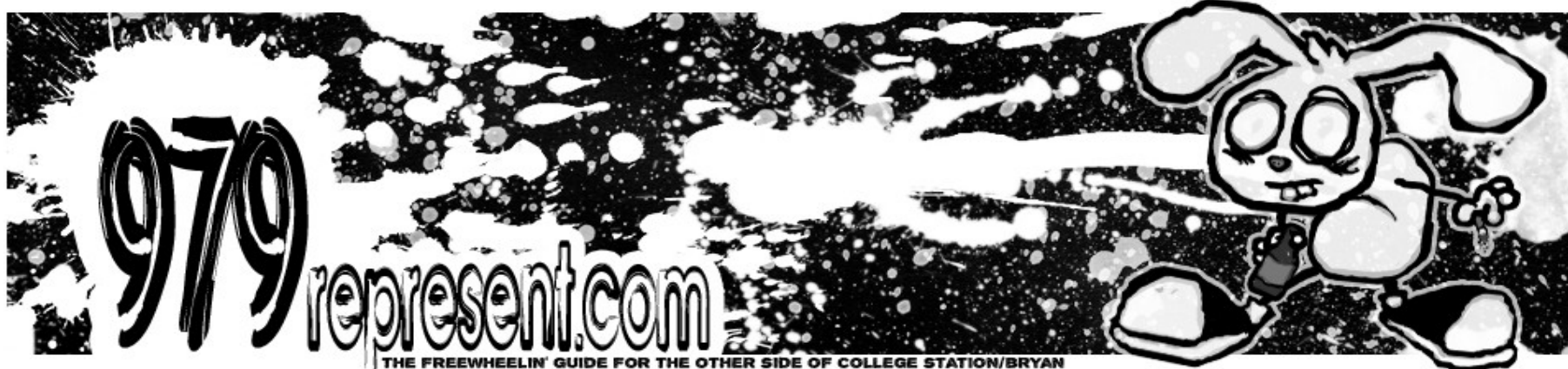
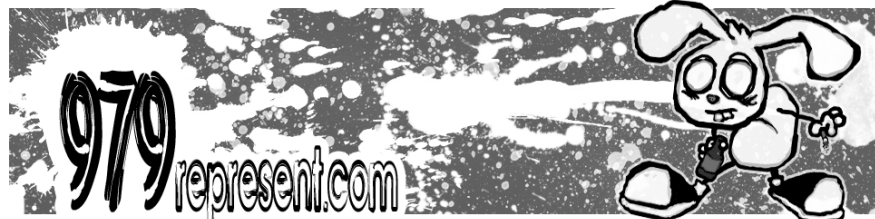


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Also inside: *CS Skatepark Opening—New Republic Brewing—Asian Persuasions—Pedal Pushing—CD Reviews—Movie Reviews—Book Reviews—Concert Calendar*



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10 Years After...9/11 Still Complicated

Yes, it has been ten years this month, and every newspaper, broadcast news program, magazine and such is banking on your nostalgia this to sell copy. That's a rather cynical way of looking at it. I assess that 9/11 hasn't really left us in the way that flannel and Doc Martens, or stonewash and leg warmers have. 9/11 isn't something to be nostalgic about because it has never gone away. We continue to this day to surf the epic waves born at 8:46 AM EDT, September 11, 2001.

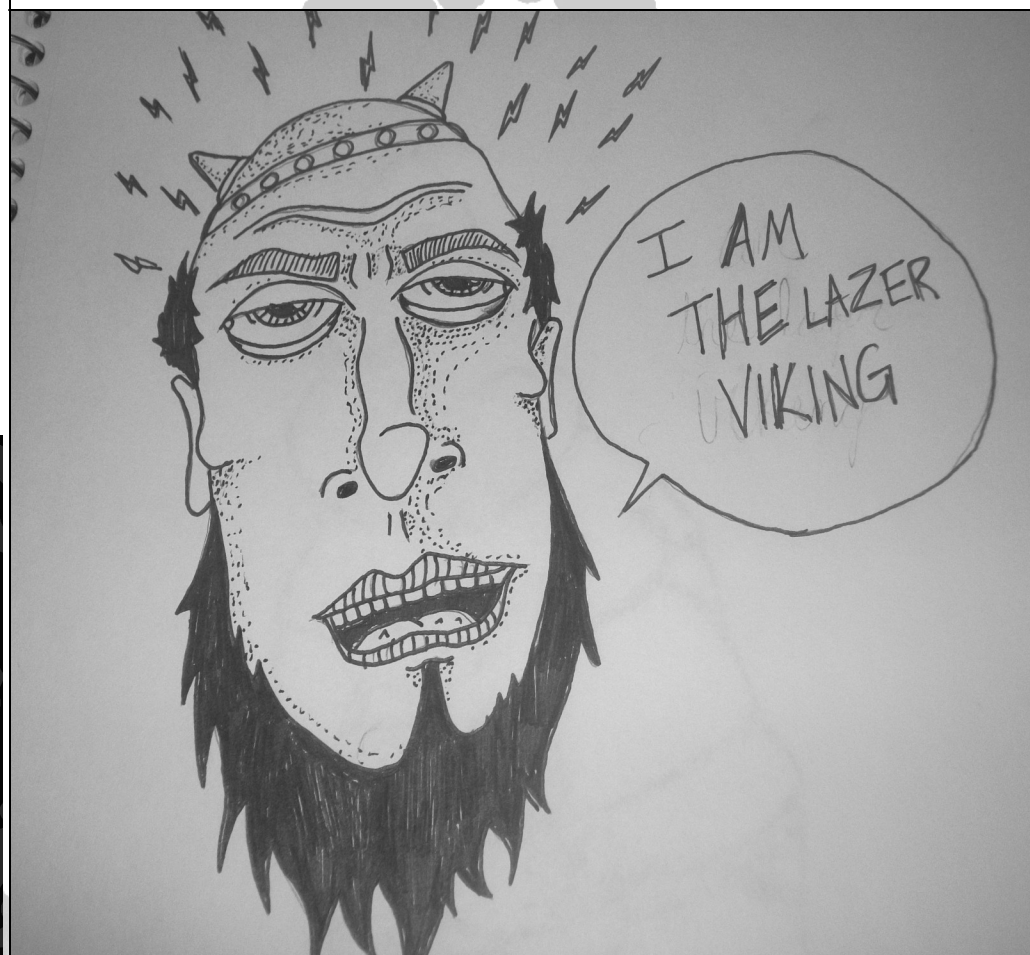
America really had no inkling that morning of what was about to happen. In retrospect it is easy to connect the dots, but that morning we had no clue. I was at work at a Seattle talk radio station when our news anchor ran down the hall to tell us she wanted to break in on regular programming to announce the first plane crash. Even at that time our host, a staunch right winger, when asked point-blank if this was terrorism, blanched at the question, citing that in the 1940's the Empire State Building had been struck by accident. At the top of that hour we were in our national news coverage from ABC in New York City, monitoring TV news in the control room, when an eyewitness on the radio screamed "Oh my God, there's another plane!" Looking up to the monitor we saw plane #2 hit the World Trade Center. And then there was no question in my mind, or anyone else's, that we were at war.

Of course, it didn't turn out exactly like that. Aside from NY, Pennsylvania and DC on 9/11 there would be no other attacks on our soil. America took the fight overseas. For whatever reasons you may argue, America's subsequent wars weren't exactly the brightest ideas our leaders have ever had. Its costs, both human and financial, continue to pile up nearly ten years later. The wars contributed to the Great Recession that continues to play havoc on our country at large. At the same time, the wars have helped create what *TIME* is referring to as the Next Greatest Generation of military-trained civic leaders just raring to come back to America and make a difference. Without our two wars I don't think you get the Arab Spring, I don't think you get the peaceful uprising in Egypt, you don't get the eventual killing of 9/11 mastermind Osama bin Laden, and you definitely don't get the multilateral revolution in Libya.

So, like anything else that has happened to our country, 9/11 is a mixed bag. It gave rise to anti-Muslim xenophobia that continues to reverberate every time a community prevents a mosque from being built. It helped jam a larger shim in the Great Divide between political ideologies that to this very minute a cable TV channel or talk radio station is profiting wildly from while the 9.someodd percent unemployed (and the many more who gave up looking for work at all) continues to suffer from. It is easy, I think, ten years later to forget the simple catastrophe of two very large buildings falling down with a lot of people still inside. On September 11, 2003 I stood at Ground Zero overlooking the continued excavation of the remains. Two years later authorities were still finding remains. The ruins smoked where fires still burned beneath the debris. I interviewed dozens of relief workers, survivors, and construction crew members removing debris. Two years later it was raw, it was hurt, it was profound loss. Later that day I attended an ad hoc ceremony where survivors took turns reading the names of all 2753 victims killed on 9/11. On September 11, 2005 I found myself in the center of the Pentagon near Washington DC doing pretty much the same thing. The Pentagon was mostly repaired. For the servicemen and women I interviewed that morning the repair work was ongoing. Ten years later I would say that work continues for them as well as for all of us.—KELLY MINNIS

mustache riles

with james gray





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Still Drinking Visits New Republic Brewery

For far too long, BCS beer-nerds have traveled in many directions – Austin, Houston, Dallas, Blanco, even Conroe – for solid craft beer reprieves from the typical domestic markets. Blessed day! Such days of greener-grass gazing have ended. No longer shall beer-nerds look towards the horizons for the best in Texas beer.

