

READER



Welcome to Chicago

CAPITAL OF THE MIDWEST

Is the city an island of cosmopolitanism in a sea of rural, inexpensive, stultifying friendliness? Not exactly.

By **Pete Saunders** 12

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THIS WEEK ON CHICAGOREADER.COM



Beyond Smollettgate

On the *Back Room Deal* podcast, Ben Joravsky and Maya Dukmasova discuss the Cook County State's Attorney's race.

'Allure of Matter'

Smart Museum's exhibit features pieces made of hair, human fat, cigarettes, plastics, and 127 tons of boiled-down Coca-Cola.

Reclaiming our resettlement

Syrian Community Network's afterschool art program helps refugee children stay connected to home.

CITY LIFE



Kevin Hsia
© ISA GIALLORENZO

STREET VIEW

Form and function

A DJ and radio host takes a considered approach to style.

By ISA GIALLORENZO

Kevin Hsia's attention to detail is evident in the way he's cuffed his military trousers, buttoned his denim shearling jacket, and sprinkled subtle pops of color all over his outfit. The 30-year-old DJ, radio host, and digital marketer describes his style as "modern-classic, through a playful lens that combines vintage, workwear, and at times, tailoring."

"I heard somewhere that a new piece of clothing that feels foreign at first becomes part of 'you' after three wears," he says. "I've stuck with that practice."

For inspiration, he looks to iconic actors who "embody a timelessness and confidence in dressing," such as James Dean, Don Johnson,

Marlon Brando, and Clark Gable. He also turns to street style sites like The Sartorialist, old fashion ads, and *Esquire* magazine. Fashion for him is "the intersection of form and function."

"It's about self-expression, of course, but it's also something utilitarian for me. I often have long days and nights, so it's a considered approach for me to anticipate my day's activities. I try to respect the company I'm with and the venue and occasion."

You can hear Hsia every third Sunday on *Sunday Record Club*, a vinyl-focused radio show on Lumpen Radio (105.5 FM or lumpenradio.com), where he interviews local DJs, vinyl enthusiasts, and collectors. 

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Groundbreaking white mapo tofu  ANJALI PINTO FOR CHICAGO READER

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Chicago Ramen takes its place among the kings

A chef from a celebrated LA chain throws down a gauntlet in the north suburbs.

By **MIKE SULA**

A sickness had descended upon my home. The walls echoed with wheezes, hacks, and croaks like a chorus of spitting coffee makers, while a malevolent fog of viral particulates hung in the air. I could feel it making a home in my lungs. What started as a wispy, scratchy tickle began to sound more like an open chest wound.

I fled to the suburbs for relief, to a strip mall in Des Plaines where, between a vape shop and a nail salon, a new *ramen-ya* had opened. Chicago Ramen comes from a veteran chef who'd helped

create a sensation in Los Angeles in 2011 with the opening of the first outpost of the lauded Tokyo-based Tsujita chain. For eight years prior to that, Kenta Ikehata, who attended the same Nagasaki junior high school as founder Takehiro Tsujita, had worked up from the bottom in the group and joined his senior classmate in introducing Angelenos to *tsukemen* (“skee-men”), a particular ramen variant of thick, cold noodles meant to be swabbed in a side bowl filled with an ultra-concentrated broth that the late critic Jonathan Gold described as a “syrup-dense

dipping sauce porkier than pork itself.” Gold continued to heap praise on the various Tsujita satellites that opened over the years, and it became a powerhouse in the ramen capital of the western hemisphere.

Meanwhile, to a less satisfying degree, Chicago began to experience its own ramen deluge. There was a time when the only game in town was in the northern suburbs, meaning the milky bowls of *tonkotsu* ramen at Santouka in the Mitsuwa Marketplace food court in Arlington Heights, and later the miso-based noodle soups

at Ramen Misoya in Mount Prospect. But in the city, chains and individual operators subsequently rode the tide of the national ramen obsession, and though some have distinguished themselves, it is still a bit of a challenge to find a well-constructed bowl among the generalists and dilettantes—or anything unique in the ocean of tonkotsu broth.

Last January, Ikehata broke away from the Tsujita group to open Tokyo Shokudo at Mitsuwa, serving homey dishes like dry maze-soba noodles, fried cutlets, and curry. Last month he struck again, opening Chicago Ramen, the first of what he says will be multiple north suburban outposts specializing in heretofore uncommon (in the midwest) ramen varieties.

Here that means his own version of *tsukemen*, the sauce based not on tonkotsu, but a chicken, vegetable, and pork broth emulsified with a blend of Ikehata's red and white miso pastes.

There is a three-stage protocol to eating these noodles (sourced from the gold standard Sun Noodle). You're first meant to squeeze a lime wedge over them, then mop them in the sauce and slurp them noisily in a manner that will make those sensitive to certain aural triggers see a conspiracy in the root word of misophonia. Next, alter the profile of the broth as you go along by adding dried chili (*onikasu*) and raw minced garlic. When your noodles are depleted, you can always order more, but the dense, nutty broth, dotted with tiny amorphous blobs of molten backfat, is as rich and sedating as any tonkotsu. You're better off requesting a “soup *wari*,” and your bowl will be diluted with a dose of hot chicken broth. There's little left to do after this but find a comfortable place to sleep it off.

Ikehata also offers red and white miso ramen, based on his individual pastes (which seem like a gauntlet thrown in front of nearby Ramen Misoya), in addition to a vegetable ramen and a limpid chicken ramen. But it's a sixth variety that truly breaks ground here.

White mapo tofu ramen was born at Tsujita in LA, and it's the White Walker of ramen varieties. A riff on the lava-colored Sichuan mapo tofu, it features a relatively light chicken broth, a thinner-bore Sun noodle, and a pile of soft, silky tofu nestled within. It looks as midwestern as hot-dish, but for the blanket of black pepper on top and the Thai chilis lurking in its depths. You can customize the spice level, and if you're battling a viral invader I recommend you push yourself to the limit.


Chicago Ramen is audaciously named for an outfit getting its start in the suburbs, but the



Chef Kenta Ikehata with tsukemen ramen  ANJALI PINTO FOR CHICAGO READER

suburbs have always been home to the kings of Chicago ramen anyway. Based on their social media feeds, local food writers are all over it right now. It's possible the praise about to be heaped upon Ikehata will lead to a Tsujita-style obsession here, especially after he packs up his family in LA and begins to build his own empire.

For now the suburbs are home to a potent medicine. I loaded my tsukemen with raw garlic,

slurped it down, went home and slept like the dead. The next morning my cough was much diminished, and I subdued it totally after downing the cup of wari I took home. At the very least Chicago Ramen should restore your faith in the idea that there's nothing a really good bowl of ramen can't fix. 

 @MikeSula



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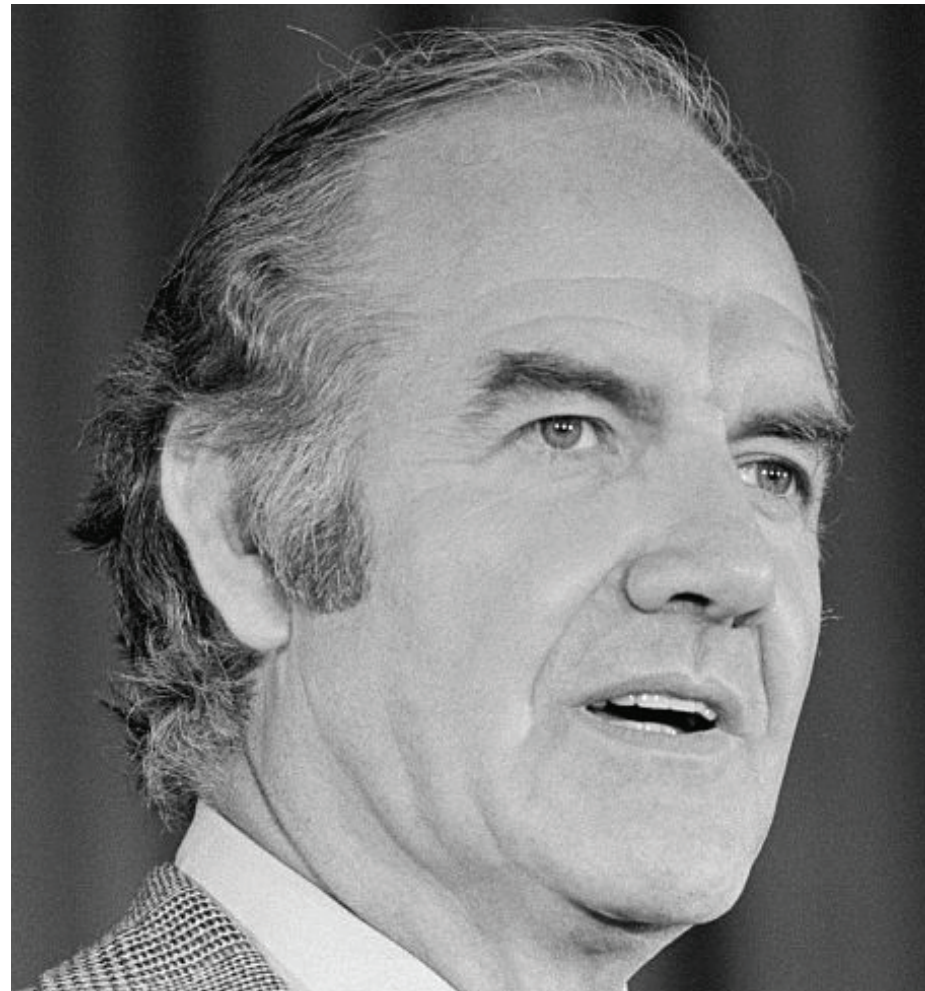
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NEWS & POLITICS



POLITICS

Panic peddlers

Centrist Dems are using the 1972 election to scare voters away from Bernie.

By **BEN JORAVSKY**

Of all the panic being peddled by centrist Democrats to scare voters out of voting for Bernie Sanders, the scariest fantasy is one I call Horror House.

It's the one in which Bernie's nomination leads to utter devastation as Trump wins reelection, and Republicans hold on to the Senate, recapture the House of Representatives, and win over some state legislatures for good measure. Just in time to gerrymander the Democratic Party out of existence.


Just reciting that scenario has me breaking into a sweat. I feel like the Elizabeth Moss character in *The Invisible Man* who's constantly

looking over her shoulder for her deranged ex-boyfriend whom she can't see because . . . he's invisible!

So, let me take the time to say that just like *The Invisible Man*, the Horror House is just the product of devious minds. In this case those minds are James Carville, Mayor Rahm, and other old centrist fogies working on behalf of Bloomberg or Biden or *anyone* who might beat Bernie.

Hey, Elizabeth Warren supporters—don't get smug. They'd be using Horror House against you if she were higher in the polls. If she wins a few primaries, trust me, they will.

NEWS & POLITICS

For centrist Dems, George McGovern is the ghost of lost elections past.  WARREN K. LEFFLER

Like any good scary movie, Horror House is loosely based on something real—the presidential election of 1972, in which President Richard Nixon trounced Senator George McGovern, his Democratic opponent.

Nixon won every state except Massachusetts and the District of Columbia, which, of course, is not a state.

While I'm on the subject—if Democrats had any guts or sense they'd be fighting like hell to make the District of Columbia a state, just as they would be fighting to abolish the electoral college, which always works to their disadvantage. But, alas, my beloved Democrats have no sense or guts. They'd rather spend their time fighting against Bernie.

Back to McGovern. There are some parallels between McGovern and Sanders in that both are taking on the party establishment.

McGovern's nomination followed a heated primary season that led to a contentious convention in which the faction loyal to Mayor Richard J. Daley walked out.

It got so bad that lifelong Chicago Democrats like Alderman Vito Marzullo endorsed Nixon.

The Republicans gleefully played one faction of the Democratic Party against the other, writing off McGovern as the leader of a movement for “Amnesty, Acid, and Abortion”—far removed from mainstream America.

The lesson taken from the election by ambitious young Democrats—like Bill Clinton, who worked for McGovern in Texas—was that they would never allow the party to drift too far from the center.

It's a lesson they're trying to reinforce in today's campaign, even though many voters weren't even born back in 1972.

By the way, I, too, was traumatized by the 1972 election. It haunts me to this day—which is why, like any boomer, I'm so vulnerable to the scare tactics of Rahm, Carville, and the Clintons.

Back in 1972, I was a hugely idealistic high school senior with posters of McGovern on my bedroom wall.

I volunteered for McGovern. On election day, the campaign sent me to some north shore suburb where I went door-to-door begging people to vote Democratic.

As I recall, it was raining. Or maybe I just imagined it was raining because Nixon voters kept slamming their doors in my face. Or maybe I just imagined them slamming doors in my face.

Point is—we got walloped. And as the votes came in, I wailed at the moon and wrote angry

denunciations of the voters in my diary, which I will spare you from reading. You're welcome.

But in retrospect, that election wasn't so bad. Even in the face of the Nixon landslide, the Democrats held on to the House and the Senate. In fact, they won two extra Senate seats.

It was like a split verdict. The voters may have liked Nixon more than McGovern, but they didn't want to give Nixon too much power. So they voted for Democrats further down the ballot. Exactly the opposite of what Carville, et al. say they will do in this election.

I know this from firsthand experience. In 1972, I was also going door-to-door on behalf of Abner Mikva, a Democrat running for Congress.

Mikva lost, but he did a lot better than McGovern in his district. And two years later he was victorious, and the Democrats have held onto that seat ever since.

You see, voters are not as stupid as Carville and Rahm would have you believe. At least, they know how to split their vote.

Put this in the current perspective. Say you're a swing voter in Sean Casten's 6th Congressional district out in the western suburbs. And say you voted for him in 2018 because you were sick and tired of the Republican Party's anti-science ideology, or its rigid opposition to abortion rights, or its efforts to kill Obamacare, or the overall lunacy of Trump.

But say you're too middle-of-the-road to vote for Bernie. So—gulp—you vote for Trump. That doesn't mean you'll turn around and vote to give Trump even more power by voting against Casten.


Especially if your choice is Jeanne Ives, who's so ideologically to the right that she almost makes Trump look like a liberal.

No, you're likely to vote for Casten even if you voted for Trump in order to elect one candidate to protect you from the consequences of electing the other.

Back to McGovern. It seems that the country has embraced the three-A stereotype of his campaign. Think about it. Amnesty referred to letting draft resisters in Canada come home. OK, Nixon didn't do that, but his successors did.

As for acid—well, reefer's legal in many states, including Illinois.

And, yes, the Republicans are still waging war against abortion rights. But pro-choice candidates have the upper hand in those swing districts that flipped to the Dems in 2018.

The centrists may never tire of using McGovern as their bogeyman. But in some ways, McGovern actually won even while losing. 

 @joravben

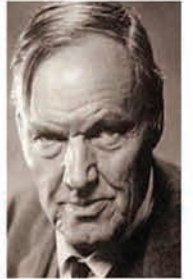
“...In these changing times we have no right to close our eyes to the dangers and responsibilities of the day. No era of the world has ever witnessed such a rapid concentration of wealth and power as the one in which we live.”

— Clarence Darrow on *The Right of Revolution*, Chicago, November 1925

The Clarence Darrow Commemorative Committee

Invites you to participate in its annual wreath-tossing & symposium commemorating Darrow on the 82nd anniversary of his death

NOTE: Events are now in separate locations and dates



Friday, March 13, 2020 at 10 a.m.

Please join us just EAST of the Clarence Darrow Bridge in Jackson Park (the bridge is under construction) for the traditional tossing of flowers and brief speeches, including an excerpt from Darrow's 1925 lecture on *The Right of Revolution*. The Darrow Bridge is behind the Museum of Science & Industry. Driving south on Lake Shore Drive, pass the light at 57th Drive and turn right at the next light (Science Drive). You will come almost immediately to Columbia Drive. If you turn left and follow Columbia Drive there is parking near the bridge. Free. No RSVP needed.

Symposium Topic:

Income Inequality, Corporate Power, and Social Justice: The Right of Revolution

Wednesday, April 15, 2020, 6:15 – 7:30 p.m.

Loyola University Chicago Quinlan School of Law –
16 E. Pearson, Room 1001

Co-sponsored with the Curt and Linda Rodin Center for Social Justice at Loyola University Chicago School of Law

Free and open to the public. RSVP to LaTrina Porter at lporter@luc.edu.



Lecture: Steven Ramirez is the Abner J. Mikva Professor of Law, and Founding Director of the Business Law Center, at Loyola University Chicago School of Law. Professor Ramirez writes extensively on issues of social justice and capitalism, law and economics, corporate governance and financial regulations.

Reading of excerpts from Darrow's 1895 lecture by actor Scott Duff

Scott Duff is a Chicago-based actor, comic, and radio host. He will read excerpts from Darrow's 1895 lecture on “The Right of Revolution.” A graduate of Northwestern University, Duff is an Artistic Associate of About Face Theatre, has performed with the Goodman, Steppenwolf, Theater Wit, Lookingglass, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, iO, and American Theatre Company. He is host/producer of OUT CHICAGO, a live weekly talk show for the LGBT community airing Sundays on WCPT, Chicago's Progressive Talk AM & FM.



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Vice President Mike Pence   GAGE SKIDMORE

CULTURE

Zombie wars

Paul Krugman on undead Republican concepts and coronavirus

BY DEANNA ISAACS

Last week, as the world caught a bad case of the coronavirus and the stock market began a major swoon, Paul Krugman came to town to talk about zombies.

A scary, flesh-eating, indestructible force rampant in the world? Couldn't have been more apropos for the events of the next few days.

Krugman, the Nobel Prize-winning economist and *New York Times* columnist, drew a packed Chicago Humanities Festival crowd to the sanctuary of the Chicago Temple on a blustery night to hear him talk about his new book, *Arguing with Zombies*. It's a collection of his columns, in which he takes on conservative ideas that he says have proved false and should have died long ago but are still lurching around, consuming human brains.

Two days later, on the heels of assurances

from President Trump that coronavirus will miraculously disappear, we learned that all future information we'll be getting about the virus from our government will have to be cleared by a new task force, headed by Vice President (and major zombie concept adherent) Mike Pence.

This, apparently in response to an announcement by the Centers for Disease Control that we need to prepare for a possible pandemic. And that it wasn't a question of if the virus would spread to the U.S., but when.

So Pence—still unconvinced about evolution, and notoriously reluctant to employ a needle exchange to head off an HIV outbreak in Indiana when he was governor—is now deciding what the nation's top health and science experts can tell us. In case he needs some help, Trump appointed Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and White House economic adviser

Larry Kudlow to the task force.

Or maybe Trump did that because the ailment that really got his attention last week was the nasty sell-off virus that took the stock market down 3,000 points. If he'd known this two years ago, he might not have axed the health security team whose job it was to handle pandemics.

Krugman's zombie concepts are a roster of Trump-supporter talking points, so it's no surprise that, as broadcaster Steve Paulson, his interviewer at the Chicago Temple, noted, Trump has tried to get him fired from the *Times*.

The zombies include climate change denial (kept alive by the fossil fuel industry's hired guns), and the threat that Social Security will run out of money. (Not to worry: it's a payroll tax, not a private pension fund, and taxes—as we know so well—can always be raised.)

Also, the national debt crisis, which the

Republicans were so concerned about during the Obama administration, but have recently “done a 180” on. The size of the debt relative to the size of the national economy looks OK to Krugman. Besides—and this is my favorite among his nuggets of wisdom—“from a planetary perspective, it's just money we owe ourselves.”

Krugman's “ultimate zombie” is the idea that tax cuts for the rich are a way to stimulate the economy; he's called the 2017 Trump tax cut, “the biggest tax scam in history,” and writes that “at least 90 percent of Americans will end up poorer” thanks to it.

He's also argued that, whoever the Democratic candidate is, the issue the party should pursue is the growing financialization of the U.S. economy. Since the deregulation of the 1980s, he has written, the greatest profits have come, not from “running companies that actually made things,” but from Wall Street transactions: buying and selling those companies, often loading them up with debt and resulting in job losses.



Wall Street, of course, is the arena in which Michael Bloomberg, with his pioneering computer terminals, made his fortune: “he got rich by selling equipment to destructive wheeler-dealers.” Elizabeth Warren, on the other hand, created the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, “saving ordinary families billions, until the Trump administration set about eviscerating it.”

Bernie Sanders is “not actually a socialist,” Krugman maintains, but he doesn't like Sanders's “personal branding” and fears he would waste “his political capital on unwinnable fights,” like Medicare for All—“a heavy political lift” that Krugman says isn't going to happen right now, no matter who's president.

Still, what makes him angry is people who say, “Trump is bad but Bernie might raise my taxes.” To defeat Trump, “we have to set aside that kind of self-indulgence.”

On Monday morning Krugman turned up on CNN, looking concerned. He said he was extremely nervous about the market (given “the few tools” in the Federal Reserve's tool kit, since interest rates are already historically low) and about the spread of the virus.

The president had resisted warnings; he “did not want to hear that [the virus] was going to be bad,” Krugman said.

“This could turn out to be Trump's WMD.”  

