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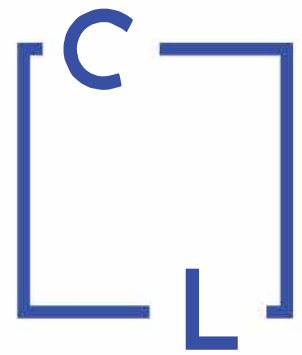
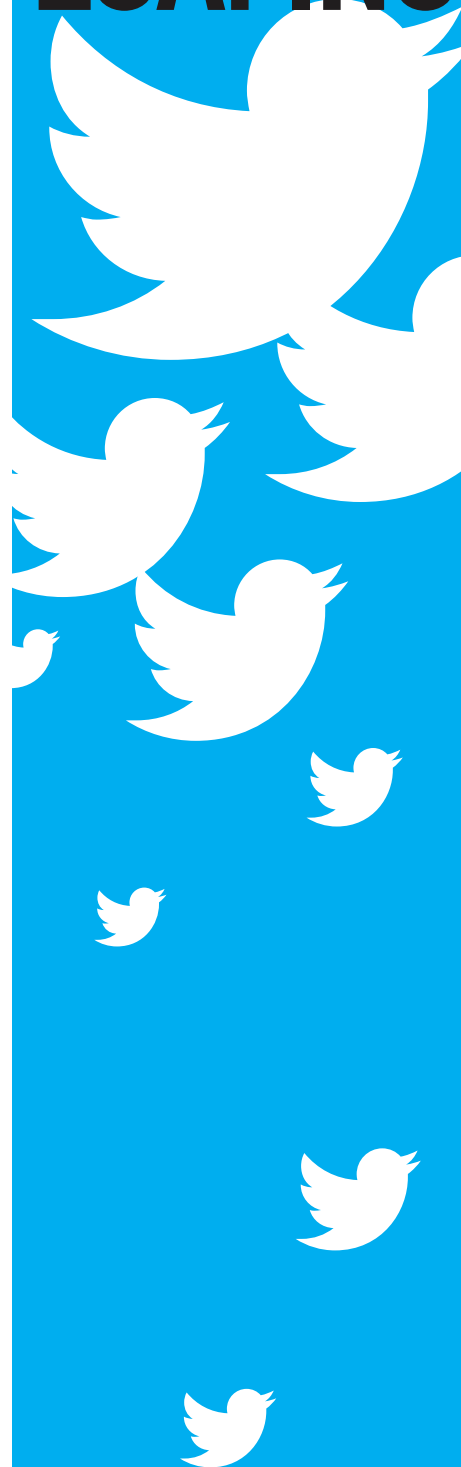
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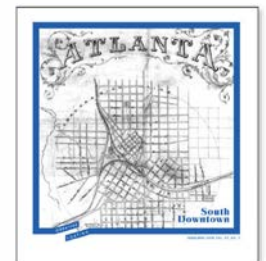
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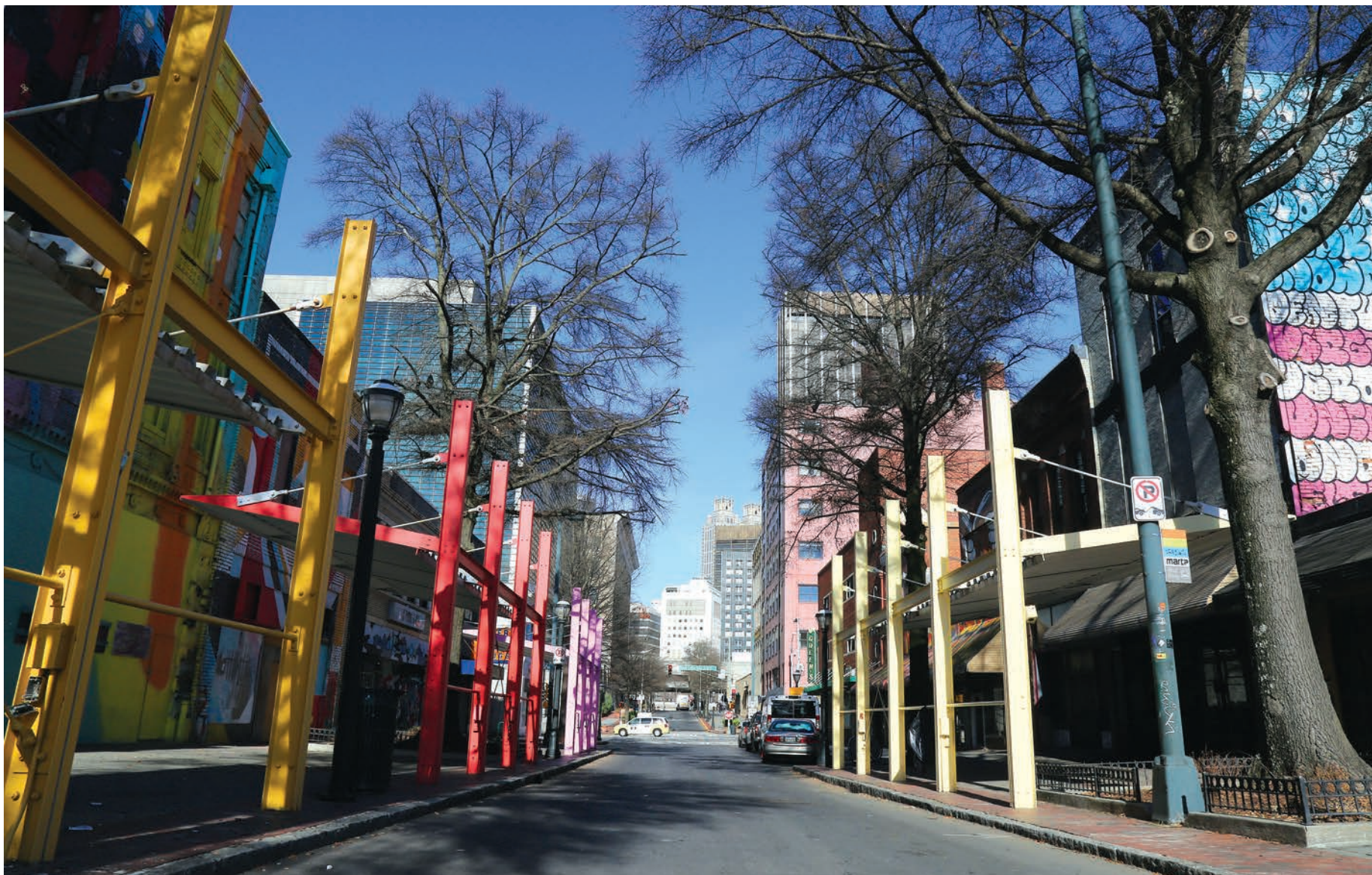
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# Breathing new life into South Downtown

Can Atlanta's arts communities survive and thrive in an area primed for drastic change?



MAMMOTH MAKEOVER: Mammal Gallery (left) on South Broad Street will witness the transformation of its surroundings in years to come.

SEAN KEENAN

**O**rchestrating South Downtown's colossal revamp will entail something of a balancing act for the developers that have scooped up scores of intown properties. Can they polish the place without sanding down its cultural identity? Will the neighborhood's artists, venue owners, and weirdos head for the hills if its graffiti-laden side streets are peppered with artisan soap shops and high-brow watering holes? Only time will tell. But there's no denying that big changes are afoot for the streets that hold some of Downtown Atlanta's most celebrated DIY art and music haunts.

The American arm of German developer Newport Real Estate is currently reimagining dozens of South Downtown properties strung along Peachtree, Mitchell, and Broad Streets, with plans to spruce up the area via road diets —

sacrificing automobile lanes for bike paths and walkways — retail renovations, and retrofittings of historic buildings. The neighborhood could see considerable changes by springtime.

The infamous Gulch, a mammoth swath of parking spaces and train tracks surrounded by Mercedes-Benz Stadium on the west, Martin Luther King Jr. Drive on the south, and the CNN Center parking deck on the northeast, is staring down the barrel of an overhaul, the likes of which the neighborhood has never seen. Amazon might even commandeer the plot for the future site of its second headquarters. Atlanta made the 20-strong short list of prospective cities to host the internet retail giant's HQ2.

Amid an abundance of other blueprints sketched to give South Downtown a much-needed makeover, Underground Atlanta — which hasn't wooed substantial business in years — awaits a primping that, much like the aforementioned

redevelopment efforts, has Atlantans wondering how the local culture will change with the times.

There's no denying that words such as development, gentrification, and urban living, in Atlanta, have become synonymous with cultural colonialism. The real estate blitz is, no doubt, a harbinger for an overhauled version of South Downtown. But stakeholders who thrive on the cutting edge of the city's arts, music, and cultural institutions — the Masquerade, Eyedrum, Mammal Gallery, and Murmur — are notably optimistic that efforts to jumpstart the heart of the city mean opportunities for positive change. But it's up to the city's Downtown arts dwellers to harness its potential.

The Masquerade is a longtime staple of Atlanta's bustling and rambunctious music scene. It became a household name for punk rockers, hip-hop heads, and metal maniacs in its previous North Avenue location. The Masquerade

has hosted shows by such lauded and far-reaching acts as Nirvana, Kendrick Lamar, the Cranberries when they were relatively unknown artists at the beginning of their careers.

In December, after nearly a year of settling into its new home in Kenny's Alley at Underground Atlanta, the Masquerade signed a 10-year lease to stay put. The lease came as a sigh of relief, and a sign of some permanence for the club that was ousted last year from its home of nearly 30 years to make way for boutique shopping and fine dining on the Beltline.

After a brief shake-up with plans to relocate to northwest Atlanta – a nearby residential landlord sued to put the kibosh on plans to start anew across the street, citing concerns of expected noise complaints and other disturbances – the Masquerade's new home in Kenny's Alley serves as ground zero for the multiplex's turnaround.

WRS Inc. Real Estate Investments, the development boss behind the recent buy of Underground, aims to wrap the Masquerade in a mix of new retail and residences, leaving some skeptics concerned about the club's future. Will the hallowed concert hall succumb to the development trend of bulldozing history and culture? Ponce City Market, which towers near the Masquerade's original location, offers a glimpse at the city's tendency to inject abandoned properties with lucrative, luxurious places to hang – er, spend.

Nevertheless, the Masquerade's leadership isn't batting an eye at the changes to come. In fact, they're embracing their new digs with open arms, reaping the benefits of existing in this too-long-neglected slice of Downtown Atlanta. And for that, management is grateful.

As with years prior, the Masquerade is booking more and more shows at its latest setting, says Greg Green, the venue's booking manager. A survey of the venue's February show calendar reveals performances by everyone from

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, punk act Anti-Flag to Chicago's hyper-sexualized rapper, Cupcakke.

The first order of business after signing a long lease is to build out of the three-part music house, which will turn Heaven – the largest among the Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell stages – into a bigger auditorium, primed for nearly 1,500 concertgoers. The venue is adding a balcony by expanding upward into what used to be the Underground Atlanta food court.

"The Downtown neighbors have expressed happiness with having us here," Green says. "They like having music here, and we certainly hope we can be a catalyst for growth on the property and Downtown in general."

The proximity to Georgia State University student ticket-buyers and MARTA doesn't hurt, either.

When asked if the prospect of uncontrollable nearby growth could hamper the booking practices of the Masquerade (i.e. would the venue have to book quieter, tamer acts?), Green says, "No way."

"I don't know that [WRS] really knew what we were, other than a music venue that was coming temporarily at first," he says. "But over time, they've come to appreciate what we have to offer, and vice versa."

Green says the venue's new location, unlike the former,



MAMMAL GALLERY: Chris Yonker

is shielded from noise leakage that could ruffle the feathers of the WRS tenants slated to fill in the spaces adjacent the venue. In response to concerns that Underground could evolve into a posh counterpart to Ponce City Market, Green says, patrons can continue to expect the same old, same old.

WRS' plans are still largely up in the air.

However, April Stammel, vice president of Newport

"We're not going to be able to keep everybody that's there, but we're certainly going to make every effort to try. One of the things that attracted us to this neighborhood was its arts scene."

– April Stammel, VP, Newport US

U.S., which will oversee some parts of the neighborhood just south and west of Underground, says that her firm wants to maintain many of the neighborhood's favorite spots, although what exactly stays and goes remains to be seen.

"We're not going to be able to keep everybody that's there, but we're certainly going to make every effort to try," Stammel says. "One of the things that attracted us to this neighborhood was its arts scene."

"How do you manage natural evolution, but at the same time be respectful of existing businesses and people and not have displacement?" asks Jennifer Ball, Vice President of Planning and Economic Development at Central Atlanta Progress, which helped concoct Downtown's walkable, more transit-friendly master plan. "I don't think there's a silver bullet. Generally speaking, Downtown is already much more affordable than many other places within the city, which is why some of the arts organizations found their way here."

Says Green: "There's an opportunity for the artistic com-



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munity to thrive along with the business community, as well as the educational community.”

And each of these communities can still play a role in the area's redevelopment. Representatives from the Newport have attended regular meetings of Neighborhood Planning Unit M. WRS has hosted a couple community meetings as required by City Council following the community protest of the abandonment of Alabama and Pryor streets.

Newport, in particular — now that's it's in the tail end of its acquisition phase — is seeking community input as the developer moves forward with its plans. And other artistic venues have been showing up for community discussions, in an effort to help shape their surroundings.

*Additional reporting by Alex Patton and Doug DeLoach. Interviews have been edited for length and clarity.*

As the wave of change to South Downtown looms on the horizon, denizens of the Broad Street Arts district — Mammal Gallery and Murmur, along with Eyedrum Art & Music Gallery a block away on Forsyth Street — weigh in with their thoughts and feelings about their respective places in Downtown's future landscape.

#### What have you brought to South Downtown?

**Chris Yonker, who co-owns Mammal Gallery with Brian Egan:** What Mammal has brought to the neighborhood is more people. People who hadn't seen this neighborhood before — different kinds of people, depending on what we book. Some shows we might have people who are mostly in their 40s. Others nights are people mostly in their 20s. We host film screenings, dance recitals, art shows, concerts, we even have studios in here. We just started bringing a lot of different people down here who never had a reason to hang out for an extended period of time.

**Brandon Sheats, Murmur, Executive Director:** [Murmur] tends to be the first stop for a number of artists that are trying to be seen and heard. South Downtown is still new enough that we can present pretty much whatever we want. If you're not an established visual artist yet, we're a pretty good fit for that down here. Murmur is an art gallery masquerading as a film studio masquerading as a performance stage masquerading as a comedy house, and it's all weird as shit, but somehow it fits together.

**Grace Kim, Eyedrum Vice-Chair:** Physically, piece by piece, over three years, the volunteers of Eyedrum have applied an investment of sweat equity, passion, and skills to transform a derelict, century-old, marginally utilized property into a functional community art space where two to five performances happen weekly. Where art exhibitions are constantly installed, exhibited, attended, and de-installed, and where community members meet for discus-

sions, planning, learning, and creative exchange.

**Chris Gravelly, Eyedrum Build-out Committee Chair, Music Committee:** Eyedrum's gallery is an incredible jumping-off point for up-and-coming artists. Our rooftop has hosted unforgettable experiences including dance performances, film screenings, and concerts. Our location has also allowed us to serve the surrounding homeless community by providing water and a snack or letting someone earn a temporary living by doing labor during build-outs.

**Tracy Woodard, Eyedrum Board member:** For years, Atlanta had a vertical hierarchy for artists. You had to graduate from a top 10 art school, have an exhibit in New York, and then make your name at Arts Center in Midtown. In a



MEMBERS OF THE EYEDRUM BOARD: Niel Fried (from left), Kelly Szatyari, Tracy Woodard, Grace Kim, Ed Hall, William Goldstein, Chris Gravelly.

sense, Eyedrum has democratized that process and given a voice to marginalized artists who otherwise could not afford the big-name galleries.

#### Do you feel a responsibility to the Downtown arts scene that you've helped create?

**Yonker:** Mammal co-founder Brian Egan and I have assumed some responsibility that we weren't necessarily aware of when we opened Mammal. That responsibility is not to put our opinions out there, as much as it is our responsibility to provide the platform for other people who have things to say, and try to be open-minded about how many points of view there are.

**Sheats:** Between us and the owners of the others places around here, we know that we're going to get older and want to do different things with our lives. So the idea is to create enough physical space, enough talent, and administrative and curatorial space for people to be able to pick up where we leave off, and go somewhere else with it. We've done a lot to move toward that. We've recently had arts dealers coming down to look at people's work. Things like that contribute to the longevity of work like this, even if it turns out to be in a different place.

#### Has Mercedes-Benz Stadium affected the neighborhood?

**Yonker:** Mercedes-Benz Stadium hasn't necessarily changed anything yet, but it will. As with any large development project or anything with that much money behind it, it's going to bring a lot of change. So far, the only thing it has really brought is traffic. Any time there's a football game, it's craziness down here. There will be more projects developed around it that may change things for us. It's just one puzzle piece to this whole Downtown push that all these developers are getting in on.

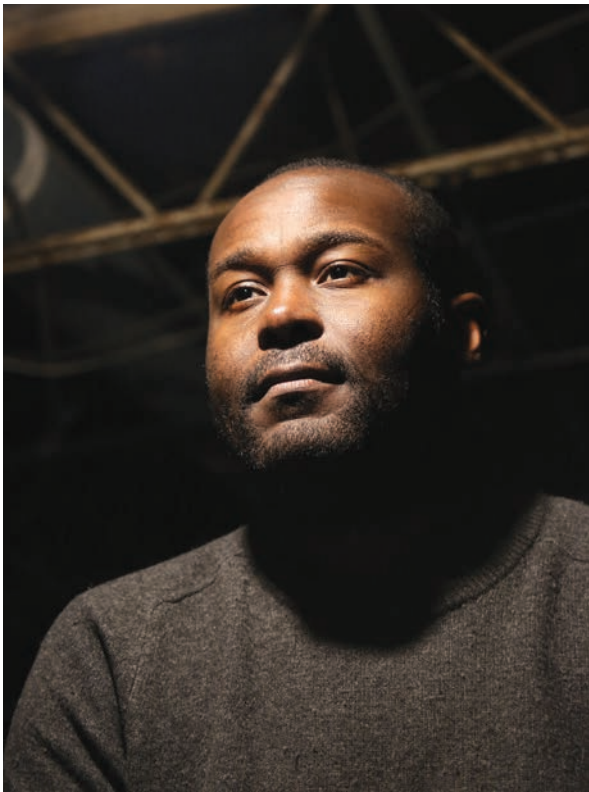
**Kim:** Aside from the obvious problems of traffic and the logistics of getting folks into Downtown, the stadium reinforces the Atlanta drive-to-and-through, commuter-consumer culture, which is a significant barrier. We need more restaurants and bars and entertainment businesses, which will bring exurbanites and suburbanites and ITPers to South Downtown where they can experience art and culture and other types of nightlife.