No longer shall we blindly suckle at Shiner's goat-ladled teat as if she were our only craft mother. No longer shall we hunker down at neighborhood bars sipping pints of Pabst Blue Ribbon-owned Lone Star, feeling personally spiffy for supporting "Texas beer." Chilifest shall dupe us no longer! The Lord of seventh-day six-pack sabbaths hath delivered a plentiful bounty to our Aggieland doorstep.

Tucked back in the outskirted coves of College Station, **New Republic Brewing Company** elevates homebrewing to the next level. Packaged in small scale everything, New Republic's production ingenuity is as impressive as their beer – as owner John Januskey and head brewer Dean Brundage espouse in their bi-monthly New Republic brewery tours. I drink beer better than I write it, so I recommend touring New Republic brewing for yourself. I'll see you in the New Republic parking lot September 10 – or September 24 – at 7:30 with a camping chair and a big-ass grin. Six bucks will get you in the brewery with a signature New Republic pint glass (a proper pint glass, mind you, none of this 12-ounce American style pub glass bull-honkus) and two glass fill tickets. Bring the glass back and get in the brewery with two glass fill tickets for five bucks. You'll savor every ounce of every ticket.



So what'll you be savoring with New Republic? And where else, besides the every-other Saturday tour, can you savor New Republic beers? Good questions.

New Republic Brewing crafts Bellows American Amber Ale, available in several BCS pub spots. Amber Ales may sound familiar from such hits as New Belgium's Fat Tire, Left Hand's Sawtooth, Saint Arnold Amber, Independence Austin Amber Ale, and others with "Amber" in the title. The distinguishing ingredient between New Republic's Bellows Amber and other said amber ales is New Republic's ample addition of Centennial and Fuggles hops, which mellows the breadly Amber ale maltness with a slight, sharp hop bitterness. New Republic's hop addition lends a refreshing brightness to Bellows Amber Ale that makes it a perfect

quenchable porch sipper on these three digit degree Texas days.

Think of it this way: water is good, but toss in an uber tart lemon and you got a porch sitting favorite. Same with beer. Toss in a healthy dose of bittering hops to a bread heavy beer style and you'll be smacking sun-stripped lips with a Cheshire sized grin.

New Republic Brewing's Bellows Amber Ale is certainly available bimonthly at the brewery, details to be found on New Republic's Facebook page or at www.newrepublicbrewing.com. Also, you can find Bellows on tap at the Village Café, Murphy's Law, Good Time Charley's, O'Bannons, and Revolution. If you take the tour tell them that Kevin sent you. It won't get you a discount, but it'll earn me cool points with John and Dean. Also, I wrote this review under the influence of Bellows Amber and Full Sail Pale Ale. Don't tell anyone.—KEVIN STILL



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Local Food Trucks To Host Open House & Slider Contest

Since the College Station City Council changed local laws regarding mobile food trucks we've had a veritable mushrooming of awesome mobile eateries pop up. And we're not talking more taco trucks (though I happen to love the taco truck...even if my bowels don't so much). We are talking *serious* foody style grub. Both Chef Tai's Mobile Bistro and Madden's Street Cuisine have long served upscale fusion styled foods in their brick and mortar locations in College Station and Bryan (Chef Tai's is serviced out of Veritas). Chef Tai's truck is so popular that it recently placed 2nd nationwide on a poll run by *Great Food Truck Race*, a reality show on the Food Network. We also have a mobile dessert truck serviced from Cake Junkies in Bryan that sells a mean cupcake.

In order to showcase the area's awesome mobile eats, Village Foods on Briarcrest and 29th in Bryan will host the first ever Gourmet Food Truck Gathering. This will occur in the parking lot at Village Foods Saturday, September 10th at 11AM. You will be able to sample the eats from these mobile trucks as well as the awesome cuisine coming out of Stover Bros. Café, the restaurant inside Village Foods operated by former Stover Bros. Burgers gourmand Charlie Stover. There will also be a slider burger eating contest. Each food truck is sponsoring their own team, but the public is invited to form teams of six to compete for gift certificates from all of the participating mobile eateries. Charlie Stover is providing the sliders (and it is worth competing just to get a chance to eat a few of those!)



Chef Tai Lee in front of the Chef Tai Mobile Bistro truck

You can keep up with each truck's service schedule by searching Facebook for their pages. Like them and you will be included in their weekly information. I have eaten at Chef Tai's truck many times and definitely recommend the pulled pork stir fry and the California Kobe burger.—KELLY MINNIS

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B-Bit Burgers: Burger King Whopper Jr.

Yeah its lame to review a fast food burger, but I'm the boss when it comes to burger reviews, so fuck it. Can't eat a local burger every time, and honestly some of these cheap, quick burgers are really damn good. Like the Burger King Whopper Jr.

When it comes to fast food burgers I am much more a fan of the smaller "kid" sized burger. Not sure why, but they almost always taste better than the bigger "grown folks" ones.

The Whopper Jr. while clocking in a just past a buck is a good damn deal. Loaded with lettuce, onions, pickles and slathered with mayonnaise and ketchup. I think that's why I like these smaller burgers. Because the condiment/other stuff ratio is way off in favor of the condiments. I love condiments.

Condiments.

I've had quiet a few of these lately since I live right down the road from a Burger King, and the Whopper Jr. has slowly taken top fast food burger slot over Wendy's Double Stack. Pretty sure its the mayonnaise that put it in the lead. So if you can't make it to a local burger shack, and are down on the cash money, swing by and pick a few of these little bad boys up.

Condiments.

Bit Rate: 7.5/10—ATARIMATT



Asian Persuasions: Exhibits Contributed By...



As a kid, I remember growing up in the cityscape known as the Bay Area, California. This broad term engulfs the cities of Berkeley, Oakland, San Jose, and San Francisco. What made growing up in this area so cool was that there was a shit ton of things to do for kids. My folks took me to the ghetto-ass Fairyland Zoo in Oakland, my friends' parents took me to the Lawrence Hall of Science, and on the rare occasion we had money we would hit up Golden Gate Park. There was something always associated and tied to education that allowed us kids to be kids and actually learn something. Did it make me or my friends any smarter? Probably not. But it did give us an educational outlet in a time where the internet was not as prevalent and available as it is now, and when gaming systems were limited to its 8-bit hey day and every-one couldn't afford one.

As a parent, I wanted to give my kid the same type of opportunity to, at the very least, be exposed to the bureaucratic offerings of educational entertainment. Enter an afternoon this recent summer where some of my local friends and I visited the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History. What was intriguing at the time we decided to take my little one on this venture was the reminiscent memories of when my friends grew up in the Brazos Valley and the good times they had at this venue. I was regaled with tales of the inner workings of a bee hive, magnanimous exhibits that contained dinosaur skeletons and the like. Was I expecting the grand scale educational exhibits of my youth? Did the Brazos County have at it's disposal the resources that were available to the bureaucracies of my hometown? Not really, nor was I expecting it to. What I did experience was an admission fee of \$5 and a slew of outdated exhibits and staff of employees who were passionate, but highly underpaid in a department that was highly underfunded.

Don't get me wrong; the museum and its staff did a tremendous job of creating interactive exhibits with the elements afforded to them. What was immediately apparent and evident was that in a time where information is readily available at any given moment, a sense of immersing yourself in actual experience of said available information has become secondary to the convenience associated with Blu-Rays, and pseudo experiences unlocked through online achievements with controllers and headsets, the hassle associated with actually doing something is an accepted norm that we deal with daily. But it goes without saying that there is something to be said about creating real memories as opposed to the convenience associated with digital ones, and while it's evident that we are all going through "hard times," what is the price tag associated with the creation of lasting memories? As the old adage goes, you can't take it with you.—THE DAHLI RAMA



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CS Skatepark A Sk8er's Dream BV Derby Girls Bouts Coming Up

Five years ago two teens had the idea that College Station really needed a serious skateboard park in the worst. Five years later, after lots of signature gathering, city board meetings, one bond election and various design meetings, the College Station Skatepark will have its official Grand Opening ceremony Saturday, September 3rd. While that may be the park's official opening, skaters and bikers have been sessioning the park for weeks now. I've spent plenty of time at the park and have left a lot of sweat and skin on the transitions in the bowls. So I can give you a bit of an old fat skater's perspective on what the new skateboard park has to offer.



