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# Reader

## Drag's Not for Sissies

NEVER FORGET YOU'RE A MAN IN A DRESS

To walk through Horton Plaza at lunchtime on a gorgeous day in late spring with a flamboyantly beautiful woman on your arm is a sure way to snag a lot of looks — quick, long, furtive, appreciative, critical, and the confused. This particular woman is over six feet in spiky four-inch heels, has a wild tangle of black hair and a small purple satin dress that fits her like an orange peel fits an orange. Her skin coloring shows traces of a Hawaiian and Greek heritage that heighten her exotic appeal. And she doesn't so much walk as sway forward, a mixture of stride and hip movement, stiff back and head toss. She's here because I invited her for lunch and to buy a golden rhinestone-covered cowboy hat to match the golden chaps she sometimes wears to work.

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It's Shocking What Rieseling Can Do — See Page 116



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**Murder boat** There are two local connections to the grisly murder of two professors at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. San Diego's Hannah Esery is the 80-year-old grandmother of James J. Parker, one of the two Vermont high school students who police are holding for the stabbing deaths of **Haif** and **Susanne Zantop** in their Hanover home. The German-born professors were said to have been active in anti-Nazi politics; according to a report on ABC's 20/20 last week, neo-Nazi literature was found in the home of Parker's co-suspect, 17-year-old **Robert Tullach**, and the slayings coincided with Germany's Holocaust Remembrance Day. Interviewed by the Boston Globe before the pair were captured in Indiana last week, Esery said, "It doesn't seem to make much sense to me. This boy doesn't have a reputation for this sort of thing." She added that Parker had spent his summer vacation here with her last year and played Prince Charming in a family pageant. Parker's lawyer is San Diegoan **Douglas Brown**, said to be a family friend. "I can tell you Jimmy Parker has nothing to do with any of this stuff," Brown told the Boston Herald regarding the neo-Nazi material. "I certainly don't know that it was found in the other boy's room. He may have been doing a school project — I'm speculating. I don't know, but certainly that's not an issue with Jimmy Parker."

**Abortive campaign** Chargers owner Alex Spanos has come up on the losing end of that bitter battle last weekend for the chairmanship of the California Republican Party. Conservative **Shawn Steel** triumphed over self-styled pragmatist **Brooks Firestone** 662 to 576. Spanos made a hefty contribution to Firestone's \$100,000 campaign war chest against Steel, a Beverly Hills attorney, who was backed by the pro-life wing of the party. A former state assemblyman, Firestone was supported by the party's business establishment (including Rancho Santa Fe's **Gerry Parsky** and ex-President **Gerald Ford**), which wants to downplay abortion and other conservative issues in the interests of regaining the state's 55th political power. — The city is still trying to build a \$150,000 sculpture at the entrance to its University City sewage-treatment plant. A year ago, eccentric Laurel Canyon artist **Chris Burden**, who had a friend shoot him in the left arm with a .22-caliber rifle as part of an art show back in the 1970s, was paid a \$10,000 settlement fee to abandon his proposal for a fountain fed by processed sewage effluent. To replace Burden, the city has settled on **Nobuko Nagasawa**, probably most famous for his "Atomic Cowboy" installation, which chronicled the strange case of *The Conqueror*, a Howard Hughes movie of the 1940s. In the years after the movie's production, 91 of 220 crew members, including stars **John Wayne**, **Dick Powell**, and **Susan Hayward**, got cancer, which many in Hollywood attributed to the fact that the picture had been shot near the busy Nevada desert site.

Alex Spanos

**Professional sport** Manhattan Beach's sports consultant **Daniel S. Barrett** has been making big money peddling stadium advice to the San Diego City Council. Last spring, his company, Barrett Sports Group, was hired for \$20,000 to try to find a way out of the Chargers' ticket guarantee. Since then, the city has upped Barrett's total compensation to \$120,000, the latest rate of \$50,000 coming in early December. According to the city's deal with Barrett, \$30,000 of that went for consulting on the stalled downtown baseball stadium, with the balance being paid for consulting on Chargers matters. Meantime, San Diego taxpayers forked over another \$200,000 last month to the San Diego International Sports Council, a private sports promotional and social club made up of some of the city's richest men. In past years, the group promised to sell Chargers tickets after getting tax money to pay for computers and other equipment. These days, council executive director **Ky Snyder** is lobbying hard for the downtown baseball stadium. Another target is on the way for the city's big downtown law firm of Gray Cary Ware & Freidenreich, according to the *Recorder*. The prospective partner is L.A.'s Riondan & McKinnin, the firm cofounded by outgoing Los Angeles mayor **Richard Riordan**. But some lawyers think Gray Cary's last merger "may have dulled" the firm's "edge in the legal market."

Contributor: Matt Potter

The Reader offers \$25 for news tips published in this column. Call our voice mail at 619-235-3000, ext. 440, or fax your tip to 619-235-3096.

## Tijuana's Troubled Families

By Abe Opincar

**'G**o to the border between 5:00 and 7:00 in the morning, and you can understand something about my patients'

lives. At that time in the morning, the border is crazy. People honking, yelling, fighting for a place in line. These people are under tremendous pressure to arrive on time to their jobs in San Diego. They're afraid that if they're late, they'll lose their jobs. And the border's always unpredictable. You can never be sure how long it's going to take you to get across. So the day begins in a very stressful way, and then

certainly other psychologists and therapists who see children whose parents are divorced, but these kids make up the bulk of my practice." Although she has no hard statistics on the incidence of divorce in Colonia Libertad, she does know that, according to statistics published last year by the Mexican government, the divorce rates in Tijuana, and Ensenada, are some of the highest not only in Baja

think my practice in Colonia Libertad is important. A lot of people there don't have many resources. I can really make a difference in their lives.

"In some ways it's an unusual community. It's one of the oldest that was established outside downtown Tijuana. It has a reputation for being a poor neighborhood. People in Colonia Libertad feel a strong tie to the place. They may go to San Diego to work, but they don't venture much into Tijuana. They say, 'Why leave the neighborhood? We have everything we need right here. Bakeries. Butcher shops. Hospitals. A hotel. When I drive around Tijuana, I get lost.'"

"My uncle, who's a pediatric surgeon, has a clinic in Colonia Libertad, and another, just a short distance away, in Zona Rio. Sometimes when he can't see patients at his Colonia Libertad

course, who speak good Spanish, who are quite fluent. But there are many cultural references they don't understand or fully appreciate. Simple things, like the importance of the Virgin of Guadalupe in Mexican culture, or references to food, or even Mexican sports teams.

"I know these things sound insignificant, but in order for therapy to be effective, in order for it to truly help, there has to be a sense of empathy between therapist and patient. Humor, for example, is an important way that people become more comfortable with each other and establish empathy, a rapport. Mexicans are very playful in Spanish, and there are lots of Mexican puns. It's extremely rare to find a non-native speaker who understands and appreciates Mexican wordplay. Without that sort of understanding, an important element of commu-

nity is lost."

The development corporation has helped the city revitalize

lobby at 225 Broadway. The center exhibits sketches and charts detailing the area's redevelopment. Its showpiece is a 200-square-foot model of downtown. From a distance, the model looks like an art installation, an abstract, geometric study. Up close, it looks like downtown — to scale and detailed, with cars, pedestrians, and trees. Black tags pasted to the model mark current and future development projects, most of which proceed under the aegis of the development corporation, a public, nonprofit organization created by the city in 1973 to serve "on behalf of the San Diego Redevelopment Agency as the catalyst for public-private partnerships to facilitate projects."

Through an operating agreement, it functions as the "agency's representative in the developments of retail, residential, and other projects."

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## Has Gaslamp Lived Up to Its Promise?

By Justin Wolff

**T**he Downtown Information Center, a service of the Centre City Development Corporation, occupies the ground-floor

lobby at 225 Broadway. The center exhibits sketches and charts detailing the area's redevelopment. Its showpiece is a 200-square-foot model of downtown. From a distance, the model looks like an art installation, an abstract, geometric study. Up close, it looks like downtown — to scale and detailed, with cars, pedestrians, and trees. Black tags pasted to the model mark current and future development projects, most of which proceed under the aegis of the development corporation, a public, nonprofit organization created by the city in 1973 to serve "on behalf of the San Diego Redevelopment Agency as the catalyst for public-private partnerships to facilitate projects."

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Fifth Avenue



Fifth Avenue



whether they've been fulfilled. Not surprisingly, city redevelopment officials say that they have. For years, they have celebrated the erasure of blight and the reversal of "physical, social, and economic decline" in the Gaslamp. Today, city websites, advertisements, and brochures describe the area as "vibrant," "attractive," and "entertaining."

What success the Gaslamp has enjoyed it has earned, in part, by emulating New Orleans' French Quarter. The Gaslamp hosts several Cajun-style restaurants and a robust, bacchanalian nightlife, which reaches its apotheosis on Fat Tuesday when, for a price, one can get lit on the street. The area's buildings, like the French Quarter's, are grand, their facades have been historicized and painted in vibrant colors. "Entertaining" is too dainty

a word for it. "Lubricant" seems more appropriate. Though most of the drugs and pornography have vanished, they've been replaced by a different kind of partying — a city-sanctioned culinary and alcoholic indulgence. On weekend nights, Fifth Avenue

busies with handsomely dressed patrons window-shopping for the best restaurant or bar. Pretty women push oversized menus into customers' hands and entice them with promises of choice seating and descriptions of delicious specials. Bouncers stand guard at the clubs, checking IDs. A deep bass spills into the street from the Bitter End, young revelers descend the stairs toward the auspicious glow emanating from the Onyx Room. The street smells of food, cigarette smoke, and cologne. Pedestrians cut in front of cars to catch up with friends. On a recent Friday night, Ed McMahon's emblazoned Star Search bus, double parked between G and H Streets, spilled out diesel fumes and clogged traffic. A crowd gathered around, hoping to catch a glimpse of somebody.

Beverly Schroeder, a senior planner at the development corporation, told me on Jan. 26, "Thirty years ago the plan was to clean up drug use in the area. I don't think anyone imagined that it would become what it has become."

Locals and tourists alike think of the Gaslamp as a nighttime destination. Whether it's Croc's for music, La Strada for food, or the Star Bar for no-nonsense drinking, the Gaslamp caters to evening needs. But officials intended for the district to be a mixed-use area, a place where residents could rub elbows with out-of-towners while they took care of their daytime shopping. The language of the original 1976 planned-district ordinance, which has been upheld in subsequent drafts, says as much. Among the "desired uses" for the Gaslamp were for it to accommodate "day and nighttime entertainment and restaurant establishments" and "activities which attract the casual shopper, whether resident or visitor."

The 1982 redevelopment plan for the Gaslamp Quarter Redevelopment Project — prepared by the city's Redevelopment Agency in cooperation with the Gaslamp Quarter's Project Area Committee — reiterated these objectives. Planners listed as "major goals" the "strengthening and encouragement of retail, business, cultural, social, and other commercial functions in the Project Area, including, but not limited to, the establishment of a safe, healthy, and attractive environment in which business, commercial, cultural, and social services activities can thrive and residents live." In May 1992, officials merged this plan with the larger redevelopment plan for the Centre City Redevelopment Project — which included the Columbia, Marina, and



Moore McGillycuddy's



Bouncers at the Bitter End



Horton Plaza, 1981



Horton Plaza, 1981

how with out-of-towners while they took care of their daytime shopping. The language of the original 1976 planned-district ordinance, which has been upheld in subsequent drafts, says as much. Among the "desired uses" for the Gaslamp were for it to accommodate "day and nighttime entertainment and restaurant establishments" and "activities which attract the casual shopper, whether resident or visitor."

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Olivia Aguirre

there's the usual stress at work. Usually, you get home at around 9:00 at night. Often, there's lots of traffic getting back into Tijuana. You have just a short time to eat, talk with your children, take care of family matters. You go to sleep early because you have to get up early to cross the border. Then the whole process starts again. Where I work in Colonia Libertad, a great many people work in San Diego. This is what their lives are like. People come home at night, and they're hungry, exhausted, and they argue. That sort of life is hard on marriages. It's not so surprising that such marriages end in divorce."

Olivia Aguirre is, to her knowledge, the only psychotherapist in Tijuana who deals primarily with children of divorced parents. ("There are

California, but in all of Mexico. "It's not only that border life is itself stressful, but Tijuana is less traditional than other cities in Mexico. People here have come from everywhere. In many cases, they've left their extended families behind. They don't have that support."

Aguirre's family moved from Guadalajara to Tijuana when she was six years old, and she returned to Guadalajara to attend a Jesuit university, where she studied psychology. "The Jesuits have a very open-minded approach to psychology, with a great emphasis on serving the community. The most important thing they taught us was humility. They taught us that it wasn't enough just to study psychology. You studied psychology in order to serve people. Which is why I

continued on page 6



Bill Keller



Billboard at Front and Beech Streets



# CITY LIGHTS

## Troubled families

continued from page 4  
States, but they didn't feel they were really being understood. Another reason is money. They can't afford to see a therapist in the United States. In Tijuana,

some family therapists charge as much as \$75. I charge much less. In Colonia Libertad, no one could afford that. Another reason they come from so far away to see me is that they're afraid that if they go to a therapist in the United States, either their children will be taken from them, or they'll be deported, or

both.

"Let's say you have many members of a family living together. The father has been abusing the children. The mother wants out. She wants a divorce. But she doesn't want to go to an American therapist because she's afraid the therapist will tell the authorities about the

abuse. The authorities will come to the house, and everyone will be arrested. So, they feel safer making the trip to Tijuana to see me.  
"I usually see 14 to 20 children a week. I also teach. And I hold weekend workshops for families who are divorced or going through divorce. When I ask

the children how they feel about their parents' divorce, the first thing they tell me is that they feel embarrassed. By the time their parents bring them to see me, the children are often withdrawn, depressed. They're having learning problems or problems with aggressive behavior.

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## Troubled families

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## Troubled families

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There's a lot of bed-wetting. I encourage the parents to speak to their children's teachers, to let them know what's happening in their children's lives. In Mexico, there's still shame attached to divorce. The children feel that shame, and so do their mothers. In Mexico, a divorced woman has a difficult time finding another relationship. In general, men are interested only in sexual relationships with divorced women. Families discourage their sons from marrying a

woman who's divorced. Mothers say, "She had a marriage that ended in disaster. Don't go looking for trouble."

In my workshops, I try to encourage parents to be as honest as possible with the children. The important thing is that the children understand that they are not the cause of the divorce. So, I encourage the children to ask all the questions that they need, even if the questions are difficult or painful for the parents. "Daddy, you left Mommy because you fell in love with another woman?" "Daddy, do you ever miss me when you're at the other woman's house?" "Daddy, did Mommy divorce you be-

cause you were beating her?" It's a very difficult process. I usually hold these workshops on Saturdays over two weekends. The questions and answers can be very tough. Sometimes the parents don't attend the second workshop.

"Marriages fail here for the usual reasons — infidelity, abuse, drug and alcohol addiction — but there are other reasons that are particular to Mexican culture. Often, extended families live together, and there can be tensions between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. Sometimes marriages fail here because the husband's family and the wife's family just

don't get along. Mexicans have a reputation for being very close to their children, for having close families, and that has its good points and its bad ones. When a child forms a very close relationship to his parents, he sometimes has difficulty establishing close relationships in the outside world...with a spouse, for example. It's almost an issue of competing loyalties. And when a very close family falls apart, it can be very hard for everyone. My job is to help the children. I can't reunite their parents, but I can try to help the children understand what has happened. I can try to help them understand that it wasn't their fault."

## Gaslamp

continued from page 5

and Gaslamp Quarter redevelopment — but they have never changed the "major goals."

Nevertheless, the Gaslamp Quarter Association, which represents a diverse group of more than 380 businesses located in the 16-block historic district, deemed it necessary late last year to take matters into its own hands and launch an advertising campaign promoting the Gaslamp's retailers. Driving down toward Broadway you might have noticed a new billboard at Front and Beech Streets imprinted with the slogan "Shop

Outside the Box." Bill Keller, chairman of the association's board of directors and owner of Le Travel Store at 745 Fourth Avenue, explained the campaign to me on January 29.

"Basically, there was some extra money left over from last year, and we designated it for the retailers in the neighborhood. I think we've got a lot of high-profile events for the bars and clubs, and what we were looking to do was promote retail. So with a little seed money we put together a group of Gaslamp retailers starting late summer and tried to figure out how to spend it. The concept was 'What makes us unique?' Well, obviously we have

a high percentage of locally owned businesses. We don't have the big boxes of malls and big chains, and we were thinking about the process of shopping, of going in and out of stores. In trying to figure out what makes us unique, we came up with the initial phrase, 'I found it in the Gaslamp.' It was that sense of the discovery of something that we wanted to communicate. We handed the program off to Jud-

design, and they took it over and turned it into several different concepts, all of which were amazing. The one we chose was 'Shop Outside the Box.' That phrase captures what we are going after. The obvious comparison is to malls and chain stores. The hot trend in retail has obviously been the superstore, but we know there are a lot of people who absolutely hate those places. This was an effort to communicate with those people."

Keller added, "Our goal is to get people to realize that there are 75 to 80 stores in the Gaslamp and that it is more than just a great dining and entertainment district. There is something else happening here, and so we need to start adding that idea of shopping to people's idea of the Gaslamp."

Even though city press releases plug the Gaslamp's shopping, Keller thinks the Gaslamp has a way to go before it becomes a reputable retail district. "From my point of view," he said, "I know that not everybody agrees with me. I think that a certain percentage of national stores here is critical. There just isn't that much good independent retail. I say we need some of the clothing stores. I don't think that we'll become a real shopping district until we get some more of the nationals, with all the product and expertise that they bring. In order for us to be perceived by San Diego as a shopping district, we need to get more retailers down here. And I hope that includes some additional independents and a few more national chains. I hope we end up with a balance. That will benefit the local stores, who in turn will attract people to the national stores. What the billboard promotes is old-fashioned street shopping, like that on the street level in San Francisco, Santa Monica, Pasadena."

Michael Stepper, dean of the New School of Architecture and a planner for the Gaslamp Quarter from 1975 until 1992, agrees with Keller. "The goal of balance really has not been achieved," he told me on January 30. "We have Fridays and Saturdays when the place is jammed with people going down for the restaurants and the entertainment. I think we haven't developed a sufficient retail market downtown to cause a lot of retail to spill out from Horton Plaza. While some things have gone in, what was envisioned was a lot more businesses going in on the ground floor of Fifth and Sixth Avenues, not just restaurants. We haven't quite achieved that. I would like to see city officials get more daytime

commercial tenants in there and go out and find businesses."

Stepper also thinks that Pasadena can be a lesson for San Diego planners. "I look at Old Pasadena as a model, which has achieved more of a balance," he said. "You do have a real strong daytime use there. The big chains can be used to bring in business."

Patti Judd owns Judesign, an advertising and design firm at 696 State Street, and the Pacific, a retail store at 534 Fifth Avenue. Judd developed the billboard and a "Shop Outside the Box" campaign that ran in San Diego Magazine in December. She told me on January 29, "We took a look at what's unique

about shopping in the Gaslamp, which is that the stores are not all cookie-cutter like at the malls. There's a certain cachet with downtown right now, and there's an urban quality that you can't get anywhere else, and so, in terms of developing this campaign, we asked, how do we go in and talk to San Diego, not just

to the tourists, but to get the word out that there is quality retail down here. I think that a lot of people still have the impression of downtown as kind of creepy and not the most desirable place to go."

I asked Judd if she would like to see more city-sponsored endorsements of the retail aspects

of the Gaslamp. "Absolutely," she said. "Absolutely. But we know it's not going to happen overnight. We have to make it a more attractive place for retail, and that means there has to be a draw during the daytime as well as the nighttime to support the rents that are going on. As far as what CCDC [Centre City Development

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agement Corporation) can do, I think it's really their messaging. Previously, the Gaslamp has been touted as a place for nightlife. Part of our messaging has been to make sure they include this shopping experience. We wanted to get away from the perception of the Gaslamp as just a historical district or just an entertainment and dinner place. It needs to be a complete community."

According to Judd, parking has contributed to the problem. "It's affecting both of my businesses, and that is something that can do more attractive. A lot of people say, 'Oh, I don't want to go down there and pay for parking.' They know that the meter mads are scotching around."

San Diego redevelopment

officials have just started to address the parking issue. On January 24, they celebrated the opening of a 500-space public parking garage on Market Street between Sixth and Seventh Avenues. It is the first publicly financed garage built downtown since the 1960s and is part of a larger plan to add close to 5000 parking spaces downtown over the next three years. The spaces will be more affordable than the private ones currently available at exorbitant rates.

But we cannot blame parking alone for the lack of daytime visitors to the Gaslamp. The noise and commotion coming from the clubs has prevented a residential community from taking root in the quarter. The authors of the original plans for the Gaslamp envisioned a mixed-

use area that would include residents, independent stores, and entertainment venues. The 1976 planned-district ordinance called for "activities which encourage maintenance and development of balanced housing," and the 1982 redevelopment plan mandated the "expansion and improvement of the supply of low- and moderate-income housing." If the city had met these objectives the Gaslamp would be a more diverse area, with residents who would support daytime shops. "I still think that the Gaslamp should strive to attract as much daytime use as possible," Stepper told me. "I say that because I think that in order for the partying to burn out, the daytime uses have to thrive."

Debi Owen, a Gaslamp res-

ident for almost eight years, owns the Debra Owen Gallery on Eleventh Avenue. She has also sat on the Project Area Committee, a citizen group that advises the San Diego Redevelopment Agency about downtown projects, for five years. "My gallery used to be in the Gaslamp," she told me on January 30. "Being there does nothing for a business. All people think about is not being able to park and not wanting to deal with the drunk people. In my vision from ten years ago, I used to imagine all these cute little storefronts. It would be wonderful if we were like Union Street or Fillmore Street — or any street in San Francisco. It isn't going to happen."

Owen added, "What I remember from the original goals

was that the purpose really was to make the whole downtown a 24-hour place, which of course means that people live there, work there, and play there. I've lived here for eight years and sat on the board, and I've always said you have to think about the residents. That's what makes it feel like a neighborhood. It really is tough living in a place that's a party zone. I guess I think that the Gaslamp's best days have come and gone," she said with a nervous laugh. "If we wanted it to be a balanced, mixed-use zone, at this point in time, the pendulum is way too far on the entertainment and nightclub side of it."

Owen believes that to find a balance you have to look at the whole of downtown. "I think that it's happening, that down-

town is becoming viable as a residential area," she said. "And maybe the Gaslamp just has to be the designated party zone." Stepper agrees with Owen's characterization of downtown. "The housing market, I think, is there to some extent," he said. "But a lot of the housing in the East Village, on the other side of Sixth, and those people should start going to the Gaslamp for some of their specialty needs. That's just beginning to happen. If the housing gets built up the way it's proposed in the East Village, that should at least cause things to happen along Sixth Avenue and eventually make some of those commercial spaces viable for other kinds of uses along Fifth, which will promote that diversity of use. But all of these things take time."

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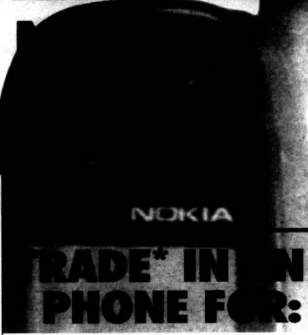


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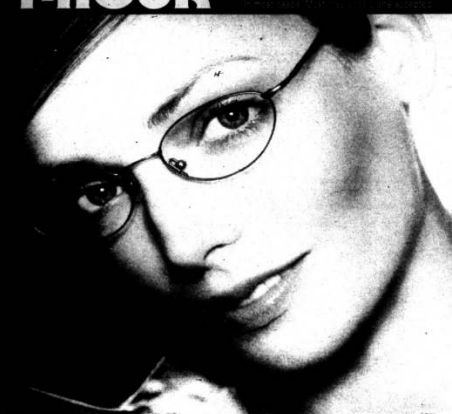








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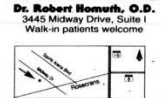
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## SHEEP AND GOATS

PLACES OF WORSHIP REVIEWED

Denomination: Roman Catholic  
Address: Mar Ballico #621, Colonia Alcan.  
011-52-6-680-5838  
Year founded: 1968  
Senior pastor: Carlos Mayorga  
Congregation: 5000  
Staff: 1  
Annual budget: not available  
Weekly giving: not available  
Singles program: yes  
Diversity: Hispanic  
Dress: casual to dressy  
Services: Sunday Mass, 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m.

Hard rain fell on the empty little carnival in front of Parroquia del Sr. San Jose. The miniature carousel, the rocket ride, the other concessions—all painted, it seemed, with faces of angry chickens—rattled in the wind. A

Roman Catholics sing better than their Anglo counterparts is that their contemporary hymns are more modest. The lyrics are plain, "Defend us, protect us, hear our prayers..." and to the point.

Father Mayorga's homily, too, was straight-forward. Like other messages I've heard in Tijuana Roman Catholic churches, Father Mayorga's was an admonition.

"In what spirit should we come to church? We should come in a spirit of humility. As the Gospel reading told us, a good man speaks only good, a bad man, only evil. A good man speaks good because he has good in his heart. The way we can have good in our heart is to listen to what the Bible teaches us. But in order to learn, we have to have humility, we have to acknowledge that we need to learn. We must come to church as true disciples of Christ, willing to follow His message. If we think that we are better than others, if we are full of pride, we can't hear His message. The Bible tells us that we must even love our enemies. Our hearts must be full of understanding, not hate, unforgiveness, and vengeance. God has given us a way to overcome sin. Death is a consequence of sin. But if we are free of sin, we overcome death. We have everlasting life. If we die in sin, we are forever separated from God. We are dead forever."



Parroquia del Sr. San Jose  
Tijuana

Sermon	content	***
delivery	***	
Liturgy	***	
Music	congregational	***
choir	***	
Snacks	no snacks	***
Flowers	***	
Architecture	***	
Friendliness	***	
Room for sanctuary	(none)	***
Good	***	
Very good	***	
Excellent	***	
Extraordinary	***	

Like many Roman Catholic churches in Tijuana, San Jose is cavernous. Before last Sunday's 10:30 a.m. Mass, a blue-robed children's choir, accompanied by a guitarist, practiced a folksy hymn before a statue of San Jose. The plaintive voices echoed off the church's high beige walls and black-and-white tiled floor. Father Carlos Mayorga knelt in prayer a long while before the altar.

Aided by chubby altar boys, Father Mayorga celebrates a simple liturgy. Born in Jalisco, he came to Tijuana in 1957. "The city was so small then," he remembers, "there were no vacations. Now Tijuana is so big, we ordained five priests only yesterday. When the Pope visited Mexico, we saw a considerable increase in vocations. His visit really helped."

"Defend us, protect us, hear our prayers." The children's choir sang sweetly. The priest wasn't shy. The congregation joined in with feeling. (One reason, I think, Mexican

corner store, San Jose is in a real way part of Colonia Alcan. San Jose's parishioners hear its bells. They see Father Mayorga on a daily basis. They walk to Mass. If they need consolation, or if they just want to light a candle, the church is right there, nearby, a constant resource.

After Mass, I asked an older woman where I could catch a bus downtown. She told me to follow her to Second Street, not far away. She and her little granddaughter were going there. The three of us trudged along in the rain, helping each other cross flooded gutters. The woman and little girl left me at the top of the hill, at the entrance to Garden Cemetery, where they bought a bunch of red gladiolus from a pair of Indian women. The woman and little girl wandered deep into the cemetery until they found the grave they sought. They placed the gladiolus before the headstone and stood staring down without moving for a very long time.

—Abe Oppen

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I am the mother of a three-year-old girl. We share a friendship with another mother and her daughter, who is also three. My friend is a good mother. I learn a lot from her as a parent, but sometimes I feel uncomfortable when she singles my child out to make a comment to her own child about what's going on between them, such as, "Mimi seems tired today," when they get into little disagreements. I have been a witness to most of these power struggles between these two strong-willed girls. They both say things that could hurt the other's feelings when they get mad. What should I do when my friend makes these subtle comments which I feel are unfair to my daughter? I don't want my child to feel that she is always the one with the problem when she and her friend disagree.

CONFUSED

Dear Confused,

Sounds like your friend's developed a tiresome habit of shifting blame away from her little angel at all costs. Maybe talk to her directly? Your letter is succinct and sweetened with praise for the other mother, which might make your request for her to back off a little and not label these arguments all your kid's fault a bit easier for her to swallow. Present the idea casually and with humor. Otherwise you could be sneaker and tell her that you admire her mothering skills and want her advice about a problem. Then tell her about another mother whose child "Mimi" plays with and ascribe to this fictional mother your friend's behavior, and ask how you should handle this. Tell her you respect this other mother a lot and would never want to alienate her. Maybe her subconscious will take the hint. Or you can just make sure you're ever-present at the next several skirmishes between the two tykes and jump in before your friend does, encouraging the girls to tell each other what they think is going on, so your friend has no chance to impose her prejudiced version of the interaction on the proceedings. Hopefully, this will help the little girls learn to work these things out with less referring from the big girls.

Dear Aunt Trudy,

I'm a single mom with a six-year-old son who has never (and may never) see his father. My older sister has been suggesting that I sign up for a "Big brother" so that he has some more male attention, but I'm frankly skeptical about it. How can you be sure what the influence, or nature of the person, would be? He already has lots of friends his age and a pair of doting grandparents. But he has also complained lately that he is "the only kid in school without a father." Your suggestions?

SOLED IN OCEANSIDE

Dear Solo,

First, take a bow. You're doing one of the noblest jobs on earth, raising your son, alone. And yet you're not really doing it completely by yourself, because hopefully your friends and family are part of your son's world. You don't say what the situation is with your son's mysterious absent dad — so I can't address that aspect of his "fatherlessness." I do hope you listen attentively to your boy's complaints, fears, and wishes on the subject and regularly engage him in dialogue about his lack of a dad, taking special care to answer whatever questions he has about where his dad is, who he is, and why he isn't around. If your son is grousing about not having a papa, there are lots of ways to get more bearded testosterone-infused beings involved in his life besides enlisting in a Big Brother program. I have every confidence that such programs are meritorious, but you don't sound comfortable with the Big Bro idea right now. If your boy likes sports, then Little League and other such activities that often have male coaches might be fun for him. It depends on your son's interests. I have a nephew his age who takes Tae Kwon Do lessons, who is male. Another nephew is taking a painting class from a guy he really likes and is actually beginning to produce some nice pictures. Could you cultivate friendships with men you respect who might take an interest in Junior? Most cities have support groups for single parents, and while the majority of the parent-members are women, there are usually a few single dads in the mix. Talk to your kid about what he wants and needs. Would he like to join any of these programs? What does he miss most about not having a dad? What kinds of fun could he have with you that might make him feel less deprived?

Write to Aunt Trudy c/o the San Diego Reader, P.O. Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-5803; call her at (619) 235-3000 ext. 413; fax her at (619) 881-2401; or e-mail to: [trudy@reader.com](mailto:trudy@reader.com)

tip of my TONGUE

If you don't spend your spare time paging through publications like *Food Ingredient News*, you may be unaware that Kyowa Foods, a Japanese company, is building a factory in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. The \$50 million facility will employ 60 people who will every year produce 2000 metric tons of a seasoning whose flavor you'd recognize but whose name

genetic code. Kyowa Foods in Cape Girardeau produces *umami* in a form food scientists call "nucleotide seasoning."

Many foods, it turns out, have *umami* — very ripe tomatoes, soy sauce, gruyere, and Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese. Protein-rich foods, like mother's milk, are particularly high in it. Aging and fermentation enhance the flavor. Thailand's *nam pla*, Vietnam's *nuoc mam* — clear, salty sauces made from fermented fish, often anchovies — are, like soy sauce, high in protein and *umami*. What's interesting is that when you eat something seasoned with fish sauce, like Thailand's famous *tom kha gai*, chicken-coconut soup, neither nose nor tongue detects fishiness.

Your mouth instead perceives a vividness, a meatiness, that make you want more. "Umami isn't so much a flavor," one food scientist said, "as a kind of seduction. It makes you want another bite, and another. You want more."

I know a man who asks prospective dates if they like anchovies. He believes this a reliable litmus of female libido, anchovy-haters being, in his experience, less "wild." There

by MAX NASH

are, we now know, *umami* receptors on the human tongue that send *umami* messages to the brain. Peking man's diet was 70 percent venison, an unusually *umami*-heavy meat. Anchovy-loving women are perhaps more in touch with neurons long ago sensitized to *umami*'s charms, and to the advances of cunning, predatory men.

The ancient Romans, cunning, conquering, in touch with their "wild side," were addicted to *liquamen*, a salty fermented fish sauce, often made from anchovy, much like *nam pla* and *nuoc mam*. Historian Reay Tannahill suggests that the "brine from salted anchovies, with a little anchovy creamed into it" might be the closest we can now come to approximating *li-qua-men's* taste. Although named after the Italian restaurateur who invented it, Caesar salad, made with anchovy dressing, is something Roman hand crackers the reason you think. Yes. *More. I want more*, is a finite arrangement of molecules that can be spilled and mopped up from a Missouri factory floor.

whose son had planted the car bomb that blew the legs off a Palestinian mayor. I recall our conversation as strained. The woman explained to me that Israel had a right not only to the West Bank but to all the land between Jerusalem and Amman, Jordan. She was not, I felt, a woman patient with differing views. I said little. While she talked she ate an entire can of Portuguese anchovies without offering me a single one.

(The woman's kitchen was done in red and gray, a particularly weird combination, nestled as it was among unrelenting beige rock in the Judean hills. When I asked the woman about her kitchen, it was the only moment when she softened. "Oh, I'd always wanted a red and gray kitchen, ever since I was a little girl.")

The "nucleotide seasoning" made by Kyowa isn't intended for the layperson's kitchen but for vast corporations who want to give their products a you-can't-eat-just-one-flavor. Just as literature professors have determined that Molly Bloom says, "yes," really, yes, to life, 87 times at the end of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, food scientists have mapped and counted *umami's* secrets. The reason your hand dips reflexively into a box of snack crackers, the reason you think, *Yes. More. I want more*, is a finite arrangement of molecules that can be spilled and mopped up from a Missouri factory floor.

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# SIGHTSEER

## Tocqueville

Americans have always needed explaining. We talk about abstruse Frenchmen and Ardent Italians, but what word best describes Americans? Early on, just after the Revolution, Europeans thought we were foolish — upstart pie-in-the-skyers blindly following pseudopoliticians selling snake oil and quack social theories. Democracy, the presumption went, was bogus, a quaint vestige of the republicanism that had passed many centuries before. In an 1830 letter intended to raise money for his fact-finding trip to the United States, the French politician and historian Alexis de Tocqueville wrote, "I have long had the greatest desire to visit North America: I shall go see there what a great republic is like; my only fear is, lest, during that time, they establish one in France."

Tocqueville later scoffed at America's miserly patronage of the fine arts and literature. He didn't mention that the French government, tired of republican experiments, refused to fund his trip. In the end, like an American, he borrowed the money from his family.

Tocqueville arrived in Newport, Rhode Island, in April 1831. For almost one year he traveled around the country, visiting places like New York City, Cleveland, Detroit, Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, Nashville, and New Orleans. He came to study the country's penal system



From *xsroads.virginia.edu* — HYPER/DETOC/

but ended up writing the first comprehensive study of the American temperament. His book, *Democracy in America*, was published in two parts in 1835 and 1840 and is now available online at the University of Virginia's hypertext collection (*xsroads.virginia.edu* — HYPER/DETOC/). The site has links to 50 exemplary texts, among them Charles Dickens's *American Notes*, Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery*, Francis Parkman's *Oregon Trail*, and D.H. Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature*.

Once in America, Tocqueville caught on quickly and stayed wide awake to the customs of the place. "Nothing strikes a foreigner on his arrival in America more forcibly than the regard

paid to the Sabbath," he noted. "But on Monday at early dawn the rolling of the carriages, the noise of the hammers, the cries of the population, begin again to make themselves heard." He also recorded his impression of a formal supper in America. "As for the dinner itself," he wrote, "it represented the infancy of art: the vegetable and fish before the meat, the oysters for dessert. In a word, complete barbarism." Tocqueville remarked on almost every aspect of the country's social, political, and economic interactions — he commented on banking, wages, leases, military life, schools, farming, drinking, and gambling.

However, Tocqueville overlooked the chief puzzle of the American character. He believed that democracy was an almighty gestalt that dwelled in and acted on the American mind, and he advanced this view through stubborn generalizations. In a section of the book titled "Influence of Democracy on the Feelings of the Americans," Tocqueville described all Americans as siblings sired by a single prin-

"As for dinner itself, it represented the infancy of art: the vegetable and fish before the meat, oysters for dessert...complete barbarism."

ciple, what he called a "love of equality." He marveled at the "extreme skill" with which "inhabitants of the United States succeed in proposing a common object for the exertions of a great many men and inducing them voluntarily to pursue it." Granted, it's pedantic to quibble about what one man observed 170 years ago, all the same, Tocqueville failed to identify the variety that lies at the heart of America. I don't mean that he merely overlooked American ethnic and social diversity — of which there was plenty in 1831 — but that he neglected to record the myriad political attitudes that coexisted in this country. America's two-party system has always had the regrettable consequence of reducing our political beliefs to a dialectical formula: we're either liberal or conservative, but we all endorse the main tenets of democracy as stated in our great documents. Such reasoning ignores that from the beginning, communists, socialists, libertarians, anarchists, and religious fundamentalists have always competed for authority and have procured it to various degrees.

Tocqueville got close to the viscera of the American, though. Democracy, he said, has one thing to fear: "The first thing that strikes the observation is an innumerable multitude of men, all equal and alike, incessantly endeavoring to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives. Each of them, living apart, is as a stranger to the fate of all the rest; his children and his private friends consti-

tute to him the whole of mankind. As for the rest of his fellow citizens, he is close to them, but he does not see them; he touches them, but he does not feel them; he exists only in himself and for himself alone; and if his kindred still remain to him, he may be said at any rate to have lost his country."

American individualism, Tocqueville believed, teetered on the edge of a cliff that fell straight down into a foul swamp of selfishness. Feeling that vertigo, American politicians and historians pulled a fast one; they made sure that the notion of individualism became America's most celebrated — and conventional — principle. In being co-opted by the larger (so large, in fact, that it's largely meaningless) rubric of democracy, the ideal of individuality has lost its true sense. As someone would have it, a pride in individualism unifies America; we all share a common desire to be ourselves. Well, the most casual observer of society can tell you our wish to keep on as individuals rarely coalesces into altruistic programs. This was as true in 1831 as it is today. The apertness that Tocqueville believed might someday rear its ugly head — and that generations of Americans have converted into an agreeable ideal — has powered this country's democracy from day one. Democracy isn't a pearl that we've cultivated by gently rubbing our benign differences against each other; it's the act of friction, or the state of opposition. Maybe I'm fine with that, and maybe you're not. — Justin Wolf



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Cover photo: Tootie; Photograph by Sandy Huffaker, Jr.



Story continued from page 1

# Drag's Not for Sissies

NEVER FORGET  
YOU'RE A MAN IN A DRESS

**t**hose who look twice begin to focus on the woman's feet and hands, which are large for a woman. Then they notice her Adam's apple. In fact, everything about her is italicized, larger than life. Occasionally she smiles back — relaxed and in possession of her world — as if these people were guests at her own private party.

The woman — her name is Tootie — leans over to speak to me. "You know, honey, once you get your weenie whacked it's over. You're going to become normal. You're going to be a girl. Nobody is going to fault you for liking men. But as society changes you're going to see more people who are comfortable being drag queens, like me, because that's really what I am. I don't ever want to lose being a boy. I mean, it's great to be able to stand up and pee. You can't do that kind of stuff if you're a girl, roadside peeing is not very easy. And it's nice when I get home to take out my tits and put them on the dresser, you know? And not have to have them on me all night."

