Reader

Steve Esmedina wrote his first story for the Reader in July 1973; his last story appeared in September 1994. He wrote about popular music and film, mostly in the late '70s and early '80s. Esmedina died on June 24, 2001. In this issue, his dosest associates remember him.

and if that's just your body, your corpse, your shell, God, I with some Higher Power for your life, you are reading these hope so, because, surely, your mind, your spirit - glorious, wonderful, twisted, sad...the essence of Esmo, a nickname

lubbo, oh Blubbo, where do I begin? You're dead, gone, they say you hated, but you never told me—is still out there somewhere in the ground; somewhere. And maybe if you're not too busy making excuses words and chuckling and shaking your head like you used STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 to do when something amused you.

This memorial issue was prepared before the terrorist attacks of September 11.



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LETTERS

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Anne Albright's Shrink Needs Help

As a Reader and "Kid Stuff" reader, I note that Anne Albright has quietly revealed literally between the lines, that she is seeing a therapist. Though commendable, one wonders at the inconsistency in which she presented this new wrinkle. Last week (Sep-tember 13), Anne shared her residual grief (and tears) relating to her ex-fiancé's suicide which she outlined in previous columns. How did her decision to commence therapy escape her readers?

her readers?
Her therapist's "compas-sionate, logical" view is ques-tionable. When Anne shares her friend's farm life as more idyllic than her own, her therapist responds by reinforcing Anne's sense of inadequacy by playing up her friend's supposedly better-organized lifestyle?

What would this therapist tell her friend if she came to him for professional help? Tell her her friend in suburbia with only five children has an "easier row to hoe" (pardon the pun)?

Anne's problems aren't occurring because she doesn't live on a farm. She apparently suffers from long-term de-pression, exacerbated by taking on the role of stay-at-home mother to an ongoing, growing brood.

Accounts of Texas homicidal mom Andrea Yates, who drowned all five of her children, sound chillingly similar to several of Anne's more morose writings.
In light of that, it is heart-

ening to know she is finally getting the help she so des-perately needs.

Lillian Hanson

University Heights

Schub Snub

A music critic's review of a con-cert should be objective and learned. Jonathan Saville's rather personal attack of André-Michel Schub and his facial expressions (August 23) s unnecessary and a low blow. Mr. Schub is a pianist of inter-national stature and reputation. To compare such a respec ted musician to someone passing kidney stones and to the creature from Alien, the movie, is insulting and should have no place in a concert review. It's unlikely that the Boston Symphony or the Royal Concertgebouw Orch

sidered Mr. Schub a "reptilian fiend" when they invited him to be their soloist. In my 20plus years on the concert cir-cuit, I had never read such a personal attack on a performer. It shows poor taste on Mr. Saville's part. If he is so gung-ho on facial expressions, what would he call Leonard Bernstein in the throes of ecstasy while conducting a Mahler sym-phony? Shrek at work?

. Cho-Liang Lin SummerFest La Jolla Artistic Director

More Brothel. Less Drivel

Imagine my disappointment reading Shepherd's September 13 movie column! Let me take you through my stream of consciousness as I picked up the Reader today, looking for some escape from the tragic events of the week. "Ah, here it is, yes, let me

first check the letters — OK. nothing — and where is Schad's column, and where is the page numbers and skimming the "Roam-O-Rama" which the "Roam-O-Rama," which took us to Big Bear, I turn to the movie page. " 'Stream of Consciousness'...hmmm. Look — he is going to take us through his mind, through one of his days - oh delight ful! — this promises to be better than his movie reviews (since sometimes I haven't seen the movie and don't intend to)... But what's this, the fucking 'Jumble'?!" Lo! is the reader (not to

mention the Reader!) bored with my monograph? How much more bored were we readers of Shepherd's column today! His jumble of movie titles was so inane I am ashamed to say I actually read fully half of it, refusing to believe there

was nothing clever there. Shepherd's movie reviews are so enjoyable. It was so disappointing to see him crap out and shovel shit from his sleeve — better he had written nothing at all. This level of self-indulgence is remarkable even in Duncan Shepherd. It can indicate only the unbe-lievably high level of disrespect and disdain he has for his readers. While, granted, ordinarily this is no bad thing, today I felt its sting.

Duncan, feel utterly free (you have our leave!) to go off on any tangent you wish — talk about how you saw Belle et la Bête hanging upside down at a Turkish brothel while eating phyllo pastries and smoking clove cigarettes with a Japanese film student who loves Trent Reznor, or even beguile us with your mundane and endless reservoir of conviction in regard to how those old Westerns were so much better than new Westerns - anything but the pure drivel you did dish.

Your stock has gone down you must now come back

David Whitman DeKock

Reader

FEATURES

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nd I did used to amuse you, didn't I? We amused each other I missed your funeral because no one told me you were dead until a week later, but I'm kind of glad because I would have cried, and I don't like

to do that. I hate things that are beyond my control, and there's nothing I can do to change the fact that I can never talk to you again, never hear your voice over the phone from the "ghetto," as you liked to refer to the old house in Southeast you shared with your

mother and older brother. Hell, I just pulled out my old Rolodex and there you are: Steve Esmedina, 910 South 37th Street, San Diego, California 92113, (619) 262-1590. I'll have to remember to scratch you from my Christmas-card list. That was the only contact we had, that and an occasional phone call the last one must have been two years ago - that brought back vivid mem

amuse each other. But it was more than that - we were bound by mutual admiration and this very weird sense that we truly understood each other, as puzzling as we may have been to most anyone else.

Death at a young age is always doubly sad, and 47 is young, I don't care what anyone says. Of course, you always predicted you would go early, and none of us doubted you because you had epilepsy, you didn't take care of yourself, and by the way, Steve, you shouldn't have doused yourself in that cheap cologne every time we went out. I can still smell it... Now, why do I bring that up? It's funny how when someone dies, the memory brings

We'd generally pile into his old Peugeot headed for either the Skeleton Zebra Club in the old Douglass Hotel to see the Penetrators or the Rick Elias Band, or to the Spirit in Bay Park, across from Kelly's Pet Hotel, run by fast-talking Jerry Herrera.

ories of the old days when we "hung," and you still sounded the same, you still were the same: it was I who had changed, but even though I married and had two boys and you stayed where you were — and as you were, so people tell me — deep inside we were still very, very much alike, Thomas K. Arnold and Blubbo. Long after we had ceased hanging out together, we still had the ability to

out minutiae. We say publicly, "He was a great guy and a good friend," but we think about cologne, or the time I passed out driving drunk along 163 in the old Mustang coming home from some party, and I woke up just in time to prevent a crash, but you never said a word, never even tried to wake me. You were along for the ride, ready to accept whatever might



You were a great guy, and you were a good friend. In fact, you and I were best friends when I was at my craziest and you at your glory. I was 21, a late bloomer who was discovering the world and all its delicious vices. I had started my own magazine, Kicks, covering the San Diego rock scene. Suddenly I was hip, I was cool, DJs announced my name when I walked into a nightclub, and I loved it, I ate it up. I was reckless, I was wild, I was young. You, four years older, had established yourself as San Diego's premier rock critic, writing a column each week in the Reader that everyone in our little world devoured. Many hated you, many admired you, all knew you

I looked up to you. You were a brilliant writer, much better than I was, much better than I would ever be. You used words like a seamstress, stitching them into intricate, colorful patterns the rest of us could only marvel at. We were journalists; you were a poet. It was 1979, and I had just launched Kicks ("San Diego's Only Rock 'n' Roll Magazine") on a \$7000 budget I had amassed by working as an usher at the stadium and the Sports Arena while attending San Diego State University. My life was music, and the magazine was styled after BAM magazine up in the Bay Area, a localized version of Rolling Stone. We made quite a splash when we first published in August, and at the end of the year the Reader named me one of San Diego's 50 People to Watch in 1980.

I met a whole new class of people: Jim Mullin, Jim Holman, Howie Rosen, Neal Matthews, Paul Krueger, Jeannette De Wyze, and you, Blubbo. They were all quirky but seemed so much smarter than the other people I had known, so much more curious. They were interested, and that made them interesting.

I forgot how we first got together, but I remember vividly the nights we'd spend hanging out — you, me, and Mullin. You had your own pad then, in the old Wilson Apartments at the corner of Ninth and A, near the old El Cortez Hotel, and since you didn't drive much - I think you had a car back then, an old American beater of undetermined make, but you were timid behind the wheel - I would always drive downtown to your house. You lived upstairs, Mullin lived downstairs, and we'd generally pile into his old Peugeot headed for either

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the Skeleton Zebra Club in the old Douglass Hotel to see the Penetrators or the Rick Elias Band, or to the Spirit in Bay Park, across from Kelly's Pet Hotel, run by fast-talking Jerry Herrera, loathed by many of the bands he booked for being cheap, but always a

good friend to you and me. Sometimes we'd join up with another of our friends, Cameron Crowe, the former rock critic for Rolling Stone who is now a famous director. He was back in San Diego, attending high school, undercover, for a book and movie that would be called Fast Times at Ridgemont High. The three of us would often wind up in the parking lot, looking at the stars, talking about life and how the music would lift us up and make us feel part of something big, something we couldn't quite describe. The Skull Club, the Spirit, later the Zebra Club, also downtown these were great clubs, ground zeroes for San Diego's burgeoning "new wave" scene. All my life an outsider. I felt at home here: I still didn't blend into the scene, but at least I was there, with Kicks as my safety blan ket and you as my sidekick, my friend, the rock critic despised by many musi cians and fans but adored and worshipped by oth ers — including me.

You were short and fat and dressed all in black, and you had this ridiculous looking fake-leather jacket that you loved and wore night and day. It had come from the thrift store where your mother worked, as had so many of your garments. You had terrible hair, even by the standards of the time, a coarse mop of black and gray swept over from one side of your head to the other, like a sideways pom padour toupée. You were funny looking: we jokingly called you "Yoda," after the Star Wars character, And yet, you had a cherubic almost beautiful face and the neatest expression when you recounted your background - Mexican mother Filipino father, with an older half brother and two half sisters and a wild niece. Monique, beautiful and lost. l wonder whatever became of her? I wonder if she knows you are dead.

became such close, fast friends. We were young, watching and chroniclis and longing to be a part o this new music scene that. to me, still marks the moment of San Diego's rebirth, long before Horton Plaza and the Gaslamt and the trolley and North

Dr. Yaghout

Medical Directo

City West and the cruiseship terminal and all the other symbols of "San Diego becoming a true metropo lis" that came later. The punk scene was New San Diego's first angry cry, a rite of passage that never got the recognition it deserves. You and I were late

bloomers who spent much of our time lamenting unrequited loves - both for girls with the same first name — and trying to get laid. Or going out and "pulling," as you would call it, with a sparkle in your eye, equal parts imp and lech. We were like awkward

puppies, trying to be cool, striving for acceptance, and in the end the only people who truly accepted us, it seems, were each other. I admired you for your talent, and you looked up to me - or at least you told me you did - because I went out and started my

own magazine and for a while there made it work. You'd call me "My liege" or "The King," and that fed my developing ego; l'm sure you knew it, or maybe you really felt that way. Or maybe it was just your way of expressing gratitude for my admiration, which I'm sure



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you felt as well. Regardless, we filled a mutual need. Does that make any sense? It does to me, looking back, and I'm sure you would say the same thing.

However it was we first met, I wanted you to write for Kicks You were a marquee name, and I wanted to make this magazine work. So you did some reviews, and they were so much better than anything else we were run ning, but you seemed to have a little problem meeting deadlines, didn't you? I would call you to ask where your story was, and you'd say. Just about done," and then I wouldn't hear from you for a few days. I'd drive down to your apartment in the Wilson Apartments, storm up the stairs, my anger building, and hammer away at your door with my fist. You'd let me in, and I'd be screaming and velling, but you'd be nonplussed as always you were a human shrug, Steve, a shrug and a sigh, that's how you went through life - and then you'd sit down behind your old type writer in your smelly, dark living room and bang out the rest of your story. That was our formula: I don't think you could have written something otherwise

That was when I got in. Sometimes you weren't tended you weren't. Once I was so mad after pounding on your door and get ing no response that I ripped back to my car and came back with a pen. I still see myself writing, "Esmo, where's my fucking story!? on your whitewashed door in blue ink. You never bothered to erase it: maybe you saw it as underscoring your lethargic defiance.

One time you were really late, and I had been drinking somewhere with Mullin. Apparently you owed him a story for the Reader as well; we began knocking on your door — it was night time - and got no response We went back into Mullin's apartment, beneath yours, and began pounding on the ceiling with a broom handle. Again, no response.

I don't recall who was the first to suggest it, and looking back I still don't see how it could have come to this. But somehow, our anger transmogrified into con cern, and we convinced our

selves that you were dead. Mullin was always a bit of used to estimate the nun her of weekends he had left in his life before he would be too old to party and bemoan the steadily dwindling supply - and he was flitting about like a moth around a light bulb. We began casing your apartment, looking for a way in - which wasn't easy, since you were on the sec ond floor, Finally - and I still don't know how he did it - Mullin found an oper window, got to it, and crawled in. I was outside on the sidewalk, keeping watch. I heard a scream and then you and lim emerged from your front door. Mullin was still hop ping around excitedly, but he had a sheepish look on his pointy face; you were as calm as always. Then Mullin got mad and I got mad, and we both stood behind you and your little typewriter, watching you type until finally Mullin had had enough and went down stairs to bed. You and I each had a beer - one of the few times you had anything digestible in your apartment - and I remember saying over and over, "We thought you were dead. We

McShann (1943) and Earl really thought you were Hines (1944). In 1945 he dead." "Well, I'm not," you traveled with McShann to the West Coast, where his singing was heard by Char-I believe one reason you lie Parker: "This Is Always." and I were so close was we which Coleman recorded both loved like a woman with Parker in 1947, became but the women we loved a jazz hit. Thereafter Coledidn't love us back, I rememman performed only interber the long conversations mittently, working on his we had about your dream own and with various leadgirl, the true love of your ers, including Gene Ammons life, a beautiful blonde you (mid-1950s), Gerald Wil had dated briefly and made son (1960), Don Byas (1962), love to a few times, who and Frank Foster (midthen uttered those dreaded 1960s). In 1968 he moved words all men hate to to Los Angeles to work as a hear - "Let's just be friends." freelance musician. He has In her mind, that was that, recorded with such distinbut in yours it was the begin guished accompanists as ning of a long, torturous Fats Navarro and Max Roach journey to get her back. Of (both 1948), Art Farmer course, you never did, but and Gigi Gryce (both 1956), that was part of the rite. and Hank Jones (1956, part of the ritual - the 1977)." more she rejected you, the

more you loved her, pined

for her, yearned for her

drank yourself to oblivion

over her, and talked your

friends to death about her

I would listen and com-

miserate because I was there

would typically start with us

The conversations

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being out at some club, usu-

ally the Spirit, eyeing some

girls. "Let's pull," you'd say

excitedly. Sometimes we

tried most times we didn't:

I don't think we ever once

scored while we were both

out. Then we'd go back to

my place and drink some

more and you'd start singing

from the British rock band

the Marmalade's "Reflec

tions of My Life," or (2)

"Like the river flows to the

sea, to the sea," from

"Unchained Melody." You'd

get very emotional and tear-

ful: "She is my goddess, My

goddess. Oh, Thomas K.,

what am I going to do?"

Then you'd get defiant: "Well, fuck her. She'll come back

One day, she'll come back

and realize she needs Blubbo

But you know what I'll save

Fuck you. Fuck her. FUCK

HER!!" I'd nod sympa-

thetically, vowing to do the

same should my unrequited

love come around, as I knew,

just knew, she would, she

or to get another drink.

When I'd come back I'd find

you snoring on my couch.

Remember Farl Coleman?

sional career with Jay

"He began his profes-

I'd go to the bathroom

either (1) "Oh my sorro

Coleman is mentioned in many jazz encyclopedias and discographies, and I remember looking some of them up 15 years ago when Coleman came to San Diego for a gig. It's not that I was a big jazz fan. It's because the



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ontinued from page 8 former sideman to Charlie Parker Farl Coleman, who died in 1995, spent several months living on your

Surely you remember this better than I. My memories of how this came to pass are hazy. I seem to recall that Earl Coleman came to San Diego for some show, maybe part of the old San Diego lazz Festival, and you wrote it up for the Reader You and Earl got to talking — and drinking.

You went home, and Earl went with you. He ended up staying for several months.

I remember several times picking you up or bringing you back to your pad at the Wilson Apartments, and this slight, sinewy old black man would be lying on your couch. At first you were amused, but after a few weeks your patience wore thin, and I remember you telling me he didn't seem to have anywhere else to go. You were supporting him — you, who even at your peak could barely afford to feed yourself. We made jokes - there was a Saturday Night Live skit about a pesky dropper-in titled "The Thing That Wouldn't Leave,"

and that was Earl. Eventually Earl did leave, but I don't remember whether you kicked him out or whether he left of his own volition. I can't see you kicking anyone out, even if they no longer amused you It would have been more like you to go somewhere else and just leave Earl there.

Some people said your mom held you back. You were the baby, and she pampered you, protected you, to the point where she did everything she could to prevent you from leaving the nest. And she certainly was the larger-than-life figure in your life; you used to refer to her as "Moms," as though there was more than one of

But I wonder Lots of mothers lay guilt trips on their kids and don't want them to stray far from home I think your mother was a factor in your return to the "crib," as you sometimes called your ghetto home. and though we never talked about it, I believe she made the inevitable easier "The path of least resistance" is a phrase that comes up when

mother was in on it.

I think of you, Blubbo. Living with your mother was safe and sound. You were shielded from the outside world, the worries and the cares of having to make a living, of having to fend for yourself. It was make it or break it time, and you couldn't deal with that, so you went back to the womb. You really did live in Blubbo's world, but that world wasn't real. Staying in the real world mother. would have meant less time

to spend in Blubbo's world, so why venture out? You didn't talk much of the Reader, aside from occasional snippy comments about Mullin and Holman mostly Mullin, about his fastidiousness and insistence that you meet deadlines. "I thought at first he was qui-qui [Blubbo slang for homosexual l, but man that guy knows how to pull," you marveled once not long after we first met. "Mullin. How come a guy like that gets laid, and I don't?" After you moved back home to your mother's house in the ghetto, I didn't see you as much. Part of it was my typical white-boy reluctance to travel to points Southeast at night, partic

ularly after my first visit, when I got lost and passed built, they become. by several bands of roaming young men who came into the street and waved and gestured as I drove by. Part of it, too, was that I vou, Blubbo, Furniture covhad trouble accepting this sudden change in living arrangements, from Inde old person's home.

pendent Blubbo to Living With a Junkie to Back Home with Mom in the Ghetto. You rarely answered the phone yourself: it was either your older brother Bobby, the proverbial "rolling stone" who was more lethar gic than you, or your mother. whom you clearly adored. Whenever I'd call and she'd answer and I'd identify myself as "Thomas K Arnold," you would come to the phone and with a chuckle tell me your mother had said it was "Arnold K. Smith," a twist on the fallen financier C. Arnholdt Smith. It got to be a joke between us, and I do believe your I only met her in per son once, on my first or sec ond visit to your "ghetto pad," as you called it. She was a big, hefty woman, already in her 70s, who looked like everyone's













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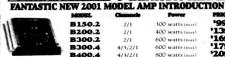
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the eye, and he went on his way. "So this is the guy who always answers the phone, I thought to myself. "What does he do for a living?" I asked. "Nothing" was the response. "Like me."

I don't recall how we drifted apart, but we did, the way even the best of friends inevitably do. After 19 months I passed Kicks onto a friend and signed on as Gary Puckett's manager. I found new friends in radio, which I had started to cover for the Los Angeles Times. My Mustang blew up, and I took over my parents' 1965 Chevy Impala, at the time not yet hip. You never drove, and my new friend, John Duncan of KPRI, had a midnight-blue Corvette, and you and I saw less and less

You lost your gig at the Reader and moved into a condo with this weird gothic girl who was on SSI. I think she was a junkie. You'd have terrible fights; you weren't sleeping with her, but she was whacked out, and you were

Our friendship migrated went to the doctor and were to the telephone and then diagnosed with epilepsy. Visiting you in your hospislowly drifted away to less tal bed, tubes in your arms, and less contact. Friend-Loot real mad because everyships have a way of doing that. But even during our one was saying you were a drunk, and I, who had been increasingly infrequent with you most nights, knew phone conversations, you were the same. You shared you didn't drink any more than I did. Of course, that my joy when I finally got wasn't saying much — I did pass out behind the wheel my girl: you never got yours back, but you eventually one night, remember? But found someone as well. I wish it all would have worked I never drank in the day, out for you, Blubbo. I wish and I don't recall you doing you could have gone on to so either. I never considexperience the joys of famered you a heavy drinker, ily, of making babies. You and I felt vindicated when you were diagnosed with would have made an excellent father; you would have epilepsy because it confirmed my belief that your read to your children and played with them and really problems walking and standing up stemmed from sometalked to them and underthing else besides booze. stood them.

You continued to write

for the Réader, in various

capacities, but you never

really got it together after

you lost your column. That

was when we started hang-

ing around less; I always

had to pick you up and bring you back home unless I

You would have told them marvelous stories. You would have amused them. and they would have amused

- Thomas K. Arnold

Thomas K. Arnold was a regular contributor to the Reader from 1981-1997. tor at large for Video Store Magazine

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n late January 1954, Dick Tracy found an infant abandoned in a tree. For more than a week the comic-strip detective searched for the mother. Sud-

denly, "as if dropped out of nowhere," a Mrs. Catchem appeared. She claimed

the baby was hers: "Check the hospital. You'll see I'm the authentic mother!"

On page A-14 of the San Diego Union, on February 2, 1954, the day Steven Esmedina was born, Dick Tracy was still grilling Mrs. Catchem. "You express fanatic love for your baby. Yet you left him in a tree! Why? Why?""I...I...can't tell you!"

Steven, or as his birth certificate called him, Esteban, weighed eight pounds and three ounces, measured 21 inches long, and was brought into the world at Mercy Hospital by Dr. J. Wanless at 6:15 p.m. While Steven was taking his first breath, the evening TV lineup was just starting - Nutsy the Clown on Chanthe police captured an injured pet falcon owned by Daniel C. Peterson, who lived on Niagara Avenue. The mayor's wife, Mrs. John D. Butler, explained to the Union that before her marriage she'd never voted because she "traveled with an ice show."

It was a day without particular omen or portent, but Steven's mother, Guadalupe Esmedina, was worried nonetheless, According to one of Steven's four sisters, he was born with kidney problems. According to another, something was wrong with his lungs. Perhaps there was

"There's a boy in this room who runs home and tells his mommy when he has problems at school."

nel 4, Laurel and Hardy on Channel 2, something called Your San Diego on Channel 10. Over on Eighth Avenue at the Broadway Theatre, folks were buy ing tickets to see Marlon Brando in The Wild One. Over at the Cabrillo, Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin were starring in Sailor Beware.

The temperature was in the low 50s. A weak high-pressure system was moving in from the southeast. Earlier in the day, because farm work was scarce, 3000 Mexican peasants stormed the U.S. border at Calexico. In North Park, 39-yearold William I Riley a former city fireman. bilked an "ailing 53-year-old widow" out of \$8700, her life savings. In Ocean Beach a problem with both. Guadalupe at any rate was arixious because 13 years earlier she'd lost a child, Isabel, age three, to diphtheria

"Robert, our oldest brother, brought the diphtheria home from school," remembers Helen McSpadden, Steven's oldest sister, "There'd been a diphtheria outbreak at Robbie's school. So we all had to go to the hospital for observation. Little Isabel came down with it and died. She was only three. We were all so little, none of us remember her."

Rosemary, the sister closest in age to Steven, says, "Our mother never forgot Isabel. I don't think you can ever forget something like that. Losing a child.



She never talked about it. It was something that she'd never bring up. But she never forgot. I think in some ways Steve suffered most from Isabel's death. He was born 13 years later, but her death had the greatest impact on him."

A few days after Steven's death, after his sisters had been in and out of the Esmedina home down on 37th Street, the house where Steve lived almost all his life, someone left a box of photo albums on the front porch. The albums looked almost new: someone had taken good care of them. Not far from the albums stood a statuette of the Virgin Mary, her blue robe covered with thick dust. In the back yard, weeds grew five, six feet high, obscuring the plum, orange, and lemon trees. A crack ran along the house's foundation. Wooden steps to the back door were rotted through. A halfdozen windows were broken.

"To me this place was like a mansion."

Marco Curiel stood, not long after Steven's death, in front of the house on 37th Street. Curiel knew Steven since the two met in fourth grade at St. Jude's Academy, a few blocks from the Esmedina home

"A two-story house. It was and still is the biggest house on the block. One of the biggest in the neighborhood. I lived in a one-bedroom place with my mom and my four brothers. We were poor. Coming to Steve's house was like my renaissance."

Curiel is a broad-shouldered, thickset man who played defensive back at St. Augus-tine High School. He's now principal at Memorial Academy on 28th Street. Gangbangers loitering in front of Memorial tend to scatter when they see Curiel approach.

'We used to call them pachucos back when Steve and I were coming up. There have been gangs in this part of the city forever. Over here in Shelltown where Steve lived, the big gang was Los Hermanos, and I guess you could say Steve was involved with them. He at least had friends who ran with them. In this neighborhood you got a hard education real fast. You got your ass kicked. You learned how to take a beating. On one corner there might be a brother who had a thing about Mexicans. On another corner there'd be some crazy pachuco who decided he just didn't like the way you looked

"Steve and I were always good Catholic boys. We went to St. Jude's. I think we met through a Christmas gift exchange or something, and we became friends. And



"He was the baby of the family. Very close to our mom."



it was odd because we were two very different people. He was this nerdy kid who hated, absolutely hated, any kind of physical activity whatsoever. And I was ath letic, good at sports. I had

girlfriends. I guess you could say I was popular. There were guys, you know, who'd say, 'What are you hangin' out with him for?' I didn't care. Steve was my buddy.

"You have to understand. Here in the neighborhood... One of the guys we knew used to huff gasoline. By the time he was in high school he practically didn't have a tooth left in his head. Other guys joined gangs. They just lived for the moment. And here was Steve, you know, who had a reel-to-reel tape recorder in his bedroom and he used it to do make-believe interviews with the Beatles.



That bedroom. The upstairs bedroom with the big window facing the street. That room was Steve's kingdom. That room was Steve's lens on the world. Not only did he have a reel-to-reel tape recorder, but he also had his own record player, which was extremely rare back then. No other kid had all that. Steve's family had resources. No other little Mexican kid was making make believe interviews with the Beatles."

Little Mexican kid? Rosemary, the sister only eight years older than Steve, said the Esmedina family had no ethnic identity. ("Our dad was Filipino," she said. "And our mom was Mexican. But her family had been here in the States

forever. One of her grandmothers was from England. When we moved to 37th Street in the early 1950s, I'd say the neighborhood was pretty much Anglo. There was some Mexican. Some Filipino. But mostly Anglo. None of us kids

grew up speaking Spanish.") But Curiel said, "I always thought of Steve as a Mexican kid. And he knew a lot of Spanish vocabulary. Sometimes he'd ask me questions, like, 'Marco, what's that thing Mexican moms say when something bad almost happens? Ave

Steve's fourth birthday party

Maria purry-something? He meant, 'Ave Maria purisima.' Hail, Most Pure Mary, And his mom, I remember, was completely bilingual. My mother sure wasn't. She worked as a wait ress in Ocean Beach. Took the bus every day to work. A single mom, supporting us five boys. But Steve's mom was very strong, very self-

"He always went home for lunch. He'd walk home from St. Jude's. And once he didn't do his homework. We had this teacher, a big stereotypical'evil nun.' She was going to make Steve stay at school during lunch to finish his homework assignment. He said,'I gotta go home. My mom's wait ing for me to eat lunch.' The Evil Nun didn't care. Well, when Steve's mom heard what happened she came to school and really let the mom. Steve's mom wasn't



intimidated by English or by authority figures, not even

"The next day the Evil Nun stood up in front of our class and said, 'Students, I'm not going to say his name, but there's a boy in

this room who runs home and tells his mommy when he has problems at school. And you know what? When he grows up he's going to be a sissy. A sissy who wears

"Loud see Steve kinda

a big deal for him. This religious authority figure standing up in front of the class, saying something like that Humiliating him. I think that's when he lost his faith, or started to lose it. These authority figures teach you these religious values. They teach you right from wrong They teach you rules. When you see them break the rules, you start to wonder if a lot of what they teach you might not be true. Some of the guys asked Steve, 'Hey, why didn't you say something You can't let her get away with that!' And he said, 'If I'd have said anything, it would only have made it

shaking his head. This was

"His mom, Guadalune was a real no-nonsense lady His dad, on the other hand, was a real sweet, real quiet,

worse. My mom would yell

A lot older than Steve's mon They were so different. Steve called his dad 'Thut,' which was some kind of Filipino word. So I and Steve's other friends called his dad Mr. Thut. I often wondered how Mr. Thut and Steve's mom

Thut might have been ven's corruption of tatay ("tut-TIE"), Tagalog for "daddy." (Tist, an abbreviated, less-polite form of tatay, would be the equivalent of "Poos") I also told Curiel that Steven used to circulate a story that the man everyone thought was his father was often away and that his mother had had an affair.

"That sounds like Steve," Curiel laughed "Exactly like Steve. That's the sort of thing he'd always

"He liked to play with your mind. He called me once and said, 'Hey, Marco, on the radio they had this call-in contest and the first caller got to interview the Beatles, I called in and I won.' Maybe you remember, but back then they had these 'interview albums.' recordings of the Beatles, or whoever, being interviewed. And Steve had used one of these interview albums and his reel-to-reel ording that sounded like he was interviewing the Beatles. He just dubbed in his own questions. He played it to me over the phone, and I could tell he was really getting off on the fact that he had tricked me, that I had

"The Beatles. The very first time I went over to his house he made me listen to the Beatles''I Saw Her Stand ing There, and 'Needles and Pins' by the Searchers. Trust me, Steve had to have been the only little Mexican kid in the neighborhood, maybe in the entire city, who was listening to the Beatles and the Searchers. He was like that. He introduced me to all sorts of music that no one else in the neighbor hood was listening to. Great music. You couldn't even hear it on the radio. Not yet. Frank Zappa. Jimi Hen-drix. Cream. Chicago. Blood, Sweat and Tears. Blue Cheer. Paul Butterfield, All of it. before it was on the radio He knew about it. He took me to the opening of A Hard Day's Night at the California Theatre. There we were, two little Hispanic kids at the opening of A Hard Day's

resources. He loved movies. His sister Rosemary worked at a movie theater downtown, and she used to let him in for free. He went to see In Cold Blood, which wasn't something your average little Hispanic kid would do. He loved that movie. He came home and he actually made a comic-book version of In Cold Blood He drew it himself. He even wrote the dialogue. He and I used to make our own comic books. We had our own emblem we'd draw on the corner - 'EC Comics meaning Esmedina Curie

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This way of handling conflict through comic books, Steve probably took it further than I did. And I

think he was like that his entire life - more an observer than a participant. Even when he was a little kid. He would sort of hang back and observe He was like that into high school and for as long as I knew him

"So, comic books were important. Steve was the only kid in the neighborhood who could afford a subscription to Spider-Man. I know it's easy to dismiss

comic books, but in fact they were very well written. The English was certainly a lot more sophisticated than what we heard being spoken around us in our neighborhood. I know comic books helped develop my English vocabulary — 'And now we find our hero sequestered in his lair. Sequestered? Lair? What's

that mean? That's how we

learned a lot of words. Steve

especially had a tremen-

dous vocabulary. Even in elementary school he'd come out with things like 'Call me by my proper moniker

"I know the Union-Tribune said his nickname, his moniker, so to speak, was Blubbo.' But here in the neighborhood, those of us who grew up with him never called him that. When he was in elementary school, he had a really big head, so that's what we called him, Big Head. Or, in Spanish, Cabezón. Later on, in high school, Big Head was abbre viated to just Big. We'd say

"It was in high school that I and my friends started buggin' Steve to hook us up vith his sister Rosemary. She was cute I don't know what happened to her." Rosemary, now 55 years

Hey, what's up, Big?'

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old, is still lovely. She lives in the Bay Area, not far from own lives. "Steve was a happy lither handsome twin sons, Britt and Bruce, whom

Steven had her name after characters in the Green Hornet. Rosemary was the last of the four Esmedina sisters to leave home. "I'm pretty much the

only sister who was around Steve a lot when he was little. Everyone else was gone Married. They had their own families. They loved Steve, but they had their

tle kid. Definitely spoiled. He was the baby of the family. Very close to our mom. We girls had a different rela tionship with her. We were, I guess, just girls, On Steve. Mom focused her attention. I think it was because he was sick as a baby. Because of Isabel, Mom was very protective of him. She treated him with kid gloves.

"I think my clearest memory of Steve is of him running around the house dressed as Zorro'

(His sister Helen said, "I'll always remember him as a little boy, running around the house dressed as Zorro." His sister Yolanda said, "I remember he'd run around the house dressed as Zorro. He saw that movie and fell in love with Zorro. Our mom had someone an aunt? a friend? - make a Zorro costume for Steve. He ran around in that little mask and cape, jumping on the furniture, brandishing a little sword, mark ing up everything with lit-tle Z's. Mom didn't seem to mind.")

Rosemary also remembered that Steven "loved that movie El Cid. I was working at a movie theater downtown, and I let him in free to see it. He went crazy. I don't know how many times he saw it. El Cid starring Charlton Heston. Steve was only six or seven years old and he memorized all the dialog, word for word. He could recite the entire movie El Cid. He was definitely a smart kid.

"I don't know why he didn't go further. He had the potential. Mom rented a piano for him. He had a guitar too, and he'd sit in his room and strum it. He also had a trumpet that he used to mess around with. trying to play like Miles Davis. I think maybe my mother held him back. Her wish was his command. He did whatever she said."

His sister Helen recalled

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Standing in front of the Esmedina home, Mark Curiel considers the dusty porch "I used to be so excited

hurt."

when I came over herê to play. Curiel makes his way

to the back yard and sighs when he sees the tall weeds. "Where's the plum tree? I remember eating so

many plums from it. They were so sweet." He pauses. He turns

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and studies the broken win dows, the rotting stairs.

"I don't know why Steve didn't go further. We were close through high school, and even after high school we kept in touch. I know he didn't like to smoke pot. He said it made him indolent, which was a pretty strong thing for him to say because he wasn't the most physically active person in

"And as for the drinking, I wasn't really aware of it. Not in terms of it being a problem."

(Rosemary says that in 1978 or 1979 she went in Steven's room and noticed "a lot of liquor bottles," and it was only then that she began to wonder if he had a "problem.")

"But coming up in the 1960s, there were a lot of drugs around," Curiel remembers. "Everyone was experimenting. Everyone was overdoing it with everything. Steve was maybe experimenting with overdoing it with alcohol. I don't know, I don't know why, I don't know if loneliness was the reason. You know, when you grow up a nice

Catholic boy, there's a whole bunch about sex that you don't learn until later in life. When Steve was in his early 20s he had a girlfriend. Gail, a beautiful blonde. A dream come true. And it was with her, in his early 20s, that he said he finally came sexually alive.

"But maybe he didn't want to leave home. Maybe he didn't want to see a big ger world. Maybe he was

nerous guy." Curiel grows quiet. He stares some more at the

weeds. He clears his throat

When I was a kid, there

were a lot of times when I

was so hungry. My mom

provided the bare basics, but

might have a baloney sand-

wich. Two slices of bread.

One slice of baloney. That's

it. That was lunch, I was

hungry a lot. And, you

know, back when we were

at St. Jude's, Steve was just

a little kid, and he was aware

of that. Of my being hun-

nothing more. For lunch I

"You know. You know

"Our mother? At a Beatles concert? But Steve wanted to go, so she took him."

content with what he knew. with living in this neigh borhood, with his music and his room. The interesting thing is that Steve in a lot of ways introduced me to the big world, to the world outside this neighborhood. Growing up here, in my family, we were so poor. It was impossible to see any further, to imagine a life outside it. Through my contact with Steve, through the music he made me listen to, the movies we saw

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gry. And in a very quiet, we had. I was able to start casual way, he'd help me out. He'd buy me milk. Or I started to have an idea of in the mornings they used the world outside this neighto sell cancakes at St. Inde's borhood. The interesting and in this very easy, nothing is that Steve introbig-deal way, Steve'd say, duced me to a life he didn't 'Hey, Marco, let's get some cupcakes.' choose for himself. "So, that's how I'll remember him. As a very

"So, you don't ever forsomething like that," Curiel says. In his pocket he jiggles the keys to his big white SUV parked in ont of the Esmedina house. "Even 40 years later, you don't forget something like that. Which is why I'll always remember him as this very generous guy. My buddy

Curiel turns to leave He gives the back yard one last glance.

"What tortured Steve? What were his demons? I'll never know."

The photo albums on the front porch offer no clues. They show large happy family get-togethers. One album in particular, a white one, follows Steven's life from three months old to when he was 11 or 12 This white album chron icles mostly Steven's birthdays, which were large

affairs. See him at 4 years old dressed like a cowboy. sitting astride a pony hi parents apparently rented for the party. See him at 8 blowing out the candles on a large cake. At all these parties the cakes were enormous and elaborately decorated. Steven always looks directly at the camera and

It isn't till you come

to the last page of the large white album that you notice something a little odd. You notice finally that all the dates and notes jotted beside all the photos are written in Sfeven's hand. He must have compiled the album, gathered up all the various pictures of himself and his birthday parties, when he was 13 or 14 vears old. And on the very last page Steven has mounted a snapshot of himself as an infant. Beneath the photo, in ballpoint pen. Steven wrote, "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? Only the Shadow knows." .

- Abe Opincar

Abe Opincar has written for the Reader since 1982.

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Student **Steve**

backgrounds were below the Uni-

versity of California standards. The

theory behind this experiment was

to integrate general students with

those who were science and premed

two courses in Western civilization -

the 19th Century, at Revelle College,

and the 20th Century, at Muir Col-

lege. Invariably, I taught Freud's Civ-

Among other subjects, I offered

aring the early '70s, the war in Vietnam created upheaval at universities across the country, UCSD, where I taught, was no exception. Dissenters

organized rallies in Revelle Plaza, committees of students met with deans to

protest scientific projects that might aid the war, and once we participated in a candlelight march that started on upper Torrey Pines Road and ended at Cove Park, where one of the speakers whipped the crowd into a frenzy by quoting e.e. cummings: "There is some shit I will not eat.

In addition to the antiwar frenzy, the university admitted many multiethnic students whose academic

ilization and Its Discontents and selections from The Interpretation of Dreams. The enrollment for this particular contemporary course was at least 125 students. I had hardly begun my first lec-

ture on Freud's life when an uproar emanated from the back of the lecture hall, where additional folding chairs had been added to accommodate the crowds. Suddenly these chairs were kicked and overturned and shouts of "PIG, Pig," "He's the Man and you're the Man" filled the air. Paper airplanes or paper balls were tossed at my head. Many of the multiethnic students stamped out of the room screaming, "You're the Man. Then as now "The Man" stood for authority, the police, and in this instance, they shouted at me, "You're the Landlord." With knees turned to water I walked down the steps of the podium and tried to make my way into the hall where chaos reigned.

At the door, his head lowered, stood a young man dressed in black



Esmedina flashed me a glance of unadulterated admiration.

struction worker's shoes, black pants, black shirt, and a jacket styled like a Navy peacoat in rough salt-and-pepper-colored material, frayed at the cuffs and collar. His skin was cinnamon color, his hair black, and he was slightly shorter than I. He kept his eyes down as he said, "This way." I followed him to a side exit and he walked



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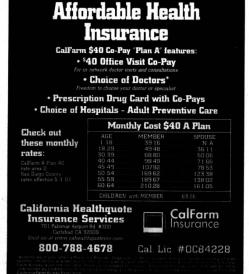
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behind me protecting me until I reached my office When I thanked him and asked his name, he replied, "Steve," and quickly darted away I didn't know whether he was registered for the course or just an auditor

Since I didn't drive. I often took the bus down Torrey Pines Road, which was close to my house. On this day. I went home in a taxi and, still wildly upset, relayed the incident to my young but sophisticated sons. They urged me to hold my ground and suggested that I begin again with my own life's story.

I did just that. The next time the class met, and with thundering heart, I described my childhood in a New York ghetto. From there, I launched into Freud's early years, when he was often humiliated and accosted for being an outsider. My voice broke several times as I spoke.

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but I managed to convince the former rioters that neither Freud nor I was a Pig, the Man, or the Landlord

Once we got into the text of the book. I gave the class a voluntary assignment. Freud claimed to have discovered free association by reading a paper in German that explained the world the therapeutic value of writing without reference to a specific subject, writing the first thing that came into your head and not the first things that came worrying about spelling into their heads, and they

and grammar. The idea was to write for as much as a day or two to free up the mind. I suggested that anyone who felt like indulging in this exercise would find it useful. The names were not to appear on the papers and the students had to stay in their houses and not go out or watch TV. I said, "You'll find that some sentences and paragraphs will leap off the page and you

will discover something about yourself that will take your writing in a whole

Steve Esmedina, who stood at the door throughout the lecture, flashed me a glance of unadulterated admiration, as if I had conveved some arcane piece of knowledge unknown to

many chicken scratches.

Turning over the page, one

sentence struck me "I

More than 20 students were intrigued by this volunteer exercise of writing left their papers for me in this standing up. His breath a box in my office. I almost smelled of alcohol. I wondered whether it took a few went blind reading one paper whose sheets were drinks to get up the courage filthy, stained with coffee to speak to me. "You're right," I agreed cup rings, edges crumpled. Worst of all was the hand-"I should have gone deeper into guilt, but I had to writing. Tiny, unsteady, one word colliding into the next, squeeze in The Interpretation of Dreams." many crossed-out lines.

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WHAT I SHOULD BE" With a red pen I under lined the sentence and wrote, "Begin here. This insight should start your essav.

During my office hour, I kept my door open. In the identical outfit that he wore daily, Steve crossed and recrossed the hall before he walked in and blurted out, "You didn't speak enough about guilt in Freud. always remained several Did you think we wouldn't paces behind me and never understand why civilizattempted a conversation. tion creates guilt?" He said

than crisp paper.

Steve turned, went into the box that held the free association papers, and dug out the untidy mess held

together with a twisted paper clip.

Throughout the ten weeks of class, Steve never sat in a seat. He stood for the 50 minutes and rarely failed to follow me around campus. This was not stalking but a commonplace. Some students walked with me from class to class, waited with me at the bus stop, or drove me home. Steve

because I knew that sooner

or later, he would burst into

my office. Burst he did, on

a morning when he was

particularly disheveled. He

looked as if he had not yet

he screamed, standing as

upright as he could, though

he was tottering, "Portrait

of a Lady is crap. And his

long, convoluted sentences

make me sick. He denies

happiness to all of his char-

acters. He refuses to give

his heels. I wondered

whether he would fall on his

face and what I would do

lames," I said. "I should

have assigned 'The Beast

in the Jungle' and called it

asked. "How come it's so

easy for you to say you made

a mistake? Once with Freud

tic," I replied, "My father

always said, when he was

and now with lames."

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Esmedina rocked on

"Yes, the students hate

"How come?" he finally

"Family characteris-

them contentment."

"I hate Henry lames,"

been to bed.

My teaching assistant read the final papers. I examined most of them to be sure the grades were fair. I could spot Steve's final immediately from the squirrelly handwriting and less

He wrote on Solzhenitsyn. The writing was somewhat ornate, but the project was detailed, thoughtful, well organized. I wrote him a personal note thank ing him for his efforts.

about to make a negative The next quarter I gave comment, 'Darling, if I'm a course in the 19th-century wrong, I'll apologize.' And novel. I didn't notice Esmeyour family?" I asked. dina until the class emp-His face turned to

tied out. There he was, sitstone. It hardened, grew ting in the last row, in his expressionless. I knew nothing personal about Steve dull, battered outfit. His eves did not meet mine as edina: where he lived. he scurried out the door. where his parents came In my smaller classes, from. Not only had I crossed each student had at least the line by asking about his one conference with me. family, but I had thrown On the appointed day and him into turmoil. He hour for his conference, stamped out of my office Steve did not show up. I and he stopped following didn't ask him about it,

To my astonishment, he wrote a brilliant final paper on Henry James's theory of fiction.

I don't know whether he graduated from UCSD, but a year or so later his writing turned up in the Reader. He wrote about jazz and rock music and occasionally he wrote a music review. At Christmas parties he either didn't attend or fled after I greeted him.

About a decade ago at a Christmas party held in a restaurant, my boss gave me an assignment to write about a heavy-metal concert held at the Sports Arena that featured a group named Poison. I knew nothing about this kind of music with its electrical instruments and outrageous songs. I started to protest when a voice behind me said, "You'll do great, Write

it as you see it. Behind me stood Steve Esmedina in a perfectly laundered white shirt and snappy dark trousers. His eyes were laughing, his face relaxed. I couldn't believe this was the same scruffy student I once knew.

He pulled up a chair and, as if he had been vaccinated with a phonograph needle, he talked and talked about his writing and how much I had influenced him as a teacher. Steve told me how much he loved the process of writing but that he despised deadlines. He reported that he was thinking of writing a book but didn't say on what subject. His shyness, his reticence his fear of me were gone as if they had never existed Suddenly he asked, "Do you like Mexican food?"

"Of course." I answered a bit hastily, wondering where this question would lead

"Would you ever have Mexican food with me?

"Absolutely," I replied. "I would love it. Do you know Mario's in La Mesa He prepares the best tamales and the greatest albondigas soup in the city. We could eat there," I said.

For a long moment the troubled Steve Esmedina resurfaced, "I can't really eat with your because I don't have the right clothes." "You don't have to

worry about clothes." "I can't believe you would do it. That you would meet me at a restaurant.

eat with me as a friend." "Of course I will. Anytime soon." From my purse

I extracted an old envelop He never phoned. I and wrote my name, phone number, and address, "Don" forget to call me," I urged. "I expect to hear from you in a few weeks."

"I will. I will call," he repeated with awe. "I mean it's great." I pressed my hand

never saw him again. Nor do I know how he lived or what he wrote during the intervening years. I thought that one day he would find

the courage to contact me. When I heard he had died, these lines from the 17th-century dramatist

John Webster in The Duches of Malfi flew into my head: "Cover his face, Mine

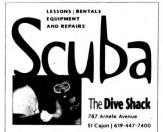
eyes dazzle. He died young." .

— Eleanor Widmer

Eleanor Widmer reviewed restaurants for the Reader from 1974 to 2000.



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I Feel a Jam **Coming On**

very time I invited Steve Esmedina to hang out at my place in the Claireont-Pacific Beach area in the early '70s when I first met him, he'd stare

at me through curiously squinted eyes, smirking. We were usually in the Mesa College cafeteria, trading albums between classes, the only sand

We'd both signed up for Andrew Makarushka's journalism class.

occupation for two young men with an excess of spare time.

"What?" he'd ask. "And do what? What would we do?"

The smirk would become a full smile as he rolled the question off his tongue. His smile was a brace of white teeth, making his mustache linger sparsely along the rim of his upper lip. It looked like a starved eyebrow, or a frayed, black string



There wasn't much for guys in their early 20s without money to do besides the shared hobbies of playing records, walking around, seeing matinees, getting fucked up, and then running our mouths about anything we felt entitled to deliver a rant on. Movies and music were the two constant issues at hand, because in our world, there was nothing more important than good film-editing or a rip-snorting guitar solo after a lead singer's stratospheric yelp about the dark night of his soul. We cracked each other up as well with the lugubrious language we brought

to bear on the loudest and flashiest examples of a technologized popular culture.

"Listen to tunes at my place," I said, "tool around the beach, maybe, get a bottle and some smoke..." I either reached for a Marlboro from a pack that was crushed being crammed pocket to pocket or lit a Virginia Slim I appropriated from one of my mom's unattended packs or, being without cigarettes at all, stooped to bumming a menthol from Steve.

Steve smirked again, laid an arm over a stack of record albums he'd



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brought to school that day so we could trade discs he was lending me Pharoah Sanders and King Crimson and I was offering him Mountain and the MC5and took a look around the Mesa College cafeteria where we sat in the middle of a muggy afternoon in late spring, which I remember vaguely being in 1973, month unknown

The cafeteria was large, drab, and drafty as an air plane hangar, filled with folding tables, bent, ripped chairs, and chain-smoking commuter students who scrutinized their notes from class amid legal pads and bits of shredded Styrofoam cups that littered the scarred tableton as homework deadlines neared. There was always a bus station qual ity of commotion going on, which suited us fine, seated at what we considered our "usual" table, laying waste to the false gods of the world while a blur of rushing humanity came and went, speaking of finals and big-

ger paychecks. We, in turn, attended to our business of exchang ing our albums, editoria izing about particular artists

I remember handing Steve a copy of Truth by the Jeff Beck Group and going off on a tirade.

"You tell me, give a listen," I said. "This is the framework for what became Led Zeppelin. I mean, listen to the way Stewart's voice hits those fucking high notes and the way Beck matches him before blast ing the thing to bits with some scrambled guitar. Lis ten to 'Let Me Love You' on this and then slap on 'Heartbreaker' on Led Zeppelin II and tell me that Jimmy Page didn't steal Beck's idea."

Steve, I think, scratched his mustache and slumped in the chair, scanning the cafeteria as dozens of students suddenly seemed to rise from their chairs and hurry out the door to an awaiting lecture or a job they had to get to.

"I ain't disagreeing," he said, lifting himself a little in his seat. "I mean, yeah, l see where Page might have copped some of Beck's ideas and shit, but they were both in the Yardbirds, and I think it's hard to say at that point who really came up with the basic blues-into-hard-

named School Paper with rock thing first," Steve would pause, tap the album, make column inches of our clever a hand gesture, "but all I rock-and-roll reviews, thinl really care about is whether pieces, and sundry other these white guys can do culture-vulturine. We discovered that we both liked something with the blue they say they love to play, and the same rock writers, if not all I care about is whether the same bands, and our they get the heat to the mutual intention was to make the eight-page "Say what?" Another biweekly into a West Coast

"All I care is whether they can play the shit outta their guitar. If they can't do something like that, it's all

meat.

Esmedina-ism.

academic "Well, yeah..."

"Hell yeah..." I picked up a copy of King Crimson's In the Court of the Crimson King and slipped the disc from the iacket. I groaned because the surface of the vinyl was scarred and scratched.

"Esmo, you are a slob." Steve spoke like a consoling priest.

he asked, barely suppress-ing his laughter. His shoul-

hammered story ideas with the usual cadre of Mesa Col lege music intelligentsia and hard-rock elitists. He referred to the Voice critic whom his print pals called the Dean of American Rock Critics. I'd been printed in the Reader, with some wandering and finally gas-bag gish reviews, a few month before Steve debuted in these pages, and he insisted

"What troubles you?"

After Steve had established his voice and his eminence as a San Diego music critic, he and I stopped talking to each other as much as we once had.

ders shook with this compressed glee.

I held the album up, Exhibit A. "You should take better care of these things, man. This is gonna fuck up my needle." "You didn't request that

the record be pristine." "Ah c'mon," I said, "you just oughta take care of your albums better, that's all."

"I don't let my posses sions possess me," he said, another phrase that resounded in our converations for the decades that followed

We exchanged our records, traded insults, talked about what an asshole bigleague critics Lester Bang or Robert Christgau had

I'd met Steve at Mesa College when we'd both signed up for Andrew Makarushka's journalism class where we had our own little shock of recognition as we realized our shared obsession with music and music writing and our abject desire to fill the sublimel

dingly as long as we knew

each other. I tried to return the favor and said he could be the Greil Marcus of So Cal, but I remember Steve shrugging, not looking at all interested in being the San Diego version of any writer he admired. Still not getting it. I asked who he wanted to be. Steve, who was not tal and was a tad portly, patted

his stomach. "Blubbo," he said. "I am Blubbo.

When we weren't in the journalism room banging away at typewriters or, by some fluke, actually lay ing out pages for an impend ing issue, we set up shop at our table in the cafeteria, talking about music, women, and then the rest of the world, a haze of cigarette smoke abutting a jagging caffeine buzz. And, nearly each time, I'd asked Steve if wanted to hang out in my neck of the woods

"Nah." he'd say to my



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sterilizes my mind."

genius he felt privileged to I gave the same invi witness. Like the musicians tation for the first few he admired, he wanted to "get it right," in his deft years I knew him, and each time Steve gave the same prose, in the knifelike sharpness of his sentences where response, with some juicier variations interspersed he considered and conveyed from time to time. I made the terms and power of the the phrase my own and sounds, the throb and used it for years with other bristling vibration of slammusic fans and obsessed ming, visceral improvisa associates who hadn't an tions that stripped each inkling of the original conmoment to a raw nerve of text. The phrase, though, sheer sensation and made you witness all the joy and carried its intention, as there isn't much likelihood aggravation of being alive with senses. Whatever he of mistaking a sentence such as "Robert Musil ste reviewed, he made what he ilizes my mind" as a nuanced liked seem as though it matrecommendation. tered in the gravest sense.

He hadn't the time fo He and I were arguing imprecise prose that butt his house in East Sa tressed dubious art with an Diego one night about the merits of King Crimson, inoculating layer of vaporous and I had gone on the attack wanted to do was to find dismissing them as British music where the musicians aesthetes who were hood winking their audience with ooked and thrived, in those the pretense of erudition rare instances where the usually exclusive strands of nspiration and technique

clarity and poetic verve con-

joined in a sustained ecstasy

of creation, and then to

speak to these creators and

their best work in a lan-

guage that was equal to the

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and experimentation, a point Steve contested rather well. "What I know is that I may not 'understand' what these guys are up to musi cally, any more than I under stand Ornette Coleman or

Albert Avler when they pun

ish their instruments, but

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it's something that I've never heard before out of the thou sands of records I've heard, and I respect the hell out of it. It is what it is, and it does not pretend to be anything else, and does not pretend at all that listening to it will make you a better person. Fuck yeah, I'm going to talk about these guys every chance I get, I will always make a case for them...Lemmee hold a smoke, will ya, Burke?" The compromise over

where we'd hang out together was to meet at Mesa two or three times a week depending on the number of classes either of us had signed up for in our shared effort to stay off the job market - an irony not lost on Steve since the campus had an architectural style that was poly as a bad haircut. "This place sterilizes my mind," he said more than once. A squirrel cage had better design value, and it's not unfair to insist tha the environment was soulkilling for anyone having

to live long stretches of a day in its midst. "Burke, let's go to the library," he'd say, gathering up his stack, "I wanna hear some of these jams."

This was the Cue for whoever was hanging around to head out to the campus library, where students could listen to audioreserve albums intended for music appreciation courses inside small rooms that were about as big as the phone booths you see in blackand-white movies. There were two chairs and an institutional record player bolted to the table. The tone arm was heavy, and you would swear you heard the stylus carve a hole to the other side as it dragged along the spinning disc. I was leery of more damage to my already sullied albums and

once mentioned this to Steve. "It'll save us time," he said, signing his name to a form at the library's audiovisual desk to secure an available listening room. "We can listen to both sides at the same time."

We'd cram others in there, up to five longhaired guys into a room meant for no more than three, elbowing each other in the gut and groin trying to slip albums in and out of their

sleeves as we readied the music to be sacrificed on the cruel, cold turntable.

Someone lit a cigarette and the room filled with smoke, gray and grim in dull light. The tone arm was set on the record, and the hisses, pops, and scratching terror that preceded the first notes of the first track on side one was a reassur ing sound. "Ramblin' Gamblin' Man" came on, a teenage hit by Bob Seger from my life in Detroit.

"You still think Seger is better at this kind of singing than Steve Marriott?" Steve asked. "I mean. you think he kicks his ass...

"No one better than this guy," I said, "I mean, face it, Brit belters do a good facsimile of the blues and soul and all, but Seger is from Motown - Detroit he's closer to the source, he played the same clubs, and think he's better by default...

"Well, yeah," said Steve. "I like Seger too, but not better than Marriott. The shit he did with the Small Faces, especially Ogden's Nut Gone Flake, and still later with Humble Pie, the

Rockin' the Fillmore set. doesn't sound anything like what Seger has been doing. Seger is more, more...

"More corny," said Richard, someone in our Mesa crowd who was a confirmed Anglophile, "I mean, Seger has nothing on what Marriott has already accomplished, I mean there's a world of difference that how these guys sing...'

How these guys sing is all black music anyway I said, "and Seger is better at that than these Brits who get it off of records they

Bob Seger was screaming his way through the next song, and the room filled with even more smoke when I lit one of my mom's Virginia Slims, mashed and unrecognizable from my coat pocket. Steve lit a Kool. Richard took a drag from his Camel unfiltered and shook his head

"You can't say that." he protested. "You hear a kind of music anyway you hear it, anywhere it happens, a musician has no control over that. It's what they do with it that, counts, that,

"Put on Jethro Tull," someone else said. "I wanna play some Thick as a Brick.

"Ah," said Steve, "an old controversy that won't go away, the album as work of-High-Art." Steve's tone vas perfectly effete and dilettantish "Why don't we do some debate in the School Paper, a point-counterpoint about whether art rock is a blessing or a curse for rock music

"Put on Tull, man, l want you guys to check something out..."

"Fuck, that album sucks dick," I said, "though some parts are okay, but one album as a whole song? Dubious Jethro Tull are a terrible hand .

"Martin Barre is a great guitarist," Steve inserted, and Clive Bunker is one of the best drummers in rock. The British own rockand-roll drumming...

The tone arm came up a zipping sound filled the smoky air. Steve beat every one to the turntable and slapped on an Anthony Braxton record. Saxophone maybem filled the air, moan ing baritone notes squalling against bass and drums that sounded at the moment like a clutch of kids let loose in a hand room with big. heavy hammers.

"This motherfucker iams," Steve said. "Put Seger back on," I

said. Steve waved me off. "Burke, I think you

ought to write up the nav side of our art-rock debate. Talk about Seger all you want..

"Mavbe..."

"Maybe, shit, do it..." "Okay, okay, but let's play some Mountain. Take this shit off..."

"Put Tull on. I want to show you something in the lyric sheet when Anderson says what the point of it all is, just when the drums come down and the guitar goes Irish/Scottish...

"Burke," Steve said, "you got your harmonica on

handed it back to me.

"That was my 'free' improvisational interpretation on 'The Work Song' he said. "Whereas T. Navin Burke, as a player, is an impressive formalist in his ability to interpret faithfully the intention of a composer's notation, I much prefer to use the melody as only suggestions of where to ven-

"Yeah..."

Band harmonica from my

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texture as a creation com beauty."

"Let me see it for a second. I feel a jam coming I pulled a crusty Marine

coat and gave it to Steve, who put it to his lips and banged out a rotten version of "The Work Song" by the Butterfield Blues Band, It was a harmonica showpiece I'd been playing for a few years at that point, and Steve liked to blast away on one of my harps when he had experimental jazz tearing up the air around him. He

ture on a sortie and view each tangent and ruinous ing from another kind of Braxton made growl

ing sounds through his mouthpiece as Steve and I laughed and Richard and the fourth guy left the room for the classrooms and day iobs that awaited them. A noticeable stream of smoke rushed out the door with

them. "T. Navin Burke" was how I signed my articles in the School Paper for a while, in a young man's effort to seem smarter and graver. and this throat-clearing appellation amused Steve for years. He called me T. Navin Burke in referring to the staff box of the imaginary music journal we wanted to start and kept it alive as an in-joke. Still other times, it was out of the blue unexpected, a tap on the

shoulder. After Steve had estab lished his voice and his emi nence as a San Diego music critic, he and I stopped talk ing to each other as much as we once had. Our lives diverged, with mine con-

sisting of sobering up and learning how to do most things over again after the years it took me to foul up matters with a cruel demanding thirst. I still read Steve's column, and there was one I read with inter est because the photograph was of blues harmonica player Charlie Musselwhite, a particular favorite of mine who'd been a large influence on my own playing.

Steve, essaying forth on Musselwhite's impor tance as a blues harmonica innovator, changed course in the last couple of lines in his piece and wrote, basi cally, that Musselwhite's time had passed and that the job of brilliant har monica work belonged to younger players such as T. Navin Burke.

"I figured it was a good way to get you to call my ass," he said on the phone "I mean, you're busy and shit, but c'mon, gimmee a call, Burke."

So I called him, picking up again on the habit of get ting him on the phone in the late night and talking for hours, thousands of hours, for the better part of three decades, into the distance, it seemed, of the following morning, with the TV on sound off on my end, Steve on the other end of the phone line playing blistering bebop or a solo disc by a P Funk bassist. The subject matter was the same as it had been when we first met in Makarushka's class music, music writers, women current and past loves, movies, literature, literature literature, always literature and the need for writers to

themselves and get the heat to the meat, the motion in "How's the poetry?" he'd ask.

get off their inflated sense of

"Fine," I'd say, "wanna hear a new piece?" I'd hear crumbling

the emotion.

paper on the other end Sure," he'd say, "although I'd rather be reading you crucify a phony art-mon gering poseur, because that's where your best shit flies.

"Well, yeah, but that was something I did, and

"Well, okay, read me a poem. But you have to start writing prose again... Steve nagged me every

chance he could about writing reviews again, even though I'd made a deluded decision at the time that I would commit my writing life to creating my own art, not assessing someone else's. Steve had an answer for this: Bullshit," and after I'd railed at him about the importance of my being connected to my work as a means of processing my experience of the world and a host of other egocentric rational izations I'd been seduced by, Steve would say "Bullshit, motherfucker," and would bring up Henry Miller, Norman Mailer, and Carlos Fuentes, forging a conversational trail that passed through the city at night, two guys yakking up a giddy philosophy amid the static of stars and salt air. I miss the talks.

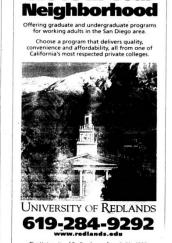
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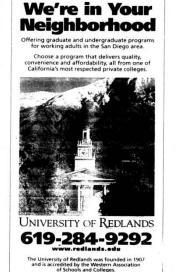
Ted Burke wrote music reviews and features for the Reader during the early '70s. He was included in the 1996 anthology Small Rain: Eight Poets from San Diego, pub lished by D.G. Wills Books. He works currently at War wicks in La Jolla.



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Friends Forever

Steve Esmedina had the biggest head I had ever seen on a human being. He also had the biggest heart — one that became more corroded over time,

leaking pain and despair. The droll demeanor, the sniping wit, the cacophony

of demolition that was Bighead grew weaker and nastier, his huge heart awash

with some temperamental toxin. I think he was more afraid of not making it as a writer than he was afraid of dying.

That big head of his was filled with ideas. But it was also teeming with bitterness. He knew he had talent, but his anger prevented him from cultivating his abilities. He could write

fascinating pieces, concisely analyzing the arcane dynamics of his favorite jazz artists or running wild with praise for the movie directors he worshipped. We his caustic nature left you wondering ining if Steve was really serious or simply stopofing. That bitterness was the seed form of his own demise and laid waste to write a beautiful, raw talent.



I remember visiting Steve at his Logan Heights home in the early '80s. He was a mess. I hadn't seen him for a year or so, having been away at college. We corresponded, but the letters were infrequent. I had no idea how ill Steve had become. No longer was he the rotund raconteur in the thrift-store blazer, his prematurely gray hair chopped into an anti-fashion style, his impish eyes glowing. Now he was sickly and shrunken and pale. I hugged him and cried, frightened by his closeness to death. Those who had been around him then, who knew his habits, mocked me. Their sympathies had run dry long ago.

When I enrolled in journalism classes at Mesa College in 1973, Steve was already ensconced as a music critic for the school paper.

Our paths first crossed ten years earlier. When I enrolled in journalism classes at Mesa College in 1973, Steve was already ensconced as a music critic for the school paper. Hoping to get onto the staff myself, I submitted a stuffy review of the latest Jethro Tull album. Steve found my Englishmajorey prose stilted and silly, but I landed a spot on the staff nonetheless. Not versed in the terse, trendy style of Steve's favorite music critics, I was denied a role writing album reviews. Instead, I was given the position no one wanted: city editor. On one slow news day, Steve suggested we create our own news. He convinced another





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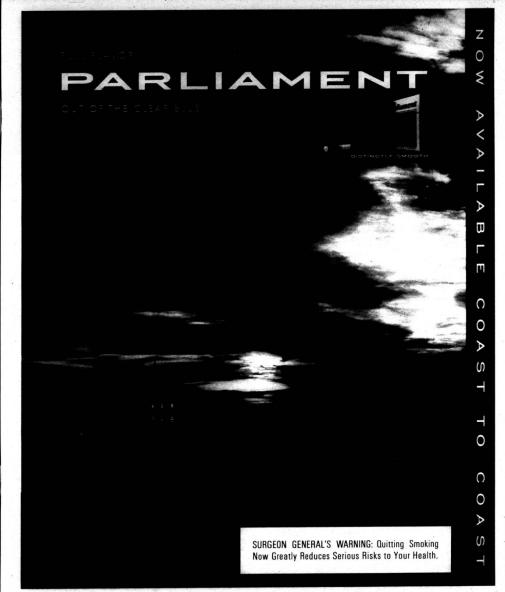
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zullible staff member to run across campus naked, from one restroom to another We had an instant streaking story for the front page.

On another oc we received a review copy of a new Lou Reed LP, Rock tening booth in the Mesa College library, we rocked out, cranked it up, and spouted lines for a review of this, the greatest rock album of all time. All in the sterfacility. Steve had chesen Mesa partially because of with "white dudes." City College was closer to his home, but something about the suburban blankness of Kearny Mesa was much more appealing to him.

King Crimson was one of Steve's favorites, and in between classes at Mesa he ed me to borrow their latest LP. At home, I scratched the vinyl on the turntable of my ancient stereo, and I replaced the album with a w one. Those who knew Steve better than I laughed and shook their heads. No one abused his records more than Steve Scratches and gouges were simply "alternate percussion," he liked to say. When I first visited Steve's house, which he shared with his mother and an ever-changing cast of relatives and hangers-on, I was treated to the sight of his stacks of naked vinyl and empty record jackets sur-rounded by empties and

Steve could write. Back dothes and fast-food residue At the forefront were his then, his work was published regularly in both the stalwarts: raunchy Redd Foxx, Blowfly, and Rudy Mesa paper and in the Ray Moore. His passion appeared to be jazz, but fecund, and his ability to much of his time was spent turn ornate phrases was traveling back alleys and disdain infected much of dark corners, avoiding groups who were popular and seeking out the new, what he wrote, and it was an act of conscious restraint on his part to keep that negthe unknown, the future stars, always dipping in and out of the shadows, just out ativity in check when crank ing out music and movie of reach. In those days, the reviews. He was not comfirst thing we did when vispletely successful, and his iting someone's home for eputation as a cranky critic grew. He took delight in the the first time was dig through the records. The tag line e letters he received, writwas: You can learn an awful ten by music fans whose lot about people from the sacred cows were sliced at Steve's hands. kind of music they listen to. Deadlines for Steve wen of the music I like does this guy like? Anything outside

always someone else's problem. His ire colored his pero cancel out his irresp sibility. He felt he was destined for something larger Fame. Fortune. White girls. We were certain that writing infamy was immi-

learn much more about someone by the way he treats Steve's disregard for the nent, and, as dumb as we ndition of his LPs manwere, we still knew we had ifested itself in other areas to write something big or go nowhere. After meeting a of his life. In those days, we liked to drink, and we drank like idiots. Even though we to a Mesa College film class. didn't need the money that Steve and I decided to write badly, we still sold our blood a screenplay. Now that we downtown, had our fill of had this Hollywood conthe free donuts and orange nection, we were going to go juice, and then went out for the gold. The plan was for us to write constantly drinking in dingy bars south together. I moved into Steve's of Broadway. We fancied ourselves junior Charles house in Shelltown for a Bukowskis, depraved, dragfew weeks, and the result was a slim sketch we named from dive to dive, always Blood Boredom. It was all about gangs before gangs ending where we started:

foul language and violence. Sam Peckinpah was a hero of Steve's, and from him we borrowed the blood. Martin Scorcese's film Mean Streets was another of Steve's touchstones, and we drew blood from that source as well. The boredom was generated from our clumsy neophyte screenwriter prose and not from the angst our characters were supposed to embody. We even had the thing bound with a hard cover. The pages now are vellow, but the attitude remains. The characters speak with anger and vengeance and disdain. The dialogue is common. The plot is thin. And the main character dies a senseless

violent death.

We received a rejection letter from the movie producer in September of 1974. By that time, I was going to school in San Francisco and Steve was studying at UCSD. Steve wrote to me frequently. keeping the screenplay dream alive. The rejection was typed on stationery from one of the producer's biggest successes. The Last Detail. As rejection letters go, this one was kind and personal. Genuine advice was given, and receiving this letter was taken as a success in itself. A real producer was writing to us. two unknown, unproven, grandiose talents from America's Finest City. He told us, "I have read Blood Boredom after holding your screenplay for an insultingly long time. My apologies. Real talent, such as yours, would selling a screenp have saved or changed Steve's something more immedi

ate. He wrote to me in the fall of 1974, "The point I'm

trying to make is that I really

think 19th-century Amer

ican writing, which is thrown

in my face as God-like, is

really pompous and over

weight and BORING!!!

Modern writing, especiall

Latin-American, strike

notes in me that I never

thought existed. When I

read a line like: 'One of my

weaknesses is gossipology, although I'd add in my

defense that only certain

superior forms of gossip,

interest for me, I CREAM!!!!

That was from Cortazar.

