Letter from the Editors

Due to unexpected chaos that occurred during the transition of LV designers, information was omitted from the cover story, "Finding Obscenity," that we would now like to rectify. LV strives to treat those represented or quoted in its articles with respect and will do its best to correct misattribution or other errors that might occur unexpectedly.

Thus, we are printing a correction to February's cover story in hopes of showing our sincerest apologies for the lack of attribution to an academic's work quoted in "Finding Obscenity."

The text from the uncut article appeared as this:

Obscenities cannot get away from politics, and neither can the torture photographs from Abu Ghraib.

Chuck Goehring, a doctoral candidate in Communication Studies at the UI, will be presenting on obscenity as it relates to the notorious photos on the "Terror and Torture" panel at 10:30 a.m. in Room 347 at the Iowa Memorial Union.

"Several scholars view the Abu Ghraib photos as similar to late 19th and early 20th century lynching photographs," he said via email. "My research shows that designating them as 'obscene' is one effective rhetorical strategy that justifies their lack of circulation and publication, and the fact they are interpreted as pornographic makes the images even more difficult for the American public to comprehend."

See A-List on page 19 for more information on Tim Miller's performance art, which LV donned on February's cover.

Alissa and Melody
He, "William Deerfoot, married his snake charmer sweet heart Frances Jackett. For eighteen years they hitched their wagons together...

The Deerfoot's wasted no time in becoming Iowa City's oldest couple. Their neighbors were spooked by Frances Deerfoot's habit of answering her door with her bull python wrapped around her neck. William Deerfoot made a handsome living putting on a sideshow and selling "Tonkawa Annie, his Indian wife, all best remembered as a powerful, lactating, Deerfoot was neither a doctor nor a native American, but that's show biz!"

The bliss did not last long, however. Early in 1913, she left the town and worked his mojo with other women in town.

It turns out that the order might have been for his own good, though. Mrs. Deerfoot had a taste for whiskey and a short temper. And many town folk could recall the doctor running to the police to escape the barrage of pots, pans, and dishes that would she would hurl at him.

Then on the evening of September 6th, 1913, the doctor bumped into his wife as she left the Kostal's Grocery on Benton St.

She left with milk and bananas. He bought a cigar.

Little Nettie Elk was at Kostal's to buy milk and a lollipop. She would later testify that the Deerfoot's left together and in fine spirits.

When she passed them in Mrs. Deerfoot's yard, Nettie heard shouting, and the doctor promise "I'll get you yet!" Little Nettie walked on, and was a block away when she heard the first gunshot.

Unless they arrived in Iowa City in 1912, deciding to quit the road and make their big top at home.
If you eat, and I have a hunch that you do, then the 2007 Farm Bill concerns you. This sweeping legislation, which is renewed every five years, covers everything from commodities programs—six crops that require federal price support—to wetlands conservation, from food stamps legislation to country of origin labeling (COOL). This means that the issues covered in the Farm Bill affect each and every one of us, whether we are urban or rural dwellers.

My career as a chef tends to force me to look at everything through a lens colored by food. Its effects on our health and wellbeing, its emotional and even spiritual aspects are vital to us all. The problem with the food system that the United States has now is that while it produces abundance, it's an abundance of dull, unhealthy food. In addition, the legislation—as currently written—rewards monocropping over diversity, quantity over quality, and profits over people. For too long, following the Golden Rule of Governance ("He who has the gold makes the rules"), agricultural legislation in this country has benefited a behemoth of commodity farming that is not just unsustainable, but unhealthy. One need look no further than the grapes that show the rise in production of high fructose corn syrup since the 1970s and the rise in the rates of obesity and diabetes to see the precise correlation.

The problem with the food system that the United States has now is that while it produces abundance, it's an abundance of dull, unhealthy food.

This is no mere post hoc ergo propter hoc effect. Our farming system is carefully designed to produce profit over all else, especially over the nutritional and flavor content of our food. Now when chefs like me suggest that the quality and flavor of our food should be paramount, we are usually derided as effete snobs who would rather wolf down foie gras than be sure that children receive three square meals a day. If we suggest that buying meat and produce from small local growers is better—and tastier—than shipping it across country from massive mono-cropping farms in California or Mexico, we are accused of clinging desperately to old-fashioned, outmoded systems and pining for the "good old days."

In reality, as Chef Dan Barber of New York's Blue Hill restaurant pointed out in his January 2007 editorial in the New York Times titled "Amber Fields of Bland," many would say "that the desire to promote smaller, family-run local farms is gratuitously effete and nostalgic. That's just nonsense. It's the agriculture industry's mind-set — high on capital, chemistry and machines — that is actually old-fashioned. Just as the Industrial Revolution of factories with heavy machinery and billowing black smoke is yesterday's news, so too are our unsustainable farming operations."

Reviewing the Farm Bill in its entirety can be overwhelming to the most astute and dedicated of political wonks. In fact it is true that none or nearly none of our legislators themselves ever actually read the tome in total. But this does not mean that you cannot have an effect on what is said and done in Washington in regards to the legislation. To simplify things (perhaps too much) and to get you started, here are a few ideas:

If you feel frustrated by the limited availability of EBT (electronic benefits transfer) capabilities at farmers' markets, let your legislator know that Title IV and the Food Stamp Program is important to you. If you feel strongly about eating grass-fed meat, and you believe there should be increased funding for grassland reserve, tell your legislator that Title II is important to you. If you wish your child had more fresh fruits and vegetables available to her in her school cafeteria, voice your support for Title IV and for increased funding for Promoting Healthful Diets in Schools. If you are concerned about the dominance of subsidized commodities crops such as soy and corn, and think that more attention and funding should be directed to "specialty crops" (fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc.), so that we can have a more diverse agricultural landscape, then let your legislators know that Title I should help promote the production of specialty crops.

Remember that our own Iowa Senator Tom Harkin heads the Agriculture Committee in the Senate. Contact him, contact Senator Grassley, and contact your Representatives as well and tell them to craft a farm bill that will support healthy people, and healthy profits, this time for the small family farmer instead of large monocropped commodities and their brokers.

Remember also the words of Harry Truman. "In the end, no nation is healthier than its children," he said, "or more successful than its farmers." IV

Chef Kurt Michael Friese is co-owner, with his wife Kim, of the Iowa City restaurant Devotay, serves on the Slow Food USA National Board of Governors and is editor-in-chief of Edible Iowa River Valley. He lives in rural Johnson County. Questions and comments may be directed to devotay@mchsi.com.
Woody Guthrie was an American Original, though his music wasn't necessarily "original." He reworked preexisting melodies and lyrics, all without any anxieties about his influences.

In 1940 Guthrie was bombarded by Irving Berlin's jingoistic "God Bless America," which goes, in part, "From the mountains to the prairies / to the oceans white with foam / God bless America, my home sweet home." The irritated folk singer wrote a response that originally went, "From California to the New York Island / From the Redwood forest to the Gulf Stream waters / God blessed America for me." (Guthrie later changed the last line to "This land was made for you and me." ) Continuing with his anti-privatization theme, in another version of this famous song Guthrie wrote:

As I was walkin'—I saw a sign there And that sign said—no trespassin' But on the other side . . . it didn't say nothin'! Now that side was made for you and me!

He set the lyrics to a beautiful melody he learned from the Carter Family, giving birth to one of the most enduring (and endearing) folk songs of all time. Guthrie's approach is a great example of how appropriation—stealing, borrowing, whatever you want to call it—is a creative act that can have a powerful impact.

For Guthrie and many other folk musicians, music was politics. Guthrie was affiliated closely with the labor movement, which inspired many of his greatest songs. These songs, in turn, motivated members of the movement during trying times, and that's why Guthrie famously scrawled on his guitar, "This Machine Kills Fascists." Appropriation is an important method that creative people have used to comment on the world for years, from the radical Dada art of the early twentieth century to the beats and rhymes of hip-hop artists today. Guthrie drew from the culture that surrounded him and transformed, reworked, and remixed it in order to write moving songs that inspired the working class to fight for a dignified life.
Instead of passively consuming and regurgitating the Tin Pan Alley songs that were popular during the day, Guthrie and other folk singers created culture in an attempt to change the world around them. They were not an over-the-counter culture.

