

NORTH COUNTY'S WEEKLY
Reader

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BY STEPHEN JONES AT WIRECUTTER.COM

CHAPTER ONE

It was always night in the Hillcrest Club, one of those Southern California cocktail lounges with the red vinyl booths, artificial plants, Formica bar, and no windows. Anyone coming in off the street, no matter

what time of day or night, had to stand in the doorway blinking either fierce sunlight or blinding neon out of his eyes for a good 30 seconds before he adjusted to the greasy lighting inside. If you didn't like who you saw coming in, you

had enough time to duck out the exit by the rest rooms before he could spot you. The door led to the parking lot by the entrance ramp to Route 163. It locked automatically from the inside so that you couldn't come in that way — you had to walk around the side of the building along a narrow concrete path. This arrange-

ment made it a long shot that your car would be recognized by a wife, secretary, or neighbor if you needed a few fast shots before 8:00 a.m. It also made the place perfect to soak in when you didn't want to run into creditors without notice.

Story continued on page 30

In California's brutal border land, the currency is flesh and blood.



John
Brizzolara

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Brewster Saved My Life

You missed the best feature of all concerning the Mission Bay High Class of '75 ("No One Ever Dances," March 8). On your cover (with Phil Hoffman) is Scott Brewster. He's the best heart surgeon in San Diego. He saved my life and countless others. His brilliance can't be measured.

Eric Taub
La Jolla

Cattle-Call Justice

The debate between prosecutors, defense attorneys, and the citizenry about whether 15-year-old Andy Williams should be tried as a minor or as an adult is not a debate about the trial at all ("City Lights," March 15). Rather, it is an indirect debate about how Williams will ultimately be sentenced. If Williams is tried as a minor, he has a chance of one day being released. If he is tried as an adult, he will die in prison.

No politician ever lost a vote being tough on crime. Politicians' increasing tendency to drastically constrain judicial discretion by mandating the sentence a defendant will receive upon conviction for a certain crime does not leave sufficient room for judges to consider the totality of circumstances in each case.

Under the law of California, and most other jurisdictions, a sentence would be required to sentence both Jeffrey Dahmer and Andy Williams to die in prison on the generic conviction of first-degree murder. Dahmer stored his victims' body parts in his refrigerator and ate them. Williams is a youngster whose issues have yet to be quantified. Returning sufficient discretion to the hands of judges (most of whom are former prosecutors) would inspire confidence in our criminal justice system and would prevent the need for prosecutors to rest from the legal fiction that Williams is an adult.

That Andy Williams apparently committed multiple adult crimes does not make him an adult. It may well be that Andy Williams deserves life in prison with no parole. I would just feel better if that decision were made by a judge after considering all of the evidence as opposed to

power-hungry politicians who in their zeal to pander to the lowest common denominator have seen fit to pass laws that turn what should be the careful process of sentencing individuals into a one-size-fits-all administrative cattle call.

Mark Whitney

Crucial Sand Imports

Justin Wolff's article ("City Lights," March 15) about the highly emotional issue of bluff erosion and its impacts on beaches in North County was balanced and helps to identify not only the involved individuals and organizations, but also their positions and the rationales for them. Coastal oceanographers and engineers at Scripps Institution of Oceanography have been studying this coastline for decades. Their data and scientific understanding lends support to, or refutes, many of the viewpoints that were expressed. For example, careful measurement has shown that the San Diego shoreline is eroding very slowly, inches per decade, when compared to most of the American coastline. This is not the same phenomenon as the beach narrowing that results from cutting off the natural supplies of sand that would make up the natural losses. Cliff-top erosion, for reasons discussed thoroughly in Wolff's article, has greatly exceeded this rate in many areas. Beaches in North County are very thin sand veneers that seasonally cover or expose underlying rock and cobble. Fortunately, it is this rock that controls the rate of shoreline retreat in most locations.

Mr. Reingewirtz's simplistic belief that plugging the lagoons causes beach loss and that opening them would restore the beaches, although appealing, does not stand scrutiny. Lagoons plug naturally when the amount of water exiting on high tides is no longer sufficient to overcome the transport of sand along the neighboring beaches. The volume of all San Diego County lagoons has been decreasing over geological time because of sea-level rise and sediment deposition. It is interesting to note that once the opening to Batiquitos Lagoon was maintained, a very significant amount of sand was lost to the beach system through the formation of a large rib tide shoal inside the lagoon — the opposite of what Mr. Reingewirtz predicts. Flood-control measures far from the shoreline have assured that the water-courses that feed these lagoons will never again deliver significant amounts of sand to the beach.

Beach nourishment projects in which sand is retrieved from deposits offshore that would just feel better if that decision were made by a judge after considering all of the evidence as opposed to

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MARCH 22, 2001

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An archive of City Lights stories can now be searched on the Internet at www.adreader.com

Revenge of the Union-Tribune Sixth District city council candidate **Peter Navarro** is making headlines in his investigation into how those huge *Union-Tribune* signs got on the back of Qualcomm Stadium overlooking the busy I-15 and I-8 interchange in Mission Valley. And the U-T is none too happy about it. The big billboards suddenly appeared without explanation last year, causing consternation among neighbors in District Six, who complained of public blight and questioned how the U-T wound up with such primo advertising space. Two weeks ago, Navarro wrote to San Diego city manager **Mike Uberuaga**, asking for more details. Last week, Uberuaga responded: "Q: How much are the Padres charging the *Union-Tribune* on a monthly basis for this signage? A: Under the agreement, the Chargers and the Padres have the right to directly arrange for signage, provided that it is not for alcohol or tobacco. The City is not notified of the amount that is being paid for the advertising. Q: What is the city's share of the revenue? A: The city receives no revenue from this signage. Q: Did former City Manager **Jack McGroarty** lobby your office for permission to put up this signage? A: Mr. McGroarty was a part of the negotiating team for the Padres when the Qualcomm Extension Agreement was written and as such was involved in the negotiation discussions. Q: Was the previous councilmember, **Valerie Stallings**, informed of the decision by your office to allow the signage? If so, did she approve it or object? A: Ms. Stallings voted in favor of the Qualcomm extension agreement, which did include the provisions for the signage you have referenced. Q: Does the *Union-Tribune* hold any equity position in the Padres or own property in the ballpark zone? A: The City is not aware of the *Union-Tribune* holding any equity position in the Padres or owning any property in the ballpark zone. The U-T, which has carefully ignored the stadium-sign controversy, quickly struck back against Navarro with an editorial attack based on opposition research the newspaper credited to the camp of **Mike Pallamary**, one of Navarro's ten rivals for the council seat.



Back to the future When downtown real estate developer **Peter Janopaul** took office as Mayor **Dick Murphy's** pick for new San Diego Unified Port District commissioner two weeks ago, the port's public relations department put out a news release touting Janopaul's business acumen and public service record. "Janopaul also serves as President of Citizens Trust Housing Corporation, a private, nonprofit company focused on affordable multi-family housing." Well, not quite. A check of public records shows no such company exists, a fact confirmed by Janopaul in a telephone interview last week. "We were going to set it up but haven't pulled the trigger yet. Once you set up something like that you have to pay corporate taxes, so for now, it's in the future."

Flutie's flakes First it was trouble with sloppy record-keeping and excessive expenses at slinger **Tony Gwynn's** nonprofit foundation. Now it's new Chargers quarterback **Doug Flutie**, set to grapple with a less-than-charitable controversy. According to a report in last week's *Boston Herald*, Flutie and his wife **Laurie** have demanded that the Giving Back Fund, a Boston-based foundation for which they have raised more than \$2 million, turn the money to them so that they can set up their own charitable operation. But Giving Back's president and CEO **Marc Pellick** says that's impossible. "The money raised for the foundation was raised here and belongs to that foundation. They could certainly apply for a grant and would be considered like every other charity that applies." Flutie's agent says no dice and that new bones of Flutie Flakes cereal, with him in his new Chargers uniform, will drop the old charity's name and add that of Flutie's new effort, dedicated to fighting autism, which affects his son Doug Jr. — Padres owner **John Moores** shows up on the latest *Forbes* 100-name roster of info-tech "working riches," but just barely. Moores, with a net worth of \$189.8 million, is ranked 93 on the list. First is **Bill Gates** with \$54.3 billion, and **Larry Ellison** is second with \$42.1 billion.

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.



Allen Glick

With Friends Like These

By Matt Potter

If they think of him at all these days, most San Diegans probably remember Allen Glick as the Mafia puppet, thinly disguised

as "Mr. Green," in Martin Scorsese's movie version of *Casino*, a book by Nick Pileggi. Back in the mid-1970s, Glick, a small-time San Diego real estate developer with an office just down the street from Mr. A's restaurant, was set up by the Midwest mob as straw owner of the Stardust and Fremont hotels on the Las Vegas strip. Glick's main job in Las Vegas, it later emerged, was to sit quietly while two Mafia henchmen, Frank "Lefty" Rosenthal and Tony "The Ant" Spilotro, skimmed millions from the hotel's casino, Rosenthal, a hand-icapper, bookie, and sports fixer,



Robert De Niro as character based on Frank "Lefty" Rosenthal



Jeremy Simms

Gang "jewel" thefts. Spilotro also ended up two-timing with Rosenthal's wife Geri, an ex call girl.

In the movie, a fictionalized version of Spilotro, played by Joe Pesci, is seen to murder a character closely resembling Tamara Rand, a San Diego real estate woman whose business dealings with Glick had soured and who had threatened to blow the whistle on him. Rand was gunned down in 1975 in the kitchen of her Mission Hills home, arguably becoming one of San Diego's most famous victims of a Mafia hit, though the case was never officially solved. When the feds moved in on Glick's operation and shut it down in 1979, he lost his casinos and became a cooperating witness, immunized from prosecution in a celebrated criminal case against 15 members of the 25 killings provided the muscle for the operation; in his spare time he freelanced around Las Vegas with his own makeshift crew of mafiosi, breaking into upscale homes in a series of high-profile "Hole in the Wall

Rosenthal's friend Spilotro, a hit man suspected of at least 25 killings, provided the muscle for the operation; in his spare time he freelanced around Las Vegas with his own makeshift crew of mafiosi, breaking into upscale homes in a series of high-profile "Hole in the Wall



Joe Pesci as character based on Tony Spilotro



Sharon Stone as character based on Tony Spilotro's wife

author Pileggi. He was portrayed by Robert De Niro in the movie.

Spilotro, indicted for his jewel thefts, disappeared in June 1986; his body was later found alongside that of his brother Michael's in shallow graves dug into an Indiana cornfield. *Casino* depicts their gruesome murder by baseball bat-wielding executioners from the Chicago mob. Glick, meanwhile, always maintaining he had been duped by the mob, continued to live an outwardly peaceful and prosperous life behind the large walls and elaborate security devices ringing his La Jolla mansion. Over the years since his Las Vegas endeavor, Glick's business links have variously been reported to include casinos in the Philippines and Costa Rica; motorboat gambling ventures in Pennsylvania; electronic lotteries; and the manufacture of a canned diet drink called California Slim. Author Dan Moldea wrote that Glick had been in a real estate deal with Oakland Raiders owner Al Davis. Glick was also an investor with convicted felon Richard Silberman



Simms property at 6350 Camino de La Costa, La Jolla



Simms property at 8006 El Paseo Grande, La Jolla

in Silberman's ill-fated gold-mining venture, Yuba Natural Resources. For the most part, Glick has managed to lead a low-key existence, giving generously to the private schools attended by his children, playing golf at La Costa, and easily mixing with La Jolla's beautiful people. But that began to change last fall when the *Arizona Republic* blew the whistle on part-time La Jolla Jeremy Simms, a Glick associate with a checkered past who now heads the Turf Paradise horse-racing track in Phoenix.



Tony "The Ant" Spilotro

Simms, his family members, and some La Jolla friends—including high-dollar resident real estate broker Maxine Gellens and Dr. Don and Emily Einhorn—were granted a three-year license to turn Turf Paradise in May of last year by the Arizona Racing Commission. But after a series of September stories in the *Republic* linking Simms to Glick, Arizona governor Jane Hull sacked racing department chief Jim Higginbottom and ordered an investigation into Simms and his operation.

Last week, the Arizona gaming department notified Simms that his application to operate video-gaming devices and off-track betting at Indian casinos in the state would be denied. In addition to his relationship with Glick, regulators said, Simms's connection with a bribery case against ex-California coastal commissioner Mark Nathanson in which Simms sought a permit to build a pool at his La Jolla mansion, made him unworthy of an Arizona gaming license. An unsuccessful attempt to stop construction



Simms property at 8454 El Paseo Grande, La Jolla



Simms property at 8454 El Paseo Grande, La Jolla

of the Sheraton on Torrey Pines by other payoffs to Nathanson also figure in the license denial. Simms has vowed to appeal the ruling. He and his partners reportedly paid \$53 million for the track operation last year and hope to add slot machines at the track. He claims that he no longer talks to Glick, and the monetary dealings he had with Nathanson were the result of extortion. In any case, the allegations against Simms, as spelled out in



Frank "Lefty" Rosenthal with Frank Sinatra

financial dealings and personal relationship with Allen Glick, He has pursued economic gain in an occupational manner by the use of corrupt payments. Mr. Simms's prior activities and association pose a threat to the public interest of the Tribe and State, and the effective regulation and control of Class III Gaming. "Between 1992 and 1998, Simms advanced Glick a total of exactly \$1 million. In interviews with Department Investigators, Jeremy Simms and Allen Glick

to Glick did not disclose these monthly transactions. The transactions were contained in tax files held on Simms's behalf by his accountants. Other than a handwritten note by Simms noting the loss on the sale of these bonds and that he was loaning Glick approximately \$250,000 each month, no documentation exists to support the loans from Simms to Glick. When shown the documents evidencing the cash transactions, Glick's accountant Thomas Reid, CPA, indicated he did not know anything about the monthly wire transfers between Simms and Glick. "Mr. Simms outlined his relationship with Mr. Allen R. Glick as follows: Mr. Simms met Mr. Glick in the 1970s. His cousin, Ron Hecker, introduced them. In 1985 Mr. Simms started to socialize with Mr. Glick and his family. Around this time, Mr. Simms learned Mr. Glick had owned some hotels and casinos in Las Vegas during the 1970s. Mr. Simms learned that Mr. Glick owned and sold the Hacienda Hotel, Fremont Hotel, Marina Hotel, and the Stardust Hotel. Mr. Simms also learned Mr. Glick was to be a government witness in a trial in Kansas City against several organized crime figures. Simms's cousin, Ron Hecker [sic], introduced to tell Simms that Glick was not an organized crime figure and had been victimized by the Mafia. "More recent magazine articles and a book about the trial seemed to confirm my cousin's belief that Mr. Glick was a victim of the Mafia." After the trial, Mr. Simms and his cousin were among the

The book actually stated that Mr. Glick knew the person arranging the loans, Frank Robinson, was the organized-crime boss of Milwaukee. "During Mr. Simms's interview, conducted on September 22, 2000, Mr. Simms stated he no longer had a relationship with Mr. Glick. He stated he ceased the relationship about a week or two ago." I told him that based upon things that have been put in the news papers recently, I thought it would be best for myself and for him if we did not continue our friendship, even though I still cared about him, because I'm in the gaming business and because of his articles—the articles in the paper.

"Mr. Simms attempted to describe himself as a naive businessman. Even though he founded a bank and sat on the finance committee, Mr. Simms stated he was not aware of the rules regulating the reporting of certain financial transactions. Specifically, he stated he did not know that money transactions at a bank of \$10,000 or above had to be reported. To the com-



Richard Silberman

franchise for a luxury automobile dealership that Honda planned to open under the name of Aaron. Robbins indicated he had connections with controlled by organized crime.

CITY LIGHTS

CITY LIGHTS

CITY LIGHTS

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Friends like these

continued from page 5

Honda, having performed favors for Honda as a California State Senator in connection with legislation regarding Honda's all-terrain vehicles, and in turn

Robbins would receive the rights to an Acura dealership franchise. Robbins offered Simms a 50 percent interest if Simms would act as a front man to the Acura dealership.

"It should be noted that Honda was awarding Acura dealerships only to existing owners of Honda dealerships.

Neither Robbins nor Simms held an ownership interest in a Honda dealership. Robbins told Simms that if they could find an existing Honda dealer who was not interested in an Acura franchise, Honda would turn the Acura franchise over to a straw man for Robbins and

Simms, who would then transfer the Acura franchise over to Robbins and Simms. In consideration for the inside deal, Robbins would have to purchase a new Acura Legend for a Paul Priolo. Paul Priolo was a lobbyist for Honda.

"Simms, with full knowledge of Robbins's inside position,

agreed to Robbins's terms and located an existing Honda dealer willing to act as a straw man in the transaction. In October 1986, Robbins and Simms sold their rights to the Acura franchise, for which they received \$400,000. Simms received \$150,000 and Robbins received

continued on page 8

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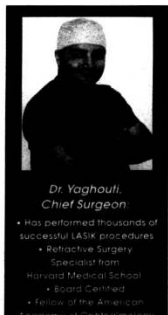
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continued from page 6
\$250,000.
"On February 28, 2001, Investigator Thomas spoke with Mr. Bob Baker on the telephone. Mr. Baker is the person who bought the Acura dealership from Mr. Simms and Senator Robbins. Mr. Baker stated he met with Mr. Simms at Simms' La Jolla residence. Simms informed Baker that he wanted \$400,000 for the dealership. Mr. Baker became uncomfortable with Mr. Simms when Mr. Simms stated that he (Simms)

had 'underworld' contacts. Investigator Thomas asked Mr. Baker if by underworld he (Baker) meant Mafia or Organized Crime. Mr. Baker replied, 'Yes.' From then on, Mr. Baker only dealt with Senator Robbins.
"Mr. Simms was involved with Senator Robbins on two incidents involving corrupt payments or questionable benefit to a government official to influence a decision. Mr. Simms requested a permit from the California Coastal Commission to build a lap pool at his residence in La Jolla. In April of 1987, California Coastal Commission staff recommended denial of the permit. Mr. Simms

discussed the denial with Senator Robbins, and the Senator suggested Mr. Simms contact California Coastal Commissioner Nathanson. Mr. Simms contacted Coastal Commissioner Nathanson. Coastal Commissioner Nathanson asked Mr. Simms for a \$100,000 loan. Nathanson reminded Simms that he was helping him get his lap pool... Mr. Simms received approval to build his lap pool. Coastal Commissioner Nathanson received his \$100,000 loan.
"On April 29, 1992, Simms, in sworn testimony before a federal grand jury, admitted the following:
"Question: And did you understand, sir, that if you made the loan to Mark Nathanson for \$100,000, he would use his po-

sition as a Coastal Commissioner to make sure that you got a Coastal Commission permit for your lap pool and that the Sheraton Torrey Pines project would be defeated?
"Simms: Yes.
"In early 1987, Jack Naiman was attempting to have a hotel project located in Torrey Pines approved by the California Coastal Commission. At the same time a competing hotel project (Sheraton Torrey Pines) was seeking similar approval from the California Coastal Commission. Naiman asked Simms for assistance in defeating the competing project. Simms formed the Friends of Torrey Pines and appeared at community group, city council, and planning commission meetings to voice opposition to

the Sheraton Torrey Pines project. Simms approached Robbins about his (Simms) work in opposing the Sheraton project, and Robbins suggested that Simms contact Nathanson for assistance.
"Despite Simms' efforts, the Sheraton Torrey Pines project was approved by the local city council. Simms contacted Robbins about the city council approval and Robbins again suggested Simms contact Nathanson for assistance as the Sheraton project still required California Coastal Commission approval. Simms agreed to call Nathanson. Robbins also told Simms to use pay telephones when contacting Robbins or Nathanson to discuss the Torrey Pines project. In May 1987, Naiman at Simms suggestion

met with and asked Nathanson for assistance.
"In June 1987, Robbins and Nathanson met and agreed to seek a \$250,000 payment from Naiman for Nathanson's assistance. On June 4, 1987, Naiman met with Robbins and Robbins contacted Robbins about the city council approval and Robbins again suggested Simms contact Nathanson for assistance as the Sheraton project still required California Coastal Commission approval. Simms agreed to call Nathanson. Robbins also told Simms to use pay telephones when contacting Robbins or Nathanson to discuss the Torrey Pines project. In May 1987, Naiman at Simms suggestion

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would be paid. On June 4, 1987, Nathanson asked Simms if he could borrow some cash to make the payment demanded by Robbins. Simms agreed to advance Naiman the cash. Simms also told Naiman that Robbins informed him Naiman should make withdrawals from the bank in increments below \$10,000. Robbins informed Simms any transaction over \$10,000 would cause the bank to make a record, which is something Robbins wanted to avoid.
"On the morning of June 5, 1987, Simms withdrew \$9000 from First Interstate Bank using his MasterCard. Later on the same morning of June 5, 1987, Naiman went to Simms' house and collected the \$9000. Naiman informed Simms he would combine Simms' money with the cash he withdrew and made a payment to Robbins.
"On May 9, 1991, Simms in sworn testimony before a federal grand jury admitted the following:
"Question: Did you understand that the \$9,000 that you had withdrawn and gave to Naiman was part of the \$250,000 demanded by Robbins and Nathanson?
"Simms: Yes.
"Question: And that that \$9,000 was part of an illegal payment — an extortion or bribe payment that Robbins had demanded from Naiman and that Nathanson had confirmed had been demanded from Robbins?
"Simms: Yeah.
"Question: You understood that that was a corrupt payment?
"Simms: Yes, I did.
"Question: And you understood that that money was being paid in connection with an effort to influence the official vote of the Coastal Commission, correct?
"Simms: Yes.
"Both Robbins and Nathanson pled to a violation of the racketeering statute and filing a false tax return. Mr. Simms received immunity from prosecution in exchange for his testimony against Robbins and Nathanson. During his grand jury testimony, Mr. Simms admitted that on at least three occasions, he made corrupt payments or loaned money to public officials for his personal gain.
"During his interview with Department of Racing investigators, Mr. Simms made the following comment about FBI Agent Wedick writing a letter on his behalf: "...I wish I could send him Wedick something for taking the time to write that letter that he wrote that time because I'm Wedick something for taking the time when I got that letter, if I could have done something to make his life better, if I could have gone and paid off his mortgage, not as a bribe..."
"This is not to say Mr. Simms was seeking to bribe the Racing investigators during the interview. However, it is evidence of how cavalier and comfortable Mr. Simms is in his paying money to influence people's

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STRAIGHT FROM THE HIP



MA of Reader:
I have a Toyota truck that has a lift on it and tires that are a little bigger than the factory tires were. The other day I passed one of those radar machines that tell you what the speed limit is and what your speed is. My speedometer said I was doing 40 mph, and the machine said 44 mph. I know my speedometer is off because of the bigger tires, but my question is this: when the rate of speed increases, does the difference in my speedometer vs. actual speed increase, decrease, or remain the same?

—LB of Poway

Car questions. Phooey. Can't think of a subject that generates more heat and less light than car questions. Get two guys, a case of beer, and a Ford with bad valves together in one place, and in half a day you'll have two guys, a car that's still broken, and a fistfight. Guaranteed. But since the only high-risk sport I participate in is Xtreme Researching, I'll give this one a shot. As you know, your speed will always lag behind your actual speed because it hasn't been recalibrated for the longer distance you travel on your larger-circumference tires. There is a formula you can use to refigure your actual speed, using your new-versus-old tire size. It gives you a percentage value that you can apply to your speed reading, no matter how fast you're going. The ratio remains constant.

My car experts actually suggest you ignore the formula, which some say isn't really accurate for every set of tires and every vehicle. They recommend you take the Libmobile out and run a timing check on a flat road with mile markers. (Obviously, you should ignore your odometer since it's lagging too because of the new tires.) Travel a constant speed between the mile markers, time it with a stopwatch, divide 3600 by the number of seconds it took to cover the mile, and that will give you your actual speed at that speedometer reading. From that you can figure the percentage of correction for your truck. Or you can stop being so cheap and get a new gear for your speedo cable (or reprogram it if it's digital). Or forget the whole thing and take the Ma Alice approach to speed regulation. If you're getting a ticket, you're going too fast; if people are honking at you and flipping you off, you're going too slow.

Hey, Matt:
Recently the daily paper published a letter from the director of the U.S. Mint defending the issuance of the so-called "Golden Dollars." He indicated that the Mint generated a profit of \$800,000,000 (that's 800 million!) due to the issuance of the G.D.s. My question is: How does the Mint make a "profit"? I have been unable to get an answer from the Mint; probably too busy missing other unnecessary pocket-ripping cuts.

—Les Land, San Diego

The Mint always makes a profit on its coins. It costs less than a penny to make a penny and only 12 cents to make the \$20.00 coin. But the Mint's main business is to make the Federal Reserve (the "bureaucracy" that distributes them to banks). The Mint sells coins to the Fed at face value. That \$8-cent profit on every bank is officially known as seigniorage. So when the Mint struck a billion \$2-cent coins, they were suddenly raking in dough. At least that's the way they figure it.

Urban Legend Gets More Mileage

Dear MA:
I've noticed in the past made about the 100-mpg carburner being an urban legend. There is such a device in existence. Whether or not one will get 100 mpg, I can't say. But improving mileage by 25% is nothing to laugh at. I've attached the (Internet) links, and I strongly suggest, on "knowing of all things," that you do some serious reading. I can vouch for the integrity of the company. My best friend, who built the manual machine, has built a device called a "Brown's Gas Machine." He built it, and it works! It's a wedding, torch that uses water for fuel and is capable of welding steel, brick, quartz, aluminum, cast iron, and titanium. It can fuse dissimilar compounds, such as brick to iron, and can vaporize diamonds. You're lagging, Matt. Had to call you on this one.

—Little Lady Pirate, the net

I hope you realize, while your boyfriend is vaporizing your jewelry and welding the lawn furniture to your patio, he's messing with hydrogen and oxygen gases. Has he blown the place up yet? Well, it will give you something to look forward to. I'm not sure how the Brown's Gas thing proves that the 100-mpg carburner exists, but that's what keeps urban legends alive. And of course if the tale sticks around for enough decades, some car company actually will develop a 100-mpg carburner, then you can say, "See, I told you so." Anyway, Brown's Gas (hydrogen and oxygen electrolyzed out of water, then recombined) will weld some things. So, big surprise there. But most of the claims made for how hot it will get are apparently bunk, according to welding cognoscenti. Of course, there are always the true believers. The website's other idea of running your car on hydrogen extracted from water using old beer cans as some explosive chamber. Though the competing air-fueled engine (MTM) calling on any \$29.99, or above Congular Home Plan. MTM offer applies to anyone for incoming or outgoing voice calls to or from a Congular PCS subscriber enrolled in the MTM plan to or from another Congular PCS subscriber. MTM subscriber must be within our CANV network to take advantage of the MTM minutes. Excludes applicable long distance charges, calls while roaming out of our CANV network calls to voice mail, Wildlife (not available in all areas), and call forwarding calls. Trade-in phone must be GSM or CDMA technology and complete with original home charger and will be traded for a single of the 11 listed accessory items.

Got a question you need answered? Get it straight from the hip. Write to Matthew Alice, c/o the Reader, P.O. Box 6060, San Diego, CA 92160-5063, or fax your questions to 619-231-0489, or e-mail to hymatt@att.net via the Internet.

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Dear Aunt Trudy,

My wife and I had a falling out with friends who are a husband-and-wife realtor team. Three years ago we expressed interest in purchasing another house. One house they showed us was nice enough, but the others were not even close. Months passed, and we rarely heard from them. Our kids play together, so we would see them and say we were still looking. The wife would occasionally complain about other clients who were a pain because they had to show them too many houses. There were also remarks about how there wasn't much on the market in our price range. After about six months of no response and another year of them occasionally showing us a token shack, I called another agent and found there was plenty on the market in our price range. At an open house a real estate agent said, "Why have you waited two years to buy a second house when it's been a buyer's market all along?" Another agent found us a house, which we purchased through that agent. One day when my son and I dropped over, the wife of this couple yelled at me harshly in front of my 13-year-old boy. She said that as friends we should have bought from her. Then her husband came out and just stood there silently. I left after my son started crying. Later, we decided to sell our first house. We did it through a multiple-listing service that offered the selling agent a commission. Most of the local realtors brought clients through. I feel our "friends" boycotted us out of spite. I also think she yelled at me to guilt-trip me into listing my first house with her. I didn't because she'd acted so unprofessionally when she yelled at me in front of my son. I know she had a record year and did not need my business. What's your take? What can I say to patch things up?

Dear E.H.,
I notice you put the word "friends" in quotes. You were right to do so. Your letter shows why old wives' tales never to do business with friends. These "pals" gave you substandard service. If they wanted to keep your business, why didn't they accomplish this by simply doing a good job? Back where I come from, as the Wizard of Oz used to say, folks worked harder for their friends. They didn't slack off when helping a buddy, telling themselves, this is just a task I'm doing for a friend, so it doesn't deserve my best effort. You're obligated to give them your business, while they're not obligated to do a credible job? Of course, you took your business elsewhere. Who wouldn't? If you must try to reconcile with this difficult duo, tell them you'd like to for-

get the business difficulties, let bygones be bygones, and start fresh. See if they're willing. And good luck if they are. These are the kinds of "friends" you'll need a whip and a chair to deal with.

Dear Aunt Trudy,
I'm almost 28 years old and will soon complete my MFA in creative writing. I left a good-paying position in a large corporation three years ago to pursue writing and get my degree. Between the money I saved from my last job and my husband's income I don't have to work, but when school is finished I feel I should do something "real" and just write on the side. Part of this urge is due to how others see me (as a silly girl who writes poems while her poor husband toils 60+ hours a week). I am happy with the work I've been doing in school, but I don't have a lot to show for it. Just a degree most people haven't heard of and one poem published in a small literary magazine. I'm not considering giving up writing, but maybe I should get another corporate job even though it'd only be for the money?

Dear B.,
If you're on fire to write, and your hubby is willing to bring home the bacon, then you write, girl. Read tons and write reams of poems and immerse yourself in whatever feeds the writing. If you and your husband understand each other on this issue, then ignore the evil inner demons sneering that every body thinks you're mooching off your man. Likely no one thinks that or only bibliophobic fools. If you love poetry, pursue it. You can always get a job later, if necessary; preferably part-time. I don't want you to get to my advanced age and find yourself breathless with regrets.

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@sdreader.com

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Frustratingly, but sensibly I'm sure, the site offers no interpretation of the cave art it so thoughtfully presents. The common explanation, you might remember from Art History 101, is that as Paleolithic cave dwellers discovered how to make stains from mud and plants, they first made hand prints on the cave walls, perhaps to mark births and deaths

among their tribes. As their graphic skills developed along with their ritualistic ones, they began to paint red ochre on the walls of the caves. The red that they thought the most to them – the animals that depended on for clothing and food. Why else? Well, we can only imagine. It was 20,000 years ago. But for sure the faded pictures of the animals were there. While the bulls, cats, and stags appear to be mere outlines, sketched rapidly and with rudimentary shading, one somehow intuits their massive bulk and musculature and awesomeness. The cave paintings are the magic of the cave painters: they're delicate but beefy. The simple outlines of a Chinese-ink drawing elicit more cerebral, meditative responses; the silhouettes at Lascaux pulsate with phylogeny and aboriginal phenomena. Why, perhaps that's because they're painted on stone, which gives them a unique substantiality. A fleeting one, though: the French government closed the cave at Lascaux in 1963 because of the damage caused by carbon dioxide produced from human respiration slowly

At the back of Lasciaux's Chamber of Engravings the ground falls away, giving access to the *Scene of the Dead Man* on the lower level — "one of the most outstanding works of cave art." The panel's originality, the site claims, lies in its "narrative possibilities, expressed just as much by the liveliness of the different players as by the distribution of the figures and principal themes expressed: man, bison,

rhinoceros." The scene portrays a confrontation between a man and a bison; a rhinoceros flees off into cave-wall space. The man—we can tell he's dead because he's fallen (though, admittedly, there's no ground to fall on)—is just a hollow stick figure; he contains none of the potential energy of the bison. The artist imbued the animal with more life than he did himself, or his friend, or his brother, or whoever the dead man is. ■

—Justin Wolff

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IN PASSING

Little Girl Gone

The first public money spent by the City of San Diego for an outdoor, free-standing sculpture funded a completely uncontroversial work. Even today the statue probably wouldn't raise taxpayers' sensitive art hackles. In 1925 George Marston and the San Diego Chamber of Commerce decided to honor La Jolla philanthropist Ellen Scripps for her contributions to community life. As Marston said at the dedication, the biggest problem was the choice of a tribute. "Due to the modesty and quiet dignity of Miss Scripps," he explained, "nothing costly, imposing, or ostentatious could be suitably presented."

The Chamber called on La Mesa artist James Tank Porter, who was known, among other things, for his sculptures of children. Porter had studied at the Art Students League and Columbia University's Beaux Arts Institute. He won medals for his work in several competitions, including the Prix de Rome. His sculptures, mostly portrait busts and figures, were exhibited around California and in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and in several American universities. John Spreckels' portrait at the organ pavilion in

Balboa Park is Porter's work. Later, the artist established his own art school and foundry in La Mesa. During the Depression, he supported his art by manufacturing sprinkler heads. For his San Diego commission, Porter designed a 26-inch-high bronze fountain — a young girl kneeling at a small circular pond. Water flowed from her cupped hands and bubbled from a tube in the center of the tiled pool. The committee chose to place the sculpture, with its companion 22-foot-

long, curved, pink marble bench, near the playground that Miss Scripps had donated to the children of La Jolla, on Prospect Street, where Draper and Silverado intersect, in front of what is now the La Jolla Recreation Center. The *La Jolla Journal* covered the dedication ceremony on June 14, 1926. San Diego and La Jolla socialites attended the event, plus the graduating class of the nearby Bishop's School. The La Jolla Boy Scouts were also "drawn up on one side in parade order...."



A tribute to Ellen Scripps

"Square stepping stones led to the charming green bird-pool, set in its circle of darker tiles.... When the audience had arranged itself, ...Miss Leonore Williams, graceful Playground dancer, glided forward on the lawn, clad in Grecian costume, with sandals and ribbons of gold, and a file of gold leaves on her head. With a quick gesture, she set three white blossoms afloat on the pool, then stepped into an interpretive dance and ended by lifting a blanket of flowers and displaying the exquisite kneeling child-figure."

In 1990 Bruce Kramling, then curator of collections for the San Diego Historical Society, surveyed selected art works owned by the City of San Diego. Among his comments on the statue he noted that the hands, knees, and base of the

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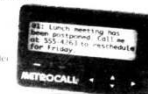
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sculpture were "badly encrusted and pitted," with corrosion spots on the bronze and cracks in the basin. The water jets no longer worked, though "the bronze retains its original patina where it is not affected by the encrustations. Stagnant water in the pool has greatly disfigured the tiles." He classified the sculpture as a major work in Porter's career and ranked the artist as "of major regional significance."

