

STARGREPRESENT



april 2017
vol. 9 issue 4



inside: life is short, drink up - food facts - still drinking - balcony of stars - making fun - reunited - patriotism - richard russo - l.a. guns - an almost true story - chuck berry - things to come - still poetry - blitzed - the bottle - wallpapering - record reviews - concert calendar



**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

creepy horse - tim danger - bill daniels - mike l.
downey - jorge goyco - todd hansen - rented mule -
joshua siegel - starkness

on the interwebz

<http://www.979represent.com>

emails to

redchapterjubilee@yahoo.com

materials for review & bribery can be sent to:

979represent
15530 creek meadow blvd. n.
college station, tx 77845



LIFE IS SHORT, DRINK UP

There are hundreds of clichés that we have all heard over the course of our lives. Some are true, some not, some have just enough truth not to discard

entirely but also not enough to earn its spot as a true credo. One of my favorite clichés was learned in these very pages years ago from our erstwhile contributor Mike L. Downey. In one of his columns he quoted Warren Zevon. The famed singer-songwriter had appeared on *Late Show With David Letterman* to play one last time on the show, as Zevon was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. Letterman asked Zevon if there was anything he understood now, facing his own mortality, that he didn't before. Zevon replied, "Just how much you're supposed to enjoy every sandwich."

Glib as it may be, that is incredible advice. As I have somehow stumbled my way into the beginnings of my middle age period I have begun to understand the frail fragility of life more than I ever did as a younger pup. Death was something that happened WAY down the line, when I was old, bald, and had a forest of whiskers protruding from my house elf ears. There were hints of death come to soon for an acquaintance or two in college but still, well into my 30's, death was something for the old. Or, in the case of my wife and I, death came for a child that never quite made it out into the world on time.

Then I started to see it in my peers. The engineer at the radio group I worked at in Seattle drank himself to death at 33. My brother Sean died of HIV complications at 38. My best friend from high school Matt died of complications from melanoma. My boss's 19 year old son was murdered in a robbery. And now my other boss's 10 year old daughter has died in a freak rodeo accident. Death is a hard concept to grasp when you are in your 20's or younger, because you don't really have anything to lose yet. Death happens to the old. When you start to get a little older and lose someone(s), you begin to look at death a little different. And then begin to contemplate your own.

Midlife crises are in and of themselves a cliché. Our culture has made them as such, as men and women in the 40s begin to lose their mojo and want to dress inappropriately, make extravagant and conspicuous purchases, find younger people to fuck, etc. It can look ridiculous on the outside looking in, and I have too goofed on combover Corvette bumper dudes and cougar moms. The existential angst that fuels such reactions is too real. Some people are better at recognizing the symptoms and instead channel it in some less racy and garish way. Because I am still an emotional teenager, I just keep doing the stuff I've always done. Write rock songs vaguely about it, type away in this magazine that no one reads about it, and eventually just kind of shuffle off into the corner, overthink about it, tear up a bit listening to music I hold dear, and think about the injustice of the world continuing to turn for the living while it holds still in stasis for those that are gone. And the continued struggle of those with feet planted firmly on the earth and their heads way up in the clouds, feeling gravity's pull and a yearning for the stars.

Death is what gives life meaning, as another fine cliché states. Because one day we will all be gone it is important to enjoy and experience every moment we can. That is not to say that you should live every day as if it is your last, but that sometimes you should recognize the good things, hold tight to the good days, acknowledge that this day was a good day. Perhaps you won't enjoy every last crumb of every sandwich you've ever had, but maybe you should be thankful for the good ones and cherish them. — KELLY MINNIS

ARSENAL
TATTOO & DESIGN

**HISTORIC
DOWNTOWN BRYAN, TEXAS**

arsenaltattoo.com

CREEPY HORSE FOOD FACTS



Some people may not know that I was a chef and went to Le Cordon Bleu. Well, now you do. From that experience of say 18 years, I came to learn a whole hell of a lot of stuff that does me absolutely no good in day to day life. I am an idiot savant when it comes to food and realize I know more inane bullshit about food than the average person. This realization came about when a friend I believe was asking rhetorically why pork takes so much longer than chicken to cook and I fucking actually knew the answer.

Myoglobin. It's an iron based protein found in ALL animal muscles, even yours. So if you were to really look at a protein it's a spiral. The more dense that the protein is, the tighter wound the spiral is. Pork has a denser protein and is actually closer to red meat than chicken's "white meat". Chicken has pretty loose morals in the protein field and so heat "unravels" that spring quicker and easier thus making it cook faster and degrading into mush much quicker than pork or beef. That's also why tougher cuts of beef or types of cuts like shank have to have a dual cooking process. When they are first exposed to heat that coil is so thick and wound up, heat initially makes it tense up really tight and that's why it's so tough and has to go through a second form of cooking. Like braising.

Human flesh is said to taste very much like pork.

There is no such thing as "caramelizing meat". Caramelizing can only occur with sugars, what people believe is "caramelizing" of meat is actually called the Maillard Reaction. That's the same effect as caramelization but with AMINO ACIDS and not SUGARS. Onions are also not truly caramelized, again that's the Maillard Reaction hard at work.

Chlorophyll has a cooking life span of a grand total four minutes. After that the cell walls degrade and you get peas and asparagus like canned Le Fleur and it's brown gray and mushy. When you are cooking anything green,

you know, chlorophyll, and see that beautiful bright green color, it is fully cooked. It's best to stop the cooking process with an ice bath.

Meat continues to "cook" even after it has been removed from heat, this is referred to as "carry over cooking".

You know that blood pouring out of that juicy steak or burger you're eating? It's actually "Purge". Purge is the water in the muscle colored by our good friend Myoglobin and releases from the muscle when heated. Essentially, it's muscle sweat.

The dark part of the mushroom? Those are gills and the reason they are black is because that's shit. Really. Mushrooms come from dead stuff and poop. The mushrooms we eat are typically grown from chicken shit. That's not dirt. Your mushrooms are covered in shit.

Don't like Veal, don't drink milk. This ain't even a vegan thing, seriously I learned this in meat fabrication. Veal is the by product of the Dairy Industry. Cows have to produce offspring in order to lactate, so they are routinely impregnated and the baby is immediately taken away and slaughtered anywhere from four to 26 weeks of age. Veal slaughtered at four weeks is called "Bob Veal", most Veal consumed is generally slaughtered at 18-22 weeks. Most cows are slaughtered at 18 months, dairy cows are slaughtered at 4-5 years of age and they have a natural life span of 25+ years.

The only edible part of an alligator is the tail.

Frog legs' tendons need to be cut or when they are exposed to heat the tendon will tense up and they will literally "hop" out of the frying pan. (This was hilarious to watch a group of Haitian girls in class go running out because they didn't know that would happen and it scared the living shit out of them.) — *CREEPY HORSE*

STILL POETRY

THANKSGIVING

After coffee and poems and a spoon
Of Daisy brand cottage cheese,
And after a shower

Washing away the marinade
Of yesterday's best efforts
To usher me closer to the End,

I walked my two pugs so they too
Might deposit the prior day's
Gluttony near the mailboxes

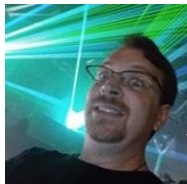
Slightly under a bush. Good dog.
Josephine appears most ecstatic
About these prospects,

Circling and sniffing until her nose
Finds true north, where she squats,
Delivering a fresh batch of pug loaves,

Steaming in the morning chill. Good dog.
I am a thoughtful neighbor, so I bend
At the waist with a slender plastic bag,

One that this morning breaks on me,
Piercing my finger into Josie's
Hot bread of whitefish and potato recipe

Feed, like a thermometer
Scientifically inserted into the breast
Of a Thanksgiving turkey.
- KEVIN STILL / March 14, 2017
(Dedicated to Zoot and her persons)



MAKING FUN

It sucks being made fun of. It probably happens to me still at 47, but it's way less often and way more subtle and complicated.

I'm going to assume that most of us reading this were the ones being made fun of. I feel like it's a higher percentage of people who are on the receiving end of that crap...I might be wrong about that.

Some of you were the "Others". No worries btw. It's all part of growing up. It's confusing and interesting for everyone. We forgive you. Well, most of you.

I think for the most part it was unfounded, but sometimes not. Being made fun of changed me. I remember deciding, "Oh, wait, I don't want to be that person anymore." and then didn't do whatever it was that was the offending action.

I remember in the 8th grade, some kid who was better than me at soccer (everyone was) saw me picking my nose on the field. He started yelling, "look at the dense boy!"

Just, first of all, "dense" was a new insult for me. I know it meant thick and solid....oh...I get it.

But for picking my nose? Why did that make me dense? I would argue that it didn't. Socially awkward? Maybe. immature? Yes. Adept at self grooming? Heck yes!

Anyway, I made an effort from then on to make sure no one was watching if I picked my nose in public. I still pick my nose while driving in the car, and I'm sure I've been caught "penetrating".

What would he have called me if he knew I was still (at the time) partaking in the joys of nibbling a little nose goblin now and then. Probably "Dense" I guess.

I'm not the guy who does the making fun of (it's just not in my makeup), so I still don't exactly know the motivation behind the insults. Seriously, I've been sarcastic, but I don't insult. Not intentionally anyway.