#### Does Downtown development make you nervous?

**Yonker:** I'm not nervous because this is going to happen all the time. Anywhere you are trying to run a business, the neighborhood will change over time. You just have to figure out how you fit in and how you can evolve with the neighborhood. If you don't want to evolve with that neighborhood, find another one that you do want to grow with. I might feel totally different about this neighborhood five years from now, and maybe I won't want to be here. I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing.

**Kim:** I am nervous because the future is truly unknown. [Bill Torpy's story] does not help assuage the anxiety that the creative community feels, nor does it empower people to see beyond the bankrupt trope of the all-powerful developer versus the victim-arts/community organizations. At the same time, I am excited because we have an opportunity to nurture a downtown that truly reflects the vibrancy and utility required by Atlanta's diverse community.

**Sheats:** We could hit a recession, although we're kind of recession-proof, as none of us are in it for the money.



BRANDON ENGLISH

MURMUR: Brandon Sheats

All of us are volunteer organizations down here. Newport could've said, "We want to make you into a coffee shop or a grocery store," or something like that, but they know that Murmur is important to the community here.

Being down here has made us kind of underground and ground-level at the same time. We have a number of people who want us to stay underground, but at the same time we have people who are established looking at us, wanting to know how they can get into our space. We're willing to challenge ourselves and our community, and reflect on that as positive change.

**Woodard:** As much as I applaud development in my beloved city, I'm afraid Atlanta will go the way of San Francisco and price out of everything that made it unique.

**Neil Fried, Eyedrum Treasurer and Film & Tech Committee chair:** If the property value goes up too quickly, it will be hard for a DIY arts organization to compete. It's likely we will have to change or move. By change I am talking about becoming a professional arts organization with a board of directors, which pays the bills and attends the black-tie events. That is not what Eyedrum is at its core. Eyedrum is made up mostly of artists who curate and facilitate shows. When artists and musicians are touring, they seek us out because they have heard about our DIY multimedia core.

**How have your dealings with WRS or Newport gone so far?**

**Yonker:** They are doing their best to understand the culture of this neighborhood. A lot of times you see development companies have an idea of what they want to do with an area, and they'll just cut and paste over what's already there. Newport has taken a light-handed approach to seeing what is already down here, and what's good for the neighborhood, and then adding to that ecosystem rather than

tearing everything out and starting from scratch. They've been good about talking to us before making any moves, which is refreshing. Like if they want to paint murals down here, they talk to us about doing it to keep the money in the neighborhood rather than flying down some random-ass artist that none of us know.

For an arts organization, a development company coming in is almost supposed to be a game of cat and dog, like we're supposed to hate each other. Technically, they're just coming in and fixing a lot of the broken stuff on these buildings and letting us stay in them. I don't see anything wrong with that.

**Sheats:** Their ownership out of Germany came down to meet with all of us, and they get that you can't have civic life without art and culture. When people say "live, work, play" they mean all kinds of bullshit. Newport gets that it can only happen in an organic, slow, sometimes painful way. There's an idea that places like South Downtown can attract attention as a place for people to hang out, and that middle-class people want to live within walking distance. Look at a neighborhood like Little Five Points: There's plenty of nice homes in that area surrounding the arts and retail district. That area has been nicely developed without hurting the personality of the neighborhood, which development companies understand is important for the property value of the homes nearby. If it weren't for those scrappy-ass theatres down there, those places wouldn't be worth as much.

**Kim:** The Board and Officers of Eyedrum have met with Newport regularly, about once every three or four months, since the fall of 2016 when Eyedrum was made aware of the interest in purchasing the property in February 2017. I personally attended two of the three public meetings hosted by WRS. With Underground being a close

neighbor, I am very concerned about WRS' decisions. I have attended Atlanta Downtown Neighborhood Association meetings and Central Atlanta Progress' Downtown Master Plan community meetings. Newport has been minimal in its PR efforts, but consistent in terms of delivering content regarding vision and timeline. My questions are: How will the local government, particularly the City of Atlanta, engage with the community and Newport in the development process? How will the philanthropic community and business investment community engage with the community and Newport in the development process?

**Fried:** Assuming they follow through with tangible support for Eyedrum and other arts organizations and partners in the community, Newport seems to have a good vision. They said their investors have "patient money," which implies a long-term investment in things like lifestyle amenities on the street. Eyedrum is determined to make sure those commitments are fulfilled.

**Kim:** It's important to note that inequitable conditions in Atlanta existed before WRS and Newport stepped into the downtown scene. Just because Newport bought certain properties does not mean they created these dynamics. However, these conditions and dynamics are becoming visible because the eyes and ears of our communities are now on the arts organizations downtown. Personally, I am not looking for Newport to save our souls, no matter how much their slow money might support organic development of South Downtown. The community of Atlanta should own Atlanta; these developers are not, and could never be, the voice of the community. The challenge lies in figuring out to what extent we can work side by side. How much is the community willing to contribute — in terms of financial investment, attendance, volunteering, learning, and participation — to own the future of Downtown?



BRANDON ENGLISH

ASCENSION: Heaven, the Masquerade's largest concert room is expanding into the space that was formerly the Underground Atlanta food court.

### How do establishments like Mammal, Murmur, and Eyedrum fit into the future of Downtown?

**Yonker:** Ideally, I'd like to stay in this neighborhood. I like the area and the people who hang out down here. It blew my mind how much of a sense of community there is. A lot of people care about this neighborhood and want to do good things for it. I've been asked if I see Murmur or Eyedrum as competition and I really don't. We're all just curious about what each other are doing. I hope that even more stuff pops up in the future to a point where people can get lost in this area.

We aren't gaining actual financial stability by running art galleries. I don't make shits-worth of money running this place, but I have made social capital for myself. If I want to start another project somewhere else or do another thing, I have the ability to do it now that I can say I started Mammal Gallery. That's the best thing you get from running an arts organization, and no one can take that from you. You can use it in another place if you have to, but the longer an arts organization is around, the more beautiful layers it can add to its story over time.

**Sheats:** We're the wildcard. We do things that others sometimes don't. Mammal came down here before any of us, and their focus is so solidly on music. We deal with misfits a lot. We keep local, national, and sometimes international acts here that might not be accepted anywhere else.

Murmur isn't trying to go anywhere. There is no other place in the city where you can get as much accessibility as South Downtown. We all have a desire to get this right, without an idea of what right will even look like. I don't know what's after this that isn't gentrifying in a very harsh way. There's this idea that there's an impermanence to what we do, and there's a necessity to continue that sense of impermanence so that everyone has a place to explore and figure their shit out. -CL-

NEWS@CREATIVELOAFING.COM

### WHO THE PLAYERS ARE

#### DEVELOPERS

**Newport:** German developer that controls the area around South Broad and Mitchell Streets where Eyedrum, Mammal Gallery, and Murmur are located.

**WRS:** A South Carolina-based developer that purchased Underground Atlanta where the Masquerade is located.

**CIM Group:** A Los Angeles-based developer that controls the Gulch and is courting Amazon as a major tenant.

#### ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

**Eyedrum Art & Music Gallery:** Gallery and music that's held various locations Downtown for 20 years.

**Murmur:** Multi-discipline DIY arts organization and venue.

**Mammal Gallery:** Art gallery, music venue, and the anchor of South Broad Street.



HIGH ROLLER: Murmur on South Broad.



**JESSICA HOLTER'S THE PUNANY POETS**  
PRESENT A NEW SEASON OF ROMANTIC COMEDY THEATER

**FEB 14 SCHOOL OF SEDUCTION**  
PHILLIP RUSH, 1530 DEKALB AVE NE A. ATLANTA, GA 30307

**FEB 16 SECRET OF THE PEARL**  
AMPERSAND GUILD, 382 CHERRY ST. MACON, GA 31201

**FEB 17 SECRET OF THE PEARL**  
PHILLIP RUSH, 1530 DEKALB AVE NE A. ATLANTA, GA 30307

**FEB 18 THE HEAD DOCTOR SHOW**  
LAKE CITY COMMUNITY CENTER  
5471 JONESBORO RD. LAKE CITY, GA 30260  
WITH SPECIAL GUEST **LATOYA LONDON**



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Intimate Romantic Comedy Theater for Lovers & Friends

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# The Emory University Mental Health & Development Program

is conducting research on the development of young adults with adjustment problems. The research is funded by the National Institute of Mental Health and the project director is Dr. Elaine Walker.

Volunteers may be eligible if they are 13 to 30 years of age, and are experiencing two or more of the following:

- New or worsening social problems,
- unusual ideas,
- unusual perceptual experiences,
- or increased suspiciousness.

Diagnostic psychological and physical assessments are conducted at no charge and volunteers are reimbursed for their time.



Call 404.727.7547 or email [mentalhealth.research@emory.edu](mailto:mentalhealth.research@emory.edu) for more information.

## WALK WITH US TO END POVERTY FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

**WALK  
IN HER  
SHOES**



**MARCH 3, 2018**

**HISTORIC FOURTH WARD PARK**

10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

FAMILY CELEBRATION WITH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING STATIONS

11:00 A.M.

2 MILE WALK ON THE BELTLINE

**REGISTER FOR FREE!**  
**WALK.CARE.ORG**

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# Arts Agenda



Free yoga in the park.

SEAN BARRY

## FESTIVALS/ EVENTS

### UNCORKED ATLANTA WINE FESTIVAL

Pop open a bottle! Park Tavern is holding a wine and beer tasting with live performances and wine themed activities overlooking Piedmont Park. \$30-\$54. Noon-4 p.m. Sat., Feb. 17. Philips Arena, 1 Philips Drive N.W. 404-878-3000. [www.parktavern.com](http://www.parktavern.com).

**UNIVERSOUL CIRCUS** UniverSOUl Circus presents a thrilling show with high-flying acts from across the globe. \$26-\$40. 10:30 a.m.-7 p.m. Wed., Feb. 7. 10:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Sun., Mar. 11. UniverSOUl Circus, 755 Hank Aaron Drive S.W. 404-588-1253. [www.universoulcircus.com](http://www.universoulcircus.com).

**FERNBANK AFTER DARK: LOVE ON THE BRAIN** Bring someone special to Fernbank Museum for a night of drinks, films and exhibits for this Valentine's Day themed event. \$10-\$20. 7-11 p.m. Fri., Feb. 9. Fernbank Museum of Natural History, 767 Clifton Road N.E. 404-929-6300. [www.fernbankmuseum.org](http://www.fernbankmuseum.org).

**EAT WITH SUPER SUNDAYS** Personal chef Toya Wright is holding informative, free cooking classes to focus on wise eating decisions for the entire family. Free. 3-4:30 p.m. Sun., Feb. 11. Andrew and Walter Young Family YMCA, 2220 Campbellton Road S.W. 404-523-9622. [www.ymcaatlanta.org](http://www.ymcaatlanta.org).

**THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF DISNEY ON ICE** Guests are invited to view the timeless Disney characters glide across the ice in a fantastic and action packed show. \$40-\$115. 2:30 p.m. Sat., Feb. 17. Philips Arena, 1 Philips Drive N.W. 404-878-3000. [www.philipsarena.com](http://www.philipsarena.com).

**TAROT- THE FOOLS JOURNEY** Tarot card reading course welcomes both beginner and experienced tarot readers in drawing lessons from cards and applying them to everyday life. \$15. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Thurs., Feb. 22. ATL Craft, 489-B Edgewood Ave. 478-737-8482. [www.atlcraftshop.com](http://www.atlcraftshop.com).

**LGBTQ GSA SUMMIT** A day of workshop, panels, art and talent shows involving the LGBTQ youth community hosted by the Georgia Safe Schools Coalition. Free. 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat., Feb. 24. Agnes Scott College, 141 E. College Ave. 404-471-6000. [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com).

**FAMILY FUN FESTIVAL** Alliance Theatre invites guests to a day filled with family fun activities including art and live performances. Free. 1-4 p.m. Sun., Feb. 25. Alliance Theatre, 1280 Peachtree St. N.W. 404-733-4650. [www.alliancetheatre.org](http://www.alliancetheatre.org).

**ATLANTA SALSA & BACHATA FESTIVAL 2018** The Salsa and Bachata festival is an exciting four-day festival involving shows, workshops and social dancing. \$15-\$1,600. 7 p.m. Thu., Mar. 1; - 3 a.m. Mon., Mar. 5. Atlanta Marriott Marquis, 265 Peachtree

Center Ave. 404-521-0000. [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com).

## PUBLIC AGENDA

**CASA DAY AT THE CAPITOL** Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children (CASA) volunteers, board members and staff from across the state will gather in Atlanta to meet with state lawmakers during the 2018 legislative session. \$10. 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Wed., Feb. 14. Georgia Railroad Freight Depot, The Freight Room, 65 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive S.E. 404-874-2888. [www.gacasa.org](http://www.gacasa.org).

**HUNGER WALK RUN** Family fun for a good cause! Register for this annual 5K walk benefitting the Atlanta Community Food Bank. \$25-35. Noon-4 p.m. Sun., Feb. 25. Georgia State Stadium, 755 Hank Aaron Drive S.E. 404-419-1723. [www.engage.acfb.org](http://www.engage.acfb.org).

## SPORTS/ HEALTH

**ENCHANTED WOODLAND TRAIL: FAIRY HOUSES AND GNOME HOMES** Walk along the Kingfisher Pond Trail to see the mystical and magical homes of fairies and gnomes in Sandy Springs. \$6-\$10. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Thu., Feb. 1. Chattahoochee Nature Center, 9315 Willee Road. 770-992-2055. [www.chattnatu-recenter.org](http://www.chattnatu-recenter.org).

**YOGA AT PARK TAVERN** Bring a mat! Park Tavern and Westside Yoga are holding free yoga classes in the Piedmont Room at Park Tavern. Free. 6:30-7:30 p.m. Mon., Feb. 12. Park Tavern, 500 10th St. N.E. 404-249-0001. [www.parktavern.com](http://www.parktavern.com).

**2018 ATLANTA MISSION 5K RACE TO END HOMELESSNESS** Atlanta Mission is hosting a 5K race to combat homelessness in Atlanta. Proceeds will go toward shelter fees for homeless individuals in Atlanta. \$30-\$35. 8:30 a.m.-Noon Sat., Feb. 17. Atlanta Mission, 126 Ivan Allen Jr. Blvd NW. 404-588-4015. [www.atlantamission.org](http://www.atlantamission.org).

**CUPID'S UNDIRIE RUN** Would you like the opportunity to exercise while having fun? Cupid's Undir Run is hosting a mile-long party/run to fund research to find the cure for genetic disease Neurofibromatosis. \$35. Noon-4 p.m. Sat., Feb. 24. Big Sky Buckhead, 3201 Cains Hill Pl NW. 404-228-8856. [www.mycupids.org](http://www.mycupids.org).

## SPOKEN WORD/ POETRY

**WISH WEDNESDAYS OPEN MIC: POETRY, SPOKEN WORD, NEO SOUL** Hosted by Grey, Kat's Cafe welcomes visitors to open mic night for poets, spoken word artists, and neo soul/acoustic musicians, every first Wednesday of the month. \$7. 7-11 p.m. Wed.,

Feb. 7. Kat's Cafe, 970 Piedmont Ave. N.E. 404-347-2263. [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com).

**WORD IS BORN** Apache Cafe invites guests to spoken word poetry open mic night, hosted by Dichotomy the Poet every third Sunday of the month. \$10-\$25. 7 p.m.-Midnight Sun., Feb. 18. Apache Cafe, 64 3rd St. N.W. 404-876-5436. [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com).

**EROTIC POETRY SESSION: VOL. 1** Guests are invited to hear the poetry of Grande Beauty during this evening of sensual and tantalizing spoken word. \$12. 8-10:30 p.m. Thurs., Feb. 22. Bakaris Lounge, 576 Lee St., Suite E. 404-254-3784. [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com).

**POETRY AT TECH: MCEVER POETRY READING** Featuring poets, Aimee Nezhukumatathil, Christopher Collins and Bruce McEver. Free. 7:30 p.m. Thurs., Feb. 22. Kress Auditorium at Robert C. Williams Museum of Paper Making, 500 10th St. N.W. 404-681-5128. [www.acapella-books.com](http://www.acapella-books.com).

## BOOKS

**ZADIE SMITH'S #FEELFREE ATLANTA BOOK TOUR** Attend Zadie Smith's reading, discussion and signing of her newest collection of essays, *Feel Free*. \$30. 7-10 p.m. Mon., Feb. 12. SCADshow, 173 14th St. N.E. 404-253-2740. [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com).

**JAMES QUATRO: FIRE SERMON** Author James Quatro reads, discusses and signs copies of his book *Fire Sermon*. Free. 7 p.m. Tues., Feb. 13. Ivy Hall, 179 Ponce De Leon Ave. N.E. 404-681-5128. [www.acapellabooks.com](http://www.acapellabooks.com).

**BEYOND BOOKS** Literary Atlanta hosts a monthly literary series, profiling the stories of published and unpublished writers. Free. 7-9 p.m. Wed., Feb. 14. The Wren's Nest, 1050 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd. S.W. 404-753-7735. [www.wrensnest.org](http://www.wrensnest.org).

## COMEDY

**SCANDAL O4W SKI RESORT** Dad's Garage Theater Company is back with their weekly improv soap opera. \$16.50-23.50. 8 p.m. Sat., Feb. 10. Dad's Garage Theater Company, 569 Ezzard St. 404-523-3141. [www.dadsgarage.secure.force.com](http://www.dadsgarage.secure.force.com).

**KILL AND BE COOL JAM SESSIONS** A fusion of live instrumentation and improvisational stand-up comedy, hosted by Anthony Driver. 21+ event. \$8-10. 10:30 p.m.-midnight. Fri., Feb. 16. Relapse Comedy Theater, 380 14th St. N.W. 404-464-5894. [www.relapsecomedy.com](http://www.relapsecomedy.com).

