expect from you. You are especially persuasive this month.

 **TAURUS**—Deep background. You would be well-advised to stay in the background, for now. Exert influence subtly. Offer advice quietly. You have a good grasp of the issues. However, the powers that be are out of harmony with you, at the moment. They are surrounded by manipulators, too. And, you aren't at the top of your game. You need privacy and time to reorient yourself and re-think plans for your own future. Travel, education, spiritual exploration . . . all these things are beckoning more strongly, now. This isn't a passing phase.

 **GEMINI**—Trust your luck. The powers that be are engaged in exceedingly complex negotiations. The outcome will affect your future. But you should ignore that for now. The negotiations are too complex and the outcome is absolutely unpredictable. Also, your thinking is not as sharp as it could be. Emotions and dreamy speculation intrude. Supportive planetary influences are protecting your interests, anyway. This is one of those times when you can let things take their course. Concentrate on the personal successes headed your way this month. Explore that adventurous, romantic impulse.

 **CANCER**—Reason vs. Emotion. Keep emotions in check. Look the challenge of change squarely in the eye. Shed preconceptions about what is possible for you. Imagine yourself in a new situation. Use objectivity, self-discipline and personal organization to get you there. Do your homework. There are many realistic possibilities and the element of luck is working for you. New and helpful alliances are evolving. Long-term financial strategies are starting to bear fruit. This month also offers entertaining and enjoyable diversions, but don't get carried away. Escapism is not the answer.

 **LEO**—A very fine line. This month, none of the old formulas will work, for you or anyone else. There is no new, obvious or easy solution, either. You will need to be inventive, but not too inventive, organized, but not too organized. You will have to look for the sweet spot between risk and security, between selfishness and selflessness and split some other philosophical hairs. But in the end, you will probably just have to roll the dice. The process of finding the right path will require much shared soul searching.

 **VIRGO**—Easy does it. Normally, I advise people to help shape their own future. And Virgos are especially inclined to do so. This month, I'm making an exception. Powerful people who basically agree with your goals are fighting everybody to achieve those goals. The resulting tension and confusion are considerable. Confusing and impulsive vibes also beset your ruling planet, Mercury. The situation demands impossible levels of patience and precision. The Virgo mind would not do well in this situation. Instead, put your emphasis on your job responsibilities. The vibes there are very supportive.

 **LIBRA**—Rest and relaxation. There is a battle raging over issues that are of fundamental importance to you. It is being fought by powerful figures in your life. Your future depends on the outcome. There is not a lot you can do about it directly, though. The battle will have to run its course. Meanwhile, drive your imagination to new heights. Imagine new roles for yourself. Creative activities and personal experimentation will help you find the line between what is realistic and what isn't. Talk to others about what you envision.

 **SCORPIO**—Positive trends. A current of deep personal healing runs through your experience in March. You'll find home life especially inviting and nurturing. Conflict and stress in the neighborhood and among family members will bring surprising and welcome results. People you thought would never settle down will show signs of maturity. Stodgy types you thought would never change will open up to new ideas. Expect supportive and uplifting discussions. Your interests are under protective planetary influences. Intense, bittersweet moments are possible as you have to make relationship decisions you wanted to avoid.

 **SAGITTARIUS**—Advisory role. You can see the intense turmoil. You know it will affect your personal financial future. However, you feel detached and at peace despite the turmoil and persistent uncertainty. Something new is happening, something you know is well worth the risk. You have a deep personal understanding of the issues and a deep personal sympathy with the goals of those facing the challenges directly. You've paid your dues. You can perform a priceless service by offering your advice and emotional support to those on the front lines.

 **CAPRICORN**—A higher power. You are in the middle of a major logjam. Partly, you feel responsible for the obstruction. But you also realize that you couldn't really do much to get things moving by yourself. The details are so tangled, no one can grasp the situation single-handedly. Many people just need to work through their own issues. This is one of those times when you will have to do your best and entrust the rest to a higher power. You know in your heart things will soon get a lot better.

 **AQUARIUS**—Stress management. It will be tough to avoid the stress and turmoil surrounding you. Rarely have Aquarians experienced such high levels of excitement. The planets are also urging greater personal discipline. Your financial life is in for a shakeup. Seldom have you faced such important financial decisions. But you are also beginning a new cycle of growth and expansion. Supportive influences are taking over in your life. A stressful month, but a good month: a big, confusing, positive turning point. Try to schedule some extra rest and relaxation.

