

STOREREPRESENT



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

editorial bored

kelly minnis - kevin still

art splendor

katie killer - wonko the sane

folks that did the other shit for us

hy danger - mike e. downey - jorge goyco - todd
hansen - jessica little - amanda martinez - vera oviri
- william daniel thompson - josh willis

on the interwebz

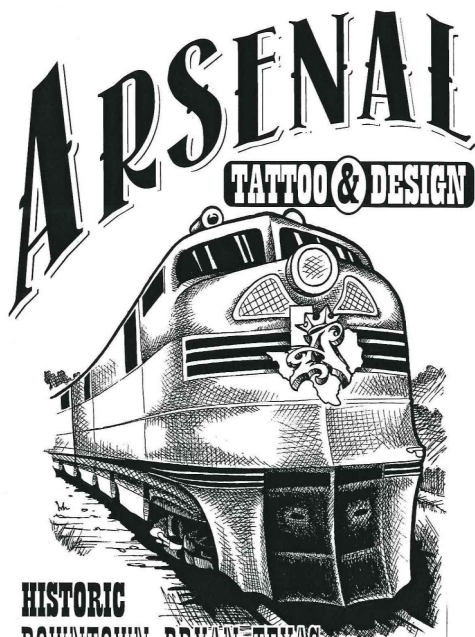
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**HISTORIC
DOWNTOWN BRYAN, TEXAS**

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SETTLING FOR A CANDIDATE

On March 1st, otherwise known in the political spectrum as SUPER TUESDAY, Texans along with seven other states lined up at the polls or caucused to participate in the presidential primary. By press time even more Republicans will have dropped out of the race and even more Democrats will have solidified behind their obvious frontrunner. My prediction is that America will be setting itself up for what I'm dubbing The Election of Great Compromise, as Donald Trump will be settling in as the clear delegate winner for the Republicans and Democrats will be resigning themselves to Hillary Clinton. Voters will hold their noses and cast votes not for their favorite candidate but against the one they feel will destroy America as we know it. I know how this works, because I will have already made my conscientious vote for compromise. You see, by the time you view this, o reader, I will have cast my vote for Hillary Clinton.

BLASPHEMY, many of you will gasp. I realize that many of my friends and colleagues will have cast a vote for Vermont senator Bernie Sanders. The excitement amongst young voters and the hard left has been palpable. I am pleased that so many 18-25 year olds are getting so involved with the process and are engaged. I have felt that way before. This year I have not. I like Bernie Sanders and I believe in a lite version of his democratic socialism. But I also don't believe a President Sanders has a snowball's chance in getting any of his fantastic ideas through Congress. If centrist President Obama has been stymied by Republicans on the Hill at every turn, then I believe a President Sanders would face an even more bleak screen.

I am Clinton weary and my hesitancy to continue a Clinton dynasty factored into my early support for then Illinois senator Obama in '08. I stood in the back of the Boston Gardens when Sen. Obama spoke at the 2004 Democratic National Convention and, along with most of the people in the room, asked myself why we weren't voting for him that year instead of John Kerry. I knew when Obama eventually ran I'd support him. And I supported him like no other presidential candidate in my limited time of voting. It wasn't that I didn't like Hillary Clinton. I voted for her husband twice. I felt like we had just had an unsuccessful political dynasty in the two George Bushes and I wasn't keen to vote for the Democratic version. Eight years later I'm still not keen on it. Not to mention the other baggage that comes along with Hillary Clinton. While she has been a largely successful Secretary of State and Senator to the state of New York, I find her naked ambition and a certain unsavoriness offputting. That said, I think a second President Clinton would get shit done. She would fight like a cornered animal to get her priorities moved through Congress. Will she perhaps moderate towards the right a bit on finance and international policy? I know she will. Will she get some good domestic policy moving? Yes. Will she make the hard national defense decisions? Yes. Might she grease the skids for easier money to be made in the finance sector? Eh, probably. In Sanders' defense, it is not his fault that he has become a bit of a cipher for the young urban liberal. He is a blank canvas that can be written largely upon. Witness all the witty memes casting Sanders as an old school hardcore punk versus Clinton as a Nickelback fan. It's humorous for sure, but the differences between the two are not that stark.

American politics is rife with compromise. Idealism may warm the heart, but unfortunately you cannot always vote with your heart. Nor be 100% pleased about your vote. It is not a perfect world and there are no perfect political candidates. My vote for Clinton was indeed a compromise. I hope my compromise was not in vain. — KELLY MINNIS



INTELLECTUALLY CHALLENGED

So the wife and I went to see a movie in the theater recently. I would tell you what it was, but I don't want to mention *Deadpool*...

There's a lot of things you anticipate when you go to a popular movie. You anticipate shitty kids. I mean it's a comic book movie after all, and who cares about the R rating right? You got nudity, profanity, vulgar jokes, and that's all pretty much almost off the bat.

Since it is an R rating, you also anticipate shitty parents. You know the ones I'm talking about, the ones who claim that the movie "isn't that bad" even though they hadn't seen it, and then brag how they took their 5-year-old to see *Kickass 2*. Yeah... that doesn't really strike me as parent of the year either. Maybe they should have applied for a big brother or sister program before they decided to procreate. (Before the editor gets tons of hate mail, I'd like to remind you I have no kids, nor do I want one, but mostly don't want the responsibility of having one, not just with money, schooling and shelter, but also with moral upbringing.) I WANT to see R rated movies without getting a sitter, I WANT disposable income, and if I have to pay over 10 bucks to see a movie, I don't want your permanent STD running around ruining my experience. (rant over. I'm crotchety, deal with it)

As mentioned before you expect shitty kids. By kids I mean anyone age 4 to 35. People suck, they talk during my movie, they text during my movie, they squirm and shift in their seats kicking the back of mine. They never read the comic, so they don't understand any of it. They don't have a quick wit so they don't get jokes. I mean... you know. People.

But the one thing my wife and I were not expecting to run into, is the "uppity soccer mom on a date with her husband because he only takes her out twice a year and it's Valentine's day so he better do something" woman....

So there we were... an hour early with good seats. The place was filling up. I volunteered to go get some snacks because I am a true comic fan and had seen the movie already so if I missed anything, I wouldn't cry about it. I would cry more if I didn't get popcorn, because let's face it, you don't get to be a man of my impressive physique on salad.

While I am in line, our friends show up. They have tickets and there are two seats near us in a corner. They also go to get snacks, and my wife volunteers to save their corner seats. The lobby is packed. Mostly with shitty parents who only feed their kids at movie snack bars apparently, so it takes me 45 minutes to get to the front of the line. While I am finally ringing out, my wife texts me the following altercation: While waiting on everyone to return, my wife politely tells about 4 separate couples, "I'm sorry, these seats are taken." The

couples politely reply "OK, thank you," and move on. (It's not sold out so there are plenty of seats available.) After the 4th couple moves on, a woman three rows down turns around and raises her voice to my wife. "You know, you legally can't save those seats," she says. To which my wife laughs and says, "I'm not 'legally' doing anything, I'm saving them as a courtesy to my friends who are in the lobby right now." The woman apparently didn't like that answer. "Has anyone intellectually challenged you about this?" she asked. My wife shrugged. Intellectually challenged? That's a new one. My wife responded with "Honestly, I don't think this concerns you at all." The couple who had since moved on to some seats a row behind start laughing at the nosy lady. This really infuriates her. "Well...." she stammers in a hot flash of anger. Maybe the clothes hanger she forgot to take off before she put her blouse on was bothering her. "You can talk to my husband when he gets back... he's a police officer." The veiled threat makes my wife laugh. "Yes...." she says, "I would very much like to talk to him."

There's many reasons for this. The woman looks surprised that someone is challenging her on this. "Number one, I'm not breaking any laws. Number two I'm saving seats for two people who have purchased tickets and are getting snacks in the lobby just like you are doing for your own husband, and number three this is none of your business so why don't you turn around and shut up?" The theater is absolutely loving this, the couple who had moved on are snickering in their seats. Meanwhile I'm in the lobby getting a play by play by text.

