

inside: loudfest redux - how music makes you remember - vive le naivety - covfefe - still drinking - bay side manners - trump vs nixon a thousand years - for gregg allman & chris cornell - ask creepy horse - record reviews - concert calendar



979represent is a local magazine for the discerning dirtbag.

editorial bored kelly minnis - kevin still

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folks that did the other shit for us

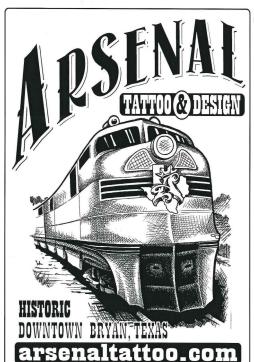
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VIVE LE NAIVETY



On May 9th, President Donald Trump fired FBI Director James Comey, less than four years into his ten-year term, under the quasi-recommendation of US

Attorney General Jeff Sessions and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein. On the day of the firing, the official reason for Comey's dismissal was for his malfeasance in the handling of "Emailgate", slang for former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server during her term as SoS. Since Trump used Comey's admittedly bad timing as a campaign rally (often to the refrain chanted in unison with his rallygoers "Lock her up! Lock her up!") there was no one in the country who believed this was the reason Trump had Comey fired, not even his surrogates who took bravely to cable news to face the flabbergasted hosts.

What came next was an astonishing week-long series of revelations, one after another, exploding in a chain reaction day after day. Comey took notes of his meetings with Trump wherein Trump asked Comey to "let [the FBI's investigation into Russian interference of the 2016 election] it lie". Stories of Press Secretary Sean Spicer hiding in the bushes in the Rose Garden to keep from being questioned by reporters about the firing, Comey finding out about his dismissal on TV, former Watergate prosecutors comparing the firing to "the Saturday Night Massacre", when Nixon fired Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox, the turning point in the Watergate investigation that ultimately led to Nixon's resignation, rocketed across the news. It was a fascinating week for me in that I felt like the fabric of my country could unravel at any moment. I remained glued to news feeds and watched the talking head shows each night, reacting to every new development, vibrating like a tuning fork struck by every item.

Of course, society did not unravel. Those who supported Trump before continued to support Trump after the revelation that SURPRISE! SURPRISE! Your president is a crook. Duh, they knew this already and totally elected him regardless, so why should it matter? Trump will remain president until his term expires or he is bodily dragged from the premises in chains to federal prison. I held my breath for a week and got nothing from it except blacking out. During our annual tear-down session from LOUDFEST some of us began to talk about the events of the previous week and I was surprised that no one really wanted to talk about it. "I don't watch the news, don't care, it has nothing to do with me, I can't do a single thing about it so why bother" was the continued response. I was shocked and put off by that response, but the more I thought about it, the more I begin to understand the appeal for tuning out and dropping out. If you are a bare nerve you are going to continue to tingle for 3.5 more years. Every scandal, every mis-spelled Tweet (covfefe, anyone?), every bungle, every layer of Putingate uncovered, every nail driven into the coffin of the United States' integrity...you can wring your hands over it, drink until you pass out, blog until your fingertips are sore, but ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WILL COME OF IT. The sun will still rise in the morning, America will continue. It's just another shovel full of shit that post-Trump America will have to dig out from under eventually, but there is truly nothing we can do about it now.

So should we all disconnect from the news and find something else to occupy our thoughts? Maybe. I am incapable of doing such a thing. But I understand the appeal for tuning it all out and focusing on one's acting career instead. Perhaps I should use that energy more wisely on doing something else.

Nah.-KELLY MINNIS

STILL DRINKING

this year Austin About time last Eastciders unveiled a Pineapple Cider, and it won Summer 2016. That stuff was/is golden. I'd experienced nothing like it, grabbing a pint every first sight of that giant canoe paddle of a tap handle they've got for themselves, even when I was in the mood for something more beer-y with less produce. I can remember seeing overhearing macho-beer consumers-those who assure you the small dog they're walking is their girlfriend's cause, "ya know, I got a grey nose pit that eats a dozen homestyle biscuits, can and all, between tbone meals"-poopoo the stuff, laughing that those

damn hippies in Austin will think of anything to emasculate America. tο which I always cheered cause, hey, more good stuff for us geeks. Austin Eastciders has proved again and again that cider can be as bodacious and artful as anything in craft brewing. And with their Pineofferapple ing, they further established

themselves as a cider-y to trust implicitly.

And then Summer 2017 rolls around and, with it, Austin Eastciders once again wins the season. This time they've given us a **Blood Orange Cider** with a flavor deceptively (and refreshingly) more akin to an orange soda than anything packing five buzz points of alcohol. If you ain't tried it, beware: it's smoooooooooth. A can of sweaty Al Green radio vocals when your bare thighs are already suction-cupped to the leather back seats of young love's Chevrolet. It's the first time you heard *Kind Of Blue* in public and recognized the opening to "So What". It's 12 solid ounces of every time Ashley Judd is on screen in *A Time To Kill*. Something like that. You know what I'm talking about.

And, for the record, I despise blood orange. It's the worst of the oranges. Even worse than navel (including Judd's). My favorite are those little Cutie oranges. If Austin Eastcider had drawn the orange spectrum on a chalkboard and said, "Here, come mark the spot on this continuum where you'd like for us to make a tributary cider to the orange", I would have marked the spot conspicuously between Cuties and Brach's Orange Slices, if the latter ever made the board. But, as is want to happen, I enjoy being wrong at times. This time I even

celebrate my error, for blood oranges have been redeemed to me.

In the words of Reading Rain-bow's Lavar Burton, "But don't take my word for it." Here's a list of people I know who recommend Austin Eastcider Blood Orange Cider: Tim and Todd from Golden Sombrero; Wonko and Katie Killer from most things cool around here; Frank and Justin behind the Revs bar (so you know they know); Johnny "Creature of Habit" St. Clair, who said, "Yeah, I mean, it was good, but I like my Strongbow": Echo-Dislocate-Her and Ali Lawless from

Brazos Valley Derby Girls, but I only saw them take a sip and not spit it out: the Chris Pine looking guy at Eskimo Hut and the other guy who is so nondescript I can never remember him, but he liked it, too; my buddy Corey from Maryland (out of state vote!) and his Tiffany; wife Mark Douglass sipped one at a

