EDITOR’S NOTES

By Tim Redmond
TRedmond@sfbg.com

I was over at the San Francisco Public Defender’s office the other day, headed for a press roundtable, and I’d forgotten what room the event was in so I wound up at the reception desk on the second floor. When I arrived, a man was standing at the counter, highly agitated, trying to explain that something was wrong with his case, and that nobody was listening and he was getting the runaround — the kind of scene you see every day at the bottom level of the legal system, where people who don’t have money scramble constantly to figure out which end is up.

And on the other side of the counter was a young guy who was calmly collecting the information, analyzing the problem, and explaining exactly what the client needed to do. He sent him a few doors down to another service then said, with a smile: “But don’t worry, if they can’t help you, just come right back here and we’ll get you taken care of.” He was the model of what a good public employee ought to be — professional, friendly, polite, smart, and (particularly important in this office) sympathetic.

And as I stepped up to ask him where the CONTINUES ON PAGE 6
Do the right thing, Dianne

By Robert Haaland and Rafael Mandelman

OPINION At the end of World War II, approximately 36 percent of American workers belonged to a union. Today that number has shrunk to about 12 percent, lagging behind the world’s other industrial democracies. But now, with a Democratic president in office, we have a realistic chance of enacting the most significant piece of labor legislation in decades, the Employee Free Choice Act, which would protect the right of workers to organize into a union.

The opposition, of course, is well organized and well funded. Opponents will spend more than $200 million to defeat the bill in the Senate. They will argue that EFCA is just a special interest bill that helps big labor. But the truth is that the legislation should be part of the long-term economic recovery plan and is key to rebuilding the middle class.

In 1980, average CEO pay was 42 times that of the average blue-collar worker. By 2006, CEO pay had grown to 364 times the average blue collar worker’s pay. A survey of median weekly earnings in 2007 revealed that union workers make 30 percent more than their nonunion counterparts, and are 59 percent more likely to have employer-provided health coverage than other workers.

The key EFCA reform, and the one that has generated the most controversy, is called “card-check.” Under EFCA, if the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) finds that a majority of employees have signed written authorization forms designating the union as their collective bargaining representative, the union is certified.

The concept is so good it’s hard to imagine why anyone would criticize it: the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission wants to cover the Sunset Reservoir with solar panels, creating the largest municipal solar generating project in the country. The money would come from existing SFPUC revenue — no new taxpayer dollars. The Sierra Club loves the idea, and Mayor Gavin Newsom is pushing it.

We agree that the reservoir is a perfect place for a solar project, and that the city ought to be pursuing this.

But the structure of the deal makes us uncomfortable — and the financing shows a serious flaw in how federal money for renewable energy is allocated.

Under the terms of the proposal, a private company, Recurrent Energy, would finance and build the plant at a cost of perhaps $40 million. The city would finance and build the plant at a cost of perhaps $40 million. The city would have an option to buy the plant from Recurrent after seven years for $33 million.

The good news is that this would be a public-power project — the city would own the electricity and could use it to power public buildings and eventually, once the community choice aggregation (CCA) system is running, could sell it as retail power to residents and businesses.

But Sups. Ross Mirkarimi and David Campos have asked the obvious question: Why is a private company even involved? Why can’t the city build the solar generating station itself? The CPUC’s answer: It’s cheaper to let Recurrent do the work — because the private outfit will get a $12 million tax break from the federal government.

That’s a serious problem — why is the Obama administration giving tax breaks for private projects that aren’t available to cities? “What we should be looking at is why San Francisco, with all its clout in Washington, can’t get that same sort of subsidy for a public project,” Campos told us.

Or as Mirkarimi put it: “This only makes sense to me if there’s some guarantee that the city will actually buy the plant in seven years. Otherwise we’re going to look back at this in year 15 and realize it’s not such a good deal.”

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Yes, the Recurrent deal offers solar now — and that’s important. But the supervisors shouldn’t rush this through. At the very least, they should pass a resolution asking House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to seek to direct the same subsidies that private companies can get to public solar projects — and to delay a final vote on this until there’s a better analysis of why a private company should be given a long-term contract for what ought to be a public project.

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DIANNE

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San Francisco

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Locally...
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LETTERS

MUNI’S BAD TWO-YEAR BUDGET

Another reason a two-year budget cycle is a bad idea (“No balance in two-year budget,” 4/15/09) is that it allows the powers that be to reduce the visibility of bad budget decisions. As case in point — SFMTA (which runs Muni) had a two-year budget cycle, courtesy of Proposition A in 2007. When the (unelected) commissioners created their first two-year budget, they sneaked a fare increase in the second year of the budget, an increase most Muni riders are still blissfully ignorant of. In July, the adult Fast Pass goes up $10, to $35 per month. The youth/senior/disabled pass goes up $5 to $15 per month, a 50 percent increase.

Fare strike, anyone?

Marc Norton
San Francisco

WHAT’S A GREAT PLACE TO WORK?

A great place to work is one because its workers believe that it is a terrific employer (Editor’s note, 4/15/09). So we have developed a methodology that looks exclusively at the workplace from the employee perspective. (By “we,” I mean my coauthor and fellow journalist Milton Moskowitz and myself, along with the Great Place to Work Institute.) Our primary way of determining the businesses that make our lists is through our employee survey, which is filled out by a random selection of employees at each company. Our survey asks for employees’ opinions about whether they trust the management, feel respected and treated fairly, have pride in their work, and feel a sense of camaraderie with other employees.

Because we believe that whether a company is a great place to work can only be answered definitively by those working there, we would reframe your question this way: What are the opinions of employees working at a company that is not green (such as an oil company) or a defense contractor

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Hardcore Christians and other ridiculous assholes probably won't agree with me here, but the truth about human desire is that it knows no bounds and is utterly insatiable.

--from "Peepshow: Missed Connection, found somehow" by Justin Juiu in the Sex SF blog

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Uncivil union

What the fight over Larry Mazzola says about the progressive and labor movements and their uneasy relationship

By Steven T. Jones
steve@sfbg.com

Who really cares about an appointment to the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District Board of Directors? There isn’t a delicate balance of power on the board or any major initiative at stake in this fairly obscure district. San Francisco certainly has more pressing issues and concerns.

Yet the Board of Supervisors’ April 14 vote to reject Larry Mazzola Jr. and select Dave Snyder for that board says more about San Francisco’s political dynamics, the state of the American labor movement, the psychological impact of the recession, how the city will grow, and the possibilities and pitfalls facing the board’s new progressive majority than any in recent memory.

It was a vote that meant nothing and everything at the same time, a complex and telling story of brinksmanship in which both sides of the progressive movement arguably lost. And it was a vote that came at a time when they need each other more than ever.

“It was a win for the Newsom-oriented elements of labor,” Sup. Chris Daly, who helped spark the conflict, told the Guardian.

The bloc of six progressive supervisors who shot down Mazzola—who helps run the powerful plumbers union and was the San Francisco Labor Council’s unwavering choice for an appointment that has traditionally been labor’s seat on the bridge board—is the same bloc the unions helped elected last year. It is also the same bloc that has been fighting the hardest to minimize budget-related layoffs.

The vote says a tremendous amount about the crucial alliance between progressives and labor, how that delicate partnership formed, and what the future holds.

PLUMBERS VS. PROGRESSIVES

The Mazzola name carries a lot of weight in San Francisco labor circles. The Web site for the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry Local 38 (UA 38) features a photo of U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis standing between Larry Mazzola Sr. and Larry Mazzola Jr., the father and son team that runs the union.

But the Mazzolas and their union are also controversial. As the Guardian has reported ("Plumbers gone wild," 2/1/06), the union owns a large share of the Konocti Harbor Resort (which a lawsuit by the Department of Labor said was a misuse of the union’s pension funds) and owns the Civic Center Hotel, which tenants and city officials say has been willfully neglected by a union suspected of wanting to bulldoze and develop the site. The plumbers and other members of the building trades have also fought with progressives over development issues and generally back moderate-to-conservative candidates.

Sup. Chris Daly and several progressive groups locked horns with the union over the hotel a few years ago, and Mazzola Sr. responded by opposing Daly’s 2006 reelection campaign, targeting him with nasty mailers and donating office space to Daly’s opponent, Rob Black. Yet more progressive unions like Service Employees International Union Local 1021, which represents city employees, convinced the Labor Council to back Daly and union support helped Daly win.

So when Mazzola Jr. came before Daly’s Rules Committee last month, the supervisor unloaded on him, and Mazzola gave as good as he got, telling Daly he didn’t want his support and defiantly telling the committee he didn’t know much about the bridge district, or its issues, but he expected the job anyway. Those on all sides of the issue agreed it was a disaster.

“He was just patently unqualified for the position,” Daly told the Guardian. Mazzola tells us his experience with labor contracts would be an asset for the position, but he admits the committee meeting didn’t go well. “I was caught off-guard and put in a defensive mode that altered my planned presentation,” Mazzola told us.

Whatever the case, Sup. David Campos joined Daly in keeping the Mazzola nomination stuck in committee while the progressive supervisors privately asked labor leaders to offer another choice. “We said, ‘Give us anyone else as long as they can intelligently talk about transportation issues and the bridge district,’” Daly said.

But labor dug in. “It seemed as though the board was trying to dictate to labor what labor should

CONTINUES ON PAGE 12
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SFBG.COM/NEWS + CULTURE 9
ALERTS

By Andrew Shaw
alerts@sfbg.com

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22

People’s Park 40th anniversary
A health fair kicks off the anniversary festivities for Berkeley’s People’s Park. You can also join Easy Does It Disability Assistance today. People’s Voice Poetry on Thursday, a Founders Forum with the park’s creators, and live music Saturday and Sunday.
2–5 p.m., Free
2556 Haste, Berk.
www.peoplespark.org

THURSDAY, APRIL 23

Support labor
San Francisco’s labor movement meets to support and shape the Obama administration’s agenda on workers. The group is sending a delegation to Sen. Diane Feinstein’s office this month to urge her to support the Employee Free Choice Act. Help support Unite Here Local 2 in their contract battles.
3:30 p.m., Free
Unite Here Local 2 Union Hall
215 Golden Gate, SF
hmlstein@earthlink.net

Is Feminism Passed?
The International Socialist Organization (ISO) commented recently that a women’s movement to fight sexism is an unnecessary anachronism. Radical Women explore and critique the position.
7 p.m., free
New Valencia Hall
625 2nd, Suite 202, SF
baradicalwomen@earthlink.net

SATURDAY, APRIL 25

“High Stakes” Special Election
The Older Women’s League takes on the May 19 election, what’s at stake, and why it’s so important. OWL also hosts members of California Association of Retired Americans for a discussion on the ballot measures, the California budget, and the impact of the federal stimulus package.
11 a.m., free
Older Women’s League
870 Market, room 1185, SF
www.owl.org

Walk Against Rape
Join San Francisco Women Against Rape in its fourth walk and fundraiser celebrating Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Empower survivors of sexual assault in this three-mile walking journey, which starts at Justin Herman Plaza and ends in a rally in Dolores Mission Park.
10 a.m.–noon, free
Justin Herman Plaza
One Market, SF
www.firstgiving.com/3war to register

Parents in the Schools
Parents for Public Schools hosts Bringing Parents into Public Schools, the annual celebration of its 10-year anniversary. The program features writer, radio personality, and public school advocate Sandra Tsing Loh. Free parking from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Mission High School, entrance on Dolores Street. Register online.
9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m., free
Women’s Building
3541 18th St., SF
www.popsf.org
10 STEALING MY FUTURE
SUNDAY, APRIL 26

Sunday Streets
Bring the streets to life in safe, fun, carfree fashion in this first of six Sunday Streets events. Busy city streets will be blocked to auto traffic as participants enjoy dancing, yoga, skating, biking, walking, hula hooping and more.
9 a.m.–1 p.m., free
Embarcadero from Aquatic Park to AT&T Park, SF
www.sundaysstreetssf.com

TUESDAY, APRIL 28

The Siege of Gaza
Legendary novelist, poet, and activist Alice Walker discusses her recent visit to Gaza. This program also features an interview with Malhe Rabazan of KPFA’s “Voices of the Middle East and North Africa.” A benefit for Code Pink and KPFA Radio.
7:30–9:30 p.m., $12
First Congregational Church
of Oakland
2501 Harrison, Oak.
www.kpfa.org/events aroo

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By Andrew Shaw
alerts@sfbg.com

“Inside SEIU, we’ve been struggling for four years basically on a difference of ideology and vision of what the labor movement is.”
Sal Rosselli, head of National Union of Healthcare Workers

NOISE
Devendra Banhart, Kush Arora, Boy in Static, Kero One, Japanther, Pangaea

PIXEL VISION
Cherry Blossom Parade, banana cookies, hot Tomales, Seth Rogen, Look of the Day

SEX SF
An interview with trans sex superstar Wendy Williams, a hip girls’ guide to UTIs, hot sex events

POLITICS
Offshore oil protest, Daly and the Dems, torture and Yoo, should prisoners have cell phones
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Wednesday, April 29, 2009
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Alex L. Pitcher Room
Southeast Community College
1800 Oakdale Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94124

For more information on the cleanup activities at Hunters Point Shipyard, please contact:

Mr. Keith Forman
Navy Base Realignment and Closure Environmental Coordinator
1455 Frazee Road, Suite 900
San Diego, CA 92108-4310
Local telephone number: (415) 308-1458
Office telephone number: (619) 532-0913
Fax number: (619) 532-0995
Email: keith.s.forman@navy.mil

Information is also available on the Navy’s Hunters Point Shipyard website:
Unions cont."

Do,” Michael Theriault, who heads the San Francisco Building and Construction Trade Council. And the other unions decided to back the trades, for a number of complicated reasons.

“The reason we supported Larry Mazzola is because this was important to the plumbers union,” said Mike Casey, president of the Labor Council and head of Unite Here (which includes the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union).

“To the extent we can support the trades, we want to.”

So when the four most conservative members of the Board of Supervisors used a parliamentary trick to call the Mazzola nomination up to the full board on April 14, the stage was set for the standoff.

THE STATE OF LABOR
Labor is truly a house divided, despite its universal interest in minimizing recession-related layoffs and taking advantage of a new Congress and White House that is generally supportive of labor’s holy grail: the Employee Free Choice Act, which would make it far easier to form unions.

The April 25 founding convention of National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW) in San Francisco caps a years-long battle between Sal Rosselli’s United Healthcare Workers (UHW) and their SEIU masters (see “Union showdown,” 1/28/09). Rosselli and many others say SEIU under Andy Stern has become undemocratic and has climbed in bed with corporate America, while SEIU says getting bigger has made the union better able to advocate for workers. Both accuse the other of being power-hungry and not fighting fair.

“Inside SEIU, we’ve been struggling for four years basically on difference of ideology and vision of what the labor movement is,” Rosselli told us. David Regan, who SEIU named as a UHW trustee after ousting Rosselli, told us the union divisions have been overstated by the media. “Everyone is together in pushing the Employee Free Choice Act,” he said, glossing over the fact that the legislation is in trouble and recently lost the support of U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein.

Nationally, SEIU has been at war with all of the most progressive unions. The union recently made peace with the California Nurses Association after a particularly nasty struggle that involves many of the same dynamics as SEIU vs. NUHW, including accusations by CNA that SEIU was a barrier to achieving single-payer healthcare and was illegally meddling in its internal affairs.