By the time I get the food and head into the theater I am livid. The movie has started, and I ask my wife to point out the woman and her husband. I make a note and plan on confronting her after the movie for an apology. The couple leaves before the movie was over. It was probably too much for them, or the husband got the play by play to and decided to leave before he could be confronted. That makes sense. In my hometown, the police are becoming more of a joke as more and more of them are being investigated for everything from sexual misconduct, to beatings, to other abuses of power. I'm sure the last thing he wants is for his wife to be using his job in a gross misappropriation of power just so she can win an argument.

She made a mistake. Picking on the wrong person really. She didn't heed the patches on my wife's jacket or colored hair or tattoos, that we really don't care much for authority. We don't respond to threats from scary people well, much less empty ones from a lady with a Sante Fe styled dress and a "can I speak to the manager" haircut. It bugs me she did this. It makes me wonder how many times she has and gotten away with it, with a shitty smirk on her face. In the end we all had a good laugh. I learned a powerful lesson. It's not just parents I hate, or kids. It's people. Next time, I'm just gonna pirate the damn thing. — TIMOTHY DANGER





STILL DRINKING

Last month I declared my fanfare for the polarizing **Karbach Brewing Co.** Well, this month I'm here to prove what makes them polarizing. Karbach's **Three Legged Lab Imperial Stout** (9.2% ABV / 70 IBUs) did not win me. My apologies in advance: I do not have precise tasting notes for this beer. But, you see, that's the problem. I've made my way through about five or six cans of Three Legged Lab. I've enjoyed it cold, cool, slightly warm, from the can, from a pint glass, even from a sniffer—and the only thing I've ever tasted, in any format, was simply Imperial Stout. I could never find anything unique about this beer. No big dark chocolate or coffee notes. Nothing overly sweet or charred. No big dried fruit, tobacco, or even meaty flavors. It just tasted Imperial. Admittedly, I fought the temptation to hit HEB tonight to grab a can for one-more-review shot. Nope. If that many samples, each met with a mindful palette, could not remember one solid flavor note, it's probably not a solid Stout. That being said, grab yourself a can and sip this sucker alongside a hefty chunk of dark chocolate or wrapped around a fine cigar. Perhaps Three Legged Lab needs the fourth peg of a pairing to stand on.

Real Ale has reconfigured a brewery classic for their **Brewers' Cut No. 23** (5.2% ABV / 45 IBUs). This time around, Real Ale has brewed their ESB, according to brewers, "to showcase the complex malt character of Blacklands North American Pale Malt". I include this quote because this ESB is a prime example of an English ale, yet it utilizes a distinctively new strain of American malts. Everything about this ale screams other-side-of-the-pond. Even the aroma is drastically the Queen's. Wisps of sweet, buttery caramel heft the malts to the surface, offering a nose that precisely matches the mouthfeel and flavor. This is old school English pub fare filtered through an American academy. And it's absolutely beautiful. Most American craft ESBs I've tried feel confused, generally masquerading American-inspired pale ales or amber lagers beneath a British style label. Not this one. Also, Real Ale's new ESB is the rare malt-forward ale that does not translate as a straight-up bread-bowl of toasted oats and whey (ie. most American brewed bocks and lagers). As mentioned, this Real Ale ESB primarily features caramel, butter, and even toffee notes, making this ESB a straight-up dessert beer, a pint of drinkable fondue to polish off your fish-n-chips or even your bread pudding. And although I'm known as the 979 resident hop-head, I'll be stocking my fridge with loads of this sucker. Real Ale's Brewer's Cut No. 23 has not been approved as a year round offering, so you might want to grab some while they last.

My sincere loathing for **Shiner Bock** amplifies my giddiness to review **Saint Arnold's Spring Bock** (6.9% ABV / 24 IBUs). Perhaps the reason I despise Shiner Bock so much is because, like **Anheuser-Busch's Zeigenbock Amber Lager**, it's just a flat-flavored amber lager (think **Killian's Irish Red**) with a popped collar of a price tag. There's nothing traditional or strictly bock-ish about these beers. (At least Anheuser-Busch has the decency to admit their beer is *actually* a cheap amber lager.) Saint Arnold's Spring Bock, on the other hand, is a traditionally crafted old-world lager that meets German definitions for bearing the "bock" label: higher alcohol, months long fermentation process, and a focus on sweet (rather than toasty) malts. Unlike the Real Ale Brewer's Cut No. 23 ESB, a certain breadiness should be expected in a solid bock. However, Saint Arnold perfectly tempers any potential heaviness in their Spring Bock with a hint of sharp Czech Saaz and Hallertauer hops, offering a brew that is not quite balanced (still malt forward) but that manages to not feel chewy. All in all, Saint Arnold Spring Bock is a fine German-style lager that, like Real Ale's new ESB, won over this pretentious hop-head. —KEVIN STILL

THE SLIDESHOW

It's over before it starts. Straight to the hard part, the after heart of the matter. New beginnings themselves disguised as the final curtain. Much like these we try our damndest to subversively guide our lives towards that peaceful and long silent forever sleep. Yet we get caught up in the nows, the thens, and even the future what ifs. So many possibilities with such fleeting time. The end can come any moment in many shapes and sizes. It's sudden and usually unsuspected. Still we go day to day on our routines, for no other reason than a bunch of "important" people, long ago, sat around and said "Let's make them live in a grid so they only go back and forth and never explore and find their truths".

We waste so many opportunities, for the right time, for things to line up with our predetermined schedules while ignoring the ebb and flow of the world around us. We are as much energy and water as waste I believe. The fences only exist to keep us in...

It's so easy to forget how to enjoy the now because of then, or the then yet still to come. We compartmentalize our actions and thoughts to help us further continue to cling to the mere concept of sanity. The reasoning itself gets lost in the meaning. Each day some will wake again while others won't. We get used to seeing familiar faces till they start to disappear. We begin to romanticize that we are the only ones really here for the brief blink of an eye moment that we call our whole lives. But is it a good parting? Or more importantly are we happy with our moments as they flash before our eyes one last time before tipping into the unknown regions of the afterlife? Though our own demise may be out of our hands in most cases, our moments most certainly always aren't. Sure there are extreme circumstances, as with most anything, but there are also times and ways where we can still steal a few good moments for the end's slide show.

With that in mind, Cheers to the slideshow. —WILLIAM DANIEL THOMPSON



HARD KNOCK LIFE

"It's too bad I didn't come from poverty and hardship, or I might have actually had a chance at doing something amazing". That's what I wrote to my wife after watching Tan Le's TED Talk called, "My Immigration Story".

Then I really started thinking about it. Sure, I didn't have to wonder if I'd actually have to drink poison so I wouldn't have to get raped by pirates. Sure, I didn't have to go hungry or be oppressed by a husband or whatever. (I admit, she kinda lost my attention a couple of times so I don't have another example of her ordeal). But, if I really thought about it, I've had a hard life too. Now, I am not talking about deserving anything. This is not about entitlement. I'm just thinking that from now on, I might lead with my life story before I propose an idea to an investor or start a Kickstarter campaign.

So, here are some of my hard knocks: I grew up in a harsh nomadic military environment. My dad was in the Air Force and we moved to a different city or state or country every 3-5 years. And being a kid, I didn't even think about staying in touch with any of the friends I had in Virginia in 1973, Venezuela in 1976 or Spain in 1981 or any of the other seven moves. Facebook has helped "connect", but we all know that's not real connecting. So, I have no lifelong friends. And I call it harsh because my dad was a "TI" (Training Instructor) and an officer, and he brought that home sometimes. I can't tell you how many times I got a 3x5 card left on my bed telling me that he had "cleaned up" my room...which meant there were personal items I would never see again.

Oh, as a side note, my parents named me "Jorge" but always introduced me as "George". How confusing is that? At least once a week someone asks me what I want them to call me. And no one can pronounce my last name. That pretty much curses me to a life of never amounting to anything. I'm pretty sure the Rogue Economist guys who wrote *Freonomics* said something like that. I am among the Laquisha's and Tyrell's.