It's a mystery, and the truth is, how am I ever going to find out? If I ask someone who did it to me, they will

most likely have had some sort of remorse...or at least be polite and pretend they were apologetic...which means they are NOT going to say something like, "Oh, it's because you wore really tight corduroy short-short pants." or whatever it might be.

Or they won't want to admit to it, so they would downplay it and say something about "kids being kids" or some TV sitcom script sounding shit.

Either way, I'll probably never know. None of my friends are like that. Not sure if they changed or whatever, or if they are scared I will find out they were part of the "Others". Actually, there ARE a couple of people in my life that I am not the most comfortable around, but it's definitely not all the time. They aren't constant dicks anyway. I chalk it up to my being overly sensitive.

I'll just passively-aggressively show them my massive middle finger (in my mind).

I'm not a pussy. I'll tell people they are being dicks. But only if they are my "Closeys". Honestly, I can like and love offensive people. Unless they flick me in the "love handle" every time they walk by. Fuck that guy!

I am making it sound like I am harboring resentment, but I'm not. The "trickster" type is super interesting to me. There's this thing called "Liminality" or the "Liminal Stage", and it's basically the threshold between one level and another. Like a right of passage into manhood, but not exactly. It's the period between being a boy and a man (Or girl to woman)...to whatever degree, when stuff changes.

"During a ritual's liminal stage, participants "stand at the threshold" between their previous way of structuring their identity, time, or community, and a new way, which the ritual establishes."

The Trickster has a part to play to get you from one place to the other. He pushes you off the cliff even though you weren't ready to dive in. He tells you to eat a second brownie (because you aren't feeling anything yet) knowing full well there will be a solid 6 hours of angry ghosts fighting agitated, spiky puffer fish behind your eyes.

Whatever. I seriously shouldn't have been wearing those shorts. — JORGE GOYCO



BALCONY OF STARS

The ship was made of the silk from a thousand thousand spiders and held aloft by the monk's prayers. Monks had labored at least a hundred hundred years to build it. They were directed by the prophets who foretold the end. Well, at least the end of Tyvic.

If only the prophets had said how long the journey would take. While scanning the endless and featureless ocean, Bishop wished for that knowledge often. A storm darkened the Southern horizon. Bishop adjusted the prayer schedule to steer them to further West. Bishop thought that he had already turned away from the storm. Odd. He reviewed their course and noticed that he had been adjusting West every seven hours. He dimmed the navigational sphere and whispered into a transmitter.

"Brother Kir, it seems that Doubt is within your third choir."

"Apologies, Excellency. I will isolate it. Tonight?"

"Yes," Bishop paused, and held that sorrow in his heart that no one had ever been able to explain to him, "Tonight, at the Balcony of Stars." He did not wait for acknowledgement, and walked out of the bridge through a black door, through a corridor illuminated by violet torches and parted scarlet curtains.

Chanted prayers, soft and loud, harmonized and discordant, filled the vast white silken space, keeping the airship aloft. Groups knelt and stood, lie flat and upright, meditating and agitated. The faith of the remnant of Tyvic bringing them to a new home. Except when there is Doubt.

Once, when Bishop's father was Bishop, a test ship had attempted to cross the ice peaks. When the wreckage was found a decade later, the ship's journal said that Doubt had crept into the ranks, first only touching one. They fought, tried convincing arguments, but the arguments themselves fostered more confusion. Doubt festered until the test ship was unsteerable, and it crashed.

Bishop scanned the throng. None of these were in Doubt. Third group was off shift, eating, sleeping, or acting out a recreation fantasy. He began to descend to his quarters, but Brother Kir approached and touched Bishop's sleeve.

"Excellency, I must speak with you in private," he whispered urgently. Immediately, Bishop knew who was in Doubt. It would not do to distract the current prayers by being impolite and telling Kir to leave him be, so he followed off to a side chamber away from prying eyes. When the sea foam curtains fell together and they were alone Bishop felt his heart break in two. "Rily?"

"You knew?"

Bishop felt an accusatory tone from Brother Kir. Untoward. "Only because you came to me." Rily was Bishop's only child, born long ago when Bishop was Rynille. She was born with auburn hair and cinnamon eyes with flecks of green like her mother, who died with Tyvic.

"Maybe you can talk to her?" Brother Kir trying to offer hope.

Bishop grimaced. Yes, he could speak to her. The ship crosses the sky on wings of faith, how can you Doubt? The cataclysm we escaped was foretold, how can you not Trust? The ship was built over the course of millennia for us to be in now, how can you not Believe? She would listen, take heed, smile, and go back to her prayers.

"We both know better. It will go as it always goes."

Bishop could not sleep. He stared at the fresco on his ceiling. The fresco was once a part of the greatest temple in Tyvic. It showed the Creation from nothing. A single emerald set in the aquamarine sea. He pondered. Perhaps the Creator was making a new land for them now. Perhaps he would fly them there. Perhaps. No one knew. The prophets did not explain this part.

It would be so easy to Doubt, if the others had time. Bishop did not keep the airship in the sky. He guided their course—his faith did not matter. He questioned. He wondered. He Doubted continually. Why did he not know their destination? How could this endless journey be the intention? No one else could know that he did not know.

Tears dripped down his face, dripping a chill onto his open palms. After a time he rose and wiped his sorrow dry. It was time to go to the Balcony of Stars.

On the Balcony of Stars, Rily waited, hair askew, lips pursed, demeanor calm. Two burly men held her arms, though she was not resisting. The heavens were glittering in the night, shining brightly on Rily's garnet necklace.

Bishop said the final prayer, choking as he spoke Rily's name. He looked over the side of the ship. "Farewell," he mouthed, too quiet to be heard. The men lifted her up easily and dropped Rily overboard.

Bishop waited. Bishop listened. There was no cry. There was no scream. As high as they flew, he still should have heard a splash from below. There was nothing.

Maybe Rily had gone where the prophets intended. Maybe he was being foolish.

Held up by unshakeable faith, the airship flew on a straightened course. — STARKNESS

PATRIOTISM

Something fucked has happened. And it's happened fairly slowly, but it's pretty depressing and kind of makes me sick. Patriotism in America has been claimed.

You get it. You know what I'm talking about. Patriotic chants ringing out at Trump rallies while minorities are shuffled away. If you go to the Rodeo it's full of this weird macho-patriotic-conservative person that has become common. American riders are introduced separately from foreigners. The "American-ness" of conservatives is proudly flaunted and it's affected everyone's outlook.

If some dude was walking down the street with a baseball cap with an American flag on it, does that have political implications? Yes, it fucking does. And it's disgusting.

Somehow the right has staked a claim on patriotism, and a sole claim. I mean, I get the fact that conservative politics and patriotism are linked. You love things the way they are, everything is already good, etc. Conservatism is an inclination to follow the ways of the past, or as Lincoln said "against the new and untried." It follows that patriotic nostalgia is a natural part of conservative ideology.

But where the hell have the progressives been? Discussing and focusing on injustices and mistakes seems to have made liberals and progressives distance themselves from their country when we need to be there the most. "Moving to Canada" is a bullshit liberal trope. Looking at oppressions, human rights violations, environmental implications and just examining the underside of history that we usually don't talk about means that liberals must confront horrors that the MAGA true believers never care to look at. I get that makes it harder to trust in your country, but the liberal crowd needs to stop distancing themselves from our country and work to make it better.

In the end you have to understand that no one side has a claim to patriotism. The American liberal needs to understand that we have the most exceptional form of patriotism. The United States was founded on a set of ideals and beliefs that question whether societies of mean are really capable of establishing good government from reflection and choice. Our nation was not built on a singular common heritage. It wasn't formed on the back of a dynasty. America was built in the minds of people who envisioned a better way of life.

religion in our loyalties and government history. For the conservative today, it is Christian and it is white. How is that patriotic? The American liberal's patriotism is built on ideals. A loyalty to grand values that we want to live up to. Values that we recognize are not fulfilled now or in our history as a nation. It's impossible to live up to these things, but that commitment to making things better and committing to equality is deeply rooted in the American tradition.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights" It doesn't get any more patriotic than the fucking Constitution.

What I'm hoping to convey here is that the contemporary liberal's concept of our country, our deepest loyalties lie to our country and we should be proud of that. A Trump supporter may feel a deep patriotic connection to the 1950s, our connection to the ideals that continue to propel our nation forward. It is certainly a less tangible thing to cling to, but it is a great deal more important.

"Patriotism has nothing to do with conservatism. It is devotion to something that is changing but is felt to be mystically the same, like the devotion of the ex-White Bolshevik to Russia. To be loyal both to Chamberlain's England and to the England of tomorrow might seem an impossibility, if one did not know it to be an everyday phenomenon." — George Orwell

There is an indescribably experience of being American. MLK Jr has been to the mountaintop! We went on the fucking moon! The infinite number of variables unique to America make patriotism an everyday phenomenon. It is the people of our nation. It is the land that we live on. It is visceral and unknowable until you actually travel around the country and meet punks in dive bars, hippies at a farmer's market, and corporate account managers in the airport.

