

The Night of the
Stripping Dead

READER

Third Coast Percussion
and Philip Glass



**'IT WAS A
HAPPENING'**

EVOKING THE SOUTH SIDE'S WEEKLY JAZZ PARTY

Excerpts from THE ALLEY LP: PERSPECTIVES AND RECOLLECTIONS

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

SO MANY BIG CHANGES have taken place at the *Reader* in recent years, from minor masthead shifts to several handovers in ownership. We have new print facilities. (Do you like the new cover stock?) We made new T-shirts. Few changes are likely to be as impactful, however, as the one we're about to make: the *Reader* is headed to the south side.

Our new offices will allow for many splendid wonders, such as the entire workforce of the paper being under one roof and able to communicate without scheduling meetings days in advance, convenient parking facilities, and not having to walk through another newsroom to get to our newsroom, a path that always made me feel a bit like I was walking past the adults' table at Thanksgiving to get to the kids' table in the back. Most exciting to me, however, is that we'll be operating from such a vibrant historical center of Chicago culture.

It's not a history or a culture everyone is familiar with—inside or outside of the city—so I'm thrilled we were able to work with the curators of "The Time Is Now" exhibition at the Smart Museum of Art to bring you some oral histories of the Alley, an event for spontaneous music, art, and literary production that took place for about 30 years, every Sunday, in Bronzeville. Excerpts from audio recordings, transcribed and edited for clarity and

style, will give you a peek into this moment of Chicago's past that still informs our present.

Also, we have an inside peek at Philip Glass's first-ever collaboration with a percussion ensemble—Third Coast Percussion—premiering as part of the Chicago Humanities Festival on November 9; a preview of the Eyeworks Festival of Animation—the best experimental animation series around; and a look at "Night of the Stripping Dead," a horror-themed adult show, as our comics journalism feature. Maya Dukmasova gets us into the electoral mood with her journey to the heart of Mike Madigan's home turf, and Ben Joravsky offers a slew of hopeful election predictions.

A mea culpa for an error in the last print edition: we misidentified the Door as a branding firm; in fact, it's a PR firm. The company did not name the Saint Jane Hotel and was not involved in the branding of the hotel. And cheers are due to our very own board president, Dorothy R. Leavell, who was recently honored with the Chicago Urban League's Lester H. McKeever, Jr. Individual Service Award. According to the Urban League, the award "recognizes an individual who has demonstrated a strong commitment to improving the quality of life for African Americans in Chicago through volunteerism and embodies excellence through community service." —ANNE ELIZABETH MOORE



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Electoral fashions

"Who wore it best" wasn't on the midterm ballot. Maybe it should have been?

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"It was a happening"

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TO CONTACT ANY READER EMPLOYEE, E-MAIL: (FIRST INITIAL)(LAST NAME) @CHICAGOREADER.COM

PUBLISHER TRACY BAIM
EDITOR IN CHIEF ANNE ELIZABETH MOORE
MANAGING EDITOR, DIGITAL KAREN HAWKINS
DEPUTY EDITOR KATE SCHMIDT
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STAFF WRITERS MAYA DUKMASOVA, LEOR GALIL
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR BRIANNA WELLEN
GRAPHIC DESIGNER SUE KWONG
MUSIC LISTINGS COORDINATOR LUCA CIMARUSTI
FILM LISTINGS COORDINATOR PATRICK FRIEL
CONTRIBUTORS NOAH BERLASKY, ED BLAIR, LUCA CIMARUSTI, ISA GIALLORENZO, ANDREA GRONVALL, JUSTIN HAYFORD, JACK HELBIG, IRENE HSIAO, DAN JAKES, MONICA KENDRICK, STEVE KRAKOW, MAX MALLER, BILL MEYER, SCOTT MORROW, J.R. NELSON, MARISSA OBERLANDER, LEAH PICKETT, JAMES PORTER, BEN SACHS, KATHLEEN SACHS, DMITRY SAMAROV, KATE SIERZPUTOWSKI, RYAN SMITH, ANNA WHITE, ALBERT WILLIAMS
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DISTRIBUTION CONCERNS
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CONSULTANT CAROL E. BELL

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CITY LIFE



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SHOP WINDOW

Elevating the lowly pair of jeans

Pilsen-based designer Brandon Lamar Rials crafts uniquely distressed pants.

A PAIR OF JEANS doesn't have to be synonymous with mass production: Brandon Lamar Rials of BLRDesign elevates the humble garment to haute-couture material. From his cool live-work space in Pilsen, the driven entrepreneur produces customized pants that take one to two weeks for completion, fashioned in quality 11- to 13-ounce stretch selvedge denim made in America, Italy, and even Japan. "The jeans are one of a kind; you can't find anything like what I make elsewhere in the city," he says. Each wash is unique and handmade, created with soap, water, and bleach, and dyed in pieces. The finished product has been sported by local celebrities such as photographer Trashhand, streetwear designers Don C and JoeFreshGoods, and rappers Joey Purp, Vic Mensa, and Towkio. All that hard labor doesn't come cheap: BLRdesign's customized denim prices range from \$350 to \$650. Other

items are more affordable, however: the striking car-print T-shirts sell for \$40, the sturdy jean drawstring bags with a handy exterior pocket cost \$65, and the six-panel caps embroidered with the designer's witty illustrations sell for \$35.

With a background in industrial and graphic design, Rials, 32, does almost everything related to his line—from taking photos and creating the illustrations printed in his merchandise to product development, pattern making, and garment construction. His mother, who taught him to sew, helps him in the manufacturing process. Inspired by Japanese designer Hiroshi Fujiwara of the cult streetwear label Fragment Design, Rials cares deeply about the image of his brand: "I've always been at the heart of design, but I'm not so much an in-your-face seller or marketing guru. This past year has been about training myself to

be a better businessman rather than being so aesthetically focused."

One of Rials's strategies has been to release new products every month during Second Fridays, a popular art walk in Pilsen. "Sometimes I even do sewing demos for the interested few," he says. His prime spot on Halsted and 18th has helped him grow his clientele thanks to the abundant foot traffic in the area: "It is great from spring to fall. Winter is terrible in Chicago." Even though Rials opened his brick-and-mortar store in June last year, he's run an online shop for over six years. His graphic design skills are evident in his tasteful and eye-catching website, filled with high-quality photos. "What I want is to produce work that inspires others to create work that inspires others—this motto is also written in large letters on the wall in my studio." —ISA GIALLORENZO



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In the battle of the billionaires, Pritzker (left) will prevail TAYLOR GLASCOCK, COURTESY THE ARTIST

POLITICS

Going the *NYT* one better

The *Reader's* politics writer out-Nate Cohns Nate Cohn by predicting winners in the 2018 congressional midterms.

By BEN JORAVSKY

On Monday, the day before the big midterm elections, when all my friends were losing their minds with angst and anxiety, Nate Cohn weighed in with his election predictions.

Cohn's the numbers-crunching computer geek for the *New York Times* who goes through every poll from every district in every key race throughout the country to come up with rock-solid predictions about who's going to win what.

In other words, he's the Nate Silver of the *New York Times*.

Actually, Nate Silver used to be the Nate Silver of the *New York Times*—then he cut a better deal and took his blog to ESPN.

So now Nate Cohn is Nate Silver. Leading me to wonder—do you gotta be named Nate to get a numbers-crunching job with the *New York Times*?

Anyway, to ease my own election angst and anxiety, I eagerly dove into Cohn's front-page story. And this is what I read . . .

"Two vastly different outcomes remain easy to imagine. There could be a Democratic blow-

out that decisively ends Republicans' control of the House and even endangers their Senate majority. Or there could be a district-by-district battle for House control that lasts late on election night and perhaps for weeks after."

Are you kidding me? I mean, Nate Cohn—you call that a prediction? C'mon man, take a stand!

Essentially, Cohn wrote—the Democrats might win. Unless they don't. In which case, the Republicans will win.

Dude, I could have told you that, and my first name's not even Nate!

So allow me to do what the pros, like Cohn, apparently won't dare to do—make a real prediction in several major races, state and national. You can take it to Vegas, folks . . .

GOVERNOR: J.B. PRITZKER V. BRUCE RAUNER All things being equal—and what's more equal than two billionaires running against each other?—politics is basically a popularity contest. In this case, you've got J.B., a fairly likable fella, versus Rauner. Nobody likes Rauner—not even the Republicans. Especially the Republicans.

Pritzker wins—saving us from the potential nightmare of Rauner turning Illinois into a red

state by gerrymandering the legislative and congressional maps after the upcoming census.

ATTORNEY GENERAL: KWAME RAOUL V. ERIKA HAROLD You'd think this would be a gimme for Raoul, the Democrat, what with Illinois being a solid blue state. But Harold has a chance because (1) She's a woman and this is said to be another "year of the woman," and (2) I think a lot of voters will feel compelled to vote for at least one Republican, if only to prove to themselves that they're independent minded. Of course, this prediction is contingent on the notion that Illinois liberals are so clueless that they'd rush to the polls to vote against all things Trump, and then turn right around and vote for an anti-choice Republican who wouldn't have the guts to stand up to the idiotic executive orders on everything from LGBTQ rights to the environment emanating from the Trump White House.

I predict Raoul.

FOURTEENTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: LAUREN UNDERWOOD V. RANDY HULTGREN This suburban congressional district was gerrymandered to protect the incumbency of Republicans—in this case, Hultgren, a Trump puppet. Yet the district's drifting left as more Democrats move to the western suburbs. Yes, in 2016 Trump beat Clinton by four percentage points in the 14th. But that's down from the ten percentage points by which Romney beat Obama in 2012. Underwood's such a dynamic and exciting new face that she's winning many important endorsements. (Well, the *Tribune's* editorial board didn't endorse her. But its members also couldn't bring themselves to

endorse Hillary Clinton—so I think we'll all agree that the *Trib's* pretty worthless when it comes to election advice.)

At the start of the election cycle, many oddsmakers said Underwood didn't have a chance. But over the last few weeks the polls have tightened.

I'm going with my heart—Underwood in a squeaker.

SIXTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: SEAN CASTEN V. PETER ROSKAM For as long as I can remember, the Sixth has been filled with DuPage County Republicans—it was Congressman Henry Hyde's old district. And yet, it too has been moving left—Hillary won it by seven percentage points over Trump. Roskam is an anti-choice, climate-change-denying Trump rubber-stamper who's always done as he's been told to, even when it came to voting for last year's horrendous tax bill. I don't believe a majority of voters in a district that encompasses parts of DuPage, Lake, and suburban Cook Counties would vote for a climate-change denier over an environmentalist like Casten.

Uh-oh, between this race and the attorney general's, I'm exhibiting a lot of faith in voters. Man, this prognosticating thing is tough. No wonder Cohn wimped out.

I'm going with faith, gulp. Casten wins.

U.S. SENATE Alas, the calendar favors the Republicans, who already have a 51 to 49 advantage. In other words, there are more Democratic incumbents running for reelection in Trump states than Republican incumbents running for reelection in states that went for Hillary. So the Republicans will hold on to the Senate—even if the Dems win in Nevada and, dare I say it, Texas. But it won't matter so much, 'cause . . .

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES The Dems will take the House.

Yeah, you heard it here first, people. They need to flip 23 seats, and they'll do better than that—even with all the Republican gerrymandering.

So, yes, Trump will still be able to appoint judges, thanks to his Senate rubber-stampers. But the Dems will be able to provide some solid oversight in the House. And almost as soon as this election is over, guess what? We'll be gearing up for the next one.

That's right—2020 is just around the corner.

I can't wait.

@BennyJshow



Carolynn C. Bailey, Emma Mendez, and Jade Nolden

EDUCATION

Programs empower young women of color in STEM

High school students connect with role models, receive hands-on training.

By **SANDRA GUY**

Sexual harassment is hurting women's career ambitions and driving them away from the areas where they're most needed—science, technology, engineering, and math—the STEM fields, as they've come to be called.

That's the conclusion of a report from the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. The problem is pervasive at colleges and universities, the bureaucracies of which are set up to protect the institution rather than the people most in need of help.

A University of Texas survey included in the report showed that 20 percent of female undergraduate and graduate science students, more than a quarter of female engineering students, and more than 40 percent of female medical students had experienced sexual harassment on the part of faculty and staff they work with.

Two programs in Chicago have been established to combat the problem. The STEM Innovation Leadership Academy, in partnership with the Exelon Foundation and the U.N. Women's HeForShe program, and the F.H. Paschen Engineering Scholars, a partnership between Chicago construction and contracting firm F.H. Paschen and George Westinghouse College Prep, are aimed at helping scholars gain technical skills and problem-solving experience.

We spoke to teenage girls participating in these programs about the possibility that their careers could be empowered instead of imperiled.

The students understand that they'll have to stand up for themselves—and they intend to, even as technological solutions, such as apps to call for emergency help, start to flourish. As 17-year-old Emma M. Mendez, a senior at the all-girls' Mother McAuley Liberal Arts High School, said, "I think now, due to the awareness and society's support, we can finally end this harassment."

She said if she were confronted with a harasser, she'd say, "This isn't how I should be treated," and immediately talk with someone in charge about the situation.

Mendez, who aims to major in forensic science and minor in biology and theater, noted that she was heartened to see an episode of a favorite TV show of hers, *The Good Doctor*, portray a young female resident stand up to a male surgeon who behaved inappropriately.

Another student, 15-year-old Walter Payton College Prep High School junior Carolynn C. Bailey, said she's already accustomed to having a "call in/call out" program at school. Students can get help figuring out if a peer's potentially objectionable comments are made

out of ignorance or with the intent to cause harm, and act accordingly.

Bailey, an Afro-Latina who wants to be a pilot, says she's glad to know the nuances of when to call someone out. She also says she trusts her mother and a school principal to support her.

Both Bailey and Mendez are quick to cite strong women role models in their families. For Mendez, her paternal grandmother was a doctor who ran a clinic in Mexico with her husband, Mendez's grandfather. Her maternal grandmother was a nurse in a Chicago-area hospital's operating room.

Though she's progressed from airplane pilot to glider training, Bailey still has designs

on possibly becoming a doctor. "Diversity and inclusion matter," she said. "There needs to always be a place where women can feel included and inspired."

Bailey and Mendez, alongside Jade Nolden, a 16-year-old native of the Austin neighborhood on the city's west side, were selected to be part of the STEM Innovation Leadership Academy.

Since the ninth grade Nolden has attended a private boarding school in Pebble Beach, California, where she's on the student council and works on electrical setups and construction props for theater productions. "I hadn't heard of women of color being in the STEM field until [this]," she says.

The weeklong event this summer →

Researchers say widespread change necessary in science, technology, engineering, and math

A NATIONAL ACADEMIES OF SCIENCE, Engineering, and Medicine report describes pervasive and damaging gender harassment—behaviors that demean women and isolate them with sexist remarks and degrading jokes.

The 311-page document—two years in the making, and the national academies' first report addressing sexual harassment—also urged legislators to pass laws so people can file harassment lawsuits against individual faculty members, and so accused employees who settle harassment complaints cannot hide them from another prospective academic employer.

Yet one coauthor of the report, Kate Clancy, an associate professor of anthropology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, says the emergent goal is a complete cultural change for STEM fields.

Other concurrent research supports such a broad agenda. One separate, peer-reviewed article says that exposure to demeaning and insulting behaviors—known as microaggressions—that are constant, continual, and cumulative caused a high degree of depression in undergraduate engineering students at a large midwestern research university, particularly among women of color. The paper, "Intersecting Identities of Women in Engineering," presented June 23 in Salt Lake City at the American Society for Engineering Education's annual conference, found that engineering students and academics who are female, African-American, or of other underrepresented groups experience pervasive insults, boorish behavior, and sexual harassment.

"The results are serious and profound. I learned from my coauthor (and colleague) Professor Princess Imoukhuede that there are associations between anxiety and depression and cardiovascular diseases such as high blood pressure," said Kelly J. Cross, an assistant professor in bioengineering, and one of the article's six coauthors, all from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

"An African-American student who has been told, 'You're only here because of affirmative action,' or a female student who hears, 'Don't worry that you don't understand that programming concept, you won't need to,' are experiencing these things multiple times," Cross said. "That builds."

Despite the incivilities they endured, a majority of the students surveyed expressed a high level of identification with engineering or said that being an engineer is important to their identity and sense of self.

"This result rebuffs the long-held stereotypes that females are less interested in engineering," concluded the article. —**SANDRA GUY**

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CITY LIFE

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brought 50 girls from throughout Chicago to the Illinois Institute of Technology to see STEM professionals in action and to get hands-on learning experiences on a university campus.

The second program, the F.H. Paschen Engineering Scholars, is made up of six students—four young women and two young men—chosen from among applicants who attend high schools where at least 81 percent of the students come from low-income families. This year marked the first time young women made up the majority of the scholars.

The activities are part of a three-year STEM program, which includes a special curriculum, summer internships, exposure to college engineering programs, construction-site visits, classroom-to-site applications, and one-on-one support. The aim is to ensure that engineering students have the opportunity to seek STEM careers with confidence. Scholars talked to a variety of engineers at O'Hare International Airport about their jobs, learned design and fabrication techniques, and applied their newfound skills by working with laser cutters and 3-D printers.

One of the students, Shayla Turnbough, gained experience in coding and 3-D printing a drone and a computer.

Turnbough wants to be an entrepreneur. "We have to step forward and say, 'It's time,'" says Turnbough, who's active in sports and participates in the After School Matters Peacemakers initiative.

The African-American woman in charge of the Paschen scholars' program—herself a native of Chicago's North Lawndale neighborhood on the west side—knows only too well the everyday realities the STEM students will face.

Even today, Antonia Winfrey, a project manager at Paschen, says she can be at a meeting with a subcontractor on a job, and the subcontractor will start asking questions of the young white male intern who happens to be sitting in.

Yet Winfrey says she remains amazed at today's young people and what they can achieve.

"The future looks very bright," she said. "I cannot stop talking about how great these kids are."

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POLITICS

The view from Madigan country

The much-maligned statehouse speaker's constituents remain unfazed by gubernatorial campaign rhetoric.

By MAYA DUKMASOVA



Sammy's Kitchen, where some Madigan constituents I spoke to had little to say about the longtime speaker. © MAYA DUKMASOVA

The Friday before Election Day, I headed to the neighborhoods hugging Midway Airport with one question on my mind: What do the people in Mike Madigan's legislative district think about Governor Bruce Rauner's reelection campaign hinging on the demonization of their representative?

For months, Rauner had been campaigning against J.B. Pritzker on the argument that he was the best man to combat the perennial Democratic statehouse speaker. One ad depicted Pritzker and Madigan joined in an “unholy union” by an officiant who, sotto voce, pronounces Illinois “fucked.” Another showed Rauner in mom jeans and a leather vest embroidered with a “governor” patch riding a Harley and decrying the “Madigan machine.” The constant refrain could be summed up in a simple equation: Madigan = greed, corruption, and tax increases.

I figured the best place to look for some Madigan constituents would be at the speaker's district office, listed on his website as 6500 S. Pulaski. Driving down the busy commercial thoroughfare past miles of storefronts featuring advertisements mostly in Spanish, I was surprised to find the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture at this address. I blew right past it at first—there was no indication at all that the drab two-story building doubled as the home base of the longest-serving statehouse speaker in American history.

Upon closer examination of the edifice I noticed a tiny sign to the right of the museum doors, inches above the sidewalk: “13th Ward Democratic Organization Second Floor—North.”