HOW TO READ THE GUIDE:

1. A vacancy has to be filled, your options are listed in the order you will see them on the ballot
2. Listed is the % of bar associations finding the candidate to be at least **qualified** or recommended
3. Listed is names of bar associations finding the candidate to be **not qualified** or not recommended

THE VOTER GUIDE IS BASED ON EVALUATIONS FROM THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:

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ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT - NEVILLE VACANCY

(D) Maureen Patricia O'Leary 12% All but HLA
(D) Carolyn J. Gallagher 75% DSL, HBA, ISBA
(D) Sandra Gisela Ramos 60% DSL, LAGBAC, WBAI, ISBA
(D) Michael B. Hyman 100%

ILLINOIS APPELLATE COURT - SIMON VACANCY

John Griffin 100%
Sharon O. Johnson 100%

Cook County Circuit Court Countywide Candidates

BELLOWS VACANCY

Tiesha L. Smith 0% Recommend

COGHLAN VACANCY

Kelly Marie McCarthy 100%
Aileen Bhandari 100%
Elizabeth "Beth" Ryan 100%
James T. Derico, Jr. 100%

FORD VACANCY

U. O'Neal 0% Recommend
Laura Ayala-Gonzalez 100%
John O'Meara 100%

FUNDERBURK VACANCY

Jacqueline M. Griffin 80% DSL, LAGBAC
Daniel L. Collins 100%
Marie Therese Quinn 100%
Celestia L. Mays 100%

LARSEN VACANCY

Levander "Van" Smith, Jr. 100%
Suzanne Therese McEneely 100%
Megan Kathleen Mulay 100%

McCARTHY VACANCY

Teresa Molina 100%
Michael O'Malley 100%

MASON VACANCY

Arthur D. Sutton 100%
Bonnie Carol McGrath 0% Recommend
Jennifer Patricia Callahan 100%
Chris Stacey 100%
Joy E. Tolbert Nelson 100%
Joseph Chico 63% WBAI, CCL, ISBA
Sheree Desiree Henry 100%
Dan Walsh 0% Recommend
Amanda Pillsbury 55% BWLA, CCBA, HLA, CCL, ISBA
Keely Patricia Hillison 82% CCBA, ISBA

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Deidre Baumann 100%
Maura McMahon Zeller 92% ISBA
Russell Hartigan 100%

K. SHEEHAN VACANCY

Jill Rose Quinn 100%
James Samuel Worley 75% CCBA, ISBA
Wendelin "Wend" DeLoach 0% Recommend

Cook County Subcircuit Candidates

FIRST SUBCIRCUIT - BROOKS VACANCY

Krista D. Butler 0%

FIRST SUBCIRCUIT - CRAWFORD VACANCY

Tyria B. Walton 100%

SECOND SUBCIRCUIT - "A" VACANCY

Sondra Nicole Denmark 100%
Felicia H. Simmons-Stovall 89% ISBA
Chelsey R. Robinson 91% ISBA

THIRD SUBCIRCUIT - FILAN VACANCY

Daniel Edward Maloney 100%

THIRD SUBCIRCUIT - FLYNN VACANCY

Lauren Brougham Glennon 78% WBAI, ISBA
David A. Bonoma 82% WBAI, ISBA
Regina Ann Mescall 90% CCBA
James John Knibbs 100%
Thomas J. Condon, Jr. 100%
Brad S. Telander 100%
Scott Edward Lipinski 50% DSL, HBA, WBAI, CCL

THIRD SUBCIRCUIT - MURPHY VACANCY

Erin Haggerty Antonietti 100%
Thomas G. O'Brien 0%

SIXTH SUBCIRCUIT - NEGA VACANCY

Jamie Guerra Dickler 100%
Anne Shaw 58% HLA, PRBA, WBAI, CCL, ISBA

SIXTH SUBCIRCUIT - PANTLE VACANCY

Eileen Marie O'Connor 100%
Cory Eli Oshita 56% BWLA, WBAI, CCL, ISBA
Anthony Lucafo 100%

SEVENTH SUBCIRCUIT - JACKSON VACANCY

Owen "Joe" Shelby 100%
Marcia O'Brien Conway 100%
Pamela Reaves-Harris 100%
Mable Taylor 0%
Kristen Marie Lyons 0%

EIGHTH SUBCIRCUIT - FLEMING VACANCY

Jonathan Clark Green 100%
Bradley R. Trowbridge 100%
Michael A. Forti 100%

NINTH SUBCIRCUIT - AXELROOD VACANCY

Pamela "Pam" Stratigakis 100%
Thomas M. Cushing 100%
Ira I. Silverstein 25% CCBA, HLA, PRBA, WBAI, CCL, ISBA
Timothy Patrick Carter 100%

NINTH SUBCIRCUIT - LUCKMAN VACANCY

Thomas Peter Kougiias 36% CCBA, DSL, HLA, LAGBAC, CCL, ISBA
Julie Bess Aimen 100%
Michael Alan Strom 100%
Basileios "Bill" Foutris 100%

TENTH SUBCIRCUIT - ALLEN VACANCY

John G. Mulroe 100%

TENTH SUBCIRCUIT - MCGING VACANCY

John Garrido 0%
Jon Stromsta 100%
Maire Aileen Dempsey 100%

TENTH SUBCIRCUIT - O'BRIEN VACANCY

Daniel Alexander Trevino 100%
John Hourihane 100%
Audrey Victoria Cosgrove 100%
Mary Catherine Marubio 100%
Liam Kelly 0%

TWELFTH SUBCIRCUIT - HANLON VACANCY

Patricia M. Fallon 100%
Howard J. Wise 89% PRBA
Carmine Trombetta 91% PRBA
Frank R. DiFranco 100%

THIRTEENTH SUBCIRCUIT - KULYS HOFFMAN VACANCY

Joe Gump 100%
Matt Flamm 100%
Michael Harry Minton 33% CCBA, DSL, WBAI, ISBA
Susanne Michelle Groebner 91% CCBA
Michael P. Gerber 100%
Angel Garcia 0%
Gary William Seyring 100%

FOURTEENTH SUBCIRCUIT - BETUCCI VACANCY

Gerado Triston, Jr. 100%
Steve Demitro 0%

FOURTEENTH SUBCIRCUIT - LACY VACANCY

Daniel O. Tiernan 100%
Perla Tirado 70% DSL, WBAI, ISBA

FIFTEENTH SUBCIRCUIT - GRIFFIN VACANCY

Heather Mulligan Begley 100%
Nichole C. Patton 100%

**Information provided by VoteForJudges.org and Chicago Appleeed. Evaluations based on the Alliance of Bar Associations for Judicial Screening & the Chicago Bar Association*



Graphic By: Tessa Gillett

Important Facts About DOVATO

This is only a brief summary of important information about DOVATO and does not replace talking to your healthcare provider about your condition and treatment.

What is the Most Important Information I Should Know about DOVATO?

If you have both human immunodeficiency virus-1 (HIV-1) and hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection, DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Resistant HBV infection.** Your healthcare provider will test you for HBV infection before you start treatment with DOVATO. If you have HIV-1 and hepatitis B, the hepatitis B virus can change (mutate) during your treatment with DOVATO and become harder to treat (resistant). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in people who have HIV-1 and HBV infection.
- **Worsening of HBV infection.** If you have HIV-1 and HBV infection, your HBV may get worse (flare-up) if you stop taking DOVATO. A “flare-up” is when your HBV infection suddenly returns in a worse way than before. Worsening liver disease can be serious and may lead to death.
 - Do not run out of DOVATO. Refill your prescription or talk to your healthcare provider before your DOVATO is all gone.
 - **Do not stop DOVATO without first talking to your healthcare provider.** If you stop taking DOVATO, your healthcare provider will need to check your health often and do blood tests regularly for several months to check your liver.

What is DOVATO?

DOVATO is a prescription medicine that is used without other antiretroviral medicines to treat HIV-1 infection in adults who have not received antiretroviral medicines in the past, **and** without known resistance to the medicines dolutegravir or lamivudine. HIV-1 is the virus that causes Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). It is not known if DOVATO is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take DOVATO?

Do Not Take DOVATO if You:

- have ever had an allergic reaction to a medicine that contains dolutegravir or lamivudine.
- take dofetilide.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before using DOVATO?

Tell your healthcare provider about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- have or have had liver problems, including hepatitis B or C infection.
- have kidney problems.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. One of the medicines in DOVATO (dolutegravir) may harm your unborn baby.
 - Your healthcare provider may prescribe a different medicine than DOVATO if you are planning to become pregnant or if pregnancy is confirmed in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.
 - If you can become pregnant, your healthcare provider will perform a pregnancy test before you start treatment with DOVATO.
 - If you can become pregnant, you should consistently use effective birth control (contraception) during treatment with DOVATO.
 - Tell your healthcare provider right away if you are planning to become pregnant, you become pregnant, or think you may be pregnant during treatment with DOVATO.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. **Do not breastfeed if you take DOVATO.**
 - You should not breastfeed if you have HIV-1 because of the risk of passing HIV-1 to your baby.
 - One of the medicines in DOVATO (lamivudine) passes into your breastmilk.
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby.

Tell your healthcare provider about all the medicines you take, including prescription and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements.

Some medicines interact with DOVATO. Keep a list of your medicines and show it to your healthcare provider and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

- You can ask your healthcare provider or pharmacist for a list of medicines that interact with DOVATO.
- **Do not start taking a new medicine without telling your healthcare provider.** Your healthcare provider can tell you if it is safe to take DOVATO with other medicines.

What are Possible Side Effects of DOVATO?

DOVATO can cause serious side effects, including:

- **Those in the “What is the Most Important Information I Should Know about DOVATO?” section.**
- **Allergic reactions. Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop a rash with DOVATO. Stop taking DOVATO and get medical help right away if you develop a rash with any of the following signs or symptoms:** fever; generally ill feeling; tiredness; muscle or joint aches; blisters or sores in mouth; blisters or peeling of the skin; redness or swelling of the eyes; swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue; problems breathing.
- **Liver problems.** People with a history of hepatitis B or C virus may have an increased risk of developing new or worsening changes in certain liver tests during treatment with DOVATO. Liver problems, including liver failure, have also happened in people without a history of liver disease or other risk factors. Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your liver.

Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following signs or symptoms of liver problems: your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice); dark or “tea-colored” urine; light-colored stools (bowel movements); nausea or vomiting; loss of appetite; and/or pain, aching, or tenderness on the right side of your stomach area.
- **Too much lactic acid in your blood (lactic acidosis).** Lactic acidosis is a serious medical emergency that can lead to death. **Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the following symptoms that could be signs of lactic acidosis:** feel very weak or tired; unusual (not normal) muscle pain; trouble breathing; stomach pain with nausea and vomiting; feel cold, especially in your arms and legs; feel dizzy or lightheaded; and/or a fast or irregular heartbeat.
- **Lactic acidosis can also lead to severe liver problems,** which can lead to death. Your liver may become large (hepatomegaly) and you may develop fat in your liver (steatosis). **Tell your healthcare provider right away if you get any of the signs or symptoms of liver problems which are listed above under “Liver problems.” You may be more likely to get lactic acidosis or severe liver problems if you are female or very overweight (obese).**

ViiVConnect

For information on access and coverage to help you get your prescribed ViiV Healthcare medications
Insured • Underinsured • Uninsured



1-844-588-3288 (toll free)
Monday-Friday, 8AM-11PM (ET)



www.viivconnect.com



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Learn more about
Leo and DOVATO
at DOVATO.com

SO MUCH GOES INTO WHO I AM

HIV MEDICINE IS ONE PART OF IT.

Reasons to ask your doctor about DOVATO:



DOVATO can help you reach and then stay undetectable* with just 2 medicines in 1 pill. That means fewer medicines[†] in your body while taking DOVATO



You can take it any time of day with or without food (around the same time each day)—giving you flexibility

DOVATO is a once-a-day complete treatment for adults who are new to HIV-1 medicine.

Results may vary.

*Undetectable means reducing the HIV in your blood to very low levels (less than 50 copies per mL).

[†]As compared with 3-drug regimens.

 **Dovato**
dolutegravir 50 mg/
lamivudine 300 mg tablets

What are Possible Side Effects of DOVATO (cont'd)?

- **Changes in your immune system (Immune Reconstitution Syndrome)** can happen when you start taking HIV-1 medicines. Your immune system may get stronger and begin to fight infections that have been hidden in your body for a long time. Tell your healthcare provider right away if you start having new symptoms after you start taking DOVATO.
- **The most common side effects of DOVATO include:** headache; diarrhea; nausea; trouble sleeping; and tiredness.

These are not all the possible side effects of DOVATO. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Where Can I Find More Information?

- Talk to your healthcare provider or pharmacist.
- Go to DOVATO.com or call 1-877-844-8872, where you can also get FDA-approved labeling.

October 2019 DVT:2PI-2PIL

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LEO⁺

Living with HIV

[†]Compensated by ViiV Healthcare

Could DOVATO be right for you? Ask your doctor today.

Capital *of the* midwest

Is Chicago an island of cosmopolitanism in a sea of rural, inexpensive, stultifying friendliness?

By **PETE SAUNDERS**

You've done this. You've flown out of O'Hare or Midway, and you've seen the towers of the Loop in the distance. You've seen the almost endless flatlands beneath, covered with sprawling subdivisions that slowly transform from small lots to large lots to farms. Heading west, the farmland becomes ranchland and later the Rocky Mountains. If you're going south, you see the farmland touch the Appalachian foothills; those heading north see the farms become vast, rolling forests. Travelers heading east can see the expanse of Lake Michigan give way to more farmland, then mountains, then urban areas. In all directions, you can sense that Chicago is intimately connected to its midwestern hinterlands, a metropolis on the prairie.

Or is it?

WBEZ's *Curious City* regularly researches questions asked by listeners. One recent segment investigated whether Chicagoans are true midwesterners. Many people on the street almost reflexively said no. Chicago's urban, not rural; it's no longer dominated by manufacturing; it's progressive, not provincial; as a global city, Chicago has more in common with New York than it does with Des Moines, Iowa, or even Decatur, Illinois. These people believe that the Windy City is an island of cosmopolitanism in a sea of rural, inexpensive, stultifying friendliness.

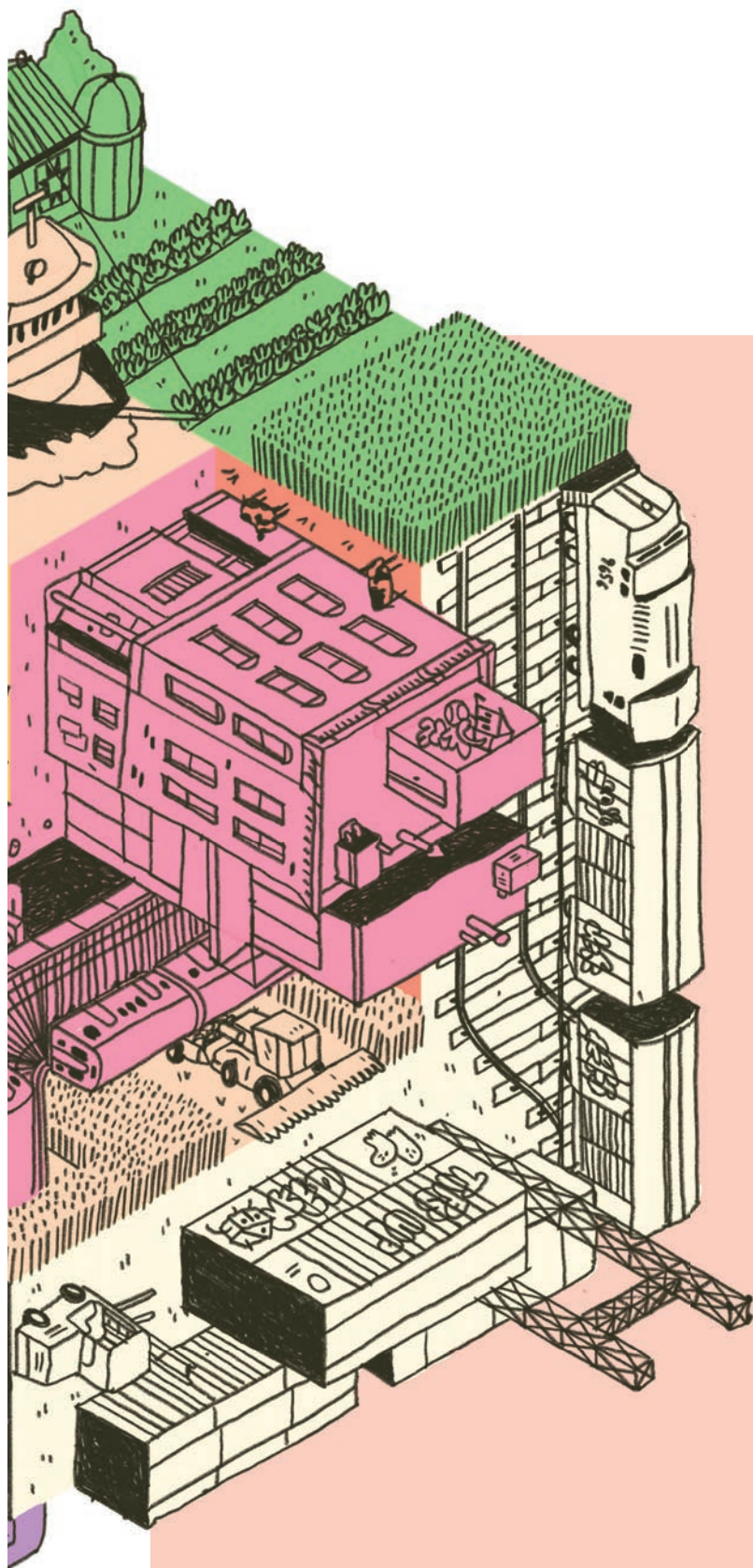
The commenters weren't entirely wrong. Chicago naturally shares a lot with our nation's largest cities. However, Chicago is as midwestern as the corn that surrounds it. Even more, it's the capital of the region. And we should embrace it.

It was clear that the Chicagoans who responded in this way to the question were likely making a commentary on the midwest in social, cultural, and value terms. To them, "midwest" evokes images of pastoral and rustic agricultural land dotted with small towns, or perhaps the postindustrial distressed larger cities in the region.

Yes, Chicago has diverged significantly from its troubled rust belt city peers lining the Great Lakes, and the small and midsize communities scattered from Ohio to the Great Plains. Chicago has made a pretty huge transition from its earlier position as a manufacturing behemoth to top-tier global city that is among the world's leaders in finance, food processing, health care, professional services, and logistics. With 36 of the Fortune 500 corporations headquartered in our metro area, led by pharmacy retailer Walgreens, airplane manufacturer Boeing, and food processing giant Archer Daniels Midland, the economy has significantly diversified over the last 40 years or so.

Other cities in the midwest haven't been as successful in the transition. Pittsburgh (technically not part of the midwest as it sits





✍ BOBBY SIMS

in the mid-Atlantic state of Pennsylvania, but often included in the region because of its rust belt manufacturing bona fides) may be the only other large metro in the region that has rebounded as well as Chicago. Indianapolis and Columbus are midwestern cities that have grown significantly over the last 40 years, but they were never burdened with the loss of an extensive manufacturing economy. As state capitals and homes to flagship universities, they've relied on a sun-belt-like approach to growth, promoting business friendliness and affordability. Indianapolis's focus on low taxes and inexpensive quality of life is a big part of its appeal. Large cities like Buffalo (see Pittsburgh), Cleveland, Detroit, Saint Louis, and Milwaukee have recovered from manufacturing's collapse, but not to the extent witnessed in Chicago.

But if you use "midwest" as a cultural identifier, you're probably not thinking about our large cities. You're probably thinking of our many midsize and small cities and the rural areas that have continued to struggle.

A recent study by the Economic Innovation Group compared economic and quality of life characteristics for several midsize midwestern metros, comparing South Bend, Indiana (home to former Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg, who served as mayor from 2012 to 2020), and other similarly sized metros in the region with other metros throughout the country, examining the period between 2007 and 2016. South Bend, Grand Rapids, and Fort Wayne were the only metros that saw slight improvements in their indicators (among others, educational attainment and median household income) over the period; other cities like Toledo, Racine, and Peoria continued a downward slide that began well before the Great Recession. From the report's conclusion: "Modest recoveries from the Great Recession pale in comparison to the forceful rebounds experienced across much of the rest of the country."

The *Curious City* piece spoke with Richard Longworth, author of *Caught in the Middle: America's Heartland in the Age of Globalism*, a great book about economic decline in the midwest. He said Chicago's economy used to be intimately tied to midwestern manufacturing and agriculture. The midwest's small city manufacturers once sent products to Chicago for distribution across the nation. Farmers determined crop prices based on futures from the Chicago Board of Trade. The midwest's entire economy went through Chicago, but globalization severed that tie.

But has Chicago really diverged—and recovered—to the extent that it's completely shed its manufacturing legacy? You can stand in parts of Chicago and say it definitely has. You can stand in other parts of Chicago and say it absolutely has not.

Chicago's social and economic stratification can be considered a characteristic of its midwestern-ness.

Some years ago on my blog and later on Twitter, I made a comment that I saw Chicago's social and economic makeup being "one-third San Francisco and two-thirds Detroit." That is, one-third of Chicago is a booming global city, and that the balance is still a struggling, not-fully-recovered rust belt relic. I received a lot of pushback from Chicagoans when I made that statement. I still stand by it.

This becomes clear when you analyze Chicago via its 77 community areas, defined by University of Chicago researchers in the 1920s. Researchers of all stripes have been collecting and analyzing socioeconomic data on the city using these areas since at least 1930. This method provides great historical data on the communities that make up the city—and it's a resource few cities in America enjoy.

As a quintessential "city of neighborhoods," Chicago is known for having neighborhood types that span the social and economic spectrum. There are dense, walkable, and affluent areas concentrated on the city's north lakefront—think Lincoln Park, Lakeview, and Edgewater—and Loop. There are areas of single family homes and bungalows with solidly middle-class and working-class residents in much of the northwest and southwest sides: Jefferson Park, Garfield Ridge, and Beverly come to mind. There are also the west and south sides of the city, like Austin or Englewood, areas that have historically lagged in economic success relative to the rest of the city.

Take a slice of Chicago that extends from the northern edge at Rogers Park to the Near South Side, including McCormick Place and the surrounding area. Head inland from the lake towards the Chicago River, and include neighborhoods like Logan Square, Wicker Park/Bucktown, the Near West Side, Pilsen, Bridgeport, and Chinatown. That can be considered Chicago's Booming Bubble. The rest of the city lies outside of that bubble in many ways, and data bears that out.