Yers truly, hitting the bowl frontside.—Photo by Wonko the Sane

The park is laid out like a giant, snaking street course from the corner of the easternmost parking lot at Southwood Athletic Complex (right in front of what use to be the Exit Teen Center that is now the Seniors Center...maybe they can hit the park on their motorized scooters?) around the tennis courts to the bowls. The street course has hips, hips with gaps, transitions with spines, ollie boxes, and rails. You will be all in a hurry to just skate down the middle to get to the bowls. DON'T. Stop and session the street course because it is a lot of fun. All of the obstacles are easy to skate for beginners and offer a lot of options for seasoned skaters to create rad combos making a run out of the entire course. The ollie box is already nice and sex-wax'ed so nose/tail/board slides and axle grinds are a cinch. One of the transition walls is made with bricks and might be a little too "street" for me as it is kinda hard for modern skaters with their little wheels to really hit it properly, but longboarders with the larger, softer wheels shouldn't have any trouble.

And then, of course, there are the two bowls. The bowls are definitely set up with different ability levels in mind, but not in the way you'd think. It's not like one bowl is super easy and the other one is challenging. The eastern most bowl features two skateable "pools", one deeper than the other. This is the one I've spent the most time in as it is somewhat less daunting since the pools are maybe ten feet deep. The transitions curve in strange ways that take a little getting used to as one is somewhat tighter than the other. Even for a somewhat beginner like me (I haven't skated hardcore since 1993) I could hit the transitions and do some carving. This is definitely the old school dude's pool.

The western most pool is U-shaped and is almost halfpipe-like at the beginning of the run. Four foot transitions are easy to drop in on (after multiple visits I finally was able to screw up the courage to drop in) and most of the skaters I shared the park with spent their time in this section, as it is small and resembles most of the surfaces suburban skaters are familiar with. The fear comes when you come around the corner that leads you into a run that drops you into THE BIG BOWL. When I mean big, I mean 15 or so feet with a good four feet of it pure vertical. Even after getting my bearings in the easier bowl I found the big pool daunting. I could carve up pretty high but still found myself well short of the coping. I saw a couple of skaters hit it and get close to the top but no one had managed to kiss the lip on that one. Though I sure did kiss the transition on the other side of the pool after coming down hard a few times!

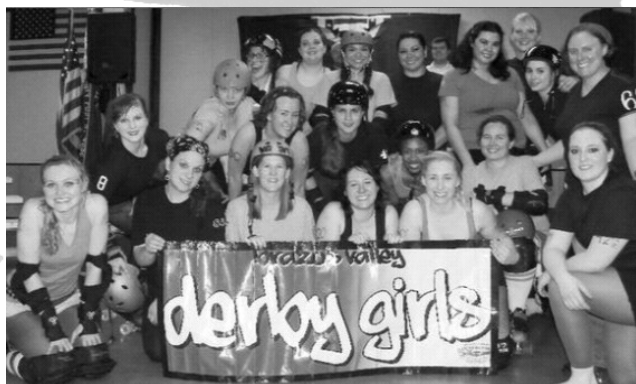
My experiences were always at night and the park is relatively cooler then than the day time. There are lights and everything is very visible. It was still hot as heck but not too bad. The park closes at 11pm. There were no signs when I was there and a friendly police officer shooed me out after midnight. Before school started I would always see people in the park even in the 100+ degree afternoons so it can't be all that bad I guess. There is a water fountain there and shade over a small pavilion-like area in between the two bowls but there really wasn't a lot of places for people to just hang out yet. I guess if you get too hot there's all those fast food joints, drug stores and groceries for you to get some refreshment or you could do a little shopping inside the A/C'ed comfort of C-Ment Skates.

All in all, I have to say I was more than happy to see at least a small portion of my property taxes go towards something that not I only I will use, but something I think that benefits the community at large. I can't wait for the 3rd so I can see the park open in style and hopefully watch some awesome skaters shred the park.—KELLY MINNIS



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This month the Brazos Valley Derby Girls are having an official match on September 10th against Crude City in Corpus Christi. The Girls are going into skate battle with three new teammates, along with the return of Tessa Miranda (Chi Chi's Rodriguez) to the flat track. She is Head Coach and also one of the strongest skaters on the team. For months now Tessa has been waiting to heal up from a serious knee injury she got while skating. She now has been given the green light to compete by doctors. Another team member has been sidelined for knee injuries also. Nikki Snook (Nicks & Stones) will be out of gameplay and practice while she heals.

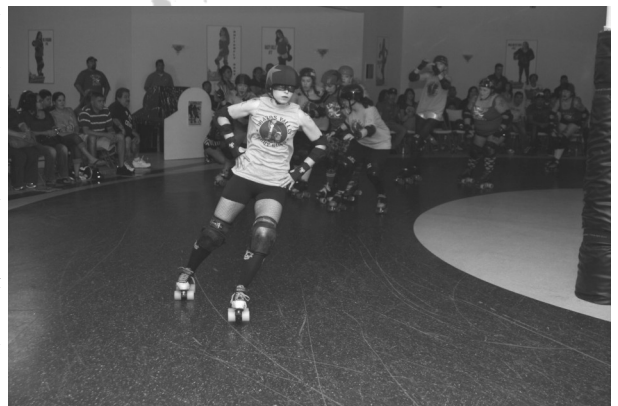


I asked Tessa what the BVDG are doing to cut down on the amount of knee injuries. She said "Pre-game stretching is the main thing. We have got to keep stretching, even between jams. When you're pushing muscles, tendons, and ligaments in your body as hard as you do in derby skating they have to be able to flex with the constant changing atmosphere on the track. Even when we stop for halftime, I tell the girls to keep stretching. We have also started getting better knee braces for the girls, but the cost of them is a set back right now. So only a few girls have good knee braces. We feel we will be very competitive in Corpus Christi. As a team, the girls have been doing great. Using the exhibition bouts as training tools, we knew where the weakness was in the pack and corrected it. We are ready to jam and score points!"

The Brazos Valley derby Girls are having a 1980's themed Exhibition Bout at the VFW in Bryan on September 25th. They are encouraging everyone to dress up in 80's fashion. Come out and have some fun with them.

Looking forward into October, the Girls will be staying busy with a match against the East Texas Bombers in Jacksonville, TX on October 15th. They are also volunteering at the Texas Reds Festival and on Saturday, October 22nd, they will be at the Brazos Animal Shelter's Weinerfest at Wolf Pen Creek. Then on October 30th, The Girls are having a Halloween Party. Check their site for updates and more information.

Facebook/BrazosValleyDerbyGirls.—DAVID LYNCH



Trapped! With a Miner On an Arkansas Hillside

We were standing in the front yard. It was Arkansas, but it was barrel-tooth cold when those wet night winds rolled over them Northern hills like black spit on festered lips. You didn't much want to stand outside on a night like that. And so we made a bet. Not a yellow bet with money or shot glasses full of Wild Turkey. We made a man sized bet:

Whoever lost this last round of Milton Bradley's *Sorry* had to walk out stark-naked and shrivel-penciled into that night wind, all the way across the yard to the fence line, out past where even the cats wouldn't cross that night, and that sorry sack'd have to smoke a whole cigarette before slipping back into clothes or doorways. Also, you couldn't light up till you reached the fence line.

A man wouldn't deny a bet like that unless his purse were empty.

Half an hour later William Miner's purse was on the table. He tried to yellow out, blaming his back molar's sensitivity to the cold and subsequent nipple cramps, but the bets had been laid, and them nipples were soon hitting hard wind, whether Will went willingly or not. The *Sorry* winners grabbed an ice chest of PBRs and some winter coats and then headed out into the yard to view the spectacle.

William was buck as baked barleycorn in ten seconds flat, his nipples sharp as the teeth on a competition horse. He walked out sock-footed to the fence line, struck a match on a shaking diner book, and lit up. His shoulders quivered. His knees buckled. And in his misery he barked out a name at us that could send a preacher back to the bottle.

You don't toast a man in that position. You don't go tipping an aluminum can at his inverting manliness and merely declare, "Good job, Taco!" You shotgun that motherscratcher, and you don't lose a drop on the way down. If his molars can re-enter the house still embedded and ungoosebumped, and if he can say his own name and still sing Meatloaf without jamming up the chorus, then you can – at the very least – shotgun that half-lady with a dry shirt in the end.

