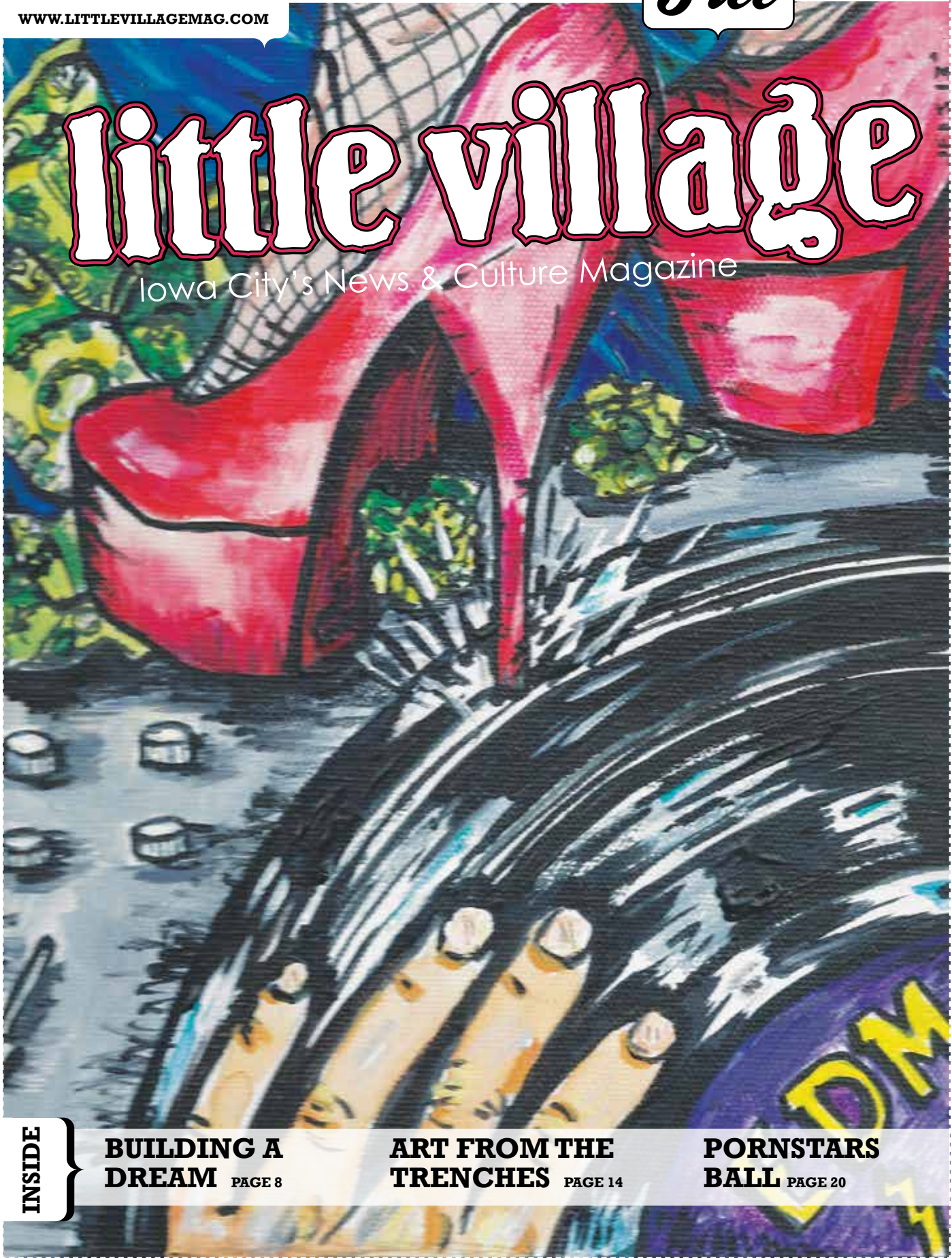


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Iowa City's News & Culture Magazine



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Iowa City's News & Culture Magazine

VOLUME 12 | ISSUE 132

MAY 1-15 2013

PUBLISHER | Matt Steele
 Publisher@LittleVillageMag.com

MANAGING EDITOR | Kate Conlow
 Editor@LittleVillageMag.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
 Drew Bulman, Stephanie Cattlett,
 Amber Neville, Megan Ranegar

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
 Cecil Adams, Raquel Baker, Jill
 Bodach, Pat Brown, Thomas Dean,
 Russell Jaffe, A.C. Hawley, Carmen
 Machado, Kembrew McLeod,
 Brian Prugh, Megan Ranegar, Jared
 Rogness, John C. Schloffelt, Jorie
 Slodki, Warren Sprouse, Dr. Star, Roland
 Sweet, Casey Wagner, Kent Williams

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS
 Bill Adams, James Davies, Joshua
 Distraction, Tonya Kehoe-Anderson,
 Jay Geisen, John Richard

DESIGN
 Andrew Desforges, Matt Steele

ILLUSTRATIONS
 Jared Rogness

LITTLE VILLAGE LIVE
 Alex Persels, William Ford
 Live@LittleVillageMag.com

DISTRIBUTION MANAGER | Austin Morford
 Distro@LittleVillageMag.com
 Jessica Carbino (CR/UI Campus),
 Charles Hoffman (Des Moines)

ARCHIVE
 Jessica Carbino, Melody Dworak

CONTACT | P.O. Box 736,
 Iowa City, IA 52244 • 319-855-1474

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TIP LINE | 319-855-1474
 Editor@LittleVillageMag.com

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On the cover: Acrylic on canvas
 by JoAnn Larpenter-Sinclair

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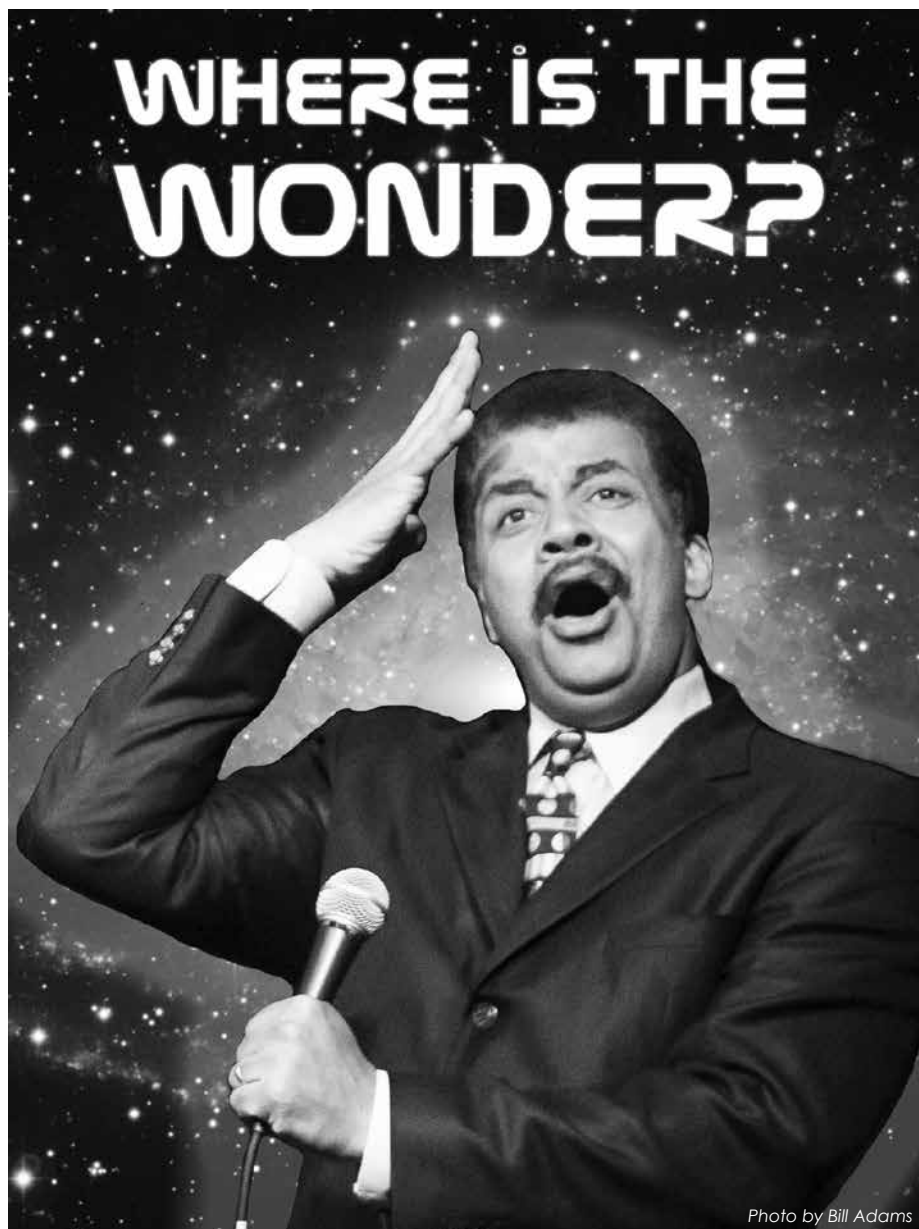
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



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When astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson spoke to a capacity crowd at The University of Iowa in April, he said that through his teaching of the marvels of the universe he tries “to reignite some sense of wonder.” He went on to say that if you’re not

The wonders of human achievement sparkle around us constantly.

wondering “you’re not fully embracing all that it is to be alive. Because humans wonder.”

I could not agree more. Yet the sense of wonder is inherent not just in the far reaches of galaxies, cloud nebulae or asteroids that may buzz about our own planet; It need not even be sought in the mysterious permafrost of Antarctica, the dark depths of the Mariana Trench or the cloudy heights of Machu Picchu. Equally spectacular sources of wonder await our discovery within our home place, ready to amaze and ignite imagination whenever we are open to seeking them.

The greatest sense of wonder possible comes through the miracle of life. And the miracle of life is everywhere. We live amidst some of the richest land in the world, a wonder in and of itself. We plant spinach seeds,

basil seedlings and young tomato plants in our backyard gardens, and within days they reach for the sky and then bring forth food for us to eat. In the prairie remnants or restorations we visit at Iowa City’s Mormon Handcart Park in Iowa City, Johnson County’s Kent Park or West Branch’s Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, big bluestem that has been emerging from the rich topsoil for years and years breaks ground and grows to nine-foot-tall splendor within weeks.

The sense of wonder can be dark as well. We marvel at the miracle of bluestem, but its magic is made both precious and tragic when we remember that 99.9 percent of the native prairie in Iowa has disappeared. Within 70 or so years, humans completely extracted a fully functioning ecosystem and replaced it with something else: domestic agriculture. That is probably an unmatched feat in human history, though it has had dire ecological consequences. It is still wondrous, though in the blackest of ways.

<<< MR. WONDERFUL

Neil deGrasse Tyson illustrates a point during his lecture at the University of Iowa on April 15.

Tapping into the remarkable history on the very ground we walk every day can evoke wonder if you let it. Within the limestone walls of our community’s historical and cultural centerpiece, the Old Capitol, the very state we live in was created. On the Old Capitol grounds, the community gathered to mourn Abraham Lincoln’s assassination, to protest the Vietnam War and to hold a candlelight vigil for the victims of the Southeast Asian tsunami of 2004. The shadows of profound moments of history and heritage can flicker into our imaginations right here at home.

You can literally touch history, too. Feel that limestone of the Old Capitol outer walls. It was hand-quarried over 170 years ago from along the Iowa River north of Iowa City. It is Devonian limestone, bedrock from when Iowa was a warm inland sea 400 million years ago. Fantastical giant armored fish called arthrodires, superpredators up to 30 feet long, swam in those waters amidst feathery crinoids and shelled brachiopods. A visit to the unique Devonian Fossil Gorge at Coralville Lake, legacy of the 1993 and 2008 floods, will literally put your imagination in touch with our prehistory that dates to long before dinosaurs even roamed the planet.

The wonder of human achievement sparkles around us constantly. The marvels of

UR HERE >> CONT. ON PAGE 11



Photos by Tonya Kehoe-Anderson



Philip Hensher's book *The Missing Ink: The Lost Art of Handwriting* discusses the vanishing act of the written word plays in our world today. The widely reviewed book claims that the diminishing use of handwriting is in turn diminishing our humanity. It seems Hensher may take his scribbling a little too seriously.

But, as I sit here texting my mom, typing my grocery list into my iPhone and clicking away at my keyboard, I begin to wonder if Hensher's got a point. I can type 200 words in the blink of an eye, but I've forgotten how to write most letters in cursive. While gaining all of this new technology, are we losing something meaningful? Is handwriting really becoming a lost art?

Local artist and maker Heather Atkinson is keeping the DIY dream alive. Atkinson's handwriting has become a part of her—and most likely, your—day-to-day life. She creates handmade signs and menus for local shops and eateries, including Artifacts, Home Ec. Workshop, Leaf Kitchen, The Paper Nest, Revival and RSVP. Her skillfully scrolled signage appeals to business owners and patrons

alike. "The feel of our restaurant is kind of personal," says Harriet Woodford, owner of Leaf Kitchen. "Everything is different, and that's kind of our style. Having handmade signs is part of what we do. You can't create what Heather does on a computer."

"I feel like a lot of people are going back

Handwriting takes more time, effort and creativity than letting your computer do the dirty work. So, why DIY? "Seeing something done by hand has an increasing attraction for people," says Atkinson. "It's a lost connection, a longing for that special touch of uniqueness you just cannot get with technology. It carries warmth and even the memory of human contact. It shows that you dedicated time to create something special and unique."

Okay, you're all in—you want to get crafty with cursive. Atkinson suggests mixing equal parts ink

and inspiration to create your own handwritten projects. "I try and add some special flair to each set of signs. For example, on a few recent projects, I tea-dyed the paper prior to use. Oftentimes, I will do some research or look for inspiration in my book collection, magazines, online—everywhere, really. Times can vary greatly depending on the amount of detail, and often the most time is spent in the inspiration and research phase."

