



*INSIDE: Yelping About Architecture—Viciously Vile Time Won't Slip If I Don't—
BLSHS Flooded By Foolishness—Rabbit's Paw Still Geeking—Pedal Pushing—The
College Station Student Bloc—Record Reviews—Concert Calendar*



South Knoll Wants To Expel Aggies

979Represent is a local magazine
for the discerning dirtbag.

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Kill Me Now, Save My Weekend

Desperation has brought me here and the thumb of a system
I cannot beat

Trapped in this desolate concrete cave with sounds of nothing

Clawing at the walls, the caress of solitude is chilling and dangerous

Craving human contact, craving a friendly voice

But knowing all hopes of desired sounds and touch is foolish
- It is Sunday, I am at work, I am alone -

The monsters inside my head are getting restless, screaming
for escape

Slowly going mad, quickly becoming angry

Four hours have fallen and here I sit anticipating the next
five to dwindle into nothing.

Despicable and inviting daydreams begin to tame my beasts
within

Unknown how long they will be calm, I will lose my way in
this maze of stone

Only to end where I began, I will waste time

Time. Such a precious thing to be thrown away, but in this
box made of rock, there is no other choice.

I have no other choice

- I am at work on Sunday, I am alone and I am going insane. -

- JESSICA LITTLE

Well, not exactly *expel* all Aggies, but the south College Station neighborhood's permanent residents asked the city last year for some teeth in setting restrictions on multi-student households, street parking and, in general, resisting the hollowing-out of College Station. Since the late '90s College Station has seen a very privileged version of the multi-ethnic "white flight" issue that many urban metropolises like Detroit and Philadelphia experienced in the '60s, where white citizens fled to the suburbs, leaving the core of town to ethnic minorities. College Station has seen families pushed out of its core (the large block made by George Bush at the north, Texas Ave. at the east, Wellborn Rd. at the west and Rock Prairie Rd. at the south) south towards Edelweiss, Castlegate, Pebble Creek and other HOA-managed communities.

Many of 979Represent's writers live inside this interior square of College Station. Yours truly rented a house right in the middle of this area of town for the first two years I lived here. At the time the street I lived on was a curious experiment. There was a New Orleans family displaced by Katrina, several young professionals, an A&M professor that had lived in the same house since the early '70s when he bought it brand new, and a whole host of student party houses. Both sides of the street were crowded with cars parked on the curb 24/7. There were no other children on our street for our kids to play with. CSPD were no strangers to some of the more notorious houses where parties raged until late in the night. But our street was relatively tame compared to the cul de sac behind us, which consisted entirely of rental homes.

Once I discovered that there were nicer, newer and more family-friendly neighborhoods south of Rock Prairie that's where my family eventually settled when we were able to buy a house. Lots of homeowners that have opted to stay inside the "student bloc" have been frustrated by the changing timbre of their neighborhoods for many years, and it's only in recent years that the city has begun to address the challenge. The newer subdivisions south of town have homeowners associations with restrictions against on-street parking and the number of non-related residents. College Station residents recently petitioned the city to make some of these restrictions citywide and, understandably, the city did not comply. Last fall permanent residents of the Oak Knoll area banded together to petition the city for some of these HOA-style heavier restrictions against renters and the City Council decided to listen this time. It took until late last month for the council to take a vote on such a plan, and the plan passed but only after much of the HOA-style parking and non-related resident restrictions were struck from the plan. Score one for the renters.

The name of this town is College Station. That would imply that there is a college here. Texas A&M University and the Bryan campus of Blinn College together serve over 60,000 students a year. Blinn has no dorms, and A&M's dorms can only hold a very small fraction of its enrollees. Those students gotta live somewhere, and that "student bloc" area is well-served by A&M buses, easy to walk/bike to campus and get to local amenities. This area is ideal for students. Yes, students party, are generally loud and have no investment in the neighborhood as their residency lasts 3-5 years. It should be on the permanent residents to get to know these students as they move in, so the residents can set the tone for the neighborhood, rather than rely upon statutes and fines. If you have the pride of neighborhood to suggest the city set your area apart from the rest of the city, then perhaps you can have the pride of neighborhood to actually welcome the students in and work with them. There will always be some assholes that just won't play nice no matter what you do, but those are the exception. Most of the student renters will be happy to acknowledge your sleeping babies and a clear path to your mailbox. This town exists because of these students. It's about time that College Station and its residents recognize it. —KELLY MINNIS

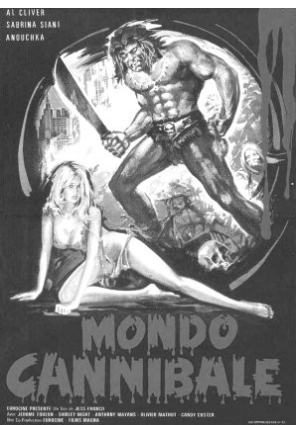


Viciously Vile: *Cannibals*

My newest late 70s/early 80s obscure horror movie experience is Jesus Franco's *Cannibals* (a.k.a. *White Cannibal Queen*). Lately, I've been keeping my horror viewing to such gems as Lucio Fulci's *The Beyond* and *Manhattan Baby* or Mario Bava's *Black Sabbath* and *Hatchet for the Honey Moon*, but I decided to branch out (reluctantly, I might add) to quell my horror appetite in Spanish horror. I hold a special place in my heart for so-bad-it's-good movies, and *Cannibals* does not disappoint. If you know Italian horror and the marvelous directorial genius that is Lucio Fulci, I can boldly say that Franco is the Spanish equivalent of Fulci's work. Though the styles are somewhat different, Franco was a trail-blazer in quality and dedication to the genre.

A man decides to take his wife and daughter on an exploration into the Amazon for his job, even though he has second thoughts about bringing them along, considering there are tribal cannibals abound. The cannibals manage to come aboard the ship, eat the wife while still alive, knock the husband unconscious, and steal the daughter to make her the queen of the tribe. The husband/father spends the rest of the movie searching for his long lost daughter only to find that she has become the tribe's goddess. The B-movie goodness runs throughout this hidden gem. For starters, the tribesman have face paint that is directly from the dressing room with clean lines and amazing detail instead of being primitive tribal art work. The English dubbing is laughable with accents that at times mimic a character straight from *Deliverance*. As a pleasant surprise, the lead character is played by Al Cliver, a known regular from Fulci's *The Beyond* and *Zombie*, whose charisma is extremely welcome among the "lesser" actors. One of my only complaints is the lack of gore. This film had so much potential to be gory and bloody; however, I think the director was going for something more artsy, which is an honorable shift from being a "torture porn" type of flick. The tribesman at times were also wearing wedding bands, tennis shoes, and were mostly white, exactly how we cynically envision all tribesman. The lead tribal goddess was beautiful; however, she was kidnapped at around age 10 with brown hair and became platinum blonde as time progressed. Apparently, Amazonian tribespeople bleach hair. One of the sillier contexts was the main characters' fake arm. He gets his arm cut off earlier in the movie, but as someone who has become spoiled on CGI it took me a while to get used to the unrealistic expectation of special effects. The man's limb looked like it was wrapped in feathers with duct tape.