Liberals, your love of country can't be taken away. It is not some owned by some Cheeto looking motherfucker in the White House. No matter how alienating it is to hear "USA!" chants while a Muslim woman is pulled away from a rally while protesting, we must hold strong. Not only in continuing to protest, but in our love for country. Do not allow conservative countrymen to appropriate the right to love our country. Do not appropriate patriotism for political goals. — STARKNESS

**FIND 979REPRESENT ONLINE AT
FACEBOOK & 979REPRESENT.COM**

STILL DRINKING



When I moved to Texas from Kansas City, some nine years ago, I loathed the distributed loss of my two favorite craft breweries: Colorado's **Boulder Brewing Co.** and Michigan's **Bell's Brewing Co.** Back in 2006, I cut my IPA hop-loving teeth on these companies. A new beer from either brewery demanded instant purchase, and I was rarely disappointed. To this day, I need a **Hazed and Infused Session Ale** immediately upon entering Denver (though I feel tacky pulling the wife to Denver International's Boulder Tap House while our friends wait outside), and anytime Latonya travels home to Saint Louis I request Bell's **Two Hearted Ale** return in her luggage. Whether or not Hazed and Two-Hearted are truly great beers is beside the point: these IPAs are my home, my imbibers' shire, and I swell with domestic tranquility beneath their spicy wings.

With this in mind, imagine my glandularly explosive glee upon learning that Bell's Brewing had landed distribution in Texas. I remember it like it was this past March 14th. I slipped in Waco's Dancing Bear Pub to peruse their craft menu and saw Bell's Two-Hearted Ale—that familiar tap handle with its long white stem cradling an olive green billiard ball. I called to the bartender, "Excuse me, ma'am, when did you get Bell's Two-Hearted?" She squinted her entire face—no joke, I slightly recoiled—and said, "Um, a few days ago?" My bulky bar neighbor, who I'm sure is paid by GNC to wear their tight t-shirts, said in a southern Barry White-ish voice I kinda fell in love with, "Their distribution started in Texas last week." I said, "Sir," and meant it, "you have made me happy." And I meant that more.

Since Tuesday, March 14 I have attempted to consume as much Bell's Brewing Co. brew as possible while not losing the ever-loving plot. Thankfully, Texas welcomed a soft-open to Bell's Brewing, offering little more than the essentials at the onset. Immediately, I got my hands on **Bell's Two-Hearted Ale (7% ABV)**, an American IPA, made exclusively with Centennial Hops that exhibits a wickedly balanced bed of bright, golden malts. As always, I was beyond pleased: hell, I was hop-home. Also, I was amused by how my palette has changed. I remember Kansas City days when Seanboy and Jason Scott and I would throw back Bell's Two-Hearted Ales over backgammon and horror flicks. We grimaced at how massive that sucker was. TA-DOW! The hops smacked! It was the biggest thing we'd ever tasted!

This was before the great uber-hop trend in American craft brewing, before the goal became to utterly sear taste buds with hop burn. Now, after nearly a decade, Bell's Two-Hearted Ale is an easy drinking IPA, balanced for kick-backable repetition.



To celebrate their Texas distribution, Bell's released **Am I Right or Amarillo American IPA (6%)**. Ridiculously thin and one-sided, Am I Right—brewed with 100% Amarillo hops, which generally offer a citrusy flavor—boasted all hops and no malts, making for a beer that tasted like a defunct wine experiment. Likewise, after a few bottle length samples, I realized that Bell's **Amber Ale (5.8%)** and **Bell's Porter (5.6%)** hold more merit via nostalgia than in the actual glass. Bell's Amber is a fine up-front amber lacking a satisfying finish: the malts peter out where

they should bolster the caramel-ish malt flavors. Likewise, Bell's Porter proved merely okay, never quite bringing forward those rich cola-sweet cocoa covered fig notes that a good porter should.

Still, **Bell's Kalamazoo Stout (6%)** did not disappoint. Served best near room-temperature and touted in a bottle note that reads "Stout Brewed With Brewer's Licorice", Kalamazoo Stout blends a succession of roasted malts that leave behind their promised flavors of "dark chocolate and freshly roasted coffee" for a rich tobacco burly sweetness. Totally top-notch. Similarly, **Bell's Oberon (5.8%)**, a seasonal Wheat Ale available from March to August, packs a massive Wit-style citrusy punch, even though their website claims Oberon is not brewed with spices or fruit. Their only addition is Wheat Malt. I was totally duped! Oberon is an old favorite of mine being the only wheat ale I gravitate towards, and all this time I thought it was due to the accoutrements. Not at all! Regardless, be sure to swirl this sucker and grab all the sedimentary wheat malt from the bottom. You'll be glad.

All in all, Bell's has proved as equally trustworthy as it is merely nostalgic. I recommend bulk purchases of Two-Hearted Ale, Kalamazoo Stout, and Oberon, while relying on trial size single-bottle purchases of Amber, Porter, and, if you can find it, Am I Right or Amarillo. No brewery on the planet brews everything to perfections. But some get close to really damn good. —KEVIN STILL

RENTED MULE VS. L.A. GUNS

The Proof Rooftop Chronicles part III (no really, Proof Rooftop Lounge isn't paying me to write these reviews). L.A. Guns—Proof Rooftop Lounge 2/23/17

To be honest with you, I didn't know much about L.A. Guns before I saw this show. I lumped them in with other cheezy hair metal acts of the era—Skid Row,

covers. All the expected suspects were covered: AC/DC, Quiet Riot, Ted Nugent, KISS and so on. He did sneak in one original, which not too surprisingly, sounded like a hair metal hit that didn't get radio play the first time. Solinger has a clever thing going with this band. His musicians were School of Rock protégées meaning he probably doesn't have to pay them and he has a lock



Poison, RATT, Winger and so on. In my defense, when L.A. Guns were in their prime, the likes of Husker Du and The Replacements were also in their prime, putting out classic albums (R.E.M. didn't even get radio play back then). Hair metal in general seemed at best pretty silly and at worse the enemy. However, "free" is the best ticket price around (especially given the asking price for the current Metallica tour—tickets start in the 90 dollar range), so I went.

The word is getting out on these free shows at Proof. The place was packed. Taking a look at the crowd of people at the show when I arrived, I was certain of two things: 1) There was full employment for baby sitters tonight; and 2) You probably couldn't find cheap blonde hair dye in the Houston area that night. There were more fake blond 40ish MILFs (and plenty of not so MILF females who left their best days behind them circa 1987) in the audience than a Fox News talk show panel. Their beer bellied, grizzled husbands/boyfriends kept a watchful eye on them as they fetched buckets of beer. Any place that sells buckets of beer can't be all bad.

A gent by the name of Johnny Solinger opened the show. Evidentially he the second vocalist for 80s' hair metal band Skid Row after Sebastian Bach. Mr. Solinger knew the score. The crowd was there for nostalgia and he gave it to them in spades. Rather than boring the audience with new originals, he played 1980s metal

on the opening slot future Proof Rooftop metal shows.

L.A. Guns were better than expected. This band has more substance than the likes of Winger and RATT. This shouldn't have surprised me as members of Guns and he gave it to them in spades. Rather than boring the audience with new originals, he played 1980's metal covers. All the expected suspects were covered: AC/DC, Quiet Riot, Ted Nugent, KISS and so on. He did & Roses were in an early version of L.A. Guns. Basically L.A. Guns play the grittier, glam side of hair metal. Songs such as "Killing Machine", "No Mercy" and "Bitch is Back" apparently were played as well as they were back in the day (I wouldn't know as I didn't see them "back in the day"). Tracii Guns is the alpha of the band; playing loud clean guitar solos that don't sound silly (well too silly anyway). If you were in a hair metal band in the 1980's you had to have a power ballad and L.A. Guns were no exception. They played their power Ballad "Ballad of Jayne" toward the end of their set. Of course out came the lit cigarette lighters over the audience members heads (and cell phones with pictures of lit cigarette lighters).

LA guns were the first band I've seen at Proof that I would have actually paid to see. Of course, I'm not passing up free tickets as long as Proof continues to give them out. Lita Ford is coming in May. That ought to be quite a show. —RENTED MULE

AN ALMOST TRUE STORY

Starkness is writing in the third person, present tense. He knows that stream of consciousness bullshit is the sort of thing they teach at prestigious universities, that it can be mistaken as clever by those who value style over content. Hell yeah, check the word count, only six hundred thirty-nine more words and Starkness will reach six hundred eighty-nine and submit it to some stupid publication so that he can feel recognized by the world, or at least a small community of people that pick up weird free publications.

But you pause. Maybe second person would be better? People don't do that much. That's different. You know there aren't many stories written in the second person. You wonder if that's because not many people know about the second person, or because it comes off awkward and pretentious. You think you know the answer when...

Eva walks in the room. She reads over your should for a minute, and you look up. You can tell that she is annoyed.

"What's the matter?" you ask.

"You're writing in the second person, present tense. Again," she says. "Why do you do that when it irritates you so much?"

She glares at you. Eva has been married to you for eight years. She has a degree in Thermonuclear Physics, worked in retail and now is teaching at the local high school. She loves gas station tacos, Netflix, and crying while looking at pictures of cats.

"Now you're doing that writing school potted biography thing!"

"I can't help it! I'm all confused!"

You're often confused these days.

She looks so annoyed that I switch to first person.

"You're right," I say. "You know what to do. I should listen to you more often, rather than getting tangled up in my male need to always be right."