SEIU is also accused of breaking up Unite Here, which fought the most high-profile labor battle here since Newsom became mayor in its contract fight with the big hotel chains. Last month, a large faction from the old Unite affiliated with SEIU, whose officials say they were just helping out after the end of what all knew was a bad marriage. “This is an example of a merger that didn’t take,” SEIU spokesperson Michelle Ringuette told us. But the building trades have backed Unite Here in its fight against Stern’s SEIU. As Casey told us, “We’re in a major fight over our right to exist. There’s no other way to characterize it.”

Yet in San Francisco, SEIU plays a different role. Local 1021 is the advocate for the little guy, representing front-line city workers who deliver social and public health services. It is the union facing the deepest layoffs in the coming city budget fight and is still negotiating contract givebacks with the Mayor’s Office. The union’s biggest allies in City Hall are the exact same six supervisors who voted against Mazzola.

So why this standoff? SEIU, Unite Here, and other progressive unions share the Labor Council with the building trades, which are traditionally more conservative and friendly with downtown and, these days, starting to really get desperate for work. “We have thousands of guys on the verge of losing their homes and families,” Theriault said. “We’re in a major fight over our right to exist. There’s no other way to characterize it.”

That was one reason the San Francisco Labor Council last year cut a deal with Lennar Corporation to back Proposition G, which lets Lennar develop more than 10,000 homes in the southeast sector of the city. Daly, who wanted firmer guarantees of more affordable housing, was livid over the deal and has been at odds with the council ever since. But Daly said labor’s undercutting of progressives goes back even further and includes the early reelection endorsement Rosselli’s UHW gave Newsom in 2007, which helped keep big-name local progressives out of the race.

Tenants groups, affordable housing advocates, and alternative transportation supporters form the backbone of progressive politics, but on development projects, they often clash with the trade unionists who
“Inside SEIU, we’ve been struggling for four years basically on a difference of ideology and vision of what the labor movement is.”

Sal Rosselli, head of National Union of Healthcare Workers

just want work. And labor expects support from the progressive supervisors. As Mazzola pointed out, “It was labor that got most of those guys elected.”

But labor has its own fights on the horizon. SEIU fears deep city job cuts if the Mayor’s Office can’t be persuaded to start supporting new revenue measures. NUHW is getting challenged by SEIU for every member the try to sign up. And Unite Here’s hotel contracts start expiring in six months, reopening its battle with downtown hotel managers.

“We’re going to be in a real war with some of those employers,” Casey said. Yet he said its actually good time for the otherwise distracting fights with SEIU over how nice to play with big corporations. “I embrace this fight because I think this is exactly the struggle we need to have in the labor movement.”

But the Mazzola fight was one that neither side relished.

TO THE BRINK
The Board of Supervisors chambers was filled with union members flying their colors on April 14, but the progressive supervisors were just as unified, voting 6-5 to reject Mazzola. All that was left was the political posturing, the decision of what to do next, and the fallout.

“I am disappointed and surprised by the board’s action,” Sup. Sean Elsbernd (who voted for Mazzola and publicly called it “a sin” to deny him) told us, refusing to confirm the private joy over the outcome that many sources say he has expressed. “What shocked me is a majority of the board turned their back on labor.”

Daly admits that the standoff hurt progressives. “I’m not sure who came up with it, but it’s certainly true that the Sean Elbernds of the world were able to take full advantage of the situation to drive a wedge between unions and progressives,” Daly said.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 14}
Fun under siege
Nightlife and street parties in San Francisco face official crackdowns—again

By Steven T. Jones and Marke B. news@sfbg.com

As San Francisco’s party season gets underway—a time when just about every weekend includes street fairs and festivals, venerable celebrations like Bay to Breakers, quirky cultural events such as flash mobs, promoter-created club nights, and underground parties designed to raise funds for Burning Man camps and other endeavors—police and other party-poopers keep finding new ways to crack down on the fun.

The latest: potentially fatal price gouging of the How Weird Street Faire, a series of bizarre police raids on underground clubs, and state alco- hols officials threatening to yank local club licenses.

For years, the Guardian has been warning that NIMBY neighbors, intolerant enforcers, and indifferent city officials were threatening the vibrant social events that make San Francisco such a fun and unique city (see “Death of fun,” 5/23/06, “Death of fun, the sequel,” 4/25/07, and regular recent posts on the SFBG Politics blog).

Lately the situation has gotten so bad that even the conservative San Francisco Examiner has written about the problem (“Squeezing the fun out of festivities,” 4/13/09) and followed it up with an editorial calling for city officials to address the issue and ensure that the cultural events can keep happening.

Overwhelming public opposition to recently proposed restrictions on the May 17 Bay to Breakers and April 12 Bring Your Own Big Wheel events led City Hall to pressure the San Francisco Police Department into reversing promises of a crackdown, although many events are being threatened.

The How Weird Street Faire is scheduled for May 10, although organizers say they can’t come up with the nearly $10,000 the San Francisco Police Department is demanding by May 1. Organizer Brad Olsen sought help from City Hall (Sup. Ross Mirkarimi and senior mayoral aide Mike Farrar—who helped save BYOBW—have both tried to inter- vene, so far to no avail) and unearthing city codes that seem to cap police fees for events like How Weird at $5,494, but the cops haven’t budged.

“Although we appreciate your position, it would be unwise for the SFPD to risk public money by not collecting the required fees prior to the event. If the event is the only way your group is able to pay for police services, we are all betting that the event will be as successful as you hope,” SFPD Lt. Nicole Greely wrote to How Weird promoters on April 13, suggesting that organizers take out a loan to pay the escalating protection money demanded by SFPD.

But Olsen said his grassroots group, which barely breaks even on the event, has never in its 10-year history been required to pay in advance and told us that entrance donations at the event are the only real source of revenue for the popular dance party.

Meanwhile the Guardian has heard multiple reports of undercover cops infiltrating underground parties in SoMa in the early morn- ing hours of April 11 and 12, followed by up groups of more than a dozen uniformed officers storming in and roughly making arrests for resisting arrest, illegal alcohol sales, and drug possession.

“All of a sudden an undercover cop just tackled someone on the dance floor,” 27-year-old San Francisco resident Ryan Parkhurst told the Guardian, describing the scene at one party. “Then at that point, more than 10 officers came upstairs... I asked an officer, ‘What’s going on?’ and he said, ‘ Arrest this guy.’”

Parkhurst said four cops then jumped on him, roughed him up, arrested him. “Another guy was beat up worse than I was, with severe bruises and scratches all over his face.”

Parkhurst said he was charged with being drunk in public, resisting arrest, and assaulting an officer, but when he went to court on April 13, he was told all charges had been dropped.

SFPD spokesperson Sgt. Lyn Tomioka spent several days trying to gather information on the raids, but had little to offer by Guardian press time. “I can’t give you the answers you’re looking for based on what the communication was telling me,” she said. The District Attorney’s Office also did not respond by press time.

The attention that the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) is paying to licensed venues seems to have ratcheted up lately as well. DNA Lounge, a night- life haunt for freaks of all stripes, was cited by ABC in February for operating “a disorderly house injurious to the public welfare and morals” after undercover agents for the department witnessed brief instances of nudity and simulated intercourse during the DNA’s popular regular queer parties Cream and Escandalo.

These instances occurred during go-go and stage routines, mostly involving flashing buttocks and a wet T-shirt contest. In a statement on the DNA Lounge Web site, www. dnaleague.com, DNA owner Jamie Zawinski contends that ABC is retaliating against his club for the department’s decision not to grant DNA a conversion of its license from a Type 48 (21-and-over bar) to a Type 47 (all-ages venue that serves food).

During the appeal process, a settle- ment was reached, and the DNA suc- cessfully converted its license.

“ As a direct result of our having filed an appeal, ABC began sending undercover agents into the club dur- ing our gay and lesbian promotions looking for dirt,” Zawinski writes, drawing attention to the specific targeting of DNA’s queer nights, a particular that inflamed the gay community when a story about it was published in the Bay Area Reporter.

It is the specific requirement that all-ages venues collect 50 percent or more of their revenue from food sales that has gotten several other San Francisco clubs in trouble with the ABC. The state requires that venues possessing a Type 47 (“bona fide eat-
Don’t drill here
By Rebecca Bowe
rebeccab@sfbg.com

GREEN CITY When U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar looked out at a sea of faces during a San Francisco public hearing April 16, a band of activists dressed as polar bears, sea turtles, and other marine creatures stood out from the rest. Their message, also articulated by a host of federal and state-elected officials, was unequivocally clear: no new oil and gas drilling off the California coast.

Waving a thick document in the air, Salazar explained that he’d inherited a five-year plan from the Bush administration to award new leases for oil and gas drilling in the federally controlled outer continental shelf, which comprises some 1.7 billion underwater acres off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, the Gulf of Mexico, and Alaska.

Rather than move the policy as planned, Salazar extended public comment for six months, met with stakeholders in each region, and placed greater emphasis on developing offshore renewable energy. The San Francisco public hearing was the last in a series of four that Salazar attended.

“One of the significant issues that is so important to President Obama is that we move forward with a new energy frontier,” Salazar said. He advocated embracing offshore wind and other renewable alternatives as part of a “comprehensive energy plan going forward.”

Yet Salazar also indicated that future plans for the nation’s energy mix were “not to the exclusion of oil and gas,” and mentioned that opportunities for “clean coal” technology should also be considered.

Under the five-year plan, three new leases are proposed off California’s coast — two in the south, and one in the Point Arena Basin, an underwater swath near Fort Bragg. Elected officials unanimously opposed any new offshore petroleum development. “Our state clearly is saying to you today, no,” declared Sen. Barbara Boxer, chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. “Instead of putting our California coast and economy in jeopardy, we need to look at green technology which will bring us new jobs.”

Lt. Gov. John Garamendi sounded a similar note, saying the billions that would be invested in offshore oil could be put toward advancing clean energy. Rep. Lynn Woolsey (D-Petaluma) highlighted the risk of oil spills around the Point Arena Basin. “It could be turned from a wellspring of life into a death plume,” she said. “This shimmering band of coast must be protected.”

While nearly every testimony blasted new offshore oil development, the conversation brightened when Salazar asked for comments on renewable energy. According to estimates by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, offshore wind in shallow areas could provide some 20 percent of the electricity needs of coastal states nationwide. Wave energy, while still under study, might one day generate enough electricity to power some 197 million homes per year, according to Department of the Interior estimates.

Most of the oil that could be extracted from the outer continental shelf would come from the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska, with some 10 billion barrels potentially available off the Pacific coast. Joe Sporano of the Western States Petroleum Association said offshore drilling could create jobs and limit dependence on foreign oil. Yet Boxer pointed out that, based on Energy Information Administration figures, drilling for oil across all areas would yield just 1 percent of the nation’s total oil consumption by 2030 — and it’s not believed to make a real difference in gas prices.

Richard Charter, government relations consultant with Defenders of Wildlife, seemed confident that California’s coast would be protected. “You have a new interior secretary for an administration that received California electoral votes… in a state that is pretty much single-minded in its position in terms of saving the coast,” he said.

Charter’s optimism was helped by a recent federal appeals court ruling against the previous administration’s plan to award new offshore-drilling leases in the Arctic.

So now, “whatever Secretary Salazar does will have his own stamp on it,” Charter said. “In each of these hearings, it’s become apparent that the Obama administration may be coming around to a new approach.”

Public comment for the offshore leasing plan ends in late September. Salazar told reporters that he expects a decision by the end of the year.
**THURSDAY APRIL 23**

**COMEDY/EVENT**

Comix for Comics
Cartoon Art Museum is hosting its fifth annual “Comix for Comics,” a fannish affair that includes stand-up comedy by Rene 911’s Carlos Alazraqui and others. The event is lovingly organized by the museum’s curators, Andrew Farago and his wife Shaenon Garrity, aficionados of Watchmen and Japan’s Studio Ghibli — the famed animation studio whose revered director, Hayao Miyazaki, the duo jetted over to visit recently. In addition to gourmet snacks and drinks (let’s hear it for PopChips), partygoers can bid on original comic strip art from local and national cartoonists like Dan Piraro (Bizarro) and Lynn Johnston (For Better or For Worse). Sweet. (Danica Li)

7-10 p.m., $20
Cartoon Art Museum
655 Mission, SF
(415) CAR-TOON
www.cartoonart.org

**PERFORMANCE**

Big Art Group: S.O.S.
Big Art Group hails from New York City, where in 1999 founder-director Caden Manson (soon joined by co-creator Jemma Nelson) began exploring new vocabularies of performance through a rigorous, joyfully unbound mixing of media and a subverting of stodgy narrative paradigms. In the last 10 years, BAG has toured extensively, winning recognition for aggressively funny, dark, and dazzlingly video-drenched acts of provocation. With the Bay Area premiere of S.O.S., BAG continues its scathing yet gleeful assault on consumerism, spectacle, and the whole fat trauma of late-late capitalism. Expect a delightful mingling of media culture critique, transgender revolutionaries, and furry forest creatures. (Robert Avila)

8 p.m. (through Sat/25), $20-$25
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
701 Mission, SF
(415) 978-2787
www.ybca.org

**FRIDAY APRIL 24**

**EVENT/PERFORMANCE**

Lucha VaVoom
Lucha VaVoom is a unique cross between masked Mexican wrestling (lucha libre) and burlesque (va-va-voom). In the tradition of El Santo and Mil Mascaras, it presents high-flying masked midgets, voluptuous women, and the type of grudges that must be settled in the squared circle. Cultures collide under one roof as hipsters, beer, Mexicans, and geeks enjoy the colorful spectacle that has become a So-Cal staple for the past seven years. I even heard Robin Williams was sighted heckling in the audience at the last SF show. Performance art or “sports entertainment”? I’m not really sure. One thing is for certain: sexy y violencia will prevail. (Andre Torrez)

9 p.m., $32.50
Fillmore
1805 Geary, SF
(415) 346-6000
www.livenation.com

**VISUAL ART**

“Special Delivery”
Sticker art evokes kaleidoscopic reactions that range from “That’s so cool!” to “How’d they get that all the way up there?” to “WHAT THE HELL?” The show “Special Delivery” gives anyone interested a different context in which to peep the sticker art coloring nearly every inch of Bay Area pavement. Oakland’s Triple2Seven Gallery is rounding up a rainbow’s worth of slap tags, posters, and any other proclamations of Sharpie might. Here’s your chance to witness canvas-eschewing guerrilla creations from the Bay and beyond in a proper setting. (L.C. Mason)

6 p.m.-midnight, free
Triple2Seven Gallery
2227 International, Oakl.
colourofshadow@yahoo.com

**SUNDAY APRIL 25**

**MUSIC/EVENT**

KUSF’s 32nd birthday
Everybody loves a birthday party, right? It’s time to get gussied up because KUSF is turning 32. The nonprofit station is throwing itself a benefit to party at the mysterious Haight Street venue known as the Peacock Lounge. Apparently run by the Masons, this private bar is available for rental. Prolific local garage-rock hero Ty Segal is adding some noise to the festivities. He’s on a roll, basking in the afterglow of his latest single release, “Skin” (on Goodbye Boozy). Kelley Stoltz rounds out the evening with a sound that is markedly more pop. (Torrez)

With I Love My Label
8 p.m., $10-20
Peacock Lounge
552 Haight, SF
(415) 386-KUSF
www.kusf.org

**MUSIC/VISUAL ART**

Rubies and “Danielle Rubi: Invisible Thread”
Both Sorcerer and Rubies descend from eras while local favorites Cal and Response; in their new incarnations they are waging a gentle war for the creamiest electronic swirls this side of Norway. The Rubies template is more song-oriented, with Simone Rub and Terri Lowenthal wrapping honeyed voices in delightful harmony. Though savants of the mellow tropicalia, 1970s studio production, easy-going funk, and all genres cosmic are touchstone sounds — their mood is buoyant and given to dancing. Put another way, Rubies sound like SF’s most perfect weather. How perfect to see them surfside: they play Mollusk for the opening of Danielle Rubi’s Rolleflex show, “Invisible Thread.” (Max Goldberg)

7 p.m., free
How perfect to see them surfside.