Joey McGee concert and said, "I don't dislike it"; Bryan's own Buck the Builder; self-proclaimed downtownies Matt and Jane Sherman, Alex Garza, Donny "Mayor of Downtown" Hall (well, he said he liked it - "Fuck yeah, I like shit!", were his exact words when questioned at Loud!Fest X); anyone asked at Fox-n-Hound cause they want to sell stuff: two guys at Harvey Washbangers that I trust cause they speak like nerds and not propagandists (looking at you, Fox-n-Hound!); Kelly Minnis will like it (I'd better-ed.), I'm certain; and my good friend Ben Haguewood from Austin, who is quoted on page 121 of Rod Dreher's book The Benedict Option, but don't hold that against him, said the Blood Orange is as good, if not better, but thank God we don't have to choose cause both are available, as the Pineapple-still winning. But the most important vote comes from my wife, Latonya, who demands our refrigerator remain stocked with cans and my growler remain filled with the draught that Blood Orange nectar, sweet sweet sweeter than Odin's mead. We're a household bent on it, wondering how we'll hoist it with us on our travels. Obviously. we won't. But we'll live vicariously through the many palettes listed above, glad at heart to have more than the fluff of our personal pillows to return home to at the journey's end. - KEVIN STILL





How music makes You remember

Our ears are constantly open, registering perceptions. They are the closest thing we have of recording our personal

history in time. That's why music brings back memories of when you listened to a specific song or album the most, or even if it was just something that happened while that song was playing.

Our memory is recording our thought history, so what we were thinking at the time (in the case of when we listened to the song the most) is recorded and "stacked" for lack of a better word. It's like a bell curve, with the most common thoughts in the middle, and the fleeting "once-in-a-lifetime" thoughts out to the edges. Then, whenever we hear that song, our memories have a huge collection of overlapping thoughts that have been recorded and attached to the song.

For most people, the songs they listened to during their teen years is the music that resounds profoundly in them for the rest of their lives. The music they feel was "real" music. The music that "Takes them back". This probably has to do with hormones and emerging identity and probably some resistance and reactionary behavior against the previous generation. I don't know about that, but there is something definitely there.

For me it's Iron Maiden (pre Seventh Son), The Cure (pre Wild Mood Swings) and Ween (pre Country Greats)...among others. If you start listening to specific songs again later in life, you will be adding overlapping thought history layers, and the old ones sometimes will fade. Sometimes overshadowed by the new thoughts, sometimes just natural fade of memory.

Where do those old memories go? They are probably still there, just not easily recalled. Movies and commercials use this concept all the time, sometimes ruining our own personal thought stacks and hijacking them with dramatic visual sequences that our brains can't decipher as being pseudo-reality.

One of my all-time favorite quotes is from Frank Zappa: "Without music to decorate it, time is just a bunch of boring production deadlines or dates by which bills must be paid." I agree. I had this thought on my hammock one day when I was sick at home from work. It may not be true at all, but it sure sounds true.— JORGE GOYCO

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BAY SIDE MANNERS

It's always cold this far out into the bay. The wind rolls down the hills that crescents the frigid waters, ripping through pine trees and carrying the smell of wood and rain. I can't help but be addicted to this kind of dismal solace. It hurts so good. The water breaks from its glassy, statue like slumber into velvet ripples as I paddle out to the spot I love the most. I find peace there, just at the tip where the cliff points its finger towards the sun at daybreak. The wind howls against the cliff's rocks and ledges where the waves once crashed against the crook of its arm. The clapping echo of body on body bouncing off the deepest walls hidden inside her cave. It's mesmerizing in the most intimate way. The ocean slowly took away pieces of flesh and bone, carving curves and hips, making her lean and bend, to sway with the storm; to surrender. Now, as the sun climbs over the ocean's horizon, the hues of yellow begin to reach out. This is my favorite part. The waves haven't awoken, still, and the water is lifeless. I lift my ores to sit in silence and admire the beauty of my voluptuous cliff. Birds sing their praise with the rise of light, and yet the lazy waves haven't yet woken. Light is tip-toeing at the edge of the bay. I don't have too much time left. The unzipping of my bag is too quiet to wake the waves.

Little plastic bags begin filling my boat in such a transcendental sight. I always start with the feet because I enjoy puns, and I like to work from the bottom up. I dip his toe in first, and slowly let the weight of the rocks I had packed with each bag sink down to the bottom of the icy waters, where the light would never reach. After his big feet come his shins, thighs, hips, torso, chest, arms, hands, fingers, and lastly his head. He was beautiful and still is, inside his plastic bag. I like to save the head for last so I can have a few words of why he ended up in such a position. I always use a clear bag for the head, so I can see, and remember all the good times we had. It's better to leave a relationship on good terms. and not harbor any bad feelings. Sometimes it's a little hard to let go, like now. I loved Peter very much. But, even the most loved men have their weaknesses. Her name was Christy. She was smug, rude, and wild. I suppose that was the attraction.

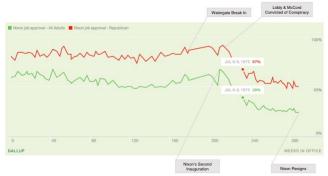
Peter and I watch the sunrise one last time. The sun has burst into the bay, bringing with it more birds and a livelier sea. The waves start to kiss the cliff, and all the colors of light spill into the pine trees. I look into Peter's green eyes and tell him I love him. I hold his head over the dark water and let go. He sinks fast along with a little of my love into the black depths. He'll be happier there with Christy, and that's what really matters.—

JESSICA MARIE LITTLE



TRUMP AND NIXON A RETROSPECTIVE

Senator John McCain recently described Cheeto Prez's scandals as "Watergate in size and scale." Is he right? fucking think so. Are we observing the most rapid unraveling of a presidency in modern U.S. history? I fucking hope so.



look at Reagan. His approval among Republicans never dropped below 67 percent durina his presidency, even during the Iran Contra scanleh **Following** his August 1987 Oval Office address on the matter. his approval rating hit 78 percent among Republi-

What we do know is how the American public has viewed its recent presidents—notably Nixon—in crisis. This is critical information for the donald, because his path to re-election—or removal from office—will follow public opinion. There are two sets of approvals though—national approval and party approval. It took 26 months for Nixon to unravel after the Watergate break in, and most of that is because Republicans loved him.

DT's Dismal Starting Point

According to Gallup, dt began his presidency with a national job approval rating of 45 percent. This is a dismal starting point. For context, President Obama began his first term with a national approval rating of 67 percent, Bush 57 percent and Clinton 58 percent.