She stares at me. She's not the type of woman you want to fuck with.

"Stop that too," she says. "I hate that male apologist bullshit style of writing. Women aren't perfect and neither are men. It makes the author sound like a fucking creep when they write that way."

"Okay."

"That's better."

"What's better?"

"This way of writing."

"Which of us is speaking now? I can't tell anymore."

"Nor can I? Which one of us is talking now?"

"It's that Hilary Mantel thing. Call everyone Thomas and don't indicate who has spoken. That's fucking art."

So is it me saying this or you?

Look the speech marks are gone now. We're like Cormac McCarthy or ee cummings, he's pretty smart Put the speech marks back in right now

"I mean it."

"Okay," you say. She can have her damn speech marks, but you're going to keep the second person. You stare her down, daring her to understand your genius.

"Yes, I do understand your genius," she says. "And now you can understand mine. I've edited you for years. Take my advice and just write the damn story."

You pause.

"Fuck this," you say. "I'm going to the bar to see Ezham, Babs, Pak Charlie, Aarna, and Din Zin."

"Seriously?? Those aren't your friends!" she yells.

"Yes, they are!"

"No, you asshole, they're not. Your friends are Joe and Devin and they're both run of the mill alcoholic men, just like you. You're just pretending to have a diverse group of friends so that it looks good to all the morons reading this magazine on the toilet."

You give a sardonic laugh. What does she know? You're the writer. You're going to write the story the way you want to write the story. The right way. The correct way. The way it needs to be written.

=====

Eva picked up Starkness' story. She took a red pen from the mason jar on the kitchen table and settled herself on the couch with a lone star six pack instead of a clipboard behind the paper to begin editing. He always forgot about this. He could write what he liked but eventually, she would get the story to edit.

She couldn't help but smile to herself. It was time, she thought, for a little omniscient narration. — STARKNESS



This month's round robin focuses on the continued gravy train found in the seminal rock band reunion tour. It is easy to lean towards pat cynicism in these instances. Do The Sex Pistols have anything new to offer Millennials? I mean, they don't even LOOK like punk rock, just like a bunch of bloody old farts who would've crucified their future selves in 1977 had they seen what became of themselves. Do they have anything new to say at all? There are other ways to look at it. Some bands don't find their audience in the initial run of course and the band's legacy grows to the point that getting the band back together makes creative sense. Audiences are rewarded for their patient pining with great live shows and new music as important as the original canon.

These discussions then turn to who should and who shouldn't reunite. The *979Represent* staff tackles these questions below.

=====

The band I'd honestly like to see reunite, the MOTHER-FUCKING RUNAWAYS. Sure, Cheri did a short two year stint with Lita Ford, but to see the original lineup of the most underappreciated female group ever in their prime would make me squirt so hard, I'd elevate. JOAN JETT, CHERIE CURIE, AND LITA FORD at the helm of a stage? Time and well, let's be honest, male dominated music have maybe blurred how fucking god damned HUGE this band was to music. 15 year olds in BOWIE era playing rock music and using burgeoning sexuality for Cherie's baby pink teddy, feathered hair and microphone around the thigh trick to JOAN MOTHERFUCKIN JETT in a leather jacket and a punk style virtually non-existent in America at this point and Lita's fucking shredding while looking like she about to beat yo ass. THIS WAS NOT HOW IT EVER WAS BEFORE! These kids and their well known producer/decadent skeezeball Kim Fowley gave both men and women rock hard erections. These women still give me a rock hard erection and are the reason for so many acts and finally deserve the respect they have always deserved by being offered hundreds of thousands to play a set for whatever festival is ever smart enough to book them. Everyone clamors to all the big boy acts, but let's not forget the women that shit kicked the way.

As for a band I NEVER want to see reunite, easy. The Dead Kennedys. Fuck them. What has that band done without Biafra? What new material have they released since royally fucking him over in court? A fucking karaoke cover band of songs Jello Biafra wrote? Let's see, Biafra has 1) Run a successful label (even after the fall-out of the band he created); 2) LARD (Another band I'd totally skeet to see reunite); 3) Spoken Word; 4) Collaborated with the likes of Mojo Nixon, NoMeansNo, DOA, The Melvins, ETC.; 5) Battled Tipper Gore and the PMRC; 6) Run for Mayor; 7) Run for President; 8) Let's not forget the Witch Trials; 9) Oh yeah and that time he formed a band just to protest the WTO; and 10) Guantanamo School of Medicine where you can still hear him sing his most famous songs of the Dead Kennedys catalog. It's obvious Jello has found a multitude of musicians to play with him, so if the DK band is so fucking great why aren't they? The last thing I even heard of them was a chick getting ate out which must be the most exciting thing to happen on stage since they've played post Biafra. I was a HUGE Dead Kennedys fan. I kept up with the court case when they sued. I know Jello and his longtime girlfriend and know in even more detail how the band has

REUNITED? (PEACHES & HERB)

fucked him over for money. But despite that, the proof is in the pudding. What have they done? What have they put out POST BIAFRA? They destroyed one of my favorite bands ever over money. Now they want to get back together because now they are offered HUGE sums of money to reunite for festivals and I stand behind Biafra each and every time he says "Fuck no." — *CREEPY HORSE*

=====

For whatever reason, probably due to my obsession with Jenny Lewis, the first idea that popped into my head for a band to get back together one last go around was Rilo Kiley. My approach for this being a good idea is two-fold. For one, I think the timing in the next year or so would be pretty good for them to have a reunion, as they're kind of set up in the sweet spot for a band of their relative legacy size. Their last album, *Under the Blacklight*, is approaching its ten-year anniversary this coming August, and other than the *RKives* rarities collection that came out in 2013 and literally only a couple festival shows where Blake Sennett appeared on stage with Jenny to do a song, any discussion of further activity from the band has pretty much been non-existent. They disbanded at the height of their (minor) fame, just when they were on the precipice of breaking into the mainstream.

Secondly, I think there is still a lot of latent importance to Rilo Kiley in the indie rock world. One might argue (currently me) that in the past twenty-five years few women aside from the great Kathleen Hanna have made more of an impact in giving women a voice in rock music than Jenny Lewis in Rilo Kiley. She wrote and delivered incredibly cutting and brilliant lyrics in songs across their output, and she still keeps a few of those tunes in her back pocket for her own shows. Sure "Silver Lining" has been done to death, but we could always use more performances of "A Better Son/Daughter". I actually went backwards from her solo work during *Acid Tongue* in discovering Rilo Kiley's songs, and I'm sure there are a lot of other millennials (ugh) that would also like the chance to see the band for the first time. Conversely, waiting much longer to do a Rilo Kiley reunion would probably result in their existing legacy waning and the reunion looking more like a plain ol' cash grab. Sometimes lonely hearts they just get lonelier.

Now, for the band that I do not want see get back together for another show/festival, I think one qualifier should be that all the original/major members for something to be a worthy reunion. There are so many classic bands that at first glance should not get back together, but the truth is I've been to a lot of legacy act shows that were a great time. A couple years ago Tears For Fears were one of the bands booked at Free Press Summer Fest, and what at first glance seemed a bit silly to have on the bill actually turned out to be one of the best sets of the weekend. Black Sabbath back in 2013 at Cynthia Woodlands (terrible venue), even without Bill Ward on drums (which perhaps makes it not count), was a great time. Ozzy was definitely not in peak form on vocals, but Tony and Geezer sounded like they could keep playing for another ten years. Although, I didn't go to see them a couple months ago at the Toyota Center for their

supposedly final tour, so maybe there's something more to be said there.

While there probably a lot of better examples/much worse bands I could say here, I'm going to have to go with Talking Heads being a bad candidate for a reunion. I must also further qualify this by explaining that I am not by any means world's biggest Talking Heads fan, but have relatively recently come into truly appreciating them and digging into their discography. It happened after I finally watched *Stop Making Sense* for the first time, and almost instantly the proverbial light bulb flickered on in my music brain. I love the band's music now, but for me they exist within the confines of that perfect concert film, and I'm not sure I could accept a show from them in a different context. Plus, from what I have gathered Chris Frantz and Tina Weymouth are not on the best of terms with David Byrne, so a band reunion would indubitably appear suspect in terms of it being for the right reasons. Actually, who am I kidding—it would be killer frickin' show. — *TODD HANSEN*

=====

Most bands overstay their welcome. I doubt very seriously if a Rolling Stones fan would feel cheated if they didn't play songs from *Bridges to Babylon* or *Steel Wheels* on their next enormo dome tour. Gang of Four's stock (now Gang of One as there is only one original member left) has slid considerably by putting out pedestrian album after pedestrian "reunion" album. On the other hand, cashing in one chips early never hurt a band's status. Just ask Nirvana, Joy Division, Big Black, or The Sex Pistols. If your favorite band isn't playing anymore, it is probably for a good reason. The only reason a band should get back together is if they have left something unfinished musically. Along these lines, the following bands SHOULD NOT reunite as they have already "came, saw, and conquered": The Smiths, Crass, Husker Du, The Jam, R.E.M. Odds are good to excellent that at least one of these bands will cave in to the big bucks and reunite at some point (my money is on R.E.M.).

