

97.1 REPRESENT



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LOUD!FEST

also inside: your guide to loudfest 7 - the world ain't flat - the legacy of donald sterling - 22 - still poetry - pedal pushing - willie nelson tribute - into the drink - record reviews - concert calendar



**979represent is a local magazine
for the discerning dirtbag.**

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THE WORLD AIN'T FLAT

I was just thinking the other day, whilst perusing headlines of continued global economic malaise, the reports of American companies "insourcing" manufacturing and call centers that were once outsourced to other countries, and what appears to be the beginnings of the reassembly of the Soviet Union that the very early 21st century concept of a "flat world" has turned out to be complete pie-in-the-sky hokey.

Let me backtrack a bit. The concept of a "flat world" was introduced in the late 1990s in a series of columns by *New York Times* economic writer Thomas Friedman, resulting in several books on the concept, including the penultimate *The World Is Flat* in 2005. The idea is that technology would create communications lines that would flatten the playing field of commerce for all world economies. The flat world would eliminate poverty through providing steady work for all in emerging economies; war would be eliminated because it would disturb countries' commerce too much for it to be risked; it would revolutionize the idea of being a world citizen and de-emphasize border lines and nationalism. Basically, a flat world promotes utopianism through free commerce.

What Thomas Friedman didn't take into consideration while building his figurative Tower of Babel was that human nature will *always* fuck up your perfect idea.

Whilst the world was busy moving towards this "flat earth" ideal a bunch of trends conspired at once to undo it: first it was radical Muslim terror then followed by the intense greed of rich White people that ultimately derailed the world's economy by toppling the first domino (American, naturally) with the other big economies following suit. While America played its war games in the Middle East, sneaky white collar cashchuckers figured out how to make a killing off of middle class debt before it got well out of their control, blew up in their face and came within inches of destroying the Western world's economy. Those cashchuckers stayed rich throughout the crisis and then ultimately got richer thanks to the bank bailouts; meanwhile the middle class of the first world got hollowed out, everyone's 401K's got erased, and everyone still spends tentatively and lives hand to mouth. Pensioners in Europe bankrupted the nascent Euro zone and the concept of nationalism began to creep back into the flat world Utopia that Europe was working so desperately to create. Meanwhile, Russia, who has gained little advantage in the dissolution of the USSR and the move towards democracy, has very quietly consolidated power and is in the process of rebuilding the Soviet empire, one lost country-state at a time. After all, if this is what happens in a capitalistic society, why do they want a part in it?

Last night I picked up our copy of *The World Is Flat* and thumbed through it again. I haven't touched it since reading it in 2006. It's a very naive and earnest illusion that Friedman painted at the time, and I remember being somewhat skeptical, not just because it suggested a world that I wouldn't have much of an economic stake in, but because I felt like it underplayed the very basic underlying principle of humanity: that we fail, that we covet, that we cheat, that we horde, that we are imperfect creatures of hypocrisy. And now the openness that technology helped to create has begun to diminish as the world is being tempted hard by isolationism and the roll back of decades of progress.

It is amazing the subtle and nuanced ripples that poured through this world on the morning of September 11, 2001, and how those ripples continue to shape the world 13 years later. And probably will continue to shape our world for years to come. It is like our Great Depression, our World War II, our Baby Boom, our Watergate, our Vietnam all rolled up into one big mess that continues to evolve and roll the flatness of the world right back up into that all-too-familiar big round ball of confusion our parents and their ancestors were all too familiar with. —KELLY MINNIS

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22

So, May marks my one year anniversary writing for the 979. My first piece was called "21 and A Fucking Lion". It was a nostalgic piece commemorating me turning 21 and entering the romantic world of bars and this place I created inside my head. It was a toast, if you will; it was a pat on my own back for making it to 21 and not completely fucking up.

It's really funny when I read back on it. I was so excited about this world that was seen on movies and read in books. This world of independence and a level of adulthood I wanted to run into head first; it was something so new, so ready to be explored that I took a step and didn't look back. I walked into this seemingly magical place and came out crawling. I made it a point to push myself to the limits with everything I possibly could. I fell more times than I could count. I scraped my knees and scuffed my hands, I found and lost god, I snapped a few times, but that's what it's about. It's about going as hard as you possibly can and getting dirty, it's about testing every ounce of your being and getting back up when you trip and fall. It sucks, but 21 (for me) was a crash course in life. What a cliché.

In the beginning I spent every ounce of my free time I had at bars. As expected of course. I learned what I can and can't do. For instance: I can drink up to seven doubles containing vodka, but I can't drink seven doubles containing jack or pretty much any kind of whiskey. I can drive with five drinks down, after that I probably shouldn't. I can go two days without sleep, and I can go to work drunk and still be okay. I had my priorities the first few months. Just weekends turned into weekends plus Tuesdays; a few times weekends turned into Tuesdays and Thursdays. This entire year has been one giant party. Drink after drink, band after band, a game of pool after a game of pool. It's been one big fucking party.

But, there are consequences. Those suck. A few times I had a choice of booze or food. Of course I chose booze. I've eaten more Ramen this past year than I ever have in my existence. I went broke, I screwed up in school, I lost a lot of dignity and I've abandoned my faith a few times. Not just because of alcohol, but of other things I have done that I'm not too proud of. 21 has been an experience that I have craved. I have wanted this, all of it. I've wanted the hard times and I've wanted the good. I've given myself an entire year to do what I pleased, to completely fuck up and to be as free as I could be. 21 was a roller coaster with party hats and tears. It's been the best year for me, by far the most interesting and the most free for me.

I'll be 22 May 6th. This year is over and what it's done was made my curiosity spark into a forest fire. I want more. I don't want 22 to be just a party, but something more. I want to leave and see what this world is, what it's about, and how it works. I want to see as much as I possibly can while I'm still alive. I want to see trees taller than buildings, I want to see cities alive and breathing, I want to see people of all sorts walking and rushing to nowhere while I stride along foreign sidewalks admiring the world as art. That's my next step. To twirl into newer adventures and dangerous ideas; it's this deeply romantic idea of nomadism that I can't shake. Whether it'll happen this year or the next, will be the mystery. But, I say bring it. Give me what you got and I'll drag it through the mud. I'm too young to sit still but old enough not to care.—JESSICA LITTLE

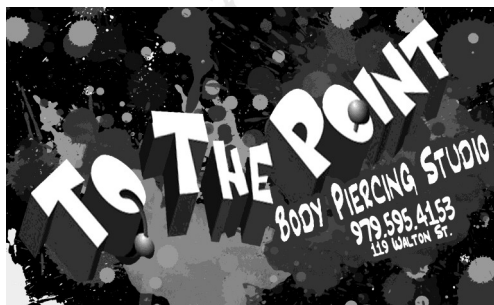
INTO THE DRINK: NEW REPUBLIC BRYANER WEISSE

Somehow I have become a default beer writer. Maybe because all the 979Represent beer writers are either just getting their sea legs back from extended periods away from alcohol, or because they are nursing babies, but since I am doing neither I become the go-to guy here. All I can base my beer writing on is what I'm drinking at the time. I'm not a "ooh, I'm going to buy as many different kinds of beers to experience" kind of beer drinker anymore. I'm fairly set in my ways. I've been drinking craft beer for 20 years now. I've lived on the West Coast in hops central during the real heyday of the microbrew boom. That said, I can still find a beer that I have never had before, and I'm not just talking about from a certain brewery.

There are still dozens of beer styles that I have never tried, usually because there are so many different variations of beers that are localized to tiny regions of central Europe that no one in America knows about, let alone knows enough to try and figure out how to replicate it or use it as a launching point for their own take on the style. How does one find out about these styles if they are not a globetrotter? I found about them from the Beer Bible, written by none other than the dearly departed Michael Jackson.