Dare I call myself a horror connoisseur, but as a woman who appreciates the awesomeness that is horror in every aspect, my review is far from a complaint. I thoroughly enjoyed this movie from beginning to end and only wished that today's directors would take old school horror into consideration and reinvent the genre from its original form. I feel as if directors only take "nods" instead of going back to the basics. This film is a prime example of how horror movies should be executed. Simplicity is essential. I highly encourage you to see this highly underrated film as I know you'll appreciate it as much as I do. —VAMP VIXEN



Flooded By Foolishness

Saturday September 29, 2013. It's raining and I've just showered an amazing shower. I sit anticipating the night, for it is a good friend's 21st birthday and her Aggie ring dunk.



Drying my hair is pointless because it's like a war between the fascist dry ground and the aid of beautiful, peaceful water that the Gods have bestowed upon us. I think for a moment and say "Fuck it" out loud so the universe will know that I don't give a damn! I grab my keys and walk onto the porch where the fight of the elements has overtaken any clear sight of an end to the war. With the courage of a lion, I step out into the fight and am instantly drenched, but I don't care.

I hop in my golden chariot and crank up "Red House" by Jimi Hendrix because this is the music for my soul, this is the music for the free. Driving to the holy grail of alcoholic occasions, I'm careless and my natural rebel comes into play as I drive through rising waters without a hint of fear or respect for Mother Nature. Speeding in places I shouldn't, passing lakes of accumulating water; I had a choice. I see a potential deep dip in the road, but give it no mind and drive through the high water like I'm sailing in a sea of stars and bliss. How arrogant and irrevocably stupid of me, I should have known better. I can feel the thick volume of water as my tires glide through the valley in the road. Then I feel nothing.

A quick second of numbness passes over me and panic sets in as my car comes to a halt in the middle of my imaginary ocean of constellations. Stunned, I slowly open my door only to see that brown, earthy street water has engulfed my surroundings from the bottom of my door to the floor of the asphalt. I quickly close my door and cry. I ask my God "why me" and cry some more. If it weren't for my arrogant choices and careless attitude, I wouldn't be in this horrifying situation. Once again, I've fucked myself royally.

I sit and wipe away the tears of defeat, panic and humiliation. I expect my car and I to be swept away by the waves of aids infested creek water, but it never does. Thank God that a woman in a huge SUV drives my way and I quickly honk her down. She calls her brother, and we wait for salvation to come. After a bunch of squabble and chatter in a foreign language called "men talking about cars", they conclude they can't help me and forsake me in the middle of the road to fend for myself.

I pull my cell out and call my dear friend Steph. I try not to cry but it doesn't work. We talk until she finds me, and by this time the water has disappeared into the desperately parched creek. When she turns the corner she laughs. It caught me off-guard and I was a bit stunned, but then I could only imagine how ridiculous I look with my poor broken chariot. I laugh too. We both take time to spill out guts out laughing at this whole situation.

I step out of my car and see my license plate is dangling by one screw that was not washed away by the water. I laugh and cry and laugh harder. Thank my God for dear friends. She and I take our soaking shoes off and begin to push my golden chariot up a hill. The rain is falling and we are lions. With every ounce of adrenaline and muscle we have in our bodies, we managed to conquer the task of getting my car out of the street. Better than men, better than machine, we were beasts.

We load up and head to desires birthday; then we drink. Her night ended after a ring dunk, and a hefty amount of alcohol, and mine ended with a couple of glasses of vodka, congrats to the ring bearers and a happy birthday to the newly aged 21 year old. In this lesson I've learned not to take chances with Mother Nature because she will kick your ass. I've learned that strangers may help but are not dependent, I've learned that alcohol can cure any type of blues you may have, and I've learned that amazing friends are the most beautiful secret to living a good life. —JESSICA LITTLE

Still green!

September has been a rough month for a geek. The new school year steals my attentions, my devotions, and turns my faithful eye towards payable concerns. I am grateful for the distraction because I like putting gas in my car and feeding my pugs, but I have grieved long mornings with fat books and quiet evenings with unnecessary films. Still, I've read some stuff, watched some stuff, listened to some stuff, and sipped some stuff that feels nearly pertinent enough to mention publicly.

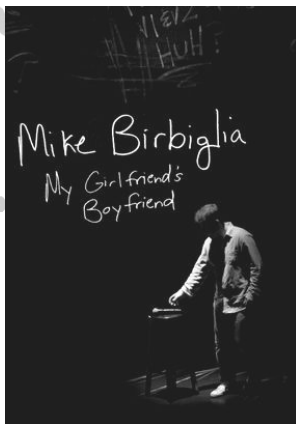
READ—I buy more books than I will ever read. Recently I made a resolution to not buy any more books until the onset of 2014. The very next day after declaring the resolution I asked my wife for Stephen King's new *Doctor Sleep* for my birthday, both to receive the book and to beat my own system. I remember my favorite English professor in college saying, "There's people who talk about reading books and people who actually read books". Well, hell, here I am writing about reading when I have the whole of King's *The Shining* waiting for me on the coffee table. This morning I read the first chapter over coffee and a pug's curled snores, and I marveled again at the no-nonsense narration from King's early writings. In his earliest works, King was not writing horror as much as dark, gothic literature in the vein of Flannery O'Connor and William Faulkner. King's distinction was a Northern setting, removed from the South that is haunted by superstition and sinister generational shadows. O'Connor and Faulkner told the stories of the southern lands, which are bleak due to the heat, the religion, the racism. None of that stuff was considered "horror" in the South. Stage it in the North, like King did, notch up the obvious nature of the metaphors to telekinesis and vampires, and you no longer have the gothic, you have horror. But it's all the same! A young girl ravaged by religious fundamentalism and social pressures in *Carrie*. A small town assaulted by secrets and legends and the embodiment of everything brushed under the rug as hush-hush in *Salem's Lot*. An alcoholic in isolation feeling the walls closing in on him in *The Shining*. This isn't horror: this is real life with dimmed lights.

