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Iowa City's News & Culture Magazine



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TO C.R.**

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A SEPARATION

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APR 6 - APR 12

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Directed by Steve McQueen | UK

APR 13 - APR 14

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APR 15 - APR 19

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APR 20 - APR 26

IN DARKNESS

Directed by Agnieszka Holland | Poland

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APR 27 - MAY 3

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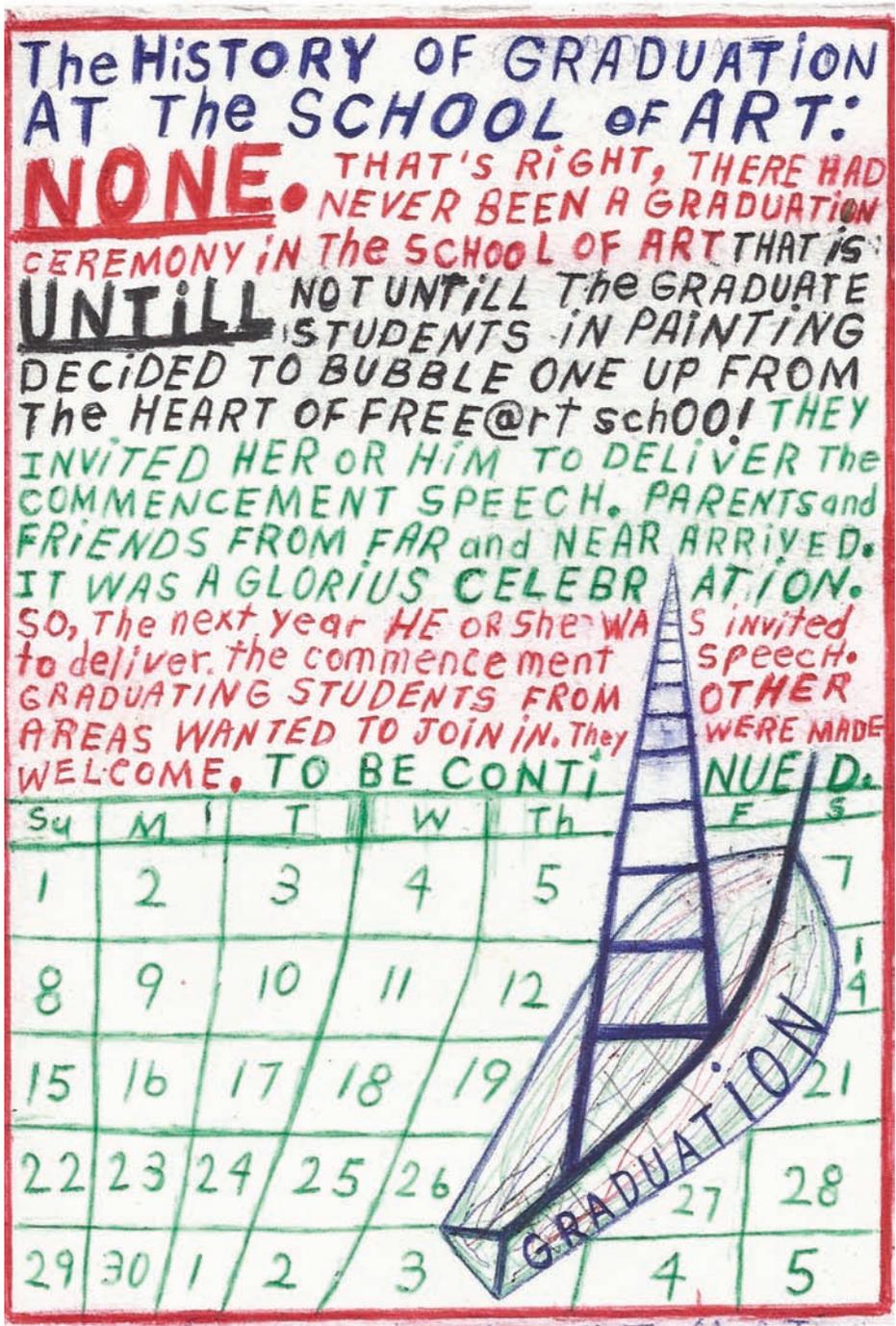
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by TOM TOMORROW

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UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE IS THE FIRST STEP ON THE PATH TO COMMUNIST TYRANNY!

LIKE UP THERE IN CANADA!

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--AND WE LOOK FOR REASONS TO DENY YOU COVERAGE.

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IT WILL BE A TRIUMPH OF BIPARTISANSHIP! HOW CAN MY REPUBLICAN FRIENDS OBJECT?

IT'S THEIR PLAN!

5) SOCIALISM: TERM USED BY G.O.P. TO DESCRIBE HERITAGE PLAN AFTER ADOPTION BY OBAMA.

"INDIVIDUAL MANDATE"? WHAT IS THAT, FRENCH FOR "GOVERNMENT DEATH PANELS"?

I BLAME SAUL ALINSKY!

ER--YES! QUITE RIGHT! I TOO AM OUTRAGED!

6) SUPREME COURT: JUDICIAL BODY WITH POWER TO OVERTURN OBAMACARE, THANKS TO ADOPTION OF INDIVIDUAL MANDATE.

ISN'T THIS EXACTLY LIKE FORCING PEOPLE TO EAT BROCCOLI?

I HATE BROCCOLI!

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GOVERNMENT SHOULD KEEP ITS INVASIVE LAWS OFF OUR BODIES!

UNLESS WE ARE WOMEN SEEKING ABORTIONS.

WHICH WE ARE NOT.

This spring marks the end of an era in Iowa City. Iowa City Spells, the annual adult spelling bee sponsored by the Iowa City Public Library Friends Foundation as a benefit for the library, held its fifteenth and final competition. Over

the years, the spelling bee became much more than a fundraiser. Over its decade and a half, it became a unique community-building event, drawing people together in common purpose and competitive fun in ways that few other events have in this highly literary community. To commemorate the last spelling bee, I asked some of the event organizers and fellow participants for their parting thoughts.

Susan Craig, director of the ICPL (who served as official timekeeper of the spelling bee and has attended every one) says, "The event brought together people who otherwise might never be in the same room. It was truly a multi-generational event with high-schoolers competing against retirees." Holly Carver, current ICPL Board of Trustees member, attended only two spelling bees, the first and last, but agrees. As a first-time participant on the board's team this year, Carver noted the "incredibly strong sense of community and connectivity in the room. The positive energy and goodwill on both sides of the microphones were amazing." Todd Pettys of the UI College of Law, who served as judge for the last four years alongside veteran arbiter Sheldon Kurtz, commented "The event's mixture of business and academic leaders, library officials, high school and college students, and folks from all walks of life, younger and older alike, has always struck me as a wonderful microcosm of the good life we all have in Iowa City."

Some of these participants were especially ardent. The high school student contingent grew throughout the years as the bee drew

teams from City High, West High, Regina and Iowa Mennonite. These

SPELLING T-r-a-d-i-t-i-o-n

young people were often among the best-prepared and the fiercest competitors. The bee also included an audience participation component. Susan Craig and Maeve Clarke—who served as sound effects director and Foley artist, providing buzzes, slide-whistles, raspberries and ta-das for especially skillful and unfortunate spellings—each commented on the number of repeat audience contestants (and repeat winners) who showed up year after year.

The spelling bee community was not limited to the confines of 123 South Linn Street. One of the marvelous resources in our community is the Library Channel, where the bee was broadcast live. And people did watch. Patty McCarthy said she would hear back quite often from families who had played along at home. Board member and two-time board team member John Kenyon became convinced of the healthy number of viewers of Channel 10 when he would routinely run into people who told him they had seen him on TV. As a journalist, John would occasionally appear in the background of press conferences and such, but no...invariably it was a months-old replay of the spelling bee that the person had caught. All the bees were broadcast over and over and they became in some ways a visual record (and museum) of changing hairstyles and clothes (and to some regulars' chagrin,

weight gain and hair loss).

The core of the spelling bee was the contestants. I always divided the team members into two categories: the boosters and the hardcore. Team members were given a "paideia," a list of words, from which the words would be taken throughout the main rounds (when it came to the last two teams, any word from the dictionary was fair game). Most of these words were either very tricky to spell (quick, spell "onomatopoeia" without looking!) or highly obscure (sorry, I wasn't familiar with an Eastern European jam called "lekvar" in the last round I spelled in—though I got it right!). The "boosters" did study some, but we (I count myself in this category) were in it more for the fun and the support of the library than the trophy. The "hardcore" folks did intend to win,

"Even though our mission was to destroy the rest of the spelling community, we couldn't help but feel a sense of kinship with our fellow nerds."

—Missy Molleston, Kirkwood "Killer Bee"

and played like it. These folks had clearly studied and memorized every single word. Even so, the fun and camaraderie were always paramount. As Kirkwood "Killer Bee" Missy Molleston says, "Even though our mission was to destroy the rest of the spelling community, we couldn't help but feel a sense of kinship with our fellow nerds. It was fun for us each year to see which teams returned with what team members, and then good-naturedly size each other up."

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Iowa City Spells morphed over time. Maeve Clark recalls the first spelling bee at the Highlander Inn (now Clarion Hotel), which featured a cash bar, which I suppose could have helped some and hindered others! Also, in those first days, spellers could buy their way back into the competition (remember—this is a fundraiser) if they missed a word. Another year, a bee mascot from a local restaurant danced around the proceedings. As Iowa Public Radio's Ben Kieffer says, "The fact that it has been an Iowa City tradition and that people take it so seriously but also have a lot of fun with it makes me proud of the community of Iowa City. If there's one thing we can all agree on, we love our literary roots and our public library!"

In a lot of ways, for fifteen years, Iowa City Spells wonderfully captured who and what we are. All good things must end, though. The spelling bee organizers have found it more and more difficult to fill out teams and, in recent years, the bee has not provided as much bang for the buck as it once did. As the spelling bee enthusiasts I talked with make clear, this was about more than simply fund-raising, but it's also sometimes a good idea to let things rest and try to create some new traditions. The library and its Friends Foundation are hard at work on a replacement for the spelling bee. They promise something that will be fresh, but equally fun, challenging and community-oriented to raise money for our remarkable library—and bring us together. I can't wait to see what they cook up. **lv**

Thomas Dean participated in about seven of the Iowa City Spells spelling bees (he can't quite remember how many). He did misspell a word once that knocked the team out of contention: connoisseur. He still kicks himself for that. He knows this word, but those darned proliferating French vowels tripped him up. It IS nerve-racking to spell in front of an audience with no paper in front of you.

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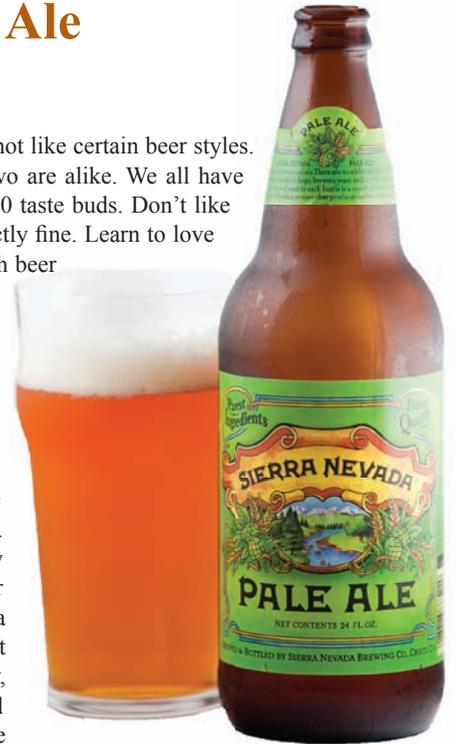
Sierra Nevada Pale Ale

BREW OF THE MONTH: APRIL

Trust me: it is okay to admit you do not like certain beer styles. Tongues are like snowflakes: No two are alike. We all have a unique collection of around 10,000 taste buds. Don't like porter or hefeweizen? That is perfectly fine. Learn to love your own set of taste buds and treat them with beer you do like. However, keep an open mind; you may be surprised how much your palate changes as you try different beers.

Based on personal experience and what others have told me, hoppier beers seem to be an acquired taste. Though I am not a fan of hop bombs, I do enjoy balanced American pale ale and want to recommend Sierra Nevada Pale Ale for April as an introduction to hoppy brews.

To me, this pale ale—a hybrid of the malty pales preferred by the Brits and the hoppier West Coast versions—is *the* pale ale. It is a hazy honey-gold and, when poured into a pint glass, it will produce a finger or two of buttery, off-white head. The aroma is slightly muted but offers loads of citrus—grapefruit, orange and lemon—caramel and toffee; there is a hint of grapes, too. The taste is quintessential American pale ale: a balance of hop bitterness and malt sweetness with grapefruit and lemon zest.



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FOOD PAIRINGS: Bill Manley, a product development manager at Sierra Nevada, told me the chefs at the brewery's restaurant commonly pair Pale Ale with grilled meat, mushrooms and fresh garden vegetables. For cheese pairings he suggested Colby and Edam.

WHERE TO BUY: It is almost universally available at local beer retailers. Bottles are available at The Sanctuary and Sierra Nevada Pale Ale is often on-tap at Red's Alehouse in North Liberty.

PRICE: \$7-9 per six-pack, \$4 per 24-ounce bottle.

—Casey Wagner

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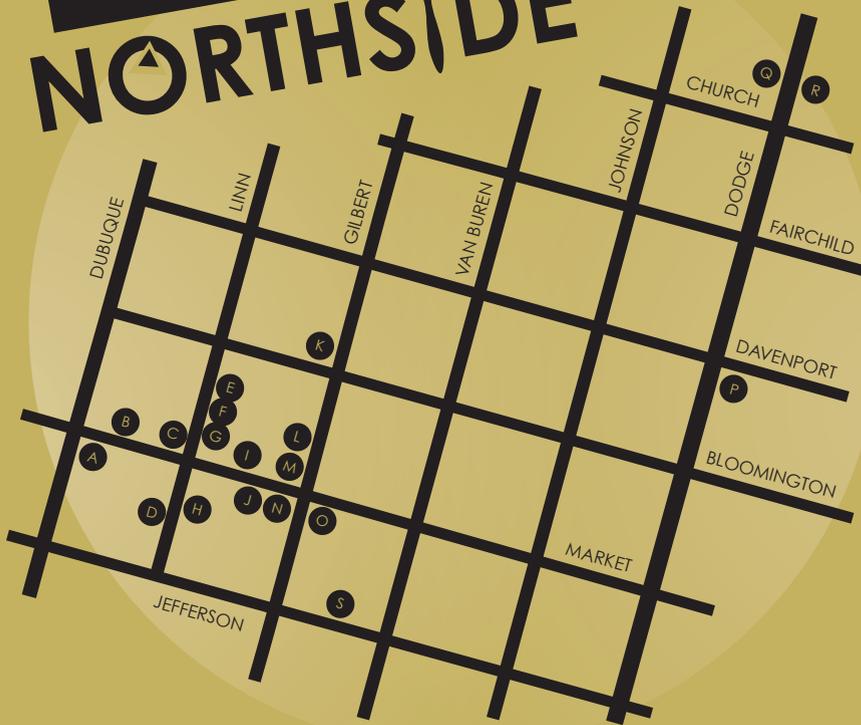


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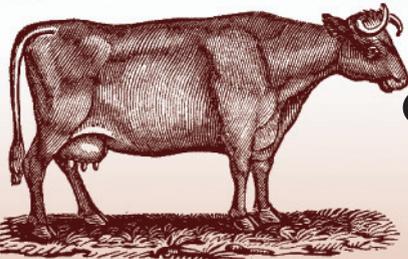
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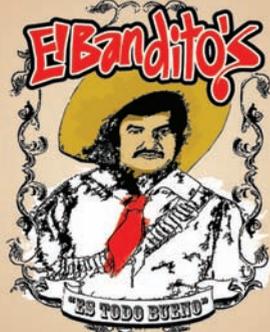
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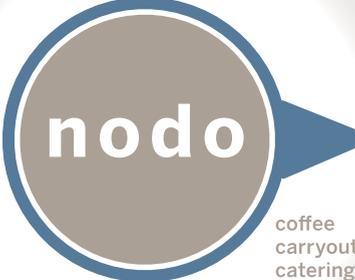
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ZONING OUT: ONE RESIDENT'S TAKE ON CRIME, CAPITAL & ON-CAMPUS HOUSING

In 1965, Nancy Carlson came to Iowa City as a student and never left. At that time, about 40 percent of UI students lived in on-campus housing. As an Illinois transplant and farm girl, Carlson remembers the vibrancy of downtown neighborhoods in the 1970s, recalling the single-family homes lining South Johnson and Van Buren Streets. But when the last UI dormitory was built in 1968 (Slater Hall), little did Carlson know that she was witness to the end of an era.