It's unknown whether the thieves appreciated the history of the statue. They didn't seem to care about its condition. On June 28, 1995, about 1:00 in the morning by everyone's best guess, Porter's tribute to Miss Scripps was uprooted and carried off. It was not elaborately secured to its concrete base. Today Porter's kneeling child likely resides in a garden at a private home, taken by an admirer or by someone who knew they could easily and quietly sell it. Perhaps it was melted for scrap. Despite a \$1000 reward and a listing in a worldwide registry of missing and stolen art, Porter's statue, San Diego's first outdoor public commission, has never surfaced.

The La Jolla Historical Society and the recreation center organized a private fundraising campaign and a design competition to replace the statue. They chose local sculptor Mary Buckman's entry. There's no record of how much the city paid Porter for his commission, but the replacement cost about \$8000 for the design, casting, mold-making, foundry work, and installation. The new Ellen Browning Scripps Memorial was dedicated on June 28, 1997.

Porter's statue was a nude in a simplified classical style. The child had a short, curly bob typical of the day. Buckman's more contemporary long-haired young girl, seated casually, barefoot, but clothed in a short, draping dress, looks down into the pond. She reaches out a finger as if to trail it in the water. Buckman's sculpture and the new, much larger semi-circular gray stone pool have no problematic plumbing; and when they were installed, special attention was paid to security. ■

— Linda Nevin

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Story continued from page 1



Wirecutter

A THOUSAND
THINGS
MIGHT HAVE
HAPPENED
TO HERMAN

It was late afternoon and I didn't think I was avoiding anyone in particular. I owed the phone company \$80 and my landlady twice that, but I wasn't worried about them sending anyone around to collect. I was working on forgetting the dead man I had left behind that morning and the mess I had made over the weekend while trying to trace one Herman Villegas in Tijuana. I wasn't expecting any more excitement when the front door of the Hillcrest Club swung open and two figures were silhouetted against the feral brightness of University Avenue.

One of them must have weighed in at 250 and was tall enough to have to duck the door frame. They both wore nice suits. People with nice suits don't often drink at the Hillcrest. They had followed me from T.J., but I didn't know that. That's probably because I'm not really as bright as I like to think I am. All that business with the cops had distracted me on the ride back up. I kept drinking my beer and resumed my conversation with Bananas—a 67-year-old, shell-shocked Anzio vet and a pleasant drunk—a great guy to talk to when you didn't have anything in particular to say and felt like saying it.

"Why is it," I asked him, "that every joint like this one in San Diego County has plastic ferns? I mean anything will grow in this part of the country, even in the dark, choked by alcohol and tobacco fumes. Why phony plants? You tell me that."

The old man smiled a gummy

smile and said the only thing I'd ever heard him say in the three years I'd known him, the only thing anyone had heard him say—as far as I know—since Anzio. "God bless America," he intoned, "nickel and dime."

That was Bananas's act. His entire act except for holding out his thumb and forefinger horizontally when he wanted another shot of Kessler. More often than not he made as much sense as anyone else in that place.

As I was agreeing with Bananas, I noticed the two guys who had just come in sidle down the bar toward me. A San Diego Gas and Electric worker on the barstool next to mine decided it was time to take a leak. The taller guy, sleek black razor-cut hair, Wayne Newton mustache, and knife scar at the edge of one eye, occupied the vacated seat. He turned and spoke to me in quiet Spanish, smiling like we were old friends. He looked vaguely familiar, but we weren't old friends. I had a nagging suspicion we weren't going to be new friends either.

"You are a very nosy *cabrón*," he said. The smile he wore was like a cellophane bag that was making it hard for him to breathe.

I didn't say anything, no gems came to mind.

"Very nosy, much *huevo*, eh? You must be tough, such a curious little cat. You are tough, eh?"

"Just who in hell are you?"—a reasonable question, I thought—"or would that be telling? Actually, I now recognized both him and his partner

as the pimps I had seen around Coahuila. I noticed his friend had maneuvered himself toward the rear door and was pretending to study the jukebox.

"I asked you if you were a tough guy," His smile was history now. I was quickly trying to figure why a Tijuana pimp who looked like Conan the Barbarian in a Pierre Cardin suit and his sidekick would follow me across the border and pick a fight in a San Diego bar, but nothing added up. Okay, they weren't pimps.

"Sure," I told him in English, glancing around the room to see who might step into this on my side. It didn't look good: Bananas, Eddy Nuzzio, the bookie

**At least
they weren't
just pimps.**

who was older than Bananas; his girlfriend who turned heads in Vegas as a showgirl when you could still count the neon signs; Carl, the squirrel behind the bar who was given to fits of deafness and blindness at the sight of Abraham Lincoln's portrait; and Sievie McLain, the delivery kid from Mayfair Market who, on a good day, might whip his weight in week-old celery. "Tough, that's me. See this beer? That's just a chaser. A minute ago I was drink-



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ing straight shots of molten copper."

He frowned as if he were considering ordering one himself. "You were in Tijuana asking a lot of stupid questions. Why are you looking for Nabor? What do you want from him?"

"I'm not looking for any Nabor. I'm looking for Herman Villegas."

"This Villegas I don't care about. The other man you were describing is a friend of mine. With the holes in his face."

Pockmarks. So now I had a name for the *pollero* or coyote and someone who might lead me to him. I brought out the photograph that Juana Villegas had given me. I showed it to Conan. He looked at the family portrait: the dapper-looking gent in the broad-striped suit and mustache; the heavy woman dressed in black who peered at the camera as if it were a drunken mariachi who wanted to marry her daughter; Juana Villegas at age 19, whose awesome beauty survived the crude photography; and holding her hand, Herman Villegas in his mid-20s, grinning negligently from beneath a thin mustache and shoulder-length hair.

I tapped the photo indicating the boy in the Western shirt, his thumbs hooked into his Levi's. "This is who I'm looking for. His sister lives here now. She sent money to him to pay a *pollero* to bring him across. She told him to see a man with pockmarks somewhere in Coahuila. Said his name was Morelos, but of course everyone's name is Morelos, no? I didn't know his name was Nabor." I smiled at him. "Any-

way, this Herman Villegas paid somebody. He was supposed to meet his sister in San Ysidro. He never showed. She hasn't heard from him and she's worried. She doesn't know that many people up here, and her English isn't all that great. I told her I'd ask around and take a look, that's all."

He nodded gravely and took my elbow in a grip that would have cracked open a live lobster. "Let's have a talk, just you and I." His smile was back and he had me on my feet looking up at a set of perfectly white teeth the size of dice. He ushered me quickly toward the men's room. His companion, who looked like a mongoose in a serge suit, nodded at him and turned his attention back to the jukebox. He looked up every few seconds to make sure no one tried to give me a hand. No one did. My escort lifted me off the floor and pushed open the door to the men's room with the back of my head. Inside, the meter reader, or whatever he was, was combing his hair. When the door struck him in the back, he yelled, "Hey!" and spun around.

With one hand, Conan yanked him out the door. He fell to his knees behind my dancing partner. I couldn't resist. I pushed off from the sink and butted him in the chest with my head and one shoulder. He was supposed to topple over, tripping backward over the guy behind him on his hands and knees. The old gag. It didn't work. He just looked at me as if I had disappointed him terribly. Then he sent his fist into the bridge of my nose.

After the light show had died down and the roaring in my ears had quieted to the sound of distant surf, I could make out what he was saying: "...things that are none of your concern. It can be very hazardous. I don't know your Herman Villegas. No one does. You will never find him. It's too bad for his sister, but maybe he will show up soon. Who knows? A thousand things might have happened. Maybe he was arrested by *Immigración*. You must not come to Coahuila and ask questions anymore. If you do, you will be killed."

That was the second time that day that I had been told that.

"You understand now, don't you?" He seemed genuinely concerned, apologetic, as if he were telling his favorite kid about matches. There was blood all over my hands, the sink, the floor, and my shirt. He offered me his handkerchief. I waved it away, and as we walked out of the men's room, I pretended to search the pockets of my jeans for my own. He paused to replace the cloth in his breast pocket while standing between me and the exit to the parking lot.

My fingers closed over the keys in my pocket. I splayed four of them between my fingers and made a fist. I could sense his partner behind me, but not close enough to worry me. I brought my hand out of my pocket, began to turn, and then spun toward the steroid nightmare from *Gentlemen's Quarterly*, bringing my arm around like a whip. My fistful of keys connected with his left eye and he stag-

continued on page 35

How He Did It

JOHN BRIZZOLARA
TALKS ABOUT
THE WRITING
OF WIRECUTTER



The author and his son, c. 1980

How this one happened went like this.

During 14 years of marriage, it became a custom for my ex-wife and me to create and exchange supernatural thrillers on Christmas Eve, stuff we spent weeks on. It was a tradition started, as far as I know, by the British writer M.R. James (author of, for example, "Oh Whistle, and I'll Come to You, My Lad"). We thought this was a cozy, Dickensian thing to do. We were right, and it drove us to produce—something, anything, while we struggled to make our lives elsewhere.

We had published some of these stories in the genre magazines and once even—so happily—received a check from *Amazing Stories* on Christmas Eve.

While listening to (of all things) "Hotel California" by the Eagles, I was struck with a spookiness, an unsavory narrative, and while the music did little for me, the implied story crept me out and I wanted to do something like it in fiction.

My original story idea was along the lines of "Heart of Darkness" meets *The Day of the*

continued on page 33

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continued from page 31

Locust. I think I got close, but as the Johnny Mathis song says, "It's Not for Me to Say." Anyway, what started out as a quest for a supernatural short story grew into a novel that had nothing to do with the occult.

Coincidentally, around that time a friend gave me a copy of James Crumley's *Last Good Kiss*. It was a Raymond Chandler pastiche, but the best I'd ever read. I was a Chandler fanatic, and *Wirecutter* is a slavish imitation of that style. I began it in 1983 in the Coronado heat.

But back to the embryo. For my ghost story, or Christmas horror, I had in the back of my mind a large population of untraceable, undocumented aliens. In other words, people who if they disappeared off the face of the earth would hardly be missed. I had a kind of wicked-witch character in the borderlands of the East. She commissioned illegal migrants from "coyotes," to ensnare the migrants or eat them or make them into cat food, whatever. I hadn't gotten that far in my plotting.

So I heard it was possible to ride along with the Border Patrol and applied. It took forever. They were dragging their feet because at about that time *The Border*, a Jack Nicholson film about INS corruption, came out. It was hardly a public relations promotion for the State Department. They were concerned about how I would portray them. Well, I didn't know — because I hadn't met any of them.

Finally clearance came through. I was allowed on a night run in December along the Brown Field Sector.

I had only been in San Diego a short while and was unprepared for the almost Arctic atmosphere of Otay Mesa in December. The aquamarine Ram Chargers were heated, all right, but no one had mentioned anything about a "night shoot." This was a procedure where target practice was exercised under the stars.

In almost complete blackness, agents sped to a stop, seemingly at random, got out of their cars (being careful to use the door of the vehicle for cover), and fired at a shadowy, man-shaped target that would suddenly spring up. Within seconds

the target had to be identified as woman, child, or armed man. With luck this decision might be aided with a flicker of peekaboo moonlight. More often than not the targets were shot with .357 magnums and mistakes were made.

I looked around for cover, but nothing seemed safe; bullets were coming from unpredictable angles. Finally, one of the agents suggested, "Get behind that board."

The "board" he was referring to looked like an old Burma Shave sign riddled with bullets. This was about as much cover as a Bantu dictionary. In my heringbone jacket and moccasins, no socks, I huddled there for about nine years, my teeth chattering, and not simply from the cold.

One woman, Maria I believe her name was, proved to be the best marksman. I covered a little less when it

a green image. I was astounded at the number of human bodies we found. Didn't mean all or even half of them were illegal, but there were an awful lot of people where they shouldn't be, in unlit canyons with names like Moody's, Springs, and Deadman's.

In the intervening years it has become unclear to me how, exactly, I met Danny "Tokes" Lopez. I know it was in the Unicomia, a Tijuana bar. Danny was funny. We were buying drinks for hookers who were even funnier. But I wanted a coyote, a pollero.

Danny didn't seem to fit either of these professions convincingly. But it was not long before I saw him hustle Anglo and Hispanic suckers into deals on "cultured" pearls, 24-karat gold bracelets, and illegal trips to Fargo, North Dakota, which he assured them was just a short bus ride from Los Angeles.

So Danny agreed to take

"Tijuana was full of tunnels and trapdoors and things during Prohibition," my son pointed out.

was her turn.

The other things I remember from that night were the jackrabbits and the green-screen nightscopes showing up body heat on the mesa. Long-eared rabbits would dart suicidally into the headlights of the Ram Chargers. "It's a miracle we didn't kill half of those stupid bastards," I remember commenting to the driver. His answer was, "Oh, I figure, I don't know if he was joking."

The marvels were the infrared nightscopes. I imagine they were fairly primitive compared to what they are using now, but they were effective. Most of them were mounted on the backs of flatbed trucks and were the size of television cameras, boxy, almost like WWII radar machines. No one seemed to be expert in using them, but they weren't hard to figure out: whatever you pointed at, if there was body heat (including rabbits) you got

me to a once famous and pink hotel where in a single room, no one had the space to sit or lie down but had to stand upright, even in the bathroom — the effluvia from which was horrendous no matter where one stood in the room.

That night he took me through a drainage ditch in Tijuana west of the San Ysidro border crossing with maybe 30 other *polleros*. The stench again was horrific. We were to cross the Tijuana Estuary at its low ebb, and I noticed most *polleros* wore layers of clothes so that when they got through the glop — or the guts — on the other side, they could strip off their outer layers of clothing and be more or less presentable for employment options.

This was before the Berlin Wall of America's Bottom Left was erected. I did not go through with the others to Monument Road in Imperial Beach. This was sheerly because of cowardice, the stench, the mire my cloth-



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ing was becoming progressively more sopped with, and the gathering conviction that I had no idea whatever what I was doing.

I had no trouble walking back through Customs: I just looked like another falling-down drunk after too many cheap tequilas (diluted with 7UP or Sprite) and beers. Not an uncommon visual.

Driving home, what struck me was Danny "Tokes" Lopez and what he did for a living. A Robin Hood in a sense, but a hood no less. His nickname meant "propina, tips; la mordida, the bribe." He was, he said, 18, figured 16. He carried a crummy Saturday-night special in his boot. A pig-iron 32.

But the most lingering image was returning to my home about 2:00 a.m. My son was sitting in my desk chair.

"I'm sick," he said. "What's wrong, Nutley?" "I don't know. Mommy gave me some stuff, but Pat and her daughter are here and they don't want me to sleep in the same room cuz I might infect 'em."

I felt his head. It was

warm. His cheeks were flushed and I could see hives on his face.

"Where were you?" he asked.

"Mexico."

"Why do you always go there? I don't like that place."

"It's a part of the world we're very close to, and it's interesting right now. It's like H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*. Remember that?"

"Yeah, I loved Allan Quatermain."

"Well, it's kind of like that. It's an injustice that's horrible. I want to expose it, remind people."

"Like Batman?"

I had to laugh. "No, like a writer."

I broke off my laugh as it occurred to me that my son's outbreak of hives, etc., were symptoms of stress. He was worried, anxious, maybe he had, in his mind, exaggerated the superheroic dangers I was involved in.

Or maybe he had a crush on a girl, was worried about school grades, or was being hassled by some schoolyard bully. I didn't think to ask; a writer's self-absorption, especially when excited about

a project, will eclipse everything. It is like something George Orwell said: "Writing a novel is like deliberately undergoing a prolonged illness." Something like that.

The danger I most feared (aside from another night shoot — unless Maria held the gun) was reading *National Geographic* in the waiting room of the deputy chief INS guy while he demonstrated disdain for the press by eat-

ing a vital transition. When I was grudgingly satisfied, my Apple II crashed and lost ten hours of work. I was told there were methods to retrieve it, but they all seemed contradictory and I am a computer whiz like Pee-Wee Herman is Orson Welles.

I let out a scream at 1:30 or 2:00 a.m. that must have terrified the neighbors. My wife called out, "You all right?"

My son stepped into the

old movies. Now there are about 15 *la migra*, INS, federal coppers; they've surrounded the place."

I explained the technical problem of how one side of the trailer was against an embankment, on rusted old railroad tracks, and the whole thing set in concrete. I had the trailer filled with good guys and smugglers, all armed. Since it was on an old gasoline dump, I couldn't know if it was still flammable — or who to ask. The *bombos* in TJ were uncertain. The SDPD could not be sure without an excavation. In short, I didn't know how to get anybody out of there alive. Good or bad. I had written myself into a corner.

"Trapdoor," my son said. "Trapdoor in the floor? A hole in the concrete? What is this, Abbott and Costello?"

"What would occur to a child, but hardly to an adult trying to write anything but young-adult novels." Tijuana was full of tunnels and trapdoors and things during Prohibition, my son pointed out. I didn't ask him how he knew it, but he was true.

(A few years ago I

crawled through a lengthy underground tunnel, fully armed, and entered through a warehouse in TJ. The tunnel ended 120 feet or so from the warehouse in Otay Mesa where it was supposed to end. The excavators surfaced in the full light of authority.)

"A lot of them are probably still there," the lad said — meaning the bootleggers' tunnels — as he led his head on my shoulder. A boy's world is plagued with trapdoors. Later, I suppose, we just call them "life, pitfalls, shit happens, one damned thing after another... you name it."

It was a couple of years later that I placed the book with Doubleday. It was well reviewed (with one exception, in *San Diego* magazine: "The novel is hard-boiled to the taste of sadomasochism").

Newgate Callendar in the *New York Times* liked it, but my favorite review came from an ex-border cop turned writer: I was listed as a former bartender, and the *Albuquerque Journal Magazine* wrote, "I don't know if he can mix a margarita or not, but he can tell a story that'll faze your synthetic

socks to your Kinneys."

The book was picked up for mass market by Pocket Books, with a cover illustration of my anti-hero Nathaniel York, looking oddly like Judd Hirsch, and a woman wearing heels running down a road. Well, still, I always wanted to be a "paperback writer." And now I was one.

The paperback did about 35,000, the hardcover about 10,000 to 15,000. (Respectable for a first book, but hardly Clancy stuff.) You can never know about these figures anyway.

Other good things have happened: I received a multiple-book review from Doubleday's *Filings*. The thing was, this was to be another year's security, and this was exactly when the largest publishing firm of Teutonic yuppies decided to dismiss half their pub list. They kept Asimov, who wouldn't necessarily go anyway, but fired their editorial staff (kids who grew up on *Josie and the Pussycats*) and bought out the contracts of writers who didn't sell in large numbers.

The book has been

seemed to have legs for a while; at any rate, for a few years. I made more money on the movies that never materialized on screen — a good thing too, a dodged bullet, when you think about it.

Wirecutter is dedicated to my ex-wife, whom I still love, and my son. "To Diane for all the years and all the faith; and for Geoffrey... for always." It is hard to look at that these days, because of the difficult nature of faith and the circumstances of the divorce.

The guttural, most real memory of the writing of that book is of my son's affection, helping Dad do his book stuff — and though I don't know his heart now that he is a man of 23, I never really knew it, but I believe he loves me and I know he did when he was sitting on my knee and offering me his trapdoor.

The process of writing fiction is in itself a trapdoor, a means of escape. Facts are necessary, or at least verisimilitude, but truth must be in it as well or it's no good. And the truth is quite another trick unto itself. ■

— John Brizzolara

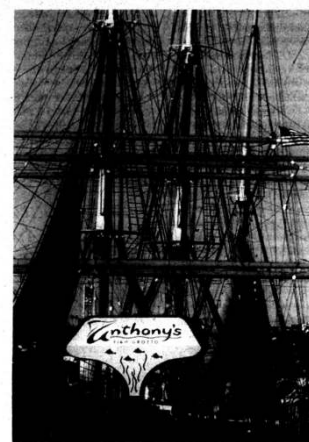
continued from page 31 | gered backward, bringing both hands up to his face. I kicked him in the groin and he went lurching out the rear door, which closed and locked neatly after him.

I turned and the morning was already on me. He swung at me and I ducked. I hit him twice, quickly and hard in the stomach. He bent over looking toward the rear door, waiting for the big guy to reemerge with a war axe or something. I grabbed his right collar with my left hand, his left collar with my right. With my wrists crossed just beneath his Adam's apple, I began digging my knuckles into his windpipe.

As I stood there doing that for a while, I heard what sounded like a wrecking ball being sent up against the back door. Then it got quiet. The guy I was holding turned a bad color and stopped fighting me. I dropped him and ran for the front door.

On my way out I noticed that there was no one left in the place except Bananas.

On the street I was nearly as blind as the guy who came bounding around



Anthony's restaurant and Star of India. Harbor Drive

the corner of the Hillcrest, still clutching his eye with one hand. I wasn't unhappy to see blood running from between his fingers onto his

suit. If I'd had a handkerchief, I wouldn't have been able to resist offering it to him, all apologetic and letting bygones be bygones, land-

ing myself in traction. As it was, I did the smart thing and ran into five lanes of University Avenue rush-hour traffic, dodging and weaving like a linebacker. I didn't look back for three blocks.

I congratulated myself that I had lost him and decided to celebrate. The only place I could get served looking the way I did, I figured, was my apartment.

CHAPTER TWO

Once inside my two-room bungalow on Robinson and Third, I decided against a drink. I was too busy shaking and throwing up. Conan had broken my nose, my right eye was swelling closed, and I couldn't breathe. I lay down on my Salvation Army couch and tried not to pass out. The way to do this seemed to be to stare at the ceiling around the corners of a washrag filled with ice cubes. If I closed my eyes, the blackness was too inviting. I had to be careful not to look at all the blood too. The sight of blood makes me sick. Like I told the man: tough, that's me.

After a while I put on a record by Mink DeVille.

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took two Tylenol with codeine, and practiced breathing through my mouth while I tried to think of what to do next.

So I was wrong about their being pimps. At least they weren't just pimps. It was a safe assumption that they were in the smuggling business. Maybe the girls were a sideline or maybe I was wrong about that altogether. I didn't know. I did know that the big guy hadn't recognized Herman Villegas or his name. That wasn't surprising. Even if they had moved him across the border, there was no reason they should remember his face. I also knew that if I went back down to T.J. and stuck close to Conan, there was a good chance I'd eventually run into Nabor or Morelos or whatever his name was.

I wasn't too crazy about the idea. Nabor/Morelos was a sensitive subject down there. That meant he was not just a garden-variety smuggler. Juana had said his fee was

unusually high but that he guaranteed safety. Detective Bevilacqua of the Tijuana police had done a take on my description of him. It all pointed to his being well connected.

I felt my broken nose and thought about the dead man. I decided that T.J. was out of the question, at least for a while.

I could hang out at the Casa del Sol in Chula Vista, where the illegals rendezvous, exchange information about work, and connect with "mules" to drive them to L.A., but that would probably get me nowhere. If they didn't talk to Juana, they wouldn't talk to me, and if Herman Villegas showed up there, he would get in touch. That left the man who had hired Juana and brought her to the United States to dance in his club. The man who recommended Morelos. My boss, whom I'd never met. Mr. E. Walters.

I wasn't too crazy about that idea either, but it was the only one I had that, as far as I could tell, didn't

involve my getting killed.

Juana would want to know what I had found, but she was working tonight and I didn't have anything positive to tell her. I listened to the rest of the album, felt the pain pills kick in, and watched the shadows crawl across the piles of clothes, overflowing ashtrays, and dirty dishes in my apartment.

I looked battered enough to hope that she would want to kiss it and make it better.

I put Little Feat on the stereo and poured some Ancient Age into a clean coffee cup I found. After a while I had another one.

When it was fully dark and I was feeling just wonderful enough to think about it, I decided to go in to work on my night off and see her. Thinking about Juana made my face and the back of my

neck burn like a schoolboy berserk with new hormones.

In the bathroom mirror I could see that I looked battered enough to hope that she would want to kiss it and make it better. I thought about that while I took a shower.

When I walked out of my apartment, my hair was

cooled back at the pigeons in the palm tree and waved at my neighbor Wayne. Wayne ignored me; the pigeons cooed back. Whistling the guitar hook from a Tom Petty song on my way to my usual parking space, I felt ready for anything.

I don't think I stared at the vacant curb for more than a few minutes before I remembered I had left my Maverick in the parking lot at the Hillcrest Club.

Would they be waiting for me? Did Wayne Newton the Barbarian rip my car apart with his bare hands? I walked back up the sidewalk and let myself in again to the mock Moorish little house. I phoned the Hillcrest and got Gordon, the night man.

"York, you okay?" "Yeah, how's my car?" "All right, I guess. I heard about what happened. What was that all about?" "Later. What about the two guys?" "They split just before the cops got here."

Sometimes during the rainy season I would stand

"Are you sure?" "Yeah, I'm sure." "Thanks."

I walked back to the Hillcrest through my neighborhood — the only area in San Diego, aside from the Barrio in Logan Heights, that you could really call a neighborhood. A lot of the old residents were complaining about the number of gays coming in opening boutiques featuring unicorns and X-rated greeting cards. It didn't bother me except that it was hard to find a place to drink without a guy in a mustache and work boots singing Streisand songs or some overweight girl in a flannel shirt calling you "Jocko." When the area wasn't being called "Homo Hill" it was called "Little Saigon." The Vietnamese opened restaurants, barber shops, delicatessens, flower shops, and produce stands. Unicorn boutiques and hair salons came and went, but the immigrant businesses did a solid trade.

Some times during the rainy season I would stand

outside the Phuong Nam and listen to the waiters or the old men who gathered at the Number One Barber Shop, and I would close my eyes to find myself in another time, another life. I didn't do it too often.

Gordon looked upset when I asked if I could borrow his car for a few hours, just in case they were still in the area and watching mine. I told him not to worry about the car or the money he owed me on last week's Padres game and took the keys.

The Trans Am smelled like a dumpster behind a McDonald's. There were Big Mac boxes and empty milkshake cups all over the floor. Still, the 427 engine pulled me from 0 to 60 in about seven seconds as I headed north on 163. It was just the car to be in if I was followed. A loop north, nearly all the way to Miramar Naval Air Station, proved no one was following me. I turned around and headed back toward San Diego. I listened to Steely Dan on Gordon's cassette.

The Low Down's 30-foot

neon dancer that flooded Pacific Coast Drive with garish colors for nearly a block either way was doing a stuttering bump-and-grind with her left hand missing. Maynard was getting the sign fixed. He had told me himself when he hired me as a security guard three months earlier.

Dick Holster was working the door that shift. He swore it was his real name. I even saw his driver's license once under the little flashlight they issued to us that brings out the watermark on California licenses — it also shows up any cute X-Acto knife work on the date of birth, which is mostly what we look for on the IDs of the Navy kids who come to the Low Down.

Dick was a quiet, competent man. He worked for the San Diego Police Department for a year and then quit. He never told me why. He was cool and fair with a dry sense of humor, and I would want him on my side of any trouble. I knew he subscribed to the *National Centurion*, some gun magazines, and the *Survivalist*, owned some property in the



San Ysidro

mountains, and had once applied for a PI license but didn't get it. He didn't have the kind of authority complex I expected to go along

with this package; he didn't need to feel bigger than he was or push anyone around. He was a little hard to figure. Anyone who wanted

to be a private detective was probably immature. My ambition was to sing like Ray Charles.

"Nathaniel York?" he read. "I thought York was your first name." Dick was paying me back for all my cracks about his name and my insistence on seeing his license that time. He handed back the card with the miniature photo of me that a girl I once dated said made me look like "a dissipated Dondi."

"I don't mind Nathaniel, but no one ever uses it. People always insist on Nat or Nate or Nathan. None of which are my name. So it's York."

"What happened to you?" He shined his flashlight in my eyes.

"Plastic surgery. I've decided to turn Japanese."

For a Monday night, it wasn't a bad crowd. Two dozen sailors in Levi's, windbreakers, and haircuts from an old yearbook were seated around the horseshoe stage watching Liz do toe touches, running her hands over the insides and backs of her thighs.

I could watch Liz dance all night, she was that good at it. She had fine sunnied legs that were nicely muscled but not too muscled, a perfectly hemispherical ass that moved more ways than one, and high breasts, no more than a handful but enough to draw the eyes upward. She worked hard at dancing, and it showed. She was also naturally sexy in the way that some women are, no matter what kind of shape they're in; it comes through in the eyes, in the smile, and in the air around them.

The sailors might as well have been watching a training film — "This, men, is a woman's backside" — for all the life they showed. From the bouncer's point of view, that was just fine. If you seemed to be enjoying the show a little too much, you were asked to leave.

On the floor next to Dick were all the checked motorcycle helmets, briefcases, and bags. We started checking briefcases and bags about the time the idea of whipping out dildos at the girls became all the rage.

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The helmets we checked because we didn't like the idea of getting hit with them.

I wondered who the briefcases belonged to, and I scanned the room. They weren't hard to find. Off in the corner where the timid guys sit, they laughed a little too loudly with each other and pretended they were too well laid to really care about Liz's charms. Their ties were loosened at identical angles to their collars. They probably operated computers across the street at Major Turbines and had names like Harvey and Norm.

They should get together with the sailors and go to a movie.

I chose a barstool next to the waitress station and said hello to Suzy Lee. Maynard had the DJ bill Suzy as "The Red-Hot Yellow Peril." Smiling prettily at me from beneath jet bangs, she said, "Can't get enough of the place, eh? What is it?" Her face twisted in mock puzzlement. "The atmosphere!" She was wearing a blue silk kimono she didn't bother to close. I admired the way she tugged at the

top of one black stocking that gleamed wickedly in the low light of the bar and adjusted a garter belt. "My magnetic personality?" Her wink used both eyes, all of her face, and her shoulders. I ordered a Coke and said, "You know, you're the most scrutable Oriental I've ever met."

Her laugh sounded the way a puppy does when you step on its tail. "I'll tell Juana you're here."

CHAPTER THREE

It had been on a slow night like this one that I had first seen Juana. They might have been the same fresh-faced sailors around the horseshoe, and I remember a handful of old-timers, machinists from the plant down the road who peered up at the stage with lifeless, secretive eyes from over the tops of their beers. I had been watching the girls make the rounds in their G-strings to see if anybody needed refills. The drill was to scan the girls as they leaned toward the customers; if anybody touched them where they shouldn't, they were out the door.



Border activity

Juana was carrying a tray and following Suzy Lee to see how it was done. Trailing, they called it. She was waiting her turn to go

onstage and dance, and she looked scared to death. She must have been 21—they're very conscientious about that kind of thing in top-

less bars because most of them are run by very sensitive interests—but she looked 17. She was wearing a tight blue skirt that was about as long as a mayfly's memory, sandals, and what looked like a man's white shirt tied up in front like a halter and rolled at the sleeves. I guessed her to be five feet tall. She looked so good with her clothes on I didn't want her to take them off. Her face, in the bruised lighting, looked like a Mayan carving of some regal, delicate bird. Her eyes were and are huge and dark—soft, but with a kind of wariness that isn't quite disillusionment. Her hair was long then, all the way to her waist, black and rich like a jungle night. All the girls at the Low Down were beautiful—they had to be—but Juana, all flashing eyes, sculpted cheekbones, and velvet sienna skin, could have made Helen of Troy look like a transvestite with a hangover.

She would look up at the stage, trailing the dancer—I forgot who it was—the way she trailed Suzy Lee, trying to drink in

the movements and memorize them, knowing she was about to go on. You could tell she was about as familiar with the atmosphere as she was with the moon's.

When she approached the bar, she would let Suzy Lee order first and then repeat after her as the bartender set up the drinks, "Meclair Lite" or "Jean and Towneek." Then she would smile up at the bartender—it was Clifford that night—for confirmation on her English. Cliff only scowled at her. Nothing personal, that was just Cliff. In a place where the dancers collected tips from the men in the horseshoe of barstools at the lip of the stage and then collected tips as waitresses when they weren't dancing, there wasn't much left over for a 25-year-old bartender that looked like Karl Malden. I sympathized with him up to a point but suspected that he wasn't quite human. Any- one who didn't melt when Juana smiled couldn't be quite human. I smiled at her for both of us and lied to her in Spanish that her pronunciation was very good. Her cheekbones seemed to

lift even higher as her smile broadened in my direction.

Suzy pressed herself against me and wrapped her arms around my waist. She introduced us. "York is the big strong hunk who protects us from the bad horny men. Stay away from him, he's mine." She narrowed her eyes at Juana and then laughed, letting me go. "I

"Cubano, ¿SÍ?"

I told her I was a lot of things, none of them Hispanic unless you counted the Corsican.

"Where did you learn to speak Spanish so well?" I could listen to her voice all night, and for the first time since taking the job I thought about doing just that. I made it a rule

I knew he subscribed to The National Centurion, some gun magazines, and The Survivalist.

wish."

In Spanish I made sure Juana knew it was just Suzy's sense of humor, adding that it wasn't going to be easy being the most beautiful dancer in the place. I wasn't just saying it.

It got me another smile.

"You are Mexican?"

I shook my head. "No, I—"

not to sleep where I ate, or however the old saw goes, partly because it was a good idea no matter where you worked and partly because most of the girls at the Low Down either were gay, were into more dope than even I felt comfortable around, had wacky boyfriends with guns, or had interesting combinations of all of the above.

I learned Spanish in high school, but not very well. I picked up more from some Puerto Rican people in my neighborhood in New York. Again, not very well."

She assured me that King Carlos never spoke better. She was probably right. I was being modest and King Carlos probably lisped.

The dancer onstage finished up and Larry, the disc jockey, started gabbling about fine foxes and funky stuff and flash-dancin' mamas.

"I have to go," She looked toward the stage as if it were the gallows. "My first time, you know? I'm nervous."

"I know. Don't worry about it. You'll be fine."

Her smile had collapsed. A ghost of one flickered that was more of a facial tic, and then she headed for the backstage curtain. The previous dancer emerged and began circulating, taking drink orders from the sailors and the old men.

We all listened to Bob Seger sing "Fire Down Below." It sounded like he was in the room.

Larry interrupted the

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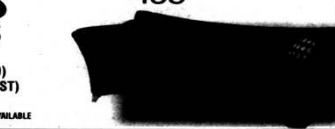
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North County Reader March 22, 2001

key friends at the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, it would take a couple of months to get a residency permit, what they called the green card, though it wasn't green. Sometimes it could take up to a year and even then it could fall through.

Something had been bothering her. She was leaving a lot out. In a strange country after her first day at a pretty strange job, sitting

across the table from a stranger in a mock cop's uniform, it wasn't likely she'd give me an epic and detailed life history; but I got the feeling it wasn't me or the job or geography that made her seem sad and afraid.

No doubt they had told her that they would make her a star in the United States, that if she just took off her shirt and danced in their club, Hollywood would be

beating the door down in no time. I wasn't going to tell her otherwise. Things happened around the kind of beauty Juana had.

I drove her back to Liz's apartment and took myself home. She had agreed to meet me for dinner the next night before our shifts began.

We had seafood at Anthony's and watched the tourists yell at their kids and take

pictures in front of the *Star of India* and the tuna boats. She wasn't any more eager to talk about herself, and I held up both ends of the conversation by making up names for all the people that walked by. I became more convinced that there was something on her mind, but I was going to wait for her to spill it, if she ever decided to.