Curious about the copyright status of Guthrie’s decades-old music, I called up Woody Guthrie Publishing and spoke to a very nice gentleman named Michael Smith, the general manager of the organization. He was clearly familiar with the folk-song tradition and obviously knowledgeable about Guthrie, but he nevertheless had a lot of trouble accepting the idea that copyright extension was a bad thing for art and culture. I was surprised when Smith told me that the song-publishing company that owns Guthrie’s music denies recording artists permission to adapt his lyrics. And I was shocked when Smith defended the actions of the company, called The Richmond Organization (TRO), even after I pointed out that Guthrie often altered other songwriters’ lyrics.

“Well,” Smith explained, “he admitted to stealing, but at the time that Woody was writing...” He paused. “I mean, things have changed from Woody’s time.”

They certainly have. During the 2004 election season, a year after I spoke to Michael Smith, a small-time team of cartoonists posted a Guthrie-invoking political parody on their Web site. Not surprisingly, TRO threatened to sue. The animated short portrayed G. W. Bush and John Kerry singing “This Land Is Your Land,” where Bush said, “You’re a liberal sissy,” Kerry replied, “You’re a right wing nut job,” and they sang together, “This land will surely vote for me.”

Guthrie’s copyright managers didn’t think it was funny at all.

“This puts a completely different spin on the song,” TRO’s Kathryn Ostien told CNN. “The damage to the song is huge.”

Perhaps more damage is done to Guthrie’s legacy by practicing such an aggressive form of copyright zealotry.

“If someone changed a lyric in Woody’s time,” said Michael Smith, “chances are it wasn’t going to be recorded and it was just spread through campfire singing, you know, family-time singing and stuff like that. You know, now you can create your own CD at home and distribute it any way you want to, and so the dissemination is a lot broader, a lot faster, and can be a lot more detrimental to the integrity of the song.”

Detrimental to the integrity of the song? I pressed him further on Guthrie’s own alterations of others’ songs and asked what Woody would think of TRO locking up his folk-song catalog.

“The answer to that is, you know, ‘Hey, you’re going to have to ask him, because we have a duty,’ ” Smith said. “We don’t know what Woody would have wanted—we can’t tell.”

Soon Michael Smith began to make a little more sense to me—at least economic sense.

“If you allow multiple rewrites to occur, then people will think it’s in the public domain, and then you have a hard time press- ing people to prove to them that it’s not in the public domain.”

Then the publishers can no longer generate revenue from it. That a company can still make money off “This Land Is Your Land” is exactly the type of thing I believe Woody Guthrie would not have wanted. Even worse, that TRO prevents musicians from releasing altered, updated versions of his music probably makes Guthrie roll in his grave.

But don’t trust me; listen to the man himself. When Guthrie was still alive, for instance, Bess Lomax Hawes told him that his song “Union Maid” had gone into the oral tradition, as folklorists call it.

“It was part of the cultural landscape, no longer even associated with him,” said Hawes, the sister of the famous song collector and archivist Alan Lomax. “He answered, ‘If that were true, it would be the greatest honor of my life.’ ”

In a written statement attached to a published copy of his lyrics for “This Land Is Your Land,” Guthrie made clear his belief that it should be understood as communal property. “This song is Copyrighted in US,” he wrote, “under Seal of Copyright # 154085, for a period of 28 years, and anybody caught singin’ it without our permission will be mighty good friends of ours, cause we don’t give a damn. Publish it. Write it. Sing it. Yodel it. We wrote it, that’s all we wanted to do.”

Notice that he mentioned the song’s copy-
THE SXSW MUSIC AND MEDIA CONFERENCE showcases hundreds of musical acts from around the globe on fifty stages in downtown Austin. By day, conference registrants do business in the SXSW Trade Show in the Austin Convention Center and partake of a full agenda of informative, provocative panel discussions featuring hundreds of speakers of international stature.

2007 KEYNOTE
Pete Townshend
Wednesday, March 14 at 6:30pm

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Prairie Pop
right lasted 28 years, though the term was later lengthened.

Also note that Guthrie said, “We wrote it” not “I wrote it,” something that indicates Guthrie didn’t see himself as the song’s sole author. Since much of the song’s power comes from that lovely melody passed down to him, how could he?

In light of Guthrie’s view, how sad it is that others continue to taint this socialist musician’s ideals by keeping his songs private property, turning them into a lucrative revenue stream rather than a shareable part of our common cultural heritage. If Woody Guthrie had to make his art under the overly restrictive policies his song-publishing company imposes on today’s musicians, it would have been very hard for him to make his music at all. In some cases it would have been impossible, for “things have changed.”

In a dramatic turn of events, Ludlow Music, the subsidiary of TRO that controls Guthrie’s most famous copyrights, backed off from its legal threats against JibJab.com’s parody.

This was after the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF)—a nonprofit organization that defends civil liberties online—came to the Web site’s rescue, providing legal counsel. What made the aftermath of the JibJab.com flap remarkable wasn’t merely that the copyright bullying ended.

More interesting was the discovery by EFF senior intellectual property attorney Fred von Lohmann that, according to his research, “This Land Is Your Land” has been in the public domain since 1973! He writes, “Thanks to tips provided by musicologists who heard about this story, we discovered that Guthrie published and sold the sheet music for “This Land Is Your Land” in a pamphlet in 1945.

An original copy of this mimeograph was located for us by generous volunteers who visited the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. This means that the copyright in the song expired in 1973, 28 years after Guthrie published the sheet music. Ludlow’s attempted renewal in 1984 was 11 years tardy, which means the classic Guthrie song is in the public domain.”

This means that anyone can sing the song—and rework it—without needing to ask permission. Okay, now everyone sing, “This song is your song, this song is my song...”

Kembrew McLeod lives in Iowa City. You can listen to his specialty radio program on KRUI, “The Ministry of Reverend Eleven’s Happy Time Radio Hour,” on Mondays at noon.
Promoters of Iowa City the city—and not Iowa City the college town—praise it for its thriving small businesses and independent spirit. After all, a pedestrian can traverse the downtown area without running into a single Burger King or Pizza Hut. Instead, they find two Indian restaurants, an Ethiopian place and a falafel joint.

Independence for Iowa Citians is a way of life sometimes no matter what the professional sacrifice. College graduates know if they want to make money doing what they love, they either leave town or do it themselves, settling for love over money.

Case in point: John Ira Thomas, the writing power behind the graphic novel series Zoo Force (ZF), works the parking ramps as a day job and personally owns the publishing company that releases these books. His company, Candle Light Press (CLP) publishes the work of five individuals working on six different titles, one of which—Leap Years by Ian Bennett—won a Top-10 spot on the American Library Association Booklist’s 2005 list of graphic novels appealing to youth.

Not a bad achievement, coming from a publishing microcosm.

ZF also targets kids of all ages. The man who illustrates Thomas’ plot, Jeremy Smith, is a former Iowa Citian currently living in Portland, using both traditional drawing and digital technology to complement the text.

ZF’s third edition, BBQ, will be coming out this spring.

“Neither of us really knew how to make a comic—we were making it up as we went along,” Thomas said of the beginning of their partnership. “I was writing in screenplay format, and he was more worried about changing anything.”

Now, he said, they know each other’s minds well enough to sustain a long-distance creative relationship over ZF and other projects.

The ZF books have a triptych feel to them. In both previous issues, “Dear Eniko” and “Bean and Nothingness,” the books first tell the story of the Enforcer Group #77—superheroes with oddball powers—and then tell the story of the Enforcer Group #76—not-quite superheroes with equally oddball powers.

The final section is no story and all children’s games, where kids can complete a maze or color in outlined morals.

The addition of these coloring-book pages prompts the question, were these pages just an excuse to draw a rooster putting away a spoon and a polar bear with her jowls around some plates? Or a subversion of library rules, coer-
ing kids to color in books under the guise of teaching them the importance of cleaning?

Actually, Thomas says, they need all three sections to utilize the print-on-demand technology that allows for this 100 percent creative control. Mainstream graphic novel publishers might find it hard to market these Zoo Force characters to a mass audience, and the CLP Web site says they need a 100-page minimum to give independent publishing a professional look.