I collected data on Chicago at the community area level to see how the Booming Bubble compares with the balance of the city, using



OFFICIAL INFORMATION REGARDING APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

I.B.E.W. Local 134 and the Electrical Contractors' Association sponsor apprenticeship programs in Cook County, Illinois through the Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Trust (EJATT). EJATT has permission from the U.S. Department of Labor to open a registration for new applicants for its Communications Program. For more information on this program, please go to our website at www.ejatt.com.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration for the
Communications Program
will take place at the

IBEW-NECA Technical Institute
6201 W. 115th Street, Alsip, Illinois

on the following dates and times

Monday, March 23, 2020 through Friday, April 3, 2020
9:00 A.M. until 11:00 A.M.

All applicants must report in person and bring the following documents in order to register:

1. Your valid Driver's License.
2. Your original Social Security Card.

You must provide **copies** of the following documents that will be kept by EJATT (No documents will be copied in our office or returned to you):

1. A \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee (Money Order only made payable to EJATT).
2. To prove employment eligibility you must provide a copy of your U.S. Birth Certificate, U.S. Passport, Certificate of U.S. Citizenship or Naturalization, or Permanent Resident Alien Card. (Minimum age of 17 at registration).
3. To prove High School Graduation (HS), you must provide a copy of your HS transcript (official or unofficial with a graduation date posted), or a copy of a HS Diploma, or GED Certificate. College transcripts do not satisfy this requirement. HS seniors in their last semester prior to graduation may register with acceptance contingent upon graduation.
4. To prove one full year of HS level Algebra with a grade of at least "C" or better, or one post HS level Algebra course or higher level course with a grade of at least "C" or better, you must provide a copy of a transcript. Note: The GED Math Certification does not satisfy this requirement.

Upon an offer of apprenticeship, you must be able to demonstrate that you can perform the essential functions of an apprentice electrician with or without a reasonable accommodation. In addition, a drug screen, physical exam, and background check will be required.

EJATT will not discriminate against apprenticeship applicants or apprentices based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), sexual orientation, genetic information, or because they are an individual with a disability or a person 40 years old or older. The EJATT will take affirmative action to provide equal opportunity in apprenticeship and will operate the apprenticeship program as required under Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 30."

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Chicago is
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recovered rust
belt relic.
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continued from 13

U.S. Census American Community Survey data from 2017. A distinct picture emerges. Just under 1 million of the city's 2.7 million residents live in the Booming Bubble, more than one-third of the city's inhabitants in about one-fifth of the city's land area. On a per-square-mile basis, population in the Booming Bubble exceeds 20,000 per square mile, making it one of the densest areas in the nation outside of New York City. (New York's density is nearly 28,000 per square mile, while Manhattan alone is an astounding 71,000 per square mile.) Outside of the Bubble, Chicago's density is about 9,800 per square mile—similar to Los Angeles (8,500).

Demographically, the Booming Bubble differs from the rest of the city. Whites make up 56 percent of residents inside the Bubble; Latinos comprise 18 percent, Blacks and Asians represent around 12 percent each. That makeup is quite different outside the Bubble: Blacks make up 40 percent of the population, Latinos 35 percent, whites 20 percent, and Asians 3 percent.

The most significant divergence between the Booming Bubble and the balance of the city might be in terms of median household income. In 2017 the median household income within the Bubble was \$68,186, nearly equal to that of the metro area overall and actually higher (when adjusted for cost of living) than for all of San Francisco. Beyond the Bubble, the median household income is \$43,946, well below the metro area's \$68,403 median household income.

How does the Booming Bubble compare with the nation's superstar cities? Very well. The Booming Bubble's population, land area, and high density are indeed comparable to San Francisco; the Bubble area has 960,000 residents within its 48 square miles, while San Francisco overall has 880,000 residents in its 46-square-mile span. The Booming Bubble's demographic profile is quite similar to Manhattan, which has slightly fewer whites (47 percent to the Bubble's 56 percent) and more Latinos (26 percent to the Bubble's 18 percent).

In terms of educational attainment, the Booming Bubble again compares very favorably with the superstar cities. In 2017, 57 percent of adults age 25 and up in the Booming Bubble had a bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree. That's equal to what's found in San Francisco and Washington, D.C. (57 percent), and only slightly behind that of

Seattle and Manhattan (61 percent).

On a cost-of-living adjusted basis, the Bubble's median household income is equivalent to San Francisco; the 2017 San Francisco median household income of \$110,816 equals \$67,509 in Chicago, just slightly below the Bubble's \$68,186. The same goes for Seattle, where its \$86,822 median household income adjusts to \$66,396 in Chicago.

Bottom line: Chicago's Booming Bubble does indeed live, work, earn, and spend very much like our nation's most successful large cities.

If Chicago has a Booming Bubble, then by definition there's an area that's . . . not. How does the rest of the city compare with other midwest or rust belt cities? Again, very well, but its sheer size makes it difficult to make direct comparisons. However, trends emerge. The rest of the city beyond the Bubble holds nearly 1.8 million residents within 179 square miles, slightly bigger than Philadelphia (1.6 million, 140 square miles). In fact, it would

take multiple versions of rust belt cities to equal beyond-the-Bubble Chicago in size—it's more than twice the size of Detroit, three times larger than Baltimore, and nearly five times larger than Cleveland.

Demographically, the beyond-the-Bubble area makeup is more like Baltimore than the nearby Booming Bubble. In Chicago people of color make up 45 percent of residents within the Bubble, but 75 percent beyond it, comparable to the 73 percent witnessed in Baltimore. The Chicago city balance has a higher minority population percentage than Cleveland (67 percent), Philadelphia and Milwaukee (65 percent), and Saint Louis (56 percent).

Educational attainment in the rest of Chicago mirrors that of fellow rust belt cities. About 27 percent of beyond-the-Bubble Chicagoans age 25 and up have bachelor's, graduate, or professional degrees, similar to Baltimore (30 percent) and Philadelphia (28 percent). The Chicago balance figure does exceed that for Cleveland (17 percent) and Detroit (15 percent).

As you might guess, the median household incomes of not-Bubble Chicago and rust belt cities compare favorably as well. The \$43,946 median household income for beyond-the-Bubble Chicago is again comparable to Philadelphia (\$43,861), yet is bested by Saint Louis (\$57,602), Baltimore (\$50,888), and Milwaukee (\$49,287).

Maybe Chicago is best understood as Philadelphia, with Manhattan grafted on.

This doesn't diminish Chicago's midwestern character; it enhances it. Despite its attempts to socially and culturally detach itself from its midwestern peers, particularly among Great Lakes cities, it still has plenty in common with them. Scratch the surface and you can see that Chicago is still defined by the positive traits associated with the midwest—the accent, the friendliness, a love of heaping portions of food. Chicago's midwestern-ness is also defined in not-so-positive midwestern traits—provincialism, relatively closed and hierarchical business and social networks, extreme segregation. The city shares these

traits with its rust belt peers like Detroit and Cleveland, and with rural Iowa and Indiana too.

What Chicago can do to transform itself, and the region it comes from, is to once again embrace its role as the economic and cultural leader of the midwest. In the strictest sense, the 11 states of the midwest have nearly 57 million residents. If western New York, western Pennsylvania, and the Kentucky counties bordering the Ohio River are added, all areas that have more-than-passing similarities with the rest of the midwest, that number swells to more than 65 million. Chicago remains the economic and cultural hub sitting at the center of 20 percent of the nation's population. Few cities have dominion over a region like Chicago has over the midwest. Chicago should strengthen its ties to its hinterlands and contribute to their comeback, not retreat from it. Doing otherwise would simply mean Chicago is denying its essence. **FI**

 @petesaunders3



REMEMBER, IT'S A GAME OF CHANCE

Players of Illinois Lottery games win prizes every day, but a purchase does not guarantee a win. It is important for players to know the odds of the games they play. Odds reflect the likelihood of a particular outcome happening. For example, an instant ticket with overall odds of 1 in 3 is more likely to win than a ticket with 1 in 4 overall odds.

Let's use a deck of playing card as an example to explain how odds work. A deck of cards has a total of 52 cards with 13 cards for each suit (i.e., hearts, spades, diamonds, and clubs). To calculate the overall odds of drawing a heart from the deck, an individual would divide the 13 cards that are hearts by the 52 total cards in the deck to get 25% - or 1 in 4.

This means that the odds of picking a heart is 1 in 4 cards drawn, but such odds do not guarantee that a person who draws four cards from a deck of 52 cards will draw a heart. Depending on the order of the cards, a player will draw anywhere between zero and four hearts. It is possible to draw zero hearts because there are 39 cards in the deck that are not hearts.

To learn about the overall odds of each Illinois Lottery game, please visit [IllinoisLottery.com/games-hub](https://www.illinoislottery.com/games-hub)



 Be Smart, Play Smart® Must be 18 or older to play.



Caleb Hearon GABY DIEMEKE

COMEDY

Gossiping with Caleb Hearon

The comedian on his style, inspiration, and the Chicago comedy scene.

By **JON DALE**

In between acts at his comedy variety show, *Caleb Says Things with Friends*, Caleb Hearon takes a seat. “Y’know, this is my show. I could just sit here and talk about me for the next hour,” he says. “I won’t though . . . unless?” He takes a pause, raising his eyebrows and theatrically looking around the room, as if hoping someone will let him do it. “Haha, yeah, that’d be crazy,” he continues, “. . . right?” Pausing again, Caleb covers the microphone with his hand, scanning the crowd, waiting for a cheer. “If anyone shouted anything at all, I’d keep going,” he laughs.

The 25-year-old Missouri native is a gifted storyteller with spot-on timing and the ability to create punchlines about anything. He’s got a commanding presence on stage, compelling and energetic, as he walks the audience through the tiny moments of embarrassment involved in his most recent hookup, or explains why

politicians shouldn’t be cool or hot. He’s booked roles on *Work in Progress* and *Fargo*, has a very funny Twitter account with more than 75,000 followers, and has toured his shows across the country.

I sat down to talk with Caleb about *Roseanne*, his Intro to Judaism class, and the benefits of gossip.

Did you watch TV shows that represented the south growing up?

Well a lot of people don’t consider Missouri the south. I would consider myself midwestern. My favorite TV show growing up was *Roseanne*, and I stand by that. I don’t stand by *Roseanne* herself, she’s lost it. That show growing up was so cool and important to me, they just had queer people in the middle of nowhere, and they were picked on a little bit, but only in a loving way. They were accepted, there were

multiple queer characters, and it was the only thing I saw in TV or movies that looked like the life we were living besides *Erin Brockovich*, and even that was just one movie, and that’s really more a story about how corporations kill people.

What did you think of Chicago growing up? Was it the place to go? Was it at all on your radar?

I mean, my only relation to Chicago was when it was mentioned in *Roseanne*, because they were close. I was always thinking of New York. It was always the place. Especially growing up closeted, I was like, “You gotta go to New York. That’s where people are gay, people get to be gay in New York.” So I was always thinking of New York, and then as I got older and got really into comedy, I was still thinking New York, it’s where *Saturday Night Live* is, it’s where everything happens, and I was fully gonna move. I was gonna move there after school, and then a few guys from my college improv team were like, “We should go to Chicago,” and I was like, “Yeah, I guess everyone I like did spend some time there doing comedy.” So I said, “Sure, I’ll go to Chicago.” And it was the best decision I ever made.

You’ve been here for almost three years now. How has your relationship with the city changed?

The biggest change is that people are asking me what I want now. No one cared what I wanted when I moved here. I think comedians in Chicago, our drive is to pitch ourselves as everything. We’re stand-ups, we’re improvisers, we’re actors, we’re on screen, we’re on stage, you have to pitch yourself as everything because there’s no legitimately big industry here. There’s great shows that come through town, there’s amazing casting agencies, there’s Second City, but in terms of the coasts, the big money, out there you have to narrow it down and be like, “Here’s what I do.” When you start looking at going out there, the question becomes “What do you want?” When you move to Chicago, you tell everyone you want everything just so you can get anything.

People are asking me a lot right now, “Where do you see yourself in five years” or “What do you want, what’s your dream?” And I feel like I’m supposed to say *SNL*, or supposed to say a sitcom in my name, or a feature film about this one pivotal experience that I had. But I don’t know, I want to make things with people I like. Long term, I’d love to have enough of what-

ever I need to help people I believe in make their stuff. Money, resources, name recognition, whatever it takes for me to say, “Here are the people I love in Chicago and they want to make this thing.”

You work a lot with the comedian Holmes Holmes, and it’s so fun to watch the two of you together onstage.

Holmes works from a pretty erratic, frenetic energy, she’s like the energizer bunny, she’s on a different beat. I feel like I’m more contained, I’m not capable of the things she is. I sit on the stool and whisper. She’s bouncy. But it’s fun hosting with her, because we’re different energies but have the same idea of how to move the show along.

I love stool-based comedy. I was glad to see you sitting.

I like it a lot, too, and I didn’t allow myself to physically talk and sit for so long because Maron did it, and I would watch him do stand-up and be like, “Fuck, now he owns stools!” But also he owns a type of comedy that is genuinely how I like to perform. I like to sit, I like to talk, I like to feel comfortable with the audience. For a long time I fought that, because I was like, “Someone is already doing that,” but that’s stupid. You gotta do your thing.

There’s a story you told about dating at your show *Caleb Says Things with Friends* that I loved so much.

Gay people are interesting. I think I thought, growing up, that coming out would be a giant party, just spending a bunch of time with very interesting, intellectual people, and of course I would be one of those people by virtue of coming out. And then you realize that a lot of gay people are just like a lot of people of any other sexuality, which is to say they’re boring, and not fully realized, and that you also are one of those people. Coming out doesn’t absolve you of the work of coming of age, of figuring yourself out.

The stories you tell about hooking up are so funny because there seems to be so much stress involved in how you process it happening.

Sex is embarrassing! Everyone should be mortified that they’re doing it.

I heard on a podcast you said you took an Intro to Judaism class at a synagogue in Chicago. What first hooked you?



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ARTS & CULTURE


continued from 16

I have no plans to convert, but I do believe that to be liberal and Jewish is correct. Every Jewish person I've met is so cool. The biggest thing about Judaism as a faith to me is the insistence on refusing certainty and answers. My favorite part of my Intro to Judaism class was the old Catholic woman who took it to disprove it. Her name is Mary, she takes it regularly, and everyone is cool with it. Everyone's like, "Mary's here to talk about Catholicism," and they'd relegate a little time at the end of the class for her to talk about it. It was the funniest thing in the world to me, but she was based in so much love and respect, she'd be like, "I love being here, I love everyone here," but every once in a while she'd be like, "In my church . . ." And they'd be like, "That's crazy, Mary." I think about her, I don't know, five-six times a day.

One thing I've noticed in your videos on Twitter is gossip, from your Hogwarts video to your Jonathan series. Is gossip a space that you feel is your wheelhouse?

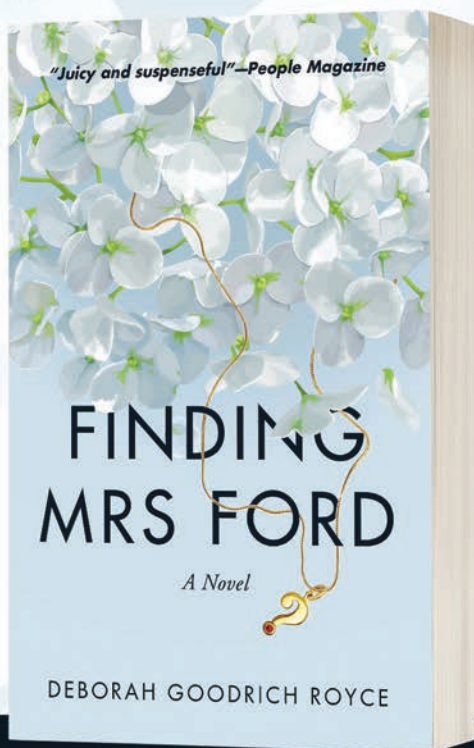
Well I think people are their truest and most excited selves when they're talking about oth-

ers. And I think the most fun to me in comedy is finding a little truth in how people communicate. And gossip is when people are doing those little things. It's for some reason so subversive, it's so taboo, we fight being people who gossip, we fight being people who talk about others, we fight negativity, we'll be like, "I hate to talk about this person, but . . ." and it's like why! Talk!

I mean I've been on the receiving end of texts about me, from friends that meant to send it to someone else. It's a thing that happens. And I love it. I mean, it was hurtful. It's good that you're talking about me, because it means you don't hate me so much that you're gonna stop being my friend. You hated something I did and you care about me enough to get over it with someone else so we can hang out again next week. That to me is wonderful. I think gossip is so good and important and fun. I think I like to play with it so much because everyone loves it, a lot of people pretend not to, which is even funnier, and it's just the best way to explore stories. 

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WOMEN
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Poets focus on deliberateness, typing with their pointer fingers and the occasional middle finger only. © JUSTIN C. STALEY

LIT

Submarine kangaroos and space pirate birthday parties

An afternoon with Poems While You Wait

By JUSTIN C. STALEY

It's balmy in the Children's Garden of the Garfield Park Conservatory, a welcome respite from the blustery chill of winter. It's Sweet Saturday, so visitors can sample coffee beans, lemon, papaya, and prickly pear, among other edible treats, and there's the tumult of children playing.

Amidst the cacophony of children at work, there's another form of clatter at the back of the garden: the unmistakable sound of typewriter keys being punched, of carriage returns being zinged.

I'm facing six poets behind six typewriters

sitting at a long table covered in black cloth. Beside their typewriters are an array of notepads. They're busy punching keys, staring at the tiny sheets of paper rolled between the platen and the paper bail, some blank, some half-filled, some waiting for just one more line.

Most of the poets type with their pointer fingers and the occasional middle finger only, an emphasis not on speed, but on deliberateness.

There's yelling and the clanging of the metal grating where children play above us and wait for a twisted slide that empties right by the poets' table. At one point an ant crawls

across the spare topic list behind the table. A few spots of crumbled earth land on my notebook. The occasional drip of water or flower bud falls from above. The distant rolling of the el shudders in the background.

And this is all in just the first five minutes.

I settle in and get ready to watch the poets from Poems While You Wait.

Started in 2011 by Dave Landsberger, Kathleen Rooney, and Eric Plattner, Poems While You Wait now has two dozen poets in its stable and has become a staple of Chicago events and locales. Perhaps you've seen them at the Field Museum or the Adler; the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum or the Chicago Symphony Orchestra; a summer festival, a street market, a book fair, a library, a theater, even a wedding.

It's simple: Give them a topic and \$5 and come back in a quarter hour to get a fresh, hot-off-the-press poem written just for you. A smudge, an uncorrectable error, it's part of the authenticity.

Normally the money goes to Rose Metal Press, a nonprofit literary publisher started by Rooney and Abigail Beckel, but because the museum is free on this day, so are the poems.

People walk by and ask: *How does it work? Are you volunteers? Do I write the poem or do you?*

The poets explain the process—often it's explained by Rooney herself. Once it's been established who does what, the person gives the poet a topic: family, coffee, palm trees, emergency medicine. With the younger crowd there's usually some negotiation. "What do you want a poem about?" a parent will ask, and their child will shrug or blush or whisper something. It's one poem per household, so siblings will often have to agree to a subject; or, because a poet's creativity knows no bounds, multiple topics can be lumped together like scoops of ice cream. What does a poem about submarine kangaroos sound like? What about tacos and cats? A space pirate birthday party? No topic is too weird.

The group's objective is to provide patrons with a "magical, unexpected, unpretentious, and decontextualized encounter with poetry."

I recall the Czech poet Miroslav Holub's affirmation that "there is poetry in everything. That is the greatest argument against poetry."

There are other arguments against poetry, too: it's ambiguous, inaccessible, magnilo-

quent (whatever that means); our attention spans aren't built anymore for the commitment and concentration it requires. Or so the arguments go. We see and feel the poetry of the world; we're in love with the poetic, but we're afraid of the poem.

This chasm is precisely what Poems While You Wait aims to bridge, to coax the public into remembering what it's like to enjoy reading poems, to revel in language and the way someone sees the world, even if only for a few dozen seconds.

"I don't care about being corny: it's magic," Rooney says. "Everybody who came here today is like, 'I'm going to go to the conservatory, I'm going to look at plants,' and that's already kind of magical. But then you come here looking at plants and on top of that suddenly you can walk up to a poet, and be like, 'Write me a poem about plants.' And that suddenly memorializes and activates and alters the great moment you already came out to have, and I think there's some kind of alchemy to that."

There's something generous and democratic about Poems While You Wait: there are no agents, no editors, no journals, no publishers. There is only the writer and the reader. It is, according to Plattner, a "total demystification" of poetry and the poem, even of art: "It's not this hermit sitting alone staring down into this dark hole of poetic bullshit."

The poets occasionally stop to snack and apply hand sanitizer. At one point a poet's finger starts to bleed (metaphor!). Antibiotic ointment is applied, followed by a Band-Aid, and the poet starts typing again. The finger will heal, but the poem cannot wait.

The clamor of children is noticeably less intense and the list of topics dwindles to nothing. The last wave of commissioners comes by to pick up their poems. The poets stand up, stretch, pack up their typewriters. Eighty-three poems today.

Someone asks the poet to read her poem aloud to him: "I want to hear it in your voice."

As they walk away, twin sisters pantomime their poem's lines about how twins look at each other.

A patron pulls a poet aside to talk jazz.

On the table sit unclaimed poems, common at a free event, according to Plattner. They're orphaned children, writing sent into the void, like most writing. They're also a reminder of what makes Poems While You Wait special: a word, a line, an answer that's waiting for someone to ask. **R**

ARTIST, WRITER, performer?