Anyway, back to the knocks: Most of my life was pre-internet, pre-mobile phones and pre-tiny computers. We didn't have Google to ask whatever fancied us at the moment. My parents had no idea that we rode our bikes to another neighborhood where there was a huge quarry with cool jumps and really steep and dangerous downhill and rocks and trash. If one of us had gotten hurt, there would be no way to get in touch with anyone unless someone rode all the way back home. There was one time that a neighborhood boy fell backwards off a cement wall and started crying saying he had broken his leg and couldn't move. He told me to go to his house and tell his parents. We couldn't just call. I would have had to ride all the way back home from the other side of the neighborhood. (The funny thing is, for the life of me, I don't remember riding my bike to his house or telling his parents. I remember him in a cast. Weird.)

OK, you know how people above the age of 60 know the exact place they were when Kennedy got shot? Well, I know the exact place I was when the Space Shuttle Challenger exploded. We were watching it live in the school's auditorium. It was horrible. (And I must admit, kinda beautiful). But scarring for sure. I mean, the first teacher in space, wow! Oh, she's dead. Wait, are we sure? Let's keep the cameras rolling. Is that a seat that's careening towards Earth? Is this real life? Yes, little Georgie. This is real life. You just watched seven people die. Scarred for life.

I was in Spain when the movie *Red Dawn* came out. We were going to school on the Air Force Base in Torrejon. The school decided that it would be a good idea to give students the option to skip classes and watch the movie. Hell yeah I skipped classes. They played the movie several times, so I pretty much skipped all day. That movie freaked me out. They did the same thing for *The Day After*. Oh, you don't remember that movie? It's about the aftermath of nuclear explosions. This would plague me for the rest of my life, basically thinking that the world was on the brink of ending in invasion or explosions. I still think that.

Do you remember the hardship of having to decide between attempting amazing breakdance moves and getting an electric guitar? Between "Sucker MCs" and "Shout at the Devil"? I do. Tough decisions for an innocent kid at such an impressionable age who was brought up on John Denver and Abba during road trips. My mom bought me a Speedo when I was 13. I'm sure there were other swim trunk styles she could have bought me, but no, my mom thought a Speedo was what I needed. This is just all sorts of bad. You got the potential of your little guy filling with blood (as he became very fond of doing at inopportune times) and making an appearance over the top, or an accidental slip-page showing off your pride and joy: the sparse collection of newly emerged short and curls. And then surround yourself with hot High School lifeguards wearing tiny bikinis. All I can say is that I sat down a lot that summer. Positioning a boner inside of Speedos is practically impossible. Thanks mom!

Once, my brothers and I were having a dirt clod fight and I slipped and fell into a creek that turned out to be downstream from a pig farm. I gashed my head wide open on a boat propeller, had a root canal on one of the front teeth and was made to eat rice and beans for years. I got locked out of the house naked on a dare by my older brother...twice. I was even swept out toward the Atlantic on a Boy Scout trip in Portugal. Sure, I was warned not to go into the ocean because it was dangerous and I could get swept out to sea, but that's not the point. My mom would give me a "cafe con leche" every morning during elementary school, and then I'd get grounded or get my skateboard or tape player taken away because I'd bring home pink slips saying I couldn't sit still or keep my hands off other kids and was a "Class Clown".

After college, once I had "settled down" a bit, I was asked by a friend if I would meet with him and a kid he was mentoring. Well, driving to where we were going to meet, I thought I was gonna fart and basically sharted at least a full pint of really liquidy green stuff. I couldn't call to cancel (no cell phones at the time) and didn't want to bail on the kid who was trying to be a better person. So I stopped at a gas station and did what I could to clean up. By the time I was done cleaning up, my nose had turned off. I had no idea if I smelled like I just sharted myself or not. Great example, right? "Hey, take a look at this fine example of what you can be if you...what is that smell?" One time I was at an Indian doctor's office and when I took off my shirt, she asked me, "Are you always this pale?" My first job was a McDonald's grill cook. Arrested, expelled, incarcerated, swirlies, wedgies, tubby, cowlicks. Oh, and as it turns out, I might have Mad Cow disease. Just a whole lot of "Hard Knocks", right? The truth is, all of this really means nothing because I haven't done anything amazing yet. Well, I haven't invented a way to control a drone with brain waves or temporarily turn off boners or anything amazing like that anyway. But maybe my story would make a good intro to a Ted Talk. Followed by, "And then I invented..." or "This is what led me to..." or, "Never again would anyone..." We'll see. The world is my oyster, right?

We know about Tan Le because my wife and I watched *Chelsea Handler Does Silicon Valley* on Netflix and she was interviewed about something she and her team invented, but the Ted Talk my wife sent me had nothing to do with what she had done, just about how "hard" her life was immigrating from Vietnam to Australia, which for her, meant more opportunities, including schools and universities. I looked her up, and it doesn't look like she was a "rags-to-riches" story. To be 100% honest, I really like that all these things happened to me. I mean, it makes me who I am, right? I'm sure you've had worse (and just as interesting) stuff happen to you. Maybe you'll be invited to do a Ted Talk too! Maybe the real point of this article is to say that experience makes us feel confident. Important, even. Makes up think we have something under our belt. Maybe that's a good thing. Maybe that's what makes us want to invent or revolt or rise above in some way. Unless it makes you think that you deserve to be thought of as important or deserving of attention. That's just lame. —JORGE GOYCO

Recently a series of "List the 12 Albums that have stayed with you" Facebook meme passed around amongst my friends and family. I can never resist the Facebook poll when it pops up, especially not one that has to do with music. So I, of course, filled one out and dutifully passed it along to my other peoples. Turns out many of our staff writers participated as well. We thought it might be a good idea (ie. REAL GOOD COLUMN INCH FILLER) if we published some of them. So here ya go...

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1. The Exploited—*Punks Not Dead*
 2. Misfits—*Walk Among Us*
 3. Cocksparrer—*Shock Troops*
 4. My Life With The Thrill Kill Kult—*Confessions Of A Knife*
 5. Ministry—*A Mind Is a Terrible Thing To Taste*
 6. Tom Waits—*Blood Money*
 7. Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds—*Let Love In*
 8. Jawbreaker—*Dear You*
 9. Suicidal Tendencies—*Suicidal Tendencies*
 10. Manic Hispanic—*The Menudo Incident*
 11. Ramones—*Rocket To Russia*
 12. Bad Brains—*Bad Brains*
- TIMOTHY DANGER

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1. Hitmen 3—*Bubbling Under*
2. Bruce Springsteen—*Born to Run*
3. The Clash—*The Clash*
4. The Who—*Quadrophenia*
5. Blue Rodeo—*Diamond Mine*
6. The Jesus and Mary Chain—*Darklands*
7. Mike Oldfield—*Hergest Ridge*
8. Warren Zevon—*Sentimental Hygiene*
9. Joe Ely—*Dig All Night*
10. Ian Hunter—*All of the Good Ones are Taken*
11. The Supertones—*The Supertones... Are Go*
12. Social Distortion—*Sex, Love, and Rock 'n' Roll*

I don't know how I managed to leave off all female artists, REM, Bob Dylan, MXPX, Graham Parker, Psychedelic Furs, and OMD, but there you go. —MIKE L. DOWNEY

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1) Devo—*Q: Are we not men? A: We are Devo!*
 Okay, now I only got into Devo within the last two years, but in that time I've come to realize that they are my favorite band I needed to listen to years ago. Iggy Pop described them as the only new wave band that mattered and I mean it's Iggy. Listen to everything he says. *Idiocracy*? Good movie huh? Well, they came up with that idea back in the 1970's and it's the catalyst for their being. They were actually protesters in the Kent State shooting and went on to do this. The self-described "Kraftwerk with pelvises" group has a discography far more in depth than the one-hit wonder band of "Whip it" fame I purported they were for so many years. Immensely talented, sardonic and an intense sarcasm that digs it's teeth to the bone.

2) Depeche Mode—*Music for the masses*
 Seriously, if you don't like Depeche Mode, well fuck you.

