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We welcome letters pertaining to the contents of the Reader. You may phone them in by calling 235-3000, ext. 460; address them to Letters to the Editor, Box 85803, San Diego, CA 92186-5803; fax them to 231-0489; or e-mail them to s.d.reader@eworld.com via the Internet. Please include your name, address, and telephone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

Maybe a teacher like Laura McNeal ("The Desire to Leave Hangs Like Heat," January 5) working as a sub only has the choice or, as she says, the two options: to pander or to punish. But in Boston when I was a sub, I took the middle option, which was to be on the side of learning. I did punish sometimes and I did pander sometimes, but mostly I was on the side of learning, and this was based on James Herndon's books, *How to Survive in School* and *How to Succeed in School* and other books. Rather than it being necessary to either pander or punish, I think it's possible to be on the side of learning, which is to be on the side of the student rather than on the side of the administration.

Don Stevens
Escondido

Are you related to Gina Arnold? Is she your sister? Otherwise, I can't imagine you allowing one of your music reviewers to review music *before they've heard it* ("Of Note," January 5). I admit it—I'm flabbergasted. Can I ask what your credentials are to be editing a major metropolitan weekly newspaper? Is this the New Journalism or something? What's next: are you going to encourage Gina to pretend she's inside Roger Clinton's head? That worked for Tom Wolfe.

But let's talk about you. You've been giving free rein to some very self-absorbed writers, with very inflated ego/talent ratios, some of them for decades now. Maybe they're *a!*l-related to you...or maybe you're just totally incompetent and have no clue about what real journalism is. Should you go back to school? Or perhaps read some respected organs of the press, like the *Times of New York* or *Los Angeles*?

Please let me offer a suggestion: send some brave Captain Willard upriver to find Gina Kurtz and terminate her command with extreme prejudice. She's operating outside the bounds of all accepted journalistic ethics and standards. And while you're at it, why don't you move back to Lorkwater, or Bull's, or Pizzle, or

whatever godforsaken place it was that you left before learning your craft.

Kennedy Gammage
San Diego

I take offense to your article "Room at the Inn" that appeared in the December 22 issue of your publication.

Why would Madeline DeFrees, who is a woman that appears to be financially comfortable and is able to shop at Farmers Market in Horton Plaza, come to the Maryland Hotel? Her sole intent seems to be to belittle the residents and the hotel and to write a story that will sell copies.

I especially disliked the unfair and unfounded inferences against our housekeepers. We have spent many hours and much money to offer a reasonably priced, secure, comfortable, and clean home for people who are on limited budgets.

In all fairness, Ms. DeFrees should visit two or three similarly priced hotels in the downtown area. She would then discover, as others already have, that the Maryland Hotel is truly providing a very nice environment for people with restricted incomes.

Thomas Mix
Manager

Maryland Hotel

Bad Name

This letter is in response to Mr. Bill Manson's "Smuggling through an Ozone Hole"

"City Lights," November 10). In his article, Mr. Manson asked, "Why such serious treatment for a chemical [CFCs] we use in refrigerators, in our cars' air conditioning, even in spray cans?" You and your readers might be interested to know that spray cans — like most other aerosol products — have not contained CFCs [chlorofluorocarbons] for 16 years!

In 1978, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration banned the use of CFC propellants in virtually all American-made aerosol products. U.S. manufacturers have government permission to use CFCs in less than 1 percent of aerosols. Most of these products are used for medical purposes, such as in asthma inhalers. Most European and Western Hemisphere nations have followed suit.

Repeated surveys show that the majority of American consumers don't know about the 1978 regulations and mistakenly believe aerosols represent a significant threat to the ozone layer. Through our organization and others, the aerosol industry is working to correct misperceptions about aerosols.

Carol Digges
Consumer Aerosol
Products Council

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Aw heck, party hearty anyway The results are in, and they don't look good for San Diego State. Fifty-three percent of 2200 test-takers flunked the English placement exam last year, while 81 percent of 4300 test-takers failed the math test. School officials blame local community colleges. "They're not prepared, and that has the universities concerned," says Rick Moore, SDSU director of communications. "This university, and most of the others, has been spending a considerable amount of money to bring people who come to us up to speed. And we'd like to see that accomplished before they get here." —T.J.A.

Fish that got away Although attendance at American theme parks was up an average of 2 percent in the year just ended, patronage at Sea World, one of the bedrocks of local tourism, has stagnated. According to an estimate by *Amusement Business* magazine, 3.7 million tourists passed through the gates of Shamu here, nearly a notch above the previous year. Sea World in Orlando, Florida, by contrast, was among the gainers, drawing 100,000 more visitors in 1994 than in 1993 for a total of 4.6 million. **Diane Oaks**, a spokeswoman for Sea World of San Diego, won't confirm the magazine's estimate, saying, "We don't release our attendance figures." She concedes, however, that attendance was flat, blaming a sharp decrease in "international visitation" and the still-suffering local economy. — T.K.A.

[illegible]

Poly roundup Do great minds work in tandem? **Mel Shapiro** was watching **Susan Golding's** state-of-the-city speech last week when he got a big surprise. Her honor wants to put the notion of a city political ethics commission before voters this year. Democratic activist and super-sleuth Shapiro proposed the same ballot idea last year to the council's rules committee, at which time the mayor and colleagues were on hand. "When I was in *Crash* talk-shows like a journalist!" When **New York City's** any other, and he, ex-pol **Hedgecock** begins yet another career when he takes his officially credentialized place under the capital dome next week — accompanied by a 150-member "citizens lobby" that will urge Republican lawmakers to swiftly pass the GOP's "Contract with America." Very important press release filed from Washington by new GOP congressman **Brian Baffert**: he thinks the Chargers will beat Pittsburgh. — **TKA**

Soy again? U-T editor Jerry Warren, quoted by Gina Lubrano, the paper's "readers representative," condemning Connie Chung for the Kathleen Gingrich "just between you and me" incident: "We do not want our readers to believe that we have joined the haters of any politician in the renunciation of our ethical and moral standards to facilitate our pursuit of controversy about those politicians." — M.P.

Contributors: Thomas K. Arnold, Matt Potter

The Reader offers \$25 for news tips published in this column. Call our voice mail at 235-3000, ext. 440. Or fax your tip to 231-0489.

Firefighters Fear Mouth-to-Mouth Diseases

By Thomas K. Arnold

The fear of AIDS and other communicable diseases is alive and well in the San Diego Fire Department. So much so that firefighters are battling hard against rules

that require them to give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation even if they can't put on their special protective gear first. They've lost the first round with the city attorney, who ruled against them. And soon they may face the wrath of gay activists, who accuse the firefighters of ignorance and failure to do their duty.

Fire battalion chief John Liberatore, who made the request of the city attorney's office, says he will demand the city furnish all 840 men and women in the fire department with personal "fanny packs," containing facemasks, latex gloves, and protective eye gear, at a cost to taxpayers of more than \$20,000.

"Federal law specifically states that firefighters should be protected from any blood-borne or air-borne pathogens," Liberatore says. "The problem has always been there, but now with the transmission of disease being so dominant, there is increased awareness of what could happen."

Fire trucks are already outfitted with respirators, masks, and other protective equipment, Liberatore says. "But if our firefighters are at an accident or responding to an emergency in a high-rise building, if someone should happen to need CPR, it isn't always prudent for them to run back to the apparatus to get the equipment," he says. "We only have so much oxygen-rendering equipment, and especially if we come upon a multi-casualty incident, it's a matter of either waiting for more equipment or accepting manual CPR."

Liberatore says that his request for fanny packs is unlikely to be fulfilled or even entertained until budgets are drawn up for 1996. In the meantime, he says, firefighters have no choice but to bend the

"If it was between a rock and a hard spot, they would have to perform CPR to save a life," he says. "That's why it's so important to us that we protect our firefighters. We do not enjoy putting them in that sort of situation to make that decision. They will perform their sworn duty, but at the same time we should not allow them to be exposed to any unnecessary risk, if we can prevent it."

Liberatore says his concerns grew after he was put in charge of a fire department committee that was assembled last year to review safety procedures. "We have had a lot of people who have been infected with

certain diseases throw-up on our firefighters and bleed on our firefighters," he says. "That's the line of business that we're in — it can happen at any moment. They can be exposed to contaminants very easily."

Liberatore sent a memo to the city attorney's office, asking "whether the language, at no time shall a rescuer provide unprotected respiratory support to a pa-

John Liberator demonstrates one of

tient," should be included in the San Diego Fire Department's Infection Control and Procedures Plan."

The city attorney ruled no, stating the proposed amendment "is inconsistent with the California Occupational Health and Safety Administration guidelines. Cal/OSHA guidelines do not preclude unprotected respiratory or other emergency care under 'extraordinary circumstances.' The proposed amendment is inconsistent with the Cal/OSHA guidelines because it completely bars unprotected emergency care being rendered by fire personnel."

Not only that, deputy city attorney Elmer Heap Jr., wrote, "The proposed amendment also increases the city's liability."

...increases the city's habi-



—

By Bill Manson

Like an anxious mother-in-law, she just wants to hear that the delivery was

Tigrinas are small, tabby cat-like creatures of the jungles of the Amazon. Like the jungles themselves, they're endangered — resistant to breeding in captivity.



Pat Quillen



Pat Quillen



Pat Quillen

We're standing beside a row of cages outside Pat's bungalow among California oaks and wild lilac trees. "Can you hold your feet up please," she says matter-of-factly. "One at a time will be fine." She sprays my soles with what she says is a disinfectant viricide to make sure I don't bring in germs to her refugees.

We walk gingerly into the walkway. "Don't bend down and put your face up to them," Pat warns. "Remember, these are wild." On the left is a somewhat striped cat, longer and thinner than a domestic one, and displaying, well, un-

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sticking through the gum. It could not close its mouth. My heart went out to it, I said. 'Something must be done. And that's how this all started.'

Queller took the cat—a leopard cat from South America—to a vet who told her to 'take it back and get a healthier one.' 'He didn't get it,' says Pat. 'I told him to either fix it or put it to sleep. He fixed it.'

Pat waited three months till the cat's jaw was mended, then took it to the San Diego Zoo and offered it to them. 'We'd taken it thinking we could give it to the zoo when it was well, but they said, Thank you, but gee, we don't want it. Like so many others I hadn't realized how overcrowded they were. I thought, It's a wild animal they'd be glad to have it.'

Word of mouth soon got around that Pat Quillen be-

teacher would take in home-
less exotic animals. "As time
went by, people began to come
knocking on my door, saying
"If you don't take this cat, we're
going to have it put to death."
And I'd look and it would be a
little wildcat. They had brought
it at a petshop, thinking that
eventually it would be mellow
and sit in their lap and purr.
But they're wild cats. They're
not like that. They're not
domestic animals. So I'd take
them, but I never had the
wildest guess that this was
going to take over my life."

But already she had
launched a search for informa-
tion on small cats. What
she found was very little.

"There's a great deal of infor-
mation about tigers and leopards
and lions and jaguars and large
cats, but when you're looking
for information on small wild
species of cats, it's very, very

scattered, and in the 1960s there was virtually nothing, a couple of paragraphs maybe. And they lumped many species of small cats in together. Like lumping the lion with the tiger — it's unrealistic. They're totally different animals and different natures."

By 1976 her number of resident animals had grown, and by sheer hands-on practice Pat was becoming something of an expert in the raising and handling of exotic small cats. And her marriage was on the rocks. In the end her husband told Pat to choose between him and the animals.

The animals won. Pat ate up S.O.S. Carle San Diego. "I was a tremendous increase in my workload, just having a pet is one thing, but having a pet animal — there are so many such things as holidays. You can't just say to the child next door

"Feed the cats for me." You can't leave them. They have special feeding needs. You make a tremendous number of personal sacrifices when you take care of cats.

It was after the divorce was finalized in 1981–82 that Pridmore moved out of town to Valle Center, for more space and better air for the animals. Her study of books and her own animals was starting to pay off. She hand-reared leopard cats for four years without losing a single kitten. A remarkable record. Experts started noticing. She moved on to tigers. "My first tiger was born April 16, 1976. That was some sort of turning point. By 1980 professional people were starting to come in about small cats. Because the fact is, often in zoos people don't have time to totally specialize as I have done in small cats. Also small cats

suffer greatly in the shadow of the more glamorous species. Big attention and money go toward animals that are most spectacular, that is, the biggest draw to crowds at zoo. Giant Pandas, Koalas, Cheetahs."

Pat was invited to join the prestigious World Conservation Union, and after her successes in captive breeding began to be asked to consult with everyone from the San Diego Zoo (all her black-footed cat are on loan from the zoo), to the Malaysians on their leopard and cats to São Paulo Zoo on preserving the tigrinas and magays.

"A lot of these zoos from poorer countries come to me because I am trained for fund-raising, and so we both operate at the same shoestring level. In the mean, I really need to make a trip to São Paulo on the tigris."

rina, and to Malaysia, but just keeping and feeding my little family here is already an incredible strain."

"As for the tigrinas down in São Paulo, Pat got a fax saying 'Happy New Year. We have seen copulation!'"

"That gives us 75 days to get this right—the tigrina gestation period," Pat says. "Probably the zoo will end sending the kittens here, hopefully with a staff member who can apprentice under me for the critical period. Although, really, like me, she'll be learning from the animals."

I leave Pat preparing lunch for her guests: grouse, chicken, peas, pre-killed baby chicks, mice, and water. Pat mentions something about funding. These are lucky cats; you wouldn't get that mix of food and love down in the Brazilian jungle. ■

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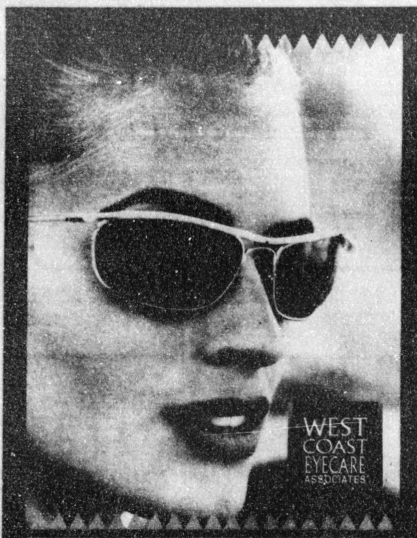
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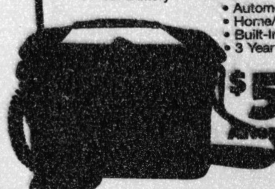
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Black Chronicles

by MICHELLE BROWN
Interviews by MICHELLE BROWN



(continued from page 1)
"Well, would you talk to me about the film afterward?"
"Oh, sure," the oldest one says.

We file into the theater and settle down in our seats, waiting for the start of the film about girl gangs in East L.A. The Chicanas I've met are Priscilla, Michelle, and Nadine. Priscilla, the oldest, explains that Michelle is her cousin and Nadine is her friend. They're both 14. They're not in a gang, they say. Priscilla says, "We lived in Long Beach, and my brother was in a gang. I was only nine at the time, but he got shot at a party down the street from our house. We moved out only a week later. Well, we were getting ready to move because the gangs were getting so bad. I mean, we were shot at in our house and everything, so we moved to Tucson. We had to get away from there."

III Vida Loca, a three-part melodrama with a documentary edge, reflects the lives of young Latinas as they deal with the contradictions of machismo and the more independent ideas of American culture. Jostausy almost ends a lifelong friendship between Sad Girl and Mousie when each has a baby by 16-year-old Ernesto, a smooth-talking store clerk turned drug dealer. Sad Girl's sister tries to live the "normal" life of a college student until she falls for her prison pen pal and he stirs up neighborhood rivalries. Their friend Giggles is released from jail with some revolutionary ideas for her homies: computers are the key to the future, and sticking by your man isn't all it's cracked up to be. In the end, Ernesto dies in a drug deal, and Sad Girl and Mousie are left to depend on each other.

There are tense scenes of girls being jumped into a gang, the initiates beaten up by their own members, and many other scenes of violence and conflict. The film ends brutally, when a child is killed in a gang retaliation.

Nadine, Michelle, and Priscilla are engrossed as the images flash across the screen, cultural symbols of tattoos, black makeup, rap music, James Brown oldies, lowriders, cursing, and urban slang. Occasionally, there are bursts of laughter from the girls, but for the most part they react with sniffs and howls of recognition.

Once we are outside the theater, we sit down on a bench and watch the other filmmakers emerge from the dark. The girls seem willing to talk about their impression of the film, their boyfriends, brothers, styles, whatever.

Was the movie realistic? Did it portray the way it is for you now?

"Yeah," Michelle answers, "it's the same."

ing out with a lot of people. I used to always laugh. Even when it wasn't stupid or anything, you know, I would still laugh about it."

Priscilla smiles at this and says, "I think it is, like, she is very quiet and to herself."

In the film the girls had babies really early. Is that something you see?

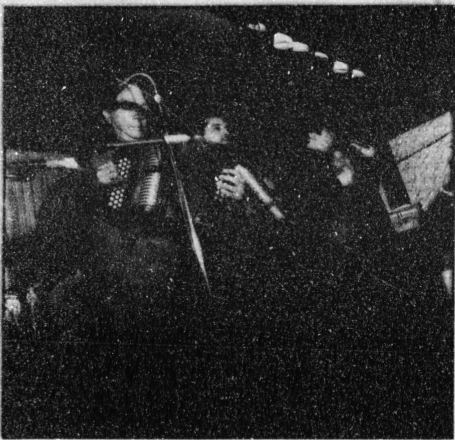
Priscilla says yes. Giggles adds, "Yes, some of them. Yeah, you'll find that."

But these are girls who tend not to go to college. Giggles agrees, and both she and Nadine say they might want to go to college later.

So you try to avoid hanging with gangs?

Giggles says, "We hang with a lot of them, but I don't see myself getting pregnant from a guy, not like that."

Giggles says when they hang with gangs, it's just for fun, not violence. Their neighborhood is



Banks at La Ponderosa

It's everything the way it happens in the streets. The talking, the language, the attitude, everything."

Nadine answers with her laconic, one-word "Yah."

It's the first time the girls have seen the film?

"Yeah," Michelle says. "They took it out of Tucson, because they said it wasn't appropriate for the...that it was really bad because of the Bloods and the Crips. And they changed the name of the movie *Blood In, Blood Out*, too, because of the Bloods and the Crips." *Blood Out* is a film about the early years of the Southern California prison gang the Mexican Mafia.

So they think *Mé Vida Loca* is going to be provocative for gangs. Do you think so?

Michelle answers, "No, they already know everything."

In the film there was a scene in which the gang girls give each other street names, which they tattoo onto their fingers. Do you have nicknames too?

Only Michelle answers, "It's Giggles, like in the movie. I got that because when I was hang-

predominantly Chicano and is a close group, but they're still sometimes bothered by the police."

"Yeah, they will bother you," Giggles says. "Like, you could be sitting right there or you could be walking somewhere, and they will pull up and ask where you are going or what you are doing. Maybe if it is getting late in the night they will do that. But if it is early, a night or noon, they won't do it. They will just pass by."