I also recently began reading J.M. Barre's *Peter Pan*. For the record, I do not smoke or snort or shoot or drop drugs. Yes, I'm well-versed at sipping mental slants, but the other stuff is a no-go. I say that because this *Peter Pan*, which I have not finished, feels like a total trip. In the book, Peter and Wendy have all this weird sexual tension, but they're still children. The dog acts as the children's nanny. And the mother is a bit too Real Housewives of London to offer anything more than fainting drama and Oedipus innuendos. At this rate, Captain Hook is the hero, an Uncle Buck type lovable loser who can't catch the right break. I do not like *Peter Pan* yet, but I'm also less than half way through it. I'll try to finish it before next month and hopefully report something a bit more encouraging. Of course, as Levar Burton would say, "But don't take my word for it".

WATCH—There's loads of great stuff in the theater and very little time to get there! We did take in a matinee of James Ponsoldt's newest film, *The Spectacular Now*, starring the stunningly amazing Shailene Woodley, who played Clooney's foul-mouthed daughter in *The Descendants*, and Miles Teller, a spot-on Hughes-esque John Bender style anti-hero. This movie is flawed on multiple levels: dialogue and assumptions of teenage maturation, being most key. Regardless, *The Spectacular Now* won me over and emotionally slain me. Yes, the story attaches boggles too profound for teenagers at too early an age. Yes, the script would have been better suited for a college graduate coming-of-age story, a la early Noah Baumbach films. Whatever the case, the story of Sutter and Aimee killed me because his boggles were my boggles. His

medicine was my medicine. His narcissism was my narcissism. Glorious film. Amazing performances. The highly underrated Brie Larson made a strong appearance. I give it 3.5 junky jukeboxes out of 5. Get on this one while you can! *The World's End* was my only other notable theater trip.

Obviously, I'm a middle class, White male geek, steeped heavily in 80s and 90s television glory. For these reasons, I'm prone to adore anything featuring Simon Pegg and/or Nick Frost. Unlike their space alien road tripper *Paul*, *The World's End* rejoins the dynamic pale duo with director Edgar Wright to finish out the "Cornetto Trilogy" - named after a famous English ice cream treat referenced in all three films—beginning with *Shaun of the Dead*, then *Hot Fuzz*, and now *The World's End*. *The World's End* tackles similar Cornetto themes—male friendship, avoidance of maturation, broken dependence on modern conveniences, failed fence hopping—but it also stabbed more deeply into probable reasons friendships suffer and maturation halts. *The World's End* felt the most preachy of the Cornetto Trilogy, but it still offered a hella good time. I give it 4 Punchkicker She-bots out of 5.



I do want to challenge our own Vamp Vixen's *You're Next* review from last month. Vamp Vixen said the film was not scary, the pacing ruined any potential for character development, and the writing failed at delivering intentional humor while simultaneously feeling laughable when humor was not intended. Actually, I can agree with her on one main point: *You're Next* was billed as a nightmarish hell-ride, but it played more like a dark comedy. Regardless of this, and personally speaking, I thought

You're Next was a bit of a low-budget, indie masterpiece. Director Adam Wingard opens the film with a small story that features most of the wooded-cabin-sex-and-booze horror tropes, as if to say, "Here's what you're expecting, but I ain't doing that". I loved the humor, even some of gore was humorous—ie. I've never seen a blender used quite like that before. Wingard's mumblecore-ish style played well with this group of actors, several who have worked in horror (Ti West, Barbara Crampton), mumblecore (Joe Swanberg and Amy Seimitz), and with Wingard on previous projects (A.J. Bowen, Seimitz and Swanberg). This is big time talent that delivers especially strong improvisation. The dinner table felt nearly as fine as anything Tarantino orbited himself. All this said, I will join Vamp Vixen in her disappointment that the film did not deliver the scares. However, I felt like what it did deliver was even better than my expected fears. I gave *You're Next* 4.5 crossbows out of 5. As an aside, and as a fellow lover of "bad" movies, Vamp Vixen's got me pretty excited to see *Cannibals*. I'm not well versed in these older, foreign horror flicks, but October and Halloween are right around the corner. I look forward to the new horror Vamp introduces to me.

LAUGH—I fell in love with Mike Birbiglia via his *My Secret Public Journal* album, which was quickly eclipsed in narrative awesomeness by his *Sleepwalk With Me* live album. Birbiglia

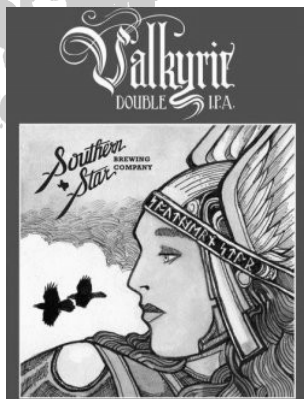
thing

Rabbit's Paw

The tides crash on the shore. There's a chill that travels down my neck to the tips of fingers and toes. I smell the scent of day old fish that saturates the air replacing all else. The sand here seems to have been replaced by nature in some cruel joke with broken shells in place of smooth beach sands... No matter, I'm wearing boots today.

is that rare comedian—like Maria Bamford—who grows exponentially on a mechanical, structural level between releases. Most comedians I've listened to extend their previous themes while modestly growing in their oratory. Birbiglia is different. He's becoming our next Garrison Keillor, our new Bill Cosby, the stand-up comedian Jerry Seinfeld hoped to become. Birbiglia's newer material works more like an extended NPR *This American Life* bit than a traditional stand-up set. And in his newest special, *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend*, found exclusively on Netflix Watch Instantly, Birbiglia tells a meandering, funny, heartbreaking story worth deep digestion. I give *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend* 6 Scrambler rides out of 5. I walked away from *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend* convinced I'd experienced something rare and artistically significant.

DRANK—I'm geeking pretty hard on three specific beers these days: Southern Star's Rauchbier, Stone's Arrogant Bastard, and Harpoon's Imperial Pumpkin. First, Southern Star's Rauchbier bubbles up these amazing smoke and peaty Scotch style aromas, and then follows through with a solid, full-bodied amber goodness. I love this beer. Storing up multiple cases of the Rauchbier does not feel the least bit gratuitous. The word from Southern Star is that they will soon begin canning their Valkyrie Double IPA, which is good news, though a bit cloudy by the glory of the Rauch. Next, I can safely say that I have not had a Stone Arrogant Bastard in the past five years. Why the distance? Beats me. But this past week I ordered one on tap at BJ's, and it hit all the right spots. Lord, this thing is pretty! It's the amber that functions like an IPA but still maintains that glorious amber body. I mean, they nailed it. You gotta know them Stone fellas high-fived each other for days when they first tasted the complete incarnation of Arrogant Bastard. I probably will not even wait five days for my next bomber. Lastly, I bought the Harpoon Imperial Pumpkin to impress my wife, but ended up sharing it with two buddies instead. We all ooooed and aaaahed over this one. Before you even ask, no. Harpoon's Imperial Pumpkin is no Pumkinator, but it's the most Pumkinator-y beer on the market. Forgive me if I don't remember the specifics of the Harpoon Imperial Pumpkin—it was rather late when we popped that top—but I can tell you that it was dark, rich, malty, and the pumpkin was definitely evident. Good spice, but not too much. Highly recommended for those who loved the Pumkinator but drained their cellar supply.