In some ways this story started 40 years ago when I was a sophomore at Wayne State University in Detroit. To get from my best friend's apartment to my apartment, I had to walk past a sleazy drag bar in a sleazy neighborhood. I was immensely shy, and the girls in minidresses would stand out on the sidewalk and taunt me. Usually it was around midnight. Of course, it was no more than crude joking and it was aimed at anyone who passed, but it seemed aimed at me alone. When I crossed the street, they shouted and waved. My very shyness and refusal to acknowledge them increased their jokes. I knew nothing of drag queens, and who knew what went on inside that dark place? At 19, I found the whole thing very scary, although what exactly I was afraid of I could never actually say.

As the years passed, I didn't learn much more about drag queens. A few movies and a few newspaper articles — that was it. However, not long ago I was driving down Fifth Avenue, and as I passed Lips, a club featuring drag acts and where drag queens work as waitresses, I saw a beautiful young black woman teetering on top of a 14-foot stepladder screwing a lightbulb into the Lips marquee. Three other women were down on the sidewalk, looking up at her speculatively. Nice balancing job, I thought.

By the time I had gone another block I realized that hadn't been a woman after all. Then I again told myself that I knew absolutely nothing about drag queens.

It is one of the pleasures of journalism that it allows me to satisfy my curiosity on a wide

**"Maybe I'd prefer working with straight guys,  
you know, guys talking about football."**



variety of subjects, and that evening I visited Lips to see if I could interview some of the — what were they called? Perhaps even “drag queen” was politically incorrect. Perhaps they were called Persons of Ambiguous Sexual Presentation. However, drag queen was what it was. For most of this, that is.

There is nothing subtle about Lips with its pink walls and oversized rhinestones stuck to golden glitter above the bar, a variety of gaudy colors, tinsel wherever it can be attached, mannequins in gaudy dresses, photographs of drag queens — outrageously lovely in big wigs and sexy dresses — a gigantic four-foot lipstick standing at the corner of the bar by the door, being at the same time both phallic and feminine. In back is a stage such as Miss America might use surrounded by a ring of tables. I first talked to Mitchell Albert, the general manager.

He told me that Lips had opened in June 1999 and employs eight or nine drag queens who work both as showgirls and waitresses. The customers are almost entirely heterosexual. The different

stage shows include drag queens impersonating and lip-synching, or singing, famous numbers by famous singers — Cher, Barbra Streisand, Billie Holiday. One of the biggest attractions, however, is the birthday celebrations — where the birthday boy or girl is invited or coerced onto stage, interviewed, and teased (“Are those tits real, bitch, or have you hidden your napkin?”), given flowers, which are taken back at the end, and has his or her picture taken with the girls. It is all very campy. Mitch said they have had as many as 30 birthday celebrations a night. There is another Lips in New York City that opened four years ago and is owned by the same group of people.

Mitch had come out to San Diego from New York, where he had been working for the same company. I asked him if there was any difference between working at a straight restaurant and one where the waitresses were drag queens.

“Food is food, a restaurant is a restaurant, service is service. I try not to think about the demographics. I’m



straight, so maybe I’d prefer working with straight guys, you know, guys talking about football. But these guys are great. At first I think I was too direct. I mean, most of my experience has been with 40-year-old straight waiters

in New York, and so here at Lips I think I stepped on some toes, so I’d have to apologize. Here they can be very sensitive, so sometimes you have to be pretty indirect. But actually, the last place I worked, Broadway Girls in New York,

the waitresses were all young Broadway hopefuls. They were 22 or so. They could be very sensitive. It was very similar to here, the same kind of sensitivity. You’d have to watch your temper.”

Over the next week I talked to five different drag queens. I had assumed they might be rather similar. This turned out not to be the case.

Tootie was the first I talked to, and as I was waiting for her to show up one Sunday afternoon at Lips, Mitchell said to me, “Are you waiting for Tootie? Just to let you know, drag queens are never on time. That’s a thing about being a drag queen. If Tootie has a show at 7:00, she comes in at 7:30. She’s on drag-queen time.”

Actually, she was only five minutes late and couldn’t see the problem with drag-queen time. “Drag time is like, you know, you have a problem getting the lashes on or your wig is not looking right, or you can’t get your dress zipped up, or all of those things happen all at once. I mean — you can imagine.”

Tootie is assistant manager at Lips and headlines in

the shows on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights, doing impersonations on Thursdays of Cher, Lena Horne, Billie Holiday, and Diana Ross. On Wednesday nights she does shows in a club in Laguna Beach. She has also done shows in L.A., has done several national commercials, and has appeared in two films and a Zippo lighter campaign where she got to ride on the back of an elephant. Her psychic tells her that she will soon do a film that will change her life. “She told me about the other two,” said Tootie, “so I’m going to have to trust her on that.”

Tootie started in drag in Honolulu at the age of 20 when she appeared in the play *The Spider Woman*. “Androgyny was always very interesting to me, but I never wanted to be a woman except for short spurts of time. For many drag queens it was Boy George who gave us a sense of permission, let us do what we wanted to do. At least that’s how it was for me, you know? But I don’t see why drag queens always have to be performers. I think they could be great politicians or

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public speakers or secretaries or business people."

A few years after that first experience Tootie moved to San Diego and started a cigarette-girl business with drag queens called Uptown Toots, which is the origin of her name. "I needed something identifiable, so I thought, you know, Tootie went well with Uptown Toots. And it was fun. People have gotten used to hearing Natasha and Elisha and Crystal and Karesha, all of that stuff. They wanted a change, and here's a person who came out of the woodwork, wearing big flowers in her hair and the shortest skirts possible, and right away, I think I endeared myself to a lot of people that way."

And why hire drag queens instead of, well, regular girls?

"Girls are harder to work with than drag queens because they have periods and boyfriends. Of course, drag queens have boyfriends too, but the drag queens are usually the ones calling the shots." Flashy, beautiful with a great figure, wisecracking and sharp-tongued, Tootie is as hard to overlook as a black

cat on a wedding cake. She could be 30 or five years older. When I asked how old she was, she raised an eyebrow. "You mean in Hollywood years?" I said sure. "Twenty-four, honey."

On the day of our lunch, we had been crossing Fourth Avenue when a driver in a green Chevrolet swerved as he took a second look. Tootie patted my arm. "I've been the cause of three traffic accidents," she said proudly. I was surprised it wasn't more.

Although intellectually I knew Tootie was a man, it was something of which I had to keep reminding myself, because she never seemed like a man. On the other hand, when I walked with her she tended to walk ahead, like a dancer who always insists on taking the lead.

The stereotype of the drag queen, said Tootie, is that she's vicious—the bitch who will jab her stiletto heel into your heart and grind away.

"The lady—er, the drag queen that started Lips in New York was very impressed and influenced by that TV show *Dynasty*. That's partly where that stereotype came



Angelica

from. And maybe through life the women that we've also chosen to emulate have been bitches. You know, Diana Ross has a notorious reputation; Barbra Streisand has a notorious reputation. Joan Collins, Joan Craw-

ford—all of these female icons that we have, you know, clawed to, are all considered bitches, so maybe that's where we get it from too. Here at Lips we don't do a lot to dissuade that. We have shows where we reinforce that image that

we're a bunch of bitches, you know? But it's tongue-in-cheek. It's playing on old stereotypes of drag queens. Because, actually, the time of the vicious drag queen is over. People don't want that. And in my own life I try to be not that. When I was a little girl, I used to tell people that Mario Thomas was my sister—my last name is Thomas. I used to say that because she was somebody, you know, cutesy, and affectionate. So, I've always liked that and wanted to be like that. You get a lot more with sugar than you do with vinegar, right?"

But even though drag queens may be getting sweeter, they don't tend to hang out together, Tootie told me. "There's still a lot of bitchiness between us, though we're finding that less and less. A club like Lips in conservative San Diego puts us together and creates a place where we can come together and do what we do, without fighting for jobs, or fighting for focus, or whatever—men, whatever, you know? So, Lips has been a great catalyst to get us all bonded and stuff."

However, in talking to

drag queens over the next week I heard some rather sharp criticism about the behavior, lifestyles, performances, manner of dress of other drag queens—remarks that, if not entirely bitchy, certainly contained a lot of meow.

Although several other clubs in town have occasional drag shows, the main commercial venue is Lips; and on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays Tootie brings in other drag queens from the community "to do numbers and stuff like that. We want to reach out and embrace everybody, you know?"

I asked her how many drag queens she thought there were in San Diego.

"Well, I'm amazed because I meet new girls every week. I can't believe there are that many drag queens, but there are. There are the ones that work and live their lives like that, there're the ones that just do it once in a great while, and you have the young crop that is coming up who are just trying it out for the first, second, third time maybe—they're still in high school or just getting out of high school. So, we're here,

there's a lot of us. And there's a greater sense of permissiveness. Places like this allow that, which is so great. Drag is a very familiar kind of thing, we pass it down from generation to generation. I mean, I have a dress that was given to me by a drag queen who is no longer doing drag. She gave me one of her old dresses that she danced for—a sheikh back in the '70s with—so it's passed down from generation to generation. Sometimes somebody will come in and maybe they'll look a little rough or something and one of the girls will say something like, 'Oh my God, look at that one.' Well, I'll be very quick to take them over on the side and go, 'You know, these people are like totally welcome here, and we need to make them feel that way.' Because there is no place else you can go and feel that."

"But the work and the lifestyle—it's not for sissies, that's for sure. It's pretty tough

when you get down to it. We spend six hours in high heels, and yes, we have to put up with a bunch of crap from people too. So it's tough that way too. And some drag queens find it particularly hard. When I had my own show, I had a Marilyn impersonator who constantly went back and forth about loving it and hating it because of the stigma that it has, or the stigma that it gave him as a gay male. I hate to see people go through that kind of angst. You know, why? That's not life. Enjoy what you're doing, and I mean, I totally enjoy this."

"We get tons of goofy people in here. That's what gives me fodder for my show, it keeps me going, and I've never had a really bad experience with anybody. I have seen where people come in and maybe they're not happy with the person they're with and therefore it translates over to their energy during my show, something like that,



but I've never had anybody who was like vehemently negative about drag queens or gay people. Well, once, there was this guy sitting up by the stage and he did not want to be touched by anything or anyone—and you've seen how I go around the audi-

ence, and we all do, you know—well, when I get a guy like that, you have really opened the floodgates, okay? Because number one, I am still a man in a dress, and I am going to push it, all right? So, I will tell everybody—see that guy over there? That's

the one you want. And I'll tell them on the microphone so he knows to get ready, baby. Well, that guy gobbled his food and he got the hell out of here, but I think everybody else in the audience saw how he acted and realized how ridiculous that was.

Maybe there were some other people who came in with that same attitude but saw how stupid it was on somebody else and left here changed—maybe."

Because of her work at the club and with Uptown Toots and her other jobs, Tootie tends to be in drag from morning to night. But most of the drag queens at the club, she told me, "live their lives as boys all day, then they throw on a pound of makeup and two pounds of powder, and they're here ready for work looking glamorous."

And there are several others at the club who remain in drag all day because... Tootie toys with the word "transsexual" but doesn't like it. "It's hard to say, well, they're like women, because it's not like they're like women, they're like guys, but they identify with women more. I would say that they maybe enjoy their masculinity and their

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femininity, but they identify with being a woman more." Tootie makes many of her dresses but buys them as well. "You always go to the closet racks, because that's where you find the flashiest dresses. I'm an incredible bargain hunter, and I will find things and I will never pay more than \$20 for anything. And I have beautiful gowns, honey, I mean gorgeous, but I've never paid over \$20 for any of them. I have a wardrobe that would make most girls just like salivate."

She is also always on the lookout for clothes for the other drag queens at Lips, whose personas range from the glamorous to the campy. In New York, Tootie told me, the queens tend to be campy. "But here at Lips, we kind of have to mix it up, we have to be a little bit more fishy." Fishy, I asked?

"Well, if you look good, you look fish, girl." But buying clothes can present difficulties. While Tootie herself wears a size 8 dress, another drag queen at Lips, Angelica, who stars in a comedy act, wears a size 16 dress and a size 13 or 14 shoe,



Dressing room at Lips

which can mean a lot of Internet shopping.

Angelica, or Jelly, was the second drag queen I talked to. At six feet three and 200 pounds — spiky heels can bring her up to six seven — she can be daunting in red satin. Though extremely campy in drag, she was very serious in person. When I talked to her at Lips, she was wearing a blue T-shirt, jeans, and a baseball cap turned around backward. There was nothing feminine about her,

nothing to indicate that part of her life was spent as a drag queen. Consequently, I shifted over to Angelica's daytime name: Greg.

Originally from Long Beach, Greg earned a bachelor's degree from San Francisco State in social science with a concentration in sexuality communications — counseling, with a minor in gay/lesbian/bisexual studies. He also has two associate degrees in criminal law and criminal psychology and is

certified in administrative justice, paralegal studies.

I gestured around the restaurant with its pink and glitter. So how did this happen? "I would drag like twice at school just for fun, nothing serious at all," Greg told me. "When I graduated, I moved back to L.A. and started doing computer consulting. I was making \$80,000 a year, full benefits, company car, company townhouse, everything was set, and then I had a friend moving down here

and I said — well, I'll look at some jobs. Lips was having auditions and I do stand-up comedy — mostly I'd done a lot of benefits and charities in San Francisco, coffeehouses and juice bars, things like that — and I thought there was no way they'd consider me as a drag queen, because I had only done drag twice before and it wasn't serious at all. So it was like — it would be really fun to audition as a joke. I mean like just to have the experience and to be able to write about it someday and talk about the crazy time when I auditioned to be a drag queen.

"So I auditioned and did all comedy stuff. No one else really had done comedy here, like they all do just dancing and glamorous kind of stuff. And they loved it and offered me the job, which I'd never expected because I figured I am competing against hundreds of professional people that have been doing this for a long, long time, but they offered me the job. So here I was wearing a suit and tie to work every day, and I thought, I'm only 23, do I really want to be so serious?

How many opportunities do you have in your life to be an entertainer and do something so wild and crazy while you're still young? I was like, if I don't do this, I'm going to regret it — I don't want to ever have to look back and be like what if I had done that crazy drag-queen thing back when I was 23?

"So I got out of L.A. and moved down here at the end of May 1999. The whole decision-making process took two weeks. Like one day I was wearing a suit and tie to work, then two weeks later I'm down here learning everything there is to know. When they actually hired me, I said, I don't know how to be a drag queen, but I'm really good with people, I'm really good waiting tables, stuff like that. I'm really good entertaining, being a comedian, like at my tables. So, if the girls can teach me how to do my makeup, I can teach them how to be good waitresses and work the computer and other stuff."

"When you start doing drag, most drag queens have a drag mother that takes you under her wing and shows you how to do your makeup,

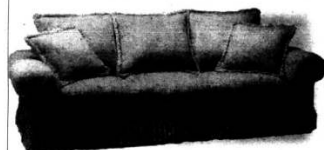
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shows you how to sew or make your costumes, and gives you her old jewelry and passes these things down in order to train you. And her mother becomes your grandmother, and if she has two daughters, they become your sisters, a whole lineage. For some people, it's just like a funny kind of title that they give to these people, but for others it's very, very serious, and they call each other family, they celebrate like holidays together. I know a lot of people that celebrate Mother's Day—it's a big thing where they bring flowers and candy and take them out to dinner, the exact same way that you would with a regular mother. But I didn't do any of that. I was a drag orphan and self-taught pretty much. When I came here, everybody who worked here was a professional who'd already been doing drag for a long time. I'd never really done drag at all and no one ever really offered to be a drag mother, but every single person here in the restaurant painted my face at least once, like for the first month. And that's kind of how I learned. After that, it was just kind of trial and error.

Parthenetically, Tootie had told me, "All that drag mother and drag-grandmother business, I can't stand it—I say I'm the administrator of a drag orphanage." Greg's day job is with the Office of Naval Research, doing research in cognitive neuroscience, using hypnosis to manipulate the subconscious. "The theory being that your conscious mind is only able to access a very small percentage of your brain's memory. Using hypnosis is a way to gain access—like having a photographic memory. Our mind remembers everything that we've ever seen or heard, it's just our conscious mind can't handle all that information, but through hypnosis, you can access it. This is one small example. There are a million other applications for this research as well."

The skills acquired from Greg's various degrees have been useful primarily in well-understood work, working with different community centers, working as a gay youth counselor and with Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, a gay-rights organization. I suggest that all of this seems some distance away

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from being a drag queen. Greg glanced around the room with a mixture of perplexity and pleasure. "Well, this was never my plan. I didn't go to college for six years so I could be a drag queen. I thought like it will be fun for a month or so to try something different. I mean, how long can you really wear heels and spend two hours doing your makeup every night? How long can you do that and enjoy it? But I'd never really had any kind of performance outlet. I never sang or danced or played instruments or acted or had done anything onstage, and so being onstage as a comedian was a whole new thing for me. Then as it kept going and I was able to refine things,

refine the way I looked, refine the way I dressed, you know, get more creative with my makeup and my costumes and my numbers, and that remains exciting and fun because like I'm constantly reinventing myself. Here it's great because you do your own numbers and your own show—you can pretty much do whatever you want, whereas singers and actresses other places have to follow a script, they follow what somebody else has written. So, that way, it's stayed exciting. People always ask me how long I'm going to be doing this, and I say until it stops being fun. Because I can certainly make more money somewhere else.

"But another reason I

wanted to move down here was that I thought about how amazing it would be to meet all these crazy people that lived these incredibly different lives from me, but it wasn't like I was one of them. I just wanted to understand where they're coming from and blah blah blah. Before I started working here, I saw drag queens as these mystical creatures who were totally different than me, not even like human. I admired them and I loved watching the shows. I loved everything about it, but it was never something that I saw a commonality with.

"As crazy and strange as everything seems to people when they first come in here, that's the same way we all felt

when we first saw things. I mean, four years ago, I thought drag queens were like mentally disturbed and that they had these psychological problems, they all wanted to be women, and I'm sure some of them do, but that's not what it's about. Because when I met them, I realized that for a lot of them drag was just kind of like another thing. They just fell into it like me, came and auditioned. Some of them, like Tootie, who are career queens, have been doing it forever and constantly. You ask Tootie what will you be doing in ten years and Tootie says I'll be a drag queen. Whereas for me, I don't see myself doing this for ten years. For the personal, I only do drag for

work. I don't dress up for any other reason unless I'm going onstage. Whereas, there are other people for whom getting dressed up is a way for them to express themselves and to become someone they don't feel like they can be as men, and so they do it, you know, more often. So definitely some people have always kind of been drag queens in their lives, but there are a lot for whom this is just like a show. They're like actors and this is their medium, and they come here and they perform, and when they're done, they're done.

"But definitely doing drag has affected my entire life. It's become more campy. Drag has definitely seeped into everything else I do. Not

the dressing up, but the way I dress, the way that I act, the way that I decorate my room. Those things have become really campy and flashy and dramatic—things they never were before. And I'm comfortable with it. Maybe I'm queening out. You know, flaming, whatever. That's something that was never part of my personality before. For some people that's their personality naturally. For me it's not, it's still like a fun medium that I play with. But when six of us drag queens from Lips go out to lunch, it's not like watching six boys having lunch together; it's like a show. Six people around a table, making jokes, making fun of each other, singing, dancing. I mean, whatever.

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Sometimes they want to have surgery, sometimes they don't. That would be transgender — gender being what is on the inside, not what is on the outside. And if those people choose to have the surgery, where they actually physically alter their bodies, then they enter the category of transsexual, which is when you start changing the biological sex of your body. Then, transvestites are men that feel a sexual release from cross-dressing. For them dressing up is a means to embrace a feminine side of their personality that they can't usually express. It's not like just for fun. If they don't dress up, they feel a pressure build up that isn't released until they do. Actually, 80 percent

of transvestites are heterosexual men, which comes as a shock to most people because people always assume transvestites are gay. But a transvestite might do so more than wear women's underclothing under men's clothing — and only he knows about it. Or he might just dress up at home and walk around the house — things that a drag queen would never do. The entire point of being a drag queen is to go out, it's for the show, for people to see you. It's not for yourself, it's for everybody else. A drag queen would never get all dressed up in drag and stay home. That would defeat the entire purpose. And I suppose that there are heterosexual drag queens. I've heard

that there are, but I've never met one. The thing is that all these categories involve men dressing up as women, that is why it's confusing. In talking to Greg, I had been struck by how becoming a drag queen had actually brought about changes in his personality. He had become more outgoing, less inhibited, more outrageous, more comfortable with himself. This was something I also found in the third drag queen I talked to — Kiki, the only African-American at the club and who, among other things, does Whitney Houston impersonations, singing rather than lip-synching her songs. Greg had told me that Kiki was slang meaning to like to talk and that Kiki had

received her name because she talks all the time. Small and pretty — she wears a size 6 dress — Kiki is one of the drag queens at Lips who could easily pass for a woman. Although 32, she looks in her mid-20s. She, too, is flamboyant, sexy, and perfectly at ease. But it wasn't always like that. Kiki had only been in drag once before coming to Lips, having been part of a show at another club. On that occasion, the owner of Lips happened to see her and asked her to audition. By that time Lips had been open about two months.

"I told him to screw himself," said Kiki. "I wasn't going to dress up as a woman and wait on people's tables. Then about three weeks later, one of my friends who worked at Lips came up to me and said, 'Oh my God, you know how much money I made in one day?' That was on a Sunday and I was here on Wednesday. I had no training at all. I came here as a crazy, obnoxious man in a dress, is what I call it. So then I had a drag mother who said, 'Okay, you just need to know how to do anything. I'm going to help you.' So in five days of working, she showed me how to put my makeup on. The attitude in my stage presence was there. I just needed to make my face look like a drag queen. I mean, I'm an entertainer. If I could do this without dressing up

like a woman, I would. All I want to do is entertain and make people laugh and have a good time. If I can do that, I'm happy. I'm a stage person, I have to get up and make a fool of myself. I'm the crazy, obnoxious one."

"I was nervous in the beginning, because I'm doing everything dressed like a woman and I didn't know how to act. So the first day, I took a drink and said I need to just be in a dress, that's all. But I was scared out of my wits, scared of everybody who came in here. Because this is my part-time job, this is not my real job. I was afraid that someone was going to walk in from my real job and notice who I was. Every time I turned around, I was look-

ing over my shoulder and after a while, I said, none of these people pay me, none of these people feed me, none of these people take care of my bills, so I shouldn't worry they have to stay. It took me about five months to get used to it. I was only working one day a week at that time. Then in my sixth month my whole attitude changed. Then they put me on five days a week. You see, it took that long to come out of my shell. That's how long it took to stop worrying."

One reason Kiki was reluctant to let people know she was working as a drag queen was that she lives alone with her eight-year-old son. It took six months before Kiki could tell him.

"But in the beginning, I was real nervous. I would sneak out of the house, not letting him know. Then I brought him in here for dinner one night and we sat down and we ate and he said, 'Daddy, those are men?' I said, 'Is that bad?' He says, 'No. Why don't you do that?' And I said, 'Okay, I'll do it for you.' So then he saw me perform and he thought it was great."

Now her son asks for a new picture of Kiki every week to take to school for show-and-tell.

"I mean, the refrigerator door is covered with pictures," Kiki told me. "All his friends come over and say, 'Is that really you?' And I'm like, 'Yeah, that's me.' And they say, 'You're prettier than my mom!' It's hard being a single parent."

Another reason Kiki didn't want to advertise her work at Lips is because in her other life she is on active duty in the Navy, where she had worked as a cook. Yet here as well, after six months her fear of what might happen if she was found out disappeared.

"I have to say the Navy has come a long way, because a couple of years ago I would have never told anybody I was doing this, ever. Now, I don't have a problem. If someone asks me what I do for my part-time job, I tell them. I work in a restaurant. If they ask me where the restaurant is, then I go further with it, but if they don't ask that last question, then I don't go any further. Actually, the ones I've told have honestly come in here and had a good time and say you are great. A lot of the people in the military

know I work here. There are people you can tell and people you can't tell. Even a couple of my bosses have been here. They didn't recognize me until two days or three days later and I'd say, 'Where did you eat dinner the other night?' They'd tell me and I'm like, 'Oh, you didn't see me?' They said, 'You were in there too?' I'd say, 'Yes.' And that's when I told them. But most of the girls in the Navy know what I do because I get

tips from them for certain outfits and where to shop at."

I asked Kiki how she saw herself in relation to Tootie and Angelica — Tootie into being a drag queen for the long haul, Angelica only for a short time.

"Me and Angelica are about the same," Kiki told me. "When I get tired, I'll just leave. It's just that because I got me out of debt. Because I take care of my son, I have to pay for baby-sitting, and then I have to pay my ex-wife for my other son. She has been working here it was really, really hard. I was working three jobs prior to this one. I was working the Navy, Little Caesar's, and working at a hair salon at night, cleaning up. So, I was spending most of my life away from my son, and I didn't even see him but once or twice in a week. Then I took this job and I spend a lot more time with my son. So, when I finally got out of debt, the whole thing changed. Like I said, if I could do this without dressing up and have as much fun, then I'd do it. This is just entertainment for me. Other people like to dress up, go out and do things, not me."

Another reason that Kiki wished to keep what she did hidden was that she didn't want her family to know, even though they live in Buffalo, New York. Yet after about six months she stopped worrying about that as well.

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doing that damn good, then I want you to keep doing it." [Kiki makes about \$2000 a month at Lips.] Everyone almost died when he said that. They were like, I don't know what you did to Dad, but that's not our dad. My mother looked at him like, are you serious? And my mother has known since a month out, that's when I told her. Then when I went home I told everybody else. I showed them the pictures, I didn't say anything, I just showed them the pictures first. I let them take it in and then I said, "You know that's me, right? You're crazy, this isn't you, you're gorgeous." I work dressed up like that. And it took my father about an hour before he said something to

me. Then he said, "If you're doing it that good, keep doing it." I was impressed by the series of changes that Kiki had gone through during her time at Lips, and I asked if there had been others as well. "It's made me respect women more," she told me. "It's made me think of the hell they have to go through to make themselves beautiful for a man or for public life—day in, day out, putting makeup on, eye shadow, hair. When a man gets up, all he does is take a shower, put on some Chap Stick, brush his teeth, and walk out the door. A woman goes through a lot more. But I've also come to see how most women have to put themselves on a plate and

garnish it very well. I've become more sensitive to that. And I respect them. But I have to honestly say that if you have to do that, if you have to garnish up a plate, then that's the wrong person you looks. They judge you from just looking at you, when it's the inside that matters. Coming here has taught me that also. I see a lot of people—he's cute, he's cute, he's cute—but that person

because I used to be that same person that goes, 'He's ugly, she's ugly, I don't even want to be anywhere near them.' And it's the inside that you have to learn, because anyone who sees me dressed like this all the time is going—'Drag queen, always gotta be in dresses, always going to be running around doing that. And that's not me. They only see me in the restaurant, they don't see what's on the inside, they just see what they see. So that's made me more sensitive as in if I found someone attractive, I can't go by looks anymore, I have to go by the person on the inside, how they feel, how they care, how they carry themselves.' I was struck that all these changes had happened to

Kiki after she had been at Lips for about six months, but what had brought these changes about didn't become clear until I asked her about being a gay man. "Whoa," she said. "I am Jerome. That's what I tell everybody." "What do you mean?" I asked. "That's my name. I don't relate anything to sex. I'm a human. People run around saying, 'I'm gay, I'm straight, I'm purple.' I'm like, 'Okay, I'm Jerome.' That's my man name, Jerome, I'm Jerome." I was afraid that I might have been offensive and said as much. "No, you didn't offend me at all. A lot of people are like, 'I'm gay.' Oh my God and

I'm like, 'I'm Jerome, how are you?' I just don't want anybody to get the wrong impression about me, so I never pretend to be what I'm not supposed to be, I'm just Jerome. When it comes to sex, if you make it to my bedroom, then you'll know." So then I asked Kiki or Jerome how she or he described himself. I didn't mean sexually, but his whole life. How did he see himself? And then Kiki explained how he had changed after six

months at Lips. "I see myself as a nice, sweet, caring, loving black man," Kiki said. "Five years ago, I didn't see myself as this. I saw myself as this timid little scared little thing, running around the streets of San Diego, thinking that he knew everything. And now I see myself as being this—if someone needs something, knowing you or not knowing you, I would give it to you. I would have never done it before. And what changed

me was that I looked around and I saw where I was—in debt and then out of debt, and when I needed things, there was no one ever to give it to me, no one to help me. And I had to stop asking my family because I had to be a man and take care of my responsibilities. When I came out of that on my own, I decided that if someone ever needed me, I would be there for them because I would want the same thing for me if it ever happened to me

again. And it was actually coming here and working as a drag queen that brought that about. Lips brought me out of the basement of owing money to everyone to actually putting away \$100 and \$200 every two weeks and to where I could be comfortable and take care of my son properly. When I saw that I could do that, then it was like I wanted my son to learn the values of life and help his brother too, who might not even be his brother but who

might just be someone who needed something; that my son should be there to give it to that person, whether they're black, green, yellow, purple, whether you like them or hate them, you should always be there for the rest of these men and women on this earth. See what I mean? Because everybody needs sympathy. "All that has to do with when I got comfortable working here, it's all tied together. Because when I first started working here, I didn't think

any of these people were like me, because I came in here and I had makeup on my face and I looked like a man. Then Gigi started working with me, helping me with my makeup, and the others started coming around saying, 'How you doing?' and as time went along they started asking me to do things with them, and that's when everything started changing. They would say, 'Let's go out and do something— you want to go out and do something?' And oh

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my God, they actually liked me. And I was wondering, why do I need them to like me in order to feel comfortable? And that was one of my human traits that I let take over when I shouldn't have to worry about anyone liking me or wondering what I'm doing with my life or who I was going home with. Instead I should be thinking about what makes me happy, just like everybody else, and not be worrying—Oh my God, these people don't like me, I'm here just one day a week, they don't know me, they don't know me.

"And then, boom, I changed. I just busted out. And it was overnight because that next day, I came in here and everyone is like who in the hell are you? I came in smiling and bouncing around. You see, at the beginning, I was walking around like a little angry little SOB. I was

wound up so tight that no one liked me, no one liked me, and now I find it amazing, people come here asking for me to be their waitress for their table. It's funny, isn't it? It shocks me every time I sit back and tell someone about it. When my mother asked me what made me do this, I broke it to her from beginning to end, she's like this—You had been through some hell and no one even knows it.

"And you know what else is funny about this? I tell people when they come in here, a good 20 percent of that story and they will look at me and go, you are amazing, and I still don't see it like that. I see it as being a person that learned from A to B, and before he could get to C, he made a decision and changed it all, so he didn't need the rest of the alphabet. I was trying to climb that hill,

but I was tied on the safety line. Then I cut the safety line. That made it a lot easier. You see, people can't judge each other from the outside. You have to get to know your shit—get to know your fellow man and take life for what it is. Life is too short to play around with these games."

It was for me an amazing story—that self-discovery had come about not by being who one was, but by being who one wasn't. In addition, that while Kiki seemed the most dramatic case, it was something I also found in most of the others, that pretending to be women had given them more freedom to be men, to be human beings. It seemed an enviable condition.

While Kiki is very clear about her sexuality while performing ("That's me onstage. That's the man me onstage,

dressed up like a woman") and doesn't do drag outside of Lips ("You not paying me. I ain't going"), the fourth drag queen I talked to, Gina Roberts, occasionally considers what it would be like to have "the operation" and become a transsexual. She is also active in the greater drag-queen world in San Diego.

Gina Roberts is the one Asian working at Lips, having come to the States from the Philippines in 1983. Small and lovely (she wears a size 4 dress), her makeup is far more subtle than the other drag queens at the restaurant and her delicate features make it easy for her to pass as a woman. But in daylight, she told me, it was very easy to tell. ("It's the muscle and the way I carry myself, it's much too wild.") Although 27, she looks 20. Gina has been at Lips since just after it opened and began doing drag seriously

about a year and a half before that. Her first experience with drag, however, had been a year earlier when she had dressed in drag for a Halloween party. The problem was that even with the makeup, she could still see herself, as she expressed it.

"I didn't like it and I never wanted to do it again, but then the next Halloween I had another friend who had a drag party and he told me he wanted to do my makeup. But I wasn't sure. I mean, I didn't have a good experience the first time. So he said, 'If you don't like it, you can take it off.' I said okay."

"And he did my makeup and I was like wow. Everything changed. I couldn't even recognize myself. And after that he did my makeup for a while. He was my ex-roommate, and he became my drag mother. Every time I would go out, I would ask him to be

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my makeup man, and he would tell me, 'You're just going to have to learn on your own because I can't always be doing it.' And you can totally tell who does your makeup because it's similar to the way that person does his own. People will look at you and say, 'Oh my God, I know who did your makeup.' So I watched him and tried to do it myself. Sometimes it would look okay and sometimes it wouldn't. And I really hated it when it didn't look right. Then after a while I got used to it and got it just the way I wanted it. I would never let anybody do my makeup now, because I've created my own look and it's totally different. I tend to do it more softer now. Because before it was like drag queen—you can totally tell the makeup looks nasty. But I've been able to make it more subtle because my facial structure is more feminine. Asians have softer bones. Most of my Asian friends, they're more like very feminine with makeup.

"So then I began to enter pageants and some of them I never got in because it was like my first pageant and I didn't get anything because I was so scared. But then every weekend I would go out with my friends. It was a routine with us, we'd go out every Saturday in drag and I would love it because nobody knew who I was. I would do benefit shows and stuff. Then I heard about Lips. I wanted to apply for it because I had clothes and I'd learned how to do makeup and I knew how to perform in a lot of benefit shows and had a lot of experience. Well, one night, we did a benefit show and after the show I came over to Lips and auditioned. They loved me and it was fun."

The world of drag-queen pageants and benefits that Gina Roberts became part of can be found all across the United States. Earlier Angelica had said that very few drag queens make their living performing. "Many more drag queens do drag for competition, do pageants. They're called pageant queens or are part of the Imperial Court, which is like drag royalty. Every city has an Imperial Court. And those are very competitive. Pageants are just like beauty pageants. The Imperial Court is help for. So they're like popularity contests and it raises a feeling of competition, because

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putting other queens down benefits you by making you look better. So it can be very catty, very cutthroat."

In San Diego the different neighborhoods have competitions and there are also ethnic competitions—Miss Gay Black, Miss Gay Latino. Gina Roberts had been elected Miss Hillcrest and participated in the Queen of Asia pageant, coming in second as Miss Filipina. Drag queens also perform in benefits for organizations such as the Harvey Milk Foundation and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund but also non-gay benefits as well. I was told that about 200 men in San Diego do drag in these competitions.

Angelica, Kiki, and Tootie took no part in the pageants, while Tootie was somewhat scornful of these group activities. "All that Royal Court stuff—I can't

stand it," she told me. "They're queens without a country."

"Most of these Asian queens are very competitive," Gina told me, "and their costumes are like gorgeous, but I try not to spend a lot of money on my costume or gown or anything. Mostly, the Asian community tends to stick together. We're out partying all the time and have picnics. I mean, if a person wants to join our pageant, you're more than welcome. We pass out the flyers and everything. Usually at least one non-Asian will join."

"And I joined a pageant in L.A. that was called Miss Universe that was very competitive because I was competing with transsexuals who were turning into women. I never even placed. I looked like a little boy in a dress compared to them. It was like boobs and ass everywhere. Long hair, real hair. I mean,

everybody starts out as a drag queen. Some start out feminine—you know, growing their hair, growing their nails, but no makeup. And they look like women. I had a friend who was just starting out—very feminine. But they teased him, his hair was long and he was like a boy until he started using hormones and everything was like going softer. He's not 100 percent woman, but he's going through the process and he looks good. Now he wants the operation. It's a big step, but he wants it done. It's just a matter of money."

I was curious whether becoming a drag queen had changed Gina Roberts as it had changed Angelica and Kiki, if she had become more outgoing and comfortable with herself. "It turned out that she had."

"Sometimes when I'm in drag, I get more out of

everything. When I didn't do drag, I got a lot of attention, but when I started doing drag, it was a different kind of attention. It was like people were very attentive; they listened to what I had to say. Some people would say they looked up to me. I'm like, 'Why would you do that?' And I guess it had something to do with the way I looked. They were amazed at how someone can look like a woman—have nothing done—no surgery, no hormones, and they're amazed by that and they respected that. And out of drag, people missed me being in drag because I'm more fun in drag. Like when I work here, I go out at the end of the night with my friends to a club and I have a lot of fun. So, there's a big difference. On the other hand, most people have only seen me in drag and don't know the other side of me. And

that's okay because I like to keep it that way sometimes. But when I get close to someone who I can call my real friend, then they will know I have another part of me. And they're very comfortable with any way I dress, and it doesn't make any difference."

"But basically I would say I am two different people. When I'm in drag, I'm very loud. And when I'm not in drag, I'm very quiet—or I get quiet, sometimes I don't. But when I'm in drag, usually I'm out there. People tell me this all the time, it's like—wow, you know, there's like two different people, and then it's stuck in my head that people think it's two different people and I kind of play that part. I don't even have to think about it. It just comes naturally. I just see myself as Gina and that's who I am. And out of drag, it's Robert."

And that's how I am. Though in some ways when I switch from Gina to Robert, it's more comfortable. Like now I can touch my face and brush my hand through my hair. I'm more relaxed, you know? And I don't have to cross my legs."

I asked Gina Roberts if she had ever thought of becoming a transsexual.

"It's crossed my mind many times, but I don't think it's something I want to put myself through. It's a lot of work and it takes a lot of patience. I've seen most of my friends going through that process and it's difficult, the attitudes change and it just doesn't look right. It's weird. For example, I had a friend I used to hang out with all the time. She went through the process and she's still going through the process of becoming a woman. Every night she was saying, 'I am beautiful and you should treat

me like—you know—I'm the princess. And you are nobody. You are nothing. You are just a boy in a dress, or something funny like that. She was very sensitive about a lot of things, and it had something to do with all the drugs she was taking to become a woman. It messes with your head. And it's a lot of things you have to go through, you know? If the process was a week, I would probably do it, but it takes years. Counseling and hor-

mones and pills—I just couldn't handle all that. I would go crazy before I turned into a woman."

"Also in some ways it would change everything for me. I mean, I always thought that was what I wanted to be. At a very young age, I thought, I'm going to grow up to be a woman, a beautiful woman. But growing up, it wasn't so much becoming a woman as being comfortable with myself. And you know, as I grew older I began to be more com-

fortable with myself, like experiencing gay life. I was happy just the way I was, and I didn't have to change anything. Then, when I started to do drag, it was like having those two different people—Gina and Robert—and I didn't have to change anything. If I got in drag, it was whatever I wanted to be. And if I got out of drag, it was me. And it was not a process where I had to take anything for it, like hormones. I mean, I had to take a lot of lessons with

makeup, but transforming is something else again. A lot of my friends encouraged me to transform and I joke about it, I'll say I'm already taking hormones. They say, 'You are? Oh my God—no wonder your tone is getting a little lighter.' And I say, 'No, honey, I've had nothing done.' So, it's just being comfortable with yourself, and I feel comfortable with what's going on in my life right now. So that's one of the biggest things about transforming. I would

miss Robert."

Now Gina mostly stays in drag, and usually she is taken for a real woman. "If I'm in the gay clubs, they know who I am," she told me, "but if it's just straight parties, the guys stare at me and the women give me hard looks. If a woman stares at me, I stare back at her. I'll play the part. Vicious to vicious. And women cannot tell. You know, like looking at me, if I'm in a bar and they're looking at me, they

won't have a clue that I'm a man until they get next to me and I start talking. Then of course they'll know because my voice is deep. Stuff like that."