Megan Ranegar is wondering where all of her gel pens from 1997 have gone.

TEXTUAL HEALING

to handmade and smaller scale businesses and ideas," says Margaret Roberts of Artifacts. "It just goes along with buying local, doing things the old fashioned way." Here, Atkinson shares her secrets when it comes to putting pen to paper.

Part of "readopting" writing involves changing our habits. Flex your writing muscles by simply shifting your focus from your keyboard to a pen and paper. "Have you noticed people holding writing utensils like sporks?" says Atkinson. "Writing may not be a lost art yet, but it is definitely endangered. You can't write neatly with your texting thumb!"

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Talking TRASH



With more and more local programs and educational initiatives popping up, composting is clearly taking a larger role in Iowa City's waste infrastructure.

Composting, by definition, is the controlled breakdown of biodegradable yard and kitchen waste. As organic matter decomposes, nutrients are converted into usable forms that can then be absorbed by roots. According to Kristi Cooper, a Family Life Specialist with Iowa State University's Linn County Extension Office who specializes in sustainable living practices, interest in composting is at an all-time high.

"Most people I talk to are interested in learning about composting," Cooper said. "People are really concerned about the environment and the waste we produce and want to learn what they can do about it."

Cooper has had an outdoor compost pile at her home for many years. Four years ago she decided to try indoor composting. It was so successful that Cooper set up a composting bin at her Linn County office, and in just one year the office diverted 300 gallons of food waste by collecting lunch scraps.

Local organizations that have launched composting efforts include New Pioneer Food Co-op, Bluebird Diner, Regina High School,

Elizabeth Tate Alternative High School, Hiawatha Elementary School and West High School. All have incorporated some level of composting, whether it's just diverting food waste from landfills or also converting it to compost. Residents of several Iowa City neighborhoods have also started composting cooperatives where one residence hosts the compost pile and other residents contribute to it.

It's true that many Iowa City residents are putting a concerted effort towards composting, but before trash talking other communities for their lack of composting efforts, Scott Koepke has some other statistics. Koepke is the Education Outreach Coordinator for New Pioneer Food Co-op's Soilmates program. He can often be found in classrooms teaching children about the value of composting. Not surprisingly, Koepke serves as his neighborhood composter, and he often finds donated buckets of food on his porch.

"Iowa City is actually behind the curve," Koepke said. "And I say that to be motivational, not critical."

Cities like Portland, Oregon have really embraced urban composting programs. Since October 2011, the city provided all residences with weekly curbside compost collection. A year into the new curbside collection system, 38 percent less residential waste was headed

to the landfill and three times more yard debris and food scraps were turned into compost, according to the City's website.

In Manhattan, the Lower East Side Ecology Center's Community Compost Program has offered dropoff locations for food waste since 1990. In the Bay Area, the cities of San Francisco and Oakland have adopted zero-waste initiatives that emphasize a closed-loop system of production and consumption, promoting the best use of materials and eliminating waste and pollution, moving incrementally toward the goal of producing no waste at all.

"[In Iowa City] the momentum has really blossomed, but there is still a lot that we could do to take it to the next level," Koepke said.

STEP 1: EDUCATION

The first step in taking Iowa City's composting to the next level. The first is educating people. The first lesson: It's not garbage; it's compost. According to Koepke, half of what currently goes into the Iowa City landfill could be composted. Organics, paper and cardboard account for 52.9 percent of the Iowa City Landfill.

"That's a really staggering statistic," he said. "And [the waste] is not doing anything there except creating methane."

Methane is a potent greenhouse gas—the second most prevalent greenhouse gas emitted in the United States from human activities, according to the Environmental Protection Agency—and one of the greatest contributors to global warming.

Along these same lines is the misconception that compost piles "stink." They don't, if done correctly by keeping a ratio of greens to browns. Greens are the food products (i.e. fruit peels, vegetable trimmings, coffee grounds and tea leaves) that contribute nitrogen to the soil. Combined, greens should only account for 30 percent of what is in the compost pile. The rest should be browns (i.e. shredded newspaper, leaves, paper towels and wrapping paper rolls), which contribute carbon. Items such as meat, fish, milk products, eggs, oils, walnuts and heavily coated paper such as magazines cannot go into backyard urban compost piles because they attract maggots.

The second lesson: It's not dirt; it's soil.

<<< HALF OF WHAT CURRENTLY GOES INTO THE IOWA CITY LANDFILL COULD BE COMPOSTED, SAYS TO NEW PIONEER FOOD CO-OP SOILMATES COORDINATOR SCOTT KOEPKE (PICTURED AT RIGHT)



When Cooper talks about the nutrient-rich soil produced by her worms she gets giddy with excitement.

“It is the perfect fertilizer,” she said. “It’s like liquid gold.”

Soil, at least that which can sustain plant, vegetable and fruit growth, is not something people frequently think of conserving, but Koepke says it should be.

“[Soil] is really a finite resource that we take for granted, and I want people to start to respect it more,” Koepke said. “We pollute it, we erode it, and that’s just not smart in the long term. It’s the basis on which our food and our plants are linked.”

STEP 2: FUNDING

The second step towards increasing composting programs is the financial component. For those who don’t choose to purchase a composting bin, composting at home can be completely free. Wiggler worms—they expedite the process, but are not necessary—are another cost, but again, it is possible to obtain these without spending money (Cooper says she is happy to share hers once they reproduce.)

Incorporating composting programs in schools or throughout the county could be costly, but the costs are not formidable or prohibitive, Koepke said. The most expensive component could be hauling the food scraps and compostable waste to compost facilities. Currently, only Johnson County Refuse provides this hauling service.

Purchasing a shredder is also necessary in order to dehydrate all of the waste—a vital part of reducing the plague of urban composting: maggots.

Ideally, as a long-term goal, Koepke said he’d like Iowa City to have a comprehensive system to divert food waste from businesses (especially restaurants and grocery stores) to a composting facility. In the short term, he’d like to see more neighborhoods and individual homes adopt their own composting programs.

Cooper thinks composting will continue to gain momentum as more and more people learn about its benefits.

“The lesson of composting is that nothing is wasted because everything can be transformed into something else,” Cooper said.

Jill Bodach is a graduate of the Iowa Writers’ Workshop. She is an adjunct professor of English at Kirkwood Community College.

New Belgium Brewing - Ft. Collins, Colorado

Rampant IPA

BREW OF THE MONTH: MAY

With supplies of spring’s seasonal brews dwindling, I’ve decided to suggest a spring-ish beer that is not only brewed year-round, but also offers a level of hop bitterness that exceeds anything else I have recommended: Rampant IPA, brewed by New Belgium Brewing.

As an Imperial IPA, Rampant is not one of those flavorful, springtime camping IPAs with lots of citrus and tropical fruit. Rampant offers hints of that, but it is brewed to be bitter and boozy, and that is exactly what it is. It is not the most extreme version of the style, but it is a good value for the style.

Pour into a tulip or oversized wine glass. The beer is clear with a light copper color. Two fingers of dense, eggshell-colored head will leave a rocky cap, a webwork of foam along the glass and will eventually settle to a skim and bubbly ring around the edge for the rest of the pint. The smell offers a balance between floral hops, citrus and tropical fruit. Pine is prominent at first, but is tempered by grapefruit, orange, apple, tangerine and mango as the beer warms. As the beer becomes warmer, it offers a sticky-sweet aroma that is tinged with citrus, mango and perhaps peach. Though it may just be the pine resin, I think there is a touch of catty pungency.

The flavor offers a bold bitterness that slowly works on the taste buds and does not reach its peak until the aftertaste. Though not completely masked, the alcohol keeps a low profile. The flavors are pretty tame: mostly floral hops and pine, with sharp lemon zest. Hints of grapefruit and mango peek through, but the beer needs to warm considerably before they are noticeable. After that point, the bitterness is countered by pale malts and a light, candy caramel flavor. **IV**

SERVING TEMPERATURE: 50°F or a little warmer

ALCOHOL CONTENT: 8.5 percent ABV

FOOD PAIRINGS: *BeerAdvocate* recommends barbecue; peppery, sharp and pungent cheeses; and grilled meat.

WHERE TO BUY: Rampant is available at most area beer retailers.

PRICE: \$9 per six-pack

Casey Wagner lives in Iowa City.



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A Dream No Longer Deferred

In 2006, Frederick Newell moved from Chicago to attend the University of Iowa. He was 18 years old and had a six-month-old baby. As a single dad, he found little support—like access to affordable daycare—in his new city, and remembers bringing his son to class with him. He also found a severe lack of

Inspired by his guiding question, in May 2012, Newell founded the Dream Center in a house across from Grant Wood Elementary School. The Dream Center’s core mission is to strengthen families by mentoring fathers and young men. With services such as the Fatherhood Academy, Dads Making a Difference and the Youth Leadership

the time, Benson was teaching introductory writing courses at Kirkwood. That semester Benson had his students read *In Defense of Dangerous Ideas*, an essay by Steven Pinker that poses the value of considering ‘dangerous ideas’—ideas that can be unpleasant to think about because they challenge the social order or a society’s



Photo by John Richard

<<< WITH THE DREAM CENTER

25-year-old Frederick Newell is working to build community and bolster families in Iowa City, one father at a time.

most profound convictions about itself. When seven of his nine students of color failed to turn in a major paper assignment, Benson returned to the text he had assigned to his students and asked himself a dangerous question: “Is cultural bias operating in my classroom?”

Benson, a whiteboy who grew up on a farm in a 400-person town in northwest Iowa, says, “I thought I understood race.” Yet faced with a glaring fact—that all of his white students but only two of his minority students were passing his course—Benson says, “I underestimated how real systemic issues are. I underestimated my privilege.”

Though from different backgrounds, Newell and Benson, who serves as the program director of the Dream Center’s Learning Center, base their work together on mutual respect and a willingness to explore dangerous ideas. Teaching in Cedar Rapids and trying to get Kirkwood to fund an intensive summer program for students on academic probation led Benson to the conclusion that equity in education can only be achieved, racial and economic

community between other fathers. He earned a social work degree in four years while raising his son with little social support. This combined with his professional experience working in a social service culture that prioritizes the needs of women and children while often failing to foster father involvement sparked the beginnings of a somewhat dangerous idea: What if it’s the social infrastructure for fathers, and not the fathers themselves, that is the problem?

Academy, the Center is a budding one-stop shop where fathers and families are connected to educational advocacy, support groups, therapy, social services and spiritual resources.

A DANGEROUS IDEA

In October 2012, Newell met Luke Benson, who was inspired by the work Newell was doing with young men and fathers in the community. At



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THE DREAM CENTER

divides can only be bridged and schools can only be transformed through grassroots educational reform, community activism and involvement in advocacy and mentorship. "Education is broken," said Benson, "As a community, change must come from us."

GROWING A DREAM

Together, Newell and Benson are working to grow the Dream Center through a community-based fundraising initiative they call Dollar a Day (DAD). With access to the greater corridor area, and the potential to reach donors throughout the rest of Iowa, Benson believes getting 1,000 people to commit to donating one dollar a day is possible and will create a stable funding base for salaries and programming.

The Inspireads program is another growth

The Dream Center's First Annual Benefit Dinner

Sunday, May 5, 5:30 p.m.
at the Iowa City Moose Lodge.
More information:
[facebook.com/thedreamcenter1](https://www.facebook.com/thedreamcenter1)

initiative that, in partnership with Prairie Lights and the National Council of Teachers of English, calls for individuals to write a personal inscription inside a book that inspired them and donate it to create a library at the Dream Center.

Newell's vision for the growth of the Dream Center extends beyond Iowa City, providing support groups and advocacy throughout the state in less than five years.

But, in order for the Dream Center to succeed in reaching its advocacy goals within Iowa City, Newell says it may mean first crossing the boundaries of the greater community's comfort zones and engaging more people in conversations about dangerous ideas. Newell says that

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For Kirkwood Community College teacher Luke Benson, equity in education can only be achieved, racial and economic divides can only be bridged and schools can only be transformed through grassroots educational reform, community activism and involvement in advocacy and mentorship.

he can't advocate for fathers and young men, parents and students, without being vocal about the racial divide in Iowa City, the differential access to resources that effect the greater community and, most importantly, the lack of motivation from Iowa Citians to develop an inclusive community in its schools, local governing bodies and neighborhoods. Newell says, "We need community support to be able to speak against

entrenched institutional power ... I'm just struck by how little it would take to make a big difference and how much people fight change." The effects of these issues contribute to what Benson describes as perhaps the most dangerous idea of all, "learning to recognize and reconcile the fact that there are really two Iowa Citys."

While Newell and Benson acknowledge that change can be slow, they know they are already making an impact through the Center's work with young people. Charles Johnson, a 14-year-old South East Junior High student, says he appreciates the tutoring and loves the Dream Team basketball program. He says, "Playing [basketball] is a big help. A lot of people from school play. You have to have a 3.0 GPA to be on the team."

Johnson also participates in The Chosen Generation, a youth development program that offers mentoring, volunteer activities and a critical discussions of issues that affect the lives and potentials of the next generation of grown ups. Johnson remembers one moment during a poignant discussion that addressed the politics of law enforcement and incarceration, as well as the disparity between the black population

living in Iowa City and the City's incarcerated black population. As the conversation shifted to the economics of filling jail cells and the profits made by a network of interests—from construction companies to businesses that provide services such as healthcare, food or clothing—he looked around, counted all his peers in TCG and thought, *that'd be like a million dollars of profit lost if all of us in this room stay out of jail.*

With the Dream Center, Newell and Benson want to foster those kinds of moments of self-realization—moments of dream formation—by providing a space where youth can share ideas and experiences with engaged adults. They hope the Dream Center will grow to become an institution that helps Iowa City have the courage to explore and confront dangerous ideas, fosters cross-racial community building and continues to work toward building social and political structures that benefit ALL Iowa Citians.