I'll have a schlew of record reviews next month. Katy Perry's *Prism* and Red Fang's *Whales and Leeches* both will be released in October. Plus, I recently discovered Philadelphia's premiere swank rock duo, Lantern. Their *Rock-n-Roll Rorschach* album is roasting my melon. Thanks to Real Ale's Iron Swan Ale, I've finally been spinning *The Sword's Gods of The Earth* record on repeat, and thanks to an old friend I've recently become reacquainted with The Car's *Candy-O* record. All of these deserve a bit more time and attention. Praise God I've got two ears. —KEVIN STILL

My eyes flicker between the shimmer of the moon night light on the surface of the watery ripples, and the seemingly infinite horizon that forever lays just out of reach as though tomorrow will bring us closer to grabbing that which cannot be touched... Sweat forms in the corners of my eyes. They're not tears I swear—merely sweat from the humidity of the Gulf - nothing else. Foot prints left by travelers past lead me on a wild goose chase into the sand dunes where I find enough empty beer cans to make a poor man rich and trash to make a landfill full.

A boat horn sounds in the distance and I decide to light my last cigarette. Morning is practically here and yet somehow I am not. Go figure. Illusions... Allusions... Intrusions of self doubt mixed bouts of undeserved pride. With each drag of my smoke I feel somewhere deep inside that I am hopelessly looking for something I will never find. The only certainty I have is that if I smoke enough of these damn things and keep drinking like a fish eventually my body will "tap out" of the great boxing match of life. Suicide is painless they say, but so why not take it slow. Enjoy the ride if you can—sense we only get one shot at misery after all.

Dawn's arrived. I know because I can hear the beeping of my damn alarm. I'm not sure why I still set the damn thing—it's not like I really truly am needed anywhere. I have nowhere to go. Perhaps that's why I set it?... I'd just ask myself but I know I'll probably just lie. Can fate be oh so cruel? Can life really be about striving for mediocrity? Or is the act of rejecting mediocrity now in itself more mediocre then mediocrity? A crumpled newspaper blows past my feet and catches me unaware. It occurs to me that "news" makes life feel as though we are outsiders to ourselves. Judging on a podium of stacked phone books. No one cares why we are here anymore. Hell most don't even ever know they are "here" or where the hell "here" is. I know I've thought I have known in the past, and perhaps I did. Like most other things with time I have forgotten. Without importance stressed knowledge escapes back to the depths of the unknown... Much like a forgotten 80's Bad Religion album...

Hell was once a place of comfort in my mind, but soon the glowing lakes of fire turned to wells of murky oily sludge... As I walk I continue to reminisce about what I once thought heaven was. Boy was I naive. A place clean of filth, with choirs of joyous souls harmonizing in songs of rapture... It now seems to me that we come from the dark to live by/ near the light only to return to the dark...no cobbled scrolls of fortune, no sacred cows or holy tablets. It's all a hoax. A grand universal cosmic laugh in my face to knock me on my ass in tears like a hapless child. No it's all-fake. There is no luck. There is truly no me. Merely impressions of my fourth dimensional shadows represented in a 2D rendering of a 3D object.... Perception a joke created for those with "fore sight"... The "dark suckers" start to turn off... The day is officially here. Thankfully, my lucky rabbits paw will keep me safe one more day—I just know it... Though, tomorrow's another story... Today I'll just crush shells between my toes...and who knows perhaps my luck will change... - WILLIAM DANIEL THOMPSON

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If you happen to be reading my latest while dining out, the odds that you chose the restaurant as a result of reading Yelp are about as good as a hair making an appearance in your soup. If that's so, the place is also likely to be crawling with Yelpers. If your use of Yelp is limited to consulting the site for restaurant recommendations, you might be hard-pressed to identify the yelpers. Fret not, dear reader: identifying a Yelper is easier than identifying a Mason.

One thing yelpers don't do is acknowledge fellow Yelpers with a series of gestures that, to the unfamiliar, resembles the carryings-on of the lunatic. What I've described does not become the Yelper—too gauche in such posh surroundings, as is a holler of "Hey, girl!" across a crowded restaurant. You'll have to work a little harder to suss the Yelper, but not too much. If you spot someone in the foyer with a look of chagrin furiously scribbling something on his phone, you've likely identified a Yelper, one who's upset that he hasn't yet been seated during peak hours. They also like to gather in groups. If you spot a party of three to five whose badinage is restrained yet hearty, you've likely identified a pack of yelpers.

At this point, some disclosure is in order: I consult Yelp for a number of things, from finding out where a guy might get a good egg roll in this town to where I might find an obscure plumbing part. I also Yelp. I Yelp when my wife and I have eaten a meal worth Yelping about (good or bad), about service received at a given business (more likely when the service is egregious such that, I like to think, I'm assuming the role of a consumer advocate), and, often, for the sheer joy of writing and the hell of it. One of the personae I like to assume is that of the lout. Boy I'll bet that makes Yelp mad. That tickles the devil out of me.

Still, to my mind, none of my Yelping activities qualify me as a Yelper. I like the Grateful Dead, but I don't have the stomach to be a Deadhead. I can't drop everything, pack a plastic shopping bag, and travel from one corner of the country to the other expecting everyone to give me money and food at all points of my psychedelic journey. Likewise, I don't have the commitment, nor the savoir faire peculiar to Yelp, necessary to fully surrender myself. I am perfectly happy with my Yelp outsider status, and I enjoy shopping at Big Lots and other businesses that attract a cheapskate like me. Yelp just seems too rich for my blood.

I say, without shame, that I don't have the cultivation required for full membership. Lack of cultivation is distinct from being an uneducated rube, which I am not (I paid good money for my degrees). I am, largely, disinterested in self-cultivation, and fully distrustful of cultivation as an enterprise.

For one, cultivation is conspicuous. With the Information Age (is the term too quaint? Does it beg cultivation?) in full swing, one cannot afford to be caught with his pants down. His boss might be looking! Worst still, his boss' boss might be looking over the shoulder of his boss! That's why he's advised to mind his P's and Q's and take down that profile picture taken on he night he stuck the lampshade on his head and balanced a Budweiser tall boy on it. The savages he hung out with that night sure got a kick of it. The boss, on the other hand, is less than amused with his employee's shenanigans. "Does he do that when I'm not looking?" The picture he took at MoMA speaks better of him. Now the boss thinks his employee is smart and cultured.