When the conversation turned to movies, she bright-

ened up. She knew more about American movies and movie stars than Rona Barrett. I was left in the dust, but neither of us minded. She recounted plots from movies I'd never heard of and delighted in describing what everyone was wearing in what scene. I was happy just listening to her voice; it sounded the way cool silk feels against hot skin.

"...You would look like him a little if you had a mustache."

"Who?"

"Burt Reynolds. You're not listening. I am boring you."

"You could read me the phone book without boring me. You like Burt, eh?"

"I told you, he is my absolute favorite. If I could become a movie star, I would make all of my movies with him."

"I'll grow a mustache."

For the next two weeks I took her to every matinee in San Diego County that didn't have a title like *Wet Housewives* or *Lavender Trucks*. She held my arm once while Burt Reynolds kissed Goldie Hawn. I made a mental note to buy Burt a drink if I ever met him.

On her nights off, she told me, she was going to school to learn English, but she didn't say where. When she offered to make me a dinner of carne asada and ceviche in my apartment, I didn't turn her down. I bought a bottle of Frascati, a bottle of Beaujolais, and a bottle of El Presidente brandy. Over the finished dinner — which was better than any I'd ever had in the two — many mediocre Mexican restaurants in town — we drank brandy and she told me that my mustache was funny-looking. I pretended her English was bad and that I thought she had said that it smelled funny. When she leaned closer to place her nose near my upper lip, I kissed her and she kissed me back. Long and hard. The world dissolved into soft lights, a velvet tongue, and the scent of her hair like sweet earth and night-blooming jasmine. I held her for a long time, her head against my chest, until I felt a dampness on my shirt and her shoulders shake in my arms. I lifted her face and saw the tears and streaked makeup.

"Okay. Tell me about it," I said as gently as I could. She shook her head and used a Kleenex. She had drunk far more than she was used to and she started to pour another. I took the snifter from her.

"This won't help, but maybe I can."

"I'll make some coffee," she said.

She got up and walked a little unsteadily to the kitchen. I followed her. She

leaned against the sink and lowered her head. She started to sob again. I held her and after a while she started to tell me about Herman Vilcek.

"When I left Mexico I promised my brother I would arrange for him to join me here as soon as I could. The man who brought me here, Mr. Walters, would not help me except to give me the name of a man in Tijuana who would smuggle him across for \$300. It is more than the usual amount, but I was told he guaranteed safety. The man's name is Morelos, and he, Mr. Walters, said he could be found in the bars in a district called Coahuila. He was described to me as a man with holes from some disease on his face. I wrote to Herman and I sent him the money. I received a letter from him two weeks ago saying that he had arrived in Tijuana and had met the man. He said everything was arranged, that he was to leave in a few nights. He told me to wait for him at the Casa del Sol in Chula Vista until he arrived. I waited there for three nights the next week. I took the trolley. That's where I have been. I lied to you about the English lessons. I showed his picture to the *alambristas* there, but no one had seen him. Or if they had, they said nothing. They are all very frightened and always lie, even to their own people. They trust no one. I must find this man Morelos and ask him what became of my brother. These *coyotes* are dangerous men, and I am afraid. My brother and I are very close; he has always taken care of me and now I must take care of him. I've failed. Something terrible has happened to Herman. He may have been arrested or killed. You always hear of the terrible things that happen to the *alambristas*."

The word meant, literally, "wirecutters." It was the term Mexican illegals used instead of *mojados*, or wetbacks, along this part of the border. Because they didn't have to cross a river to get there, just a fence. She lied to me about the English classes all right, and I sensed there were holes in her story you could drive a Buick through, some of which could be explained by the fact that she herself was here on phony papers, but if that

was the way she wanted to tell it, that was all right with me. There was enough truth in it to make a start.

"What about Walters? Couldn't he trace him for you?"

She looked away and shrugged. "He said to wait, that he was probably only

delayed but that he would come soon. I know that isn't true." She gave me a look that held all the certainty anyone could have about anything. "Herman would have gotten in touch with me somehow."

"Yeah, they have phones in Tijuana and a sort of a

post office. What about the woman who was with Walters when he hired you?"

"I don't know her name. I never saw her again. She was very beautiful, but cold-looking, you know? Mr. Walters gave me his card long ago when he asked me to think about coming

to work for him in the United States. The second time I saw him I agreed. The next day he sent a car for me. It brought me to the club. There was no trouble at the border. He gave Liz some money and asked if I could stay with her. Liz was very nice, of course. It was

just temporary, he said. Soon he would get me my own place. That was some weeks ago. I've seen him once since then, and I asked him about Herman. He told me to be patient. Herman would come. He said that he would soon have some news for me that would make me

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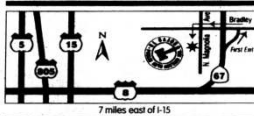
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happy. He did not mean news about Herman, but some job for me. I haven't seen him since then. When I have tried to call him, there is a machine that answers his telephone, and he has never returned my calls."

From her purse she handed me a business card with the name E. Walters embossed in gold and a number with a North County exchange. There was nothing else on the card. E. Walters was the name on the liquor license at the Low Down. He owned at least two other topless joints, one in L.A. and one in

Carmel. He signed my paychecks as head of Wolf Security Systems, which was an organization of doormen, bouncers, night watchmen, department-store guards, ushers, repo men, and professional witnesses for law firms.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," I sat her back down on the couch and spoke to her from the kitchen as I made the coffee. "In the morning I'll go to the detention center in San Ysidro. You said you have a photograph of Herman. I'll see if I can spot him. If he was arrested, he might still be there. I can't

very well circulate his picture with the Border Patrol in case he's lying low somewhere and still trying to dodge them, but I can go to Coahuila and see if he

eyes that weren't yet cried out. Her brother must be something special.

"I would do that." She brought my head down to her mouth and I

The bundle had grown. There must have been about \$1000 in 20s, 50s, and 10s.

"You're spoiling the moment. Put that in a bank somewhere."

"I don't like banks," she said defensively.

"Give it to Maynard. Tell him to put it in the house safe at the Low Down."

"He keeps my green card, and he won't let me have it," she looked at me to see what I made of that and then said, "I don't like Maynard."

"No one does. Sorry, that was my dumb sugges-

tion for the night. I have usually letting her down onto me as I lay on the floor. She straddled me and sat up, lifting her skirt over her head with a fluid ruffle of soft beige. I had seen her take her clothes off before, onstage. But this wasn't a show. She looked at me now with an intensity and hunger that you always hope to find in a woman with that kind of beauty but usually don't—settling for something close enough to get you through the night but not close enough to want to remember the next day. She unhooked her flesh-colored bra and it fell away. She stayed upright for a moment just breathing and looking at me and for a while I knew that to begin meant that it would have to end.

"Nathaniel," she said, her breasts rising and falling as she tried to take in enough air to say whatever she thought had to be said. "This doesn't have to...I'm not...we..." She bent to kiss me again. My mouth met hers and we finished the thought the only way that made any sense.

Her tongue silenced me

RESEARCH STUDIES

Do You Have Acne?



If you have acne, call us to find out if you qualify to be part of an investigational research study at our site. The study includes study-related evaluation, laboratory tests, and study medication at no charge. Participants will receive up to \$140 for completion.

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Do you have Athlete's Foot?



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MANIC DEPRESSION

HIGHS

Excessive Energy
No Need for Sleep
Impulsive Activity
Irritability

Fatigue
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Loss of Interest/Pleasure
Social Withdrawal

LOWS

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If you experience symptoms from both columns you may suffer from MANIC DEPRESSION. You may be eligible to participate in an investigational medication research study at NO COST. Call the UCSD Psychopharmacology Research Program at (858) 622-6194. You may be eligible for a free evaluation and treatment with investigational medication.

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If your anxiety interferes with your social relationships and work, causes you to avoid certain situations or stops you from enjoying life, then you may suffer from an anxiety disorder. The UCSD Psychopharmacology Research Program is conducting research with investigational medication treatments for anxiety disorders. Participants will be compensated \$25 for travel expenses of each visit. To see if you qualify for a clinical evaluation and participation in this research, please call (858) 622-6194.

UCSD Psychopharmacology Research Program may be able to help you. You may be eligible for a free evaluation and treatment with investigational medication.

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and I rolled to the side, gradually letting her down onto me as I lay on the floor. She straddled me and sat up, lifting her skirt over her head with a fluid ruffle of soft beige. I had seen her take her clothes off before, onstage. But this wasn't a show. She looked at me now with an intensity and hunger that you always hope to find in a woman with that kind of beauty but usually don't—settling for something close enough to get you through the night but not close enough to want to remember the next day. She unhooked her flesh-colored bra and it fell away. She stayed upright for a moment just breathing and looking at me and for a while I knew that to begin meant that it would have to end.

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I slid her hose down from her hips and she pulled my shirt from my waist. Her lips played over my belly, the scar just above it, then back down. I felt her fingers on my belt and the buttons on my Levi's and in the next moment she had me in her mouth, all of me that mattered except for the little timekeeper existing somewhere in that cold place between the heart and the brain who kept pointing out that tomorrow or the next

day or a year from now she would just be something else that I had lost.

When I entered her she bit her lip and laughed, shuddered and grew quiet. She said she was sorry that she laughed. I told her that I wasn't. I told her that was perfect.

We made love until dawn, and when it came time, I shook just as hard and laughed too—because it was perfect. And maybe because nothing else ever

had been. I lay beside her tracing patterns on her cheek, still chuckling like a madman over some private joke. She kissed my forehead and my face until I stopped. She said, "You are a funny man."

"Ha-ha funny?" "No."

"Then you mean strange."

Different. A man who laughs when he makes love...and doesn't mind when I do. Do I sound stupid because I can't speak English

well?" "Not to me."

She said nothing for a while. A gray light came in through the venetian blinds; early-morning fog that would burn off by noon.

Then she said, "If you were a Mexican man, you would slap me for laughing, and I would be humiliated if you laughed."

"That's what makes this country great. We're a funny people. We make the world safe for comedy." It was a bad

substitute for what I wanted to say. The cleverness hung like body odor or old cigarette smoke in the room.

"You need to protect people, don't you?" "I don't know about that."

"I think that about you, but I don't know why it is." "It's a minor neurosis, I can deal with it."

"Nothing." I kissed her again because I wanted to and because it would stop

RESEARCH STUDIES

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me from talking about love and protecting people. She moved on top of me again.

I must have put the radio on because I remember music that isn't on any record I own. It probably isn't on any radio either.

We slept eventually, and very late that morning she made me breakfast. Rice Krispies and papaya slices. We talked about everything: dancing and acting and movies and the regulars at the Low Down, Ronald Reagan, and the Russians. We talked about the night before and how fine it was, and then we talked about her brother, Herman Vilz.

We talked about everything except love. She gave me the family photo, taken, she said, after Easter Mass two years ago in front of an uncle's ranch outside of Hermosillo. I drove her back to Liz's

apartment around eleven o'clock. The hard strains of heavy-metal music came from an open window along with the too-loud voices of people who had been up all night on cocaine and were too stoned to realize they didn't have to hold back the

She was wearing a blue silk kimono she didn't bother to close.

night anymore.

I kissed Juana on the tip of her nose and drove myself south to San Ysidro.

CHAPTER FOUR

At the detention center a woman behind a sliding-glass window asked me my

business. I told her I was a reporter for the San Diego Reader doing a piece on the treatment of illegals by the San Diego Border Patrol. As just a curious citizen I could wait weeks or months to get clearance, and then I would get only the sunshine

desk. Douglas Weintraub, assistant administrator. Doug looked like an old cop to me, maybe FBI, maybe military police. He had that dull look that comes with aging authority. He was about 55 with narrow eyes above a coffee-drinker's nose. His sideburns were a little too long for his haircut, and he looked like he would speak with a Southern accent but he didn't. He was courteous but forgot to shake my hand. I put it back in my jacket pocket and sat down uninvited.

"So, you're with the Reader," he said, standing. "If I sell them this story, I am. I'm freelance."

"Then the Reader didn't send you here?"

"Not exactly." "You're writing this article on...what exactly?"

Speculation?"

"Right."

"You didn't tell the receptionist that."

"It didn't come up," I smiled, trying to look like a clever cub reporter.

He didn't smile back.

"You mind if I ask you you've written for in the past?"

"I wrote for the Village Voice in New York. I did stringer stuff for the Daily News back there. I did a story on the American Nazi Party for Rolling Stone last year, a piece on male-pattern baldness for Esquire..."

"I was just getting going when he interrupted me."

"I never read any of those..." He thought and then said, "publications."

He said it as if it were a clever euphemism for toilet paper. "I don't read the San Diego Reader either."

"Over 100,000 people

in this country do." I made up their circulation figure.

"Well, Mr..."

"Hammil," I said. I don't know if it was some vague hunch I had that I should keep my real name from the Border Patrol's notice, a kind of clairvoyance about what was to come, or if I was just having fun.

"Raoul Hammil."

"Mr. Hammil, before I could authorize a visit to the facilities, my office would require a letter from your superiors addressed to our public-information officer in San Pedro outlining the exact nature of your article and the manner in which the Border Patrol would be represented."

"I told you, Mr. Weintraub. I'm a freelancer. At the moment I have no...superiors." I smiled a gosh-shucks kind of smile.

"The Border Patrol will be represented fairly, I believe. I could agree to submit the article to you before publication for your perusal."

No reporter would agree to something like that, but I hoped he didn't know that.

Doug sat down and spread his hands to show me that they were empty, that he was powerless. "I'm sorry. That's not good enough. You understand."

Now he extended his hand for me to shake. "It's a sensitive matter."

"Yes, it is," I stood up and started to go, leaving his extended and meaty hand poised over his desk.

"Then it's okay with you if the article reads, 'The Border Patrol Administration Office would not permit an on-site inspection of the detention center?'"

"That would not be accurate," He closed his hands and sat forward.

It was my turn to spread my palms and shrug.

He glanced at his watch. "The morning is a bad time. Maybe if you were to come back after lunch I could get someone to take you on a brief tour. We've got nothing to conceal here. We don't mistreat these people."

He was suddenly standing again. "They're a lot better off if we get them. We don't take their money or molest them or kill them the way their own people do. We feed them here. Your tax money buys them the kind of meal many of them could never buy for themselves. We take

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them back across the border and arrange for their transportation to wherever they say they've come from, which is more than their own government does for them. If we're a little cautious about who we allow into the place, it's because we're trying to do a job with no help from the media, who seem intent on portraying us as storm troopers. Come back this afternoon and you'll see beds for people who've never slept in one, quality food and medical care for people who'll never see it again unless they become regulars or graduate to the penitentiary. Come back after lunch, Mr. Hammer, and write your story." He dismissed me by screwing a True Blue cigarette into a white holder and lighting it. The witless tool of the comic fag New York press had been told off and shown largesse by one of the front-line defenders of Our Way of Life.

I turned to go. I was about to say thank you when he said, "Mr. Hammond, I

don't think I like you or your way of doing business, but maybe you've got enough gumption to tell your readers the truth. I'm gonna count on that."

"I appreciate it, Mr. Weinhardt," I said as I closed his office door behind me.

Herman Villex wasn't at the detention center, or "staging area," as they called it. The place resembled a well-maintained POW camp, which, in a sense, is exactly what it was. A hurricane fence enclosed a compound of numbered one-story buildings that looked like barracks, only their cinder blocks were painted a cheerful yellow. The guy who showed me around was Agent Ybarra, a broad, pleasant-looking Chicano who probably lifted weights. He parked a turquoise-and-white Border Patrol passenger van that he had used that morning to bring the previous night's catch back over the border.

"You're not gonna see much," he said, unlocking a gate set into the chain link.

"This time of day it's pretty quiet. We got three guys left from last night." He indicated a trio of tired-looking men squatting against the fence and smoking cigarettes. They didn't speak to each other. Their clothes looked dusty and cheap; their faces and arms had seen a lot of sun over the years. They could have been in their 30s or their 60s. I didn't get that

Doug looked like an old cop to me, maybe FBI, maybe military police.

dose, but none of them were Juana's brother.

"One of these guys is a refugee from El Salvador. He goes to El Centro for official deportation tonight or tomorrow. This other guy goes to the marshal's office to be arraigned on charges of resisting arrest. He had a knife and tried to use it. Didn't do him any good.

He'll probably do time at MCC."

"Metro Correction Center."

"Right."

"What about him?" I pointed to the third man. He wore imitation designer jeans that were too big for him and worn out at the knees.

"He turned himself in this morning. He was com-

tured out at the miles of valley stretching out below San Ysidro along the Tijuana River basin. "We'll keep an eye out for her."

"Yeah," I turned from the scenery. There was too much of it to go along with the thought of a lost kid. I looked at the men in the yard. If they gave a damn what happened to them, you couldn't see it in their faces. "The guy who resisted arrest, you get a lot of that?"

"Enough."

"Every night? Once a month? Anybody besides him in the last couple of weeks?"

"Sure." He smiled.

"There was a guy a few nights ago that bit one of our people. Right here." He pointed to his inner thigh. "He got away, though."

I wondered if Herman Villex was a biter. "You see the guy?"

"Oh, I know who he is. A regular. We'll get him again and when we do, Caulfield is gonna bite his leg off. Then we'll just drive him back to First Avenue in T.J. He'll come across

again in a few nights and get caught. It becomes a game after a while."

"Caulfield?"

"The guy he bit."

"I thought your regulars do a prison term."

"Not the everyday working guys. There's not enough jails, man. No, our biter is an old friend. He picks fruit up here every summer and spring, spends the money he makes on whiskey and boys in T.J. He gets real pissed off when we catch him. He's okay, though, you know."

"He got a name?" I brought out my notebook as though I were taking notes for the Reader.

Ybarra grinned a goofy way. Anybody who could make that face had to be human as hell. I laughed before he even said anything. "Juan Garcia, what else? Just like these other two guys. Caulfield calls him the Tooth Fairy now."

"The Tooth Fairy?"

"He's an old queen, man. Too much." Ybarra looked at his Casio watch.

"You wanna see the bar-



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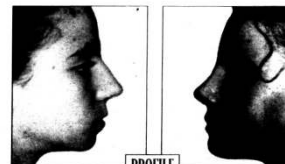
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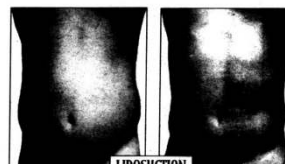
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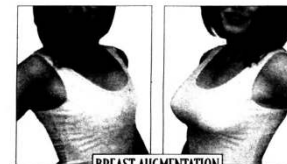
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NOSE RESHAPING

racks with the beds and all that! You missed lunch for these guys. A restaurant down the road caters their meals. Sloppy Joes today."

"Yummy. Thanks, Agent Ybarra. I've got enough for now." I turned to go. Ybarra stopped me with a hand on

my arm.

"If you're a reporter, I'm Maria of Romania. Who are you looking for?"

"You've been a lot of help. If I was looking for somebody who was picked up, I would hope he ran into you."

"Don't let Weintraub get in your knickers, he's really okay. Most of the guys here are okay, more or less. There are a few John Waynes and whatnot, what the hell? If you were looking for a wirecutter, they could do a lot worse than be picked up

by the Border Patrol. A lot worse," I believed him.

"Yeah, they might miss out on the Sloppy Joes."

Ybarra laughed, then added, "If there's somebody out there" — he gestured at the valley, the DMZ between hostile countries in a quiet

but nonetheless real war for the American dollar — "somebody we should know about who's liable to do more than just bite, you let me know. Okay?"

I nodded and walked back to my car. I would. ■

— John Brizzolara

Next week: York travels to Tijuana.

John Brizzolara's novels include *Wirecutter* and *Empire's Horizon*. In 1997 he received the National Conference Media Award for Journalism.

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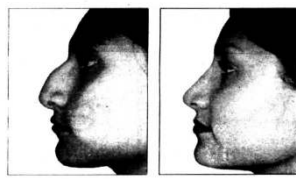
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LETTERS

continued from page 3
expensive shoreline construction, particularly infrastructure such as major roads and water and sewer lines. Like any structure, a constructed beach must be maintained throughout its life. As attractive as sand-retention systems sound, they must disrupt the shoreline substantially to work. They change the waves, change the shape and appearance of the shoreline, and can seriously alter access patterns. It is not clear that the public is willing to put up with these disruptions of the natural shoreline to reduce the cost of nourishing their beaches. The future of the majority of San Diego County beaches will almost certainly depend upon the continuing importation of sand.

Richard Seymour, Ph.D., P.E.
Scripps Institution of Oceanography

Hackneyed Sexist Congressman

Kennedy Gammage (Letters, March 15) waves profanities about trifles (Matt Potter's spelling of "Darrell"). I'd like to remind Mr. Gammage that although Darrell Issa is, to my embarrassment, a member of the U.S. Congress he should be referred to as Representative Issa. "Congressman" is hackneyed, sexist, and could just as properly refer to a U.S. senator.

The spelling of unusual proper nouns is Matt Potter's least important responsibility. Joel Melick
Banker's Hill

Available Homosexuality

I'm generally a Duncan Shepherd fan. Though I rarely agree with his opinions outright, I always appreciate the nuance with which he elucidates them.

However, I was disappointed with his casual dismissal of James Gandolfini's performance in *The Mexican* (March 15). I found Gandolfini revelatory, and his performance is generally regarded as the best thing about the film.

But Shepherd barely mentioned Gandolfini. And when he did, he damned himself further.

It's perfectly fine for Shepherd to have disliked the film; I'd be the first to admit that it wasn't exactly *Casablanca*. And if he didn't like Gandolfini in the role, that's fine too. But for Shepherd to base his entire rejection of Gandolfini's performance on a perceived "stunt-casting" as a (contrary to the article's depiction, discreetly open) homosexual betrays his argument and makes him look strikingly prejudiced in the process.

I'm sure Shepherd realizes that homosexuality is available

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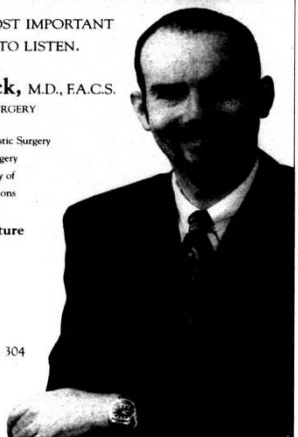
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in all sorts of shapes, sizes, colors, and option packages. And I'm equally sure that his "stunt-casting" comment was tossed off. But that didn't make it any less ignorant.
David Hughes

Another Duncan Beauty

To my favorite movie reviewer:
This week's review (March 15) is another beauty. I've read it aloud to a few people (though I was handicapped by much chortling) and sent e-mail copies to others.

Now all you need is HBO for *The Sopranos*.
Rachel Powers

Extraordinary Trudy
I just wanted to say that you really have an extraordinary new column with "Ask Aunt Trudy." She is well thought out and quite a source of wisdom, not your usual, shall

I say, Miss Manners or Dear Abby. I just always look forward to hearing what she has to say to people's questions.
Candy Riley
Pacific Beach

Mandatory Anonymity
Now that I've seen some of

the swell reasons given for "Name Withheld" letters (Letters, March 15), I've reconsidered my original position (Letters, March 8). The freedom to express opinions "without threat of personal harm or retaliation" — suggested by "Name Withheld" — is a fine reason to send anonymous letters.
Maybe the Reader can run a contest and give a free T-shirt to whoever comes up with the best of all reasons to

sign letters "Name Withheld." In the meantime, I can think of other really good reasons like not wanting somebody at the IRS or the parole office or family court knowing where you are, or your not wanting to worry about being sued for libel, or your not being sure how to spell your last name.
Come to think of it, I wish it were mandatory that all announcements by our mayor or any member of the city council be "Name Withheld."

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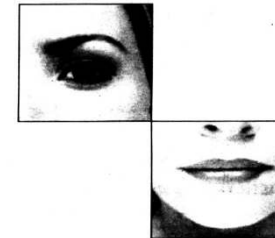
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 c. Detox hydro pack wrap for slimming
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European Facial ONLY \$45 (\$75 value)

Facial also includes head and neck massage and 15-minute back aromatherapy 1-1/2 hours. Helps deep cleanse, repair, refine and hydrate. Add only \$15 for Alpha Hydroxy Peel.

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Offers good with this ad. Expires 4/4/01.

It would be easier on me if I didn't know who said what.
 Helen McKenna

Cheap Journalistic Point

Give me a bloody break! Doesn't your writer Dave Good know anything about the local music scene? He referred to Buddy Blue ("Blurt," March 8) as a former Beat Farmer. Pub-leecese! Buddy was a member of the Beat Farmers for the first year and a half. Then for the other 15 years or so, the Beat Farmers somehow managed without Buddy.

To say Buddy Blue is a former Beat Farmer is like saying Pete Best is a former Beatle. It's true, but aren't we taking some journalistic license to try and make some cheap point?

I can hear Country Dick doing subterranean 360s. I will now make a prayer that poor Dave Good gets a clue.

Jim Cline
 Carmel Valley

Ads Endanger Self-Esteem

Is there some money being exchanged under the table here? I noticed that there are a helluva lot more cosmetic surgery ads in your paper these days. What kinds of messages do these ads send to your young female readership who are struggling to maintain strong self-esteem in the face of excessive media manipulation?

Julia Dashe
 La Jolla

Narrow-Minded Taste

I am writing to comment on the detestable, biased movie reviews that you are printing in your paper. I enjoy your publication very much aside from the thinly veiled attacks on modern cinema called reviews. I expect a quality publication such as your own to present reviews that take into account all factors of a film, including entertainment value, and it seems like your current reviewer is only interested in films that suit a very narrow-minded taste. Most people go to films to enjoy themselves, not to search for some obscure philosophical meaning to their lives. You need to have someone review contemporary films in a manner that better represents the majority, as opposed to a one-man crusade for grainy 8mm Polish art-house films.

Brian Moeller

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FINALLY! The program to help you break out of the diet-binge cycle and lose those painful pounds naturally and permanently. Learn to feel better about yourself, lose the insatiable appetite for food, and come to peace with your body.

As former compulsive eaters, The Hungry Heart's team of Certified Clinical Hypnotherapists and Nutritional Counselors would like to share with you a better way to healthy, permanent weight loss. We've been through it: suffering with chronic weight fluctuations, bingeing and yo-yo dieting. We understand the frustration and confusion of losing weight only to regain it.

We work together as a team to create lifelong changes in your eating habits. This is a permanent approach to out-of-control eating.

The program provides a guilt-free, safe, and discreet environment where...

You Will Get Positive Results!

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 A Caring Approach to Out of Control Eating

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The Hungry Heart is a place for healing your relationship with food so you can live every day free of compulsive overeating. Learn to move past your preoccupation with eating and weight loss and move towards a more rewarding and satisfying life. Our 8-week systematic program combines behavioral and nutritional counseling with hypnosis to reinforce new behaviors and thought patterns. Weight loss is a natural by-product of changing our thinking patterns.

We work together as a team to create lifelong changes in your eating habits. This is a permanent approach to out-of-control eating.

The program provides a guilt-free, safe, and discreet environment where...

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the Hungry Heart
 A Caring Approach to Out of Control Eating

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Calendar

Modest at the Star

Independent Film Society

"I'm an entrepreneur," says Dan Hare, "and my philosophy is, you want to have a party? And you tell each of them to call 12 friends and say, 'Hey, you want to have a party?' And you tell each of them to call 12 friends. And you decentralize responsibility and the sense of ownership. So that's going to be the secret of our success."

What he wants to succeed is the Independent Film Society, which he founded three years ago "as a way to bring the film festival experience to Main Street, as it were." Never mind Robert Redford's annual event in Park City, Utah. Same goes for the ones in Palm Springs, Toronto, Seattle, and Cannes. Hare shows films on screens at La Costa Canyon High School, Carlsbad Village Theater, and La Paloma Theater in downtown Encinitas.

There are advantages to modest venues. Rather than face the prospect of choosing among umpteen films in ten days, as international festival participants must, Hare's society members enjoy what he calls "a bite-size format"—a film once a month. "So that when the next one comes up, people aren't burned out. They're ready for it. It's like, 'Hey, yeah, that's a cool thing.'"

What is more, *vive la difference* between the audience for the famous festivals and for his society's films, says Hare. Being discreet with his phrasing, he defines the crowd at Sundance, et al., as "a certain segment that has seen a lot of films." In San Diego, by contrast, "You have a group of people who see movies and they chat about them, but it's not like it's overdone. It's not an obsession."

Opportunities to "chat" are built into the society's programming. Its latest venue, the Star Theatre in



Dan Hare

Oceanside, was chosen with just such chats in mind. "The facility has the space to host a reception before the screening," says Hare of what is currently San Diego's largest theater, with 900-plus seats. Foreclosed in the mid-1990s after a stint as an X-rated movie house, the Star was bought and renovated in the late 1990s by Jim Heiser. It boasts a mammoth screen, 40-by-20 feet, as well as a superior sound system. Recently it has changed hands again. Its new owner is the Potomac Theater of the

Performing Arts—"a nonprofit group, thank God," says Hare, who was asked to be its "producing partner on the film end of it."

The kinds of films screened by the society are ones "that basically you can't see anywhere else, because they're not in wide-area release." Anybody can go to the multiplex and see Tom Cruise "for weeks and weeks on end." These are "smaller, character-driven films" and documentaries.

Here is Hare's process for choosing the films. The first hurdle is "the good, old-fashioned, IF-I-like-the-movie one. Then I've got some people that I share it with, to double-check a look at it. Thirdly, it depends on if the director can come down for a Q&A. Even if I like the movie a little less [than others], if the director's available, that adds points to it."

Last month, the society showed *The Port of Last Resort*, a 1998

documentary about Jewish refugees who left Europe for Shanghai during the Nazi era. Instead of hearing from the director in that case, the audience was introduced to John Stoesinger, distinguished visiting professor at the University of San Diego, who himself saw Hitler roll into Austria and fled to Shanghai's "Little Vienna."

Hare's probable choice for the opening of the society's third season, in May, is *Out of the Black*. A feature set in Western Pennsylvania's coal-mining country, it was cowritten and directed by San Diego-based Karl Kozak and scored by Oceanside resident Larry Groupé. "Among other things, Groupé did the score for *The Contender*—that's up for an Academy [award]," says Hare, who claims to have introduced Kozak and Groupé to each other.

In July, Hare hopes to show a sneak preview of a film being produced by Rancho Santa Fe resident Robert Glenn Smith. It's "loosely inspired" by the Ian Spiro incident of some years ago, says Smith. Hare glosses the old news clippings: "Guy comes home, his wife and three kids are shot, and he's found dead three days later in the desert by cyanide." When the incident occurred, it was thought to be a murder-suicide. Spiro was \$5 million in debt. But, says Hare, "There's heavy evidence that it was a conspiracy by terrorists."

The film interleaves four other stories of fictional North County residents—migrant workers who live in a makeshift camp. Tentatively titled *El Campo*, it will be half English, half Spanish, with subtitles for each, "so everyone can watch it together," says Smith.

Hare calls the society "a little, no-name, grass-roots, by-the-way, bootstrap organization." Translation: his formula for success requires a paying membership and volunteers for ushering and other tasks. On Sunday at the Star, the group will host a reception and informational meeting designed to bring more people into the fold. Tours of the nostalgia-tinted, neon-signed theater are part of the afternoon's scheduled activities.

—Jeanne Schinto

Reception and Informational Meeting
 Independent Film Society
 Sunday, March 25, 3:00 p.m.
 Star Theatre
 402 North Coast Highway,
 Oceanside
 Free
 Info: 760-942-9988

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Lobby of Star Theatre

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. 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, Box 55003, San Diego, CA 92166-5003. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may also submit information online at www.sandiegoreader.com by clicking on the events section.

GETAWAYS

BAJA

"A Spanish Concerto Gala" is set for Friday, March 23, when the Orchestra of Baja California performs Spanish classical music at 8 p.m. at the Tijuana Cultural Center. Tickets are \$22 U.S. Find the center at Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street in the Zona Río. For more information, call 011-52-66-87-9600. (TJUAHO)

The orchestra repeats the concert on Saturday, March 24, at 8 p.m., at the Teatro del Estado (on Boulevard López Mateos). Tickets are \$22 U.S. Find the center at Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street in the Zona Río. For more information, call 011-52-66-87-9600. (TJUAHO)

Poker Fun, the 45-mile Rosarito Beach Off-Road Poker Run is set for Saturday, March 24. Registration is \$30 U.S. For details, dial 011-52-66-12-2525. (ROSARITO BEACH)

The Comedy Hour de Dos Armas will be presented by Cynthia Klitbo and Rebecca Jones at the Tijuana Cultural Center Monday through Wednesday, March 26-28. Performances begin at 7 and 9 p.m. each

night at Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street (Zona Río). Call 011-52-66-87-9600 for information. Tickets are \$22 U.S. (TJUAHO)

"Three D's Music" screens at the Omnimax Theater in the Tijuana Cultural Center Tuesdays through Fridays at 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 Héroes and Mina Street in the Zona Río. For more information, call 011-52-66-87-9600. (TJUAHO)

Yuccas of two varieties are in bloom in San Diego County from now through May. Year after year, the Mojave yucca (*Yucca schottii*) sends up a blunt flower stalk of white, waxy blossoms from the same base—a rosette of dagger-like leaves. The shimmering white exclamation point that unfolds above "our Lord's candle" (*Yucca whipplei*), on the other hand, is a prelude to the

yucca's imminent death. Mojave yucca is widely distributed along San Diego County's coastal strip and throughout the higher elevations of the Anza-Borrego Desert. Our Lord's candle persists the scrubby coastal foothills and the drier slopes of the Palomar, Cuyamaca, and Laguna Mountains. The two yuccas coexist with each other in a few areas like Torrey Pines State Reserve and Anza-Borrego's Culp Valley area.

Indie Northern, one of the most common flowering shrubs used in landscaping as hedges and dividers in San Diego, is blooming best right about now. The plant, which has several varieties, covers itself with blossoms ranging in hue from pinkish white to vivid pink.

OUTDOORS

Where Is Balthus Back? Find the rock and the fossil tree embedded in sediments when geologist Jerry Winter and marine biologist John McGowan lead a walk for the Friends of the San Diego River Valley on Saturday, March 24. Cliff erosion and marine life in the Del Mar area will be discussed. Interested? Meet at the entrance to the parking lot at Torrey Pines State Beach at 1 p.m.

Improve the Trail, help place plants, and trim back brush when ranger Dan Bryan leads a park beautification project in Cleveland Canyon in the San Pasqual Valley Open Space, at 8 a.m. on Saturday, March 24. Bring drinking water and a snack, some hiking and bootbrushing is part of the fun.