UP-ZONING AND THE STUDENT GHETTO

It was the 1960s and Iowa City had begun “up-zoning”—a controversial planning practice in which zoning laws are changed to allow for greater density or commercial development. The University’s stopped building student housing and the City of Iowa City changed its zoning laws, transforming the downtown neighborhood into what today is called the Student Ghetto.

Carlson recalls resident outrage as apartment complexes replaced the unique architecture of residential neighborhoods with cookie-cutter apartment developments.

In college towns, Carlson argues that up-zoning transforms diverse neighborhoods into distinct districts with homogeneous populations: the student ghetto (a dense area of rental properties, run down by round after round of uninvested occupants), fraternity row and

the faculty enclave. She says that managing population density in this way significantly impacts the character of neighborhoods and the lifestyle possibilities available in Iowa City as a whole. For example, as downtown



Photos by Jon Winet

WHO IS IT GOOD FOR?

For Nancy Carlson, more off-campus housing is just as bad for students as it is for Iowa City.

commercial interests have tried to focus on the mercurial tastes of youth culture, mainstay residents (such as homeowners, young professionals and non-students) find that they go downtown less and less. As these folks stay away from downtown, businesses are less able to survive—unless they cater to students or sell Hawkeye gear—and a vital commercial district becomes a one-trick pony. The city as a whole becomes a one-industry town.

Carlson, a proud Iowa City homeowner and resident of the College Green neighborhood for 31 years, chose that location for its diversity: a fertile mixture of economic levels

and a healthy combination of single and multi-family homes with businesses. As an officer of the College Green Neighborhood Association and concerned citizen, Carlson has been researching the issue of neighborhood sustainability, and she cites the recent transformation of downtown neighborhoods as a startling reminder of what up-zoning planning policies can do to Iowa City’s vital neighborhood communities.

Carlson is adamant that this is not a “residents versus students” issue or even an issue of pitting the residents against the university. Thinking about the ‘70s and ‘80s—the height of high-density development in Iowa City—Carlson is emphatic, “The real winners are the developers. They got their money and left town.” Now, she says, students and residents alike are dealing with the primary challenges such development poses for the quality of life in Iowa City’s neighborhoods, with crime and nuisances increasing in the downtown, Northside, Goosetown and Longfellow neighborhoods. In 2011, downtown saw the highest number of reported assaults, burglaries and drug arrests, followed by the College Green area, which, according to Iowa City Police Department statistics, is the crime capital of Iowa City, suffering more than any other from thefts and drug violations.

HOW WE COMPARE

Carlson points to 2010 Census data setting the percentage of rental housing units in Iowa City at 53 percent, well above the national average of 35 percent. She also refers to a 2011



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U.S. News and World Report article comparing the percentage of students living in on-campus housing in that year. Here, The University of Iowa came in at 20.6 percent, well below the national average of 38.5 percent. She says the low amount of housing available on the UI campus has created a high-impact zone called

The issues that plague university-impacted neighborhoods beg the question: Just who is responsible for providing housing for undergraduates, anyway?

the Pentacrest Mile, a one-mile radius around the Pentacrest, where most undergraduates try to get housing. For Carlson, the issues dealt with in that area—from noise, petty theft and fighting to high rents, lack of on-site apartment management and oversight, constant tenant turnover and its concomitant lower level of investment in the neighborhood culture and maintenance—beg the question, “Just who is responsible for providing housing for undergraduates, anyway?”

Carlson sifts through the piles of paper on her table, copies of studies, printouts of blog posts and market research data. “Because the university is only providing on-campus housing for 20 percent of its students, the city is responsible for housing the other 80 percent of students that the university brings to the area. It puts a lot of pressure on the city, and it’s no good for the students either. Living on campus is correlated with better performance, higher retention rates and faster graduation. If you want to graduate in four years, live on campus.” She believes that if the university provided 40-50 percent of the housing for its students it would take pressure off the most impacted neighborhoods and would also increase undergraduate student performance and the university’s ability to attract, retain and graduate its students.

The university does house 90 percent of its freshmen, but Carlson believes that a longer stay would significantly benefit all undergraduates by providing increased access to campus facilities and a greater level of social interaction with peers, faculty, administration and mentors. Her research indicates a link between

on-campus housing and graduation rates, as well as students’ actual and perceived sense of safety.

Carlson acknowledges that the university is doing something. Plans are underway for a new dormitory that aims to increase the university’s housing capacity by some 800 beds over two years. In fall 2011, however, the university reported that the number of entering freshman in 2010 increased by about 494 students over the previous year and the number of entering freshman in 2011 increased by about 68, a trend that is expected to continue through 2015. As student enrollments increase, the addition of 800 beds will not increase the overall percentage of the university’s housing

capacity, nor will it relieve demands for rental housing, which drive down vacancy rates and fuel high rental prices. Carlson grabs for her copy of the 2011 Greater Iowa City Area Apartment Survey. “It’s an issue of affordability and access,” she states. “With vacancy rates hovering at about 2 percent in the Pentacrest Mile and at about 3 percent in the greater Iowa City area, which

She praises the UniverCity project as a step in the right direction, but says she isn’t sure if the program will continue to be funded past 2012.

THEY’RE BACK

While the city has renewed its focus on neighborhood sustainability, investors also seem to have renewed their interest in developing high-density housing as single-family construction has slowed since the recession and the age of foreclosures. Carlson says she knows of three lots that are currently being targeted for high-density development: 821 East Jefferson Street, the site of the now-empty Medical Associates building; 911 Governor, the site of the now-empty (and rather unattractive) Johnson County Health and Human Services building; and 521 East Washington Street, the infamous, recently-demolished Red Avocado site.

Development of the lot at 821 East Jefferson Street is currently on hold while developers wait and see the dispositions of upcoming Central District proposals to limit the number of unrelated people who can live together to three, to limit new developments to three-bedroom maximums and to require new developments to pro-



THE DORMS DOWNTOWN?

Recent changes have left some residents wishing for more town and less gown.

includes Coralville and North Liberty, people are priced right out of the market.”

The university has made efforts to deal with the challenges faced by neighborhoods in the impact zone and has taken steps to preserve the character of these neighborhoods. Carlson points to a UniverCity Neighborhood Partnership affordable housing program pamphlet. “The university will buy rental properties at market value, rehab them up \$50,000, and sell them for between \$60,000 and \$200,000 to qualifying families who agree to live there for 20 years. It’s a great program that’s bringing families back into neighborhoods.” (Actually, the language is that the home must remain owner-occupied, not that the buyers themselves must stay.)

vide a parking space for each bedroom. Prior to putting the plans on hold, developers pitched the project as being marketed to young professionals who have just gotten out of college. But, Carlson notes, “Floor plans never lie.” She laid sample floor plans of three-bedroom units next to the floor plans for upscale condos planned for Cedar Rapids. “I worry about what the students are getting for their money. Do these apartments have nice amenities or are developers just forcing bodies in just to make money? ... Do students realize the safety issues of living off campus?”

Carlson takes a deep breath. “It’s a complicated issue. There are zoning laws that dictate what kind of development can happen where. There are market laws that dictate the amount



"SHAME ON YOU IOWA CITY"

Nancy Carlson stands in front of 511 E. Washington, the site that has become ground zero for IC's semi-urban dismay.

Carlson picks up a well-worn document studded with yellow sticky notes, "We have to hold the city accountable to what it has laid out in the zoning code." She steps away from the kitchen table and reads from Title 14, the zoning code for Iowa City as if reading from a holy book: "Zoning is intended to implement the City of Iowa City's Comprehensive Plan in a manner that promotes health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity and the general welfare of the citizens of Iowa City." She pauses, fire in her eyes, "People need to know what the Central District plan says. They need to read it. And we all need to hold the city accountable to what they have said." **IV**

of money that must be made to recoup demolition costs if you want a new building, and there are the hard realities that our neighborhoods are facing. And I'm not against apartments, but we already have enough apartments in this area. And where they are added, green space and parking should still be preserved."

Carlson settles into her seat at the kitchen table, looks over the piles, the graphs, the maps and the surveys. "This is an ethical issue. An issue of conduct and actions. An issue of neighborhood stewardship. The past generation gave me this neighborhood. I want to give it to the next generation. We have to make sure that today's decisions don't compromise

the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This is our city. We need to ask the university and the board of regents what their responsibility to provide housing for their students is. We need them to look at the effect their decision has on UI students, financially and academically."

As for the type of town we are building today, newly-elected city council member and UI Urban Planning Professor Jim Throgmorton says he believes higher-density development can work in Iowa City, as long as there is a keen sense of design in terms of green space, amenities and how the building meets the existing streetscape.

nience, prosperity and the general welfare of the citizens of Iowa City." She pauses, fire in her eyes, "People need to know what the Central District plan says. They need to read it. And we all need to hold the city accountable to what they have said." **IV**

Raquel Baker is working on a PhD in English Literary Studies at The University of Iowa, specializing in Postcolonial Studies and African Literature. Her short stories have been published in The Womanist and Crux.

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"Grade Inflation": Frisking Harvey Mansfield

In 2011, during the final weeks of a semester, a full professor at a research university in the United States was summoned to her department chair's office. The chair said to her, "I notice that you gave three A+ in your general studies course this semester. That's too many. I need you to lower two of them to straight A."

During the same year, a graduate instructor in first-year composition submitted his grades to his advisor. An email followed, "Your grades are all A's and B's, with 40% of them A's of some sort. Before you officially record the grades, lower the A+ to an A, and adjust the other grades so that you give fewer A grades and you give some C grades."

There is ample statistical ground for the statement that university grades are higher than they were in 1971, when I matriculated at University of Michigan, and in 1981, when I taught my first class as a teaching assistant at The

University of Iowa. There is a phenomenon of people around and in the university that see this climb in overall grades over the last forty years as a problem. The question they're asking is: "How can we lower grades to the level before grade inflation distorted them?"

The current push to lower grades can be traced back to Harvard Professor Harvey Mansfield's 2001 article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, "Grade Inflation: It's Time to Face the Facts." His article identifies the major themes echoed by those who believe grades are too high and should be systematically lowered. It's worth looking closely at this article, because it initiated the current conversation, and because paying close attention to what it ignores will illuminate the conversation we could be having.

Notice the language. "Inflation," for example, suggests that grades are a payment for schoolwork, much as my salary is payment for my teaching. (Curiously, there is no move among university administrators and faculty to return salaries to 1972's norms.) When you begin with this analogy you skip the fundamental question, "What are grades for?"

Some people believe that grades exist to motivate students. Others, including Mansfield, believe that they exist to

communicate to students what they've accomplished on an assignment, in a course or in their university careers. Others, again including Mansfield, believe that they exist to sort students into classes for rewards within the university—admission to selective majors, scholarships—and to sort them into classes for institutions outside, like graduate and professional schools, and future employers. Most of us believe in some combination of all three in fluid and shifting proportions.

Mansfield asserts that he knows grades have increased, and that he knows the increase started in the late sixties and early seventies. Mansfield, who cites no numbers, relies "on what I saw and heard at the time." It turns out that he's wrong about when grades be-



There is ample statistical evidence that university grades are higher than they were in the past ... In the last decade, a few people have looked closely at the numbers and found that they are far more complicated than we might expect.

gan to rise, the nuances of the increases and where they happened. In the last decade, a few people have looked closely at the numbers and found that they are far more complicated than we might expect. There is a lively discussion of what the numbers mean among scholars of higher education, including statisticians. My reading of the statistics is best captured by Lester Hunt, editor of *Grade Inflation*, an excellent book of essays. He summarizes the numbers as follows: "The best data do not show a single direction or nation-wide trend (either up or down) throughout the three decades following 1972."

Mansfield's article is a response to his practice of generating two grades for his students—one for the registrar and another generally lower grade given to the student, which represented his true evaluation of that student's work. "When grade inflation got started, in the late '60s and early '70s, white professors, imbibing the spirit of affirmative action, stopped giving low or average grades to black students and, to justify or conceal it, stopped giving those grades to white students as well."

Mansfield is clear that students have changed for the worse over time. In this he is more direct than the vast majority of those concerned by rising grades. Not only does he believe that

unqualified minorities have been admitted to elite institutions, but that those students have been coddled by "the emphasis in American education on the notion of self-esteem." However, his statements make it clear that we have to ask another fundamental question: "What are students like in 2012? How do they compare with students in 1960? 1970? Even the 80s, 90s and today?" I believe that most first-year students who are native speakers of English produce fewer spelling and grammatical errors in unrevised writing than they did in 1981. I have a colleague who vociferously disagrees. The point isn't whether either of us is correct. The point is we don't know.

Mansfield has a very clear notion about why most professors give higher grades than

he does: "We are flattering our students in our eagerness to get their good opinion." This claim is echoed in faculty meetings all over academe.

He goes on to say that white professors give high grades to African American students out of a combination of liberal paternalism and fear. I know of no teachers at Iowa who will admit to giving high grades because they wish to be liked by their students. A few will admit being nervous about the effect that student evaluations have on their promotions and tenure. Most of us tend to say something like, "I give the grade the student earned." The still unanswered question is, "Why do we give the grades we do?" If we were to start with that question, I believe we'd be far better off.

The full professor, in the office of her department chair, said, "No. I'm not going to change the grades." And she walked out of the office bemused that even full professors get lectured on their too high grades by administrators who have seen not one line of her students' work. The graduate instructor lowered his grades.

There is one answer to the question, "Why do we give the grades we do?" Some of us have more power than others. **IV**

Patrick Dolan teaches Rhetoric at The University of Iowa. He has friends in academia all over English-speaking North America and beyond. The incidents depicted in this essay are composites of persons and institutions.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In early March, the Iowa legislature passed HF 589, the law that has come to be known as the “Ag-Gag” bill. After months of public outcry over the original bill’s First Amendment implications—including a Slow Food Iowa petition that generated 41,000 signatures—the softened bill garnered bipartisan support in both the Iowa House and Senate, and was signed into law by Gov. Branstad. In the weeks since, activists, farmers and consumers alike are wondering what the new law will mean to them.

THE LAW IN QUESTION

House Bill 589 was meant to curb the surreptitious videotaping of Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO’s) in Iowa. Its final language outlaws “agricultural production facility fraud” and criminalizes the act of gaining access to an agricultural facility under false pretense and making false statements as part of an employment application with the intent to commit an unauthorized act.

“There’s already plenty of laws against trespassing, against slander, against breaking and entering and against libel,” says Kurt Friese, owner of Iowa City restaurant Devotay and member of

the leadership committee of Slow Food Iowa. “All of these laws are already in place, what do they need these special laws for?”

AVERTING DISASTER

While the law seems superfluous to critics such as Friese, it could have been much, much worse. “The first bill was not just a ban on videotaping, but a ban on the possession or distribution of the videotape, putting it right up there with child pornography,” he explains.

In its current form, the bill stops short of an outright ban on unsanctioned videotaping on farms, rejecting language found in the failed 2011 version that was criticized for limiting speech. It throws most of its weight behind intent, leaving many to wonder how it could possibly be enforced.

The complicated evolution that led to the weakened version of the law can be seen as influence-peddling at its least effective. “They were looking to get the best of both worlds,” says Friese. “They can say to loudmouths like me, ‘Look, this law won’t really do anything.’ And then they can turn to their funders over in the CAFO lobby and say, ‘Okay we passed it for you’ and give me some more money for my re-election.”

