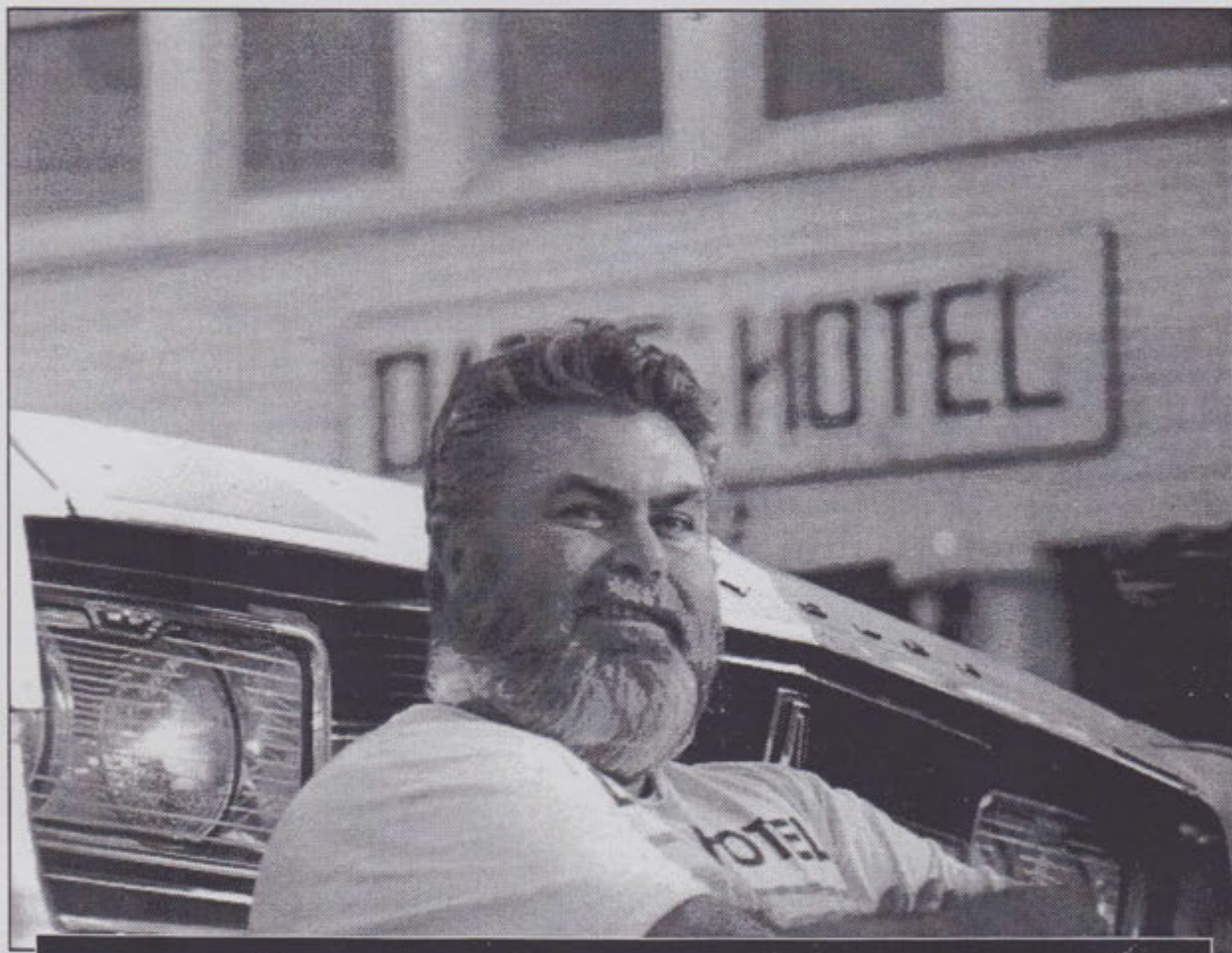


Salt for Slugs

texas homemade magazine

vol. 1 • issue 2



SPEAKING OF THE DABBS RAILROAD HOTEL

...An interview with proprietor Gary Smith

page 4

this issue: pagan workshop • terror at 10,000 feet • senior citizen beauty pageant • music and film reviews • short fiction • essays on the opposite sex: two view points • the original square mile of austin



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**WE GO TO
GREAT PLANES**

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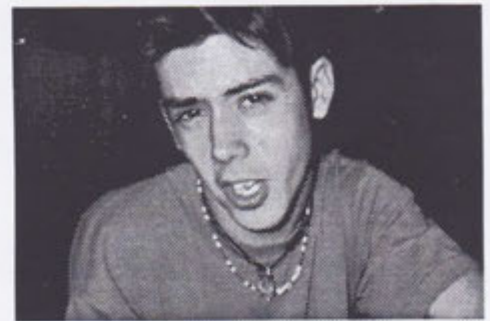
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Salt for Slugs

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WORDS TO LIVE BY

It is the struggle to repeat and perpetuate pleasure which turns it into pain, the very demand for the repetition of a certain pleasure brings about pain, because it is not the same as it was yesterday. - Krishnamurti

The more one knows, the less one believes. - fortune cookie

Even a space ape must urinate. - Desmond Morris

She wanted to borrow my shoes, and she wanted to borrow money. I don't share my shoes, and I don't share my men. - Stella Boes (Carousel Lounge)

The coffeehouse scene is like an upbeat horror flick. - Mort Starr (aka: Mass Starr)

A well dressed man is virtually faceless. - Christopher Lloyd ("Twenty Bucks")



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Minutes after Ray wrote out the text for the "Field of Fear" ad while standing at a table in the Horseshoe Lounge, a fight broke out in a nearby corner. A shuffleboard bet gone bad had left one gentleman feeling short-changed, ten dollars short to be exact. After pinning his welching opponent down on a corner table, he proceeded to rip twelve dollars out of his pants, crumpling up the remaining two and throwing them in his face. At that moment I knew that this issue would come together.

Although he was able to respond to a few letters, Burt Cocaine is on sabbatical this issue. He is deeply investigating the inside of the alcoholic's mind. Pondering clandestine interludes with fairy maidens and drinking maker's marks has become more than just a frequent hobby. He plans to develop a new language in vain of Ebonics as well. Look for Drunk Phonics in your local bookstore. The Eye on Austin Series will continue in the summer issue, unless of course, rehab interferes.

In keeping with the "haven't lost their childhood dreams" theme, we continue the search for the interesting. Stabler gives The Playdoh Squad one hell of a review, they'll live up to it. Talk about childhood, say no more, just see them live. There are a lot of bands here in town that we hope to see and hear more of this year. Terror at Ten Thousand Feet is another band we have had the pleasure to witness. Hopefully they will be able to release some new material in the near future. They are playing at the Coppertank, of all places, during the SXSW. They are worth checking out.

Well, I completely alienated the workers at the 7-11 down the street after they read the Mitch Applebower letter in the winter issue. I didn't think that anyone would take the letters seriously, and if anyone does, feel free to write in anything you want. I'm particularly interested in receiving some good writing of any kind, as well as good black and white artwork (drawings, photos, anything really). Anyone motivated to do some brief, coherent show reviews (even just one) of any kind here in town, please submit material by May 15th, 1997 for the summer ovenator issue due out June 1. All other contributions must be received for consideration prior to May 1, 1997.



We have actually been able to find a few advertisers for this, our second issue of Salt For Slugs. This has enabled me to bring down the cover price a bit, and if things progress as planned, we will make the summer issue four pages longer. The current price to advertise is as follows: \$25-1/4 page, and \$50-1/2 page. Naturally, we want to increase the number of copies printed and lower the cover price at the same time.

I want to thank all of the really cool people who have contributed to this issue in any way, but especially the mechanics; the writers, the photographer, the graphic artist, and the illustrator. It's a great thing when you find people that are into creating something new and actually do it. - ed. note, March 1, 1997.



Speaking of The Dabb's Railroad Hotel

...an interview with proprietor Gary Smith. by Raymond Grant

Salt For Slugs: Why do people love the Dabb's?

Gary Smith: Here at the motel we have medicinal programs. A lot of people come out for healing. One of the more popular forms of healing is the wig-o-meter, it's a small cone shaped device that you stick your tongue into and it's plugged into a 220 volt air conditioner outlet. After you gain conciousness, and all the swelling goes down, your ion level is maxed for five years. One of the other programs involves skeletal realignment. We push you off of the second floor with a rope tied around your ankles. After you regain conciousness and the swelling goes down, that backbone is as straight as a board. But, speaking of washing cats.....

SFS: That's an ancient art.

GS: What Ichigoomi? Cat washing?

SFS: Yeah, it can be traced back to the Ming Dynasty.

GS: Speaking of the Ming Dynasty... I have a little pond out back with a booger toad in it. One day, I wanted to see how deep it was, so I tied some weights on a long rope and lowered it down. And I never did reach the bottom of it. Every once in a while a little chinese toy will float to the surface.

SFS: May I ask what in the hell a booger toad is?

GS: A lot of people ask about the Llano river booger toad. It's an ancient creature that the indians did cave paintings about. And also, of course, the famous work that Jauques Cousteau did in the late sixties. He found the print of the murky footfin. There's nothing like a good booger toad ham for Thanksgiving. There's a gravy that I make that's guarranteed to get all the Ju-Ju parallel in your gizzard.

SFS: Did you know that on Thanksgiving I fight my relatives to get the gizzard?

GS: I had my gizzard removed the other day and things are different now.

SFS: How has it affected you?

GS: There's that little space missing in your brain.

At this point in the interview, Helen Hogan and her cooking accomplice served us a gourmet meal of Bruschetta, and a secret pasta dish that only an Italian grandma could have made.

SFS: So what type of overnight guests usually wander into the hotel?

GS: The Dabb's has become a very popular place for R&R, for all the artists, musicians, and entertainers in Austin. Actors, comedians... All the bands come out and stay after they've performed on the weekends.

SFS: Richard, the drummer for Crust, got married here.

GS: Yeah, the list is long. The Buttholes, Bad Mutha Goose, Forsythe, The Asylum Street Spankers, Pocket Fisherman, Retarded Elf. That is a tiny percentage of the thousands of bands I can name. Frank from Poi Dog Pondering used to come out and listen to the Victrola and reproduce the music from the Victrola for his band.

Of course, Gary spins a few huge, thick metal platters for us, and we hear faint music trickle out of the horn from a lost time.

SFS: I heard that the Captain and Tennille met here in the seventies, is that true?

GS: In spirit, in spirit. But the Asylum Street Spankers, according to their new album, met here at the Dabb's.

SFS: And Dahveed recorded here right?

GS: Yeah, we took all of the furniture out of the hotel and recorded an album here. Asleep At The Wheel stayed overnight and wrote in my register, "We are asleep at the wheel, so you don't have to be." But, speaking of Buttholes..... The Butthole Surfers were always famous for their great shows, and when they were on Letterman it was the most horrible show I had ever seen. The camera would pan to them and they would be just sitting there and then immediately they would start acting, and it was so amateur. They were on national T.V and they were real jerky. It seemed as though they didn't know what to do. A lot of less skilled bands have put on better shows.



SFS: What do you know about Roky Erickson?