Nixon and National Approval

President Nixon, in contrast, began his first term with a national approval rating of 59 percent, a solid foundation. His national approval did not fall to DT's current levels until July 7, 1973, six months into his second term and almost a full year after the Watergate break-in. 13 months would pass before Nixon's August 1974 resignation. In total, the Nixon scandal followed a 26-month arc from Watergate break-in to resignation. These 26 months included 225 stories by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, not to mention the publishing of All the President's Men. As much as I want DT to get gone and deal with Pence's specific brand of evil, this shit takes time.

Nixon and Partisan Approval

President Nixon's partisan approval—his approval among Republicans—offers clues. When Nixon's national approval rating dropped to the DT level of 39 percent in July 1973, his partisan approval slipped to 67 percent from a peak of 91 percent just four months earlier. This may sound high, but the shift represented a tipping point. The decline continued over the next year and bottomed out at 50 percent partisan approval at his resignation. Nixon's hardcore base never fully abandoned him, but the rest of the country did.

For further evidence of the power of partisan support,

cans and then rose to 93 percent at the close of his second term. This reflects what the American public viewed to be a deft handling of a crisis.

Not a spiral... yet.

Let's turn back to DT's numbers, and look at them at how the Republicans see them. Per Gallup, DT's approval rating among Republicans remains at 84 percent. This explains why most congressional Republicans—even so-called moderates—don't pull support, much less take him on

So where does all this leave DT? Considering his weak support at the national level, DT is in a danger zone and hopefully pretty largely diminished as a policymaking force, but he has not yet entered a Watergate spiral. His scandal may appear to be moving faster than those of his predecessors, but remember—this shit does take time, and quite a bit of it. Our Constitution is designed to make these things take time. Americans still process events through a partisan filter. Partisanship is sticky. This is a critical point. If Republicans across the country stick with the president, so will Republicans in Congress—just like they did with Nixon over his 26-month scandal arc.

Bottom line: DT's approval rating is an important indicator, but there's more to the story. Gianforte assaulted a reporter and he was still elected last week. Georgia's special election (June 20) may elect a democrat in the South. In two special elections to date, support for the Republican candidate has declined 20 percent from the 2016 result. Polling in the Virginia governor's race suggests DT is the reason people are showing up to vote against the Republican candidate. Republicans need to lose these races; then skittish Republicans will turn to self-preservation as an incentive to turn on that orange skinned coward. (Is it racist to hate orange people? I don't think it counts.)

In the 1974 midterm elections, the Watergate Babies swept into Congress, and the Democrats gained 49 seats. Let's make it to 2018 without blowing ourselves up.—STARKNESS



Creepy Horse vs. Douchebags at Lita ford

in a time where women just did begun. not partake in the "boy's club" of

rock music. Punk Rock's Joan Jett and Metal's Queen Lita Little did we know. Ford carved their very own niches as talented artists in their own right.

coming true since 14 year old me found out that my favor- Our mood is playful and fun, we laugh and crack jokes as ite double neck guitar shredding Lita and the fucking we sing along. Then a metalhead that peaked in the 8th sexiest punk woman of all time Joan had started in a band together. Bands I loved like L7 and The Lunachicks exist- knocks my friend on the ground head banging, ramming discovering them. I was raised white trash and on all the n't confront him as we don't speak Neanderthal. hair metal I could ingest like a cloud of aguanet. I was very familiar with a spandex clad Lita zooming in to play a JUST as Lita Ford is about to take to the stage is when double neck guitar riff because Lita Motherfucking Ford the shit really begins to hit the fucking fan. god damnit.

So when tickets became available to finally see a true shred, when I'm tapped on the shoulder by a very tall legend of Rock N Roll, I was fucking going. It'd be held at Proof Rooftop Lounge and tickets were free in groups of four. Rented Mule had become almost a regular and it which I had no problem with. Then I realized this was not was my now second show after partaking of Ratt's lead a child, but a grown woman. A grown woman with a very singer Stephen Pearcy. Outside as I awaited my friend evident disability of sorts that was maybe 4'5" at most (I who was running late and doing my best not to look like a am 4'11" and could easily rest my chin on her head) with meerkat poised on hind legs looking for her, wafts of the most delicate, tiny bone frame. Words cannot describe rotten fish permeated the waves of heat still radiating as how small in size and stature this woman was. "She just the pm hours took hold. As I stood there, I saw 1987 all wants to get close enough to see", the very tall woman over again. The mentality it seemed never left people well leaning into my ear shared. "No one was letting her within their 50s. Leather skinned men in Affliction shirts through as far as I could see so I was hoping we could smelling of bud light, cheap cigarettes and far too much help her out." Letting this woman stand in front of me. axe body spray convened together. I laughed as "aggro" old dudes on bikes came in revving their engines remind- and there was a place only a few feet ahead of me that ing me of the "fag" episode of South Park as they parked would be perfect for her to see. their storeroom floor motorcycles giving dirty looks to people that weren't there, but just in case.

back. My friend is still wrapping this WTF moment in her was shrugged off and ignored. head when I ask the guy what the fuck his problem is. He tries to shrug me off, but I get in his face and ask again. I I was gagged. I was in shock. My friend is in disbelief story as there are more douchebags to come.

with us when we've been drinking whiskey.

In 1975, the seminal all female As we downed our shots, both of us being the curators of rock group of all time, The Runa- bad ideas, feel we will drink whiskey and need to because ways was created. Teenage girls we both have a feeling that the douchebaggery has just

As the opening band comes on playing hair metal covers. my friend and I sing ourselves hoarse to some Skid Row To finally be able to see Lita Ford in concert, was a dream and other wonderful cover choices, but all in good fun. grade runs up during a Black Sabbath cover and nearly ed because of what these women did as young as I was into her repeatedly while throwing devil horns. We could-

We see Lita Ford standing off stage about to come on and woman. I spin around and look at her and for a brief moment, I thought she was asking if her kid could get ahead was no problem at all. She took up almost no space at all