For Iowa Farm Bureau Federation representative Laurie Johns, the criminal implications of the law are not as important as the

ethical standards it imposes. “The first thing you need to know,” says Johns, “is that it has nothing to do with filming.” She points out that any worker, farmer or witness to perceived abuse can call in an anonymous tip at any time to the Animal Rescue League, and that many farmers install cameras in their own facilities, monitoring for safety and ethics. For Johns, such self-policing in the agriculture industry is what keeps farming practices safe for animals and workers, not laws such as HF 589. She says the bill helps ensure that every work-



Photos by Jay Geisen



BIG-AG GOT YOU DOWN?

Compass Group, a regional art/activism collective, welcomes your testimony as they prepare to put Monsanto on (mock) trial, April 21 at the UI’s Boyd Law Building. Submission and event info online at: www.midwestradicalculturecorridor.net

er coming to an Iowa farm has the skills to properly care for the animals. She also stresses the need for honesty in journalism surrounding agriculture. “Ask a farmer!” she says. A former journalist herself, she points out how ethically unsound it is to try to secretly film a person’s place of business, claiming that the vast majority of farmers would be more than happy to allow a look at their facilities.

In an email, Jennifer Holtkamp of Iowa Select Farms said “It is clear to us that these activist organizations try to mislead and manipulate the public’s perception of animal agriculture.” Iowa Select’s Kamrar, Iowa, farm was targeted by Mercy for Animals in a video called “Concealed Cruelty.” Despite conditions that Holtkamp says are in-line with state regulations as verified by “an independent study conducted by a leading animal well-being expert at Iowa State University,” the film is so gruesome YouTube has restricted

it to viewers 18 and over.

Some remain concerned about just whose activities are targeted and criminalized by the bill. Randall Wilson of the Iowa Civil Liberties Union told the *Des Moines Register*, “We all know it’s a thinly veiled attempt to eliminate investigative reporting and whistle-blowing regarding abuses in our food production chain.”

Who is responsible for the PR struggles of hog confinements: factory farms or the activists working to expose them?

The ICLU continues to investigate the bill and, likewise, agricultural lobbyists for Monsanto and Dupont/Pioneer continue to pressure state government to enact more aggressive protections for Iowa farmers whose reputations, they say, have been tarnished by undercover videos.

Advocacy groups, on the other hand, blame farmers for tarnishing their own reputations with inhumane practices. When asked if the law will stop undercover filming attempts by such groups, Friese is doubtful: “My guess is that they will begin recruiting people who are already working in these facilities, so they did not lie to get the job.”

WHAT'S A CONSUMER TO DO?

Johns emphasizes that the Farm Bureau works with all sorts of farmers, from owners of confinement hog facilities to tenders of free-range goats. She explains that they are not about “big” versus “small,” saying that, although the interests of independent farmers are not always the same as the interests of larger companies, both are necessarily committed to the needs of their customers. Johns points out that, for both types of companies, “the customer is always right.”

A prime example of consumer-driven change took place this February, when one of the world’s largest corporate consumers, McDonalds, announced a requirement that all of its pork suppliers must be gestation crate free by May. The fast-food chain has been targeted by several organizations, most notably



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Henry Wilhelm, “The Grinnell College campus, looking toward Burling Library.”
Photograph. © 1966 and 1966 Henry Wilhelm. Courtesy of the artist.

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ON DISPLAY

Hue Hill Farm is one of many Iowa growers working to tell their story to curious customers.

but there are plenty of other more transparent means that are also being utilized. Research facilities, such as the Iowa State University School of Veterinary Medicine, make animal welfare a top priority, and just this February the Iowa Veterinary Medical Association held a full day of conferences dedicated to eradicating animal abuse and neglect. Among the proposals was a project called Iowa Farm Animal Care (IFAC), a community-based approach for a centralized animal abuse reporting system in Iowa.

For those looking to become involved in food activism, there are many available public forums. This April, a regional collective known as Compass Group will hold “Monsanto Hearings” at The University of Iowa’s Boyd Law Building. UI Assistant Professor Sarah Kanouse, an organizer with the group, says “Activism is really about education—educating ourselves, first and foremost, and educating others.” The April event is a mock trial in which testifiers are given the chance to share, in any preferred media, ways that Monsanto has affected them. “With the political and

legal systems as they exist so thoroughly dominated by forces friendly to agribusiness,” says Kanouse, “art can become a way not just to continue pushing the issues forward, but also to start collectively imagining new forms of political engagement.”

Kanouse encourages those with little time to publicly participate in activism to learn to cook their own meals at home. “Simply giving up industrially-raised meat a few times a week and replacing it with bean-based dishes can help both your budget and the planet.” Locally, Farmers’ Markets, Community-Supported Agriculture, Local Food Connections and other area organizations allow consumers to meet the very farmers who grow their food and understand the practices and principles they put into its production. On a global scale,

the international Meatless Mondays initiative is an easy, realistic approach to moving toward a less meat-based diet.

“You’re not going to get the planet to stop eating meat—I don’t deny them their choice, but it’s their choice. Eating less meat makes sense. There’s so much more out there and your body needs a wide variety.” says Friese. Aside from the health benefits of consuming less meat, which has been shown to reduce chronic illness, there’s an added benefit: less pollution. The United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization estimates the meat industry generates nearly one-fifth of man-made greenhouse gas emissions. CAFOs are among the largest polluters in the state and Iowa residents tend to flee areas contaminated by their noxious odors, toxic water and unhealthy air. A study by the Institute of Science, Technology and Public Policy at the Maharishi University of Management found that the largest statewide decrease in population from 1980 to 2003 occurred in the ten to fifteen counties in Iowa with the largest number of hog confinements.

In the end, consumers who would like less involvement by corporate agriculture in the production of their meat (and the laws that govern said production), less highly polluting CAFOs in their backyards and less uncertainty about the treatment of the animals they eat must investigate the source their food and choose meat from farmers whose values align with their own. Local producers need funds to continue supporting their communities, and when factory farms see a reduction in profits they will have to consider making healthier changes. **lv**

Kristin Anderson enjoys writing poetry for herself and prose-type things for others. You can often find her running around Iowa City, watching Mad Men, or drooling over puggles.

Stephanie Catlett's garden is a-planted and the flowers are a-bloomin'!

Mercy for Animals, whose YouTube video “McDonalds Cruelty: The Rotten Truth About Egg McMuffins,” has gotten almost one million views. In a *New York Times* article, Paul Shapiro of the Humane Society heralds the ramifications of McDonald’s move: “While we’ve been able to pass laws against gestation crates that are very important, this announcement by McDonald’s today does more to put the writing on the wall for the pork industry than anything that’s happened previously.” Smithfield, one of the world’s largest producers of pork, has also jumped on the wagon, vowing to phase out gestation crates in all of its facilities by 2017.

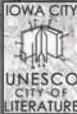
Would these recent changes in the industry have been possible without the help of undercover videos gone viral? It is difficult to say,

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Handgun



Megan slept in the bassinet. She was three weeks old. Guffey marveled at the slight rise and fall of his daughter's chest, and the way she smelled so sweet. He pulled the cotton baby blanket down to reveal her face. Joanie's mother had sent them that blanket and about two-hundred dollars' worth of baby items: diapers, formula and toys. It made him think just a little bit more of the woman. He studied Megan's features; he couldn't understand how others could recognize him or anyone else in that tiny face. She was beautiful and for the first time ever he felt the power of some direction in his life. He studied her hands, the tiny bones and fingernails, like the small fan shells he and Joanie had picked up off a northern California coast last year. He had worked the night shift at a local canning factory and he remembered what it was like coming home every morning smelling like fish. But everything was different now, he thought, everything was better.

Joanie had gone out to the van to look for the cigarettes. He'd smoked the last one but he didn't bother telling her. It would just make her mad. The baby's eyelids fluttered and her body gave a jerk. Guffey wondered, could you dream without words, or was she capable of remembering somehow where she'd spent the last nine months? He tucked the blanket under Megan's body and bit his nails.

He heard the hammer of the van engine—a bad rod—as Joanie pulled out of the Capri Motel parking lot. She was on her way to the Coastal Mart for more Camels. He didn't like

her smoking so much in the motel, not now with Megan. Guffey felt claustrophobic when he was hemmed in by the wall-to-wall smoke. He tried to step outside to smoke or did it in the van when he went for diapers and formula.

They'd only been in Iowa two weeks, and Guffey wondered how much longer the money would hold out. They were down to three hundred eight dollars and that wasn't going to last forever. But it was better than Colorado. When he'd gotten a postcard from a friend saying that Iowa had jobs, he and Joanie picked up and moved everything that would fit into the old Econoline—the tent, the Coleman stove, sleeping bags, clothing, sci-fi books, Guffey's carpentry tools—and they hit I-80 at one o'clock on a Saturday morning. Driving at night was the best: You could pop four or five white cross and drive forever, happy, and the lights from oncoming cars and the small towns were vivid and inviting. Why hadn't they just up and left long ago, he'd wondered as they crossed Nebraska—leave that shitty one-bedroom apartment and all the roach-infested furniture for the new tenants. He was tired of owning garbage, couches propped up on bricks, shirts and jeans with stains that would never come out, cars that had just enough go left in them to get you miles from home before the transmission fell out or the radiator leaked.

He took the plastic lid off the Styrofoam cup of the free motel coffee. Why did coffee always taste so good in the morning? There was something about the ritual of it all, grinding the beans when you could, waiting for it to percolate. It made him feel connected

to something, or equal to somebody. The rich need their coffee as much as the poor. He surveyed the room as he sipped his coffee. The Capri would do for now. They could wait it out for another week or so until he found a carpentry job. He'd dig holes for a while if he had to, pour concrete or tie steel.

The handgun sat on the table next to the bassinet. It was a .45. Guffey marveled at how much bigger the slug was than his baby girl's fingers. Joanie had bought the gun for him last Christmas. He'd bought her a microwave. He liked the feel of this gun in his hand. It was power, too, but of a different sort. You could blow it all away with a gun this big. You could end up in jail. You could end up in the grave. You could even end up rich, lots of money somewhere down in Mexico, or some place you'd only seen on TV. Guffey had only been as far south as Kansas. He liked the sound of the word Mexico, the way those gardeners in Colorado had said it, the way it rolled off their tongues, like the name of a car, like Cordoba or Corolla.

Guffey pulled the clip out of the gun. The slugs were golden and made Megan's skin look pale. He heard the van rattle into the assigned parking space out front. Megan began to stir. He snapped the clip back into the gun and set the safety. He was lucky, he thought to himself, to have this baby, to be someone's father.

Todd Case is a local real estate agent.



FISHBONE IS BACK!

An Interview
with Fishbone Bassist
Norwood Fisher

JUMPING RIGHT IN

Angelo Moore of Fishbone
(circa 1990) in Charlottesville, VA



Photos by Greg Hawkins

I made it out of the '80s, '90s, and '00s without a single tattoo, but if I did get inked, it likely would have been a Fishbone logo. They were my favorite band when I was a teen, and I wasn't alone. Back in the mid-to-late-1980's, two Los Angeles area bands—the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Fishbone—were on the cusp of blowing up big time. The Chili Peppers were suffering from a string of lineup changes and drug addictions that led to the death of one founding member, so the safe money was on Fishbone. But given the career trajectories of each band, that obviously would have been a bad bet.

Fishbone was red hot, but they were impossible to package and sell to a mass audience. For starters, they were six black men from South Central L.A. who played punk, reggae, ska and metal, sometimes all in the same song. They were signed to the biggest major label around, Columbia Records, which had no clue how to handle them. The other problem was that Fishbone could never fully translate their live energy onto record. As great as some of those studio recordings were, they never came close to capturing the intensity of their live shows. Speaking from firsthand experience,

Fishbone concerts were completely off the hook. It was fairly common, for instance, to watch frontman Angelo Moore jump twenty feet into the audience off a lighting rig or balcony.

The 2010 release of Lev Anderson and Chris Metzler's critically acclaimed documentary *Everyday Sunshine: The Story of Fishbone* might just give them the exposure they deserve. It features an eclectic who's who of interviewees/fans (rapper and actor Ice-T, jazz artist Branford Marsalis and members of No Doubt, Living Colour, Circle Jerks and the Red Hot Chili Peppers). "Since *Everyday Sunshine* has been playing theatrically," says filmmaker Chris Metzler, "we've been able to do combo screenings and concerts, and the number of people in those audiences have steadily increased over time."

Like many other fans, I lost track of Fishbone as the 1990s wore on. That's why it was such a pleasure to re-immense myself in the music of a band that refused to

be boxed in by racial categories, musical genres, or any other limitations. I recently spent an hour talking to founding member and bassist Norwood Fisher about their three decade-long career, and their experiences with Everyday Sunshine.

Tell me about the early days of the band.

Me and Fish, my brother, were six and four when we started playing together. I got an acoustic guitar and he got drums for Christmas, and so we immediately started writing songs. [laughs] Then we started playing music with guys in our neighborhood, and when I was thirteen I was bused to Hale Junior High in the suburbs, where we met future Fishbone members Kendall and Chris. We talked about playing together for about a year, and when we got to ninth grade, in 1979, we started the band.

How did you discover punk?

It was brand new, it was in the media, and it was supposed to be really scary. New Wave was starting to happen too, and it was more acces-



RIDING THE WAVE

When they got signed, the band had just graduated from high school.

sible than punk. Devo was on Saturday Night Live, and we all liked Devo from the very first record. Also, the Talking Heads. The first punk band I ever saw was The Clash opening for The Who on their first farewell tour.

Did anyone from your neighborhood go?

Hell no! [laughs]

What other music were you guys were listening to?

Black radio, in about 1978 and 1979, started to play Bob Marley songs, which you could

hear every now and then. After that you'd hear Third World, Steel Pulse and Black Uhuru. We started playing with these reggae rhythms, but we also liked punk, so we started speeding up the reggae rhythm. We thought we invented ska! What were we gonna call it? "Punk rock reggae!" [laughs]

FISHBONE WAS RED HOT, BUT THEY WERE IMPOSSIBLE TO PACKAGE

How did you find out you were reinventing the musical wheel?

Two days later, a friend came back with an English Beat record, and then we saw the Specials on Saturday Night Live. We ate up a lot of music we saw on that show. Then we discovered late night television, especially New Wave Theatre, on some UHF channel. They had punk bands on. It was bad ass.

What was it like to be Fishbone and get signed onto a major label?

We were just out of high school, six black guys on Columbia at age 19, and we confused the hell out of people at the record company. The industry was segregated by color, and by genre. Funkadelic and The Clash mixed up genres, but most everyone else had to stay in a box. There weren't a whole lot of opportunities for Fishbone, because you couldn't pigeonhole us.

Do you feel that the industry has changed since then?

The label that put out our last record, Crazy Glue, we have a deal where we split the profits. That would have been impossible 20 years ago. And now live shows are more important than ever for your career. In the last 10 years, in spite of the way the economy has gone, we've held steady and have grown.

Has the film helped with booking shows?

It absolutely helped. After people see the movie they become fans, which is just amazing. And there are also a lot of old fans that rediscovered us.

What was it like seeing yourself as a character in a documentary?

It's like watching a home movie on steroids, a Frankenstein patchwork of your life. The reaction to the film has been extremely gratifying and validating. This far along in the game, for me to be talking to someone like you who was a fifteen year-old listening to us in the 1980's, it's humbling. The whole experience makes me feel very fortunate.

Any last words?

Even though my bank account doesn't reflect it, I can look back with a sense of pride when it comes to the quality of the music we made. **lv**

Kembrew McLeod teaches at The University of Iowa, and plans to work Fishbone into the curriculum of his Media, Music & Culture class.

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ROUGH NIGHT

Rough night: There's a raunchy fête at one of the meet markets and ladies too young wander the streets boudoir-style looking like they've just emerged from Victoria's Secret, wolf packs of skinny bitches high on cocaine.

Meanwhile, one Ultimate Fighting championship or another is being broadcast at BWW. From corner to corner, ginned-up boys slug it out and/or drool at coeds peeled of their outerwear.

Not that I harbor any ill-will toward skin-

one off and pass it up here, I'm getting hungry."

