

little village

Iowa City's News & Culture Magazine



CHANNELLING THE DIVINE

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW





Photos by James Davies

HOME IS WHERE THE HYGGE IS

Hygge (roughly pronounced högeh, though with a little more “oo” on that unlauded o) is a Danish word that defies English translation. Its closest Anglo analogue is probably cozy, but that doesn’t fully capture what hygge is all about. Hygge is a feeling, a condition, but Danes tend to define it more by action and situation than abstractions. Hygge is the soft, warm glow of candlelight in the darkness of a winter night. Hygge is sharing a glass of wine, a nice beer, some of your favorite sweets and breads at twilight on the patio in summer. Hygge is playing a Chopin nocturne on the piano while it snows at dusk. Hygge is quiet, warm conversation with dear friends or family members. Hygge is the smell of bread baking on a rainy Saturday afternoon. Hygge is melting into your favorite chair at home after work with soft music in the background and a fire crackling in the fireplace while the rest of your family quietly goes about the offices of their day’s end.

For Danes, Christmas is the high season of hygge. For me, hygge happened on Christmas Eve at my Danish grandparents’ house, with the women of the family (okay, it was the 1960s) sending the warm smells of dinner wafting from the kitchen, the men laughing in the living room over bottles of Tuborg Beer or shots of akvavit, the fat colorful bulbs of the Christmas tree providing the only soft glow of light, the muffled sounds of Bing Crosby’s “White Christmas” floating from a hidden radio somewhere, all bulwarks against the coldest, darkest, sparkling winter night outside. That’s hygge.

We humans have a brilliant capacity to seek experience via the imagination. If I

want to transport myself to summer in northern Minnesota in January, I read one of Sigurd Olson’s North Woods essays. If I want to relive the beauty and thrill of attending the live performance of Puccini’s *La Boheme* earlier this year, I put on a CD recording. If I want to think fondly of the house I grew up in on Shaw Street in Rockford, Illinois, I look through old photo albums. If I want to visit Japan in the Taishō period of a hundred years ago, I read Yukio Mishima’s *Spring Snow*.

In the spirit of hygge and my Danish heritage I have a string of C7 Christmas lights hanging from the floor lamp next to my reading chair in my home office. Sometimes late

Hygge is quiet, warm conversation with dear friends or family members. ... The smell of bread baking on a rainy Saturday afternoon.

at night, even if it’s May, I’ll turn off the lamp and plug those red, green, blue and orange hygge bulbs in, sending that warm glimmer across the pages of my book. Now and then, if I feel like it, when a July late afternoon draws long at work, I’ll call up a YouTube video of the Vienna Boys Choir singing “Stille Nacht.” And if a lazy September Saturday afternoon turns gloomy with clouds, maybe I’ll just go ahead and read Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* or put Alastair Sim’s *Scrooge* on the DVD player.

So as you start hoeing that rich, black dirt and planting that spinach and those snapdragons in your backyard garden this April, and as you head out to the ballpark for your first baseball game, go ahead and go wherever else you’d like in your imagination. It’s OK. And let me just say to you—Merry Christmas! **IV**

Thomas Dean just might roast some chestnuts over an open fire.





Photos by Jason Alan Fries

WILL THE REAL *Top Chef* PLEASE STAND UP?

On Tuesday, March 26 foodies and local chefs came together to celebrate food and friendly competition at the Third Annual Top Chef Iowa City event held at Hotel Vetro. Fourteen restaurants and four breweries from the north side, downtown and beyond each took the preparation of food and drink to the highest level of the culinary arts. The event attracted foodies eager to try the culinary delights of many of Iowa City's most notable chefs, mixologists and breweries.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In the food category, chefs really showed what they could do with local ingredients and a little imagination. Pork--the most popular local ingredient used--was stuffed, glazed, smoked and grilled in such dishes as Clinton Street Social Club's 'Orange Chili Hinterland Farms Pork Belly' and Linn Street Caf e's 'Stuffed Iowa Pork Tenderloin and Polenta.' Beef was the second most popular protein. Short's Burger and Shine's





'Dundee Burger' was cooked medium rare and served with arugula, heirloom tomato and shiitake mushrooms. Both bones and meat alike were utilized for Formosa's popular 'Pho Soup.' Perhaps the most unique dish in this competition was the 'Salmon Gnocchi' from Xie, which incorporated potato, salmon, squid ink, greens and dehydrated tomato resulting in a French-Asian flavor fusion representative of their new business.



SWEET TOOTH

In the dessert category, new Iowa City businesses had their chance to shine. Molly's Cupcakes, Yotopia and Gluten-Free Annex at John's Grocery gave many foodies a first taste of what their respective establishments had to offer. Yotopia experimented with a new flavor combination of chocolate raspberries and amaretto that won the judges over, securing their win for best pastry chef. Molly's Cupcakes elicited murmurs from guests about how they were saving room for the crème brulee cupcake goodness (people's choice pastry chef) that awaited them in that corner of the room. New Pioneer Food Co-op also took part, sharing a giant chocolate mousse cupcake. Gluten-free desserts included a sweet white chocolate satin tart with a raspberry gluten-free beer reduction was presented by the John's Annex, and a lemon curd cheesecake by Howling Dogs Bakery.

WET YOUR WHISTLE

The beverage competition made guests yearn for warmer weather, presenting drinks that featured springtime flavors of watermelon, basil and lemonade best suited for nursing on a sun-bathed patio.



THE 2013 TOP CHEF AWARD WINNERS

Top Chef: Short's Burger & Shine*Dundee with Wedge Salad, Kevin Perez***Top Pastry Chef: Yopotia Frozen Yogurt***Chocolate Raspberry Amaretto, Veronica Tessler***People's Choice Chef: Linn Street Cafe***Stuffed Iowa Pork Tenderloin & Polenta, Brian Kirkman***People's Choice Pastry Chef: Molly's Cupcakes***Crème Brûlée Cupcake, Abbie Misfeldt***People's Choice Mixologist: Clinton Street Social Club***Grandpa's Coffin Cocktail, Brian Lovejoy***People's Choice Best Brew: Backpocket Brewing***More information: downtowniowacity.com*

The standout spring drink was Nick Brink's (Linn Street Café) 'Smoke & Mirrors,'—a sugary and spicy mix of local Cedar Ridge Bourbon, sparkling wine, strawberries, basil, smoked peppers and fresh sour. The most daring cocktail was Xie's 'Cilantro Bloody Mary' consisting of cilantro, vodka, tomato water (made by sweating tomatoes), wasabi and celery. In a sea of fruity drinks, the champion of the mixology competition was Clinton Street Social Club's 'Grandpa's Coffin,' bestowed to thirsty guests with dry ice and fire by bartenders dressed in black. A variation of Clinton Street's very popular Old Fashioned, the stiff drink is made with Homestead Bourbon, Cedar Ridge Apple Brandy, artisan orange and cherry vanilla bitters, honey and chamomile, finished with a dash of Laphroaig and a flamed orange.

BREW HA HA

Cocktails were not the only libations up for competition. John's Grocery, Millstream Brewing Company, Backpocket Brewing and Mississippi River Distilling Company competed for the people's choice award in the best brew category. Millstream's Weizenbock was one of the more interesting beers, exhibiting flavors of yeast, bananas and cloves. **IV**

Heather McKeag enjoys eating and drinking in Iowa City.

Big Sky Brewing Company - Missoula, Montana

Big Sky IPA

BREW OF THE MONTH: APRIL

Call me crazy, but I have been so eager to go camping that I set up my tent in my basement one afternoon. I even inflated my sleeping pad, put it in the tent and laid on it.

I cannot wait for the first time this year when my friends and I sit around a campfire and watch the hypnotic dance of the flames under the big, star-studded sky. When that happens, I think I will be doing 12-ounce curls of Big Sky IPA, brewed by the Big Sky Brewing Company of Missoula, Montana.

Though not the boldest IPA around, Big Sky IPA offers a nice bite and a bracing dose of citrus. It is also available in cans, which is ideal for camping.

When poured into a pint glass (which is unnecessary around a campfire), the color is orange-tinted amber. It smells of West Coast citrus intermingled with a malt balance. Though not overpowering, the aroma is still invigorating with scents of orange, lemon zest, pine and tropical fruit (maybe mango and pineapple). Pale malts and caramel provide a balance. Flavor-wise, though, the balance tips toward the hops; the flavor is much more floral and earthy than the aroma and the malts are present only as a foundation. The first sip offers a nice bite, which more or less maintains its strength throughout the pint. The orange, lemon, pine and tropical fruit are still present, but relegated to a supporting role. **IV**

SERVING TEMPERATURE: 45-50°F (which is a perfect temperature for camping)

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 6.2 percent ABV

FOOD PAIRINGS: Kyle Sillars, the quality control director at Big Sky, said curried dishes are a classic pairing for IPAs. However, he also highly recommended a bison burger with blue cheese. Other suggestions included grilled waterfowl, dry-rubbed and grilled pork or a simple burger with pepper jack. For dessert, he said many like to pair IPA with carrot or coffee cake.

WHERE TO BUY: Big Sky IPA is available at most area beer retailers.

PRICE: \$8.99 per six-pack.

Casey Wagner lives in Iowa City.



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LIFE IN A JAR



Photo by Adrienne Behning

Now that April is here, it's time to get some green back in our lives. Up until St. Patrick's Day, I forgot that the color green even existed. Now I'm seeing things like leaves and grass and sprouts, and I want more of it. I'm getting green greedy. My crafty solution? Terrariums.

I've made it really easy for you to like this project. Let's talk about why:

1. We're going to be saying the word "succulent" a lot. You can't *not* like that word. Succulent.
2. We're going to throw this whole situation into a jar, which you probably already have lying around the house. If not, I'm giving you permission to go finish off the jar of peanut butter. You're welcome.
3. Succulents are really hard to kill.
4. Having any sort of houseplant automatically makes you seem more civilized.
5. A miniature gnome could be involved.

Supplies:

- Large mason jar
- Succulent, cactus or other small plant
- Pebbles
- Soil
- Spanish or sheet moss
- Activated charcoal (optional)

CLEAN YOUR JAR

Would you want to live in a room that smells like peanut butter or pickles? (Don't answer that.) Make sure your jar is squeaky clean and free of any foodstuffs or leftover labels.

ROCK & ROLL

Line your jar with pebbles or small stones. You can keep this simple and cheap. Your childhood

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rock or marble collection would work beautifully. Don't have any rocks at hand? This project is a great excuse to go tromping through Hickory Hill Park for fresh air and craft supplies.

ALL YOUR BASES

If you're adding a plant that requires regular watering, add a layer of activated charcoal on top of your pebbles (found at garden stores or the aquarium section of pet stores). The carbon in the charcoal helps purify water as it cycles

TERRARIUM TIPS

- You're not making a full size garden here, so there's no need to purchase full size packages of moss, charcoal and soil. Ask your local garden supply store to sell you smaller bags to save some money and clutter.
- Keep your terrarium near a well-lit window.
- If you're planting a cactus or succulent, water about once per week in the summer and every other week during the cooler months.

through and keeps your jar from getting moldy. For plants that don't require much watering, such as cacti and succulents, you can skip this step if you'd like. Next, layer on two to four inches of dirt, depending on how large your jar is. Top the dirt with moss, forming a hole to create a donut-like space. Place your plant into the hole, using a couple spoons to maneuver the plant into the jar and blend the dirt.

FINAL TOUCHES

This is where the gnome comes in. Embellish your terrarium with stones, shells, figurines ... whatever puts some color into your world (or at least your living room). **lv**

Megan Ranegar would absolutely want to live in a peanut butter scented room.