And that's what we did: lined up like heretics on the line, holding our own bullets and piercing the steel. One. Two. Three. Crack. Suck. Guzzle. And don't even think about breathing till air is the only thing seeping through that can.—KEVIN STILL

WELCOME TO AGGIELAND

OK, so you made it off to college. You've got all your stuff unpacked in your tiny dorm room with the smelly roommate from parts unknown, or maybe you've got all your stuff tight in your first apartment with all your bros and ladies. You've got your books, you know (for the most part) where your classes are, but you don't really *know* Bryan/College Station yet. You've heard vaguely about Northgate and you're pretty sure you can get back to the grocery again next week by yourself but you're pretty convinced that your friends are all right. You *are* pretty fucking dumb for having chosen to go to Texas A&M or Blinn instead of Rice or U of H or UT or somewhere much cooler out of state. Well, stop feeling sorry for yourself. You have something cooking right here in your very own backyard. You see, if all you do is stay on University Dr. or Texas Ave. then you'd never know that Bryan/College Station has some awesome places to patronize that aren't located on the beaten path right in front of you. We've got lots of tiny places full of character *AND* characters.

Every town has pretty much the same chain restaurants and stores. It's the homespun unique places in a town that make you want to stick around. We've got lots of restaurants and shops and they are all practically BEGGING you to spend your parents' hard-earned money with them. This map will help you find the cool places to shop and the cool stuff to do at night without having the inconvenience of stumbling around town. That's how much we love you...we'll do you this solid *gratis*.

I moved here in the summer of 2006 and it took me easily a year to find out that there was actually cool stuff to do here beyond the usual Aggie and Northgate stuff. And the usual B/CS stuff isn't bad, really. I've lived in many college towns over the years and I've never attended or worked at a university more rich in tradition than Texas A&M. Going to a football game here is as big a deal as going to see the pros play. I'm proud to be an adjunct Aggie. But if sports or redneck culture is not your bag, then please refer often to the map on this page and try out some of the cool and unique stuff Bryan/College Station has to offer. And then *why don't you maybe see about offering something up yourself!* Start a band, even if you've never touched a musical instrument in your life. Paint. See a play or write and produce one. Sculpt. Make art out of trash. Hold a protest. Join the roller derby league. Make friends with someone your mama and daddy would absolutely freak out if they ever saw you with them...and then introduce them to each other at Parent's Weekend!

The point here really is that college really is what you make of it. It's the magic time in your life when you have adult privileges without full-on adult responsibility. Whatever you do (provided it doesn't kill you or somebody else) will pretty much be excused away as "oh, that was just my crazy college years". Enjoy it, because it will pass you by quick. Bryan/College Station is full of memories waiting to happen. To let them go to waste is worse than failing Chemistry. I guarantee.—*KELLY MINNIS*

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913 Harvey Rd. College Station (979) 703-1838

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College Station Skatepark
http://cstx.gov/skatepark
1600 Rock Prairie Rd. College Station
The \$1 million project officially opens this month with over 1600 square feet of bowls, walls, street courses, hips, and Ollie boxes. All concrete, all rad.

FX Video Game Exchange
fxvideogameexchange.com
1500 Harvey Rd. College Station (979) 696-4263
Locally owned and operated by real gamers and not corporate managed to the point of ripping you off like some other chain game stores around here we could name.

Fuego Tortilla Grill
http://fuegotortillagrill.com
108 Poplar St. College Station (979) 703-1804
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Fuzzy's Taco Shop
http://fuzzystacoshop.com
1712 Southwest Pkwy. College Station (979) 764-8220

OK, it's a chain but it they have great food, free wifi and is, according to Mrs. Editor, one of the best places to study in town while avoiding the other douchebags at the local coffee shops.

Grand Station
http://grandstationent.com
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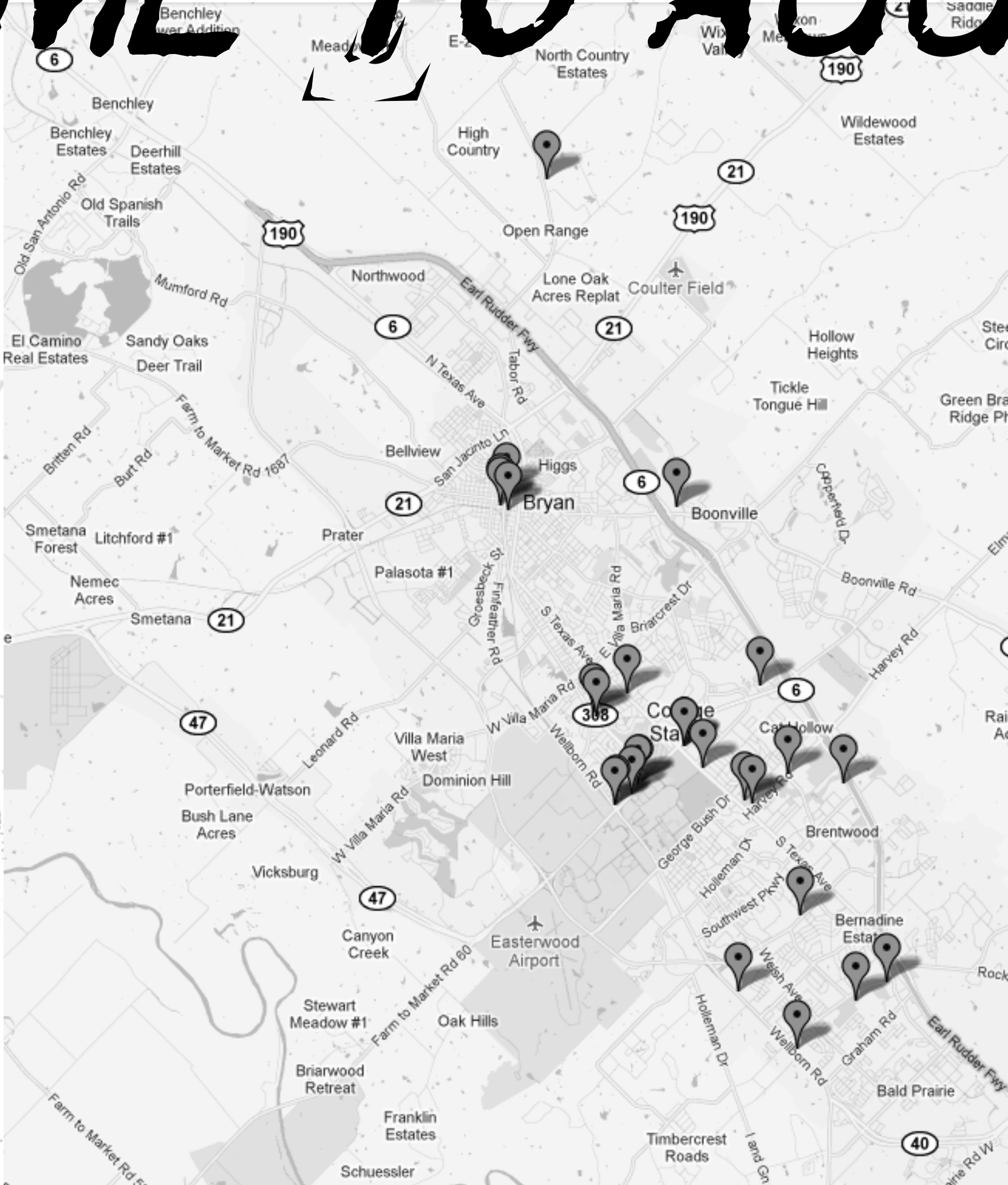
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110 Nagle St. College Station (979) 691-8858
Jin's does a good job of well-rounded Asian. A little Thai, a little Korean, a little old school Chinese, a little Indian, etc. Cheap and right across from A&M.

Koppe Bridge Bar & Grill
http://www.koppebridge.com
11777 FM 2154 College Station (979) 764-2933
Local polls rate Koppe Bridge's burgers as the best in town. If it's not the best then it's definitely one of the top three.

La Bodega Taco Bar
http://bodegatacos.com
102 Church Ave. College Station (979) 220-5126
Mexican restaurants are a dime a dozen around here but La Bodega does it super fresh with



an emphasis on fish, fresh ingredients and *health*.

Lake View Venu
4004 FM 974. Bryan (979) 778-0667
A gigantic club that plays hosts to the local metal music scene. Starting in mid-September pretty much every weekend will feature great music.

Lippman Music Co.
http://lippmannmusic.com
112 Nagle St. College Station (979) 846-1225
The local's favorite hole in the wall jampacked with amps, guitars, drums and such. You can also get set-ups, repairs and gear rentals there too.

Lost Souls Fixies
12815B FM 2154 College Station (979) 822-8338
The dirtbag's choice for custom bicycles, accessories and repairs.

Margies
320 N. Main St. Bryan (979) 822-8422
Margie's is an old school dive bar that's friendly as hell and they pat out one of the best burgers you'll ever have by hand right before your eyes.

Mr. G's Pizzeria
http://www.gotomrgs.com
201 W. 26th St. Bryan (979) 822-6747
No college town is complete without a ripping local pizza joint, and Mr. G's is ours. We recommend the calzone.

Northgate Vintage
http://northgatevintage.com
403 University Dr. College Station (979) 691-8820
It's the tiniest but awesomest vintage clothing and apparel shop around that also sells new stuff and vinyl LP's too. The only wormhole you'll ever climb up!