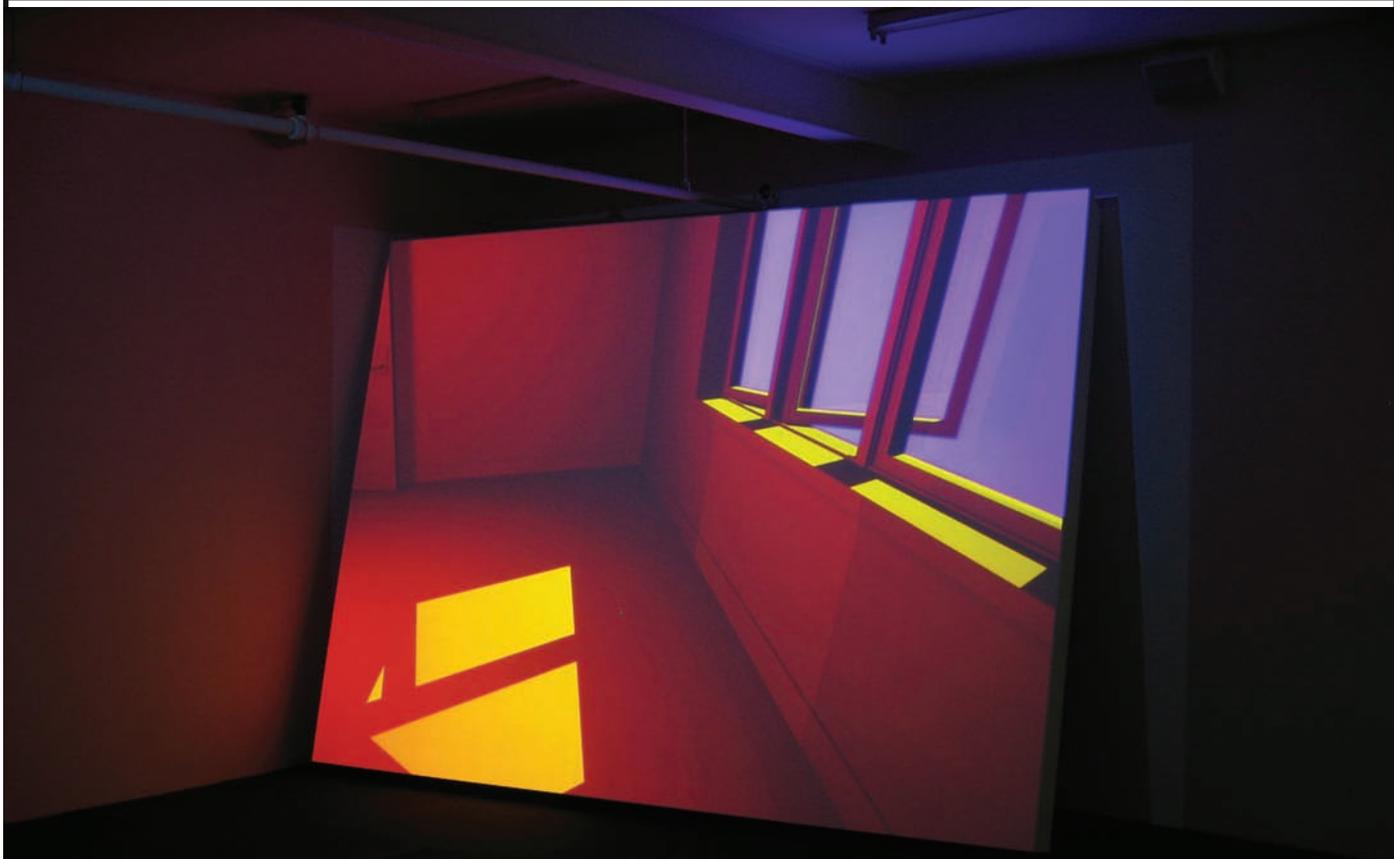


### Pisces

Time to settle down. A whirlwind of change is sweeping through Pisces' world. When the dust settles, you will be leading a very different life. You are already experiencing some of the changes, challenges, responsibilities and benefits of recent commitments. The benefits will continue to flow and outweigh the costs. Your new life will not be quite as footloose and fancy free as you have become used to. Self-discipline and organization will be high priorities. The benefits of your new life will be harder to earn, but more lasting than what you left behind.



FAULCONER GALLERY



Through 19 April 2009

# Animated Painting

*Animated Painting* is organized by the San Diego Museum of Art

**Includes animations by: Barnstormers, Jeremy Blake, Sebastián Díaz Morales, Kota Ezawa, Ruth Gómez, William Kentridge, Ann Lislegaard, Takeshi Murata, Serge Onnen, Wit Pimkanchanapong, Qiu Anxiong, and Robin Rhode.**

For information on all related events call 641.269.4660 or log onto [www.grinnell.edu/faulconergallery](http://www.grinnell.edu/faulconergallery)

Ann Lislegaard, *Bellona* (after Samuel R. Delany), 2005. Single-channel digital 3D animation video projection on leaning wood screen and six audio speakers, color, sound; 11:00 min. continuous loop. Courtesy of the artist and Murray Guy, New York

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