GS: I first saw Roky at Raul's. Most of the time when I saw Roky he was passed out in his food at Hill's cafe on South Congress and it was the only 24 hr. place in Austin. It was an old Wells Fargo stop still going after all these decades.

SFS: Roky reminds me of a ghost still in human form, does he come out to the Dabb's?

GS: No, but we do have ghosts here. When I first got the place there was a room with an old antique radio antenna and a bunch of old World War II furniture in it, and I always thought of it as the Nazi room. No matter who stayed in there, they could be from any walk of life, they would have a major ghost experience. Finally, the room was so haunted that I ended up turning it into a storage room and eventually the ghosts left.

SFS: Well, you insulted them.

GS: For years people would bring bones, tortoise shells, carcasses, or neat rocks with holes in them. We started hanging them in a tree out back and eventually the tree became known as the Ju-Ju tree. People would ask, "What is the Ju-Ju tree" and I would say that it kept the evil spirits away. Well soon after, The Statesman actually came out and took photos of the tree and the caption read that I said the tree keeps evil spirits from coming up out of the river. Well, when the Llano preachers got a hold of this, they started lining up out front looking for the devil. We didn't want to make anyone nervous so we took down the tree, but it was a tremendous amount of fun while it lasted. Everyone wanted a picture next to the Ju-Ju tree.

SFS: Do you have anything interesting to tell us about the gallows that are across the river from here?

GS: The jail across the street was originally called the Redtop because the roof was painted red. The turret upstairs were the gallows and they had a church, a lunchroom, and a school downstairs. They taught you reading, writing, morals, and then did ya'.

SFS: They killed you if you didn't fit in. Sometimes that's necessary, it seems to be a common practice.

GS: The steel cages inside are like The Silence of the lambs, they are free standing in the middle of the room. But speaking of Hollywood.....(laughs). I always watch the academy awards, and the history of the academy awards is that one of the actors in

Hollywood had a beautiful mansion and started having giant parties for the entertainers to celebrate their films, and I thought, well, why can't I do that? So, I decided to have a big entertainers party called "The Llano Banano Show". It was a wild west Vaudeville show. It was five hours of five minute sets; Vaudeville, burlesque, you name it.

SFS: Is it true that the actual Ol' Yeller lived upstream from here?

GS: Yes, the book was written about three to five miles upstream, and there are still descendents of Ol' Yeller running around there. (At this point, Gary is in his storytelling mood, so I let him float into his next story unquestioned.)

GS: The soldiers that were staying in this motel found a German spy collaborating with Nazi Germany, so they organized a lynch mob and hung him in the front yard. Hence, the Dabb's famous Nazi hanging.

Gary then goes on to tell us of the old inkeeper woman from 1907 that ran the Dabb's and cooked cornbread for one hundred people a day, and how they would eat on the very same table that we are conducting this interview. Looking out of these old country windows at the river, you can almost smell the steam from the engines. Back when the University of Texas was modeled after a castle, but all that was torched for insurance money.

GS: I moved to Washington D.C. in the seventies, and in 1975 my friend came to visit me from London and had a burr. Everyone had long, hippie hair at the time and were listening to Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. He came over to my place and pogoed around my apartment to David Bowie, and he said, "This is the hottest thing in London right now!" At first, I couldn't relate to it at all, but being an artist, I studied this art form for awhile and said, "I can do this".

SFS: So you braved new wave.

GS: Yes, I shaved myself a mohawk and went into the bars in D.C. and the drinks would line up on the bar and I loved every minute of it.

SFS: Sure, free beer, that's pure enjoyment.

GS: It was an art city, and people were ready for art. Shortly after this, I hitchhiked back to Austin. David Bowie was gay music and no one did that. The cosmic cow chip was the slander for everyone who wasn't into the

scene here. Everyone had a pickup, a crunched up old cowboy hat, and an Irish Setter in the back. Then Raul's opened, and I was friends with Randy Turner (Biscuit, singer for the infamous Big Boys) at the time. He would skate with these guys and they formed a band. I roadied for the Big Boys then, and Gary Floyd of the Dicks started a poster band for about two years. He would put up giant posters all over town that the Dicks were going to play, and there was no band. Then, one day he came into Raul's and said, "I've got a band!" Gary Floyd would give birth to live pig heads on stage and it would be the best show ever. He was a big, fat drag queen, and he would run around and plop a big, fat pig's head out of his dress. In the early days, the Big Boys were thought of as new wave, and the Dicks were punk rock.

SFS: I think Gary Floyd had one of the greatest voices, especially in the song, "Dicks Hate the Police", he has such a blues tone.

GS: The Continental Club would refuse punk rock, they were real straight, but this Mexican guy down on Congress decided he was going to let punk bands play there, so Duke's Rollcoach became the second punk club in Austin. For a while, the thing in Austin was to ride designer 10 speeds.

SFS: You mean like a Schwinn Varsity??

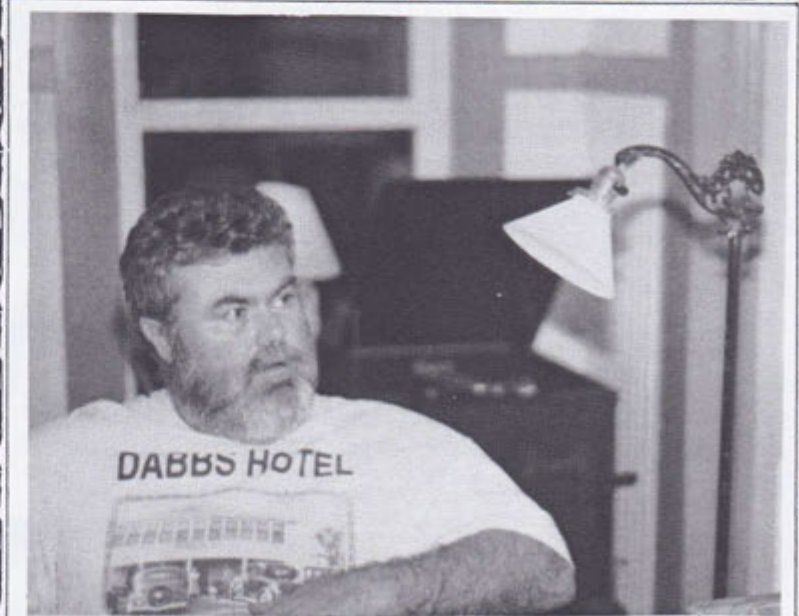
GS: Yeah. You were bizarre if you had a one-speed. I wanted to be the first white guy to low ride with drag bars in Austin, so I modified an old cruiser, put a suicide shifter on it, and rode the hell out of it. This was in 1983.

The Dabbs Railroad Hotel:

dabbs@gopher.well.sf.ca.us

<http://www.matisse.net/files/dabbs.txt>

Reservations: (915)247-7905



SFS: In the front room there is a photo of you right after this time period, as the foreman of the J-Bar ranch. How did that come about?

GS: Well, I would wake up at 5:30 AM and ride my bike twenty-five miles to get a bag of carrots. It was the western dream life, the Roy Rogers lifestyle. I was slim, athletic, and had a gold palomino, twenty-five head of cattle that I would feed everyday, and a big bull. Sometimes I would get too drunk and fall asleep on the back porch. In the morning I would wake up and the bull would be a foot away from my face, snorting and slobbering. Sometimes I would roll over and ignore him so he would go to the front porch and stomp up and down, and if that didn't work...

SFS: If that didn't work, he would stomp on your forehead!

GS: Yeah, and that would always work. Then I got bored and started hanging out with a bunch of Hill Country Indians, the Ray Ritter tribe upstream near Mason. Ritter was the chief, and we would hang on the Llano River for two or three weeks with a big fishing camp and fish and fill everyone's freezer with yellowcat.

SFS: This has nothing to do with John Ritter from Three's Company does it??

GS: No, no.

SFS: Okay, because sometimes I don't know what's around the corner with you. I know there have been some wildmen throughout the history of the Dabb's, including Clyde Barrow of Bonnie and Clyde. Tell me of some others.

GS: The Dabb's Railroad Hotel, 1943, two hundred and fifty teenage soldiers from Killeen, Texas railed into the frontier on a Friday night. This was literally "the" frontier. If you wanted to go any further west of here, you had to take a Wells Fargo stagecoach (covered wagon) into indian territory. Then another two hundred and fifty soldiers would come in on Saturday night. This was World War II, and it was a young war, people signed their kids up at fourteen. So, the age of these kids ranged from fourteen to eighteen. The college kids would also come in from Austin and that would be the atmosphere here during WWII. It was full of brothels and had twenty seven saloons.

SFS: Do any midgets on horses ever pull up at the Dabb's?

GS: Yes, and they always leave the worst mess. I'm always cleaning up around this old hotel and I find the weirdest things; toothbrushes, toothpaste, underwear, tie straps on the ends of the bed, and of course, one of my favorite things to find is a big leather pouch of ancient gold Roman coins.

It's really cool because you can take the coins and scrape them on the sidewalk and they'll go right into a Coke machine. Nothing like free ice cold Cokes!

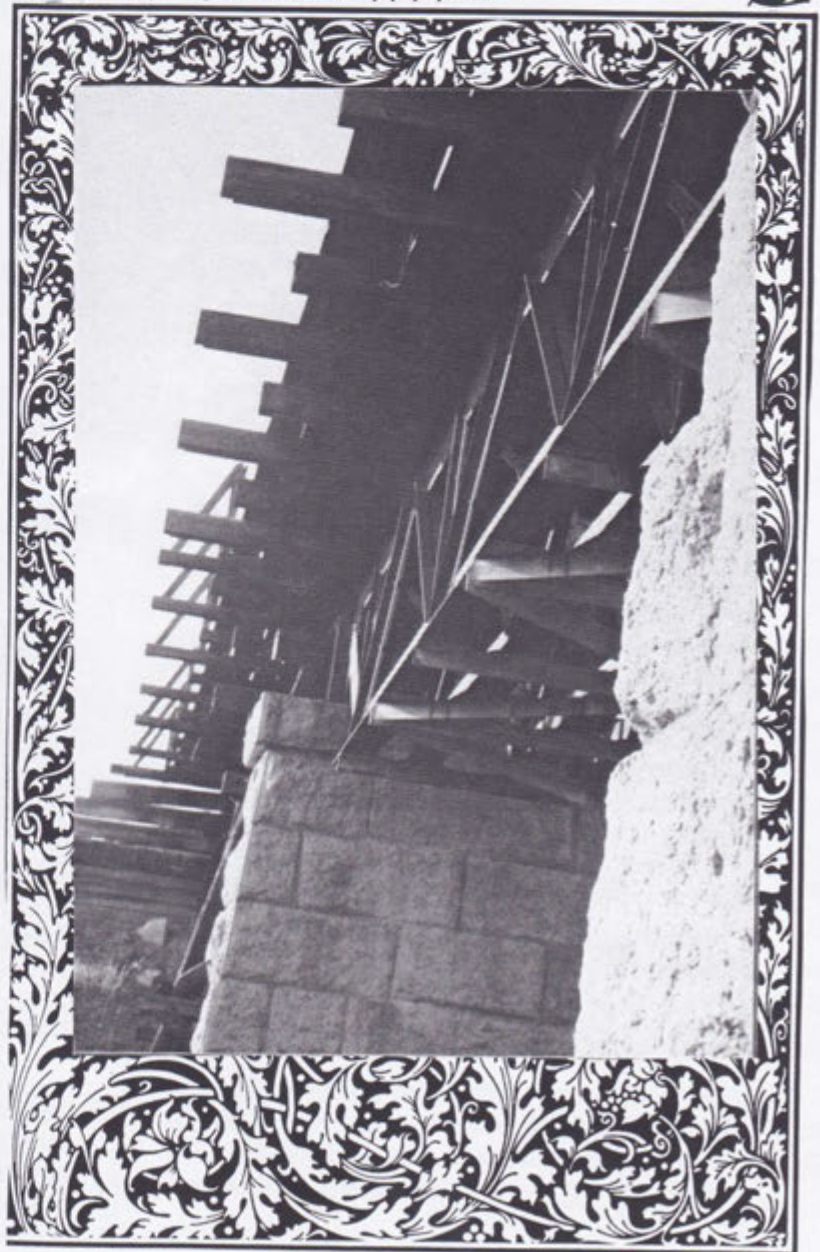
SFS: Have you ever had people from other planets stay here?