The woman couldn't seem to get the attention of the men standing in front of her, so I kindly tapped the man on the My friend shows up and we make our way up the stairs to left in front of us asking if he could move his shoulder to reconnect with Rented Mule and friend Neil Squared. My let her through to the open space ahead. He literally friend and I decide to grab drinks and catch up before the would have only needed to move his shoulder blade all of opening band starts. We make our way back to the guys three inches long enough for her to wiggle her way ahead when my friend is abruptly shoved into me. There was of him. This guy easily stood over six feet tall. He hardly a crowd and plenty of room for everyone, even up claimed he couldn't hear because "earplugs". When I in the front. I look over to see a thin squirrelly Ron Jere-knew this was bullshit, but still tried to ask louder in my looking guy standing in front of my friend and I mean hopes this guy truly couldn't hear me and of course would IN FRONT OF MY FRIEND. Like her nose was touching his move his shoulder to let a tiny disabled woman pass by, I

don't fucking register as having a fucking opinion to this that there was no way this guy was being THIS kind of a guy but he agrees to move up now shoving another wom-douchebag, then tries to ask herself. He tells her he an aside, but her husband actually has no problem with "Doesn't care" and to leave him alone. Now we are both this and makes conversation with this nitwit. We'll call standing there, mouths agape when this guy starts talking this fuckhead husband, douchebag #2 for the sake of the to Douchebag #2 from before and gives him his information bragging about his metal blog and Youtube channel. Funny, he had no problem hearing this guy through Relieved this guy has moved, my friend and I decide we're his ear plugs. Douchebag #2 decides to just ignore us going to need some whiskey in this equation as the two of completely and these two males bond over the course of us are the fusion dance of you really don't want to fuck Lita Ford's entire concert now purposefully blocking and shoving a disabled little person.

Lita Ford was immaculate. She looks amazing and sings returned the favor and looked at him like he was a fucking and shreds even better. She played some obscure song- bitch and continued to stare him down until he looked streated us to some fucking Runaways and played "If I away uncomfortably. These guys were such misogynists, Close My Eyes Forever" and "Kiss Me Deadly" in her encore. "Out For Blood" wasn't played but that's okay be- woman. cause we already were. The irony was not missed on me that despite all she has had to overcome and beat in her. When the show ended the crowd dispersed and these long career, misogyny was well abound in the audience guys fucked off and away, my friend and I headed to the toniaht.

Park. Small and curious but when angered (also when disabled woman fucking finds us and speaks to us. It's a infused with several rounds of whiskey) is prone to spit- pretty big venue and she sought us out. She tells us that ting and vicious attacks. Tonight, I was in full Dilo- she was there early and right up front, but had come by phosaurus mode. The guys started trying to obscure all of herself and after so long had to use the restroom. When our views now and "back into us" hoping I guess to knock she tried to get back, NO ONE was letting her through. us down all for asking if a disabled person could get to an She was even groped and manhandled while trying to open spot ahead of them that wouldn't have affected them make her way through. They called her names, just bein the least.

They laughed and at one point even fucking "high fived" about obscuring this woman's fucking view. It was a joke. We were a joke. It was funny to physically intimidate a me TWICE with tears in her eyes. disabled person that physically couldn't defend them self. We mattered nothing, our opinion did not register because I can't fathom why these two were so hell bent on physiwe were women. I had had it. These guys were fucking cally and mentally tormenting a disabled woman. I can't douchebags and everything I had to deal with when I was understand repeatedly hitting a woman and when she too small to protect myself. Now, I'm a little bigger and asks if you'll please stop, flipping her off. When we went tougher. This woman couldn't be tough if she tried. Her to exit the building we were stopped by the woman that bone structure was just far too delicate for her to push her was elbowed and her and her friends also thanked us and way through or get drunk enough to be an asshole. She shared how they were being tousled about, shoved and looked at us downtrodden. This is someone that everyone even groped. Then Douchebag #1 comes down and starts has beat down and for fucking once. I wanted her to know talking shit to the group of now six of us. He boasts about someone was in her fucking corner.

friend and tries to kiss her on the mouth before she can appearance, personality and probably lack of a love life, he break free of him. Was there a keg of misogynist fuckhead floated before we got there?

So I sprayed beer all over douchebag #1's ass. Twice. And I don't know what the moral is. I know my behavior wasn't make us.

And not only did not one single man step in and try to help it all worth it. - CREEPY HORSE or say something to these fuckheads, but one guy even gave me a look after witnessing this, like I was the lone asshole. He looked at me like I was a fucking bitch, so I

bathroom. We were greeted by women that witnessed what had happened, thanking us. When I'm beginning to You see, I am much like the Dilophosaurus in Jurassic think I may have acted a little bit inappropriately, the cause of her appearance. They laughed and jeered calling her a midget and a freak. Then she looks at me and says "No one has ever taken up for me before. You're the first person to ever really stand up for me," and fucking hugs

being an asshole and we proceed to unleash some verbal fury that he must not have expected because as soon as Then a random guy WITH HIS GIRLFRIEND grabs my we started throwing mental time bombs at him about his very uncomfortably walked away and tried avoiding a now irate girl gang in pursuit of him.

me and the woman and my friend fucking laughed. Then a the best. I know this dude probably has an MRA metal girl asked if she could join us because Douchebag #2 kept themed blog writing about the "crazy bitches" at the Lita elbowing her in the breast and shoving her, she had asked Ford show. Kindness did nothing. Ignoring did nothing. him politely to stop and he gave her the finger, so I cleared Maybe being as obnoxious and aggressive as they were to my throat and nasal cavities all over the back of his neck us may make them wary of fucking with the disabled or and head and we all pointed and laughed more. I may not minority of any kind and maybe not. Sometimes though. be big enough to take these douchebags on physically, but you got to stick up for what's right. I truly can't convey in I could definitely get down on some mental warfare like words enough how awful the crowd was. Many women nobody's business. So as they continued to try and ob- were complaining and comparing stories. We were one of scure our views and consistently try and knock a disabled many cases that night. I just can't state that I believe in woman down, we took to screaming and berating every doing what is right, preach others to do what is right and time they tried to film. We hurled insult after insult. We then be too much of a coward to put that in action when I wanted to be as obnoxious as they were to us. We wanted see someone that can't defend them self being wronged. I to make them feel as uncomfortable as they were trying to wish there was a better scenario, but at the end of the day. douchebag #1 walked away rubbing his cargo pants trying to figure out why his ass was so wet and I think that made