"O.M.G." clucks the gal pal and the others snaps bra over breasts like snatching something back from a thief. She glares at me in the rearview.

"You're a asshole [sic]!"

Like I said: Rough night. I'm seven hours into my twelve and out of thirty calls I've made just \$20 in tips. Do the math: My attitude sucks.

Grinding out of the Sheraton circle without mowing anyone down, I find a happy couple making out at the corner.

They amorously stumble into the road and I slide to a halt. Like it's all part of the show, dude lifts girl's butt onto my hood and they go on mashing face. Blasting my horn gets their attention and the girl swings a lazy arm overhead, "Hey taxi!"

They climb in back and dude says: "Seville Apartments. Take a right here."

"I know where it's at, keep your shirt on. And hers too."

I hate springtime. Everybody shifts into caveman or -woman mode, pricked electrically at the deep root of our animal brain until we go dumb as rabbits. What would our mothers say? Behind me, the happy young couple can't keep their hands off each other.

"Touch this," she says to him, and then to me, "Touch this."

We're stopped on the red light at Madison so I take a look and see one gleaming and enormous white breast slung over the shoulder of my seat.

"This ride is cash only."

"Feel it," demanding, "They're totally fake, both of them. Feel my fake titty."

Well, no shit? Having never felt a fake, the scientist in me jumps the ethical fence and cops a feel. "Feels reals—but it's still cash only."

We're crossing the river a hundred yards

later when I tell them no sex.

"What do you mean we can't have sex in here?" Dude adds: "I'll give you like twenty bucks."

"No sex in the taxi-cab. Like I says, keep your shirts on."

Then she goes: "You're a asshole [sic]!"

That's twice tonight and I can smell the trend, like catching whiff of the jack arcade at Romantix. I drop them at Seville and dude ponies up the fare as the girl with the fakes reminds him to tip me, remarkably.

"Here's a tip," he says. "Eat these."

Dude passes me a dime bag that I hold up in the dome light. Inside: Two plain white pills. "Where'd you get these?"

"Just eat up," he says. "Alice-style, nigga-braugh."

On that note—and from somewhere deep in my own animal brain—I call the young lady with the fakes back to my window. She wobbles over and I give her my card, telling her, "In case things get hinky in there."

She's all laughs and charm, drunk and bluishless.

I hate springtime.
Everybody shifts into caveman or -woman mode. There are times when I wish I carried a vat of sanitizer in the trunk, or that I could drive from inside a biological safety cabinet.

"Things're getting hinky, all right. He's going to fuck me in the butt!"

There are times when I wish I carried a vat of sanitizer in the trunk, or that I could drive from inside a biological safety cabinet. Or maybe I could altogether quit myself of this racket and go pound keys for ACT. Alas, if only I could type.

Dispatch barks me back downtown to the Blue Ramp where I scoop up a grumpy but appropriately dressed lesbian couple going back west. Without thinking about it, and bypassing Burlington, I zip into the T-Bowl alley.

But it's bar rush, Vic, you dumbass: Soon as I hit the bricks of the Pedmall, revelers swarm both sides of the taxi like the Walking Dead. I creep through the crowd at a baby's pace as half-naked coked-up swine jump the hood and pound the roof and slap glass.

I check the rearview and see my fares have huddled closer together, away from the windows. They are horrified I am willing to drive with maniacs hanging off my



ny bitches high on cocaine, or the dudes that make money off the other dudes following the wolves around like dogs. But SBHOCs usually want to pay me with a flash of their breasts.

"I know drivers who'd totally give me a discount for showing him these."

Perhaps she means the driver who seconds as a "modeling agent."

"I'm not that guy," I tell her. "That guy is a creep and scumbag, and he don't work here. The fare is seven bucks—cough it up."

Says she to her gal pal: "I'm showing my tits and he won't give us a break?" Time for an extra-strength application of the #202.

"You want to pay with your mams? Then lop

car. They wouldn't be so appalled if this were the Apocalypse, of course. And who's to say that it isn't? "Is it always like this?"

"Skinny bitches high on cocaine," says the other woman. "They think they run this town."

An hour later, the pills have disappeared Alice-style and my ringing cell phone sounds like it's underwater. Girl with the fakes on the other end. So back to Seville where I find her sitting on the curb, bawling. Aw, rough night. But everything is softer now and I play nice.

"You and your beau get into it?"

"He's not my beau! My beau's downtown."

So I roll downtown and she keeps up the tears like a spring storm.

"Oh god, I shouldn't've done it. He's going to kill me, they're best friends!"

"It's alright, I've done that, nobody killed anybody," I say to her.

"These are his, he's paid for them, oh god! We haven't even been married a whole year!"

In the rearview I see her clutching hands over her chest. My hands turn the wheel steady and the road feels like it is made of glass. **lv**

Vic Pasternak lives in a riverside shack where he works on cars, repairs chainsaws and builds clocks.

little village

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SHORT'S

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Inside the CANARIUM

Once upon a time, I wanted to be a poet. I carried around a notebook, went to readings, bought poetry books, took poetry classes. What was hard was actually writing poems. One day in class, Marvin Bell said something that took a while to sink in, “Poets write poetry because that’s what they do, they don’t have any choice.” It came to me, eventually, that I could almost always think of something to do that seemed more important than writing poetry. Eventually, I found other things that compelled my attention the way poetry did not. But my failed career left me with an abiding respect and appreciation for the ones who can’t escape poetry.

Two people who didn’t escape are the married couple Nick Twemlow and Robyn Schiff, editors at Canarium Press. They live in Iowa City, where Schiff is an associate professor in the Department of English and Twemlow a graduate student in Film and Video Production. They originally met in the Iowa Writer’s Workshop. I met with Nick Twemlow at that most literary of dive bars, George’s Buffet, to discuss Canarium Books.

Twemlow and Schiff met Josh Edwards, founder and publisher of Canarium, when they moved to Oregon for Schiff to take a temporary position at the University of Oregon. “He was a young guy, he came to my wife’s office hours, he wasn’t even a student any more at the time. He said ‘I’m Josh Edwards and I’m starting this magazine called the *Canary River Review*,’ and he wanted to meet Robyn and he wanted us to just hang out sometime.” He had used this ‘cold call’ approach to get “all these really amazing poets into the magazine.” The three became friends and over time, Twemlow and Schiff became more involved in publishing the magazine.

“We all realized we had very different aesthetic interests but a lot of common points, and we all loved doing it ... that’s what got it started. Josh’s energy is unbelievable and he found funding for this, independent of any university.” Edwards went on to do an MFA in Poetry at the University of Michigan, where the project evolved further. “He was able to get the

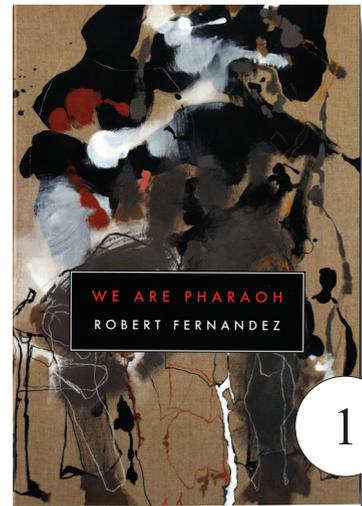
[Michigan Creative Writing] program to invest in a book press, so they basically supplied seed funding. Josh had always wanted to do books... in 2008 we decided to start, so we stopped the magazine and switched to books. The impetus was probably how a lot of publishers begin: We just simply knew of too many good manuscripts that weren’t finding a home.”

“I like sentences, and that may sound strange coming from a writer, except that poetry doesn’t always work in a sentence. ... I like people that think in these terminal ways ... I’m a fan of thinking there’s this end coming and you don’t know when it’s going to happen.”

—Nick Twemlow

I asked Twemlow if there was a unifying aesthetic that determines which authors they publish. Since there are several Canarium editors each advocating for manuscripts, Twemlow said “I think all of us have different answers... I think the thing that I like is work that’s—well I like sentences, and that may sound strange coming from a writer, except that poetry doesn’t always work in a sentence. I don’t mean they need to be straightforward, simplistic stuff but I like people that think in these terminal ways, where there’s a thought, the sentence may unfold over 40 lines... I’m a fan of thinking there’s this end coming and you don’t know when it’s going to happen. I think mostly we like things with ... a very clear voice that, when you read a poem or the whole manuscript, that voice will stick into your brain and it won’t go away. I wish all poetry was like that.”

The works published by Canarium are diverse. Anthony Madrid’s 2012 book *I Am Your Slave Now Do What I Say* combines rigorous rhythmic construction with murderous



We Are Pharaoh

I should have said the iris
in its network of evictions

I should have spoken
more softly

We no longer fear,
We are no longer--

Our throats
Are inadequately sexual

I've exchanged my reflexes
For a \$6,000 suit

The color of oxygen
And silence

We split silence's red liver
And become conscious of
our art

In the streets, a universal:
It is accurate to say

We who eat at the table,
Speak at the table, see

At the table,
are painful

Dilations and constrictions
Made bright by
A dominant
Impulse: to survive.

—Robert Fernandez

RECENTLY RELEASED

humor: “Jam me in hot hell. Make me drive a street cleaning truck/in the folds of the Devil’s anus, but don’t make me read all this Irish poetry.” Suzanne Buffam’s book *The Irrationalist* is as spare as Madrid’s book is expansive. She writes with a distiller’s ear; a section of the book called “Little Commentaries” contains whole poems that are shorter than one of Madrid’s serpentine lines:

ON BORGES

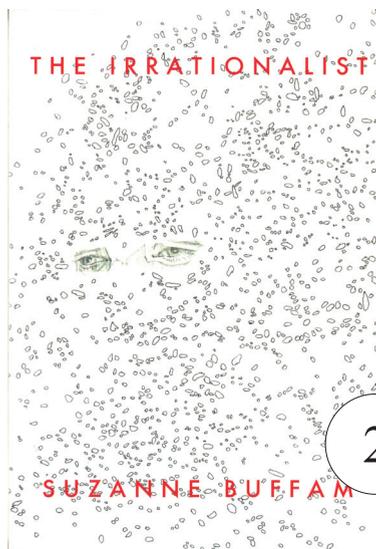
Put One Dream
Inside Another

Iowa Citian Robert Fernandez’ 2011 book *We Are Pharaoh* takes a third way. His poems resist any easy reduction to a particular meaning. The title poem is a sequence of linked, fragmentary thoughts, each linked to the next structurally, but not logically. Or rather, they’re held together by dream logic, evoking a mood indescribable by more direct language. Fernandez seems concerned with the estrangement of modern life, expressed in the literal estrangement—making strange—the discourse of everyday things.

French poet Emmanuel Hocquard’s *The Invention of Glass* is Canarium’s second published translation. While Canarium’s other authors are “young” poets (i.e. under 50) Hocquard has had a long career and has established his reputation in the world of French Poetry. This book comprises poems that examine their own language: “... Internal is the mask of the subject: red. Yet verbs show nothing more than a predicate before it dissipates.” Though self-referential writing is a cliché of post-modern literature, Hocquard’s book is something beyond that. “A taste for glass does not explain the appeal of experiments in language.” Hocquard’s glass is the idea of glass, a metaphor for language: Something transparent through which one sees, but also a barrier that separates one from the things seen.

As Nick Twemlow told me, “... In Stalinist Russia where the poets were executed, that means they feel like the word has some power, and it did. I’m not sure we’ve ever been in that place here.” And it’s true, poetry remains a marginalized art form in the United States, but part of its importance lies in its resistance to being co-opted by commercial mass culture—you will never see, for example, *Leaves Of Grass: The Movie*. But for those attuned to the power of the poetic word, Canarium Books has found a diverse group of writers whose work is serious but inviting, significant yet entertaining. **lv**

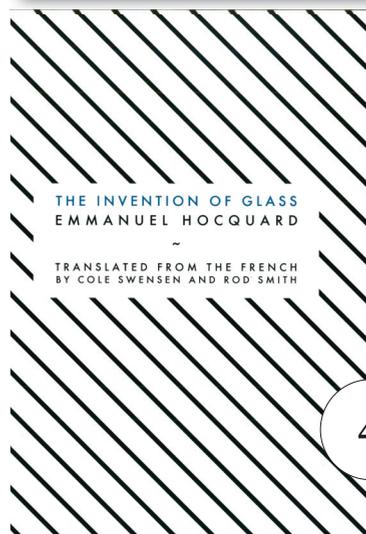
Kent Williams gazed into the void and the void fell asleep.



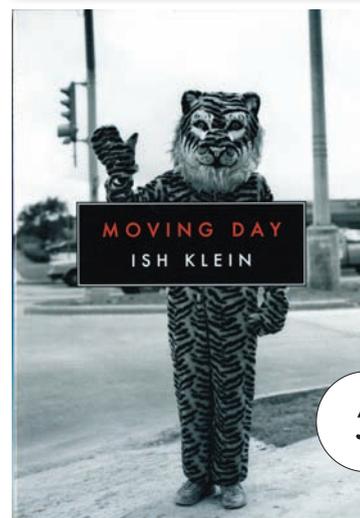
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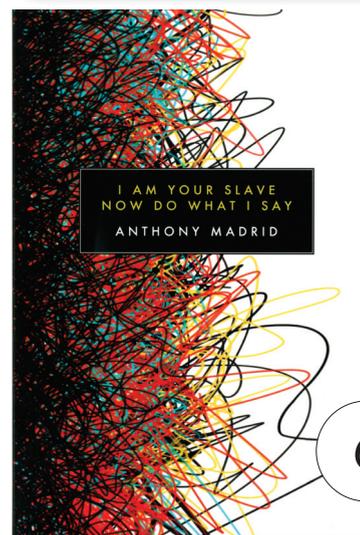


5

1. Robert Fernandez: *We Are Pharaohs* (2011)
2. Suzanne Buffam: *The Irrationalist* (2010).
3. Darcie Dennigan: *Madame X* (2012)
4. Emmanuel Hocquard: *The Invention of Glass* (2012). Translated by Cole Swensen and Rod Smith.
5. Ish Klein: *Moving Day* (2011)
6. Anthony Madrid: *I Am Your Slave Now Do What I Say* (2012)

All titles are available at canariumbooks.org.

6



At the end of every spring semester, The University of Iowa Theatre department brings us its annual New Play Festival. Composed of several new works written and directed by MFA students. Since the first NPF more than twenty years ago, the festival has been dedicated to bringing new works to the public within a short amount of time via productions that encompass the entire department. Here's a rundown of this year's productions:

All That Shines

Directed by: Matt Hawkins

Written by: Basil Kreimendahl

Tues. May 1, 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

David Thayer Theatre

All that Shines follows Houston, a man forced from the city who is forced to live with a group of squatters staying in an abandoned house. With the threat of the city quickly approaching, the group is soon faced with a series of difficult decisions dealing with ideas of survival, euthanasia and industrialization.

The Man in the Sukkah

Directed by: Nathan Halvorson

Written by: Deborah Yarchun

Wed. May 2, 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Theater B

A supernatural thriller set in the woods of South Carolina, *The Man in the Sukkah* follows a pair of new foster parents who get more than they expected when their pasts begin to manifest in the present. With the fate of their new foster child at stake, the couple must face the past if they want to keep it from repeating itself.

**GRAD STUDENTS TAKE A BOW
NEW PLAY FESTIVAL 2012**

Ondine

Directed by: David Hanzel

Written by: Kat Sherman

Fri. May 4, 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

David Thayer Theatre

Ondine is an Elemental, the very spirit and soul of the ocean, and Hildebrand is an alchemist knight. Because of a curse, the two are forced to stay awake. In order to do this, they start to recount their story as it unfolds before us.

Collective Amnesia: A Study of Episodic Memory

Directed by: Kristin Clippard

Written by: Janet Schlapkohl

Sat. May 5, 5:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Theater B

While coping with the loss of her mentor, Dr. Zweifel, Dr. Judith Jonson reaches a conclusion about him involving human experimentation. A young woman from Japan, Chioyoko, who is working with Judith, and James Jackson, an Iraq War Veteran, share their memories of Zweifel as well, and soon love, friendship and mentorship weave the fadafasdfafadadthree closer together as they discover more reasons to pull apart.