Revolution Café & Bar
211 S. Main St. Bryan (979) 823-4044
The heart and soul of the local dirtbag community. It's like your favorite living room house party with a cash bar! Free wi-fi, good drinks and the best live

music around.

Smoken Joes
http://smokenjoes420.com
3701 S. Texas Ave. Bryan (979) 260-1636
You can get cigarettes anywhere, right? Yeah, but this place *really* knows its tobacco, y'know? If you've ever rolled your own then this is your place.

Spoons Yogurt
http://spoonsyogurt.com
1509 S. Texas Ave. College Station (979) 446-0085 & 2305 Boonville Rd. Bryan (979) 776-5670
Self-serve yogurt & sorbet with an assortment of fresh fruit, candy, nuts and whatever. Also look for a new location south of town at Tower Point before year's end.

Stover Bros. Cafe
facebook.com/StoverBros
1760 Briarcrest Dr. Bryan (979) 846-8199
Inside Village Foods (the hippie grocery) you will find award-winning quirky meals with all local ingredients prepared by the Valley's only rock star chef, Charlie Stover.

To The Point Piercing
tothepointbodypiercing.com
119 Walton St. College Station (979) 595-4153
If you love it then you should put a ring through it...and if so then you should definitely let Jave and company be the ones to do it.

Village Café
thevillagedowntown.com
210 W. 26th St. Bryan (979) 703-8514
Great fresh food, cool atmosphere and the occasional singer-songwriter in the corner. Also plays host to the hottest salsa dance night in the twin cities.

Village Foods
http://www.villagefoods.com
1760 Briarcrest Dr. Bryan (979) 846-9600
The best selection of organic, free-range and gluten-free groceries in B/CS.

LOCAL MEDIA

KEOS FM 89.1
http://keos.org
(979) 779-5367
This is the Valley's only 100% volunteer-operated and listener-supported community radio station. This is old school college radio done up off-campus. Roots music is the main format but at night you will find all kinds of crazy music from electronica to bangra to acid rock, as well as the only on-air source for alternative news and commentary.

Rock 103.9 FM
http://rock1039online.com
(979)731-1039
The Brazos Valley has a rock station again, playing wall-to-wall modern rock and metal with some classics tossed in. Live and local during morning and afternoon drive with Dee Snider on Saturday nights off the bird and *Home-grown*, a local music show on Sunday nights.

KANM Student Radio
http://kanm.tamu.edu
(979) 458-5266
Not exactly a terrestrial radio station (though you can kinda get it on campus at 1580 AM) you can definitely stream A&M's student radio station online and through your portable devices. Spinning indie rock most hours with a helping of specialty shows ranging all over the musical map.

KAMU FM 90.9
kamu.publicbroadcasting.net/kamuradio
(979) 845-5611
If you are accustomed to waking up with *Morning Edition* or going home to *All Things Considered* or *Fresh Air* then KAMU has you covered. They also air a number of great symphony, jazz, roots and ethnic music programs as well.

TEXAGS
http://mybcs.org
OK, the political views of most of the people who frequent this online forum drive me barking mad but if I want to learn about new things going on in the B/CS community this is pretty much the best place to learn about it first...provided you are patient enough to weed through all the other assorted detritus that often clogs this forum.

Reading Rocks: Reassessing the Replacements

It was rather timely that this past week I spent about 12 hours with *The Replacements: All Over But the Shouting: an Oral History* since recently Replacements bassist Tommy Stinson hinted in a *Rolling Stone* interview that he and Replacements singer/guitarist/heart-and-soul Paul Westerberg have been talking about perhaps reuniting the band for a one-off performance or two. About seven or eight years ago I saw Westerberg perform an in-store concert in Seattle and saw the sort of nastiness that can occur between Westerberg and hardcore (and really fucking disrespectful) 'Mats fans and I'm thinking it's probably not gonna happen. Besides, after reading this book I'm not entirely sure it *should* happen.

This oral history was compiled by Jim Walsh, an old school Minneapolis musician that was around pretty much from the band's genesis in 1979. A lot of the well-worn stories really aren't told this time around. What you get are remembrances from a lot of the people who were in the Twin Cities as the Replacements forged their legend. Musicians, music fans, Twin/Tone Records (the 'Mats' first label), Peter Jespersen (the band's first manager and "discoverer"), writers, etc. all queue up to tell their favorite Replacements stories. You get the stories about Westerberg's poaching of someone else's band wholesale to turn into his band. You get the stories about how dyslexic the band's performance style could be, from stellar otherworldliness awesomeness to cranky contrarian piss-takes of the fairly narrow early '80s hardcore punk audience. You learn how the band stepped up their game for each album until the major label era when lineup changes and a general tiring of the whole concept brought the band down. You know, the typical VH1 *Behind The Music* special thing done up in print.



What I find so intriguing about this book and the oral history format in general is that you get a fleeting impressions from the people who were there at ground zero when history was happening of just how it really could happen to any local shit band down at the bar. How any man or woman can stumble from the basement practice room with their miserable heart displayed wearily on his/her sleeve and become the working class poet that often lurks beneath the dreariness of the manufacturing belt. You don't really get into the workings of *why* it was Paul Westerberg who strode out of the Midwest singing songs that helped define the ennui of the fabled Generation X loser. Just that apparently Westerberg had a knack for singing songs that *seemed* to be about the lives of everyone around him and people came to identify with his lovable loser literate drunk in the corner persona. I mean, at some point everyone looks up from whatever rut they've been living in and look around blearily to question just what it is they are doing. The songs of The Replacements like "Here Comes a Regular", "Bastards of Young", "Unsatisfied" and "Answering Machine" really seem to embody that clarity. You get plenty of that sort of lionization.

What you *don't* get in *All Over But the Shouting* is what I really want from books like this. There was a very ugly firing of original guitarist Bob Stinson, who later went on to drink himself to an early grave five or six years after The Replacements' demise. What exactly led to his firing? How did the band feel about it? Their peers around them? Well, there's not much of that really. Why did original drummer Chris Mars quit right after finishing the last album? Well, there's a little in there but you don't really get the story. And that is often a problem when you get a book written by an inside who was right there beside the band every step of the way. Jim Walsh doesn't appear to want to step on any toes. He has written volumes in Twin Cities press of serious Replacements fawning. Even though he admits he and members of the band aren't exactly BFF's the respect for the music prevents Walsh from really digging deep to unearth anything potentially painful. Even though members of Husker Du are present in the book (the two bands were super competitive with each other during the 1980s) you really don't get any of the nastiness, none of the realism. The only real moment of rawness you get from Slim Dunlap, the man pulled into the band to replace Bob Stinson in 1987. Slim lets you know that even though he loved the music and cherished the times he was playing with the band that he never felt he was actually *in* the band. He felt like he was just filling in for Bob's legacy and playing stuff live that Westerberg couldn't physically do.

Is it because Walsh himself is maybe too respectful of the legacy? Or is it maybe that looking back nearly 20 years later with the rose-colored glasses of nostalgia has softened the memories into the warm and fuzzies? I'm not sure. What *All Over But the Shouting* will give the casual fan or someone who's heard about The 'Mats but doesn't really know the band's story a real desire to pull their music down and give it a listen. Obviously if so many people rave about it then it's gotta be classic, right? Well, it is. The Replacements were one of the best rock and roll bands of all time. But for diehards, well, you're not really getting the story that you're looking for.—KELLY MINNIS



Growing Up With the Kings of Rock & Roll



In this coming of age story *The Fine Wisdom and Perfect Teachings of the Kings of Rock and Roll: A Memoir*, Mark Edmundson directs his narrative and advice towards young people now experiencing the period of his life that he is describing—early twenties, after graduating from college. But I am not sure that the time period covered is one that many twentysomethings today can appreciate or identify with: the mid-Seventies—a time period following the peace and love hippy days, during the heyday of stadium rock through to the beginning of the disco era. At times, the book seems to be Edmundson's nostalgic romp. The story chronicles Edmundson, now a distinguished professor in English literature and well-respected teacher, from his final days at Bennington through his time living in NYC spent as a stagehand at stadium rock shows and driving a cab to working as a bouncer in a disco and to finally finding his vocation at what he calls "probably the last hippie school in America." It was a pivotal time in his life; he was betwixt and between, trying to figure out what the world was about and what his place in it would be.

Edmundson explores life through literary and rock lyric quotes; he juxtaposes Yeats and Van Halen to make a point. It is through the "kings of rock and roll" that Edmundson learns life's lessons. These kings (and in one case, a queen—or white witch at least) are characters that he calls "hot shits" and include the rock stars he admired but also "kings of this and that." He loved "people who took up the whole room, put on an act, sucked all the oxygen out of the atmosphere and sent it back to you as intoxicating ether [. . .] The "big talkers, bullshitters, kingly clowns." He found these people and followed them. They were figures from rock and roll and out of literature—"they were figures out of quest romance," and he thought himself a quester.