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**DIVINE FITS**

w. Emperors Club, No Coast
April 5 | Blue Moose | \$18

DIVINE INSPIRATION

Dan Boeckner is one of indie rock's hardest working songwriters and performers. He was a founding member of Montreal-based Wolf Parade and helped lead that band through a fruitful career that yielded three impressive albums before disbanding last year. He also co-founded the synth, drum machine outfit Handsome Furs with his wife and put out three great records before that project also disbanded in 2012. Amidst all of the break-ups he managed to start up a new band called Divine Fits with Spoon's leader, singer and guitarist, Britt Daniel, and New Bomb Turks drummer Sam Brown. Their debut record, *A Thing Called Divine Fits*, was awesome, mixing elements of Boeckner's anthemic, restless songwriting with Daniel's knack for whipsmart grooves and alluring pop hooks. In its short existence, the band has developed a signature sound and stunning live presence, and furthermore, all of its members have made clear that the band is a band and not some one-off project. Divine Fits will appear at Mission Creek Festival at the Blue Moose Taphouse on Friday, April 5. I caught up with Boeckner over

the phone for a quick interview in advance of their performance. But first, a full disclosure: I am not only a co-founder and programmer for Mission

Creek Festival, I am also an unabashed fanboy of Boeckner and all of the amazing work he has done in music—Wolf

Parade! Handsome Furs! Divine Fits!—over the last decade. Just thought you should know!

LV: Last year was the big debut for you guys. You came out with a record, you did some U.S. touring, you got out of the country. Now that you've done that, what are you expecting, or afraid of, or excited about as you go into this next stage of touring and doing festivals for the summer?

DB: I am not really afraid of anything. We just did eight shows in five days at SXSW. Just being able to go to SXSW and work in the most extreme conditions possible for setup and tear-down—we came out of the other end of that. So I'm not really worried about anything. I am excited about playing shows. I like playing festival stages 'cause you might be reaching people who don't necessarily know who you are.

LV: Are you guys playing new material on this next run?

DB: Yes, I think we are going to be playing at least two new ones. We just got out of a

recording session in L.A. doing two new songs. These are the first songs that we've written as a complete band since we've been playing shows. All of the stuff on the record (*A Thing Called Divine Fits*) were demos done by either Britt (Daniel) or me or the both of us and then taken to the band. This new stuff was written together in the rehearsal room.

LV: Do you have plans for writing more music or will you just let it happen when it happens?

DB: I think the plan is to do a couple of singles this year, like an A and B-side, and then we'll start writing for record number two.

LV: Are you working on other projects right now?

DB: I am! I just started a new band. Britt's got Spoon recording and touring coming in 2014, so I know he's writing for a new Spoon record. With Divine Fits, we always thought we'd do our thing and then obviously Britt would make a Spoon record, I would do something, and then we'd come back and do another Divine Fits record. It's kind of like the way I ran things with Wolf Parade and the [Handsome] Furs. But this new band is more electronic than Divine Fits. It's punked-out dance music.

LV: Who did you start the new band with?

DB: So far I've got three people in the band. There's a lot of analog synth and drum machine and loud guitars. It's still under wraps. That's what I can say right now.

LV: Listening to the last couple of Handsome Furs records, even the last Wolf Parade record, and some of the synths that were coming onto the Divine Fits record, it seems like there's been a consistent interest from you on the synthesizer aspect of your arrangements. Are there certain instruments that you're working with? Are you continually looking for new synthesizers or new-old synthesizers to work with?

DB: Well that's something I'm really excited about with the new band. For the last couple of years now I've been writing on sequencers—hardware sequencers, not with a laptop. When I'm writing I don't really go anywhere near Pro Tools or Ableton. I will have a sequencer

that's handling bass and drums and then I'll play some live keys. That's how I write music, even songs that are guitar-based now. With this new band I've been using this machine called the Electron Analog 4. It's a four-channel analog synth sequencer. It's kind of the brains of the band. There's another drum machine and this thing called the Korg Poly 800, which is a totally cheap, crappy late-'80s digital-analog hybrid keyboard that I love. That's the new setup so far. It's been really fun. And then we have live drums. That's been the big difference between this new project and Handsome Furs. It's a little more live-drum oriented.

LV: Will the other members be contributing a lot of material too? In all of the projects you've been in it seems there has been a foil working with you to create different voices within the bands.

DB: Yeah, the other members will be contributing a lot with their parts. But this new thing, I feel like it's an amalgamation of everything I've done with music. It's got elements of punk rock, there's a couple of acoustic songs with synths and samples in the background and ... yeah, this one's a bit more of a dictatorship I think.

LV: It's been close to 10 years since Wolf Parade started. Now you're in Divine Fits and you're about to start this new band. Do you ever sit back and just think about all of the projects you've worked on and wonder about which phase of your life you're in, and where you want to go?

DB: I do. I have been doing that a lot with Divine Fits. With the new Divine Fits material and this new project I've been taking stock of what I've been doing for the last 10 years artistically and just with my life. Honestly man, I can't believe it sometimes. When we were playing SXSW we opened for The Flaming Lips at Auditorium Shores. They broke the record for attendance at that show. It was a free show, not a wristband show, it was open to the public. I kept thinking back to about 11 or 12 years ago—moving to Montreal with no money and no prospects of ever doing anything I would want to do, working this series of dead-end and soul-crushing jobs. I feel like a pretty lucky guy. I know a lot of people play music their whole lives and they never get to go up in front of 45,000 people and play their songs like we did with the Lips. I feel pretty lucky.

I also feel like I have to just keep working because it would be a disservice to that luck to not take advantage of it and continue to put out the best music I can and put on good shows. That would be squandering. I don't want to take any breaks.

...thinking back to about 11 or 12 years ago—moving to Montreal with no money and no prospects of ever doing anything I would want to do, working this series of dead-end and soul-crushing jobs. I feel like a pretty lucky guy.

—Dan Boeckner Divine Fits

LV: Do you work on music everyday?

DB: Pretty much. I kind of set a goal for myself to work everyday. Even if I don't use it I think it's still a good tool. I'll get up in the morning and say "today, I am going to write a bass pattern." Or if I have an existing thing, I'll write a bridge. Or I'll write something from scratch. It's almost obsessive compulsive because if I don't do that I'll go to bed at night and I can feel it scratching at the back of my mind and I'll feel guilty. So, I'll write something and even if I don't use it—I know when something's not good—it's important, at

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>>>SWEET COMBINATION

Divine Fits—Britt Daniel (*Spoon*), Dan Boeckner (*Wolf Parade*, *Handsome Furs*) and Sam Brown (*New Bomb Turks*)—put out their first record in 2012 and are soon to start recording again.

least the act of doing it: to clear one thing out of your mind and make way for the thing that's going to be good or usable.

LV: In relation to what you were just talking about—the artist's ethic—do you feel like you're able to sustain the artist's lifestyle? Do you feel like you're able to get food into your mouth, rent money to the landlord? Do you feel like your lifestyle is sustainable for you?

DB: I do, I do. I know in the last several years there have been a lot of articles that have come out from pretty big publications where people who actually have a pretty solid level of success are complaining about how difficult it is to have a life as an artist. I sympathize with some of that because it's not a regular income like if you were a staff writer for a publication and you were on salary or if you work in manufacturing and you are getting a salary and union protection and health benefits and all that. That doesn't exist when you're an artist. But at the same time you're fucking picking up a guitar and standing in front of people and playing music and the global economy is in the toilet so if you can make your rent, you know, you're doing OK. I do pretty well for myself. I can pay my rent, I can buy food. It makes me happy that I can do that by playing music. And that's really lucky. I'd rather be doing that than working in manufacturing or working in an office job or whatever. So, I think the whole thing about it being hard to be a musician is kind of ridiculous. You just have to work. You have to go on tour. On tour and write songs. And then you get paid for it. That's an amazing gift. **lv**

Andre Perry lives and works in Iowa City.

TOO MUCH QUIRK

When Too Much Joy frontman Tim Quirk played Riverfest in the early-1990s, things didn't go well. Mother Nature unleashed a shitstorm of epic proportions, so after a long delay, the gig was relocated to a club downtown. Adam Sandler, the opener, was the first to face the out-of-control audience. "He went onstage," Quirk recalls, "and the crowd, which had been drinking since morning and waiting several hours for the show finally to start, was just vicious—booing, hurling beers.

performing live—Too Much Joy jumped into the fray. To protest this censorship, later that year they played a set of 2 Live Crew covers in the same Florida club where the rap group was arrested, along with their version of the Clash's "I Fought the Law," and a few other songs. Sure enough, they were arrested. By the time Too Much Joy arrived at jail, the holding pen's television had already broadcast news coverage of the concert and subsequent arrest. Quirk tells me that the room full of 2 Live Crew fans greeted them like heroes (though

one particularly intimidating inmate did steal a band member's milk).

Too Much Joy grew up on both punk rock and hip hop, and they loved both. After LL Cool J's debut album *Radio* came out in 1985, they began covering the rapper's "That's a Lie." It appeared on their second album, *Son*

of Sam I

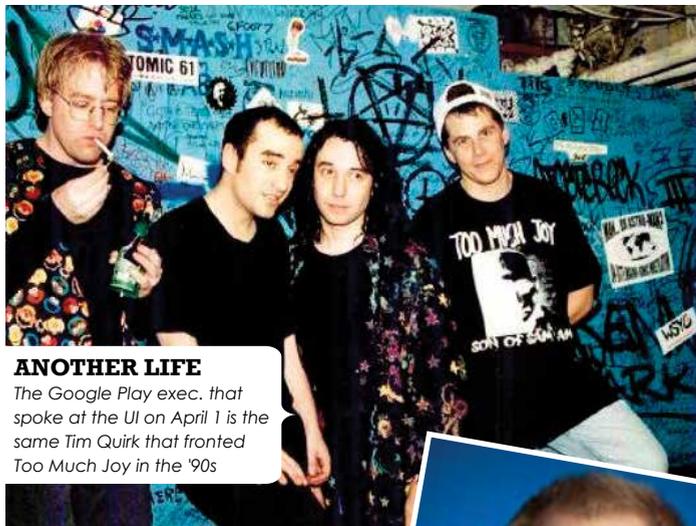
Am, and LL Cool J did a cameo for their music video.

"Though we had a decent amount of money for the video," Quirk recalls, "there was only enough

one trailer, so when LL arrived we all got booted onto the sidewalk."

On a related note, legendary rapper KRS-One did a guest verse on their song "Good Kill." Unfortunately, Too Much Joy's thunder was stolen because he also guested on R.E.M.'s "Radio Song," which was released on the exact same day. ("Stuff like that was constantly happening to us," Quirk says, "which is why our next album had the lyric, 'I'm ahead of my time/but only by a week.'")

"That's a Lie" became a concert staple, and Quirk began telling a site-specific fib during the



ANOTHER LIFE

The Google Play exec. that spoke at the UI on April 1 is the same Tim Quirk that fronted Too Much Joy in the '90s

They drove him off the stage." Quirk assumed it was because Sandler sucked.

"I can't recall any of the jokes, but I do remember not laughing much. But then we took the stage, and the same damn thing happened." Nevertheless, Too Much Joy embraced the abuse and completed their set. "Now I get to tell people that Adam Sandler opened for me once. And bombed." Much to Quirk's chagrin, this sort of incident is the kind of thing that Too Much Joy is best remembered for—rather than their undeniably catchy punk-pop songs. Though he will never be the subject of a VH1 *Behind the Music* episode, his colorful escapades in the music world are the stuff of legend.

After Florida police officers arrested a record store clerk in 1990 for selling an album by 2 Live Crew—a foul-mouthed rap group that was also busted for obscenity after



song's false stop. In the mid-1990s, they played a Washington D.C. club that was swarming with Secret Service agents—who were rumored to be protecting Chelsea Clinton, or the Gore girls, or some diplomat from Bolivia. "So when we got to the false stop I did a little riff about them. I was improvising, which is maybe not the wisest idea when ridiculing cops." Quirk figured that, while it is illegal to threaten the life of the President, *making jokes* is protected by the first amendment. He thought it would be obvious he was kidding when the band shouted "That's a Lie!" after his rant. "Except that in the midst of babbling all that, I apparently said that I wanted to slap Bill Clinton and then choke him until he died, so when we got off stage there was a Secret Service guy waiting for me, and he interviewed me for an hour or more to confirm I was not in fact a hazard to the President. Good times."