Raquel Baker is a graduate student at the University of Iowa, studying Postcolonial Studies and African Literatures in English.

GREEN STREET by Jared Rogness

PART 8 of 12 | LittleVillageMag.com/greenstreet



>> UR HERE CONT. FROM PAGE 4

democracy, when a society cooperatively agrees to make decisions for itself—whether they're about new jails, school board members or US presidents—recur regularly. Our friends, neighbors, loved ones and guests are constantly writing incredible books and poems, making gorgeous music, building impressive social and cultural organizations, plumbing the mysteries of the human genome and, yes, even probing the farthest reaches of dark outer space.

One person who never lost that sense of wonder about the paths he walked every day throughout his entire life was Iowa Citian

AWAKEN your inner historian by participating in Irving B. Weber Days this May. Find evens at icpl.org/weber

Irving Weber, memorialized in the statue at the corner of Iowa Avenue and Linn Street. Living his entire 97 years in his home community, Weber was so fascinated by the world he grew up in and lived in day by day that he could not help telling stories about the marvels of our town in newspaper columns, bus tours, community access television presentations and much more. Whether relating the heyday of Whetstone's Drugs (the place to go for a Friday night malt), the mystery of Oakland Cemetery's Black Angel or the spectacle of the coming circus marching down Clinton Street, Irving Weber exemplified a lifelong enthusiasm for our community that can only be called wonder.

Although Irving Weber has not been with us in body for 16 years now, he remains with us in spirit. Each May, our community celebrates the wonders of the local with Weber Days, and I hope you will reignite your sense of local wonder by attending some events. Check out the websites of the Iowa City Public Library (www.icpl.org) and the Johnson County Heritage Society (www.jchsiowa.org/) throughout the month.

Wonder certainly can be in the eye of the beholder. And our eyes see best what is closest to us.

Thomas Dean wonders if he will ever be able to learn about and experience all the marvels of our community.



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JUMP UP & GET DOWN

with Lil Alasdair

[Editor's Note: Kembrew McLeod's two-year-old son, Alasdair, is sitting in for our regular Prairie Pop columnist this issue. Like many adult music critics, he likes to coin genre names, and lately Alasdair has been obsessed with "Jump Music." When it comes to this musical style, his tastes veer more towards hip-hop and r&b-inflected dance pop—likely because they meet the functional requirement of inspiring him to jump up and down. The following is an exact transcript of Alasdair's comments on Jump Music.]

It was Kris Kross's number one hit "Jump" that first made me a fan of Jump Music, a genre that makes all other styles sound wiggity-wiggity-wiggity wack. One highlight is the song's economical sampling of "I Want You Back," in which teen producer Jermaine Dupri looped just three notes from that classic Jackson 5 song. I also like the repetitive minimalism of the stage names adopted by this kid-rap duo: Mac Daddy and Daddy Mac.

"Jump Around" by House of Pain—or as I like to call them, "House of the Pain," which is a way better band name—is the second best Jump Song ever. *Ever!* Aside from the chorus, "Jump up, jump up, and get down," my favorite line is, "I got more rhymes than cops at a Dunkin' Donuts shop." Because, well, I like donuts very much. Very *very* much! However, I hate the misogyny in the line, "I'll serve your ass like John McEnroe/If your girl steps to me I'm slapping your ho." That's not right, even if he was trying to be funny. We all came from

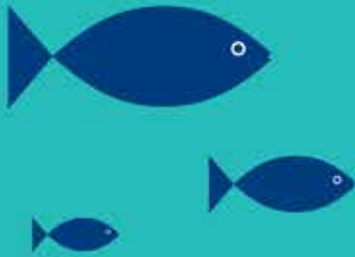
our mommies, so we have to treat women with respect.

I don't fully get the lyrical content of Destiny Child's "Jumpin' Jumpin'" ("it's 11:30 and the club is jumpin' jumpin'"). I'm not old enough to get into clubs, and I can't stay up late, but I do like the beat. I feel the same about R. Kelly's "Party Jumpin'," which goes, "Let's take some shots/Let's celebrate ... Let's get this party jumpin'!" He glorifies drinking, which I don't understand. I like to drink from my sippy cup as much as the next guy, but there's no reason to be excessive about it—especially if it means getting your diaper changed more often.

"Jump 'n Shout" by Basement Jaxx is a straight up banger. Aside from Kris Kross's and House of Pain's contributions to the jump music canon, this song makes me want to jump around the most. Its frenetic, almost avant-garde rhythms are *super*, and the song's dancehall-style vocals remind me of Major Lazer's totally fist-bumpin-n-pumpin' "Jump Up." LCD Soundsystem's cover of "Jump Into the Fire" is the most rock-oriented song on this list, but its Krautrock-meets-Disco beat nevertheless made me poop my pants the first time I heard it.

I also really *really* liked Sir Mix-A-Lot's "Jump On it," in part because I love learning and because it dropped some real geographic knowledge on my tush. The song is about how Sir Mix-A-Lot likes to party in different cities, and it begins with the MC name-checking Dallas, Austin and other places in Texas before moving on to different regions throughout

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the country. ("What's up Little Rock, what's up?/Little Rock, jump on it! Jump on it! ... What's up Tacoma, what's up?")

Dad will only let me listen to the censored version of Lil' Kim's "The Jump Off," even though it is one of the least racy songs recorded by this foulmouthed lady rapper. I'm less turned off by the swear words than by her rampant celebration of consumerism in the song's chorus ("This is for my peeps with the Bentleys, the Hummers, the Benz/Escalades, 23-inch rims"). Nevertheless, the Timbaland beats rock my little world!

For my last pick, I'm going *waaaaay* back in the day with the Pointer Sisters' "Jump (For My Love)"—a 1984 song that is so old school it's almost preschool! I mean, what did they have to do to listen to music back then, rub stones together? I don't think I could live in a world without touch screens and instant access to streaming music. If I want to hear a very specific Jump Song, *I WANNA HEAR IT NOW!*

Lil Alasdair is the only music critic who can rock overalls with a doggie on the front and still be cool.

[Admittedly, that wasn't an exact transcript of what Alasdair said, but he actually did select the following songs in this Jump Music Top Ten list. In the process of compiling it, he vetoed many well known tracks—such as Van Halen's "Jump" (it was "boring," Alasdair insisted, citing its slow tempo), and the Rolling Stones' "Jumping Jack Flash" ("this is NOT Jump Music," he flatly stated). Oh, and don't get him started on Harry Belafonte's "Jump In the Line" or Dave Brubeck's "Everybody's Jumpin'," which he dismissed out of hand because apparently calypso and jazz aren't jumpy enough.]

Download Alasdair's Jump Music Top Ten at littlevillagemag.com/jumpmusic

1. Kris Kross "Jump"
2. House of Pain "Jump Around"
3. Destiny's Child "Jumpin' Jumpin'"
4. R. Kelly "Party Jumpin'"
5. Basement Jaxx "Jump 'n Shout"
6. LCD Soundsystem "Jump Into the Fire"
7. Major Lazer "Jump Up"
8. Sir Mix-A-Lot "Jump On It"
9. Lil' Kim "The Jump Off"
10. The Pointer Sisters "Jump (For My Love)"

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A BEAT OF THEIR OWN

All Music All Art Hosts Quatro de Mayo Celebration

Art wears many faces; sometimes you'll remove art's mask and surprise, there's another mask underneath. It can be hard to tell where art starts and stops. There's an art to broken pianos, to rainy day gravel back lots and, of course, to communities.

creation meets conception, where massive collections of tools hang confidently overlooking drafting tables piled high with fliers and ideas for projects. And while the sheer amount of stuff in the gallery space might drive a minimalist mad, Downing sees a comfort in the aesthetic of the gallery and store.

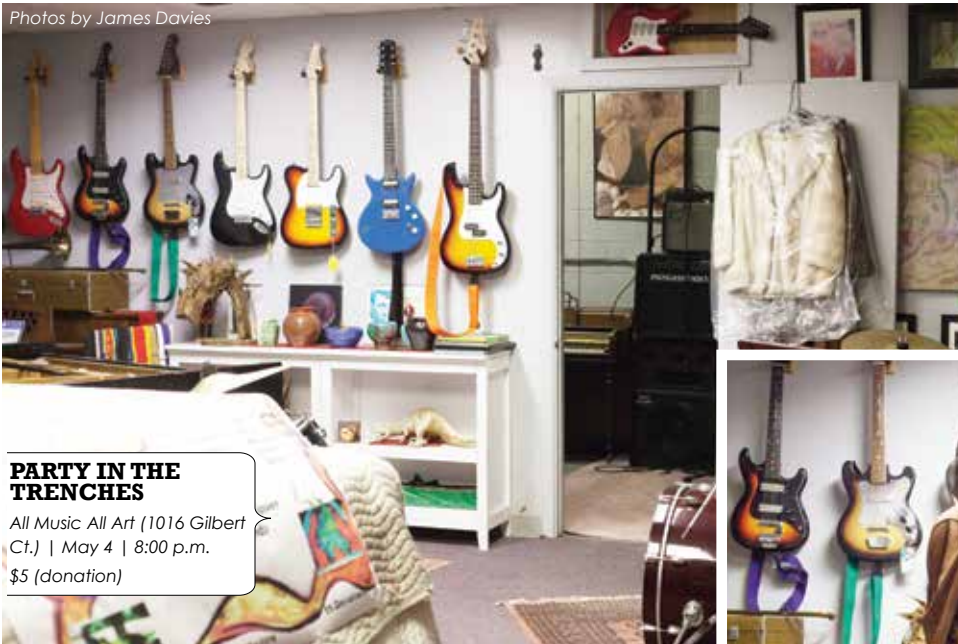
Warming psychedelic jazz music plays from a dusty boombox on a paint-splattered shelf in a workroom filled with pianos and warehouse-high ceilings. Downing puffs a cigarette, the smoke reaching around from under his Hawkeyes cap like monster fingers through the sewer grating of American movie posters. He gestures with hands ruddy like someone who's tuned a lot of things.

Currently, he's designing a flier for AMAA's next event: A Quatro De Mayo celebration. "You like that? Most of the Mexicans I know think it's funny too," Downing says with a smiling shrug. It happens May 4 at 8:00 p.m., a Saturday night. Nearly a dozen artists will

be there alongside half a dozen bands in the lot next to the store. "What we do is we set up tents and lights and chairs and tables outdoors, out in the parking lot, and we've been lucky with the weather so far. See, I rent a little fence and block off the whole parking lot."

Downing's an earnest, hard working guy, a perfect representation of the wilderness art community surrounding the domesticated clearing that is the central downtown region with its quick University accessibility.

Photos by James Davies



PARTY IN THE TRENCHES

All Music All Art (1016 Gilbert Ct.) | May 4 | 8:00 p.m.

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Enter All Music All Art (AMAA), an off-the-beaten path gallery and music store tucked around the corner from a hair salon at 1016 Gilbert Ct., that walks to the beat of its own drum (and piano, guitar, etc.), running concerts and art showcases for local artist for the last two and a half years. It's run by E.G. Madison and my host on this visit, M.F. Downing. Downing is an eccentric and stoic craftsman asteroid perpetually in Iowa City's art orbit, at least for the last few years.

"We buy and sell new and used musical instruments and we specialize in restoring them," Downing says in a voice equal parts molasses and ash. "If I had \$10,000, right now, I'd spend it all on instruments to restore."

Paintings and glossy photographs hang next to shelves of rusty tools, glossy acoustic guitars and all manner of silent pianos. The rooms of AMAA form a stockhouse bunker where

"There's no madness," he says. "We restore musical instruments. People pay me to restore pianos. I've been in the restoration business for over 35 years, all over—the East Coast, the West Coast—but

I've been making art since I was a little kid ... people need to get out of their shells and hunt [art] down, experience it a little more, instead of doing the same things over and over again."

Downing sips a Budweiser as he leads me through a thin labyrinth of hanging artwork and standing musical equipment. "We don't have a half a million dollar budget. We're on a real shoestring ... All the art here is for sale, and it's all from local artists. These are the artists from this upcoming show alone."



He smirks, "We're hoping to get under the skin of Iowa City, get them away from the pretentious stores downtown, and they can see some real art, art that's affordable."

And for only \$5, AMAA offers quite the affordable celebration that includes wine, cheese and Mexican food. "[The \$5 donation] doesn't cover the cost," Downing explains. "It never does, so it helps but doesn't go too far. If we get, say, 200 people, though, we'd throw money to the musicians, buy some of

the art ... I've been saving up to buy some of their work myself ... A good friend of mine is a wine expert and wholesale wine dealer; he provides the wine and talks to people about it. He actually teaches the wine class at Kirkwood (through the Continuing Ed Dept). My partner teaches guitar, drums and he's working on piano. He's a drummer for a lot of different bands ... he'll be playing with James Kennedy and Friends at the show."

All Music All Art is a passion project where musicians and artists peddle their wares and services. And they're always seeking new artists and musicians to showcase for future shows. "I plan to do (events) two, three times a year for the rest of forever," said Downing. And if his shoestring budget gets untied? "There's always reincarnation! You gotta think about the future. You'd be surprised how quick the future comes."

And then, after hearing about his passion for restoring ancient pianos in the room of instruments, I ask him, "Why the art?" He answers as only a true art spirit might, starting with laughter. "I don't understand the question," he says with a cool, collected voice like a long stretch of highway. "It's obvious. What

do you mean why? There's no answer to that question. That's like asking Michelangelo 'Why the art? What's with the art, man?'"