Inside, taped up on the shiny granite walls and partially obscured by plastic plants, were paper signs pointing to the office upstairs. Walking down a long, shadowy hallway hung with portraits of Lithuanian national heroes, I finally came to a locked glass door marked by another inconspicuous piece of paper:

13th Ward Democratic Organization
Marty Quinn, Alderman
Michael J. Madigan, Committeeman

On the other side of the door several elderly people were having a leisurely chat with office workers in Spanish. I rang the bell and heard confused shuffling and mumbles through the intercom; they seemed alarmed by the arrival of a reporter. A few minutes later a middle-aged woman cautiously cracked open the door to slide through a piece of paper with the name and number of Madigan's spokesman. She wouldn't let me inside and said she had no idea where Madigan's district office was when I asked if I'd come to the right place.

The museum was otherwise deserted, so I headed to Sammy's Kitchen, right outside the northern walls of Midway. Shift workers and families filled the tiny diner, and at the bar

a variety of current and former law enforcement officers offered political analysis.

A 74-year-old retired cop named Jerry didn't have a kind word for his state rep, but predicted that Rauner would lose the election. “They didn't give him a chance, Madigan or Cullerton,” he said ruefully, referring to the state senate president and the state's second-in-command. He also thought the scandal over the Legionnaires' disease outbreak at the Quincy-based Illinois Veterans Home, which happened on Rauner's watch, would “take his legs off. People don't forget that stuff.”

While Jerry couldn't explain why people in this neighborhood have been reelecting Madigan every two years since 1970 (he's on the ballot again this year, uncontested), he also admitted he hasn't been very plugged into politics since his retirement. Robert Eigenbauer, a 56-year-old CPD officer still on the job, said people keep voting for Madigan because he's the only choice. A lifelong resident of the area, Eigenbauer said he'd never seen Madigan out and about and wouldn't even know what the representative looked like if he hadn't seen him on TV. “I'm gonna be honest,” he said between bites of well-done ground steak slathered in ketchup. “I can't tell you one thing Mike Madigan has done for this community.”


Nevertheless, Eigenbauer wasn't swayed by Rauner's ads, saying the governor's inability to shepherd a budget for the

state in a timely manner was proof of his incompetence.

I never found anything but the most tepid endorsement of Rauner in the neighborhood—but neither was there much enthusiasm for Pritzker, Madigan, or anyone else on the local ballot. Two years ago the general disaffection with machine politicians and random rich guys running government led to a surge of enthusiasm for Donald Trump's anti-establishment message in this part of town. In 2016, the 13th and 23rd Wards, which make up most of Madigan's 22nd state house district, were among just eight in Chicago where more than a quarter of the ballots cast were for Trump.

That Election Day, I met 17-year-old David Krupa waving a Trump flag and a “Hillary for Prison” sign outside a polling place at 63rd and Monitor. He described himself as a “day-one Trump supporter,” 18, and a fan of the candidate's law-and-order agenda. But last summer, I got a call from Krupa, who admitted that he'd lied to me about his age (because he thought it would be cool to be quoted in the newspaper) and let me know he was now running for 13th Ward alderman against Quinn. I caught up with him at his campaign office on Tuesday, just a couple of blocks east of where he'd been stumping for Trump.

Krupa, now 19 (really) and a student at DePaul, is running as an independent. He thinks that's the only way to beat Madigan on his own turf. He's no longer an avid Trump fan, and traded in his MAGA hat for sensible khakis and a blue button-down. But he's still all about fighting the establishment. He said his youth won't thwart him from being a more transparent and accountable public servant than the incumbent Quinn, whom he described as nothing more than a Madigan “appointee.” Krupa is of Polish descent, but he believes he can do a better job tending to the needs of the ward's increasingly Latino population.

“This country needs change,” he said. Krupa wasn't enthused about Rauner or Pritzker, saying that it's a “shame that we have two billionaires running for governor.” But as he sees it, the real problem in Illinois is Madigan. The 76-year-old speaker, he explained, is the real person in charge around here. Who's in the governor's mansion—or even in the White House—hasn't mattered in almost 50 years. 

 @mdoukmas



Cold ribbon noodle salad Xi'an-style
 ALEXUS MCLANE

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Shan Shaan Taste is harboring a noodle hero

Veteran chef Richard Zhou conjures a rare regional specialty in a tiny stall in a Chinatown basement food court.

By **MIKE SULA**

Chicago seems like it's luxuriating in a golden age of pasta. From Monteverde's Sarah Grueneberg to Daisies' Joe Frillman to Cameron Grant at Osteria Langhe, the number of chefs operating at the peak of *eccellenza* is astonishing. And yet is it really that impressive when you consider that the Chinese were eating noodles long before anyone else—and that, in terms of the vast universe of Asian noodle dishes, Chicago is years behind cities like Los Angeles, Vancouver, or Toronto? Sure, we're lucky to have the hand-pulled lagman at Jibek Jolu, the fresh black jia jiang mian at Great Sea, the knife-shaved dao xiao mian at Slurp Slurp, and even the mutant "Belt noodle Yibin-style" at Bixi Beer. But compared to Italian-style noodle slingers, the city's heroes of Asian pasta are fewer and less well-known.

Yet allow me to introduce you to one. Richard Zhou is a 53-year-old veteran chef who has worked all over the city cooking all kinds of foods in all kinds of kitchens, from the Peninsula to Old Town's Kamahachi to Evanston's Koi, and at a series of anonymous food-service gigs.

A graduate of the former Cooking and Hospitality Institute, for the last five years he's sold dumplings, noodles, and the Xi'an-style "hamburger" rou jia mo for takeaway on the outskirts of Chinatown in the erstwhile Richwell Market (now Win Sing Supermarket) with his mind on something bigger. Last month he and his wife, Cynthia Guo, opened a stall in the basement food court of the Richland Center mall, the great incubator of Chinese restaurants that's hatched Snack Planet, the late Lao Pi BBQ, Kylin Teppanyaki, and Qing Xiang Yuan Dumpling. Maybe it doesn't seem like a big step,



FOOD & DRINK

The food stall; chef Richard Zhou
 ALEXUS MCLANE



Liangpi, cold skin noodles ALEXUS MCLANE

unless you look at the success of the latter, now banging out their magnificent soup-dumpling variant *guan tang jiao zi* in a spiffy street-level brick-and-mortar space upstairs.

Zhou has big plans for Shan Shaan Taste, and he plans to execute them cooking the food of his home Shaanxi province in northwestern China, whose capital city, Xi'an, gives its name to so many of its signature foods. You might be familiar with some if you've eaten at New York City's Xi'an Famous Foods, which itself began in a basement food court but exploded into a 13-unit minichain after Anthony Bourdain lost his mind scarfing down its chile-and-cumin-licked lamb *rou jia mo* on a 2008 episode of *No Reservations*.

Chicago's sole other specialist in this regional cuisine—which features lots of lamb and wheat-flour noodles and bread—is Xi'an Cuisine on Cermak, popular for its *paomo*: lamb soup, thick with torn shreds of flatbread and *biang biang mian*, ribbon hand-stretched noodles deployed in various soups and stir-fries. They're much less known for another major regional noodle specialty.

That specialty is called *liangpi*, cold skin noodles or, as Zhou calls them, “cold ribbon noodle salad Xi'an-style,” a dish of such stark

textural contrasts and assertive, electric seasoning that you wonder why it's not in regular rotation all over Chinatown. The reason may be its labor intensivity—making them is a lot slower and less sexy than whipping out a batch of hand-pulled noodles like a marionettist.

Richard Zhou is a specialist in *liangpi*, and he's been making them since he was boy in the his hometown, Taiyuan, where he sold them on the street.

These noodles, which are slicker, snappier, and shinier than hand-pulled noodles, take days to make. First Zhou submerges the well-rested dough in water and begins kneading. As the water gradually turns milky with the extracted starch in the flour, what's left in his hands is the gnarly gluten, which he tears into shreds and steams until they build up the structure of chunky sponge nuggets. Meanwhile the starch is settling to the bottom of the water. After 12 hours, Zhou gently pours off much of the surface liquid, until he's close to the thin deposit of starch settled at the bottom, which he steams until it sets.

He then folds it over upon itself, slices it into half-inch ribbons, and chills them. When an order comes in, he piles them in a plastic dish, adds the gluten and a tangle of shredded

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raw cucumber, and lashes it all with sour black vinegar, raw garlic, sesame seeds, soy sauce, and a chile oil spiked with ten spices and herbs that he cooks at a gradually increasing temperature for an hour. Altogether flavors are so assertive you might not realize it's vegan—unless you order it as a combo, which comes with an egg, hard-boiled in a five-spice-spiked blend of jasmine and oolong tea.

Zhou offers his noodles in nine variations, one stir-fried and served hot, another served cold with warm sesame sauce, another extra-spicy, and another tossed with sesame noodles. One is served as a combo with red-braised pig feet, two others with *rou jia mo*, griddled flatbread sandwiching fatty chopped pork belly or thinly sliced cumin-braised beef shank.

Zhou also serves solo portions of these meaty braised off bits, including pork stomach, liver, or ears, or Signature 18 Flavor Chicken—a whole or half syrup-glazed bird, air-dried, then deep-fried, then braised for four hours in five-spice powder and medicinal herbs, a recipe he learned from his father. He's also added another noodle dish, *dao xiao mian*, knife-cut pappardelle-like noodles (which he admits using a machine to make) swimming in beef soup with chunks of supertender braised beef.

If you've taken on too much spice or too many carbs, he also offers his house-made Beijing-style yogurt, which is sweet, thin, and drinkable. But for now Shan Shaan Taste is a restaurant of the best kind, a specialist that does one thing really, really well.

I asked Zhou if he planned to add more to his menu—*paomo* is coming—but he thought I meant something else. Perhaps looking toward New York, he replied, “I want to start a chain.”

@MikeSula

From a collection of images taken in July 1977 entitled "Jazz Alley, 50th and Langley, Chicago, Illinois."

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'IT WAS A HAPPENING'

Evoking the south side's weekly jazz party

Excerpts from
**THE ALLEY LP:
PERSPECTIVES &
RECOLLECTIONS**



Starting back in the 1950s, the Alley was a sprawling weekly party in Bronzeville where people of all ages came together to hang out, exchange ideas, spin jazz records, and perform. Flanked by murals and photographs, the jazz happenings lasted for nearly 30 years until the host was forced to close them down. Its spirit persists today, however: iterations of the Alley—including Back Alley Jazz, held in July 2018—have moved into new spaces on the south side.

Originally the regular Sunday gatherings were held in an alley adjacent to Arthur "Pops" Simpson's garage, at 50th Street between Champlain and Saint Lawrence. The jazz happenings ended in about 1980. Yet this vibrant era of creative expression produced a cultural legacy with an impact that continues to unfold, nationally and internationally, throughout the fields of visual art, literature, and music.

The Smart Museum of Art is showcasing the Alley as part of its exhibit "The Time Is Now!," an examination of the watershed cultural moment during the 1960s and '70s when Chicago was defined by the art and ideas produced and circulated on the south side.

A listening station in the gallery showcases *The Alley LP: Perspectives & Recollections*—a limited-release record featuring interviews about the Alley with a few of the many individuals who organized, experienced, and were inspired by this iconic space: Marcus Sterling Alleyne, Maggie Brown, Jimmy Ellis, Douglas Ewart, Kevin Harris, Patric McCoy, Tyler Mitchell, Cécile Savage, Georg Stahl, and Karma S. Webber. The interviews reflect on the Alley's origins, its music, its murals, its iterations, the people who gave it life, and the ways that the Alley's story continues to speak to the spatial politics of race and class on Chicago's south side. The listening station also contains records—several suggested by interviewees in the texts that follow—with music by artists who either performed in the Alley or who reflect its enduring spirit.

The album was created by Sojourner Scholars alumni and Smart Museum of Art docents Nyla Evans Conway, Devell Jordan, Ariana Strong, and Sandra Swift, with support from Lamar Gayles, Jeanne Lieberman, Kai Parker, and Marya Spont-Lemus. Transcribed excerpts from it appear below. The interview with C. Siddha Webber was conducted by Northwestern University art historian Rebecca Zorach in 2013-14 as part of the Never the Same archive of conversations with artists and organizers. —ANNE ELIZABETH MOORE

PRELUDE

PATRIC MCCOY: OK. You ready? [Laughs.] I want to talk about the Alley, which was a happening. This is a term young people—during our time—we said "something's a-happening." It's that it just "happens." It's no organization. Things just happen. So this happening was something that went on for—when I got to it, it was old. This was back in the 70s when I got to it. And it ended in 1980. It was an event that occurred every Sunday, from noon to dusk, in an alley between 49th and 50th, between Saint Lawrence and Champlain. This guy would open up this garage in the back of the alley and would play jazz music. And people would come from all over the south side to party in this alley. They would party and do every kind of thing you could think of in the Alley. And it went on and on and on. Everybody from the high to the low. People would be coming in in minks, and there'd be pimps, prostitutes, gay people, just everybody! And they're all in the Alley, just partying. Nobody was organizing it. They'd be shooting craps. They were doing all kinds of things. Everything you could think of was going on in this alley. It was like a big carnival. Every Sunday. And people knew. You know, "I'll meet you at the Alley!"

On the corner—the reason why it starts at noon—right on

the corner of 50th and Saint Lawrence were three liquor stores. [Laughs.] Back-to-back liquor stores. And on Sunday you could sell alcohol at noon, back then. So the whole thing starts at noon, and everybody would line up and get their drinks and go in the Alley and drink and smoke and all that good stuff. And there was a vacant lot to the south, and people would come with barbecue pits and they would have barbecue pig ears . . . sandwiches . . . it was a hoot! Jazz musicians that would come into Chicago—you know, they would play at a set somewhere in a jazz club, and then on Sunday, they would be playing, performing in the Alley. It went on and on until 1980. Jane Byrne was the mayor, and she sent the police in there and they closed it down. But it was a happening. There was murals on the alley walls—Mitchell Caton, one of the artists that was out of the original mural movement with Bill Walker—he painted a mural on that wall.

MUSIC

JIMMY ELLIS: I've been interviewed a lot of times. It's difficult to know where to start. But we didn't entitle it Universal Alley. We just called it Jazz in the Alley. But that's OK, some people call it Universal Alley. But anyway. It goes all the way back to 1950 . . . It's been so long I couldn't give you exact dates. I'd say it was 1955. It's the neighborhood where I grew up. That's where I grew up, on 49th and Champlain. And the Alley was between Saint Lawrence and Champlain. We called the neighborhood the Valley, because those two blocks—Saint Lawrence and Champlain—felt valleylike. And in the alley was where the records would spin. It would start off as DJs every Sunday would come and spin records, and the community would come out: old folks, young people, doctors, lawyers, any people, winos, junkies. Everybody'd come out. Excuse my expression, but I'm speaking very plain. It was for the people. Church people after church services would come out, and grandparents, and the babies. It was a wholesome affair. And in the Garage is where it started. Maybe three or four DJs would bring their records and then they would have their turntables. And each DJ would spin a record and the audience—people would sit in the audience—and they would judge it according to each one. At the end of the day, you'd give points to who had the best record. And that would include people like Sarah Vaughan, Billie Holliday, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, all the jazz people back in the day. Now this went on for years and years.

Now how I got involved—I always tell everybody that I didn't start Jazz in the Alley, it started off as records being played each Sunday. But what happened was that one Sunday, I brought my horn down and played with the records. And they thought it was so great and said, "Why don't you bring the band down?" So we decided to bring musicians down once a month. By me being a musician, I was able to get some of the best musicians in the country who were in town to come in and sit in and play for us. And it was always free. We gave it to the people. We didn't charge nobody. And it was fun!

C. SIDDHA WEBBER: They had about, say, five to six DJs. Each DJ would have a spin table, and they would play. One guy would play a tune, say a Dexter Gordon, and the next guy would play a tune and try to beat that tune, sound better. He would play maybe . . . a Sonny Stitt. And then the next guy would play, maybe, a Charlie Parker. People would get up and



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do they own dance and jig. And then they would—some cats would get up and improvise to the music. So then, when the live set would happen, live musicians would come. Sometimes they'd be joining like a jam session. Then guys would sing—singers, both male and female singers—would sing to the band. And some guys had improvisational instruments, something like karaoke—they didn't really have instruments, but they did a real good show, pantomiming an instrument, you know what I mean? So that's the way that was. And then it got so it later became identified as a sacred space. And so then I learned, sometimes you do something previously and then you learn, oh there is such thing as sacred space, oh really? That's what we created.

DOUGLAS EWART: I think music is always political. In fact, I can't really think of much in life that doesn't involve politics: survival, your ideas about things, what you say, how you dress, how you walk [laughs], how you look [laughs]. Those are all

features of politics—body politic, if you will. And remember that there was a lot of control exerted on the arts and music—in particular—because music brought people together of all stripes. And when you think about the compartmentalization of Chicago politically, the intersection of various ethnicities—and particularly black and white people coming together—that was a no-no in Chicago, whether unstated or stated. You know, when I came to Chicago in the 60s, people used to tell me where I couldn't go! Of course, being from Jamaica, I didn't adhere to any of that. Later, when I started looking back, I realized how dangerous it was. Because, going past—there were various streets, especially when you think about going west—it was pretty volatile. And so the music has this power to draw people together and to cause people to interact in a way that makes it impossible to restrict people's interactions. You can't prevent people from developing both friendships and intimate relationships once people start interacting. And the arts are a powerful conduit for that. ➔

continued from 11

ARIANA STRONG: What was the relationship between the live music and the DJ battles in the Garage and Alley?

DOUGLAS EWART: Well, you know, DJing is really important because people cannot always afford to go to hear some artists. Some artists never come to some geographic locations. And when they do, depending on the venue where they are, people might not be able to go to hear them. But when you have DJs who are passionate about the music, you get to hear records and artists that you would never necessarily be able to see live. So that was an important component. If I remember correctly, the DJing aspect was the initial concept that eventually evolved into live music. So we can see that there is a great symbiosis between recorded music and live music and that they both help to expose the music and the art to the public.

PEOPLE

JEANNE LIEBERMAN: Can you tell us a little bit about the Sandman [Daniel Pope]?

JIMMY ELLIS: Oh yeah. We were in grammar school together. And I remember him. We were children. I was in the class with him. And what he would do is sit in the back and go to sleep. And they'd just send him home! He used to clean the neighborhood, every Sunday. He would clean the streets, from Champlain to Vincennes, on 50th. He'd clean all the streets. He had his push broom. One time I said, "Sandman, why you do this?" He said, "This is my kingdom. It's my heavens." That's the way he talked. "I want it to look nice." Now this guy wasn't making a quarter doing this. So one Sunday we gave all the proceeds that we'd been able to raise—we gave it to him. For all the good he'd done in the community. And he was a musician! He did singing and dancing. And he could sing! [Laughs.] He'd put tables in his mouth and dance. But anyway, Sandman was a great person. I've got pictures of him too.

MARCUS STERLING ALLENE: It grew into the Universal Alley Jazz Jam, and it moved from a few different places. I can't remember all the locations it was at. But ultimately it ended up at the current location, that's at the Black United Fund and, you know, we get together every summer, every Saturday, from July to August. I met a lot of musicians and became friends with them. We encourage one another. You know, I think that was basically the essence of the original Jazz in the Alley, was to bring people together. And I think that any movement that begins with that energy, that attempts to unify a community—it's only natural that it just grows into something. You know, it's like a star gathering planets ultimately grows into a solar system.

MURALS

C. SIDHA WEBBER: When the mural was done, we had a dedication. Fred Hampton came and they gave a rap, you know, a kind of connection with the Panthers. A few of the Panthers came. Fred Hampton was the guy. And several other community leaders from the organization. After that, it was kind of like the mural brought, like, a lot of people there. Maybe, I don't know, hundreds of people came. And then after that week, since the people had come to that,



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then they came back every week, en masse. So now the people just came to stand in front of the mural, and then it would pervade all the way down the alley. And people would come together—thousands—and just enjoy the spirit of being in community, and being with each other. Like, you got maybe 2,000 people in an alley. It was a place where people could be hip—hip, meaning . . . like, right now, there's no place to be hip. Very few places to be hip. Blacks have a society—social way—of being hip, stylish, and communal. So then you need a place to be hip, stylish, and communal. And that's part of our culture. And that's why we are public, street people. Corner people. Corner cafe people. We need someplace to be hip, stylish, and communal! [Laughs.] You know? And so, like, when these "no loitering"-type things—those are things that's anti our natural proclivity as a people to be social.