Dealing with Secret Service agents was one thing, but Bozo the Clown was even scarier. Too Much Joy sampled him in the intro to their song "Clowns," which was about "how parents seem to think clowns are harmless even though all kids know that clowns are weird and evil," Quirk says. While recording the song, the band found a Bozo record with a creepy sound bite: "I found something in one of my pockets, it was about as big as your shoe, but it was *shaped like a rocket!*" After the record was released, they received a cease and desist notice—complete with a maniacal Bozo smiling in the letterhead. (Incidentally, while I was writing this, my two-year-old son told me that Bozo looked like a monster; Alasdair now calls him "Bozo the Monster Clown.")

Too Much Joy had to contend with evil clowns, secret service agents, Florida courts and, last but not least, major labels. My favorite Tim Quirk war story involved getting into a drunken debate with Talking Heads bassist Tina Weymouth at a music industry event. While they were arguing, Weymouth snapped and said he wasn't a *real artist*. "Later on she apologized by hugging me for an uncomfortably long time," Quirk recalls, "and whispered the following in my ear—and I'm not making this up—'You are an artist. And you know what it's like on a major label. It's like they stick an umbrella up your ass. And then they open it. And you just have to walk down the street like nothing's wrong.'" Chris Frantz, Weymouth's husband and fellow member of Talking Heads, just stood by, smiling. **lv**

Kembrew McLeod recently filed a FOIA request to see his FBI file, and was disappointed to find out that he and RoboProfessor have no record.

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SWAN SONG

Pete Swanson was one half of the experimental electronic music band Yellow Swans who made their mark as extremely ambitious musicians, whose performances balanced improvisation, chaotically complex sound treatment and emotionally affecting harmonic progression. Their performances in Iowa City (opening for Xiu Xiu in 2005, and playing with Wet Hair in 2008) were both arresting, memorable events that have earned them many local fans. Since their amicable breakup a few years ago, Pete Swanson has carried on the Swans' reputation for manic productivity, releasing four albums and several EPs in the past three years, while also attending graduate school.

and *Pro Style* came out of these intentional exploratory sessions with the goal of developing something that worked live on a consistent level that I wouldn't get bored with after one or two shows.

LV: *Your music is well outside the mainstream of both popular and serious (i.e. approved of by Music Professors) music in the United States. How does your music interact with and respond to more conventional music?*

PS: As I continue making music I find myself in an odd position where my music is more highly regarded by

Little Village: *How has playing live changed for you now that you've gone solo?*

Pete Swanson: I really don't play live very often. Because of the demands on my schedule, I can really only usually do one-off shows so that generally means festivals.

When I started getting more serious offers for playing live following *Man With Potential* I had to be pretty pragmatic about what I was going to bring to things. Basically people wanted an intense techno-related concert and I had to figure out how to do that in a way that was true to my process and employed the tools that I had on hand. *Punk Authority*

both popular and serious musicians, while I feel like my own work is developing in a direction that increasingly has no appropriate subcultural context. I'm interested in my music being in dialog with the stuff I'm listening to. So if I'm obsessed with musique concrete, that'll be in there. '60s psych rock, that'll go in there. Techno, pop, whatever. It all ends up in the mix in some form or another.

LV: *The 'repetitive beats' in your solo work immediately signify techno to some listeners, but your music would never be mistaken for mainstream dance music.*

PS: I do listen to some techno. I listen to all sorts of music. I've never been very involved in club culture and could care less about dancing or DJs in most cases. I'll listen to Cybotron or Regis while I'm at the gym or cleaning my room.

LV: *Does a regular beat have some emotional resonance for you, or is it more a matter of imposing structure on your pieces?*

PS: The 4/4 kick came about from practical means. I bought a kick drum module for my synth. So now I have this kick that is tied to a very basic eight-step switch sequencer. When I started solo work with my synthesizer, I wanted to work with clusters of brief sounds after making a few washed out YS records.

... if I'm obsessed with musique concrete, that'll be in there. '60s psych rock, that'll go in there. Techno, pop, whatever. It all ends up in the mix in some form or another.

—Pete Swanson

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The kick helped gel these very amorphous jams of fractured oscillator skree ... I needed the grid at that moment ... Now I'm starting to feel like the grid is holding me back and I'm trying to figure out ways around that.

LV: *Your I Don't Rock At All is mostly a work for guitar. Does your guitar music come from a different place than the purely electronic work?*

PS: There's very little that's different other than I'm playing a guitar as opposed to my synthesizer. I'm not very adept with either instrument and I just play however I play. Everything is processed the same way.

LV: *Your work is noisy, but not as noisy as some artists' work. Where does your use of distortion and noise come from personally? Do you feel emotional about noise?*

PS: I'm not bound to noise as a gesture any more than I am to drones or rhythms or melody. It's just another piece of the sound vocabulary that is always present in my work to some degree. On a fundamental level, noise is just noise, and in my work there's often unintentional noise going on.

LV: *Is the noise a texture imposed on your music, or is it a foreground component to it?*

PS: I don't really have anything that's a dedicated "noise" producer in my setup. There's some stuff that is noisier than other things. The noisiest stuff I use are also great venues for error where the sounds I'm intentionally making have to fight for position in the mix with each other. So the noise is organically integrated with everything else. I really just want everything to sound like one big sound out of the speakers and not a bunch of fragmented elements.

LV: *What music do you listen to for your own pleasure?*

PS: Just about everything. Right now I'm pretty fixated on the first three Igor Wakhevitch LPs, The Trash Company "Having Fun" 12", Lubomyr Melnyk, House of Woo and been digging into the new AraabMuzik mixtape a bit, it should be shorter than it is, but it has moments. I think almost every record should be shorter than they are.**lv**

Kent Williams is a regular contributor to Little Village's "Local Albums" reviews section. Find his review of Daddy's Songs About Prostitutes on page 31 of this issue.

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THRILL OF THE HUNT

Crystal Dynamics' new game *Tomb Raider* (2013) adopts the strategy of the film *Star Trek* (2009) in using a prequel-cum-reboot to revitalize a franchise that had run out of steam: You play the game as a version of Lara Croft far younger and less experienced than in her previous 10 iterations, whose experiences in the game are meant to be her "formative" experiences—but it's not at all clear that she'll turn out to be exactly the same Croft. Unlike J.J. Abrams' *Star Trek* film, the new *Tomb Raider* game doesn't bend over backwards to explain the discontinuity between it and the previous iterations of the series; such obsessive attention to narrative continuity, it would seem, is not particularly expected within video games. This is perhaps because of the different devices of universe creation endemic to games.

A film and television series like *Star Trek* creates rules for a fictional world through a succession of texts that are each meant to envelope the spectator as invisible observer. The rules of that world take on something of an intractable solidity both by being relayed via verbal and visual exposition, and by remaining relatively consistent between individual texts. The experiential world of a video game, on the other hand, is produced to a large degree by the nature of the user's specific interactions with that game. Rather than being *narrated to a spectator*, then, the rules that govern the universe of a video game are *enacted by a user*.

This aspect of gaming is most pointedly illustrated by games like *Spore* (2008) which explicitly thematize the user's collaboration with

the software to create a new world. But it's present to some degree in every video game, inasmuch as the object of every video game is for the user to affect a virtual world. *Tomb Raider* was fascinating from its early moments because, like so many recent video games, a significant gameplay element is Croft's interaction with a natural environment. As in *Red Dead Redemption* (2010), *Assassin's Creed III* (2012) or *Far Cry 3* (2012), to name just a few, the user is encouraged to spend time stalking animals in the forest with a myriad of hunting appendages and skills, or scrounging for rare plants that provide boosts to Croft's character.

At work here may be a certain nostalgia for a way of life the "developed world" thinks it has lost contact with, for a world that might in fact be waning due to pollution and population growth. While this interpretation certainly has some weight, it doesn't take into account the particularities of video gaming: The environment of these games is not simply a romanticized, nostalgic image of nature, it is also an interactive ecology. In playing these games, one becomes part of a virtual system of interactions, exchanges and exploitations. What they are concerned with is not just hunting, but the very question of existing within an ecological system. The authors of these games have realized that it is a question video games seem particularly adapted—so to speak—to deal with.

Video games can allegorize ecology because their virtual worlds depend on a network of actions and actors, only some (or one) of which are controlled by an actual organic

being (the user). Playing a video game means learning how to act toward the different elements of the game—both in what your character does on screen and what your thumbs do on the controller—and understanding how one's actions alter one's environment. Such games might compel us to think about our relationship to our environment, meaning the totality of the things that surround us, the interactions which make up our experiential world. It's true, on the one hand, that in rewarding users with so many points or particular bonuses for killing the highest number of animals or harvesting the highest number of plants, video games can be seen as partaking of a dangerous cultural logic. On the other hand, the same games might actually make us think about the way natural objects and beings are so frequently reduced to quantitative and utilitarian identities in our society.

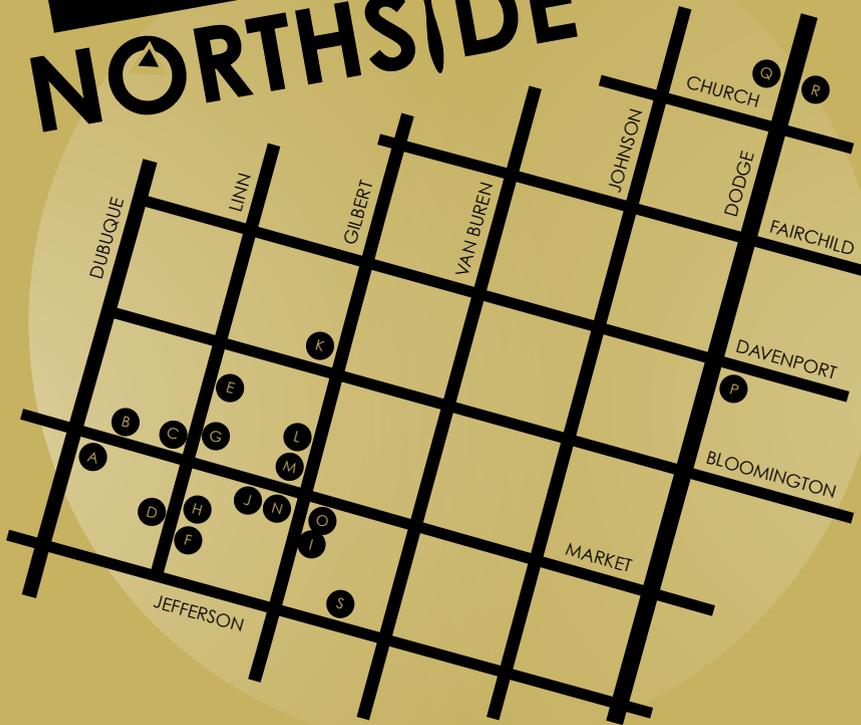
Although it's introduced in the tutorial as a fundamental part of gameplay and of the progression of Croft's character, it quickly becomes clear, strangely, that hunting is not an essential part of *Tomb Raider*. The game doesn't have the massive, open-world format of *Red Dead* or *Far Cry*, and the bonuses you get from hunting aren't diverse or vital to

The environment of these games is not simply a romanticized, nostalgic image of nature, but (also) an interactive ecology.

Croft's survival: They're just a set amount of points. One might question why the game even includes this hunting mechanism, but it seems to me that it's when a gameplay element becomes pointless—a habitual, generic trope—that we can mostly clearly see how significant it is. In *Tomb Raider*, one can't help but notice how thoroughly rationalized and unnatural this virtual nature is. The stupidity of incorporating hunting into the game but doing so little with it is the stupidity of the meaningless exploitation of nature, and the game makes you feel how ultimately unpleasurable, how experientially proscribed, this makes human life. **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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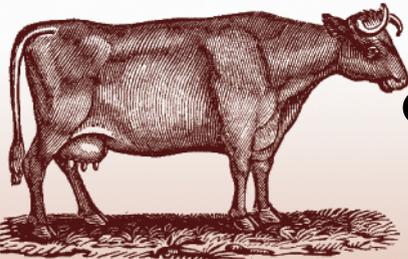
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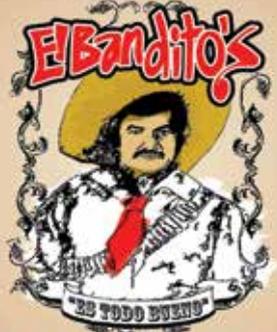


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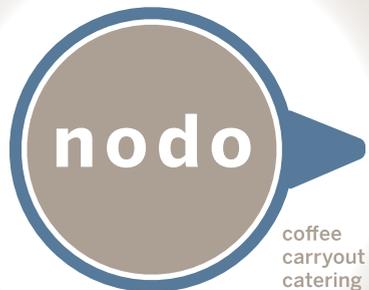
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Why here?