"You know, my dog may have run out the door," he continues. But the shaggy black dog that greeted me with cuddles upon entry is in the other room resting, staring up at us with brown eyes like thick wooden screws. "There's no question about art, it's a necessary aspect of life," says Downing. "Can you imagine a world without art and music? Good luck with that."

He continues: "Iowa City has two faces, you know? There's the plastic chichi wannabe cosmopolitan scene and there's the trenches," he laughs. "People are just scratching and clawing through life, clawing through the trench. Both faces are fine, except they clash. They don't come together like they should. But that's the way society is anyway. It's a crazy mixed up world out there, you can't be scared to go out and face it."

More information can be found at allmusicallart.com/amaa/ or by liking All Music All Art on Facebook.

Russell Jaffe is the editor of Strange Cage and is a real man doing real things.

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take it outside

By the time you read this, the first of May will likely have passed, but that's okay because it probably would have been too cold to fuck outside anyway. But let's assume that by the time you read this it is warm enough, and you're feeling frisky.

The first of May is a magical day. It marks Beltane, the pagan fertility festival, and has been celebrated by poets and musicians alike as the first day of the year—barring freakishly freezing Iowa springs, of course—to romp around with your lover in the tall grasses.

While James Taylor sang subtly about this day (“It’s a rite of spring / A horizontal thing / The sweetest sort of dance / Hidden in among the plants”), Jonathan Coulton pulls no punches (“Water’s not cold baby dip in your big toe / Maybe I’ll see you in flagrante delicto / Grass below you, sky above / Celebrate spring with a crazy little thing called fucking outside”). Either way, once the ground has thawed and it is definitely, *definitely*, for-sure-this-time not going to snow again, Iowa City is your outdoor sexin’ oyster. So whether you need to bone somewhere where the roommates can’t hear, you’re looking for something new and adventurous or you just want to have another excuse to drink during Never Have I Ever, here are some handy-dandy tips for coming hard and frequently, all with a gentle breeze tickling your backside and minimal bad things happening.

KNOW THE LAWS AND RISKS.

Do not be fooled: Public sex is a risky behavior. First of all, unless you own and are fucking

on your own palatial estate, you will often be trespassing, especially if it’s after hours. There are also laws about public exposure. Iowa Code §709.9 (indecent exposure) states that if you commit a sex act in front of a third party, you could be charged with a misdemeanor.

Will that be how it shakes out if a late-night dog walker or security guard discovers you mid-coitus? Not necessarily, but it’s something to think about. Also: While part of the hotness of public, outdoor sex is the “Ooooh, we might get caught” factor, *don’t try to get caught*. Accidents happen, but your kink is not

*It’s a rite of spring
A horizontal thing
The sweetest sort of dance
Hidden in among the plants
—James Taylor*

everyone else’s kink, and you shouldn’t deliberately try to expose a stranger to your wobbling genitals. (Remember what Taylor sings: *hidden* among the plants. Hidden.)

Also, I am not a lawyer. Consult a lawyer if you’re really worried about all of this.

PICK A GOOD SPOT.

Iowa City is lousy with good places to fuck in public. You just gotta choose a place that’s a little more isolated, and pick late night, early morning hours where the chances of running into someone are slim. Oakland Cemetery is massive and has lots of good corners, if the idea of desecrating the resting places of the dead doesn’t give

you pause. Pick the oldest tombstone you can find, for a more authentic experience. Fuck under the Black Angel if you’re feeling daring (that she won’t put the curse on your head, or that the more exposed location won’t get you caught). Hickory Hill Park is closed between the hours of 10:30 p.m. and 6 a.m., but if you can get away with it, there are plenty of pretty spots.

BRING A BLANKET.

There are few things worse than grass burn on your knees, ants in your pubic hair or poison ivy in your groin—you can pay tribute to spring without having to use ice packs for days. Plus, you can use a blanket to cover yourselves up quickly if an intrepid voyeur happens upon you, or throw it on an aggressive nocturnal mammal should you need to run away.

MAKE LIKE CAMPERS AND CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELVES, FOR FUCK’S SAKE.

There’s nothing wrong with having sex outdoors, but there is something wrong with being an asshole. Don’t leave used condoms, discarded underwear or whatever tangled in the underbrush or strewn across the grass. Leave that meadow more beautiful than when you found it.

Carmen Maria Machado is a fiction writer and essayist whose work has been featured or is forthcoming in The American Reader, VICE Magazine, Five Chapters, Indiana Review, Best Women’s Erotica 2012, The Hairpin, Los Angeles Review of Books, The Paris Review Daily, and many other publications. She is a graduate of the Iowa Writers’ Workshop and the Clarion Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers’ Workshop.

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I have a friend who is somewhat obsessed with a particular writer, but hasn't read what is widely considered this author's masterpiece, as he's intentionally saving it for a particular moment. After I accidentally spoiled part of the novel for him this week, I teased him for being the only person I knew who was so obsessed with a book he'd never read. And then I realized you could probably say the same situation applies to me, only not with a book but the video game *Minecraft*.

Digressive confession: Although for the moment I am writing a monthly column on video games, I am no expert. Up until March of last year, the most recent system I owned was a Playstation 2; my most frequently played game was *NCAA March Madness 2004*, in which game I led my hometown Fighting Illini to seven Championships in a row, a carefully constructed alternate history to the last

seven seasons of Illinois basketball. And the last time I had played a game online for an extended period was probably in the days of *Quake II* (yes—the '90s).

All this is to say that, although I've clearly rediscovered video games, I've missed some things. One of these things would seem to be *Minecraft*, the original version of which came out for the PC over three years ago. But it's only over the last week that I've gotten obsessed with this game, watching videos and homemade tutorials, reading articles and making mental plans for my gameplay. I haven't bought it yet simply because this game is going to be the end of me. Here, I'd like to try to explain this obsession.

For the uninitiated (technically, I'm still among you), here is this game—if you can even call it a game—that has reached massive popularity despite the fact that it presents no goals, direction or victory conditions. Like a number of other games released in the last decade, it's labeled an "open-world" game. Unlike traditional video games that either have linear progression through levels toward an ultimate

goal (e.g., *Mario Bros*), or simply increase difficulty after every successful completion of a task (e.g., *Space Invaders*), open-world games give more freedom to the user to control his or her experience of the game and generate a free-standing universe to explore.

The thing about open-world games is that their openness is paradoxically—and in some sense necessarily—a circumscribed one. While playing, one runs into arbitrary borders and in-

function in a likewise manner, and, at night, supernatural threats. But there is no goal, and there is no end to this world: no missions, no arbitrary borders.

Before I idealize the game too much, it is generally assumed that as one spends more time in the world of the game, one's technology will advance, more areas will be discovered and excavated, one's dwellings will increase in size and improve in design. After all, the possibility to advance technologically is programmed into the game. But there's nothing compelling the user to take advantage of this feature, no rewards but the self-satisfaction one might receive from the simulacrum of a bigger reserve of iron, a taller tower, a complex underground bunker.

And if one does follow such a goal-oriented path, in single-player mode there's ultimately no one to share it with; the serene yet melancholy score of the game emphasizes one's solitude

as the only human in an infinite world. The constructions of the user represent nothing but the manifestation of one's will upon nature. The radically open space of this game thus exposes goals and progress as cultural notions that depend on a human subject; ironically, of course, it achieves this effect through complex coding and hardware that are a direct real-world result of the imposition of human will on the world. It generates its openness from a closed system.

So there is a certain closedness in the very foundations of *Minecraft*, but the game allows

this closed-ness to manifest itself in the game's blocky, lo-fi graphics. *Minecraft* doesn't practice *illusionism* in its imagery or *realism* in its (lack of) narrative, but it is *immersive* and, perhaps even *critical*. I think this is why I've become so obsessed with it. **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.



Screenshot provided by Pat Brown

LIVING IN A DIGITAL WORLD

An untouched Minecraft landscape waits to be harvested.

The constructions of the user represent nothing but the manifestation of one's will upon nature.

To be polemic for a moment, although I very much enjoy narrative in general, and some of these games in particular, I suspect that the "heart" of video games lies elsewhere, and I think I've found it in *Minecraft*. This game has no goal, notions of progress have to stem from the user him- or herself, it by definition does not end. It is open. The user starts in—or is abandoned to, one might say—an effectively infinite world. This world is populated by blocks of various minerals the user may harvest to build tools and shelter, animals who essentially

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Take 380 To CRAZY

“Pornstar’s Ball. Tits and techno. This is going to be crazy.” On hearing that last utterance in my friend’s pitch for potential weekend plans, I couldn’t help but clench my fist. “This is going to be crazy” is usually all I need to shoot down whatever proposal follows. Say this to me in conjunction with the mention of “hitting up the bars,” “long anticipated shopping trip,” or “indie rock band,” and I am liable to just lose it. Just because something is fun and enjoyable, doesn’t make it crazy. No one knows this better than an unreconstructed thrill-seeker like myself whose enjoyment hinges on things actually being crazy.

But the mismatch of “tits and techno,” the event’s rallying cry as I eventually learned, was enough to give me pause. It did have the genuine ring of crazy. Things sounded only more promising as the details filled in. Pornstar’s Ball was an all-night rave being thrown at Woody’s Showclub in Cedar Rapids. It was being put on primarily under the guidance of Matt Rissi, a DJ whose Iowa City shows I always turned out for, in a locally notorious highway stripclub which, from what I could gather, represented everything right and wrong about a Midwestern gentleman’s club. I was sold. Here was something with the promise of actual crazy—out of the ordinary, unpredictable, uncertain. Something that might actually push the envelope rather than just repackaging routine nightlife fare.

On March 8, I cabbied it up I-380 with a few friends to the Pornstar’s Ball. After finally making it into Woody’s I watched a stripper with a crazy fit body, clad in nothing more than a pink thong, turn her ass out to the crowd as if to wordlessly pose the question, “Is there any way I could make this look better?” A second later, she was giving the stumped onlookers the answer, letting loose a mean yet effortless twerk. The DJ setup to her right was flanked on its left by a collection of neon-skirted and tank-topped raver chicks seeming to cheer on the gyrations, waving their arms back and forth to the music in fluid, aimless zigzags. Out of the ordinary? Check.

The first major challenge of the evening was the crowd. Apparently, the 500 RSVP was no

joke. My desire to carve out semi-permanent space to mill about soon gave way to my curiosity about just who turns out for Pornstar’s Ball.

After making a few rounds about the club, I came to recognize that this was likely the most diverse electronic dance music (EDM) show I’d ever attended. And I don’t mean the kind of token diversity you find in a college-brochure with everyone united in zombie smiles of togetherness despite their differences in skin color or manner of dress. No, I mean, raw, real diversity. People coming from all walks of life—race, class, gender, social scene—who wouldn’t otherwise associate with each other.

>>> THE PORNSTARS' BALL

Friday, May 10 | Woody's (9395 6th St SW,
Cedar Rapids) | 18+ (21+ BYOB)
Music from 10:30 p.m.-5:00 a.m.

After making my own way to the dance floor to join up with friends and appreciate the crowd from the inside, I found my mind riffing on sound clashes in electronic music. A DJ strings together a disparate set of sounds in a way that first jars the listener to attention and then gradually tries to habituate them to all these pieces that don’t seem to fit. This wasn’t really a part of the trap music I was hearing, but I felt like I was watching the visual equivalent of this as the crowd came together in fits and spurts.

I was mesmerized by the sight of a très chic duo in designer dresses that danced side-by-side a heavyset, gangster rap fan (a fact his t-shirt declares in no uncertain terms) who bobbed his head in time with the beat while sucking on an LED pacifier.

I found myself tallying up what seems like the most multicultural display of fauxhawks I’d ever seen in such close quarters until my heart sank as the last one I spotted belonged to

the person making out with the girl I’d judged hottest thing ever. But there was no time to indulge my misery as I found I desperately needed to make room for a middle-aged wom-

an who was using the full force of her generously proportioned backside to propel her perplexed but smiling dance partner across the length of the dance floor. Yeah, it was weird, and unnerving, and just a whole lot to take in. But I kind of loved it.

Matt Fee’s trap wound down and Matt Rissi took the stage next, starting in on a set of bass-



Photo by Joshua Distraction

heavy techno. The space in front of the stage begins to fill in with raver girls who danced and circulated the ubiquitous EDM “Crank It” sign to one another. The next few hours were a welcome assault on the senses, as I cycled back and forth through various states of arousal driven by conversation, chemicals and lust, all while never seeming to have to move to anything below 130 bpm. I dwelled on another analogy between electronic music and the interactions of the crowd, but it is hard to pick distinct memories out of the blur.

The line between amateur and professional dancers got blurred as well, as the strippers mixed in with the crowded assortment of ravers

over the course of the night. I don't mean that as some glib dig at EDM's penchant for risqué fashion—its true that attire honed for the stripper's stage, from nipple pasties to cheek cleav-

Here was something with the promise of actual crazy—out of the ordinary, unpredictable, uncertain. Something that might actually push the envelope rather than just repackaging routine nightlife fare.

age flattering hot pants, are now mainstays of EDM festivals—but, what got me was seeing the strippers at Woody's bring this full circle, donning rave accessories like rainbow striped stockings and UV paint for the night.

The pinnacle of this melding of styles is embodied by the stripper with porcelain-pale skin, framed by multi-colored furry boots and a shock of blue hair. If it wasn't for the ease and grace with which she balances her body against the pole, I'd be willing to believe she just came in as a regular EDM kid and, at some point during the night, elected to try her hand on stage on a whim.

That ease and grace stuck out in my mind so much that I blithely concluded that this girl

could be a professional dancer, one of the non-exotic variety. This followed by a rolling of my eyes as I realized she'd probably be making a fraction of her current income. And, with that my mind shifted from parallels between ravers and strippers to parallels between strippers and DJs. Just the way I respected this girl even more how lucratively she's using her talent, I feel the same esteem for Rissi bringing his DJ skills to the stripclub. Rather than putting on another warehouse show in purist fashion, Rissi had the entrepreneurial savvy to put on an event in the one local venue that would actually have no problem holding an event on rave time-frame. Add to this how the off-the-wall venue choice actually draws people in by the hundreds, rather than turning them away. Whatever its rocky moments, when seen as a whole, Pornstar's Ball was a stroke of genius.