GS: I think that's what that burnt ring out in the backyard is from.

SFS: You told me that Llano residents have the longest lifespan in the US because of the minerals in the water and clean air. Do you think you will live long?

GS: I remember thinking when I was a kid, 'Wow, some people really get fucked up when they are old!', but there were a few inspirations of people that just didn't get old. I thought, 'That looks like a route that I may want to take.'

SFS: That's the big trick in this magic show, age is an illusion. I heard of a guy who inhaled gasoline and it preserved his body, but aged his head fifty years.



trptych
from the original collection
"this town"
a documentation
of the
original square mile
of austin



Ellen Mary Pucciarelli

terror at 10,000 ft.



Terror @ 10,000 Feet
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Austin, TX 78765
www.io.com/~dmuldoon
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We recently spoke with Andrew and Steve, two of the three bassists for the band, and if the fact that there are three bassists interests you, read on because that's just the half of it. There is no guitarist or vocalist, and no one in the band sings. In fact, the only other person in the band is the drummer. Get ready to be blown away by Terror @ 10,000 Feet.

SFS: Hello, and your names are?

Andrew: I'm Andrew.

Steve: I'm Chachi.

SFS: Steve, Chachi, are you bass player number one, two, or three?

Andrew: He's number six, and I'm number twelve.

Steve: I would be the rhythm bass player.

Andrew: I'm sometimes lead and sometimes rhythm, the medium bass. Dan is usually lead, playing the high end stuff, and Steve plays the low rhythm bass.

SFS: And the current drummer is?

Andrew: Ben plays the drums; the high, low, medium drums.

Steve: He's good.

Andrew: Ben plays with Sap and another local band, but he won't tell us the name of that one.

SFS: Did you guys get your name from an old episode of the Twilight Zone?

Steve: No, that was "Nightmare at Twenty Thousand Feet", or ten thousand or something. It's close. Then there's also a horror movie called like "Fifty Thousand Feet", or something.

Andrew: Steve's the one who thought it up.

SFS: It has nothing to do with 10,000 Maniacs, does it?

Steve: Well, yea because we're all maniacs obsessed with Natalie Merchant.

Andrew: I hate Natalie Merchant. I have a good story to tell about this. I have a real problem with her because when I was seventeen I was taking an SAT class and there was this girl there that I liked and I always used to flirt with her. One day I was hanging out with her and she started talking to me about God and that went the wrong way. It turned out that she was a big Natalie Merchant fan. So, ever since then...!!!

Steve: Wow, that was a good story!

Andrew: Cut that out, okay.

SFS: So Steve thought up the name?

Steve: Yea, I did a drawing and I called it "Two Thousand Feet", and then I thought that it would be a good band name. But then I thought that I could go up some and get a little higher, so it became ten thousand. It turned into "Terror at Ten Thousand Feet".

SFS: So do you guys tour at all or play anywhere outside of Austin?

Steve: We haven't done any touring at all.

Andrew: We need to keep writing songs and playing here with a steady drummer, and then we want to start playing in Houston and Dallas. Then, we'll get lucky and quit our jobs and move on to somewhere else, just wander around. I don't have a job right now though.

SFS: So what about recording, have you recorded anything at all?

Andrew: We did a demo tape in March of '96 with Paul Stottinger who's a really cool guy. He works at Sweatbox. We actually did the tape at Jason's house, our old drummer. It sounded good, but we were still trying to figure out exactly what we wanted to play. We also did the live taping on KVRX which was when we played on the air. That recording isn't really our property or anything. So we're just anxiously waiting for someone who will want to put something out by us.

SFS: So, the old drummer Jason used to play for John Boy?

Andrew: Yea, he was hit by a donut truck.

Steve: Well, he got a job in Houston making a lot more money.

Andrew: Selling donuts.

SFS: So you guys aren't paying enough?

Andrew: We're not a "paying band" at the moment. Let's just say that after the show, we wake up the next day and go to work. The most money we've made was like seventy dollars.

Steve: Yea, at Electric Lounge.

Andrew: Remember, with Craig at that Trance thing with Monroe Mustang, a really good band by the way. Anyway, Craig's a cool guy and he actually cares about the bands so he paid us.

SFS: Do you have any messed up show experiences that you want to share?

Steve: Yea, we were opening for Zeni Geva (from Japan) at Emo's and they told us up front that we weren't going to be paid. So we said, "Okay, we'll do it." So, we were going to be the first out of three bands, and then the second band canceled, so it was just us and Zeni. We went on and things were going good up until about the fifth song when I broke a string and blew our momentum. So I was nervous and I put on another string and it was all out of tune and people started leaving. I was like, wait... Then I broke another string.

Andrew: Now we always bring an extra bass to shows.

Steve: That's gotta be the worst (show experience).

Andrew: No, remember that time when we played at Electric Lounge! We were up there, minding our own business, playing up there. There was hardly anyone there, and this guy's right up front at the stage doing air-bass and stuff. I was like whatever, that's cool, until he started yelling stuff like "Play F sharp, that's cool!" I was like "What?" Then he starts asking us like heavy metal music theory questions about fifths and all. He tried to interview us while we were actually playing! A total freak.

SFS: So you guys play by ear pretty much?

Andrew: Yea, but me and Dan took guitar classes when we were little kids. I know where the notes are. Steve practices scales on the fast fret.

SFS: Who's idea was it not to have any guitar?

Steve: Dan played guitar, but he wanted to play bass. Then he finally got one.

SFS: So then you said screw the guitar completely?

Steve: Yea, he's better at bass. Why don't we have a singer?

Andrew: Well, I can't write lyrics.

Steve: None of us have a good voice and we're tired of seeing all these bands where the music is great and then the singer ruins it. So we said fuck it.

SFS: So what are your plans for the near future?

Steve: We're gonna do that South by Southwest thing and get a steady drummer.

Andrew: We'd love to do a couple of seven inches.

SFS: That would be really cool. So Steve, since we're going to put a few of your comics in the magazine, the final question for this interview will be about that.

Steve: Since I was a kid, I drew comics in my textbooks in school. I'd see Hustler's really disgusting comics, and I'd draw them in schoolbooks and pass them around. I'd write like, 'turn to page 42' in the front, and there it would be on page 42, a disgusting spread eagle with a tattooed vagina with a classmate's name on it. This one girl named Lynn Butcher told on me and I got suspended. When they showed my parents, my dad said, "That's 100% pure pornography."

turn to page 25



Walkin' the Beat

by greg e boy

It was a hot and muggy summer day in the District of Columbia. It's days like this, Mac thought, that make people crazy. It drives them out of their minds. For the drunks, it whacks them out because they're much thirstier than usual, but aren't smart enough to drink water. They dry up their bodies, get all dehydrated, and a good bout with diarrhea can put you in a real bad mood, quick. As for the junkies and the crackheads, skin starts to boil as their bodies try to sweat out the toxins that they just can't seem to put in their veins fast enough. Then, there's the kids, fresh outta school and itchin' to do something just to take up time in their empty days.

Me, I'm sweating my balls off, sitting in this squad car waiting... Waiting until I can go home to my fine wife, the splendid dinner she made, and a few beers. The number of beers depends on the day, with each beer drowning out a bullet-holed drug dealer or an old lady who's been beaten to death for her fifty dollars in savings. My wife asks me, "Mac, when can we have some kids of our own?" "Someday", I tell her. "Some day when they won't have to worry about whether or not Daddy's gonna come home from work or not." She doesn't really understand. She hears the stories, but until you actually see that dead body, head cracked open, brains coloring the street crimson, and hear the coroner's men bitching about the dirty work they have to do, only then do you understand death. Death and all it's ramifications; seeing brains being shoveled up from the street at high noon in mid July, with the mercury cresting over 95 degrees, and that doesn't even take into account the humidity and the flies. One can never understand that until they work the beat.

Then, the box began to talk. As a cop, you perfect a way of hearing where only certain codes and words come through, always preceded by your precinct or squad car number. I mean, that's the bottom line. It's all you really need in order to hear. Then a call back to the station to confirm what was heard and where

you need to go, who's gonna be there, etc., etc., etc.

The specs come in something like this: two kids, one male and one female, possible teenagers, caucasian, presumed to either be drunk or under the influence of some narcotic, are standing on the top of a building on 16th Street, across from the Chinese Embassy. Possible double suicide attempt in progress. I know the building they are talking about. It has these huge gargoyles holding spheres on their backs, probably the world, and now here are these two desperate kids feeling that same weight of the world on their shoulders, waiting to end it all with a swan dive into the hot asphalt. As I drive there, I reminisce about my teenage years and how my problems then seemed twofold what they actually were, with my blood just about overdosing on hormones. As I got older, those problems became quite ridiculous with the onset of each new "adult" problem. Now I wonder how anyone makes it.

I'm not the most religious man around, but a preacher friend of mine tells me that it's our time on Earth that is hell. Heaven is the rest badly needed after doing time in this burning reality we call life. I guess that I agree with him to some extent. But then why would people sacrifice their children like they did back in the Old Testament days? For the innocent child, not yet scarred or burned by this living hell, would be truly saintly. See how this job can make you crazy. Damn.

When I arrived at the building, there were two squad cars there already and a small crowd had begun to form in the street. I tried to disperse some of them by driving my car dangerously close to them and parking up on the sidewalk, one of the oldest cop tricks in the book which never works. It looked as though the crowd was only going to get bigger, so I called for back-up. I exited my vehicle, looked up and could barely make out the silhouette of two bodies. It was the movement that made them stand out from the looming gargoyles.





I had to get to the roof and try to calm these two down. I entered the building and pushed the highest button once inside the elevator. I quickly noted that there wasn't a thirteenth floor in this building. Boy, these architects are some superstitious ones, aren't they? The elevator stopped at the top floor, I moved out and turned right, toward the stairs. I could hear the girl crying, but there was no sound of a male voice anywhere. I paused at the bottom of the steps, took a deep breath, and then put my hand on my revolver and shuffled up the steps. Shortly before I got to top of the stairs, the boys downstairs radioed up, "Mac...Mac, are you there?" "Yeah, what's up George?" "The boy jumped...", he paused. "About five minutes ago. Dead as a doornail." "10-4", I said calmly and quietly. I didn't want the girl to hear me or what was going on. When I reached the steel door at the top that led to the outside, I put my radio back in my belt, took off my hat, and ran my hand through my hair trying to look as unalarming and sympathetic as one could look at a time like this.