These guys know what it

means to feel superior/infe-

rior with everyone you know

of the educated mind. They

know that smugness is deadly. So they gnaw at their

sense of accomplishment.

their own smugness in a

way that might be taken as

a wee bit 'smug,' They real

ize the contradictions, the

obsessions, the repetitions,

the futility of ponderance

and yet they ponder, they

repeat, they are obsessed

they contradict. They move

on and stay in the same

place LIKE US!!!! I don't

care what the 'scholars' think

They should build a time

machine and go back to the

periods they love so much

and leave modern art to

such as history, hold an

The next month, Steve wrote to tell me he was still reworking Blood Boredom. place, he closed the letter saying, "Next week I'm going to send you the first com pleted draft of Sangria de Mi Barrio, the new title of BB. I figure if we make it sound really ethnic and provincial then some asshole humanitarianly inclined Hollywoodian will think he's got a new genre on his

I took a souvenir from that collaboration episode. Steve was forever collect ing items from thrift shops Part of his treasure included a bound set of Catholic prayerbooks and a matching catechism. He sensed my curiosity and gave the books to me as a gift. I was not sure what it was all about. since way back then I was not yet a Catholic. Steve tried to enlighten me, and I realized that he was fight ing the church, also. So many battles he waged; collec tively these struggles destroyed him. He always placed himself on the periphery. The spite he held for those not like himself was tangible, and it kept him anchored outside. But beneath so much scathing attitude was that messy, yearning heart of his.

He fought other instimodern minds. End of tutions as well. In literature lecture." courses at UCSD, he strug ing on the screenplay, and ings. His mind demanded



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the current sphere of cool

was anathema at worst and

material for derision at the

very least. And you can also

his music collection.



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DR. NICK SELBY,

8 DR. TED MECKLENBORG, or

thoughts on his desire to become a writer. I was study ing journalism and creativ writing at San Francisco State, and he was immersed in literature at UCSD. M letters to Steve were soaked in wine; his were driven by beer and adorned with espairing return addresses From one marked "Ennui

Associates," Steve wrote, "Have you ever wondered about my propensity for pseudo-self-effacing selfpity? Don't mind me. It's my way of maintaining a semblance of rationality about the ridiculous, fucked up entanglements of this life which doesn't even belong to me vet. Do you remember the first time you thought, 'Gosh, I wanna be a facile writer someday? I do. It was cold, darkness, all black. Here is the crux of my dilemma: I can see things clearly but am afraid to apply them to my art That's why I waste time writing criticism. I can perceive but not conceive. Oh, the

shame of it all!!!" And as that hig head churned, Steve craved love. He disguised that desire in his letters among raunchy bellowing and pretend misogyny. Later that fall, he sighed, "Perhaps it's just me. How can I expect a 'meaningful relationship' with a oman in these days and nights of liberated libidos? I am not needed. But then again, I must learn to shelve my undue cynicism. Maybe that's what's keeping me rom realizing my sundry dreams. If I'm so intelligent

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then how come no woman loves me? Can a person control his life? Can he chart the course? Is there hope? A few days later, he wrote again, avoiding the subject of women entirely. But he still reflected on his future. Critic, writer, and ultimately, he said, "Yes, I dream of being a film director day in and day out."

So ironic, this whole sad business Steve wanted to be loved, he wanted to be esteemed. He pursued those things that lead to notoriety or fame. And the hope was always there, for the name alone, to attract women - not necessarily the man behind the name. How we stumbled and shouted and chastised the world for being unfair, all the while drinking ourselves comatose to squelch the pain. Heads and hearts disjointed, unformed, askew. Yet in the midst of thi

emotional chaos, it appeared that Steve also craved sub stance. And meaning. His letters are abundant with dismissals of the mundane and the hypocritical. As punctuation to his ram bling eviscerations of music movies, and relationships. Steve offered focused state ments attached to clear examples that appeared to stand for things he truly believed in, things he felt were worthy and honorable. In December of 1974, he wrote me about a childhood friend who recently joined MeCHA. Steve always struggled with identity, for ever self-deprecating, for-

ever vacillating, forever unsure of politics. He used his mixed-blood Filipino/Mexican status to justify sitting on the fence or standing off to the side. The MeCHA group was going to confront the Mesa College cafeteria staff, and Steve's friend asked him to cover the event for the school paper. Afterward, Steve unloa "I feel weird," he wrote. "On one hand. I must admit that this farmworkers' cause is a good, humane one, but on the other hand I IIIST DON'T GIVE A FUCK!!! We don't exist in a climate that is especially conducive to political blood-brotherism. And the ethnic reification process truly annoys me. Why am I a 'Tio Taco if I choose the kind of wine or beer or lettuce I want to? Why should I care? What if I decided to be like Jean Genet and give my life over to bigger causes...would

my 'peeeple' not call me names, ridicule me...isn't 'La Raza' just another equiv alent to 'My Country 'Tis of Thee? What is this shit? Am I just a selfish bastard Is my reactionism justified? As far as I'm concerned, the biggest joke about this country is that everyone gets to have it their way...don't like waving a red, white, and blue flag?...then go wave a red, green, and white one and feel real, real good. Then go stop buying Gallo vine...buy Annie Green Springs, and feel real good."

And the following week he zeroed in on more essen tials: "You must read Yukio

Mishima's Spring Snow. The guy knew how to die, which much more important than knowing how to live You see, he created a body of art that was completely his; then, by adhering to some ridiculous Samurai Bushido code, he killed him self. Great! That way it sounds like he was MAKING A STATEMENT instead o just copping out. Brilliant strategy. Maybe Mama Cass deliberately got to be a fat pork-chop boar to make a statement on how obesity causes heart attacks, even in the most famous fatsos. Many times it was difficul to tell when Steve was seri ous and when he was fool ing. Occasionally, he would send me terse concert review of bands he knew I liked. later to inform me that he had never actually attended the shows. It was a curious mix of not wanting to hurt my feelings along with stabs of envy. It all issued from his wounded heart.

broken, and he was using a pay machine at the univer That heart eventually sity that was fueled by quar got him the girl. By the ters. When his money rai spring of 1975, Steve was out he finished the letter in longhand. "I read some writing frequently about his love affair with Gail of Gail's poetry the othe She was white, from the night," he said, "Not bad, It alien realm of Mission Vilwas intelligible and there lage, young, beautiful were a couple of good lines like, 'Cab driver / drop me and - gauging from Steve's epistles - thoroughly taken off at the asylum 'round the by him. His brooding and corner / I just went insane bitterness were toned down I still think poetry is prose After a lengthy lament in search of punctuation about a former girlfriend and verbs, but Gail has more he wrote, "But who cares on the ball than I ever could I have Gail, Sweet, lovely, have considered possible. moody-as-hell Gail, Every-He still talked about the thing I dreamed of and screenplay revision, and more...more hassles, more always he touched on liter-

ature, film, and music, drop plaints of ingratitude. She's going to go on the pill for me, and I have been made to feel as if it is a magnar imous sacrifice unparal leled. To which I replied...I can always use Trojans...not good enough...only 80% effective. So what does she want me to do...cut my balls off? I appreciate everything she does for me, I low

her dearly. I respect her per-

spicacity...but dues-pay

ing went out with the Cub

Scouts for me." The new

domesticity in his voice was

tempered, though, by that

letter's concluding sentence:

"I am becoming more skep-

tical, more mistrusting, more

boring and boorish every

day. Where will I be in five

years? Hell, five months!

Fuck! Five days...min-

In late winter of 1974.

Steve wrote me from UCSD.

His typewriter at home wa

utes...seconds...

I would die any vear now: a semi-fever is basking my sick by tonight.... I guess it's my fault as I slept with the window open all night and you know how cold cold cold it's freezin' in this hotel...accidental suicide someday? Maybe." Later, in the same plaintive missive Steve asks, "Can vitamin C help a wounded heart? I feel shitty in every sense of the word. I think I'm going to start taking care of myself from now on...methodicalize my roles as a humar being while still leasing this lemon called life...(excuse me)." He followed with lyrics from his all-time favorite. Bryan Ferry, the former Roxy Music front man "With every goddess a bed down / every idol a bring down / it gets you down / but the search for perfec tion / your own predilec tion / goes on and on and

to enter the service. Steve was the only friend who

ping names and ripping his way through culture with rusty scissors. When all was shredded, there stood Steve searching for something acceptable, something mean ingful, something worth hi while. And the object of that search was forever elusive A letter from the following spring contains sad ironies. He laments, "This morning I woke up with a throbbing in my gullet and

the certain knowledge that body, and I'm sure I'll be

That summer. I was set

ing a grave error. He was still attending UCSD, but more out of habit than any thing. In April of 1975, he wrote, "School is boring. The people at UCSD are despairing to habitate amongst. If success doesn't arrive soon I have severa options: (1) Join an insti tution that will provide ready steady work, like you; (2) Get a menial job and sign myself to mediocrity (3) Become an alcoholic or drug addict thereby pro viding everyone with a reasonable excuse as to my downfall; (4) Invest in a

were several cop cars there already. Apparently, they had been chasing this guy for a while. The guy's car bottle of Sleep-eze." The sad ironies con was squashed into one huge scrap heap. Strewn across tinue in his next letter, two weeks later. After describing the road we saw the guy's his aimless, irritating activ head smashed up as well as ities at a party, during which his bloody torso and severed limbs. After we had he drunkenly disparaged been there for about ten most everyone he encoun tered. Steve added, "Any minutes many cars started to pile up, and the audience way. Gail got extreeeeeemeh pissed off at me even to the grew to sidewalk capacity point of telling me 'GET What surprises me is that I THE FUCK AWAY FROM was hardly affected by the ME YOU INSANE BASsight of death in my pres TARD!' Wow! I felt like comence. I wonder - am I jaded mitting myself. Of course beyond hope, or am I near-I guess I asked for it." The ing total apathy about life? The pole, by the way, didn't rest of the letter was devoted to film: short reviews, paean: even have a dent in it. Ov to Tobe Hooper and Dirk vev...high-life ecstasy?" The ruminations wound on, and Bogarde, analyses of the then he focused on his love directing styles of Schlessinger, Polanski, and life "On this side of heartbreak," he said, "I believe I Arthur Penn, But he slipped in strange digressions, reflect am nearing the penultimate ing on a year-old tarot-card stretch with Gail. It's just a prediction and declaring a feeling, mind you, but she appears to be rapidly tiring new substance-abuse strategy. "I hate alcohol," he said. of me. Either that, or she is "I think I'll just go back to just merely used to me. I would pray that I am sim sniffing lacquer. I never fucked up when I sniffed ply imagining things, but I paint. It just zonked you don't have the energy. I think out." He jumped back into I am a fair approximation cinema and deposited this of a washout-with-women I am a nice change of haunting interlude: "San Diego's dearth of a movie pace...a surprise...an exotic scene is killing me. Most of dessert...good for a month the new movies I've seen or two and then easily dis this year have been shit or ephemeral gloss. How can I wait two more months to see The Passenger or Day of the Locust? The arid climate for arts.... I mean, LIVING

art, not canvassed cadavers...proves that San Diego

is as worthless as Cincin-

nati or Butte or Providence or Taos....think of dying in

San Diego, What a legacy, I'd

rather die anywhere else but

here. That will be the ulti

mate test of success or fail-

tain fewer references to musi

and movies and more and more commentaries on

Soon his letters con

ure for me."

posable. Booo Hoooooooo Please, God. whoever you are, don't let her dump me...who else will pump me...??" He concluded with a series of gossipy one-liners before his quarter ran out and the typewriter clicked off. In his sprawling hand, Steve wrote a postscript: "In the next bulletin I'll detail my tarot experiences. I'm doomed, according to my introductory reading.

death and fate. At the end

of April, he started off with

the description of a horrid.

fatal accident. "Life never

seemed so negligible," he

began, "nor death so

ineluctable as it did last

night. I saw a poor asshole

crash into a pole at 90 miles

an hour. Gail and I were en

route to downtown when

about half a mile up Friars

Road we saw a huge mass

of metal explode. We stopped

to investigate as all self-serv-

ing meteches would. There

Ultimately, the head/ heart dynamic spun out of orbit. Visceral breakdowns were on the horizon. Esoph agus, liver, organic destruc tion. The letters never var ied in their themes. Over and over...music, books movies women Presented with dark highlights, exaggeration, bleak stretches mbroidered with anger and frustration, filigreed with sourness. A few months later, he wrote me overseas "I, too, have been drinking a lot. At the beginning of this month I decided to put all my empties in a big box to see how many I could collect in a month. I've got three six packs of Olde English four yorks bottles two Thunderbird bottles and a bottle of Plum Vel vet. Here's how it usually goes: start off depressed, go to store and buy booze and Pall Malls (my brand now), drink for a half-hour, feel great, start getting depressed again, feel sick, start over the next day. Oy vey."

It all seems so inevitable Steve was issuing fatal predictions in his letters for years. Occasionally, he spoke of turning it around, of changing his ways, of tending to his health. Mere words Spoken many times to reassure a girlfriend. Part of the script. Buying a little time

Even the last scene of Blood edom etched out the confines of his vision, as eerily as a prediction from the thrift-shop copy of Nostradamus that lay near melted candles and urinefilled 40-ounce beer bottle lined up next to Steve's bed Kiki, the hero of the screenplay, is driven into a corner. In the barrio there are no options, and violence is a daily inevitability. The plot is as trite as Steve's life was tragic. The last scene:

Three vatos pounce on Kik while he is running. One of them pulls out a knife and stabs Kiki several times. Kiki falls to the ground. The vatos disappear into the crowd.

Medium-close shot of Kiki lying on the floor, eyes open. His mouth is twisted

Fade slowly.

Steve would have loved the bound by attitude, would story to end here, on a grim not allow him to speak otherwise. His letters were ridnote. But he deserves better. He would deny this, dled with bravado and boast. opting instead for the and he spent years crafting grotesque, the violent, the a persona that defied penabsurd. But he deserves etration. Even when he typed better. Yes. The ineluctable on his new typewriter in ness of death. Always a fasred all-capital letters, "I WILL BE YOUR FRIEND cination for Steve. In how FOREVER," it was certain many cinematic episodes, sitting in darkened theaters that his crafty head, shaded or protected by the clovby some diabolical purpose. ing comfort of his living would compromise that room, did he study scenes sentiment eventually. Bu of violence with dispasthe heart was still there. signate approval? So many struggling to flicker and movies, so many slow shine, as Steve waited for motion ballets of murder the success that eluded him. and vengeance and gratuwaiting and fading. Gooditous destruction. It all started bve, Bighead. after seeing Ben Hur, "The – David Zielinski greatest movie of all time!'

David Zielinski wrote for the Reader in the early '90s: he teaches composition and literature at Imperial Valley College.



he said time and again. The

critic. Blubbo passing judg-

ment again. He was wrong

about the negligibility of

life. His tortured heart,

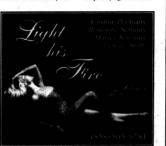


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Stumble, Stumble, Thump, **Crash**

Mullin is editor of the Miami New Times. He held the same position at the Reader from 1977 to 1986

"I remember exactly when I met Steve. It was at the annual Reader Christmas party in 1976, at the old location of the Athens Market restaurant. That was when they announced that I was the new editor for the paper. I remember that there was one writer at the party that I sought out and two writers who sought me out. Immediately after the announcement was made, I was rushed by Steve and George Varga. They cornered me and absolutely bombarded me with questions about music, what I thought about music, music stories, the paper's music coverage... They fired all kinds of questions at me.

"Steve was already working for the paper then, so I had read his stories and was familiar with his work. The story of his that really affected me it still sticks in my mind after all this time — was a piece he had done about his high school graduation. It was very funny and so disrespectful, but at the same time it had so much heart and warmth in it. It was a wonderful story. So when I became editor, I already knew these things about him.

"One of the things I liked best about Steve was that as a reviewer, he would take strong stands and express strong opinions. It's surprising, but that's not something all reviewers will do. It can be a problem, getting a reviewer to take a definite stand on something. But not with Steve. And his taste in music was very broad.

"As quiet and shy as he could be sometimes, he could also get into these huge shouting arguments about music or about almost anything else. He had strong opinions, and he really didn't care what anybody else thought. If you disagreed with him, well, you were just wrong,"

For a variety of reasons, most of them self-generated, Steve was notoriously bad at meeting copy deadlines. For several years he lived in a downtown apartment on Ninth Avenue, directly above Jim. Those times when Steve's deadline would come and go, Jim would take out a broom and bang the handle on his ceiling until the story finally appeared.

"It was a little frightening living downstairs from him. When he'd drink, I'd hear him up there. It would be quiet for a long time, and then I'd hear this stumble, stumble, thump, and then a crash, like a body hitting the floor. It was really terrifying, imag ining what was going on up there. I'd rush up the stairs and start pounding on his door, practically breaking it down, to make sure he was all right.

I tell you, it was honestly frightening.



As valuable as Steve's contributions to the paper were, Jim says, he was eventually replaced as a weekly contributor. There are limits to the patience of even the most agreeable editor. "One of my most vivid recollect

tions of living near Steve involved a woman. Not a staff member, but someone associated with the Reader, who was about 20 years Steve's senior. I came home one night, and I started to open the door to my apartment, I looked in and there was Steve locked in this make-out embrace with this woman. They were kissing, passionately entwined, her blouse was unbuttoned and in disarray, right there on my couch. This woman was 20 years older than Steve, and they were going at it in my apartment. I quietly closed the door and beat a hasty retreat. We never talked about it." .

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- Linda Nevin

Better on the **Music Page**

wo earlier endings. The drawback to asking Steve Esmedina to write a movie review

in my stead, ostensibly to give me a break, was that it would then fall to me to edit it. A drawback, first, because of his habit of testing the limits of a

deadline, and second, because the further he pushed the limits, the more he needed editing. For me, as for others in my position, it was always a question of weighing what Steve had to offer (a lot - person-

ality, pugnacity, taste, humor) against what he would exact in toll. I can't be sure what ultimately tipped the balance, but memory tells me it might have been the review of Slap Shot. Memory again must tell me, because

the printed version will not, that the opening line ran something like, Slan Shot should have been called Slap Shit." This dipped well below my journalistic standards for opening lines. Anyway, I stopped asking him. And I had no reason to repent, on other grounds, when he later committed the gaffe in print of mistaking the British pop star Samantha Fox and the American porn star Samantha Fox for one and the same person. (The Foxes looked nothing alike, even from the neck down. Better on the music page, I would have said, than on the movie page.

Somewhere in that span of time, my working conditions at the paper improved greatly (while my need for substitute reviewers diminished) when I no longer, all by my lonesome, had to gather the weekly info of which movies were playing at which theaters. I now was afforded an assistant. Esmo became the first to hold that post, despite his patent unsuitedness to it. An agreeable phone manner, for talking to total strangers sometimes uncooperative or rude ones, was the primary requirement. Esmo's phone manner, to the contrary,

For all his barrio slang, his attachment to the seedy and seamy, and (in later years) his surrounding cloud of eau-derotgut, there was a sweetness about Steve, and a shyness, and a sensitivity.

was so hugger-mugger that I could be sitting four feet away when he was talking and could not make out a single word. For all I could tell, he might have been laying fifty on a pony. This was the time I knew him best, when we would have the chance to talk during work, occasionally have dinner or drinks afterwards. (I couldn't share his enthusiasm for

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the hospital. That turned into a late, late night. Shortly thereafter, or maybe shortly before, he had had to be fished out of a swimming

If specific memories



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pool, floating face-down. Esmo had problems, Some one more dependable took

of him gravitate to rough spots, my general feelings gravitate illogically toward armth. For all his barrio slang, his attachment to the seedy and seamy, and (in later years) his surrounding cloud of eau-derotgut, there was a sweetness about Steve, and a shy ness, and a sensitivity. He would not thank me for saying so, but he might chuckle. He chuckled often He had a gift - along with his other gifts — for making his colleagues want to encourage him, help him, save him. (I saw close at hand how hard his onetime editor, Jim Mullin.

tried.) He had a greater gift for self-destruction.

The final ending did not come as a shock. Some months before, I had heard he was at death's door, in need of a new liver. I mobilized myself to visit. But when I spoke to him first on the phone, the crisis seemed already to have passed. He just needed to ake better care of himself. He would bounce back. I postponed my visit. I lost

- Duncan Shepherd

Duncan Shepherd has been the Reader's movie reviewer since 1972.

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Blubbo's WORLD

Last Ride

never asked Steve Esmedina why he didn't drive a car. Except when he rode in mine. I don't recall even seeing Steve Esmedina in a car. He would just show

up. At the stadium. At the Belly Up. Downtown. I never questioned him because

I didn't want him to feel that he couldn't call anytime and talk to me like this:

ESMO: Hey, ése. It's Blubbo. PH: I can tell

ESMO: We're workin' tonight, right? RH: Right.

FSMO: OK I know you white boys don't like to come down here to the ghetto, so I'm not going to ask you to pick me up. I think I can get to the gig. But if I can't get back, can you bring me at least part of the way?

RH: Part of the way? ESMO: Yeah, Maybe, like, to Tower Records or something. I think my brother can meet me there.

RH: We'll work it out, Esmo. Don't worry about it.

Flat out, I liked Steve Esmedina. He was witty, obnoxious, intelligent, stupid, provocative, and kind. Favorite singer: Tom Jones. Pet peeve: Being rec-

ognized in public. He drank too much. asked too little, died too young. If he knew you were coming, he might clean his room. And sooner or later, he would get around to telling the truth.

I met Esmedina in the spring of 1977, shortly after taking an advertising job at the San Diego Reader. Esmedina was a music writer there. We discovered a common interest — dredging pop music's trivia slew for obscure facts — and appreciated each other's ability to recall this useless information. We created a game to channel this effort. It could be instigated with something as simple as the pointing of a finger during the workday ("Who was the lead singer of the Beau Brum-mels?""Uh...Sal Valentino!") or carried out in lengthier sessions at house

were two Steve Esmedinas. You might encounter the laid-back "Blubbo" sloppy, crass, ready to laugh, usually funny, sometimes not. If he thought your girlfriend had a nice ass, he might just say so, leaving you to sort out whether or not the comment was something to laugh about.

But then Blubbo would focus especially when guided by the written word — to the brink of eloquence, where his opinionated prose was delivered with disarming clarity. It was hard to figure how one set of characteristics begot the other. I was caught off guard at times, even embarrassed, by Esmo's free-swinging approach,

but his honesty bore a wicked charm. "I hated his reviews," says local musician Chris Sullivan, whose hand struggled for attention in San Diego during the late '70s. As bassist for the Penetrators, Sullivan recalls chiding

SEADER Two Dollar Tour parties and beer hars Over time. I came to believe there

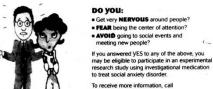
Top: Chris Davies bottom: San Dieso Reader, October 18, 1979

Esmedina in letters to the editor, urging him to explore the fledgling punk/new wave scene gaining momentum in local clubs.

"Esmedina was playing it safe in those days, reviewing Journey, REO Speedwagon, whoever was in vogue, Sullivan says, "He liked the foppish,

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severe and can disput your normal activities. It may be located on one side of your head and feel as though it is "throbbing" or "pulsating." You may also experience nauses, verniting or sensitivity to light or sound.

Vigraine headaches are more common in women.

d services typically

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"He had a 'So, there' attitude," Sullivan says. "He was like. 'You've been send ing me letters at the Reader, so I'm here. Show me some thing.' We slowly won him over. I guess he saw a new approach there. Steve eventually took that extra step, and rather than just buyin off the shelf, he went to 'swap meets' and 'garage sales,' in a sense, lookin' for bands and trying to dis-

Early in 1979, Esmedina wrote in the "Reader's Guide to the Music Scene" "More than a few observers (including myself) will insist that the Penetrators upstaged the infamous Ramones las December," Later that summer, he characterized the band as a "brazen, exciting rock and roll band, with a galvanizing presence." And in October of the same year, the Penetrators hit the front page. Beneath the headline "Two Dollar Tour," Esmedina chronicled his tagalong trip with the band on a six-day junket up the

"For the last year since witnessing the Penetrators nearly upstage the Ramones in concert at San Diego State. I have tried to goad, persuade, and plead with peo ple to take seriously my estimation of them as the best San Diego rock band," Esmedina wrote in the opening "My mother urged me

to bring ample provisions, eat at least two meals a day, and stay away from drugs and liquor. Concerned female friends advised me to keep a close eye on my funds and moral virtue," he continued. There is little in anyone's recollection to suggest that Esmedina hon ored these concerns. There were tales of martini swills in Los Angeles, sleeping in the sand at Pismo Beach. and bad burritos in Sacramento

"Every time I looked at him "says Sullivan "he'd have this Peter Lorre type of smile on his face. Kind of an all-knowing guy with a little nod, smoking a cigarette.

According to Sullivan Esmedina hit the rock-androll lifestyle full stride in San Francisco.

"We were up there in North Beach with the strip shows," he recalls. "For some reason, Dan McLain [the band's drummer | knew Carol Doda, the famous burlesque queen from the '50s. She was an older gal that owned a club. I remember sitting on the street corner with her having a drink Esmo was there But when we went for the sound check he wandered off. I don't

know where he went Guitarist Chris Davies



Chris Sullivan

"There was this big deal about Esmo going to these secret places, some kind of show or something, possibly pornographic, that we wouldn't be able to handle We didn't even want to know what it was.

"When he showed up again," Sullivan says, "h had that smile on his face. I didn't pursue it."

With the Penetrators cover story. Esmedina centered himself in the local scene of "modern" rock His opinion was one to be reckoned with, if not always

respected by younger purists.

"He was the first writer from a big publication to come in and write favorably about the scene and spread it beyond just a small group of people. Attendance at the shows went way up once he started writing,

Davies says. But Esmedina was not about to become comfortable in anyone's lovefest. He bewildered the locals with frequent shots at emerging icons like Bruce Springsteen, and Davies laugh when recalling Esmedina's

RESEARCH STUDIES

willingness "to express his

itically incorrect opinion.

"He told me James Tay lor was more 'punk' than a lot of the punk rockers," he says, "I didn't know if he was jive or what. I remem ber thinking, 'If I thought that, I sure wouldn't say

Esmedina's enthusiasn for bands like the Penetra tors fueled a backlash within his readership. As the '70s became the '80s, he became the subject of constant dia tribe in local letters-to-the-"He started getting heat

because he wrote about us so much," Davies says. "There were people who didn't think we [the Penetrators] were that good, and they though there was a connection then that wasn't revealed, so they assumed it was corrupt There were punks that didn't like us or him. I think there were a lot of people who liked having that little scene to themselves." Esmedina was quickly given to his own defense and often sparred with his critics from his

weekly column "I would say more about the Penetrators," he remarked while highlight ing an upcoming show at the La Paloma Theater in February 1980, "but with all the money, gold, sex, and drugs they've given me for plugging them, I don't really need to anymore."

Fed up with the pubic squabbling, Dan McLair shot a letter to Kicks mag-azine in April 1980. "Al these crybaby letters written to Kicks and the Reader are starting to get to me," he d. "Steve Esmedina has nothing to gain by bringing attention to the Penetrators. It certainly doesn't mean that because he likes the Penetrators he's going to ignore other bands."

There was probably some jealousy there," Sullivan says now, adding that he feels letters were "contrived." "I think some o them [other bands] thought if they wrote in and attacked him, he might come and them. Steve was always some body's abuse receptacle. It didn't seem to faze him."

Esmedina's long associa tion with the Reader was divided by periods of coming and going. He would disappear from the music pages for a time, surface briefly somewhere else, then return to the forum that best suited his broadening interest in music. In 1989 I began contributing photography to his music reviews, and the eclectic signments Esmo gener ated filled my files with an array of contemporary treasures: George Clinton. The Rolling Stones. Maria McKee. Joshua Redman. Buddy Guy. Vinnie Golia. Pink Floyd. But working with Esmedina required the

it, why do you hate him so **NEBRIATE:** 'Cause he's full of shit, man! He doesn't addition of some footage like anything. He doesn't to what had always been an even like Springsteen! Can amiable friendship you imagine not liking If we did not arrive

> After the show, we would reconvene to discuss what we had seen. Again, I had to be mindful of who was around us, but now for di ferent reasons. Esmo's blood alcohol level was sometimes on the rise at this point, and he was capable of some pretty sharp edges. I recall standing in the middle of the dance floor at the Belly Up Tavern, the audienc milling toward the exit following a sold-out show by Maria McKee, When I asked for his thoughts, he rolled his eyes and blurted a list of the singer's physical on applying himself to several of them. With my eyes darting around for someone who might have taken offense, I suggested it was time to leave.

The tension Esmedina

exacerbated between himself and his public followed him everywhere, and in 1994, prior to a Rolling Stones show at Qualcomr Stadium, I may have witnessed its zenith. Esmedina and I had

together at a venue, we met

at the entrance to discuss the

evening's objectives. I learned

not to call out to him while

we stood in crowds. His

observations had offended

many over the years, and

an inadvertent slip could

draw an unruly response.

Once inside, we went sep-

arate ways. Esmo preferred

to hang back on the edge of

the crowd, squeezing a wad

of paper and pencil I rarely

saw him use. I needed t

osition myself near the

edge of the stage, usually

in front of the artist's most

ardent fans. The camera

equipment I shouldered

never failed to attract atten-

tion, and I must have had

this conversation a hun-

LOCAL NEBRIATE: Hey, you

INEBRIATE: That's cool,

man. Hey - who is that

asshole that writes that shit

in the music section? What's

RH: Esmedina. Steve

Esmerelda that he's full of

shit, man. He uses so many

big words, I can't even

understand what he's talkin

RH: Well, if you can't read

EBRIATE: Yeah, well, tell

his name? Esmerelda?

work for the Reader?

dred times:

RH: Yeah.

gone together to obtain our credentials at a media center set up by the band's management. Photographers are carefully scrutinized at events like these, and Esmo waited patiently while I received my instructions From the side I noticed a group of three or four people moving briskly toward us, and I recognized the point man as Ken Leighton, who at that time was a pub licist for the Belly Up Tay ern. Even before he stopped walking, he engaged Esmedina over a recent review of a show at the Belly Up With other media types in the area taking notice, a heated discussion erupted Esmedina stood his ground He spoke in short, clipped ntences, delivered with the funny head swing that surfaced when he was pressed. I knew both of

these guys, and I waited for

one to say something to

cool the belligerence. Finally I grabbed Esmo's arm and told him I needed to ge down to the photo area 'What the hell was that?' I asked, once out of earshot Esmedina didn't look a me, "Fuck him" was all heard.

In the years that followed, for reasons I never fully understood, Esmedina faded from the music page: and communication between us began to dissolve. There were some phone calls, mostly for laughs. Occasionally he would send over a CD that he wanted me to check out He sent me a picture of Tish Hinojosa once, with a sticky attached. He had jotted 'Your favorite Chicana" on t. Then, nothing. Last June 26, my phone rang. Oddly, it was Ken Leighton, Steve

Esmedina had passed away. Two days later, I drove to a small chapel on the grounds of a cemetery'south of Highway 94 to attend a nemorial service. Walking past a handsome portrait of Esmo placed near the entrance. I sat down at the back of the room. The crowd was small, with family members gathered in front. We listened while Mike Thomas a longtime friend, recalled his relationship with Blubbo To my left, a friend stared at the podium through sun glasses. On my right, a local musician wept openly. Thomas struggled at times and I appreciated his doing what the rest of us could

As we filed out of the room, what remains of Esmedina's immediate fam ily - four lovely sisters -

greeted each of us and made sincere efforts to discover what role we had played in their brother's life. We asked questions about Steve's final days, then listened to what we did not want to hear He had been hospitalized for much of his last year, finally uccumbing to massive liver failure. We were not

surprised. Saddened, but not surprised. Later, I drove back note of the fact that mine was the last car to leave. I have no idea what Blubbo expected to encounter after death, but evidently he got his ride. — Randy Hoffman

and headed home. I made

Randy Hoffman is a local musician, writer, and photographer and a native of San Diego, His association with the San Diego Reader dates from 1977 and continues to this day.

through the cemetery gates RESEARCH STUDIES



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In His Own Words

Excerpts from Steve Esmedina's writing in the San Diego Reader

July 12, 1973

Yes Is More Than Just a Word

The critics who have consistently maligned Yes have a hard time justifying their disdain in reasonably musical terms. Usually their criticism stems from the nebulous belief that "Yes are merely trying to show how clever and brilliant they are.'

Perhaps it is old fashioned of me, but I do not regard attempts at brilliance as distasteful, especially when they are successful. This is particularly true with Yes who are certainly rock's most sophisticated stylists.

January 8, 1976

Best of 1975 Issue

Steve Esmedina, Reader Contributor

Best Albums

- Country Life/Siren, Roxy Music Death And The Flower/The Koln Concert, Keith Jarrett
- · New York Fall. 1974/Five Pieces. Anthony Braxton
- Natty Dread, The Wailers Still Crazy After All These Years,
- Paul Simon · There's A Trumpet In My Soul,
- Archie Shepp The Last Record Album, Little Feat
- Northern Lights-Southern Cross,
- Follow My Mind, Immy Cliff
- Atlantic Crossing, Rod Stewart

- Captain Fantastic And The Brown Dirt Cowboy, Elton John
- Born To Run, Bruce Springsteen The Hissing Of Summer Lawns, Ioni Mitchell
- Man-Child, Herbie Hancock
- By Numbers, The Who
- · One Of These Nights, The Eagles

RESEARCH STUDIES

The Maytalls, Balboa Stadium I skipped them — Elton John, Jethro Tull, The Eagles

Best Concerts

McCoy Tyner, Back Door

Little Feat, Sports Arena

Mahayishnu Orchestra, Golden

• Weather Report, Civic Theatre

Joe Farrell, George Benson, Civic

I wish I had gone — Toots And

AWB/Kokomo, Sports Arena

- I should have Aerosmith Herbie Hancock, Graham Cen-

eadership Qualities

Esmedina review of Mingus concert, April 8, 1976

tral Station

- · How Could You Be Soo Good On Record And So Lousy In Concert - leff Beck, Golden Hall
- · Vice-Versa KC and The Sunshine Band, Sports Arena

Special Awards

- The Rock Criticism Finally Pays Off Award: Bruce Springsteen
- Runner-Up: Patti Smith

an Of The Year:

- · Clive Davis, President of Arichta Records
- Anyone who can have Archie Shepp, Anthony Braxton, Cecil Taylor, The Breckers, and Mal Waldron on the

Kudos to the April 8, 1976 **Balding Folkie** Leadership Qualities Since the Fifties, Charlie Mingus has remained one of the more intriguing anomalies of jazz.... Min gus and his latest quintet performed last Friday at the Back Door. The same qualities inherent in his hest records, surfaced in abundance live.... That ensemble watchfulness is probably Mingus' greatest

REVIEW

From the San Diego Reader, July 16, 1992

same label with Barry Manilow, Patti Smith, Bar City Rollers, and The Out laws is either an artistic pervert or an economic

HI II

1

half 29,

1

e Pauline Kael I've Said A Mouthful Award:

Ion Landau, the rock critic whose declaration that Bruce Springsteen was the "past, present, and future of rock and roll" got him a posi tion as Springsteen's manager, thus requiring that his beaming mug be plastered or the pages of Time, Newsweek and other periodicals.

ing The Who's Tommy, "the twentieth-century's greatest work of art" (huh?) into a two hour rococo pig sty: a fitting fate for the first

Step in The Name Of Love ward: Diana Ross, who after such a smashing debut as an actress in Lady Sings The Blues succumbed to a ranting variation of the

nd Of The Year: Disco-

decadence. At last

Muzak became a rec-

ognizable force on the

pop charts. By adding

a barely funky beat.

people such as Barry

White, Van McCoy,

MFSB, Percy Faith, and

The Silver Convention

got Muzak out of the

office and onto the

Music. The Wailers.

Archie Shepp, and

Anthony Braxton will

make their way to San

Diego: Bryan Ferry will

get his Tuxedo on the

cover of Newsweek;

Peter Townshend, Neil

Young, and Mick Jag-

ger will collaborate on

an album, Rock's No

Fun Anymore, But It's

All I Know; Talented

local bands like United

dance floor.

Maybe This Year: Roxy

The Bye-Bye Birdle Award for Subline Valgarity: 'Ken Russel, for turn-

George Wein's "Kool Jazz Festival" same role in Mahogamy The biggest obstacle was

Stadium. It is doubtful that there is any way to fully appreciate music in this Grand Canyon set ting. The nearest \$8.50 seat was situated many yards away, and even the six-screen set-up offered little relief for strained eyes As for Nancy Wilson, it's a puzzle that she was on the bill at all, for her affiliations to jazz or soul seem cosmetic at best. She sang fashionably "cool" songs like "If I Ever Lose This Heaven" and "All Is Fair In Love" with the dry ness of a Las Vegas head liner appearing on The Mery Griffin Show If Wein wants to tout her as a musician, he should team her up with Michel Legrand, Bobbi Humphrey, Donald Byrd, and Tim Weisburg and have a "Kool Schlock Festival.

July 22, 1976

States Monsters, Grace,

Horsefeathers and

Glory, Harlequin

Doomsday Water

melon will get the

widespread attention

they deserve.

talent. He has the uncanny

ability to compose and

arrange so determinedly

that each player is prepared

to overcome each other's

flaws. Although he lacked

the innovation displayed in

the recent Back Door con-

certs by Elvin Jones and

Anthony Braxton, Mingus

provided a more-than-aver

age amount of inspired musi-

cal democracy in his writing

and leadership. In this case

more-than was enough.

Medium Kool

the location — San Diego

June 24, 1976

Feel Good. Look Good, Smell Good. Be Good

The passersby, the loiterers, and the commuters standing at the bus stop Horton Plaza evangelists, not even to jeer; thus, the

shrill efforts to turn back the people flocking to hear Reverend Eikerenkoetter, better known as Rev. Ike. lecturing on "Health, Happiness, and Prosperity," fell on indifferent ears.... The success of Ike's performances, here and elsewhere in America, is evidence that he needn't be concerned with heretical or ethical dilemmas. As an entertainer, he is a peculiar sort of genius. Seeing a young lackey bring silver chalices

of water to him every 15 minutes, or hearing him tell a little girl who has given him a homemade key ring for his Rolls-Royce that he needs "six more, darling," or watching the crowd pledge hundreds of dollars to him in order to have their promise placed on his "special altar in Boston" is certainly an affecting experience. How it affects, exactly, depends on one's sense of religious propriety. But when he cli-

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Disposable Noise

The Ramones made their debut in San Diego last week at the La Paloma and the Back Door, Although the audiences seemed more than willing to accept them for what they are, the San Diego Union's rock critic, Robert Laurence, regarded them with the moral indignation usually reserved for snuff films and political terrorism. He called their material "ugly, hostile songs that exalt the violence that plagues Manhattan" ... A few minutes before they were scheduled to perform at the Back Door. The Ramones could be seen

leaving the parking lot in an old white car, deliberately causing the concert to run late. When asked how they reacted to the intense crit icism they've received, bassist Dee Dee Ramone stuck his head out the window and remarked, with the brevity of one of their songs, "If people don't like us out here, to hell with us."

April 7, 1977

Hockey Muck

In keeping with the stu pidity of Nancy Dowd's script, Slap Shot ought to be re-titled Slipshod. The thing carr easily be dismissed as a Three Stooges com edy modernized by blood nudity, and wall-to-wall obscenities. But both Dowd and director George Roy Hill obviously see it as a "metaphor" for a couple of the more frequently denounced traits of the American Way: the obsession with winning and the thirst for vicarious violence. Both of which, of course, translate into "macho."

March 2, 1978 This Week's

Concerts

Monday, the hard-rock band Nazareth headlines a show at

the Civic. Their heavy metal bashings are typical, neither better nor worse than the run of similar bands. However, their abominable lead singer Dan McCafferty screeches like a cross between Robert Plant and Lucy Ricardo. The show has slight potential in the form of sec ond-billed lay Ferguson, With Spirit and Jo Jo Gunne, Ferson maintained the image of the forever grasping, never entirely successful rock journeyman. Now that he's on his own, it remains to be seen if he's gotten any closer to rock's

March 23, 1978

READER'S **GUIDE TO THE** MUSIC SCENE

On Friday, soul singer Johnny

Taylor performs at the Slave Market. Taylor is one of the few holdovers from the Stax-Volt era who retains that style, even when flirting precariously with disco. He never was an imposing figure on the order of Otis Redding but his slick stage presence and gritty vocals coniure up memories of a gusty form of black pop music

that seems to have become

an anachronism.

June 1, 1978 Wednesday, the youngest of the almost criminally successful Gibb brothers, Andy Gibb, performs at the Sports Arena, Gibb's brother, Barry, has a midas touch and it appears to have rubbed off. The littlest Bee Gee has had three monster hits in a row. On the basis of those records, though, it's impossible to think of him as anything other than a panhandler grasping tightly to his brother's cuffs. His latest. "Shadow Dancing," sounds suspiciously like a medley of his first, "I Just Wanna Be Your Everything," his sec-

ond, "Thicker Than Water,"

and bits and pieces from the rockers, Bratz, Sunday. despotic "Saturday Night

Fever" album. I suppose that

those with an insatiable

desire to see the Bee Gees

can stimulate their hunger

with Andy while they antic-

ipate the big boys' grand

Roger McGuinn and Chris

Hillman have a place in rock's

short but grand history book

as the coleaders of the Byrds.

l always respected McGuinn

and Hillman for being exper-

imental during rock's infancy

(the Byrds were among the

first established bands to

toy with Indian music, avant-

garde jazz, and various styles

of country music), but

never was infatuated with

them. In recent years, nei-

ther of these two have come

up with anything of sub-

stance, but they are worthy

of attention for their past

efforts. They'll be at the Cata-

maran next Wednesday, Also

at the ever-busy Catama-

ran this week: Jose Feliciano,

a nimble guitarist and like-

able bon vivant, Friday and

Saturday; and heavy-metal

mmer tour

May 22, 1980

December 4, 1980 Country swing will be represented at the Bacchanal on Tuesday night by Asleep at the Wheel, a group whose skill I admire but who I salute only on an intellectual, not a visceral, level. My aversion is strictly per sonal and doesn't reflect on the group's talent.

lune 8, 1989

Of Note Ray Charles

To this day. Charles remain a polished but highly charis matic and dynamic per former. Even though his music stretches beyond the boundaries of elemental blues, it is inherent in even his frothiest pop material The late Michael Bloom field, a sad figure whose expertise on the subject could be relied on, once remarked that Ray Charles (along with B.B. King) was "the last word" among blues musicians. Charles has stiff competition, of course, but his position in the upper echelons has long been secure. He will be at Humphrey's on Friday night

September 7, 1989

Of Note

But the Cure's work is so unmodulated that after cur sory acquaintance, the paucity of fresh ideas negates he intended effect. Rather than being hypnotic oracles, the Cure can easily come off as desultory bores with one-track minds They'll attempt to mes merize the local faithful Tuesday night at the Sports Arena, with Shelleyan Orphan opening. .

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Blubbo's WORLD

Blubbo Adrift

n the Reader's scuffling days, Steve Esmedina was the staff's Doc Holliday rudite, enigmatic, and bedeviled by self-consumptive tendencies that seemed rooted in debilitating, unspoken discomfiture. For as long as I knew him, he relied on friends, colleagues, and deadlines to keep him propped up and functioning

Esmo was a glorious paradox, a riddle that I never tried to solve. As a writer, he disgorged caustic essays on music-as-art into the beaks of readers too hungry to turn away. Away from the typewriter, he assumed the guise of a phlegmatic troll given to vato street slang and scatological musings. Unable or unwilling to reconcile his Shavian intellect with his self-image of a bemused Sancho Panza, Esmo publicly exalted himself with often brilliant wordplay, privately pickled himself. Even in his 20s, Steve's personal doomsday clock always seemed a tick away from midnight.

Like many people, I first met Esmo through his early-'70s work in the Reader. I was a year out of col

lege, and Jupiter Records, my store in Clairemont, was a drop-off point for the weekly. I eagerly awaited each issue, delighted that a free paper had arts writers of the quality of Esmedina, Duncan Shepherd, and Ionathan Saville

In 1975, I wrote a strongly worded letter to the editor in response to a disparaging remark Saville had made about rock and roll, after which I was asked to "audition" for occasional freelance work by reviewing Doug Kershaw's concert at Straightahead Sound, on El Cajon Boulevard, Soon afterward, I joined the Reader's loose-knit team of free lance music writers, which included Esmo, George Varga, Frances Thumm, Ted Burke, and others. I

think we were paid \$5 for a record review and \$10 for a full-length concert review. Obviously, we weren't doing it for the money.

Long before 1979, when I moved to L.A. to pursue a songwriting career, Esmo had assumed the popular-music critic's chair at the paper. When he was "on," as he so often was during the '70s, his writing was exceptional. I believe that if he'd been healthier of mind and body, more ambitious, and worked in a major media center like L.A. or New York, Esmo would've been ranked with Greil Marcus, Robert Christgau, and Lester Bangs. For my simoleons, he was better than any of them.

I was most impressed with the breadth of his musical knowledge and his use of language. Too many people don't appreciate that one can gain something of value from reading a well-written critique, even if one disagrees with the thesis or finds the subject matter esoteric Even when I differed with Esmedina, I laughed my way through his broadsides and nodded at his point making because the writing was so damn good.

Still, he could be maddeningly inconsistent. At his best, Esmo com bined a deep, historical understanding of the subject (which could be music, film, even sports), a droll wit, an elegant writing style, and a

At his best, Esmo combined a deep, historical understanding of the subject.... At his worst, he finger-tapped diffuse, disposable thoughts.

sorial vocabulary cut with an earthy sensibility. At his worst, he finger tapped diffuse, disposable thoughts merely to accommodate a deadline and to appease a harried editor.

One was struck by the pro found unhappiness underlying those tossed-off carpings, which served more to illuminate the writer's inner disquiet than to edify the reader. From week to week, one never knew which Esmo would surface in print — the profound or the profane, the trenchant analyst

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When Esmo was dis posed to share his vast knowledge, the reader was the beneficiary. But he had no governor on his criti cal engine. He could be wincingly arbitrary, and when he disliked indi viduals or entire genres, he swatted them like flies and further pissed off his detractors by serving his bile in finely turned cruets that sent readers scurry ing for their dictionaries

The scornful Steve definitely had his favorite targets. He dismissed almost all country-music artists as "Okie Bobs," called Jackson Browne and most of his ilk of singersongwriters "whiners," and was not above ad hominen attacks that some perceived as racist, sexist, or simply elitist. But he was so confident of the unas sailability of his position that he practically dared the reader to counterpunch. Esmo's was a strong voice, and after the Reader initially split into two sections, it made perfect sense to lead off the "events" section with his column.

In late 1980, as I was reaching the upchuck point with life in Holly veird, I got a call from the Reader's then-editor, lim Mullin. He wondered if I'd be willing to return to

the paper as music critic/editor. When I asked about Esmo, I was told that Steve had failed to heed several ultimata about deadlines and such and that he was being relieved of his duties. If I didn't want the job, it would go to someone else. For a few years after returning to San Diego, I had only sporadic contact with Esmo. although I'd hear reports from reliable sources that described a man who, in disturbing ways, had cut anchor on life.

Viewed as a point or a timeline. Esmo's involuntary abdication coin cided with the ascendance of the Reagan De-evolu tion and the acceleration of America's cultural dumbing-down, a proces that hit warp-speed in our lowbrow military town Years before Regis and Kathie Lee and "reality TV," before the polite cops-making-arrests-onvideo shows and primetime pro-wrestling, before America dumped buckets of human chum on daytime "talk" shows to prove that the Missing ink was not missing bu had gone forth and mul tiplied, there was mounting evidence that people had little time or taste for

erudition. People didn't want to see unfamiliar words, or to think, or to gain historical perspective about something as nonessen-

tial to daily survival as an art form. They resisted the challenge to question their own assumptions and took umbrage if a writer dared to contradict the directives of corpo rate media that sedated them with infotainment and gossipy sound-bites. What people wanted from their "critics" were pointand-click assessments in plain-yogurt language that any NFL nose tackle could understand, Most important, they wanted their

to get more voices into the music coverage. I thought that if Esmedina hadn't completely shortcircuited, we could give him a forum for his views and his talent. It wasn't easy to locate Steve, but eventually I was able to shoehorn him into a small stable of freelancers that included Mike Keneally. Buddy Blue, and Alan Reder. As before, there were wide fluctuations in the quality of Steve's submissions, but I was glad to

see his byline on a regu-

What people wanted from their "critics" were point-and-click assessments in plain-yogurt language that any NFL nose tackle> could understand.

HEALTH AND BEAUTY

in the same direction as their own — personal validation by perceived consent. The '80s must have been impossibly hostile environment for someone like Esmo, who was tilting at his own internal windmills

Nevertheless, later in that decade I asked the Reader publisher if I could approach Esmo about doing some music writing. I wanted to start a special section devoted to local music (it finally happened but was short-lived), and I also thought it was time lar basis.

More troubling was the perceivable advance of his psychological and physical dissolution. When I saw him at concerts, he seemed adrift in unfamiliar waters, a man with a wobbly gyroscope. Never a social animal, he now limited his conversation to sodden, unprintable exclamations and pungent, sometimes inscrutable

Perhaps Steve was more lively and forthcoming with his close friends. I was more a colleague than a friend, and while I respected Esmo, I wasn't interested in living on the edge of existence and couldn't relate to someone who did. I also didn't feel that it was my place to pry or probe into his personal matters. Mostly, we kept our exchanges cordial and

nonspecific. Although I hadn't had

any contact with Esmo since the early '90s and sometimes wondered if his downward spiral were reaching the point of no return, I was surprised when Hearned of his death and saddened by the reports of his grim final months. I silently remi nisced about the "good old days" of working half a week on a review that paid a sawbuck, of savoring Esmo's pithy comments, laughing out loud at his barbed asides, marveling at his talent. And enjoyed the memory of one incident that in many ways captured the essence of this complex person and the often absurd way in which he dealt with life

In 1983, the Reader held its Christmas dinner-party at the Glorietta Bay Inn in Coronado. Some of us who were involved in the planning and/or the evening's entertainment spent that night at the hotel. To save money, a few of us shared a suite. At about 1:00 a.m., an inebriated woman who was

not part of the sleepover group collapsed onto a chaise lounge on the suite's small balcony to await sobriety.

It was a difficult wait for all. A less-than-sober Esmo spent the wee hours in a chair beside the woman, patiently, quietly, relentlessly hitting on her, either oblivious to or completely accepting of the fact that at regular intervals she was hurling omelette-size portions of vomitus onto the artificial-turf flooring on either side of him.

When Esmo finally tired of that futile pur suit, he came inside, sat in the dark at the foot of my bed, and sang Christmas carols for the bene fit of everyone in the suite. At the conclusion of each performance, several sleepy/annoyed/sarcastic voices would mumble in unison, "Great, Steve." This went on until Steve finally exhausted his holiday repertoire and left, at about

In a more nostalgio frame of mind, as I think about Esmedina's best work, of what he con tributed to the Reader and to local music discourse, I can't think of a simpler eulogy: "Great, Steve." ■

music writer and editor

at the Reader between 1975

- John D'Agostino that began, "Well, you white peo-John D'Agostino was a

ple..." or make a vague reference to his gangster friends in Shelltown when he was in school, how he was the only one still walking free. Nonsense, of course. Then he'd start to work with sighs and groans, as if setting down on paper the ideas in his head was the worst torture.

A typewriter was an annoving

Blubbo vs. **the Kaypro**

necessity, but Steve considered a computer the work of the devil. For quite a while after all editorial copy had to be prepared on disk, someone had to be recruited to input Steve's copy every week. The was told he would at least have to

hang around the outskirts of the digital revolution. It was a small enough skirmish; the computer in question was a Kaypro, even easier to use than most word processors of the day. It looked like an osciloscope with a keyboard and two slots for floppy disks, not much bigger than a 12-pack of beer.

The afternoon of Steve vs. the Kaypro...did I volunteer to teach him? I don't remember. He took his place in front of the machine. I can picture his face: open, wideeyed — perhaps not eager to begin, but at least willing. The way people look when they're getting a fresh start at something, and this time they're determined to beat it.

I explained the basics. "You turn it on here. This disk contains the computer's programs. They make the computer work. It goes here. This disk is for your story. It goes down here. The keyboard is just like your typewriter, except for some of these keys over here. We'll learn them as you need them. You type, and the story goes onto the screen and onto the disk at the same time. Here, you try it." He handled the disks as if they were crawling with salmonella. As if the machine would burst into flames when he put them into the drive slots. So far he hadn't said a word, but I took that as a good sign. I left him alone.

The next half hour consisted of long periods of silence, interrupted at first with hopeful sounds - a disk popping into a drive, one click of the keyboard. Then more silence.

Another key click, Silence, A slow click, click, Click, click, click. I thought, "Hey, Steve, we did it!" But then began the muttering, sighing. "I made a mistake. How do I correct it, again?" Another long, long silence. Soft cursing, sighing. "What is this key, again?" "How do I get a copy of this?""It just disappeared off the screen! Damn! Can I get it back?" After 30 minutes, with perhaps two or three sentences on the screen, his voice was a whine, his face thunderclouds of frustration. Click, click.... "Why do I have to do this?" Long, long silence. Papers shuffling

the floor. He was gone. When you read Steve's work in the paper - a treatise on Sun Ra and his Arkestra and why we all should be listening to him, or a long fan letter to crooner Tom Jones and his wonderful pipes - you don't hear the cursing and moaning. I came to believe that even though his opinions reached a wide audience through the paper, he hated the mechanical necessities That he would rather call his read ers together at a bar and have a loud, pie-throwing discussion about Sun Ra or Tom Jones, And if you disagreed with him, well, tough. There should be more of Steve's writing around, but I guess that just wasn't meant to be.

Muttering, cursing. His chair scraped

— Linda Nevin

Linda Nevin has worked at the Reader as a writer and editor since

Blubbos

d see Steve most often when the Reader was in its original home, a splintery firetrap at the corner of State and Market Streets. After the Reader moved

out, the Marine Corps used the raggedy shell for a mock assault, storming the halls and lobbing smoke grenades in the old editoria and production offices. Steve would stride down the echoev hall and swing into the editorial workroom; but if he found a woman there, he would suddenly cast down his eyes: smile that little tight-lipped, dimpled Buddha smile; and say a near inaudible "hi." Painful shyness could stop him in his tracks, as I recall.

We'd joke about things, play word games with each other. He'd sometimes sneak in a comment

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A Critic Looks at a Critic

must have been hundreds of years ago, that time of simplicity and innocence. It was before the electronic revolution had shackled us all in front

of our screens. In those days, the Reader's writers composed on antediluvian

mechanical contrivances called typewriters, and they physically brought their copy down to the office. Writers, editors, and production people actually saw each other face to face.

Of the paper's various locations

in those years, my favorite was an elegant little building on Kettner Street, where the ambience was so attractive that on occasion I even wrote my reviews there. It gave a pleasant infu sion of adrenaline to be typing away,



against deadline, amid the noisy bustle of the whole newspaper shebang, as though I were a hard-bitten jour nalist out of The Front Page, with a broken cigarette hanging from my

Often enough, while engaged in this playacting, I would encounter down there. He would show up with his contribution to the "Music Scene" section, looking pretty much the worse for wear, as though he had been dragged out of bed at some unconscionable hour of the mid afternoon. Hunkering down at a typeSteve's compulsion to right the wrongs of bad taste drove him to the devastating metaphors he always had at the ready.

writer adjacent to the one I was using he would make finicky last-minute changes in his text. We sat side by side in a companionable silence punctuated by the clacking of the keys.

When he left the desk to try to find the restroom (its obscure location was a peculiarity of the building). I would sometimes take a look at what he was writing. He was a meticulous writer, changing a word again and again to get the right nuance. His subject, which included virtually every kind of popular music as well as jazz. was opaque to me. I called it all rock

and roll, and to me it all (and pretty boring) songs sounded the same. Not to at the Catamaran, Tuesday Steve. He worked hard to night." define the special charac-On the other side, if he ter of each musician, with liked a group he would praise a short, vivid formulation it generously, finding a per-

sonal source of happines

in its virtues. And he didn't

require that every artist be

a genius. He enjoyed being

able to write a review that

began "The most hearten-

ing achievement of this

exquisite record is the return.

after a nearly five-year

absence from the studio

and the limelight, of the

master alto-saxist. Ornette

Coleman." But he also could

happily say, about another

sax player, "He is by no

means great, but he enter-

"The Alleycats are impas sioned, concise, and styl ized, but not campy," he would write, after trying out a half-dozen other pos sibilities. A core description of someone as "a very warm, amiable alto saxo phonist," which tells a lot in a little, came about only after a lot of tight-lipped A professional critic

has to put up with a lot of

saints among us can resist

panhandler grasping tightly

to his brother's cuffs." About

a composer-performer of

limited talent the reader

would learn that "his music

serves the same function as

elevator music and office

white noise': it provides

just enough surface sound

nothings."

bad stuff, and only the few

the delight of skewering tains and soothes, and some with a phrase some artis times that is enough." who has made us suffer In short, a critic with There was no malice in rigorous standards, but at Steve, but he knew how to the same time a sweet convey his dissatisfaction human being. Steve in fact was at his very best as a There was "the youngest of the almost criminally suc writer when his humancessful Gibb brothers," about ity - and his own person whom Steve opined "it's impossible to think of him as anything other than a

And how about this ality - had greater scope wonderful piece of Cali-"The first song is about cheating girls. The second song is about cheating girls. The third song is about cheating girls." for expression. Typical of

to heighten such pleasurthe man was his Reader able activities as ironing cover story about a clothes, mopping floors San Diego rock group he and whispering sweet accompanied on a tour to a few gigs around California at the end of the '70s Sometimes his con tempt was so total that he He loved this band, and couldn't bring himself to decried the injustice of the vaste words ("a simple yecmarketplace that kept them chh will suffice"). Somefrom a bigger reputation. but at the same time he knew how to bring out all the pathos and absurdity of what was ironically billed as "the Penetrators' World Tour '79." Those who knew Steve got a wryly familiar pic ture of him as he shared "the travels of this impoverished caravan.... It is almost midnight and we are sitting outside a Sacramento Taco Bell, trying our best to savor one of the few semisolid meals we've had in three days The amorphous mash of beans, cheese, tortilla swims before my eyes, and combined with my inebriated frame of mind, inspires me to wonder, silently, 'What in hell

and a whole situation with what seems like unedited naturalness. Here is a bartender in a Chinatown nightclub rattling on at the band

fornia on-the-road landscape writing? "The tail end of summer is beautiful. Framed by the rear window of Sullivan's car, the skies are clear, clean, aqua blue; the hills and cliffs are camel backs, perfectly sculpted; the highway to Santa Barbara is free of speed-freak crazies. Looking to my left, all I can think of is how gorgeous the ocean is, a flawless, curved piece of painted glass " And then, with a finely calculated rhythmic bump, he twicks us back from this upwelling of aesthetic joy to the flat commonplaces of our highway culture: "We pull into a Santa Barbara gas station to fill up."

is all the greater for the small

scale of the events. Steve

himself was no world trav

eler. "The farthest north I

have been is Marin County.

the farthest south is Ense-

nada, the farthest east is

Yuma, and the farthest west

is the South Mission Beach

jetty." He was very much a

California writer, and a fine

one. Do you know a livelier

vignette of Los Angeles'

Chinatown than this one?

"For walkers, Chinatown

could easily be Tijuana

North. We half expect a kid

to approach us and ask if we

want to buy chiclet. There

is a surreal quality to the

neighborhood. It's both

authentically foreign and

strangely familiar. If every

storefront had fresh paint,

if the sidewalks were glis-

tening, if the brooding statue

of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen were pol-

ished, you might think you

were entering a new addi-

tion to Disneyland."

Do you think it's easy to write like that? Believe me, it's not. It's also not easy to record and shape a fragment of dialogue so as to convey a whole character members as he pours a

punk rock? You really know now to play?' He shakes his head. 'This punk rock no music, I know music because I play organ for twenty years. But I like songs, melodies, This punk just sound like shit. And damn kids never buy drinks! One beer for

ten people sometimes!' Then we have Steve's zestfully satirical description of the opening band that precedes the Penetrators to the stage at this club: "The first song is about cheating girls. The second ong is about cheating girls. The third song is about cheating girls. The fourth song is about...cheating boys! These three thin young men from Santa Barbara who look like runners-up in a malnutrition contest, have a message, and it seems to be that girls are 'creepy little creeps' and 'smelly lit tle rats.' We all agree that without their die-hard legion of friends and family, these chaps wouldn't have made it out of a garage."

The most touching moment in this story, and my final example of how exceptional a writer we've lost, has Steve and the Penetrators camping out on Pismo Beach to save money (they are on their way to Sacramento, where an evening's work is going to earn the five-man hand \$48). After drinking and eating and drinking some more, until three in the morning, the band members and their girlfriends finally bed down in sleeping bags or in their freezing cars. As for Steve, "I have a soft, silken mattress. I place an issue of someone's Los Angeles porno paper down as a bottom sheet, and use the latest Rolling Stone for a blanket. As I turn on my stomach and taste sand, McLain offers a good-night salute. 'Hey, Steve, there's a couple of copies of the Reader in one of the cars if

you need a pillow." I think of him like that, out with his admired musi cian buddies in the Cali fornia night, warm from beer and tequila, wrapped up in literature, and happy I'll miss him.

— Jonathan Saville

Ionathan Saville has cov ered art, theater, and clas sical music for the Reader You are invited to attend the

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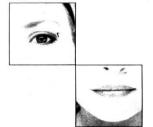


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times he thought the artist's failings were substantial enough to deserve precise analysis: "The pasting together of redundant har monies, sinister, monster movie chords, and quick burst piano glides is too arbitrary to be sustaining. But when the performer had acquired an undeserved popularity, Steve's comulsion to right the wrong of bad taste drove him to the devastating metaphors he always had at the ready. There is no soulfulness or invention to her singing She delivers a chic blend of pop, Latin music, jazz, and soul wrapped up in thick, overdressed arrangements and smothered with sentimentality.... This pretty singer will sing her pretty

am I doing here?" The poignance of this

week of disappointments

tequila shooter: " 'You guys

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Cut to the **Heart**

one whose words spoke so loudly

on the printed page. We gradually became friends of a kind. Since he

didn't have a car and I didn't drive,

our longest conversations usually

took place by phone and often cov

ered the latest albums by our favorite

artists or our newest discoveries,

circa 1976, for blue-eyed Scottish

soul singer Frankie Miller, Sun Ra,

the Ramones, Little Feat, Nina Simone,

col Harum, Sarah Vaughan, Graham

Parker, and the two Jameses (Brown

minced words in person. His catholic

tastes impressed me as much as the

depth of his knowledge and his abil-

ity to craft words in a manner as art-

ful as it was unaffected. He had an

almost unerring knack for discovering

worthy new artists early on, from

Patti Smith and the band Television

to budding progressive jazz dynamos

like Anthony Davis, Mark Dresser,

and lames Newton

As in his reviews, Blubbo rarely

and Taylor), among others.

pre-"Birdland" Weather Report, Pro-

We shared a mutual passion,

good, bad, and wretched.

haps the best tribute I can pay to Steve Esmedina, my departed compadre and fellow music critic, is that his legacy traly lives on.

Today, 25 years after first having read his work in the then-fledgling Reader, I still vividly remember the essence of many articles he wrote, specific lines from his eloquent critiques, and some of the phrases he coined, such as "tuneless Okie Bob jams" to describe a misbegotten country singer and "grotto mouth" to describe an overwrought young local jazz singer (who shall mercifully remain nameless)

Blubbo, to invoke his favorite nickname for himself, was the first music critic whose writing I encountered after moving to San Diego as a teenager in late 1975. The Reader was a very young, slim, and modest publication in those days, but Steve's writing carried immediate weight. I began writing freelance music reviews for the Reader in early 1976 and recall thinking at the time that it would be a good challenge to measure up to his qualitative standards. I was correct.

We first met in late spring of 1976, and he initially struck me as surprisingly shy and quiet for some

trait that earned him devoted fans and outraged detractors, the latter of whom frequently wrote the Reader to express their disdain; question his intelligence, hearing, and parentage; and generally froth at the mouth at his alleged offenses (one of which included dismissing Ann and Nancy Wilson of Heart as rock's answer to the Virginia Slims ad models). When the Southern California

He was fearless in his writing, a

punk and New Wave scenes began, Blubbo was one of their staunchest supporters, almost single-handedly nming up local interest in such



myself editing his film reviews, which were good enough to run almost

When Mark Dresser started his Music Forward series in Del Mar and Rob Hagey launched the La Jolla (later San Diego) Jazz Festival, both in the late '70s, Blubbo used his Reader column to light a fire under this city's jazz audience.

fledgling bands as X, the Alleycats the Penetrators, and others. And when Mark Dresser started his Music Forward series in Del Mar and Rob Hagey launched the La Jolla (later San Diego) Jazz Festival, both in the late '70s. Blubbo used his Reader column to light a fire under this city's jazz audience, which was even more

had also become contributing editors for Kicks, a local music monthly. for which we each wrote columns (his on R&B, mine on jazz). When I briefly became editor for Kicks in its final incarnation in 1981. I found

minuscule at that time than it is now By the late '70s Blubbo and I

Sadly, this was not the case later in the decade, when - after becoming pop music critic for the San Diego Union - I successfully lobbied my editor at the time to have Blubbo do some freelance work for the paper. I had been unaware that his down-ward spiral had begun, but the increasingly erratic quality of his writing quickly became as apparent as his inability to meet deadlines. His brief tenure as a Union freelancer ended the same day we published his interview with jazz bass great Charlie Haden, who, not without just cause, immediately threatened to sue the paper for libel.

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I'm sad to say I had less and less contact with Blubbo in the years that followed. But I still fondly remember how, at my request, he used his position at St. Vincent De Paul Thrift Shop to obtain a used bowling ball for me to give as a going-away present to a friend departing on a yearlong ornithological expedition to the jungles of Costa Rica. As I recall, Blubbo appreciated the humor of this gesture considerably more than the gift's recipient.

Along with many others, I deeply regret Blubbo's passing. I continue to savor his impassioned, insightful writing And I still fondly recall his ability to instantly cut to the heart of the matter, as he did most memorably at a downtown dinner we both attended in late 1980 at the Old Spaghetti Factory. following a nearby solo

concert by James Newton. Perhaps because one of the people in our party was a teacher, the dinner conversation eventually turned to the poor quality of school lunches. After silently enduring as much debate on the topic as he could stomach, including a spirited argument over the size of individual por tions of food given to students, Blubbo finally spoke up. "The issue isn't the size of the portions of food." he said, rolling his eyes.

"The issue is shitty food." When the raucous laughter that ensued finally subsided, another topic of conversation began Blubbo's first words on school food were the last that needed to be said, and he approached his writing about music in the same no-nonsense

So adios, compadre. I'll think of you when I'm enjoy ing good music, or endur ing the aural equivalent of mediocre school food. - George Varga

George Varga is the pop music critic for the San Diego Union-Tribune and Copley News Service. He was a music freelance writer for the Reader from 1976 until 1981, during which time he also did a threeevents listings editor ("and hated every minute of it")



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With this Melville-like utterance a 20-year friendship was formed between Steven No-Middle-Name Esmedina and me; it was a friendship that would endure until his death on June 24, in this Year of Our Kubrick,

He stayed in his room and allowed his fierce intellect to turn in on itself.