In the film, there was a black guy at one of the parties. Do the Chicano gangs mix with the black gangs?

"They are separate," Nadine says. "Some of them come to parties if they come from the neighborhood."

And there was a mixture of black and Latino music in the film.

"Rap music and oldies and those kind of songs," says Giggles.

Priscilla responds, "Yes, I think that's the music that they listen to, the black music. But they don't get along, where we live, the blacks and Mexicans are against each other."

In the film, there seemed to be more conflict between the men and women. Is it that way in your experience?

Giggles agrees, "Yeah, with some of them."

Do the girls have a lot of boyfriends? Do they compete with each other for boyfriends?

This topic brings light to the two younger girls. Giggles flashes her trademark giggle and admits, "Yeah."

So it didn't seem unrealistic that the boy in this film had a baby by two girls who were good friends?

"Yeah, it happens." She's all smiles now, as she explains the world of the young Chicana. "It's crazy."

"You're supposed to have an ugly best friend," Priscilla adds, "so she won't take your man."

Do you think Nadine would take your boyfriend?

Giggles glances over at Nadine. "No," she says, laughing. "We are different. We like different kinds of guys."

Do you have the same problems with gangs in school as in the film?

Giggles pauses for a second. "In high school it will probably be worse than in junior high," she says, looking off across the parking lot into the darkness. "Because, see, if they don't like you, they go straight up and they hit you. There ain't gonna be no words to it."

No words to it? I hope for clarification of the imaginative phrase.

"No. That's how it is."

Who will hit you? Like, anybody?

Giggles exclaims, "Will some guys do that too?"

She looks at me as if I believe that boys were some kind of saints. "They will hit a girl," she declares, in case I had any doubt about it.

Will some of the girls carry guns too?

"I don't know yet, because I am not there yet," Giggles says.

What I think was very interesting in the film was the makeup and the way the women wore their hair. And I see you have your hair like that. (Both Nadine and Giggles wear their hair in bangs and hanging long in the back, shoulder length.) Where does the style come from?

"I don't know," Giggles says. "Just, everybody does it. When it goes on, it keeps on going."

And what about the eyes? They have their eyes made up very dark.

"Yeah, with dark eyeliner."



Giggles



Nadine at La Pinta



Priscilla at La Pinta



Rita

And they had their lips very dark, almost black. Is that very popular?

"Yeah."

What is that lipstick called?

"Black Orchid," Michelle says. "Or they get black eyeliner and just use that."

In the film they were talking about different generations of women. Some of them would have their hair blond. Is that still popular too?

"Yes," Giggles says.

Priscilla, the older one, speaks up. "When I was growing up, I was into that style too. I grew out of that once I got to high school, thank God."

Giggles's friends also like to dye their hair. "We use red a lot, and orange."

And they wear the same kind of clothes as the girls in the

movie. How would you describe the outfit you are wearing now?

"Sneakers, baggy pants, and body suit," she says, "and a belt with your initials on it."

But Nadine's belt has a Don't.

"That's for a guy I used to see," she explains.

But you always wear your hair long? You and your friends don't cut your hair short?

Giggles shakes her head definitely. "No."

And they like to have the tight curly style, like yours?

"Yeah," she says and laughs. "And they wear a lot of makeup to school. With black eyeliner. Real thick on the top and light on the bottom. And they make their lips dark."

But your mother didn't mess with that? Your aunt doesn't do that?

"No, my stepmother dresses like his friends," she confesses. "He is a cholo. And some of my cousins do. He wears the hair, too, because he dresses like a cholo."

The jets come from the cooks," Giggles says, "who don't want to get their hair in the food." Giggles says she has no idea how it became a fad.

Giggles also wears a gold necklace with what she says is the cross of the Virgin Mary, the Virgin of Guadalupe.

Finally I ask the girls how they would have made My Vida Loca different, what they would have changed if they'd directed the film.

Priscilla goes for this one. "The guys and girls are more together now. They work together. They party together. They do everything more together. The girls hang out with the guys. But in the film they showed them separate all the time, and now it's like they are all together in the streets."

Giggles doesn't know why the film would have shown them that way. Priscilla speculates, "Those were from older days, maybe? The older generation?"

Before we leave, I ask to see their picture. They agree. I have to wait while they get ready and put on more lipstick. When I raise the camera to snap the picture, I see them throwing gang signs.

Saturday morning, Barrio Logan. Walking up Logan Avenue I see a sign, Rita's Hair Salon, and step inside. "Hello," I say to a young Hispanic woman who is standing beside a

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lady whose hair is being washed.

"Hello," she says.

"I'm talking to women about the film *Mi Vida Loca* and about their lives. Have you seen the movie?"

"Not yet," she says, giving me a look, "but my son has a copy of it."

"But it just came out."

"His friends from L.A. have a copy on video."

Reina is a cosmetologist, and in her opinion the black lipstick on the young Latinas like the ones in the movie is just a fad. Long hair and copiers and black lips and dramatic eyeliner are just the girls' way of saying, "Look, I am here!" Copiers are the high, fluffy buns popular with Latinas. Originally the word referred to any kind of ornamental tuft or crest, like feathers on a military officer's helmet.

Reina believes Mexican films and Madonna are the true sources of the hair and makeup fads. "You know," she says, "the movie stars, they always are, like, the ones that started with this heavy makeup. Like Madonna! Heavy lipstick. Sometimes they'll go back to red lips. Now we're going to black lips."

But do you find that the Chicanas like to look like the American girls or Spanish girls, Mexican girls, or...?

"Mixtures," she says. "Both cultures or both traditions, like, the Mexican tradition for the long hair. And makeup. Both Mexicans and Chicanas usually wear a lot of makeup without blusher. We spend a lot of money on makeup in Mexico. But now with this very dark makeup, even more. Cover Girl, Max Factor, Revlon, these are the American products in Mexico."

Reina travels to Chicago, Spain, and New York to give lectures on hair and makeup. "Like, when I came to San Diego 12 years ago," she says, "it was real hard for me to convince the people, Mexican women, to just give me the opportunity to cut their hair once." There is a world of difference between the way hair is done in Mexico and the way it is done in America.

"The problem is mainly the water," Reina says. "The water's real hard. Has a lot of minerals in it. Ruins the hair, and then it's the chemicals. They don't know how to apply the products. They know how to cut hair, but nobody teaches them sanitation, chemistry, the mixing, the timing. They use the same products as we use up here, but the result is different. They don't use enough water for rinsing, and they leave parts of the chemicals still in the hair. And the chemicals burn the hair, and it falls out. Or the color is not even, or the curl is not even."

"I tell my clients, 'I'm not going to do your hair if you keep going to T1 to get it done.' She looks at me. "Because, you see, they expect me to do miracles."

Reina goes to check on progress with a customer. An attractive Mexican woman with short hair is also watching the customer, whose hair is being washed by an assistant.

"They go to Tijuana," Reina laments, "because they can get their hair done cheaper."

She leans down close to the customer. "How much do you pay over there?" Reina asks the woman.

"Thirty-eight dollars."

"And you pay how much here? Sixty dollars. You learned your lesson?"

Why do some women choose to cut their hair short, when long hair seems so popular with others?

"Well, it's more practical. Some people may think that women have to have long hair in order to look feminine, but it's not true. You can still look feminine with short hair."

Her husband, for example, who is from South America, she mentions, not Mexican, loves her short hair. "But the Mexican culture is still into long hair. That's why all the teenagers, they have long hair, because the father doesn't like, or mother, to cut their hair. When they grow up, after 18, they cut their hair."

So it's a kind of independence.

"Independence, yes. Because I think they are tired of the experience from the machos. They want their freedom, their independence, to be able to do whatever they want."

So machismo is a big problem for Chicanas? But once they've been here for a while, they become more and more independent?

"More and more independent, yes," she says. "Nobody likes machismo."

Then how does it keep going?

"Some Mexican men are still machos," she says, "but they are about 30, 35. Young boys like her son Pedro, who's

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16, are not machos. Her son, she says, is very "liberal." As most sons are influenced by their fathers, her son is influenced by his father. But Pedro's father is not from Mexico, she reminds me. Although Mexican girls have more freedom in America — they don't have to have babies and depend on men — still Reina believes that the young Chicanas have a diffi-

cult time surviving in American society. "I think that it's a very big problem for them, you know, to survive in this society with all these, um, how do you call them? All the customs, traditions they have. Because sometimes they have the American way, and they have the Mexican way. Sometimes they're caught in the middle." And the Catholic Church,

she believes, doesn't have the influence to solve the problems any longer. Her son has four passports, from Mexico, South America, Panama, and the United States. Reina tells her son to take advantage of "the good things" of the United States. "But machismo is not a tradition of America but of the Mexican culture. Some follow the father.

The way the father treats the mother, the brother treats his sister," Reina states. "The brother controls the system. The way that the father treats the mother, then he treats the sister, and then he treats the son to take advantage of his wife. The brother is trained to protect the women in the family. He takes over the father role. He protects the honor of the house. That's why he is a

"When the boyfriend wants to, you know, go with the sister, sometimes he has to go and ask for permission to the brother, even if they still have the father alive. The brother takes control of the family. That's why they have a lot of respect at home, and they honor him a lot. He has to respond, you know, be like the macho, the man of the house. That's why he is a

macho. That comes from the home. To me, a macho is the one who goes and drinks and comes back drunk, and you say, 'Where have you been?' 'Who cares? I'm the macho of this house,' you know? Was there a time when it did help the family? "Machos? It never did anything for the family."

The American system helped changed the Mexican family. The women have more independence, Reina believes. "They go to school. They are able to care for themselves, working. If they get married, they can have children. Before when the man was macho, they didn't know what to do. They didn't go to school. They had to stay home."

I ask Reina if she has problems with gangs here. "Not as much anymore. Here I don't have metal bars on windows. I don't need a lot of security."

What changed it? "What made it stop? They raised the rents here, for business and apartments. You can't find a one-bedroom apartment here for less than \$375. It used to be real cheap here — \$75, \$100. And then they no longer rent them to Mexican nationals. Sometimes I leave my car open and nothing happens. Twelve years ago when I first moved here, it was terrible. Now, almost everybody who lives in this area owns their own property."

If I want to see the real Mexican culture, Reina tells me, I have to go and hear the banda music. "It's like the lambada," she says with a laugh, "but a cowboy lambada. They dance like they are riding a horse. We can take you. Let's see, Tony, can you come with us?"

Tony, who is working with a customer, says he can. "Yeah, let's go. Let's go tonight."

"Wait until dark."

"Yes, let's go. That'll be fun!"

"It's in National City. La Mission is in National City. It's just for teenagers. They don't bring adults. They dance all night long, until 2:00 in the morning," says Reina. "Here's how it's done," says Tony, as he leads his customer out of her chair, and they begin dancing. With her hair still in curlers, she yells and laughs and has the time of her life.

"Oh, that's fabulous! All right! All right!" "We'll meet here about 9:00," Reina says. Music, picture-taking, screaming, laughing as I learn the dance.

It's 9:00 p.m. (15 after), and I'm waiting for Reina in front of her shop. I notice that there are not many people about. Next to the salon, a man wearing a cowboy hat stands behind his gate. He looks as if he has been standing there for hours, watch-

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ing. Across the street, the only light on the entire block is from a storefront church. I can see the Mexican preacher holding up his Bible with one hand and bringing down his other hand in a gesture of declaration.

I walk over and introduce myself to the man behind the gate. He eases up to me in a crisp American accent and tells me he can't speak English.

But if I am looking for Reina, she just left a few minutes ago. I thank him and go across the street and peep into the church. There 30 or so worshippers, scrubbed and dressed in their best white clothes for the occasion, listen contentedly, devoutly. This is a mission, but it is certainly not Catholic.

I go back to the shop, but still no Reina. An older

man comes by and I ask for her. Does she live in the back? He tells me yes, and I go to the back of the store, climb a set of steps to the apartment door. Through the glass I can see a well-lit, super-clean living room. A gray-haired woman opens the door and smiles toothily.

She doesn't speak English, she says in Spanish. What I made out is that Reina

will be back soon. It's nice to see you, come again, as I thank her and leave.

I leave Reina a note and take off. I'll find the clubs myself. The first one is near the last exit before Mexico and across some railroad tracks.

The room sign — Mi Cabana La Mission Nite Club. Live Mariachi Band — lights up the velvet black night like

a distant star. Pickup trucks fill the parking lot. A big group plays loud music. Fast tempo. I hear what sound like tubas. The crowd is in the 35 to 45 age group — women in short skirts or tight pants, men in cowboy outfits, hats, boots, shiny belt buckles. A young Chicana is the manager. As we go inside, I'm searched by a guy who could double as a highway patrolman.

From my seat, I can see the Techno Banda band performing. 12 young musicians. To my left, a string of waitresses dressed in black pantyhose, hot pants or tight bicycle shorts and cowboy boots take turns busting empty bottles in a barrel before picking up their next orders of Mexican beer.

The dancers gallop together, skin tight, with legs intertwined. Women kick heels back in a Charleston style, men bend the women back, as in a tango. During the break, the mariachi band of six old men serenades the tables, while the young musicians go into the parking lot to smoke cigarettes.

I follow them outside and ask about the club. The customers are older Mexican nationals. I want to see a different kind of Mexican music. I should go to La Ponderosa, where they play techno.

Looking for the Ponderosa, I ask directions from a Chicana couple at a fast-food store. They tell me I am within a block of the club, and they look surprised that I am going there. But then they say, "Right on."

The parking lot is full, and as I cruise through it, I see a lot of homeboys sitting in their cars with the doors popped open, letting the music flow out. I park and approach the entrance. A bouncer, wide and unimposing, greets me. I explain that I would like to talk with the owner. He tells me to wait and then disappears inside. A few minutes later, he returns with a young, attractive Mexican woman.

Once again I'm searched by a man at the door, then the manager asks me to follow her. The ticket-taker simply greets me as I pass.

There are two large lounging areas on my right. In one of these rooms is a bar where only non-alcoholic beverages are sold.

The manager, Ivette, tells me that her brothers started this club to give young Mexican-Americans a chance to enjoy themselves. She praises her brothers for everything.

Meanwhile, she gives me a tour of the place. The main room is filled with about 200 dancing young people. The music is techno. I glimpse the DJ on stage, standing behind an electric keyboard, singing into an attached microphone, dancing to his own music. He manages to capture the musical impression of a large band by programming a drum machine to play back for his one-man show.

At the Ponderosa, youths dance apart from each other. The music is fast and upbeat, almost corny.

I dance with a young woman to see if I can do the steps. She laughs at my attempt to dance the querebita. At one side of the dance floor, a couple of guys watch me for a moment and then they too

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laugh. When the number finally ends, I thank my partner, and as I pass the Mexican guys, they congratulate me.
At the bar I meet Jovita's nephew, who is the bartender. He seems older than she is. How can it be that he is older?
His grandmother had 15 children. His father was 20 years older than his father's sister, Jovita. His grandmother, he tells me, is around here somewhere.

"She is running the show," he says. "My mother is over there. My uncle — he looks just like Cheech, of Cheech and Chong — is somewhere over there." When his uncle comes out, the bartender introduces us, and it is true, he looks like Cheech Martin.

So this is a family-run business?
"Yes," the uncle says. "Actually they are the owners of several places."

You're here just for the summer?
"Yeah. I go to Penn State. I will be a sophomore in the fall. I'm trying to major in mechanical engineering, but I might change." When he arrived here for school break, he tells me, there were more than 430 people packed into this place. "In both Mexico City and here this music is popular."

I ask one young, attractive waitress, Elizabeth, if she had a moment to talk to me about *Mi Vida Loca* and about her opinions of it. Glancing at her watch, she says okay. We find an empty booth, and a few of the men inch closer to hear what we are talking about.

In the movie, the girls had a lot of conflict with the boys and their macho image. What do you think about that image?
Elizabeth laughs. "I don't like it." She flicks back her pretty black hair. "Even if guys look really good. But if he has a macho image, I don't like it. I don't like to be pressured. I like to be independent and take care of myself. I like guys in general, but not the macho-type guy."

Do you have brothers?
"Yes."
Are they protective of you?

"Yeah," she says, "they advise me, but they are not macho types."
Do they check out your boyfriend?

They checked out the guy I married and said he was a macho-type guy," she recalls, "but I didn't listen to them and married him anyway."

Did that marriage work out?

She shakes her head and laughs. "It doesn't exist anymore. It lasted for two years and three months."

Elizabeth looks anxiously at her customers. I thank her for her time and watch as she disappears into the crowd of shuffling bodies.

Jovita returns and sits in the seat Elizabeth has just vacated. I'm interested in the gold charms that hang on chains around her neck.

I swear everything that is supposed to give you good luck. Right now this is in style, but it's also supposed to give good luck. This one here is my name. Most Hispanic or Mexican people, they always have their name on a plate to let people know who they are. Some wear them very big. My mom gave me this one."

I wonder if Jovita, like the girls in the movie, sees a lot of problems between girls and guys, with macho men.

"Yes, around here I have seen it a lot. Guys, sometimes they get mad with girls because sometimes they don't want to dance with them. I mean, the girls pay their own money to come in," she says. "It's none of his business if she doesn't want to dance. I mean, she pays to get in, she can do whatever she wants. Yeah, a lot of macho guys want to dance with me and stuff like that."

And in the movie, the brothers are very protective of their sisters. Does Jovita have that in her family too?

"Yeah, that's true. I have seen Americans, you know, their families, African-Americans, Filipinos, and all kinds of people, and I think that Mexican and Latin families are more close than what I have seen in any other cultures. I think it is more of a respect they have."

But that's not macho?
"No."

What does Jovita define as macho?
"Macho is that — whatever they want to have, they want it now, whenever they feel like it. And they will hit somebody or curse somebody to get something. That's what they use. That's what I call macho."

But, Jovita agrees, there's a difference between that kind of behavior and the behavior of a brother who cares about his sister and cares about who she goes out with.

I have two brothers," Jovita says. "They protect me so much. We have this thing — we like to have people read our

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hands and read the cards for us, and we kind of have a belief in that. And this lady read my hand and she told me I have a protection, that my brothers protect me too much. And I think it's true, because people don't come too close to me that much. Because of my brothers. They are afraid of something. But my brothers are not macho types. What they do is just protect me, that's all.

"They won't let me have a boyfriend. I do have one, though. But they don't know. Well, one of them knows." Sometimes Jovita has to keep things secret.

And her father?
"Yes, he protects me, but my mother protects me even more. My mother is like, 'Oh, I don't want you to go out because of this or that.' My mother is kind of scared, maybe because when she was 15 she already had two kids."

As we speak, her mother passes by us, carrying a stack of dishes.
"Well, it was 10 of us," Jovita says. "I would have been 15 of us, but 5 of them died. I am the youngest. My mom was 42 when she had me. She was afraid I was going to be born with Down syndrome or that she was going to die." Jovita believes these are the reasons why her mother is so protective.

Will Jovita have a big family?
"No, not really. I don't think I can handle that. My mother had a lot of problems."