For another, cultivation is an act of negation. When a person takes voice and diction lessons in an effort to remove all vestiges of his Southern twang (and, by extension, those that betray his Southern upbringing) and winds up sounding like

yelping about

William F. Buckley, that person engages in cultivating himself out of existence. No longer can his peers claim that he's "white trash like me." His boss thinks he's well-spoken.

Ultimately, acts performed in the name of cultivation are designed to help one get a leg up in the class above that he currently occupies, while, at the same time, his perceived lessers' grip loosens, a most propitious, welcome byproduct. When one's grown sick and tired of driving that hunk of junk, eating junk, and staying at home and watching junk because he can't afford to go out and, as I've heard it put, "hang with the effective crowd," he's advised to take up ostentatious jogging, use NPR and *The Daily Show* as his sources for current events, both political and cultural, and start watching *Girls* because it serves as the voice for not only its generation, but, better put, the Zeitgeist. He's advised to list them as favorites on Facebook. His boss thinks he's hip and fit. He can work some overtime without breaking a sweat, and look cool doing it.

His friends will also advise him to splurge once in a while. There's this place, Godot's. I read about it on Yelp. It just opened up. Me and some buddies from the office are going on Friday after work. Dude, their happy hour is supposed to be cray-cray, and they have a Four Horsemen, except they call theirs the Five Horsemen! It's supposed to be in-teeeeenese. Dude, I'm worried about you, bro. Tell you what, bro—first horsemen's on me.

His friend is right, so he'll go. He'll drink six Five Horsemen, eat a Kobe beef burger with serrano ham, have some selfies taken, deal with the hangover on Saturday, and finagle rent on Monday. His friends will drive him home because he had one horseman too many, and he'll spend much of the latter part of Saturday and Sunday scrubbing off the dicks his pals drew all over him Friday night because he can't go in looking like that on Monday. He's advised to check Facebook sometime over the weekend—there are pictures up that his boss won't like.

Yelp is an all but essential vehicle if he wants to show everyone how much he's grown. "We Waited at godot's For What Seemed, Like, an Eternity Before We Were Seated."

Food has become as treasured as books and virginity used to be, and Yelpers seem to know better about what tastes good than anyone else. One Yelper's nickname (Yelp asks you to choose a nickname, and I'm certain that all power Yelpers have one) is "french fries...hand cut, fried twice, no exceptions. got it?" Got it boss man, right away, and hand cut, if you're reading this, like, duh! Not only do Yelpers know what tastes good, they also know where to get it. Moreover, Yelpers aren't ginger when it comes to writing about their transcendent eating experiences. It seems that they reserve their most florid prose for the most floridly priced and praised restaurants. What follows are examples of purple prose written about a Houston establishment called The Hay Merchant, a relatively recent addition to Montrose that boasts 274 reviews and an aggregate Yelp score of four stars. My wife and I visited The Hay Merchant three or four times when we were the drinking kind.

First, my review (not published on Yelp): Quality and sheer selection of beers considered, a wealthy man could conceivably drink his way to a happy death. I wish I could say the same for the food! I've had a hamburger/chili-cheese fries combo from Sonic that was comparable in most ways, save price. The wealthy man is well advised to spend his food dollar at The Hay Merchant's next-door neighbor, Underbelly,

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between bouts, if the scuttlebutt is to be trusted.

Hope my boss isn't reading this! Why don't we, instead, read the words that come from more informed tongues? Their words follow:

"I put the fun in funeral!" luxuriated re: the pig ears: "The pig ears were amazing-like fried bacon, but better." (sic) [Five Stars];

No Nickname wrote, "Astonishing beer selection and inventive, delicious pub menu. I love this place. Sadly though, on our most recent visit (a busy Wednesday), the service was abysmal. Complete indifference from the front staff. I'll be back for the food and drink, and hopefully they'll get their act together on the service end." [Four Stars]

Finally, and from undoubtedly the Yelper with the best Yelp nickname I've encountered yet, "PRUEVIT - that's what my license plate says":

"Ok, I'm a little late on writing this review, but wanted to definitely get this one in! Great place for dinner, drinks, oh and did I say drinks. Beer—tons of everything on tap, mainly from local (Texas) breweriness and they are indeed tasty. Lots of Belgium esque beer, mmmm. Food, great and good healthy portions. Fried chicken and macaroni are phenominal, gotta love it. Great portions too. You can go here to have a nice dinner with friends at a table, or drinks and food at the bar, or just plain old drinks at the bar or outside on the patio. It's not your typical bar scene, which is nice. Go here to drink good beer, eat good food, and just chill. Just go! (sic)" [Four Stars]

Besides licentious spelling and grammar (though, in "Pruevit"'s defense and in his words, he "definitely had to get [his review] in"), one item of note is the Most Sensibly Nicknamed No Nickname's mention of "abysmal" service. I've read more than my fair share of restaurant reviews on Yelp, and, surely as ants will swarm a dog a day dead, a Yelper will Yelp about a service slight, busy night or not. In my experience as a restaurant gadabout, I can recall but two instances of service so bad that they warranted any amount of attention; for Yelpers, bad service seems like a fait accompli. Never does bad service go unmentioned. Yelpers don't go out with a whimper. Many of them yelp before leaving.

Bad service's frequency of mention leads me to believe that service, or maybe even the food, is not the true subject of discussion at all. Really, the Yelper Yelps about himself. If, like me, you're the type of masochist who'll endure mild discomfort in the name of entertainment, surely you've noticed this, too. If you really want to get your kicks, make friends with someone who's well-heeled with yelp and beg this new friend to invite you to a Yelp Elite party.

I've attended several of these so-called "Elite" parties (short and blunt, becoming an Elite is nothing like becoming a Green Beret), and, enjoying the privileges membership bestows, if only for an evening, I cadged all the high-class food and drink I wanted. Almost as much, I enjoyed listening to Yelpers Yelp on and on about themselves. If they're to be believed, Yelpers are true movers and shakers, real shapers of opinion who dropped the names of cool people, places that pained them to pronounce, and shiny things they paid pretty pennies for with the same elan it took to fill their faces with free food, and every bit as effortlessly as the fellow who stopped, dropped, and yelped after the house had served him one too many pink drinks. I wonder whether Yelpers have ever Yelped about Yelp or Yelpers other than themselves (if I were a Yelper, yes.) I also wonder whether the Yelper who Yelped a night's worth of pink drinks is still in Yelp's good graces.

This past weekend, my wife and I decided that we desperately needed a foray well outside Montrose, which, for me at least, had become too stifling due, in part, to the unbending smirks its new

residents probably picked up at Walmart. They'd never tell you, and they'd sooner do that than Yelp about Walmart and its smirk aisle. We were on the way to Katy when we'd just passed the entertainment complex on I-10 across the street from Ikea. We'd both heard about about this Asian buffet that sits near a bowling alley within the complex. As legend has it, the buffet is a like a double decker luxury liner filled to groaning with food, only moored adjacent to a Dave and Buster's and the bowling alley.