The Enforce Group #77 is Zoo Force: Ding, a 20-year-old with a six-foot tongue; Pythagoras, a philosophical rooster with a penchant for reincarnation; Prairie Dawg, a half-man/half-prairie dog with mad tunneling skills; and Snowball, a polar bear with soulful eyes and a library card.

Not Zoo Force—or Enforcer Group #76—likes to think they deserve their own comic, too. Captain Cat is the leader of this wayward group of vigilantes, and he uses his robot arms to scribble, Xerox and staple the tales of the one-step-less enforcing.

In BBQ, Thomas confides, one of the lesser enforcers will lose his powers and readers will get to see who’s the jerkiest of the lesser vigilantes during a climactic moment involving a wiener dog and a candy bar. The ZF team, meanwhile, discovers that there’s something of an ex-pornographer among their ranks, with the details assured to be unexpected.

CLP’s motto is “Words and pictures, differently,” and the way to maintain that sense of individuality is by a new kind of DIY engagement made possible through this print-on-demand technology of Lightning Source, the Nashville company that prints all of CLP’s projects.

Here’s how it works: When it comes time to finish a CLP project, Thomas uploads the very large PDF file to the company’s FTP (File Transfer Protocol) server, and they take over the printing and distribution. Their Web site, Lightningsource.com, says the publishers retain the copyright to the book while the company lists the title in its database, making it literally available anywhere in the world.

This democratization of technology allows creators to decide for themselves what’s fit to print—even if it’s references to local IC musicians like David Zollo and Tom Jessen, whose art is also produced in an IC-based independent company, Trailer Records. Thomas said he’s always been a fan of this Americana music and so references to these Iowa City celebrities appear in the ZF series.

“The thing is that I think about any form of commercial ‘art,’” Thomas said, “is that so many people want to jump into the system so that they can work their way to the top so that
they can do what they want, instead of just doing whatever they want.”

This doesn’t mean that creative independence and top achievements are mutually exclusive. Ian Bennett’s Leap Years, which details the experiences of a high school student who befriended an imaginary frog.

Bennett, the youngest member of the CLP crew, is now in film school at Northwestern in Evanston, Ill. He began his graphic relationship with this crew back in 1995 when he was only 10 years old. These were the days of the Crop Circle Comics Guild, which met regularly at a rented space up in the Hall Mall, 114 ½ E. College.

Back then, they called the Xeroxed and stapled books “minis,” Thomas said, and they’re exactly like the “zines” that still grace the hall in the former Schneider Building today.

Thomas met Bennett by seeking him out. He had walked into Daydreams and bought a mini bound with thread by Bennett and his sister Hanna (then 13), which prompted him to contact the youngsters to ask them to join what was going to be a community comics venture.

“I was really worried at first, I thought, how do I approach how do I do this without looking like a stalker or monster?” Thomas said.

A note was written, screened by enough scrutinizing adults, and the kids joined.

Just last December, the creative relationship that lasted over 10 years became a conjugal one when Thomas and Bennett the elder tied the knot.

Over so many years, this level of creative independence seems more like creative interdependence. The CLP members all began as a part of the Crop Circle Comics Guild.

Crop Circle morphed into Candle Light Press at the hands of Mike Ayers and Andy Black. Thomas took over when Ayers wanted to finish his Master’s and take a high school teaching gig in Cedar Rapids, paying him one dollar for the company.

To read more about Zoo Force and other Candle Light Press publications, visit www.Candlelightpress.com.

Illustrations by
Jeremy Smith of CLP

FAULCONER GALLERY

Stories and Histories
March 9 to April 22, 2007
An exhibition exploring works from the Grinnell College Art Collection by American artists who use history, collage, and personal narrative to create striking visual stories.


The Space of Freedom Apartment Exhibitions in Leningrad (1964-1986)
March 9 - April 22, 2007
Approximately 45 paintings, drawings, and prints from the collection of the Museum of Nonconformist Art in St. Petersburg, Russia will be displayed in a fabricated Soviet apartment interior (c.1970).

Organized by the University of Richmond Museums, Virginia, the exhibition and tour have been made possible with generous support from Global Partners, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Faulconer Gallery, Grinnell College, Iowa
For more information: 641.269.4660 or www.grinnell.edu/faulconergallery

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Thanks to print-on-demand technology, CLP books can be found at Amazon.com, Booksense.com, Booksamillion.com, Powells.com, Prairie Lights or any other store that orders publications through Ingram Book Group.

Cover Story | Melody Dworak
Up indie creek, paddling a Midwest mission

story by David Morris

Meet the Mission Creek Producers: Tanner Ringworth, Emmy Stern and Andre Perry

Patty Griffin
last year, the first edition of the Mission Creek Midwest Festival (MCMW) introduced Iowa City to the urban, bar hopping music fest model exemplified by Austin’s South By Southwest (SXSW) and New York’s CMJ Music Marathon. The festival’s 50-odd band sophomore splash runs from March 28th to 31st sure to be a three-day bacchanal of spilled beer, bloody elbows and frantic hype. But have no fear, little ones – Little Village is here to guide you by the hand through this incipient extravaganza. By the time the dust settles, we hope that Iowa City’s bands, music fans and club owners alike will have learned the true meaning of Christmas.

The Plan

Whatever successes or war stories the festival yields, they’ll be the outcome of months of diligent organizing work by the fest’s producers, who hope that the event not only kicks butt this year, but sticks around for the long haul. New for 2007, MCMW has set up a co-sponsorship deal with Daytrotter.com, the Quad Cities-based recording project that spent 2006 garnering praise from the indie-rock establishment.

They’ll be kicking free hand-screened Daytrotter t-shirts to the first 100 people at March 30th’s Tilly and the Wall show at the Mill. There’s also a deal with online retailer Amp Camp to run the festival’s online retail arm (AmpCamp.com), and the Englert Theatre will be on the schedule for the first time, hosting twangy chanteuse Patti Griffin on March 29th – a show that represents the organizer’s commitment to branch out from the festival’s indie-rock roots.

MCMW’s non-musical offerings are growing from last year, too.

“We like to call ourselves an arts festival more than a music festival,” says lead producer and programmer Andre Perry. “On Saturday, we have a reading at the Mill, which is awesome, because you get a mix of students and teachers, drinking at three in the afternoon, listening to some cool stuff.”

Bringing Iowa City’s rich literary tradition out of the halls of academe and into the (drinking) people may seem like a no-brainer, but the results can be more than anyone bargained for.

Last year, a reading at the Dublin Underground started out in a traditional literary mode, and eventually morphed into a dirty limerick session. According to eyewitnesses, nobody does dirty limericks like those Writer’s Workshop kids.

Aside from expanding the literary smorgasbord, this year’s MCMW is offering some tastes of visual art, multimedia – and handicrafts.

“Saturday at the Picador is going to be an early show, we’re going to have people selling some DIY crafts, and also people projecting on the wall, and maybe have somebody bring in an installation,” promises Perry.

The Bands

Even with this wider scope, Perry emphasizes that “Music is always going to be our thing, because that’s just where we come from.”

This year’s festival features acts from the Midwest and well beyond, in genres from roots rock to hip hop to experimental music to old-school punk to indie pop. That kind of diversity is one thing that makes festivals like MCMW an important chance for bands to reach beyond their normal fan bases.

The Deathships’ Ofer Sivan praises MCMW’s genre-defying booking policy, and also points out the role of such festivals in his band’s continuing ascent to local-hero status.

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Music Feature | David Morris

~ Picks of the Fest ~

The Freak-Flag Flyers

Mucca Pazza—Yacht Club, Saturday March 31: This 28 piece “punk circus marching band” will somehow fit into the Yacht Club to deliver their rhythm attack. There may also be cheerleaders! In a signature moment of Mission Creek boundary-busting, wrestle-rockers The Tanks and hip-hoppers AAV Collective will be opening.