But Jovita says she gets along pretty well with her overprotective brothers. "Like, right now, in the business, they listen to what I say, like, 'Let's do that because it will be better for us.' They listen to everything I say." She thinks about that for a moment. "I really like that."

At 18, Jovita is in her last year of high school. She'll carry on with the family business after graduation. "I am going to study some accounting and how to run a business and stuff like that, even though that's not what I really like, but..."

"I like singing. I used to dance in a group. Right now there is this guy who's going to help me, 'cause I like to sing and I like to do modeling, even though I am fat. I like it. I like everything that has to do with entertainment. My nephew too likes to play guitar and everything, and he and his friend are really good at it. They want to make a band and everything. When you really like something, you do it with love. You put everything into it."

"Our whole family, we like to work together. That's why I am saying we are very close, we help each other a lot."
Jovita doesn't go to clubs that serve alcohol, even if her family owns them. In the Ponderosa, there is no alcohol sold. All that is being served at the bar are juices, coke, and coffee.

Are there any gang members here tonight?
"You would be surprised," she says. "But you won't notice it because they come to have a good time, they are not looking for trouble. They don't want to fight or nothing like that. We feel good about that, because we see them right here, and the next morning we see them dressed different, with their cholo dress and baggy clothes. They don't come here to dance with them. Gang girls come here too, but they don't dress like that either. Gang girls won't get to dance."

"When they come here, the girls dress with shorts, and tight skirts, and long boots."

She looks around the club. "I don't see any right now, but I know a lot of them come here. They will probably be at Contreras's."

Does the club play rap music sometimes?
"Sometimes, yeah. They put on techno sometimes and change it. That's how you can tell who the gang members are, 'cause gang members dance to anything. Those who are not gang members will come and say, 'Take this off! Play Mexican music!' But if you play techno, rap, anything, the gang members keep dancing. They like both things."

Sunday morning, 11:00, I call Reina and discover that she didn't return from Tijuana to meet me last night because her car was stolen down there. "And I didn't have any



"We like to have people read our hands and read the cards for us, and we kind of have a belief in that. And this lady read my hand and she told me I have a protection, that my brothers protect me too much."

insurance in TI," she laments. I express my condolences for her bad luck.
As I hang up the phone, I remember an appointment in Logan Heights with Graciela and her daughters. I arrive at Graciela's beautiful house and find the three of them there. Brenda, the oldest, is 18. Vanessa is 14. They've both seen *Mi Vida Loca* and thought it was realistic. "It was a good movie," Brenda says. "For showing what people in gangs do, what things people can learn from gangs, what things are bad, and what things happen that can hurt people. Just the violence and everything."

Can you describe the cholas and cholos, their activities in your neighborhood?
Overlapping each other, Brenda and Vanessa describe them hanging out in Chicano Park or at friends' houses or at the Burger King, or they cruise down Highland on Sunday nights. There are a lot of cholas standing around on both sides of the street, "starting trouble" or just "kicking back." If a guy from one gang hits on a girl from another gang, her gang "will probably be mad or something." Vanessa tells me. "They will tell her to stick with her gang."

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The women wear religious medals, and I ask how important the Catholic religion is to them. The girls give each other a look.

"Well, I'm Christian. I'm not Catholic," Brenda says, but when I ask her for a demonstration, she says only that "it's just Christian. We pretty much just follow everything in the Bible and stuff, but right now I'm not really going to church and stuff like that."

Brenda begins to translate our conversation into Spanish for her mother.

Vanessa is a Christian too. "They take me to church on Sunday and take me, like, every Thursday to a get-together and read the Bible." She doesn't go to church every Sunday but every other Sunday, because she lives with an older sister who does not like church. (There are five sisters in the family, and one brother who had recently died.)

"We were, you know, born Catholic," Brenda says. "We were baptized when we were little as Catholics, but, you know, as we got older, we got into seeing other things, you know? And we decided to become Christians." When they came to a Christian church, they discovered the members were warmer and friendlier to them than the Catholic members.

Is virginity important?
Brenda looks over at her sister and asks, "Is what?" The question throws them.
Virginity.

"Um...it is," Brenda says, squinting a bit.
Vanessa repeats the answer. "It is. Yeah, it is."

Did your mother teach you that? To wait until you're married?

"Right," they say together. "Uh-huh."

Do boys usually respect you too, that you want to wait?

"Yeah, they do," Brenda sighs, relieved that the virginity question has passed. "I mean, there might be guys who'll try to pressure you, but if you stand with what you believe in, your morals, you'll be okay."

So what does your mother tell you about men?

Brenda laughs.

"About men? Well, you know, that you have to look at what kind of person the guy is, what kind of family he comes from. She didn't want us to go out with men when we were too young."

Brenda and Vanessa describe what the cholas do. They hang out in Chicano Park, or at friends' houses, or at the Burger King, or they cruise down Highland on Sunday nights.

She made us wait till we were, like, 17 and stuff like that. But, I mean, I have a boyfriend now. She likes him."

And what about macho guys?

"I don't like machos," Brenda begins. "I don't like that, because I feel they should not have to portray this 'big guy.' They should be who they are."

Vanessa explains that the machos have to prove that they are real men by risking their lives for membership and status in the gang. "They're down to their gang," she says, "because the gang leaders will tell them to do this or that to be down for their gang. They're taking their life in their hands. They take risks."

Growing up, both girls have seen what they consider macho men. Their older brother was very protective of them, they say. If a guy called to their house, their brother would want to know who he was and why he was calling his sisters.

"He wouldn't like it, you know, if he saw us talking to a guy," Brenda recalls. "He'd say, 'Who's that? Don't be out there talking to them.'"

Even when the older girl went out on a date, he would check out the boyfriend. Brenda didn't mind her brother doing that, in fact, she liked it because it showed that he cared about how they were doing. But since she was only 13 at the time, most of his concern was with her two older sisters.

Her brother and father were born in Mexico, and this may have had some effect on their being so macho, but Brenda's

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Larry: I had a little system going. I'd read all the Phone Matches™ ads, cross out the ones I didn't like, and prioritize the rest. Jeanne's ad really popped out at me. And when I called up and heard her message, she really turned on the sex appeal - then I was hooked.

Jeanne: We met for coffee in Solana Beach on a Saturday afternoon. Then we went for a walk in Carlsbad and stopped in at an Italian restaurant for an early dinner. After that, we walked and watched the beautiful sunset on Carlsbad State Beach. It turned into a five-hour date.

Larry: When we got back, I kissed her. I've never kissed anyone on the first date.

Jeanne: He asked me if it was OK first. He really put me on the spot.

Larry: Before me she was dating all these megaback guys.

Jeanne: I never had a shortage of dates, but I wasn't meeting anyone who seemed like they'd be a good

husband and father. Most of my friends were pretty surprised when I told them I was getting married.

Larry: We'd been going out for five or six weeks when she signed up for the bridal registry.

Jeanne (laughing): It wasn't that soon! And it wasn't a bridal registry. It was just a mailing list.

Larry: I think you were trying wedding gowns on, too.

Jeanne: We got engaged last New Year's Eve. We were on the Coronado ferry, watching this giant fireworks display, and Larry pulled out the ring and proposed. I started crying. While the fireworks glimmered on the water of San Diego Bay, a person behind us captured our special moment on film.

Larry: We were leaning over the water when I asked her. I was afraid I'd drop the ring.

Jeanne: He didn't. We were married April 24 at the beautiful campus of University of San Diego in Founders Chapel.

Larry: Sometimes, when you're out there trying to meet new people, you run into women who aren't really looking for a relationship. What I liked about Phone Matches™ is that it eliminated all those cold shoulders.

Jeanne: Not everyone is going to find someone who's right. But it certainly opens you up to meeting a lot more people.

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not sure. She was born in Guadalajara, too, but she was brought up here in San Diego. Their mother wanted them all to be born in Mexico, and only Vanessa was born here. "It was an accident that she was born here," Brenda says with a laugh.

I ask Brenda to ask her mother, a cosmetologist, to talk some about hair and makeup styles that are popular. In Mexico, she says, the style is "red lipstick, pink, orange, and, like, burgundy-ish," but the eyeliner is a "fine line, not so heavy" as with the young girls in the United States. And they wear blush, not the pale skin, and have "more natural eyebrows," not so much makeup.

Have the styles changed since she grew up? When she grew up in Mexico, was it changing? Through Brenda's translation, Graciela says yes, the fashion's always changing, so everybody tries to stay in style. Some of the styles are influenced by Mexican television, but many Mexicans get their styles from American television. People usually look at the United States.

Graciela wears her hair cut very close, short. Did she ever wear her hair long? Remembering when she was single and younger, she smiles and says, "When you get married, have five daughters, you cut your hair short."

Graciela says a lot of cholas come to her shop for styling. They want a lot of copotes, bangs. "The cholas, the homegirls, they like the feathered-style hair, and they like it high or teased.

And a lot of perm."

Graciela leaves to attend to a customer, but Brenda and Vanessa continue talking about today's styles.

They were at a crew party not long ago when somebody got into an argument over a shirt. Somebody started firing, and one guy was killed and another wounded.

she says, "and just do it crazy, you know?" Both Brenda and Vanessa have been part of girl gangs. When she was in high school, Brenda and her friends formed

a party crew called Philosophy, which consisted of about ten girls. Their activities included going to the park and talking, hanging meetings about what they were going to do. Innocent stuff, according to Brenda.

Vanessa explains how you go about starting a party crew. First, you have to have a name, a membership of any number from 5 to 30, a street name for each member, and a symbol such as a hat or shirt. You have to "throw a party or do something so that people will know who you are."

"Some crews make flares, you know, pass flares out," adds Brenda. Vanessa says she became a raver when her friends in the gang voted her in. "They want me to be in," she says. "There're about 14 girls." Vanessa adds that she couldn't be with her gang much because she lives with her older sister, who is strict on her because she is only 14. When she does get out, though, Vanessa likes to go to clubs like the Retro on College and the Bronco on University and J.I. Hot Rod Club and to private houses. But some of the clubs are only for people over 21.

What do you have to represent your crew? "You wear a hat with the name on it. You all go out together to parties or things like that. You have car washes to raise money to buy hats and stuff." The members wear their hats and shirts "just to show, like, who you're from." Sometimes they spray-paint the party crew name on the back of a shirt or jacket. She brags about her own burgundy-and-white hat, which

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San Diego Reader January 12, 1995

Someone Has to Win and Someone Has to Lose

BY ANNE ALBRIGHT

Photographs by Natalie Flocie

When I was between the ages of four and six years old, I played a game called "Dream Girl." I based the game on a television show of the same name, which came on every afternoon before cartoons. A kind of low-rent beauty pageant, the television show began with four "lovely young ladies," probably in their early 20s, vying for the title of "Dream Girl." First the girls each came out in street clothes and introduced themselves. There was a bathing suit competition and an evening gown segment during which the girls were interviewed by the show's host. At the end of the interview, the host crowned that day's Dream Girl. Smiling and teary-eyed, Dream Girl of the Day took a triumphant walk down a short runway clutching a bouquet of roses to her breast and waving.

For "Dream Girl" the game, I reenacted in our front room what I'd seen on TV. Standing by myself on the low heels in front of our fireplace, I introduced myself, paraded in an imaginary bathing suit and imaginary evening gown, answered imaginary questions and waited breathlessly for the imaginary verdict. I always won, but I was always surprised. Covering my face and gasping in delight, I lifted a battered flowered pillow (my bouquet) from where I had strategically placed it on the arm of the couch. Clutching the bouquet, I walked the length of the room and back, waving to the imaginary crowd.

I had "Dream Girl" Rashbacks recently. Sitting in an over-decorated ballroom at the Jell Lion Hotel in Mission Valley, I watched the first few hours of a Charisma Beauty Pageant. I had seen the Charisma Beauty Pageant ad in the Parent & Child Expo brochure and couldn't resist. "Charisma Beauty Pageants—For Babies, Children, Teen and Miss." For babies? I stopped at the Charisma booth at the Expo and picked up an entry form. They weren't kidding about the babies. For the November 19 pageant, the morning divisions consisted of the following: Baby Miss 0- to 12-month girls; Baby Mister 0- to 24-month boys; Tiny Tot Miss one-year girls; Petite Miss two-year girls; Wee Mister two- to three-year boys; and

Tiny Miss three-year girls.

The brochure also made it clear we were not dealing with an easy "Dream Girl" kind of competition. This baby beauty pageant business is very complex. According to the brochure, the judging is based on "Beauty, Attire, Personality, Overall Appearance, and Grooming." In each age division, the pageant crowns a Queen or King, a Mini Queen or King (to step in should the Queen or King not be able to participate in the State Finals), and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd runners-up.

Charisma Beauty Pageants offer their tiny contestants "Optional Titles" as well. If the parent pays an additional entry fee, the child can be eligible for Miss Sweetheart/Mr.

A few older contestants, five or six years old, walked purposefully into the dressing area wearing navy blue sweat suits, hair in curlers under brightly colored scarves.

Horseshoe: judged on facial beauty only; Mr./Miss Charming: judged on facial beauty and personality; and Mr./Miss Charismatic: judged on facial beauty and attire. For another extra entry fee, the child can be eligible for "Mini Optional" prizes in the following categories: Best Personality, Best Smile, Prettiest Eyes, Best Hair, Best Dressed, Prettiest Face, and Best First Impression. If a child were to compete for Queen or King plus all the optional and mini-optional categories, the entry fee would total \$170. Charisma did offer an "Early Bird Special," which allowed a child to enter the

entire pageant for \$130.

The morning of the pageant, the check-in area outside Ballrooms VI through VIII slowly filled with parents and children. The group waited a while pre-pageant hunk. Moms pushed sleepy-eyed toddlers in strollers, garment and diaper bags stuffed to bursting draped over the handles. A few older contestants, probably five or six years old, walked purposefully into the dressing area, a ballroom next door to the "stage," wearing navy blue sweat suits, hair in curlers under brightly colored scarves. These older girls carried garment bags and makeup kits and glanced warily around the room like models ready for the next shoot.

In the dressing room, nervous mothers changed their babies' diapers and traded footed sleepers for the frilly, fingertip-length pageant dresses the girls were required to wear. Some of these dresses revealed my wedding gown in opulence. Fitted satin bodices covered with sequins and elaborate hand-beading; puffy, chiffon sleeves bordered in lace; full, gathered skirts that stood nearly straight out from all the crinolines underneath. Mothers combed or smoothed tiny wisps of hair and attached small, white ribbons with Velcro or Scotch tape.

Outside the dressing room, a late-30s woman named Gina sat holding her daughter, Celyna, a contestant in the first category to be judged that morning, 0- to 12-month-old girls. While we talked, Gina's 7-year-old daughter Cassandra bounced around us, alternately running down the hall and coming back to make faces at Celyna. All four of Gina's children compete in beauty pageants, including her 6-year-old son Gus and 11-year-old daughter Athena. Athena and Gus took Queen and King titles in their age categories at the last Charisma Pageant and would be handing out trophies to the other contestants today. "At five Gus didn't want to enter," Gina said about Gus's first pageant experience. "But then he decided to enter just one pageant, and he loved it. He won King. You should have seen his face when they announced

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Pre-show prep time

he had won. And when it was all over he told me, 'You know, Mom, it really didn't matter whether I won or not. I made a friend.' He got to know one of the other boys in his age category. That's what it's all about."

Gina used to be a pageant director for another pageant organization. "This is Karissa's second pageant. Debbie Remond, the director, really knows what she's doing. She did a good job with her first pageant. Afterward she got suggestions from the contestants and other people who know about professional pageants, and she's trying to make this pageant even better. There are a lot of reputable pageants. Pageants should be professional, they should be picky. You can tell this is a professional pageant because Debbie follows the rules. The girls have to wear white shoes and socks, no color in the socks. The dresses for the babies and little girls have to be fingertip length. After Debbie's first pageant I talked to a mom who thought her daughter should have placed higher. But it was obvious



Judges get a closer look

the little girl's dress was too long. You can also tell this is a professional pageant because the stage looks so professional.

"I think pageants are great for kids. It gives guidance to kids. It teaches them how to carry themselves. And even if they don't win, they

Bobby Darin sang "Bare Necessities" while two women and a man behind me reviewed the program and discussed the various contestants' merits.

make friends. Someone has to win and someone has to lose, but I think every child should be rewarded for getting up on stage. Celyna's seven months old, and this is her second pageant. Cassandra and Athena have both been in lots and lots of pageants, since they were babies."



Crying contestant

Gina had to finish getting Celyna ready, so I went inside and found a seat on a folding chair a few rows in front of the stage. The overhead lights were dim even though it was only 9:00 a.m. The stage itself consisted of a royal purple velvet backdrop bordered in ivory of white chiffon. Tiny twinkling lights circled the backdrop and extended around the main stage and runway, which jutted 30 feet into the ballroom. Both the runway and main stage rose three feet above the ballroom floor, the supports hidden behind a green velvet skirt. Grecian columns topped by overflowing purple and gold flower arrangements lined the stage and runway. I thought perhaps I'd taken a wrong turn and ended up in Las Vegas instead of Mission Valley. Stage left, three or four large conference tables, also skirted in green velvet, held an enormous array of trophies. The judges sat in

front of the stage at two conference tables, one for the main judges and one for the optional judges. A man in a suit typed information into a computer at the optional table. To the right of the stage, an announcer wearing a tuxedo stood behind a bank of sound equipment. The program and he was Ron Jones, "twice awarded best DJ in San Diego, by the Southern California DJ Association." Ron adjusted the black silk scarf around his neck and announced that the first category, 0- to 12-month-old girls, would begin soon and all contestants should assemble in the dressing area. Meanwhile, Ron continued to play Vegas-style slow music to set the mood for the competition. Bobby Darin sang "Bare Necessities" while two women and a man behind me reviewed the program and discussed the various contestants' merits. "Brittany — isn't she the one who took Queen last time?"

"You're right. I thought she'd be here. Karissa's here, too. I thought she should have won last time."

"Karissa's a beautiful girl. But it's personality, too. Karissa doesn't show any personality." Karissa and Brittany would be competing in the one- to two-year-old girls category.

The lights dimmed a little more as Ron welcomed us to this Christmas Beauty Pageant. He paused and intro music swelled for about 30 seconds, a cymbal beat slow tune with an "Up with People" chorus singing "Such a Wonderful World We Live in Now." To my left the 50-ish grandmother of what looked to be a three-year-old contestant opened a bag of Chee-tos and offered one to the contestant's younger brother.

To my left the 50-ish grandmother of what looked to be a three-year-old contestant opened a bag of Chee-tos and offered one to the contestant's younger brother, who sat drooling in a stroller.

who sat drooling in a stroller. Sitting next to the grandmother, the contestant's mother wore faded blue jeans and an L.A. Raiders T-shirt. The contestant herself, decked out in a yellow, crinolined and beaded dress, white lace anklets, and white shoes squirmed in her folding chair. I wondered if she would last the hour until she was to take the stage.

