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Her Way

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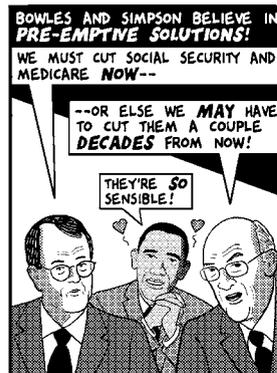
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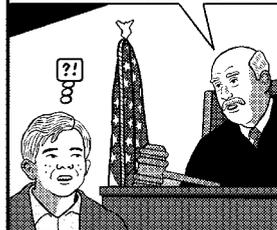
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by TOM TOMORROW

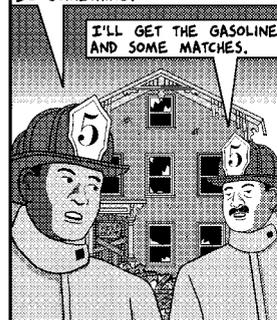
THE TIME IS ALWAYS NOW: THE BOWLES SIMPSON APPROACH



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NEXT: B.S. FROM BEYOND THE STARS!

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Ebel Strikes a Chord

Last week at Eble Music, I picked up the next piece my daughter, Sylvia, will be working on for her saxophone lessons, Alfred Desenclos's "Prélude, cadence, et finale." As I walked down Linn Street after my purchase, I said to myself, "You know, I think Eble Music may just be the best local business in town." I don't mean to diminish any of our other marvelous local retailers in any way, but, in my experience, there's something a little bit extra about Eble Music.

I advocate supporting our independent, locally-owned businesses for all the reasons you would expect. Our local business owners are our neighbors, and people in community support their neighbors. In purely economic terms, one of the most important reasons to shop at independent local businesses is the recirculation or multiplier effect. Money that we spend at our neighbors' businesses tends to stay in the community much more than money spent at a national chain.

According to a study underwritten by the American Booksellers Association and analyzed by Civic Economics, a Chicago consulting firm, spending at independent retailers generates 3.7 times more direct local economic benefit than spending at chains. Our local business owners both live and work here, so spending for the business itself tends to remain more local, and the owners in turn spend their private money—which they earn from us—in our local community.

On top of that, a local business is more invested in the community. If the bottom line starts looking iffy at the Iowa City Walmart, the bean counters in Bentonville won't hesitate to shut the place down. If a local business hits a rough patch, it will work much harder to stay open in order to continue serving its home community.

One of the things that disappoints me, though, is when the local business experience isn't very good. Admittedly, customer service in most chains is abysmal, so when

independent local businesses can't compete on price, they tend to do so on service. When a local business does come up short on treating its customer well or doing that little bit extra, it's disappointing.

One of my ideal retail experiences has been at Scheels Ace Hardware in Fargo, North Dakota, when we lived across the Red River



Photo by James Davies

of the North in Moorhead, Minnesota. Ace, by the way, is not a chain. It's a cooperative— independent store owners are dealer-owners and shareholders in the Ace company. When I would walk into Scheels Hardware in Fargo, someone appeared immediately to greet me and ask if I needed help. If the salesperson could not answer my question or find what I was looking for, he or she would promptly go find someone who could. Scheels Hardware was also very well-stocked.

Once while my wife's parents were visiting us after we bought our house in Moorhead, my father-in-law was helping me with some repairs of some sort. As we were standing at the checkout at Scheels discussing whatever project we were puzzling over, the young woman at the cash register said, "Oh, did you buy a new house?" On my saying yes, she reached under the counter, pulled out a plastic bag, plopped it on the counter, and said, "Happy housewarming!" It was full of goodies such as small tools, sponges, glue and other everyday needs. Nothing extravagant—but that was customer service!

Scheels helped me thoroughly and immediately (and in a very polite and friendly way) and had what I needed when I needed it. That is exactly what happens when I walk into Eble Music. When I open that basement door at 115 S. Linn St. and walk up to the service desk, one of the friendly music meisters is there immediately to greet me—and does so as if happy to see me.

My favorite aspect of the Eble experience is asking for the piece I'm looking for. The Eble folks, frankly, are unearthly. With the Desenclos "Prélude, cadence, et finale" request (not exactly your obvious Bach or Beethoven), my trusty attendant had already smiled, nodded and was heading for the back room practically before I could finish saying "finale." Within 30 seconds, he was back with a pristine copy. This happens every time. I don't know how anyone can know every musical piece and every edition ever published, but it seems the Eble geniuses do. And they have what I'm looking for without fail.

Well, almost always without fail. The only time I stumped Eble was when my son, Nathaniel, ran across a saxophone piece on

YouTube and really liked it. Turns out it is rather obscure (Pedro Iturralde's "Pequeña Czarda"—and in all fairness to my friends at Eble, the University of Iowa's renowned saxophone teacher, Kenneth Tse, was not familiar with it, either).

Eble Music has deep roots in our community as well, giving it a pedigree that is part of our living history.

Even though they didn't have the piece, the customer service didn't waver, and they promised to try to find it. They called a few days later, and even though they had tracked down the piece, they were disappointed with

themselves that, as an American retailer, they would not be able to procure it for me. Still, they shared a couple of European websites from which I might order it myself. (And we were successful!)

Eble Music has deep roots in our community as well, giving it a pedigree that is part of our living history. According to the UI Alumni Association, Charles Eble, 1940 University of Iowa piano graduate, “became interested in collecting new literature and music on an international scale. As personal secretary to School of Music Director Philip Greeley Clapp, Eble made contacts with European

Our local business owners are our neighbors, and people in community support their neighbors.

publishers and book and music dealers who could provide new editions of works for the American market.” After military service, graduate school and a brief teaching stint at Northwestern University, “he returned to Iowa City in 1950 to purchase the community’s only music store. As he built a thriving music business, Eble [accompanied] Professor Himie Voxman to Europe in 1954 to procure the first of the Music Library’s now extraordinary collection of rare books.” Eble, Clapp, Voxman—you can’t get much more significant than that in Iowa City music history, and the current staff members continue Eble’s tradition of a music store grounded in true musicology.

I have had many wonderful experiences with many local Iowa City businesses. I am happy to pay full retail price when I know those dollars will help my neighbors and my community, and when I know I can count on those businesses to help me out (and be happy to do it) when I need it. It’s even better when their courtesy and their desire to help are 100 percent consistent. For me, that’s Eble Music. So, thanks so much to those musical geniuses downstairs at 115 S. Linn. You make musical magic happen in our community. **lv**

Thomas Dean has a degree in music history and literature, so he knows the real deal when he sees it.

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MINOR INDULGENCES

Post-holidays can be a tricky time and it seems like every year I eat a little more, drink a little longer and exercise a little less.

Having noticed my expanding waistline, my health-centric-physically-fit-yogi-fiancé decided to take drastic measures and put us on a three-week health kick called the “Crazy Sexy Diet.” In case you’re unfamiliar, Kris Carr’s “Crazy Sexy Diet” is based upon the idea that people should avoid the following foods (all of which make life worth living): bread, dairy, alcohol, sugar, meat and coffee. This means that for the last three weeks I’ve subsisted primarily on mulch, tree-bark and about a thousand oranges. (I’ve never been less worried about contracting scurvy.)

My three weeks of *hellth* have finally come to an end, and although admittedly I have lost weight and felt 10 years younger, I have also been a petulant ass and looked forward to this day like a kid waiting for Christmas. In this spirit of anticipation, I decided to create my own personal holiday, which I am calling

Indulgence Day, to be celebrated once a month with a few minor indulgences that I have previously taken for granted.

In case you’re curious, here’s how the first celebration went:

GOOD MORNING:
Coffee at Prairie Lights Café

Over these last three weeks I’ve come to the uncomfortable realization that I function much better drinking tea than coffee. Tea provides a calmer boost, it’s easier on my stomach and I have saved a small fortune skipping my habitual Java House morning joe. I’ve also never slept better in my life. That being said, I really, really, really love coffee—I would marry it—so this topped the list for my first indulgence.

I decided to break from my standard Java House slow drip and went, instead, to Prairie Lights’ café. Located on the top floor of Prairie Lights, the café has arguably the best espresso in town. The baristas there bent my ear for close to an hour about their choice in beans and the espresso blend they use—Hairbender, from

Stumptown Coffee Roasters in Portland. They seemed very knowledgeable and I appreciated their dedication to their craft—but not nearly as much as I enjoyed sipping on an Americano and quietly reading a newspaper by myself. There are few moments I have enjoyed, do enjoy and will enjoy more than that.

GOOD AFTERNOON: Cheese balls at The Pit

There’s likely not a great deal of culinary expertise required for frying up cheeseballs, but for my money, nothing beats The Pit’s. The texture is perfect—a crisp, yet firm exterior with a warm, soft interior—and although occasionally you’ll have three massive curds and a bunch of tic-tac runts, there is usually a solid consistency in the size.

There is, I suppose, little rationale for why anyone would eat an order of cheese balls by themselves, especially with a side of ranch, so I concede: It’s absolutely disgusting and I’m a troll. But as I sat at The Pit and reflected on this particular indulgence, I realized that every time I come to the Pit it reminds me of being a kid and sitting with my dad at The Charger Inn, a greasy spoon in my hometown, where we went and had cheese balls and root beer floats. Now I ask you, what can be so wrong

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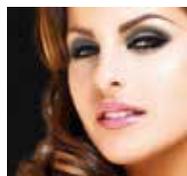
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about that? Oh yeah, I was 10 and we were splitting the order. Oh well, Happy Indulgence Day!

GOOD NIGHT(CAP): Grandpa's Coffin at Clinton Street Social Club

I've been a bit of a barfly these past couple years and, as such, abstaining from alcohol has been difficult—but this cleanse has made me realize that it's not the drink itself but the act of drinking and the camaraderie involved. There's something so grand about sitting in a booth with a drink and a notebook or friend. While I think this country, town and myself could all benefit from drinking less, there are also some undeniably great aspects to sipping on a cocktail at a pub.

In breaking this abstinence I opted to go to Clinton Street Social Club where Brian Lovejoy makes what I consider to be some of the best cocktails in town. Immediately upon sitting down I was reminded how lucky this town is to have this establishment; how the interior has the right blend of elegance and grit but mostly how much the people make the place. I felt so charged watching the patrons interact with one another, flirting, fighting, conversing—I love watching how people live in public.

Lovejoy slid me my usual, a Grandfather's Coffin. Somewhat surprisingly I didn't love it as much as I remembered—it sort of tasted like drinking perfume and eating an apple—but all that was secondary to the act of sitting there sipping, and of course, eating the cherry at the end. Perfection.

GOOD ENOUGH

So there ended Indulgence Day and with it my three weeks of crazy sexiness. I certainly did my share of complaining, but I learned a lot from the experience. I was reminded how important it is to break our habits once in awhile; that suppressing urges is important, but embracing them is important too; that both should be done to deepen appreciation and understanding.

I've certainly been guilty of not appreciating the finer things in my life, but these last three weeks have been a good reminder of how to appreciate everything a little more fully, with a little more attention. **lv**

All this talk reminds has reminded Luke Benson that he should probably take his lady out for a nice dinner at Trumpet Blossom. She loves their sweet potato fries with aioli—and besides, he hears they have really good margaritas.

Schlafly Brewery - St. Louis, Missouri Irish-Style Extra Stout

BREW OF THE MONTH: MARCH

As if the Irish reputation was not already soaked in stout and whiskey, the county council in Ireland's County Kerry approved a motion that would allow residents in rural areas to drink and drive. The measure supports the creation of a permit system which would, according to *The Guardian*, "allow rural drinkers to drive after having 'two or three drinks.'" The councilor that proposed the measure, Danny Healy-Rae—who, *The Guardian* notes, owns a pub—"claimed it would help prevent depression and suicide in the county" by allowing residents of the sparsely populated countryside to drink and socialize at a pub and then drive home without the fear of losing their license.

The 5-3 vote, though, was far from a ringing endorsement since seven councilors abstained and 12 others were absent. Regardless, drinking and driving is not cool. In fact, I encourage and implore you to stay put when drinking the beer of the month: Schlafly's Irish-Style Extra Stout.

Schlafly's Irish-Style Extra Stout is a tasty, full-bodied alternative to thinner Irish imports such as Guinness, Murphy's and Beamish. The Schlafly website says it "amplifies the traditional drier versions from Ireland for a bolder, black brew."

Poured into a pint glass (an aroma-enhancing tulip or snifter will also do), its color is opaque black. Two fingers of thick, tan head will settle unevenly and leave trails of foam along the glass. The first whiff is rich, dark and slightly boozy. There are scents of toasted malts, a little espresso-like roast, black raspberry, plum, a touch of black licorice, dark chocolate, molasses and singed caramel that reminded me of the 7-Up we boiled down in my high school chemistry class.

As advertised, the mouthfeel is fairly dry and the roasted and toasted malts impart the customary dry stout bitterness. The flavor mostly mirrors the aroma: toasted malts, a hint of espresso-like roast, dark fruit, licorice, dark chocolate, molasses, burnt caramel and a little booze.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: 50-55°F

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 8 percent ABV

FOOD PAIRINGS: According to *The World Atlas of Beer*, written by Tim Webb and Stephen Beaumont, the boldness of dry stout "provides a cleansing contrast" to oysters. In *Tasting Beer*, Randy Mosher recommends "hearty, rich food; steak, meat pies," and suggests pairing "stronger versions with chocolate."

WHERE TO BUY: Most area beer retailers will carry it; however, supplies are limited because it is a seasonal release only available through March.

PRICE: \$10-11 per six-pack.