Go! Sensei Say Willard brings her Snake Sense program to Felicita Park on Saturday, March 24, at 1 p.m. She'll discuss local snakes and their benefits. Meet in the meadow; the park is located at 742 Clarence Lane. Free. 858-494-3049. (ESCONDIDO)

Mystery Tree Walk, investigate the legend of the Mexican-era sign map on trees during a nature and historical walk planned in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve on Saturday, March 24. Participants will see wild flowers and learn native plants and their uses. Meet the group at 1 a.m. at

the Mercy Road staging/parking area (upper level), by the benches at the junction of Mercy Road and Black Mountain Road. 619-484-3219. (MIRA MESA)

Who's-a-Gone Thers? Meet live on the beach at historical figures as well. For information, call 858-494-3049. Free. (POTRERO)

Support Your Local Indicators, Nancy Conroy of Skyhatters brings live birds of prey to Goodwin Ranch/Sycamore Canyon on Saturday, March 24. These birds act as indicator species on our environment. Spot local birds during a hike following the talk. Meet at the entrance to Sycamore Canyon off Highway 67 at 2 p.m. Call 858-485-5077 for RSVP. The requested donation is \$1. (POTRERO)

Tracking the Refuge, view the migratory waterfowl and shorebirds and wildflowers at the Otay Sweetwater National Wildlife Refuge when the series hosted by the Chula Vista Nature Center continues on Saturday, March 24, at 8:30 a.m. To make the required reservations and obtain directions, call 619-499-5983. (RANCHO SAN DIEGO)

Daley's Top Ten, Daley Ranch is in full bloom. Join naturalist Irene for an easy 2.5-mile walk to see the ten most common plants found in Daley Ranch and how Native Americans and pioneers used them. The walk

starts at 10 a.m. on Sunday, March 25, in the main parking lot (on La Honda Drive), with water and hiking boots. 760-439-4680. Free. No pets. (ESCONDIDO)

Spring Is Definitely in the Air, so take a four- or five-mile (volunteer) cycling hike with Heather and Sara along the lake in San Diego County River Park on Sunday, March 25, from 9 to 11 a.m. Call 858-674-2275 to make the mandatory reservations and obtain directions. Free. (ESCONDIDO)

Outdoor Bathhouse are invited to enjoy the San Diego Audubon Society Silverwood Sanctuary. Silverwood offers ten miles of hiking trails, a self-guided nature walk, an observation area filled with bird feeders, and many resident birds and wildlife to observe.

Silverwood is open to the public on Sundays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with guided nature walks conducted at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. For more information, call 619-442-2998. The sanctuary is located at 1300 Wildcat Canyon Road (five miles from the Ashwood-Mahabow turn). (ESCONDIDO)

Consider Carlebach, a walk around this burg offers views, charm, lovely homes, and a good workout. Join the Walkabout explorers on Sunday, March 25, for a moderate-plus seven-mile walk in the area. The walk starts at 8:30 a.m. in the parking lot at the water's edge at the foot of Tamarack Avenue (exit 15 at Tamarack and head west) 619-231-7461. Free. (CARLSBAD)

Desert Natives and plants will meet to the area and regions are highlighted when the third Desert Garden Tour 2001 takes place on Sunday, March 25. The self-guided tour runs from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$15 general for reservations and information, call 760-767-3098. (BORRERO SPRINGS)

Black Mountain Wildflower Walk, head out with naturalist Mike Kelly to see flowering plants including mountain lake, California buttercup, fuchsia flowering gossamer, monkey flower, native bunch grass, and many others. The moderately strenuous two- or three-mile walk is dated for Sunday, March 25, at 10 a.m., beginning in the Black Mountain Park staging area (off the old dirt Black Mountain Road). 619-484-3219. Free. (RANCHO PENASQUITOS)

The Slender Waist Crescent Moon makes its first easily observable appearance in the western sky during twilight Monday, March 26. Because the crescent stands at a steep angle relative to the west horizon this time of year, the young crescent moon hovers almost directly over the setting sun and so appears as a "smile" almost perfectly aligned with the horizon. By March 28, the latter crescent moon passes near the pale planet Saturn, and by March 29, an even later moon—nearly a third quarter phase—lies near brilliant Jupiter.

Observe the Nocturnal Habits of Marine Life on the beaches of La Jolla when the Birch Aquarium-Museum hosts grunion runs activities on Tuesday, March 27, 9:30 to 11:30 p.m. The evening begins with a presentation and featuring local musicians and the lifestyle of various beach-dwelling marine animals, including grunion, and then moves down to the beach to watch the residents. The fee is \$12 for adults, \$8 for children 7-13. Call 858-534-2336 for the necessary reservations. (LA JOLLA)

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Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

Museum for a family kayaking adventure in search of the sea turtles in south San Diego Bay on Sunday, March 25, from 8 a.m. to noon. Non-members pay \$85; call 619-232-3821 x200 to register. (SDC/NM SAN DIEGO BAY)

From Sea to Arroyo Cienega, you'll see it all when the San Diego Bicycle Touring Society hosts a Fallbrook hills ride on Sunday, March 25. The 80-mile jaunt starts at 8:45 a.m. in the upper parking lot Moonlight Beach (found at the foot of Encinitas Boulevard). Bring money for a lunch stop. 619-449-9189. (ENCINITAS)

Memorizing Mike and cruising through Clearmont Mesa is promised when the Kickstarters gather for a ride on Sunday, March 25. This 27-mile ride for novices begins at 9 a.m. at the Costa Verde Shopping Center (1600 Genesee Avenue) and promises lunch (bring money). 858-453-3667. (LA JOLLA)

Outback Express, take a scenic 40-mile bicycle ride through San Diego's "nearly unspoiled outback" with Sierra Club bicyclists on Sunday, March 25. The loop ride starts at 9 a.m. near the Starbucks in the Rancho San Diego Town and Country shopping center at the northwest side of Jamacha Road at Willow Glen. When the outing was last of forest, participants "claimed that this loop was all uphill," on consider yourself warned.

Leaders suggest bringing three water bottles and money for a mid-ride snack and lunch. For information, call 619-268-1877. (RANCHO SAN DIEGO)

SPECIAL

Talk About It, the San Diego Meditation Center sponsors its "Day of Dialogue" on Friday, March 23. Citizens are beckoned, at walk-in locations, to learn the basic lessons of conflict resolution, begin a dialogue, and fix a problem.

A parent-child conflict resolution workshop starts at 11:30 a.m. at the Escondido Public Library (129 South Kalmia Street). Call for reservations. All events are free. For specific walk-in locations and other details, call 619-238-2400. (SAN DIEGO COUNTY)

Fishing Season Approaches, so it's time for the 27th annual Fred Hall Tackle and Boat Show, continuing through Sunday, March 25, at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Expect to see boats, all manner of fishing gear, vendor booths, and seminars. Show hours are 2 to 9:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets are \$9 for adults, free for those 14 and under. Call 805-389-1339 for more information. (DEL MAR)

Folded Area, Little Talk, Curly Hair, all will be on display during the American West Cat Club cat show slated for March 24 and 25 at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Organizers expect up to 450 of the "world's finest pedigree cats" from 37 breeds. The show includes a tribute to the American Shorthair Cat, described as "America's native breed."

Show hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Admission is \$7 general, \$5 for seniors, children, and military. For information, call 619-267-0787. (DEL MAR)

Circle of Art, the circle for the 12th annual juried "Circle of Art Show and Sale" ran March 24 and 25. Sixty

artists will exhibit their works in a variety of media in the grassy park known as Christmas Circle on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free. For information, call 760-767-5555. (BONNIE SPRINGS)

Gem Shows, it's time for the annual event hosted by the San Diego Mineral and Gem Show, on Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25, at the Al Bahi Shrine Temple (5440 Kearny Mesa Road). Collectors and artists from throughout Southern California will exhibit crystals, gems, minerals, and fossils; demonstrations will be offered; and commercial dealers will offer their wares.

Show hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$4 for adults, children 12 and under free with an adult. Questions? Call 619-239-8812 for answers. (PACIFIC MEALS)

Law Day 2001 is slated for Saturday, March 24, running from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the third floor of the San Diego Public Library (820 F Street). Attorneys will offer legal advice on family law, immigration law, bankruptcy, personal injury, criminal law, and more. Free. Call 619-236-5894 for more information. (DOWNTOWN)

Dried Eggs Per Excellence! Easter egg season fast approaches, and the House of the Unicorn is hosting its annual *prayer* workshops from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, March 24 (and March 31 and April 7). *Prayers* are created using the dye-resist method with tools called *dyers* and *beeswax* and a wealth of ancient and lovely pagan symbols. The fee is \$25 (per student per class). Call 619-291-0601 to register. (BOLTON PARK)

Celebrate P-82 Twin Twin Airgroup Appreciation Day at the CAF Air Show One's World War II Flying Museum on Saturday, March 24. Only five P-82s are left in the world; the specimen being celebrated at the museum is number 18 of the 20 built before the end of World War II. Guests will see Twin Mustang and learn more about its history and restoration, and there will be big-band music and a barbecue.

Events run from 2 to 7 p.m. Find the museum at Gillespie Field. Admission is \$25. For reservations, call 619-561-3100. (LA CAJON)

Meet the Independent Film Society when the group launches its Ocean-side chapter with a reception and meeting at the historic Star Theater on Sunday, March 25, at 1 p.m. Guests will be able to tour the award-winning theater and learn about membership and volunteer opportunities. Find the Star at 402 North Coast Highway 760 March 26-April 1. For showtimes and tickets, call 619-295-1581. Tickets are also available through Ticketmaster (619-220-7133). (PUEBLO CITY, OCEANVIEW)

Rennascence Rainbows, 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 Walk 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, \$1 for children 6 to 12, and free for those five and younger. Find the fields at the Palomar Air-Port Road exit from I-5, head east for two blocks, and turn left on Paseo del Norte Road. For information, call 760-930-9123. (CARLSBAD)

Hit the Road for the fifth annual Boland Street Fair on Sunday, March 25, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Organizers plan live music, vendors, and children's activities. Find the fun on Boland Boulevard, at El Camin Boulevard. Admission is free. Call 619-236-5894 for more information. (LA JOLLA)

619-583-7321 for information. (RANCHO)

Take a Turn on the Beach, pianists meet for an informal concert, with tunes ranging from classical to jazz, at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, March 27, in the Santa Fe Room (found at the west end of Presidents Way). Free. For information, call 858-483-3939. (BALBOA PARK)

Under the Big Top, Circus Vargas hits the county for performances at a variety of locations through Sunday, April 15. Find the circus in Plaza Bonita for performances through March 25. Then it's off to the Valley Drive-In (at Mission Avenue and Highway 76) March 26-April 1. For showtimes and tickets, call 619-295-1581. Tickets are also available through Ticketmaster (619-220-7133). (PUEBLO CITY, OCEANVIEW)

Thousands of Books will be offered when the Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center hosts a sale of Judaica and non-Judaica books, both used and new, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, March 25. Find the center at 4126 Executive Drive. Call 858-362-1330 for information. (LA JOLLA)

Listen and Learn, radio station KISD-FM (92.1) brings back San Diego Opera director Jan Campbell for his popular discussions of the art form. He plays selections and generally enlightens every Sunday, including March 25, at 6 p.m. For information, call 619-232-7636. Broadcasts continue through May 27.

FOR KIDS

Follow The Fish when the Puppet Theater Players perform through Sunday, March 25, at the Marin Hitchcock Puppet Theater. Next up: *Rumpelstiltskin*, presented by the

Weaver's Tales, March 28-31. 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 Aerospace Center; 619-685-5045. Regular admission is \$5 for adults, \$2 for children (11-2), free for those under 2. (BALBOA PARK)

The San Diego Premiere of Afternoon of the Elves is being presented by Theatre School at North Coast Repertory Theatre. The play is adapted from the 1990 Newbery Award-winning book by Janet Taylor Lisle, centering around an ostrich girl who discovers an elf village in her back yard and makes a friend as a result.

Performances begin at 11 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25. Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for children. Find the theater at 987-D Lomas Santa Fe. Call 858-481-1055 or 888-776-6276 for reservations. (904/44 BROAD)

Verge of Discovery, it's the theme for the Carnival Concerts hosted by the San Diego Chamber Orchestra on Saturday, March 24, in the indoor activity center at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. The program invites kids to hear the diversity of music, from *Prince of Egypt*, *Animals*, and *Poca-hontas*, along with the "Olympic Fanfare," "The Star-Spangled Banner," "La Marseillaise," and Irish bagpipe, and steel drum band music. Performers include the Liam Harney Irish Dancers, the Heils High School Bagpipe Band, the Montgomery High School Steel Drum Band, and the San Diego Children's Choir.

Pre-concert activities start at 3:15 p.m., with an instrument petting zoo, face painting, and crafts. Tickets for the one-hour program are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children. For reservations, call 888-848-7326 x7. (DEL MAR)

Let Down Your Hair and enjoy Rain when the San Diego Artists Theatre presents its "Children's Classics" at L'Auberge Del Mar Garden Amphitheater on Saturday, March 24. The program includes *Three Little Pigs*, *The Big Bad Wolf*, and songs. The fun begins at 10 a.m. at 1540 Camino Del Mar. Admission is \$4 per person. 858-268-4494. (DEL MAR)

How Do Rabbits Hop Instead of Walking? Find out when the First Friends class (for those two to four years old) meet at the Hidden Woodward Animal Center (6525 Calle del Nido) at 10 a.m. Tuesday through Friday, March 27-30. The fee is \$10. Call 858-756-4117 x318 to register. (RANCHO SANTA FE)

Parent and Tot Story Time, enjoy Frank Auk's Goodnight, Baby Boun-ter Thursday, March 29, 10 a.m., at Barnes and Noble Bookstores (10755 Westview Parkway). Free. Call 858-684-3166 for details. (MIRA MEAS)

Children's Discovery Museum of North County, "The World of Sound," offers instruments from a variety of cultures and activities focusing on the science of sound, sound waves, and how sound travels. The museum is designed as an educational environment through art, science, and social activities for children 2 through 12. Look for a medieval castle, magic mirror, music, and renovated children's marketplace. Find the museum at 300 Carlsbad Village Drive, suite 103. 760-720-0737. (CARLSBAD)

Plankton Palooza! The microscopic marine organisms known as plankton fulfill a number of important roles in ocean ecosystems. Students of this Rich Aquarium Museum class (grades one through three) on Saturday, March 24, at 10 a.m., will use microscopes to learn about the plankton in seawater and be made models of plankton and a plankton net.

Scale, Feathers, and Fur, during these classes on Sunday, March 25, participants will learn to classify animals according to their outer coverings and find out what function it serves for the animal. Kids four through six meet at 10 a.m., while the children (grades one through three) gather at 12:30 p.m. at the Teolote National Science (5180 Teolote Road). The fee for this class, co-hosted by the San Diego Natural History Museum, is \$15 for nonmembers. To register, call 619-232-3821 x203. (CLAREMONT)

Celebrate Eric Carle when the Mercur Theatre of Nova Scotia presents creative adaptations of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and *The Very Quiet Cricket* on Sunday, March 25, at 1 p.m., at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido. The shows are headlined by children three through six years old.

Tickets are \$9.50. Find the center at 140 North Escondido Boulevard (at Valley Parkway). Call 800-988-4253 for information and reservations. (ESCONDIDO)

Let's Hope Mr. McGroger Doesn't Show Up! Peter Rabbit visits the story time planned at White Rabbit Books on Sunday, March 25, at 1 p.m., at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido. The show is headlined by children three through six years old.

Tickets are \$9.50. Find the center at 140 North Escondido Boulevard (at Valley Parkway). Call 800-988-4253 for information and reservations. (ESCONDIDO)

Children's Museum of San Diego, arrive early on the month in March to see the new exhibit, *Indian People*. The "Hank" Ensemble presents a rhythm and percussion performance at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, March 27. Try your hand at creating an etching like print by using the museum's printing press or scratch board during workshops offered at

10 a.m. Tuesday through Saturday, March 27-31.

The theme for the museum in 2001 is "One Puzzle, Many Pieces: Building Community Through Cultural Awareness." Continuing exhibits include "The Book Stop," "Improv Theater," and "Corra's Rainhouse." Find the museum at 200 West Island Avenue. Dial 619-233-8792 for additional details. (DOWNTOWN)

Why Do Rabbits Hop Instead of Walking? Find out when the First Friends class (for those two to four years old) meet at the Hidden Woodward Animal Center (6525 Calle del Nido) at 10 a.m. Tuesday through Friday, March 27-30. The fee is \$10. Call 858-756-4117 x318 to register. (RANCHO SANTA FE)

Parent and Tot Story Time, enjoy Frank Auk's Goodnight, Baby Boun-ter Thursday, March 29, 10 a.m., at Barnes and Noble Bookstores (10755 Westview Parkway). Free. Call 858-684-3166 for details. (MIRA MEAS)

Children's Discovery Museum of North County, "The World of Sound," offers instruments from a variety of cultures and activities focusing on the science of sound, sound waves, and how sound travels. The museum is designed as an educational environment through art, science, and social activities for children 2 through 12. Look for a medieval castle, magic mirror, music, and renovated children's marketplace. Find the museum at 300 Carlsbad Village Drive, suite 103. 760-720-0737. (CARLSBAD)

Marine Corps Recruit Depot Museum, housed in a historic building, the museum features five permanent galleries with artifacts, uniforms, vehicles, weapons, and photographs depicting Marine Corps history. The museum is located in Building 30 at MCRD, just inside Gate 4, off Pacific Highway, 619-524-6038. (MCWAVE)

Personage Museum of Lemon Grove, ongoing exhibits include "Popcorn, Poodle Skirts, and Little Green Men: The Air Drive-In Lives Again," a display of drive-in movie memorabilia; and "Lemon Grove: The Rise of a California Town." Find the museum at 7715 Chula Avenue. 619-460-4353. (LEMON GROVE)

Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, 30 exhibits designed to make science, math, and technology engaging and fun make up "ExploreZone," an exhibition originating at the Exploratorium in San Francisco. Each exhibit component seeks to stimulate better understanding of the relationship between art, science, math, and human perception — look for "Color Shadows," "Visible Effects for the Invisible," "Skittles," "Gold Metal," and more. This "ExploreZone" exhibition continues through Sunday, June 3.

Continuing exhibitions include "Sweetwater Valley from the mid-1800s, with historical photographs, artifacts, tools, and farming implements; the district's 1953 fire engine; and bound copies back to the 1930s of the Chula Vista Star News. Find the museum at 4035 Bonita Road. Dial 619-267-3141 for additional information. (BONITA)

Chinese Historical Society and Museum, pilows used in northern and southern China in the late 19th Century from the collection of Sally Leung are gathered in "Pillow Talk," on view through April. The museum is located in a building originally built in 1927 for the Chinese Mission; adjacent to the building is an Asian garden, including a statue of Confucius, a waterfall, stream, and a large Chinese gate. The museum is located at 404 Third Avenue (at J Street). 619-338-8888. (DOWNTOWN)

Chula Vista Heritage Museum the museum features glimmers of Chula Vista's past; exhibits feature lemon packing crate labels, photographs of downtown Chula Vista, doors and adobe blocks from the original Star newspaper building, and relics from the Otay Water Company. Find the museum at 360 Third Avenue. For further information, call 619-420-0916. (CHULA VISTA)

Creation Museum, a museum creating the evolution and creation world-view is found at 10946 Woodside Avenue North. For more information, call 619-448-0900 x231. (SAVED)

George White and Anna Gunn Marston House, this historic home sits on five acres of landscaped grounds with a formal English-Bornman garden. Built for civic leader and department store founder George Marston and his family by San Diego architect William Hebbard and Irving Gill, the Marston house design is in keeping with the early 20th-century American Arts and Crafts period, which emphasizes simplicity, function, and natural materials. The museum is located at 3525 Seventh Avenue (619-298-3142). (HILLCREST)

Home of Pacific Relations, international cottages are open every Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. to present the history and traditions of 30 ethnic groups. Select cottages are also open on the fourth Tuesday of every month, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Children Around the World videos are shown in the Hall of Nations on the fourth Tuesday of every month. 619-538-5809. (BOLTON PARK)

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READING

Familiar Spirits: A Memoir of James Merrill and David Jackson



Alison Lurie

Viking, 2001; 181 pages; \$22.95

ABOUT THE BOOK: James Merrill and David Jackson were a couple for almost 40 years. Merrill was a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, a critic, a playwright, and novelist. Jackson was a painter, critic, and unpublished novelist. Alison Lurie, for almost 40 years, was their friend. In *Familiar Spirits* Lurie recalls visits with Merrill and Jackson in New York, Athens, Connecticut, and Key West.

Although Lurie writes about other aspects of Merrill's and Jackson's lives, *Familiar Spirits* focuses primarily on the two men's rather serious play with the Ouija board. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* has this to say about the Ouija board: "In occultism, a device ostensibly used for obtaining messages from the spirit world, usually employed by a medium during a séance. The name derives from the French and German words for 'yes' (out) and 'no' (in). The Ouija board consists of an oblong piece of wood with letters of the alphabet inscribed along its longer edge in a wide half-moon. On top of this, a much smaller, heart-shaped board is placed, mounted on casters, which enable it to slide freely. Each participant lightly places a finger on the small board, which then slides about because of the resultant pressure. The letters

pointed out by the apex of the board may in some instances spell out words or even sentences. In the late 19th Century, when the Ouija board was a popular pastime, it was fashionable to ascribe such happenings to discarnate spirits; more recent opinion is skeptical."

Merrill and Jackson began their experiments with the board in 1955, three years after they met and fell in love. Merrill was almost 30 and Jackson, 33. "They were at a kind of crossroads in their life together," Lurie writes, adding that the two men, both independently wealthy, had no permanent jobs or family responsibilities. Jackson's well-to-do California family left him a man of some means; Merrill was the son of Charles E. Merrill, a founder of the investment-banking firm, Merrill Lynch.

Lurie, in *Familiar Spirits*, describes an early Merrill-Jackson Ouija-board session.

"They...consulted the Ouija board in the third-story tower room of their house, an octagonal cupola adjoining the sitting room, painted vermilion pink inside with white Victorian trim and lit by five windows. They sat side by side at a round table with a white milk-glass top, on Victorian chairs painted lavender. The board in front of them was of the standard pattern, but instead of the commercial pattern they used an upside-down blue-and-white willowware teacup; its handle indicated the letters."

Jackson managed the teacup. Merrill took notes. Eventually, Merrill turned those notes into poetry. In 1976 *Divine Comedies* was published. At two-year intervals, *Mirabell: Books of Number and Scripts for the Pageant* followed. The three books in 1982 were published together as *The Changing Light at Sandover*.

When Jackson and Merrill became a couple, Jackson spoke of himself as a writer. He finished several novels, none of which were published in trade versions. Jackson's last published work, Lurie writes, "was a long, witty, erudite review of two books on Lord Byron's Greece that appeared in the June 10, 1976, issue of the *New York Review*." Merrill, however, increasingly became successful as a poet, and the poems that make up what became *The Changing Light at Sandover* all bore Merrill's name as author. Jackson and Merrill, during their long arrangement, had other lovers. During the last decade of their partnership, their relationship deteriorated. In 1986, according to J.D. McClatchy's account in *Los Within Loss: Artists in the Age of AIDS*, Merrill was diagnosed with ARC (AIDS-Related-Complex). Merrill died in

1995. Jackson continues to live in Key West.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Alison Lurie was born in 1926 in Chicago. She graduated from Radcliffe College in 1947. Lurie is the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of many highly praised novels, including *The War Between the Tates*, *The Truth About Lorin Jones*, *Foreign Affairs*, and *The Last Resort*. She has also written a book on the meaning of fashion, *The Language of Clothes*, and a collection of essays on children's literature, *Don't Tell the Grown-Ups*. She teaches writing, folklore, and literature at Cornell University. She divides her time between New York and Key West.

A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR: *Familiar Spirits* jacket shows a photograph of James Merrill and David Jackson when they were in their late 20s or early 30s. I asked Ms. Lurie if she could tell me something about the photo.

"This photograph was taken by Rolfe McKenna. She's now an elderly woman, not very well. But over time she took many, many pictures of writers, and particularly some like Jimmy Merrill and Dick Wilbur she took over a long period of time. So that she had, almost at ten-year intervals, pictures of Jimmy, who was a neighbor of hers in Stonington, Connecticut. So this is just one of many pictures of Jimmy. It's one of the few with David, though, and that's why I wanted to use it. It's very much of the period. The painting in back of them, which you don't see so well because they cropped it, is a painting by Larry Rivers of cows in a meadow. He was a friend of theirs. He was very little known at the time they acquired this painting. He also did a portrait of Jimmy, which I don't think is as acceptable; it is very sketchy, which is fine for cows and trees, but it doesn't quite work for humans."

Asked about the very first time that Merrill and Jackson used the Ouija board, Ms. Lurie said, "They were in Stonington, with nothing much to do. And perhaps they got out the board just for that reason. Perhaps they found it in a cupboard. I don't really know. Who can say how they started?"

Merrill in 1986 told an interviewer, "We did it after dinner instead of having a guest. Of course, we did have a guest, but we didn't have to feed him."

The first guest was Ephraim, who introduces himself to Merrill and Jackson. Upstage letters indicate the material that



ARE YOU XTANS?

We guessed so, WHAT A COZY CATACOMB
Christ had WROUGHT HAVOC in his family
ENTICED MY FATHER FROM MY MOTHERS BED
(I too had issued from a broken home —
The first of several facts to coincide.)

Jackson's hand on the teacup was swift. The teacup handle pointed to letters, spelling out 500 to 600 words per hour. Lurie believes that without Jackson's contributions as message-bearer these poems would not have had the same wit, richness, beauty, or glamour. She writes, "For over 20 years he provided at least half of the material for Jimmy's epic poem... Jimmy — and the spirits — were aware of this." I asked Ms. Lurie about Jackson's contributions.

"I don't think people realized how much of this material [in Merrill's epic poem] did come from the Ouija board. You see a poem and you imagine that it was created by the poet, because it usually is. Although, of course, if you're a writer, you're thinking of writing something, and suddenly a phrase swims into your mind from who knows where, and you think, 'That's a good image. I must do that.' And I think that this business with the Ouija board is an aspect of the same thing. Your subconscious supplies you with material that you maybe couldn't reach by actively searching."

arrives on the Ouija board.

Correct but cautious, that first night, we asked

Our visitor's name, era, habitat.

EPHRAIM came the answer. A

Crest Jew

Born AD 848 in XANTHOS Where

was that?

In Greece WHEN WOLVES &

RAVENS WERE IN ROME

(Next day the classical dictionary

yielded

A Xanthos on the Asia Minor

Coast.)

NOW WHO ARE U We told him.

Charlton Heston, prop cannons and pistols, a display of characters from *Moppy Treasure Island*, and small statuettes from which the robotic inhabitants of the Pirates of the Caribbean ride at Disneyland were created.

An exhibit entitled "Submarines: A Century of Silent Service" is on display aboard the ferryboat *Berkley* through the year. Five components make up the show: "The Dream"

Ms. Lurie never liked Ephraim. She writes about him, "He was a part of David and Jimmy I hadn't met head-on before and instantly felt estranged from. He was foreign, frivolous, intermittently dishonest, selfishly sensual, and cheerfully, coldly promiscuous." Lurie writes that she nevertheless was flattered when the two men offered to consult Ephraim and "find out where I was in the spiritual scheme and whom I had been in my last life." The news wasn't good. "In my last incarnation, I had been a 19th-century English spinster missionary named Helena Pons-Toby who was sent to Africa to convert the heathen. After a while the heathen found her so annoying that they murdered her."

Ms. Lurie told me that she was upset to hear this from her old friends. "And," she said, "I think it was a warning. They knew that I was very skeptical and even frightened by what they were doing. And I must have said things like, 'I don't think this is safe.' Or, 'This seems to be very childish.' I don't know what I would have said. I can't remember. But I think they knew, even if I didn't say anything, they knew, when they would rush to me and say, 'Oh, we had the most wonderful message last night.' My face would tell them that I didn't believe a word of it. And I think they had to stop me because if they wanted to go on, they didn't want friends who were that skeptical or constantly expressing their skepticism. I took Ephraim's message as a warning, and I stopped criticizing what they were doing. At least I tried not to show what I thought."

"Did any of their friends criticize them?" I asked. "Yes, and from the poem you can see that they did. Particularly, Robert Morse, one of their Stonington neighbors. His remarks were very devastating. But Jimmy put Robert's objections right into the poem."

Merrill in *Sandover* quotes Morse as saying:

...He giddy from
Upstuck of too much upper case ...

Merrill, Ms. Lurie continued, "incorporated all of his friends' objections. And there were many people who thought it was a waste of time or silly, and then of course Jimmy's old psychiatrist said he thought it was a *folie-a-deux*. [The psychiatrist added that he thought Merrill and Jackson would do better to

try to talk to each other rather than to these 'spirits.' I think it was very good of Jimmy to enter these objections. He didn't try to pretend that no one objected, and he kept an open mind, but he kept on doing it."

Did Ms. Lurie believe that Merrill and Jackson believed that the messages on the Ouija board were coming from another realm? "I would say not always. That would be my guess. But as I wrote, there are moments in the book which suggest that they didn't quite believe it."

I asked Ms. Lurie what she made of the Ouija board. "I wouldn't go near it," she said, "I think it's wonderful to get in touch with your subconscious, but there are probably safer ways to do it."

Few people knew that for the five years until his death in 1995 Merrill battled AIDS. Obituaries stated that Merrill died of a heart attack. (The AP noted, "James Merrill, the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet whose career included 14 books of verse and many other honors, died of a heart attack Monday in Tucson, Arizona. He was 68.") I asked Ms. Lurie if she knew why the obituaries did not mention AIDS.

"People didn't know," said Ms. Lurie. "And he did die of heart trouble. People who have the kind of AIDS that moves very fast do sometimes die of heart attacks. They get pneumonia. It weakens the heart. Long ago, before they had all these cures, people would say, 'I hope I get the pneumonia and go fast.'"

A character who appears in several of Ms. Lurie's novels is the snappish, high-hat literary critic Leonard Zimmerman, known to his familiars as "Lennie." I asked Ms. Lurie what she thought Lennie might make of Merrill's and Jackson's two decades with the Ouija board.

"Ah," she said, "Lennie would have been extremely scornful. He's a side of me I try not to let out too much, but there is part of me that thinks the way he does. He would have laughed. I think he would have been skeptical, even sooner than I was. I think that the very idea of this would turn him off."

And what did Ms. Lurie imagine her critic Lennie would make of *Familiar Spirits*?

"I can't say, since we're so closely related."

— Judith Moore

Author Event!
Richard Rayner
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San Diego Automotive Museum, what does "family car" mean to you? "Vans, Sedans, and Wagons: A Tribute to the Family Car" continues through Monday, May 28, with vehicles from the Packard Woody to the quirky VW Microbus on exhibit. More than 80 automobiles and motorcycles from roadside carriages to future prototypes are included in the museum's permanent collection. Find the museum near the Light House, 619-231-2886. (BALBOA PARK)

San Diego Historical Society Museum, "Out of Our Vault II: Curatorial Curses" features artifacts from the society's collections of fine art, decorative arts, furniture, textiles, tools, instruments, photographs, architectural drawings, documents, and ephemera. The exhibition changes periodically through Sunday.

Spirituality For Dummies
Author: Sharon Janis
This book belongs on every person's shelf — better yet, right next to — no matter what their spiritual orientation, or lack thereof, may be.
BOOKSIGNING March 31 12:00 pm

September 2, drawing from the society's stored collection of over 17,000 objects.

Big Red Books
invites you to meet and talk with
Douglas C. Waller
He will be signing his new book
Big Red
Monday, March 26, 6 pm
Big Red is the story of a trident nuclear submarine and the men who can still destroy the world.
Douglas C. Waller is a correspondent for *Time* magazine and is featured in this year's March 12 issue.
Please, only copies purchased at Bay Books will be signed.
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The role of photojournalists and photographers in preserving San Diego region's eccentricities is commensurate with the ongoing "Weird San Diego: Capturing the Public Eye" — Photographs from the Collection that Seattle, Surprise, Amar, and Confuse. — Along with nearly 200 photographs, "Weird San Diego" features museum artifacts, costumes, and documentary evidence showing an often unseen San Diego. Curator Gregory L. Williams is also attempting to "show how historic data evolves. An image that looked serious 50 or 100 years ago can now appear absurd, poignant, or funny."

The museum is located in the Casa de Balboa building, 619-232-6203. (BALBOA PARK)

San Diego Maritime Museum, rare original paintings by Williams, including the Younger, Backhuyes, and Perceles are featured in "Art of the Sea: 17th Century Dutch Master and Their Legacy," on exhibit through Sunday, May 13. The total influence of these artists on the ensuing three centuries of European art is reflected in the other art exhibits on the exhibit.

THE ADAM SMITH INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA
presents
DENNIS SHAW
Former Deputy Undersecretary of the U.S. Navy, Dennis Shaw will be speaking on
"The U.S. Military in the Reagan Years and the Current State of the U.S. Military."
Mr. Shaw has held several distinguished administrative posts in military service, including Director for National Defense Strategy and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs.
Dennis Shaw has a degree in law and is currently adjunct professor at San Diego State University and Point Loma Nazarene University.
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Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, presents
Artists On The Cutting Edge IX
CROSS FERTILIZATIONS
THURSDAY, MARCH 29 • 7:30 PM
Join us as MCA presents the ninth season of *Artists On The Cutting Edge: Cross Fertilizations*, an outstanding lecture and music series conceived by Quincy Troupe. This year's program includes many of today's most innovative artists, and is expected to sell out, so be sure to buy your tickets early.
Thursday, April 5
ANGIE MIN
BOBBY GRANT
C.K. WILLIAMS
Thursday, April 12
RUTH FOREMAN
HOWARD ARBES
DOUGLAS EWART
Thursday, April 19
HENRY THOROGILL
DAVID WYONG LOUQUE
SAPHIRE
All performances 7:30 pm
TICKET INFORMATION: All performances are at the Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, 700 Prospect Street, La Jolla. For more information, call the Museum at (619) 454-3541, add. Tickets may be purchased in advance at the MCA Bookstore in La Jolla and Downtown, and at all TicketVestor outlets. (619) 220-0105.
Tickets will be sold at the door if space is available. Ticket holders are invited to tour MCA's galleries free of charge each evening before the performance.
Individual event tickets: MCA Members, Students & Seniors \$12; General \$17.
Enjoy a drink or dinner at the Museum Club prior to each performance.

Calendar LOCAL EVENTS

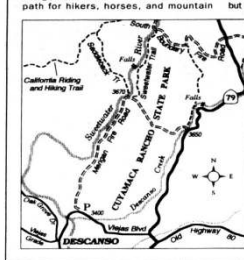
artifacts (including an actual Japanese torii).

The museum features permanent exhibits documenting the history of San Diego's waterfront and the building of the West Coast by sea, including exhibits concerning the old San Diego Coronado ferries, the tuna fishing industry, and the military. The museum fleet consists of the 1863 bark *Star of India*, the 1898 San Francisco ferryboat *Berkeley*, and the 1904 Scottish steam yacht *Medea*. There are also nautical exhibits, ship carpenters, model building, ships in bottles, woodcarvers, and a complete research library.