Jerome Algiers is a writer based in Iowa City who has clearly spent much more time thinking about the relationship between EDM and stripclubs than he has about his pseudonym.

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BEST IN SHOW

Highlights from this year's batch of UI MFA shows

It's graduation time in Iowa City, and for the University of Iowa's School of Art and Art History, that means an avalanche of visiting artist and MFA shows are going up and then coming down far too quickly. Off campus, there is the general upswell of creative activity that spring always seems to bring: A new art gallery has opened up on the south side of town—McNutt Gallery—and alternative downtown spaces like the Paper Nest are staying busy presenting interesting shows.

For this column, though, we will attempt to draw some attention to a few highlights from the MFA show circuit. These easy-to-miss shows almost always last only one week, and certainly deserve more than a paragraph each, but here are some quick thoughts on some of the work:

MARY COATS' MFA show in Art Gallery West was as sensitively calibrated as those of us who have come to know her work would expect. An incredibly intense wall painting and some recent paintings with slightly looser forms were balanced against carefully selected pairings of paintings from the past two years. One section stood out to me sharply: In the back of the gallery, covering holes in the wall that have never been patched, were a collection of four very minimal wood,



white and gray paintings with pink edges that never looked better. Held against the noise of some of the more intense color combinations in the main gallery, these quiet works give a sense of a more delicate range of expression.

LIZ DAVENPORT'S show at Public Space One (PS1) was large, baroque and delightful. I was pleased to see paintings that I have become familiar with dressed up in new clothing, looking confident and assured in their surroundings. New work surprised me: The "Water Room" with its waves is fresh and delightfully simple. There was evidence all around the gallery of a confident hand and a genuine confrontation with the disconcerting emptinesses of modern life. But Davenport's paintings hold out against the abyss: Her darkly imaginative world keeps the artist present in the work, the precariously constructed worlds acting as a kind of ballast against despair.



Liz Davenport

NAQEEB STEVENS' MFA show in the Porch Gallery at Studio Arts had as its center a handmade sidewalk apron—a transition from sidewalk to street.

Get Artsy

Gallery Shows of note for May 1-15



RETURNED TO LIFE

Alexandra Janezic
The Paper Nest (220 E. Washington—Behind Beadology)
Fri., May 3 5-8 pm (opening)

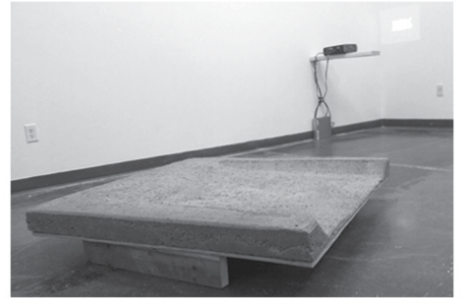
An addition to Iowa City's mix of alternative gallery spaces like White Rabbit and Prairie Lights, the Paper Nest has great promise as a unique installation space for small work. Through May, they will be exhibiting drawings by Alexandra Janezic, an MFA candidate at The University of Iowa Center for the Book who grew up in Buffalo, New York.



THE ARTISTS

McNutt Gallery (204 Stevens Drive)
Through May 22

The McNutt Gallery is making a go at showing serious work for an Iowa City audience, and this group show includes an impressive roster of faculty, visitors, current and former Iowa students and others. Located in a space outside of the downtown loop, this gallery has the potential to really add something new to the local art scene.



An ungainly thing, and something I only started to really notice when pushing around a stroller on a regular basis, but a moment of everyday transition in walking. The two videos, hard to look at, forced a confrontation with the in-between of life—the words describing dialogue (“said,” “asked,” “replied”) and steps through an endless hallway in a nameless store.

HEATH SCHULTZ’S “unspectacular” MFA show in the Drewlowe made very clear why the current School of Art and Art History’s prohibition of MFA shows outside of University property is a little silly. Two chairs in front of a screen did the job of “showing” his video, but the screenings at PS1 were much more to

the point. In any event, Schultz re-made Guy Debord’s *The Society of the Spectacle for the 21st Century*, sustaining Debord’s argument, correcting his errors and generally making clear that things are as bad as they ever were. But there is hope in this film—perhaps hope only that by thinking a little bit more clearly, what is real and what is spectacle might more readily reveal themselves. This, at least, would be progress.

JEFF TRUEBLOOD’S MFA show in Art Gallery West was long on atmosphere: He painted the walls a deep blue-gray, which allowed his “night” paintings a sufficiently dark ground not to pop off the walls. These

paintings represent largely uninhabited dark landscapes, and abound in acidic purples and violet-reds balanced against natural landscape forms or, in a couple of notable cases, eerily lit snows. All is not well in this world, and in their most successful moments, the black of night, the violet-tinged shadows and warm man-made lighting open out into a quietly disturbing scenario.

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.

(All images provided by the artists)



SOMETIMES IT'S NOT THAT EASY TO JUST SAY NO.

During the run-up to the Iraq war, there was a popular bumper sticker which satirized the idea of Iraqi elections. It showed an imaginary Iraqi ballot with two voting options. Option one said “I vote for Saddam Hussein,” option two said “Please arrest me and torture my family.”

Chilean voters in 1988 may have felt that their options were similarly limited. Pablo Larrain’s *No*—Chile’s entry to the best foreign film category at this February’s Oscars—tells the story of that country’s 1988 referendum on whether dictator Augusto Pinochet would remain in power for another eight years, or if Chile would opt to hold open elections to install a new government.

It is surely a symptom of the perversity of superpower foreign policy during the Cold War that, after the U.S. government had helped to create the Pinochet regime and then propped it up for 15 years, it decided to throw its political and economic weight behind the nationwide referendum. Despite U.S. assistance in the effort to secure a ‘no’ vote, however, the movie’s protagonist—advertising man Rene Saavedra who is leading the “No” campaign—has his hands full. Since, in a Latin American military dictatorship, nationwide elections can be conducted in less than a year and a half, Saavedra and his team must come up with a

strategy, create a campaign and deliver the message within a period of just a few weeks. Add to this the very real tension of whether the regime will even go along with the legitimate outcome of this vote, and the associated threats to the family members of those working on the campaign, and you end up with something like *Mad Men* meets *The Year of Living Dangerously* or, more ominously, *The Killing Fields*.

Political movies made in the U.S. these days seem to sort themselves into a few categories. First are the heroic tales of accomplishment against past social barriers, which have been heroically transcended: *42—The Jackie Robinson Story* awaits summer audiences. Second are the tortured but, ultimately, enlightening stories of historical re-conceptualization: The saga of Lincoln’s presidency has already been re-told to us by an Irishman. More recent is the worship of the heroic and unaccountable clandestine services, sometimes aided by the film industry itself: securing the freedom of erstwhile hostages in the Iran of 1979 in Ben Affleck’s *Argo*, and the somewhat more shadowy exploits of the Navy Seals in *Zero Dark Thirty*. All these are worthwhile, though maybe somewhat narcissistic, endeavors of political filmmaking. But where are the political films that can do it all—that can give viewers a compelling narrative,

Now Showing

More shows of note
for May 1-15



Scary Movie V

Malcolm D. Lee

Marcus Theatres

Malcolm Lee does an admirable job of trying to keep up with the absurd pretexts for horror movies in the early 21st century. Between the internet, foreign markets and the homeland, this must get exhausting. *Scary Movie V* probably looks a lot like *Scary Movie 10,000*, but it nonetheless keeps us current with why we walked out on much in the current horror films genre, once we’d finished the Junior Mints.

42

Brian Helgeland

Marcus Theatres

Thoughtful Americans, after watching *42*, may ask a series of difficult, yet fundamental, questions to our national history—should sport count at all as a measure of social change? Was Jackie Robinson or Branch Rickey the real hero of the integration of baseball? Would integration have happened no matter what, or was Jackie Robinson the only player who could realistically accomplish it? Brian Helgeland’s film answers none of these questions, but instead offers a superficial, though uplifting, account of the integration of America’s pastime.

interesting characters and a reasonably objective view of actual historical circumstances? Alas, we may have to look abroad (again) to a tragic but profound political situation that the U.S. government—spoiler alert—helped to create. At a time when *G.I. Joe Retaliation* shows at not one, but ALL of the Marcus Theaters in Iowa City, perhaps the Chileans can teach us something.

Gael García Bernal's character does not exactly come off as the Chilean Don Draper, but his creative process has some of the same approach (minus the heavy drinking).

The C.I.A. must count as some sort of victory the fact that the campaign to vote out Pinochet comes off more as advertising than as revolution. Saavedra, played by Gael García Bernal, insists on this approach from the beginning: Portraying the evils of Pinochet will only convince people to be afraid of those evils, but portraying the alternative as better will more certainly win the day.

Bernal's character does not exactly come off as the Chilean Don Draper, but his creative process has some of the same approach (minus the heavy drinking). He has the rather daunting assignment of convincing Chileans to do something which their own government has told them is wrong, unpatriotic and potentially dangerous. He goes about this not by pointing out the injustices, corruption and human rights abuses of the Pinochet regime, but by essentially making democracy look fun.

The film's story is told in a sort of pastiche, comprised of family drama, crowd shots of political rallies and snippets of the ads themselves. While it shares some of *Argo's* self-congratulatory theme that the cinema industrial complex in some indirect way can promote

meaningful freedom, *No* is much more about how film sells itself: that the packaging of the media message is sometimes just as important as the truths it reveals.

American politics, in its own expensive and indirect way, similarly forces a choice between 'yes' or 'no' in most of its national elections: Is it 'morning in America' or four more years of the same old thing? At the very time that Chileans were being asked to make a life-altering choice between the continuation of a military dictatorship or the prospect of an untested, potentially disastrous democratic future, American voters were being given the infamous Willie Horton ad campaign and embarrassing pictures of Michael Dukakis trying to see over the hood of an Abrams tank.

Pablo Larrain's movie reminds us that the two political approaches are maybe not that far apart. In both countries the message is mediated by the inelegant chicanery of the sales pitch, but we can't help but feel that the posturing in our case is both more resource-intensive, and at the same time, somehow less stark. A revolution, as Mao Zedong famously remarked, is not a dinner party. It may, however, be a movie, screenplay or television campaign.

For American audiences at least, Pablo Larrain's *No* forces us to ask why we have been wasting all those advertising dollars on Super Bowl beer commercials rather than on more profound issues. In Chile's case, these are issues of life or death.

No plays at the Bijou May 1-2.

Warren Sprouse teaches high school in Cedar Rapids. He sends his sympathies to the Cuban national baseball team.

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WE HAVE GROWLERS

LIVE MUSIC PREVIEW

The month of May has come, and, while this means nothing for the various working stiffs in Iowa City, it does signal one of my favorite times of the year: the exodus of most of the undergrads and the summer slowdown. Everyone's more relaxed, restaurants don't have lines and I get free reign of Brothers ... if I wanted that. Although the slowdown applies to many realms of day-to-day life, it does not apply to nightlife in Iowa City. May is the start of a very busy, very promising concert season. While there is much to look forward to in the second half of the month, the first half isn't chopped liver.



Photo via Minimalwave

Further Reductions w/ Beau Wanzer, Grave Posture // Gabe's // May 8 // 10 p.m. // Free, 19+

Since high speed internet connections have become the norm, great music that was once relegated to the footnotes of history and the bargain bins of record stores has found a platform that affords greater exposure. This has allowed for many artists to get their proper due—even if it is a little too late—and has also been a source of inspiration

for future musicians. The latter part of this statement is applicable to Further Reductions. The Brooklyn-based duo of Shawn Devin and Katie Rose mine the re-found music archives of the web to create their modern hypnotic dance music.

Devin and Rose pull heavily from the French-Belgian punk movement of coldwave. Although it was passed over during its time due to the prominence of post-punk and new wave, coldwave is defined by its heavy use of

Calendar

MUSIC

FRI., MAY 3

Bright Giant

Blue Moose Tap House, Free, 7 p.m.

Heatbox CD Release Party

Gabe's, \$10, 9:30 p.m.

Jason Clothier

Mendoza Wine Bar, Free, 8 p.m.

Bluegrass

PS-Z, Free, 7 p.m.

Fielded

The Mill, \$7, 9 p.m.

Cinco de Paco

Yacht Club, \$3, 10 p.m.

SAT., MAY 4

Minnesota

Blue Moose Tap House, \$15-18, 9 p.m.

Transit

Gabe's, \$12-14, 5:15 p.m.

Noah's Ark Was a SpaceShip w. Emperor's Club

Gabe's, \$6, 10 p.m.

Big Sandy and His Fly Rite Boys

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$16-19, 8 p.m.

The Smawpad Trio

Mendoza Wine Bar, Free, 8 p.m.

Orchestra Iowa presents American Gothic

Paramount Theatre (Cedar Rapids), \$18-48, 7:30 p.m.

Bruce Robison & Kelly Willis

Redstone Room (Davenport), \$17-20, 8:30 p.m.

S. Carey (of Bon Iver)

The Mill, \$10-12, 9 p.m.

Irish Sessions

Uptown Bill's, Free, 4:30 p.m.

Robert Johnson (One Man Band)

Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 p.m.

Seldom Seen

Yacht Club, \$5, 7 p.m.

SUN., MAY 5

Attack Attack!

Blue Moose Tap House, \$13.50-15, 5:30 p.m.

MON., MAY 6

Kendrick Lamar

IMU Main Lounge, Sold Out, 7 p.m.