Exploring place at the Art Faculty Biennial

Find the opening question in David Dunlap's Artist Statement to be the most promising guide for a consideration of what the faculty show *shows* us. He asks, "Who are we here?" The question makes a suggestive distinction, supposing, as it does, that there could be a difference between "who we are" and "who we are here." The second question that Dunlap asks in his Artist Statement could be amended to articulate the overwhelming question I had walking through the show: "What is it that the faculty do *here*?"

The obvious answer, proposed by the show, is that they make art. The organization of the show, with its "one wall per artist" layout invites us to consider each artist as an independent producer. It presents the viewer with one large or several small works for consideration, establishing moments of visual assonance and dissonance through the arrangement of artists' "walls" next to or across from one another.

The relative proximity of works by, for instance, Heidi Van Wieren, James Snitzer and John Dilg create a kind of focal point for reflections upon the possibilities contained in small paintings or prints with subtle inflections of material qualities. Steve McGuire's bicycle frame facing Anita Jung's painted panels and swirling printed ephemera offer alternatives about how life might spill out of (or into) art.

Sarah Kanouse's research-based *National Toxic Land/Labor Conservation Service* installation sits opposite a collection of figurative canvases by Ron Cohen, creating a playful opposition between where art has traditionally been and where some see it going.

A few cross-gallery comparisons also seemed significant: mediated meditations on painting by Hartmut Austen near the entry and Laurel Farrin in the back corner, and the layered networks of connections (legible or not) suspended in works by Jeremy Lundquist at the front of the room and Susan White at the back. Sculptural installations by David Dunlap and Isabel Barbusza bookend the exhibition and form a suggestive pair.

These broad considerations create an image of a diverse faculty working in a wide variety

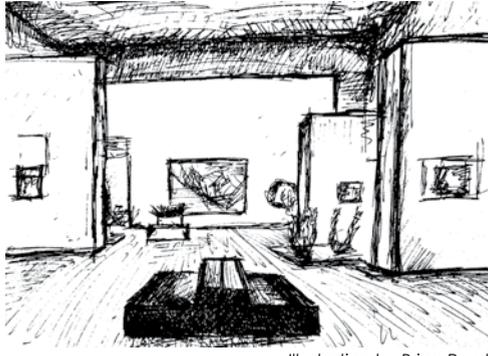


Illustration by Brian Prugh

of media and operating with a range of ideas about what art is and what it can do. It presents an image of a well-rounded art department, but I am not sure that it reveals much about the 'here' questions with which I began this review. There are artists here, they teach here, they make work here. But why are they here? Is there a reason that this particular group coheres in this particular place? What is it that they do *here*?

The most pervasive theme in the artists' statements is about the relationship of technology and technological processes to what Farrin calls "our gravitational weight" and the handmade object. Many are interested in the way new technologies are shaping our lives. These questions have an odd way of diverting one's attention away from place, and into a

space of human and technological interaction that could take place anywhere or nowhere. (Kanouse and Snitzer take up this idea explicitly in their works.)

The structure of industrial distribution further limits any straightforward connection to a place like Iowa City. The things made "here" (like corn, ethanol and high fructose corn syrup) are shipped out of state on the railroads, and the things we use daily (vegetables, clothing, building materials, art supplies, etc.) are shipped in. This *place* provides us neither food, nor clothing, nor shelter. Who, then, can we be here? What is it that we can do here? Are there any answers to these questions that are different here than they would be anywhere else?

We're a long way from Grant Wood's regionalism, where he imagined that each part of the country would produce art of a fundamentally different character. He thought that the relationship between the place a thing was made and the form the thing ultimately took could not be pulled apart. But if it is difficult to discern a connection between this work and this place, it seems to be precisely because of the forces that have made any particular "here" no different from any other.

I think that it is an engaging and troubling question to consider what is possible in a place-less world. Dilg in his statement praises outsider art that can achieve "an intimacy, poignancy and beauty of a kind found only in conditions of close community or tribal urgency." It is worth asking, can such conditions obtain in this world? Can we look, as Dunlap does, to the artist Ana Mendieta—or have conditions changed irrevocably since then? Are there unique possibilities here? Who can we be here? **IV**

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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The Ties that Bind:

The Broken Chord examines the effect of Alzheimer's on communities

“How do we experience an epidemic?” Martin Andrews, Producing Director of Working Group Theatre, poses this question during a rainy Saturday rehearsal of the company’s upcoming original production, *The Broken Chord*. The word “epidemic” brings to mind contagious, deadly illnesses that sweep through a country and just as quickly disappear, such as the Black Death killing a third the population of Europe, or the 1918 flu outbreak that caused more deaths than World War I. Currently 5.4 million Americans have Alzheimer’s, about one in eight older Americans. Based on available definitions, does Alzheimer’s disease qualify as epidemic? What about endemic, or pandemic? Do statistics and definitions matter as they gradually manifest in your family members, your spouse-or yourself?

Working Group Theatre, in collaboration with Hancher Auditorium, will be performing *The Broken Chord* at the Englert Theatre from April 12-14. The production centers on the story of a woman identified only as “Mother” as she experiences Alzheimer’s disease. Different scenes occur in different “worlds,” including the world of her family members, her nurses, the greater community and Mother herself as she experiences life with an increasingly skewed perspective.

Andrews explained that the idea for this production began several years ago when he heard a public radio segment about Jon Witherell, a Marion man who was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer’s (a version of the disease that is diagnosed before the age of 65). Witherell worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the disease before dying in 2010 at the age of 45. Andrews talked to many people who privately struggled with the disease among family members. He also read figures on the large amount of resources needed to care for sufferers, which totaled \$200 billion in 2012 alone.

After researching scientific articles and other artistic works, the members of Working Group Theatre decided that they wanted the play to be just as much about the caregivers, both family members and healthcare

professionals. “The person with the disease is at the center of a web of people who are also affected,” said Andrews. In order to gather material for the script, members interviewed people in the community about their experiences. The Alzheimer’s Association connected them with two couples facing early-onset Alzheimer’s. As word spread about the project, there was no shortage of people who were

Eventually, people in the advanced stages of the disease lose the ability to swallow or breathe. Andrews also wanted to create opportunities for the cast to take personal risks in this show--and for acting veteran Andrews, movement is one of those risks. “I wanted a different experience. Movement feels more ‘real’ because it’s a risk to me. I’m not balancing my checkbook in my mind as I do it.”

This production is also the first time that Working Group Theatre is collaborating with Hancher Auditorium. This opportunity has given the company more resources, including increased marketing and funds for research, without which the production could not have happened. The use of the Englert Theatre has also created some new artistic challenges. The company normally per-

forms in Riverside Theatre’s space on Gilbert Street, which seats 120 patrons. In creating the show for Englert, the members have to consider how to utilize the theatre’s stage technology and how the scenes, with their inherently intimate nature, will appear to audience members sitting in seats that are farther from the stage.

On a rainy Saturday, the cast members think about their future space as they rehearse at



anxious to tell their stories. Once they gathered enough interviews, Associate Artistic Director Jennifer Fawcett “sculpted” the material into a script, one that can still be altered during the rehearsal process.

Working Group Theatre has gained much attention for creating shows that spotlight local issues and stories, but the process of creating this production has been different in

The Broken Chord incorporates more movement, creating scenes that run the spectrum from traditional theatre to abstract, dance-inspired pieces

several ways from previous productions. *The Broken Chord* incorporates more movement, creating scenes that run the spectrum from traditional theatre to abstract, dance-inspired pieces. Elizabeth Bergman, a local dancer and movement artist, said that this is the first performance she has participated in with a script. She is happy to bring more physicality to the show because, as she observed, “Language can be a shield.”

Andrews wanted an emphasis on movement in order fight the public perception that Alzheimer’s disease only affects the mind. “Motor skills disappear too,” he explained. “First you lose fine motor skills, like buttoning a shirt or tying your shoes. Things that my five-year-old daughter just learned to do.”

Riverside. Andrews and Bergman experiment with twisting, contorting movements with the house lights dark, two other members pointing glaring lights at the duo. Someone reads statistics about Alzheimer’s disease out loud. By 2050, it will cost \$1.1 trillion to care for the 16 million Americans who will have Alzheimer’s at that time.

“But it’s not about 16 million. It’s about one ... and one ... and one ... and one ...” **IV**

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

IC DOCS 11

APRIL 11-13

This year marks the 11th edition of the Iowa City International Documentary Film Festival, a diverse showcase of short documentary and experimental film and media, that runs April 11-13 at the Bijou. As a smartly programmed fest featuring work that's 30 minutes or less, it's appropriate to embrace the event's shorter, more tongue-friendly moniker IC DOCS. And see docs you will. Perhaps IC DOC's most distinct feature is its annual invitation of two notable filmmakers to serve as jurors. Over the years, the festival has brought some terrific guests to town—Sarah Price, George Stoney, Martha Colburn, Bill Daniel and Sam Green, to name just a few.

The tradition continues this year with jurors Cathy Lee Crane and Ernst Karel. Crane and Karel will join us as audience members and each will also present a selection of their own work.

Crane is an award-winning filmmaker and professor at Ithaca College. Making films since the late 1980s, her work crosses between short collage, literary adaptation, hybrid forms and experimental biography. Her feature *Pasolini's Last Words* explores the murder and last year of Italian filmmaker Pier Paolo Pasolini's life through archival material, lyrical re-imaginings and Pasolini's own writing. Noted critic Noël Burch calls Crane " ... one of the most interesting filmmakers in the tradition of the avant-garde working in the United States today."

Crane says she will share clips from several of her films "in order to engage a set of conceptual and aesthetic concerns that pertain to

documentary filmmakers; working with non-actors, staging subjects on location, and opening up the fact and fiction divide in a way that may take the non out of non-fiction."

that can (and should) be rendered by figures on location, everything by Tarkovsky reminds me that one could engage with political questions through a meditative measure and Wong Kar-Wai's work with Christopher Doyle emphatically insists that the image, how the frame holds the movement of a figure, is key to cinematic meaning."

Following IC DOCS, Crane will also show her short film *Composer and I* at Prairie Lights on April 14 in conjunction with a reading by Alexandra Chasin, who wrote the script and story from which the film is adapted.



WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

Ernst Karel is a very, very good listener.

Asked about her own formative cinema experiences, Crane singles out "those in which I have been surprised. [Chris] Marker's *Sans Soleil* provoked a profound understanding of image/sound poetics, [Maya] Deren's *Meshes in the Afternoon* confirmed that psycho-geography is something

Karel is a maker of experimental nonfiction sound works and electroacoustic music. He currently manages the Sensory Ethnography Lab and the Film Study Center at Harvard University, where, as Lecturer on Anthropology, he teaches a class in sonic ethnography. Karel's

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recent projects are edited and composed using unprocessed location recordings; in performance he often combines location recordings with analog electronics to create pieces which move between the abstract and the documentary. Nonfiction films on which he has done sound work include *Sweetgrass*, *Foreign Parts*, *Lunch Break*, *People's Park*, *Leviathan* and the upcoming *Single Stream*.

Karel will offer festival goers a chance to rest their eyes and open their imagination with a selection of sound-only location recordings. Careful listeners will be amply rewarded by detail-rich soundscapes.

At IC DOCS, the Iowa City International Documentary Film Festival, guest jurors Cathy Lee Crane and Ernst Karel will join us as audience members and each present a selection of their own work.

Among the work Karel will share at IC DOCS are recordings made at a materials recovery facility in the Boston area, where large amounts of single-stream recycling is fed into and sorted by a large network of conveyor belts, machines and human workers. He'll also feature work from his Swiss Mountain Transport Systems project, consisting of location recordings of various transport systems specific to mountainous terrain. As Karel says of location recording, "Everything becomes your instrument."