My first glance at her was horrifying. Her clothes were torn and she was bleeding from scratches on her face. It looked as if she had scratched her face herself, as one might do when clutching their face during an event so overwhelming. Her hair was messy like an infant who refuses to let her hair be brushed and her eyes red from the frustration and tears. But underneath it all you could see a beautiful young girl. One that no one would suspect having problems of this magnitude. She was sitting on her knees, rocking back and forth whimpering. An almost silent "Please help me" ebbed out of her mouth over and over again, synchronizing her speech with her rocking. She never even looked up to see me coming. Her head didn't look up until I had my hand on her shoulder. "I'm here to help you." I said in the most gentle voice I could make. She got up and hugged me, her tears drying on my uniform and the blood staining it.

I felt empty. I saw the pain in her eyes when she glanced at me. I almost lost grip of my emotions, but fought back the tears... again. What could I do to help this poor girl? Were they tormented lovers, fighting their way through those adolescent years, feeling helpless and

turning to a suicide pact to resolve it once and for all? Did they even know each other that well? Friends at school maybe? Or drug partners, two lonely souls finding solace in each others' loneliness? I didn't matter what I thought. What's done is done. "Someone please help me", she snorted through her tears. "Come here", I said as I slowly walked her over to the edge of the building. "Look", I spoke. "What?" she said with a snuffle. She was a bit confused about what I was doing. "Look down", I paused for a second, not sure if I knew what I was doing. "You must come to terms with reality. It did happen and this is your first step towards dealing with it. You must accept what has happened." "No!" she cried, shaking and pounding her wrists on my chest. "I can't, I can't!!!" she rebutted, as she shook her head. "Do it!" I strained. "Can somebody please help me?!!" she hollered again. "Yes. Yes, I can", I said as I pushed her away from my body. Her scared eyes looked into mine and I leaned over and gave her one good shove. "Yes." I said. "I can help you."





Timeline of Love by randal manthei

Ahhh, here it comes again. The holiday that makes every lonely girl and boy wish they had someone, anyone... maybe even that ten dollar whore their daddy used to talk about. That's right folks, it's VALENTINE'S DAY!!!! The sheer basic concept of this day baffles my inner fibers. Just one example before we delve into the true meat of the story: Why am I buying my girlfriend chocolates when it will only make her fat and unattractive?

This season of media-fabricated love brought to mind my current dilemma. A problem so great, it controls my every movement and thought as of late. Of course, I am talking about who should become my new schoolboy crush. There's been a long, long line of schoolboy crushes for me. I think that a crush on a girl is as mandatory for a growing lad as breaking into the liquor cabinet, or getting caught shoplifting at the local 7-11.

I remember my first crush with extreme fondness. An impressionable little tike looked upon the television which was screaming MTV and he, well, I saw her. HER... **PAT BENATAR**. The angst, the sultriness, the pure, strange feeling (later to be known as sex appeal, remember I was eight) filled me with the desire to do anything for her. The most alluring part was the pure fantasy of the situation. What in the hell would Pat want with a love-sick pup who doesn't even have grass in the pasture? But, she had (okay, and to a point still does) my endless devotion. I was willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for a boy my age, I would share my Star Wars figures. Hey, for an eight year old in 1981, that was a big move in our relationship. Err, what relationship?

A parade of women would follow Pat Benatar, and God how I love a parade. After her, there was **DEBBY HARRY** of Blondie, for her wildness I wanted to tap into, literally. From there, a really brief one with **ANNABELLA LWIN** of Bow Wow Wow for reasons I still am unable to put into words.

After seeing 10, **BO DEREK**'s long braids and locks were firmly wrapped around my pubescent heart. The highlight of this infatuation was getting the Bo Derek Playboy Issue, the Holy Grail to me at the time. It was almost too much as my trembling hands opened up to her layout. It was definitely a red letter day, night, day, then night again. It was that red letter. She held the reigns to my wild heart till I saw her, a girl my age who would later go on to do soft porn movies in Europe.

Lollapalloza. There can only be one. After the first one they all sucked, save Stage 2000, which was what the whole damned thing was supposed to be in the first place. Half giddied on cheap vodka (and to think of Perry won't even let water in now), I saw her. My first love goddess of Olympian size, **SHOXSIE SHOX**. Her dark and mysterious ways almost made me see the point and logic in the Goth culture, but not quite. This love of hot desire was to be extinguished by a lady of ice, Iceland to be exact.

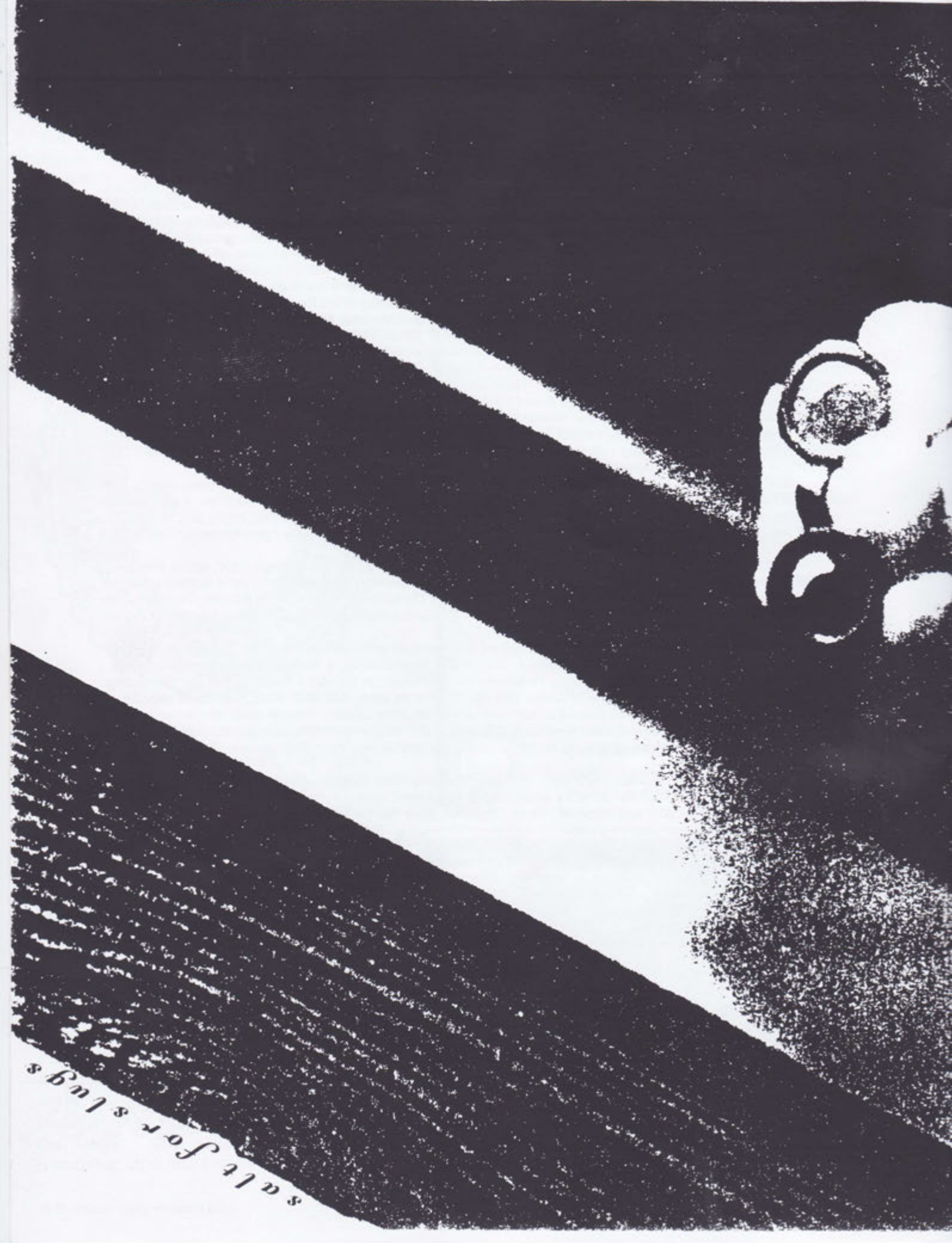
BJORK. I first had my eye on this little filly when she was putting the sweetness of the Sugarcubes. When she went solo, so did my heart of other infatuations. She was a heart breaker, a man maker, till she got fat. Hey, when it comes to unattainable lovers, it's okay to be shallow. Besides, on the day I realized that she was letting herself go I saw a little band by the name of Seven Year Bitch. Viva mi amor, **SELENE VIGIL**, was bella muy, loud, aggressive, and had an inner fire that burned in her heart which set mine ablaze. Though most songs berated out how men are basically assholes, this vixen (and I use that term in the most empowering way possible) put me under a spell of what a woman could be. I can still be found up front at any Seven Year Bitch show in Texas. I'll be the one drooling, puppy-eyed.

Tea Leoni, Tea Leone, **TEA LEONE!!!** Yes, quite the step from Selene. Oh those eyes, those lips, her ability to keep a straight face on the worst TV show on the air. I don't care if it has a Norm, it still sucks. She is divine. She is immaculate. She has no equal. Or so I thought. Here lies the point of the last few pages of chatter. A rival has arrived, the guards may be a changin'.

It occurred about two months ago when I was lying ever so peacefully upon my couch. I heard this voice come crashing into my head which sent my heart, stomach, and an array of vital organs into a hum as I fell to my knees. **NINA PERSSON**'s Sweedish sweetheart of a voice made me smile like a kid about to get a lollipop. She was the one who would crush me everyday for me having the knowledge she would never be mine, much less ever even know my name, or care. Not since ABBA have the Scandinavians sent us such a wonder. As the song spun it's Dream Weaver web around me, all I could think about was, "Do you think she would like Pearl?" Cuz, if she did, she would be perfect, my search would be over. Case closed, period, the end. She would be the flawless woman, if such a creature exists.

They are playing here in Austin real soon, and I am gonna go and get love drunk like I do at Seven Year Bitch shows. I have a struggle, Nina or Tea, Nina or Tea??? After the show, I am sure a new queen of silly boy love will be crowned, and I'll have to change out the love altar of my heart. Her smile, her quirky Nordic smile helps me through my struggle against the man.





salt for slugs



This article is a product of just one of the strange experiences that I usually find myself involved in as a result of Helen Hogan's madness. She befriended a senior wildwoman who gave us free passes to this bizarre pageant which she had entered. So sit back and enjoy...



On January fourth, at seven o'clock on the dot, Helen Hogan and I arrived at the Marriot Hotel by the Capitol for an event that we had planned to see for weeks, the 1997 Ms. Central Texas Senior Pageant. It was like Florida came to Austin, blue hairs galore. We downed the last of our rum and coke in the car and entered the automatic doors of the hotel and into fantasy. First things first, we needed programs. They were stocked with photos and information about the ladies. They had special interests ranging from being a clogger to collecting dollhouses and miniatures. One woman volunteered for Blue Santa, and also Brown Santa. Well, Santa's Little Helper was the most sedated candidate to grace the stage. She also belonged to the Friendship Club and Loners On Wheels.