3) Janis Joplin—*I got dem ol' Kozmic Blues again Mama!*
 Janis was my first. I was spending the summer with my dad as he went through a divorce and would spend hours perusing his vinyl collection of Led Zeppelin, KISS, Jimi Hendrix, etc. I was 11 years old when I found her. Buried deep within the collection was the only female in his stacks. That voice. There's no other like it. Janis was the first artist I chose myself. You can feel the twisted turmoil of a strong woman's life in shambles holding it in over "Little Girl Blue" as song that still resonates with me to this very day. Do yourself a favor,

DESERT ISLA

listen to all the non-hits of hers to really appreciate the talent she had.

4) The Velvet Underground—*The Velvet Underground*
 I still like to drive through fog banks late at night with the windows down and listen to "Pale Blue Eyes". I ain't afraid to tell everyone and anyone I did cry when he died. Lou Reed, as cheesy as it may sound, was the poet of my existence. Okay that does sound cheesy as fuck but god damn. "Candy says", a song about The famous Warhol Transwoman Candy Darling, lingers an aftertaste of sorrow when one follows her life from fame to an untimely death whether it's the intention or not. These songs have always resonated with me, never having a moment of lackluster.

5) Tom Jones—*The Complete Tom Jones*
 Okay, I'm cheating but to get all the songs I like by the guy, I have to go to comp. standards. The first time I ever heard him sing a cover of Prince's "Kiss" in the opening scene of *My Stepmother is an Alien*, which is my favorite Prince song, I knew Tom Jones was the dude. "Delilah" only further established that for me. I collect old Tom Jones albums and let me tell you Austin Powers' mojo is NOTHING like Tom Jones. One of my favorite segments of his variety show was Janis Joplin. His cover of "Burning Down the House" with the Cardigans is pretty majestic as well.

6) Nick Cave and the bad seeds—*Murder Ballads*
 The most amazing and surreal thing you will ever read is a late 80's interview with a newly sobered up Nick Cave instigating arguments between The Wire's Mark E Smith and The Pogues Shane MacGowan in a bar. For years I hated Nick Cave, the perennial critic's golden boy of moody, raucous lamenting. Then I actually started listening to good music and fell in love with this album. His rendition of "Stagger Lee" is brilliant, his duet with PJ Harvey taken from an old folk song "Henry Lee" is sensual and terrifying and the video hauntingly simplistic and passionate. On "Where the Wild Roses grow" Cave stuns with a duet with pop music icon Kylie Minogue where the lyrics intertwine amongst each other as both recant the last three days before Minogue's Elisa Day meets her untimely demise as Cave closes the song with the best damn lyrics ever written "And I kissed her goodbye, said, "All beauty must die" And lent down and planted a rose between her teeth"

7) The Pogues—*If I should fall from grace with god*
 You got me. I am a huge unabashed fan of MacGowan. I seriously grew up on the Dubliners and more traditional Irish music playing in the white side of my family's home. It was a Scottish friend that actually first played The Pogues for me one night when we were up late drinking and watching Rugby. I had decided to crash on her couch when she came stumbling in with a lit cigarette cursing at me in her brogue for not knowing who the god damned fuck the Pogues were. My nickname at the time was Fiesta so she played "Fiesta" for me followed by the entire discography. I pulled a bender listening to The Pogues and never once regretted it. If you can get past MacGowan's larger than life self, you will find some of the most amazing lyrics ever written. He also appears on Nick Cave's *Murder Ballads*.

8) Hedwig and the Angry Inch Soundtrack
 I was actually turned on to this movie by a bunch of greasers and pin strippers in a trailer park in Alvin, TX. A chance meeting on an airplane between a NYC Punk rock musician and a budding Broadway star would bring on the creation of Hedwig. Steven Trask wrote all the music, arrangements and produced the music as well as starred in the movie. Fucking amazing music. I'll

AND DOZENS

always defend this as an epic rock musical in the very best way.

9) The Clash—*The Clash on Broadway*

True Story, I once had a nervous breakdown at a record store as a teen when the only copy of this I had kept my eyes on for weeks was sold. The internet was not yet everywhere and I was sure I'd never see this again. There's something very special about the Clash for me. Maybe from the busking days of Joe Strummer's early years to the drugs and fame destruction of the band, there was always something very special about them and the sound they created. Years before M.I.A. would desecrate it, "Straight to Hell" was one of the most beautiful and ethereal songs I'd ever heard.

10) *Labyrinth* soundtrack

I would really like to tell people that my first experience with the late great Bowie was Ziggy Stardust but it's a lie. In 1986 my stepsister demanded I watch the movie and by the end she wanted to marry The Goblin King and I wanted to BE the goblin king. I remember 5 year old me being very disappointed with what the real David Bowie looked like, hoping he really did go to Costco in full on crotch bulge, poet blouse attire and poofy blonde hair. This is one of the very few things that still taps into the cold dark morose heart of a misanthrope and dials right into 5 year old me. Also, it's good for when you're stuck in traffic.

11) Kraftwerk—*Radio-Activity*

Nothing has ever struck me as profoundly as watching Kraftwerk perform the title track last year in Austin. Kraftwerk is another new to me band that I've only started listening to in recent years. They not only were a band of the late 60s, but were the forefathers to modern day rap as well as the gods of Krautrock. I can get lost in this music and somehow come out even more astounded than the time before. Kraftwerk opened the doors for a lot of music I would have never listened to like Throbbing Gristle, Joy Division and Psychic TV. I don't know how, maybe they just showed me I could love something different.

12) L7—*Hungry for Stink*

Que? You ask. L7 was the first all girl band I really listened to and came to appreciate. Their music opened the door for me to listen to Babes in Toyland, Bikini Kill, The Lunachicks and 7 year bitch. I heard about them in an interview with Joan Jett and knew immediately I liked what I was hearing. How many women could throw a bloody tampon out of their vagina at a festival at a male heckler and not be called a "dick cutting feminist"? Or when they organized a benefit for a slain abortion doctor in my neck of the woods. They were unabashed rockers. They also didn't brush their hair and I like that. This album is rough. It's rude, crude, dirty, filthy and hard. Seriously, stop reading this and listen to this album right now on Spotify or Youtube.—CREEPY HORSE

1. Modest Mouse—*The Lonesome Crowded West*

Cade and I lived in a trailer down a dirt road behind a graveyard next to a guy named Jerry who'd been at Woodstock and invited us into his storm-cellar (and his stories) every time rain dropped more than a drizzle. (Jim and Bonnie parked the Red Van Lounge in the driveway, left their clothes in the front seat, and sat on Cade's furniture bare-assed. They kept mountain weed in the freezer and code-worded it "ice cream"). This album saw us through those long Arkansas nights—"Oh my god-dam!"—and through copious jugs of cheap vodka. I've yet to fully recover..

2. Hole—*Live Through This*

I discovered this album when I enjoyed wearing make-up. Gretchen and Noelle practiced "old man" shadow on my cheeks and around my eyes after play practice. Once I said, "try something pretty", and I wore it the rest of the day. Ours was a Baptist campus. Recently, I'd been ejected from a campus ministry—"Go on! Take everything! Take everything! I want you to!"—and I was looking to turn heads. In walked Courtney Love, the girl with the most cake, and I followed suit, even when the suit was a babydoll dress.

3. Bruce Springsteen—*Nebraska*

The *shaogai* locked the doors at 10 PM. After that, we *laowai* could only purchase bottles of *pijui* from the lobby kiosk. Chad and I smoked Chinese cigarettes and listened to Bruce, to Neil, to Bob, to Willie, to any old White guys that endeared us to our fathers while allowing us to hate them. I stared out the window, the Yellow Sea belched her brown broth—"Well, they blew up the *Chickenman* in *Philly last night*"—trapped in stone and skin—"now they blew up his house, too"—and I saw America for the first time from an ocean away.

4. Social Distortion—*White Light, White Heat, White Trash*

Mike Ness need never write a memoir. It's in his songs. Addiction. Break from addiction. Difficulty breaking addiction. The jittery joy and angst of sobriety. The final calm. Ness's voice is pastoral, fatherly, wise. His heart nothing but pure to me. And this album echoes a modern day Book Of Psalms—"Friends they come and friends they go/But You were always by my side." He sees God. He reports. And I take note. I've seen Mike more than any performer, and I've yet to meet him. I want to keep it that way.

