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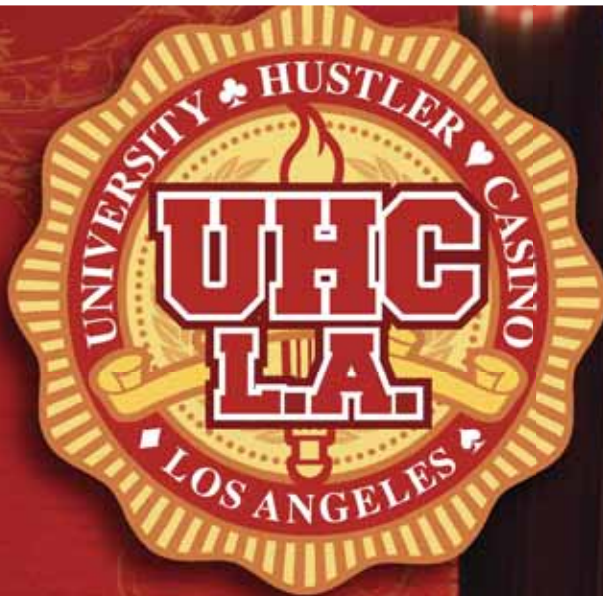


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campus CIRCLE

Feb. 25 - March 3, 2009 • Vol. 19 Issue 8

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Campus Circle newspaper is published 47 times a year and is available free at 40 schools and over 800 retail locations throughout Los Angeles. Circulation: 30,000. Readership: 90,000.

PUBLISHED BY

CAMPUS CIRCLE, INC.
5042 Wilshire Blvd., PMB 600
Los Angeles, CA 90036
(323) 939-8477
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info@campuscircle.net
www.campuscircle.com
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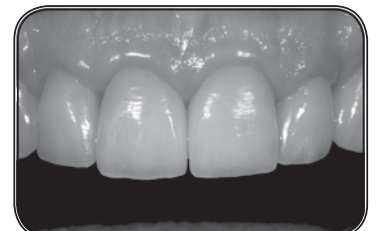
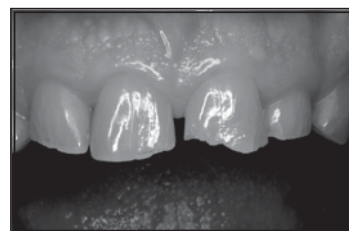
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COVER: Malin Akerman in *Watchmen*
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inner circle **campus news**

BY GINA QUATTROCHI

Alternative Spring Break

It's that time of year again – time to start planning those oh so coveted spring break trips. Don't want to do the Cabo thing (or don't have the money)? Why not do something positive, different and



Spend an Alternative Spring Break with United Way

ultimately more fulfilling, and try an alternative spring break volunteering program?

Your campus probably has their own programs, or United Way nationally sponsors programs in Detroit, Indiana and the Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coasts. It only costs \$150 to participate, and you would either be helping out non-profit organizations, helping to repair homes destroyed by flooding or assisting in communities that were devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

Applications are reviewed and

accepted on a rolling basis, so apply as soon as possible at liveunited.org/asb/. For more information, see Fun for Less on page 7.

Art Talk: The Academy, the Arts & the Community

Feb. 26 at Loyola Marymount University the Laband Art Gallery and the Truth About the Fact: International Journal of Literary Nonfiction are hosting an evening of art, discourse, music and poetry. The program states: "In an era when the intelligencia and the arts often get a bad rap for being separated from the greater community, this program will explore how and where they intersect."

This will be accomplished through discussions, poetry and free fried chicken and drinks! The event takes place at the Laband Gallery on LMU's campus.

Father G and the Homeboys

The Chicano Studies Research Center at UCLA presents a free screening of *Father G and the Homeboys*, a 2007 documentary narrated by Martin Sheen about a Jesuit priest who attempts to clean up the acts of four Boyle Heights gang-bangers. Father Greg, affectionately called "Father G" by the gang members, and his non-profit group "Homeboy Industries" help kids who are exposed to gang violence to prepare for a better and more positive future. Check it out for free from 4 p.m.-6 p.m. in the Young Research Library presentation room Feb. 25.

How MySpace Became a Household Name

March 3 at USC, CTO and co-founder of MySpace, Aber Whitcomb, will discuss how it went from zero to 125 million registered users in just three years and was ranked the most trafficked site by comScore. He will specifically talk about the technology behind a high-traffic Web site like MySpace, and what it takes to keep the site running at all hours of the day.

Whitcomb oversees the engineering and technical operations at MySpace and is recognized as an expert in large-scale computing, networking and storage on the Web. He will also be co-teaching a course on developing social apps this fall at USC's Viterbi School of Engineering.

Found: Ice Age Fossils in L.A. Tar Pits

In 2006, researchers found 16 Ice Age fossil deposits under a parking lot next to the tar pits. Among them are a near-intact mammoth skeleton and bones of saber-toothed cats, dire wolves, bison, horses, ground sloths and other mammals. The Page Museum's Ice Age collection could double with the addition of these discoveries. ■

event pick**São Paulo**

Feb. 28-March 28 @ Scion Installation L.A. Gallery
The *São Paulo* exhibit celebrates the emerging art culture in the biggest metropolitan city in South America. Blending personal heritage with pop contemporary references like skateboarding, hip-hop and punk, this diverse set of artists guarantees a spectacular show. Opening reception is 7 p.m.-10 p.m.

site pick**RocknRollDating.com**

If you're single and love music, check out this matchmaking site. In addition, they have two new sections, Dating From Hell (stories ranging from comical to tragic) and Interviews, which features conversation with artists from Billy Zoom (guitarist for 'X') and Jarboe (Swans) to Mark Eitzel (American Music Club).

wooden nickels | BY JOE HORTON**BUDGET BLOCKBUSTER:**
Solutions for California's Financial Crisis

IN LIGHT OF THE CALIFORNIA state budget crisis, estimated conservatively at \$42 billion and liberally at unremitting catastrophe, I have assembled a list of cutbacks that best serve the taxpayer. As seen in the deal struck last week in Sacramento, this kind of drastic fiscal belt-tightening is never easy, nor is the solution universally easy to stomach.

But I am confident that this great Golden State will rise up to prosperity and once again live out its squirrely mandate as one of the world's largest economies: shelling out tax breaks to Hollywood, bickering over social services for illegal immigrants and gaily cannibalizing earthquake and natural disaster funds while praying that the Big One happens on someone else's watch. The good old days.

First, I would immediately raise the fine on tactile cell phoning and text messaging while driving to \$1.2 million per offense. If you can't keep your hands off the phone and on the wheel, you don't deserve to retire. Ever.

This tax would also presumably cause a further decrease in traffic accidents, thereby easing the strain on emergency services that could be better utilized elsewhere.

However, as drivers pay more attention to the road, they will also be more inclined to notice the deplorable condition of the roadways and demand action. Any budget surplus generated by this tax would be quickly eaten up by infrastructure repairs, always desperately needed but now glaringly obvious to drivers who find themselves with little to do but stare at the road.

Second, annex Nevada. The favorable balance of this small population and large gambling revenue will be a boon to our depleted coffers.

Naysayers who point to the supposed "illegality" of this action

would be well served to remember that the largest single landowner in Nevada, controlling 86 percent of the total area, is the federal government, which, if you've been paying attention to the news, is a little busy

dealing with a global economic meltdown. I doubt they are going to notice a few million square miles of desert.

More importantly, in those few million miles of square desert lie Area 51 and a vast treasure trove of alien technology ranging from talking microwaves that never burn their contents to spinal disassociator rays that always burn their targets. These products could be packaged and sold to the Japanese, who are obsessed with weird gadgets and electronic things.

Of course, this plan is somewhat problematic because the aliens no doubt stole all of this technology from Japan years ago. They know quality when they see it.

We will have to put the L.A. public relations behemoth to work rebranding all of these items for resale. Image makeovers aren't cheap, so again, we'll be lucky to break even.

Third, any voters who supported Proposition 8 must pay, in the future and retroactively, sextuple the marriage license fees. Since marriage is such a sacred covenant that can't be freely shared, those lucky enough to have it won't mind paying a bit extra for the privilege.

The cost will be sextupled because it has the word "sex" in it, reminding all the new taxees that "sex" is only found in marriage for reproduction. Unless, of course, "sex" features as the prefix of a numerical value between fivefold and sevenfold or an

instrument used by ship captains to determine longitudes and latitudes.

Since gay Californians have been paying taxes without equal representation under the law for years, however, they may subconsciously be unable to resist paying this fee as well.

Accustomed to having to prove themselves to fellow Californians, same-sexers may actually take up the collective effort to pay more than the required amount.

Coupled with the destruction of the female tuxedo industry and the loss of hotel and restaurant revenue in San Francisco for all of

the Fox News media crews no longer staking out the steps of San Fran City Hall to grab some video of two married men kissing to beam back to GOP fundraisers across the country, any tax revenue generated here must be considered a wash.

I suppose, then, the only viable solution demands that Governor Schwarzenegger return to movie-stardom immediately, not in abdication of his title but in addition to it. Many people are working two jobs to make ends meet, and I think it only right and fitting that Arnold suit up and churn out a few flicks on the weekends.

These films, helmed pro-bono by each and every living Oscar-winning director and scripted by each and every living Pulitzer Prize and PEN/Faulkner-winning writer (thrown in with the deal for Nevada), will be fast-tracked for release to every international market in the world under the title, "The Plans for Immediate, Lasting and Awesome Economic Recovery in Six Easy Steps."

The star governor's muddled but sincere delivery will convince all patrons that the money they spent at the cinema was well worth it and that there is light, however fabricated, at the lip of the horizon. Markets will rebound, banks will lend and California will have its first multi-trillion-dollar movie franchise. The first rule of economics is: It's all about confidence. ■

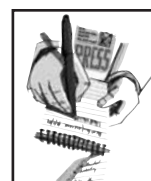


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COLLEGE BOUND CRISIS

Getting in Just Got Harder

BY CHRISTOPHER AGUTOS

IT'S SIMPLE MATH. WE, A GENERATION OF THOUGHTFUL, ambitious go-getters are taught by just about every adult we encounter the importance of education. It's important to land that respectable, well-paying job, and to do this we have to do just one thing: Go to college.

But now, more than ever, pockets are tight and cash is low, and suddenly going to college no longer seems to be the ideal, cost-feasible option it once was. You know, back in like 2000 (before Bush screwed us over).

Today's national and statewide recessions are affecting almost all walks of life, and new struggles for college students and their parents prove that even they can't escape the brutal economic downpour. Back when Governor Schwarzenegger constructed his budget plan for the 2008-2009 fiscal cycle, cuts to education set California plummeting farther down below the national average in per-pupil spending.

And if you haven't started pinching pennies, now's a good time; the situation doesn't look to be improving anytime soon. As the threat of a \$42 billion deficit by mid-2010 lingers over taxpayers' shoulders, the State Legislature is still teetering on the approval of Schwarzenegger's latest fix, a proposal filled with layoff plans, an idea to shorten the school year and of course, \$8 billion worth of budget cuts.

In recent months, college campuses across the state have been forced to modify their academic policies including all-important admission standards to cope with the harsh times. Among these campuses is the most popular option for students, the University of California, or the UC system. Home to over 226,000 undergraduates and graduates throughout nine public universities, the UC system responded to reduced funding with a cut to admission rates for the upcoming fall semester.

The result: the rejection of over 6,000 qualified students from admittance to their first-choices of college campuses.

"I think it's sad. Getting into college is already stressful enough. Because of the economy, the idea that more people will be denied from their dreams is a really unfortunate outcome," says Millie Tran, 19, a current UCLA sophomore who is studying computer science and Arabic.

Another public university system in California, the 23 Cal State colleges, took similar action. With twice the number of students attending Cal State campuses than UCs, officials decided they would not only cut enrollment by 10,000 incoming freshmen but also toughen enrollment criteria and move up deadlines to make the application process more difficult.

And if that weren't enough, a salary freeze was enacted last month preventing over a hundred top Cal State faculty members and administrators from receiving pay increases of any kind during the 2009-10 school year.

Though public colleges seem to be most devastated by the economy's blows, private universities are no exception. What might have been a shock to many students, the University of Southern California, in response to a decreased endowment and reduction in campus-wide funding, announced last November that the university would end all hiring for the current fiscal year until June 2009. Though USC promises acceptance rates will not change, perhaps the number of applicants to infamously expensive private schools will.

Economic crisis, \$50,000 tuition, everyone's broke ... just a hunch.

Community colleges might be the best solution for students who want to go to college but would still like to afford other things, like food and water. About two-thirds of California's college students have chosen the two-year alternative, but that amount is expected to inflate by 10 percent this year. The promise is that after two years, they would be prepared to transfer to a four-year school.

The only problem with that promise is that students forgot to read the fine print, right next to the "bad economy" clause. Not only are community colleges cutting classes, packing classrooms to capacity and laying off teachers, transfer rates are falling dramatically, which could mean a huge, unforeseen road block in the future.

You have been warned.

As the great saying goes, "Things have to get worse before they get better." Until then, stock up on Easy Mac. ■

lifestyle | BY AMY SOMMER

PARTY DRINKING GAMES

Have fun, but be responsible, too!

Colleges across the land are filled with students who play drinking games. As long as you and your friends – both new and old – imbibe responsibly, drinking games can be a lot of fun. Many games come and go, but a few remain. Below is a listing and brief explanation of some favorites.

Beer Pong remains a top game even though it has been around forever. It is a classic with several Web sites devoted to it.

This game has few rules to govern play. Just set up two-player teams and two sets of plastic cups filled with beer on opposite ends of a table.

The goal is for the team on one side of the table to throw a ping-pong ball into a beer-filled cup on the other end of the table. If the ball lands true, chugging must occur. This game should only be played with cheap beer as the throwing of balls inevitably leads to lots of spillage – and chugging tasty craft beers is not recommended.

King's Cup also requires props: a deck of cards. Players shuffle and deal one card for each player in a circle. If one draws a red card, one must drink the number of shots, gulps, etc. If you get a black card, you have to dispense the number of drinks to fellow players.

Then there is the 100 Club, also known as the Century Club, which is an endurance game. Players are required to drink one ounce of beer every minute for 100 minutes.

This game allows one to savor the actual taste of beer – at least for the

first few rounds. Few make it to the triple digits as those ounces add up to eight and a quarter cans of beer over the course of an hour!

Beer Hunter is another choice requiring only beer – many cans of beer. This game is best played outdoors.

Beer Hunter is like Russian Roulette – but with a less lethal instrument. One player shakes a beer can vigorously. The can of beer is then mixed with others in a bag. Players blindly reach into the bag, hold a can of beer up to their face and crack it open.

The result: You either wipe away massive amounts of beer foam or chug the beer in hand. While this isn't sophisticated – to say the least – it is a good way to get people talking to each other, although those uninhibited enough to play this game may not need the help.