Well, we were out of our minds with anticipation and out of our element as it turned out, because upon marking our territory on some prime center aisle seating we were soon overcome by a group of elderly women known locally as "Seniors On Uppers". Their pocketbooks were packed and they were meaner than a pack of stray, rabid Mexican hounddogs. The lights went down, the music went up, and the crowd began to snore as "Jukebox Hero" crackled from the P.A. speakers. One grandma awoke in a frenzy and clapped twice before going right back to sleep. As the introduction began, each contestant was aided across the stage to flaunt her own individual style. The attire was anything goes, from evening gown to sweatsuit. There were two commentators for the event, old hopefuls that never quite made Bob Barker status. One, a man who crooned our guts out doing Vegas renditions of old Andy Williams songs. The other, a woman who seemed to be controlled by an unseen force not of this earth. By the time they were finished harpooning us, we were barely alive to witness the talent leg of the show take it's course.

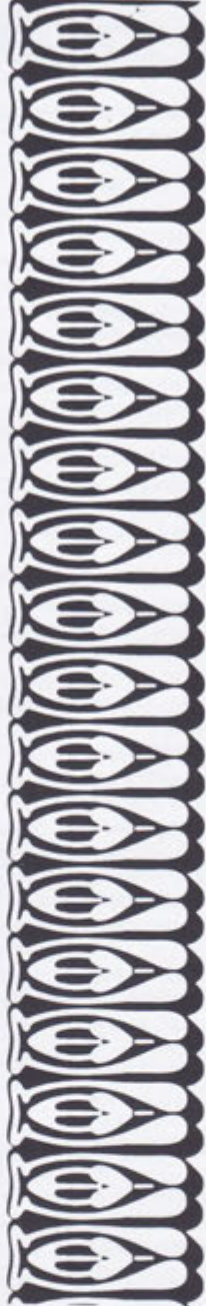
Well it did, and here's what ensued. Lela Mae Kelley was the first to go after the Grand Prize, a brand new candy apple red metallic hot rod scooter. It was a certified concrete demon sure to spark the crazed animal in each of them.



Ms. Stella Boes shakin' what she brought with her.

Lela had her roadies set the stage ablaze with her homemade hats and garments, followed by Jeanne Pace, Edna Tatum, and Nellie Tellez who did a great folklorico Mexican hat dance. At this point, there was an intermission followed by a half-time show, including a group of singing canaries and Lyn Ryan, 1996's Ms. Texas Senior America. This lady was showing these seniors how it's done. She came out cookin', either there was one hell of a backstage party going on or someone slipped pixie stix into her medication. She jumped around the stage like it was made of hot coals to some insane, country - techno beats. She brought down the house. The DJ was mesmerized by her wanton zeal and didn't skip a beat during her performance. Although I must note that mysteriously all of the other pageanteers had technical difficulties from their soundtrack source.

Soon after the excitement wore down, and the seniors in the audience did the nod (similar to the wave, but with less exertion required) a few times, the mood hit rock bottom. It was as though an emotional roller coaster had suddenly derailed. The next two contestants plucked honey dreams of youthful utopia from the minds of the elderly audience, and replaced them with nightmarish visions of being buried alive. If they had handed out razor blades at the door, this room would have resembled the Guyana Tragedy by now. These women were severely tranquilized, and for good reason. Then there was Dr Joyce Scheffler. The DJ (I use that term loosely) had destroyed her act beyond recognition. She had to stop and start so many times it was embarrassing. Then the highlight of the evening, what we'd been waiting for, finally arrived. A woman who parted the clouds and let a little sunshine in, Ms. Stella Boes. She came out in a fire red dress with hair to match and burst onto stage with the energy and life that this night was in desperate need of. She danced to Elvis tunes like there was no tomorrow. She had many of the powers of "E", and truly became Stelvis for a brief moment.



A brief Stelvis moment.

Now, what you've all been waiting for... the conclusion to this twisted tale. I, among others, was convinced that this pageant was fixed, because not only was Stella robbed of a performance that humbled the gods, but also what I haven't mentioned is that there was a mystery contestant who was covertly placed in the talent round. Despite the fact that she wasn't in the program or in the introduction, she gained the title. After a half an hour of deliberations and a few more Andy Williams songs, she took the money and rode off into the sunset victorious on her new red machine.

THE END



The canaries chirping away the evening.

Music Reviews for the Spring by Josh and Greg E. Boy

June of '44

The Anatomy of Sharks E.P.
Quarterstick Records

Sorry, only three songs on this one. This E.P. is the newest release from the math rock supergroup known as June of '44. The first song, "Sharks and Sailors" is more of the same, but better. The B side is the real deal though. The first song on this side, appropriately titled "Boom", is just that. A mix of tribal type drumming and a sort of bullfighter-esque trumpet via Fred Erskine. The last song would have to be my favorite, reason being that the all talented Erskine of the now defunct Crown Hate Ruin is doing vocals. Very, very, very good!
(josh)

Guitar Wolf
Missle Me
Ole / Matador

They are Japanese folks, and punk as shit. This stuff makes me cry. What has happened to the underground music scene? It takes a bunch of sake-drunk Kung-Fu experts, playing Thunders-cum-Ramones songs to turn the rock media's heads? Hello. We invented this shit, forgot about what it was all about, and sold out to... ah, I'm getting drunk now. It's four chord punk, Link Wray bastardizations, turning their amps up to 11. Finished all the beer, now onto the mouthwash. Don't leave your girlfriend alone with me music. (greg e boy)

Make Up
Afterdark
Dischord Records

The Make Up are back again with yet another live album, well, at least this one appears to actually be a real live recording. Live at the Fine China in London. The sound is extremely good, and the band brings more of their yeh yeh music to the stage. The songs range from stuff on the first album: "Here Comes the Judge", "We Can't Be Contained", "Don't Mind the Mind", plus songs off of the seven inches such as: "Rua Believer", "We're Having a Baby", and "Blue is Beautiful". Mixed in are a few previously unreleased songs. If you saw them on tour this past summer, that's pretty much what the record sounds like. Overall, it's pretty good.

Look for a new LP coming out on K.
(josh)

Built to Spill
Perfect From Now On
Warner Bros.

Major label debut from this funky (not in musical terms) Idaho outfit fronted by Doug Martsch. He used to live in Seattle and play in the Treepeople. Uh, there's your indie cred voucher. But seriously, the guy makes some damn catchy music. Pop music on the lo-fi heavy emotion tip. Not as annoying as say Sebadoh, and a lot more tolerable than Portastatic, but it's all sold at the same counter. (greg e boy)

A Minor Forest
Flemish Altruism
(constituent parts 1993-1996)
Thrill Jockey

Louisville, Kentucky via San Francisco, California, A Minor Forest definitely have that Slint/Rodan thing going on, but I wouldn't say that it's a rip-off. It's still very original due to the extreme talent involved. Besides that, half of the album was done by Albini and the other half by Bob Weston. And to top that off, the packaging is some of the best I've seen to date. It's a double LP in a gatefold sleeve with hand screened acetate inserts. It looks like a piece of slide film. It's good, buy it.
(josh)

Staccato Reads
Secular +3
Gravity Records

Staccato Reads is an instrumental side project, led by Jason Crane, aka: JC2000 of Rocket From the Crypt. It could very easily be grouped with the likes of June of '44 and Slint. It sounds like something Gravity would put out. Not bad, but I'm waiting for more. Oh yea, John Reis plays synths. (josh)

The Revelators
We Told You Not to Cross Us
Crypt Records

More drunk on beer, hot rod, blue in the face garage punk from this cult label. I love this shit. Remember going to a party at someone's house when you were in high school, and their parents were away, and there's a band playing in the living room? The crowd was out of their heads, drunk, thrashing about, breaking shit, and you were in the corner screaming and throwing empty beer cans in a zealous act of incomprehensible emotion. If that wasn't you, then don't bother listening to this record. They rock. Fuck yea, they rock!
(greg e boy)

Karma To Burn
self-titled
Roadrunner

West Virginia backwoods alterna-rock and roll. Quite good actually. Like the Melvins, but from West Virginia. Heavy. Black Tar and moonshine. A Joy Division cover, "24 Hours" and that titillating pornographic effervescence of seeing your mother fuck your brother who's really your dad. The perfect blend of Appalachia and acid. (greg e boy)

Monroe Mustang
Wusses / Carcrash Head
At A Glance Records

I think that Monroe Mustang would have to be one of the best bands coming out of Austin right now. This is the second seven inch to come out and it's equally as good as the first. Slow tempo, feel good (or bad), pop music, cool cover by Roy Tompkins (Trailer Trash) and also a special Valentine's greeting in a limited number of them. (josh)

Space Needle
The Moray Eel Eats the Space Needle
Zero Hour

The first track is the epic opus, "Where the Fuck's My Wallet?", and the album just runs from there. These boys have definitely digested their share of Pink Floyd records as well as various forms of psychedelics. The triptych of "Hyapatia Lee", "Old Spice", and "Hot for Krishna" rival that of any band, thank kick out the jams. Think the third Zeppelin record ("Gallows Pole", "Tangerine", "That's the Way"). Reefer recommended.
(greg e boy)

The Minders
Paper Plane +2
The Elephant 6 Recording Co.

Tune in, turn on, drop out. Yet another band going for that indie psychedelic sound (Olivia Tremor Control applies in stereo, neutral milk hotel). The first song is quite catchy, with a lot of pop hooks. The two songs on the B side hold their own also. (josh)

Love as Laughter
I'm a Bee +2
K.P.O.

Sam Jayne (ex-Lync frontman) has come out of his room with three more eight track recordings. A bit more garage-ish, but still keeping with the whole idea of LAL. Mark Hamilton (Seductive) plays drums.
(josh)



This is my job

by Jamie Ward, Village Idiot

A short, balding man approached me one day and asked me if I was aware of my reason for being on this spinning sphere that we humans call home. Hoping that I didn't sound to apathetic, but not really knowing what else to say, I replied, "No". He looked past my eyes and said, "They will come and tell you. Then you will know, then and only then, no more". Then he asked me for a quarter. For weeks afterward, I couldn't sleep. Who would "they" be and what would they tell me? I had fantastic visions of being in a field with an unknown person. Blinding lights filled the sky. Were the lights "them"? Was I an abductee? If so, what was my purpose? I tried to tap my unconscious to figure out if I indeed had been told my purpose by these lights. Regression hypnosis, group therapy; I even contacted MUFON on the Internet. This was a troubling time for me. And then came the jokers responsible for the pages you've been reading previous to these written ravings you are currently reading; hoping for some answers, I asked, "Why me?". Then they told me.....

My purpose for writing this:

Here, you broke bastards, are two movies to prepare you to make money the old fashioned way: By Stealing It.

The Taking of Pelham One, Two, Three, (1974), Robert Shaw, Walter Matthau, Jerry Stiller, Martin Balsam, Hector Elizondo and the old man who plays the waiter in "Moonstruck".