THE HOMETOWN HEROES

Death Ships—Picador, Saturday March 31: 2006 was a huge year for these local boys made good, who released their debut album and traveled the country with Jay Bennett. They’re sharing a bill with the orchestral spookycore of Rock Plaza Central, as well as Envy Corps and Brighton, MA.

“We got our SXSW gig specifically because of our performance at CMJ in New York,” he said.

Similarly, Mission Creek is sure to help up-and-coming bands make connections on the local level. MCMW producer Tanner Illingworth says that’s an explicit part of the festival’s agenda.

“We love forming relationships with these bands,” he said, “and watching them grow.”

Having your way isn’t always effortless.

“In some ways it’s harder, because people who work in booking have certain connections that we don’t have,” admits producer Emmy Stirm. “But we don’t have to worry about filling shows every weekend – we can just focus on the festival.”

Not only can the organizers pick and choose whatever catches their ears and gleefully stitch together unlikely bills (for example, March 31st’s marching band/metal/hip hop meltdown at the Yacht Club), they can put bands in unexpected venues – with sometimes delicious results.

“You put a serious indie band into the Mill, and they kill it,” says Perry. “They’re surrounded by wood, and the audience’ll never see a band that big, that close up.”

Case in point was last year’s buzz event, the Mill show by then-explosive indie rockers Tapes n’ Tapes.

“It was mind-blowing,” says Illingworth. “That was when I knew the public was going to support the festival – because everybody was there. They knew it was going to be a happening.”

That kind of hype benefits bands and club owners alike.

“There’s extra press that comes with being associated with the Festival,” according to The Mill’s Trevor Lee Hopkins, “It’s a cool thing, everyone wants to be involved with it.”

Former James Gang board member Jesse Elliot, now of D.C.’s These United States, playing the Yacht Club on Wednesday the 28th, points out that fans are “more enthusiastic, too, generally speaking. It’s not just another night out in a loud, smokey bar.”

The Man

The Mission Creek crew has gotten support not just from dyed-black indie kids but also from the upper echelons of Iowa City’s power elite.

Businesspeople and community leaders see Mission Creek as a way to advance an arts-focused development agenda, which also manifests in IC’s annual Summer of the Arts (SotA) and the city-funded Public Art Program.

“They’re great people,” Perry says of such benefactors, “and they care a lot about creating an arts community here.”

It’s through nurturing higher-up connections that grassroots Mission Creek was able to snag a slot at the highbrow Englert Theatre for this year’s fest.

“There’s no reason Mission Creek can’t be a huge, gigantic thing in Iowa City ever-... where we come from.”

— MCMW Producer, Andre Perry

An event with that sort of drawing power would be a major boon to Iowa City’s long-term transformation into a regional arts destination. MCMW helps by putting creators in touch with each other and helping fans find artists they dig.

This is a mission shared by Moeller, who last year began recording short sessions from touring acts that passed through the Quad Cities. After garnering national recognition for the site’s ever-expanding archive of one-of-a-kind recordings, Moeller hopes to expand his operation by adding a club, poten-
Music Feature

Music ture
tially forming another node in an emerging
cabal of grass-roots culture in Iowa.

While clearly a goal based on a love for
art and artists, these efforts also have ines­
capable economic implications - cities like
Seattle and Austin have been transformed in
recent decades from quirky cultural gems
into economic powerhouses by their success
in creating a nurturing environment for cre­
ative, dynamic individuals.

That vision is clearly attractive to the en­
trepreneurs and developers who often be­
come major arts donors -though it hasn't yet
enticed the City itself.

The Iowa City government supports SotA
to the tune of $50,000 annually and has a
stated mission of supporting the arts as a
quality of life issue, but they've yet to pony
up for Mission Creek.

"This festival is as big as my savings ac­
count, and Emmy's savings account, and
Tanner's savings account," says Perry.

This sort of independence, despite its lim­
itations, is exactly what the Mission Creek
crew sees as part of its project's bigger mes­sage - something that they hope will reach
beyond Iowa's borders.

"I hope people see this, and they think, 'I
live in Kansas City, I should just blow it up
here,"' says Perry. "I hope we can start some
sort of positive infection, where people de­
cide to just blow up what they have."

Whatever its larger impact, though,
MCMW is ultimately about something very
simple: rocking out—hard—and in large
quantities. For those who've never had
a chance to mix and mingle at this sort of
festival before, it's an incomparable experi­
ence.

Tanner sums it up: "The beauty of it is that
you can go out on any night of the week, and
it's a minute walk between venues."

Don't like what's on stage? Go see who's
on next door! A festival pass - $50 (and
handmade by Emmy!) - allows free access
to any show, so you can come and go as you
please. With that kind of convenience—and
the huge variety and quality of events—
you've got a formula for free-flowing musi­
cal anasism.

David Morris studies and teaches about
media for a living, and produces media
as a hobby. He has written for Dammin
or noll, smogalaly, and more of his writing can
be found at mindslikeknives.blogspot.com.
He's also a member of an unnamed dance­
punk band that will be burning down your
area soon.
AMERICAN EYES WIDE SHUT

Slipping through American fingers, foreign films get less cred than the Oscars suggest

As the calendar storms through winter and moves closer to spring (at least officially), Oscar-buzz begins to dominate movie talk. Multiplex chains pick up nominated films that they’ve ignored prior to awards hype—if studios had not held back the titles with hopes of a nomination and bigger box-office returns—and moviegoers rush to see them before the big night.

On Feb. 25, the little golden guys were handed out at the 79th Academy Awards. All of the hoopla can give one the sense that the Awards represent The Year in Film.

Despite the belief that awards for art are silly, I’ll admit that I always watch the Oscars. I’m a sucker for movie montages and the occasional heartfelt speech. But as a cinephile with a deep love for the art of film, I cringe when thinking of how much of the public sees the Oscars as a reflection of the year’s finest in filmmaking.

This year seems especially notable in that regard, particularly through the lens of a trio of Mexican directors whose films make the false impression that foreign film is alive and well in America. I’m talking about Alfonso Cuarón’s Children of Men, Alejandro González Iñárritu’s Babel, and Guillermo del Toro’s Pan’s Labyrinth.

The first of those films, Cuarón’s dystopian tale of mankind’s infertile future, barely qualifies as foreign. Financed with U.S. and British money, it was filmed almost entirely in England.

Babel is decidedly more international, having been filmed in Morocco, Japan, Mexico and California. But despite showcasing some impressive technical skill, it’s just another helping of the same overly done stuff served up by Iñárritu and screenwriter Guillermo Arriaga in Amores Perros and 21 Grams. And its celebrity casting has more to do with its wide release than anything else.

Then there’s the post-Spanish Civil War fantasy film by del Toro. I like it mostly for its tremendous imagery, but I’m not sure how much credit goes to del Toro versus the film’s production design and art team. Though independently financed (unlike del Toro’s earlier studio-backed productions), it quickly found distribution, being pitched as a “smart” genre film for adults and backed by considerable marketing dollars its distributor, Picturehouse, is a joint venture of New Line Cinema and HBO Films, both Time Warner companies.

This is not the road faced by the vast majority of foreign films, even those that play successfully at prestigious international film festivals or are directed by respected world cinema auteurs.

I’ll offer just a few examples (of many) foreign films that have struggled to find distribution or remain without it.

Korean filmmaker Hong Sang-soo has seen his work turn up consistently on yearly lists of the best undistributed films. Well received at festivals and favored by critics, his work remains largely without a theatrical audience in the U.S.

Similarly, there are the last two films by Taiwanese visionary Tsai Ming-liang. His 2005 film The Wayward Cloud remains without a distributor, and his newer effort, I Don’t Want to Sleep Alone, only recently found a distributor in Strand Releasing.

Even having a previous work distributed to acclaim is no guarantee of future success. That’s the situation faced by the masterful Jia Zhang ke, called “the world’s greatest filmmaker under forty” by The Village Voice. His wonderful film The World (set around World Park, a tourist attraction on the outskirts of Beijing) was a small art-house favorite, but not enough so to have yet secured distribution for his new film Still Life, winner of the Golden Lion at the 2006 Venice Film Festival.