"Da fuck?" I hear you say. I am not talking about the King of Pop. I am talking about the King of Beer. The white, spectacled and bearded Michael Jackson was considered the father of critical beer drinking, the first to really give beer its culinary due. If you have ever had a beer matched to a food, you have Michael Jackson to thank for it. For centuries wine connoisseurs have sold the public on the idea of fine wine consumption, but the art of beer pairing and cataloging is in its infancy, really only getting its start in the 1970s. *Michael Jackson's Beer Companion* is a must-read for any halfway serious beer quaffer. It may be a tad dated (it was last updated in 1999) but you will learn a lot about the history of craft brewing. One of the styles of beer that Jackson details is what's called a Berliner Weisse. The style dates back to the 16th century in Germany and describes a cloudy, sour wheat beer that has been traditionally served with either a red syrup (raspberry) or green (woodruff). It is a style that has not been largely exported from the motherland. Imagine my surprise to discover that **New Republic Brewing Company** had their own version as a beta test draft early last month AND also had both syrups. I was more than excited to give this one a try.

I had a chance to taste the beer sans syrup first. It is indeed a sour, pale, cloudy wheat beer. It definitely is somewhat grassy and I felt that it was also somewhat salty in flavor. I took the bartender's advice and took my next schooner with a spoon of Waldmeistersirup, a green woodruff syrup. I have no idea what woodruff is or tastes like, but what I do know is that it made the beer very sweet and fruity, more like a beer soda, like a lambic or lamboise but still maintaining its beery character and those underlying grass and salt notes. I found it very refreshing and drank more of it than was probably good for me. I'd call it a winner. Sadly, New Republic scotched their next run of Bryaner Weisse so it may be some time before another batch is up and running. But when it is, you need to get your hiney out to New Republic and give it a shot.—KELLY MINNIS





adults is a somewhat new Bryan indie rock group. These three dudes have the choppy, English neo-postpunk sound of Bloc Party with the occasional Vampire Weekend skank, stoned-out falsetto vocals and bursts of snare drum fire.

adults plays Stafford Stage Thurs. 5/15 @ 12:15am
www.facebook.com/adultsbandramenwar

Remember when metalheads and punks started to check either out, in the mid '80s? Metallica wore Misfits t-shirts, Motorhead had been striding the divide between both worlds for years at the point. Crucial albums from Suicidal Tendencies and D.R.I. cemented the term "crossover" for metal bands who took the attitude and velocity of punk and melded it with metal palm-muted riffs and double kick drum onslaughts. Bryan/College Station has its very own crossover band, **ASS**. Punk rock vocals over doomy metal riffs that just beg for you to grab your Psycho Stick and drop in on a backyard halfpipe.

ASS plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Thurs. 5/15 @ 12:30am
www.facebook.com/assthrashpunk



The Appeals is a super group formed from members of Golden Sombrero, Mike The Engineer and Fistfull of Dollars. The Appeals is a straight-up Stooges-style early punk rock mess, with blues-based rock riffs atop a soul rhythm section and drunk punk rock vocals.

The Appeals plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 9pm
www.facebook.com/theappealstx

In the past year I've truly learned the international impact of American punk rock, having played with bands from all over the world that have come to tour the nation of Texas. Osaka, Japan's **Babylon Breakers** is one such band, that plays dirty, frenetic punk rock with complete abandon.

Babylon Breakers plays Revolution Indoor Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 11:30pm

New Orleans has become a hotbed for indie rock activity, and **The Bedroom** has become one of the scene's residents, bringing the rhythmic romance of late '80s C86 style dreamy Britpop not unlike Ocean Colour Scene or The Pains of Being Pure At Heart.

The Bedroom plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 10pm
www.facebook.com/thebdm



Houston punk rock rejects **The Born Liars** takes the genre back to its maximum R&B roots, blending The Who's working class boogie as channeled through The Jam with the classic adolescent roar of punk rock adding in quite a bit of the wry point of view of modern Houston.

The Born Liars plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Saturday 5/17 @ 10pm
www.myspace.com/thebornliars

Austin cyborg math-rock duo **Boss Battle** has risen from the ashes of the beloved Vulcan mindmeld Black Cock, blending a multimedia light show with their impossibly heavy and polyrhythmic rock. Imagine Brainiac if they had decided to come on with the power of Kyuss and the finesse of Unwound and you are halfway there.

Boss Battle plays Stafford Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 11:30pm
www.facebook.com/bossbattleband



Brand New Hearts is a Houston band after my own heart. The radio-ready emo-pop of Jimmy Eat World, early '90s DGC Records power pop and early '80s AOR radio are all touchstones for this excellent hard rock & roll band.

Brand New Hearts plays Stafford Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 9:30pm
www.facebook.com/BrandNewHearts



Bryan/College Station's **Electric Astronaut** takes modern alternative rock and kicks it in the teeth with a classic punk rock attitude and a two-guitar/two-vocal onslaught.

Electric Astronaut plays Stafford Stage Friday 5/16 @ 12:15am
www.facebook.com/electricastronaut

FEST

Empty Hollow is a Houston/Bryan quartet that fondly remembers mid '90s alternative radio rock proudly, and lets that influence inform its midtempo hard and heavy sound.

Empty Hollow plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 8pm
www.reverbnation.com/emptyhollow

You never quite know how **The Escatones'** shows are going to wind up: either in a pool of discarded clothes and beer suds or with the band watching as the audience plays the band's instruments. While the shows may be chaotic and unpredictable,

you can always rely that the band's psychedelic pop reminiscent of L.A.'s Paisley Underground of the early 1980s will always peak through the hysteria.

The Escatones plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 1am
www.reverbnation.com/The-Escatones/110675738999767



College Station indie rock quartet **The Ex-Optimists** has been clearing rooms with their ultraloud early '90s college radio alternative rock sounds for nearly six years now.

Bring earplugs and get ready to nod out.

The Ex-Optimists plays Revolution Indoor Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 1:30am
www.reverbnation.com/theexoptimists



Houston band **Funeral Horse** has perfected the crossbreeding of punk and stoner metal. Wait, how does *that* work? Because Funeral Horse has heard Black Flag's *My War* and the crazy postpunk of Scratch Acid and includes that into its unholy concoction of galloping New Wave of British Metal and sludge-tempo stoner metal. Doesn't sound like it would work but the Houston trio has got that shit on lockdown.

Funeral Horse plays Revolution Indoor Stage Friday 5/16 @ 10:30pm
www.facebook.com/FuneralHorse

Galactic Morgue is a doom metal band in the classic sense of the term, bringing the bent-note blues of Black Sabbath to thrash metal lightning fast riffs and barked vocals that would make Tom Araya proud.

Galactic Morgue plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Thursday 5/15 @ 11pm
www.soundcloud.com/galactic-morgue



Japan-via-Brooklyn outfit **Gelatine** is like a Japanese cartoon come to real life as a organ-wielding hardcharging manic punk rock band with more charisma than an entire year's worth of Austin indie rock band shows.

Gelatine plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Saturday 5/17 @ 12am
www.reverbnation.com/gelatine

Local punk rockers **Giriband** continues to drink everyone's beer, piss all over the floor but win over everyone's hearts with their back-to-basics punk rock sass.

Giriband plays Revolution Indoor Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 9:30pm
www.reverbnation.com/Giriband/213204058800384



LUCA hails from College Station and uses a lot of dynamics, bringing their songs up and down, coming on like a late 90s Seattle or Portland band with a lot of space in their music.



LUCA plays Stafford Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 8:45pm
<http://luca.bandcamp.com>

B/CS punk rock stalwarts **The Hangouts** describes themselves as "guitars with no knobs, skittle cracks, flipping drumsticks with no intention of catching them, pointy basses, tattoos and having lots of fun." Except you should add that their songs take less time than a real good piss.

The Hangouts plays Revolution indoor Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 1:30am
www.reverbnation.com/thehangouts



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Loudfest is the first show for B/C/S Midwestern late '80s style alt-rock/power pop quarter **The Inators**. They combine the heart-on-the-sleeve loser heartache of late period Replacements, early Goo Goo Dolls and early Soul Asylum with the bubblegum-chewing skinny-tie wearing glee of early '80s power pop.