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ARTS & CULTURE

RR "VAGINAL DAVIS: THE WHITE TO BE ANGRY"

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Vaginal Davis, *The White to Be Angry*, 1999. © THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO © VAGINAL DAVIS

VISUAL ARTS

Vaginal Davis steps into the mainstream

Nearly five decades after her career began, the pioneer performance artist, musician, and activist is now a permanent fixture at the Art Institute.

BY S. NICOLE LANE

The goddess of queer punk Vaginal Davis burst onto the Los Angeles performance scene in the late 1970s as the front woman for the art-punk band Afro Sisters, then became an integral influence in drag performance and a matriarch for performance artists. Born intersex during a time when doctors performed medical interventions in order to assign gender, Davis's mother refused. While her birth certificate stated male, her family used she/her pronouns. Honing in on her German, Jewish, Mexican, and French-creole heritage, she would go on to create fictional characters that were "multiracial and maxi-gendered."

Davis has played a pivotal role in critiquing politics, white supremacy, identity, and sexuality. In her 1999 video piece, *The White to be Angry*, Davis is particularly focused on these themes. The 19-minute capsule of found footage, 90s commercials, and montages of televangelist Robert Tilton is on view in the modern wing of the Art Institute of Chicago. The video is set to a soundtrack by Davis's band Pedro, Muriel & Esther (PME), which recorded their first full-length album, also titled *The White to be Angry*, in the mid-90s in Chicago. While in PME, Davis performed as Clarence, a white supremacist

from Idaho. She even wore a ZZ Top beard.

Davis's first solo exhibition didn't happen until 2012 and commercial gallery representation didn't open up for the artist until 2013. The Art Institute of Chicago is the first museum to collect Davis's video work in a permanent collection. Davis told *Dazed* in a recent interview, "For someone who's sort of an outsider artist . . . well, it's a big deal for somebody like me. A funky, funky person like me!"

Davis was a member of the subculture group Homocore, which hosted a queer punk night in the mid-90s that influenced the Riot Grrrl movement and featured bands including Sleater-Kinney, Los Crudos, Tribe 8, Bikini Kill, the Butchies, and more. The decade-long monthly queer night expanded to cities like Detroit, Minneapolis, and New York, and finally ended with Le Tigre's Chicago debut in 2000. Davis was closely tied to the Queercore zine movement, where she published *Fertile La Toyah Jackson* from 1982 to 1991, which she turned into a video performance project. At Homocore events, Davis would share zines, present lo-fi films, and perform poetry.

The White to be Angry, shot on a Hi8 camcorder with virtually no budget, acts as a visual album for PME, following songs that reference

directors (Woody Allen, Bruce LaBruce, and Clive Barker). Each segment includes an original song and footage that centers around a skinhead grappling with his sexuality, resulting in violent hate crimes. The lo-fi video piece feels especially current. We are experiencing a flare under the current cheese-puff administration similar to the queer punk revolution that sparked fire during the Reagan era. Featuring scenes of BDSM, violence, blow jobs, religion, and white supremacy, Davis incorporates dark humor to explicate complex themes still relevant to history and society. The film focuses on the othering of people and how society ruminates on that hatred until it explodes with dangerous and destructive violence.

Davis has always fit in-between the punk and the drag scenes. "Gay drag queens hated me," she famously told José Esteban Muñoz in the book *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*. "They didn't understand it. I wasn't really trying to alter myself to look like a real woman. I didn't wear false eyelashes or fake breasts. It wasn't about the realness of traditional drag—the perfect flawless makeup. I just put on a little lipstick, a little eyeshadow and a wig and went there." Muñoz, a queer writer and critic, was the first to coin the term "terrorist drag," which was used to describe Davis's work in particular. Davis focuses on the repulsive, the undesirable, the revolting reality of society and mirrors that in her performances as well.

Viewers of *The White to be Angry* are meant to feel discomfort, either from their own prejudices or the abhorrent honesty portrayed in the scenes. Images with Confederate flags, discussions using intolerant racist language, and crimes against the LGBTQ community are thrust onto the viewer. A young mother sitting next to me in the gallery softly left the space with her stroller midway through the video. A man giving a blow job flashed across the screen as she rounded the corner towards the exit. The couple to my left shifted uncomfortably in their seats. The roughness in the film is contextual but also applies to scenes cut from cable television coupled with the editing style that give this piece a "home project" feel that celebrates the weird, perverse, DIY, and outsider aesthetics. Davis's voice, presence, and art have the unwavering power of remaining relevant for nearly five decades. Being born in the underground clubs of LA and traversing esteemed museums across the globe, Davis has proven that being your bona fide self is still the most punk rock thing you can do.

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Stop Playing Games Babes Only Comedy Show

Sarah Alo hosts this variety show with comedy from Adrienne Brandyburg, Hannah Murphy, and Meg Indurti plus music by Cami Soul and Sun Blvd. Donations from the night will benefit Salt & Light Coalition. [Mon 3/9, 8 PM, Emporium Wicker Park, 1366 N. Milwaukee, facebook.com/babesonlyinfo, FREE](#)

DANCE

Sweet Tap Chicago

Chicago Tap Theatre celebrates Chicago musicians in this show, accompanied by a live jazz sextet featuring rapper-singer-host Taylor Mallory and JC Brooks. Some of the musicians covered include Chaka Khan, Curtis Mayfield, and the Smashing Pumpkins. [Sun 3/8, 2 and 5 PM, Mayne Stage, 1328 W. Morse, chicagotaptheatre.com, \\$30-\\$40.](#)

LIT

Hyde Park's Bonnie & Clyde

Larry Baran will tell the story of his mother, Flo Baran, who ived in Hyde Park under a life of crime, and how it all came to an end. Books of *The Housewife Loved a Bandit* will be on sale. [Sat 3/6, 2-4 PM, Hyde Park Historical Society, 5529](#)

[S. Lake Park, hydeparkhistory.org, FREE](#)

Jacob Tobia

The author celebrates their new book, *Sissy: A Coming-of-Gender Story*, with a reading and book signing. Registration for this event is required. [Thu 3/5, 7 PM, Women & Children First, 5233 N. Clark, womenandchildrenfirst.com, FREE](#)

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VISUAL ARTS

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"The Funk Machine"

This group exhibition looks at 17 Midwest artists who explore all forms of media—from painting to sculpture. [Opening reception Fri 3/6, 6-10 PM, 3/6-5/10, Mon-Sat 11 AM-8 PM, Sun 11 AM-7 PM, Jackson Junge Gallery, 1389 N. Milwaukee, j2gallery.com, FREE](#)

"Honey & Smoke"

David Heo present his exhibition focusing on a series of paintings that represent bars and nightclubs. [Opening reception 3/7, 6-9 PM, 3/7-3/28, Tue-Sat 11 AM-6 PM, Sun-Mon by appointment, Vertical Gallery, 1016 N. Western, verticalgallery.com, FREE](#)



Day of Absence • JAZMYNE FOUNTAIN

REVIEW

One joke, two audiences

Congo Square's *Day of Absence* merits historic interest, but could use sharper satirical chops.

By KELLY KLEIMAN

Day of Absence is a show with one joke and two audiences. The joke is revealed in the title: one day, all the people of color disappear from a Southern town. This provides an occasion for some rather gentle satire of

DAY OF ABSENCE

Through 3/22: Fri 8 PM, Sat 3 and 8 PM, Sun 3 PM, Victory Gardens Theater, 2433 N. Lincoln, 773-871-3000, victorygardens.org, \$35, \$35 students and seniors.

white people's helplessness and cluelessness once they lose their entire heretofore invisible support structure. For a Black audience, at least the audience at the Congo Square The-

atre Company's press opening of the show, the predictable jokes—white people don't know how to comfort their own babies; white people can't drive themselves or throw out their own garbage; white people are confounded by an African American woman's having short hair today and long hair tomorrow—are riotous. It must be pleasant to see people who've ridiculed you be ridiculed in turn; but "pleasant" is not the same as "funny."

The second audience is white people, for whom the show is intended as a mirror into our own ugliness. White audience members are supposed to be made uncomfortable. Perhaps at its debut in 1965, the show performed its function; but for a reasonably liberal audience in Chicago 55 years later, it's too easy

to dismiss the portraits of white people as well-deserved comeuppance for those other white people—the ones named Clem, with southern accents and MAGA hats—and remain comfortably sure that we are the exception. The play just isn't harsh enough to evoke anything else.

There's another layer of joke beyond the central conceit: every white character (that's all but one in the play) is played by a person of color in whiteface; author Douglas Turner Ward called *Day of Absence* "a reverse minstrel-show." But whiteface fails as commentary on the disgrace of blackface: the latter is insulting, and intended to be, a joke played on people who couldn't defend themselves. This was a point still struggling to be heard

in 1965, even after Ralph Ellison's pivotal 1958 essay "Change the Joke and Slip the Yoke" condemned blackface; so the use of whiteface at that time was clever, and even slightly subtle. Today, though, we recognize blackface as a punch in the nose, while whiteface is just makeup. To the extent that it comments on white people at all, it's a joke played on people who have no need for defense.

The idea of a day of absence remains vibrant. Women in Mexico are currently organizing one to highlight the government's indifference to violence against women, and it was an annual event for many years at Evergreen State College in Washington, where students of color stayed off campus to discuss issues of equity and inclusion. The tradition came to an end in 2017 when it finally succeeded in its purpose of making white people uncomfortable: the non-white organizers announced that to observe the day that year, whites would be excluded from campus. In protesting this decision, one faculty member wrote, "There is a huge difference between a group or coalition deciding to voluntarily absent themselves from a shared space in order to highlight their vital and underappreciated roles . . . and a group encouraging another group to go away. The first is a forceful call to consciousness, which is, of course, crippling to the logic of oppression. The second is a show of force, and an act of oppression in and of itself." The professor did not address what should happen when the "forceful call to consciousness" loses its force.

All the actors, under the direction of Anthony Irons, do a fine job with the agitprop script, which includes significant updating—references to "POCs," pronounced "pox," and allusions to Latinos, including jokes about ICE. I would have preferred if Ann Joseph, as the Mayor, had varied her delivery more: when you start out yelling, there's really no place to go but louder. But her speech to the absentees—including an embarrassing anecdote about her "Mam-nanny"—is a tour de force. And when the white people have a complete meltdown and start picketing, there are two sides to every sign: "Come back and we'll stop" [reverse] "AND FRISK." Kudos to Sydney Lynne Thomas for her scenic and property design.

But *Day of Absence*, at least in this iteration, is less a condemnation of racism than a historical artifact. I'm glad to have seen it, but it hasn't changed the way I look at the world—and I know it was supposed to. **A**

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Kill Move Paradise © LARA GOETSCH

REVIEW

Black lives, white lies

Kill Move Paradise creates an assaultive purgatory for Black victims of police killings.

By **CATEY SULLIVAN**

Of all the inescapable truths that James Ijames bombards his audience with in *Kill Move Paradise*, the biggest one is found in the mirror he holds up to the audience. There are few things more dismaying, or more apt to generate a knee-jerk, fear-based, totally ignorant defensiveness, than being forced to confront the worst parts of yourself. And that's precisely what *Kill Move Paradise* does, at least for the melanin-redacted people in the audience. With surgical precision, Ijames lays down the facts of living in a country founded by and—for most of its 200+ year history—run by white supremacists. Ijames knows that if you are white, you are part of the problem, so long

indispensable. The skate park-like set (by Ryan Emens) is a netherworld limbo for three Black men and a Black child who have been murdered by cops. The actors don't enter so much as they are hurled like crash test dummies across the half-pipe, down into an assaultive purgatory of buzzing lights and throbbing noises.

Isa (Kai A. Ealy) has been there the longest. It falls to him to help newcomers, including Grif (Cage Sebastian Pierre), Daz (Charles Andrew Gardner), and 12-year-old Tiny (Trent Davis), get oriented. The others, for example, are initially confused by the endless spew of sheets from a downstage dot matrix printer. It's a list of names that Isa reads aloud—hundreds of them, all Black people killed by law enforcement. In Isa's utterance, the names become an indictment of history and a demand for reckoning. "Jesus," says Grif in the shattered silence that follows. "They got his ass, too," Isa responds.

Throughout, the actors move purposefully through the audience, demanding prolonged eye contact, puzzling over these creatures who "like to watch." Grif: "They have a name?" Isa: "America."

Intimacy and violence director Rachel Flesher makes the violence visited on these young men so wincingly realistic, it's tempting to avert your eyes. Which, again, points to the problems *Kill Move Paradise* so vividly underscores. **✪**

as the system designed to favor white people remains intact. If you find yourself wanting to look away or giggling nervously, that says more about you than anything else.

Directed by Wardell Julius Clark with brutal, beautiful, haunting choreography by Breon Arzell, *Kill Move Paradise* stands at the unicorn-rare intersection of mesmerizing and

🐦 @CateySullivan

OPENING

RR Hedda sings TUTA gives us a 2020 Ibsen heroine.

Lauren Demerath rages, leers, screams, flirts, and, best of all, sings her way through an unforgettable turn in the title role of Jacqueline Stone's unique new musical adaptation of the 1891 Henrik Ibsen play, *Hedda Gabler: A Play With Live Music*. A newly-married woman returns from a honeymoon abroad already bored with her milquetoast academic of a husband (Huy Nguyen) and plots to wreak havoc in the lives of acquaintances and old loves just to feel alive.

Hedda Gabler is a selfish schemer but it is impossible to not feel sympathy for her situation. She's a woman who is chafing under the constraints of a staid conventional society and justifiably enraged (from our contemporary viewpoint, anyway) to be losing her maiden name, and, thus, her own identity. Her complicating others' lives as a way of fighting the prospect of becoming an invisible appendage to a dull man's life may be wrong but it is also completely understandable.

Kevin V. Smith nearly matches Demerath's intensity as one of Hedda's old suitors, but this is Demerath's show. Her best allies are the versatile trio of musicians, led by the production's composer, Wain Parham. They play in eerie white death masks for much of the running time, but emerge to the forefront once the inevitable tragic end nears. Ibsen's original intent might have been to explore mental illness, but in this evocative reframing, it is the story of a woman fighting just to have her voice heard. It is a story which is sadly all too familiar in 2020. —DMITRY SAMAROV *HEDDA GABLER: A PLAY WITH LIVE MUSIC* Through 3/29: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 3 PM, Strawdog Theatre, 1802 W. Berenice, tutatheatre.org, \$25-\$40.

RR A huckster's tale Here Lies Henry muddies the waters of what's true and false.

Interrobang Theatre Project presents a revival of Daniel MacIvor's daringly strange one-person show, *Here Lies Henry*, starring Scott Sawa in the title role, directed by Elana Elyce. Suspenders, jitters, throwback mustache and all, Sawa delivers a bravura performance as either the worst inspirational comic of all time; a soul in purgatory who keeps blurting out unsavory disclosures involving past awkwardness and possible murder; a pathological liar; or some fiercely winning jumble of all three. You have to hand it to Henry. To be sure, his impromptu eight-part treatise on the art of lying is cogent. His dance rendition of Britney Spears's "Toxic" is graceful. His affection towards the "mother" (a word he can't pronounce without giggling uncontrollably) strikes us as genuine. But he's for sure not well. This becomes all too apparent, if it wasn't already, by the fourth or fifth time he screams out, leering with his entire face, "This is fun!" What is? Talking into the void? Brazen negative pathos? Acting itself?

As with many solo pieces, the destabilizing effects of solitude are front and center here. It's hard to believe in story or dramatic tension when you're the only person in the universe. Luckily, there is such a thing as putting on a show. By the 75th straight minute of staring into Sawa's unbelievably expressive face, you realize what this play is truly about. Henry, a huckster without wares, dead or alive, phantom or flesh, is an actor. His mouth and body

are doing their own thing. We watch, weirded out with joy. —MAX MALLER *HERE LIES HENRY* Through 3/28: Thu-Fri 8 PM, Sat 3 and 8 PM, Sun 3 PM; also Mon 3/23, 8 PM (industry night), Rivendell Theatre, 5775 N. Ridge, 312-219-4140, interrobangtheatreproject.com, \$32, \$16 students.

RR The ties that tear A Mexican American teenager confronts grief and growth.

There is a moment in *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* where Amá (Charín Alvarez), mother of protagonist Julia, deliberately rips pages from her daughter's prized journal in half. It's an act of desecration that makes us gasp. But as Julia learns, her mother has had so much torn apart in her own life as a working-class Mexican immigrant that the symbolic lashing out may be one of the few ways she has to channel her own grief and rage. And though the relationships here are ruptured and cannot be put back together as they were, there is always a chance for a child to later reconstruct the parts of their parents' story that can't always be seen clearly through the emotional haze and hormones of adolescence.

Adapted by Isaac Gómez from Erika L. Sánchez's best-selling young adult novel, this Steppenwolf for Young Adults offering (directed by Sandra Marquez) packs a lot of hard truths into its 90-minute running time. Anchored by a breathtakingly vulnerable performance from Karen Rodriguez (an acting muse to Gómez for several years now) as Julia, it's alternately funny and heartbreaking, harsh and compassionate.

Julia tries to figure out the secrets left behind by her seemingly perfect now-dead older sister, Olga (Dyllan Rodrigues-Miller) and deal with her growing attraction to Connor (Harrison Wegner), a wealthy white boy from Evanston. With the help of her friends and a sympathetic teacher, she also learns to trust her voice as a writer. A trip to her family's small hometown in Mexico throws a blinding light on the sacrifices her parents made.

The entire cast is terrific, but ultimately it's the mother-daughter relationship that resonates strongest here. Alvarez and Rodriguez bring bruising anger and galvanizing grace to their performances. It may well make you weep. —KERRY REID *I AM NOT YOUR PERFECT MEXICAN DAUGHTER* Through 3/21: Fri 7:30 PM, Sat 3 and 7:30 PM, Steppenwolf Theatre, 1650 N. Halsted, 312-335-1650, steppenwolf.org, \$20-\$30, \$15 students.

RR Rutherford's dilemma Lifeline offers a rollicking and arresting take on *Middle Passage*.

Lighting out for the territory, as Huck Finn put it, may be central to the American dream of liberty, but it's also a false narrative of freedom. We see that clearly in Ilesa Duncan and David Barr III's *Middle Passage*, adapted from Charles Johnson's 1990 National Book Award-winning novel, which hit the boards with Pegasus a few years ago under the title *Rutherford's Travels*. It's now back under the original moniker at Lifeline under Duncan's direction.

Rutherford Calhoun (Michael Morrow), a freed slave from Illinois in 1829, follows his licentious bliss to New Orleans, where he meets a governess, Isadora (Shelby Lynn Bias) who wants to make an honest man out of him. Escaping both Isadora and his debts lands him on a ship, the symbolically named Republic, bound for Africa to

pick up a cargo of human beings.

What transpires is a battle for Rutherford's soul and identity. Is he one with the white crew, who plot to take control of the ship? Does race, if not tribal affiliation, require him to help the Allmuseri, the group of captured Africans planning their own revolt? Or should he play both sides against the middle and serve as spy to Patrick Blashill's Captain Falcon?

A mix of the historic and the swashbuckling with a scosh of magical realism, this production captures what is most arresting about Johnson's original story. Morrow is splendid as the callow Rutherford forced to grow up and (in one mystical segment) confront literal ghosts of his past. If he sometimes seems like a cipher in the mix of larger-than-life characters surrounding him, that too is a reflection of how a Black man must negotiate what to reveal and what to hide about himself for the sake of his life and liberty. —KERRY REID *MIDDLE PASSAGE* Through 4/5: Thu-Fri 7:30 PM, Sat 4 and 8 PM, Sun 4 PM, Lifeline Theatre, 6912 N. Glenwood, 773-761-4477, lifelinetheatre.com, \$45, \$35 seniors, \$20 students and rush.

RR Shavian showdown A daughter confronts the source of her mother's wealth in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*.

To get an idea of just how convoluted the legal and moral attitudes toward sex work are in the United States—the self-professed global leader of civil liberties—consider the 2017 trial of Jeffrey Hurant. Under arrest for his role as CEO of RentBoy.com, Hurant stood before a judge in federal district court, who praised his contributions to the queer community, namely, providing a safer avenue for escorts to manage their own business. Then, the judge sentenced him to six months in prison.

Having premiered in London at the turn of the 20th century, George Bernard Shaw's two-act family dramedy about a daughter coming to terms with the source of her family's wealth is a prescient and holistic exploration of capitalism, exploitation, self-empowerment, gender dynamics, and the hypocrisy of "polite" society. Ironically, the fact *Mrs. Warren's Profession* is so layered and thoughtfully written is likely what led to its initial ban and its subsequently halted performances by censors—there's something to provoke and challenge audiences from every viewpoint.

Michael D. Graham's production of Melanie Spewock's adaptation includes plenty of the costumeey, English Department-style foppishness often featured by Promethean Theatre, but at its core is a biting, whirlwind performance by Elaine Carlson in the title role. Carlson's read on Mrs. Warren's larger-than-life personality, humor, righteousness, and ultimate disillusionment exemplifies the proscenium-sized grandiosity of Shaw's best characters—even in cozy blackbox. —DAN JAKES *MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION* Through 3/29: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 2:30 PM; also Mon 3/16, 7:30 PM, Otherworld Theatre, 3914 N. Clark, prometheantheatre.org, \$30, \$25 seniors \$25, \$15 students and military personnel.

RR Smothering fears The *Pillowman* offers a dark look at why we write.

Once upon a time, in a room that looked like a fifth-grade classroom after a firebombing followed by an era of mildew, a man named Katurian (Martel Manning) was being questioned. Katurian was a writer of stories that felt like Edward Gorey had infiltrated the dreams

of Franz Kafka. In a totalitarian dictatorship such as he was in, the resemblance of recent child murders to the themes of his writing has been taken as practical proof of his guilt. "We like executing writers. . . . You execute a writer, it sends out a signal, y'know?" says good cop Tupolski (Cyd Blakewell). Bad cop Ariel (Gregory Fenner) is less concerned with messaging than with the noble use of excessive force, an obsession pegged to his "problem childhood."