EVENT
“Alchemy”
Zero percent financial return, guaranteed, since 2001. That's the official motto of False Profit, LLC, the community/corporation known for stellar DJs, outstanding events, and innovative art — and for bringing a sense of collaboration, revolution, and whimsy to everything they do. Their contributions range from commonplace cubbyhole makeovers to spiffy deluxe suites. Previous exhibits have been wow-material, even if the swank upholstery and lavish carpetry might seem to defy livability. It's all for a good cause: proceeds go to San Francisco University High School's financial aid program, which benefits low-income students. (Li)

EVENT
San Francisco Decorator Showcase
Can you say fancy schmancy? This year's San Francisco Decorator Showcase takes place in a turn-of-the-century Georgian mansion, a grand ol' multistory affair, with white trim, manicured green hedges, and a wrap-around rooftop terrace. Close to three dozen local architects and designers are participating. Their contributions range from commonplace cubbyhole makeovers to spiffy deluxe suites. Previous exhibits have been wow-material, even if the swank upholstery and lavish carpetry might seem to defy livability. It's all for a good cause: proceeds go to San Francisco University High School's financial aid program, which benefits low-income students. (Li)

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EVENT
San Francisco Decorator Showcase
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OF THE FILLMORE

THE INDEPENDENT

SFBG.COM 19
At the desert shore
Throbbing Gristle returns to destroy the universe

By Brandon Bussolini
a3cletters@sfbg.com

At some point between the group's termination in 1981 and re-formation in 2004, Throbbing Gristle entered the canon. The more Throbbing Gristle music you've heard, and the more you've read about it, the less likely that conversion will seem. Matmos' Drew Daniels acknowledged as much in his contribution to Continuum's 33 1/3 series of classic albums, an ephemeris of the band's most accessible statement, the puzzling Jazz Funk Greats (Industrial Records, 1979). The group's relationship with music-as-such was perverse enough to make contemporaries like the Sex Pistols look like Chuck Berry revivalists. Back in the saddle after nearly a quarter-century, Throbbing Gristle mark two has less in common with the noise pranksters of old than the divergent, mark two has less in common with the The weird thing about such innovations is that those committed to establishing Throbbing Gristle's major authorship risk freezing and trapping these self-appointed culture-creeps within one historical moment or another. Despite all the collateral riding on Throbbing Gristle's "seminal" place in the last half-decade of musical and cultural history, the band's deliberate failure

P-Orridge, the most visible and outspoken member, is seductively articulate about the band's intentions: they have little to do with making music that plays into the pleasure of listening, and much to do with music's mainline connection to culture. For all of Throbbing Gristle's touted firsts, its music often verges on indecipherable. None of the group's wired, lo-fi recordings evoke emotions beyond a vague, lingering unease. But, the achievements: Throbbing Gristle literally invented modern industrial music with the founding of its so-named label, members Carter and Sleazy are credited with developing an early keyboard-triggered sampler, Tutti's "Hot on the Heels of Love" was a prime inspiration for first-wave Detroit techno, and "(We Hate You) Little Girls" predates Whitehouse's power electronics and the whole harsh-noise underground long since percolating in the U.S. and Japan. And so on.

The thing with Throbbing Gristle is that they have had an effect on the popular music scene forever. So declared Throbbing Gristle's Genesis P-Orridge in the Industrial Culture Handbook, first published in 1983. Beginning their Bay Area association in 1976 through correspondence with Oakland-based shock artist Monte Cazazza — who traveled to England to assist with their nascent Industrial Records project and coined their company slogan: "industrial music for industrial people" — Throbbing Gristle's aural extremism was also painstakingly documented by local champion of the underground V. Vale, first through fifth issue of the publication RE/Search, and then through Industrial Culture Handbook.

It wasn't just the Dada-esque, cut-up compositions of Throbbing Gristle and Bay Area-based industrial noise peers like Boyd Rice and Z'ev that gained an early foothold in the collective consciousness of the SF underground. Survival Research Laboratories, founded in 1978 by Mark Pauline, gave mecha-fetishism a physical expression — with installations of and performances by a bevy of robotic entities, often decorated with animal carcasses for ultimate shock value. SRL's first public event, Machine Sex, featuring dead pigeons on a conveyor belt tumbling toward a rotating blade, debuted on St. Patrick's Day 30 years ago. Not long after, Vale introduced Pauline to Monte Cazazza, who became one of SRL's early collaborators — and the bridge between the musical and mechanical arms of industrial culture.

Industrial music, permanently positioned outside the mainstream by design, has long struggled for recognition in the U.S. But early industrial's lasting influence on the Bay Area arts is readily apparent in the confrontational panhandling robots of the Omnircircus, the large-scale mechanical sculptures of the Flaming Lotus Girls, the electro-noise/"weirdcore" performances of the Katabatik Collective, the flesh-eating fantasies of industrial music club MEAT, and even in the Mad Max-ian flamethrowing antics and electronic castrations found at Burning Man and live looping sensations such as Kid Beyond and LoopStation. Considered in that vein, you could say a little bit of Throbbing Gristle resides in us all.

Chew on it. (Nicole Gluckstern)

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Throbbing Gristle

Throbbing Gristle was initially a venture of four ex-members of Wire. They were prescient enough to choose unconventional methods to disseminate their message. Their tactics were prescient enough to choose unconventional methods to disseminate their message.

Throbbing Gristle was a band more talked about than listened to, it seems inconsequential. Individually and collectively, they were prescient enough to choose culture as their medium, and music as a tool for scrambling it. It’s a foresight that has been borne out by MTV and then the Internet, but the tricky thing is that Throbbing Gristle’s actual accomplishment — the meaning behind what it does — isn’t in music itself, but in culture. That’s a zone where significance tends to be more protein; we can’t simply rely on albums as self-contained, coherent statements that we can either identify with or reject. There’s something trickier going on here, as if Throbbing Gristle’s music is meant to be heard at the second or third degree, when everything’s been attenuated.

The Throbbing Gristle project grew out of COUM Transmissions, a sort of umbrella term for performances and art projects that had strong affinities with the extreme performance artists known as the Vienna Actionists, William Burroughs, and occultist Aleister Crowley. Their best-known installation, “Pornography,” in a gallery within spitting distance of Buckingham Palace, most notably exhibited images of Cosey from various British porn magazines. It was a publicly-funded blight whose purpose was, in part, to convert sensationalist press into a feedback loop worth contemplating: the group framed and mounted outraged press clippings, and when newspapers published articles about this détournement, framed those as well. This press-driven mise-en-abyme probably offers the best example of how to listen to TG. An album that cries re-invention and modern day classic at the same time. In parts, it’s dark and like The Cure and Bauhaus, and in others it has the groove of Neut and the pop of the Psychedelic Furs.
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MAY 2 SOMA Arts Walk, 12noon-5pm
MAY 3 Anna Halprin: Spirit of Place
Stern Grove, 11:30am & 2pm

→ EAST BAY
APRIL 25 Oakland Dance Festival:
social dance classes, 1-7pm
APRIL 28 Intro class for people affected by Parkinson’s Disease and their caregivers, 10:30-11:45am
MAY 2 InterPlay presents Multigenerational Play,
10am-12noon
MAY 3 Soul Sanctuary’s Family-Friendly Freestyle Dance, 11am-1pm

→ SOUTH BAY & PENINSULA
APRIL 26 Halanda’s Open Studio Recital,
11:30am-4pm
APRIL 26 sjDANCEco Dancin’ Downtown, 12-5pm
APRIL 30 College of San Mateo
“mini” dance classes, 2-6pm

→ NORTH BAY
APRIL 26 Marin Dance Theatre
Community Dance Day, 12-4pm
APRIL 27 The Common Well
Contact Improv with Rana Satori, 7-8pm
MAY 1 Morris May Day Dance, 5-8am

Bay Area National Dance Week is a fiscally sponsored project of Dancers’ Group and gratefully acknowledges the support of: Fleishhacker Foundation, Grants for the Arts, Walter & Elise Haas Fund, Williams & Flora Hewlett Foundation, Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation and the Zellerbach Family Foundation.

Photo top to bottom: ODC Rhythm and Motion; ODC School; BANDW Conga Line; Xpressions; Christy Cote and Darren Johnson
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Photos in each category will be judged by a panel of Guardian Editorial and Art staffers; winning photos will be included in Explore SF 2009, the new pocket-sized Baedeker hitting the streets May 27, 2009! GRAND PRIZE! The reader submitting the best overall photo will also win roundtrip airfare for two people courtesy of

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By Kimberly Chun
akeletters@sfbg.com

SONIC REDUCER Now playing: Locals Only II. You can't stop it from happening, even if you crumble to the ground like Keanu, fire your pistol in the air, and scream, “Noo!” NorCal bands gotta make some noise, Baybies.

Hey, what gives? The Fresh and Onlys promised to release their self-titled Castle Face debut in May, yet last week I spied the CD, prominently displayed, twinkling brightly on an Amoeba Music end-cap. Could it be an inside job, being that Fresh and Onlys Tim Cohen and Shadye Sartin have passed through the store's payroll? Whatev, Kev, be happy it's there, polishing off rough gems like “Endless Love”:

“Don't you know you gotta give yourself / to get somebody else.” Happily tucked into an echo chamber of passion-first rock 'n' roll, and armed against the apocalypse with a here-to-help sincerity that could stand the test of time ("The Mind Is Happy"). “Feelings in My Heart”), the Fresh and Onlys pull off the seemingly impossible: discovering a clunky sweetness and lo-fi grace in a very singular rock primitivo.

“Snap back like a bungee chord — Lord!” Watch yourself, Raw Deluxe. The Bay Area group's flow is as satisfyingly smooth and substantive as classic Del tha Funky Homosapien times three on “Can You Spend It,” off its new Raw Communication (Reel Deal). MCs Lexx Luthor and Mic Blake of Alphabet Soup and Soulati of Felonious are unstoppable and at the top of a mix that showcases the sheer delight of word-slingers riding the exact same wavelength. There's nothing particularly uncooked about the smokily intoxicating old-school jazz-funk gumbo on Raw Deluxe's third long-player: keyboardist Matt Fleming, saxophonist Tony Jurado, bassist Christ Arenas, and drummer Chris Spano are on point on “Something to Build Upon” — a celebration of the band's actual music-making process — which would chart in a better world and provide the foundation for a more maximalist hip-hop.

On the post-rock-cum-math side of the spectrum is the far-too-scarce From Monuments to Masses, now SF-NYC bicoastal and back with a new mostly instrumental full-length, On Little Known Frequencies (Dim Mak), possibly the most powerful recording yet by Francis Choung, Matthew Solberg, and Sergio Robledo-Maderazo. Mars Volta and Minus the Bear — MTB keyboardist Matt Bayles coproduced, engineered, and mixed the disc — are obvious referents. though neither band finds its voice via fragments of sampled dialogue like FMTM does, as if tapping directly into the culture’s transmissions. Almost monochromatic in its clear-eyed devotion to alt-rock propulsion, FMTM’s music has the closed-circle urgency and internal fury of a sonic dialectic. Are these frequencies to be plumbed with increased frequency?”

FRESH AND ONLIES Thurs/23, 10 p.m., $5 Knockout 3223 Mission, SF www.theknockoutsf.com RAW DELUXE Fri/24, 10 p.m., $10 Club Six 60 Sixth St., SF www.clubsix1.com

THREE UP A TREE

FLIPPER The punk legends are turning over a new leaf in honor of their new 4 Men With Beards vinyl reissues, including 1982’s Generic Flipper. The battle continues with Flipper’s new Love/Fight albums on May 19. Fri/24, 6 p.m. free, Amoeba, 2655 Telegraph, Berkeley. www.amoeba.com. Also Sat/25, 9 p.m. $10. El Rio, 3158 Mission, SF. www.elriosf.com

AULTULX The L.A. combo veers toward the dark, detuned, and delici-ously distorted, judging from the music released from its long-awaited, forthcoming second disc, Transit Transl. With Odawas and Mini Mansions. Sat/25, 9 p.m. $15. Great American Music Hall, 859 O’Farrell, SF. www.gammh.com

THE GROUCH AND ELIGH Is three the magic number for the West Coast indie MCs? Check for lofty concepts on the new Say GGF (Legendary) With Exile and DJ Da and Afro Classics. Sat/25, 9 p.m. $18. Slim’s, 333 11th St., SF. www.slims-sf.com. Also Mon/27, 6 p.m. free. Amoeba, 1855 Haight, SF. www.amoeba.com

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**April 22 - 28, 2009**

**MUSIC**

"First Person Magazine benefit party featuring Gudrun Gut"

**PREVIEW**

Now two years old, I Put A Record On (Monika Enterprise, 2007) is a record worth lingering over. In addition to being the first solo release from Berlin-based musical gadabout Gudrun Gut, it’s remarkable for how unhurried Gut was in getting around to it. She’s been appearing on recordings and taking part in bands, including a very early incarnation of industrial pioneers Einstürzende Neubauten, for more than 25 years. Her intervening projects give her the aura of a post-punk Zeitgeist: the all-female punk band Malaria! formed in 1981, toured with the Birthday Party, put out records on Belgian boutique label Les Disques du Crepuscule, and performed with Nina Hagen at Studio 54. That the group’s "Kaltes Klars Wasser" would later be covered by Chicks on Speed was a foregone conclusion.

The synth Matador followed Malaria!’s collapse, but Gut’s ear eventually led her, like any good punk, to techno. With typical great timing too: Berlin had just undergone a techno surge, spearheaded by local duo and label Basic Channel. Abandoning the constraints of playing in a rock-derived idiom in favor of more uncharted territory, Gut also had the good fortune to run across Thomas Fehlmann, a producer with post-punk roots who had recently collaborated with Alex Paterson’s downtempo pace-setters the Orb. The two founded Ocean Club, producing a weekly genre-stomping radio show as well as parties that paired up the likes of experimental techno producer Thomas Brinkmann and slay-shirted southern gothic aficionado Nick Cave.

None of this is new information, yet all of it is useful in figuring out how something like I Put A Record On came to be. It’s beguiling, though free of big emotions — a left-field album that functions as an homage to the hypnotic state that arrives when you’re sucked into your favorite records. The best indication of its intentions is provided by the sole cover, of Smog’s “Rock Bottom Riser.” Gut’s multitracked delivery, over a pistonung and downtrodden bass drum, is affectless enough to make Bill Callahan’s stoic delivery on the original seem fraught. But by the end, she’s wracked by giggles, as flecks of color appear like dried spittle around the monochrome production’s edges. Gut is not an innovator; both she and Callahan are committed to the old, inexhaustible pleasure of listening, regardless of genre. And this is exactly what allows them to go back to their respective genres, if we can name them, some missing essence.

*(Brandon Bussolini)*

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**FIRST PERSON MAGAZINE BENEFIT PARTY FEATURING GUDRUN GUT**


Music listings are compiled by Paula Connelly and Cheryl Eddy. Since club life is unpredictable, it’s a good idea to call ahead to confirm bookings and hours. Prices are listed when provided to us. Submit items for the listings at [listings@sfbg.com](mailto:listings@sfbg.com). For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks.

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**WEDNESDAY 22**

**ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP**

Etienne De Crecy, Alex Gopher. Independent. 6, 11.

Dry Spells, Pillow Queens, Vultures. Hemlock Tavern. 9pm. $5.