5. Smashing Pumpkins—*Siamese Dream*

Cade and I found new ways to leave Arkansas, so we drove. He bought us Arizona tea by the bottle. When I had to pee, he said "Use the bottle". And he drove. Once, we sat below Jennie's window in Cade's Montero, Rix was there, and we played "Silverfuck" as loud as Cade's car could—"Bang bang. You're dead. Hole in your head.". Our necks hurt later, and we laughed all night that we couldn't hear one other speaking. When I left America, my future bride, knowing that story, laid on top her car listening to "Silverfuck" as loud as her car could. And in our early years, we rarely drove more than an hour away without *Siamese Dream* fueling us forward.

6. Radiohead—*OK Computer*

Simon and Claire taught me to hold my liquor. They lived and worked across the pond, literally and figuratively, at the Yantai Business School. Chad and I met them in the market for *pijui*, smokes, and dumplings. We compared notes between America and England, between who hears what in which, and how prolifically any of us could hold a promise. And then Chad and Claire. And then me and Claire. And then Simon defriended us three. "*The emptiest of feelings/Disappointed people/Clinging onto bottles*". And I woke often with knees like double-barrels pointed at the mirror near my bed. Cigarette. Coffee. Yellow Sea chastising. "*And when it comes it's so, so disappointing*". Chad and I, never angry about Claire, watched Sofia Coppola's *Lost In Translation*. We thought it was the cinematic version of Thom Yorke's *OK Computer*. Probably not. But it made perfect sense at the time.

7. Patty Griffin—*Living With Ghosts*

The lot of us—Damn! The whole blessed lot of us!—gathered from our scattering into downtown Kansas City for an outdoor festival. Sean was there. Chelsea was there. Elizabeth was there. Latonya and Jeremy and Jesse and Gabe and Tim and Sarah were there. Just a year earlier we'd spent a summer sweating and swearing, changing diapers on adults, pushing wheelchairs up dirt-paths, holding guns and ropes for the blind to find their fire. Summer camp 1999. And then there in Kansas City

we all, the lot of us addicted to one another like emotional Vicodin, sat on that grassy hill—I leaned back into Chelsea, her lanky arms around my neck- and we were family. Latonya and I had our eye on one another. We shared a closet and a pillow that night. She refused to kiss me. Sarah and Jesse mentioned Patty Griffin. Swore by her. I bought her debut at a Best Buy south of town, never having heard a single track, and she sang me from North Missouri to South Arkansas. *"I can chew like a cannon ball/I can yell like a cat."* I've heard that Kansas City hillside, all that laughter, in her voice ever since.

8. Waterdeep—*To Chase Away The Birds*
I lied saying Mike Ness was the performer I had seen most. That would be Don Chaffer. And this was the first album I studied or allowed to study me. Sophomore year in college. Waterdeep showed up at the gazebo near the Ouachita River. I was new to live music. Sure, I'd seen Bon Jovi, Ozzy, Alice In Chains, Motorhead—but I'd never seen performers *up close*. Don was scraggly in body and guitar—loose in his movement and playing. He was the weird Jesus-loving hippie that played blues and sang soul, hints of folk on the edges. And he knew pain. Depression. Self-loathing. No one in our Christian camp admitted as much. *"It was a night that could feel outdated/It was a tired reminder of the bad/When you held onto what you hated/And you hated what you had."* Chaffer was my first literary hero. Cade and I followed him relentlessly. I met Latonya at a recorded and produced Waterdeep concert (*Live At the New Earth*, 1999). Regardless, Waterdeep refused to play our wedding. *"18 bullet holes/in the body of a priest/They say he was eating a hot dog/When the ammunition was released."* Latonya and I floated on anyway.

9. Willie Nelson—*Stardust*
More than any other album, *Stardust* redirects my day. Even when I hear Willie's "Georgia On My Mind" in public, eating a burger or sipping a backgammon brew, a shift occurs. Two things are at play here. First, the pure perfection of the thing. Willie with guitar and strings and Paul English's quiet, jazz pattered drum. Nothing can beat it. Second, meeting my father at age 21 over a six-pack of Bud Ice and a photo album of Vietnam photos. Willie in the sonic background. Stories I had never heard. PTSD chasms finally closed. *"Nothing but blue skies do I see."* I had waited a decade for these stories—a long time for a fella barely two decades in.

10. Against Me—*Transgender Dysphoria Blues*
I was already an Against Me fan. Then Tom pulled a Laura Jane, and I was back at junior year under Gretchen and Noelle's eyeliner pencil. A lifetime of feminine questions in my beard, my legs, my need for effusive words over silent assumptions. Plus, this album rocks. Wind-dows down. Back and forth down Bryan's 29th street. Loud as it could. Sitting in parking lots listening, listening, talking to God through these lyrics—Laura Jane: my new Mike Ness—*"I wanna piss on the walls of your house/I wanna chop those brass rings"*—I had not heard anything so perfect, so true. An angst He and I had not yet worked out. And He welcomed me more than Laura Jane did. We still talk, in our own way. Such conversations—such songs—are part of what He promised.

11. Britney Spears—*Femme Fatale*
Britney's "Hold It Against Me" video premiered for me on a Saturday morning. Afterwards, I drove to Calvert to meet Myles (my brother from Waco/now Abilene) at Loretta's Cafe (now closed). Myles awarded my travels with an anthology of stories titled, *Murder At Christmas*, which I never read. All I could talk about during breakfast was Britney's video—"She fights herself in high heels!", "She has these paint-spraying fingers!", "She has this pyro-technic dance breakdown at the end that's five minutes too short!". I referenced Britney's video a dozen

times, and Myles belabored such. A true brother. And *Femme Fatale* is Britney's most perfect cover-to-cover release. Latonya and I have seen Katy live. We've seen Kelly. We've seen Robyn. We'll see Adele soon. Britney? She's a dadgum unicorn.

12. Metric—*Fantasies*
Sitting in the parking lot of the Addison, Texas Flying Saucer, circa summer 2009, waiting for the DJ to tell me who this woman was on the radio: *"All the gold/And the guns/in the world/Couldn't get you off."* She became mythic, writing songs about Scarface alongside tracks comparing the Beatles to the Stones. The wife and I rarely agree on music, but we agree on Metric. Especially this album. Emily Haines is a boss. One album ahead, "Breathing Underwater" is just oof. It's my 3 AM, feet-and-head-don't-work-quite-right song. King Solomon with a Canadian accent. I bend. I fold beneath that one. And it can never play just once.—KEVIN STILL

- =====
- 1) Bob Dylan—*Blood on the Tracks* (All the 60's Dylan albums, really. They all blur together for me. This one just stands out as the one that got the most spins on the ol' Discman)
 - 2) Jawbreaker—*Dear You* (Runner up: Jets to Brazil—*Orange Rhyming Dictionary*, though at the time I didn't realize they were both the same guy.)
 - 3) Sonic Youth—*Daydream Nation*
 - 4) Modest Mouse—*The Lonesome Crowded West*
 - 5) The Pixies—*Surfer Rosa*
 - 6) Nirvana—*Nevermind*
 - 7) Sebadoh—*Bakesale*
 - 8) Green Day—*Dookie*
 - 9) Ramones—*Ramones*
 - 10) The Velvet Underground—*The Velvet Underground & Nico*
 - 11) Robert Johnson—*Complete Collection*
 - 12) The Rolling Stones—*Exile on Main St.*
—WONKO THE SANE

- =====
1. Kiss—*Kiss*
 2. Motley Crue—*Too Fast for Love*
 3. Van Halen—*Women and Children First*
 4. Iron Maiden—*Piece of Mind*
 5. Trouble—*The Skull*
 6. King Diamond—*Fatal Portrait*
 7. Slayer—*South of Heaven*
 8. The Cure—*Kiss Me, Kiss Me, Kiss Me*
 9. Mr. Bungle—*Mr. Bungle*
 10. The Crucified—*Pillars of Humanity*
 11. Portishead—*Dummy*
 12. FSOL—*ISDN*
—JORGE GOYCO