There are games that force one to view pop culture classics in a new – and often blurry – way. For example, there is the "The Jerry Springer Game," which requires players to drink each time there is a fight on stage or an expletive is bleeped. There are many games based on events, which occur in a given episode of a show and are a great way to share experiences with new friends while watching good or bad television.

Other games turn classic games on their alcoholic head. Beer Checkers is a variation on the classic game where one uses shot glasses filled with your beverage of choice that you drink when you capture an opponent's piece. Truth or Dare or Strip Poker with alcohol can be dangerous – but a lot of fun if played with good friends, or those who will become good friends very quickly!

There are the time sensitive games – like the ones we played during the presidential elections. During the Vice Presidential debate, we had to chug our beverage of choice every time



Beer Pong is a classic drinking game.

Sarah Palin winked. During the Democratic Presidential debates we drank every time Hillary Clinton mentioned her experience.

For the athletically inclined, there is Mushball, which is a variation on softball – with booze. A Mushball is a soft ball with a 16 inch diameter, making it hard to miss. The size of the ball also makes it hard to hit very far.

Drinking games are fun – but only if you learn how to drink responsibly. There are some practical tips to follow if you know your evening's activities will involve imbibing: Drink lots of water, don't drink on an empty stomach and, most important, hide or give away your car keys. ■

BOOZE CROOZER

Get a Lift in a Limo for \$5 Per Mile

BY CHRIS LESINSKI

THE GIRLS ARE ALL DOLLED UP in glistening cocktail dresses. The boys are wearing collared shirts – blazers, if we're lucky – and they're waiting outside the campus gates for a ride. A dirty, yellow taxi pulls up and everyone piles in.

When the young lady's satin dress hits that worn, stained, smoky, "leather" seat cushion – that's when you know you're in college. It makes us feel like wannabes.

An even worse scenario involves a snappy-casual crowd jumping into a snappy-casual BMW that dad bought. Unfortunately, the driver of that car isn't for hire so he doesn't mind having a few drinks at the destination. Or a

few before he drives. Yikes.

Wouldn't it be nice to take a limo? Booze Croozer is a Los Angeles limo service for the late-night-ride crowd. The best part: Instead of paying a limo driver per-hour to verify that the reclining seats are comfortable enough to sleep in, Booze Croozer uses a per-mile taxi cab model. You pay for what you use.

Yes, it's more expensive than a cab. There's a \$5 fee to start a ride, and it's \$5 per mile after that (no traffic surcharge).

But when you consider that you can split that among six people in a limo versus three in a cab – not to mention the fact that you're in a freaking limo – it's probably worth it. One way from USC to Hollywood is \$9.98 per person (six) via Booze



Croozer, and \$11.05 per person (three) in the average cab.

We might expect a sub-par product from a bargain limo service, but that's not the case. It's aptly plush: a stereo system, a TV, a lighted bar with coolers (drinking is permitted) and a power divider. The outside is classy, too, and will surely make passer-bys think you're a "Gossip Girl," until they see the rather unfortunate magnetic signage on the side of the car.

True, this is no high-school-prom ride, but it is perfect for the everyday college student, or at least for a special occasion. ■

For more information, call (888) 4YO-CROOZE or visit boozecroozer.com.

fun for less | BY EBONY MARCH

VOLUNTEER VACATIONS

Do Good for Spring Break

I TAKE MY TIPS ON BEING A good person from the movie *Clueless*. Now, I know what you're thinking: "Isn't *Clueless* just a rip-off of Jane Austen's *Emma*?" Yes it is. But *Emma* never had a funny third act involving the Pismo Beach disaster relief fund.

Doing good deeds for others can be highly rewarding. It can also lead to some mighty fun travel opportunities.

With so many organizations around the world needing helping hands (and so many cash-strapped bleeding hearts wanting to assist), the volunteer vacation was born. The biggest incentive of this pastime is that some non-profits are willing to subsidize the cost of your trip and lodging or offer tax write-offs on the getaway.

Don't know where to go for spring break? Then you're just the person to mobilize and clean up this nation's beloved parks and trails through the **American Hiking Society's** volunteer efforts.

A visit to this charity's Web site (americanhiking.org) will provide do-gooders with an annual volunteer schedule outlining clean up initiatives for the entire year. Choose from vacations in Arkansas or on Catalina

Island to name a few. Each trip's cost, focus and time frame is detailed.

For all those Björk and Sigur Rós fans out there, **Working Abroad** (workingabroad.com, an organization for students) offers the chance to visit offbeat Iceland. This land of gnomes and elves is ripe with natural resources like hot springs and lush greenery that span as far as the eye can see.

However, with the country's recent bankruptcy filing (yes, the entire place is B-R-O-K-E), you can bet your bottom dollar these folks need a little extra help keeping the place clean. From late June 2009 through August 2009, Working Abroad will be teaming with big-hearted guys and gals to place them in various cities that are in the most need of a pick-me-up.

The cost is steep for some, but incredibly inexpensive if you do the math. A two-week program runs roughly \$750 US. That covers airfare, lodging, meals and materials for your work.

Most flights overseas, depending on when you book them, cost that much just for a one-way ticket. So, while your friends are waiting in long lines at Disneyland this summer, you

could be changing your life by assisting a section of the world that still remains a mystery to many North Americans.

However, if you're one of the few people who absolutely can't afford the price of a trip, consider getting paid for your travel. This may sound too good to be true, but it's not.

By getting certified to teach English as a second language, you will not only give yourself a professional teaching credential, but you'll also become a powerful international commodity. Many ESL schools in Asia and South America are desperately seeking native English speakers who can teach local men, women and children how to converse with a charming U.S. accent.

Since the inception of the EU, it may be harder to find work in most European countries, not to mention that you'll be competing with the coveted English accent. Still, certification is relatively easy. Many schools offer distance learning programs that start as low as \$200 for a 40-100-hour program.

I received my certificate nearly three years ago through **i-to-i** (onlinetefl.com). The instructors were extremely helpful and the school also offered free job placement. Shortly after my course ended, I had offers from a small school in Korea and one in Brazil. Both provided teachers with free lodging and a salary of \$2,000/per month (to work 40-hours a week) for the entire summer.

Gain a new skill that just may catapult you into a new profession or lead to lasting memories. ■



Ebony March

bottoms up | BY RICHARD CASTAÑEDA

TONGA HUT

12808 Victory Blvd.,
North Hollywood

WITH THE RECESSION HITTING real close to home nowadays, plans like flying to Hawaii might be on the backburner. If jonesing for a trip like that has been reduced to drinking with your friends and "Hawaii Five-O" reruns, check out the Tonga Hut.

Located in the heart (or at least right ventricle) of the valley is your dose of Tiki culture mixed with strong drinks that I hope you can handle. If you blink, you might miss the Tonga Hut, which has proudly claimed stake at its locale for over 50 years.

"[The Tonga Hut] is a real bar. Not a bubblegum-fake-Hollywood bar," co-owner Jeremy Fleener says.

For the last three years, Fleener and Ana Reyes have overseen the rejuvenation of the Hut from the

seedy sports bar of the '80s and '90s into the laidback, dimly lit Hawaiian paradise it is now.

Don't come here expecting flashy plasmas and an Internet jukebox. There's a 15-inch television set and retro jukebox outfitted with hits from almost every decade of music. It's about the drinks and conversation here.

If you're the type of drinker who hates yelling at the person next to you to get their attention over the plastic music on the P.A., the Hut's got you covered. Great music plays at levels where you don't need a test for a hearing aid the next day.

From the Moai statue at the entrance to the fountains around the

bar, this place screams "soul" and "character."

Drinks are incredibly cheap. Everyday of the week there's happy hour from 4 p.m.-8 p.m. with \$2 domestic beer and \$3 well drinks. The Tonga Hut is open daily from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. Make your liver and wallet happy at the same time and check out the Tonga Hut. ■

For more information, call (818) 769-0708 or visit tongahut.com.



the normandie files inner circle

MASSIFICATION AND PUNK IDEALS: A Cultural Case Study

BY SARAH BENNETT

AFTER DESCRIBING WATCHING THE BAND No Age play a Misfits cover they just learned to a packed sushi bar in London, Jessica Hopper, the writer of the Feb. 5 *L.A. Weekly* cover story, proclaimed that the local noise-rock-post-alt-whatever band are "deliverance ... everything we've wished and waited for in punk."

It's an extreme statement – blunt, hyperbolic – and it caught me off guard. While I want very badly to believe that No Age and other "Smell bands" are still a scene existing outside of mainstream influence, the last year-and-a-half of corporate-aided exposure seems to have negated that possibility.

As the poster boys for the raw, gritty scene surrounding alcohol-free-all-ages downtown L.A. venue the Smell, No Age signed with Nirvana-alma mater SubPop Records in 2007 and embarked on a non-stop marketing campaign for debut album *Nouns*. The local two-piece was thrown on MTV; they did the Craig Ferguson show; and, most recently, had their album packaging nominated for a Grammy.

Several Smell-mates followed suit

and left the den: Abe Vigoda went around the country with Diplo, and Mika Miko toured Europe and Japan. This close-knit community of bands was paraded around as the new hope for Los Angeles' burgeoning underground music scene so much that when they returned back to the Smell, they found that their burgeoning underground music has changed hands.

The crowd at No Age's homecoming show lacked the energy and substance of Smell legend. Hardly anyone danced, cell phones were raised high to capture video for YouTube and the audience members came across as young, nervous and eager.

Does this signal the end of the organic aspect of Smell bands, or is it the start of a larger movement? Only time will tell.

But when a musical subculture like the one surrounding the Smell becomes massified, it eliminates the essence and detracts from its authentic nature. Because our gritty downtown scene is so hinged on its context, once you send a Smell band on tour, they cease to be Smell bands and all performances not done at the Smell are just attempts to reproduce one. Doing this draws even greater distance between the audience and the band so that a sold-out show at New York's Bowery Ballroom has no correlation to the actual scene that the band embodies.

No Age is as punk to European teens being fed Los Angeles underground as the Sex Pistols are to American kids buying *Never Mind the Bullocks* on iTunes (which is to say, not a lot).

The dirty underbelly of L.A. music has come a long way since the Masque days of Hollywood punk, but it risks being eliminated at the hands of its inceptors. They created a new culture as a vehicle of protest against the mind-numbing, static banality of the Sunset Strip rock scene and although these punk rock ethics had a nice run under the radar in downtown Los Angeles, the influx of publicity to the scene is threatening its fragile existence. ■

Send feedback to normandiefles@campuscircle.net.



Sarah Bennett



Randy Randall and Dean Spunt of No Age

STREET FIGHTER: THE LEGEND OF CHUN-LI

Kristen Kreuk & Co. aim to kick Bison butt.

BY JAMES DUSENBERRY

GAMING FANS, GET ready! The latest incarnation of a popular game franchise is hitting the screens.

Street Fighter: The Legend of Chun-Li is not the *Street Fighter* you may remember ... starring a certain Belgian action star. This is an entirely new creation of the incredibly popular video game.

This time, the focus is on Chun-Li, played by Kristen Kreuk of "Smallville." The story follows Chun-Li as she comes of age and becomes a Street Fighter.

Chun-Li's motivation to expand her martial arts expertise comes from helping to protect the slums of Thailand from the evil Bison, played by Neil McDonough. This Bison is not an evil overlord looking for world domination; instead he is a slick, successful and soulless businessman. A martial arts expert as well, he travels with his right hand man Balrog, played by Michael Clarke Duncan, and keeps his secret weapon, Vega (played by Taboo of Black Eyed Peas), close at hand.

Chun-Li is not alone in her fight, however. She receives guidance from



Chun-Li (Kristin Kreuk) prepares for the final, epic battle against the forces of darkness.

Sunee and Interpol agent Charlie Nash also on the trail of Bison, played by Moon Bloodgood and Chris Klein, respectively.

McDonough talks about the approach they took when making the film: "We wanted to make a fresh take on 'Street Fighter,' yet stay with the core of what the game was."

McDonough also took this fresh approach to his character of Bison.

"We tried to make him much more of a Richard Branson type. I didn't play Bison evil at all; I played him like a businessman. As a businessman sometimes you have to cut corners here, cut things there. And Bison sometimes has to cut people, literally. He has no emotion

toward that; it's just business. He's going to take over the world, and nothing's going to stop him," says McDonough.

"When you play somebody good, you're restricted, and once you're restricted, you can't go over the top," explains Duncan, talking about playing Bison's right hand man Balrog. "As a bad guy you can be diabolical, and it's fun because you don't have the restriction. The worse you are, the better it comes off on camera."

Duncan and McDonough were the "team of evil" as McDonough puts it.

"Michael and I have been buddies for a long time, and so to work with him was just a blast," says McDonough about the joy of working with Duncan and the rest of the cast. "And to work with Kristen, who was just tireless ... never complained, always worked hard; it was wonderful."

Kreuk, having never played the game growing up, explains what drew her to the film.

"I think having that story there; that mentor and apprentice personal growth story is part of what drew me

to the movie in the first place. I like that story of mentor and apprentice," she says. "I think it's really beautiful and is something that as human beings, we all seek out in some capacity. To find somebody that you can recognize is greater than you and has skills that you want to build and that you aspire to; I think it's beautiful."

The theme of helping others is definitely something the entire cast took to heart while filming in the slums of Thailand. Kreuk herself has been working on "GirlsByDesign," a Web site designed to help girls grow into strong women.

"I've been putting a lot of my effort into it, and I'm very excited about it," Kreuk says about her project. "Being in this industry, I started to think there wasn't anything out there encouraging young women to grow themselves as females in the world. A lot of the industry kind of tears girls down, and I didn't want to participate in that. I was trying to think of a way I could help to encourage them instead." ■

Street Fighter: The Legend of Chun-Li releases in theaters Feb. 27.

projections | essential film events

LESS THAN ZERO

Feb. 25 @ Space 15 Twenty

BY SARAH BENNETT

SO WHAT IF IT'S NOT SUMMER (or even summer weather)? The rain has finally stopped, and the brisk night air is begging for an outdoor movie screening. Thankfully, Hollywood's Space 15 Twenty knows no season and has the next few months filled with courtyard showings of favorite and obscure films so everyone can take a June-worthy load off.

The new Cahuenga Boulevard retail experiment pairs an Urban Outfitters flagship store with a rotation of vendor spaces all connected by a courtyard and adjoining gallery, which hosts a smattering of music, art and film events. Since their grand opening party last December, the steel and concrete compound has seen book readings, Hope Gallery installations, pop-up shops, sketch comedy performances, DJ sets and Inauguration Day parties.

Tonight, their endless use of the communal space continues with the next screening in 1520's "All L.A., All the Time" Wednesday night film series: *Less Than Zero*.