So, you're an ex-mercenary, out of "real" work and trying to hustle life like normal folk, but your tastes are too expensive. What do you do? CRIME. Robert Shaw (Jaws) decides to hit New York City where it hurts: in the

wallet, by highjacking a subway car full of mid-afternoon passengers, demanding a million bones for their release. So, with his three similarly disguised accomplices: Mr. Brown, Mr. Blue, and Mr. Grey (sound familiar), he boards the 1:23 train to Pelham St. armed with a sub-machine gun and the fuck all attitude of any good gun for hire. What proceeds is a nervous hour and a half as the hijackers wait their bread. Great plot, sure, but the true reason for watching this instead of looking for a better paying job is the characters. Everyone loves laughing at New Yorkers, and this movie exploits them for all of their loving charm. From the roly-poly station supervisor Cas Dolowitz to Transit Authority Lt. Zack Garber (Matthau, what a fuckin' New Yorker), the thick Brooklyn accents and bad attitudes never quit. Matthau even pronounces "shut up" as "Shaddup", something I have only heard Bugs Bunny (another fine New Yorker) do. The only character who does not warrant hysterical laughter is Shaw, whose disregard for life keeps this film tense. Reason # 2 for this film: Soundtrack. Hopefully, you have your TV hooked up to the stereo, because this soundtrack is unreal. No contempo hits, genre bombs or sappy ballads. This is 1970, when directors still used composers. Fierce drums, big horns. If you try to jack any of these beats, I'm coming to your house to hold you hostage for a million

dollars. I know how to make a zipgun and I'm sick of starving....

The Blue-Eyed Bandit, (Italian, 1975) starring Franco Nero, a really good looking blonde woman and some other Italians.

Another contender for beats I'd hold you hostage for stealing (those with samplers: I'm dead serious) More tense music. Hook it up in stereo or make friends with someone who has a good stereo, go to their house and demand that they either shut up (or Shaddup) and watch it with you or leave for the two hours while you ransack their fridge and plunder their stash. Plot? Oh yeah. Have you seen "The Usual Suspects"? If not, read no further, I'm about to blow it for you. Remember how cool you thought it was when you discovered that Kevin Spacey was faking his limp? Welcome to the Tarantino school for script writing. The idea originally appeared in this Italian classic. Franco Nero is sick of being poor. And what do you do when you are in an Italian heist flick and you're sick of being

poor? Nero gets a wig that him look like he is balding, some contact lenses to hide his distinct blue eyes and fakes a limp in order to establish a dual identity to get a job in one of the city's ministries (not as in a church, you culturally uneducated buffoons). At this job, he learns of money pick up times and procedures all while establishing an air tight alibi. Then he robs that fucker. Problem is, that everyone sees those blue eyes. The rest of the movie is him trying to flee the country with his luciano (that's money to you), while an inept chef, his nymphomaniac wife (the blonde Italian woman I mentioned), an idiotic male gigolo try their damndest to bust him for the reward. God, what fun.

Authors note: I can't really do these films justice on paper. Those who know me and my reviews are already aware of that. But, I AM someone you should trust; I'm the video guy. Just if you see me in public, don't ask me about movies...

THE END

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Pagan Workshop

An interview with Micheal Duncan

by Stabler Hsu

SFS: Let's begin this interview by talking about what it is you do at a typical ritual. Can you run through one ritual and tell us what exactly takes place?

Micheal: I can share a little bit of it. I really have a belief that there should be a "peasant class" of ritual that everybody has a right to participate in, even if they haven't been initiated into that particular group. There are open circles out there that are open to everybody. What you might expect if you were to come to an open circle that I put on here in Austin is: You would show up, and before you entered the circle you would go through an act of purification. This would often be done with a traditional herb of purification, such as pine needles and cedar. I can harvest these locally, I don't have to purchase them. By bathing yourself in the smoke from burning these rid's you of this negative that you don't want to carry into a sacred space, and it also serves to take you to the first step of preparing yourself to do something that you don't normally do everyday. At that point, you would enter where the circle would be cast, and mind you, the church, so to speak in Pagan traditions, is more often outdoors if there is a comfortable place to hold it. It can be in the woods, or by a lake, anywhere. It doesn't always have to

be in the same place. So, you would enter this area and form a circle. The next step may be someone coming along and anointing your forehead, marks you with a little bit of oil in a Celtic cross. This takes you one step deeper again, into doing something tonight that you don't normally do everyday, entering a sacred area. Also, since everybody else in the circle has been anointed with this same oil, it produces a like vibration and a sense of community among the people there. Space would then be delineated, that is, someone would walk the circle, either with their hands, or sometimes a besom. I personally like to use a sword. This marks the space and establishes that this is where the circle is being held. A fire is then built in the center. At that point, we would announce the purpose, for instance, Lughnasad - the first Fall harvest. Then we would do a spiral dance, as always, to turn the wheel of the year. If you do a spiral dance with say, one hundred people and you dance counter clockwise, spiraling into the fire, and then turn and begin to go clockwise back out, you actually dance between two rolls of people dancing inwards. For those of us who have worked for a while with this to make the connection with the energy, it's truly a euphoric feeling. The phrase I like to use to describe it is that it feels like your

Standing Stones



hair is going to stand up on end. So after that is done, there is the sharing of food. There's some sort of liquid, it can be alcoholic or not, which represents the Goddess, and some sort of bread which represents grains of the field. Part of this is both sharing with and taking of a deity. The other aspect of it is that you have just raised power and a lot of folks don't realize what plane that puts them on. Then we would begin at that point to end the ceremony and take down the space that we have created. Generally there's hugs all around and everyone goes their own way.

SFS: Sounds like a cool party. There are a lot of female images in your artwork, maybe we could talk some about women and how they are viewed in the Celtic tradition.

Micheal: There seems to be a belief nowadays that Celtic society was matriarchal. Historic evidence may or may not prove this, but in the current practice of Paganism, and Celtic Paganism in particular,

Celtic Goddess Medallions

women are given equal rights all across the board. Particularly in Ireland, they were very strong figures. If you look into Irish mythology, the two greatest Irish heroes Cuchulainn and Finn Maccumhail were both actually trained by women.

SFS: *What were they trained to do exactly?*

Micheal: They were warriors, very famous warrior characters. In fact, women played a major role, particularly in the life of Cuchulainn. He was trained by a woman and ultimately, in the end it was his relationship or lack thereof with the Morrigan that eventually brought him down.

SFS: *What is the Morrigan?*

Micheal: The Morrigan is perhaps a title put on three Goddesses. An example of the Morrigan would be the tale of the warrior going to battle, and while fording a river he sees a woman washing bloody clothes and he realizes that the clothes are his and that he is going to die that day. So she is the one who foretells death. She is also the raven that picks at the fallen bodies on the battlefield. I think that to most men this is a really scary aspect of woman. As men, we don't give birth. Women understand this act of giving birth and the cycle that also means completion, taking away. The raven on the battlefield represents this completion. Things go back to the earth to be recycled, reused, or reborn.

SFS: *So what does the blood represent in the myth?*

Micheal: The blood represents death,

a proceeding death and the warrior is most shocked by realizing that it's his clothes with the blood on it.

SFS: *That is kinda scary.*

Micheal: The Morrigan does scare a lot of men. For instance, of the jewelry that I manufacture I turn out four pendants of different Goddesses and by far, the Morrigan is bought predominantly by women. Men often admire it, but they don't even want to touch it. (laughs) But, back to women in Celtic society. You can look to Brighid who was a very early



The Morrigan

Goddess figure in Ireland who was very well loved. When Christianity came along, they tried to repress the worship of Brighid and they couldn't do it, so they later made her a saint.

They couldn't abolish the fact that she was being worshipped before Christianity. They then resorted to saying that she was present at the birth of Christ. To this day, especially in the Orkney islands and the remote highlands of Scotland, Brighid is asked to be present during childbirth to assure a safe birth and a healthy child.

SFS: *So what other Celtic traditions are carried on in our society today?*

Micheal: (laughs) That can be a loaded question open to a lot of debate. The Celts originally celebrated four sabbats of sacred times of year. These sabbats were festivals that were geared toward the plant, the harvest, midwinter, and midsummer. So, these were people who lived off of the land and lived in tune with the seasons and celebrated these seasons with ritual. It is rather odd that some of the symbolism and the timing of these sabbats fall hand in hand with things we practice today. An obvious one is Halloween, All Hallows Eve, which was originally known as Samhain on the Celtic calendar. The Celtic new year, the Celtic new day actually starts at the beginning of the night before, so on the first day of November is the time when the veil between worlds is thinnest. Well, the Celts didn't worship ancestors but they did have a reverence for the people who had gone before them. Along with a whole host of deities. At the time when the veil was thinnest, it was thought that these people could cross over and interactions went on. So at that time of year there were great feasts laid out which were feasts for the ancestors to come and partake in. To this day,

you could go to a Scottish gathering or a Scottish church festival and they will practice what is called "Flowers of the Forest". This is a small ritual where people call out the names of those who have passed away. This originated as Samhain. That was the time of completion and people were remembering those who had passed over the veil.

SFS: *So what does that mean, "the veil that separates worlds"?*

Micheal: The early inhabitants of Ireland lived at a time when there were several invasions. One of the last groups to inhabit Ireland before men and women as we know today, were the Tuatha De Danaan. When the sons of Mil came to Ireland, these were Celts who were migrating from the Iberian Peninsula. They interacted with the Tuatha De Danaan very briefly. They proceeded to have a battle with them, but the next day when the sons of Mil went out onto the battlefield to look at the slain bodies, they couldn't find any of the Danaan anywhere. They couldn't find any traces of them living or dead. It is said that they shifted time somehow and that they still live there amongst the trees, beneath the hills. The separation between the two is called the veil. If you look to the mythology, and sometimes what is deemed as history, you'll find cases where there have been marriages between the fairy race and the race of humans. They always meet in places where the veil is thinnest: dusk or sunrise, where it's neither light nor dark; a bridge over water, because you're neither on land nor water, you're in between the two; and places where it's foggy. It's full of these tales.



SFS: *So on Halloween the veil is really thin?*

Micheal: (laughs) Yea.

SFS: *So what about Christmas and Easter, do you think that they represent some Pagan sabbats?*

Micheal: I tread this question with a bit of caution, because I stand behind everybody's right to practice the religion of their choice. You do find that people who have really explored the roots of these festivals find that they predate Christianity. Yule is traditionally the time of the birth of the Sun God, it's the shortest day of the year, from then on the days get longer. So, the ceremony at Yule would be one of building a great fire to have sympathetic magic that would bring light back into people's lives. It's rather odd that the birth of Christ, the son of God, falls at the same time as the birth of the Sun God. When you move further into the year and you begin celebrating festivals such as Easter, this falls hand in hand with some of the Spring celebrations like Beltane. Beltane is the time of year when the young Sun God is now matured, and the Goddess has also grown to the

point where they mate. This symbolic mating is where you get the fertility of the land, coming from the Earth mother and the Sky father coming together.

Unfortunately, I think that the craft of Paganism gets a bad name here, where they talk about people screwing around.