Francis Xavier, Callow El Rio. 8pm. $5.

Terry Hancock Biscuits and Blues. 8pm. $16.

Toby Lucca, Josh Kotts, Curtis Peoples. café du Nord. 8pm. $12.

Paola Nutini, Serena Ryder Slim’s. 8pm. $12.

Peanut Butter Wolf, James Pants, Mayer Hawthorne and the Country-Dam Funk, Baron Zen. Great American Music Hall. 9pm. $23.

Sex Type Thing Grant and Green. 9pm. Free. "SFTY Unplugged" Red Devil Lounge. 8pm. $30. With Live Evil, mMMEm, Dave Masi, Da Bloom, and Dailes.

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**JAZZ/NEW MUSIC**

Cat’s Corner Swing Party Savanna Jazz. 9pm.

Guarneri Jazz Group Shanghai 1930. 7pm. Free.

"Johnny Foley’s Mad Pianos" Johnny Foley’s. 9pm. Free. With Mr. Rags and Alejandro.

Ben Marcato and the Mono Domo Combo Top of the Mark. 7:30pm. $10.

Third World Love Yoshi’s San Francisco. 8 and 10pm. $14-18.

Tin Cup Serenade Le Colonial, 20 Cosmo Place; 9:31-3:00. 7pm. Free.

**FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY**

Jaco Abel Peña Pachamama, 1630 Powell, SF. (415) 646-0018. 8:15pm. $12. Flamenco electric and acoustic guitars.

Borinquen Shattuck DownLow. 8pm. $10. Live salsa and dance lessons.

Crooked Roads, Jenna Lavio. Climate Theater, 205 Ninth St; www.climateatet.com. 8pm. $7-15.

Gaucho, Mitch Marcus Session Amnesia. 8pm. Free.

Dave Gonzalez and the Stone River Boys Pough and Stars. $5. $10.

James Moseley Café Dvino, 37 Caledonia, Sausalito; (415) 331-9355. 8pm. Free. Solo acoustic.

**DANCE CLUBS**

Booty Call Q-bar, 446 Castro. [www.bootycallwednesdays.com](http://www.bootycallwednesdays.com). 9pm. Juanita Moore hosts
MUSIC

this dance party, featuring DJ Robot Hustle. Club Shuttle Elbo Room. 10pm. $5. Goth with DJs Omar, Nako, and Justin. 

Fame Bar on Church. 9pm. With rotating DJs. Infatuation Vessel, #5 Campion, SF. (415) 431-8566. 9pm. DJs Bikini, Rhond OH!, and Jondi. 

Bam Wednesday Infusion Lounge. 9pm. free. DJ Slick D. 

Q Bode 11 Minna Gallery. 9-11pm. $5. Pan-tech lounge with DJs Spesh, Gil, Hyper D, and Jondi. 

RedWine Social DaVita. 9pm-2am. free. DJ Topfile and guests spin international funk and get drunk. 

Synchronized Pirata, 2007 16th St.; (415) 626-2626. 10pm. free. Psychedelic dance music with DJs Helios, Ghetto Matt, Psy Lotus, Intergalactis, and guests. 

We All We Got Levende Lounge. 9pm. Hip-hop open mic and live performance mixer; this week’s special guest is Rebels to the Grain. 

THURSDAY 23

ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP

Dan Deacon Ensemble, Future Islands, Teeth Mountain Great American Music Hall. 8pm. $31. 

Urah Duffy, LTB Boom Boom Room. 9:30pm. $5. 

Empty Rooms, Church of the Snake, Worker Bee Helmielocks. 9pm. $7. 

Fits of Depression, Sorcerers, Anti-Panti, Perfect Machines Anner’s Social Club. 8pm. $8. Fresh and Unly: Knockout. 10pm. $5. 

Mighty Mike Schermer and Lara Price Biscuits and Blues. 8pm. $15. 

Superstitions, Ty Segall Amnesia. 

Throbbing Gristle, Erika Anderson Grand Ballroom. 8pm. $32. 

Wendy Darling, Moon Cadillac, Silhouette Era El Rio. 9pm. $5. 


JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Belinda Blair Cafe Claude. 7:30pm. 

Eric Kurszrock Trio Ana Giselle Girardelli Square, 891 Beach. 771-6800. 7:30pm. free. 

Jesse Jay Harris Quartet El Misti. 8pm. free. “Johnny Foley’s Mad Frans” Johnny Foley’s. 9pm. free. With Mr. Rags and Alejandro. 

Joel Forrester Trio Shanghai 1930. 7pm. free. 

Mopped Amnesia. 8pm. 

Stompy Jones Top of the Mark. 7:30pm. $10. 

Rachid Taha Yoshi’s San Francisco. 10pm. $18. 

Marina Teich with Ed Williams Brickhouse. 426 Brannan; (415) 920-1956. free. 

Cafe Claude. 7:30pm. 

Vince Lateano Trio and jam session Savanna Jazz. 8pm. $5. 

FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY

Jessica Fichot and Michael Papilo with friends Red Poppy Art House. 7pm. $12. 

Kitchen Help Atlas Cafe. 8pm. free. 

Tipsy House Ploog and Stabs. 9pm. free. Traditional Irish folk. 

DANCE CLUBS

Afrolicious Elbo Room. 9pm. $6. DJs, Trespasser and Señor Qz spin Afrobeat, Tropicakia, electro, salsa, and funk with guests 1 Brand and Lil Leo. 

Alcoholocaust Presents Riptide. 9pm. free. DJ What’s His Fucks spins punk rock and other gems. 

CONTINUES ON PAGE 30 »
Energy 92.7 and AT&T are Honoring
The People Of The Bay Who Raise The Bar In The Community.

Joseph is being recognized as an AT&T community hero because of his work and efforts in supporting the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. From April 2005 to August 2007 Joseph participated in six marathon training programs with the AIDS Marathon, with five of these as a volunteer or as a trainer for new participants.

He most recently participated in the 2008 AIDS life cycle and has agreed to be a training lead runner for the 2009 event. Joseph is dedicated to fighting the war on aids and is a constant motivator for everyone he speaks to. Joseph Purcell is this week’s AT&T Spotlight Community Hero and that’s why AT&T is donating $500 to the non-profit organization of his choice.

AT&T supports community based programs and organizations that address educational, cultural, and social issues affecting the quality of life in our communities. Energy 92.7 and AT&T - helping to raise the bar in our community.

Grass Widow

PREVIEW Grass Widow’s harmonious post-punk tension is fostered below SF street level, in a former meat locker containing, among other things, a very charming quilt with the band’s name patched into it. In anticipation of an impending record release, I met there with bass player Hannah Lew and drummer Lilian Mazon (guitarist and trumpeter Raven Mahon was overseas), who, although living far apart — Mazon is on the East Coast at present — were clearly very happy to be together.

“It’s not like there are any dispensable characters,” explains Lew. After the dissolution of Shitstorm, Lew’s former band with Mahon, the two started playing together in 2007 with Mazon, who was in the city for the summer from Washington state. Though Mazon went back north for a bit, she says she quickly returned and the trio “got really serious” — serious enough to offer the U.S. the following summer after cranking out a wonderful demo CD-R cassette that makes up most of their upcoming self-titled 12-inch on the local Make a Mess label.

Grass Widow artfully molds anxiety, love, and sturdy musicianship into a mesmerizing shape — a sound in which haunted beauty is tempered alternately by pain and, as Lew puts it, “the cathartic experience of playing the song itself.” The group’s three-part harmonies are intricate, with an incidental, spoken quality. Imagine a darker shade of the Raincoats, with minimal, vocal harmony-centric arrangements — really terrific stuff.

A seven-inch EP is projected for summer release through Cape Shok, and Grass Widow has been making short films, some of which will be screened at the record release show. “So much of it is about survival and friendship that we’re not gonna quit,” Mazon said. “It’s a reason to live.” (Michael Harkin)
DANCE CLUBS

Activate! Lookout, 3600 16th St. (415) 491-0306. 9pm. $3. Face your demons and
dance at this Red Bull-fueled party.

Bar on Church 9pm. Rotating DJs, Zax, Zhalde, and Nuxx.

Blow Up Rickshaw Stop. 10pm. $10-$15. The electro-disco-noir party celebrates its four-
year anniversary with Jeffrey Paradise, Ava Berlin, and guests. DJ is Tough.

DJ Wej Rockin Room. 10pm. Free.

Eshale, Fridays: Project One Gallery, 251 Rhode Island; (415) 445-2129. 5pm. $5. Happy hour
with art, fine food, and music with Vin Sol, King Most, DJ Centepede, and Shane King.

Go Bang! Deco SF, 350 Larkin St; (415) 346-

2015. 10pm. $5. Reviewing the diversity and freedom of the 70’s-80’s disco nightlife with DJs
Eddy Bauer, Flight, Nicky Bl. Sergio and more.

Gordon Gut, Thomas Fehlmann, Greco
Guggenheim Mezzanine. 10pm. $15.
Homicide and E Rock In-Bus Live. 9pm. $20.
Look Out Weekend Vessel, 85 Campton; (415) 433-

6655. 4-9pm. Free. Drink specials, food
menu and resident DJs White Girl Lust, Joe
BarkeL, Swayzee, LL Cool D), and more.

MAM Fridays Underground SF; 10pm-2am.
Joshua J and Franchise host this man-tas-
tic party.

Punk Rock and Shlock Karaoke Annie’s Social
Club. 9am-2am. $5. Eileen and Idly bring you
songs from multiple genres to butcher: punk,
new wave, alternative, classic rock, and more.

Raw Deluxe Club Six. 10pm. $10. DJIS
Pleasuremaker, Malik Q, and King Fu Chris
spin funk, hip hop, and afro-beat.

Raw Sessions Ebro Room. 10pm. $10. Hip-hop
with Elnamop, Beetiki, Evangelist, and OI Strategy.

Suite Jesus 111 Minna. 9pm. $20. Beats,
dancehall, reggae and local art.

Teenage Dance Craze Party Knockout. 10pm.
$3. Sixties teen beat with DJs Sergio Ilesias,
Russell Quinn, and dj the Funky Gran Paw.

House of Voodoo Jules Supper Club, 1123
Folsom, SF; (415) 866-0799. $5. DJs
oblin, Unit77, Forced Hand & Rayne spin dark
electronic, hard industrial, techno 88M, and
power noise.

SATURDAY 25

ROCK/BLUEZ/HIP-HOP

Autolux, Odawas, Mini Mansions, DJ Mikes
Great American Music Hall. 9pm. $18.
Bonded by Blood, Exmortus, Witchesvan,
Savage Machine, Gravehill, DJ Rob Metal Thee
Parkside. 9pm. $8.

Buck-O-Nine, Monkey, Dan Potthast, A Class
Act Bottom of the Hill. 9pm. $12.

Definite Articles, Stripmall Architecture,
Footkai Somersault Rickshaw Stop. 8:30pm.
$10.

Diego’s Umbrella, 77 El Deora, Mission Three
Red Devil Lounge. 9pm. $12.

Flipper, Love Songs, King City El Rio. 9pm.
$10.

Graysonce, Floating Goat, Professor,
Gitter Wizard Anna’s Social Club. 8pm. $8.

Grouch and Eligh, Exile and DJ Day, Afro
Classics 9pm. $10.

Mother Hips, Stone Foxes, Blank Tapes
Independent. 9pm. $20.

John Prince & Rotter Warfield. 8pm.

$4750-49.50.

Sic Alers, Groupwer, Jefe Cantu-Ledesma, Paul
Clipsen Hembloc Tavern. 9pm. $7.

Sinister D Grant and Green. 9:30pm. free.

KELLY STOLTZ, Ty Segall Peacock Lounge.
552 Hatch; kltmusic@yahoo.com. 8pm.
5:30-7:30. Kilt celebrates his 23rd birthday
with this benefit show.

The Thermals and Blues 9 and 10pm. $22.

Top Critters, History Lesson, Tender Frame
Parkside. 5pm. free.

JAZZ/NEW MUSIC

Audium 9 1616 Bush; (415) 771-1616. 8:30pm.
$15.

Eric Kurtzrock Trio Ana Mandara, Ghirardelli
Square. 8:30pm-9pm. Free.

Jerry Gonzalez and the Fort Apache Band
Yoshi’s San Francisco. 8pm and 10pm. $25.

Earl Klugh, Freddie Cole. 10-10pm.

Johnny Foley’s Mad Pianos Johnny Foley’s.
9pm. free. With Greg Zema, JC Rocket, and
Alex 1.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 32 »

THE PAGE

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MUSIC
SUNDAY 26

**ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP**
Brothers Goldman Bloom Boom Room: 9:30pm, free.
Fastball, Goh Nakamura Café du Nord: 9pm, $15.
Sippy Cups Bimba's 366 Club: 4pm, $17.
Slow Poisoner, Palace Family Steakhouse, Warren Jackson Hearne Hemlock Tavern: 9pm, free.
Joe Louis Walker Biscuits and Blues: 8 and 10pm, $25.

**JAZZ/NEW MUSIC**
Jerry Gonzalez and the Fort Apache Band Yoshi's San Francisco: 7 and 9pm, $15-$25.
Frank Jackson and Michael Burr Bliss Bar, 4026 24th St: 9:30pm-12am, 4:30pm, $10.
Neetker's Moxy Musicians Hall, 115 Ninth St: 9:30-11pm, $10.
Savannah Jazz Trio Savannah Jazz: 7:30pm, $10.
McCoy Tyner with Bobby Hutcherson Palace of Fine Arts: 8 pm: www.clazz.org 7pm.

**FOLK/WORLD/COUNTRY**
Sérgio and Odair Assad Herbst Theatre, 401 Van Ness: (415) 392-2545: 7pm, $32-$42.
Camille Bloom, Mara Levi, Nancy Eddy Grant, and Green, 8pm, free.
Julio Bravo y su Orquesta Salsabor El Rio: 4pm, $15.
Don Carlos and Dub Vision, Reggae Angels Independent, 5pm, $25.
Marla Fibish, Erin Shradar, Richard Mandel and Friends Plough and Stars: 5pm, free.
Georges Lammam Ensemble Pacha Pachamama: 1630 Powell, SF: (415) 646-0018 8pm, $10.
Mara Levi, Nancy Eddy, Camille Bloom, Nicole Torres Grant and Green, 8pm, free.
Jay Lingo and the Kick Ballers, Mississippi Rider The Parkside: 4pm, free.
San Francisco Festival of Mandolins Croatian American Cultural Center, 60 Ordona: 6pm, $10.

**BLUEGRASS REVOLUTION**
The Music Store, 66 West Portal: 4pm, 2-4pm, free.
Craig Ventrevo and Meredith Ariad Atlas Cafe: 4pm, free.
The North and the Allard Choir Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez, SF: (415) 454-5238 8:15pm, $17 gospel night.
Karamo Jesus Red Poppy Art House: 8pm, $15.

**DANCE CLUBS**
Bar On Church 9pm, Rotating Djs Foxlee, Joseph Lee, Zhaloes, Mark Andrus, and Nickx.
Barracuda 111 Minna: 9pm, $5-$10 Eclectic 80s music with Djs Damon, Philippe Ocean, Heiko, and Marc Fong, plus free 80s hair and make-up by professional stylists.
Danse Macabre Julie's Super Club, 1123 Folsom: (415) 664-1222: 9pm, $5 Classic gath and industrial with Djs Tomas Diablo and Melting Gears.
400功能 Elbo Room: 10pm, $5-10 Hip-hop, Hot Mess Infusion Lounge: 9pm, $20 Djs Solarz, Pheeko, and Vahid.
HYP Eight, 10pm, Free. Gay hip hop club, fea-
turing Djs from the gay and straight communi-
ties infused with live performances from Bay Area hip hop dance crews.
Otherside of Sm Club: 6pm, $5 A group art, design, and music exhibition with Aima the Dreamer, SI Divinity, and DJ Impekable.