The Bret Easton Ellis (*The Rules of Attraction* and *American Psycho*) college essay turned novel turned movie stars Robert Downey Jr. and one of the guys from *Weekend at Bernie's* as drug-filled teenagers from upper crust Los Angeles. Back for the summer from their first year away at college, the story follows a group of rich high school friends as they party in big houses with no parental supervision, get into massive drug debts with other rich kids and act nonchalant about their decadent lifestyles.

Although the movie falters from the book of the same name, the incessantly '80s factor – and



Jami Gertz, Robert Downey Jr. and Andrew McCarthy in *Less Than Zero*

extreme L.A.-ness – makes it a must-see (7 p.m.-9 p.m.) The Space's aptly titled eatery, Snack Bar, will be giving away free soda and popcorn to those brave enough to bring blankets and take to the 'yard for some recession-busting fun.

Next up: Neighbors Amoeba Records' music-themed Monday movie night runs all of March and April with everything from *Patti Smith: Dream of Life to Sleepwalking Through the Mekong* already on the schedule. ■

Space 15 Twenty is located at 1520 N. Cahuenga Blvd., Los Angeles. For more information, visit space1520.com.

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pages | book reviews

Richard Yates

(Everyman's Library)

The criminally underappreciated Richard Yates is finally gaining some mainstream popularity after the film adaptation of his first novel *Revolutionary Road*. This hardcover anthology collects three of his novels: *The Easter Parade*, *Eleven Kinds of Loneliness* and of course, his masterwork, *Revolutionary Road*.

Yates is a writer's writer. His bleak view of mid-century American life probably explains his select readership.

The characters populating his novels are desperately lonely and isolated, bitter with the recognition of the sham of the American Dream. You probably don't want to read all three at once. But no doubt Yates' stunning prose and incisive psychological insight will bring you back for more.

Grade: A

—Mike Sebastian

Richard Yates is currently available.

Dangerous Laughter: Thirteen Stories

(Vintage)

As in his Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Martin Dressler*, the 13 stories in

Steven Millhauser's new collection show the fantastic possibilities of the real world. It's a landscape populated with obsessive dreamers, who Millhauser captures in brilliant, masterful prose. He creates worlds the Germans would describe as *unheimlich* – the Normal that is somehow slightly off and unsettling.

The book is divided into three sections: Vanishing Acts, Impossible Architectures and Heretical Histories. After a bumpy start, opening with an extended riff on "Tom and Jerry" cartoons that never quite goes anywhere, Millhauser doesn't look

In "The Disappearance of Elaine

Coleman," the narrator tries to grasp snatches of memories of a girl he went to high school with who has mysteriously vanished – apparently from being ignored for so long. "History of a Disturbance" is about a man who begins to dissociate words from the world around him.

"A Precursor of the Cinema" is a tour de force, in which a late 19th Century

artist (and possible magician) becomes consumed with the possibility of moving paintings.

While a few of the stories are not as fully realized as others, there are so many imaginative and vividly memorable ones that it doesn't matter much. It's also a highly cohesive, thematically bound collection.

Grade: A-

—Mike Sebastian

Dangerous Laughter: Thirteen Stories is currently available.

The Healthy College Cookbook

(Storey Publishing)

Cooking in college can be a daunting task, especially when you're trying to stay a little bit healthy. And even if you try avoiding the longing, there will be times when all you want is a home cooked meal. *The Healthy College Cookbook* can help you with

that.

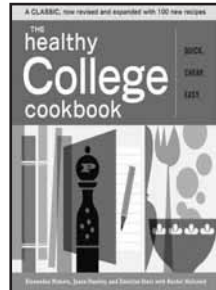
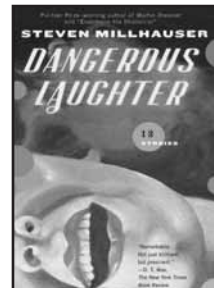
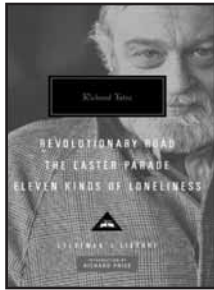
It has 300 recipes from college students that are simple, healthy and yes, delicious. It's got you covered from basic breakfast dishes like omelets to main dishes like lemon asparagus pasta.

Each recipe also has the nutritional content of the dish for those who are calorie conscious. You'll never settle for fast food again.

Grade: A

—Devon Klug

The Healthy College Cookbook is currently available.



t.v. time | BY BONNIE PRIEVER

CASSIDY FREEMAN**The New Bad Girl of "Smallville"**

AFTER SHOOTING A PILOT scheduled for the CW that never took off, Cassidy Freeman, a.k.a. Tess Mercer, the new bad girl of "Smallville," welcomes the chance to bring a new character to an already-established popular show, now in its eighth season. Freeman plays Mercer, the replacement for the evil iconic villain, Lex Luthor, and is a series regular.

"Smallville" revolves around the story of the young Superman of DC comics, and is basically his story before he became Superman. When the show began, Superman was still in high school; now he works at the *Daily Planet*. Freeman's character has naturally evolved as well – she is the CEO of Lutherworld, and her character is a mix of Mercy Graves and Ms. Teschmacher.

In Hollywood, as the forces of good and evil, real and supernatural are forever in conflict and of great intrigue, shows based on superheroes and supervillains bring in strong ratings. Above all else, viewers wish to believe a bit of a superhero is hidden within, waiting to be revealed.

Freeman, however, explains and defends her character: "It's great to be a villain. You get to do a lot of things that are more complex and different than the basic good guys."

When asked her opinion of Heath Ledger's role as the Joker in *The Dark Knight*, she states, "I think he did incredible work in that role. He went to a really dark place, and it shows."

As Freeman soon wraps this season of "Smallville," she shares a closing comment.

"Plenty of villains get their due

praise in the end. They always have a seed of redemption in them, and you always want to see them do better!" ■

"Smallville" airs Thursdays at 8 p.m. on the CW.



J Squared Photography

dvd dish | BY MIKE SEBASTIAN **film****SPECIAL FEATURES****I Love the '80s**

Howard the Duck, the big budget, George Lucas-produced adaptation of the anthropomorphic comic book character, finally makes it to DVD (available March 10). One of the most notorious flops in cinema, *Howard* has become something of a cult classic.

If Lucas is embarrassed enough to bury one of his films, you know it's bad. If you've ever wondered what giant naked duck breasts look like, you're in luck.

One of the biggest successes of the '80s, the *Back to the Future* trilogy is now available in individual special editions for those heretics that don't already own the box set.

In Toon

"The Pink Panther" is surely one of the strangest spin-offs in TV – creating a cartoon character from a credit sequence that had nothing to do with the actual movie. Throw in an infectious theme song, and you've got pure gold.

Of the many collections available, *The Pink Panther and Friends Classic Cartoon Collection* is the volume to get for the casual fan. It also includes the complete series of "The Ant & The Aardvark" and a couple volumes of "The Inspector."

The latest multi-episode arc released as feature-length DVD, *Futurama: Into the Wild Green Yonder*, finds Fry with newly found mind reading abilities. Meanwhile, Amy's father intends to demolish parts of the solar system to clear the way for the Universe's largest mini golf course.

**The Idiotbox**

Dead Like Me: The Complete Collection contains both seasons of the popular Showtime series as well as *Life After Death*. The much-loved black comedy follows a college dropout who, after dying, finds herself with a new job: Grim Reaper.

Robert Vaughn and David McCallum reunited in 1983 for *The Return of the Man From U.N.C.L.E.* (available March 3), a TV movie based on the hit '60s spy series. By this time

Leo G. Carroll had died. Plus, anything spy related just isn't the same outside of the 1960s. But for fans it's worth a watch.

Disasterpiece Theater

Australia (available March 3), Baz Luhrmann's bloated ode to the land down under is set in the early days of World War II. Beautiful scenery isn't enough to justify almost three hours of unabashed sentimentality and meandering subplots. Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman star.

ALSO AVAILABLE:

The Moon and the Stars and *Paid*

staff pick**8 1/2**

Feb. 25-26 @ New Beverly Cinema

Several months ago, I screened the MOST genius film called *The Brothers Bloom*. Its director is California native Rian Johnson.

The New Beverly has this incredible filmmaker following in the footsteps of Diablo Cody and Edgar Wright with his very own movie series. Check out cool's inspiration with a screening of Fellini's *8 1/2*, which will be showing as part of Rian Johnson's Festival of Fekery. 9:25 p.m.

—Ebony March

film screen shots | BY ZACH HINES

Here come the *Little Fockers*.Meet the *Little Fockers*

A third installment into the *Fockers* franchise is coming. Ben Stiller and Robert De Niro are going to do *Little Fockers*, a continuation of the story from *Meet the Parents* and its sequel, *Meet the Fockers*. I suppose right now I'm hearing the sound of inevitability that Agent Smith is so fond of.

Meet the Parents was great, and *Meet the Fockers* was definitely a worthy sequel, so I suppose this was a no-brainer. I have a big De Niro bias, and I go see anything he does if only to see him smirk at people.

I recently listened to an interview writer/director Eli Roth did when he was promoting *Hostel: Part II*, and he said something I really connected with. When asked if he would do a third *Hostel* film, he said that the third chapter in most trilogies are generally not good. Unfortunately, Roth is very right.

Assuming it isn't being made to shamelessly capitalize on a film that worked, a sequel should either be better than its predecessor, or take the story in such a new and original direction that the two films can't be compared. Something at the climax of the film should drastically change the course of events so that if the story were to continue, it couldn't be a rehashing of the previous story for the purpose of simply re-shooting the same movie and slapping the number two on the end of the title. Creating a sequel that is better or just as good as the first one is a very difficult task; so creating an effective third chapter is even harder, and there are very few instances in film history where the third entry of a trilogy was considered one of the best.

I don't want to name names, but I'll bet that everyone can name at least five trilogies where they thought the third film sucked ass. I agree with Roth in that if you make a sequel that tops its predecessor, move on. But I also think that if your story is really, really strong and you've managed to set up a third film in an exciting way, do it.

Even though it seems astronomically impossible for Christopher Nolan to top *The Dark Knight*, the way he set up a possible third film almost demands it. I know, I'm a shameless *Dark Knight* whore. But I'm an honest *Dark Knight* whore.

Robin Hood: A New Twist or Same Old Story?

This next bit is not really new, more like an addendum to something older. A while back I commented on the long gestating *Robin Hood* project that Ridley Scott was going to direct starring Russell Crowe. The film was to be titled *Nottingham*, Crowe was to play the Sheriff of Nottingham and the story was going to be told from his perspective with Robin Hood as more of a criminal mastermind.

Telling old stories from different perspectives is always a great way to breathe life back into them, and from the first time I heard about this project I was really excited. However, now there's talk that they're ditching that approach and just making a regular *Robin Hood* movie.

When I heard this I have to admit I was disappointed. I love Scott. He's made a lot of my favorite films and he's one of my biggest influences, but personally I don't really want to see him make another version of a story that's been done countless times in film and TV.

I trust Scott to make good movies and I trust his judgment, but I can't help but think that telling the story from the Sheriff's point of view would be ... well ... something we haven't seen before. How crazy would it be if Robin Hood turned out to be a scumbag who only gave to the poor to serve some sort of ulterior motive? Something sinister.

Hell, if Ridley Scott doesn't do it, I guess I'll have to. ■

Send feedback to screenshots@campuscircle.net.

film notes | reviews

Crossing Over

(The Weinstein Company)

What *Crossing Over* wants to be is *Crash*.

What *Crossing Over* is, is a long, laborious, droning headache.

The film follows multiple storylines across Los Angeles, all dealing with issues of American citizenship, nationalization, patriotism and homeland security. But the thing that makes *Crash* both blistering and poignant is the way it shows how worlds collide and lives are changed.

Crossing Over might as well be called "A Bunch of Scenes About Immigration Where Sucky Things Happen." There's no thru line and, thus, no tether or anchor for the audience to latch on to.

The cast is packed with capable, captivating actors like Harrison Ford as an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officer and Ashley Judd as an immigration defense attorney, but writer-director Wayne Kramer hangs them out to dry. Everyone on screen, from Ray Liotta to Summer Bishil, who was so dazzlingly talented in last year's *Towelhead*, over-acts, over-emotes and under-impresses.

Grade: D

—Sasha Perl-Raver

Crossing Over releases in select theaters Feb. 27.

Must Read After My Death

(Gigantic Releasing)

Must Read After My Death is an intimate look into the dark heart of the American family. This documentary's only agenda is to expose the raw emotions of a family teetering at the brink of a complete meltdown. It is insightful, heartbreaking and even frightening.

The family in *Must Read After My Death*

What starts as a habit in which a separated family can feel closer together, becomes a cathartic exercise in which all members of the family can voice the ways they've grown apart. The recordings become confessionals. They range from melancholy to bitter to hopelessly

The film is directed by Morgan Dews and assembled from an extensive

collection of home movies and audio recordings. This collage of archival material introduces us to Allis and Charley, a seemingly typical family in 1960s America. They have three sons and one daughter.

Charley has a job that takes him to Australia for four months out of the year, so the couple purchases Dictaphone recorders to stay in touch. The husband and wife are frank and open in their relationship, encouraging each other to find solace in the company of other men and women during their extended separation. Trouble brews on the horizon.

Movies About Filmmaking

- 1) *The Player*
- 2) *Day for Night*
- 3) *Get Shorty*
- 4) *A Star Is Born*
- 5) *Singin' in the Rain*
- 6) *Frances*
- 7) *RKO 281*
- 8) *American Movie*
- 9) *Irma Vep*
- 10) *Living in Oblivion*

—Angela Matano

desperate.

Late in the film, much of the conflict comes from the institutionalization of one of Allis and Charley's sons. Misdiagnosed, their son spends years away from home. He goes from being a frustrated boy to a young man who has disassociated from his family and is brimming with rage.

I hope this powerful film, the 2008 Grand Prize winner at the International Documentary Festival in Marseilles, finds the same audience that lauded *Capturing the Friedmans*.

Must Read After My Death is distributed by Gigantic Releasing. Interestingly, they are the first distributor to open first-run films simultaneously in cinemas and online. Gigantic is able to do this through their Gigantic Digital broadband theater.

Gigantic Digital streams in ultra high quality, commercial-free and at a modest price. \$2.99 gets you a three-day, unlimited ticket. Do take note that cities in which the film is or will be playing in theaters will be blacked out so that the digital release does not compete with cinema bookings.

Grade: A

—Nick Day

Must Read After My Death releases in select theaters Feb. 27.

l.a. faces | BY BONNIE PRIEVER

KATE FRENCH

L Words to Live By

THE L WORDS LUCKY, LIVELY and learning best describe Kate French from the hot Showtime original series, "The L Word." Lucky enough to audition and get the part of Niki, the show's wild, young party girl who doesn't always make the right decisions in life and love, French is enjoying the Hollywood life, both its successes and challenges.