Apichatpong Weerasethakul—who goes by Joe, the name he used while studying film at the Art Institute of Chicago since his name basically trips up anyone who doesn’t speak Thai—faced a similar situation. His film Tropical Malady won a jury prize at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival and had a limited U.S. release. His latest, Syndromes and a Century, struggled to find a buyer until Strand Releasing, the company who distributed Malady, stepped in.

I could easily go on, but hopefully the point is clear. Much of the most innovative and exciting cinema being made today struggles to find an audience beyond festivals and select international markets. As film writer Anthony Kaufman wrote in an article on the best undistributed films of 2006 for indieWIRE.com, “Foreign titles, especially those that don’t involve World War II, martial arts and Pedro Almodovar, are falling out of favor with U.S. distributors.”

While some claim that there’s hope for change with digital downloads and video-on-demand, films that truly rise to the level of art deserve more. They should be seen in a theatrical setting on the big screen. Maybe then international films stop being so foreign to American audiences.

Andy Brodie is programming director of the Bijou Theater, the UI’s non-profit, student-run cinema. His own short film, End of the Sawdust Trail, will screen at the Sarasota Film Festival in April.
Movement

The third album from Iowa City’s favorite world beat warriors, should be just the thing to catapult the band from club favorites to the summer festival stages. Public Property’s brand of upbeat reggae, funk, and ska isn’t exactly new to the sort of regional fests where it’s best to bring a tie-dye, but few bands do it with such a sense of joy and enthusiasm.

Public Property might be the best-rehearsed local band you’ll ever hear, thanks to the combined experience of the musicians involved. Paul Hala (keyboards) and Jeremiah Murphy (bass) both did time in Bohemian Soul Tribe, the popular soul ‘n’ horns revue of the ‘90s, before joining PP. Drummer Ben Franklin played countless gigs in Dr. Z’s Experiment, a trio with a jazz background and amazing improvisational skills. These guys largely stay out of the spotlight in Public Property, but you’ll hear the difference hundreds of gigs make from the first note.

Frontman Dave Bess and the vocal harmonies of the trio of ladies (Margaret Larson, Georgette Stern, and Mareva Minerbi) are the more obvious face of the band. Bess’ smooth vocals and easygoing songwriting could bring the most skeptical fan to noodle-dancing ecstasy, and the comparisons of the three female voices to Bob Marley’s I-Threes could bring the most skeptical fan to noodle-dancing ecstasy, and the comparisons of the three female voices to Bob Marley’s I-Threes are both inevitable and appropriate, as they punctuate the verses in just the right spots and carry the choruses to three-part bliss.

Public Property’s forte is their ability to keep their sound designed for mass appeal while still indulging their love of complex song structures and time changes. The album sometimes stumbles on its own earnestness lyrically, however. The good intentions of “Everyone Is Africa” retain the feel-good vibe of the rest of the record, but the hippie idealism gets a little deep. Some might wince at lines like, “shake your ass, pass the grass, raise your glass and see...all we want is peace,” something even Marley wouldn’t have been high enough to sing. Also strange is the glaringly out of place “When A Boy,” a bit of X-rated feminist sexual politics rapped by Margaret Larson. While doses of hip hop show up all over the album (“Break Down”), “When A Boy” seems like too much of a mean-spirited departure to belong on Movement.

The occasional lapse into rap bravado or activist speak can be forgiven when it sounds so good. “Break Down” may fire randomly at targets as varied as cell phones, radio, reality shows and pollution, but the 10-minute plus track also does just what its title suggests, seamlessly flowing from a mellow reggae to James Brown funk and back again without losing a step. Producer John Svec places the many instruments in just the right spot in the mix, resulting in earthshaking bass lines and guitar notes that ping pong between your speakers. The songs that best represent Public Property’s strengths (the sleepy “Lay Low” and the appropriately named “Harmony” among them) reveal a band at the top of their game, and this 65-minute disc won’t disappoint their growing fan base.

Public Property’s forte is their ability to keep their sound designed for mass appeal while still indulging their love of complex song structures and time changes.

William Fare works and lives in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, pretending that rock music will someday provide a career. Like Lester Bangs, he mostly thinks that pop culture peaked with Brian Eno. “Dispensin’ Shekels” is sort of hip hop, but silly and ridiculous—in a good way. From his shout out to Rialto Middle School (where he teaches) “RMS 4 LIFE” to the Sears Rims on his Lincoln, MCLOGO 65 is the opposite of thug. “Dispensin’ Shekels to the ladies in the Shtetl” indeed. He’s having a laugh, but it all works.

The production values are similar to the 2005
Protostarr CD “Accretion Discs.” Payne’s analog keyboards and lush sampled strings build up a wistful, stony ambience, but the starkly simple of strummed acoustic guitar gives them a 60s psychedelic folk feel. The drums—a mix of drum machine, sampled beats and live playing—aren’t what you’d imagine going with the other sounds. It’s as though the Incredible String Band started working with Neptunes. The way MCLOGO 65 channels influences from each of the last four decades is a little disorienting at first. But if you keep listening everything coheres and feels deliciously inevitable.

Evan Miller
Three Spells
for Six String Guitar
Night People Cassette
www.roccoo-oo-oon.org

It isn’t an exaggeration to say that the music of America would not be recognizable without the guitar. It is the central instrument to vernacular music going back to the 18th Century. Before music could be recorded, the guitar was a parlor instrument used to perform popular and folk music for family entertainment. It was adopted by African slaves as an instrument complementary to the banjo. The guitar was cheap, portable and easy to learn well enough to play a few songs. At the same time, the guitar was as deep as the piano in its possibilities, both as a virtuoso and experimental instrument.

Evan Miller’s ‘Spells’ on this cassette release owe a lot to guitarist John Fahey, something he copes to by naming one song “Fahey Spell.” Like Fahey, Miller is capable of casual virtuoso fingerpicking, but more important, Miller has taken to heart Fahey’s reverence for the possibilities of the instrument. When Fahey played, especially later in life, he was on a mission to find and inhabit a new world of the spirit and mind suggested by the resonance and timbre of the instrument. But Miller’s compositions and technique are uniquely his own. Fahey’s reinvention of solo guitar doesn’t constrain guitarists, it frees them to find their own world of sound. Miller does have highly developed technical skills on the guitar, but avoids virtuosity for its own sake. Much of what he plays is quite simple, but his technique can take-him any place he wants to go. “Spell Against Forgetfulness” has the classical Raga structure, where a particular scale is explored over a droning pedal tone. Themes are stated and then repeated with variations, blending one into the next, gradually speeding up and gaining volume. But instead of following the ‘rainbow’ form of rising to a peak and then coming down, Miller’s frenetic fingerpicking gets more clipped and damped until it sputters to a stop, the guitar having become a purely percussive instrument. “Fahey Spell” is a more conventionally structured piece played at a leisurely walking pace, reminiscent of Elizabeth Cotton’s stately guitar ragtime.

“Spell Against Indifference” finishes off the cassette by exploring a harmonic space more open to dissonance than “Forgetfulness.” The first few minutes are extremely sparse, with completely free rhythm. As a steadier beat takes hold, Miller plays chords very high on the neck, getting a sound similar to a Kora harp. He repeats percussive, chorded patterns, modulated by subtle rhythmic shifts, shifting freely between 3 and 4 beat rhythmic patterns. Of the three pieces “Indifference” is the most ambitious and emotional. I can’t really describe the mood it evokes, but that’s maybe the point—the best description of the mood is the music itself. Raccoo-oo-oon’s label Night People put “Three Spells” out on cassette, a format rapidly disappearing from the mainstream. The sonic limitations of the format are well known, but on releases like this one the slightly inconsistent pitch and soup of hiss add something to the music. Without the knife-edge crispness of digital reproduction Miller’s guitar sounds darker and more mysterious. There’s never a point where the format gets in the way of hearing the music, and the constant whispering of tape hiss becomes the sonic space the guitar lives in. Racoo-oo-oon’s label’s cassettes are widely distributed and reviewed all over the world, so it’s not as quixotic a career move. In addition to the unique music it contains, “Three Spells for Six String” is an attractive physical artifact.