Amid the interrogation and torture, the theme of Martin McDonagh's *The Pillowman* (2003) is storytelling itself—what we write, and why, and what happens when the sense we make of senseless things like loss becomes the trap of a flawed existence, rather than an escape from it. Under Laura Alcalá Baker's direction, Gift Theatre's production tensely renders the darkness and the wonder of McDonagh's brilliant nightmare. Katurian's relationship with his abused brother Michal (Jay Worthington) roams from protection to disillusionment, sometimes burdened by and sometimes made divine by love, representing the best and worst of characters who never lose touch with their human qualities in a world with no happy endings. Inspired use of puppetry (designed by Daniel Dempsey) brings Katurian's stories, which structure the work, to life. —IRENE HSIAO *THE PILLOWMAN* Through 3/29: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 2:30 PM, Gift Theatre, 4802 N. Milwaukee, 773-283-7071, thegifttheatre.org, \$40-\$50.

RR A meaty offering Haven's take on the Bard is bloody good stuff.

Titus Andronicus is a bloody tale about the illusion of peacetime. Despite being a child of the Clinton administration, I didn't realize it until I sat through Haven's latest production at the Den, directed by Ian Damont Martin. But that's exactly what keeps the show relevant. Haven handily rises to that occasion, leading the show with contemporary commentary about race, gender, legacy, and violence that expands the Bard's work in rebellious form. Here, I saw the tragedy of liberal politics, the failures of political reconciliation without institutional change.

In this rendition, an artful and highly choreographed battle between the Romans and Goths kicks off the story, which leads victorious Titus (Colin Jones) back to Rome and the emergence of Saturninus's (Christopher Wayland Jones) rules. The rest of the juicy plot follows an ever-growing cycle of vengeance verging on Grand Guignol.

From Sarah Espinoza's gorgeous and brassy sound design to Gabrielle Lott-Rogers's brutal, brilliant performance as Marcus, this adaptation blows it out of the water. This is truly an intricate and tight take. From the top, costume designer Lilly Walls's use of color in the show is apparent: the Romans are Black actors donning elaborate black costumes; the surviving Goths—all white actors—are in blood-soaked white tatters. It's a smart reversal of the harmful tradition that treats whiteness as "pure" and Blackness as "dirty." The gendering of the roles is also defiant and chaotic, complicating Shakespearean masculinity in profound ways. The revenge might be served in piping-hot pie crusts, but this production's ability to draw out classic bleak humor while offering fresh themes really brings the heat. —KT HAWBAKER *TITUS ANDRONICUS* Through 3/14: Thu-Sat 7:30 PM, Sun 3 PM; also Sat 3/14, 3 PM (no 7:30 PM performance this date), Den Theatre, 1331 N. Milwaukee, 773-697-3830, havenchi.org, \$35. 



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Hello Dolly

PREVIEW

The 70mm Film Festival is back

The Music Box once again introduces modern audiences to the “road show” moviegoing experience.

By **MATT SIMONETTE**

According to Music Box Theatre Technical Director Julian Antos, 70mm films historically had “a heightened sense of being ‘a big thing.’ They were probably movies that cost a bunch of money to make, had big casts and beautiful landscapes. All these pieces were making a more special, more theatrical experience than ‘non-prestige’ films.”

Music Box’s 70mm Film Festival kicks off the evening of March 5 and lasts through March 19, with features ranging from sci-fi classics like *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) and *Tron* (1982) to musicals such as *Hello, Dolly!* (1969) and *West Side Story* (1961) and dramas, including *Roma* (2018) and *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood* (2019).

The widescreen 70mm gauge was often utilized for “road show” film presentations

throughout the 50s and 60s. Those movies would often include overtures and intermissions—and higher-priced tickets—so audiences would equate the film with a “legitimate” theater performance that could lure them away from their then-new televisions.

Though the road-show format died out, various 70mm showings continued through the 70s and 80s, usually reserved for high-end exhibitions of blockbusters such as *Star Wars*, *Superman*, and *Alien*, which were filmed in 35mm and blown up. As movie exhibition standards deteriorated over the decades, Antos says, “70mm was a way of assuring quality control, because it is more difficult to run, and more care has to be taken.”

The frequency of 70mm showings dissipated, and now—when even a 35mm exhibition is

a novelty for cinema goers—they only happen when an influential director such as Quentin Tarantino or Christopher Nolan uses their pull to film in the 70mm gauge or have their film blown up.

The Music Box festival began in 2012 and has had sporadic iterations since. “Because it’s a lot of work, it’s not annual,” Antos says. “It ends up being about every 18 months or so. We find a spot in the calendar where it makes sense—for example, if there is a new 70mm release coming up, we’ll try to tie it in with that.”

Planning a film festival is inherently difficult for any venue, Antos noted, because curators must plan, check for title availability, and coordinate print traffic. But working with 70mm titles is even more complicated.

“You’re dealing with a range of different prints,” he says. “There are some that are brand new, archival, and super nice, that you know will have no problems. There are others that you spend a day inspecting, getting ready to show. Everything comes in all at once, so you have this two-week period where the booth is flooded with dozens of cans.”

Curators only have 100 or so 70mm titles to choose from these days. As such, Music Box programs some regular titles, such as *West Side Story* and *2001*—the theater owns its own print of the latter. Antos and his colleagues also try to include titles with which contemporary audiences might be less familiar; for 2020, they’ve included the 1966 historical drama *Khartoum*, and the 1930 early-wide-screen western *The Big Trail*, which will be shown in a 35mm reduction because no 70mm prints of it still exist.

“A lot of these prints are really one of a kind,” said Antos. “In many cases, we’re running the only circulating print of something. I really like thinking about where the prints have been, and what venues they’ve screened at. I’m sure that print of *West Side Story* has screened all around the world. I think it’s about 15 years old, and still going strong, and still kicking ass.”

Antos emphasized that Music Box remains committed to programs utilizing all film-projection formats—from Super 8 all the way to digital-video—even as mainstream cinema exhibition has largely shifted to video projection. “The great thing about analog film is that it can, even in its smaller iterations, reproduce colors, and with much nicer contrast than any digital formats,” Antos says. “We are maintaining 70 years’ worth of technology.”

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FILM



The Banker

NOW PLAYING

RR The Banker

Between the Trump family and Wall Street corruption, it can be hard for modern moviegoers to imagine real estate moguls and bankers as heroes in any setting. But *The Banker* might change your mind. The film is based on the real-life story of Bernard Garrett (Anthony Mackie) and Joe Morris (Samuel L. Jackson), two 1950s Black entrepreneurs who hired a white man to front their business in order to circumvent racist lending practices, and built an empire while eroding housing segregation in California, one building at a time. Not content to sit on their laurels, they expanded into banking in Jim Crow-era Texas to help Blacks attain loans and develop wealth—until their identities were exposed. Though some of the dialog feels more made for TV than for silver screen, the story itself is riveting. With its look into 20th-century discrimination that still casts a shadow on communities today, and stellar performances from Mackie and Jackson, *The Banker* is worth watching with the whole family. —**JAMIE LUDWIG** *R*, 120 min. Streaming on AppleTV+. Screening at Harper Theater

RR Go Back to China

Go Back to China is as predictable as it is enjoyable—largely, on both counts. Writer-director Emily Ting's reportedly autobiographical tale centers on Sasha (Anna Akana), whose trust fund allows her to blow \$1,500 for a trendy jacket and \$2,000 at a club on any given night, despite the fact that her degree in fashion hasn't led to a job. When her Chinese father Teddy (Richard Ng) cuts her off, Sasha is forced to go back to China to work at his factory. You know where this is going: Initially, Sasha pouts that her life is over. Slowly, her heart and mind are opened to the plight of the "workers" whose annual income is generally less than her one-night club tab. And—wait for it—Sasha learns to love her difficult, tyrannical father and the family she's been estranged from for years. She even finds an outlet

for her design sketches. It's all formulaic, but within that formula, Ting crafts a story that is genuinely moving. Crucially, she avoids any cheap sentiment. Sasha's journey is easy to invest in, and in the end, you'll be rooting for her. Akana makes her someone you'll empathize with, \$1,500 statement jacket and all. *Go Back to China* also does an impactful job exploring the economically driven cultural differences between worlds. Ting touches on the dire impact of China's "one child" policy and the reality of factory workers attempting to support overseas families they can only afford to see once a year. Ting's keen eye for fashion and visual detail makes the movie pop visually—even when you know what's coming, you can't wait to see how *Go Back to China* will illustrate it. Like the champagne Sasha and her LA friends guzzle with abandon, *Go Back to China* is fun, effervescent, and goes down easy. —**CATEY SULLIVAN** *95 min.* 3/5-3/12, *Facets Cinematheque*

Greed

Just in case you haven't gotten enough obvious cinematic critiques of wealth inequality—see *Parasite*—Michael Winterbottom (*24 Hour Party People*, *The Trip*) is here with yet another one. Not to be confused with Erich von Stroheim's silent masterpiece of the same name, Winterbottom's limp satire follows a billionaire fast-fashion mogul (Steve Coogan) as he, his entitled family, and his beleaguered staff prepare for his lavish, gladiator-themed 60th birthday party. Accompanying him in all this is a writer (David Mitchell) who's been hired to pen a biography of the tycoon and who thus serves as an audience identification figure. The film's criticisms of the fast-fashion industry are valid, and its emphasis on the experiences of workers and refugees is commendable. But while it has a good cast and is occasionally humorous, it's also clunky, confusing, and ultimately unnecessary. With Isla Fisher, Asa Butterfield, and Shirley Henderson. —**KATHLEEN SACHS** *R*, 104 min. Screening at Landmark's Renaissance Place Cinema



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FILM

continued from 27

RR The Invisible Man

A modern-day adaptation of H.G. Wells's novel of the same name, *The Invisible Man* (writer-director Leigh Whannell) is a largely effective science-fiction horror film. Cecilia Kass (Elisabeth Moss) escapes an abusive relationship with wealthy tech-guy scientist Adrian Griffin (Oliver Jackson-Cohen). A few days later, Cecilia is relieved to learn of the alleged suicide of Adrian and surprised to learn she is being willed several million dollars of his fortune. A series of disturbing events occur, leading Cecilia to the conclusion that Adrian faked his own death and has somehow developed a means to torment her unseen, leading those around her, including her sister Emily (Harriet Dyer) and close friend James (Aldis Hodge), to question her seemingly rapidly deteriorating sanity. Moss skillfully navigates through the majority of the film, accomplishing a praiseworthy performance in a series of scenes largely absent of other actors. Narratively, Whannell uses the film's premise to compellingly capture the trauma inflicted through gaslighting and emotional and physical abuse. Most of the tension comes through jump-scares, though there is a steady thrill in attempting to spot subtle-shifts in the frame indicating the presence of our antagonist. Ultimately, *The Invisible Man* makes for a pacey, if mostly predictable, reimagining of a classic Hollywood horror terror. —**ADAM MULLINS-KHATIB R, 124 min. Now playing in wide release, including Davis Theater, Harper Theater, and Logan Theatre**

RR Love & Basketball

A girl who wants to play professional basketball is in love with the boy next door, who also wants to play professional basketball. When they grow up her career seems as important as his—until this idea is put to the test. Told largely from the point of view of the woman, this career-versus-love story (2000) still develops the perspective of the man persuasively, as Sanaa Lathan and Omar Epps reveal their characters' motives with nuances of expression that transcend the dialogue. The lush, emotional scenes are enhanced by the soundtrack—especially when the characters can hear it too. Written and directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood; with Alfre Woodard, Dennis Haysbert, and Debbi Morgan. —**LISA ALSPECTOR PG-13, 124 min. Fri 3/6-Mon 3/9, 11 PM. Logan Theatre**

RR North by Northwest

Cary Grant, a martini-sodden advertising director, awakes from a middle-class daydream into an underworld nightmare when he's mistaken for a secret agent (1959). A great film, and certainly one of the most entertaining movies ever made, directed by Alfred Hitchcock at his peak. With Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, and Leo G. Carroll. —**DAVE KEHR 136 min. Mon 3/9, 2 and 7 PM. Landmark's Renaissance Place Cinema**

RR Real Love

Writer-director Claire Burger (who cowrote and codirected the 2014 feature *Party Girl*) pulls off an emotional balancing act with her first solo directorial effort. The film follows a middle-aged man, Mario (Bouli Lanniers), and his two teenage daughters after Mario separates from his wife; 17-year-old Niki is eager for independence, while 14-year-old Frida is coming to terms with her sexuality. Both struggle, in their own ways, with their parents' separation. Burger doesn't sentimentalize the

harsh realities of marriage, parenting, and adolescence; instead she emphasizes the complexities of these stages of life. She also incorporates classical, modern, and contemporary art (Mario, a civil servant, is an unlikely art buff) to emotional results. One subplot considers a local theater production of an avant-garde play that features Mario; Burger has remarked that she wanted to portray art as being needed by the middle-class in order to face life. In French with subtitles. —**KATHLEEN SACHS 98 min. Screening as part of the Chicago European Union Film Festival. Sun 3/8, 3 PM and Thu 3/12, 6 PM, Gene Siskel Film Center**

RR The Tree of Life

A masterpiece, this fifth feature by Terrence Malick manages to reconcile the emotional force of his 70s classics, *Badlands* and *Days of Heaven*, with the epic naturalism of his more recent comeback films, *The Thin Red Line* (1998) and *The New World* (2005). Brad Pitt gives an impressively sober, tight-lipped performance as the rigid 1950s patriarch of a little family in Waco, Texas, a decent but angry man whose strict treatment of his three young sons is countered by the love and Christian grace of his ethereal wife (Jessica Chastain). Interspersed with this humble family conflict are scenes of the world's creation that Malick concocted with the legendary special effects artist Douglas Trumbull (2001: *A Space Odyssey*). These audacious sequences can't help but evoke the metaphysical questing of 2001, and in fact *The Tree of Life* often feels like a religious response to Stanley Kubrick's cold, cerebral view of our place in the universe. Not to be missed. —**J.R. JONES PG-13, 138 min. Tue 3/10, 7 PM. Doc Films**

ALSO PLAYING

Chicago European Union Film Festival

For the 23rd year Gene Siskel hosts this month-long festival that features Chicago premieres representing all 28 EU member nations. Opening night (Fri 3/6, 6 PM) is hosted by Sanja Laković, Consul General of Croatia in Chicago and includes a screening of the Croatian comedy *Comic Sans*. Go to siskelfilmcenter.org/ceuff2020 for the complete schedule. 3/6-4/2. **Gene Siskel Film Center**

One Earth Film Festival

The 2020 edition of this festival devoted to movies about environmental issues features more than 30 films screening at various Chicago and suburban venues. Visit oneearthfilmfest.org for the complete schedule. 3/6-3/15. **Various locations**

90-Second Newbery Film Festival

The ninth annual children's video contest features short films created by kids that tell the stories of Newbery-winning books like *Charlotte's Web*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, and more. Sun 3/8, 1:45 PM. **Harold Washington Library, Pritzker Auditorium**

South Side Irish Parade Film Fest

For the fifth year, this festival celebrates Irish film. The day includes a screening of *The Secret of Kelis* at 3 PM and a screening of *Odd Man Out* at 7 PM. In between and after the evening screening there will be traditional Irish music, drinks, and dancing. Sat 3/7, 3 and 7 PM. **Beverly Arts Center**



Chicago Research founder Blake Karlson (left) and his roommate Cesar Robles, who helps design the label's releases. The two of them have released music through Chicago Research as members of Product KF; Karlson has also recorded for the label with Civic Center and as Lily the Fields, Robles with Bruised and Conjunto Primitivo.  COURTESY CHICAGO RESEARCH

CHICAGO POSTPUNK GETS ITS WU-TANG CLAN

Local label Chicago Research has built a powerful, tight-knit collective of dark underground rock and electronic artists.

By **LEOR GALIL**

The first thing Blake Karlson did to promote his record label Chicago Research was head to what he calls “the most haunted cemetery in the United States.” Hidden in Rubio Woods Forest Preserve in the southwest suburbs, Bachelor’s Grove Cemetery has been a nexus for spooky apparitions since at least the 1950s, according to Matt Hucke and Ursula Bielski’s 1999 book, *Graveyards of Chicago*. Witnesses have reported seeing flashing lights, a house that would appear and disappear without a trace, a man with two heads, mysterious hooded fig-

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6:30pm - 8pm
Sulzer Regional Library,
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4455 N. Lincoln Ave.

March Hyde Park Rent Control Action

March 6
2pm - 4pm
Nichols Park
1355 E. 53rd St.

African American Women & The Vote: A Centennial Review

March 6
5:30pm - 8pm
Chicago Public Library
400 S. State St.

The Personal is Political: Storytelling & Reproductive Justice

March 7
1pm - 4pm
Location TBA

Recognition Delayed: The Contributions of African American Suffragists and Why Their Stories Matter

March 8
1pm - 3:30pm
UIC Richard J. Daley Library
801 S. Morgan St.
1st Floor Conference Room

Activism Evening – Postcards, Texting, Phonebanking

March 9
6:30pm - 8:30pm
Unity Lutheran
Church of Berwyn
6720 31st St.
Berwyn, IL

2020 Candidate Night

March 9
7pm - 9pm
Zoe's Patio
5518 S. Archer Ave.

LWV Presents: Illinois Fair Tax Q&A

March 10
6:30pm - 8:30pm
Downers Grove
Fire Station 2
5420 Main St.
Downers Grove, IL

Organizing for Plastics Alternatives

March 10
7pm - 8:30pm
Sulzer Regional Library,
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Citizenship/DACA Renewal Workshop

March 14
9am - 12pm
Morton College
3801 S. Central Ave.
Cicero, IL

Documentary & Discussion: Period. End of Sentence.

March 15
3pm - 4:30pm
Northbrook Public Library
1201 Cedar Ln.
Northbrook, IL

Joan Esposito Election Night Coverage and Meetup!

March 17
2pm - 9pm
Gino's East Rosemont
9501 W. Devon Ave.

Training Class for Introverted Activists

March 18
7pm - 9pm
Lorraine H. Morton
Civic Center
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For more information of listed events please visit persistlist.org

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Cesar Robles (foreground) fronts Bruised at the release party for the LP edition of their debut album, *Rotten Codex*, in summer 2019. © COURTESY CHICAGO RESEARCH

continued from 29

ures, and a woman cloaked in white. The satanic panic even came early to Bachelor's Grove: though fears of shadowy devil-worshipping cults didn't become widespread in the U.S. till the 80s, similar anxieties gripped the communities around the cemetery in the 70s, after vandals dug up graves and left animal remains scattered around.

One year ago, Karlson took a camera and a friend (who records as the Arno) to Bachelor's Grove. He already knew that he wanted Chicago Research to focus on postpunk, industrial, and eccentric electronic music, and the sublimely eerie sounds he loves made a perfect match for a graveyard that's frightened Illinoisans for nearly a century.

A silent loop of the footage, so pixelated that it sometimes degenerates into a gray and brown haze, was the centerpiece of the front page of the label's website, which Karlson retired last week (the video can still be seen at the @chicago_research Instagram page, where it's the first post). The Arno skulks through the desolate cemetery in a black trench coat, sometimes hitting a large metal spring with a rod—it looks like a cryptid hunter's footage of the lost member of Ein-

stürzende Neubauten. "We were just trying to make some weird video to put out, but it ended up being a little goofy," Karlson says. "I tried to make it less goofy, but I still like it."

The only other things on the label's website are links to Bandcamp. Chicago Research launched with two releases in February 2019: *Natural History*, a compilation of deranged, distorted electro-punk from a solo project called Understudy, and *CROOL*, a label sampler that features synth-pop artist Death Valley, rowdy postpunks Bruised, noise hypnotist Hen of the Woods, industrial surrealists Civic Center, and Joy Division worshippers Product KF. Since then, the Chicago Research catalog has ballooned rapidly: its total number of releases hit 23 last month, when EBM act Club Music released the digital version of *Beyond New Beat*. When I visit Karlson at his Humboldt Park home on Wednesday, February 13, about a week after the album's release, he's getting ready to dub it onto 100 pink cassettes he'd received that day.

The large, shabby house that Karlson shares with a crowd of roommates doubles as Chicago Research's headquarters. He records musicians in his bedroom, using his closet as a vocal booth. In the second-floor living room,

MUSIC

he and his collaborators make flyers or assemble cassettes for mail orders. In the basement Karlson stores his supply of cardboard record mailers, which he also uses to sell used records online (the closest thing he has to a day job). Including the people in the coach house out back, he has eight roommates, and some of them pitch in with Chicago Research work. One of them, Cesar Robles, helps design the label's releases, fronts Bruised, and plays in EBM outfit Conjunto Primitivo; before Karlson's group Product KF went on hiatus, he played guitar with them too.

Karlson makes the curatorial decisions for Chicago Research, and he carries the financial

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burden of running it. But in many other ways, the label is a collective—the main factor that unifies the sonically disparate acts that it's released, aside from their shared antagonistic aesthetic, is that they're all part of the same friend circle.

These connections preexist the label too. A few years ago, Karlson played in synth-punk band Plastic with Macklin Reed (of Bruised and Product KF) and Ariel Motto (aka Death Valley and Club Music). Between them, Karlson, Reed, and Motto have contributed to 14 Chicago Research releases so far. "The main goal is just to document what's going on," Karlson says. "I'm just doing this for us, for the people here."

Chicago Research releases have hardly been burning up the charts, but the label's prolific release schedule and range of unusual sounds have made lots of fans in the local underground electronic scene. Cult producer Beau Wanzer got hooked after stumbling on the label's Bandcamp page in early 2019. "The combination of experimental, industrial, noise,

punk—all those things that I love—that was what drew me to it," he says. He's since booked a few Chicago Research artists for Hot on the Heels, the outre electronics monthly he's hosted at Danny's for 14 years; Understudy performed in May, and last month the Arno played a live set while Karlson spun records.