The Bunny The Bear

Gabe's, \$8-10, 6 p.m.

TUES., MAY 7

Lipstick Homicide

Trumpet Blossom Cafe, 9 p.m.

WEDS., MAY 8

Zoe Keating

Englert Theatre, \$18-22, 8 p.m.

Harp Recital

Falconer Gallery, Free, 7:30 p.m.

Katchafire

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$16-19, 7 p.m.

Burlington Street Bluegrass Band

The Mill, \$5, 7 p.m.

I Hear IC

Trumpet Blossom Cafe, 8 p.m.

THURS., MAY 9

METZ, No Joy, Paducah

Gardner Stage, Grinnell College, Free, 9 p.m.

Drew Nelson

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$12-15, 7 p.m.

Doug Langbehn Trio

Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 7 p.m.

Raw Mojo

The Mill, \$6, 9 p.m.

The O'My's

Yacht Club, \$5, 10 p.m.

FRI., MAY 10

Il Cattivo

simplistic keyboards and drum machines as well as its cool, detached vocal style. Further Reductions do not deviate from this template. Both Devin and Rose icily deliver their lyrics over staccato drum machine rhythms and futuristic keyboards, recalling bands like Absolute Body Control and Linear Movement as well as the Liquid Sky soundtrack. If you like local synth duo Goldendust, you'll like Further Reductions a whole lot.



Photo via Brooklyn Vegan

Vietnam // The Mill // May 13 // \$10 Advance, \$12 Day of Show; 19+

2013 signals the re-formation of Vietnam—no, not the country—the six piece led by Brooklyn-based songwriter Michael Gerner. For the past six years, Vietnam didn't exist. Following the release of their self-titled album in 2007, Gerner disbanded Vietnam and packed up shop for Los

Angeles. There, he made experimental music and film soundtracks with analog synthesizers. While I'm sure that music is good, it's better that he is making rock music again as Vietnam.

Vietnam has a sound that is firmly anchored in blues, rock and Americana. It shares more than a passing resemblance to the band The War on Drugs due to the fact that both are influenced by Bob Dylan, The Velvet Underground and Sonic Youth. Vietnam's new album an

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Blue Moose Tap House, 8 p.m.

Casey Donehew Band

First Avenue Club, \$17, 8:30 p.m.

Strictly Vinyl

Gabe's. Free, 10 p.m.

Tree Shelton Hip Hop Battle

Gabe's, \$5, 10 p.m.

Dan Bern

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$17-21, 8 p.m.

Steve Grismore

Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 8 p.m.

Calliko

Redstone Room (Davenport), \$15-20, 10 p.m.

Dick Prall

The Mill, \$12-15, 9 p.m.

The Laureates

Yacht Club, \$5, 9 p.m.

SAT., MAY 11

Andre Nickatina

Blue Moose Tap House, \$15, 9 p.m.

Greg Brown Record Release Show

Englert Theatre, \$30-45, 8 p.m.

The Body

Gabe's, \$7, 9 p.m.

Masaki Batoh's Brain Pulse Music

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$15-18, 8 p.m.

Tony Brown

Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 8 p.m.

An Evening With Bob Dorr & the Blue Band

Redstone Room (Davenport), \$10, 8 p.m.

Punk Show

Trumpet Blossom Cafe, 10 p.m.

Jet Edison

Yacht Club, \$6, 10 p.m.

SUN., MAY 12

Iowa City Community String Orchestra

Englert Theatre, Free, 3 p.m.

The Pines w. Jeffrey Foucault

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$15-18, 7 p.m.

MON., MAY 13

Whitechapel w. Motionless in White

Blue Moose Tap House, \$17-20, 5:30 p.m.

Vietnam

The Mill, \$10-12, 9 p.m.

TUES., MAY 14

Enter the Haggis

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$15-18, 7 p.m.

Isotopes

Public Space One, \$3, 8 p.m.

WEDS., MAY 15

Somo w. Nick Luebke

Blue Moose Tap House, \$13-15, 7 p.m.

Grant-Lee Phillips

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$17-21, 7 p.m.

The Thermals

The Mill, \$12-15, 9 p.m.

THURS., MAY 16

Tylan (from Girlyman)

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$12-15, 7 p.m.

Miles Vincent Trio

Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 7 p.m.

Dan DiMonte and the Bad Assettes

Yacht Club, \$5, 7 p.m.

MAY 2-5

La Clemenza di Tito

Englert Theatre, \$5-20, 8 p.m.

MONDAYS: Open Mic w. J. Knight

The Mill, Free, 8 p.m.

TUESDAYS: Lower Deck Dance Party

Yacht Club, \$1, 10 p.m.

WEDNESDAYS: Free Jam Session

Yacht Club, Free, 10 p.m.

American Dream shows Gerner shifting and adding upon these influences. There is still the dark lyricism, social awareness and moodiness that mark its previous albums, but the addition of a synthesizer and a violin brings a deeper darkness to the overall sound, making the seediness of Gerner's world much more tangible. In the end, an American Dream shows that although this might be a new Vietnam with a couple of new tricks, the old Vietnam is still around and strong as ever.

The Laureates w/ Colin Gilmore, Julie Klee
Yacht Club // May 10 // \$5, 19+

In the summer of 2011, I got a promo CD from a band called The Laureates. There weren't too many details outside of a fairly regular origin story. Being the listener that I am, I skipped over the promo materials and listened to the record. The first thing that I noticed in listening was the quality. The musicianship is very precise. The guitars are jangly and noisy and held up by a solid rhythm section. The harmonies are sharp and come in on time. And, the songwriting itself is pretty good. While all of these things are positive, a lot of modern indie pop bands—ones not indebted to the legend of Kurt Cobain—do this. What makes



The Laureates stand out from the pack?

The difference is in the pace. Their ballads are slow but never too slow. Their pop songs are fast but not too fast. They found the balance and made crisp songs that are fully entertaining. Although they've only been playing as a band since 2007, The Laureates' sound suggests they've been playing together longer than that because they know how far they can push themselves without it

seeming unnatural. It's similar to a skill possessed by The Ponys, another Chicago pop band that has a sonic attack—and finesse—similar to The Laureates. Much like the pop bands around Iowa City, The Laureates are worth checking out.

A.C. Hawley runs The Chrysanthemum Sound System on KRUI 89.7 FM. It airs on Thursday nights from 10:00 p.m. to the Witching Hour.

Calendar

THURSDAYS: Gemini Karaoke
Blue Moose Tap House, Free, 9 p.m.
Soulshake
Gabe's, Free, 10 p.m.
Little Village Live
Public Space One, Free, 5 p.m.
Open Mic
Uptown Bill's, Free, 7 p.m.

ARTS/EXHIBITION

FRI., MAY 3
ArtsFest
Studio Arts Bldg. 1375 Hwy 1 West, Free, 4 p.m.
Opening Reception: Brendan Baylor
Public Space One, Free, 7 p.m.

SUN., MAY 5
Exhibition Closes: University of Iowa Faculty Biennial
Figge Art Museum, Free, 5 p.m.
Cheap Art Bazaar
PS-Z, Free, 1 p.m.

THURS., MAY 9
Art Talk : American POP Art!
Figge Art Museum, Free, 7 p.m.

SAT., MAY 11
Beaux Arts Fair
Figge Art Museum, \$2, 10 p.m.
Exhibition Opens: Young Artists at the Figge
Figge Art Museum, Free, 10 a.m.
Exhibit Opens: The Madeleine Albright Collection
National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, Free, 10 a.m.

SUN., MAY 12
Exhibition Closes - Bertha Jaques: Botanical Prints and Photographs
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 12 p.m.
Tour of American POP! and Selections from the CU Art Museum Collection
Figge Art Museum, Free, 1:30 p.m.

THURS., MAY 16
American POP! Selections from the CU Art Museum Collection

Figge Art Museum, Free, 6 p.m.

MAY 10-12
Crescent City Beads Trunk Show
Beadology, Free, 12 p.m.

MAY 3-JULY 16
Trouble the Water
Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), Free

MAY 4-SEPT. 1
Pushing the Envelope
Figge Art Museum, Free
American POP Art!
Figge Art Museum, Free

NEW MOBILE SITE

Visit LittleVillageMag.com/calendar
for updated show information
when you are on the go.

MAY: THE MONTH IN THEATRE

University of Iowa Theatre

New Play Festival

May 5-12

Though the University of Iowa presents excellent theatre throughout the school year, its reputation in playwriting comes to full flower in the University's annual New Play Festival. During the last week of spring semester classes, the department stages five full productions of plays by MFA playwriting students, daily readings of scripts by MFA and undergraduate students and roundtable discussions of the works presented. Guest artists, which this year include Emmy-winning writer and producer Rick Cleveland and Sarah Lunnie of the Actors Theatre of Louisville, attend each full production and provide feedback to the playwrights during the roundtable discussions. The

theatre department cancels classes during the festival so that students may attend as many events as possible. Consider attending a show or reading—you never know which play will become the next modern classic. The festival runs from May 5-12. For more information on individual plays, guest artist biographies and a complete schedule events, visit the Theatre Department website at theatre.uiowa.edu/production/new-play-festival.

Dreamwell Theatre *The Children's Hour*

May 10, 11, 17, 18

Dreamwell Theatre continues their season's focus on female playwrights with *The Children's Hour*, directed by Elizabeth Tracey. Based on a true story, the play focuses on a troubled student at a girl's boarding school who begins a rumor that two of the school's

female teachers are lesbians. Focused on the subjects of LGBT issues and harassment, the play feels ahead of its time. Indeed, when it premiered on Broadway in 1934, the very mention of homosexuality in a play was a crime in New York. The play runs at the Unitarian Universalist Society in Iowa City on May 10, 11, 17 and 18. For more information on purchasing tickets, visit dreamwell.com.

City Circle Acting Company of Coralville

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum

May 10-12, 17-19

Are you in the mood for something familiar? Something peculiar? How about something for everyone? Check out City Circle's production of the Tony Award-winning musical, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, directed by Patrick Du Laney. With music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, the plot is a wild and witty farce based on *Miles Gloriosus* and other Ancient Roman comedies by Plautus,

LITTLEVILLAGEMAG.COM/CALENDAR

Calendar

ONGOING

Yunomi Invitational

Akar Design, Free

Brendan Baylor Exhibition

Public Space One, Free

Barry Anderson

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), Free

Native Kids Ride Bikes

Black Box Theater, Iowa Memorial Union, Free

Thursdays: Artvaark (Art Activities)

Uptown Bill's, Free, 6 p.m.

MAY 10-11

The Children's Hour

Dreamwell Theatre, \$10-13, 7:30 p.m.

MAY 10-19

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum

Coralville Center for the Performing Arts, \$12-27

THROUGH MAY 26

The Last Romance

Old Creamery Theatre (Amana), \$18-27

TUES., MAY 7

The Seven Year Itch

Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$3, 6:30 p.m.

THURS., MAY 9

Screening of "Half the Sky"

Figge Art Museum, \$10-12, 6 p.m.

FRI., MAY 10

Manet: Portraying Life Exhibition Series

Englert Theatre, \$15-18, 7 p.m.

SUN., MAY 12

abUSed: The Postville Raid screening

Public Space One, Free, 1 p.m.

THEATRE

THROUGH MAY 4

R.U.R. (Rossum's Universal Robots)

Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$15-20

The Wizard of Oz

Theatre Cedar Rapids, \$20-30

FRI., MAY 10

SPANK! The Fifty Shades Parody

Paramount Theatre (Cedar Rapids), \$28-38, 7:30 p.m.

CINEMA

FRI., MAY 3

Love Free or Die

Trinity Episcopal Church (Iowa City), Free, 7 p.m.

MON., MAY 6

Film Screening by Jesse McLean

Public Space One, Free, 7:30 p.m.

LITERATURE

FRI., MAY 3

Ink Lit Mag Issue #4 Release Party

Public Space One, Free, 7 p.m.

Voicebox

Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$7 Suggested Donation,

but with a vaudevillian flair. The play runs May 10-12 and 17-19 at the Coralville Center for Performing Arts. For more information on show times and tickets, visit citycircle.org.

Fourth Room Theatre

Cymbeline

May 24-26, May 30-June 1

Can't wait until the middle of summer for your outdoor Shakespeare fix? Fourth Room Theatre, the newest independent theatre company in Iowa City, will stage an ambitious production of William Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*. Based on ancient Celtic legends, the play straddles an uneasy line between tragedy, comedy, romance and fantasy—making it one of Shakespeare's least-performed works. Critics have found the play so problematic that even playwright George Bernard Shaw wrote his own ending! Director Angie Toomsen hopes to bring a sense of enchantment to the audience, including an outdoor performance space, bird motifs and ghostly spirits. The

core members of Fourth Room Theatre want the play to be as accessible as it is entertaining, and have been working on a fundraising campaign to make the production free to the public. The play will be staged May 24-26 and May 30-June 1 in an outdoor space near Kinnick Stadium. For updates, follow Fourth Room Theatre on Facebook. (Disclosure: The writer of this column has a role in this production.)

OF THE FALLS

UI New Play Festival
David Thayer Theatre
May 5 | 5:30 and 9:00 p.m.
\$5 (students free)



Theatre Cedar Rapids

The Wizard of Oz

April 26-May 18

A family show is one that can be enjoyed by family members of all ages, but for different reasons. The stage musical version of L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is a show

for the entire family. Adults can read into the play's populist symbolism. Teenagers can find parallels to Pink Floyd music. Children, and even jaded older members of the family, delight in the songs and fanciful setting as Dorothy Gale travels on her journey to achieve her goals. The play runs at Theatre Cedar Rapids from April 26 through May 18. For more information, visit theatreocr.org.

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

Calendar

LITTLEVILLAGEMAG.COM/CALENDAR

8 p.m.
Christine Sneed reading
Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m.

TUES., MAY 7
Geoffrey Nutter reading
Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m.