Because of the sexual ambiguity of drag queens they can appeal to both straight and gay men, though many gay men dislike drag queens, partly because of the attention they attract and partly because a gay man isn't drawn to women in the first place. Earlier Tootie had told

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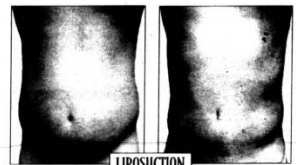
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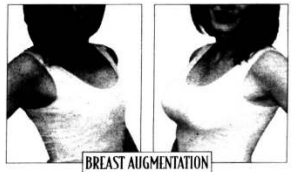
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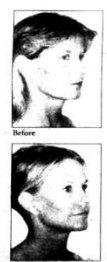
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me. "The people that we are mostly around are straight people. And so, in both the straight and gay worlds, we're ostracized in some sense, you know. I think drag queens go through a lot with that, and you build up walls around you as a buffer. But I think that we're in a paradigm shift in our relationships and sexual relationships and stuff where we're letting down our hair in sexual areas so that people are more into the gay areas. They're not, you know,

if you're a guy, you're into girls; and if you're a girl, you're into guys. And then we went into the next paradigm shift where it's if you're a guy, then you might be into guys also, but you know, you're into guys or you're into girls; and now I think we're into this third paradigm shift, which is if you're a guy, you might be into guys or you might be into girls or you might be into both or you might be into transgendered people. I think that's the way that it's

going. And maybe it's going to get more and more muddy, who knows? I wonder what comes next."

Other drag queens also spoke of these gray areas and how they sometimes felt ostracized.

Angelica had told me, "Parts of the gay community totally embrace drag, but since most of the gay population is closeted and not open and happy about people knowing they're gay, they view drag queens as very

threatening to that. The internalized homophobia in the gay community wants the gay community to be seen just like the straight community, that it's just a change in sexuality, that everything else is exactly the same, and they don't see drag as having anything to do with a gay culture, if there is one. And so the rejection of drag queens by gays is not usually just about a rejection to drag, but a rejection to the outward representation of sexuality,

of gay sexuality. The result is that drag queens are in this dating limbo — people look at us like a woman trying to attract a straight man, but not like a man attractive to gay men. Again, it's because there is no education. People don't see drag queens as people, unless they look more like regular women. They see them as characters."

Because Gina can look like a regular woman, straight men are often drawn to her. "If I'm at a bar where

there are drag queens and straight men are looking for that, then I don't think anything of it — they wouldn't be uncomfortable towards me and I wouldn't be afraid of telling them who I am. I don't have to tell them that I'm a man. But when I go to a straight club, then I immediately tell people — if they ask me to dance — I'd say, 'I'm a man.' And sometimes it's, 'Oh, okay.' And they turn away, but one time it was really funny, one time it hap-

pened and I told some guy I'm a man and he said — 'Oh, so am I.' And I was like, 'Oh, okay. What's up?' "Other times, it's, 'Baby, you're so beautiful, do you want to dance?' I say, 'No, thank you, I'm tired. My boyfriend's here. I don't want

to deal with that kind of stuff. And you know, a lot of people just don't have a clue. And I think they have the right to know, but I'm not going to go yelling, 'I'm a man!' If somebody comes up to me, I will usually tell them. Like, 'Before you go on, honey,

there's something you should know.' "Actually, my boyfriend says he was straight. He has never been with anyone gay or a man dressed as a woman, but he told me that when he saw me he thought I was beautiful. And he never

thought it would go into a relationship. And we've been together for nine months. And he still thinks of himself as a straight man. He likes women. He would never look at other men the same way. He's very comfortable with me in and out of drag. And

I'm happy. It's very hard to find people, you know, that you can feel comfortable with because not a lot of people can take this seriously, this lifestyle, because of how people see you and who you're with. When we go out he says he doesn't care how people see

him, but I know he does. And you know, we're just taking it day by day. I told him, this is who I am. I'm not like this 'all the time. This is a job. But most of the time when I go out I'm in drag. Very rarely am I out of drag." I asked Gina how she

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gets along with women.

"They hate me," she said. "I don't know if it's true, but they tell me they hate me. You know, it's like you bitch. You have no stomach, look at your waistline. I'll say, you too can have a body like this—all you need is foam and rubber. But still, it's like, honey, look at how skinny you are. And I'm like, yeah, as a woman, I'm skinny, but as a man, I'm still skinny. And it's not pretty as a man because I don't work out, so I'm a small little boy. But if I'm dressed in drag, everything comes into place. Everything looks better. And I wouldn't say that out of drag I look bad or anything. I'm just saying that it's not the way I would want to look—muscular and stuff like that. So these women are jealous of how a man can look better than a real woman. And to me it's nothing to brag about.

It's simple if you just put your mind to it. If you're that worried about how you look, then you can do something about it. I mean, you know, I did.

"But sometimes lesbians come up to me and say, 'If you were just a real woman, you know?' And I always respond, 'Honey, if I was a real woman, I wouldn't be a lesbian.' So, it's just a different scene. It's usually the straight women that I meet — 'You're so pretty. Your hair is so-o-o beautiful. I could never wear your clothes.' And I say, 'You too can look like this, honey. I'm telling you.' One thing about drag queens, we're very catty. Very catty. You noticed that?"

My last interview was with Saffire Blue, whom I talked to out on the patio behind his apartment in University Heights. Muscular with short bleached blond

hair and about five feet eight, he is a youthful 37 and first did drag over 20 years ago. He was dressed in "boy clothes," and so it was hard to think of him in drag (he wears a size 12 dress) until I actually saw his Barbara Streisand imper-

said was, "My one rule is that you never forget you're a man in a dress. If you start to forget that, then you lose it." Pasqual has worked at Lips since its opening day. Previously he had also done drag in Florida, Texas, New

**"Lines are very blurred between what a transvestite is, what a transsexual is, what a transgendered person is, and what a drag queen is."**

York, and Atlanta. Living in Atlanta, he had been on the board of directors for the 1992 Atlanta Lesbian/Gay Pride Festival. For the festival's Pride Prom, Pasqual had been asked to go "in face."

"It means being all made up," Pasqual told me. "Instead of going as a boy, I had to go as a girl. And I was awarded the 1992 Atlanta Lesbian and Gay Prom Princess. And from then on it became something I began to do more seriously. I like doing it, but I don't want to live as a girl. And it's funny because you say drag queens and I say I'm not a drag queen. I consider myself a gender illusionist. I mean, look, I have 48-inch shoulders and a 17-inch neck, and when I dress up, you'd never be able to tell. I mean, a lot of the friends I've met in the last year have met me as Saffire Blue, and I've walked up to them as a boy and they've no clue who I am, none."

Like Gina Roberts, Pasqual is deeply involved in the drag competitions and a variety of other drag events outside of Lips. "I started it here about two years ago to help out a friend of mine who was running for empress in the Imperial Court, and he asked me to help him do a benefit. So I said sure. I like to perform and I like to pull off the illusion, and I did a song by Tay-

lor Dayne called "Want Ads." The whole show was based on an '80s throwback thing. And from that day, everyone said you have to do this. I'm like, okay, fine. So, I helped out with one thing or another, and before you know it, my friends talked me into running for Miss Gay San Diego, and I did, and I won. I actually am the current reigning Miss Gay San Diego. They haven't had a new pageant yet. I've got the crown and the sash and the trophy—all of the stuff that goes with it. Bunch of pain, if you ask me."

Pasqual told me that the Imperial Court was a nonprofit organization with about 65 chapters nationwide, which raises money throughout the year for charities and other nonprofit organizations. The different chapters have elections for empress and empress, prince and princess royal. And there is also the court itself.

"I'm a member of the Imperial Court. Right now I'm titled a grand duchess, which is an earned title. You start out with a small title—

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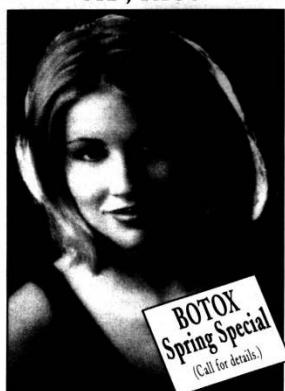
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a lady—and work your way up by the things that you do, benefits and fund-raising. Everybody who is in it donates their time and their energy and their gifts, whatever they have, and they raise money for lots of people. So far our San Diego chapter has raised \$60,000 this year, but if you figure our \$60,000 added to tons of other — 65 other chapters across the United States. And it's not only money that you raise. It's like we have toy drives, teddy bear drives, blanket drives for people in Mexico for the winter, in Tijuana. All kinds of stuff, all year round—that's a lot of stuff. Much of what I've done has been not for personal gain, but because of the fact that I like to entertain and I get more out of an audience entertaining as a female. I can use that and I've used it to help raise money for different organizations, different causes. I had a fund-raiser for an organization called Ordinary Miracles, which was started by two gentlemen about four years ago. They arranged it on one Saturday night to have the bartenders in a lot of the bars donate half their tips to a needy organization, and I think that first year they raised \$5000. This year, their goal was \$55,000, and they raised I think \$125,000—I think. I know they raised more than enough money to give who they said they were going to—like to some of the children's funds like Wish Upon a Star and organizations like breast cancer—we don't just do gay things—and then they gave the rest to other organizations. And I had a benefit for them in December and I was one of the only people—a benefit all by myself—and I raised \$2500 by auctioning off people, bartenders and waiters from different restaurants in the area."

When I asked Pasqual how much time he put into pageants and benefits, he said that before he started at Lips it took at least ten hours a week. But now most of his time is spent working and going to school. In December 1999, he received his cosmetology license and he has recently begun working in a salon. Although Pasqual clearly loves and takes great pride in being an entertainer, a gender illusionist, he sometimes regrets how working at Lips often means he has less time to give to pageants and fund-

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"All that time I spent doing it — it's fun. It makes me feel good about myself. It's not like — I'm going to get shot for this one, but it's not like what I'm doing now. If I had known 20 years ago that I was going to end up serving food as a drag queen, I probably wouldn't have started because it's a lot of

work. It's a lot of work. They don't seem to understand that unlike some of the other female impersonators — if I'm going to do something, I'm going to give it 110 percent, and it can take me an hour and a half to get ready for work. That's an hour and a half that I don't get paid for and I'm doing it four times a week. Take your yourself for

instance, you get up, you get in the shower, you brush your teeth, you put on your clothes, and you go to work.

"I have to get up and get in the shower and shave every day, which I don't normally, and then I have to start piling on the makeup and the clothes and the padding and the jewelry and the hair — that's a lot of time. And I mean, there can be a real mess in my room because there's boy clothes, girl clothes, hair, jewelry, stockings, hose, heels. See? Imagine what it would be like if you had to have a little makeup counter there all the time. It's like I'm two people. Always mess — always. There's nothing I can do to make some good money at it, but it's more of a chore

to me. I've lost hold of what I was doing it for in the first place. Raising money, being out there for my friends that need me — that's what I like most."

And those gray areas talked about by the others, rejected by gays and attractive to some straight males — this too was something that Pasqual discussed.

"One of the things that's difficult about doing what I do," said Pasqual, "is the fact of being a female impersonator, gender illusionist, means it's very hard to date. It's not like gay men don't like drag queens, they just won't date them. It goes back to the thing that if I wanted to date a woman, I would go with a woman. But what they don't

realize is that underneath that woman, is me — you know what I mean? They can't separate the two. There's a boy and there's a girl. I have an alter ego and her name is Safire Blue and when she's out, she's out. And when Pasqual is out, Pasqual is out. They cannot realize they're two individual people. I mean, they literally are. And all they see is that it's just a guy in a dress. They can't see that's what I do. And the amount of money that I make in 20 hours a week knocks the hell out of some of them, but they can't look past the fact that I'm wearing a dress.

"So, you know what? I've actually kind of given up on the whole dating issue, yes I have. Not just because

of what I do for a living, but because of the fact that at 37 years old I can't compete with the people who are out there. So I go out with my friends and I have a good time, and if something happens, something happens. If it doesn't happen, hey, I still went out and had a good time. But I don't go out looking for it.

"But when I am out as a female, I will not, under any circumstances, meet a guy. I won't. I can't do it. Because the truth is, there are a lot of guys who like men who wear women's clothing, and then they'll take them home. The only one that gets undressed is the 'man', and they lay there and get serviced. They're kidding themselves to me. They're straight guys. Married with children.

"I did meet this one guy one night and we started to talk and I said to him, 'You really do like men in women's clothing, don't you?' And he said, 'Yes, I do.' And I said, 'Let's just say hypothetically — you're a good-looking man — things happen and we decide to go back to my house, do I get to leave this on or do I get to take it off?' He said, 'No, you have to leave it on.' And I turned around and I said to him flat out, 'Well, you know something? You, my friend, are a freak.' And he said, 'Who are you to call me a freak?' I said, 'You know

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what? Let's be honest, I make a lot of money at this. I don't do it to meet men. I do it to come here and entertain. That's what I do. I entertain. You, on the other hand, think that just because it looks like a woman, it's okay to be serviced by her even when it's not a woman. From what I can see, I believe that you're in denial and maybe you should either fess up to it or just move on. And he kind of raised his eyebrow and said thank you very much for your input and walked away.

"So there's a lot of self-deception there, obviously. You see these guys, they're hanging out in different clubs where they know there's going to be drag queens or female impersonators or transies, and that's what they're there for. They're everywhere. And some of them, you would think they should either fess up to it or just move on. And he kind of raised his eyebrow and said thank you very much for your input and walked away.

"It's appalling sometimes. First of all, you have to understand that a lot of drag queens have given us a bad name. A lot of them are prostitutes. Well, not here of course. Some are prostitutes and those are the ones that just yell on the street corner and those are the ones that the newspapers automatically point out. And that just makes us all look bad. And there are some of us that actually do it for noble causes. You know, it's not just because I like putting on a dress. Not because I want to be a female. I don't want to be a female by no means. Not of what I have to go through just to go to work.

"My mother asked me a long time ago when I actually came out of the closet when I was 16 — I told my mom that I was gay and she asked me, 'Do you want to have a sex change?' I said, 'Mom, I like standing up to pee. No, I don't want to have a sex change. I like being a boy.' Now I'm getting to the point where I want to be a boy even more because of the everyday thing. I mean, going to work four nights a week, dressing in drag. It's fun, but it's not as if I'm only

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entertaining and that's it. I'm going in there and selling \$2000 worth of food and beverages, and on top of that, in a six-hour period, I'm also doing five numbers, with five different costume changes, and having to keep myself composed all night long in

order to make sure I still look as good at the end of the night, as well as running around a restaurant, making sure everybody is happy. It's a lot of work, and in high heels to boot, I tried in the beginning to wear the little flat ones, but it just doesn't look right,

so I wear four- or five-inch heels and run around in them, and that's the easy part. The heels are not the hard part. No, I don't want to live my life as a girl. Some of them do, but I don't. I don't want to have to shave my entire body every day. I do it for a reason,

then I'm done. I want to be a boy. I don't want to have to get up and be Tootie or Gina Roberts all the time. I don't want to be Saffire all the time. Saffire is her — over there. Wadded up in a ball in the corner of my room."

Yet Saffire also talked about the sense of freedom, a sense of being alive that seemed very attractive despite the fact that it often led to being misunderstood and being confined to what the drag queens themselves described as a gray area of human sexuality.

"One night a gay man came up and talked to me," said Saffire. "He was from either San Francisco or L.A. He was coming on to me a lot, and I said, 'What is it with you?' He said, 'You know what it is? Drag queens are so much more real than gay

men.' And I said, 'What do you mean?' He said, 'Because each one of you spends a certain allotted amount of time developing your personality. Like Saffire has got her own personality.' And he really liked that, because gay men as a whole are some-

times very rigid. You know, that standard model thing. Like I'm here and if you want me, you come talk to me and that kind of stuff. And that's the way they are. Where drag queens — they'll cut you down if they want to. They'll joke with you, they'll laugh —

they're boisterous, they're out having fun. They do what they want to do. Yet none of us are the same. We all have our own different personalities; we all like to have fun in our own different ways. And I mean, you put me and my roommate and

Kiki and Gina in the same room and sure, when we get dressed up, we look pretty damn good, but personally, we're four completely different people altogether. It's a whole somebody else that is coming out, and it's fun because I have the abil-

ity to do something that most people never get a chance to. I can live my life as a girl and have fun and then go back and be a boy and still have fun. Either way, it's fun. It's a great life. I just wish I dated more."

—Stephen Dobyns

Stephen Dobyns has been a reporter for the *Detroit News* and is the author of 10 volumes of poetry and 20 novels, and most recently a book of short stories, *Eating Naked* (Henry Holt & Company).

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Lip Liner	reg. \$250

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## LETTERS

continued from page 3  
huge campaign dollars. And pollsters wonder why voters are disillusioned with the political process!

Alfred Stumphauer  
Oceanside

## I Hate Jewelry

I am writing in regard to your story in the February 22 issue entitled "Rules of Engagement," written by Debra Ginsberg. I am a 23-year-old single woman,

and I am very aware of the expectations and rites of passage that burden members of our society when it comes to marriage. I am aware of the effort put forth by those who stand to make a profit to ensure that these standard rites continue to be observed. I am also aware that the only way to end the needless suffering that women, like the author, endure is for men and women to stop buying into these ridiculous "rules" and "games" that are quite simply nothing but a marketing ploy! I feel so, so sorry for folks who are so unempowered that they

feel a diamond-studded ring and a stroll up a flower-lined aisle is the key to their happiness. Have they absolutely no faith in their uniqueness and self-worth? Why must we fall victim to the selling of our souls in order to find society's order for our lives?

I am deeply saddened by stories of people who used to be full of ideas and self-awareness when they were younger (or as some might say, when they were my age). Now that they have matured and "come to their senses," they realize they are powerless to society's pressures, and they cave in, suddenly believing that society does know what will make them happy. And they assume everyone else will too. I have no respect for these people — Ginsberg included. You are making my world an utter misery as a single person — most definitely not because I loathe being single (NO! I LOVE BEING SINGLE!), but because you take away all understanding for folks to be single. I have news for you, Ms. Ginsberg. Everyone does not want to be coupled up, and stop saying such things in order to make yourself feel better about your mistakes! It's great to be single and free! I don't ever have to worry about being stuck in a bad marriage or having privacy! Life is good. Respect! P.S. I hate jewelry. Diamonds and rings included. Oh, and

I'm not a lesbian either. Oh my gosh!  
Cindy Under  
Chicago, IL

**20% Enjoyment, 80% Vanity**  
"Generations" (February 15) was a very enjoyable read. Is it really necessary to have page after page of liposuction, vein removal, weight loss, depression, laser hair removal, hair transplant, herpes diagnosis, cosmetic surgery? Have we really all taken care of ourselves that poorly? Just who exactly are you targeting? Most pages have about 20 percent article and 80 percent vanity ads.

Name Withheld

## Offensive, Shameful

One self-righteous woman's Christian Crusade into the overwhelming realities of the American dispossessed poor as printed in the Reader smacked of smug moral presumptions and wagon loads full of naivete ("Haves and Have-Nots," February 1). That she chooses to refer to her fellow Americans (oh! how revolting a thought!) as "haves and have-nots" is funny and (cliche) exposes her true bias from the outset. That she thinks the patty sum of a few hundred dollars handed over to this cursed creature of the streets will get her to pull herself up by her bootstraps in a country where more than 80 percent of the residents cannot afford

to buy a home is laughable and self-serving. ("That night, in bed, I felt elation. I had never given so much money to one person before.") Ask Ms. Lickona if she were on the streets with drug and emotional problems where monthly rents average about \$850, if a meager \$325 would do it for her. She'd be lying if she said yes. A friend's family just rescued a dog from the Oceanside pound, and fees and medical bills already topped \$400 within two weeks. What your inept cub reporter discovered beyond the journalistic tenet of never becoming subjectively involved in one's subject is that the job of helping those stuck at the bottom of this laissez-faire capitalist oligarchy's maw is best left to those whose life's work is committed to those souls, i.e., social workers, doctors, psychologists, and for that kind of push-out needs large-scale government intervention. And that requires increasing investment by those lucky folk who have the incomes and assets to tax sufficiently to pay for those government programs. Sadly, increasingly, those able to accomplish these things turn their backs on them and the Second Gilded Age is upon us.

But what is most telling about this embarrassing article is what is found on the last pages, 54 and 55, where much of your readership's eye

is caught not by the erstwhile award-winning journalistic prose about an ostensibly well-meaning soccer mom reporter getting ripped off by desperate street people but by the three-fifths of each page taken up by ads for cosmetic surgery, hair removal, fat suction for the overly fed and underworked. I wonder if your self-conscious, superficial readers who peruse these ads still find time and money to tithe as claims the author of the article does. As a man who prays to a Christian God, I found this pandering to the nouveau riche and their ever-extended reach for the guileless, conscienceless Southern California lifestyle offensive and shameful. One wonders if ever there will be a resurgence of Romantic Progressive nobility in this place. Was there ever?

Edmund Beniti  
San Marcos

## Lost In Tijuana

Hey, Abe, I think you are confused. The Reader is a San Diego publication. So why all the Tijuana churches in "Sheep and Goats"? I used to read your column!

Ralph G.

**Jellyfish Reader**  
Even with staples, you are spineless.

Name Withheld

# Calendar

## Kin Mobile

Tribute to the Family Car

Car museums have a surreal quality. Objects meant to be mobile and outdoors are displayed like dream props, out of context. Almost as surreal are the memories of cars in our collective past. The sight of them can evoke the strongest reveries, like certain smells.

What used to be known as "the family car" is a remnant of those days when there was only one vehicle in the middle-class driveway and its solitary nature provided a challenge for teenagers of the Wally Cleaver era: how to wangle the keys from Mom and Dad for a Saturday-night date.

Today we have "Mom's car" and "Dad's car," the better to drive to work, and many a kid thinks a car is his or her birthright.

Mary  
Oswell, the San Diego Automotive Museum's exhibits manager, says that one family car of yore — the station wagon — was originally a commercial vehicle. "They were used primarily to transport people and luggage from the train station to the hotel in town. They were a way to get a bunch of people somewhere. Called 'depot hacks,' they had wooden siding and no glass in the windows. In fact, they had no windows at all. Neither driver nor passengers wore goggles. 'They weren't going for a long ride.'"

Then, in 1937, Ford introduced a wood-sided model with windows. It began to sell in great numbers and became, more or less, the car we recognize as a station wagon today. Oswald curated the museum's new exhibit, which traces the history of the family car. On display will be 15 models, mostly American. The museum owns three of them; the rest are being lent.

The show's 1955 Studebaker Champion is owned by Flo and John Cummings, volunteers at the museum and "big Studebaker fans," says Oswald. They bought it shortly after their marriage. "So it's not only a family car, it's a one-family car."

Ironically, this car, which they drove across country with the kids piled into it, is what's known as an "orphan" car — one whose manufacturer has stopped production. "These are often middle-priced cars and ones that are most fondly remembered," Oswald says.

The same model (not the same car) that lender Dann Whalen received as a gift in the 1960s, when



Flo and John Cummings with '55 Studebaker Champion

he was 17, is in the show. As Oswald tells the story, "His dad said, 'Well, Dann, we think it's time for you to have a car.' And he handed him the keys and said, 'It's out in front of the house.'"

Dann was elated, imagining the snazzy car that Dad had chosen at the dealership, what he found. Instead, was his grandfather's old Nash.

While the 1952 Nash Statesman was not that high school boy's most fervent automotive desire, years later he went looking for one. Oswald interprets the purchase as Whalen's attempt to recapture a remnant of his past.

Whalen is a member of a local Nash car club today.

Besides evoking personal memories, the show is meant to evoke thoughts about the economy that eventually produced the multiracial families of today. "So we're going to bring in a Model T, primarily to talk about the cost of owning a car. The Model T was the first car that a run-of-the-mill family could own. It cost \$800 in 1908, its first year of production, when most cars were \$1000 or more. Henry Ford believed

that everybody should have an automobile, and that's why he ended up creating an empire based on mass production."

Safety features are extolled by current car makers. Oswald says that cars built in years prior to Ralph Nader are low in safety features. "They tried in the '50s to offer safety belts as an option and people didn't want them." What family-car purchasers wanted instead was spaciousness and couch-like seats. Even midpriced cars were sold on the basis of their "living-room-ness," she says.

"They wanted height, too, because men used to wear hats. Leaving room for one used to be par for the course. Car makers boasted that a man could drive their models without taking his hat off."

One of two European cars in the show is a seven-passenger Saab station wagon from 1969. It's also the show's newest model. Oswald calls it "a European attempt to get a lot of people in a small space."

The other European is a Volkswagen bus from the early '60s, but the idea that it became the hippie

vehicle of choice — and a symbol of family disintegration — is not broached. Like all of us, the museum displays a distinctly selective memory, and the music on the soundtrack will be Bing Crosby, not Jimi Hendrix.

Nor will a Rambler be included, because they are too small, says Oswald. It's a gap. Legend has it that the flip-down front seats of the cars produced by the American Motors Corporation between 1958 and 1969 were responsible for not a few shotgun weddings, when teenage parents started families unintentionally and gave yet another meaning to the term "family car."

— Jeanne Schinto

**"Sedans, Vans & Wagons: A Tribute to the Family Car"**  
San Diego Automotive Museum  
2080 Pan American Plaza,  
Balboa Park  
Friday, March 2-May 28  
10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
\$7, adults; \$6, seniors (65 up) and active military (with ID); \$3, kids (6-15); under 6, free  
info: 619-231-2886

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## Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

### EVENTS LISTINGS

#### HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTING:

Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cost, the precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a contact phone number, and a phone number (including area code) for public information to READER EVENTS. Fax: (619) 581-2401. You may also submit information online at [www.sandiegoreader.com](http://www.sandiegoreader.com) by clicking on the events section.

#### BAJA

**Baja Prog 2003**, the fifth annual international progressive rock festival,

#### GETAWAYS

continues through March 3. Progressive bands including Ankh (Poland), Landmarc (England), Ariga (USA), Sylvan (Germany), Cast (Mexico), Priam (France), and others will participate.

Each day of the festival includes pre-show concerts at the Arava Inn Convention Hall, beginning at 2 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, and at noon on Saturday and Sunday. The feature show goes underway at 7 p.m. at the Teatro del Estado (Bolevard Lopez Mateos). Three bands perform each night. Tickets are \$15 per night. For ticket and information, call 602-955-0993. [www.bajaprogressive.com](http://www.bajaprogressive.com)

**The Leguista Caravan** benefits from a concert planned at 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, at the Centro San Jose (Casa de la Cultura). Enjoy performances by Tijuana No!, Anjo Underwood, Almalma, Mexican Jamming, Frijoles, Jambos, Quinto Sol, Los Alex, Kung Fu Monkeys, Sanandhi, Sotomayor de Juarez, and the Death Ponchos. Admission is a requested \$6 donation. For more information, call 611-52-66-8031 or 611-52-66-8101. [www.bajaprogressive.com](http://www.bajaprogressive.com)

**The Mexican-San Felipe Bike Ride** is scheduled for Sunday, March 4,

beginning at 8 a.m., at the Chamber of Commerce. For more details, call 611-52-66-1277. [www.bajaprogressive.com](http://www.bajaprogressive.com)

**More Biking** How about taking part in the Teacup Light Mountain Bike Ride, an off-road biking event for more than 500 participants on Sunday, March 4, 8 a.m. Call 611-52-66-1277 for information. [www.bajaprogressive.com](http://www.bajaprogressive.com)

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### OUTDOORS

**Mexican Cedar Trees**, or "naked cedars," are showing their stuff this spring by bearing and bearing scarlet, flame-like flowers on the tips of their twisting, leafless branches. Commonly planted as park and freeway landscaping, these and other species of cedar are blooming along Freeway 94, Interstate 5 through Oceanside, along Harbor Drive near the airport, at San Diego Zoo, on the lawn in front of San Diego City College downtown, and on the San Diego State University campus. The bloom may continue into late spring, when the naked cedars will cover themselves with eight-inch-long leaves, just in time to provide shade for the warm months.

**Three-D Mania** screens at the Ommat Theater in the Tijuana Cultural Center Tuesdays through Fridays at 3, 5, 7, and 9 p.m., as well as at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on weekends. *Amazons* continues, showing at 2, 4, 6, and 8 p.m., with additional screenings at noon on Saturday and Sunday.

The center is located at Paseo de los Heroes and Main Street in the Zona Rio. For more information, call 611-52-66-8700. [www.tjucultural.com](http://www.tjucultural.com)

blooming brittlebush, chaparral, ocotillo, apricot malvow, and more. Starting in mid-month, several varieties of cactus should bloom. For the latest update and prognostication on the seasonal bloom, call Anna Borrego Desert State Park's special hotline, 760-766-4684, for a recorded message.

**With the Overwintering American Redstarts**, black-throated green warbler, and black and white warbler still at Guajome Regional Park when the Audubon Society birders visit the 500-acre park from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, March 3. The park boasts a 25-acre lake, marshland, and some interesting trails, along with water in the creek.

Meet the group in the first parking area after entering the park on Guajome Lake Road, about seven miles east of I-5 via Mission Road (Highway 76). Expect considerable hiking of a moderately strenuous nature, water, restrooms, and picnic tables are available (bring a lunch if you wish). There's a \$1 parking fee. 619-286-7710. [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

**Wear Tough Old Clothes** and get dirty during the Black Mountain Open Space Park volunteer work project on Saturday, March 3, from 8 a.m. to noon. Other items to bring: plenty of drinking water, a snack bar, sunscreen, and sturdy shoes and

boots. For information and directions to the staging area, call 858-338-8082. [www.blackmountainopen.org](http://www.blackmountainopen.org)

**History by Obscure**, Oldfashioned Tours offers its monthly hour-long history walk, blending Balboa Park history with its wealth of architectural and botanical treasures, on Saturday, March 3, at 10 a.m., starting at the visitor's center. Fee: \$19.235-1121. [www.obscure.com](http://www.obscure.com)

**Native Plants and Their Uses** will be the subject when ranger Brian Fulton leads a nature walk at 10 a.m. on Saturday, March 3, in Lake Jennings Park (10100 Bas Road). Call 858-494-3049 for details. [www.sandiego.gov](http://www.sandiego.gov)

**Explore the Plant World** around the Mission Trails Regional Park's visitor center with Paul Selby during a native plant walk on Saturday, March 3, from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Many native plants from different habitats around Southern California are found in the park. Find them at One Farther Junction, Serra Trail, call 619-666-3278. Fee: (MISSION GORGES)

**A Guided Nature Walk** takes place at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 3 (and on the first Saturday of every month), in Marian Rest Memorial Park. Trail guide Don Wetzel will lead nature lovers through the oak and acorn trees and chaparral, pointing out birds

and wildlife calling the park home. The hike is free, but there is a \$6-per-car day-use fee. The Lake Cypress Recreation and Park District center is at 15027 Highway 79. Call 788-581-9904 or 619-447-8123 for details. [www.lakecypress.org](http://www.lakecypress.org)

**Gain Proficiency in the Art and Science of Tracking** when the San Diego Tracking Team hosts a beginning tracker/naturalist weekend March 3 and 4 in San Panchito Canyon Preserve. Events run from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturday and 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

Meet at the Ranch House: to reach the spot, take the Mercy Road exit off I-15, and head west to Black Mountain Road. Go right on Black Mountain. Cross the intersection and head straight into the parking lot. For information, call 858-672-1120. The fee is \$35. [www.sandiego.gov](http://www.sandiego.gov)

**Recovering Wild Animals** is the job of Wildlife Assistant, troublemaker in the park. Find them at 4731 Clement Drive. Participants are involved in all aspects of the work. 619-921-6044. Fee: (CLAREMONT)

**Back Biting and More** leads the "tip-and-toe" to make birdwatching easier when Barbara Moore, program

director at the Chula Vista Nature Center, conducts a class beginning on Saturday, March 3, from 8 a.m. to noon. During the five-class series, participants will spend two hours in the field and two in the lab at each meeting. The fee is \$35. To reserve a space, call 619-409-5983. The center is located at 5 Street and Bay Vista.

**March Fourth on March Fourth**, join Walkabouts for their annual jaunt on Sunday, March 4. The moderately paced outing over level terrain begins at 1:30 p.m. at the traffic circle at the Film Forum at 6 p.m. on Monday, March 5, at the San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). Lou Diamond Phillips plays Richie Valens and is joined by Easi Morales and Elizabeth Pena. Call 619-236-5880 for details. Fee: 619-236-5880. [www.walkabouts.com](http://www.walkabouts.com)

**The High Annual San Diego Latino Film Festival** runs March 6-11, promoting 56 films and videos from around the U.S. and Latin America at the Mann Hazard Center 7 (7510 Hazard Center Drive). Fee:

**Indie Bunch**, in support of the Guat earthquake victims, the Patuxent Sisters plan a concert of classical Indian music at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 3, at Challenger Middle School (10810 Parkdale Avenue). The program includes "Night music" by Kala Bhabari. The \$20 suggested donation includes an Indian dinner. For information, call 858-558-7605. [www.indiebunch.com](http://www.indiebunch.com)

**Contradance**, the contradance scheduled for Friday, March 2, promises music by Jump Fingers and dancing by Jostyn Kopyeva. The dance takes place at Trinity United Methodist Church (1030 Thorn Street) at 8 p.m., following beginners' instruction at 7:45 p.m. Call 760-476-4030 for information. Admission: \$6. Free for adult sons, no cash.

**Composer and Pianist** Leonard El is presents couples' folk dances — including waltz, schottis, polka, hambos, and zwerchs, among others — at 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, at Dancing Unlimited (4569 Hill Street). The fee for non-members: \$6. Call 281-7666 for details. [www.dancingunlimited.com](http://www.dancingunlimited.com)

**Flamenco Master** Antonio Vargas offers an orientation for his upcoming dance classes at 1 p.m. on Sunday, March 3, at the California Ballroom (8276 Roman Road). The classes are geared for students at all levels. Fee: \$58. \$1.50 cash advance. [www.flamencomaster.com](http://www.flamencomaster.com)

**Beginning Square Dance** classes are being offered by the Single Spinners' Dance Club on Tuesday, March 4, at 7:15 p.m., at Our Savor's Lutheran Church (4011 Ohio Street). Single couples and quadrilles are welcome. The fee is \$1 per person per week. For more information, call 619-465-9205. Open enrollment on March 13 and 27. [www.single-spinners.com](http://www.single-spinners.com)

**Have a Swiggle** (Good Time) when the Rocket Swing Dance Club convenes from 8 p.m. to midnight on Tuesday, March 4, at the Portuguese Hall (2818 Avenida de Portugal, just off Rosecrans). Beginners' dance lessons start at 8:15 p.m., with DJ swing music for a variety of dances. The cover is \$6. For information, call 619-291-3775. [www.porn.com](http://www.porn.com)

**Postwar Years**, Cold War Years: American Culture and Politics, 1945-1967 — this film and discussion series continues on Sunday, March 4, with Eisenhower (Doc), a political bi-

ography of the general's presidential career, including the major events of his two terms in office. The following discussion will be moderated by SEDU's Henry Jansen. The screening begins at 2 p.m. at the San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). Fee: 619-236-5880. [www.walkabouts.com](http://www.walkabouts.com)

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# Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

**A Concert of Original Music** by composer/performers John Naples (piano) and Jimmy Patton (flute guitar) is planned at the Carlsbad City Library on Sunday, March 4. "Hammerdance," presented by Inverforest Music, starts at 3 p.m. Find the library at 1775 Dove Lane; call 760-435-0001 for information. Admission is \$15 general, benefiting Casa de Amparo. (CARLSBAD)

**Stitaris Karik Seshadri**, accompanied by Anup Chatterjee on tabla, plans a concert at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 4, at the San Diego Museum of Art. Tickets are \$20 general; call 619-496-1966 for reservations. (BALBOA PARK)

**San Diego Poet** Thomas Canyon will read from his new book of poetry and prose, *Yarrow City Blues*, at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 4, at the San Diego Museum of Art. Tickets are \$20 general; call 619-496-1966 for reservations. (BALBOA PARK)

more details, call 858-270-7467. The cover is \$5. (DOWNTOWN)

**Music and Dance of Vietnam** is showcased during programs beginning at 6 and 7:30 p.m. on Monday, March 5, in Smith Recital Hall at San Diego State University. Tickets are \$10 general. Call 619-594-6031 or 619-594-6020 for further information. (SDSU)

**"Celebrating Jewish Music: A Concert Series"** gets underway at the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center with "Talmi Play Talmi" on Tuesday, March 6, at 7:30 p.m. Israeli flutist Et'ella Talmi and Yosef Talmi (known for his work as director of the San Diego Symphony from 1989-1998) will perform the Talmi's own compositions and arrangements, along with Yosef's "Elegy (Reflections on Dachau)," to be performed by the California Ballet Company. Tickets are \$22 for nonmembers. Find the center in Mandell Weiss Eastgate City Park, at 4126 Executive Drive. Call 858-362-1348 for reservations. (LA JOLLA)

**The Reality behind the Alleged Reality**, five-time Emmy-winning investigative reporter Peter Lance will

sign and discuss *The Stingray: Lethal Tactics of the Sole Survivor: The Inside Story of How the Cartage Wars Were Controlled on the Island and Beyond* at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6, at Borders Books and Music, 1072 Camino del Rio North. Free. Call 619-295-2201 for details. (MISSION VALLEY)

**Two Local Bands**, Cedar Mill and Strange Woods, perform when the San Diego North County Bluegrass and Folk Club meets on Tuesday, March 6. The evening opens with sets by other bluegrass and folk musicians at 7 p.m. Find the fun at Round Table Pizza, 1161 East Wabington Street (at Ash). 760-726-8380. Free. (PESQUERA)

**Orange County Poet** Michael Paul is the featured poet for Poetic Brew on Tuesday, March 6, at 8 p.m., at Claire de Lune (2006 University Avenue). Open-mike readings precede and follow the readings; sign-ups begin at 7:30 p.m. Free. 619-688-0845. (NORTH PARK)

**The Use of Medication in Psychoanalysis** has exploded in recent years, breeding both suspicion and enthusiasm. UCSD clinical professor of psychiatry Roy Renshoff, M.D., will

discuss and sign *Bridges for Healing: Integrating Family Therapy and Psychopharmacology* at Warner's Bookstore at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6. Free. Find Warner's at 7812 Girard Avenue. 858-454-0347. (LA JOLLA)

**Jazz Improvisations** may be heard when undergraduate students of Music 131 perform at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6, in the Recital Hall at UCSD's Mandeville Center. Admission: \$5. Call 858-534-4830 for information. (LA JOLLA)

**Experimental Performance Series**, "Mike Kennedy's Circus of Values" convenes on Wednesday, March 7, featuring longtime David Byrne collaborator and guitarist Reeves Gabrels and Diego bassist Andy West, along with Kennedy. The fun begins at 8 p.m. at Dizzy's Place, 344 Seventh Avenue. Tickets are \$10. Call 858-270-7467 for details. (DOWNTOWN)

**Romantic and Traditional Melodies** and original compositions may be heard when South American harpist Alfredo Rolando Ortiz presents a concert at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7, at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido (340 North Escondido

Boulevard). Free. Call 800-988-4253 for information. (ESCONDIDO)

**The Band of Brigands**, or *Taral de Haidouks*, is a village band of traditional Gypsy musicians from the small Romanian village of Clejani. Their sound is described as a fusion of Eastern and Western influences in a uniquely Balkan blend. Enjoy a concert by these brigands at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7, in UCSD's Mandeville Auditorium. Tickets are \$17 general. Call 858-534-4897 for information and reservations; tickets are also available through Ticketmaster. (619-220-TIXS). (LA JOLLA)

**Jazz in the Park**, the series offers Irish dancing and bands during the Irish Celtic Celebration at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7, at 5:30 p.m., in the sculpture garden court at the San Diego Museum of Art. Tickets are \$10 general. For reservations, dial 619-496-1966. (BALBOA PARK)

**Tricks of the Trade** are dispensed in *Secrets from a Caterer's Kitchen: The Indispensable Guide for Planning a Party*, which author Nicole Adams will discuss and sign at 7 p.m. next Thursday, March 8, at Esmeralda

Books and Coffee (1555 Camino del Mar). Free. 858-755-2707. (DEL MAR)

**Artists on the Cutting Edge IX**, the "Cross Fertilization" literary and music series at the Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla led by artistic director Quincy Troupe starts next Thursday, March 8. The opening-night roster includes Beat poet Michael McClure, author Ibbot Moore Campbell (Brothers and Sisters, Singing in the Cornfield Choir), and multi-instrumentalist Rene McLean.