So Blubbo it was, then. Actually I'd always heard him referred to aroun town as Esmo, but be later confided that he hated that particular appellation. To his real friends he was Blubbo. For obvious reasons. He was large; he contained multitudes. And they were all wrapped in endless folds of flesh. He was a Mexipino version of Orson Welles, Freddy Fender gone to seed, Yoda on Sterno. My wife was once thrown against him at Disney land on an amusement ride and later told me it was like landing on the biggest, most comfortable waterbed in the world, all bouncy, warm, and



cozy, a Pillsbury Dough Boy come to life. "There wasn't a bone in that body," she said in amazement. (When I later passed along her comment to him, ne corrected her, "There's one - small it may be, but a mighty bone it is!") was confused, however, when he began to address me as Blubbo, not long after we became friends. "Hold on, why are you calling me that?" "Everybody's Blubbo," he answered, as if stating an obvious universal Truth. It was, I quickly learned, his world, and if you wanted to live in it, you accepted his Blubbo Theory of Relativity. Every body's Blubbo in his own way: I am Blubbo as you are Blubbo, goo-goo-

So many mixed emotions raced through my mind the day of his death grief, in the enormous emotional void; anger, at the complete needlessness of his death - vet all these were essentially preempted because he had been chronically foretelling his death ever since I first met

him in the spring of 1981. repeatedly moan. "Only when I'm gone will they appreciate my true genius and finally get off my crutch." After having heard this song and dance for the millionth time, I would reply, "Well, I guess there's only one way to test that theory." He would then look at me with those gimlet eyes and utter with all the disdain he could muster, "Midcult,"

formidable intellect in a rigorous and disciplined examination of the chosen work oven together in a breath-It was a friendship like taking command of the lanno other I've ever known. guage that was so dazzling To be sure, every friendship it could circumvent any pos is unique. The special chem sible dispute with his theistry between any two indisis. If I disagreed with him viduals cannot be replicated; and wanted to take him on it is sui generis. But then so his mastery with the spoken was Steve. He was as unique word was always so in evidence, the best I could come a person as I've ever encountered, and though I was as up with was a meek retor close to him as I've been to like, "Well, that's your opinanyone, I knew only a part ion," and I'd be lucky to of him. I knew of, but escape with my wits intact. But he loved the give and take couldn't help contain, the demons that possessed and of intellectual discourse. then finally consumed him. whether about movies or music, politics or the tragi-Had he been able to believe more in himself, been able comedy of the opposite sex to push himself instead of and its misty intersection going into a kind of hiberof love and lust. Steve was nation the last 20 years of a throwback to an earlier his life, Steve Esmedina could time when the art of conhave been one of the finest versation was prized. He American cultural critics of vould have been at home his time. Instead, he staved in a salon during the reign in his room and allowed his of the Sun King or in a genfierce intellect to turn in on tlemen's club in Restoraitself. But during those two tion England or in the agora decades. I was able to spend of Periclean Athens - there a great deal of time hangwould have been Blubbocrates holding court, delving with him, carrying on hourlong conversations with ing into the mysteries and him on the phone, influforms of that particular encing him, and being influ branch of philosophy known enced by him, and he helped as Aesthetics. shape my view of things as It was a matter of life much as any one person and death for him. Although

ever has Before I moved to L.A. in 1996, I talked on the phone to Steve two or three times a day for 15 years. I valued his opinion, trusted and relied on his judgment, and constantly sought his take on those essential things that make life worth living — movies, music, literature - the arts. He was da bomb, he be de man, the Dr. Know It All of da Hood, the Ghetto Guru. He knew. That his writing style was as elegant as anything published in the New Yorker or the New York Review of Books made this just one of the many contradictions of the late, lamented Blubbo

Writing was what he did, who he was. It was understood that if I were to loan him a book, I would

Olivetti steed and sally forth to do battle. Yet he could be as articulate in defending his favorite pop culture trash like the Spice Girls or Howard Stern as he was in defending the avant-garde jazz of the Art Ensemble of Chicago or the writing of Sinclair Lewis. His was the most orig-

inal mind I have ever known

get it back with copious

Blubbo commentary in that

easily recognizable and nearly

indecipherable scrawl of

his. He simply could not

write well. His prose style was

something he created as

effortlessly as walking or

breathing, Probably with

less effort, actually. It was a

style that utilized his

Steve was nominally a good

Roman Catholic and a for-

mer altar boy, I think Art

was Steve's true faith, a reli-

gion he could really believe

in in an empty, uncaring

universe. The greats were

to be championed and

revered, the heretics and

apostates - those purvey-

were guilty of bad faith and

to be sought out and con-

demned. Bad works of art

(and bad critics; he despised

obnoxious fools like Dave

Marsh) were personal trans-

gressions to Steve, sins against

God and Blubbo, and the

blasphemous perpetrators

must be caught and held

accountable. And so, just

like his greatest hero, Rodrigo

Díaz de Vivar, the Cid, this

rotund knight of South 37th

Street would mount his

ors of artistic mediocrity

He could reduce a complex work to its essence in a bril liant one-liner. His pithy, incisive writing style, so uniquely his, could be so illuminating. In conversation, he could be dazzling After every one of our marathon phone calls, I felt exhausted, as if I'd dropped acid. He could expand your horizons with a logic that skewered most commonly held assumptions as you entered his Blubbo Unified Field and had your mind bent. Like a latter-day Mencken, one of his heroes, he could provoke you to see things in an alternate context, to argue, defend, and reassess your own precepts Received wisdom was always a phrase he uttered with derision and contempt. No recycled thinking for our Esmo. If he thought Citi zen Kane was one of the most overrated films of all time - it wasn't even Blubbo Orson's best jam; that, of course, would be Ambersons, thank you very much — then Our Mar Esmedina would be com-pelled to shine that light, ring that bell, to testify! And if he preferred the raw energy and emotional purity of Please Please Me and The Beatles' Second Album to the psychedelic contrivance of Sgt. Pepper, then he would cry out in the darkness like the hero in "The Emperor's New Clothes," proclaiming eternal vigilance against the mindless forces of philistinism and conventional wisdom: a knight-errant battling pretense and white elephantiasis. Whether exploring the universe of James Joyce or Leave It to Beaver, it was all the same to Steve; if it gave him a bone, then it was a good

There was, as I say, quite a distance between Esmedina in print and the genuine article. But dichotom was rampant in the soul of St. Steven - his longing, his despair, the tenderhearted soul masked by those many

outer layers of cynicism, his commanding intellect, his abject doubt and selfloathing. "I'm really a preppie, trapped in the body o a fat Filipino," he would lament. He was missing a gene somewhere when it came to ambition. His career goal was not to write the Great American Novel or to be the generation's preeminent man of letters. No. not for our Stevie. He confided to me on more than one occasion that all he wanted out of life was to drive an ice cream truck or operate the Ferris wheel at

an amusement park. And he was serious. But I digress. I first became aware of the name Steve Esmedina in the pages of the UCSD student newspaper, the Triton Times, in 1975. His review no, essay, for it was a med itative contemplation, really — about Terrence Malick's directorial debut, Badlands, was a revelation, college newspapers not noted for such sophistication. His Badlands piece was so graceful and elegant, so assured, it seemed to have come from the pen of an established East Coast literary lion. Around the same time, Steve began writing for this very publication and he and Duncan Shepherd soon became the most quoted (and argued about) writers in San Diego. In the 1970s, the music column in the Reader was a coveted forum. It seemed like the best gig in town. Steve's weekly column would spotlight a music act that was coming to San Diego. His contentious and opin ionated writings provoked scores of outraged partisans, but few questioned his facility as a writer or his exhaustive knowledge. So when a mutual friend introduced us in 1981. I was intimidated. He was some thing of a local legend, the shining star of the San Diego music-journalist firmament, of which I was a minor figure. Besides, if he was any thing like his writing, I would be mincemeat inside of five minutes

To my profound relief, he seemed neither imperious nor supercilious but friendly enough and even a bit shy. The three of us went to see Albert Brooks's Mod ern Romance and for much of the movie found ourselves the only ones laugh ing. Not long after, Steve

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and I went to the Ken Cin ema for a screening of Terrence Malick's maiestic second film, Days of Heaven After the screening, we repaired to a Japanese restau rant, and over bites of sushi we engaged in a wide-rang ing discussion of shared interests. Although the intellect was clearly there, it wa never on show; he never felt the need to issue advertisements for Blubbo, Instead he was open and generor and remarkably witty His writing never did him justice in that regard. During a lull in the conversation he looked at me and asked. as if it was the most natural question in the world. "Ever have a girl go poopoo on your chest? no," I responded, and he proceeded to discuss other topics. But as I choked on my sushi, I realized there was a lot more to this com plicated character than I

could imagine. At that time, Steve was living in Cabrillo Square, a high-rise apartment complex at the edge of down town. His roommate was a he had dubbed Moona, after the vampira-like hostess of a popular Saturday-after on sci-fi matinee on Channel 10 during the '60s. He had recently stopped iting his column be of health problems. It seems he had developed epilepsy, about a day at the Reader office when, during an attack, he'd stood up on a desk and done a swan dive into his typewriter. He was on hia tus, taking a break from the grind of a weekly column and writing the occasional music review for the Reader We discovered that we had shared the same child hood - we had both grown up watching those projected shadows on the screens of the glorious, vanished movie theaters of downtown San Diego — the Fox, the Cal ifornia, the Spreckels, the Plaza, the Balboa, the Mision, the Broadway, the

Orpheum, the Aztec. We

had read the same comics

studied the same books.

watched the same TV shows

listened to the same radio

rather bizarre creature whom

stations. But he had me or the music: somehow he'd managed to listen to every rock and roll album eve released, and he was equally knowledgeable about the even vaster world of jazz. And he remembered everything

We hit it off immediely, and I began hanging out at his pad. It was fortuitous for me. I had just lost my job at a video store for being a smart-ass college boy, and when my landlady found out, I was on the street in no time. I was living in my car, still hanging around UCSD and writing art-section reviews for the school paper when I met Steve Graduating two and a half vears earlier from the UCSD visual arts department with a filmmaking/film history degree, I was not prepared for the real world and realwas biting me on the ass with a vengeance. I was trying to figure out what to do, how to pursue a film career, how to get enough money to put gas in my car, and where could I crash tonight? Steve extended an

open invitation to use his couch, and during a dark period of my life, he provided me with a haven. That was one of the most endearing things about my friendshi with Steve. No matter what trouble I was in, I always knew there was a couch I could crash on at his house and a willing ear to listen to my troubles. Throughout the years, as my fortunes rose and fell, the knowledge that despite the vicissitudes of capricious fate. Lalways

had a place to stay at Steve's meant the world to me. We both had an assured knowledge of movies, an assurance that came from having digested thousands of films and thought about movies at such an early age they had entered our genetic code and become part of our DNA. Just as knowledgeable about film as he was about music, Steve had seen everything and brought that same critical facility to bear in his film analysis. We discovered a shared passion for many of the same filmmakers - Malick, of course, Resnais, Godard, Sturges

(both Preston and John) touchstone, the iam of iar Drever, Wilder, Hawks his own cinematic grail Scorsese, Peckinpah, Buñue Hitchcock, Welles, Griffith cho Panza than Cid. Steve Fuller, Wise, Aldrich, Again saw himself. I think, as the he saw no difference in high last knight-errant, seeking or low art in the movies h liked. He could appreciate world that had lost its wa and no longer honored the code of chivalry that so the precision of Ozu or the ambiguity of Antonion orms El Cid. he embraced the raunch

He seemed genuine surprised (and even embar rassed) that I could recite his reviews from years earlier Sometimes they would be ant memories for him such as when I quoted lin after line of his Radlands review; sometimes he would squirm with the unpleas ant feeling of having been found out. When I chal lenged his disregard for the Beatles with a flippant dis missal, "As one who never cared for the Beatles ... "he grinned sheepishly, admit ted he'd been in a bad dis position toward the Fab ever since seeing the cal adaptation of Sgt. Pep per and the equally godaw ful touring abomination

ugh he was more San

records, even a prized pair of Beatle boots. At the ten der age of ten he had ventured to the California The atre to see A Hard Day's Night, braving hordes of screaming teenaged girls At one point, during the incessant hysterical shout ing toward the screen, young Master Steven turned to one of the screaming Reat lemaniacs, who was his elder by a good five or six years, and asked, "Do you really think the Beatles can bear your deluded rantings? Oh, shut up, little boy came the response as she continued her hormona caterwaulings at the unresponsive images on the screen, Nevertheless, A Hara Day's Night remained one I was always impressed that in an age before VCRs, he had committed every line of dialogue in the movie to memory and could recite nia ("Not the Bea it on the spot. We cemented our friendship by harmo nizing on Beatle songs late into the night, especially Lennon's splendid hymn to

tles but an incredible

In fact, I discovered Blubb

had been Beatles-obsessed

in childhood, buying the

albums, the fan books and

teenage angst's unrequited

sion was Neil Young's

"Thrasher," as poetic a song

as has ever been written

Steve had seen Young with

Buffalo Springfield and had

been a longtime aficionado.

I was preparing to write a

book on Young and felt that

"Thrasher" was one of his

masterworks. It was a song

about friendship and death

the obligation to yourself

to move on when friends

have chosen to give up on

their dreams. Steve and I

actually got up one night

at the old Spirit Club off

Morena Boulevard and sang

the damn thing in the onl

known performance of the

Disposable Diapers. But the

fact that he had so totally

understood the song, the

majesty of the lyrics' imagery

nd metaphors, amazed me

There was never a trace of

it was always genuine and

organic. One thing his writ

ing never adequately cap

tured was his passion. When

he liked something, he was

a partisan, an advocate, a

true romantic in affairs of

pretense in his enthus

Another shared pas-

yearning, "No Reply."

chedelic simula

bined with carefully cali We quickly hatched a brated shocking remarks was a Blubbo trademark olan to write a screenplay together. Although I had He loved to be the convritten several shorter scripts trarian: he reveled in any during film school, this opportunity to poke fun at would be my first attempt sacred cows. His irrever at a feature script. Steve wa ence always derived its force the pro. He had already by containing insights of stinging truth expressed in scripts with friends. He a laconic delivery. For hours decided it should be based he could riff on a topic tha on our lives, what was haponly he and I would care pening then and there, a about, like the film career of Jack Elam or the pretensnapshot of the times. It would encompass the theme tiousness of long-forgotter writers like James Gould of Young's song "Thrasher Cozzens, or his unique plan and examine a group of friends in a particular to reform the country - a place — San Diego — in monarchy! His take on the the first year of the Reagan absurdity of life was a never era. The title was borrowed ending source of inspiration; he was like some grea from Steve's current favorite James Taylor song, "Her jazz comic, endlessly jam-Town Too," He had admired ming. His penchant for mis-Fellini's I Vitelloni and the chief once got him in trouble at the Reader when he French director Claude Sautet's Vincent, François submitted a movie review Paul and the Others for their of an imported film from the depictions of friendship and Philippines entitled The their sensitive capturing of Sour Taste of Lemon over the milieu of the protago Menudo. It was an insightnists, and we set out to creful review of a sterling piece of Filipino filmmaking that ate a group of artistically existed only in Steve's twisted about to hit the Big Three O imagination. His editors and study their dreams and were not amused. aspirations as some chose to While cowriting the leave San Diego and purcript with him, I came to

learn that Steve possessed a sue their destinies and the rest decided to stay and sucsense of dread. He was convinced he wouldn't live to cumb to the soft life in Amer ica's Finest City. I have never 30, which was only a few had, before then or since, a years away. Though I tried to argue with him about writing partner, so I cannot compare working with this doom-and-gloom out-Steve to working with anylook becoming a self-fulone else. But it was pure filling prophecy, it was ingrained in his personalcreative joy to work with him. The give and take as we ity. "Life was better before I came along," he would hammered out the script made the drudgery o tate, and I would get enraged putting thought to paper at this. But his despair an exhilaration I still vividly seemed bored into his soul recall. Steve could be incred found out there had been ibly supportive and was a a girl; isn't there always? She great booster of talent. had taken his heart, made Though his print persona off with his dough, and left might seem otherwise, i him longing for an early you were his friend, he would Apparently, there had be most generous in his praise, and that encourbeen two other long-term

gement and enthusiasm relationships in high school was a gift he gave to many and college, but this one he fell hard for. Her name was of his friends. Another instance where Louise, and Lalways felt he the man deviated from the was trying to work out his writer was his sense of relationship with her in the humor. Though there were script, trying to make some sense of what had gone humorous passages in his writing, they were generwrong with the love of his ally filtered through that life. It was during one of sober, analytical prose voice of his and never suggested stumbled across another the wicked humor of himexplanation for his heart of darkness. Arriving at his motherfucker I ever knew pad, I found Steve had taken

some acid and was tripping.

His deadpan delivery com-

Hardly the wisest move for someone with diagnosed epilepsy, but there he was, so I tried to be calm and comforting to ease his trip He began to cry, telling me Esmedina wasn't his true name, that his real name was Steven Nunal. In a highly unusual arrangement, hi biological father had lived in his house posing as his 'Uncle Thut" and had helped raise him while the man who was ostensibly his father went off on long absences, frequently trav eling back to the Philip pines. His mother never told him of his father's iden tity, until his sudden death by cardiac arrest in the fam ily kitchen, dropping to the floor in front of 16-year old Steve. It was the double blow of witnessing his beloved uncle's death and the subsequent revelation b his mother that Thut had been Steve's real father that sent him in a psychic spiral that would remain at the very core of his emotional pain. This was the only time he ever brought this up, and I never mentioned it to him again, But I'm convinced it was a psychic wound from

which he never recovered

After a few weeks of

writing our script, Steve announced we'd have to change locations. He was going back to the ghetto to live with his mother. I helped him pack and move, but had a sense of foreboding Moving back home when vou're an adult is always fraught with much baggage it's far too easy to lapse into an adolescent codependency with parents. Which is what happened. He moved back ome, and for the rest of his life that would be his fixed abode. He had a complicated relationship with his family. Clearly, he was so far above their level of comprehension and understanding in matters of intellect that it must have been extremely lonely for him. He was devoted to his mother, a big, gruff woman whose own cynicism and cutting wit so strongly haped Steve's character that I used to refer to her as The Explanation. Since he was the baby of the family, born long after his brother and sisters had grown, he was pampered to a probably unhealthy degree, and despite his mother's acerbic side, she was willing to

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Scorsese more than I did,

never shared my enthusi-

asm for David Lean, and as

tell you, he revered Anthony

Mann's El Cid as the great-

est movie of all time. "Car

a man live without honor?"

he would ask, quoting from

the film, just before he would

pass out. Like Blubbo, I, too,

had seen the film at the

grand Fox Theatre and had

fallen under its spell as a

youth. A better film by far

than the other, more cele-

brated, Heston epic, that

lumbering tale of the Christ.

Ben-Hur, El Cid is a vigor

ous piece of filmmaking

that was the most rousing

epic of its time. It was Steve's

Moore as Dolemite, He lil

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grant him carte blanche, ust as long as he was at home and under her watch ful eye. He adored his brother Bobby, a ne'er-do-well who loved to gamble and party and spin tall tales. One of Steve's earliest memories, he once told me, was of Bobby's coming home and telling Steve about a party where Frank Sinatra had told him to break up a fight between Burt Lancaster and Tony Curtis. Bobby was a swinging Errol Flynn-like roque, a hipster Dark Knight of the night, and Steve idolized him and emulated his wastrel ways as he grew older. And, of course, there was Steve's strong positive self-image: "The two most fucked-up races in the world are Mexican and Filipino,

race; he suffered for it and

used racial epithets freely.

Black, Latino, Jew, Arab,

Asian, and Anglo were all tar-

gets of his racial profiling.

I lost count of all the times

I heard him say, "The white

man is the devil." but he

spared no one. He was an

equal-opportunity racist,

although, actually, I always

thought he was more Don

Rickles than Tom Metzger.

I'm convinced he loved the

shock value of tossing out

forbidden racial slurs in

polite society. "What's

wrong?" he would inno-

cently inquire, "That's just

the way us ethnic folks talk

in the ghetto," I always felt

Steve freely acknowledged

his own racist bent to make

his listener confront his own

latent racism and hypocrisy.

I know Steve had endured

his own racial taunting from

the cops, boyz in da hood,

strangers on the street. 'Chico" or "Pancho" or

"Gordo" were some of the

names heaped upon him

through the years, and I'm

sure as a kid they must've

stung. But his own macho,

streetwise self-image liter-

ally took a pounding one

day at Otto Square, the

nearby shopping center in

than to mess with Blubbo and I'm both." The irony is that Steve Yes, our Blubbo was a was immersed in black culture, from Miles Davis to complicated customer, and I realize that just about any-Dr. Dre. He'd read and thing you might care to say admired Stanley Crouch. Cornel West, James Bald about him would be true. One word that might come win, Ralph Ellison; knew to mind is that current bug the music of the Motown bear, "racist," It is quite a and hip-hop nation inside loaded term in this politi cally correct world, and whatever the word means. I suppose Steve was one He certainly was aware o

Shelltown. I'd warned him

that his mouth would get

him in trouble, but he always

assured me he knew the

ghetto, he knew how to han-

dle its denizens. One day,

when I called to see about

a writing session, I was told

Steve was in the hospital

Apparently, one of the hobo

watch sellers at Otto Square

didn't share Steve's advanced

views on racial epithets, and

when Steve declined the

seller's offer of a watch by

telling him to "Fuck off, nie

ger." umbrage was taken

and Steve received a punch

that punctured a lung. When

I visited him in the hospi

tal, he would only acknow

edge that his assailant must

not have been from the bood

and so didn't know better

duced me to Steve; our friendship was broken, but hey, he got the girl and I go Blubbo. It was a fair exchange, and it all went into the script. We were writing not just a movie but, in an eerie, prescient way, plotting the course of our lives. My character struggled and finally broke free of the soft life of San Diego. making the move to L.A. to seek his destiny in the film industry. Steve's character staved behind in America's Finest City, unwilling or unable to take the risk of leaving home. The film ended at a funeral, where the remaining group o friends, now scattered reassembled to say a final good-bye. I had never been able to complete a feature script before, but thanks to the encouragement and

overcame my doubts and finished the screenplay. Around this time, direc for Robert Wise was screen ing Orson Welles's Magnificent Ambersons at SDSU. I

partnership of Steve, I finally

Steve and I actually got up one night at the old Spirit Club on Morena Boulevard and sang.

out; loved raunchy black comics like Rudy Ray Moore: was enthralled at the grace of Nat King Cole; and had once allowed a forgotten black singer, Earl Coleman, to stay at his downtow apartment for over a month and came very close to writ ing Coleman's biography In fact, in print, Blubbo wa an outspoken liberal denouncing the apartheid government of South Africa and what he saw as vicious Reaganomics that struck hardest at minorities and the disenfranchised. And vet, how to reconcile these admirable sentiments with the story he told me of want ing to join the Klan as a youth, only to be heart broken when he found ou they didn't accept Mexi cans? As I say, he contained multitudes.

We continued writing during that summer of 1981 weaving our personal expe riences into the script, liv ing our lives and turning our experiences into arti fice. A girl whom I fancied preferred instead the com pany of the guy who intro

tried to interview Wise, but he suggested we meet in his office. Steve didn't want to come, so another friend went with me - a visit to Olympus with one of the gods - and then that night we saw Abel Gance's Napoleon at the Shrine Audi orium, complete with orchestra and Cinerama prototype, three-projector triptych finale. Not long after. I had dinner with m friends the Hutshings and I talked about my interview with Wise and the screen ing of the Gance film. Prue knew of my film background and suggested that I start a film series at one of the local museums. Her husband. Ed, who'd had a career in Hollywood before becom ing book editor of the Sar Diego Union, endorsed the idea, and that dinner altered my destiny. When I men tioned the idea to Steve, he was terrifically supportive and we began mapping out a strategy. I convinced the Museum of Art to let me curate a ten-week film series that would take issue with

the auteur theory; we named

the series "Hollywood Film: The Collaborative Art." In the fall of '81, I found an apartment in Mission Hills overlooking the air-

port. Though I now had my

own place, I was still in touch

with Steve constantly Even

before I had a phone

installed, I would walk down

the hill to the pay phone at

the Union 76 and spend

hours jammin' with him. God, was he a one-man revivalist of the lost art of conversation. I mean, he could go for hours, he was the marathon man of Ma Bell. And we talked about Schopenhauer and Clyde Crashcup, movies and women, music and politics. the future and the past. Thanks to Steve. I heard about an opening at the San Diego Union for a freelance music writer to supplement Bob Laurence's musi reviews. I got that gig and was now respectably ensconced in my new pad working for both the Museum of Art and the Union. I had managed to turn things around and was eternally grateful to Steve for being there when I needed someone to believe in me. He wrote a wonder fully crafted piece in the Reader highlighting the film series, and on opening night, he was the one who I wanted to impress, whose reaction I valued the most. In the next few years I brought to San Diego some of the leg endary talents of Holly wood film history: Frank Capra, Billy Wilder, Jack Lemmon, Ernest Lehman Haskell Wexler, Stanle Kramer, Jack Nitzsche, And Steve was there for all of them, and when San Diego native Tony Bill came dow and wanted to sneak out during a screening of his hit production, The Sting to cruise around his old haunts, it was the three of us in the back of his limo-Mr. Bill, Mr. Mike, and Blubbo - riding around

mative San Diego years. Yet over the course of time, the fire that had once burned in Steve's eyes grew dim. No longer did he talk so much about moving to New York to pursue a writing career or about our long held plan to move to L.A to pursue a career in screenwriting. In fact, the idea of moving out of his mom's house seemed to grow more

downtown, reliving our for

and more remote. The foreboding I had when helping him move back to the cri had been justified. He had returned to the womb and had essentially disengaged from the world. Oh, sure, h still wrote for the Reader and had a monthly column in San Diego magazine fo a while, but by the time his 30th birthday rolled around on Groundhog Day, 1984, it seemed as if Blubbo hadn' seen his shadow and had returned to bed to hibernate. He still read vora ciously, listened to music saw all the movies in town and on cable, still picked up his copies of Mad magazine, Playboy, and the National Review (he liked the writing style). But for al practical purposes, he had managed to return to childhood, free from the stress and ssures of adult respon sibilities. He would still look out at the world (and find t wanting), but he did it from the comfort of his inner sanctum, his Blubbo

Fortress of Solitude. And

His bedroom was on

an impregnable fortress it

the second floor of his house, and upon entering his room a sight of unforgettable horror greeted the unwary visitor. Piles of garbage cov ered the floor, making navigation across the room a delicate proposition at best. Scratched-up vinyl record albums were strewn across mountains of newspapers. nagazines, drawing pads Half-empty packs of cigarettes littered the floor, which was tastefully gar nished with the occasional bottle of vodka, all festively decorated with scores of writing tablets amply illus trated with his Thurberesque drawings of sultry

sexpots having their carnal way with Blubbo the Stud. like I was in danger of growing up. But no such fears attended Blubbo. He ve was no slob; he was so was a constant — fixed far beyond slovenliness that a new category would be needed to classify his Uberimmutable. Years later I would find out that it was messiness. This compost around this time that Steve heap, this mountainous was first diagnosed with range of refuse was his refuge. liver disease. Although I knew he liked to get fucked where he spent all his wakup, I had absolutely no ing hours when not watch ing TV downstairs. His bed idea of the extent of his was completely buried alcohol consumption. underneath all this, and so he slept, literally, on top of this crap. Oh, sure, he might roll over and crush the occa sional LP, but, hey, he could

always buy another copy at

Off the Record, and besides

it was probably scratched

up anyway. His response to

any critical questioning of

his hygiene was always the

same — "I don't let my pos

sessions possess me." Over

whelm, yes, but not pos

ess. For someone who made

his livelihood writing about

music, he had the cheapest

sound system imaginable

"How can you hear any

thing on this cruddy sec

would ask. "I just turn i

ond-hand piece of shit?" I

up," he would answer, as if

it were the dumbest ques-

tion in the world. His

TV/VCR set was just as

shoddy. He would record

movies at the slowest speed

on the cheapest tape, but

he seemed content. Remem

bering Blubbo's First Com-

mandment - "Thou shal

not get on my crutch" — I

never brought up his san-

itarily challenged living quar-

ters. It was his universe, after

As the decade pro-

gressed. I was still trying

to save enough money to

move to L.A. when I met

a girl, fell in love, and we

iob for a student-exchange

t married. I landed a PR

all. I was just visiting.

should have realized some thing was amiss when he was rushed to the hospita with a bleeding esoph in '89. Looking back, I can' believe how blind I was about his drinking, but he was so secretive about his

and I plunged into an abyss He kept it private. I that I have yet to crawl out of I don't recall hearing much about Steve's prob lems, emotional or physical. He was still great fun on the phone, but from what I gather, those years were a time of dissipation and decline for him, hanging Why had Steve turned down

awarded to Harvard?

the scholarship that he'd been

health that I took him at his word and never connected his health problems to his drinking. In public I never saw him drink to excess. But apparently, during those epic phone conversations we used to have, he was doing more than just listening to Roxy Music and playing with his beloved toy Godzilla monster, the Blubbo version of a teddy

In 1996, my wife and a were finally able to move to Los Angeles. I did not enjoy the same relationship with Steve after that move Our conversations still continued, but not as many and not as long. Bobby had died. and the two elder Esmedi nas were ailing. The house, which had always been dark, even in broad daylight, now seemed more than ever a around strip clubs, enjoy ing the attentions of the

Williams and The Addam

Family. I think Steve stopped

writing for the Reader

around this period - too

many missed deadlines. But

I was preoccupied with my

a career in an industry that

had seemed to stop caring

anyone over 25 (years or

IQ). My marriage collapsed

about making movies for

When I would call, he'd talk about familiar things movies, music, politics the usual essentials. We were both thrilled that Terrence Malick had finally made his third film. The Thin Rea Line, after a 20-year hiatus. Steve and I were transfixed by the enormity of Malick's accomplishment. The first time I saw the film, osten sibly an adaptation of James Jones's WWII novel, I was as confused as everyone but on second viewing realized what Malick had done, and I soon recognized this was at once Malick's most flawed film, yet by far his greatest accomplishment. Although a simple story - a hill on Guadal

canal has to be taken -

history. The movie is told from the point of view of a collective consciousness. I became obsessed by the film and saw it over 20 times. For me, it was a work of art comparable to that of Milton or Dante. The myriad voiceovers on the soundtrack that had at first seemed so confusing now seemed simply understandable. This, film was told from God's point of view, and this is what it must be like for the Creator to hear the unspoken thoughts of men about to die (and, in one extraordinary scene, the thoughts of a dead Japanese soldier). It was a studio-financed film that asked the big questions about the mean life, a film that as far as I'm concerned can rank with ome of the greatest works of art in Western civilization. Steve, of course, got it on the first showing and promptly proclaimed it Malick's masterpiece. When I got to meet Terrence Mal ick at a Directors Guild of America dinner, I sheep ishly approached him and

that war at the heart of

nature that defines human

rible secret he'd long kept from me. He was dying. It was at the beginning of 1999 that Steve was hos pitalized for what became the beginning of the ter

conveyed my profound

admiration. He was very

soft-spoken, almost serene.

his Texas accent reminding

ing voice. Immediately, I

raced home to call Steve

and relay the great news.

But while I was babbling,

Steve was sitting on his ter

me of Lyle Lovett's speak

minal phase of his liver failure. A minor stroke followed, and at some time during the spring, Steve lost the use of his legs and was forced to use a wheelchair. I would go down and visit, but despite his recent set backs, he still seemed jovial and never revealed the exten of his disease. In the sum mer of 1999, I was in Canada working on a film called A Storm in Summer for Show time Robert Wise was direct ing it - it was to be his 40th and final film — and he had insisted that I be his assistant. While shooting in Vancouver, I called Steve with the news that his one time goddess Nastassia Kinski had been cast in our pic ture and he should come up to visit the set. It was then that I finally discovered how much deterioration had taken place and how much pain he was in. He told me it had been so terrible he'd wanted to die and for Steve to confess that made me realize how serious it was. When I returned to L.A., I raced down to San Diego and found that Steve had been placed in a hospice in El Cajon and was not given much time to live Yet he seemed in relatively good spirits when I arrived, and I managed to take him for a drive to a nearby record store, and for a brief moment, Blubbo was in his element, all was right with

When Mr. Wise was injured in a fall, I became the overseer of the postproduction of the Showtime film. Unable to visit Steve I was pleased to learn that

the world.

organization, and it seemed cross between Tennessee Malick's concern is all war Laser Removal of C D J V J O J

HEALTH AND BEAUTY

Laser Removal of

he had gone home and American Cinematheque. eemed to be on the mend. This would be a pattern next year and a half. After each stint in the hospital. he would return home a little weaker. Sometimes I'd drive down and we'd go see a movie: other times I'd arrive at his home and he wouldn't want to get out of bed. And then Steve's mother died and things became bleak. He stopped taking phone calls and I didn't himself back in Paradise Valley Hospital. know what was going on This dragged on until this spring, when he took another turn for the worse. This time

he didn't go home. In December of last year I landed a job working on the Academy Awards handling media relations It was a great gig but very time consuming, and I didn't realize how bad Steve was getting. I was even trying to get him to come up -I'd get him into the Oscar show, which was being held on the same weekend that Charlton Heston was appearing in person at a reening of El Cid at the

But Steve, in the final stages of his liver failure, was in no condition. After the show was finished. I drove down to visit him at a rehab center on Euclid Boulevard, and he seemed as down a I had ever seen him. He pleaded with me to get him out of the place; his roommate was a screaming psycho, and he just wanted to •go home. But he was too far gone, and he soon found

When I went down in May, it was a difficult encounter. He was speaking incoherently, as if he were talking in his sleep, and I realized there wasn't much time left. The liver was shutting down, and the toxins were flooding into his blood. One day, I called to find out how he was doing, and his nurse told me he had developed a lifethreatening infection. His liver had finally been eaten away; his kidneys were shutting down. I got a call from one of his sisters, and she said he was about to go. I drove

down the next day but stopped by a friend's place in PB for a brief hello. I lingered too long, and by the time I arrived. Steve had been dead for about 35

A week after the memoria

service, I spent my Fourth of July going through boxes and boxes of Steve's objets d'garbage at the now-empty house. I was hoping I might find some lost writings, a novel perhaps, maybe some short stories, something that could be published posthumously. After all, he'd had 20 years in which to indulge his need to write; there had to be something. And yet all I found were scraps of writing, fragments of unsent letters; nothing of significance. There was a reference to a pair of novellas he'd written, "Death Fears Me" and "So Many Assholes, So Few Bullets," but I could find no trace of any manuscripts themselves. I found scattered copies of written, but nothing col-

lated in any kind of order I found some prized books. ranging from The Confessions of St. Augustine, to Jerzy Kosinski's Painted Bird, plenty of well-worn copies of Playboy, massive amounts of pornographic cartoons he scribbled in his last few years, but nothing of his

I spent the night on the couch of the empty house, knowing it would be the last time I ever would do so. It brought back many memories of nights spent in the past, and I knew I'd never have that kind of friendship again, the kind where you could call some one day or night and he'd be there for you, the kind where you speak in a shorthand that only you two can understand, the kind of friendship that we shared The next morning, three of Steve's sisters stopped by and we talked about what a sad waste it all had been Still trying to understand why, what it was that made him give up on his life, I sought an answer to a ques tion that had always both

it, and she didn't want to ered me. Why had Steve turned down the scholarship that he'd been awarded t

Harvard? "Oh, that was

Mom," came the reply, "She

didn't want him to go back

East. 'Why do you want to

go there? You won't be able

to make it.' So she talked

him out of going to

Although I knew Steve's

mom had always been overly

protective. I had never real

ized it had such destructive

consequences. "Steve was

the baby and she spoiled

him rotten. We all did. She

didn't care what he did, just

as long as he was doing it

upstairs in his room. She

didn't think he could han-

dle it back East, that the

pressure would be too much

for him. That's why she

talked him out of taking the

a job as editor of the Reader

but Mom didn't think he'd

be able to handle the pres-

sure, so she convinced him

not to take the job. She just

didn't think he was up to

"What Reader position?

Steve had been offered

Reader position too."

I sat there, stunned

Harvard."

"Do you think that was what caused him to turn to

"I think it was that and Uncle Thut's death, Right after Thut died, Mom told Stevie that Thut was his father, and I think that's when he began drinking. I couldn't believe what

I had just heard. As his sis

ters went on to talk about

other family matters, I heard

little of it. I sat there in silence, as if a body blow had slammed into my chest Without putting too pre-I'd found the answer to the question that had bothered me since we had first become friends all those years ago, and now Rosebud was revealed. Not a sled, just an overprotective mother, prob ably unaware of just how gifted her son truly was, try ing to protect him from failure and instead denying him the chance to test him self in the forge of adversity. The law of unintended consequences is a bitch, handing out death sentences in the name of love.

I'm sure there were nany other reasons as wel for his despair - failed romances, low self-esteem the gulf between his intel t and his surroundings the crisis caused by his father's unspoken identity - but this revelation emed the key to this whole fucking tragedy. Steve's iden tity had been so intertwined with his mother - they shared the same cynicism the same gruffness, even the same penchant for dis pensing nicknames — that her refusal to allow him out of the nest must have been a source of conflicted anguish for him. I cannot

understand. And to think what it must have been like for him. during those last years, knowing he had brought it on himself, scoffing at the doctors' warnings. What thoughts must have tor tured him during thos bleak hours, alone, bedrid den, and in agony. I can only imagine what hell he must have been suffering.

pretend to even begin to

As I ruffled through him then. I wish I could have told him to be strong the rest of the papers strewn about his room, I felt like getand make his way in life, to ting drunk. Christ, what believe in himself. I wish anguish must have eaten there was something I could have done for him. I wish away at him. Alone, in his oom, with that intellect of there was something I could do to ease the anguish in his. I found scraps of paper my own heart for the long, he had written, berating himself for his cowardice w death of Steven No castigating himself for the Middle-Name Nunal roads not taken. And ther

I found a photograph of

Steve that broke my heart.

There he was, going to his senior prom with his high

school sweetheart. There

was no trace of the over-

weight, ill-dressed man-

child that I had known for

all those years, but rather, a

dapper young Steven Esme-

dina, elegant in top hat and

tails, ready to take his best

girl out on the town. He has

the confidence of youth in

this photograph, the world

was still his, waiting to be

taken by storm, and, by God,

he looks like he was ready

for the challenge. There was

something in that photo

something in those eyes I

had never seen - a confi

dence, a sense of hope. I

wish I could have known

When I hear King Crimson or Robert Palmer or Traffic or Art Blakey, or when I watch Soderbergh's King of the Hill or Terence Davies's sublime The Long Day Closes, Blubbo will be there. I shall think of Steve when I listen to the Stones and recall those times we went to the stadium to see them. I shall think of Steve when the Chargers score a touchdown and recall how nervous he was during their march to the Super Bowl he got up and left our liv ing room so he wouldn't iinx their chances. I shall think of Steve when I listen to Kind of Blue, because he was the one who told me it was the best jazz album of all time. I shall think of Steve when I see a movie I

and feel the sadness of not being able to share with him. I shall think of Steve at 3:00 a.m. when I feel alone and wish there was someone to call and open up my heart to. I wish I could say, Hey, Blubbo, your man Bryan Ferry is on tour, are ou gonna go? Or, Hey, what about that new Buffalo Springfield box set? And, course, I shall think of Steve when I watch the films of Terrence Malick, Before Steve's final decline, I was burning a CDR for him that contained the philosophic voiceovers from The Thin Red Line. The spiritual yearning, the desire for transcendence - these, too,

were a part of the Steve

Esmedina that I knew, a

part not easily shared with

many others, and as I lis-

offering up their thoughts

to the great unknown spirit,

I think of Steve and hope my

friend's troubled soul has

know he would have liked

found peace at last. "I remember my dying.... I heard people talk about immortality but I ain't seen it. I wonder how it would be when I died. What it would be like to know this breath now was the last one you was ever going to draw? I just hope I can meet it the same way she did, with the same calm 'Cause that's where it's hid den, the immortality I haven't seen.... Your death that captures all... You, too, are the source of all that's going to be born.... Maybe all men got one big soul where everybody's a part of it. All faces of the same man one big self. Everyone look ing for salvation by himself. Each like a coal, thrown from the fire Are you righteous, kind? Does your confidence lie in this? Are you loved by all? Know that I was, too, Do you imagine your sufferings will be less because you loved goodness, truth? This great evil where did it come from it grow from? Who's doing this? Who's killing us? Rob bing us of light and life

of what we might have

known. Does our ruin ber efit the earth? Does it help the grass to grow or the sun to shine? Is this darkness in you too? Have you passed through this night? One man looks at a dying bird and thinks there's nothing but unanswered pain. That death's got the final word it's laughing at him. Another man sees that same bird and feels the glory.... Where was it that we were together? Who were you that I lived with, walked with? The brother, the friend. Dark ness and light, strife and love - are these the workings of one mind? The features of the same face? Oh my soul, let me be in you now. Look out through my eyes, look out at the things ou made. All things shining." -

- Mike Thomas

Mike Thomas has written for the San Diego Union, the Los Angeles Times, and the LA Reader Founder of the San Diego Film Society, he currently lives in L.A., where he works in the movi







Get Out and **Get Drunk**

he greatest rock and roll song ever was 'No Time to Live.' "

That was Steve Esmedina almost six years ago. I suppose you could make a case for almost any random quote from almost anyone being prophetic after the fact of his or her death, but I did kind of choke on this opening line of "My Dinner With Blubbo," an interview I did with Steve

Steve called himself "Blubbo," though I never could, while most of his friends — and I like to think I was one of them — called him Esmo. Why Blubbo? Well, you could say Esmo had low self-esteem, sure you could; and it wouldn't make any difference to him back then and even less now. I think it had more to do with Esmo's habit of calling things the way they were; a habit that endeared him to some and alienated him from those who preferred their bubbles - silly as they might be — intact. A case that springs to mind, though not the most egregious, was his dismissal (in 1989) of Jefferson Starship as "makeout music for sentimental hippies. He then pointed out that "Miracles by that band had replaced "We've Only Just Begun" as wedding music for "newlywed diagbats." Or references to Bruce Springsteen as "Bossy Brucie" and lumping him in that category of "gas-station attendants pos ing as rock stars (i.e., the Blasters...John Cougie...)." The above dates from a 1989 "Of Note" about the Bacchanal appearance of local heroes the Beat Farmers, in which Esmo shrugged heretically, "I'm still waiting to hear something, anything, that can be construed as novel, trailblazing, important."

Observations such as these were occasions for readers to write in describing the critic as "A genetic miscreant." To which Esmo replied tha night in December '95:

"[Does it bother me?] No, because they cannot argue with the truth. All that knoweth the truth shall listen to me." Pretty much serious, he went on to add, "Hey, the only thing George Bernard Shaw ever did was when he wrote 'A Critical Credo,' he said, 'I hear they're starting a critics club What a joke! By the very nature of the beast he must want to slaughter, chop up, throw to the dogs those who offend him and follow slavishly those who exalt him?" Esmo stuck the period on that one by lifting a bottle of Michelob to his lips as if he

were only commenting on the obvious Esmedina didn't soft-focus his lens when trained on himself either. So he invited everyone to call him Blubbo, "Cuz that's what I am," he

shrugged. "I'm Blubbo." I think this was followed by a discussion of Village Voice critic Robert Christgau's theory of the human race being broken down into two categories, the way people are divided by say, cat people and dog people. Christgau's model was one of creeps and assholes. Everyone is one or the other, and Esmo and I congratulated ourselves that we had pretty much avoided creepdom. I maintain to this day tha Steve Esmedina was not a creep.

Leafing through the transcript of that interview, much of which never made it into print - and now, in the wake of his death, leafing through his old reviews - Blubbo eems to rise from the printed page to bestow an elegant full moon on pop culture's faithful.

Steve came down on rap and hip-hop back in 1989, not as a frightened suburban white boy, but as a Filipino homey living in the goddamned ghetto, where he was also cremated recently. He called it "...that malingering genre/disease," establishing his bona fides by adding:

"I used to enjoy hearing my ghetto brethren swap 'the dozens' (insults in rhyme) and was even gratified to hear the jive banter artfully manip-



ulated into something approaching

street poetry by the likes of the Last

Poets, Gil Scott-Heron, Reverend Ike,

and Rudy Ray Moore. I would never

have imagined that there would come

a time when such garbage would

metamorphose into a multimillion-

dollar half-industry. Since viruses are

in vogue, the once-dreaded Barry

White-Bee Gees-Donna Summer

disco has come to seem, in retrospect,

Marky Mark and the Funky Bunch.

About Marky himself (dapper on the

cover of last July's GO), he wrote.

barely pronounce in comprehensi-ble phonetic fashion..." This was at

a time when millions of chicks were

swooning, fully prepared to ruin their

lives for an errant drop of this guy's

sweat or commit suicide in the attempt.

all the while unconsciously prepar-

ing to forget about him to make room

in their diaries of infantile erotica for

the Backstreet Boys, and later, Ricky

But rock, hip-hop, and R&B were only a part of Esmedina's world. He

knew more about movies than I

thought possible for anyone to know

(other than his friends Duncan Shep-

herd and Bill Richardson - the lat-

ter sitting next to me, weeping at

Esmo's memorial service) But again

this body of knowledge may have

been dwarfed when it came to what

Blubbo (all right, Blubbo) knew about

dina said, "In life, Miles Davis was

vilified as often as he was exalted: he

simply refused to behave. He made

light of his nickname, the 'Prince of

Darkness,' but the epithet suited his

needs and purposes," Substitute Miles

Davis for Steve Esmedina, "Prince of

Darkness" for "Blubbo," and I think

it works. Reading further in that same

piece, the conceit might continue

second-guessed, lampooned, and

derided so much that he often twisted

his taciturnity into sour, ugly brag-

gadocio. And during the last decade

Throughout his career, Davis was

Writing about Miles Davis, Esme-

This ingenuous thug cannot sing, can

The above was in his review of

positive, vital, even virtuous"

Millions of chicks were swooning, fully prepared to ruin their lives for an errant drop of this guy's sweat.

of his life, the once-young punk seemed to have degenerated into a spoiled curmudgeon." Who is Blubbo really writing about here?

Writing about music is a nearly impossible proposition in the first place; it is transmuting the ineffable into language. To call it a challenge is a gross understatement. Few serious writers attempt it (I don't mean the happy blurb machines that make up the music press corps of Entertainment Weekly and their ilk); fewer writers succeed at producing firstrate work on the subject of pop/rock/folk/R&B/country, etc. It gets even narrower in the ink-stained alleyways of jazz. Esmedina was as good on the subject as Nat Hentoff was. I would often circle phrases in Esmedina's columns and reviews that articulated, for me, some elusive reality in the primary material.

Case in point. I once tried explaining to a friend, who thought I should be crazy about Stanley Jordan, why I was both so impressed and so frustrated by that guitarist. I couldn't make my case comprehensible. Weeks later, Esmedina did when Jordan came

"lordan's mastery is undeniable." he wrote, "but it is generally in the service of the mundane (oft-repeated jazz and pop standards) or the negligible (his banal compositions). The results are tantalizing but ephemeral. Perhaps if Jordan played with partners of equal caliber to provide ballast, his stuff would not seem so much like hollow glamour-mongering." Yeah," I thought. That's it exactly. I was learning from Esmedina long before I started writing in the same pages, and though I'd written an

unpublished novel about my own experiences in rock and roll bands, I wouldn't consider myself a "music writer" for some time

It was in 1992 when I was asked to write a piece for the music section. I was in a local hand, and the idea was to review the audience from the musician's point of view. A funny enough concept, but since we had such a small audience at the Spirit Club on that night, I basically reviewed the other band members and myself. It was funny, and I was asked to write more stuff. The paper at that time had talents like D'Agostino, Stampone, and, of course Esmedina. The invitation was attractive and daunting. But I figured if it was some kind of Italian rockwrite mafia at the Reader, with my last name, I had a My reviews of local and

national bands were so informed by Esmedina's style that I read them now and realize to a large extent I was doing Esmedina.

I had lines like "The

of the world know what you think. In the pages I write for, I've been given freedom. I cánnot talk about music as if it were always something that reflected my problems. I don't care about what some pedes trian music writer did with her sister when she was a kid. Make it interesting. Make it fun. Make something up!

cussion sounded like a

55-gallon drum full of bro-

ken glass and household

appliances tumbling down

guitarist was in the tertiary

stages of Stevie Ray Vaughan

syndrome." I was trying to write like Blubbo. Mean-

spiritedness had nothing

to do with it. This band had

begged me for publicity,

and when I heard them

their mediocrity was an

affront, a waste of my time

and yours. Blubbo would

probably have skewered

them with more wit - and

I'm not just saying that

because he's dead. I'm sav-

ing it because it's probable

with Blubbo" I asked him

'Why aren't you more

famous?" And then I men-

tioned another rock critic

writing in these pages at

that time who also wrote

for Entertainment Weekly

and had a gushy hack/hic

of a rock star on the best-

seller list. Esmo said, "She

works at it. I do not know

how to do that. I don't

understand the energy

involved in letting the rest

During "My Dinner

No doubt much will be made in San Diego music circles about similarities

The last time I saw Blubbo was in Paradise Valley Hospital. He thought he was dying.

between Stephen Esmed ina and Lester Bangs, and I won't deny them. I knew Esmo, not Rangs, but, weah. on the page they were in as Christgau and Marcus and Meltzer, better than Crowe, Marsh, and Hilburn, just in a different market

ley Hospital. He thought he was dying. We all thought he was dying. He wanted to die. He asked Bill Richardson and me to kill him. Get some drugs that would just take him out, he was in so much pain. We couldn't do it. I got mad. I said, "You can't die. This town is full of morons waiting for you to tell them what to think. You're too good. You can't

The last time I say

Blubbo was in Paradise Val-

We all thought he was dying.

die. This is wrong." I took it out on the nice Filipino nurses and got the name of the doctor on the floor and kept calling for two hours until I got him to put a morphine patch on Blubbo. I knew what kind of agony he was in because I suffer from the same dis

surgery wasn't for me.".

ease. I lay in a hospital bed with a swollen liver, spleen and pancreas trying to erupt out of my torso like a tric of toothy bloated aliens A couple of days later,

I spoke with him on the one. He sounded great. He was feeling all right and was about to be discharged He said, "I can't wait to get out of here and relapse

"Ah...ieez.ah...that's not what you shoot for,

"Don't call me Esmo." "Okay. I'll talk to you later." That was our last

conversation. Stephen "Blubbo" Esmedina's old friend Mike Thomas, working in television in Hollywood these days, came down and gave the eulogy. He cried, he got mad, he laughed too. What he had to say constituted the service, and I think Steve would have been moved and amused - touched that this guy and Bill in the back pew couldn't keep from crying because something was now gone in their lives beyond retrieval. My grief was constituted by large

amounts of fear, because as I said. I've got what Steve had, went along that road, looked down, freaked, and turned back. Another big element to go with my loss and fear would have to be annoyance, because with Esmedina out of the way.

the world is just that much

safer for mediocrity.

On the way out of the Sally Lynn Chapel that day, to the strains of some horrible shit by Edith Piaf or someone none of us could figure out and Esmedina would have hated, Mike Thomas said, "I can just hear him saving, 'lame jam.' I laughed and thought "Yeah, I can hear him say ing that." But it wasn't the service that was lame Thomas made it what it should have been. It was Esmo's death that was a lame jam. And on the heels of that thought came another one "I'm still learning from the guy." .

— John Brizzolara

John Brizzolara has written for the Reader since



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Blubbo's **Secret Tongue**

front of my open garage, Monique Esmedina and I sit on the cold paveent. The fountains in her eyes seem to have shut down again, and moments

of bitter silence are repeatedly punctured by sobs

After more than three weeks of trying to locate the peripatetic "Moan," I'd nearly given up. Today I had decided it was time to finish sorting through the last of the stuff that her uncle Steven had returned to me, his remark able soul imprinted on every piece. And now...Allah Akbar! Here comes

I deem him one of the greates beings alive in our time We shall never see his like again.... His name will live in the annals of history Torn between two civilizations This controversial figure who became a legend in his own lifetime.... The most extraor dinary man I ever knew. He was a poet, a scholar, and a mighty warrior.

Steven Esmedina would, were he here today, insist on reading the above tributes at least two times before com osing himself to offer comment Finally, he would give his response; as always, precise, concise, fearless: "Thanks, Alex. What are . . . words spoken in the trailer for the film Lawrence

of Arabia?" Once again, Steven Esmedina is our champion. In addition, he'd think it's pretty damn fucking funny that those bloated accolades had found their way here to begin with, into a piece about his own bloated, funkybad self. Well, I've got news for you, Blubbo: those raves might just as truly have been written about you! Parts of it, at least, I mean, a word or two...all right, how about "torn"?

On a summer night about 24 years ago, I first encountered Steven Esmedina on the dance floor of the popular North Park lesbian bar Diablo's My friend Ginger had begged me to accompany her and two of her girl friends, insisting that it would be a fabulous experience with absolutely no problems. Somewhere across town. a similar group of ladies were certifying their friend Steve as their own scot on a trip to the same destination.

Red lights were everywhere. It was much larger than I had expected There was only one couple actually



dancing, but 10 or 12 ladies had formed a semicircle at the far end of the dance floor, blocking view of whatever it was they were studying. I walked along the mirrored walls to investigate, notice ing a diminutive guy (at least I wasn't the only male!) standing by himself. away from the ladies, who were devouring the same remarkable something with their mournful starving eyes.

The object of this brokenhearted attention was a single woman, her hands pressed up against floor-toceiling mirrored wall, swaying sensuously in time to the music. She reminded me of Michelle Phillips, only if Michelle Phillips had become even more beau tiful. A masterpiece of female beauty, dancing only with herself, in love with her own reflection. The ladies around her could do little but gaze and hurt and dream and hurt some more.

I began to feel intrusive. When the other guy saw me heading toward the exit, he followed. Outside, we lit cigarettes. Then he spoke.

"I was thinking about offering to buy that girl her favorite drink, but Diablo's ran out of it last night. They're expecting their next shipment of her bath water sometime tomorrow

Good one! "Could you believe

Steven either hit a bump in the road or lost his way when he approached Hustlertown.

that?" I asked. "Incredible. And the looks on the faces of those chicks...the whole scene, the whole situation! Pucking unbelievable...so fucking...

'Poignant," he declared, precisely, and I would have high-fived him, but I don't think high-fiving had been ented yet.

Having read and admired both his and Duncan Shepherd's criticism for many years by that time, I was happy to meet Steve in person, and he seemed pleased that I was a fan. We spent a while talking of our shared admiration for Shepherd, as well as several other regular Reader contributors. Perhaps our most emphatic agreement on that perfect summer night was that neither of us would ever be capable of forgetting Revelation in Red, a superb tableau, described by at least one noted critic as "poignant.

I didn't run into Steven again for several years. Early in the '80s, though, his niece Monique began to work at the Guild Theatre which I managed

She would tell me wonderful stories about her uncle, during times when her tongue took the odd vacation away from its new residence in the throat of my older brother Tom. The more I learned about Steven from Moan, the more I admired him. We seemed to like a lot of the same stuff.

I was flattered that he enjoyed the musical duo that Troy Danté and I had started. When he interviewed us. he hadn't yet realized I was his niece's oss, nor that we had met several years before. When I began describing a

a single dance...it clicked "That was you! Yeah! Oh, I've dreamed about that scene...that amazing bitch...that goddess...wa

"Poignant," I offered. We became friends. Since 1965, he was able

to recite the entire "Dracula's Return" side of the albun Famous Monsters Speak That's 22 minutes in a Lugos accent, word-perfect and never missing inflection or pause. I could toss him a random line from the script, and he'd pick up and carry on the narrative until I'd have to stop him, each of us satisfied. I was satisfied also in that I had another friend who, having fallen in love with monsters during the Great Golden Revival of the late '50s, lived to watch his love grow. Steven was thrilled that I had saved most of the ines and many of the other artifacts from my child hood's "dark side," and it was gratifying to observe

When Playboy hopped into our lives, we didn't trade one for the other. Hell, we had lots of room, Bring 'em on: Help, Mad, and on and on through the decades. It seems clear now that Steven either hit a bump in the road or lost his way when he approached Hustlertown. I imagine his conflicted heart being given a choice: Hang out here for a while or find the straight road home. For young Steven, alone, this would be a tough decision to make. He would leave it

to Beaver. "I do not like whiskey, but I do like tea This does not mean that I wish to stop people drinking whiskey, so long as they do not want to stop me drinking tea." - Peter Cushing, 1954 me, she asked me if I had ever

Few things pissed us off as superbly as censorship, and no one defined our view as simply and as civilly as Peter Cushing, one of Steven's favorite actors and my all-time movie hero

Monique is sitting, hug-We were in our midring her knees tightly to her chin as if she is trying to 30s when we realized that new restrictions were being ecome a ball. Teardrops placed on the content o are still noticeable on the adult motion pictures. The pavement around her, and government didn't think they're trying to transform one should be allowed too. Silence and sadness and to let their own adult ever moking back and forth to the witness certain acts of adult beat of a heart. A startling giggle as her head turns

ard me, an infant smile while she speaks.

on television screens, or

This decree was retroactive

Steven and I saw ourselves,

even as we tiptoed through

being legally forbidden to

view many of the images

ve legally had been able to

see half a lifetime ago. Yes,

our all-time adult classic,

The Devil in Miss Jones, was

still on the shelves. It was

still, by definition, "hard

core." But now, the fruits of

Justine Jones's labors

(banana, for example) are

very carefully diminished

back: I had a cellar, which,

over many years. I had

whiskey. When I told Stever

about this, he was delighted,

and I was more than happy

to let him borrow from th

cellar. Years passed, the Gov

ernment continued to dilute

whiskey with increasing

amounts of tea, which made

me pissed. I found some

comfort in the security of m

now-rare, untainted stock

however, when it became

of the choicest examples of

my collection. One in par

ticular (I'll call it Esmo

he had borrowed for sev-

eral years without returning.

Throughout the years, Steven

would assure me with con

cerned, even comforting

sympathy that Esmogiveit

back Vol. I had never left my

chance encounter with

Monique around the time

of Steven's scary hospital

ization provided the longed

for conclusion to an annov-

ing mystery. Commenting

on the remarkable similar

ities she noted in the cul-

tural tastes of her uncle and

experienced the singular

delight of Esmogiveitback

Vol. I. a discovery of her

uncle's, which, over the years,

had become the talk of the

block and an essential acces-

sory for any successful soirée.

Three years ago, a

home in his hands.

eitback! Vol. I) I was sure

npossible to locate several

Even that comfort died

mount of...unadulterated

stocked with a substantia

Allow me to pull Peter

the foyer of middle ag

inating from videotape

"So did you call him on that one? Bust him? Did you get it back?" I think I'm glad I left it

alone. To Steven and me. the more some things increased in their legal or cultural toxicity, the more we needed to locate and trap them. This was a special ho potato; less a transgressive artifact than a source of some essential nutrient. And must have realized that he needed it more than I did: some part of it could help inspire him when he embarked on his Last Adventure.

Monique is crying again "He was my friend! The finest man I've ever

Monique begins to share several pieces of herself and of Steven. The beauty of her face, too, become legend in a very grateful

In school, she tells me, Steven had been the class clown, the witty scholar, the coolest friend. At home he felt hopelessly controlled and emotionally starved. Monique was only five years younger than her uncle. Having no father at home, Monique examined little Stevie's résumé and offered him the position. He'd take it on one condition, he replied: he wanted to be her brother too. He knew that would be neat because he had his own brother who was a lot older (15 years), and Steven loved him more than anyone, so now Monique would love him that much

Steven and Monique grew close and would remain o. When grown, she had a habit of changing residences as if competing for a world record. Every time they lost contact, though, Steven knew she'd be popping in soon. He

was never wrong. Steven did have a pervasive problem that he was powerless to put right. Today some people call it negative

body image. Certainly he was aware of his intelligence, his amiability, his literary skills. But he loathed the physical package that enveloped them At some point, he resolved that he would always be fat and short and foreign-looking and decided he preferred being called "Blubbo."

g to call him anything but Steve or Steven or Esmo. the last of which he once granted me his official permission to use in public, as long as it was either preceded or followed by hail-

I pissed him off by refus-

ing him Tongue of Tongues Within a day, Steven had forgotten all about the conions, and I wasn't about to remind him. The Glorious Squiggle Days were in the mid-'90s, and Steven understood why I would come to call them that. They were glorious

> less than glorious had my girlfriend Squiggles not been such a delicious centerpiece. Here was an intelligent, attractive lady who had been a fan of Esmo for many years, and the fact that I ctually knew El Steve must

> have earned me a bonus

only in their supreme rev-

elation of the horror behind

the mask of beauty, and they

would have been so much

point or two in the decency department. Steven was a frequent visitor to the home Squig-gles and I created, and she would look forward to his sporadic presence. They soon became enthralled with one another; his affection being seasoned with no small amount of robust lust.

Her fascination with his literary talent led her to select his criticism as the topic of a paper she was preparing for one of her classes at UCSD. To aug ment her research, Squiggles borrowed my own scrapbook of Collected Esmo which became essential in the construction of her dissertation. He was able to say hello to a period of unexpected pride; I was never allowed to say goodbye to the collection of my friend's writings, which I spent several years putting together

Steven once invited Squiggles and me to accompany him to a Tom lones concert he was to review. I snuck a tape recorder into the show. At one point near the end, Squiggles asks Steven, "Have you ever heard a voice like that?" I can understand her candor without issue more easily now, when I replay the tape, noting that I am not present. Taking a

powder, probably. "Truly, he is the King of Kings," Steven replies, honestly. It was a phrase he would use at the close of his

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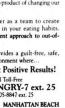
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review of the concert, attributing it to me! It was also a sort of in joke, a way to usher into print the title of one of our favorite films.

Fuck me, sweet Esmo After that suprem ning, things started to get ugly. Steven's urge to write began to hide from him. Squiggles and I broke up. (The true details of the split, Steven swore, would make enthralling fiction.) With her, sadly, went my treasured collection of Steven's writings, in a folder I had labeled "Esmolingus."

But 1996 wasn't done with us yet. During the same month, Steven's beloved older brother (Monique's father) died, as did my own older brother, whose throat had been the happy home of Monique's tongue, over a decade before. Then my dear friend Ginger died, she who had steered me to Dia blo's (and Steven) so long ago.

The only retrievable loss in this mess would be the collection of Steven's writing. I missed the legendary cover story abou his travels with the Penetrators (a work of importance not only to the band

but to the San Diego music scene, then and now), and I longed to laugh again at the other gem in which he described one deserving performer (MC Hammer?) s a "worthless fuck." Among the writings was one article Steven would have given anything to have wiped from the world's memory and his own. It contained a faux pas concerning a female performer's identity that wa so unlike the encyclopedic Esmedina, that I often felt a sort of unkind, sadistic

I was aware of several stages of grief, and in regard to the lost Esmolingus, I skipped past Shock and Anger and headed straight to Bargaining. If Steven would allow me to borrow and photocopy his own files, I'd make him an all-on-one tape compilation video of several short subjects I had created, including my latest (and which was to remain his favorite), White Pussy.

need to verify its astonish

ing existence. .

Yes, as in cat. Feline. Honestly. So...as to his files. "I never save that shit," he told me in his casual final-as-fuck manner, break-

I made him the tape yway. For the first of sev eral times. Overuse would require frequent replacements of White Pussy.

Tongue of Tongues actually does have some value, biographically. Impli cations will be exami (following a peek back at the garage) in a fashion that is not for all tastes.

I reach down for her hands and help Monique up. We walk away from the open garage and into the sunlight, and on perhaps the most gorgeous day this year has yet seen, we make an attempt to understand, for our own sakes, whom or what we can most easily blame. An unhealthy upbringing? Too many

"It was the fucking vodka," Monique decides, for now.

The presence of Steven Esmedina's shadow, a part of my daily life for weeks now, is like the unspoker gloom that followed the man everywhere. The inferiority complex was his shadow. He seemed to welcome it. He befriended it. confident that if he and that shadow ever stopped get-ting along, all he'd have to do is turn off the lights. But ultimately, he smashed those lights, and everything i deeply, dreadfully dark.

He correctly assumed that his body (which had never been as friendly as his shadow) was shutting down. He had always been in love with feminine beauty. To put it correctly. Steve was a major horndog, obsessed with sex in all its forms.

He was a devoted stu dent of any kind of intimate physical interaction between woman and man. Or woman and woman. Woman and animal/vegetable/minestrone soup ladle He yearned to learn and looked forward to arranging some exciting field trips

His self-image and his deteriorating health weren't going to help him open any doors. He was, however, proud of his tongue and its superb technique. One memorable afternoon, for my amusement, he paradeo around my living room shouting some sort of Esmo Mantra/Manifesto (in tongues?) in the key of Steve:

spot in an outdoor picnic "I AM NOT AN ANI area where Monique and I MALLIAM A HUMAN vould delight in his grad-BILIBBO! FEED MEEEEE ual improvement. The big red felt letters spelling ESMO I AM A FAT UGLY FUCK WHO HAS BEEN BLESSED on the backrest cracked him FROM ON HIGH WITH up, and he would never THE TONGUE OF remove them. TONGUES! IT NEITHER TOILS NOR SPINS YET IT

IS FED! IT WILL BE FED!

FEED THEN? THE

TONGUE OF TONGUES

FEED BLUBBO IN RIGH

TEOUS SERVICE OF

WOMANKIND! ALLAH

there. Maybe not, I was or

the floor in laughter for a

long time. Later that day, I

begged him to repeat this

act for my video camera or

even a tape recorder and

still camera. He refused

Lately he'd started using

cameras and recorders for

a different kind of act. Only

etween his mind and his

body. The two would join in

a race against the clock to

mount a reunion/farewell

tour. The location would be

his hedroom. The show

would last days or months

or years or until the money

ran out or somebody pulled

his plug. The show would be

pay-to-play; guest stars he

or escort services. He'd pay

They'd play. What a way to

into his enterprise. He fell

hard for one of his "guests"

in particular, and she encour-

aged him and made him

believe that she truly loved

him, just him. No one else

mattered. She assumed his

surname in their ongoing

of vast sums of money. Then

she left, having given him

the gift of a broken heart. His

shadow, strong and sardonic

watched Steven Esmedina

Three years ago, Monique

and I would visit Steven on

what he insisted was going

to be his last bed, at an El

said then. "Blubbo's done."

Blubbo?" I whined sarcas-

tically, and he laughed. W

held up the wheelchair I

had brought him; the

wheelchair in which we

assured him he'd be leav

ing the hospital. We'd visit

and glide him around the

place, resting at his favorite

"I'm gonna die here," he

"Is this the end of

drift...down.

Cajon hospital.

production. She bled hi

Headfirst Steve dove

ould recruit from strip dube

Steven had called a truce

Maybe you had to be

AKRAR!"

that kind.

Nor did I ever alter the black velvet Dracula cape with red lining that he had given me a year or two earlier. I bring it down to the garage to show Monique, who is stroking the red ESMO on the well-used wheelchair. I start to tell her how much the cape means to me...and how much her uncle meant to me and to so many others. I tell her about the last time I saw him. His dearest friend, Mike Thomas, called from L.A. to let me know that Steven was hospitalized again and

I pulled out my laserdisc of Steve's favorite movie, El Cid, and recorded onto audiocassette his favorite musical cues. I grabbed a portable player. Off to El

that, again, this was extremely

The nurses at the hospital told me he was becoming unresponsive; he was in fact deeply asleep. Quickly there was music to his ear (the right one, at least). And, of course, he woke up, smiled, and chatted for 20 minutes or so. He found it very difficult to speak, so I did most of the chatting.

"I want you out of this place tomorrow, Esmo." "Rlubbo"

"No way. Blow your self. And learn to talk, if you don't mind." "I'm gonna die here."

Bullshit," I lied. "You tried that one last time." I'm glad I saw him one

last time. Monique had been away and had missed it, and the hurt still grows.

Mike Thomas came down from Los Angeles and spoke at the funeral. A more shaken, lonely person would be difficult to imagine. As would a more moving, comonate, beautiful speech. I can't recall ever hearing a more perfect testament to personal value, priceless loss, and the value of friendship Michael had been Steven's relative through the blood of the soul. For Michael, the incalculable worth that the ng presence of his friend

had held for so long had

become finite at some level

now all the memories and

inspiration were overpov ered by the cruelty of Final Loss. On that afternoon in the chapel, he defined Brotherly Love.

He would soon experience a new, unexpected

Michael came back into town the following week to help sort through Steven's effects; that useful, mournful task started to turn into nare. He uncovered the reality of Esmo's lizzneyland and was shocked to confront the extent of his friend's obsession with carnality during the final years. I was saddened and

ashamed when I drove ove one morning to join Michael at Steven's empty house. The single consolation I attempted that day was an honest product of the cheapest truth: that Steven had archives. taken some care to conceal the malignancy of his seamier side from his friend Michael. This was the side that Steven gloried in: outraging the norm. In this one area, Esmo knew he had gone berserk,

I like to think that Stever respected me too, but I'll have to accept that he did so in a different way. For years he had delighted in my willingness to be a target for the foam. He would bring me a steady supply of his tro phies: photos, photographic negatives, audio recordings Souvenirs from Jizzneyland They documented his growing delight in womankind and womankind's manu-

factured delight in him. One

ICRODERMABRASION

and he respected Mike too

much to expose his rabid

particular 60-minute cassette, an on-the-spot bit of audio verité, essentially demonstrates the number of different ways in which one certain female can invoke the names of God and Stever in the same moaning/ecstatic phrase. Two, maybe three recognizably different ways seems to be her creative

To understand that Steven loved the attention he received amid this trans parent mechanical bullship s to understand pity. It might have been similarly pitiful also had he denied his hungry, fading body the pleasures

Mike Thomas, bearing a new sting over the bruise of his personal loss, suggested that I take away the remaining Jizzneyland

Among them I noticed a duplicate of one particular color shot that Steven had delivered to me two years earlier; a photograph in which he took enormous pride.

A very beautiful young lady stares at the camera. her palms and knees sinking into a thick, dark comforter. She is smiling joy ously; the fact that she's mislaid her clothes hasn't hit her yet. The male figure lying on his stomach somewhat behind her is recognizable through general form and head of hair as none other than El Steve. His face is buried in some task and obscured, but there can be little doubt that his soul, at least, is cracking a big, wide

My sympathy, concern, and admiration for Mike Thomas still increases. That dreadful morning, before we had exited the haunted silence of Casa Esmedina, Michael shared his view on tragedy: How tangible the importance of life had become, how much clearer the worth of time itself, how urgent the need to live in as real as death. And life

I know that Michael will keep that creative part of Steven's spirit and use it to amplify his own.

The sun is setting and Monique tells me she's going up north and will come b when she returns in about two weeks. We're about to hug, I miss her already, I tell her what she already knows:

that Steven had always loved and treasured her. Through a new sheet of tears, sh turns the tables. Her liquid eyes, her endangered smile. the whole day and this whole experience are now inviting me to collapse.
"Bill, he always said how

lucky he was to have found you. Someone who was just as twisted as he was - Oh shit...I didn't mean...I

That saved me. A more perfect compliment from Esmo is unimaginable. I hope the bitch isn't lying

She's soon gone, and I'm about to close up the garage. I go to grab a few of Steven's juvenile porno collages in the hope of discovering some hidden mean ing. That task can wait. It can wait forever. I glance

again at the ESMO wheelchair. His spirit is with that too. I picture him rip ping through his house months or years ago when no one else was around shouting, "I am Blubbo! El Steve!" Then, a final "Allah Akbar!" rolls off the Tongue of Tongues, and Steven Esmedina rides on into

> Bless his beautiful, giving, twisted, poignant heart.
> — Bill Richardson

Bill Richardson has performed as José Sinatra since 1983 and is currently por traying John Lennon and Freddie Mercury in the musical Heaven Rocks.

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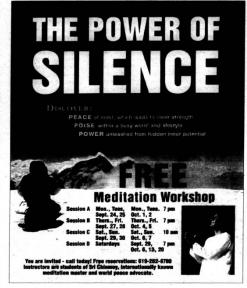
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Calendar

Silence Disciple

Cabrillo's Story

e were his first students in the United States," says Abel Silvas, speaking about his teacher, the esteemed French mime, who is perhaps the only mime that many of us, if asked, could name: Marcel Marceau. Silvas, who lives in Pacific Beach studied with him in the 1980s at the University of Michigan, where a short-lived American school of mime was established by the

"And he said to us that first morning, 'Okay, get up and do your stuff.' And one guy from New York started doing a mime and it was awesome. But Marcel stopped him in the middle of it. 'This is

LOCAL mime,' he said. 'This EVENTS is clown.