The Inators plays Stafford Stage Thur. 5/15 @ 10pm
www.reverbnation.com/theinators



Austin's **Kingdom of Suicide Lovers** sounds like classic X reimagined as a first wave Paisley Underground band raised on a steady diet of Velvet Underground and Dream Syndicate bootlegs: scrappy psychedelic garage rock with a heady

dose of Spahn Ranch mania.

Kingdom of Suicide Lovers plays Revolution Indoor Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 9:30pm

www.facebook.com/kingdomofsuicidelovers



Jay Satellite is a four-piece band from Hutto that unabashedly rings out early '90s big guitar power pop with catchy melodies and songs you swear you've heard before...but there's a dark undercurrent to the lyrics and guitar chords and a quirkiness that shows their record collections go deep towards post-punk, goth, shoegaze and beyond. If you dig on Superdrag and Sugar you will certainly dig on Jay Satellite.

Jay Satellite plays Stafford Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 9:15pm

www.reverbnation.com/jaysatellite

Mother Ghost

hails from Houston, but sounds like they could have been formed on the banks of the Mersey in 1980. The band borrows heavily from early '80s new wave guitar rock with a snotty almost punk rock attitude.



Mother Ghost plays Revolution Indoor Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 8:30pm

www.facebook.com/MotherGhost



San Antonio ska punks **Kill Liberal** combine the speed of hardcore with the skank of second-wave Southern California ska punk bands but without being cutesy and pop about it.

Kill Liberal plays Revolution Indoor Stage Thur. 5/15 @ 10:30pm

www.facebook.com/pages/Kill-Liberal/162530570603766

King And Nation

consists of a bunch of Texas A&M college students making modern college radio indie pop.

King And Nations plays Stafford Stage Thur. 5/15 @ 10:45pm

www.facebook.com/kingandnation



Houston's **Knights of the Fire Kingdom** is a really good classic rock band. That is not a misprint or an insult. They play really hard and heavy rock sounds with incredibly catchy choruses, guitar solos, harmony vocals, and big rock endings with much intensity and ferocity. Easily one of the best shows you'll ever

see, AND you get to see it Loudfest.

Knights of the Fire Kingdom plays Revolution Indoor Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 10:30pm

<http://facebook.com/KnightsOfTheFireKingdom>

put on one hell of a show.

Mothracide plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Thur. 5/15 @ 9pm

www.facebook.com/mothracide

B/C/S metal crew Myra Maybelle

blends the melodic vocal style of the early days of strident heavy metal with death metal larynx shredding evil, while musically the band's guitarists harmonize classic metal lines but also pull it back for neck-snapping hardcore breakdowns and mathematical polyrhythms. Myra Maybelle looks forward and backwards at the same time. Must be hard on the eyes like that...

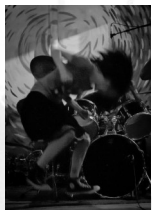
Myra Maybelle plays Stafford Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 11pm

www.facebook.com/pages/Myra-Maybelle/164644040337121

Houston rock oddballs **Only Beast** have a unique almost prog-ish kinda sound blended with late '80s college radio alternative rock and an almost gothic rock undertone...not to mention an arresting frontwoman.

Only Beast plays Stafford Stage Thur. 5/15 @ 11:30pm

www.facebook.com/OnlyBeast



Mothracide

is Bryan/College Station's agit-prop gonzo psychofuck metal band. Confrontational, beyond slightly mental, unpredictable and always guaranteed to

The early '90s was a time when the all-female loud rock band became somewhat accepted to the average dude rocker. Aside from Joan Jett or maybe Throwing Muses there really wasn't much else to get excited about. Lita Ford was a shadow of her awesome Runaways self. Vixen? Oh brother. Austin's **One Good Lung** puts both leather-booted feet squarely in that L7—early Hole—Babes In Toyland territory, but adds a stoner rock haze and a slightly noisy no-wave tint to it. The overall effect is psychedelic and headbanging all at the same time.



One Good Lung plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Thur. 5/15 @ 12am
www.facebook.com/onegoodlung

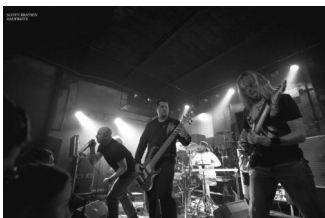


Atarimatt tells me, "Man, I'm booking this crazy band from Austin, **Rubella Muti**, for Loudfest." That was two years ago, and minds were suitably blown by this mostly instrumental prog-meets-thrash metal trio. And we booked them again so minds can be blown all over again.

Rubella Muti plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 1am
www.myspace.com/rubelamuti

College Station's **Signal Rising** are a very heavy modern hard rock band that balance catchy songwriting with deep groove-heavy metal-leaning post-grunge hard rock.

Signal Rising plays Stafford Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 11:45pm
www.signalrising.com



SkyAcre is definitely Austin's best math rock band. Loud quiet, soft hard, always dark, always intricate, always rocking. The band can get way small and then slam you to the back of the room with blunt force, while treading deftly

through stop-start arrangements and more odd time signatures than a prog band on crack. Now condensed to a trio, SkyAcre hits even harder.

SkyAcre plays Revolution Indoor Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 12:30am
www.skyacremusic.com

StereoType is a young College Station hip-hop crew that won the hearts of many at Loudfest two years back, and are back for another set of Down South swagger.

StereoType plays Stafford Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 7:15pm

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Something Called Nothing hails from Austin, and kicks out classic rockabilly with a punk rock heart and a vocalist in Virginia Lopez that is a full, wailing and smoky alto that sounds like k.d. lang if she were raised on big

band swing.

Something Called Nothing plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 11pm
www.somethingcallednothing.com

Houston indie rock outfit **A Sundae Drive** have that Yo La Tengo noise pop sound down tight, with intricate dual guitar work and winsome girl vocals with occasional bursts of volume and adrenaline.

A Sundae Drive plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 12am
www.asundaedrive.com



The idea of a punk rock cover band may seem somewhat sacrilegious in theory but in practice...it turns out to be a full-on cathartic mosh pit sing-along, especially when Baytown's **Super Dragons** knows all the best classic punk rock songs and plays them with such gusto.

Super Dragon plays Revolution Indoor Stage Fri. 5/15 @ 9:30pm
www.signalrifacebook.com/SuperDragonclapclapclapclapclap

Talk Sick Brats is like a Houston punk rock supergroup, featuring former members of Lazer Cunts, White Crime, The Cutters and Muhammadali. They have that jittery coked out Houston jump punk sound in spades.

Talk Sick Brats plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 11pm
www.facebook.com/talksickbrats



T-Rexuals is a new College Station indie rock band that looks back to the late '90s commercial alternative scene for their sound.

T-Rexuals plays Stafford Stage Thur. 5/15 @ 9:15pm
www.facebook.com/trexuals

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T.S.S. represents Victoria with their raw and dead simple punk rock. Punk rock may seem simple to make but T.S.S. understands that songcraft is what makes for great punk rock, and you'll be able to sing along with T.S.S. songs by the second chorus.

T.S.S. plays Revolution Indoor Stage Thur. 5/15 @ 11:30pm
www.facebook.com/tssmusic

A funny thing happened since we started booking shows up here a few years back from Houston stoner metal band **Venomous Maximus**. They blew up nationally, toured with The Sword and Down and got signed by a prestigious all metal label in Europe. We've been saying for years you'd best come see VM while you still can on a small stage. And I'm saying it now. Next time you see Venomous Maximus will be in an arena opening for a metal legend.

Venomous Maximus plays Revolution Indoor Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 12:30am
www.facebook.com/VenomousMaximus



We Were Wolves has been playing shows around B/Cs for years, touring up from their native Beaumont. But we haven't seen them for a couple of years, and in the interim they've moved to Houston, released a new album and continues to pump out Queens of the Stone Age-inspired modern alternative rock.