Originally from New York, French moved to California for college, attending UCSB, hoping to write a novel or life story (her favorite authors are John Steinbeck, Pat Conroy and Wally Lamb) – but then decided to pursue acting, her other passion, when

an opportunity arose to star in the American telenovela, "Wicked Wicked Games."

This was French's first project and entailed 18-hour days, 6 days a week.

She recalls, "It was sort of like an acting boot camp!"

Now in its final season, "The L Word" has been a great run for French.

Reflecting on the creative team of writers, she states, "They keep it so interesting and fresh. They aren't real sticklers to the dialogue, so I'm free at times for spontaneous improv."

French will next appear in some episodes of "Gossip Girl" and the recently released feature film *Fired Up!*, as the head cheerleader captain who



seduces one of the guys.

Constantly perfecting her craft by taking acting classes, immersing herself with high-caliber actors on set and giving herself regular confidence-boosting pep talks, Kate French stays motivated and enthusiastic in show business, and is living, loving, laughing and learning. ■

"The L Word" airs Sundays at 9 p.m. on Showtime.

A BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK



WATCHMEN

“These MASKED MEN and WOMEN are a MIRROR for all of the things that are at once GREAT and TERRIBLE in our SOCIETY.”



Silk Spectre II and Nite Owl II share a tender moment amidst chaos.

Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures



(l to r) The Comedian (Jeffrey Dean Morgan), Silk Spectre II (Malin Akerman), Dr. Manhattan (Billy Crudup), Ozymandias (Matthew Goode), Nite Owl II (Patrick Wilson) and Rorschach (Jackie Earle Haley)



Hollis Mason (Matt Frewer), the original Nite Owl, and his successor, Dan Dreiberg (Patrick Wilson)

Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

WHO WATCHES WATCHMEN? If you're a Warner Bros. executive, then you hope everyone watches *Watchmen*.

It is an expensive, bold endeavor, an adaptation that strives for nothing short of epic. Even the marketing hints at something extraordinary.

The graphic novel transcended its contemporaries. Will the film do the same?

For the uninitiated, *Watchmen* was originally a 12-issue comic book series published by DC Comics in 1986 and 1987, and it was created by writer Alan Moore and artist Dave Gibbons. The comic has since been reprinted in a collection, has won several awards and is considered by many literary critics to be a modern classic. Like many successful books before it, Hollywood set its sights on the property as a viable product.

As a film property, *Watchmen*

Creative differences have seen the project drift in and out of every major studio in Tinseltown. Producer Lawrence Gordon has been with the project since the beginning, and 23 years later he is about to reap the benefits of patience.

On March 6, after starts and stops and every creative snag imaginable, *Watchmen* is finally hitting the big screen.

"It's pretty amazing. And exciting," Gordon says, adding, "It's a bit unbelievable."

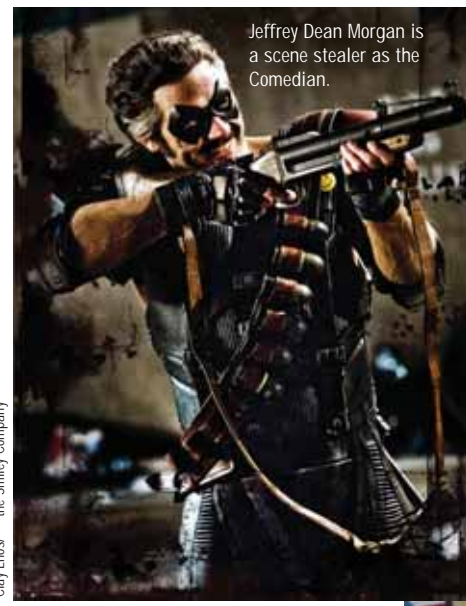
And when asked whether or not the film lives up to his expectations, Gordon answers without hesitation.

"It's better," he says, and you can hear the satisfaction in his voice.

It is most likely a virtue that the film took so long to reach the big screen. Larger than life superheroes, their flying machines and a crystal castle floating across the face of

Mars, these are the kinds of images that will undoubtedly benefit from modern movie magic.

"Now is the time for it," assures illustrator Dave Gibbons. "The effects have got to a level where if you can imagine it, you can make it real. And, also, you can integrate them with the



Jeffrey Dean Morgan is a scene stealer as the Comedian.

Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures



Ozymandias and the Comedian during a group meeting

has been in and out of development since 1986, most notably with Terry Gilliam. No stranger to difficult properties, he was once attached to direct.

real world."

Watchmen exists in its own very realistic universe, but it is a universe that borrows liberally from our own.

Though the original comic was set in modern times upon its publication, almost 30 years have passed, which makes a literal adaptation of *Watchmen* one part

fantasy and one part period piece.

"I think one of the masterstrokes of the movie is that it is set in the 1980s," says Gibbons. "It then becomes a period piece, and it kind

thickens by way of intricate conspiracies that may have dire consequences for all of humanity. Like *Chinatown* before it, it is at once a deconstruction of the genre and



Jackie Earle Haley as the idealistic sociopath vigilante Rorschach.

Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

of becomes timeless in a way. It's turned into a universal story."

So, what exactly is the story of *Watchmen*? At its core, the narrative is a mystery surrounding the murder of a costumed hero, though the plot

a multi-faceted drama. "Because *Watchmen* the graphic novel was a comment on superhero comic books at the time," reasons Gibbons, "I think this stands as a comment on



Malin Akerman steams things up as Silk Spectre II.



Nite Owl (Patrick Wilson) and his Owl Ship

superhero movies at the time."

Is it possible to successfully translate such a seminal piece of work in a way that not only satisfies

the fan base, but can also appeal to someone that has never read the comic?

"It's not the comic book," says Gibbons. "The 'pure' *Watchmen* is the comic book, clearly. That's how

it was conceived, that's how it was executed. This is a translation of it, but I think it's a very, very faithful translation."

So, if you are familiar with the source material, then you can



Billy Crudup as Dr. Manhattan

Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

an intelligent movie that is every bit as idealistic sociopath vigilante. His performance is at the core of the story and much of what the audience experiences is through his character.

"I think it's literally kind of affected the way I see the world," Haley says of his performance. "I'm a little bit more cynical."

Of course, this being the digital age and all, you can expect a DVD that will try and outdo the theatrical release.

"You have to always put up the best version of the movie on the screen," says producer Deborah Snyder. "I do have to say that the three hour director's cut version gives you that much more. A little bit more story, a little bit more development, a little bit more of the violence, a little bit more of everything." ■

Adding to the dramatic heft of the film, Oscar-nominated Jackie Earle Haley (*Little Children*) plays

the character Rorschach, an idealistic sociopath vigilante. His performance is at the core of the story and much of what the audience experiences is through his character.

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Watchmen releases in theaters March 6.



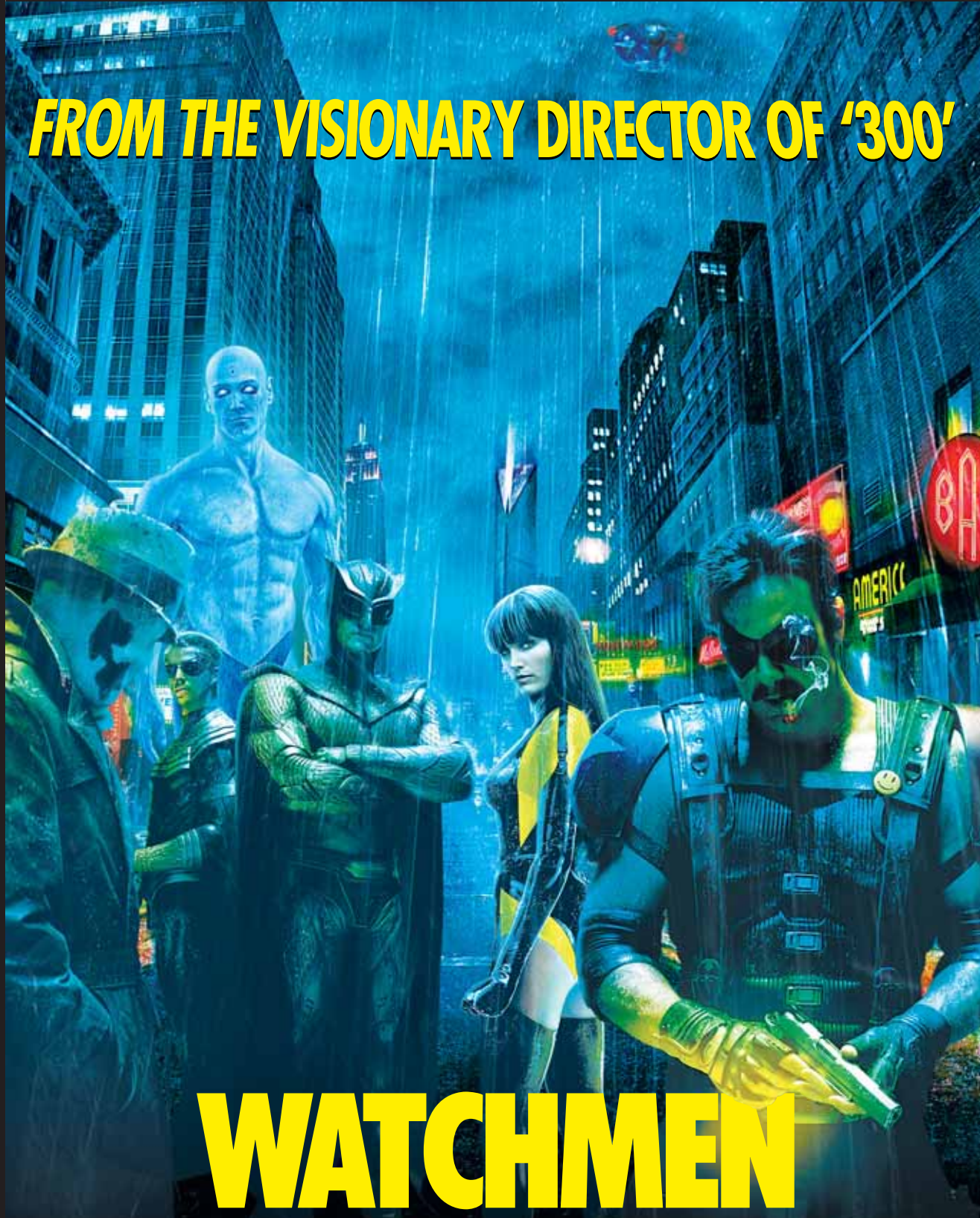
The Comedian (Jeffrey Dean Morgan) and the original Silk Spectre (Carla Gugino), members of the Minutemen.

Courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

campus CIRCLE MEDIA Asks You:

WHO WATCHES THE WATCHMEN?

FROM THE VISIONARY DIRECTOR OF '300'



WATCHMEN

Enter For A
Chance For You
And A Guest
To See

WATCHMEN

WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 4
7:30 PM
Los Angeles

Campuscircle.com/screening/WatchmenLA

WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 4
7:30 PM
Orange County

Campuscircle.com/screening/WatchmenOC

Also,

Register To Win A
WATCHMEN
Prize Pack At

Campuscircle.com/sweeps/Watchmen

No purchase necessary. While supplies last. No phone calls, please. Late, misdirected or incomplete entries will be invalid. Theater is overbooked to ensure capacity. Please arrive early. Ticket does not guarantee admission. All seating is first-come, first-served. Employees of Warner Bros. Pictures, Campus Circle and their affiliated agencies are not eligible.

Music From The Motion Picture
WATCHMEN
Soundtracks in Stores
03.03.09
watchmenmusic.com
Soundtrack and Score Albums on
Warner Sunset/Reprise
Records

WARNER BROS. PICTURES AND PARAMOUNT PICTURES PRESENT
IN ASSOCIATION WITH LEGENDARY PICTURES A LAWRENCE GORDON/LLOYD LEVIN PRODUCTION A ZACK SNYDER FILM "WATCHMEN" MALIN AKERMAN
BILLY CRUDUP MATTHEW GOODE CARLA GUGINO JACKIE EARLE HALEY JEFFREY DEAN MORGAN PATRICK WILSON MUSIC BY TYLER BATES
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS HERBERT W. GAINS THOMAS TULL BASED ON THE GRAPHIC NOVEL BY DAVE GIBBONS AND PUBLISHED BY DC COMICS
SCREENPLAY BY DAVID HAYTER AND ALEX TSE PRODUCED BY LAWRENCE GORDON LLOYD LEVIN DEBORAH SNYDER DIRECTED BY ZACK SNYDER

R RESTRICTED
UNDER 17 REQUIRES ACCOMPANYING
PARENT OR ADULT GUARDIAN
STRONG GRAPHIC VIOLENCE,
SEXUALITY, NUDITY AND LANGUAGE



WWW.WATCHMENMOVIE.COM

TM & © DC COMICS

WATCHMEN OPENS IN THEATERS AND IMAX® FRIDAY 03.06.09

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essential **l.a.** | BY ERICA CARTER**SWEET 9**

7361 1/2 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood

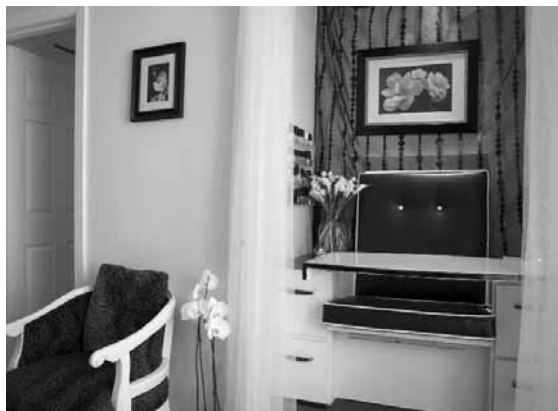
ATTENTION, HOLLYWOOD: I'VE found an oasis in the middle of the chaos. I know, there are plenty of places that lay privy to that claim, but Sweet 9 Day Spa & Tea Room is a major contender.

Located off of the Melrose Avenue shopping district, this boutique is not your run-of-the-mill salon. Upon entrance, Sweet 9 has the appearance of an East Village railroad apartment on the second floor with hardwood floors and natural lighting from perfectly placed windows.

The waiting room is actually a lounge area where you can relax, use the complimentary Wi-Fi and sip tea served from the adjacent tearoom. Dawn Reid, the warm and friendly owner, personally picks the natural teas once a week to ensure the utmost freshness.

In the unsuspecting back of the salon lies a true gem, a day spa with eco-friendly products for massages, manicures and pedicures. The spa is surprisingly serene and private, something that is hard to find at some of the top spas. It'll be rare that you share the spa with more than one guest. The day spa offers 60-minute facials starting at \$85, and a 90-minute massage doesn't break the bank at \$120.

For your hair, Sweet 9 mainly uses Redken,



one of the nation's top lines especially for color. Prices are reasonable, starting at \$60 for women's haircuts and basic all over color at \$85.