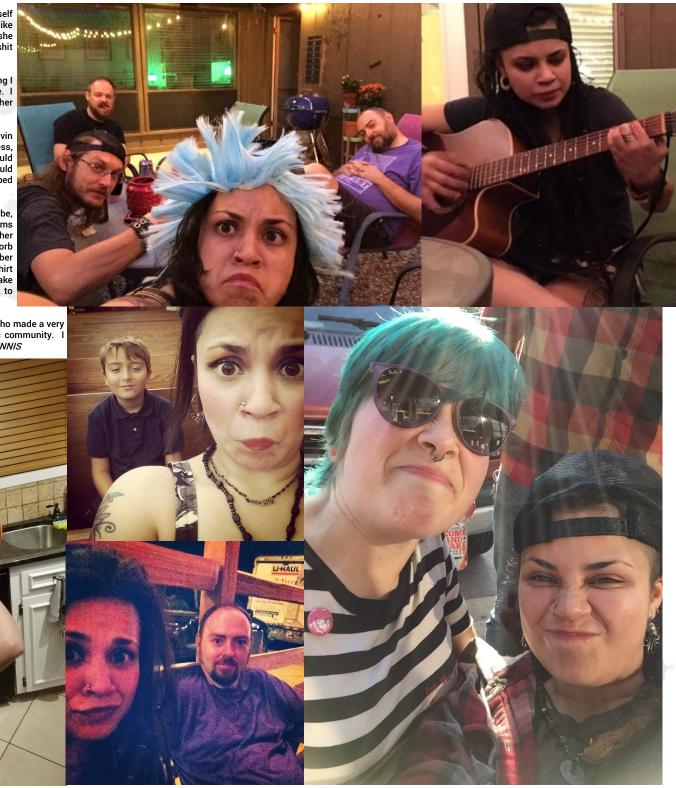
Little Jess was always picking up my phone and taking photos of herself and whoever else happened to be around her at the time. Kinda like leaving little notes to remind you that she'd been there, that you and she had shared company, shared yet another party, show, hangout, bullshit session. I am so glad she left these picture notes behind.

She took a perverse pleasure in getting me high. That is not something I normally do, or at least not on any sort of regular basis since college. I would come out of retirement once a year to take communion with her and it would make her swell up with pride, make her smile.

My youngest son had his first crush on her. At Jess Kempen and Kevin Sorensen's wedding Rowan fell head over heels in love with Little Jess, so much so that he drew her a penicorn on a slip of paper. That would indeed be a unicorn with a dick for a horn. She treasured it and would joke about saving herself for when Rowan turned 18. I secretly hoped she wasn't kidding.

Wherever we were, Little Jess always was right there. Witty as can be, saying outrageous things, handing you a drink, wrapping her arms around you, scratching your face with her dreadlocks, imprinting her sweet scent upon your clothes, holding her hand in the shape of an orb and banging her head right along beside you. I cannot count the number of shows I've looked across a stage or a crowd to see her at, flannel shirt tied around her waist, satan horns held high. Jess knew how to make you feel good about yourself, to feel comfortable, to feel important, to feel loved

I could go on like this all day. Jessica Ramirez was a small woman who made a very gigantic impression on all of us in the Bryan/College Station music community. I loved her dearly and my world is dimmer without her light. – KELLY MINNIS



A THOUSAND TIMES

Once a year, the merfolks arrive. They come from the ocean, their tails silver, their bodies glowing in the moonlight. For one night, they are among us. They reach the shores, and transform into human form. They mix among us, and roam the streets.

They are the mirage of one moonlit night. They disappear as the sun comes up, vanishing again for a whole year. Back into the deep

Once a year, my father comes to visit. He didn't speak much but, he was everything I looked up to in a man. I knew he was my father by the green eyes that I'd inherited. He smelled like the ocean. Ma and I sat with him for that one night, every year, and he told us tales of the places he'd visited, the worlds he'd seen. His words gave rise to a longing in me, a longing to belong to the oceans.

"When you turn thirteen, you'll be strong enough to withstand the magic, Sofie. I can turn you then. You can come with me, if you want," he said. For that one night, the three of us were almost like a family.

Ma's eyes were always sad when he left. I wished he didn't have to leave. He couldn't be there when Ma caught fish for our livelihood. He couldn't be there when Ma broke her leg and I had to go to work instead, so that she could rest and we could both eat.

It was Charlie, another fisherman, who helped us during those times. He helped Ma sell her fish and split the take with us. He was the one who took Ma to a doctor. He was the one who made Ma laugh during those bleak days when the nets stayed mostly empty.

Ma married him pretty soon after my tenth birthday.

"How could you marry him?" I said to her, my voice thick with tears.

"I love him," she said.

"You're lying. You love Papa."

"It's too painful, seeing him every year, and knowing we can never be together, Sofie. Charlie makes me happy," she said, and the look in her eyes made my heart ache, but I didn't want to understand it. My own heart was bleeding.

I ran away from her, ignoring her voice calling me back. I'd wanted us to be a family--me, Ma, and Papa. How could she pick Charlie when Papa was still out there?

A year later, on the night my father came, Ma gave birth to my sister, Ziya. I didn't look at her even once.

I went out to meet my father alone, upset, and bitter.

"Ma's married and now I have a sister," breaking down and swallowing salty tears. He held me for a moment, and kissed my hair. "It's okay, Sofie. She needs someone to be with her. I can't give her that."

I wondered how he accepted it so easily, the fact that we could never be family. How could he accept Charlie when Ma was inside the house?

"You've grown up so fast. My little girl, almost thirteen. This is a big one! What do you want for your birthday?" Ma said to me, as she held a sleeping Ziya in her arms, gently rocking her.

I turned away. We hardly spoke nowadays. She smiled a lot more than she used to, but I couldn't give Charlie my father's place.

"I want to get away from this place. I want to go with Papa."

"If that's what you want, Sofie, it will be yours. I love you and will always be with you, you know that." Her voice had a slight quiver in it.

It was the last time we talked.

Papa came a day after my thirteenth birthday. He held me tight. "I'll take care of you," he said. "You can come with me now."

I knew I could. I'd dreamed of this day ever since I'd known about it. I could leave Ziya and Charlie and their falseness. I would do it. I am going to live a long life, free, and in the Ocean, with Papa.

Two days later, a storm took Ma and Charlie's boat. Capsized. I floated frozen, staring at them falling to the Ocean floor, fish nibbling at their skin, unable to believe my eyes.

I said nothing. I could not speak under the water. What would happen to Ziya? Where did Papa go? I hadn't seen him since the ceremony.

Ziya was a human child. She couldn't be turned, even if she was the right age. She was my sister. I couldn't abandon her like this. I already had abandoned her like this. There was no going back. The magic only lifted for one night, once a year.

I haven't seen Papa in years. He never comes to our meeting spot on the surface. Every year I go back and watch Ziya from afar.

I'd once dreamed of living in the ocean and swimming through the waves. I do that now. Now, abandoned by Papa, a part of a culture that can only speak or interact intelligently once a year, with an orphaned little sister that doesn't remember I exist being taken care of by our small village, I dream of family and love. Ziya is about thirteen now, blessedly fully human.