TYLER MITCHELL: Mostly with my father [Mitchell Caton's] work, there's a story behind the work, you know? It wasn't just

people standing there, looking, posing. When he was alive, he could explain it to me, or explain the story. That was pretty much how he did it. He had a story going [in] everything he was doing. And he says, you know, at some point, he won't be around to tell the story and, in that case, you got to put your own story together. How you might interpret the mural and that story.

He pretty much just touches base with the things that are going on in the community. How it was, you know? That's why he called it *Rip-Off*, because I guess somebody was getting robbed or stuck up. You know, it's like, "Put your hands up against the wall," you're getting ripped off. Yeah, he was pretty much just telling the story of what was going on during that time, in that neighborhood, you know? But that's how he painted. He drew pretty much based on the times and what was going on. So he didn't really draw fantasy kind of stuff. His stuff was always very current, very in the now. Also, he was influenced by jazz and music all the time. He didn't play



You can't prevent people from developing both friendships and intimate relationships once people start interacting. And the arts are a powerful conduit for that.

no instrument, but he loved jazz. He always had some music going on in his artwork. You know. Always. You'll always see something: piano keys, notes.

C. SIDDHA WEBBER: When we did the Alley, the first art piece we did, I was evolving as a poet, as a jazz poet, and I developed the forms from those studies to look at the universe as one. And so, we fought over—Caton and I had a mental fight, verbal fight—over calling the Alley . . . you know, what we gon' call the Alley? So he wanted to call it "Rip-Off," and his pictures showed that rip-off effect, of police ripping off the people, up against the wall, and that's what he was talking with the titles, "Up Against the Wall" or "Rip-Off." And then I was into "Universal Alley." And so the people took to "Universal Alley," and they took to the poem. And so the poem just got to the soul of the people. That's what made that thing really come alive in the Alley. And so Caton dropped the title "Rip-Off," and—I think in interviews he did, he would still call it "Rip-Off," OK? But the title was on the wall, "Universal Alley." And so the people gave it that. Because, you know, the people had evolved!

CONCLUSIONS

JIMMY ELLIS: The Alley was a great place to be, because it was wholesome. But what happened with the Alley, Jane Byrne—I don't even remember what year it was—she became the mayor of Chicago. And Pops Simpson was the old man who had the Garage, who had music playing in the Garage. He used to pass a cigar box around to try to get a little money to support what he was doing, sometimes give it to the band or something. Then he wanted us to play some rock 'n' roll. We don't play rock 'n' roll. We're playing for nothing to begin with. So. What happened—like I said, we only played live music once a month. When Pops started making money because people started coming because of the live music, and he started playing rock 'n' roll, they had violence down there. Some vacant buildings, all kinds of stuff was going on inside those buildings. Jane Byrne closed the Alley down because of the music. The wrong kind of music was being played.

MAGGIE BROWN: You guys, it's that I heard the reason that original one shut down was because things got so live and so, you know, big and attractive—it attracted a lot of people! Then it started attracting seedy people. It just got kind of big and deep and, you know, people would be not only in that alley but [they'd be] there in, you know, whatever vacant little houses. There was just stuff, activity getting a little seedy and crazy. And then that one day a gun, you know, was fired. I don't know that it was that anyone was murdered, but just that that was enough trouble to make the police and the then-mayor shut it all down.

So that was the old one, right? So when I came along—and by this time, I'm starting to perform with my father live—we're getting a call, you know, "I'm going to do a gig with Dad, and it's going to be for Jazz in the Alley." OK, well, this location was a vacant lot at the corner of 50th and Champlain. I think Jimmy Ellis did those. I think Jimmy Ellis is who went and got the monies from the city to do a neighborhood arts festival and called it Jazz in the Alley. I think this is after '81. So then—that might have happened a couple times—and then a person who I know named Oshun—and her family—I think they got those neighborhood arts funds. Some years would pass in between these activities sometimes. And hers, she got the site of Dunbar Park, right by Dunbar High School. So there was even a time when people were like—there was confusion—like when you said you going to Jazz in the Alley, "Oh, you going to the one in Dunbar, or the one over there?" Because other people would still hold theirs. Then, when I started being asked to do the one that was elsewhere—that wasn't the Dunbar Park one, right?—which it took many manifestations. [This was] under the leadership of C. Siddha Webber. Jimmy Ellis would come to those meetings, a brother named Bernard. I know Senabella sometimes would be at these meetings. And we had a committee of keeping Jazz in the Alley going, but didn't want to have to charge, and didn't want it to go into this whole "we have to get funds" from anybody downtown. Nobody can, you know, direct what we're doing. C. Siddha—Dr. Siddha Webber—he really remembered how things were! Before! It was an organic thing, it just happened. He wanted to bring that spirit back. That was very

important. So he would help [financially] some, but there was a time we were behind New Approach Health Food Store and Restaurant on 47th Street. I did a few of those. In fact, if you go on YouTube now and you look up "Maggie Brown," one of the things you'll see is me in this mud-cloth poncho and my good friend Cécile Savage—a French bassist—playing behind me, and I'm singing "Work Song." That is actually what we considered a Jazz in the Alley—it was that jazz faction of the Jazz in the Alley crew. Unfortunately, things factioned off.

DOUGLAS EWART: I thought it was good! It was still in the neighborhood. The fact that it was being carried on in a respectful manner, and it was still catering to the notion of artists coming out to express themselves in an open, healthy environment. I think those are important factors. And so succession is a good thing. Anything that fosters live music, to me, is fabulous. And then all the other aspects that it fosters—people coming together, other art forms that showcase the other artists. So I think it was positive, and it was still in the black neighborhood, which is really essential. A part of a continuum. And it still goes on to this day, even though it's moved yet again.

MAGGIE BROWN: So often our music, our creations, get co-opted. They make money and, you know, of course take the credit and get successful and of course start having to hire us! And, to us, that's what the Jazz Fest is. There was no—Jane Byrne and them, they weren't doing the Chicago Jazz Fest before all this stuff happened. And so, I wish—especially in the days of such troubles in our communities—if only we knew who we were, that we could just organically create something that was really, really beautiful and naturally grew out of how we are when we get together. All this talent comes out, and this exchange, and everything. Those things are really possible. But those have been—hmm—severely stifled out of the neighborhood. Then you had to have a permit. You can't just do this, and you can't just—[makes an exasperated noise]. Because now, we don't want you all doing that over there, because we're making money every year doing it downtown.

DOUGLAS EWART: You can also think about powerful entities that control what goes on in the neighborhood. Like the University of Chicago, in regards to Hyde Park and their desecration of Woodlawn. I mean, they're definitely involved. [Laughs.] Of course, now there's this drive to kind of "fix" that, with certain aspects of outreach. But in my mind, I will never forget how they sat by and in some regard facilitated the demise of Woodlawn with a projection of getting that territory. And they pretty much have gotten it, and they pretty much run things in Hyde Park. Music is beginning to trickle back into Hyde Park, but for a good while, unless you had the Blue Gargoyle—and of course there were things at the University of Chicago, but that was primarily fostered by student bodies. I don't know how many people have spoken to this, because some people—especially people that are still practicing artists—are reticent to speak out about it. But even when I play at the University of Chicago I talk about it, because I think it's important to be critical, and to reference certain historical aspects, so we don't make those mistakes again. I think it's good that there's some aspects of outreach going on, but be careful of people bearing gifts. [Laughs.] 📍

the NIGHT of the STRIPPING DEAD

by Morgan Claire Sirène



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On November 1st I attended Chicago Horror's Night of the Stripping Dead at the Admiral Theatre. Here are my impressions of the talent that evening. Fake blood not included.



Stripper Edward Scissorhands...
A fetish I didn't know I had...
Thanks Raven!

Masumi Max
"Angel" + Demon

Natasha Nebula

Clownvis Presley

unpopular opinion...
I love Clowns

Pink + Pain,
my favorites!

the talented + beautiful
Cervena Fox

I love demons

+ his security guard

the infamous
Maya Sinstress + Sultry Susan

The Finale!

Don't worry,
it's fake

MORGAN CLAIRE SIRENE

@morgansirene/2018

Style from both sides of the aisle

Does the way you vote influence the way you dress? We went to both Republican and Democratic election parties to find out.

By **ISA GIALLORENZO**

1 **Melissa Erickson, 23, paralegal, from Edgewater, Democrat**

"I have the style of a queer trans woman. Since I work in a law firm I go for 'corporate casual.' Ever since I transitioned, my style has changed a lot. First I used to be very feminine. Now I also incorporate more masculine pieces into my wardrobe. This suit I just got an hour ago at Zara."



2 **Roa Hussien, 18, student, from Orland Park, Democrat**

"I always wear a scarf, so I have to put a little more thought into coordinating my outfits. I dress modestly, but I always try to add a modern element to my look."

3 **Candace Howell, 48, insurance agent, from Hyde Park, Democrat**

"Since I work all the time I favor casual and practical clothes. The double collar? I was just cold!"



4 **Angela Coxworth, 45, organic farmer, from Saint Charles, Republican**

"My style is classic, dressy, and businesslike. I'm really excited about these pants I just got."

5 **Nathalia San-Fratello, 15, student, from Wrigleyville, Democrat**

"I was at basketball practice half an hour ago, so I picked pieces that would go easily with what I was already wearing. I love mixing patterns, and I'm not a fan of plain colors. These boots represent how diverse cities are—they even have a peace sign on the zipper. The skirt I made myself."



6 **Michael Zanko, 24, consultant, from Wrigleyville, Republican**

"I picked fall colors for my fitted suit. Fun socks are always important. My brown shoes style up the outfit a bit—I like to match the shoelaces with the suit I'm wearing."



This conceptual drawing released in May 2017 by the Obama Foundation shows the proposed Obama Presidential Center that will be located in Jackson Park on Chicago's south side. This view from the south shows a public plaza that extends into the landscape. The tall structure is the museum.

© OBAMA FOUNDATION

ON CULTURE

Is the Obama Presidential Center finally a done deal?

After a Halloween vote by the City Council, it looks like it.

By **DEANNA ISAACS**

History books of the future might not mention this, but the City Council meeting that gave the Obama Presidential Center final permission to build in Jackson Park included votes by Freddy Krueger, Prince, and a trio of giant animal heads.

It was October 31, and the aldermen were into it: Ray Lopez of the 15th Ward was the scar-faced, claw-handed Krueger; Leslie Hairston (Fifth) sported Prince's flowing tresses, mustache, and purple satin jacket. As the session wore on, three others transformed into creatures we've long suspected of occupying City Council seats: a bunny, a shark, and a sloth.

The council was about to hand out a historic treat: a 99-year lease on nearly 20

acres of Jackson Park for \$10, along with an agreement to undertake taxpayer-funded infrastructure projects, including road closures and construction estimated to cost at least \$175 million.

But there were a few things the council had to get out of the way first, like a public comment period that gave a handful of citizens three minutes each to tell the council what was on their minds. With a monster of a digital clock looming over them, ticking off the seconds, they begged the council to forbid horse-drawn carriages, establish a senior housing bill of rights, increase funding for mental health services, and get rid of the lead that's poisoning the city water supply.

The speakers were ardent, the officials distracted.

While the citizens told their horror stories of horses working round-the-clock shifts and senior housing residents collapsing in 93-degree indoor heat, the alderpeople huddled and hugged and roamed, putting their heads together for impromptu confabs, perusing the stacks of documents that had just then been dropped at their seats, checking their phones.

They were more attentive once the public's half hour was up. Mayor Rahm Emanuel called for resolutions, starting with one that honored two police officers for preventing a suicide and showing empathy while doing it. One alderman after another stood and praised the pair.

"The Chicago Police Department is the best in the nation," Alderman Ed Burke (14th) declared, as if we had been transported to an alternate universe.

After two more resolutions and a lot more aldermanic minispeeches of praise, the mayor announced that it was time to turn the council's attention to the Obama Center, "the only presidential library with a public library inside of it."

Whereupon—like a bolt of lightning on a dark and stormy night—rules were suspended, a roll-call vote was taken, and both OPC ordinances were resoundingly passed, 48 to zero.

There was no discussion, and that was no surprise: the council had approved earlier

versions of the Obama Foundation plan twice before. Emanuel remarked on how important the center would be to the city, and the council gave the project a standing cheer.

So did most everyone in the audience. You'd be hard-pressed to find anyone who doesn't want the Obama Presidential Center in Chicago. But some supporters still have issues with the plan. Patricia Hightower, a member of the Obama Community Benefits Agreement Coalition (members of which demonstrated in the hall outside the council chamber before the meeting), told me this week that her group is seeking aldermanic support for an ordinance that would set aside 30 percent of new and rehabbed housing for low-income and working families, freeze property taxes for longtime residents, and invest in workforce development and affordable housing in the neighborhoods around Jackson Park. The coalition wants to get a referendum to that effect on the February ballot in those precincts.

"It's Obama yes, displacement no," Hightower said.

Friends of the Parks, whose lawsuit to keep the Lucas Museum off parkland sent that project to Los Angeles, issued a statement saying that it opposes any park site, but "if it must be in a park, we will advocate for a 'park positive'" outcome. Among their concerns: public access to the park, replacement of lost parkland and facilities, and financial support from the Obama Foundation for the broader South Lakefront Framework Plan.

Jackson Park Watch, which had urged the council to defer the vote, said in its own statement that no construction can occur until federal reviews are complete, and that those reviews will examine problems the group had noted: "loss of parkland, impacts of the discretionary roadwork, and displacement of local residents."

And then there's the Protect Our Parks lawsuit, still pending in federal court. It claims that the city and Park District have engaged in a property-flipping scheme for the illegal purpose of turning protected parkland over to a private entity. POP says that's a nasty trick. The next court date has been set for December 5; expect the city to file a motion to dismiss any day now.

As for the many other measures the council approved on Halloween, most of them were stuffed into a great big grab bag of an omnibus bill filled with aldermanic goodies and passed with another unanimous vote. **FI**

[@Deannalisaacs](#)



Linda Gehringer
© LIZ LAUREN

THEATER

Lady sings the blues

Dael Orlandersmith's *Lady in Denmark* explores the legacy of Billie Holiday through one of her fans.

By DAN JAKES

The emotional impact of plays about musicians tends to have a high floor and a low ceiling. *Heartbreak Hotel*, *Hank Williams: Lost Highway*, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, *Always... Patsy Cline*—it's a category of theater that's by and large informative and unchallenging and, at best, an excuse for a solid live revue. These shows also usually feel like they've been pressed out of the same Mold-A-Rama with a different name and songbook.

Dael Orlandersmith's latest monologue, now making its world premiere at the Goodman, does not.

In part, that's because her central figure, jazz singer Billie Holiday, never appears, and her music is only heard as an accent around the edges. Instead, Orlandersmith explores and grapples with the themes of Holiday's music entirely through the lens and life of one of her fans. It's a thoughtful twist on the typical chronological, paint-by-numbers biographical format, and it treats the contributions artists bring to the world as immortal gifts that continue to resonate and communicate long after their creator has passed.

We meet Helene (Linda Gehringer) in her spacious Andersonville home, realistically rendered by set designer Andrew Boyce, as she's cleaning up after her late husband's 80th birthday party. She'd been planning the celebration long before the unexpected and

aggressive recurrence of his stage 4 stomach cancer, so instead of canceling, she memorializes him with a party he'd have loved, full of wine and cigarette smoke and Danish dishes and nonstop Holiday on the record player.

"I just had a party and everyone is gone" is a common setup for solo shows, but it's tricky. It's no doubt a practical solution for how to organically introduce anecdotes about different characters, but its ultimate premise is the idea that the space was, moments ago, occupied by lots of vibrant people you would have loved to meet whom you'll now be passively told about. This model could probably use some retooling.

Anyway, Helene tells us as her loneliness creeps back in, "this house is both house and tomb." But Billie, she says, "is my friend in the dark." When a loved one dies, years of inside jokes, casual references, and a shared appreciation of particular works of art die with them, but for Helene, the bittersweet passion inherent in Holiday's voice takes on new meaning, one that provides comfort rather than despair.

About two-thirds into Chay Yew's production comes a *This American Life* chapter-length vignette about how Helene met Holiday during her 1954 appearance in Copenhagen, and it's during this stretch that *Lady in Denmark* really comes to life. The combination of Stephan Mazurek's projec-

tions, Gehringer's performance, and Orlandersmith's storytelling recalls the vitality of Emily Mann's *Having Our Say: The Delany Sisters' First 100 Years*, which has a similar speaking-to-an-audience-directly structure.

But Helene's monologue is ultimately about death, and the lingering grief that haunts surviving spouses even when they're afforded a comfortably long life span, a support structure of attentive family and friends, and a lovely home in a vibrant neighborhood full of vintage furniture shops and brunch joints.

That translates into a lot of time listening to a grieving septuagenarian describe a barrage of cancer-related horrors in excruciating detail after excruciating detail in a very quiet theater—the silence is remarked upon at least twice.


LADY IN DENMARK

Through 11/18: Wed-Thu 7:30 PM, Fri 8 PM, Sat 2 and 8 PM, Sun 2 PM, Tue 7:30 PM, Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn, 312-443-3800, goodmantheatre.org, \$15-\$45.

From my seat in the back of the Goodman's Owen theater, I wondered how many people in the audience had firsthand knowledge of that despair, and how they could possibly stand to benefit from sitting and stewing in it for so long. Were the iTunes sample-length snippets of thematically parallel Billie Holiday songs illuminating or redemptive enough to justify going through that melancholy?

That wasn't the case with Orlandersmith's most recent work, *Until the Flood*, which handled material audiences should be agitated about, the enduring crisis of unarmed black men in America being gunned down by police. Although Orlandersmith's multitude of characters expressed their grief, there was a forward momentum and a sense of urgency and action amid the anguish.

Lady in Denmark is about a quieter struggle, and in its way, it does speak very well to Holiday's music from a new perspective. Once the drop-in visits from concerned friends vanish, Helene warns us, "This is the beginning of real pain."

And yet, the quote that sticks with me the most comes not from the play, but from a couple wiping their eyes on the sidewalk outside the theater after the show: "Yesterday, a funeral, and then that?" 

 @DanEJakes

DANCE

Gaslighting

Lucky Plush's *Better Half* explores the mirage of matrimony.



© CHERYL MANN

LOVE MAY BE A MIRAGE—the self no better—and what is life but a walking shadow, etc? That seems to be the thesis of *The Better Half*, cocreated by Julia Rhoads and Leslie Buxbaum Danzig in collaboration with Lucky Plush ensembles present and past. Loosely structured by the Patrick Hamilton play *Gas Light*, in which a woman marries a murderer keen on stealing jewels hidden in her house, this 2011 work about domestic relationships keeps its Freudian slips not only out in the open but embellished into acrobatic pratfalls that hover between the ease of technique and the risk of improvisation.

All who enter are lit by spotlights, not round like the auras of stars, but square, enclosing each in a separate cell. Adrian Danzig and Rhoads are Mr. and Mrs. Manningham, a married couple flung together by circumstance and the chap in the corner reading from the script (the eminently watchable Michel Rodriguez Cintra). As they play an elaborate game of patty-cake that loops a few times through an orbit of contact and abandonment, the maids Elizabeth (Meghann Wilkinson) and Nancy (A. Raheim White) try on identities like ill-fitting shoes—when they're not being impressed into searches for lost keys and dry-cleaning tags. When Cintra evolves into Detective Rough, the dancing heats up but the narrative simmers down. Who cares whodunit when who we are is far more interesting? Centrally pleasurable are White's forays into fantasy, as the least defined character in the piece discovers the most possibility. —IRENE HSIAO

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OPERA

Becoming a man-child

The Lyric's Ring Cycle continues with the amazing adventures of *Siegfried*.