Kent Williams writes the software that makes the whole world sing. Or at least, the software that helps psychiatrists classify anatomic features of the brain. He also produces his own electronic music and writes for various publications. Turn ons: creative use of a ring modulator and cooking with garlic. Turn offs: Meat nuggets, CNN and Fox News.
Art/Exhibits

African American Historical Museum and Cultural Center
55 12th Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 877-526-1863

AKAR
257 E. Iowa Ave., Iowa City, 351-1227
Yunomi Invitational, Feb. 23 - Mar. 16.

Brucemore
210 Linden Drive SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-7375
The Families of the Brucemore, ongoing.

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
410 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-7503
The Young and the Restless: Children in Art, through Apr. 15 • Hidden Treasure: Original Children’s Book Illustration, through May 13 • Midwestern Visions: Grant Wood, Marvin Cone and Beyond, through Sep. 2 • About Face: Portraiture from the Collection, through Oct. 28 • Art in Roman Life, ongoing.

Chait Galleries Downtown
218 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 338-4442
Dimensions of Chung hi Choo and Her Students, ongoing.

Engert Theatre
221 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 688-2653
Iowa City Gallery Walk featuring the work of Alan Weinstein, Mar. 2 from 5 to 8 pm.

Faulconer Gallery – Grinnell College
1108 Park St., Grinnell, 641-269-4660
Stories and Histories, Main Lobby, through Mar. 2 through Apr. 22 • The Spaces of Freedom: Apartment Exhibitions in Leningrad, Main Lobby, through Apr. 22.

Herbert Hoover National Historic Site
110 Parkside Dr., West Branch, 643-2541
Holography: History in a New Light, through Apr. 24.

The History Center
615 1st Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 362-1501
Living along the Tributaries, ongoing • Timequest, ongoing.

Hudson River Gallery
538 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 358-8488
Venus, Gary Kelley, through Mar. 10.

National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library
30 16th Ave. SW, Cedar Rapids, 362-8500
Works by Warhol from the Cochran Collection, through Mar. 11 • Homelands: The Story of the Czech and Slovak People, ongoing.

Peter Paul Luce Gallery
Cornell College Campus
McWethy Hall
John Shimon & Julie Lindemann, photography, through Mar. 20.

UI Hospitals and Clinics
Project Art of UIHC, Iowa City, 353-6417
All exhibits, Patient & Visitor Activities Center, 8th floor John Colloton Pavilion unless noted other.

UI Museum of Art
150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727
Art Letters, print cycle by Max Klinger, through Apr. 15.

Music

Clapp Recital Hall
UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160
All music 8:30 unless noted otherwise

Kantorei, David Puderbaugh, Mar. 2 • Matisse Trio with William Preucil, viola, Mar. 3 • School of Music Centennial: Center for New Music, David Gompper, director, Mar. 4 • Dennis Petersen, tenor, with Sonja Thompson, piano, Mar. 7 • Hawkeye Regional Tuba Euphonium Conference: Opening Night Concert, Mar. 16 • Delbert Disslehorst, organ, with Kantorei, David Puderbaugh, conductor, Mar. 21 • Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra with Leon Fleisher, Mar. 23, 7:30pm • Iowa Percussion, Dan Moore, director, Mar. 24 • Rachel Jepsen, soprano, and Rene Lecuona, piano, Mar. 25.

CSPS
1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580
All music 8:30
Teatro del Milenio, Mar. 3 • Cheryl Wheeler, Mar. 4 • Charlie King and Karen Brandow, Mar. 5 • Crooked Still, Flook, Mar. 8 • Nathan, Mar. 13 • April Verch, Mar. 15 • Jen Chapin, Mar. 18 • Dervish, Mar. 22 • Ian Moore, Mar. 24 • Bitch and the Exciting Conclusion, Mar. 25 • Steve Forbert, Mar. 31.

Engert Theatre
221 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 688-2653
Folk-rock singer Patty Griffin, Mar. 29 at 8pm.

Hancher Auditorium
UI Campus, 335-1160
Art Garfunkel, Mar. 3, 7:30pm • The David Miller Project, March 15, 8pm.

A-LIST

Tim Miller
Performance Art
BCSB • March 2nd, 9:30 pm

March in Iowa City kicks off with “Obscenity: An Interdisciplinary Discussion,” the 2007 Obermann Center for Advanced Studies Humanities Symposium from March 1st through the 4th. These three days will be dedicated to the discussion of cultural politics, and the debates that revolve around boundary-pushing art.

One notch in the art-veus-porn debate— the NEA 4—occurred under the Bush-the-elder administration in the early 1990s. The question was: Should nation-wide “community standards” dictate what kind of art can receive funding from the National Endowment of the Arts? Along with three others, Tim Miller challenged the veto of his NEA grant by John N. Frohmeyer and won the Supreme Court case with the help of the ACLU. Through this decision, the Supreme Court provided indecent—though not legally obscene—artistic sexual expression with First Amendment protection. Unfortunately for artists, the decency clause was reinstated in 1998, and so those whose artwork includes sexual or sexuality-related themes—like the NEA 4—might still experience discrimination when seeking government funding.

Miller frequently performs in the buff and includes queer themes, and Loren Glass, coordinator of the Obscenity conference said the performance will not be censored. Miller was a visiting performer at the UI during the 2006 mid-term elections, and he returns to perform on Friday, March 2nd at 9:30 p.m., in the Samuel L. Becker Communication Studies Building.

For more information on Tim Miller and his performance art, go to Hometown.aol.com/millertake/timmiller.html.
Sanborn Group, Mar. 7, 1pm ICN Broadcast and 7:30pm performance.

Harper Hall
Voxman Music Building, UI Campus, 335-1063
All music, 8pm unless noted otherwise.
Teican, piano, Mar. 7
Volkan Orhan & Diana Gannett, double bass, Mar. 1
Jonathan Martin, trumpet, and Catalina Teican, piano, Mar. 7
Four Hornsmen of the Apocalypse, Mar. 27, 8pm
Kenneth Tse, saxophone, with UI students and alumni, Mar. 30 7pm

hotelVetro
Lobby, 211 Linn St. Iowa City, 512-393-4400
Singer-songwriter Sharon Bousquet CD release concert, Mar. 2, 6pm.

The Java House
211 E Washington St, Iowa City, 355-5730
Nathan James, Mar. 2, 8pm
Terrapin Isle, Mar. 9

The Mill
120 E. Burlington St., Iowa City, 351-9529
Open Mike Mondays, 8pm  All music, 9pm unless noted otherwise.
Women’s Music Showcase, Mar. 1, 7:30pm
Homemade Headtrip, Mar. 2
Samuel Lockeward, Outlaw Con Bandana, Pete Ballestrieri, Great Lakes, Coyote Blood, Mar. 3, 8 pm
The Great Bluegrass Herons, Mar. 7, 7pm
Captains and Sleevest and Sleeping Plans, Mar. 8
The Salsa Band, Mar. 9
Jeffrey Foucault w/Bo Ramsey, Mar. 10
Shame Train w/Noah Earle, Mar. 15
Catfish Keith, Mar. 16, 8 pm
John Dee Graham and The Silos, Mar. 21
Andy White and Radoslav Lorkovic, Mar. 22
Diplomats of Solid Sound feat. The Diplomats, Dave Zollo, Wandering Sons, Awful Purdies, Mar. 28
Heathers, Winter Blanket, Liam Carey, Twelve Canons, Mar. 29
Tilly and The Wall, Baby Teeth, Golden Birds, Skursula, Mar. 30
Charlie Parr, Coyote Blood, Kinit Her, Mike Anichini, Mar 31

Old Capitol Museum
Pentacrest
UI Campus
Piano Sundays—Shared Student Recital: Minji Kwoan performs Beethoven and Schumann, Andrew Hofstrand performs Beethoven and Liszt, Mar. 18, 1:30pm.

Open Door Coffeehouse
First United Methodist Church, 1000 30th St, NE, Cedar Rapids, 431-0982
Australian musician Martine Locke, Mar. 23, 7pm

The Picador
330 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 354-4788
Physical Challenge Dance Party, Thursdays.