**GABRIEL IGLESIAS: ONE SHOW FITS ALL WORLD TOUR** See Gabriel Iglesias perform stand-up live at Philips Arena. \$54-94. 8 p.m. Sat., Feb. 24. Philips Arena, 1 Philips Drive N.W. 800-653-8000. [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

## FILM

**ROYAL OPERA HOUSE: RIGOLETTO** Get tickets to Royal Opera House's pre-recorded live production of RIGOLETTO. \$15. 7 p.m. Tues., Feb. 13. Landmark Midtown Art Cinema, 931 Monroe Drive N.E. 404-879-0160. [www.landmarktheatres.com](http://www.landmarktheatres.com).

**BLACK PANTHER MOVIE PRE-SCREENING AND FESTIVAL** The National Black Men's Health Network offers a pre-screening of Marvel's Black Panther movie. \$22.99-29.99. 7 p.m. Thurs., Feb. 15. Regal Cinemas, 261 19th St. N.W. 844-462-7342. [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com).

**STAR WARS: A NEW HOPE IN CONCERT** Experience the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra perform the film score of Star Wars: A New Hope while the movie is screened at Symphony Hall. \$79-159. Thurs.-Sat., Feb. 22-24. Atlanta Symphony Hall, 1280 Peachtree St. N.W. 404-733-5000. [www.atlantasymphony.org](http://www.atlantasymphony.org).

## THEATRE/ OPERA

**ROMEO & JULIET** A tale of two lovers and their tragic ending is celebrates its 18th anniversary with the Shakespeare Tavern Playhouse. \$15-\$20. 10 a.m., 2 p.m., 6:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m. Thu., Feb. 1; Fri., Mar. 9. Shakespeare Tavern Playhouse, 499 Peachtree St. N.E. 404-874-5299. [www.shakespearetavern.com](http://www.shakespearetavern.com).

**THE JUNGLE BOOK** A family-friendly event to experience the beloved classic in a one-act play about the misadventures of Rudyard Kipling's seminal characters. \$18-\$32. 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 4 p.m., 7 p.m. Sat., Feb. 10-

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## TICKET PACK #2

vs. PITTSBURGH PIRATES • MONDAY, APRIL 30  
vs. PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES • FRIDAY, JUNE 22  
vs. NEW YORK METS • SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22



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# What's New at FERNBANK MUSEUM®



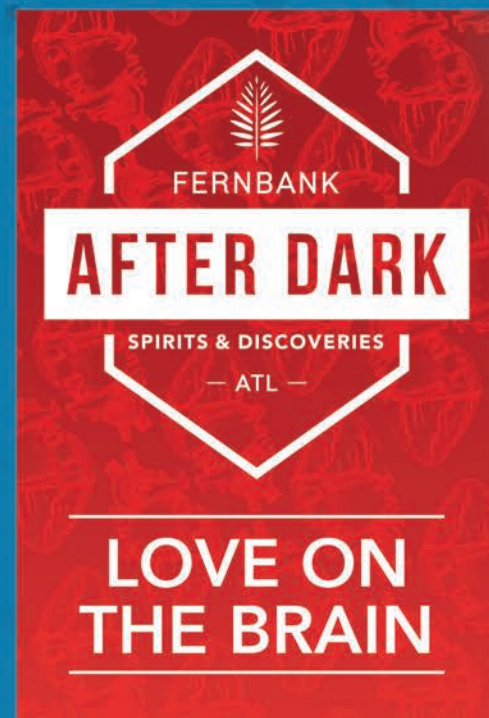
## THE SECRET WORLD INSIDE YOU

**Exhibit Opens Feb. 10**

*The Secret World Inside You* is organized by the  
American Museum of Natural History, New York ([www.amnh.org](http://www.amnh.org))  
Support for science education provided by UCB.  
Additional support provided by the Frances Wood Wilson Foundation.



**Giant Screen Movie  
Opens Feb. 9**



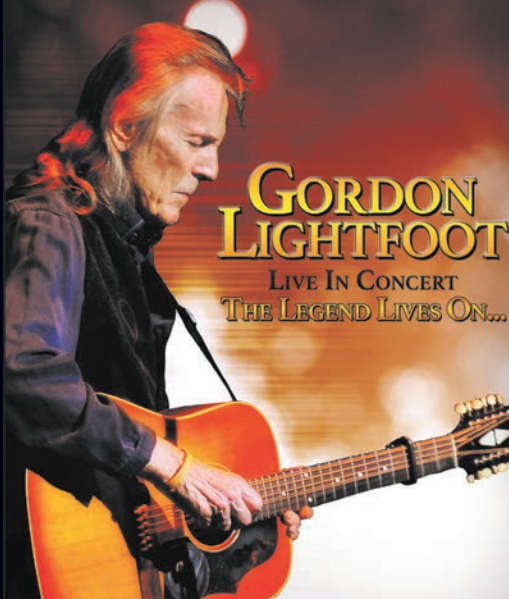
**Adult Science Night  
Friday, Feb. 9**

[FernbankMuseum.org](http://FernbankMuseum.org) | [@FernbankMuseum](https://twitter.com/FernbankMuseum)



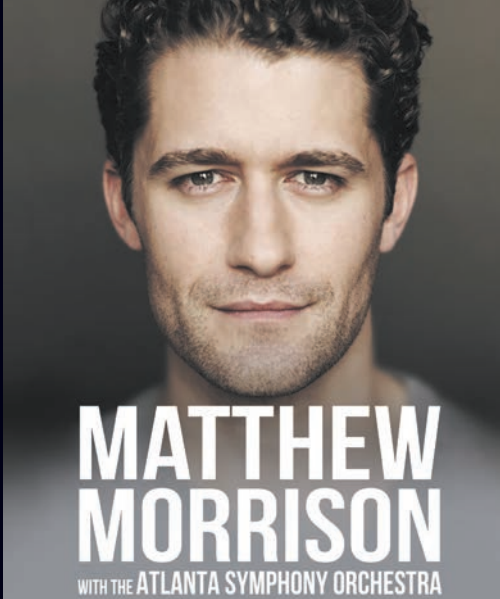
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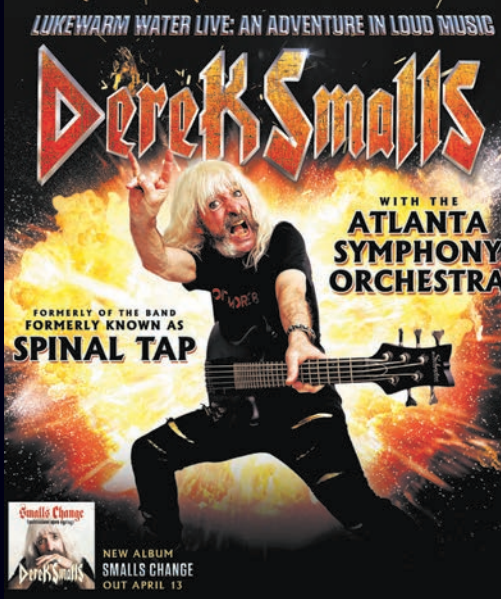
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**MATTHEW MORRISON**  
WITH THE ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Sat, **JUN 16**

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**Derek Smalls**  
WITH THE ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
FORMERLY OF THE BAND FORMERLY KNOWN AS SPINAL TAP

NEW ALBUM  
SMALLS CHANGE  
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Symphony  
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A NEW HOPE  
IN CONCERT



FILM LIVE WITH ORCHESTRA  
PRESENTED BY THE  
**ATLANTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**  
FULL ORCHESTRA CONDUCTED BY STEPHEN MULLIGAN

MUSIC BY **JOHN WILLIAMS**

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**Harry Potter**  
AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS  
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# The Followers

## a retelling of The Bacchae

by Margaret Baldwin  
music by Klimchak

Feb. 3-25th

www.7Stages.org

7  
STAGES

arts@tech professional artists series

## Nufonia Must Fall

by Kid Koala

Monday, February 12 7:30 pm  
Tuesday, February 13 7:30 pm

It's a robot romance just in time for Valentine's Day! Kid Koala's graphic novel *Nufonia Must Fall* comes to life at the Ferst Center with an amazing mix of puppetry, video, and live and electronic music. 50 puppets, 17 miniature stages, four cameras, Kid Koala, and the Afiara Quartet live!

## Rebirth Brass Band

Saturday, February 24 8:00 pm

Enjoy a Mardi Gras celebration with the famed New Orleans group known for combining traditional brass band music with funk, jazz, soul, and hip-hop.

**Tech Connect:** Free Jazz talk with WCLK host Jay Edwards at 7 pm.

# Arts Agenda

Sun. Mar. 4. Alliance Theatre, 1280 Peachtree St. N.W. 404-733-4650. www.alliancetheatre.org.

**ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER** The illustrious dance foundation is coming to Atlanta to present a show packed with choreographers and stunning performances. \$25-\$89. 3 p.m. Sun., Feb. 18. Fox Theatre, 660 Peachtree St. N.E. 404-881-2100. www.foxtheatre.org.

**PERFECT ARRANGEMENT** Inspired by true stories, two gay coworkers are ordered to expose "moral turpitude" within the government in this bubbly drama-comedy mashup. \$18-\$49 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Thurs. Feb. 22. - Sun. Mar. 18. Theatrical Outfit, 84 Luckie St. N.W. 678-528-1500. http://www.theatricaloutfit.org.

**THE DAUGHTER OF REGIMENT** Atlanta opera fans are invited to the historical opera at the Cobb Energy Center. \$35-\$131. 3 p.m.-8 p.m. Sat., Feb. 24. - Sun. Mar. 4. Cobb Energy Centre, 2800 Cobb Galleria Parkway. 770-916-2800. www.cobbenergycentre.com.

## VISUAL ARTS

### OPENINGS

**ATLANTA CONTEMPORARY** Stanza Jibade-Khalil Huffman creates a complex unending poem within an abstract film. *Opens Tues. Feb. 6. Free. Tues.-Wed. and Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thurs., 11 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sun., Noon-4 p.m. 535 Means St. N.W. 404-688-1970. www.atlantacontempary.org.*

**MICHAEL C. CARLOS MUSEUM** *Divine Felines: Cats of Ancient Egypt* From divine symbols to domesticated house pets cats have played a major role in Ancient Egypt. *Divine Felines* explores different sides of cats. *Opens Sat. Feb. 10. \$6-\$8 Tues.-Fri. 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun., noon-5 p.m. 571 South Kilgo Circle. 404-727-4282. www.carlos.emory.edu.*

**FERNBANK MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY** *The Secret World Inside You* Learn about the microbes that keep your immune system healthy. Discover what microbes are through immersive and interactive displays, games, and videos. *Opens Sat. Feb. 10. \$18-\$20 Mon.-Sun. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. 767 Clifton Road N.E. 404.929.6300. www.fernbankmuseum.org.*

**MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART OF GEORGIA** *The Paul R. Jones Collection of American Art at The University of Alabama* Paul R. Jones includes one of the

most comprehensive collections of African American art on the globe. Over 2,000 works are featured in this exhibit from over 600 artists. *Opens Sat. Feb. 10. Free-\$8. Tues.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 75 Bennett St. N.W. 404-367-8700. www.mocaga.org.*

**MARCIA WOOD GALLERY** *Panda* 750 The visual works of Venke & Spänle on display. *Opens Weds. Feb. 14. Thurs.-Sat. Noon-5 p.m. 263 Walker St. SW 404.827.0030. www.marciawoodgallery.com.*

**MUSEUM OF DESIGN ATLANTA** *Designing a Playful City* The more crowded that our cities become the more spaces for play are needed. Through an engaging and interactive experience visitors get to view places for play sewn into an urban environment. *Opens Sun. Feb. 18. \$5-\$10 Tues.-Weds. and Fri.-Sun., noon-6 p.m.; Thurs. Noon-8 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; 1315 Peachtree St. N.E. 404.979.6455. www.museumofdesign.org.*

**SEPTEMBER GRAY FINE ART GALLERY** *If not now....When?* Almost 50 years after the death of Martin Luther King Jr. many people are still being denied basic human rights. This group art exhibition questions the problems with social justice in America. *Opens Fri. Feb. 23. 6 p.m. RSVP online 75 Bennett St Suite 0-2 404.907.1923. www.septembergrayart.com.*

### ONGOING

**MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART OF GEORGIA** *Selections from the Permanent Collection.* Includes works from Brendan Carroll, Maurice Clifford, Herbert Creecy, Rocio Rodriguez, Edward Ross and Caomin Xie. Through Feb. 10. *Free-\$8. Tues.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 75 Bennett St. N.W. 404-367-8700. www.mocaga.org.*

**FERNBANK MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY** *Wild Huts and Hollows: A WildWoods Nature Gallery Exhibit.* Made from locally-harvested plant material, these woven sculptures by J.D. Koth are a family friendly activity. Through Feb. 11. *Fernbank Museum of Natural History, 767 Clifton Road N.E. 404-929-6300. www.fernbankmuseum.org.*

**ATLANTA CONTEMPORARY** *Née Ingénue* Alex C. Kerr analyzes the underlying notions of status and vanity within today's pop culture. Through Feb. 18. *Tau Lewis.* A sculptural exhibit featuring repurposed materials found in Westmoreland Jamaica and Canada. Through Feb. 25. *Pas-aquan.* Paintings by the late Eddie Owens Martin. Through March 11. *Ancient Blue Ornament.* Kamrooz Amram examines and challenges the conventions of ornamental

art, inspired by Persian carpets and modern European architecture in this design-centric display. Through April 1. *Once That River Starts To Flow.* An exhibit that follows American tragedies over the last 40 years by Joe Minter. Through April 1. *How Does the External Shape Shape the Internal Shape.* Atrium Wall installation by Katya Tepper. Through April 22. *Free. Tues.-Wed. and Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thurs., 11 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sun., Noon-4 p.m. 535 Means St. N.W. 404-688-1970. www.atlantacontempary.org.*

**MICHAEL C. CARLOS MUSEUM** *Coiling Culture: Basketry Art of of Native North America.* Showcasing the art of basketry in the Americas. Through Feb. 18. *"Tell the Whole Story from Beginning to End:" The Ramayana in Indian Painting.* The Ramayana is the most celebrated poem in South and Southeast Asia; these paintings demonstrate various artists' depiction of its plea. Through May 20. *\$6-\$8. Tues.-Fri., 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 571 South Kilgo Circle. 404-727-4682. www.carlos.emory.edu.*

**HIGH MUSEUM OF ART** *Black is the Day, Black is the Night.* A photographic exploration of solitary confinement by Amy Elkins. Through March 4. *AI Taylor, What Are You Looking At?* The first U.S. museum survey of the works of American contemporary artist AI Taylor. Through March 18. *"A Fire That No Water Could Put Out": Civil Rights Photography.* Photographic history of the civil rights movement. Through April 29. *Free-\$14.50. Tues.-Thurs., Sat., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Fri., 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sun., Noon-5 p.m. 1280 Peachtree St. N.E. 404-733-4400. www.high.org.*

**SCAD FASH** *GUO PEI: COUTURE BEYOND.* Features the work of acclaimed fashion designer Guo Pei. Through March 4. *Free-\$10. Tues.-Wed., Fri.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thurs., 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Sun., Noon-5 p.m. 1600 Peachtree St. N.W. 404-253-3132. www.scadfash.org.*

**SPELMAN COLLEGE MUSEUM OF FINE ART** *Deborah Roberts: The Evolution of Mimi.* Southeast debut of new work by Deborah Roberts. Through May 19. *Tues.-Fri., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sat., Noon-4 p.m. 350 Spelman Lane. 404-270-5607. www.museum.spelman.edu.*



Enchanted Woodland Trail at CNC through the end of Feb.

**JOHNNY MERCER TRIBUTE  
FEATURING JOE GRANSDEN  
AND FRANCINE REED**

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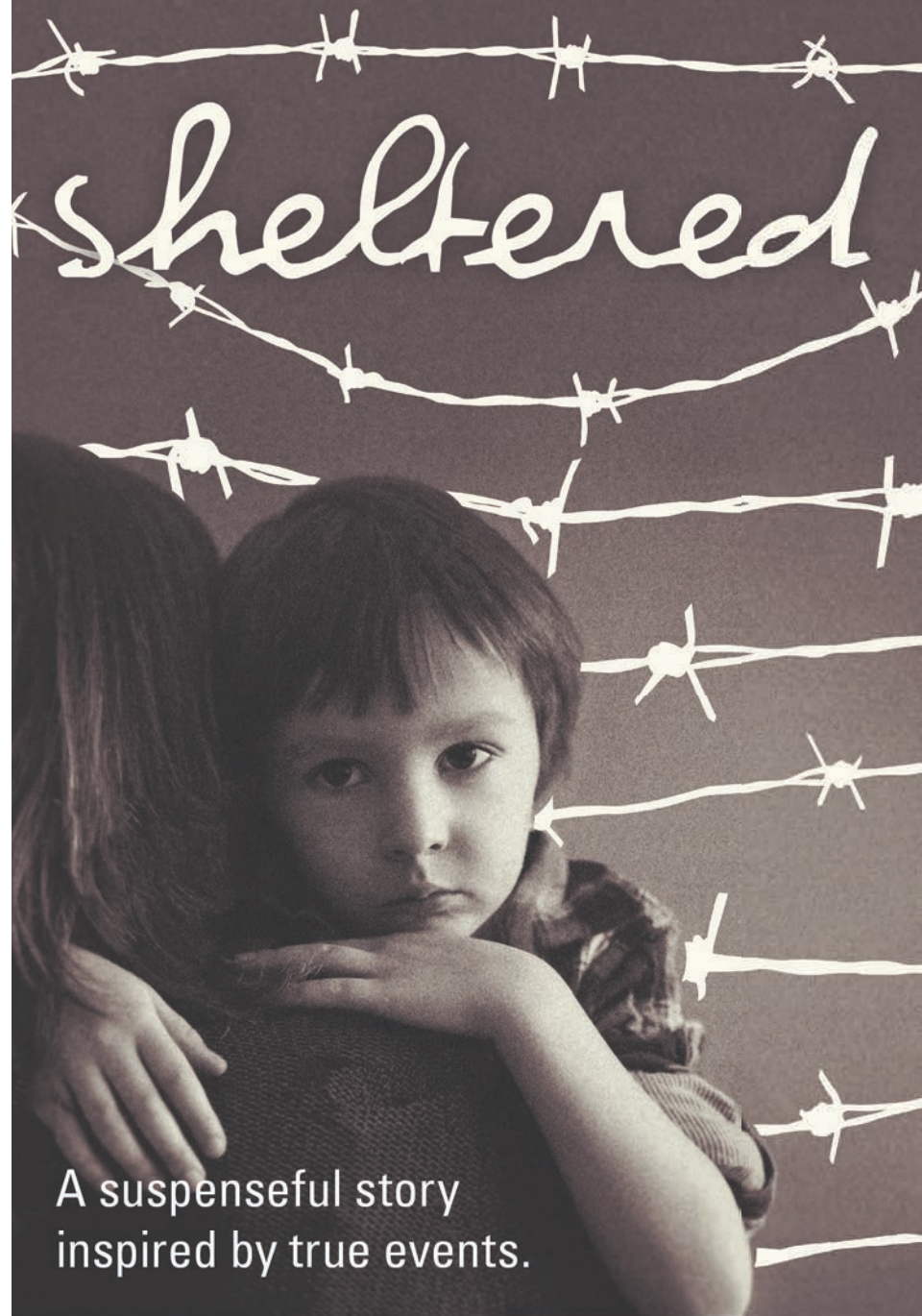
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# Bird's the word

Paper Crane Lounge offers a cozy retreat atop award-winning Staplehouse

BY ANGELA HANSBERGER

When 1,000 paper cranes are folded as a group, they are known as a senbazuru. According to Japanese legend, the folder is granted one wish upon completion.