By DEANNA ISAACS

The first act of Lyric Opera's new production of *Siegfried* is a triumph for director David Pountney, who's put the four operas of Richard Wagner's mythic, fairy-tale-like Ring Cycle into a self-consciously theatrical steampunk setting.

That concept works for the opening of this third installment (the Lyric has been staging one annually), a coming-of-age story for the eponymous hero, because Pountney takes Siegfried all the way back to early childhood. The curtain goes up on a toy-strewn nursery with a giant playpen and a backdrop of kids' art that foreshadows encounters to come with a talking bird and a dragon. With a full set of steampunk special effects, including puppets, masks, and mimelike stagehands, it enchants.

Especially since tenor Burkhard Fritz has the child Siegfried down pat: rash, brash, ignorant, full of himself (even as he clutches his doll), and ready to rumble. The Baby Trump blimp floats into mind.

Siegfried's had a nightmare of a childhood, raised in isolation by the malevolent gnome Mime, portrayed here by tenor Matthias Klink in a brilliant and vocally astute performance. As he frequently reminds Siegfried, Mime has been both mother and father to him; in this production he's outfitted in a spaghetti-strapped frock.

There's a big backstory. The Ring Cycle is a family drama, and its patriarch is Wotan, chief of the gods, sung (royally and on stilts) by bass-baritone Eric Owens. Years

earlier, Wotan got it on with the earth goddess, Erda (mezzo-soprano Ronnita Miller); they had a child, the maiden-warrior Brünnhilde (she of the horned helmet and flying steed), who became his favorite daughter. In a previous episode (er, opera), Brünnhilde rebelled against Wotan, and he put her into a comalike sleep. Wotan also fathered a pair of half-human twins—Sigmund and Sieglinde—who, in a union promptly followed by their deaths, produced Siegfried.

In this installment of the cycle, Siegfried learns of his parentage, mends his father's powerful sword, slays the giant Fafner (who's taken the form of a dragon), acquires a problematic magic ring, and discovers and woos Brünnhilde, who, yes, is his aunt.

However, the run time, for three acts and two intermissions, is five hours. The steampunk gimmicks, fetching in the first act, begin to wear thin in the second; Wagner was a plodding librettist, and his hero (especially as portrayed and sung here) never becomes more than a blustering little boy. But the music (conducted by Sir Andrew Davis) is glorious, especially in the third act. And there's a fantastic bonus for hanging in that long: the mighty soprano Christine Goerke, as the literally and sexually awakened Brünnhilde, rises to join her overwhelmed lover in a closing duet that is Wagner's rapturous tribute to passion. **R**

@DeannaIsaacs

THEATER

Yes, *Moby Dick!* The Musical is real

And sometimes the Cuckoo's Theatre Project cast hits the right campy notes.

The premise for Robert Longden and Hereward Kaye's 1990 musical sounds like a parody of bad musicals—like *Elephant!*, the intentionally bad musical adaptation of *The Elephant Man* featured in the 1989 movie *The Tall Guy*: take Herman Melville's much-praised, less often read masterpiece about a monomaniacal sea captain bent on killing the albino whale that bit off his leg—and musicalize it. The great British producer Cameron Mackintosh (*Les Misérables*, *Phantom of the Opera*) bankrolled the original production at Oxford's Old Firehouse Theatre in 1990. It opened in the United States in 1993, fittingly enough in the old whaling town of New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Longden and Kaye frame Melville's tale with the story of a nearly bankrupt Catholic school, Saint Godley's Academy for Young Ladies, and its last hope for solvency, a self-produced musical version of the aforementioned classic with all of the characters played by students (except Ahab, who is played by the crazed headmistress). You can see already the possibilities—either for great comedy or disaster.

The Cuckoo's Theatre Project's current revival falls somewhere in between. The performers in this production, directed by Donald Kolakowski, have a charming energy, and some in the cast, notably Tina-Kim Nguyen, perfectly hit the balance of seriousness and silliness needed to make this self-consciously campy comedy work. But much of the humor in the show is crushed by actors who telegraph punch lines, singers who can't do justice to Longden and Kaye's sometimes inspired score, and the inevitable messiness of cramming a nine-member ensemble into the Heartland Studio's tiny storefront space. —**JACK HELBIG** *MOBY DICK! THE MUSICAL* Through 11/30: Fri-Sat 8 PM, Sun 3 PM; also Thu 11/29, 8 PM, and Sat 11/30, 3 PM, Heartland Studio, 7016 N. Glenwood, 312-882-8201, thecuckoostheaterproject.com, \$30.

RR The boy who had to grow up in *Neverland*, Prop Thtr finds the poignancy in J.M. Barrie's chestnut.

I have to admit that I was dreading having to sit through another version of *Peter Pan*. J.M. Barrie's chestnut about the boy who refused to grow up hasn't aged well—it's hard to suspend one's disbelief and hold one's nose enough to pretend to be back in 19th-century England while one is in 2018 America.

Though it takes a while to get going, this new take, devised by the Prop Thtr ensemble and directed by Olivia Lilley, managed to win this skeptic over by turning a well-worn story on its head and giving it a ripped-from-the-headlines urgency. Pan is an arrogant man-child who punishes anyone who dares to question his motives, Wendy is a manipulative teenage delinquent, and Hook is a heartbroken and bitter woman who's just looking for a little love and understanding.

By completely reconfiguring the story and the characters, the play is able to ask serious questions about what it means to become a grown-up in today's ever-evolving society. Hook's first mate, Smee, for instance, is the only straight male in the piece, and he's a cowering, confused ball of violence and misdirected

feelings. Everyone here is grappling with their identity in one way or another, but it's when Hook (played with a perfect balance of iciness and sorrow by Kate Black-Spence) takes over center stage at about the halfway point that this tale truly gets its sea legs. In her climactic duel with Pan nobody wins, because they're no longer fairy-tale heroes and villains in Neverland but instead former friends who have betrayed one another and have no idea how to fix what's been broken. —**DMITRY SAMAROV** *NEVERLAND* Through 12/2: Thu-Sat 8 PM, Sun 3 PM, Prop Thtr, 3502 N. Elston, propthtr.org, \$20.

You are entering the Twilight Zone

A failed interrogation into the idea of control, *An Oak Tree* is instead a benevolent dictatorship.

An attempt at a clever conceit, Red Theater's *An Oak Tree* pairs two actors, one who has rehearsed the script (an engaging Gage Wallace), and another who has never seen the material before. The second actor changes with every performance; I saw the talented Cruz Gonzalez-Citadel. The setup, opening with a recording of "O Fortuna" from *Carmina Burana*, implies dramatic risk; that the visiting actor is flying without a safety net opens up the possibility for surprising discoveries or agonizing mistakes. Unfortunately, nothing of the sort materializes.

Director Jeremy Aluma guides Wallace as she feeds lines to Gonzalez-Citadel, explicitly telling her what to say in front of the audience or whispering directions to her through a microphone that feeds to headphones she's wearing. Initially this is fascinating, leaving one wondering, at first breathlessly, then impatiently, when Gonzalez-Citadel will be allowed to break free and improvise her own responses. Sadly, this moment never comes. Instead Wallace hands her the written script. This is not a collaboration; it is a benevolent dictatorship of a staged reading.

An interrogation of themes of control reminiscent of the 2010 movie *Inception*, *An Oak Tree* is not fully self-aware. The outside optics of Wallace directing a guest actor who has no agency of his or her own for every single line of an entire play painfully and unintentionally harkens back to the famous, deliciously terror-inducing 1961 *Twilight Zone* episode "It's a Good Life," where a monstrous spoiled child with godlike magical powers terrorizes everyone in his town by telling them what to do—or else. —**SHERI FLANDERS** *AN OAK TREE* Through 12/9: Thu-Sat 8 PM, Sun 6 PM; also Mon 11/26, 7 PM; no performances Thu 11/22 or Fri 11/23, Athenaeum Theatre, 2936 N. Southport, 773-733-0540, redtheater.org, \$22, \$20 students.

A real damper

The leads fail to heat up anywhere close to *110 in the Shade*.

BoHo Theatre delivers an earnest, likable rendition of this 1963 musical version of N. Richard Nash's 1954 romantic comedy *The Rainmaker*, which BoHo produced six years ago. Enhanced with a score by lyricist Tom Jones and composer Harvey Schmidt—it was the songwriters' follow-up to their 1960 off-Broadway hit *The Fantasticks*—the story focuses on Lizzie Curry, the daughter of a rancher whose cattle are dropping dead during a drought in the Depression-era southwest.

The prolonged dry spell is a metaphor for Lizzie's parched emotional state; plain and plainspoken, unwilling and unable to play the girly games that other **R**

★★★★ (OUT OF 4)

“UNFORGETTABLE”

—Chicago Sun-Times

“POWERFUL AND MOVING”

—Daily Herald

Lady in Denmark

By **Dael Orlandersmith**
Directed by **Chay Yew**

After the death of her husband, a Danish American woman finds solace in the hauntingly beautiful music of their favorite singer, Billie Holiday. A journey through the couple's time together—from the smoky jazz clubs of post-war Copenhagen, to the home they shared in present-day Chicago—*Lady in Denmark* is a passionate reflection on life and love.

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ARTS & CULTURE



The Scientific Method
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→ local ladies use to snag men, she faces and fears life as an “old maid.” Enter con man Bill Starbuck, a traveling “rainmaker” on the lam from the law, who promises to bring rain to the community in return for \$100. Lizzie’s pa happily hands over the cash, recognizing that Starbuck may be Lizzie’s last chance for love. Initially at odds, the hardheaded but unhappy realist Lizzie and the footloose dream weaver Starbuck find in each other the power to believe in themselves—a universal theme that offsets the plot’s dated sexual attitudes.

Peter Marston Sullivan’s staging features Neala Barron as Lizzie; she’s an actor of real presence, and her plaintive soprano is well suited to the music. But there are no sexual sparks between her and Tommy Thurston’s quirky, scruffy Starbuck. Denzel Tsopnang does what he can with the underwritten role of File, the sheriff who hides his own feelings for Lizzie behind a taciturn facade. —ALBERT WILLIAMS *110 IN THE SHADE* Through 12/16: Thu-Sat 8 PM, Sun 2 PM; no performance 11/22, Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont, 773-975-8150, bohotheatre.com, \$35.

RR Lab rats
Be patient and *The Scientific Method* will yield results.

You’ll need patience to make it through the first hour or so of Jenny Connell Davis’s brand-new and ultimately satisfying 90-minute play, set in the world of high-profile cancer research. It takes Davis that long to make it clear what her play is about.

Until then, we watch the varying levels of ambition in a handful of key players in the fictional Garfield University’s cancer lab alternately sweeten and sour this cutthroat world. Amy, the play’s center, is a sixth-year postdoc on the verge of a breakthrough in basal cell carcinoma profile expressions, although the lab’s world-renowned director, Julian, seems too busy chasing multimillion-dollar grants to adequately promote her work. Julian’s just brought in a new first-year grad student, Manish, who’s eager to leapfrog over Amy even as he falls in love with her. Undergrad Makayla, the only black student who’s ever set foot in the lab, struggles to find confident footing, while Marie, the lone female senior academic, guns for the department’s endowed chair that Julian believes he deserves.

It’s all interesting enough, despite the occasional misstep into scientific overkill (metaphors don’t readily emerge from polypeptide folding, despite the playwright’s efforts). But little coheres until Amy discovers a possible betrayal by a fellow researcher, and suddenly

her doomed efforts to get her due in a system rigged to favor the world’s Julians becomes a thrilling, harrowing ride. Director Devon de Mayo’s ideal cast make the finale of this Rivendell world premiere worth waiting for. —JUSTIN HAYFORD *THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD* Through 12/2: Thu-Fri 8 PM, Sat 4 and 8 PM; also Sun 11/18 and 12/2, 3 PM, and Tue 11/20, 8 PM; no performance Thu 11/22, Rivendell Theatre, 5779 N. Ridge, 773-334-7728, rivendelltheatre.org, \$38, \$28 students, seniors, military.

RR O brave new world
Spirits to Enforce is an auspicious beginning for the Passage Theatre.

The Passage Theatre makes an auspicious debut with its revival of Mickle Maher’s deadly difficult 2003 play, a work so doggedly antitheatrical and conceptually absurd (like most of Maher’s dizzying scripts) that it seems designed to fail. Twelve dubious superheroes, with names like the Intoxicator, Fragrance Fellow, Memory Lass, and the Untangler, have apparently saved Fathomtown from archnemesis Professor Cannibal (his capture took 400 years) and are now in the midst of mounting a celebratory production of Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Trouble is, they’re broke (superheroism isn’t remunerative), so they’re holding a telethon in their secret submarine headquarters, trying, with scant success, to raise funds. And they’ve holed themselves up beneath Fathomtown’s execrably polluted bay for so long that supervillains now run rampant.

The play’s myriad elements seem decidedly random at first, and little happens onstage; the audience witnesses nothing but intercut snippets of actors making phone calls. But imperceptibly Maher’s imaginative world begins to cohere, the team’s true history emerges, and Maher delivers a gorgeous, melancholy saga of everything *The Tempest*’s spirits endured after their play ended.

Director Will Quam rightly takes a nearly musical approach, letting various themes and motifs emerge, submerge, and recur rather than trying to manufacture action where none exists. The 95-minute show has its lulls, but the precise, unhurried cast finds disarming poignancy in the well-orchestrated absurdity. As lead superhero Ariel, Peter Andersen plumbs the depths of a truly lost soul’s incalculable sorrow. —JUSTIN HAYFORD *SPIRITS TO ENFORCE* Through 11/17: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Mon 7:30 PM, Berry United Methodist Church, 4754 N. Leavitt, 502-548-8677, passagetheatre.com, \$12.

VISUAL ART

'Be Black'

The Time Is Now! celebrates the artists of the south side who used their work as a vehicle for social change during the 60s and 70s.

By DEANNA ISAACS

The Time is Now!" is the title of both a big, beautiful exhibit on view at the University of Chicago's Smart Museum through December, and the equally big and beautiful book that functions as its catalog. It was taken from one of the artworks in the show, a 1968 photograph by Darryl Cowherd.

The photo captures graffiti on a boarded-up doorway in Woodlawn that pairs those urgent words with these: BE BLACK. Rebecca Zorach, who coedited the book with Marissa H. Baker, writes in an introduction that this "insistent imperative" to claim identity and space is a key focus of the exhibition.

But, she adds, "the title also speaks to a more generally held feeling of urgency in art of the time, to the concern that art be timely."

"The Time Is Now!"—subtitled "Art Worlds of Chicago's South Side, 1960-1980"—captures two fervent decades during which Chicago's black artists made their work the vehicle for and expression of the revolutionary civil and social change they sought.

There are white artists here—most notably the Hairy Who and other Chicago Imagists who showed their work at the Hyde Park Art Center when it was headed by Don Baum—but really, it's not about them. It's about a context of segregation, suppression, and lynching (the latter referenced in, among others, Nathan Wright's exquisite and surreal 1971 oil *Bound*). And it's about the response to that context—expressed, for example, in the raised fists of a black-power salute, commemorated in Murry DePillars's powerfully satirical 1969 lithograph *Untitled (Aunt Jemima Pancake and Waffle Mix)*, and in the potent screen prints of Barbara Jones-Hogu.

While the book is a must-have, filled with illustrations that amplify the 100-plus-piece



exhibit (although it could use an index), it shouldn't substitute for a visit to the Smart to see the real thing. Photos can't do justice to works like Sylvester Britton's mesmerizingly luminous 1962 abstract oil (*Untitled*) or the churning, explosive universe of color in another oil painting, Dale Normand's *Superman* (1980). These works, like Douglas Williams's abstract but unmistakably relatable 1970 three-part sculpture *Sky Watchers* and Eddie Harris's blood-drenched 1969 panel, salvaged from the *Wall of Truth* mural that faced and spoke to the storied *Wall of Respect*—demand, and reward, your presence.

The book includes essays, interviews, a time line, maps, and images of everything in the exhibit (and more). It documents south-side

institutions and spaces from the Alley to the South Side Community Art Center and—across the street from it—Margaret Burroughs's home museum that became the DuSable. (For more on the Alley, see page 10.) It chronicles artist collectives (OBAC, the Organization of Black African Culture; AfriCOBRA, the African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists), the origins of the mural movement, and the shift from the civil rights era to the era of black power. It's a valuable historical record.

And it's a cocktail of diverse voices, from Barry Plotkin's memory of his brief, clueless 1960s venture into the gallery business with a "below-pavement-level" Hyde Park space and Yaoundé Olu's recollections of Osun, the multidisciplinary art center she operated in South




Land Where My Father Died by Barbara Jones-Hogu  SMART MUSEUM OF ART, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Blackstone, Woodlawn, Chicago by Darryl Cowherd  COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

Shore from 1968 to 1982 (though, she writes, "it was never, ever profitable financially"), to Tempestt Hazel's very current argument that terms like Afrofuturism (which grew out of futurism) are too tied to Western and colonial traditions to be acceptable labels for the self-determined work of artists (like Olu). Labeling black artists in this way, Hazel writes, is "stripping them of the opportunity to exist within a community-grown context created by, for, about, and directly from the lineages of Black diasporic cultures."

The Time Is Now! is also about the displacement that was taking place on the south side. A forward by the Smart's director, Alison Gass, and deputy director, Michael Christiano, refers to the U. of C.'s mid-20th-century urban renewal campaign (called elsewhere in the book "Negro removal"), and says that the Smart is now endeavoring "to rewrite the vision of our institution as one that functions as a site of productive convergence of multiple publics on the South Side."

So many of the problems these south-side artists were grappling with between 1960 and 1980 are still with us. The title, unfortunately, remains apt. 

 @Deannalisaacs

LIT

Chicago sits for its portrait

Art in Chicago may not be able to distill 150 years of history into one volume, but it sure looks good trying.

By **DMITRY SAMAROV**

Can 150 years of art be distilled into a single book? *Art in Chicago: A History From the Fire to Now* is being marketed as the first single-volume history of the art of this town. It is neither exhaustive nor comprehensive; instead it lets six writers take 20- to 40-year chunks of history and focus on their own interests to stitch together a messy crazy quilt before ceding the stitching to a series of contemporary artists and writers who add the ribbons and bows. The result is sometimes baffling, sometimes insightful, but ultimately too open-ended to be definitive.

Published as a companion piece to the Terra Foundation's year-long Art Design Chicago initiative, a series of exhibits meant to celebrate Chicago's history of art and design, the book gives plenty of attention to the Hairy Who, yet barely pays lip service to important artists like Francis Chapin and Todros Geller, both of whom were the subjects of exhibitions included in Terra's program. The book's most striking feature is its bold purple cover with embossed lettering.

Wendy Greenhouse tackles 1871 to 1912 in the first chapter, touching on the first artists who settled in or, more often, passed through the city, and on the formation of the cultural institutions that preside over its art world to this day. The Art Institute, originally an art school, quickly became the locus around which virtually every other visual-art entity in the city revolved. But the patrons who bought the art that filled its galleries took their cues from the east coast and Europe; thus the museum has always been known the world over as a great repository of art from out of town.