For details on the full IC DOCS program and schedule, visit icdocs.wordpress.com. **lv**

Andy Brodie is the co-founder of FilmScene, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the presentation and discussion of film as art. FilmScene will open a full-time art house cinema and cafe on the Pedestrian Mall this fall. Details at icfilmscene.org.



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The Apocalyptic Apiarist

IC DOCS **PREVIEW**

Hi, folks! Are you as excited as I am about IC DOCS? What's that? You don't understand? You're asking if I'm saying, "I see dogs?" No, you silly bastards! The sentence "Are you as excited as I am about I see dogs?" makes zero literal or syntactical sense. I'm referring to IC DOCS, the Iowa City International Documentary Film Festival. Wee're pretty cosmopolitan here: This is one of at least two film fests we fest in the IC. Intrigued? You should be. It's going to be a hoot; the kind of hoot that can only be found by sitting calmly in the dark and engaging your brain-muscles. What wonders await? Let's take a sneak peek, shall we?

THE APOCALYPTIC APIARIST

With all this crazy cold weather we've been having, wouldn't you just love to be transported to the sunny beaches of rural Johnson County, IA? That's the backdrop for *The Apocalyptic Apiarist*, a little short about a wily beekeeper, whose hobbies include shooting cans and getting stung by bees. Everyone enjoys a little bee-stinging now and then. And guess what? It's about an Iowan, by one of our handsome (probably) Iowan men (John Richard, UI alum) ... As an added bonus, the apocalypse is involved. Oooh, suspense! A chicken or two make a guest cameo.

GHOST OF YESTERDAY

Maybe guns and bees aren't your thing. Perhaps your thing is rotoscoping and experimenting with ephemeral representations of

consciousness. If so, then boy, does director Tony Gault (also UI alum, also probably handsome) have the film for you! I think you know

which local short nonfiction-experimental film I'm talking about. Why, *Ghost of Yesterday* of course! I can't be the only one who gets all hot and bothered when films poetically explore the connection between the deterioration of analog formats and the fade of memories themselves. I know; I'm such a cliché. Will girls ever tire of experimental nonfiction formats?

BUSCA VIDA

What's that you say? You hate Iowa? First of all, how could you, you heartless son of a bitch? What, you think you're better than us? Second of all, IC DOCS features non-Iowan films and directors as well. Take *Busca Vida* by Daniel Cardenas. One viewing of this portrait of the direct effects that a country's politicians' changing doctrine have on a scrappy young beggar boy will have you appreciating Iowa in no time. Hint: the politics' effects on the adorable street urchin are not positive. You ingrate.

Ingrate? No, not you. You support your community and the cultural opportunities it affords you, right? IC DOCS will take place April 11-13 at the Bijou. Worst case scenario, if you hate the film you're watching, the good news is it is guaranteed to be less than 30 minutes long. It'll be over before you know it, just like this wonderful fest, so get down there! **lv**

Kit Bryant lives in Iowa City with her valid alibi and several innocuous non-lethal pastimes. Outside the workplace, she enjoys sarcasm, light spanking, and fleeting moments of hope and levity. Her blog is popslashcorn.wordpress.com

Now Showing

More shows of note
for April 3-17



LUNAFEST

Coralville Center for Performing Arts
April 3

Are you a woman? Do you know someone who is? Nine out of 10 doctors prescribe LUNAFEST, the independent short film festival by, for and about women. This year, LUNAFEST is being hosted by our very own Girls on the Run, the after-school program for third through sixth grade girls that combines character-building with running. If you like auctions, but find them too noisy, you're in luck, because there will also be a silent auction to raise money for Girls on the Run.

Tall Corn Euphoria

(Dean Wellman, 2008)

Julien Dubuque International Film
Festival April 4-7

Fans of local music or havers of hippie tendencies who live in the Iowa City area have no doubt heard of Camp Euphoria, the annual music festival based out of Lone Tree. Tall Corn Euphoria is a documentary by a Dubuque-based filmmaker about this very event and all the dancing, tents and beards it entails. It features the music of local legends Public Property, Euphorquestra and Diplomats of Solid Sound (among others). The 90-minute musical documentary is being featured at the Julien Dubuque International Film Festival, so fest it up!



MISSION JUST GETTING STARTED

This issue drops during the full throttle, sweaty bacchanalia that is the Mission Creek Festival, an event that usually results in an extreme disregard for my own well-being. Before I drop into my own private hell-heaven, let me assure readers of two things. The first is that if you offer me a sandwich on the street during Mission Creek, I will take it. The other is that there is music after the festival. Let's focus on the post-festival music, which will feature a diverse group of artists that have interesting origins.

fine-toothed comb. Their music is what rock and roll is supposed to be: dirty, raucous, fun and eternally cool.

Akron/Family // Gabe's April 12 // 8:00 PM
// \$10 Adv., \$12 Day of Show; 19+



Los Vigilantes w/ Las Ardillas, Good Habits & Los Voltage // April 13 // The Mill // 10:00 PM // \$7, 19+

With the presence of bands like Foo Fighters and Nickelback, some might say that rock and roll is dying if not dead. On the contrary, I would argue that these bands are not rock and roll. Sure, they look like rock and roll bands with their tattoos and guitars, but they are missing the most important aspect of

rocking: swagger. You can't be rock and roll if you give a fuck. There are bands that embody the rock and roll ethos

The music of Los Vigilantes is what rock and roll is supposed to be: dirty, raucous, fun and eternally cool.

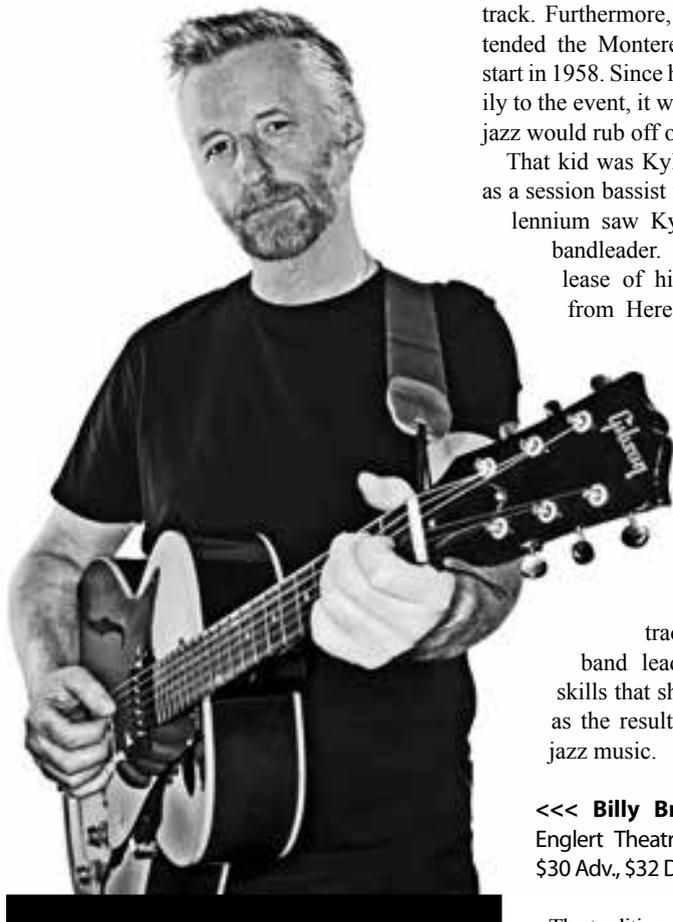
such as TV Ghost and Guitar Wolf, who have both always ripped first, not caring about whether they were liked or not.

Adding to this list of true rock and roll bands is the Spanish language group Los Vigilantes. Hailing from San Juan, Puerto Rico, their sound is influenced by '60s garage rock (think The Trashmen and Back From The Grave compilations), punk, doo-wop and Carl Perkins. It's music you listen to in a hot rod while pushing down the boulevard or slicking your hair down with some Brylcreem and a

Brooklyn-based Akron/Family is a music writer's worst nightmare: They are unclassifiable. No one is able to ask them about their music because they are recluses that rarely talk to the media. Most people only know that they are, as their label Young God Records puts it, "extremely nice, sincere and well-

mannered young men from rural America who came to New York City in 2002 to make music." Much like other recluses, like the noted postmodern author Thomas Pynchon, the work that the group has produced is expansive, creative and mindbending.

Their sound pulls from many different influences. Although they are frequently associated with freak folk, the movement headed by Devendra Banhart, Akron/Family is not just blending folk music with some electricity and a psychedelic haze, they are also adding elements of free jazz, country,



track. Furthermore, Eastwood has always attended the Monterey Jazz Festival since its start in 1958. Since he always dragged his family to the event, it was inevitable that a love of jazz would rub off on one of his kids.

That kid was Kyle, his eldest son. Starting as a session bassist in the 1990s, the new millennium saw Kyle as a fully established bandleader. March 2013 saw the release of his sixth album *The View from Here*, which is a compilation of sensuous jazz music that evokes a variety of city, natural and exotic landscapes. While he is not pushing the borders of jazz like Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Kyle shows a great amount of technical capacity as well as extraordinary songwriting and band leadership skills. These are skills that should never be overlooked as the result is engaging, entertaining jazz music.

<<< Billy Bragg w/ Kim Churchill
Englert Theatre // April 15 // 8:00 PM
\$30 Adv., \$32 Day of Show; All Ages

The tradition of America is one of dissent. Many of our biggest actions as a country--from the freeing of the slaves to granting women the right to vote--developed from the minority's ability to protest against discrimination. While those battles took place in the leaflet and on the streets, they also infiltrated our music. Artists like Woody Guthrie and Bob Dylan became international ambassadors for American protest and influenced generations of future artists and activists.

Billy Bragg found inspiration in the political, protest-minded music of Guthrie and Dylan and put a punk spin on it. Rather than being accompanied by the plaintive acoustic guitar, Bragg accompanies his warm voice and thoughtful lyrics with an electric guitar with a sound that is covered in reverb and tremolo. He uses this guitar sound to create the forlorn quality that is ever present in his love songs that maintain a timeless quality and beauty. Regardless of whether he sings about the miner's strike or having a broken heart, Bragg's music is clever, creative and worthy of the legend it has created on both sides of the Atlantic. **IV**

A.C. Hawley will be all over town during Mission Creek. Follow him at @acethoughts to know what is happening. And, he's serious about the sandwich thing.

noise, David Lynch-style aesthetics, electronica and '60s pop to that mix with a healthy amount of field recordings thrown in for good measure. Fans of Woods and other freak folk acts like Six Organs of Admittance, Sufjan Stevens and the aforementioned Banhart will find much to like here.



Kyle Eastwood // CSPA Hall Cedar Rapids
April 9 // 7:00 PM // \$20/\$25; All Ages

Before Clint Eastwood started talking to chairs, he was well known as a fan of jazz music. His directorial debut *Play Misty for Me* takes its name from a classic Erroll Garner

A-List



Bill Sackter's Centennial Celebration
April 8-13
Uptown Bill's (730 S. Dubuque) & Wild Bill's Coffeeshop (321 North Hall)

Iowa icon Bill Sackter showed us the possibilities of living with a disability. Named Handicapped Iowan of the Year in 1976, he made a name for himself as a proprietor and friend. Sackter died in 1983, but his legacy lives on through Wild Bill's Coffeeshop and Uptown Bill's in Iowa City. Wild Bill's Coffeeshop, which began as an employment opportunity for Bill Sackter, has since become a well-known symbol of abilities awareness. Wild Bill's continues to operate as a service learning project for the UI School of Social Work. Uptown Bill's, which opened in 2001, includes a coffeeshop, music venue, bookstore, and vintage shop.