The intro music faded into the theme from the Disneyland electrical parade, and Ron announced the first contestant in the 0- to

12-month-old girls category, "Breanna Nicole is 9 months old. Her hair is brown and her eyes are brown. Her favorite phrase is 'Mama.' Her favorite foods are fried chicken and french fries, and her greatest ambition is to walk." As Ron spoke, Breanna's mother carried her onto the stage and down the runway. Breanna's podgy baby legs hung out from under the blouse of her pink dress. Her white lace anklets and white patent leather Mary Janes bounced against her mother's thigh with every step. Breanna's mother turned her toward the main judges and the optic. All judges and whispered something in Breanna's ear that made her smile. After about 10 seconds, Breanna's mother turned and carried her back up the runway and off the stage.

"Our next contestant," boomed Ron, "is Alicia 'Chanel.' Alicia is 11 months old, toddled out followed by her mother. 'Alicia's sponsor today is Comfort Zone Air Conditioning.' While Alicia stood at the end of the runway smiling at the judges, her mother, Alicia's mother, stood behind her, put her arms around Alicia's waist, and made her dance from side to side. (Maybe that's what they mean by personality.) After Alicia and her mom retreated up the runway, the third contestant refused to walk and went limp on the stage. Ron told us the slumped's ambition in life is to be a neurosurgeon.

Gina came out next carrying Celyna. At seven months old, Celyna showed much greater interest in the lace on her dress than in the judges or the audience. She clutched a strip of lace from



Charisma gives Alicia with trophy

her dress's bodice and sucked on it. At the end of the runway, Gina snapped her fingers in front of Celyna to get her to look at the judges. Celyna looked up briefly from her lace, and when Gina tickled Celyna under her dress, Celyna even smiled at the judges.

Terry, the next and youngest contestant, at three months old, looked like a little cabbage. Her tiny, dark-haired head rose from a mass of purple frills, crinolines, and beads in her mother's arms. At the end of the runway, her mother held

her out as if to stand, but Terry just lurched forward and looked curiously at the twinkling lights by her feet. Helena, six months, followed Terry. Staring out at the lights and people as her mother carried her up onto the stage, Helena closed her eyes, screwed up her face into a little red ball, and cried the entire length of the runway. She didn't stop as her mother turned her toward first the main and then the optional judges. Ron told us Helena's ambition is to crawl. I suspected Helena's real ambition was to sleep.

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After the moms and babies filed back out into the dressing area, Ron announced the

A few minutes later Ron told us the results were in and asked the contestants and their mothers to gather in the dressing area and wait for the winners to be announced. I found myself

As Ron went through the mini-optional and high-point optional winners, Debbie's helpers handed out trophies for Prettiest Face, Prettiest Hair, Prettiest Eyes, Best Dressed, Best Personality, Best Smile, Miss Sweetheart, Miss Charming, Miss Charismatic, and Most Photogenic. The room grew quiet when Ron announced it was time for the Queen's court. Debbie's helpers placed four even larger trophies at intervals across the stage for the first, second, and third runners-up and the Mini-Queen. In

The moms grew visibly nervous after the Mini-Queen had been crowned. According to the entry form, the Queen would win a "Bible Thumper," a "Purse," a "Photogram," a "Handwritten Thank You Note," a "Portrait," a "Memorable Glamour Shots studio, Special Price Party, and their FULL Beauty Entry Fee Paid to the State Finals!" After a long pause, Ron intoned, "And the Christmas Beauty Pageants Opened with a bang as our eighth girl is our bubble girl... Alisa Christina Christensen." She screamed and carried her onto the stage. Alisa looked unimpressed in her enormous pink dress, thin brown hair cut in bangs to frame her elfin features. I hadn't even noticed Alisa during the judging but did remember Ron's helpers darning a satin "Christmas Queen" sash around Alisa's body and perched a sparkletiar on top of her head. Alisa's mom walked up to the end of the runway and held up Alisa's hand so she could wave to the applauding crowd. The queen was escorted by two girls who called to make the Dorem Girl Institute complete.

Good Girls Dying for Love

By Susan Whittaker
Illustration by Annika Nelson

Lance remained my deskmate until after lunch, when Mrs. Firby called us up front, explained that

We were, little girls in the 1960s, riding a precarious cusp. The mothers who bought us toy

ovens and vacuum cleaners and tea sets, who taught us the meaning of "ladylike" and cleaned

up after their fathers, were the same women who would shortly join consciousness-raising groups, get jobs and divorces, wear their hair loose, try marijuana, sleep with new men.

And so my dolls were also prone to perilous adventures, scaling tables and couches with a bent hairpin and twine, or out back of our tract house like a thousand Clairemont tract houses, by the reddish stained fence, hunting our cat (using a pencil for a spear) in the tall grass, making plastic model horses that galloped in the back canyon, formed between us girls' twin beds. Maybe Barbie was only benefiting from a new direction in marketing: she could now be bought boots and safari wear besides evening gowns. But I stole her a machine gun and a field telephone from a neighbor boy's GI Joe.

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as I walked up the steep hill to school. We would ride horses all through the neighborhood. We'd ride them to school and hide them in a secret place.

Mrs. Firty was a great believer in music. On hot days, when the boys and girls came in from recess sweating and panting, she appointed musicians to dampen paper towels in the sink and distribute them to the class. We pressed the wet towels against our foreheads, imagined ourselves feverish and near death. "If you're still and quiet, you'll cool off faster," she said. And then Mrs. Firty would sing a song, accompanying herself on the accordion. With our foreheads resting on our crossed arms, we listened to "Home on the Range," "Turkey in the Straw," or "Go Tell Aunt Rhodie." Once she began a British lullaby but was forced to stop by our indignant whispering. We weren't babies, after all.

Music was on Wednesdays. Favored children — often Lance and me — took cymbals, drums, recorders, and orange songbooks from a cupboard smelling of paste and dust, placed one on each desk to be shared. The hand-bound books, titled *Songs of Many Lands*, opened flat. The pages were slick. Next to each song was a brightly-colored illustration of children hiking in the mountains or skating on a pond. If your desk-mate was sick and you had a book to yourself, you could lean forward and smell the fresh, good book smell of ink and glue. At the front of the classroom, Mrs. Firty would write a page number on the board, give the starting note on a pitch pipe. We sang "This Land Is Your Land," and "The Animal Fair," and "The Hiding Song." We sang "Cherry Blossom."

Once she started our vocal range by having each of us sing a scale. She pointed to girl after

girl, the pointed to boy after boy. Then she pointed to me a second time. Then she pointed to Lance a second time. "You two," she said, "have the highest voices in the class." We looked at each other, looked at our shoes. The other boys giggled. "Lance is a wussy!" someone shouted. Mrs. Firty called us to the front.

Mrs. Firty placed her larger teacher's copy of the songbook in our hands. Lance's side of the book opened down because he was so much shorter. "Sing 'Cherry Blossom,'" Mrs. Firty said. She gave us a starting note, an octave higher than we usu-

My dolls were prone to perilous adventures, scaling tables and couches with a bent hairpin and twine, or out back of our tract house like a thousand Clairmont tract houses.

ally sang it. Lance and I sang together. His breath bounced off the page into my face; it smelled like oranges and bologna. From the halved orange and the bologna sandwich he brought in his Thermos lunch box every day. When we hit the highest notes, we looked at each other, and later, after school, when the other children had melted off the far side of the dirt field, we met in the shade of the bungalow and sang the song again, in higher and higher keys, until our voices were squeaky and we went over laughing.

Orn was a delicate contralto. Lance was not a boy who chased girls to the water field fence and pretended to handcuff them to it or kicked them in the crotch during disputes in four-square. He played basketball with the boys but spent most of his time at the monkey bars. Girls lined up on one end of the horizontal ladder, boys on the other.

You gripped the hot metal bars with one hand, swung forward from every other one. In the middle of the horizontal ladder, you tangled legs with a member of the opposite sex until your grip was too wussy to maintain or until the teacher on yard duty came to break it up. Growth years did not seem to like this game.

We somehow came to be seated together during handwashing. Lance and I shared certain disgusting habits and compared our respective farts and O's and O's in whispers. Lance made his O's like an O with a car's tail and then added ours. I

had never seen this done before and thought it a very clever trick. In a whisper, he asked me, "How do you spell your name?" I wrote it out in my best writing, and he wrote out his, and we exchanged the grumpy green-ruled papers after school.

We spoke for seconds at a time in line after recess, exchanging information like furtive refugee camp leavers.

"Do you have sisters?"

"No. Do you have brothers?"

"Have you ever been to Norway?"

All this made my previous kindergarten entanglement with Buvvy Lockerson seem brutal, carnal. Buvvy, square-faced, buzz-cut, was twice sent to the principal's office for biting. To experience Buvvy's affection was to endure endless pervers-

sions. He stole your scissors, hid you in the stairs, threatened to push you off the jungle gym. You could only hope his attention would be diverted soon.

Lance and me was just for the two of us, not a show, challenging kind of interaction meant to entertain friends. There were no confessions with disputes in the boys' and girls' bathrooms; he never sent another boy to ask me to speak to him. Likewise, I didn't pass notes about Lance back and forth to girlfriends. Mostly because they couldn't read and write very well.

I didn't know where Lance lived, but sometimes I saw him ahead of me in the distance as I walked home along Clairmont Drive. It was sometimes in the winter, a day of sharp blue sky when the grass lawns were cruddy and brown, that Lance was outside the chainlink gate when I walked through it and fell into step beside me, neither of us saying a word. At the first corner we turned, he offered to carry my books. His were in a dark blue canvas book bag on his back. I gave him my books. He put them under his right arm. He dropped his left arm down. "Let's cross the street," he said. I said okay.

We stepped off the curb. "We should hold hands crossing the street," he said. I said okay. His hand was soft, chummy.

Across the street our hands started together, and we swung them back and forth, and then we started laughing, and we skipped down the block to the corner. We talked about what animals we would have, if we could have any animals. We talked about what horses we would take and ride to school, if we could have any horses. We came to where my neighborhood, a subdivision of five monotonous blocks, started. I knew he lived on the other side of it, in a subdivision of ranch-

style houses with redwood fences just like mine. He said he'd walked through my neighborhood with me. At the corner house of my block, with a split-rail fence and white, spiky rocks around the rose bushes, he asked, "Do you think we should kiss?"

I said, "I guess we should."

One or the other of us said we should perform this ritual in my house. My mother wasn't home yet, and his parents, he said, wouldn't be mad if he went to my house. "You should have my phone number," he said.

"Write it on my folder," I said. Lance put my stack of things on the sidewalk, slung off his knapsack, scrounged for a pencil. We knelt together over my For-Clare folder. He smelled slightly sweaty, of boy-sweat — light and sweet but faintly tinged with feces, dirt, and mold. He wrote his phone number, in the smallest numbers, on the inside flap. He wrote my phone number on the inside of a library book. This was shocking, kind of dangerous.

Before I unlocked my front door, he pulled out a key from inside his shirt, a key on a dirty string. We tried it in the lock of my front door, but it wouldn't fit.

Inside my dark house, we stumbled saw-blind into the kitchen, drank big plastic numbers of

Lance's breath bounced off the page into my face; it smelled like oranges and bologna, from the halved orange and the bologna sandwich he brought in his Thermos lunch box every day.

water from the kitchen sink. It was quiet in the house. Lance looked around. "Where should we do it?"

The bedroom my sister and I shared was out of the question — too full of private things, girl things. I wouldn't want Lance to see my pink stuffed poodle, my Barbie van, my bride doll. My parents' bedroom was inviolate for other rea-

sons. The spare room had a window onto a neighbor's yard through which we might be seen. The living room was too close to the front door, where, for whatever reason, my mother or father might come bursting through at any minute.

I led Lance by the hand down the hall. We went into the bathroom. We turned on the light. I held the door behind us. "Wait," he said. He took off his knapsack again. He opened it and pulled out a blue nylon windbreaker. He put the jacket over his head, pulled it forward with his hands, so that it tented his face. "Okay. Now."

I stepped in, scrunching down to his height, and put my hands up to hold the jacket, too. We

dropped the fabric over my head and breathed in each other's quick breaths. He pressed closed lips against my cheeks, just barely, and made a loud smacking noise. I pressed my closed lips against his cheek and made a loud smacking noise. We separated quickly and went out to the living room. Lance put his windbreaker back in his knapsack, heaved the bag's straps onto his shoulders, and went out the door.

Back in Mrs. Firty's class, Lance began spending more time with the other boys — laughed when they laughed, evaded disgust at all things girl. I rediscovered a girlfriend in another class and spent my recesses with her. Now come the line you know is coming. Rather, you may have your choice of the three.

After that kiss, things between us seemed to have changed.

We drifted apart after that summer, and I never saw him again. ■

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All of the fifth-grade classes at Painted Rock worked on the bear project for the past two weeks.

—Times-Advocate

My daughter and I were attacked one night recently by a frustrated owl who was trying to eat a least tern in the Mission Bay High School baseball field.

Stepping out for a walk along Rose Creek... While sitting on the rocks by the creek and talking to each other, we responded to the bird's calls and began talking to them.

There was one least tern with a small piercing cry that swooped near us trying to drive us from its territory. The tern settled down when I made the simple two-note all-is-clear call. The least tern I heard may well have been the same one that I read about in the Beach & Bay Press last year.

read it had been attacking a construction worker's dog... On our way back we cut across the school field. I was the first to spot the large owl. Sitting very low, we watched the owl turn its head toward the way around. I stood at her and the second back when I got the call just right. She displayed her tail feathers at me turkey-style and dipped her head in a submissive bow. My daughter said it was a female.

As we were distracted by the owl I could hear the least tern getting closer. It was almost ready to resume its efforts to drive us from its territory when the owl silently swooped down upon the least tern.

I gave the quick attack call of danger and it took flight. Missing its mark, the owl stalled over our heads with claws extended for four or five wing beats. After expressing its frustration the predator settled on a post nearby. My daughter...

The girl came outside to talk to the boy, but after talking with him and Parley asked her to show him her bra by lifting the green, cut-off shirt she was wearing.

The girl refused his requests, allegedly prompting Parley to make offers of \$10 and \$20 to see her bra. Parley then offered the girl a roll of money estimated at \$300 if she would show him her nipple, but she still refused.

"He told me he was going to have to find another way to make me show it to him," the girl testified.

Parley allegedly pulled a box from behind the passenger seat in his van and retrieved black, steel handcuffs. The girl slipped her wrist out of the handcuffs when Parley first tried to put them on her right hand, but her friend put them on her hand and tightened them because Parley told him to, the two teens testified.

The girl told the court that Parley attached the other end of the handcuffs to the steering wheel of the van and took his foot off the brake. As the van began to roll, she decided to comply with his request to get into the passenger seat.

The girl said she did not think the incident was a joke or bad prank and that she never told Parley she wanted to have handcuffs on her because she had never felt them before.

Parley allegedly drove to a spot two streets away, where he allegedly handcuffed her hands behind her back, unhooked her bra and pulled it out to look at it, brushing his hand on the side of her breast in the process.

"He told me it was his way of repaying me for ignoring him when we worked together," the girl said.

—Times-Advocate

A former newspaper sales contractor (5) accused of kidnapping a girl who once worked for him.

The 16-year-old girl was one of three witnesses called to the stand... The alleged victim testified that... (Andrew James) Parley was in his van outside her home, talking to a 15-year-old boy who lived next door and who also had worked for Parley.

The girl came outside to talk to the boy, but after talking with him and Parley asked her to show him her bra by lifting the green, cut-off shirt she was wearing.

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—Times-Advocate

idea of vests being sold to the general public because criminals could buy them too, Ford said.

"How can I determine who is a criminal and who is not? I have no way of knowing what someone is going to do."

—The Beacon

Editor: When I first moved to La Jolla, I was dismayed and upset to find an active drug ring doing a brisk business across the street. This wasn't exactly what I expected in moving here.

I placed the anonymous call, and within two months arrests were made... Yes, I had to make more than one call, but the persistence paid off.

Make the call! Ask for the narcotics division of the police department and tell them what you've observed. Call them several times...

A concerned Jollan Editor's note: Although it is the Light's policy not to accept anonymous letters, this letter was followed up by several phone calls.

—La Jolla Light

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Classical Music Review and Guide page 61

Art Review and Museums & Gallery Guide page 63

Theater Review and Guide page 67

Pop Music page 70

Movie Review and Guide page 93

Restaurant Review and Guide page 108

Reader

Calendar



Martin Vidner, Kim Crosby, James Fari, and Jennifer Allen in the current Broadway revival of Greys and Dots

New York Chewed Me Up But Did Not Spit Me Out

San Diego's Own Jennifer Allen at La Jolla Stage Company Gala

There was the time, early on, not long after she had moved to New York, that Jennifer Allen came home at 3:00 a.m. from her miserable waitressing job to her ground-floor apartment in Astoria, Queens, and found a burglar quietly pillopping her apartment while her roommate, she says, were lucky to have escaped with their lives.

Then there was her "big break" in children's theater: commencing in New Jersey before dawn to play various roles in productions of, say, *Pinochio* or *Hansel and Gretel*.

"I was always a cat," Allen says. "But I was lucky, because cats always have work. Children's plays always have a cat role. I also got to play Tweedle Dee — you know, Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum — on roller skates. And it was at this time that I began to think that I might actually be able to make a career for myself as an actress in New York. Besides, it was a horrible waitress."

Then there was the time, her first gig with a touring show, that the company's bus broke down in rural Vermont. "There we were, stranded in the snow. A school bus finally came and picked us up. They took us to this high school auditorium where we were supposed to perform *Funny Girl*. There was one of those big, ticking high school clocks above the stage. It was, uh, a very interesting performance. But I got sent there by someone who recommended me to one of the producers of the touring production of *Cabaret*. It was with *Cabaret* that I got my Equity card. And it was *Cabaret* that really opened my eyes to the world of 'professional' theater: I stepped on Joel Grey's foot during a musical number.

LOCAL EVENTS

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"But it didn't sour me on show

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LOCAL EVENTS

business. It was an important lesson. You can be very talented, you can have all the necessary skills, but you have to learn to navigate theater politics if you're ever going to get anywhere in the business.

I guess that's where San Diego Junior Theater really helped me. Looking back, there were politics at work there. There was a lot of competition. Although I always ended up playing a mother, I was auditioning against friends — people whom I knew, which is pretty much the same here in New York. We're all here on this one little island, and I

know most all of the character actresses of my type who are out there auditioning. You're going to go up against people whom you know, and probably like, and there isn't a lot of work, and you have to be able to cope with that.

"It never gets any easier. I've been performing in *Gypsy* and *Dolls* on Broadway for the past two and a half years, and

I'm still terrified at auditions. I may perform on stage all week long — I've performed *Gypsy* and *Dolls* literally hundreds and hundreds of times — but auditions are still difficult. Every time, it's a new experience. Every time you have to try and figure out what they want from you, and every time I audition I walk away thinking, 'Oh, my God.

I know they hated my dress. They hated the song I chose. They hated the way I sang it.' So, you have to be able to cope, on the one hand, with this eternal nervousness, and on the other with repetition. If you're lucky and you get cast in a show, as I did in *Gypsy* and *Dolls*, you have to be able to get up there, week after week, and deliver a performance.