Programs begin at 7:30 p.m. Seven-night series tickets for nonmembers are \$100; nonmembers pay \$17 per individual event. Tickets are available through Ticketmaster. (619-220-TIXS). Find the museum at 700 Prospect Street. Call 858-454-3541 x444 for information. (LA JOLLA)

**The Celtic Folk Music Tye** Golden Bough plans a family concert for the Multicultural Arts Festival "For Kids by Kids" at 7 p.m. next Thursday, March 8, in Schulman Auditorium at Carlsbad City Library (1775 Dove Lane). Admission is free. For reservations, call 760-434-2902. (CARLSBAD)

"Word Art" may be enjoyed at the Del Mar Art Center next Thursday,

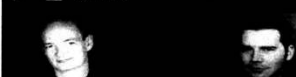
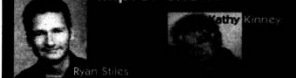
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March 8. The event features composer and guitarist James Baiten, writer and poet Alton Sears, and composer and poet Reginald Sledge, beginning at 7 p.m. Free. Find the center at 1555 Camino Del Mar. 858-481-1678. (DEL MAR)

**Dog Lovin'** head in Boulder Costa Verde next Thursday, March 8, when Mike Rothmiller signs and discusses his *Old Dog's Guide for Pups*. The event begins at 7:30 p.m. at 8650 Genesee Avenue. Free. 858-457-7561. (LA JOLLA)

## SPORTS

**Baseball Region**, spring training begins for the San Diego Padres with matches against the Seattle Mariners in Borja, Thursday through Saturday, March 1-3, at 1:05 p.m. each day. The Padres host the Colorado Rockies at 7:05 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6, and the Arizona Diamondbacks at 1:05 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7. Games are broadcast in English on KOGO-AM (600) and in Spanish on KJMS-AM (580). For details, dial 619-280-1000.

**The California Classic**, boasting competition by "some of the top women gymnasts in the country," takes place March 2-4 in the gymnasium at United States International University. Past and future Olympics hopefuls will be competing, along with all other levels of female gymnasts.

The competition runs from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday through Sunday. The elite gymnasts compete at 4 p.m. on Saturday. Admission is \$8 for adults, \$6 for those 12 and under. Call 619-496-1089 for information. Find the campus at 10455 Pomerado Road. (SCOTTSDALE RANCH)

**Hoop!** The San Diego Wildfire hosts the Tampa Bay Thunderclap on Friday and Saturday, March 2 and 3, 7 p.m., at the San Diego Sports Arena. Tickets are \$6 to \$8 general admission, with \$25 box seats and \$50 court-side. Call 619-542-1400 for information. (SPORTS ARENA)

**Roses Will Be Awarded** to all female finishers of the 37th annual Sue Krentz 15K Race, sponsored by the San Diego Track Club. The event, on Saturday, March 3, starts at 7 a.m. near the Hilton Hotel (1775 East Mission Bay Drive) and promotes a flat and fast course around Mission Bay and Fiesta Island. For more information, call 858-268-1932. (MISSION BAY)

**Climbin' for CF**, cystic fibrosis is a genetic disease causing the body to produce dangerously thick mucus, leading to lung infections and interfering with digestion. Take part in the 20th annual Stairclimb to Cure Cystic Fibrosis on Saturday, March 3, at One America Plaza (600 West Broadway). Registration starts at 8 a.m., with two stairwells for climbing beginning at 9 a.m. Participants climb the stairs and ride the elevator down. Each climber who raises \$20 in donations and pledges receives a one-month membership to 24-Hour Fitness. For more information, call 858-277-5880. (DOWNTOWN)

**Bicycle to Teate, Mexico**, with San Diego Bicycle Touring Society riders on Sunday, March 4. This 65-mile ride starts at 8:45 a.m. at McDonald's (531 Telegraph Canyon Road). Bring money for food. For more information, call 619-449-9189. (JOLLA VISTA)

**How Will the Waves Rank?** Who knows, but the South Coast Surfing Series hosts event #5 on Sunday, March 4, at the Oceanaire Pier (300 North the Strand). Beach entries for all divisions start at 6:30 a.m., with the competition beginning at 7 a.m. For details, call 949-661-0531. (OCEANAIRE)

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good taste - Luxurious

**Touch**  
(Noun)  
To move to  
tender response

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Elegance  
and  
Touch your heart  
with Exquisite  
splendor"

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## READING

### Tenderheaded: A Comb-Bending Collection of Hair Stories



Edited by Juliette Harris and Pamela Johnson. Pocket Books, 2001, 302 pages; \$25.95

**FROM THE DUST JACKET:** What could make a smart woman ignore doctor's orders?

What could get a hardworking employee fired from her job? What could get a black woman in hot water with her white boyfriend?

In a word...

HAIR.

When does a few ounces feel like a few tons? When a doctor advises a black woman to start an exercise program and she wonders how she can do it without breaking a sweat. When an employer fires her for wearing a cultural hairstyle that's "unprofessional," and she has to go to court to plead for her job. When she's with her man, and the moment she's supposed to let loose, she stops to secure her head scarf so he doesn't disturb the "do."

**TENDERHEADED!** Yes, definitely. All black women are, in one way or another. The issue is not only about looking good, but about feeling adequate in a society where the beauty standards are unattainable for most women. *Tenderheaded* boldly throws open the closet where black women's skeletons have been threatening to

burst down the door. In poems, essays, cartoons, photos, and excerpts from novels and plays, women and men speak to the meaning hair has for them and for society. In an intimate letter, A'Lelia Perry Bundles pays tribute to her great-grandmother, hair-care pioneer Madam C.J. Walker, who launched a generation of African-American businesswomen. Corporate consultant Cherilyn "Liz" Wright interviews men and women on the hilarious ways they handle "the hair issue" between the sheets. Art historian Henry John Dreval explores how hairstyles, in Yoruba culture, indicate spiritual destiny, and activist Angela Davis questions how her message of revolution got reduced to a hairstyle.

*Tenderheaded* is as rich and diverse as the children of the African diaspora. With works by Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, bell hooks, Henry Louis Gates Jr., and other writers of passion, persuasion, and humor—this is sure to be one of the most talked-about books of the year.

**ABOUT THE EDITORS:** Pamela Johnson was born in 1960 in Harlem, New York. And, as Johnson, on the afternoon that we talked, "I was raised in Carson, California. I was three months old when my parents moved to California. They wanted to move someplace a little more, I guess, conducive to what they thought was a family. They were living in the city, and they wanted to have a house and a yard, so that's where I was, growing up. At the time, in Carson where we were called Gardena. And then Carson incorporated a few years later. But I went to grade school and junior high school and high school there. And I even went to college in California, at Stanford."

Johnson graduated from Stanford University with a degree in communications. After graduation, she moved to the East Coast. "I wrote. I write often for *Essence* magazine. I usually have something in there every month. I write a column and other stories for them."

Johnson also is coauthor of *Sunrise and a Novel*, a novel that was made into a CBS-TV movie. She lives in Mt. Vernon, New York.

Juliette Harris is the editor of *International Review of African-American Art*, published by Hampton University Museum in Virginia. She has also written award-winning television and film documentaries.

**A CONVERSATION WITH PAMELA JOHNSON:** Juliette Harris and Johnson live in different states, Harris in Virginia and Johnson in New York. They worked together on *Tenderheaded* for 18 months before they met in person. "But," said Johnson, "we both were very passionate about hair. Our own hair and hair in general, and we found that there were so many fascinating aspects about our hair. We also felt there was a lot of baggage that black women were carrying with regards to hair, whether it came from a time when black people were enslaved and black women didn't have the time to do their hair, so they would put it under a headscarf, or if they were working in the house of the people who owned the plantation, let's say, they had to wear their hair under a white bandanna to be considered somewhat acceptable."

"So that was a lot on our heads. And then we came out of that period into a post-slavery era, and where before we'd just been kind of workers with no income and no representation, suddenly we were looking for a way to feel good about ourselves as women and beautiful as women. We were looking to come up with a way to present ourselves that we felt good about. In the early 1900s there was the emergence of Madam C.J. Walker. She herself had dealt with a lot of scalp ailments and loss of hair, and it was through those troubles that she came up with products and a system to help women have healthy hair. So Madame C.J. Walker really helped black women not only come up with a feminine identity that they'd never had really prior to that point—at least not in this country—but she also helped organize a brigade of black women entrepreneurs."

In the introduction to the chapter "Straight Talk," the editors write:

"Around 70 percent of black women in the United States and an unfathomable number of sisters in the diaspora wear their hair straightened. Rejecting the notion that their black pride has pale, these sisters say, 'What's hair got to do with it? It's the advantages of straightened styles that they want, not the attributes of another race. In fact, some women believe their fortunes are tied to their straightened tresses. Without a doubt, women like media mogul Oprah Winfrey and Congresswoman Maxine Waters have perfected an impeccably coiffed look that has helped them crack through a series of glass ceilings leading straight to the top."

Marianne Kaba writes in "When Black Hair Tangles with White Power":

"Today the practice of hair straightening has become commonplace. Though a process that often requires many hours and much expense, roughly three-quarters of black women consider the time and financial investment worth it, according to Kathy Russell, coauthor of *The Color Complex: The Politics of Skin Color Among African Americans*. Why do so many black women submit to this sometimes painful practice? My research suggests that it is not a reflection of what I call 'white power envy.' Black women 'take the heat' to achieve access to the economic and social resources within American society."

In "Relax Your Mind," an essay in the "Straight Talk" chapter, Terrence M. Raines writes, "I am here to praise straightened hair, not to bury it in tired rhetoric about wanting to be white." Raines and several other essays in *Tenderheaded* note that straightened hair is not as much about race as it is about manageability. I asked Johnson what she made of the most part African-American women who have had their ancestors' origins in Africa. Had we not been transported to this country during the period of slavery we would not have that concept of our hair. So I think that the practice of being in a society with a majority culture with straight hair makes us feel like our hair has to be 'manageable' more than 'manageable' when we seem to have managed it well enough, or our ancestors managed it well enough, without ever putting anything into the fire and then putting it into their hair. So I think that it is a reflection on the fact that we are in a different culture, and we have different standards of what we consider to be 'manageable.'"

How did Johnson think Oprah Winfrey's choice of hairstyle affected upwardly mobile African-American women?

"Well, Oprah is probably the most visible black woman in America."

"She is," I said. "One of the most visible women."

"That's right. Definitely. I would say that, in reality, black women who are in mid-level to high positions are a lot of the time—and Oprah is one of these women—surrounded by a lot of white males, and I think [these women] have attempted over the years to make their

hair a nonissue. So you go in and you're already a black person and you're a woman, and you are amongst males in power. And you are hoping also to be in power, to be in increasing power. And you want to eliminate the number of reasons why you should not be endowed with that power. And I think that you cannot change your skin color. And it's very expensive to change your sex. And most people don't want to do that. So hair is pretty simple to change. And I think that often women have chosen to alter their hair to, like I say, make themselves more uniform in a culture where everybody else's hair is straighter, where the people with some power have straight hair."

"One of the essays in *Tenderheaded* is titled 'When Black Hair Tangles with White Power.' Women who have chosen to wear their hair in styles that are cornrows, or some other kind of culturally rich styles, have often paid for it economically. They've been fired from their jobs or they have voluntarily left their jobs to maintain their integrity in terms of wearing a certain style that is meaningful to them and relinquishing the position that they held. So I think that the message that Oprah sends may be the message that a lot of women are also sending in their professional lives. I think Oprah probably has to make fewer adjustments than do other women and has actually worn a range of hairstyles. But I think a number of other women who are in corporate America, who do not enjoy the kind of financial freedom that Oprah has, do sometimes choose to tow a line to ensure the perks and the positions that they've achieved are not taken away from them. People may find fault with them, maybe for other kinds of reasons, but maybe it's the hair. Maybe it's my hair, maybe it's this, maybe it's that. 'So women in these positions try to eliminate all those 'maybe it's this' kind of reasons, and one of those reasons, of course, might be hair."

I asked Johnson how long it takes to get hair braided into cornrows.

"It depends. If you get a really, really fine braid, it could take you ten hours. And you could get something that takes an hour or two, depending on the complexity of the style. Something simpler is less time. Some styles are really, really complicated. I was in Senegal, and the more complicated it is, the more money it is. In Senegal I had somebody braiding my hair, and you ask how much it is, and it's not that much money, so you go okay, and you spend a long time but you come out with something really,

really fantastic."

I asked if, in fashioning cornrows, hair had to be added.

"No, you don't have to add hair, you can do it with natural hair. But if you do add hair, it tends to last longer because hair that's done with hair can begin to fuse. And I don't know if you've seen locks before. So if you do hair with hair, sometimes the process of not combing that hair will cause it to fuse together versus if you have woven in your hair, it is not likely to fuse with your hair."

What was about fusing, Johnson explained, was that "you don't have to be locked into wearing those cornrows. If you have locks, then you intentionally allow your hair to fuse to itself in those different strands. That's a choice."

I asked if African-American moms tend to fuss a lot at their daughters about hair and hairstyles.

"Yes," Johnson said. "Yes. I think, in general, black mothers have always been very concerned about making sure their daughters were presentable. 'Don't go out of the house with your hair looking like that!'"

I think black mothers have made an effort, at all times, to keep the daughter looking ship-shape. I often wonder if—and this is something I couldn't say—but I often wonder if black mothers aren't maybe a little bit more protective, a little bit more sensitive around how their children are perceived because of a time when they had less control over their children. I think with slavery you have these children and you may not be able to raise them. Or if you do, you want to make sure that they stay out of harm's way, so maybe you're even a little more concerned with keeping them in bounds. And hair may be a part of that. You can control how other people perceive your children, but you can make every effort to control how they are presented as they go out into the world, which may mean sometimes spending too much on designer tie."

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**Puckish Fun.** The San Diego Gulls host the Tacoma Sabers on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 6 and 7, at 7:05 p.m. each night, at the San Diego Sports Arena. Tickets range

from \$5 to \$15, available by calling 619-224-4825. The games are broadcast on KSDS (AM 1130). (SPORTS AGENCIA)

## SPECIAL

**Replete with Spinning Flago, Sabres, and Riffs,** the Rancho Bernardo High School Winter Guard Tournament takes place on Sunday, March 2, at 6:30 p.m. Twenty-five winter guard bands from schools in Chula Vista, Escondido, and Vista will compete. Tickets are \$5. Find the school at 13010 Paseo Lucido, call 858-474-4965 for information. (JANISCH BERNARDINO)

**Dream a Little Dream,** the 16th annual Spring Home Garden Show takes place at the Del Mar Fairgrounds, March 2-4. The main feature is the "Garden Masters," showing up the annually in lands-ape design and in installation talents of landscape designers and

firms. There will be more than 400 vendors' booths offering goods for inside and outside the home.

Show hours are noon to 7 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$10 for adults, free for those under 12. Call 858-350-3738 for information. (DEI MAM)

**Look Up in the Sky!** The 53rd annual Kowalski Ocean Beach Kite Festival and Parade is set for Saturday, March 3. The fun starts at 9 a.m. on the grounds of the Ocean Beach Elementary School (4741 Santa Monica Avenue), with kite-making until noon at the Ocean Beach Recreation Center (4226 Santa Monica Avenue).

judging takes place at 1 p.m. on the ensuing parade down Newport Avenue to the beach starts at 2 p.m. with kite flying on the beach at 3 p.m.

2:30 p.m. All kites entered in the contest must be handmade, bring your own kite string (all other materials will be provided). For information, call 858-274-2016 or 619-531-1527. (OCEAN BEACH)

**Long Live the Queen!** Queen Elizabeth II and her royal court, accompanied by a troupe of entertainers, food vendors, merchants, and "hundreds of other Renaissance re-enactors," will converge upon Felicita Park for a Renaissance Fair and Shakespeare-in-the-park festival on Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days.

Expect Shakespearean plays, period music, battle pageants, a pirate encampment, madrigal singers, and more. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for those 5 to 11, free for those under 5; weekend pass is \$15; park

ing is \$3. Find the park at 742 Cleland Avenue. For details, dial 805-496-6036. (CROWDSTON)

**"Clarence Observed,"** the annual or child show hosted by the North County Palomar Children's Society, is dated for March 3 and 4 at the San Marcos Community Center (13 Civic Center Drive). Show hours are noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$4, which includes an orchid plant. For information, call 760-723-4140. (SAN MARCOS)

**"Native Spirit:** Paintings of Southern California's Vanishing Open Spaces," an exhibit featuring members of the California Art Club, is on view through Sunday, April 2, at the Mission Trail Regional Park visitors' center (One Father Luperon Serra Trail). Meet the participating artists during a reception set for Saturday, March 3, from 3 to 5 p.m. View the show from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. 619-668-3275. Free. (MISSION GORGES)

**Books to Good Homes,** the San Carlos branch library plans its monthly book sale from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 3. Paperbacks and hardbacks at all prices. The library is found at 7265 Jackson Drive. 619-442-1860. (SAN CARLOS)

**The Talent of the Brush** art group presents its annual cultural arts exhibition beginning with a reception on Saturday, March 3, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Holiday Inn Select Miramar (9335 Kneary Mesa Road). Local artists have work showcased. A traditional dance performance at 11:30 a.m. For information, call 858-495-2390. (MIRAMAR)

**The Coastal Painters** are a group of 11 North County artists, exhibiting their work from Saturday, March 3, through Wednesday, March 28, at the Poway Center for Performing Arts (15428 Espada Road). You're invited to an artists' reception set for Sunday, March 4, from 2 to 4 p.m. For more information, call 858-756-0417. (POWAY)

**Ranunculus** *Ranunculus* *Ranunculus*, the 50 acres of giant ranunculus flowers are blooming at the Flower Fields

through early May. New this year is the All-American Rose Selection Garden, the Field of Fame Garden, the Color Project, and theme gardens. Visitors may stroll on pathways

through the fields from 10 a.m. to one hour before dusk daily. Admission is \$5 general, \$4 for seniors, \$3 for children 6 to 12, and free for those five and younger. Find

the fields by taking the Palomar Airport Road east from I-5, head east for two blocks, and turn left on Paseo del Norte Road. For information, call 760-930-9123. (CARMEL VALLEY)

**Gather with Psychic Friends** during the metaphysical conference and paychic fair, hosted by the Alexandria Institute from noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4, at

the John D. Spreckels Building (1858 Front Street, at University Avenue). Practitioners of psychic arts such as tarot, palmistry, and numerology will be available for both days, charging

\$20 per reading, and lectures will be given. 619-286-3422. (CROSS)

**The Three-Part Installation** *Red* (Hubert) with a reception for art

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THURSDAY, MARCH 8 • 7:30 PM



**Thursday, March 15**  
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**Thursday, March 22**  
JANET FITCH  
TRACE MORRIS  
ANIL KALCHOUR  
DAVID MURRA

**Thursday, March 29**  
CAR BENNETT  
W.S. MERVING  
ELIZABETH NUNEZ

**Thursday, April 5**  
ANCHE MORN  
BOBBY BRYANT  
C. WILLIAMS

**Thursday, April 12**  
HOMER ARDIS  
DOUGLAS EVART

**Thursday, April 19**  
HENRY THREAGILL  
DAVID THREAGILL  
SAPHIRE

All performances 7:30 pm

## BRUCE MAU

Wednesday, March 7 7 p.m.

Graphic designer Bruce Mau will present a lecture about his work at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, discussing his collaborations with Rem Koolhaas and Frank Gehry, and his new book *Life Style* (Phaidon). A book signing follows the lecture, and books will be available for purchase in the Museum Bookstore.

\$5 MCA Members  
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the same way that we have been in the battered about the head by the kinds of images, that males have taken in and have, but as this is what I want. This is my beauty aesthetic and what I desire. So I think that is true among some males. I think also that we've had — as a result of the '60s being something of a foundation of comfort and pride and beauty, associated with the afro — a foundation for cornrows and for locks and for Bantu knots and for a number of styles using the natural hair. I think that comfort has also created another aesthetic, and that there are a number of men — I can't give you any percentages — who are equally enthusiastic about a woman who finds ways to work with her natural hair and isn't keeping his hands out of her because she just got it done, or dealing with a burn on the ear, or dealing with whatever kind of issue she has around having a perm, or not yet getting a perm. And so I think we're in a point where we can't say, 'Here are the preferences, and they break down like this,' but there are definitely preferences for the natural hair as well as for the straightened version."

I said that I thought that as African-American men grow older, they might find themselves less interested in a woman's appearance and more interested in her entire being.

Johnson did not disagree. "A gentleman I was speaking with

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**Tenderheaded** decry the preference some black males, particularly younger males, show for longer hair and lighter skin. Did Johnson believe that these young men did this preference?

"I think that probably some do. I think that definitely in the same way that black women have faced the tyranny of having flushed before their eyes, in almost every different media you can imagine, that what is beautiful is white skin and blond hair. I think that in

at a signing we had last night in Washington, D.C., was saying to me that that was the case for him. As a young man he did tend toward wanting a lighter-skinned, longer-haired girl. And I think what he was suggesting was that he had not yet come into his own in terms of what he truly preferred as opposed to what was considered beautiful by the majority. I can't tell you how old he was; he was somewhere between 35 and 40 or so. But he seemed to suggest that there was a maturity thing that happened for him, where he was able to be not only more comfortable with women who were as natural as they chose to be, but also self-acceptance. That he had become more comfortable with himself and that those two correlated."

I said that as I read *Tenderheaded* I thought that, in fact, few if any women are entirely "natural"; most women engage in at least a few cosmetic artifices.

"That's a good point. A woman who is too natural probably is often alone. It's a harder fit if you choose not to do all of these things that we might call 'the beauty checklist.'"

"Most American women shave their legs and wear deodorant and at least put on some lipstick," I suggested.

"And," said Johnson, "have under their ar Absolutely. And I suppose, too, that there are efforts that people make in order to attract the opposite sex. There's a joke I like. I am hard-pressed to tell it correctly, as Chris Rock tells it, but the gist of it is that a man and woman don't really meet. As Chris Rock puts it, 'I send my representative and you send your representative, and then later on then that's when we get back to who we are. My representative is the one who shows up on time, smelling good, pays for dinner, says all the right things.' And basically, at some later point, you realize that that was just a representative."

I asked if Johnson, now that she was out of her 20s, thought that much about her hair.

"No, not so much. I mean, I like it to be beautiful. But I don't have a lot of anxiety around it. So the other night I was at a lecture and I had washed it the day before and kind of pinned it up. It was just pinned over, and a little puffed at the top, just very simple. I had to do something to do something a lot more complicated for that particular reading, because I'm thinking, 'Well, I'm going all the way to D.C., and I'm going to be in front of people, it's

my book, and it's a book about hair, and shouldn't my hair be fabulous?' But I was tired, and I said, 'No, I'm just going to be simple.'"

I think that at another point in my life I would have been willing to sacrifice, and even though it would have made me more tired to invest the time in doing the hair, I can't tell you how old he was; he was somewhere between 35 and 40 or so. But he seemed to suggest that there was a maturity thing that happened for him, where he was able to be not only more comfortable with women who were as natural as they chose to be, but also self-acceptance. That he had become more comfortable with himself and that those two correlated."

I complimented the hairdo that Johnson wears in her author photo on *Tenderheaded*'s back flap. "I like hair pulled up on top," I said.

"Me too. Actually, my hair is up in a little topknot today, and it's kind of on an asymmetrical plane. I know what I was thinking about when I was talking about being at peace; there's an essay in *Tenderheaded* called 'Crowning Glories: Hair, Head, Style, and Substance in Yoruba Culture,' by Henry John Drexel. And one of the concepts in there that stays with me, no matter how many times I read the book, is this concept about, 'May my outer head not disgrace my inner head,' which is to say that you need to always kind of be presentable, and stay in keeping with your spirit, but I think of it more, not so much as disgrace, but as 'May my outer head match my inner head.' My mood on that particular day when I had to go to D.C. was to be simple, and I did not work against myself. I think that it is an opportunity for all of us to not suffer as much about our roots or whether we woke up and the curl wasn't as curly as it was the day before — all of these things that really hamstring us sometimes."

Johnson laughed and added, "I was on vacation last year, and it was midnight, and it was about six of us who had rented a house, and two of us were up eating chocolate cake, and I said, 'You know, if there were no men in the world, we would all be fat and bald.'"

—Judith Moore

Daniel Wheeler at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 4, at the San Eliot Laguna Nature Center. With the *Real Hub*, Wheeler aims to create an artistic scene similar to what could be described as an airport with birds perched on the "airplanes." The project consists of three stations: "Terminal," "Tower," and "Perch." For information and directions, call 858-756-2140. (6060745)

**Put a Single Candle on the Birthday Cake** when the Museum of Music, Making celebrates its first anniversary with festivities on Sunday, March 4, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. As part of the

events, innovator and musician Don Lewis, a pioneer of MIDI (musical instrument digital interface), will be on hand to answer questions and meet guests from 2 to 4 p.m.

Find the museum in the corporate headquarters of the NAMM (National Music Products Association), at 5270 Armada Drive. Admission is \$5 general, \$3 for students and seniors. For information, call 760-436-5996. (CARLSBAD)

**Living History in San Pasqual**, cannon firing drills, demonstrations of crafts and skills from the 1800s, history lectures, entertainment, volcan

ters in period attire, and authentic food for sale will all be part of San Pasqual History Days, taking place from 11 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. on March 4 and on each first Sunday from October through June at San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park. The museum is located at 15008 San Pasqual Valley Road, 760-737-2201. (ESCONDIDO)

**Behold the Beautiful Berry**, in honor of the local strawberry crop, the Carlsbad Village Farmer's Market is hosting its sixth annual strawberry festival from 2 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7 (not March 1, as was

stated in last week's *Reader*). Organizers promise live music, strawberries, and various items using the luscious fruit as a main component, master gardeners answering questions, a plant sale, and more. Find the fun on Roosevelt Street, between Carlsbad Village Drive and Grand Avenue. For details, call 760-720-9161. Admission is free. (604800)

**Animal Whimsy: A Wildlife Garden** is the theme for the third annual exhibit at the Carlsbad Sculpture Garden. Among the nine participating artists are Rolo Scanga,

DeLora McGraw, Ron Tatro, James Watts, and Lisa Schirmer. Find the garden behind the Carlsbad Arts Office (2955 Elmwood Avenue, next to the Cole Library). 760-434-2920. Viewing hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday through November. Free. (604800)

**The Southland Streets** of Southeast San Diego are brought to life in the exhibit "Voices Project 2000: Through Our Eyes," on display through Friday, March 25, in the Founders Gallery at the University of San Diego (5998 Alcala Park). Students from Gompers and Jefferson High

School participated in the project, creating photographs and videotapes from their lives.

View the exhibit from 12:30 to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Find the campus at 5998 Alcala Park. Call 619-260-2280 for information. (LJGA 0574)

#### FOR KIDS

**Check Out The Book Circus** when Tom Jensen's Puppets perform through Saturday, March 4, at the Marie Hirschback Puppet Theater. Next up: *Punchinello* will be presented by ventriloquist Lynn Trimble. March 7-11. Performances begin at 10 and 11:30 a.m. Wednesday through Friday and at 11 a.m., 1 and 2:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Find the theater near the Arroyo Center, at 1150 Arroyo Parkway. Regular admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 for children (11-2), free for those under ten. (604800)

**"By Kids for Kids"**, the eighth annual Multicultural Arts Festival, runs March 3-10 at locations throughout Carlsbad. The fun begins with a musical variety show by Totally Kids at 4 p.m. in Schulman Auditorium (1200 Carlsbad Village Drive).

Followed by the Malandres de Mestre Troupe presenting Afro-Brazilian combat dances at 6 p.m. On Monday, March 5, the Pata Pata Troupe performs an ancient Indian court dance at 8:30 p.m. in the Carlsbad City Council Chambers (1200 Carlsbad Village Drive).

The City of Vista Ballet Folklórico performs at 4 p.m. in Schulman Auditorium. "Specially Dressed & More!" The Puppeteer Players play at St. Patrick's Day Show on Tuesday, March 6, at 8:30 p.m. in the community room at Cole Library (1250 Carlsbad Village Drive). One by One presents a musical production at 4 p.m. in Schulman Auditorium (with a repeat performance on Saturday, March 10, at 2 p.m.).

How about some Scottish traditional dancing? The Academy of

Highland Dancers plans a recital in Schulman Auditorium at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7.

The Golden Bough Celtic folk trio presents a family concert at 7 p.m. next Thursday, March 8, in Schulman Auditorium. Admission to every event is free. For reservations, call 760-434-2902. (CARLSBAD)

**Hailing from Thessaloniki, Greece**, prodigy pianist Vasilis Varvareos won first prize at the 1998 Young Concert Artists International Auditions at the age of 14, the youngest pianist ever to win the auditions. Varvareos plans a concert hosted by the La Jolla Chamber Music Society at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, at the Neurosciences Institute (10640 John Jay Hopkins Drive). The program features selections by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, and Ravel. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$5 for students 6 to 18. For reservations, call 858-459-3729. (LA JOLLA)

**Who's Afraid...enjoy Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf" when Seagat Concerts offers a "Concert for Kids" on Saturday, March 3.** The narration is provided by Kenneth Bell. The fun begins at 11 a.m., at the San Diegoato United Methodist Church (1701 Calle Magdalena). Tickets are \$5. For information, dial 760-436-8744. (ESCONDIDO)

**Over 50 Local Children** have been cast in the Muscoda Children's Theatre production of *The Wizard of the Weyland* on Saturday, March 3, at the Poway Center for Performing Arts (15498 Espola Road, at Titan Way). The Wizard is a musical production described as a "down home country telling of every couple's favorite story."

Performances begin at 4 and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5 for children, \$10 for adults. Call 858-748-0019 for reservations. (POWAY)

**Bright Lights and the Bay Area**, the San Diego-based San Diego Light Society's free for All San Diego activities through March 4. Participants may design light displays through March 8, in the community room at the Cole Library (1250 Carlsbad Village Drive). Free materials are provided. To register, sign up in the children's section of the library. For information, call 760-721-0676. (CARLSBAD)

**Children's Museum of San Diego**, celebrate Dr. Seuss's birthday with a party planned from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. next Thursday, March 8, at Bookstar Casa Verde (9650 Genesee Avenue). Free. Call 858-457-5561 for details. (LA JOLLA)

**Who's Your Favorite Flying Mammal?** The answer may be the star of the show at the Arroyo Center. Meet the bat at White Rabbit

at 7 p.m. on Saturday, March 4, at the Arroyo Center, at 1150 Arroyo Parkway. Regular admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 for children (11-2), free for those under ten. (604800)

**"By Kids for Kids"**, the eighth annual Multicultural Arts Festival, runs March 3-10 at locations throughout Carlsbad. The fun begins with a musical variety show by Totally Kids at 4 p.m. in Schulman Auditorium (1200 Carlsbad Village Drive).

Followed by the Malandres de Mestre Troupe presenting Afro-Brazilian combat dances at 6 p.m. On Monday, March 5, the Pata Pata Troupe performs an ancient Indian court dance at 8:30 p.m. in the Carlsbad City Council Chambers (1200 Carlsbad Village Drive).

The City of Vista Ballet Folklórico performs at 4 p.m. in Schulman Auditorium. "Specially Dressed & More!" The Puppeteer Players play at St. Patrick's Day Show on Tuesday, March 6, at 8:30 p.m. in the community room at Cole Library (1250 Carlsbad Village Drive). One by One presents a musical production at 4 p.m. in Schulman Auditorium (with a repeat performance on Saturday, March 10, at 2 p.m.).

How about some Scottish traditional dancing? The Academy of

Children's Books during story time events on Sunday, March 4, 2 p.m. Find the shop at 7755 Girard Avenue. 858-454-5518. Free. For children three and older. (LA JOLLA)

**Horses Walk on Tiptoe** — can you? Investigate our equine friends, groom a pony, and try trotting and galloping like the real thing during the next First Friends classes for those two to four years old at the Helio Woodland Animal Center (6525 Calle del Nido) at 10 a.m. Tuesday through Friday, March 6-9. The fee is \$10. Call 858-756-4117 x318 to register. (RANCHO SANTA FE)

**Follow the Trail to Quail**, head to Quail Botanical Gardens on Tuesday, March 6, at 10:30 a.m., for a general tour of the gardens oriented for kids (aged three to six). Meet at the visitors' center located directly north of the parking lot, at 280 Quail Gardens Drive. 760-436-3006. Free. (ESCONDIDO)

**Learn About the Creatures** thriving in the harsh conditions of tidepools at La Jolla Shores when the Birch Aquarium hosts Tidepooling for Tots on Tuesday, March 6, at 2 p.m. The program is designed for children ages 3 to 5 (four through kindergarten). To make the required reservations, call 619-534-7536. (ESCONDIDO)

**I Do Not Like Them...** enjoy Green Eggs and Ham when the Dr. Seuss tale is read for the parent and tot story time next Thursday, March 8, 10 a.m., at Barnes and Noble Bookstore (10755 Viewview Parkway). Free. Call 858-448-1166 for details. (MIRA MESA)

**A Writer's Workshop** for kids is planned by John H. Ratner, author of *Choosing Up Sides*, at 10:30 a.m. next Thursday, March 8, at Bookstar Casa Verde (9650 Genesee Avenue). Free. Call 858-457-5561 for details. (LA JOLLA)

**Climb the Family Tree**, the North San Diego-based Genealogical Society offers a junior genealogy course, five weeks long, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. beginning next Thursday, March 8, in the community room at the Cole Library (1250 Carlsbad Village Drive). Free materials are provided. To register, sign up in the children's section of the library. For information, call 760-721-0676. (CARLSBAD)

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**Calendar**  
**CLASSICAL MUSIC**

# Emotional Elimination

Is this a good idea?

Gounod's *Faust*—or part of it—received a generally pleasing though somewhat flawed production at the Civic Theatre. It is remarkable how sturdy a stage work this sentimentalized version of Goethe's vast drama remains. Much of the opera's continuing success is, of course, due to the expressive dramatic arias, the decorative songs, and the well-contrived choral scenes, throughout all of which the composer's sophisticated harmonic imagination and constructive sense make themselves discretely felt. The libretto does its job efficiently, telling the story, defining the characters' motives, and—most important of all—allowing Gounod to create an authentic music drama, with real psychological and moral resonance.

**REVIEW**  
**JONATHAN SAVILLE**

Unfortunately, it has become traditional in many opera companies to make considerable cuts in the score, and San Diego Opera is one of these. The lengthy ballet of the final act, delectable as it is, cannot be dispensed with without damaging things (Gounod was compelled to add it for the Paris Opera production ten years after the 1859 premiere). The other major cuts, however, significantly weaken the drama's dramatic cogency, aside from eliminating a lot of good music.

The libretto by Barbier and Carré already requires the audience to leap from Faust's seduction of Marguerite to her situation as a socially condemned sinner who has been abandoned by her lover. But it makes the transition easier by providing a scene in which Marguerite, alone in her room and afterward in conversation with Siebel, reflects on her feelings about the crucial events that have taken place between the acts. The scene is important in order to clarify the plot and to deepen the characterization of the heroine. It is here that we learn Faust has left her, that her former friends disdain her, that she is filled with shame but not guilt (for she does not believe there was anything base in her love), that she still loves Faust and thinks of him as her lord and master, and that she has had a child by him (a fact that emerges in the San Diego production only when it is mentioned in the final scene that she has killed the child). Her aria, sung at her spinning wheel, is also one of the most exquisite pieces of music in the opera (comparable, in its way, to Schubert's) superb setting of Goethe's text for the spinning

song), and Siebel, too, is given lovely lines to sing, which at the same time enrich his character. Yet all this was omitted here, no doubt in order to shorten the production by some 12 minutes. The omission of the *Witches' Sabbath* scene (disregarding the ballet) saves another 14 minutes, but it deprives the audience of insight into Faust's feelings of guilt, and his desperate attempts to blot out his remorse with wine. We also lose the theatrical *coup* of his magical vision of Marguerite with her throat cut (presaging her execution for the infanticide), which supplies the motivation for his return to her. What the cuts eliminate, in sum, are the emotional reactions of the two main characters to the most dramatic event of their relationship. Is this a good idea?

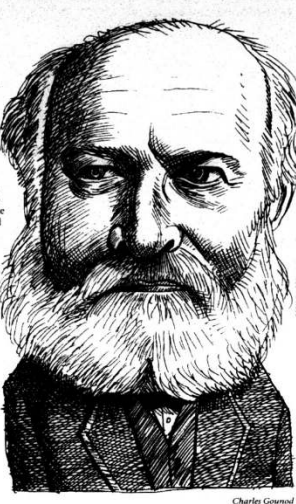
The problem is not helped by certain choices made by stage director Linda Brovsky. Marguerite's song about the king of Thule, which she keeps interrupting with reminiscences of Faust, is a wonderful musical-dramatic way of showing how the image of this handsome young man has come to preoccupy her. It is supposed to be sung in solitude, so that the audience can receive the most intimate perceptions of what is happening to her emotionally. Brovsky, instead, had her reading the story to some little children, who naturally didn't know what to make of things when Marguerite became distracted and seemingly told them about how attractive the young man was, and how she blushed when he approached her. The inwardness of her confused feelings, so artfully depicted by Gounod, was externalized into a piece of cute (and distracting) stage business. Not a good idea.

Another not-good idea was having Faust taken down to hell through a trapdoor just as the redeemed Marguerite—who has recognized his alliance with evil and has repented him in horror—is ascending a stairway to heaven. Gounod and his librettists understood matters better. Their Faust is not sent to hell; he is left on earth, presumably to suffer a lifetime of remorse, and in the knowledge of his own eventual damnation (though in Goethe, after a long spiritual progress of which the opera knows nothing, he too will be saved). Once again, the San Diego production weakened our sense of the character's inner life.

Other parts of the stage direction tended toward fussiness and superfluity, for example, in the soldiers' chorus, where dozens of little actions referring to wounded, dying, and dead soldiers pululated around the stage. Faust's erotic pawing of Marguerite as they lay on the ground in the garden was a vulgar distortion of Gounod's far more romantic musical treatment of the moment. It was also unnecessary—the dumbest audience in the world would have gotten the point without it. I should also mention the dislocation of narrative consistency caused by placing the church scene after the scene of the soldiers' return, instead of before. Marguerite goes to church to pray for the well-being of her child and of her absent lover. Her spirit is calm (the music of her opening lines tells us that). It is only the intervention of Mephistopheles and his demons—heard though not seen—that convinces her she is damned and will go to hell, a thought that had never previously occurred to her in the opera (things are quite different in Goethe). In the following scene, her brother Valentin returns from the wars, discovers what she has done, and in his deathbed (Faust has wounded him mortally in a sword fight) puts his curse upon her as a sinful woman.

In the opera's logical sequence of scenes, the curse reinforces what she has heard in the church (and—we are to assume—drives her mad; hence the killing of the baby). If the scenes are reversed, however, as they were here, Marguerite seems to go to the church directly from the traumatic event of her brother's death and his terrible curse, entering nevertheless with no agitation at all, and no sense that her immortal soul is in deep trouble. It just doesn't compute.