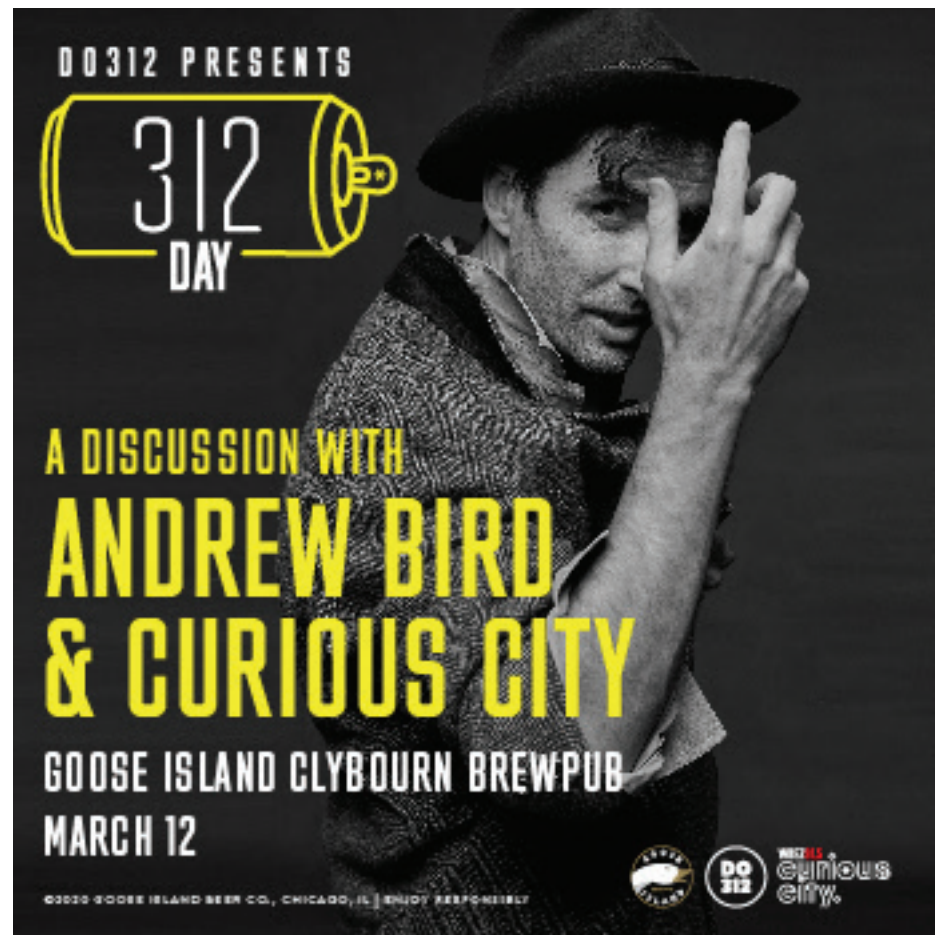
"Their enthusiasm makes me an enthusiast as well," Wanzer says. "They're obviously younger than me—they're just starting out—and with the amount of stuff they've already released within just a year, I'm just really happy that they're pushing, pushing, pushing. It makes me very proud to have a Chicago label that has really contributed a lot to the scene."

Karlson guesses that a Chicago Research artist performs somewhere in town at least once per month, but March is shaping up to be especially busy. Civic Center are part of an American Dreams Records showcase at the Hideout on Wednesday, March 4, and Club Music opens for Montreal darkwave duo Automelodi at Sleeping Village on Sunday, March 8. On Friday, March 13, Chicago Research hosts a first-anniversary showcase at a DIY space with five acts who've each released at least one song on the label. The concert doubles as a birthday party for Karlson, who turns 26 that day.

"Chicago Research, the label, gave us a point that we could all coalesce around and all deposit our energies into," says the Arno. The label's artists invest in their connections to the collective, not just in their individual projects. Karlson has been critical to making the endeavor work, encouraging his friends to focus on their music while he handles the logistics. "A lot of our crew is left-brained and insane people," the Arno says. "It's nice to have a daddy shepherding the whole thing along."

Karlson grew up in Aurora, and his dad brought him to his first punk shows when he was in third grade. "He took me to see Rancid and NoFX and stuff," Karlson says. "He was big on those bands in the early 2000s." Once Karlson got acquainted with the DIY scene, he'd take the Metra into Chicago to see shows. "When I was 18, I would come down here to see bands like Culo," he says. "That's when I really started becoming active."

In the early 2010s, Karlson started his first band, a short-lived hardcore outfit that fizzled out after self-releasing a couple cassettes. His most prominent band in that scene was a lumbering unit called 86 Gemini, which also featured Macklin Reed. In 2017 they issued a



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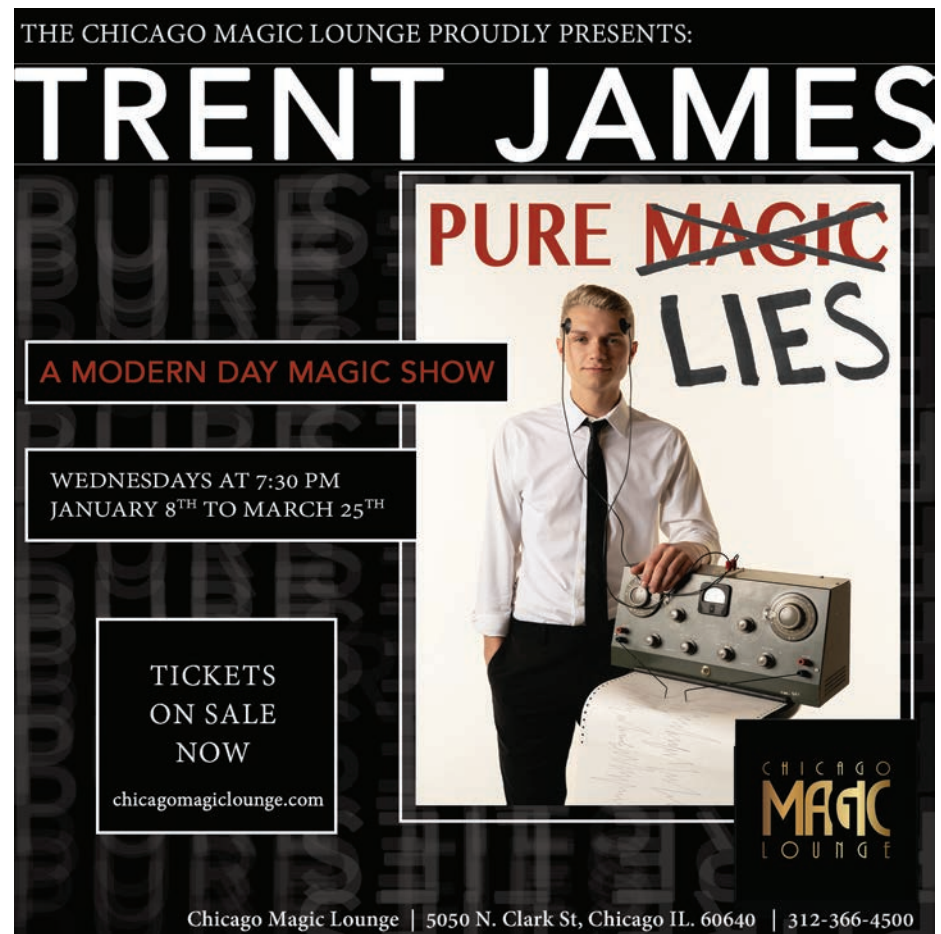
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self-titled seven-inch on High Fashion Industries, a DIY label run by Eric Frankel of heavy hitters Rash. “He’s probably got a lot of those left,” Karlson says.

Karlson played a critical role in Chicago hardcore as a recording engineer. He learned the basics while in high school, at a west suburban church his family attended—but he’s forgotten the name of the church and the name of the person who showed him the ropes. “He would send me home with textbooks on EQing,” Karlson says. “I’d go to church every Sunday, ‘cause he taught me for free.” At Harold Washington College (one of four schools he attended) he took an elective on Pro Tools, which he still uses to record bands.

In July 2014, Karlson posted to the Facebook group DIY Chicago with an offer to record bands for free. “So stupid—I was young,” he says. He recorded a streak of Chicagoland hardcore acts, including Scary & the Scrapers, the Wrong, and Tigress (he worked on their 2016 self-titled seven-inch, which came out on critical local punk label Not Normal). Karlson’s post also reached Robles, who’d been looking for someone to record Bruised. “He’s been recording us ever since, everything we’ve put out,” Robles says.

At first Robles didn’t spend much time with Karlson outside of Bruised recording sessions. But in 2016, they got to know each other better after Robles joined 86 Gemini on guitar—they especially bonded on a west-coast tour. “I spent a lot of time in the van with him,” Robles says. “I think we became pretty close friends after that.” About a year later, Robles moved into Karlson’s house.

Also in 2016, Reed and Karlson were looking for a new synth player for their other band, the Screamers-inspired outfit Plastic. They reached out to Ariel Motto, who’d played synth in the live lineup of Mark Plant’s postpunk band Military Police and a Devo-influenced Northwest Indiana group called Mannequin. Karlson and Reed wanted Plastic to tour a lot, and Motto was on board. “That’s the most rewarding part of being a musician—getting to perform a lot and getting the opportunity to tour,” she says. “I just didn’t have a lot going on; I needed something to fill my time. I wasn’t working—it was a really dull summer.”

Plastic lasted another year and a half, during which time Saint Louis punk label Lumpy Records reissued their 2016 debut, *Plastic 2.0*. Motto moved to Bloomington, Indiana, and

started recording solo darkwave material as Death Valley. In April 2017, she released two singles on Bandcamp. “Blake was really supportive from day one,” Motto says. “He said, ‘If I was doing a record label, I would want to release the single as a seven-inch.’”

Karlson actually was running a label at the time, but it stuck mainly to reissues—its only original release was *Plastic 2.0*. He called it Animated Music (the same name he now uses to sell used records online), and he ran it from 2016 till 2018. Its three reissues included a jaunty 1981 synth-pop single that former Gary Numan keyboardist Chris Payne had recorded as the Electronic Circus.

Animated Music’s biggest project was also its biggest headache: a double LP of a 2008 cult album by Houston rapper Viper entitled *You’ll Cowards Don’t Even Smoke Crack*. “We had the contract, and then this other label announced a reissue of it at the same time,”



The Chicago Research logo uses a stylized image of the windows in Union Station.

ILLUSTRATION BY CESAR ROBLES

Karlson says. “I’m trying to work out how me and the other label can both sell 500 records, and then Viper announces a reissue of his own. So now I’m thinking there’s gonna be three pressings, and I’m like, ‘Holy shit, I’m gonna be \$8,000 in the hole—how am I gonna move any of this stuff?’” The Animated reissue took a year of work, but once it came out in September 2018, it sold out quickly.

Despite that success, Karlson stopped doing reissues after *You’ll Cowards*. He found the process too transactional and emotionally cold, and besides, his friends were making vital new music that nobody else seemed to want to release. “We spent almost a year recording a Bruised album, and then the label that was gonna put it out was like, ‘Ehh,’” Karlson says. “Ariel Motto had some stuff, and

Product KF pretty much had an album. It’s necessity—no one’s gonna put out our record, so we might as well.”

Karlson arrived at this conclusion in December 2018 and wasted no time setting up his new label. He derived the name from Manhattan Research, a technology company founded by influential composer and electronics pioneer Raymond Scott. Karlson asked Robles to design a black-and-white logo that stylized the sunbeams shining through the windows of Union Station’s Great Hall, reimagining them as long spikes.

“I honestly didn’t really like that image at first,” Robles says. “But it’s grown on me a lot. I’m glad he insisted on that. He knows what he likes.” Robles and Karlson later realized that the Union Station windows appear in the artwork for a touchstone of the coldwave and synth-pop scenes: Ministry’s 1981 debut single, “I’m Falling” b/w “Cold Life.”

Karlson has a strong and specific aesthetic, and he often makes it felt in the music his friends make for Chicago Research—especially on the releases he records, such as the Arno’s debut cassette, April’s *Ways of Perfection*. “In some ways we wrote a lot of that music together, or at least he helped me make editorial decisions,” the Arno says. “I would make this noise or that noise, and we’d constantly be having this dialogue of, ‘Do you like this? Do you not like this? Is this too weird? Is this not weird enough? Should I push this more? Let me push this more. Let me make this more fucked-up.’” Sitting in his tiny little cubicle bedroom, recording this stuff, I think it fostered a really strong, collaborative relationship.”

Chicago Research also helped convince Motto to move back to Chicago. Karlson told her about the label after she booked Product KF and Understudy for a show at her Bloomington house. “It felt like an opportune time to come here, write and record a lot of music, and play a lot of shows alongside similarly minded friends,” Motto says. “There were definitely opportunities to collaborate on the table, and do and create a lot of great things.”

Motto moved back to Chicago about a year ago, and since then she’s spent a lot of time recording in her apartment—she’s released three Club Music cassettes since August. She prefers to handle every aspect of the recording process herself, but she credits Karlson with providing crucial moral support. “Blake has a knack for pushing his friends creatively, and

MUSIC

pushing them to do the things that they want to do and take their projects to the next level—he's done that for me," Motto says. "I was sort of stagnating creatively for a while—this was before I started recording as Club Music, and I still was focusing on Death Valley. I was feeling kind of lost, and I was unsure of what direction I wanted to take that project, or if I even wanted to keep doing it at all. If it weren't for his encouragement, I don't know if I would've released the music."

Karlson has released his own music on Chicago Research not just in Product KF but also with Civic Center and as Lily the Fields. He started Civic Center, a trio project with the solo musicians who record as Understudy and Hen of the Woods, around the same time he started Chicago Research, and they've put out three tapes and a double-cassette compilation so far. "It worked out really well—we can churn out albums pretty quick, it turns out," Karlson says.

This summer, Civic Center will release an album through American Dreams Records, the experimental label of musician and *Reader* contributor Jordan Reyes. He discovered Chicago Research after seeing Product KF open for French coldwave group Trisomie 21 at the Empty Bottle in March 2019. The more he learned about Karlson and Chicago Research, the more impressed he was.

"There was a clear aesthetic and dedication to the music, and so much of it came from trusting his friends to fulfill creative obligations," Reyes says. He likens Chicago Research to a family operation. "I think that that's optimal for creativity," he says. "They're not Wu-Tang Clan, but it reminds me of Wu-Tang Clan, the way that it was done—allowing there to be these centralized organizations, and then also giving people the opportunity to do their own thing. I thought that was just really cool."

Reyes later wrote a profile of the label, which Bandcamp Daily published in August under the headline "Chicago Research is Building a New Home for Industrial Music in the Midwest." After the story ran, Karlson asked Reyes about releasing a Civic Center album on American Dreams; the band met with Reyes at Falafel & Grill in Wicker Park to talk it over.


"A couple of the other cats from the Chicago Research crew came too," Reyes says. "You sign someone, it's like a marriage—you get to be a part of the family. Everyone's involved. It's a really interesting thing to feel, even more than it is to see."

On a recent trip to New York City, Wanzer stopped by boutique record shop 2 Bridges and spotted a spread of Chicago Research cassettes. "I was like, 'Oh, this is great—I'm really excited that there are people paying attention to Chicago underground music,'" Wanzer says. "In terms of national attention in general, I feel like Chicago's still under the radar, more or less."

Karlson has also heard from nonlocals attracted to Chicago Research's bizarre electronic sounds, some of whom apparently haven't picked up on the label's premise and ask him to release their music. "I had a guy from Japan hit me up—he had some techno stuff," Karlson says. "I was like, 'This is good, but sorry, I'm only doing Chicago stuff.' Maybe far in the future I would venture, but right now I've got enough on my plate in Chicago."

Drew Ryan, who's booked Chicago Research acts at the Owl for his monthly experimental series Neobeat, sees the label's strength as its community. "It's nice to see someone's taking the time to put something out there, to give it an identity and give it a home to live in," Ryan says. "There's more of a sense of culture and the people behind it, rather than if Hen of the Woods or Civic Center were just to put out a record by themselves on Bandcamp or something that didn't really feel like part of this mass. Chicago Research gives it a little bit more weight."

The label releases cassettes and records sporadically, usually in groups of two or three. Since September it has also run a more or less weekly mix series, posting material from members of the collective to Mixcloud. Karlson never wants Chicago Research to fall silent for long, because he knows how easy it is to lose an audience's attention. "If you're not churning stuff out now, in a month no one's gonna give a shit—if you're not reminding people that you're here," he says. "There's just so much stuff everywhere."

For now at least, nobody in the city's experimental electronic and industrial scenes is likely to forget about Chicago Research. The musicians involved take up a lot of space, especially given the way they work together. "Now that we've kind of established the sound and the visual language, I'd like to see who else also fits into that or is interested in being a part of it," Robles says. "You know, outside my friends." 

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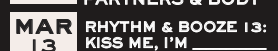
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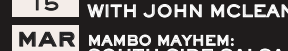
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IN ROTATION

A Reader staffer shares three musical obsessions, then asks someone (who asks someone else) to take a turn.

PHILIP MONTORO

Reader music editor



Horse Lords AUDREY GATEWOOD

Horse Lords, *The Common Task* This instrumental Baltimore four-piece combine explosive joy with ferocious rhythmic discipline. The baffling metrical ambiguity in their swams of morphing and overlapping ostinatos means that when this stuff is danceable—and it often is—you can choose any one of three or four different beats. The songs on their new album, *The Common Task*, can sound like overcaffeinated Tuareg “desert blues,” like 17 robots all trying to get into the same elevator, or like a reggaeton beat in a clothes dryer. And despite the avant-garde and academic influences that inform Horse Lords’ music, their live show isn’t a chin-stroking music-appreciation exercise—it boils over with the rowdy energy they get back from the crowd.

Sugar Shack, “You’re a Freak” Houston garage band Sugar Shack released this corny stomper in 1992, during their ersatz grunge phase, and my smartass college buddies adopted it as a theme song: “You’re a freak and you don’t even know it / We’re all freaks and we’re not afraid to show it.” RIP to guitarist Austin Thomerson, killed in November while trying to foil a pawnshop robbery.

Hot Snakes, “Suicide Invoice” The Greatest Living Posthardcore Band played this cold knife of an earworm at Music Frozen Dancing. The next day, I learned that Jeff VanderMeer (of *Annihilation* fame) had used its lyrics as an epigram for his new novel, *Dead Astronauts*: “And when I dream / I keep my promises to you / I really do.” Both the book and the song are improved by the association.

JASON SOLIDAY

Electronic musician and noise maker

Ohne If forced to claim a favorite band, I’d

probably pick Ohne, the short-lived quartet of Daniel Löwenbrück, Reto Mäder, Dave Phillips, and Tom Smith. The absurd actionist musique concrète on their album *Ohne 1* has everything I love about noise: it jump-cuts from crisp electric sizzle to surreal tape collage to jarring squall to piano-and-accordion skronk, and it’s all somehow both adept and ham-fisted. Between tense silences, it splices in vocal barks, belches, laughs, and amplified apple chewing—and over the top floats Smith’s disconcerting yet compelling croon. It’s chaos, but it flows incredibly well due to tight editing and deft improvisational skills.

Co-dependent A few times per month, Co-dependent releases an album with a color-gradient circle for a cover, titled with CODE plus a three-digit number. Each contains contemporary electronic and computer music, covering a wide spectrum: rhythmic dance-floor pulses, deep drones, knots of generative noise. It’s the musical equivalent of a gumball-machine egg: you never know what you’re going to get, and if you don’t like it, there’s another surprise coming. Current favorites include RM Francis’s squiggling pulsar synthesis on CODE889 and 333’s enigmatic sine-wave transmissions on CODE333.



Charmaine Lee PETER GANNUSHKIN

Charmaine Lee at the Kitchen, 11/20/2018

I wasn’t familiar with vocal improviser Charmaine Lee before stumbling across this YouTube video, but that’s something I’ll need to

rectify—I was floored by the variety of sounds Lee can coax from a voice and a microphone. It’s a humbling reminder for this electronics obsessive: you don’t need a pile of knobs and wires to create a compelling sound world.

JEFF KOLAR

Sound artist, composer, founder and director of Radius

Jen Kutler, *Disembodied* The most intriguing release of 2019 was Jen Kutler’s *Disembodied*, an album generated by vibrations and movements captured with an electronic ring worn on the finger by a series of feminine-spectrum people bringing themselves to orgasm. In what Kutler calls a “de-sexualization experiment,” data transmitted from the ring is transformed into MIDI files that activate pure tones, field recordings, and granular synthesis; these voices are then edited into lush drones, complex harmonies, and engrossing textures.



Eartheater, aka Alexandra Drewchin

SAMANTHA WEST

Eartheater, *Trinity* Raw power. *Trinity* is the third studio album from multi-instrumentalist, composer, and vocalist Eartheater, aka Alexandra Drewchin. It’s slippery with electronic-oriented dance swells and multi-octave vocal crashes. The track “High Tide,” produced by AceMo, absolutely crushes. Drewchin’s set last year at the Hideout’s beloved Resonance Series proved her total mastery of the craft.

Beyond/Below mix series Drop out and tune in to Beyond/Below, an ambient mix series run by Chicago’s Hi-Vis (who curates the Dreamtone label and organizes Neon Falls events with Sold). It features new international artists with a focus on deep listening. The mixes include psychedelic electronics, hallucinatory dream states, and voyages of warped time. And every one has a track list.