- =====
1. Pink Floyd—*Wish You Were Here*
 2. The Who—*Quadrophenia*
 3. Neil Young—*Ragged Glory*
 4. Ryan Adams—*Love Is Hell*
 5. Jenny Lewis—*Rabbit Fur Coat*
 6. Alice In Chains—*Dirt*
 7. Gillian Welch—*Time (The Revelator)*
 8. Autolux—*Future Perfect*
 9. Deer Tick—*Divine Providence*
 10. Wye Oak—*Civilian*
 11. Motorhead—*Ace of Spades*
 12. Jessica Lea Mayfield—*Make My Head Sing...*
—TODD HANSEN

=====

1. Weezer—*Blue Album*
 2. Pedro the Lion—*Control*
 3. Modest Mouse—*We Were Dead Before the Ship Even Sank*
 4. Manchester Orchestra—*Mean Everything to Nothing*
 5. As Cities Burn—*Come Now Sleep*
 6. Mewithoutyou—*Brother Sister*
 7. Brand New—*The Devil and God*
 8. Jimmy Eat World—*Bleed American*
 9. David Bowie—*Hunky Dory*
 10. Elliot Smith—*Either/Or*
 11. American Football—*American Football*
 12. Twentieth—*Regulate the Chemicals*
- JOSH WILLIS

- =====
1. Nirvana—*Nevermind*
 2. Pixies—*Doolittle*
 3. Pink Floyd—*The Wall*
 4. The Cars—*The Cars*
 5. Alabama Shakes—*Boys and Girls*
 6. Funkadelic—*Maggot Brain*
 7. Emerson, Lake, & Palmer—*Emerson, Lake, & Palmer*
 8. Led Zeppelin—*Led Zeppelin*
 9. Minor Threat—*Out of Step*
 10. Electric Wizard—*Dope Throne*
 11. Kylea—*Ultraviolet*
 12. Neil Young—*After the Gold Rush*
- JESSICA LITTLE

My brother started this mess.

1. Kate Bush—*Hounds of Love*
Makes me think of a basement apartment with fake wood paneling, winter 1992. The smell of a kerosene lamp, the shadows it threw against the wall. The sound of Kate breaking through the ice, trying to get out. It resonated with my teen self.

2. Joni Mitchell—*Hejira*
1994. I didn't understand what a 30 y/o Joni and I had in common. In passing, I mentioned this album to my creative writing professor. He says, "Um, did you bother to look up the term 'hejira'?" Oh, yeah. Oops. Then I got it.

3. Sonic Youth—*Daydream Nation*
This is punk rock? It didn't sound like punk rock to me in 1990. It sounded like flying. I could lie on the floor listening to the intro to "Candle" or the middle of "Cross the Breeze" and feel like Superman.

4. Black Sabbath—*Black Sabbath*
It's dark, heavy, and it *swings*.

5. KISS—*Dynasty*
I got all our KISS records taken away at Xmas 1979 because I laid waste to our bedroom with my badminton racket "guitar". Where it all started for me.

6. Miles Davis—*Bitches Brew*
I sincerely thank the nameless A/V librarian at the downtown branch of the Nashville Public Library who turned me onto so many amazing albums from 1989-1991. This one in particular. Murky, dense, impressionist, and other-wordly.

7. Kraftwerk—*Trans Europe Express*
In 1982 my brother brings this album home from the Owensboro-Daviess County Public Library. One song in particular, "Hall of Mirrors", would give me nightmares. I'd dream that Florian Schneider watched me through the knot in our closet door. I also dreamt that the entire band were waiters at the above-ground swimming pool I could see from our bedroom window.

8. Tangerine Dream—*Phaedra*
A bandmate in 1990 loaned this to me because "it gives me cool dreams". I didn't do that for me. Instead it shows me movies in my mind.

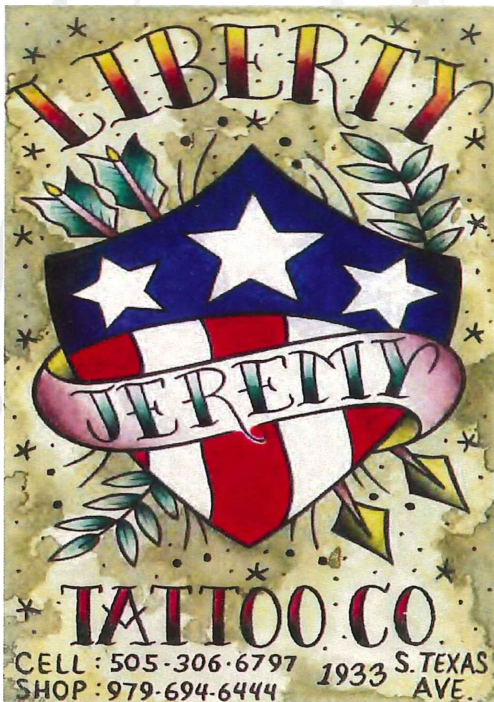
9. King Crimson—*Larks' Tongues In Aspic*
Another bandmate loaner from 1990. Heavy metal with whimsy and art

10. U2—*Boy*
U2 were once a really cool band. Along with Big Country's "In a Big Country" single, this was my entrée to the delayed out post punk sound I've loved so hard since my childhood.

11. Afghan Whigs—*Gentlemen*
I spent the first year of college fucking up, as most everyone does. This was the soundtrack to the more personal side of my mistakes. It was almost like Greg Dulli *knew* what I was doing. Been there, done that, and offered no sage advice, just reported the facts.

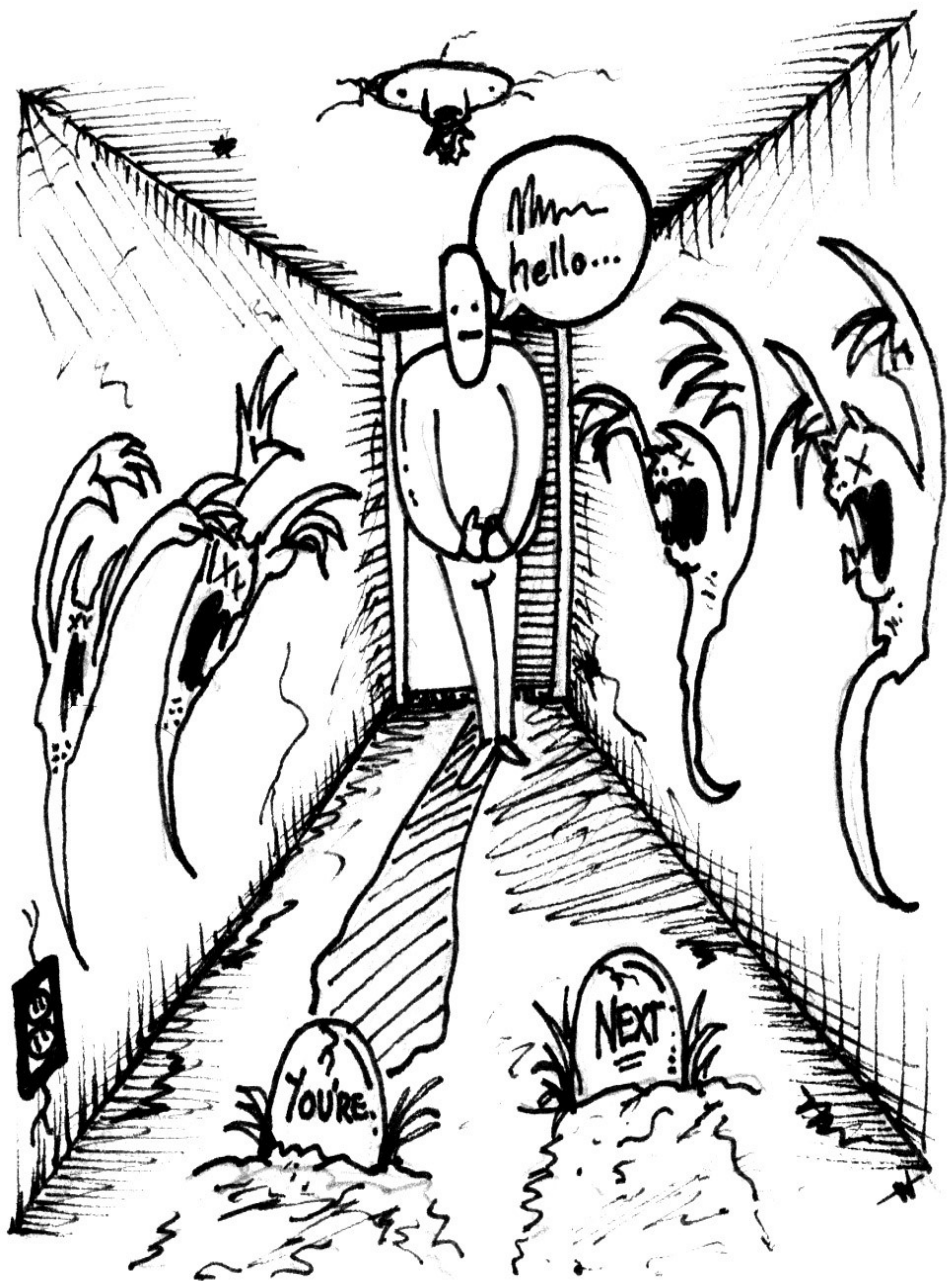
12. Led Zeppelin—*Led Zeppelin IV*
Sometimes a band's most popular album is also their best album and also your favorite album. It is also the first Zeppelin I heard, on a shitty C-60 tape dubbed by a 6th grade friend who dubbed it from his dad. I learned to play drums to this album. I played *Dungeons & Dragons* to this album.