Casey Wagner lives in Iowa City.



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**MAKE IT:
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Photo by Adrienne Behning

Fact: a project is way more fun if you can drink the final product. It seems like everyone today is brewing up small batches of beer while sipping on a glass of homemade kale-ginger juice. I'm personally all for this tasty trend, and wanting in on it, I decided to try my hand at homemade soda. Delicious factor high, risk factor low. When it comes to do-it-yourself drinks, homemade soda is going to land you right around 5 on the coolness scale (1 being almond milk and 10 being moonshine). But for what they lack in edginess, sodas make up for in versatility and fun. Crafting your own colas, rootbeers and fruity sodas at home is surprisingly easy. Move over craft beers—the homemade soda craze is near, I can feel it. And I'm taking credit.

SUPPLIES

- Champagne yeast
- Sugar (or sweetener of your choice)
- Soda concentrate
- Glass bottles (or a growler with a tight fitting cap)
- Bottle caps and capper

JUST CONCENTRATE

To create anything from classic colas to spicy sarsaparilla sodas, pick up a homebrew concentrated extract. You can find soda concentrates, brewing yeasts, bottles and caps at the Iowa City Hy-Vee Drugstore (310 N. First Ave.). For a wider selection of goods, check out Midwest Supplies (www.midwestsupplies.com).

SWEETEN THE DEAL

A big perk to brewing your own soda is control over the ingredients and taste. Looking to infuse your brews with extra flavor? Try adding a few drops of homemade simple syrups or flavored syrup (such as Torani—the kind you

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DIY SODIES

see in coffeeshops) to your batch. If you're using a super sweet syrup—amaretto or chocolate, for example—try omitting about a quarter of the sugar. Wanting to whip up a more natural soda? Replace white sugar in your recipe with the same amount of honey.

GET GUZZLING

To make a gallon (about 10 bottles) of soda, dissolve a quarter teaspoon of champagne yeast in a cup of warm water for at least five minutes. Combine one tablespoon of soda extract, two cups

SODA PAIRING IDEAS

Cherry almond soda

cherry soda extract + a few drops almond extract

Lemon basil soda

lemon soda extract + a few drops basil simple syrup

Lavender ginger ale

Ginger ale extract + a few drops lavender simple syrup

Chocolate cream soda

Cream soda extract + a few drops chocolate extract

of sugar or honey and any other flavoring you plan on using with enough warm water to dissolve the mixture. Stir in your yeast water and fill with warm water to make a full gallon. Fill your sterilized bottles, cap with a wing bottle capper and store in a cool, dark place. Your soda (and you) should be bubbly with excitement and ready to drink after about a week. Once the wait is over, go ahead—kick back, relax and crack open a crafty one. **lv**

Megan Ranegar is wondering where a homemade rootbeer float spiked with hand-crafted booze might land on this coolness scale.

m.c. ginsberg

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Each month a selected piece of creative writing up to 1,000 words is published in the pages of *Little Village*, Iowa City's News and Culture Magazine.

Oh, and the author receives an honorarium of \$100. That's right: \$100, to one writer, every month.

> SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Judges will consider creative work in all genres and formats up to 1,000 words. These might include short fiction, short literary nonfiction, poetry, or even two pages of dialogue from a play or scenes from a graphic novel. Work may be pulled from a larger piece, but it will be judged on its ability to stand on its own. Only work that has not been published elsewhere—in print, online or otherwise—will be considered.

The series is designed to highlight new work produced in Iowa City, so entrants must live or work in the Iowa City area at the time of submission. Please include your current address with your submission.

Submit your work to: htr@littlevillagemag.com. Please attach your work as a Word Document, PDF or Rich Text file. Your name and contact information will be removed from your entry and it will be judged anonymously. Judges are Andre Perry (UI Nonfiction MFA graduate and executive director of the Englert Theatre), Hugh Ferrer (associate director of the UI International Writing Program and board member at Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature) and Matt Steele (publisher and managing editor of *Little Village* magazine).

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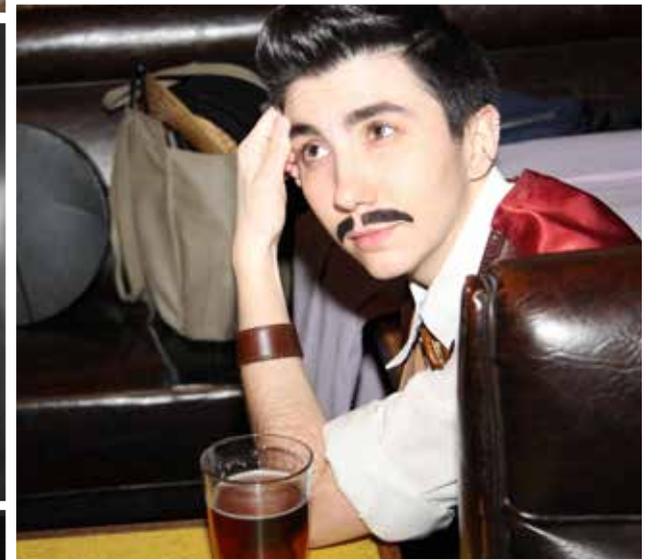
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A PROGRAM TO SHOWCASE
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Iowa City's own drag king group, IC Kings recently joined forces with Les Dames du Burlesque d'Iowa City for a one-night gig at the Mill. In their collaborative acts the Kings looked even more "Kingly" standing next to the ultra-feminine expressions of Les Dames. Painstakingly creating their male expressions from scratch in daring and original ways, as one audience member remarked, during the large group numbers it was easy to forget that it was, in fact, all female performers on stage. **lv**

Photos by Tonya Kehoe-Anderson





RULE NUMBER 3

The last in a twelve-part series by Vic Pasternak. Thanks for the stories, Vic! Readers, find the rest at littlevillagemag.com/haulin-ass

The woman gave me the address of a mansion out on the parkway and said, "Step on it!"

Then she confessed, in a smaller voice, "I've just always wanted to say that."

"I've always wanted someone to ask."

We roared out of downtown, weaving traffic and clipping every light on the yellow.

The lady was my kind of damsel, with the only distress showing in her skinny jeans. She wore black hair chopped at the shoulders over a smart cut of leather jacket. Lady also wore on her married finger a glasscutter big as a hummingbird. A mom with tweens, I casually guessed, but by all appearances still built for speed.

She said, "My cowboy's out of town and grandma's got the kids."

"Girls' Night Out," I hooted, perhaps too cheerfully, "Do you ever read *Little Village*?"

Alas, she did not.

My fair rider did, however, ask the inevitable: "So do you like driving a cab?"

"It's not the lowest thing I've done for cash."

"I think it'd be a barrel of monkeys."

"Indeed but the monkeys are drunk and really pissed off."

"I think that sounds like ... riotous adventure!"

She said it italicized like it might be an enchanted forest, or another shade of gray.

Three: Never go inside their home."

That got her attention.

"Danger begins at the threshold," I went on. "No point to going in unless I'm a cop or a social worker. Or the coroner."

"Danger, hmm."

She was gazing out at the shuttling dark, absently opening the palms of her hands to the knobs of her knees.

"Long ago," I said, "when I was first at the wheel, I get this old drunk out of the CV Leg, that's the American Legion in Coralville. I have to go inside and collect his sorry ass and carry his sixer to the cab because he can't manage the upright position. Dude slams into the lot, dude piles against my taxi, dude carps when I fold his legs inside. Lifting up by the headrests, he gets wedged between the front seats and stays all the way to his house like that, mooing like a cow."

"How old is this creep?!"

My lady passenger was howling in laughter so I indulged with the richer details.

"Better than sixty, maybe forty, he's a professional so it's hard to tell. He lives in a basement apartment with the entry around the side which he naturally hadn't shoveled all winter.



"So what would you do if not drive a cab?"

"Ah I have no idea."

"Waiter? Oh you'd make a charming waiter."

"I blunder like an ox."

"Delivery boy?"

"Hell naw—that breaks Rule Number

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But the barmaid gave me a \$20 and told me to get him home safe, right? And maybe watching him flop in the snow got to me. Any case, I get out and help him indoors.

“So then I’m dragging him along, dude hanging off me on dropped knees and giving back no help at all. And his basement stairs are glazed with thick brows of ice so just looking at them feels like falling down. Sure enough, we both go thudding down the whole flight on our cans.

“Now I’m pissed and dude is groaning in a heap. Knowing he’d come home drunk, the mope, he hadn’t bothered locking his door, and I haul his besotted ass over the threshold by the hood of his coat. When I let a light on, I see in his back room he’s got a bedroll and a pile of clothes but not a stick of furniture anywhere except the table in his kitchen, and the table’s covered in empty liquor bottles.”

My fair rider appalled to brighter gaiety. “Empty bottles—and that’s it? No chairs or anything?”

I knocked him down and got out like I said. But that’s why Rule Number Three is ‘Never go inside their home

“Everything he ever needed by the fifth and gallon,” I said, supposing, “Or all of it he’s cared to keep. Old dude has even lined empties along the entire cinder footing going round the perimeter of his crib. I mean that’s a lot of booze to put away. The worth of years.”

“You have to write all this down,” she ordered, wiping laughter out of her cheeks.

I allowed our mood to hang a moment, allowing her to believe that my story might have finished.

“But then I turn to get out of there,” I went on, sounding haunted, “My old drunk buddy is staring back at me and all of a sudden he’s clear eyed and sure on his feet, grinning to show his teeth, and starting in with, ‘Now that

you’re here why not sit your butt down?”
 “I maneuver round him for the door but he snatches my elbow so I have to dump him over to get out, and he fights to keep hold of my leg, pleading in the sorriest voice, ‘Don’t go!’”

“Holy Jesus, that’s awful.”
 The laugh riot had crashed but my fair rider was not overly revolted.

“So what did you do?”
 “I knocked him down and got out like I said. But that’s why Rule Number Three is ‘Never go inside their home.’”

She was delighted to consider my third rule in this new light and was still giggling it out when I wheeled into her driveway. I threw into park, which I only ever rarely do, and I let on the dome light so we could take in each others’ eyes.

Then I poked my chin toward the dark of her home.

She grinned, eyes blinking shocked, and she blushed, a bit flattered perhaps, having no idea my suggestion, however bold, stood hopelessly negated by Rule Number Two: ‘Never fuck any passenger(s), ever, ever- ever.’ And never mind how that was figured out.

“Nice try, buster,” she said to me, unknowing. “So what’s my fare?”

The meter showed we’d broken twenty bucks getting out to her country manor. She handed me a \$50, telling me proverbially to keep the change. Then she smiled at me once more and I waited to drive off until she was inside.

At 12 hours a night, four nights of seven, and paid 34 cents on the dollar, sometimes just the idea of a thing is enough to scrape by. **IV**

Vic Pasternak is moving to Colorado to work security on a migrant cannabis farm. Thanks for reading.

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Regular *Prairie Pop* columnist Kembrew McLeod has turned over this month's edition to Umläut Nideldick—the famous German song doctor and rock and roll life coach. The following text is drawn from Nideldick's keynote address at the 2012 conference of the Eurovision Academy of Musical Arts.

Hello, fellow rockers! How ya doin'?!? *Sehr gut*? Alright! I'm here to tell you how to write, perform and record your very own power pop

power pop *ballad* is impossible). They should also be punchy, not “anthemic”—a la the U2, Coldplay, Arcade Fire axis of evil. Nein! I should also emphasize that being derivative is a virtue, so don't even try to be experimental. There is no power pop equivalent of Radiohead's *Kid A*, for example. You should instead pillage from the catchiest songs of the 1955-1964 rock and roll era, before pretentious art-rockers sullied the form by trying to make it fancy. Lastly, your band needs to be

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- The Raspberries – Go All the Way
- Big Star – September Gurls
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- Cheap Trick – Oh, Candy
- Pezband – Baby It's Cold Outside
- The Cryers – Shake It Up (Ain't It Time?)
- Nick Lowe – Mary Provost
- The Records – Starry Eyes
- Gary Valentine – The First One
- The Only Ones – Another Girl, Another Planet
- The Buzzcocks – You Say You Don't Love Me
- The Undertones – Get Over You
- Blondie – Hanging On a Telephone
- The Cars – Just What I Needed
- The Jags – Back of My Hand (I've Got Your Number)
- Shoes – Too Late
- The Pretenders – Kid
- The Knack – Your Number or Your Name
- Chris Stamey & The DB's – (I Thought) You Wanted To Know
- The Beat – Rock 'n' Roll Girl
- The Rubinoos – I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend
- The Romantics – Tell It To Carrie
- Phil Seymour – Baby It's You
- Bram Tchaikovsky – Girl of My Dreams
- Candy – Whatever Happened To Fun
- The Plimsouls – Zero Hour
- Josie Cotton – Johnny, Are You Queer?
- The Go-Go's – Vacation
- The Bangles – Going Down To Liverpool
- The Smithereens – Strangers When We Meet
- The La's – There She Goes
- The Primitives – Crash
- Redd Kross – Bubblegum Factory
- The Muffs – Baby Go Round
- Rollercoaster – Insane
- DM3 – 1x 2x Devastated
- Paul Collins – C'mon Let's Go!



hit. Some of you may not be familiar with this genre name, but if you have ever heard The Knack's "My Sharona" or Blondie's "Hanging on a Telephone," then you know what power pop sounds like: catchy, punchy and compact.

First off, you need a band, because power pop doesn't work in a solo acoustic setting. Ideally, your group should consist of a keyboardist (optional), drummer, bassist and two guitarists. In addition to the lead vocalist, at least two other members need to be able to harmonize. As for your band name, which is important, it should begin with "The" and end with a noun, like The Cars, The Beat or The Raspberries.