The museum is located at 1306 North Harbor Drive, along the Embarcadero at the corner of North Harbor Drive and Ash Street; 619-234-9153. (DOWNTOWN)

San Diego Museum of Man, photographs emphasizing ceremonial dress in tribal New Guinea as a visual marker for the complexity and beauty of its endangered cultures are included in "Endangered Cultures: Portraits from Tribal New Guinea." The exhibition of 40 color photographs by Phil Rasmussen is complemented by an array of authentic objects such as masks, historic photographs, and articles of adornment from the museum's collections. Enjoy the exhibition through Sunday, May 20.

Skeletal remains reveal fascinating stories from the past in "The Bones Don't Lie: Stories from the Grave," on view through January 27, 2002. The exhibit explores everything from bone recovery and identification techniques to uncovering evidence of nutrition, disease, and trauma, to the use of skull and bone imagery in popular culture. The exhibition includes hands-on learning and interactive displays.



Ancient Egyptian royalty and commoners are contrasted in the re-

Roam-O-Rama

A Guide to Unexpected San Diego and Beyond • By Jerry Schadt

Fed by countless ravines and rivulets on the slopes of the Cuyamaca Mountains, the Sweetwater River eventually becomes a watercourse worthy of the name "river" — at least in the rain or snow season. Below Green Valley Falls, the sweet, bubbling liquid slides placidly down a pleasant little gorge lined by alders, willows, and live oaks. The Merigan Fire Road — a wide, oak-shaded path for hikers, horses, and mountain

bikers — clings to the high bank of the river for a mile, offering the self-propelled traveler vistas of ice-cold, sparkling water tumbling over a gravelly canyon floor.

At about 3500 feet in elevation, the fire road was actually an excellent cross-country ski route for a brief period last month, when snow blanketed East County down to as low as 2700 feet. The snow's sunny gone now, but muddy ground remains. Wait at least two weeks if you want drier, warmer weather, and the onset of botanical spring. By April, the chaparral-covered hills above the path will have turned emerald green, speckled with the lavender blossoms of ceanothus (wild lilac). At least a dozen species of showy wildflowers should soon pop up along the trailside, including Indian paintbrush, which sports clusters of bright, red petals.

The Merigan Fire Road starts at a small parking lot next to a ranger residence on Viejas Boulevard, 0.6 mile east of the main crossroads in Descanso, or 1.1 miles west of Highway 79. You cross an open meadow, climb onto a chaparral-covered slope, and descend a little to enter a strip of live-oak woodland on the river bank. Don't miss a spur trail on the left, leading to a sit-in in diversion dam that has



Indian paintbrush off Merigan Road becomes an artificial waterfall.

At 1.9 miles in, the fire road (denoted by double-dashed lines on the map) turns east toward Highway 79, while other trails continue north toward Green Valley Falls and Green Valley Campground. Hikers and equestrians may continue on the trails, but mountain bikers must stay on the fire road and not use the narrow trails.

For more information, dial 619-239-2001. (BALDWIN PARK)

San Diego Railroad Museum, over 80 pieces of vintage railroad equipment are collected here. Among the pieces: five antique steam locomotives, seven large diesel electric locomotives, a number of small switchers, old freight cars and cabooses, a U.S. Army kitchen car used on troop trains during World War II and Korea, and a variety of passenger cars.

ventures through San Diego's backcountry. Miller Creek trains depart every Saturday and Sunday from the Campo Depot at 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Find the Campo Depot off Highway 94 and Forest Gate Road. For information, call 619-595-3010 or 619-478-9937. (CAMPO)

San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park commemorates the clash (on December 6, 1846) during the Mexican War between the U.S. Dragoons, bolstered by sailors and volunteers from San Diego, and California militia. A narrated slide-show screens throughout the day, telling the story of the war in Mexico and California. A self-guided tour recounts the events of the battle and profiles the leaders of the forces and also describes the lives of the Indians indigenous to the valley. The museum is found at 15800 San Pasqual Valley Road. Call 760-737-2201 for additional details. (ESCONDIDO)

Villa Montezuma, built in 1887 for internationally celebrated author and musician Jesse Shepard, serves as both a historical house museum and cultural center. Find the museum at 1925 K Street (at 20th Street). Call 619-239-2211 for more information. (SHERMAN HEIGHTS)

William Heath Davis House Museum, said to be the oldest surviving structure in the new town area of downtown San Diego, the house is a well-preserved example of a pre-fabricated "kit house" family home shipped from the East Coast to California by boat around Cape Horn in 1850. Guided walking tours focusing on the history and architecture of the Gadagang Quarter depart the museum each Saturday at 11 a.m. Find the museum at 410 Island Avenue (at Fourth Avenue). 619-233-4692. (GASLAMP QUARTER)

The museum also offers train adventures through San Diego's backcountry. Miller Creek trains depart every Saturday and Sunday from the Campo Depot at 11 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Find the Campo Depot off Highway 94 and Forest Gate Road. For information, call 619-595-3010 or 619-478-9937. (CAMPO)

When Ugliness Is Beautiful

These days, few music lovers are even aware of Karl Amadeus Hartmann's name.

The La Jolla Chamber Music Society presented the Munich Chamber Orchestra at Sherwood Auditorium. Christoph Popp, who has been the orchestra's conductor since 1995, offered a program of Britten, Tchaikovsky, and Karl Amadeus Hartmann.

This is a tightly disciplined string ensemble, with a harsh, aggressive timber that is apparently intended. The violins regularly produce a glassy, knife-edge sound, sometimes by a hair's-breadth clash of pitches. Their occasional vibrato-less tones (used for purpose of color) and their high-pitch harmonics set the teeth on edge. Popp, although himself a violinist, shows little interest in the lyrical elements of music. He is all for drive and power. There is a sense of tension at every moment.

That is obviously not the right attitude for Tchaikovsky, but it is also out of line for Benjamin Britten's *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*. Some sections of this work are indeed intensely expressive of a certain kind of anguished grief or numbed depression, and they perhaps invite the kind of exaggerated treatment Popp and the Munich orchestra gave them. But much of Britten's composition is parodic, ironic, lyrical, and light-hearted, and these sections were

grossly distorted by the heavy weight of the conducting, in which there was never a note of relaxation or humor. The music was experienced not as a graceful, balanced exploration of contrasting moods, but as a relentless assault.

A considerable part of the orchestra's programming is devoted to modernist and contemporary works, and in that repertoire their preferred style is much more at home. The highlight of the Sherwood concert was the performance of Hartmann's *Concerto furente* for Violin and String Orchestra, a work that responded like a willing slave to Popp's spastic manner of conducting and the string's nerve-shattering lashes. This was, so far as I know, the first time any composition by Hartmann had been played in San Diego, and as an introduction to the German composer's oeuvre the Munich Chamber Orchestra's performance was close to ideal.

These days, few music lovers are even aware of Karl Amadeus Hartmann's name, much less his music. The painful dissonance and frenzied emotionalism of much of his work denied him a large audience during his lifetime (1905-1963). In the latter half of the 20th Century, his accomplishments tended to be ignored even by aficionados of modernism, because his style was so out of step with the various fashions that dominated

the period. In particular, Hartmann had been a resolute opponent of serialism — "the course of extreme determinism" — of which he wrote: "One hopes in vain for ears that order the acoustic impression, the picture of collected muddledness unfolding before us. Even the designation 'music of the eye' rests only on a euphemistic glossing over because only a detective succeeds in following the line of thought." At a time when avant-garde music festivals and "cutting-edge" academic music departments treated serialism as the one true religion, Hartmann's music was unlikely to get much of a hearing. Fiercely modernistic and alienating to traditional audiences, Hartmann was thought of as old-fashioned and benighted by composers and performers who sought to alienate the audience far more radically.

It is time for a reassessment of this fine composer, and the Munich Chamber Orchestra's advocacy of his music — both on recordings and (as at Sherwood) in live performance — has helped. The *Concerto furente* is typical of Hartmann's work. It is resolutely an Expressionist piece: its overriding aim is the communication of emotions, and the emotions in question (as always in Expressionist art) are those of agony and suffering. Humanity suffers under the dehumanizing conditions of modern life; the good, the beautiful, the normal are twisted and defaced; ugliness and pain garishly color the depiction of human existence; the traditional principles of order, by which in earlier eras the world



Karl Amadeus Hartmann

Munich Chamber Orchestra
Christoph Popp, conductor; Muriel Cantoroggi, violin
Sherwood Auditorium (La Jolla Chamber Music Society)
Britten, *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*; Hartmann, *Concerto furente* for Violin and String Orchestra; Tchaikovsky, *Serenade for Strings in C*, Opus 48.

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had been made to seem a livable place, are ruthlessly broken. This is what we encounter in the Expressionist plays of Georg Kaiser, Oskar Kokoschka, and the early Bertolt Brecht; the Expressionist poetry of Gottfried Benn and Georg Trakl; the Expressionist painting of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Max Beckmann; the Expressionist operas of Alban Berg and Arriberto Reimann. It was at first largely a German movement, beginning in the first decade of the 20th Century, and it is still a living force in German art.

Much of his Expressionism was a direct response to historical events: the *Concerto funebre* (1939, later revised) arose out of the horrors of the Nazi period; his *Miserere* was dedicated to the victims of the Dachau concentration camp. His eight symphonies, composed after the Second World War, are pervaded with its atmosphere. He lived in a terrible time, and his music reflected that fact. They are not easy to listen to, and no one would go to them for escape or entertainment. But they are profound expressions of the human spirit, their musical inventiveness is endlessly fertile

and the harrowing experience they put the listener through, ultimately achieve the clarity and subtlety of the greatest. One does not go to *King Lear* for escape or entertainment either.

The Munich Chamber Orchestra has issued a CD of Hartmann's music, including the *Concerto funebre*. The violin soloist on the CD is Isabelle Faust, rather than Muriel Cantoreggi (the orchestra's concertmaster, who played at Sherwood), but the searing interpretation is the same, and so is the dazzling technical proficiency of soloist and orchestra. The orchestral string sound, not pleasant but incisively expressive, is just what the music needs. In the live performance, Bonner's conducting

ing propels the music forward with savage force. As you listen to this work again and again, you become aware that within the ugliness there is a miraculous beauty. For such a revelation, any flaws in the Munich Chamber Orchestra must be forgiven. ■

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 (including area code), and a phone number for public.

The program includes Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man," excerpts from *Billy the Kid*, "Hoodwinked" from *Rodeo*, "Variations on a Shaker Melody" from *Appalachian Spring*, and "Old American Songs, Sets 1 and 2, for Chorus"; Ellington's "New World" and "Chickadee"; and "Chichester Psalms" by Bernstein.

Enjoy the concert at 8 p.m. on Friday March 23, at Copley Symphony Hall (750 B Street). Tickets range from \$10 to \$50. Call 760-743-6402 or 888-848-7326 for reservations. (COMANTUNE)

Music in the Galleries, head to the galleries to see the art on Friday, March 23, when Trio West presents a concert at 7:30 p.m. Ensemble members include violinist Mark Carraway, pianist Lisa Targonsky, and cellist Barry Gold. Tickets: \$20 general. Call 619-696-1966 for reservations. (HARBOLD)

on Saturday, March 24, in the indoor activity center at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. The program invites kids to hear the diversity of music from *Prince of Egypt*, *Amistad*, and *Pocahontas*, along with the "Olympic Fanfare." The Star-Spangled Banner will be played on the "Patriotic" and steel-drum band music. Performers include the Liam Harnes Irish Dancers, the Hells High School Bagpipe Band, the Montgomery High School Steel Drum Band, and the San Diego Children's Choir. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. For reservations, call 888-648-7326 x7. (DEI, MAE)

ART LISTINGS

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 ART, Box 85803, San Diego CA 92186-5803. Or fax to 619-881-2401. You may

Friday, March 23, at the Market Street Studios (1225 Market Street). View the exhibition from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. A talk by the artist and appointment Tuesday, April 10. 619.234.9269. (DOWNTOWN)

Italian Painter Davide Biondi exhibits recent works in oil, mixed media, pastel, acrylic, collage, and watercolor on canvas and wood beginning with a reception at 5 p.m. on Friday, March 23, at the galerie *Art & Project* (1010 15th St.) with a lecture at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 7. The show continues through Wednesday, May 9.

Find the gallery at 592 Carlsbad Village Drive. Regular gallery hours are 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. by appointment. For more information, call 760.434.2282. (CARLSBAD)

Chinese Watercolorists on Silk

Art Inspired by Hot Rods, Lowriders, and American Car Culture. The 14 featured artists use a variety of media to interpret America's ongoing love affair with the automobile. Examples of customized cars are also on view in the exhibition, which continues through Sunday, May 27.

Find the center at 340 North Escondido Boulevard (at Valley Parkway); 760-738-4110. (ESCONDIDO)

Mingli International Museum of Folk Art. Objects of daily use, ritual, and ceremony from the cultures of India — textiles, terra cotta and bronzes, adornment, toys, and kites — are included in "Village India — Art of Compassion and Devotion — Selections from the Permanent Collection," on view through Sunday, September 10. The ceiling share part of the galleries with a larger-than-life-sized clay *Ayayara* horse, along with life-sized paper-

artistic talent is reflected in the exhibitors' small- and large-scale works, as well as its site-specific installations. All of the featured artists are recipients of several Fekkai Awards, awarded annually by the Fleschbacher Foundation. The show presents paintings, photographs, drawings, installations, and video works by 11 artists and a collaborative group.

"Books, Bytes, and Mortar" is an exhibition of paintings, models, and renderings for the new main library and four upcoming branch library projects.

Both exhibitions close on Tuesday, June 19. Find the museum at 1001 Kettner Boulevard at Broadway and Third Street, near the B and M Railroad Depot, adjacent to the American Plaza trolley transfer station. 619.234-1001. (DOWNTOWN)

Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla, the growing practice among

Find the museum at 700 Prospect Street, 858-454-3541. (LA KOLLA)

Museum of Photographic Arts, shot in a voyeuristic, gritty style, "Daigo Moriyama: Stray Dog" is a personification of the artist, who likens himself to the stray dogs populating many of his photographs. The 100 black-and-white photographs included in this exhibition captures the rapidly changing cultural climate of post-World War II Japan, a juxtaposition of age-old tradition and contemporary practice.

Also on exhibit: "Beatrice Heig," a series of photographs of a woman in a plebeian, and drawings of industrial objects are used by the artist to construct spaces that seem visible from many perspectives but are "ultimately captured on film from the singular viewpoint of the camera's eye." It uses her knowledge of music, an acute sense of light, and other elements to stretch her work

Museum of Art." The exhibition, on view through Sunday, April 22, highlights the vibrant interpretations of modern life in Europe and the United States created by American artists who embraced French Impressionism, featuring 39 canvases by 28 artists, including Mary Cassatt, John Singer Sargent, and Childe Hassam.

Albert Belleroche (1864-1944) was at the forefront of the renaissance of photography, when artists began to stretch the medium beyond the limits of creativity and technical production as defined by commerce. Working in Paris, Belleroche was well acquainted with the latest artistic techniques and styles. See "The Rise and Fall of the Lithographic Art," Albert Belleroche, pp. 40-41, lithographs drawn from the museum's permanent collection, through Sunday, May 27.

The museum's permanent col-

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concert by Marion Verbruggen (recorder) and Arthur Haas (harpichord) on Friday, March 23, at 7 p.m., in Smith Recital Hall. The all J.S. Bach program includes the "Trio Sonata in C Major," "Partita in C Minor," and the "Sonata in G Minor." Tickets are \$15 general.

Verbruggen will conduct a master class at noon on the same day. Admission to this master class is free. Call 619-594-6060 for information and reservations. (SDSU)

Voyage of Discovery, it's the theme for the Carnival Concerts hosted by the San Diego Chamber Orchestra

U2
APRIL 17

Admission is free, and prize monies will be awarded during the recital. For information, call 619-466-6606 or 619-697-0551. (LA MESA)

The "Lord Nelson Mass" by Franz Joseph Haydn may be heard when MiraCosta College's North Coast Concert Choral, the San Elijo Choral, and the North Coast Symphony Orchestra join forces for concerts on March 24 and 25. Haydn was at the height of his career when he created this mass in 1798, and its heroic character has made it one of the most popular classical works for more than 200 years. This production features 15 soloists from the chorales.

Join the ranks of admirers at 7:30 p.m. on Saturdays and at 2 p.m.

Set in a Small Georgia Town at the turn of the 20th Century, *Cold Snow* Tree centers on the town's most prominent citizen and his decision to take a young wife following the death of his first wife. This is the first comedy by American composer Carlisle Floyd, and it's the next production for the San Diego Opera. The cast includes soprano Patricia Racette, bass-baritone Dean Peterson, and tenor John McVeigh. The opera is sung in English with text projected above the stage.

Enjoy the production — conducted by Karen Keltner, with Garrett Bruce directing this new pro-

GALLERIES

"Goddess, God, and Myth..." opens at the Broker's Building Gallery (402 Market Street, at Fourth Avenue) during a reception at 6 p.m. on Friday, March 28. More than 15 local artists working in a variety of media are participating in this "postmillennial reflection on the myths that make up who we are," exploring classical and contemporary belief systems. View the art from 6 to 9 p.m. on Friday, March 30. For information, call (919) 540-6316. (GASLAMP QUARTER)

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Destiny," on view through April at the Exclusive Collections Gallery. Meet the artist from noon to 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 24, and from noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. The works include historical figures and folklore legends from China.

Viewing hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Find the gallery at 8008 Girard Avenue #190; 858-551-2027. (LA JOLLA)

ART MUSEUMS

California Center for the Arts Museum, the artists who have defined

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Whimsical creations by a Hawaiian folk artist are gathered in "Crowning Glory — Contemporary Paper Hats by Moses," on display through Sunday, April 29. Moses created more than 250 hats from paper bags contributed by merchants in his Hawaiian neighborhood in a room of his local library during the 1980s. Although all of the hats are fashioned from brown paper bags, the *chipunios* range in texture from a flannel-like appearance to a smooth, slick look.

The Mingei is located on the square with the San Diego Museum of Art and the Timken Museum of Art. For additional information, call 619/239-0013. (BALBOA PARK)

Museum of Contemporary Art,

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6 Hours

fit into the clearly defined categories of art and design is demonstrated in "Against Design," a traveling exhibition on view through Sunday, May 20. The "against" in the exhibit's title means "alongside," not in opposition to; it is art that is directly influenced by design. Most of the included pieces invite viewer interaction and draw on significant developments in modern and contemporary art, notably minimalism and formalism.

"Contemporary Collectors XVI" is an exhibition showcasing the selection of works that may be chosen for the group's 2001 acquisition. The Contemporary Collectors have purchased nearly 40 works for the museum since 1985 — which piece will

e Specials
Sunday-Thursday
\$35.00

Both shows conclude on Sunday, April 8. Find the museum in the Casa de Balboa building, at 1649 El Prado. For information, call 619.238.7559. (BALBOA PARK)

Oceanside Museum of Art, the artwork of 36 contemporary artists living and working in San Diego County is highlighted in the juried "OMIA Regional 2" exhibition. Jurors Daon Bacigalupi, Erikka Torres, and John Haynes selected "50 provocative works of art" for inclusion in the show, which may be seen through Sunday, April 8, at 704 Pier View Way. For additional details, dial 760.721.2787. (OCEANSIDE)

San Diego Museum of Art, an anniversary of the birth of the

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The museum's permanent collection includes Italian Renaissance paintings, Spanish old masters paintings, American art, 19th century European paintings and sculpture, and the Weisman Gallery of Contemporary California Art. 619.252.7931. (BALBOA PARK)

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Shadow Actors

Imagine hearing a director say, "You've been cast, sort of."

On a Friday afternoon, during an interview about being an understudy for the first time, Melissa Tan's phone rang. In the second half of a split second, it dawned on her: the call. Emotions gridlocked, everything from "let's do it" to "to-NIGHT!"

Another ring. Wrong number.

"Where were we?" she asked. "I think you just answered my question."

"It's so strange," she says. "Part of me's convinced I won't get the call. I suppose I can't think about it... don't want to freak myself out. If it happens, I go on, do my best."

"My mom said, 'Is anyone ever ready?' I'm not! All understudies must feel this like you're behind, and oh — the worst — that you might let them down! But then again, maybe no one ever feels ready."

Understudies are the smokejumpers of theater. If an actor calls in sick, or gets injured, an understudy parachutes into the fire, often with no rehearsal. Just as a second-string quarterback gets few practice snaps before the Super Bowl, so understudies must learn their lines, blocking, and business by observation only.

"Most of the understudies I've had were no more ready than the guy who ran concessions," says Walt Jones of UCSD. "They get rehearsals, usually with the stage manager, only after the show's opened. And if there's a notice enough before they actually go on, they get a rehearsal — as in 'one' — with the cast. But usually there's no notice."

Tan's assignment was typical. She understudied for the Asian-American Repertory Theatre's *O.B.*, a three-character drama. She not only had to learn lines and movements, she also had to perform a six-minute combat sequence. "It's like a dance," says Tan, "a series of steps with a partner, only I'm trying to kill him."

The fight required a *gun* (a spear-like "horseback knife") and a *gem* (a "straight sword"). The actors didn't just swing heavy, lethal weapons at each other. Martial arts master Dwight Lowe stressed an operatic northern Chinese style. Andy Lowe, Anne Tran, Robert Dahey, the prin-

cipal actors, and Tan had to use precise postures and movements — arch the wrist, palm up, fingers like a sword — and "mean" them. In one rehearsal, Lowe lowered Tan's arm two inches. While Dahey rehearsed with Anne Tran, Lowe worked the sequence with Tan. Lowe's a bit taller than Dahey, which changed his weapon's attack point. When Tan practiced with Dahey, she'd expect the sequence with Tan. Lowe's a bit taller than Dahey, which changed his weapon's attack point. When Tan practiced with Dahey, she'd expect the sequence with Tan.

INTERVIEWS

JEFF SMITH

Tan's assignment was also atypical because AART guaranteed her four performances, which is next to unheard of. Plus, she had three full run-throughs before opening night. And she "shadowed" Tran twice in rehearsals stood two feet behind her and imitated Tran's movements ("I don't know if other companies walk the blocking — few do — 'I just wanted to get up there'"). Tan rehearsed the combat so much she felt more secure with it than her scenes.

"They were so generous about giving me time," Tan said on opening night. "much more, I hear, than understudies ever get. I haven't had the chance to develop a rhythm with Robert and Andy. But I'm just the understudy. And I understand that."

For understudies the glass is half-full and half-empty. Imagine hearing a director say, "You've been cast, sort of." But they are not second-class citizens. "The only people who think that," says Todd Blakesley, artistic director of the Actor's Festival, "are second-class actors." Professionals, who have done it themselves, understand the punch/counterpunch of fear and adrenaline driving them.

An understudy going on for the first time gives regular actors a boost as well. They become hypervigilant, shepherding the actor through scenes: shoving props into hands, really listening to dialogue. "The new kid on the block recharges everyone," says Steven Adler, director of theater at UCSD, who stage-managed *Camelot* and *Big River* on Broadway. They bathe understudies in a protective aura, "helping them

find their marks and lights, nodding so they won't miss a cue, and not letting spectators detect the guidance.

Except for the theatrical equivalent of a "looky-look," audiences are usually supportive as well. A 23-year-old Albert Finney recognized this in 1959. He had a career-threatening case of stage fright. But when he went on for an injured Sir Laurence Olivier at Stratford, "It didn't matter what happened... if I dried, they'd expect it. If I fainted, well, it's a lot of pressure on the lad, you know. So I didn't worry." And Albert Finney, actor, came alive.

Broadway theaters have three kinds of substitutes: understudies, standbys, and swings. Regular understudies earn "actor minimum" per week — around \$1100 as of March 1. They "cover" regular cast members and each other, because if an understudy performs, someone must cover that person. To ward against worst-case scenarios, two or three people cover every role on Broadway.

Understudies must "call in" a half hour before curtain. At that time they're also expected to be within a ten-minute radius of the theater. Many Broadway stage managers require them at the theater every night. Adler: "If you're rep'd to understudy a Broadway show, this is your job. You can afford to be at every performance."

Big Broadway productions even use backup stagehands, who often learn their tasks on the job. Adler: "The production electrician in charge of follow-spots literally walks the backup operator through the show on headsets. As in 'Okay, spot three? You'll pick up character X, woman in a yellow dress; she'll enter down left. Pick her up, small iris, and carry her over to center where she'll sing the song. Stay on her. Then she'll exit off-right. Okay, stay on her. Whoa! WHOA!! She's going off now. Don't lose her!'"

A "standby" is an actor with some reputation who substitutes just for the star. Producers only use standbys for "sit-downs engagements," shows at a specific theater, and not "bus and truck" tours where — when you add in hotel bills, meals, travel expenses — they're not cost-effective. Many producers will cancel the



Melissa Tan

performance if the star is out.

Todd Blakesley is a local standby legend. For five of the past seven years he's understudied Scrooge in the Rep's *Christmas Carol*. That's 150 performances, and he's never gone on. Eight times a week, he calls at "half hour" and is within a ten-minute radius of the theater ("which does pin your evenings down"). He observes at least two shows a week, during the run, and gets an occasional rehearsal with the stage manager. But he's zero for five... years. "I get paid not to act," he half-laughs.

"I've been a good-luck charm for the person I'm understudying. I never had illusions of going on, unless there's a catastrophe, because these guys, believe me, are pros. They'd have to be damn near death's door — or abducted by aliens — before they wouldn't show up."

A swing, says Steven Adler, is "the hardest job of all." One male and one female understudy the entire chorus of a musical. They must know every dance step, song, and blocking. "For up to 15 parts," says Adler, "and be any one of them on short notice. It takes a special performer, usually

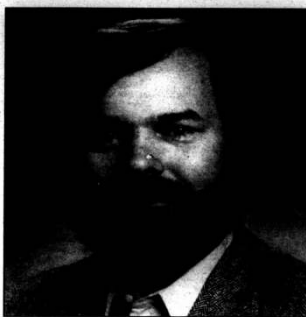
a dancer, to be a swing." Manny Fernandes is the current San Diego equivalent of a swing. He's understudying three characters for the Theatre in Old Town's *Shear Madness*. The show, about two-thirds audience participation, is a murder mystery that changes villains each night. Fernandes must not only memorize three roles but around a dozen possible endings.

Some professional theaters, especially for big musicals, expect understudies to perform exactly like the actor they replace. For Tan, Blakesley, Fernandes, and others I talked to, most theaters are less strict. "Initiation means just going up there and being fake," says Fernandes. "That's not interesting. So you adjust enough to feel comfortable doing it."

The substitute's nightmare is that first performance. A few years ago, Fernandes had a different one. He was understudying some minor roles for *A Christmas Carol*. One night, he called in at 7:30. The stage manager said an actor had his show up, call back in ten minutes. Fernandes did. No actor. The stage manager screamed, "Get down here!"

"So I'm driving 90 miles per hour down Park Boulevard, trying to remember what that character's supposed to say, and drawing a blank."

When he reached the theater, the show'd begun. As dressers frantically pinned a costume together, the actor



Todd Blakesley

muddled in, got dressed, and went on.

"That's only happened once," says Fernandes, rolling his eyes and looking for wood to knock.

He first went onstage as an understudy three years ago. "I knew the words and where to move, but going up there and doing it, with only one rehearsal, in front of an audience!"

"Just say, 'I got through it.'"

The second night was "a little better." The third — "a natural fit. I went from one extreme to the other in two days. And

that first time was as nervous as I've ever been onstage."

Melissa Tan goes on tonight. Unlike most understudies, she knew the date weeks in advance. But still.

She tried pretending it's opening night for everyone. But that doesn't work. Lowe and Dahey have already done the show for three weeks. She worries about more than the combat, the lines, and her timing.

She'll also serve a meal, before a live audience, and rehearsed it only once.

At the same time, Tan can't

wait to perform. This is it. She's "really happy but a bit overwhelmed."

She took the day "easy," worked in the morning, napped for an hour, and at 5:00 was in ritual mode, the actor's automatic pilot prior to a performance. Moving in almost slow motion, she focused on the show, checked her clothes and makeup, water, and "just in case," throat lozenges.

She drives ten miles below the speed limit, in a light rain, and gets to the theater two hours before curtain. The

door's locked. Be calm. Save drama for the stage.

She chats with Andy Lowe and others. Asked if she's nervous, Tan retorts, half-kidding, "Don't ask me that! I'm good. It's gonna be good!" As she heads to the dressing room, Lowe says, "Melissa's ready. She worked real hard."

At 6:30, Tan comes onstage in costume. She and Dahey "mark" the combat sequence, walking through each move, step-slap, step-slap.

"Up to speed," says Dahey. Eyes widening, they stride and

slash, their voices like blurred arrows. Both are now in character, out for blood.

"Again," says Dahey, and they repeat the sequence faster than usual.

"Careful," Lowe yells off-stage, "your blades are flecking metal!"

"I'm pumped," Tan confesses after the warm-up. "All jitters and calming them down. Nervous-excited. It'd be easy to dwell on negatives. But I won't. If something goes wrong, we help each other. We sink or swim together."

She swam. Every actor I talked to about understudying spoke of a release that first time — which Todd Blakesley has yet to feel. The preparation, the pressure — like an ever-present, low-grade fever — building for weeks, sometimes months, vanished when they walked into the lights. Even if dissatisfied with the performance, and many were, to a person they let out a long exhale with the memory. Tan, no exception, does into the role as if finally set free.

"She was great!" says Lowe after. "It took Robert and I just a couple of beats to adjust. Different rhythms, different audience laughs. Another thing: it's true what they say. When an understudy comes on, it wakes everybody up."

The show's over. Tan's glass is brim full and home dry. "I think it went well," she says. Many congratulate her. She

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"You really can't dance to this music unless you're a total spazz, but we occasionally do get people with a spastic nature," Jesse Applehaums of the "mutant, avant-garde, hardcore" Upsilon Acrux says his band is "hard to grasp."

"How many different rhythmic changeups, damaged horn bellows, and atonal guitars can one song contain?" asked one music scribe about their CD *The Last Pensive of Upsilon*.

"The last show we did, we had this guy who totally freaked out, jumped out of his seat, ran towards us, and jumped headfirst into the stage," said Applehaums. "He started flopping on the floor."

Upsilon Acrux is hard-core and heavy progressive rock. "We call it 'maximism.' It's the opposite of minimalism. It's got a lot of notes. Some consider it in the vein of Frank Zappa, but we don't do

any social commentary." In fact, Upsilon Acrux doesn't do lyrics. "We have two drummers, guitar, bass, and keyboards.... We've been around for three years. We've played at the Knitting Factory in Hollywood and at A's Bar, and the Smell in downtown L.A. But San Diego doesn't really have a place that caters to our type of music. That's why we don't play here too often."

But they have managed to squeeze a gig out of the Casbah. They convinced



COFFEE-ADDICTED Upsilon ACRUX

owner Tim Mays to book the Japanese duo the Ruins, who will be making their first San Diego appearance in their 20-year history. Upsilon Acrux opens the show.

"The Ruins is basically Yoshida Tatsuya.... He wrote

a whole language to go along with the band. It's all based on a French progressive band from the '70s called Magna, who was the first band to invent their own language to go along with their music. They did it so their music would be completely original."

Applehaums knows he won't get to quit his job at a record store anytime soon. "If you want to make a living at this type of music, you have to live in New York or Europe. We do it for free. We've never made any money off of it, but that's not why we do it. The thing is, a lot of people would rather turn out for the latest swing revival or cool-guy rock band than this. You want to go where girls are and have a good time and not really pay too much attention to the art. But this show is going to be all about music and art."

I note that Tangerine Dream concerts are famous for attracting hallucinating fans. What's it like at an Upsilon Acrux show? I ask.

"Tangerine Dream are ambient psychedelic. We're into coffee."

The Ruins, Upsilon Acrux, and the Free Stars appear at the Casbah April 4.

—Ken Leighton

"I think he was kind of upset," Jimmy Patton says about Stanley Jordan at the Galaxy Theater in Santa

Ana in December. By some accounts, the 27-year-old Vista guitar teacher blew Jordan off the stage, who was plagued throughout his performance with tuning and equipment problems.

Jordan would just stop in the middle of a song and start tuning his guitar. It kind of bothered a lot of people," Patton says that people began to leave halfway through Jordan's performance.

Patton says that an Escondido agent got him the opening spot, but it came with conditions. "I had to sell a hundred tickets to the show," he says.

Jimmy Patton plays two guitars at the same time. A guitar instructor at the Bishop's School in La Jolla, Patton says, "I use the tapping technique. It doesn't involve any strumming or plucking. Pretty much, you produce the notes by pushing down on top of the string over the fretboard, and that sends the vibration down to the guitar's pickups. That's how you get the sound out."

Patton holds one guitar in a normal position; the other lies on his lap, with both necks pointing in the same direction. This dictates that Patton must sit during performance, usually on the stage floor. "The main

problem was trying to set up the guitars," he says. "They aren't made to be played that way." He installed louder, hotter pickups, had the frets filed down to the fretboard,



ONE GUITAR JUST WASN'T ENOUGH

and tuned his guitars down a whole step to the key of D (and sometimes as low as B) to reduce string tension and make tapping easier.

Mr. Patton speaks in a very quiet, almost shy voice. "The reason I started playing two guitars," he says, "is because it gives me total freedom with both hands." His guitars sound more like a cross between a dulcimer and a piano.

Patton currently performs with Agent 22, a progressive band featuring Patton's twin six-string guitars, drums, and a Chapman Stick—a ten-

string guitar-like instrument with an extra-wide fretboard. It is the combination of the number of strings that gives Agent 22 its name. See Agent 22 downtown at Dizzy's, Friday, March 30, at 8 p.m.

—Dave Good

"I live in San Diego County," but if the earth shakes, I turn on [L.A. station] 1070 KNX or television, which at least has the resources and desire to cover breaking news."

If you expect to get breaking news on the local radio airwaves, one veteran radio newsmen says don't even bother.

Bob Hudson started in local radio as a Top 40 DJ in 1972. He moved into news at local stations like KCBQ, KQED, KSON, KPBL, and at Los Angeles stations KHI, KRLA, and KABC. He also worked as a media advisor for Pete Wilson. Most recently Hudson was the morning news guy at "The Planet" (KPN 103.7) until he was fired three months ago.

"I have to echo the beliefs of those who say radio news is a fading part of San Diego radio," he wrote on a website dedicated to radio. "I think the only radio station in town that still employs its own news person is KXYY with John Q. Lawrence [who is] one of the last remaining San Diego radio news people who can still be considered a

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journalist.

Local radio stations used to employ news departments. Today local stations rely on two different services for their news and traffic reports. Reporters like Pamela Howe, Rick Lawrence, Cal Walker, and Moe Tatum are not employed by the station they are heard on. Instead, they work for one of two traffic/news services. The 11 English-speaking stations operated by Clear Channel and the 3 stations owned by Jefferson Pilot (B-94.9, KIFM, KSON) rely on Airwatch, which is owned by Clear Channel. Other stations, including KYY, the Planet, Sets 102, and Star 100.7, use Shadow/Metro, which is owned by New York-based Westwood One. These two services make their money by selling ten-second ads at the end of each traffic/news report.