Even when you think, 'If I hear "Luck Be a Lady Tonight," one more time I'm going to start screaming and screaming and not be able to stop myself.' There are tricks, one, of course, is to think up new and obscure lyrics for the songs and sing them to yourself backstage, another is to sing them, backstage, as badly, as off key, as you can, another is to scream, 'Shut up! Shut up! My God, shut up!' at the TV monitors in the dressing room. I know, for example, that when I start hearing "Luck Be a Lady Tonight," that it's time for me to put my corset on, and so when I hear it, I yell, 'Yeah, yeah. Enough already. I'm getting dressed!'

"So, there you have it. I left San Diego for New York when I was 19. New York chewed me up, but did not spit me out. I made it to Broadway. If you were to go to the Martin Beck Theater, before Sunday, because that's when we close — it has been the longest-running revival since *Dratula* — you'd see my picture on the front of the theater. It's not exactly like having my name in lights, in the picture, I'm standing there in my chicken suit.

"I don't think any young person who's just starting out, who's considering a career in theater, necessarily has to take the route I took. I did it the hard way, which was important for me, which really strengthened my character. But there are other ways of going about it. Going to a very good school, for example, with a fine theater department, would give a person a very good feel for the theater, and an opportunity to try different things, to experiment with different areas — technical areas, directing, writing. Not everyone is cut out to be a performer, and finding that out in college is much easier than moving to New York and going through hell only to find out you don't have what it takes.

"But I knew, deep in my solar plexus, that I was a performer, that the only thing I wanted to do was perform. I didn't really have a choice. And looking back, even considering all the truly awful experiences, I've enjoyed myself. I've had a wonderful time. And the scary part is, you know, that I've practically lived an entire lifetime over the past decade, and my career is only just now really beginning.

— Abe Opietzer

La Jolla Stage Company's 25th Anniversary Gala Sunday, January 13, 8:00 p.m., doors 7:00 p.m., musical revue featuring Jennifer Hiller, Parlor Auditions, 780 Nantux Street, La Jolla 920 429-7773

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LOCAL EVENTS

Steel Wildcat

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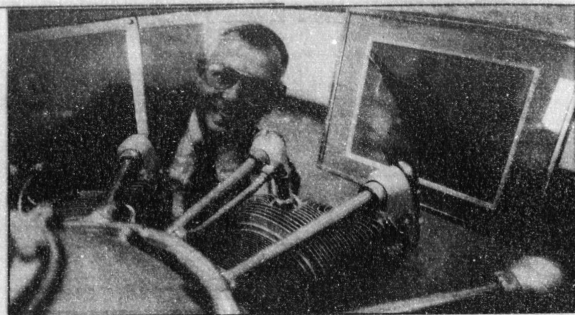
last June, on the anniversary of D-day, President Clinton spoke of the men who fought for our country in World War II. Near as I can remember, he said that "their step may have lost some of its spring. And their ranks are thinning. But when they were young, these men saved the world."

In San Diego, there's a chapter of an organization called the Confederate Air Force. That sounds silly, of course. But it has a serious purpose, and its members are serious men. Their formal name is The American Air Power Heritage Museum, and they locate and preserve World War II military aircraft to help keep the memory of the men who flew them. Each unit of the CAF (the general headquarters is in Midland, Texas) selects specific planes, ones that fit its historical content. In San Diego the orientation is toward U.S. Naval and U.S. Marine Corps aircraft. The CAF has 53 chapters worldwide, and maintains a fleet of 155 planes. They're still looking for L-5 and SNJ pilot sponsors. Robert E. Reis,

named by his father, a Civil War historian, after the famous general, is a member of the San Diego unit and a donor-sponsor of a C-38A-10N P-2 Wildcat.

Mr. Reis, with private, commercial, instrument, flight instructor, flight instructor-instrument, and twin-engine ratings, has flown twice around the world. He remembers especially flying up the fjords of Greenland on a beautiful, Southern California-like day, to a base that the United States used during the early '40s as a stopover for B-70s that were flying along about 1000 feet above the water," he said, "with these huge icebergs. Some of the icebergs looked a little taller than 1000 feet, so we edge up to 1200 feet. Spectacular scenery. Not a man to be seen. Nor an indication that man had ever been there. The instructions on the map say you get to the end of this fjord, make a left turn, and there is the airport. You can't see it until, instantaneously, bang, there it is. At the base — at sea level — of an 11,000-foot-high glacier."

Mr. Reis's interest in air-



Robert Reis

planes started in his boyhood. The New York Mirror, back in the '50s, every year sponsored model airplane contests for New York City youth. Young Robert would go out to Beth Page Long Island to the Grumman plant, where his aunt worked as the first female chief inspector. She brought him pictures from the plant, told him about naval aircraft. In fact, the first model Mr. Reis built was a Wildcat. As a '50s kid on Manhattan's Lower East Side, he would "fire up one of these suckers" — with its tiny model airplane engine that exposed the naked sound of combustion — in the middle

of the night. Mr. Reis is now a bioengineer with Intervention Technologies.

He likes World War II fighters. "They're smaller than the 20-seater American Eagle flies today, but weigh more. They were built stoutly. You couldn't pull the wings off of them, no matter what maneuvers you committed." They were overbuilt, and protected the pilot. "Cold, rolled steel," Mr. Reis says. Around the cockpit, "they put it in three plates with the grain going in different directions. They made a sandwich out of it. Like plywood, except made out of steel. Even if a bullet could penetrate

the steel, it would be deflected going through the seams."

Mr. Reis's plane, the P-2 Wildcat, has "a radial engine capable of putting out 1200 horsepower — equivalent to five new Camaros. Super-charged for altitude, it would be injected with a mixture of methanol and water for the seconds of hypersonic pilot needed during a kill."

"The World War II fighters are noisy and uncomfortable airplanes. They vibrate quite a bit. They're deadly. There's a lot of air leaks in them. You go up to altitude, there's no heater in the thing. You're sitting on a hard-packed parachute.

You're strapped on a .45 caliber pistol. Then you have all this bulky radio equipment in the way."

"When they were designed, there was no time taken to make them comfortable for the pilot. The average life expectancy of a pilot in combat was on the order of 17 minutes."

— Peter Griffin

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Pierce Your Heart

Road Trip to the House of Blues

"If you don't like the blues, you got to have a hole in your soul."

But we all like the blues, whether we know it or not. Even if you have never heard Ma Rainey or Bessie Smith singing the classic blues, or Blind Willie McTell, or Blind Lemon Jefferson shouting lyrics against a guitar line as blue as bent to a singing voice, or Robert Johnson with his eerie falsetto, the blues are in your cars and your soul (provided there isn't a hole there instead).

That's because, in addition to its development in jazz, the blues tradition is the greatest single influence on modern popular music. Listen to soul music or rhythm and blues, listen to Aretha Franklin, and the blues are shining through. Elvis Presley, the Rolling Stones, or Eric Clapton are unimaginable without Big Bill Broonzy, Muddy Waters, Elmore James, and Otis Spann behind them. And the tradition goes back further than that.

Take Muddy Waters, for example. Where did the music of McKinley Morganfield (1915-1983) come from, while he was splashing through his witty pseudonym? You've got to go all the way back to Africa to find the origins of the in-between pitch blues notes, the call-and-response pattern, the falsetto break, the relaxed vocal style. From Africa, the music moves to the fields of the South, where workers would accompany their labor with short calls and wails, repeated several times. The style gradually came together as the rural blues, toward the end of the 19th Century — and that's the form that, transformed and reinterpreted, eventually conquered the world.

Here's a typical blues lyric:

Had some hard days, out in the pucker 'n' rain.
Y'all had some hard days, out in the pucker 'n' rain.
There ain't nobody to love me, and ain't that a cryin' shame!

The words are simple, but they get down to the emotional bottom of things: the sadness, the disappointment, the heartache in love, the loneliness, the ex-



House of Blues

posure to the elements, the defeat by a cruel and indifferent world... the inner life of the blues. The form of the lyric is just as simple, and just as rock hard: line A, line A repeated with a little variation; line B that brings the idea to a conclusion.

The melody and the chord progressions accompanying it work the same way. The first statement of line A is a four-bar section of the tonic; the repeat, another four bars, moves to the subdominant, and then back to the tonic; and the four bars of the final line create the most tension by moving to the dominant, which is then resolved by a re-

turn to the tonic. In each of the lines, the voice occupies about two and a half bars, and the accompanying instruments — the guitar, maybe, or the harmonica — fill in the rest with a break that repeats, answers, or complements the vocal line. And all this, simple and formulaic as it is, can pierce your heart — the greater the bluesman (or blueswoman), the deeper the wound.

The rural blues, in the first decades of this century, were concentrated in three areas of the country, each with its own particular manner: Georgia and the Carolinas; Texas; and the Mississippi delta, where the speech-like improvisation and

percussive guitar accompaniment would exert the greatest influence on subsequent music. Muddy Waters (to get back to him) belonged to that classic delta blues style, and when he moved to Chicago, in the early 1940s, he joined other musicians who were carrying the tradition into its next stage, the urban blues. Some years later, white musicians began to get into the act — for this is music with universal appeal. Through the medium of rock and roll, it even got to England! No wonder that when the Hard Rock Cafe's Isaac Tigley founded the House of Blues in West Hollywood (erecting it on the site of the John Barry-

more estate), he chose as its motto "On a Mission from God." The building is dedicated to the history of the blues. Legend has it that the great delta bluesman Robert Johnson sold his soul (which didn't have any holes in it) to the devil, getting in exchange his voice, his rhythm, and his style. That took place at the crossroads of Highways 61 and 49 — and it was there that Tigley found a rusted tin cotton press, a century old, which he used for the exterior of the House of Blues. And beneath the club's stage on the Sunset Strip, there are two truckloads of Mississippi mud — the real stuff.

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San Diego Reader January 12, 1995

LOCAL EVENTS

and Tenney play. The fee for each class is \$30 for garden members, \$40 for non-members. To register or gain more information, call 436-3036. Quail Botanical Gardens is located at 2300 Quail Gardens Drive, in Encinitas.

Town of Del Mar Area. Block box there, stage area, lighting and technical areas, foyer, classrooms, and kitchen at the new South County Center for the Performing Arts with the Friends of the Arts on Tuesday, January 17, beginning at 6 p.m. The "Arts Spotlight" at the meeting will be an on-site local visual artists who will display and discuss their work. The center is located on the campus of Fairchild High School, 1120 Eastlake Parkway, in Chula Vista. Admission is free and open to the public. Call 426-1877 for more information.

Bring a Free Song to Share at the Neighborhood Old-Time Bluegrass Gospel Jam for Tuesday, January 17, at 7 p.m. at the Neighborhood Old-Time Bluegrass Gospel Jam, 1001 Country Club Lane, in Encinitas. Call 743-3190 or 743-8497 for information. The jam is free and open to the public. They're held on the third Tuesday of each month.

FOR KIDS

For Puppets and Other "Tales" are being presented by the Torrey Pines Puppet Company on Tuesday and Friday, January 12 and 13, at 10 and 11:30 a.m. and Saturday and Sunday, January 14 and 15, at

11 a.m., 1 and 2:30 p.m. Catch all the shows in the Marie Hitchcock Puppet Theater, located near the Aerospace Center in Balboa Park. Tickets are \$2 for adults, \$1 for children under two years old. Free for those under two. For more information, call 485-5005.

Zip-Up Your Healthy Side and head to the puppets every time at Balboa and Noble Bookstore in Harvard Center on Friday, January 13, starting at 7 p.m. (and taking place every Friday in January). Stretch out on the big quilt and parade of snacks at 700 Harvard Center in Mission Valley. 229-0175, free.

Delmar Beach, Ramon Quintero, based on the books by Beverly Cleary, is the current presentation by the San Diego Junior Theatre continuing through Sunday, January 22. Performance times are at 7 p.m. on Fridays and at 2 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays (the performance on January 13 will be interpreted for deaf). Tickets are \$6, \$7, and \$8. Enjoy the antics at the Casa del Prado Theatre in Balboa Park. Call 239-4355 for information and/or tickets.

"The Search of Dr. Seuss" series at the Old Loma Theatre Bookstore continues on Saturday, January 14, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. All ages are welcome. The bookstore is located at 5150 Rosecrans Place, Point Loma. Call 225-0665 for more information. Free. Story hours are held on the second Saturday of every month.

"Cabrillo's Classics" will be presented by the San Diego Actors Theatre at the La Jolla Del Mar Garden Amphitheatre (1540 Camino Del Mar, Del Mar), on Saturday, January 14, at 11 a.m. Among the stories to enjoy: *Hansel and Gretel*, *Rapunzel*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Three*

Little Pigs, and *Little Red Riding Hood*. Children are invited to volunteer and play selected roles with the actors. Admission is \$4. For more information, call 268-4494 or 229-1315.

Marvin Muddles will be examined at the Discovery Store on Saturday, January 14, at 1 p.m. Find the south and ophiophiles in University Towne Center, 4500 La Jolla Village Drive, suite C-13, in La Jolla. Call 967-9212 for more information on this free event.

Old Tales with a Fresh Twist will be told when Marilyn McFee appears during "Storytelling Magic" at Museum of Contemporary Art, Downtown on Saturday, January 14, starting at 1 p.m. Included is a tale of Cinderella's neighbor who takes the bus to the palace, recycles glass, and runs a home for orphans, a screen-play version of Cinderella entitled "Marilyn McFee and the Magic Wand" and more. This program is suitable for those five to nine.

Later that same day, at 2 p.m., *musings* 7 to 12 years old are invited to write new versions of the classic fairy tales *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Cinderella*. MCA's high school member society will conduct a gallery walk-through for children and their families, and then each child will receive a small book to record new words and thoughts for the *Wonderscape* characters. Participants will be invited to make hand puppets of their favorite characters. Inquiries are suggested for this workshop, which will repeat on January 21 and 28.

Read the museum at 1001 Kettner Boulevard, directly across from the Santa Fe Railroad Depot (at Broadway Street), adjacent to the America Plaza trophy transfer station. Admission is \$2 for adults, \$1 seniors and students, children under

13 free, the storytelling and puppet programs are included in the admission fee. Call 234-1901 for more information.

The Top Lifelines officially established themselves in the Young String Quartet in 1980 while all four were studying at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. The quartet will perform for the "Disco" series sponsored by the La Jolla Chamber Music Society on Saturday, January 14, at 3 p.m. The program includes Berberov's String Quartet No. 6, and Dvorak's String Quartet in A-flat Major.

Here the concert in the Parker Community Auditorium, at La Jolla High School, 750 Nimitz Street (at Fay Avenue), in La Jolla. Admission is free for students and older, \$15 for adults, and can be had by calling the society at 428-0728.

Shower Night at the Chula Vista Nature Center, for kids and their parents, is slated to begin on Saturday, January 14, at 4:30 p.m. and continue on Sunday, January 15, at 9 a.m. Organizers include a story, puppet, nature activities, nature hike, and beach picnic, as well as breakfast. The center is located at E Street and Bay Boulevard, just west of I-5 in Chula Vista.

The Winwood and "No guitar-sitar-kind" put "Rock" on the kids' list at the Kids Club at Plaza Camino Real shopping center on Tuesday, January 17. Nugget the Clown appears at 10:30 a.m. Find the shopping center at 2525 El Camino Real, in Carlsbad. Call 725-7277 for more information. Free.

Nease & Tels at the story time for youngsters aged three to five years, held at the La Jolla Branch Library on Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. The series is free, and registration is not required. The library is located at 7555

River American Barrens such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King Jr., as represented by artists in the current "Passionate Visions of the American South" exhibition at the San Diego Museum of Art in Balboa Park during the Family Day-themed "July Quarter" series sponsored by the La Jolla Chamber Music Society on Saturday, January 14, at 3 p.m. The program includes Berberov's String Quartet No. 6, and Dvorak's String Quartet in A-flat Major.

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Draper Avenue. Call 552-1857 for further information.

Just Magled After All These Years. The *Secret Garden*, inspired by Frances Hodgson Burnett's 1911 novel, hits the stage at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido from Tuesday, January 17, through Sunday, January 22. An isolated mansion in Yorkshire, England, is the setting for this play with themes of hope, rebirth, and healing.

Find the center at 140 North Escondido Boulevard (at Valley Parkway), in Escondido. Showtimes are at 8 p.m. through January 21. Tickets range from \$18 to \$35. To order tickets and gain more information, call 738-4100.

Necessity is a World of Rap and Rock! Pastor Coleman Blumfield presents a musical program designed for children at the San Diego Museum of Art in Balboa Park on Thursday, January 13, at 10 a.m. Blumfield will talk about classical music, how it started, where it's going, and how it develops a place in their world. Admission is included into the museum fee. Dial 232-7931 for additional details.

The Debonair Delusions Propp and Perla and their adventures with the Debut Family Band. The 100 Delusions, being presented by the Escondido Arts Theatre at the San Diego City College Theatre. Shows continue Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7 p.m., and at 2 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays through January 22. Tickets are \$5 for children, \$10 for adults (with a \$2 discount for every child accompanying each adult). Tickets are available at the box office, at the Arts Theatre, or by calling 696-0908.

The theatre is located at 14th and C streets, downtown (there's free parking after 7:30 p.m. in park-

ing lot). See the other side of the theatre).

Up Close and Personal, the B Street Play is currently housing a display on the "Dissolution of a World of Whales in the Waterfront." The exhibit features eight life-sized models, created by the Dissolution International Corporation, that move and vocalize in a simulated dramatic underwater environment. Attendees will learn all about whales and their relations, their behavior, and conservation efforts on their behalf.

The exhibit is co-sponsored by the San Diego Natural History Museum and the San Diego Unified Port District and continues through Sunday, January 28. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for seniors, \$2 for children 3 to 17, free for those under 3. Find the pier at 1140 North Harbor Drive, on the downtown San Diego waterfront (the building that houses the cruise ship terminal). Show hours are 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., weekdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends.

MUSEUMS

(Art museums are listed in the Reader's Guide to Art.)

Antique Gas and Steam Engine Museum, the museum's activities include touring, collecting, doing ironing, and preserving historical gear. Items, such as horse-powered equipment related not only to agriculture, but to the general development of America. The collection is made up of equipment used in lumbering, mining, oil drilling, and construction industries. In addition, the museum has a blacksmith and wheelwright shops, a country kitchen and parlor, a steam-powered saw mill, and a 1/3-scale train. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 2000 North State St. in Encinitas. Admission is free. Donations are accepted. For further details, call 941-1791.

Beavis Historical Museum, the museum features many historical photographs, artifacts, tools, and farming implements: the district's 1951 fire engine and board copies back to the 1930s of the La Jolla Star News. Find the museum at 6335 Route 16, in Beavis. Hours are 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Thursday and Saturday, and by appointment. Dial 267-5141 or 479-0671 for further details. Admission is free.

Carlsbad Children's Museum, the museum is designed as a social environment for children. Through art, science, and educational activities, targeted for children 2 through 12. Look for a medieval castle, magic mirror, mini-city, and children's marketplace. A Carlsbad Police Department patrol car will be installed soon. Hours are noon to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Find the museum at 2000 Carlsbad Village Drive, suite 103, in Carlsbad. Admission is \$3.50. 720-0757.