Reid specializes in fashion-forward razor cutting, so make sure to speak with her if that's what you're searching for.

Though I reside on the Westside, I would definitely make a trip back to Sweet 9. Not only do you feel like you're in an exclusive environment, it's such a soothing atmosphere, making it truly a one-stop shop for all of your beauty needs. ■

For more information, call (323) 655-1196 or visit sweet9.com.

door service | BY POLITES

XANAX, DO YOU...?**Part Two**

IT'S 12:34 A.M. IN HOLLYWOOD.

"You don't have any Xanax, do you?" Glitter Girl asks.

"No, I said, 'Xanadu.' It's an '80s movie. You should watch it."

"Can I watch it on Xanax? That would be sweet!"

"I imagine you could, but it wouldn't be as badical," I replied.

There are words I make up nightly at the door. Little experiments I do often to see if hipsters even take time out of their busy-being-a-hipster schedules and predictable words and phrases to notice my made up slang.

VHSs (Very Hopeful Scenesters) assume the words I make up are the NOW and are what they're supposed to use because they, like my words, are SUPPOSED TO BE cool and will later appropriate my fake slang.

Tonight my word "badical" is an example of one of these words. It's totally badass and radical put together, and OMG - it's sweet!

"Sweet. Xanadu. I'll have to check it out ... Do you have any Xanax?" she eagerly asks as if she had been on a resuscitator for the past few sentences and just brought back to life, a life that could only continue to go on with assistance from a wonder drug.

At that moment I felt the same way; tired,



needing something to get me through the rest of the night, or at least this tired conversation.

"No, I don't have a prescription for that," I say with a feigned look on my face.

"My friend does. It's sooooo sweet," she replies, fully unaware that my last reply was attempting to use a little bit of real sourness to balance out, or even cancel out, her artificial sweetness that was cute earlier ... for about four seconds.

In four more seconds Androgynous Boy whisks her through the door as she tries to grab my hand leaving a little glitter on the counter.

"Badical..." ■

caught around campus

inner circle

WHAT ARE YOUR SPRING BREAK PLANS?

PHOTOS BY RUDY SANCHEZ



ANA CECILIA SANCHEZ
(Pasadena City College):

"With today's tough economy, vacation is not an option. I plan to pick up some extra hours at work."



JOHN SINATRA
(Los Angeles Trade Tech):

"Can we say drinking games?! I plan to play every game possible."



WENDY MCCOLLM (USC):

"I'm going to shoot funny videos for my YouTube channel."

music

cd reviews

MAKING THE GRADE:

- A EXCEPTIONAL
 B WORTHWHILE
 C MEDIOCRE
 D SAVE YOUR MONEY
 F WILL BE ON HELL'S JUKEBOX



The Diagonals

Valley of the Cyclops
 (Monofonus Press)

This Austin, Texas garage-psych rock quintet has a time capsule sound that melds Thirteenth Floor Elevators-styled mid-'60s garage rock, a glib '90s rock stance and lyrics about LSD, jealousy, getting drunk, casual sex and other midnight revelries.

The Seeds-like "Drone of the Stone" and "Neil Diamond Blues" are well-versed, consciously derivative nuggets with deadpan vocals and classic fuzz guitars straight out of someone's basement circa 1966. The Hawkwind-esque title track boasts a medicated recital and a galloping guitar drone worthy of the Brian Jonestown Massacre. The dark rumination "Summer in the Shadows" is another drone-rock missive that is either three minutes too long or ends too soon, depending on whether you prefer brevity or anesthetized epics. Brisk "Space Bakin'" kindled by a guitar/organ inclination, is actually a bustling UFO tale about absent friends.

Despite the sometimes-loopy lyrics, the Diagonals more often than not persevere, thanks to the fivesome's penchant for keen melodies and no-nonsense six-string runs.

Grade: B

—Doug Simpson

Valley of the Cyclops is currently available.

Sara Lov

The Young Eyes EP
 (Nettwerk)

Many listeners will find the sound of this EP quite familiar since it does not vary greatly in tone from Lov's work with Devics, her long-running partnership with Dustin

music 101 | artist feature

BOOZOO BAJOU

"A Present From The Past
 Wrapped In Future Sounds"

BY RICHARD CASTAÑEDA

WHEN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA doesn't inspire cursing from its residents and state legislature over its economic woes, it provides musicians with the musings necessary to make timeless music.

When Florian Seyberth and Peter Heider of the German DJ duo Boozoo Bajou began writing what eventually became *Grains*, they decided to immerse themselves in what they loved most: the laidback culture California is well-known for.

Seyberth and Heider refined their vision and focused on the 1970s when America struggled to be at peace. They channeled the easy-going nature of the hippie counterculture movement and created the nine tracks, which comprise their newest release, *Grains*.

Although Los Angeles' famous street, Laurel Canyon Boulevard inspired a majority of this album, it has the vibe of painting a mental picture of a soothing sunset at the beach on a warm summer day with its jazzy compositions layered on top of its loose beats. Songs vary from

instrumentals to tripped-out vocal odysseys through relaxing beats that beg for repeat listens.

British singer-songwriter Rumer guests on two tracks, "Same Sun" and "Messengers." The addition of her voice creates a vacuum of interest that immediately sucks the listener into the song. This is by no means the type of album to listen to in the car, as its relaxing nature might cause an accident.

Boozoo Bajou's collaboration with Rumer is their first, and as Seyberth hints, hopefully not their last.

"We look forward to making a whole album with her, under her name possibly," Seyberth says. "I would definitely love to work with her more."

Although they originally hail from Nuremberg, Boozoo Bajou is seen as more of an underdog in their hometown than they are abroad.

The world got to know Boozoo Bajou's name in 1998 with their breakthrough single "Night Over

Manaus." The song was the first tune Seyberth and Heider worked on together. Sensing that what they touched turned to gold, they followed up the collaboration with their first and second albums, 2001's *Satta*, 2005's *Dust My Broom* and two *Juke Joint* mix compilations.

Now, a decade since their inception, Boozoo Bajou are determined to reinvent themselves with each subsequent release to remain as fresh as the beats they deliver on *Grains*.

"Progression matters," Seyberth says. "As long as I like it and it's different, it's good."

The maturity of a band is inevitable, unless said band desires stagnation. Such is not the case for Boozoo Bajou.

"We are more open to melody and songwriting now," Seyberth says. "Before we were focused on track."

In order to achieve variety, Boozoo Bajou employed the folk experiences they had at the UK's Green Man Festival in 2008 along with the stylings of Neil Young, Jackson Browne and Joni Mitchell interspersed throughout their electronic soundscapes. Joining the forces of folk and electronic might seem like an odd pairing at first, but after listening to "Tonschraube," "Same Sun" or "Fuersattel," whatever red flag was raised should be immediately withdrawn.

Boozoo Bajou's success in their marriage of old and new is possible because it doesn't come across as pretentious. Strangely, it blares out of a pair of speakers as organically as any



Peter Heider and Florian Seyberth of Boozoo Bajou

other album composed with live instruments.

Another contributing factor to *Grains*' success is plain ol' curiosity. Seyberth admits his curiosity allowed him to find the right type of beats to convey his vision of cool.

"We just did what we wanted to do personally and music-wise," he says.

Boozoo Bajou's evolution relies heavily on their eclectic identity and spontaneity. Without any outside interference, *Grains* is the representation of what Boozoo Bajou has become. ■

Grains will be available March 3. For more information, visit boozoo bajou.com.

live show | review

Hip Hop 101

Feb. 21 @ The L.A. Sports Arena

Decked out with graffiti displays, the music and arts festival was set up to be a learning experience for all ages. It was a multifaceted, multimedia experience designed to showcase all aspects of the hip-hop culture, including musicianship, dance and art.

The festivities of the night got off to an amazing start as Janelle Monae ripped up the stage with an incredible performance parallel to the intensity of a young James Brown. Monae performed fan favorites such as "Sincerely, Jane," as well as a show stopping performance of "Many Moons," in which she jumped into the

crowd and sprayed water over the media pit and front row – normal for a Monae performance.

Dance battles in between sets hosted by *Stomp the Yard* star Columbus Short brought the crowd into the dance facet of the hip-hop world. The competition displayed all genres of hip-hop dance including krumping and break dancing. Winners of the dance competition were given a scholarship by the festival.

Common's arrival to the stage served as an "Announcement" that real hip-hop was indeed in the building. Common's performance brought the intensity back up as he performed classics from his catalog such as "I

Used to Love H.E.R." and songs off his latest release, *Universal Mind Control*: "Sex 4 Suga" and "Punch Drunk Love." Common ended his set in B-boy fashion as he uprocked and holla'd to his hit "Universal Mind Control."

Ludacris was the last professor of the evening to hit the stage.

"With Hip Hop 101, I'm just trying to put people in the same mindset of what I feel real hip-hop is," said Luda in regards to what fans could expect from his performance.

Accompanied by Lil' Fate, I-20 and Shawnna, Luda took the audience on a journey through the roots of his beginnings with "Growing Pains," "Move Bitch" and "Area Codes." Before he left the stage, Luda shared "One More Drink" with the legal alcoholics of the audience and showed



Ludacris took the audience on a journey through the roots of his beginnings.

his appreciation for California's fine "greenery" with "Blueberry Yum Yum."

The hectic work behind the scenes and by the performers on stage left the patrons of the Hip-Hop 101 festival satisfied and with a greater appreciation for hip-hop culture.

—J. Poakwa



fragility. And that's the name of the game here; *The Young Eyes EP* literally drips with melancholia and few do it better than Lov.

The singer's sadness is palpable on originals "Seasoned Eyes Were Beaming" and "Why Can't I Be?" but her take on the Arcade Fire's "My Body is a Cage" is so taut that you

feel like moving out of the way because this girl's going to explode. Lov does allow herself one lighthearted moment though with a bouncy version of Beck's "Timebomb."

Grade: B

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17 >>

music report | BY KEVIN WIERZBICKI

Limp Bizkit Reunites

After an eight year hiatus caused by bad blood between group members, Limp Bizkit has decided to get back together. The reformed Bizkit will feature all of the original members: Fred Durst, Wes Borland, Sam Rivers, John Otto and DJ Lethal.

Durst and Borland issued a joint statement saying, "We decided we were more disgusted and bored with the state of heavy popular music than we were with each other. Regardless of where our separate paths have taken us, we recognize there is a powerful and unique energy with this particular group of people we have not found anywhere else. This is why Limp Bizkit is back."

First up for the band is a tour of Europe including eastern European nations like Russia, Ukraine and the Baltic countries. After that the band will hit the studio and begin work on a new album. Limp Bizkit has sold over 33 million albums worldwide so far.



Alternate Routes - *A Sucker's Dream*

century. Each of the contemporary artists got to pick the song they reinterpret for *Covered: A Revolution in Sound*, and there are some interesting choices.

The Flaming Lips chose Madonna's "Borderline," the Black Keys take on Captain Beefheart's "Her Eyes are a Blue Million Miles" and comic actor Adam Sandler gives Neil Young's "Like a Hurricane" a try. Other artists participating include Mastodon, Michelle Branch, James Otto, the Used, Avenged Sevenfold, Disturbed, Against Me!, Missy Higgins and Taking Back Sunday.

Metallica Goes Digital for Box Set

The entire official Metallica discography - 163 tracks - is being released as a digital-only "box set" under the title *The Complete Metallica*. The set includes all nine of the band's studio albums, the double live album *S&M*, the double album of covers *Garage, Inc.*, the *Some Kind of Monster* EP, the *Live from Live Earth* EP and "I Disappear" from the *Mission: Impossible II* soundtrack. Topping it all off will be eight bonus live tracks including "One," "Creeping Death," "Battery" and "For Whom the Bell Tolls."

This is a festive time for Metallica; they've just won two Grammy awards, they're about to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and they're the stars of the upcoming Activision video game "Guitar Hero Metallica." *The Complete Metallica* will be an iTunes exclusive beginning March 31 and drop at other digital retailers April 28.

A Sucker's Dream

The just-released new album from the Alternate Routes is called

Songs to Hit the Road With

- 1) The Doors - "Moonlight Drive"
- 2) Johnny Cash - "Wide Open Road"
- 3) Bob Dylan - "Gotta Travel On"
- 4) Lynyrd Skynyrd - "Travelin' Man"
- 5) U2 - "Where the Streets Have No Name"
- 6) Led Zeppelin - "Ramble On"
- 7) The Beatles - "The Long and Winding Road"
- 8) Bruce Springsteen - "Born to Run"
- 9) The B-52s - "Roam"
- 10) Red Hot Chili Peppers - "Road Trippin'"

—Doug Simpson

A Sucker's Dream, but that doesn't mean that the roots rockers (routes rockers?) spend the album moaning. Actually the recurring themes of *A Sucker's Dream* are hopeful, and guitarist Eric Donnelly explains where the title came from.

"Every night we push ourselves to take our show to a new level," says Donnelly. That's what keeps us going - knowing that the next thing is gonna be the great thing - the next album, the next big gig. A sucker's dream!"

The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus

Lonely Road
(Virgin)

This 11-track CD offers listeners a combination of hope and despair. On one track, Ronnie Winter et al. scream about losing control, in another they still "Believe" "that there is more love than hate/there's more heart than ache."

Winter's soft and musical voice, which in some cases sounds like that of Placebo singer Brian Molko, and the band's general sense of harmony have the ability to mask the grimness of the lyrics with their melody. The listener gets lost in the music of "You Better Pray," "Pleads and Postcards" and "Step Right Up."

Grade: B

—Farnaz Youshei

Lonely Road is currently available.

Covered: *A Revolution in Sound*

As part of the 50th anniversary celebration of Warner Bros. Records, the label will release an eclectic compilation featuring current Warner artists performing cover versions of classic recordings associated with the label's artists from the past half-

Release dates are a bit confusing; Amazon will have a two-week exclusive on both digital and CD formats beginning March 10 then the digital version will be released to other online service providers March 24. The CD version of *Covered* hits retail stores April 7.

staff pick

dead prez

Feb. 27 @ Keyclub

The revolutionary rap duo is back promoting the release of

its third album, *Information Age*. After over a decade of pushing change on wax, you have to believe they're (just a little) happy to see Obama in charge. Why not share in the celebration with M-1 and stic.man? 8 p.m.

music dvd | reviews

Rush

Snakes & Arrows Live
(Zoe Vision/Anthem)

This triple-DVD set of Rush playing live offers pretty much anything a fan could want from a concert film. The music is meticulously well played, and there is a little something for everyone among the 31 songs performed.

As the title suggests this material was filmed during the tour for the *Snakes & Arrows* release, and the bulk of that album is performed including Alex Lifeson's acoustic guitar instrumental, "Hope." But fans who've been there since the beginning will hear a bevy of the band's radio staples, including "Limelight," "Freewill" and "Subdivisions."