Hudson says, "The quality of news product coming out of the Shadow/Metro complex is appalling.... I made it a point to never rely on news generated by

(them).... I finally gave up calling the [news] desk to let them know when they'd sent out something wrong because no one seemed to think it was a big deal. Most people at Shadow/Metro... are traffic reporters who do news because management told them they had to.... It gives the stations the appearance of having news, no matter how shallow."

Hudson suggests that Airwatch actually is a better service than his former employer Shadow/Metro but that Airwatch news/traffic readers are underpaid.

"Much of what you hear is from very low paid former weekend DJs who got their Clear Channel/Airwatch jobs mainly because they will work full-time for a couple thousand dollars a month."

Hudson says some consumers are turning out radio altogether. "TV news seems to be making inroads into radio's former audience for breaking news—during the recent Santee school shootings, more than 100,000 people at a time were using the Internet and RealPlayer to access KCTV Channel 10's live streaming video from the scene."

"I don't comment on comments from people who used to be employees of our company," said Shane Coppola, executive vice president for Shadow/Metro

OVERHEARD IN SAN DIEGO: MISSION VALLEY 20



in New York. "We have 600 employees who just do [radio] news nationwide. We have 1000 news affiliates." Of the Santana High School incident, Coppola said, "We were the first to provide airborne coverage."

Regarding Hudson's specific San Diego complaints: "I don't know every single employee. I don't know specifics. In general we employ quality news professionals or we wouldn't be in business."

"I would dispute the statement that our employees are low-paid former weekend DJs," said Earle Curtice, executive vice president of Airwatch Traffic, which changed its name to Premiere Traffic Networks in January. He would not directly dispute

Hudson's \$2000-a-month salary figure. "We won't comment on anybody's income except to say we pay the going market rate based on talent and experience."

Curtice said that unlike Shadow/Metro, Airwatch/Premiere focuses on traffic reports and that it is up to the journalists at KOGO to provide news reports to the other Clear Channel stations. "For instance, during Santana High [shootings], the other Clear Channel stations turned to KOGO for live news coverage. [Airwatch/Premiere] does not do news in a significant way."

—Ken Leighton

CD review: Dave W.'s 90's Retrospective, My X-Lover's Records MXL 007

Seventy-seven minutes, folk!

Consisting of "the complete hits (1990-99)" of Farces Wanna Mo, Carnage Asada, Slept On It!, the DubOnics, the Penicillins, House of the Seven Magnificents, Dudley Dudley Not the Same as Dudley, Semper Fi, 4th of July Toilet, Dr. Robert, Sambo So Belly, Buttplug, and Cretin Masturbating in a Teaspoon. Some great, great unsung bands—and all from San Diego.

In all, there's some 31 fab-yoo-lous tracks, at least a third of them killer, but "Cherry Blossom Clinic," by Cretin Masturbating in a Teaspoon takes the cake...the brass ring...the meat trophy. A hip-hop remake of a lesser

cut from the first Move album on Regal

Zonophone—hardly one of its memorable moments—the CMIAT cover, in six disparate sections, with mood swing from maudlin to byzantine to bacchanalian, achieves healing transcendence of a sort unsmiled since Mahler's ninth symphony...11 minutes well spent.

And another 66 spent OK too.

—Richard Meltzer

CONTRIBUTORS
Insider Ball (editor): Bob Adams, Russell Bender, Kenyon Collier, Ed Decker, Dave Good, Randy Hoffman, Ken Leighton, Richard Meltzer, Jay Allen Sanford, Pat Sherman, Eileen Zimmerman

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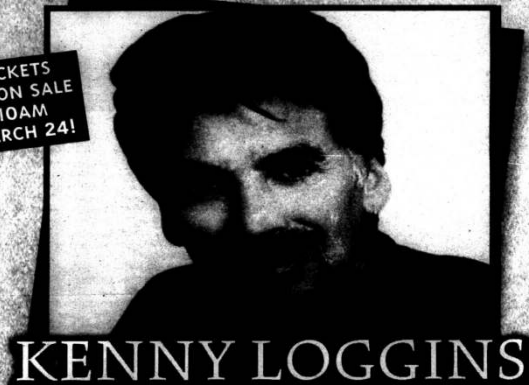
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Calendar
MUSIC SCENE

Generosity's Downside

Leman was confident that, if blindfolded, he could distinguish between a Yamaha and a Steinway.

More than two dozen pianos dominated the stage of the University of California San Diego's Mandeville Auditorium. Sales representatives, practiced in the art of describing the 90 acoustic and digital pianos on display, hovered nearby. Besides keyboards, the sales staff kept stacks of purchase contracts and finance plans at their fingertips.

Purple postcards touting the event called it "A Historic Opportunity to Acquire a Magnificent Piano at Substantial Savings." From all the hype, Greene Music, of San Diego would appear to be the sole beneficiary, but the sale enables the university's music department to stay equipped with new pianos.

By allowing Greene on campus, the University of California San Diego receives 18 new grand, upright, and digital pianos from the Yamaha Corp. After a year's use by students and faculty, those instruments will be sold next fall and replaced with new.

David A. Leman, Greene's sales director, explained that the sale was historic because it was the university's tenth such event. With Yamaha's permission, Greene exhibited some of its non-Yamaha inventory on stage, including grands made by Kohler & Campbell and K. Kawai, and uprights made by Thearle, Hallet Davis & Co., Whitney, and Wurflitzer. About two-thirds of the pianos were new, and the rest were used. Prices ranged between \$695 and \$27,995—which, Leman claimed, are 10 percent to 15 percent less than what Greene Music stores would normally charge.

F. Richard Moore, a computer-music professor, bought a new grand piano, manufactured by Young Chang of Korea, at the sale held about six years ago. "I honestly would have preferred the Steinway sitting next to it, but I couldn't afford it." Along with other professors, students, and university staff, Moore was invited to select a piano a day or two before the sale opened to the public.

While the sale may offer some legitimate price cuts to average consumers, Moore said, its real purpose is to strengthen the university's music department, which specializes in modern composition. "The acquisition of high-quality pianos is essential to an operation like ours. There's no question that these new pianos and our new practice rooms help us recruit and retain students," Moore said. "For many years we didn't have any practice rooms. We had pianos all over campus, in places like dorm lounges. When pianos get pounded on 18 to 20 hours a day, they

get worn out quickly."

About 250 music schools, including Yale, Ohio State, Northwestern, and the University of Connecticut, have latched onto Yamaha's "college partner program." Other participants in San Diego County include Palomar College, Southwestern Community College, and Mesa College. Tony Siciliano, a former studio musician for Motown Records and Nite, takes credit for persuading the Japanese manufacturer to start the program in 1989.

In his pitch to Yamaha, Siciliano used Apple Computer's donations of electronic equipment to universities as a model. Now, as president of National Piano Institute Marketing Services in Chino Hills, Siciliano works full-time helping Yamaha dealers such as Greene Music arrange piano sales at colleges. The weekend before the University of California San Diego promotion, Siciliano orchestrated a similar sale at Stanford.

The weekend after, he did the same at University of California Los Angeles. The emergence of various piano-loan agreements during the past decade speaks to academia's growing dependence on corporations, observes Paul Kenyon, who became chairman of Point Loma Nazarene University's music department in 1998. "There can be a downside to these deals," he said, recalling an alliance between the department and a piano vendor in the early 1990s.

Kenyon said he and his colleagues were under the impression the annual sale would be limited to pianos used by the department. Instead, the campus became an outlet for much of the vendor's unsold and unwanted merchandise. Lists of Point Loma Nazarene alumni, donors, and staff gave the vendor access to potential customers it wouldn't have known otherwise, Kenyon said. The aggressive tone of the sales-driven event clashed with the serene environment of the small liberal arts college, an affiliate of the Church of the Nazarene. "It wasn't a good match. We got new instruments for a while, but the second or third year we didn't generate enough business for them, and they canceled our arrangement. In the end, we had to buy our own instruments. It wasn't pleasant."

Kenyon would not identify the vendor except to say it wasn't Greene or Yamaha. In fact, the music department, which has a strong choral curriculum, receives free electronic keyboards from Yamaha. But it relies on contributions. "We've done very well getting gifts of instruments," Kenyon said.



UCSD's piano sale

Outside the music world, Yamaha is better known for its motorcycles and other sporting goods. However, the corporate logo of three tuning forks symbolizes that pianos were the company's original product, first made in 1887. Yamaha is based in Hamamatsu, Japan, which is the headquarters of its main piano-making competitor, Kawai. Yamaha produces 1350 pianos a day, said Leman, who enjoys telling potential customers, "You can eat off the factory floor, Yamaha runs such a clean operation."

Steinway & Sons of New York makes a total of 2250 pianos a year, according to Leman, "by hand." That claim, however, is disputed by some musicians who say some components within Steinways are no longer handcrafted. (Hammers and stems, for example, are machine-tooled.) Each Steinway takes a year to build, and variations in woods and woodcarving give each instrument a unique sound, Leman said. In contrast, Yamaha makes a consistent product—one piano feels and sounds identical to the next, reflecting its mechanized creation on the assembly line.

A high-quality piano that is tuned regularly and meticulously maintained should last a century, according to Leman. "Pianos that are not maintained properly deteriorate to the point that they are either taken to the dump and burned or they become planters," Leman said. "The key is taking care of it, tuning it every six months, regulating and voicing the hammers every five years." In addition, hammers need to be replaced about every 6 to 8 years, while the strings need replacing every 30 to 40 years.

Leman was confident that, if blindfolded, he could distinguish between a Yamaha and Steinway, given the latter's warmer, richer tones. But most music professors interviewed weren't so

sure. "I would have an idea whether it's Asian or a Steinway, but I wouldn't stake my life on it," Kenyon said. "Generally, pianos manufactured in Asia have a distinctive sound. It's a little more bright. It's not as mellow. Some jazz players and classical performers actually prefer them because of the clarity."

Susan and Tom O'Neill intended to buy a Steinway more than a year ago at the university's annual sale. The array of pianos didn't appeal to them, so the La Jolla couple ended up at Greene's store, where they ordered a Yamaha mahogany grand with a compact disc player for \$35,000.

Unlike the old-fashioned, mechanical player pianos that lack expression, disc players enable pianos to mimic intricate performances of famous concert musicians. The recording capability of disc players is used to track students' progress and archive special performances. Some pianists use disc players to embellish their playing with orchestral accompaniment.

Tom O'Neill, an electrical engineer, chose Yamaha over Steinway after some careful analysis. Yamaha's disc player, called a Disklavier, is installed at the factory while the piano is under construction on the assembly line. A similar player, called Piano-Disc, can be added to pianos later. Steinways must be retrofitted with such a device.

While Steinways cost from \$20,000 to more than \$200,000, Leman said, they are generally more expensive, usually averaging about \$50,000. Models featuring inlaid wood, "art case pianos," cost \$100,000 or more. "A piano has no antique value," Leman stressed. "If it can't be tuned to a certain pitch, and the hammers are irreparable, even a Steinway loses its value. It becomes a decorative piece."

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I Breathe with Care

Satie insisted it was he who had gotten Debussy to give up his Wagnerian adventure.

I wrote about Erik Satie recently, but this composer provides fascinating copy, so indulge me if I write about him further and make a few more suggestions as to interesting recordings. The great musical friendship in Satie's life was with Claude Debussy, whom Satie met in 1891, two years after the great Impressionist exhibition of 1889. Both young men would have been in the crowd there, unknown to one another, and both deeply affected by the Javanese Gamelan ensemble, which performed there with its exotic modes, static surface, complex underpinning, and range of tonal color. Satie had already composed his *Gymnopédies*, the year before at age 21 while living with his parents, convalescing from a severe case of bronchitis, which he deliberately contracted in order to get out of military service.



Erik Satie

Satie had already come upon the possibilities of an oriental, pentatonic scale on his own. He was a *naïf*, having attended conservatory for a time but judged without aptitude by his instructors. He would reenroll for formal musical training in 1905, when he was nearly 40, and study counterpoint with Albert Roussel and orchestration with Vincent d'Indy. It was also at this point that Satie began to dress in the bureaucratic uniform of the day, with bowler hat, stiff white collar, and umbrella.

REVIEW
AUGUST KLEINZAHLER

think, the elements of cabaret and liturgical in the Anzellotti accordion transcriptions of Satie's music. The accordion, of course, was a favorite cabaret instrument in France, still is, but its organlike quality lends itself to Satie's meditative pieces. In fact, Satie's earliest musical training was with an organist.

NEW
EINZÄHLER Beyond his musical genius, Satie was anti-academy, anti-pedantic, anti-classical. He found entirely new ways to conceive of piano music that were not taken up until 50 years later in the work of John Cage, who wrote a piece in 1969 called "Cheap Imitations," which is based on the musical theme of "Socrates," a Satie composition of 1918 for four sopranos and chamber orchestra (what the composer called a "symphonic

drama"). Cage subjects the original to a series of aleatoric derivations based on a reading of various hexagrams from the *I Ching*. Satie would, I think, have been delighted by all this, and by Cage. Cage's notions are far more interesting than the musical results, but in this instance the music of "Cheap Imitations" is more listenable and intriguing than the original, which is based on Plato's *Dialogues* and which also inspired a sculpture by Brancusi.

Satie had many friends and admirers among the visual artists of his era, including Picasso, Braque, Derain, and Picabia. Satie would insist that he learned more about music from painters than he had from other composers. He referred to himself as a "phonometrographer," as opposed to a composer or musician. When he wasn't attired in priestly robes or bureaucratic uniform, Satie had seven identical velvet suits he favored. He was

a drunkard, albeit an amusing and brilliant one, and when he moved south of Paris to the suburb of Arcueil, he would make the long trek back and forth from Paris, not missing a single *auberge*, where he'd have his *vin ordinaire* and soldier on to the next *auberge*. (There were many *auberges* between Paris and Arcueil.) Satie died of cirrhosis of the liver complicated by pleurisy in 1925 at the age of 59. His room in Arcueil, to which no one had been permitted when he was alive, was a chaos of manuscripts and thousands of tiny papers with calligraphic inscriptions, describing a kind of interior world.



Claude Debussy


(which another musician and eccentric, Oscar Levant, would rip off for the title of his own autobiography years later):

I retire with regularity at 22:37. Once a week I wake up with a start at 03:19 (on Tuesdays).

I eat only white victuals: eggs, sugar, grated bones, the fat of dead animals, veal, salt, coconuts, chicken cooked in white water, fruit mould, rice, turnips, camphorised sausage, pasta, cheese (cream), cotton salad and certain kinds of fish (without the skin).

I have my wine boiled, and drink it cold with fuschia juice. I am a heavy eater, but never speak while eating for fear of strangling.

I breathe with care (a little at a time). I very rarely dance.
When walking, I hold my sides and stare fixedly behind me.




Albert Roussel

A little cooked
From a distance, bored
Behave yourself, please, a monkey Gummy
Is watching you
In the pit of your belly Cloisterly
Lacquered like a Chinaman Dry as a cuckoo
Light as an egg Even whiter if possible
Like a nightingale with a toothache

These instructions were not entirely frivolous. In most instances, they serve to make the musician rethink his approach to playing music, as if he were striking the piano for the first time. Satie's project was designed to make us hear music, individual notes and harmonies, as if for the first time. And that is how we must listen to the music of Erik Satie, as if we were listening for the first time to music of another world. ■

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"Backstreet Superstar CD Release" (119) and **Gitter Mail 9:** The Cobalt, Thursday, April 5, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

Big Sandy & His Fly-Bite Boys (242), **Russell Scott & His Bad News**, and **the Sandlites:** The Cobalt, Friday, April 6, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

The Psychopaths Furs and Tined: Cornblatt Bar, Saturday, April 7, 9 p.m., Cottonwood Resort Hotel, 3999 Mission

Boulevard, Pacific Beach, Information: 858-539-8661, 619-220-8497.

Jackpot, Billy Midnight, and Ten Pound Brown: The Cobalt, Saturday, April 7, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

Guided by Voices (267) and **Cropper Legends (469)** 8th & B, Saturday, April 7, 11:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-220-8497 or 619-221-4355.

Pumpkinhead featuring Tim Borne, Tim Borne, and Drew Grease: Sunset Street Forum, Saturday, April 7, 8 p.m., 301 Spruce Street, Bonita's Hill. 619-221-4355.

Michael McHenry: Iron Joe's, California, Saturday, April 7, 9 p.m., 1956 Bonita Street, Ocean Beach. 619-221-4355.

"Athenian Jazz" with the Checco Valdes Quartet: The Neuroscience Institute, Sunday, April 8, 8 p.m., 10640 John Jay Highway Drive, La Jolla. 619-221-4355.

The Arlyn Street Spunkers: The Cobalt, Sunday, April 10, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

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Venue (422) 8th & B, Sunday, Thursday, April 12, 8 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140 or 619-220-8497.

Canyon: The Cobalt, Thursday, April 12, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

Bala Fleck and the Flecktones (465) Granada Theatre, Friday, April 13, 121 Broadway, downtown. 619-221-4355 or 619-220-8497.

Joe Walsh (491) 8th & B, Friday, April 13, 8:30 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140 or 619-220-8497.

Joe Walsh & Lari: Club Roma, Friday, April 13, 10:30 p.m., La Jolla. 619-220-8497.

The Molesters (205) 8th & B, Friday, April 13, 11:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

Supertramp (267) The Cobalt, Friday, April 13, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

Coco Montoya and James Harman (710) 8th & B, Saturday, April 14, 9:15 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach. 858-481-8140 or 619-220-8497.

Grandchild (227) The Cobalt, Saturday, April 14, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

"The Band of Charles Jones" with Thomas Boudier and Joseph Kober: Sunset Street Forum, Saturday, April 14, 8 p.m., 301 Spruce Street, Bonita's Hill. 619-221-4355.

Joe Jackson: 4th & B, Sunday, April 15, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

UT (468) and P.J. Harvey (476): San Diego Sports Arena, Tuesday, April 17, 3:00 p.m., 121 Broadway, downtown. 619-221-4355 or 619-220-8497.

Shine (219) and Glory of Champions: The Cobalt, Tuesday, April 17, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

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The Trenches (320) 8th & B, Thursday, April 19, 3:05 p.m., 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780.

Duke Dickinson & His Eco-Funk: The Cobalt, Thursday, April 19, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

The Trenches (494) 8th & B, Friday, April 20, 3:05 p.m., 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780.

The Trenches (494) 8th & B, Friday, April 20, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

UP! New Wave: Granada Theatre, Friday, April 20, 121 Broadway, downtown. 619-221-4355 or 619-220-8497.

Little Feet: Cornblatt Bar, Saturday, April 21, Cottonwood Resort Hotel, 3999 Mission Boulevard, Pacific Beach. 858-539-8661.

Lacy Rappaport: Iron Joe's, California, Saturday, April 21, 9 p.m., 1956 Bonita Street, Ocean Beach. 619-221-4355.

Law and Doublewide Follies: The Cobalt, Saturday, April 21, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

Trade (555) 8th & B, Saturday, April 21, 3:05 p.m., 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780.

Kenny Wayne Shepherd and Double Trouble: 4th & B, Sunday, April 22, 3:45 p.m., 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780 or 619-221-4343.

Hot Chick of Conscience: The Cobalt, Sunday, April 22, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

Yagoda Robinson (515) and Lizzy Borden: Sunset Street Forum, Sunday, April 24, 3:05 p.m., 301 Spruce Street, Bonita's Hill. 619-221-4355.

Jets to Brazil: Sunset Street Forum, Sunday, April 24, 3:05 p.m., 301 Spruce Street, Bonita's Hill. 619-221-4355.

Jays Page: 4th & B, Friday, April 27, 3:45 p.m., 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780 or 619-221-4343.

Padre the Line: The Cobalt, Friday, April 27, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

"The Incredible Muses Larry CD Release" (102) The Cobalt, Saturday, April 28, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

Alvin Curran (102) Sunset Street Forum, Saturday, April 28, 8 p.m., 301 Spruce Street, Bonita's Hill. 619-221-4355.

98 Degrees (415) San Diego Sports Arena, Sunday, April 29, 3:00 p.m., 121 Broadway, downtown. 619-221-4355 or 619-220-8497.

RAY

Rocket from the Crypt (237) International Holistic Conspiracy, and the Esplanade: Sunset Street Forum, Friday, May 4, 3:05 p.m., 301 Spruce Street, Bonita's Hill. 619-221-4355.

"Clash de Reyes with the B-Side Players" (449) The Cobalt, Saturday, May 5, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Karmar Boulevard, midtown. 619-221-4355.

House Fullerton (198) Sunset Street Forum, Saturday, May 5, 8 p.m., 301 Spruce Street, Bonita's Hill. 619-221-4355.

Gary Hume (537) 4th & B, Sunday, May 6, 3:45 p.m., 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780 or 619-221-4343.

"Athenian Jazz" with Sphere: The Neuroscience Institute, Sunday, May 7, 8 p.m., 10640 John Jay Highway Drive, La Jolla. 619-221-4355.

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SATURDAY, MARCH 94
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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.)

Afterblock: Dream Street
Agent 51: 'Cones Bar and Grill
American Pearl: 'Cones Bar and Grill
The And/Ors: Live Wire, The Casbah
The B-Movie Rats: The Casbah
Banana Fish Zero: The Kaplan

Honeybeards: Bird Models
 Hot Water Makers: The Cosh
 and Grill
 In Effect Models: The Cosh
 Jack's Bedroom: Hones
 258 Jack's Gold
 Laundry: Dream Street
 Leatherhouse: Games for the
 Life
 Life Hates Me: Dream Street
 Little Men: Dream Street
 Magic Super Alloy: Dream
 278 Street
 Melon: Epimetheus
 The Mighty Mighty
 Jewels: Games for the
 The Million Dollar Player
 Live Wire
 Motives: Bink by Bink
 Movies: Hones
 Ones: Games for the
 Place: Dream Street
 Pump: Winstons
 Pattern: Cornhill Bar
 Pump: Epimetheus
 Pyralis: Bink by Bink
 Razorblades: The Cosh
 The Shakes: The Cosh
 Sidewalk Flap: Epimetheus
 Skin: Games for the
 Sleaze 77: The Kensington
 Club, The Cosh
 Sleazy Deluxe: The Cosh
 Sleazebuster: The Cosh

Small Brown Bells: 'Go and Sell Flowers'
Sallendine: Dream Street
Sallendine: 'Come on Boy'
306 Speak Your Mind
Stashdunkin': The Cowboy
The Street Walker
Chester: Rock by Rock
Stashdunkin': Rock by Rock
Gowdy's: Bestie (epicentre)
Sweeney: Wild Horses
Ten Percent: Dream Street
Three Fifths: Home in the
Town
Townhouse: The Cowboy
Troy's: Buckskin
Troy's: Epicentre
Troy's: Epicentre
VIII Friends: Dream Street
Newbie: Epicentre
VirtuVibe: Live Wire

EXTENSION 4003

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BLUES & ROCKS

441... The Abyss: Dream Street
Axe: Wild Horses
Axe: Home
Axe: Home
Backlist: 'Come on Boy' and 'Go and Sell Flowers'

[illegible]

Liquidize: Over the
Nemours Bar and Grill
Live! Out Loud: *Hot*
Mindful Otis: Can
Grill
534 **Mr. Mysterio:** Surf
Bick
The Mike Mike Mix:
404 **Jeff Houser & the**
Whippersnappers:
Mr. Lucky: T80 Home
Wessex: Fannie's, the
Town (T80)
Natural Selection:
Bardhouse
The Michael Project:
Malone
Night Hawks: Cowan
Night Shifts: Fogarty
Dick's Last Record
Paradise: Victor's Rock
Bar
Positive Approach:
Power Play: Chay
Line
489 **Powerload:** Dream
Private Domestic:
Rear
Red Flower: Diamond
Nightclub
The Restless Men:
Bar and Grill
Rock Dogs: Bud's
Liquor Crawl: The Gr

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THE Alley 

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X-Cel

9:45 PM - 1 AM

FRIDAY, MARCH 23

Makai

9:45 PM - 1:25 AM



SATURDAY, MARCH 24

ROZ & THE UNFUCKING CREW

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TUESDAY, MARCH 27

Millennium Jubilee

6:10 PM



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28

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7:30 PM - 12 AM



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The Sensations: John's Joe's
Serious Oases: John's Cockles
784-Horse: The Cobish
 Avenue, the Roadhouse
696: Dream Street
Sisters Brothers Bank: Cornish Bar
Sellfests: Woody's Sports Bar & Grill
Snowflakes: Dick's Horseshoe
 Lounge
Sunsets: Dick's Back
The Trailer Park Poppies:
 Neenah Bar and Grill
Under Your Skin: Tavern's
 Pub
Unusable: Harpersen's Twenty
The Vibe Trillo Chronicles:
 Wintners
 What's Comes Bar and Grill, the
 Cobish
Willow Walkers
Robert Walker: Blind Hares
 692 **Robert Walker's 20th**
 Centuries: Wintners
V23E: Bar Cona's

More Payson: Top of the Cove
Jack Phillips: Shooters Bar and
Grill

The Klyburn Dogs: The Alley
Rising Star: Rock Bottom
(Geddes)

The Rockers: The Phoenician:
The Westgate Hotel: Rocky's on
5th

Rox and the Wrecking Crew:
Cruz: Jimmy Love's

The Smooth Houndes: Blind
Makers

X-Cal: Jimmy Love's

EXTENSION 4005

Christopher Adler Trics:
Goback

Agnes Dunes: The Kensington
Club

The Key Avenue Big Band:
The Common-Ancient Society

Ray Burt: The Sea Lodge Hotel

The Two Eyes Operators: Coo's
Top Hot Bar and Grill

Black Monks: Julia Joent Cafe
Black Monks: Hotel del Coronado

Ed Fickels: Iowa's *Coronado Bay*
Ed Rowland: *Shower: The Beach House*
Jacob Ford: *Jazz Odyssey: The Czechs!*
Hollis Gentry's Home: Coca's *Jazz Box*
Tom Grigorovich: *La Costa Coffee Roasting Co.*
Cynthia Hammond: *Like Jazz Cafe*
Robert Incelli & Orquesta: Seattle
Barbara Johnson: *The Crescent Shoreline*
The Jazz Project Big Band: Darcy's
Jefferson: Jimmy Lowe's *Art Johnson: The Laurel Restaurant and Bar, Lewis*
Dirk K: *The Sea Lodge Hotel The Mikado Karaoke Tric: Like's Kamae Karaoke: Iowa's*
Coronado Bay Resort
The Charlie Miller Jazz Orchestra: Darcy's
Red Landers: *Soloist Coffee*
Carrie Landgraber: *The Wyndham Emerald Place*

Andrew's Fossil: *Covers*
Band-Disco: *The Katinas*
The Discs Manicure: *Baby's Up*
Town:
The Discs Plunge: *Buffalo Joe's*
BO's & Gossamer: *Dick's Los*
Recess:
The Bitter Alliance: *Buffalo Joe's*
The Flamingo: *Vivies Casino*
Higher Ground: *Jimmy Low's*
Stomach Knight: *Shooters Bar*
and Grill
Lunar Lapse: *The Butcher Shop*
Mania: *Humphrey's, Jimmy*
Low's
The Water Snake: *Baby's Up Town*
Scene Re-Wind: *The Impaired*
Home
The New Breed: *The Alley*

Bruce Cummers: Coyote Bar and Grill
 567 The Gifford's Co-Motion: The Name
 Gifford Castanheira: Dizzy's
 The Gifford Castanheira
 Humanned B-3 Telo: Tito's
 The Gifford Castanheira
 Quavert: Joka Jazz Cafe
 Mikee Cafe: Miracles Cafe
 The Club: Gommor Jazz Doc:
 House of Gommor
 The Graft Union: Neighbors Bar and Grill
 Jo Doris: The German-American
 Societies
 581 Karl Danneberg's Town
 Unhatched: Body Up Issues
 Hankenstein: Central Bar
 The George Fervor Band:
 Richtown: Michelangelo
 538 Glen Fisher can Admit: Coca's
 Jazz Bar

Levitts: La Valencia Hotel
 8 **The Dingles:** Jimmy Lowe's
Mambo's Little Jazz
 Esmeralda: Mambo's
 Jimmy Mandel: Fie's (Cacha
 Indio)
The Shop Mayors Quartet:
 Coca's Jazz Bar
Millican: Jimmy Lowe's
The David Patten Quartet:
 Marlin Ranch (Gosnell), Marlin
 Ranch (Encinitas), Coca's Jazz Bar
 (Encinitas), Coca's Jazz Bar
 (San Diego)
Quel's Shiner: Humphrey's,
 Aubergine Grille
Down Paul Revere: Sante
 Restaurant
Real to Reel: Humphrey's
Cedric Belfrage: Humphrey's
The Seven Bows Jazz
 Quartet: Jammers Joe

TURN YOUR ENERGY AROUND
DO A 180



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Calendar MUSIC SCENE

UNDERGROUND DANCE CLUBS

If you would like to have your underground dance club or event included, fax information to 619-461-2401, attention Scott Ellis, or e-mail scottellis@comcast.net, night or day by 5:00 p.m., Friday, the week prior to publication. The listings are free.

Anytime: DJs spin house, disco, funk, and techno music nightly. North County Sports Dome, 440 West San Marcos Boulevard, San Marcos, 760-744-4120.

Ante: Back: Thursdays, Punk Rock Bowling with DJ Stacy and various bands. Saturdays, Come Band, DJs spin future soul, polyrhythms, progressive world, and dancehall. The Ante: Bowl (the Turquoise Room), 4356 56th Street, North Park. Info line, 619-220-0944.

Blue: Saturdays, DJ Kary, Sandman, Finger, and Mantle. Below Buffalo

Joe's, Fifth and Market, downtown. 558-728-1489.

The Brass Balls: Tuesdays, Club Remo. DJ Dementia and Bateria spin the best of '80s and '90s new wave, synthpop, industrial dance, and more. www.synthclub.com. Wednesdays, Aqualia, 170 Mantle and Tom Fitzgerald spin house, trance, and techno. Sundays, Nightfall, DJ Deb and guests spin gothic, synthpop, EBM, industrial, and fetish. 3796 Fifth Avenue, Hillcrest. 619-296-2233.

Club Boom-Boom: Thursdays, DJ Ramsey and weekly special guests spin house, techno, and disco. Fridays, Get Your Groove On with DJs spinning Top 40, hip-hop, and house. Call club for Saturday events. 3175 India Street, midtown. 619-296-6799.

Club Vibe: Thursdays, DJs Bryan Pollard, Kurt Hallie, Miss Katie, Richard O. Todd, and Zero One spin the best of '80s music, new wave, synthpop, and new romantic. 21 and up. Live before 10:30 p.m. with college or military ID. Shooters, 3815 50th Street, San Diego. 619-460-3827.

Club Elements: Thursdays, Transmutation, trance. Fridays, Playhouse house. Saturdays, Elements, progressive and trance. 1255 University Avenue, Hillcrest. 619-296-8160.

NOTE

BY RICHARD MELTZER

A couple of Mangelberg questions you're no doubt DYING for answers to: Is pianist **Misha Mangelberg**, who with drummer Ian Bernink played on Eric Dolphy's last studio session (June '64), the son, grandson, or possibly nephew of classical conductor Willem Mengelberg? Did his dad, granddad, or uncle Willem collaborate with the Nazis? And, 1: Misha is Willem's grandnephew.

Ans. 2: Yup, collaborated. According to *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* (8th ed.), "During the occupation of the

Netherlands by the Germans, Mengelberg openly expressed his sympathies with the Nazi cause, and lost the high respect and admiration that his compatriots had felt for him; after his country's liberation (1945), he was banned from professional activities there, the ban to be continued until 1951, but he died in that year in exile in Switzerland."

Wait — there's a third question: How did he, Misha, a Dutchman, happen to be born in Kiev?

Ans.: His father, composer/conductor Karel Mengelberg (nephew of Willem), was at the time of Misha's birth, 5 June '35, in charge of the music department of a Ukrainian film studio, returning to

Amsterdam three years later.

MISHA MENGELBERG, Spruce Street Porch, Saturday, March 24, 8 p.m. 619-296-0302. \$18, \$30.

Club Mean: Wednesdays, Dance Party with DJ Kenny. Thursdays, the Hot Spot presented by the Union, DJ's Gai, the Good DJ, Brian Soworth, and

K.I. Rockwell: Saturdays, DJ Chris and Ron with dance and techno. Doubletree Mission Valley, 7400

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Saturday, Mar. 24
10 SPOT

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BUCK-O-NINE AGENT 51 MADCAP
Thursday, Mar. 27
10X

AMERICAN PEARL CAPITAL 2 OHM
Wednesday, Mar. 26
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6-13 MINDSIZE DAEMONS ISI
Thursday, Mar. 29

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Friday, Mar. 30
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Thursday, Apr. 11
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Wednesday, Apr. 11

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Thursday, Apr. 12
8PM • DIFFUSER

SPRUNG MONKEY
Friday, Apr. 13

YINGWIE
Saturday, Apr. 14
7 PM
LIZZY BORDEN • SHERIDAN

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Calendar MUSIC SCENE

Hazard Center Drive, 619-297-5466, 44178

Club 911: Fridays and Saturdays, 400-bp, hip-hop, house, and trance. 2000-caps-in multi-level venue. 18 and up. Red Mill Entertainment Complex, 1540 Broadway, El Cajon. 619-441-1800.

Club Tropics: DJs Stuffy, Dizzy D, and Road 1 spin dirty South West Coast/Lat. Coast hip-hop, reggae, and R&B. Fridays, Latin 290 night with Billy Burt and 11 Saturdays. May County's Party Epicenter. Sunday, May 27, Jammin' 200 night Memorial Day Weekend Jan. 7-10 Nordahl Road, San Marcos. 760-737-9402.

Club Tropicana: Fridays (beginning in April), Techno/acid, local and national DJs will spin the best of all genres of electronic and digital dance music. Lineup changes weekly; call info line. Mondays (beginning April 16), R&B. Thurs, two rooms of open table DJ. 18 and up. Club Tropicana, 4222 50th Street, San Diego. 619-584-2720.

Darkwave Garden: Wednesdays and Thursdays at every month. DJs: Dregan, Todd, and Tyler spin garage, pop, and dance. 21 and up. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. The Hide, 2820 Union Street, Point Loma. 619-465-3827. www.kids.com

DJSP: Thursdays, DJ Snyde, Will Krawley, and MC Skyley mix, and special guests spin jungle and drum 'n' bass. 21 and up. The Rhythm Lounge, 3048 Midway Drive, Midway District. 619-912-1101.

The Flame: Mondays, Spin Out, amateur night. All DJs welcome. 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Saturdays, Pista Latina. Night 11 Free spin, house, merengue, salsa, and conga. 720 Park Boulevard, San Diego. 619-295-4163.

House Call: 1131 13th Street, Mission Hills. 619-481-7444.