The next stage of Umläut Nideldick's Patented Power Pop Hitmaking Method® is cultivating the right sound. For starters, songs must be mid-to-up tempo (by definition, a

tight and well-rehearsed, and the recording should be polished (though not overly slick).

Now that you have formed a band and developed the correct sound, you must create a structure for your soon-to-be hit. Let's start from the beginning of the track, which should avoid long, dramatic guitar intros

**BEING DERIVATIVE IS A VIRTUE,
 SO DON'T EVEN TRY TO BE EXPERIMENTAL.**

(U2's "Where the Streets Have No Name"? Nein!). Kick off with a bang. If your band has two guitarists, begin the song with one guitar and then have guitar number two enter the track after four-to-eight measures. This will add more power to your rockin' pop song. At some point, your group should briefly strip the instrumentation down to vocals, drums, bass

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POWER POP

and handclaps. Also, put a bridge at the end of the second verse so you can briefly introduce a catchy new melody. And as always, keep it short: do *not* let your song exceed three and a half minutes. Understand? Ja?

**ALWAYS, KEEP IT SHORT:
DO NOT LET YOUR SONG EXCEED
THREE AND A HALF MINUTES.**

Once you have the basics of song structure down, sharpen the details. Most important is the main guitar riff, which must be catchy, pretty or both (herky-jerky riffage is good, and a little Byrds-influenced chiming guitar will make a song sparkle). Guitar solos are acceptable, but should not be overly long. While acoustic guitars can be used at times, electric guitars are preferred—though lay off the distortion pedal, this isn't grunge! Synths are also fine, but they shouldn't dominate the mix, and *no drum machines*, otherwise, you're veering into synth-pop territory. While we are on the subject of rock drummers, don't allow them to play polyrhythms or elaborate fills. Rush percussionist Neil Peart is power pop kryptonite, so do *NOT* let your dumb drummer show off his sophisticated instrumental prowess. Keep it simple and direct. Ja!

Lastly, the lyrics: which are limited to sweet love, romantic angst and fun times (there has never ever been a power pop concept album, because the lyrical subject matter is too limited). While outright misogyny is forbidden, some standard-issue pop song sexism can be tolerated—like the use of “baby.” As for how those lyrics are delivered, there is no room in a classic power pop song for over-emotive vocals or bloozy inflections. Lastly, harmony is your *freund*. Background vocals can be used to beef up the song's hooks with *oooh-oooh-ooooo's*, *la-la-la-aaa's* or brief phrases like “we're gonna have some fun!”

At long last, you are ready to rule the pop charts. I, Umläut Nideldick, will happily offer you a full refund if you fail to score a hit by following my instructions exactly. Please send all correspondences in my care to: 666 Upurass, Mainz-Kastel, Germany, 55252. **lv**

Kembrew plans to apply Umläut Nideldick's Patented Power Pop Hitmaking Method® to produce a hit entitled “A Little Village Named Iowa City.” Stay tuned...

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Spacing Out: TV in Public Space

A couple weeks ago, a professor said to me, “Since you’re a TV person, you are used to watching stuff alone.” For a few minutes I freaked out about potentially being this sad loner screening television shows on Saturday nights without anyone to talk to. But more important than this statement inspiring ridiculous neurosis, I began to wonder whether this was actually the case about television watching.

We often consider television to be something we watch in our homes, either with our families, roommates or by ourselves. Early advertisements for television support this notion, usually picturing a Mom and Dad on the couch eating their TV dinners with 2.5 children sprawled out before the electronic hearth (Motorola 17F6 TV ad, 1951). However, many photographs of actual TV audiences during that time depict an entirely different picture than the ads, one that is fundamentally social or public. Meaning that just as often as we watch TV in our homes, we watch TV in social settings, in public spaces.

When television was still an expensive novelty in the late 1940s, one of the most common places to watch was with a bunch of strangers in a bar. This is, of course, still somewhat true today. Think about the way a room full of strangers at The Vine are unified in their sadness watching the Hawkeyes lose yet another

There are TV screens everywhere in social spaces—the Adler Journalism Building devotes an entire wall to screens featuring talking heads delivering the day’s news.

football game on the screens before them. One of my favorite memories of this past summer was sitting at Joe’s Place in the middle of the afternoon watching muted footage of riots from around the world on TruTV. Yes, I lead a very exciting life.

There are TV screens everywhere in social spaces! The Adler Journalism Building devotes an entire wall to screens featuring talking heads delivering the day’s news. The building where my office resides recently installed a TV for people to watch whatever they

want, whenever they desire. For example, this socially situated TV now allows a professor of mine to catch important episodes of *Dr. Phil* in the afternoon.

Outside of bars and campus buildings, there are tons of TVs hanging around while we’re hanging around. TVs line the walls of laundromats, airports, Doctors’ offices and, in some cities, there are even TVs on public transportation to make those bus rides to work or school more enjoyable.

Outside of these public or social spaces littered with television screens, the television we watch in our homes, and perhaps by ourselves, is often social, too, albeit in another way. The television industry frequently encourages its viewers to talk about TV, especially through social media like Twitter and Facebook, in order to make TV even more social than it already is. It’s hard to avoid the Twitter hashtags (like #HappyEndings for *Happy Endings* or #tvd for *The Vampire Diaries*) that accompany most of the programs we now see. Additionally, internet streaming TV viewers may see chat rooms next to their content where complete strangers can talk and bond over the horribleness of Jenelle on *Teen Mom 2* as they watch.

The problem with some industry attempts, however, is that they often consider social TV to be connecting viewers to television programs. For example, the company Get Glue lets registered users “check-in” to their favorite TV shows while they are watching in order to stay better connected to their favorite programs. Connecting to our favorite programs is fine and all, but social TV is more about people connecting with other people, and sharing in the experiences of viewing, whether it’s at a gathering to watch the Superbowl, tweeting together during an episode of *The Good Wife* or watching on a shared screen at the gym while we all run on our treadmills to nowhere. There is something simultaneously mundane and really special about these social TV experiences.

You are all probably wondering, “so what?,” but I think it’s important not to just think about

what we are watching on TV, but where and who we are watching TV with. Do we enjoy watching TV just because we enjoy what we see on the screen? Or does part of our enjoyment of TV come from the memories we have from watching with our friends, or the odd experience of watching *Black Dynamite* with a bunch of middle-aged, white people while waiting to get an oil change.

So much of the TV that I actually and distinctly remember watching, and the context in which I was watching, were social. In fact, I remember the acts of watching TV much more, and consider them to be more meaningful, when they are connected to social experiences. I remember watching *TGIF* episodes on ABC every Friday night with my friends in grade school. I remember going to *Lost* par-

I remember the acts of watching TV much more, and consider them to be more meaningful, when they are connected to social experiences.

ties to watch episodes and drink every time Kate took a shower. I remember watching the Packers win the Super Bowl the first year I moved to Iowa City, and being ‘that girl’ crying at a bar out of joy. I remember accidentally watching the entire ESPY awards at Short’s one night with a good friend. On the other hand, I can’t tell you what I watched last Tuesday night when I got home from class.

I don’t think I’m alone in this. My mom has an anecdote about how all the kids from her neighborhood where she grew up would come to her family’s home to watch TV because it was the only color set on the block. She couldn’t tell you what she was watching necessarily, but the act or experience of watching became the meaningful memory for her.

Perhaps I’m just trying to convince myself that something I spend a lot of my time doing—although not nearly as much time as I would like—is not the sign of someone leading a solitary or lonesome life, but instead a very social one. TV, of course, can be both solitary and social, but I think the presence of TV screens everywhere and the alone, yet connected experience of watching even in our homes blurs these distinctions and reminds us that the contexts of watching are probably as important as the shows themselves. **IV**

Melissa Zimdars is a doctoral student in Communication Studies at The University of Iowa, specializing in media and critical cultural studies.



To my mind, the best director in contemporary Hollywood—for our purposes, let’s say post-*Star Wars* (1977)—is the Dutch import Paul Verhoeven. While Verhoeven was working in the United States he gave us trashy, excessive Hollywood films we could sink our teeth into. More than that, if you look closely at these ostensibly paradigmatic examples of Hollywood’s deleterious product (e.g. *Showgirls* (1995)), Verhoeven was also the most subversive of genre auteurs, directing the spectacle back in at itself, parodying the absurdity of U.S. culture.

Although they were not released consecutively and have no narrative continuity, I like to think of Verhoeven’s *Robocop* (1987), *Total Recall* (1990) and *Starship Troopers* (1997) as a trilogy, as each explores in a rather complex (if stylized and gratuitous) way the mutual underpinning of mass media and warfare, and each does so through the popular sci-fi action film. The first is about the corporeal effects of a postmodern, war-based society on the blue-collar worker; the second is about the intoxicating and derealized fantasy of Third-World violence cable news provides the middle-class American on a daily basis; and the third film is about the way the precise control of information allows certain groups of beings to be designated as irredeemably “Other,” as not worthy of mutual recognition or even life.

One of the great things about these films, however, is that each is perfectly assimilable as an enjoyable Hollywood blockbuster. To

the attentive viewer, then, these films would effectively seem to be sending two messages simultaneously, one inviting us to delight in visual excess and the elimination of the enemy, the other compelling us to think critically about the framework in which such messages are relayed to us. Verhoeven accomplishes in each of these films a precise but disorienting balance of these two messages that allow us to have our cake and eat it too—or, perhaps, allowing us to have our cake but forcing us to eat it.

I bring up Verhoeven because I have a sneaking suspicion that video game developer Ubisoft might be up to something similar with its recent game *Far Cry 3*. To sum the game up succinctly, you play as a privileged, white (some have used the adjective “douche”) young man named Jason Brody, who spends a lot of time sticking knives into black men in the jungle, and then becomes the leader of an indigenous tribe, whose exotic, always-mostly-nude matriarch he’s also sleeping with. Quite predictably, this has sparked a lot of debate within the circles of people who are wont to have such debates, as the game packs a lot of colonial tropes about the encounter with the Other, along with very

viscerally racist and sexist imagery and gameplay. It’s also a hell of a lot of fun.

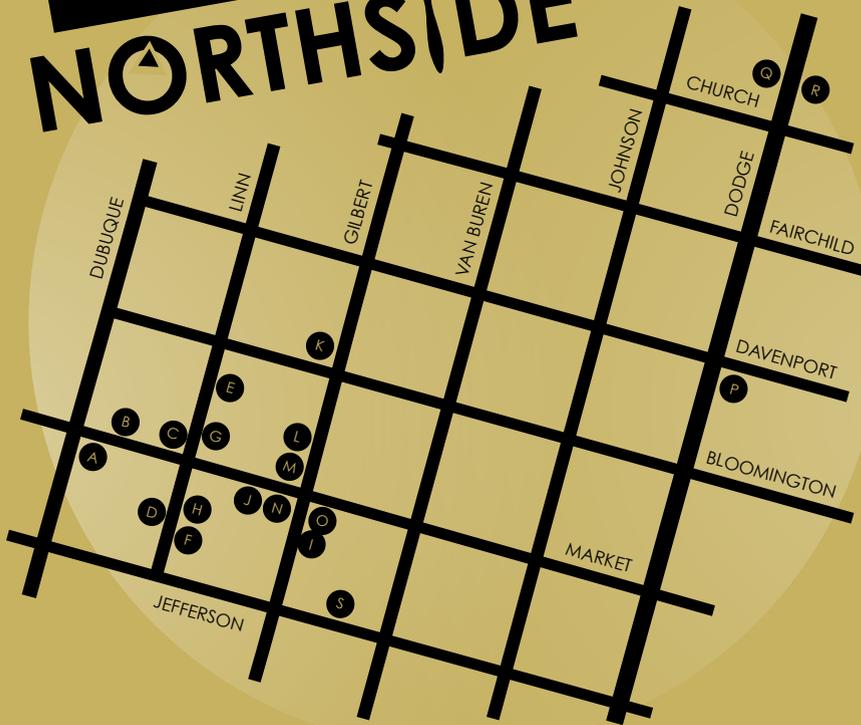
But like Verhoeven’s films, the game seems to always be sending you two messages at once. In each of Verhoeven’s films, vital to the critique of spectacle and militarism is the concept of *mise-en-abyme*, or a text within a text (the French phrase actually means “placed into abyss.”) In *Starship Troopers*, for example, much of the exposition is delivered by a web browser not used by a character within the film, but placed directly on screen. As a cursor selects different informational videos that explain the storyworld

Far Cry 3 packs a lot of colonial tropes about the encounter with the Other, along with very viscerally racist and sexist imagery and gameplay. It's also a hell of a lot of fun.

to us, the viewer, we’re left to reflect on the authoritarian control of choice through media that are supposedly “open;” if the point isn’t clear, the only choice the invisible operator of the cursor is ever given is “Would You Like to Know More?”—a pseudo-choice that seems pretty familiar to all of us who have sat through video

ABYSS >> CONT. ON PAGE 22

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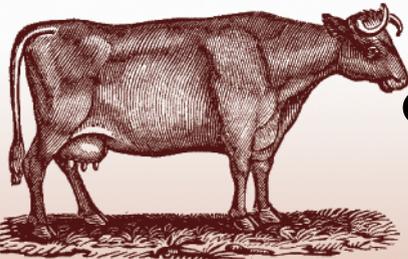
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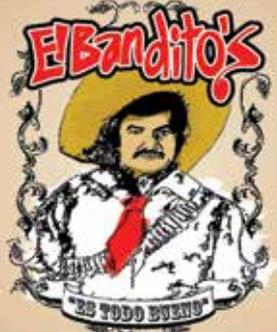
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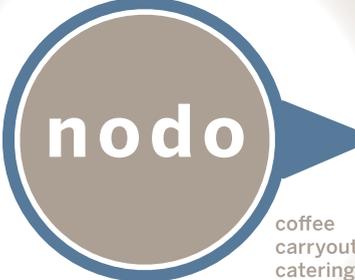
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ABYSS >> CONT. FROM PAGE 19

advertisements on YouTube or Hulu. The casual brutality of these propagandistic videos within *Starship Troopers* mirrors that of the actual film, and we are left to reflect on the way both propaganda and Hollywood action film elicit, control and depend upon our hatred for the Other.