9pm. All music, 9pm unless noted otherwise.
Ad Astra Per Aspera, Skursula, Jonny Rumble, Mar. 1
The Human Abstract, Pony Boy Curtis, Ender, Mar. 2, 6pm
Coolzey, Crest, Soul Crate, P-Tek, Mar. 2, 9:30pm
Death Ships, Broken West, The Mittens, Dead Dare, Mar. 3
River City Tan Lines, Gito Gito Hustler, Van Gunn, Mar. 4
Public Property, The Diplomats of Solid Sound feat. The Diplomettes, Mar. 8
Bobby Conn, Baby Teeth, East Side Guys, Mar. 9
Ed Gray, Kaspar Hauser, Stef Drootin, Belfrie, Mar. 10
Kickass Tarantulas, Lipstick Homicide, Rent Money Big, Mar. 11, 6 pm
Bible of the Devil, Minsk, Damn the Gods, The Horde, Race to the Bottom, Mar. 11, 9:30pm
Speedfinger, Plagued By Saints, Nihl Seraph, Mar. 14
Lair of the Minotaur, Terraceethe, Mar. 15, 6 pm
King of Clubz, The Feeding, Fight of Our Lives, High Five, Mar. 17, 6pm
The Thermals, Catfish Haven, The Narrator, Mar. 19
The Blood Brothers, Celebration, Moonrats, Mar. 20, 6 pm
The Carbonas, Gentlemen Jesse and His Men, Mar. 20
Pelican, Russian Circles, Young Widows, Mar. 21
Pebald, MC Chris, Street to Nowhere, TBA, Mar. 23
Lucky Boys Confusion, The Architects, Starter Kit, Mar. 24
ISIS, Jesu, Zozobra, Mar. 26, 7 pm
Ladyhawk, Anvil Chorus, Brief Candles, Amy Cooper, The Wheelers, Mar. 28
Gowns, Mef Tee, Pantherantler, LWA, Mar. 29
The Feeding, Lipstick Homicide, Poison Control Center, Mar. 30
5:30pm • fit(the Shadow Government), TODD, Planes for Spaces, East Side Guys, Mar. 30
Caleb Engstrom, Davide Karsten Daniels, Arbouretum, Mar. 31, 4:30pm
Rock Plaza Central, Death Ships, Envy Corp, Brighton, MA, 31

Paramount Theatre
123 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888
Cedar Rapids Symphony Guild presents Let the Good Times Roll!, through Mar. 11, 2pm and 7:30pm • Little Eagles of Siberia, Mar. 16, 7:30pm • Cedar Rapids Symphony, Mar. 24, 8pm

UI Museum of Art
150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 355-1727
Dan Knight Trio and Don Blev, Mar. 4, 5pm

Uptown Bill’s Small Mall
401 S. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 339-0401
Open Mic Night, every Friday, 8-11pm, all other performances, 7pm
Kate Kane & Rachel Feldmann, Mar. 3
Chris Doherty, Mar. 10
Nancita Wernett, Mar. 17
Jesus Don’t Like Killin’, Mar. 24

Yacht Club
13 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 337-6464
Blues Jam, Sundays, 9pm.
Throwdown: Free Dance Party, Tuesday nights; Open Jam, Wednesdays, 10 pm.
All music, 9pm unless noted otherwise.

Brother Trucker, Shame Train, Pokey LaFarge, Mar. 1
Dr. Z’s Experiment, Atomic Hoss, Mar. 2
Dennis McMurrin and the Demolition Band, Mar. 3
BirdsEye Record w/Highway Shelter, Trimmig Hedges, Anomosity, Mar. 8
Matthew Grimm & The Red Smear, The Piggies, Brian Troester, Mar. 9
Fair Warning, Caveman Spaceship, Caulfield and the Magic, Mar. 10
Funkmaster Cracker, Mar. 15
Brokeout Steppers, Mr. Baber’s Neighbors, Mar. 16
Caleb Ryder & Friends, Rude Punch, Mar. 22, 10 pm
Euforquesta, The Hipneces, Mar. 23
Reverend Mirror, Max Eubank and Joe Losh, Michelle Lynn, Mar. 24
These United States, Cartright, Shortstack, Rykarda Parasol, Mar. 28
U-Melt, Martyrs of Maudlin, DeWayn Bros., Bluegrass Band, Mar. 29
The Glitch, Homemade Headtrip, Mar. 30
Mucca Pazza, The Tanks, Wayne Western, AV Collective, Mar. 31

Theater/Performance/Dance/Comedy
CSPS
1103 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 364-1580
Teatro Milenio, Mar. 2-3, 8pm • Out of Bounds, Mar. 17, 8 pm

Dreamwell Theatre
Unitarian Universalist Society, 10 S. Gilbert, Iowa City, 688-5087
Dreamwell Theatre presents Die! Mommy! Die!, Mar. 23, 24, 30, 31, 8 pm.

Englert Theatre
221 E. Washington St., Iowa City, 688-2653
The Wild, Wild, Wildest West! presented by The School of Performing Arts, Mar. 1, 7 pm

Old Brick
26 E. Market St., Iowa City
Cedar Valley Dance Club, Mar. 2, 8pm

Paramount Theatre
123 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, 363-1888
Curtain Call presents Anne of Green Gables, Mar. 12, 9:45am • International Dance Challenge, Mar. 17, 10am • Cirque Dreams Jungle Fantasy, Mar. 31, 8pm

Riverside Theatre
213 N. Gilbert St., Iowa City, 338-7672
A Number, Mar. 2-3, 7:30pm • Collections Stories, through Apr. 15

Space/Place Theatre
North Hall, UI campus, Iowa City
Dancers in Company: Home Concert, Mar. 3-6, 8pm • Dance Thesis Concert, Mar 29-31, 8 pm

Theatre Cedar Rapids
102 Third St. SE, Cedar Rapids, 366-8592
Thursdays, Fridays, & Saturdays: 7-30pm;
Sundays: 2:30pm.
Angels in America, Mar. 2-4

UI Theatres
Theatre Bldg., UI campus, Iowa City, 335-1160
Black on the Great White Way: The Story of Rose McClendon, Mar. 8, 7:30 pm
Metamorphoses, through Mar. 12, 8 pm
Versailles, through Mar. 10, 8 pm

Iowa City Public Library
123 S. Linn St., Iowa City, 356-5200
Homeless in America, Mar. 21, 7pm
WalMart: The High Cost of Low Prices, Mar. 29, 7pm

UI Museum of Art
150 North Riverside Dr., Iowa City, 335-1727
Collage Films directed by Ximena Cuevas, Mar. 3, 7pm.

Uptown Bill's Small Mall

UNIVERSITY THEATRES MAINSTAGE presents
in IOWA PARTNERSHIP IN THE ARTS WORLD PREMIERE
a COLLABORATIVE EVENT conceived and directed by DAVID SCHWEIZER

March 1-10, 2007
David Thayer Theatre
UI Theatre Building
call 335-1160 or 1-800-HANCHER
Getting In

Probing answers to a question on probing

Not every woman likes what sex goddess Tristan Taormino likes, whose first, self-directed porno portrayed the star—Taormino herself—enjoying a 10-person anal orgy.

So what if a woman’s companion wants her to explore the orifice beneath? How can a woman be convinced that her temperamental biological in-box could be just as pleasurable as her biological in-box?

These questions were posed to Queen Zelda at The Picador one evening, with a special request for some anal answers. To be honest, QZ has only had failed attempts at what’s thought as the dirtiest deed—we just didn’t know exactly what to do.

Ignorance isn’t the only barrier, however, because anal sex carries with it so many thoughts of the Icky. Wannabe butt-doers have a psychological hurdle to hurdle in order to convince a woman that there’s pleasure in the backdoor. Women don’t have that beloved prostate that makes anal stimulation for men—well—so stimulating, and so it takes that extra oomph for them to feel a little more “open” to suggestion.

That “oomph” could be found in Tantus’ Lil Flirt and Astroglide’s Shooters—after getting over dirty-factor, that is, and maybe trying a finger or a tongue first. Astroglide has packaged its gel of a lube—sworn by Taormino to be the thickest on the market—in applicators that fit the orifice like the finger of a latex glove, and the Lil Flirt is a non-threatening butt plug that just might lead to the Big Flirt.