Ice House Young Adult Dance Club: 1131 Mission Hills and Mission. 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Saturdays, Pista Latina. Night 11 Free spin, house, merengue, salsa, and conga. 720 Park Boulevard, San Diego. 619-295-4163.

Inner Space: Friday, March 23, pay tribute and go in Room 1 with DJs: Hideo-Punk, Feather, Matt McCoy, 15, Mindbender, and Blue Tech. live drums by Rahem, Marco, and H. In Room 2, D & B with DJ's Can Pouch, Zyle, Pacemaker, Fuse 1, and MC Humane. Visuals by Inlight, dancing by Indigence, musical live by Dakin. Deva, 18 and up. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Club North, 4222 50th Street, at El Cajon Boulevard, North Park. Info line: 619-220-4944, 619-584-2720.

Liquid: DJs spin deep house, trance, and hip-hop. Fridays, E Street Alley, 919 Fourth Avenue, downtown. 619-529-9999. www.meriproductions.com

Live Wire: Tuesdays, Two-Wired Tuesdays. DJs spin vintage punk, glam, and primitive rock 'n' roll. Set by biker bikes on two screens. Plenty of candy and scooter only parking. Wednesdays, 1131 Rattler club up bank, hip-hop, and jazz grooves. Kung fu and anime vids on two screens. Both events no cover. 2103 El Cajon Boulevard, North Park. 619-291-1430.

Luminati: Tuesdays, DJs: Tom King, Brendan Cabal, and Cyban spin industrial and gothic. Kakers, 308 University Avenue, Hillcrest. 619-491-0900.

Margie Rock: Wednesdays, 17 Club 84, 80, night. DJs: Kormer and Tux spin the best of all types of 80s music. 8 cover. \$1 off if you were born in the '80s. All covers 18 and up. Club North, 4222 50th Street, at El Cajon Boulevard, North Park. Info line: 619-584-2720.

Medusa: Saturdays, DJs: DJ's Machina and guests, plus live electro acts, spinning power electro, rhythmic, house, techno, and trance. 18 and up. Club North, 4222 50th Street, at El Cajon Boulevard, North Park. Info line: 619-584-2720.

Metal Works: 1131 Mission Hills and Tyler Vicerine. All realm of metal. Military and college 13 live before 10 p.m., 21 and up. Mondays, Back by Back, 1131 Mission Hills. Back Park, 619-275-5485, every first Saturday of the month. Quality live, 2001 Sunday Boulevard, Point Loma. 619-224-3655, General info: 619-465-3827. www.kids.com

Old Madrid: Fridays, Club Ana, DJs: Matt Spencer, Tanya, Spencer, and guests spin house, techno, and trance. Saturdays, Moya, 1131 Mission Hills. 619-224-3655, General info: 619-465-3827.

Over the Border: Saturdays, 1131 Mission Hills. Latin pop house, reggae, and salsa. 18 and up. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Club North, 4222 50th Street, at El Cajon Boulevard, North Park. Info line: 619-584-2720.

Plan Cray: 1131 Mission Hills. 619-224-3655, General info: 619-465-3827.

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Calendar MUSIC SCENE

Billy Up Tavern, 141 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach, 858-481-9022. Thursday, *For Sells and the Hatcher Brothers*, 5:30 pm, *the Mar* (aka, 9:15 pm, *Karl Denaro's Tiny Universes* and guest, Saturday, 9:15 pm, *the Once Biscuits*, Sunday, *Onyxone* Prima. Monday and Tuesday, call club for information. Wednesday, 8 pm, *Glen Phillips and John Mayer*.

Beer Crawl's, 390 Grand Avenue, Carlsbad, 858-729-2889. Friday and Saturday, 7:30, rock and roll.

The Book Works/Panama Cafe, Flower Hill Mall, 1.5 mi. N. of La Jolla, Del Mar, 858-755-3735. Friday, 8 pm, live jazz/folk music.

Banditos Backs and Blues, 11140 Rancho Camino Drive, Carlsbad, 858-418-1814. Friday, 8 pm, Western-style acoustic. Sunday, 2 pm, *Stardust*, folk.

Bob's Whiskey Dive, 301 Pier View Way, Oceanside, 760-757-BURS. Friday, 8:00 pm, rock. Saturday, *Crackhead* Lenny, rock.

The Casual Inn, 887 San Marcos Boulevard, San Marcos, 760-744-1332.

Friday, the *Straw Hat*, Celtic folk. Saturday, *Cone Warren*, folk.

Corvus, 11940 Bernardo Plaza Drive, Rancho Bernardo, 858-566-2400. Friday, *Night Hawk*, classic rock. Saturday, *Andrew's Faith*, pop rock.

Coyote Bar and Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Drive, Carlsbad, 760-729-4695. Thursday, 6 pm to 10 pm, *Big Daddy & the Money Shakers*, blues. Friday, 8 pm to 10 pm, *the Rastros Natives*, rock, blues, and reggae. Saturday, 3 pm to 5:30 pm, *Billy Watson*, blues, 6 pm to 10 pm, *Billy Thompson*, blues. Sunday, 2 pm to 4:30 pm, *Blue Largo*, blues, 5 pm to 9 pm, *Bruce Cameron*, jazz. Monday, 6 pm to 10 pm, *the Blue Pharaohs*, Wednesday, 6 pm to 10 pm, *Red Lane*, blues.

The Del Dine Country Store, 20154 Lake Drive, Escondido, 760-745-2733. Friday and Saturday, the *Working Cowboy Band*, country.

Fugate's Pub, 1260 West Valley Parkway, Escondido, 760-480-0833. Thursday, *High Shift*, classic rock. Friday and Saturday, *Under Your Skin*, rock and roll.

Hendrix's Irish Pub, 13314 Poway Road, Poway, 618-486-0764. Friday, *Lauren Morris*, acoustic folk.

Honeyman's Tavern, 2777 Roosevelt Street, Carlsbad, 760-728-6951. Friday, *Unstable*, rock. Saturday, *Crackhead Lenny*, rock.

NOTE

BY WILLIAM CRAIN

If you're going to have rain on a Saturday afternoon, you could do worse than spend the day hearing some really good music and drinking beer with new friends. A few weeks ago, I did just that at a show put on as part of the Noise Pop festival in San Francisco. This particular lineup was much heavier on the pop than the noise, so the crowd was full of bespectacled guys and gals in their late 20s and 30s, even though it was an all-age show. Funny how that works: Pop is unhip teen music, but indie pop is music for aging hipsters. I missed the opening band but arrived in time to be charmed by the Orange Peels.

The Bay Area five-piece has critics genuflecting at its feet with its second CD, *So Far*, but in concert the melodic songs were even better. Headlining was the *Aislers Set*, whose two albums are excellent but whose live performances range from the charmingly ramshackle to the maddeningly sloppy. This was one of the bad ones.

Sandwiched in between was the *Shins*, a self-described American pop combo from Albuquerque who have an album due out later this year on Sub Pop. On paper, they seem like textbook indie rockers: dorky thrift-store T-shirts, Pavement-soundalike vocals, cheap-looking guitars, and a guy making funny noises on a small keyboard. But that's just on paper. In fact, they were great. *James Mercer's* vocals made me think of



THE SHINS

Police-era Sting until a friend pointed out the similarity to Stephen Malkmus. And watching *Merly Cromwell* frantically twist the knobs on his Casio was worth the price of admission alone. **764-HERO** and the *and/ers* also perform.

THE SHINS, The Casbah, Thursday, March 22, 8:30 p.m. 619-232-4368, 67.

Jell's Jell's, 717 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido, 760-743-7665. Thursday, call club for information. Friday and Saturday, the *Semantics*.

The Kraken, 2331 Old Highway 101, Cardiff, 760-436-6483. Thursday, *Bad Medicine*. Friday, the *Blue Brothers*. Saturday, *Blue Heat*, blues, rock.

Jimmers Eve, 218 A North El Camino Road in the Wriggall Plaza next to AMC Theaters, Encinitas, 760-942-JAVA. Saturday, the *Sean Row Jazz Quartet*.

Jell's Jell's, 717 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido, 760-743-7665. Thursday, call club for information. Friday and Saturday, the *Semantics*.

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Calendar MOVIES

leak; camerawork, a little teetery and tottery; surface, a little plasticity or rubbery. I will need to see more examples before I find a vocabulary. Or re-focus my eyes. The improvement, in any case, does not clear away all concerns. What about, for one thing, the viewers who wait to see a film until it's released on video? Will DV features always lose even more than a 35mm feature in their metamorphosis to video? And why—a more personal, and a more professional, concern—was I permitted and even encouraged to preview it on video in the first place? Is a critic not expected to notice, much less talk about, the look of a film? Several sals, apropos of that, fell from my eyes a few years ago when, after a long absence from big-time film festivals, I attended the one in Toronto (than which there are few bigger) and observed that, even though I had access to the exclusive "press screenings," the local counterpart of the *Reader* was already full of capsule reviews of all the films in the festival. How had the local reviewers gotten so far ahead of me? The scandalous answer, as you will have anticipated, is that they had watched the films on video. Standard practice at festivals, evidently, as was confirmed not long afterwards when I attended another one in San Francisco. And not un-

common practice, what's more, even outside of festivals. If truth be told (without naming names), my critical colleagues seem more and more disposed, as a matter of course, to screen films at their own convenience, in the comfort of their own homes, and with undoubtedly a repertoire of good excuses, on video. They have a word for it: a "screener." Which strikes me as the rough equivalent of a music critic listening to a new album on a seven-dollar set of headphones during a morning jog. Or an art critic assessing a new exhibit on the evidence of its promotional postcard. (Criticism should be the same as any other kind of journalism: better late than ill-informed.) Not that I am guiltless. I've gone home with a screener, though with a good excuse, a time or two myself. But I am always sorry, if not downright conscience-stricken, the experience with the *Reader* has taught me, if nothing else, to stiffen my resolve to refuse all screeners. Until I again forget the lesson.

The Sundance Channel, five years old this month, recently came calling—or more literally, came E-mailing—and then, at my acquiescence, came U.S. Mailing. I have had little experience with premium cable channels (Cinemax for a while, HBO for Tracey Ullman) my own problem tends to be how to read more books, not how to see more movies. But Alan Resnais' *Same Old Song* the current month's schedule and an April series of "She Said Cinema" that includes Agnes Varda's *Cleo from 5 to 7*, Jane Cam-

pion's *The Portrait of a Lady*, and Joan Micklin Silver's *Chilly Scenes of Winter* supply me with sufficient reason for a ringing endorsement. Nowhere in the promotional material could I find the sully information of how much this service costs. Call 1-800-SUN-FILM or (as they say) your local cable provider, should you care to pursue it.

Now that Tower no longer rents videos, only sells them, Kensington Video has lost its one serious competitor and becomes eligible, in my view, for some official designation, some mayoral anointment, maybe even some arts-council subsidy, as a San Diego cultural treasure. Where would we be without it?

The Pacific Gaslamp has late transformed itself into a theater worth keeping an eye on (in particular for delinquent moviegoers), using its fifteen screens to afford refuge for movies elsewhere turned out into the cold, a sort of halfway house between first-run and video. As of the current week, it was the only place in town where you could still catch *The House of Vampires*, *Best in Show*, *Shadow of the Vampire*, *Requiem for a Dream*, and (David Elliott of the Union Tribune would especially want me to mention) *All the Pretty Horses*.

One thing that nags at me from *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* is the name of the hero, Ulysses Everett McGill. I get the Ulysses part of it ("based upon *The Odyssey* by Homer," yes, yes), but why the rest of it? Everett McGill is of course the name of a chiselled-faced actor most commonly associated with David Lynch (*Twin Peaks*, *The Straight Story*, *Dune*), though never, to the best of my recollection, with the Coen brothers. And whatever the Coens do, they do deliberately and—as the Cogen T-shirt

MOVIE LISTINGS

All reviews are by Duncan Shepherd. Priorities are indicated by one to five stars and antipathies by the black spot. Unrated movies are for non-viewers.

All the Pretty Horses — From the Cormac McCarthy novel, a post-WWII cowboy movie, not quite a purebred Western, a little like *The Hi-Lo Country*. A little (including in that scope the scrumptious Penelope Cruz), but not a lot. And it is, whatever its constitution, more than director Billy Bob Thornton can chew. The opening stretch, in which a dispossessed Texas rancher and his faithful sublimely drift across the Rio Grande looking for work on a baronial south of the border spread, picking up for 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 artifice. 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 noblesman and the hired hand, or, to the title of an old Gary Cooper vehicle, the cowboy and the lady), and the going into and getting out of the forbidden penitentiary, the storytelling becomes abrupt, choppy, perfunctory, barebones, as if running headlong toward a deadline. Word has it that the movie underwent heavy editing. That word is easy to believe. Lucas Black, Robin Blades, Bruce Dern. 15.

Before Night Falls — Julian Schnabel's second film is, like his *Boulevard*, a conventional, celebratory biopic, on the unconventional, sublimely here, this time the homosexual Cuban author Remberto Armas. We take up his story in his female-dominated childhood (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

disfavor ("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. Nor is it easy simply to understand his English. Sean Penn shows up loquaciously in a straw hat, gold toothed, greasepainted cameo ("I had sex brothers. Zee ole one, he yorn dee rabbit"), and then Johnny Depp tops him with two canes: a transvestite prison guard, in the next moment, a sadistic prison guard. The cinematic highlight is a lyrical escape attempt in a hot-air balloon. 2000.

PHILADELPHIA — Christopher Guest's gallery of caricatures of the people at and around the fictional Mayflower Kennel Club Dog Show turns, yet disappointing. Or in other words: not as funny as his *Waiting for Guffman*, and lavishly overpraised in the reviews. (I given reviewers a chance to be funny, in turn, by passing along the jokes.) The so-called "documentary" technique, at least as practiced by Guest, is so inherently faulty to merit endorsement as a formula. The *de rigueur* interview bits, more convenience than necessity, are simply an easy way (a little akin to voice-over narration) to disguise information, tell jokes, etc., without the trouble of constructing serviceable scenes and situations. At the same time, or rather at different times, the hand-held camera is purporting to be behind closed doors activities to which no documentary film crew would ever gain access, and without the responsibility of selecting an angle, setting up a composition, etc. It is a technique that yields more excuses than results. The cast members — Eugene Levy, Catherine O'Hara, Michael McKean, John Michael Higgins, Michael Hitchcock, Parker Posey, Jennifer Coolidge, Jane Lynch, Bob Balaban, Fred Willard, Jim Piddock, Guest himself, several of whom were also in *Guffman* — are well in tune with the semi-improvisatory comic style, though not free from the occasional overbearing clunker. A special gold star, each, to O'Hara as a small-town Norwich woman whose extreme sexual history is forever catching up with her; to Willard as the ex-jock TV commentator whose speech is never forgotten by thought (he *Garage*), on the Westminster telecasts, would be the obvious model; to Piddock as Willard's strait-laced British straight man, and to Guest for his Cardigan drawl and his loving gap alongside his prize bloodhound (but not for his fondness of chasing the ventriloquist). The dogs themselves are accorded little room to roam, little space to stretch. That, too, is disappointing. 2000.

Billy Elliot — Fluffy 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 all-girl ballet class that covetries in the same gym, and proves himself (not to the untrained eye, which might consider his potential as a dog dancer, but rather to his chain-smoking matronly teacher) "good enough" to audition for the Royal Ballet School. How nice. How very, very nice. The lad, Jamie Bell, is likable kidlike, and the smoothness of Stephen Daldry's direction is stepped short of slickness with a sprinkling of cool town grunge. Julie Walters, Gary Lewis. 2000.

GLORY — HAZARD CENTER 7, LA KOLA VILLAGE, 10, HORTON PLAZA 14.

Slow Day — Lander comedy, with intermittent heavy drama, about a cut-throat hardening competition in an English blue-collar town. An exceptionally fine case for Natasha Richardson and Rachel Griffiths to have had their skulls shorn. With Alan Rickman, Bob Hartman, Bill Nighy, Rachel Leigh Cook, directed by Paddy Breathnach. 2001.

MISSION VALLEY 20

The Brothers — Morris Chestnut, D.L. Hughley, Bill Bellamy, and Sherman Moore as lifelong buddies in early

San Diego International Film Festival March 30 • April 12 2001

March 30 • OPENING NIGHT!
WITH A FRIEND LIKE HARRY
by Gilles Marchand • France
Laurent Lucas & Sergei Lopez
MIRAMAX brings you this audience favorite from Cannes. A multiple award-winning thriller about a 'friend' with only the 'best' intentions.
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center
Very special thanks to MIRAMAX

March 31
HOUSE!
by Julian Kemp • England
with Freddie Jones & Kelly MacDonalld
Smart, laugh-out-loud comedy! Can the ancient binggo survive when 15 acres of computerized binggo fun has just opened down the road? BINGO!
Don't miss this one!
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

PURELY BELTER
by Mark Herman (Little Voice) • England
Two working-class teenagers try to earn 1,000 pounds for Newcastle United soccer season tickets. Funny and moving. The London Times called it "A delight!"
9:30 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

April 1
MY MOTHER FRANK
by Mark Lamprell • Australia
with Sam Neill & Sinéad Cusack
Wonderful comedy/drama about a feisty woman who decides to go back to college, and infuriates just about everyone in the process. Sinéad Cusack is remarkable.
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

L'AFFAIRE MARCORELLE
by Serge Le Pâron • France
with Jean-Pierre Léaud & Irène Jacob
Acclaimed thriller/fantasy about a public prosecutor (Léaud) and a mysterious murder. As Léaud tries to find the killer, he begins to think he may be the real murderer.
9:30 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

April 3
SONG OF TIBET
by Fei Xie (Girl from Hunan) • China
Groundbreaking epic romance made, for the first time, with an all-Tibetan cast, follows the three profound love affairs of one woman.
This is a dazzling beautiful film by the director of *Girl from Hunan*.
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

SANDSTORM
by Jagmohan • India • Director in person
Award-winning, true story of a remarkable woman who defied the Indian legal system by demanding the men who raped her be punished.
9:30 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

April 4
HAPPY FUNERAL DIRECTOR
by Mian-Ji Jang • South Korea
A real charmer about a village where no one has died for ten years...what's an undertaker to do?
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

FELICE... FELICE...
by Peter Delpout • Netherlands
True work of art. Set in the 1900s, a Dutch photographer returns to Japan to find his lost, or as some think, abandoned, lover.
9:30 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

April 5
BORN IN ABSURDISTAN
by Houchang Allahyari • Austria/Turkey
Two babies—one of an Austrian Immigration agent, and one of an immigrant Turkish family, are switched. The mix-up isn't discovered until the Turkish family has been permanently deported back to Turkey.
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

NANG NAK
by Nonzee Nimibutr • Thailand
Grand Prize Winner • Asian-Pacific Film Festival.
An eerie, beautifully rendered ghost story. When a war-savaged soldier returns home, he finds his wife and his baby waiting for him. The rest of the villagers see something else entirely.
9:30 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

April 6
YI YI
by Edward Yang • Taiwan
2000 Award for Best Director • Cannes
Wonderful slice-of-life charmer. Yang seems to understand every nuance of human nature as he follows the ups and downs of one particular family.
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

April 7
CALLE 54
by Fernando Trueba • Spain/France/Italy
Joyful extravaganza about Latin jazz in America with Gato Barbieri, Tito Puente, Paquito D'Rivera, and many more!
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

DEVILS ON THE DOORSTEP
by Wen Jiang • China
2000 Grand Jury Prize Winner • Cannes
In this powerhouse of a war movie, a remote Chinese village makes the mistake of trying to negotiate with Japanese invaders. Stunning.
9:30 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

April 8
I LOVE YOU • Japan
by Yutaka Osawa & Akihiro Yonaiyama
In the spirit of *Shall We Dance*, a deaf housewife recruits for a deaf theater. Wonderful.
5:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

WANTED
by Harald Sicheritz • Austria
A gem of a wicked satire. A depressed surgeon loses himself in his fantasies of our Wild West, much to the chagrin of his colleagues.
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

THE BIG ANIMAL
by Jerzy Stuhr • Poland
Multiple Award Winner—a lovely essay going tale of how a village is undone by the presence of a camel.
9:30 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

April 10 • NEW!
SHADOW MAGIC
by Ann Hu • China/Germany
Beautifully done true story about an American trying to introduce silent films to Peking in 1902.
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

FOOLISH POMEGRANATE TREE
by Peter Mexaros • Hungary & Georgia
A sweet surreal dream of a movie. It will either seduce or infuriate you.
9:30 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

A SHORT NIGHT!
A Night of Wonderful New Short Films!
7:00 p.m. • Mandeville Auditorium

April 11
HAPPY END
by Christina Olofson • Sweden
with Harriet Andersson
Bergman's favorite, returns to the screen as an intransigent writer forced to share her island flat with her landlord's teenage son.
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

BOESMAN & LENA
by John Berry • France & South Africa
Angela Bassett & Danny Glover turn in electrifying performances in this powerful adaptation of Fugard's classic play.
9:30 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

CELEBRATING ANIMATING!
Best New International Animation!
7:00 p.m. • Mandeville Auditorium

April 12 • CLOSING NIGHT
THE LUZHIN DEFENCE
by Marleen Gorris • France
Starring John Turturro and Emily Watson
Based upon the novel, *The Defense*, by Vladimir Solovky, this romantic thriller takes place during 1920's at Italy's Lake Como Chess Championship.
7:00 p.m. • Mann's Hazard Center

All films except as noted will be shown at Mann's Hazard Center in Mission Valley.

There will be two different films a night: one at 7:00 p.m. & one at 9:30 p.m. On April 8, I Love You is at 5:00 p.m.

A limited number of Festival Passes are available for \$80.00 a piece. Single tickets: Any Student \$6.00 • G.A. \$8.00 Available at Mann's Hazard Theatre & The UCSD Box Office: 858-534-4559 Call for Updates: 858-534-0497 Everything Subject to change! Website: www.sdiff.com

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"AN OUTRAGEOUSLY FUNNY COMEDY."
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Heather Graham

SAY IT ISN'T SO

www.saysitsnotso.com

STARTS FRIDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
THE MIND BLOWN 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:00 AM	THE MIND BLOWN 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:00 AM	THE MIND BLOWN 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:00 AM	THE MIND BLOWN 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:00 AM	THE MIND BLOWN 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:00 AM

"DMX Triumphs!"
Steven Seagal is back!
"Exit Wounds" is a blast!"

STEVEN SEAGAL • DMX

EXIT WOUNDS.
THIS IS GONNA HURT

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THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
EXIT WOUNDS 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:00 AM	EXIT WOUNDS 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:00 AM	EXIT WOUNDS 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:00 AM	EXIT WOUNDS 10:00 AM 12:00 PM 2:00 PM 4:00 PM 6:00 PM 8:00 PM 10:00 PM 12:00 AM

For more information about this movie, visit our website at www.exitwounds.com

Calendar MOVIES

childhood, written and directed by Gary Harkness.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN 14; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALAXY 15; GROSSMONT CENTER 12; LA JOLLA 12; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; SOUTH BAY DRIVE 16; SWEETWATER 9; TOWN SQUARE 14; FROM 3/23

Cast Away — Robert Zemeckis, so soon after the frolicsome RRR of *What Lies Beneath*, returns to his post-Campy prententiousness. Not so much in what he says (an Optimistic Chuck 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 glib, 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 bennies), and then well over an hour of rudimentary Robinson Crusoeisms (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 needed to no state to the clock, Zemeckis. The spectacular plane crash perhaps seems worth it, but the rest — in fact the plane crash included — is splendidly self-indulgent. With Helen Hunt, Nick Searcy, Chris North, Lari White. 2000.

FASHION VALLEY 18; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; LA HORTON PLAZA 14.

The Cavenham's Valentine — An ethereal, rarely murder mystery, haunting, however, a most unorthodox detective: a ranting, psychotic, street person (Samuel L. Jackson) with a headful of dreadlocks and a well-stocked highway inside a rock formation in a public park. Everyone on the street knows the Cavenham by name and address, but no one touches his person. The hero's paranoid delusions about a Big Brother atop the Chrysler Building go far beyond the allowable flaws of the American

crime-solver (alcoholism, amnesia, blindness, what have you). We require our detectives at least to be rational. This one's deficiency in that department provides no added interest, only added irritation, to the case as a whole. A tissue of contrivance and convenience from start to finish. The Cavenham's detective happens to be a cop. He himself happens to be a full-fledged dropout — a pianist, prodigy — and an old classmate happens to be buddies with the leading suspect in the case, a chi-chi homoerotic photographer (and walking cliché of the court-seeing heartless artist: "All great art is born of suffering"). A yuppie philanthropist, touched by the panhandler's plea for a pencil and his use of it to join down musical notes, welcomes him to a Strawberry, a bathtub, and a suit of clothes in preparation for a glittering soiree at the photographer's country estate. There is no clue as to how, without a lift from his ill-fated chum, the Cavenham is able to make repeated return trips to this remote spot. And we get precious few details, for that matter, of his hand-to-mouth daily life, certainly not enough of them to qualify the film as an acceptable character study in lieu of an acceptable detective story. Colin Firth, Ann Magnuson, Annamie Ellis, directed by Kass Lemmons. 2001.

FASHION VALLEY 18.

Chocolate — Another art house film, an agonized, chocolate-maker opens her Little Shop of Temptations during the Lenten fast. Director Lasse Hallstrom follows his discreet pro-choice propaganda (*The Cider House Rules*) with a smug, complacent, liberal-minded broadsheet against the smugness, complacency, and narrow-mindedness of a French Catholic provincial village circa 1909. The movie international cast adds to the air of 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 Morse, Judi Dench, Peter Stormare. 2000.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN 14; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; HAZARD CENTER 7; LA JOLLA; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; TOWN SQUARE 14; LA HORTON PLAZA 14; WEGAND PLAZA.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon — Ang Lee's homage to the martial arts fairy tales of his heritage, especially perhaps to

spendous 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-did intrigue — beautiful. The tatty script, the unedited unpunctuated narrative line — a bore. And although *Ride with the Devil* may have proven that Lee can handle action, it did not prove he could make something credible and compelling of fight 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 mythicallity would render the action more acceptable, more "aesthetic," than that of a John Woo hackneyed. They only render it more remote, more effete, more affected and aseptic. The effects of flying, spinning, dancing up walls, skipping across water, hovering in treetops, etc., are technically well done (yawn), and they sometimes, if only fleetingly, rise to the exalted plane of "dreamlike." "Soapsific" would better describe the remainder of the times. Michelle Yeoh, Chow Yun Fat, Zhang Zhen, Chang Chen. 2000.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN 14; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; GROSSMONT CENTER; HILLCREST CINEMAS; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; SWEETWATER 9; TOWN SQUARE 14.

The Day the Earth Stood Still — Science fiction with a United Nations message. The stiffness of that aside, there is plenty of low key suspense built up around a tall and finely chiseled extraterrestrial (Michael Rennie) who maintains a low profile in a Washington, D.C. boarding house while satisfying his curiosity about the American Way of Life. There is also a formidable, visual robot named Gort, whose lustreless prole like chassis withstands all attempts at puncture and analysis, and a good spunky musical score by Bernard Herrmann. With Patricia Neal and Sam Leiff, directed by Robert Wise. 1951.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN 14; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; HAZARD CENTER 7; LA JOLLA; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; TOWN SQUARE 14; LA HORTON PLAZA 14; WEGAND PLAZA.

been the other way around: a white guy talking 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 14; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALAXY 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; SOUTH BAY DRIVE 16; SWEETWATER 9; TOWN SQUARE 14; WEGAND PLAZA.

Enemy at the Gates — The Battle of Stalingrad, reduced ridiculously to a personal "duel" between superior snipers, a Russian peasant and a German aristocrat. ("It's the essence of the class struggle," opines the editor of a propaganda newsletter.) The telescopic shutouts are meticulously diagrammed, and there are several spectacular shots of aerial attacks, and Bob Hoskins's impersonation of Nikita Khrushchev is authentic, at least as far as the bumps on his face. Uniform green blue-gray photography for frigid griminess. With Luke Law, Joseph Ferrer, Ed Harris, and Rachel Weisz, directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud. 2001.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN 14; CINEMA STAR 13; FASHION VALLEY 18; FLOWER HILL CINEMAS; GROSSMONT CENTER; HAZARD CENTER 7; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16; TOWN SQUARE 14; LA HORTON PLAZA 14.

Exit Wounds — Steven Seagal fighting age, weight, and dirty Detroit cops. Putting up no resistance to washed exes, mindlessness, and gonorrhea. With TIMO, Anthony Anderson, Isaiah Washington, and Tom Arnold, directed by Andrew Bartis. 2001.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN 14; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALAXY 15; GROSSMONT CENTER; HAZARD CENTER 7; LA COSTA 6; 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 6.

15 Minutes — Socially conscious monotony on the stretched-throat topics of violence in America, tabloid television,

and the cult of celebrity. A couple of new-generation American Dreamers ("You think I came to America to work?"), a Russian and a Czech whose fervent swear and shifting glances unconsciously fail to set off any alarms at the ICE immigration checkpoint, pick up a CPM in Time Square ("Make Your Own Movie"), to document their upcoming murder spree, and pick up a ready-made lawfully defense "look-alike system" from the *Houseman* tab show. (The cameramen gets additional jolts by registering in hotels under the alias of Frank Capra.) They also pick up a pursuing posse led by a media-friendly homicide cop (Robert De Niro) and an over-the-hill, TV-illustrate action investigator (Edward Burns), aided along the trail by a frightened eavesdropper and fellow Star (De Niro always strikes Vera Farmiga eyes for Jean-Claude). The video "special effects" — pain by numbers Pop Art color, etc. — give license to the actual filmmaker, John Herf, to wallow in all manner of visual gimmicks, and not just when looking through the first person camcorder. Similarly, in his penchant for formula, hypebole, hypocrisy, he proves himself to be no less crass than the *Gratitudes* tabloid show ("TV is Media, is Media") he is ostensibly commenting on. Keely Grammer, Karl Roden, Oleg Taktarov, Melina Kanakaredes. 2001.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN 14; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT CENTER; HAZARD CENTER 7; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLLA 12; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16; TOWN SQUARE 14; LA HORTON PLAZA 14; WEGAND PLAZA.

Finders Keepers — Gus Van Sant, reverting to the vein of *Good Will Hunting*, gives all sort and squabbly (don't be fooled by the scruffy surface) with the tale of another youthful genius, a black high school athlete and closet intellectual (diffident newcomer Rob Brown) who is a mentor in an on-the-edge old recluse (Sean Connery) that inside a Bronx brownstone — the author of the great 20th century novel before he sank into premature suicide. (The genius of *Hemingway* Matt Damon, puts in a cameo appearance near the end.) Sentimental, to say, rising (together with your gorge) to a suspenseful preordained

showdown against a prep-school pedant, F. Murray Abraham, Anna Paquin, Bruce Rhythym. 2000.

GALAXY 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY.

Forbidden Planet — Habitually overrated science fiction classic, whose Freudian pretensions hope for intellectual status on the basis of Walter Pidgeon's professional windiness in expounding them. Robbie the Robot, with his rotating gurnies and Robbing lights, may be inspiring as robots go, and the atmospheric transparent id is exciting; but the others in the cast are as animated as tulips. Their frequent arrangement in straight rows across the planet's horizon, the complete turn it takes to suggest a boat and a bay beyond the deck chairs on center-stage, there is always ample imagination to compensate. Always, that is, in matters visual. Storytelling is another matter. The tragicomedy of the lusty, striking Vera Farmiga eyes for Jean-Claude. The video "special effects" — pain by numbers Pop Art color, etc. — give license to the actual filmmaker, John Herf, to wallow in all manner of visual gimmicks, and not just when looking through the first person camcorder. Similarly, in his penchant for formula, hypebole, hypocrisy, he proves himself to be no less crass than the *Gratitudes* tabloid show ("TV is Media, is Media") he is ostensibly commenting on. Keely Grammer, Karl Roden, Oleg Taktarov, Melina Kanakaredes. 2001.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN 14; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALAXY 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; LA JOLLA 12; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16.

Hannibal — Sequel to *The Silence of the Lambs*, long, slow, eventually revolting, less a right film than an animal film. A "revisited, operate" (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 worse. It could have taken as low a road as *or a lower* than this, 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 (they bring him over as gourmet chef). There's a little more sense in the filmmakers' apparent attitude of admiration, adoration, 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. On cultural icon. Or grist for the joke-mill. Goddard, after all, evolved into a stuffed toy, a plastic action figure, and Earth's savior. The Terminator, too, 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 "rude" people. A public service, practically. With Julianne Moore (taking over the part from Jodie Foster, who had the better sense to turn it down). Ray Liotta, Giancarlo Giannini, and an uncredited, unrecognizable Gary Oldman, directed by Ridley Scott. 2001.

CINEMA STAR 13; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16; SWEETWATER 9; LA HORTON PLAZA 14.

Heartbreakers — Willies, long-winded comedy about a mother-daughter team of con artists named Consers. That's a sample. The seven-inch semi-erect penis that gets broken off a statue, twice, is another and another. Miles of leverage (if that's how it's measured), though the fifty-one-year-old Sigourney Weaver can keep pace with twenty-one and top heavy Jennifer Love Hewitt. Gene Hackman has the only amusing moments, in the part of a tobacco tycoon who's his own best customer and worst advertisement. With Ray Liotta, Jason Lee, Anne Bancroft, directed by David Mirkin. 2001.

CARMEL MOUNTAIN 14; CINEMA STAR 13; CINEMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALAXY 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY; HAZARD CENTER 7; LA COSTA 6; 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; WEGAND PLAZA 6; FROM 3/23.

The House of Mirth — Taisford, artful, generally faithful rendition of the Edith Wharton novel. If it naturally lacks the "personal" quality of Terence Davies's autobiographical work — *Distant Voices*,

Still Lives and *The Long Day Closes* — it at least earns his credit for having selected a first-rate piece of literature. And it does not, in the popular phrase, puts it all together. Set in the early 1900s, the story of Mr. Chow and Mrs. Chan, quiet, well-mannered next-door neighbors whose spouses are having an affair, is not by 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 almost squinting into tight, narrow, cramped spaces, taking people as it finds them, with a Degas-like randomness and informality; people caught in their surroundings, from disadvantageous angles, at odd moments, not people in a comfortably cleared-out space, in front of a docile backdrop, in positions of total domination, like your average movie stars. They are often only partially seen — from behind, in three-quarters profile, through forests of obstruction (slats, 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 mate (at 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 say so is inadequate. Words can't convey. You must see 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 takes place, but it is fair to say, too, that fits in with the theme of the unknown and the unknowable. And the device of role-playing, whereby the cheated-on spouses improve 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. The great advance is that it's a Wong Kar-wai film without evidence of disorientation. Tony Leung, Maggie Cheung. 2000.

GALAXY 15; THROUGH 3/22.