Like *Starship Troopers*, *Far Cry 3* uses excess and self-reflexivity to critique its own genre, its own medium. The game "places you into the abyss" in many ways, but most interesting are the dream sequences that are about half-playable: you mostly walk through some gorgeously animated environments while hallucinating, as information about your character is delivered to you. The main spectacular effect of these scenes, however, is the way the environment shifts or suddenly appears as you move forward; these sequences in the game, of course, mirror the game's own (possibly unintentional) issues with "popping," the tendency in these open-world games for details of the surrounding environment not to appear until you get close to them.

Through these dream sequences, the preconditions of the game's own illusion are incorporated into your character's experience of the story-world, just as Verhoeven's

mises-en-abyme call attention to the relationship between the spectator and the media. It is just the beginning of the way the game starts to blur some of the conventional boundaries (the self versus the other, the story-world versus the medium) expected of games like this. For example, Vaas, the engaging and charismatic villain, the game hints over and over again, is not so different from your character (I will refrain from explaining how, to avoid spoilers). This led one reviewer to suggest that Ubisoft could and should have ended the game with the revelation that Brody and Vaas were actually the same person.

But I think Ubisoft was after bigger fish. They seem to be using the genre most associated with identification as a Self and with violence against the Other—the first-person shooter—to undermine, or at least call attention to, the stable (and racialized) notions of identity on which it relies. A *Fight Club*-style twist would have offered a catharsis that gave the player release from the boundary-defying conflicts that structure the game's narrative. In the end, there is no twist about you being Vaas

to paradoxically drive home the fact that, by the middle of the game, you might as well be Vaas.

The end of the game has thus been unsatisfactory to some, perhaps as the final "victory" hardly feels like a victory. But then we're

Like *Starship Troopers*, *Far Cry 3* uses over excess to critique its own genre, its own medium.

reminded of the end of *Starship Troopers*, in which Neil Patrick Harris, a telepath, proclaims of a captured alien, "It's afraid!" to the raucous cheers of the troopers, signifying, it would seem, the ultimate military victory. The finale of *Far Cry 3* is nowhere near this brilliant, but it is similarly unsatisfying—and dissatisfaction can be a very ethical emotion. **IV**

Pat Brown is a graduate student in Film Studies at the University of Iowa. No, that doesn't mean he makes movies; he just likes them a lot.

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SAVING SPACE

News of a potential lease termination for Public Space One (129 E. Washington), raised a lot of questions about the future of non-commercial art downtown. Here, we ask PS1 Director John Englebrecht about the past, present and future of the space. The interview was conducted over email.

Little Village: *The news of the potential end of Public Space One's (PS1) lease of the Jefferson building has caused quite a stir. To begin, I'd like to ask you about what the lease arrangement has been. How long you have been leasing the space and what does the current upheaval mean for the immediate future of PS1?*

John Englebrecht: Our current space in the basement of the Jefferson Building has been "ours" for nearly five years, though we have never paid rent or utilities. The space came about through some work done by the James Gang in 2006-2007. The James Gang (PS1's parent organization which also sponsors several other arts organizations in Iowa City) has always been closely affiliated with the University (though never officially), and through some connections at that time, a verbal agreement of sorts was worked out with the University Foundation. The Business Office of the University was also involved on some level and for the past five years our space has been overseen and managed by Dan Black with MidwestOne Bank.

"The city wants this, the downtown district wants this. But the economics are problematic."

—Public Space One Director John Englebrecht

This has led to a unique arrangement and environment for us and our space, allowing us certain freedoms (and constraints) that come with an underground (figuratively and literally) location. We don't have to abide by the University's rules for what we can and can't show in our

gallery, and we don't get any funding from them.

Everything may change in the next week or two, but for now the decision for us to vacate the space has not been made official. We are in the process of meeting with the University Foundation and Business Office, having an open discussion about who we are and what we provide to the community and the University. We feel that they should be able to see value

They kept doing productions, started inviting musicians to play and putting art on the walls. psONE (their preferred way of spelling it) was there for three or four years. In 2005-2006 it had a short tenancy above MidwestOne bank. This time was brief but led to the connection with Dan Black and the agreement to move to the old Arts Iowa City space in the basement of the Jefferson Building.



DAS PUBLIC

PS1 has served as a remote studio for KRUI. Here, Das Racist visits the 2011 PS1 Mission Creek Lounge

Photos by Adrienne Behning

in PS1, not just in the more intangible value of a unique cultural entity for downtown Iowa City, but in concrete areas that match some of their objectives like providing an alcohol-free destination serving a large student population.

LV: *This time of transition for you is naturally a point to stop and reflect on what PS1 has become in the years since its founding. Could you share a little bit about how PS1 came into existence and how that relates to the kind of programming that it has become known for?*

JE: Public Space One has been an Iowa City entity (like its parent group the James Gang) for over 10 years now. It has existed in three locations (four if you count ps-z and the Zenic Press, throttling full-speed ahead in the Wesley Center). It was started above the Deadwood in 2002, when the space was offered to some theatre students for a one-off play production by Deadwood owner Jim Bell.

The years in the basement of the Jefferson Building have additionally influenced what we do. In this space we have followed what others have done before us and used it as an installation space, a place for "emerging artists" and a place to program our own crazy ideas.

Currently we balance our own internal programming (curated art exhibitions and community programs like Iowa City Community Supported Art [ICCSA], SOUP, Free @rt School workshops and music shows) with what comes to us through the community. We aim to balance each exhibition season with local, emerging artists (including students), and artists from somewhere else.

LV: *To say that PS1 runs on a shoestring budget is probably generous, and to suggest that it has plans to turn a profit this year is beside the point. Could you talk a little bit about why, in the absence of a profit motive, PS1 exists? Why does Iowa City need a venue to show art without commercial pretensions?*

**EVER CHANGING**

Skye Carrasco performs alongside installations in the gallery space. At right, guests attend an opening for Pete Schulte's "Oceans and Sky."

JE: A shoestring budget is exactly how we talk about it, but it is a budget that we are slowly growing. The addition of ps:z and Zenzic Press (and ICCSA on a smaller level) have tripled the kind of economy we have dealt with in the past. These new initiatives have led to an increased need for operating support and a system in place beyond the looseness at which we had formerly operated.

"Absence of a profit motive," I like how that's phrased. And I could go on about why Iowa City should embrace a noncommercial space, starting with the simple fact that art has a life outside a capital-based system. It is bigger than capital and has been around longer.

We feel very strongly that art without any commercial aspirations or monetary value is just as (if not much more) important than commodified art, but it is an idea we often struggle with. We do hold an annual art auction, a "cheap art" sale and run a program (the ICCSA) that does just that: commodifies art. We aim to run these programs in a fashion that

makes the needs of the monetary side of what we do transparent, offsetting the rest of our noncommercial existence while highlighting or paying artists in the meantime.

In general, we would like to grow what we do, if only to support creative minds doing innovative projects in our fair city. In this regard, our motive is to present, fund or otherwise support artists, performers, creative people of all types. Personally, I want more strange people doing smart, weird, wonderful things somewhere close by.

LV: *What have you liked about your current space? What have been*

the challenges of your current space? This might be premature, but what sort of space do you imagine moving into once this space is no longer available?

JE: I really like where we are located, how we are hidden but right in the center of the city. I like to mythologize our space and how it connects to other spaces using the story of an underground tunnel system, a system that is very much alive and well in Iowa City. There are times when some conduits of the system close (when Arts Iowa City moved from below the Savings and Loan building to its ultimate demise beneath Wells Fargo) and others open (ps:z and house galleries like Keokuk & Keokuk and the BS Gallery).

The challenges of the current space include a crumbling ceiling, water leaking, clanking pipes, etc. (There was a reason we got free rent!) We have also struggled to get some sort of street presence, something people could see when they walked by.

Serious discussion of moving is a bit premature, though the idea of vacating opens up a lot of potential. As for the music venue, we have access to a performance space twice as large as our current one at ps:z (the lunchroom-auditorium at the Wesley Center will be part of ps:z once the Free Lunch Program



moves to the Crisis Center at the end of the year). Music, theatre, readings, etc. are all already happening at z. But there isn't an obvious answer for exhibition space at ps.z. We will hold some exhibitions there, but nothing can have its own dedicated space, at least in the next short while.

If anything, I hope the potential of losing this space allows for more exposure and opportunities to present what we do to a broader community. I would love to find a street level venue for contemporary, noncommercial art in downtown Iowa City. I do not doubt the value of what we provide, the brand we administer (to put it in business terms) or what we could do with the right resources and support. It's really a matter of connecting with the right people to find an adequate next step.

LV: *The idea of a storefront space for PSI is certainly exciting to me (the idea of any kind of space downtown where I don't have to spend money to enjoy is exciting). How do you see the role of a more visible nonprofit art space in downtown life, especially in a college town like this one?*

JE: I would love the opportunity to take our brand of art out of the basement. I think there is this notion that a certain kind of work fits within our space (perhaps due to the nature of our space and lack of resources, this attitude is perpetuated).

The idea of a visible, accessible non-profit arts space is exciting. The problem with downtown is the real estate premium. Without an entity like the city or a private group of business owners decidedly saying, "We are going to support this thing that enriches the fabric of our town though won't turn a profit," it's not going to happen. The city wants this, the downtown district wants this. But the economics are problematic.

My hope is that whatever happens with the current space, people will realize the contemporary, non-commercial visual (and other) arts are valuable beyond the dollar and help make this a real place instead of just a "college town." **lv**

Brian Prugh is a graduate student studying painting at the University of Iowa. He also writes art criticism for the Iowa City Arts Review, found online at iowacityartsreview.com.

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Rust & Bone

MAR. 8-14 | BIJOU CINEMA

The spirit of our age walks on prosthetic limbs. Of course, humanity has always been fascinated by amputees. But whereas prosthetics were once a sign of creepiness, from Captain Ahab to Captain Hook, now they're attached to sympathetic heroes. Think of Oscar Pistorius, the Olympic "Blade Runner," sadly on trial for murdering his model-girlfriend; or Bethany Hamilton, the subject of *Soul Surfer*, who lost her left arm in a shark attack; or Aron Ralston,

her legs to one of her hungry whales.

Rust and Bone begins with the unemployed Ali (Matthias Schoenaerts) and his young son Sam (Armand Verdure) fleeing to the south of France. Though his real ambition is to be a kick-boxer, Ali finds work as a bouncer in a club, where he becomes fascinated by the otherworldly Stéphanie. When she loses her legs in a freak accident, Stéphanie calls on him, and they strike up a sizzlingly sexual, albeit ambiguously romantic, relationship.



In *Rust and Bone*, the heart-amputatingly lovely Marion Cotillard plays Stéphanie, an Orca trainer who loses both of her legs to one of her hungry whales.

the subject of *127 Hours*, who was trapped under a boulder until he self-amputated his right arm; or the athlete-model Aimee Mullins, whose collection of sexy prosthetic limbs includes jellyfish arms and jaguar legs replete with tail. Think of fictional characters like the jovial king in *Brave* or Inspector Gustave in *Hugo*. Now we have *Rust and Bone*, the new film by Jacques Audiard (playing at the Bijou March 8 through 14), in which the heart-amputatingly lovely Marion Cotillard plays Stéphanie, an Orca trainer who loses both of

The unlikely presence of Ali is just what Stéphanie requires to repair her fractured sense of self. One of the most powerful scenes in *Rust and Bone*, the main image for its marketing,

involves Ali carrying her on his back to the sea. Immediately after he deposits her in her element, he returns to the beach, sprawls out and falls asleep. The typical do-gooder would have lifeguarded over the legless Stéphanie as she breaststrokes in the big waves, but Ali's lack of concern provides just the space she needs to recover her self-reliance.

However, if you think the movie is mainly about Stéphanie, you'll end up feeling a little

RUST >> CONT. ON PAGE 30

Now Showing



Chasing Ice

Mar. 8-14

Bijou

Co-sponsored by the Landlocked Film Festival, this documentary tells the story of James Balog, who uses time-lapse cameras to document the disappearing glaciers and depress us into action about climate change.



Stand By Me

Mar. 8, 11:15 p.m.; Mar. 9, 11 p.m.

Of the many movie versions of Stephen King fictions, *Stand by Me* has the most heart. The cast of boys—including John Cusack, Kiefer Sutherland, Corey Feldman and Wil Wheaton—is stellar. But River Phoenix steals the show with his unforgettable portrayal of the charismatic, troubled Gordie.

MARCH: THE MONTH IN THEATRE

University of Iowa Theatre

A Dream Play

Swedish playwright August Strindberg was best known for using his literary genius, varied influences and psychosis to write plays that influenced avant-garde artists for generations to come. The University Theatre will be staging one of his best known plays, *A Dream Play*, in which the daughter of an Indian god comes to earth to learn about the human experience. Strindberg's heavy use of symbolism in this play was an early influence on surrealism, an artistic movement that attempted to recreate the nonlinear and impermanent nature of dreams. The play is directed by David Hanzal and is showing from March 7-16 as part of the University Theatre's Mainstage Series. For more information about showtimes and tickets, visit the Hancher Auditorium website at hancher.uiowa.edu.