Traffic was only getting thicker the farther west we went, and we were starved. We were fast upon the U-Turn when we decided to ditch the Katy idea and head for the buffet. When we hit the eastbound feeder, our excitement mounted. Still, I was a bit apprehensive.

Opinion about the place was as colorful and loud as a grown man brought to his knees by a pink drink too many, except on Yelp. The place had been reviewed seventy-four times, and had an aggregate score of three stars. Sushi was good, not great. Selection was dazzling, and every item was good, but not up to Yelp snuff. As I negotiated the left turn to the restaurant, I chuckled to myself. "Gets three stars on Yelp. Can't be that bad!"

All that food (including a churrascaria?), but no egg rolls? The sushi was not only not great, it was also hot and gray in the middle. My mind was made, and my notes detailed. I, too, would weigh in. I didn't think twice.

Five Stars.

I told you I'm not a Yelper.—DONALD B. MAYNE

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MR: Can you tell me a little bit about how BLSHS was formed?

Rick: Chris and I have been playing for a while, and we've always toyed with the idea of starting a project involving a female vocalist. We did a bit of looking around for awhile and finally synced up with Michelle. After seeing some videos of her doing some covers we were hooked. Chris immediately replied to the email to set up a time for us all to meet, and discuss our goals for the group. It was very apparent in the meet-up that the fit was great right off the bat. Shortly after, we began meeting up and crafting our style.

MR: What are the musical backgrounds?

Rick: I played percussion from grades 6-12 in school—that included drumline, jazz band, etc. After I graduated, I played drums for a couple of punk bands, but never really did much with it. It wasn't until my uncle, DJBIGWIZ, gave me a copy of Reason that I began making beats again. This was around 2003, and all I did was make drum-and-bass. I didn't do that for very long before I quit making music, but I always had a passion for it and I wanted to pursue it again at some point. I met Chris at work in 2010, and we really hit it off. We both shared a big passion for music, and we would always talk about forming a group. Finally, one day we got tired of talking and decided to do something about it—and here we are.

Michelle: I learned to play keyboard at a very young age from my grandmother; she and my grandfather played in a country band together, and I was always inspired by their passion for music. From the age of 10 I began learning songs by ear on piano and singing along for fun. I also was in band from 6th to 12th grade in school; I played flute during concert season for all six years, and during my junior and senior year I played snare drum during marching season. I continued to play piano and sing in my spare time for fun, but did not gain the courage to overcome my stage fright and perform live vocals until November of 2011, when my brother convinced me to join his electro/hip-hop group as a backup singer. My brother and I began collaborating on some tracks that he produced at that time, and continue to do so today in our spare time. He is a big influence on who I have become as a songwriter and as a vocalist; his encouragement and our collaborative efforts on projects really gave me the push I needed to pursue my passion for music more seriously. With my new found courage and drive for success in music, I began taking vocal and piano lessons locally. I sang at some open mic nights during late 2012 early 2013, and was eventually was networked with Chris and Rick which resulted in the formation of BLSHS.

Chris: I started playing bass guitar in high school, which eventually led to guitars, then drum machines, samplers and synths. I've been using computers to record, manipulate and sequence music since the programs like Hammerhead, Fruity Loops and Rebirth came out. Previously I've played in all kinds of bands from nu-metal bands in the late 90s to acoustic rock bands to experimental live-looping guitar + laptop IDM.

MR: Historically, who are some of y'all's favorite artists? Pop or otherwise.

Chris: Wow, we each listen to a ton of music, we are always on Spotify or Sound Cloud seeking out new jams or rediscovering old ones. Rick was on a Club Nouveau kick a few weeks ago and is currently listening to a lot of Future Unlimited, Prince Innocence, Still Corners, Kendrick Lamar and Rush Midnight. Oh and that new Jensen Sportag!

Rick: Chris could listen to only Depeche Mode and Com Truise all day every day but has been into Be the Wolfe, Soft Lighting, Alaska in Winter and Diamond Rings recently.

Michelle: I have CHVRCHES and Disclosure on heavy repeat and I'm regularly on YouTube (Majestic Casual, The Sound You Need) or cruisin' around listening to EDM music on the BPM Satellite radio channel. My all-time faves include: Imogen Heap, Paramore, and Ellie Goulding. Collectively we all <3 Madonna, HAIM, Prince Innocence, Still Corners, Michael Jackson, Phil Collins, x Priest x, Prince, CHVRCHES, Rush Midnight, Art of Noise, Imogen Heap, La



profile by



Roux, Glass Candy, Grimes, Run DMC, Beastie Boys, and LL Cool J.

MR: BLSHS is indeed evocative. Anything influence the group outside of music?

Chris: Each song that we write is inspired by a variety of influences in our personal lives. We definitely try to breathe life into each song by giving it a very personal and introspective touch. Lyrically, Michelle pulls from personal experiences, relationships and the people that have touched her life, emotions, dreams, memories, and anything that she reads or

blshs

minny roe



sees that inspires her such as a quote, a movie, or a photograph. The instrumental production is equally inspired by emotions, dreams, and personal experiences, along with nostalgia, patterns, movies, and design.

MR: Can you tell me about recording Abstract Desires? How did you hook up with Synth Records?

Chris: When we first started working on Abstract Desires we decided to spend a month just writing new demos for the EP. We already had several songs that we loved, but within the first week the new ideas were just on a new level. We had just

finished spending the previous month rehearsing our live set and playing the same songs over and over and over. Getting back in the studio after that is exciting enough on its own, then getting on Synth Records pushed that excitement over the edge. Everyone on the label is killing it and honestly, it is a little intimidating. We took all of that excitement and energy and poured everything we had into the demos. Rick gave himself the very ambitious goal of making a new beat everyday that month and almost every night there would be a new beat in dropbox for Chris to add some synths to. We were moving so fast and noticed when Michelle started sending back the ideas with vocals that a new, darker, more minimal sound was emerging. During that first month of writing we really found our sound. We are really excited to be able to share these new songs with everyone soon. We are currently finishing recording vocals and mixing, so we are getting close. We've been doing some sneak peeks of rough mixes through our Facebook page and if you follow us on Instagram you can see and hear the songs develop with us.

Michelle: How did we hook up? We get this question a lot. Hooking up with Synth Records happened very organically. Rick and Chris were fans of Teel since ISO50 first blogged about him and eventually they started connecting through social networks. This quickly grew from fanship to mutual friendship with the three sharing a love for 80s movies, good music, synthesizers, drum machines and graphic design. SXSW 2012 would see this friendship go offline and really grow. This was all happening as we (Chris and Rick) started making music together. From giving us our first remix opportunity to just being there to talk to about production, Jim has been a great friend, very supportive and encouraging. Thank you Jim, we love you man.