The most insightful (and depressing) part of Greenhouse's chapter is her insight that the tendency of artists to flee Chicago for more supportive or lucrative locales to grow their

careers has been a key phenomenon from the start. Samuel Marsden Brookes, purportedly Chicago's first resident professional artist, disposed of all his unsold stock by lottery and went abroad in 1845, only a dozen years after the city was founded. Artists have been fleeing ever since. The reasons the city has never been able to adequately support and sustain its creative class are many, but one interesting theory Greenhouse offers is that, obsessed as the city's leaders have always been with pragmatic ways of making a buck, art's nebulous qualities—such as reckoning with the human condition—have always been a tough sell here. Nevertheless, proven and sometimes risqué work from elsewhere has always found champions here. The Art Institute hosted the first Claude Monet museum show in 1895.

Jennifer Jason Marshall covers 1913 to 1943 in the second chapter. It is by far the most

lucidly written and persuasively argued part of the entire book. In 1913 the city hosted a touring version of the Armory Show, which introduced many of the most important European modernists to America; local art students staged a mock trial of "Henry Hair Mattress" on the last day of the show in a fit of provincialism and frustration at being left out of the exhibit. But an Arts Club of Chicago show of Picasso's drawings—his first museum show anywhere—was a big influence on a young Leon Golub, one of the progenitors of Chicago's homegrown mongrel version of figurative art. Other painters like Aaron Bohrod and Archibald Motley took inspiration from writers such as Theodore Dreiser and the art of New York's Ashcan School to create a lively, warts-and-all portrait of the city.

Maggie Taft, one of the lead editors of the book, tackles 1933 to 1956 next, and echoes some of the concerns from Greenhouse's section. One hundred years after its founding, Chicago was still searching for its own identity. "It is no culture yet, just a million beginnings," observed László Moholy-Nagy, a recent transplant from the Bauhaus in Berlin, in 1937. The city was still more often a way station or a place to start a career rather than a destination.

Still, as Taft's coeditor, Robert Cozzolino, points out in the fourth chapter, which covers 1948 through 1973, artists kept coming here. "It was like you could run free because there was no place to run to, so to speak,"

Golub said. This was the period during which the city's most enduring art style, broadly called Chicago imagism, sprang up and was quickly codified. It was a visual art inspired by artifacts found at the Field Museum, by self-taught artists, and by ephemera such as ads and comic books. It was an emphatic rebuke to both European modernism and the abstract expressionists who held sway on the east and west coasts at the time.

Rebecca Zorach writes about the *Wall of Respect* and other city murals in the next chapter, and also the formation of the DuSable Museum and other cultural institutions in the city's African-American and Latino communities between 1961 and 1976. The tensions between the various local modes of expression and the international artwork favored by city leaders came to a head with the installation of the Picasso statue in Daley Plaza in 1967. The reaction from the neighborhoods was summed up by poet Don L. Lee (who would later be known as Haki Madhubuti): "Picasso ain't got shit on us, send him back to art school."

Jenni Sorkin focuses on the long tradition of alternative and feminist art spaces in chapter six, which covers 1973 to 1993. The question of why these places often close after a decade or less is broached but not answered. Her argument—that it's part of the natural life cycle of an artist-run space to disappear once its members leave for better opportunities—sounds like putting a happy spin on an intractable problem.

The rest of the book is devoted to a grab bag of short essays and interviews with local luminaries. Comics artist Chris Ware offers a typically eloquent and self-deprecating evocation of Chicago: "Our city could arguably be considered the nation's heart—or at least its large intestine." And gallerist and historian John Corbett reveals a bit of how the sausage is made in a vignette about how he tricked a local junk dealer into parting with a hidden treasure.

Taft, Cozzolino, et al have assembled their version of a historical survey of Chicago's art. To anyone involved in any way in that history, there will be gaps and omissions, which will vary according to their own interests. But can a single book give an accurate overview of such a heterogenous thing as the art of a city? My bet is that this one will be best remembered as a handsome design object, which is the fate of most coffee-table art books, many of which have much less attractive covers than this one. **A**



Dawoud Bey, *Lauren* (2008)
 From the series "Young Chicagoans," commissioned as part of Character Project. **DAWOU**
 BEY/COURTESY OF STEPHEN
 DAITER GALLERY





Claire Foy as
Lisbeth Salander
© NICOLA DOVE

MOVIES

Lisbeth Salandar, action hero

Girl in the Spider's Web uses past trauma as an excuse for further violence.

By NOAH BERLATSKY

The *Girl in the Spider's Web* isn't so much meant to tell a story as it is designed to launch a new property. Stieg Larsson's posthumously published 2005 novel *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* was essentially a cozy mystery. The 2011 American film version was distinguished by its thoughtful character sketches and its moments of unexpected intimacy. But *Girl in the Spider's Web* shoots for a broader, more explosive canvas.

Based on a novel that wasn't written by Larsson (David Lagercrantz took over the series after Larsson's death), the film replaces the delicately expressive Rooney Mara with the mostly blank Claire Foy in the role of traumatized supercomputer hacker Lisbeth Salander. Director Fede Álvarez has been tasked with turning a personal creation into a predictable moneymaker. Along the way, he somewhat inadvertently demonstrates

how individual trauma can be detached from its specific victims and become an excuse for generic violence—whether in the service of entertainment or something bleaker.

The plot of *The Girl in the Spider's Web* is familiar James Bond boilerplate. Various people are trying to steal an NSA program that will grant them control over the world's nuclear weapons. Lisbeth is also given an archenemy in the form of her twin sister, Camilla (Sylvia Hoeks). Intrepid investigative reporter Mikael Blomkvist, played with wearily assured compassion by Daniel Craig in the earlier film, is here rendered as a mooning dishmop by Sverrir Gudnason. It is deeply unclear why Salandar wants to have anything to do with him.

Though, to be fair, it's not clear why Salandar does much of anything she does in the movie. In *Dragon Tattoo*, she was motivated by curiosity, self-preservation, and commitment to friends as well as by a hatred of male vio-

lence linked to her own history of abuse. What makes *Girl With the Dragon Tattoo* special is that it's a rape-revenge narrative in which the main character isn't defined by either the sexual violence done to her or the revenge she takes on those who harm her or others. What was done to her matters, but it's not all of who she is. Her imperious confidence, her frank earthiness, her love of a puzzle, her rare smile: those are who *she* is, not her trauma.

In the reboot, though, everything but the trauma is tossed aside—or, given the FX budget, blown up. Salandar has become a kind of Batman figure, consumed by her lonely quest for justice, hunting down and punishing a string of abusive men and then disappearing into the night. In *Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*, Salandar doesn't even fire a gun; her big action-hero moment involves swinging a golf club. Now, though, she's suddenly a ninja superspy and an expert with firearms of all sorts,

leaping from car chase to firefight like any other action hero.

Previously, Salandar used violence in extremis, to protect herself or people she cared about. But in *Spider's Web*, her particular history of trauma becomes (again like Batman's) a kind of all-purpose excuse for, and spur to, vigilante action and hyperbolic violence. Body counts escalate, shootouts splash into public places. The old Salandar's vulnerability and trauma spurred her to do what she needed to do to survive. The new filmmakers, in contrast, use trauma as an excuse for Salandar to do anything she wants, no matter how destructive.

Girl in the Spider's Web is at least vaguely aware of the moral problems that can result from the careless use of revenge narratives. Salandar's sister, Camilla, was also abused by their father; she blames Lisbeth for running away and leaving her behind to suffer. Her career as a criminal mastermind is fueled by her trauma and ends with her planning to destroy the world to get back at her sister. Victimization has become detached from a particular person and turned into an all-purpose excuse.

That's a common trope in Hollywood—and, for that matter, in politics, where opportunists like Trump peddle gaseous narratives of grievance to justify any range of atrocities. You have made America less great, the argument goes, so it's OK to put your children in camps. Not coincidentally, the film gratuitously glorifies America's security services, as NSA operative Edwin Neeham (Lakeith Stanfield) shows up to save the day from the nefarious Swedish government. The story of one abused Swedish woman is rerouted, via the magic of American filmmaking, into an apology for U.S. global hegemony.

Girl With the Dragon Tattoo was in part an empowerment narrative; it was a story about how men who abuse and harm women are forced to answer for their crimes at the hands of those they've tormented. *Girl in the Spider's Web* is a story about how the desire for retribution can be picked up for cynical ends that have little to do with justice, much less with sympathy for the abused. Lisbeth Salandar has suffered a great deal. But turning her into a vehicle for overdetermined, conscienceless violence still hurts. **✎**

🐦 @nberlat

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MOVIES

Thirty minutes or less

Here are some of the best bets at this year's Chicago International REEL Shorts Film Festival.

By **ANDREA GRONVALL**

The history of movies began with short films, a format that's still viable more than 120 years later. Shorts might no longer precede feature-length multiplex attractions (Disney-Pixar's output being a welcome exception), but they are mainstays of film festivals worldwide, including this weekend's 15th Annual Chicago International REEL Shorts Film Festival, presented by Project Chicago at Chicago Filmmakers. Reflecting a notable trend, some shorts among the 45 works screening are original webisodes purposefully designed for smaller screens—such as *Subverse* (Sat 11/10, 6 PM), a sci-fi series about “the dark side of the Internet.” British director Joseph White takes a low-tech approach to create a trippy high-tech tale of a near future where humans play it safe by dating avatars. One day a borderline-paranoid office worker enters a virtual reality frontier zone where there's no customer support, and mind-blowing nastiness ensues.

Greg Chwerchak's darkly comic *Sac de Merde* (Fri 11/9, 6 PM) charts a particularly uncomfortable one-night stand between a perky New Yorker (Arielle Haller-Silverstone) and a smooth lounge lizard (David Fumero). It's so not PC, but you'll think twice about venturing into a pickup joint again. Also funny, but considerably sweeter, is *Heather Has Four Moms* (Fri 11/9, 8 PM), about a high-schooler

who resolves to lose her virginity on her 15th birthday. Complicating the big plan are Heather's birth mom and her current wife, and the birth mom's ex and *her* new wife. Director Jeanette L. Buck shows subtlety and a flair for characterization.

Among the overtly political shorts is *1968* (Fri 11/9, 6 PM), a protest rock musical about the 1968 Democratic National Convention; the budget apparently didn't include synchronous sound, but the songs are well orchestrated, the color palette is rich, and the cutting is on the beat, proving that director Alex Lubin knows a thing or two about the genre. In *Leia's Army* (Sat 11/10, 2 PM), Oriana Oppice, director of programming for Women in Film Chicago, delivers an au courant drama about a family divided along sectarian lines, in which a bitter, divorced Christian evangelist (Lisa Hodsoll) explodes when she discovers her ex (Bolton Marsh) has taken their daughter (Rachel Sonvico) on a trip to Washington, D.C., for the Women's March and a reunion with their other daughter, who's a lesbian. Of the shorts reviewed here, this film has the most accomplished performances, especially Ilona Dulaski's as the sensible grandmother.

Of special interest is *Violin* (Sat 11/10, 2 PM), one of three short interlocking films that make up Ukrainian director Konstantin Fam's historical drama *Witnesses*. The filmmakers claim it's the first feature film from the former USSR to honor the memory of Holocaust victims. A rare musical instrument changes hands on its long journey from workshop to concentration camp to present-day Manhattan and Jerusalem. The production design and cinematography are excellent; if there are a few loose ends in the plot, it's a fair guess the missing pieces surface in the other two shorts, which are not screening in this festival. **A**

MOVIES

Dreamscapes and visions

If you're into experimental animation, Eyeworks is your festival.

By **KATHLEEN SACHS**



Bubble Boing by Barry Doupe

Now in its ninth year, the Eyeworks Festival of Experimental Animation, curated by artists Alexander Stewart and Lilli Carré, remains the best annual survey of the form, one that takes care not to limit itself.

“We don't normally curate the festival around specific themes,” the curators explain via e-mail, “but they inevitably emerge in each year's lineup as we get the [short] films together.” Works “that use digital collage techniques, and . . . that feature a kind of dystopic environmental collapse” are this year's de facto leitmotifs; the best example of both is James J.A. Mercer's *Landfill* (2014), purportedly composed of archival video footage from the year 2157. Wholly committed to its found-footage premise, the film defies summation; at times reminiscent of a Dalí dreamscape, its surreality encourages revelry rather than attempts at decoding.

I found myself drawn to the densely bizarre abstractions of the program. Dane Picard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are George* (1992) features computer-animated George Jetsons wearing Shakespearean ruffs speaking dialogue dubbed from Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet*, with *The Jetsons* patriarch's fictional—and utterly batshit—life story detailed via randomly dispersed intertitles. Theo Chin's *Pinakothek* (2018) uses a Polyvision-esque aspect ratio to present the story of an offscreen protagonist looking for companionship in the Munich art museum's digital archive. “Experimental” need not mean “exceedingly bizarre,” but with these

two films (and several others), it's absolutely the case.

“We are always interested in finding works that attempt to do something we see as truly unusual, both in terms of the way the piece is made, and what it's working with conceptually,” Carré and Stewart write. “It's especially exciting when we find older pieces that do this, that anticipate or speak to ideas that artists are engaging with in contemporary work.”

Decades-old short films by children's book creator Lisze Bechtold, abstract painter Maria Lassnig, and animator Faith Hubley will be projected from 35-millimeter prints; this year's Eyeworks features more films in that gauge than any previous edition. The varying formats and lack of established through lines speak to the festival's own experimental spirit, running the gamut from old-school computer animation (the 1985 short *Calculated Movements* by Larry Cuba, who designed the animated Death Star blueprints in *Star Wars: Episode IV—A New Hope*) to hand-painted animation (Cheng-Hsu Chung's 2018 short *Adorable*). The latter is a graphic exploration of queerness, a reflection of how important diversity is to Stewart and Carré. “We think of the idea of diversity in multiple ways,” they write, “including gender and identity, geographical and cultural perspective, and creative sensibilities.” Through their seemingly random assortment of animations—limited only by the stipulation that they be experimental—they achieve that and more. **A**

ARTS & CULTURE



Boy Erased

MOVIES

Boy Erased

Joel Edgerton writes, directs, and costars in this heart-tugging drama about an 18-year-old pastor's son (Lucas Hedges) who undergoes "gay conversion therapy." After the protagonist's father (Russell Crowe) and mother (Nicole Kidman) learn about his sexual orientation, they impel their only child to enter a Christian treatment center in rural Arkansas, run by "recovered" gays who promise parents that they can cure their children of same-sex attraction via God's grace. In reality, the unlicensed staff's tactics include emotional and physical abuse disguised as tough love, which Edgerton renders in horrific detail. Based on the 2016 memoir by Garrard Conley, the narrative hits some predictable beats while upending expectations in other ways, like shining an empathetic light on the young man's parents without excusing their behavior. Kidman delivers a delicate and nuanced performance as usual, while Edgerton's take on the manipulative head therapist is disturbingly accurate. **—LEAH PICKETT R, 114 min. Fri 11/9-Sun 11/11, 10:55 and 11:40 AM, 1:30, 2:20, 4:10, 5, 6:55, 7:40, 9:30, and 10:15 PM; Mon 11/12-Thu 11/15, 1:30, 2:30, 4:10, 5, 6:55, 7:40, 9:30, and 10:15 PM. Landmark's Century Centre**

Hal

Hal Ashby's career reflects the rise and fall of the New Hollywood era; he thrived in the 1970s, directing seven uncompromising movies in that decade, but floundered in the 80s when profit-obsessed studio heads refused to grant him creative control over his work. This documentary celebrates Ashby's good years, with laudatory analyses of each of his major films, and takes a clear-eyed view of his downfall, delving into the economic conditions that stymied his creative output. Director Amy Scott doesn't devote much time to Ashby's personal life, but what she reveals isn't particularly flattering; apparently he couldn't maintain a steady relationship (he was married five times), abandoned his daughter when she was still an infant, and was prone to explosive rages. Scott barely considers the discrepancy between these revelations and Ashby's humanist cinematic vision, choosing to focus on the films. The result is an unsatisfying human study, albeit a successful overview of Ashby's work. **—BEN SACHS 91 min. Fri 11/9, 2 and 6 PM; Sat 11/10, 5 PM; Sun 11/11, 5 PM; and Mon 11/12, 8 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center**

Nobody's Fool

Tyler Perry does for Tiffany Haddish what Irving Thalberg did for the Marx Brothers: he gives her a vehicle for her prodigious comic talent, then weighs it down with unfunny supporting performers and an unnecessary melodramatic subplot. Haddish plays a recently released convict who moves in with her sister (Tika Sumpter), a

straightlaced advertising executive who's being wooed by a stranger she met online but hasn't seen in person. The sister gets Haddish a job at a coffee shop, and though the ex-con manages to better herself, she can't help acting out inappropriately, especially when her sister's paramour turns out to be a scam artist. The movie is bad in all the ways Perry's movies are usually bad—it's haphazardly paced, riddled with plot holes, and thuddingly overstated in its moralizing—but that doesn't matter whenever Haddish is onscreen. Her line readings are uproarious, and they convey a disarming, street-smart intelligence. **—BEN SACHS R, 110 min. Block 37, Century 12 Evanston/CineArts, Chatham 14, City North 14, Crown Village 18, New 400, 600 N. Michigan**

A Private War

Marie Colvin wants to see it all, no matter the cost. In the new biopic *A Private War*, the eyepatch-wearing war correspondent's life and career are ruled by a nasty cycle of journalistic obsession, PTSD, and addiction to both adrenaline and alcohol. Colvin feels the need to bear witness to horrific things so others don't have to, which has negative ramifications for her personal life. While Rosamund Pike delivers an unbeatable portrayal of Colvin, the film itself fails to say anything new about addiction or the demons she battles. In the already cramped genre of alcoholic and/or chain-smoking female journalists fighting personal demons—from *Sharp Objects* to *Spotlight*—*A Private War* doesn't stand out from the pack. **—CODY CORRALL 106 min. Thu 11/8, 7:05 and 10 PM; Fri 11/9-Thu 11/15, 10:55 AM, 1:55, 4:45, 7:35, and 10:20. Century 12 Evanston/CineArts 6**

Tea With the Dames

This cozy nonfiction film, structured as an extended conversation rather than a standard documentary, stars four venerable British actresses—Eileen Atkins, Judi Dench, Joan Plowright, and Maggie Smith—whose friendship allows a breezy candor as they revisit their long careers and dish on colleagues and former husbands. Honoring their artistic achievements, Queen Elizabeth II bestowed upon each the title Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire, but there's nothing starchy about them as they frankly assess how their looks influenced casting (Atkins was considered not so much pretty as sexy when she started out); rank theater company heads on toughness and daring (Smith tells Plowright, who was married to Laurence Olivier, that "he terrified us"); and swap a blue story or two. Director Roger Michell (*Notting Hill*, *Venus*) mixes in clips from their movies and also from TV productions of their early stage successes, affording glimpses of these ladies in the flush of youth, while inevitably adding a tinge of melancholy. **—ANDREA GRONVALL 84 min. Fri 11/9, 2 and 6:15 PM; Sat 11/10, 3 and 7:30 PM; Sun 11/11, 5 PM; Mon 11/12, 6 PM; Tue 11/13, 8 PM; Wed 11/14, 8 PM; and Thu 11/15, 6:15 PM. Gene Siskel Film Center**

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Clockwise from left: Philip Glass and Third Coast Percussion members Peter Martin, David Skidmore, Sean Connors, and Robert Dillon  REBEKKA FEDERLE

THIRD COAST PERCUSSION TACKLE A PHILIP GLASS COMMISSION—AND THE ‘GREAT COMPOSER’ PROBLEM

The Chicago quartet’s premiere of the minimalist giant’s first piece for percussion ensemble could help them do even more for diverse emerging voices.

By **KERRY O’BRIEN**

Philip Glass arrives in town this Friday to appear as part of the Chicago Humanities Festival, but he’s no stranger to the city. He first came here in 1952 to begin his undergraduate studies at the University of Chicago at the prodigious age of 15. He remembers sitting outside jazz clubs like the Beehive in Hyde Park, too young to be admitted, listening to bebop waft out the door.