Dreamwell Theatre

The Vagina Monologues

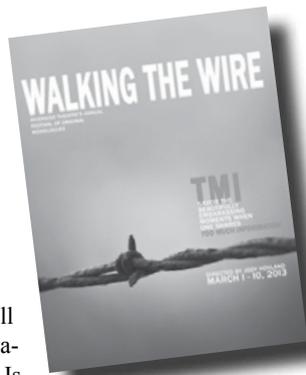
The theme for Dreamwell Theatre's 2012-2013 season is "Ovation! A Season of Women's Words." Is there any play that most exemplifies that idea than *The Vagina Monologues*? Created by Eve Ensler, the play (which can be more accurately described as a movement) is now in its 15th year. Director Adeara-Jean Maurice leads a cast of 16 women in the second of two Iowa City productions this year. Be aware that if you've seen one performance of *The Vagina Monologues*, you haven't seen them all. This year's performance includes a new monologue by Ensler inspired by the recent attention to gang rapes in India. The

play will have performances on March 15 and 16. Visit the production's Facebook page at facebook.com/vmonologuesiowacity2013 for more information ... and artistic renderings of vaginas drawn by the cast.

Iowa City Community Theatre

The Royal Family

If you are in the mood for something more "family friendly," look no further than George S. Kaufman and Edna Ferber's classic comedy, *The Royal Family*. A thinly-veiled parody of the Barrymore family, the play concerns three generations of an acting family as they fight to maintain their reputations. The play's Broadway premiere in 1927 received harsh criticism from Ethel Barrymore herself. Hopefully, the ICCT production directed by Krista Neumann will be left unscathed. The play will be showing March 8-10 and 15-17 at ICCT's performance space at the Johnson County Fairgrounds. For ticket information, go to iowacitycommunitytheatre.com.



Riverside Theatre

Walking the Wire: Too Much Information

Riverside Theatre's annual monologue festival, *Walking the Wire*, features original monologues by writers from around the country that are directed by Jody Hovland and performed by professional actors. This year, writers were to send in pieces based on the theme of "too

much information." Some were inspired by hilarious embarrassing moments, others of a more serious inner torment. With 11 monologues total, audience members are guaranteed to identify with a variety of perspectives. The festival runs March 1-3 and 7-10 at the Riverside Theatre on Gilbert Street. To order tickets, visit the box office during weekday afternoons or go to riversidetheatre.org to access the online box office.

Theatre Cedar Rapids

Legally Blonde: The Musical

For fans of the 2001 comedy *Legally Blonde* that can't be satisfied by merely watching it on cable practically every day, the only remedy is to "bend and snap" their way to see Theatre Cedar Rapids' production of *Legally Blonde: The Musical*. This live version incorporates songs into the story of how sorority girl Elle Woods tries to win back her ex-boyfriend by attending Harvard Law School. Along the way she finds a purpose in life, makes new friends and proves that an encyclopedic knowledge of hair care products might come in handy someday. The show runs March 1-23. Tickets are available online at theatre.org. Just sit back, relax and try not to think about how Elle from the original movie is almost ready to celebrate her 10-year law school reunion.

The Old Creamery Theatre Company

Death by Disco

Sometimes, theatre does not feel complete unless it involves mashed potatoes, platform shoes ... and murder? The Old Creamery Theatre Company is performing a 1970's themed murder mystery, *Death by Disco*, as a dinner theatre show at the Ox Yoke Inn in Amana. The show runs through March 16. For tickets, call the Inn at 1-800-233-3441 weekdays between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Tickets are \$45 per person, which includes dinner, tax and gratuity. **lv**

Jorie Slodki earned her MA in Theatre Research from University of Wisconsin, Madison, and has past experience in acting, directing and playwrighting.

KNOCKING ON DEMENT'S DOOR

In October of 2012, Iris DeMent released her first new album of original songs after 16 years. The album—*Sing the Delta*, which DeMent maintained complete creative control over by releasing on her own record label—is an utterly personal work, drawing influence from her upbringing with gospel music and telling stories with her distinctive literary voice. It is a masterpiece of American literature as much as a timeless album of country folk. DeMent sat down with *Little Village* to talk about her career, her new album, songwriting, moving to Iowa and her upcoming Mission Creek Festival show at the Englert Theatre.

Little Village: *I read recently that you got your start when John Prine heard you playing the Blue Bird Cafe in Nashville. How many years did you live in Nashville?*

Iris DeMent: I lived in Nashville from I think it was 1989-1991. I moved back to Kansas City before I made my first records. It's a good place—it's changed a lot. I mean [Nashville] is still a good town, but it hadn't quite been "discovered" when I was there. It was a cooler kind of setting for my tastes. Kind of funky and all of these big record labels were based in houses. When I signed with Warner Brothers in 1992—literally, they were in somebody's house. All of the business at that time was very local and accessible. But, things changed.

LV: *Did moving to Nashville seem like the move you had to make to get to the next step in your career?*

I did talk to a couple of labels and came close to going that route, but went with my instinct instead and I've had no regrets about that.

ID: It was definitely the right move for me. I wanted to make records and I wanted people to hear my songs. I was living in Kansas City at the time, and I didn't see any possibility of

that happening there. I think sometimes that is the reality—that you need to go somewhere. I don't know if that is the case so much anymore because the record industry has changed so much. But, at that time it was like, Nashville, New York or LA—and for what I was doing,



IRIS DEMENT

w. Dave Moore | Englert Theatre
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Photo by Pieta Brown

far and away Nashville was the most obvious place for me to be. The songwriters that I admired, many of them had either come out of Nashville or gone there. It was a very exciting time in my life—I got to meet people like John Prine, Nanci Griffith and Jim Rooney—who produced my first couple of records. I think another thing that was as important was that I became educated about the business side of the work I was going into, and I've never underestimated the value of that education.

LV: *Do you mean the publishing, recording and performance sides of it?*

ID: Oh yeah, all of it. I went down there with a handful of songs and continued writing. Being in that environment I learned how to protect my music. I learned how to make decisions about how to handle what I had created. I'm

not sure I would have known that, had I not gone down there. It certainly would have been more difficult to get that information. Living among people who were doing what I wanted to do and knew how to go about it was very beneficial to me, no doubt about it.

LV: *From Nashville you moved back to Kansas City?*

ID: I moved from Nashville in 1991 to Kansas City, and I was there until just about five years ago, when I moved here. So, I'm still fairly new to Iowa. I love Iowa—well, I love Iowa City—it's a great town. Everything I could possibly need is here and it's just the right size. And, I have a lot of family here—Greg (Brown)'s older daughters are here. I've been very happy in Iowa.

LV: *Getting back to the business side of things—you were on Warner Brothers Records for three albums. The last two releases you put out on Flariella—your own label. You started out at a time when the music business was largely part of the record label machine, and, as you pointed out, things have changed. What were the challenges you experienced deciding to do your own releases?*

ID: Well, the first record I released on my own was *Lifeline*—the album of a bunch of old church songs that I sang my whole life and loved. It was kind of a no-risk venture because I actually had no intention of promoting the record—it was really just a great desire I had to go in and sing those songs. It seemed unlikely that very many of them were going to sell—so it was low pressure. I didn't want any input from anybody. I just wanted to sing those songs like I felt them—send the music out there and let it do what it was going to do. So, it seemed obvious to me to put that out myself.

I did talk to a couple of labels and came close to going that route, but went with my instinct instead and I've had no regrets about that. With *Sing the Delta*, part of me thought that since I hadn't made a record in a long time, maybe I needed the machinery of the label. But, it was such a satisfying experience to me to make my own record and be able to make all of the decisions and release it exactly how I wanted to. More than that, though, not feel

as though I have this team of people who are invested in me and in whom I would feel a responsibility. I think more than anything, when I was at Warner Brothers—I haven't thought about this in a long time—it wasn't that they tried to steer me creatively, but I felt obligated to them. When a big label like that signs you—no matter how much they love you—their aim is to make a bunch of money. There's nothing

(In Nashville) I became educated about the business side of the work I was going into, and I've never underestimated the value of that education.

wrong with that, but I don't miss that pressure that I felt. So, having said that, it's unlikely that I would ever sign with a record label again for as long as I live. This has worked out well.

LV: Was the decision to release the album on vinyl yours?

ID: No. I actually did not realize that people were buying vinyl again. I was very surprised when [my distributor] suggested that we issue

vinyl. So, I asked around and realized that it has come back into vogue among young people. Even with that, I was a little skeptical. It's surprising to me how many people ask for it. I get emails all the time, "How can I get the record in vinyl?" So, that's pretty cool.

LV: Are you looking forward to the Englert show?

ID: I am! It's a beautiful room. When I'm there I always feel a little nervous—playing where I live—but I'm really looking forward to it. Dave Moore is opening the show—he's a wonderful songwriter. I've been touring for the most part with a band which I haven't done in quite a long time. It's been a lot of fun.

LV: Is the band made up of session people, or people put together specifically for the tour?

ID: Well, they're a mix of people. Dave Jakes—he plays in John Prine's band. He also played on my record. I've been good friends with him for years. Brian Owings is on the drums and also played on the record. Jon

Graboff will be playing pedal steel and mandolin and Neal Casal will be playing guitar. Jon and Neal played with Ryan Adams in the Cardinals—they're pretty darn good!

LV: Is there any part of *Sing the Delta* that is based on your experiences in Iowa?

ID: Well, I wrote half the songs on the album in the year prior to recording it while I was living in Iowa. At that time we were living down in Van Buren County. You know, the place in my music has always been a place that comes from inside of me. As much as I love Iowa, I can't say it has much to do with the songs. Some of my earliest songs were written in Topeka. I don't know how much that Topeka itself had to do with them. I think that a door opens up inside of you and the music comes in. **lv**

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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RUST >> CONT. FROM PAGE 26

confused by its last act. Try to resist the immense allure of Cotillard and remember that the story, as the beginning suggests, is about Ali, who is brought to life with an alchemical mix of disaffectedness and passion by Schoenaert, the Belgian actor best-known for *Bullhead* (2011). Full of the capacity for love, both for Stéphanie

Rust and Bone has the same heart-warming uplift of a blade-runner in the Olympics, as well as some of the hidden darkness of an erstwhile hero on trial for murder.

and his son, Ali must overcome his laissez-faire attitude toward life and channel his fierce subterranean feelings for others.

French films have always drawn on American culture for energy, but *Rust and Bone's* American sensibilities are peculiarly strong. Aurdriard's arty filmmaking will suddenly break into a peppy B-52s dance party. Sensitive character studies will come to a head with a kickboxing scene that Rocky Balboa would appreciate. On the one hand, you get to appreciate numerous shots of light bouncing on the water. On the other hand, the scene where Stéphanie limps out on her prosthetic limbs to rouse the beat-up Ali is guaranteed to jerk tears. The soundtrack—which veers from Bon Iver to Django Django, from Carte Blanche to Katy Perry—reflects the movie's energies and ambivalences.

You could say that *Rust and Bone* itself walks on prosthetic limbs. It's a French-Belgian film that's American below the knees. It has something of the artistic heart and philosophical brain of the usual French film but lurches forward with a sentimental American plot. It has the same heart-warming uplift of a blade-runner in the Olympics, as well as some of the hidden darkness of an erstwhile hero on trial for murder. While some viewers will argue that the movie doesn't quite cohere into an organic whole, my hunch is that most will believe in and root for this fascinating, limping, troubling, triumphant movie.

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

**CONE TRAUMA**

Old Thrashers VI (UAY Benefit)
The Mill | Mar. 9 | 8 p.m.

By the time that you are reading this column, the annual Mission Creek Festival will be less than a month away, a sign that spring is beginning to rear its head and musicians are getting back on the road. This is a benefit to everyone and means that many artists with a wide variety of backgrounds and approaches to music will be making visits over the coming weeks.

While this country may lead to our demise (its super volcanoes are on the verge of erupting—there is an episode of *NOVA* about this if you're curious), Iceland has become a hotbed of music experimentation. In recent years, its bustling scene has produced the folk-based electronica of Múm, the mind-bending eclecticism of Bjork and the crushing post-rock of Sigur Rós.

Joining the list of accomplished Icelandic artists is Valgeir Sigurðsson. Founder of the Bedroom Community record label, Sigurðsson is a widely sought after producer and collaborator. He has produced albums for Múm and helped create some of Bjork's best work including *Vespertine* and *Medulla*. He has also worked with Kate Nash, Feist, CoCoRosie and Bonnie "Prince" Billy.

In addition to his resume as a producer, Sigurðsson is an accomplished solo artist. Pulling between the abstract and the concrete, his music is airy and expansive. His most recent album *Architecture of Loss* was originally composed for a ballet of the same name. While it would be interesting to experience the music with the dance component, the album stands on its own. It is a collection of songs that are restrained yet beautifully, hauntingly powerful. The combination of piano, viola and electronic sounds create an ethereal connection with the world and the body. Sigurðsson will

be performing with Nadia Sirota, who helped record *Architecture of Loss*, on March 13 at the Englert.