The band is in excellent form even

though singer Geddy Lee understandably can't send his voice soaring into the high notes like he used to. Of course, drummer Neil Peart takes a solo, giving his massive kit a workout for about seven minutes.

A three-song encore is preceded by a trifecta of set-closing biggies; "Distant Early Warning," "The Spirit of Radio" and "Tom Sawyer."

A few quirky shorts are included, some animated and others featuring band members.

The main concert was filmed in Holland, but also included are four songs shot on the U.S. leg of the tour including "Ghost of a Chance" from *Roll the Bones*, which is seen on film for the first time ever.

Grade: A

—Kevin Wierzbicki

Snakes & Arrows Live is currently available.

Various Artists

Love Train - The Sound of Philadelphia Live in Concert
(P.I.R./Legacy)

Last year Legacy released the CD version of *Love Train*, an amazing four-disc box set packed with vintage Philly soul cuts.

This concert, filmed in 2008, is a very nice add-on for anyone who bought the box or for those who cherish hits like the Stylistics' "I'm Stone in Love with You" or "La-La Means I Love You" by the Delfonics. Both of those songs are performed here, as are another 10 favorites by artists like Jerry Butler ("Never Gonna Give You Up") and the Soul Survivors ("Expressway to Your Heart").

All of these artists are, of course, way up there in age and many of these songs therefore are not performed by the original artist or lineup; Harold Melvin is dead, but his Blue Notes check in with "Wake Up Everybody" and "The Love I Lost," while Bunny Sigler takes over for Billy Paul on "Me & Mrs. Jones" and G.C. Cameron, former member of the Spinners, handles that group's "The Rubberband Man."

The concert is done "revue" style with the Sound of Philadelphia Orchestra and vocal group the Three Degrees backing up each performance, and the O'Jays close out the show with a moving version of "People Get Ready/Love Train."

Grade: B

—Kevin Wierzbicki

Love Train is currently available.

—Kevin Wierzbicki
The Young Eyes EP is currently available.

O'death

Broken Hymns, Limbs and Skin
(Kemado)

Can you imagine Primus gone hillbilly? Not unlike Primus singer

Les Claypool, O'death frontman Greg Jamie has a squirrely voice that makes him sound like he's one step away from the insane asylum at any given moment. And therein lays the O'death charm.

The band makes their music with a lineup of instruments fit for a bluegrass band but they don't play

bluegrass; instead the fiddle, acoustic guitar and banjo stomp, strut and whoop up a quirky, ADD-addled symphony that heightens Jamie's about-to-crack persona. O'death's hopped-up folk tunes are way beyond rural moonshine-and-weed wackiness; this stuff conjures images far scarier than anything

that happened in the movie *Deliverance*.

Grade: A

—Kevin Wierzbicki

Broken Hymns, Limbs and Skin is currently available.

Roger Sanchez

Renaissance 3D
(Renaissance Dance)

Renaissance is at it again with a new three-disc set from their *Renaissance 3D* series, this time bringing in Roger Sanchez to mix things up. *Home (Disc 3)* of the mix is an eclectic collection of artists and groups faultlessly compiled.

Sanchez calmly launches the assortment of tracks with the Balearic grooves of Afterlife and Massive Attack's "Weather Storm" then switches things up to the chilled dub styles of Findlay Quaye and Dawn Penn. The body of the mix consists of '80s funk, including the Tom Tom Club's classic "Genius of Love" and Patrice Rushen's "Forget Me Nots."

The album concludes with Mylo's brilliant remix of Sia's "Breath Me," as well as Daft Punk's "Fresh" and cuts by Klaxons and Ben Watt. From start to finish *Home (Disc 3)* is a non-stop voyage through genres and time - the perfect blend of the unordinary, especially from Sanchez.

Grade: A

—Ryan McWhorter

Renaissance 3D is currently available.

CONTINUED >

inner circle | jet setter | travel

SEDONA

Red Rock Country

BY WALLACE ALFRED WYSS

THE BEAUTY OF SEDONA IS THAT THE gorgeous scenery surrounds you on all sides, and it costs you nothing. A hotel in Sedona, however, is going to set you back anywhere from \$100 up. Our hotel, the Sedona Real (95 Arroyo Drive) was \$160/night for a suite, which included a free continental breakfast.

Sedona has sun 300 days a year and, having already been there in the summer when it can be a bit uncomfortable at 90 degrees, it's best not to go during those months.

The highlight of our trip was the Pink Jeep Tour (pinkjeep.com), which I would highly recommend especially if you have never been off road. The Jeeps are long wheelbase Wranglers, which will hold at least six people and are driven up and down

exceedingly narrow trails that wind around the base of some of the mesas.

The drivers have traversed these routes thousands of times and know just when it's safe to "thrill" their tourist passengers by powering up a hill at a 45-degree angle. At least three times I was separated from the seat – at the same time as my hat separated from my head!

We also toured the art galleries, mostly in what's called the Gallery District, along Highway 179. First we stopped by the large Exposure Gallery (561 AZ-Route 179), which had some great sculptures, and then checked out several in Tlaquepaque, an arts district that is designed to look like a Spanish village with art – both realistic and abstract.

You can eat most places in town for about \$14 for an entrée. And the hiking trails abound – I've never been in a town that offers more beauty on the trail.

You really can't mention Arizona without at least thinking of Indian silver and turquoise jewelry. We shopped in Oak Creek. The jewelry was spectacular, but so were the prices! Still, native jewelry makes great gifts – for yourself, too. ■



Chapel On Rock in Sedona



The cemetery at Xcaret

MY OH MAYA!

Mexico's "Other" Riviera

BY KEVIN WIERZBICKI

VACATIONERS HAVE LONG FLOCKED to the Mexican Riviera, a portion of the country's Pacific coastline that includes the resort cities of Mazatlán, Puerto Vallarta and Acapulco. But Mexico hosts another seaside playground on its eastern shore; an 80 mile-long stretch of sparkling Caribbean sand known as the Riviera Maya.

The Riviera Maya is the perfect place to go to enjoy the sea and that famous Mexican sunshine, but it is also a place where you can see some very unique things like the well-preserved ruins of the pre-Columbian Mayan city of Tulum.

Most visits to the Riviera Maya begin in the bustling party city of Cancún, and that's where I kicked off my adventure. The Riviera Maya officially begins a few miles south of the Cancún airport, and there's a nicely maintained highway that runs parallel to the shoreline that makes it easy to get to any attraction.

I started with a shuttle ride (Car rentals are available too.) to my headquarters for the trip, the Blue Bay Grand Esmeralda Resort on the outskirts of Playa del Carmen. The Blue Bay is an all-inclusive resort, so the cost of eating at any of their restaurants is already included in your lodging fee as is the cost of any and all adult beverages you may wish to consume.

The Blue Bay has a great beach and all the other activities you'd expect from a fine resort; you wouldn't even have to leave the grounds if you didn't want to. But the resort is just a short ride away from Playa del Carmen.

Playa del Carmen is a good-sized city but it's very easy to find the 5th Avenue shopping district, and that's the beginning of where the action is! Fifth Avenue is the city's touristy area where dozens of shops are filled with Mexican arts and crafts, souvenirs of every sort and great places to relax with a *cerveza* or two. If you want to indulge in nightlife you'll find it up and down Playa's 12th Street (It intersects with 5th Ave.) where clubs like



The ruins at Tulum in the Riviera Maya

the Blue Parrot, Diablito Cha Cha Cha and the rooftop bar at Los Danzantes keep things going deep into the night.

Not far from the nightclub scene is the most famous stretch of sand in Playa del Carmen: Mamas Beach. The always-happening Mamas Beach Club is located right on the beach, and it's a place for more casual partying any time of day.

Playa del Carmen is centrally located on the Riviera Maya and you can easily daytrip to do things like snorkel, visit the ruins at Tulum or visit the Mayan theme park called Xcaret. Located amid a lush jungle setting, Xcaret (pronounced ISH-kuh-ret) is a place where you can learn all about Mayan culture in an interactive way. Stroll through colorful memorials at the hillside cemetery, participate in a Mayan spiritual cleansing ceremony or swim with dolphins.

Hiking paths, jaguar viewing, wild parrots, horse shows, mariachis, live cultural performances and a great Mexican food buffet are just a few of the things that'll keep you busy – there's even a wine cellar! To fully enjoy Xcaret, plan on spending the whole day there. ■

For more information, visit rivieramaya.com.

DODGERS '09

SPRING TRAINING

Warm Up in Glendale, Ariz.

BY DOV RUDNICK

LISTEN UP, DODGERS FANS. IT'S BEEN a long winter. Maybe last season didn't meet your highest and most precious hopes. Whatever, it's time to move on. Springtime is right on deck. It's time to look to the future.

This coming Sunday the Dodgers will be playing their first exhibition game at their new spring training facility at Camelback Ranch in Glendale, Ariz. If you're a true blue Dodger fan, the best way to show your support is take a little road trip. That's correct, I am proposing we all drive out to Arizona and give the boys some love.

Just the other day I was perusing the Dodgers Web site, and there was footage of catcher Russell Martin talking to the press. He is all positivity, looking forward to playing and winning, yada, yada, yada.

But then he says, "We're only missing a few more fans."

It nearly broke my heart. The poor guy puts it all on the line, getting banged and bruised up every year and coming back for more. It seems to me the least we could do is drive out to Glendale and give a holler.

From the pictures I've seen, the new training facilities look spectacular. Complete with 13 fields, walking trails, two ponds and a lake with fish (so I hear). The best part is that it's free to stroll around the grounds – although you probably need a permit to fish. Tickets to the games are being sold for as low as eight dollars.

The exciting thing about this ball club is that they are virtually the same squad that ran away with the division last year. James Loney, Matt Kemp, Andre Ethier, Casey Blake and Juan Pierre are probably taking practice swings as you read this. Even Rafael Furcal is healthy and ready to start at shortstop.

While the lineup looks promising, the big question remains regarding the pitching staff. Supposedly Jason Schmidt is feeling good and ready to start. The acquisition of Randy Wolf could prove just the ticket. Personally, I have my heart set on a comeback for Jeff Weaver, who has as much passion as any pitcher in baseball.

I can't think of a better way to pass spring break than to see them all up close in action. And for a mere seven-hour drive (with traffic), who can resist? ■

For more information, visit visitglendale.com or camelbackranchbaseball.com.



Camelback Ranch

jet setter | travel

MAUI

A Holiday in Paradise

BY LAUREN BRODSKY

CRAVING TO GET AWAY FROM EVERYTHING to a place where work and worries simply don't exist? Well say "aloha" to the lovely island of Maui in Hawaii! A short six to seven hour flight from Los Angeles and you'll feel right at home on the friendly island where the sun always shines.

For the perfect vacation in Maui, staying at one of the five-star resorts on the famed Ka'anapali Beach is a must. Whether you're traveling with your significant other or your entire extended family, the hotels situated just steps from the beach are definitely ideal.

Choose from the Westin, Hyatt, Sheraton or Marriott, which all offer numerous pools, water slides, massages and daily activities to keep everyone entertained. The Hyatt is home to an assortment of warm weather penguins, and the Westin has a plethora of fish and flamingos swimming in their ponds.

Just walk down the beach and you can learn how to surf on the perfect small waves through one of Maui's many surfing schools. If surfing seems a bit intense for you, snorkeling on Ka'anapali is also an excellent way to spend a few hours in the ocean with your family and friends.

When you get hungry, each hotel has several restaurants and snack bars on their property to choose from, which are not

Front Street, which has everything from restaurants like the Kobe Steakhouse (136 Dickenson St.) and Cheeseburger in Paradise (811 Front St.) to nightclubs and Irish pubs that the locals frequent.

Only a short 10-minute ride from the beach, one night in the town of Lahaina is also a must. If you don't mind early bird dining, Lulu's restaurant in the Lahaina Cannery Mall (1221 Honoapiilani Hwy.) is



Immerse yourself in the beautiful waterfalls of Maui.

one of Maui's new best-kept secrets. Lulu's has an extensive scenic bar and dining area, and if you are seated before 6 p.m. any day of the week all of your food is 50 percent off!

If you're the type who eventually gets bored of lying on the beach and crave adventure, excursions are the best way to keep active in Maui. From scuba diving to whale watching, the opportunities are endless. But if you talk to any local in Maui, they will tell you that the one activity you can't miss is the road trip to Hana.

If you have a free day sometime during your trip, look into renting a car, grabbing a map and spending the day driving the road to beautiful Hana. Choose your stops along the way and enjoy the natural beauty, amazing waterfalls and breathtaking landscape of the untouched

town. It is recommended to start your day early around 6 a.m. so you can get to as many stops as possible.

Along the way, you have the opportunity to see black, red and white sand beaches, go surfing, play in waterfalls and try delicious homemade banana bread. Stop at Twin Falls, which is the first waterfall on the road to Hana. After about a mile hike in the rainforest, you come to a gigantic waterfall and natural pool where you can swim.

The other must-see is the Seven Sacred Pools that are a 10-mile drive past Hana. There is a series of lovely waterfalls as well as the Pipiwai Trail, which is considered one of the best hikes on Maui. ■



Lauren Brodsky

exclusive to hotel guests only. If you're on a smaller budget, Whalers Village (2435 Kaanapali Pkwy, H6, Lahaina) is a short walk from most of the resorts and offers all types of food and less expensive dining choices as well as boutiques to shop in.

After a long day of relaxing in the sun, happy hour beside the palm trees overlooking the gorgeous sunset and ocean is a great way to start your night. For dinner, there are the restaurants at the resorts or the option of taking a free shuttle into town.

Often referred to as the "jewel in the crown of Maui," the town of Lahaina is a spot that more than two million people in Maui visit annually. The main drag of this historic town is

inner circle

CALIFORNIA'S CENTRAL COAST

Irresistible Seaside Escapes

BY JESSICA KOSLOW

L.A. RESIDENTS ARE SPOILED. Surrounded by scenic beaches like Venice, Santa Monica, Malibu, etc., it's no wonder people feel like every day is spring break. But now that time off is around the corner, plan an adventure just three hours north, and you'll find a different set of breathtaking sandscapes – some unpopulated and serene, others speckled with piers and fishing boats and a bustling few with mating elephant seals, sea lions, harbor seals and views of migrating gray whales.

Begin your journey traveling north up Highway 1. Three words: gorgeous, gorgeous, gorgeous. Driving up the winding seaside road compels you to appreciate just how lucky you are to live in this natural wonderland.

Along the way, there are many places to stop and admire the vistas. One is Point Mugu in Ventura County, and another is the historic pier on Ventura Beach. Grab a basket of fish and chips and a fish taco at Pier Beach Grill all for \$10.

A convenient spot to stay while you're discovering Central Cali's beaches is the Pismo Beach – Grover Beach Holiday Inn Express (hiexpress.com). Clean, sporting a heated pool and Jacuzzi and centrally located to lots to do, it's ideal for a mini-getaway. And let me not forget to mention the free continental breakfast (with warm cinnamon rolls) and heated Otis Spunkmeyer cookies upon check-in.