Also in this year's festival: a workshop of MFA student Louisa Hill's new play *Riot Grrrl Saves the World*, a play drawing from the social history of the Riot Grrrl scene, as well as several readings of other new plays

If all of these new plays aren't enough to pique an avid theatergoer's interest I'm not sure what would, but here is a look at what will be on offer at the Englert this month:

Roméo et Juliet

April 26-28, 8:00 p.m., April 29, 2:00 p.m.

Englert Theatre

Though even to this day, for some, the very name may conjure up negative images of bad high school productions, *Romeo and Juliet* is a play that has survived the ages with good reason. Having inspired countless musicals, films and operas, the tragedy that is the couples final, everlasting decision is still, when done well, absolutely devastating. Under the direction of Alan Hicks and featuring the grandiose music of Charles Gounod, *Roméo et Juliet* is sure to be a production that will eradicate those painful adolescent memories of class assignments and gawky school productions for good.

How to Survive Your Adult Relationship with Your Family

May 19, 8:00 p.m.

Englert Theatre

Writer Polly Frost has been called the "Edith Wharton of her generation" and her humor book, *With One Eye Open*, has been met with widespread acclaim. Now, Frost brings her new

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“My show is not stand-up comedy, for one thing, I’m middle aged, so I like to sit down.”

—Polly Frost

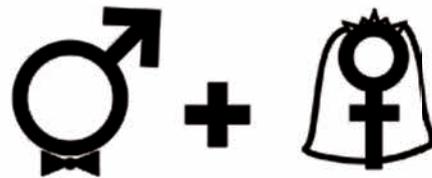
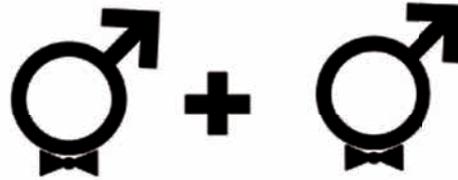
one-woman show *How to Survive Your Adult Relationship with Your Family* to Iowa City. Her stop at the Englert is just one of many on a tour through Iowa she organized herself. Her show is a different kind of theater entirely. “After writing and publishing for over 25 years, I realized that I wanted to connect with live audiences on an intimate level,” says Frost. “My show is not stand-up comedy, for one thing, I’m middle aged, so I like to sit down.” The show invites the audience (only 100 seats are filled per show) to join Frost on stage, creating a unique, interactive experience. “Even though there’s a lot of laughs in my show,” she says, “audience members also cry during it—and laugh again.” Frost’s show proves that no matter how much you’ve grown since childhood, your family can still surprise you.

Visit Polly Frost’s website at: www.pollyfrost.com. **lv**

Levi Smith is currently an undergrad at the University of Iowa studying Theatre Arts and Cinema.

m.c. ginsberg

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THE ART OF HOSPITALITY

Photos by Jay Geisen

Look just beyond Iowa City, a quick highway drive up 380, to The Hotel Kirkwood Center. The ambitious building is a multi-million-dollar endeavor, melding 5-star hotel swankiness with an upscale conference center, inspired restaurant, office complex and art collection. Three hundred pieces, to be exact, all procured by Arbe Bareis, Kirkwood's Fine and Performing Arts coordinator.

All the art has a Kirkwood—or at least Iowa—connection, whether made by students, faculty, or staff from within the state. But, on this anti-tour, one should approach the art with an eye for functionality. Kirkwood itself is one of the most significant community colleges in the country, one of only sixteen affiliated with the League of Innovation for Community Colleges (and the only one in Iowa). The spirit of the space is that of the community college: Art lives here in practice and passion. It caters to visitors coming and going by way of the Eastern Iowa Airport, and to students in the school's well-known Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management programs. Even Business students and faculty hone their crafts here, and the art reflects this.

Outside a simple waiting room hangs Military Cadence by Susan Chrysler White (2008), a prolific painter who is an associate professor in The University of Iowa's Painting and Drawing area. Cadence doesn't look like a painting. It looks like a huge neon triumph of the ornamental, fresh from a gigantic space-age printer. My spellcheck turned "waiting room" into "waging room," which almost fits better. Waging is rooted in the present tense, the right now, and the art here is cutting edge, current. Seeing it is waging the currency of space. It is a room that carries on the action of conversation. Indeed, the Kirkwood Community College Continuing Education secretary, whose desk is in front of the painting, told me, "I think it stands out, it's odd...you don't see stuff like that around here." And that goes for the whole space, she said, "The hotel here, there aren't any similar hotels in the area."

"We have 'Four Diamond' Triple A rating," she says. "We would have gotten top honors if we'd gotten a spa and pool." (Art pool forthcoming?) The hotel is next door to the Iowa Equestrian Center. Horses stand like plastic toys on tan tracts of land. There's a lot of green and white fences. The truck drivers will stall you out if you're stuck behind them on the bony throw of single lane road that takes you from the highway to the hotel, which sits like an alien obelisk, unobstructed in its space by the agrarian backdrop, not unlike the placement of pieces on the green playing field in Hasbro's The Game of Life board game.

The student hallway is filled with photos and ornate glass pieces in closed glass cabinets, and is as transparent as the hotel once you've



stepped inside. It's just past the rich reds, whites, and blacks of the lounge area, which boasts a smokeless fireplace under glass in the center. John Schwartzkopf's *Geometric Tango* (2010) is there—a human-sized sculpture carved in PaperStone (usually used for expensive countertops). It is a minimal, parenthetical introduction to the greater hotel space.

Conifer Smith, an instructor of Glass and Ceramics at Kirkwood, has an appropriately-titled piece: *Geologic Conversations* (2008). Husks of what appear to be giant shells and strange coral feel carved from invisible waves in a kind of oceanic tumultuousness. It's quiet, though, and it represents well the entire idea of how art works here: The functionality of the place leads to the wonderful role of art as conversation.

A beautiful, huge mural of blurred lines and colored stripes, Will Mentor's *Test Plot Test* (2010), hangs across from the main conference rooms. Art thrives in these cavernous hallways and ultra-modern spaces. It is an overlord you'll never personally meet but have opinions on. It is a giant water cooler. A newly elected official. "People have so, so many questions about the art



here," the secretary whispers to me. "Mostly good stuff! They just love to talk about it, ask where it came from, know more about the artists..." This is a space where art functions as a distracting, useful, engaging juxtaposition to business, people, and their events, a bookmark holding the pages of our working lives. The space of the hotel's

business says a lot about how galleries work. Modestly, this is a place that practices art in public in a supremely effective way.

The themes in these massive conference-center hallways are symbiosis and metamorphosis: what it means to be a colorful, exotic bug trapped in the white, fresh sterility of an office. A giant Susan Chrysler White mural (*It Must be Heaven*, 2009) places moths against a blue, green and yellow nebulae, dangling light. The vaporous clouds behind them overlook the central cavernous hallway to the main conference center. This big, clean place is a meditation on our networking-job-and-collared-shirt culture, a world of cell phones connected to belts and laminated name tags. Yet, it is impossible to call it unremarkable, considering the astonishing art collection. We

spend so much of our professional lives within places of quixotic angularity, quizzical smoothness, and questioning, aching color. The art here suggests conversation, but the building (and the area around it) is an expansive container; it never

>> **ARTICLE CONT. ON PAGE 28**

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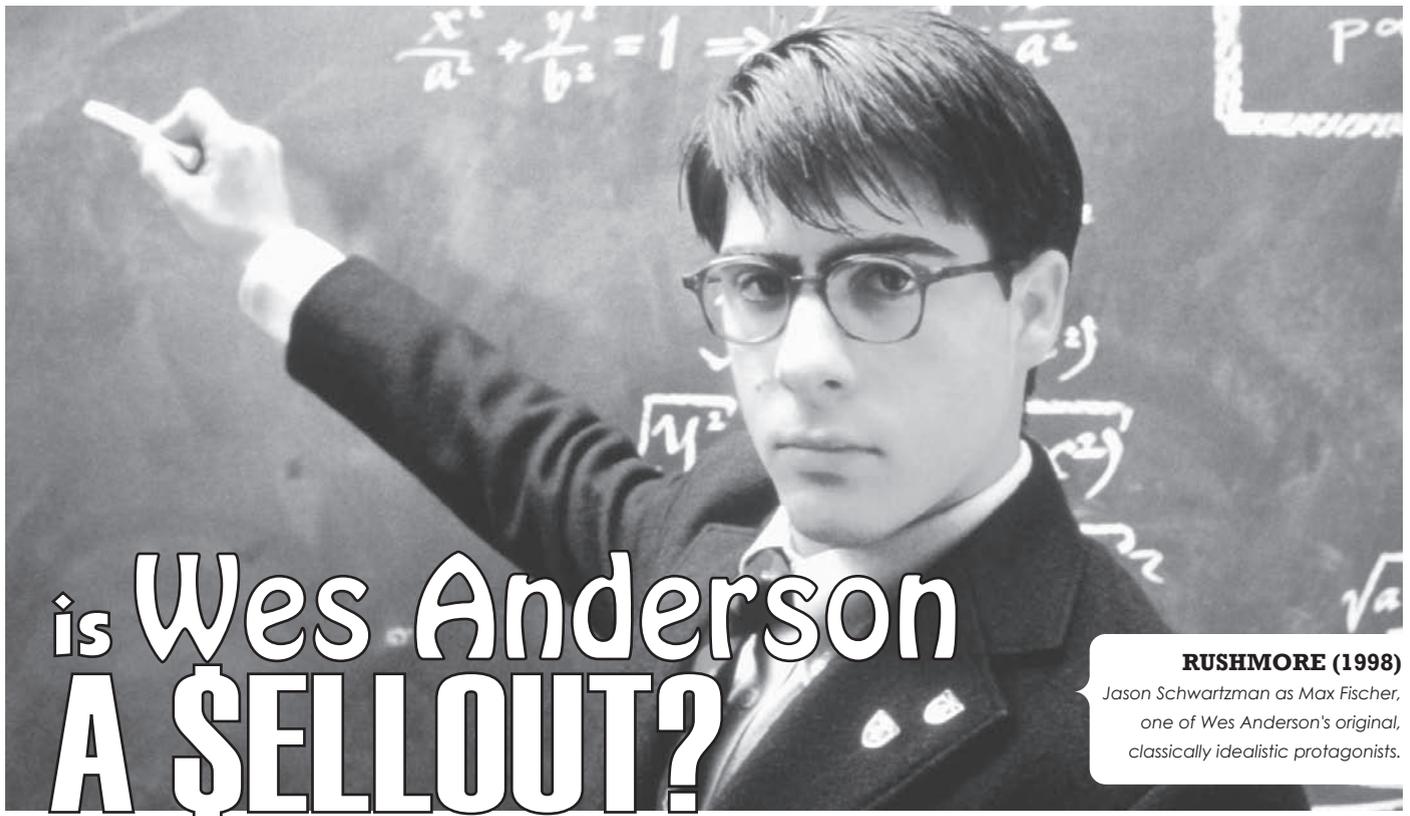
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is Wes Anderson A \$ELLOUT?

RUSHMORE (1998)

Jason Schwartzman as Max Fischer, one of Wes Anderson's original, classically idealistic protagonists.

Have you seen the new Wes Anderson? No, I don't mean the new Wes Anderson film (that would be *Moonrise Kingdom*, set to premiere at this year's Cannes Film Festival!), I mean the new Wes Anderson ad for the Hyundai Azera—two ads, in fact, which his ardent fans pass around the internet as if they were previews for *The Royal Tenenbaums II*.

In the weird online world of film buffs, these ads have sparked a controversy about what it means to sell out. A few pure souls hold firm that directors using their powers with a camera to shill merchandise is almost as bad as baseball players auctioning their skills with a bat to the mafia. The overwhelming majority

argue not only that directors can maintain their artistic integrity in advertising, but that their ads can be shining miniatures, like pages from Michelangelo's sketchbook.

Masterpiece was not the first word that leapt to mind when I saw Darren Aronofsky's latest "celebration" of Jennifer Lopez's new clothing line at Kohl's. The director of *Black Swan* and *Requiem for a Dream* has made a pedestrian product for a boring performer's mediocre new fashions, essentially a 30-second music-video of J. Lo dancing as her clothes magically change. If selling out means doing uninspired work in order to make some dough, then Aronofsky is selling out. But is that so wrong?

Wes Anderson's ads for the new Hyundai, which clearly bear the personal stamp of the

director of *The Life Aquatic* and *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, make the question even harder. In my favorite of the two, he imagines three different dreams of talking to our car. Each begins with an old TV set showing a claymation car flying off a ramp; and each time we immediately enter into the TV reality. In the first, the driver commands the car to sprout wings, which it obediently does. In the second, the car plummets into the ocean and deploys fins: the driver commands, "Up periscope!" The third shows the car being chased by a team of cars into a tunnel. The James-Bond-like driver orders, "Active rear incendiary devices!" In the final shot, we see the real Hyundai. The driver asks it for the location of the nearest Italian restaurant, and a Kit-style voice delivers an answer. It's an

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A Separation

Asghar Farhadi (2011)

Bijou | April 1, 4, 5

The winner of this year's Oscar for best foreign film is as real a movie as you'll see. Be forewarned: This stunning exploration of marriage, family and community will break your heart. It will also remind you of the humans—they happen to be Iranians—whom we're talking about bombing.



We Need to Talk About Kevin

Lynne Ramsay (2011)

Bijou | April 6-8, 10-12

Kevin is guilty of a mass murder at his high school. This mesmerizing psychological thriller, starring the incomparable Tilda Swinton and the fascinating John C. Reilly, is about how his parents try to make sense of their role in his unspeakable crime.

The Turin Horse

Béla Tarr (2011)

Bijou | April 28-May 3

Legend has it that the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who spent his final decade in madness and delirium, lost his mind on January 3, 1889, in Turin, Italy, upon seeing a man whip his horse. The Hungarian master Béla Tarr imagines the subsequent story of the driver, his daughter and the horse.

elaborately-crafted jeu d'esprit about dreams, TV and the products we buy. So, do its artistic merits get it off the hook?

Wes Anderson, who's made several ads before this, including a self-reflexive charmer for American Express, is not alone in descending from high cinema into the world of marketing. Federico Fellini, Jean-Luc Godard, Ingmar Bergman, Martin Scorsese and David Lynch, to name just a few, have all put their artistic prowess in the service of reshaping our desires.

Many of their ads, like Anderson's most recent, make use of the concept of dreams, perhaps because dreams embody desire and flicker as swiftly and powerfully as a string of ads. David Lynch has several typically creepy examples. You might remember a surreal spot he did for Calvin Klein's Obsession, in which a hunky guy squirms in bed, and a pretentious voice over describes the incoherent train of thoughts that lead to sleep. Even more nightmarish is the public service announcement Lynch made for New York City, which connects thoughtless littering to the spread of rats. For one of my all-time favorite ads, Fellini actually transcribed one his dreams. In an ad for the Bank of Rome, he weaves together a horrific, semi-comic, highly-personal nightmare of titanic desires and guilts. Then he cuts to a psychoanalysis of the dream, in which the shrink concludes, "I don't bother myself with the financial questions, only the psychological problems, but for the rest there's the Bank of Rome." As if to slyly remind us just how absurd our consumer vision of happiness really is.

The aesthetic debate about selling out is interesting, but let's not forget the big picture. We live in a society where the majority of things we look at blink and glow with ads, where every inch of athletics from headbands to the titles of bowl games is plastered with corporate logos, where doctors have begun to sell their cell phone number to desperate patients, where a school in Dallas is bribing kids to read, where corporations pay to pollute and where, increasingly, education, prisons and the military are for-profit institutions. If we're inclined to argue that Wes Anderson isn't selling out by making an ad for Hyundai, it's in part because the concept of selling out has become meaningless. Almost everything is sold out already. Maybe that's what we should start caring about. **lv**

Scott Samuelson teaches philosophy at Kirkwood Community College and blogs about music with his son at billyanddad.wordpress.com.

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>> **ARTICLE CONT. FROM PAGE 25**

attacks or makes demands.