Such insertion should not be used without a water-based lubricant, like the aforementioned Astroglide or ID. From what I hear, absorption “back there” is not to be messed with. It sucks up a lot (which could be seen as promising to the poser of the question).

There’s also the I’ll-do-it-if-you’ll-do-it answer. This answer should be probed with more questions before probing either of the depths, though. First, what kind of companion would probe out of some sort of pre-emptive vengeance?

Couples must pursue the bend-over-boyfriend option, also known as BOB or pegging, for good rather than evil. A good reason to do it would be because they want to—not because of an equal-opportunity penetration policy.

The BOB reverse-penetration position became popular after Carol Queen’s 1998 film of the same name, which they made to be an educational cinematic experience. Taormino’s film mentioned in the beginning of this piece, The Ultimate Guide to Anal Sex for Women, began as an instructional video, as well. So, wannabe probes of either sex have a place to turn to for visual education that might double as inspirational.

Anal sex is more common than people think. According to a 2005 report from the Center of Disease Control, over 30 percent of women said they have had butt sex before turning 24 years old.

Unfortunately for that 30 percent, the CDC also says it’s the sexual outlet that has the highest rates of HIV and STI transmission. (Tests and/or condoms are IMPERATIVE!!!) They say the rectum’s lining is super thin, making that kind of sex far more risky than any other. They also say that condoms break more with anal, so not even that’s a sure bet at protecting the body.

Those pursuing anal should also be aware of a less life-threatening—but still possibly disturbing—consequence: the Santorum. (Weak-stomached, beware. Stop reading here.)

Named for Senator Rick Santorum (R-Penn.), the senator who wanted to keep sodomy a criminal activity, the term was coined in a March 29, 2003 column by Dan Savage, published in Seattle’s The Stranger:

“After all, ending up with idiots like Santorum in elected office is a byproduct of the otherwise desirable practice of letting any old yokel vote,” a Savage Love reader suggested in response to Savage’s request for a neologism spitting fun at the senator.

“Specifically, I nominate the frothy mixture of lube and fecal matter that is sometimes the byproduct of anal sex. As in, ‘We had a great time, but we got santorum all over the sheets’ (QZ’s italics).”

In other words, doing it up the butt might lead to uncontained, unwanted excretions.

The final question is what began this PCK reader’s probing into the issue: does cock size matter? As far as a woman’s fears are concerned, yes. As far as her actual anus is concerned, no.

From all my research and inquiries, a woman who’s relaxed and into the idea will not discriminate against larger cocks. Blame it on the mood or the penetrator or whatever. Being upright about any of the (many) factors involved in successful rear-entry will prevent her from naturally “loosen­­ing up.”

Unfortunately for the deaf and dumb, communication between lovers matters most. Breaching the subject matter should begin the quest to breach the cheeks. After all, if someone’s not comfortable having her mind probed, forget the anus.

Queen Zelda knows that people care too much about sex—but still feel the need to help people find that satisfaction. She believes consistent access to emotionally satisfying orgasms could bring about world peace.

Find Flexi Felix on Trista Taormino’s Website, PuckerUp.com

Queen Zelda

22 | little village | march 2007
ARIES—We all need a good month once in awhile, and March looks surprisingly positive for Aries. The good news has everything to do with children, romance, education, travel and creative projects. Something big and good and lasting will come together. But you need to make financial allowances for future changes. Good things are happening, but financial obligations loom. Expect sudden shifts in your own attitudes as old, outdated ideas fall away. Long-pending changes will finally kick in at work. You might need work/lifestyle changes to protect your health.

TAURUS—The planets empower you in March, and you will achieve a lot. However, much of what you achieve will be blocked from easy view by complicated developments. You might be distracted from your own achievements by changes in basic finances: home, investments and long-term savings. Things are fluid and they are confusing. But events are leading to a more solid and stable life. Adjustments will come about to delight and sustain you through the coming months.

GEMINI—The playful, romantic, idealistic side of your life is receiving strong, positive stimulus. Something substantial and lasting will come about to delight and sustain you through the rigors of real life. Meanwhile, the gears of change are spinning, presenting new challenges and removing lifestyle options that were probably dead ends anyway. Pick the strongest, most feasible seedling, and work diligently to make it flourish. Partners and higher ups are as demanding as ever, but they are feeling much more domesticated. Big changes at the top are likely in coming months.

CANCER—Sudden and dramatic changes are unfolding now. These will strongly and positively affect your own achievements and financial arrangements. But new attitudes, new ideals and new personal goals will pull you irresistibly in a different direction. You will need to build a foundation for these new activities without risking your present job, which is probably becoming less interesting to you than these developing opportunities. You’ll probably have to go out on your own. If you tend carefully to long-term financial matters and honor existing job responsibilities, everything will take care of itself.

LEO—You deserve the love and good fortune coming your way. Good luck flows from involvement with the young, from creative projects and travel and educational pursuits. Save part of any windfall or financial increase, though. Your disposable income is hostage to changes going on in almost every department of your life. Expect a lot of sudden, irreversible and ultimately beneficial financial "adjustments" in the months ahead. People who think they run your life continue to make many and varied demands on your time. Lighten your load. Shed unreasonable and unfair burdens.

VIRGO—The planets are about to ignite a slow motion charge near the foundations of your existence. It will shake loose a lot of unnecessary and burdensome baggage. Liberating changes will ripple slowly but steadily through your existence over the next few months. You will eventually be able to present a new, more serviceable and effective identity to everyone in your life. Let your own innermost concerns drive decisions. You probably can’t explain your reasoning to others, but it is sound. Continuing financial constraints will require that you budget conservatively.

LIBRA—The planets are stimulating those parts of your chart related to your most concrete and material interactions with the world—where you find companionship, creative and romantic opportunities and paying jobs. Dead weight, old baggage, roadblocks, many of these things will be removed over the coming months. A clear, workable way forward will emerge. The key to finally stabilizing your situation is the accumulation of secure long-term assets. In all that is happening, emphasize the things that lead most directly and reliably to the accumulation of appreciable capital assets.

SCORPIO—You will soon be able to reset the balance between your personal needs and family needs. Familial relationships have grown overly complicated and maybe one-sided. Until now, it really hasn’t been possible to simplify things, to make meaningful, helpful choices. The planets are about to help you sort things out. Some cherished but unrealistic options will be blocked. Realistic options will remain. New pathways might open up, or longstanding options will emerge as more attractive. Alternative, innovative ideas and methods will help. You are due for a financial boost.

SAGITTARIUS—You are inspired and succeeding on many levels that are important to you. However, you could become overwhelmed by your involvement in peripheral events and other people’s lives. You approve of much of what is happening. But you still have serious concerns that keep you from just bowing out. It is best to start focusing on moral and ethical fine points. The planets suggest that issues of balance and fair play are the real causes behind lingering tensions and concerns. Many of the problems will start sorting themselves out soon.

CAPRICORN—The efforts of other people have been stalled and blocked, creating problems and delays for you. The planets are going to do Capricorn some favors by clearing up the issues in those other people’s lives so Capricorns can make progress with their own affairs. Expect progress soon. Efforts to stabilize your long-term savings and investment arrangements will soon begin to work. Prospects are good that you will arrive at a plan that provides what you need for the future and gives you needed peace of mind in the present.

AQUARIUS—There will be adjustments in your financial situation that bring income and work levels into line with present reality. Some of these adjustments will be sudden and unexpected. Many will be long overdue. They will put you in better sync with current economic trends and better able to plan for the future. Something very good will manifest in social and interpersonal areas. Just about your whole social network is due for an upgrade. Your involvement in the community will be significantly enhanced. Newfound friends will be loyal and lasting.

PISCES—The planets are firmly but gently blocking certain work or professional pathways. If you have been considering these avenues, you will need to go back to the drawing board. However, significant and lasting improvements in your work life and income are presently manifesting. The planets are also implementing sweeping changes in your psyche. You will soon be able to express important facets of your personality that might have been obscured or blocked in the past. This will enable you to interact with the world in new and surprising ways.

Contact Dr. Star at chiron@mchsl.com
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