Today, the origami cranes are seen as a powerful symbol because of the story of Sadako Sasaki, a young girl who developed leukemia following the bombing of Hiroshima. She tried to fold 1,000 birds before her death, with a selfless wish of world peace.

"Her story stands as an inspiration to all, and a testament to the continued power of the paper crane as a compelling symbol for hope, love, honor, and peace," says Jen Hiding-Kendrick, co-founder of Staplehouse and the Giving Kitchen.

But Sasaki's tale is only part of the inspiration behind the newly opened Paper Crane Lounge, which rests atop Edgewood Avenue's award-winning restaurant Staplehouse. Dreamed up by Hiding-Kendrick and her late husband Ryan Hiding before his death in 2014, Staplehouse is a subsidiary of nonprofit the Giving Kitchen, which helps restaurant workers in times of unexpected crisis.

A beloved member of Atlanta's restaurant community, Ryan received gifts of a thousand cranes twice during his year-long battle with cancer. Twenty-four hours after he died, a crane landed on top of the Hidingers' home chimney and perched there for a while before flying off. The bird left the family with a hopeful sign that Ryan was OK. "That's the crane image I have on my right arm," says Hiding-Kendrick, pointing to a delicate tattoo that stretches from elbow to shoulder. It's from "a photo that Kara [Ryan's sister] took of the actual crane sitting on our chimney."

Upstairs at the Paper Crane Lounge, bartender Kate Flowe, who honed her skills at Octopus Bar and Kimball House, serves cocktails alongside beverage director/assistant general manager Melissa Davis. It's a cozy retreat, with exposed brick walls, a fireplace in the far corner, a small bar station, a few tables, plush sofas. It feels kind of like an extension of somebody's very hip living room.

"It's an intimate space where people



SHAKE IT UP: Bartender Kate Flowe whips up cocktails at the intimate Paper Crane Lounge.

can enjoy a drink with friends at a leisurely pace, kind of circling back to Staplehouse's early days as a supper club [in the Hidingers' home]," says Flowe. But perhaps the lounge's best feature is its accessibility. Unlike at Staplehouse, you don't need to vie for a reservation months in advance; this lounge is made for walk-ins.

The short and sweet menu invites conversation, listing cocktails with a few descriptive words in lieu of their ingredients. Flowe's Night Vision is "earthy, smoky, mysterious," the result of an abundance of prickly pears in the kitchen and her "what grows together goes together" philosophy. She added lime for zing, mezcal for earthiness, Cappelletti for depth, and made a tincture from the buds of shiso leaves for a mysteriously purplish hue. Flowe and Davis are happy to take the time to fully explain their creations while guests sip.

"Having a cocktail should never be anything but a relaxing or stimulating experience," says Flowe. "Jen and Kara

created this beautiful warm space, and so many of the little touches people appreciate are Melissa's. I like to think of Melissa and I being your personal drink shoppers."

Looking ahead, there are plans to showcase Ryan's gifted cranes as an installation in the stairwell and in the rafters of the lounge. They'll stand as symbols of peace and hope for guests and yet another gift to the community that means so much to this team.

Davis is smitten with Paper Crane's warm and intimate ambiance. "The environment isn't stuffy or pressuring. We just want to give people insanely good cocktails, and a few esoteric wines and beers. To help guests explore the possibilities of the ever-changing beverage world." -CL-

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# Iron Maidens

Cast Iron Chronicles challenges myths around soul food, gender, and race in the food industry



**WOMEN ON TOP:** The Cast Iron Chronicles team is made up of long-time industry professionals (from left) Jennifer Hill Booker, Deborah VanTrece, and Tiffanie Barriere.

OSAYI ENDOLYN

At a recent food conference in Savannah, chef Deborah VanTrece had an all too familiar encounter. “A white male chef told me I didn’t belong there, and to go back to Atlanta,” she recalls. The incident was just the latest on an endless list of silent stares, overt comments, and outright dismissals that she’s experienced throughout her career as a black female chef. All convey the same myth: Women don’t belong in professional kitchens, and the opportunities available to marquee chefs belong mostly to white guys.

VanTrece’s experience is not unique. Personal chef and cookbook author Jennifer Hill Booker and mixologist Tiffanie Barriere recount similar instances throughout their careers. The three women connected after being jointly featured in an NBC News article that highlighted their participation at the Atlanta Food & Wine Festival in 2017 (and all three sit on the festival’s recently announced all-female advisory council for 2018). In the months that followed, mutual frustrations and a desire to move the needle led them to launch the collaborative dining series, Cast Iron Chronicles, late last year.

The series began with two local events over the past several months that challenged stereotypes about soul food and encouraged timely conversations about racial and gender inequality in professional kitchens and the food industry at large. It’s a big conversation — so big that the group is taking their act to the James Beard Foundation’s famed Beard House in New York City on Feb. 21, where they’ll conclude the three-part series. The dinner is a long-held dream come true.

Six courses with cocktail pairings are inspired by Southern tradition and bounty and the ensemble’s African American heritage: think fried chicken liver with

peach confiture on crostini, black pepper biscuits with pimento cheese spoonbread, catfish goujonnettes with buttermilk hominy grits and red-eye gravy, and oxtail rillettes with foie gras mousse, pickled Vidalia onions, and muscadine gelée. Barriere’s drinks include the Green-Eyed Bandit (freshly juiced collard greens, gin, and aloe liqueur), and with dessert, the apropos Black Girl Magic — an all-black cocktail featuring Cathead Hoodoo chicory liqueur, Cynar, and ruby port, marked with edible gold pieces.

Collectively, the three women boast more than 55 years in the industry. VanTrece is the owner and head chef at Twisted Soul

Cookhouse & Pours; Barriere is a freelance bartender known for her creative beverage development (Southern National in Mobile, Alabama; the launch of One Flew South’s bar program); Hill Booker has gained a reputation for her globally-minded takes on Southern cuisine, as detailed in her cookbook *Field Peas to Foie Gras: Southern Recipes with a French Accent*. That mastery will be on display for Beard House diners — the bar, as they say, is set high.

Presenting at the James Beard Foundation represents the preeminent honor in American culinary arts; to host a dinner in the Greenwich Village dining room is to reach a pinnacle moment. For one, a chef doesn’t just book a Beard House event; she must be invited by a selection committee that considers noted chefs throughout the U.S. She receives this invitation only after review of her skill, reputation, and expertise, among other criteria. Current and former Atlanta-based chefs who’ve made the trek include Mihoko Obunai and Joseph Truex, Matthew Basford, Todd Richards, Drew Belline, Adam Evans, Jonathan Fox, Duane Nutter, and Todd Ginsburg.

On a recent phone call, VanTrece expressed gratitude. “It means the world,” she began, pausing to acknowledge that she was still deeply moved. For years, she recalls watching as contemporaries received invitations — often those peers were male. She began to wonder if such an honor was available to her as a black woman chef, an underrepresented group in fine dining. Hill Booker could relate. A Georgia Grown executive chef, she says she was devastated to not represent at the Beard House with the group in 2015. Their journey to the Beard House is meaningful not just because of the professional honor, but because they’re doing it together.

VanTrece, Hill Booker, and Barriere all wish to be judged by the quality of their offerings — they are in

service to food, drink, and people. But achievements of this nature are important to observe because doing so recognizes that part of the culinary conversation has been sorely missing. That’s why Cast Iron Chronicles aims to “debunk myths about soul food,” Hill Booker says. “It’s not all cafeteria-style meat-and-threes, fried, and covered in gravy. We’re talking about a cuisine that was created by enslaved Africans, who incorporated their West African cooking traditions and those of their French, German, and Spanish owners.”

Hill Booker studied and cooked professionally in Germany and France in the late ’90s, and notes: “People don’t like to talk about where this food comes from, but we are cooking the food of our ancestors.” The need for this dialogue is crucial, the trio agrees, especially when women and people of color have to overcome unfairness in funding and investments for restaurants, gaps in competitive pay, poor recruitment efforts at festivals and conferences, lack of mentorship, and sometimes open hostility.

“It’s been interesting to see how ‘soul food’ was appropriated as ‘Southern food,’ where I look up and people are talking about an ‘elevated’ cuisine,” VanTrece says. It’s language that can be heard from restaurant cooking lines to “Top Chef.” The underlying logic, whether intended or not, can convey that a bowl of chit-lings bears less culinary value than *pâté en croûte*. Cast Iron Chronicles provides a space to question what that assumption means, especially when black chefs are systematically left out of the conversation, despite having originated so much of the history.

It’s true that much of the soul food lexicon was derived from people who didn’t have much — collard green potlikker and cornmeal, cooked with meat cuts rejected by white landowners. But what often gets dropped from the narrative is the cooking expertise that Africans brought with them and adapted throughout slavery, Reconstruction, the Jim Crow era, and the Great Migration — from plantation kitchens to segregated hotels and train cars, and so on. These were touted professionals before they were credited as such, and their skills weren’t confined to their jobs; they came home with them, too. Haricot verts in béchamel sauce were just as easily served at a black family’s Sunday dinner as the cook’s white employer’s *soirée*. Adrian Miller’s latest book, *The President’s Kitchen Cabinet: The Story of the African Americans Who Have Fed Our First Families, from the Washingtons to the Obamas*, explores how this history showed up in the country’s highest office. This is all part of the soul food story.

Cast Iron Chronicles’ invitation to the Beard House is a hallmark that bestows the type of respect chefs want most — the kind they get from heroes and peers. “We’ve always been here,” Barriere says, both of crafting classic drinks and feeling some ownership of Southern food and hospitality. “To go to the Beard House like this, it means they see us for who we are.” -CL-

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# The little country store that could

Gloriously anachronistic and free from all frills, Mt. Paran Country Store makes Buckhead work



BLAST FROM THE PAST: Pete Chevallier has been running the Mt. Paran Country Store for 15 years

BY BRAD KAPLAN

Nestled among the estates of Buckhead at the crossroads of Mt. Paran Road and Northside Drive, there is a somewhat dilapidated old building topped by a wooden wagon wheel and the words, “Est. 1906.” The gas pumps outside and the bright red “Enjoy Coca-Cola” sign make clear that this is a convenience store, but it just feels so ... out of place. After all, the neighborhood is among the wealthiest in town, lined with massive manicured lawns and houses hidden by thickets of trees, including older ranches that have somehow escaped the teardown tidal wave that has swept much of the area. There’s not another shop of any sort for miles around. The nearest home for sale, described by Sotheby’s as a “truly stunning European estate,” is listed at \$9.88 million. Like I said, out of place. But this is the Mt. Paran Country Store, and it is a glorious anachronism.

If you arrive at the country store anywhere near lunchtime on a weekday, you’ll find the parking lot packed with landscaping, construction, and pool trucks, with a BMW or two thrown in, maybe a Rolls Royce. The benches and tables outside are filled with

workers fortifying for the afternoon ahead. There may be a chicken or two prowling the pavement. Inside, the kitchen turns out a limited menu of affordable staples, mostly burgers and BBQ sandwiches, or biscuits if it’s morning. Sure, you can get any other typical convenience store pre-packaged fare — bags of pork rinds, tins of Vienna sausages, cups of instant ramen — but the burgers and biscuits are the draw. That said, the three microwaves (\$0.25 charge for use) get plenty of action, especially from some of the Hispanic work crews who bring Tupperware dishes piled high with home-cooking that just needs a quick reheat.

Pete Chevallier, or “Mr. Pete” as many of the regulars call him, has been running the country store, known as Norman’s for decades, for the past 15 years. He’s friendly and decidedly down-to-earth, putting in long days that start around 5:30 a.m. when he pops the first biscuits into the oven. “My minority partner,” Chevallier tells me, “he got the store in 2002 when the lease ran up on the other guy, and he called me — I was working at a Shell station over in Tucker — and asked if I wanted to be a partner and run the business. We’re now just into another five-year lease. Whether we extend that or not, I’ll be 68 years old. I don’t know


what I’m going to do!” He chuckles at the thought.

It’s hard to think of the country store continuing to exist without Mr. Pete, along with his wife, Jan, and a few longtime employees. Pete and Jan actually arrived a year or so after Lavern — the woman who works alongside them in the kitchen and takes credit for the store’s popular homemade chili. “The chili is her recipe,” Chevallier says. “The deviled eggs, the tuna fish: all hers.” He confides that Lavern likes to use a little bit of sugar in her cooking, and, sure enough, the chili, tuna salad, and deviled eggs all contain just enough sweetness to make you take note.

Besides the sugar, the Mt. Paran Country Store is notable for what it does not have. There’s no hint that this is a million-dollar neighborhood. No fancy coffee. No micro-craft beer. There’s no upscale Angus beef in the burger, nor artisanal ham on the biscuits. None of the gimmickry, even, that your average QT employs to earn a higher dollar ring per customer. “We’ve thought about salads,” Pete says, “but we haven’t gotten around to it. We’re just not in the salad business.”

Pete does make exceptions on carrying specialty items when his regulars ask for them. He ticks off the ones that come to mind: “ZERO bars, 5th Avenue, that’s real old school. I still have Tab, and I may be the only person in Atlanta that sells single cans of Tab. You got some people who have been drinking Tab for years and just don’t want to switch. I would get assaulted if I didn’t have it.”

The store’s big volume, though, is soft drinks and sports drinks — anything that satisfies the thirst of the many workers who keep the homes of Buckhead up and running. “When it’s 90 degrees outside, a full fridge of Gatorade or Powerade will be empty by the time four o’clock rolls around.”

I ask Chevallier how he’s managed to keep the customers coming back over the past 15 years, without feeling the urge to change much of anything. “We’re just here to help people out whenever they need something,” he replies. Somehow, as incongruous as it may seem on first glance, the Mt. Paran Country Store is exactly what the neighborhood needs. 

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# The price of wine

Jaye Price of Castleberry Hill's Wine Shoe knows his grapes and his people



ERIK HEADONS

FRIENDLY FACE: Jaye Price owns and operates Wine Shoe in Castleberry Hill.

BY GINA CAISON

I wandered into Castleberry Hill's Wine Shoe for the first time a few years ago, in search of anything but a bottle of oaky, oily chardonnay. I was likewise weary of my standby sauvignon blanc, albariño, and sémillon. Having been spoiled from years of living just a stone's throw from St. Helena, California, in the heart of Napa Valley, I often grumbled at Atlanta's wine scene, fancying myself a Paul Giamatti stranded in a sea of merlot (but in my case, chardonnay). Upon entering the shop, I explained my dilemma to proprietor Jaye Price. With a warm smile and a complete lack of hesitation, he recommended — oh no! — a chardonnay. I tried to be polite as he insisted that the terroir of this French-produced wine was a world away from what I despised in the California varietal. I bought the bottle and imagined that I would taste it, hate it, pour it down the sink, or pawn it off on unsuspecting guests, and never return.

Two weeks later, however, I walked back into Wine Shoe in search of a second bottle. Price greeted me with, "Hey! We've got a new French chardonnay in that's got a compelling minerality. You're going to love it!" I looked behind me; surely he was talking to someone he knew. And how did he know I'd even liked the first bottle? How did he even remember me after one visit two weeks prior? And that's when I realized: Jaye Price knows his grapes and his people.

Price takes up big, energetic space. By contrast, his business, Wine Shoe (named due to a city typo on their business license), is an unassuming little spot, tucked between repurposed industrial lofts and well within the fiery, postmodern shadow of the new stadium. Price's passion for wine, music, the arts, and Atlanta fills the shop, and it's easy to imagine his other life as a musician: middle school music teacher, regular

performer, and composer. He radiates enthusiasm, and the shop's warm interior matches his personality.

Growing up in Anniston, Alabama, didn't automatically grant Jaye wine-insider status. As he tells it, "Back in the day, I was playing saxophone with a group called Jazpects here in the city. We would play these house-band gigs for fancy functions, you know, just a 'stand in the corner and play standards' kind of thing. One time at the end of the night, the people who hired us didn't have the money to pay us, which can happen to musicians, and you gotta figure something out. We were like, 'We're leaving here with something,' so I got paid in wine — good wine. Now, at the time, I didn't know anything about wine, but I took it home and really tasted it, and I thought, 'This is interesting.' And so I set out to learn more."

From there, Price got a gig at the since-shuttered shop WineStyles working under George A. Gore, one of the first African-American sommeliers in the U.S. "I was just George's pour-guy, plating up cheese for pairings, cleaning up after the tastings, but he took me under his wing, made me taste, taught me how to pay attention to craft and production. And that's where I got my wine education, learning from George." After this unofficial apprenticeship, Price took a job in wine distribution, but it wasn't his calling. "I wanted to get back to sharing the tasting of wine with people," he says. "Real people, people who know about wine, and people who are just learning about it. Those are my people."

Price came to Wine Shoe in 2011 under the store's original owner, Nora Wiley. He immediately began upping the shop's educational outreach, allowing customers to experience the pleasures of wine without condescension or presumption.