**PREVIEW** In the era of Slow Food in the City of Fog, I wonder why more people don't slow down for a second and get out to taste some local music. Think about the last time you were willing to fork over more than a river for some local talent. Seriously. San Franciscans sometimes seem fonder and more aware of what the Bay Area attracts than of what it produces. Jimmy Sweetwater is out to change that. Sweetwater, a historian of Mission District music from the past 20 years, has put on five shows at the Great American Music Hall, four at Slim's, and one at Cafe du Nord. According to Sweetwater, club staff has largely been supportive, but it’s a struggle to fill venues in these times of financial woe. “There’s a ton of local talent that never gets to play the big clubs,” he says, noting that he tries “to combine different kinds of music in one night.” All-local nights and combinations of different genres — these aren’t tradi-
tional strategies, but the Bay Area is the perfect place to unleash them.

This weekend sees a diverse Jimmy Sweetwater Presents lineup at the Red Devil Lounge, including the high-speed-Calexico-like Diego’s Umbrella, honkytonkers 77 El Deora, the East Bay’s Ben Berkert, and the Mission Three, a group including Sweetwater that will play a number of tunes by the Band, even one of my favorite (and rarer) Band joints, “Acadian Driftwood.” Sweetwater always seems to be doing a thousand things at once. It’s all for the love of the song in this songlike town.
**DANCE CLUBS**

Dub Mission Elbo Room. 9pm, $6. Dub, roots, and classic dancehall with Kush Acora, Juakali, and DJ Sep.

4S Club: The Funky Side of Soul on 45 RPM Knockout. 7:30pm, free. With DJ the Funky Granpaw, Dirty Dishes, and English Steve.

**Honey Soundsystem** Paradise Lounge. 8pm-2am. “Dance floor for dancers – sound system for lovers.” Got that? Jock! Lookout, 1600 16th; 431-0390. 3pm, $2. This high-energy party raises money for LGBT sports teams.

**Kick It!** Bar on Church. 9pm. Hip-hop with DJ Zak.

**Religion!** Bar on Church. 9pm. With DJ Nikita.

**Stag** Auckland. 6pm. $5. Gay bachelor parties are the target demo of this weekly erotic tea dance.

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**MONDAY 27**

**ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP**

**Alpha Blondy Independent.** 9pm, $33. Color Turning, Glaciers, Death Valley High, Ghosts and Strings Elbo Room. 9pm, $6.

**Avettts and Modupu!** Yoshi’s San Francisco. 8pm, $10.

**Lavay Smith Trio** Enrico’s, 504 Broadway; www.enricassf.com. 7pm, free.

**DANCE CLUBS**

**Black Gold** Koko Cocktails, 1060 Geary; 885-4788. 10pm-2am, free. Senator Soul spins Detroit soul, Motown, New Orleans R&B, and more — all on 45!

**Mainroom Mondays** Annie’s Social Club. 9pm, free. Live the dream: karaoke on Annie’s stage and pretend you’re Jello Biafra.

**Manic Mondays** Bar on Church. 9pm. Drink 80-cent cosmos with DJs Mark Antrus and Dangerous Dan.

**Monster Show Underground SF.** 10pm, $5. Cookie Dough and DJ M2C make Mondays worth dancing about, with a killer drag show at 11pm.


**Split Sessions** Tunnel Top. 10pm, free. DJs MAKessa, Kung Fu Chris, and C. Moore spin funk, soul, reggae, hip-hop, and psychedelia on vinyl.

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**TUESDAY 28**

**ROCK/BLUES/HIP-HOP**

**Cold War Kids, Crystal Antlers** Fillmore. 8pm, $20.

**Ghost, Barn Owl Independent.** 8pm, $15.

**Kreator, Exodus, Belphégor, Warbringer** 7pm. 7:30pm, $24.

**Montana 3246** Grant and Green. 9pm, free. Followed by Ben Feldman’s Joke Show (10pm).

**Scubacat, Achievements in Sound** El Rio. 8pm, free.

**Belle Solée, Kate Norson** Café du Nord. 8pm, $12.

**Splinters, Brilliant Colors, Buzzer** Bottom of the Hill. 9pm, $8.

**Voxhaul Broadcast, Vox Jaguars, Moller** Hemlock Tavern. 9pm, $7.

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**JAZZ/NEW MUSIC**

**Margie Baker Shanghai! 1930.** 7pm, free.

**Dave Parker Quintet** Rasselas Jazz. 8pm.

**Kurt Ribak Quartet** Boom Boom Room. 9:30pm, $5.

**Ricardo Scales** Top of the Mark. 6:30pm, $5.

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**DANCE CLUBS**

**Alcoholocaust!** Presents Argus Lounge. 9pm, free. Rocker tunes with DJs Marcos and Colin Hormones.

**Drunken Monkey** Annie’s Social Club. 9pm, free. Rock ‘n’ roll for inebriated priests like you.

**Eclectic Company** Skywark. 9pm, free. DJs Tonos and Jaybee spin old school hip hop, bass, dub, glitch, and electro.

**Rock Out Karaoke!** Amnesia. 7:30pm. With Glenni Krayzig.

**Womani Bar on Church.** 9pm. With DJ Nuxx. 4040.
“Punks and Poets: SF Subculture in the ’70s”

PREVIEW
Let’s get punk-rock and have a slideshow, everybody! While Green Day not-so-secretly toils along its dejected piano-ballad path to Broadway, it’s the perfect time for a bracing reminder of what actual punk in the Bay looked like, circa the late-1970s. You know, before the final epilogue of Scifield, Zing!

Photographer Michael Jang — whose weary ’80s home shots of his Chinese American family, collected as “The Jangs” and shown at University High School last year, opened a revelatory window into a 30-plus year career — was up front and snapping when turbulent San Francisco groups like the Mutants, Averagewhiteband exploded onto the scene. You ain’t seen so many skinny ripped jeans, torn Pattí Smith tees, untamed hairdos, and askew lapel pins since your last trip to the backroom of Adobe Books.

At Pirate Cat Café, Jang will be projecting prime pics of the above legends in action (and meltdown), interspersed with images of outré icons like William S. Burroughs, Ishmael Reed, Michael McClure, and others to conjure up a scene that’s not been seen since your last trip to the backroom of Adobe Books. You haven’t seen so many skinny ripped jeans, torn Patti Smith tees, untamed hairdos, and askew lapel pins since your last trip to the backroom of Adobe Books.

VIEW the special exhibition Warhol Live. Andy Warhol used music to transform himself from fan to record album designer, to producer, to celebrity night-clubber, to rock star. The first comprehensive exploration of Warhol’s work as inspired by celebrity and the music industry, this exhibition will provide a visual and aural score to his extraordinary work.

MUSEUMS


Pirate Cat Café 2781 21st, 415-341-1199. www.piratecatradio.com

GALLERIES
OPENING


FRIDAY NIGHTS
at the de Young

April 24
From 5–8:45 p.m. with live music and cocktails. Regular museum admission prices apply.
Stage listings are compiled by Molly Freedenberg. Performance times may change; call venues to confirm. Reviewers are Robert Avila, Rita Feliciano, and Nicole Gluckstern. Submit items for the listings at listings@sfbg.com. For further information on how to submit items, see Picks. For the complete listings, go to www.sfbg.com.

THEATER

OPENING

BAY AREA

Luv Live Oak Theatre, 1301 Shattuck, Berkeley; (510) 648-9999; $10-$12. Opens Thu 23/24, 8pm. Runs Thurs-Sat, 8pm. Through May 23. Actors Ensemble of Berkeley presents three versions—one straight, one lesbian, and one gay—of Murray Schisgal's twisted love story.

Magic Forest Farm Marin Theatre Company, 397 Miller, Mill Valley; (415) 388-5208; $20-$36. Previews Wed/22, 7:30pm; Thurs/23-Sat/25, 8pm. Open Sun/26, Wed/26, 8pm. Runs Thurs, 7:30pm; Thurs-Sat, 8pm. Through May 17. MTC presents the world premier of Zach Dochak's award-winning play about life on a Northern California commune.

ONGOING


American Hwangap Magic Theatre, Bldg D, Fort Mason Center, Marina at Lagoon, 443-8822; 545-75. Wed, 8pm; Sun, 2:30 and 7pm. Through Sep. Magic Theatre performs Lloyd Shul's story of a Korean immigrant who returns to the US on his 60th birthday to reunite with the family he'd abandoned 15 years ago.

Audacious Artefacts: Parisian Grand Guignol Hypnodoxe, 575 10th St.; 1-800-888-3988. www.sffilm.com. $15-$69. Thurs-Sat, 8pm, through May 2. Then May 19-21. Open. The Thrillpeddler have doubled in the diabolic on many levels—from the creepy sci-fi inspired cigarette A Slight Tinge to the elementally claustrophobic terror of Orgy in the Lighthouse. This spring lineup of old Parisian Grand Guignol goodies gleefully exploits an array of human phobias old and new. Phobia (fear of cosmic), bedphobia (fear of sleepless), and lechophobia (fear of leeches) to a perhaps historically undiscovered phobia: fear of the lewd shadow puppetry. The Thrillpeddlers have always delighted in exploring the unexpected. It's the unexpected that makes the flat-out impossible, alternating as traditions demands between tales of lurid, domestic and erotic sex farces, and this year they get down and dirty as prostitutes, louches country gen
er, amoral jungle guides, and naughtily nuns sink and prance across the stage in various states of undress and unrepentant behavior.

in, a hysterically-paced evening of wife-switching between exquisitely sleazy Doctor Marx (Ego Yeson Wertel) and his high-strung dinner guest Monsieur de Merlot (TJ Buswell) results in a veritable onslaught of unfortunate physical reactions, while the cruel rate which befalls impressively perky radiesthesiologist Elinveen Ricard (Maria Leagh) in the 1941 adventure thriller The Head Hunters hearkens back to the trillogiaexploitation plats found in vintage men's magazines.

Is there such a thing as follies de grandeur? With implicit debt to Beach Blanket only wet
ter, this high-energy but wearisome revue from John Bisciglie (creator of the San Jose Follies) purports to take us back, with comic and musi
cial flair, to the good ol' days of San Francisco.

More likely than not, you'll count those days as any preceding certain time frame. True, the young ensemble cast has enthusiasm to spare and bright costumes to boot (minus a recurring "naked" prospector in a beige thing), even if the singing and dancing acts are unevenly distributed. The greater problem is the writing, which seems unsure whether to aim at tourists or locals with its rarely very funny in-jokes, and song-wise goes from redeemable to blab lyrical overtones of classic pop fare. The human problems,合资 at best, though not quite right uncomfortable in its playfully Colorful but also off-the-mark riffing in the direction of Indian gossips or gay cottages. (Avild)

Conferences of a Refrigerator Mother, 5082 Vale - note: 1-800-899-9770, $15-$50. Thurs/23-Sat/25, 8pm. Carolyn Doyle performs her play based on her own family, including a nine-year-old son with autism.

menence with Shannon Day.

Ecological Farms San Francisco Bay: A Magical Escapade San Francisco Magic Parlor, Chancellor Hotel Union Square, 433 Pizell, 1-508-388-3006. $30. Fri, Sat 8pm. Ongoing. This show celebrates real-life charac
ters from San Francisco's colorful and notori
ous past.

Evil Hamlet by Wm Shakespeare Stagewex, 533 Sutter; 415-398-9929. Thur/22-Sat/24, 8pm. Catchesyme puts a sardonic spin on the Bard, moving his classic play to 1965 Brooklyn.


The Homecoming Phoenix Theatre, 414 Taylor, Ste 601, 1-800-899-9770, 610. Thur/21-Sat, 8pm. Through May 2. Home sweet hell, North London, circa 1964, the year the late Harold Pinter penned this still fragrant, hilarious, and terrifyingly creepy vision of the family home. In this case the family consists of grown men, topped by wobbling patriarch Max, an angry, aging, time-killing, and vicious old butcher (dexterously and deftly embodied by an excellent Graham Cowley.) Max comes surrounded by twisted son Lenny (Nick Russell) in jacket and tie, dog-simple boxer son Joey (Conor Hamill), and gentle, tightly composed brother Sam (Rand Hurst,) a chauffeur. Late one night, prodlag PhD Teddy (Yusef Lambert) slips in the old key and enters his boyhood house after six years self-imposed exile at some American university, bringing with him wife Ruth (a wonderfully far-away yet starchy Sylvia Kratns), her chilly discomfort in the testosterone-laden all but obvious—though as the reunion takes its darkly bizarre course into depravity, Ruth soon proves as much an alpha as any in the male in the room. Solidly cast and expertly directed by Joyce Henderson, Off Broadway West's intimate season opener is a modestly sized powerhouse, doing justice memorably to this one-a-kind family feeding frenzy. (Avild)

The Love Song of J. Robert Oppenheimer Custom Made Theatre Company, 965 Mission, 1-800-899-3006. $15-$25. Wed/22-Sat/26, 8pm. After a light but firm hand on Albaer's A Delicate Balance, Custom Made Theatre fumbles this one, dropping a bomb about the A-Bomb with director Brian Katz's Bay Area premiere of Carson Kressin's 2003 play. Winner of several awards, although it's dif

icult to understand why in this garish and flat-footed production, The Love Song of J. Robert Oppenheimer rehearsals (and borrows many a line from) the well-known story of the making of the world's first atomic weapon at Los Alamos under the all-too-Faustian figure of the titular physicist (played by Ian Walker), who ends up on the outs with the McCarthy-era government he so dutifully toed during the war. Kreitzer's take includes a Biblical subplot about massacre and infidelity whose feminist overtones partly manifest over the stage, on an ungainly scaffold grace
lessly negated by the snake-like figure of Lilli (Jessica Jade Rudolph, garded darkly in dark tattters and face paint). Kreitzer also offers levying seemingly resonant bits from T.S. Eliot's Prufrock poem, although this marriage too feels overly forced and doomed to a short half-life unlike the play itself, whose cheap morality and strain, empty thematizing drane on for two radioactive acts. (Avill)

A Necessary Evil Theatre Rhinoceros, 2926 16th St., 861-5079. $15-$20. Wed/22-Sat/25, 8pm, Sun/26, 3pm. Theatre Rhinoceros pres
ents a workshop performance of John Fisher's new drama.

org. $20-$50. Fri, Sat, 8pm, Sun, at 5pm. Through May 2. Brian Copeland returns with his long-running solo show.

Over the Mountain Brave Theater, 2781 24th St., 647-2822. $20-$40. Thurs/23-Sat/25, 8pm. Brave Theater presents the world premiere
of Bay Area playwright Brian Thortonson’s drama set in a nameless but familiar-looking war-torn Middle Eastern city. Above the chaos engulfing the city below, two grown sisters reunite briefly in their parents’ old cottage where to (Lauri Smith) flee years before and tends to refugees crossing over the mountain, and where Hannah (Anne Darragh) stops after fleeing the totalitarian authorities who have already banned her poetry. Another pair, meanwhile, two bureaucratic henchmen of the state (Jeffrey Adams and Michael Henford) and childhood friends, process files and bodies in a house of detention, where soon novice Lenny (Henford) will develop a fatal bond with the incarcerated Hannah. The play sets several complimentary themes in motion—including the sibling’s pen-versus-gun tension and the sympathetic power of art to bridge even the greatest political, ideological gulfs—but twisted by affecting music courtesy of composer-actor Meklit Hadero. But even as the initial mist hovering over the stage slowly dissipates and characters and story emerge, the themes remain unsatisfyingly developed despite solid efforts by director Raehle Myrick-Hodges and cast. Instead, they wander in a mist of their own, just short of meaningful impact, never quite hitting home. (Avila)


Story of Playhouse, 593 Sutter, 677-9596. $30-40. Wed/Thu-Fri/Sat, 8pm; Sat/24pm. SF Playhouse and Lorraine Hansberry Theatre co-present Tracey Scott Wilson’s play about an ambitious newspaper reporter whose stories are too good to be true.