In the Mood for Love — It was about time. After years of promiscuous, flame-of-the-moment, stretch-the-romanticism — in days of *Being Wild*, *Ashe of Time*, *Chungking*

Express, *Fallen Angels*, *Happy Together* — Hong Kong's former fashioner of "art films," Wong Kar-wai, finally settles down, and in the popular phrase, puts it all together. Set in the early 1900s, the story of Mr. Chow and Mrs. Chan, quiet, well-mannered next-door neighbors whose spouses are having an affair, is not by 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 almost squinting into tight, narrow, cramped spaces, taking people as it finds them, with a Degas-like randomness and informality; people caught in their surroundings, from disadvantageous angles, at odd moments, not people in a comfortably cleared-out space, in front of a docile backdrop, in positions of total domination, like your average movie stars. They are often only partially seen — from behind, in three-quarters profile, through forests of obstruction (slats, 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 mate (at 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 say so is inadequate. Words can't convey. You must see 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 takes place, but it is fair to say, too, that fits in with the theme of the unknown and the unknowable. And the device of role-playing, whereby the cheated-on spouses improve 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. The great advance is that it's a Wong Kar-wai film without evidence of disorientation. Tony Leung, Maggie Cheung. 2000.

GALAXY 15; THROUGH 3/22.

Mad Max — An assured and energetic visual style, reliant almost to the point of over-reliance on short tracking shots and quick dissolves, makes this futuristic *Rom* *Lozors* worth watching. It is set not so far in the future as to pose problems of production or imagination for the filmmakers, just far enough to explain away any bit of mindless chaos and destruction as the breakdown of civilization as we know it. Made in Australia and dubbed into American. With Mel Gibson, directed by George Miller. 3/28.

MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTS; 3/29, 3/30, 3/31.

The Man Who Fell to Earth — An interplanetary traveler with pale skin and orange hair touches down in spooky New Mexico. "The Land of Enchantment," and on the strength of several electronic patents, he skunks to the very heights of high finance ("I want you to begin negotiations with Eastman-Kodak immediately"). The elliptical narrative style tends to conceal the bokeness in this Walter Tevis sci-fi story adapted to the screen by Nicolas Roeg. The viewer, at every moment, is required to puzzle out what's happening, and in the process he becomes a sort of collaborator in the storytelling and hopefully becomes less inclined to quibble over the results. Roeg imbues the rather clichéd Americana with vague sinister undertones, but he expresses none of his ideas as clearly as his evident conviction that the world is his quietest. His images, unlike his narrative, are sharp, rich, alluring. David Bowie, in his movie debut, makes a sympathetic and even a believable extraterrestrial, with his writhable physique, his sunken cheeks, his lank hair, his chinos, dizziness and noisiness, his ungainly undertones, and his intense yearning. Candy Clark, Rip Torn, Buck Henry. 1976.

MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTS; 3/27, 3/28, 3/29.

The Mexican — Trifling crime comedy dash road movie which for some reason, out of the track which scripts dumped their individual discoveries, captured the fancy of

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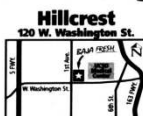
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Calendar
RESTAURANTS



Joshua McGinnis

oven comes a hot, yeasty eight-inch disc of the house's slightly sweet pizza crust, accompanied by a saucer of a rather bashful extra-virgin dotted with a vibrant balsamic. (I only wish that Prego would offer eight-inch pizzas, as well as their huge entrée-size pies.)

The regular appetizer that stole my heart was *gamberetti marinati*, marinated shrimp served cold in a salad with cukes, red onions, endive, and feta cheese with a tomato vinaigrette. The shrimp were tender and smoke-flavored from the mesquite grill, and everything alongside showcased their virtues. A delightful, nightly changing antipasto misto (appetizer platter) usually includes a bit of the shrimp dish; other regular habits of the assortment include paper-thin silky prosciutto wrapped around fresh mozzarella, savory marinated veggies, and a few paper-thin slices of a moist Italian salami flavored with fennel seeds. The chef's assortment also included very sweet eggplant caponata (made with molasses) and minimalist *crostini*

of so-so tomatoes on toast.

An appetizer of stuffed eggplant (*melenas zarfate*) is actually a sandwich with bread, succulent eggplant slices as the bread, surrounding a rich filling of pureed spinach, ricotta, and goat cheese. I was glad I had three friends to share it with. We were disappointed to find it with a rather bland food store tomato sauce. Fried calamari are greaseless but ordinary, even with a tomato-caper dip. The more ambitious *involtini di pesce spada* translates to thin slices of swordfish rolled around lemon (cured by the citrus, like ceviche), rolled around slightly peppery daikon sprouts, carrots, and baby string beans, all sticking out from the roll's end like grass from a sidewalk crack. It's a species of Italian sushi, a nice concept. The fisherman's medley made didn't disappoint; it was a hearty mix of swordfish, shrimp, but fishy filling.

Don't gloss over the salads here: McGinnis, surely an honorary Italian by now, finds green inspiration in this course. We happened to choose his favorite, a challenging *Insalata*

REVIEW
NAOMI WISE

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 278: 1039-1044.

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NEED TO KNOW: Reservations recommended. Vegetarian, vegan, heart-healthy choices.

Ratings are from zero to four stars and are weighted primarily on the basis of the food.

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Piemontese, combining watercress, endive, raw mushroom slivers, corn kernels, blanched skinny green beans, and shaved parmesan in a lime truffle vinaigrette. Whenever you see the word "truffle" on an Italian menu, it's a crucial test of the chef's palate — good chefs are stingy with white truffle oil, indifferent chefs are so generous with it that the whole dining room ends up reeking. At Prego, happily, there's just enough truffle oil in the dressing to give it a hint of earthiness, and just enough dressing on the salad to moisten the ingredients without drowning them.

The list of pastas is long and tempting — I wanted to try them all. *Agnolotti de aragosta* are big, supple squares of house-made pasta, thin as wonton wrappers, stuffed with minced slipper



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lobster meat and prosciutto surrounded by a creamy yellow low sauce with mild lobster and lemon flavors. *Tremble* is a small, delicate, tender scallop on a plate, a mingling of flat, narrow, green spinach noodles with white-fleur noodles in a light cream sauce. *La Vieille* is a heap of greenlip mussels, shrimp, and sweet, perfectly cooked Atlantic sea scallops. *Les P'tits* are small, delicate scallops, by the way, their prime breeding ground, Georges Bank, is a few miles off the coast. Several years to let the species recuperate from overharvesting. The area was just opened to fishing in 1999. *Le Grand* is a fish of extraordinary size and quantity. Risotto is a different kettle of fish, though; once again, it's a delicate, tender scallop. A fatal technical problem: the scallop was gummy, heavy, and so overrich, it glumed with butter.

Prego's entrees follow the simple dishes (including a most delicious, tender, delicate scallop grill) on the oodles-of-fried-ribs spree. Every night there's a special. The special is the same on the day's best catch. At our first visit, our waiter, who was both charming and well-informed, specified that the evening's

Unfortunately, the health craze has hit Prego where it really hurts—ugh! right in the *luganega*!—resulting in diner requests, the kitchen has abandoned Italian smoked pork sausage in favor of fully cooked, prepackaged sausage. It's better for you (and easier on the restaurant, since it keeps longer than raw sausage and requires only quick reheating). But although the sausage is a good artisan product from a small company in San Luis Obispo, its dense texture and lack of flavor is a far cry from the mouth feel of pig-meat. The sausage appears finely chopped as a seasoning for fusilli noodles and mushrooms or comes whole as the star of an entrée with grilled polenta triangles, spicy *rapini* (a fierce near-wild green), and a mushy baked potato. Onion, and a tad too much too-sour tomato to my taste. Not wrong, we particularly

with mango glaze. For a more traditional finish, if you have a little wine left (or want to order some more), there's a plate of three interesting Italian cheeses with fresh fruits and a wine-poached pear. (The wine is a bonus, but not for the time being, though.) The \$17,000 imported gelato machine broke and can't be fixed.)

The very best dish at Prego is a special that McGinnis prepares only rarely, because few of Prego's patrons order it. It's a duck breast, braised and made with genuine Hudson Valley fattened goose liver. Most restaurants use duck foie gras, which has a bit of graininess and a faintly bitter lively undertone. Goose is different. Goose is better. In McGinnis's capable hands, it emerges as a smooth, pillowy as whipped cream, surrounded by a buttery, slightly sweet Chianti-balsamic reduction.

ABOUT THE CHEF
Josh McGinniss, aged 29, is a son of a chef. His mother is Deborah Helm, owner of Hillcrest's popular Mixx. "Before she had Mixx, she was the executive chef at a beautiful place called the Abbey," McGinniss recalls. "I was about ten, so I couldn't go home — I would take the bus from school there, and every day she'd put me to work in this huge, dungeon-like kitchen with all these burly, crazy, '80s-style 'Kitchen Confidential' kind of guys."

Initially, McGinniss was

He's been working for ten years in numerous San Diego kitchens. "I was really lucky that my mom put me in a position where I would have had the opportunity to get into kitchens and work with some great chefs that I might not have worked with otherwise." Another important mentor was a chef named John (John) at Torrey Pines Hilton), head chef at Dobson's when he was a line-chef there. "She gave me so much encouragement. I wanted to do sweetbreads three ways, I wanted to do frites, I wanted to do snails. She'd say, 'fosh, let's do it!' Nobody else would have trusted me enough at age 20 to let me play with that." After stints at Kensington Grill, he worked at the Ritz-Carlton and went to work at Grego as executive sous-chef. "Hall my family

The restaurant is part of a four-branch California-wide chain, and McGinnis says he's not planning to expand over the menu, which has changed only slightly in the 11 years since Prego opened. "We have a lot of people who are having fun with the pastries, and we're offering special and rotating lunch menu. He, the pastry chef, and the sous-chef have been working on new desserts, although some sweets (such as tiramisu) have been on the menu forever," McGinnis says. "The kids are helping to open his patrons to more adventurous ordering, since it exposes them to ingredients (such as chocolate) that they otherwise be leery of." A trust factor gets built slowly. "We need to be aggressive about educating the kids on the value of cooking classes are already getting us a more interesting customer base." On a note that's not too far from McGinnis' teaching a new generation of adventurous restaurant-goers: His two-month-old son doesn't eat anything but pasta and is going to sushi bars.

I dunno. Seem to be gravitating to these places where you get good talk as much as good food. This is a weekday morning, 8 o'clock, when the boys line the counter. I mean the old boys. Guys who have been coming in for the whole 28 years Salazar's has been here. Guys who grew up in the neighborhood, while their moms slaved away in the tuna-packing plants. When the smell of tuna was always in the air.

They're the regulars of Frank Salazar's coffee-shop-looking taco place hiding behind the spiky green trees on Market Street. A little o-

Mexico. And now that I look back, I can place here feelings that I have never seen in pictures of Taz. Earthy brick walls. Great timbers holding up the ceiling. Spanish monastery-style colored lanterns hanging down. Leather strap chairbacks alongside bright orange bistro stools and counter stools. A big oil painting of a man in a white shirt and tie — I'd! I'm our own Mission San Diego de Alcalá. A photo of his daughter Barbara in a white dress hanging on the wall beside the cook's window where the orderly wheel chairs.

Frank says the food of New Mexico is different from anything about the green chilis, how they hang them out to dry till they turn red. Something about how like things hot and spicy. He says the food is good. He's talking about. Breakfast prices range from \$2.50 to \$5.45. Chorizo (Mexican spiced sausage) with eggs, refried beans, and tortillas \$5.45. Huevos, chiles, and enchiladas rancheros cost the same.

They also have a pretty good gringo deal of two eggs, bacon, ham, or sausage, with pota-

I think I blew it by ordering *salsa ranchera* rather than red chili sauce on top. It's not that spicy. On the other hand, it is wickedly deli-

In a way, Frank's place and his customers are a piece of old Spanish San Diego. "I've lived all my life right in this part of town, except when I was away at the Korean War," says John. (He's called "The Squirrel" because that's his last name, Ardill, means in Spanish.) John and his wife, Loretta, sit next to him, and Urbano Ruiz, who has a couple of blocks from here. "We remember when you could swim off the docks and the water was okay," says Urbano. "We'd make rafters out of railroad sleepers and paddle across the bay. It was a different San Diego."

Frank says if you want to see Salazar's at full rip, come late Sunday mornings. Latino families and their kids come in three or four generations together. Men, I'm pretty sure, crash the Hilda's little fun club.

toes, butter
eggs, potato
cheese ome

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BANDS OF THE CALENDAR RESTAURANTS

CAPRI APENGO 890 University Center Lane, Aventura complex, 858-450-3355. The decor is smashing and the Pacific Rim food — with influences from Japan, China, Hawaii, Thailand, and California — is beautiful to behold. Outstanding appetizers. For entrees, try roasted duck with crisp vegetables or shrimp and scallops with spicy peanut sauce. The sushi bar is one of the city's best. Please make notes of the prices — if you get carried away you may be in for a large bill. Open daily. Expensive. — E.W.

DAILY'S 8915 Towne Center Drive, Renaissance Towne Center, 558-453-1112. The restaurant is owned by a doctor who has devised a menu that's low-fat, low-calorie, low-sodium. The dishes look and taste wonderful. All items available for takeout. Same menu lunch and dinner. Open daily. Low to moderate. — E.W.

LA FONDA 3752 La Jolla Boulevard, Bird Rock, 858-456-7171. If you've visited La Fonda Robertson's in Tijuana, you'll enjoy these gourmet regional Mexican dishes (no tacos, tostadas, or enchiladas). Excellent prices, cactus salad, soups, beef steaks, Chile relleno wrapped in banana leaves, shrimp in two salsas, fillet steaks, *carne en nogada*. Romantic room with fountain. However, cooking tends to be uneven. Sometimes excellent, sometimes average. Open for dinner nightly. Moderate. — E.W.

HOPSI BISTRO AND BREWERY 6355 La Jolla Village Drive (next to Macy's, University Town Center), 858-587-6677. Hopsi serves the best food of any brewery in San Diego. The spot menu is served continuously from lunch to closing. Best dishes are split roasted chicken and penne with

salmon and shrimp. All beers are brewed on the premises. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Moderate. — E.W.

MATRE D' 5523 La Jolla Boulevard, 858-456-2111. Two separate dining rooms, an elegant ambience, and the presence of the owner himself (formerly with the Plaza Hotel in New York) contribute to a fine dining experience with faultless service. The half lobster appetizer is a house specialty, and the rack of lamb or fresh fish are always outstanding. Excellent place to be entertained. Closed Sunday and Monday. Diners only. Tuesday through Saturday. Expensive. — E.W.

THE PANNIKIN CAFE 7467 Grand Avenue, 858-454-5453. The outdoor seating area is almost always crowded with tea and coffee drinkers who sit themselves, read, or chat. Light meals, including breakfast (steamed eggs, bagels, fruit plates) and sandwiches, soups, salads, as well as beverages and sweets are served. It is a well-known hangout and always crowded. Open daily. Low. — E.W.

STAR OF INDIA (LA JOLLA) 1000 Prospect Street, 858-459-3355. The Indian food is good. The best bet is the all-you-can-eat buffet lunch or the Saturday and Sunday champagne brunch. You'll enjoy these gourmet regional Mexican dishes (no tacos, tostadas, or enchiladas). Excellent prices, cactus salad, soups, beef steaks, Chile relleno wrapped in banana leaves, shrimp in two salsas, fillet steaks, *carne en nogada*. Romantic room with fountain. However, cooking tends to be uneven. Sometimes excellent, sometimes average. Open for dinner nightly. Moderate. — E.W.

TAPENADE 7612 Fay Avenue, 858-531-7500. Surely one of the best restaurants in the city, it offers superb French cooking. We are privileged to have the famous chef in our midst. Each dish is perfect. Low fat, no butter or cream used in sauces. Pork tenderloin, Muscovy duck, foie gras, and the fresh fish are small triumphs. Worth every penny. Closed Monday. Lunch, Tuesday through Friday. Dinner, Tuesday through Sunday. Expensive. — E.W.

CLAIREMONT & KEARNY MESA

THE GOOD BOYS 7947 Balboa Avenue, Kearny Mesa, 858-565-4244. The menu offers omelets, gourmet pan-fries, souffles, and several different kinds of fritatas. Freshly squeezed fruit juices are available, and for lunch there are burgers, salads, and a long list of sandwiches. Good value here. Open for breakfast 6:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Low. — E.W.

HIDEYOSHI JAPANESE RESTAURANT Hazard Valley, 9340-B Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, Kearny Mesa, 858-568-8995. A delightful restaurant tucked away at the far end of a small shopping center. Fine sushi bar, and unusual appetizers. A feast named "Tahiko special" for two or more, is worth ordering. Visually and gastronomically a treat. Closed Sunday. Lunch, Monday through Friday; dinner, Monday through Saturday. Low to expensive. — E.W.

KOREA HOUSE 4620 Convey Street, Kearny Mesa, 858-560-0080. Korea House offers free seating or a table if you want to barbecue your own food. The menu offers a "down-home" Korean food, such as traditional *mandu* (dumplings), *jeoggal bulguk*, or *raw crab* and *yukhoe*, a steak tartare worth raving. Make a meal from enormous appetizers like *gal bi* (raw oysters), pork, and cabbage leaves. Open daily. Low to moderate. — E.W.

NEW SHANGHAI 4681 Convey Street, Clairemont Mesa, 858-560-4833. New Shanghai is busy, friendly, and draws a mostly Chinese clientele, because their Chinese food is n't "Americanized." Whatever your gastronomic politics, try the generous platters of dry braised shrimp, the "fat pork shoulder," the hot tripe,

and the ingenious red bean pancake dessert. Low to moderate. — M.N.

SORETTE'S 4724 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard, Dunes Shopping Center, 858-483-1811. Though the main restaurant has closed, Sorette's deli continues to offer superb pizzas and excellent pastas. Open daily. Low to moderate. — E.W.

WINE SELLAR AND BRASSERIE 9550 Wiggins Street #115, Mira Mesa, 858-450-9557. This is the sister restaurant to Laurel, and the food is a delight to the palate. Lunch on Saturday served by mail order in conjunction with the wine tasting. Call for directions and specific hours. — E.W.

THE BEACHES

RALEIGH Paradise Point Resort, 1404 Vacation Road (off Ingomar), Mission Bay, 858-490-6363. Very expensive. Reservations recommended. Take a quick trip to chic Miami at the local beach of Raleigh's finest new resort restaurant. Whimsical tropical decor features a monkey motif (carved in the chandeliers, peeking from the paintings) and mambos play on the speakers. But the unlisted prices for chilled shellfish may make a monkey of you unless you ask before you buy. The menu features high-quality seafood and land creatures in refined conditions, including gorgeous lobster huge, salmon with a clever hummus crust, herbbed sea bass, and a bank of free-range wild. Servers are charmers. The wine list is long and rather steep at the bottom end with better values farther up the range. — M.W.

CHATRAU ORELLANS 308 Turquoise Street, Pacific Beach, 858-496-6744. The interior of this Cajun and New Orleans restaurant has rarely looked better. All diners include house salad, a Cajun stuffed parrot, and popovers. The menu offers blackened tripe, crawfish étouffée, and Cajun style

chicken, fish, and pasta. Very large portions, excellent service. Closed Sunday. Open Monday through Saturday, dinner only. Low to moderate to expensive. — E.W.

QWINGS BAR & GRILL 5083 Santa Monica Avenue, Ocean Beach, 858-422-1101. A splendid ocean view, a good sushi bar, sprightly salads, and fresh fish are the main attractions here. Friendly service. Long flight of stairs to the dining room, with an elevator for wheelchair access. Open daily. Moderate to expensive. — E.W.

RESTORANTE MICHELANGELO 2808 Shelter Island Drive, Point Loma, 619-224-9478. A good place for family dining with children especially welcome. Pizzas, pastas, and shrimp fare well here. Recipes cover the range of Italian cuisine. Restaurant seats 140. Open daily, lunch, Monday through Friday, dinner nightly. Low to moderate to expensive. — E.W.

SAKSA'S 3768 Mission Boulevard, Mission Beach, 858-488-7311. Saks's is the perfect spot for insomnia. Heavy breakfast, which include meat and eggs, are served Sunday through Thursday from 11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., to 3:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday. The dinner hours extend to 2:00 a.m., as well. Saturday and Sunday brunches offer Mexican specialties. Breakfast atmosphere. Open daily. Breakfast low, dinner moderate. — E.W.

SUSHI OJA 6259 Mission Bay Drive (at Bunker Hill), 858-270-5670. Moderate, disabled access, chachy; long, crowded waits unless you've reserved. What becomes a legend most At its best, this renowned sushi bar offers fish of exceptional quality, perfect tart sweet rice, tight portions, and disciplined creativity. These joys don't come easily. First, find the place. Driving south from Balboa, look left, and into the mini-mall with the large "J" sign (opposite Rubio's). Sit at the sushi bar to enjoy on your neighbor's choice, watching for off-menu extravaganzas, e.g. sea-mullet cooked over

MIDWAY, OLD TOWN & MISSION VALLEY

CAFE COTE 2461 San Diego Avenue, Old Town, 619-281-4495. Cote CAFE is a good spot for a light Mexican meal with Southwest influences. Best bet is the carne asada beef, bean, queso, and salsa. Open daily. Breakfast low, dinner moderate. — E.W.

FAIROUX CAFE AND GALLERY 3166 Midway Drive, 619-225-0308. Set out this family-owned and operated restaurant for wonderful Lebanese and Greek food. The owner, a noted artist, displays his paintings on the dining room walls. The extensive menu of fine Lebanese lamb, stuffed grape leaves, and a wide selection of exotic vegetarian meals. Copious all-you-can-eat buffet available at lunch or dinner in

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addition to the regular menu. Given 24 hours, this cafe will prepare an astonishing Lebanese feast at low cost. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Moderate. — E.W.

JACK AND GIULIO'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT 2391 San Diego Avenue, Old Town, 619-294-2014. The former owners of Giulio's in Pacific Beach now operate Jack and Giulio's. Best bet are angel hair pasta, minestrone soup, and their famous scampi. Old-style chicken cacciatore abounds on the menu. Outdoor patio is one of the strong features. This is a low-cost family restaurant with fresh, casual food. Open daily, lunch and dinner, continuous service weekends. Low to upper moderate. — E.W.

EAST COUNTY & STATE COLLEGE

ALPINE INN 2223 Alpine Boulevard, Alpine, 619-445-5122. If you're a beef lover, try the Texas burger served on a Kaiser roll with steak fries. Stay with beef here. Dark interior with large booths and dinner on Sunday. Early bird dinner Monday through Saturday for \$7.95. Call for hours and reservations. Lunch Monday through Sunday, dinner Tuesday through Saturday. Low to moderate to expensive. — E.W.

CLAIM JUMPER 5500 Grossmont Center Drive (across from Montgomery Ward), La Mesa, 619-446-3627. The portions are so large they elicit gasps (the prime rib served weekdays is 26 ounces). The food isn't memorable, just more than any one person can eat. Among the attractions every day are the huge salad bar, barbequed chicken, ribs, and turkey dinner. Open daily, call for hours. Count on wait on weekends. Low to expensive. — E.W.

HOMETOWN BUFFET 581 University Avenue, University Square Shopping Center, 619-583-7173. If you're a nostalgia buff and long for cooking as it existed 50 years ago, try this all-you-can-eat buffet. Menus change daily. Massive amounts of food that's fresh but not low-calorie-cholesterol. Not for gourmet diners, but fun. Open daily. Other branches located throughout the city and suburbs. Call 858-5373 for locations. Low. — E.W.

LA MESA OCEAN GRILLE AND SEAFOOD MARKET 5603 La Mesa Boulevard, La Mesa, 619-463-1548. Fish and seafood of good quality served in large white room with huge TV. Food is served fast but it's not fast food. Fine for quick meal or takeout. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Low. — E.W.

RAMON'S SMOKED HOUSE B.B.Q. 1710 Alpine Boulevard, Suite 110, Alpine, 619-445-1008. Inexpensive. You're 2000 feet up here, and the mountain air sharpens your appetite. The smell of mesquite wood burning under fresh cut beef rib is beyond resistance. The secret Texas recipe draws crowds. Go Sunday morning, especially when chefs in maroon aprons dance around the pit, the smoking fire snapping into the clouds of fragrant smoke to flip the racks of beef and pork ribs. If good weather you can eat out back next to an authentic chuck wagon. — E.W.

YOSHI 8584 61st Street, San Diego, 619-287-3536. 17 appetizers, 20 items of sushi, 19 specialty rolls — all excellent and exciting — are served in a modern cuisine that uses 10 of the sushi bar's 1600 12 tables. The hot mushroom special, the "3 of a kind roll," and the Toshi tempura roll are all worth the trip. Diners are modestly priced, but watch out for ribs. Lunch, Monday through Friday, dinner nightly. Low to upper moderate. — E.W.

VALLEY HOUSE RESTAURANT 10767 Woodside Avenue (Mission Gorge Road between Woodside and Magnolia), Santee, 619-562-7878. You'll find your dream "Tuna Potato" here — pork tenderloin that's deep fried and served on a bun. It's juicy and succulent. On Wednesday and Friday nights, all you can eat fish and chips are \$8.99. If you like biscuits and white gravy, this is the place for you. Colonial-style decor, friendly service. Open daily, breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Low. — E.W.

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Best Mexican Restaurant - 2002

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2003

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2004

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2005

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2006

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2007

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2008

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2009

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2010

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2011

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2012

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2013

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2014

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2015

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2016

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2017

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Best Mexican Restaurant - 2021

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2022

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2023

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2024

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2025

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2026

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2027

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2028

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2029

Best Mexican Restaurant - 2030

Calendar RESTAURANTS

CENTRAL SAN DIEGO

LAO & CHINESE CUISINE 4122 North Central, Logan Heights, 619-263-0914. This restaurant is a simple place, large and spare around Formica tables, that serves uncomplicated, home-style Lao cuisine. Highly recommended the lamb, a spicy salad with poached minced beef, chicken, hot pepper, cilantro, onions, fresh mint, and ground roasted rice. This dish is earthy and wild, spectacular. Other tasty dishes include papaya papaya salad (papaya, chili, and tomato), tom yum soup, and pho and pad see ew noodle dishes. Low. —M.N.

LUCKY STAR SEAFOOD RESTAURANT 3855 54th Street, corner of University & K. Mari 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 (in advance to order), steamed whole fish, Dungeness crab in special sauce, frog legs, and 1-1/2 pound lobster. Call ahead for large parties. Open daily for dim sum and dinners. Low to upper moderate. —E.W.

PAISANO 3447 10th Street (at Landis), North Park, 619-291-4006. Inexpensive. It's that Cher pulling up a chair. There's a definite, warm atmosphere about this place. Joe Romano and his family started here in 1967, painting the interior to look like real stone arches of some Italian village. Pictures of Italian tourist attractions line the walls, and the music is Italian mandolin tunes. The food is traditional Italian-American, with pizzazz. "Daily specials" like eggplant Parmesan and spaghetti with meatballs, plus salad and garlic bread. Regular dishes are bargain-priced, too. —E.B.

PEKING RESTAURANT 287 University Avenue, North Park, 619-295-2610. Inexpensive. Closed Tuesdays. This old-time Chinese eatery was founded in 1931 by an immigrant from Canton; his grandchildren now run it and it's hardly changed in 70 years. You'll find red tasseled hanging lanterns with translucent pictures of samurai, mother of pearl wall decorations, and big colorful bowls. The food is Gold Rush era Cantonese-American: chop suey, chow mein, braised pork, bean cake with shrimp, and rice. —all for a song. —E.B.

PHOENICIA 3361 Adams Avenue, Normal Heights, 619-282-4120. Inexpensive. To find this tiny restaurant—the longest running eatery on Longfellow Avenue—look for a window featuring a cedar tree, an American flag, and the word "Phoenicia" written in Arabic and English. The inside is cramped, but they have sidewalk tables, too. Try their baked eggplant stuffed with lamb, pine nuts, onions, and garlic, or the kabob, with ground meat, parsley, onions, and pita bread. The real treat is the lamb skewer, raw lamb with cracked wheat, onion and scallions, but you'll need to call 24 hours ahead to get it. Homemade rice and Lebanese coffee are delicious, too. —E.B.

UPDOWN

RANZAI CANTINA 3667 India Street, 619-298-4388. The menu offers Japanese specialties as well as Mexican dishes. Service is fast, the atmosphere is soothing, and you may find here at affordable prices. This place is a lot of surprise. Open daily. Moderate. —E.W.

BERTRAND AT MISTERS 1550 Fifth Avenue, 12th floor, 619-299-1277. Bertrand Hugh of Mike Heirs has created Mist's A.P. It's like a royal bistro—open, airy, with gorgeous views. It's expensive—appetizers \$12 to \$22. But the food, service, and atmosphere are first-rate. Should you want to show off the city to visitors,

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this is the place. The food is American with French and Mediterranean influence. Open for lunch, Monday through Friday; nightly for dinner. Very expensive. —E.W.

RIG CITY BAGELS 1010 University Avenue, Hillcrest, 619-574-7878. The bag attraction consists of about nine varieties of light cream cheese vegetable, sun-dried tomato, strawberry, and cinnamon walnut toast. Lunch specials available. Open daily. —E.W.

BOMBAY EXOTIC CUISINE OF INDIA 3975 Fifth Avenue, Hillcrest Cinema complex, 619-298-5155. Don't miss the elegant food, the lovely setting, the former proprietor of Monsoon. You will find the food subtle and sophisticated. This Indian restaurant is a blessing to our community. All you can eat buffet lunch \$7.98 daily. Open daily; lunch and dinner. Low to upper moderate. —E.W.

EXTRAORDINARY DESSERTS 2929 Fifth Avenue, 619-294-7001. If you've been searching for a place to have

desert after a movie or other cultural event, keep this dessert café in mind. The baker-owner prepares sensational cakes, tarts, cookies, and all manner of chocolate goodies. Tea and coffees are uniformly good. In the summer, the patio is especially charming. Please note the late hours: Sunday through Thursday to 1:00 p.m., and Friday and Saturday to midnight. —E.W.

FIFTH AND HAWTHORN 515 Hawthorn, 619-544-0940. Excellent, very fresh fish and seafood dinners are to be found here. The price of the entire 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 frequented by actors and writers, which adds cachet to the evening. Open daily; lunch, Monday through Friday; dinner nightly. Moderate to expensive. —E.W.

ICHIBAN 1449 University Avenue, 619-299-7203. Inexpensive. In this 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 values are at lunch, with weekday specials like Bento combos (sushi rolls, crab, salmon, rice) and filling soups overflowing with veggies and thick udon noodles. Healthy? You betcha. The miso soup (with every dish) made from soy and seaweed is a great daily to-die-for. Number One—that's what "ichi ban" means. —E.B.

THE MISSION NORTH PARK AND CITY BAKERY 2801-2805 University Avenue, 619-220-8992. The two winners are breakfasts and the adjoining bakery, especially for its Russian pears bread and cinnamon rolls. Lunch and dinner offer California food with Asian and Latino influences. Lots of items under \$10.00. Open daily. Low to moderate. —E.W.

THE PARKHOUSE EATERY 4574 Park Boulevard, Hillcrest, 619-295-7275. Small house provides charming setting for dining. Eclectic menu is prepared with average competence. You can make a meal from last

of appetizers. Open daily breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Low to moderate. —E.W.

BE ZAPAPÉ 4642 Park Boulevard, University Heights, 619-692-1652. This stylish little Mexican restaurant on a tiny stretch of Park Boulevard is proof that not all taco shop food is equal. Try a shredded beef or chicken taco or tostada and you'll know what we mean, with their generous mound of juicy, slow-cooked meat. Many enjoy their unusual scallop burritos, vegetarian potato-filled burritos and rolled tacos, and well-prepared soups. We go for the steered most. \$3 range is dependable, serving Mexican with solid, homemade, handmade flavor. Low. —M.N.

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DOWNTOWN

A LA CARTE ON SIXTH AVENUE 921 Sixth Avenue, 619-544-1661. This take-out emporium serves first-rate sandwiches, soup, small entrees. Food is delicious and top price is \$6.95. Call ahead for Saturday orders. Best bets are sandwiches: roast beef, meat loaf, egg salad, and salmon. Soup plus half sandwich make a fine light meal. Closed Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Low. —E.W.

BELLA LUNA 748 Fifth Avenue, 619-238-3222. The chef brings expertise in Italian regional cooking. When available, try shrimp salad, crisp stuffed with salmon, and daily risotto dishes. All breads baked on premises! Best bets are grilled half chicken or daily fresh fish. Low to expensive. —E.W.

BLUE POINT COASTAL CUISINE 565 Fifth Avenue (at Market), 619-233-6623. Very classy atmosphere and menu—mostly fish and seafood—in much. You can eat on patios at the bar, but best bets are nightly fish entrees or steak and crab cakes served with lots of organic vegetables. A welcome addition to downtown. Dinner only, from 5:00 p.m. Expensive. —E.W.

EL COMAL 2455 Imperial Avenue, Sherman Heights, 619-291-9023. Inexpensive. No border compromises here—not great home cooking from Michoacan, Guerrero, Jalisco, and Oaxaca, prepared by Luz Herrera Barba, a biologist teacher from Acapulco. Try the huachuc (cactus slices with carne asada, frijoles, cheese, and onions) or the malita carne adobada (pork, melted cheese, and pita-zamale inside two tortillas) and have a glass of Nue (a refreshing walnut drink). —E.B.

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PRINT CLEARLY: First 25 words are FREE. \$1.20/additional word. Do not abbreviate words. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

25/FREE: 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42

FREE AD DEADLINE: 7 a.m. Saturday
Mail: Reader Matches, P.O. Box 858003, San Diego, CA 92186 Fax: (619) 233-7907

LATE AD DEADLINE: 6 p.m. Tuesday
(Must include \$20 service fee.)
Fax: (619) 233-7907 Phone: (619) 235-8200
Walk-in: 1703 India St. (at Date St.) downtown

WE must have the following information. Please print.
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NEW! Now you can also receive e-mail responses! Simply provide your address below. (Don't worry, your e-mail address will not be revealed.)
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Choose One:
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Win VIP Passes to Mountain High!

Choose a date and head for Southern California's closest and fastest-growing ski resort.

The VIP passes are good every day through May 29!

3 winners will be chosen at random; they will receive their passes in the mail.

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North County Reader March 22, 2001

153

THE MILKMAN
by DANIELA

Karen: Say, Karen...did I ever tell you about when I was in the navy?

Uncle Bo: You were in the navy?

Karen: Yes...but it wasn't all that great. Sometimes we were ordered to kill our own shipmates to prove our loyalty to the ranking officers.

Uncle Bo: That's a lie, Milkman. Don't mix Uncle Bo in the navy an' they don't do mean stuff like that.

Karen: I didn't say I was in the United States navy, Karen. Hmm...now that I think of it, I'm not even sure she was a navy. Is there a navy that sells kids to pirates in exchange for rum?

Uncle Bo: Mom!

Karen: He-ha! Relax...no military would ever take me. With my record, I'd be lucky to get a trout fishing license.

[illegible]

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15x7 1/2
14x7 1/2
ANY SIZE 16x7 1/2

\$35 16x7 1/4
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