While I was interviewing Price for this piece over a bottle of Venta Morales Organic Tempranillo, this spirit of education and inclusion was in full effect. One young woman, so new

to wine she was worried that she didn't even own a corkscrew, came in looking for a bottle of "something red." Price steered her to an easy-drinking, medium-bodied grenache. Then another customer from London called to confirm his private tasting during his upcoming visit to Atlanta, going over the details of his preferences with Price in advance. "Is this normal?" I asked. Price laughed. "Well, I don't always have international guests calling, but yeah, this is what wine can bring together."

He continued, "Maybe it's because of my background, but I think of wine like I think of music. It has region, style, notation, time period. It allows us to enter into a new world. Wine, particularly here in the States, lets us travel; it lets us experience new places, new times. As an analogy, people say things like 'I don't like rap music' or 'I don't like country music.' But how do you know? Have you listened to it all? I think of wine in the same way. You might think you don't enjoy a particular grape —"

"Like chardonnay?" I interjected.

"Exactly! Like chardonnay! But you've got to taste, to listen, to get past your generalizations and preconceived notions and try new things."

I suggest that wine can be intimidating. "Here in America, it's a class marker, for sure," Price agrees. "And that's why I find the education component of my job so important. And I'm also still learning. People come into the shop all the time who have knowledge I might not, and I always admit what I don't know. I can learn from them, too." For Price, this learning and growing together is what will build Atlanta's wine future, which he sees as driven by the city's increasingly strong culinary reputation. But he'd also like to watch Atlanta's wine scene evolve into a space where the wine can stand on its own.

To that end, Price strives to bring variety to the city's vino-scape. "People don't often think about it, but the best winemakers are, essentially, small humble farmers. It's the folks who know their vines, their fields, who have spent thousands of hours on their craft. They don't have to be big producers with famous names. I try to stock the shop with as many small-batch wines as possible."

Thanks to Price, over the past few years, my own California-induced snobbery toward the city has faded. The wine club at the shop invites local distributors in for tastings with members before they select their wines for the month. It's easy, social, and brings together a wide swathe of the city, from retired Spelman professors to young professionals in from OTP. Starting in January, Price assumed ownership of the shop. Now, he's looking to open up even more educational events and pair his knowledge of music with his knowledge of wine.

But what is this man who seemingly does everything — playing music, scoring films, teaching kids, owning a wine business — drinking now? I ask. He takes a sip from his glass, smiles slyly, and says, "Don't let anyone tell you what to drink."

Point taken, Price. Now, I'll have a bottle of that French chardonnay. -CL-

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**MARILLION**

2/10 : Variety Playhouse

**MANIC FOCUS**

2/10 : Georgia Theatre

**SONS OF APOLLO**

2/12 : Variety Playhouse

**NOAH GUNDERSEN**

2/13 : Georgia Theatre

**WHY?**

2/13 : Terminal West

**ANDERSON EAST**

**SOLD OUT**

2/15 : Terminal West

**UNO THE ACTIVIST**

2/15 : Terminal West

**PHOEBE BRIDGERS**

2/15 : Aisle 5

**MARK FARINA**

2/16 : Terminal West

**ANDERSON EAST**

2/16 : Georgia Theatre

**MARC BROUSSARD**

2/18 : Terminal West

**CORY WONG (OF VULFPECK)**

2/19 : Aisle 5

**TWO FEET**

2/20 : Terminal West

**MAGIC GIANT**

2/21 : Aisle 5

**ANDREA GIBSON**

2/23 : Terminal West

**PHILLIP PHILLIPS**

2/23 : Variety Playhouse

**MORGAN WALLEN**

2/23 : 40 Watt Club

**EMANCIPATOR ENSEMBLE**

2/24 : Variety Playhouse

**RHYE**

2/24 : Terminal West

**RANDY ROGERS BAND**

2/24 : Georgia Theatre

**BENJAMIN CLEMENTINE**

2/28 : Variety Playhouse

**JUDAH & THE LION**

2/28 & 3/1 : Georgia Theatre

**TRAVIS GREENE**

3/1 : Variety Playhouse

**BRETT DENNEN**

3/1 : Terminal West

**BRETT COBB & THEM**

3/2 : The EARL

**LOTUS**

3/2 : Georgia Theatre

**DUMPSTAPHUNK**

3/2 : Terminal West

**THE FLAMING LIPS**

3/5 : Georgia Theatre

**HISS GOLDEN**

**MESSENGER**

3/6 : Georgia Theatre

**BONOBO**

3/7 : Variety Playhouse

**GEORGE WINSTON**

3/8 : Variety Playhouse

**LANE 8**

3/8 : Terminal West

**I'M WITH HER**

3/10 : Variety Playhouse

**SOULECTION RADIO**

**FT. JOE KAY**

3/10 : Terminal West

**LITTLE DRAGON**

3/13 : Terminal West

**SOMO**

3/14 : Terminal West

**HORSESHOES &  
HAND GRENADES,  
JON STICKLEY TRIO**

3/16 : Aisle 5

**BILLIE EILISH**

**SOLD OUT**

3/17 : Terminal West

**OZOMATLI - 2 SHOWS!**

3/17 : Variety Playhouse

**LO MOON**

3/20 : Aisle 5

**MESHELL NDEGEOCELLO**

3/21 : Terminal West

**CHROME SPARKS,  
MACHINEDRUM**

3/22 : Terminal West

**SUNSQUABI**

3/23 : Variety Playhouse

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# Tinsley Ellis' 'Winning Hand'

The Atlanta blues rocker ups the ante with his latest release



WINNING HAND: Tinsley Ellis' new album is a soulful collection of burning guitar work.

BY TONY PARIS

Tinsley Ellis and I meet up at the Majestic Diner, where, as most Atlantans know, they've been serving "food that pleases" since 1929. It's also where the guitarist and I met for our first interview 35 years ago.

At the time, Ellis was only a couple of years into his band the Heartfixers and was anticipating the release of *Live at the Moonshadow*, the group's debut album for Michael Rothschild's Landslide Records. Today we're back at the diner near the corner of Ponce de Leon and North Highland as the blues rock guitarist prepares for the release of *Winning Hand*, his 20th album (16th as a solo artist), and a three-month tour of the U.S.

Forgoing the booth we sat in the first time around, we opt for a quieter spot in the back of the once greasy spoon. Ellis remembers those early days, playing the frat circuit, the bar circuit, the club circuit, any circuit they could find. Fronted by "Chicago" Bob Nelson, a hearty blues singer and harmonica player who lent authenticity to the band, the Heartfixers recorded three albums for Landslide Records before breaking up. When reaching for the next rung

on the ladder to success, Ellis decided he needed to be fronting his own band.

At the time, Ellis, who had a side project with Bruce Hampton called the Stained Souls, confessed, "I needed a band that was my own band, and I wasn't afraid to state that ... Ricky Keller (a Hampton cohort) produced the album. We got together and picked the players: Wayne (Burdette), Ricky (Keller), Yonrico (Scott), Oliver (Wells) ... they jumped on it ... and added a lot to it. It was the first time I worked on an album with a producer who made a lot of notes and had definite ideas of what to do. We tried to incorporate a lot of the things that I learned working with the Stained Souls: funk and free-form improv. Bruce brought me out," Ellis claimed, using the term before it became commonplace in the Col. Bruce Hampton vernacular, and Hampton's influence was realized on a whole generation of jam rock players.

That change in direction led to his recording *Georgia Blue*, Ellis' first album for Alligator Records. Ellis recalls the importance of that release. "They put me on the international festival circuit," he says.

In turn, he started gaining the recognition he deserved as a formidable electric guitarist, with the English blues magazine

*Juke Blues* calling him "one of the top three white blues guitarists in America today. The other two being Stevie Ray Vaughan and Johnny Winter."


Thirty years later, Ellis continues to make good on that proclamation, as evidenced by his most recent album, *Winning Hand*, a soulful collection of expressive songs and burning guitar work. *Winning Hand* also finds the guitarist back on Alligator Records, having bounced around labels, including Capricorn and Telarc, as well as releasing his last four albums on his own Heartfixer Music imprint.

With a studio and an arsenal of guitars set up in his basement, Ellis is never far from the "office" where he's recorded his last five albums. Such easy access paved the way for *Winning Hand*, an album that showcases those guitars and the different tones and textures Ellis achieves with them, in particular his longtime standard, a 1959 Fender Stratocaster, along with his 1967 Gibson ES 345 hollow body, his '73 Gibson Les Paul Deluxe, his 2000 Les Paul Standard, and his 1996 Fender Telecaster.

"This particular album was cut more live" than the previous albums Ellis recorded at home, he explains, with him going to Nashville, where his co-producer/keyboardist Kevin McKendree lives, and taking "two days to belt things out" before returning home to "fix things."

As to whether or not Ellis sees himself as a "blues" musician, he's quick to make a distinction. "I'm not sure how much real blues there is. Buddy Guy may be the last blues guy standing."

No, Ellis is quick to call what he plays blues rock.

"There are a lot of people who try real hard to be the real thing, but ... I'll let people battle it out as to what blues is, and what blues isn't," he says. "In the blues world, it's a very short list of very good white blues singers. If I think about me doing Elmore James or Muddy Waters" — he shakes his head back and forth — "99.999 percent of the time when white people play blues, it is blues rock. So I really don't call what I do blues. I have too much reverence for the real thing." 

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Read Tony's *High Frequencies* column every Thursday at [www.creativeloafing.com/music](http://www.creativeloafing.com/music).

**ARIPPIN** UPCOMING EVENTS

<b>MON, FEB 5</b> DRUNKEN UNICORN	<b>MAMMOTH GRINDER</b> OCCULTA / DEAD OATH / ABUSE OF POWER
<b>THURS, FEB 22</b> 529	<b>THE ATLAS MOTH</b> ROYAL THUNDER MIRRORS FOR PSYCHIC WARFARE
<b>FRI, FEB 23</b> THE EARL	<b>CRINGE / DEGRADATIONS</b> OLD THRONES / ANGER WITHIN
<b>SAT, FEB 24</b> 529	<b>BLACK MASS / LED TO THE GRAVE</b> DEATH OF KINGS / VETERUM
<b>TUES, FEB 27</b> 529	<b>CONAN / THE DITCH &amp; THE DELTA</b> INSOMNIAC / DEAD NOW
<b>THURS, MAR 1</b> 529	<b>1000 MODS / TELEKINETIC YETI</b> SASH THE BASH / THE BUZZARDS OF FUZZ
<b>MON, MAR 19</b> 529	<b>VOWWS / ENTERTAINMENT</b> DEAD REGISTER / TELEVISION AFTER DEATH
<b>THURS, MAR 22</b> CLERMONT	<b>DEAD RED FLOWERS</b> THE BUZZARDS OF FUZZ / TWIN CRIMINAL

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4/4 @ THE EARL - PRIMITIVE MAN / SPECTRAL VOICE  
4/8 @ THE EARL - WITHERED / WAKE  
4/12 @ 529 - TOKE / GNOMONAUT  
4/14 @ 529 - IMPIETY / DIVINE EVE / GRAVEHILL  
5/4 @ 529 - COME TO GRIEF / FISTULA

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# FEAR OF FEAR: Metal yoga

Neda Draupadi Honarvar practices Tough Love



STRENGTH AND BALANCE: Neda Draupadi Honarvar in the Astavakrasana pose at Tough Love Studio.

CHAD RADFORD

For nearly eight years, Neda Draupadi Honarvar has professionally honed the powers of the mind, body, and spirit while traversing the boundless middle ground between yoga and heavy metal music. Every Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday, Metal Yoga classes at Tough Love Studio fill up with bodies stretched to their limits to the tune of grinding distortion and oceanic rhythms. The idea behind Metal Yoga has long been to lure into the studio those who wouldn't normally consider yoga, and to show them new dimensions within themselves. For this month's Fear Of Fear column, I stopped by Tough Love for some Saturday morning namaste time, and to talk with Draupadi Honarvar about finding balance amid chaos.

## Chad Radford: Why do you bring metal to the yoga mat?

**Neda Draupadi Honarvar:** I have listened to metal for most of my life. Iranian families are pretty close, and when I was growing up, my parents threw big parties and all the kids were there. There was one kid about six years older than me who listened to a lot of Metallica, Iron Maiden, Slayer. So that got me into it when I was maybe seven years old. When I got a little older I went to a lot of shows, and I prac-

ticed yoga to metal at home. I started teaching yoga at Kashi. It's an urban ashram — a spiritual community — and the vibe is pretty chill. Generally, there isn't music during their classes. In 2010, I wanted to do my own thing, but none of my friends would come to my classes. I tried getting a couple of my guy friends, whom I went to shows with, to do yoga. I asked, "What would it take?" They said, "If you play metal we'll come." So I started in September 2010. I had no other job, and it was like, if one person shows up I'll make \$10 and I can buy lunch. It was really fun, and it caught on.

In the beginning it was mostly folks who wanted to listen to metal, so I taught more of a beginners class. Now, we've been doing it for eight years. So we have a range of experience: people who know what they're doing and people who are new. So I offer all levels and, over time, people become more proficient. I'll play some Black Sabbath, some doom and stoner stuff, some Melvins. Most people who come don't really care about metal. They come because they want to do yoga. A lot of people say they don't notice the music after the first few minutes. That's cool, because part of yoga is finding focus in the realm of chaos: If there's chaos all around you, can you still focus on your breath?

## There was a pretty atmospheric soundtrack today.

I usually curate the playlist to be kind of chill at the first, then build up, and then come down at the end. Today, we

started with "Suspended In Light" by Neurosis and closed with "He's Alive" from *The Handmaid's Tale* ... And then a track of om with harmonies from *Music For Meditation*.

## Was there a trial-and-error process finding what music works and what doesn't?

Oh yes. I started with what I knew would be good for yoga: Neurosis, Isis, stuff that's more melodic. Then I got adventurous and played Judas Priest, Iron Maiden, I even tried Watain. A million years ago I used to DJ rock nights at MJQ, so I had some experience making mixes. After that I started coming up with themes around bands coming through town: "Watain's coming, I'll make a Watain playlist." I went to a lot of shows back then. My health was good. I was teaching till 9:15 and then putting on jeans and going to shows.

## You are the picture of health!

My health is much better now; I've had Lyme disease since 2009. I didn't know what was happening until 2016. It caused all kinds of problems — my stomach completely shut down. It took a few years to figure it out. During that time I hibernated at home and taught. Now, I don't go out as much as I used to, and I don't drink like I used to.

## You can control your situation with yoga?

Yoga is crucial for my joint inflammation. If I don't practice, I feel terrible. And if I eat like shit, I feel like shit. It's a blessing that this is my job. It's my favorite thing to do.

## How many regulars do you have now?

At least a couple hundred people each week. We have 40-something classes on our schedule, each has 10-50 people sign up. There are three of us who teach Metal Yoga regularly, and there's a fourth who subs while I'm out of town — Carly Brown teaches Wednesday nights, Josh Jones teaches Thursday nights, and Greg Tinkle subs this class for me.

## The music is so subtly worked in that it doesn't draw attention to itself. It's not a gimmick!

People ask why I don't push Metal Yoga more. Part of it is because when we started, it wasn't happening anywhere else. Now there's metal yoga everywhere, and teachers say, "Stick your tongue out and scream!" I don't want to be judgmental, but for me, this is about the practice. It's not about acting a certain way. There are people out there pushing heavy metal yoga, so I just don't push it. We've been doing it on these three nights for a long time. We'll keep doing it and hope the right people find it. Most of it has been word of mouth, and that's great. Our aim is to have people who are in here for the right reasons. Our community is pretty nonjudgmental. Everybody who comes is super chill, and people who come in with an attitude get weeded out because we don't tolerate folks who aren't being nice. This is hard work, you're vulnerable, and it's important for me that people feel comfortable and safe here.

Read Chad Radford's Fear Of Fear metal column each month at [www.creativeloafing.com/music](http://www.creativeloafing.com/music).

## The commercialization of Zone 6

Gucci Mane's life could be a movie



JONATHAN MANNION

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MR. ZONE 6: Gucci Mane, lost in thought.

BY JEWEL WICKER

When Gucci Mane appeared in a bathtub (still draped in his gold chains, of course) during a scene in Harmony Korine's *Spring Breakers*, it seemed like it should probably be his last foray into the film world. But that was old Gucci.

Now, the East Atlanta rapper is hoping to turn his *New York Times* bestselling autobiography, *The Autobiography of Gucci Mane*, into a film. The rapper teased the project, and the possibility that he might serve as director, on Twitter in January.

"#TheAutoBiographyOfGuccimane is coming to a theatre near you #DirectorGuccimane #1017Films," he Tweets.

The book received praise from critics and fans for allowing the public to peek behind the curtains into the troubled life of the reformed rapper. Still, some questioned its authenticity. Gucci's former manager and Waka Flocka's mother, Debra Antney, said "half of the book is false."

*The Autobiography of Gucci Mane* focuses on the upbringing of Gucci, his run-ins with the law, and, most interestingly (and controversially), his influence on the Atlanta rap scene. From his work with OJ Da Juiceman to his tumultuous relationships with Young Jeezy to his early mentorship of rappers such as Migos and Young Thug, the book positions Gucci

Mane as a businessman and visionary, not just a rapper.

It's easy to see how the story could be converted into a film. Documentaries such as *The Art of Organized Noize* (Netflix) provide an enlightening look into the trio behind much of the success of the Dungeon Family collective. *The Art of Organized Noize* is a source of pride for Atlanta music lovers, and a Gucci Mane film would likely be, too.

Most importantly, it's always great when locals can tell the stories of Atlanta, instead of allowing outside voices to frame the conversation.

In a time when former Fifth Harmony member Camila Cabello can rule the Billboard Hot 100 chart with a cringe-worthy reference to "East Atlanta," authenticity is certainly welcomed.

In the hook for "Havana," Cabello sings, "Half of my heart is in Havana, oh na na. He took me back to East Atlanta," before telling of a bad boy with local ties. Rapper Young Thug hops on the song with a memorable crossover verse towards the end. Along with a song featuring Quavo that ultimately didn't make the final cut for her debut album, Cabello latched onto Atlanta rappers and their credibility at the start of her solo career.