We Were Wolves plays Stafford Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 10pm
www.facebook.com/WeWereWolves



Air or Ivory is a Texas style heavy breakdown death metal band with an amazingly agile rhythm section and some pretty clever harmony guitar chording going on. Not another Cannibal Corpse wannabe, these guys are doing something somewhat different with the genre.

Air Or Ivory plays Stafford Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 10:15pm
www.facebook.com/AirOrIvory



Houston modern metal band **Vicious Cycle** brings some Southern drawl to their commercial radio metal sound.

Vicious Cycle plays Stafford Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 12:30am
www.reverbnation.com/viciouscycletx

Ronia hails from "South Texas Hell", and it uses its surroundings to fuel its Lemmy fronting Suicidal Tendencies sound. Straight-up metal-unfused crossover thrash. Bleak, dark, heavy ass punk rock.

Ronia plays Revolution Outdoor Stage Thur. 5/15 @ 10pm
www.facebook.com/Roniadbeathell361



Houston indie pop quarter **The Wheel Workers** has some strangeness at the edge of their sound. Synthesizer shriek and waver pitchless like banshees, male-female vocals weave together like disembodied spirits, like a psychedelized

version of indie pop.

The Wheels Workers plays Revolution Indoor Stage Fri. 5/16 @ 11:30pm
www.facebook.com/thewheelworkers

San Antonio via College Station rapper **GQ Marley** makes his Loudfest debut, spouting lyrics about nerd shit, school, and modern living over lazy southern beats.

GQ Marley plays Stafford Stage Sat. 5/17 @ 8pm
about.me/gqmarley



A TRIBUTE TO WILLIE NELSON

The Christmas party dimmed early. Festivities began shortly after breakfast, and by lunch most of the house napped off their Yule Tide beer buzzes. The same after dinner, only most were not rousing this time around. My dad, always the first to arrive and last to leave, asked if I'd stay awake with him. He sat a Budweiser sixer on the coffee table and said, "We do not go to bed until those beers are gone and we've played all the way through both sides of these Willie records." He held up the double-LP *Greatest Hits* (and *Some That Will Be*).

He dropped the needle on the first track, "Railroad Lady", and we sat in silence. Then he began telling stories I'd never heard about his high school years in newly integrated South Arkansas, about where he was and who he was with when he first heard these songs, where the Vietnam War took him in South Asia during the mid-1960s, and where it took him again across Texas during the late-80s when I lost him for years. He talked through six beers and 20 some-odd Willie Nelson songs. I was 22 years old. I had never listened to either of these men.

If a boy needs his father, he also needs the memory of his father's voice to carry him between visits and visions. Willie Nelson has been my father's voice for more than a decade.

My first memory of my father involves a 1977 Red Delicious Apple colored Ford Thunderbird, a fuzzy FM station, and my dad wailing his cackling voice out the window. My mother was not in the car. She wouldn't stand for such nonsense: a grown man with car windows down and a cigarette clipped between his teeth while a tortured karaoke drowned out even the radio. Who knows what the song was that day? Maybe Eddie Rabbit. Maybe The Oak Ridge Boys. Maybe John Anderson was "Swingin'". I was four years old. My dad wore bright blue Nike trainers with a banana yellow swoosh on the sides, and he kept a prickly brown mustache trimmed and combed to Magnum P.I. perfection. He knew every song on the radio. Before he moved away, when I was seven, he gave me a box of cassette tapes. Chuck Berry. Elvis Presley. Buddy Holly. He told me to listen closely. I did. Music made him real.

My dad's favorite Willie Nelson song is "My Heroes Have Always Been Cowboys" because ramblers always have been for him. He reminds me often of Willie's line, "Picking up hookers instead of

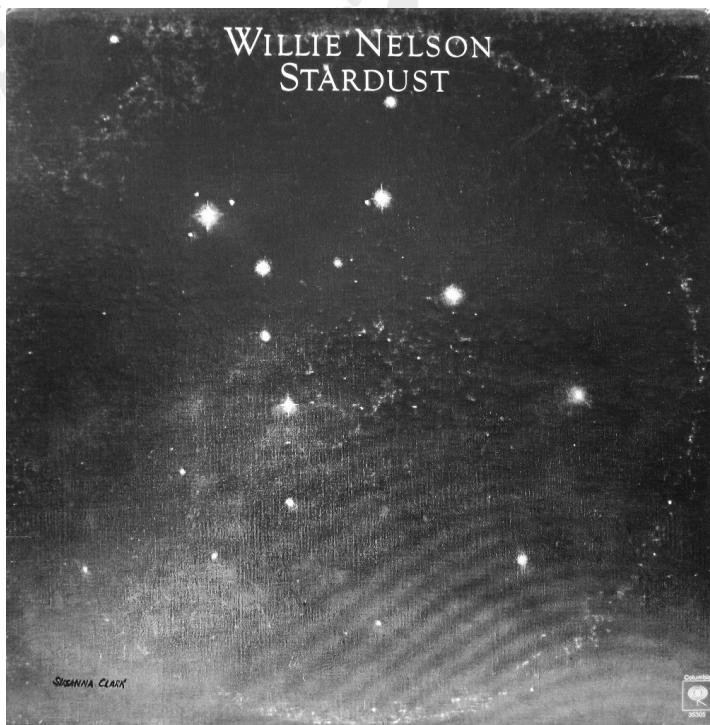
my pen / I let the words of my youth fade away". This followed by a charge to count well. To excel in the simple math of knowing you're numbered. We are most naturally an equation hinged on subtraction, unless we can learn otherwise an equation hinged on subtraction, unless we can learn otherwise.

To this day, my favorite Willie Nelson record, hands down, is *Stardust*. Willie recorded *Stardust* in 1978 as a tribute to the great

pop standards of the 1940s and 50s. This is the album that gives us "Georgia On My Mind", "Blue Skies", "All of Me", and "Moonlight In Vermont". It's a quiet record. A smoke and whiskey record. A late night or long drive record. My dad sent me a cassette tape of *Stardust* when I lived in China as part of a care package full of Rolling Stone magazines, Cheetos, black licorice, and Willie Nelson tapes. I burned that *Stardust* cassette down to the nub. History repeats itself in such odd ways: an absentee voice leaving behind recordings of a voice not his own. Hey, it worked. I hear multiple voices in a single voice. Find

connection in random places. Move decades, recast regretful stones, with thin plucks on a weathered guitar.

I have seen Willie Nelson in concert only once. He and Bob Dylan played a dual show in Kansas City at the T-Bones Minor League ball-park. Dylan was awful. We looked at each other in the crowd, all us half stoned strangers, asking "What song is this?" Dylan was dying right in front of us. Willie, on the other hand, killed it. He bounced his beer-keg belly around the stage. He swaggered through his classic guitar play. He talked to us and joked with us, and I cried half the damn concert like a 12 year old girl at a New Kids on the Block concert. That voice came to life. After so many burning bushes and pillars of fire and clouds by day, you know Moses was more than tickled to finally stand on the mountain. I'd played through LPs and cassettes and CDs and bad karaoke and poorly caught radio stations on poorly paved roads for too many years, always hearing more than Texas country music, always taking away more than outlaw ideas. Even my being there, simply standing in the crowd, seemed a baton torch rite of passage. I'd won these tickets. Signed my name to a raffle in a brewery. A girl in tight Levis pulled my name from her back pocket, and I showed her my driver's license. Matching name to name. A Still to a Still. And then she handed me my father's favorite gift—a voice to fill silences and address questions when silences and questions are a father's gifts. How else would we learn to listen? — KEVIN STILL



RACISM: THE NEW SPECTATOR SPORT

Okay, I understand the things Donald Sterling said about Black basketball players and his girlfriend's Instagram have offended people. Sterling sounds like a privileged White guy who knows he's a privileged White guy. Got it. Sterling possesses a truly racist heart, and, as the Good Book says, "from the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks". The racial statements Sterling made are unacceptable, and they also represent and repeat other racial statements Sterling has spoken in the past. Surely, it is time Sterling be held accountable to some degree for his known bigotry, even as privately as this expression of bigotry may have been this time.