His quest took him into the rock and roll business—he looked for the elusive Grail "in drugs and sex and politics and wealth and poverty and in movies and in books." He finds "it"—or at least he thinks that he does—but his sense of it had changed, and so had he. As T.S. Eliot says, "the purpose is beyond the end you figured/and is altered in fulfillment." Rock and roll music saves him in high school, but doesn't save him this time—although he had thought it would.

At the hippie school, Edmundson began to realize that the do-gooder inside him was at odds with his ambition and the hustler inside as well. He realizes that he is only going to be a half-assed teacher unless he gets "something out of the deal himself." He began to educate himself through teaching; he began to learn from his students—his muses—his "unwashed, weed-sucking, often golden-hearted sixties leftovers" whom he needed to inspire him as much as they needed him. He still wanted to help his students but he "wasn't going to let his students get in the way of his education." He calls these seemingly opposing drives the "heroic or the compassionate" and states that trouble imbalance occurs when one strives for one to the complete exclusion of the other.

From some of the kings of rock and roll he had gotten a "hit of the regal striding feeling" (as when listening to the Stones) but whacked out on LSD and "when the crowd opened up like a rouge blossom under Grace Slick's spell," he had also been taken over by the "feeling for the One Life within us." Without compassion the "hero becomes a brutal killing machine, like Achilles in his wrath." However, people also need the desire for distinction; without it, they become homogeneous, boring.

In the end, Edmundson concludes that there must be a balance between pride and selflessness—that we should help others through helping ourselves and visa versa—that the self and community are both important and need to be balanced. He states that it is in community that one's spirit feels calm—and that "by subsuming the self to the group," one becomes more of an individual. We want community but we also want to be number one; "we want to be the first in power or in strength." Edmundson adds that we are animals whose "drive for glory and urge towards compassion are always alive and most of the time in conflict." "Those who flourish manage to integrate their nastiness with their more benevolent parts;" they give the devil his due. Yet you have to be humane too.

Edmundson identifies compassion and glory as the "potent twin aspirations of the soul" but adds that we also have a great hunger to "think about things." Music, film, literature, life. Some of you reading this may be new to Bryan/College Station—just starting or finishing your college education, or following some other path. Edmundson calls this book a graduation gift, and although this book won't surely replace life experience, such as Edmundson had, and that we all have, it will give you a lot of ideas to chew on. May you have at least a few teachers as inspired Edmundson and a few kings of rock and rock as your guides—be it in college or not—and may you yourself be as inspired in whatever it is you decide to do.—MARY MANNING





Rad Films: *Flesh For the Beast* vs. *C.H.U.D.*

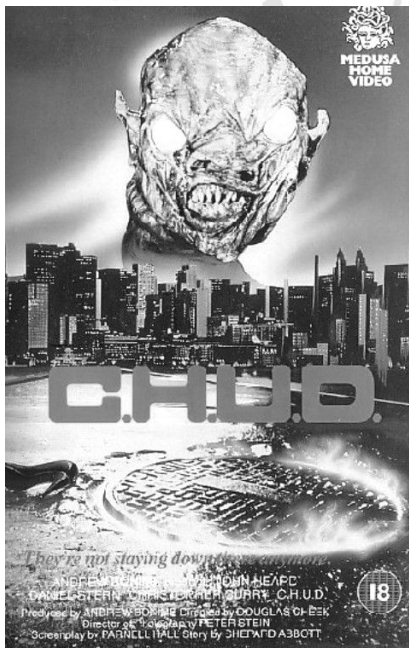
My friend handed me *Flesh For the Beast* and said, "Vampire lesbian blood orgy". Sold. How awesome could this be? Ridiculous was more like it, but completely worth watching again. This movie has the perfect formula for a horror film: creepy old house, parapsychology team, disturbed old home owner, lots of sex and even more blood. This movie, what it lacks in acting and creativity, makes up for in sex and violence.

The parapsychology team enters the house to cleanse it of its disturbances. The home owner warns them that the last three teams he brought in were all mysteriously killed while investigating. The owner tells the story of the house's history and it's rumored to be haunted by Succubae out to feed on men. The owner was obsessed with finding the power to control these women, an ancient amulet, hidden somewhere in the house. As the team wanders the place, members being isolated, they begin to see different things throughout the house, from a family of zombies to naked women pleasuring themselves in the shower.

The acting in this film is terrible, and it takes away from what could be a good story. The film also follows Classic Horror Film Rule #2: Sex=Death. It was like clockwork in this movie. Every guy went out the same way, walking into a room getting some kind of reading or feeling about the place, and meeting a super hot chick, standing there mostly naked. After some short conversation, the women get naked and they jump on top of them and start going at it, as if they aren't wearing mics and holding video cameras. After some short, unimpressive humping, the women turn into hideous blood thirsty she demons and rip the men's flesh off. Each death is more interesting than the last.

But not until after a not-so-surprising twist to the story. The Succubae have annihilated the entire team and left a trail of blood in their path. The one female team member, a psychic medium thought to be the missing piece to the puzzle of finding the amulet which will control the succubae, is successful in uncovering its elusive hiding spot. The home owner thinks he has found the key to eternal life, along with the control of these women, and is sorely mistaken. His abuse of the psychic's powers shook something loose in her mind, and it turns out she one of the Succubae. She is the fourth member of their blood thirsty family. The four women are left alone in the home, with the home owner's skull becoming the new hiding spot for the amulet. Their reign of blood can continue for years.

Over all this movie delivers, and is accented by a really good soundtrack all written and performed by Buckethead. For plenty of tits and blood, check out *Flesh for the Beast*.



ter is running a soup kitchen for the homeless and has some members of his congregation that live in these underground tunnels. Most of them begin to go missing, and when he reports it a police captain finally begins to poke around. Rather than just letting cannibals run rampant and slaughter most of the city, the movie takes you to the court room and into meetings with senators to explain the cover up. You don't get to watch much more than a few random kills throughout. Instead you met the scientists behind it all, and between the bad acting and the terrible script, it just wasn't worth the time.

The great plan to rid the city of its infestation of mutant underground monsters is to flood the tunnels with gas and suffocate them all. The minister and a photographer who lives in the area are trapped underground when the gas is released, and they discover the truth about who really dumped the goods down there. After a battle between two old guys, instead of cannibal kills, everyone makes it out safe and the town is cleansed of its problem. The senator is dead, and the city can sleep in peace. Blah. This movie would have done better to fill the hour and a half with carnage and drop the double crossing, anti-government environmentalist propaganda. Would have made for a more interesting film.—BRI EDWARDS

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Pedal Pushing: Korg Monotribe

I have owned a Korg Monotron for about nine months now. It is a fun little noise box that is deceptively an awesome professional audio tool lurking inside a toy. I realize that's pretty much what Korg had in mind for it, but a lot of musicians were seriously unhappy with the Monotron and the internet is full of videos and how-to blogs for modifying Monotrons to take external control, to add other oscillators, in general more control over the Monotron's very simple analog synthesizer engine. Korg took note of this and responded by releasing the Monotron's older sibling, **The Korg Monotribe**.

Notice the nomenclature. Korg's use of "tribe" denotes their popular Electribe groovebox series first unleashed on the marketplace in 1999. The Monotribe is pretty much the unholy melding of the Monotron's analog synthesizer voice with the function of the Electribe. You still have the ribbon controller, VCO, VCF and LFO of the Monotron, but now you have a sequencer to add to it, a little more control over the voice via one shot LFO mode (providing a quasi-envelope generator), a noise generator and a limited analog-voiced drum machine. Keep it battery-operated but in a slightly tougher metal box with built-in speaker. All in a box about the size of a paperback novel. AND around \$200 on the street. Sounds rad as fuck! But how does it all work together?

In practice, the Monotribe is a great tool for improvising live electronic music and is designed to work well

with other analog gear. For starters, Korg has CV input and output for clocking the sequencer so you can have it work in sync with pretty much anything that provides a steady sharp pulse. This makes the Monotribe clockable by pretty much any signal. Korg also makes an iPhone/iTouch app that allows for accurate BPM-mapped clocking and swing functions.

The ribbon controller can be stepped for accurate pitch programming. You still have the one oscillator but you have three different waveforms to choose from. The LFO has two waveforms and, as a said before, a one-shot function which puts the LFO into the duty of

an envelope generator, putting some movement into the pitch or filter. You still have the some 12dB squelchy as hell Korg MS series low pass filter. However you don't have external access to it in the same way you do a Monotron. Meaning that when you plug something into the Monotron's audio input it automatically turns the oscillator off. That is not the case with the Monotribe. My guess is that Korg manufactured them this way to keep the Tribe and Tron separate from each other.