In January, Cabello nabbed her first no. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 with "Havana," proving that she could surpass the success of her former band mates. The lead single's ascent to the top of the chart coincided with Cabello's self-titled debut album entering the Billboard Hot 200 at no. 1. "Havana" is also Young Thug's first no. 1 on the Hot 100. Prior to the collaboration with Cabello, Thug's highest charting song was "Lifestyle" with fellow ATLien Rich Homie Quan. It's hard to believe East Atlanta has become so popular that singers with absolutely no ties to the city have begun to give it a prominent shout-out, but here we are.

With rappers like Gucci Mane continuing to release projects that bring attention to the neighborhood, it's likely that outsiders will continue their fascination with it, too. But at least this way, locals are steering the conversation. [@](#)

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Read Jewel's Atlanta Untrapped column every week at [www.creativeloafing.com/music](http://www.creativeloafing.com/music).

# ATLANTA UNTRAPPED

by Jewel Wicker



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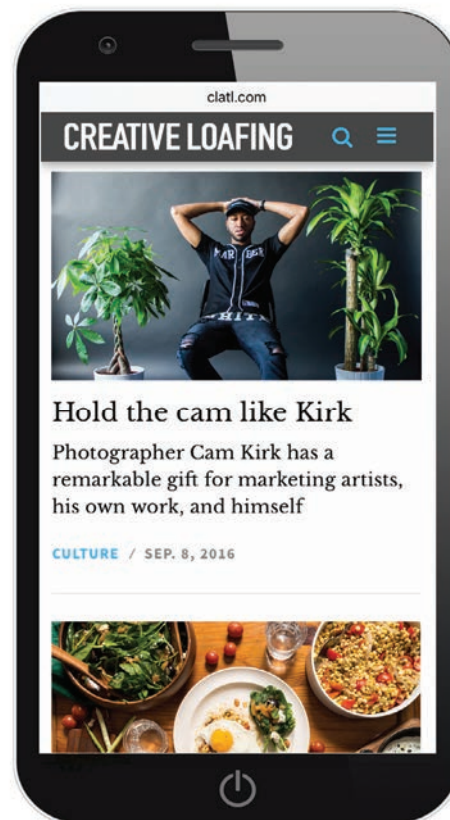
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## Sun., Feb. 25

GEORGE CLINTON & PARLIAMENT FUNKADELIC. \$36-\$51. 8 p.m. The Buckhead Theatre. [www.thebuckheadtheatreatl.com](http://www.thebuckheadtheatreatl.com). 404-843-2825.

MARTIN SEXTON. \$30-\$40. 6 p.m. (doors). City Winery. [www.citywinery.com](http://www.citywinery.com). 404-WINERY1.

FRANCINE REED. \$25-\$30. 5 p.m. (doors). Eddie's Attic. [www.eddiesattic.com](http://www.eddiesattic.com). 404-377-4976.

RENT. \$30-\$146. 1 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Fox Theatre. [www.foxtheatre.org](http://www.foxtheatre.org). 404-881-2100.

J.D. WILKES, NIKKI & THE PHANTOM CALLERS, THE WAYMORS. \$10-\$75. 6:30 p.m. Smith's Olde Bar. [www.smithsoldebar.com](http://www.smithsoldebar.com). 404-875-1522.

K. MICHELLE. \$33-\$55. 8 p.m. The Tabernacle. [www.tabernacleatl.com](http://www.tabernacleatl.com). 404-659-9022.

HARRISON 75 - NICK, TIM AND FRIENDS CELEBRATE GEORGE HARRISON'S 75TH BIRTHDAY. \$5-\$10. 7 p.m. Venkman's. [www.venkmans.com](http://www.venkmans.com). 470-225-6162.

AJJ, SHELLSHAG AND JOHN HAYS. \$15. 7 p.m. (doors). Masquerade (Hell). [www.masq.com](http://www.masq.com). 404-577-8178.

## Mon., Feb. 26

EDDIE'S ATTIC SONGWRITER'S OPEN MIC. \$5-\$6.25. 7 p.m. (doors). Eddie's Attic. [www.eddiesattic.com](http://www.eddiesattic.com). 404-377-4976.

RUDY CURRENCE. \$10-\$15. 6:30 p.m. (doors). Eddie's Attic. [www.eddiesattic.com](http://www.eddiesattic.com). 404-377-4976.

HARM'S WAY, RINGWORM, VEIN, AND QUEENSWAY. \$13. 6 p.m. (doors). Masquerade (Purgatory). 404-577-8178. [www.masq.com](http://www.masq.com).

## Tues., Feb. 27

CONAN, THE DITCH AND THE DELTA, INSOMNIAC, DEAD NOW. \$10-\$12. 9 p.m. 529. [www.529atlanta.com](http://www.529atlanta.com). 404-228-6769.

FUTURISTIC, WHAT MORE COULD YOU ASK FOR? TOUR WITH ISHDARR, SCRIBECASH, JARREN BENTON. \$17-\$20.

7 p.m. (doors). Vinyl. [www.centerstage-atlanta.com](http://www.centerstage-atlanta.com). 404-885-1365.

TAPE FACE. \$29-\$44. 7:30 p.m. (doors). Center Stage. [www.centerstage-atlanta.com](http://www.centerstage-atlanta.com). 404-885-1365.

MINDI ABAIR & THE BONESHAKERS. \$26-\$36. 6 p.m. (doors). City Winery. [www.citywinery.com](http://www.citywinery.com). 404-WINERY1.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT. \$35-\$131. 7:30 p.m. Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre. [www.cobbenergycentre.com](http://www.cobbenergycentre.com). 770-916-2800.

JOHN OATES WITH THE GOOD ROAD BAND. \$45-\$55. 6:30 p.m. (doors). Eddie's Attic. [www.eddiesattic.com](http://www.eddiesattic.com). 404-377-4976.

KEVIN SCOTT TUESDAY NIGHT JAM SESSION. 9 p.m. Elliott Street Deli & Pub. [www.elliottstreet.com](http://www.elliottstreet.com). 404-523-2174.

THE EXPENDABLES, THROUGH THE ROOTS AND PACIFIC DUB. \$17. 7 p.m. (doors). Masquerade (Hell). 404-577-8178. [www.masq.com](http://www.masq.com).

AWOLNATION. \$34-\$132. 8 p.m. The Tabernacle. [www.tabernacleatl.com](http://www.tabernacleatl.com). 404-659-9022.

JOYWAVE WITH SASHA SLOAN, KOPPS. \$17. 7 p.m. (doors). Terminal West. [www.terminalwestatl.com](http://www.terminalwestatl.com). 404-876-5566.

MUSIC IN THE ROUND. \$10. 7 p.m. Towne Cinema. [www.mytownecinema.com](http://www.mytownecinema.com). 404-228-3125.

JOE GRANSDEN'S JAZZ JAM. Free. 8 p.m. Venkman's. [www.venkmans.com](http://www.venkmans.com). 470-225-6162.

## Wed., Feb. 28

JOHN OATES WITH THE GOOD ROAD BAND. \$45-\$55. 6:30 p.m. (doors). Eddie's Attic. [www.eddiesattic.com](http://www.eddiesattic.com). 404-377-4976.

SWEET ASCENT, ANSON AND BEDLAM. \$10. 7 p.m. (doors). Masquerade (Purgatory). 404-577-8178. [www.masq.com](http://www.masq.com).

HEARTLESS ROMANTIC, LIKE MIKE, THE KEEPSAKE. \$8-\$12. 7 p.m. Smith's Olde Bar. [www.smithsoldebar.com](http://www.smithsoldebar.com). 404-875-1522.

NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH FLYING BIRDS. \$39-\$85. 8 p.m. The Tabernacle. [www.tabernacleatl.com](http://www.tabernacleatl.com).

com. 404-659-9022.

IKE STUBBLEFIELD TRIO. \$10. 7 p.m. Towne Cinema. [www.mytownecinema.com](http://www.mytownecinema.com). 404-228-3125.

BENJAMIN CLEMENTINE. \$20. 7 p.m. (doors). Variety Playhouse. [www.variety-playhouse.com](http://www.variety-playhouse.com). 404-524-7354.

CAROLINE AIKEN. \$10-\$15. 8 p.m. The Vista Room. [www.thevistaroom.com](http://www.thevistaroom.com). 404-321-5000.

STEVIE MILES/MISTA 420, SUPERBIA, TRAY-D, KING DILIO, ODEASY, CHRIS VEGA, CASHONABLE, P SUADE. \$10. 7 p.m. (doors). Masquerade (Hell). [www.masq.com](http://www.masq.com). 404-577-8178.

## Thurs., March 1

DAVID J (OF BAUHAUS AND LOVE AND ROCKETS) PLAYS A SOLO ACOUSTIC SET OF SONGS FROM THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER. WITH THE HOT PLACE AND JAMES HALL. \$25. 7 p.m. Little Tree Studios. [www.davidjofficial.bandcamp.com](http://www.davidjofficial.bandcamp.com).

MARTIN L. MATHIS. \$10-\$60. 6:30 p.m. Smith's Olde Bar. [www.smithsoldebar.com](http://www.smithsoldebar.com). 404-875-1522.

THE PRESCRIPTIONS, GOLD-STAGGER, DELTAPHONIC, THE ESSENTIALISTS. \$8-\$10. 7 p.m. Smith's Olde Bar. [www.smithsoldebar.com](http://www.smithsoldebar.com). 404-875-1522.

JO KOY. \$37-\$47. 8 p.m. The Tabernacle. [www.tabernacleatl.com](http://www.tabernacleatl.com). 404-659-9022.

BRETT DENNEN WITH DEAN LEWIS. \$27. 7 p.m. (doors). Terminal West. [www.terminalwestatl.com](http://www.terminalwestatl.com). 404-876-5566.

SINGER-SONGWRITER OPEN MIC NIGHT. Free. 8 p.m. Towne Cinema. [www.mytownecinema.com](http://www.mytownecinema.com). 404-228-3125.

JEFF BRADSHAW & FRIENDS FEAT ALGEBRA BLESSETT. \$30-\$50. 9:30 p.m. (doors). City Winery. [www.citywinery.com](http://www.citywinery.com). 404-WINERY1.

TRAVIS GREENE. \$20-\$25. 7 p.m. (doors). Variety Playhouse. [www.variety-playhouse.com](http://www.variety-playhouse.com). 404-524-7354.

NORMA JEAN, GIDEON, TOOTH-GRINDER, AND GREYHAVEN. \$15. 7 p.m. (doors). Masquerade (Hell). [www.masq.com](http://www.masq.com). 404-577-8178.

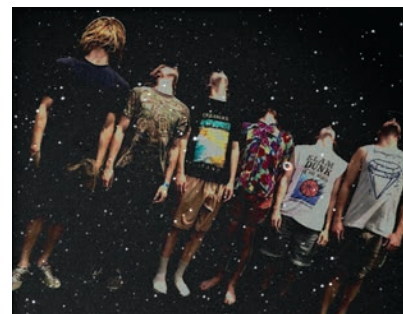
AN EVENING WITH THE JULIAN LAGE TRIO. \$18. 7 p.m. (doors). The Earl. [www.badearl.com](http://www.badearl.com). 404-522-3950.

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## MUSIC/FEATURE

# Hello Ocho returns

### The group reignites on Valentine's Day



SPACE IS THE PLACE: Hello Ocho.

ALEX PATTON & LAUREN LEATHERS

**H**ello Ocho has a weird way of showing love. One year after taking an unexpected hiatus, the group returns to defy indie-pop norms once again, this time on Valentine's Day. What better day to show some weird love than the most awkward holiday of the year? "We always had a lot of fun playing Valentine's Day shows," frontman Chris Yonker says. "We always did them up real big."

Hello Ocho became a favorite of the local underground music and arts scene circa 2010, when the group released its self-titled debut EP. With a lineup featuring Yonker (vocals/guitar), Christian Shepherd (synths/vocals), Clinton Callahan (bass), Chris Childs (vibraphone), and John Gregg (drums), the group crafted manic rock songs steeped in thrashing pop and dreamlike serenity. Look to the stylistic and emotional roller coaster ride of 2017's "Tear Wagon" for just a taste of the group's balanced rhythms and mental divergence in the name of art and rock. Part of the Hello Ocho concert experience is hearing raw versions of songs that never appeared on an album, making each show an exclusive and intimate experience.

Gregg has since moved on to Cleveland, Ohio, and will soon be a married man. Gregg met his fiancé at a Hello Ocho show, and the group is playing the Valentine's Day reunion show as a nod to their marriage.

The rest of Hello Ocho's personnel continue playing in other groups around town. In addition to being co-owner of Mammal Gallery, Yonker now plays bass for experimental pop quartet Karaoke. Childs has embarked on a burgeoning career composing modern classical music. Still, the group left a lot of unfinished material behind. In 2016, the group's sound engineer, Ben Price of Studilaroche, was severely injured in a bicycling accident, holding up the release of an album that was almost complete.

Now that Price is back on his feet, Yonker

hopes to use money from the reunion show to help cover the costs of releasing the material postmortem. "It's just sitting there not doing anything, and it would be nice to get it out there," Yonker says. "A lot of people know some of those songs already, since we've been playing them live for a little bit."

The return of Hello Ocho is accompanied by the return of another long-defunct local act, Christ, Lord. While the original Hello Ocho lineup was touring behind its self-titled debut album, the group cultivated a deep and shared infatuation with Christ, Lord. Led by Christian Shepherd's soaring voice and accordion, Christ, Lord developed a highly stylized blend of vaudevillian gypsy-folk songs that came to a peak with the release of the 2010 album, *Magnalia Christi*, and a live LP recorded at Criminal Records in 2012.

When Hello Ocho and Christ, Lord toured together, they would often form one large ensemble dubbed Ocho Lord, reaching deeper into the experimental nuances of Hello Ocho's subtle chaos and Christ, Lord's dark undertones. Both groups complement each other well, pushing the boundaries of art pop and psychedelic folk music. "When I found out that Christ, Lord might be doing a reunion with us, it made me really excited about doing the show," Yonker says. "It's the full original Christ, Lord lineup together."

After Christ, Lord played its final show in May 2014, Shepherd began playing synths for Hello Ocho as a full member, along with frequent collaborator Childs on vibraphone. This final lineup of Hello Ocho released both *In Portuguese* and *The Slippery Hand EP* in 2016.

Like most breakups, Hello Ocho's separation was complicated, motivated by the struggle of time management. Yonker adds that this will probably be the last show they play together, or at least until another special occasion prompts a reunion.

In the meantime, Hello Ocho and Christ, Lord are once again rekindling the flames, all of the spirituality, atmosphere, and weird love they've always fostered, and it feels more poignant than ever before.

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### HELLO OCHO

With Christ, Lord, 10th Letter. \$15. 8:30 p.m. (doors). Wed., Feb. 14. The Earl, 488 Flat Shoals Ave. S.E. 404-522-3950 [www.badearl.com](http://www.badearl.com).

# Knower: Music without borders

Genevieve Artadi and Louis Cole twist jazz and pop into something new



RICHARD THOMPSON

**WORKING OVERTIME:** Humor, talent, and high-energy grooves define Knower's aesthetic.

PAUL DEMERRITT

Over the last decade Los Angeles has become America's nerve center for musical experimentation and genre cross-pollination. Heavyweights such as Kendrick Lamar, Flying Lotus, and Thundercat are figureheads for a generation of music fans who wouldn't find any contradiction with having Miles Davis, Claude Debussy, and "The Legend of Zelda" soundtrack on the same playlist. While L.A. was once known for birthing West Coast jazz and G-Funk, the boundaries between the city's musical communities are constantly being redrawn.

Writing and performing as Knower, vocalist Genevieve Artadi and drummer Louis Cole create music that's as genre-defying as their L.A. counterparts, but with a frenetic energy unlike anyone else. Whether covering mainstream pop hits or crafting their own tunes, they infuse each song with jazzy chord structures, dayglo synthesizers, and spastic rhythms that evoke a mix of James Brown's funk and Aphex Twin's manic syncopations.

Artadi and Cole started amassing a fanbase in 2010, after uploading covers of Top 40 songs to YouTube including Britney Spears' "3" and Justin Bieber's "Baby." Even now, these early videos are the best argument for why Knower has such a broad appeal. The duo's "Baby" video showcases Artadi and Cole's goofy charm as they alternate between wearing Viking hats, dressing up like an angler fish, and getting in pillow fights.

A healthy and unironic embrace of pop

glamour is crucial to Knower's aesthetic, and the duo's ability to saturate its impressive musicianship with hooks carves out space for a diverse fanbase. "We were using pop covers to attract new people to our sound," Artadi says in an email. "I grew up listening to a lot of pop music, and [Cole and I] share taste in a lot of the pop we like. Michael and Janet Jackson, the Beatles, the Beach Boys, and Earth Wind and Fire are some of our favorites."

Artadi and Cole met while studying music at different L.A. universities — Artadi went to California State University, Northridge and Cole USC Thornton School of Music — but their musical roots go back to their childhood homes. "It was just normal for [my] house to be filled with musicians rehearsing, and for Mom and Dad to be learning songs from the radio and writing songs, and for my mom to dress up all crazy for gigs," Artadi writes. "The house was so colorful all the time, [which made] me want that energy in my life all the time too."

Likewise, Cole grew up in a musical family. "Louis was heavily influenced by his dad — a badass E.R. doctor who also played jazz piano and made amazing arrangements for Louis's high school funk band," she adds.

While they didn't perform in the same circles as Thundercat or saxophonist Kamasi Washington, Artadi and Cole cut their teeth in a similar scene, packed with talented and exploratory musicians who pushed Knower's music beyond L.A. "Jack Conte told us to try making video songs and took us on tour with Pomplamoose," Artadi says. "Then people

like [saxophonist] David Binney, Nate Wood, and the Kneebody crew, [drummer] Zach Danziger, and [former bass player with the Roots] Owen Biddle came into our lives and encouraged us to keep going in the direction we were going and not give up."

Since 2010, Knower has spent time on the road with a full band including Thundercat's keyboard player Dennis Hamm, opened for the Red Hot Chili Peppers, and released four records, most recently 2016's *Life*. A live version of "Overtime," a standout single from *Life*, is one of the duo's most viewed YouTube videos and showcases the progression of Knower's style and talent.

Cole and Artadi's love of glittery synthesizers and breakneck drums hasn't changed much since their "Baby" cover, but every aspect of their playing has become more polished and, at the same time, more unhinged.