Every day I relive the same choice, a thousand times over.—STARKNESS

WHAT IS COVFEFE?

Covfefe is the gradual transformation of drumpf into Richard Nixon, a process fueled by a diet of paranoia, KFC, Pepsi, and despair.

Covfefe is what Melania calls her headaches now.

Covfefe is the reasoning behind the GOP support for dt.

Covfefe is the vibration of a panicked aide who has just realized that dt has found his phone again.

Covfefe is a better way to celebrate Memorial Day than even #champagnepopsicles.

Covfefe is code for an astonishingly inept cover-up operation.

Coyfefe is Vladimir Putin's favorite flavor of vodka.

Covfefe is a mug full of liberal tears which makes the drinker happy until they finally realize that they don't have healthcare or a job or a home or any future prospects and the drinker is just plain fucked.

Covfefe is the white of Anderson Cooper's eyes as he rolls them with a combination of exasperation and disgust.

Covfefe is the acrid smell Steve Bannon's liver.

Covfefe is the sun, the moon, and the stars as they bid fond farewell to a planet on which its inhabitants have decided that God will take care of climate change.

Covfefe is the feeling you get when you realize actual humans preferred a foolish-dumbass-offensive-racebaiting-narcissist over a competent woman to run the country.

Covfefe is Sean Spicer's digestive system after a press conference.

Covfefe is the intersectional clusterfuck of racism, misogyny, poverty, and anti-immigrant xenophobia which explains how we got here today.

Covfefe is the collective torment of anxiety and conspiracy and outrage and all the hours we've lost to this shit show that we can never get back.

Covfefe is the Mar-a-Lago mascot, which is a one-and-ahalf-pound rat imported from Mumbai.

Covfefe is, in fact, a pre-existing condition.

Covfefe is the bile that rises each time a woman hears the words "President Trump."

Covfefe is an alternatively factual way of saying "We're All Going to Die."

Covfefe is the fury of a Fox News enthusiast screaming into the ether, "Why are people focusing on this and not on Kathy Griffin?"

Covfefe is America, baby.

Fuck.-STARKNESS

FOR GREGO ALLMAN

In 1972, my younger brother and I decided to get a portable eight-track player since everybody else had one, and we invested some of our little spending money on two eight-track cartridges: *Thick as a Brick* by Jethro Tull, and *Eat a Peach* by The Allman Brothers Band. After listening to the two over and over again, we decided we wouldn't need to buy anything else since the pair covered all the bases. Of course, we ended up buying



more eight-tracks, but that's another story. The Allman Brothers Band on that album had it all: rock, jams, ballads, instrumentals, great vocals. It's part of the sound of my high school.

The death of Gregg Allman is another loss to not only the music world, but another loss that feels personal. It was Allman's passionate voice that powered the rockers on *Eat a Peach* as well as the ballads, particularly the soulful "Melissa." Who wouldn't want to be the singer in a rock and roll band. As the lead singer, Gregg was the sound of the band for decades despite all the mythology that grew up around his guitar-playing brother Duane who tragically died too soon.

It was Gregg who had to persevere despite his personal loss to keep the band going. In doing so over the decades, he influenced a wide range of performers while leaving a considerable musical legacy. Gregg even got to marry Cher.

The past few weeks also saw the death of another musical pioneer: Chris Cornell. However, his loss didn't impact me much since his music was part of the sounds I embraced as an adult. But Gregg Allman was there when I was discovering rock music, and he's been around for all these years. It's just hard to lose another one.

At least now, Gregg is back with his brother, some band up in heaven. For the rest of us, all we can do is follow Allman's advice: "So I, ain't a-wastin time no more 'Cause time goes by like hurricanes, and faster things... You don't need no gypsy to tell you why/Ya can't let one precious day to slip by." Amen.—MIKE L. DOWNEY





THE DEATH & RESUIRRECTION SHOW

The Death and Resurrection Show is no ordinary documentary. Then again, Killing Joke is no ordinary band. Too danceable for punk rock, too heavy for post-punk, and too intelligent for metal, Killing Joke have carved out their own unique brand of iconoclast aggressive music that is uniquely their own. Often copied but never equaled, Killing Joke has inspired the likes of Metallica, Nirvana and (for better or worse) a bunch of industrial and goth bands.

The main two takeaways from *The Death and Resurrec*tion Show are 1) How seriously the band takes magic (magick?) rituals

and 2) The strength of Killing Joke's musical The catalog. strength of their musical output more less or iustifies the potential ridiculousness of their witchcraft posturing. In the hands of any other band. Killina Joke's belief in a mix of Wicca Aleister Crowley, Rosicrucianism, the Kabbalah, and UFO/Conspiracy theory wouldn't pass the laugh out loud test of a 15 year old kid forming his first stoner rock band.

stoner rock band. However, Killing Joke Jaz Coleman espouses such beliefs with such fervor that one has to conclude that he is insane, a masterful bullshit artist, a genius, or some combination of the three (at least some genius is there as he has composed classical music pieces for orchestras in Prague, London and New Zealand). According to *The Death and Resurrection Show*, Coleman and drummer Paul Ferguson formed the band and sought additional members for the band by a witchcraft ritual. How well it worked is questionable as they still placed an advert in music zines for members; hedging their magical bets I guess. Either the advert, the magic or both worked as they rounded out the band with bassist Youth and quitarist Geordie.

The Death and Resurrection Show proceeds in a more or less linear fashion tracing Killing Joke from their formation in 1978 to today. The live footage is impressive and live versions of songs such as "Unspeakable", "Wardance", "Frenzy" and "Sun Go Down" are incendiary. Just as the band was band was about to appear on a TV show to promote a single from their third album, Jaz Coleman disappeared for Iceland to escape what he

thought was imminent nuclear holocaust, and/or inspired by lines in Aleister Crowley's work that said "Choose an Island! Fortify it!" and/or because Iceland "amplifies" mystical powers. Bass guitarist Youth left the band in disgust but guitarist Geordie eventually came along. The video then treats the viewer to stories of levitation, geomancy, mystical rituals and alternate universes in Iceland. Upon returning from Iceland, drummer Ferguson rejoins and Raven joins them as their bass guitarist. Killing Joke then hit upon the closest thing they had to a successful career stride with their brilliant club hit "Love like Blood". Then the seem-

obligatory inalv bad record deal comes to bite them in the ass as their label attempted to lean on them to produce more commercial sounding material (I.e., another song like "Love Like Blood) and squandered what little money the band made off of that song. No magic can protect a band from a crappy record label; though Ferguson bailed the band at this point.