Within the very small window of bands that should get back together, my choices for this are Magazine and The Virgin Prunes. Formed by ex-Buzzcocks member Howard Devoto (who thought "punk" was already sounding formulaic in 1978), Magazine still sound contemporary today. My snarky one line opinion of Radiohead is "I liked them better when they were called Magazine". If Magazine were to change their name to a lame indie rock sounding name—"Taming the Black and White Bears and Wolves" for instance—and pretend they were a "new band", Pitchfork Media would be falling all over themselves to claim discovery rights. Magazine put out an album as late as 2011 but didn't tour much for it. The Virgin Prunes had a unique take on Goth; edgier glam rock meets *Lords of the Flies*, meets performance art. They wouldn't sound out of place on Sacred Bones Records. The only band that has come close to what The Virgin Prunes were doing is a Deathrock band called Ergrets on Ergot (highly recommended). I also have some selfish music nerd choices: Zounds, Datura Seeds, Futurisk but that is what You tube is for. — *RENTED MULE*

There are a handful of artists who I absolutely worship and adore that I'd love to see come around one more time, mainly because I never saw them the first time around and would like to correct that oversight. The

problem with me is that I was born too late to have seen for all the bands I truly love. My number one desire is to see Kate Bush perform live. Until last year that was just a pipe dream, as Kate had not toured since the Tour of Life roadshow in 1979. Europe and Great Britain were treated to that groundbreaking combination of dance, mime, and live music but Kate has never toured America. Even when her star was at its brightest during the mid '80s *Hounds of Love* era Kate did very little publicity to support the album, let alone perform live. That is, until last year when Kate Bush performed a stand of shows in Europe, playing "The Ninth Wave" portion of *Hounds of Love* as well as the "Sunset" suite from her 2005 album *Aerial*. The performances were filmed and a DVD is now available but I would do nearly anything to see such a stand of shows in Los Angeles or New York City. It seems that such an event could be done logistically, but only time will tell if Kate will bring such a series to fruition.

Another such performer that I would fly to any city in the country to see is The Comsat Angels. This English band made one of the most important post-punk albums of the early 1980's, *Sleep No More* that counts amongst its contemporaries The Sound, The Cure, and Joy Division. After the initial three album run from 1979-1982, the band went on to make more commercial music, failing miserably at it, and continued making the odd album that showed much of the band's former glory until the mid '90s when the band gave it up. Until 2008, when The Comsats reformed for a series of shows in England. Video on Youtube shows the Comsats still had that fire, but for whatever reason, the reunion did not hold. The Comsats haven't played in America in 25 years. The band's legacy has continued to grow over time and I bet that a dozen show run across the upper part of the country would've yielded surprising results for the band. Me, it could only be one show in the States and I would move mountains to get to it.

As for bands that shouldn't reunite, I hesitate to make that call. We have been spoiled in recent years by reunions that have far exceeded expectation. Mission Of Burma is the first one that comes to mind. That band has released more music in the 15 years it's been back on the scene than it did in its initial run. And those albums are every bit as good (if not as classic) as that first rush. Swervedriver released its first album in nearly 20 years recently and it stands just as tall as its classic albums, and the live shows were knockouts. I think bands know they have to come out swinging because they know what they themselves think of useless reunions. I too know that someday I may also find myself past my "sell by" date. And I hope that as pathetic as my music may be that I still have a venue for turning up my amps or setting up my drums and kicking it the fuck out.

But let's bygones be bygones, y'all. No one needs to see yet another lousy Flak Jackets reunion. Let's let that sleeping dog lie. — *KELLY MINNIS*

=====

CONTINUED ->

The band I would most like to see reunite are the creators of alternative country: Uncle Tupelo. Jeff Tweedy (with Wilco) has been more successful, one could say, while Jay Farrar (with Son Volt and solo) has been less so. However, both have continued to expand their musical horizons while honing the Americana/alternative country sound they practically created.

Now I wouldn't want just a reunion, so they could crank out another album with a tour in order to make money (not that there's anything wrong with making money—heck, the band wasn't even paid royalties for one album since the label hated it so much). No, I want to hear Tweedy and Farrar collaborate again to create songs like "That Year," "Gun," "Fall Down Easy," "Outdone," or "Watch Me Fall." Now *Anodyne* is a great album, but they pretty much were writing alone by then, which might be enough if they were in the same band again. I want to hear more tunes that match a steel guitar with a punk delivery. I want that pop sensibility filtered through punk and country and folk. Finally, I want a chance to see them without having to take out a loan. Is that asking so much?—**MIKE L. DOWNEY**

During my most formative years—mainly high school in the late 1990s—I did not have what one would call "musical tastes." I enjoyed what was popularized by MTV and film soundtracks. Grunge was large to me, but so was Bon Jovi and Mariah Carey. My junior high school years were my most musically prolific. In those days I was a metalhead. I adored Megadeth, Slayer, and, for some reason, Skid Row. Those old metal records still crank my gears, and I return to them often. But in high school, I lost the musical plot. I had zero musical identity. In fact, for a two year stint (sophomore and junior years) I toured greater Arkansas and north Louisiana and even east Texas as the roadie and speaker for a Christian rap group called Heavenz Pozzee. (The zeds were so edgy!) Looking back to high school, I wonder why more friends didn't punch me in the face occasionally to lose the mustache, to quit with the tight-rolled jeans, and to stop blasting that terrible Christian heavy metal music from the windows of my Oldsmobile Forenza. Lord, I thought I ran the town.

However, one band from my high school years still stands to me as my only claim to authentic and personal "taste". And, as far as I can remember, no one else in my circles enjoyed Poor Old Lu as much as I did. Poor Old Lu was *my* band. They were the secret I found and kept because I needed one musical score that was either not overly famous or potentially denied. I kept their cassette tapes—*Mindsize*, *Straight Six*, and *Sin*—out of view and away from the sun in my console. And I played those tapes on repeat in my car alone, memorizing every inch of every song, every one of Nick Barber's swanky bass lines and Scott Hunter's shrill half-squeals, always wondering, but afraid to ask, "Are these guys really as good as I want them to be?" Sadly, I needed such validation, but I also refused it, allowing the songs to be what they were to me: little elixirs to silence the demands of late 90s cool-nonchalance. I did not have a "cool" bone in my body. I was awkward and skittish and anxiety ridden, but I was also abrasively asserted myself into every situation, so desperate for attention and praise, that I drove people bananas. Driving the outskirts of town alone, as those south Arkansas' pines swept into a deep green blur, was the only time I could breathe deep and let my shoulders

drop. And I was nearly always listening to Poor Old Lu, finally having something in my life I didn't give a shit if anyone acknowledged or not. The summer after my freshman year of college I moved to Austin, Texas to live with my dad. One Monday night Poor Old Lu played Babe's on Sixth Street. I did not know my way around Austin, and, being from such a rural town as El Dorado, Arkansas, my folks would not allow me to drive their cars into the city at night. I begged my dad to drive me. Just drop me off. I'd grab a cab back. I'd call my sister to pick me up. He could drink beer at some joint next door. Just give me the car or bum me a ride! I got neither. I sat at my folks' house listening to those same old damn tapes while they sat on the couch playing backgammon and drinking cheap beer. Two weeks later, I learned that Poor Old Lu would play their last show in November 1996 in Seattle, their hometown. I still haven't forgiven my father.

Since their departure in '96, the various members of Poor Old Lu have continued to play music through various iterations, including solo projects, and they even re-united in 2002 for the album *The Waiting Room*, as well as in 2013 to record a for-charity track titled "The Great Unknown". Never did these iterations and reunions find Poor Old Lu on the road again. Most notably, Aaron Sprinkle, Poor Old Lu's guitarist, released three solo records in the early aughts featuring something of an acoustic and cafe-house rock singer-songwriter vibe. I loved these records, still do, and felt that they contained the seed, somewhere down deep, of everything I ever loved about Poor Old Lu. Sadly, Sprinkle has taken a dark and gnarly turn for adult-contemporary pop. If for no other reason than to stop Aaron Sprinkle dead-in-his-popstar-tracks, I need to Poor Old Lu to reunite and reignite the weird, just good enough vibe they had to successfully build a nostalgia that, I truly believe, will never subside.—**KEVIN STILL**

Imagine if you will, that you are a young naive Buddhist student and that I am the snarkiest jerk master in the world. (Because it's not far off from the truth) and you ask me which band should reunite. I will tell you none. You will shake your head in disbelief because surely you know that there is some band from the eighties that deserve to be resurrected. This is where I would smack you with a cane and teach you about the dangers of attachments.

Letting go of the past is hard. I should know, and like you I am guilty at one point or another of really wanting to see a band live again (I was lucky to grow up in the 80s and the best era of punk and hardcore) or even a band that never made it to the states. But, like most naive people, I have to tell you that I have never seen a good reunion show.

That's right.... never.

Oh sure, there have been times leaving the venue I thought "wow that was great" but the more I thought about it, especially weeks and months later, it was shit. Capturing the fury and anger of what a band was 40 years ago? 30, 20 or even 10? Hasn't been done. Sure, there's been some close calls, but when I stopped to think about it, even a "good" show was a pale glimpse of what the titan of a band used to be. This includes friends of mine. Sorry. You need to know. I am much more happy to see what you got going on now, then watching you relive your glory days. No matter how much you (or me as a fan)

want you to. It's important I remember you at your best. This is not to say I'm hating on old bands (hell I'm old) if you are in your 50s and 60s and never stopped playing. You still have the magic. But let's face it, if you hung up your guitar on the wall as a decoration, if you traded in the tour van for a mini van, there is a good chance you lost something. Maybe not much, but you lost something. While it may not seem like a big deal, it's that little something that keeps you from being the greatness we all remember.—**TIM DANGER**

What the world needs now is a Talking Heads reunion.