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HALLS OF INSPIRATION

Kirkwood's Culinary Arts program is among the country's best.

dramatic squares in contrast to one another, but part of a larger rectangular pastiche. There's the slightest discolored fuzz in the middle, a static which lets us know that no, this is not, in fact, Mark Rothko, and if you look even closer you'll see that the squares of color in fact fold and turn like an unmade bedspread. This place is a great testing ground for art. This is the Nevada desert for nukes in every possible good way: beautiful, picturesque, sprawling, and a critical component of learning.



METAMORPHOSES

UI painting instructor Susan White's It Must Be Heaven.

The Hotel Kirkwood Center is where parents get taken by their kids at college, intending to stall for an afternoon in a place where interesting things accidentally happen. The images put on a slow fashion show from their walls. Where formal galleries might grow preoccupied with the high demands and critical expectations of the art world, students, faculty, staff and visitors to Kirkwood are treated to an environment that encourages practice, training and conversation. Visit and you will find yourself in a place where art is real. You just have to come out and find it and walk around. **lv**

Russell Jaffe is filling in for R.A.D. Wudnaughton, who has become stricken with image poisoning after encountering some particularly evocative visuals.

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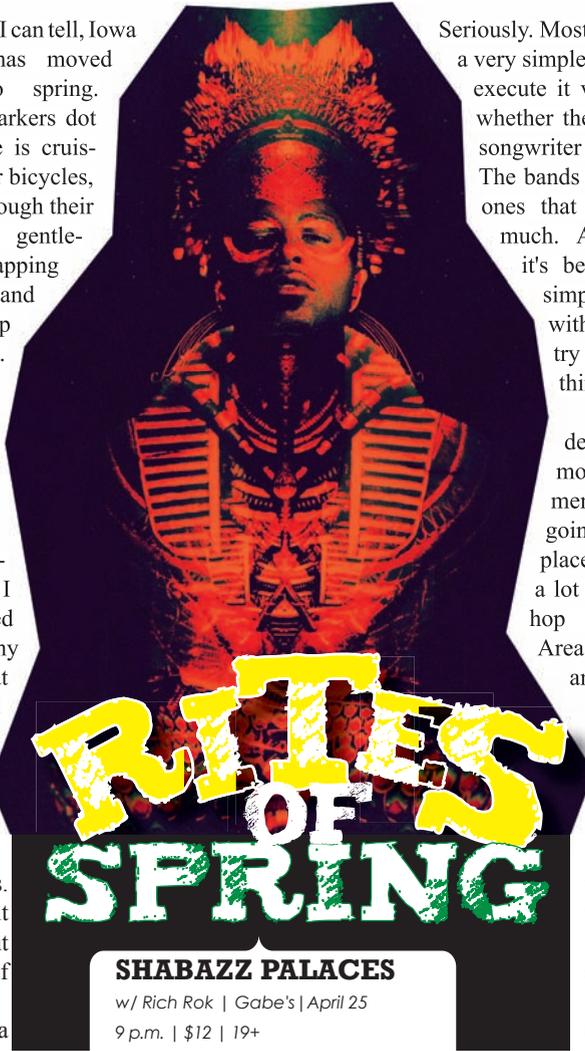
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M

As far as I can tell, Iowa City has moved on to spring. The markers dot the city. Everyone is cruising around on their bicycles, wind whipping through their hair. Ladies and gentlemen alike are swapping their duck boots and heavy coats for flip flops and shorts. The days are getting noticeably longer while the nights get warmer. The change of seasons is always a nice time to reassess your life. I did this, and it led me to shaving my head. I know that this doesn't sound particularly remarkable; there are people who keep a bald head and have to shave it every few days. But in my case it required me to cut off eight and a half years of hair.

There were a number of reasons for doing this, but the primary one was that I wanted freedom. For those that have never had dreadlocks, one thing that happens is that they become a part of your life. You are no longer yourself; you are yourself and your dreadlocks. The frequent result is that people fail to see you and only acknowledge your dreadlocks. While others don't mind it so much, I grew frustrated having to explain my hair to people again and again and again, or others making assumptions about me based on it. So, I hit the reset button.

At this point, you might be asking what the changing seasons and my hair have to do with music, the actual topic of this column. Well, the answer is simple: a lot. In one season or another, everyone has to get back to basics. Spring is a perfect time for this because winter is so extreme—the weather is so cold, the layers of clothes are so heavy, the stir craziness is so engulfing. It's not until spring that you feel the essence of things once again, and this idea of minimalism transfers over to music. Think about your five favorite artists.



SHABAZZ PALACES

w/ Rich Rok | Gabe's | April 25
9 p.m. | \$12 | 19+

Seriously. Most, if not all, have a very simple framework and execute it very, very well, whether they are a singer-songwriter or a metal band. The bands that fail are the ones that try to do too much. Almost always, it's better to keep it simple and do it with flair than to try to do too many things.

This idea underlines all of this month's recommendations. I'm going to start in a place that's meant a lot to me as a hip-hop fan: the Bay Area. From E-40 and Too Short to Rasco and Planet Asia, this scene has produced nothing but inspired albums from emcees with excellent technical abilities. A longtime contributor to this scene is Andre

Nickatina who is coming to the Blue Moose on April 12. While his raps might not win awards for creativity, his precise flow, relaxed delivery and beat selection more than make up for it. His appearance at the Blue Moose is special because he is bringing Fashawn with him. Fashawn is a

Spring is the time to get back to basics, to begin to feel the essence of things once again.

Fresno-based emcee that you need to put on your radar immediately: His flow is excellent, up there with new cats like Big K.R.I.T. and Kendrick Lamar.

Staying on the hip-hop tip, April 25 brings Shabazz Palaces to Gabe's. Emcee Ishmael Butler a.k.a Palaceer Lazaro has a rap style that is off-kilter, surrealistic and streetwise. He raps over beats that are equally informed

Quick Flits

Put these shows on your calendar for the month of April.

ANDRE NICKATINA

w/ Fashawn, MUMBLS | April 12
Blue Moose | 7:00 p.m. | \$15 | 19+



BOMBINO

CSPS | April 16 | 7:00 p.m.
\$17/21 | All Ages

BREAK SCIENCE

w/ Gramatik, Paul Basic | Gabe's
April 15 | 10 p.m. | \$17/20 | 19+



LIGHTS

Gabe's | April 28 | 6 p.m.
\$13/15 | All Ages



SLEEPY SUN

The Mill | May 1 | 9 p.m.
\$8 | 21+

by the grime of the city and the vast expanse that is outer space. While this sounds really pretentious, the two mix to create a straightforward sound that is a smart, necessary update of the model constructed by the old school hip-hop pioneers Ultramagnetic MCs, who blended the outre rhymes of Kool Keith and the futuristic production of Ced Gee with an eye and ear for the street. It's challenging yet still amazingly approachable for both hip-hop heads and indie rockers. Their debut album *Black Up* was one of my favorite albums from the past year.

And then there's the Brooklyn-based alt-country band Country Mice. In most cases, alt-country is a word that I don't like to use, but this quartet is different. They owe as much to noise rockers Dinosaur Jr. and Hüsker Dü as to Neil Young & Crazy Horse. Their guitars attack and are balanced smoothly by the rhythm section. The lyrics of lead singer Justin Rueger provide a melancholy beauty to the entire affair. The overall result is a sound that is



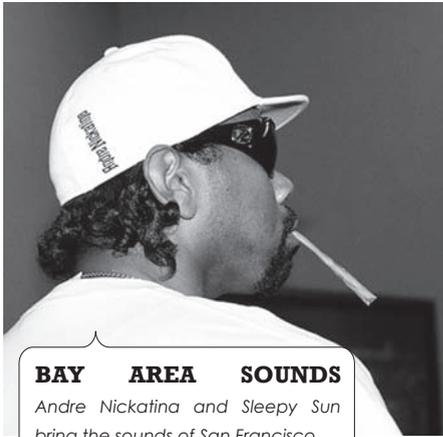
COUNTRY MICE

The Mill | April 5 | 10:00 p.m.
\$8/10 | 19+

pure country rock, twangy and raging. They make excellent music for drinking whiskey and hanging out in the dark recesses of a bar. These young men will be coming to the Mill, a place with many dark corners, on April 5. If you like any of the bands mentioned above or local country-rockers Grand Tetons, this is a show to put on your calendar.

The last band I want to talk about for April plays rock-and-roll music, pure and simple. Hailing from Oakland, Bare Wires is another band coming from the very potent Bay Area garage scene. Unlike some of their contemporaries like The Moonhearts, they are not bratty. Instead, they follow in the model of Ty Segall, playing in a melodic style with a psychedelic edge. Their sound is driving and urgent. It is reminiscent of either a faster Stooges or an updated Ramones. For me, it is the former. Others might find it to be the latter. No matter how you look at it, these guys know how to rock the stage. They will be visiting Gabe's on April 5. **lv**

A.C. Hawley is still adjusting to his bald head. Do you have a tip? Email it to ac.hawley@littlevillagemag.com. Follow him on Twitter at @acethoughts.



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The Twelve Canons

Volume 4: Sacrifice

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The Twelve Canons is currently singer/songwriter Jim Durocher and multi-instrumentalist Justin Norman. *Volume 4: Sacrifice* came with a note from Norman that mentioned “FYI it was recorded in a mental institute.”

Jim Durocher’s personal demons are no secret around Iowa City, but it’s not my place to air them here; I only mention it here because when listening to this CD, I’m struck by how focused and carefully wrought Durocher’s songwriting is. As the title suggests, this is the fourth Twelve Canons album, the three previous done in collaboration with Iowa City’s extraordinary Alex Body. Durocher’s change of venue took the music in a different direction. There’s still plenty of Durocher’s trademark neo-Renaissance creepiness, but Justin Norman contributes a remarkable setting for his songs. I assume the string arrangements were produced by way of a sampler, since no string players were credited, but they sound wonderful.

There’s no mistaking the darkness of Durocher’s imagination. *Sacrifice* is a concept

album sung in the character of a sexual sadist and remorseless killer. When a serial killer can have a hit TV series, this may not be as edgy as it used to be, but Durocher’s fear, anguish and despair comes through as authentic. “Quiet now, or I’ll sew up your mouth” he sings in “There’s No Getting Out.” In Daddy Longlegs he says “‘it’s wrong,’ they all say ‘for the child’ but it’s my daddy’s way... when he’s in me I’m not alone.” And the first line of the record is “Let me kill you, I’ll use the sharpest little knife.”

For the record, Jim Durocher is one of the mildest, least threatening people I’ve met; I say this because some people have a hard time separating an artist from the art. *Sacrifice* is more than gothic transgression for its own sake. It is music of rare, horrible, beauty.



Exposed Fiction

Exposed Fiction

www.exposedfiction.com

Exposed Fiction’s self-titled debut album arrived at my house with a big crack through the middle. It’s romantic to imagine the music is that powerful, but it’s more likely the Postal

What is ‘exposed fiction’ anyway? It could be revealed falsehoods, but it could also just be fiction—stories brought to light.

Service or our intrepid publisher Mr. Steele broke it accidentally before dropping it off. No matter. You can listen to (and buy) it on the band’s Facebook Music Store page. What’s remarkable to me about their music is the way they soak up influences from across several decades, though to my old-guy ears it’s obvious they’re intimate with the music of Neil Young.

They don’t sound that much like Young, exactly, except when they break out the harmonica. But instead of imitating, Exposed Fiction have picked up on Young’s ability to meticulously apply craft, while still staying loose enough to swerve off in surprising directions. The lyrics are simple without being simplistic. On “Worm Food” the first verse is about rainbows and “walking the way the wind goes,” but the second, just as bouncy, announces “every now and then I like to think how we’re all dying, one day at a time just like fresh cut flowers drying,” sung with the same care-free bounce.

Sonically, the album is anchored by the band’s guitars with the drums playing a subtle, background role. It may be an accident of home recording, but there’s an appealing tonal darkness to the songs. They’ve avoided the pitfall of hyping the high frequencies that’s so prevalent amongst a generation already half deaf from too many hours listening to cranked iPods. It’s a sound close to that favored in the early ‘70s while still feeling current.

What is ‘exposed fiction’ anyway? It could be revealed falsehoods, but it could also just be fiction—stories brought to light. Either way this is a record with some good songwriting and playing, whose sincerity shines through without baring everything on first listen.

—Kent Williams



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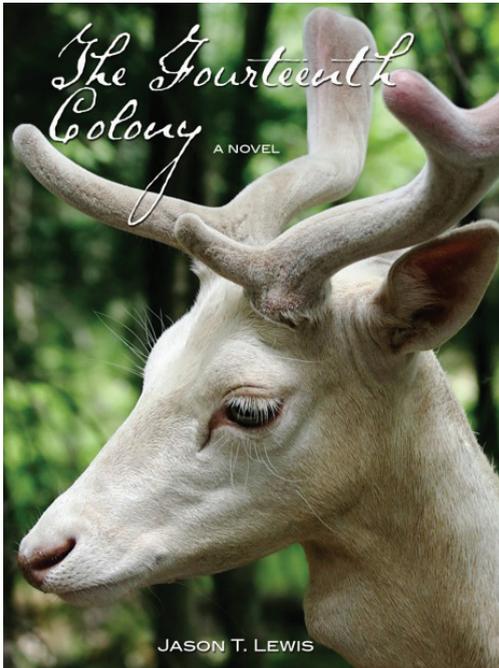
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Jason T. Lewis

The Fourteenth Colony
<http://www.sadironpress.com/>

A common problem fiction writers have with musician characters is that if the author isn't a skilled songwriter, then the character is much less believable. Never mind the fact that we never really know what the character's songs would sound like, either. Iowa City

A washed-up musician named John Martin returns to his childhood hometown in an attempt to reconnect and possibly gain some bearings.

author and musician Jason T. Lewis came up with a solution to this in his debut novel *The Fourteenth Colony*.

The book is a "you can never go home again"-themed story of a washed-up musician named John Martin who returns to his childhood hometown in an attempt to reconnect and possibly gain some bearings. In his van are his worldly possessions—a guitar and the tapes of an unreleased album.

The Fourteenth Colony is subtitled "a novel with music" because Lewis—who also performs as Sad Iron Music—went into the studio following the writing of the novel to record the songs that John Martin wrote as a companion work. Conveniently,

John Martin's particular genre of music is edgy guitar-soaked barstool Americana of the kind Sad Iron Music is known for. The songs reflect the need for escape that John Martin was feeling. When he sings "where you been, what you doin' here again", all these questions, no answers" in "Take This Song" it serves as the theme for the book, as Martin makes his way through town encountering people and places from his past. Lewis uses flashbacks to effectively develop concurrent past and future storylines. As

he comes to terms with being in the town he left, we are shown also the events leading up to his original departure.

I found *The Fourteenth Colony* to be a good read. I identified with the challenge of coming home after an absence, and I found a parallel in my life to his small town experiences. Listening to the album while reading the novel enhanced the experience of both, and I hope that Jason T. Lewis continues this "novel with music" approach to his art.

Michael Roeder is a self-proclaimed "music savant." When he's not writing for Little Village he blogs at www.playbsides.com.

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Can a hard-hit baseball crush your skull (revisited)?

I've heard of the occasional car in a baseball stadium parking lot being damaged by an out-of-the-park home run. I wonder: Have there ever been any skulls or other body parts crushed? Who would be liable for the hapless victim's misfortune?
—Victor, Santa Cruz

I first tackled this question in 1978. Things were different then. I pounded out columns on a mechanical device called a typewriter. My telephone was the size of a shoebox. When I wanted to ascertain a fact, I didn't Google it or e-mail people in Adelaide but rather called them one at a time. This had a deleterious impact on the quality of information I was able to amass.

Today research is easier, so I revisited the subject. I was, I'm happy to report, directionally correct: flying baseballs can be lethally dangerous. However—and I'm sorry if this has had any unfortunate consequences over the past 34 years—I underestimated the risk by a factor of ten.