Right down the road is the cozy Quarterdeck Restaurant (goodseafood.com). Steak and seafood have never tasted so good, and the atmosphere is priceless.

Avila Beach, about 10 minutes north of Pismo, is a cute and self-contained seaside city. There's Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort (sycamoresprings.com), which offer hot tubs in the middle of a woody paradise. At only \$15/per person per hour, it's a no-brainer.

A short drive around the bay is Port San Luis Pier, and if you're lucky you can see sea lions and harbor seals trying to steal fish from the boats.

Next, stop by the Avila Wine & Roasting Company (avilawineandroasting.com) to sample some local varieties. Take a walk down Avila's main oceanfront strip and dine at Custom House (oldcustomhouse.com). After, sneak through the adjoining door to Mr. Rick's (mrricks.com) for a post-dinner drink and live entertainment.

One of the must-sees in the area is San Simeon's Hearst Castle. Drive an hour north of Pismo Beach and take in the magnificence that is Hearst Castle, boasting 127 acres of gardens, terraces, pools and walkways and 165 rooms.

Built by media mogul William Randolph

Hearst, it was a playground for a who's who list of Hollywood celebs and VIPs in the 1930s. You can choose from about five tours, but Tour 1 is for first-timers. And be sure to watch the 40-minute film, *Hearst Castle, Building the Dream*, before you ascend the Enchanted Hill, which celebrated its 50th year being open to the public last June.



Explore San Simeon's Hearst Castle.

About four miles north of Hearst Castle is a not-to-miss spectacle. Northern Elephant Seals are lounging on the sand, mating and giving birth. They are truly a sight to see – and hear! If you look around for people in blue jackets, you can get the lowdown from Friends of the Elephant Seal docents.

There are so many beaches to see around Pismo, you may have to choose between the lesser of two nirvanas. Two top choices are the stretch by Morro Rock in Morro Bay, where loads of surfers catch waves all day, and the secluded spots in Montaña de Oro State Park.



Check out the waves at Morro Rock in Morro Bay.

It's also fun to stop in the many little coastal towns. We found the Sea Shanty (seashantycayucos.com) in Cayucos, which offered delicious clam chowder and a belt-busting dessert menu.

A final stop: San Luis Obispo's Madonna Inn (madonnainn.com). Each one of its 110 rooms has its own theme. Do not skip this gem! ■

For more information, visit SanLuisObispoCounty.com.

inner circle | jet setter | travel

DEATH VALLEY

Desolate Theme Park

BY ERIK HAYDEN

ALL OF A SUDDEN I FOUND MYSELF IN A THEME PARK. NEON SIGNS AND FAUX western billboards beckoned us to “Come on in!” to Furnace Creek Resort, and I couldn’t help but follow them.

After parking I walked up to a “you are here” sign. My jaw slackened as the desert that presumably was desolate housed a resort that included a fine dining restaurant, massage therapists, a poolside lounge, cocktail service and not one, but two, golf courses.



Duck into abandoned mines in Golden Canyon.

I felt cheated. A day earlier a friend and I had left for a destination we assumed was relatively untouched because it was perceived to be undesirable. The destination was Death Valley.

The assumption was that it would be dry and arid, desolate and stark, and empty. Instead we were greeted with busloads of bewildered Asian tourists and senior discounts in the 49er Café. Tired, we decided to camp in the Furnace Creek Resort and then

leave disappointed the next day.

When we woke up the next morning everything had changed. The billowy, rain-filled clouds of the previous night had receded leaving stark, clean air and brightened blue sky.

The scope of the valley, which we had missed during our night drive, was incredible. The resort, which looked huge and garish draped in nighttime neon, now seemed like a mole on the vast landscape. After pouring over a map, the Golden Canyon trails sounded like a logical place to start.

For the next five days we hiked, backpacked and camped at all edges of the park. I expected to find an endless amount of dusty desert trails but was surprised by a diverse and unexpected landscape.

We explored Darwin Falls, a concealed waterfall in a wooded area, quickly ducked into numerous abandoned mines in the Golden Canyon, slid down sand dunes that seemed to belong in the Sahara, wandered around the crusty salt flats of Badwater and camped on any one of numerous dirt roads that lead to snow-capped mountain ranges that bracket the valley. If this description sounds like the place is some sort of fantastic naturalist theme park – it is.

It’s crucial to avoid getting suckered into the inevitable tourist traps though. We assumed any place given the title Hell’s Gate was worth exploring. It ended up being a paved road to a lookout that wasn’t nearly as impressive as it sounded.

By the same token a recluse’s mansion, Scotty’s Castle, was equally unimpressive and reminded me of a mini-Hearst Castle clogged with tourists.

The beauty and allure of Death Valley is its simplicity. Miles of empty space and salt flats are punctuated by wind swept sand dunes and rocky hills. Days can be filled with long excursions of hiking craggy, shingly buttes, impressively low, sandy valleys (200-feet below sea level) and snow sprinkled mountains.

The weather, which averages 125 degrees in the summer (Badwater salt flats may reach 200 degrees), is accommodating and temperate during the winter months. The valley has the aura of a cooled stove – as if nature’s architecture was distorted and scarred during the brutal summer sun and warped into an unnatural position. This only added to the eerie, alien and exciting feel of the expansive country. ■

For more information, visit deathvalley.com.



Find the concealed Darwin Falls.



Drink a lazy Sunday Hot Toddy at the Tamarack Lodge.

MAMMOTH MOUNTAIN

California’s Own Winter Wonderland

BY BOURBON WITH BRENDAN

WHAT TOP CALIFORNIAN DESTINATION IS white and green and fun all over? I’ll give you a few hints: It has four Ms, it’s named after a prehistoric beast that shares the same DNA as Mr. Snuffleupagus and has been both a main summer and winter vacation spot since I was old enough to put one foot into a ski boot and the other into a hiking boot.

Welcome to Mammoth Mountain, not only one of the most comprehensive winter ski resorts in California, boasting a voluptuous peak of 11,053 feet and an average 400 inches of snowfall a year, but also a sultry summer hideout with over a hundred mountain biking and hiking trails accessible by eye candy vista gazing gondola.

The Mammoth experience has so many aspects to it, perhaps it’s easiest to transmit its effervescent joy by way of pleasant moment montage: humming the James Bond theme song while skiing down one of the 150 trails, mouthing “swish, swish, swish” while carving fresh mogul powder on the face of chair 3 just above McCoy Station, soaking your tongue in a cold beer while your happily bruised body soaks in a hot tub in après-ski bliss at approximately 4:45 p.m., drinking a lazy Sunday Hot Toddy at the Tamarack Lodge before snowshoeing on the trails behind Twin Lakes, devouring the tastiest combination of eggs, potatoes, peppers and onions on a sizzling hot skillet at the local village eatery the Stove, being separated from the slopes by only a wall, two bindings and a few steps while staying at the Mammoth Mountain Inn, situated a mere spitting distance from the central gondola and Main Lodge.

Located approximately five hours by car or one hour by plane from the sprawling metropolis we call Los Angeles, the duality of Mammoth Mountain is one of the reasons non-Californians flock to our gold-lined shores in droves. Come for the perpetual summer sun and stay for the winter wonderland.



Swoosh down Mammoth Mountain.

In essence, Mammoth Mountain is as much California as the Eiffel Tower is Paris. So ... *Vive Mammoth Mountain!* ■

For more information, visit mammothmountain.com.

the art of love | BY LUCIA

Hi Lucia,

I am attracted to a man who works in a department store. I was standing with my back towards him when he walked up behind me and asked if I needed help.

I said yes and then turned around and WOW – there was this gorgeous guy standing there. Since it was not his department, he called for help, and we left it at that.

I was looking for an item that had to be ordered, and a few days later, I went back to order it. He again approached me and asked if I needed help. I thanked him and told him that he helped me a few days before. He suddenly seemed to remember who I was and what I was looking for that day, so we briefly chatted about that.

Five days later I went back again with a gay male friend of mine to find out if my order came in. We saw him from the distance, and he shouted something like: "You should get a job here since you are here all the time." He walked over to us, and we chatted for a few minutes.

My friend was the one who started joking around that this guy likes me. I was thinking that maybe he is just a helpful salesperson, but my friend's point was that it looked like he came over just to chat me up, because he left his department to talk to me.

The salesperson who ordered my item was not there that day so I went back to him and gave him my telephone number and asked him to give it to the other employee. At this point I

did go back to him as a reason to talk to him a bit again.

He was very helpful, professional and smiled at me a lot. I noticed that he had no wedding ring.

My item arrived a few days later, and when I went to pick it up I thanked him for his help. He introduced himself, and we shook hands.

I had his name finally, and I used it to search online to see if I could find out something. He has an account on one of those friendship sites (not a dating site). He has a few pictures up there, and it also says that he is in a relationship.

My original plan was to go back to the store and ask him out for coffee, but at this point I am not sure if that would be appropriate. I do not want to take what that Web site said as the absolute truth, but I also do not want to be in a middle of anything.

I still would like to get the opportunity to ask him out, but my dilemma is that I am debating between asking him out versus going back to the store again to see if he would ask me out. I used to work in a department store before, and I also know that it may be against their rules for an employee to ask a customer out on a date.

What do you suggest? Should I take the chance and ask him out, or should I go back to



Lucia

the store with an alibi? I also have an account on that Web site, so I could also send him a message there as well.

—K.R.

Hi K.R.,

What an exciting adventure this sounds like! You're right; he may not be able to ask you out because you're a customer.

Whenever you meet someone who is "on the job," and you are attracted to them, I suggest giving them your card and saying something like, "I really enjoyed talking to you. If you'd like to get together again, here's my number."

Smile and walk away. You don't want to put them on the spot if they were just being friendly and are not interested in anything further.

I would definitely not suggest contacting him on the Web site. He'll know you've been doing research on him, and while it may be flattering, it's also a bit creepy.

Let me know how it goes. ■

Write to Lucia at theartoflove.net.

Read an excerpt from Lucia's Lessons of Love at lessonsoflove.net.

Listen to Lucia live every Sunday at 3 p.m. PST on latalkradio.com.

Remember: Love inspires, empowers, uplifts and enlightens.

on the menu | a tast of l.a.

VENICE BEACH WINES

529 Rose Ave., Venice

BY ERICA CARTER

THERE'S A NEW KID, ER, WINE SHOP IN Venice. It's got a huge one up on the competition though. There's a kitchen attached to this one!

Make your way over to Rose Avenue and look for the spot where people are sitting out on a communal patio, and you've found Venice Beach Wines. The establishment has an unassuming feel not often found amongst wine bars and the like.

In fact, owner Oscar Hermosillo made it a point to stay true to the heart of the casual beach community. The welcoming manager, John Jenkins, will take the time to sit with you and go over wine pairings with the ambitious menu.

The excellent Charcuterie and Cheese selections include Smoked Speck (\$5.50) to Mortadella (\$4.50) and cheeses not easily found this side of Italy – double creamed Robiola and Spain's Tetilla (\$4.50). The latter was paired with a white wine, Dom. Lafourcade Savennières that balanced the floral undertones with a low tannin finish. Both meats and cheeses come with fresh cut crostini, fruit and vegetable compotes and toasted almonds.

For heartier fare, Venice Beach Wines offers pressed sandwiches like the standout spiced Lambwich (\$12), a thinly sliced hearty creation

with caramelized onions and manchego cheese. I almost forgot the accompanying salad because I was too busy sipping the fabulous pairing of Argentina's Zolo Bonarda (\$12), but the salad proved to be palate cleansing and graceful in rounding out the meal.



Not to be left out is the eatery's beer list. Hard to find brews like the 17-oz. Reutberger (\$8) and La Chouffe (\$7) are all the rage here.

All in all, it will probably take about two visits to get the hang of pairing your foods with their impressive wine list, but you can always attend a tasting. Prices for bottles range from \$10 and up. ■

For more information, call (310) 606-2529 or visit venicebeachwines.com.

curtain call

'THE TRIAL OF THE CANTONVILLE NINE'

7361 1/2 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood

BY MIKE BUZZELLI

AUTHOR AND ACTIVIST FATHER Daniel Berrigan details the events of his infamous court case in "The Trial of the Cantonville Nine."



Kim Zsche

The eponymous nine – Berrigan (Andrew E. Wheeler), his brother and fellow priest (Scott Harris) and seven

Catholic activists (Chris Schultz, Cameron Dye, Corey G. Lovett, Patti Tippo, George Ketsios, Paige Lindsey White and Ethan Kogen) – walked into the selective service office in Cantonville and burned the draft files for eligible enlisted men during the height of the Vietnam War (May, 1968).

The play explores the legal ramifications of the act of civil disobedience. Though there is some fine acting, the drama is dry. It's more of a transcript than a play.

There is a lot of heavy exposition, which seemed to be annoying the judge (Adele Robbins) as much as the audience! ■

The Ivy Substation is located at 9070 Venice Blvd., Culver City. For more information visit theactorsgang.com.

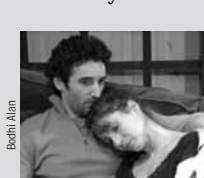
'BURN THIS'

Now-March 22

@ The Ruskin Group Theatre

BY MIKE BUZZELLI

WHEN A LONELY DANCER, ANNA (Marisa Petrero), loses her gay best friend, Robbie, in a boating accident, she strikes up an unlikely 'friendship' with his hyperactive,



Dominic Comperatore and Marisa Petrero in "Burn This"

coke-snorting brother, Pale (Dominic Comperatore), in Lanford Wilson's clever *pas de quatre*, "Burn This."

Anna is floundering in her life without Robbie. She has her roommate, Larry (Aaron Misakian), and her longtime boyfriend, Burton (Jonathan Blandino), to console her, but things heat up when she meets Pale. The two begin a dangerous liaison.

Not only is Anna cheating on Burton, she soon discovers that Pale is married with two children. She must decide between the dependable boyfriend and the volatile lover.

Wilson's drama is witty and engaging, full of sub-textual grist. John Ruskin moves the actors around fluidly under his taut direction. It's a spectacular production. ■

The Ruskin Group Theatre is located at 3000 Airport Ave., Santa Monica. For more information, visit ruskingrouptheatre.com.

inner circle | **l.a. hoopla** | nba scoop

SIZE DOES MATTER

Clippers Falter Without Their Big Men

BY TJ WEBBER

THE 13-43 CLIPPERS STARTED OFF THE SECOND HALF OF this season with two huge losses to the 31-24 Suns this week: Feb. 17 in Phoenix (100-140) and Feb. 18 at home (119-142).

Forward Zach Randolph received a two-game suspension on the 17th for getting into a violent altercation with the Suns' Louis Amundson late in the first quarter. Randolph was automatically ejected after pushing Amundson to the ground then hitting him in the face after he got to his feet.