Art Museums & Galleries page 85

Local Events

Classical Music

page 69

Theater page 86 Pop Music

page 92 Restaurants page 122

He taught us mime's whole history. He broke it all down. From him we learned that a clown performs from the outside; a mime performs from the inside. Now we are his disciples all over this

Silvas, a South Bay nativ who teaches mime to both children and adults, says his earliest ambition was to use language to tell stories, funny ones. As a fifth-grader at Lauderbach Elementary School, he was the designated class clown. ("I had good timing.") His reputation for clowning grew at Castle Park High School. When he got to Southwestern College, he says his "ultimate goal" was to become a stand-up comedian, and his theater-arts professor, William Virchis, encouraged him to try.
"He would give me five minutes
on Fridays to do my stand-up and would grade me on it." Eventually, thanks in part to Virchis's critiques, Silvas was hired to do his routine at the Comedy Store in

What were the subjects of his what were the subjects of his routines? "They were bland; nothing interesting," says Silvas, who credits Marceau with helping him to develop his true talent, which is to tell stories his true talent, which is to tell stories using both words and gestures. Marceau helped him choose his rightful subject matter, too. "It was Marcel who encouraged me to look into my Native-American ancestry for my material. I've lived in New York and L.A., but Marcel



vas the one who told me to go back to my roots. That's when I came back home and started to do research."

Combining the research results with what he had long been told by his parents, Silvas determined that he was descended from members of five tribes of "Mission Indians" who intermarried with Europeans, including Spaniards, Portuguese, and Germans. Records show that his relatives were among the

first families to settle in Old Town

Native-American heritage when he was growing up. "When I was a little kid, anyone who believed the stereotypes used to say to me, 'Hey, you're not an Indian. You don't hunt buffalo. You don't live in a teepee.' I was kind of bummed by that. When I was bummed by that. When I was developing my material, Marcel asked me, 'What did your ancestors hunt?' What did your dad show you to hunt when you were small?' I told him that when I was five years old, my dad took me out to the Silver Strand and showed me how to catch a grunion. The

"The Voyage of Cabrillo" Sunday, September 23, 2:45 p.m. Sunday, September 30, 12:30 and 2:00 p.m. Cabrillo National Monum (in the auditorium) \$5 park-entrance fee per Info: 619-557-5450

them together."

And a character named Running Grunion" is Silvas's

"Bip" — Bip being the name of the signature Marceau character

whose face is painted white and

whose costume is a striped shirt,

short jacket, and stovepipe hat topped by a flower. "Marcel compared Running

Grunion to Bip. Bip goes traveling by train; Bip goes to a party. Running Grunion goes hunting:

Running Grunion goes fishing. It's

the same thing."
Well, analogously speaking, it is. Running Grunion wears no

white face paint. "I wear my regular brown skin," says Silvas. As for his costume, it's Native-American clothing consisting of a

rabbit indigenous to the region.
This weekend and next, at
the Cabrillo National Monument,

Running Grunion narrates the story of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo's landing in 1542 at what was later named San Diego Bay. The

Silvas's former professor, Virchis, of Southwestern. Running Grunion offers a

present-day perspective on the event and acts as a mediator between a fictional Native-American woman who was living

in the area when the expedition arrived and a fictional priest and sailor who accompanied Cabrillo. Asked if it's difficult to play a

Asked if it's difficult to play a role that requires him to alternate between two worlds — ours in the 21st Century and Cabrillo's in the 16th Century — Silvas says,

"Being half European and half Native-American, I already am in two worlds. That's how it always is for me. That's what it means to be

mestizo. People have been taught that the two sides are supposed to be separate. I'm trying to bring

production was directed by

"shell" made from the fur of a

EVENTS LISTINGS

HOW TO SEND US YOUR LISTING: Contributions must be received by 5 p.m. Friday the week

prior to publication for ideration. Do not phone. Send a omplete description of the event, scluding the date, time, cost, th precise address where it is to be held including neighborhood), a contact phone number, and a phone number including area code) for public emation to READER EVENTS Box 85803, San Diego CA 9218 5803 Or fax to 619-881-2401 You at www.SanDiegoReader.com by clicking on the events section. The Papantla Flyers, presenting a

BAJA

"Mexico in the 20th Century" is the

A Fiery Challenge, the 25th annual Baja International Chili Cookoff hosted by I.D. Hussong is slated for Saturday, September 22, from noon to 6 p.m., at the Quintas Papagayo Resort. Teams from the U.S. and Mexico will compete. The annual sals contest runs concurrently, and salsa contest runs concurrently, and here will be live entertainment, folklorico, arts and crafts, dancing, and

The \$10 fee includes chili sampling, five food and beverage coupons, and entertainment. Find the resort at kilometer 108 on the Ti-juana-Ensenada road. For information, dial 818-795-4818 or 011-52-61-76-4159. (ENSENADA)

A Demolition Derby is promised on Sunday, September 23, at 9 a.m., at Campo Romero Manzo, Mesa de Otay. For tickets and other details, call 011-52-66-82-8488. (TUUANA)

Langosta for Lunch? Head to Puerto Nuevo for a "Lunch in Lob-ster Village" when Baja California Tours hosts a guided outing on Wednesday, September 26. The \$52 fee includes transportation, lobster tee includes transportation, lobster lunch at El Patio de la Langosta, and shopping in Rosarito and Tijuana, For reservations, call 858-454-7166. (PUERTO NUEVO, TIJUANA)

The Papanita Fives, presenting a radiational ceremony with dance and musis, return to the Tijuana Cultural Centre with performances through September. Shows begin at 1, 3, and a 13 and 6 p.m. on Thursday and Fria-day, Find the gitner at Paseo de low day, Find the gutter at Paseo de low fixed to the control of the control of the control of the control of the Riss. For more information, call 011-52 66.87 9-900. Witch the thyers for free, TOUANAI,

Omnimax Films, see All Access— featuring concert footage of B.B. King, Carlos Santana, Sting, and others— when it screens Tuesday through Fri-day at 3, 5:30, 7, and 9:30 p.m., as well as at 11 a.m. on weekends, at the Om-nimas Theater in the Tijuana Cultural Center. Dolphins is shown Tuesday through Friday at 2, 4:30, and 8:30 p.m., with an additional screen-

ing at 2 p.m. on weekends. The center is located at Paseo de los Héroes and Mina Street in the

011-52-66-87-9600. (TUUANA)

OUTDOORS Equal Days and Nights everywhere

on the earth, 12 hours each, are only one noticeable consequence during the time of equinox, either autum-nal (fall) or vernal (spring). Another consequence is that the sun at equinox always rises from a point on the horizon due east and later sets due west. You could calibrate a cor pass this way if you had access to a other very subtle consequence is that at midlatitudes like ours, morning at midlatitudes like ours, morning, and evening twilight periods are shortest during equinox. From San Diego, the duration of twilight this week is about 80 minutes; last lune it was about 100 minutes.

was about 100 minutes.
Late Spreimer signals the beginning of Satu Ana winds, which may continue intermitently through the winter. Early Satu Ana are often responsible for coastal Sam Diego's hottest and driest days of the year. days a Lindberge-Field with 90 degree readings or higher have occurred during the months of Spetimer and Crother.

The devert slie days are a consequence are removed for the remoth of Spetimer and the sliest of the size o

low-pressure area offshore in the Pa-cific Ocean. West of the mountains the air sinks as it rushes toward the the air sinks as it rushes toward the coast, heating (by compression) about 5 1/2 degrees Fahrenheit for every 1000 feet of descent. During a full-blown Santa Ana, gale-force winds rake the foothills downwind

BUFFALO JOE'S

BLUE TATTOO

of the mountain passes, and San Diego's coastal communities often

experience temperatures that are among the nation's highest.

Escaping the Heat of this season's first couple of Santa Anas will not be easy — if you can't be inside air-con-ditioned buildings, at any rate. Along may reach the 90s, taking a dip in the

surf solves the problem.

Inland, the furnace-like heat is oderated only by increases in altitude. Head for the high places of the county - the mile-plus heights of the Palomar and Laguna Mountains, for example. Climb either of the county's loftiest peaks: Cuyamaca Peak (6512') in Cuyamaca Rancho Peak (5512') in Cuyamac Bancho State Park and Hort Springs Moun-tain (6533') on the Lox Coyotes In-dian Reservation. Atop these promontories during a Santa-Ana-simid episode, the thermometer reg-isters about 25 to 30 degrees lower than in the lowlands. Since the early phase of a Santa Ana sweeps away at-tion of the control of the control of the country of the control of the control of the unition, bunded male seaso are op-direction may be yours to enjoy.

What's New Out in the Blue? Joir naturalist Kathy Reading for a look at the many plants with medicinal qual-ities growing in Blue Sky Ecological Reserve on Saturday, September 22. During this slow-paced 1.5-hour-long walk, (bring and) plan to carry water. "The Natural Beauty of the

Canyon" provides the theme when naturalist Charles Hurd leads an easy walk focusing on the plants and an mals calling the canyon home on Sunday, September 23. Both outing begin at 9 a.m. Find the park on E pola Road, one-half mile north of Lake Poway Road. For information call 858-679-5469. Free, (POWAY)

See the Waterfall during a four-mile hike planned by Clif in San Dieguito River Park on Saturday, Septem ber 22, from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Call 858-674-2275 x5 for directions and ions. Free. (RANCHO BER

For the Birds, head out to Tecolote Canyon Open-Space Park on the fourth Saturday of each month, in-cluding September 22, for a one- to two-hour bird walk starting at 9 a.m. at the Tecolote Nature Center (518 Tecolote Road). Bring water and binoculars and wear comfortable shoes. Commonly seen species: redtailed and Cooper's hawks, Cassin's kingbirds, and common yel throats. Free. For inform call 858-581-9961 (CLAIREMONT)

Clean Up Loma Alta Creek with volunteers on Saturday, September 22, between 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Volunteers are encouraged to wear com-fortable clothes and tennis shoes; all

fortable debthes and termis shoes, all necessary equipment will be provided. Free.

The second annual Environmental Faire takes place between 11 a.m. and 3 pm. at the Occanside Amphitheatre. Over 30 state and local environmental algenicies and comprofit groups will be on hand to provide information. For information vide information. For information. Sec. 2017. Proc. (OCLAMSDE)

Trekking the Refuges, view the mi gratory waterfowl and wildflowers of the South San Diego National Wildlife Refuge when the series hosted by the Chula Vista Nature Center continues on Saturday, September 22, at 8:30 a.m. Free. To make the required reservations and obtain directions, call 619-409-5903. (IMPERIAL BEACH)

Walk Back Over 100 Years when Urban Safaris leads a three-mile walking tour of University Heights on Saturday, September 22, from 10 a.m. to noon. The fee is \$10. For eservations and directions to the starting point, call 619-944-9255. (UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS)

You Won't Be Asked to Act You Age, say organizers of the Walkabou jaunt planned in Balboa Park on Sat urday, September 22. Expect a light hearted one-hour amble including: playground, Frisbee throwing, bub ble blowing, and roses to smell — the fun starts at 10:15 a.m. at the Balbo Park carousel (at Park Boule Village Way). Plan to stay on after ward for silly jokes and ice cream (o other refreshments). Free, 619-23 7463. (BALBOA PARK)

746. (MAIGO AMO: FAII Officially Regins at 4:04 p.m. on Saturday, September 22 — a good cough reason to throw a late-affer-noon equinox party or barbecue. Technically speaking, at 4:04 p.m. to survive the saturday of the saturday to the carth's equation, at 4:04 p.m. to a survive the saturday of the saturday cart in the saturday of the saturday Cocan outhof 14 least. The autumn season will continue for three months until the sur'moves' to its furthest southerly point in the sky-winter solbite, December 21.

Sing Around the Campfire during the family campfire planned at Blue Sky Ecological Reserve on Saturday, September 22, from 6 to 8 p.m. Or tanizers promise songs, a demon tration by the Canine Search and Rescue Team, stories, hot chocolate

To reserve a spot, call 858-679 5469. There's an easy one-mile wall to the campground; find Blue Sky or Espola Road, one-half mile north o Lake Poway Road. A \$1 donation i requested. (POWAY)

Star Party, check out the heaven when George Varga sets up a tele scope for stargazing in Mission Trail Regional Park on Saturday, Septem ber 22, from 7 to 9 p.m. Find the par at One Father Junipero Serra Trail 619-668-3275. Free, MISSION GORGE Bizarre Trees, cacti, and succulen

star when Offshoot Tours hosts in



Do Jews Believe in Heaven and Hell?

What about Sin? Or the Messiah? These are some of the questions studied at the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School Attend a free "Taste of Melton" sample class.

For more information, call The Agency for Jewish Education at

(858) 268-9200 x17









the desert garden 619-235-1100. (BALBOA PARK)

Batiquitos Lagoon Festival, the field day is set for Sunday, September 23, at the Batiquitos Lagoon. Storyteller Running Grunion (a.k.a. Abel Silvas) and Native American musicians will perform on flutes, drums, and rat-les at 10 a.m.; Nancy Conney of Sky tles at 10 a.m.; Nancy Conney of Sky Hunters will discuss regional birds of prey from 1.1 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and na-tive plant grower Las Pilitas Nursery will be offering plants for sale. Free. For information, call 760-431-2879. (IA COSTA)

A Dusk Hike is planned in Los A Dusk Hike is planned in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve on Sunday, September 23. Participants may spy wildlife during this moder-ately pace of hour-mile walk to the wa-terfall and back. The outing starts at 5 p.m. at the kiosk at the intersection of Camino Ruiz and Park Village Drive. Wear hiking boots and insect repellent, and bring water. Free. 858-484-3219. (RANCHO PENASQUITOS)

Walk Back in Time, explore Old Eswalking tour planned by the Escon-dido Citizens Ecology Committee (in onjunction with the Escondido His torical Society) on Tuesday, Septem ber 25. The outing starts at 6 p.m. at Draper's and Damon's. Call 760-739-8703 or 760-743-8207 for details. Free (ESCONDIDE

It's Early in the Fall, but some good activity is possible when Audubon Society birders head to Lindo Lake on Wednesday, September 26, from 8 to 11 a.m. A vermilion flycatcher was ted last winter, and tricolored

splotfor us to wave, and to the splot, take 1 % to Hydroxy of the top the take 1 % to Hydroxy of the forest of the take the fiverford Rout exit, bit and take to the forest of the road, where the park will be visible. Continue as road, surveys to the right and then to the left for about one block. Then turn left into the parking lot, and meet there. Penit tables, water, and restrooms are available. Easy hiking. Free, 619-280-7710, (AMESOS) blackbirds breed there in season

DANCE

Decades of History Are Woven into art in repertoire of the Ballet Folk brico de México de Amalia Hernan Arts in Mexico City, the group hits the stage at the California Center for the Arts, Escondido with a performance tonight, Thursday, September 20, at p.m. Tickets range from \$15 to \$45 Find the center at 340 North Escon-dido Boulevard (at Valley Parkway) Call 800-988-4253 for information and reservations. (ESCONDIDO

"Caring for the Children." this dance benefit "for health and well ness for Rosa Parks Elementary School" is slated for Friday, Septem School is stated for Friday, Septem-ber 21, at 7 p.m., at the Weingart/City Heights Library Per-formance Annex. Tickets are 88 for one, or \$15 foe two. Find the annex at 3795 Fairmount Avenue; call 619-594-5104 for more information.

The Circulators Square Dance Club has a beginners' class at 6;30 p.m. on Friday, September 21, in the Recital Hall (2130 Pan American Plaza). The first class is free; thereafter, pay \$2.50 per week. Call 858-277-7499 for in-formation. This is the final week of open enrollment. (BALBOA PARK)

Twine Time, dance to music by the Old Twine String Band and calling by Graham Hempel during the contradance on Friday, September 21, at Trinity United Methodist Church (3030 Thorn Street). Dancing begins

thly hour-long guided stroll to September 22, at 10 a.m., starting rom the park's visitors' center. Free

BALLET **FOLKLÓRICO** DEMEXICO Thursday, September 20 * 8pm \$15-\$45
"Beautiful Dazzing It's Gorgeous," The New York



Robert Miraba Monday, September 24 8pm \$15-\$25

and Billy Gilman september 26 8pm \$35 and \$45 Hurryl Tickets





John Philip Sousa Sunday, September 30 20m \$20-\$35

Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis Saturday.

8pm \$35-\$65



Friday, October 5 saturday, October 6 8pm \$25 own Holly Hofmann

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HERE:

ON BROADWAY

joy the big-band sounds of the Swingime Orchestra at the Kimball Senio Center on the fourth Saturday of each month, including September 22, from 1 to 4 p.m. The first hour fea tures dance instruction by Russ Maples. Find the center at 1221 D Av

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enue. Admission is \$5. Call 619-336-6760 for information. (NATIONAL CITY) Learn West African Dance Moves

in a noncompetitive class for stu dents of all levels slated for Saturda ptember 22, at 11 a.m., at Coas Athletics (613 Westlake Stre ers are welcome. The fee is \$15. Call 858-793-0178 for informa

Time to Clog, the Raylin Cloggers Club meet every Sunday from 5 to 10 p.m. at the Recital Hall. Beginning through advanced lessons and dances through advanced lessons and da are offered. The fee is \$4 for nonzi bers. 619-444-2166. (BALBOA PARK

Have a Swingla' Good Time when the Rocket Swing Dance Club con-mens on Tuesday, September 25, at the Portugal, ised off Rosecrans). Begin-ners' swing dance lessons start at 9.30 p.m., with from 9 p.m. until mid-night. The cover is 86. For informa-tion, all 619-291-3775, GONT LOMA. Have a Swingin' Good Time when the Rocket Swing Dance Club con-

Must Be the Season of the Square, the Seaside Twirlers open their be-ginning square-dance classes to the

public on Tuesday, September 25, at 7 p.m., at Garrison Elementary School (333 Garrison Street). Classes are open — at no charge — through September (thereafter, a \$3 donation s requested). For information, call 760-931-9506. (OCEANSIDE)

> Folk Dances of India will be preented by the Janavak National Folk Ensemble for the Mineri Interna onal Museum next Thursday September 27, at 7:30 p.m., in Sher wood Auditorium at the Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla (700

Contemporary Art. a front Von Prospect Street). The lapproximately) 20-mem-ber troupe of dancers and musi-cians — hailing from Ahmedabad, Gujarat — will perform dancers including Oppana, Bhavi, Thali, Tra-pani, Kalaripayath, the Goad Danc-pani, Kalaripayath, the Goad Danc-form \$25 to \$50. For reservations, call 619-239-0003 x116. (LA JOLIA)

FILM

thematically unite the selections screening for the "Art of the Cinema Class" meeting on Thursdays at Palo-mar College. Tonight, Thursday,

September 20, see Requiem for a Dream; on September 27, view

Each class and movie begins at 6:30 p.m. in room P-32, and the public is welcome. Find the campus at 1140 West Mission Road. For information, call 760-744-1150 x2444. Free, (SAN MARCOS)

Rude, Crude, and Completely Lewd, these may be apt monikers for the short films on offer in Spike and Mike's Sick & Twisted Festival of An imation. This year's festival boasts 18 "brand new" short animated films including Behind the Music That Sucks, Bad Phone Sex, and Eat,

Sucks. Bad Phone Sex, and Eat, among others.
See the flicks tonight, Thursday, September 20, at the Ken Ciriema (4061 Adams Avenue). Admission is 57.75 at the box office. For show times, call 619-283-5909, (RENSHIGTON).
The festival moves to the Museum of Contemporary Art, La Jolla with screenings through Cotober 7.

with screenings through October 7. This weekend, see the movies at 7 and 9:30 p.m. on Friday and Satur day, September 21 and 22. Find the museum at 700 Prospect Street. Admission is \$8. For information, call 858-454-0267 Tickets are available through TickA Nature Film Pestival is planned in conjunction with the Batiquitos La-

goon Festival on Saturcay, Special ber 22. Beginning at 6 p.m., see Lifestyles of the Wet and Muddy, Van-Lifestyles of the Wet and Muddy, Van-ishing Waters, Living Europe: Fresh-water, and Wet and Wild in Schulman Auditorium at the Carlsbad City Library (1775 Dove Lane). Admission is \$7. For details, dial 760-431-2879. (LA COSTA) Populism and Magical Realisa

Marcia Muller, wnote utreasure tough female private investigators. The film explores the creative process each writer uses when researching and writing her detective novels. Catch the film on Tuesday, September 3% at 6:30 p.m., at the Oceanside

Civic Center Community Room (330 North Pacific Coast Highway) and at 10 a.m. next Thursday, September 27,

In conjunction with the film, Carolyn Placente-Darroch will lead

Carolyn Placente-Darroch will lead book discussion groups focusing consecutively on Grafton's F Is for Fugitive, Muller's novel The Shape of Dread, and Tumel Vision by Paret-sky. Free. For book discussion dates and other details, call 760-435-5578. (OCEANSIDE)

Foreign Intrigue is on offer in films screening for the Carlsbad Library Film Series. On Wednesday, Septem-ber 26, enjoy The World of Living

Dangerously, starring Sigourney Weaver and Mel Gibson. The movie starts at 7 p.m. in the Schulman Au-

ditorium at the Carlsbad City Library

(1775 Dove Lane). Free. For informa

tion, call 760-602-2026. (CAPLSBAD)

nside Mis sion Branch Li-

brary (3861 Mission Avenue)

Blend in Robert Redford's 1998 Blend in Robert Redford's 1998 filmic version of The Midgro Boar-field War. It's the tale of a small-time bean farmer who irrigates his land with water earmarked for a developer and ultimately unifies the people of his valley. See the film — starring Ruben Blades. Sonia Braga, Melanic Griffith, John Heard, and Christo-Griffith, John Heard, and Christo-Griffith, John Heard, and Christo-pher Walken — when it screens for the Film Forum and Razafest on Monday, September 24, at 6 p.m., at the San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). Discussion follows, 619-236-5800. Free. (DOWNTOWN)

"Women of Mystery: Three Writers Who Forever Changed Detective Fic-tion" are highlighted in the docu-mentary by Pamela Beere Biggs and

Fall Film Festival, see three great novies on three consecutive venings at Saint Paul's Cathedral. includes The Trip to Bo iful, My Dog Skip, and O tiful, My Dog Skip, and October Sky. Screenings begin at 7:30 p.m. Friday through Saturday, September 27-29. Find the cathedral at 2728 Sixth Avenue (at Fifth and Nutmeg). Admission is free. 619-298-7261. [MIDTOWN]

A Voice for the Unique Asian American Experience is promised during the second annual San Diego Asian Film Festival, running September 27-30 at the Hazard Center Mann 7 Theaters. Organizers showcase films made by Asians or Asian-Americans on a variety of subjects and some "that have nothing to do with Asian issues." Screenings begin on Thursday

with films such as Against the Grain, American Chai, and The Cut Runs Deep. Tickets are \$3 to \$5 for shorts umentaries, \$5 to \$10 for features. For more details, call 858-616

Reuben H. Fleet Science Center. travel back in time in China: The Panda Adventure. The film is set in 1936, based on the true story of Ruth Harkness, an independent woman who traveled to the forests of China to follow in her late husband's foo

and achieve his dream of bringing the first live giant panda to America. See this film through the end of the year

Did you know there are 50,000 known caves in the U.S., and every known cwes in the U.S., and every state has at least one lewarray into Amazing Caves squeezes into some of the earth's allen, hidden realms, guided by two cavers seeking these often unexplored fronters. The statest MacGillivray Freeman Films offering follows' zetreme accientists' Hazed Barton and Namy Aulerbach as they seek organisms that might hold new medical applications. Cover the Caves of the Caves o

been called the greatest athlete of the 20th Century. The "real-life story" of Michael Jordan is presented in Michael Jordan to the Max. Expect a "largerthan-life tribute to a larger-than-life figure." See the film thro ugh Octobe For ticket prices and showtimes, call 619-238-1233. (BALBOA PARK)

LECTURES

The House of David Inscription was discovered at Tel Dan in 1993 and is the earliest mention of the House of David outside of Biblical text. Learn about "The Dead Sea Scrolls and the House of David In

scription" when Ran Boytner speaks for the Archaeological Institute of America on Friday, September 21. Boytner is the guest curator for the Bowers Museum's exhibition of Dead Sea Scrolls and House of David Join the group at 7:15 p.m. at the Lemon Grove Community Center, 3146 School Lane. Free. For informa-tion, call 619-465-3841. (LEMON GROVE)

ton, call 619-460-3841, LEMON GROVE Conscerned About Neighborhood Safety, placemaking, community building, and smart growth? The American Planning Association hosts a workshop on "SafeScape and Place-making on a Budget" on Friday. September 21. The seminar runs from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at City of from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at City of Carlsbad offices (1635 Faraday Avenue). The fee is \$85 general, includ-ing breakfast, lunch, and workshop rrials. For space availability, call 858-614-5054, (CARLSBAD)

Celts Experienced Spiritual Signif river, a grove of trees. Learn about this ancient outlook when Barbara Bagan and Len O'Brian present "A Contemporary Celtic World View" for the Friends of June on Friday September 21. The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. at St. Peter's Episcopal Church (334 14th Street). Admission is \$15 for non details, dial 858-587-4651, (DEL MAR

The World Peace Series at San Diego The World Proce Series at San Diego Mesa College gets underway when poet Lawson Inada speaks on the Ipanaee internment camps and world peace on Friday, September 21. As a child, Inada and his family every relocated from Frense to camps in motion, call 69-388-2873. The talk starts at 7:30 p.m. in the Apolliad theater on camps in College Drive. Prec. POLANY MESA.

iege Drive. Free. (REANY MESA)

"On Foot and Wheela in Northern
Pakistan and Western China" is the
title for a slide-illustrated program
planned by Jeff Davis and Dottie
Korn-Davis on Friday, September 21.
_The_program begins at 7:30 p.m. in
the auditorium of the San Diego
Zoo's Otto Center (left of the zoo's
main entrance). Free, 619, 799-1744

main entrance). Free. 619-299-1744 x1040. (BALBOA PARK) The Correlation between Cruelt to Amimals and violence against hi mans will be explored when psy

chologist Randall Lockwood speak

on Friday, September 21. This evol-

Hear the talk at 5:30 p.m. at the Bar Center, 1333 Seventh Av ission is \$35. For information, call 619-231-0781 v129 (DOWNTOWN Master Furniture Maker Sam Mal-

ing information has been used in le-gal proceedings involving juvenile vi-

olence, domestic abuse, serial

killings, and other forms of vi-

oof, hailed as a "Living Treasure of California," plans a talk in conjunc-tion with the exhibition of his work

worker's art.
Admission is \$30 for nonmem-bers. Find the museum at 704 Pier View Way. To make the suggested

reservations, call 760-721-2787.

"Poland, Prague, and Vienne" are the subjects for a lecture and discus-sion planned by the Globtrotters of North County on Saturday, Septem ber 22, at 1:30 p.m., at the San Diego City Credit Union (at El Cam Real and Garden View Road). Ad mission is \$2. For information, dial 760-931-9374. (CARLSBAD)

Medical Astrology is the subject when astrologer Lee Lehman speaks for the National Council for Geocosnic Research on Saturday, Sentem mic Research on Saturday, Septem-ber 22, at 14;30 a.m., at the Kearny Mesa Parks and Recreation Center (3170 Armstrong Street). Lehman is known for her herbal medicine work and medical astrology background. Admission is \$20 for nonmembers.

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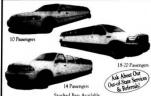
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Coping with Cancer, this seminar ered at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of San Dieguito contin-ues on Saturday, September 22, 9 a.m. to noon. Speakers Vicky Newnan, Peggy Manuel, M.D., Charlene Jannan, Susan Alexander, and Jim Cannan, Susan Alexander, and Jim Mattioda will focus on "An Integra-tive Approach to Cancer Prevention and Treatment." Find the fellowship at 1036 Solana Drive. To make the

"A Slip in the Evolution of Thought" is the subject when Jim Underdown — executive director of the Center for Inquiry — speaks for the San Diego Association for Rational Inquiry on Sunday. Septem-ber 23. The meeting begins at 7 p.m., in the Community Room at La Jolla Village Square (8657 Villa La Jolla Drive). Admission: \$5. Dial 619-421-5844 for information. (IA JOLLA)

Coronado Public and Private, learn bout Harrison Albright when Cyn hia Malinick, director of the Coron ido Maseum of History and Art speaks in Thornton Theatre for the un Diego Historical Society on Sun day, September 23, at 2 p.m. Ticket ire \$15 for nonmen 619-298-3142 for space availability (BALBOA PARK)

The Silent Crime of elder abuse proides the subject when attorney James G. Boyd addresses the Hemlock Society on Sunday, Septem ber 23, at 1:30 p.m. at the Joyce Beers unity Center (1230 Vermon Street). Boyd is described as "an adsocate for the elderly with special knowledge of how the complexities of aging impact the entire family. 619-267-5810, Free. (HILLCREST)

Take a Guided Tour of the current "Frederick Carl Frieseke" exhibition at the San Diego Museum of Art dur ing an Insight Gallery Talk planned by curator D. Scott Atkinson or Sunday, September 23, at 2 p.m., a the museum. The lecture is included in regular museum admission 619-696-1966. (BALBOA PARK)

Decorate Your Gourd after artist Barbara McDermott leads the holi day-themed gourd craft dem tion planned on Sunday September 23, from 1 to 4 p.m., at Bell Gardens (3084) Cole Grade Road). McDermott uses a method similar to tole painting. Free. For more information, dial 760-749-6297. (VALLEY CENTER)

"The Diversity of Native Plants in San Diego County" provides the sub-ject when Jon Rebman, curator o botany at the San Diego Natural Hisbotany at the San Diego Natural His-tors, Museum, presents the program for the Lake Hodges Native Plant Club on Monday, September 24. The talk starts at 2 p.m. in the upstairs seminar room of the Rancho Bernardo Library (17110 Bernardo Center Drive). Free, 760-741-0829. (RANCHO BERNARDO)

Explore the "Wonderful World of Opera" when Ridgley Allison Muller

peaks on Monday, September 24, at

2 p.m., in Schulman Auditorium at

the Carlsbad City Library (1775 Dow

Lane). Free, 760-434-2881, (CARLSBAD)

GETAWAYS

Patent Pending? A "USPTO Instors' Workshop" for inventors entrepreneurs is planned on Mon-day, September 24, at 6 p.m., in the computer lab on the second floor of the San Diego Public Library (820 E itreet). Workshop leader Richard Apley will cover patent searching, filing patents, what happens after fileral, 619-238-1233, (BALBOA PARK ing, and more. For information, call 619-238-6630. Free. (DOWNTOWN)

Ikebana - including Chikoh, Ichiyo Ikenoho, Ohara, and Sogetsu - is promised when Ikebana Interna onal meets on Wednesday, Septer ber 26, at 10 a.m., in room 101 of Casa del Prado, 619-223-8879, Free

"Coloring the Mirror: Chicana/o

the North San Diego County Ge-nealogical Society focuses on "Re-search in Georgia and South Carolina" when the group meets on Tuesday, September 25, at 10 a.m. in the Carlsbad City Council Chambers (1200 Carlsbad Village Drive) 760-723-1342. Free. (CARLSBAD)

Ouch! A seminar on behavior prob planned by the Parrot Education and Adoption Center on Saturday tember 22, at 12:30 p.m., at the Golden Hill Res Golf Course Drive). Admir \$10. For information, call 6 \$10. For information, call 619-287-8200. (GOLDEN HILL)

"International Dimensions of the University" provide the subject when Mary L. Dhooge speaks for the World Affairs Council of San Diego on Tuesday, September 25, at 1965 a.m., in the second-floor salon at La Vida del Mar (850 Del Mar Downs Road). Dhooge in den or In-ternational Education at UCSD, which was the hargest crops of the council of the Council of the Council 836-487-4955, for information. SOLAN BESCH. "International Dimensions of the

(SOLANA BEACH) "Europa: The Other Ocean" is the topic when Gary Peterson from SDSU's department of geological sci-ences speaks for the Eyes on the Uni-verse series at Reuben H. Fleet Science Center at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, September 26. Learn how scientists have decided that Europa, one of the Gallilean satellites of Jupiter, may have the only liquid water beyond the Earth. Admission is \$6.75 ger

A Teacher's Showcase of arrange

THE SEASON AS

in the Arts" is the subject for a panel in the Arts is the subject for a panel discussion exploring issues of cul-tural definition here in Southern Cal-ifornia, sponsored by Cafe Literati and Banned Book Week. Participants include Jorge Huerta, Oliver Mayer, Maria Sanchez, Harry Polkinhorn, Tomás Riley, and moderator Richard Griswold del Castillo.

The discussion starts on Wednesday September 26, at 7 p.m. in Casa Real, Aztec Center, at San Diego State University, Free, For Diego State University. Free. For more details, dial 619-269-8131

Giant Panda Lectures are being of fered at the Reuben H. Fleet Sci fered at the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center by members of the panda team at the San Dilego Zoo. The ser-ries continues when senior keeper Kathy Hawk — who has cared for the goo's gain pandas since they ar-rived from China in 1997 — speaks on Wednesdy, September 26. Hawk has just returned from a three-month "keeper loan" to Wolong, where she exchanged panda hus-bandry techniques with the keep-sbandry techniques with the keepbandry techniques with the keepers

The talk starts at 7 p.m. on ednesday, September 26. The fee is \$12. To make the required reserva-tions, call 619-557-3962. (BALBOA PARK)

Take a Journey to the Athenaeum Music and Arts Library for "Location/Location/Location; The Travel Journals of Raul Guerrero/Paintings Drawings, Prints, Photographs, Artist's Books, 1972-2001." In the show, San Diego artist Raul Guerrero has created a visual narrative expressing aspects of transition and movement, in a variety of media. He'll present a lecture about the ex hibition and his work next Thursda September 27, at 7:30 p.m. Free. Find the Athenaeum at 1008 Wall Street; 858-454-5872. (LA JOLLA)

"Cave Culture." Collin O'Neill of the San Diego Grotto shares archaeolog-ical secrets of caves and what makes them such ideal historical and pre-historical treasure troves for the

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at 7 p.m. next Thursday, Septer ber 27. The lecture is included in 760-632-0488. (LEUCADIA) No Borders, the featured poets are Roger Aplon and Patty Mooney tonight, Thursday, September 20, for No Borders at the Other Side (4096 gallery admission. For reservations, call 619-238-1233 x853. (BALBOA PARK)

30th Street, at Polk). These poets

work features foreign scenes and sit

uations. Followed by a "no-censor

omedy Island for perfo

More Pertinent Than Ever, SDSU professor Dipak K. Gupta has published extensively on issues of vice lence and ethnicity. He'll discuss and sign his newest book, Path to Collective Madness A Study in Social Order and Political Pathology on Friday, September 21, at 8 e. m., at D. G. September 21, at 8 e. m., at D. G.

September 21, at 8 p.m., at D.G. Wills Books (7461 Girard Avenue). Free. Questions? Call 858-456-1800 for answers. (LA JOLLA)

Patriotic Tunes Are in Order when

the Grand Pacific Band plays for the Concerts on the Green series at

Prescott Promenade (on Main

Street) on Friday, September 21, at

5:30 p.m. 619-401-8858. (EL CAJON)

In Memoriam, mystery author Taffy

Cannon completed Rebecca Rothen berg's book The Tumbleweed Mur

botanical mystery - after Rothen

berg's death. Cannon visits Myster

ous Galaxy Books to sign and discuss

the book at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 22. Find the Galaxy at

and by calling 858-268-4747 Free

American Folk Legend Utah

American Folk Legend Utah Phillips — described as an "archivist, historian, activist, philosopher, hobo, tramp, member of the IWW" — per-forms for San Diego Folk Heriago on Sturday, September 22. The Litakets to see this artist, singer, storyteller, and radio show host are \$15. The concert begins at 7:30 pm. at the San 1720 Caller Magdalens. For creavisa-tions, call 858-566-4040. (ENCNITAS)

"Reading, Writing, and Rhythm World Music Series" — take a "jour ney into the sonic riches of Latin American music" when Correct

Aereo performs for the series on Sat-urday, September 22. Concerts be-gin at 7 and 8:30 p.m. in the Sun-shine Brooks Theater (217 North

Coast Highway). Tickets are \$7. For information, call 760-435-5570.

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"Hidden Baja" is the subject when Outdoor Travel Adventures and Carefree Vacations host a slide-illustrated travel seminar by Kevin War ren next Thursday, September 27, a 6:30 p.m. Free. Find the office at 2927-A Canon Street (at Rosecran To reserve a spot, call 619-523-2137 (POINT LOMA)

Learn to Better Communicate With Your Kids when self-described "parenting expert" Michael H. Pop-kin presents "Character, Discipline and Parenting in the 21st Century" at 6 p.m. next Thursday, September 27, 6 p.m. next Thursday, September 27, at the San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). The talk — sponsored by the Lorillard Tobacco Company's youth smoking prevention program — seeks to make it "easier to discuss tough topics, like not making." To reserve a spon for Free. (DOWNTOWN)

IN PERSON

Same Way Again, the "shocking cautiful, and genuinely dangero performance artist Karen Finle rings Shut Up and Love Me to Sush ermance and Visual Art Septem ber 20-22. Shut Up is described as an unapologetic illustrative perfo mance of a woman's journe through dysfunctional companio ship and psychosexual lust

rested? Performances begin a 8 n.m. Tickets are \$30 peneral. Sushi i ocated in the ReinCarnation Build ing at 320 11th Avenue For tickets call 619-235-8468. (DOWNTOWN

A Young Man's Struggles to come to terms with his family's Holocaust experiences is on offer in A Melody Out of Darkness. The one-man show Out of Darkness. The one-man show written and performed by David Pornanter focuses on a 13-year-old Jewish boy's struggles with anti-Semitism and violence in his daily life. Six traditional Yiddish folk songs are waven into the partitive accomnied by the Rabbinical School

Thursday through Saturday, Septem-ber 20-22, at the Carlsbad Commu-nity Cultural Arts Center (3557 Monroe Street). Tickets are \$10 gen-eral, \$5 for students. For reservations, call 760-720-5377. (CARLSBAD)

Former San Diego Councilmemb Abbe Wolfsheimer Stutz has written a novel of political intrigue entitled The Whores of St. Jean. She'll sign and discuss her book at 6:30 p.m. tonight, Thursday, September 20, at Bay Books (1029 Orange Avenue). For tion, call 619-435-0070. Free

Summer Concerts in the Gardens, the series concludes with a perfor-mance by Latin guitarist Tony Lasley on Saturday, September 22, at Stutz will also sign books at 6 p.m. on Saturday, September 22, at Ducky Waddle's Emporium (414

7:30 p.m., at the Wood House in Heritage Gardens (at Rock Springs Road and Woodland Parkway). Tickets are \$5 general, free for those under 10. Bring beach chairs or blankets for lawn seating, 760-744-900

The Constraints and Social Forces that prevent "Mexican-origin ado-lescents" from constructing "netship, untimed open reading," with sign-ups starting at 7:30 p.m. No cover — donations appreciated. 619-640-1963. (NORTH PARK) lescents' from constructing met-works that provide access to impor-tant forms of social support' are examined in Ricardo D. Stanton-Salezar's book Manufacturing Hop-ter Methods of U.S. Mexican Youth poper Nieworks of U.S. Mexican Youth English on Saustra's, September 22, at 7 pm., at Casa del Libro (1735 University Avenue). Free. 619-299-9331, onaLCMEST) Comedy, head to Sandi C. Shore's Harry Basil, Joe Nipote, and Claude Shires on Friday, September 21, a Shires on Friday, September 21, at 9 p.m. The cover is \$15. Find the club at the San Diego/Del Mar Hilton, 15575 Jimmy Durante Boulevard). Two-drink minimum; you must be 21 to attend. 858-792-5200 x4248. (DEL MAR)

9331, (MILCREST)

Music acrose the Genres is promised
when the Normal Heights United
Methodist Church hosts a concert on
Saturday, September 22, from 4 to
6 p.m. Listen for gospel, rap, folk, and
traditional praise music. Find the
church at 4650 Mansfield Street.
619-238-9243. Free. (NORMAL HDGHTS)

Call Him Coach, head to Borders Books and Music on Sunday, Septem-ber 23, at noon, to watch the Chargers versus Dallas football game with Coach Tom Bass. He spent 30 years coaching for SDSU, the San Diego Chargers, and San Jose State Univ sity, and he's the author of Play Foot ball the NFL Way. Bass will discuss and sign his newest creation. Coach Bass Sport Maps. Find the store at 11160 Rancho Carmel Drive; 858-618-1814. Free. (CARMEL MOUNTAIN)

Hawaii .- Here! The Makaha Sons — said to be a product of the Hawaiian music renaissance, which began in the 1970s — perform on Sunday, September 23, at 2 p.m., in Sherwood Auditorium at the Museum of Contemporary Art (700 Prospect Street). The program also features a performance by Robi Kahakalau. Tickets are \$30 in adv or \$35 at the door, available by calling 619-235-5515, (LA JOLLA)

Sunday Eve Poetry and Jazz, the seues on Sunday, September 23, at 7 p.m., with an excerpt from A Day of 7 p.m., with an excerpt from A Day of Absence, presented in conjunction with the Motojaye Arts Institute for Youth. What happens when all of the black people disappear from a South-ern town? Also on tap: works by poet and vocalist Timothy Ewing. Find the restaurant at 36 North Euclid Avenue, suite F. For informa-tion, call 619-263-3899. The cover is \$3.3 ANDONAL CRESS.

\$3. (NATIONAL CITY)

Short Story Author John mann's debut novel is entitled Mur-der at the Red Dog, which he plans to sign and discuss at 2:30 p.m. on Sun day, September 23, at Mysteriou , September 23, at Mysterious Galaxy Books (7051 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard). Free. For informa tion, call 858-268-4747. (CLAIREMONT)

The New Jessie Drake Mystery be

her work on Sunday, September 23, at 4 p.m., at Mysterious Galaxy Books (7051 Clairemont Mesa Boulevard). Free. 858-268-4747

The Annual Pops Concert at South western College features perfor-mances by the Southwestern College Concert Choir, Chamber Singers, and Vocal Jazz Ensemble on Sunday, September 23. The music starts at September 23. The music starts at 4 p.m. in Mayan Hall Theater at Southwestern College. Tickets are \$10 general. Find the campus at 900 Otay Lakes Road; 619-421-6700.

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"Voices from America" pro theme when the La Jolla Chamber Chorus and String Ensemble per-form works by Alice Parker, Robert Erickson, and folksongs, spirituals, and sacred songs from North and South America. The concert starts at 7 p.m. on Sunday, September 23, at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church (6628 Santa Isabel Street). Tickets are \$10. For information, dial 858-534-4637. (LA COSTA)

Yee-Haw! It's Cowboy Night at Templar's Hall in Old Poway Park on Sunday, September 23. For your dancing pleasure, there's music by the Texas Toothpicks; the concert promises music by Nathan Welden, Ken Graydon and Phee Sherline, and the Mark lackson Band, Tickets: \$10. Find the hall at 14134 Midland Re To make the required rese

Living Writers Series, P.E.N. prizewinning poet Robert Mezzy ap-pears at San Diego State University for the Living Writers Series on Monday, September 24. The reading begins at 7 p.m. in room 2030 of the Malcolm A. Love Library, Free. Call

2 NICHTS Turnday departure Minimum 7 days whence required

619-594-5318 for information.

when the Chamber Concert Series at the Chula Vista Civic Center Library opens with a concert on Monday, September 24, at 7:30 p.m., by so-prano Deborah Davis, baritone Mark Goros, and the Rajahmel Jazz Trio (with members pianist Rob Gross bassist Jim Hunt, and percussionis Mel Lipsey). Find the library at 365 F Street. Free. For more information, dial 619-691-5164. (ORLIA VISTA)

For the Sophisticated Pooch! Head to Warwick's Bookstore with your

canine pal on Monday, Septe ber 24, at 7:30 p.m., when Brian Kil-Metrodog: A Guide to Raising Your Dog in the City, addressing the "unique concerns of city-dwelling dogs." Find the store at 7812 Girard Avenue and by calling 858-454-0347 ue and by calling 858-454-034

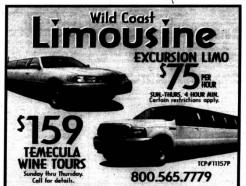
"Playfulness and Silliness Is No "Playfulness and Silliness Ia Not About Joking," according to author and retired podiatrist Ted Borgeas, "It's your sanity." He leads the San Diego Laughter Club, next meeting on Monday, September 24, at 7 a.m., at the Elephant and Castle (1355 North Harbor Drive). Free, For in-

GETAWAYS

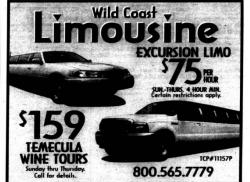
(LA JOLLA)













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lighted during programs beginning at 6 and 7:30 p.m. on Monday, mber 24, in Smith Recital Hal at San Diego State University. Tick ets are \$10 general. Call 619-594-6031 or 619-594-6020 for further in-

"Muse Festivities" are on tap when er book The Nine Modern-Da

Muse and a Bolyquard. The Guide Muse and a Bolyquard. The Guide to Creative Inspiration and Fellow-Through with a reading on Tuesday, Spetember 23, at 7 p.m., at Earth Song Bookstore (1440 Camino Del Mar), For information, dial 858-735-Badonaly will eastline: Thou to break through resistance, procreati-nation, time-shorteg, avoidance, and tack of focus in relation to en-gaging in creative activities 'on Welnesday, September 26, at 7 p.m., Stati 24, Roda and Excinitals Boule-vard), 35, Dual 858-720, 00050 for more information (DeCoultAS)

ish Fold cat-known as Norton, Peter Gethers. The author visits War September 25, at 7:30 p.m., to sign and discuss The Cat Who'll Live For

she'll sign and discuss her book at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, September 25, at Borders Books and Music (159 Fletcher Parkway). Free, Call 619-593-5119 for information. (EL CAJON)

Author Duff Brenna signs and dis-cusses The Altar of the Body on Wednesday, September 26, at 7 p.m., at Esmeralda Books and Coffee (1555 Camino del Mar, suite 307). Free For information, call 858-755-2707.

Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Author Ed Dzwonkowski will discuss and sign his book How You Can Become a Millionaire: Your Lifetime Cuide C Millionaire: Your Lifetime Guide for Building Wealth and Achieving Finan-cial Independence on Wednesday, ctat Inaepenaence on Weanesday, September 26, 7 p.m., at Barnes and Noble. Find the shop in Grossmont Center, 5500 Grossmont Center Drive, 619-667-2870. Free. (LA MESA)

Expressions Unlimited, open-mike iam sessions convene on the second jam sessions convene on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, including September 26, from 6 to 8 p.m., at the Makodim X Library (5148 Market Street, at Eu-clid). All forms of spoken word and

The West Coast Arts Annual Pacific cisco author Jonathan Knapp, and Chicana poet H. Emilia Paredes

Aztec Center, at San Diego State Uni-

SPORTS

sions planned on Saturday, September 22. The first race starts at 645 p.m., with qualifying runs starting at 5:15 p.m.

The 3/8-mile track is located next to Gillespie Field. Take 1-8 to Highway 67, and use the Bradley exit.

Drive left for two blocks to Wing Street, then right one block to the Set for Soccer? The San Diego Sockers host the Utah Freezz on Friday, September 21, at 7:05 p.m., in the Street, then right one block to the track entrance. Adult admission: (west side) and \$9 (cast side); \$3 for those 6 to 12; free for kids under 6 with an adult. For information, call 619-448-8900. (EL CAJON) at 619-220-TIXS), Listen to the game in English on KSDO (1130 AM) and in Spanish on KURS (1040 AM).

Runnin' the Ranch, septuagenarian roadrunner and naturalist Don Par-nell leads a run in Daley Ranch on Saturday, September 22. This one-hour run "will be at a pace you can handle over hills and through mead-The Boys of Early Autumn, the San September 21-23, with games at 7:05 p.m. on Friday and Saturda and at 2 p.m. on Sunday

The Pads head to Colorado to

The Pads head to Colorado to mere up with the Rockies Spetternber 24-27. Games begin at 605 p.m. Monday through Wednesday and at 12-09 p.m. on Thursday. 25 to 326, available by calling 69-297-237 and through Tacketmaster (619-220-TISS). The games are broadcast in Engish on KOGO-AM (600) and in Spanish on attaction KURS-AM (600) and in Spanish on attaction KURS-AM (600). And (600-200-1875) and through Tacketmaster (619-200-1875) and (619-200-1875) water. (#SCOMODO)

Have Yourseld a Tseiy Little Ride,
take in 30 miles of Kensington, Hill-crest, and some of San Diego's
bridges found along the way with
Knickerbikers bisyclats. The ride, set
for Saturday, September 22, starts at
8 a.m. at Midway Town Centre (park
behind the Blockbuster, 3980 West
money for a dim sum lunch Call
619-298-9981 for information. 619-280-INFO, JOHNSON WALLEY)
Run to Bondarder for the McMillan
Mile and Corky's Kid Run, slated for
Startrady, September 22. Race, synthether
Startrady, September 22. Race, and, and the kids' beginning at 9-50 am, and the kids' beginning at 9-50 am. and the kids' beginning at 9-50 am.
To reach the spot, take Highwas to the Estreet/Bonita Road exit: fellow Bonita Road approximately three miles. For information, dial
619-479-9375, ROMYIA

Kayak-Itty-Yak, if you harbor any interest in kayaking, this is the week-end for you. Kayak demo day is set for Saturday, September 22, at Bahia Point. Free demonstrations run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with kayaking clin ics available (\$10) by reserva The Season Draws to a Close at Ca

On Sunday, September 23, the Aqua Adventures Kayak Center (1548 Quivira Way) hosts Kayakfest

Hardcourt, Clay, or Grasel Br play tennis on all three of the re (aforementioned) surfaces, watch a celebrity pro-am exhibition match, and partake of tennis instruction. Free. Find the resort at 2100

mation, call 619-606-5269. (LA COSTA)

Walk to Cure Diabetes, the Juvenile and 10k walks are slated for Satu September 22, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in Balboa Park and Cannon Park (at Cannon Road and Carlsbad Boul vard). On-site registration starts at 7:30 a.m., with the walks stepping of (Wheelcheirs) Over the Line has

(Wheeksheir) Ower the Lina, have you ever tirel playing coffull while seated or connected with a pitched hall from a wheeksheir Abhetes of all ags will rise to the challenge when combing Wheeksheir Over the Line Tournament takes place on Saturday, September 22. The three-player teams will play from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the apphal as the 24th Stere Charles Charles and the September 22. The three-player teams will play from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the apphal as the 24th Stere Charles Char

Day-of-event registration for teams begins at 8 a.m.; there is no fee for first-timers. Questions? Call 619-525-8247 for answers, (NATIONAL CITY)

Where the Heck is Elfin Forest? Bicywith the San Diego Bicycle Touring S The 55-mile ride starts at 8:45 a.m. at Dovle Park (8175 Regents Road at No bel Drive), traveling up Del Dios High-

619-479-2804 (JORDHART CITY) Chargers vs. Cowboys, the San Diego Chargers head to Dallas to meet up with the Cowboys on Sun-day, September 23, at 10 am. Fan in-formation: 858-455-1984/85/or 86; regular season ticket information 877-CHARGERS.

Polo Time, the San Diego Polo Club hosts Pro-Am Classic/John Collura Cup finals on Sunday, September 23. Preliminary matches begin at 1:30 p.m., the featured polo match at 3 p.m. The traditional half-time divot-stomp starts at 4 p.m., wher guests are invited to take the field and replace the divots.

General admission is \$5. The

club meets at 14555 El Camino Real For information and reservati call 858-481-9217 (BANCHO SANTA FE

call 85-8-81-9217, #MANISO SMEATEY STRENGED THE STRENGED TO THE STRENGED THE STRENG

Hunter/Jumper Equestrians from all over the world will demonstrate their prowess, skill, and agility during the Del Mar International Horse Show, running September 27-30 at the Del Mar Arena. Organizers ex-pect 300 riders and horses for the compatition.

npetition. Double slalom match races begin at 7 p.m. on Friday, September 28; in this event, the competitors race on identical courses, and the first horse to reach the finish line is the winner (free). Saturday, September 29, fea-tures the Del Mar International Grand Prix at 7 p.m. (\$8 and \$10); the Junior/Amateur Jumper Classic is set for Sunday, September 30. Daily horse show hours are

8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free ex-cept where noted. Call 619-793-5555

Paddle Around Lake Sutherland Paddle Around Lake Sutherland during a kayak tour planned by Mark of the San Dieguito River Park next Thursday, September 27. The two-mile tour starts at 4 p.m. and will in-clude a peek at an Indian site and perhaps some wildlife. To make the necessary reservations, call 858-674-2275 x5. (BAMONA)

agility courses, jumper courses, fly-ball, and flying disc. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

information, dial 888-244-5489 Leave your pooch at home, (DFL MAR

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The adoptions are conducted by silent competitive bid from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.; animals not selected during the competitive bid will be available for adoption on a first-come, first-

599-697-5220, (noncova).

Go Home, the 12th annual fall home show runs. September 21-23 at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Organizers promise 200 exhibits with products and services for the home, plus a feature called "Style" containing interior design vignettes and seminars emphasizing home furnishings and interior design. 2001 migration is underway

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rior design. Show hours are noon to 8 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$8 general, free for those under 12; admission is \$3 for those 55 and older on Friday. For more informa tion, call 858-350-3738. (DEL MAR)

Chugalug! The seventh annual San Diego Festival of Beers is slated for Diego Festival of Beers is sure.
Friday, September 21, from 6 p.m. to midnight at Columbia and B Street More than 50 microbreweries wil erve over 120 different beers, and serve over 120 different beers, and there will be live music. Tickets: \$15 tickets for 6 tastings, \$20 for 12 tast-ings. For information, call 858-672-3972. (DOWNTOWN)

Trunk Show, Byzantium hosts a vin Trunk Show, Byzantium bosts a vin-tage bead and Enip-work trunk show and sale on Friday and Saturday, September 21 and 22, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Find the shop at 2607 Congress Street; 619-497-1848. Free. (OLD TOWN)

Celebrate Bonita, a parade, crafts, Celebrate Bonita, a parade, crafts, booths, and entertainment are all promised when Bonitafest takes place on Saturday, September 22, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Find the fun along the Bonita Road commercial area. Free. For information, call 619-472-8520. (BONITA)

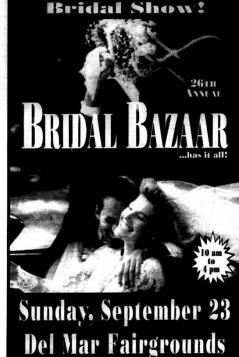
A Time to Tour, COVA's 2001 "open studios" events take place on September 22 and 23. Organizers of-fer self-fluided tours of 42 artists' stu-dios countywide. North County stu-dios host tours this weekend. The fee for the chalog (the ticket and guide to the participating studios) is \$20 for two people. For catalog outlets and other information, call 619-234 0928, (SAN DIEGO COUNTY)

French Historian Alexis de Tos onsidered one of the first impartial and systematic studies of American nstitutions. Discuss a selection fro the work with the Great Books Read September 22, at 2 p.m., in the San Diego Public Library (820 E Street), 619-440-5625. Free; new

Dinner Downtown, the Vista His Dinner Downtown, the Vista His-torical Society hosts this fundraiser on Saturday, September 22. Expect tours of the historic buildings and current businesses along the renotours of the historic buildings and current businesses along the reno-vated Main Street, entertainment, and a catered pasta dinner. Events run from 3 to 7 p.m. The fee is \$20 per person. For reservations and in-formation, dial 760-630-0444. (MSTA)

formation, and 760-502-9944, Versil, "A World of Discovery" is the theme for the 11th annual Interna-tional Friendship Festival, running September 22 and 23, at the El Cajon Civic Center (200 East Main Street). Organizers promise ethnic food and crafts, live entertainment, a fine arts exhibit, pow-wow (starting at moon each day), and activities for children and teens.

Festival hours are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is free. For more information, dial 619-441-



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SPECIAL

Top Dogs, more than 500 canine athletes are expected to compete in the Animal Planet/United States Dog Agility Association Grand Prix of Dog Agility World Championships, taking place September 20-23 at the Del Mar Horse Park. Events include agility courses, thy-

Thursday through Saturday and 8:15 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Sunday. Ad-mission for spectators — of the hu-mań variety only — is 55 Thursday through Saturday and 58 for adults

Living Symbols of the Wild West. hosts its Adopt-a-Horse and Burro Program September 21-23. The 80 wild mustangs and 20 wild burros on offer arrive at Mountain Valley Ranch for viewing at around noor on Friday, with adoptions held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Get our calendar on-line! www.athleticsingles.com LARGEST CLIMBING GYM IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA Black Diamond Anchor Clinic & Scarpa Shoo Domo

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One admission per coupon. Cannot be combined with other offers Regular admission \$10.00. Visit bridalbazaar.com for additional information and discount coupons.

Stampers Unite! The ninth annual California Rubber Stamp Festival is scheduled for September 22 and 23 at the Del Mar Fairgrounds. Rubber stamps, scrapbooking supplies, con etti, stickers, papers, papermaking applies, and more will be offered by the rubber stamp and accessory manufacturers on hand. Classes and demonstrations are planned as well Show hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday Tickets are \$5 per day, or \$6 for a two-day pass. For more details, call 541-574-8000. (DEL MAR) Pick Me, Squeeze Me, Make Me estival on Saturday, September 22 from 2 to 6 p.m. Participants will en-joy a grape stomp, fiesta food, music,

ontests, wine tasting, tours, and sore. Find the winery at 26312 Mesa Rock Road. The fee is \$35. To reserv spot. call 760-796-7557. (ESCONDIDO Let's Get Psychic-al, a psychic fair scheduled at Alexandra's BookStore from noon to 6 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, September 22 and 23. Tarot, palmistry, numerology, and other spychia arts will be featured; pay \$20 per reading. The shop is located at 3545. Midway Drive, suite. G; 619-298-3422, (SPORTS ARENA)

Go Fly a Kite, head to the beach recreation center (300 North the Strand) for Kite Fest 2001 on Sunday, September 23, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For information, call 760-966-7114. (OCEANSIDE)

"The Voyage of Cabrillo" is a fic-

boulders.

Near sunset on clear days, a golden glow settles across the ocean and cliff faces, and Sunset Cliffs Park becomes one of the best places to celebrate the day's end. At nearby Cabrillo National Monument you can't usually do this most of the year, since the monument closes too early in the afternoon. aftermoon.

Exploring tidepools is another favorite activity at Sunset Cliffs Park. Starting in October and ending in March, extreme low tides occur during aftermoon hours — not in the wee hours of the morning as in the spring and summer. During episodes of neg-

Roam-O-Rama

Sunset Cliffs Natural Park extends for some one and a half miles along Point Loma's ocean-facing side. The northern part covers only the cliffs that separate Sunset Cliffs Boulevard from the ocean. The remainder of the park includes a half-mile-long strip of coastline, plus some hillsides sloping uward towart the campus of Point Loma

upward toward the campus of Point Loma Nazarene College. The natural erosion of the sea cliffs

here proceeds at a geologically galloping pace — thought to be dozens of feet per

century. Elaborate retaining walls designed to dissipate wave energy have been installed

to keep Sunset Cliffs Boulevard and nearby

ent viewpoints of the 1542 encounter between Juan Rodriuez Cabrillo's crew and the Native Americans living in the San Diego area. Abel Silvas narrates, while other cast members represent the views of a priest and sailor accompanying the expedition and a Native American woman.

A Guide to Unexpected San Diego and Beyond By Jerry Schad

park land by playing fields and

parking lots used by the college, and improper drainage. Nonetheless, you can spend a

pleasant hour or two following the small, informal network of

trails starting at Ladera Street and Cornish Drive. They can

take you up and down the hill-

sides and out to the tops of the

low cliffs just above where the

Get a Creativity/Humor Work Get a Creativity/Humor Workout and take in a "program of playful ex-ercises designed to spark your humor and creativity" led by Jacquie Lowell at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Septem-ber 24, at the Radiance Studio (1618 West Lewis Street). 885-881-0050. Admission is \$15, (MSSION HILLS)

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Sunset Cliffs Park shoreline

ative tides (that is, ocean water-levels lower

alive tides (that is, ocean water-fevels lower than the mean lower low tide), much of the intertidal zone is uncovered. Over the next water to be uncovered to the second of the control o

FOR KIDS

Lynn Trimble presents Bitsy's School Adventures through Sunday, Septem-ber 23, at the Marie Hitchcock Pup-pet Theater. Millie Patterson and Weaver's Tales perform Rumplestiltbegin at 10 and 11:30 a.m. Wednes day through Friday and at 11 a.m., 1, and 2:30 p.m. on Saturday and

Find the theater near the Aerospace Center. Regular admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 for children under 12. For more information, call 619-685-5045, (BALBOA PARK)

Wear a Nifty Disguise and mee Wear a Nifty Disguise and meet Lilly when the resourceful and lov-able rodent star of the Kevin Henkes 6:30 p.m. on Friday, September 21, at Borders Books and Music (11160 Rancho Carmel Drive), Free Call 858-618-1814 for information.

"The Crane's Gift" is on tap when the Momotaro Preschool Story Time starts at 11 a.m. on Saturday, September 22, at the Japanese Friendship Garden. Visitors will hear this fairy tale about how a mysterious woman came to a small Japanese vil-lage and wove the most beautiful lage and wove the most beautiful cloth ever seen. Afterwards, children will decorate an origami paper crane to take home and have a snack too.

Admission is free for those un der 6, \$3 general. To make the re rvations, call 619-232 2721. (BALBOA PARK)

Fishin' in the Pines, Lake Cuvamaca will be stocked with 2000 pounds o Moiave trout and 1200 pounds of whitewater trout prior to the kids' fishing derby slated for Saturday, September 22. Fishing and registra

tion start at 6 a.m., and all fish must be weighed by 12:45 p.m. Free. The readquarters for the Lake Comtion and Park District is fou at 15027 Highway 79. Call 619-447 8123 for information. Fishing li censes are not required for this even

The Wild Rumpus Begins at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 22 at Borders Books and Music, Roan your terrible roar, gnash your terrible teeth, and roll your terrible eyes durteeth, and roll your terrible eyes dur-ing this pajama party, which will in-clude a visit by one of the Wild Things from Maurice Sendak's Where the Wild Things Are. Borders, 159 Fletcher Parkway; 619-593-5119. Free. (E. CAJON)

Free, IR, CAON9.

Bunny Tales are on tap at Borders Books and Music on Saturday. September 22, at 3:30 p.m. Pat the Bunny will visit-the shop for stories including his own (written by Dorothy Kunhardt), Guess How Mush Llev Foub Sam McHerney, and Margaret Wise Brown's Rumawy Bunny. Find the store at 1072 caway Bunny. Find the store at 1072 cay 10 p.m. September 2011. Free (MISSION VALLEY).

Watch Out for the Apple! See S

Theater Arta Workshops for chil-dren four to nine years old are con-ducted by the San Diego Actors The-atre on the fourth Saturday of every month, including September 22, at L'Auberge Del Mar Garden Am phitheater (1540 Carnino Del Mar) Vorkshops run from noon to ed. The fee is \$10. Dial 619-268

Have Your Picture Taken as an Pogineer when the San Diego Model Railroad Museum hosts family day activities on Saturday. September 22. Framed! Make a photo frame dur ing the preschool craft time planned on Monday, September 24, at 10:30 a.m., at the Zany Brainy stores. Find the stores at 1530 activities on Saturday, September 22, from 1 to 4 p.m. Expect art and crafts, face painting, and refreshments. Ac-tivities are included in museum ad-mission. For more information, call 619-696-0199. (BALBOA PARK) Camino de la Reina (619-291-9500), 10661 Westview Parkway 9500), 10661 Westview Parkway (858-547-8700), and in Grossmont Plaza North, 5475 Grossmont Cen-ter Drive (619-466-6751). Free. (MISSION VALLEY, MIRA MESA, LA MESA) Coral Reef Construction Com Goral Reef Construction Company, why do people refer to coral reefs as "rain forests of the sea"? Children in grades one through three will find out during this class planned at the Birch Aquarim-Museum on Saturday, September 22, at 9:30 am. Activities include building a coral reef. The fee is 5:30. The aquarism is longer than the control of the control of the required reservations, call 858-534-7336, (LA DALA)

Lears to Lead a "Ridiculously Cool Life" when authors Super Clea and Keva Marie visit Borders Books and Music to sign and discuss Hey, Day! next Thursday, September 27, at 7 p.m. Find the shop at 1072 Camino del Rio North; 619-295-2201. Free. MSSGON 944 LEY) (MISSION VALLEY)

While vacationing in Baja California...

MUSEUMS tional information. (BONITA)

Antique Gas and Steam Engine Antique Gas and Steam Engine
Museum, the museum's activities include locating, collecting, documenting, and preserving historical
gas-, steam-, and horse-powered
equipment related not only to agriculture, but to the general development of America. The collection is
made us of equipment used in lummade us of equipment used in lummade up of equipment used in lum-bering, mining, oil drilling, and con-struction industries. In addition, the museum has a blacksmith and wheelwright shop, a country kitchen and parlor, a steam-operated saw mill, and 1/3-scale train. Find the museum at 2040 North Santa Fe Av enue. For further details, call 760-941-1791. (VISTA)

Ronita Museum and Cultural Center, the museum highlights the his-tory of the Sweetwater Valley from the mid-1800s, with historical pho-

Find the museum at 4035 Bonita Road. Dial 619-267-5141 for addi-

Chinese Historical Society and Museum, the museum is located in a building originally built in 1927 for the Chinese Mission. Adjacent to the building is an Asian garden, includstream, and a large Chinese gate. Find the museum at 404 Third Avenue (at 1 Street); 619-338-9888.

Chule Vista Heritage Museum the museum features glimpses of Chula Vista's past; exhibits feature lemor 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 Watch Company. Find the museum at 360 Third Avenue. For further information, call 619-420-6916. (CNLA VISTA)

Creation Museum, a museum con-trasting the evolution and creation world views is found at 10946 Wood-side Avenue North. For more infor-mation, call 619–448-0900 x231. (SANTEE)

intic garden. Built for civic leader George Marston and his family by San Diego architects William Hel bard and Irving Gill, the Marston house design is in keeping with the early 20th-Century American Arts and Crafts period, which emphasize simplicity, function, and natural ma

rials. The museum is located a

3525 Seventh Avenue; 619-298-3142

House of Pacific Relations, Inter House of Pacific Relations, International Cottages are open every Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. to present the history and traditions of the other control of the control of t

J.A. Cooley Museum, an eclectic col lection of items — including displays on nickelodeons, phonographs, and beaded purses — is featured at the museum. The grand attraction,



the San Diego Actors Theatre pre-sents "Children's Classics" on Satur-day, September 22. The program in-cludes Beauty and the Beast Part III,

The Giving Tree, poetry, and songs. The fun begins at 11 a.m. at L'Auberge Del Mar Garden Am-

phitheater (1540 Camino del Mar) Call 619-268-4494 for information

sion is \$4 per person. (DEL MAR)

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Demo Day Bahia Point, Mission Bay

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and gear this weekend only! Noon: Capsize recovery clinic 2-3 pm: Umbrella race!

4 pm: Free barbecue at Mission Bay Deli (1548 Quivira Way)

Sun., Sept. 23, 10 am-6 pm Kayakfest 2001 Aqua Adventures 1548 Quivira Way

10 am-3 pm: Free demos 10 am-2 pm: Races

& contests all day! Great prizes!

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Basic Books, 2001; 240 pages; \$24.00

FROM THE DUST IACKET: Five rears after he was gunned down n Las Vegas in a drive-by shooting, rap artist Tupac Shakur (1971–1996) is even more loved, contested, and celebrated than he was in life. His posthumously released albums, poetry, and movies still top the charts; he inspires countless plays, articles, and websites by fans and critics Michael Eric Dyson
In Holler If You Hear Me, "hip-hop intellectual" Michael

Eric Dyson, acclaimed for his writing on Malcolm X and Mar tric Dyson, acciaimed for his writing on macoim A and mar-tin Luther King, Ir., as well as his passionate defense of black youth culture, turns his attention to one of the most enigmatic and enduring figures of our time. Through original interviews and reporting. Dyson offers us a wholly original understand-ing of the controversial icon who has been called the black Elvis.

on explores Tupac Shakur's childhood and the influ ence of his mother Afeni Shakur, showing how her history as

alism of the '60s and '70 with hip-hop culture today. For the first time, we understand etance of Tunac's early education, his experienc in the theater, and the role of mentor Leila Steinberg in ing his music. Dyson examines Tupac's achievement with at assessment of hip-hop's artistry and the role thug "authentic ity" plays in rap culture. He also examines the themes that vade Tupac's life and music in the context of African-Ar can culture and America at large. He sheds provocative new light on such issues as: self-destruction and mortality among black men; the surprising role of religious and spiritual beliefs in rap cultures; and the ways negative attitudes towards women are shaped by cultural cues and social history. Through these themes Dyson takes the full measure of our adoration and dis

themes Dyson takes the full measure of our adoration and dis-dain for "ghetto saint" Tupac, and his generation. To create his portrait of the artist, Dyson interviewed peo-ple who knew Tupac or have reflected seriously on his legacy, including Afeni Shakur, Quincy Jones, Toni Morrison, John Sin-gleton, Jada Pinkett Smith, Maxine Waters, Samuel Jackson, Stanley Crouch, Reverend Al Sharpton, Big Tray Dee, and Johnnie Cochran, among many others. Dyson holds up Tupac as a mirror in which we see our wishes for, our desires of, and our fears about black male genius. His search for Tupac will thrill those who already love the artist and enlighten those who seek to understand him and his legacy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Michael Eric Dyson was born in 1958 in a Detroit, Michigan, ghetto, son of a teacher's aide and an employee of Kelsey-Hayes Wheelbrake and Crum Company. He graduated, magna cum laude, with a BA in philosophy from Car-son-Newman College in 1982. In 1993, he received his Ph.D, with a major in religion, from Princeton University. On the day that we talked. Lasked Professor Dyson on what subject he did his dissertation. He said, "I did it on a comparison of heroism, the uses of heroism with Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. I looked at the use of heroism among African-American com-

munities to foster moral aspiration and to allow black people to critique the larger society by the heroes they choose

Professor Dyson has taught at various colleges and universities and is now Ida B. Wells Barnett University Professor and Professor of Religious Studies at DePaul University in Chicago. About what he teaches, he said, "I do a course on the radical About what he teaches, he said, I do a course on the ratical legacy of Martin Luther King, I do a course on critical race the ory and philosophy. I get a chance to range around in whatever kind of courses I want to teach. And that's nice. I'll end up teaching a course on black icons, religious and moral icons, and ther

I'll do a course on hip-hop culture."