Thom Pain (based on nothing) Cutting Ball Theater, Exit Theater, 277 Taylor; 1-800-838-3006, cuttingball.com. $15-30. Thurs-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 5pm. Through May 9. Will Eno’s Thom Pain (based on nothing) is an aggressively funny, cooly insouciant piece of theater terrorism now up in a laser-focused, captivating production from Cutting Ball Theater. Bay Area audiences were introduced to Eno’s blazing wit and word play last year in Berkeley Rep’s local premiere of Tragedy: A Tragedy, but Thom Pain, a tortuous and wonderfully hostile/hospitable monologue, achieves a kind of ideal setting and performance in this intimate production executed to the hilt by a very impressive Jonathan Bock, under admirable direction by Manessa Wolf. (Avila)

War Music American Conservatory Theater, 415 Geary; 415-2228; $12-24; Wed/22/ Sat/25, 8pm (also Sat/25/Sun/26, 2pm). ACT and director-adaptor Lilian Gogos’s ambitious world premiere brings English actor Christopher Logue’s monumental rewriting of the Iliad to the stage in a meditation on the capriciousness and depthlessness of tragedy that, need I say, remains ever timely here at the end of time. But the admirable project attains mixed results, partly as a result of what comes across as the play’s own mixed feelings about how best to present the subject matter: The declarative presentation of the play’s action and themes forcefully delivered by Anthony Fusco as Homer, among other characters) marches not always comfortably beside the choreography of strife and order (courtesy of Daniel Peling), the contemporary-flavours in the melodrama unfolding between Achilles (Judd Winick), Patroclus (Christopher Tocco), Agamemnon (Lee Ernst), Helen (René Augusten), et al., and a smattering of working-flat-flat-flat reality of state-humor (reminiscent of Mary Zimmerman’s laugh-mongering approach to the classics). It can’t quite escape its English roots and insular architecture of fragmentation. While the more intimate exchanges can glide the moral and mortally weight of war over the stage effectively, often the human scale seems ironically unable to bear the magnitude of historical and cultural meaning that should hang majestically but lightly over the proceedings like the great shifting orb in Daniel Ostling’s fine, amphitheatre-invoking set. (Avila)

Wicked Orpheum Theater, 1182 Market; 512-7770, www.shsfn.com. $25-99. Tues-Sat, 8pm; Sat/Sun/Wed/22, April 22, 24, 29, May 6, 13, and June 24, 2pm, May 24, 31 and June 7, 14, and 23, 7/30pm. Through June 27. Assuming you don’t mind the music, which is too TV-themed/sounding in general for me, or the rather gaudy décor, spectacular rules the stage as ever, supported by sharp performances from a winning cast. (Avila)

Wormhole Socha Café, 3295 Mission; www.crowdfire.org. Free. Sat/25, 8pm. A pleasant room in a pleasant café an expectant audience sits in ringed chairs facing each other and speakers hover along the periphery. When the lights go out there is a sound like that of someone restlessly tapping on the side of their plate with a fork, then in sudden profusion we get the sounds of rushing traffic, a Spanish-language pop song, a abrupt and jarring car crash, disembodied voices swining in the aftermath, and emergency screams in the distance, getting closer. Welcome to Wormhole, the latest experiment in sensory theatrics founded by Playwright/Director Marilee Talkington, presented by Crowded Fire as part of their on-going Matchbox Productions development series. This 45-minute soundplay takes place entirely in the dark, as a nameless woman (played by Mollena Williams), makes her way through the first stages of her afterlife, by sifting through remnants of the past. Guided along by a savvant spirit (played by an anonymous company member of Crowded Fire), she encounters the memories of childhood tribulations, passive-aggressive relationships, and finally to those of the wreck, all her actions “flashed out” by the multi-dimensional soundscape provided by Jacopo De Nicola. While the script itself lacks a certain amount of punch, its radio-play presentation does raise interesting questions about the nature of theatricality, both with and without lights. (Gulskern)

“Cubacaribe Festival of Dance and Music” Dance Mission Theater, 3316 24th St; 826-4443, www.dancemission.com. Fri-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 2 and 7pm, through May 2, May 3, 7pm, $12-22. You expect heat to emanate from the stage of a CubaCaribe Festival, but on the First of this year’s three-weekend run, the packed Mission Dance Theater generated plenty of color of its own. It must be gratifying to be showered with the kind of enthusiastic support that the audience rained on both the local artists and the visitors from San Diego Omo Achê and former Bay Area resident Sifredro La O. Some of the beautifully costumed Folkloric dances looked like tearers—taps instead of a whole meal—but the evening also included an increasingly boisterous Maypole dance and a rousing chalccete dance, performed in wooden sandals. But the hottest item were the contemporary ones, Ramon Ramos Aloyo’s improvisation with bassist Jeff Chambers, “Moving Measures”, and his stunning male dual, “Wrong Way” with La O. With their version of Cuban pop Las Que Son, an all woman ensemble, added their own version of hot dancing. This coming weekend the line-up expands from the Cuba to include group from the Americas—Peru, Mexico, Haiti—and contemporary dance—Hip Hop, Jazz (Feliciano) era.

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COMEBACK TWENTY-FIVE
New Edition Now Available
San Francisco International Beer Festival

EVENT It’s Beer Fest time again, which means those lucky enough to have scored tickets to the always-sold-out event are prepping their drinking pants for three hours of madness — and those who’ll miss the affair are prepping to, well, drip tears into their (non-festival-acquired) beers. We can’t blame their lachrymosity. The festival features more than 300 varieties from a mind-boggling number of breweries and brewpubs, from locals like Anchor Steam to internationals like Guinness. Then there are the hard cider and non-alcoholic options. Oh, and the food from the city’s best restaurants. And a commemorative stein to use for tasting and then take home. It’s enough to make a beer fan weep like the condensation on an ice-cold pilser glass.

We’re sorry to say there’s not much we can do for the people who don’t already have tickets — but we can recommend ways to ease the pain. How about staging your own tasting? Pick up a variety of ales, lagers, and more from the dizzying selections at City Beer Store (1186 Folsom, SF; 415-503-1033, www.citybeerstore.com), Healthy Spirits (2299 15th St., SF; 415-255-0610, healthy-spirits.blogspot.com), or New Star III Liquor (501 Divisadero, SF; 415-567-7900). Or let the experts choose unusual, exotic Belgian varieties for you at La Trappe (800 Greenwich, SF; 415-440-8727, www.latrappecafe.com), Monk’s Kettle (3141 16th St., SF; 415-865-9523, www.monkstekettle.com), or the Trappist (460 Eighth St., SF; 510-238-8900, www.theredpippin.com). Granted, these options aren’t the Beer Fest, but they’re all pretty fantastic as alternatives go. And remember, there’s always next year.

(Molly Freedenberg)

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL BEER FESTIVAL
7-10 p.m. $60. Festival
Pavilion, Fort Mason, SF. www.sfbeerfest.com

Events listings are compiled by Paula Connelly. Submit items for the listings at listings@sfbeerfest.com. For further information on how to submit items for the listings, see Picks.

WEDNESDAY 22
Farmers’ Market at UCSF Mission Bay Campus Plaza at Mission Bay Housing, Gene Friend Way between 3rd and 4th Sts., SF; (415) 476-6307, 10am-3pm, free. Get your fresh, seasonal, and local fruits, vegetables, nuts, flowers, and more every Wednesday through November 25.

“National Parks: America’s Best Idea” Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center, SF; (415) 567-7900, 9am, $25. Filmmaker Ken Burns will premiere his new film, “The National Parks: This Is America,” and participate in a one-day conference on the National Parks.


FRIDAY 24
New Living Expo Concours Exhibition Center, 635 8th St., SF; (415) 382-8300. Friday 3-9pm, Sat 10am-9pm, Sun 10am-7pm, $10-$15, or $25 for a weekend pass. The Expo will feature exhibitors, speakers, and lecturers that celebrate and improve your health and contribute to a friendly environment.

Upper Haight Salon Haight between Central and Sharyn, SF; (415) 421-7783, 5-9pm, free. Enjoy local art, dance, live music and DJs, free appetizers, drink specials, trunk shows, and more at over 20 participating stores and restaurants.

SATURDAY 25
103rd Anniversary of the 1906 Earthquake and Fire Tour at Lasto’s Fountain. Market at Kervan, (415) 779-4700, 9am, free. 5:11am marks the exact moment of the 1906 quake. Meet at the fountain with survivors, the mayor, the San Francisco fire chief and many more and then take a trip over to Church and 20th St to paint the fire hydrant this year: Mission churches gold. More activities to follow.

BAY AREA
Berkeley Earth Day Civic Center Park, Center at Martin Luther King Jr., 510-644-6346, Noon-5pm, free. Featuring dance, live music, climbing wall, solar power demos, biosolar and electric cars, the Berkeley Farmer’s Market, craft and community booths, and more.

BAY AREA
Strictly Speaking with Dave Sedaris Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley, Bancroft at Telegraph, Berkeley, (510) 642-9988, 8pm, $28-32. Sedars, NPR humorist and best selling author, reads from his newly published collection of essays titled, When You Are Engulfed in Flames.

MONDAY 27
BAY AREA
Neighborhood Public Radio Berkeley Center for New Media, UC Berkeley, 160 Kreuger Hall, Berk; (510) 642-0659, 7:30pm, free. After its first five years of radio access and critique of the limited public radio, Neighborhood Public Radio presents their history and asks the audience to contribute to their plans for the next five years.

TUESDAY 28
BAY AREA

Alice Walker: “The Siege of Gaza Is an Attack on the Common Heart” First Congregational Church of Oakland, 2525 Harrison,Oak; (510) 444-4812, 7:30pm, $25. Hear Walker reflect on her recent visit to Gaza in a deeply thoughtful interview with KPFA’s Elaine Razaan. URSJ

The End of the Jews
A Reading and Talk by
Adam Mansbach
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2009
7:30 PM

What Happened to Anna K.: A Novel
A Reading and Talk by
Irina Reyn
THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 2009
7:30 PM

Bureau of Jewish Education
Jewish Community Library
writers on writing

The End of the Jews
By Adam Mansbach

What Happened to Anna K.
By Irina Reyn

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food + drink

Jazzeria

By Paul Reidinger
paulr@sfbg.com

What do pizza and jazz have in common? Why, two z’s, of course — the pair of identical twins that also appears in such exciting words as nozzle, nizzle, pizzle, pazzo, and cazzo. Put these all together and shoot them from the rooftops and you’ll have quite a riff, if not quite a jazz riff. For music, play ZZ Top. Then run from the obscenity police.

Other than that, pizza and jazz go together. There is no connection I know of. Nonetheless, our drastically refurbished jazz district, along Fillmore south of Geary, now has a creditable pizzeria to go along with the fancier places across the street, Yoshi’s and 1300 Fillmore. The pizzeria is called Bruno’s and, in a most un-Italian development, is unrelated to the Mission District old-timer of the same name. Old Bruno’s has had enough facelifts to rival Phyllis Diller. New Bruno’s, on the other hand, is new — with freshly painted reddish-brown walls, nicely upholstered booths, a gleaming bar against a far wall, a shiny kitchen, and jazz memorabilia everywhere, the walls laden with portraits and plaques.

In Europe, jazz has long appealed to the French more than the Italians, but Bruno’s, despite these musical festoonings, is Italian to its core, right down to the festoonings, is Italian to its core, right down to the patron, Claudius Oliveira (owner of several other Italian restaurants in northern California, many in the East Bay) who circulates through the dining room, shaking hands and checking, and the service staff with their winsome accents. The cultural flavor is very much that of Little Italy, and part of its beguiling spell is to intensify the experience of the food.

Pizzerias aren’t generally known for their grace notes, but Bruno’s offers several. To begin, there’s the basket of marvelous garlic bread, which is not only flavorful but of a brioche-like tenderness and plumpness. Tasty bread so often exacts a steep price in crustiness and toughness, but not this stuff. Even if you couldn’t eat it, you’d be happy enough just feeling it with your fingers. But you will eat it, and then they bring you more, along with an amuse-bouche — a little ramekin of roasted red pepper soup, say, with a broad hint of cayenne kick. One is typically afforded this type of treatment only when ordering seven-course tasting menus at much starchier places.

Given the slight sports-bar aura, it isn’t surprising to find that the list of appetizers includes buffalo wings (“Texas style”), along with a parade of goodies from the deep fryer, among them calamari and zucchini sticks. But a better choice might be the drunken prawns ($10.95), spiked with tequila.

There is both an Aloha and a Hawaii 5.0 pizza, both with pine-apple. Fruit (tomatoes excepted) does not belong on pizza, but pepperoni, sausage, does, salami too, and you’ll get all that and more with the signature Bruno’s special ($14.99 for a 14-incher), along with a parade of appetizers includes buffalo wings (“Texas style”), along with a parade of goodies from the deep fryer, among them calamari and zucchini sticks. But a better choice might be the drunken prawns ($10.95), spiked with tequila.

Bruno (pictured) brings everyone’s favorite Italian savory pie to the Fillmore historic jazz district, via his Pizzeria Cucina.

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(2) Matzoh brei and brisket
(3) Fries with eyes, Anchor and Hope, SF
(4) Two towers of stacked donuts while watching Twin Peaks
(5) Pagan Sunday dinner with steak, celery root mashed potatoes, strawberry mousse
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THIS WEEK

THROBBING GRISTLE
4/23 Grand Ballroom

DAVID WILCOX
4/23 Swedish American Hall

VIENNA TENG
4/24 Yoshi’s Oakland

MR. LIF
4/24 Bottom of the Hill

PAPERCUTS
4/24 Cafe du Nord

JOHN PRINE
4/25 Warfield

THE GROUCH & EUGH
4/25 Slim’s

JAMES COTTON
4/25 & 26 Yoshi’s Oakland

COLD WAR KIDS
4/28 Fillmore

THE FAINT
4/29-30 Fillmore

THAO WITH THE GET DOWN STAY DOWN
4/30 Independent

ZION & TRACKADEMICS & THE HONOR ROLL
5/1 Slim’s

KINGS OF LEON
THE WALKMEN
5/21 Bill Graham Civic Auditorium

TV ON THE RADIO
DIRTY PROJECTORS
5/22 Fox Theater

NINE INCH NAILS
JANE’S ADDICTION
5/22 Shoreline Amphitheatre

FLIGHT OF THE CONCOURDS
5/25 Berkeley Community Theatre

ANIMAL COLLECTIVE
5/26 Fox Theater

ST VINCENT
5/27 Bimbo’s

MAD
5/27 Mezzanine

SUN KIL MOON
5/29 Great American Music Hall

SILA AND THE AFROFUNK EXPERIENCE
5/30 Mezzanine

THE THERMALS
5/31-31 Bottom of the Hill

SHE WANTS REVENGE
6/12 Bimbo’s

FEMI KUTI
6/20 Fillmore

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Tending the brood

By L.E. Leone
> le_chicken_farmer@yahoo.com

CHEAP EATS The young couple next door to me in Rockridge is building a chicken coop, and I love them for this. They aren’t married and don’t have kids, which makes me just want to squeeze them and look at them, and invite them over for every single thing I eat, even oatmeal.