Both coffeeshops are hosting a week of events to mark the 100th birthday of Sackter. The six-day event kicks off Monday, April 8th with a showing of "A Friend Indeed: The Bill Sackter Story." The documentary will be shown at 7 pm at both Wild Bill's Coffeeshop and Uptown Bill's. Caffeinate for a cause on a Coffee Crawl from Wild Bill's to Uptown Bill's (April 11th at 6 pm). The event ends in sugary style on Saturday, April 13th. The daylong celebration (9 am to 9 pm) features a different cake and different band every hour at Uptown Bill's. Dust off your harmonica for a group rendition of "Happy Birthday" at noon. Dave Moore and No Coast tune up for a grand finale at 7 pm.

For information about all of the Centennial events, visit the Uptown Bill's website at www.uptownbills.org or call Uptown Bill's at (319) 339-0804 or Wild Bill's at (319) 335-1281.

MUSIC

Thurs., April 4

Of Mice and Men, Chunk No Captain Chunk, Final Alibi, Hello Ramona, Moral Belief, Noah Blue Moose Tap House, \$15-17, 6:30 p.m. SCOPE Concert: Grizzly Bear, Owen Pallett Englert Theater, Sold out, 8 p.m. **Pallbearer, Blizzard at Sea, Big Box, Sweet Chariot** Gabe's, \$10-12, 9 p.m. **Coolzey** Angle Public Space One, Free, 7 p.m. **Elias Goldstein**, viola Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Big Damn Blues Revolution** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$17-20, 7:30 p.m. **JEFF the Brotherhood, PUJOL, The Olympics, Wolves in the Attic** The Mill, \$12-15, 9 p.m. **Mister Lies, Ex-Action** Model Yacht Club, \$10, 9 p.m.

Fri., April 5

Divine Fits Blue Moose Tap House, \$18-22, 9 p.m. **Future Rock, Zeta June, Chasing Shade** Gabe's, \$12-15, 9 p.m. **Deja Vu Rendezvous** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$7, 9 p.m. **Joe Pug, The Pines, Frank Fairfield, Douglas Kramer Nye** The Mill, \$15-18, 8 p.m. **Zammuto, Trouble Lights, Snowblink**, Taser Island Yacht Club, \$8-10, 9 p.m.

Sat., April 6

Killer Mike Awthntkts Blue Moose Tap House, \$15-18, 10 p.m. **Mucca Pazza** Englert Theatre, \$12-15, 8 p.m. **Exitmusic, Caroline Smith & The Goodnight Sleeps, The Lonelyhearts, Alex Body** Gabe's, \$15, 8:30 p.m. **Iceage, Wet Hair, [gluestick]** Gardner Lounge, Grinnell College, 9 p.m. **Carrie Rodriguez** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$16-19, 8 p.m. **The Diplomats of Solid Sound, The Miles Kean Epictet, Pressure Drop** The Mill, \$10-12, 9 p.m. **Pete Sawson, ITAL, Container,** Cuticle Yacht Club, \$8-10, 9 p.m.

Sun., April 7

Orchestra Iowa Chamber Players Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, 2:30 p.m. **Piano Sunday with Professor Rene Lecuona and Studio** Old Capitol Museum, Free, 1:30 p.m. **Camerata**

Second Floor Ballroom, Iowa Memorial Union, 3 p.m. **Deerhoof, Wet Hair, Love Songs for Lonely Monsters** The Mill, \$15, 8 p.m.

Mon., April 8

Zammuto, Snowblink Gardner Lounge, Grinnell College, 9 p.m. **Lisa Doll & the Rock n Roll Romance, The ills, ConeTrauma, Bass/Drum** Public Space One, \$5, 7 p.m.

Tues., April 9

Shivering Timbers Ed Schrader's Music Beat, Rusty Buckets, Cool Boobs Gabe's, Free, 9 p.m. **Kyle Eastwood** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$20-25, 7 p.m. **Johnson Creek Stranglers** The Mill, \$6, 9 p.m.

Wed., April 10

One More Time: A Daft Punk Tribute Blue Moose Tap House, \$15-20, 9 p.m. **That 1 Guy, Captain Ahabs Motorcycle Club** Gabe's, \$15, 9 p.m. **Caravan of Thieves** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$15-18, 7 p.m. **Burlington Street Bluegrass Band** The Mill, Free, 7 p.m.

Thurs., April 11

Sleeping with Sirens, Conditions, Dangerkids, LIONS LIONS Blue Moose Tap House, \$13-15, 6:30 p.m. **Concert: Fresh Flutes** Faulconer Gallery, 7:30 p.m. **Juno What?!, Black Forrest Hamm** Gabe's, \$7, 8 p.m. **Cavani String Quartet** Riverside Recital Hall, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Symphony Band** Second Floor Ballroom, Iowa Memorial Union, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Guitar Ensemble and Andrew DiRuzza Quartet** The Mill, \$5, 6 p.m. **University of Iowa Jazz Performances** The Mill, \$3-5, 6 p.m. **Master Class, Cavani String Quartet** University Capitol Centre, Free, 11:30 a.m. **Trampled Under Foot, King of the Tramps** Yacht Club, \$10-12, 9 p.m.

Fri., April 12

Hatebreed, Every Time I Die, Terror, Job For A Cowboy, This Is Hell Blue Moose Tap House, \$22-25, 5:30 p.m. **Akron Family, M Geddes Gengras** Gabe's, \$10-12, 9 p.m. **Trampled Under Foot** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$10-12,

9 p.m. **Steve Grismore and Co.** The Mill, Free, 5 p.m. **Joshua James** The Mill, \$10-12, 10 p.m. **Aaron Kamm and The One Drops** Yacht Club, \$7, 10 p.m.

Sat., April 13

Watsky Blue Moose Tap House, \$12-14, 7 p.m. **Sean Bonnette** Blue Moose Tap House, \$12-14, 7 p.m. **Roster McCabe, Old Shoe, Marbin** Gabe's, \$8, 9 p.m. **Three Years Hollow** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$8, 7:30 p.m. **Music Through the Centuries for Organ and Voice** Riverside Recital Hall, Free, 3 p.m. **Los Vigilantes** The Mill, \$7, 10 p.m. **Gloria Hardiman, Bruce Teague** Yacht Club, \$10, 9 p.m.

Sun., April 14

Now Now the Lonely Forest, The Morning Exit Blue Moose Tap House, \$12-14, 7 p.m. **Prize Hog, Wax Moth, Acoustic Guillotine** Gabe's, Free, 9:30 p.m. **Red Horse** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$25-30, 7 p.m. **Marcia Hadjimarkos, lecture/demonstration, fortepiano** Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, Free, 7:30 p.m.

Mon., April 15

Billy Bragg Englert Theatre, \$30-32, 8 p.m. **Iowa Trombone Octet** Riverside Recital Hall, Free, 5:30 p.m.

Tues., April 16

Good for You, Greg Ginn & The Royal We, Alex Body Gabe's, \$8-10, 6 p.m. **Fierce Bad Rabbit** Redstone Room, River Music Experience, \$8, 7:30 p.m. **Iowa Brass Quintet** Riverside Recital Hall, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Lydia, From Indian Lakes, Sweet Talker** The Mill, \$10-12, 8 p.m.

Wed., April 17

California Guitar Trio & Montreal Guitar Trio Englert Theatre, \$18-22, 8 p.m. **Spankicious, Plunkie, Bass Coma** Gabe's, \$7, 10 p.m. **Baby Dee and Little Annie** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$14-17, 7 p.m. **Daren Robbins**, horn Recital Hall, University Capitol Centre, Free, 7:30 p.m. **Thirtyfive Duo** The Mill, \$8, 8 p.m.



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APR 3-17 2013 | LITTLE VILLAGE 27

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

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

THEATRE

April 5-6

Menopause the Musical Paramount Theatre (Cedar Rapids)

Sat., April 6

Holly Hughes and Gay Marriage: A UI Theatre Special Project Theatre B, Theater Building, 7:30 p.m.

Sun., April 7

Ballet Folklorico Los Angelitos Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, 7:30 p.m.

Tues., April 9

Hancher Presents: Compagnia TPO, "Kindur" Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$10-25, 7 p.m.

April 12-13

Cabaret Coralville Center for the Performing Arts \$25-38, 7:30 p.m. **Hancher Presents: Working Group Theatre's "The Broken Chord"** Englert Theatre, \$10-35, 7:30 p.m. **SPT Theatre** Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$20-25, 8 p.m. **R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots)**, Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$15-20

April 5-13

Neighborhood 3: Requisition of Doom Dreamwell Theatre, (10 S. Gilbert St.)

Tues., April 16

Experience the Beatles with Rain Paramount Theatre (Cedar Rapids), 7:30 p.m.

Through April 22

Black Bird Riverside Theatre, \$15-28

ART/EXHIBITIONS

Through April 7

Edward Kelley/Wanda Ewing Exhibition Public Space One

Thurs., April 4

"Elizabeth Catlett: Where She Stands in American Art History" Lecture by Barbara Mooney Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 7 p.m. **Single Speed Geography on the Continental Divide** Figge Art Museum, Free, 7 p.m. **Lecture by Anoka Faruque, visiting artist in Painting & Drawing Room 116,** Art Building West, Free, 7:30 p.m.

Fri., April 5

Opening Reception: Animals Among Us Faulconer Gallery, Free, 4:15 p.m. **UIMA April First Friday** Hotel Vetro, \$5, 5 p.m. **Sandy Dyas: Artist Talk & Reception** The Douglas & Linda Paul Gallery, Englert Theatre, Free, 5 p.m.

Sat., April 6

Grant Wood Studio Reopening Grant Wood Studio, Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 12 p.m.

Thurs., April 11

Public lecture by Steve Rowell, visiting artist in Intermedia 240 Art Building West, Free, 5:30 p.m. **Portraits of People I Know: Found Object Collage "Mini Class" with Mary Zerán** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 5:30 p.m.

Fri., April 12

Opening Reception: The Annual Bachelor of Arts Exhibition Faulconer Gallery, Free, 4:15 p.m.

Sat., April 13

Gallery talk: Markus Haala Faulconer Gallery, Free, 2:00 p.m.

Through April 12

Works by David Crane & Silvie Granatelli Akar Design

Through April 14

Alison Saar: STILL... (sculpture) Figge Art Museum

Ongoing

Liz Davenport: You Be the Moon Public Space One **Artists Caught Behind the Iron Curtain: The Freeman Collection** National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library **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 **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** Figge 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

Thurs., April 4

Film Series: "The Firemen's Ball" National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, 7 p.m.

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April 4-5**CAB Movie: "Lincoln"** Iowa Memorial Union, Illinois Room, \$3**Sun., April 7****Movies@MNH: "Fergully"** Macbride Auditorium, Macbride Hall, 2 p.m.**Sun., April 14****Movies@MNH: "Six Degrees Could Change the World"** Macbride Auditorium, Macbride Hall, 2 p.m.**April 5-6****Evil Dead** Bijou Theatre**April 5-11****The Jeffrey Dahmer Files** Bijou Theatre Leviathan Bijou Theatre**April 11-13****CAB Movie: "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey"** Iowa Memorial Union, Illinois Room, \$3 **11th Annual Iowa City International Documentary Festival** Bijou Theatre**April 14-18****Vanishing Waves** Bijou Theatre

COMEDY

Fri., April 5**Tig Notaro & Janeane Garofalo** Englert Theatre, \$22-25, 8 p.m.**April 5-6****Stage Benders** Penguin's Comedy Club, \$5, 7:30 p.m.**Thurs., April 11****Comedy Classic** Penguin's Comedy Club, \$20, 7:30 p.m.**Tues., April 16****jUsT PLAYIn: a comedy variety show** Public Space One, \$1, 8 p.m.**April 12-13****Michael Winslow** Penguin's Comedy Club, \$20, 7:30 p.m.