MAR 8



WE BANJO 3

MAR 9



**JACK BROADBENT
WITH BENJAMIN JAFFE**

MAR 10



ANA POPOVIC

MAR 11



**KASIM SULTON'S
UTOPIA**

MAR 13



SQUIRREL NUT ZIPPERS

MAR 17



**LADY LAMB
AN EVENING WITH STRINGS**

MAR 18 + 19



**ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO
FEAT. DON ANTONIO & ALEX RUIZ**

MAR 20 - 22



ERIC ROBERSON

MAR 22



**CHICAGO PHILHARMONIC BRUNCH
STRINGS, SYRAH, & SISTERHOOD**

MAR 23



PETER COLLINS

MAR 24



TOM WEST

MAR 25



BOBBY V

MAR 26



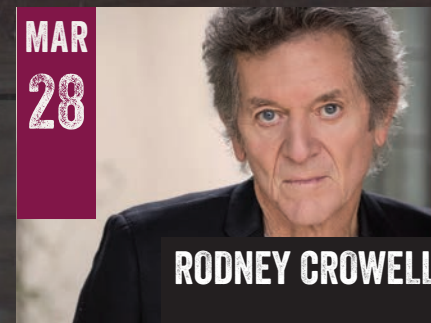
**DAVE SIMONETT
OF TRAMPLED BY TURTLES**

MAR 27



**MOMS & MURDER
LIVE PODCAST**

MAR 28



RODNEY CROWELL

MAR 29



**CHICAGO SOUL
SPECTACULAR**

MAR 30



**VOICES OF CHICAGO: MUSICAL
DIVERSITY IN THE WINDY CITY**

MAR 31



**AL JARDINE
(OF THE BEACH BOYS)**

APR 3 + 4



LYFE JENNINGS

APR 5 + 6



**VANESSA CARLTON
WITH JENNY O.**

PICK OF THE WEEK

Baltimore indie group Lower Dens use synths to navigate a complex world on *The Competition*



Jana Hunter of Lower Dens © TORSO

LOWER DENS, :3LON

Mon 3/9, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln, \$18. 18+

LOWER DENS EMERGED out of Baltimore's fertile underground music scene in 2010, and they've since built a catalog of immersive, slow-boiling indie rock elevated by Jana Hunter's inviting, resonant vocals. During the first half of the 2010s, they dropped three albums, which makes the four-year gap between 2015's *Escape From Evil* and last year's *The Competition* (Ribbon Music) feel like an eternity. Just before releasing *Escape From Evil*, Hunter wrote a Tumblr post identifying as genderfluid and discussing their history of struggling to fit into the gender binary; in the ensuing years, they underwent testosterone therapy, and Hunter now uses they/them and him/his

pronouns. The band re-emerged with a newly streamlined lineup, slimming down from the five musicians involved in *Escape From Evil* to a duo of Hunter and drummer Nate Nelson on *The Competition*. The album's dreamy songs employ a battery of synths that gives them a new-wave sparkle, while Hunter dishes out lyrical dissections of the current socioeconomic hellscape. When Hunter sings about impending societal collapse under capitalism atop an ersatz symphony of grand synths on "Empire Sundown," their sharp, defiant vocals suggest that we can find solace in one another—and that we'll have to. —LEOR GALIL

SATURDAY 7

LANZÓN 8:30 PM, Constellation, 3111 N. Western, \$15. 18+

Jim Becker and Joe Adamik are resolute sidemen and longtime fixtures of Chicago's live-music scene. The former often plays fiddle, guitar, and banjo in rootsy settings, both straight and twisted, while the latter appears most often these days drumming with jazz and improvisational combos. Their partnership began in 2000, when they were both members of polymorphous rock band Califone, and carried on when Iron & Wine recruited most of Califone in 2010. They started playing together as a duo while on tour with those projects, during the downtime that's an inescapable part of life on the road. In 2014 they began taking the stage as Lanzón, and they started recording shortly afterward—but it's taken them until now to release their self-titled debut LP. The record's six tracks display their stylistic reach as well as the full range of their multi-instrumentalism. Each man plays electric keyboards, electronic effects, and percussion; Adamik proves himself a more than adequate guitarist on the rustic "Mescalina" and the bristling, funky "Arc Minute," and his reeds confer melancholic dignity upon album closer "Lhasa." On the album, Adamik and Becker played all the instruments themselves, but they'll be joined onstage by drummer Glenn Kotche, bassist Matt Lux, clarinetist Asher Waldron, and trumpet and flugelhorn player Katie Samavoa. —BILL MEYER

JEFF LESCHER WITH GREEN, JOY POPPERS

8 PM, Gman Tavern, 3740 N. Clark, \$15. 21+

When I contacted Jeff Lescher of legendary mod/glam/punk/power-pop band **Green** to find out what his set would be like for this special gig, he responded quickly and kindly, but added, "One 'angle' that I hope you'll avoid in your reportage is the overworked and untrue 'Green was a group that should have been big but never were.'" I've gotta admit it's hard to not go there, as it's a bit of a head-scratcher to me that Chicago bands such as Veruca Salt, Urge Overkill, and Local H got signed to major labels while the beloved Green didn't (in 1991 the Reader's Bill Wyman dubbed them "Chicago's Great Green Hope"). However, we'll shift focus here, per Lescher's request. It's worth noting that Green predated the 90s Chicago alterna-rock explosion (and all the aforementioned bands). They released their first EP in 1984 and their self-titled debut LP in '86, both on their own Ganggreen label. Lescher continually reinvented the band with an influx of new musicians, and Green's brilliant second album, 1987's Anglophilic *Elaine MacKenzie* (Pravda), featured their second and perhaps most crucial lineup: bassist Ken Kurson (of Circles and later the Lilacs) and drummer Rich Clifton. The raw, jangly 1989 album *White Soul* and 1992's gooey, hook-filled *The Pop Tarts* were stellar too, and Green released their seventh and most recent LP, *The Planets*, in 2009. The band have soldiered on since then, at varying levels of activity, and Lescher has pursued a solo career as well. In November he dropped his first solo album, *All Is Grace*—a wildly varied affair that includes mellow acoustic ditties as well as full-on punky glam

MUSIC



The Make-Up © GLEN E. FRIEDMAN

rock. At this gig, Lescher will focus mostly on solo material, but he says there will also be a “proverbial ‘smattering’ of Green songs, and a cover or two,” with Clay Tomasek on bass, Jason Mosher on guitar, John Holoman on drums, Preston Pisellini on keys, and Mark Durante (formerly of KMFDM and Revolting Cocks) on pedal steel. Opening the show are the similarly underrated **Joy Poppers**, who’ve been at their brand of sticky-sweet pop since 1993. Their sound recalls power-pop greats such as Big Star, Badfinger, Piper, and Todd Rundgren, and the core of the group is lead songwriter Tom Szidon (who’s also played with Scott Lucas of Local H fame in his band the Married Men, to come full circle) and brilliant percussionist, singer, and guitarist Jason Batchko (who’s played with Lucas, Jonny Polonsky, Caviar, and others). The duo will be joined for this show by Marc Sloboda (guitar) and Dani Malloy (bass), and will focus on the 25-year-old *Zoomar!* album. It’s a rare treat for these near pop legends to be playing at all, let alone playing a mix of new material and classics, so this intimate gig is not to be missed. —STEVE KRAKOW

THE MAKE-UP *Deadbeat Beat* opens. 10 PM, Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, sold out. 21+

The wit of Ian Svenonius is something to which we’ve never quite been privy, a clever commentary between him and himself that’s probably brilliant despite being totally impenetrable to everyone else. (Have you read his book *Supernatural Strategies for Making a Rock ‘n’ Roll Group?*) Sometimes you have no choice but to respect an artist’s commitment, even if you can’t totally parse their ambition. Lucky for us, we’ve been privileged to watch Svenonius live his own legend for three decades, dressed to the nines and commanding stages with a panache that he’d be the first to say is probably borrowed from 60s soul stars. Though he first emerged in the late 80s as front man of D.C. punk band Nation of Ulysses, Svenonius is perhaps most famous for his

stint leading the Make-Up, which formed in 1995. Though they’ve played a handful of reunion shows since breaking up in 2000, Svenonius recently resurrected that posse, which in the late 90s rethought what it meant to be an underground, politically charged punk band. The Make-Up’s stripped-clean, lo-fi sound leans hard into gospel and soul, preaches much more than it snarls, and ultimately paved a path for a glut of early-2000s imitators who aimed to smash the state in three-piece suits. Today their records, such as 1997’s *Sound Verite* and 1999’s *Save Yourself* (both released on K), continue to sound modern thanks in part to Svenonius’s own resilience. The Make-Up will hold up live because he won’t let his vintage vision—and, by proxy, his vision of the band—die. And we should all feel blessed that he’s keeping on, regardless of the project, new or



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MARCH 9	RC BIG BAND 7PM PROSPECT FOUR 9:30PM
MARCH 10	FLABBY HOFFMAN SHOW 8PM ELIZABETH'S CRAZY LITTLE THING FEATURING MICHELLE SHAFER 9PM
MARCH 11	FLABBY HOFFMAN SHOW 8PM KENNY'S 50TH BIRTHDAY BASH THE MAD POETS
MARCH 12	TONY DO ROSARIO GROUP
MARCH 13	PROSPECT FOUR 9PM
MARCH 14	MORSE & WAGNER WITH FRIENDS 8PM
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MARCH 19	RC BIG BAND 7PM
MARCH 20	CHIDITAROD MARCH 7, 11AM
MARCH 21	OPEN MIC ON TUESDAY EVENINGS (EXCEPT 2ND)

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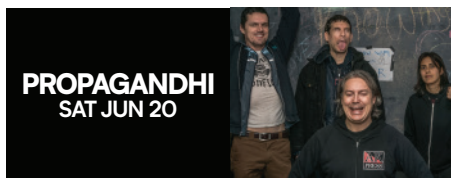




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Roberto Fonseca @ ALEJANDRO AZCUY

continued from 37
old. —KEVIN WARWICK

SUNDAYS

ROBERTO FONSECA 7 PM, *Old Town School of Folk Music, Armitage Concert Hall, 909 W. Armitage, \$23-\$25.*

I had a chance to see Roberto Fonseca play at the 2015 Fes Festival of World Sacred Music in Morocco, in a duo collaboration with Malian singer Fatoumata Diawara. In his thrilling, visceral performance, the Havana-born musician, composer, and bandleader embodied the multifarious musicality of Cuba's best jazz pianists. Blessed with access to the island's customary classical music training, which often begins in elementary school, Fonseca began playing jazz festivals at age 15 and later obtained a master's in composition from Havana's prestigious Instituto Superior de Arte. He's well-versed in Cuban folkloric styles such as rumba as well as its dance genres, including mambo, timba, and reggaeton. His heady, masterful compositions are enlivened by his musical prowess, his precision, and his ability to create unendingly varied ripples of notes. He accompanies his playing with wordless vocals and chants, influenced by his mother, Mercedes Cortes Alfaro, a renowned bolero singer who was once a dancer at the legendary Tropicana Club in Havana. Fonseca is currently on tour supporting his ninth solo album, *Yesun* (Mack Avenue), whose title blends the names of two Yoruban deities: Yemaya, the goddess of the sea, fertility, and maternity, and Oxun, the god of the river. Throughout *Yesun*, his pieces transition from one style to another, flowing freely in a kaleidoscope of progressive, dynamic Cuban musical forms; as he put it in a 2019 interview with *Jazz Times*, his songs are a call to "a party so nice it will fill your soul completely." Fonseca will perform with bassist Yandy Martínez Rodríguez and drummer Raúl Herrera, with whom he recorded *Yesun* and with whom he plays weekly gigs at Havana club La Zorro y el Cuervo;

this concert is a rare opportunity to witness the vanguard of 21st-century Afro-Cuban jazz. —CATALINA MARIA JOHNSON

FREE NATIONALS 9 PM, *Chop Shop, 2033 W. North, sold out.* 18+

Best known as Anderson .Paak's backing band, the Free Nationals are masters of fusion, with the ability to blend various strains of pop music past and present into mellifluous tracks that dependably set a chill mood. On their 2019 self-titled debut (released by OBE/Empire), they refashion modern funk, boogie, and yacht rock into a backdrop for a revolving door of popular rappers and vocalists, including .Paak, Syd of the Internet, Daniel Caesar, Mac Miller, Kali Uchis, T.I., Conway, and Westside Gunn. Too often, *Free Nationals* feels like it's aimed at listeners who'd prefer to hear the band back their favorite MC rather than take center stage—but the group's refined recontextualization of retro and underground pop styles deserves a real shot on its own terms. The Free Nationals showcase their versatility throughout the album, but usually they mold their sound to fit the personalities of the guest vocalists rather than foregrounding their own talents and tastes. Even within these self-imposed limitations, though, they can crank out electric performances—particularly when they aim to make the suavest sounds imaginable. On the blue-eyed soul number "Apartment," featuring the gently lilting vocals of Dutch pop artist Benny Sings, the Free Nationals' easygoing, luscious melodies create a heartening glow. —LEOR GALIL

JEFF PARKER & THE NEW BREED See also *Monday, 8 PM and 11 PM, Dorian's, 1939 W. North, \$15, early show sold out.* 21+

Chicago music remains interesting and vital partly because of how local subcultures overlap and intersect. The city has plenty of tight communities of musicians focused on specific sounds, but the borders around those communities are porous; impro-



Jeff Parker JIM NEWBERRY

vising multi-instrumentalists collaborate with rappers, hip-hop producers take in jazz gigs, and rock musicians immerse themselves in hardware-centric underground dance scenes. This cross-pollinating ecosystem owes its continued existence to figures such as Jeff Parker. He's famous as a jazz guitarist, a member of Tortoise, an in-demand sideman, and a free improviser, but he also has less well-publicized talents: his DJ sets at defunct Wicker Park club Rodan attracted jazz fiends and arty hip-hop producers who've since built up Chicago's blossoming beat scene. Parker moved to Los Angeles in 2013, but he's kept Chicago close to his heart. In January, he put out *Suite for Max Brown*, his second solo album for celebrated local label International Anthem (in partnership with indie heavy Nonesuch). As he did for 2016's *The New Breed*, Parker shaped the new album's songs by experimenting with hip-hop production and synth hardware, fleshing out his early demos into lush recordings that retain the electricity and feel of a dusty, eccentric vinyl sample hiccuping through a hip-hop cut. Parker handles much of the instrumentation on *Suite for Max Brown* himself—he plays guitar, piano, drums, and a semi-modular Korg synthesizer on the whimsically unsteady “Build a Nest,” which sounds complete thanks to the surefooted vocals of emerging Chicago talent Ruby Parker (who's also his daughter). On other tracks, he taps into his extensive network of musician friends to bring his material home; drummer Makaya McCraven and bassist Paul Bryan help give “Go Away” its thrilling combination of slinky riffs, bustling rhythms, and mesmerizing atmosphere. —LEOR GALIL

MONDAY⁹

LOWER DENS See *Pick of the Week*, page 36.
:3lon opens. 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln,
 \$18. 18+

PALOMA MAMI Opens yet to be announced.

7:30 PM, Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, sold out.

Paloma Rocío Castillo Astorga, better known as Paloma Mami, was only 18 when she released her debut single, 2018's “Not Steady.” Lugubrious and resoundingly confident, the song made clear she wasn't callow: “I don't change for no dick,” she declares over a soft-edged dancehall beat whose nocturnal aura sets the tone for a night spent wisely (yet sadly) alone. The Chilean-American artist was signed by Sony Latin on the strength of that one single, and since then she's gained worldwide popularity. Castillo decided to pursue music seriously after watching reggaeton superstar Bad Bunny perform live, and the stage name she chose was inspired by Drake's Instagram handle, @champagnepapi. Paloma Mami shares those artists' love for woozy, melancholy atmospheres, but she has no use for their querulous and self-loathing attitudes: On “Fingias,” she rails against an ex-lover over a moody reggaeton beat, her breathless delivery conveying a melange of bitterness, despondency, and longing. Then on “Mami” she plays the role of femme fatale, declaring that she's “more powerful than two Nefertitis” and commanding her lover to keep calling her “mami.” Though she's only released a handful of singles so far, Paloma Mami has already proved herself one of reggaeton's brightest new stars—and at her Chicago debut, she'll be able to win over a new audience. —JOSHUA MINSOO KIM

JEFF PARKER & THE NEW BREED See Sunday.
 8 PM and 11 PM, Dorian's, 1939 W. North, \$15, early
 show sold out. 21+

TUESDAY¹⁰

BEST COAST See also Wednesday. *Mannequin Pussy* opens. 8 PM, SPACE, 1245 Chicago Ave.,
 Evanston, sold out.

California duo Best Coast are a long way away from

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Mar 15

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Free Throw, Pool Kids

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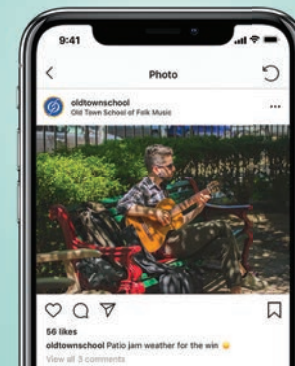
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Best Coast @ EDDIE CHACON

continued from 39

the bite-size stoner love songs and sun-drenched slacker tales of their 2010 debut album, *Crazy for You*. On their brand-new fourth LP, *Always Tomorrow* (Concord), singer-songwriter and guitarist Bethany Cosentino and multi-instrumentalist Bobb Bruno pair beefed-up power chords with clear-eyed observations, a newfound sense of optimism, and an ambitious look toward the future. It's the band's most straightforward rock 'n' roll record to date, but it still has echoes of the SoCal skater vibe and lo-fi pop-punk warmth that defined their breakthrough tunes, such as *Crazy for You*'s "When I'm With You" and "Boyfriend." Cosentino and Bruno have honed their one-two punch of 60s melodies and laid-back rhythms ("True" will surely tug at the heartstrings of Best Coast purists) while trading fuzzy distortion for bold, slick riffs and snappy percussion. Cosentino's mighty vocals flavor "Graceless Kids," "Rollercoaster" and "Make It Last," which balance new life lessons and "work in progress" reality checks (she got sober in 2017) with the overwhelmingly posi-

tive vibes emanating from the album as a whole. While 2015's *California Nights* portrayed a love-struck woman afraid to let go, Cosentino has better topics to address now: becoming the master of her own mind, getting tired of writing about the same old unhealthy behaviors and relationships ("Seeing Red"), and finding the power in shedding her former self ("Different Light"). Culminating with "Used to Be," a slow-burning, shoegaze-tinged anthem that nods to the band's arena aspirations, *Always Tomorrow* showcases Best Coast's evolution and sharpened focus—and Cosentino finally seems ready to sing a different kind of song. —**JESSI ROTI**

WEDNESDAY 11

BEST COAST See Tuesday. *Mannequin Pussy* opens. 8:30 PM, Thalia Hall, 1807 S. Allport, \$25-\$35. 17+

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TUE 3/10
SPEED BABES • THE BOMBATS

12PM FREE
SAT 3/7
BOTTLE BRUNCH WITH MARIA TZ & JOSH FOX
THE MAKE-UP
DEADBEAT BEAT

WED 3/11
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THE GOD AWFUL SMALL AFFAIRS

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FENNESZ
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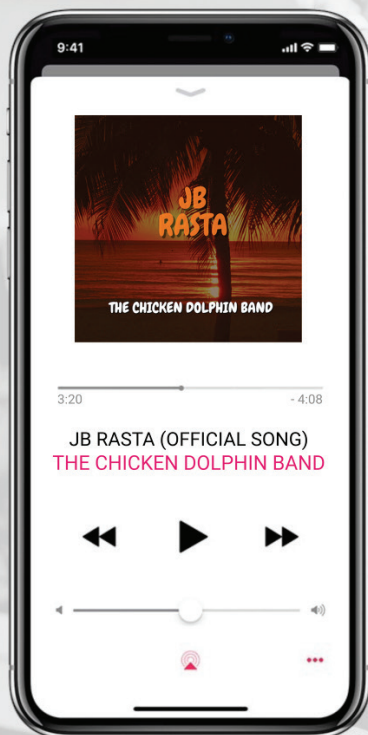
BOB WEIR & WOLF BROS Also Thu 3/12 at the same time and venue. 7 PM, Chicago Theatre, 175 N. State, \$60-\$415. 