Almost seven decades later, Glass is arguably America’s most famous living composer and considered something of a national treasure—in 2015, Obama awarded him the National Medal of Arts. He’s using his current visit to Chicago to correct an oversight of long standing. Though he’s well-known for composing, performing, and thereby defining “minimalist” music, Glass has somehow never before written for the minimalist ensemble par excellence: the percussion ensemble.

Prompted by a commission from Third Coast Percussion—the Chicago quartet of David Skidmore, Robert Dillon, Peter Martin, and Sean Connors—Glass will present the world premiere of his first-ever work for percussion ensemble during a CHF event at the Francis W. Parker School. The evening will begin with a solo piano performance by Glass, followed by a discussion between Glass and Skidmore and Third Coast’s debut of the three-part, 20-minute *Perpetuum*.

Glass’s style of minimalism, which he once called music of “repetitive structures,” is unmistakable once you’ve heard it. Typified early in its history by his group the Philip Glass Ensemble—which used mostly amplified winds, keyboards, and voices—it’s characterized by rising-and-falling pulsed patterns, steady rhythms, meditative passages of harmonic stasis, and nonstop melodic momentum.

Over the years Glass’s trademark arpeggios have permeated pop culture as well as the classical sphere. He’s written a long list of film scores—

Koyaanisqatsi, *Candyman*, *The Truman Show*, *The Hours*—and made an infamous fictionalized cameo on *South Park*. “The thing about Philip Glass is that he’s been part of the fabric of music and culture for so long,” says Martin. “I knew who Philip Glass was from just watching movies—I remember seeing *Candyman* in the mid-1990s. He’s been part of everything, so in that sense, his aesthetic and musical voice probably has been a part of Third Coast Percussion for a much longer time.”

For Martin and the other members of Third Coast, their first deep dive into Glass came when they were students in the 1990s and encountered his landmark 1976 opera, *Einstein on the Beach*. “I had a very hip high school music theory teacher who just kinda blew our minds one day,” says Skidmore. “She was like, ‘There’s this opera by this guy named Philip Glass,’ and she just hit play.” Connors admits that he downloaded this minimalist classic in the dial-up days of Napster—and given that it’s more than three hours long, even in its abbreviated recordings, that must have taken forever.

The 81-year-old Glass comes to Chicago in the midst of a busy performance schedule (which may help explain why he didn’t respond to multiple requests for comment). In late October, he and his ensemble played his three-and-a-half-hour mid-70s masterpiece *Music in 12 Parts* at New York’s Town Hall, followed last week by a sold-out run of his 1980 opera *Satyagraha* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, which he attended on opening night. Sometimes Glass seems to have done it all already—he’s written for myriad musical legends, among them the Kronos Quartet and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which will premiere his Symphony no. 12 in January 2019. But Third Coast Percussion found something he hadn’t done—and more important, they persuaded him to do it.

It’s incredible that a commission like this didn’t happen sooner. Modern classical percussionists are raised on minimalism, in part because minimalist composer Steve Reich (a Glass contemporary and himself a percussionist) has written so extensively for percussion ensemble. Third Coast won a Grammy last year for their album *Steve Reich*, which collects works ranging from 1973’s *Music for Pieces of Wood* to 2009’s *Mallet Quartet*.

Unlike pianists or string and wind players, percussionists have no “classics” from the 18th and 19th centuries by the likes of Bach, Mozart, or Beethoven. People have been drumming for millennia, but the earliest known Western classical works for percussion ensemble—by John Cage and Johanna Beyer, among others—are less than 90 years old.

The members of Third Coast point out that composers such as Cage didn’t just write for percussion; they also performed in their own repertory groups, creating a trend of hybrid composer-performers in percussion chamber music. “The music you write is different when you’re the one performing it,” Dillon notes. Composer-performers can take their own technical abilities and stylistic sensibilities into account. This has historical precedent, but only to a degree: Mozart, for instance, wrote piano concertos he performed himself, but he didn’t create a “Mozart Ensemble” that toured Europe playing exclusively his music.

In December 1938, Cage staged the first concert for classical percussion ensemble at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle (where this writer teaches). For the occasion he assembled an ensemble, and he then toured with it around the western United States. Thirty years later, Reich and Glass updated that composer-performer model, playing in each other’s groups

from 1967 till ’71. At that point they parted ways, forming the Philip Glass Ensemble and Steve Reich & Musicians and performing only their own works.

The members of Third Coast, who founded the group in 2005, look back to Glass and Reich’s period of cooperation and see a clear historical model for their own distinctively collaborative style as composer-performers. That same period—minimalism’s formative years, roughly 1967 till ’71—also helps explain Glass’s percussion-writing lacuna.

In 1967, after returning from studies in Europe, Glass attended a New York concert of Reich’s *Four Pianos* (an early version of *Piano Phase*). The two composers had met in the late 1950s as fellow Juilliard students, and after this concert they began collaborating regularly. Along with composer-flutist Jon Gibson, they convened for weekly sessions with an idiosyncratic, cloak-and-helmet-wearing composer, poet, and theorist who called himself Moondog (aka Louis T. Hardin, who was then living with Glass). This group played Moondog’s music exclusively, and they recorded some of the sessions, usually with instrumentation of flute, shakers, and voice. A selection of these recordings was released in 2007 to accompany Robert Scotto’s biography *Moondog: The Viking of 6th Avenue*.

In his preface to that book, Glass writes, “We took [Moondog’s] work very seriously and understood and appreciated it much more than what [Reich and I] were exposed to at Juilliard.” In 1968, Reich and Glass began performing not just Moondog’s music but also each other’s.

For a concert in May 1969, Glass played percussion on Reich’s new work *Four Log Drums*, for which Reich used a machine he’d devised to send each drummer’s headphones a different guiding metronomic pulse, all slowly shifting out of phase with one another. Reich’s device was temperamental, however, and Glass later called it “a disaster.” A tactful friend, he added, “But we *all* have disasters!”

During the growing pains of minimalism in the late 60s, as composers tried and often failed to work out the glitches in their processes, audiences and critics struggled to acquire a taste for the music. In January 1970, when Reich performed keyboard for the premiere of Glass’s *Music in Fifths*, the *New York Times* called it “a waste of time.” Later that year, Glass performed on the premiere of Reich’s *Four Organs*, which the *Times* likewise panned, though in more mixed terms—the reviewer admired Reich’s “single-minded fervor,” but wondered why these performers should play such repetitive music “when machines can do it so much better.”

Nonetheless Glass and Reich continued collaborating, even gaining some steam—they toured France, Germany, and England together in early 1971, sharing various personnel, including Gibson, Arthur Murphy, and Richard Landry. When asked in the mid-1970s what drew this group together, Glass responded, “I think an interest in the work and an interest in each other.” As musicologist David Chapman has shown in his lengthy study of the history and membership of the Philip Glass Ensemble, much early minimalist music grew out of this mixture of collaboration, friendship, and mutual support.

By the end of 1971, however, the collaborations between Reich and Glass were over. After a feud that neither man has explained publicly, they became estranged and ceased working together for decades (their next collaborative performance was a reunion in 2014). This schism affected the

instrumentation each composer employed individually: on those European tours they’d shared electric keyboards, but after their falling out, the Philip Glass Ensemble used primarily amplified winds, keyboards, and voices, while Steve Reich & Musicians centered on percussion (Reich wrote his famous work *Drumming* in late 1971). It would be almost 50 years before Glass wrote *Perpetuum*.

Commissioning Philip Glass is part of a larger initiative for Third Coast Percussion. As they look back at the history of Western classical music, it’s tempting to wonder, says Skidmore, what kind of percussion quartet the likes of Stravinsky or Bartók might have written. It’s a torturous counterfactual thought experiment, and everyone has their own dream list (just imagine if Julius Eastman or Maryanne Amacher had written one). Dillon adds: “We look at all the great composers who, if they had written a percussion ensemble piece—if someone had asked them or hounded them to write a percussion quartet—how much different would our whole genre be?”

The commission did require persistence—Third Coast reached out to Glass for “years and years and years.” A composer of Glass’s stature must be commissioned long in advance, so *Perpetuum* has been brewing for some time. Skidmore believes the key was being “patient and friendly but insistent,” and that patience was possible, he notes,

because Third Coast are an established group with a functional development infrastructure—the processes to sustain the ensemble long-term are up and running, which means they can plan far into the future while projects seeded years ago come to fruition in the present.

Perpetuum (a hybrid word suggesting both “perpetual” and “pendulum”) wasn’t delivered already done but instead arose from collaboration between Glass and Third Coast. This began in April 2017, when the composer met with Skidmore while in town for a Chicago Opera Theater production of his *The Perfect American*.

After that initial meeting, Glass and Third Coast maintained frequent dialogue. “He calls pretty regularly, actually, to talk through revisions,” says Skidmore. “We’ll go back and forth. He’ll send a new idea, his copyist will try it out, we’ll record it, he’ll call and ask what we think.”

This collaborative style has become a hallmark of Third Coast’s creative process. They’re not only an unusually close-knit group (they write music collectively, such as this year’s program-length composition *Paddle to the Sea*) but also tend to work hands-on with the composers they commission. For example, they ask each participant in their Emerging Composers Partnership to attend at least three workshop sessions at the ensemble’s Ravenswood studio. Due to Glass’s busy schedule, though, much of their collaboration happened via phone or Skype.

Dillon explains that *Perpetuum* assigns each player a pitched instrument (marimba, vibes, xylophone, tuned metal pipes) as well as some nonpitched percussion (cymbals, drums). Between the second and third parts, Glass has included a cadenza, a free-form virtuosic passage more commonly found in a piano concerto than a percussion quartet. “When we were talking with Philip about what he was thinking,” says Martin, “he actually mentioned it could be a situation ➔

PHILIP GLASS & THIRD COAST PERCUSSION

Fri 11/9, 7 PM, Diane and David B. Heller Auditorium, Francis W. Parker School, 330 W. Webster, sold out, all-ages



Steve Reich (left) guides Philip Glass, Jon Gibson, Richard Landry, and Arthur Murphy in a performance of his new work *Four Log Drums* at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1969.

© RICHARD LANDRY

continued from 27

where it was all nonpitched percussion and all completely improvised, like very jammy sounding.” That’s not Third Coast’s style, though. “We like sculpting things, so our cadenza is highly sculpted, every single note.”

Dillon adds: “It allows room for us to really make the piece our own, where we can highlight our favorite parts of Glass’s style and also sound like us.” Martin hopes the cadenza will encourage future performers to customize the quartet. “I think time will tell what the life and the legacy of this piece is,” he says, “but it will be interesting to see how different ensembles interpret that—and hopefully they will interpret that in their own voice.”

Skidmore sees *Perpetuum* as an interesting way to graft keyboard percussion sounds (marimba, vibraphone) onto Glass’s approach to percussion in his symphonies. “His percussion writing up until recently has been very focused on traditional orchestral percussion instruments—snare drum, bass drum, triangle, tambourine—and these kind of motor rhythms, in symphonies especially,” he says. Glass has long written for keyboards (piano, organ), but not for keyboard percussion. As Martin says, “This is not early Glass music at all,” but it’s continuous with that style in that “there’s a lot of energy throughout the piece.”

Friday’s concert has long been sold out, but *Perpetuum* will be released in March 2019 via Glass’s label, Orange Mountain Music, on an album that also includes Gavin Bryars’s *The Other Side of the River* and multiple new works by Third Coast. Dillon says these pieces “reflect the influence of Glass but also connect a bit to our roles as composer-performers.”

The broader classical music scene has long favored canonical works by long-dead “masters” and commissions from famous living composers, rather than music by newer, untested figures. Mainstream programming rarely features women or people of color—the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s 2018-2019 subscription season, for instance, includes no women composers. Name recognition sells, and that leaves less room for emerging voices. Given this lack of equitable representation, why commission Glass, who has more opportunities than he can possibly accept? Though he’d never written for percussion quartet before, many of his contemporaries still ha-

ven’t—among them Tania León, George Lewis, and Pamela Z.

To commission such a towering eminence requires a significant financial commitment, which is made clear by the long list of funding partners for Third Coast’s work with Glass. In addition to a grant from the Maxine & Stuart Frankel Foundation, money came in from several co-commissioners, many of them venues or presenters who wanted to secure a concert: Elizabeth and Justus Schlichting for the Segerstrom Center for the Arts, the Bravo! Vail classical music festival, San Francisco Performances, Town Hall Seattle, Performance Santa Fe, and the University of Notre Dame’s DeBartolo Performing Arts Center. The list doesn’t even end there: the project got additional support from Third Coast board members Friedrich Burian and Bruce Oltman, MiTo Settembre Musica, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra’s Liquid Music series, and the Percussive Arts Society.

Why pool so many resources to work with a single composer? The members of Third Coast point out that, despite appearances, they haven’t put all their eggs in one basket—they maintain their own lengthy dream list of composers to commission, and though they aren’t all of Glass’s stature, many of them break from the whiteness and maleness of the canon. (They wouldn’t share any names now, because these commissions aren’t yet public.)

Third Coast also see objections to working with Glass as representing a false choice—such a project doesn’t prevent them from also nurturing up-and-comers. The Emerging Composers Partnership, launched in 2013, uses an open call to solicit works by lesser-known composers—Third Coast’s website says its aim is to “provide the Chicago contemporary music scene with premieres of works from the brightest rising stars in the composing community” and to promote “inclusive commissioning of new music.”

The composers who apply for this program aren’t well-known today, but they might be the greats of tomorrow. “It’s a very intimate thing that we’re doing—it’s not a cattle call,” says Connors. “It’s two people per season, so it’s really building a relationship, and then we become partners with them forever. They’ll be in our network, we’ll be their big supporters, and hopefully we’ll work with them in the future.”

Third Coast has also sought out collaborations with artists famous outside classical music, such as pop polymath Devonté Hynes of Blood Orange and Wilco drummer Glenn Kotche.

These partnerships, much like the group’s work with Glass, raise Third Coast’s profile and build their audience, putting them in a better position to advocate for unsung composers. The necessity to balance historical figures against diverse new voices is a delicate problem for everyone in classical music, and Third Coast are among the best at advocating for open and equitable access to this cultural space.


Audiences will doubtless rejoice that Glass has finally written a work for percussion ensemble, and percussionists will surely be relieved that no one will need to wonder 50 years from now what might’ve happened if only someone had asked him. But in seeking to commission already established “great composers,” Third Coast risk reinforcing the biased system by which these composers first became known as great. Rewarding the already rewarded can create a self-sustaining cycle: opportunities beget more opportunities, and commissions beget more commissions.

Glass and Reich themselves have recognized this cycle and provided a precedent for disrupting it: After they formed separate ensembles, they also founded their own nonprofits, the Reich Music Foundation in 1971 and Glass’s Aurora Music Foundation in 1975. Through these platforms, both men have used their prestige on behalf of less famous artists. In 1978, for instance, the Reich Music Foundation’s Young Composers Concert Series featured pianist Ursula Oppens, and in 2012, the Aurora Music Foundation hosted the three-day festival Philip Glass: Music With Friends, featuring collaborations with the likes of performance artist Laurie Anderson, actor and singer Tara Hugo, trumpeter Nate Wooley, and composer Tristan Perich.

For ensembles today, choosing whose music to perform or commission isn’t necessarily a zero-sum game. Budgets often are, though—you can’t spend the same money twice. Deciding what resources to allocate to which initiatives will remain an ongoing concern for Third Coast. It’s not simple math, either. Funding opportunities often present themselves more abundantly when a group commissions a famous composer such as Glass, and in turn that fame can rub off on the group, giving a boost to lower-profile projects yet to come.

By commissioning Glass while piloting their Emerging Composers Partnership, Third Coast both participate in and help write the history of percussion music. “One of the big points of that partnership is to find new voices and to encourage them . . . to not only write music, but percussion music,” Skidmore says. “Some of the people who we are able to work with in the ECP will one day be the next Meredith Monk, Philip Glass, Devonté Hynes, whoever. And how cool is it that at the onset of their career they’re asked for percussion, that that becomes a part of their voice early on? So there’s also an aspect of cultivating a future of composition in percussion.”

The Emerging Composers Partnership certainly helps with the “great composer” problem, but one future challenge for Third Coast Percussion will be to avoid seeing it as the solution. As UK-based feminist writer and scholar Sara Ahmed notes in her book *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*, “Solutions to problems can create new problems.” Once people feel they’ve done enough, they can let themselves off the hook.


Third Coast’s Glass premiere is historic, and with any luck it will amplify their urgently needed efforts to encourage inclusivity. As with any such project, though, the important work is collaborative and ongoing. 

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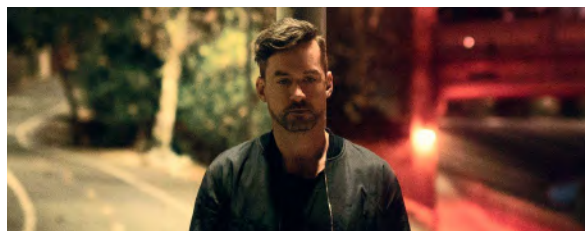
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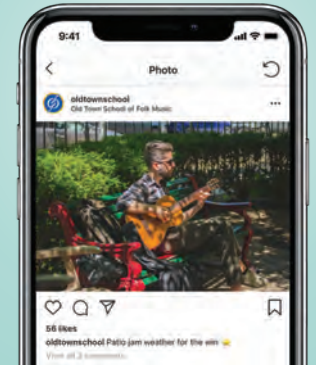


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PICK OF THE WEEK

Laura Jane Grace & the Devouring Mothers lay out their cards on *Bought to Rot*



KATIE HOVLAND

LAURA JANE GRACE & THE DEVOURING MOTHERS, TIME THIEVES 8 PM, Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia, sold out. 21+ 8 PM, Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia, sold out. 21+

A CHICAGOAN SINCE 2013, and a charismatic, influential figure in punk music for nearly 20 years as the leader of Against Me!, Laura Jane Grace has more recently become a role model and inspiration for many with her frank writings about her struggles with addiction, brushes with the law, and perhaps most importantly, her experiences of gender dysphoria and coming out as a trans woman. Grace began sharing that journey in an in-depth profile in *Rolling Stone* in May 2012, and in the autobiographical lyrics of Against Me!'s 2014 album, *Transgender Dysphoria Blues*. In a 2016, she penned a memoir with Noisery editor Dan Ozzi titled *Tranny: Confessions of Punk Rock's Most Infamous Anarchist Sellout*. Her songwriting is always candid and compelling, and she's honed it sharply over her career; a setting as intimate as the Hideout—where she's playing tonight with her new project, the Devouring Mothers—is bound to highlight that even more. The Devouring Mothers are a trio with Against Me! drummer Atom Willard and sound engineer Marc Jacob Hudson, and this show (the first of a three-part unofficial Chicago residency that includes shows on 11/8 at Cobra Lounge and 11/29 at Lincoln Hall) marks the release of their debut album, *Bought to Rot* (Bloodshot). In these songs, Grace's brash authenticity has a one-on-one quality; listening to them is like sitting down at a table with a compelling storyteller who lays out her cards and wins you over, even as she challenges you with songs such as "I Hate Chicago" (spoiler alert: she doesn't really). On *Bought to Rot* she's truly become one of those people whose mere presence reminds you what it's like to feel at home. —MONICA KENDRICK

THURSDAYS

AWAKEBUTSTILLINBED Mom Jeans. headline: *Just Friends, Awakebutstillinbed, and Retirement Party* open. 6 PM, Subterranean, 2011 W. North, \$15. 18+