Randolph's suspension couldn't come at a worse time for the team. With center Chris Kaman still out with a strained left arch, forward Brian Skinner suffering from a strained right Achilles and forward Marcus Camby unable to play due to an ear infection, the Clips are lacking most of their bigs.

Sunday, they suffered their third straight loss, in Portland against the 35-20 Trail Blazers. Guard Eric Gordon was the team's point leader with 21 of their 87 total points against Portland's 116.

The Clippers face the 45-12 Celtics at Staples Feb. 25 then head to Sacramento (12-45) Feb. 27 before facing the 32-22 Hornets Feb. 28 and the No. 2 in the west Spurs (37-17) March 2 at home.

On the other hand, the 46-10 LAKERS began the season's second half with four wins.

They improved their home record to 25-4 Feb. 17 against the 32-23 Hawks, and a USC student from the crowd received a standing ovation after hitting the half-court shot to win \$165,000 during the break before the fourth quarter. With Kobe Bryant putting up only 10 points, teamwork was the word of the night. Center Pau Gasol earned his third career triple-double (12 points, 13 rebounds and 10 assists), and forward Lamar Odom, who averaged 19 rebounds in the previous four games, scored 15 points and pulled down 20 rebounds on the way to the 96-83 win.

Center Chris Mihm was traded to Memphis for a future draft pick the next day, a move that added to Josh Powell's playing time that night in Golden State (20-36). The former Warrior scored 16 points and seven rebounds in 25 minutes.

Although the Lakers trailed for most of the second and third quarters, they made a 17-3 run in the fourth, sparked by two 3-pointers by Trevor Ariza. Bryant scored 30 and Gasol added 24 points and 13 rebounds in the 129-121 victory.

One of the most exciting games of the season happened Friday night against New Orleans at Staples. The Hornets were the only team to not play an overtime game this season, until this match.

Both teams were shooting so-so from the field, with the exception of Lakers forward Luke Walton, who ended up going 5-7. It was Chris Paul's offensive foul with 20.1 seconds left in the game that led up to Derek Fisher's three-pointer with 14.6 seconds to take it into OT. Bryant scored 11 of his 39 points in overtime period, leading the squad to a 115-111 victory.

Sunday against the 18-37 Timberwolves in Minnesota, Bryant surpassed Elgin Baylor as the third top scorer in Lakers history and entered the top 20 in the NBA. The team came out with a 111-108 win, but it wasn't a pretty one.

The Lakers play the Suns at Staples Feb. 26 then in Phoenix March 1. The squad faces off against the 37-19 Nuggets in Denver Feb. 27 before playing Memphis (15-40) March 3 at Staples. ■



PLAYER OF THE WEEK: PAU GASOL

Team: Lakers, No. 16; Position: Forward-Center; Years Pro: 7

Count on the Spaniard to consistently be the ninja of games: stealing rebounds, dishing out assists and making baskets.

All stats as of Feb 23.

the sports wanderer | BY PARIMAL M. ROHIT

THE ALL-USC COLUMN

Trojan Football No. 1 Again ... in Coach's Salary

Phil Jackson earns about \$6 million per year for coaching the Los Angeles Lakers. President Barack Obama earns about \$250,000 per year for leading our nation.

Fittingly, college sports are a reflection of the real world. According to a report released on Monday, USC football Head Coach Pete Carroll was the highest paid private university employee in the United States for the 2006-07 fiscal year.

According to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Carroll earned \$4.4 million in total compensation, four times more than the earnings of USC President Steven B. Sample.

Carroll is not alone in earning more than quadruple his school's president. Reportedly, Texas' Mack Brown, Florida State's Bobby Bowden and Florida's Urban Meyer also earn about four times as much as each respective school's president.

Carroll earned his paycheck in more ways than one, though. Since his hiring in 2001, USC won two national titles, seven consecutive Pac-10 Conference championships and appeared in seven consecutive BCS bowl games.

Beyond the on-field success, USC has also benefited in the revenue department during Carroll's tenure. According to reports, revenue for the school's athletic department almost doubled from \$38.6 million in Carroll's first season to more than \$76 million in

2007-08. Those figures include donations and endowments, which increased from \$13.7 million in 2001-02 to \$39 million last year.

Perhaps Carroll is in the wrong profession. He should enter politics. If he can help a university double its revenues, perhaps he can find a way to increase revenues to solve the nation's economic woes.

USC basketball loses grip on tourney invite.

The Trojans could definitely use some of Carroll's magic at Galen Center.

OK, so USC defeated the lowly Washington State Cougars last Thursday evening, defending its home court and improving to 7-6 in Pac-10 play. Entering into its contest against nationally ranked Washington on Saturday, a Trojan victory would have opened the floodgates in the battle for the conference crown.

The Huskies were a conference-best 10-4 entering the match-up. After UCLA lost earlier in the day in Westwood, the Bruins needed a Trojan victory to keep its first-place hopes alive. Oh, and USC needed a Trojan victory to keep its national tournament hopes alive.

Of course, the Trojans were anything but alive after tip-off. USC



Parimal M. Rohit

(16-10, 7-7) was outscored 14-1 in the final 5:43, losing 60-51 to the quicker and longer Huskies (20-7, 11-4). The Trojans, who lost for the fourth time in five games, shot 38 percent in the contest.

USC could certainly use a little help inside after Washington junior forward Quincy Pondexter burned the Trojan frontcourt for 22 points on 10-of-13 shooting.

Sidney stays in Los Angeles.

Perhaps that much-needed help in the frontcourt is just around the corner.

Highly touted prep basketball star Renardo Sidney announced his intentions to play at USC next season. The 6-foot 11-inch high school senior at L.A. Fairfax is projected to be an NBA lottery pick once he decides to go pro.

The announcement was made in an elaborate ceremony at the Fairfax basketball gym, in front of more than 100 friends and family members.

Sidney is the second blue-chip recruit to commit to USC since 2006, when then-prep star and current NBA rookie O.J. Mayo spurned many national programs to play just south of downtown Los Angeles.

This season, Sidney earned McDonald's All-American honors while averaging 24 points and 10.3 rebounds for Fairfax.

While Sidney made his announcement on Sunday, he cannot sign his letter of intent until April 8. ■



Renardo Sidney sets his sights on USC.

galaxy fyi | BY MARVIN G. VASQUEZ

BECKHAM NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE

ENGLISH SOCCER SUPERSTAR David Beckham may leave Hollywood after all.

The Los Angeles Galaxy rejected the initial offer from AC Milan to acquire Beckham. Reports indicate that the offer was for more than \$3 million.

However, Major League Soccer and the Galaxy had been seeking a transfer fee worth between \$10 and \$15 million from the Italian club.

MLS commissioner Don Garber imposed a deadline for AC Milan and Galaxy to reach an agreement after the

made it clear that they only seek Beckham's services until next season, and Beckham intends to somehow continue playing with the squad in Milan.

"I know it will be difficult to go back after everything that's happened," Beckham told the *Los Angeles Times*. "I've said I want to stay at Milan, and I haven't changed my mind, but it's out of my hands.

Angelenos refused to accept the first offer. Nevertheless, AC Milan never made another effort to produce a higher offer in potentially acquiring Beckham.

AC Milan has

"I hope things will go the way I want them to, of course. But if I have to go back, I will be professional, because that's what I have to do."

AC Milan vice president Adriano Galliani seems to think that the club will complete the transfer because both squads have gone into deeper negotiations. Galliani was reported stating to the *La Gazzetta dello Sport* that the organization had taken steps forward in the matter.

Fortunately, the Galaxy expect striker Landon Donovan to return. It seems as if his current stint in Germany will only be temporary since Bayern Munich management have made it official in their plan to not offer a transfer fee for the American.

Bayern Munich already employs three forwards, and adding the Ontario native would only produce chaos for playing time. ■



David Beckham

the 10 spot | BY GINA QUATTROCHI

TUESDAY, MARCH 3

**Virtual Tuesdays
Guitar Hero
Competition**

Safari Sam's at the Regent Theatre, 448 S. Main St., East Hollywood; safarisams.com

Play whatever songs you want with electronica and pop in the background and full bar and restaurant. 18+. 8 p.m. \$10.



Test your skills at "Guitar Hero World Tour."

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 25

Full Frontal

La Cita Bar, 336 S. Hill Street, Downtown; sleazetone.com/fullfrontal

This disco dance party pays homage to the '70s every second and fourth Wednesday of the month. 10 p.m.-2 a.m. RSVP at sleazetone.com/fullfrontal. FREE.

THURSDAY, FEB. 26

ArtEffect Thursdays

Medusa Lounge, 3211 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles; redlightpromotions.com

Artsy types get together to drink and have a good time with other creative minds. Enjoy the gothic décor and brand new sound system on the dance floor. 8 p.m.-2 a.m., Free with RSVP to jenn@redlightpromotions.com. \$5 before 11 p.m. and \$10 after without RSVP.

FRIDAY, FEB. 27

Newly Restored Godfather Trilogy

Aero Theatre, 1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; americancinematheque.com

Paramount Pictures and Francis Ford Coppola have restored the *Godfather* trilogy for your viewing pleasure. Be amazed by it all over again on the big screen for three nights. Through Sunday. 7:30 p.m.

Dan Eldon: Traveling Exhibit

Pete and Susan Barret Art Gallery, Santa Monica College, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica; smcbarretgallery.com

See Dan Eldon's journals and photographs of war and peace celebrations. Opening reception is 6 p.m.-9 p.m. Through March 21.

SATURDAY, FEB. 28

Batsheva Dance Company's Premiere of "MAX"

Royce Hall, UCLA (310) 825-2101; UCLALive.org

An ensemble work for 10 dancers, "MAX" continues artistic director Ohad Naharin's recent research into the roots, origins and essence of movement. Through March 1.

Gourmet Cookies Class

Chef Eric's Culinary Classroom, 2366 Pelham Ave., Los Angeles; culinaryclassroom.com

Learn how to make scrumptious gourmet cookies like chocolate dipped pretzel cookies, Florentines, chocolate dipped biscotti, lady finger chocolate Milanos, snowflake cookies, gingerbread cookies and more. Bake and then devour. \$85 per person. 9 a.m.-noon.

MONDAY, MARCH 2

Dollar Dog Night

The Stand, 1116 Westwood Blvd., Westwood Village; thestandlink.com

One dollar for a classic hot dog, \$2.50 for one with all the fixings, plus \$2 pints. 5 p.m. 'til closing every Monday.

TUESDAY, MARCH 3

Blue Plate Special

Luna Park, 672 S. La Brea Ave., Park La Brea; unaparkla.com

Blue Mondays have extended to include Sunday and Tuesday as well, with rotating entrée specials served on a blue plate for \$10 to \$12. Sophisticated soul food like cigar onion rings, Moroccan spaghetti and meatballs and fried catfish have made this place an L.A. favorite. Plus, \$5 glasses of red or white wine or sangria served in a blue goblet. Sun-Tues, 5:30 p.m.-10:30 p.m.

"Los Farruco"

Royce Hall, UCLA (310) 825-2101; UCLALive.org

Featuring three generations of dancers - led by the patriarch's 20-year-old grandson - and accompanied by two guitarists and three singers, "Los Farruco" promises an amazing evening of traditional gypsy dance and music. Also 8 p.m. Wed. \$17 for UCLA students. ☐

To submit an event for consideration, e-mail calendar@campuscircle.net.

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nightlife 101

inner circle

SCION HOUSE PARTY & NO CULTURE

Feb. 18 @ The Roxy & The Echo

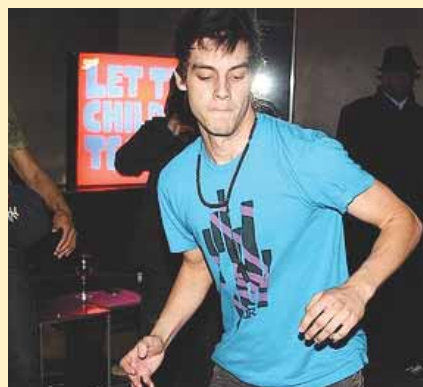
PHOTOS BY SHAUNT & LEVON GHARIBIAN

To view additional photos, visit clubsoda.fm.



BANANA SPLIT SUNDAES

Feb. 15 @ LAX



GOLDENVOICE PRESENTS IN INDIO

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INDIO CALIFORNIA  EMPIRE POLO CLUB

Paul McCartney Morrissey • Franz Ferdinand

FRIDAY APRIL 17

Leonard Cohen • Conor Oberst and the Mystic Valley Band • Beirut • the Black Keys • Girl Talk
Silversun Pickups • the Ting Tings • the Crystal Method • Ghostland Observatory • Crystal Castles • the Airborne Toxic Event
We Are Scientists • N.A.S.A. • Patton & Rahzel • M. Ward • the Presets • the Hold Steady • A Place to Bury Strangers
Felix da Housecat • Buraka Som Sistema • Ryan Bingham • Bajofondo • Peanut Butter Wolf • Noah & the Whale • White Lies
the Bug • Alberta Cross • Los Campesinos! • Craze & Klever • Molotov • Switch • Gui Boratto • Steve Aoki • the Aggrolites
Genghis Tron • People Under the Stairs • the Courteeners • Cage the Elephant • Dear and the Headlights

SATURDAY APRIL 18

The Killers

Amy Winehouse • Thievery Corporation TV on the Radio • Band of Horses • Fleet Foxes • MSTRKRFT

Michael Franti & Spearhead • Atmosphere • Mastodon • TRAV\$DJ-AM • Henry Rollins • Crookers • Jenny Lewis • Turbonegro
Hercules and Love Affair • Superchunk • Glasvegas • Dr. Dog • Drive-By Truckers • Booker T & the DBT's • Amanda Palmer
the Bloody Beetroots • Surkin • Para One (Live) • Calexico • Liars • Junior Boys • Zane Lowe • Electric Touch • Blitzen Trapper
Glass Candy • James Morrison • Bob Mould Band • Drop the Lime • Thenewno2 • Gang Gang Dance
Billy Talent • Ida Maria • Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti • Zizek Club • Cloud Cult • Tinariwen

The Cure

SUNDAY APRIL 19

My Bloody Valentine • Yeah Yeah Yeahs

Throbbing Gristle • Lupe Fiasco • Paul Weller • Peter Bjorn and John • X

Antony & the Johnsons • Roni Size Reprazent • Public Enemy • Groove Armada ^{DJ Set} • Christopher Lawrence • Paolo Nutini
Lykke Li • the Kills • Okkervil River • M.A.N.D.Y. • Clipse • Sebastien Tellier • Fucked Up • Perry Farrell • the Horrors
Late of the Pier • K'naan • Brian Jonestown Massacre • Supermayer • No Age • Vivian Girls • Shepard Fairey
Themselves • Friendly Fires • the Gaslight Anthem • the Knux • Mexican Institute of Sound
the Night Marchers • Marshall Barnes

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