Forget The Smiths or Husker Du or whatever else you were going to say. The Talking Heads is the correct answer. Bring back David Byrne's quirky yelps and the band's groovy tunes! However, Byrne has said that reuniting the group would be a "step backward" and he is focused on other creative pursuits.

I tend to agree that some things are better left alone and it's best to keep moving forward. With the boom of the festival circuit and all of the money that follows, we have seen so many groups reunite and play to large crowds, but with varying degrees of success.

Outkast was one of my original finalists for this question, but their 2014 reunion was so forgettable that I forgot it even happened.

So, despite the unrealistic expectations of this actually happening, I would like to hear even more songs about buildings and food from the group that plays that record best.—**JOSHUA SIEGEL**

THINGS TO COME

The best days of our lives have yet to come they say. But what if they aren't? What if the best days we'll ever have are from times when we almost caught that game winning fly ball? When Mom showed up four hours late to pick you drunk after practice while you were standing in the rain? When you caught your gf texting sweet nothings to your best friend but took comfort in the fact at least she was lying next to you then? That time when that girl was cheating off your college exam and you got in trouble for cheating—guaranteeing a null grade while she passed with flying colors on your work, but that mean you at least knew what you were doing, somewhat—so you take comfort in it. What then? Do we keep moving forward or do we just say "it's been fun, thanks for the ride" and step off into the unknown sweet embrace of the forever void? Rhetoric keeps us grounded. Stories with heroes, villains, love affairs, battles, shouting matches, and more drama than the CW could dream up keep even the most sedated keen to see what the next day brings, while looking for patterns to tell us what is really going on. The stories and false connections tie us into a web where we view even ourselves as outsiders to ourselves. Introspection is diminished and bravado boosted as people get louder, but not smarter.

So what if the stories serve only to prevent most of us from realizing not everybody's story is a romantic comedy, or an action blockbuster thriller, or a WE TV movie, or any of these. The dramedy plays on. We buy into the façade, giving up our best years to be pawns in the grand social commercial ponzy scheme of modern life in the 21st century. The a new pill for feeling that way, and a new app to distract you for a few more months while you toil away on things you think matter, but ultimately don't. None of it does. We all end up the same. Bones in a box or ashes in a can, and either or the story gets lost along the way — parts get remember for a bit perhaps — but in the end they too fade. The ones that last the longest are from those moments when life was lived to no accord, when imaginary mental boundaries were passed and the end result was nothing worse than some of the most memorial experiences of this life. We are ultimately the only ones who hold any power over ourselves if any one does, though the heart is quite retarded and without occasional reassurance, like any machine, needs to be tuned up every once in a while. But the biggest secret the powers that be don't want you to know, is that their power lies in you, and me, and him, and her, and well the truth be told the manipulators must make propaganda to keep us grazing the fields they've allowed us to feed in, as opposed to actually catering to general well-being of the individual. Our hearts grow lethargic from how rooted modern life wants us to be, regardless of how "mobile" and "travel-friendly" our gadgets and gear become, our mental prisons will only grow too. Our social structure looks down on people who live out of their cars and wander across the country as vagabond derelicts, yet sells overpriced buses to those better off as third wheels and encourages them to get out and see the land. The only difference? A few tens of thousands of dollars? And what's to say your experience with the third wheel for all that money will truly be more enjoyable minus a few immediate amenities?

So what do we do with this knowledge? Go out of our way to ask questions, know matter how uncomfortable, while searching our minds and hearts for what truly makes us happy regularly, not what will others approve of you doing to make yourself happy in the confines of the environment which you are being held. Be true to you.—**BILL DANIELS**

BV ROLLER DERBY
SEASON 2017 SCHEDULE

FIERCE-FAB FAST TRACK FUN

2/12 - HOME - vs. MISSFITS
 3/26 - HOME - vs. CONROE
 4/23 - HOME - MASHUP
 5/13 - AWAY - vs. KERRVILLE
 6/25 - HOME - MASHUP
 8/5 - AWAY-DOUBLE HEADER
 8/27 - HOME - MASHUP
 9/24 - HOME - MASHUP
 10/1 - AWAY - vs. CONROE
 10/29 - HOME - MASHUP

VFW POST 4692 - FOXHOLE LOUNGE -
 764 N FM. 2818 BRYAN, TX 77807
 DOORS OPEN AT 5:00
 FIRST WHISTLE BLOWS AT 6:00
 * ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. facebook

THE BOTTLE

I finally got a bottle of the good stuff. It was a blue glass bottle, that deep rich blue, with the yellow stuff full to the top inside. I wrapped it in red paper to mask the gentle yellow glow it gave off. Then I put it in a lime green bag and covered it with night black paper.

First, she was woken up by her favorite song echoing down the hallways. The stone walls were letting the vocals bounce around as the overhead bulbs slowly flicked on one by one. The rest of the family groggily awoke, grandfather complaining about the pace of the drums. But they all made their way out of bed. The whole family actually woke up today. Some of them had to stumble over wires as they made their way to the central keyboard where I was pulling up the video. All the screens in the house came alive with dancing animals, a special treat for Alix, who isn't old enough to remember our old cat Crystal.

She didn't notice at first. It was just another present among several odd shapes sitting on the table. We never open presents till later.

Then it was time for breakfast and she wanted potatoes. I went gone to the garden and pulled a few that were hanging over the tub, while checking the chemical meter on the nearby dial. Based on the readings I needed to get more nitrogen for the fertilizer, but that could wait until tomorrow. It was Alix's birthday after all.

Even after she ate, Alix couldn't hide her smiles and excitement. Something about being a kid. She was playing games on one of the screens in the living room, while we did the normal business that people do during the day. I could see from the way she kept watching the clock flash that she was waiting for it to start.

I finally took pity on her and told everyone to gather in the floor. She eyed the pile of brightly colored packages in the dim light like a dragon surveying its jewels and plunged forward. There were handmade games, little toys, and I kept shifting her away from grabbing the bottle. I didn't want to steal anyone else's thunder. Eventually she got there and ripped off the black paper, pulled out the still wrapped bottle and everything stopped. She knew what it was. We all knew what it was, and she eyed it hungrily.

"How long?" was all she asked.

"Three hours," I responded.

Then we were all chasing after her, as she darted from the living room stumbling into her shoes. I caught her climbing up the main ladder, a flashlight in her pocket. The rest of us followed afterwards grabbing various lights and jackets as quick as we could. Brother grabbed that old basketball he saved.

By the time I got up the ladder she already had the hatch open, and for a moment I forgot everything as the air hit my face. It was dark, as usual and one could barely

make out shapes on the horizon from the little bit of light that came from the stars. Yet the wind was blowing across my face, and I took a moment to truly breathe. Outside air was not something you got every day, hell, every month.

Alix was standing a few feet away, furiously trying to rip the cap from the bottle. I chuckled to myself, feeling the bottle opener in my pocket.

"Not yet," I told her, turning on my flashlight. "Where do you want to be when you open it?"

She smiled and ran down the road, as quickly as she could in the darkness, the rest of the family following.

She led us to the playground, this time waiting for us to catch up first while glaring at me with anticipatory longing. When everyone was there I wanted to let everyone catch their breath, we don't get to exercise as much anymore. I tossed Alix the bottle opener. Everyone shut off their lights. With a large pop, the small ball of light was released from the bottle and gently floated upwards into the sky. As it rose in the air so did the sunlight, spreading out over the surrounding area.

Everyone smiled. Even Grandpa. The young ones followed Alix to the playground equipment, attacking the slides and swings like they had never seen them before. At least they had never seen them properly. The older kids climbed from trees and rolled down the grassy hills, while others played basketball. The ones too old to play set around and simply enjoyed the sight of their kids having fun and remembering. Grandma sat in the flowers. Mother just lied in the grass, ignoring everything.

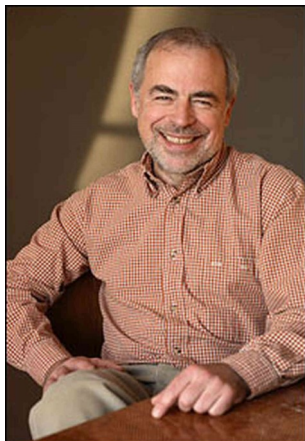
They weren't really flowers and grass, as in the days of old. These plants use chemosynthesis, and you can't eat them. But that really is beside the point. The flashlights and jackets and problems lay on the ground forgotten in the warm sunlight.

For a child, three hours can seem like forever, so it is fair to say that they played forever. But then the three hours were up, and the ball of light began to sink down towards the horizon. This was the clever part, simulating the sunset. I have no idea how they do that, but again, beside the point. We had a few minutes left. The basketball game was over, the kids were tired, and we all went to sit by Mother who was crying bittersweet tears.