Shannon Taylor, who plays guitar and sings in San Jose emo band Awakebutstillinbed, screams like she could go hoarse at a moment's notice and is determined to make every last second of her forceful wail count. On the group's January debut album, *What People Call Low Self-Esteem Is Really Just Seeing Yourself the Way That Other People See You* (which they've since rereleased on Tiny Engines), Taylor's powerful presence helps push the four-piece band through their most shambolic moments—even her off-key notes feel like intentional instants of clarity. Awakebutstillinbed ain't for everyone, but they're catnip for anyone who ever experienced grace while listening to the messiest Polyvinyl records and has since accumulated hundreds of seven-inches from forgotten 90s emo labels in search of that same feeling. Taylor told Stereogum she wrote the music on *What People Call Low Self-Esteem* during a difficult period, and though its songs alternate between vulnerable and muscular, Awakebutstillinbed sound like they're fighting to lift a weight that's heavy enough to crush them. Through pluck and ambition, they make it work; atop the cascading guitars on "Safe" Taylor caterwauls about the sacrifices people make in order to try to achieve what they've been told is impossible. Her resolute poise at the quiet end of the song conveys a measured sense of hope. —LEOR GALIL

LAURA JANE GRACE & THE DEVOURING MOTHERS See *Pick of the Week*, page 34. *Time Thieves* open. 8 PM, Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia, sold out. 21+

LOS CAMPESINOS! *Adult Mom* opens. 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 1807 S. Allport, \$22-\$35. 17+

"Four sweaty boys with guitars tell me nothing about my life," smirks vocalist Gareth David, aka Gareth Campesinos! of Los Campesinos!, on "... And We Exhale and Roll Our Eyes in Unison," from the band's 2008 debut, *Hold on Now, Youngster*. The song was a straight shot at the stereotypes of indie-music fans at the time. While other MySpace-era acts have since devolved into self-parody, LC! actually started off that way but evolved into a more serious seven-piece band. They'll assemble their Thalia Hall set list from that 2008 album, and they've already addressed the strangeness of revisiting the emotional space of songs they wrote in their early 20s a decade later with a sense of humor; at a recent show in London, they took the stage to the theme song of pro-wrestling stable D-Generation X (a way-past-their-time act composed of men in their near 50s still trotting out crotch chops like it's 1998). Since their debut, LC! have slowed down their style; over six albums they've changed from abundantly exuberant twee poppers to earnest, reserved, elder indie-rock statespeople (albeit statespeople who are wryly obsessed with both death and soccer metaphors). With any luck, at tonight's show they'll squeeze in some songs from last year's *Sick Scenes*, a triumph of a record that found David openly musing about the ➔



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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10 8PM
Simon Shaheen In Szold Hall

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25 3:30PM
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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30 8PM
Bob Schneider

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1 5 & 8PM
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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2 7PM
On Big Shoulders
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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7 8PM
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8 8PM
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NOVEMBER 14	ELIZABETH'S CRAZY LITTLE THING FEATURING FAKE BLIND DATE 9PM
NOVEMBER 15	KEITH SCOTT BLUES REVIEW PALM GHOSTS
NOVEMBER 17	SACRED
NOVEMBER 18	TONY DO ROSARIO GROUP
NOVEMBER 19	PROSPECT FOUR 9PM
NOVEMBER 21	THE MAD POETS
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- 12/1 - Chris & Heather's Country Calendar Show
- 12/3 - "It's A Wonderful Life" Pop-Up Movie Night
- 12/5 - Jon Dee Graham / Ben de la Cour
- 12/6 - Ron & Naomi's Christmas Special
- 12/8 - Mike Cooley
- 12/10 - "It's A Wonderful Life" Pop-Up Movie Night
- 12/14 - Off Broadway
- 12/14 - Tish Hinojosa (SB)
- 12/15 - Brave Combo Holiday Spectacular
- 12/17 - "It's A Wonderful Life" Pop-Up Movie Night
- 12/21 - The Redmonds Christmas Show
- 12/22 - Ronnie Baker Brooks

MUSIC

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impact of mental illness. And when he sings, "Another blister pack pops, but I still feel much the same / Thirty-one, and depression is a young man's game," on "5 Fluclloxacin," he firmly draws a line between LC!'s youthful heartsickness and the realities of adulthood, where finding relief from such ailments can feel insurmountable when one is contending with insufficient health-care options and policies dreamed up by greedy politicians. It's all a far cry from name-dropping K Records on *Hold On's* "Knee Deep at ATP," but their continual growth makes this tour seem like a celebration of surviving this long instead of a cynical attempt to cash in on nostalgia.

—ED BLAIR

FRIDAY9

BEHEMOTH, AT THE GATES Wolves in the Throne Room open. 7:30 PM, House of Blues, 329 N. Dearborn, \$35. 17+

Two of Europe's extreme-metal influencers, Poland's Behemoth and Sweden's At the Gates, represent a relative rarity in heavy music: beloved 90s veterans who are churning out some of their best work nearly 30 years after they formed. With its 11th album, *I Loved You at Your Darkest* (released in October on Metal Blade), Behemoth continues imbuing its blazing-fast blackened death metal with a sharp sense of dynamics and symphonic accompaniment. The results are just as sinister and blasphemous as on previous albums, but the band's evolving songcraft is also on full display in the moderate tempos and the melodic passages supported by a 17-piece orchestra and a children's choir. Meanwhile, At the Gates is touring in support of May's *To Drink From the Night Itself* (Century Media), its second LP since 1995's *Slaughter of the Soul*—which is widely



Merzbow performs at Drone Activity Chicago.

© COURTESY THE ARTIST

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SECRET HISTORY OF CHICAGO MUSIC

PIVOTAL CHICAGO MUSICIANS THAT SOMEHOW HAVE NOT GOTTEN THEIR JUST DUES by PLASTIC CRIMEWAVE

THE SERVICE

SOMETIMES A BAND AND LABEL ARE BORN AT ONCE: FOR INSTANCE, POP-ROCKING TROUBLEMAKERS THE SERVICE AND CHICAGO INSTITUTION PRAVDA RECORDS. I SPOKE WITH RICK MOSHER, GUITARIST AND MAIN SONGWRITER FOR THE SERVICE, HE WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL WITH VOCALIST DAVID BRIGGS, AND THEY BOTH ATTENDED NIU IN DEKALB, WHERE MOSHER AND KEYBOARDIST KEVIN GOODMAN STARTED THE NEW WAVE BAND DD & THE GUNS. IN 1983 ALL 3 QUIT SCHOOL AND MOVED TO CHICAGO WITH BASSIST GREG BALK (WHO WORKED AT WENDY'S WITH MOSHER) AND DRUMMER JOHN SMITH (WHO'D ALSO DROPPED OUT OF NIU). THE FIVE OF THEM FORMED THE SERVICE, AND WHEN THEY DEBUTED IN '84 WITH THE CASSETTE EP "FOMA" CASSEMBLED BY HAND AT THEIR CRAPPY DINING-ROOM TABLE IN ROGERS PARK, GOODMAN AND MOSHER FOUNDED PRAVDA RECORDS TO DO THE HONORS. THE 1ST PRAVDA VINYL WAS THE SERVICE'S 1985 EP "ZEBU," AND IN 1986 THE BAND RELEASED THEIR 1ST LP, "AMERICA'S NEWEST HITMAKERS." THAT YEAR PRAVDA OPENED A STORE UNDER METRO, WHICH CLOSED IN 1992.) IN 1985 THE SERVICE WARMED UP FOR THE REPLACEMENTS IN TUCSON, BUT THEY MISSED THE GIG IN OKLAHOMA CITY AFTER A WHEEL FELL OFF THEIR VAN—"THAT TURNED OUT TO BE THE NIGHT THE MATS RECORDED THEIR LEGENDARY "SHIT HITS THE FANS" CASSETTE-ONLY TAPING," MOSHER LAMENTS. "AT ONE POINT PAUL INTRODUCES THE BAND: 'HI, WE'RE THE SERVICE, FROM CHICAGO.'" THE SERVICE RECORDED THEIR 2ND ALBUM, 1987'S "GEORGE'S DUTY-FREE GOULASH," WITH FUTURE NIRVANA SMASHING PUMPKINS PRODUCER BUTCH VIG AND NEW BASSIST GARY SELVIS SCHEPERS (LATER OF DEVIL IN A WOODPILE). BRIGGS LEFT BEFORE 1988'S "IN NONSENSE IS STRENGTH," SO MOSHER TOOK OVER ON VOCALS, BUT THE BAND WAS RUNNING OUT OF STEAM—THEY SPIT AFTER THE 1990 ALBUM "HEAD VS WALL," AT WHICH POINT MOSHER, SMITH, AND GOODMAN STARTED THE HILARIOUSLY ROWDY NEW DUNCAN IMPERIALS. TODAY GOODMAN STILL RUNS PRAVDA, NOW ONE OF THE LONGEST-LIVED INDIES IN THE COUNTRY, AND MOSHER, GOODMAN, AND SCHEPERS CONTINUE TO EVOLVE THE SERVICE'S SPIRIT IN THE IMPERIAL SOUND. THX RICK GALEY, KEVIN

TUNE INTO THE RADIO VERSION OF "THE SECRET HISTORY OF CHICAGO MUSIC" ON "OUTSIDE THE LOOP" ON WGN RADIO 720 AM, SATURDAY AT 6AM WITH HOST MIKE STEPHEN. COMMENTS, IDEAS TO ARCHIVED @ OUTSIDETHELOOPRADIO.COM | plasticcw@hotmail.com

regarded as one of melodic death-metal's finest albums. *To Drink From the Night Itself* is the group's first album without cofounding guitarist Anders Björler, but it manages to eclipse 2014's *At War With Reality*. Its 12 tracks combine the catchiest aspects of *Slaughter of the Soul* with pummeling thrash and blackened death metal, and are underpinned by the most orchestral elements of the band's catalog; a string section appears alongside acoustic guitar and keyboards to add more color to the music. Opening for these juggernauts are Wolves in the Throne Room, whose atmospheric black metal is potent in its own right. —SCOTT MORROW

DRONE ACTIVITY CHICAGO Part of Red Bull Music Festival Chicago. Featuring Merzbow, Stephen O'Malley, Olivia Block, Ono, Thoom,

TALsounds, Quicksails, Bruce Lamont, Matchess, Carol Genetti, Hogg, Rebecca Valeriano-Flores, Fire-Toolz, and Katherine Young. 7 PM, Saffron Rails, 1365 N. Cherry, \$10. 18+

Passing sirens, squealing brakes, fireworks, the metal-on-metal grind of el trains, the incongruously chirpy commercials preceding your streaming videos, and every damn noise coming out of everyone else's phone on the bus. For people everywhere—but especially for those of us living in the city—unwelcome sounds assail us like a thousand irritating cuts. Drone Activity Chicago, which is part of Red Bull Music Festival Chicago 2018, gives the listener a chance to purge those annoyances by pitching him- or herself into an all-encompassing barrage of sound. The event, which takes place at Saffron Rails (a massive brick-and-timber industrial space on



Grapetooth ALEX HUPP

Goose Island that will be outfitted with two rooms, three stages, and an arena-worthy soundsystem), has an expressed intent to rattle its listeners' molecules, and its lineup includes artists who set the bar for how to do that. Headlining the event are ultraprolific Japanese noise artist Merzbow and Sunn O))) cofounder, experimental guitarist, and composer Stephen O'Malley, both masters at purposefully employing volume to alter consciousness and physical states. The rest of the players are locals, and their collective stylistic reach goes far beyond drone music: Quicksails and TALSounds play tuneful, immersive electronic music; Carol Genetti explores the extremes of her amazingly supple voice; Thoom mixes a cauldron of sampled Middle Eastern hand drumming and blown-out club beats; Ono lay noise and freaky proclamations over dance grooves; Katherine Young combines classically rooted structures with electronic distortion; Matchess combines analog sounds with spell-casting chants; Bruce Lamont's latest album merges dark ambient metal and western movie soundtracks; Rebecca Valeriano-Flores delivers righteously condemnatory punk rock; Fire-Toolz blend shut-in metal moves with the ugliest 80s-vintage synth sounds; and Hogg revive the vibe of first-generation industrial music. This is the most extreme Red Bull Music Festival event in town this year, but you don't necessarily have to know or like everything on the bill to get something out of it. All you need is an appreciation for body-massaging volume. —BILL MEYER

SUNDAY11

BOOKER T. JONES 6 and 8:30 PM, SPACE, 1245 Chicago, Evanston, \$22-\$58.

Booker T. Jones, most famous for fronting iconic R&B/soul band Booker T. & the MGs, is a much more diverse musician than people give him credit for. A child prodigy who picked up an assortment of woodwinds and keys growing up, he became one of the most accomplished musicians in the

Stax Records stable in the 60s, as likely to score a soundtrack as he was to introduce elements of jazz and classical music into Memphis soul. He's since produced the likes of Bill Withers and Willie Nelson, and has played with the Drive-by Truckers, Kelly Hogan, Rancid, and Stephen Stills. His range extends to his work as a solo artist; his 1974 album *Evergreen* (Epic), an eclectic singer-songwriter venture, is one of the great overlooked gems of that decade. But it's the music he made with Booker T. & the MGs between 1962 and '71 that first cemented his legacy. Along with the Ventures, the group—which started as the house band for Stax—was among the most prominent to keep instrumentals on the charts after they'd largely gone out of fashion. And though Jones is certainly an adept singer, it was his organ work with the MGs that brought him hit after hit, including "Green Onions," "Hip-Hug-Her," and "Time Is Tight," plus the entire 1971 album *Melting Pot*, where the band went for broke with a collection of forward-thinking originals. Jones shines in his studio work with an impressive array of rhythm-and-blues giants, among them Otis Redding, Eddie Floyd, William Bell, Albert King, and Sam & Dave, but his live shows can be quite powerful too. Onstage, he shows he's just as talented on vocals and guitar as he is on keyboards, and it's likely his talents extend to some instruments many of us wouldn't associate him with—photos from rehearsal sessions for the 1967 Sam & Dave classic "Soul Man" show him fooling around with a tuba. Though you can't detect that instrument on the actual record, I'm sure it would have been interesting just to hear him try it out. —JAMES PORTER

GRAPETOOTH *Dehd* and *Sports Boyfriend* open. 7 PM, Thalia Hall, 1807 S. Allport, \$16.

Tonight, just two days short of the anniversary of their first gig—opening for Knox Fortune as part of his sold-out record-release show at Lincoln Hall—Chicago synth-based indie-pop duo Grapetooth celebrate their self-titled debut album on Polyvinyl. Grapetooth don't play out often, but when →

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they do, audiences clamor to see them—on their return to Lincoln Hall in July for a headlining set during Pitchfork weekend, they sold out the entire venue. The band's pedigree offers some explanation for their quick ascent—Clay Frankel, who cofounded Grapetooth with Chris Bailoni, plays guitar and sings in uberpopular garage act Twin Peaks. Grapetooth have stacked their album with urgent, grubby synth-based pop songs meant to burn up dance floors, and in interviews Frankel and Bailoni have credited Japanese experimental and pop acts as their sources of inspiration, including Yellow Magic Orchestra, Fishmans, and YMO's Yukihiro Takahashi. But the tunes on *Grapetooth* should feel familiar to anyone who enjoys the 80s pop they've heard in soundtracks of classic John Hughes movies. Frankel and Bailoni treat their musical influences like fragments of sea glass in a mosaic, and they don't allow ideas from other places and eras to get in the way of finding new concepts; the wobbly synth melody and serrated howls on early single "Trouble" sound as though they're barrel-rolling toward parts unknown. —LEOR GALIL

MONDAY12

JULIEN BAKER, PHOEBE BRIDGERS, LUCY DACUS See also Tuesday. Julien Baker and Phoebe Bridgers play headlining sets; Lucy Dacus opens. 7:15 PM, Thalia Hall, 1807 S. Allport, sold out. 17+

Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers, and Lucy Dacus are three singer-songwriters who have each made an impact in the music world in just the past couple of years, particularly with their recent solo releases *Turn Out the Lights*, *Stranger in the Alps*, and *Historian*, respectively. While Baker's instrumentals—usually sparse figures on a chordal instrument—are mellow and minimal, her voice is a powerful force that often transforms into a melodic yell. Bridgers's music is similar in that it is also an ethereal assortment of mollified, simple layers, but her lyrics are typically more narrative than Baker's. Dacus's songs tend to be louder and more musically upbeat than the other two, and focus on a typical live-rock sound. Despite

these differences in approach, Baker, Bridgers, and Dacus find common ground in their lyrical themes, which frequently deal with mental-health concerns, heartbreak, and assorted other tribulations. The musicians have long had a mutual respect and admiration, and after booking a tour together, they began writing together as a supergroup of sorts too. The brand-new self-titled EP of their project, *Boygenius*, shows a true synthesis of their solo work that takes advantage of the personal and aesthetic similarities of its creators. Through its six songs they convey like-minded thoughts and tales over gut-wrenching three-part harmonies and multiple distinctive guitar tracks. In just 21 minutes, *Boygenius* has a beautiful arc that builds to a startling, immense energy in the penultimate track, "Salt in the Wound," before closing out with the stark, folksy "Ketchum, ID." Baker, Bridgers, and Dacus are all sensitive, thoughtful artists on their own, and *Boygenius* proves they can maintain those qualities while stepping outside of their own creative processes to work with others—their individual voices bubble up now and then, but they ultimately meld together harmoniously. It's the start of something new that hopefully will continue while the three songwriters also pursue their solo careers. These two sold-out shows at Thalia Hall will feature a shorter opening set from Dacus and two full solo sets from Baker and Bridgers—plus a possible trio encore featuring *Boygenius* material. —IZZY YELLEN

TUESDAY13

JULIEN BAKER, PHOEBE BRIDGERS, LUCY DACUS See Monday. 7:15 PM, Thalia Hall, 1807 S. Allport, sold out. 17+


A COLLABORATION BETWEEN UNIFORM AND THE BODY *Author & Punisher* and *Intensive Care* open. 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, \$15. 21+

Brooklyn's Uniform and Portland's the Body are two of the world's harshest purveyors of postindustrial noise, so it was really only a matter of time before these like-minded duos joined forces to up the

ante. On this summer's *Mental Wounds Not Healing* (Sacred Bones), the members of both bands bring all their signature tricks to the table in laying out seven succinct tracks of unadulterated darkness. Some songs drag behind the beat due to the purposeful sludge-drumming of the Body's Lee Buford, while his bandmates grind ahead, propelled by the pushy, repetitive electronic beats. Seemingly endless waves of guitar feedback and droning synth bass are layered so their sounds are distorted beyond recognition, creating an uneasy base for vocalists Michael Berdan and Chip King to bounce their unmistakable vocal styles off of each other: Berdan's raw, deranged rhythmic approach to his lines adds a tiny bit of stability to King's shrieks—which sound like those of a wounded prehistoric beast. *Mental Wounds Not Healing* is not made for the faint of heart, and the sheer volume and dark energy Uniform and the Body separately bring to the stage means that a collaborative live show will be at least as ferocious. —**LUCA CIMARUSTI**

WEDNESDAY 14

TACO, KENYADDA *Taco headlines; Kenyadda, Joel Q, Josi Green, and Fadah open. 9 PM, Subterranean, 2011 W. North, \$20, \$10-\$15 in advance. 21+*

In July, local rapper Bekoe told *Reader* contributor Matt Harvey that he founded multipronged hip-hop company Illanoize in 2012 because he saw a void in coverage of the local scene. "During that time Chicago was the center of hip-hop culture," Bekoe said. "Even so, there still was a lot of really good artists being overlooked." In the last six years, Bekoe has made Illanoize indispensable; if you stumble upon a local hip-hop artist who's unfamiliar and hasn't been covered by major city news outlets, there's a good chance the Illanoize site has at least one blog post about him or her. Bekoe throws shows under that name too, including tonight's belated celebration of **Taco's** *Never Doubt Me* EP, which the rapper self-released in September. Taco's got an ear for lushly produced, soul-inspired instrumentals, and in his best performances—such as the heart-felt ode "Ma Dukes," named after J. Dilla's mother—his lyrics augment the warmth of his tracks. Opener **Kenyadda** also knows about honoring those who came before him; on his latest mixtape, last year's *Homage*, he took instrumentals from hip-hop heroes and gave them his own spin. With his cool in-the-pocket flow, Kenyadda shows he has an intimate knowledge of hip-hop history and aims to make a place for himself in the genre's ever-blooming canon. On "The Pact" he flips Outkast's "Da Art of Storytelling," and his melodic thump on the hook easily jells with the track's intergalactic-funk bump. —**LEOR GALIL** 

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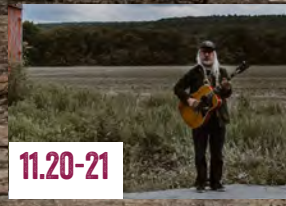
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- 11.10-11 JOHN HIATT
- 11.12 CONYA DOSS
- 11.18 JON MCLAUGHLIN & MATT WERTZ
- 11.19 THE EXPENDABLES
- 11.24-25 BODEANS
- 11.28 CANNED HEAT
- 11.29 DWELE
- 11.30 JANE LYNCH
- 12.1 ANDREW RIPP & FRIENDS
- 12.2 JENNIFER KNAPP & MARGARET BECKER "HYMNS OF CHRISTMAS"
- 12.2 SUZY BOGGUSS
- 12.3 DAVE HOLLISTER
- 12.4 KRIS ALLEN - SOMETHIN' ABOUT CHRISTMAS
- 12.5 JOE PUG
- 12.6 THE EMPTY POCKETS HOLIDAY CONCERT
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LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF ILLINOIS COUNTY OF COOK, ss.
Circuit Court of Cook County. Public notice is hereby given that a hearing will be held on January 7th, 2019, at 2:00 P.M. in Room 1704, Richard J. Daley Center, 50 W. Washington, Chicago, IL, pursuant to a Petition heretofore filed in the County Division of said Court as Case Number 2018CONC001315.
Said Petition prays for the change of my name from Miriam Gomez to that of Miriam Bahena-Cardona Bisby, pursuant to the statute in such case made and provided.
— MIRIAM GOMEZ, Petitioner. (11/22/18)

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SAVAGE LOVE

By Dan Savage

So what if you're not like anyone else?