Though this was often done for practical reasons. For instance, if you ran a farm in Ireland and you wanted to marry the young lady next door, well you had to know that in order to run a farm you need help, and the help were children, your children. So, at Beltane in the days of old, you were encouraged to take the young lady of your choice and take her into the woods to make love. When she turned up pregnant, you knew that the marriage was blessed and you went ahead and got married.

SFS: *That sounds good, but that was "in the days of old". So what is it that people get out of performing these rituals today?*

Micheal: First of all, and particularly among women, people are getting sick of the male dominance of religions today. They're looking for something with a little more balance and in some cases women are drawn to groups that are entirely feminine. The thought there is that if you go with



a group that works completely with feminine deities, it will counter balance what is a completely masculine religion. I find that people like the Celtic Pagan tradition, at least the way we run it, because it is balanced and honors both males and females. Secondly, there is the tribal aspect of what we are doing. Religion today doesn't seem to be made up of close groups of friends anymore. Meetings at masses and so on tend to be gatherings of complete strangers a lot of the time. At our rituals, people hug each other because they are happy to see one another. There's a community feast and everyone contributes. There's a telling of traditional myths for that time of year and an exploration into how these old myths reflect things in our current lives. What was good for our ancestors two and three thousand years ago is still good for us today. Also, we are a society that basically lives nine to five today. If you figure that for thousands of years up until recently we were more of a society that lived off the land. We understood the cycles of the Earth (the seasons). One of the things that people get out of the ritual is the sense of really being connected to that cycle of life. Today, we practice eight sabbats which celebrate everything from the Spring planting to the Fall harvest. We are connecting with the rhythms of the Earth that we live on, and similarly, we may begin to understand the rhythms of our own lives.

SFS: *Are there rituals that are based on the lunar cycle?*

Micheal: More of the inner workings is done during the moons. When you have a full moon or a



dark moon you can have a ritual. Full moons are more for working without, bringing things into your life. Dark moons are more for looking within, doing meditation, facing the demon within one's self. A lot of people who don't know about the craft ask me things like, "Do demons ever pop up in the middle of a ritual?" Well, that has always been metaphorical language. No, the devil is going to walk into the room. In fact, the devil is a creation of Christianity. It's a culmination of the Horned God of the Forest and the Norse Underworld which actually wasn't bad, it was an underworld place. If you sit and think of what is the worst attribute of yourself, that is probably the demon you'll face. If you think in terms of demons, that's probably the last thing you're gonna want to see. It's about personal growth and having a close group of friends to support you through this growth.

SFS: *So, it's all in your head then?*

Micheal: Boy, that's the one hundred thousand dollar question! When I work with people and teach people, I'll tell them that there are two points of view. One is that it's all psychology and that everything in ritual is opening up new things in their minds. The other is the view that it's all without - that every tree, every rock, every house, and so on

has its own spark of life, no matter how small; that the deities we work with are real energy forms. The latter maybe is a more romantic point of view, but it is held by many people. I probably lean more towards the romantic view, being an artist. Simply because of the way I've experienced things, I really believe that some things are without, but whether you view it as without or within the system works. It's not up to me to tell you what's right or wrong in how you view it.

SFS: *Well, I think we're running out of space. Do you want to talk about Cu at all?*

Micheal: (laughs) The Irish Wolfhound!

SFS: *How big is that dog?*

Micheal: Cu is 135 lbs. and I'm glad to say putting on more weight. Cu Mor is just a character. Sometimes he likes to participate in ritual, but he tends to be an energy junkie. Everything grounds to the dog and then he's awake all night. He will be two years old in April. We got him as a rescue from a wolfhound rescue organization, he was 95 lbs. and had matted hair and sores on his body which is a shame because wolfhounds are not expensive to keep. He's great, walks with slack on the leash, lays down on command, and chases away anybody at the door selling magazines.

SFS: *Yikes!*

Note: *Mike Duncan is cofounder of a Celtic Pagan clan (tribe) in the DFW area, and is doing groundwork to form the same here in Austin. He hosts an ongoing workshop in Celtic Paganism, and is accepting three students for the Celtic path, call him at: (512) 458-5589. ■*



Hats off to The Playdoh Squad, one of the more entertaining live acts based here in Austin. Possessing and incredible amount of unbridled energy and capti-



vating presence on stage, these four will most assuredly place you in a state of awe. And what was that song, "Drive Like Megaforce"? That came out of nowhere. The crowd was screaming uncontrollably during their show last month at Emo's.

First of all, just looking at these guys you'd never believe that they even knew each other, much less played in the same band. They look more like four guys that ended up in the same subway car, or maybe they all took the same English class at UT. Whatever it is that brings The Playdoh Squad together must be pretty heavy though, because they really click musically.

The drummer looks like the Diceman and plays like a Madman. The bassist is straight out of Trixter (great job, by the way) and plays like an old bouncy style that reminds me, at times, of the Surf Punks. The guitarist is reminiscent of a Devoesque science geek with an old SG kinda like rocking his ass off. And last, but definitely not least — The singer...My God! Where did this guy come from? It's not long before he's a star because his stage presence alone could take any band to screaming success. Unstoppable, and a pleasure to witness, he weaves a web of frantic movements into blissful moments of clarity and precision. The Playdoh Squad forms their magic song after song, unwilling to relent. Have a beer or three before this one — you'll need it to shield yourself from the shock and dismay you'll experience when they come on and go to work.

—Stabler Hsu

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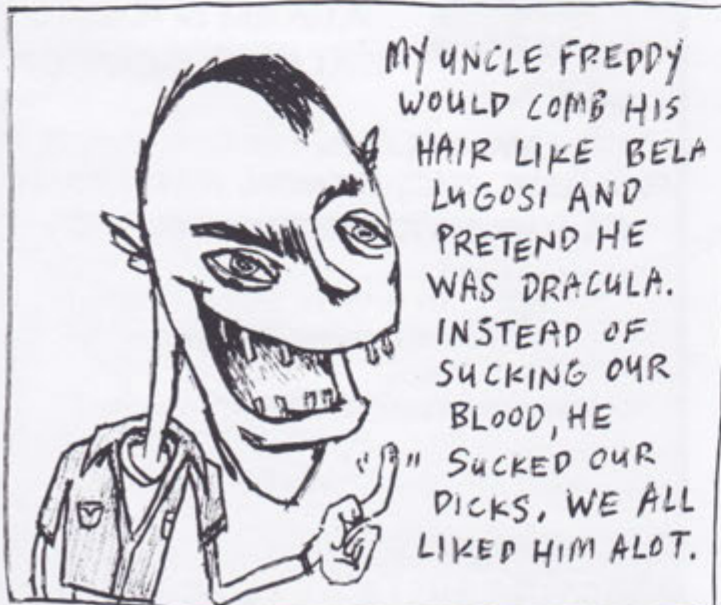
6th Street's Lament by E.J.

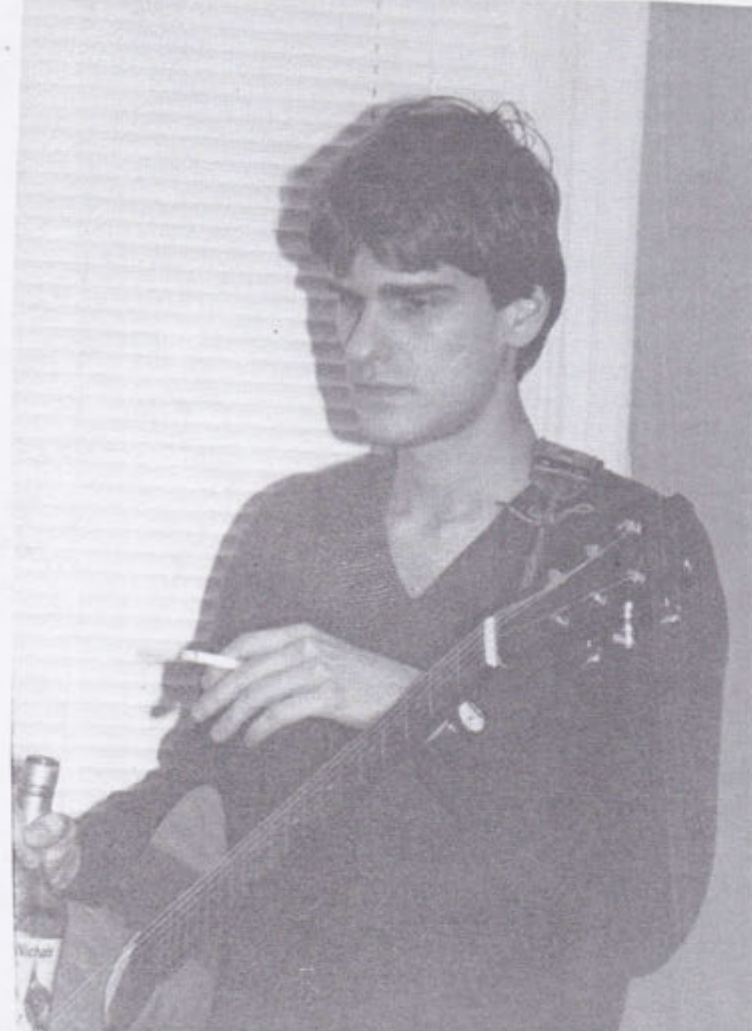
Every town has one. A street where one has an unhealthy variety of drinking establishments to choose from. Austin, being the college town that it is, has a larger choice than many. It has even become a tourist attraction where one can see the sights; the laughter, the tears, the fights, and the vomit, all swirled into one happy arena of lust and disgust. Many of you have had your share of 6th Street adventures, where, much like fishing stories, have their share of exaggeration. "They were this big!", and "I had so many, I had to throw some back!" But as fun as it can be, it can also be horrific in it's equal doses of sexual aggression and sexual rejection.

If you are a woman trying to imbibe (and not looking for that one night stand, or even that relationship that usually also ends on the same street), then it can be difficult to enjoy oneself. You're trying to have a conversation with your girlfriends, and men keep interrupting with inane and bland comments. Or, you say yes to one dance with that persistent (usually because he has to be) guy that then gloms onto you for the rest of the night. Or, the dance partner who takes that parallel between dancing and sex a bit too far and immediately tries to grind crotch. And last, but definitely not least, is the completely malignant hit and run. You're weaving your way through the swaying crowd and then you feel it, the insidious hand that probes your intimates and then just as quickly snakes back into the crowd, almost before you realize that it wasn't an accident. To be kind to men on 6th street is must, even the pests, because they are only human, ultimately alone and looking for love (or quick simulation), but these last one's are a scourge on the simple purity of drunken revelry. I don't know about you ladies, but when this happens my first reaction is to want to smear the pavement with every man there and for the rest of the night every well-meaning guy that approaches me gets a mental kick between the legs.

So I have tried to come up with a few ideas to protect oneself from the sexual tension of this bar scene that we have. The best one is the tried and true 'safety in numbers'. Travel in large packs of laughing and derisive women. Nothing is more intimidating to men, unless they are also in a pack. If you don't have a large group of women to drink with then there is wedding ring approach, but I've found that to be largely ineffective as no one really pays much attention to that anymore. Just a thought, but you could smear your privates with shoplifter dye so the next grabber will be caught red-handed, and as a result red-nosed. But that could be messy in a crowded bar where you can't move without touching someone. I'm thinking of having a T-shirt made that reads "Not interested, but you can buy me that drink anyway," but this just wouldn't go with my hipster image. Or, tables set aside in bars for 'untouchables' that don't want to be approached. All I know is that my usual approach to smile kindly and say no just doesn't seem to be enough. I just might have to take some drastic measures. I'm not sure what but you'll be sure to know. I am the postwoman towards the end of Christmas that hums as she cleans her rifle.