Also, I agree with other commentators who have called out Vanessa Stivano for recording, even baiting, Sterling in private to make loaded statements she obviously meant to make public. And with that, I agree that we the people—definitely including myself, who listened for pedagogical and nosy reasons—behaved pornographically by listening to the tape and then ogling about its content. In fact, everything I'm about to write here is steeped in a mighty thick fog of hypocrisy, but the pervading light piercing through radiates from a sincere concern regarding the ways we are and are not talking about this situation. Here's a few thoughts:

1. Is anyone gonna say anything about the fact that this guy who is nearly 50 years older than his girlfriend is telling her it's okay for her to bed other men? Sure, I should not expect less from a creepy old nugget screwing around on his wife with a pretty young thing, but there's an ocean of irresponsibility and in blessing her towards promiscuous waters. Love, which obviously finds no purchase between these two, protects its beloved. We fail to understand love when we refer to the "intimacy" or the "connection" — words that indicate love, or at least selfless affection—of Sterling and Stivano. And we perpetuate a "Do as thou wilt" mentality by overlooking it.

2. Is anyone gonna mention that Sterling verbally abuses Stivano? He says things no man would ever want spoken to his daughter, and no one mentions this. No one seems to care. Is this now acceptable? Do his bizarre racial statements take so much precedence over misogynistic statements—hey, if such veiled racial statements can win him the title of bigot, just listen how he talks to this woman—that we overlook these statements completely? Don't bring Black guys to a basketball game" gets you banned from the NBA but calling his "girlfriend" the "enemy" and insinuating that she should just say "I understand" and obey him gets nothing?

3. And on that note, where are the American women who should be BOTH defending Stivano and calling her out? Yes, Sterling runs Stivano into the ground, but she lets him. Is anyone gonna mention that this young lady allows him to speak to her like this? And then she continues trying to serve him and call him "honey" and appease him in strange ways? She's a supermodel who's debased herself to skin level beauty and the love of riches. And nobody's saying anything about that? The whole focus is Sterling's racism, while nobody wants to tackle the oddness of Stivano being there in the first place. Instead, we refer either to the intimacy of their relationship or we toss her under the bus as being a gold-digger. Either way we miss an amazing opportunity to address larger issues.

These are oddly preachy questions to raise concerning this situation, but when I finally listened to the tape, hoping to understand what this man said that was SO BAD, I realized that, once again, we had missed the whole truth of a broken situation. Like Paula Dean and Phil Robertson earlier this year, we have found the easiest political issue to address, racism, and we ignore these other issues that are just as broken and nasty and gnarly. And if we ignore those issues in Sterling - or Dean or Robertson - we

learn to ignore those issues in one another and, eventually, even ourselves.—KEVIN STILL

OK, here's the deal. Old rich white man is racist. In other news, dog bites man. There's nothing to see here in the Donald Sterling, now-temporary owner of the Los Angeles Clippers NBA basketball team, story. But, there's *a lot* to see here in the way the story was brought about, the circumstances of the lives of the participants, and what it says about our society.

Let's start with the participants. Donald Sterling is an old racist piece of shit. His taped statements show only the very conical KKK grand dragon hat tip to the entire bigoted fucking iceberg. He and his wife (who is also a real piece of work) have been sued for prohibiting housing to blacks and other minorities. He plays sugar daddy exclusively to young, hot Latinas. He is the very embodiment of the plantation mentality, making money off the sweat and talent of a coterie of young black males, tasting the honey of illicit love affairs with young brown women...all while not-so-secretly loathing their youth, their virility, their acceptableness, their ascendancy. That he is caught in a candid moment revealing these opinions is not news. That he has a long, long track record of racial and sexual discrimination yet his position as a very generous donor and benefactor allowed him for so long the Teflon coating he needed to insulate his views from the world outside is an embarrassing bit of news, that somehow his money and privilege allowed him that eccentricity of being thoroughly racist in a society that has learned to keep that mentality on lockdown, or to troll the internet anonymously with it. The audacity that the man has been proven to not just be a racist in words but in deeds as well and was going to receive a special honor *this week from the NAACP for his charitable contributions* before these tapes were leaked is beyond baffling to me. That is the true ugliness here.

V. Stivano is also a real piece of work. This woman who has more aliases than Will Oldham set up Sterling for the fall. If you read the transcripts of these quasi-legally recorded conversations (it is still up for debate whether or not Stivano had permission to record these conversations) you will see that Stivano asked Sterling leading questions. She knew where the gold was and knew exactly where and how to pan for it. Why? Because he was such a racist douchebag? Oh hell no, this was used as an opportunity for Stivano to launch herself from someone who had to whore herself to old rich white dudes to get what she wants to now entering the ranks of the C level celebratard, almost guaranteeing her agent callbacks for *Dancing With the Stars* and a pay-per-view kickboxing match against some other high profile mistress. This was entrapment plain and simple, but because we all know Sterling deserves to be taken down no one raises a fuss.

Meanwhile, let's talk about this tape and its high profile on nightly news. Again, racist POS says racist things "in confidence" to his granddaughter-aged twinkie in the city and gets caught. And we hold our hands over astonished mouths in outrage. "He said WHAT?" But what we are talking about is not news. What I find most astonishing out of all of this is that this story reveals what many defeatists have long known about this country. If you are rich and white you *can get away with anything*. Well, apparently you can have decades of hardcore discrimination against minorities but only when you say it and the gotcha-journalism of the post-TMZ age catches wind and runs it up the hashtag flagpole to salute does it become something anyone cares about. That is the sad part. The very tabloid nature of this story and how it was captured and subsequently revealed to the public is so 21st century, but the salaciousness is as old as the wheel. We love a Faustian fall, we love to watch someone who deserves a takedown to be taken down publicly, but this entire story just makes me want to take a long shower with a very large bar of soap. — KELLY MINNIS

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INTROVISIONAIRE: THE INVENTION

This is the second chapter of a novel than began being serialized in 979Represent with the April 2014 issue and will be serialized each month.—ed.

Morning came and went. Soon so did the afternoon. It wasn't till around 8 or 9pm that Piest's head ceased pounding and he was finally able to start actually assessing the evening before. He could only remember blurred fleeting moments, but could recall he had begun writing before completely blacking out. He wasn't sure exactly what he'd been writing, and only hoped it had something to do with his mysterious formula. Observing his surroundings Piest noticed a mound of bloodied scribbles besides the foot of his bed. There was a genuine pile of papers. Theodore reached down and analyzed the first paper he grabbed, there was poorly written bathroom poetry scribbled on it. "I sit and think, and tap my feet, trying not to smear my treat, god gave me one and only sheet, how oh how will I wipe this shit?" it read. He couldn't believe it. He picked up another only to find poorly drawn amateurish stick figure pornography with lewd captions. Still more papers sat stacked. They couldn't all be like this could they? His heart dropped a little more with the discovery of more and more obscene literature and "art". Till he had barely the slightest care or strength to siphon through the few remaining scraps of paper. He sat there defeated. It was too outlandish of an idea to have worked and he was a fool for thinking it might have. "At least," he thought to himself, "Well at least, I got toasted and forgot for a moment the failure I was..." He laid his head back down and pinched the bridge of his nose while simultaneously rubbing his eyes in disbelief. "What now?" Piest thought to himself.