WEDS., MAY 8
Talk Art
The Mill, Free, 10 p.m.

THURS., MAY 9
Loren Glass reading
Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m.

FRI., MAY 10
Robin Hemley reading
Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m.

TUES., MAY 14
Paul's Book Club
Prairie Lights, Free, 7 p.m.

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

COMEDY

FRI., MAY 3
Paperback Rhino (improv comedy)
Public Space One, \$2, 10:30 p.m.

MAY 3-4
Mike Lawrence
Penguin's Comedy Club, \$12.50, 7:30 p.m.

FRI., MAY 10
Aziz Ansari
Englert Theatre, Sold Out, 10 p.m.

MAY 10-11
Rocky LaPorte
Penguin's Comedy Club, \$12.50, 7:30 p.m.

Mondays: Catacombs of Comedy
Yacht Club, \$3, 9 p.m.

Thursdays: The Everyone Gets Laid Comedy Show
Gabe's, \$3, 8 p.m.

DANCE

WEDS., MAY 8
UI Swing Club
Public Space One, Free, 7:30 p.m.

SAT., MAY 11
Undergraduate Dance Concert
Space Place Theatre, \$6-12, 8 p.m.

KIDS

FRI., MAY 3
Doodlebugs Preschool Program
Ladd Library (Cedar Rapids), Free, 10:30 a.m.

SAT., MAY 4
Celebrate Your Super Power!
Iowa Children's Museum, 10 a.m.
Broadway Buddies: Session 4 Begins
Iowa Children's Museum, \$60, 9 p.m.

SUN., MAY 5

IYWP Food Writing Workshop
PS-Z, Free, 10 a.m.

MON., MAY 6

Kids Drama Club
PS-Z, Free, 6 p.m.

THURS., MAY 9

Pajama Story Time - Grand Prix
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Free, 7 p.m. ICPL
Groovin' at the Englert
Englert Theatre, Free, 10:20 a.m.

SAT., MAY 11

Saturday Morning Cartoons
Faulconer Gallery, Free, 1 p.m.

SUN., MAY 12

IYWP Food Writing Workshop
PS-Z, Free, 10 a.m.

MON., MAY 13

Kids Drama Club
PS-Z, Free, 6 p.m.

TUES., MAY 14

Family Night
Coralville Public Library, Free, 6:30 p.m.

WEDS., MAY 15

Homeschool Day: G.W. Carver
African American Museum of Iowa, 1 p.m.

THURS., MAY 16

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

Tuesdays: Preschool Storytime

Coralville Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

THURSDAYS:

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

Wee Read

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

Art Adventure: Clay Play!

Iowa Children's Museum, Free, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

SATURDAYS:**Family Storytime**

Coralville Public Library, Free, 10:30 a.m.

MISC.**FRI., MAY 3**

Free Friday
African American Museum of Iowa, Free, 10 a.m.

Celebration Mixer

African American Museum of Iowa, Free, 5 p.m.
Gallery Talk/Performance: The Sound of Purple Minor

Faulconer Gallery, Free, 12:15 p.m.

A Damn Good Time Variety Show Vol. 4

Redstone Room (Davenport), \$5, 8 p.m.

SAT., MAY 4

20th Birthday Party
African American Museum of Iowa, Free, 10 p.m.

Picasso and Chicago Trip

Figge Art Museum, \$50-65, 8 a.m.

Digital Photography: A Balanced Look/workshop

Figge Art Museum, \$35-45, 12 p.m.

TUES., MAY 7

The Salt Company
Englert Theatre, Free, 8 p.m.

WEDS., MAY 8

Mendoza Trivia
Mendoza Wine Bar (Coralville), Free, 8 p.m.

THURS., MAY 9

Historic Neighborhood Walk
Brucemore Mansion, \$12-15, 6 p.m.

FRI., MAY 10

Martini Madness: Enchanted
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, \$35-75, 7 p.m.

SAT., MAY 11

Brucemore Plant Sale
Brucemore Mansion, Free, 9 p.m.
Wine Tasting, Hosted by Tabor Home Vineyards and Winery

Englert Theatre, Free, 6 p.m.

Old Capital City Roller Girls vs. St. Chux Derby Chix

Coralville Marriott, \$10-13, 7 p.m.

SUN., MAY 12

Was the Word
Englert Theatre, \$10 Suggested Donation, 7 p.m.

Listen to Your Mother

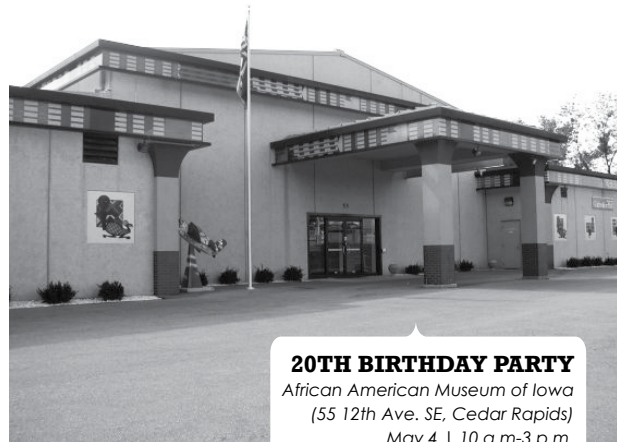
Legion Arts (Cedar Rapids), \$10-15, 2 p.m.

Mother's Day Brunch

National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, \$15-30, 12 p.m.

TUES., MAY 14

Arts Share: An Evening of Literature and Music
Brucemore Mansion, \$5-10, 7 p.m.

**20TH BIRTHDAY PARTY**

*African American Museum of Iowa
(55 12th Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids)
May 4 | 10 a.m.-3 p.m.*

THURS., MAY 16

Hired Help Tour at Brucemore
Brucemore Mansion, \$12-15, 6 p.m.
The Visual Universe of James Rosenquist - Lecture
Figge Art Museum, Free, 7 p.m.
Class on Watercolor · All Levels
Figge Art Museum, \$95-105, 12 p.m.
UI Environmental Coalition Meeting
Public Space One, Free, 7 p.m.

MAY 4-5

Free Mansion Tours
Brucemore Mansion, Free, 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.

MAY 15-16

"Adult Art Camp" Found Object Jewelry with Mary Zeran
Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, \$60 + \$10 Material Fee, 10 a.m.

Mondays and Thursdays: Yoga in the Gallery with Monica St. Angelo
Faulconer Gallery, Free, 12:15 p.m.

Sundays: Funday Pub Quiz
The Mill, \$1, 9 p.m.

SUBMIT EVENTS

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If I traveled back in time, would I get ancient diseases?

Time-traveling back to the middle ages has seemingly always been a popular theme in kids' shows, science-fiction books, etc. But what would actually happen if a person from our era traveled back in time? How would the difference in air pollution make an impact on the traveling person, and what medieval diseases would she get? And how many of the people there would die of bacteria that the modern person brought with her? —Kid from Sweden

They make it look so easy on *Doctor Who*. Everyone hops into a time machine with a madman at the controls and travels through time, creating paradoxes and re-writing history, and somehow everything works out. Only rarely does anyone get sick or spread disease to their unfortunate ancestors. It's conceivable, I suppose, that not only does the Doctor's time-travel rig come equipped with a universal translator, it's also got a universal inoculator.

We'll have none of that. Instead, let's approach the subject in the usual Straight Dope spirit of pessimistic realism. Limiting the discussion to time-travel destinations predating the discovery of antibiotics and vaccines, we find there are two main types of health-related trouble the intrepid temporal explorer could be setting herself up for.

The first possibility is falling prey to ancient diseases. Life during the middle ages, and during pretty much any other era until quite recently, was incredibly dirty, and depending on the time and place, clean food and water were more or less unknown. Air pollution could be a significant hazard if you traveled back to Victorian London, or for that matter spent a lot of time indoors around a smoky fa yak-dung fire—evidence of lung disease has been found in ancient societies ranging from Egypt to the American Southwest.

Water and food contamination from lead dishes and cups might be a problem, although that would require lengthy exposure. Simply eating or drinking anything prepared before about 1900 would present more immediate risks—our time traveler would have a fair chance of acquiring intestinal worms, trichinosis, giardia, or other parasites too numerous to list. Anthrax, tuberculosis, and botulism can all be spread by eating the flesh of infected animals, which I suspect were pretty common.

In early urbanized areas, dysentery, cholera, and typhus were the rule rather than the exception. For most of human history it would be difficult for our traveler to avoid smallpox, cowpox, and variations of influenza unknown to modern times; lepers and plague victims would warrant a wide berth. It's true that the modern suite of inoculations would likely protect our time traveler from many common diseases, unless of course she was some kind of anti-vaxxer, in which case she'd be on her own.

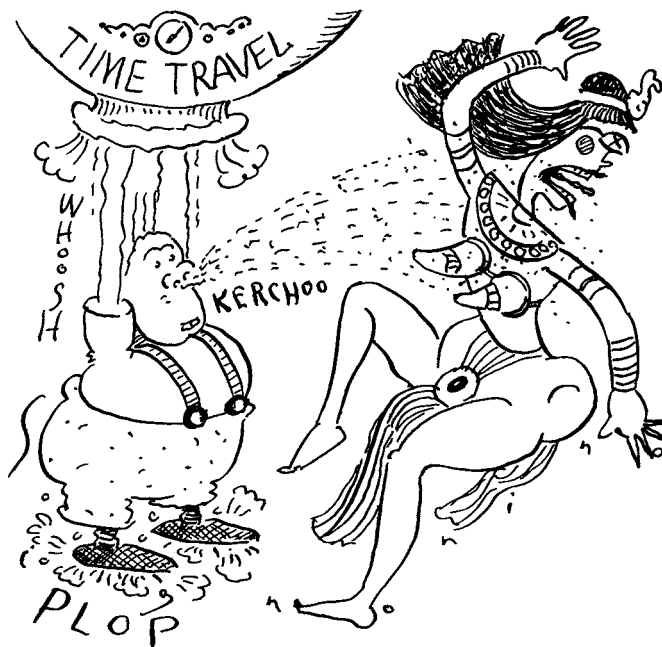
Ebola and Marburg viruses, although victims die so quickly the spread of either disease might be limited; and of course HIV/AIDS, with a current worldwide toll of 34 million infected and 30 million dead.

But new diseases wouldn't necessarily be the gravest threat. Possibly the real danger would come from ordinary illnesses that had evolved significantly over the centuries, in part because weaker strains had been killed off by antibiotics. Keeping Doctor Who's peregrinations in mind, remember also that time travel could involve journeying through space as well, meaning one could unwittingly bring pathogens to regions with minimal resistance to diseases of any sort.

The result might be an epidemiological catastrophe rivaling those that actually occurred. As is now well known, Old World diseases virtually depopulated the Americas within a short time after first contact, with estimates of mortality ranging as high as 90 percent. Fatal bugs included not just smallpox, which alone may have killed more than 15 million people following its introduction in Mexico in 1520, but everyday afflictions such as measles, mumps, chickenpox, and scarlet fever. And let's not forget the 1918 pandemic involving a newly mutated strain of influenza that killed 50 million or more.

In his classic *War of the Worlds*, H.G. Wells imagined that invaders from an advanced civilization might be wiped out by microbes harbored by us primitives. Judging from history, aspiring sci-fi authors might want to note, the more likely scenario puts the casualty count the other way around.—CECIL ADAMS

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



And of course food variety and balanced diets weren't the norm for most of human history. Nutritional diseases such as scurvy, pellagra, and goiter could well afflict our traveler if, having dodged all the above, she were obliged to subsist long enough on the local cuisine.

The other, far worse possibility is visiting modern plagues on the past. New diseases have shown up unpredictably throughout history. In 1967 the U.S. Surgeon General boasted that we'd won the war against infectious diseases; less than a generation later HIV/AIDS emerged. If our time traveler was a temporal Typhoid Mary, she might gift the past with such latter-day scourges as severe acute respiratory system (SARS), which in the first year of its appearance caused nearly 10 percent mortality even with modern medical care;

Curses, Foiled Again

• A mother and daughter with a baby in a stroller tried to avoid paying full fare on the Philadelphia subway by sharing a day pass intended for only one person. They went to the 60th Street Station, where the cashier punched the pass and allowed the daughter to enter. The mother then went to the 56th Street Station and used the pass. When the two women met up at the next station, neither had the baby. According to transit official Heather Redfern, both women assumed when they split up that the other one had taken the child. The women notified transit police, who reunited them with the child and declined to cite the pair for violating the day-pass rule. (*Philadelphia Daily News*)



• Lawmakers in Mississippi, the most obese state in the nation, overwhelmingly approved an “anti-Bloomberg bill,” which bans communities from requiring restaurants to post calorie counts on menus or limit portion sizes. State Sen. Tony Smith, who owns a chain of barbecue joints, said he introduced the measure because government has no business telling people what they cannot eat. “If I want fried fish,” he declared, “that’s my right.” (New York’s *Daily News*)

After someone broke into a church in St. Charles, Mo., and stole an undetermined amount of ice cream from a freezer, police spotted Andrew Steven Jung, 24, three blocks away, with ice cream all over his face and clothing. Jung told officers he was an “ice cream junkie.” (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*)

The Thrill Is Gone

Inspired by a YouTube video of thrill-seekers swinging through arch and canyon openings, Kyle Lee Stocking, 22, tried to swing from the top of Utah’s 140-foot-high Corona Arch. Stocking died, Grand County sheriff’s Lt. Kim Neal reported, because he made the rope too long, and when he “swung under the arch, he struck the ground.” (*The Salt Lake Tribune*)

Law Makers

• Montreal police arrested some 300 people protesting a city law against demonstrating without first providing police an itinerary of the protest route. The police charged the demonstrators with violating the law they were protesting by failing to notify authorities of their route. (Canada’s QMI Agency)