Terakaft lacks some of the mystery of Sigurðsson, but that is definitely not a bad thing. From the Tuareg tribe of Western Africa, Terakaft pulls from traditional music and infuses the sound with western influences like Mississippi Delta blues, The Rolling Stones and the garage and psychedelic rock of the '60s. Their setup is like a normal rock and roll band with two guitars, a bassist and a percussionist. The guitars play beautifully off one another as one holds the main riff while the other goes on extended, soaring runs, providing a fantastic dynamism. The bass and percussion are deep and hold the affair together while providing groove. The whole together makes a swirling, psychedelic sound that evokes the desert expanses that their nomadic tribe calls home. Those that are familiar with the output of the Sublime Frequencies label (Group Inerane, Group Doueh, Omar Souleyman, etc.) will find a lot to like here. They will be playing at CSPPS on March 10.

While it is certainly different from the desert blues of Terakaft, punk rock is another form of rock and roll that is certainly welcome here in eastern Iowa. Back in the 1980s, Iowa City was a hotbed of punk rock with bands like Soviet Dissonance, Iowa Beef Experience and Suburban Death Trip. But, that was three decades ago and there is a whole new generation of punks in Iowa City that are holding up the city's mantle. Once a year though, the old punks come out of retirement and show everyone that they've still got it at the event, Ol' Thrashers. This is its sixth year and features Wax Cannon, Baggi Spandex, Acoustic Guillotine, intergenerational

Quick Hits

Put these shows on your calendar for March 9-19



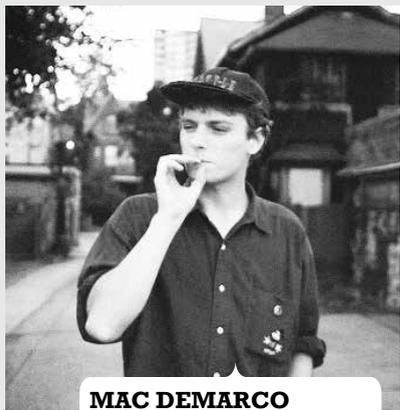
TERAKAFT

CSPS Cedar Rapids | Mar. 10
7 p.m. \$17/21, All Ages



VALGEIR SIGURÐSSON

w. Nadia Birota | Englert Theatre
Mar. 13 | 8 p.m. | \$10/15, All Ages



MAC DEMARCO

w. Naomi Punk & Calvin Love
The Mill | Mar. 19 | 9 p.m. | \$8/ \$10

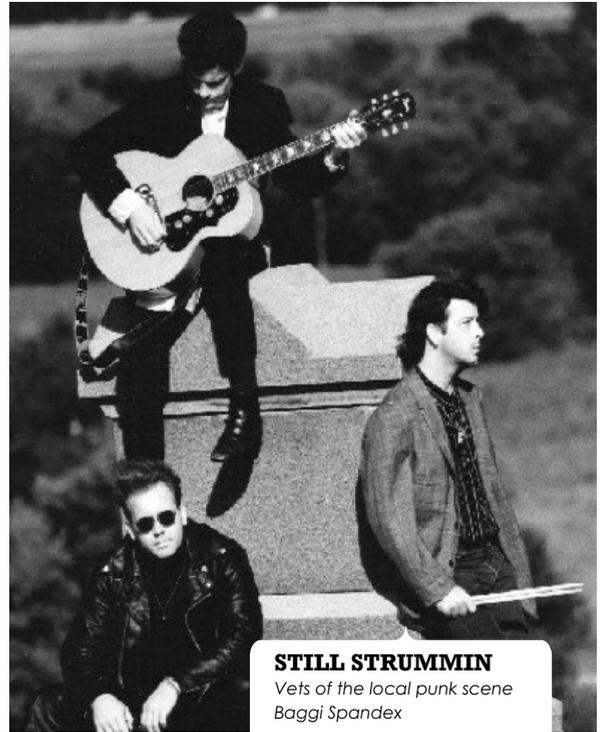
From the Tuareg tribe of Western Africa, Terakaft pulls from traditional music and infuses the sound with western influences like Mississippi Delta blues, The Rolling Stones and the garage and psychedelic rock of the '60s.

band Chance in Hell and representing the next wave are local UAY alumni Conetrauma. All are playing for a good cause: United Action for Youth, which provides middle and high school students access to musical and recording equipment, things that helped to develop the punk scene here in the '80s. You can see the thrashers kick out the jams on March 9 at The Mill.

Mac DeMarco certainly is not an old thrasher. Originally releasing tapes under the name Makeout Videotape, the 22-year-old, Montreal-based, multi-instrumentalist has risen quickly. He was discovered and released by Captured Tracks, one of the best indie labels operating right now. His first album *Rock and Roll Nightclub* was a weird mix between soft rock and glam-style crooning. The sounds are surreal and somewhat unsettling, but the overall album showed that he has considerable talent as a songwriter.

His talent is delivered upon on *2*, a pop album that is more cohesive than *Rock and Roll Nightclub* and exhibits the relaxed style of Steely Dan. The bass gallops while the cheaply chorused guitar coolly cruises over top. DeMarco's more mature vocals guide the whole vessel through its various tempo changes, providing the anchor for the album. *2* is a standout of pop music in an indie landscape that is currently littered with excellent pop bands.

This should be a dynamic show as DeMarco is known for his stage performances. To provide an example of what could happen, let me quote DeMarco himself: "One show, I was hanging from the rafters in Vancouver and stuck my thumb up my ass, then put it in my mouth. That was pretty gross." I should note that this is the *tamer* of the two stories that I could have used here. Hopefully, DeMarco



STILL STRUMMIN'

Vets of the local punk scene
Baggi Spandex

Once a year, the old punks come out of retirement and show everyone that they've still got it.

will give everyone a story to tell when he plays The Mill on March 19.

If you find yourself going to points elsewhere for Spring Break, have fun. If you're not traveling, see if you can watch *Spring Breakers*, the new Harmony Korine movie. If you can, let me know. You can find me out on the beat. **lv**

A.C. Hawley once did a report on Iceland when he was 10. He learned extraordinarily little about the country. You can follow him on Twitter at @acethoughts.

MAR. 11
JANIS IAN

MAR. 13
VALGEIR SIGURÐSSON

MAR. 15
SCOTCH TASTING

MAR. 16
TRACY MORGAN

MAR. 22
NAHA GREENHOLTZ

MAR. 28
RALPHIE MAY

APR. 3
IRIS DEMENT
MISSION CREEK FESTIVAL

APR. 5
**TIG NOTARO &
JANEANE GAROFALO**
MISSION CREEK FESTIVAL

APR. 6
MUCCA PAZZA
MISSION CREEK FESTIVAL

VISIT 221 East Washington St, Iowa City
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Local Albums



Omens

Omens EP/No Dawn Cassette

facebook.com/omenshc

*Free download via Iowa Hardcore

blog http://bit.ly/Omens_DSM

Metal never really did it for me. So much of it centered on contrived attitude and image. Growing up I was in the orchestra and AP english, and the metal fans were in shop classes. While the gearhead kids were buying

Sabbath and AC/DC, I was buying Coltrane and Kraftwerk. But a curious thing happened to my perception of metal, influenced by listening to industrial and noisier electronic music like noisecore and gabber: I started hearing what made all the metalheads so happy.

Once I was able to access my inner metal-head, I was surprised to find that Iowa is full of amazingly good metal bands. Coming out of Des Moines—the sort of moribund midwestern hell on earth that requires the deafening rebuttal metal provides—Omens is a new band with a solid pedigree, comprising members of Druids, Knuckled Down, Plague City and Nothing To Nothing.

The two EPs together have 10 songs in less than 25 minutes. Each song is short and to the point, though at the breakneck tempos they prefer, they're playing more notes than the average pop band plays in twice the time. But it isn't just unrelenting triple-time kick drums, they drop into low gear for some grinding slow motion passages as well. They're so beyond being merely tight and well rehearsed that their songs can breathe and groove. The swaying lurch of "Dark Depths" from No Dawn is actually a mutant, black t-shirt kind of funk music. And Omens always brings the grind: that sustained, fuzzy tone that rattles

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your molars and feels like a belt sander to your ears—in a good way.

Even if you're more the chamomile tea and Joanna Newsom sort, it's high time to give metal a chance, and Omens is as good a band as any to start with. These two free EPs will get you ready for their first album which they're recording now. Find out how their music about bleak, hopeless doom can make you happy.

Kent Williams is an Italian operatic tenor who also crossed over into popular music, eventually becoming one of the most commercially successful tenors of all time.

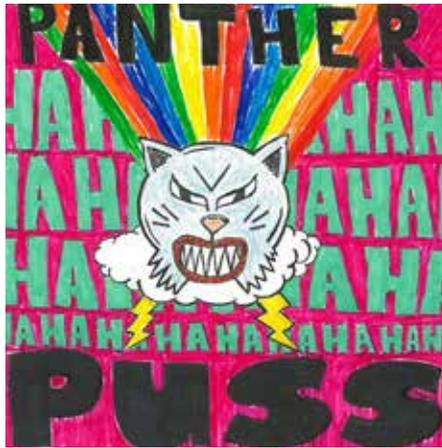
Samuel Locke Ward

Panther Puss

samuellockeward.bandcamp.com/

For his second in a year-long series of monthly releases, Samuel Locke Ward has dipped back into more familiar territory. After the top-40-skewering electro-pop on his January release, *7 AM New Year's Day*, Locke Ward leans heavily on his trusty acoustic guitar and Casio keyboard for a 16-song collection of weirdo pop-ditties on *Panther Puss*.

The album opens with the downtrodden



psych-folk of "Here Comes No One." Locke Ward describes an emotional wasteland where "no one shall be true...and no one cares for you" over a tambourine plod with just enough will to find the downbeat and a guitar that shambles along despite having no affection from anyone or anything. This is followed by the unnervingly psychedelic and equally desperate cut "Ships Won't Sail." The second song churns along on choppy strums from Locke Ward's guitar but the teeth-gritting jitters the track induces come from the noodling guitar solo looped backwards. "Ships" grows more

portentous at the end with each staccato repetition of "It feels like this ship might never come in," the unspooling solo matches Locke Ward's increasingly unhinged vocal performance.

It's never all doom and gloom with Locke Ward. No matter how terrible everything looks, there's always a crooked grin to be found. The album's lead single, "Swastika Eyes," is a darkly comic break-up song. Instead of focusing on the shock at discovering that a new girlfriend is a neo-Nazi, "Swastika Eyes" highlights what might be the monotony of a relationship with someone with such a singular and all-consuming obsession: "You're master race spiel has me yawning every time / And you're new hate-do has me rolling my eyes."

The new father also finds room for a surprisingly sweet lullabye. Toward the end of *Panther Puss*, Locke Ward implores the sleeper to "dream something sweet for me," and promises "all of the sadness shall wash away." Only a scary, electronic gong sound at the end undercuts the tenderness.

John Schlotfeldt has made a chorizo meatloaf, the world will never be the same.



GREEN STREET by Jared Rogness

PART 4 of 12 | LittleVillageMag.com/greestreet



Why do we itch?

As bodily defense mechanisms go, pain makes sense: put your hand on a hot stove and your body screams "Get out of here!" But what's the purpose of itching? Chicken pox, mosquito bites, hemorrhoids, and rashes: why do we instinctively react by scratching? Why must we fight the urge to dig in at an inflamed area, knowing that as soon as we stop, the fire ants will start flaring up on our flesh all over again?

—SMB, Chicago

Come now, this isn't that complicated. Itching alerts us to the presence of potentially troublesome critters and substances and impels us to poke at them. Notwithstanding occasional false alarms, surely you can see the value in acting reflexively to get rid of that bothersome tsetse fly or, more prosaically, some irritating tick, flea, or louse.

What's less clear is how itching works. That's a matter of more than academic interest, since as you suggest, excessive itching and scratching creates its own problems, and not having a clear idea what makes something start means it's tougher to make it stop.

When I first wrote about this subject years ago, it was thought itching was a mild form of pain. Nobody thinks that now. In 1997 a research team led by Martin Schmelz established the existence of itch-selective neurons called pruriceptors, a subset of the damage-sensing neurons called nociceptors. Pruriceptors specialize in detecting certain very faint stimuli and elicit a specialized response: whereas pain makes you withdraw, itching makes you scratch. Looking at the larger picture, it also seems clear if you have a literally hair-trigger sensory modality, along with some legitimate signal you're going to get a lot of noise.

That's about as far as we can go in the way of definite pronouncements. Reading through the journals about the neurology of itching, you get the sense of well-meaning folk poking around in an extremely tangled fuse box. Fortunately, I came across an illuminating review of the current state of knowledge published a few years ago by dermatologist Ralf Paus along with Schmelz and two other researchers. A few nuggets from their paper:

- *Itching is all in your head.* OK, obvious up to a point—everyone knows the brain hosts all sensation. However, it helps to remember that when you sense an itch, what's really



happening is that a sensation we understand as "itching" is projected onto the map of the body maintained inside the brain.

Sometimes, as in the case of itching arising from neurological or psychiatric causes, there's no strictly external stimulus at all. But even in the case of an ordinary itch on, say, your arm, what's going on is that something on or in the skin triggers an event in the brain, which instinctively causes you to scratch your arm, which sends a competing neural message to your brain, which drowns out the original stimulus. As Paus and company put it, it's "almost as if we were scratching the brain itself."

- *Itching can be controlled by pain.* When we scratch, we inflict low-level pain on ourselves, which temporarily makes the itch go away. Although pain and itch are separate sensations, they use many of the same neural mechanisms and processing centers, and pain has the higher priority. To put it another way, when a neural pathway is carrying a pain signal, itch gets put on hold.

- *Itching has many causes.* A "bewilderingly wide range" of stimuli in the skin can trigger itching, Paus and company write. Histamine, the compound that triggers the inflammatory response, causes itching, but so do at least 15 other types of chemical stimuli, triggering various different sets of neural receptors. Itching, in other words, is merely a klaxon that calls attention to a broad array of irritants. It doesn't tell you what the irritant is.