But that would be creepy, so instead I offer to bring them some straw. Do they need a feeder? A waterer? I still have my place in the woods. I have rat traps, chicken wire, and rusting 55-gallon drums that would look real nice against the falling-down barnlike outbuilding on the edge of their lot.

Together, I think, we can shake up this neighborhood. In just a couple months here I have made more friends (or at any rate met more people I want to be friends with) than I did in five years living in Occidental. In five years in Occidental, I made four friends. Two couples. One I actually met in San Francisco, and the other through a mutual friend in Oakland.

Don’t get me wrong, I love the woods, or I wouldn’t still keep my shack, which I go to when I can for air, and I’m driving her a cardboard box with holes poked into it, for air, and I’m driving her out to the country. To the woods.

The family I work for in East Oakland, Boink’s family, they have a chicken. Used to have three, but two died, and the one that’s left has gone bad. Her name is Cakey. She’s brooding, which means she’s set her mind, and ass, on hatching eggs that no amount of setting will ever induce to hatch. Save maybe a visit from Gabriel.

This is actually a dangerous condition for a roosterless hen to be in, because she might get over it, and she might not. I have girlfriends like this.

It falls on me, while Boink’s family is away in Florida for the week, to traumatize their chicken. I’m surprised Boink hasn’t already achieved this, by accident, but the best way to get a broody hen to snap out of it is to harass the hell out of her.

So I’m going to East Oakland in a moment, I’m stuffing Cakey into a cardboard box with holes poked into it, for air, and I’m driving her out to the country. To the woods. To my shack. Where I can annoy her for three days with sticks, Pere Ubu records, and buckets of cold water — and no one will hear all the squawking. I tried this once with one of my girlfriends and got arrested.

I love Pere Ubu, by the way. But chickens ... and perhaps all poultry, for all I know — their capacity to withstand ‘70s-era punk rock starts and ends with the Ramones. So you know.

But speaking of traumatized girl-friends, my friend Alice Shaw, after whom I named my great car, Alice Shaw, was mugged at gunpoint in the Mission District. As if I weren’t already mad enough at nuggers for stubbing a friend of a friend in Seattle!

And do you know what Alice Shaw said to us, over deep-fried hamburgers after a soccer game? She said, Well, in a way it was nice to be noticed, for a change. I’m paraphrasing.

It is comments like this that make me love human beings even more than chickens. I mean, to be fair, we have no exact translation for the could-be-clocks-of-wisdom that chickens call to each other from the jaws of foxes, but it’s a safe bet they are not so laced with humor and sadness as, for example, Alice Shaw’s odd comment.

I wanted to squeeze her and feed her oatmeal, but we were already eating fried hamburgers. Outside, and over rice, with fried eggs on top, and smothered in gravy. What could be better, after a soccer game? It’s a Hawaiian thing, called loco moco, and in fact it was invented 60 years ago, according to the menu, in honor of a barefoot Hawaiian football team called the Wreckers.

Whose players apparently liked to eat, because I, at my hungriest, couldn’t clean half my plate, or even imagine ever being hungry again, so I brought the rest to Earl Butter. We all agreed: Really really dong-dong-dong-dong-yo great, in a school lunchy kind of way.

You want to know where, don’t you? sfbg
Kimjongilia — titled after a type of begonia cultivated in honor of you-know-who — takes a devastating peek behind North Korea's closed borders, while Sacred Places (top right) and Z32 (bottom right) offer structurally adventurous spins on the documentary genre.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 46
Unhappily ever after

The fest’s fractured (and freaky, and feminist) fantasies

By Kimberly Chun
akaletters@sfbg.com

We’re living in topsy-turvy, fairy tale times: the mighty have fallen, and the once-marginalized have risen. We’re painting the White House black, while Wall Street high-fliers are hitting the skids and the once-mocked scientists who cried “global warming” are embraced by Main and K streets. A hardscrabble era calls for equally toughened-up tales that provide moral instruction and plunge into the heart of the narrative’s contradictions.

Do, er, grittily realistic flicks like Dante Lam’s ADD-pacey HK cop thriller Beast Stalker (2008), which skirt the periphery of lost-innocent yarns, count? The filmmaker’s empathy for his monstrously disfigured villain is unparalleled in both the maker’s studies and technologies are manipulated toward a hidden truth. Yet profound as it is, there’s something overly elaborate and ultimately disheartening to the stillness experienced by one of these uneasy men, a carpenter and family man named Wayne (Jerry McDaniel), who is trudging through his middle years in a state of unhappy wonder.

Shot in Oakland, the film uses a series of portrait-like scenes of house exteriors to convey the static emptiness in Wayne’s life, which he describes in voiceover monologues, his voice rising and falling just outside the boundaries of monotone. The contrast between these still lifes and the recurring shock of the soundtrack is almost painfully discordant, though the landscape intruded on is far from idyllic. When the camera moves inside one of the houses, the one where Wayne coexists with his wife, Renée (Beth Lisick), and their two sons, it’s filled with signs of residence but seems as empty and still and dead as the outside world, as if the family has just retreated from some personal apocalypse. Later the camera trails through a gutted Victorian as Wayne and Renée are heard quarreling, then processing as modeled by some couples’ counselor in their past — more empathy and a sense of unending minor tragedy. Wayne presents a marriage sapped by financial exigencies such as the now-familiar house worth less than their debt.

These signs of trouble are plain enough, but emotionally expressive. Occasionally Bradshaw leans a little heavily on the symbolic, as when we see Wayne as he envisions himself, in the getup of a clown, and when the film runs backward through a trafficked street scene. More problematic, though, is the awkward shift in direction and shape that occurs when the resident stillness is interrupted by something more sharply horrific than the characters’ day-to-day suffering. (Lynn Rapoport)

SHOTS IN THE DARK: SHORT TAKES ON SIFF 52

THURS/23

La Mission (Peter Bratt, USA, 2009) A veteran S.F. vet turned responsible — if still half-macho — widower, father, and Muni driver, 46-year-old Che (Benjamin Bratt) isn’t the type for mushy displays of sentiment. But it’s clear his pride and joy is son Jess (Jeremy Ray Valdez), a straight-A high school grad bound for UCLA. That familial bond, however, sustains some serious damage when Che discovers Jess has a secret life with a boyfriend, in the Castro, just a few blocks away from their Mission walkup but might as well be light-years away as far as old-school dad is concerned. This Bratt family project (Benjamin’s brother Peter writes-directs, his wife Talisa Soto Bratt has a supporting role) has a bit of a predictable TV-movie feel, but its warm heart is very much in the right place, and the affectionate location shooting makes this an ideal SIFF opening-nighter.

(Dennis Harvey) 7 p.m., Castro.

FRIDAY

It’s Not Me, I Swear! (Philippe Falardeau, Canada, 2008) Ten-year-old Leon Dore (Antoine Êcuyer) is a Harold without a Maude, forever staging near-fatal “deadly accidents” that by now no one blinks twice at — whether they’re expressions of warped humor, cries for attention, or actual (yet invariably failed) suicide attempts. Mom and dad are forever at each others’ throats, while their older son pines for a domestic normalcy that ain’t happening anytime soon. One day mom simply announces she’s splitting for Greece to “start a new life,” pointedly without husband and children. This event rattles Leon’s misbehaviors — which also encompass theft and vandalism — up a few notches. Set in kitschily-realized late 1960s Quebec suburbia, director Philippe Falardeau’s adaptation of two linked novels by Bruno Hebert is a very deft mix of family dysfunction, preadolescent maladjustment (or maybe budding sociopathy), and anarchic comedy. (Harvey) 5:45 p.m., Sundance Kabuki. Also Sat/25, 2:45 p.m., Sundance Kabuki; Tues/28, 1 p.m., Sundance Kabuki.

SAT/25

Adoration (Atom Egoyan, Canada/Canada, France, 2008) When orphaned teenager Simon (Devon Bostick) writes a paper for French class in which he imagines himself as the son of real-life terrorists, his teacher (Arsinée Khanjian) tactfully encourages his being taken for fact. The resulting firestorm (largely taking place on the Web) raises questions about the boy’s actual parents, free speech, religio-political martyrdom, and so forth. This is the first Atom Egoyan feature based on his own original story — as opposed to literary sources or historical incidents — in 15 interim years. While his fame has certainly risen in the interim, some of us haven’t liked anything so well since that last one, 1994’s Exotica. Adoration recalls such early efforts in the cool intellectual gamesmanship with which characters and technologies are manipulated toward a hidden truth. Yet provocative as it is, there’s something overly elaborate and ultimately dissatisfying about his gambits that makes Adoration less than the continues on page 44 »
Tune boon
Catchy ditties and dino-riffs at SFIFF

By Dennis Harvey
a3ecletters@sfbg.com

Before there was Barney or Raffi, the answer to the question, “Who is most responsible for songs most likely to make children sing and push their parents to the very brink of sanity?” was most likely “the Sherman brothers.” It might have been enough for Robert and Richard Sherman to write “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious,” “It’s a Small World,” and “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang,” each of which when heard once — let alone a million times — became instantly imprinted on the DNA of several juvenile generations. But no, they imprinted on the DNA of several zillion times — became instantly chockful of earworms that you might have escaped the Disney’s juvenile generations. But no, they imprinted on the DNA of several zillion times — became instantly Chitty Bang Bang,” each of which “It’s a Small World,” and “Chitty ercalifragilisticexpialidocious,” Richard Sherman to write “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious,” “It’s a Small World,” and “Chitty Bang Bang,” each of which “It’s a Small World,” and “Chitty

Comedy blackface, was an obvious model for 1933’s King Kong (Willis O’Brien designed FX on both) and an admitted one for 1993’s Jurassic Park (whose sequel, you’ll recall, was 1997’s The Lost World). After nearly 85 years, it’s still at least as entertaining as the latter-day comic-book movies that owe it a colossal debt. (Eddy)

A T. rex mangles with gusto in early-cinema classic The Lost World.

SHOTS IN THE DARK: SHORT TAKES ON SFIFF 52

CONTINUED

sum of its parts. (Harvey) 6:15 p.m. Sundance Kabuki. Also Mon/27, 6:30 p.m. PFA. Tulpan (Sergey Dvortsevoy, Kazakhstan/Switzerland/Germany/Russia/Poland, 2008) Possible new genre alert: the docu-comedy. Documentary Dvortsevoy turns his camera on his native Kazakhstan, and nothing depicted suggests anything Borat might’ve broadcast. The country’s stark, southern steppes form the backdrop for a family of nomads, including married-with-children Samal and Ondas, and same-sex brother Asa, who returns from his Russian naval service longing for his own flock of sheep. Alas, he can’t get a flock until he lands a wife — and the only local prospect, Tulpan, rejects him on the basis of his “big ears” (and the small fact that she would like to move out of the sticks, into the city, and maybe even attend college). Traditional ways bump up against more ambitious ones (as when Asa dreams of a satellite dish), just as comedic moments trade screen time with gritty scenarios (including actual footage of a sheep giving birth). The end result is an intimate and somehow totally relatable look at a fascinatingly foreign world. (Cheryl Eddy) 6:15 p.m., PFA. Also Mon/27, 9:15 p.m., Sundance Kabuki; April 30, 4:45 p.m., Sundance Kabuki.

TUES/28

In the Loop (Armando Iannucci, England, 2009) A typically funny and bracing remark by U.K. Minister of International Development Simon Foster (Tom Hollander) ignites a media firestorm, as it seems to suggest war is imminent even as both Brit and U.S. governments are downplaying the likelihood of the Iraqi invasion they’re simultaneously preparing for. Suddenly cast as an important arbiter of global affairs — a role he’s perhaps less suited for than playing the Easter Bunny — Simon becomes one chess-piece in a cutthroat game whose participants on both sides of the Atlantic include his own subordinates, the prime minister’s rambunctious communications chief, major Pentagon and State Department henchmen, crazy constituents, and more. This frenetic comedy of behind-the-scenes backstabbing and its direct influence on the highest-level diplomatic and military politics is scabrously funny in the best tradition of English television.

APRIL 30

California Company Town (Lee Anne Schmitt, USA, 2008) This land isn’t your land, or my land, and it wasn’t made for you and me — such is the insightful and incite-full impression one gets from this simple, stably narrated, and ominously structured look at the Golden State and the state of capitalism is labor of love, shot between 2003 and 2008: it’s a provocative piece of American history. On a semi-buried level, it’s also an extraordinary act of personal filmmaking that subverts various stereotypes of first-person storytelling by women while simultaneously learning from and breaking away from some esteemed directors of the essay film. (Johnny Ray Huston) 8:35 p.m., PFA. Also May 2, 6:45 p.m., Sundance Kabuki; April 30, 6:30 p.m., Sundance Kabuki.

Rudo y Cursi (Carlos Cuarón, Mexico, 2008) A who’s-who of Mexican cinema giants have their cleats in soccer yarn Rudo y Cursi: stars Gael Garcia Bernal and Diego Luna, and producers Alfonso Cuaron (whose brother, Carlos, wrote and directed), Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu, and Guillermo del Toro. But while Rudo is entertaining, it’s surprisingly lightweight considering the talent involved. Bernal and Luna play Tato and Beto, rural half-brothers discovered by a jovially crooked soccer scout (Guillermo Francella) who gets them gigs playing on Mexico City teams. But athletic achievement seems barely a concern. Of far more importance are Tato’s drowning dreams and high-profile romance with a rapid TV star, and Beto’s left-behind wife and kids — not to mention his glorious gambling addiction. Though the drama boils down to one final game (of course), Rudo is really about the bonds and brawls between brothers, not sports teams. Goal! (Eddy) 6:15 p.m., Sundance Kabuki. Also May 1, 4 p.m., Sundance Kabuki.

MAY 1

D Tour (Jim Grantano, USA, 2008) There’s been many a band-on-the-brink doc about groups torn apart by substance abuse, or creative differences, or just plain nuttiness (see: 2004’s Digi and Some Kind of Monster, and any number of Behind the Music eps). In D Tour, local indie popsters Rogue Wave face, and are drawn together by, an entirely different brand of crisis: drummer Pat Spurgeon’s urgent need for a kidney transplant. Director Granato is given full access to subjects who are very open about their feelings (and, in Spurgeon’s case, unpleasant medical procedures). The result is a music- and emotion-filled journey that’ll no doubt inspire many to check off the “organ donor” box on their driver’s licenses. A sadly ironic, late-act twist involving a different band member will come as no surprise to Rogue Wave followers, but D Tour incorporates the tragedy into its storyline without ever exploiting it. (Eddy) 9 p.m., Sundance Kabuki. Also May 4, 3:15 p.m., Sundance Kabuki; May 7, 5:15 p.m., Sundance Kabuki.

MAY 2

The Immaculate Conception of Little Dizzle (David Russo, USA, 2009) Animator Russo’s first feature is a (mostly) live-action whimsy about rudderless Dory (Johnny Ray Huston) 8:35 p.m., PFA. Also May 2, 6:45 p.m., Sundance Kabuki; April 30, 6:30 p.m., Sundance Kabuki.

THE BOYS: THE SHERMAN BROTHERS’ STORY
Sat/25, 2 p.m., Letterman Digital Arts Center

THE LOST WORLD WITH DENGUE FEVER
May 5, 8 p.m., Castro
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All Guardian Facebook group members will receive a special email on Monday, April 27th with details on how to download two complimentary tickets (each admits one person) to an advance screening in San Francisco.