What saved the church scene was the stunning set (by Earl Staley) and the powerful musical performance (by Ferruccio Furlanetto as Mephistopheles, Izabela Labuda as Marguerite, and the opera chorus). There were, in fact, several first-rate singing performances in this production. Furlanetto is a master of the role of



Charles Gounod

**Gounod, "Faust" (San Diego Opera)**  
Richard Bonynge, conductor; Linda Brovsky, director; Earl Staley, production designer; Octavio Arévalo (Faust), Ferruccio Furlanetto (Mephistopheles), Jeff Mattay (Valentin), Zheng Cao (Siebel), Izabela Labuda (Marguerite), Judith Christin (Marthe).

Mephistopheles, his powerful bass voice (as well as his exceptional acting talents) brilliantly projecting the character's varying identities: the smooth tempter (in his initial scene with Faust), the ingenious servant (as he helps his protégé woo Marguerite), the comic buffoon (in the garden scene), the cynical satirist (in the "Calif of Gold" song, delivered with savage power), and the terrifying embodiment of evil (both in the church scene and—most thrillingly—when he invokes

the powers of night to aid Faust in his seduction of the blonde and vulnerable girl).

Mezzo Zheng Cao brought a rich voice and an accomplished technique to what was left of the trouser role of Siebel: her "Faites-lui mes aveux" (the little scene of the flowers) was vocally secure and full of charm and real feeling. The singer coped bravely with the incredible excess of stage business the director had foisted upon her throughout. The production's other mezzo, Judith Christin, had only a single scene and a tiny bit of music to make her impression on the audience, but that was all this wonderful singing actress needed. Her Marthe Schwerlein made the most of the role's comedy (the direction here was nicely inventive), which might have caused some amused members of the audience to overlook the excellence of that plush, well-placed voice and the singer's deft phrasing.

I liked Izabela Labuda much more in *Faust* than in last season's *La Bohème*. She seemed quite at home in the French style, and projected the character's tenderness, innocence, passion, and despair with fine psychological insight. The voice fit the role, and its sound was particularly affecting in the lyrical sections (two bad we did not get to hear her do the spinning scene). One might have hoped for just a bit more virtuosity in the "Jewel Song," which exhibited no faults but did not dazzle. The other two soloists, who sang with great tenor Octavio Arévalo (Faust) and baritone Jeff Mattay (Valentin) I am obliged to use the word "promising." Mattay's voice is a powerful instrument, but he tended to use it in a rather crude way, singing loudly (too loudly) most of the time. Arévalo exhibited a good middle range, with an ingratiating timbre, but the top was effortful and the bottom weak and colorless. He was at his best in the music he seemed to know best, such as "Salut, demeure chaste et pure," which he sang beautifully overall, although somewhat impeded by technical problems.

Richard Bonynge conducted with his usual taste and intelligence, but he did not seem quite as in tune with the other performers as we have become used to with him. On opening night, there seemed to be disputes about rhythm going on between him and some of the singers (notably Furlanetto), and even the habitually note-perfect San Diego Opera Chorus had a few ragged entrances. The orchestra nevertheless played with finesse under Bonynge's direction, bringing out the remarkable imaginativeness of Gounod's orchestral writing.

A word more, in regard to that imaginativeness. If you need to shorten Gounod's masterpiece, the piece to cut is the soldiers' chorus. It has nothing to do with the opera (it comes from a different one, in fact), and its musical level is inferior to every other number in *Faust*. The tune, I admit, is a rousing

one, but it really goes better with the words I learned as a schoolboy.

My father slaughtered a kangaroo. Gave me the grisly bits to share. Wasn't that a terrible thing to do— To give me to chew the grisly bits of a dead kangaroo? ■

**CLASSICAL LISTINGS**  
**HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTINGS:** Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week prior to publication for consideration. Do not phone. Send a complete description of the event, including the date, time, cast, the precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a contact phone number (including area code), and a phone number for public information to READER. CLASSICAL MUSIC, Box 85003, San Diego CA 92186. Or fax to 619-811-2401. You may also submit information online at [www.SanDiegoReader.com](http://www.SanDiegoReader.com) by clicking on the events section.

**A Duo of Don Juan Works**—Richard Strauss's *Don Juan* and the suite from the ballet-pantomime *Don Juan* by Gluck—are on the program when Yoon Talmi joins the San Diego Symphony Orchestra for concert March 2 & 3. The concert also features the "Symphony No. 1" by Brahms. Talmi was music director of the symphony from 1989 to 1996.

The concert begins at 8 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and at 2 p.m. on Sunday, in Copley Symphony Hall (750 B Street). Pre-performance conversations are presented by the conductor 45 minutes prior to each performance. Tickets range from \$15 to \$20. For reservations, call 619-235-0804.

**The Father and Daughter Team** of Anita Fetsch (violin) and Wolfgang Fetsch (piano) present "Music in the Galleries," concert at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, March 2, at the San Diego Museum of Art. This recital by Duo Concertante promises music by Brahms, Debussy, Stravinsky, and Enescu. Tickets: \$20 for nonmembers. Call 619-496-1966 for reservations. (BALBOA PARK)

**The "Electronic Music Festival"** hosted by UZUKI's Festival under the direction of San Diego cellist Felix Fan, concludes with a focus on electronic and new music on March 2 and 3. The Friday concert highlights the music of George Crumb, while Saturday's events showcase the music of Kaija Saariaho. Performers include Ruggiero Alfanchini, Josefina Vergara, Hsin-Yun Huang, Nicos Abondolo, Tara Helen O'Connor, Jochen Bohlen, and others.

Concerts begin at 8 p.m. at Stasi Performance and Visual Art (found in the Reitz-Carnation Building at 320 11th Avenue). Tickets are \$15. For reservations, call 619-235-8408. (COWBOY)

**Hailing from Thousand Oaks, Greece**, prodigy pianist Vasilis Varvaros won first prize at the 1998 Young Concert Artists International Auditions at the age of 14. The young pianist ever to win the auditions. Varvaros plans a concert hosted by the La Jolla Chamber Music Society at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, at the Neuroscience Institute (10640 John Jay Hopkins Drive). The program features selections by Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, and Ravel. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$5 for children under 12. For reservations, call 858-459-3729. (LA JOLLA)

"Jupiter, Rameau, and La Jolla," the La Jolla Symphony and Chorus season

continues with concerts on March 3 and 4. The program features Mozart's "Olympian Symphony No. 41," the "Symphonie espagnole" by Edvard Lalo, and Respighi's "Feste Romane." These concerts of "Mediterranean delights" feature a young virtuoso violinist and winner of the 2000 Young Artist Competition, Wesley Precourt. Concerts begin at 8 p.m. on Saturday and at 3 p.m. on Sunday in UCSD's Mandeville Center. Pre-concert lectures by Eric Breidenberger begin one hour prior to each performance. Tickets: \$18 general. For reservations, dial 858-534-4637. (LA JOLLA)

**Who's Afraid...enjoy Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf"** when Segate Concerts offers a "Concert for Kids" on Saturday, March 3. Narration is provided by Kenneth Bell. The fun begins at 11 a.m. at the San Diego

United Methodist Church (170 Calle Magallanes). Tickets are \$5. For information, dial 760-466-8744. (CROWNE)

**"Sound Impressions: Musical Impressions of Nature,"** directed by Christopher Adler, assisted by Massimo Pina, may be enjoyed at 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, in Founders Chapel at the University of San Diego (5960 Alcala Park). Admission is \$8 general. Call 619-260-7280 for details. (SAND VISTA)

**Opera's Greatest Hits** and selections from *The Barber of Seville* are on tap when the San Diego Opera Ensemble performs at 7 p.m. on Sunday, March 4, for the La Jolla Presbyterian Church Concert Series. Find the church at 7715 Draper Avenue. Segate Concerts offers a "Concert for Kids" on Saturday, March 3. Narration is provided by Kenneth Bell. The fun begins at 11 a.m. at the San Diego

music—continues at the Athenaeum Music and Arts Library on Sunday, March 4, with "Music by Pierre Boulez, et al." Listen for Boulez's "Le Matre sans Matre" for voice, viola, flute, guitar, and three percussionists, as well as the premiere of a piece by Southern California composer Erik Ullman, "Nocturne" by Kaija Saariaho, and Dmitri Tikhonov's "Caught by the Sky with Wire."

The music starts at 7:30 p.m. at 1008 Wall Street. For reservations, dial 619-454-5872. Admission is \$15 for nonmembers. (LA JOLLA)

**"Vienna, City of Dreams"** is the theme when the San Diego State University Symphony Orchestra performs on Sunday, March 4, at 7 p.m. in Smith Recital Hall on the SDSU campus. The concert features singers Carol Nebbett and Daniel

Hendrick performing excerpts from Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* and Lehar's *Merry Widow*, as well as a group of lieder entitled "Café Mit Schlag." Also on tap are Mozart's overture to *Don Giovanni*, the "Blue Danube Waltz" by Strauss, and Lehar's "Tein ut mein garten here." Tickets are \$10 general. Call 619-594-6042 for information. (SDSU)

**Organ Recital**, following the 5 p.m. evening at Saint Paul's Cathedral on Sunday, March 4, John Obetz will present an organ concert. Obetz is retired principal organist for the world headquarters of the Reorganized Church of Latter-Day Saints in Independence, Missouri. Find St. Paul's at 2728 Sixth Avenue (at Fifth and Nunez). 619-298-7291. An offering will be received. (MTCOW)

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## Calendar CLASSICAL MUSIC

**Oboe and Organ.** Karen Victor and Jared Jacobson present a concert in the Spreckels Organ Pavilion on Sunday, March 4, at 2 p.m. Dial 619-702-8138 for information. Free. (JACOBSON)

**Solo Pianist** Bernard Bayer presents a mini-concert at noon on Monday, March 5, at the Athenaeum Music and Arts Library (1008 Wall Street). Free. Call 858-454-5872 for information. (JA JOLLA)

**Indian Music** is promised when star and tabla students of Karsh Sekhri and Arup Chatterjee perform at 8 p.m. on Monday, March 5, UCSD's Mandeville Auditorium. Tickets are \$5 general. Call 858-534-4830 for more information. (JA JOLLA)

**"Le Mariage Sans Matin"** by Pierre Boulez may be enjoyed when guitarist Colin McAllister performs this and other contemporary works at 8 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6, in Erickson Hall at UCSD's Mandeville Center. Tickets are \$5 general. 858-534-4830. (JA JOLLA)

**"Celebrating Jewish Music: A Concert Series"** gets underway at the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center with "Talmud Play Talmud" on Tuesday, March 6, at 7:30 p.m. Israeli flutist Erella Talim and Yoav Talim (known for his work as director of the San Diego Symphony from 1989-1998) will perform the Talmud's own compositions and arrangements, along with Yoav's "Talmudic Reflections on Dushan," to be performed by the California Ballet Company.

Tickets are \$22 for nonmembers. Find the center in Mandell Weiss Langate City Park, at 4126 Executive Drive. Call 858-362-1348 for reservations. (JA JOLLA)

**Piano Works by Haydn, Schumann, Ravel,** and contemporary composer Joe Uterback may be heard when guest artist Thomas O'Brien performs at noon on Wednesday, March 7, in Smith Recital Hall, San Diego State University. O'Brien is coordinator of the piano division at Kent State University, Ohio. For information, call 619-594-6800. Free. (JOLLA)

**American Impressionist Music** is promised when pianist Andrea Anderson plays in the Capley Auditorium at the San Diego Museum of Art next Thursday, March 8, beginning at 7 p.m., the recital will feature works by Edward MacDowell, Charles Griffes, Gertrude Stein, Samuel Barber, Copland, and Channing Young. Call 619-696-1966 for reservations. Tickets \$20 general. (BALBOA PARK)

**Symphonic Sounds in Sacred Spaces**, the series continues when the San Diego Young Artists Symphony Orchestra presents concerts on March 8 and 10. Titled *Grave of the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin* and *Rainier Morte* of the Berlin Philharmonics join the orchestra for Mozart's "Symphonie Concertante for Violin and Viola," the program also promises Mahler's "Symphonie Movement (Blumine)," and "Symphonie No. 104 (The London Symphony)." The concert next Thursday starts at 7:30 p.m. at the Mission San Diego de Alcalá (10818 San Diego Mission Road) and at 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 10, at St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church (11451 Blue Cypress Drive). Offerings will be received. For more information, call 619-445-3284. (MISSION GORGE, SCHWEPES HANCO)

## COMING THIS SUMMER



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## Voluptuous Dead

Weir hangs an apple-tree branch from a wall, its fruit bruised and wormy.

The sweet surprise these days at the San Diego Museum of Art isn't the recently opened "American Impressionists Abroad and at Home" — or at least not only that — but the paintings from the museum's American collection that accompany it, which provide an occasional look at some very good pictures that roughly sketch the history of American painting from the 19th Century to the 1940s.

Pictures by George Bellows and John Sloan illustrate how the early-century Ash Can school, also known as the Eight (George Luks, William Glackens, and Robert Henri, among them), followed Impressionism's lead by depicting the realities of modern life. Bellows's painting of a sludgy snowscape washed with indigo shadows offers crudely dimpled and enervated passages — one tree's violet leafage puckers like scar tissue. Nearby is his *Lobster Cove, Monhegan, Maine*, a small, furious marine picture haunted by Albert Pinkham Ryder's melancholy, portentous seascapes. Ryder was a great, eccentric painter, born in New Bedford, and all his life obsessed with sea imagery, though he made his best pictures while living in squalor in New York. His ghost also glazes John Marin's electric 1942 *Still Life and the Sea*, where the tossing ocean is pure danger and portent while the vase of flowers Marin puts in the foreground suggests a steady domesticity.

Readers of this column know my high opinion of Marsden Hartley (1877-1933). Major

museum haven't given him quite the attention he's due. He worked all over the place — in Paris, New York, Berlin, New Mexico, Massachusetts, and Maine — and showed at Stieglitz's famous 291 Gallery. He wrote good art criticism, mediocre poetry, and a chatty autobiography. Like Kandinsky, whose essay "On the Spiritual in Art" left a deep impression, Hartley made his artistic career a spiritual adventure. His landscapes swell with visionary fervor. The cubist pictures of 1915-1917 look patched and grand. His figure paintings, like *Fillemur's Last Supper* and *Adelard the Drowned*, *Master of the Phantom*, drew on American primitivism the way European artists exploited folk art. Two of my favorite Hartleys are the 1941 *Crow with Rabbits* (in the Hirschhorn) and the 1935 *Portrait of a Sea Dove* (in the Art Institute); both intensely physical reality in death's ponderous repose. The crow picture was an homage to Ryder's painting of a dead songbird in the Phillips Collection, and Ryder is also the covering angel of the San Diego Museum of Art's *Winter Wind-Maine Coast*. Seagray sea, running clouds, flowers framed by a window, islands in the distance.

Most American artists reacted somehow to the 1913 show of European Postimpressionist art held in a regimental army in New York. Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912), with its shattered planes and scissored movement, was probably the most shocking. SDMA's Stuart

Davis paintings illustrate the Army show's short- and long-term effects. An early harbor scene, the 1932 *Composition with Boats*, has a De Stijl austerity of line and field. The much later *Terrace* (1962) shows Davis working in his feistiest near-representational manner, creating a liquefied surface of happy lime greens, pumpkin yellows, and candied reds. Compared to the economies of Hartley, Marin, and Doss, the Georgia O'Keeffe paintings on view — one of a trumpet flower, another of a New Mexican landscape — are typically overstated and self-important.

Since I've already said something about Thomas Hart Benton's most famous student, Jackson Pollock, I should mention that Benton's 1940 *Many Days*, a regionalist picture in rebellion against the Army show's modernism, is an allegory in the *vanitas* (all is vanity) tradition. Bursting milkweed pods shower seeds around serene leaves and stalks. They form a crown for the skull on the ground. In the distance are two horses, which, like the plant, will go the way of all things.

The first Impressionists' exhibition in Paris in 1874 included a painting by Monet that gave the movement its name. "I was asked to give a title [to a view of Le Havre from his window] for the catalog," Monet



"American Impressionists Abroad and at Home: Paintings from the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art." Exhibit runs through Sunday, April 22. San Diego Museum of Art, Balboa Park. 619-232-7801.

later said, "I couldn't very well call it a view of Le Havre. So I said, 'Put Impression.' So the picture was catalogued 'Impression: Sunrise.' "A catty re-

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San Diego Reader March 1, 2001 69



## Calendar ART

view picked that up and repeated the word a dozen times. Impressionism broke with the conventions of history and narrative painting. The choppy brushwork, sunny palette, and apparent spontaneity of outdoor paintings by Monet and Pissarro built on the *plein air* tradition of Millet, Corot, and Theodore Rousseau, who had worked near the town of Barbizon in the 1830s and 1840s. Impressionism was also making, above all of the new Second Empire Paris created by Baron Haussmann, its boulevards, cafes, public parks, theaters, and shops.

Aspiring American painters went to study in Paris, usually at the Ecole des Beaux Arts (the French government academy), where they learned the silky technique, anatomical drawing, and compositional structure required of history and allegorical painting. Some chose to follow the pastoral tradition of the Barbizon painters. Although many Americans, some of whom later became Impressionists, were there while the new painting was happening, they paid little attention to the contrivances of Corot and his colleagues. They who did pay attention weren't happy with what they saw. I. Alden Weir wrote after seeing the third Impressionist exhibition in 1877: "I never in my life saw more horrible things. They do not observe drawing nor form but give you an impression of what they call nature. It was worse than a chamber of horrors." Weir later became an Impressionist; two of his paintings are included in "American Impressionists Abroad and at Home." Our artists didn't really take up Impressionism until the 1880s, and when they did, they nationalized it, adapting its technique to depict contemporary American pastoralism and to report the facts of socially turbulent city life.



Broadway and 42nd Street, 1902, John Singer Sargent

John Singer Sargent and Mary Cassatt were exceptions.

Unlike most American artists in Paris (a smaller contingent studied in Munich), they had no intention of returning home, and they absorbed Im-



Alpine Peaks, c. 1907, John Singer Sargent

pressionism earlier. Cassatt, represented by two creamy portraits of girls, was more or less discovered by Degas in 1874 and actually showed with the Impressionists between 1879 and 1886. By 1879 Sargent, soon to become famous for his high-society portraits, was producing canvases that recorded contemporary life on the quick with loose, quivery effects. The trees in his painting *Peepers* (resting in a Wheatfield, 1885) are constructed from broken brushwork of lights against darks, and the field is a swaying mass of scintillating yellows, greens, and browns.

By the early 1880s Impressionist pictures were being shown and bought by American collectors. William Merritt Chase helped clear the way. Chase studied in Munich, imitating the high style of Rubens, Hals, and Rembrandt, but by 1886 he was painting impressions of new public spaces like Brooklyn's Prospect Park. Weir's career, too, measures the progress of the new painting in America. In 1876, after seeing an exhibition of Manet (who broke ground for the Impressionists but never showed with them), he wrote, "A value of color is good; but this is all I can say of him." By 1881, Weir was buying Manet pictures for an American collector and had even paid a visit to the painter. Weir's 1888 still life of fruit, a conscious representation of ripeness into rotteness, is one of the best paintings on view. It combines Manet's painterly

style with the great 18th-century still-life painter Jean-Baptiste-Simeon Chardin's manner of depicting deadness. Instead of the traditional deployment of fruit on a tray or tablecloth, Weir hangs an apple-tree branch from a wall, its fruit bruised and wormy beneath its fallen apples, a few weepweebs, and two deflated, fly-bitten tomatoes. Weir responds to the motif as so many painters have: the more dead-looking the thing, the more voluptuous the treatment.

The show features Childre Hassam's Sisyphus-influenced nocturne *Broadway and 42nd Street*, in which the dark winter crowds, shop-window lights, and hansom mizzles into atmospheric. Very different is Maurice Prendergast's summery outdoor figure group (*Group of Figures*), which owes less to Impressionism than to the stabilizing color of the Fauves and the ironed-out tableaux of the Nabis when the "Over-Foot Show" and regional artists shows, joined by Sandra Chans, get underway at the San Diego Art Institute with a reception at 6 p.m. on Friday, March 2. The featured solo artists are Mona Devine and Renata Spartz, in the David G. Fleet Young Artists Gallery; see work by artists at Pottery's Meadowsbrook Middle School. View all the shows through Sunday, March 25.

Galleries hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. For more information, call 619-234-1111. Admission is free. (BAGDAVIDA)

**The March Show at La Jolla Studio** featuring work by local artists and collectors begins with a reception at 6 p.m. on Friday, March 2, and concludes on Friday, April 1, at the Old Ramona Hotel Gallery. Meet the contributing artists during a reception at 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 3. Find the gallery at 845 Main Street. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday. 760-789-3682. (BAGDAVIDA)

**"Paintings and Drawings About Heaven and Here"** is the theme for an exhibit of work by Cliff McKenry on view through Sunday, April 2, at the Earl and Birdie Taylor Library. Meet McKenry during a reception on Saturday, March 3, at 6 p.m.; the artist plans a talk at 10 a.m. on March 24. Find the library at 4275 Cass Street. 588-581-9934. (PACIFIC BEACH)

**"Another Path,"** an exhibit of plein air landscapes in oil by Adele Earnshaw, opens at the Santa Ysabel Gallery with a reception at 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, and continues through Saturday, April 14. Earnshaw is best known as a wildlife artist and thus reveals a different side to her work in this show. Regular gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. The gallery is found at 3052 Highway 78 at the junction with Highway 790. 760-785-1676. (SAN YSABEL)

**Outside and In**, water-media plein air landscape paintings of Torrey

**"2001: Weaving in the New Century"** is the theme when members of the San Diego Creative Weavers Guild exhibit their work in a juried show at La Jolla Fiber Arts. The exhibit features a reception at 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, and continues through Saturday, April 13. Regular hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Find the gallery at 7644 Girard Avenue. 619-234-0004. (LA JOLLA)

**"Essential Places,"** an exhibit of recent works by Lauren Kascas Carrera, is on view through March at the North Park Studio Gallery (3803 Ray Street). Meet the artist during a reception at 6 p.m. on Saturday, March 3. Carrera's large and small-format paintings "explore the complex relationship between external landscapes and internal terrain." For information, call 619-293-7346. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. (PACIFIC BEACH)

**The Drawing Class of Palmor Clark** conducted by Victoria Chick exhibits drawings created in pencil, pen and ink, Conte Crayons, and charcoal through Sunday, April 1, at the Old Ramona Hotel Gallery. Meet the contributing artists during a reception at 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 3. Find the gallery at 845 Main Street. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday. 760-789-3682. (BAGDAVIDA)

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**"Another Path,"** an exhibit of plein air landscapes in oil by Adele Earnshaw, opens at the Santa Ysabel Gallery with a reception at 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, and continues through Saturday, April 14. Earnshaw is best known as a wildlife artist and thus reveals a different side to her work in this show. Regular gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. The gallery is found at 3052 Highway 78 at the junction with Highway 790. 760-785-1676. (SAN YSABEL)

**Outside and In**, water-media plein air landscape paintings of Torrey

**"2001: Weaving in the New Century"** is the theme when members of the San Diego Creative Weavers Guild exhibit their work in a juried show at La Jolla Fiber Arts. The exhibit features a reception at 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 3, and continues through Saturday, April 13. Regular hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Find the gallery at 7644 Girard Avenue. 619-234-0004. (LA JOLLA)

**"Essential Places,"** an exhibit of recent works by Lauren Kascas Carrera, is on view through March at the North Park Studio Gallery (3803 Ray Street). Meet the artist during a reception at 6 p.m. on Saturday, March 3. Carrera's large and small-format paintings "explore the complex relationship between external landscapes and internal terrain." For information, call 619-293-7346. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. (PACIFIC BEACH)

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**Outside and In**, water-media plein air landscape paintings of Torrey

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## Spirits of Snooze

Performers often saw an "extra" person in the lighting booth, wearing a top hat.

Perhaps because it's the oldest in California, and has gone through so many historical rines, San Diego is the state's most haunted city. Half of Old Town, it would seem, has apparitions. The Point Loma Light-house could host *Ghostbusters III*. And several other sites claim smoky wreaths of menacing men, poltergeists (now called "recurring spontaneous psychokinetic activity"), or plain old ghosts. Given the preponderance of sightings, it's surprising that local theater hasn't tapped into the phantasmagoric plane more often.

More to the point, some local theaters are haunted. The Old Lyceum had something in the stage-left stairwell leading to the dressing room below. For decades, actors complained of a "frozen presence" in that area. From the stage, performers often saw an "extra" person in the lighting booth, wearing a top hat (legend said it was the original owner's ghost). In *The Woman in Black*, now at the Old Globe, even telling a ghost story in a small Victorian theater could conjure up the real McCoy. Like the Ancient Mariner, Arthur Kippis must tell a story to "lay it to rest." When he was a young solicitor, he visited Mrs. Drablow, "a rum character," she lived in a corner of England so remote that to get there you change trains several times, carve through thick fog and silver marshes, and cross a flimsy causeway, pocked with quicksand. She'd lived the last 60 years in Fieldmarsh House alone—or was she?

Cue creepy organ music, Vincent Price voiceover. And was Fieldmarsh House real, or some "hitherto unimagined realm of consciousness?"

Dark and stormy stuff, which the play takes its sweet time to get to. A young actor convinces Kippis to stage the story. And we watch a rehearsal for a reading. The men recite, pull back, fret. Kippis threatens to quit.

The Actor reassures him that the magic of theater will piece together imperfections. It's an ongoing we can't/can't tease in its own way as conventional as the ghost-story genre.

Except for a single scream as loud as thunder, which launched my seat—waa! me, I swear—as if ejected from a jet, the Globe's *Woman in Black* huffs and puffs but probably won't blow your house down. Many of the conventions are stagey hokum: the door creaking open of its own accord, a grinding sound upstairs, the ubiquitous storm outside (don't ghosts ever haunt in broad daylight?). You know a spectral woman in black "with a wasted face" will appear from darkness. The only question is when?

The production has two noteworthy features. Veteran actor Keith Baxter plays Arthur Kippis and a gothic novel's worth of eccentrics, each sharply etched and instantly alive. The second: once it finally gets going, this play is written. Stephen Mallatrat's descriptions are so vivid you could close your eyes, listen, imagine, and not need the production at all. And there's the rub.

### REVIEW

JEFF SMITH

### Calendar

THEATER



Keith Baxter, Jared Reed in *The Woman in Black*.

**The Woman in Black**, by Stephen Mallatrat, adapted from the book by Susan Hill. **Old Globe Theatre**, Simon Edison Centre for the Performing Arts, Balboa Park. **Directed by Patrick Garland**; cast, Keith Baxter, Jared Reed, Leslie Kalarichian; scenic design, James F. Vance; costumes, Noel Taylor; lighting, Ken Billington and Brian P. Monahan; sound, Chris Walker. **Playing through March 18**; Tuesday through Saturday at 8:00 p.m. Sunday at 7:00 p.m. Matinee Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. For information call 619-239-2255.

**Eve's Tail**, written and performed by Laura Bozanic. **Hiroshi McDonald Mori Performing Arts Center**, 3010 Juniper St. (Juniper at 30th), San Diego. **Lighting**, Andy Lower; sound, Xavier Leonard and George Ye; composers, Leonard and Ye. **Playing through March 10**; Friday and Saturday at 8:00 p.m. For information call 858-613-0973.

The Old Globe's scenic design—two levels of covered furniture—includes a black, gauzy scrim behind which immobile objects seem to move. Chris R. Walker's sounds blast the winter

jet stream down the aisles. The lighting, however, is better with splashy effects than small ones. The scrim behind which immobile objects seem to move. Chris R. Walker's sounds blast the winter



Laura Bozanic in *Eve's Tail*.

tor creeping off.

The young actor promises Kippis the magic of theater. And the Globe delivers, technically. But the effects upstage potential intimacy. And it's hard to shake the notion that *The Woman in Black* would have been more interesting—and much scarier—in the intimate Cassius Carter, where they could put ghosts and things that go bump behind the audience. The Old Globe's large stage and distant proscenium prevent the twofold tug of ghost tales: get-

ting scared stiff and arousing persistent suspicions that there might be more to death than meets the eye.

Although the city doesn't recognize things like this, last summer Laura Bozanic brought honor to San Diego as a cultural ambassador. She took her one-woman show, *Eve's Tail*, to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and was one of the biggest hits on that international stage. The Scotsman, Edinburgh's most reputable

newspaper, gave her four stars. Few numerical evaluations in the arts are as coveted.

Every guy she dates, Eve sneaks, dumps her and then comes out of the closet. But Eve, too, is a shut-in. She represses her desires for fear her late father, who died when she was a child, won't approve ("Is he watching...always?"). Then she decides to change her ways. Dorothy went to Oz. Alice to Wonderland, and Eve visits Self-Improvement Valhalla, where the gurus really practice what they preach.

Like the "Depressed Chef," who cries even when not cooking with onions. Or a fortune-teller who could horrify pit bulls. Or Dr. Gender, who teaches "How to Make Love All Day Long...YES!"—including a session on "how to masturbate better!"—and who has a world-class case of penis envy.

Bozanic slips from one gonzo scenario to another in a monologue that recalls the great Foreign Theatre comedy group (after a while, she leaves "reality" behind: are we watching late-night TV or are we "live," watching sperm trying to storm a coy egg?). Throughout the hourlong piece, Bozanic moves, dances, creates vivid characters, and charms with double gifts as a performer and writer. This is a very, very funny show. ■

### THEATER LISTINGS

Theater listings and commentary are by Jeff Smith. Information is accurate according to material given us, but it is always wise to phone the theater for any last-minute changes and to inquire about ticket availability. Many theaters offer discounts to students, senior citizens, and the military. Ask at the box office.

#### Arsenic and Old Lace

Vine College Theatre Company. Stages Joseph Kesselring's comedy about kindly old ladies who don't take kindly to old men. APOLLO THEATRE, MESA COLLEGE. FRIDAY, MARCH 2, THROUGH MARCH 11, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

#### The Beauty Queen of Leenane

The San Diego Rep's opening night performance of Martin McDonagh's funny, grim drama, produced one of theater's most amazing phenomena: one moment the audience exploded with deep, delighted laughter; seconds later, you could hear a pin drop. Once well, *Beauty Queen* is equal parts comedy, tragedy, and horror—and you don't know which comes next. Directed by Sam Woodhouse, the Rep production isn't just done well, it's one of the Rep's best shows ever.

You can sum up Maureen and her mother's relationship easily. Maureen, 40, has kissed two men in her life. Her mother, Mag, says that's too many. They are symbiotic neurotics. Each derives pleasure from offending—mostly passive, though not always—the other. Into this den of interlocking neuroses ambles Pat Doyle. If he could speak for himself, unmediated, Pat and Maureen might find love. Grudges emerge, however, when others speak for him. Every thing about the Rep's production,



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1620 Sixth Avenue at Cedar  
Don't miss this world premiere ensemble creation.  
MUST CLOSE MARCH 11  
Thursday through Saturday at 8 pm  
and Sunday at 7 pm







## Calendar THEATER

SATURDAY, MARCH 3, THROUGH  
APRIL 22: THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY  
AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M.  
MATINEE SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

**Much Ado About Nothing**  
SOUTH COAST REPERTORY PRESENTS  
SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY ABOUT BEAT-  
RICE AND REVENGE, WHOSE OBVIOUS  
LOVE FOR EACH OTHER IS IN DEEP DE-  
NIAL. MARK RUCKER DIRECTED.  
SOUTH COAST REPERTORY THEATRE,  
MAIN STAGE, SATURDAY, MARCH 3,  
THROUGH APRIL 1, TUESDAY THROUGH  
SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT  
7:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AND  
SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

**Murder at the Vicarage**  
The Coronado Playhouse shows  
Agatha Christie's mystery about

the death of Colonel Protheroe. Ev-  
eryone's suspect because no one  
could stand the guy. Keith A. An-  
derson directed.  
CORONADO PLAYHOUSE, THROUGH  
MARCH 11, THURSDAY THROUGH SAT-  
URDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT  
2:00 P.M.

**Of Grapes and Nuts**  
Multi Productions presents a satire  
of John Steinbeck's *Grapes of  
Wrath*, originally presented by  
Chicago's Illegitimate Players in  
1990.  
MISFIT PRODUCTIONS, SUNSHINE  
BROOKS, 227 NORTH COAST HIGHWAY,  
OCEANSIDE, FRIDAY, MARCH 2,  
THROUGH MARCH 17, FRIDAY AND SAT-  
URDAY AT 8:00 P.M.

**Oktober!**  
The Wells Resort Theatre presents  
Rodgers and Hammerstein's stand  
Agnes de Mille's first collabora-  
tion. Songs include "Oh, What a  
Beautiful Morning." The Surrey

with the Fringe on Top," and "Peo-  
ple Will Say We're in Love."  
WELLS RESORT THEATRE, THROUGH  
MARCH 31, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND  
SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE TUES-  
DAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY  
DAY AT 1:45 P.M.

**Old Times**  
The Poway Performing Arts Com-  
pany presents a Harold Pinter's  
drama about a conversation that  
leads to confrontation and a duel  
for a woman's "very soul." Michael  
Schall directed.  
POWAY PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY,  
FRIDAY, MARCH 2, THROUGH  
MARCH 25, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT  
8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT  
2:00 P.M.

**Sherr Madness**  
The Wells Resort Theatre presents  
the longest-running nonmu-  
sic in American theater history is  
set in a sunny hair salon in Mis-  
sion Hills. In an upstairs apart-

ment, someone stabs erstwhile pi-  
anist-diva Isabel Cierney with clip-  
ping shears. Whodunnit? Up to this  
point the cast — performing as if  
on second base, ummiked, at Qual-  
comm Stadium — overkills every  
word, gesture, and joke. Then in a  
vile face, the house lights come up,  
and the audience becomes the de-  
tective. The show's core, and obvi-  
ously the cause of its longevity, lies  
in the give-and-take between cast  
and audience. During the inter-  
mission the actors become re-actors.  
They ad lib and trounce hecklers.  
Although many ad lib sound  
scripted ("You don't have a bullet?  
How do you cut?"), the cast, espe-  
cially Rick Meads as top cop Nick  
O'Brien, is at its best in this format.

**Sherr Madness**  
Mystery dinner theater minus the  
meal. The longest-running nonmu-  
sic in American theater history is  
set in a sunny hair salon in Mis-  
sion Hills. In an upstairs apart-



Sherr Madness

**A Texas Romance**  
Octad One Productions stages a  
comic drama, by Elsworth Schaefer,  
about the time Garland Stein-  
harden asked permission to court  
Daisy. Wayne Alan Errea directed.  
OCTAD ONE PRODUCTIONS, THROUGH  
APRIL 1, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT  
8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT  
2:00 P.M.

**Theatreports**  
A cross between improvisational  
comedy and *Family Feud*. Improv-  
makers up a funny scene as you go  
along, is tough enough. Add com-  
petitive scene-making, with the au-  
dience awarding points to the win-  
ning team. Purists might balk at  
the odiousness of comparisons, but  
Theatreports' "game show" is a  
hoot. The 90-minute evening uses  
various formats. The show I caught  
had "Team Sports" — two pairs of  
players competed, taking sug-  
gestions from the audience, and "Ga-  
rilla Theatre" — five "directors"  
invented scenes, using the other  
four as actors. The winner got a ba-  
nana, the loser a "forfeit." Some at-

**Shogun Wedding Anniversary, or, Who Wants to Murder a Millionaire?**  
Let's get this straight: Basil and  
Petals-Wilson-Somerville will review  
their wedding vows on their 25th  
anniversary! Hey, call me, but  
do they even like each other? And  
who invited Brenda Sokrates, cos-  
metics mogul and Petals's worst  
enemy (or is she?), to the recep-  
tion? And Basil and Petals's strange  
son and his pal Marcella... what is  
that all about? Not to mention let-  
ter and Sperul, beauteous but-  
tressed event coordinators. (Petals likes  
theme events, like "Grief: A Fi-  
nancial.") Turns out these folk aren't  
just ten kinds of whacks. The  
phones are down, a storm's out-  
side, and they're suspects in a mul-  
tiple homicide. Each has enough  
motivation to make you question  
not who — but who didn't — dan-  
ger. Mystery Cafe Dinner Theatre's  
latest has a relatively loose script  
and a cast adept at comedy and  
mystery ad lib. James Pancher, one  
of the funniest people in San  
Diego, again reigns supreme in  
multiple roles: audience, host, and  
witness. Think you're witty? This  
guy's all-pro. He'll bar an orangish  
red not found in nature, and he'll  
be on Mars — Diane Thresher's a  
scream as Petals, who never met a  
situation she didn't yearn to con-  
trol. Gerry Mackinnon, William  
Frederick, Megan McLeod, and  
Crystal Vanden (whose middle  
name should be "Talent") keep the  
show rolling, even when the script  
halls.

**Work a try.**  
MYSTERY CAFE, OPENED RUN, FRIDAY  
AND SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. FOR  
INFORMATION CALL 619-544-1800.

**Sex Characters in Search of an Author**  
University of San Diego's MFA  
program stages Luigi Pirandello's  
drama about six abandoned char-  
acters. Kirk Jackson directed.  
UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO, SACRED  
HEART HALL, SATURDAY, MARCH 3,  
THROUGH MARCH 10, SATURDAY AND  
MONDAY, AND WEDNESDAY THROUGH  
SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUN-  
DAY, MARCH 4, AT 2:00 P.M.

tempt, you wish they'd quit  
trumping up the pseudo-drama  
and get on with this entraining, if  
lighthearted show (note: the origi-  
nal cast members have been re-  
placed; current performers are  
Diane Stauffer, Scott Cervino, and  
Diane Stauffer).

**Work a try.**  
NORTON GRAND THEATRE, 444 FOURTH  
AVENUE, CASLAMAR QUARTER, SAN  
DIEGO, OPENED RUN, WEDNESDAY  
AND THURSDAY AT 7:30 P.M. FRIDAY AT  
6:00 P.M. AND 9:00 P.M. SATURDAY AT  
5:00 P.M. AND 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT  
3:00 P.M. AND 7:00 P.M. FOR IN-  
FORMATION CALL 619-234-9563.

**The Trojan Women**  
Gravette Hills Acting Workshop  
presents Euripides' tragedy, in a  
new translation by Howard  
Rubenstein.  
GRAVETTE HILLS, GRANITE HILLS HIGH  
SCHOOL, 1710 EAST MADISON AVENUE,  
EL CAJON, THROUGH MARCH 3, THURS-  
DAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M.  
FOR INFORMATION CALL 619-440-3237.

**Uncle Vanya**  
The Lamb's Players Theatre's stag-  
ing of Chekhov's "Scenes from  
Country Life" is daffodil, one-track,  
and never catches fire. One of  
Lamb's hallmarks is ensemble  
work, but here it's more a collec-  
tion of individuals who come in,  
read lines, and go off without cre-  
ating Chekhov's collective sense of  
angst and stuck in the mud tor-  
por. City folk — self-centered  
scholar Serdyukov and young wife  
Yanya — have infected Yanya and  
Sonya's "working estate" with a  
virus of self-love. They've turned  
time upside down: day is night,  
night day, and everyone's got time  
to speculate, for once, about their  
fate. (Anton asks "One hundred  
years from now, those who come  
after us... will they think kindly of  
us?") Yanya was produced in 1902;  
we are "those who come after."  
Chekhov wrote his first, painter-dis-  
tillers, comedy, tragedy (and farce)  
interviews. The Lamb's produc-  
tion, directed by Robert Smith,  
is the opposite. It moves in straight  
lines. Actions are clear, motives  
are understandable. Blazey, "I  
Mokoko Cocoa Moshe" — High  
plays 70s tunes on the piano. He  
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stagnant, lifeless, and lifeless.

**The Woman in Black**  
Reviewed by Richard Burns  
OLD GLOBE THEATRE, SAMON EDITION  
CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS,  
THROUGH MARCH 16, TUESDAY  
THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUN-  
DAY AT 7:30 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY  
AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

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**Work a try.**  
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FORMATION CALL 619-234-9563.