From 1900 through 2002 there were 35 confirmed spectator fatalities in major- or minor-league ballparks. Only five of those were ball-related: two from foul balls, two from wild throws into the stands, and one during spring training where a fan chasing a foul ball got hit by a car. None was due to home runs, no doubt owing to the relative rarity of homers, the distance involved, and the comparatively small number of people seated in fair territory in most parks.

Foul balls, as anyone who has watched a game from the stands likely suspects, are more of a problem. In 1960 Dominic LaSala (reported spellings vary) was killed by a foul ball off the bat of Johnny Powers of the minor-league Columbus Jets, and in 1970 14-year-old Alan Fish was killed by a line-drive foul from Manny Mota of the Dodgers.

Not only can batted balls be dangerous, so can the bats. Baseball bats used to be sturdy cudgels made of formidable wood species such as hickory, but over time hitters adopted

lighter ash bats with spindly handles to improve their home run power. As it became apparent ash bats break much more easily than hickory, batters switched to maple. This led to another problem: when maple bats break they're three times as likely as ash to shatter into large pieces, which can become dangerous projectiles. Nearly 25 bats get broken per game.

Some serious nonfatal spectator injuries have occurred from both errant

survey—1 in 298,000. My apologies to any injured parties or their heirs and estates.

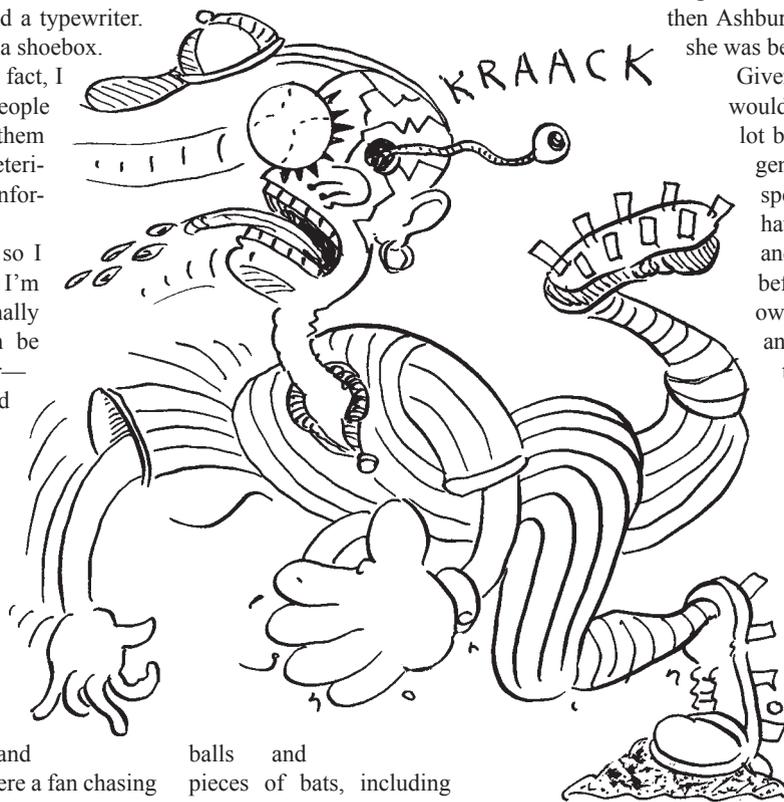
With so many balls ending up in the stands (on average a few dozen per game, judging from several small-scale counts), it's remarkable deaths and injuries aren't more frequent. As it is there have been some bizarre incidents. On August 17, 1957, center fielder Richie Ashburn of the Philadelphia Phillies hit fan Alice Roth twice with foul balls during a single at-bat: the first foul broke her nose, and then Ashburn lined a second ball into her as she was being carried off on a stretcher.

Given the risks, you'd think MLB clubs would have been sued back to the sandlot by now. However, the courts have generally held, even recently, that spectators at baseball games don't have to be protected from common and expected risks. Case law from before World War I absolves park owners from liability for foul balls and broken bats. That's not to say the clubs are immune to lawsuits. Patrons have successfully sued after being hit by foul balls that passed through protective netting, stumbling over loose bats, falling into holes, or tripping and falling down stairs. The common thread seems to be that the hazards involved couldn't reasonably have been anticipated.

Generally speaking, though, the law considers that when you go out to the old ball game you're willingly assuming the risk of injury or death. In 1991 Illinois was briefly an exception, with plaintiffs winning lawsuits against both the White Sox and Cubs for foul ball injuries. That was nipped in the bud the following year by the Illinois Baseball Facility Liability Act. This shielded the clubs from most foul ball litigation, the legislature evidently taking the view that from long, sad experience Chicago baseball fans should know to expect the worst.

—CECIL ADAMS

Send questions to Cecil via straightdope.com or write him c/o Chicago Reader, 11 E. Illinois, Chicago 60611. Subscribe to the Straight Dope podcast at the iTunes Store.



balls and pieces of bats, including broken cheekbones and jaws, concussions, and in one case the loss of an eye. Players can be at serious risk too. On September 19, 2010, Chicago Cubs outfielder Tyler Colvin was heading home from third on Wellington Castillo's broken-bat double when a flying shard of wood speared him like a cocktail shrimp. Colvin needed a chest tube and emergency surgery and was done for the season. He did, however, score.

One comprehensive medical study found 291 injuries from foul balls during baseball games attended by 7.7 million spectators—a rate of roughly one injury per 26,000 attendees. That's an order of magnitude worse than the figure I came up with for injuries during the 1977 season based on an informal phone

Curses, Foiled Again

• Police searching for a stolen iPad used the tablet's GPS to track it to an apartment in San Jose, Calif. The officers didn't have a search warrant, but when they asked permission to enter the apartment, the occupants obliged. "They probably thought if they didn't, we'd suspect something," Santa Clara County Assistant District Attorney David Tomkins suggested. Once inside, the officers found 780 pounds of crystal meth, worth about \$35 million. "I told my dad about the bust," District Attorney Jeff Rosen said, "and he said, 'They have \$35 million, and they can't go out and buy an iPad?'" (*San Jose Mercury News*)

• Police arrested a 17-year-old boy they said tried to burglarize a home in Belfast, Northern Ireland, after a patrol spotted the juvenile at the front door struggling to free his hand from the flap of a mail slot. He became stuck while trying to reach through the slot to unlock the door. (*Associated Press*)

• When a single-engine Cessna 182 strayed into the same Los Angeles airspace as a Marine helicopter carrying President Obama, the North American Aerospace Defense Command scrambled two Air Force fighter jets to intercept the aircraft in the no-fly zone and direct it to land at Long Beach Airport. Federal agents who questioned the pilot determined that he presented no security threat, but they also found 40 pounds of marijuana aboard the plane and turned him over to Long Beach police. (*Associated Press*)

Immodest Proposals

• Missouri lawmakers voted to add gun owners to the list of groups protected against workplace discrimination. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Wanda Brown, said the measure was inspired by a constituent who runs a meat-packing plant in a bad neighborhood and "was told that if he didn't quit carrying his gun, the USDA would not come and inspect his product," meaning he couldn't sell it. After the measure passed, 115 to 36, openly gay Rep. Mike Colona declared, "What this body has done is put protecting gun ownership above discriminating against somebody because of their sexual orientation." (St. Louis's *KWMU-FM*)

• Ohio Senate Bill 271 would allow telephone companies to stop providing landline service, potentially leaving a large number of Ohio residents without any phone service. The bill's sponsor, Sen. Frank LaRose, said the measure frees phone companies to spend their time and money on new, high-speed connections. "Those resources are being wasted on vintage services customers are walking away from," he explained. Among the bill's opponents are seniors and people unable or unwilling

to give up their landlines. "If you eliminate landlines," Clark County Sheriff Gene Kelly pointed out, "you would put these people out there without a means to report a crime." (*Springfield News-Sun*)

Keeping in Touch

• Jacob Jock got kicked off a jury in a civil trial in Sarasota, Fla., after sending a Facebook friend request to one of the defendants within 20 minutes of being instructed by the judge not to contact anyone connected with the case. "I didn't think it was a big deal," Jock said, explaining that he sent the friend request while he was in the jury pool. "I didn't think I would get picked for the jury." But he was, and defendant Violette Milerman informed her attorney, who told the judge. (*Sarasota Herald-Tribune*)

• Authorities were called to rescue Bonnie Miller after she walked off a pier in St. Joseph, Mich., while texting. "I had set an appointment for the wrong time, and so I sent about three words,"

Miller said. "Next thing you know, it was the water." (South Bend's *WBND-TV*)



Low People in High Places

• While serving as mayor of Hawthorne, Calif., Larry Guidi also worked as a warehouse operations manager for the Hawthorne School District. He was fired after a security camera recorded him loading a commercial food mixer into his pickup truck. He pleaded guilty to stealing the mixer, explaining that he took it so he could make dough for his home pizza oven. (*Associated Press*)

• Anwar El-Balkimy, an ultra-conservative Islamist member of the Egyptian parliament, told reporters from his hospital bed that masked gunmen robbed and beat him on a desert highway. Later, however, the employees of a plastic-surgery clinic in Giza said that El-Balkimy was covering his face in bandages to hide plastic surgery. El-Balkimy admitted he'd gotten a nose job and resigned from both the Salafist Nour Party and parliament. (*USA Today*)

High People in Low Places

Barely an hour into his 21st birthday, Damien

Dasilveira Bittar was arrested for drunk driving after he crashed his car into an alcohol rehabilitation center in Eugene, Ore. Police said Bittar was trying to flee the scene when officers arrived. (Eugene's *KVAL-TV*)

High People in High Places

When sheriff's deputies went to a home in Dickson County, Tenn., to notify Danielle Elks, the wife of Charlie Daniels band keyboardist Joel "Taz" Digregorio, that her husband had died in a car crash, they found the back door open and entered. They found what they suspected was marijuana on the kitchen table, as well as rolling papers. They also noted there was a sticker for the Governor's Marijuana Eradication Task Force. Elks is the director of the state Alcoholic Beverage Commission, whose mission includes the eradication of marijuana. The deputies neither investigated nor arrested anyone. (Nashville's *WSMV-TV*)

When Guns Are Outlawed

Authorities accused Paul A. Broadwell, 22, of throwing a bowling ball at a man during an argument while bowling in Niagara Falls, N.Y. "That guy ducked," Deputy District

Attorney Doreen M. Hoffmann said. "The bowling ball hit this kid who was just minding his own business." The 16-year-old victim suffered broken facial bones and needed four plates installed in his face to hold up his eyeball. (*The Buffalo News*)

Homeland Insecurity

While driving a \$160,000 armored Chevy Suburban specifically designed to thwart high-velocity gunfire, fragmentation grenades and land mines, Immigration and Customs Enforcement Special Agent Jaime Zapata, 32, was ambushed in central Mexico by drug cartel gunmen. When they forced the vehicle off the road and surrounded it, Zapata confidently put the allegedly invulnerable vehicle in park. That's when the door locks popped open, thanks to a consumer-friendly automatic setting installed in the vehicle. Assaultants were then able to wrestle open the door enough for one to spray gunfire into the interior. U.S. officials acknowledged that "hundreds, if not thousands, of other U.S. government vehicles all over the world" might have the same vulnerability. (*The Washington Post*)

Compiled from mainstream news sources by Roland Sweet. Authentication on demand.

ART/EXHIBITIONS

Akar

257 East Iowa Ave., Iowa City
www.akardesign.com

New Works by Wayne Branum and Mark Pharis, April 27 through May 11

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids
www.crma.org

Grant Wood Studio Reopens, April 14, 12 pm * Hiawatha Public Library: The Secret Side of Rome, April 20, 6 pm

Figge Art Museum

225 West Second St., Davenport
www.figgeart.org/

"Thursdays at the Figge," Thursdays at 5 pm * Fins and Feathers: Children's Book Illustrations from The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, through April 22 * Young Artists at the Figge, through May 27 * W(h)ine & Art!, April 5, 6 pm * Easter Brunch, April 8, 10:30 am and 1 pm * ART@Heart, April 27, 6:30 pm

Public Space One

129 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.publicspaceone.com

See website for Feb. gallery events TBA
Lewis Colburn: After the Architect Has Gone, April 6-26 (opening reception on April 6, 5 pm)

University of Iowa Museum of Art

uima.uiowa.edu/events

See website for event locations
April events not listed at time of publication, see website for events TBA

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History

10 Macbride Hall, Iowa City
www.uiowa.edu/~nathist

Night at the Museum: Weather, April 13, 6 pm * UI Explorers Seminar Series: Randall McEntaffer,

Department of Physics & Astronomy, April 19, 7 pm * Pentacrest Museums Family Weekend, April 21-22

MUSIC

Blue Moose Tap House

211 Iowa Ave, Iowa City
www.bluemooseic.com

Borgore, Document One, DarkGrey, April 7, 6:30 pm * Fun, Sleeper Agent, April 9, 7 pm * Andre Nickatina, April 12, 8 pm * Slaughterhouse, April 23, 9 pm * Na Palm, DJ Martinson, DJ Kage, I.D.K., April 26, 8 pm * Iwrestledabearonce, Molotov Solution, Glass Cloud, The Greenery, April 27, 4:30 pm * The Envy Corps, April 27, 7 pm

Coralville Center for the Performing Arts

1301 5th St., Coralville, Iowa
www.coralvillearts.org

See website for showtimes
Metal for the Arts Festival, April 7 * Orchestra Iowa Chamber Showcase, April 12 * Metro Mix Chorus, April 14 * The Elim Arrival Tour: Where Are You Women of Courage?, April 15 * Chase Garrett and Philippe LeJeune, April 18 *

Englert

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.englert.org

Dave Pietro, April 5, 7:30 pm * Mason Jennings, April 6, 8 pm * Iowa City Community String Orchestra, April 15, 3 pm

Gabe's

330 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.icgabes.com/

Mixology every Thursday
Bare Wires, April 5, 7 pm * Los Vigilantes, Slut River, April 6, 10 pm * Euforquestra, Roster McCabe, April 7, 9 pm * Dubste for Dummies, April 13, 10 pm * Family Groove Company, Chasing Shade, April 14, 9 pm * Deals Gone Bad, April 15, 6 pm * Break Science, Gramatik, Paul Basic, April 15, 10 pm * Dead Larry, Jon Wayne and The Pain, April 20, 9 pm * Metallica Tribute with Blackened, April 21, 9

pm * Coke Dick Motorcycle Awesome, Johnny Has the Keys, Ancient Elm, April 24, 10 pm * Shabazz Palaces, April 25, 10 pm * The Dear Hunter, April 26, 7 pm * Defeater, Touche Amore, Code Orange Kids, Birds in Row, April 27, 5 pm * Lights, April 28, 7 pm

Hancher Auditorium

www.hancher.uiowa.edu

See website for event locations
Pre-performance discussion with Dave Pietro, April 5, 6:30 pm * Dave Pietro performance, April 5, 7:30 pm

Legion Arts/CSPS

1103 3rd Street SE, Cedar Rapids
www.legionarts.org/

Songwriting workshop with Peggy Seeger, April 8: 2 pm * Peggy Seeger, April 8, 7 pm * Red Baraat, April 10, 7 pm * La Guitarra with Patty Larkin, April 15, 7 pm * Bombino, April 16, 7 pm * Garnet Rogers, April 20, 8 pm * Robin and Linda Williams and Their Fine Group, April 22, 7 pm * Eric Taylor CD Release Concert, April 24, 7 pm

The Mill

120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City
www.icmill.com

Study Hall, the game, Sundays, 9 pm-Midnight
Open Mic with J. Knight, Mondays, 8 pm, call 338-6713 to sign up
Tuesday Night Social Club, Tuesdays, 9 pm
Howlin Rain, April 6, 9 pm * End Times Spasm Band, April 8, 8 pm * Golden Boy, Colloquialisms, April 10, 9 pm * University of Iowa Jazz Performances, April 12, 7 pm * Jazz After Five with OddBar Trio, April 13, 5 pm * Paul Thorn, Grand Tetons, April 13, 9 pm * Pieta Brown, The Pines, April 14, 8 pm * University of Iowa — Jazz Performances, April 19, 7 pm * Jazz After Five with OddBar Trio, April 27, 5 pm * Simon Joyner & The Tarnished Angels, Ed Gray, Ramon Speed, Samuel Locke Ward, Douglas Kramer Nye, April 27, 9 pm

Performing Arts at Iowa

performingarts.uiowa.edu

See website for times and locations
Enrico Elisi, piano, April 4 * Enrico Elisi, piano

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& The 10,000 Hours Show present
GRACE POTTER & THE NOCTURNALS
APRIL 26 8PM IMU MAIN LOUNGE
Tickets are available at
the University Box Office (319.335.3041)
and at all Ticketmaster locations.