Killing Joke soldiered on with

a series of drummers including Martin Adkins (PIL, Pigface) and Dave Grohl. Though it seems as if Dave Grohl is a talking head in every "rockumentary" made these days, his appearance here is forgiven as he played drums on a Killing Joke album (and Nirvana lifted the riff for their song "Come as You Are" from Killing Joke's "Eighties but that is another story.). Killing Joke continued to put out mostly brilliant albums as Coleman takes jaunts to magical hotspots such as Ionia, Glastonbury, Egypt (recording vocal tracks in the King's Chamber of the Great Pyramids) and the Nazca lines. Jimmy Page and Peter Hook are fans of Killing Joke as well and throw in their two cents worth as well.

At over 150 minutes (not counting the "bonus" disk), The Death and Resurrection Show probably isn't for a casual music fan. Then again there are probably no casual Killing Joke fans out there. The magical detours in the documentary are either ridiculous or very interesting depending on where you stand on this sort of thing. Like the band themselves, The Death and Resurrection Show is a demanding but ultimately rewarding experience. — RENTED MULE



THE THREE CYCLES OF SUMMER

Summer as a time of the year goes through three cycles as you age. However, it never really loses that special aura of youth.

The first cycle starts after you begin going to school. The allure of summer vacation is so appealing when you are in elementary school, high school, college. It seems to take forever for summertime to arrive when you are a kid. The expression "slow as Christmas" is accurate, but even that holiday seems to come sooner than summer.

When summer did arrive as a kid, it was marvelous. No more early rising, no more tests, no more hassles with jerks in school, no more deadlines—instead, plenty of sleeping, lots of doing whatever you wanted, lots and lots of fun.

For me as a kid, it was almost all about being outside: riding bikes, playing war, swimming, but it was mostly playing sports. It was my two younger brothers and our friends. We played baseball and tennis outside, and for years, we had a key to the high school gym and played basketball inside around the clock (my dad was a teacher). We hit golf balls outside until I hit a great five-iron through a window of the school chemistry lab. We played on the football field until I set it on fire (it was an accident...really). As we got older, we drove to area golf courses and played for hours and hours. We saw tons of movies at the local drive-in theatre. We stared at the stars.

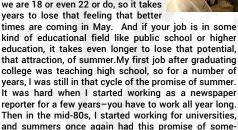
We dreaded Labor Day since that's when we had to go back to school. Summer is a great time to be a kid. Sure, as you got older, you had to work to earn money in the summer, but even that was more fun and different. That's the first cycle of summer.

The second cycle of summer is after you start working for a living. Then summer loses that promise of fun, and it becomes just another time of the year that you have to go to work. For many, summer becomes the time of vacation, so it retains some of the sheen of the summers of the past.

However, it's almost cruel to have to be content when we trade two or three weeks of vacation time for that three months of summer. The problem is we have

grown up with always anticipating the wonderful promise of summer until we are 18 or even 22 or do, so it takes years to lose that feeling that better

becomes something else altogether.



The third cycle of summer is when you have kids. For nine months, the family has their routine: get the kids off to school, get yourselves to work, get the kids home from school, go to extracurricular stuff after five, repeat. Summer though can be a nightmare. Who takes care of the kids? What are they going to go all day? It's the time of summer camps, of parent schedules, of caregivers, of continuing education (ugh).

thing new. However, once you start a family, summer

I suspect it's still a fun time for the kids, but the parents are burdened with having to figure out how to keep their kids safe and occupied. I was lucky enough as a kid to grow up in rural Texas, so the only danger was the occasional rattlesnake. My parents didn't see us kids in summertime except at lunch and sundown for supper. Today, the challenge is keeping kids away from 24-hour screen time, and about the only way to do that is to impose restrictions and rules.

Summer used to be about freedom from restrictions and rules, but for parents today, it has to be about making summer more structured for the good of their children. Summer for parents is a time of more concern and planning than it should be, but there's no way to avoid it.

So, that's the three cycles of summer for now. There are other cycles that occur as children grow up and as you stop working, but I don't know enough about them yet. Have a great summer!—MIKE L. DOWNEY



RECORD REVIEW



Solarflairs Stereo Alley

This Georgia power pop trio is led by the amazing voice of Elisabeth Eickhoff who fronted Nillah back in the early part of the millennium (2005's The Sun Show is fantastic). Eickhoff on bass and guitarist Greg Gentry, along with drummer James Cunningham, hit the mark with these five songs (the sixth is an acoustic version of the best tune).

"Asleep by Midnight" is a thrilling power-chord rocker with Eickhoff's killer vocals, solid drumming, and layered quitars. It just screams hit-no wonder they did two versions of it. As good as this tune is, the others are not shabby. The title cut seems to be something of an homage to the enduring power of rock and roll with the lyric: "No matter the distance/ Śhe'll guide you home." songs "Spirit of Johnny V2.0" and "Shack in the Back" are mid-tempo songs that harken back to the alternative sounds of the 80s and the sheer fun of "Drums and playing music: cymbals crash/In the shack in the back." The thoughtful "79" has some powerful lyrics about growing older in music: "rock and roll wreckage" and "Seen it all, been around." The best line is "Nothing left to see/I'm younger than I know and older than I'll be." As thoughtful as the words are, the music is still key.-MIKE L. DOWNEY



The Afghan Whigs In Spades

Coming three years after the reunion album Do to the Beast and just after notice that guitarist Dave Rosser was diagnosed with inoperable colon cancer, *In Spades* is

REO ALLEY

noticeably denser and more cohesive. With ten songs and clocking in at 36 minutes long, it feels much bigger, and you it feels much bigger, and you get a glimpse of how the band is still evolving with the stacca-to that open "Birdland," and then later with the deep strings that frame Greg Dulli's weathered falsetto, it is an odd song that sets a shadowy and foreboding tone that persists throughout the record.

> The slide work in "Arabian Heights" behind Dulli's voice is beautiful. Always emotive, Dulli's manic swings from murmur to wail on In Spades makes past albums seem downright tame. "Demon In Profile" goes from brooding and thoughtful to horn-fueled power pop while "Oriole" takes its earthy acoustic beginning to the heavens at its height. It's a tight, technical trip throughout

> Lyrically, there are references to people and events that are hidden or unclear, making the record feel almost dreamlike. "Birdland" came from the street name Dulli grew up on to the dense moment of gravity with the ballad "I Got Lost," written right after learning about Dave diagnosis Rosser's cancer while recording the album. For all the wandering and grasping throughout the album, the message seems to be that the physical present is relentless and elusive, and we're all just destined to live in our own minds.-STARKNESS

POOL LIGHTS

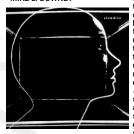
Pool Lights Pool Lights

Back in 2005-2007, I had a couple of CDs by this compelling Texas singer-songwriter who went by the name Fall of Snow, a mix of uncomfortable confessional ballads and wailing rock. Stephanie M. Casey toured around and then dropped out of music, so Pool Lights is something of a comeback and a new direction as she's playing with others this time around.