The song's funky and infectious groove begs audience participation in the same way that James Brown's rhythm section used to light up the dance floor on "Soul Train." Most notably, Artadi's command of her vocal rhythms now demands just as much attention as Cole's drumming. What's most refreshing about "Overtime" is its ability to add something legitimately new to dance music at a time when stale, uninspired blends of funk and electronica have choked the life out of both genres for years.

What's even more heartening is that Knower's early sense of humor remains intact in the lo-fi video effects on "Overtime."

"Our similar senses of humor helped bring us together, and continue to be a part of our thing," Artadi writes. "We just want to go maximum and without limits in our visuals and our music, so that just includes our humor, as well as a crapload of other aspects of our lives and selves."

Knower may be too accessible for jazz diehards and too intricate for pop fans, but Artadi and Cole have created a musical refuge for anyone hungry for talent without pretension, and experimentation without fear. —CL—

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# Visitors & DfTaLS revel in jazz and drones



No matter what fate has in store for south Broad Street, the gritty Downtown arts district continues fostering some of Atlanta's most vibrant and creative music. One of the more engaging gems to sprout from the neighborhood is **Visitors**, a loose but fruitful collective that's honing fugue-like psychedelic jazz and krautrock rhythms and excursions. The group orbits around Jared Pepper and Dan Bailey's Broad Street Visitors Center recording studio; its core lineup features a mix of stunningly creative locals, including bass player Bailey (Carey, Faun and a Pan Flute) and flautist/guitarist Pepper, along with flautist Rasheeda Ali, pianist Gage Gilmore, synth player Jeremi Johnson (10th Letter), and percussionist Kenito Murray (Atlanta Brass Connection). There's still plenty of room for guests: Chris Childs (vibraphone), Quinn Masonry (saxophone), Saira Raza (cello, lyrics, vocals), Dallas Dawson (drums), and more names are sprinkled throughout the group's first release, a singles collection titled *Anticipation* that surveys a slew of genres and sounds. "Origami" riffs into the celestial plane with a jazzy mix of kosmische pop. "Where" is a freewheeling screed of dark and mesmerizing psychosis in the vein of Miles Davis' *Bitches Brew* or Can's *Future Days*, while "Howard The Coward" offers a disfigured blend of beautifully noirish and deadpan dread. For how loosely Visitors operate, *Anticipation* is a taut and focused statement that demands to be heard. As a companion release,

the group also released a cassette, titled *The Optimism of Concern*, featuring an exploratory sidelong opus that captures the Visitors live group, adding depth to the the group's variety of sources, culminating in gritty but gorgeous urban jazz inflections. In fact, the 34-minute title track blends jazz, dub, and spacey ambience into a living, breathing whole that fuses each disparate influence together perfectly. Keep an eye out for a new tape to arrive, titled *Nature Documentary* (Null Zone), due out March 3 when Visitors play the Earl. ★★★★★

Since 2006, Scott Burland (Theremin) and Frank Schultz (lap steel) have cultivated a rich ambient presence performing as **Duet for Theremin and Lap Steel**. The duo's simple formula has evolved into a sprawling and ethereal blend of droning and electronic textures. Burland and Schultz are no strangers to collaboration, having documented mesmerizing meditations alongside Andrew Weathers, Helena Espvall, Richard Lainhart, Bill Brovold, and members of Chattanooga's Shaking Ray Levis. For their latest offering, Burland and Schultz called on cellist Benjamin Shirley (Faun and a Pan Flute), who adds a subtle but substantial new angle into the mix. *DfTaLS with Benjamin Shirley* is comprised of four live, improvised pieces recorded at Creative Sound Labs. Here, the trio's instruments blur into a floating, amorphous cloud wafting through a darkly hued performance. "Part 2" is eerily unsettling as it brings together

spine-tingling textures and scraped strings, while "Part 4" takes shape amid a flurry of discombobulated electronic sound. -CL-

★★★★☆

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*DfTaLS plays Eyedrum. Sat., Feb. 3, with RoboCromp.*



DfTaLS with Benjamin Shirley



# Sober redemption

Jason Isbell's new highs in songwriting



THE NASHVILLE SOUND: Jason Isbell (center) with the 400 Unit.

DONOVAN FARLEY

Since getting sober in 2012, Jason Isbell's live shows have become joyous musical benedictions. The former hellraiser, whose grandfather was a musically-inclined Pentecostal preacher, extols the virtues of clean living, loving immensely, and maintaining a steadfast dedication to the craft of songwriting.

The sea change in Isbell's personal life was echoed by a period of transition in his art. The records he's released since sobering up — 2013's *Southeastern*, 2015's *Something More Than Free*, and last year's *The Nashville Sound* — have shot him to the top of the Billboard charts, and won him two Grammys — the song "24 Frames" won Best American Roots Song, and *Something More Than Free* won Best Americana Album. In 2018, "If We Were Vampires" is up for Best Americana Roots song, and *The Nashville Sound* is nominated for Best Americana Album.

Such accolads have landed Isbell in slots at or near the top of several festival lineups. Songs like the exquisite "Cover Me Up" showcase a man who has gone through hell and learned something about himself and the world in which he resides during the journey. More than ever, Isbell is searching for a deeper connection with the world and a sense of peace within himself.


At the heart of Isbell's rise beyond his *Sirens Of the Ditch* debut album, is his wife and frequent collaborator, Amanda Shires. Together, they've become the new first family of Americana, setting the standard for how love, art, and politics successfully commingle.

The couple's upward spiral took shape after Shires, along with Ryan Adams and manager Traci Thomas, staged Isbell's 2012 intervention. These days the couple use their time in the spotlight to denounce Trump, speak out in support of social justice issues, and talk about country music.

On Feb. 8 and 9, Isbell, Shires and his backing band, the 400 Unit, play a two-night stand at the Fox Theatre that's indicative of how much Isbell's reality has changed since Shires and sobriety came into his life.

I recall attending one show in Savannah several years ago where Isbell was carrying so many bottles of liquor into the tiny, smoke-filled rock club that he looked at me through bloodshot eyes, a cigarette dangling from his mouth, smiled like a wasted Cheshire cat and said, "Hey buddy, you wanna help me with the liquor load-in?"

But all that's behind him now. And at this stage in Isbell's life, it's inconceivable to think that anything could beat the high of taking the stage at the Fox Theatre with the love of his life by his side, and nearly 5,000 fans hanging on every word when he leans into the mantra in "Cover Me Up," singing, "I sobered up and I swore off that stuff /Forever this time."

Amen, brother. 

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## JASON ISBELL AND THE 400 UNIT

With James McMurtry. Thurs.-Fri., Feb. 8-9. 8 p.m. \$32.50-\$79.50. Fox Theatre, 660 Peachtree St. N.E. 404-881-2100.

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# Michelle Malone, still tough

'Slings and Arrows' gets personal



"You can't stop me now/I'm just getting started," Michelle Malone sings with feisty swagger over a fast, bluesy shuffle opening her latest album, *Slings*

and *Arrows* (SBS Records). But that's only half true; Malone has been turning out rollicking roots music since her 1988 debut, *New Experience*. With *Slings and Arrows* Malone unleashes another set of rugged, soulful rockers and ballads slathered in the humid Southern atmosphere that she has perfected over the past three decades.

Malone's pipes remain powerful on her fiery version of Otis Redding's "I've Been Loving You Too Long," a duet with homeboy Shawn Mullins (filling in for Gregg Allman who was initially slated for his part). She gets rowdy with a New Orleans backbeat on "Love Yourself," grabbing inspiration from Michelle Obama singing, "When they go

low, we go high," calling for sympathy in a divided country, all while laying out sizzling slide guitar.

Randall Bramblett co-penned the swampy "Fox and the Hound," where Malone gets sultry as the song changes tempo into a John Lee Hooker-styled boogie, with another shot of scorching slide work. She displays a tender side on "The Flame," arguably her finest love song, and closes with the mid-tempo but aggressive "Boxing Gloves," where the titular items are removed to find she's even stronger without them. It's a significant and candid insight from Malone, one that finds the veteran singer and songwriter as incisive, potent, and commanding as at any time in her career.

— HAL HOROWITZ



Michelle Malone CD release show. \$24. 7 and 9:30 p.m. Sat., March 24. Eddie's Attic, 515-B N. McDonough St., Decatur. 404-377-4976. [www.eddiesattic.com](http://www.eddiesattic.com).

## MUSIC/FEATURE

# Milo, the wordy rapsmith, plays Aisle 5

Rory Ferreira, better known to most as emcee and producer Milo, has never been comfortable staying in one place for too long. He's lived all over the country, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Los Angeles, California. Press play on his 2017 album, *Who Told You to Think?!!?!?!?*, and it's clear that he's drawing inspiration from far beyond hip-hop's traditional avenues in songs such as "Poet (Black Bean)," "The Young Man Has A Point (Nurture)," and "Take Advantage of the Naysayer."

Naturally, the diversity of Milo's life experiences take shape with a mellow, measured pace and wordy raps. In the song "Rapper," following a lumbering intro via Busdriver, Milo delivers a mouthful: "Imported bits of eloquence direct from Margaritaville/Never imagined *Blade Runner* as an idyllic film/And the *Pokemon GO*/When the *Pokemon GO*, when the *Pokemon GO*/On Potrero Hill bent pole head under firmament/Guess I'll just scat off axis."

It's a mighty mantra for the young innovator who also releases music under the name of Scallops Hotel. The production is sparse — a glowing backdrop for social commentary and introspective rants that dive headlong into the dark side of social anxiety in the modern world.

Show up early for this Sunday-night blowout to check the army of openers lined up, including Elucid, Dope Knife, Divine Interface, and the rising MVP of the evening, Baltimore, Maryland's JEGMA-FIA, aka Peggy aka Black Ben Carson. He's noisy, gnarly, bursting with unorthodox creativity, and in "Baby I'm Bleeding" he promises to "never go blonde like Kanye!"

— CHAD RADFORD JEREL MARSHALL

\$12-\$14. 8 p.m. Sun., Feb. 18. Aisle 5, 1123 Euclid Ave. N.E. 404-885-1365. [www.aisle5atl.com](http://www.aisle5atl.com).

# Missed connections

Omni copes with fleeting human interactions on *Multi-task*



AFTERLIFERS: Omni's Frank Broyles (from left), Philip Frobos, and live drummer Doug Bleichner strike a pose.

## DONOVAN FARLEY

Omni's sophomore album, *Multi-task*, finds the jittery Atlanta post-punk trio garnering national attention and high praise from the likes of Pitchfork and Noisy, and deservedly so. The album expands upon Philip Frobos' feverish zen lyrics and bass lines, and Frank Broyles' buoyant guitar licks. Broyles also plays drums on both the band's records (drummer Doug Bleichner has played most of the group's live shows over the last year).

Good post-punk has always had a decidedly urban feel to it; music befitting fast-paced and concrete surroundings. Omni's 2016 debut, *Deluxe*, laid the blueprint for the group's stylistic approach. *Multi-task*, with Frobos' wry observations on seeking connections in modern life — and all but one song clocking in at under three minutes — furthers the aesthetic. Although the band holed up in a remote cabin in the woods near Vienna, Georgia, to record with producer Nathaniel Higgins, Frobos says that living in the city and the frenetic life of a touring band inspired the album's themes.

"Even though we went a couple hours down the road to record, we were on such regimented schedules that we never really left the city and all its energy," Frobos says, adding that the record's title is a nod to the band's hectic lifestyle. "It's something I believe that came from a late night in Europe, but we were so busy last year that when we weren't touring we would immediately record for as long as possible before going on tour again. Somewhere in the balance we had lives and ended up with a new album, *Multi-task*."

Frobos and Broyles take the madness in stride, adding that writing and recording the

album was "casual and fun" — no surprise considering that Broyles spent time touring with Deerhunter, and plays on the album *Monomania*. Frobos is the former leader of Atlanta post-punk outfit Carnivores.

His loose confidence plays a big part in Omni's sound. At first, Frobos' lyrics seem like stream-of-conscious observations. But a deeper dive into his words reveals a songwriter grappling with what true connections to others means in the modern world. In the song "Choke" Frobos sings, "Choking on a couple of words, yeah they kinda fly like the birds/Take a deep breath that's not so toxic, and remind yourself of all your logic."

As the record plays on, a foreboding sense of anxiety grows in "Equestrian," "Tuxedo Blues," and "Type." "I was contemplating what it means to be truly close to people, and how fleeting that can be," Frobos says. "It's undeniable that the present has seeped in a bit. People don't often think before they speak, and even more so forget to look in the mirror." But, he adds, "I don't have any kind of grand ideology or agenda in response to the many interactions and encounters that inspired a lot of these lyrics, I just think it's at times funny and interesting to highlight them." Making the most of these missed connections in the fast-paced, concrete environs of Atlanta and beyond is rich fodder for Omni's sparkling, lo-fi hooks and tales of urban alienation.

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OMNI With Karaoke, Rated Age, Organized Boys DJs \$10. 9 p.m. Fri., Feb. 9. 529, 529 Flat Shoals Ave. 404-228-6769. [www.529atlanta.com](http://www.529atlanta.com)

# David J: A day in the life

The former Bauhaus/Love and Rockets bass player embraces the troubadour spirit

BY CHAD RADBURN

There's an adage in the arts world that says an artist is only as good as what they are doing right now. When taken at face value, it's a dogmatic and somewhat heavy-handed expression. But it's one that resonates when looking at the careers of great artists throughout history, from Pablo Picasso to David Bowie — artists who turned out consistently brilliant works until the end of their days on Earth. It's also an expression that former Bauhaus and Love and Rockets bass player, singer, songwriter, and co-founder David J. Haskins says rings true.

"Every artist has a legacy, and if that legacy is strong, then it is to be respected. But one cannot rest on one's laurels," Haskins says. "In order to keep active, and to engage, you have to evolve and keep making the work."

From the murky British goth and post-punk inflections of his 1983 solo debut, *Etiquette of Violence*, through the lush Americana of 2017's *Vagabond Songs*, Haskins displays an insatiable imperative to continue moving forward as an artist. He is the playwright behind 2008's *Silver for Gold* (*The Odyssey of Edie Sedgwick*), and the author of a 2014 memoir, *Who Killed Mister Moonlight?: Bauhaus Black Magick and Benediction* (Jawbone Press). But above all else, music is David J's center.

Over the last several years, David J, as he is most commonly known, has spent much of his time traveling the world, playing "living room" shows. These are typically solo acoustic performances in unorthodox spaces that have ranged from sponsors' actual living rooms to bookstores, and, in one instance, the chapel in a Victorian cemetery in Savannah, Georgia. These shows are intimate, low-key gatherings that are purposefully designed to facilitate a more up-close and personal experience than the large venues he spent years playing while touring with Bauhaus and Love and Rockets. Occasionally he invites local guests to perform with him, depending on who happens to be in town, evoking a troubadour spirit, performing songs from throughout his career. As such, there's a certain winking resignation to *Vagabond Songs'* title.

After releasing over a dozen solo albums, and collaborating with everyone from "Watchmen" and "V for Vendetta" writer Alan Moore, to Old 97's frontman Rhett Miller, Haskins propels his music forward by looking deeper into himself.

The 15 numbers that make up *Vagabond Songs*, follow a story arc that distills Haskins' life experiences into a finely balanced double LP.

"The Day That David Bowie Died" opens the album



LOUIS RODIGER

**THE VAGABOND:** David J. Haskins looks deep within himself to inspire a body of work that grows brighter with each listen.

with a slow unfurling of acoustic flare and reflection. The song is an homage, stamping in time Haskins' feelings and whereabouts on the fateful day when he learned that one of his lifelong musical heroes — the inimitable Mr. Jones — transcended the physical plane. The song is matched at the end of the LP with a sentimental, acoustic rendition of Love and Rockets' 1985 song, "The Dog-End Of A Day Gone By." In the midst of it all, "2000 Light Years From Gold Street" offers something of an artist's manifesto when Haskins sings, "Nostalgia is two parts bullshit to one part blue/Add a dash of bitter regret and the song is coming through."

"...Gold Street" is a thesis for a percolating and unlikely song cycle steeped in stories and imagery plucked from throughout Haskins' earliest days spent discovering music and growing into adulthood in his sleepy hometown of North Hampton, U.K. "It is autobiographical and it's general, and a bit specific to the cynicism of North Hampton," Haskins says. "But it's a healthy cynicism. There is a downside when it's carried too far, and it becomes negative, but it can be taken as a goad, and an encouragement to get on and change what you don't like. Make what you do like. It's being realistic," he adds. "With nostalgia there's a tendency to

see the past through rose-tinted shades, and that's bullshit — it becomes 'the good old days.' But it's also melancholy and beautiful looking back."

These psychological cues are channeled into the bar-reeling guitar rhythm of "The Sun Sets Soon On Heroes," a cover of Little Feat's laid-back and New Orleans-infatuated "Roll 'Em Easy," and the sweet psychedelia of "A Star Crossed Shipboard Romance." Each song paints a portrait of Haskins' persona with a greater sense of depth than his previous works have revealed. "I don't think about these concepts when I'm writing the songs, they just pour out," he says. "The concepts reveal themselves to me in the process of making the work."

Still, his songwriting has evolved a long way from the phantasmagoric characters — some real, some imagined — and abstract imagery of early songs such as "The Fugitive" from *Etiquette of Violence*, his pairing with former Bauhaus singer Peter Murphy for 1992's "Candy On the Cross," and 1991's alternative chart-topping number, "I'll be Your Chauffeur."

The writing has become increasingly personal, which is the result of growing as a person, underscoring another adage: You write what you know. "Sometimes, when I'm having an experience, in a way I'm writing a song — listening to a person with one ear, and with the other ear listening for lines," he laughs.

As evidenced by the barely three-year gap between *Vagabond Songs* and 2014's *An Eclipse of Ships*, writing songs seems an effortless endeavor for Haskins. But that's the magic of good songwriting. "I've become a lot more productive, the older I've become," he says. "Earlier in life I would release just about everything that I wrote. Now, sometimes I discard things completely. Other things I shelve."