The burning foreboding curiosity of the true extent of his failure was too much for him to bare. After only a few minutes of self loathing had passed, he decided he should take a look at the last few remaining pieces of paper. After all, they appeared to be the bloodiest. And wouldn't you know it, as cruel fate would have it there on those last few remaining scraps of paper were step-by-step directions meticulously explaining not only formulas, but instructions on how to most cost effectively assemble what were labeled "Introvision Specks". The papers were crammed with information front and back in some instances. So much so that he had to strain his eyes just to make them out. Scribbled at the bottom of the last sheet of paper was a crudely written message to himself. It read "Congratulations, you schmuck on discovering 'Introvision'... get ready to revolutionize the world, only too bad you're too dense to know what you've done, so I've taken the liberty of dumbing it down for you." It continued, "What you hold are the key designs for man's next greatest discovery—the introverse. These glasses you've invented will help you glance inside this introverse. Just what is the introverse you ask? It's a realm unseen by human eyes that exist solely for our ids—our inner selves. Each person has their own introverse, in which can be found all the what if, could be's, and maybe so's. In fact, every facet of every aspect of one's being can be found in their own introverse. Just think of the potential, if a nobody like you could put these glasses on and see—actually see—their full potential, and by seeing it—manifest it. Think of the wonders that are waiting to be discovered and that's just the tip of the iceberg". The letter continues "Get two people together who are both wearing their 'introvision specks' and they now have double the potential and can see new possibilities, new extensions of their realities. So you can imagine what would happen if three, four, or even five people sat in the same room wearing these things. The possibilities for greatness are limitless, but then again so is the potential for unimaginable horrors. Be cautious with your 'introvision' and before you do something stupid and show other people or file a patent, try them out for yourself, and see what you find in yourself. Congratulations moron, you may just have single handedly destroyed mankind... but on the other hand, who knows perhaps your delusions could save it! Enjoy whatever fortunes may come your way while you can, because of the misery that comes with knowing your personal truth—that you will most likely ultimately end up destroying anyone and everyone in the end with 'your' creation. Oh how it amuses me to see you fail even when you have the potential to save the world you'll find a way to ruin it for everyone...it's in your nature. That's why only truths are laid out here before... why should I kick a person when they're as down as you?... I've decided to save you the trouble and built you a pair

since you might just be too dense to do so yourself—though I am you in a sense, in the same sense though I am not, but who cares!?!? Have fun you silly sad excuse for an inventor, and enjoy your greatest triumph 'INTROVISION'. You will find your/my glasses located in the top right drawer of your desk." — signed Sir Theodore Piest.

"Wow, talk about cryptic! I mean, what a relief! And at the same time such an unsettling discovery... To think that I Theodore Piest — failed Renaissance man actually might just be responsible for the single greatest invention of the 21st century! What about the warnings? How is it possible someone could even invent such a thing? Much less do so blacked out drunk? Surely, this is just my subconscious getting the better of myself again, playing a cruel joke on myself. So at the very least the drunk in me can get a good laugh in before my soul is crushed in misery. I know I'll check the drawer. I bet there's nothing even there. That'll put this all to rest. That's it! Once I do that, then I can cease this foolish hope and resume my self loathing," he thought to himself. His eyes skimmed the letter again looking for clues of any kind he may have had over looked, but his eyes kept returning to the same thing—the note was signed "Sir Theodore Piest". He was certainly no knight, honorary or otherwise. He wasn't even British for that matter. Then it dawned on him—ego—the note had been written by no other than his EGO... Piest hated ego in people. He felt it was the ruin of many a good man and he wanted no part of it.

Surely enough, the glasses were in the drawer just as he had told himself they'd be in the crude note. They were quite plain looking in actuality. He had figured that something that could allegedly do all the things that these glasses were supposed to do would appear bulkier and much more extravagant. In reality they were nothing more then slightly modified 10 cent 1950's era X-ray/hypnosis glasses—the type commonly found advertised in the backs of comic books of the time. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the generic x-ray glasses of the 50's it's important to note a couple of things. First, that they did not work and secondly, that the lenses were nothing more then cardboard with black and white spirals printed on them with open holes in the middle.

Now here it seems is where a drunken Peist had made the glasses his. Placed carefully in the centers of the holes were crudely shaped shards of mirrored glass which barely seemed to fit in the holes. The mirrored glass had a strange green tint to it. Along the sides of the holes where the mirrored lenses were placed were tiny holes for "external world viewing". That was it as far as a Peist could tell. Nothing too impressive here.

The revelation that the glasses were so crudely fashioned, along with the fact that there seemed to be no ground breaking science used to manufacture them made the would-be inventor chuckle to himself.

He felt relieved that he hadn't invented anything at all that would change the world. In fact, the more and more he thought about it, the more and more he lost all desire to do such a thing. What with all that responsibility if something dreadful came from something he invented? Much less, he was unaccustomed with dealing with people frequently, and was rather quite the introvert. What could he possibly want with celebrity? Yes, thank heaven he was no inventor.

His hopes were not nearly as dashed as he had expected them to be, what with the realization that he had no actual use for celebrity, though the idea of being well to do did entertain him from time to time. He figured that if he could at least invent something as useful and unnoticed as a doorstop or paperclip then he would be just where he wanted to be. No celebrity with the exception of a few fellow inventors who would surely be kicking themselves for not thinking up such a simple device themselves, and of course he would make a small fortune off the patent alone. The thought made Peist smile even a little more. Ha, yes thank heaven for failures, as they really do seem to let you know what not to do, and what it is usually that you actually should to do.

<- CONTINUED FROM

The air was stale and stifling in the basement so Mr. Peist decided to get out for some well needed fresh air and to attempt to enjoy the remainder of the day—the first half of which he had drunkenly slept away. He left up the stairs and headed down the hall to the door with no sight of Mrs Gantly. He was halfway out the door when he heard an echoy “O Theo...” It was Mrs. Gantly who was in the kitchen cooking something that smelled absolutely wonderful. He was still so out of it from the night before that he hadn't noticed the pleasant aroma on the way to the

door. Now that he had, he wanted some of whatever it was that the old lady was making.

He was tempted to just leave, because he felt that perhaps in his blacked-out state the night before that he may have caused quite a raucous or even possibly upset the old lady again somehow. But the aroma of deliciousness was too strong, and too overpowering for a man as hungover as Mr. Peist was that morning. So he sucked up his little remaining pride and made his way to the kitchen. “Yes Ma'am?” he said. “Are you hungry dear?” she replied. “...Famished” he replied, relieved that she was taking such a pleasant tone with him.—*WILLIAM DANIEL THOMPSON*

PEDAL PUSHING: CATALINBREAD BELLE EPOCH

It has become super trendy in recent years for guitar pedal manufacturers to offer delays tailored on vintage machinery but modeled using DSP power, i.e. using digital code to emulate analog circuitry. Not only to emulate the sound of said devices, but also to emulate the eccentricities and, in some cases, the shortcomings of said devices. And it's the eccentricities that made analog tape delay and magnetic drum delay so appealing...and so nervewracking. DSP modeling gives you all the former and none of the latter.

Portland boutique pedal builder Catalinbread has made a career out of emulating other devices in guitar pedal format. Their series of “amp in a box” pedals like the W100, Formula 5, RAH and Dirty Little Secret have been widely acclaimed by players and media alike. Two years back Catalinbread issued the Echorec pedal, an emulation of the classic Echorec analog delay unit in pedal form that is considered by many to be a near perfect cloning of the Echorec unit but in a far more convenient and reliable format. Many were eager to find out what vintage echo unit Catalinbread might point their engineering team towards next. The next emulation would be the Echoplex echo unit with the Belle Epoch delay.

The Echoplex is probably the second most famous analog tape-based delay in history, counting Jimmy Page and Jimi Hendrix as just a couple examples of its many famous users. The concept is that a signal is fed into the Echoplex's preamp, is recorded, and played back blended with the original signal. The echo would degrade with the quality of the tape, the capstans, the record heads, the power from the wall and how hard the signal hit the preamp. It is one of the more iconic sounds in popular music, and one excellent example of Electroplex use and abuse is Bauhaus's epic single “Bela Lugosi's Dead”. What made the delay so iconic also made the Echoplex so problematic. It required constant maintenance, could sound different in different locations based on power voltage and the tape itself lent for less-than-perfect echoes. The Belle Epoch allows you to dial in as much of the “eccentricities” of the original Echoplex as you desire, all in a small pedal enclosure. Catalinbread allows for controls for echo volume, the amount of echoes, “modulation” (basically how much wow and flutter inherent in the tape mechanism), echo tempo and “record level”, measuring how hard the signal input hits the tape. You can make the pedal sound nearly digital pristine (you should be able to avertall, it IS digital) or you can make it sound like an Echoplex that was unearthed from the back of a smoky club discarded and unused since 1978. Catalinbread also allows for the echoes to “trail”, meaning that the when the effect is disengaged that the last echoes continue over your signal until they fade out (more on this later). Also thoughtful, Catalinbread has no charge pump inside so the effect can be used at 9v or at 18v for increased headroom before the preamp starts to compress out.