LITERATURE

Thurs., April 4**Mary Jo Bang and Eleni Sikelianos** reading Prairie Lights Bookstore, Free, 7 p.m.**Sun., April 7****The Drums Inside Your Chest** Englert Theatre, \$10-15, 7 p.m.**Mon., April 8****Vivian Gornick** reading Prairie Lights Bookstore, Free, 8 p.m.**Tues., April 9****Elizabeth Strout** reading Iowa City Public Library, Free, 7 p.m. **Paper Tongues** poetry readings Public Space One, Free, 7 p.m.**Wed., April 10****Shane McCrae and Carmen Giménez Smith** reading Prairie Lights Bookstore, Free, 7 p.m. **Antifa Speaking Tour** ps-z, Free, 6 p.m. **Talk Art** The Mill, \$5, 7 p.m.**Thurs., April 11****Chad Simpson and Marie-Helene Bertino** reading Prairie Lights Bookstore, Free, 7 p.m.**Fri., April 12****Michael Tyrell and Steve Kuusisto** reading Prairie Lights Bookstore, Free, 7 p.m.**Mon., April 15****Allison Amend** reading Prairie Lights Bookstore, Free, 7 p.m.**Tues., April 16****Caryl Pagel (poetry) and Madeline McDonnell** reading Prairie Lights Bookstore, Free, 7 p.m.**Wednesdays: Spoken Word** Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 p.m.

DANCE

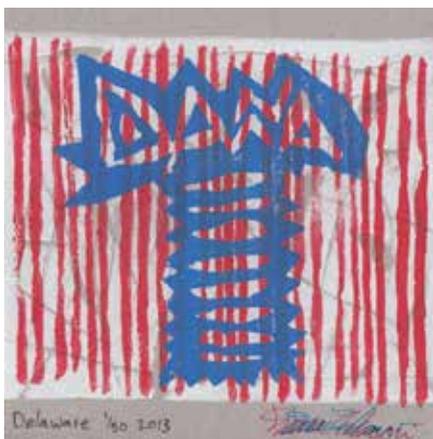
April 4-6**Thesis I Candidate Dance Performance - Cox, Harge,** Medcalf Space Place Theatre, Free, 8 p.m.**April 14****AFFECT Dance Company Showcase** Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, Free, All day**Wednesdays: UI Swing Club** Public Space One, Free, 7:30 p.m.

KIDS

Thurs., April 4**Family Night guided tour of Hageboeck Hall of Birds** Macbride Hall, Free, 7 p.m. **Art Adventure: Clay Play!** Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 3:30 p.m. **Pajama Storytime** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 7 p.m.**Fri., April 5****Doodlebugs Preschool Program at the Ladd Library** Ladd Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.**Sun., April 7****Peace Party & Workshop** Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 1 p.m.**Thurs., April 11****Art Adventure: Clay Play!** Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 3:30 p.m.**Sat., April 13****A Kid's Musical Introduction by Dan Knight****Coralville Center for the Performing Arts**, Free, 2 p.m. **Maps Family Day** Figge Art Museum, Free, 10 a.m. **Celebration of the Young Child** Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 10 a.m.**Saturdays: Family Storytime** Coralville Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.**Sundays: Family Storytime** Iowa City Public Library, Free, 2 p.m.**Through April 13****The Life and Times of the Three Little Pigs** The Old Creamery Theatre, \$8.5**Thursdays: Wee Read** Coralville Public Library, Free, 10:15 & 11:15 a.m. **Toddler Story Time** Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 1:30 p.m.**Tuesdays: Preschool Storytime** Coralville Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.**Wednesdays and Thursdays: Preschool Storytimes** Iowa City Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

MISC.

Thurs., April 4**Thursday Night Lineup: Brucemore Evening Mansion Tour** Brucemore Mansion, \$3-10 6 p.m. **Zumba Fitness** Figge Art Museum, Free, 5:30 p.m.**April 5-6****American Girl Fashion Show Fundraiser** Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$27**Thurs., April 11****Thursday Night Lineup: Nooks and Crannies Tour of Brucemore** Brucemore Mansion, \$12-15, 6 p.m. **Cooking Classes with Figge Chef Dave Micklewright** Figge Art Museum, \$40, 5:30 p.m.**April 10-12****Cool-Season Plant Sale** Brucemore Mansion, Free**Sun., April 14****IYWP Food Writing Workshop** ps-z, 10 a.m.**Mon., April 15****Lecture: Neil deGrasse Tyson** IMU Main Lounge, Free, 7:30 p.m.**Tues., April 16****Arts Share: An Evening of Literature and Music** Brucemore Mansion, \$7-10, 7 p.m.**First and third Sundays: Super Sunday Pub Quiz** The Mill, \$1, 9 p.m.**Mondays and Thursdays: Yoga in the Gallery with Monica St. Angelo** Faulconer Gallery, Free, 12:15 p.m.



Dana T

{Your Name}

danatelsrow.bandcamp.com

The latest from Dana Telsrow (a.k.a. Dana T) is a six-song collection of mostly effective digital-baroque-funk (consider that genre term coined). The University of Iowa student has enhanced his already dense compositions on {Your Name} with a horde of horn players whose work vacillates between classically

On {Your Name}, a horde of horn players whose work vacillates between classically inspired baroque-pop trills and funky blasts and stabs.

inspired baroque-pop trills and funky blasts and stabs.

{Your Name}—as in, this album is named after you—is front-loaded with two of the EPs strongest pieces bolstered by some of the most assured horn work. “Nocturnal” bubbles in on a wave of 8-bit funk that could accompany a discotheque level in *Super Mario World*. The slinky, retro keyboard keeps the whole song feeling a little sexy while the saxophone and trumpet work from Ryan Smith and Peter Gillette maintain a playful lightness before the overdriven, hard-rock-aping chorus. On the chorus Telsrow relates a tortured relationship with technology that keeps him tied to a computer all night, so he’s “never meant to see the sunrise.”

The more contemplative, down-cast number, “Troubleshoot” follows. The EP’s second cut puts a personal touch on a word we now tie to stressful phone calls to the IT department.

Smith and Gillette play a more pivotal role on “Troubleshoot,” with horn runs from noir movies slathered in reverb like cheap perfume, their work reinforces this re-appropriation of technical jargon for Telsrow’s life.

The weak tracks on {Your Name} are songs that cry out for the stage. The most glaring example is the band roll call that is “He’s Got the Whole World.” Over a glitchy update on the echo and reverb laden funk in the 80’s, Telsrow runs through the band and how they like to play their instruments with the instruments “in [their] hands.” It’s a fun enough piece once or twice—and may be bit more enjoyable at the front or back of the EP, but it’s probably a blast live. Here it just feels flat, repetitive, and jammed in to fill out the tracklisting.

John Schlotfeldt is happy baseball is back, he’s just hoping spring follows suit.

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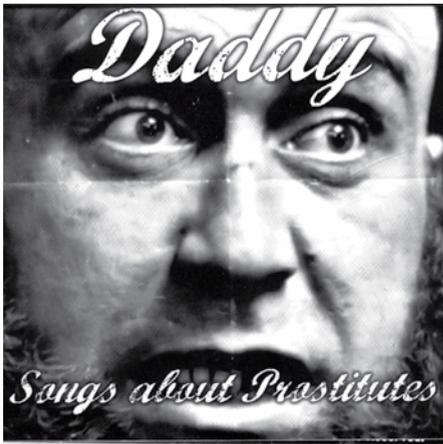
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Daddy

Songs About Prostitutes

daddyusa.bandcamp.com

The first time I encountered the man now known as “Daddy” was at a Kickass Tarantulas show at the old Gabe’s. Dressed in a Speedo, he was rolling around in the cigarette butts, spilled beer, and broken glass in front of the stage, bellowing like a wounded wildebeest. Whilst living in Iowa City he performed in various guises, ending up founding

and fronting the legendary Family Van.

A longtime Walmart employee, he once informed me that his work-life strategy was to act mentally ill so people leave him alone to do his job. But is he really crazy? Is his ‘music’ (scare quotes necessary) a desperate plea for help? Is it a horrendous piss take that threatens to become uncomfortably literal? I’ve known the guy for ten years and I still don’t know. In person he’s every bit the cordial gentleman; I’d even eat the produce he stocked at the Super Walmart. But in his 20 years before the mast of Punk Rock, he’s stayed true to his muse, and she’s one foul-mouthed, crazy bitch.

His new project as “Daddy” is the country record he’s been threatening to make for years, and he’s brought together a band to back him up that is more conventionally musical than past projects. There are drums, guitar and bass that play in tune and keep a steady beat, and Daddy comes within shrieking distance of actually carrying a tune.

But if this is country, it’s the kind that would give Dolly Parton violent nightmares. “Sick Freak” is a sprightly country two step with a Jug solo where he sings “Darling please understand I wanna be your john I wanna be your

man.” It’s followed by “Song For Samantha,” which is touching in a way: “You’re so young and full of life, puke in the sink most every night. Keep you here would not be right, girl go out and get f*cked tonight.

This is patently offensive music with no commercial potential whatsoever. It’s also completely original, and the sort of funny where first you laugh, and then you feel ashamed. Quentin Crisp once said “Those who once inhabited the suburbs of human contempt, find that without changing their address they eventually live in the metropolis.” Daddy, aka David H., aka Luthor the Geek is the kind of outcast who sees civilization coming in the distance and lights out for the territories.

Kent Williams was an American baseball player who played in the early part of the 20th century. He is remembered for his performance on the field and for his association with the Black Sox Scandal, in which members of the 1919 Chicago White Sox participated in a conspiracy to fix the World Series.

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Has a big corporation ever conspired to kill someone?

If Hollywood has taught me anything, it's that working for a multinational corporation (or investigating one as a journalist) carries the risk you'll uncover damning information revealing a vast criminal conspiracy, which will lead to your attempted murder (if you're the main character) or your successful murder (if you're the main character's source/best friend/avuncular mentor). This got me wondering: Has this ever happened? Has a modern corporation ever conspired to kill someone who got too curious to keep the money rolling in?
—Clayton, Boston

As with many of the knotty questions of our times, we need to slice this into more digestible bits. Let's take it a step at a time.

Q: Have corporations ever killed people?

A: Sure, happens all the time. That's why we have wrongful-death lawsuits.

Q: I mean *intentionally* killed people.

A: Define intentionally. There are lots of cases, most of them admittedly pretty ancient, in which big companies trying to bust a union hired armed . . . well, "thugs" is a prejudicial term. Armed individuals, which it then sent into labor strongholds to beat the crap out of . . . sorry, we need to be objective. Let's just say there have been multiple armed confrontations between workers and company agents that involved shots getting fired and people getting killed. For example, in the Homestead Steel Works strike of 1892, at least six workers and some lesser number of Pinkerton detectives in the pay of Andrew Carnegie were slain during gun battles that broke out over an attempt to bring in strikebreakers.

Q: Who shot first?

A: That remains in dispute. The same could be said of a lot of the facts surrounding labor-management clashes in the old days.

Q: This isn't really what I had in mind anyway. What about premeditated murder of a specifically targeted individual, rather than some wage slave who strayed into the line of fire?

A: Well, there's the well-known case of nuclear plant worker Karen Silkwood. A union activist at a Kerr-McGee facility that made plutonium pellets for reactor fuel rods, she testified before the Atomic Energy Commission in 1974 about alleged safety problems at her plant. Several months later she was found to be dangerously contaminated with plutonium. In November Silkwood was driving to a meeting with a *New York Times* reporter to show him evidence of unsafe practices when her car crashed into a culvert and she was killed. Authorities said she'd fallen asleep at

that either the company's Atlanta HQ or its Columbia subsidiary had advance warning of the killing, and a federal judge threw out charges against Coke and its subsidiary on the grounds that neither had control of the local plant. The judge didn't address the claim that an agent of an independent Coke licensee had had a man killed.

2. Drummond, an Alabama-based mining company, was accused in 2002 of having hired Colombian paramilitaries to torture and kill three union leaders. In 2007 an American jury found Drummond not liable for the killings, but earlier this year in Bogota a Drummond contractor was convicted of two of the murders, and another suit against the company is currently proceeding through U.S. courts.

3. Canadian firm Talisman Energy was sued in 2001 by the Presbyterian Church of the Sudan for its role in promoting civil war in that country. This started with the use of paid government troops to guard Talisman's oil fields, then morphed into the military's using the company's roads and airstrips to launch attacks against rebels and civilians nearby. The case was dismissed for lack of evidence showing Talisman intended to harm the southern Sudanese.