- *Painkillers can make itching worse.* You might think an analgesic would deaden all sensation and thus reduce itching, but in fact often the opposite happens. This makes sense once you understand that pain tends to cancel itch out—when pain is out of the picture, itching is no longer held in check. The plus side of this is that pain in controlled amounts can make itch go away. For example, capsaicin, the painful irritant found in hot peppers, can be used to curb certain types of chronic itch.

However:

- *Where most everyday itching is concerned, you'd better get used to it.* Paus and associates make a couple points: First, nobody has found an itch control center in the brain that, if knocked out, would make itching stop, and there may not be one. Second, while the fact that itching can be suppressed by other sensations (in addition to pain, extreme heat and cold are also effective) opens the door to better treatments, the underlying mechanisms are extraordinarily varied and complicated and right now only dimly understood. For the time being, the most effective way of relieving itch is, alas, to scratch.

—CECIL ADAMS

Send questions to Cecil via straightdope.com or write him c/o Chicago Reader, 350 N. Orleans, Chicago 60654. Subscribe to the Straight Dope podcast at the iTunes.

Curses, Foiled Again

- An officer who noticed that a padlocked gate had been knocked off its hinges at a police station parking lot in Germantown, Md., saw no vehicle but spotted a license plate and parts of a headlight. The officer traced the plate to a Ford Explorer owned by Kevin N. Osburnsen, 50. Officers who went to his home found a parked Explorer missing a plate and with “fresh damage” to a headlight and front bumper, according to police Capt. Luther Reynolds, who reported Osburnsen was charged with drunken driving and leaving the scene of an accident. (*The Washington Post*)
- When Khalil Bailey, 27, tried but failed to buy a pair of new limited-edition Nike sneakers

and enlisted 200 hunters. They managed to kill only one of the animals. Dirk Bogaert, of the Flemish Agency of Nature and Forestry, reported hunters spotted groups of about 60 animals but, except for the one they did kill, the others slipped away, with some possibly fleeing across the border into the Netherlands. The agency said the hunters would share equally in the one animal they did shoot. (*Reuters*)

Slightest Provocation

Police charged Shaquina S. Hill, 23, with threatening an 18-year-old woman in Niagara Falls, N.Y., with box cutters, throwing a ceramic vase and a coffee table at her and then

Old Habits Die Hard

- Police charged Daniel H. Richardson, 53, with robbing the same Washington, D.C., convenience store four times in 10 weeks. He had worked at the store, which is located around the corner from his home, but was fired for stealing merchandise off the shelves. He was awaiting trial at the time of his arrest. After police spotted him outside his home wearing pajamas, he explained he was headed back to the store because his girlfriend had berated him for stealing only \$35 cash, four packs of cigarettes and a doughnut, and ordered him to go get more. (*The Washington Post*)
- Three days after Christopher Travis, 53, was released from a British prison for refusing to pay for restaurant meals, he was arrested for again refusing to pay, this time at a restaurant in downtown Plymouth. His court appearance was his 88th, mostly for refusing to pay for food or drink, and the 13th since he was issued an Anti-Social Behavior Order banning him from every licensed restaurant in the United Kingdom. “You have been before the courts time and time and time again for the same sort of behavior,” Judge Paul Darlow said while sentencing Travis to two years in jail. (Plymouth’s *The Herald*)

WASTE NOT

Hachikyo, a Japanese restaurant in Sapporo famous for its “tsukko meshi,” salty salmon roe served on rice in overflowing bowls, fines customers who don’t finish their order. The menu explains that working conditions for fishermen are harsh, so “to show our gratitude and appreciation for the food they provide, it is forbidden to leave even one grain of rice in your bowl. Customers who do not finish their tsukko meshi must give a donation.” The amount of the fine isn’t specified, but blogger Midori Yokoyama said a waitress told him “hardly anyone leaves their tsukko meshi unfinished.” Restaurant owner Hitoshi Sugita said the concept of charging customers for unfinished meals has actually proven popular enough to allow him to open a second restaurant that fines customers in Tokyo in April. (*Rocket News via International Science Times*)

ers five days before their official release, police in Middletown, Pa., said he broke into the shoe store and stole four pairs of the shoes. A store manager noticed the shoes were missing but couldn’t find evidence of a break-in. Ten days later, however, she discovered pry marks on the back door and reviewed the surveillance video. It showed Bailey wearing a pair of the \$200 shoes before they went on sale, Nicastro said, calling Bailey “a dopey criminal.” (Bucks County Courier Times)

Problem Solved

Missouri state Rep. Mike Leara proposed legislation that would make it a felony for lawmakers to propose legislation “that further restricts an individual’s right to bear arms.” Explaining he introduced the bill after other lawmakers proposed banning assault rifles and high-capacity gun magazines from being manufactured or carried in Missouri, Leara declared, “There have to be consequences for removing our constitutional rights.” (*The Huffington Post*)

Why Hunters Need Assault Rifles

Intending to reduce the sprawling wild boar population in Belgium’s northern forests, wildlife officials near Postel organized a hunt

punching her in the chest during an argument over mashed potatoes. (*The Buffalo News*)

Bombs Away

Anticipating federal regulations for commercial drones in 2015, a San Francisco research lab launched Burrito Bomber, a fully automated Mexican food delivery system. Its creators at Darwin Aerospace said they got the idea from a taco-delivery drone concept that never materialized but went viral on the Internet. Darwin Aerospace’s video, posted on YouTube, shows a Darwin engineer setting a GPS location for the Burrito Bomber drone while another loads a burrito into a canister with a parachute attached. Once airborne, the drone flies to the location and drops the canister to the recipient, who takes a bite. “We chose burritos because Mexican food is really popular, and the name Burrito Bomber is excellent,” engineer John Boiles said. “Plus, burritos are kind of bomb-shaped.” (*U.S. News & World Report*)

Putincare

President Vladimir Putin ordered Russia’s government to increase life expectancy to 74 years by 2018. Last year, it was 66.5 years, compared with 78.5 years in the United States. Putin is 60. (*The Washington Post*)

Sit. Stay. Float.

Dogs would be required to wear life jackets at pool-equipped daycare and boarding facilities in Colorado, according to rules drafted by the Pet Animal Care Facilities Program, a division of the Colorado Department of Agriculture. “Not every dog is a good swimmer,” program manager Kate Anderson explained. (Boulder’s *Daily Camera*)

When Lollipops Aren’t Enough

After receiving a 911 call about “a subject in a silver car sucking on a dildo” in a park in Trenton, Mich., police Sgt. Steve Allen reported finding a Ford Fusion being driven by a 67-year-old man who admitted he was “sucking on a dildo.” Allen said the man apologized and “admitted to having a problem with sex toys.” He was arrested for disorderly conduct in a public park, and the flesh-colored dildo was “confiscated and tagged as evidence #794.” (*The Smoking Gun*)

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

Music

Wed., Mar. 6

letlive, HRVRD, Night Verses, Conditions, Rescuer Gabe's, \$12/\$14, 6 p.m. **Townes Van Zandt Birthday Celebration w/ Various Artists** The Mill, \$7, 8 p.m.

Thurs., Mar. 7

CAB Music: David Ramirez The Mill, 10 p.m. **Clarinet Studio Recital** Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, UI campus, Free, 5 p.m. **Dan DiMonte and the Bad Assettes** Yacht Club, \$3, 10 p.m. **David Ramirez** The Mill, Free, 10 p.m. **Eoto, Crizzly, FiLiBuStA** Blue Moose Tap House, \$20, 9 p.m. **India Jazz Suites** Hancher Auditorium (at Englert Theatre), \$10-\$35, 7:30 p.m. **The Air I Breathe, For All I Am, Famous Last Words, This Romantic Tragedy, Forty Fathoms** Gabe's, \$10/\$12, 5:30 p.m. **Tom Nothnagle** Mendoza Wine Bar, Free, 7 p.m.

Fri., Mar. 8

Charlie Parr The Mill, \$12/\$15, 9 p.m. **Henhouse Prowlers, Frank F. Sidney's Western Bandit Volunteers** Yacht Club, \$7, 10 p.m. **Jazz After Five: Equilateral** The Mill, Free, 5 p.m. **Jon Wayne & The Pain, Zeta June** Gabe's, \$7, 10 p.m. **Jose Gobbo's Jazz & Bossa Nova** Mendoza Wine Bar, Free, 7 p.m. **The Olympics, Christopher The Conquered, No Coast, All Dogs Invited** Blue Moose Tap House, \$5, 8 p.m. **Will Hoge** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$15, 9 p.m.

Sat., Mar. 9

Afrozep, Chatsworth and Dupree featuring **Cornmeal** members **Wavy Dave and Chris Gangi** Yacht Club, \$10, 10 p.m. **Mike Mangione & The Union** Legion Arts, \$12/\$15, 8 p.m. **Mutiny in the Parlor & Breakfast at Tiffany's** Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$8, 7 p.m. **New York Empire Trio** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$20/\$25, 7:30 p.m. **Ol' Thrashers VI** The Mill, \$6, 9 p.m. **Old Capitol Chorus 2013** Englert, \$5-\$15, 7:30 p.m. **Orchestra Iowa presents Brahms' Third** Paramount Theatre, \$18-\$48, 7:30 p.m. **Roger Oyster, euphonium master class** Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, UI campus, Free, 10 a.m. **The Recliners** Uptown Bill's, \$5, 7 p.m. **The Smawpad Trio** Mendoza Wine Bar, Free, 7 p.m.

Sun., Mar. 10

Big Chocolate, J Rabbit, Loki Blue Moose Tap House, \$13/\$15, 8 p.m. **Center for New Music** guest artist, **Ensemble: Peripherie** Riverside Recital Hall, UI campus, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Chamber Orchestra** Riverside Recital Hall, UI campus, Free, 3 p.m. **Gaelic Storm** Englert, \$25-\$35, 7 p.m. **Spring Jazz Brunch at Campbell Steele Gallery** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, \$35, 10 a.m. **Terakaft** Legion Arts, \$17/\$21, 7 p.m.

Mon., Mar. 11

Chien-Kwan Lin, saxophone Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, UI campus, Free, 6 p.m. **Janis Ian** Englert, \$25/\$27.50 8 p.m. **Open Mic with J. Knight** The Mill, Free, 8 p.m. **University Band and Concert Band** Iowa Memorial Union, UI campus, Free, 7:30 p.m.

Tues., Mar. 12

Chest Pain, Big Box, Way of Dusty Death Gabe's, Free, 9 p.m. **I Hear IC** The Mill, Free, 9 p.m.

Wed., Mar. 13

April Verch Band Legion Arts, \$17/\$21, 7 p.m. **Bernhard Scully, horn** Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, UI campus, Free, 5:30 p.m. **Burlington Street Bluegrass Band** The Mill, \$5, 7 p.m. **Jessica Mathaes, violin; Uriel Tsachor, piano** Riverside Recital Hall, UI campus, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Kristen Ford, Marge Loveday** Uptown Bill's, 8 p.m. **Minor 4th Trombone Quartet** Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, UI campus, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Valgeir Sigurðsson** Englert, \$10-\$15, 8 p.m.

Thurs., Mar. 14

"Holland-Daze!" with Violist Dave Holland Riverside Recital Hall, UI campus, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Horn Choir** Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, UI campus, Free, 7:30 p.m. **The Doug Langbehn Trio** Mendoza Wine Bar, Free, 7 p.m. **Tracy Grammer** Legion Arts, \$14/\$17, 7 p.m. **Tyrone Wells, Brendan James, Brett Young** The Mill, \$15/\$18, 8 p.m.

Fri., Mar. 15

Hooten Hallers, Illinois John Fever, Nate Gordon The Mill, \$6, 10 p.m. **Jucifer, ASEETHE, Plaguewitch, Helmsplitter** Gabe's, \$8/\$10, 9 p.m. **Sara Watkins (of Nickel Creek)** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$20, 8:30 p.m.

Sat., Mar. 16

Alash Legion Arts, \$14/\$17, 8 p.m. **Dunlavin Green** Uptown Bill's, \$5, 7 p.m. **Good Habits, Twins** Public Space One, \$5, 8 p.m. **Heligoats, Mirror Coat, William Danger Ford, Jake McKelvie, Huge Lewis** Gabe's, \$5, 8 p.m. **John Prine** Paramount Theatre, \$49.50-\$59.50, 8 p.m. **Mill Karaoke** The Mill, Free, 9 p.m. **The Saul Lubaroff Trio** Mendoza Wine Bar, Free, 7 p.m.

Sun., Mar. 17

St. Patrick's Day Massacre XI: Item 9 & the Mad Hatters, American Honey, Gone South, Unnamed Acoustic, Home-Grown Gabe's, \$5, Noon - 2 a.m. **Tony Sconyers Quintet** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$10-\$15, 6 p.m.

Mon., Mar. 18

Open Mic with J. Knight The Mill, Free, 8 p.m. **Heatbox** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$8/\$10, 9 p.m.

Tues., Mar. 19

Mac Demarco, Naomi Punk, Calvin Love The Mill, \$8/\$10, 9 p.m.

Saturdays: Free Bass Dance Party Blue Moose Tap House, Free, 9 p.m.

Tuesdays: Flight School Dance Party Yacht Club, \$1-\$5, 10 p.m.

Wednesdays: Jam Session Yacht Club, Free, 10 p.m.

Second/Fourth Thursdays: Super Soul Session Gabe's, Free, 10 p.m.