In use, this pedal takes A LOT of time for you to really dial in what you are looking for, as the controls are somewhat finicky and

aren't labeled the way that the lion's share of delay users are accustomed to. Echo Sustain controls how the number of echoes, from one repetition to infinite repetitions that will take off

and self-oscillate at any setting over 1 o'clock. In fact, even if you have no input signal into the Belle Epoch above 1 o'clock the pedal will take off like an oscillator and can be used as such if you desire. Mod allows you to dial in as much or as little tape eccentricities as desired. It doesn't sound so much like mangled tape to me as it does chorus or vibrato, so I don't use much of this effect. It doesn't sound as “natural” to me as other tape emulators like Strymon's El Capistan. Rec Lev takes into account how hard the pedal's preamp itself is hit, allowing the initial echoes to be really loud and brickwall the preamp a bit, adding some mushiness and compression. Echo Delay controls the tempo of the delay (from about 80 to 800 ms of delay), which is definitely the range of most delay pedals. Mix controls your wet/dry range.

I mentioned earlier that you can set the pedal to “trail”. What is cool about this function is that in the trailing mode it leaves the Belle Epoch's preamp on all the time. Jimmy Page was fabled to have left his Echoplex preamp in his signal at times because he liked what the circuitry did to his overall guitar tone. A cottage industry has popped up in itself of pedalmakers who have popped Echoplex-style preamps into guitar pedals, probably most famously by Xotic FX's EP Booster (a pedal I have used now off and on for nearly four years). It just makes your guitar sound bigger, for the lack of a better term. There's also an easter egg of sorts in the Belle Epoch that allows you to turn this pedal into one hellacious fuzz pedal if you are so inclined. I am not, so I've not tried it (google it if you are keen).

I have no idea if this pedal actually *sounds* like an Echoplex but I do know that it sounds very good and certainly like the other tape echoes I've owned or used. I like that it adds a trails feature, as that is something that I have to have on any delay pedal I use. It can get super noisy and fun in a heartbeat. What I don't like about it is that it is difficult to get it to behave subtly if that's what you are after. With five different settings it is a tweaker's delight but also a headache for making quick adjustments live. It is a mono effect and that might also be a killer for those that like to run wet-dry rigs or use this pedal to affect other stereo sources. But...it definitely has a fantastic sound and is a really fun pedal to play. You can lose yourself for hours playing with the delay time and sustain, letting the warm, dark echoes overlap. At \$199 it's not as expensive as some of the other tape-based offerings from Strymon or Wampler, but it also isn't nearly as jack-of-all-trades as less expensive offerings from Line 6 and TC Electronic. My verdict is that it's a really neat pedal, but I'd save the extra \$100 and pick up a Strymon El Capistan instead. Or save your coins and see if Catalinbread takes on the Space Echo next (Boss has already emulated the Space Echo with its RC20 pedal that does a pretty good job of delivering Space Echo vibe without that Space Echo headache and cost).—*KELLY MINNIS*



STILL POETRY

A PLACE OF MIND

The tiniest chalet waits for me, made of earth and twigs;
A crusader emerged; I will ramble to this place of mind.
My sole existence in the humming meadow;
A plot of bean just for me; trees for the hives of honey bees

Sweet wings of the finch play for the evening's moon,
Peace flowing from the masked night; a cricket's symphony.
Violets aglow, midnight stars sparkle in space,
Peace will envelop me in this place.
Still on rock, standing on stone,
I hear the water wrapping around the shore's bone.

— JESSICA LITTLE

THE SPECTRE AWAITS

(A Companion Piece to The Ex-Optimists' Song "Whoop Stop")

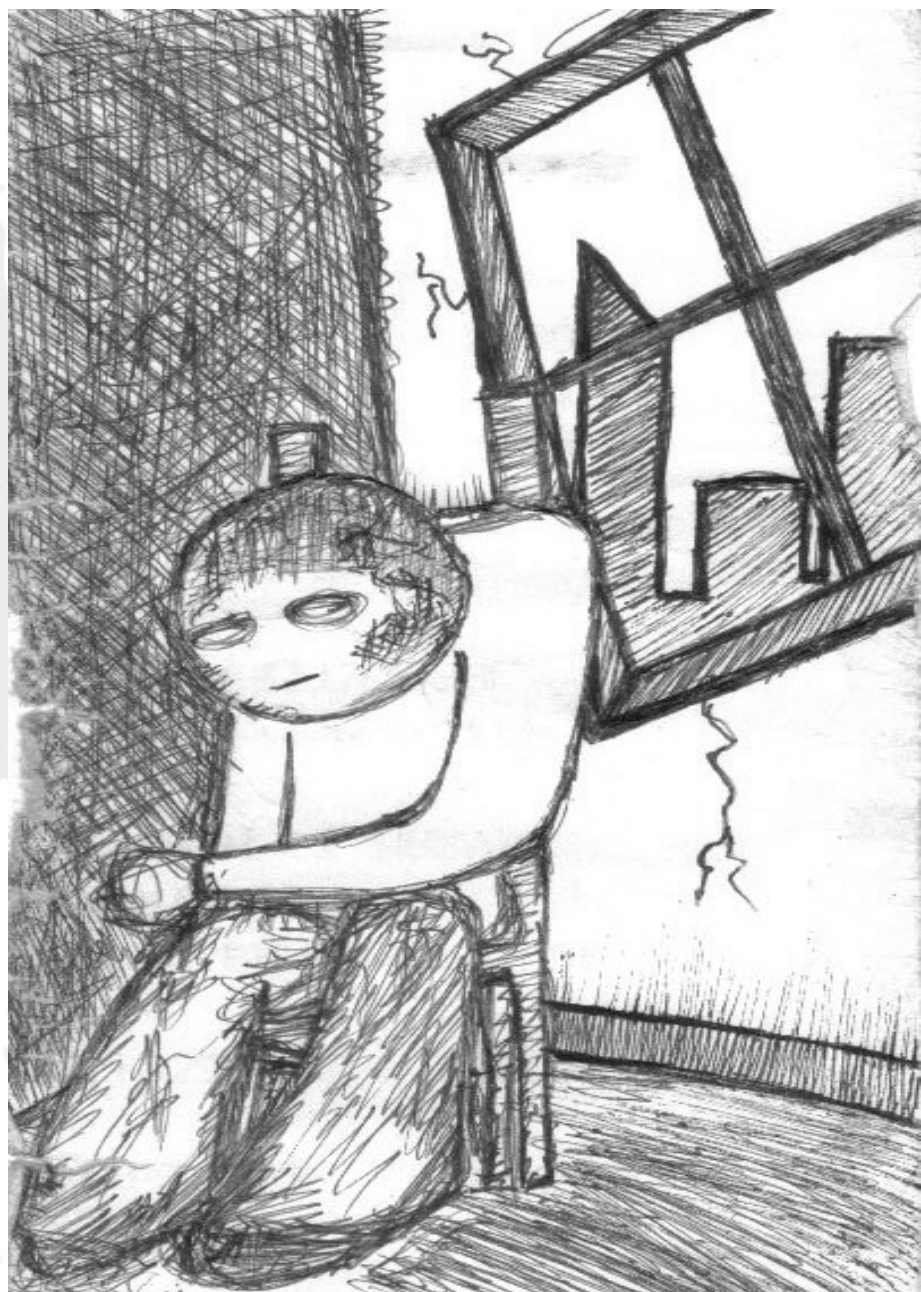
Some night I am going to die out on Highway 21:
To the rhythm of the flashing caution lights,
reflecting unevenly in the half-dried pools of engine oil and
AC condensation, dusted with pollen and cigarette ash;
To the hushed whisper of the prairie wind rustling
in the tall blades of grass, the husks pinging indistinctly
against rusted-out hulks of discarded tractors and plows;
By the pinprick light of the night sky, a mosaic of stars,
vapor trails and cellphone tower beacons.