Every member of the Grateful Dead played a vital role in the band: Jerry Garcia was the spaced-out leader, Mickey Hart was the shamanic spiritual guide, and Phil Lesh was the giant brain. Rhythm guitarist and vocalist Bob Weir—the spry youngest member—was the group’s heart and soul. His obtuse, jazzy chord structures drove the Dead’s most mind-expanding jams, and his infectious enthusiasm and joyful playing brought out the freewheeling spirit of their best material. The 2015 reunion of the Grateful Dead revitalized interest

in the band, and no member has capitalized on it more than Weir. That year he joined Hart and the group’s other longtime drummer, Bill Kreutzmann, to found the unstoppable Dead & Company (fronted by Weir and John Mayer), and in 2016 he released his first solo studio album since 1978, *Blue Mountain*. Over the past couple of years he’s assembled a new trio, the Wolf Bros, with Les Claypool cohort Jay Lane on drums and rock producer Don Was on bass. They’re a stripped-down group, especially compared to early-70s iterations of the Dead—which at times had up to eight members onstage—but they can tear through rock standards and Dead classics. As he settles into his 70s, Weir is shining in his late-career renaissance. —**LUCA CIMARUSTI** 

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C.W. Stoneking KANE HIBBERD

NEW

Acid Witch, Hitter, Henry Chinski, Dead Sacraments 5/30, 7 PM, Reggie's Music Joint
Yemi Alade 7/1, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+
Dee Alexander & John McLean 3/15, 7:30 PM, the Promontory
Phil Angotti, Mark Watson Band 4/24, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 3/6, 11 AM
Arca 5/8, 9 PM, Metro, 18+
Armor For Sleep 8/14, 7 PM, Metro
Bendigo Fletcher, Minor Moon 3/17, 8 PM, Schubas, 18+
Bent Knee 4/11, 9 PM, Sleeping Village
Black Keys, Gary Clark Jr., Marcus King Band 7/25, 7 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park
Black Pumas, Seratones 3/26, 9 PM, House of Blues, 17+
Blackberry Smoke, Allman Betts Band 7/19, 6 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM, 17+
Bonefang 7/25, 9 PM, Concord Music Hall, 17+
Breaking Benjamin, Bush 8/6, 5 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM
Jimmy Buffett 7/18, 8 PM, United Center
The Business, Bar Stool Preachers 6/9, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+
Car Seat Headrest, Ron Gallo 5/29-5/30, 7:30 PM, the Vic
Case-fitter 3/25, 9 PM, Hungry Brain
Cash Box Kings 5/15, 8 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 3/6, 11 AM
Clannad 9/15, 8 PM, Irish American Heritage Center, 17+

Coathangers 6/13, 9:15 PM, Empty Bottle
Micah Collier 3/22, 7:30 PM, the Promontory
Thomas Comerford 3/13, 9 PM, Hungry Brain
Marshall Crenshaw & the Bottle Rockets 5/29, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM
Daphne 2020: Diamond Formation featuring Sherelle, ASL Princess, Ariel Zetina 3/27, 10 PM, Smart Bar
Daphne 2020 presents Laurel Halo, Beta Librae (DJ set), Sold 3/21, 10 PM, Smart Bar
Deafheaven, Inter Arma, Greet Death 3/24-3/25, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+
Dragonforce 3/15, 6 PM, House of Blues
Early Eyes, Ember Oceans 3/20, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, 17+
Fabulous Fucking Fabian Fest featuring Vicious Attack, Johnny Vomit, and more 3/14, 7 PM, Cobra Lounge, 17+
Front Left Speaker one-year anniversary party featuring T Mixwell and more 3/25, 1 PM, GMan Tavern
Robbie Fulks 4/18, 5 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM
Rami Gabriel's Arabic Xhman 3/12, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+
Geographer 5/15, 10 PM, Empty Bottle, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM
Goody Grace 5/6, 7:30 PM, Subterranean
Adam Green, Nation of Language 3/13, 10 PM, Schubas, 18+
Jason Hawk Harris 6/25, 8 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 3/6, 11 AM
Woodrow Hart & the Haymaker, Old Heavy Hands 3/17, 9:30 PM, Hideout

Horse Lords, Hecks, Fetter 3/21, 9:30 PM, Hideout
Horse Lords, Olivia Block 3/20, 9:30 PM, Hideout
Hotel Books, Comrades, State Faults, Frail Body 3/30, 8 PM, Subterranean, 17+
Eric Hutchinson, Jeremy Messersmith 6/5, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+
Illegal Smile, Ryan Schultz Trio 4/22, 9 PM, Hungry Brain
Christone "Kingfish" Ingram 6/5, 9 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM
Kaleo, Matt Maeson, Belle MT 7/17, 7 PM, Aragon Ballroom, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM
Lucy Kaplansky 5/17, 7 PM, Szold Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music
Robert Earl Keen 4/29, 8 PM, Thalia Hall, 17+
Knee-Hi's, Little Man, Greg Woods 4/5, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen
Kraftwerk 7/21, 8 PM, Aragon Ballroom, 17+
Stu Larsen, Ken Yates 5/13, 8 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Dylan LeBlanc, David Quinn 4/29, 9 PM, Sleeping Village
Dana Legg Band 3/29, 6 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn
Jens Lekman, Eddy Kwon, Chicago Metamorphosis Orchestra 4/28, 7 PM, Thalia Hall
Lil Mosey, Bankrol Hayden 3/22, 7 PM, House of Blues
Liz, Adam Kraft 4/20, 9 PM, Schubas, 18+
Stephen Marley 3/31, 8 PM, The Promontory
Methadones, Direct Hit!, Dan Vapid & the Cheats, Cappun Heroes 6/27, 8 PM, Chop Shop, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM, 18+
Shawn Mullins 4/7, 8 PM, City Winery

New Order, Pet Shop Boys 9/18, 6:45 PM, Huntington Bank Pavilion
Leslie Odom Jr., Victoria Canal 3/18, 7 PM, House of Blues
Of Montreal, Lily & Horn Horse 3/12, 8 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+
Omar-S, Shaun J. Wright 4/3, 10 PM, Smart Bar
OTR 6/26, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM, 18+
Oysterhead featuring Les Claypool, Trey Anastasio, & Stewart Copeland 4/22, 8 PM, Aragon Ballroom, 17+
Peelander-Z 5/19, 9:15 PM, Empty Bottle
Noam Pikely & Andrew Marlin 5/10, 2 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music
Pop Evil, Brkn Love 6/26, 7 PM, Bottom Lounge, 17+
Possessed, Pestilence, Black Moriah, Noose, Voimaton 3/20, 8 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+
Post Consumer Material, Rush Falknor, Breastmilk, Family Grimoire 3/17, 9 PM, Empty Bottle

Ceschi Ramos, Moodie Black, Spoken Nerd, Curta 3/18, 8 PM, Beat Kitchen
Caroline Rose, Toth 4/3, 9 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+
Rudy Rude Fest featuring Cerebro Negro, Los Cadejos, Dissonance & Dissent, Nahuales Underground 3/21, 7 PM, Bananna's Comedy Shack at Reggie's, 18+
Santana, Earth Wind & Fire 7/11, 7 PM, Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre, Tinley Park
Ty Segall & Freedom Band 5/4-5/7, 7:30 PM, Thalia Hall
Six Organs of Admittance 4/15, 8:30 PM, Constellation, 18+
Skatalites 6/21, 8 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM
Jill Sobule 6/9, 7:30 PM, SPACE, Evanston, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM
Omar Sosa & Gustavo Ovalles duo 3/12, 8 and 10 PM, Jazz Showcase
Omar Sosa/Yilian Casnazares/Gustavo Ovalles 3/13-3/14, 8 and 10 PM; 3/15, 4 and 8 PM, Jazz Showcase
Soul Summit Dance Party featuring Skeme Richards 3/28, 9 PM, Empty Bottle
Sounds, Starbenders 5/5, 8 PM, Cobra Lounge, 17+
Soup & Bread featuring DJ Leor Galil 3/18, 5:30 PM, Hideout
South By Southwest Send-Off featuring Ohmme, VV. Lightbody, Waco Brothers, Roy Kinsey, Fran, Wyatt Waddell, James Swanberg, Faux Furrs 3/14, 4 PM, Hideout
Lindsay Stirling, Kiesza, Mako 8/10, 7 PM, Huntington Bank Pavilion

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C.W. Stoneking 4/9, 9 PM, Sleeping Village
Sun Blvd, Richienough, Bonita Appleblunt 3/19, 8 PM, The Promontory
System 2 featuring Africans With Mainframes, Chris Hefner, Matt Shaw, Physical Medium DJs 3/22, 8:30 PM, Empty Bottle
Tennyson 4/25, 9 PM, Sleeping Village
Sam Trump & the Soul Vortex, Native Sun 3/18, 9:15 PM, Empty Bottle
Two Feet, Upsahl 5/26, 9 PM, Metro, 18+
Dan Tyminski 6/19, 8 PM, Maurer Hall, Old Town School of Folk Music
Vandoliers, David Quinn 4/25, 9:30 PM, Hideout
Velnias, Pale Horseman 3/20, 8 PM, Cobra Lounge, 17+
Vérité, Bianco, Emily Blue 3/26, 8 PM, Lincoln Hall, 18+
Donnie Vie 5/23, 8:30 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 3/6, 11 AM
Violence, Dysphoria, Wraith, Gavel 3/21, 7 PM, Reggie's Rock Club, 17+
Violent Femmes, X 5/30, 8 PM, Radius Chicago, on sale Fri 3/6, 10 AM, 17+
Vista, Authentic Pines, Long Gone, Splits 4/10, 6:30 PM, Subterranean, 17+
Waltzer, Elijah Berlow, Max Subar, Sarah Weddle 3/28, 9 PM, Subterranean, 17+
Wildlife, Betcha 4/25, 6 PM, Cobra Lounge
Zelienople, Chloe Yu Nong Lin & P.M. Tummala 4/22, 9:30 PM, Hideout
Zimmermen 5/30, 9 PM, FitzGerald's, Berwyn, on sale Fri 3/6, 11 AM

UPDATED

Luke Combs, Ashley McBryde, Ray Fulcher 11/5-11/6, 7 PM, United Center, 11/6 show added A
Soulwax 10/3, 8 PM, Metro, Date changed, 18+

UPCOMING

Acacia Strain, Rotting Out, Creeping Death 3/25, 7 PM, Subterranean, 17+
Ekali 3/20, 8 PM, Concord Music Hall, 18+
Habibi, Cam's Jams 3/13, 9:30 PM, Hideout



GOSSIP WOLF

A furry ear to the ground of the local music scene

GOSSIP WOLF HAS been tearing it up at Chicago clubs to the mixes of legendary DJ **Teri Bristol** since the mid-90s. Fellow enthusiasts of late-night booty shaking no doubt remember her epic sets at **Medusa's**, at **Smart Bar**, and alongside Psycho-Bitch at **Crobar's** Sunday-night **G.L.E.E. Club** (aka Gay, Lesbian, Everyone's Equal). In January, Bristol was hospitalized in Tennessee for kidney failure; she's had surgery and gone on dialysis, and her bills are piling up. To raise money, a slew of friends and top-notch DJs—including **Greg Haus, DJ Heather, Jeff Pazen, Jevon Jackson, Boy Alberto, and Blu 9**—will spin at the **One Love for Teri Bristol** fund-raiser at Smart Bar on Saturday, March 28. Fans can also donate to a **GoFundMe** page set up by Bristol's loved ones. Get well soon, Teri! This wolf can't wait to see you back behind the decks!

Impulsive Hearts have a history of dropping summer-themed jams just when it seems like warm weather might never come back—plus they use their music to do good! The local five-piece, led by singer-songwriter **Danielle Sines**, donated proceeds from a 2019 EP to Chicago sexual-violence-prevention nonprofit Resilience. Their excellent sophomore full-length, **Cry All The Time**, arrives Friday, March 6 (via Midwest Action and Cavity Search), and a portion of vinyl sales will benefit **Girls Rock! Chicago**. Impulsive Hearts play Thursday, March 19, at **Sleeping Village** as part of **Midwest Action's Spring Showcase** with Bev Rage & the Drinks, Harvey Fox, and Richard Album.

Last week, oddball soul visionary **Zango the Third** released a charming, synth-based album called **Boketto**, which he wrote following "a profound experience with my brother that prepped me for tragedies that happened in the coming months." The contemplative mood he lends to his easygoing melodies makes songs such as the yacht-rock-tinged "Tree Bark Crown (Resurface)" even better. —**J.R. NELSON AND LEOR GALIL**

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



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OPINION

SAVAGE LOVE

Should I treat my throat like a Fleshlight?

Plus, advice for a man who just wants his wife to wear a fake cast.

By **DAN SAVAGE**

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Q: I'm a middle-aged gay man and I was recently diagnosed with sleep apnea. This is a disorder caused by the soft tissue in the throat collapsing during sleep. On top of making me feeling tired and awful all the time, sleep apnea is associated with a long list of health complications. I'm writing you because I'm into very rough oral. I like it when a guy treats my throat like a Fleshlight. Gagging and retching turn me on. Since I don't want to risk making my condition worse, I stopped giving blowjobs after my diagnosis. But will giving blowjobs the way I like to give them actually make things worse? The Internet was not helpful, and I didn't feel comfortable asking the sleep specialist.

—**REALLY EXCITED TO CHOKE HARMLESSLY**

A: "The vast majority of people with sleep apnea have obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), which is what I assume this individual has," said Dr. Anna Grosz, a board certified otolaryngologist in practice in Portland, Oregon. "It results from muscle relaxation and collapse in the airway (throat), which narrows the passage for air to flow and then makes it harder to breathe and get oxygen." (Otolaryngologists specialize in diseases and disorders of the ear, nose,

and throat.)

So when you fall asleep, RETCH, the muscles in your throat relax and collapse, restricting your ability to breathe. Your brain—which doesn't want to die—responds to this oxygen deprivation by waking you up, which tenses your muscles back up, un-collapsing them, and allowing you to breathe again.

"Someone with OSA gags or chokes in response to the apnea, not as a cause," Dr. Grosz clarified. "And while the contraction of the muscles opens the airway, it leads to poor sleep because the person is constantly being woken up."

Now for the good news: Dr. Grosz doesn't think choking on dick is going to make your OSA any worse, RETCH, and it might even make it better. "Theoretically," said Dr. Grosz, "increased tone of the muscles of the airway might be a good thing in terms of strengthening those muscles." Now, there's no evidence that having your throat used like a Fleshlight will strengthen your ol' throat muscles, but there's no evidence that getting face-fucked will weaken them, either. (Needless to say, there aren't a lot of studies on OSA and rough oral sex—and seeing as our public-health officials are busy trying to protect us from a worldwide pandemic and our imbecilic president,

there probably won't be any studies anytime soon.)

"Ultimately, I don't think your reader is at risk of making his sleep apnea worse by continuing his oral sex practices," said Dr. Grosz. "And to improve his sleep apnea, he could make sure he maintains a healthy weight, doesn't smoke, and avoids excess alcohol or sedatives."

Q: I'm struggling and could use some advice. I have a cast fetish—think orthopedic casts—and my wife isn't interested at all. To be clear, I don't want her to be injured in any way and I certainly don't want to injure her. I just like the idea of her wearing a cast on her leg. It's not even entirely sexual. If she would just wear a cast for a couple of hours while we hang out and watch a movie, I'd be happy. When we met eight years ago, I was in denial about the importance of my fetish, both to myself and to her. I've since realized that it's a deal breaker for me, and it's clear we wouldn't be together today if I had been aware of the extent of my fetish when we first met and been able to be honest about it. Over the years, we've briefly spoken about incorporating it, and we had a single failed attempt a few years ago. I've finally come to the realization that this isn't going to happen without it being forced or coerced. She's recently

offered to participate, but only because she thinks she needs to in order to “save our marriage.” How do I cope with this? Obviously, a need of mine will be perpetually unmet. How do I keep myself from resenting her for not being more open-minded? Is our marriage doomed? We have a nine-month-old child.

—CHURLISH ABOUT SUDDEN TURN

A: You just had a child—because of course you just had a child—which means now is not the time to do anything stupid. Or rash. And ending your marriage because your wife failed to understand how important your fetish was to you before you understood how important your fetish was to you would be both stupid and rash. So take a deep breath, help care for your baby, and have a conversation with your wife the next time she isn't completely exhausted, CAST, which could mean waiting three to six months.

If it's clear when you talk that she hates the thought of pulling on a fake cast and watching a movie with you—what you say you need to be happy—that will come out in the conversation. But if she's come to understand how important this cast business is to you and how little it actually requires of her, please do yourself, your wife, and your baby a favor and take the yes you've always wanted for a mother-fucking answer.

And finally, CAST, I don't know what your dick is telling you right now, but just in case it's telling you there

are hordes of women out there with cast fetishes who are also into recently single new fathers with child-support payments to make, *your dick is lying to you*. A new girlfriend, if you can find one, might wear a cast for you, but she'll be doing it for the same reason your wife is willing to: in order to make your kinky ass happy.

Q: I'm a straight man who enjoys the erotic “mummification” experience. My wife finds the process of wrapping me in cling film and duct tape extremely tedious, as it takes more than an hour and she doesn't derive pleasure from it. So we decided to invest in a sleep sack, which will shorten the process considerably. I found a leather artisan on Etsy who makes them to order. During a video chat about sizing, the artisan made a reference to the “lucky man” who would be putting me in my sleep sack. I informed him I am straight. He apologized, saying that in his experience, it is mostly gay men who invest in this type of gear. I was nevertheless offended by his assumption. Your thoughts?

—GOT EXTREMELY AFFRONTED RECENTLY

A: First thought: If gay men collapsed into puddles every time someone assumed we were straight, GEAR, we'd have to be reclassified as a liquid.

Second thought: As a gay man, I'm sometimes annoyed when people assume I'm straight. But it's not an unreasonable assumption,

since most people are straight. It's also rarely a malicious assumption. Similarly, GEAR, since all of the men who've commissioned this Etsy artisan to make them sleep sacks in the past have been gay, the assumption he made about you wasn't unreasonable. And it's hard to see malice in it. The offense you've taken, on the other hand, strikes me as both unreasonable and malicious; it's unreasonable in that you would come crying to a queer person about something like this, and it's malicious in that your reaction is so obviously rooted in homophobia (so what if some dude thought you might be gay?) and yet you came crying to a gay man about it.

Final thought: Whereas as a straight person who's assumed to be gay can correct the record without fear, a gay person who's assumed to be straight has to do a risk assessment first: Is this person going to freak out or get violent? Having to do those sorts of risk assessments all your life—starting in childhood with your own family—can take an emotional toll. So instead of being angry or offended by this experience, GEAR, you should be grateful that you can say, “Actually, I'm straight,” without having to worry about being punched in your stupid face or kicked out of your parents' house. **✪**

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LEGAL NOTICES

STATE OF ILLINOIS, PUBLICATION NOTICE OF COURT DATE FOR REQUEST FOR NAME CHANGE. Location Cook County - County Division - Case Type: Name Change from Alberto Alonso Blazquez to Alberto Alonso. Court Date April 13, 2020, 9:30 AM in Courtroom #1706 Case # 2020CONC000200

STATE OF ILLINOIS, PUBLICATION NOTICE OF COURT DATE FOR REQUEST FOR NAME CHANGE. Location Cook County-County Division-Case Type: Name Change from Jiaheir Marquise Taylor to Jiaheir Marquise Bean Court Date April 27, 2020, 9:30 am in Courtroom # 1706 Case # 2020CONC120.

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to "An Act in relation to the use of an Assumed Business Name in the conduct or transaction of Business in the State" as amended, that a certification was registered by the undersigned with the Country Clerk of Cook County. Registration Number: Y20003262 on February 24, 20202. Under the Assumed Business Name of BRIFIO. With the business located at:

4105 N Sheridan RD APT 1s, Chicago, IL 60613.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, PUBLICATION NOTICE OF COURT DATE FOR REQUEST FOR NAME CHANGE. Location Cook County - County Division - Case Type: Name Change from JULIO RANGEL RIVERA JR to DeLuca Ethan Amasiano Court Date April 13, 2020, 9:30 AM in Courtroom #1706 Case # 2020CONC000222

MARKET PLACE ADULT SERVICES

Danielle's Lip Service, Erotic Phone Chat. 24/7. Must be 21+. Credit/Debit Cards Accepted. All Fetishes and Fantasies Are Welcomed. Personal, Private and Discrete.

READER matches

Married 1991 thanks to Reader Matches!

Met my DH in 1990 through Matches, 29th wedding anniversary this year! Glad that Matches are back for a new gen, wishing you luck and love!! kmb4004@gmail.com

Deeply Groovy

My dentist says my molars have deep grooves. My dad says I have always been bad at accepting reality. Looking to get gin n tonics with someone who's little heart also has deep grooves and who feels a better world is possible (especially one without prisons). erinoconnor99@gmail.com Instagram: @chicagoangothic

Hello? Is It Me You're Looking For? (And Other Cheesy Jokes)

Library science student, roller derby skater, and performer seeking women/non-binary folx to adventure and laugh with. Interests include skating, hiking, hanging out at the GP Conservatory, art-ing, cooking, and finding new hobbies to take on. Google Voice: 312-772-6129 Twitter @lisadubs13 Instagram: @lisaintheevening

Lucky Me

A year ago, you lived over 1,600 miles away from me, and my heart was across the country with you. At the time, this life we now share in Chicago felt like a dream, way too good to be true. But here we are! Thanks for the best 2 years, my love; here's to countless more.

Reluctant Optimist Seeks Similar to Enjoy the Spring 24F seeks a partner(M20s) for

interesting dinners citywide and reading through Best-Of lists. U: make me laugh w/o being mean. Me: cooks you duck l'orange. Shd love basketball, nerd shit, bad wine, good beer, and pop music of all eras. BernieBros bore me- M4A, but this ass isn't. Twitter and Instagram: @LivKunc

55 yr old creep wooing for wub. Used to score with Reader Matches when Clinton was President and the future looked bright

To be or not to be--dat is da question. Chicago born and bred with the accent to prove it. Not as thin as I was in the 90's, but the receding hairline masks it. I have fewer health issues than most men my age and no recent criminal convictions. Funnier than funny looking.

Sexy Senior Searcher

Although there's some snow on the roof, this active 60+ still has a fire down below... seeking a lady who enjoys life. Attitude important... appearance not. windy_city_lover@yahoo.com

Let's have some fun and laughter!

Life is good and I am looking for a guy who enjoys fun, laughter, music and cultural events. For me it doesn't get much better than that. Let's connect and see what happens. Nothing ventured nothing gained. Opened to friendship and possibly romance. Seize the moment. Coolgalconnect@gmail.com

Vivacious, sparkly, #stacked 33F

Seeking gainfully employed, light-hearted, cultured, centered, athletic, tall/dark/handsome woke adult male, with varied interests who knows how to plan dates. sarachicago2020@gmail.com

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Cow Balloons

You: Got on the Blue line at rush hour on a Monday with two mylar cow balloons and nothing else. Me: Need to know where you were going.

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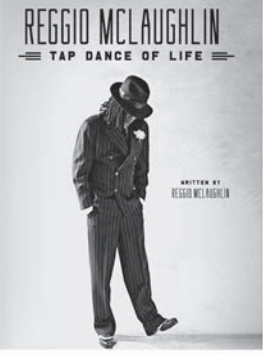
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