Then it was gone and night returned. — STARKNESS

WRITING IS A LONELY PROFESSION IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE

When I heard that Pulitzer-Prize-winning author Richard Russo was going to speak about writing at Texas A&M, I was thrilled. This was the chance to get some insights into where his ideas come from and how to tap that in my own writing.



Russo's award-winning novel, *Empire Falls*, was funny and moving and horrible. I still haven't seen the HBO miniseries, but I'm sure it's fantastic. The movie *Nobody's Fool* from his novel of the same name was superb: funny and touching, just like the book. Also, I figured since Russo

has the academic background, a PhD. and a couple of master's degrees, there would be a good turnout.

Man, was I wrong. I didn't realize that Russo pretty much thought the academic world was a rat race even before he finished his degree, and he wrote an early novel that somewhat mocks the whole academy (or so I heard, another one I need to read). So the crowd was sparse in the Bush Museum auditorium, mostly young for some reason (class credit perhaps?).

Anyway, Russo read from a work in progress currently titled *The Destiny Thief* where he tries to figure out how he ended up where he is at being a writer while he examines parts of his life. It was funny and touching like most of his writing, so it drove me to pick up his memoir *Elsewhere* that turns out to mostly about his mother, who was quite a character and a handful all of her life up until the end.

So, I enjoyed it, and I realize he was pretty much boycotted by the English department and students who likely feel like he mocks their very existence. I just figured there would be more readers and writers in the community who would enjoy a free hour or so hearing from someone who shares recognition with John Steinbeck, William Faulkner, even Cormac McCarthy. Ah, well... —MIKE L. DOWNEY

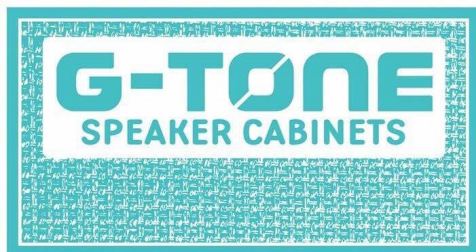
WALLPAPERING

It's been a long first 100 days. There have been so many revelations, scandals, back-alley deals, seedy connections, foreign involvements, twitter storms, firings/hirings, rounds of surreptitious golf, ICE round-ups, and major policy failures that it would give one whiplash to try and watch every action POTUS 45 has been responsible for. He promised he'd get a lot of stuff done in a hurry, and you have to give him credit in that regard. The man HAS been busy, even if he and the GOP failed to measure the temperature of the public on the Affordable Care Act yet again. Can you imagine fighting the same fight for seven years and continuously losing? Paul Ryan can.

This flurry of words and deeds is a very wise political move. Bombard the country with activity. Create a lot of smoke, a lot of movement. Throw every dart you have against the wall, then throw more. And then more. It will wear a person out dodging them. And it has. The millions strong movements from early in the Trump presidency (just ten weeks ago, as I type) have dwindled down. Protests have given way to forwarding news stories on social media for folks to shake their heads out, fire up their angry face emoji, and then get back to other things. Even my bare wounds have developed decent scabs, and instead of watching "rage television" (i.e. the nightly news) I instead ask the family to find me a good Marvel movie on rerun.

It is a long 3.85 years we have left ahead of us. Any of you still holding out hope for a grand slam homerun out of anything that emerges from any sort of congressional hearing, FBI investigation, or in-depth *New York Times* report on Putingage will be sorely disappointed. This is Trump's Iran Contra. Some around him will go down for it, but the man himself will endure unscathed. There will be no grand Oliver Stone movie moment that will flush Trump and company from office in one great big rinse of the DC swamp. In all of Trump's storied business history no one has ever been able to pin him to the wall. Lots of courts, attorneys, journalists, union leaders, and TV executives have been able to make him squirm but there is just something about Donald Trump that allows him to escape the larger damage from scandal that would crush anyone else. A political cockroach, that man.

That is the danger (and the political advantage) of so much activity. That is that it becomes wallpaper at a certain point. Sure, it's ugly, it's garish, and it needs to come down. But it's so much easier to just ignore it and get on with things. Oh Trump's bullying Susan Rice this week? Meh, that's what he does, hey, is that a new season of *Rock and Morty*?!?! This is the most dangerous time for the nascent political action groups, new coalitions, and first-time activists, when one realizes that an immediate impact cannot be made, that you discover you are not in a battle but a long war. You may not even see buds from the seeds you've sown for years. Whether the grassroots that were beginning to take hold in the first quarter of this year will survive long enough to have any real bearing on political action in this country remains to be seen. —KELLY MINNIS

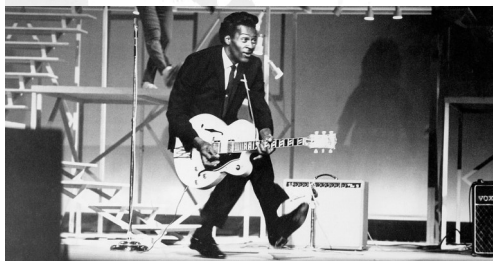




IN MEMORIAM: CHUCK BERRY

"He could play a guitar just like a ringing a bell"—Chuck Berry's Dead

I saw Chuck Berry play in the 1980s at Billy Bob's Texas in Fort Worth. He was considered a nostalgia act then, just another old-timer rock and roller making the rounds on past glory. I don't recall much of what he played, but I remember he seemed to be having a good time, almost as much as those of us who were watching him then.



Berry died last month at the age of 90—he was playing weekly into his late 80s; he even recorded his first new album in nearly four decades over the past couple of years—a rock and roll stalwart to the end.

There is plenty that has been written about Berry, the incredible songs he composed, his prickly nature, his prison time, and all that. The 1987 documentary *Chuck Berry Hail Hail Rock n' Roll* is a unique look at Berry as he turned 60, playing with a world-class band in two special concerts. The songs are all wonderful, but the insights about Berry, and from Berry, are sometimes at odds with the happiness of the music. He was a piece of work, but I think he came by it naturally.

American icon Johnny Cash and to some degree Merle Haggard, and any number of lesser musical performers, built some of their credibility upon doing prison time. But for Berry, it was always a millstone around his neck both times he did time; the first sentence essentially ended his career for years and years. Whether it was racism or the nature of his crimes, it's hard to tell.

Rocker George Thorogood once said when asked why he didn't write more songs that "Chuck Berry already wrote all the good ones." And there is a grain of truth there. Rock and roll is a derivative art form that draws much of its power from the repetitive and the familiar. Berry was just the first to marry all the ingredients together.

I'm sure it was galling for decades to see others get the accolades—and the money—from the musical foundation he laid. Whether it was the King of Rock and Roll (Elvis Presley) or the King of Pop (Michael Jackson), Berry must have wanted the recognition he deserved. Alas, it was not meant to be in his lifetime.

Goodbye, Chuck. Thanks for the songs.—MIKE L. DOWNEY

BLITZED

If you ever thought the Germans would have had to be high to support Adolph Hitler you may be closer to the truth than you know. In *Blitzed: Drugs in the Third Reich*, Norman Ohler makes the case that Nazi Germany *Übermensch*—from lowest German foot soldier to Der Fuhrer himself—were dependent upon an array of amphetamines (and possibly with Hitler, more than amphetamines).

Blitzed is divided into two main parts. Part one details amphetamine use among the German populace during World War II. The drug of choice was pharmaceutical grade methamphetamine in a drug called Pervitin. Pervitin could be obtained over the counter, was widely used, and said to cure (among other things) depression, fatigue, and narcolepsy. According to Ohler, amphetamine use was as widespread in the Third Reich as drinking a cup of coffee. Amphetamine chocolates boxes were marketed to housewives. Each box contained chocolates with 14 milligrams of methamphetamine in each individual chocolate. Workers popped Pervitin to give members of the "Master Race" the little extra boost needed to establish the 1000 year Reich. No wonder they cheered so loudly at those Nazi Party Rallies. Methamphetamine use in the Third Reich becomes more than a historical curio when put in the context of its use by the German Military. The German military ordered 35 million doses of Pervitin for their campaign against France in 1940. Ohler attributes the quick, successful, German victory in France—particularly the surprise attack in the Ardennes—to German soldiers fueled by amphetamines. The *Blitz* in *Blitzkrieg* was fueled by amphetamines.

The second part of *Blitzed* deals with Adolph Hitler's alleged drug addiction. Here, Ohler's proof is on shakier ground. Ohler believes Hitler became addicted to Eukodol—an opiate similar to Heroin—given to him by Hitler's personal doctor. According to Ohler, Hitler's addiction contributed to his increasingly erratic behavior as the war progressed and increasingly insane decisions as the war progressed. The main proof offered in *Blitzed* are the medical notes of Hitler's quack doctor. Ohler admits that these notes are a "chaotic mess" written with barely legible handwriting and indecipherable abbreviations. If these notes are a chaotic mess, can they be relied upon to be accurate? That Hitler's doctor—Doctor Morell—was as crazy as his patient is beyond dispute. Part Dr. Nick and part medicine show doctor, Morell gave Hitler nearly 800 injections and over 1000 pills over the course of 4 years. These pills included an ever changing regimen of "medicine" that included, but was not limited to, glucose injections, steroids, hormone preparations and the extract of animal entrails such as pig liver and pancreas. Given that menu of quack medicine, it is possible that Der Fuhrer was also getting Eukodol. However "possible" isn't "probable" and it seems to me that one needs stronger evidence than "possible" in this case. When given an explanation as strong as drug addiction for the behavior of a genocidal dictator it can be a very slippery from explanation to excuse. To Ohler's credit he rejects this claim. Hitler's addiction may have contributed to irrational thinking but the main cause of Hitler's evil is that he was evil.