Chula Vista Heritage Museum features glimpses of Chula Vista's past: the opening exhibits include historic packing crate labels, photographs of downtown Chula Vista, doors and sills from the original Star newspaper building, and relics from the Chay Watch Company. Regular museum hours are 1 to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Find the museum at 360 Third Avenue, Chula Vista. For additional information, call 520-4911.

Command Museum of HCCD, objects from the beginning of the Marine Corps to the present are displayed.

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As seen on TV

No Longer Passive Before the Box

By Abe Opincar

We are no longer passive before the box. The remote channel-changer, cable, the VCR, the satellite dish, and now CD-ROM technology, have all empowered viewers. Old-fashioned television, commercial and public, has to work harder and harder to get our attention. Competition is stiff.

The traditional television for so long had us at its mercy probably goes far as an explanation of the popularity of CD-ROM games. Who among us, after all, has not wanted to hurt television, or hurt someone on television? Who among us has not fantasized about having Rags and Kathie Lee in the crosshairs of some incredibly lethal laser gun? Who among us has not, at least once, understood Connie Chung. Dan Rather, and Barbara Walters as the most sophisticated and deadly of monsters in human guise? Admit it: you, too, have wanted to reach through your television screen and seize Geraldine by the arm, self-satisfied mustachioed head and squeeze until his brains squirted from his ears, you, too, have wished to move down with extreme prejudice each and every one of the yipping, bitching, bickering white-trash talk-show "guests," who prattle and rage on and on in their annoying trailer-coat accents about their ridiculous, pettiest personal problems. You have wanted to grab these creatures by their vestigial tails and dash them against the ground, again and again, until your disgust and rage were sated.

CD-ROM technology cannot yet offer you these

pleasures. Not quite. But it is getting closer and closer every day. There are currently two ways — or what the industry calls "platforms" — for gaining access to CD-ROMs. One is through a "console," one of those little boxes you connect to your television set, and the other is through a CD-ROM drive installed in your personal computer, thus making your PC more television-like. Current estimates put the number of personal computers with CD-ROM drives at around 20 million, and 1995 is expected to be the "boom year" for the technology. If you don't already own a CD-ROM drive of one sort or another, chances are you will very soon, or that someone close to you will have one. (Then you can gesture him or her to let you play around with it before you decide whether or not you really want one.)

As I said, CD-ROM technology doesn't yet allow you to blast Oprah with an Uzi. But it is moving nicely in that direction. Until then, you'll have to content yourself with some fairly spiffy games, some of which, like Virgin Interactive's *Creature Shock*, are every bit as creepy and revolting as your average installment of *The Jerry Springer Show*. The difference is, of course, that the "creatures" in *Creature Shock* are not, like those on *The Jerry Springer Show*, cranky cracklers with bad teeth, but are, rather, cranky aliens with bad teeth — well, not necessarily bad teeth, but plentiful teeth. And you get to kill the creatures in *Creature Shock*, which is a nice change of pace.

Creature Shock is very much like being trapped inside a paranoid claustrophobic nightmare of what the future will be like. Since I'm less interested in space travel than I am in outright bloodthirsty mayhem, I prefer the sections, or "missions," in the game that deal primarily with the slaughter of repulsive monsters. These are not your average computer-generated creepy-crawlies. *Creature Shock*'s production values are amazingly high. The monsters are all slick and shiny, the Teflon coated with a thin film of spit, and it is a profound joy to blast them into kingdom come.

The point, you see, of *Creature Shock* is for you, and you alone, to save the day for all humans.

As you might expect, this is no easy task. A survey spaceship has been dispatched to search for potential new homes for Earth's overcrowded inhabitants. But something very, very awful happens to the spaceship. Something unpleasant. Something frankly nauseating. This is made all the more upsetting because *Creature Shock* actually goes to the trouble of introducing you to the survey ship's female captain. (She's a saucy little computer-generated sex bomb with large eyes, big bosoms, and a rasty swing to her hips. And it makes you madder than heck to think of those kooky aliens running their claws over her luscious form.) But before you can help her, there's a hell to pay. There are infernal fight sequences and nightmare sequences aboard the alien spacecraft. And I'd really like to emphasize just how disgusting many of these aliens are — I'm talking about the caterpillar-type things. They're plump, and they're vicious, and *Creature Shock*'s animators have really done a bang-up job of giving you a good notion of what it would be like to be nibbled by one of these things and devoured. Little is left to the imagination. So little, in fact, that I have actually dreamed about these caterpillar-type things — their sharp teeth, their stick skins, their punky appendages. Sweeney.

Which is not to say that I hate not, from time to time, dreamed about the designers of *Talk Show Nation*. But for all their filthy repugnance, *Creature Shock*'s creatures seem less troubling and more wholesome. And marginally less violent.

More on CD-ROMs next week.

Creature Shock: Less revolting than a TV talk show

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More on CD-ROMs next week.

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CLASSICAL MUSIC

of course, the conductor) might acquit themselves. The fabulous harpichord cadence of the first movement was particularly disappointing, whereas when it is treated as the incredibly inventive virtuoso masterpiece it is, it too can literally take your breath away.

There were no disappointments in the Oboe and Violin Concertos, where Morrison and choir Alan Vogel were (figuratively) dazzling. Nor was there any letdown in the second half of the program, devoted to the entire *Four Seasons*. This work is played so often that familiarity might breed indifference, but Morrison and the LAGO managed to rejuvenate the music so that the

CLASSICAL LISTINGS

Contributions to the Reader's Guide to Classical Music must be received by mail no later than the Friday preceding the Thursday time for publication. Items listed run from Thursday at 8 p.m. to the following Thursday at 7:30 p.m. Do not phone. The editor reserves the right to edit all material. Send complete information, including a description of the event, the date and time it is to be held, the price of admission (if any), the venue, the conductor, the orchestra, and a contact phone

number, and a phone number for public information to Reader's Guide, P.O. Box 8580, San Diego, CA 92161-8580.

"Classic Encounters — The Bush-Brown Series" hosted by the San Diego Symphony, continues tonight, Thursday, January 12, at 8:15 p.m. Jean-Claude Casadesu will conduct and violinist Chia-Hong Drapel-Liu will join the symphony for Weber's Overture to Oberon, Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 in F Major (Pastorale), and Khachaturian's Violin Concerto.

The doors of the Copple Symphony Hall open at 5:15 p.m. for a happy hour with beer, wine, and soft drinks included in the admission price: tickets are \$10 and \$15. Find Copple Symphony Hall at 1245 Seventh Avenue, downtown. The box office is open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 699-4205. Tickets may also be purchased by calling 278-TICKET. Strong Technique and Compelling Temperament are said to

be characteristics of Norwegian pianist Leif Ove Andsnes, who presents a recital at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido on Friday, January 13, at 8 p.m. Find the center at 340 North Escondido Boulevard (at Valley Parkway), in Escondido. Tickets are \$16 and \$20; call 739-4100 for information and advance tickets.

Bay Piering Thursday's Rush Hour Jean-Claude Casadesu will conduct and violinist Chia-Hong Drapel-Liu will join the San Diego Symphony for Weber's Overture to Oberon, Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 in F Major (Pastorale), and Khachaturian's Violin Concerto when the Orchestration Series continues on Friday and Saturday, January 13 and 14, at 8 p.m. This concert will be repeated on Sunday, October 30, at 2 p.m.

Tickets range from \$15 to \$42. Catch the concert in Copple Symphony Hall, 1245 Seventh Avenue, downtown. Call 699-4205 to order tickets and obtain additional information and advance tickets for any of the performances.

The Ying Quartet officially established themselves at the Ying String Quartet in 1988 while all four were studying at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. The quartet will perform for the "Discovers" series sponsored by the La Jolla Chamber Music Society on Saturday, January 14, at 3 p.m. The program includes Beethoven's String Quartet in F Major, David's String Quartet No. 6, and Dvořák's String Quartet in A-flat Major.

Hear the concert in the Parker Community Auditorium, at La Jolla High School, 750 Nautilus Street (at Fay Avenue), in La Jolla. Admission is free for students six and older, \$15 for adults, and can be had by calling the society at 499-3728.

Made by Bach, Beethoven, Wilder, and selections from Phantoms, Les Misérables, and The King King may be enjoyed when guest organist Les Schmidt-Rogers plays during a recital at the Spreckels Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park on Sunday, January 15, at 2 p.m. Call 726-0819

for more information on this free concert.

Reverend Music for voice, lute, and guitar will be performed by renaissance Windy Goss and lutenist/guitarist John Schindlerman during the mini-concert planned for Sunday, January 16, at noon, at the Alhambra Music and Arts Library, 1008 Wall Street, in La Jolla. Call 654-5872 for more information. This concert is free.

Israeli Vocalists Ishai Segal will perform the Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra in B Minor by Dvořák with the East County Jewish Community Center Symphony Orchestra on Tuesday, January 17, at 8 p.m. The orchestra will be under the direction of David Aiken. Tickets are \$8 general, \$7 KCC members, with a \$1 discount for seniors and students. The concert is located at 8079 Oak Street, in East San Diego. Call 581-3300 for more information.

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You Can't Imagine What's Been Going On in Tennessee

Their sculptures and paintings define their inner being more profoundly than any banjos or barns.

"Passionate Visions," a collection of art by self-taught artists from the American South, has just a few more days to run at the San Diego Museum of Art. It is a lively and instructive show, and — in combination with the excellent

REVIEW JONATHAN SAVILLE

catalogue edited by Alice Rae Yelen for the New Orleans Museum of Art, where the exhibition was organized — "Passionate Visions" is likely to give you a stimulating insight into an art and a culture you probably know little about. The culture is the dominant element here, for a large proportion of the individual works, while variously delightful, amusing, or touching, are not of any great or lasting aesthetic value. You look at them briefly, enjoy yourself, and move on to something else, never to return. Taken together, however, they provide an impressive and moving picture of a way of life, a place, a time, and a certain kind of quintessentially American character type. Most of the works date from the last 10 or 15 years, but a great many of the artists (a lot of them still living) are in advanced age, and the life-experiences that have gone into their art belong to a world that is rapidly disappearing: the rural South of uneducated working people, to a considerable extent isolated from modern urban culture.

One of the most poignant aspects of this show is to be found not in the art works themselves but in the photographs of the artists, published along with their biographies in the catalogue. The faces of these people (some black, some white), as well as the poses and settings of

the photos, convey a sense of personality and lived life that is quite overwhelming: hard lives, a lack of most cultural advantages, and yet an amazing self-possession, a determination to express something in themselves at all costs. You see them in worn workclothes, sitting on a porch and playing a banjo, or leaning back in a shabby armchair in a cluttered room, or standing in front of a barn in its last stages of decay, or staring out of a jail cell — yet usually in the company of their sculptures and paintings. The objects that define their inner being more profoundly than any banjos or barns.

Their biographies are similarly vivid, earthy, and idiosyncratic. For example, "Homer Green, born 1916 in rural Tennessee, worked at many jobs, including carpenter, farmer, blacksmith, dairyman, factory worker, and utility line-man. He retired in Beech Grove, Tennessee, and began creating art in the early 1980s. To pass time, Green began to carve small objects in cedar and later fashioned larger objects with a chain



Raymond Green, Raymond and Ruby
"Passionate Visions of the American South: Self-Taught Artists from 1930 to the Present" San Diego Museum of Art Through January 15

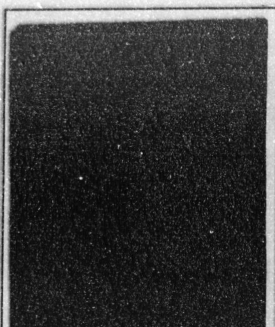


William Edmundson, *Tennessee*

Tennessee, about 1960. From the late 1960s until her retirement in 1983, she worked as a housekeeper's aide at a hospital in Alcoa, Tennessee. Late in her life, tormented by recurring visions of faces, Harvey began to make doll-like sculptures. The anthropomorphic forms that she constructed from found materials and her clay figures express her visions, profound religious beliefs, and powerful sentiments about her African-American heritage. Because Harvey preserves the natural form of the tree branches, stumps, and roots that she uses, her figures are often highly abstracted. The pieces are frequently embellished with hair, glass eyes, feathers, jewels, and splashes of paint.

In order to be appreciated fully, the works in the *SEKIDA* show must be seen in the context of life histories such as these. Many of them are less autonomous objects than parts of a total human existence. If you look at them from a purely aesthetic point of view, what you usually see is crude forms, gaudy colors, lively imagination, an intuitive sense of design, and an authentic naivete. Some of the paintings are indistinguishable from those made by children; some resemble the raw, naïf, Grandma Moses imitations you find on Christmas cards.

Nevertheless, we cannot look at these works as people in the 19th Century might have viewed them. We have the whole crazy experience of 20th-century art at our back. Lack of traditional technique (none of these artists has had any formal training) is characteristic of so much modern art that it is not easy to think of many of these paintings and sculptures as fundamentally different from what you might confront on the walls of the Museum of Modern Art. You will find works akin to those of Jackson Pollock, Barnett Newman, Elmer, Dufur, Dubuffet, de launier-Roussos, or Picasso (and it is a question whether the untutored South-



David Strickland, *Big Bird*

large-scale sculptures made out of found objects (Charlie Lauc's horse, Clyde Jones's pelican, David Strickland's big bird, among others) that are as good as any contemporary artist has done in this genre—that is, as busy, as decorative, and as eerie. The sculpture of Raymond Collins (wood or stone), William Edmundson (painted), Jesse Aaron (wood with cloth), and Ralph Griffin (laminated driftwood) have the power of real primitive or archaic art. Look, for example, at

for less numerous than these sculptures and (especially) paintings that are more valuable for what they tell us about their makers' spiritual and social world than in independent works of art. No matter — that too can be a worthwhile experience for a museum-goer. You might find it even more enlightening if, after having spent some time in "Tennessee" and "David Strickland, Big Bird," you take a stroll through the adjacent Weisman Collection and make a comparison with the "high art" of our time. What do the things in that gallery tell you about their makers' spiritual and social world? There are more backgrounds for an artist than a career in carpentry, farming, or domestic work, far from Art in America, followed by an awakening to a creative spirit that will not take to for an answer.

ART LISTINGS

Contributions to the Reader's Guide to the Museum of Modern Art

Do not miss the *Friday* preceding the *Thursday* issue for publication.

Information for Reader Art, P.O. Box 68851, San Diego CA 92168-5851.

GALLERIES

Fourteen Photographers

Works from 1979 to 1990 by Bruce Smith, John Adams, go on display at the University Art Gallery beginning with a reception on Friday, January 13, from 5 to 7 p.m. Adams has his sculpture on the first and activities of people in his neighborhood. The show continues through Sunday, January 14, from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and until 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday. The afternoon is held at 1000 West Street, in La Jolla, 494-9872.

Old Paintings and Poets

Old Paintings and Poets by Holly Weissen go on display at the Art, Body Studio and Gallery beginning with a reception on Friday, January 13, from 7 to 9 p.m. View "Too Short to See the Shadow" through Sunday, February 4, regular gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and by appointment. Find the gallery at 569 Bird Rock Avenue, in the Bird Rock area of La Jolla, 494-1979.

The World of Brinkhoff

Contemporary artists are combined with those of emerging artists at the Art Fire, a gallery opening with a reception on Saturday, January 14, from 7 to 10 p.m. Find the gallery at 1263 Grand Avenue, in Pacific Beach, 270-4037.

"Winter Group Show"

Painting and drawing by gallery artists at the B. B. Stevenson Gallery are on view through Saturday, January 14. The gallery is located at 7477 Grand Avenue, in La Jolla, with hours from 9 to 5 a.m., to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday, 494-0392.

The Learning Institute

is holding a student art show at Gallery Alton.

Vertical Hold Sport Climbing Center

is holding a student art show at Gallery Alton.

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is holding a student art show at Gallery Alton.

"Paintings and Poets"

recent works by Larry Cooper, go on display at the Man Who Thought He Could Drive Indoors/Gallery with a reception on Friday, January 13, from 7 to 9 p.m. Find the gallery at 511 by Lane, just north of Balboa Park, in Hillcrest, hours are Thursday and Friday 10 to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 1 to 5 p.m. 291-4371. See the show through Sunday, February 12.

Paintings by David Rose

are on display at Gallery 7770 Park Boulevard through February, you're invited to an opening reception for the artist on Friday, January 13, from 6 to 9 p.m. Gallery hours are Thursday through Saturday, 10 to 5 p.m. Find the openings: Gallery 7770 Park Boulevard in Hillcrest and by calling 296-2786.

Social and Cultural Design

by contemporary artists, along with historical costume and accessories, are being shown in the exhibition at the Alton Museum and Arts Center. Look for work by David McKinney, Peter Safford, Dale Chihuly, Debra McGraw, and Maurice Strickland. Opera sketches and designs from the San Diego Opera Company will be displayed, along with the original model for La Bohème, the first production by the San Diego Opera in 1965. Video on tapes will be available for viewing.

South African Artists

has a show entitled "Slices of Life," with acrylics and watercolors, on display at the San Diego Art Institute. Concurrently, look for a membership show titled by Margaret Porter Troup. The gallery has located two doors west of 54th Street, in suite 108 at Mission Valley Center. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, 12:30 to 5 p.m. Sunday, 220-4800. Show hours continue through Sunday, January 15.

"Angels and Others"

are on view at the Southcoast Gallery. The works are in a wide range of media including oils, pencil, ceramic, glass, jewelry, and engravings, by artists such as Corbinia Anzani, Matt Aron, Juan Angel Castillo, Wilbur Gahm, Johnathan Hansen, Diane Neal, Mary Kaye, Frank Ryan, Susan Snyder, and La To.

The gallery at 425 Market Street

in the Gaslamp District, Gallery hours are Wednesday and Thursday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., and by appointment. See this show through Sunday, January 15.

"The Best of the Best"

is presented at the Signature Gallery through Tuesday, January 17, in a show of paintings, textiles, sculpture, and glass art. Find the gallery at 5693 Fifth Avenue, Hillcrest, and 1110 Camino Del Mar, Del Mar. Both galleries are open 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, but additional information, call 297-4670 or 727-1501.

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sculpture by Bill Holman and Traci Rab-

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\$25 for 4 weeks
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ART

Gallery. Both shows continue through Saturday, February 4. Find the gallery at 7470 Grand Avenue, in La Jolla. 634-0404. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and by appointment.

"Redwood Forest: For more and more..." are on display at Gallery 11 through Saturday, February 4. Find the shop at 7484 Grand Avenue, in La Jolla. 634-0791. Hours are 12 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

The Annual Art Museum Exhibition is now presented at the Cottage Gallery through Sunday, February 5. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., daily. Find the shop at 2123 San Diego Avenue, in Old Town. 266-1893.

Recent Paintings and Works on Paper by Dorey Copley are on exhibit at the Porter Randall Gallery through Saturday, February 11. Porter Randall is located at 3624 La Jolla Village, Bird Rock. 351-0884. Regular gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and by appointment.