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All donations will go directly to San Francisco Goodwill.

IN THEATRES EVERYWHERE MAY 1ST!
African titles are harder to procure than a Jackie Chan vehicle. Sacred Places is light enough on its feet to pass itself as a slice of life, but Teno's quiet approach constitutes a major revaluation of the aims of African cinema.

Another illuminating interviewer, Heidi Honigmann, returns with Objection, her last film set in Lima since 1994's mobile portrait Metal and Melancholy. There's also a double-shot of alternative histories from Lee Anne Schmitt (California Company Town) and Travis Willkerson (Proving Ground), who are both associated with CalArt, an institutional hotbed for hybridized docs. Willkerson's An Injury to One (2003) remains one of the great American political films; his live performance of military foot- age promises more shots from the avant-garde of documentary. Also on SFIFF’s doc-centric slate: 2009 Persistence of Vision winner Lourdes Portillo, art-historical conspiracy theories courtesy of Peter Greenaway (Rembrandt J'Accuse), and reality-bending fictions like John Cassavetes' still-potent unraveling of the domestic melodrama, A Woman Under the Influence (1974). sfog

SHOTS IN THE DARK: SHORTS TAKE ON SFII’S 52

May 3
Moon (Duncan Jones, England, 2008) The Bay Area’s own Sam Rockwell has qui- etly been making a slew of memorable performances in variable films — including 2002’s Confessions of a Dangerous Mind and 2008’s Choke — so the fact that he’s pretty much the whole show in this British sci-fi tale is reason enough to see it. A one-man space saga à la Silent Running (1972), it has him as Sam Bell, the lone non-mechanical worker (Kevin Spacey voices his principal robot assistant) on a lunar mining station in the not-too-distant future. He’s just about to finish his long, lonely contracted three-year stint and return home to a desperately missed family when strange things begin to occur. First there are hallucinations, then physical disabilities, then finally the impossible — there’s company aboard the station. Debuting feature director Duncan Jones orchestrates atmosphere and intrigue, though despite one major game-changing twist his original story seems a little thin in the long run. Nevertheless, Rockwell commands attention throughout as a character whose exhaustion, disorientation, and eventual panic feel alarmingly vivid. (Hiroshi Abe) 9 p.m., Castro.

The Reckoning (Pamela Yates, USA/Uganda/Colombia/Netherlands, 2008) Yates’ latest documentary chronicles the long-delayed launch and bumpy first years of the International Criminal Court, a Hague-based body founded to prosecute (primarily) war crimes that member nations were unwilling or unable to do so themselves. Its authority is not yet recognized by several nations — including the Big Three of U.S., Russia, and China — while prosecutions of various military or political leaders who ordered crimes against civilians are often hampered by political minefields. Nonetheless, the still-struggling court is a beacon of hope for peace and justice around the globe. Yates lays out its work so far as an engrossing series of detective stories investigating instances of mass murder, rape, plunder, etc. in Uganda, the Congo, Darfur, and Colombia. (Harvey) 5:30 p.m., Sundance Kabuki. Also May 5, 6, 6:15 p.m., Sundance Kabuki.

Still Walking (Hirokazu Kore-eda, Japan, 2008) It’s no joy for Ryota (Hiroshi Abe) to bring his bride and stepson up from Tokyo on an annual visit to his elderly parents. The occasion is to commemorate the passing of an older brother who’s been dead for decades but is still held up as the yardstick by which Ryo will always fall short. Mon (Kiki Kristina) is often insatiably well intentioned, if blurt- and spoken. But retired dad (Yoshio Harada) is an impertinent grump who resents Ryo’s not following him into medical practice, disapproves of his marrying a widow, spurns her son from that prior union as less than a “real” grandchild, and is generally kind of a dick. This latest from Hirokazu Kore-eda (2004’s Nobody Knows, 1998’s After Life) is a quiet seriocomic with lots of discomfiting moments. Yet it’s suffused with enough humor, warmth and surprising joy to easily qualify as one of SFIFF’s best 2009 picks. (Harvey) 8:45 p.m., Sundance Kabuki. Also May 5, 6:30 p.m., Sundance Kabuki. sfog
Lymelife

**REVIEW** It's 1979, and disco isn't the only thing that sucks for Long Island teen Scott (Rory Culkin). Bullies at school beat up his skinny 15-year-old ass; girl next door Adrianna (Emma Roberts) likes him, but "like a brother." Housewife mom Brenda (Jill Hennessy), neglected by real estate magnate spouse Mickey (Alec Baldwin), has gone kinda crazy. Buying into the paranoia around deer-tick-carried Lyme disease, she won't let Scott go outside without duct-taping shut all worrisome gaps in his clothing. It's pretty clear to everyone (particularly older son Jim, played by Kieran Culkin — who here seems a rare live wire in the usu-
-ally underwhelming Culkin acting dynasty) but her that dad is cheating, though for a while no one guesses it's with Adrianna's bitchy mum Melissa (Cynthia Nixon). Melissa has her own problems at home, given that husband Charlie (a strikingly tragicomic Timothy Hutton) really does have Lyme disease, which has turned him from a dynamo into an exhausted, pitiful shell of a man. Yeah, you're thinking, do we really need another dysfunctional-family flashback with the requisite retro pop hits, pot smoking (back when it came dirt cheap), awkward virginity loss, and nostalgically horrible decor? Sure, why not. *Lymelife* treads no original territory, but its setting and characters are granted more than skin-deep authenticity, and the tangled conflicts in director Derick Martini and cowriting brother Steven Martini's screenplay really do lead somewhere interesting, even important. There are some annoying quirks, but the overall the Martinis nail a savvy balance of comedy and drama. Plus, amid numerous good performances, there's Baldwin giving a smug, surly yet sympathetic one that should be a shoo-in for award consideration if anyone still remembers little *Lymelife* at year's end. (Dennis Harvey)

.opens Fri/24 in Bay Area theaters.

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SFBG, NO PASSAGES ACCEPTED FOR THIS ENGAGEMENT

Film Festival] doesn’t mock. Friends and bandmates since the early 1960s — when Brian Wilson’s level success seemed nearly possible — Reiner and vocalist-lead guitarist Steve "Lips" Kudrow have been the rock god dream their entire adult lives, toiling at day jobs and raising families but keeping at every chance to capture glory, be it a poorly planned European tour or an emotional trip back to the recording studio. Even if you scoff at hair bands, it’s hard not to get wrapped up in this tale of success, failure, and power chords. And with no less than Lars Ulrich calling Anvil “the real deal,” there’s no need to uh, smell the glove. (1:20) Bridge, Shattuck (Eddy)

Earth James Earl Jones narrates this feature-length version of Planet Earth, just in time for Earth Day. (1:30) Grand Lake, Shattuck

Fighting Step Up (2006) stars Channing Tatum switches from dancing to you-know-what-gets. (1:46) Shattuck

The Informed This Bret Easton Ellis adaptation, a period piece on privilege and excess run amok in ’80s Los Angeles, rides partly on the spookily spot-on poetry of its casting: the smaller parts are peopled by such ’80s survivors as Mickey Rourke and Winona Ryder, no strangers to the tabloids, and there’s a genuine sadness in this, the final role of Brad Renfro, who died after an accidental overdose last year. Sadly there’s little chance of a Heath Ledger-style postmortem Oscar for Renfro. Though he reprises 2001’s Bully’s drooling angst, portraying a gawky working class wannabe and the closest thing to a moral center in this coldly searing indictment of LA decadence, he’s eclipsed by the beautiful, cruel, and pleasure-seeking youth (Jen Foster, Amber Heard, Austin Nichols, and Lou Taylor Pucci) as the indistinguishable Malibu Barbies and Kans) and the scarred, calcified, oblivious parents (Kim Basinger, Billy Bob Thornton, and Chris Isaak) — the latter particularly effective as the alcoholic, womanizing dad who can barely keep his snare under wraps! that populate this orgy on the precipice of AIDS epidemic. The chickens, of course, come home to roost in a way that ties Ellis’ intertwined tales to the now-bursting Dubya bubble. This chilled rondeau of sex, drugs, and synths — a Reagan-era embodiment of the Killers’ “Somebody Told Me” — will likely repel moralists, read like deep-fried, cheddar, comedy complete with supremely androgenic hair to the former ’80s kids who had been-one-done-those-and intriguing ciphers with its disinterested yet watchable gaze, trained on an LA playing itself. (1:38) Drafthouse (Chun)

Is Anybody There? Being a ten-year-old kid living at an old-folks home run by your parents wouldn’t be so bad if a retired magician (Michael Caine) was among the residents. (1:34) Albany, Embarcadero, Sight & Sound

Lost in the Fog A gifted racehorse, his trainer, and his owner (colorful Noyo businesswoman John Alegre) are the subjects of this San Francisco-centric doc. (1:21) Roxie

Lymelife See pick box. (1:35) Embarcadero, Shattuck

Obsessed Stronger Bell and Sasha Fierce: married, with waiter. (1:48)

The Soloist Played at moments like Beethoven’s Ninth — with maximum intensity and a finger on its earthly passions — The Soloist is one of the few movies of and about Los Angeles that attempts to make sense of its life — the writer and the one writing about: music and journalism. English director Joe Wright (2007’s Atonement) accomplishes this in a grand Hollywood style unidentifiable to pluck at heartstrings as well as eager to borrow from ’60s British cinema. Los Angeles Times columnist Steve Lopez (Robert Downey Jr.) stumbles on his story by accident, beneath a statue of Beethoven: the homeless violin player Nathaniel Ayers (Jaimie Foxx), a one-time Juilliard prodigy felled by mental illness and resplendent in rainbow-hued Afrofantastic ragtag-ly-ragbag Bonding with the stubbornly bound soloist — Lopez is a committed-philic individualist himself — the reporter grows increasingly involved with his subject, trying to fix his problems and get him to a home, a apartment, and a car, plunging ever deeper into the world of the down-and-out in downtown LA. The newspaper industry dives into crisis, casting out reporters as Lopez attempts to lure Ayers inside. Working with Susannah Grant’s screenplay based Lopez’s 2008 book The Soloist: A Lost Dream, an
rep clock
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“The American Dream Sucks.”

“THE YEAR I LEARN TO DANCE”

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[Image 326x697 to 465x837]

“REVENGE”

[Image 330x86 to 761x304]

“A GRIPPING THRILLER.”

“THE LION KING”

[Image 331x454 to 611x540]

“ANVIL! THE STORY OF ANVIL”

[Image 626x374 to 764x641]
ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: CNC-09-545877. SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 Master St. San Francisco, CA 94102. PETITION OF Melanie Lan Hung Wong, for change of name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Melanie Lan Hung Wong filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present Name: Melanie Lan Hung Wong. The COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING Date: May 28, 2009. Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM. Signed by James J McBride, President Judge. Date: April 29, 2009. Gordon Park-Li, Clerk. Publication date(s): April 29, April 29, May 6th, May 13th 2009. LFS3562.

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: CNC-09-545887. SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 Master St. San Francisco, CA 94102. PETITION OF Denise Hunt for change of name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Denise Hunt has also filed for a decree changing petitions gender from female to male. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING Date: June 26, 2009. Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM. Signed by James J McBride, President Judge on April 29, 2009. Gordon Park-Li, Clerk. Publication date(s): April 29, April 29, May 6th, May 13th 2009. LFS3562.

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: CNC-09-545888. SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 Master St. San Francisco, CA 94102. PETITION OF Sofia Tulchinsky for change of name. TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner Sofia Tulchinsky filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present Name: Steven Alexis Gabriel and Jake Ivan Gabriel. Proposed Name: Steven Alexis Gabriel and Sofia Tulchinsky. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter shall appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. NOTICE OF HEARING Date: June 9, 2009. Time: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM. Signed by James J McBride, President Judge on April 3, 2009. Endorsed Filed, San Francisco County Superior Court of California on April 6, 2009 by Gordon Park-Li, Clerk. Publication date(s): April 8, 15, 22 & 29 2009. LFS32606.

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME CASE NUMBER: CNC-09-545889. SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO, 400 Master St. San Francisco, CA 94102. PETITION OF San Jose Bay Guardian to place an AD 415-255-7600
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I’m A lonely Guy

By Andrea Nemerson
andre@altsexcolumn.com

Dear Readers:

The letter from “Forty and Frustrated” a few weeks back got a lot of interest and at least one excellent suggestion (go out alone) from a woman who has had success following her own advice. Excellent! I also heard from “F&F’s” male counterpart (and no, sorry, I can’t match them up), and here’s what we’re going to do: We’re going to read this and figure out what’s wrong and come up with a better approach. Together. Here goes:

I’m a 44-year-old guy, single for most of my life. Aside from a 10-year relationship with someone I was not attracted to and got involved with for all the wrong reasons, I’ve never had a girlfriend. I have had a few flings, though none have lasted more than a month.

In the last year, I’ve had more than two dozen dates. All but two weren’t interested in seeing me again. The most recent split was particularly painful because she seemed to be the closest match for me yet. (She apparently felt otherwise.) It’s always the same pattern. There seems to be a strong initial attraction that quickly fades after a couple of weeks. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve been told I’m a nice guy. I’m beginning to think that the few women who are interested enough to want to see me again eventually realize that I don’t have much else to offer, and lose interest. For the record, I’m healthy, fit, athletic. I have a life. I’m not aggressive, conceited, or rude. I like to think I’m a reasonably pleasant person to be around. I’m genuinely interested in what my date has to say. What am I doing wrong?

My profile on Match.com has had over 1,500 hits, I have yet to receive a single unsolicited e-mail. I’ve sent out nearly 500. I’ve had more than a few women write back, appearing interested, only to never hear from them again. When writing my profile, I made a concerted effort to not come across as pretentious or self-absorbed. I don’t have a checklist that’s a mile long. I included photos in which I’m smiling and one can clearly see my face. I would be thrilled to receive an e-mail from a woman who was interested enough to take the time to write one. I can’t speak for other guys, but having a woman ask me out on a date would be one of the most flattering things that could happen to me. And I’ve never backed out of a date at the last minute.

OK! The first thing that catches my eye is the admission, from someone who otherwise seems willing to acknowledge his own more saleable qualities, that he has “not much else to offer.” Either this is evidence of a self-image badly enough distorted to cripple any attempts to connect meaningfully with women he might be interested in, or it’s true.

If true, we had better hope it is fixable. What does it mean to “have something to offer”? Well, what are those women looking for? They do want somebody solvent (did anyone else read the articles about chimpanzee chicks who have more sex with the chimp dudes who have more antelope meat?) and sane, but beyond that? Fun, yes; compatible sexually and otherwise, yes; but also, assuming he’s dating women in their 30s, a husband and kids. If women in their 40s, maybe just the former, but these days you never know. What they all probably want, though, is availability and commitment. If he is not signaling that these are on offer, and not going way too far in the other direction and offering them in his opening e-mail, he’d better get signaling, and fast.

I assume they would also like to know why he’s 44, never married, and so little-dated. He’s going to have to come up with a good spin on a sad tale. Not a lie, mind you, but a little polish.

Lonely guy, spark it up. Maybe they’re not calling back because they fell asleep.

It also occurs to me that he may be — and I hate to say this because I imagine him reading it and I shudder in empathy — boring. True, “nobody wants to date me” is not your most scintillating subject and may not inspire the complainant to dazzling heights of witty word play, but come on. A little joke, some narrative flair, even a pun would help — and I hate puns. Lonely guy, spark it up. Maybe they’re not calling back because they fell asleep.

OK readers, your turn. Have at him.

Lonely guy

Love,
Andrea

Don’t forget to read Andrea at Carnal Nation.com.