• Prodded by the meat and poultry industries, state legislators nationwide are introducing laws making it harder for animal-welfare advocates to investigate cruelty and food-safety cases. Measures in Indiana, Arkansas and Pennsylvania, for example, would outlaw videotaping agricultural operations. Iowa already made it illegal to deny belonging to an animal-welfare organization when applying for a farm job. Other bills are pending in California, Nebraska and Tennessee. The force behind this legislative agenda, whose purpose, Paul Shapiro, vice president of farm animal protection for the Humane Society of the United States, insisted, “is to prevent any pattern of abuse from being documented,” is the American Legislative Exchange Council. It labels those who interfere with animal operations “terrorists” and titled the California bill the “Animal and Ecological Terrorist Act,” although an AELC official admitted “Freedom to Farm Act” would’ve sounded better. (*Associated Press*)

Litigation Nation

• Richard and Melinda Armstrong sued the U.S. Forest Service for more than \$1 million after a large dead tree at a remote campsite in the Boise National Forest fell and injured their 6-year-old son. The Idaho couple accused the Forest Service of negligence for not removing the tree. (*Associated Press*)

• Larry Shandola, 62, a Canadian man serving a 31-year sentence in a Washington state prison for a 1995 murder, sued the victim’s widow, blaming her for persuading corrections officials to deny his transfer to a Canadian prison by placing him “in a false light.” Shandola is seeking \$100,000 in damages from Paula Henry. Calling the suit a ploy to harass and torment Henry, her lawyer, John Ladenburg said he doesn’t expect it to get very far in court but lamented, “He wins by costing her money.” (Canada’s *The National Post*)

Help a Robrot Out

A new web-based informational database for robots by robots provides advice that helps robots simplify complex tasks. Designed by European researchers who created RoboEarth, “a World Wide Web for robots,” the open-source robotics platform Rapyuta lets robots move their heavy computations into the cloud. It catalogs situations and objects that robots have encountered so other robots can access the information instead of having to build up their databases from scratch. Project leader Mohanarajah Gajamohan said that by decreasing the power needed for on-board computation, Rapyuta could make robots cheaper, longer running and more mobile. (*BBC News*)

More Equal Than Others

Rich Russians hoping to avoid Moscow’s notorious traffic jams are paying upwards of \$200 an hour to ride in emergency vehicles that use their sirens to scatter traffic in their path. The newspaper *Izvestiya* reported that when police stopped one of these “ambulance taxis” for violating traffic rules, they discovered “that the interior was fitted out like a high-class limousine with comfortable seats for transporting VIP passengers.” (Britain’s *The Daily Telegraph*)

Mother of the Year

After Leticia Silva, 31, was jailed in Florida for drug possession and lost custody of her daughters, authorities said she mailed the girls, ages 7 and 9, a knife from jail with instructions to murder their paternal grandparents, with whom they live in Greenville, N.C. The grandmother found the knife under one of the girl’s pillows and took the girls to the Pitt County Sheriff’s Office, where they told investigators of their mother’s instructions. A friend, Mary Snell, said regaining custody of her daughters was Silva’s “one goal in life.” (Tampa Bay’s *WFLA-TV*)

Badder Business Bureau

Authorities charged David Kitzki with setting fire to his house in Mequon, Wis. Kitzki, who owns his own fire-inspection business, told investigators he put a lit cigarette in a garbage can to see how long it would take to start a fire and then for the smoke detectors to go off, but it started burning out of control and he was unable to put it out himself. (Milwaukee’s *WISN-TV*)

Drinking-Class Heroes

• After police charged a 27-year-old man with impaired driving in Innisfil, Ontario, he called his mother to take him home. When the 53-year-old woman showed up a couple of hours later, the officer who arrested her son smelled alcohol on her and gave her a Breathalyzer test. She failed and was charged with impaired driving. (*The Canadian Press*)

• Less than a week after Floyd County, Ky., Sheriff John K. Blackburn was charged with drunken driving, his son, Jeffrey Blackburn, was charged with public intoxication. (*Associated Press*)

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



Merchandise

Totale Nite (Night-People Records)

merchandisetheband.wordpress.com

This isn't a mistake. This is a review for Tampa buzz-band Merchandise in the "Local Albums" pages of *Little Village*. After heaps of accolades from the music press—*NME* and *Pitchfork* among others—the Florida trio went to Iowa City's own Night-People to release their latest album, *Totale Nite*.

The five-song slab finds the Florida trio at their genre-bending best. The lead single, "Anxiety's Door," has garnered most of the early ink, and rightly so. The album's second track opens with a tightly coiled rhythm section that explodes with David Vassalotti's raw nerve guitar lick—which just begs for you to hum along. When the sparkling guitar recedes, the velvety baritone croon of Carson Cox floats in with a sobering load of solipsism: "Some things / Are never really there. / I walk the street at night, / I drink the perfumed air." "Anxiety's Door" is fraught with dynamic tension. Merchandise highlights Cox's vocals with simple, arena-ready propulsion; when he pulls back from the mic, Vassalotti leads the composition off into deeper waters. The solo and repetition of the opening guitar figure that ends the song is accompanied by winter storm wind gusts from the keyboards and eerie, distant wails from Cox.

The group's taught, post-punk numbers ("Anxiety's Door," "Who Are You?," and "Totale Nite") are strong. You can really hear the punk roots of the band's early days. However, the real key to *Totale Nite*'s success is the effectiveness of the album's two ballads. Especially strong is the road-weary third cut, "I'll Be Gone." The maudlin plod Merchandise establishes actually ends up opening sonic real

estate for Cox to really let his baritone brood and Vassalotti's guitar explore textures in sustained chords and arpeggiated runs. The gist of the lyrics isn't entirely clear, both due to a bit of slurring and some opaque imagery ("to walk in the daytime / amidst a hundred burning computers), but the distance and isolation are felt in the aching vocal delivery and the expansive fret work. The aural equivalent of showing, not telling.

If John Schlotfelt were an Instagram filter he'd be Hudson: retro, a little worn, but not too ostentatious. #NoLoFi



Huge Lewis

Ascending Into Heaven

hugelewis.bandcamp.com

"I have swallowed the sky/through only a straw"—the 56-second opener of *Ascending Into Heaven* is a quiet moment of organ and silly psychedelical lyrics that ends without resolving to the tonic. It gives no clue to the sloppy, unhinged pop songs that follow it. The rest of the songs make me think of middle period Pavement, but where Pavement grooves, Huge Lewis lurches and yelps.

Music this carefully constructed and carefully implemented could be off-putting, but

Huge Lewis isn't. Part of their aesthetic is to ride right up to the edge of being annoying. They hint at this by naming themselves after the second most annoying pop rock vocalist ever, Huey Lewis (the first being Eddie Money).

After heaps of accolades from the music press, Florida trio Merchandise went to Iowa City's own Night-People to release their latest album, *Totale Nite*.

Other Iowa City bands set out to damage their audience's hearing without bothering to properly tune their guitars; it's no innovation. But Huge Lewis imbues every chord progression on *Ascending Into Heaven* with tricky modulations that go back to the Beatles and Big Star. Nothing here is a two-chord piss take.

Recorded as it is in a deliberately primitive manner by Amana-based pop weirdo Ian Williams, I can't really catch most of what they're singing. From what I could make out, the album closer "Curse Words" contains no actual curse words. It's rendered in syllables so tortured they might as well be in Tagalog

Huge Lewis imbues every chord progression on *Ascending Into Heaven* with tricky modulations that go back to the Beatles and Big Star.

or Old Low Norse. Towards the end I catch the singer wailing "No social conscience! No consciences!" Trying to follow what's being sung is like making sense of the fine print on the Dr. Bronner's peppermint soap bottle: It means something, but the effort of figuring it out makes you dizzy.

All this slap-dashery hangs together, just. Lurking in this basement junk pile of an album is surprisingly sophisticated song-craft. There are bands (Jesus & Mary Chain comes to mind) that were ruined by achieving technical proficiency. Huge Lewis' songs could actually survive more careful treatment, but they're kind of great just as they are: both baffling and ingratiating.

Kent Williams is the son of Ofeig Clumsyfoot, who was the son of Ivar Horsetail.

ASTROLOGY FORECAST FOR MAY 2013

FOR EVERYONE—In May, we will find ourselves swept down a new road with only minimal preparation. We just have to trust that countless small decisions, made over a long period of time, often on the fly, have prepared us. The planets are taking things into their own hands. The world will work by different rules. It will suddenly respond better to sharing, consensus-building and cooperation, for example. Progressive views will be more welcome. In the meantime, until you get it figured out, prepare to be surprised.

♉ **TAURUS (April 19 - May 19)** Taureans are putting themselves on a new footing, aspirationally, socially and financially. Changes in Taurus's financial situation make this change necessary and also help make it possible. This departure from your old life takes place amidst a rapidly evolving social and economic context. Fortunately, the planets have lined up to help Taurus find the right partners. Others are making similarly comprehensive changes. Your efforts to manage the details of this difficult and fateful transition will yield especially useful insights. Others need to hear them.

♊ **GEMINI (May 20 - June 19)** All the altering things in this fast-changing world seem to run through Gemini's life. More so because Gemini possesses a special charm and an aura of prosperity nowadays. The issues are evolving rapidly and the first answer you give will not be the last. Second-guesses are inevitable, but things are important and you'll need to be involved. Offer your honest, heartfelt opinion. You'll be delighted at the influence you can exert on the process. People will even take your personal wish list seriously.

♋ **CANCER (June 20 - July 21)** Events are moving fast. Emotions are turbulent. Priorities are conflicting. Thoughts are confused. Events are affecting your support systems. Cancerians are hard-wired to create and maintain support systems; planetary influences have been strengthening those instincts. Recent experience has honed your ability to combat determined opposition. Your intuition is well-supplied with relevant insight. Your confidence is high; however, you have no direct leverage. Your skillful behind-the-scenes efforts could be all that keeps dubious "reforms," some well-intentioned, some not, from dismantling the support systems you've built.

♌ **LEO (July 22 - Aug. 21)** Most Leos probably realize by now that they have an enviable degree of influence over today's difficult, complicated and seemingly unpredictable events. This influence, though potent, is indirect and occasionally causes consequences of the unintended kind. Your influence is especially effective in May, and if you make the wrong choice, things can go wildly awry. To ensure the best outcome this time around you might have to

take a detached approach and oppose the inclinations of your superiors. Depend more on principles and ideals.

♍ **VIRGO (Aug. 22 - Sept. 21)** Virgos need to make as accurate an estimate as possible of the effect rapidly changing circumstances will have on their long-term financial goals.

As hard as it is to get an accurate reading on events now, things will continue to evolve. To reach your goal, you will need to re-calculate periodically and adjust your trajectory accordingly. Defend your plans; push back against pressures from higher ups, but be realistic. Virgos can still count on their ability to guide events in the direction they prefer.

♎ **LIBRA (Sept. 22 - Oct. 21)** May is a fateful month for Librans. You might feel at a disadvantage and uncertain of which direction to take. You might also feel like someone is forcing your hand. However, you have a lot of bargaining power and surprising influence over the outcome. Don't hesitate to call on this leverage, even when confronting determined opposition from those more powerful. Their hand isn't as strong as everyone thinks and your views carry more weight than you realize. The concessions you win will benefit many.

♏ **SCORPIO (Oct. 22 - Nov. 20)** Changes are occurring in your neighborhood that you personally find acceptable, for the most part. But things aren't as simple as they first appear. Many friends will be affected and their preferences must be taken into account. Any concessions that must be made to satisfy them will probably not be onerous. It's important that you be true to your principles throughout and that everyone involved respect that. This will guarantee a better outcome and change the way others regard you, in a good way.

♐ **SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 21 - Dec. 20)** Sagittarius is cleaning out their psychological and spiritual attic, making room for a new vision of the future. At the same time, they are building a new financial framework that will give them power to manifest that vision in the real world. Let this vision of the future be influenced by those you love or your future will be a lonely place. But envision a livelihood that will allow you to work for the general good, also, or you'll find it unsatisfying.

♑ **CAPRICORN (Dec. 21 - Jan. 18)** Capricorns see the need for change; they just aren't sure this is the right change.

Friction between yourself and change-minded associates is a constant; the threat of destructive confrontation ever present. The stars strongly recommend that you give family, friends and subordinates the benefit of the doubt. You'll be able to live with what they come up with; a lot of it will meet your own highest standards. You'll gain respect as part of a team seeking constructive reform, principles and reputation in tact.

♒ **AQUARIUS (Jan. 19 - Feb. 17)** The issue you're facing has serious real world consequences for yourself and others. Too much about it troubles and annoys you, making detached consideration impossible. Even if you could be objective, it's too complicated. It defies rational analysis and frustrates intuitive insight. You can't just stand by and let it resolve itself; the chances of a screw up are too great. Meanwhile, the clock is ticking. Engage those involved in an informal, relaxed setting. Leave seriousness at the door. A playful approach will yield breakthroughs.

♓ **PISCES (Feb. 18 - March 19)** Your conscience and your intuition are aligned and free of outside interference. You know the right way to go. You give reliable voice to everyone's innermost thoughts about the situation. You can speak calmly and confidently in a noisy debate; others find your words compelling. That much is easy. The problem is, you don't have much leverage over anyone's situation. The hard part is making a solid connection between the ideals you espouse and the realities people face. This connection is the secret ingredient.

♈ **ARIES (March 20 - April 18)** You'll have to jump in with both feet to keep your plans for the future on course. You can benefit a lot from the second-guessing sparked by mention of your ambitions, but only to a point. Your strength comes from firsthand knowledge of the immense pressures at work. You know in your gut which ideas will withstand these forces and which won't. The stakes are high. Don't sign off on anything unless it passes your reality test. And don't let anyone seize the reins.

—DR. STAR



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