"They Come Out Singing" is a rich synth rock tune that I took as a joyful return to playing music for others again. "Wonderful Thing" also features great synthesizers that for

some reason evoked Gary Numan. The upbeat tune is matched by the lyrics of the joy of a good relationship: "All of a good relationship: "All these wonderful things/You bring out in me." The other two tunes are slower, still synthrich, with interesting dynamics in "Dreaming Things." Lyrically, the last song – "Come Close" – is more cryptic: "Up on screens, the education/You look like you could be famous...in my world."

This is a worthy dip back into the water for this performer. Check out her new venture with her friends out on Bandcamp. -MIKE L. DOWNEY



Slowdive Slowdive (2017)

I did not want to hear this album initially. I have been a long time fan of this English quartet, one of the core bands responsible for the "shoegaze" dreampop sound of woozy, gauzy, ethereal vocals atop affected guitars, and jaunty, almost dancey rhythms. Like most bands back for reunion dates, Slowdive have a new album. To showcase their first new recordings since 1995's Pygmalion, the band released "Sugar For the Pill" as a pre-album teaser for Slowdive. I was really not impressed. At all. It sounded too much to me like M83, a band whose late '00s recordings have influenced the current millennial generation of pop music per-formers and who, in turn, were heavily influenced by Slowdive their fellow and British dreampop and shoegaze Slowdive more credit, as the song may not work for me in a single format, inside the context of an album it makes absolute sense.

Slowdive (2017) is not quite a masterpiece but, like so many other '90s era bands on the comeback trail, the album acquits itself of the band's legacy very well. The guitars echo, the male/female unison vocals whisper, the drums pound like surf on a stormy beach, and the bass underpins the action. Pretty much like every other Slowdive album. The songs maybe aren't quite as catchy as some of their early '90s dreampop classics

(though "Go Get It" with its calland-response refrain "I wanna see it/I wanna feel it" is a sure exception), but the sound and importantly the feel Slowdive is intact. Lea Lead-off song "Slomo" does the uncanny job of blending the more ambient work from their band's last album with the more pop exploits of Souvlaki while sounding au current. It is hard to tell if Slowdive had THIS much influence on M83 or if Anthony Gonzalez's imprint on current pop music is really this large. It definitely sounds like M83 and Slowdive made an album together. The produc-tion, from the flat 1980's drums, the warbly guitars, the hushed-yet-anthemic vocals from Rachel Goswell as she reaches for the upper register...the resemblance to something from Saturdays=Youth is uncanny. "Star Roving" is much more classic Slowdive dreampop, like a lost Holding Our Breath EP outtake. Third song "Don't Know Why" brings a hammering drumbeat to shove the delicate lace of the guitars and vocals way forward, slamming 8th notes with a tension that gives way to a glorious and expansive chorus, like their early '90s EP's (their best work IMHO) that blends the tension with the release. The album is rounded out with more of the M83 meets Slowdive sound, with current production clichés like clipped, flat drums, bit-reduced guitars, and the tell-tale sound of the Roland RE-201 Space Echo pedal in meltdown.

The album's final track, "Falling Ashes", is perhaps the most interesting song. It is mostly bits of minor key piano arpeggios cut and looped in the manner of modern ambient pianists like Harold Budd and Brad Mehldau. It revives the quiet burn of *Pygmalion*, intensity in minimalism. Gosling and Neil Halstead octave the refrain, "Thinking about love," and it is alternately dopy and profound, depending on my mood. It is the perfect cap to a short, 8 song burst that paces just

I've never felt Slowdive were a great album band. Their first two EP's (1990's *Slowdive* and 1991's *Morningrise*) comprise their best work, with their albums often overlong. This album feels right and makes me hopeful for future works. – KELLY MINNIS

CONCERT CALENDAR

<u>6/2</u>—Astrochimp @ Arsenal Tattoo, Bryan. 6pm

<u>6/2</u>—Electric Astronaut, Guilla, Delayed Therapy, Beige Watch @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

<u>6/3</u>—Shane Walker, Gabe Wooten @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

<u>6/4</u>—Jerod Justice @ Lakeside Icehouse, Bryan. 6pm

<u>6/6</u>—Cosmic Chaos, HYAH!, Sleepy Dog, Beige Watch @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

<u>6/7</u>—Tenino, OffSet, Interracial Dinonysus @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

<u>6/8</u>—Step Rydeau & The Zydeco Outlaws, Kid Reece & Mo' Live Zydeco @ Wolf Pen Creek Amphitheater, College Station. 7pm <u>6/8</u>—Dayeater @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

<u>6/11</u>—Neville Stands Up, Pizza Planet @ Josh's House, College Station. 1pm

<u>6/15</u>—Isonimist, Chernobyl The Secret @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 8pm <u>6/15</u>—Lead Pony, Wartime Afternoon, Yeeha! @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm <u>6/16</u>—The Ex-Optimists, Grizzly Band, Cake Rangers, Dayshifters @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

6/17-Puente @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

6/18—Cynthia's Birthday Meltdown w/ Unicorndog, Mutant Love, Electric Astronaut, The Ex-Optimists @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 8pm

<u>6/22</u>—Electric Astronaut, Ruiners, Mutant Love, Jeremiah Jackson Band @ Revolution, Bryan. 9:30pm

6/23—The Docs @ Lakeside Ice House, Bryan. 8pm

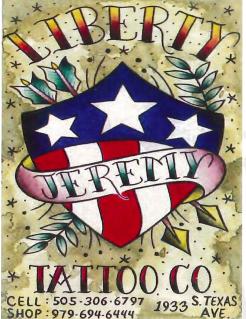
6/23—Jay Satellite, The Inators, Count Vaseline
@ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

<u>6/24</u>—Second Runner Up, Far From Home, A Deathbed Promise @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

<u>6/29</u>—Desdimona @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

6/30—Unicorndog, Bernie Pink, Mockingbird Brother @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

7/1 - Cosmic Chaos @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm



FRIDAYS 7-9 pm

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