**The Trojan Women**  
Gravette Hills Acting Workshop  
presents Euripides' tragedy, in a  
new translation by Howard  
Rubenstein.  
GRAVETTE HILLS, GRANITE HILLS HIGH  
SCHOOL, 1710 EAST MADISON AVENUE,  
EL CAJON, THROUGH MARCH 3, THURS-  
DAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 7:30 P.M.  
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**Uncle Vanya**  
The Lamb's Players Theatre's stag-  
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Country Life" is daffodil, one-track,  
and never catches fire. One of  
Lamb's hallmarks is ensemble  
work, but here it's more a collec-  
tion of individuals who come in,  
read lines, and go off without cre-  
ating Chekhov's collective sense of  
angst and stuck in the mud tor-  
por. City folk — self-centered  
scholar Serdyukov and young wife  
Yanya — have infected Yanya and  
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Chekhov wrote his first, painter-dis-  
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The Reader offers \$25 for news tips published in *Blurt*. Call us at 619-235-3000, ext. 436, or e-mail your tip to [chickens@cs.netcom.com](mailto:chickens@cs.netcom.com)

**"A lot of hippies like us."** We live in OB, so I guess we get lumped in with all that.  
Sean Hart launched Wise

Hart and the other five members just celebrated the release of their sixth album, *They Live*, with a two-night stint at Winston's.  
The Deadhead thing started at shows in Arizona and Colorado in the early '90s. It's dance music and good time, and it's not punk rock or metal. We have fun,

"We're anything but hippies. It blows my mind. If they only knew how I was in my daily life. I come from the techno scene. I'm a meat eater. I smoke and I drink."  
Hart says he recycles, but that's as far as it goes.  
"I call them hippie-crits," he says of some of the tied-die clergies. "They come to these shows and they've got the 'Save the Whale' sticker on their VW bus that's pouring smoke out into the air."

But he admits the Deadheads have been very good to WMO, turning out in droves for their four cross-country tours and pushing sales of their six CDs over the 25,000 mark.

"We go to North Carolina or New York City or Vermont or Baltimore and there would be hippies by the hundreds... I just never thought that would be our audience, especially on the East Coast... The only reason I ever went to a Grateful Dead show, frankly, was to sell pot."

Hart explains the difference between a band like the Grateful Dead and

Wise Monkey Orchestra. "A jam band can pick a key and noodle or improvise in it for 20 minutes. That's a



WISE MONKEY FANS ARE "HIPPIE-CRITS"

complete 180 degrees different from what we do. We have strict song structures. We have horn players, and we do some jazz, but we don't play endless jams. Our band is very structured."

About local radio support, Hart says, "San Diego radio won't even touch us unless it's midnight on Sunday night, maybe. We get radio airplay in 20 cities, like New York, L.A., and Denver... We cross paths all the time with local bands... We all say the only reason we live here is for the weather... Bands from other cities tell us, 'San Diego has a lot of great bands, you guys must have a great scene.' They ask, 'Can you get us a gig?' We tell

them they'll probably do better in Phoenix. Phoenix has a better scene than San Diego."

— Ken Leighton

**"Last year I went to every music awards ceremony."** I was at the Grammys, Billboard Music Awards, American Music Awards, My VHI Music Awards, and the Source Awards.

While local artists like Switchfoot and Nickel Creek got media exposure for attending last week's Grammy ceremony as nominees, Russell Hollowell of Vista was quietly sneaking in to make those all-important "industry connections."

Hollowell, 25, pays the rent by selling window blinds. But since late 1999, he has crashed every major music awards show in L.A.

He does it on behalf of two bands he manages, Brothers From Another Planet and Purim.

"I have to do what I have to do to get these guys signed. I'm just trying to make some dreams come true."

Hollowell said he has met Janet Jackson, Eminem, Dr. Dre, the Backstreet Boys, and

event. There are so many industry people walking around, people don't know who's who. They just assume you are part of the industry and that you are supposed to be there."



GRAMMY GATECRASHER

# blurt

Monkey Orchestra in 1990. "We were doing full-on Donna Summer disco." But for reasons Hart says he never fully understood, the Deadheads adopted Wise Monkey as one of their own.

"I'm not saying that music is not worthy of whatever," said the keyboardist/percussionist about the close-knit jam band collective. "It's just not my cup of tea. I love the Dead's music. I just hate it when other people try to do it."

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## JAZZ

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**Calendar**  
**MUSIC SCENE**  
**blurt**  
continued

Creed. But his pay dirt is meeting established managers and record company A&R reps.

"I met Andy Martin of Deep South Records, Jim Welch of Atlantic, Andy Carg of Lava/Atlantic—he signed Kid Rock and Uncle Cracker—and Aaron Seawood of Virgin. I met Benny Medina, who manages Jennifer Lopez and Puffy Combs, and Johnny Wright, who has Britney Spears and N'Sync."

He says it's important not to be a pest.

"I don't get too aggressive. Initially I try and build some kind of rapport so that next time I see them, then I can trade business cards and build on that rapport. I might eavesdrop and hear what they are talking about and then come back 30 minutes later and touch on the same topic to spark a conversation."

So how do you know that Johnny Wright is Johnny Wright, I ask?

"I read *Billboard* and all the trades. I might see them

on MTV or in magazines." Hollowell says he dresses to impress.

"You have to be able to fit in.... You pretty much mimic everyone else's behavior."

He admits he has been turned away a couple of times from after-parties.

"If I can't just walk in, I get there before security buckles down."

Sometimes I spark up a conversation with someone I met at the awards and walk in with them. The parties are usually in hotels. I might just go in through the back-door emergency exit."

"The important thing to remember is they are all human beings. You'd be surprised how open-minded and down to earth these people are if they assume you are just part of the 'in' crowd."

—Ken Leighton

"We fill up a nightclub with five foot of suds and foam. Everybody parties and dances and has the best time of their life."

Mike Erickson got a career brainstorm while running spring break tours for college students. He saw Cancun nightclubs pack 'em in with people who danced in foam. "They were raging like rock stars."

Erickson said those Cancun bars took the dance

club foam idea from a nightclub in Ibiza, Spain. Last year he and his wife decided to drop everything and promote dance events under the banner "Ibiza foam party presents...."

So far the couple have produced 35 foam parties.

"We just did the Sun Theater next to Disneyland.



FOAM-A-RAMA DE ESPAÑA

We drew 4500 to one in Arizona."

On Saturday the couple say they will spend more than \$15,000 to stage a foam party nicknamed "Dreamland" at the Del Mar Fairgrounds.

"We'll have a 50-by-100-foot foam pit. We'll have four foam cannons. It will be like being in a pool. There will be 5-foot-high steel walls with tarps that hang down."

Erickson promotes safe suds. "It's biodegradable and nontoxic. It can run in your face, and you don't have eye irritation or sneezing. Movie studios hire us to make fake-looking snow. If you mix in more water, it makes bubbles instead of snow."

Erickson admits foam dancing does have a potential to be a fad.

"It will last for a couple of years. But for fraternities and sororities, it will last forever because kids are always gonna wanna party in the foam."

He said he expects 2500 to make it to Dreamland, which is designed for the 18-and-up crowd.

"It's for high school kids. No alcohol is involved.... It's not for ravers."

The foam parties I've seen here don't even come close to what they do in Ibiza, Spain," sniffs one competing dance scene promoter. "What happens in Ibiza is a total phenomenon. It's like an oversized Roman spa. There's music pumping and people are immersed all at once. The club that's famous for it is a giant club that's tiered all the way around. And the people dance in the middle. Everyone is immersed in bubbles up over their head. When the whole act is over, they just rinse it down the drain. Then the audience goes out and goes skinny dipping in the Mediterranean to wash off. It's hard to replicate that elsewhere."

"In a sense he is right," says Erickson, who would not confirm or deny whether he'd actually been to Spain. "We are just pumping suds on a dance floor. You are dealing with a lot of fluids in someone's nightclub. We

make it a point not to wreck the nightclub we are dealing with."

Dreamland/Ibiza Foam Party happens tomorrow from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Admission is \$15 in advance, \$18 day of the show.

—Ken Leighton

**URL watching — Banjo Jokes**  
<http://www.blugrausbanjo.org/banjojokes.html>

Few who play banjo ever hear themselves referred to as "musicians," not even by other banjo players.

[www.blugrausbanjo.org](http://www.blugrausbanjo.org) acknowledges this self-deprecation with its Canonical List of Banjo Jokes.

Local stringsmith Darrell Reich says, "I started collecting banjo jokes in August of 1990 while preparing for the Julian Banjo, Fiddle, Guitar & Mandolin contest. I was invited to a jam at a friend's house...there were so many banjo players at the jam that night that one of the bass players started with the banjo jokes.... I tried to forget them and failed, so I started writing them down."

The list grew quickly (there are now 300 jokes

recorded) after he posted gags on Usenet's folk music and humor newsgroups. Usenet's computer network is distributed around the world via the National Science Foundation, and soon banjo pickers from as far away as England and Scotland were sending jokes to Reich, such as:

"What's the difference between a banjo player and a foot massager?"

"A foot massager generally bucks up the feet."

"How do you define an optimist?"

"A banjo player with a beeper!"

"How is banjo playing like a courtroom trial?"

"Everyone is relieved when the case is finally closed!"



BANAL BANJO HUMOR

Scrolling past the joke list reveals "Ten Easy Steps to Better Banjo Playing."

Regarding professional afflictions—like sheet music—Lesson Four advises

**Two for one from Scott McCaughey.**



Scott McCaughey's revolving door projects have cranked out a lot of music. Now he's launching a double-barreled assault with two new releases in one package. First, he and The Young Fresh Fellows completed "Because We Hate You". Then Scott turned around and put out "Let The War Against Music Begin" with The Minus 5. You can take home both for one low price of \$14.49 at Lou's. Be sure to catch both bands live at the Casbah Friday, March 2nd. And if you think you see Peter Buck from REM on stage with The Minus 5, your eyes ain't foolin' you.



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**PLAN B**





# Calendar MUSIC SCENE blurt

continued

that "Tablature is a simplified form of musical notation used by musicians to preserve music on paper. Avoid all tablature... you will get nowhere as a banjo player by imitating musicians."

Lesson seven describes "Banjo Paraphernalia" such as a capo ("allows the banjo player, once out of tune in one key, to quickly be out of tune in any other key"), a carrying case ("protects your banjo from abuse, except when it is being played"), and beer ("the experienced banjo player's favorite liquid to spill... sometimes it is filtered through the kidneys first").

Reich offers a Banjo Exorcism — \$3,814.39 covers expenses like "chicken feathers" (\$14), "scientific demonstration of why the banjo can't be tuned" (\$67), and "posture correction" (\$1,356). (Those with or who know of sites created in San Diego or which focus on local music are encouraged to forward info/URL links to [jas2669@aol.com](mailto:jas2669@aol.com))

— Jay Allen Sanford

"It seemed like I would be somewhere like the fair or the mall, and I would look over and see some guy who looked like Kenny Rogers."

Jaimie Muehlhausen has launched [www.menwho-looklikekennyrogers.com](http://www.menwho-looklikekennyrogers.com), dedicated the legions of 40-plus men who have morphed themselves into the laid-back country squire.

"Once I noticed the phenomenon, there was no escaping it. Basically it's these guys who reach a certain age and they decide to grow a beard. They are from an era where you wore your hair a little longer. When you combine the two, they end up looking like Kenny Rogers. Most guys don't really realize



A KALEIDOSCOPE OF KENNYS

it, while some guys actually cultivate the look."

Muehlhausen sells "Have you seen Kenny T-shirts" on his site, but he says it is not a commercial venture. For a living, the Carlsbad graphic artist designs lifestyle websites like [swell.com](http://www.swell.com) and [monsterskate.com](http://monsterskate.com).

"I started off with an idea to do an art project, like an Andy Warhol collection of Polaroids. But then I realized



this is something that is perfect for the Internet. It's a pop culture thing like (the '80s haircut website) [mulletsgalore.com](http://mulletsgalore.com). It's striking a nerve with people."

He says [www.menwho-looklikekennyrogers.com](http://www.menwho-looklikekennyrogers.com) has gotten 8000 hits in its first 47 days of being online. The site describes how to become your own Kenny Rogers: "Keep your beard trimmed neater than Richard Simmons' tank top drawer. Make sure it's white so it will stand out against that creepy, year-round tan." Clicking onto "Tips on how to look like Kenny Rogers," one tip advises getting "a Laz-E-Boy recliner in the den and one of those aboveground pools in the backyard."

Muehlhausen asks website visitors to send in their own Kenny Rogers lookalikes. "I have people sending me photos from all over. One guy sent me three or four from airports."

Muehlhausen admits to being sneaky when he goes out in the field. "A lot of times I just try and get a picture of my wife, who stands near them. They end up being in the photo." Each photo on the site has its own caption. There's "Santa Kenny," "Disneyland Kenny," and "Surf Industry Kenny."

president of his fan club e-mailed me and said she thought it was hilarious. Who knows, maybe we'll start a Kenny revival."

— Ken Leighton

**CD reviews: Born Blind,** One for All, Solid State Records TND1177-S532. A baker's dozen all reet grade-A hardcore Christ-punk "sides." I can't think of a single rotten thing to say about any of them, not a one. (You don't believe me, give me a polygraph). One anthem after another to the human heart stomping hard on everything that's wrong with the world. I love it, it's great, buy it, okay, done with that. Let me tell ya 'bout this dream I had last night. It's well after midnight,

I'm sleeping, when Kris Kristofferson comes over and bangs on the door, waking me. "Hey man — let's go somewhere and get some salt."

"Salt?" "Yeah — I could really use some." "I got high blood pressure, man. No salt." "Well then, how 'bout either wine or cigarettes?" "Make it wine." "Where you wanna go?" "Let's think about it." (I would like to thank lens for moving me effortlessly through this review.)

— Richard Meltzer

**CONTRIBUTORS** Jennifer Bell (editor), Rob Atkins, Russell Reader, Kristen Collier, Ed Decker, Dave Good, Randy Hoffman, Ken Leighton, Richard Meltzer, Jay Allen Sanford, Pat Sherman, Edna Zimmerman

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## Calendar MUSIC SCENE

I feel terrible how the market affected us. Basically we're unable to perform for the very people we built the community for.

"The company as a corporation itself was officially

"This one girl... her father found out... and made her quit."

dissolved on December 29, 2000," Beddows explains. "The site, including the code, trademarks, domains, etc., was transferred to another company [which Beddows refused to name] who will be rebuilding the site and who have the resources and desire to continue to operate the site indefinitely as a public service/resource. However, this company only bought the assets, not the debts, and are not responsible for any Upstage, Inc., liabilities."

Along with Hendrix and Warner, there were others who were negatively affected by their involvement with Upstage.com. Warner says a graphic artist who worked for him didn't see a penny. He tells of an employee who nearly got evicted from his apartment due to the nonpayments. As for Warner, he says he's not considering legal action, despite Upstage.com owing him approximately \$3500. "I was considering legal action," but then I found out they filed Chapter 11, so basically, Chapter 11, get in line."

Ironically, Warner's involvement with Upstage.com landed Warner the best job of his life, he says. "I got my job right now through Upstage's landlord [as a graphic artist]."

Even in its current state of nonbusiness, Upstage.com is reportedly getting twice as many hits per month than it did in its last business of operation. "I know that one of the focus points of your story is the fact that we were unable to provide our contest winners prizes," Beddows says. "This was a direct result of one of our significant investors pulling out on us, but we obviously still feel really bad about it."

"However, we are very happy that we have arranged for the site to be improved significantly, let alone still stay up. This is the only reward we will have received after working all year without pay, losing all of our personal investment, and destroying our credit."

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**Calendar**  
**MUSIC SCENE**

# In Thrall to Inside

*I first heard Marsalis play in the late '70s at a club run by a character named DooDoo.*

The woman who has been cutting my hair — what's left of it — the past 15 years is named Birgitte. She's a lovely person, excellent at her job, and from a hamlet in Germany by the Rhine, near Cologne. I think she has been in this country for 15 years and has acquired a great love for jazz. Perhaps she did it before she came here.

Many Germans acquired a taste for American music listening to U.S. Armed Forces radio in Germany during the '30s and, probably, the '40s. As a result, Birgitte knows jazz, regularly goes to clubs to hear it played, and always, always has the jazz station on the radio whenever I come by for my 'do. On my most recent visit Birgitte volunteered, "That Ken Burns Jazz program was disappointing, wasn't it?"



Art Blakey

Well, there are several ways to approach that question. The short answer is, yes, it was disappointing, especially for someone like Birgitte who already knows much of what was offered by the Burns series and has a keen interest in what's going on now and has been going on for at least the past 20 years. It is disappointing in that Burns is stuck in a format that alternates photographs and old film footage with the learned comments of talking heads. It is disappointing in that, even having worked exhaustively in this format on at least two prior occasions, the jazz series is very crudely patched together and poorly edited. What so many of us who love the music found especially disappointing is how the last four decades of the music was concertina'd into only one of the ten segments. And, finally, what I, personally, found particularly disappointing is how invested Burns's program was in the opinions of Wynton Marsalis and Stanley Crouch, who are very bright, articulate, and knowledgeable on the subject of jazz

novations came, roughly, between 1923 and 1931 with his Hot Five and Hot Seven groups. Armstrong was to perform and record great music well into the 1950s, but his signal in jazz history and influence date from an earlier era. Ellington's greatest band was probably what is called the "Blanton-Webster" group from 1939 to 1942, which recorded dozens of classics, including "Ko-Ko," "Concerto for Cootie," "Cottontail," "Harlem Air Shaft," "All Too Soon," "In a Mellow Tone," "Warm Valley," "Take the A-Train," "Cheba Bridge," "Perdido," "C-Jam Blues," and "Johnny Come Lately," among others. Billy Strayhorn is now regarded as a principal composer and second pianist, and the band particularly disappointing is how invested Burns's program was in the opinions of Wynton Marsalis and Stanley Crouch, who are very bright, articulate, and knowledgeable on the subject of jazz

**REVIEW**  
**AUGUST KLEINZAHNER**

Carney, and Johnny Hodges. There has never been an ensemble like this, before or after, and it should be noted here, as it has been elsewhere, that most of the compositions attributed to Ellington were in fact based on solos of various of the great instrumentalists on hand and elaborated by Ellington without giving credit to his sidemen — often a sore point with band members — but which in no way diminishes the genius of Ellington.

I first heard Marsalis play in the late '70s at a club in Montreal run by a character named DooDoo Boissel. He was with Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, and my beloved and I pooled our meager resources to attend. Blakey and his men were an hour late, and the waitress was pushing drinks hard. (You remember things like that when you're young and broke.) I was fairly pissed off by the time Art and the boys got cracking, but not for long. He had a young trumpet player on hand whose sound was curiously, just brilliant. Marsalis would have been a teenager then. There was no question of his gift; it was enormous and lit up the room. You know the rest of the story.



Wynton Marsalis

Stanley Crouch is best known as a writer, an essayist, particularly on matters of jazz and race. He is a good essayist, I think, on the whole. But he started as a drummer in L.A., most notably in the free jazz groups Quartet and Black Music Infinity, working with artists like Bobby Bradford, David Murray, and James Newton. Without becoming embroiled in the debate about "inside" and "outside" jazz and where the heart and soul of jazz resides, I believe it's fair to say that Mr. Crouch has grown more "inside" in his tastes over the years.

Both Marsalis and Crouch know from where they speak, and the former is a natural teacher. That said, there was far too much of both Marsalis and Crouch, for my money, and of Ellington and Armstrong as well. In the final episode, which I found maddening in its attempt to get much

music into a couple of hours, I thought Marsalis's final surmise ridiculous. He was going on about a music of love and joy, and if America's democracy worked like a first-rate jazz band we'd all be doing just fine.



Louis Armstrong

I don't think LAX air-traffic control or the nearest power station should work like a jazz band. I think they should work like fascist, militaristic states. Nor do I think the Federal Reserve should work like a jazz band, even though the head of it, Mr. Greenspan, was an eminent jazzman in his youth.

Nor do I think the House Appropriations Committee should work like a jazz band, nor the Federal Election Committee nor the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Most of the jazz is about alienation and rage, and most of it dates from after 1945, when neither Armstrong nor Ellington was of primary influence, though the latter has retained considerable influence, especially in large ensemble arrangements and in the music of Charles Mingus. But I believe the Ken Burns ten-part series *Jazz* was a great thing, if not for Birgitte and me, then for millions of Americans who had at best a half-baked idea of the music, its origins and development. I hope it was illuminating for millions of white Americans with regard to race in America, which was what much of the series was about. The music and film clips were thrilling. And I hope public television makes a killing they deserve it. But most of all, I hope the program turned tens of thousands of young people on to the music, because joyful, angry, outside, or inside, I would be delighted for them to share in the pleasure it's given my hairdresser and me. ■

**Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers, featuring Wynton Marsalis**  
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**THE CASBAH**  
2501 Kettner Blvd. (619) 232-4585  
There aren't enough ways to describe the amount of fun to be had at the Casbah. To get right to the point, it's the largest and most popular venue around for catching underground rock bands at their most candid. Friday, 3/2, don't miss an incredible evening with T. Frenk Pellosos and Silences & (featuring Parker Back from B.L.B.). Both bands have been around since the old Casbah days, and they still rock hard!

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CONCERTS

**THURSDAY**  
Unlabeled Theory (443) (Singing  
members of Pearl Jam and Blind  
Melon). Live/Right Shores, and  
Festive/Back by Back, tonight.  
Thursday, March 1, 8 p.m., 1130 Barnes

Ames, Bay Park, 619-220-8497 or  
619-225-5483.

Save Farley (758), the K.G.B., and the  
Inevitable Masses Live/Right Shores  
Bay and Gold, tonight, Thursday, March 1,  
3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach.  
854-480-1780 or 619-220-8497.

The Slaves, Platinum, and Bury Me in  
the Background: The Cobalt, tonight.  
Thursday, March 1, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kanner  
Boulevard, midtown, 619-232-4355.

**FRIDAY**  
"The Inevitable Fall Festival" with  
Mud Grubbs (874) & the Blue  
Moose Orchestra, Redkey Crowl,  
and Gary Clark: Collette Center for the  
Arts, Friday, March 2, 8 p.m., 340 North  
Escondido Boulevard, Escondido.  
800-988-4253 or 619-220-8497.

Kelly Jay Phelps (694) live live  
Café/Bar, Friday, March 2, 9 p.m., 1954  
Barnes Street, Ocean Beach, 619-520-0356.

The Young Fresh Fellows (292),  
Honey 3, and Drew Clarke: The Cobalt,  
Friday, March 2, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kanner  
Boulevard, midtown, 619-232-4355.

Common Sense (736) (Censored live  
Friday, March 2, Collette Center for the  
Arts, 340 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido.  
800-988-4253 or 619-220-8497.

Pete Best (unlabeled) drummer of the  
Beatles) and 34 Boney (4372) (Covers  
Bar and Gold, Friday, March 2, 3105 Ocean  
Front Walk, Mission Beach, 854-480-1780  
or 619-220-8497.

The Seawaves, the Bestard Sons of  
Johnny Cash (761), and Cowboy  
Mellon: The Last Lounge, Friday, March 2,  
5:30, 340 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido.  
800-988-4253 or 619-220-8497.

The Young Dillards (438) (Silly Up  
Tunes, Friday, March 2, and Saturday,  
March 3, 9:15 p.m., 142 South Collins  
Avenue, Solana Beach, 854-481-8140 or  
619-220-8497.

**SATURDAY**  
Duke Duker and His Ice-Punks,  
the Trailer Park Commuters, and the  
Bestard Sons of Johnny Cash (761).  
The Cobalt, Saturday, March 3, 8:30 p.m.,  
2501 Kanner Boulevard, midtown.  
619-232-4355.

The Earthworms (129),  
Corporate Arrogance, and Too Red:  
Covers Bar and Gold, Saturday, March 3,  
3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach.  
854-480-1780.

Peter Mulvey and Jonathan Knudsen:  
live live Café/Bar, Saturday, March 3,  
1954 Barnes Street, Ocean Beach.  
619-520-0356.

Joe 90 and Melted Rock by Rock,  
Saturday, March 3, 1130 Barnes Avenue,  
Bay Park, 619-220-8497 or  
619-225-5483.

**SUNDAY**  
"Save the Spinnery Day" with Back-  
O-Mat (729) (The Cleveland, and the  
Broken Heart) (258) (F.O.B., Spars  
Clamp, 200, Underside, Linger  
Thru Life, Spinnery, and Special 20:  
The Spinnery, Sunday, March 4, 9:45 AM  
New House, New House.  
858-271-4000.

Ray Rogers and Steve Marlin: live  
live, Sunday, March 4, 710 Corner  
Avenue, Pacific Beach, 854-483-844.

"Traditional Music of Vietnam"  
Huey/Chau/Chester, Sunday, March 4,  
7 p.m., 2100 Park Boulevard, Solana Beach.  
619-520-1190.

**MONDAY**  
The Resoundings (610) and Judge  
Tanner: Back by Gold, Monday, March 5,  
1130 Barnes Avenue, Bay Park,  
619-220-8497 or 619-225-5483.

Fuse to Face (702) and HOO (281)  
(Silly show) and Spinnery (Silly show):  
Covers Bar and Gold, Monday, March 5,  
8:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., 3105 Ocean  
Front Walk, Mission Beach, 854-480-1780.

**TUESDAY**  
Allen Oates Synchro (289) and the  
Madness: The Cobalt, Tuesday, March 6,  
8:30 p.m., 2501 Kanner Boulevard,  
midtown, 619-232-4355.

**WEDNESDAY**  
Erykah Badu (961), Telly Kneel, and  
M-Fab: 619-232-4355.

Agnes Orange (247) and Mother  
Roxie: "Covers Bar and Gold, Thursday,  
March 6, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission  
Beach, 854-480-1780.

DIO, Lynch Mob (435) and Armand  
Sabbat: 619-232-4355.

Agnes Orange (247) and Mother  
Roxie: "Covers Bar and Gold, Thursday,  
March 6, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission  
Beach, 854-480-1780.

Agnes Orange (247) and Mother  
Roxie: "Covers Bar and Gold, Thursday,  
March 6, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission  
Beach, 854-480-1780.

1954 Barnes Street, Ocean Beach.  
619-520-0356.

Madness, Zulu (734), and the Black  
Madness: The Cobalt, Thursday, March 6,  
8:30 p.m., 2501 Kanner Boulevard,  
midtown, 619-232-4355 or  
619-220-8497.

Agnes Orange (247) and Mother  
Roxie: "Covers Bar and Gold, Thursday,  
March 6, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission  
Beach, 854-480-1780.

DIO, Lynch Mob (435) and Armand  
Sabbat: 619-232-4355.

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Roxie: "Covers Bar and Gold, Thursday,  
March 6, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission  
Beach, 854-480-1780.

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3/3 The Shelltown Horns  
3/4 Billy Watson

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FRI, MAR 2 7-11 PM  
SAT, MAR 3 7-11 PM  
SUN, MAR 4 7-11 PM

**UPDOWN BOYS**  
FRI, MAR 2 7-11 PM  
SAT, MAR 3 7-11 PM  
SUN, MAR 4 7-11 PM

**SUNDAY COPEL BRUNCH**  
MAR 4 11-2 PM  
MAR 5 11-2 PM  
MAR 6 11-2 PM

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Saturday Mar. 3  
Sunday Mar. 4

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Sunday Mar. 4

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Black Sunday

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BONE THUGS  
Creepin' On Ah Come Up  
MILES DAVIS  
Kind Of Blue

**SANTANA**  
GREATEST HITS  
DAVE BRUBECK  
Time Out  
LOUIS ARMSTRONG

**BOSTON**  
Boston  
DAVE BRUBECK  
Time Out  
LOUIS ARMSTRONG

**JEFF BUCKLEY**  
Grace  
THE CLASH  
London Calling  
JOHNNY CASH  
BEST HITS

**FUGEEES**  
The Score  
BILLIE HOLIDAY  
Love Songs

**AEROSMITH**  
MICHAEL JACKSON  
Off The Wall  
WYCLEF JEAN  
The Carnival  
MICHAEL JACKSON

**JANIS JOPLIN**  
Greatest Hits  
KEB MO  
Keb' Mo'  
FUEL

**BOB DYLAN**  
Blonde on Blonde  
FOOTLOOSE  
Soundtrack  
THE BLACK CROWES

**ROCK ON**  
FUGEEES  
The Score  
BILLIE HOLIDAY  
Love Songs

**CAROLE KING**  
Tapestry  
CYNDI LAUPER  
She's So Unusual  
INCUBUS

**SADE**  
Diamond Life  
SIMON & GARFUNKEL  
Bridge Over Troubled Water

**MEATLOAF**  
Bat Out Of Hell  
N.A.S.  
It Was Written  
TOP GUN STOK.

**WILLIE NELSON**  
16 Biggest Hits  
ROY ORBISON  
16 Biggest Hits  
SADE

**PEARL JAM**  
Vitalogy  
SADE  
Love Deluxe  
N.A.S.

**SADE**  
Diamond Life  
SIMON & GARFUNKEL  
Bridge Over Troubled Water

**STEVE RAY VAUGHAN**  
Texas Flood  
WEST SIDE STORY  
Soundtrack  
PEARL JAM

**PEARL JAM**  
Vitalogy  
SADE  
Love Deluxe  
N.A.S.

**SADE**  
Diamond Life  
SIMON & GARFUNKEL  
Bridge Over Troubled Water

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The River  
SANTANA  
Greatest Hits  
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

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**FREE LINE**  
619.233.9797

1. Press the 4-digit extension above the category that interests you. For example, 4001 for upcoming concerts.

2. At the next prompt, press the 4-digit code that is next to the performer you wish to hear. (Performers without codes currently do not have recordings.)

**Joe Satriani & The Trey Davis**  
Infinite (86) 5. 300 101 (Callhouse),  
San Diego, March 10, 9 p.m., 154 Broom  
Street, Ocean Beach. 619-232-0256.

**Dave Katz (62)** Neon Dreamcatcher  
Show Room, Sunday, March 11, 8 p.m.,  
5000 Wilbur Road, Suite 119, 445-5400  
or 619-220-8477.

**"A Hologram Celebration"** featuring  
the **Legend Canyon Band** (775),  
the **Blacks**, **Byron Bayles**,  
**Raymond Eric Lightening**, **Highway**  
**52**, **Down the Road**, the **Virtual**  
**Strangers**, **Chet Miller**, **Walt**  
**Richards**, **Tom Constantine**, and more.  
East County Performing Arts Center, Sunday,  
March 11, 7:30 p.m., 110 East Main Street,  
Escondido. 619-440-2777 or 619-220-8497.

**Caribbean 09**, **Tori Cohen**, and  
**Dwain Horner**: The Cobalt, Sunday, March  
11, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard,  
San Diego. 619-232-4355.

**Jack, the Slave, and Blackie**: The  
Cobalt, Monday, March 12, 8:30 p.m.,  
2501 Kettner Boulevard, midtown.  
619-232-4355.

**Hootie & the Blowfish**: 4th & B,  
Tuesday, March 12, 8:30 p.m., 2501  
Kettner Boulevard, midtown.  
619-232-4355.

**Seventeen (615)**: Back by Back,  
Tuesday, March 13, 9 p.m., 1130 Buena  
Avenue, Bay Park. 619-220-8497 or  
619-275-5483.

**Aiko and Patrick**: The Cobalt, Tuesday,  
March 13, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**Stephen Williams & the Jaks** and  
**Cropper Legends (649)**: Come for and  
Go!, Wednesday, March 14, 7 p.m., 3105  
Olive Street, Mission Beach. 619-220-8497.

**Chris Connolly (466)**, **Mark**  
**Lougheed**, and **Bill Baskin**: The Cobalt,  
Wednesday, March 14, 8:30 p.m., 2501  
Kettner Boulevard, midtown.  
619-232-4355.

**The Evelyn Brothers (491)**: East  
County Performing Arts Center, Wednesday,  
March 14, 7:30 p.m., 210 East Main Street,  
Escondido. 619-440-2777 or 619-220-8497.

**"The Rubber Hips CD**  
**Release"** (775): The Cobalt, Thursday,  
March 15, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**Steve Collier (654)** and **Quincy**  
**Alphonse**: San Diego State University  
Chapel, Friday, March 16, 7:30 p.m., 170  
Cala Anguilla, Encinitas. 619-566-0040.

**Joe and the Jaks**: The Cobalt, Friday, March 16,  
8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevard,  
midtown. 619-232-4355.

**The Backstreet Boys**: San Diego Avenue,  
Saturday, March 17, 3:00 p.m., 3000 Sports  
Avenue, San Diego. 619-220-8497.

**Marie Haggard (781)**: 4th & B,  
Saturday, March 18, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**Wesley (784)**, **the Get Up**  
**Kids**, **2027**, and **Crane Street**: Avenue,  
Sunday, March 18, 7:30 p.m., 1030  
compton, La Jolla. 619-220-8497.

**The Union Underground (450)**, **Dani**  
**for Life**, **Shaves on Dogs**, and **Spoke**



Unified Theory, March 1, Back by Back

**1000 (314)**: Come for and Go!,  
Sunday, March 18, 3:00 p.m., 3105 Olive  
Street, Mission Beach. 619-220-8497.

**"Zodiac from the Crypt CD**  
**Release"** (775): The Cobalt, Monday,  
March 19, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**George Thompson (46)** & **B**, Tuesday,  
March 20, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**Junior Brown and Big Sandy & His**  
**Blue-Grass** (343) & **B**, Wednesday,  
March 21, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**George Thompson (46)** & **B**, Thursday,  
March 22, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

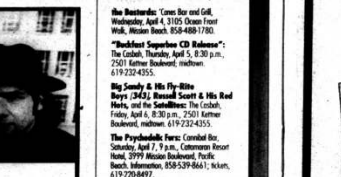
**George Thompson (46)** & **B**, Friday,  
March 23, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**George Thompson (46)** & **B**, Saturday,  
March 24, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**George Thompson (46)** & **B**, Sunday,  
March 25, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**George Thompson (46)** & **B**, Monday,  
March 26, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

**George Thompson (46)** & **B**, Tuesday,  
March 27, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
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**George Thompson (46)** & **B**, Tuesday,  
March 27, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner  
Boulevard, midtown. 619-232-4355.

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**BLONDE BRUCE BAND**

SATURDAY, MARCH 3  
**MS. JULIA & THE BLUE CATS**

FRIDAY, MARCH 9  
**JUNIOR'S FARM**

SATURDAY, MARCH 10  
**TOMCAT COURTNEY**

NO COVER

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FRIDAY, MARCH 2  
**CLYDE'S RIDE**

SATURDAY, MARCH 3  
**MCPHERSON STRUTS**

SUNDAY, MARCH 4  
**SUNDAY SOUL**  
DJ Buddha  
Spinning Hip-Hop, Funk & Soul  
No Cover

MONDAY, MARCH 5  
**NEON BEAT**  
DJ Dirty Needles  
Spinning 80's - No Cover

TUESDAY, MARCH 6  
**PUNK NITE**  
DJ Nice Boys • No Cover

FRIDAY, MARCH 9  
Hoppers present  
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DJ Ego

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MARCH 16-17 The Shake

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Thursday, March 1  
**MARTHA KITCHEN**

Friday, March 2  
**COUPE DEVILLE**

Saturday, March 3  
**BARON KARAOKE**  
Industry Night

Thursday, March 6  
**THEO'S ZYDECO PATROL**

Wednesday, March 7  
**T. MID & WINDY CITY**

Thursday, March 8  
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**SHINE EYE**  
REGGAE  
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**EL JARDIN**  
Salsa Rock or Espanol

TUESDAY  
techno laser show

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**361**  
7-1 1st 1st 2nd 3rd



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1. Press the 4-digit extension above the category that interests you (for example, 4002 for alternative rock).

2. At the next prompt, press the 3-digit code that is next to the performer you wish to hear. (Performers without codes currently do not have recordings.)

**EXTENSION 4002**  
**ALTERNATIVE**

402 9: Baby Up Town: Tones for and Gail  
403 9: Allen Crime Syndicate: The Cobalt  
404 9: American Fiddle: Dream Street  
405 9: American Tragedy: Epitaph  
406 9: Baby's Body: Winters  
407 9: Baby's Body: Winters  
408 9: Baby's Body: Winters  
409 9: Baby's Body: Winters  
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419 9: Baby's Body: Winters  
420 9: Baby's Body: Winters

129 ... The Backstreet Kings: Tones for and Gail  
130 ... The Backstreet Kings: Tones for and Gail  
131 ... The Backstreet Kings: Tones for and Gail  
132 ... The Backstreet Kings: Tones for and Gail  
133 ... The Backstreet Kings: Tones for and Gail  
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150 ... The Backstreet Kings: Tones for and Gail

107 ... The Backstreet Kings: Tones for and Gail  
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ADULT LEARN-TO-SKATE CLINIC \$4  
Conventional Skate & Session \$8 or Adult Session \$16  
No cover, no cash, no credit, no checks, no money orders.

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The second and fourth weekend of every month.  
**FRIDAY & SATURDAY**  
**EVENINGS ONLY**  
1st Session: 6:30-9 pm - Adm. \$2  
2nd Session: 9:30-11 pm - Adm. \$2  
Both Sessions: 6:30-11 pm - Adm. \$4

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March 1  
No Cover  
**BLUE FOUR**  
4 & 10 Blues

**FRIDAY**  
March 2  
No Cover  
**BLUE JONNY VIAU & THE BLUE ALLSTARS**  
4 & 10 Blues

**SATURDAY**  
March 3  
No Cover  
**BUICK WILSON**  
A Cabaret of Blues

**SUNDAY**  
March 4  
No Cover  
**THE DEACONS**  
Tuesdays Smooth Blues

**MONDAY**  
March 5  
No Cover  
**CLASSIC ROCKERS**  
Rock the Night Away

**TUESDAY**  
March 6  
No Cover  
**TEXAS TWISTERS**  
Twist the Blues

**WEDNESDAY**  
March 7  
No Cover  
**AUNT KIZZY'Z BOYZ**  
Singing Blues

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FUNK/HOUSE/DISCO/80S & 90S  
**\$2 U-CALL-ITS**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 2**  
**DJ Harvest**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 3**  
**DJ Underground**

**Happy Hour**  
Monday-Friday 3-7 pm  
1/2 price all drinks

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Coming to the Escondido location in March!

**SUNDAY: Play Pool All Day 12-5**  
**MONDAY: Play Pool for \$4 Per Hour Per Person**  
**TUESDAY: Free Pool for Household & 100+ Employees**  
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ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT  
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Champagne & Mimosa Specials!  
\$2.00 Bloody Marys

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**PEEL & EAT SHRIMP NIGHT..**  
Seasoned, served with fries, corn on the cob, celery & carrot sticks...  
\$8.95 per lb. until we run out! Happy Hour 4pm-Midnight  
We have many more shrimp dishes to choose from also!

**TUESDAY NIGHT**  
**MEXICAN FIESTA NIGHT..**  
Live Entertainment featuring Mexican food, beer and margarita specials all night long!

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**COMEDY & CRAB NIGHT..**  
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Recorded Info 858-481-9022

Show times listed are for opening bands. Main act to follow. All shows are 21 & up.