A licensed Baptist preacher since 1979, Professor Dyson is invited to preach in churches around the country. He also appear as a guest on a variety of television and radio shows. Dyson is autho of I May Not Get There with You. The True Martin Luther King Ir.; Making Malcolm: The Myth and Meaning of Malcolm X Between God and Ganesta Rap, and Race Rules: Navigating the Colo. Line. He lives in Chicago with his family.

A CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR: I asked Professo Dyson, "How did you get interested in hip-hop?"

"Well, I was a teen father, and growing up — so to speak — with my son made me want to understand the music that was already playing a huge role in black pop culture. I wanted to be able to not only keep my ear to the ground but be able to inter-pret for him the lyrics and the meanings of the messages and the music. And first of all, I just liked the music. I just like a lot of what's going on in there - the honesty, the level of emotiona and spiritual investment, and the willingness to tell the truth in political — or should I say — *politically incorrect*, terms. So that s very attractive to me. And probably being a poor black boy from Detroit allowed me to identify with many of the ghetto-centric

"What do you think makes this music and its trappings— the clothes, the language, the attitude — so attractive to bourgeois white kids?

"I think that the sense of rebellion that's expressed there is quite striking. I think the sense of alienation from one's novi-ronment is a universal them that's struck in hip-hop but that re-onates far beyond its boundaries. I think many white kids get a chance to tour the suffering of the poor black pletto without having to endure the immediate consequences if they were there in

"Somewhat like white students' 'Panther touring' in the

"Exactly. Kind of cultural and racial voveurism may be going on there. In both the good and bad sense, I guess. It allows a safe distance from the immediate events, but a kind of interpretation of those events in those eyes of some the folk who live there. Plus, I think they just dig the music, It's cool, it's hip, It's the thins that defines the cutting edge, and I think all of that together

Holler If You Hear Me offers many photographs of Tupac. I said to Professor Dyson that Tupac certainly was an attractive young man, that he had a sensitiv women must have gone mad for him.
"Oh, absolutely. He was quite a charmer in that regard. As

On, absolutely. He was quite a charmer in that regard. As the actress Peggy Lipton (whose daughter Tupac dated) said to me, he was an extraordinary young man who was well trained in the art of social grace at a certain level, but also a person who

was able to social grace at a chiefficing thing going, so I think that Tupac bridged many worlds in his own short career." Shakur was born in 1971, just after his mother, former Black Panther Afeni Shakur, was released from a Bronx prison where Fantner Aten Shakur, was released from a bronx prison where she was being held on a bombing charge (she was later acquit-ted). The rapper never knew who his father was. For a time, Afeni, who kept a vigil at Shakur's deathbed, was addicted to crack. Her son wrote about this in his 1995 Grammy-nominated "Dear Mama". "And even as a crack fiend mama / You always was a black queen mama."

I asked the professor about a phrase he uses, "thug authen

ticity." This "thug authenticity," Dyson writes, was an impor

tant aspect of Tupac's understanding of himself. Dyson quotes Tupac from an interview taped in 1995 when Tupac was in prison. Tupac explained that the thug life is "not an image; it's just a way of life; it's a mentality." He explains that mentality further by saying that the thug life is "a stage that we all go through. It's just like that for white kids and rich kids. They ge turougn. It is just use that not wante a toos also rick tube. They set to the military academy or ROTC, or they take all the risk, energy, and put it into the armed forces. And for a young black male, Puerto Rican, or Hispanic person, you've got to put this in the streets; that's where our energies go. "Dyson also quotes from outtakes of an interview Tupas did with Snoop Dogg for from outtakes of an interview Tupac did with Snoop Dogg for MY. It's not Hugging, said Tupac, 'like I'm robbing peo-ple, 'cause that's not what I'm doing, I mean, like, I'm not scared to say hoy I feel. Part of being [a thug] is to stand up for your responsibilities and say this is what I do even though I know people are going to hate me and say. It's so politically un-correct, and 'How could you make black people look like that'? 'Do you know how bufbonshi you all look with money and girls and all of that?' That's what I want to do. I want to be

Professor Dyson explained: "I think that this quest for the real, for what's authentic, distinguishes Tupac. Many people have been consumed with it, but it was really his desire to live the life he sang about in his songs that distinguished him, because he we obsessed with keeping it real, and that landed him in trouble many times, but it also endeared him to the hearts of his fol-

Tupac's body was covered with tattoos. Dyson describes

Besides "Thug Life" across his abdomen, "2 PAC" appeared on his right breast and "Nefertin" on the left. "Qu'ullaw" was stat-tooed — "tatted" in hip-hop parlance — on his right forearm, and a serpent with a crown of thorns flashed on his right forearm, and a serpent with a crown of thorns flashed on his right beceps. "Playaz" was inscribed on the nape of his neck. "Fuck the World" ran across his shoulder blades. On the lower sides of his back were

"Laugh Now" with a mask of comedy and "Cry Later" with a mask "Laugh Now With a mask of comeny and "Cry Later with a mask of tragedy. A German cross with "Exodus 18:11" stretched over his back. And "50 Niggaz" covered his sternum.

I asked Professor Dyson what, for Tupac, this scarifying of

his body signified.

Think it was about marking the flesh as an emblem of his soldarity with his homeboys. And it was about giving a visual representation — "Let my voice speak, let my body speak." And I think it was a way of testifying through the flesh about the love he had for his thug life companions and the commitment he bore to represent their mes-sage to the world. As I try to argue in the book, Tupac had deep religious feelings. He was quite conscious about what,

"This quest for the real, for what's authentic,

distinguishes Tupac. It was really his desire

to live the life

he sang about in his songs."

urday night that he was mur-dered, Tupac was in Vegas, where he and his companions had attended the Mike Tyson-Bruce Seldon heavy weight match at the MGM

for instance, the tattoos meant and what they would mean to the larger world." On the September Sat-

Grand. Tupac leaned forward in the passenger seat of a black BMW 750. The 750 was the lead car of a ten-car motorcade making its way along Flamingo Boulevard. The BMW's driver was 8uge Knight, cofounder (with Dr. Dre) and sole head man of Los Angeles-based Death Row Records. Tupac had a recording contract with Death Row. The destination was Knight's nightclub, its walls painted red to memorialize Knight's con-nections to the Bloods. A white Cadillac pulled up next to the BMW and two of the four men inside the Caddy leapt out onto the neon-lit boulevard and began shooting. Four bullets entered

through October 2001, is an exhibit on the development of the automo-bile. The display includes an 1885 Benz, described as "the first car eve built," Each of the (over 20) vehicle

built. Each of the (over 20) vehicles on display reveals a large step in the progress of the automobile. Find the museum at 4233 Park Boulevard. For more information, call 619-296-3112. (UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS)

Marine Corps Recruit Depot Mu-seum, housed in a historic building, the museum features five permanent galleries with artifacts, uniforms, ve-

Parsonage Museum of Lemon

Lemon Grove Schools Evolve." The rrent Lemon Grove School District has its roots in the town's once the ing orchards. William Hurst, an early ing orchards. William Hurst, an early pioneer in the local fruit-growing in-dustry, offered his barn in 1893 as a schoolroom, and a district was born. See this show through Sunday, Marsh 31, 2001.

The sork of mattice and aviation painter Richard DeBonest in one; which through Saturday, December 22, as part of the maseum's one going "Noted Regional Artists Series." The Lemon Grove artist is known for his epis, "super-realistic paintings of U.S. military history, and he's currently painting as six-part mutal in the chapted of the Verteam Memorial Center in Balbon Park. — Find the museum 2715 Church Street, 619-460-4353, ILDMO (ROVE)

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in Sur Jamaison, beasts more than No-rishipat-designed to make science, matth, and rechnology engaging and fun. These interactive exhibits involved learning about hearing, speak model to the properties of the properties of the properties and continue on display through June. 2002.

A range of topics including communication, proferies solving, and "Fryschology. It's More Than You Think." Over 17 interactive experiments are included in the exhibit, addressing fundamental questions delivers for the properties of t

age and retrieval of information, such as lasers, flashing lights, waveforms and more. For further information call 619-238-1233. (BALBOA PARK)

San Diego Automotive Museum San Diego Automotive Museum, vacation, migration, and the cars that ruled the road in the Golden State are examined in "California, Here We Come!" The most rustic road in-cluded in the exhibit is the Old Plank sluded in the exhibit is the OLF Plank Road, originally built in 1912 of wooden planks nailed to croasties. The primitive road carried drivers across a six mile stretch of sand other featured highways include IE Camino Real Pacific Coast Highway and historic 101. Make this trip through Sunday, September 23. More than 80 automobiles and for the prototypes are included in the museum's permanent collection.

San Diego Historical Society Muted in 1905 when an gation project backfired, the Saltor

tory. Developers in the 1950s and 1960s dubbed this desert area "Cali-fornia's New Mediterranean," envifornis New Mediterranean, envisioning a tourist haven. The sex's salinity levels have increased dramatically in recent years, driving away many of the tourists and boaters. The Sarch of El Dondor the Salontes, "In Sarch of El Dondor the Salontes," for the Salontes, and white photographs by Christopher Landis, digitally reproduced by Nah Editions. See these haunting works. The museum is located in the Casa de Balbos baddings, ed. 20, e

San Diego Hall of Champions, the museum — dedicated to promoting, recognizing, and preserving athletic achievement — is located at 2131 Pan American Plaza. Call 619-234-

San Diego Maritime Museum, ex san Diego Maritine Museum, ex-amples of ships from the 14th Cen-tury to the present are included in "Masterpieces in Miniature: A Pre-cious Collection of Tiny Yachts." Nearly 50 tiny and elaborate models Nearly 50 tiny and elaborate models are included, ranging in size from three inches to three feet. The ex-hibit, continuing through Monday, December 31, also includes ships in The museum features perma

619-234-9153. DOWNTOWN)
San Diego Museum of Man, spiritual patintings, vivid sequim banners,
and papier makeh, wood, and into
no sculptures are included in "Voodobe Spirits in Haitain Ant." The cabble
sports in Haitain Ant." The cabble
to the voodoo religion, which
evolved from a misture of Africian
religions and Roman Casholicium.
See the show through Sunday, Inetuary 272, 2002.
The state of the state of the state of the state
and the state of the state of the state of the state
of the state of the sta The museum features perma-ment exhibits documenting the his-tory of San Diego's waterfront and the building of the West Coast by sea, including exhibits concerning the old San Diego-Coronado ferrybotats, the tuna fishing industry, and the mili-tary. The museum fleet consists of the 1863 bark Sair of India, the 1898 San Francisco Gerybotat Berkely, and the 1904 Scottish neum yacht Madoa. There are also martical exhibits, ship from bone recovery and identifica dence of nutrition, disease, and trauma, to the use of skull and bon

imagery in popular culture. The exhibition includes hands-on learning Rare rock art from eastern Califormia is explored in "Echoes of Antiquity: Rock Art of the Volcanic

arpenters, model building, ships in

ottles, woodcarvers, and a complete

research library.
The museum is located at 1306

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

Tableland," an exhibit of color photography on display through Jan-uary 6, 2002. The show features work haps as entich as 10,000 years ago by San Francisco photographer Jean Allsworth highlighting the petro-glyphs of the southwestern edge of the Great Basin north of Bishop.

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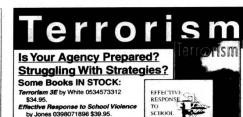
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Some of these rare petroglyphs may

Fetishes are carved objects rep resenting animals or other being revered by American Indians and others for their beauty and power The exhibit "Zuni Fetish Carving temporary fetish carving. Expect to learn about fetish history, symbolism, process, and materials

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80 pieces of vintage railroad equip ment are collected here. Among the ces: five antique steam lo ers, old freight cars and cabooses, a



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and others 0849309646 \$74.95. Computer Forensics and Privacy by Caloyannides 1580532837 \$79.00

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Tupac's chest, apparently enter-ing at the point where "Thug Life" was tattooed. Many theories exist as to why Tupac was killed. One theory has it that Tupac's murder was a battle in the war between West Coast rappers, represented by Suge Knight and Death Row, and East Coast rappers, repre-sented by Sean "Puffy" Combs and his New York-based Bad Boy Entertainment. Tupac earlier had claimed to have been sexually inti-mate with the wife of Bad Boy star Biggie (the Notorious B.I.G.

Smalls. In "Hit 'Em Up," Tupac had crowed, "I fucked your bitch, you fat motherfucker." (The Notorious B.I.G. weighed 300-pounds-plus.) Smalls had threatened revenge against Tupac. And perhaps Tupac's murder was that revenge. Perhaps not. Some claim that Knight had Tupac killed because Tupac threatened to leave Death Row. Others suggest that the men behind Tupac's murder were the Crips, one of whose mem bers Tupac and his entourage had roughed up on what for Tupac was that fateful Saturday night. Whoever was behind Tupac's murder, Biggie Smalls was not to be forgotten. In March 1997, some six months and a few days after Tupac's death, the Noto-

Tupac and why?

"Well, you know, I think ultimately in one sense his death was almost inevitably, tragically, coming. There was talk about Tupac having engaged in something, the night he was murdered, with someone who turned out to be a Crip. I think that, unfortunately, trying to live it, keep it real, pushed him over the edge and blurred the line between art and reality. And it led

(continued from page 81) to his death. I think that it was in reprisal for that, prob for that stomping of that Crip gang member that night, that How would Professor Dyson describe the difference betw

the regard gangsta rap fans show Tupac and Sean "Puffy" Combs?
"Well, I think Tupac definitely was viewed as much more
authentic and real. Puffy is seen as entrepreneurial and making
a market out of selling ghetto style to the world. But I think Tupac was viewed as doing it for real. He wasn't just in it for the money. He was in it for his commitment to thug life and what that really meant. So no amount of money could stop him or cause

him to sell out or refuse to speak to his constituents, and I think that distinguishes him from Puffy."

I said that when I see Puffy on television or read an interview with him in *The New York Times* that he seems to me to be simply a self-indulgent mama's boy.

"And Tupac, by contrast," said Professor Dyson, "was quite a serious person. He was capable of reading broadly and widely and used that learning as the basis of his narratives, the stories he told, and what he communicated, and I think that was very,

very powerful."

Did Professor Dyson ever imagine how Tupac might have done had he, like Dyson, been able to go to Princeton?
"Well, he certainly had the brain for it. That's absolutely

true. That is a funny question, imagining Tupac at Princeton, because some might argue that, "Well, you know, Dyson was there, and that was close enough for us." So in terms of rising from that ghetto condition and keeping an orientation that might from that ghetto condition and keeping an orientation that might be marked as ghetto — or at least inclined to be empathetic to the inner city — is always a hard sell in those arenas."

On the pulpit, did Professor Dyson talk about Tupac?

"Oh, absolutely. I talk about hip-hop culture in general, Tupac particular, because Tupac was obsessed with God. And he was le to tell a story that was extraordinarily important to not only black kids but to people who were suffering and people who were engaged in the process of living their lives against the limits, and I speak about him. I quote him often. I repeat what he said, "Some-body help me, tell me where to go from here, because even thugs cry, but do the Lord care? And so I use him as a basis of thinking about the question of the odyssey, which is the question of suffering and trying to justify God's ways before human beings."

"The Job question," I suggested.
"Right. The Job question, straight up. So, you know, I cer

tainly appeal to him in a very serious way."

I said that I thought it would be difficult to address the issue. in gangsta rap, of disrespect toward women, the "bitches and ho's issue."

"Exactly. It is. But, you know, it's necessary to try to make it complex, and also to bring it back home by suggesting it didn't start with Tupac or Biggie or Snoop Dogg. This is an old, just ancient, Western—indeed, global—tradition of despising women and putting them down. And that's not to excuse whatever they do. It's to say, 'Put it in a larger context and figure out how we can cut this out across the culture. At least they're honest about it.' We have these other quarters of America where corporate life and church life and educational institutions are just as pervasively sex ist and misogynist as any other."
"Wouldn't black middle-class church folks feel somewhat

alienated from someone like Tupac?"

"Oh, sure, sure." "I would think they would feel annoyed when you men-

tion Tupac from the pulpit."

"Absolutely. You're reading it very right. People will think, 'Why would you go into talking about something as crass and

'Or," I said, "talking about Martin Luther King, Jr.'s love (Which Dyson did in I May Not Get There with You.)

"Exactly. Or even comparing King to Tupac. It's a rough way, to go there. And some people are quite turned off by that, and others find it at least refreshing, to a certain degree. So I take my hits and keep moving."

- Judith Moore

Highway 94 and Forrest Gate Road or information, call 619-595-3030 619-478-9937, (CAMPO)

San Pasqual Battlefield State His-toric Park commemorates the clash (on December 6, 1846) during the Mexican War between the U.S. Dra-

goons, holstered by sailors and volalso describes the lives of the Indians also describes the lives of the Indians indigenous to the valley. The mu-seum is found at 15808 San Pasqual Valley Road. Call 760-737-2201 for additional details. (ESCONDIDO)

Villa Montezuma, built in 1887 for

William Heath Davis House Mu-

Horn in 1850. Guided valking tours focusing on the histor and architec-ture of the Gaslamp Quarter depart the museum each Schuday at 11 a.m. Find the museum at 410 Island Av-enue (at Fourth Avenue; 619-233-4692. (GASLAMP QUARTER)



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Difficult Mackey and Spanish Fluff

The rest of the program was made up of Spanish music, and rather trivial Spanish music at that.

ummerFest presented two more works by SummerFest presented two more works by composer-in-residence Steven Mackey, on two programs of diverse content. The newly reconstituted Borromeo Quartet

performed Mackey's Ars Moriendi: Nine tableaux on the art of dying well, which the composer describes as "a personal diary of my experience with my father's death, which I regard as among the richest, most profound experiences of my life." Here was a rare instance

of a contemporary composer's commentary on one of his works actually being pertinent to the work itself. The moving narrative of the father's death, printed in the program notes, helped to illuminate the daunting musical episodes of the composition, from the initial representation of la-bored breathing and rapid heartbeat to the final moment in which life left the body. Furthermore, the richness and profundity of the experience Mackey writes of were carried over fully into the music, and through the transcendently beautiful
'performance of the Borromeo Quartet were available to any listener willing to listen with an open

mind and heart to Mackey's uncompromisingly difficult musical language.

If his language is difficult, making no concessions to an audience's traditional expectations in regard to tunefulness, tonality, form, and ingratiating sounds, it is nevertheless a stunningly expressive language, and Mackey's powers of invention relentlessly hold the mind fascinated. In fact, I think the purely musical values of this work are sufficient in themselves to evoke a rich and profound experience in the listener, without the aid of the highly detailed program notes. I would have preferred to imagine my private pictures and meanings, guided by the work's title, but not constrained by a point-for-point program. Most listeners hearing Richard Strauss's *Death and Transfiguration*— another piece of program music about dying—respond to the emotional drama without needing a moment-by-moment scenario. Like Strauss's work. Mackey's (where any ransfiguration takes place only in the son's mem

mind and heart to Mackey's uncompromisingly

ory of his father's life and death) is musically

ory of his father's the and ceath is musically strong enough to stand on its own. Mackey's Troubadour Songs, in which he and his electric guitar joined the Borromeo Quartet, struck me as a somewhat less perfected piece. The quality of sonic invention was as high as in Ars Moriendi and the REVIEW writing for the instruments had JONATHAN SAVILLE

the same exquisite finesse, but I found it hard to perceive where the work was going, formally and emotionally. Repeated listening would no doubt help (although there are no recordings of these Mackey compo sitions, and we are unlikely to hear them in concert

again any time soon).

Once again, as in Mackey's Physical Property (performed on an earlier SummerFest program) I felt uncomfortable with the electric guitar. Some of its interventions sounded like a harpsichord appropriate enough for a meditation on old-fashappropriate chough for a meditation on old-tash ioned storytelling, but the effect would have been stronger with a real harpsichord. Other effects, such as the often repeated downward glissandos, seemed mere devices, with no particular expres sive meaning. In his program notes, Mackey revealed that he intended the electric guitar as a symbol of adolescent rebellion — but that idea oo seemed extraneous to the piece as we heard

it, where the atmosphere throughout was one of nostalgia and melancholy.

Over the last few years, the Borromeo Quartet has made a powerful impression, and those of us who had begun to think of the group as one of the foremost string quartets of our time were dis-tressed last season to learn that fully half their personnel would be leaving. I am happy to report hat the replacements — second violinist William redkenheuer and violist Mai Motobuchi — are cv ery bit as good as their predecessors, and (mos important of all) play with the same passion and meticulousness that have characterized the Bor-romeo from its beginnings. One could hear the result most clearly in the breathtaking performance of the Debussy Quartet in G Minor, where the group's flawless coordination and interpre-

tive unanimity made for a musical experience of luminous beauty, at onc extrovertedly Romantic and delicately

On the same program, listeners had a chance to hear the difference between an established ensemble, who had rehearsed a work to the utmost polish and expressiveness, and an ad hoc group assembled for the festival, and indeed for a single performance. The Borromeo's Debussy was as good as that work gets; the Schubert C Major Quintet, which ended the program, was very good in-deed, but anyone who knows this great work has heard it played more compellingly. The problem was not with the splendid musi-cians — violinists Adele Anthony and Gil Shaham, violist Paul Neubauer, cellists Ralph Kirshbaum and Felix Fan. But these musicians did not know the Schubert, or each other, in the way that comes only from long acquaintance. Of course, that is a commonplace occurrence in SummerFest, but more often than not the performance has

rehearsal. In the Schubert Ouin tet, that was not quite the case.

Ars Moriendi was curiously place right in the middle of a program titled "A Night in a Spanish Garden," a sub-ject with which Mackey's painful depiction of death in a hospital bed had nothing to do. The rest of the program was indeed made up of Spanish music, and rather trivial Spanish music at that, with the triviality underlined by contrast

There was a special emphasis on Joaquin Rodrigo, who in his long life (1901–1999!) composed an immense amount of charmingly trivial music. The violin soloist in two of thes pieces was the dazzling Gil Shaham, who — like the great old-fashioned fiddlers he so closely re-sembles — has a penchant for trivial violin pieces. Shaham, with his incomparable tone and his stu pendous virtuosity, knows how to make such pieces sound like terrific music — something he did in his performance of Rodrigo's silly Sonata Pimpante (accompanied with equal panache by pianist Anthony Newman) and the composer'

come together anyway, profes-sionalism, inspiration, and the challenge of risk-taking over-riding the lack of extended

with the deeply serious Mackey work

Sylvia McNau

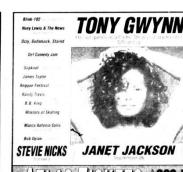
SummerFest: "A Night in a Spanish Garden" and "An die Musik" Sherwood Auditorium (La Jolla Chamber Music

Sherwood Auditorium (La Jolia Champer music Society) Mackey, Ars Moriendi und Troubadour Song, Debussy, Quartet in G. Minor, Schubert, String Quintet in C. D. 956, Falla, Sect canciones, populares, works by Alberia; Malais, Rodrigo, Celedonio-Romero, Grandos, and Surasulte

Serenata al alba del dia (accompanied by guitarist Pepe Romero). Shaham and his wife, Adele Anthony, then went on to a bit of flamboyant fluff by Pablo de Sarasate (with Newman once again at the keyboard), Navarra. All three musicians played so spectacularly, and had so much obvious fun doing it, that their performance was irresistible (although few listeners would want to

The two other performers prominent on this program were Pepe Romero and soprano Sylvia McNair. Romero played short works by Albeniz,





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Calendar CLASSICAL MUSIC

Maláts, and Rodrigo (of course), as well as a delightful exploration of guitar technique (Fantasia) by his own father, the famous Celedonio Romero. The guitarist and McNair collaborated in songs by Rodrigo and in the Siete canciones pop-ulares of Manuel de Falla. With her husband, conductor Hal France, at the piano, McNair also sang Granados's marvelous

Much of this was disan-

vitality both text and music de-

mand. Monotonous color.

essential drama left her perfor

mances in a state of enervated

blândness. The Granados aria came off as a dull dud. So much for Sylvia McNair! ■

CLASSICAL

LISTINGS

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Diego State University. Tickets are \$15 general. Call 619-594-6060 for further information. (SDSU)

Recorder Players Are Beckoned

when the San Diego County Recorder Society meets for instruc-tion and playing on Friday, Septem-ber 21, at the Tierrasanta Recreation

precise address where it is to be held (including neighborhood), a contact phone number (including area code),

artificial emotion, and lack of

Dieguito United Methodist Church (170 Calle Magdalena). For reserva-tions, call 760-744-7516. (ENCINITAS) and distracted, showing his flair only in his father's Fantasia. McNair was certainly the wrong singer for this music. Her care-fully pronounced Spanish St. Cecilia Evensong, the men's and girls' St. Cecilia Choir will sing evensong, using the fauxbourdons by Carolus Andreas, and singing the Ed-ward Bairstow anthem "I sat down under his shadow" on Sunday, syllables never sounded like September 23, at 5 p.m. Find Sair real, felt, meaningful words. In the Falla, she occasionally in-Paul's at 2728 Sixth Avenue (at Fifth and Nutmeg). An offering will be re-ceived, 619-298-7261. (MOTOWN) jected a bit of personality, but not enough to give these char-acterful songs the interpretive

"Choral Music through the Centuries" may be enjoyed when the San Diego Master Chorale performs on Sunday, September 23, at 7 p.m., in the First United Methodist Church the First United Methodist Church of San Diego (2111 Camino del Rio South). The program includes selec-tions by Palestrina, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Verdi, Rachmaninoff, Beethoven, Verdi, Rachmaninoff, Finzi, and others. Child care is avail-able by reservation. An offering will be received. For further information, call 619-297-4366. (MISSION VALLEY)

east of I-15). For information, call 619-466-6058. The first visit is free.

Symphony by the Sea, the San Diego

urday, September 22, at 7 p.m., at Port-wood Pier Plaza. For more information, call 760-743-6402 x7. (MPERM. BEACH)

call 760-743-6602 27, (nePRM, BEXIDO The Season Opens for the Lake Sun Marcon Chamber Music Society with a piano conscert by Eric Le Van on Sunday, September 23. The program includes the "Scherzo in E-Flat Mi-nor" by Brahms, Debusy's "Relets Anna Feau," the "Sonata No. 5" by Scriabin, and Lizer's "Reminiscences the Norma" (after Bellini's opera). Tickets are \$20 general. The con-ert begins at 2:30 p.m. at the San

cert begins at 2:30 p.m. at the San

Selections by Brahms, De Falla, and Poulenc are on the program when Kay Etheridge and Friends appear on Sun-day, September 23, at 2:30 p.m., in the third-floor auditorium at the San Diego Public Library (820 E Street). Ensemble members include pianist Etheridge, mezzo-soprano Janelle Rollinson, and

formation. (DOWNTOWN) Guest Organist Jared Jacobsen pre-sents a concient in the Spreckels Or-gan Pavilion on Sunday, Septem-ber 23, at 2 p.m. Free. Call 619-702-8138 for additional information. (BALBOA PARK)

the loseph Haydn "Trio No 20," and the "Piano Trio No. 3 in C Minor" by Johannes Brahms are all on tap when the Gennaro Trio performs for the first San Diego Mini-Concert of the season on Monday, September 24. Trio members include Ronald Gold man (violin), Mary Lindblom (cello), and Ilana Mysior (piano).

The free concert begins at noon (bring your lunch) and lasts approx-imately 50 minutes in Lyceum Theatre at Horton Plaza. For more de-tails, call 619-236-1980. (DOWNTOWN)

The Phi Mu Alpha Recital will be presented at noon on Wednesday, September 26, in Smith Recital Hall at San Diego State University. For infor-mation, call 619-594-6060. Free, (SDSU)

Classical Music is promised when so prano Therese Bulat, violinist Elizabeth Monacelli, and pianist John Danke perform for the Concert Hour at Palomar College next Thursday, Septem ber 27, at 12:30 p.m., in the Perfor 1150 x2317 Free /SAN MADO

A Student Guitar Recital is planned A Student Gultar Recital is planned by Roland Schlieder at 7 p.m. next Thursday, September 27, in Smith Recital Hall at San Diego State Uni-versity. Admission is free. Call 619-594-6031 or 619-594-6020 for



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GALLERIES

An Unusual Root with a Female

Take a Journey to the Athenaeu

stion and dissortment, an a sararety of media.

Generico will be on hand to pre-ent a Jesture about the exhibition and his, work mest Thursday, September 27, art 70 pm. The Athenaeum is Josated at 10 am in 8 30 pm. Tuesday though Sararday, Wedneday until 8,30 pm. For information, call 838 454-5872, 43 200 pm.

bition" opening in the University Art Gallery at San Diego State University ber 21, at 7 p.m. View the pieces, ci ated by 38 faculty artists, through Saturday, October 6. Gallery hours are noon to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and Saturday. Questions Call 619-594-5171 for answer

"Elements of Nature: Recent Works on Canvas" by New Zealand native Timothy Howe go on exhibit at the Lillian Berkley Collection Gallery with a reception on Saturday ber 22, at 5 p.m. See the show through Friday, October 12.

through Friday, October 12.
Find the gallery at 128 East Grand
Avenue, Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to
6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday,
with hours extended to 9 p.m. on Friday. To RSVP for the reception, call
760-480-9434, (ESCONDIDO)

"Through Our Eyes," an exhibition of work by six artists working in a

rsday, October 4, at the Highs 101 Artists' Colony (25 E Street). Meet the artists during a reception slated for Sunday, September 23, 3

stated for Sunday, September 23, 3 to 6 p.m. Regular gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. 760-632-9074. (ENCINITAS)

ART MUSEUMS

California Center for the Arts Mu-California Center for the Arts Mu-seum, the new annual series "Public Projects" places temporary and semi-permanent sculptural installations on the center's 12-acre campus. Artists selected will include regional artists from San Diego and Los An-geles, plus national and international artists to motion in a series of media artists working in a variety of media.

The first sculptures in the series are those of San Diegan Kenneth Capps. Twenty metal sculptures can e viewed through March of 2002 They have been sited by the artist and the museum curator around the cer and in adjacent Grape Day Park. is is one of the largest displays of a

The moveum is located at 340 sorth. Escondido. Boulevard, no 8/0/4129. ESCONDIDO

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ven and Paper Objects," an exhibit of work by this fiber artist (who happens to be Stocksdale's wife). Both ber 23.

"Venini — Glass and Design in a

"Venini — Glass and Design in a World Perspective" centers on the work of the Venini factory in Venic.
The exhibition also contains art glass by contemporary artists and by Louis Comfort Tiffany, as well as examples of ancient Egyptian, pre-Roman, Roman, and Islamic glass. Art glass by Benjamin Moore, Marvin Lipota, and Dale Chihady, all of whom sky, and Dale Chihady, all of which are also fincluded in the show, which closes on Sunday, Ismary 6, 2002.

closes on Sunday, January 6, 2002. The Mingei is located on the square with the San Diego Museum of Art and the Timken Museum of Art. For additional information, call

619-239-0003. (BALBOA PARK) Museum of Contemporary Art. Tijuana-based consortium of artists and designers whose work encom-

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Surveying the depth and rang of the museum's holdings, "Selec-tions from the Permanent Collections from the Permanent Collec-tion. The 1982, on view through Tuesday, September 25, suggests the variety of approaches employed by artists in the U.S. during this decade. It was a time "dominated by a spirit of radical investigation centreed on expanding the definitions of what a work of art could be." Expect to see work by artists regarded as leading figures with permits or produced to the time. The produced of the 1982 of the 1982 of the time Boulevard of the 1982 of the 1982 of the rectly across from the Santa & Radi decay the 1982 of the 1982 of the 1982 of the 1982 of the produced to the 1982 of the 19

road Depot, adjacent to the America Plaza trolley transfer station. 619-234-1001. (DOWNTOWN)

Museum of Contemporary Art, La contemporary art is more diverse than ever before. Newly accessible in formation and communication tech nite ant works the museum ha

useum of Photographic Arts, a cination with and fear of water fuerick Carl Frieseke is featured in a these reconstruction of the man 70 paintings drawn from public and private collections. Chronicling his hie and work, the exhibit reveals the full breadth of Friescke's genius through examination of the three phases of his artists, evolution, from 1892 to the 1938. An exparitant, he boilt an telephone of the 1938 and responsable to the 1938 and 1938 an revealing the *reflective and distorting properties of water and mirrors on made figures" in *Conne Imbodreis Bourst of Darkons, "on exhalts through Sunday, September 10. All of Imboder's photographs are unmanipulated gelatin salver prints. "Seen from aboving who great and below, the forms of Imboder's plants in the forms of Imboder's water images occupy saving reflections to the surface of the water they are suspended in a practice, or reflectivity of that surface."

A mid-arer retrispective span

an American Impressionist" closes on Sunday, November 11. Also on exhibit is a special in stallation of a three-dimensional Sh Tro mandala of Universal Peace. This three-dimensional mandala is on

eled the creation of surreal image revealing the "reflective and distor

A midcareer retrospective span-

ning more than two decades and several continents is offered in Philipp

Scholz Rittermann: Navigating by

Light." All of the work included in the show is said to explore the ele-

ment of time; the artist is "particularly interested in the conflicting per

ceptions and perspectives of the eye and the samera. View the show through Sunday October 21

Oceanside Museum of Art





Bipolar Workout

Edgar Allan Poe disliked, to the point of loathing, "any literary work too long to read in one sitting.

the Guardonan, a new musical based on Ferenc Molnar's play The Guardsman (1911), is an innocuous bauble that not only misses opportunities inherent in the origi-nal, it also misses half the point.

The Actor and his wife, the Actress, have been

married six months. Though hype

claims that "onstage and in life they're the perfect man and wife," he's certain she's looking elsewhere (his evidence: she's playing

Chopin's autumnal "Nocturne in E flat op. 9. No. 2" on the piano; ergo, the bloom from their marriage is gone). So he'll test her. Send her acres of roses, then dress as a Russian guardsman and woo her. Now, supposedly, he's a great actor — his Coriolanus has no peer, he swears — but could he fool his wife, even for one minute?

In Molnar's play that question becomes as important as her alleged infidelity. What's real becomes as iffy as what is true. Much of the comedy, in fact, comes from the Actor's split ego, the artist and the male. If he plays the part convinc-ingly, if he's as good as he says, he could seduce his wife and lose her. But then if he can't fool her - or if she's acting too - then he isn't that great a thespian. Either way he loses.

The Guardsman is more an intricate design than a play. The new version, premiering at the Globe, omits much of the design after its first number. The song is a hoot. The Actor and Ac-tress sing "Tonight Was Like the First Night" spent and swoony. But what made their earth move? You can't tell if it was recent lovemaking or their just-completed stage performance. After this moment, one of the show's best, Scott Went-worth's book drops the acting subtext, and comic opportunities as well.

Wentworth also made a change that trips over wentworth also made a change that trips over its own feet. In the original, Molnar has a third character. He's a Critic and — oh, Ferenc, you cheeky monkey! — Molnar broke the stereotype and made him a sympathetic human being. Went-worth won't go there. He changes the Critic to a Playwright and makes much of the musical about the Playwright's dilemma: how will he write his script? How bring them together? How end it? Al-though Fred Applegate gives an assured, unfussy,

and always funny performance as the Playwright, the shift of focus from the couple to the writer threatens to gut the musical of immediacy.

The score — by Craig Bohmler, with lyrics by Marion Adler — is imitation Sondheim: staccato riffs and sudden, steep intervals. The songs fit their REVIEW

places in the proceedings, though few linger beyond their singing. One that does brings down the first-act curtain with aplomb.



His voice creates a problem, though. It is so musical — singing and speaking — when he dons the garb of the Guardsman, how could the Actor's wife not recognize him straight away? Much of the play revolves around what she knew and when she knew it ("The sophisticated will take it one way," Theresa Helburn wrote of the original, "the romantic another, and this, I believe, is Molnar's intention"). Barbour is so distinctive that all the world's disbelief, suspended willingly, couldn't erase his obvious presence. When it premiered in 1911, *The Guardsman*

fizzled. In 1924, the Theatre Guild revised the show and opened it with the Lunts — Alfred Lunt and Lynne Fontanne — in the leads. Imagine the style they gave the production!

Enter the Guardsman calls for the Lunts, with peratic voices. Barbour and Fred Applegate com-bine singing and acting. Suzan Hanson, though strong vocally, makes the Actress just a petulant diva and no springboard for the role's hundred nuances. Late in Act One, she even signals that the Actress recognizes her disguised husband a goggle-eved take, played front, that eliminates

Scott Bradley's set toys with illusion and re-



Enter the Guardsman, book by Scott Wentworth, music by Craig Bohmler, lyrics by Marion Adler, based on Lowell Davies Festival Theatre, Simon Edison Centre for the Performing Arts

Directed by Michael Donald Edwards; cust lame Barbur, Suan Harijan, Fred Applegate, Trey Hohman, Joan Ryan, Vicki Van Tassel, Jamie Torellini; semic daspus, Scatt Bradler; ostumen, B. Modern, lighting, Moherl Iards, Joan De Aud Petrone, Groregouphy, Dan Mojec, maintaid durenio, Jamoe Vakovich, Playing through October 13; Tuesday through Saturday at 8:00 p.m. Sunday at 7:00 p.m. Matinee Saturday tion call 619-239-2255

Quoth the Raven, one-acts based on stories by Edgar Allen Po-

Quoth the Raven, one-act based on stone by tagar raten ver Stedgehammer Theatre, St. Cedia's Phylouse, 1903 Sixth Avenue, San Diege Stedgehammer Theatre, St. Cedia's Phylouse, 1903 Sixth Avenue, San Diege Stedgehammer Fox, Scott Fedsher, Michael Sewerance, Matthew Wilder; cast: Franci Creste, Dana Tokes, Francia Thuman, Elizabeth O'Utan Yager, Leistic Code, Iphing, Jennifer Sedios; sound, Fra Creste, Dana Tokes, Francia Thuman, Elizabeth O'Utan Yager, Leistic Code, Iphing, Jennifer Sedios; sound, Fra ticks. Knee leek Re

vrough September 30; Thursday through Saturday at 8:00 p.m. Sunday at 7:00 p.m. For call 619-544-1484.

ality. We're backstage of a vast, opera house-like theater. Solitary work- and ghost-lights sculpt shadows. Flats slide on and off. Fragments of pro-ductions past painted on the backs include a male and female, nude and semi-nude, as if painted by Aubrey Beardsley on LSD. It's hard to tell how long that show ran. Enter the Guardsman doesn't inspire thoughts of longevity either, though Jam Barbour performs his duties unforgettably.

If Edgar Allan Poe were a runner, he would have loved the sprints. He disliked, to the point of

loathing, "any literary work too long to read i one sitting." He was after a "unity of impression, he wrote in "The Philosophy of Composition, he wrote in "The Philosophy of Composition," and if "two stituges be required, the affairs of the world interfere, and every thing like totality is at once destroyed. "Though he would have hated in-termissions, Poe thought like a playwright, and his short pieces, which flow like dramatic mono-logues, beg for live performances. Sledgehammer Theatne is staging four of Poe's

works. Though the results are mixed, two are def initely worth checking out.

San Diego's Feldsher turns "The Power of Words" into a SETI-like eaves-Longest-Running Hit Show! dropping on heaven. The earth has "lately perished," and we hear voices from "Aidenn" hear voices from "Aidenn" through speakers. At first they're just cracks of electric energy, laughing, Later they be-come distinct. Oinos is a spirit "new-fledged with immortal-ity," and Agathos acts as a guide. Words, says Agathos, resonate beyond themselves. resonate beyond themselves. They become a creative physi-cal power, "an impulse in the air." And even though worlds get destroyed, words can speak them. "with a few passionate sentences," back "into birth." Feldsher makes hearing the A Triple Jolt

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Feldsher makes hearing the roices difficult. He creates, in effect, a semi-privileged mo-ment. Pea Hicks's eerie, spidery sounds and Francis Thumm's music — performed on piano strings, waterphone, and steel drums — intrude on the angelic dialogue and the power of its words. Dana Hooley and Thumm cast disembodied voices across the darkened stage, as we hear, or almost hear, answers that could save

"The Tell-Tale Heart" was one of Poe's favorites. Although San Diego newcomer Francis Gerke does fine, focused work as the tormented tormenter. ou can't help but wonder what Poe would have thought of Brendon Fox's direction. Fox puts a comic rinse around the paranoid speaker and shies away from the story's Gothic

Few things in theater ring more hollow, these days, than imitation postmodernism. Michael Severance's screwball staging of "The Cask of Amonstaging of The Cask of Amon-tillado" has those elements — clownish woman playing a man, stumbling parody of the story, tone-deaf tonalities plus strange lapses into dead air. The result is an unfocused jumble. It's as if Severance hadn't a clue, so he pretended

Poe didn't either.
The only positive in the "Cask" staging is Jennifer Set-low's expressive lighting, which was first-class all evening and among the best I've seen at Sledgehammer.

Quath the Rayen concludes with Poe's primordial fable, "Si-lence." The Demon describes a simple scene: a weary man sits on a gray rock near the Congo and gazes upon a desolate world. The Demon's biblical language elevates the event to an apocalyptic allegory, and the Demon's final laughter ripples

through the night.
Would someone right now,
please, give Matthew Wilder a
locat building, where he can fulfill his artistic destiny?

Like Feldsher's "Power of Words," Wilder enhances Poe's imagination with visual and aural correlatives. On a video screen, stage left, we're in an asylum. We watch a man, im-ploded by sadness, and a woman, also in asylum garb, "A light, frothy musical!" "James Barbour is magnetic! An exceptional leading man!" Enter the Guardsman LYPICS BY MARION ADLER MUSIC BY CRAIG BOHMLER NOW THROUGH OCTOBER 13 LOWELL DAVIES FESTIVAL THEATRE Tues.-Sun, at 8pm Suzan Hanson & James Barbou



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THEATER LISTINGS

Theater listings and commentary are by Jeff Smith. Information is accurat according to material given us, but it is always wise to phone the theater for any lust-mirute changes and to inquire about thect availability. Many theaters offer discounts to students, servic critizens, and the military. Ask at the box office.

Volumes have been written about Mart Crowley's "out-of-the-closet" gay comedy-drama: how it's dated, pervasive low self-esteem, etc. "The play that started it all," the first drama to look closely at gay life, had such a profound impact that undittee their close to be described by the close of the close their close to describe their close to be described by the close their close to describe their closes. pundits ever since, to elevate their own status, have tried to shoot it down (and hundreds of playdown (and hundreds of play-weights have turned its structure into formula). For Diversionary Theatre, director Tim Irving sidesteps opinions, and the play's stereotyping traps, and treats the 33-year-old script as a recedling per riod piece, a addinum portrait of gay individuals 14 month before Stonewall. Little has been written about how the play unfolds. It's a creathed party, Wish some of his best work to date—and with a swage, non-nerves-exposed, chilling savage, raw nerves-exposed, chill-ing performance by Michael Dou-glas Hummel — Irving has caught the rhythms and mood-swings of an evening that doesn't go accord-ing to plan. Sharp detail — little touches, like hair touches, like hair creeping past short, vicuna v-necks, music by

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lived in real time. The production evokes an era, the "liberated" '60s, in which many Americans never felt free, even behind closed doors. Critic's pick.

Chalk It Up to Murder In HTT Productions newest mys-tery dinner-theater show. Texas Ranger Slate Montana must find the truth. Did Butch Spikehorn kil Hank Anderson, as people have long believed, or was it someone else!

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elser SHIRLEY'S KITCHEN, 7868 EL CAJON BOULEVARD, LA MESA, OPENENDED RUN; SATURDAY AT 7:00 P.M. FOR IN-FORMATION CALL 619-561-8673.

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Ebb, songs include "All That Isaz" and
"Razzie Dazzie."
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SATIRBOAY AT EOD PM. SANDAY AT
7.00 PM. MATRIEE SATURDAY AND
SANDAY AT ZOOD PM. SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

The Circle
South Coast Repertory Theatre
opens its new season with Sommerset Maugham's comedy about
one generation's inability to learn
from another's misfortunes.
Warner Short directed SOUTH COAST REPERTORY THEATRE

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Death Rides the Singe
HIT Productions new interactive
comedy-mystery, written by Beth
and Scott McNellen, is set in Texas.
You survived a stampede, Lucy
Tyler is looking for your underwear... and there's a dead body in
the next room.
The HORN TOWN IN THE STATE OF THE STATE
BOALE VARO, I LA MESA, OPTH-SHOED
BULE FIRDAY AT 7:20 P.M. FOR MODE
MATION CALL 459-851 8673. MATION CALL 619-561-8673 Diva

The La Jolla Playhouse presents the world premiere of Howard M.
Gould's "scathing comedy" about a Hollywood diva and the men snared in her web. Neel Keller di-

TOBER 14; TUESDAY THROUGH SATUR DAY AT 8:00 P.M., SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

Fault Line One-Acta
The Fault Line Players present
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ofluratil"—Surpthe and Jones and
the Road to learus, Franklin's Window, Golden Boyz, and Ant
Struggles.
The FRANT LINE THEATIET, THEOLOGH
GETTERER 2-2: PRODUM AND SATIONAM

FROM AND SATURDAY AT 10:30 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 619-688-9210

Carlshad Playreaders presents New Village Arts — a new professional North County theater group — do ing four short plays from the Ac-tors Studie Drama School, Mark Stephan directed. CARLSHAD CULTURAL CONTER, 3667

MONROE STREET, CARLSBAD, MONDAY SEPTEMBER 24, AT 7:30 P.M. FOR IN-FORMATION CALL 760-729-3383.

fuddy meers
Every morning Claire finds a stack
of World Seek puzzles on the nightstand. "I love search-a-word puzzles." she says, "don't If" She can't
memuber. A while ago, her barin
"zorched." She has psychogenic
amnesis. She begin such new day
from scratch. Her world looks like
tout station. from scrack. Her wordt looks like avat search-sword puzzle, and her pencil tip just broke. Alice tumbles into Wonderland. Claire awakes in Dysfunctionville, where everyone die wishen they had be entered to be a subject to the subject to the subject to the subject to the control of the subject to the subje scenic design wiz, Marty Burnett, turns the stage into zigzags and di agonals, a melange of crazy angles that resembles a completed search a-word puzzle. Director Sean Mur

ray's assembled a savvy cast. Dan

Hold Please
Annie Weisman, who wrote Be Aggressive, has a new play opening at the South Coast Rep. Four women in a large corporation answer incoming calls and counsel each other. Mark Rucker directed.
SOUTH COAST REPERTOR THEATE.

ruber's hilarious as Richard, who flits from Jekyll to Hyde, and back. fits from Jekyll to Hyde, and back. Sandra Ellis. Troy makes Gertie a hoot. She talks in "stroke-speak." which is like getting e-mail in the wrong format. And K.B. Mercer is touching as Claire, the instant in-nocent, who wakes each morning to a bad dream.

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falls for a cabaret singer.
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BUTTENERS JAT, HORNAY AT SOO P-M.
MINES SATURDAY AND SUMONY AT
200 P-M.

Perfect, Now Change
The longest-running off-Broadway
musical revue satirizes "sex, love, dating, and marriage." It starts with youth and ends with old age. moving from the cusp of despair song called "Single Man Drought"), to a marriage ("Wed-ding Vows"), to senior singles meeting at a funeral ("I Can Live With That"). Directed with flare by Sam Woodhouse and choreperaphed with seamless fluidity by r Velasco and backed up by the odd but effective combin of piano and violin, the San Diego Rep's version is a light-hearted, al-heit lightweight, crowd-pleaser (they should move the show next door, to the Lyceum Space, and show a like Signette are general: 1-can relate to-that stuff, and the characters are little more than the stuations: either lagging phrind, to order the study of of piano and violin, the San Dieg quiet insitence, expressing his tal ents without fanfare. Steve Gun-derson has become a local head-liner. He doesn't have marquee looks, even wears a scruffy beard for the show, but can convince yo every person he plays is real. This includes a sensitivity-challenged stud ("Why? 'Cause I'm a Guy"), a father adopting his child's lan guage, and a vein-flexing San Quentin convict determined t Quentin convict determined to show a hesitant couple that mar-riage isn't a life sentence. (Note: due to popular demand, the Rep has extended the show's run sever

SAN DIEGO REPERTORY THEATRE THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30; THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT 3:00 P.M.

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H.I.T. Productions' new interactive mystery takes place at Ted Sterling's birthday party. But ask his wife: Ted hasn't been all that ster ling, "and now he must pay!

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nuptials and instead finds herself wearing family fortune is at stake. Help her solve this hill

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Joey and Maria's 25th Anniversary Party Dillstar Productions presents a se

quel to its interactive dinner the ter show loev and Maria's Comeds Italian Wedding. (Note: the show plays one Friday a month.) CULY THEATRE, 338 WEST SEVENTH.

A Midsummer Night's Dream The Globe Theatres stage Shake-speare's comedy of mistaken iden CENTRE FOR THE REREORMING ART

National Comedy Theatre

the spot, is difficult enough. Years ago, however, Keith Johnstone thought it'd be more exciting if done competitively. He got the idea from pro wrestling ("where Terri-ble Turks mangled defrocked Priests, while mums and dads yelled insults and grannies waved their handbags"). National Comedy Theatre, an offshoot of John stone's TheatreSports (artistic di-rector Gary Kramer says the two judges awarding points to the best scenes. Klunkers and groaners got booed; quick wit, rewarded (one of the most refreshing parts of the ontest: people acknowledged fai ure, abundantly, then forgot it). It made for a lively, often qu funny, evening. And Gary Kramer one talented comedian

Worth a try. Worth a try.

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Otherwise Engaged
The Fritz Theater stages Simon
Gray's outlandish comedy about
Simon Hench, under whose serene
façade "lurks a frighteningly isolated individual." Bryan Bevell di-

SEPTEMBER 22, THROUGH OCTO-BER 21, THURSDAY THROUGH SATUR DAY AT 8.00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7.00 P.M.

Wright's comedy-drama about Pe ter and Kari. They meet, for the

first time in decades, at their 20th high school reunion. Craig Noel CASSIUS CARTER CENTRE STAGE, S MON EDISON CENTRE FOR THE PER-FORMING ARTS, THROUGH OCTO BER 20; TUESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT B OO P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. MATINEE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT

Quoth the Raven

SLEDGEHAMMER THEATRE, THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT

A Raisin in the Sun orraine Hansberry's classic drama about three generations of the Younger family, their dreams and conflicts. Jennie Hamilton di

COMMUNITY ACTORS THEATRE

AT 3:00 P.M. Shear Madness ery dinner theater minus the meal. The longest-running nonmu-sical in American theater history is et in a unisey hair salon in Mis sion Hills. In an upstairs apart-ment, someone stabs erstwhile p anist-diva Isabel Czerney with negative remarks about Lakesid and Paradise Hills, for example anist diva bable (Zerrug with clipping shears, Whodunit! Up to this point the east — performing as for ne scond base, unminked, at Qualcomm Stadium — overkills sery word, gesture, and joke. Then in a volte face, the house lights come up, and the audience becomes the detective. The show core, and obviously the cause of its between cast and audience. During the interrogation the actors between cast and audience. During the interrogation the actors be raise nagging questions about the anything-for-a-laugh mindset be-Worth a try. THEATRE IN OLD TOWN, OPEN-ENDED RUN, TUESDAY THROUGH SATURDAY AT 8:00 P.M. SUNDAY AT 7:00 P.M. SATUR DAY AND SUNDAY AT 5:00 P.M. the interrogation the actors be ome re-actors. They ad-lib and rounce becklers. Although many

Solvan Wedgel Anniversary, or, Who Wents to Murder a Multimillional Cert set this straight. Bust and let's get this straight. Bust and let's get this straight. Bust and the set with the set of the set with the set of the set with the set of the set with an inversary? Hey, all me dath, but do they even like each other? And who invited Brends Socrates, sounders songul and Petals's worst to set with the set of the set

neral"). Turns out these folk aren't just ten kinds of whacko. The phones are down, a storm's outside, and they're suspects in a mu tiple homicide. Each has enough not who — but who didn't — dur nit. Mystery Cafe Dinner Theatre's latest has a relatively loose script and a cast adept at comedy and zinging ad libs. James Pascarella, one of the funniest people in San Diego, again reigns supreme in multiple roles (audiences be

on Mars — Diane Thrasher's a scream as Petals, who never met a situation she didn't yearn to con-trol. Gerry MacKinnon, William situation she didn't yearn to con-trol. Gerry MacKinnon, William Fredrick, Megan McLeod, and Crystal Verdon (whose middle name should be "Talent") keep th show rolling, even when the script ulls. Worth a try.

MYSTERY CAFE, OPEN-ENDED RUN; FR NEORMATION CALL 619-544-1600

Sign of Four OnStage Playhouse presents the mystery-melodrama, in which Sherlock Holmes investigates the disappearance of the Agra Trea-sure. Director James M. McCulloc switched genders for most roles.
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The Sopranos' Last Supper Dillstar Productions presents ar evening with the notorious Bari tone family. "gambling, dinner, dancing, and good old mobster fun."

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mouly, with their producer, Richard DOyly Carte, and each other. Even with gloss of caposition, we never get near G, nor S. (just a rehash of the basic attributes, but little depth, or how possibly the greatest musical collaboration team of all time functioned together). Basked by indeed faitpable Cris O'Bryon on piano, the production's worth seeing, and hearing, even though the book, at best, is one note.

LAMB'S DLAYERS THEATRE, THROUGH

LAMES 5 PLAYERS THEATRE. THROUGH SEPTEMBER 23; THURSDAY AT 1:30 P.M. FRIDAY AND SATURDAY AT 1:00 P.M. SATURDAY AT 4:30 P.M. AN 'UNDAY AT 2:00 P.M.

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Tarantara! Tarantara!

The music's great. It's by Arthur Seymour Sullivan. The lyrics, by William Schwenck Gilbert, are comic genius. And Lamb's Plays perform both with skill, color, ar panache, Tarantara (the title con begins at a brick-walled rehearsa hall. Through a long flashback, it tells the story of Gilbert and Sulli van their collaborations, highs Duke (1896) — and permits learn Reith to padace D'Oslo Carte quality costumes. The cast, led by David Cochran Heath, as the cor-mudgeon Gilbert, and Doren Elia as the obsequious Sulfivan, is quite strong (especially John Palhamus, born to do "patter" ongs, in a number of roles). The music and lyris are risch, but the book, by lar Taylor, is shallow. GSS bicker.

PAUL THE GREEK LIMOUSINE

CALL ABOUT TICKETS ONLY (ASK PAUL).



A cross between improvisational comedy and Family Fend. Improv, making up a funny scene as you go along, a tough rough, Add competitive scene making, with the audience awarding joints to the win the educaness of comparisons, but Theatrepostr's Fame show. In a boot. The 40-minute evening uses various formats. The show I caught had "Team Sports" — two pairs of players compreted, taking suggestive that Theatre" — five "directors" invented scene, so sing the other

invented scenes, using the othe

four as actors. The winner got a ba-nana, the loser a "forfeit." Some at-

fempts went nowhere (I repeat: in

prov is tough; I did it in my, as hindsight reveals, callow youth).

K LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE 2001 SEASON

frequent than the misses. Their guru, Keith Johnstone, has written one of the few brilliant books (Impro) I've ever read about making theater. And they put his pearls to good use. Their motto: "Remember, when it's not funny, it's art."

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ROSSMONT COLLEGE Rogebouse Theatre, 1800 Grossmont College Dr., El Cajon

quit trumping up the pseudo drama and get on with this highly entertaining, if lightweight show. (Note: the original cast members have been replaced.) Worth a try.

619 234 9583.

A Vote for Murder Mud-slinging turns to murder when senatorial candidates debate Murder Mystery Players' new in-

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RIO NORTH, SAN DIEGO, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 29; SATURDAY AT 8 00 P.M. FOR INFORMATION CALL 619 280 7115

Lamplighters presents Mary Orr's drama about Eve Harrington's cruel climb to stardom. James Ca

LAMPLIGHTERS, THROUGH AT 8 DO P.M. MATINEE SUNDAY AT

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patrons sip a house blend —
"Grape," "Scandinavian Blizzard,"
or "Mokokó Cocoa Mocha" —

Hugh plays '70s tunes on the pi

to celebrate Hugh's anniversary

ano. He and his companions, here

got stuck in the '70s. The trio used

Bean, a comedy group that never went far. They're "losers," they ad-

mit, but not "ordinary" ones. And

mit, but not "ordinary" ones. And, hey, their reunion could help them face searing issues from their medicare pasts. A formulas story line? Yep. Straight from Forever Pland There's also the Forever Pland problem: the three comedians are far too talented to play inept characters. One's a white at the piano. Another's a first-rate minne, and the third's a crackerjack magician.

o be Maxwell. Butternutt, and

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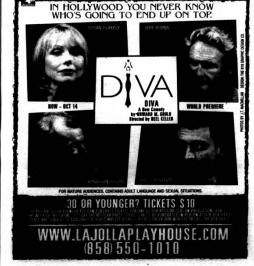
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When we're unde attack...it is disrespectful to go out and play music." An insider with decades of experience in San Diego

and irresponsible. Not so fast, says Bob Hughes, co-owner of Sets 102. Using the name Robert, Hughes is also Sets'

coverage in the morning. In the middays and afternoon we had two reports an hour. Hughes said as a former

the inside track

nonstop news coverage on the day of last week's terrorist attack, All the other English-speaking FM stations in San Diego carried nonstop news coverage last Tuesday. Sets and 92.1 balked at giving up music for news.

"Even if everyone else was reporting on [the attack], it is still your public duty to use the public airwaves to serve the public," aid the insider. "For them to White House corresponden from 1969 to 1971, he was uniquely qualified to help

deliver the news last week "I was the Washington correspondent for Metro media." He filed news reports for Metromedia's chain of progressive rock stations. "I covered the early Nixon years.

Hughes said he knew the subject. "I had direct, firsthand knowledge about the Pentagon. I worked there.

He thinks the other stations may have gone

"We provided extensive



but here's what we do

"I gave an awful lot of energy to bands and I didn't make a penny off them," said Lou Niles about his decision to abdicate Sar Diego for L. A. five years ago From 1988 to 1996 Niles

worked behind the scenes in local music, giving advice and support to Boilermaker, Gregory Page, and Rust. Officially he served as manager to local band Inch, which once was signed to

Niles, 34, left San Diego

overboard. "It was 24 hours of 'We don't know much,

five years ago out of frustra-tion. "I moved to L.A. after years of saying, 'This band is great,' but the industry would say, 'Oh well, they're just friends of yours.' "
As host of the local music

Loudspeaker show on 91X from 1990 to '96, Niles said he was an early champion of Jewel, the Rugburns, and Sprung Monkey,
He works as an indepen-

dent record promoter and as a prop man on movie and video sets. "I just worked or a Hooverphonic [band] video. We went to the desert in Arizona. Here's big-time L.A. Lou Niles moving fake rocks and cactuses in the desert to make ends meet. But at least it's industry

For more than two years For more than two years Niles worked at the indepen-dent label Ultimatum. His last eight months he was a VP. Niles was responsible for signing the Incredible Moses Leroy. Ultimatum eventually released Moses's CD Electric. Pocket Radio earlier this year but after months of delays and behind-the-scene

A musician close to Moses said the recording sessions went significantly over budget and broke many

"I would have to blame the label and Moses's management more than Moses," said Niles. "Instead of standing by me, Ultima tum put me in the middle. They made me the bad guy They didn't back me up when they were the ones putting heavy pressure on me to get the obvious radio hit

to get the obvious radio hit out of Moses. I was trying to balance between doing my job and letting the artist create. There was a point he went around me and went to my boss. My boss painted the picture that I was the one who was being too hard."
The upshot is that
Moses Leroy is still
with Ultimatum while

Niles left in September "I am in a situation now where, in a word, I'm broke and using any spare pennies to put into Rochelle, Rochelle [a band Niles is now backing]... Hopefully my good-guy attitude won't be my

Niles notes that it is not uncommon for music industry types to manage

Radio DI Al Guerra took on Sprung Monkey, Casbah owner Tim Mays has assisted the Paladins and Uncle Joe's Big Ol' Driver, and promote Bill Silva manages Unwritten Law and singer/songwriter

Jason Mraz. Niles said the relationship of blink-182 and manager Rick Devoe is unusual because blink is a successful



band still managed by its first manager, a guy who did not have music industry "The record company

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happens all the time." Rochelle, Rochelle appears October 1 at the Casbah.

- Ken Leighton

"I bought a house, which is something I could never do in San Diego. And I get a paycheck every two weeks, which is something that never happens if you're a

musician." Mojo Nixon, best known for his hit "Elvis Is Everywhere," is part of a three-man morning team on WEBN, Cincinnati. He says his show is number one in In the '80s, the San Diego gonzo hillbilly made a name for himself singing tweaked and twisted sing-alongs like "Debbie Gibson Is Pregnant

with My Two-Headed Love Child." Some five years before the national media identified the "San Diego scene" of the early '90s (Rocket from the Crypt, the Stone Temple

Club 909

Pilots, Lucy's Fur Coat), Nixon and the Beat Farm took San Diego music to a national audience.

. Mojo is just as irreverent on radio as he was 15 years ago when he was writing songs like "Don Henley Must Die."

"I was just recently auditioning to be the next pope. I got in a lot of trouble, but if somebody's not complaining, then I guess we're not rock 'n' roll, are we? Just last week I decided to help humanity and start a kill Carrot Top campaign. Let me tell you, not one person called up to

Next week the fasttalking Nixon — who released ten albums when he was in San Diego — comes back to town for his first local show since he left three years ago. One of his new songs is about another radio entertainer called "Dr Laura, Who Made You God?"

complain."

"Small mind, petty, hate-filled cretin / Ought to be taken out back and beaten. It sounds a lot like Graham Parker's song 'Don't Ask Me No Ouestions,' But I don't have the talent or where-withal to come up with no melodies. I borrow liberally.

Nixon is a left-of-center

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charge of anarchy" in the mold of Lenny Bruce, Abbie Hoffman, or Beat Farmers' founder Country Dick

Montana.
"People are shocked I'm in Cincinnati with its rightwing, conservative mentality. But it gives you something to buck up against. Besides, there's really only three things I need: ESPN, air con-ditioning, and a cool place to eat. There is a good barbecue

San Diego goes, he said,
"There is nary an iota of
Roberto's in Cincinnati...
[but] Country Dick was a big place an hour from my house." Nixon, 44, admits his barbecue ways may be changing. "I just went to a reason to stay in San Diego. When he died that went

When asked about working for the Clear Channel conglomerate that owns WEBN, Nixon said, "It's the devil, but it's a

not a factor in cholesterol."

Mojo says, "Sometime — maybe five to ten years from now — I'd like to get into talk radio. It would be more

challenging. Don't get me wrong. I'm happy to do fart jokes. I'm very good at it. But at some time I'd like to do

'As far as moving back to

"It's the devil, but it's a highly unorganized devil." When pressed for another satiric barb, he said, "Naw...I don't know how many [Clean Channell executives in San tonio read the Reader, but I don't want to take any

chances."
Mojo Nixon appears at the free-admission Adams Avenue Street Fair, September 29, 7 p.m. at the 33rd St. and Adams Avenue stage.

— Ken Leighton

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TV. Now I'll have to eat Heaven Rocks, a rock musical chicken and fish and take a pill. It's a good thing booze is

in Point Loma.

"All the audience
members get name stickers when they come in...Clark Gable and Carole Lombard, Fred and Ginger, Pat and Dick Nixon. Then I say, 'This must be heaven.'

veekend Mershon. also the producer, gave it a rest. "I got calls from cast members who said they didn't want to do it. Then I got calls [of cancellation] from people who didn't want to see it this week in light of what happened. I figured it would probably be in best taste if we canceled."

Many local rock shows were canceled postponed after the attack. The Weezer concert was set to happen last Friday at Cox Arena. The day before it was announced, it was announced, it was postponed, and no new date has been set. The blink-182 Coors

Amphitheater show scheduled for last Saturday was postponed to tomorrow On the day of the

disaster, Losing Balance, AWOL, and Pure Milk played an all-ages show at 'Canes.
"All together there were about 50 people," said Losing Balance singer Brad Kayonius, "There were a couple of rowdy people, but most everybody seemed like they wanted to be doing nething else. We got paid, but I wasn't counting on

anything.

The show has run every weekend since June 1, but last

AND OTHERS CANCEL SHOWS Heaven Rocks resumes

Friday and Saturday at the Cabrillo Dinner Theater. - Ken Leighton

"Don't you think listeners could go one day without hearing 'Because I Got High' [in order] to break the news of a national emergency?" asked a veteran radio insider about 92.1's decision to play music last

Tuesday. Alternative 92.1 got national media attention as the first commercial station to play Afroman's "Because



cholesterol count of 328. I pork diet, and exercise

guess it's my ten Mountain Dews a day, my deep-fried

deliver is 'I see dead people.' " Jason Mershon is John regimen of lying on the couch and screaming at the Belushi in the opening of BRICK BRICK

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Got High. Mike Halloran, 92.1 program director, said he ran a network news feed for two hours that morning but then played music with local updates the rest of the day.

"We told people what they could do on a local level, as in where they could go to donate blood, time, or money to help in the relief effort," said Halloran. Locally we did what needed to be done....All the Clear Channel stations were arrying exactly the same

newsman Jeff Prescott anchored the same all-day news feed that was carried by local Clear Channel

"I think it was ludicrou that Clear Channel had 11 stations carrying exactly the same programming. That pretty much tells San Diego whether there is a Clear Channel monopoly here or not "said Halloran

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Halloran said even though they played mos music last Tuesday, he made songs didn't air that day.
"One of the songs we

would not play was 'Bodies' by Drowning Pool," he said of the song with the chorus, "Let the bodies hit the floor." He also made it a point not to play music by the up-and-coming band Burning Airlines.

"Every song you play takes on a different meaning in the face of a national tragedy.

Regarding Afroman's "High" song, Halloran responded, "Obviously they were not listening that day We did not play 'Because I not played it for some

The San Diego Music Memorabilia Exhibition at

downtown's Hard Rock Cafe is free and runs September16 through October 31. Prices for 1980 albums

continue to skyrocket. Recent confirmed sales include \$800 for the Fingers Executives' Jet Set EP, and \$700 for the Cardiac Kidz' Get Out. It takes \$400 to pick up an LP by Rosie, of Rosie & the Originals.

"For whatever it's worth," says Bart Mendoza (local collector, rock writer, and lead guitarist for the

Shambles), "I have sold some of these for that - Ken Leighton [price] recently, so I can

confirm genuine interest, especially from Japan. It'll be interesting to see what happens when more people catch on. How many of these might still be out there? Ultimately, that will decide the true rarity, but

until they settle down, I think we're going to see some record bids on discs that were once extremely common around here."

Online auction sites and

magazine ads (Goldmine, DISCoveries) confirm sales such as NE1's 1-2-3 for \$30, Manual Scan's Plan of Action for \$200 (Mendoza previously was in the band Manual Scan, but he isn't the one who quoted the

AN YOU BELIEVE THAT NOW WE WERE BOTH SICH BOOK

\$200 price), the Penetrators' Untamed Youth for \$120, the Trebles' That's You for \$15, and a 45 RPM single by the Injectors fetched \$250.

— Jay Allen Sanford

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riff...you'll dig it. (2) "Fix You"...ditto. (3) "Old Man TV"...

(4) "Feel Like Math":

(5) "Junkie" is a quite realistic, quite naturalistic tune "about" heroin

(6) Under 50 minutes (Under is always better than

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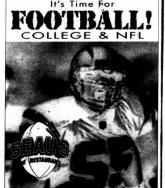




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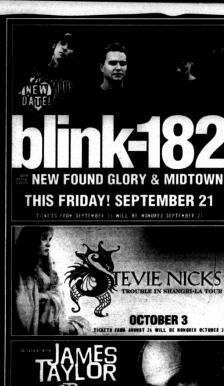
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"It's a quality that has nothing to do with training or technique. It's dragged crying and spitting from the bottom of the soul.

y old friend McGonigall iurned up the other day with his lovely consort. We go way back, McGonigall and me. You don't even want to know how long. He still looks great, though. That's what a lifetime of house painting will do for you, along with a number

of bad things. Actually, McGonigall paints fancy restaurants in the middle of the night: that's his thing. And he does a bit of computer graphics on the side. But he's always had a gift for the arts: poetry painting, what have you. A work ing-class kid from East Vancouver he seemed to just have been born with a particular sensitivity and se of talents. In his 20s, McGonigal even danced professionally with a

prominent Vancouver company.

He's always been alarmingly fit,
but that episode nearly did him in. I think he's still seeing a chiropractor on account of it, and swab oine walls at age 50 doesn't help either. I feel certain McGonigall met his first wife in that dance com-pany. Their youngest daughter is now training with the Winnipeg ballet.

It doesn't seem so long ago that
McGonigall, his wife, and two little girls bought a sailboat in the south of England and sailed AUGUST KLEINZAHLER through France into the Mediter-

ranean, setting up in the marina at Palma de Mallorca. It was there that McGonigall fell hard for Spanish culture and its music in particular. It was hard to keep McGonigall away from Spain af-ter that, and in 1982 he was in Seville for a good long while as a contractor on the Expo site. I think it must have been there that his affection for flamenco grew into a lifelong passion.