13. Rush—*Signals*
It's my paper, gatdammit, and if I want a baker's dozen then I get it. And no way I could leave this off. Rush is the band that nearly every dork in high school in the 1980s gravitated towards because drummer Neil Peart wrote about serious dorky stuff. Fantasy, sci-fi, and then by the '80s, about teen alienation. Of course, I also air-drummed to this one, but it also made me feel a little less alone. "Some are born to move the world, to live their fantasies/but most of us just dream about the things we'd like to be." In 1988 I dreamt of what I would be. Some of the dreams even came to true. —KELLY MINNIS





Jorge
Goyco



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TODD ON FILM—SPOTLIGHT

Every year I watch the Oscars with my ballot in hand to see who gets which awards. The heavy favorite for Best Picture this year was *The Revenant*, which I was admittedly excited to see in theaters from the very first time I saw the trailer. The movie just looked so

gorgeous (and it did end up winning Best Cinematography). However, when I went to see *The Revenant* I actually found myself a bit bored once it got past the first hour, and I am usually a quite comfortable during longer films. What had started as an intriguing power struggle between multiple players ended up being a pretty one-track revenge story. Overall it was good, but there was nothing lasting after nearly three hours of plot. Surprisingly the Academy voters ended up getting Best Picture correct this year (well, they didn't give it to *Mad Max: Fury Road*, but I give them some credit for even nominating it in that category) and went with *Spotlight*, which was strong in nearly every measurable aspect.

Spotlight is a story about an investigative journalism team at the Boston Globe in 2001 (which the movie is named after...if one of your drinking game house rules is to take one every time the title of the movie is mentioned, you're not going to make it through). The team takes an assignment to look into a case about a recently indicted Catholic priest and gradually uncovers a larger cover-up being the scenes. The film manages to handle its story not as an attack on organized religion but rather one of powerful institutions and the stranglehold they can have on people even when they're in the wrong. Near the beginning of the movie Liev Schreiber's character, Marty Baron, has an in-person introduction with the bishop of the local diocese in his church offices. At this point the team has yet begun to delve into their investigation, and the meeting is setup to be a welcome-to-the-neighborhood greeting for a new head editor from out of town, but it becomes clear to Baron that the bishop has actually invited him to keep the long-running cooperation between the church and the Globe intact, a not-so-subtle powerplay presented with a smile. More meetings like this take place over the course of the film, but the smiles become less and less vibrant.

The movie has good performances from all of the cast, with most of the critical attention going to Mark Ruffalo. I'm a fan of his as well, but for my taste he was a little showy at times, and he has done better work previously. The actor everyone's attention should be on is Liev Schreiber, who does some A+ stuff every time he is on screen. Schreiber's portrayal of Baron is that of a reserved leader who walks softly but has the intuition to know which direction things should head. Schreiber accomplishes this through an understated vocal tone, an upright but wary stride, and perfectly appropriate facial expressions to receive the lines from the other actors. Marty Baron is always listening and gathering his words rather than eagerly spitting them out, and I was entranced by him from start to finish.

Despite its focus on the institution, *Spotlight* does take time to highlight the personal connections the investigative journalists have with the church without being ham-fisted about it. Rachel McAdams' character is not a devout Catholic but attends services with her grandmother on some Sundays so that they can be closer together, but finds it harder to keep attending as her team continues to uncover more information about the conspiracy. The rest of the team no longer attends services but grew up attending regularly, and realize perhaps they were not so far removed from being victims themselves. Certainly none of the team members' stories are as horrifying as the victims they meet with and interview, but the overarching theme is the shared emotion experienced after a breakdown of trust. What do you do when the thing or person you implicitly, wholeheartedly trusted takes advantage of you? What do you do when you're simply told to not fall out of line?—TODD HANSEN

STILL POETRY

High Blood Pressure

The way my chest buzzes like
a burning bulb of cardiac filament.

The way my mind sags in a drooping
chowder of yesterday's diet.

The way the interstates inside my arms
lift limits for Autobahn daredevil cells.

The way my eyes invite and fight sleep, my
tongue combs itself with dry-swiped swallows.

The way I watch my wife one day alone, or,
Worse, washing me in Sickness under

arms I can no longer move towards bottles
I can no longer open - my drool pooling

a stench of thank yous shimmering
louder than my vows in Health for Better.

—KEVIN STILL

Wasting

I wouldn't call what I do sleeping.
It's just blacking out while maintaining breathing.
I shouldn't call what I do dreaming.
I'm just reliving all of our shame and glory.
Hopelessly worrying too much,
Constantly complicating everything around me.
Fascinated, I watch people fail each other, failing themselves.
Discouraged, I listen to people who have nothing worth saying.
Frustrated, I help people that won't help themselves.
Enfuriated, I speak to people who refuse to listen, refusing every plausible solution.

Stop!

It's all fucked up, step away.

Let loose, pass out, wake up.

Push through, bend back, give in.

Breathe through a cigarette, waiting for a call.

Exhale through gritted teeth, waiting for a text.

The bars are open until 2 AM, what's the rush?

The booze is cheaper than the ink on this paper,

Cheaper than the words in your mouth,

Cheaper than the thoughts in my head.

Drag me out when I'm drunk,

Hold my drink while I spill my guts,

Pour me into your bed.

No, let me sleep.

Hold me in the morning; I'm much too selfish for that right now.

Thank you, you're much too kind.

"Did you fuck him?"

"She's a whore and a drunk."

Go fuck yourself.

—VERA OVIRI

... And That's A Start

The day I re-claimed defeat, via
no anonymity, I craved
a reuben more than a brew,

so the bar still stooled me, my
'stache still filtering flavor from froth,
but I cut short what's gone long . . .

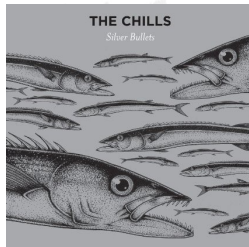
—KEVIN STILL

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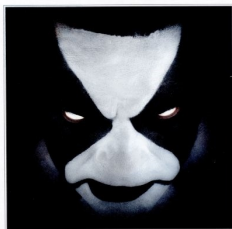


The Chills
Silver Bullets

New Zealand band The Chills have been together since 1980. For a band that has been active for 36 years it has a surprisingly small catalog with periods of inactivity that can spread decades. *Silver Bullets* is the band's first release in 20 years. It is like the band only put down their instruments a few months before.