(Fun Fact: Jim originally suggested the name Blushes to us.)

MR: Are there any other Texas synth pop outfits that you can turn us on to?

Chris: Bang Bangz (Houston) - Super talented duo that makes dreamy, moody, sexy, electro-pop. Mario blends electronic music, synthesizers, guitar and bass with ease creating the perfect soundscape for Elizabeth's beautiful, haunting vocals. <http://bangbangz.com>

Missions (Austin) - Dark, heavy, abstract, experimental, post-everything. Sounds like early Depeche Mode in slow motion in the best possible way. <https://soundcloud.com/missionsinspace>

Sleep Over (Austin) - Dreamy, lo-fi, synth-gaze. <https://soundcloud.com/sleep-over>

GEODESICS (Austin) - Instrumental, electronic/electro beats with gorgeous dream-pop melodies. Geodesics manages to sound both 80s and futuristic at the same time. <https://soundcloud.com/geodesicsmusic>

George West (Houston) - Ex-Bang Bangz drummer, turned solo experimental beat maker. Currently working on his first EP coming in December. Can't wait to hear more from him. <https://soundcloud.com/vikmonte>

TSF & MsMotif6 (Austin) - Randomly came across them on YouTube recently. Don't know much about them except that they make some of the best 80s instrumental synth-pop, program their own patches and play it all in live. Never ending lead synth lines that never get old. <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheSynthFreq>

MR: Are y'all playing shows in Houston currently? When can we expect some Texas dates?

Right now we are taking a break from playing live, locked away in the studio to finish Abstract Desires. You'll probably see us back out there starting in November. Possibly sooner. We can't wait to play these new songs live and should be playing frequently by the end of the year.

FIND BLSHS ON THE WEB AT
<http://soundcloud.com/blshs>

record reviews

WISE UP GHOST

AND OTHER SONGS

2013

ELVIS COSTELLO
AND
THE ROOTS

NUMBER ONE

Elvis Costello & The Roots *Wise Up Ghost*

I hate it when I read a review of an album I really want to hear BEFORE I actually hear the album. Especially if the review is from Pitchfork and DOUBLE ESPECIALLY if it's a heritage musician that I am a super big fan of. So imagine my consternation upon reading Pitchfork's review of *Wise Up Ghost*, the new joint from Elvis Costello & The Roots. "He doesn't use the band to its fullest potential. There's no rapping or beat boxing on this album. Blah blah blah boat shoes."

To expect that a collaboration between these two musical titans would be a Fred Durst meets Wu Tang melding of the minds is to miss the point entirely. The Roots may have been from 1994-2010 one of America's most innovative hip hop artists but from 2010 to the present The Roots have become night time TV's most exciting live band, putting every other late night talk show's house band entirely to shame. The Roots have shown their ability to play pretty

much any type of popular music effectively over and over on their house gig with Jimmy Fallon's show, both as participants in Jimmy's musical gags and as accompaniment to the show's guests. Early last year one such episode had The Roots backing Elvis Costello with amazing intimacy. It was revealed that night the two artists would be working on an album together.

The Roots guide Costello's artful tunesmithery with deft flourishes of late '60s soul, blaxploitation soundtrack music, dub reggae style bass drops and bleeps and bleeps, Philadelphia uptown soul string interludes, 70s psychedelic funk and modern NY hip-hop...without either The Roots or Elvis Costello really crossing over much in attempt to adapt their style to fit the other too much. "Refuse To Be Saved" shows this off to perfect example with horn stabs, a breezily shuffling hipswinging beat from human MPC ?uestlove, with occasional guitar white noise crashes flown in, Kingston organ and EC harmonizing himself in the indelible chorus before an awesomely arranged bit of Gamble and Bell orchestration carries you out. Best of all, it sounds like everyone is having a fucking blast playing this music together.

There's no groundbreaking or genre-shattering here. Costello isn't revealing anything new (heck, "Stick Out Your Tongue" is like a best-of from previous Elvis lyrics jammed in from previous classic songs). But what you get, if you are a fan of The Roots, is to hear them blend so many different black musics together in such a

way that it could be used as a tome for 200-level class on African Music Diaspora behind an elegant wordsmith who appears to be more engaged and alive with The Roots jabbing the funk up his ass than anything The Imposters have served him in recent years (no offense to them, as I love what they do as well). This is quite simply one of Elvis Costello's finest works and shows the world that The Roots are perhaps THE band to hire if you want to lively up yourselves.—KELLY MINNIS

strengths of *Innocents* are the instrumentals: the majestic and moving "Everything That Rises" that opens the album (one of his best tracks ever), the quiet "Going Wrong," and the crackling "Saints" that uses a wordless voice as another instrument.

Less successful are the number of collaborations. Two tunes featuring "Cold Specks" largely fail due to the weak tunes although "A Case for Shame" does reach a level of competency. The tunes by others (Danien Jurado, Mark Lanegan, Inyang Bassey, Wayne Coyne, and Skylar Grey) fail to connect unless one is a particular fan of the performer—and maybe not even then. The nine-minute-plus album closer "The Dogs" has some marvelous sounds that Moby is noted for, but there's not anything that listeners haven't heard before. And that's not necessarily bad. At least, he's still recording.

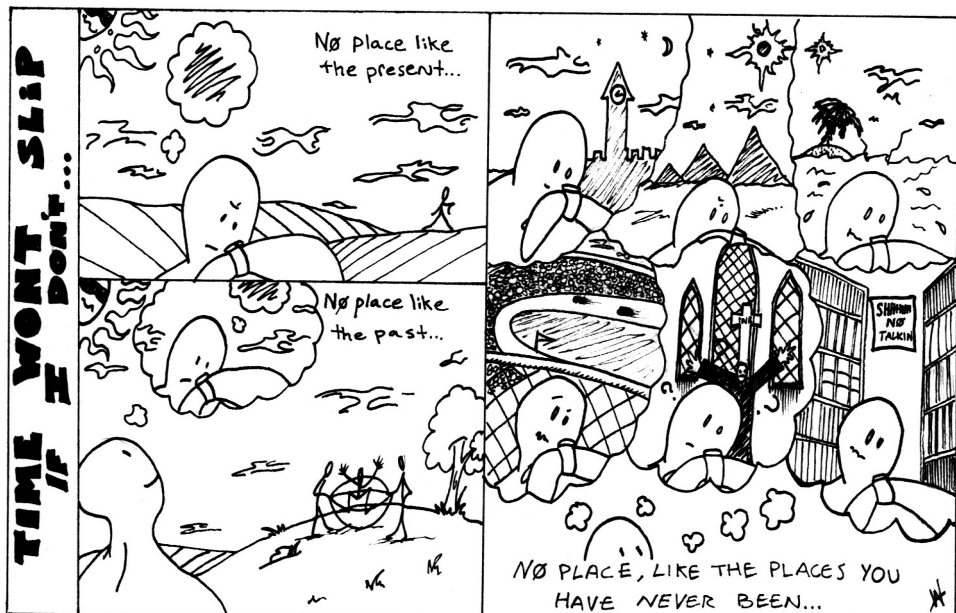
Since Moby doesn't have to record anymore due to his enormous success, he still releases music that features his signature talent, but he also is guilty of dabbling ("Hey, what if I get all these varied vocalists to come to my apartment and sing on my songs and then I'll have an album"). How lazy is that? It would have been better to have those collaborations on an EP and the "real" music on another. Moby, however, can do whatever he wants, so he does. Listeners get what they can. Buy the tunes you like, which may be what he was figuring all along.—MIKE L. DOWNEY