So when McGonigall turned up with a lively selection of flamenco numbers on a burned CD, I figured I should drag him down to the local music emporium, go through the bins with him, and see if he couldn't come up with a few treasures to share with his old buddy's faithful

"The first thing you have to

understand about flamenco is duende, "McGonigall explained to me gravely. I've carried around a rather fuzzy notion of duende for many years. The poet Garcia Lorca wrote that duende could only be found in the depths of abandon ment, "in the final blood-filled room of the soul." A gentleman named Mario Pacheco, who founded the premier contempo

rary flamenco label in Spain, has this to say about duende:

Some artists have it, others don't. It's a quality that has nothing to do with training or technique. It's dragged crying and spitting from the bottom of the soul — a very brief

moment of pure communi-cation that takes you out of time. That moment is part of Spanish culture: the audience waits for it in flamenco as they do in the bullfight. The artist

becomes what they are singing; they are there, but at one moment they disappear; they are not there - it's beyond words in: possible to describe. You are totally taken up by it then. It's that powerful.

The origins of flamenco are open to speculation There are clearly Arabic and Jewish influences in the music, most evident in its melismatics, which involve melodic ornament or grace notes and, in particular — with regard to flamenco — the singing of more than one tone to a syllable. I should imagor more than one tone to a syllable. I should imag-ine one might easily find evidence, as well, of the Arabic maqamat (melodic modes), any given or of which (maqam) has a distinctive scale, base around 24 quarter notes, as opposed to the 12 semi-tones of Western music. To put it all more accessibly, if you've ever heard Hebrew prayer or the call to

prayer by the muezzin in Ismic countries, you will have

But it is with the Spanish Gypsy — the gitano — that flamenco is most closely as-sociated, and specifically the Gypsy clans in Andalusia, in the parched south of Spain Although not exclusively in the province of Gypsy culture, especially nowadays, it is

in the Gypsy milieu that flamenco flourished, much in the way that the blues is a product of black cul-ture in this country. In fact, one could think of flamenco as a kind of Gypsy blues, even contain ing a beat cycle of 12, like the 12 measures of the blues, and largely improvised like the blues. The conventions of flamenco, with its reper-

toire and forms of expression, were pretty much consolidated in the 19th Century in Spain; and it was from the mid-19th

Century through the early 70th that the music en joyed its golden age Flamenco is low music like the blues. It's latenight music, played in bars, courtyards, on street corners, at fiestas. Flamenco comes in two basic flavors, but with all man ner of variations: there is the cante chico, a lighter or more festive flamenco and the cante jondo, o

deep song, with which we associate the great flamenco singers and their impassioned outpourings. None of the recent flamenco singers has anything like the emotional force of El Camarón de la Isla, who died in 1992, at age 41, of a heroin over-dose in his home village of San Fernando, near Cádiz. All of Spain went into mourning at the news of his death, even the Basques. It was a remarkable expression of collective grief. El Camarón (given the nickname because of his bony frame that was likened to the local shrimps — camarones — of the small peninsula island he came from, his real name being José Monge Cruz) is considered part of the Nuevo

Flamenco movement, a devel opment of the late '60s, after rock had done much to push traditional Spanish music into the background. Nuevo Fla-menco incorporated elements of jazz, salsa, Brazilian music, blues, and even rock to revitalize the genre.
As has happened with all sorts

of traditional world music, this

hybridization with popular music has had, at best, mixed results. But flamenco, at least with per-formers the level of El Camarón and his equivalent (and frequent accompanist) on guitar, Paco de Lucia, seems to have preserved the purity and in-tensity of the older music and complemented it with some interesting new flavors. There are very able and successful Neevo Flamenco performers like and an successful roles of remines to person the sub-the Gipsy Kings from the south of France, but they are of a different kind than El Camarón and the raft of other superb Gypsy performers from Andalucia, performers who often come from a dynamic traition of flamenco artists.

The three discs listed will give you a good taste

of Nuevo Flamenco, and the three-CD collection of El Camarón is truly magnificent. His voice has a beautiful roughness, and his manner of phrasing shows limitless invention. All the savage feeling of flamenco is in these performances, and one really does begin to have a notion what it might be like to hear this giant in a small café cantantes and experience something of that ineffable quality duende.

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"Whom Bonds Attock" fecturing Ozzy Osbourne [424], Godsmock [30] I, Stelind, Sollvo, and more: Goor. Mighthemir, Iriday, Soptembe 28, 2050 Intentairment Circle, (halo Vistr. 619-671-3600 or 619-220-8497.

Heavy Lewis & the News (451): Veies Casino Concerts in the Park, Thansday, September 27, 8 p.m., 5005 Willows Road, Alpine. 619-220-8497 or 619-445-5400.

Zem Georrillo /106): The Cashoh, Thursday, September 27, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boxlevord, midrown. 619-232-4355 or 619-220-8497.

Southern Culture on the Skids /266): Belly Up Tovern, Wednesday, September 76, 8:30 p.m., 143 South Cedias Avenue, Solona Beach 958-481-8140 or 619-720-8497.

Lodysmith Block Mambazo /961/ and the Blind Boys of Alebama /967£ Humphrey's Concers by the Bay, Sunday, September 23, 7 p.m. 7241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island, 619-520-8497 or 619-523-1010.

"Athermous Juzz" fectoring Dundle Perez & the Motherland Project: The Neurosciences Institute, Monday, September 24, 8 p.m., 10640 John Joy Hopkins Drive, in Julia, 858-454-5872.

Barri Shankar: (992) and Anouchka Shankar: Humphrey's Concerts by the Boy, Tuesdey, September 25, 7:30 p.m., 2241 Shalter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619:220-8497 or 619-523-1010.

The Proclaimers and the Honeydogs: "Canes Ber and Gill, Tuesday, September 25, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780.

WEDNESDAY Janet Jackson (628) and 112: San Dega Sports Arana, Wednesday, September 26, 3500 Sports Arana Basievard, San Diego, 619-220-8497

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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.)

Spyre Gyre (697) and Chris Botti (689); Humphrey's Conce

8076 La Mesa Blvd.

Big Bed Voodeo Duddy (677): Humphory Concerts by the Bey, Friday, September 21, 8 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619:220:8497 or 619:523-1010.

Glory (304); and Midtowns: Coors Amphitheore, Friday, September 21, 2050 Entertainment Carde, Chale Visto. 619-671-3600 or 619-220-8497.

Tiso Atomic Punks, pote, and Herricane Jermy: "Cones for and Grill, Friday, September 21, 3105 Ocean Front Wolk, Mission Beach, 858-488-1780.

Critters Buggin' and Backtir & Mustepha After of the Master Musicians of Jajouke: Brck by Brck, Friday, September 21, 1130 Buenas Avenue, Bay Park, 619-275-5483 or 619-270-8497.

Margon LaFay: Java Joe's Coffeehouse, Friday, September 21, 9 p.m., 1956 Bozon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-523-0356.

Dennis Quaid & the Sharks: Belly Up Toven, Schudoy, September 22, 9:15 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solaru Booch. 858-481 8140 or 619-770-8497

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Simme Goal Cell Band, Key, the Rodio Filters, Paggy Wetson (841), and See Palmer (841) and Bal Rey (810) Schooly, September 29, 10 a.m. to 10 pm., Adoms, Avenue Chowees 35 in offe Borooth Streety, Normal Reights, 855-472-8079, For performer bion of Showtines, visit www.gothere.com/AdamsAve.

Sliphnet, System of a Down (465), Rommstein (455), Mudwayne, and No One: (ax Arine, Sunday, September 30, SDSU compus, College Area. 619-220-8497.

Vinco Neil 2. His Band, Sledd, and Sirens Well (535); 4th 8. 8, Sunday, September 30, 345 8 Street, downtown. 619-220-8497 or 619-231-4343.

The Dammed /5021 the Swingle' Utters /2911 and Pleasure Forever: 'Cane: Ser and Grill, Sunday, September 30, 3105 Ocean Front Wolk, Mirsten Beach, 858-488-1780.

OCTOBER

Basement Jaxx and the Ugly Decklings: 4th & 8, Menday, October 1 345 8 Street, downtown: 619-220-8497 or 619-231-4343. Stevie Nicks /580): Coors Amphitheetre, Wednesday, October 3, 2050 Entertainment Circle, Chulo Visto. 619-671-3600 or 619-220-8497.

Anne Murray (605): Eest Courly Performing Arts Centur, Wednesdoy, October 3, 7-30 p.m., 210 Eest Mein Street, El Cajon, 619-440-2277 or 619-220-8497.

Jim Brickman /827: Humphrey's Concerts by the Boy, Thursday, October 4, 8 p.m., 2741 Shefter Island Drive, Shefter Island, 619-220-8497 or 619-523-1010.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Mystique

Jazz/Funk/R&B

Eddle from Older Joro Joe's Coffeehouse, Thursday, October 4, 9 p.m., 1956 Bocon Street, Ocean Beach. 619-523-0356. Concerts in the Park, Sunday, Septe 30, 5005 Willows Road, Alpine. 619-220-8497 or 619-445-5400.

Junes Teylor /826 t Coors Amphitheetre, Friday, October 5, 2050 Entertainment Circle, Chule Vista. 619-671-3600 or 619-220-8497.

Delibert McClinton (941): 4th 8 B, Friday, October 5, 345 B Street, downthown. 619-220-8497 or 619-231-4343.

Jame Monhelt and Holly Hofmann (694): California Carter for the Arts, Friday, October 5, and Schurday, October 6, 8 p.m., 340 N. Escandia Bouleverft, Escandida. 800-988-4233, 760-839-4100; 619-220-8497.

7608394100, 6197208497.

"Reggos World Festival" techning Busmy Walker [742], Eek-A-Mosse [734]. War, Afroman, Berrington Levy [746]. Common Sense [736]. Rumkir Jee, Skanic [743], and nare: Son Dogo Sports Aurus, Sonutdo, Octobe 6.7 p.m. to michight, 300 Sports Aurus Boulevard Son Diego, 619-220-8497.

Daisy Berkewitz (from Marilyn Menson): Brick by Brick, Sotundey, Octobe 6, 1130 Buenos Avenue, Bay Park 619-275-5483 or 619-220-8497.

Tracy Lewrence /764): 4th & 8, Sunday, October 7, 345 B Street, downtown. 619-220-8497 or 619-231-4343.

Andy M. Stewart /996 and Gerry O'Beirne /894 t Holy Trinity Episcopal

Church, Sunday, October 7, 7:30 p.m., 2083 Sunset Cliffs Boulevard, Ocean Beach, 858-689-2266.

Bub Schoolder and Bue Rilley: 'Cones Ser and Grill, Monday, October 8, 3105 Ocean Frest Wolk, Mission Beach. 858-489-1780.

The Black Eyed Peas. (459): Bolly Up Tovern, Tuesday, October 9, 9 p.m., 143 South Cadros Avenue, Solare Beech. 858-481-8140 or 619-220-8497.

"Athencous Juzz" featuring Poter Erskine, Alam Posque, and Dave Carpanter: the Neurosciences Institute, Wednesdey, October 10, 8 p.m., 10640 John for Neurosciences institute, 858-454-5872.

Rundy Travis /Z83): Vejes Casino Concerts in the Park, Thursday, October 11, 8 p.m., 5005 Willows Road, Alpine. 619-220-8497 or 619-445-5400. "An Evening with the Deraillers" /771 the (asho), Thursday, October 11, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettrer Boulevard, midrown. 619-232-4355.

The Betthole Seriers (243): Bick by Bick, Thursday, Ortober 11, 1130 Buenos Avenue, Bay Park, 619-275-5483 or 619-220-8497.

The Temptotions /971): Humphrey's Concerts by the Bey, Friday, October 12, 8 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island, 619-220-8497 or 619-523-1010.

"Lloyd's Blues Music Festival 2001" tecturing B.B. King /949] Buddy Gay /934], John Hiett &

the Genery, and Teaming Centre /938): Cors Amplitheatre, Friday, Orober 12, 2050 Entertainment Circle, Chula Vista. 619-671-3600 or 619-220-8497.

The Young Dubliners (438): Boly Up Turent, Fridry, October 12, and Saturday, October 13, 9-15 p.m., 143 South Cedros Avenua, Solano Beach. 858-481-8140 or 619-720-8497.

Gordon Lightfoot (906): Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Sunday, October 14, 7:30 p.m., 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island. 619-220-8497 or 619-523-1010.

"Judy Collins" Wildflower Fastival" with Judy Collins, Roger McGuinn, Richie Havens, and Junis Monday, October 15, 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island, 619-220-8497 or 619-523-1010.

Richard Elliet and Marc Antoine: Humphery's Concerts by the Boy, Tuesday, October 16, 2241 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island, 619-220-8497 or 619-523-1010.

Bob Dylam (400): RIMAC Arena, Wednesday, October 17, UCSD compus, La Jolio, 619-220-8497. "Athonous Juzz" featuring the Loc Konitz Guartet: The Neurosciences Institute, Wednesday, October 17, 8 p.m., 10640 John Joy Hopkins Drive, Lo Jole. 858454-5872.

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October 19, 8:30 p.m., 2501 Kettner Boulevord, midtown: 619-237-4355 or 619-220-8497.

Terry Riley, George Brooks, and Krishna Bhatt: Sprace Street Forum, Friday, October 19, 8 p.m., 301 Sprace Street, Banker's Mill. 619-295-0301

Yoursou N'Dour: California Center for the Arts, Friday, October 19, 8 p.m., 340 N. Escondido Boulevard, Escondido

800-988-4253, 760-839-4100; 619-220-8497

The Backstreet Boys |603 : 100 Entertainment Circle, Chula Visto, 619-671-3600 or 619-220-849

Soulcracker 306 to the

The Fred Anderson Trio:

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Explosion (126.): Cores Bor one Grill,
Sunday, October 21, 7, 30 p.m., 3105
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Sunday, October 21, 345 8 Street downtown, 619-270-8497 or 619-231-4343

760-839-4100 619-270-8497

Spyro Gyro, September 20, Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay

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Transist Aurel Assent, Sin Sin 77,
and more. Wester Hartin Proze Bullow,
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Broadway Circle, downtown. 619-232-4355 or 619-220-8497

George Benson /604 £ Colfornic Center for the Arts, Thursday, Novemb 8 p.m., 340 N. Escendido Boulevand. Escendido. 800-988-4753, 760-839-4400, 619-220-8497.

The Jazz Mandolin Project: 4th & 8,

Nikka Costa: "Cores Bor and Grill, Tuesday, Ortober 23, 3105 Deaco Front Walk, Mission Beach, 858-488 1780.

Julio Iglesias /629/c California Center for the Arts, Wednesday, October 24, 8 p.m., 340 N. Escondido Boulevard, Escondido. 800-988-4253,

Konk Pack: Sprice Street Forum, Friday, October 26, 8 p.m., 301 Sprice Street, Banker's Hill. 619-295-0301.

The Dropkick Murphys (481), Sick of It All, and Tigor Army: "Cones Bor and Gell, Mandoy, October 29, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780 or 619-220-8497.

Joguares /354): Cruc Theche Sett ofor Nevember 10. Third &

The Misfits: "Cones Box and Gril, Tuesday, November 13, 3105 Ocean Wolk, Mission Reach, 858-488-1780

Robert Cray /926;: 4th & 8, Sunday, December 2, 345 B Street, downtown. 619-220-8497 or 619-231-4343.

The Anniversory, Mars Volta, Seafood, and Mates of State: The Epicente, Setudoy, November 10, 3450 Mars Mesa Boulevard, Mins Mesa. 358-271-4000.

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Neil Diamond /616 t. Cox Areno, Thurstoy, November 29, 7:30 p.m., SOSU compus, College Area, 619-220-8497.

DECEMBER

Diana Krall /654); California Center fo

Kevin Burke /864 !: Holy Trimty

The Rugberns /263/t Belly Up Tovern, Manday, December 31, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solane Beach, 858-481-8140 or 619-720-8497.



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Ghoulspoon: Blind Melons

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Corles)

Bone: Surf N'Soddin Battomline: Fagerty's Pub Buzzards: Tio Leo's Lounge The Classic Rockers:

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Homegrown: Epicentre The Honeydogs: "Cares Box

Lounge Harricane Jenny: 'Cares Bar

and Grill

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Blind Melons Lois Lane: Surf N'Soddle

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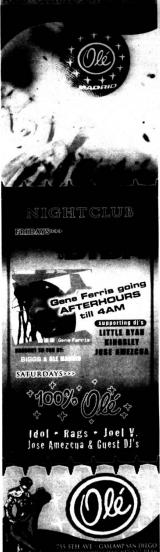
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Stephen Knight: Shocies Bor and Grill

Donny Lopez: The Butcher Shop The Marinators: Kelly's Pub Soon McVickor: The Imperial House MRG: Jimmy Love's Matural Selection: The Roadhouse

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Corondo
Bill MacPherson: Humphrey
Tim Maglione: Soloro Beach
Coffee Company, Jimmy Love's
Mitch Manker: Dizzy's
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ocieties I**ejoblu**s, The Crescent Shore

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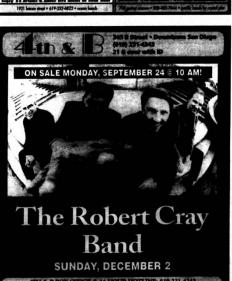
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BY WILLIAM CRAIN

Punk rock inspired almost as many filmmakers as it did musicians. The best documen-taries about the movement can be almost

saries about the movement can be almost as exiting as the music. Even the worst are better than listening to aging hippies brag about dropping acid al Woodstoot.

Acid West Coast Silve sent a president time, but ast years Rager: 20 Years of Punis Ricci. West Coast Silve sent a period time, but about all of them come when T\$0.0 singer Tack Grisham is still flowsh looking and breach, Grisham is still flowsh looking and more amilable than ever. All one point, he contains no experience in punis to that of a contains no experience in punis to that of a contains no experience in punis to that of a contains no experience in punis to that of a contains no experience in punis to that of a contains no experience in punis to that of a contain that of the contains no experience in punis to that of a contain the contains and contains and contains the contains the

he can go? It's a telling comment on the West Coast punk scene, which was younger and more violent than those in New York or London. It also says a lot about TSOL, a band that never looked before it lept. TSOL (sometimes

TSOL (sometimes Liberty) began in Orange County in 1978 and spent the '80s switching from, political punk to hard-core to death rock to

core to death rock to posychedial at bluesy metal, adopting a different style on practically every release. Grisham even changed his name almost style on the control of the rock star — it don't matter who was on the record. That may have been and of the reason, but it seems more faely that churless is walknakes pairs will insteadle and autorable after all these years.



One Man Army, the Briefs, and Los Villains open

(To hear a sample of **TSOL**, call 619-233-9797, wait for the prompt, then punch in ext. 4298.)

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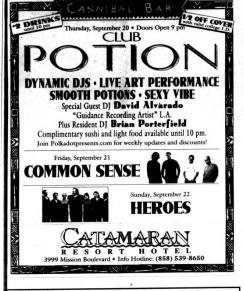
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Over the Border: Thursdays, Noche Latina Night with a special DJ guest Fridays and Saturdays, DJ

Plan B: Thursdays, Club Lithium, DIs iarnet Avenue, Pacific Beach. 68-483-9921.

Potion: Thursday DI events, 8 p.m. Cannibal Bar, Catamaran Resor Hotel, 3999 Mission Boulevard. Pacific Brach, 858-539-8661

Red C Lounger Thursdays, Milkerate Mathematics, hip hop and reggae. Fridays, house music. Saturdays, House; deep house and hip hop. Sundays, PM Sessions, downtempo

The Room: Thursdays, Club 909 with The Room: Thursdays, Club 909 with 1D Chris Marcovic spinning the best of Global Grooves. Fridays, deep house/world music with Duane, Johnnie Knight, and international guests. Saturdays, Prinley, house and founge music hosted by Kevin and Elle. 1D p.m. to 2.a.m., Il Forno Bistro, 909 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 858:459-5010.

Sabbat: Saturdays, Dls Eric Hart, Marc Brueland, and Adam Atom. Dark electro, gothic, darkwave, industrial, and fetish. Shooterz, 3815 50th Street, San Diego, 619-574-0744; information, 619-296-1301.

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and Vinny. Saturdays, 'Canes Bar and Grill, 3105 Ocean Front Walk, Mission Beach. 858-488-1780.

Seville: Fridays and Saturdays, Latin-Euro House with DJs Valo and

Skies Lounge: Thursdays, Salsa Feves salsa and merengue with DJ Charlee "EJ Pesao" Pena, Fridays, DJ Regin spins Party Mix, old skool to current dance hits. Saturdays, Salsa Fever with danke nits. Saturdays, sana Fever with DJS Juan "Kaliente Mix Serrano, Alex "El Heavy" Ramirez, and Jose "Ole" Velazquez. Four Points Hotel, Sheraton San Diego, 8110 Aero Drive, San Diego. 858-277-8888, x7038.

Solstice: Mondays, resident DJs Phil the Snakeman, Steven Flex, Charlie Rock, and Merrin 8 spin hip-hop and are groove. Blind Melons, 710 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach, 858-483-7844.

Studio 5th Avenuer Fridays, D.J. Dementia spins outrageous disco, funk, rstra, and glam music. Decadent go go dancers groove amidst lasers, bubbles, fog, and videos. Crawerky trapere girls, hoola hoops, and week publication drops with prizes. D. p.m. Lips, 270-76th Avenuer March 277-295-0380, swew studios/shaw.com.

Studio 64: Fridays, hand and progressore house musis, with a separate hip hop room. Three floors and five rooms, with three separate smoking patios. International guest 13 superstars weekly, 9 pm. to 4 a.m. Club Montage, 2028 Hancock Street, midtown, of 19–29, 4–9500, seven of the control of the control of the con-trol of the control of the control of the con-trol of the control of the control of the con-trol of the control of the control of the con-trol of the control of the control of the con-trol of the control of the control of the con-trol of the control of the control of the control of the con-trol of the control of the control of the control of the control of the con-trol of the control of the control

Technocality: Fridays, local and national DJs spin all genres of electronic and digital dance music. Club Xanth, 4225 30th Street (at El Caion Boulevard), North Park. 619-584-2720. www.clubxunth.com.

Therapy: DJs Bryan Pollard, DMNR, and special weekly guests spin industrial, EBM, fetish, gothic, and darkwave. First Priday of every month at Club Vortex, 5215 Adobe Falls (1-8, 619-295-4163; information, 619-465-5827. www.klubs.com

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BY DAVE GOOD

he Blode Depy of Alabama (also known as the Five Blind Boys of Alabama) have a the Five Blind Boys of Alabama) have a Mawed mission: to sing gospel for the masses. Generally shunned by nonchurching a second of the Boys of

Sam Cooke, Bobby Womack, Joe Ligon, and Aretha Franklin. Indeed, Blind Boys founder Clarence Fountain, known to have indulged n the devil's music himself, has turned down R&B coin in order to stay true to his religious roots.

The Blind Boys formed in 1937 at the

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JOHNNY BROWN'S

Talladega Institute for the Dea and Blind outside Birmingham Alabama. Routine schoolwork there included plano instruction in Braille. They memorized European classics. Singing the gospel, which place on the side. When they had free time, the Boys entertained to

rec time, the Boys entertained for pocket money, first as the Hoppy Land Jubileo Singers. The name changed in 1948 dart then neglight and the state of the state singing only the prayer-meeting

standards. Sure, you'll get those during a show, but this year's set list features tunes by Tom Waits and Ben Harper, blues pro gressions, and pop chords played under prayerful songs, sung with the fervor and dig-nity of men making music to chase away the

Ladvamith Black Mambazo headlines



(To hear a sample of the Blind Boys of Alabama, call 619-233-9797, wait for th

BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA, Humphrey

HURSDAY, SEPT. 20 HIP-HOP RAB SALSA BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA DANCE HALL, MERENGUE & HOUSE ROTATING DJS · 2 LEVELS

prompt, then punch in ext. 4967.)

Concerts by the Bay, Sunday, September 23, 7 p.m. 619-220-8497 or 619-523-1010

Argonaut, AMX, Mane-One, Jecs, Resonance, and Jo-ill. Club Vortex, 5215 Adobe Falls (I-8, exit Waring, Road), 619-858-8888.

The Underground Lounge: Thursdays, DJ Sachamo and international guests spin deep house music, Fridays, Heavy Retation, the best in hip hop and soul. Two dance floors, Juke Joint Cafe, 327 Fourth Avenue, San Diego, 619-232-SOUL, wow.theundergroinallounge.com.

Voodoo Lounge: Fridays and Saturdays, house, trance, and club-music spun by Dls Kazy, Sandman, and guests. Dance, drink, and smoke on the rooftop terrace. 10 p.m. Redfish, 731 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-234-7226.

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n 19 235-3000, cet. 405 night or das by 5 pm Fralas, by week proor to publication. To send weekly or manify scholades, fast of the Stone Break of the Stone Break of the Stone, P.O. Box 8500, 5an Diego. Stone, P.O. Box 8500, 5an Diego. Miller Break of the Stone, P.O. Box 8500, 5an Diego. Miller Break of Stone, P.O. Box 8500, 5an Diego. Miller Break of Stone, proper manifer ground table Stone, or miller Break of the Stone, or so that are not at a lab-should be directed to 619 225 8000, cet. 261, Sand to 619 8401, or e-milled to soutte-Baldm.com.

North County The Alley, 421 Grand Avenue, Carlsbad, 760-434-1173.

Performances are from 9 pm to 1:30 am. Thursday and Friday, the Rhythm Dogs, pop. jazz. Saturday and Wednesday, the New Breed Band, pop

The Beach House, 2530 South Highway 101, Cardiff, 760-783-1321. Performances begin at 7 pm, except Sunday, 500 pm. Thursday, Rick Ross, jazz, Friday, Trio du Jour, jazz.

Belly Up Tavern, 143 South Cedros Avenue, Solana Beach, 858-481-9022. Thurgday, 9 pm. R.E.S. and Spaceman Spiff, Friday, 9:15 pm., 34 Below and

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score, alternative rock, Saturday, 9:15 pm, Dennis Quaul & the Shar rock, with the Hatcher Brothers, alternative, Wednesday, Southern Culture on the Skids with Slim Ces, Auto Club. Big Jim's Old South Bar B Q, 19

North Coast Highway 101. Encin Saturday, noon to 2 pm. Tom Ma 3 pm to 6 pm. Brickyard Jones, bli Sunday, noon to 2 pm, Robin Her 3 pm to 6 pm. the Fremonts, blues Boar Cross'n, 390 Grand Avenue Carlsbad, 760-729-2989. Friday a Saturday, live rock and roll.

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WEDNESDAYS REGGAE

Borders Books and Music, 11160 Rancho Carmel Drive, Carmel Mountain. 858-618-1814. Friday, 8 pm. Tom Griesgenber, the Chapman stick. Saturday, 8 pm., Christopher Deun, Celtic music.

Bub's Whiskey Dive, 301 Pier View Way, Oceanside, 760-757-BUBS. Friday, Skratch, rock. Saturday, the Lobster Tank Divers, alternative.

The Camelot Inn, 887 San Marcos Boulevard, San Marcos. 760-744-1332. Friday, the Strange Woods, Celtic folk. Saturday, Gene Warren, folk. Carvers, 11940 Bernardo Plaza Drive, Rancho Bernardo. 858-566-2400.

Friday, Laguna, classic rock, Saturday, leff Lee & Friends, acoustic. The Del Dios Country Store, 20154 Lake Drive, Escondido. 760-745-2733. Friday and Saturday. Hillbilly Noise,

The Filling Station, 9522 Miramar Road, San Diego. 858-578-0757. Friday and Saturday. the Sensations. Fogerty's Pub, 1260 West Valley Parkway, Escondido. 760-480-0833. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Bottomline.

53

Henifin's Irish Pub, 13314 Powa

Hennessey's Tavern (Carlsbad), 2777 Roosevelt Street, Carlsbad, 760-729-6931, Friday, Lee Tyler & the Mystics, country rock, Saturday, A Secret Weapon, rock.

Jammers Java, 218 A North El Camino Real (in the Wiegand Plaz neat to AMC Theaters), Encinitas, 760-942-JAVA. Thursday, Marcus Friday, Nik Lusk.

Jol'n Joe's, 717 North Escondido Boulevard, Escondido, 760-743-7665. Friday, Sheld, Loving Dead, John Wilde, and Fryday, Saturday, Sic Waiting and 7 Hill. The Kraken, 2531 Old Highway 101. Cardiff, 760-436-6483. Thursday, Jeff Moore and the Witchdoctors Friday, Bad Medicine. Saturday, Blues Brokers.

La Casa del Zorro, 3845 Yaqui Pass Road, Borrego Springs, 760-767-5323. Fox Den: Thursday through Saturday, 7 pm to 11 pm, Tony Lenconi. Sunday and Monday, 7 pm to 11 pm, Dick Matson, piano and vocals.

La Costa Coffee Roasting Co., 6965 El Camino Real, Suite 208, La Costa. 760-438-8160. Music hours are from 7 pm to 10 pm. Friday, Calima, Flamenco duo. Saturday, John Lowery.

La Costa Tournament of Champions Lounge, La Costa Resort and Spa, Costa Del Mar Road, Carlsbad. 760-438-9111. Friday and Saturday,

Martini Ranch, 485 South Coast Highway (at "D" Street), Encinitas Highway (at "D" Street), Encinitas. 760-943-9101. Thursday, Government Grown with Kut U Up. Monday, Chris Torres Band, Tuesday, 6 pm, the David Patrone Quartet, jazz. McCabe's Beach Club, 1145 South Tremont, Oceanside, 760-439-6646. Call club for information.

The Metaphor Coffeehouse, 258 East Second Avenue, Escondido. 760-489-8890. Thursday and Monday, Dixieland jazz. Friday, Two of Us, contemporary.

Mincles Cafe, 1953 San Elijo Avenue, Cardiff. 760-943-7924. Friday. 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm, Lindu Sargent, folk. Saturday, 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm,





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Big Bad

Sunday, September 23



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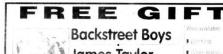
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Neimans Bar and Grill, 300 Carlsbad Village Drive, Carlsbad. 760-729-4131. Call club for information.

The Raintree, 755 Raintree Drive, Carlsbad. 760-931-1122. Friday, 6 pm to 10 pm, Steel Wave, contempor The Roadhouse, 2102 Main Street, Ramona. 760-788-1944. Friday, Big Blue Cut, blues, rock. Saturday, Natural Selection, pop, dance.

Ron's Red Eye Saloon, 1448 South Mission Road, Fallbrook. 760-728-4881. Friday and Saturday, Natro

Solana Beach Coffee Company, 437 South Highway 101, Solana Beach. South Highway 101, Solana Beac 858-792-1553, Sunday, 11 am to 2 pm, Tim Maglione, jazz.

Surf N'Saddle, 123 West Plaza Street (Lomas Santa Fe and Highway 101), Solana Beach, 858-755-9474, Friday, Lons Lone, rock, Saturday, Bone, rock Tomiko Bar & Grill, 87 Encinitas Boulevard, Encinitas. 760-633-3587. Friday, 7 pm. Ben Powell, blues, or Andy Villus-Boas, Brazilian jazz.

Valentino's, 11828 Rancho Bernardo Road, Rancho Bernardo. 858-451-3200. Friday, 6:30 pm to 10:30 pm, and Saturday, 6 pm to 10 pm, Donnie Finnell and Company East, jazz. Victoria Station Pub, 315 South Highway 101, Solana Beach. 858-481-1950. Saturday, 7 pm to 10 pm, Geese in the Bog, Celtic folk.

Wildwood Restaurant, 1433 South Mission Road, Fallbrook. 760-731-0007. Friday, 8 pm to 10 pm, Frank

Beaches

Store Poets with None Todal, Canal Search (Class Bar and Gell.), 3105 Ocean Front Walls, Mission Beach, 884-885. 1780 Music in rock/alternative unless otherwise noted. Thursday, 8 Ball Reak. There daym One, Smake Col Revival, and GT590 Feday, the Anomic Pombs, Fed. and Harriane Letters Saturday, Feed Sunday, Tod. One Man Army, the Briefs, and Los Villams, the Above, Polipissional Metole Mon., and Los Polipissional Metole Mon., and



BY RICHARD MELTZER

Big Bad Veodoe Daddy, led by the enig-matic Roy San Mart'n, has just entered Billboard's Top 200 Albums chart with Kiss My Sweet & Sour Rat's Ass, Maran, its 14th longplayer, clocking in at #179 (with a builett) following sewenday sales of 7,362 units, an increase of (where's my calculator?) 35.9 per cent over: the previous week's retail cent over the previous week's retail

Adding to the jubilation is the fact that Kiss My Sweet & Sour Rat's Ass, Mama has jumped from #20 to #6 (with a bullet!) on the Billboard Heatseekers chart and, over at Sound Week, is #3 on the Alternative New Artist Albums chart and has crashed the Current Alternative Albums chart at #47.

Meanwhile, "Cooler than Toad Dooky (The Rea Fly Song)," the second sin-gle from Kiss My Sweet & Sour Rat's Ass, Mama, is receiving significant airplay on several radio formats ncluding Top 40, Alternative, AAA, AAAA, AAAAA tive, AAA, AAAA, AAAAA, ABBBBBBBBBA, and Hot A/C — across the country. A video companion to the track, lensed by ace director Bimbo Markopoulis (David Byrne, Marie Osmond, the Foo Fighters), is on "Inside Track" had receiving airolay on MTV2. ing airplay on MTV2. According to Radio Beat,

"Cooler than Toad Dooky (The Flea Fly Song)" is currently a Top 10 record at more than 50 Top 40 Adult and Modern Adult stations in the U.S. and Canada. "Protoplasm, Uh," the first single from the album, has already hit #1 on both the Billboard LSMFT and the Sound Week Adult Alternative Retro charts Like double wow!



(To hear a sample of **Big Bad Voodoo Daddy** call 619-233-9797, wait for the prompt, then punch in ext. 4677.)

BIG BAD VOODOO DADDY, Humphrey's Concerts by the Bay, Friday, Septem-ber 21, 8 p.m. 619-220-8497 or 619-523-1010. \$36.

Duemos. Tuesday, the Proclaimers and the Honeydogs.

Cannibal Bar, at the Catamaran Hotel, 3999 Mission Boulevard, Mission Beach. 858-488-1081. Friday,

Common Sense, reggae. Sunday, Heroes.

Chateau Orleans, 926 Turquoise Street, Pacific Beach. 858-488-6744 Thursday, Tomcat Courtney & the

Jazz.

Dream Street, 2228 Bacon Street,
Ocean Beach, 619-222-8131. All
shows start at 8 pm. Music is
alternative/rock. Thursday, Channel
One, the Chost Town Deptice, Jam
Sambuck, and Megarone Friday, May
Pole, IVolinlel, Glu, and Film Note.
Saturday, Triple Carous, Spark Your
Xid, Salmade, and R.J.G. Sunday,
Wolthers From Another Elizate, Hot

Blues Dusters, blues. Friday. Paul & Shirleen Nichols, blues.

The Crescent Shores Grill (atop the Hotel La Jolla), 7955 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, 588-459-0541. Saturday, 8 pm. the Mike Woffard/Holly Hofmann Jazz Quartet Wednesday, 7 pm to 10 pm. Dejublia,

Monkey Love, and Subside. Tuesday Marquinho Pagodinho. Wednesday, Big Provider and Rambis.

Galoka, 5660 La Jolla Boulevard, L. Jolla. 858-551-8610. Sunday, Pass n Peas, folk. Tuesday, the Christopher Adler Trio, jazz. Wednesday, Forwa Funk.

Mission Boulevard, Pacific Beach. 858-483-8847. Friday, Solren, rock Saturday, the O'Brien Brothers, Irisl folk.

The Hyatt Islandia, 1441 Quivira Road, Mission Bay, 619-224-1234. Wednesday, and Thursday, 7 pm to 10 pm, and Sunday, 11 am to 2 pm Rick Ross, jazz piano, saxophone, words.

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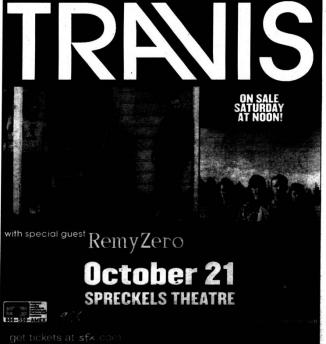
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Java Joe's Coffeebouse, 1956 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach, 619-523-0356. Friday, 9 pm, Morgan LaFay, folk. Monday, Wendy's open-mike night.

Monday, Wendy s open-mike night La Valencia Hotel, 1132 Prospect Street, La Jolla. 858-454-0771. Thursday, and Sunday through Wednesday, 6.30 pm, Barry Levich, piano variety. Friday and Saturday, 7:30 pm, Kristi Rickert, piano.

Moondoggies, 832 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach. 858-483-6550. Friday, Billy Midnight & the Chlorine Cowboys, rock.

Pacific Beach Bar & Grill, 860 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach, 858-272-7278.

Club Tremors, call club for information

information.

Shooters Bar and Grill, Radisson
Hotel, 3299 Holiday Court, La Jolla.
858-453-5500. Thursday, Friday, an
Saturday, Jack Pollack, piano. Tuesd
and Wednesday, Stephen Knight.

The Tavern, 1200 Garnet Avenue, Pacific Beach, 858-272-6066, Tuesday

Victor's Restaurant & Bar, 2702 North Mission Bay Drive, Mission Bay, 858-490-3380. Saturday, the Revelations, Clyde's Ride, Spaceman Spiff, the Price of Dope, the Damn

Dirty Apes, Able Minded Poets, and Psydecar.

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Psyderas Winatona, 1921 Bacon Street, Ocean Beach, 619-222-6822; Thurnday, the Wide Band, vol. 8: Friday, Psyderae, reggae, funk, Saturday, 4 pm to 7 pm, Myron & the Kampijons, 8 pm, Cyde's Ride and Earthride, funk, reggae. Sunday, the Bloude Brace Band, bluts, and Stankfut Monday, Sochatuma. Tuesday, 7 m. Reywolds, acoustic, Wednesday, the Gomango Invasion, asternative.

San Diego

Anthony's Star of the Sea, 1360 North Harbor Drive, San Diego. 619-232-7408. Thursday and Friday, 5:30 pm, the Jaime Valle-Bob Magnusson Duo, Brazilian-Latin jazz.

Camino del Rio North, Mission Valley. 619-295-2201. Friday, 8 pm. Andrew Hull, acoustic.

Brick by Brick, 1130 Buenos Avenue Bay Park, 619-275-LIVE. Music is Day Park, 619-22-21-VE. Music B alternative/rock unless otherwise noted. Thursday, Crawl Space, No Valence, and Saturday's Child. Friday, Critters Buggin' with Bachtir and Mustapha Attar. Saturday, the Dawn. Wednesday, Brickbath and guests.

Four Points Hotel/Sheraton San Diego, 8110 Aero Drive, San Diego. 619-277-8888. Skies Lounge: Friday and Saturday, disco, funk, pop. and Latin music. Sunday and Wednesday Ray Correa, variety. Chaser Cocktalls, 3615 El Caion Boulevard, North Park, 619-280-9379 Friday, the Thumbs, Tiltwheel, and Watch It Burn, alternative.

The Gordon Blersch Brewery, 5010 Mission Center Road, San Diego. 619-688-1120. Music is blues/swing unless otherwise noted. Friday. the Boogie Men. Saturday, the Tone Kings. Club Hollywood, 1320 Fifth Avenue downtown. 619-232-2102. Call club for information. picentre, 8450 Mira Mesa Joulevard, Mira Mesa. 858-271-4000.

Henry's Pub, 618 Fifth Avenue, downtown, 619-238-2389, Thursday, Steal Dawn, classic rock. Tuesday, the Stilettos, rock.

Etta's Place, 6179 University Avenue (at College and University). 619-582-6730. Friday. 9 pm, Rain of Kings and Baby Deluxe, rock. Sunday. 4 pm to 8 pm, the Blues Invaders, blues.

Stilettos, rock.

Humphrey's, Half Moon Inn, 2241

Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island,
619-224-3577. The Backstage Lounge:
Thursday, 9-30 pm, Quiet Storm, jazz

and blues. Friday, 9-30 pm, Detreit
Underground, disco, dance. Saturday,
Sher Ong, 9-30 pm, Viva Santanu,
classic rock. Sunday, 7-30 pm and
11:30 pm, Bill MacPherson and Native

Vibe. Tuesday, 8:30 pm, Rockola, classic rock.

The Inn Sultes, 2223 El Cajon Boulevard, San Diego, 619-296-2101. Wednesday, 8 pm to 10 pm, workshop/concert with the San Diego Concert Jazz Band.

The Inn at the Park, 3167 Fifth Avenue, Hillcrest. 619-296-0057. Monday, 6:30 pm to 10:30 pm, Rick Ross, jazz piano, saxophone, vocals. Jolt'n Joe's, 8076 La Mesa Boulevard Frequency Organization, Gimic, and the Experience, Saturday, Loose End, Lobster Tank Divers, and Rambis.

Kelly's Pub, 6344 El Cajon Boulevard, College Area. 619-286-0400. Thursday, the Marinators, pop. Friday, Evans, acoustic. Saturday, five music. Wednesday, Tommy Price, acoustic.

The Kensington Club, 4079 Adams Avenue, Kensington. 619-284-2848. Thursday, Max Flapping Jet. Friday, Lovelight Shine and Shiver, alternativ King's Fish House, 825 Camino De La Reina, Mission Valley, 619-574

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Pal Joey's, 5147 Waring Road, Allied Gardens. 619-286-7873. Friday and Saturday, Positive Approach, classic rock, swing.

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Poppy's Sport Bar and Grill, 7986 Armour Street, San Diego, 858-571-0796. Friday, 3 pm to midnight, the Big Idea, the Chris Torres Band, System Decay, Carpy Discoll, the Good China, and others.

Sante, 7811 Herschel, La Jolla. 858-454-1315. Friday and Saturday, Bill Beyer, variety, jazz.

Second Wind, 8515 Navajo Road, San Carlos. 619-465-1730. Music starts at 9 pm. Friday and Saturday, Blind Luck, rock and roll.

Sham Rocks Shack, 7059 El Cajon Boulevard (1/2 block east of 70th Street), College Area. 619-463-2263. Friday, Compass. Saturday, Notchback The Tin Pinh, 1706 Sixth Avenue, downtown, 619-238-3800, Sunday

pm to 8 pm, Donnie Finell and Company East. Tio Leo's Lounge, 5302 Napa Street (at Morena Boulevard), Bay Park. 619-542-1462. Thursday, Silver Jacks and Hot Rod Lincoln, rockabilly. Friday, Blue Rockit, Blues, rock. Saturday, Animal 32, Chris Torres Band, and the Wide Band, rock. Wednesday, Bandits, Buzzards, and Big Rig Deluxe.

Tutto Mare, 4365 Executive Drive, La Jolla (Golden Triangle area). 858-597-1188. Wednesday, 5:30 pm to 9:30 pm, the Jaime Valle Bossa-Jazz

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Downtown The Bayon Bar and Grill, 329 Marke Street, downtown. 619-696-8747. Friday and Saturday, live bands.

rristay and Saturday, live bands.
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Croce's Top Hat Bar and Grille, 802 Fifth Avenue, downtown. 619-233-4355. Friday, Agua Dulce. Saturday, Fuzzy and the Bluesmen.

Dick's Last Record, 345 Fourth Avenue, downtown. 619-231-9100. Bands start at 8 pm. Thursday and Friday, Private Domain, rock and roll. Saturday, the Siers Brothers, tock. Sunday, Hera's Olive, rock. Monday, the Soal Perusialers. Tuesday, the Rockit. blues, rock. Wednesday, the Zen Dogs.

Zen Dogs.

Dizzy's, 344 Seventh Avenue, downtown. 858-270-7407. Thursday, 8-45 pm and 10-30 pm, E.S.P. featuring Will Parions, Dave Curtis, Bob Campbell, Mitch Manker, Gary Nievers, and Jonn Willard, Jac. Saturday, 8 pm to 11 pm. Mauren Fleming, Pier Sprague, John Opferkuch, Kenn Hennessy, and

Tommy Aros, jazz. Sanday, 8 pm to 11 pm, Steve Feierabend, Gilbert Castellanos, Bob Hamilton, Gunnar Biggs, and Tim Pleasant, jazz. Wednesday, 8 pm to 11 pm, the Alan Ferber Quintet, jazz.

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Plo's Cacina Italiano, 801 Fifth Avenue, downtown, 619-234-3467. Friday, 7:30 pm, Jerry Melnick, jazz, solo. Saturday, the Jerry Melnick Trio featuring Georgi Streetman and Phil Sterling, jazz/variety.

4th & B, 345 B Street, downtown 619-231-4343. Tuesday, Daniela

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18 pm, Mys

Sevilla, 555 Fourth Avenue, downtown, 619-233-5979. Music is Latin. Thursday, Walter II y Rumbaney. Tuesday, La Combinacion Wednesday, Orquesta 8,8. Juke Joint Cafe, 327 Fourth Avenue, downtown. 619-232-SOUL. Friday. Shelle and Her Blues Band. Saturday, Black Mambo. Sunday, First

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Lilo's, 1125 Sixth Avenue, downtown 619-231-1969. Music is Jazz. Friday, 7 pm to 9 pm, the Gilbert Castellanos Harmond B-3 Trio, Saturday, the Nate Souders Trio, jazz. Sunday, 11 at to 2 pm, the Rob Thorsen Trio, jazz. Tsunami Beach Club, 802 Sixth Avenue, Gaslamp. 619-231-WAVE. Call club for information.

Martini Ranch, 528 F Street, downtown. 619-235-6100. Wednesday, 9 pm, the David Patrone Quartet, jazz.

Roger's on 5th, 835 Fifth Avenue, downtown, 619-702-0444. Thursd

downtown, 619-702-0444. Thurse and Saturday, 6 pm to 11 pm, also Friday and Wednesday, 7 pm to 11 pm, Robberecht the Pianoman.

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U.S. Grant Bloets, 326 Broadway, downtown. 619-232-3121. Grant Grill: Friday and Saturday, 9 pm., Jaime Valle and Equinox, Latin jazz Hotel Lobby: Friday and Saturday, 9 pm to 9 pm. Ping Hu, classical harpist and pianist.

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Blue Allians. Wednesday, Blue Four. The Wyndham Emerald Plaza, 400
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5 pm to 9 pm. Carrie Landspaard and
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10 pm. Stellita and Joe Tarnatino,
contemporary. Blue Alistars, Wednesday, Blue Four.

Rock Bottom, 401 G Street, Gaslamp
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Friday, Jungle Boogie, pop, dance.
Saturday, Divu Soul, disco, dance.

South Bay/Coronado

The Butcher Shop, 556 Broadway, Chula Vista. 619-420-9440. Thursdi through Saturday, and Wednesday, 8 pm to midnight, Dunny Lopez,

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acoustic. Tuesday, Jim Moore, acoustick. Wednesday, Gene Warren, folk

East County

Island Sports & Spirits, 104 Orange Avenue, Coronado, 619-435-3456. Friday, Coupe de Ville, blues. Saturday, Blue Rockit, blues, rock.

The German-American Societies, 1017 South Mollison Avenue, El Cajon, 838-273-7283. Friday, 7:30 pm. the Ray Barrie 12-Piece Big Band featuring Jo Dark. Loew's Coronado Bay Resort, 4000 Coronado Bay Road, Coronado, 619-424-4000. Cays Lounge: Friday and Saturday, 8 pm, the Jazz Trio.

Magnolia Mulvaney's, 8861 Magnolia Avenue, Santee. 619-448-8550. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, American Made, country. McP's Irish Pub and Grill, 1107 Orange Avenue, Coronado. 619-435-MCP*a Irish Pub and GrtIII, 11U7 Orange Avenue, Coronado. 619-435-5280. Thursday, Big Giry Shaman, blues. Friday, the Offbeats, rock. Saturday, Baywolf, rock. Sunday, 4 pm to 7 pm, Jooy Harris, acoustic, 8 pm, the Acousticats, Monday, Steve Breser, On the Rocks, 518 East Main Street El Cajon. 619-579-3537. Friday.

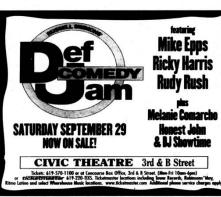
Nectarine, rock. Saturday. Tommy Budd & Windy City, blues.

Fannie's, 9143 Campo Road, Spring Valley, 619-698-2204. Friday, Fast Cruise, rock. Saturday, Runaway Train, country rock.

Pine Valley House, 28841 Old Highway 80, Pine Valley. 619-473-8708. Friday, the Bluebellies, blues, country. Saturday, Full Access, rock

Viejes Casino, 5000 Willows Road, Alpine (off Interstate 8). 619-445-5400. Friday, 8 pm. Billy Watson, 10:15 pm. Teresa Russell & Cocobilio blues. Saturday, 9 pm. Detroit Borders Books & Music, 159 Parkway Plaza, El Cajon. 619-593-5119. Saturday, 8 pm, Derek Duplessie. Dirk's Niteclab, 7662 Broadway, Lemon Grove. 619-469-6344. Friday Don's Cocktail Lounge, 13321 Business Highway, El Cajon. 619-443-2444. Friday and Saturday, Elmore

The Zodiak Cafe, 9158 A Fletcher Parkway, La Mesa. 619-466-9055. Saturday, Joshua Wachtel, acoustic folk.







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Pyramid Tacos

Was a time I meandered through parts of India searching for me. Instead, I found chutney.

FORK

hese days you need comfort food. Of course, up here at El Cajon and Montezuma, where I got off the number 15 bus, you expect, like, discomfort food: the usual rack of College Area greasebucket take-outeries. Then, yards from

the bus stop, I spot a patio. Huh. It's outside the zigzag corner of a modern glass and stucco build-ing. Place called Café Zia. Soon as you come in to the narrow, bright hard stone interior you take in wafts of spicy chicken smells. Dozens of chicken strips

hiss and smoke away on the grills. The place buzzes with university students and teachers, standing around waiting for their orders and sitting out on the patio.

The real comfort for me comes with one word: chutney. Checking the menu, I see it's included with pretty much everything. Paradise! Webster's dictionary will tell you chutney is "a thick sauce of Indian origin that contains fruits, vinegar, sugar, and spices and is used as a condiment." Was a time I meandered through parts of India searching for me, like you were supposed to. In-stead, I found chutney. Aah, chutney! The comforter, the sweetener, the thing that gave fla-vor to all those chapatis (Indian breads). Not like burning chili sauces, but gentle, forgiving, Almost like a jam, but a beck of a lot more interesting. Mango chutneys. Papaya chutneys Don't-even-ask-what-it-is chutneys.

So I'm looking to see what everybody else is ordering. Lots ask about the bagel sandwiches, tacos, and salads, but they all seem to end up or-

tacos, and salads, but they all seem to end up ordering the wraps. Hub. I look at the menu.
"Wraps, \$3.79." "It'll more than fill you, man,"
says this short guy with a big tall
crew cut. But wait. I flip the page
to the taco section. "Tacos, \$1.79,"
it says. Each on thas a full threeline explanation. Like, "A
Lot. Plenanche Toco, pineapule." Lot-a-Pineapple Taco: pineapple chutney consisting of pineapple, vinegar, garlic, Serrano chili pep-pers, caraway seeds, and herbs and

pers, caraway seeds, and neros and spices, delicately prepared with grilled onions, grilled potatoes, tomatoes, topped with mouth-watering chicken strips (marinated in a lemon sauce with vinegar and spices). Tofu may be substituted for the chicken strips." Other tacos have different fruit chutneys: "Giant peach," "Applea-Day," "Tropical Breeze" (this chutney's made

up of pineapple, pears, papaya, and banana), and "tangerine-lemon." The "Hot-n-Spicy" is a chicken taco flavored with a Serrano chili pepper chutney. The "Not Frozen Yogurt" taco has straight yogurt over chicken with garlic, dried mint, cayenne pepper, "and herbs and spices." Man. South Asia meets Mexico! Three of those, about \$5.40, ought to fill the bill. Then I see the bagel sandwiches, with the same chutney-based choices for \$3.49. Or the wraps — ditto, except you get grilled potatoes instead of lettuce — \$3.79. Or \$5.99 salads, chicken strips or tofu "on a bed of spinach, onions, tomatoes, and grilled potato," served up with half an onion bagel. But the "Big Plate" is it. A sandwich, a wrap, or three tacos with grilled potatoes and a drink with a free refill. All for \$5.99. "Which fills you up the most?" I ask Khaled,

"Which fills you up the most?" I ask Khaled, the young owner guy.

"They all do," Khaled says." But I am an artist! Food is about more than filling up. It's the pleasure of the flavors, the pleasure of what you see. The pleasure of eating for good health."

Oksy. Point taken. Still, I order the Big Plate with a Giant Peach taco, a 10th – Spicy taco, and the Not Frozen Yogurt taco. I check out the drinks. Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite, green tea (hot or iced), or coffee. I go for iced green tea. (It would cost \$1.25 separately.

Then I'm outside on the street-side patio. As the sun sets, it's cool, and funky. Tile tables with deck seating and dark green umbrellas. Plants and trees. Nice place to feel smug, watching El Cajon Boulevard's traffic piling up at the lights. Khaled arrives. Oh wow. He brings a big blue and yellow plate stacked with open tacos that look

like, well, four flowers bursting up toward you. The yellow taco is the giant peach, the white one is the yogurt, the red one has to be the hot

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and spicy, and the fourth, all bronze and brown, turns out to be the flat-sliced home fries. The golden pads under them are corn tortillas. The lettuce and tomatoes add green and red, and the mounds of chicken make them look like mini pyramids.
"Who'd've guessed?" I say. "Chutney tacos in

With 0 we guessee.

"Well, I started out last year doing just organic gournet health salads and sandwiches," Khaled says. 'Didn't work. I kept looking at people lining up for their tace a cross the road at Albertace's. So I figured, hey, if it works for them.....'

He leaves me to it. And what a dream. Peach Ad-bicken shaw reporest and chicken, cooling.

and chicken, tangy peppers and chicken, cooling yogurt and chicken, and those sweet-sauced

When I waddle in for my free tea refill I notice Khaled's paintings and mosaics. They're on the walls, on the counter, and a kind of wavy mo-saic wall turns out to be a fountain he's making. "I wanted to display my art," he says. "I have a degree from UCSD. Economics and fine arts. But art is my life. I hope to do my painting right out on the patio. Kind of like performance art." He hands me the iced tea. "Good buddy," I

Democratic Ferment

The Portuguese guys always buy the [used] whiskey barrels — the wine is good quality, except for the whiskey notes."

arlos Lopez met Steve Petrelli five years ago. Lopez was 18, living on his own, and starting college at Cal State San Marcos. was driving by this place out there, and I saw sign that said Beer and Wine Crafts. A cou-

my buddies were, like, 'Hey you ever try brewing?' We ght, 'Hey, as much as we and what we like to

— Sierra Nevada isn't Lopez stopped in to Petrelli, who was at that time aging the San Marcos store ner Audrey Eckblom. They

ked shop. Lopez bought a kit, brewed a batch became a regular. "It costs you roughly \$20 525 to brew five gallons," he explains. "I like rra Nevada and Sam Adams, and those will you about \$7 a six-pack. So when I'm makit at home, a clone style of beer, I end up

When wine season came around, Petrelli was, . 'You know, as much as you're in here ke, 'You know, as much as you're in here ou want a part-time job? 'I'm crushing grapes day; you interested?'. 'Lopez helped out with he crush, returned a week later to press off the remented juice, and took five gallons of wine ome as part of his payment. The experience warked dreams of one day owning a brewery or incress to love signed on part, time (he was alnery, so Lopez signed on part-time (he was al-El Bizcocho) and started soaking up informa-on — from Petrelli and from the customers. He ept it up for several months and then left to demore time to school

That, it seemed, was that, until the spring mester of this year, in which Lopez had decided at to enroll. He had also left El Bizcocho, after

ciding he wanted something different. He was still brewing off and on, and during one of his meetings with Petrelli (who had since bought the business from Eckblom), the man offered him

another job, this time managing the store's San-tee location. Lopez wrote up a business plan, Petrelli liked what he read, and in May, Lopez took over the store.

That was five months ago.

Since then, says Lopez, "I've shifted it around, like, eight times; I wanted a brewer's corner As soon as we get those Euro

caves [wine storage units] out of here, I want to clean up the shelves and get a little area where I can set up acid-titration kits and stuff, so peo-ple can come in here and do [things like] a sulfite test (on their wine). Displays are always cool; if one guy sees you using an acid-titration kit and there's three other guys in the store, you've sold three of them."

The store retains something of the feel of a The store retains something of the feel of a semi-private workshop — there is a sense of or-der, but it takes time for the outsider to discern. It helps to know what you're looking for before going in. It's a far cry from Eckblom's El Cajon establishment, which Lopez say's was set up with schoolroom orderliness. And besides the jostling of merchandies the change of store location took of merchandise, the change of store location too a toll on the customer base. "[Petrelli] lost a lot of people in the move," says Lopez. "The busi-ness has been building back up slowly. "He decided to move it over to Santee because

there's no moratorium on liquor licenses here. Au drey had the idea for years to get a liquor licens going. In Santee, we could set up a beer and win import [business]. I could feature all the local makers, as well as exclusive import beers

good turnover. It to sustain ourselves in the off months when there isn't a whole lot of wine making, and the summer months when beer con sumption is up but beer making is a little low." Lopez thinks a selection of bargain wines could also serve as a stylistic template to beginning wine-makers who weren't sure exactly what

they were after.

There are plenty
of beginners out there, he assures me, though he
still gets visits from the old-school Portuguese and Italians who have been making home wine for daily consumption since forever. "The Por tuguese guys always buy the [used] whisker barrels - the wine is of good quality, except for the whiskey notes. They're not entering any com-petitions; wine is just part of their life." Which is not to say they aren't interested in fiddling with the process. Says Lopez, "|Some| guys put a chain inside the barrel and roll it around so that it

inside the barrel and roll it around so that it scrapes up the inside of the barrel to extract more of the tannins and vanillans."

Many of the beginners' beginnings are com-ing at the end of something else. "There aren't a whole lot of younger couples making wine," grants Lopez, suggesting that young folks may not have the time to fuss over granes and vines not have the time to fuss over grapes and vines and fermenting juice. "Mainly it's retired gen tlemen or older couples or people who have a vested interest in one day having a fully operational winery. The majority of them have their own fruit — older guys." Their vineyards usu-ally run "a quarter acre or a little smaller. Sometimes it's guys who are just growing a really nice grape arbor.

"I get a lot of guys coming out of East County:

it blows my mind how many people have little vineyards all over the place. There's been a lot of plantings in Jamul of late. A lot of them are fairly new: I haven't seen anything outstanding come new; I haven I seen anything outstanding come out of there yet. And I get a lot of my customers from south of the border — the Valle de Guadalupe [near Ensenada], Tijuana."

For now, Lopez is waiting on ABC's decision on the liquor license, moving inventory around, making beer and wine, teaching the occasional class, visiting home vineyards to help out with class, visiting home vineyards to help out with crush and provide technical support, and gener-ally enjoying the customers. There's a great cultural mix in winemaking, which I didn't ex-pect. I thought it would be mainly Italian, Fortuguese goys, and guys who were fairly wealthy and old. But it's just about everybody and their nom." Case in point: Mike Calabro, whom I met on a recent Saturday visit to the shop. Calabro doesn't look the part of a retiring gentleman who wants to get back to the land; he works as a con-tractor, and he isn't retiring. He's done work for several of the Temecula wineries and hopes one day to run a commercial winery of his own. In the meantime, he buys and gleans fruit from other wineries, makes wine at home, and ventures forth on the occasional pilgrimage to Santee.



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chicken strips or tofu on spinach with pineapple chutney, onions, tomatoes, grilled potatoes, and half an onion bagel, \$5.99; Big Plate, bagel sandwich, wrap, or 3 tacos with grilled potatoes and drink, \$5.99



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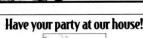
NEW LOCATION...SAME CELADON ON 5TH CHEF! ALL THAI ENTRÉES DINE-IN - TAKE-OUT - CATERING - PARTIES

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Brockton Villa Restaurant 1235 Coast Blvd. La Jolla (Overlooking La Jolla Cove)

RESTAURANT

LISTINGS The Reader's Guide to Restaurant are recommended listings written by our reviewers (Ed Bedford, Ambrose Martin, Max Nash, Eleanor

our resewers (Ed Badjord, Ambrose Martin, Max Mah, Elaunor Widmer, Naomi Wish, Elaunor Widmer, Naomi Wish, Elaunor en twice a month. A complete searchable list is available online are based on the law of the l expensive: more than \$25. Please call restaurants in advance for

MULTIPLE LOCATIONS

ANTHONY'S FISH GROTTO For tresh seafood slads, its fish and chips, and its daily fresh fish specials. An thony's still goes to the head of the class for scholler of product, good-sized portions, time-honored preparation, and loss cost. Open daily, lunch through dimer. No reservations. Intexpensive to expensive Locations: 1360 North Boulevard, Chula Vista, 619-425-4200; 9530 Murray Drive, La Mesa, 619-463-0368; 11666 Avena Place (off Bernardo Center Drive), Rancho Bernardo, §58-451-2070. — E.W.

Bernardo, 588-451-2070. — E.W. BULLLY'S NORTH 1404 Camino del Mar. Del Mar. 883-755-1660. Especially during summer, this branch the most colorful and is jammed with the most colorful and is jammed with place exciting. Food is the same as at other Bully's, but the high intensity cares it. Steak, printer 8th, hamburgern, series it. Steak, printer 8th, hamburgern, etc. it. Steak, printer 8th, hamburgern, daily, Moderate. Other locations: 5735 L. jolla. Bib4. 4, pp. 1618. 584-59-2768, 2401 Camino. Del Ro South, Mission Valley, 618-271 2655. — E.W.

CALIFORNIA PIZZA KITCHEN Here's a good family restaurant where you can take your children and grand-children for salads, pasta, or pizza. There are 28 pizzas. The chicken tequila There are 28 pizzas. The chicken tequila with spinach fettuccine is great, as are vegetarian sandwiches. Same menu, lunch and dinner. Open daily, Inexpensive. 437 South Highway 101, Suite 601, Solana Beach, 858-793-0999. La 10fal village Square. 353 Nobel Drive. 858-457-4232; and Carmel Mountain Plaza, 11602 Carmel Mountain Road, 858-675-4434. — E.W.

CLAIM JUMPER The portions are so large they elicit gasps (the prime rib served weekends is 26 ounces). The food sort memorable, just more than any one person can eat. Among the at weekends. Open daily, lunch and din-ner. Inexpensive to expensive (for larger steaks and beef rib). 5500 Gross-mont. Center. Drive, La. Mesa, 619-469. 3977; 12384 Carmel Moun-tain. Road, Carmel Mountain.

sty Avenue, University Square Shop-ping Center, 619-583-7373. 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. can-eat buffet. Menus change daily. Massive amounts of food that's fresh but not low-cal/low-cholesterol. Not for gourmet diners, but fun. Open daily. Other branches located throughout the city and suburbs. Call 619-883-7373 for locations. Inexpensive. — E.W.

FORT CRAB SHACK A sealood chain with a good Cajun corporate name (Landry's) based in southern Louisians benief a property of the control of t IOE'S CRAB SHACK A seafood chain rockin', raucous interior, Pun Dar, non auch wine. Inexpensive to low moderate, 7610 Hazard Center Drive, Mission Valley, 619-260-1111; 4325 Ocean Boulevard, Pacific Beach, 858-274-3474. — N.W.

888 274 3474. — N.W.
SAMM'S CALIFORNIA WOOD-FIRED PIZZA You have a wast choice of wood fired pizzas here, including many exotic toppings. Salads are popular and are available as half-orders. Same memu hunch and dinner. Continuous service. Open daily. 702 Pearl Street, La Jolda, 888 489-5222, 270

/erde, 858-404-9898; 12925 El Ca HOMETOWN BUFFET 5881 Unive Real, Del Mar. 858-259-6600; 1620 Camino de la Reina, Mission Valley, 858-456-5222. Inexpensive. — E.W.

UNO CHICAGO BAR AND GRILL.
The 1941-born Uno chain made its mark by transforming the flat Italian pizza into something a little more upstanding. Deep-dish pizza have becapter (along vith Oprah and steaks). Now Uno does serious steak too, with variously sized Angus top sirilosis. They come pretty much as is, but the meatiful property of the pizza of the p (which includes fajitas, ribs, shrimp-sampi, stekn' n cheese burgers) is the wicked "grilled honey-mustas salmon." Still, most lunchtime cus-tomers we saw seemed to stick to the staple: deep dish pizzas and salads. Open daily, continuous service, lunch and dinner. Inseptemive to moderate. 466 Mission Boulevard, Pacific Beach. 88-483-4145, Fashion Valley Center. 619-219 1866; 5th & H, Chula Vista, 619-420-8660. — E.B.

UNO CHICAGO BAR AND GRILL

NORTH COASTAL

THE ARMENIAN CAFE 3126 Carls had Boulevard, Carlshad, 760-720-2233. Located in a cottage with a view sun deck, this Armenian cafe prepures authentic specialties such as gyros cooked on the premises. Best as gyros cooked on the premises. Best bets are breakfasts that include omelets with shish kebabs. Music and belly dancing Friday and Saturday. Break-fast, lunch. and dinner, Tuesday through Sunday. Closed Monday. In-capensive to moderate. — E.W.

BARONE'S TRATTORIA DEL MARE 2334 Carmel Valley Road, Del Mar, 858-259-9063. Pleasant interior, 27 858-259-9063. Pleasant interior, 27 pastas, low prices, huge portions of tasty food make this a winner for all bargain seekers. On weekends, try the paella, large enough for two. Linguine rustica and chicken Marsala best bets. Lunch, Tuesday through Friday; dimer, Tuesday through Sunday, Inexpensive to moderate. — E.W.

pensive to moderate. — E. W.
THE BRASSEEE La Costa Resort &
Spa. Costa Del Mar Road off El Camino
Real, Caribady, 760-048-9111, x4500.
This hotel dining room offers breaks, lunch, and dinner. All-you-caneat Sunday buffet brunch with champen is \$32.00. Seafood buffer Bridgy,
from 5:30 p.m. Outstanding service.
Reservations recommended. Prices
Delicacies of the Sea is also located in
its complex. Expensive. — E. W.

this complex. Expensive. — E.W.

D.B. HACKERS SEAFOOD CAFE

AND GRELL 101 North Highway 101.

Encinitas, 760-436-3162. This simple
dining room is enhanced by beautiful
watercolors on the walls, and the fish and watercosors on the wans, and the finn and chips are terrific. The fish (New Zealand hoki) arrives in a golden crust, is well drained and delicious. Fish tacos are also available. If you would like small por-tions, try the "kiddie" serving, Fresh fish.

FIDEL'S CARLSBAD 3003 Carlsbae and breast of chicken Milanesa. Open daily lunch and dinner. Inexpensive. — E.W.

HILL STREET COFFEE HOUSE 524

760-966-0985. Organic in Oceanis Reallyl Look for the sign: "Organ Reallyl Look for the sign: "Organ Restaurant and Express Das" in for a retored yellow-and-white Victian house from O'slide's past. Temenu is full of healthy dish fourlyspinsch benefast streamble, it atta epinaca ["Oreck eggs"], and p-profus (for us peasants that's Fren toast) with fresh fruit and syrups, it en 11900 am, 119 bits Caljun chick Inexpensive. — E.B.

ter 1190 a.m., try their Cajun chick Incapensive. — E.B. SSEN, CER AND BARERY 1260 Via de la VI AND BARERY 1260 Via de la VI Flower Hill Mall, Del M. 838-792-2252 Voul find 200 times the menu. They include leveish de Chicago-style pizza; and grilled ri steaks, vegetables, Two recommend iterals: Mandwick. Not the greatest Jewi deli, not the worst. Open daily, twe fast, lunch, and dinner. Moderate.

EW.

OSCAR'S 1505 Encinius Bouleva.
Encinius, 760-032-0222 Here's apBacie to take followers of the order of

der \$10.00. Best bets: baby back salad and fries presented in a paper Sunday brunch from the mil 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Warm, ca atmosphere. Open daily, funch

aroll. Good hot dishes include "Dy-nite" and sukiyaki. Elegant sushi, sed Sunday. Open for lunch, Mon-through Friday, dinner Monday ough Saturday. Inexpensive to derate. — E.W.

THE VILLAGE GRILL 2833 State

little calf is famous for two things: its virtage Coar-Cols decorations and its delicious Tourneysgers, named after dictious Tourneysgers, amend after 1976. Tourney believed in fresh ingradents, says not Dies, now in charge, who orders says not Dies, now in charge, who codes only "exits lear" men from breakfast, check out the eggs and susage-party special with fried-skin postation and how barried touch and susage party special with fried-skin postation and how barried touch and its just across the tracks. Hours: 800 a.m. to 300 pm. weekdays. 10: 400 pm. Saturdays. Breakfast and 400 pm. Saturdays. Breakfast and ED TRACTON'S 550 Via de la Valle, Del Mar, 858-755-6600. Truly mam-moth portions of prime rib. steak, chicken, and fish are served in lovely surroundings. Dinners come with corn on the cob (when in season) or baked potatoes or vegetables. Salads are à la PICES THAI CAFE 3810 Valley Cen PICES THAI CAPE 3810 Valley Cen-e Drive, Piazza Carmel Shopping enter, Del Mar (east of Carmel Val-turn-off), 858-259-0889. Superb hair restaurant that's not only elegant it whose food contains no MSG and ry little fat. The seafood dishes rate

TORREY PINES CAFE 2334 Carmel Valley Road, 858-259-5878. The menu is similar to the sister retaurant, the Bird Rock Cafe, with many salads, pastas, and an excellent Sunday brunch. But there are terrific new additions: paella and tender short ribs cooked in a barbecue sauce plus mashed potatoes and vegetables. Neither is to be missed. Open daily, Inexpensive to moderate.

— E.W. s similar to the sister restau

NORTH INLAND

150 GRAND CAFE 150 West Grand Street, Escondido, 760-738-6868, www.150grand.com. In a comfortable setting, with three dining areas to suit

we've got your

works a devenue food. Elements from all services are good to a fine from all services and the first from all services and from all services and from all services and from all services and from the first from the firs fruity, e.g., mango tart tatin with sweet basil syrup. If you love the food at Par-allel 33 or Marine Room, you'll find a meal here easily worth the trip. Lunch

meal here easily worth the trip. Lunch is a bargain, with the same ingredients as the evening's menu in slightly different combinations. Well-chosen wine list. Lunch and dinner seven days. Reservations strongly advised. Expensive. — N.W. Expensive, — N.W.