I've compiled a list of come-on lines, and here they are: (1) I didn't know angels flew so low. (2) The only letters missing from my alphabet are u and i. (3) You must be exhausted (pause as she asks why), because you've been running through my mind all night. (4) Ouch! (hold cheek and smile charmingly) You give me a toothache you're so sweet. (5) (this one is effective if only earnestly said and only used once at each bar) I've been saving myself for you. (6) That dress would look better on my floor. (7) Do you have a little (insert ethnic origin here) in you? Do you want some? (8) You must wash your jeans in windex, because I can see myself in them. (9) Your dad's a thief. Who else stole the stars from the sky and put them in your eyes?





Dear Burt,
If the Beatles are the greatest rock band of all time, and Clapton is God, who is better?

Just Curious

I don't know who's better, but have you heard of Gentle Giant? They're less of a cross between The Beatles and Clapton than they are a cross between Yes and Jethro Tull.

Dear Burt,
The other day I was riding my low rider bicycle down Lamar and I stopped at the Diamond Shamrock to purchase a bumper of my favorite chilled beverage. Little did I know at the time that I was being stalked by a local police officer who happened to be off duty and was wearing civilian clothes and driving a cheap, American econo-car. After exiting the mini-mart at the gas station I stepped out to the curb, bike in hand, to uncap my \$2 brown-bagged buddy. I could feel the bubbly coldness of the brew before it even hit my lips; I was jonzin' for a smooth buzz to get my head straight for the rest of my ride (or day, that is). All of the sudden, out of nowhere, this belligerent white male descended upon me and proceeded to basically read me my rights in the middle of my first swig. Needless to say, half of that gulp ended up right in shorty's face. He reeled back a step or two before I clocked his tired ass in the jaw, then I kicked him a couple of times in the head and rode over his arm just like that guy did to Mad Max. I will say right now to any cop, badge or no badge, don't ever try to come between Da Lo Boys and their drinks again. This one porker is lucky that my homies weren't with me when this shit went down, because if they had it would have been a lot worse. It wasn't until yesterday that I found out that there is a warrant out for me because of this and I really had no idea that this citizen cop was actually a real chunk of ham on legs. It would be different if we went around selling dope to kids (under 15), or were breaking some sort of law. I'm old enough to buy a beer, why the fuck can't I drink the shit without being hassled by the man?

Brent "Skully" Martindale
DA LO BOYS

I've heard of you guys, and you can hang with me and my homeboys anytime you want. I don't know about your story though.

Salt For Slugs,
I truly enjoyed the article on iridology! What a clever little scheme to feed the sheep, who themselves are ready for consumption. I am a doctor of sciences and was intrigued by such information. What a life this guy must have, staring into eyes all day. I know I'm jealous.

Johnny Hanson

You sound like a very cynical man Johnny, I'm jealous.

Burt Cocaine,
I enjoyed your article (Ego's vs. The Carousel, issue 1), and had to write in and ask you one thing: are you for real? To begin with, you can't be serious about the Gay Veterans of Foreign Wars. I would know, because I was in Nam and have wrestled with a lot of manpussy (ass) since my return and I know of no such group. Also, I hang out at The Carousel all the time and no one has ever offered me a free-beer, never. You expect me to believe that they would give you one though, don't you? Who in the hell is Barry Convex and what is the New Flesh? You probably made that up too, you pervert. I don't like your writing style either. You're nothing like the late Bukowski or anyone else on the cutting edge of cool, so don't even try to be.
Chet Brenmeyer

Yea, I'm for real you piece of shit. What you don't know will most likely multiply exponentially as you continue with your life of being a dickhead.

Dear Salt on a Slug
Praise God in all his glory and spank the devil to kingdom come. I am concerned you have distorted the gospel of the Christ child in your little maga"zine" project. I love a good story just as much as the next guy but what is the nonsense? The idea of writing for any other purpose but to praise the manger is a sin against the Virgin and her blessed womb. You are in the bible belt son. So, grab a pew and get with the gospel.

Eternal Love and Forgiveness,
Etta Sue Brown

I don't believe in anything, so there.

Salt For Slugs,
Hi, my name is Wallace Shawn and I manage a band up here in Chicago called Crust, and we have a bit of a problem with you and your little fanzine. We've been around for a couple of years now and we don't appreciate you Texas beef eating hicks using our name. You better cut that shit out now, or there's gonna be trouble. We do take bribes though, so get in touch before it's too late.

Wallace Shawn

It's cool you'd consider a bribe, but you're dealing with some broke-ass mofo's.

Dear Burt,
What advice would you give the youth?
Concerned (New Hampshire)

Love, hate, the future, who knows what it's all about? Have a good time and don't get caught!

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Dear Burt,
Know about any cool new bands?

On-the-Scene

(USA/Europe/Japan)

No! (well...) I'm much more interested in Goblin, John Carpenter, Christopher Scott, and Witold Lutoslawski. Also Indian soundtrack music from the sixties and seventies, and "found" music and poetry. Strictly highbrow.

Dear Burt,

Does transportation of illegal narcotics between two points in the United States (or territories thereof), albeit through international waters, constitute importation?

On the Lookout (Ohio)

It depends on the jurisdiction; from Puerto Rico to New York, it's not importation; from Hawaii to San Diego, it stands that it is!

Dear Burt,

Do you ever write poetry?

Jenny Stevens

*Examining corpses ain't no glamorous life.
Another dead victim goes under the knife.
There's something going on the cops didn't see.
Heroic coroner solves one more mystery. Just a man named...
(Contest: best completion of poem wins date with their own right hand!)*

To the Salt:

Have you ever thought that you were degrading women with the image of the slug. Men like you are pigs, it's this type of thing that makes me feel like killing. I am a peaceful woman and a proud feminist. Recently I rounded up my buddies to picket a Russ Meyer film festival they were having downtown. First we knifed all of the tires in the parking lot and then we bashed the evil animals with our signs as they would exit the theatre. I heard that there is to be a slug rally on Congress Avenue during South by Southwest. Well, you better have eyes in the back of your head, check the trees, alleys, and dark recesses. Because that's where we will be lying in wait. I don't know about you, but everything that I look at is like a mirror for my problems, and it's time to do something about it!

Terri Jockey (Hate Club #95568)

I'm not really sure how you draw your conclusions, but slashing tires is a pretty effective way to get a point across. However, there are some hang-ups involved. For instance, right after you stab the sidewall a cop rolls up with a light on you. Or, you slip while puncturing the tire and end up with a knife hanging out of your leg. I remember a kid Harold who used to live down the street. He's a prime example. He was an avid DC comics fan, and hated anything to do with Blast comics, so one night at a convention he went after the vehicles that had Blast stickers on them. He even threatened to blow up their kiosk. After making his way through about seven cars he slipped and rammed the knife through the front of his shin, taking a small chunk out of his shin bone in the process. The next thing you know, the cops are carrying him to an ambulance on the other side of the convention center. So, remember the rally is on! Come and get salinated!



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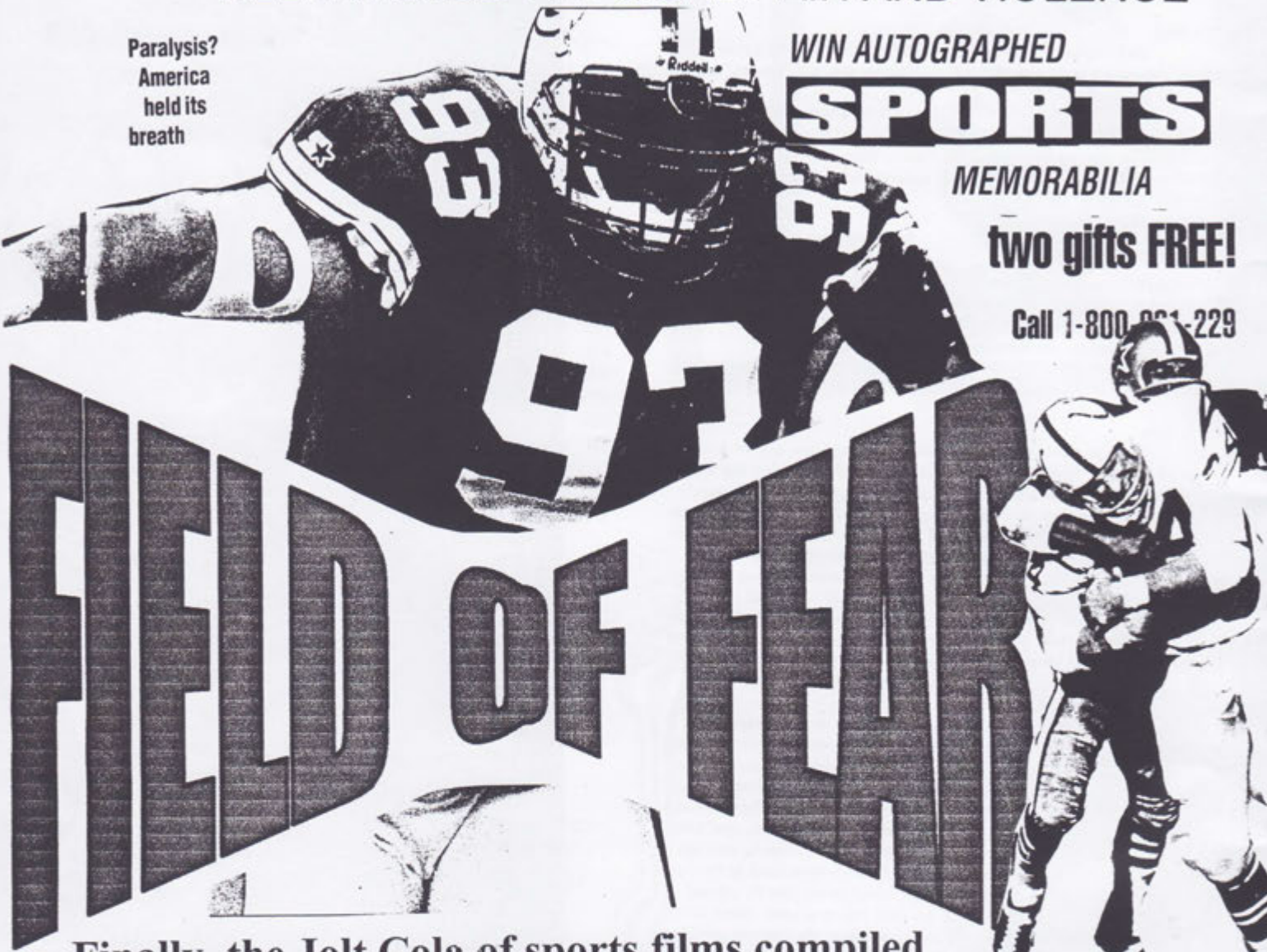
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