4. The closest to an admission of lethal wrongdoing in recent years is the case of *Wiwa et al v. Royal Dutch Petroleum et al* concerning the oil company's culpability in (among other numerous human-rights abuses) the death of Nigerian activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was executed by his country's military in 1995 after protesting Shell's environmental practices. In 2009, just days before the trial was scheduled to start in New York, Shell settled for \$15.5 million. The plaintiffs called it a victory; Shell preferred to characterize it as a humanitarian gesture. All I know is that in the previous year Shell had racked up net gains of \$26 billion, meaning \$15.5 million represented the loss of five hours' profit.

—CECIL ADAMS



the wheel. Her family said there was evidence she'd been run off the road, but such allegations have never been proven.

Q: So we have no undisputed cases of a corporation conspiring to assassinate someone?

A: Undisputed, no. However, we have many instances of foreign subsidiaries of North American companies being mixed up in killings by local goons, and in each the chief question is how far up the chain of command responsibility goes. Examples:

1. As I reported in 2005, union leader Isidro Gil was shot to death in 1996 outside the main gate of a Coca-Cola plant in Colombia, allegedly by paramilitaries at the behest of the plant manager. Coke spokespeople denied

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!

• Two weeks after someone stole Briana Priddy's wallet and used her identity to write hundreds of dollars worth of bad checks, Priddy was waiting at a restaurant in Lakeland, Colo., when a woman came in with a group, ordered a drink and presented Priddy's stolen ID to prove her age. "But I didn't say anything," Priddy said. "I handed it back to her and said 'Sure, I'll be right back with your margarita.'" She called police, who arrested the 26-year-old woman. Noting the suspect is old enough to buy a drink with her own ID, police official Steve Davis declared, "Dumb criminal. That's the first [word] that comes to mind. We found some narcotics in this woman's possession, so she's in quite a bit of hot water. (Denver's *KUSA-TV*)

• Police said Michael Oliva, 34, tried to rob a bank in Trimble, Mo., by pointing a gun at a teller and demanding cash. The teller dropped to the floor and shouted for help. Another bank employee saw the masked robber leaning over the counter and pointing his handgun at the teller, so he got a Smith & Wesson .357 revolver from his desk and fired two rounds, one of which struck Oliva in the jaw. He fled, but police caught him and identified his weapon as a plastic toy gun. (Kansas City's *WDAF-TV*)

Coincidence of the Week

After Florida's Department of Transportation Secretary Ananth Prasad was ticketed for driving 44 miles per hour in a 35-mph zone on a Tallahassee street, the DOT raised the speed limit on the road to 45 mph. Prasad said the change occurred after the DOT conducted a study that showed the previous speed limit "was artificially constrained." (Florida's *Capitol News Service*)

Second-Amendment Champions

After raising only \$10 last year to buy new equipment, this year the Atwood-Hammond Little League enlisted the support of the Atwood Armory in Atwood, Ill., to raffle off an AR-15 military-style assault rifle. "It's for a good cause," Atwood Armory co-owner Charidy Butcher said, "for the kids." (Decatur's *WAND-TV*)

The Two-Wheeling Life

• A bicyclists association that promotes safety objected to a measure in the Maryland House of Delegates that would require all cyclists to wear helmets. Shane Farthing, executive director of the Washington Area Bicyclist

Association, said mandatory helmet use might discourage people from riding bikes and that fewer bikes on the road could limit "the safety-in-numbers effect." (*The Washington Post*)



• The Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment addressed the issue of bicycle safety by funding research by automaker TNO to develop an exterior airbag. It covers the lower portion of the windshield, creating a softer landing than a pane of glass for a human skull flying through the air at 25 miles per hour. A camera positioned beneath the rear-view mirror can determine if a vehicle is approaching cyclists or pedestrians, and sensors in the bumper activate the airbag if they detect contact. (*TNO*)

• Swedish industrial designers Anna Haupt and Terese Alstin unveiled the Hövding, a concealed bicycle helmet designed to inflate in .01 second in the event of an accident. "We wanted to see if there was a way to change today's helmets and wanted people to wear them by free will, not by law," Haupt said. "We found out people wanted something that was almost invisible that didn't destroy their hair or annoy them, something with the possibility to change the looks of the helmet like they can with mobile phone shells and wigs." Costing \$600, the Hövding resembles a collar, but it contains an air bag, similar to the ones in cars. The air bag is shaped like a hood and is triggered when sensors (a combination of accelerometers and gyroscopes) pick up "abnormal movements of a bicyclist in an accident," according to the company's website. (*ABC News*)

Haberdashery Follies

• Police said a maintenance man at a Houston apartment building shot a man in the foot after the two argued for 30 minutes about the victim's missing pants. Sgt. M.D. Moses said Michael Jolivette, 32, accused the maintenance worker of taking his pants from an electrical box where he left them. (Houston's *KPRC-TV*)

• When a police officer spotted a man walking along a street in Millville, N.J., with smoke coming from his jeans, the officer urged the man to take off the jeans to prevent injury. Lt. Ed Zadroga said the man refused, telling the officer it was too cold out. The man had to be taken to a hospital and then flown to a burn center. Zadroga



said the fire probably started when vodka spilled out of a bottle in the man's pocket and was ignited by a lit cigarette. (*South Jersey Times*)

Ride of a Lifetime

One man died and another was injured when the inflatable ball they were harnessed to while bouncing down a ski slope in Russia veered off course, careened along a jagged ridge and plunged over a precipice. It then picked up speed for almost a mile before slamming into rocks. The victims paid \$10 to ride in the plastic ball, called a zorb. The accident at the Dombai ski resort followed a rash of winter sports injuries, which prompted an investigation that found 50 unlicensed operations and guides on the mountain. (*The New York Times*)

Small Consolation for the Egyptian-American Community

The U.S. Census Bureau announced it is dropping the word "Negro," used since 1900 to describe black Americans in its surveys, in favor of "black" or "African American." (*Associated Press*)

Kemo Sabe of the East

A Japanese lawmaker who goes by the name of Skull Reaper A-Ji was banned from attending sessions of the Oita City Assembly for refusing to remove his mask. A-Ji, who's also a professional wrestler, campaigned wearing the mask and was elected, but his fellow councilors declared it is inappropriate to conceal his identity and noted that he was violating a rule stating that "a person taking the floor shall not wear items such as a hat." A-Ji responded, "If I take my mask off, I'm an entirely different person." (*Time*)

Unclear on the Concept

New York City authorities accused Matthew Matagrano, 36, of using bogus credentials to impersonate a Department of Correction investigator and sneak into several city lockups, where he mingled with inmates for hours. The convicted sex offender aroused the suspicions of guards at Rikers Island when he moved inmates from one cell to another. (*The New York Post*)

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Oh God. One less Obama loving Socialist? How...tragic.

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ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR APRIL 2013

FOR EVERYONE—April will be a month of breakthroughs we never expected to see. There are issues in our lives and in our world that seem too hard, too dangerous or maybe too painful to address, taboos we thought we would never break. April is the month that we do it. These intimidating issues will suddenly arise before us, the only thing standing between ourselves and the goals we thought forever out of our reach. When you find yourself in that spot, don't hesitate to move forward.

♈ ARIES (Mar. 20 - Apr. 18) The pressure to reorganize your finances continues. This stage of reorganization could affect your personal life more seriously than previous ones. You've had confrontations you had been hoping to avoid. This time, you'll need to address issues you hoped you'd never have to dredge up. The reward for resolving these issues will be dramatic for all concerned and go far beyond the merely financial. Settling these issues will help put your life on the right track and open up inspiring new possibilities for you.

♉ TAURUS (Apr. 19 - May 19) Others are enduring life-changing events, often involving hardship or loss. Remorse over past actions and fear of repeating past mistakes are clouding their judgment. People are at an important turning point and need guidance. Your ability to see patterns is heightened. Your own inner life is unusually rich these days, too. Your unconscious is hyperactive and insights flood your mind. Helping others find clarity will help give your own life direction and form. Efforts to reorganize your personal finances will go very well, too.

♊ GEMINI (May 20 - June 19) April is a lucky, but also rather complicated month for Gemini. Life is demanding a more responsible approach. Many considerations you might have ignored in the past will have to be taken seriously, now. Financial matters will go well, but increased cash flow will be quickly absorbed by obligations you ignored before or just didn't know about. You can adjust to these new demands in ways that enhance your standing and income potential. Challenges will turn immediately into opportunities to showcase your abilities.

♋ CANCER (June 20 - July 21) Cancerians need to upgrade their already considerable ability to nurture others. The upgrade is simple, though. Powerful creative forces are at work in your unconscious, so it should go smoothly. Cancerians need to be more detached and disciplined--less indulgent and more objective--and require the same of others. Partners need to be less affectionate, and more objective and fair-minded in dealing with each other. A calm objectivity will strengthen and preserve fraying emotional bonds. Events will quickly prove you right.

♌ LEO (July 22 - Aug. 21) Leo's prefer bright, warm venues, cheery story lines and receptive audiences. But April brings

moody lighting, tough lines and a nervous audience with short attention spans. You'll need to deliver lines about people being much more honest with themselves, and about taking more responsibility. People need to hear this message now and it will benefit them a great deal. Be attentive to financial issues. Overly complex financial deals leave room for mischief and loss. Simple and clear terms are best. Friends are unusually supportive.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 22 - Sept. 21) The world is saturated with seductive messages; pheromones fill the air. Virgos conceal their discomfort with that stuff to fit in. But they should be more forthcoming about their Platonic side. Help others see its benefits. It's a tough sell, but people do need to put less energy into their intimate lives and more into meeting life's challenges. If you can convince others to keep their minds on the task at hand, everyone's economic problems will clear up more quickly. Show how it's done.

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 22 - Oct. 21) Fate has placed Librans in unstable circumstances. Conditions require constant adjustment and reliance on the generosity and integrity of others. It's hard to set boundaries. Others exert too much influence over your feelings. Workplace politics are unusually deceptive. Keep the terms of all your relationships as simple and clear as possible. Avoid dependency or 'imbalances.' This advice applies to your intimate life, too. Learning to function effectively in these circumstances will grant you unparalleled people handling skills. Pay attention to health and wellness issues.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 22 - Nov. 20) It's time for Scorpios to decide what they feel about their more intimate friendships and romantic attachments. Deceptive and problematic influences are at work in these areas. Clarifying and communicating these feelings is a required first step in rectifying these close and important relationships. Communicate your feelings clearly. If nobody knows where you stand on these matters, it will be hard to attract the right kind of relationships, or to make your closest relationships what you need them to be.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 21 - Dec. 20) Financial trends are favorable for Sagittarians. Psychologically, not so much. Difficult memories and old issues are stirring

uncomfortable emotions. It's partly personal and partly about the world around you. Don't avoid them. These issues are being foregrounded by the very insight and motivation you need to deal with them. This is an opportunity to address issues that seemed too deep to ever resolve, to clear the way for advances that seemed impossible. Taking them head on will be far easier and more rewarding than you think.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 21 - Jan. 18) Capricorns are not the most trusting, risk-loving bunch. These inclinations might serve them quite well, sometimes, but they are especially strong and especially unhelpful now, in areas crucial to Capricorn's future. Capricorns need to open up, to explain their ideas and expand a shrinking circle of allies and supporters. The planets will look favorably on deals made in April; both wealth and fame are on the table. It would be a shame to miss out because of groundless suspicion or an excess of caution.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 19 - Feb. 17) Aquarians are viewed as optimists, willing to work and fight for their ideas. But, truth to tell, they can also worry and fret. The latter inclination will be apparent in April. Aquarians could worry that the "establishment" will interfere and scuttle their plans. But April is not the month for Aquarius to hesitate or indulge doubt. There are powerfully supportive influences at work and they are very much in harmony with Aquarian aspirations. Cooperation with the establishment on selected issues will only enhance success.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 18 - Mar. 19) Pisceans are being powerfully motivated to build a better life. The planetary winds are at their back, supporting their efforts. Build a network of like-minded allies and project your intentions into the world around you. Create a space in your life where you can do things your way. This will almost certainly spark resistance. You'll need to defend your plans at home, too. Don't avoid the issues you have always avoided, not this time. It's important to tackle the tough issues, economic and otherwise. **lv**

—Dr. Star



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