The added bonus of drums is welcome, but it is a very limited sound set. Kick, snare and closed hi-hat pre-mixed to one pot. No individual volume controls. Also, the unit has one 1/4" out for a submixed rhythm and synth, so there's no way to process drums and synth separate from each other. Want reverb on the drums? Well, you have to get both the drums and the synth wet at the same time. Or overdub. The drums have that Roland CR-78 sound, prompting at least one audience member at a recent show to yell "Phil Collins" whilst I was playing mine. I consider that a plus because I love Phil Collins.

8 simple steps for the sequencer for both drums and synth. Very stupid easy to program. You can step it or record up to 16 steps arrhythmically. That way you can plan for very complex patterns. You are stuck with whatever pattern you program though, as the unit has space for only one preset patch/sequence. It's not as easy to program on the fly live while you're running the machine, because whatever you program is gonna be audible every time you press the drum buttons or the ribbon controller. There's lots of real time control between the oscillator, filter and LFO but sadly you cannot transpose octaves on the synth while it's playing back. Many people run two or more Monotribes synced together. Maybe leave one rolling while you program the other? Or use it in conjunction with another Electribe or a DSI Mopho or Ableton or something.

The concerns are all fairly small when you realize that you have a \$200 analog synth, drum machine and sequencer in one box that will play nice with your other gear. Also, like the Monotron, the Monotribe is highly moddable and you need only search the internet to figure out how to add separate outs for the drums, decay controls for the drums and MIDI control. Again, like the Monotron, you have another piece of gear that seems like a fun toy on the outside only to discover it's a serious piece of gear. I am betting that Korg is using each MonoXXXX project as R&D towards their eventual re-entry into the full-blown analog synthesis market, the first time that any of the Big Three (Roland, Yamaha, Korg) will have issued a new legit analog synth since the late '80s. As long as Korg keeps making these projects fun, useful and hell-a-cheap, then I will certainly keep buying and recommending them.—KELLY MINNIS

Brazos Valley Metal News



While August turned out to be a "lightweight" in the Heavy Metal music show arena, September is really looking exciting. Throughout this month there's a few events happening in the area. As reported in last month's column, the Brazos County Metal Music scene has a new location out on Tabor Rd. at the Lake View Venu with a two-Day show scheduled for September 15th and 16th. "We have both days booked and confirmed as of now," says Moses Alvarez II, booking director for the Metal scene and Metal shows via Lake View Venu. Thursday night's line-up will be **Blood Magistrate**, **Predominant Mortification**, **Pocohauntus**, **Villeian**, **Doomsday Brigade**, and **Domain of Arnheim**. For Friday the line-up will be **Hells Conspiracy**, **Sea of Wolves**, **Behold the Great Throne**, **Bonnie Blue**, **Transcend Before Azalea**, and **Smile Transylvania**. Not only is this show a first at the new location but it will also be the debut for the new singer of Sea of Wolves, Chris Fenn. Transcend Before Azalea will feature Cody Brown, formerly of **Primal**, on drums and Behold the Great Throne will have some new music to dish out fresh from last month's trip into the recording studio.



Sea of Wolves, debuting their new lineup 9/16 at Lake View Venu in Bryan.

The Brazos County Metal Music scene has been in a reconstruction phase since the downfall of The Stafford. This first show is a testament to the dedication by a few local supporters that really care about OUR local scene, its bands and its longevity. These people are working hard to keep it going so locals and touring bands can visit and perform in OUR scene. As in any new beginning, there will be trials and errors. Y'all come on out on both of these special nights of local Metal madness and support the New Home for Local Metal Music. The shows will start at 8pm both nights and after 2am there will be DJ's playing dub-step music. Reminder: Lake

View is beer only so if you want liquor you gotta BYOB.

On September 16th and 17th **The Hawgs of Texas Rally** is having a Battle of the Bands at their new home in Waller. This BYOB event is to see which bands will perform for the annual "Hawgs of Texas Rally" that will take place next April. Over 15 bands from all over Texas will be performing their BEST to earn the right as headliners for this show. There will be free RV/tent camping sites. Also vendors will be there supplying bikeware and parts, along with cold beer setups and hot food. It's \$10 per person at the gate with all proceeds going to charity.

On Tuesday September 20th **Rock 103.9** is hosting its one year birthday with a party and concert featuring **Fair To Midland**, **10 Years** and **Signal Rising** at Hurricane Harrys. Tickers are \$15 @ <http://harrys.bcsclubs.com> and \$20 at the door. Rock 103.9 has been a major supporter of the Brazos County Metal Music scene and a Sunday night show called **Homebrew** that plays only local and area bands' music. Cris Pate from Signal Rising is the host of the show, so be sure to tune in on Sunday nights at 9pm to hear local music and news. Happy birthday Rock 103.9!

For any live local Metal Music news and shows in the area that's happening after this goes to print, stay tuned to my page on Facebook (<http://face.com/pages/FoilFace-the-Metalhead>) - FOILFACE



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concert calendar

9/2—Atarimatt (12" release show), **Butcher Bear**, great unwashed luminaries, **Nait Ntropy**, **Noggin**, **Renegade Window Washer**, **Soundfounder** @ Revolution Café & Bar, Bryan. 10pm
9/2—Saints of Valory, **Tucker James & The Hot Mugs**, **Lindsay Harris Band** @ Palace Theater, Bryan. 6pm

9/3—College Station Skatepark Grand Opening with **Sea Of Wolves**, **Hells Conspiracy**, **DJ Get Low** @ Southwood Athletic Complex, College Station. 12pm
9/3—Puate, Ancient Wisdom @ Revolution Café & Bar, Bryan. 10pm

9/4—Nelo @ Schotzis, College Station. 9pm

9/9—J.P. & The Gilberts @ Revolution Café & Bar, Bryan. 10pm

9/10—Ziegefest feat. **Randy Rogers Band**, **Wade Bowen**, **Josh Abbott Band**, **Whiskey Myers**, **Kyle Park**, **JB & The Moonshine Band** and **Bri Bagwell**, **The Banned** @ Wolf Pen Creek Amphitheater, College Station. 1pm

9/11—Bella Morte, **The Ludovico Technique**, **Black Tar Heroine** @ Stagecenter Theater, Bryan. 9pm

9/11—Dom Kennedy, **Giovanni Tha King**, **Stick Up Kidz**, **G-Class**, **Shawn Noize**, **Josef Pierre**, **Big Hush**, **Boy Named Zach**, **Justin Wilson** @ Daisy Dukes, College Station. 3pm

9/15—Blood Magistrate, **Pocahauntus**, **Villea**, **Doomsday Brigade**, **Domain of Arnheim**, **Predominant Mortification** @ Lakeview Venu, Bryan. 6pm

9/16—Hells Conspiracy, **Sea of Wolves**, **Behold the Great Throne**, **Bonnie Blue**, **Transcend Before Azalea**, **Smile Transylvania** @ Lakeview Venu, Bryan. 6pm

9/20—10 Years, **Signal Rising**, **Fair To Midland** @ Hurricane Harry's, College Station. 9pm

9/24—One Good Lung, **The Well**, **The Tron Sack** @ Revolution Café & Bar, Bryan. 10pm

9/29—Ramp The Amp Series featuring **Ben Baxter** @ College Station Skatepark. 7pm

10/7—National Acrobats of China @ Rudder Theater, College Station. 7:30pm

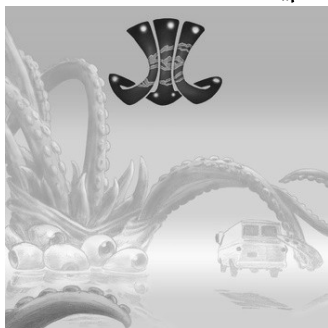
10/8—The Ex-Optimists (7" release party), **Alkari**, **Jay Satellite** @ Revolution Café & Bar, Bryan. 10pm
10/8—Texas Reds Festival featuring **Joe Nichols** @ Downtown Bryan. 9pm

10/18—Natalie MacMaster, **Donnell Leahy** @ Rudder Theater, College Station. 7:30pm

10/28—White Crime (cd release), **The Wrong Ones**, **The Hangouts**, **The Misfats**, **All That Mouth & Can't Step Bitches** @ Revolution Café & Bar, Bryan. 10pm

12/9—Fired For Walking, **The Ex-Optimists** @ Revolution Café & Bar, Bryan. 10pm

record reviews



Atarimatt
Happy Mayonnaise

Chip tunes and video game noises have permeated electronic music for decades, but in recent years hackers have learned how to rewrite software to take advantage of the archaic synth chips inside Atari 2600's, the original Nintendo NES, Nintendo Game Boys and Commodore 64's. Unfortunately, many musicians who use these tools let the tools themselves shape the music that comes from them, rather than bending the tools to their will and imagination. That is what I find so fascinating about College Station's Atarimatt.