"Putting on the 'Dip'" prints and photographs by William Wignam, continue to view at Harmon and Company Fine Art. Find the gallery at 1133 La Jolla Village, Bird Rock. 351-0884. Regular gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and by appointment.

"Survival: Expression of a contemporary view of reality by Oscar Reizenstein" are on exhibit at "The Vision" at the Potpourri Gallery

through Saturday, February 11. Find Potpourri at 2784 El Camino Boulevard (at 10th Street), in the College area. 597-7366. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday.

Local Historical Points of Interest are on display at Gallery 11 through Saturday, February 4. Find the shop at 7484 Grand Avenue, in La Jolla. 634-0791. Hours are 12 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

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in the windows at Ninth Avenue and G Street. 548-4444.

Polished Transfer Photographs printed on Arches 140-pound cold press watercolor paper by Joseph Proulx are collected in a show entitled "Rabbits" at the Red Venus Gallery. View the show on Saturday, February 13, along with a mid-20th-century exhibit of work by El Cid Art Association members. Find the gallery at 780 Broadway, in San Diego. 597-7366. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and by appointment.

The Fun, Functional, Functional are on display at Gallery 11 through Saturday, February 4. Find the shop at 7484 Grand Avenue, in La Jolla. 634-0791. Hours are 12 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

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ART MUSEUMS

California Center for the Arts offers an exhibition entitled "Artists in the Making" from Saturday, January 14, through Sunday, May 7. The show explores the theme of landscape in American Art and Crafts, California arts at paintings from the early 1900s, and in the works of contemporary artists. The show opens with a reception on Friday, January 15, from 7 to 9 p.m.; artist Ken Felt will give a talk about his work at 6 p.m.

Find the center at 240 North Escondido Boulevard (at Valley Parkway), in Escondido. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5 p.m., on Sunday. General admission is \$4; free for full-time students and those under 18. For additional information, call 785-4120.

World International Museum of Visual Arts is the traveling exhibition "Oscars: Beauty in Common Objects" — The Legacy of African American Craft Art" opens at the museum on Tuesday, January 17, more than 100 works by some 30 artists will be exhibited. The tradition of African folk art is seen in the middle passage: African crafts, images, values, and customs from home. Guest curator William "Big" Davis says that African American craft has "served the culture, serving as a vehicle for preserving African American traditions. The show continues through Sunday, January 18. Admission to the gallery is free.

Find the museum at 1001 Kettner Boulevard (on Broadway), directly across from the Santa Fe Railroad Depot, adjacent to the America Plaza Valley transfer station. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sunday noon to 6 p.m. Regency Gallery is found on the left of the Hyatt Hotel, One Market Place, downtown. 256-9956.

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Man Ray. The Best of William Wignam focuses on the artist's vision from 1970 to 1978. Included shorts are Duet, 16th Floor Plaza, Beach, Sing, Ten Lamps, Pucker, Redman, Deadman, Massage Chair, and Spelling Lesson. A final short video, Dog Barking, features two teams of Westminster dogs, with William Wignam serving as both commentator and cheerleader. These screenings continue on weekends through February 12.

In conjunction with the museum's exhibition "Airplane Parts and Building: A Large Growth for San Diego" by Nancy Rubin, a photo of a wing model rises from the floor of the museum, to break through the museum's windows and hang outside in the adjacent parking plaza. Rubin makes visual links physical with a welded bridge of debris that joins the museum's interior with the public exterior of the building. The show continues through Monday, May 1.

"Deborah Brown's Big Top" can be seen in the American Plaza Office Tower (Galileo lobby) and the lobby entrance. Brown creates hybrids of mechanical parts and toys, plastic, metal, and wood, with a focus on the middle passage: African crafts, images, values, and customs from home. Guest curator William "Big" Davis says that African American craft has "served the culture, serving as a vehicle for preserving African American traditions. The show continues through Sunday, January 18. Admission to the gallery is free.

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photographers who took unfamiliar directions with their work during this period. Included is a small selection of photographs from the '30s that had particular resonance in the '70s. The style and interests of the 33 photographers included in this show vary considerably. See this exhibition from Saturday, January 14, through Sunday, June 4.

Increasing recognition has been given in recent years to "visual art," a style also known as "art brut." An exhibition entitled "Feminist Vision of the American Self: Tangle Artism from 1960s to the Present" recognizes the artistic achievement of 80 selected contemporary artists. The show considers the conditions in the South that have nourished self-enclosed art, including historical factors such as slavery, race relations, rural environment, and the impact of evangelical Protestantism. The exhibit includes approximately 270 works by Southern folk artists from private and public collections. See this show through Sunday, January 15.

An exhibition of student art from San Diego city and county public and private schools can be viewed in "Young Art 94." Approximately 450 pieces by artists ranging from kindergarten through grade 12 were selected, in a variety of media. The show continues through Sunday, January 15.

The museum's permanent collection includes Italian Renaissance paintings, Spanish Old Masters paintings, American art, 19th-century European paintings, and 20th-century paintings, and sculpture. The William Gallery of Contemporary California art, and the Interactive Multimedia Art Gallery Explorer (IMAGE) Gallery, designed to educate visitors through an interactive catalogue of the museum's permanent collection.

Find the museum in Balboa Park. It is open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday. Admission is \$6 general, seniors \$5, active military with ID \$4, children 4-17 \$3. See for show 1 and 2 only. Admission is free on the third Tuesday of the month (for viewing the museum's collection of permanent paintings, not special exhibitions). Discount hours are available at 10 and 11 a.m., 1 and 2 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday, and 1 and 2 p.m., Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Visuals Museum of Art, the museum's permanent collection includes European artists, 19th-century American paintings, and Russian icons. Museum hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Friday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. See for show 1 and 2 only. Admission is free on the third Tuesday of the month (for viewing the museum's collection of permanent paintings, not special exhibitions). Discount hours are available at 10 and 11 a.m., 1 and 2 p.m., Tuesday through Sunday, and 1 and 2 p.m., Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

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Beneath the Scrambled Eggs and Grandma Act

She's been kidnapped by members of Operation Retrieval. They have placed her and three other women wanting abortions in "protective custody."

The 1980s brimmed with kitchen dramas. The characters expressed feelings about relationships, unrequited trauma, emerged with understanding. Three central characters in Keely & Du, the most recent work by the pseudonymous Jane Martin, undergo a great deal of such trauma — only Martin

puts them in a basement, and the director is whether Keely, three months pregnant, should have an abortion.

A Southern California premiere, Keely & Du is a co-production by the San Diego Repertory Theatre and Stuart Hynson Colper, who has directed. First produced at Louisville's Humana Festival in 1993, the work won a Theatre Critics Association Award for best play of 1994 and was runner-up for the '94 Pulitzer Prize.

On John Rodman's set, a basement in Providence, Rhode Island, rusty pipes loom over a water heater, rocking chair, burglarproof door, and brass-framed bed. When Keely wakes from a drugged stupor, she finds herself handcuffed to the bed. She's been kidnapped by Walter and Du, members of Operation Retrieval. They have placed her and three other women wanting abortions in "protective custody." They will care for

her until her seventh month, see she gets the best medical attention, and find a home for the baby. "We intend to document and assist these children's lives," says Walter, leader of the movement, "which would otherwise have been lost."

Keely freaks. She doesn't want the child because her ex-husband Cole, an abusive alcoholic, raped her. Walter says the rape makes her a test case. His sincere protestations: "You will fall in love with your baby." "Your life has already changed for the better," inflame Keely all the more. Slowly — often too slowly in Colper's languid pacing — the other title character emerges. Du, the nurse charged with watching Keely to bond with her.

Unlike David Mamet's *Oleanna* and William Mastrosimone's *Extremes*, dramas that slant their debates about sexual harassment and rape along melodramatic lines, Keely & Du refuses to hype. Instead, Martin represents how sides get taken, and several first-nighters, overheard during the intermission, sounded convinced that the other "side" had stronger representation.

When we first see Keely's ex-husband Cole, he's the opposite of what we expected. Instead of

a beered-up thug, Trent De Long makes him clean, sober, contrite. And Navarre Perry tries to give Walter, the racist, a human face. But even a smooth delivery can't win in Walter's urge to control. He becomes too grotesque to take seriously.

This is the production's major flaw. For the play to work, Keely must gain some understanding of Walter's position, not agree with it. And Walter should gain insights into Keely's position. It doesn't happen at the Rep. Director Colper has taken an easier way by making Walter a villain sacrificed to the audience's laughter. This shows Keely & Du in the direction of *Oleanna*'s and *Extremes*'s, melodramas Martin wants to avoid.

The production is much stronger with the title characters. Each has rarely had the power to decide. "There has always been someone else in the room," Keely says, and Du agrees. And though Walter's certain that it would be impossible for

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Harp from Hell

There's an id-killing propriety in the sound of the harp. The 12-string guitar sounds more like a Harp from Hell; that is, when it's played right. Fred Gerlach always plays it that way.

A thena sprang full grown from the head of Zeus. Everybody else has a story.

Whenever I have cocktails and dinner in a fancy restaurant that has a harpist playing, at the first strains of "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" I get the urge to take off my pumps and nylons, put my feet up on the table, and paint my toenails. There's an id-killing propriety in the sound of the harp that makes you feel like doing the most thing you can think of. Although there is a certain subtle similarity in sound between the harp and the 12-string guitar, the 12 sounds more like a Harp from Hell; that is, when it's played right. Fred Gerlach always plays it that way.

The first time I heard Fred Gerlach was in 1960, when I was singing in San Diego at Bob Stan's Upper Celler. My best buddy was a fin-ravaged, sun-bleached 16-year-old boozier kid with a ravenous energy for eating up the world. I said, "Are you a surfer?"

"I'm a surfer of the others," he replied. His name was Russ Giguere. He would later turn up in one of the most successful pop music groups of the late '60s, the Association.

One afternoon in summer, Russell came running up to my room at the Artec Hotel. I was leading a double life at the Artec, going to R'n'd Rock Mass every morning and singing at the Upper Celler at night. I thought that praying would somehow exorcise the evils of the afternoons I spent as a voluptuary, floating around in the pool, smoking, or drinking red Ripple out of the bottle, and watching as the warm San Diego breeze fluttered the 100 percent non-botanical leaves of the artificial banana palms. No one ever bugged you there, and in my experience there was never anything closer to the real romance of Southern California.

Russ was out of breath. "Hey, lady," he panted, "wait'll you hear this guy who's playing at the Upper Celler tonight! He's playing the 12, and his

name's Fred Gerlach." Then his eyes got round and he grabbed my wrist. "His fingers are as big as sausages," he said.

Gerlach had a full house that night at the Upper Celler, and he blew the roof off the joint. I came for his second show, and here's this big, dark, grinning man, blacksmith arms, immense hands, heavy beard, two extraordinary eyebrows taking up the whole top part of his face, hovering over his eyes like birds of prey. He put a big cigar in the corner of his mouth, lit it, and began to play, squinting his eyes against the thick cloud of cigar smoke.

He began to thrash at the 12, metal finger picks clattering against the steel strings, echoing cascades of notes, rising, ringing, toppling into a labyrinth of octonotes, then, through the brilliant treble intricacies, he began to weave an incredible boogie woogie bass line. The notes rose and fell, and somewhere deep in the center of that sound you could hear Wanda Landowska in the Underworld hammering on her Player harpsichord while a crowd of pinup blonde lelandic harpists gradually surrounded her, all playing as much and as loud as they could. It was all coming out of one instrument: Fred Gerlach's 12-string guitar.

I did what ladies of quality have always done when they first encounter that deep, primal funk. I went apoplectic. After the show, I knew what I wanted. I approached Gerlach, quaking with fear, like Dorothy approaching the Great Oz.

"Excuse me, Mr. Gerlach," I said. "Would you ever consider accompanying a real loud girl singer?"

"Yeah," he said, "why not?"

The first place that Gerlach and I worked was a booking that Herb Cohen got us. Shel Silverstein said once that Herbie looked more like a guy who managed prior tightens than a manager of musicians. We played this place called the Rinky Dink Ice Cream Parlor on Balboa. Talk

about the Wrong Room.

Herbie told the owner of this place that Gerlach and I were a duet, sort of like Karen and Richard Carpenter.

Gerlach would open the show with a number on the 12, and I'd just sit there with my hands folded, on my little chair. People would be buying ice cream for their kids. When Gerlach finished his number, then I'd do one. Gerlach used to open with this great male driver song, "Whoo Back Back." It went like this:

"Whoo Back Back, gee by the lim
Who built the backband?
Whoo, goddamn.
Who built the backband
Cunningham?
Back up, Buck, gee by the lam.

There were all these little kids standing there saying, "I'll have peppermint," while this funky song was going on in the foreground. You couldn't say it was the background, it was too unbelievably loud. Later on, a commercially successful folk group took that song and smoothed it out for radio play. The music was real stiff. They sounded like a barber-shop quartet, and instead of singing, "Whoo, goddamn," they sang "Whoo, hot darn." It was surprisingly sexy.

Gerlach and I were both staying at this place across from the LaBrea Towers in Hollywood called Rose and Grover's. They had 120 cats, 30 folksters, and there were fleas all over the place.

You had to put bug spray in your sleeping bag to avoid being eaten alive during the night. So we had to drive all the way back to Hollywood after the gig at the Rinky Dink. Gerlach had this big old Chrysler, just primer on it, and he had taken out the back seat and put a dismantled motorcycle there. On the way back in to Hollywood every night, he used to stop at this bowling alley on



Fred Gerlach

Sepulveda and hustle pool while I slept on the front seat. We had a couple of unsatisfying gigs around town, played the Upper Celler in San Diego a few times, and then each of us went his own way. We lost touch.

As the years passed, there were two artists who ascended to the status of 12-string guitar heroes. I was flabbergasted that neither of them was Gerlach. Of course, this music was wonderful, but when people asked me what I thought, I'd say, "A little too much finesse for me," or "Since when is the 12-string guitar an instrument of such refinement?" When I heard Len Korte, I took off one shoe, one stocking, and polished five toes.

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Calendar MUSIC SCENE

you. I got a 600-acre farm in Pennsylvania, and I'd like you to come and stay with me and teach me to play the 12-string guitar." I said, "Well, I can't pick up and leave. I got an apartment and everything." He said, "Oh, that's okay. I'll play you handsomely, and I'll give you a woman and a horse." **JH:** A woman and a horse? Who was this guy? **FG:** He was a mob guy, and I declined very politely. A horse is one thing. **JH:** I think a woman is one thing. The horse is what's pretty far out. **FG:** Yeah. **JH:** Fred, what nationality are you anyway?

FG: I'm Yugoslavian. **JH:** What does your name mean? My name in Dutch means "little chicken."

FG: My name means "big boy."

JH: Your parents? **FG:** They were Yugoslavian émigrés. My father was a union organizer. In 1931 he was one of the people in the central committee that organized the United Automobile Workers. That was a breakthrough in organizing unions. They had a big strike in the Fisher Body plant in Michigan, and there was a lock-out. A sit-in by the strikers. The state militia was called in. That was the start of the union, when they refused to leave the plant.

JH: What did he do after the UAW was organized? **FG:** Later on, 30 years ago, he collected \$15 million, just

by himself, for Yugoslavian reconstruction. His whole life was one of union activity, proletarian activity. In other words, he was a Red. He had to close his

When I heard Leo Kottke I took off one shoe, one stocking, and polished five toenails. They had taken the 12-string guitar out of the barroom and made it sound nice enough to play at a bridge party.

office on Madison Avenue because the U.S. government wanted him to register as a for-

ign agent. **JH:** Fred, how did you wind up in San Diego? **FG:** Well, I moved to San Diego about six years ago.

He ended up being an instructor in math and computers. I wanted to come to San Diego. I love it.

JH: How did you meet your wife? **FG:** Well, she's a probation officer.

JH: What? You were on probation? **FG:** Yeah, love through the bars, at first sight.

JH: Oh, come on, Fred. **FG:** I was teaching a guitar class, and she was one of my students.

JH: How long have you been married? **FG:** Thirty years. We were so proud of our son we decided to get married! HA HA HA HA HA. He's a computer guy. A super-mass-capability computer guy. I don't really understand all of what he does.

JH: I understand that you have an unusual hobby. **FG:** Yeah. I carve gun grips. I work on and engrave guns, and I secure them. When guns come from the factory, they'll shoot, but they don't shoot straight. The top side of it is, it's provided me with a great source of after-hour activity. I go to conventions. It's not uncommon to spend two or three thousand dollars on a handgun. I wouldn't do it personally, but some people will.

JH: You're a vegetarian? **FG:** Once you shoot the hope of eating meat, you realize how many social pressures there are on you daily to accept commercial products. The meat-eating! It's the worst in the world. Not only that, I look back on my life and I'm horrified at what I ate!

JH: No sense going back there, Fred. ■

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INTERVIEW
JOHN BRIZZOLARA

"I had a beer mug as a tip jar. I would get everything from SBH green stamps to nickels, dimes, and quarters. There would always be little kids, five to ten, hanging around the piano. I remember one time this little five-year-old kid was listening to me, and sometimes kids would like the music and ask their parents for money to put in my tip jar. This little guy reaches in his pocket and without looking tosses two coins into my tip jar. He reached in his pants again and pulled out two pennies. He looked horrified. He had meant to give me the pennies, but he put a nickel and a dime in there or something. He asked if he could have his money back." Maginnis leans back on the piano bench and laughs. "Once it goes in the tip

good. They're much better, technically, than I am."

No one looks in the entertainer's direction as he trudges through a jaunty version of "You Do Something to Me." Does it bother him that no one seems to be paying attention to his music? "Not at all," he says and seems to mean it.

Between Shakey's and the Marine Room and the Rancho Bernardo Inn, Maginnis found work at the Top of the Cove in 1979, taking over for the long-time house musician. Since then, the lounge stylist has not ventured out of San Diego at all. At least not musically. Aside from a brief stint as a tour guide for British tourists in Canada, Maginnis has made his living exclusively with the piano — and exclusively in San Diego.

"One night this lady was to everything I played, and I had a bit too much to drink, bit more to drink. I got so I lot of instrumentals," he laughs going at it. Toward the end of her standing here and this lime to transpose the key of the

Craig Macinnis

her I couldn't. She turned to the kid and said, 'He doesn't know how to lower a key.' I turned to the kid and said, 'And she doesn't know how to lower her voice.'

Does Craig Maginnis have any ambitions beyond his present gigs? A record deal? Vegas? "Not really," he says. "I mean, look at this," he gestures out the window to the surf lapping at the sand near the windows. "This is a beautiful place. I'm not trying to get to New York or something. I have my days free, and what better place than San Diego to have your days free? I'm happy."

There is no reason to doubt Craig Maginnis as he presses out an upbeat but undemanding version of "Teach Me Tonight." ■

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Dog

A gaggle of fools marched around chortling to poorly amplified beats.