**The late Walter Phobicman, Acid 9 & guests \$5 • 8:30**

**March 2 & 3 Young Dubliners w/Fri: Batsbot Brothers Sat: New Breed Orchestra 9:15pm • \$15 Fri-Sat: 8:30 Swing Kings**

**Salsa Sundays w/Orquesta Primo 10:00pm @ 7 • head at 8:30 Service Industry Night-free w/credit on this \$5 without**

**Spotlight San Diego Oscar Snow 8:30pm • \$3**

**Pat McGee Band w/guests 34 Below 8:30pm • \$8**

**Musiq Soulchild w/ City High and Kindred 9:15pm • \$15 win tickets from**

**The Samples w/guests Chris DiCenzo 9:15pm • \$16**

**Jack Johnson w/guests 9:15pm • \$10**

**Koko Taylor w/guests Shemekia Copeland 8:00pm • \$25**

**The Funky Meters w/ Santana T Lavitz-keyboardist from Widespread Panic Rod Morgenstern-Grammy nominated drummer • \$15**

**an evening with The Radiators 9:15pm • \$14**

**UPCOMING SHOWS**  
3/18 "Kindness for Kids" benefit for local children's shelter featuring Eve Sells • 3/20 John Hammond's Wicked Grin • 3/22 Eve Sells • 3/23 Karl Denson's Tiny Universe • 3/24 An evening with The Disco Biscuits • 3/29 Keller Williams • 3/30 Dave Wakeling • 3/31 Common Sense

**ticketmaster**  
619-220-7125  
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To order tickets call the Belly Up after 12noon 858-481-8140. All shows are available from Belly Up or Ticketmaster 619-220-7125 or online at Ticketmaster.com

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1. Press the 4-digit extension alone to category that interests you (for example, 4001 for upcoming concerts).

2. At the next prompt, press the 4-digit code that is next to the performer you wish to hear. (Performers without codes currently do not have recordings.)

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Kristin Key: Jammie Joe  
Jennifer Kimball: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Kimberly: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Mark Lee: The Kitchen  
Barry Lerich: La Valencia Hotel  
John Lowery: Mescal Cafe  
Terry Matzko: Jive Joe's  
and Café Company  
Karen Moore: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Jason Mraz: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Peter Mulvey: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse

Myron and the Koolhauses:  
Jive Joe's Caféhouse  
The O'Brien Brothers:  
Hemsworth's Tavern (P)  
Kelly Joe Phelps: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Lee Taylor Post: Border Books  
and Music (Mission Valley)  
Tummy Puke: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Tina Turner: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Raul's Garage: Hemsworth's  
Tavern  
Linda Sargent: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Shirley: Jive Joe's Caféhouse  
Jenny Stone: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Archie Starr: Border Books  
and Music (Mission Valley)  
Katie Strawn: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
The Strangely Woods: The  
Caféhouse  
Tony Taravella: Jive Joe's  
Caféhouse  
Guns Weren't: The Capitol Inn  
Peggy Watson: The Rhythm  
Caféhouse  
The Young Loveless:  
Jive Joe's

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# Calendar MUSIC SCENE

## UNDERGROUND DANCE CLUBS

If you would like to have your underground dance club included, fax information to 619-233-9797, attention Scott Ellis, call 619-233-9797 ext. 241, or e-mail scott@h2o.com, night or day by 5:00 p.m. Friday, the week prior to publication. The listings are free.

**Anytime:** DJ's spin house, disco, funk, and techno music nightly. North County Sports Dome, 680 West San Marcos Boulevard, San Marcos. 760-744-4120.

**Artis Bowls:** Thursdays, punk rock bowling with DJ Stacy and various bands. Saturdays, Cosmic Bowl. DJ's spin future soul, polyrhythms, progressive world, and dancehall. Artis, Bowl (the Tongueless Room), 4350 20th Street, North Park. Tel. line, 619-226-4944.

**Bliss:** DJ's Kacy, Sandman, Fingers, and Mantis. Saturdays, before Buffalo Joe's, Fifth and Market, downtown. 538-728-1495.

**The Broken Ball:** Thursdays, Club Retro. DJ's Danceteria and Ecstasy spin the best of '80s and '90s new wave, synthpop, industrial dance, and more. 1001 7th Street, Suite 100, West County East Coast hip-hop, reggae, and R&B. Fridays, Jammin' 200 night with Billy Black and DJ Saturdays, North County's Party Epicenter. Sunday, May 27, Jammin' 200 night Memorial Day Weekend Jam, 740 Nordahl Road, San Marcos. 760-737-9802.

**Club Room:** Thursdays, DJ Ramon and weekly special guests spin house, techno, and disco. Fridays, Coy

Your Groove On With DJs spinning Top 40, hip-hop, and house. Call club for Saturday events, 3173 India Street, midtown. 619-296-6789.

**Club Wile:** DJs Bryan Pollard, Kurt Helges, Mike Kinn, Richard D. Todd, and Zee Out spin the best of '80s music, new wave, synthpop, and new romantic. 21 and up, free before 10:30 p.m. with college or military ID. Thursdays, Shooters, 3815 50th Street, San Diego. 619-465-5827.

**Club Womote:** Thursdays, Transfusion, trance. Fridays, Playhouse, house. Saturdays, Elements, progressive and trance. 1255 University Avenue, Hillcrest. 619-296-8160.

**Club Gasoline:** DJ Rick One and the Gasoline family plus a weekly guest spin trance, house, hardcore, and techno. 21 and up, Thursdays, midtown to 4 a.m., Back By Back, 1130 Broadway Avenue, Bay Park. 619-687-5779.

**Club Mean:** Wednesdays, Dance Party with DJ Kenny. Thursdays, the Hot Spot presented by the Union, DJ's Gill, the Good Dr. Brian Foxworth, and K.J. Rockwell. Saturdays, DJ Chris and Ron with dance and techno. Doubletree Mission Valley, 7400 Hazard Center Drive. 619-767-3466, x4139.

**Club N1:** Top 40, hip-hop, house, and trance. New 2000+ capacity multi-level venue. 18 and up. Fridays and Saturdays, Red Mill Entertainment Complex, 1400 Broadway, El Cajon. 619-441-1800.

**Club Tronics:** DJ's Sissy, Dizzy D, and K.T. spin dirty South, West Coast/East Coast hip-hop, reggae, and R&B. Fridays, Jammin' 200 night with Billy Black and DJ Saturdays, North County's Party Epicenter. Sunday, May 27, Jammin' 200 night Memorial Day Weekend Jam, 740 Nordahl Road, San Marcos. 760-737-9802.

**Darkroom:** Thursdays, DJ's Dragon, Todd, and Tyler spin gothic, pop, and

# NOTE

BY RICHARD MELTZER

Paul McCartney of H2O sez: "Unless there's a really burning need, like if for instance you're genuinely psychotic, or more unlikely, in the threat of an actual idea or inspiration (besides the idea of 'sacring'), nobody should be playing rock-roll anymore — no exceptions. It's about as urgently nagged — as opposed to socially, culturally compulsory — as prancing around in paper-mache Nixon masks. It was possibly once needed, but that was before it was everywhere — before you heard it in supermarkets and bookstores and coming out of every Mercedes at a stop light — before the world had 'rock-surround' — but now what we most need is to turn it off. What was once liberating has become irredeemably

oppressive. It exists to make us obedient and stupid — like sitcoms or the news or the NFL or our fucking parents for crying out loud. My own band — and the music we make — is no exception. Before you start a band, I suggest you pump gas; change the grease at McDonald's; stay in school and get a degree in pos farming."

Paul, you're way too hard on yourself! If ever there was a band we'll always need, that band is H2O. So many fantastic albums, so many great tunes: "I Saw Her Standing There," "Please Please Me," "Thank You Girl," "Ticket to Ride," "If I Fell," "Baby's in Black," "You've Got to Hide Your Love Away," "There's a Place," "When I Get Home," "Yes It Is." On your latest solo albums are such gems as "Norwegian Wood," "The Word," and "I'm a Loser."



H2O

H2O are destined to play baseball stadiums. Catch 'em indoors at a cozy H1 club while you can!

**Face to Face** headlines. (To hear a sample of H2O, call 619-233-9797; wait for the prompt, then punch in ext. 4281.)

**H2O, 'Cameo Bar and Grill, Monday, March 5, 8:30 p.m. 858-688-1780, \$15.**

darkroom: 21 and up, Wednesdays and fourth Saturdays of every month, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. The Hole, 2820 Layton Street, Point Loma. 619-465-5827; www.kids.com.

**DEEP:** DJ's Tomoko, Wall Krawler, and MC Yule. 18 and up, special guests spin single and drum 'n' bass. 21 and up, Thursdays, the Rhythm Lounge, 3048

Midway Drive, Midway District. 619-912-3003.

**The Flame Mondays:** "Spin Out," an amateur night. All DJ's welcome. 9 p.m. on cover. Sundays, Finesse Latin Night, DJ Fred spin salsa, merengue, salsa, and cumbia. 3780 Park Boulevard, San Diego. 619-295-4165.

**House Call:** DJ Chad Formis. Mondays, Blind Melon, 730 Cornett Avenue, Pacific Beach. 858-483-7844.

**Joe House Young Adult Dance Club:** DJ Johnny Johnson and Monique spin hip-hop, R&B, and booty bass. Dance to trance, progressive house, and jungle on the patio. Fridays, Jammin' 200 night with Shave & Saturdays,

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self-titled debut album  
featuring  
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BURY ME IN THE BACKYARD

**YOUNG FRESH FELLOWS**  
MINUS 5  
(PRETER BACK - FLEA)

**DEKE DICKERSON & HIS ECCO-FONICS**  
TRAILER PARK CASANOVAS  
BASTARD SONS OF JOHNNY CASH

**THE REAL KIDS**  
TEACHER'S PET  
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**FURIOUS IV**  
THE CLASSIFIED  
TERRY MATSUOKA

**ALIEN CRIME SYNDICATE**  
THE MEDIUMS  
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## OF NOTE

BY DAVE GOOD

Early on in his career, Roy Rogers cranked  
out a string of blues albums that capitalized  
on his trick-playing. For example, on his  
debut Chaps, Not Chaps (it must be hell,  
growing up with the same name as a Holly-  
wood cowboy), Rogers's slide-guitar work is  
so good it's scary. The fingers are nimble,  
and there are standard blues themes working  
on "Don't Let Me Down," "Gully of Love,"  
"You," even an Elmore James cover or two.  
(It was an Elmore James recording that  
inspired Rogers to begin playing slide-style  
guitar, a sound unique to the Delta that can

crowd your emotions and  
grab you by the throat.)

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has contemporized his  
sound into a muscular,  
loose, country blues that's  
radio-friendly. His latest  
album is more the work of  
a man who has communed  
with the Holy Ghost of  
Commercial Music than it  
is the work of a bluesman.

His newer recordings are  
more centered on vocals  
and harmonies and com-  
position. The slide guitar  
does not showboat. It lays  
back and illuminates vocal  
phrases much like the call  
and response of a Baptist  
preacher and his congregation.

Rogers has both produced and played with  
John Lee Hooker. Since 1980 he has had his  
own band, the Delta Rhythm Kings. There are a  
number of guys playing Delta slide. Of them, Roy



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# Calendar MOVIES

the technology dictate the style, has already taken the endless-shooting and no-reloading amenities about as far as they can go keeping his four cameras rolling for the entire length of the film and avoiding any editing decisions by placing all four images simultaneously on a split-screen. Ripstein in *Así Es la Vida* similarly, if more moderately, favors long fluid unbroken takes—one shot per scene, with perhaps one exception—but then again Ripstein favors long fluid takes in 35mm, too. The big difference is that the DV image will put you in mind of stage Golden Age live television (or kinescopes thereof), with an added element of questions from the hand-held camera. It's hard to convince ourselves that its cheapness or easiness makes it more acceptable.

At the same time, it's hard to convince ourselves that the technology, if not exactly dictating his style, hasn't unavoidably raised the level of self-consciousness in it as witness the characters' direct address to the camera (not unlike the old *You Are There* TV docudramas hosted by Walter Cronkite), the use of video images within the image (strategically placed TV screens showcasing the fictional cast of characters), and the occasional intrusion of the filmmaking crew into

a dramatic scene (an alien finger enters the frame to switch off the television at the foot of a bed, and Ripstein himself can once be glimpsed in a mirror). Any illusion of witnessing reality is well and truly shattered, but not sooner than the illusion of witnessing a movie.

It could and will be said, of course, that the one advantage for the viewer in the digital revolution—partial compensation for his diminished visual pleasure—would be his increased freedom of choice. Faced with the inexorable rise in production costs, the DV alternative (the reasoning goes) will put the means of production in the hands of the small fry and enable him to bypass the major studios, even the major independents, bringing about an independent cinema worthy of the name. This line of thought recalls the long ago and never-realized dream of Jonas Mekas, as the mouthpiece in the *Underground Cinema* in the 1960s, wherein the 16mm and 8mm camera was to become a filmmaker. The advent of video has revived that dream in spades and advanced it much closer to a reality (*America's Funniest Home Videos*, *The Planet's Funniest Animals*, *The Blair Witch Project*, et al.). But I wasn't sure back then, and I'm not sure today, that the dream of democratization isn't destined to be more a nightmare. I don't relish a future in which the chasm continues to widen between slick megabudget special-effects extravaganzas on the one side and Some-

thing *The Cat Dragged In* on the other. That future, in some shape or form, is no doubt inevitable. In some shape or form, it's already here. Already we are asked to put up with severe degrees of shoddiness, amateurishness, awkwardness, artlessness, and assorted other hardships in the interests of a sincere, sensitive, intimate, personalized Independent Cinema. The prospect of even worse-made and worse-looking movies in the interests of even greater independence is not pretty. (I have drifted a long way now from Ripstein and the Latino film festival, although Miguel Arteta's *Chuck and Buck*, a video long put released last year, is also in the festival lineup.) No less inevitable, to be sure, is the emergence of new or would-be Jonas Mekases to rush to the vanguard and to volunteer as apologists and advocates for the new technology, defining and shaping of a new aesthetic. The question for me, as for any entrenched film critic, is whether I would prefer to see to it that every American citizen could become a filmmaker. The advent of video has revived that dream in spades and advanced it much closer to a reality (*America's Funniest Home Videos*, *The Planet's Funniest Animals*, *The Blair Witch Project*, et al.). But I wasn't sure back then, and I'm not sure today, that the dream of democratization isn't destined to be more a nightmare. I don't relish a future in which the chasm continues to widen between slick megabudget special-effects extravaganzas on the one side and Some-

With no press-screenings slated for Valentine's Day, I took advantage of the opening on my calendar to drop by the San Diego Jewish Film Festival, just to see what I could see. *Set Me Free*, a semi-autobiographical coming-of-age film by an unknown French-Canadian woman, was next door to *The Children of Chabannes*, a documentary on East European Jewish refugees in a French village in the Second World War. The coming-of-age film is not one of my favorite genres, but semi-fiction won out over documentary. In the first minute of action, the pubescent heroine dribbles a few drops of blood on the seashore rocks—her first period, and a clarion reminder why this genre is not among my favorites. But the girl, Karine Vanasse, proved to be a delight—in her infatuation with, and emulation of, Anna Karina in *Vivre Sa Vie*; in her tentative infatuation with a Karina look-alike teacher; in her lesbian flirt-

ation with a pixie-haired classmate; in her solo rendition of the Brigitte Bardot oldie, "Sidonie," self-accompanied on guitar during the closing credits; and in her every dazzling smile. No great shakes, all in all, but I was glad I saw it. Then, the very next day, I wandered into my neighborhood Blockbuster, looking for nothing in particular, just seeing what there was to be seen, and there it was—*Set Me Free*—on the New Releases shelf. My thoughts were these: (1) I would never under any circumstances have been tempted to rent this movie, not with so many others, in so many preferable genres, to rent first. (2) If I had known beforehand it was already out on video, I would never have seen it, not enjoyed it, at the festival. (3) The belated knowledge that it was available on video somehow dims my enjoyment of it in retrospect. Make sense of this anecdote if you can.

The film program at the Museum of Photographic Arts, still searching for an audience as it nears its first anniversary, shifts its schedule from the weekends to midweek, Tuesdays through Thursdays (plus Sunday afternoons), for at least the next month and a half. The bill of fare is science fiction, antiques such as *Metropolis* and *Things to Come* alongside latter-day models such as *Blade Runner* and *The Thing from Another World* and *The Day the Earth Stood Still* alongside clappart such as *Strange Days* and *Earth Girls Are Easy*, each one preceded by an episode of a French Gordon serial. We'll see if this—or that—or the other thing—does the trick. ■

## MOVIE LISTINGS

All reviews by Duncan Shepherd. Priorities are indicated by one to five stars and antiques by the black spot. *Unrated* means there are no reviews.

All the **Pretty Horses**—From the Cormac McCarthy novel, a post-WWII cowboy movie, not quite a purebred Western, a little like *The Hateful Eight*. A

little (including in that scope the scrumptious Penelope Cruz), but not a lot. And it is, whatever it is, more than director Billy Bob Thornton can chew. The opening stretch, in which a dispossessed Texas rancher and his faithful sidekick drift across the Rio Grande looking for work on a baronial south-of-the-border spread, picking up part of the way a tag-along teenager with a big hat, big horse, and big gun, is leisurely and enjoyable, notwithstanding some ominous tremors of artiness. The horses are, as advertised, good-looking; and Matt Damon and Henry Thomas look good in the saddle. But with the coming of the forbidden romance (the noblewoman and the hired hand, or to lift the title of an old Gary Cooper while, the cowboy and the lady), and the going into and getting out of a hellhole penitentiary, the storytelling becomes abrupt, choppy, perfunctory, bare bones, as if running headlong toward a deadline. Word has it that the movie underwent heavy editing. That word is easy to believe. Lucas Black, Ruben Blades, Bruce Dern. 2000.

**Before Night Falls**—Julian Schnabel's second film is, like his *Barquero*, a conventional, celebratory biopic on an unconventional, subcultural hero: this time the homosexual Cuban author Reinaldo Arenas. We take up his story in his female-dominated midwest (the boy has his head against a tree trunk, stroking it, gazing at a group of masculine skinny-dippers), then follow him through the Revolution (both Communist and Sexual), into political disaster ("People who make art are dangerous to any dictatorship"), prison, and finally exile in New York City, where he arrives in time for the AIDS plague. (His writing predictably has little place on screen: only a couple of brief "readings.") Javier Bardem acts his heart out, but it's not easy to match him up to his ostensible age, much less to his younger predecessor in the role. Now it is easy simply to understand his English. Sean Penn shows up foebly in a straw-hatted, gold-toothed, grapeateenaged "I had sex with Brad Pitt. Ze one he, he won der rabble!" and then Johnny Depp tops him with two camcans: a transvestite printer and, in the next moment, a sadistic prison guard. The cinematic highlight is a lyrical escape attempt in a hot air balloon. 2000.

**Best in Show**—Christopher Guest's gallery of caricatures of the people at and

around the fictitious Mayflower Kennel Club Dog Show: funny, yet disappointing. Or in other words: not as funny as his *Waiting for Guffman*, and lavishly overpraised in the reviews. (It gives reviewers a chance to be funny, in turn, by passing along the jokes.) The so-called "mockumentary" technique, at least as practiced by Guest, is too inherently faulty to merit endorsement as a formula. The *de rigueur* interview technique, at least as practiced by Guest, is too inherently faulty to merit endorsement as a formula. The *de rigueur* interview technique, at least as practiced by Guest, is too inherently faulty to merit endorsement as a formula. The *de rigueur* interview technique, at least as practiced by Guest, is too inherently faulty to merit endorsement as a formula.

**Chocolate**—Another art house food film: an agonistic, chocolate-maker movie opens her Little Shop of Temptations during the Lenten fast. Director Lasse Hallstrom follows his discreet post-chocolate propaganda (*The Cider House Rules*) with a smug, complacent, liberal-minded broadside against the smugness, complexity, and narrow-mindedness of a French Catholic provincial village circa 1959. The movie's international cast adds to the air of

**Unlikely**—Efforts and forgettable bit of uplift about an unlikely lad in Margaret Thatcher's England, who drops out of the local boxing club, drops in on the girl who has a class in the same gym, and proves himself not to be the untrained eye, which might conclude his potential as a dog dancer, but rather to his claim: "smoking matronly teacher" "good enough" at age eleven to audition for the Royal Ballet School. How nice. How very, very nice. The lad, Jamie Bell, is likable kiffing, and the smoothness of Stephen Daldry's direction is stopped short of slickness with a sprinkling of cool down girl, Julie Walters. Gary Lewis. 2000.

**Carmen: The Champion**—Boxing drama starring Christian recording artist Carmen, directed by Lee Stanley. (Oscar nominee 16, from 3/27)

**Cast Away**—Robert Zemeckis, so soon after the *Incubus*, *28k* of *What Lies Beneath*, returns to his post-*Gump* pretentiousness. Not so much in what he has to say as in *Optimus* Club bumper sticker: "Who knows what the tide could bring?" but in the lengths he will go to say it. Two hours and twenty minutes of length, give or take. Half an hour for establishment of "character" (a time-obsessed, paper-regulated, cellphone-toting, globe-trotting FedEx executive played by Tom Hanks, or Forrest Gump on benzene), and then well over an hour of rudimentary Robinson Crusoe: him fishing with a pointed stick, drinking from leaves, cracking coconuts with a rock, a recipe for rapid boredom, before the hero makes his way back to civilization a wiser and sadder man, with still plenty of time to put his learning into action. Everything in the movie takes longer than it should to no slave to the clock. Zemeckis. The spectacular plane crash heeds seems worth it, but the rest—in fact the plane crash included—is spendthrift indulgence. With Helen Hunt, Nick Seary, Chris Noth, Lori White. 2000.

■ CARMEL MOUNTAIN CINEMA STAR 13: FASHION VALLEY 18: GROSSMONT TROLLEY:



Chunhyang

MISSION VALLEY 20: OCEANVIEW 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWAY PLAZA 18: RANCHO DEL REY 16: TOWN SQUARE 14: UA HORTON PLAZA 14: WEGAND PLAZA

**Chunhyang**—Korean folk tale of the 18th Century, concerning the daughter's son and the courtship of a dignified "but

unreality" some do French accents, some don't. Juliette Binoche does one naturally. Johnny Depp does an Irish. With Lena Olin, Alfred Molina, Carrie-Anne Moss, Judi Dench, Peter Stormare. 2000.

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enemy is not a person. The enemy is the class that divides us." The illustrational imagery is pretty lit in tones of psych, agnost, nihilism. But the imagery is routinely dominated, overriden, trumped down, by a singing narrator who is sometimes seen in person, performing in a modern ritual hall before a live audience. His loud declaratory voice, while it doubtless underscores the folkloric element, gives the spectator to respond with a "Shh" instead of an "Ahh." Directed by Ian Kwan Tark. 2000.

**Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon**—Ang Lee's homage to the martial arts Larry tales of his heritage, especially perhaps to the splendid period pieces of King Hu, is a beautiful bore. The costumes, the sets, the scenery, the wide-screen photography, the mature leading lady, the China doll imagery—beautiful. The talk script, the unmythical unpunctuated narrative line—a bore. And although *Wade with the Devil* may have proven that Lee can handle action, it did not prove he could make something credible and compelling of light scenes in which the combatants go at it like Peter Pan. Nor does this one prove it. We might have hoped that the act of homage, the ancient milieu, and the self-conscious mythology would render the action more acceptable, more "aesthetic." But that of a John Woo aesthetic. They only render it more remote, more effete, more affected and barren. The effects of flying, spinning, darning up walls, skipping across water, hovering in trapezes, etc., are technically well done (even), and they sometimes, if only fleetingly, rise to the exalted plane of "dreamlike." "Spectacular" would better

describe the remainder of the times. Michelle Yeoh, Chow Yun Fat, Zhang Ziyi, Chang Chen. 2000.

■ CARMEL MOUNTAIN CINEMA STAR 13: FASHION VALLEY 18: GROSSMONT TROLLEY: HARBOR DRIVE 18: HILLCREST CINEMAS: LA COSTA 6: LA JOLLA 12: OCEANVIEW 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWAY PLAZA 18: POWAY 10: RANCHO DEL REY 16: SWEETWATER 9: TOWN SQUARE 14:

**Down to Earth**—Lifeless reiteration of *Three Games My Jordan* (or, for a newer generation, 1978's *Heaven Can Wait*). The gimmick is that the man we see as Chris Rock—the man temporarily installed in another man's body—is seen by everyone on screen as a portly, gay-haired, middle-aged white guy. Surely the joke would have been the other way around: a white gay being taken and acting like Chris Rock. But this is Rock's first starring vehicle, and he's not disposed to step aside. With Regina King and Chaz Palminteri; directed by Chris Weitz and Paul Weitz. 2001.

■ CARMEL MOUNTAIN CINEMA STAR 13: FASHION VALLEY 18: GROSSMONT TROLLEY: HARBOR DRIVE 18: HILLCREST CINEMAS: LA COSTA 6: LA JOLLA 12: OCEANVIEW 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWAY PLAZA 18: POWAY 10: RANCHO DEL REY 16: SWEETWATER 9: TOWN SQUARE 14: WEGAND PLAZA

**The Emperor's New Groove**—Animated adventure about a self-absorbed South American monarch (David Spade), arising even when only a voice) who is comically transformed into a llama. Made in the latter-day Disney style—brazos, suits, myopically "modern"—and

describe the remainder of the times. Michelle Yeoh, Chow Yun Fat, Zhang Ziyi, Chang Chen. 2000.

■ CARMEL MOUNTAIN CINEMA STAR 13: FASHION VALLEY 18: GROSSMONT TROLLEY: HARBOR DRIVE 18: HILLCREST CINEMAS: LA COSTA 6: LA JOLLA 12: OCEANVIEW 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWAY PLAZA 18: POWAY 10: RANCHO DEL REY 16: SWEETWATER 9: TOWN SQUARE 14:

**Down to Earth**—Lifeless reiteration of *Three Games My Jordan* (or, for a newer generation, 1978's *Heaven Can Wait*). The gimmick is that the man we see as Chris Rock—the man temporarily installed in another man's body—is seen by everyone on screen as a portly, gay-haired, middle-aged white guy. Surely the joke would have been the other way around: a white gay being taken and acting like Chris Rock. But this is Rock's first starring vehicle, and he's not disposed to step aside. With Regina King and Chaz Palminteri; directed by Chris Weitz and Paul Weitz. 2001.

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**The Emperor's New Groove**—Animated adventure about a self-absorbed South American monarch (David Spade), arising even when only a voice) who is comically transformed into a llama. Made in the latter-day Disney style—brazos, suits, myopically "modern"—and

describe the remainder of the times. Michelle Yeoh, Chow Yun Fat, Zhang Ziyi, Chang Chen. 2000.

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**BEST DIRECTOR • ANG LEE**

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## RADIOHEADS.COM Calendar MOVIES

on the latter-day accelerated production schedule, the simplified graphics and limited cast of characters. With the voices of John Goodman, Lanthi Kiti, and Patrick Warburton, directed by Mark Donald, 2008.

● JAGSLAMP 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; HARBOR DRIVE IN; PALM PROMENADE 24; PEARSON PLACE 18; VILLAGE

**Faithless** — A screenplay by Ingmar Bergman placed into the directorial or co-directorial hands of one of his former actresses and left-screen lovers, Liv Ullmann, "Not their best work," collaboration see *Private Confessions*, 1997. The plan: tell the story and plan background of the opening credits, the absence of any music, behind them, the prevailing color scheme of brown, beige, amber, and yellow, the general ambience of Scandinavian severity — all of this definitively classifies the filmmaking as School of Bergman. And of course the dialogue burrows straight down to, and settles permanently in, the wormy roost

depths of introspection, amateur psychoanalysis, self-exposure, and self-flagellation: "We felt we were up against a brick wall. I was miserable." And "Sometimes you drag yourself in misery." And "Our affinity lay in our misery." And on and on. The raw material may well be searingly, scaldingly autobiographical. An almost reduced identified in the credits as "Bergman" (ah-ha!), played by Bergman veteran Erland Josephson, interrogates a ghostly "character" (said Marianne Vogel, a favorite Bergman surname), an Ullmann-like thespian with the straight back and muscled rump of a dancer, and the wide-slanted, oozing eyes of a Lauren Hutton, who recounts her extramarital affair with a Swedish film director (a man so unrecognizing, even apart from his outbursts of domestic violence, that we can't imagine what she sees in him) and her divorce from an internationally renowned symphonist conductor ("Markus said yes to me was better than conducting *Rite of Spring*." But the degree of faith truth in the tale hardly matters. Bergman will see through Bergman's eyes, wherever he looks. And he will see the same old things. For what he had to say, he made more than enough films of his own. This one is a mawkish and a redundancy and, at two and a half

hours, a dreadful ordeal. With Lena Endre, Kristin Henriksson, Thomas Hanzon, 2000.

● LA (LA JOLLA VILLAGE)

**Finding Forrester** — Gus Van Sant, reverting to the vein of *Good Will Hunting*, goes all soft and squishy (don't be fooled by the scruffy surface) with the tale of another youthful genius, a black high-school athlete and closet literateur (diffident newcomer Rob Brown) who finds a mentor in an irascible old recluse (Sean Connery) that made a Bronx brownstone — the author of "the great 20th-century novel" before he sank into premature silence. The genius of *Hunting*, Matt Damon, puts in a cameo appearance near the end. A sentimental drift, rising together with your genre to a suspenseful providential showdown against a prep-school prodigy. E. Morris Abraham, Anna Paquin, Ross Kohn, 2000.

● JAGSLAMP 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; PEARSON PLACE 18; SWEETWATER 9; VILLAGE

**Hannibal** — Sequel to *The Silence of the Lambs*, long, slow, eventually twiddling, less a fright film than an enigma film, however, overinflated, operatic (it stresses the "grand" in Grand Guignol), no doubt a disappointment to people who actually wanted a sequel of little interest to people who didn't. It could have been a lot more. It could have taken as low a road as, or a lower one than, its predecessor. It could have tried to "top" it. There seems little sense, even so, in bringing back Anthony Hopkins in the part of Hannibal the Cannibal and then not letting him eat anyone (only letting him serve as gourmet chef). There's a little more sense in the filmmaker's apparent attitude of affection, admiration, and protectiveness towards him. That attitude is quite understandable if you think of him not as a man-eating maniac but as a Hollywood cash cow. Or cultural icon. Or grist for the sake mill. Godzilla, after all, evolved into a stuffed toy, a plastic action figure, and Earth's savior. The Terminator was got reprogrammed as guardian angel and martyr. So let the revisionism commence. All of a sudden we are informed that Hannibal Lecter shows down only on "rule" people. A public service, practically. Two of a sudden we are informed that

unrecognizable Gary Oldman, directed by Ridley Scott, 2001.

● JAGSLAMP 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; PEARSON PLACE 18; SWEETWATER 9; VILLAGE

**Head over Heels** — Is the cat guy in the apartment across the way a Mr. Right or a psychopath? Before he gets into premature silence. The genius of *Hunting*, Matt Damon, puts in a cameo appearance near the end. A sentimental drift, rising together with your genre to a suspenseful providential showdown against a prep-school prodigy. E. Morris Abraham, Anna Paquin, Ross Kohn, 2000.

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and the heroine registers more purely as victim than as equal accomplice. This can be attributed in large part to the absence of the author's tart tone of voice and the substitution of the filmmaker's dolorous temperament. Davies has adapted the novel himself — a tall order by any measure — and there is often a lack of transition, to say nothing of breathing room, between one dialogue and the next, so that the grimaces of the heroine's situation and the desperation in her demeanor descend upon us as if free stuff. Wharton's great achievement was, among other things, to make the course of the narrative seem both inevitable and unnecessary. Davies, working his way to a simpler and heavier-handed outcome, makes it seem nothing but a crying shame. Gillian Anderson, Eric Stoltz, Dan Aykroyd, Anthony LaPaglia, Laura Linney, Jodie Mar, Eleanor Brown, Elizabeth McGovern, 2000.

● JAGSLAMP 15; LA JOLLA VILLAGE

**In the Mood for Love** — It was about time. After years of promise, flashes of brilliance, stretches of virtuosity — in *Days of Being Wild*, *Atsuhiko*, *Changfeng Express*, *Fallen Angels*, *Happy Together* — Wong Kar-wai, finally settles down. In the popular phrase, puts it all together. Set in the early Sixties, the story of Mr. Chow and Mrs. Chan, quiet, well-mannered next-door neighbors whose spouses are having an affair, is not to any means a major story; it is common as dirt. But it is a major movie, a perfect match of subject and style. The camera, for openness, is always seeping into tight, narrow, cramped spaces, taking people at their word, with a Degas-like randomness and informality, people caught in their surroundings, from disadvantageous angles, at odd moments, not people in a conveniently cleared-out space, in front of a backdrop, in positions of total domination, like your average movie stars. They are often only partly seen, from behind, in three-quarters profile, through forests of obstruction (dials, bars, window shades, doorframes), or are seen only in passing, as if from the corner of the eye. (We never see the faces of the cheating man or woman.) All this sort of thing can be seen to express and preserve the mystery of people. "Do you really know your wife?" the hiddenness of their personalities, the unknown recesses of their hearts, their bottled-up emotions and muzzled thoughts, the parts of them inaccessible to a camera. But to say so is inadequate. Words can't convey. You must see it for yourself. It would be fair to say that, among the things hidden in the film, it is not always clear exactly where we are or what has taken place. But it is fair to say, too, that this fits with the theme of the unknown and the unknowable. And the device of role playing, whereby the cheated-on spouses improvise possible scenes (past or future) involving their cheating mates, has the potential to create some confusion. As does the nonsensical shuffle of scenes near the end. Of course it would not be a Wong Kar-wai film without some confusion. Tony Leung, Maggie Cheung, 2000.

● JAGSLAMP 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; PEARSON PLACE 18; SWEETWATER 9; VILLAGE

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whose subsequent quest to get in touch with the Common Man lands him on a Southern chain gang. While the humor is as broad as the Coen brothers ever have allowed (i.e., *Raising Arizona*), it is equally as bright and as funny. No one in American cinema, past or present, writes taster, tangier dialogue than Joel and Ethan Coen, and the script is studded with well-turned gems that could stand alongside any textbook samples from the pages of Preston Sturges, Jules Furthman, Ben Hecht. (The nitwit fugitives enter inevitably into a who-pun-you-in-charge dispute. The rebellious one says, "I'm votin' for Yours Truly." The bearded leader responds, "Well, I'm votin' for Yours Truly, too.") The swing voters, looking uncertainly from one to the other, puzzling out the politics, choose, says, "Okay, I'm with you fellows.") And the Coens show here, as they showed already in *The Hudsucker Proxy*, that if you take the four letter words out of their vocabulary they will not be handicapped in the slightest. Also comparable to *Huducker*, or more exactly comparable to the metamorphosis of Tim Robbins therein, is the loosening up and warming up of George Clooney into a flexible and a palatable actor, flourishing in the part of (Yours Truly) ex-Ferrit McGill, fond of the four-dollar, as opposed to four-letter, word "buffetted," "rusticated," "rancio," "paradigm," and hyperbolic about his hairy every waking moment ("My hair" is the first thing from his lips when startled from sleep) — even to the point of borrowing John Turturro's haircut from *The Big Lebowski*. And his growing romance with a tin of pomade (it has to be Dapper Dan brand, not L'Oréal), getting a sort of razor-sharp motion going with his comb, is as educational as it is elegant. Turturro, as the second of the escapers, is of course an old reliable as a

in Action Painting, it does take some time to show the artist at work, albeit in montage-y sequences accompanied by an orchestra of Aaron Copland-esque sewing machines. The unconvincing moment of epiphany when the artist, mindlessly discovers the dirty technique that earned him the moniker of "Jack the Drifter" would probably have been better left behind closed doors. All it lacks is a mysterious monolith and the opening bars of his *Henry and June* and *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. And as proof of his high-mindedness he holds back the neopagan fantasies — Kate Winslet supplying the body — as a last minute reward for the viewer's commitment and endurance. Inauguration Films, Billie Whitelaw, 2000.

● LA (LA JOLLA VILLAGE)

**Requiem for a Dream** — A grim and grimy urban horror story, from a novel by Hubert Selby, Jr., about four drug dependents on route (in a final flurry of cross-cutting to nearly synchronized rack and run. The downward spiral of their dime-a-dozin junkie needs more than new extremes of physical disgustances — the drug, the two worlds — to revitalize it as a surreal subject. (More, too, than old extremes: the mother of one of the red-cent junkies — added on for her raging TV addiction — opens up a new avenue of investigation, with compelling new details, including most prominently a rumbling refrigerator such as might have been imagined by Edgar Allan Poe. 13-lb. Burdett's all stops-out performance is compelling as well.) The title correctly foretells a streak of maskwork, although that, along with the hammering horror, is a little effort, even underminded, by the gonimack happy direction of Darren Aronofsky, the film man, now equipped with tensidic resources and determined to tap them to the limit. The split-screen, the fast-motion, the fish-eye lens, the rhythmic editing riffs, the look adding

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# Calendar MOVIES

fantasies and hallucinations, the Spike Lee-style tracking shots behind or in front of floating combs — all this (and more) makes a playfulness that slightly lighens, without quite altering, the mood. Jared Leto, Jeremy Connelly, Martin Wiggins.

★ (GASLAMP 15)

**Save the Last Dance** — Feel good pabulum for teens, about a motherless small-town girl who goes to live with her jazzman dad (we hear he's "pretty good," though not for ourselves) and who transfers into an inner-city school where a new black boyfriend revives her dream of dancing. Julia Stiles, as distinct from her lower-body and long-shot double, shows no moves to qualify her for "Jillfunkt" (as it's spelled on a placard in flashback), but she plays on our sympathies anyway through her pitiful turned-down mouth and pucky body face. She and her engaging co-star, Sean Patrick Thomas, can make you feel better about it all, if not altogether good. Directed by Thomas Carter. 2001.

★ (GASLAMP 15, 15:50, 16:00, 16:10, 16:20, 16:30, 16:40, 16:50, 17:00, 17:10, 17:20, 17:30, 17:40, 17:50, 18:00, 18:10, 18:20, 18:30, 18:40, 18:50, 19:00, 19:10, 19:20, 19:30, 19:40, 19:50, 20:00, 20:10, 20:20, 20:30, 20:40, 20:50, 21:00, 21:10, 21:20, 21:30, 21:40, 21:50, 22:00, 22:10, 22:20, 22:30, 22:40, 22:50, 23:00, 23:10, 23:20, 23:30, 23:40, 23:50, 24:00, 24:10, 24:20, 24:30, 24:40, 24:50, 25:00, 25:10, 25:20, 25:30, 25:40, 25:50, 26:00, 26:10, 26:20, 26:30, 26:40, 26:50, 27:00, 27:10, 27:20, 27:30, 27:40, 27:50, 28:00, 28:10, 28:20, 28:30, 28:40, 28:50, 29:00, 29:10, 29:20, 29:30, 29:40, 29:50, 30:00, 30:10, 30:20, 30:30, 30:40, 30:50, 31:00, 31:10, 31:20, 31:30, 31:40, 31:50, 32:00, 32:10, 32:20, 32:30, 32:40, 32:50, 33:00, 33:10, 33:20, 33:30, 33:40, 33:50, 34:00, 34:10, 34:20, 34:30, 34:40, 34:50, 35:00, 35:10, 35:20, 35:30, 35:40, 35:50, 36:00, 36:10, 36:20, 36:30, 36:40, 36:50, 37:00, 37:10, 37:20, 37:30, 37:40, 37:50, 38:00, 38:10, 38:20, 38:30, 38:40, 38:50, 39:00, 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## Calendar MOVIES

situations: the bubble of illusion springs a slow and separating leak. Nor does it help to enlist as Presidential adviser Kenneth (Kevin Connolly) an actor — Kevin Connolly — whose watery outpourings that of the rest of the cast put together. The imbalance in the casting unbalances the drama. Or more precisely it unbalances the scriptwriting, such that O'Donnell (who's this, again?) will forever appear to be burning in on others' moments of glory, offering pep talks, strategy tips, words of wisdom, moral support, etc., to the tottering Adlai Stevenson, for example, before his cross-examination of the Soviet ambassador in the U.S. General Assembly ("Stick it to 'em, Adlai") or to Bobby before his eleven-hour tête-à-tête with the Soviet envoy in Washington. And not just before it, but also during it: whistling a penetrating "Danny Boy" in the next room to stir the Irish blood. Directed by Roger Donaldson, 2000.