There is a strong history of classic college radio indie rock from New Zealand, what with the work of the Finn Brothers in Split Enz and Crowded House and the jangle guitar pop of The Church. The "Dunedin" sound is that of a jangly guitars, literate and tuneful pop songs and, in The Chills' case, a cavernous reverberation. The band's paramount 1984 single "Pink Frost" is a gossamer wing of delicate guitar lines, driving drums, and a galactic-sized reverberant tank. 30 years later, *Silver Bullets* lead off track "Warm Waveform" picks up where that left off. Twangy, surf-style guitar, brushed drums and Martin Philipps' calm voice like a blanket right out of the drier.

The rest of the album veers between the 90s Britpop of the title track, "America Says Hello", and "Aurora Corona", chugging along like Gene at their best, the subterranean hush of "Underwater Wasteland" and the most striking track on the album, "Tomboy", which tells the story with a child-like refrain that erupts into a children's choir singing along over rolling tom-toms, violin, & reverberant guitar. We have become spoiled by classic bands from the golden '80s era of indie rock reforming and making music as vital as ever. The Chills are definitely in that category. —KELLY MINNIS



Abbath
Abbath

In order to understand the significance of Abbath's self-titled solo record (released January 22, 2016 on Season Of Mist Records), one should get a glimpse of his influence within Immortal - arguably, the finest black metal band to translate Norwegian isolation into music. Immortal began in 1990 with frontman/bassist, Abbath Doom Occulta, and guitarist/lyricist, Demonaz Doom Occulta. They cut several records with various drummers, including *Battles in the North* (1994), which is not a terribly bad record if you like black-metal tinged with severe doses of death rolls and the charred scent of burning churches. Enter a grand misfortune in 1999 when Demonaz contracted tendinitis, disabling him from playing guitar. (Demonaz remained a close member of Immortal, even of Abbath's solo work, as chief lyricist and "producer.") At this point, Abbath transitioned from bass to lead guitars, subsequently solidifying Immortal's sound in terms that validated their name. It doesn't take a black metal connoisseur to recognize the difference between Immortal's *Blizzard Beasts* (1997) and *At The Heart of Winter* (1999), the latter featuring Abbath on lead guitar.

The difference between those two albums is also what makes Abbath's new solo record unique. Whereas early Immortal focused on death-infused black metal styles, creating albums with little variation and short-timed tracks (see their work on *Pure Holocaust* (1992)), Abbath brought a love for hard rock and thrash metal to black metal, specifically his early love for KISS and Motorhead. *Sons of Northern Darkness* (2002), replete with these hard and thrash influences (check the track "Tyrants"), pushes both Immortal and the entire Norwegian black metal genre forward by bounds—check this—by slowing it down. Abbath is

Immortal's brake-pumper. And this, at the end of paragraph two, is what makes ABBATH a great album.

It's funny to see guys in corpse paint get butt-hurt. But they do. And Abbath got butt-hurt at the Immortal guys. (The story would require a degree in either engineering or early childhood development to define.) And now here is Abbath with Golgotha bassist, King ov Hell, and metal-sessions drummer, Creature (Decapitated, Sepultura, Benighted, Mumakil). It's been argued that ABBATH is the continuation/B-track playlist of Immortal's *All Shall Fall* (2009), which could be true if it were only that simple.

ABBATH opens, "To War!", with hellia strong thrash guitar riffs, thriving bass, and cymbal heavy drums that champion the blast-beats below. Beneath all this, the sound of marching feet, as if Abbath declares his progression forward—"Wade knee deep in the sod of gore/Once more unto the breach: To War!"—without his longtime bandmates. The album then leads into a buffet of Immortal and un-Immortal tracks. Black-metal esque tracks such as "Ashes of the Damned" (with horns), "Count the Dead", "Fenrir Hunts" (killer), and the album closer "Eternal" (repeat of "Ashes") conjure Immortal's latter albums, specifically *All Shall Fall*. And while these tracks feel just fine, met anew by King and Creature, they feel too reminiscent to constitute solo work. Nevertheless, Abbath also showcases solo tracks that liberate him from Immortal's sound. Tracks like "Ocean of Wounds" and "Root of the Mountain" waft hints Immortal, though they operate on a slower, sludgier, doomier basis. The two stand out tracks, "Winterbane" and "Fenrir Hunts", reveal the range of Abbath's song craft and influences. "Winterbane" offers something truly special, a cross-over of black and thrash sensibilities that challenges the limits found in both genres. Here is proof that neither black or thrash metal need be repetitive, monotone, and even deceptively flashy. Both genres can build real songs that defy expectations and take risks, while still keeping a solidly structured core. "Winterbane" (as well as "Root of the Mountain") could be stripped down and delivered

just as successfully on NPR's Tiny Desk Concerts. In fact, that's not such a bad idea.—KEVIN STILL



The Prof. Fuzz 63
Chinese Folk Songs

This Richardson, TX trio are in the wrong place and time. *Chinese Folk Songs* should've been a cassette-only release in 1984 on K Records with the band out on the road in support of it in England with all the other Sarah Records and C-86 set. The music is dead simple garage rock guitar, merseybeat organ, and tentative drums. The good Professor sings like a pre-puberty Calvin Johnson with the edge and kitsch of Lux Interior. The songs the band plays are pedestrian with simple chord changes, medium tempos, and lyrics about topics that range from Arkansas brides, insane asylums, cool stoner vans, crustaceans, panda attacks, to finding the location of Nick Cave as though he might be a place instead of a man.

The songs go exactly where you think they will go. You are not hearing anything new if you have even a passing familiarity with the history of rock & roll in the 1960s. But it does not lessen the experience one bit. The songs are clever, they will make you laugh, and most importantly, they make you want to hear them again and again. I can listen to "The King of Hong Kong" once and be singing it to myself for days afterwards. *Chinese Folk Songs* is just good, subversive fun.—KELLY MINNIS

CONCERT CALENDAR

3/3—Elastic Penguins, Tungsten Clouds @ Revolution,
Bryan. 10pm

3/4—Leavenworth, LUCA @ Village Café, Bryan. 8pm
3/4—The Rotisserie Chickens, Aaron Stephens & Misery Loves Company @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 8pm

3/5—St. Arnolds Pub Crawl @ Northgate, College Station. 2pm

3/12—The Ex-Optimists, A Sundae Drive, Slow Future @ New Republic Brewing Company, College Station. 9pm

3/19—Tungsten Clouds, Phargo, Blare, The Ex-Optimists @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

3/20—Altercation Punk Comedy SXSW Hangover feat. Svetlanas, Girlband, The Obvious, The Fantastic Plastics, The Grizzly Band, The Jukebox Romantics, Lost In Society, Dead To The World, Mutant Love, The Velostacks, The Glory Holes, T.S.S. @ Revolution, Bryan. 1pm

3/25—David Ramirez, Daniel Gonzalez @ New Republic Brewing Company, College Station. 8pm

3/25—Merel & Tony, Shane Walker @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

3/26—Bow Before Horus, Myra Maybelle, Covina, Distance/Here, Aphotic Contrivance, The Other Side of Eternity, Maps To Olympus @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 6pm

3/26—Lechuza (cd release), Electric Astronaut, Mutant Love, The Inators @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

3/27—Lost Dog Street Band, Mama's Broke @ Poncho's Boneyard, Bryan. 5pm

3/31—Odd Folks @ TAMU Rudder Fountain, College Station. 12pm

4/1—Slow Future (cd release), Jay Satellite, Second Runner Up, The Ex-Optimists @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

4/16—ZZ Top @ Chilifest, Crystal Ballroom, Snook. 8pm

4/23—LUCA (cd release), Civeta Dei, The Ex-Optimists @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

4/24—Aggie Dance Festival @ TAMU, College Station. 1pm

4/26—Tony Bennett @ Rudder Theater, College Station. 7:30pm

4/29—The Inators @ New Republic Brewing Company, College Station. 7pm

5/6—Birthday Club, Iowin, Honeyrude, The Ex-Optimists @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

5/14—Toologi (Tool tribute), Smile Transylvania @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 8pm

5/19-21—LOUDFEST 9 @ Revolution & Grand Stafford, Bryan. 8pm

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