A LITTLE BIT OF GERMANY 1717.
East Vista Way, Vista, 780-941-4626.
Autheniti, German menu offers most of your favorities chicken in champagne sauce, asserbation (beef in winvegar sauce), Wierenschnitzel, Horspitalio, Judical State (1997), Wierenschnitzel, Horspitalio, Lindon, Lindon

pensive to moderate. — E.W. BERNARD'O RESTAURANT 12457 Rancho Bernardo Road. Rancho Bernardo Village Shopping Center. 858-487-717. The restaurant is elegant in food, service, and ambiance. The cuisine is California-French, menus change seasonally. Best bets are rack of

EL BIZCOCHO Rancho Bernardo Inn 17550 Bernardo Oaks Drive, Rancho ardo Oaks Drive, Rancho From the manded Scalad York, sharked you pay for at one of San Diego Country's premiere dining destinations—stuning new French causin in a lovely, ceilized room. The left sale of minimal the sale of Bernardo, 858-675-8550. You get what

fain puts you at ease and servers are pleasantly attentive. It's an ideal restau rant for a special night out — and the Sunday brunches are lavish, too. Jacke required, ties usual, women's attire chie or prosperously dowdy, reservations es ential. Very expensive. — N.W.

is smashing and the menu offers excilent pastas, fresh fish, first-rate me and chicken, gourmet pizzas. Open fdinner nightly. Expensive. -E.W.

DICRESCENZO'S 11625 Duenda Road Westwood Shopping Center Road, Westwood Shopping Center Rancho Bernardo, 858-487-2776 Should you be in Rancho Bernardo and snoula you be in Rancho bernaroo and seeking great Italian snatwisches or pizzas to eat in or take out, keep this Chicago-style "deli" in mind. The Italian beef and Rocco's Imperial sub are knockouts. Closed Sunday. Open Monday through Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Inexpensive. — E.W.

HERNANDEZ' HIDE-AWAY Rancho HERNANDEZ HIDE-AWAY Rancho and Lake Drives, Del Dios, Lake Hodges, 760-746-1444. The popular bargain priced breakfast/brunch on Saturdays and Sundays offers steak and eggs, chilaquiles, sausage, beans, and omelets. At dinner, most tables sport ometers. At dinner, most rations spon-pitchers of margaritas to wash down standard So-Cal gringo-Mex dishes Reservations urged, especially for weekends (when non-reservers may have to wait over an hour for a table)

HIDE AWAY CAFE 150 South Acacia Avenue, Solana Beach, 858-755-3388. Here's where your mom met your dad the day he bought a long board. The Hide Away is the classic forties Cali

fornia beach café. You have to look carefully down the tiny tree-shaded street to spot their big blue-and-yellow sign. It's a homey little place, with a sign. It's a homey little place, with a corrugated iron roof, wooden porch, and a green mainte of guarly old ivy. Heap through the from the kinchen. Sit down at one of the intimate tables, Or-et the jalapento and grilled red onsion motels with avoxado and Jusk. cheese, the place of the control of the control of search of the control of search of the control of search of the control of six and the control of a like of thomemade pumphs in nut bread. Breadsat and lunch only, open also of a long of the like of 20 pm. In Engylenne — 21, 21, 22 pm. In Engylenne — 22, 21, 22 pm. In Engylenne — 21, 23 pm. In Engylenne — 21, 24 pm. In Engylenne — 21, 25 pm. In Engylenne — 21, 26 pm. In Engylenne — 21, 27 pm. In Engylenne — 21, 28 pm. In Engylenne — 22, 28 pm. In Engylenne — 24, 28 pm. In Engylenne — 24,

MANDARIN GARDEN RESTAU MANDARIN GARDEN RESITAU-RANT 8242 Mira Mesa Boulevard. Mira Mesa, 858-566-4720. From the dim sum served 5 sturday and Sunday to its variety of exotic dishes, this restaurant is worth seeking out, esperestaurant is worth secking out, espe-cially at dinner. Located in the Mira Mesa Mali, it offers many unusual and hard-to-find appetizers. The notewor-thy main dishes are steamed whole fish, twice-cooked pork (spixy), fresh eet served in brown sauce. The extensive menu includes standard drishes favored by Americans. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Inexpensive to low moderate— E.W.

MIIKI JAPANESE RESTAURANT AND SUSHI BAR 9823 Carcoll Canyon Road, Eucalyptus Square, Scripps Ranch, 858-566-0206, You'll

Sunday

Champagne

Brunch

10:00 am-1:30 pm

Reg. \$15.95

Made-to-Order Omelettes.

Fresh Seafood.

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Dessert Station ., T





et Del Mer et Semsons 2638 Del Mar Heights Rd. 8861 Villa La Jolla Dr. 858.259.4880 858.455.1461

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5300 Off the Best Buffets in Town!!!

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Bread Pudding 5300 Off

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TORRES We're Bringing Spain To You!

Chef Ricardo Mora

ORIGINAL DEFECTIVE

REAL TEXAS BBO 6904 Mirama REAL TEXAS BBQ 6904 Miramar Road, 888-566-5235. Texas barbecue consists of meat, chicken, and links that are smoked rather than cooked over a fire. The room is unadorned but very clean. Same menu lunch and dinner. Open daily, continuous service. Inex-pensive to low moderate. — E.W.

SAND CRAB CAFE 222 Micro Place (at Opper, off Barham), Escondido. at Opper, off Barham), Escondido 60-480-2722. Sandy Crabbe (honest 760-480-2722. Sandy Crabbe (hones, that is his name owns this fain, funky dive in the wilds of industrial Exonomial on the San Marcos border. A visit offers the primordial, preschool into of shaking rabbs to pieces with mallets and eating them with your hands. (Bibs are optional, Event, and the party spirat. There's a huge a la screen list of appetizers, so a proposal association of the party spirat. There's a huge a lass care list of appetizers, so a lass care list of appetizers, so a proposal. Even proposal control of the party proposal shakes, and main ourses, offers a barrier not not be a present party. There is no ladie a present party of the party proposal party proposals as a proposal party proposal party proposals. snacks, and main courses, often at bar-gain prices. Threes include several crab-backet combos, cooked to a well-seanond boil with com, potatoes, and spice I coussana sausage. Most of the shellfish were flash-frozen on ship-beards, but they re still tasty. The melted non-butter "spead" as companying them appeals to the area's mars health conscious residents. (Or you can BY-Oblutter and they'll melt if for you, intertage housemade key lime pie is a fire tange housemade key lime pie is a Fine tangy housemade key lime pie perfect finale. Full bar; not much w ut good margaritas. Open daily, three

County Chinese restaurants rearure fresh fruits. Tong's has several variants, mainly cornstarch-battered fried pro-teins in honey-based sweet-and-sour sauce, lightened with loads of seasonal tim in home-based sweet and-suprassace, lightened with loads of seasonal fruit chunks — princepple, papera, ser. the Nev testy dubles. For the start black of the season start song, kong pan, ma la, etc.) are better than the old "Chinese-American" standards on the menu. Lunches are blg, harpain proced, and popular as blg, harpain proced, and popular as blg, harpain proced, and popular conceives morthern or western Chinese-dublets at meanly table. Open daily, lunch and dimere. Very incapenave (unch; to loss-moderate. — N.W.

VINCENT'S SIRINO'S 113 West Grand Avenue, Escondido. 760-745-3835, French-born chef-760-745-3835. French-born chef-owner Vincent Grumel serves Gallic classics in an intimate, small-town bistro setting. This is a cuisine of rich dark sauces robing fine ingredients, such as a huge, flavorful yeal chop (no factory call, that). Mushrooms and veg-etables (from local farmers or Grumel's own garden) are the season's best and sensitively treated. Desserts are worth every calorie — save room for the spec-tacular Buyarrian. Full bur, fine wine list. Lunch Tuesday through Friday, dinner Tuesday through Saturday. (Closed an-nually from third week of June to third week of July.) Expensive. — N.W.

LA JOLLA

AESOP'S TABLES 8650 Genesee Ave tributes of this Greek and Mediter-ranean restaurant are fresh food, tasty-preparation, and low cost. The salads are a good buy. Entrees are large enough for two. All items available for takeout. Lunch, Monday through Sat-urday. Sunday, dinner only. Inexpen-sive to moderate. — E.W.

CHOPAHN 8935 Towne Center Drive #111, Renaissance Towne Center. Golden Triangle, 858-677-0100. Located in a romantic, elegant dining room, this Afghan restaurant offers first-rate food — possibly the best Afghan menu in the city. Be sure to ortwo or three appetizers and the suse specialty Kabob E-Chopahn

Large gourmet with cream

cheese and a large hat characterist

or of the day, only 2.73

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7 days a week

Loving ownership: personalized serv-ice. Lunch, Monday through Friday, dinner nightly. Inexpensive to expensive. — E.W.

expensive. — E.W.

CRESCENT SHORES GRILL 7955 La
Jolla Shores Drive, Hotel La Jolla (formerly Summer House Inn),
858-459-0541. The 11th floor view car-858-459-0541. The 11th floor view car-ries this restaurant, Good preparation of gourmet American food, fish, seafood, steaks, and chicken. Open daily, breakfast, lunch, dinner, and weekend brunch. Moderate to expensive. — E.W.

WINE BAR 8970 University Center Lane, Aventine Complex, La Jolla East, 858-535-0078. Beautiful atmosphere, 838-33-00/8. Beautiful aimosphere, excellent service, very fine preparations. Very crowded weekends. Steaks and chops first rate. Vegetables à la carte. Open dinners only nightly. Upper moderate to expensive. — E.W.

moderate to expensive. — E.W.

FOREVER FONDUE 1295 Prospect
Street #201, upstairs, 858-551-4509.
Also at 610 Friars Road, Mission Valley, 619-295-792. If you stay with the
cheese fondue, house salad, or shrimp
with spicy cockail sauce, you'll have a
good meal. Steel plates make the food
old. The prix fixe dinner for two is
very affordable, but not necessarily a
best low. Sime mean lunch and dinner. best buy. Same menu lunch and dinner. Open daily for dinner. Inexpensive to

THE MARINE ROOM 2000 Spindrift

romains. Marine Room has become the quintersential great San Diego testaurant. The exhibitaring coastal view mers Cal-French Pacific Riu. Callaria Gonzal view mers Cal-French Pacific Riu. Callaria viezame. Call

restaurants in La Jola. The Euro-Asian fiasion menu offera a wast choice of 20 appetizers, or papas, including several sushi rolls. Don't overlook the Thai coccount stope, Atlantis salmon, and two confit at dinner, the nicoise salud at dinner, the nicoise salud at lunch, or the sectlent Sunday brunch. Beautiful interior; lovely heated patio; excellent service. Be sure to reserve, excellent service, to sure to reserve, excellent service, to avoid or precially for brunch or dinner, to avoid a very long wait. Open daily. Moderate (tapas) to expensive. — E.W.

(tapas) to expensive. — E.W.

SANTE RISTORANTE 78:11 Herschel
Avenue, 884–854–1315. The name is
Italian for "saint," and the Northern
Italian/regional cooking shines here,
operating their had selfood dables
ery night, in addition to those on the
menu. Excellent thoopped saled, pasts
with mushrooms, raviol with quali,
and lamb chops, Separate room for barseparate private dinting rooms. Lunch
pasts for lunch, Not to be missed.
Moderate (pastas) to expensive. —
E.W.

E.W.
SUSHI ON THE ROCK 7734 Girard
Avenue, 534-456-1138. This noisy,
high entry spet, a box; saloon-like
space with a sush libar in back, draws a
levelt, tevelty something, creed clair
company, tool. Unlike more traditional sush libar, there's a vast selection of rock and rolls' — huge, creatter late make you will be a subject to the
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t roll, which wraps fried shrimp, crab threds, dails on sprouts and Japanese mayo in deep-fried salmon skin — the combo would be just as impressed an appetizer at a top Cali French restau rant. The Orange Crush ramother sub-lime invention, fresh and crush sy with vegges and robbis wrapped in vegges and robbis wrapped in set salmon. Even simple rolls are so well-somerived, and the rice to nicely sea-soned, you won't need soy wasabi fully. The one it imme with of medical dinner. The one-time menu of cooked dinne

The one-time menu of cooked dinner entrees, however, is now minimal. No reservations, long waits (in cramped entryway) on weekends. Full bar, good sake list. Lunch weekdays, dinner nightly, with deep discounts for Happy Hour specials. Moderate. — N.W. LA TAVERNA 927 Silverado (at Girard), 858-454-0100. Reservations are of the roofed sidewalk pario to the din of the cust but cramped things room. Don't look for mentablish and rel association of the cust be considered to the constraint of the

Moderate .— N.W.
TRATTORIA ACQUA 1298 Prospect
Street, 858-454-0709, You'll do fine if you stay with the simplest dishers mare-inated grilled chicken breast on pizza dough, grilled porticeble mushroom, or pasts elishes. Entrées from shorts
The restaurant is located two flights down and offers an occan view and paties will be short of the sights down and offers an occan view and paties awell as indoor dining. Berstein located a garage below on Coast Boulevard. Open daily. Moderate (some pasta) to very expensive. — EW.

CLAIREMONT & KEARNY MESA

94TH AERO SQUADRON 8885 Bal-boa Avenue, \$88-\$60-671, One of Orlego's hidden jewels: there's classic of the orlego Polish sausage, veggjes, cheese pota-toes, plus raw veggjes, nacho chips, and salsa. (Of course, you have to buy something — say, a pitcher of Bud to "feed" two of you.) Thursdays and Fridays, the outside "Runway" grill fea-tures kebabs. The biggest attraction is the place itself. Built to mimic a WW I French farmhouse taken over by the 94th, a bunch of Yankee flying aces, it

BACI RISTORANTE 1993 W Moreras Boulevard, 619-275-2094, you have been eating low-fat, low-cater food, consider this place a spectreat. Be sure to order at least two pt tas (parties of four or more can require a combination pasta plate) and fre fish or chicken. Excellent fried span du the best andaplione (dessrip in ticity. Salt may be more than usual. First sensing, Onen, Monday, Jones, Monday rate service, Open Monday thre Saturday, Closed Sunday, Modera expensive. — E.W.

EMERALD CHINESE SEAFO RESTAURANT 3709 Convoy Sit.

Pacific Gareway Plaza, Kearny M.
858-865-6888. San Diego's best C.

nese restuarant for fresh scafood fish. Live fish, prawns, and lobster kept in inahs and prepared minutes ter you order. Superb dim sum, ser easily, is especially fine on Saturday. Sunday, when 100 items are availal Open daily. Upper moderate expensive. — E.W.

858-279-9799. This restaurant is note for its hot and spicy Szechuan dish as well as for its Mandarin specialtic For Mongolian barbecue, you have choice of beef, pork, lamb, or turk with stir-fried vegetables (barbecue not available Sunday morning). E:

PHO TAU BAY RESTAURANT wainscotting, silk roses, a golder foot-tall laughing Buddha, un-altar with three black-bearder For lunch and dinner you can For tunch and dinner you can ch such exotics as quail, boar, allig, and "Spicy Chop Frog in Coconut! and Curry," Breakfast is cheap, fill and very Vietnamese. Try Mi Ga, a, the rice noodle soup with shred chicken, Or order bunh mi thit, e

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restaurant where 232 items are offered. The cuisine is healthy, offers great variety, and is pleasing to the eye as well as the palate. Best bets are egg rolls, char-galled shrimp on sugarcane, ground bed wrapped in grape leaves, prawn saled, rice in earthernware portions of the property of the proper and wonderfr sive. — E.W.

SAN TONG PALACE 4690 Convoy
Street, Kearny Mesa, 588-571-6887.
This unassuming strip-mall restaurant
is easy too overbook, but once found, impossible to resist. San Tong's, hybrid
Korean-Chinese menu draw's from
these regions tastiest styles. Their Rainbow Salad demonstrates this combina-

rant where 232 items are offered

bow Salad demonstrates this combina-tion deliciously, and San Tong's dumplings are outstanding. Their seafood dumplings are especially re-markable. For the adventurous, I re-ommend the jellyfish salad, a novel-treat for Westerners. At San Tong. Palace, curious appetites are rewarded well. Inexpensive. — M.N.

well. Inexpensive. — M.N. SHGUN KOBE 5451 Kearny Villa Road, Kearny Mesa, 883-560-7399. This restaurant speculizes in well seasoned Japanese-style steaks, either by the state of the state

THE BEACHES

GUAVA REACH BAR AND GRILL 4 Mission Boulevard sion Beach, 858-488-6688. Old Mission Beach, 858-488-6688. Old-fashioned American cooking such as meat loaf with mashed potatoes and macaroni and cheese (on children's menu) are prepared here, along with Mexican and seafood specialities. Open daily. Inexpensive to moderate. — E.W.

HARBOR'S EDGE Sheraton Harbor Island Resort, 1380 Harbor Island Drive (across from airport), 619-291-2900. The restaurant has a stunning bay view and contemporary interior. Good California cuisine ininterior, Good California cuisine in-cludes fish, chicken, pastas. For inex-pensive diversion, try the Bakery (ad-jacent to the dining room) where sandwiches and pastries are served. Open daily, breakfast, lunch, dinner, and Sunday brunch. Moderate to expensive. — E.W.

HUDSON BAY SEAFOOD 1403 Scott Street, 619-222-8787. Fresh fish and scafood, burgers, and salads served in room on the dock. Circat view and you may eat on the outside deck or inside. Very casual. Best betts: fish and ships; and fresh fish sandwiches. Open daily, reakfast, lunch, and dinner. Inexpensive. — E.W.

HUMPHREY'S 2241 Shelter Island Drive, 619-224-3577, California coastal Drive, 619-224-3577. California coastal cuisine in a newly renovated room with a beautiful bay view. Among the well prepared dishes, black Angus "baseball cut" steak, grilled vegetable tower, sea-soned crusted ahi, prawn cocktal par fait. Excellent service. Open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Sunday buffet brunch. Moderate to expensive. — E. W.

— E.W.

JAKED'S 80 East Harbor Island Drive,
19-291-1028. The house specially is
steak, offered in a room directly to
the harbor. Presentation, in the manner.

Motron is, it is to how you the entiresof Motron is, it is to how you the entiresthe vegatables, postators a la carte. Excellent appetizes, especially free month
for the control of the control
tart. First rate bread and bread pudding. Closed Monday. Dinner only,
Tuesday through Sunday, Expensive.
— E.W.

— E.W.

LAMONT STREET GRILL 4445 Lam
ont Street, Pacific Beach, 858-270-3060
Most entrées here include salad or
soup, potatoes, vegetables, and fresé
fruit dipped in chocolate. This restau rant boasts a genuine fireplace on the heated outdoor patio. It's really ro-mantic. Dinners only, nightly. Moderate to slightly expensive. — E.W. SAM CHOY'S HAWAII AT THE BALI HAI 2230 Shelter Island Drive, Shelter Island, 619-222-1181. Unpre-tentious Hawaiian/Chinese creations

mphasize seafood here, in a family riendly setting with spectacular views

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Quivira Road, Mission Bay, 619-224-3551. Fifty years ago this restaurant-fish market was a tuna can-

CLOPUS GAPO

S. A. ACIFIC RIM

ily still owns it, and still knows every-thing about fish and how to cook it. The menu is devoted to the 'fruits of the sea" and includes a wonderful scafood platter (shrimp, squid, clams, fish, fries, and salad). And, of course, a crispy-crunchy fish and chips platter. Eat outside on deck, contemplating the small ships on the bay. Open seven days, lunch/early dinner. Inexpensive. — E.B. THEE BUNGALOW 4996 West Point

Loma Boulevard, Ocean Beach, 619-224-2884; www.theelingalow.com. The very soul of Ocean Beach resides in Ed Moore's charming, comfortable his-Fal Moore's charming, comfortable his-torics' cottage," where the menus over-classic French bistro fare from pute to coutfill, including comfort food entires like graunhamman used to make. And like mambre's the cooking in a little in-consistent. Skip the over-rated duck and head for the essonal specials, the rich stews, and — of course — the pates and souffles. When the peppery corn soup is on the menu, leap for it. A huge wine list at very low markups is a spe-wine list at very low markups is a special blessing. Slightly dressy; reserva-tions strongly advised. Expensive, but with affordable early-bird weeknight dinners. — N.W.

MIDWAY. OLD TOWN & MISSION VALLEY

ELAGAVE 2304 San Diego Avenue (at Old Town Avenue), Old Town, of 19-220-0802. Reservations recom-mended. Wheelchair access difficult steep ramp), you'll find upscale, un-usual Mexican specialties in an inti-mate Spanish-style dining room or on a small heated balcony. The menu cel-trates three areast ore-Hissanis ebrates three great pre-Hispanic cuisines — Aztec, Mayan, Nahuatl — with discreet admixtures of France, Spain, and Italy. (It's the history of Mexico on a plate.) Among the high-lights are the five different Oaxacan moles (plus a sixth from Chiapas), Yu-

Lunch Specials \$1295_{per person}

tangy jamaica (hibiscus) sauce, and a unique appetizer, flacogos cuitiacoche, ovals of blue corn mass topped with a sort of "mushroom" that grows on corn ears. (In English it's called "corn smut," but it tastes much nicer than that sounds.) The bar stocks over 600 tequilas and makes a food-friendly on-the-crocks. Memoratra with fresh fruit the-rocks Margarita with fresh fruit juices. Moderate, — N.W.

GEORGIA'S GREEK CUISINE 3550 Rosecrans Street, Grosvenor Square Center, 619-523-1007. This small, im maculate Greek restaurant serves food that will please anyone on a budget. Lunch is an especially good buy. All en-trées, as well as sandwiches and appetizers, are prepared for takeout. Open daily for lunch and dinner. Inexpen sive to low moderate. — E.W.

OLD TOWN MEXICAN CAFE 2489

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BARNES BAR-B-QUE 2625 Lemon BARNES BAR-B-QUE 2625 Lemon force Avenue fat Cypress, tucked in the back of Liquor Mart Squarel, Lemon Groe Ji-80-26-2706. The sign on the window reads: "Soul Food: 99 conts'; inside is the homey solace of good cheer and excellent Memphit-sely beathecue. Fork gets star billing: in a sandwish, it appears as tender chunks laced with smoke or ribs, as tuncious, multirectured strips stathered with sacore that balances sweet smoke, citrus tang and a mild, persistent spice.

BBQ beans are a revelation, creamy yet substantial, swimming alongside rich bits of pork in a sauce that delivers a sweet molasses bite. Macaroni and cheese is gooey and gummable, a mild counter to the murky, sour/salty

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DULZURA CAFE Highway 94 at Dulzura, 619-468-9591. Breakfast and

DULZUBA CAPE (tiphows) 94 at DULZUBA CAPE (tiphows) 94 at Illanch seven days, dinner frields through Sunday. Think Crape: of Winds Chine, his Dulzuma Cale: no weary westerners since 1910. The walls are clustered with license plane, post-sor participation of the company of the seary westerners since 1910. The walls are distressed with license plane, post-bones-collers, railroad lainterns, ancient go-bearter, site forts make skin, other authers and a seedy untiled bybes thead surface and a seedy untiled bybes the seed surface and seedy untiled bybes the seed surface and seedy untiled bybes the seed of surface and seedy untiled bybes the seed surface. Listens for speeding surface and seed and seed of seed and seed of surface and seed into the dirt parking lot — and watch for the scorpion in the counter-top. In-expensive. — E.B.

GRINGO'S BREW HOUSE 40601 Old

MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL

The signs outside read "American-owned" and "Check guns at the regis-ter." We're out in border-country here, folks, But just ask for Elizabeth, a younky black-haired Hallen American jolks, But just ask for Elizabeth, a punky black-haired Italian-American, who explains that the signs are "a joke for the Border Patrol." For dinner, try he house-rolled ravioli or lausgna. At oreakfast. play "stuff-your-own molec!" with onions, peppers, toma-oes, mushrooms, ham, sausage, bacon, or cheese. Pool tables and a smoking oom add to the rustic charm. You can now canno overpiable to their word or now camp overnight in their yard, or park your RV. Inexpensive, open daily. — E.B.

THE LIVING ROOM COFFEE THE LIVING ROOM COPPEE.
HOUSE 5900 El Cajon Boulevard, College Area, 619-286-8434. With deepdraft couches, Persian carpets, pictures
on the wall, chunky wooden tables, and
a-tree-shaded patio, this Swiss-owned of bacon, ham, onions, tomatoes, pper, cheese on top, potatoes, fruit, d bread. Later in the day, try their rkey lasagna with fruit and bread, pen daily. Inexpensive. — E.B.

LY'S GARDEN 6011 El Cajon Boule ic Cambodian food. Be sure to ask ir. Ly for suggestions. Live crab and obster as well as fresh oysters and arimp available. Open daily. Inex-consider to moderate. — E.W.

THE MOUNT SIGNAL CAFE 1201 HIM MOUNT SIGNAL CAFE 1201
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Calexion, the 60 year old retaurant
imans were rivals for the best bullgithers and bulls north of Mexico City,
githers and bulls north of Mexico City,
be cowner's moun, Maria de Jeux, who, a
louderflow howover to them is "50milconserted by home to them is "50milconserted by home of the six of the country
and bull-lighting team the country
to you'll find traditional casera
thomoseyie Mexico dishes. Keep an
vest for odd matadors as you dig in
you do it odd matadors as you dig in
you do it."

erves good rib sticking food morning, oon, or night. Try breakfast special II pancakes, two rggs, and two bacon rups. For lunch, the French dip sand-shish. Full-plate dinners — and they ter full — include roast beef, liver and mons, and chisen-fried steak. Open 90 a.m. to 800 p.m. Monday through sturday. (Bar open until 2 a.m.) In-spensive. — E.B.

expensive. — E.B.

SALA THAI 6161 El Cajon Boulevard,
Lampus Plaza, 619-229-9050. You will
bind this Thai restaurant as charming as
its owner. The menu is extensive, the
service attentive. Try the spicy seafood
combination or the Chinese specialites. wing experience and gastronomically isfying. Open Monday through Sat law for lunch and dinner. Sundaymer only. Inexpensive to low iderate. — E.W.

SUNNY GARDEN CUISINE, OF Mesa, 619-464 2288. This neigh a Mesa, 619-464 288. This neighthood restaurant (formerly Chang) first 18 chicken preparations at low one, plus diced chicken in lettuce cups in smoked chicken with fried trems — the last two are appetizers, own discounting to the course of the proposal neighborhood restaurant in got cours surroundings. Open daily, lunch

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TOMMYS PIZZA 1164 North Second Street, El Cajon, 619-440-2676. This old-fashioned pizza house also prepares superb Italian sandwiches that include Italian roast beef, meatball, sausage, and various combinations, Call for hours. Inexpensive. — E.W.

hours. Inexpensive. — E.W. TYLER'S TASTE OF TEXAS 576 North Second Street, El Cajon. 619-444-9297. Insomniacs and lovers of barbecue! Tyler's offers a seven-page menu with Texas specialties available 24 hours a day. Big Texas breakfasts, great barbecue chicken and ribs. chili beans!), grits, all-you-can-eat ca abeau, management and ay New branch: 7868 El Cajon Boulevard, La Mesa, 619-466-9295. Inexpensive to low moderate. — E.W.

CENTRAL SAN DIEGO

ANTIQUE ROW CAFE 3002 Adams Avenue, 619-282-9750. Breakfast served all day, offers at least 30 items and biscuits and gravy. One portion enough for two, Dinner offers burger Philly steaks. Indoor and outdoor sea ing. Open daily. Morning hours vary. Inexpensive. — E.W.

CHICKEN PIE SHOP OF SAN DIEGO 2633 El Cajon Boulevard, 619-295 0156. You'll get lots of fried chicken, chicken and turkey pies, mashed potatoes, and desserts for prices that don't seem to have changed prices mat don't seem to have changed much since the shop opened over 30 Naturago. A great bargain. Steaks also available at low cost. Very large seating area; no frills. Open daily. Inexpensive. — E.W.

politicians and folk from the nearb pers, cheese, cooked fritata style) or the half-pound Village Burger with fries, potato salad, macaroni salad, or coleslaw. Lighter standards include Caesar salad with grilled chicken, or a Polish sausage on a roll with souréed peppers, onions, and cheese. Open

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KHONG TEN OUAN 4658 El Caion

KHONG TEN QUAN 1658 El Cajon Boulevard. City Heights. 619-282-7615. Look for a mini mail with brighty-relieve signs, including "Karaoke Cafe." In this functional space next door to a sometimes-look karaoke bar, the basic menu — pho. noodles, et al.—in the paper for the condition of the conditio rate menu of house specials (you'll nave to ask for it, or get the take-out menu and look for the section labeled "Mon

Nhlu(Our Specialties") on which you'll find unusual dishes from Central Vietnam that you're unlikely to encounter in Saigonese restaurants. These include evenison, goat, frog legs, and mails. Not everything will be available — the kitchen staff is picky about quality and price. Staffers speak very little English, but point- and shoot works. Inexpensive to moderate. — N.W. MAMA'S BAKERY AND LEBANESE DELI 4237 Alabama, North Park, 619-688-0717. This informal little restaurant is more interested in quality

quick meals with a culinary tradition, definitely not "fast food," but with fact food prices and ease. Recommendations include the deliciously cheaped laider sandwich in Mama's fresh when dealing (soft flathread). On cool days warmup to a bowl of join mandama, could not up to a bowl of join mandama, could not cooked beans (tasty fevs and garban-ros). Try also spinach pie, fact, processing the processing of the processing t baba ghanoush (smoky pureed eggpla-and hummus). Inexpensive. — M.N.

OLD MILL CAFE 3949 Ohio Street, North Park, 619-294-3804. The best-kept secret in North Park looks like a Swiss chalet inside, but serves 1950s

American cats in big platefuls. Break-fast buffs should check out the pork chops with two eggs, postatoes, and toast, or biscuits and gray, or the famous pig in a balanct (three subage links rolled in hot cakes with powdered sugar). The funch and dinner menu is also good and cheap—for instance, golden fried chicken with vegetables and rice or baked potato. Inexpensive.—E.B.

RED SEA RESTAURANT 4717 Un versity Avenue (Euclid), 619-285-9722 You'll find richly seasoned (and po tentially very spicy) Ethiopian cuisine

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Buffalo Joés 2 for 1 dinner Caffe Di Fiore Free cup of coffee 'Canes \$3 off breakfast Cappy's Coffee House Gourmet meal \$5.95 Casa Machado Margarita Sunday brunch \$7.50

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Greek Village Free saganaki O

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Il Strano India Palace Jamar Restaurant & Lounge

Japasta 10% off dine lewel Box Bar & Grill 2 for 1 menu item Juke Joint Cafe Complimentary dessert Karl Strauss Brewery Restaurants Kenny B's Memphis Style BBO

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Kis 20% off die La Dolce Vita 30% off wine Lahaina Beach House \$1 off appetizer

Las Cascadas Lips Restaurant 50% off dinner Lotus Thai 25% off entrée

Maloney's Tavern Marrakesh \$10 off Moroccan cuisine ©

Mezzogiorno Free pizza entrée Mikko 50% off sushi O

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New Wharf Bar & Restaurant 50% off entrée 0 North Park Deli Free coffee

Octopus Garden Olé Madrid 50% off entrée Pacific Beach Bar & Grill

Palomino Restaurant Rotisseria & Bar Free pizza Pampas Argentine Grill Free appetizer

The Parrot Grill Passage to India 50% off dinner 0

Pasta Espresso \$4.75 pasta Raw Mana SS off hip-hop sushi Redfish Grill S0% off second entrée

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Shanghai Mongolian BBQ dinner \$8.50 Shelby's \$14 off dinner entrée Star of India 50% off entrée C Su Casa 25% off entire check

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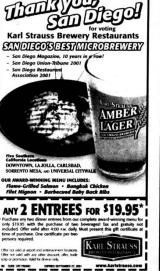
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SOUL FOOD EXPRESS 840 South SOUL POOP EXPRESS 460 South 47th Street, Southeast San Diego. 619-264-0202. The careful kitchen at Soul Food Express provides masterful home-style Southern cooking that makes you feel cared for, looked after. It is the deep-frying, endies slow-sim-mering, barbecuing, and so on that gives this American regional cuisine its soul. And you will taste it in Soul Food their potato salad, corn bread, and sweet potato pie. Soul Food Express has less to do with style and panache than with comfort, and with pleasure. Inex-pensive. — M.N.

UPTOWN

nue, Suite 171, 619-231, 2912, The re-born Alex's (now in the Mr. A's build-ing), is rightly famous for its 'Original Philadelphia cheese steak sandwich' (with fried belt peppers, onions, mush-rooms, and mozzarella). Benito Guidagni says what makes his sand-wiches so special is that be has the meat

prosciutto, and mortadella sausage meat), egg plant-parmigiana with hot garlic bread, and grilled pastrami cheese on rye. Partly, of course, you come to see Benny and his family at work. It's, well, very Italian. Open for breakfast, lunch, and early dinner weekdays. Closes 4:00 p.m. on Satur-day. — E.B.

ALADDIN'S CAFE 5420 Clairemon Mesa Boulevard, 858-573-0000; Us town Shopping Center, 1220 Cleveland Avenue, Hillcrest, 619-574-1111; Avenue, Hillcrest, 619-574-1111, www.aladim_cgi.com. These calfes of fer a bright, clean atmosphere for bright, clean atmosphere for bright, clean atmosphere for bright and clean if rather generic Middle Eastern flavorites (hummus, tabbouleh, seb., hawerms, etc.), plus imaging the bash, shawerms, etc.), plus imaging hatter between the common state of the common st

N.W.

BREAD AND CIE 350 University Avenue, Hillcrest, 619-633-9322. Twelve varieties of bread are baked daily in a 10.000-pound French stone hearth oven. Outragrously good because of the crusty exteriors and density. Among the best are multi-gain, sour-dough wheat, and fig-anise. Baguettes, brownies, and biscotti are first-rate. dougn wheat, and fig-anise. Baguettes, brownies, and biscotti are first-rate. The sandwiches to eat in or take out are spectacular. Don't miss this one. Open daily. — E.W.

BUSALACCHI'S RISTORANTE 3683

CAFE ON PARK 3831 Park Boulevard CAPE ON PARK 3931 Park Boulevard (Park and University), 619-299-7275. Gigantic portions and good food mach this a standout for people with large appetites and slim purses. Be aware that there are long waits on weekends for breakfast and funch (served simulta-mously) and dinner. The place seats 40; the cooking is called edectic Amer-chatter than 316 (50) at 4, 46; the service-tisher than 316 (50) at 4, 46; the serviceather than slick. Open daily. Inexpen-ive to low moderate. — E.W.

CITY DELICATESSEN 535 University

sandwiches and vegetarian items. Breakfast specials weekdays; early bird dinner for \$9.95. Open daily, breakfast, lunch, and dinner, to midnight during the week and to 2:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday. Inexpensive. — E.W.

CREST CAFE 425 Robinson Avenue CREST CAPE 4.2 ROBITSON AVENUE, 619-295-2510. Onion rings served in a loaf, homemade potato chips, chicken, steak, pasta, and a variety of extra-lean charbroiled hamburgers, plus the con-tinuous service from breakfast to late night keep this café crowded. Breakfas omelets particularly good. Desserts are homemade. Noisy and high spirited, this café is open daily, breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Inexpensive. — E.W.

and dinner. Inexpensive. — E.W.

EL INDIO SHOP 5695 India Street,
619-299-0333. The shop has an indoor
dining area, or you may brave the elements (such as they are in San Diego)
no benches across the street. You won't
be disappointed by the pungent,
nouth-watering specialities. The entire
menu is available for takeout, as are
may be go of outline chips. A good value
fully interpensive. — E.W.

EL ATO, VINDO, CARDE 3733, India

SERVICE STREET STREET, India

EL TORON CARDE 3733, India

EL TORON CARDE 3733, India

GELATO VERO CAFFE 3753 India Street, 619-295-9269. A fine spot for Street, 619-293-9269. A fine spot for Italian sorbettos and ice creams, pas-tries of all kinds, and coffees. Diners can read undisturbed indoors or, weather permitting, outside. Open daily. — E.W.

restadrant with its romantic atmos-phere offers an à la carte menu and fixed-price meals. Pleasant food, ex-cellent service. Patio dining, weather permitting. Closed Monday. Open Tuesday through Sunday for dinner. Low moderate to expensive. — E.W.

PRADO House of Hospitality, Balboa Park, 619-557-9441. In a magical space at the heart of Balboa Park, Prado fea-tures cute neo-Nouveau decor and a Asian-toucines cuisine. Despite the mixed ethnicities, the food brings few surprises, but is generally flavorful and served in huge portions. Toy choices include meaty crab cakes, a refreshing gaplant "sapoleon," and an astonish-ingly tender. slow-roasted pork loin. A meringue-based banana Tres Leches cake is everyone's favorite dessert. The bar makes a nice stop during a mu-seum-crawl and offers ethereal fried

Large Beer & Small Sake \$5.95

garitas. Dinner reservations vital. Interior is vast and prone to loudness, but heated, umbrella-topped terrace tables are quiet and scenic. Moderate to a little expensive, with reasonable wine list. — N.W.

SAFFRON NOODLES AND SATE 3737 India Street, 619-574-7737. Ca-sual Thai food, noodle dishes, soups, saté (grilled chicken, beef, pork) to eat in or take out. Best bet: chicken noodle soup and curry served Wednesday only. Gorgeous artwork. Open daily, same menu all day. Inexpensive. — E.W.

DOWNTOWN

BROADWAY PIZZA 1008 Broadway 619-232-6264. This restaurant, near the downtown Senior Center and City Col-lege, offers good, no-nonsense Italian-American food. And they're not mean-from a pizza slice to barbecue beet

rrom a pizza since to barbecue beer sandwiches, portions are generous and filling. The sausage link sub (Louisiana-style hot sausage link, marinara sauce, and melted cheese) is great grub, but you like a full dinner, try the whole slab

you like a full dinner, try the whole stab of beef ribs, with veggies plus garlic bread and salad. But the main thing is while the rest of downtown snores, they'restill open, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m., seven days. Inexpensive.

and tacos fuled with various odd parts of the steer, including the sweet meat of the cheeks. Decor includes campanas, traditional bells, and old photos of Ar-turo's hometown, Tepic, the riverport

SUSHI

FOR TWO

ONLY \$1195

E.W.

TASTE OF SZECHUAN 670 University Avenue, Hilkrest, 619-291-1668.
The Mandarin Szechuan menu offers standards with few surprises. But the three best features are the lovely room. 619-232-4483. This downtown hot spot is sleek, stark, dramatic, a restaurant in which to "be seen." Their "cuisine moderne" is Asian and Caribine moderne between and porce some between the teams and pork use bace outdoor by their sides, but of lamb, which Chive's generous kitchen counts to perfection. Behind the artifice, Chive's staff is cordial and efficient is histories takend of the sides of the country of the sides of the sid three best reatures are the lovery room, the astonishing friendliness of the man-agement, and the late hours. The Peking duck is excellent and so is the chopped chicken in lettuce cups. If you have favorite dishes, they will be prepared upon request in advance. Open daily. Inexpensive to moderate. — E.W. cient, its kitchen talented, if a little arty and uneven. - E.W.

DIM SUM KINGDOM 730 Broadwa DIM SUM KINGDOM 730 Broadway, 619-239-1782. It's a great place to eat if you're low on cash and crave some Chinese-American food. Breakfasts range from shrimp egg souffle with rice to pork chops with three eggs, rice, and toast. One of the best deals has to be the toast. One of the best deats has to be the breakfast steak, two eggs, home fries, and toast. And the steak is bi-ig. Three meals to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, to 2:00 p.m. Sunday. — E.B.

Saturday, 16, 200 pm. sunday. — E.B. FIO'S 801 Fifth Avenue (corner of F Street), 619-234-3467. This handsome caskamp old-timer serves tick, com-forting, serious North Italian cuisine in a civilized atmosphere, with the plassed off from the dining rooms, keeping the sound-level low. High-quality signeduents (fine fresh fish, free range chicken, genuinely ripe toma-ctes, great groppanols) are employed kes, quality ingre...
range chicken, genu...
toes, great gorgonzola) are con well-executed dishes that are going off the deep endude fine below to the second secon in well-executed dishes that are creative without going off the deep end. Great small details include fine bread with rosemary butter and an impressive wine list. There's plenty of life in this

E.B.

LA CAMPANA MEXICAN RESTAURANT 2479-A Broadway, Golden Hill,
619-232-8756, Don't be fooled by the
strip mall location. Jef Arturo's wonderful specializes include cochinita pidi, roast sucking pig in suscie, a nice,
thick posole, pork and homity soup,
and taxon filled with various odd parts GARDEN COFFEE HOUSE 634

Any Menu Item

Minimum menu purchase \$5. Limit

sive. - E.B.

German, Japanese — double thrising format in the control of the c sive. — E.B.

THE CHERSE SHOP 401 G Street,
619-232-2303. This cafe offers outragrously good sandwiches of which my
favorities are the Black Forest ham and
the roast pork, Muffins and cookies are
baked on the premises. Paper plates for
food but real mugs for coffee and tea.
Open daily, Inexpensive, Branch in
14-10418. The Short of the Shor Open daily. Inexpensive. Branch in La Jolla, 2165 Avenida de la Playa. La Jolla Shores, 858-459-3921. — E.W. CHIVE 558 Fourth Avenue, 619-232-4483. This downtown hot

6:00 p.m. Inexpensive. — E.R. GRANT GRILL U.S. Grant Hotel, 326 Broadway, 6:19-239-6806. As always, this restaurant serves qualify meat in a traditional room that uses tableside service. Best bets are spinach salad, lob-ster paella, shrimp-and-scallop risotto, and, of course, the mixed grill. Open daily, Breakfast, Isuch, and brunch, moderate. Dinner, expensive. — E.W.

HENRY'S BBQ 1300 Market Street. 619-239-3919. The outside's a little tatty, but inside — Aladdin's Cavel A dining room of gold-framed pictures, mirrored golden-wood booths, and cushions, tables, walls, and carpet all in blue. Pork ribs are the thing here, guar

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600 pm. Incepenive. — E.B.

MOME QUEST COPPER HOUSE (1)

Broadway, 619-232-3222 (May, it's toward the scurary part of Broadway, and
caters mainly to people struggling with
substance problems. but the place is
full of life and positive energy. You can
that of the and positive energy. You can
then the problems of the place of the place
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in th a piece of chicken and toast. The din - prece of chicken and toast. The dinner menu includes liver and onions, pork chops, or three pieces of chicken plus mashed potatoes and vegetables. Open 6-1/2 days (closes after lunch Sunday). Inexpensive — 8-0.

ESLAND SPICE 2320 Market (29th).
Grant Hill, 619-712-9509. Interesting lamaticas spacialism are served ulasors are served ulasors and served s

order. Inexpensive. — N.W.

RANAS GTYP ARABBICUE 10 West
Market Street, 619-231-9800. Scrumptious smells waft across the tracts at
the Seaport Village trolly stop — barbecard pork and beef. Follow ortrone. And yeah, this is the joint where
Tom Crusie and Kelly McGülli debeir "deary har scene" in Top Gion But
gares what? It is kinda deary, repulsy
in the shadowy horseshoe bar, with
memorabilia like Jeannies Dear S. Le Armine John. in the shadowy horseshoe bar, with memorabilia like hanging bras, Czech license plates, and stickers ("Grow Your Own Dope: Plant A Man"). The beef and pork ribs (or rib tips or chicken breast) are worth it. They're cooked over an oak-fueled fire. Nice cooked over an oak-fueled fire. Nice long Happy Hour (3:30 to 6:30 p.m., at bar only) has great food/grub deals. Open daily, lunch until late. Inexpen-sive to moderate. — E.B.

LAEL'S RESTAURANT Hyatt Regency Hotel, One Market Street, 619-687-6066. All-you-can-eat fish-and-seafood buffet, Friday nights only, and-seafood buffet, Friday nights only, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., \$21.95. All-you-can-eat prime rib buffet, Thursday night, \$18.95. Wednesday night, all-you-can-eat Italian buffet for \$14.95. Worth try-ing for lovers of buffets. — E.W.

ing tor lovers of buffets. — E.W.

MAMA GUCCI'S HOME-STYLE

TTALIAN POOD 1157 Sixth Avenue,
619-338-0400. Mama Gucci did so well
here, she retired back to Italy; now her son-in-law, George, runs the restau-rant. A pretty interior with blonde wood chairs, checkered tablecloths, yellow walls, red shutters, and window-box flowers brings in the downtown office crowd between noon and 1:00 p.m. — but join the in-crowd sitting out in the sun, drinking wine and scarf-ing up spaghetti Bolognese or chicken Chianti (chicken on fettuccine, with

mushrooms and red-wine sauce). Lunch only, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. Inexpensive. — E.B. OCTOPUS GARDEN 314 Fifth Ave. OCTOPUS GARDEN 314 Fifth Avenue, Gaslamp, 619-233-1633. Not to be missed Japanese and Continental preparations. Superb sushi and sashimi; unique hot appetizers; fish with continental sauces, Ahi tuna steak and see bass outstanding. Upstairs seriang for large parties. Delightful atmosphere and service. Open nightly for dinner. Moderate to expensive. — E.W.

OLD WORLD RESTAURANT 452 Grilled Grueben" — homemade corned beef on rye with Swiss cheese, sauerkraut. Thousand Island dressing, and mustard is, as they say, "gemütlich." Also, try the sausage platter: grilled bratwurst, kielbasa, sauerkraut, potato salad, spicy mustard, and rye bread. Open for breakfast and lunch weekdays, brunch and lunch on Saturdays. Insexpensive. — E.B. THE PARROT GRILL 802 Sixth Ave

THE PARROT GRILL DO? Sixth Ave-uuc, Gaslamp, 64-23.1-986. Insom-niacs take note. Dinner is served nightly to midnight and Wednedsy through Saturday a light menu (sandwische, als. 200 a.m. Food is Floridian, some spicy, some not. You can make a meal from appetizers. Bert bett: barbesue ribs, honey-glazed duck, pork chop, key limp gie. Gegregou interior and service. Imp gie. Gegregou interior and service. urday. Upper moderate. — E.W. RAINWATERS. 200 Kettner Boule.

RAINWATER'S 1202 Kettner Boule

parchment) are outstanding here. For a low-cost meal, try meat loaf and

HEI DO GADO 599 Fourth Avenue.

ESE DO GADO 599 Fourth Avenue.

Gaslamp, 619-702-8664. This classic radiatio (Bazsilla barberouch nouse) serves you more than you can est—
seried meats and poolity, and a lugar, ever-changing buffet. Along with side daless, saished and happe of fresh fruit, and the saished and happe of fresh fruit, and the saished saished and saished four saished from the saished 2971-1/2 Imperial Avenue, Grant Hill 619-236-0470. One of the oldest, ber si9-236-0470. One of the oldes, best oul food cafes in the county, but get there early (it closes at 8 p.m.). Sister Fee Wee says her daily lunch and din-ner menu depends on what the feels being pork ribs with mathed red-skin potatoes, black-eyed peas, collard greens and wo-nin-thick com bread, or Southern-fried chicken, or seafood gumbo, or catrish filler with all the trimmings. Sister's special is childina con, hurs, susages, and homimy grits. con, ham, sausages, and hominy grits Inexpensive. — E.B. THE SNACK GALLEY Greyhoun

ining room with serious Spanish en dining room with serious Spanish en-tries, and a basement night-lub dish-ing out assembly-line paella. The best food is upstair. You can get tapsa in the restaurant and entries at the bar, and in either case the choices are varied, in-teresting, and highly cosmopolitan, ex-ecuted with wonderful consistency. Be-sace to look for something that includes

sure to look for something that include potatoes; the humble spud gets Cin-derella treatment here. No reservation:

THE SNACK GALLEY Gerphound Depot, 120 West Broadway, 619-234-4322, At 600 in the morning you don't expect Cordon Bies, Pials, e19-234-4322 at 600 in the morning you don't expect Cordon Bies, Pials, about Snack Galley it that it's open at all. If you can great past the sleeping bodies, ask for the breakfast sandwish-broad stuffed with egg, cheese, and barboard with the great state of the control of the cordon of the cor cious skirt steak and garlic rubbed "to sirloin cap." Turn the cone red side u when you want.a break from the pro tein procession. The traditional bever age to wash down the meat-fest is the Caipirinha, a tangy, fresh lime cocktail. Moderate. — N.W. STAR OF INDIA 423 F Street SEVILLA 555 Fourth Avenue (at Mar SEVILIA 555 Fourth Avenue (at Mar-ket), Gaslamp, 619-233-5979, www.cafesevilla.com. (Also in Carls-bad.) This site has three faces: a crowded but Euro-civilized tapses bar for spontaneous snacking, a romantic

STAR OF INDIA 423 F Street, of 19-54-989. This Indian retains most popular for the all-you-can-est buffer, available weekdays from and Sunday from mon to 3:00 pm. and Sunday from mon to 3:00 pm. and Sunday from mon to 3:00 pm. for the many segretable and rice dishes of the many segretable and rice dishes atmosphere, good service. Be aware that breads are al carne. Open daily, lunch and dinner. Inexpensive (buffer) to expensive. EW

(or wheelchairs) at tapas bar; reserva-tions strongly recommended for dining room, Moderate. — N.W.

SISTER PEE WEE'S SOUL FOOD

CROWN ROOM, HOTEL DEL STAR OF THE SEA 1360 North Har

crown-shaped ceiling. Expensive. — E.W. with the same comunic view, a talentie mere che offers superbe see catch in fresh flavor combinations that are hold but same. Menus change seasonally, but one constant is an abovey-revishing chef? acting menu, which can include a devasting menu, which can include a devasting menu, which can include a devasting menus which can include a devasting menus to a many a devasting menus to a many a menus receipting, manity affordable, and poured generously into good large goldens that show off their noses. Service is considerate. Is this perfectional considerate. Is this perfectional considerate. Is this perfectional considerate. In the perfection of the considerate is the perfection of the considerate of the considerate in the perfection of the perfect of the perfe

SOUTH BAY &

CORONADO

LA BELLA PIZZA GARDEN 373 Third Avenue. Chula Vista, 619-426-8820. From the outside, La Bella looks like an Italian farmhouse.

Bella looks like an Italian farmhouse, with geraniums, bright green shutters, and maroon canopies. A real extended family runs this business. Their secrets are: long hours (from breakfast until after midnight daily), big meals, and small prices. The menu includes stan-dards like spagnetti with meaballs or lasagna, including ides of garlic bread, soup, or salad. The hit with lids in

mushrooms, pepperoni, and sausage. Inexpensive. — E.B.

BUON GIORNO 4110 Bonita Road.

Bonita, 619-475-2661. The menu in

pesto. Fish does very well here. Open daily. Moderate to expensive. — E.W.

"Papa's Favorite," an 8-inch p

D'LISH PIZZA AND PASTA 386 East H Street, Chula Vista, 619-585-1371. The pizzas and pastas are tasty and the salads are huge and fresh. Excellent GRANDMA'S PANTRY RESTAU-

Drive, imperial Beach, 619-424-5800. Kids will appreciate Grandma's no-tice—pinned above a heap of cheese-cakes, pies, and cakes—that says "En-tow Life Mone". ov Life More: Eat Dessert First." The joy Life More: Eat Dessert First. "The menu ranges from Belgian Dessert State wallthe heaped with strawberries and cream to "Hot luam" frittats cage, chorizo, onions, cheese, four torollia, aslau, and sour cream) to homemade meat loaf with mashed potatoes, versity and Stunday nights, try their "All-The Fish' You-Can-Eat" special. The Pish' You-Can-Eat" special. The out of the property of the property of the property of the residence of the property of the pr walk it off on IB's pier. Breakfast and early dinner six days, Sunday to 2 p.m. only. Inexpensive. — E.B.

KARIHAN RESTAURANT 2220 Plaza Miss Argentina ate here, so it can't be bad, it looks like a grass hut and fea tures about 16 different dishes at re-markably low prices; Hamenado, and hamenadore, and simmapalelanturn out to be tweet and sour pork in pinele sauce, pork with salted shrimp, and chikem in tamania oug. Falipinos like to mis, sweet and savory flavors, like the relaxe, beef tripe and oxtal cooked in peanut butter sauce. And everyfoody loves pauce, Elipinos chow mein. Wash it down with a lumpy brown gulamar drink. Open 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. seven days, Inexpensive. — F. R.

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Calendar RESTAURANTS

dia. age 76, mother of sis, grandmother of 26, great-grandma of 44. (Give her a hand) But before you dance, east is paices with the property of the property o

MARGO'S INN ITALIAN FOOD
AND PEZZA F-5 Pinh Avenue, Imperial Beach, 619-424-580s. You hardly
notice it tucked into a row of I'V repart
shops, but Marco is a gwedt Marco,
for 30 years. Now Aler Packeco does,
but nothing has changed. There are the
classic red dole-footh, murals of thians
grapes, and Chiantil Bottles. Try
yappelm, montacolo, or rigation with
meat stance and monthalls. Live a listed
ing along with the music. — "Juruscuk,
Funnium," Integrenare, — E. B.
PROMES The Landing, 201 First
PROMES The Landing, 202 First MARCO'S FINE ITALIAN FOOD

PROMES The Landing, 210 First Street, Connado, 409-417-445. This goognous, were windowed restaurant of fers upscale, Hawaiian inspired fish and geapantana steaks in a plush tropical-style setting with indoor waterfalls and three separate patients. Green the water water and the set of the plus of the set of macadamia nut ice cream may be worth the calories, too. Full bar. Open daily lunch and dinner. Reservations advised Expensive. — N.W.

ZORBAS FAMILY RESTAURAN 100 Broadway, Chula Vista, 619-422-8853. All-you-can-eat Greek buffet daily, lunch, midweek dinner, weekend dinner with entertainment of weekend dinner with entertainment or belly dancers and Zorba's dancers Plenty to eat. Not gourmet food, but fun. Open daily, lunch and dinner. In-expensive. — E.W.

TIJUANA

(The prefix for all Tijuana numbers is 011-526. From the United States use the prefix 011-526 when calling Ti-juana; when calling in Tijuana use

Berä J.

BIG BOY RESTAURANT 992. Agua
Caliente Boulevard (across the street
from the dob bulling. Tispiana. Open
247. Besides having excellent Metaknock-off daws some of the most interresting people in Tijainat—journalinteresting people in Tijainat—journalinteresting people in Tijainat—journalinteresting people in Tijainat—journalinteresting people in Tijainat—journalproblem. Brasfastin sinchde eggs, becon, ausauge, chorizo or ham, plus hash
less offine. Nobody vili object if you
sit spiping the free refills till the moon
comes up. But you won' — you'll vabunger, with two beef praties, mosded
ham, onloss, lettuce, tomatoes, fries,
and slade Or the chiken breast mariacamole, and beans. Incerpenier. — E.B.
LA COSTA 8131 Galeran (Serventh)

LA COSTA 8131 Galeana (Seventh Street between Revolución and Con-stitución), 685-8494 or 685-3124. An stitucion), 685-8494 or 685-3124. An extensive men, consistently her product, and huge portions have made la Costa the reigning seafood board of Americans. Identical funch and dinner menus offer lobster, shrime, guid, abalone, and oysters, all in a variety of presa-tions. Price of extress includes soup, said, rice, desserts, beverage, and said, rice, desserts, beverage, and control of the control of control control of cont

GRAND BISTRO Grand Hotel Ti juana, 4500 Agua Caliente Boulevard Tijuana, 681-7000, x4188. Visit this Ti Mexican beef comes with an outstand-ing side of "creamed spinach," slow-cooked with bits of smoky bacon and minced onion. Along with a fine Bistro salad and a selection from their excel-lent and affordable wine list, it's a voluptious, if fatalistic, meal. Inex-pensive to moderate. — E.W.

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ANDIEGOREADER, COM Calendar MOVIES

MOVIE LISTINGS

All reviews are by Duncan Shepherd. Priorities are indicated by one to five stars and antipathies by the black type! Unrared movies are for now unreviewed. Thousands of past reviews sorted alphabetically, by year of release and by rating, are available online at

L'Ago d'Or - One of Buñuel's two early contributions to the Surrealist cause, when it mattered most. Unlike the other and ear lier one. Un Chien Andalou, this one was railable to the public for a long time five decades or so. It is also much than the other in minutes and much mor overtly, dogmatically political in content.
For one reason or the other, it doesn't hold For one reason or the other, it doesn't hold up as well, and if you aren't, carried away by the excitement of seeing if for the first time it has some pertry dull stretches in it. Some of the scurrilities certainly retain their freshness, as when the second barrefe of a shotgon is emptied into a young boy on whom the first barrel thoroughly did the job Others. like the equation of Christ and the property of the

All over the Outy — Gay romantic com-edy, not to say lighthearted and jovial espe-cially, about an imperfectly matched outple (one's all-time favorite movie is Gone with the Wind, the other has never seen it: he doesn't like black- and-while! who make re-peated and painful attempts to fit together nowes. The original stage may be to-ottar. anyway. The original stage play by co-star Dan Bucatinsky evidently dealt with a het crosexual couple. But the recasting of the



produced something "radical" in gay cin-ema. The movie tries in a modest and ordi-nary way — a sort of Nora Ephron way— to document genuine emotional upheaval in a self-consciously glib, chipper, snappy, catry, attrommy style of dialogue, and with a conventionally and unconvincingly hosp-tical conventionally and unconvincingly hosp-tical conventional control of the conventional con-text of the convention of the and Out, and the united debate over the proper inflication and single debate over the proper inflection and emphasis in the "Fuzzy Wuzzy" nursery rhyme.) And Bucatinsky the actor cert knows how to speak the lines of Bucatinsk the writer. Sasha Alexander, half of a paral lel heterosexual couple, makes a posi impression, too, whereas her opposite half. the muzzy Adam Goldberg, makes a nega tive one. Richard Ruccolo is, by some star dards, a hunk. Directed by Julie Davis

(HILLCREST CINEMAS)

FILMS.

BEN STILLER

3% BODY FAT. 1% BRAIN ACTIVITY.

brows since Groutsch Marx1 borrows Rooster Caghuris erine-in-teeth trick from Time Grit, freeing both hands for his toolering inson at full gallon, just as of this choosing inson at full gallon, just as of this choicing control of the gallon gallo and Ali Larter (her permanent sneer). An if Timothy Dalton is indeed doing a Sean place for it? When there are no Westerns being made, you can hardly expect any new one to be directed by a specialist on the level of a Henry Hathaway or a John Sturges, but you could hope for someon slightly more suitable than the director of Flubber and Encino Man, Les Mayfield.

@ (PALM PROMENADE 24)

American Pio 2 — The gang's all here (Jason Biggs, Shannon Elizabeth, Chris

Klein, Tara Reid, Seann William Scott, et al.), directed by J.B. Rogers. (CHULA VISTA 10: DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ENCINITAS 8: FASHION VALLEY 18; GASLAMP 15; GROSSMONT CENTER; HAZARD CENTER 7; LA JOLLA 12; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MIS-SION VALLEY 20; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARK-WAY PLAZA 18: POWAY 10: RANCHO DEL REY 16: TOWN SQUARE 14)

think of Craise and Kidmun. Burton and Taylor, Bogart and Bacal — have appeared together in nine consecutive boffs block busters (the samples we see of their work, see that the samples we see of their work, see that the samples we see of their work, and the samples were of their work, and the samples with a disapproving pub-lic and two straight flops since their breakups where two years after the spit in the samples with a disapproving pub-lic and two straight flops ince their breakups where two years after the spit in the samples with a sample sample sample samples (for directed by a three time Ocar wije et in Kubrickian servey inside the Una-view to Kidwickian servey inside the Una-verse the final cau with the national person. see the final cut with the national press corps at the junket. Julia Roberts, just to open a can of Whiskas in the overall atme sphere of fishiness, plays the part of Cather-ine Zeta-Jones's wallflower sister (wearing a fat suit in flashback for substantiat though that doesn't cut down on her usual quotas of teeth and tantrums. Both ac tresses could sue the cameraman for their sallow complexions. John Cusack, insofar as he's supposed to be in recovery from a litigation. And Christopher Walken, as the anchoritic director, would probably be flat tered. Billy Crystal, as the unprincipled tered. Billy Crystal, as the unprincipled publicist (a tautology, to be sure), works very hard and handily on the assembly line of gimcrack jokes. The sheer volume of jokes would be reduced, however, by roughly a third if Crystal and his co-writer Peter Tolan were deprived of the penis.

America's Sweethearts — An alterna-tive-universe Hollywood where a married pair of superstars — it will not be helpful to think of Cruise and Kidman, Burton and

Apocachypon Now — The biggest asset of Francis Ford Coppula's thirty million dollar Vietnam War movie is the cutionisty it stirred up while keeping the public cooling its breds for four years. Without that the heek for four years. Without that when the side allow up years. Without that when the dealurty up years. Without that when the dealure years were excursion, unimage. I have a support to the property of the property and year to the property of the property and year year, backs fall, and brimming over 1 and ye a furth person nearrist on written in the hard reperson nearrists on written in the hard for the property of the prope half with a machine gun and give 'em a Band-Aid. It was a lie"; and so on), and capped off by the ghostly appearance of Marlon Brando, carrying permanent and impenetrable shadows around his shaven head wherever he goes, like the planet Venus carries clouds, and whispering with

destiny.) Joe Roth, a former studio cinet himself at Fox and Disney, returning after a decade to the director's chair to lengthen his brief and undistinguished list of credits (Streets of Gold, Revenge of the Nerds 2, Coupe de Ville), should certainly know his subject from top to bottom. But dissem

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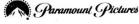
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Atlantis: The Load Empire — Imitation Julea Verina devinture yara, spin from the Disney animation factore, about a per-will expedition in search of the legendary sunken ciry. Setchibir drawn (in a deliber-ately retro style) and swiftly paxed, but slowed down eventually by moral mysical-political-anthropological grandiosis; with the woises of Michael J. Fox., James Garner, Cree Summer, and Leonard Nimoy di-rected by Gary Trousdale and Kirk Wise. 2001. Attentia: The Lost Femire - Imitation Wise, 2001. ★ (GASLAMP 15; VOGUE)

Bread and Tulipa — Licin Maglietta, a more loosely wound and comfortably unholstered Natalie Wood, warm and won-holstered Natalie Wood, warm and woundamed sparkle, gluva Peexars housewife and intermittent likitz who gets separated from her tour group, including the husband and teenage son, while fishing an earing out of the tolle book at a rest stop. The occasion affords her an opportunity to go off on one of those norradial efforce for some office of the soundaries of the soundaries and the soundaries of the s go off on one of those nonradical feminis sdysseys, in fact quite a conservative and Herself: hitchhiking to Venice where she has never been, landing a job with an inca pacitated old florist, gaining lodging with a turously stilted brand of Italian (it come out in the English subtitles like so: "What engenders such uncertainty?"). The novice private investigator on her tail, whose only qualifications for the job are the detective ovels he devours and his trench-coat, is conventional as well, and he takes away too rouch time from the heroine. But director Silvio Soldini keeps the movie light on its feet, with a fill in the blanks method of feet, with a fill in the blanks method of marative that makes indicious use of black-outs and ellipses, and doesn't get bogged down in unnecessary details. (No need to spell out, for example, why the heroine might want to get away from the blookard husband and withdrawn son;). And he moves in and out of dream scenes with a smoothness and seamlessness that surpass

Captain Coreill's Mandolin — Scenic World War II romance between a Greek is land beauty (the Spanish Predope Cruz, with her unaltered native accent) and a music-loving Islain officer (Nicolas Cage, with an unsteady Italian one). Shades, or shimmers rather, of Mediteranous chough it ultimately turns much darker. Slow, somewhat soggy, but rewarding in modest amounts: some complexity of character and emotion; some interesting disomfort and open conflict between Axis 'allies." Based on a novel by Louis de Bernières; with John Hurt, Christian Bale, Irene Papas, and David Morrissey; directed by John Madden. 2001. CARMEL MOUNTAIN: CHULA VISTA 10:

ENCINITAS 8; FASHION VALLEY 18; FLOWER ILL 4: GALAXY 6: GROSSMONT TROLLEY: HOR TON PLAZA 14: LA JOLLA 12: CJEANSIDE 16 PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY I POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16)

Cats and Dogs — Beastly spy spoof (in-termixing live animals, puppets, and com-puter animation) focused on a feline world-domination conspiracy and the vigi-lant watchdogs who oppose it. An overblown lead balloon, heavy on Bondian agadgrty and cartoon violence, with left Goldblum, Elizabeth Perkins, Alexander Pollock, and the voices of Tobe Maruire. Pollock, and the voices of Tobey Maguire Alec Baldwin, Susan Sarandon; directed by awrence Guterman. 2001 ● (FASHION VALLEY 18; GASLAMP 15; VOGUE)

Un Chien Andalou — The surrealis fashion plate, jointly made by Salvador Dali and Luis Bunuel (his first movie, and already several of his staples are on display insects, donkeys, razor blades, comical cler gymen). Very exciting for the dream logi that allows a portion of a scene to chang course while the remainder of the scene nues on as before: undoubtedly les shocking now than it was in 1928, but still shocking now than it was in 1928, but still rude and hurtful to anyone who is espe-cially touchy about cychalls, armpits, and other such sensitive spots; short enough and full enough to be viewed over and over without ever growing weary.

★★★★ (MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHIC

The Closet — Avariciously commercial

French connedy of the type that tends to be remade in Hollywood. Francis Veber, its break of the Hollywood. Francis Veber, its break of the Hollywood. Francis Veber, its what to see what could stand in the way of a remake of this one, a PC face about a remain either his his the accounting office of a condom that the counting office of a condom that the seed of the the contract of the three thr mosexual who, twenty years earlier, had been fired from his job because he was gay: how times change!) The consciousness-raising vein in this is not too bothersome. Rather more so is the cruel streak: the pre nather more so is the cruel streak: the pre-sumption that it's quite all right, quite just and proper, even quite PC, to torture and torment a macho homophobe into a ner-vous breakdown. Neither the consciouswou breakdown. Neither the concious-ness raising evin nor the cruel streak is a boon to the mirth, which scapes along at the subsistence level. The thing, neverthe-less, that devates The Choret above medi-corry, the thing that makes it would hook-cively, the control of the control of the that it's a thing worth looking at. A thing of beauty, even. More specifically, a thing photographed by the great Luciano Tovoth. The beauty of it prings not from the obi-ous and conventional source of training the scenery, Architectural Deget interiors, and the like. And not from the cameraman's cometics case of beautifying tricks: cosmetics case of beautifying tricks: "painterly" light, pea-soup atmospherics. But instead from the beauty of the colors per se: luscious and lustrous, rich and re-splendent, bright and buoyant, crisp and clean; sharply separated yet slightly dif-fused, softened, never harsh or garish, never violently clashing; a broad and demo cratic palette in which every spot on the spectrum is granted an equal independence and individuality, unsubjected to any filter-

nard. With Daniel Auteuil, Gerard Depar dieu, Michele Laroque, Thierry Lhermitte Jean Rochefort, Michel Aumont, 2000. The Curse of the Jade Scorpion Low-gear Woody Allen crime comedy.

* * (HILL CREST CINEMA

ing, desaturating, monochroming processe

o voke them into an unnatural "harmony

or imposed "scheme." The image is as di-verse and gay (in the old way) as a balloor

ouet as tasteful, as refined, as a Bon-

down a couple of notches from Small-Time Crosks, Manhatens Marker Mystery, Tata he Money and Pales. It concerns an are inspect of a fine flow of the concerns an are inspect of a night-table hypototic and has no clutch that be exist javed tider the is looking for its himself. If that sounds like a metaphor of self-discovery (no. he doesn't truly hast leiten Hunt, he deep-down lover her, it would be giving the thing too much crosk. The investigates in fast spenials very amount of time trading insults with truly investigators. And while Aller's older and droopier physical form is no less future, and often more sympathetic, to look at, his delivery of lines in monotonously shaft. Then again, be desert have much of value to the very of lines in monotonously shaft. Then again, be desert have much of value to the control on scruppiously documented in the sets and contumes, adds no fire work to the dislogue, wherein modern anachronisms abound. (The hero is gainly of opening up 'to a woman, making her of "opening up" to a woman, making her "uncomfortable.") And the soft, luxuriou "uncomfortable".) And the soft, lexurious peak-toned photography— by the Chience master, Zhao FG, once again— does not create a special condition of the control of the Chience master, Zhao FG, once again— does not create a spring platform for light comedy, It creates something more like a plush overstuffeld sold in which the comedy gets swallowed up. Dan Aykroyd, Charlize Theron, David Ogden Sieter. 2001.

* (DEL MAN HORHANGS & GALANY 6; GASLAMP 51; LA COSTA 6; LA JOLIA 12; POMAY 10)

storyline, unspooled on a smallness of scale that could nowadays be maintained only in an independent film, is agreeably old-fash-ioned, as you would expect when you know that it's a remake of a top-drawer 1949 melodrama by Max Ophuls, The Reckless Moment. The introduction of an explicit homosexual angle might seem not so old fashioned, yet the portrayal of one of the nomosexuals as a total and thorough de venerate is nevertheless old-fashioned to a egree, just not quite as old as the Forties cott McGehee and David Siegel have com a long way toward level-headedness from the lokey mistaken-identity hijinks of Suture (a minibudget norr homage shot in black-and-white), even though they're still prone to touches of the arty and the fancy; a character's entrance into a kitchen cap-tured in a drop of water from the faucet. The image in general is crisp and clear and

cool, if a tad decorative, and the scen around Lake Tahoe shows more than the local Board of Tourism would approve. local Board of Tourism would approve.