This spectre awaits me on down the line.

— KELLY MINNIS



BY WILLIAM DANIEL THOMPSON



Life. Actions. Words.
My life. My Actions. My Words.
Think. Present. Reply.
My Thoughts present my Reply
to the question that is this world.

CONCERT CALENDAR

5/2—Mothracide, Signal Man, Super Hole @ New Republic Brewing Co., College Station. 8pm

5/2—Migrant Kids, Sphinx, Holiday Mountain @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

5/2—The Ton Tons @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

5/3—New Republic Third Anniversary Party @ New Republic Brewing Co., College Station. 12pm

5/3—King And Nation (CD release show), **Golden Sombrero, Tall Talk** @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

5/5—Inside Falling Skies, A Crowd Like You, Dsgns, Air or Ivory, Galactic Morgue @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 7pm

5/8—Jess & The Echoes @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

5/10—Rock 103.9 Homebrew presents **Signal Rising, Dimitri's Rail, Fighting Gemini** @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

5/15-17—LOUDFEST 6 @ Downtown Bryan. 9p (7p 5/17)

5/23—Page 9 @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

6/6—Golden Sombrero, Race To the Moon, The Inators @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

6/21—Girlband @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

6/13—F13 Music Showcase feat. **Myra Maybelle, Headcrusher, ASS, Inside Falling Skies, Ever Since the Fire, Made of Faith, Today's Surprise** @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 7pm

RECORD REVIEWS



Ringo Deathstarr
God's Dream

The shoegazer trio from Austin continues to do things on its own terms, which can be a bit maddening for fans. Ringo Deathstarr's exploration of distorted guitar, polyrhythmic percussion, and retro songcraft on its latest EP largely continues the same path (with some discreet additions) as evidenced on its last full-length album: *Maure*. Yet *Maure* was something of a departure from the gleeful Jesus and the Mary Chain/Bloody Valentine confection of the previous *Colour Trip*.

God's Dream tends to focus on the best elements of both, namely featuring catchy pop melodies buried beneath mountains of feedback and distortion. "See You" is the best example of this. An incredibly-catchy chorus is led by bassist Alex Gehring's soothing voice before it intertwines with vocalist/guitarist Elliott Frazier as the tune slows down. But it all speeds back up to race to the end with plenty of warped sounds. The title cut, also one of the EP's best, opens with strumming guitar, of all things; then some of Daniel Coburn's best drumming kicks in, along with Gehring's spaced-out vocals. The opening "Bongload" also features both vocalists with lyrics like "my face melted off" as well as Frazier's Pink Floydish guitar on this one. "Flower Power" and "Chainsaw Morning" both include keyboards to accompany the frenzied guitar, thrashing drums, and male-female vocals. Lyrics are largely buried except for the occasional line that seeps through: "Cut my head off/Make it go away." The token ballad is "Shut Your Eyes" with Frazier's warbling with Gehring's cotton-candy voice wrapped around it all with various Age of Aquarius

instrumentation. And, just to shake things up a bit, the EP closes with the long and quirky "Nowhere". A typical frantic collision of guitar and drums with vocals for a couple of minutes, the tune settles into a hypnotic repetition for about three minutes before feedbacking to the end. Far out.—**MIKE L. DOWNEY**



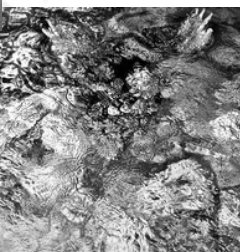
Ghost Bath
Funeral

Do you remember how badly we wanted to like *The Grey*? That movie where Liam Neeson supposedly fought wolves bare-knuckle for 90 minutes after his plane crashed in some mountains. We were all thinking it was *Cast Away* meets *Alive* meets *Cujo* in reverse, but then it was nothing like that at all. It was way more like *The Deer Hunter* or *Beaches*, with more wolves and less war or cancer. I didn't like *The Grey*. Even by the end, when Liam Neeson finally boasted the liquor bottle boxing gloves, I didn't care anymore. Too little too late. The wolves could have him. We walked into *The Grey* expecting a certain level of Jack London driven drama but got The Discovery Channel instead. *Lame*.

Think of Ghost Bath's *Funeral* as all the drama and emotion and grit and raw knuckles you wanted from *The Grey* delivered via unsettling melodic Chinese metal music. (I only mention that Ghost Bath are Chinese because they are.) This album is both hella beautiful and hella unsettling, while remaining perfectly hinged on a dramatic grittiness that is difficult to turn away from. The guitars are absolutely lovely. Breathtaking at times. The kinda long form panoramic landscape shots that bands like Explosions In The Sky and This Will Destroy You lose sleep dreaming to create. But Ghost Bath found it.

And then—what the hell—they pepper all that beautiful music with the strangest, eeriest, most unsettling shrieks and human squeals. The vocals are purely animalistic. Again, wolves or rabid men howling in the distance. In other moments, you merely hearing weeping and sobbing, the licking of wounds and unfiltered grief, but you never hear even the slightest semblance of a word.

Ghost Bath's *Funeral* is beautifully crafted, eerily dramatic disturb-rock. This is not the soundtrack of your early morning commute. This is something else. I like it. And I cannot recommend highly enough at least one listen through this record via Ghost Bath's Bandcamp page. You'll inevitably feel something you've hoped to remember or tried to forget.—**KEVIN STILL**



The Submersion
When the World Was Sound

When The World Was Sound is a two-piece from Louisiana that produces these intricate electronic soundscapes with echoes of Boards of Canada and even Pink Floyd. The tunes are typically led by multi-instrumentalist Brandon Pittman with rhythm from drummer/percussionist Amanda Sonnier. The group was part of A Melodic Menagerie at the Guzu Gallery during the alternate SXSW in Austin this March.

The tunes by the duo may be simple majestic chords that build multiple subtle sounds like "Neptune's Chronometer" or the throbbingly-averse "Under Elizabeth Lake (Devil's Submarine)". The pair rework the title cut three times, finding something slightly different each. Many tunes stretch out over several minutes. When The

Word Was Sound offers up sonic explorations that both can lull and challenge the listener. This kind of music can easily be dismissed as background ear candy, a soundtrack for the mind. "Submersion" can be easily enjoyed as such, but for those who wish to be more discerning, there are rewards to be had.—**MIKE L. DOWNEY**

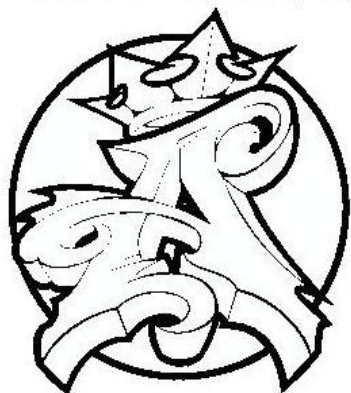


adults
Stuck

adults is a trio of Texas A&M students who have been playing shows around towns for the past year or so. *Stuck* is their first release. And what an interesting EP it is.

adults have a very frenetic sound. The music often has a lot of information going on. First track "Aspen" gives you a taste of that, with frantic Franz Ferdinand style guitars and murky vocals before the band downshifts to swing a little bit and let singer/guitarist Elijah Beavers warble in falsetto before slamming back in. This is a pattern for the rest of this 5-song EP, where the band is almost like an ADD kid who can't stick to one thing for very long without getting bored and moving on to something completely different. It is jarring at times, but sometimes, like with the Vampire Weekend-style Afrobeat and skank nods in "Pillowtalk", or the Jeff Buckley singing cabaret breakdowns in "Quilt", it makes for some rather interesting juxtapositions. All in all, this EP captures what this very interesting band is all about.—**KELLY MINNIS**

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