The music Atarimatt makes isn't interesting for the fact that it's made with Atari's and has a cool light show built in to TV's. The music itself is zany instrumental punk rock that just happens to be made in a rather novel way.

That's what makes *Happy Mayonnaise* so enjoyable, that it can be separated from live performance or the circumstances of its birth and actually stand on its own. *Happy Mayonnaise* is Atarimatt's first 12" vinyl release and is kind of a compilation of sorts of music from his previous three out-of-print EP releases. Even if you own those particular CD's, the mixes for this 12" are louder, more compressed and ready to be dropped in on someone's SL-1200 live. The results are meaner, more pumped up, thicker and all hyped up on Muscle Milk.

The packaging itself should win an Oscar or something. The artwork (by local artist Scott McDermott) does a fantastic job of referencing acclaimed 1970s album cover artist Roger Dean. And the record is blue. Drop the needle on "Commuter" and you will be happy as, well, happy as mayonnaise.—**KELLY MINNIS**



Patti Smith
Outside Society

Singer/poet Patti Smith has been jabbing at the general public for more than 35 years, so it's fitting she titled her first greatest hits collection – with no lack of irony *Outside Society*. This is a vital introduction to the music that shaped more than one generation of rock musicians, ranging from U2 and R.E.M. to Sonic Youth and Nirvana.

Largely chronological from 1975 to 2007, *Outside Society* pulls from all of Smith's albums beginning with the punk classic *Horses* and her last covers-only *Twelve*. Completists will bemoan the dearth of extras from the "godmother of punk," but for those who have wondered what Smith has been about these decades, this is an amazing look at her tunes and impact all in one place.

What's astounding is the consistency of Smith's vision over the decades, demonstrated in the passion of her performances and the power of her voice. There's the creepily-accessible "Dancing Barefoot" from 1979's *Wave*. There are her two Grammy-nominated songs: "1959" and "Glitter in their Eyes" from 1998 and 2001. There's the tune usually credited with launching her popularity in 1978: "Because the Night," co-written with Bruce Springsteen.

Take "Gloria" for example. It's heading into its fourth decade, but it still sounds so fresh and modern . . . well, not Lady Gaga or Taylor Swift modern, but certainly relevant. And, "People Have the Power" – in addition to being a fist-shaking rousing anthem – is as

current as today's news from Libya, Syria, Egypt, Congress: "People have the power to redeem the work of fools." It's no wonder the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame closes out each induction ceremony with it.

Then, there's the eerie banjo/fiddle cover of "Smells Like Teen Spirit." It's the only tune that breaks the date order as it came out in 2007. The disc closes with the quiet title cut from 2004's *Trampin'*. There are plenty of other surprises for the neophyte listener and reminders that there is more than "classic rock" to the past.—**MIKE L. DOWNEY**



Jay Z/Kanye West
Watch the Throne

I have no idea how to review a hip-hop record except lyrically. And luckily, for me, rappers – such as Jay Z and Kanye West – write loads of lyrics. So I've got plenty to cipher. Musically speaking, *Watch the Throne* is pretty as hell. Nice beats. Fancy samples. A little Beyonce and Bon Iver and NASA and Will Ferrell, to boot. I get that much. But I can't hold this record up to other records in the genre. I listen to loads of Megadeth and Katy Perry. Take that into account while reading the following.

I have a few problems with *Watch the Throne* lyrically. There are far too many points that don't connect. Primarily, there's a discrepancy between Jay Z and Kanye calling up a Black legacy while simultaneously bragging about their own wealth. They reference Martin Luther King and Coretta King, they sample Otis Redding and Nina Simone, they list statistics of Black on Black crime, they hypothesize about correctly fathering their unborn sons, but they personally claim to possess only watches, cars, and bitches as their contribution to this great legacy. Jay Z roughnecks his way through lines

about growing up worthless and poor, while Kanye whines on about having sex with far too many women that he does not really trust. In "Otis", Jay-Z claims, "Driving Benzes with no benefits/Not bad, huh, for some immigrants?/Build your fences/We diggin' tunnels/Can't you see we're getting' money up under you?" Such selfish sentiment next to tracks about Black on Black crime and the need for responsible Black fathers breaks down any ounce of vocal charity they hoped to accomplish.

Not to mention, in the "Otis" video, Jay-Z and Kanye destroyed a Maybach – retailed at anywhere from half to a full million dollars – the video ending with a bogus note "The vehicle used in this visual will be offered up for auction. Proceeds will be donated towards the East African Drought Disaster." Such flagrant waste in the face of charity only echoes a ridiculously shared level of greed. Jay-Z declares on "That's My Bitch" that there's too much focus on White women in art and culture, perhaps even White artists, and that we should "Put some colored girls in the MOMA", but Jay-Z chooses a White American male to direct his videos (Spike Jones), an Italian male to create his album art (Riccardo Tisci), and four White girls to star in his "Otis" video. In an album so overly focused on Black legacy and Black art, I'm surprised there are not more Black artists and Black participants evidently involved in the project.

Still, even with all the broken lyrics and sentiments, the pairing of Mr. Z and Mr. West presents a palpable ping-pong tension. Kanye obviously has to step up his rhyming game next to Jay-Z (the album opens with Jay-Z espousing philosophy and Kanye snorting cocaine on strippers). Meanwhile Jay-Z raps to more complicated, ethereal musical settings (notice the deeply heartfelt lyrics about his future with Beyonce in "New Day"). And while gratuitous attention has been lavished on the album's heavily sampled tracks, such as Otis Redding's "Otis" and Nina Simone's auto-tuned "New Day", the stand out tracks here are the straight forward pissed off anthems – "No Church in the Wild", "Niggas in Paris", "Welcome to the Jungle", and "Who Gon Stop Me". Personally, I'd rather these two tell me off than brag about their venerable near misses.

I don't want to be too quick to jump on album-of-the-year, especially with all my Harold Bloom-esque poetic complaints AND the new Kelly Clarkson disc coming out this September, but I'm addicted to *Watch the Throne*.

Lyrically lacking in many regards, the whole record works. I'm giving it 4.5 "other other Benz" out of 5. I'll be playing this record for my sons one day.—**KEVIN STILL**



Venomous Maximus
The Mission

I was a teenage metalhead. Yes, it is true. I to this day still bang my head to some righteous metal. But it has to be *righteous*, as I am not a big fan of modern metal. None of that drop D half-time breakdown brocore screamer deathy stuff for me. I like my metal bands to gallop, to strut, to blow marijuana smoke rings, to play JCM 800's and 26" kicks, to *sing*, and write songs about wizards, monsters, the apocalypse, nuclear war and an evil and vague "you" or "they". That is why Houston's Venomous Maximus has become one of my favored bands of late, because they are ALL these things.

The Mission is VM's second release on Houston punk label Cutthroat Records (the first was a 2-song 7"). This 4-song 12" EP starts off where "Give Up the Witch" left off. More triplet-fuel, four horsemen-riding New Wave of British Metal fist-raising glory. The guitar work isn't all unleashed fingers of fury as Otis Redding's "Otis" and Nina Simone's auto-tuned "New Day", the stand out tracks here are the straight forward pissed off anthems – "No Church in the Wild", "Niggas in Paris", "Welcome to the Jungle", and "Who Gon Stop Me". Personally, I'd rather these two tell me off than brag about their venerable near misses.

grunting and I definitely appreciate some of the cool production tricks that help make his vocals more distinct like the backwards reverb and the '70s inspired reverb explosion in "The Gift".

The Mission is definitely worth tracking down if you miss good metal from the days when the genre was so much different than it is today. Just good unironic classic metal.—**KELLY MINNIS**



We Are Augustines
Rise Ye Sunken Ships

We Are Augustines are two survivors from the hard-luck New York quartet PELA that lasted five years to 2009, at one point sharing the stage with groups like Sonic Youth and the Pains of Being Pure at Heart. The duo's first album – *Rise Ye Sunken Ships* – is rife with anguished narratives, laden with music that careens from dynamic anthemic rockers like the sturdy "Book of James," the desperate "Juarez," and the roiling "Philadelphia (City of Brotherly Love)" to quieter acoustic guitar/piano treatments like "Barrel of Leaves" and "East Los Angeles."

Everything is delivered with throaty passion by singer Billy McCarthy, whether wailing over screaming guitars or declaiming alongside martial drums in the desolate "New Drink for an Old Drunk" and the painful "Patton State Hospital." There are echoes of a tortured Idlewild ("Chapel Song"), a hoarse Snow Patrol ("Augustine"), and even a damaged Counting Crows ("Strange Days").

But it's on the full-tilt apocalyptic epic "Headlong into the Abyss" that the pair makes their mark, pulling out all the stops as McCarthy tears down some road, bellowing through a maelstrom that quiets finally with the last "I ain't gonna wait around for some pill to kick in." They'll be at the ACL Festival in Austin this month.—**MIKE L. DOWNEY**

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