A bi top wonders if he'll ever fit the norm and a judgy sibling gets put in place.

Q: I'm a bear-built top guy. There are ladies in my life who choose to share their beds with me. I can find subs to tie up and torture. (I'm kinky and bi.) What I can't find is a long-term partner. The problem is that after I fuck/sleep with/torture someone, my brain stops seeing them as sexual and moves them into the friend category. I have friends that I used to fuck regularly that now it's a chore to get it up for. Sure, the sex still feels good, but it's not passionate. And when it's all said and done, they're still in the "friend" category in my brain.

I'm 32, and my siblings are married and having kids, and the people I grew up with are married and having kids. And here I am not able to find a long-term significant other. Am I broken? Should I just accept that, at least for me, sexual partners and domestic/romantic partners will always be separate categories? —ALWAYS ALONE

A: What if you're not like most everyone else? What if this is just how your sexuality works? What if you're wired—emotionally, romantically, sexually—for intense but brief sexual connections that blossom into wonderful friendships? And what if you've been tricked into thinking you're broken because the kind of successful long-term relationships your siblings and friends have are celebrated and the kind of successful short-term relationships you have are stigmatized?

If your siblings and friends want to have the kinds of relationships they're having—and it's possible some do not—they will feel no inner conflict about their choices while simultaneously being


showered with praise for their choices. But what are they really doing? They're doing what they want, they're doing what makes them happy, they're doing what works for them romantically, emotionally, and sexually. And what are you doing? Maybe you're doing what you want, AA, maybe you're doing what could make you happy.

So why doesn't it make you happy? Maybe because you've been made to feel broken by a culture that holds up one relationship model—the partnered and preferably monogamous pair—and insists that this model is the only healthy and whole option, and that anyone who goes a different way, fucks a different way, or relates a different way is broken.

Now, it's possible you are broken, of course, and I might make a different suggestion if your brief-but-intense sexual encounters left a lot of hurt feelings in their wake. But that's not the case. You hook up with someone a few times, you share an intense sexual experience, and you feel a brief romantic connection to them. And when those sexual and romantic feelings subside, you're not left with a string of bitter exes and enemies, but with a large and growing circle of good friends. Which leads me to believe that even if you aren't doing what everyone else is doing, AA, you're clearly doing something right.

Q: I knew my little brother had an odd fascination with rubber that would likely become sexual. He would steal rubber gloves and hide them in his room, and there was a huge meltdown when our mother found a gas mask in his room when he was 12. My brother is in

his 30s now and has a closet full of rubber "gear" that he dresses in pretty much exclusively. (When he's not at work, he's in rubber.) All of his friends are rubber fetishists. When he travels, it's only to fetish events where he can wear his rubber clothing publicly. He will date only other rubber fetishists, which seems to have severely limited his romantic prospects, and he posts photos of himself in rubber to his social media accounts. I read your column and I understand that kinks aren't chosen and they can be incorporated into a person's sex life in a healthy way. But my brother's interest in rubber seems obsessive. Your thoughts? —RUBBERED-UP BABY BROTHER'S EROTIC RUT

A: If your brother was obsessed with surfing or snowboarding and built his life around chasing waves or powder—and would date only people who shared his passion—you wouldn't have written me. Same goes if he were obsessed with pro sports, as so many straight men are, or Broadway shows, as so many gay men are. The only "problem" here is that your brother's obsession makes his dick hard—and to be clear, RUBBER, the problem is yours, not his. An erotic obsession or passion is just as legitimate as a nonerotic one. And even if I thought your brother had a problem—and I do not—nothing I wrote here would result in him liking his rubber clothes, rubber buddies, or rubber fetish events any less. 

Send letters to mail@savagelove.net. Download the Savage Lovecast every Tuesday at savagelovecast.com.  @fakedansavage



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NEW

Herb Alpert & Lani Hall 5/4-5, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 11/8, noon **U**

Amity Affliction, Senses Fail 1/30, 6:30 PM, Concord Music Hall, on sale Fri 11/9, 11 AM, 17+ **U**

As It Is 2/15, 6 PM, Subterranean **U**

Taylor Bennett 12/22, 7 PM, Metro **U**

Cannibal Corpse, Hate Eternal 11/16, 7:30 PM, Durty Nellie's, Palatine

Chrome Sparks 2/9, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM, 18+

Corrosion of Conformity, Crowbar, Weedeater 2/9, 7:30 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM, 17+

Dave Davies 4/20, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM and 4/21, 8 PM, City Winery, on sale Thu 11/8, noon **U**

Iris DeMent 2/2, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM **U**

Dream Theater 3/29, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM

Thomas Dybdahl 1/31, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM **U**

FKJ 5/17, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM, 18+

Fleetwood Mac 3/1, 8 PM, United Center, on sale Mon 11/12, 10 AM

Fotocrime 12/3, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle **FREE**

Tommy Genesis 4/10, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+

Ariana Grande 4/7, 7:30 PM, United Center

David Gray 6/13, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM

Conan Gray 4/8, 7:30 PM, Bottom Lounge, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM **U**

Peter Hook & the Light 11/1, 9 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM, 18+

Icarus the Owl 12/6, 7 PM, Subterranean, 17+

Jean Deaux 11/16, 8 PM, Virgin Hotel

Emily King 2/1, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM, 18+

Knuckle Puck 12/22, 6:45 PM, Bottom Lounge **U**

Magic Giant 2/15, 7 PM, Metro, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM **U**

Majestic Casual 12/5, 7 PM, Chop Shop, 18+

Mako 12/22, 10 PM, Studio Paris

Nick Mason's Saucerful of Secrets 4/4, 7:30 PM, Chicago Theatre

Massive Attack 3/23, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM

Mineral, Tancred 1/24, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM

Kevin Morby, Sam Cohen 6/7-8, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM, 17+

Mother Hips 4/19, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM **U**

Mother Mother 2/21, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM, 18+

Noodles, Jess Connelly 12/13, 8 PM, Virgin Hotel

Perpetual Groove 4/27, 10 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+

Pigeons Playing Ping Pong 2/15, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM, 18+

Quinn XCII 3/20, 6 PM, Riviera Theatre, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM **U**

Chris Smither 4/12, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 11/9, 11 AM

States United 12/7-8, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+

Tender 3/14, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+

Tonight Alive 2/12, 6:30 PM, 10 AM, 18+

VHS Collection 3/14, 8 PM, Metro, 18+

Warbly Jets 2/15, 9 PM, Schubas, on sale Fri 11/9, 10 AM

WGCI Big Jam with Cardi B, Kodak Black, Tory Lanez, and more 11/24, 7:30 PM, United Center

UPDATED

Muncie Girls 11/11, 6:30 PM, Cobra Lounge, canceled

Peter Murphy 2/22-23, 7:30 PM, Rockefeller Memorial Chapel, second show added

The Roast of Ronnie Radke 11/14, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, canceled

UPCOMING

All Time Low 12/21, 7:30 PM, House of Blues **U**

Marc Anthony 11/30, 8 PM, Allstate Arena, Rosemont

Ashlee & Evan 1/12, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall **U**

Iggy Azalea 11/17, 7:30 PM, Aragon Ballroom **U**

Beirut, Helado Negro 2/22, 7:30 PM, Riviera Theatre, 18+

Big Wild 3/22, 9 PM, Concord Music Hall, 18+

Boy Harsher 2/8, 9 PM, Empty Bottle

Brand X 12/8, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

Bring Me the Horizon 2/5, 6 PM, Aragon Ballroom **U**

Cowboy Junkies 4/13-14, 7 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music **U**

Cult Leader 11/30, 9 PM, Empty Bottle

Cursive 11/15, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

Death From Above, Les Butcherettes 11/16, 8:30 PM, Metro **U**

Drug Church, Gouge Away 11/18, 1 PM, Cobra Lounge

Alejandro Escovedo with Don Antonio Band 1/31-2/2, 8 PM, City Winery **U**

Expendedables 11/19, 8 PM, City Winery **U**

Fisher 11/17, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, 17+

Flasher 12/4, 9 PM, Hideout

Freddie Gibbs 11/16, 7 PM, Park West **U**

Goatwhore, Casualties, Black Tusk 11/21, 6 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

Guided by Voices 12/31, 9 PM, Bottom Lounge

Har Mar Superstar & Sabrina Ellis 11/24, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

Interpol 2/7, 7:30 PM, Chicago Theatre

Jerusalem in My Heart 3/26, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

Stephen Kellogg 12/13, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston **U**

Kimbra 12/5, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

King Tuff, Stonefield 1/26, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+

Kiss 3/2, 7:30 PM, United Center

Leftover Crack, Negative Approach 11/28, 8 PM, Metro, 18+

John Legend 12/13, 7 PM, Lyric Opera House

Lemon Twigs 1/25, 9 PM, Metro, 18+

Lotus 12/30-31, 9 PM, Park West, 18+

Jeff Lynne's ELO 6/27, 8 PM, United Center

Macabre 12/22, 6:30 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

MadeinTYO 3/1, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+

Richard Marx 11/15, 7:30 PM, North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, Skokie **U**

Metric, Zoe 3/22, 7 PM, Aragon Ballroom, 17+

Mewithoutyou 11/30, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+

Bob Mould Band 2/22-23, 8 PM, Metro, 18+

Municipal Waste 11/15, 7 PM, Metro, 18+

Graham Nash 3/17, 7 PM, Athenaeum Theatre **U**

Nothing, Nowhere, Wicca Phase Springs Eternal 12/19, 6 PM, Bottom Lounge **U**

The Oh Hellos 12/12, 7:30 PM, Thalia Hall **U**

Pale Waves, Candescents 11/21, 7 PM, Bottom Lounge **U**

Panic! At the Disco 2/4, 7 PM, Allstate Arena, Rosemont

Preoccupations, Protomartyr 12/6, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

Procol Harum 2/20-21, 8 PM, City Winery **U**

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Queers 12/31, 8 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 18+

Radar State 2/2, 8 PM, Cobra Lounge, 17+

Royal Trux 2/22, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+

Travis Scott, Trippie Redd 12/6, 7:30 PM, United Center

The Sea & Cake 11/17, 7 PM, Empty Bottle

Soft Moon 1/24, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

Suicide Machines, Goddamn Gallows 12/28, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+

Teenage Fanclub 3/6, 7:30 PM, Metro, 18+

Tropa Magica 11/23, 9 PM, Empty Bottle

Kurt Vile & the Violators 12/22, 7:30 PM, Riviera Theatre, 18+

Anita Wilson 2/10, 7 PM, City Winery **U**

Dan Wilson 11/16, 7 PM, Schubas

With Confidence, Broadside 12/6, 6 PM, Bottom Lounge **U**

Danny Worsnop 11/18, 5:30 PM, Bottom Lounge **U**

Chely Wright 1/27, 7 PM, SPACE, Evanston **U**

Ry X 3/26, 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+

Xibalba Itzaes, Unholy Lust 12/7, 8 PM, Cobra Lounge

You Me at Six 3/2, 7 PM, Bottom Lounge **U**

Young Fathers 11/19, 9 PM, Bottom Lounge, 18+

Yowler 11/18, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle

Dweezil Zappa Choice Cuts 11/16, 8 PM, The Vic

Thalia Zedek 12/13, 9 PM, Hideout

SOLD OUT

Alkaline Trio 1/3-6, 9 PM, Metro, 18+

Cavetown 12/8, 6:30 PM, Bottom Lounge **U**

Greta Van Fleet 12/12, 7 PM and 12/14-15, 8 PM, Aragon Ballroom **U**

Beth Hart 4/25, 7:30 PM, Park West, 18+

Ella Mai 3/3, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, 18+

Andy Shauf 11/29-30, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+

Jack White 11/19, 7:30 PM, Aragon Ballroom, 17+

Lucinda Williams 11/17, 8 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry Benefit

Thom Yorke 12/4, 8 PM, Chicago Theatre **U**



GOSSIP WOLF

A furry ear to the ground of the local music scene

GOSSIP WOLF HAS been raving about **Bleach Party** since their live debut in 2013, and they've put out a constant stream of EPs, singles, and split releases over the years. Somewhat surprisingly, the new **NOLA** is the first full-length album from this local garage four-piece—and not surprisingly at all, it's chockablock with ragers. Blowouts such as "Entertain Yourself" and "Lunar Moods" expand on the surf-rock tinge of the band's signature sound with strutting rhythms and tough-as-Leather Tuscadero vocals from guitarist **Meg MacDuff**. **Bleach Party** drop the album digitally via Bandcamp on Friday, November 9, and celebrate at the **Empty Bottle** on Thursday, November 8, with openers Peach Fuzz and Chicken Happen.

Pretty much everything about **Sonic Youth's** 1988 double album **Daydream Nation**—the iconic Gerhard Richter cover art, the delicious punk grind of the ZZ Top-inspired "Eliminator Jr."—combined to make it one of the crowning statements of American indie rock. It seems unlikely the band will ever play these songs again—their 2011 split was spectacularly acrimonious—but fans can get the next best thing at the **Music Box** on Sunday, November 11, as former members **Thurston Moore** and **Steve Shelley** screen a 2007 performance of **Daydream Nation** filmed by director **Lance Bangs**, bits of a rarely seen 1989 documentary on the downtown NYC scene, and material from the band's own archives. After the screenings, they'll hold a Q&A with band archivist **Aaron Mullan**.

Jessee Rose Crane and **Philip Jerome Lesicko**, who cofounded bubblegum-grunge outfit the **Funs** (and trade off as front person), haven't lived in Chicago for six years, but **Gossip Wolf** still thinks of them as locals. It helps that the **Funs** routinely play here—on Wednesday, November 14, they headline the **Empty Bottle** to celebrate their new album, **Alienated**, which **Sister Polygon** (the label run by the band **Priests**) releases on Friday, November 9. —**J.R. NELSON AND LEOR GALIL**

Got a tip? Tweet @Gossip_Wolf or e-mail gossipwolf@chicagoreader.com.

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LITTLE MISS ANN



NOV 11

CHAMBER SUNDAYS WITH BOW & HAMMER



NOV 12

ONO W/ THE BRIDGE



NOV 15

HOT MESS YOGA: HAPPY HOUR



NOV 16

SWAMP DOGG



NOV 20

CHICAGO NIGHT LIVE

NOV 08 FEMINE COMIQUE

NOV 10 DEE MONEY'S SCORPIO BIRTHDAY BASH

NOV 15 "OH ISSA PARTY PARTY?!" HOSTED BY LIVE YOUNG

NOV 08 PROMONTORY AFTER DARK W/ DJ JOE KOLLEGE

NOV 11 VETERAN'S DAY SCORPIO BASH!

NOV 17 HASHTAG LUNCHBAG

NOV 09 PASSPORT VIBES: DOPE SOUNDS!

NOV 13 THE MOTH

NOV 17 ANOTHER DAMN DAY PARTY

NOV 10 POSITIVELY MELANIN PRESENTS BLACK EXCELLENCE

NOV 13 COUNTRY GRAMMAR W/ DJ SLOW MO

NOV 18 HYDE PARK HANDMADE

BODY, EVERY SUNDAY / SALSA, EVERY THIRD WEDNESDAY

THE PROMONTORY | 5311 S. LAKE PARK W. DRIVE CHICAGO | PROMONTORYCHICAGO.COM

3/2 Lures

MUSIC PAIRED WITH BEER

NNAMDI OGBONNAYA / SEN MORIMOTO
EMPTY BOTTLE 11/9

CAIRO GANG
THE HIDEOUT 11/14

RUSSIAN CIRCLES / BONGRIPPER
METRO 11/23

HAR MAR SUPERSTAR / SABRINA ELLIS
"DO THE SONGS OF DIRTY DANCING"
THALIA HALL 11/24

FLASHER
THE HIDEOUT 12/4

WAGO BROTHERS
SCHUBAS 12/27

CRACKER / CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN
SCHUBAS 12/30

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jam presents



LINDA EDER
In Concert
THIS FRIDAY! NOVEMBER 9 • PARK WEST



Elle King
Shake the Spirit
Tour
WITH SPECIAL GUEST
CORDOVAS
THIS SATURDAY!
NOVEMBER 10
Vic Theatre
ELLEKING.COM #18



Dweezil Zappa
World Tour 2018
CHOICE CUTS!
Friday, November 16
Vic Theatre DWEEZILZAPPA.COM
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TURKUVAZ
LIFE IN THE CITY TOUR



SPECIAL GUEST
ANDY FRASCO & THE UN
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17
PARK WEST

silver wrapper 

 NEW STUDIO RECORD
LIFE IN THE CITY
AVAILABLE NOW



RUFUS WAINWRIGHT
ALL THESE POSES
ANNIVERSARY TOUR 2018
SPECIAL GUEST **RACHEL ECKROTH**
NOVEMBER 20
VIC THEATRE



FREDDY JONES BAND
SPECIAL GUEST
SEAN KELLY OF THE SAMPLES
THANKSGIVING
EVE
NOVEMBER 21
PARK WEST
93XRT
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JOHN BUTLER TRIO
THE HOME TOUR
NOVEMBER 29
THE CHICAGO THEATRE
Presented by CHASE O

PHOSPHORESCENT
w/ liz cooper and the stampede
phosphorescentmusic.com
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30
VIC THEATRE

ALLEN STONE
FALL TOUR
WITH SPECIAL GUEST **NICK WATERHOUSE**
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1 • VIC THEATRE

PARQUET COURTS
WIDE AWAKE! TOUR 2018
SPECIAL GUESTS **COMBO CHIMBITA**
DECEMBER 3 • VIC THEATRE



12 LITTLE SPELLS
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DECEMBER 5 • VIC THEATRE

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