Moby *Innocents*

Star Wars I—The Phantom Menace was in the theaters; Bill Clinton was president; and Nelson Mandela was heading South Africa when Moby became an international music star in 1999. His 11th studio album has hints of what made him that star, but it's also indicative of what happens when you become a star.

The dance music that launched Moby is largely gone, yet his ability to craft music is unabated. The



concert calendar

10/3—Jonathan Tyler & The Northern Lights @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

10/4—Featherface @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

10/5—The Hangouts, Girl Band, The Ex-Optimists, Mike the Engineer, Galactic Morgue, The Escatoners @ New Republic Brewery, College Station. 8pm

10/6—Mushroomhead, One-Eyed Doll, Signal Rising @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

10/10—Band of Heathens @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

10/11—Sphynx, Marmalakes, Major Major Major, Mike the Engineer @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

10/12—BTHO Breast Cancer with Everyone Dies In Utah, The Hangouts, Myra Maybelle, ASS, Insurgence, Inside Falling Skies, Isonomist, Should've Been Cowboys, Aphotic Contrivance, Endepth, Close To Design @ Grand Stafford & Revolution, Bryan. 5pm

10/18—Haywood, Whiskey Shivers, Hello Wheels @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

10/19—Mike Stud, Marc Goone @ Schotzis, College Station. 9pm

10/19—Punk Rock Prom 2 with Girl Band, Supedragon, Okami Kids, Talk Sick Brats, Pink Smoke @ Revolution, Bryan. 9pm

10/24—Alpha Rev, Quiet Company, The Lonely Hunter, The Reynolds Number @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

10/25—Grupo Fantasma @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

10/27—Brazos Valley Derby Girls vs. Bexar County @ Bryan VFW. 6pm

10/27—Otonana Trio, Babylon Breakers, Gelatine, RIPPER, Girl Band @ Revolution, Bryan. 7pm

10/28—Nonpoint, Uneath, My Ticket Home, Digital Collapse, Myra Maybelle, In the Trench @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 6pm

10/31—10 Years, Kyng, All Hail the Yeti @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

11/8—Shinyribs @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

11/9—Rock 103.9 Homebrew presents No Such Thing, A Good Rogering, Myra Maybelle, Predominant Mortification @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

Pedal Pushing: *Fredric Zombie Klone*

I spend a lot of time on guitar forums. That can be a good thing and it can most certainly be a bad thing. There is one guitar pedal out there that elicits forum responses of all three kinds, a pedal so divisive that just its mere mention can spark derision, skepticism and outright worship. That pedal is the Klon Centaur. It is a simple overdrive pedal that is meant to goose your tube amplifier into driving its preamp into distortion, and, for those amps that won't distort at the front end, the Centaur will add a little dirt of its own to the mix to give you that cookin' tube amp sound. There are easily hundreds of other overdrive pedals out there with their own host of devotees: the Ibanez Tube Screamer, the Boss Super Overdrive, the Hermida Zendrive, the Paul Cochrane Timmy, the Analogman King of Tone, the Fulltone OCD, and many other flavors and tweaks of these pedals. None of these pedals inspires quite the same reaction as the Cult of Klon, which is, quite possibly, the catalyst for bringing the boutique pedal movement to the forefront.



For a quick backstory: Bill Finnegan, in the attempt to build a better overdrive pedal, created the Klon Centaur in the early '90s. To keep others from copying his designs he gooped up the insides to cover up the circuitry. He sold these pedals out of his garage and then on the Internet. As the word quietly got out that the Klon was the secret weapon in many professional guitarists' pedalboard orders went crazy. He had a years long waiting list for his pedal. People who couldn't wait to get their own started paying exuberant prices on Ebay for theirs (at the time we're talking \$600-\$800 for an original Centaur). Eventually Finnegan farmed production out to a foreign builder and the Klon KTR was released in 2011. It sold out real quick and Finnegan, who is reportedly "a complete OCD kind of guy" decided production quality wasn't up to his standards and he discontinued the KTR that year. Now KTR's trade regularly over \$600 and original Centaurs trade for around \$1200.

So what's the big fucking deal? Does the Klon make you play better? Does it make your guitar play itself? And how could you ever find out, since it takes a mortgage payment to get one? Eventually someone degooped a Centaur and the circuit has since been copied by dozens of boutique pedal-makers, including England's Fredric, who makes perhaps the smallest size Klon clone (referred to as a Klone). The original is fairly large and the Zombie Klone is in an MXR-sized enclosure (though turned sideways). The Zombie klone is wired 100% to spec, an exact clone of the Klon Centaur. I recently took one on, and was prepared to be underwhelmed, as I had pretty much dismissed the Klon hype as just that: hype. The Klone is a great overdrive pedal. Turning it on at unity gives your signal a fatter, rounder, more present sound. Setting your amp at the edge of distortion and using the Klone to send it over the edge as a straight signal boost is definitely worth all the Internet splooging. It is not a mid hammer like the Tubescreamer and its derivatives

that tightens lows to extinction (I like a thick loose bottom end). It just makes your guitar sound, I dunno, bigger. I don't particularly care for it as a straight overdrive for a high headroom amp (though Wonko the Sane does and uses another maker's Klone as a part of his pedalboard). What I also like a lot about this particular Klone is that it plays VERY well with all my other dirt and fuzz pedals. And I've had a REAL hard time finding a boost or overdrive that would work well in that context.

A Klon is NOT worth \$1200. But at the relatively affordable \$159 for a Zombie Klone it is somewhat easy now to try out the Klon. There's also a lot of good stuff written about JHS's Klone (though, as it is also out of production it goes now around \$400) and Arc Effect's Klone is also well reviewed (and comes in a good \$60 more than the Zombie Klone). If you too have been intrigued with the Klon and want to give it a shot the Fredric Zombie Klone is one of the most inexpensive ways to do it.—KELLY MINNIS

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