A-List

Fin & Feather Presents
Andrew Skurka

April 9, 10 | 7 pm
Fin & Feather (125 Highway 1 W)

Curious how you can earn an "ultra" in front of your "long-distance backpacker" moniker? Then hike, bike or otherwise trek to Fin & Feather this month for presentations by ultra long-distance backpacker Andrew Skurka. *National Geographic* once named "The Walking Man" Adventurer of the Year (2007) and on Monday, April 9, Skurka will be here to present a slideshow that's not your ordinary family vacation: "Circling Alaska and Yukon: A 4,700-mile, 6-month journey by foot, skis and packraft through Big Wilderness."

If that's not enough to get you pumped to hit the trail (and perhaps you're not exactly sure how to get started), then get thee to Fin & Feather once again on Tuesday, April 10 for Skurka's instructional clinic, "Ultimate Hiking Gear and Skills." Skurka will demonstrate the packing and hiking techniques that make for a more enjoyable hiking experience. Yes, that could be YOU planting your flag at the summit of Hawkeye Point this year!

Each 90-minute lecture includes a Q&A, intermission and raffle of some excellent hiking schwag.

Admission is \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door and \$5 for children under 18.

Tickets available at Fin & Feather or by calling (319)-354-2200.

masterclass, April 5 * Jazz Repertory Ensemble, April 5 * Nancy King & Andrew Parker, oboes, April 7 * Symphony Band, April 10 * Iowa Brass Quintet, April 11 * Johnson County Landmark, April 13 * Composition Festival, April 13-14 * Baroque for Betty: A Flute Extravaganza, April 14 * Latin Jazz Ensemble, April 15 * Composer's Workshop, April 15 * Brass Quintet Ensemble, April 24

Red Cedar Chamber Music

www.redcedar.org

See website for event locations

Music for Marion, April 10, 7 pm * Music in Hospitals: Project Art, April 17, 12 pm * Music for Seniors: Strum and Jam, April 17, 7:30 pm * Rural Outreach Concert, April 20, 7 pm * Open Rehearsal, April 25, 10 am * Rural Outreach Concert, April 25, 7 pm * Production Floor Performance, April 26, 12 pm * Rural Outreach Concert, April 27, 7 pm * Main Stage Concert: Strum and Jam, April 28, 8 pm * Concert and Victorian House Reception: Strum and Jam, April 29, 2 pm

Riverside Casino

3184 Highway 22, Riverside
www.riversidecasinolandresort.com
Bobby Vinton, April 27, 8 pm

Uptown Bill's

730 S. Dubuque St.
www.uptownbills.org
Art and Music Night, Thursdays at 6 pm
Open Mic, Thursdays at 7 pm
Saturday Night Music, Saturdays at 7 pm

Yacht Club

13 S. Linn St., Iowa City
www.iowacityyachtclub.org
Open Mic every Monday
Dance Party every Tuesday
Jam Session every Wednesday
Chasing Shade, Jon Drake and The Shakes, April 5, 10 pm * Sublime Tribute with Second Hand Smoke, April 6, 10 pm * Dennis McMurrin and the Demolition Band, Mad Monks, April 7, 9:30 pm * Nugget, Gilbe, April 13, 10 pm * David Zollo, Jess White Band, April 14, 10 pm * Knights of the Turntable with Skinner Chef, Unnamed Acoustic, April 19, 9:30 pm * Public Property, Insectoid, April 20, 9 pm * Big Wu, April 21, 10 pm * T.U.G.G., Walsher Clemons, April 28, 9:30 pm

THEATER/DANCE/
PERFORMANCE

Coralville Center for the Performing Arts

1301 5th St., Coralville, Iowa
www.coralvillearts.org
See website for showtimes
Our Town, April 1 * A Wolf at the Door, April 11-13 and April 15 * AFFECT Dance Company, April 22 * Masquerade Dance Competition, April 27-29

Englert

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.englert.org
The Salt Company, April 3 and April 10, 8 pm * National Theatre Live: She Stoops to Conquer, April 11, 7 pm * Nerdist Podcast Live! Chris Hardwick, Jonah Ray & Matt Mira, April 14, 8 pm * Romeo and Juliet, April 26-28, 8 pm * Romeo and Juliet, April 29, 2 pm

Hancher Auditorium

www.hancher.uiowa.edu
See website for event locations
Mayberry, April 27-28, 7:30 pm * Mayberry, April 29, 2 pm

Legion Arts/CSPS

1103 3rd Street SE, Cedar Rapids
www.legionarts.org/
SPT Theatre Writers' Room: Clue, April 13-14, 8 pm * Frankenboy: Meet the Composer, April 26, 7 pm

Penguin's Comedy Club

Clarion Hotel, 525 33rd Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids
www.penguinscomedyclub.com
Chris "Boom Boom" Johnson, April 6-7, 7:30 pm * Josh blue, April 13-14, 7:30 pm * Greg Warren, April 20-21, 7:30 pm * Untamed Schrews, April 27-28, 7:30 pm

Performing Arts at Iowa

performingarts.uiowa.edu
See website for times and locations
Big Love, April 4-7 and April 12-14 * Christopher Masters - Dance Thesis Concert, April 19-20 * Iowa New Play Festival, April 29-30

Riverside Theater

www.riversidetheatre.org/
See website for showtimes and locations
A Steady Rain, April 1, April 5-8 and April 12-15

Theatre Cedar Rapids

4444 1st Ave NE, Cedar Rapids
www.theatrecrec.org
See website for showtimes
Five Women Wearing The Same Dress, April 13 through May 5

Working Group Theatre

www.workinggrouptheatre.org
See website for times and locations
Mayberry, April 27-29

CINEMA

Bijou Theatre

IMU, UI Campus, Iowa City
<http://bijou.uiowa.edu>
See website for showtimes
We Need to Talk About Kevin, April 6-12 * Shame, April 6-12 * Moulin Rouge!, April 7 * 10th Annual Iowa City Documentary Film Festival, April 12-14 * The Room, April 14 * The Snowtime Murders, April 15-19 * Salad

April is STD Awareness Month

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Calendar

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Days, April 15-19 * In Darkness, April 20-26 * This is Not a Film, April 20-26 * The Thing, April 20-21 * Lunafest, April 21 * University of Iowa Masters of Fine Arts Thesis Screenings, April 22 * Declaration of War, April 27-29 * 48 Hour Film Festival, April 27 * Run Lola Run, April 27-28 * The Turin Horse, April 28-29

Englert

221 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.englert.org

Midnight Movie Series: Moulin Rouge, April 7 at Midnight * Midnight Movie Series: The Room, April 14 at Midnight

LITERATURE

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids
www.crma.org

Art Lover's Book Club: Museum: Behind the Scenes at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, April 19, 4 pm

Iowa City Senior Center

www.icgov.org/default/?id=1215
"Let's Talk Inclusive" GLBTQ Movie Series, Sundays at 1 pm, Room 202

Live from Prairie Lights

15 S. Dubuque St., Iowa City
www.prairielights.com/live
See website for readings TBA
Benjamin Busch, April 2, 7 pm * Beth M. Howard, April 3, 7 pm * Dorothy Wickenden, April 4, 7 pm *

Uptown Bill's

730 S. Dubuque St.
www.uptownbills.org
Readers and Writers Group, Wednesdays at 6 pm
Spoken Word Open Mic, Wednesdays at 7 pm

KIDS

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids
www.crma.org
Toddler Story Time at the CRMA, April 12, 1:30 pm *
Toddler Story Time at the CRMA, April 19, 1:30 pm *
Pajama Story Time ~ Pirates in Pajamas, April 19, 7 pm *
Toddler Story Time at the CRMA, April 26, 1:30 pm *
Doodlebugs Preschool Program at the Hiawatha Public Library ~ Samuel Morse's Birthday, April 27, 10:30 am *
Martini Madness Mad Men Mash-Up, April 28, 7 pm

Coralville Center for the Performing Arts

1301 5th St., Coralville, Iowa
www.coralvillearts.org
See website for showtimes
American Girl Fashion Show, April 20-21 * Weber Elementary: My School's Got Talent, April 26

Iowa City Public Library

123 South Linn St. Iowa City
www.icpl.org
Storytime at 10:30 Monday - Saturday, 2 pm Sundays

University of Iowa Museum of Natural History

10 Macbride Hall, Iowa City
www.uiowa.edu/~nathist
The Fossil Guy: Paleontology Programs for Children, "Dinosaur Evidence" * The Fossil Guy: Paleontology Programs for Children, "The Leg Bone is Connected to the Hip Bone", April 14, 2 pm * Storytime Adventures: Hummingbirds, April 15, 3 pm * The Fossil Guy: Paleontology Programs for Children, "Ancient Fliers", April 21, 2 pm

MISC

U of I Best Buddies

www.uiowa.edu/~bestbuds/
See website for details
Best Buddies Free Carnival, April 15, 11 am * 5k Run, April 15, Registration at 9 am, Run at 10 am

BIC (Bicyclists of Iowa City)

April Ride Schedule, See website for details
www.bicyclistsofiowacity.org
Scott Park & Newport Road retrace, April 4, 5:30 pm * Weber School Frytown Loop, April 11, 5:30 pm * West High Loop, April 18, 5:30 pm * Hills-East Lone Tree Loop, April 25, 5:30 pm

Iowa City Public Library

123 South Linn St. Iowa City
www.icpl.org
Public Workshop "At the Intersections of Queerness and Disability", April 5, 2 pm * Pathwork Study Circle, April 11 (second Wednesday of every month), 6:45 pm

Johnson County Local Food Alliance

www.jclfa.org/
See website for more information
Joel Salatin at Grinnell College, April 17, 7:30 pm

Old Capitol City Roller Girls

www.oldecapitolcityrollergirls.com
See website for event locations
Away vs. Sioux City Roller Dames, April 7 * Away vs. Chicago Outfit Shade Brigade, April 28 * Away vs. Chicago Outfit Syndicate, April 29

Public Space One

129 E. Washington St., Iowa City
www.publicspaceone.com
Sister Spit: The Next Generation Tour, April 16, 7 pm

ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR APRIL 2012

FOR EVERYONE—Option rich. Our lives are full of challenges and opportunities. There are seemingly countless options, too, but standing still isn't one of them. Nor is lingering endlessly among familiar faces and comfortable pastimes. We need to embrace the new, the unfamiliar and the foreign. To bring them closer than ever before. The planets are also clear on one thing. We need to forget about finding a soul-mate for now and concentrate on finding a true help-mate. Perhaps someone from a far off land.

♈ ARIES (Mar. 21-April 19)—Tough sell. A new inclusiveness is required of you and those you depend on. Financial survival requires this new tolerance. Personal preferences, familiar faces and, um, ulterior romantic motives, must give way. People can best serve their own interests and the interests of those close to them by forming long-term, practical alliances with those they might consider foreign. There's a spirit of exploration abroad in the land. If that spirit isn't enough, though, explain what people lose tomorrow if they aren't more inclusive today.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20)—Abide. A new dynamic is governing events. People are scrambling frantically for advantage in strange new situations. The non-stop turmoil is actually favoring your interests. You can afford to delay decisive commitments. Meanwhile, do what's needed to further your long-term financial goals. The planets strongly suggest that you consider foreign investments. Alternatively, embrace foreign investments in enterprises close to home. Familiar faces may tempt you with impractical ideas and promises of romance. Go instead with the unfamiliar bidder who promises a practical, down-to-earth approach.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20)—Foreign suitors. Gemini must begin making a lot of important choices with long-term consequences. You won't finalize these difficult decisions for many months. The planets recommend a uniformly objective, impersonal and practical approach. Be careful to respect the needs and expectations of long-time partners and allies. But the planets also say you should favor productive, long-term partnerships that challenge you to expand your horizons. Pay special attention to proposals from unfamiliar, foreign sources. Familiar pleasures in comfortable surroundings among familiar faces will hinder progress.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22)—Advise the unfamiliar. Cancer's justly famous intuitive powers are working overtime sorting through the choices friends and family must make. People seek the best option in an unfamiliar and fast-changing situation. They seek the sweet spot, where all their goals intersect magically and all their needs are met with minimal risk and inconvenience. They'll take the first opportunity to return to familiar ways and familiar places. Be prepared to advise them that they must instead embrace the unfamiliar solution, and often the unfamiliar person.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)—Synergy. You sense the financial potential in unfolding events. But you could end up stepping on a lot of toes in pursuit of it. A creative, experimental and, above all, inclusive approach is best. Allow others to contribute freely and openly. Support long-term, positive bonds between yourself and those who are helping you. Avoid falling into familiar patterns with familiar people for the usual (romantic) reasons. A willingness to embrace the unknown and unfamiliar person, and to delay gratification, is a prerequisite for success now.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)—Responsibility. Virgo is well-positioned to benefit from emerging opportunities. You can also control the pace and direction of events. This imposes greater responsibility than you might realize, though. Everybody is making difficult decisions and your choices will seriously affect their options. You'll need to guide things for the benefit of all. Doing the right thing will require some soul searching and a willingness to change some things about yourself. You'll also need to accept new, unfamiliar ideas in long-term relationships and close family ties.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)—Practicality. Many in your life are seriously confused. They're making frantic efforts to cope with too-rapid change. Librans are well-suited to help with decision-making, especially when it comes to finding the path that leads most directly to the desired goal. Help others make lasting, productive connections close to home that integrate new and unfamiliar ideas and people. Focus on practical, day-to-day issues. Avoid glowing but empty abstractions and discourage seductive, pie-in-the-sky schemes. Romantic involvements or reviving old romantic ties is counter-productive, especially if travel is involved.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)—Partnerships. The stars are putting tremendous emphasis on relationship and community issues in Scorpio's life. Your success will depend strongly on your support of new partnerships and groups in your local community. Rise above personal emotional preferences and convince others to do the same. This isn't about fulfilling personal emotional needs. The goal is lasting and productive partnerships that transcend individual likes and dislikes. You should also avoid idealistic but rash impulses that could send you or someone else on a wild goose chase.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)—Quandaries. Sorting through an encouraging but confusing range of options isn't easy. Partnership issues especially are foregrounded for Sagittarians, more than for other signs. You sense the romantic attraction of partners or potential partners, but unconventional, extra-curricular ties are a temptation, too. Impulsive behavior is also potential threat to relationship stability. The best way to fulfill your needs and avoid trouble is to honor your higher commitments. Respect for your idealistic involvements should also be the cost of admission to new relationships with you.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)—Fine tuning. Recently, the importance and urgency of the situation forced you to stay on a particular course. You couldn't change direction even when you thought there were solutions that would have been more fair to everyone. You needed to go with what you had. Conditions are still a bit frantic, but they offer more flexibility than you have enjoyed in a long while. This would be a good time to go back and make some of the adjustments your conscience has been urging.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)—Against the grain. Aquarians should recognize their native Uranian energy tearing up the landscape. Lives are in flux. People are in constant motion. Life-changing decisions are being made. People are understandably confused and conflicted. The key for Aquarians and non-Aquarians alike is actually the same. For the time being, at least, people need to favor selfless, idealistic relationships with new people and unfamiliar ideas to solve pressing problems. Romantic interests and personal preferences really must take a back seat. The future depends on it.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-Mar. 20)—Duty first. Pisceans are being tempted in too many ways. Seductive, intoxicating, impulsive vibes are hitting you from every angle. Even established family relationships have a mischievous feel to them, now. You could get away with an awful lot in the present confusion, but you would certainly live to regret it. Your best option is the one you might find least appealing. Align your actions with the priorities of authority figures. They aren't always right, but, for now, their priorities should be yours too. **lv**

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