Thursdays: Little Village Live Public Space One, Free, 5 p.m. **Mixology: Dance Party** Gabe's, Free, 10 p.m.

Thursdays: Old Capitol Chorus (Weekly Practice) Robert A. Lee Community Recreation Center, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Open Mic** Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 p.m.

Theatre

Through Mar. 9

[title of show] Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$10-\$25

Tues., Mar. 12

Book Wings: American and Chinese playwrights Theatre Building, UI campus, Free, 9 p.m.

Thurs., Mar. 14

Book Wings: American and Russian playwrights Theatre Building, UI campus, Free, 10 a.m.

Mar. 7-26

A Dream Play - UI Theatre Mainstage Theatre Building, UI campus, \$5-\$17

Mar. 8-17

The Royal Family Iowa City Community Theatre, \$8-\$16

Through Mar. 10

Walking the Wire: TMI (Monologues) Riverside Theatre, \$15-\$28

Through Mar. 23

Legally Blonde The Musical Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$15-\$30

A-List



Old Capitol City Roller Girls host First Responders Appreciation night
Saturday, Mar. 9
7 p.m. (doors at 6:15)

The Old Capitol City Roller Girls are back in action! Roll on down to the Coralville Marriott Convention Center as the All-Stars host the Northern Pains from the Fargo Moorhead Derby Girls of North Dakota. Get rowdy with the whole family with kids activities, adult beverages, and a full merchandise booth—complete with items handmade with love (and a little attitude) by the roller girls themselves.

The opening bout honors firefighters, police, and EMS with First Responders Appreciation night. Hometown heroes will receive a discounted \$8 ticket price at the door. Throw back a couple with the elbow-throwin' ladies at their new after party location, Back Pocket Brewery (located next door to the Convention Center).

Advance tickets are available at New Pioneer Co-op, Crossroads Tattoo, or online at Brown Paper Tickets for \$10. Admission at the door is \$13 for adults. Children 10 and under get in free.

Check them out on Twitter @OCCRG for a chance to win a free pair of tickets!

Art/Exhibitions

Wed., Mar. 6

Art Bites "Heading South: A Century of American Artists in Mexico" with Terry Pitts
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 12:15 p.m.

Opening Mar. 9

Taking Shape: Recent Acquisitions in the Fine Art of Craft
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

Through Mar. 10

New Works by Shawn Ireland
Akar

Through Mar. 12

"Social Studies," Michael Kienzle, painting
Englert - The Douglas & Linda Paul Gallery, Free

Tues., Mar. 12

Lecture by Professor Andrea Berlin, visiting speaker in Art History
Art Building West, UI campus, Free, 5:30 p.m.

Thurs., Mar. 14

Alison Saar: STILL... Artist Talk
Figue Art Museum, Free, 7 p.m.

Through Mar. 17

Robert Polidori: Selected Works, 1985-2009 (Photography)
Faulconer Gallery, Grinnell College

Through Mar. 18

Sculpting with Fiber
Figue Art Museum

Through March

"Drought Behavior," Patrick Reed
Public Space One

Ongoing

A Legacy for Iowa: Modern Masterworks from the University of Iowa Museum of Art
Figue Art Museum
The Eye on UI Faculty
Figue Art Museum
The Restless Spirit: American Art from the Collection
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
Western Africa: Before

the Boats
African American Museum of Iowa
Alison Saar: STILL... (sculpture)
Figue Art Museum
Artists Caught Behind the Iron Curtain: The Freeman Collection
National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library
University of Iowa Art Faculty Biennial Exhibition
Figue Art Museum
Bertha Jaques: Botanical Prints and Photographs
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
Gone to See the Elephant: The Civil War through the Eyes of Iowa Soldiers
Old Capitol Museum, UI Campus, Free
I AM: Prints by Elizabeth Catlett
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
Prague 1968: Photographs by Paul Goldsmith
National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library
Marking Territory: Cartographic Treasures of the Mississippi River and the World Beyond
Figue Art Museum
Native Kids Ride Bikes
Black Box Theater, Iowa Memorial Union, UI campus

Thursdays: Artvaark (Art Activities)
Uptown Bill's, Free, 6 p.m.

Cinema

Mar. 7-9

CAB Movie: Les Miserables
Iowa Memorial Union, UI campus

Mar. 8-14

Chasing Ice
Bijou Cinema
Rust and Bone
Bijou Cinema

Mar. 9-10

Stand By Me
Bijou Cinema

Comedy

Mar. 8-9

Greg Warren
Penguin's Comedy Club, \$20, 7:30 p.m.

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MAR. 8-14

CHASING ICE (Jeff Orlowski, 76 Min, BluRay)

RUST AND BONE (Jacques Audiard, 120 Min, DCP)

MAR. 8-9 LATE NIGHT FILMS

STAND BY ME (Rob Reiner, 88 Min, BluRay)
Fri, Mar. 8: 11:15PM Sat, Mar. 9: 11PM

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Wed., Mar. 13

Don Tjernagel Gabe's, \$3, 9 p.m.

Sat., Mar. 16

Tracy Morgan Englert, \$49.50-\$59.50, 7 p.m.

Mar. 15-16

Kevin Farley Penguin's Comedy Club, \$17.5, 7:30 p.m.

Mondays: Catacombs of Comedy Yacht Club,

\$3, 9 p.m.

Literature

Wed., Mar. 6

A Reading by Lawrence Weschler, essayist
Biology Building East, Room 101, UI campus,
Free, 7 p.m.

Thurs. Mar. 7

Julia Pandl Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m. **Michael Palmer** Dey House, UI campus, Free, 8 p.m.

Fri., Mar. 8

Eleni Sikelianos Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m.

Mon., Mar. 11

Aron Aji Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m.

Tues., Mar. 12

Terry Tempest Williams Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m.

Wed., Mar. 13

It's a Mystery: The Samaritan's Secret Coralville
Public Library, Free, 10 a.m.

Thurs., Mar. 14

Paul's Book Club: Riddley Walker Prairie Lights,
Free, 7 p.m.

Wed., Mar. 20

Lee Sandlin Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m.

Wednesdays: Spoken Word Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 p.m.

Thursdays: Toddler Story Time at the CRMA
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 1:30 p.m.

Dance

Mar. 7-9

Dancers in Company Home Concert Space Place
Theatre, UI campus, \$5-\$12, 8 p.m.

Wednesdays: UI Swing Club Public Space One,
Free, 7:30 p.m.

Kids

Fri., Mar. 15

Night at the Museum: Ice Age Museum of Natural
History, UI campus, \$25/child, 6 p.m.

Sat., Mar. 16

Cuentos en el museo (Spanish Storytime) Museum
of Natural History, UI campus, Free, 10:30 a.m.

Sun., Mar. 17

Storytime Explorers: Native American Foods
Museum of Natural History, UI campus, Free, 3 p.m.

Mondays & Tuesdays: Toddler Storytimes Iowa
City Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

Tuesdays: Preschool Storytime Coralville Public
Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

Wednesdays & Thursdays: Preschool Storytimes
Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

Thursdays: Wee Read Coralville Public Library,
Free, 10:15 & 11:15 a.m.

Occasional Fridays: Book Babies Iowa City
Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

Saturdays: Family Storytime Coralville Public
Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

Saturdays: Family Storytime Iowa City Public
Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

Sundays: Family Storytime Iowa City Public
Library, Free, 2 p.m.

Misc.

Wed., Mar. 6

Improvisation for Classical Musicians Recital
Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, UI campus,
Free, 7:30 p.m.

Sat., Mar. 9

**Old Capitol City Roller Girls vs. Fargo Moorhead
Derby Girls** Coralville Marriott Convention Center,
\$10/\$13, 7 p.m.

Sun., Mar. 10

Putt Fore the Library - Fundraiser Coralville
Public Library, \$5, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Wed., Mar. 13

Monthly Trivia Night Coralville Center for the
Performing Arts, \$5/person, 8 p.m.

Fri., Mar. 15

Englert Speakeasy: An Evening of Scotch Tasting
Englert, \$25/\$30, 7 p.m. & 9:30 p.m.

**First and Third Sundays: Super Sunday Pub
Quiz** The Mill, \$1, 9 p.m.



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ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR MARCH 2013

FOR EVERYONE—March brings more, occasionally frantic maneuvering as we maneuver to keep finances, relationships and careers on course. And we tend to be affected by each other's moods more easily than before. Everyone is feeling a little more vulnerable than they should, and a lot more defensive, too. Some soul searching is good, and we do need to worry a bit more about each other's feelings. But some financial planning and renegotiation of terms will remove a lot of the pressure and prevent excess drama.

♈ PISCES (Feb. 18 - Mar. 19) You're feeling vulnerable on many levels and there's too much on your mind. You'd probably rather hide away somewhere until you're feeling stronger and a few things blow over. Despite all that, you'll most likely have to take important actions to keep your dreams and financial plans on track. This could involve standing alone against the world or require fateful discussions with authoritative people at home and/or in far off places. A resourceful new group of allies will help you meet these challenges.

♈ ARIES (Mar. 20 - Apr. 18) Your plans are progressing, but they are drawing static from upstairs. On one level, the powers that be seem very much in tune with your ideas. They just have serious misgivings about costs and whether or not your plans are realistic. You need to show them that your plans fit the budget, that they will fulfill the intended purpose and that you can follow through. Do that and objections will evaporate. Your plans will evolve further as you satisfy these concerns. Develop new habits.

♉ TAURUS (Apr. 19 - May 19) Life's waiting for you to make a move. You need to keep the money flowing, of course. But to succeed, you need to spend as much time figuring out who you are and what you really want as anything else. It's not a matter of finding something that's out there and fitting into it. It's more about understanding who you are and creating a life around that. You are beginning a new cycle of growth and prosperity, but self-knowledge and self-healing will remain priorities.

♊ GEMINI (May 20 - June 19) You're facing a chorus of contradictory appeals for economic fairness amidst a whirlwind of conflicting issues. The political cross-currents are unreal. No detailed plan will satisfy everyone, let alone inspire cooperation. But meeting these challenges will absolutely require cooperation. Return to fundamentals; choose a basic strategy that will provide economic opportunity for the greatest number. Let people work out the details for themselves. They will end up cooperating in spite of themselves. You have enough leverage to ensure the outcome is fair to all.

♋ CANCER (June 20 - July 21) Cancer's concern for others is uppermost, again. People are facing difficult and rapid changes with limited resources. You're in less

turmoil, though, and your mind is clearer. You firmly believe that others can stay within budget, make needed changes and come out better off. To help others figure out how, dig down past popular interpretations of the present situation. The ideas you find are likely to be unfamiliar, though, and you'll need proceed gradually, case by case. Put your famous intuition into high gear.

♌ LEO (July 22 - Aug. 21) Leos are escaping the worst of current turmoil—mostly. However, economic conditions are taking a toll on family relationships. Present expectations are financially unrealistic; they are also outdated and no longer relevant. They probably weren't well-thought out to begin with anyway. Huddle with family members and keep talking until you have redefined expectations. A heart-to-heart discussion about financial realities could avoid a lot of grief. You can't just wait this rough spot out; Leo's next economic growth cycle doesn't start until July 2014.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 22 - Sept. 21) Virgos may see more excitability among key associates. Terms like "emotional volatility" and "high anxiety" come to mind. Financial conditions are causing alarm, again. Stubborn issues need to be resolved before peace and stability can return. You aren't directly involved, which allows detachment. You have insight into the problems and some leverage over the situation. You'll also find it easier than before to tell the bosses what they need to hear. Use your advantages to help restore calm. Personal finances will ease by summer.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 22 - Oct. 21) Many in your life are maneuvering frantically to stay afloat and on course in rough economic seas. Rumors are flying. Scandals are brewing. Lives are changing. Librans have a great advantage, though. They have the freedom to focus narrowly on their own financial challenges. They can more easily navigate today's difficulties, too, finding opportunities where others find obstacles. People need clarity, now, and your efforts to bring clarity to your own financial situation will bring clarity for others. Others can successfully follow your example.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 22 - Nov. 20) Scorpios enjoy a surprising degree of leverage over the otherwise turbulent and worrisome world around them. You don't have the answers.

Nobody does, right now. But your personal efforts to achieve understanding are unusually fruitful and helpful to others. Hard choices must be made. It's time to break old patterns and defy expectations. Your insights can help others make the needed break with the past in the least disruptive and most harmonious way, even if that involves defying authority or disappointing old, faithful allies.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 21 - Dec. 20) New economic possibilities are rapidly emerging; a better life beckons. But the planets are requiring higher ethical standards along with the usual ingenuity and hard work. Your heart, your mind, and especially your conscience, are asking you to harmonize financial and ethical considerations more carefully than ever before. And more so than ever before, cutting ethical corners could cost you and others the success you all desire. However, the reward for giving your conscience the last word will be greater than you probably imagine.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 21 - Jan. 18) You should tread much more lightly than your confidence and optimism seem to warrant. Resistance to your ideas and the obstacles to your plans are greater than you think. And objections to your plans deserve your attention. Re-examine fundamental assumptions; rethink goals and methods. Work through the details with others. You will be surprised at how quickly resistance turns to agreement and cooperation. In the process, you will find that your own expectations for the future evolve in a more realistic and promising direction.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 19 - Feb. 17) Many things are interfering with your ability to make important decisions. Not the least of which is a level of defensiveness unusual for self-assertive Aquarians. People seem unwilling to take you at face value. Your conscience could also be troubling you about questionable behavior, dubious acts committed a long time ago. This is unusual advice for Aquarius, I know. But you can compensate for these obstacles to clarity by consulting more often and more intensively with key associates and those in positions of power. ♋

—Dr. Star



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