Cole Porter was still ashaying among the living, he would likely suffer a seizure observing how trenchant his "Anything Goes" has become. Apologists for diminishing standards strain to find significance in a phenomenon as incomprehensible as Snoop Doggy Dogg.

REVIEW
STEPHEN ESMEDINA

However, any response other than outright derision and uncontrollable laughter is either disingenuous, overly charitable, or a little acceptance of free-based brain cells. This is not a case of critical tomato/tomato dialectics, because the only sensible thing one can say about Mister Dogg is that he is a miserable, worthless fuckface whose celebrity ascendance shows how far into the abyss of insidious ineptitude we have sunk. Whatever it was that this rat-soup-eating fool believed he was doing a week ago, on a dark and shitty night at the Sports Arena, in front of a bored, underwhelming, and booing crowd who must have come in out of the rain only to dry off, it hardly lives up to his wishful thinking that he could "come up with something different, to show that I'm versatile...deeper...true hip-hop."

The amateur night's long delay led to idle speculation that the Doggy Doo-Doo Kennel were striving to come off as the Sly and the Family Stone of "gangsta rap," but given the children's-party production qualities, it seems more likely that the posse has been hunting in vain for a bag of dry ice that could fog a bit of the stage and a bag of firecrackers to set off for "tension." A gaggle of fools

marched around chortling to poorly amplified beats from a DJ set-up that looked and sounded like a fire sale special. You could hear the WAS-SAWPS and MUSHY-TS, okay, but the only time the audience lived up was when one particularly bold honey dropped down to his knees and drew and was greeted with a crescendo of guffaws. On the side of the stage waiting for a turn in the spotlight, a platoon of moribund honeys who got their chance by maintaining a C average or not violating parole stood in the near-darkness, appearing embarrassed to be so fortunate.

When Snoop and his producer Dr. Dre (I think — a hardly matters) finally decided to take the stage, the initial wave of "at last" huzzahs fell from feigned attempts to impersonate having fun to stone silence. The brooding, violent material from *Murder Was the Case* immediately fell flat without the visuals for which the numbers are adjuncts. The spastic derring about and shit-talking destroyed whatever loose appeal they once had on disc or on MTV. As my brother-in-boredom Ernesto said, "So many ugly motherfuckers talkin' at once I can't understand shit they're saying." Mr. Mutt did adhere to the concert convention of asking "YAWLL IN DE HOUSE SANDAYGUH?" at least 30 times. And, in what was presumably a public plea bargain for sympathy regarding his upcoming murder trial, he instructed us to "fuck doing rock, fuck smokin' crack, fuck smokin' w



Snoop Doggy Dogg
January 4
Sports Arena

cigarettes, fuck wine." He may have said to fuck not remembering the Lawd's day, but by that time I believed I had spent a reasonable amount of time — two hours — so I made my way through the bedfed-up security and police and hauled ass, cursing my insatiable curiosity.

Rap has been condemned roundly for inciting violence and for sexist pandering, but I'll take a 2 Live Crew or Ice Cube over this slacker miscreant's brand of "true hip-hop," at least they have the ability to offend. All that Snoop and the pound managed was to prove that, once again, just when you believe there can be nothing that can depress you any deeper, do not bet on it. I hereby extend a public apology to Ms. Courtney Love. She was merely dignified, not quite dead to the world. w

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Norm Friedman: The Pavilion
Raven Glasgow: The Westgate Hotel
Rebecca Gook: Tutto Mare
Paul Gregg: Kelly's Restaurant and
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Jim Gurlian: Hotel del Coronado
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
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7

mathematician niece and a nice young auto

mathematician, niece and a rising young astrophysicist, conversant with quantum entanglements by way of the sci-fi pulp. Welles, Mathews, flanked by a trio of fellow longhairs interpreted as strudel cooks, gives us the Einstein of *The T-shirt: corny and cozy*. And Meg Ryan, done over as though by Helmut Kriffan's hairdresser, is no less out of character than the *Big Sister* of *Barbarella*. Hannah was as the astrotronic in *Planisphere*. Whether she's supposed to be adorably absent-minded or feigningly fervid or endearingly eccentric, it all comes on as (her standard strategy) a little pity. Where the movie most does little approximate the charms of *Barbarella* is in the musical language of its cinematography. Credit to Jack Baker, both places. With Tim Robbins,

Stephen Fry, Charles Durning. 1994.
 ★ (CARMEL MOUNTAIN, CINEMA 21; CIN-
 ERAMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS; GROSSMONT
 TROLLEY; LA COSTA 6; MIRA MESA 7; NICK-
 ELODEON GALAXY 6; NICKELODEON 10; OCEAN
 SIDE 8; POWAY 10; UA ESCONDIDO R. UA HOM-
 ER PLAZA 7; UNIVERSITY TOWNE CENTRE;
 VALLEY DRIVE (N))

The Jungle Book — Comic-book
Kipling: Mowgli the Wolf-boy, the Black
Kluge: the Monkey City. The initial half-
hour or so is a well-crammed phantas-
magoria of eye-widening images: the run-
away tandem of horses dragging a burning
remnant of an exploded busboard
through the jungle; the noise-to-noise star-
ting contest between child and panther; the
simian-infested sacred ruin, the treasure
room within, the giant serpent on sentry
duty. Deep into the dark of an Arabian
Night. Deep into the mouth of myth. The
middle section slows down for cross-
cultural education (vocabulary flashcards,



ably in the Victorian setting. With
Inna Ryder, Claire Dries, Christian
le, Gabriel Byrne, Susan Sarandon, di-
rected by Gillian Armstrong. 1994.
CARMEL MOUNTAIN; PASHON VALLEY;
NORTH HILL CINEMAS; GROESBECK TROLLEY;
JOLLA 12; NARRA MESA 9; NICHELODYBY;
NICHELODYBY 10; PHONE 1/13; PLAZA CINEMAS
WAY 10; SANTEE VILLAGE'S SWEETWATER 6;
ESCONDIDO 8; VIA GLASSHOUSE 8; VIA NOR-
TH PLAZA 7; WEGAND PLAZA

Low Down Dirty Shame — Shame's name. Shameus is the game. And it isn't get much lower down. Crude,inky, stupid-alecky. (Sassy secretary: "What happened to you?" Roughed-up mushie: "I went partying with Rodney and Reginald Denny.") Directed by and starring Keenen Ivory Wayans with La Pinkette, Salli Richardson, and Charles Hallahan. 1994.

NECKLOODEON 10: SIANTEE DRIVE IN.
M.A.A. (A-1)

In *Midwinter of the Sun* — Nicholas Hytner's screen version of the Ian Bennett stage play, with Nigel Hawthorne re-creating the role of the de-rated George III.

must have been as colorful in the Twenties," enthuses a romantic soul, less soresome than his nihilist, in the "white print" sequence in *Hollywood in 1937*, through the color flashback. But the color after all is yellow. Which is to say, not so colorful after all. In fact, not so much a color as another misguided editorial. A jaundiced view. Parker, a great literary "figure" with a dim body of work, is given here expected due as an ex-temporaneous wit: "I may die before a trace of thought leaves the station," "Doesn't look like it," "I'm not a writer," "I like my warpaint. It's just big enough to give you a bit and a few friends, and so forth. But a wit and seatingly all writers' portraits on screen, the work, slight though in this case it might be, gets slighted. Or more exactly in this case, again, slighted. And the periodic device of having the author, back in black-and-white, recite samples of her poems into the camera is pretty thoroughly mitigated by Jennifer Jones' Leigh's sleepily drowsy "I love you" in the black-and-white

the poems could easily have been printed out on screen, to be read in silence. Short though they are, they'd have stood taller. With Campbell Scott, Matthew Broderick 1994.

● (HILLCREST CINEMAS, BRANCHO BISTENARDO & FROM 1/13)

WALL — A Wild Child tale, slow-moving and overcautious, concerning a backwoods Carolina hermit (Jodie Foster), sole survivor of a brace of twins, and speaker of her own private language. Somewhat surprisingly, it develops into simply another chapter in Hollywood's continuing romance of the simple and the primitive: the local doctor (Liam Neeson) and big-city psychologist (Natalia Richardson) do much more learning than teaching. (One of the things that puts Truffaut's *Wild Child* head and shoulders above the competition

In this field is the filmmaker's honesty about his own position: if you had placed *tabula rasa* personality in Truffaut's care, he'd have wanted to take him to a movie by Renoir, Hawks, Hitchcock. A Hollywood filmmaker will pretend to want to follow the Wild Child into the woods; Dante Spinotti's photography, in its suavely sophisticated way, tries very hard to get into State of Nature, but in the moonlit skinny dips it gets no further than Maxfield Par-

ish. In contrast, the introduction of the innocent to the "big bad world" of Charlotte N.C. achieves a decent degree of wonder and bewilderment through odd croppings and unsteady movements, as if the camera like the unaccustomed sightseer, doesn't know how or where to look. Directed by Michael Apted. 1994.

★ (JARMIL MOUNTAIN: FLOWER HILL CINEMAS; GROSSMONT TROLLEY: GROVE 2; HAZARD CENTER 7; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MIRRA MESA 7; NICKELODEON GALLERY 8; FROM 13; NICKELODEON 10; PLAZA CINEMAS; SAN MARCOS

CINEMAS; SANTES VILLAGE 8; SWEETWATER 1
USA CLASSHOUSE B; USA HORTON PLAZA 7)

Night on Earth — As in Jim Jarmusch's previous project, *Mystery Train*, the structure of this one fairly leaps out at us: five consecutive taxi rides in five different cities of the world, all after dark. It sounds like an idea for a movie, or at least like the germ of an idea for a movie — a sort of back's *Day of Night*, transfiguring the traditional omnibus into, more precisely, an omnibus. In the fill-in for this structure is unfulfilling didacticism: you'll have little anecdotal one-on-

that don't add up to much because each of them on its own is too near a zero. And it's near a dead end. The best part of each segment falls outside the storyline: mini-albums of static shots introducing each city — L.A., New York, Paris, Rome, Helsinki — as well as some along-the-way "sightseeing" shots of whatever area the camera happens to be passing through. In common with some of the most mysterious and po-

tentious of urban photographs (those of Aget, those of Abbott), there is the sense about these shots that, outside their spatial and temporal frame, some unguessable story might now be taking place, or already have taken place, or be just about to take place. And at any of these spots we might wish we could order the cab to pull over, us out, and allow us to enter a different movie. Preferably one by a different moviemaker. Winona Ryder, Gena Rowlands, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Beatrice Dalle, Roberto Benigni. 1992.

JO OREN. 1.17.7.

Nobody's Fool — Domestic drama with Paul Newman, Melanie Griffith, and the late Jessica Tandy, written and directed by Robert Benton.
(OEL MAR HIGHLANDS, GROSSMONT TROLLEY GROVE 9; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA VILLAGE; NIMES 7; NICHELODEON 10; PLAZA CINEMAS, RANCHO BERNARDO 8; SAN MARCOS CINEMA

SWEETWATER 6; UIA HORTON PLAZA 7; VALLE
CIRCLE: FROM 1/13)

The Cider — Tom Tryon's intricately knotted ghost story hasn't much of a leg stand on: all it desires is to spook you. In favor, however, is its lack of desire to terrorize you, to torture you, to gross you out. Robert Mulligan's direction of the child actors (Mulligan can't seem to shake his reputation as a tender coach of kids) is very dandy, and his camerawork around farm and forest, occasionally above farm and forest, has a babbling brook's easy flow. Uta Hagen

The Pagemaster — Monotoned lip service to the joys of reading (more familiar is shown with the screen treatments of Dr. Jekyll, Moby-Dick, *Treasure Island*, the with the original books), in the form of a Neverending Story-type fantasy. Part live-

Strauss waltzes) and interracial flirtation. Jason Scott Lee and Lena Headey, a handsome couple, and an ardently acted one as well, especially Lee's half of it), before the climactic return to the Monkey City for a couple of grandly poetic deaths. Fun, as the saying goes, for the whole family. Or for any solitary unit in it. With Cary Elwes and Sam Neill; directed by Stephen Sommers.

1994.
 ★★ (ASRO DRIVE IN; CARMEL MOUNTAIN
 CINERAMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS, GROSS
 MOUNT MALL; HAZARD CENTER 7; LA JOLLA VIL-
 LAGE, NICKELODEON 8; NICKELODEON 10;
 OCEANSIDE 9; POWAY 10; SAN MARCOS CIN-
 EMAS, SOUTH BAY DRIVE IN; SPORTS ARENA 6;
 VALLEY DOLBY IN; WINGAND B774)

Bondage — The co-stars of *Twins*, Schwarzenegger and DeVito, together again, in another one-joke comedy, this time to do with the world's first pregnant man (not counting Marcello Mastroianni in *The Most Important Event Since Man*

Walked on the Moon or fully Crystal in Rubie Test). The script — "My nipples are very sensitive" ... "Feel how soft my skin is" ... "Does my body disgust you?" — virtually writes itself. And Emma Thompson, having accepted an Oscar, now goes about as far Hollywood as it is possible to go. With Pamela Reed and Frank Langella directed by Ivan Reitman. 1994.

● (CENTURY TWIN, FROM 1/13; STUDIO 3 CINEMA, VALLEY DRIVE IN VINEYARD TWIN)

Time Limit Seduction — Another (after *Kill Me Again* and *Red Rock West*) homage to film noir by John Dahl. More narrowly, an homage to the 1941 French *femme fatale* (Linda Fiorentino, with hooded eye, clamped jaw, uninflected voice — a cartoon figure). So awed is the filmmaker that he can throw up no resistance to her in the form of credible supporting characters or plotline. And an homage-to-jazz score by Joseph Vitarello provides an unsharing tail wind. With Peter Bers, Bill Pullman,

Legends of the Fall — Reviewed this issue. With Brad Pitt, Aidan Quinn, Julia Ormond, and Anthony Hopkins, directed by Edward Zwick.

★ (JACKSON MOUNTAIN, CARDUSEL CINEMA & CINEMA 8, FLOWER HILL CINEMAS, GROSSMONT TROLLEY, HAZARD CENTRE 7, LA COSTE MESSIA 7, NICKELODEON 6, NICKELODEON GALAXY 6, PLAZA BONITA, PLAZA CINEMAS, POKWAY 10, SAN MARCOS CINEMAS, VIA CHICK, VISTA 8; UA GLASSBORO 6; 1A HORTON VISTA 2; UNIVERSITY TOWNE CENTRE, FIDEX 1, LUX)

The Lion King — Predigested heroic myth to do with a lion cub called Simba, rightful heir to the paradisiacal pidelands, disposed by a Machiavellian uncle, and — as we need to go on, The apotheosis of Joseph Campbell into a household name has not been a boon to the fictional imagination.

David Muku — Stagy, forced to confess his infamy fate, based on an unimpressive French film (trans., Santa Clara Univ.).

orbit around a suicide-pre-
Christmas. Nora Ephron,
and co-writer, has not aban-
derest in humankind, all her
Lebensschmerz, but the contact
and long-distance. Steve Mar-
ahn, Rita Wilson, Juliette Le-
(LA JOLLA 12)

Carolina hermit (Jodie Foster) living half of a brace of twins, and her own private language. So surprisingly, it develops into another chapter in Hollywood romance of the simple and the local doctor (Liam Neeson, psychologist) (Natalia Richardson) much more learning than the things that puts Truffaut's head and shoulders above the rest in this field is the filmmaker about his own position: if you sublate raw personality in Truffaut he'd have to take his


Renzi, Hawk, Fischel, a filmmaker will pretend to w the Wild Child into the wo Spinotti's photography, in a sophisticated way, tries very ha State of Nature, but in the m dips it gets no further than M risk. In contrast, the introd concept to the "Bird had won

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tion, part animation, but not really much of either: less than an hour and a quarter, all told. With Macaulay Culkin and Christopher Lloyd, plus the voices of Whoopi Goldberg, Patrick Stewart, Leonard Nimoy, directed by Joe Johnston (live action) and Maurice Hunt (animation), 1994.

Flash Forward, This Way! — A sort of "Video Jukebox" selection, but on a very large and very lavish scale, even allowing for the vast amount of footage run through more than once. Blood, dangling telephone receivers, pig-faced masks, more blood, vomitous animation sequences, frenzied camerawork and cutting, more blood, and so on, are meant to communicate the depth of anguish of a spaced-out rock star and son of a Second World War casualty. *Immaturity* runs raw. With Bob Geldof, directed by Alan Parker. 1982.

THE PROBLEMATIC—*Luc Besson, of La Femme Nikita and The Big Blue*, finally comes to America in body-bodis spiro; or, yawn, about a milk-drinking, plant-nurturing, grassy-sunglows-wearing existential French hitman who saves a girl into the trade. The director's alienness is inescapable: not just in cinematic homages such as the Mr. MacGuffin allude to or the admiration for Gene Kelly, but in such a howler as the notion that a ghetto girl, daughter of a runaway drug dealer and a streetwalking stevedore, would be enrolled in an exclusive private school to become a ballerina. The film is the height of the hitman's world (he can't read or write in English): he alters his boss to

A dark, grainy black and white photograph. In the foreground, a person in a dark suit is standing in a doorway, their back mostly to the camera, looking into a brightly lit room. In the background room, another person is visible, possibly sitting at a desk or table. The image is very dark and has a high-contrast, almost silhouette-like quality.

hold his earnings while he himself lives in squalor? he charges only \$5000 a hit? he announces his arrival and his intentions to prospective targets?) are no more convincing. With Jean Reno, Natalie Portman, Gary Oldman, Danny Aiello. 1994.
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Pulp Fiction — A title as self-conscious although not as accurate as Samuel Beckett's *Film*. Yes, Quentin Tarantino's cast of characters accommodates some staple figures of the form: the small-time heisters, the mob torpedoes, Mr. Big's sex-bomb mate, the boxer bribed to throw a fight. But the writer-director borrows his narrative

from ear to nose to tongue to climate), such that Tarantino seems at times to be cultivating a new adom, a new milieu, in which to transplant the term "gunyon-eague": more colorful, more florid, more lurid. And hence more sentimental, inverted and twisted though the sentiment may be. There are plenty of things to snicker and

ance, have little latitude to behave like ordinary human beings, even the one played by so superlative an actor as Jean-Louis Trintignant. The one played by Irene Jacob, she of the elevated eyebrows and wistfully furrowed forehead, was hopeless from the start. They are all photographed in half-moon light, and in an exorbitant number

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instinctive response might suggest a need out of order when a dead character resumes your movie's end, and in earlier print editions, the book's title was a single-line character or situation, but instead is a life-shuffle of them, the leaping over of a climax but not of action. (The book's title is a single-line character or situation, but instead is a life-shuffle of them, the leaping over of a climax but not of action.)

And the first and foremost thing to be said about his dialogue would be that it is "bookish." The book is a collection of doubtful relevance. Tarantino is, so to speak, a man who loves to hear himself talk. The book is a collection of doubtful relevance. Tarantino is, so to speak, a man who loves to hear himself talk. The book is a collection of doubtful relevance. Tarantino is, so to speak, a man who loves to hear himself talk.

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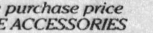
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



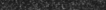


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