Overall, *Blitzed* is a compelling read and a "truth is stranger than fiction" look at a regime that was as evil as it was strange.—RENTED MULE

RECORD REVIEWS



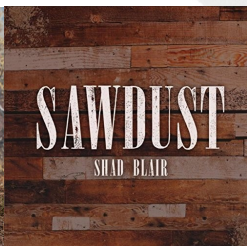
Granddaddy
Last Place

The album in 2006 by this indie-pop group (*Just Like the Family Cat*) was supposed to be its last, but leader Jason Lytle was persuaded to do another, hence the play on words with the album title, a Granddaddy trait. The good news is Lytle and the rest of Granddaddy (still pretty much sidemen) have the songs and sound (good and bad) that garnered them attention since their debut in 1997.

The album opener, the mid-tempo "Way We Won't," is instantly familiar with all the great quirky sounds that Granddaddy excelled in on its four previous albums, worthy of "Stray Dog and the Chocolate Shake," "Elevate Myself," and "The Crystal Lake." Another strong cut is "That's What You Get for Getting' Outta Bed" with its acoustic start that later kicks in: "Warming up your head, clearing out your head/ Out with your friends/Hope it never ends." The band still has that upbeat music and downbeat messages. "Brush with the Wild" and "Check Injin" are urgent rockers as well.

Lytle's plaintive vocals are an effective instrument, but his voice tends to be a bit wearying on the last third of the album dominated by slow ballads. Even the solid piano and the eerie refrain of "Everything about us is a lost machine" can't rescue the over-long near-plodding "A Lost Machine." There's even one short instrumental although it's not even close to the exuberance of "Skateboarding Saves Me Twice" from *Just Like the Family Cat*, although superior to the found-sound of "Lawn and So On" from the band's first album.

All in all, this is a good comeback for the band although Lytle has sounded much the same on his solo albums since 2006, that mix of indie pop genius and tunes of slow-paced misery.—MIKE L. DOWNEY



Shad Blair
Sawdust

Blair is a working-man singer-songwriter who's been playing for about a decade and a half, the sort who often plays Paris and Turkey...in Texas. *Sawdust* is his third album.

Blessed with a deep emotive voice, Blair is a capable songwriter who can approach the desperate majesty of a Springsteen or a Steve Earle with tunes like "Work Again" about having to work every day or simple-life nostalgia in "Me and My Brothers." On the album's lone cover, Blair nails the melancholy of working musicians in Michael O'Neal's "Ft. Worth." Steeped in traditional country music and country life (cue the opening cut "Country Boy"), Blair tends to work the folk side of that music like "The Bartender" with its thoughtful vibe, but he's able to rock out as evidenced by the fun romp "The Trucker" and the shuffling "Down at the Bar" that boasts "Where the women get naked/ It's true love till they turn on the light." Even the album closer is closer to old-fashioned rock and roll than traditional country as "Same Train Different Track" barrels along even without the benefit of electric guitars. It's something of a breakup song where she's leaving, but the players are having too much fun to be down as the singer declaims: "Find another lover who's going to buy up all of your lies."

Check it out on iTunes and Blair's live shows.—MIKE L. DOWNEY



James Pardo
American Lotus

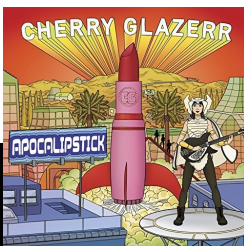
I first saw the San Antonio-

based Americana artist fronting a band at the Big Texas Night Music Series in downtown Bryan in late 2013, and I've seen him a couple more times doing the singer-songwriter thing since. *American Lotus* is his second album.

Given the soul-baring pessimism and even negative subject matter of most of the album, *American Lotus* could have been a downer to listen to, something to be endured instead of enjoyed: "The brass ring is tarnished/And it's out of round" from "Crumble Down" or "When did you lose faith/In anything that's real?" from "Self Portrait." However, Pardo is striving for empathy and understanding over sympathy, and he manages to leaven the darkness with enough hope and promise for the listener.

Most of the 16 songs feature a full band, which Pardo as co-producer employs fairly effectively. Kyle Reed and Keegan Reed, both fine singer-songwriters themselves, offer solid backup. Possessed with a strong voice, Pardo uses his instrument well, rarely drowning himself out. A couple of tunes with just Pardo and his acoustic are sturdy compositions, particularly "Home" that notes the potential of love: "You're just like home/No longer do I feel alone." Also, other strong songs are gentle rockers like "Dream Big" that utilizes some great keyboards by the late Jeff Strahan (the album is dedicated to him and the late Kent Finlay, also a fun live performer), "Long Day," and "Untitled." The urgent ballad "How Can I" boasts steel guitar by Slim Bawb, another fun live act.

The album is available on Amazon and at Pardo's live shows.—MIKE L. DOWNEY



Cherry Glazerr
Apocalipstick

Guitar rock is alive and well on Cherry Glazerr's sophomore outing, *Apocalipstick*. Front-lady/guitar-lady Clementine Creevy and Co. offer a sexy suite full of muscular guitar riffs that rollicks along for 34 minutes over the course of 11 songs.

Lead track, "Told You I'd Be With The Guys," picks up where "White's Not My Color This Evening" left off from Cherry Glazerr's 2014 debut *Haxel Princess* left off. It's a fitting opener as it possesses many of the strong qualities that radiate throughout the rest of the record. It opens with a simple, but powerful guitar riff and Creevy's distressed howls and transitions to more atmospheric sounds that her voice slithers over perfectly.

Loud-quiet-loud is usually a recipe for success and Cherry Glazerr gets it right on this record—not just inside the individual tracks, but across the album as the "softer songs" offer a welcome respite for the listener to catch their breathe.

"Trash People" wins me over with the repeated, "My room smells like an ashtray//my room smells like an ashtray," because—super-relatable—so does mine! (my life smells like an ashtray, too, but that's a whole 'nother kettle of fish) "Moon Dust" sounds like something that would have fit right in on the Yeah Yeah Yeahs' 2007 EP *Is Is*.

Creevy turned over the band's roster, adding new personnel on bass, drums and synths, and also enlisted the expertise of veteran producers Joe Chiccarelli (My Morning Jacket, The Strokes) and Carlos de la Garza (Bleached, Wild Belle). Despite cleaner production, the band retains its garage-y-ness and sounds more powerful and also benefits from the texture the synths add.

Critics tend to focus on Creevy's age—she's 19 years old. She signed with Burger Records in 2013 when she was 15 after co-founder Sean Bohman found her bedroom demos on Soundcloud.

Creevy's songwriting sees a slight bump on *Apocalipstick* too. The themes of the songs remain rooted in early-adulthood, but they feel like they are more of consequence.

I don't like the notion of qualifying things or putting people in a box because of age. Creevy bursts out of that box and sounds like a vet with a bright future. This record has swagger and is perfect to put on in your car on your way to Rev to get rowdy on a Friday night.—JOSHUA SIEGEL

CONCERT CALENDAR

4/1—Lynyrd Skynyrd @ Chilifest, Crystal Ballroom, Snook. 7pm

4/1—Duncan Fellows, Honest Men @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 8pm

4/1—DJ Jonny Cerveza @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

4/4—Over the Effect, Unicorn dog @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

4/7—The New Offenders, The Mammoths, Leander, Honest Men @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 7pm

4/7—Mutant Love, Kyle Hubbard, Fullmetal, Space Villains @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

4/8—KANM Save the Music feat. Hyah!, Wartime Afternoon, Interracial Dionysus @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 7pm

4/8—Summer of Love Slight Return feat. Golden Sombrero, The Ex-Optimists, See Rock City, Prof. Fuzz 63, LUCA @ Revolution, Bryan. 9pm

4/13—Colfax Speed Queen, Mutant Love, Piss Penny, Rock N Roll Damnation @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

4/14—Jay Satellite, LUCA, SkyAcre, Never Friends @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

4/15—TGTG, Wartime Afternoon, Hyah! @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

4/20—Mothracide @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

4/21—Interracial DiNonysus (cd release), Hyah!, Tenino, Unicorn dog @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

4/22—Pizza Planet (cd release), Mutant Love, The Schisms, Beige Watch @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

4/28—Tosh.Show Live @ TAMU Rudder Auditorium, College Station. 7pm

4/28—Roca Azul @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

4/29—Rev Music Fest feat. Fetty Wap, Ugly God, Cheat Codes, Blackbear, Mike Stud, Elephante, Quinn XCII @ Wolf Pen Creek Amphitheater, College Station. 3pm

4/29—Coattails, Darkbird, Anything Twice @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

5/5—Leavenworth, Mike Nicolai @ Blackwater Draw, Bryan. 7pm

5/5—Jess's Birthday Show feat. Mutant Love, Funeral Horse, Witchcryer @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm



I'M A
TALKING
CONE



LOUD:FEST

MAY 18-20

REVOLUTION + GRAND STAFFORD

**2017
BRYAN, TX**

**\$5
ALL AGES**