Tills Switton, whose pile papery skin, redenty link teeth, and vaguely death's head verage can have among on growing ender the redenty from the pile of the pil of the body in the lake. The body soon sur-faces, followed closely by a pair of black-mailers with an X-rated video of the victim and her son. The spectacle of this woman juggling her daily motherhood duties while trying to scrape together fifty grand in hush money — no superwoman, she, but a sturdy vessel of maternal instincts — is in sturdy week of maternal institutes—a is to equal parts amusing, aborbting, and case-perating. Or to put it a different way, the overall threat is doublistungly disunited. Be-cause the's so much alone, we don't have foll access to be thought so the crisis, and these seem gapingly eyes to second— the second part of the crisis, and these seem gapingly eyes to second— the about the biackmailers' relationship to the victim—how did they ever come into the victim—bow did they ever come into the artistic threat the contraction of the con-traction of the contraction of the contraction of the con-traction of the contraction of the contraction of the con-traction of the contraction of the contraction of the con-traction of the contraction of the contraction of the con-traction of the contraction of the contraction of the con-traction of the contraction of the contraction of the contraction of the con-traction of the contraction of the contraction

HILLCREST CINEMAS; LA COSTA 6: LA JOLLA VIL-LAGE; TOWN SQUARE 14)

The Exterminating Angel — Luis Bunuel in his most cryptic mood: no clues and no clarifications. The elegant party guests in a high-rent Mexico City neighbor hood adjourn to the living room after dinner and, for days following, are unable to leave the room, and are fitfully perplexed and exasperated by their peculiar inability and exasperated by their peculiar inability. Bufuel hardly gives pause to the puzzle as-pect of the thing, but rolls up his sleeves and digs into it, in mercilessly realistic de-tail, as though it were a Robinson Crusoe survival problem. He has almost never had a merrier time unearthing the private per-versities, shames, and squeamishnesses of the human race. And the cumulative sense of claustrophobia, of frayed nerves, of stench and decay, and of shadowy horror is quite overwhelming. With Silvia Pinal and Claudio Brook. 1963.

Choests of Mars — Space opera by John Carpenter — a tatty patchwork of his pre-vious films, most prominently Assault on Precinct 13, The Fog, The Thing (a line of the script even quotes the title of the origi-nal short story, "Who Goes There!"), Princo of Darkness, and Vampires. It has a choppy glotline (flashbacks after flashbacks, as well as flashbacks within flashbacks), a dark,

as hashoaces within hashoaces), a dark, dank, moldy image, and dialogue on the order of: "Who you calling scumbag, moth-erfucker?" Natasha Henstridge, Ice Cube, Jason Statham, Clea Duvall, Joanna Casidy. Pam Grier. 2001.

● (HORTON PLAZA 14: MISSION VALLEY 20) Ghost World — The heroine, out of a comic book by Daniel Clowes, is solariel Clowes, is solariel Clowes, is solariel Clowes, is solariel Clowes, is solaried. Freeh out on high shool — or rather, jaded out of high shool — the can produce an equal saseer for the wheels asseer for the wheels bound-valedictorian ("High shool is like the training wheels for the bicycle of allie") and for the hijp-hopping black cheer allie" and for the hijp-hopping black there leaders who follow. A tirreless carpethauger, a walking crap detector, allerated, along. Ghost World - The heroine, out of a alert, aware, unaccepting, reacting, resist-ing, judging: Little Miss Raincloud. And yet the movie, directed discreetly if none too fluidly by the erstwhile documentarist Terry Zwigoff (most notably Crumb, profil ing a real-life outsider, the underground onist R. Crumb), never loses sight of the fact that she is still just a teenager; it ever tries to puff her up into a self-wor shipping Lara Croft cult figure, much less an all-knowing Susan Sontag arbiter of

taste. (Is the band at the post-graduation bash almost so bad that it's good, or is it so bad that it go sew by beyond good and back to bad again? How's a girl to know?) The focus of the repisodic action is on the curious alliance with a fortyth bachelor and discophile, quiet and retiring, with ulumped shoulders, a bad back, flat hair, no social life, and the face, multime first amount of Sev. life, and the face-pulling first name of Se mour (Steve Buscemi, surreptitiously bril liant in the part), whom she had come to know after answering his Personals ad as a practical joke. What he plainly has in common with the heroine, for all their outward disparity, is an acute awareness and unacceptance of the surrounding world: "I can't relate to ninety-nine percent of humanity." In addition to which, as a mark of his greater depth and maturity, he has an ness and an unaccentance of himself as well: "Maybe I don't want to meet sor one who shares my interests. That my mix-terests. If it run that the movie, on behalf of its two principal outcasts, takes conde-scending aim at a lord easy targets (the faux Filties dimer, the electric guitar red-nect. "blues" band at the local bar, the "XXX" bookstore, and so on), but then again, there are so many beckoming targets in the world that some of them are bound to be easy. A tirely easy to the easy to the easy to be easy. A tirely easy to the easy to the easy to be a tirely and the easy to the easy to the easy to be a tirely and the easy to the eas one who shares my interests: I hate my in

the importance of taste and temperament in the living of daily life, the forming of re lationships, the getting through a day Thora Birch, Scarlett Johansson, Illea Douglas, Stacey Travis, Bob Balaban. 2001 ★★★★ (FLOWER HILL 4, FROM 9/21; HILL

The Glass House — Slow moving, con trived, and (to make matters worse) obvious thriller about two powerless orphans

"Remarkable!

(particularly the lightbulb-fragile Leelee So bieski), their \$4 million inheritance, and bieski), their 54 million inheritance, and their scheming guardians. With Stellan Skarrgard, Diane Lane, Bruce Dern, Karby Rakert, directed by Daniel Sackheim, 2001. • (CAMBE, MOURTAN, CHULA VISTA 10; RASH ON VALLEY IS FORMER HALE, 4 CASIA 6: LA JOLLA 12; MISSION MARPITACE 12; MISSIANE 15; EARLY LOCAL STELLAND LOCAL STELLAND LOCAL LIV 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PAUM PROMEMOI 24. PARKWAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DE REY 16; SWEETWATER 9; TOWN SQUARE 14)

Giftter — Pop star Mariah Carey in her screen debut as a rising pop star; directed by Vondie Curtis Hall.

(CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; CIN-ERAMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ENCINITAS 8; FASHION VALLEY 18; GASLAMP 15; GROSSMONT CENTER: LA JOLLA 12: MISSION MARKET PLACE 13: MISSION VALLEY 20: OCEANSIDE 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWAY PLAZA 18: POWAY 10: RANCHO DEL REY 16 SWEETWATER 9 TOWN SOLIARE 14 FROM 9/21)

Greenfingers — "Impired by actual events," the story tells of a select group of long-term convists who take up gardening at a progressive English pentienture, and Court Plake Flower's Bow. Life affirming, strong arming underdog stuff, equally work hearted and soft headed, as cuttery wootty and corp wory as Waiting Well Drown and Saving Grazer (build) writer-discreto loed having Grazer (build) writer-discreto loed having Grazer (build) writer-discreto loed habits a fine poker face, but surely his work of Coupier merited a better reveals. With in Croupier merited a better reward. With David Kelly, Helen Mirren, Natasha Little

Happy Accidents — The search for Mr. Right leads to a self-proclaimed tim traveller, starring Marisa Tomei and Vin cent D'Onofrio; directed by Brad Ander-HILLCREST CINEMAS

Hardball - Keanu Reeves coaches an in ner-city youth baseball team, directed by Brian Robbins.

(CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CINERAMA 6; FASHIO*(VAL LEY 18: GROSSMONT CENTER: HORTON PLAZA 14; LA JOLLA 12; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13: MISSION VALLEY 20: OCEAN SIDE 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWA PLAZA 18: RANCHO DEL REY 16: SOUTH BAY

Hedwig and the Angry Inch — Writer-director-star John Cameron Mitchell adapts his own off-Broadway music self-salepts his own off-Broadway music self-tion of the Start Start Start Start Start Start Start and transsexual gain-rocker (or "transex-ual" according to a mock tabloid heading operation that has betthed sex-change operation that has left him a seventh of a mu-th transplant not be street in also the transplant not be street in also the start of the street in also to the start of the start of the start of the start of the transplant not be street in also to the start of the start of the start of the transplant of the start of start of

conce - Former lovers rekindle th Innocenses — Former loves recknide the limit after forty play years. Paul Cox scri-lzoff film is certainly an uncommon notion of screen romance the had given the elderly their days of the control of the control of per minded and largely redundant flash-backs to youthful bissy provide frequent shows in that direction. The fact that the woman happens to be currently married provides helpful complication. Charles Truggett, Julia Blake, 2001.

Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back — in Jay and Silent Bob Strike Bock — Inther Kernis mith comedy arranges a kind of get-together of the casts of his four earjure councils — From Lee, then Allbek,
herty, low Lauren Adams, Brein O'Hallotann, etc. — but with the titular alseles,
herty, low Lauren Adams, Brein O'Hallotann, etc. — but with the titular alseles,
horty, low Lauren Adams, Brein O'Hallotann, etc. — but with the titular alseles and
horty, and a strated instead from and cention the margin, where they had deselfed in
all four, and situated instead from and centre. The premise these are on their was to
Hollywood to derail a Miranas film based
Hollywood to derail a Miranas film based
and Chronic, a proice greenlighed with and Chronic, a project greenlighted with out their consent, to say nothing of their profit-participation. En route, they fall in





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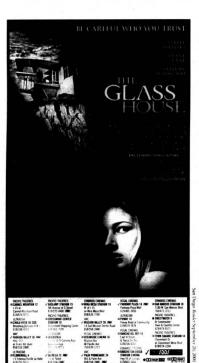
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GASLAMP 15; GROSSMONT TROLLEY: LA JOLLA 12: MISSION VALLEY 20: OCEAN SIDE 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWAY

ror show about a couple of college kids — a bickersome brother and sister — terrorized by the bogeyman, no less, on a lonely coun-try road that connects to an incongruously means and imagination, though a surplus of let's-put-on-a-show enthusiasm. With Justin Long and Gina Philips; written and directed by Victor Salva, 2001.

♠ (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; CIN-ERAMA 6; FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT TROLLEY: HORTON PLAZA 14; MISSION VAL OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARK-WAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16; SWEETWA TER 9: TOWN SQUARE 14)

baggage. (Even the dinos no longer seem

step.) A well-paced hour and a half could

MIL CONTINUE 18

CONTRACTOR DE

ACPIC'S

Reese Witherspoon, in her mile-wide ve of mockery) who gets herself admitted into Juracole Park III - Elementary and ele Harvard Law School to chase after her ex mental spectacle of ravening dinosaurs and edible humans. Beyond that, it pretty much ovfriend - and oh by the way, out him to the head of the class. Some of the details, if you allow maybe a hundred yards of slack for knowledge of how the world works, are gliddly inventive: the admissions-application 'video easy' (directed by an unspecified Coppola) delivered in an asortment of wimming pools and bikins, or the per Chalantan named Brusier, or the pink pompon at the top of the classroom plant the classroom of a human brain, willing as we may be to believe that this can occur in the airset of heads, we might balk nonrheless at the two-faced saturation that the can be considered in the airset of heads, we might balk nonrheless at the two-faced saturation that the can be considered to the consideration of a human brain, willing as we may be to believe a summer of the consideration of a human brain, willing as we may be to believe a summer of the consideration of a human brain, willing as we may be to believe the consideration of a human brain, willing as we may be to believe the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brain will be a summer of the consideration of a human brai him to the head of the class. Some of the eludes criticism or comment. A small objection might be raised at the way di-inosaurs, for live-action purposes (which is to say live-action humans, but computer-generated dinosaurs), have become the monopoly of the Prausic Park franchise. This makes for a stilling sameness, an un-transity of the properties of the properties of beautiful properties. The properties of human is allow the action to get rolling in a hurren on need to lay any groundwork. An other small objection, specific to Park Alli-could be raised over the case of identifying the diposable humans and the speed of the disposable humans and the speed of their disposal. The preciousness of the re-maining humans (most of all William H. Macy, Tea Leoni, and, after sitting out we mign toak normnesses at me two-taceu assumption that it's as simple as turning on a faucet. The idea of growth without change goes against nature. Like the idea of satire without teeth. Luke Wilson, Matthew Davis, Selma Blair, Jennifer Coolidge, the first sequel, Sam Neill) tends to depres the level of suspense. Any child - the tar get viewer, after all — will know full well that nothing too bad is going to happen to them any time soon. Aside from its shorter Raquel Welch; directed by Robert Luketic * (CARMEL MOUNTAIN: DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8 menu of snack food, the movie has lost lit FASHION VALLEY 18; GROSSMONT TROLLEY: HORTON PLAZA 14; LA COSTA 6; MISSION VALtle in transferring the controls from Steven Spielberg to Joe Johnston: little but excess

> Madde — A reunion of the male leads of Swingers, Vince Vauphn and Jon Favreau, with the latter again writing the script and for the first time directing as well. He has enlisted Wong Kar wai's inimble camera.
>
> Ann. Christopher Doyle, to photograph it — a smart move, it might seem, except that the scrapp results only go to show the collaborations. The story, or the tree say vitue incomplete the collaborations. The story, or the tree say vitue incomplete control contr Made - A reunion of the male leads of their separate reasons tighten those connec tions when they accept a vague assignmen

LEY 20: OCEANSIDE 16: PALM PROMENADE 24

REY 16: TOWN SQUARE 14)

PARKWAY PLAZA 18: POWAY 10: RANCHO DEL

Legally Blondo — A wish-fulfillment fairy tale, more voguishly known as an em-powerment myth, concerning a So-Cal sorority sister, Fashion Merchandising ma-

ior, and Miss Hawaiian Tropic runner-u

as cross-country couriers. As in the over-rated Swingers, only more so, Favreau and Vaughn each have a well-honed shick. — Big Putz and Bigger Putz — and they repeat it ad infinition and nauseam. Favreau once again comes through as the sympathetic one, not so much for his lunkish sadsack looks, still less for his mawkish relationship with the naglested desubter of his stationer. with the neglected daughter of his stripper girlfriend. It's just that he's not the one you yearn to see bound and gagged. Famke Janssen, Peter Falk, Sean Combs. 2001

Megiddo: The Omega Code 2 — Apocalyptic thriller with Michael York, Michael Biehn, Udo Kier, and Diane

(PALM PROMENADE 24; RANCHO DEL REY 16; FROM 9/21)

Milko's Murdor — A drive thru bank teller's casual liaison with a free-lance ten-mis instructor and dilettante dope dealer opens the door to a world unknown. And the selection of locales in various parts of Los Angeles is fresh enough that even the avid moviegore might feel the desen'i know a thing or two. The whole business, at least up to the damed-in-distress finale, is reup to the damsel-in-distress finale, is re-markably underplayed, so much so that the high points seem to be those that go fur-thest into tranquility and delicacy: cooking a chili burger, assaying a cocaine shipment. But it is also remarkably underdeveloped. Writer-director James Bridges seems loath to face up to the question of what sort of woman would sit around pining after a man whose only assets are physical, waiting man whose only assets are physical, waiting literally months for the phone to raing, literally months is the result in the property of the pro

project that the vividest characters to emerge are the Anglo interlopers: a fieldtripping NYU sociologist, a Sixties activisi gun with a cocked Stetson (Daniel Stern, John Heard, Christopher Walken, in order). The whimsical humor, if that's what it ided to be, dies at the frigid touch of director Robert Reddent, very far affaired from his first such attempt (no ordinary from his first such attempt (no ordinary people here, just the sorts of people who keep a pertig or alterly throw pebbles at peofestians in the town square). Whenever is not 'able to learn back and appreciate the sun' able to learn back and appreciate in sun' able to learn back and appreciate in a strength or the sun's able to the sun's able to the sun's able to the sun's able to the sun's and the sun's area and the of director Robert Redford, very far afield

The Measurement — It hadn't been that long (eight years) ince somebody (Stephen Herek's melesevord to do a youth-appeal version of the Durnac classic. But now someone (Peter Hyama) has thought to add the element of Totale Jongs style artig gravitation, and a rather poor one on the face of its chough the about poor in the state of the control of the The Munketone ... It hadn't been that and Catherine Deneuve. 2001 (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; FASHION VALLEY 18; GALAXY 6; GASLAMP 15; GROSSMONT CENTER HAZARD CENTER 7: LA COSTA 6: LA JOLLA 12: MISSION MARKETPLACE 13: MISSION VAL LEY 20: OCEANSIDE 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWAY PLAZA 18: POWAY 10: RAMONA TWIN RANCHO DEL REY 16; SANTEE DRIVE IN; SWEET-WATER 9; TOWN SQUARE 14)

O - Or: I Was a Teenage Othello. The tragic hero is now named Odin (Mekhi Phifer), a basketball phenom at an other wise white prep school in Charleston; his steady girlfriend, daughter of the dean, is

TOUCHING, DEAD-ON COMEDY One of the year's most delightful movies." peace+love EXCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT NOW PLAYING





called Desi (Julia Stiles, in her third Shake spearean update, after Ten Things I Hate about You and Hamlet, not to mention h second interracial romance within one of ndar year, after Save the Last Dance); and endar year, after Saw the Last Dance): ar the troublemaker, an envious teammate Hugo (Josh Hartnett), son of the coach, known as Duke. The foreordained event have a forced-march tedium common to but the freest of Bardic adaptations (We but the freest of Bardic adaptations (War-Side Story, Throne of Blook, Ferbidders Planer), and the plot mechanics (e.g., the pillered kerchled typically tend to seem more grinding without the lubricating or Warring to the piller of the piller of the piller piller of the piller of

• (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; FASHION VALLEY 18: SION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROME

Original Sin — Angelina ("Fat Lips") Jolie debarks in horse-and-buggy Havana, a mail-order bride from Delaware, bearing a race of her British accent from Lara Cro Tom Reader as well as a ready explanation or why she looks in person nothing like her homely photograph: it's because the didn't want is shadned who was interested didn't want is shadned who was interested plausible enough to the would be bride groom. Antonio Randeras, who had represented himself as a tobacconist's clerk, invested of as a offer bearn, because he didn't for his money. Not, in their extended homeometric plausible enough to the word of as a offer darked in the part of the for his money. Not, in their extended homeometric plausible enough to the properties of the plausible pla Tomb Raider as well as a ready explana Durkness (previously filmed by Truffaut under the name of Mississippi Mermaid), in

Or in hopes that the relentless Latin on the soundtrack will cast a snell rnyinms on the soundtrack will cast a spell should all else fail. The total effect is hyp-notic solely in the sense of soporific. With Thomas Jane, Jack Thompson. 2001. • (GASLAMP 15)

The Others — Some of the credit must preumably go the Scath Seme for re-opening the door to an old-fashioned, low-tech, thick-strongbered ghost story. There remains plenty of credit still to spread around among the Spanish writer and director (and musical scorer!) Alejandro Amenabar, heretofore known for the overly tricksy Open Your Eyes, bis compatriot cin-mustographer javier Aguirresarobe, workematographer Javier Aguirresarobe, work-ing so close to monochromatic darkness as to argue vehemently against waiting for the video; Nicole Kidman, in a bounce-back performance after the boop-boop-a-doop ery of Moulin Rouge, re-tuned now to a Lady in specific, an Isabel Archerian) qui rring tautness; Alakina Mann and Jame ntley as her puckered-browed, pasty faced children; and Fionnula Flanformidable latecomer to the long screen tradition of creepy housekeepers. Set en-tirely in and around a gothic Victorian mansion in the Channel Islands at the close mansion in the Channel Islands at the clo of the Second World War, the story awak

VALLEY 18: GALAXY 6: GASLAMP 15; GROSS-MONT CENTER: HAZARD CENTER 7: LA JOLLA 12: MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MISSION VAL-LEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24;

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Our Lady of the Assessins — A ho-mosexual writer returns from exile to his perilous birthplace of Medellin, Colombia directed by Barbet Schroeder. (KEN. 9/21 THROUGH 27)

Pearl Harbor - WWII history according Pearl Harber — WVII history according to Michael Bay (Armagoldon, The Reck), a three-hour lesson. To some extent the seriousness of the subject — as contrasted to the director's previous subjects of the end of the world and the mere annihilation of San Francisco — seems to have inspired Bay to sit up and fly right. Or at least try to. Much of that seriousness comes down to a Much of that seriousness comes down to a flag-waving and aber reatting piety that would have been easier to excuse in the years 1942-45. And much of that serious-ness, too, never scales higher than Madison Avenue kitstrk-veryi mage is sleek and pol-ished as a Lexus, creamy and sensuous as Bain de Soleil, toasted and brounced as Kel-logg's Corn Flakes. The selling never lest us. The arm-tessition never lest soo. In all up. The arm-twisting never lets go. In all fairness to Bay, however, he's probably be ing serious in the best and only ways he knows how. Ben Affleck, Josh Hartnett, Kate Beckinsale, Alec Baldwin, Cuba Good ing, Jr., and Jon Voight. 2001. * (GASLAMP 15)

Planet of the Apes - The "unique per here to the burgeoning field of science-fic-tion graphics: a new illustrated edition of an old familiar classic. (Rather dark and murky illustrations, too, with a forest primitival feel to deepen the timeless mythi cality of it all.) Sure, the ape makeup, to sa nothing of the beetly battle armor, is an im provement over the 1968 screen treatm but so what? (Myth doesn't demand but so what! (Mrth down) demand verimifitude.) Bark Wahlberg, mem-while, whose notion of heavy emoting com-sists of hereathing from an improvement sits of hereathing from an improvement of Carthon Heavy content of Carthon Heavy cames in a monkey made, reprising the cartion into of the original. The internal sentential men of the original and sentential men of the original services when the absence of Bod Serling on the screenwring team, remain very man, the same. As down the Immense special song the sentential pages in so wee, "Cart's we all not get along," and the like More toundamentally, the entire concept of an evolutionary inveralongs" and the like. More fundamentally, the entire concept of an evolutionary inversion — talking apes and caged hurnans—it too much a movely to bear a remake, just as it couldn't bear four sequels. And the new and different surproceedings is says to wring from the viewer a bertuddled. "Huh" where the fold one wrung an "Ah" 'Itelena Bonham Carter. Tim Roth. Michael Clarke Dunsan, Paul Garmanti, Estella Averes.

(GASLAMP 15: MISSION VALLEY 20: OCEAN SIDE 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16)

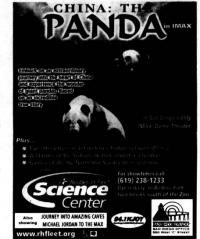
Point Blank - Lee Marvin's robot-like pushiness and impassivity tower above the whimperings, cringings, stammerings, and other symbolic castratings of a smug bunch of nattily tailored chieftains in the San Francisco underworld. The director, John Boorman, whips up mountains of hot color, frigid modern architecture, twisted expality, and modish Marienhad editing

With Angie Dickinson. 1967.

★★★ (MUSE JM OF PHOTOGRA

ARTS, 9/21, 7 P.M.)

The Princess Diaries — Fairy tale success story; from little nobody to big some-body, minus any desire or effort, more like a lottery prize. More exactly like an unex-pected inheritance the throne of Genovis (pear capital of Europe); by subterraness bloodline. What supprise for a fizzy-hared, lour eyeld. Because of fizzy-hared, lour eyeld. Because of the principle of the Ugly Duxillon [7]. If Brooke Shields mar-ried Groutsho Marx, their old would have your eyeltows. I falls a long way shy of a murack, and mothing thy of a pitch for the beauty parlor. Even betwee the is defizzed. beauty parlor. Even beture she is defrizzed, defuzzed, and despectacied, the filmmaker have a hard time hiding the physical bless-ings of Anne Hathaway; and to pair her with Heather Matarazz as best friends





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GROSSMONT TROLLEY; HARBOR DRIVE IN; HOR-TON PLAZA 14; MISSION MARKETPLACE 13; MIS-SION VALLEY 20; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARK-WAY PLAZA 18; POWAY 10; RANCHO DEL REY 16; TOWN SQUARE 14) Rat Race - Half a dozen Vegas vacation ers are picked at random, for the private

mated cutouts of the cast members with oversized heads — are cute and peppy; and the closing credits — actual cast members diving into the crowd at a rock concert — are fun, too. The in-between — with plenty betting pleasure of high-rollers, to chase down the two million dollars in a locker in are run, 100. 1 fte In-between — with plent of animal abuse for "dark" and "edgy" hu-mor — is a desert. Rowan Atkinson, John Cleese, Whoopi Goldberg, Cuba Gooding, Jr., Seth Green, Jon Lovitz, Breckin Meyer. Silver City, New Mexico, Bargain-basemen Mad. Mad. Mad. Mad World, sharing shelf space with Scavenger Hunt and Million Dol-lar Mystery. The opening credits — ani-



Jerry Zucker. 2001. ● (CARMEL MOUNTAIN: FASHION VALLEY 18: GROSSMONT CENTER; HAZARD CENTER 7; HOR-TON PLAZA 14; LA JOLLA 12; MISSION MARKET-PLACE 13; MISSION VALLEY 20; OCEANSIDE 16; PALM PROMENADE 24; PARKWAY PLAZA 18; RANCHO DEL REY 16; SANTEE DRIVE IN; TOWN SQUARE 14)

Rock Star - A rock-and-roll fantasy ful-

filled: the lead singer of a Pittsburgh "trib-ute band" (not a "cover band," thank you gets tabbed to take over the duties of his idol in a British metal band called Steel idol in a British metal band called Steel Dragon. The genial fun-poking at uncreative copycats evaporates fast when we hit be big-time, to be replaced by uncreative and ungenial clichés: sex, drugs, moral rot. (Nothing to detre the young males in the audience from continuing to fantasize.) With Mark Wahlberg, lemnifer Aniston, and Timothy Spall, clirected by Stephen Revealed to the Company of the Company of

Herek. 2001.

© (CARMEL MOUNTAIN; CHULA VISTA 10; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ENCINITAS 8; FASHION VAL LEY 18; GALAXY 6; GASLAMP 15; GROSSMONT CENTER: HAZARO CENTER 7: LA COSTA 6: LA JOLLA 12: MISSION MARKETPLACE 13: MIS-SION VALLEY 20; OCCANSIOE 16; PALM PROME-TAME 24: PARRIWAY PLAZA 18: POMAY 10: RAN-CHO DEL REY 16; SWEETWATER 9: TOWN

Rush Hour 2 - Genial, self-satisfied. moderately dull sequel on the unending and unchanging chemical reaction between mismatched Hong Kong and L.A. cops, Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker. Tucker con-Jackse Chan and Chris Tucker. Tucker con-tinues to be a sore spot for his refusal at any point to resemble a cop. He is nevertheless nearly as funny as his co-star, after trying ten times harder. Strong support from again directed, if that's the word. 2001.

* (CARMEL MOUNTAIN: CHULA VISTA 10; CIN-ERAMA 6; DEL MAR HIGHLANDS 8; ENCINITAS 8 HORTON PLAZA 14: LA JOLLA 12: MISSION MAR KETPLACE 13: MISSION VALLEY 20: PALM PROM ENADE 24: POWAY 10: RAMONA TWIN: SANTEE DRIVE IN: SWEETWATER 9: TOWN SQUARE 14)

The Score — The wore is excellent — the musical score, that is, by Howard Shore, bluery, ubdould use, anxious, ominous, nearly good enough to convince you that you are watching a legitimate suspense film — yet the movie on the whole is more on job than big legitimate suspense film— yet the movie on the whole is more on job than big inter caper. The bails, the hook, would be the big time cast. Robert John Williams of the state of t tendant who alights intermittently in the apartment of a Montreal jazz-club propri-etor and out-of-town safecracker, but who etor and out-oit-lown satecracker, but who for the duration of the movie stays mostly in flight. Brando, as a foppish fence dressed for the tropics, admittedly commands the well-worn accolade of Can't Take Your Eyes Off Him When He's On Screen, but

that's because, primarily, he takes up so much of the screen even in long shot, and secondarily because of our morbid fascina tion in searching for the slithering sex ob-act of One-Eyed Jacks inside the body of a whale. And in any case, he's not on screen long. That leaves us, for most of the av. with De Niro and Norton, and a b way, with De Niro and Norton, and a by-the-numbers heist plot whose main virtue is avoidance of excess. Comedy and fantas director Frank Or (In and Out. The Indua in the Cupbourd, etc.) is conferred more t change his pace than to top his past effort-2011.

HORTON PLAZA 14; PALM PROMENADE 24)

Shrok — This computer animated twist on the Beauty and Beast theme — the chivatric quest of a fonely, touchy, Scots-ac-ented ogre and his volunteer sidekick, a swisecracking ass suns Sancho Panza, to rescue a martial-arts princess from a fire-breathing dragon and a Machiavellian bridegroom — is relentlessly clever, relent lessly ironic, relentlessly hip, or just plain relentless. But when did abrasive and anachronistic smart-aleckry become the accepted and dominant mode in film fantasy Fantasy, like religion, requires at least a pre tense of faith. DreamWorks might like to think they are tweaking the tradition of Disney's animated fairy tales (Snow White

and Pinocchio, among others, put in camer and Pinocchio, among others, put in cameo appearances), but in truth they're in lock step with Disney's Adaddin, Hercades, Board, and the Boats, timply a few paces behind. With the voices of Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Daza, and John Lulpow. Codirected by Andrew Adamson and Vicky.

directed by Andrew Adamson and Vicky Immon. 2001.

* (CAMMIL NOLITAIN: CHILLA VISTA 17: DEL

* (CAMMIL NOLITAIN: CHILLA VISTA 17: DEL

* (PARAMIL NOLITAIN: CHILLA VISTA 17: DEL

* (PARAMIL NOLITAIN: PARAMIL PARAMI

Songcatcher — A prim, proper, prissy musicologist, pissed off at again getting passed over for promotion, flees to the Ap-palachians to visit her schoolmarm sister, and discovers in those mountains a hidden gold mine of folk music (this is in 1907) crying out to be documented. The music i crying out to be documented. The music in-self is agreeable and abundant (Iris DeMent singing from a front-porch rocker to a solo fiddle accompaniment is the peak), but the backwoods melodrama piles up to a laugh-

able climax, and the coverage of it is oddl

spotty (wouldn't you expect a reaction shot of the heroine if a barn-dance brawl breaks

out at her feet? or if her work goes up in flames before her eyes?), and the women's

place, but the Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name — are strictly rote. Janet McTeer Aidan Quinn, Jane Adams, Pat Carroll, Emmy Rossum; written and directed by Maggie Greenwald, 2001

Together — Life at a sommone of Swedish hypers in the mid secentise free love, the Revolution, vegetaramism. TM, cannabis, slage hair, the works. Forth-nostlagia laced with fault condescension and zooms, purgoogs, herb; ferty camer swork. Best bit: two loads "playing forture," claim futures being Plinisch et. Directed by Lukas Monodyson. 2009. (14 DOLA VILLAGE)

Tortilla Soup — Change of locale, and of cuisine, for Eat Drink Man Woman: now Los Angeles, and Mexican. An appetite has been found, or created, for food films, and they've got to be kept coming even if they have to start being remade. The change here works well enough, despite the broad acting and the relentless Bill Conti music. With Hector Elizondo, Jacqueline Obradors, Elizabeth Peña, Tamara Mello

Paul Rodriguez, Nikolai Kinski, and Raquel Welch; directed by Maria Ripoli. 2001.

* (CARMEL MOUNTAIN: GASLAMP 15: GROSS-

NONT TROLLEY: HAZARD CENTER 7: LA PALOMA; PALM PROMENADE 24)

Two Can Play That Game — Relation ship comedy starring Vivica A. Fox and Morris Chestnut, written and directed by

Mark Brown. ICHULA VISTA 10. CINERAMA 6; FASHION VALLEY 18: GROSSMONT CENTER: HORTON PLAZA 14: MISSION YALLEY 20: OCEANSIDE 16: PALM PROMENADE 24: PARKWAY PLAZA 18 RANCHO DEL REY 16; SWEETWATER 9:

The Vertical Ray of the Sun - Tran Anh Hung re-locates to Hanoi, by all up-pearances a sleepier burg than the Saigon of his previous films. The Scent of Green Pahas previous films. The same of Geory in-puss and especially Code. The actions, to use the term koods, centers around three grown sixters thoughts of Chekhon begin to form) and the several men in their less. Relationships are in some cases a fille alon-way of narrative insolern to propel mo-mentum; just a series of moments strang-between two tambi milestones; around, agant, the ammercary of the mother's death and the amovement of the mother's death and the amovement of the propel mo-tion of the series of the series of the page of perfections, a restable legind, non-tingenther, a standard against which to mea sure the lives of the offspring: the secret at fairs, double lives, unfulfilled longings. The emerging theme would seem to have to do with the imperfection of life as a rule: im perfection, that is, except in fleeting me ments, brief snippets from the time-line frozen photographs for the memory album The movie immediately immerses us in an other place, another tempo. Its opening seene of a sister and brother slowly was ing up and going through their morning routines of stretching, pull-ups, tai chi these, is mine a far even its limit work de-deeps and as magalith as an ideal of deeps and as magalith as an ideal down a abbit hole or any forward legg in a functional magality and in the machine. The and countless of the moment of comparable size are placed on without haster and without impaction. In without haster and without impaction, and montal terror of tranquility, reprose, fession, and other such natural occurrence of mind lessness and swilders seen. They cultivate the art of motiving and appreciation, timentography by Mark Lee Ping Bin — the observant and appreciative, timentography—is a deep and appreciative international parts. draws as into a far away fictional world a appreciative cinematography — is as much the "point" of the film as is any larger "theme." Tran Nu Yen-Khe, Nguyen Nhu Quynh, Le Khanh. 2000. **** (IA JOLIA VILLAGE)

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CENTRAL

CLAIREMONT

CLAIREMONT
Town Square 14
4665 Clairement Drive (858-274-124)
4665 Clairement Drive (858-274-124)
7-50, 1065 Sun. (120, 335)-550, 830
7-50, 1065 Sun. (120, 335)-550, 830
7-50, 1065 Sun. (120, 335)-550, 830
7-60, 1065 Sun. (120, 335)-550, 830
(139) 425, 725, 930, Mon. Thu. (155, 435)
616 (13) Fris. Sul. (125) 425, 725, 930
(140) 440, 720, 1015 Sun. Thu. (115), 500
7-70, 940, Gittler (Fu-1) Jri-Sun. (125)
420, 720, 745 Mon. Thu. (125, 430)-720
420, 720, 745 Mon. Thu. (125, 430)-720
430, 720, 745 Mon. Thu. (135, 430)-720
430, 745, 745 Mon. Thu. (135, 430)-720
430, 745 Mon. (135, 430)-720
43

DOWNTOWN

10:20; Sun. (1:30) 5:10, 7:30, 9:55; Mon. Thu. (1:30, 5:10) 7:30, 9:55; Original Sin (R)

Fri.-Sat. 4:30, 9:50; Sun. 4:30, 9:40; Mon. Thu.

(4.30) 9-40. The Others (PG-13) Fr. Sun. (14.5) 44.5; 700, 9.20, Mon. Thu. (14.5, 44.5) 2.00, 9.20; Part Holber (PG-13) Fr. Thu. (14.5, 44.5) 2.00, 9.20; Part Holber (PG-13) Fr. Thu. (14.5, 44.5) (14.6) 4.35; 7.10, 9.55; San. (14.6) 4.35; 7.10, 9.40, Mon. Thu. (16.4, 42.5) 7.10, 9.40; 7.15, 2.00; Mon. Thu. (16.4, 42.5) 7.10, 9.40; 7.15, 2.00; 7.15, 8.00; 7.10, 7.10, 7.15, 7.1 Fashion Valley 18

4-50, 805; Mon.-Thu. (2-35, 4-50) 8:05
Horton Plaza 14
457 Horton Plaza 14
457 Horton Plaza (619-444-FILM)
Hardball, Greenfingers, Two Can Play That
Game, Jeepers Creepers, O; Summer Catch;
The Princess Duries: Ghosts of Mars;
Apocalypse Now, Rat Race, Captain
Corelli's Mandolin, Rush Hour 2; Legally
Blonde: The Score; Shrek

LA JOLLA

Cove 7730 Girard Avenue (858-459-5404) Bread and Tulips (PG-13) Fri. 4:30, 7-00, 9:30; Sat. 5:un. 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:30; Mon.-Thu. 4:30, 7:00, 9:30

Mon. Thu. 430, 700, 9:30

La Jolla 12

La Jolla 12

455 Villa La Jolla Drive (858-58-202)

American Pe 2 (1) Fir-Sat. 15-5, 310, 7-40, 1925, 5m. 210, 7-30, 1925, 5m. 210, 7-3 9.40; Sun. 1:40, 4:20, 7:05, 9:45; Rock Star (R) Fri.-Sat. 1:50, 4:40, 10:00; Sun. 1:50, 4:40, 7:15 10:00; Rush Hour 2 (PG-13) Fri.-Sat. 1:25, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05, 10:20; Sun. 1:25, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05, 10:15

8-09, 10:15

La Jolla Village

805 'Villa Julia Street (168-85-7217)

805 'Villa Julia Street (168-85-7217)

805 'Villa Julia Street (168-85-7217)

805 'Nila Julia Street (169-85-720)

806 'The L200' + 60, 72:00 '9-60) Innocentre

806 'Nila L200' + 60, 72:00 '9-60) Innocentre

806 'Nila L200' + 60, 72:00 '9-60)

806 'The L200' + 60, 72:00 '9-60

806 'The L200' + 60, 72:00 '9-60

71.00 + 960 'The L105' + 420, 72:00

9-71.00 + 420, 72:00

9-71.00 + 420, 72:00

9-71.00 + 420, 72:00

9

MIRA MESA

Mira Mesa 18 10733 Westview Parkway (858-635-7700) Call theater for program information

2037 Finar Road (888-589-202) America's Sweetheasts (PG-31) Fri.-Sun. 1-25, 4:15, 705, 9-45; Mon.-Thu. 2-00 (5-40) 8.15; American Pie 2 (R) Fri.-Sun. 2:15, 4-35, 2-30, 10-25; Mon.-Thu. 1:55 (4-40) 7:20, 9-50; Captian Corelli's Mandolin (R) Fri.-Sun. 1:250, 4-00, 7:00, 9-55; Mon.-Thu. (9-55) 8:30; Cabs and Dogs (PG) Fri.-Sun. 1:50; Mon.-Thu. 1:10; The Glass House (PG-11) Fri.-Sun. 1:205, 2-40, 5:15, 7-45, 10-20;

Hazard Center 7 7510 Hazard Center Drive (619-291-7777) Hazard Center 7
10 Fland Common 10 Fland 19-10 Fland 1

Alission Valley 20
1640 Camino Del Rio North (658-558-2262)
Gillter, Shrek, America's Sweethearts;
Legally Blonde, The Class House, Hardball;
The Musketeer, Rock Stan-Soul Survivors;
Two Can Play That Game, Jeopes

Creepers: O; Summer Catch; Ghosts of Mars; Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back; Rat Race; American Pie 2: The Others; Rush Hour 2: The Princess Diaries; Planet of the Apes; Jurassic Park III

STATE UNIVERSITY

STATE UNIVERSITY
Gloreama 6
521 Elementy Avenue (a) 9-227-8999)
521 Elementy Avenue (a) 9-227-8999)
521 Elementy Avenue (a) 9-227-8999)
531 Elementy (a) 521-528-528-528
Mon. Thu. (230, 4-30) 7-218 Hearball
531 Elementy (a) 521-528-528
Mon. Thu. (230, 4-30) 7-218 Hearball
531 Elementy (a) 521-528-528
Mon. Thu. (240, 4-30) 7-218 Hearball
531 Elementy (a) 531-528-528
Mon. Thu. (240, 4-30) 5-38-58
Mon. Thu. (240, 4-30) 7-38-58
Mon. Thu. (240, 4-30) 7-38
Mo

Ken 4061 Adaws Avenue (619-28.3-5909) Our Lady of the Assassins (R) Fri. 5-00, 7-15, 9:30: Sat.-Sun. (2:45) 5-00, 7-15, 9:30; Mon.-Thu. 5-00, 7:15, 9-30; Spike & Alike's Sick & Twisted Festival of Animation,

LIPTOWN

Sat.-Sun. (11 (4:45) 10:00

(445) 10:00

Musesium of Photographic Arts
1648 I Prada, Raibon Itat (10:248-759)
Mille's Munder, Thursday, 7:30 pm., and Friday, 9 pm.; Point Blank, Friday, 7 pm.; Un
Chien Andalou, Wednesday, 7 pm., and next
Friday, 7 pm.; Land Without Bread,
Wednesday, 7:30 pm., and next Friday, 7 pm.; L'Age GOr, Wednesday, 8 pm., and next Friday, 7 pm.;
L'Age GOr, Wednesday, 8 pm., and next Friday, 8 pm.

Reuben H. Fleet Science Center 1875 El Prado, Balboa Park (619-238-1233) China: The Panda Adventure (Nor Rated) Fri.-Sat. 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00; Sun.

EAST COUNTY

EL CAJON

The Control of the Co Parkway Plaza 18

Rancho San Diego 15 2951 Jamacha Road (619-660-3460) Call theater for program information

LA MESA

Grossmont Center
5500 Grossmont Center Drive (619-465-7100)

Crossmont Trolley 8555 Fletcher Parkway (619-466-1401) America's Sweethearts (PG-13) Fri. Sun. (2:20) 7:40; Mon.-Thu. (3:35) 7:40; The Animal (PG-13) Fri. Sat. 4:00; Mon.-Thu. (1:140, 5:45); Captain Corelli's Mandolin (R) Fri. Sat. 7:00, 9:40; Sun. 7:50;

Mon.-Thu. 7:25; The Deep End (R) Fri.-Sat. 123.00, 2500 510, 7123, 9435 Sun. (1230, 250) 510, 7225 Mon.-Thu. (1324, 9425) 705; 1425) 310, 7225 Mon.-Thu. (1324, 9425) 705; 1425, 225, Sun. 710, Mon.-Thu. 715; Jeepers Creepers (R) Fin.-Sat. (1245, 305) 522, 745, 525, Sun. (1245, 305) 5225, 740, Mon.-Thu. (205, 450) 730; Legally Blonde (PG-13) Fin. Sat. (1246, 300) 520, 735, 955; Sun.

Atlantis: The Lost Empire, Cats and Dogs: Jurassic Park III IMPERIAL BEACH

SANTEE

10990 Woodside Avenue (619-448-7447)
The Musketeer and The Others: Rush Hour
2 and Rat Race

SOUTH BAY

CHULA VISTA

CHULA VISTA
Chula Vista (189-188-42)41
0 533 Brandmy (6/9-188-42)41
American Pie (3/18-7e, Thu. (10:00, 12)15,
213, 313, 713, 10/15, Captain Corellis
213, 315, 713, 10/15, Captain Corellis
12-00, 300-18-00, 800, 10-00, Giltter (Fix-18)
11, Thu (10:00, 100, 30)16-00, 80, 10-145,
Jeeper Creepers (8/13) Fr. Thu. (11:13, 1/30,
313, 10:00, 13), 10:00, The Muscheleset. \$16:00, 8:15, 10:30; The Musketter 5:10 Fri, Thu, (10.15, 12:45, 3:45) 5:45, 5, 10:45, The Others (PG-13) Fri, Thu, 15, 2:00, 4:30; 7:00, 9:45; Rock Star (R) Thu, (10:00, 2:30) 7:15; Rush Hour 2 (3:45) Fri, Thu, (10:30, 12:45, 3:00) 3:15, 0, (10:00, 5) Frie (PG) Fri-Thu, (11:45, 2:00) Soul Survivors (PG-13) Fn. Thu. (11:45, 20) 3:00, 10:00. Two Can Play That Game (R) Fn. Thu. (11:30, 1:45, 4:00) 6:15, 8:30, 10:43

Palm Promenade 24 Palm Promenade 24
"To Isamor Read, San Laya (1885-58), 2802
Glitter, Shrek, America is Sweethearts.
Legally Blonde, Megiddo: The Omega
Code 2: The Class House, Herdball Megiddo: The
Cass House, Herdball Megiddo: The
Cass House, Herdball Megiddo: The
Cash Play That Game, Jeepers, Creepers, O.
Bubble Boy, Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back
Crotilla Soup, American Dutlaws, Rat Race
Captain Corelli's Mandolin: The Others,
American Ple 2, Rush Hour 2. The Princess
Diaries, Planet of the Apes, Jurassic Park
III: The Score

Omega Code 2 (PG-13) Fri. Thu. (12:00. 3:00) 7:00, 9:40; The Musketeer (PG-13) Fri. Thu. (12:30. 3:50) 7:25, 10:00; The Others

Rancho Del Rey 16 merican Pie 2 (R) Fri. Thu. (12:35, 3:35) 30, 10:05; Captain Corelli's Mandolin (R)

2.90, 10.05 Captain Corelli's Mandolin (R) Fir. Thu (12.05, 30.07 70.01, 10.05, Esterme Days (P.O.) Fir. Thu (12.05, 30.07 70.01, 10.05

(PG-13) Fri. Thu. (12-25, 3:45) 7:20, 10:00; Planet of the Apes (PG-13) Fri. Thu. (12:0 3:05) 7:05, 9:45; The Princess Diaries (G) Fri. Thu. (12:15, 3:15] 7:15, 9:50; Rat Race 3:05) 7:05, 9:45; The Princess Diaries (C) Fri. Thu. (12:15, 3:15) 7:15, 9:50; Rat Race (PG-13) Fri. Thu. (12:10, 3:10) 7:10, 9:35; Rock Star (8) Fri. Sri. (12:00, 2:50) 10:35; Sun. Thu. (12:00, 2:50) 7:40, 10:35; Two Can Play That Game (R) Fri. Thu. (12:40, 3:40) 8:00, 10:10

NATIONAL CITY

The Mussecteer 17 (3) Fit Still (113-3), 301, 363, 864, 8710, 10-25; Sun, 1413, 3, 301, 3615, 755, 10-10; Mon, Thu, 12-20, 4-10; 755; The Others (PG-13) Fr. Sun, 12-10; 4-25, 7-30, 9-25; Mon, Thu, 12-10, 4-25; 7-30, Rock Star (R) Fit-Sun, 13-15; 7-25; Mon, Thu, 13-35; 7-30, Rush Hour 2 (PC, 13) Fit-Sun, 13-10, 3-10.

Vogue
224 Third Avenue (619-425-1436

South Bay Drive In 2170 Coronado (619-423-2727) Call theater for program information

Harbor Drive In 32nd and D (619-477-1392) Bubble Boy; The Princess Diaries

Bubble Boy, The Princess Olaries

Weetwater 29

1920 Swermuter Red (19-42-44-8711)

1920 Swermuter Red

NORTH INLAND BONSALL

CARLSBAD

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18 The Cost S Cos

Plaza Camino Real Plaza Camino Real 288 Marros Mod 17-97-29-7142 Hardball (VC 1-31) rs. 4-90, 200, 9-40 Mod San, 149, 407-200, 9-40, 9-40 Mod San, 149, 407-200, 9-40, 9-40 7-10, 9-40, 5-40, 9-40, 7-40, 9-40, 7-40, 9-40 Mod Sha, 210, 9-40, 7-40, 7-40, 9-40, 7-40, 9

CARMEL MOUNTAIN

Carmel Mountain 11620 Cornel Mountain Road (858-6-1-9-70) Captain Corelli's Mandolin (R) Fr. Sat. (300-9-50 Sun. Thu. 7-00, 9-00) The Glass Captain Corelli's Mandolin (14) 15 7:00, 9:30; Sun Thu 7:00, 9:30; The House (19) 19; Tri, Sat. (145) 4:43; 9:43; Sun. (145) 4:43; 7:10, 9:40; Mh 11:3, 4:45; 7:10, 9:40; Gliffer (19) 1 11:5, 4:15; 7:10, 9:40; Gliffer (19) 1 11:5, 2:15; 9:35; Mon. Thu (140), 4:1 9:45; Pardolal (19) 13; Free Sat. (12) 9:45; Pardolal (19) 13; Free Sat. (12)

Legally

10.25, Sun. 11.25, 4.35, 7.20, 9.36 11.25, 4.35, 7.20, 30, O 18; 16; 11.50, 4.40, 7.15, 9.40, Mon. Th. 11.50, 4.40, 7.15, 9.40, Mon. Th. 17.05, 9.20, Rat Race (Pt. 13) 1r; 14.90, 7.05, 9.30, Sun. (11.10, 4.30, Mon. Thu. (11.10, 4.30), 7.09, 9.1; 18; 1rs. Sat (1.20, 4.20, 7.30, 1.0) 4.50 Mon. Thu. (1:05, 4:50); **Tortil** (PG, 15) Fri. Sat. (12:40, 2:50) 5:500, 10:20. Sut. (12:40, 2:50) 5:00, 7:15. Mon. Thu. 41:55, 5:00) 7:15, 9:20

POWAY

Poway 10 13475 Pimay Road (838-646-9425) American Pie 2 (8) Fri (2-00, 4:30) 7:00, 9:30; Sat. (11:15, 2:00, 4:30) 7:00, 9:30. San

(11:15, 2:00, 4:30) 7:00; Mon. Thu. (2:00, 4:30) 7:00; Captain Corelli's Mandolin 4-90 7-90. Captain Corell's Mandodin (R) (17) (18) (48) 7-13, 90.15, 91. (19), 419 17, 130, 91.5, 91. (19), 419 17, 130, 91. (19), 419 17, 130, 91. (19), 419 17, 130, 91. (19), 419 17, 419 1 11145, 2135, 500, 748, 10.80; Sun. 1155, 2155, 500, 748, Mon. Thu (2155, 500, 748) Legally Blonde (PG 13) Fr. (2230, 715; Sun. Thu (2230, 715; Mon. Thu (2230, 715; Mon. Thu (2230, 715; Mon. Thu (2330, 715; Mon. Thu (2340, 715; Mon. Thu (2348, 315) 545, 815, 10.45; Sun (10.51, 1248, 315) 548, 813; Mon. Thu (1248, 315) 548, 813; Mon. Thu (1248, 315) 545, 815; The

RAMONA

Ramona Twin
6,26 Main Street Fee 189 42,25
The Muscletter 191, 13 (1); 831, 200, sun
4 90, Mon. Thu. 7 (0); The Others 180, 1 10
17; 8at 7,90,910, sun 1 90; Mon. Thu. 7 (0);
9 19, Rush Hour 2 18; 10 (2); 8at 2,90,8 sun
700, Mon. Thu. 9 (0)

SAN MARCOS

San Marcos 18 West San Marion Bestevaria (1) - San S Walk (700-471-3711) Call theater for program information

NORTH COASTAL

DEL MAR

Del Mar Highlands 8

12905 El Cammo Real 1858 e Sn. 94201 American Pie 2 (R. Fr. Sar. (10.90, 1.00, 3.30) e 600, 830, 1045 Sun. Thu. (10.30, 1.00, 3.30) e 600, 830, The Curse of the Jade Scor-ption (194.15) Fr. Sal. (2.30) 7.100, (10.15) Sun. Thu. (2.50) 7.100, (Editter (194.-13) Fr. Sal. (1.40) 9, 100, 3.30) i e 600, 830, (10-45) Sup. Thu. (10.30, 1.100, 3.30) e 600, 830, (10-45) Sqn. Thu. (10:00, 10:00, 3:0) (0:00, 8:0) (Legally Blooder (Fri 111) n. Thu. (10:00, 2:00) (7:1) The Mouletteer (Fr. 13) In. Sqn. (2:00) (7:1) The Mouletteer (Fr. 13) In. Sqn. (2:00) (7:1) The Mouletteer (Fr. 13) In. Sqn. (2:00) (7:1) The Mouletteer (Fri 13) In. Sqn. (2:00) (7:1) The Mouletteer (Fri 13) The Mouletteer (Fri 14) The Moulettee

Oceanside 16

OCEANSIDE

Mission Marketplace 13

ADI Mouse Cell 4 (9-17-1).
Glitter, Legally Blonde. The Glass House, Hardball, Planet of the Apes. The Musketeer Rock Star Soul Survivors. Two Can Play That Came. Jeepers Creepers. O. Sum mer Catch. Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back. Rat Race. Captain Corelli's Mandolin. The Others

20, 340, 750, 10.0.0. The Princess Diaries (ci. fr. Thu, 133, 105, 705, 1000, Raf Race 195, 113-11, 113, 105, 705, 705, 1000, Raf Race 195, 113-11, Thu, 1130, 225, 505, 700, 10.000, Sun, Thu, 1230, 225, 505, 700, 10.000, Sun, Thu, 1230, 230, 500, 740, 10.000, Rush Horu 2 (197-14) Fir. Thu, 1230, 100, 210, 515, 440, 540, 750, 500, 940, 1020, Shreki (Nci, Ti, Thu, 1230, 125, 440, 750), Summer Catch 195, 13) Fir. Thu, 900

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Available 10/1/01, 619-696-2730, 619-235-2415, x14022

619-286-6514.
MILLOREST, \$625 includes utilities. Room and private bath in newly-refurbished, second-story apartment with wooden deck overlooking lust gardens. Have cat. Prefer female. 619-235-2415, x26589. MALCREST, \$700, 172 utilities. Seeking roommate, 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo Best location, bright, washer/dryer in unit, garage, security, patio, jacuzzi. No pets. Available now. 619-269-9656.

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MILLOREST, \$575, 1/2 utilities. 2 bedroom, 1-1/2 bath townhome. Washer/
dryer, freplace, patio, garage. \$575 deposit. No pets. Jeff, 619-542-1416. pose. No pets. Jeff, 619-542-T416.

HILLOREST/HISSIGNO HILLS. Two rooms available, very large house. Amazing view jacuzz, pets GK, ternate preferred. One room, 475-5, the other, 4545, plus deposit. Call for more details. Mike, 619-256-4453.

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2415, a27147 LA COSTA, 3600. Designer decorated, contemporary Lush, tropical garden, Koi pond, pool, gardener, freptace, washer/ dryer, walk-in closed. Nonsmoking, pets. drugs. 760-591-0854, 619-235-2415.

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235-2415, x33280

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MINA MIESA, 5475 including utilities Fernate, Private bedroom and bath Gated for drugs. Close to shopping, 856-860-6400, x6019.

MINA MIESA, 5500, 172 utilities, 5560 deposit, Master bedroom, private bath, garage, pool, sp. times center, central ar/heat, upstars, view Fernate non-smoker preferred. New furniture 656-667.

1630. Washer/dryer, pool, gym, garage, all amenities: Split bills, \$120/month average. Carter, days, 619-640-0232, 619-235-2415, x12058.

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NOTINE PARK. \$485 Master bedroom and bath. Garage, washer/dryer in unit, dishwasher, storage, freplace. No smoking, drugs, cats. \$19-794-4327 or 858-731-5568. (31-5566). HORTIN PARK, \$500/month plus 1/3 util-ties 3 bedroom, 1 bath house Pets OK. Washer/dryer off-street parking. Shared bath 619-295-2768.

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Celeste Vertiz

Imperial Beach
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the Marines. I haven't spoken
to him, but I've spoken to his family,
and he's probably leaving next
week. He's been my real good friend
for four years.

PACIFIC BEACH, \$650/month, \$600 de posit Maledernale 1 biedroom in 3 biedroom and garage Very new clean large Gated compley.

OFF THE CUFF by Sue Greenberg

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PACIFIC BEACH, \$675, 1/2 whites, \$500 record. Share nice 2 bedroom, 2 bath

Sean McDade La Jolla

PACIFIC BEACH, \$700, 1/3 utilities toutions available 10/15, Circuit, beach



Larry Bradford Disabled

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x13647

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1/2 utilities: \$200 deposit. Seeking roommate to share 2 bedroom, 2 bath apartment. Available 10/1. Prefer nonsmoker no pets. 619-205-2415, x20525.

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PACIFIC BRACH, NORTH, 5600. Share large townhome. 2 blocks to beach Washeridayn microsians, fireplace dishwasher. Quel reighborhood. Female prefered, champking. Own bedroom and bash, 619-235-2415, x/2922.

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Available 10/15. 2 badroom, 2 bath pairtment. Near bay/beach. Laundry, easy parking, quiet neighborhood. Nonemoking, drugs, pets. excessive drinking. 858-270-9162.

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Near beachvill. Own phone line available.
Simmone, 858-566-9074.

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EPRING VALLEY, \$600, all bills paid.
\$400 deposit. Roommate needed immediately. 2 bedroom, 1 bath, fully furshed. Beautiful location. Washer/dryerin apartment. 2 cats. 619-235-2415. x19105.

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9/26. 619-235-2415. x24949 TERRABARTA. \$410/moreth plus 1/3 ubities. Nonsmoking male or female to share 3 bedroom house. 9x10 room, shared bethroom. Laundry. No drugs. Some stor-age available. 619-235-2415. x21162.

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38. Reference

19. Fin noiser
21. Fluid-filled pouches
22. Fluid-filled pouches
23. Driver's lic, et al.
24. Elton John's longiture label
26. Food worker's accessory
28. Final appearance
33. Skull in Hamlet, e.g.
34. Toledo's Jake
35. Ancient colonnade
37. Trapped
44. Eitle bits mendment in the

lunchtime? 19. Pin holder 20. Lunatic

41. The last amendment in the

41. The last amendment in Bill of Rights 43. Rake ____ (get rich) 44. Sudden outpouring 46. He played Ricky on TV

47. Naldi of the Ziegfeld Follies 48. New Jersey five 50. Profe.sional's fee 52. Loses vigor 55. Roadie's burden

57. Fly high

59. Certain vocal part 64. Includes

70. Birth word I. White-tailed eagle

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Across
1. Follows orders at the dentist's
6. Luke Skywalker, e.g.
10. Like some columns
14. Burgundy grape
15. Newsman Sevareid
16. Decree
17. Beg forgiveness around lunchtime?

12. Get away from 13. Thomas Jefferson, religiously 18. Stop on the street, say 22. They're dubbed 25. Added to the pot

27. Pasta choice 28. Filming sites

29. Yuppie's sandwich 30. Help someone like actor

32. "He's a ____ 36. Perplexed

Wood protuberance

42. Role in a gangster film 45. Summers in Rouen 49. Take a light nap

51. Chef protectors 52. An Allman brother

53. Rear____ (certain accident) 54. "60 Minutes" reporter 58. Rand McNally abbreviations

60. "____ first you ..." 61. Germany's von Bismarck

62. Burn the surface of 63. The "O" in S.R.O. 65. Letters before Jeanne or Therese 67. Superlative suffix

66. People's recollections of Bo RULES OF THE GAME Derck's career? 68. Not having a hair out of The prize for solving the Reader
Puzzle will be a Reader T-shirt. The pine on daying the near-ted pine on the search present of the

place 59. Marks of Zorro

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72. Once, once 73. Alibi

Down

1. Unwanted E-mail

2. Kind of bread

4. Singer Braxton

5. Really irritates

6. "West Side Story" gang
member

7. Son of Aphrodite

8. Jazz sunger Washington

10. Bautite, e.g.

11. What the Russians did in

19992

COMMERCIAL

comment 1032

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unit overlooking Tava Averuse Dent miss
oit, call now filter Averuse Dent miss
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1. Bruce Klowden, San Diego

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4. Carl Bennett, Escondido 5. Dana Kuzniar, Carlshad

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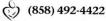


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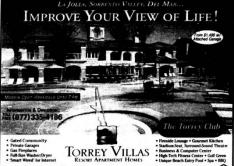
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love got to do with it?" and an old guy's ruing the day the Guild Theater closed down now seem like playing the violin and eating grapes while Rome goes up I'm taking some ten minutes or so between each sentence here to turn

up the volume on the television and stare at the footage of an airliner crash-ing into one of two identical skyscrap-ers in Manhattan. I always thought those

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quality of life in several countries in the wake of U.S.-based corporate presence Okay, that's a pissoff, and I'm the first to agree. My life became impoverished for years in the wake of a German corporation, Bertelsmann Publishing, when they devoured my publisher (Doubleday) and then Bantam, Dell, and Random House. I wanted to hit somebody. The thought of killing thousands of Germ

I'm setting this Hillcrest material aside. I wanted to talk about the extraor dinary booksellers like Troy at Footnote Books on University Avenue and Robert uniary toolscaters like Froy at roots of the South of the

Turn the sound up again and watch the Trade Center buildings destroyed in slow motion. I get that feeling at the back of my neck that signals a foul anger I've brought to heet mostly over 15 years. What is if I've strought to a leep mostly over 15 years. What is if I've strought to Some people would be greatly surpressed to hear me say. When it comes to buildization, I'm all for it.' New York City always seemed to me to be the heart of itization, I m all for it. New York City always secred to me to be the heart of Westerfic vicitation, and here a handful of homicidal thugs, who, frighteningly enough, might not have even been insane, just crashed two airliners full of peo-le into the place killing untold thousands of others because they were Amer-icans. If you had told me that someone crashed an inplume into the Pentagon in 1968 and killed hundreds of people in the building, I certainly would have had a flippant and coll response. This morning my first thought on that was had yellow and yellow, a major in the military who works there and I hope is all civide, and yellow a major in the military who works there and I hope is

all right. So I'm angry about a massively violent act against civilization. Yes, yes, that's he mumbles a few things about "economic sanctions" and "the disparity in the certainly a big part of it. It's just not all of it

I feel like I'm holding a squirt gun in a burning building. Trying to work a little ahead on this I rying to work a little ahead on this column, a week or two. I'm sitting down early on a Tuesday morning to write a kind of light, funny, affectionate piece about the joys of walking around Hill-crest on a couple of recent Friday nights.

It is one of my favorite things to do, and Friday nights are perfect because some of the bookstores stay open until 10:30. It would have been a fun and upbeat col-

umn with a good-natured wink about gay couples holding hands everywhere, the people-watching in general, the

great (or very good, anyway) restau-rants, the bookstores and odd shops,

and the (theoretically) arty movies at the Hillcrest Cinemas. I figured I would

reminisce a little about coming to San Diego and buying a home on Curlew Street in 1981, discovering the Man-dolin Wind and local blues bands, how

I used the neighborhood as a setting for the opening scene of my first pub

lished novel.

So, yeah, I had a column, but at

7:30 a.m. I've got my first cup of cof-

reading this some ten days after the fact,

the terrorist horror.

e people-watching in general, the

things screwed up the skyline, and I immediately admonish myself for the

tuning screen up in easytine, and I immediately admonish myself for the thought. Meanwhile, I'm trying to remind myself that I am not watching a trailer for Die Hard IV or a new big-budget Schwarzenegger movie. I'm listening to the tapes of people I interviewed on the streets of Hillerest, asking them their plans for Friday night, and I feel like I'm holding a squirt gun in a burnine buildine.

in a burning building.

I will confess something here in print because I can and I won't get arrested
or officially harassed because of it, not in this country; I've never been the slight-

statistical production of the statistic statistics and production of the statistic statistics and production of the statistics and phrases like "Make the world safe for democracy," employed for the justification of America's war efforts, always sounded aphasiac-like in my ears — "Save the doodah from the ding dong? What?" I nearly got in a fight once in a bar on the Fourth of July when I sugrestant is a learny got in a right once in a bar on the Fourth of July when I sug-gested that had we not fought a revolution against England, we could have put an end to slavery (the Bris had already outlawed it) almost 100 years earlier than we did. Also, we would have avoided the Civil War. "We'd be independent by now anyway," I said casually. This was an extremely unpopular point of view in that room.

Flags, fences (brick or barbed wire), boundaries, and lines drawn on a map mostly seem to me nonsensical, arbitrary, and absurd. You may say I'm deliasional or naive. Still, listening back to my Hillcrest tape I am surprised to hear my own voice, low in the audio foreground, while Donna Free is speaking onstage at the Gay and Lesbian Day gathering on Centre Street about a month ago. This is a particularly American phenomenon," I'm saying, "It's like an old-fashioned town hall meeting with well-behaved citizens who actively vote and everything. The mayor was just onstage talking about the rights of everybody to be a bisex-

fee and I figure I'll catch the news while I wake up a little. I'm guessing you're Now Dick Murphy is on local television talking about a bomb sweep at city hall. He's standing next to City Manager Uberuaga and police chief Bejarano.

The Federal building is declared closed; the airport is shut down. I take a break from sporadic work to get some donuts and the Coronado streets are weirdly but I'm watching - even as I type and recite brief prayers — videotape of the World Trade Center and Pentagon after

I'm watching television again and not tasting the donuts. It is extremely clear terrorist horror.

Gaymart and cracks like, "What's got to do with it" and an old guy's age to do with it" and an old guy's age to do with it" and an old guy's age to do with it as significant portion of the world really hates, us, enough to do this, Why? and it as the presumption of the most as a good to the company and the playing the violin and gun-happy at home, and we take it overseas now and then for reasons that are too often unclear. But no hody to the playing the violin and gun-happy at home, and we take it overseas now and then for reasons that are too often unclear. But no hody to the playing the violin and gun-happy at home, and we take it overseas now and then for reasons that are too often unclear. But no hody to the playing the violin and gun-happy at home, and we can be a supplementation of the world really hates us, enough to do this, Why? and the supplementation of the world really hates us, enough to do this, Why? and it is a supplementation of the world really hates us, enough to do this, Why? and it is a supplementation of the world really hates us, enough to do this, Why? and it is a supplementation of the world really hates us, enough to do this, Why? and it is a supplementation of the world really hates us, enough to do this, Why? and it is a supplementation of the world really hates us, enough to do this, Why? and it is a supplementation of the world really hates us, enough to do this, Why? and it is a supplementation of the world really hates us, enough to do this, Why? and it is a supplementation of the world really hates us and the world really hates us and the world really hates a supplementation of the world really hates a supplementati take it oversels now and then hor reasons that are too often unclear. But nobody put a gun to anybody's head in order to open a McDonald's in Moscow, where people stood in long lines for hours just to buy our crappy food. In my lifetime there will probably be a slarabuck, a Gap, and a Kentucky Fried Chicken all on the same block in Belize and Tierra Del Fuego, and it makes you want to groun but doesn't inspire anything near thoughts of murder. The Palestinians are homeless, that's horrible, but it can't be that simple. An anchor guy somewhere in the Middle East a saked, off-carner, why! America is so thoroughly hard, and the Middle East a saked, off-carner, why! America is so thoroughly hard, and

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Little sis finally tied the knot last year. It seemed to her doting older sister that every man who met her fell in love with the tango-dancwho met her fell in low with the tango-danc-ing beauty. And after many years of traveling the world and entertaining autiors, she finally married one. The happy couple landed in Hill-crest. Baby loe was born a few months ago and they are packing up the Explorer and moving to more baby-friendly ta Mess to sec-tled down and raise the family. Trying to lighten has load 1.0 fixed to research bow host to tle down and raise the family. Trying to ligher load, I offered to research how be move the family spinet, a piano that sits upright, with a low back.

"Why do I need to hire

a piano mover rather than have the furniture movers move the piano," I ques-tioned Jim Schafer, Movers. "A furniture mover moves all different types of furniture," explained Schafer, "so they explained Schafer, "so they have a broad knowledge but

nothing specific. Plano movers just move pianos and that is what they spend years learning to do. A furniture mover gets paid by the cubic foot of their truck, where piano

"I guarantee the piano will get there."

movers get paid by the piece. Furniture movers are going to pack their truck from floor to ceiling and so they are going to pack on top of the piano, around it. Where piano movers are going to just move pianos. We don't move pianos. We don't tend to cube out our

trucks like that." Do you use a spe-cial dolly?

"Dollies are pretty similar throughout the industry of piano movers.
We make our own to suit our techniques the best. It's

pretty basic equipment.

Most of the moving techniques

are based on the balance points of
the piano and the timing between the two men. Even two average-sized men can move a piano upstairs if they work together, if their tim-ing is correct. It doesn't take any motorized equipment or three or four 200-pound men, even for a grand piano

"For the grand piano, there is what is called a grand board which is basically a flat wooden board and it is padded and carpeted where it touches the piano. It is designed to secure the piano to it but also to allow the men to have control of the piano."

I had heard that if you do not use a professional piano mover, your piano will go out

"No, it doesn't matter who moves a piano with regard to tuning. What really affects the tuning is temperature and humidity." Is there any insurance coverage:

"It is going to be the same as furniture company. We are going to inspect it when we pick it up. If there are any scratches on it we will not that before we move it and give the customer a copy of that."

How much do you

charge?
"The price can vary
\$80 up to anywhere from \$80 up to
\$1500 depending on the
size of the piano and also
the distance. We do cross-country moves as well. If you are mov-ing from Maine to Los Angeles, you are looking at \$1500, but one house to another,

, somewhere in the range of \$80 to

"I guarantee the piano will get there." laughed Ron, owner of the family business Pitch Perfect Piano, when I asked what guarantee he offered. "I would use a piano mo because moving a piano is dangerous. For safety reasons, they are very heavy and you need the right equipment."

Pitch Perfect's prices range from \$75 to

\$95 or more if there are stairs, elevators, or

ual conditions. They ask that scheduling be done about a week in advance.

"Moving a spinet piano from one house to another house about 20 minutes away, ground floor to ground floor costs about \$105," quoted Debbie, office manager at San Diego Piano Movers. 'I need three to four days' notice because things seem to book up pretty fast. We've got liability coverage, cargo coverage, which covers the piano while it is on the truck, workmen's comp. The grands ise about 20 minutes away, to another ho are critical to have a professional piano mover move. A lot of the furniture movers will not be as familiar with the grands. The verticals are a bit easier to move, but of course ou are a bit easier to move, but of course our trucks have the lift gate. If you are doing ramps, that is a tough job as well. We use a short four-wheel dolly."

Ideal Piano Movers and

Ideal Piano Movers and Terry's Moving Service are the same company. This was explained to me who answered my calls to both phone-book entries. "It's \$85 to move a spinet from Hill crest to La Mesa and I need just a day or two

advance notice," he said. Encore Piano Moving charges \$95 with a two- to three-day advance notice. Pro Piano and uprights) and also need up to two days' notice. Modern Long Distance Piano Moving will not move pianos short distances. The move has to be at least 100 miles.

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BMW 325te, 1992, M3 sports package, black with tan leather, 16" wheels, over \$7000 in extras, 5-speed, air conditioning, trited glass, all power, \$13,500,760-

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