★ ★ FASHION VALLEY 18, UA HORTON PLAZA 14

**3000 Miles to Graceland** — Casino heisters disguised as Elvin impersonators (including Kurt Russell, who had plenty of practice in John Carpenter's made-for-TV heists on the King). Not the most logical starting point, this, for the film's bloodbath that soon follows. The tone never does stabilize: coolness, callousness, phony sentiment, go action scenes, sadism and unrestrained absurdity, and stupidity. With Kevin Connolly, Courtney Cox, Kevin Pollak, Christian

Slater, David Arquette, and David Kay; directed by Denzhan Lichtenstein, 2001.

★ **GARMEI MOUNTAIN, CINEMA STAR 13, FASHION VALLEY 18, FLOWER HILL CINEMAS: GALAXY 6, DASHAMP 15, GROSSMOUNT CENTER, GROSSMOUNT TROLEY, HAZARD CENTER 7, LA COSTA 14, LA JOLLA 12, MISSION VALLEY 20, OCEANSIDE 16, PALM PROMENADE 24, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, POWAY 10, RANCHO DEL REY 16, SANTEE DRIVE IN, SOUTH BAY DRIVE IN, SWEETWATER 9, TOWN SQUARE 14, WEGAND PLAZA 14**

**Treffe** — Steven Soderbergh holds forth for two and a half hours on the illicit drug trade. One hears that the narrative is "complex," but only in the strictly numerical sense of "consisting of two or more related parts" (courtesy of Webster's New World Dictionary). Three parts, to be absolutely exact. The first deals with a morally ambiguous Tinseltown cop (Benicio Del Toro), the second with two DEA agents (Lionel Cheate, Luis Guzman, a couple of Soderbergh's regular players) in their efforts to safeguard an unwilling witness against a socially prominent San Diego drug dealer, and the third with the newly appointed federal drug czar (Michael Douglas) whose own adolescent daughter is herself ironically, tragically, melodramatically, and maskably hooked on drugs. Only the moral ambiguity of the Tinseltown cop, who makes the general ambiguity of law enforcement in Mexico, adds anything close to complexity in the dreary sense. The other two plot strands, unconvincingly camouflaged by the documentary-style camerawork (jerky pans, a warring frame), are individually on the level of a TV movie. Or old episode of *Hawaii Five-O*. Further lessening the complexity of the design is Soderbergh's decorative decision to color code each plot strand: the czar's section, wherein his

hometown of Cincinnati or in the corridors of Washington, D.C., is tinted blue; the Tinseltown cop's is tinted yellow; and the DEA's is blanketed in a whitish-brownish foggy-smoggy haze. Or to say it another way, instead of giving his movie a unifying "vision," he gives it a variety of different "looks" — just what you might want for a cutting-edge postmodern glossy fashion magazine or hip, hot, new group show on the E! channel, but not for a hard hitting, no-holds-barred exposé on the drug racket.

There is, throughout the movie, a didactic interest in laying out *How Things Work* and *How Things Are*. And it can best be recommended as a sort of freshman survey course — War on Drugs 101 — if still on the level of a TV movie. Catherine Zeta-Jones, Dennis Quaid, Miguel Ferrer, Amy Irving, 2000.

★ **GARMEI MOUNTAIN, CINEMA STAR 13, CINEMAX 6, FASHION VALLEY 18, FLOWER HILL CINEMAS: HAZARD CENTER 7, LA COSTA 14, LA JOLLA 12, MISSION VALLEY 20, OCEANSIDE 16, PALM PROMENADE 24, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, POWAY 10, RANCHO DEL REY 16, SWEETWATER 9, TOWN SQUARE 14, UA HORTON PLAZA 14**

**Vertical Limit** — Rescue operation on the upper slopes of K2, where three survivors of an aborted climb are sealed up in a bottomless crevasse. The clock is ticking — thirty-six hours to painful death by pulmonary edema — and a *Wagon of Fear* ingredient is added to the rescuers' knapsacks in the form of three canisters of nitro: one fake step and KA BOOM. (Someone at base camp points out the folly of risking six lives to save three, and he is not sought out at tale's end when he could have said "I told you so.") The movie at least passes the funny test: something that can be sat through without undue wear and tear on the upholstery and the ichium. The suspense mechanisms are well oiled, and the setting and situation inspire director Larin Campbell to a higher than average level of compositional solidity, the better to record an angle of ascent or descent of abyss. Nonetheless, though, mountain-climbing exploits seem less impressive in the CG age (see, also, *Cliffhanger*) than in the primitive period of, say, *The Edge*. Sanctioning today's computer-generated imagery in

**The Wedding Planner** — Romantic-comic piffle in which the control-freak title character breaks the cardinal rule of her profession and tumbles for a would-be groom. In these circumstances, Jennifer Lopez is able to switch on all her charms and wiles without worrying whether she is violating her character (a woman overlooked by men) or subsuming an otherwise cohesive artistic conception. With Matthew McConaughey, Bridgette Wilson-Sampras, Justin Chambers, and Alex Bosco; directed by Adam Shankman, 2001.

★ **GARMEI MOUNTAIN, CINEMA STAR 13, FASHION VALLEY 18, GROSSMOUNT CENTER, LA JOLLA 12, MISSION VALLEY 20, OCEANSIDE 16, PALM PROMENADE 24, PARKWAY PLAZA 18, POWAY 10, RANCHO DEL REY 16, SOUTH BAY DRIVE IN, TOWN SQUARE 14, UA HORTON PLAZA 14, VOGUE, WEGAND PLAZA 14**

**What Women Want** — The battle of the sexes, rigged for the distant male. A male chauvinist ad exec (Mel Gibson, cranked up a few notches) receives a jolt of electricity and, miraculously, the consequent power to hear women's thoughts. After a hasty period of adjustment, he senses comfortably into the role of enemy agent, using his new-found power for his own advantage, scoring major points with the women around him for his elementary insights into their psyche. Eventually, he makes the leap to the insight that women are people, too. Long, draggy, serious-minded, mildly embarrassing comedy. With Helen Hunt, Maria Tomei, Ashley

Johnson, Lauren Holly, and Alan Alda; directed by Nancy Meyers, 2000.

★ **OVERSTOCK PLAZA 18, UA HORTON PLAZA 14**

**You Can Count on Me** — A rarefied chamber piece for a small-town single mom, her pensive little boy, her nomadic no-account brother (their parents, as we're shown in a childhood prologue, were killed in an auto accident, and there's no indication of who filled that role afterwards), her soft-mannered hard-assed new boss at the bank, and a rekindled indecisive lover. The complaint of the brother about his hometown — its smallness and narrowness — could easily be turned against the movie as a whole. But something he says at another point, under an unweaving grilling from the local clergyman — that however unimportant his life may be in the overall scheme of things, it is important at least to him and to those close to him — could be turned to the movie's defense. We the viewers get close to him, too, and get involved. The movie marks the directing debut of playwright Kenneth Lonergan (and, in a lighter mood, screenwriter on *Analyze This* and *The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle*), who seems to enjoy the freedom on screen to compose in fragments instead of in Scenes and Acts, and who is prone to dump an unfair share of the workload onto his musical selections: Bach, Loretta Lynn, a whole heap of Steve Earle. Laura Linney (linked on the soundtrack with Loretta Lynn for no apparent reason except the sameness of their names) emerges as a kind of thespian Annie Oakley, quick on the trigger and a dead shot, challenging Meryl Streep's record for cramming the most acting into the smallest spaces. Mark Ruffalo, who well versed in the ways of the slacker ("Like totally, man"), is less persuasive as the hard-boiled brother, held back by his third-generation Brandeisism or second-generation Erik Estradomism, and through no fault of his own, held back by the physical dissimilarity to Linney: darkly Mediterranean for her Nordic, frim. With Matthew Broderick (dependably dead as the persnickety bank manager deficient in people skills), Rory Culkin, Jon Tenney, 2001.

★ ★ (HILLCREST CINEMAS)

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## Calendar RESTAURANTS

# Just for the Halibut

"Brr," said the *kanaka* in the aloha shirt, hugging himself on a cigarette break in front of a restaurant. "They told me San Diego had the best climate on the Mainland. Brrr." It's the last lap of winter, we hope," said another puffer. As the smokers spoke, I went into a dream... the backyard roast pork and goosy purple *uh* that month in Kailua, the awful poi on the black-sand beach of lava-doomed Kalaupapa. Tropical dreams in midwinter — time for Hawaiian-fantasy restaurants.

Much of Hawaii's "local food" is best appreciated by Hawaiian locals. Some of it — the fresh fish and fruit — is wonderful, but some (e.g. Spam) is so stinky that its appeal to *haole* (mainlanders) swiftly palls. In the last decade, though, a new crop of island chefs has been re-creating Hawaiian cuisine, finding inspiration in the islands' tropical ingredients and Asian flavors.

In the months when tourists aren't in season, our own Hawaiian dinner houses mainly live off those locals who love them. Both Sam Choy's and Poole's are at the apogees of their respective islands in the bay, offering panoramic marine views and similar new Hawaiian-style menus. Among the swarms of macadamia nuts and snowstorms of coconut on their plates, you won't find much pineapple (except in your drink) — contrary to our own Hawaiian dinner houses mainly live off those locals who love them. Both Sam Choy's and Poole's are at the apogees of their respective islands in the bay, offering panoramic marine views and similar new Hawaiian-style menus. Among the swarms of macadamia nuts and snowstorms of coconut on their plates, you won't find much pineapple (except in your drink) — contrary to our own Hawaiian dinner houses mainly live off those locals who love them. 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## Calendar RESTAURANTS

one layer and two layers of "fais". The workers would place all their main dishes into a circle in the center, where everybody could reach out with chopsticks to share each other's entrees. The "Kona Bay Sampler" pu-pu plate at San Choy's includes fairly dry chicken satay with a sick of semi-spicy Thai-style peanut sauce, batter-fried calamari, small vegetable egg rolls, and small crab cakes, their filling more shredded and less pulverized than Mrs. Paul's frozen version, but with similar breading and an equivalent blandness. The best of the array are a pair of very sweet butter-fried shrimp in a coconut-and-panko batter. All the fried items are slightly greasy. Alongside come a couple of dips—a Sears-Roebuck sweet-and-sour and a cilantro-spiked "aioli" with the weighty thickness of bottled mayo.

Diners include the house soup and salad. The soup is New England clam chowder, with succulent corn kernels, diced carrot, and amazingly tender fresh clams. The broth is seductively creamy at an early dinner, but as the evening ages and the pot simmers, its com-

starch component congeals the liquid to a well-flavored wall-paper paste. (Is this San Diego poi?) The green salad, though, is "ono-licious" all the time, with its addictive sesame-flavored dressing.

The "Island sampler" entree is a sashimi-lover's treat, offering tastes of three different fish varieties, seared "ahi-style" to crust the exterior while leaving the centers uncooked. There's a strip of mahi mahi dusted with macadamias, a cube of ahi with a black pepper rub, and a cube of Atlantic salmon au naturel. A mild, suave soy butter stripes the fish and glazes the plate. Another pleasing choice is "Haole halibut," stuffed with a mixture of coconut and crab. It has little crab flavor, but the coconut lends some moisture and life to this dead-boring species. An accompanying pineapple cream sauce is light and bright. Most entrees come with a choice of steamed rice, pork fried rice, or garlic mashed potatoes. The fried rice had us asking "where's the pork?" The maul was terrific, rich and chunky with bits of skin, made from some moist spud variety like Yukon Gold.

Unfortunately, I can't recommend risking the weekly specials. Panamanian *pargo* (red snapper) was a hunk of mild fish coated with soggy potato "scales," overlying a thin sheet of something called "shrimp and

scallop mousseline." I expected a puff of crustacean-flavored whipped cream but instead found a firm fish paste with an odd dried-seafood aroma. (Perhaps some Chinese dried shrimp or scallops were involved.) The pineapple-cream sauce wished it were somewhere else. Wholly alarming was a New Zealand seared rack of lamb with coconut honey glaze. A failure of concept, execution, and shopping, the gargantuan rack tasted old and muttonish, and its coconut coat was singed to blackness, producing an acrid, carbonyl deglaze sauce.

The wine list is dreary, but who cares when the tropical cocktails are such fun? A Harpoon serves sprightly and food-friendly, with a nip of bitters lending adult complexity. The Hurricane is vibrant with real fruit flavors. The pina colada and the planter's punch are sweet and boisterous. As the meal ends, there's a nightcap: the changing desert array. A Kona coffee "cream bubble" lived up to its name, displaying a creamy (not eggy or sugary) panache. A key lime pie had a strong citrus flavor, a cheesecake texture, and a thick graham-cracker crust.

Peohe's, a stand-alone affiliate of the Chart House chain, is another stop on the macadamia-paved Hawaiian food trail. I approached the

restaurant with minimal expectations, assuming that with its fab decor, legendary views, and tourist-tickling ferry-ship location, its kitchen didn't need to work too hard. I was agreeably surprised. Sam Choy may be a bigger name nationally, but in San Diego, Peohe's runs some better riffs on the same themes.

It's as gorgeous as I imagined. The host leads you on a thickly carpeted bridge past a waterfall and a chic little sunken sushi bar and through a section of plush kiva-style half-round banquettes. Overhead, a solarium ceiling of mirror glass reflects the kitchen. You descend to one of two heated glassed-in patios with sliding window panels that can open in warm weather to admit the maritime breezes. From there, and from an outdoor patio sporting umbrella tables, you enjoy sweeping bay views. Although dress is still casual, the ambience is more elegant and adult than the changing desert array. A Kona coffee "cream bubble" lived up to its name, displaying a creamy (not eggy or sugary) panache.

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but you can give it a boost with a little soy from the crust brought to the table with it. The pu-pu platter includes jumbo prawns and sweet, moist snow crab claws with a ramekin of lively cocktail sauce for a dip-it-yourself seafood cocktail. Lobster spring rolls have a double thickness of wonton skin and a chile-lime sunken sushi bar and through a section of plush kiva-style half-round banquettes. Overhead, a solarium ceiling of mirror glass reflects the kitchen. You descend to one of two heated glassed-in patios with sliding window panels that can open in warm weather to admit the maritime breezes. From there, and from an outdoor patio sporting umbrella tables, you enjoy sweeping bay views. Although dress is still casual, the ambience is more elegant and adult than the changing desert array. A Kona coffee "cream bubble" lived up to its name, displaying a creamy (not eggy or sugary) panache.

The signature entree, called "Peohe's Halibut Ahi," is simply the best halibut dish I can remember eating anywhere. The fish is seared in a lagoon of sassy lemon beurre blanc textured with fine-chopped macadamia nuts, sweetened with just a wiff of Francigiano hazelnut liqueur. Sautéed banana halves recline across the fish. It's an unexpectedly dazzling makeover for this mousberger species: "Oh, Miss Halibut! Just a spritz of

Francigiano and a banana wrap — and you're bee-yoo-terful! The accompaniment is a wild-rice mélange that joins the fish and banana to make a downright lubricious *ménage à trois*.

"Spicy citrus scallops" prove to be biscuit-size Atlantic sea scallops, fresh-flavored and exquisitely tender. They're rubbed with piquant Japanese seven-pepper powder and seared to a crust outside, with barely-cooked interiors. Unfortunately, the coarse hot-sour sauce that accompanies these magnificent creatures is simply exhausting. Your tastebuds scream for the succor of some interesting, soothing starch, but the sole accompaniment is a helpless heap of Belgian endive shreds.

The drink card on the table lists specialty martinis. At the table nearest ours, I watched a like, satirist follow slowly saunter three of them in a row as, happily and patiently, he demolished a two-inch thick steak approximately the land area of Hokkaido. He finished with an alluring concoction of macadamia nut ice cream in a chocolate truffle with chocolate syrup. Some people have all the luck. But I had to save some appetite for the Hawaii-in-San Diego ventures still ahead. Next week, I've got a date with another halibut at Roy Yamaguchi's new shopplace in La Jolla.

Free Dessert  
With purchase of dinner entree  
per person. With tax and tip.  
Happy Hour 4:30-8:30 pm  
Early Dining Menu  
MARTINI  
AMERICAN GRILL  
3221 University Avenue  
HILTON • 619-297-0722  
Mon-Thurs. 4:30-10:30 pm  
Fri-Sat. 4:30-12:30 am  
Sun. 4:30-10:30 pm

## Bankrupt Breakfast

"This had better be the biggest, fattest, finest breakfast we've ever had."

Carla looks at me. We're sitting there staring at the check. I blame Carla. Carla blames me. What happened was we were looking for breakfast. A simple thing, you would think. Downtown, Gaslamp, Saturday morning. I'm springing. Here's the credit card. From one of these bot-toom-feeder banks out of, like, Chattanooga, Tennessee, offering to "help you, Ed Bedford" get back into "good credit." Two-hundred-dollar limit. Break your knees if you're late. I think I've got about \$20 left on it.

So we get off the trolley at the Gaslamp Quarter stop. I mention a couple of places I had in mind. "Oh, does it have to be one of your groovy dives?" Carla says. She learned "groovy" from that English friend of hers, wasname? Alan. Guy she dated way back. Doesn't help the morning harmony.

So I'm thinking: Fine. The lady wants smart? In front of me I see white umbrellas outside the brick "Hilton San Diego Gaslamp Quarter" hotel. "Let's go here," I say.

"Well, if you really think," she says. The hotel reeks of restraint. "Good taste" brick and wispy-washy green and varnish colors. Spartan's world. That encourages me. If they're spare in their decor, maybe they'll be spare in what they charge for breakfast.

Carla and I try to saunter casually into the restaurant. "New Leaf," it's called. A spoiled kid

has just upended his eggs into his high chair and onto the floor. Waiter comes, no comment, and cleans it up. Kid giggles. We sit down at a narrow, slightly wobbly Danish wood table. Four female servers are here, waiting for anybody to come in. Sure, they're very attentive. Eager to help. From the way they speak, they're all moonlighting law-school grads.

"Would you care for coffee?" says our server.

"Ah, yes," says Carla. I nod. We check the menu. Server hovers. "Do you need more time to decide?" Can she see me stewing? I know: It's all inside my head. I'm hearing. "You wanna know the cheapest dish, moocher? Bet the only thing you can afford is the Continental Breakfast. Danish, muffin, croissant, or toast with fresh fruit and juice or coffee, \$6.50."

Six bucks for a piece of toast? "Uh," I say. But Carla's not fazed. "I'll take the Big Breakfast, with bacon and English muffin," she says. Gotta hand it to her. She's always full of spunk in a tight spot. I look at Big Breakfast. "Two eggs, hash browns, choice of meat, toast or muffin, \$7.25."

Carla looks from the server down to me. She crinkles her mouth for a moment. Ho-kay. May as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb. "The Heavy Hitter, please, miss," I say. Heavy Hitter consists of "two eggs, two pancakes, ham, sausage or bacon, hash browns, and toast or English muffin, \$7.95."

## Calendar RESTAURANTS

"Course we did turn down some interesting-sounding stuff. Pecan-Crusted French Toast, \$6.95. Goat cheese and caper omelet, 'drizzled' (sautéed) with extra-virgin olive oil, \$7.50. 'High fiber' grilled Roma tomatoes, \$8.25. And for just under ten bucks, the 'Extravaganza Breakfast Buffet.' I can't help getting up to see. Basically it's scrambled eggs, sausages, bacon, and hash browns in chafing dishes plus fruit and muffins.

The server pours our coffees into small white china cups. Fine. I flick in half a pack of sweetener. Tastes great. "Orange juice?" says our second server. "That's nice of you," I say. She pours the chunky juice into our glasses. Oh boy. It does taste fresh-squeezed. I'm just enjoying that first gulp when Carla leans over. Her eyes are popping. Her finger starts the menu. "Read this! The OJ! The coffee!"

I look. I gawk. I squawk. OJ, \$3.25 a glass! The coffee, \$2.75!

"Do you see what we've just spent?" she runs quickly through the menu. "Two coffees, \$5.50. Two OJs, \$6.50. Big Breakfast, seven; Heavy Hitter, eight—Twenty-seven bucks! Add tax, thirty! Add tip, and here it's gotta be 20 percent, right, Lord Bedford? Thirty-four, thirty-five... this had

better be the biggest, fattest, finest breakfast we've ever had."

I feel like Captain Bligh, just before the mutiny. A prisoner having his last meal. Our plates arrive. I mean, they're fine. Mine has a couple of sausages, two poached eggs, not a whole lot of hash browns, and on a separate plate a couple of pancakes. Carla's Big Breakfast is, well, not that big. Three microbashed strips of bacon from some pygmy pig, two eggs over-easy, hash browns, and an English muffin. Carla looks at all the white plate space around her food. "Maybe it's nouvelle cuisine," she says.

We get through it quickly. Don't notice much about the taste. I'm too busy thinking of what's to come: trying this—uh—credit card, praying it'll work.

"Watch out!" hisses Carla suddenly. I follow her eyes to the server. Server's coming back. She has the OJ pitcher in her hand.

"A refill?" she says sweetly. "Uh, NO! No, thank you. It was great. We've had an ample...sufficade."

"Sufficade?" says Carla. "Gimme a break. I fumble for my card.

She gets up. "I'll be outside," she says. "This I can't look at."

**The Place:** New Leaf Restaurant, Hilton San Diego, 203 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp Quarter (619-231-4040)  
**Type of Food:** American  
**Prices:** Big Breakfast (two eggs, hash browns, choice of meat, with toast or muffin), \$7.25; Heavy Hitter (two eggs, two pancakes, ham, sausage, or bacon, hash browns with toast or English muffin), \$7.95; pecan-crusted french toast, \$6.95; goat cheese and caper omelet, \$7.50; high fiber ginger pancakes, \$8.50; eggs Florentine with grilled Roma tomatoes, \$8.25; Extravaganza Breakfast Buffet (scrambled eggs, sausages, bacon, and home-fried potatoes, with fruit, sweet rolls), \$9.75; also lunch, dinner  
**Hours:** 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., seven days  
**Trolley:** Orange Line  
**Nearest Trolley Stop:** Gaslamp Quarter, at Sixth Avenue  
**Buses:** 1, 3, 4, 5, 16  
**Nearest Bus Stop:** Fifth and Market (four blocks)

## Four-Course Dinner with Wine \$45<sup>per couple</sup>

Three six-course dinners from the following:

Appetizer: Fried Calamari or Bruschetta  
Soup or Salad: House or Caesar  
Entrée: Lamb Chops, Grilled Pork Chop with Veal Dripping Sauce, Stuffed Chicken Involtino, Veal Marsala, Beef Scaloppine or Special Pasta

Wine: Bottle of House Merlot or Chardonnay  
Dessert: Truffle, Bread Pudding or Gelato  
Each dish \$13.95

**DeLuca's**  
CUCINA ITALIANA  
216 W. WASHINGTON ST. • HILTON • 238-0070

## LUNCH OR DINNER FOR TWO

ONLY \$11.75<sup>per person</sup> (TAX & TIP NOT INCLUDED)

Includes: 12-Piece California Roll • 2 Fried Shrimp • 2-Piece Snapper • 2-Piece Teriyaki Salmon • Rice • Salad

With this coupon. Expires 3/31/91

**CHIBA JAPANESE FOOD & SUSHI**  
10435 San Diego Mission Rd. • (619) 584-1836  
(Corner of Rancho Mission & S.D. Mission)  
S.D. Mission & S.D. Mission

## Try our Sticky Rice & Mango!

2 for 1 DINNER

Buy one dinner, get one free. Second of equal or lesser value. Not valid with other offers.

Now Serving: Lunch Buffet \$5.99

**Thai Orchid**  
CULINARY  
4310 Genesee Avenue • #111  
(at Mount Erie, off I-15, near I-805)  
(619) 271-1111 • 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
Mon-Thurs. 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.  
Fri-Sat. 11:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.  
Sun. 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

## Free Dessert

With purchase of dinner entree per person. With tax and tip.

Happy Hour 4:30-8:30 pm  
Early Dining Menu  
MARTINI  
AMERICAN GRILL  
3221 University Avenue  
HILTON • 619-297-0722  
Mon-Thurs. 4:30-10:30 pm  
Fri-Sat. 4:30-12:30 am  
Sun. 4:30-10:30 pm

## 1/2 OFF DINNER

Buy any pasta or pizza & receive a second of equal or lesser value for 1/2 price. Excludes Pasta Bucket. Not valid with any other offers or specials. Last-dinner D'Lish Xpress locations only. Dine-in only. With this ad. Expires 4/2/91.

## D'Lish Xpress

WOODFIRE PIZZA SALADS PASTA  
5252 Balboa Ave. (Balboa & Cervantes) San Diego • (619) 277-9977  
2260 Chay Lakes Rd. Eastlake Village Ctr. So. • (619) 216-3900

## \$2 OFF 16" PIZZA

One coupon per couple. Not valid with any other offers or specials. Last-dinner D'Lish Xpress locations only. Dine-in only. With this ad. Expires 4/2/91.

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WOODFIRE PIZZA SALADS PASTA  
5252 Balboa Ave. (Balboa & Cervantes) San Diego • (619) 277-9977  
2260 Chay Lakes Rd. Eastlake Village Ctr. So. • (619) 216-3900

## Anthony's

San Diego Harbor Dr. at Ash St. (619) 232-9103

La Mesa Hwy 8 at Severin St. (619) 463-0368

Chula Vista Hwy 5 at E St. (619) 425-4200

Rancho Bernardo Bernardo Center Dr. at Avenida P. (858) 451-2070



Come home to Anthony's

...and try our Fish Fry special. Catfish fingers and clam strips with our Southern-style batter, hush puppies, red beans and rice, and our famous colelaw. A down-home treat, all for just \$12.95.

## Dinner Special SURF & TURF

Shrimp Scampi and choice of Salmon or New York Steak \$18.95

Complete dinner. Not valid with any other offer or on holidays. With all taxes 3/14/91. 6737 La Jolla Blvd. • Reservations call (858) 456-6660 • Open until 9:30 pm

## \$14 OFF Dinner Entrée\*

Choose from halibut, fish, swordfish, salmon, mahi-mahi, filet mignon or New York steak. \*Any fresh fish or steak dinner and receive the second of equal or lesser value complimentary. Up to \$4. Not valid on holidays, with any other offer or on dinner specials. With ad. Expires 3/14/91. Live pianist 6-9 p.m. (Friday & Saturday) Shelby's Restaurant Beautiful Dining Atmosphere with Fireplace 5460 Dehesa Road in El Cajon • (800) 2-STYCUAN • www.stycuan.com

## All You Can Eat Sunday Brunch

**Paipa's Oasis Sunday Brunch** features all you can eat carved ham, peel and eat shrimp and prime rib of beef, a delicious omelet bar, Belgian waffles and much, much more! **Sunday Brunch \$11.95 served from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**OPEN DAILY** Must be 18 years or older to be admitted to Casino. 5460 Dehesa Road in El Cajon • (800) 2-STYCUAN • www.stycuan.com







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# Calendar Restaurants

**RODIO BAR AND GRILL** 10109  
Maine Avenue, Lakeside,  
619-390-7996. Inexpensive to  
moderate. Agnes and Lilian are the  
two blue-eyed Hungarian-born sisters  
who run this only-in-Lakeside institu-  
tion. It's a low, red, gaspetic-covered  
outdoor produce barn next the outdoor  
grill. A dirt parking lot hides under the  
trees, and an old freezer door is the main  
entrance to the restaurant, which has  
deer straight out of Dodge City.  
The menu has two sides — the side  
features big steaks, while the side of  
burgers priced sandwiches like  
Pommes, a flame-broiled quarter-  
pounder with steak fries, barbecue  
beams, and a Ch. Thunder night.  
The sisters' most cook one of her  
special Hungarian dishes, depending on  
what the customers have asked for —  
or on get down there and visit — E.B.

**TORII SUSHI** 2941 E. 11th Ave.,  
College Area, 619-287-3536. 17  
appetizers, 20 items of sushi, 19 spe-  
cialty rolls — all excellent and ex-  
tensive — are served in a modern pre-  
mise that seats 110. The sushi bar and  
12 tables. The hot mushroom special,  
the "3 of a kind roll," and the Torii  
tempura roll are all worth the trip.  
Diners are modestly priced, low to up-  
per middle. Lunch, Monday through  
Friday, diners nightly. Low to upper  
middle. — E.B.

**VALLEY HOUSE RESTAURANT**  
10767 Woodside Avenue (Mission  
Gorge Road) between Woodside and  
Magdalena, San Diego, 619-562-7478.  
You'll find your dream "Lisa Parker"  
here — a pork tenderloin that's  
pounded, placed in butter, deep fried  
and served on a bun. It's juicy and deli-  
cious. On Wednesday and Friday  
nights, all you can eat fish and chips  
are \$6. If you like trout and white  
gravy, this is the place for you. Colo-  
rial style decor, friendly service. Open

daily, breakfast, lunch, and dinner.  
Low to E.W.

## CENTRAL SAN DIEGO

**AMARA RESTAURANT** 4431 El Ca-  
jon Boulevard (at Fairmount),  
619-563-3666. www.amara.com.  
Open daily, inexpensive, vegetarian-  
friendly. Cash only. Restaurants not  
wheelchair-accessible. Can be noisy on  
weekends. The fare here is Eritrean  
(which proves very similar to  
Ethiopian), and the menu is long and  
uncommonly interesting. The meat  
combination plate is a terrific affair,  
including top-notch *tefaki derba*  
(known as *ye-aw* due to Ethiopian  
men), chicken and an egg in a rich,  
dark sauce; a similar dish with beef;  
great *gored* (lightly seared meat cubes  
in spicy butter) and lamb at the, a si-  
fity in a mild curry sauce. From the la-  
corte choices, consider *alidi* (the char-  
grilled meat in butter, and *kulwa*, a  
sprightly stir fry of lamb, beef, or  
chicken. Vegetable dishes are luscious,  
too. Entrees are served communally on  
a tray lined with a porous panicle, in-  
sane, which serves as an edible spoon  
and edible tablecloth — use pieces of it  
to scoop up morsels (in your right  
hand). Meats are cooked (or not  
cooked) to your order and seasoned to  
your specifications: understand that  
"hot" means seriously spicy. — N.W.

**LAO & CHINESE CUISINE** 4212 N.  
Tropical Avenue, Logan Heights,  
619-264-0814. This restaurant is a sim-  
ple place, large and spare around  
Formosa tables, that serve uncompli-  
cated, home-style Lao cuisine. We  
highly recommend the *Lark*, a spicy  
salmon, 619-264-0814. Inexpensive.  
Closed Tuesday. This old-time Chinese eatery  
was founded in 1913 by an immigrant  
from Canton; his grandchildren now  
run it and it's hardly changed in 70  
years. You'll find red-tinted hanging  
lanterns with translucent shades of  
sage, and a menu of local specialties,  
including the gold-rust *Chuan* Cantonese  
American chop suey, chicken, beef,  
baked pork, bean cake with shrimp  
and rice — all for a song. — E.B.

**PHOENICIA** 1831 Adams Avenue,  
Normal Heights, 619-282-4133. Inexpen-  
sive. To find this tiny restaurant —  
look for a window featuring a  
red and white striped awning. The  
word "Phoenicia" is written in Arabic  
and English. The menu is cramped, but  
includes, among other things, *pho* and  
baked eggplant stuffed with lamb, pine  
nuts, mince, and garlic, or the *kafra*

**LUCKY STAR SEAFOOD RESTAURANT** 3803 5th Street, corner of Uni-  
versity in K-Mart Shopping Mall,  
619-229-8228. The Cantonese and  
Mandarin menu runs to 225 dishes and  
is perfect for large parties or banquets.  
Not to be missed are lobster salad (all  
in advance to order), steamed whole  
fish, Dungeness crab in special sauce,  
flour, and 1-1/4 pound lobster. Call  
ahead for large parties. Open daily for  
dinner and diners. Low to upper  
middle. — E.B.

**PABAND** 3647 36th Street (at Lan-  
da), North Park, 619-291-4090. Inexpen-  
sive. In the Chur pulling up a chair?  
This is a definite. Monoculture around  
here about this place. For Romano  
and his family started here in 1967,  
putting the interior to look like you're  
among the stone arches of some Italian  
village. Pictures of Italian tourist tradi-  
tional line the walls, and the mu-  
sic is Italian mandolin ditties. The food  
is traditional Italian-American, with  
pizzazz-prime "daily special" like  
signature *pennone* and *spaghetti* with  
meatballs, plus salad and garlic bread.  
Regular dishes are bargain priced, too.  
— E.B.

**PERIN RESTAURANT** 2871 Univer-  
sity Avenue, North Park,  
619-295-2610. Inexpensive. Closed  
Tuesday. This old-time Chinese eatery  
was founded in 1913 by an immigrant  
from Canton; his grandchildren now  
run it and it's hardly changed in 70  
years. You'll find red-tinted hanging  
lanterns with translucent shades of  
sage, and a menu of local specialties,  
including the gold-rust *Chuan* Cantonese  
American chop suey, chicken, beef,  
baked pork, bean cake with shrimp  
and rice — all for a song. — E.B.

**PHOENICIA** 1831 Adams Avenue,  
Normal Heights, 619-282-4133. Inexpen-  
sive. To find this tiny restaurant —  
look for a window featuring a  
red and white striped awning. The  
word "Phoenicia" is written in Arabic  
and English. The menu is cramped, but  
includes, among other things, *pho* and  
baked eggplant stuffed with lamb, pine  
nuts, mince, and garlic, or the *kafra*

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habob, with ground meat, parsley,  
onions, and pita bread. The red trout is  
the *kafra* *neqah*, raw lamb with  
cracked wheat, onions and seasonings,  
but you'll find to call 24 hours ahead to  
get it. Homemade rose juice and  
Lebanese coffees are delicious, too. —  
E.B.

**ZIA'S AFGHAN CAFE** 4118 30th  
Street, 619-285-1635. This storefront  
cafe with only eight tables serves in-  
expensive but very well prepared Afghan  
food. Try three-bean soup, stuffed  
porky appetizers, banana squash with  
spicy yogurt sauce. Lunch and dinner  
buffet of bazaar items for six toppings  
for \$6.49. Open daily for lunch and  
dinner. Low to E.W.

**BOMBAY EXOTIC CUISINE IN IN-  
DIA** 3975 Fifth Avenue, Hillcrest Cin-  
emas complex, 619-298-3155. Don't  
miss the elegant food, the lively set-  
ting, the loving service. Owned by the  
former proprietors of Monsoon. You  
will find the food subtle and sophis-  
ticated. This Indian restaurant is a bless-  
ing to our community. All you can eat  
buffet lunch, \$7.98 daily. Open daily,  
lunch and dinner. Low to upper  
middle. — E.W.

**ALLEN'S BROWN BOWL** 2400 Fifth Ave-  
nue, 619-231-2912. Inexpensive. "This  
is the HOME of the Original Buffalo  
Chili Cheese Steak Sandwich!" Benito  
Guzman (pronounced Goo-dan-yi)  
has been shining in the years. "I import  
the meat from New Jersey. Set?" He  
holds up a ten-pound bag of deluxe  
beef from Quality Foods, Camden,  
New Jersey. It's got to be aged six  
months. We use one-inch slices of this  
meat. Simple but pleasant vari-  
eties. Open daily. Low to upper  
middle. — E.W.

**MANDARIN DYNASTY** 1458 Hillcrest  
Avenue, Hillcrest, 619-298-4001. Inexpen-  
sive. No border compromises here —  
just great home-cooking from  
Michuan, Guizhou, Jialisco, and  
Oaxaca, prepared by Luis Herrera  
thru, a biology teacher from Oaxaca  
with carne adobe, frijoles, choro, and  
onions) or the *mudra* carne adobe  
with queso, melted cheese, and guacamole  
made two tortillas and have a glass of  
Nuez (a refreshing walnut drink). —  
E.B.

**THE PARKHOUSE BATTERY** 4574  
Park Boulevard, Hillcrest, 619-295-7275. Small house provides  
charming setting for dining. Eclectic  
menu is prepared with average com-  
petence. You can make a meal from list  
of appetizers. Open daily breakfast,  
lunch, and dinner. Low to moderate.  
— E.W.

**WHOLE FOODS MARKET** 711 Univer-  
sity Avenue, Hillcrest, 619-298-3800. For vegans on the  
go. Whole Foods' prepared food  
section will feed you better, and faster,  
than any vegetarian restaurant in town.  
Outstanding selections include green  
chili and cheese polenta, Emerald  
Mushrooms salad or Rapid Dragon  
greens, both with a sweet surprise of  
raspberry jam, and especially, their  
famous salad, with American stuffing, but  
a delicious stuffed with almonds, for  
raisins, thin strips of scrambled egg,  
and bits of carrot and bell pepper.  
Whole Foods' vegetarian meals will  
tempt any meat-eater with their deli-  
cious originality. La Jolla branch at  
8825 Villa La Jolla Drive,  
619-462-6700. Low to moderate.  
— E.W.

**BEATMAN AT MISTER A'S** 2550  
Fifth Avenue, 12th floor, 619-239-1377.  
Bertand Hall of Mike Flores has re-  
created Mister A's. It's like a real tree  
house — open, airy, with gorgeous  
views. It's expensive. New vegetarian menu  
with over twenty items. Imitation  
chicken, beef, pork prepared from tele-

to be found here. The price of the en-  
tire includes soup or salad. Best bet is  
the \$44.00 per couple dinner, which  
consists of four courses plus full bottle  
of wine. This restaurant is often fre-  
quented by actors and writers, which  
adds cache to the evening. Open daily,  
lunch, Monday through Friday. Din-  
ner nightly. Moderate to expensive. —  
E.W.

**ICHEBAN** 1469 University Avenue,  
619-299-7023. Inexpensive. 14th Paris  
or Tokyo! At night, the cafe outside  
glows like a Van Gogh painting, except  
the customers are eating sushi and  
drinking green tea, not red wine. The  
best value is at lunch, with weekday  
specials like Bento combos (sushi rolls,  
crab, salmon, rice) and filling soups  
and noodles. Healthy! You betcha.  
The number menu (every dish) made  
from soup and seaweed is a great daily  
dinner fix. Open daily, lunch and dinner.  
Low to moderate. — E.W.

**COTTAGE CAFE** 2321 Fifth Avenue  
(corner of Juniper), 619-496-0271.  
Russian and Polish diners are served  
excellent soups, which include borscht,  
good chicken Kiev, stuffed cabbage  
(also vegetarian style), prog and pal-  
low (stuffed dumplings). All you can  
eat Polish buffet served daily. All items  
prepared home style by loving mom  
and pop. Simple but pleasant vari-  
eties. Open daily. Low to upper  
middle. — E.W.

**EXTRAORDINARY DESSERTS** 2929  
Fifth Avenue, 619-294-7001. If you've  
been searching for a place to have  
dessert after a meal or a moment of  
event, keep this dessert cafe in mind.  
The baker owner prepares sensational  
cakes, cookies, and all manner of  
chocolate goodies. Tea and coffee are  
uniformly good. In the summer,  
the patio is especially charming. Please  
note the late hours. Sunday through Thurs-  
day to 1:00 p.m. and Friday and Sat-  
urday to midnight. — E.W.

**FIFTH AND HAWTHORN** 515  
Hawthorn, 619-490-0490. Excellent,  
very fresh fish and seafood dinners are

to be found here. The price of the en-  
tire includes soup or salad. Best bet is  
the \$44.00 per couple dinner, which  
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Low to moderate. — E.W.

**COTTAGE CAFE** 2321 Fifth Avenue  
(corner of Juniper), 619-496-0271.  
Russian and Polish diners are served  
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**EXTRAORDINARY DESSERTS** 2929  
Fifth Avenue, 619-294-7001. If you've  
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The baker owner prepares sensational  
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**FIFTH AND HAWTHORN** 515  
Hawthorn, 619-490-0490. Excellent,  
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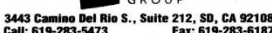








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126 San Diego Reader March 1, 2001







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