This discerning ear and sense of restraint may not be obvious upon first listen to *Vagabond Songs*, but it culminates in a body of timeless songs that grow brighter with each listen. -CL-

## DAVID J. HASKINS

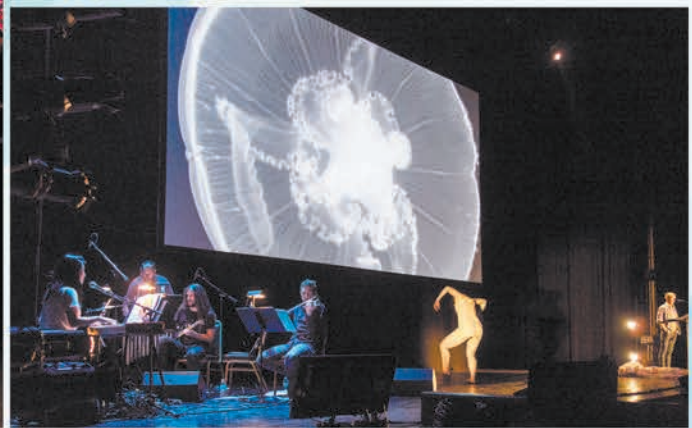
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## VALENTINES IN THE GARDEN

**Sat., Feb. 10, Valentine's Day**

When Valentine's Day rolls around, and you're searching for a workable symbol of love and affection, a bouquet of flowers is always a safe choice. But why not take it up a notch and go for the whole garden? At the Atlanta Botanical Gardens' annual Valentines in the Garden event, guests will be treated to an evening of live music, cocktails, and catered desserts surrounded by the illuminated gardens. Grab a lover (or a friend) and go flower-hopping beneath the stars for the ultimate V-day date. It's also your only chance to experience the Orchid Daze exhibition at night! \$40-\$45.

7-11 p.m. Atlanta Botanical Gardens, 1345 Piedmont Ave. N.E.  
404-876-5859. — CRISTINA BESOSA

See See & Do p.46



PHOTO JASON TRAVIS

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See&Do from p.45

## IN THE MUSIC ROOM:

- FEB 1 DYLAN SCHNEIDER**  
Lauren Ashley & The Trainwreckers / Ashley Walls
- FEB 2 ALL THE LOCALS**  
Zach Cambria / Emmy Law
- FEB 8 TRAE PIERCE & THE T-STONES**
- FEB 9 ABBEY ROAD LIVE!**
- FEB 10 HEDONISTAS**  
The Night Shift / Honey Hips
- FEB 13 ROOTS OF CREATION**
- FEB 16 PLEASURE CLUB**  
Pls Pls
- FEB 17 PLEASURE CLUB**  
Young Antiques
- FEB 19 BALKUN BROTHERS**  
Fux / The Halem Albright Band
- FEB 24 EL SCORCHO**  
Running Down A Dream / Mermer
- FEB 25 JD WILKES**  
Nikki & The Phantom Callers / The Waymores
- MAR 1 MARTIN MATHIS**
- MAR 6 CHRIS JACOBS**  
Pierce Edens
- MAR 8 TITO AUGER**
- MAR 10 HAYLEY JANE & THE PRIMATES**
- MAR 24 TAL NATIONAL**

## IN THE ATLANTA ROOM:

- FEB 6 MOTEL RADIO / AIRPARK / PAPER WALLS**
- FEB 14 THE WARSAW CLINIC / JIMI DAVIES & BRUCE THE GUITAR / SEX FARM**
- FEB 22 SPRAY TAN / THE FLORIDA ROOMS / THOMMASSONS / OZELLO**

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JOSHUA BLACK WILKES

## JD WILKES

**Thurs., Feb. 25, Country**

Col. JD Wilkes is an old-time Southern culture anachronism. The banjo picker and unpredictable front man leading the Legendary Shack Shakers' 20-plus year run of success also looks to his old Kentucky home as a filmmaker, author, and visual artist. Everything the irreverent and self-proclaimed "Southern surrealist" creates touches on regional music, from its roots in rural churches to its role in the creation of the "devil's music." Wilkes' latest album, *Fire Dream*, continues this trend, with such standout tracks as "Wild Bill" and "Starlings" allowing both the local minister and the town drunk a chance to front your hometown's best string band. *With Nikki & the Phantom Caller and the Waymores.* \$10. 6:30 p.m. Sun., Feb. 25. Smith's Olde Bar (The Music Room), 1578 Piedmont Ave. NE. 404-875-1522. [www.smithsoldebar.com](http://www.smithsoldebar.com).

— BOBBY MOORE

See See & Do p.47



ERIC CASH

## CAN YOU PICTURE THAT? "THE OC" PILOT TABLE READ

**Sat., Feb. 17, Comedy**

For one night, the ATL transforms into the OC. The West Coast comes to Relapse Theatre as some of the South's finest comedians, actors, and improvisors assemble for a live table read of the pilot episode of every old millennial's favorite primetime teen soap, "The O.C." With dorky Seth Cohen and street-smart Ryan Atwood, it'll be 2003 all over again, but with less faux-hawk haircuts. Ian Aber and Matt Pechiney host a parody script read complete with live music to get the fully teenage angsty vibe. Tickets are \$7 in advance and \$10 at the door, so save a few bucks and plan your night out ahead of time. \$7-\$10. 8:30 p.m. Sat., Feb. 17. *Relapse Theatre, 380 14th St. N.W.* [www.relapsecomedy.com](http://www.relapsecomedy.com). — OLIVIA CATHCART

## OKCELLO

**Sun., Feb. 4, Classical**

Okorie Johnson, an Atlanta-based cellist and composer who performs under the moniker OkCello, brings his amalgam of instrumental improvisation with live electronic effects, audience interaction, and storytelling to the Michael C. Carlos Museum on the Emory University campus for a special afternoon concert. Before the show, Johnson will lead a group of schoolchildren on a tour of the museum's world-renowned collection of African art and artifacts. Based on the ensuing discussion with the children, Johnson will create a song to be performed during the concert. "I'm taking their



HENRY JACOBS

ideas and telling a story in musical form," Johnson explains. *Free and open to the public.* 3:30-4:30 p.m. Sun., Feb. 4. Michael C. Carlos Museum Ackerman Hall, Level 3. 571 South Kilgo Circle N.E. 404-727-4282. [www.carlos.emory.edu](http://www.carlos.emory.edu). — DOUG DELOACH

See&Do from p.46



JILLIAN KEATS

## MAMMOTH GRINDER

**Mon., Feb. 5, Metal**

Forgive Chris Ulsh for the five-year gap between Mammoth Grinder albums. Since his punk/death metal project released 2013's *Underworlds* (20 Buck Spin), Ulsh has stayed busy drumming in thrash band Power Trip, and recruiting half of RVA rippers Iron Reagan to play in Mammoth Grinder. The group's latest album, *Cosmic Crypt* (Relapse Records), showcases Mark Bronzino's blazing riffs, Ryan Parrish's relentless rhythms, and Ulsh's otherworldly howls and growls. *Cosmic Crypt* is a sturdy reminder that crusty punk-metal bands can burn everything to the ground while playing actual, memorable songs! Welcome back, Mammoth Grinder. It was worth the wait. *With Dropout, Occulta, and Abuse of Power.* \$8-\$10. 9 p.m. *The Drunken Unicorn, 736 Ponce De Leon Place N.E. 404-361-2562. wwww.thedrunkenunicorn.net.* — BEN SALMON

## OYSTERFEST 2018

**Sat., Feb. 17, Food & Drink**

Wet and soggy weather be damned; it's oyster season! And if you're ready to get shucked, Park Tavern's annual Oysterfest has you covered with buckets of steamed, fried, and raw oysters, plus fried shrimp and plenty of cold beer. Live music by Coyote Anyway, Moody Hollow, Members Only, and Atlanta Funk Society will keep the mood light as the shellfish keep coming. In past years, this event has sold out, so if you're going to partake, be sure to nab tickets early. 21 and up. \$12. 1-9 p.m. *Sat., Feb. 17. Park Tavern, 500 10th St. N.E. 404-249-0001. www.parktavern.com* — LAUREN LEATHERS

See See & Do p.48

FEBRUARY 2ND | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**SONNY DIGITAL** WITH REESE LAFLARE, BLACK BOE & DJ FRESCO  
 FEBRUARY 3RD | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**RADIO MOSCOW** WITH AMPLIFIED HEAT  
 FEBRUARY 6TH | CENTER STAGE THEATER  
 AN EVENING WITH **MACHINE HEAD**  
 FEBRUARY 8TH | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**THE TIN MAN & VINOLOVERSUS**  
 FEBRUARY 9TH | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**TESSA VIOLET & SECRET MIDNIGHT PRESS**  
 FEBRUARY 9TH | THE LOFT AT CENTER STAGE  
**THE WHITE BUFFALO** WITH ANDREA DAVIDSON  
 FEBRUARY 15TH | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**MUNGION**  
 FEBRUARY 16TH | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**QUIET HOLLERS** WITH ARC & STONES  
 FEBRUARY 17TH | THE LOFT AT CENTER STAGE  
**HIGHER BROTHERS**  
 FEBRUARY 18TH | THE LOFT AT CENTER STAGE  
**GOOD OLD WAR & JUSTIN NOZUKA**  
 FEBRUARY 20TH | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**ADRIAN MARCEL**  
 FEBRUARY 21ST | THE LOFT AT CENTER STAGE  
**DIZZY WRIGHT** WITH REEZY  
 FEBRUARY 22ND | CENTER STAGE THEATER  
**JOSH GARRELS** WITH WILDER ADKINS  
 FEBRUARY 22ND | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**MAKO** WITH NIGHT LIGHTS  
 FEBRUARY 23RD | CENTER STAGE THEATER  
**MALOTOV**  
 FEBRUARY 24TH | CENTER STAGE THEATER  
**ERIC JOHNSON** AH VIA MUSICOM TOUR WITH ORIGINAL BAND MEMBERS: TOMMY TAYLOR & KYLE BROCK  
 FEBRUARY 27TH | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**FUTURISITIC** WITH ISHDARR, SCRIBECASH & JARREN BENTON  
 FEBRUARY 27TH | CENTER STAGE THEATER  
**TAPE FACE**  
 MARCH 2ND | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**MYFEVER & MANSELL** WITH BROTHER OLIVER  
 MARCH 3RD | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**ELLA VOS** WITH FREYA RIDINGS  
 MARCH 7TH | CENTER STAGE THEATER  
**JON FOREMAN** (OF SWITCHFOOT) THE 25 IN 24 TOUR - MOVIE & CONCERT  
 MARCH 7TH | THE LOFT AT CENTER STAGE  
**MISSIO** WITH WELSHLY ARMS  
 MARCH 7TH | VINYL AT CENTER STAGE  
**ZESHAN B**  
 MARCH 8TH | CENTER STAGE THEATER  
**JAY ELECTRONICA**  
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MAY 6TH | FOX THEATRE  
**TODRICK HALL**



MAY 21ST | TERMINAL WEST  
**NADA SURF**



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See&Do from p.47

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MON	<b>BLUES JAM HOSTED BY LOLA</b>
TUE	<b>SWAMI GONE BANANAS</b>
WED	<b>DANNY "MUDCAT" DUDECK</b>
THU	<b>THE BREEZE KINGS</b>
SUN	<b>SWAMI 6-9PM</b>

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MATLOCK  
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FRI FEB 9TH &  
SAT FEB 10TH:  
**ZYDEFUNK**

SAT FEB 10TH  
**BILL  
SHEFFIELD**  
6-9PM

FRI FEB 16TH:  
**STONEY  
BROOKS  
LITTLE G  
'WEEVIL**  
6-9PM

SAT FEB 17TH:  
**BREEZE  
KINGS**

FRI FEB 23RD &  
SAT FEB 24TH:  
**MUDCAT**

SAT 24TH  
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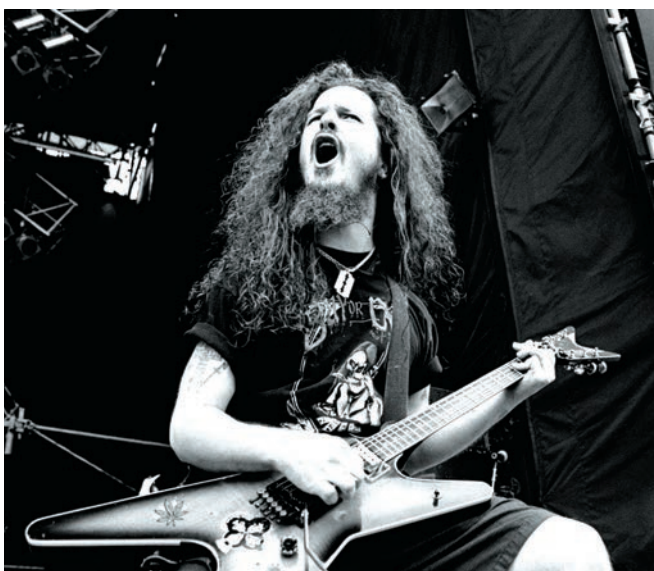


## SNARKY PUPPY

**Wed.,-Thurs., Feb. 14-15, Jazz fusion**

It's tempting to label Snarky Puppy a jazz band and leave it at that. However, that classification would obscure not only the particularities of the group's sound but also an understanding of why the Denton, Texas-based supergroup continues to sell out shows around the world. "Tarova," the opening track from the band's latest album, *Culcha Vulcha*, is a perfect case study. The song starts out simply enough with bombastic percussion and bluesy

organ improvisations. Yet over the course of three minutes, a torrent of horns, guitars, and drums builds to a climax that stretches far outside the boundaries of jazz. Instead, Snarky Puppy swallows up bits of rock, pop, and fusion, and spits out a genre-defying concoction that has earned the group a ravenous fanbase in the jazz world and beyond. *With Forq Wed., Feb. 14. With Alina Engibaryan Thurs., Feb. 15. \$37-\$50 each night. 7 p.m. Variety Playhouse, 1099 Euclid Ave. N.E. 404- 524-7354. www.variety-playhouse.com.* — PAUL DEMERRITT



## A TRIBUTE TO DIMEBAG

**Fri., Feb. 23, Metal**

Atlanta's premier Pantera tribute act, the F@cking Pantera Cover Band, lays waste to the Masquerade while paying homage to the original Cowboy From Hell, Darrell Abbott. Abbott, aka Dimebag Darrell, who was the lead guitarist and founding member of Texas headbangers Pantera and Damageplan, was gunned down by a deranged fan on a Columbus, Ohio, stage in December 2004. His legacy as one of the driving forces behind groove metal lives on. For this show, the Masquerade also hosts a guitar solo competition with a \$250 cash prize for the he, or she, who shreds meaner and harder than the rest. *\$12-\$15. 7 p.m. Fri., Feb. 23. Masquerade, 75 MLK Jr. Drive SW. 404-577-8178. www.masq.com.* — ALEX PATTON



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9:15PM SHOW 9:00PM DOORS

**SUNDAY FEB 11**  
**ATLANTA RHYTHM SECTION**  
(11) 6:00PM SHOW 5:00PM DOORS  
8:15PM SHOW 8:00PM DOORS

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 14**  
**CHINUA HAWK**  
7:30PM SHOW 6:30PM DOORS

**THURSDAY FEBRUARY 15**  
**THE BOTTLE ROCKETS & CHUCK PROPHET**  
9:00PM SHOW 8:45PM DOORS

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21**  
**CHRIS KNIGHT**  
8:00PM SHOW 7:00PM DOORS  
7:00PM SHOW 6:00PM DOORS

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 24**  
**LARRY CAMPBELL & TERESA WILLIAMS**  
7:00PM SHOW 6:00PM DOORS

**TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27 & 28**  
**JOHN OATES WITH THE GOOD ROAD BAND**  
8:00PM SHOW 6:30PM DOORS

**TUESDAY, MARCH 20**  
**JORDAN DAVIS WITH SPECIAL GUEST, JILLIAN JACQUELINE**  
8:00 PM SHOW, 6:30 PM DOORS

**THURSDAY FEBRUARY 1**  
**DELLA MAE**  
9:30PM SHOW 9:15PM DOORS

**SUNDAY FEBRUARY 4**  
**EMISUNSHINE**  
6:00PM SHOW 5:00PM DOORS

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 7**  
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7:15PM SHOW 6:30PM DOORS

**THURSDAY FEBRUARY 8**  
**RYAN KINDER REVEREND HYLTON**  
7:00PM SHOW 6:00PM DOORS  
9:30PM SHOW 9:15PM DOORS

**FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9**  
**ANGIE APARO HANNAH THOMAS**  
7:00PM SHOW 6:00PM DOORS  
9:30PM SHOW 9:15PM DOORS

**MONDAY FEBRUARY 12**  
**JASON EADY**  
8:00PM SHOW 7:00PM DOORS

**TUESDAY FEBRUARY 13**  
**RACHAEL YAMAGATA WITH SPECIAL GUEST, ALLIE MOSS**  
8:00PM SHOW 7:00PM DOORS

**FRIDAY FEBRUARY 16**  
**HALCYON TRAVIS MEADOWS**  
7:00PM SHOW 6:00PM DOORS  
9:30PM SHOW 9:15PM DOORS

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17**  
**THE GONZALO BERGARA QUARTET HALCYON**  
6:00PM SHOW 5:00PM DOORS  
8:00PM SHOW 7:45PM DOORS

**TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20**  
**AUBREY LOGAN THE SABOR! BRASS BAND**  
7:00PM SHOW 6:00PM DOORS  
9:15PM SHOW 9:00PM DOORS

**THURSDAY FEBRUARY 22**  
**THE STEEL WOODS**  
9:00PM SHOW 8:45PM DOORS

**FRIDAY FEBRUARY 23**  
**ACOUSTIC STORYTELLERS IN-THE-ROUND FEATURING SAM BURCHFIELD, NATHAN ANGELO, & CHRIS AYER**  
7:00PM SHOW 6:00PM DOORS  
9:30PM SHOW 9:15PM DOORS

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 24**  
**SUNNY SWEENEY**  
9:30PM SHOW 9:15PM DOORS

**MONDAY FEBRUARY 26**  
**RUDY CURRENCE**  
7:30PM SHOW 6:30PM DOORS

**THURSDAY MARCH 1**  
**CORB LUND**  
7:30PM SHOW 6:30PM DOORS

**FRIDAY MARCH 2**  
**STEPHEN KELLOGG WITH SPECIAL GUEST, HAILEY STEELE**  
7:30PM SHOW 6:30PM DOORS

**SATURDAY MARCH 3**  
**BAND OF HEATHENS**  
ACOUSTIC SHOW 7:00PM SHOW 6:00PM DOORS  
ELECTRIC SHOW 9:30PM SHOW 9:15PM DOORS

**SUNDAY, MARCH 4TH**  
**THE HONEY DEWDROPS GRIFFIN HOUSE**  
6:00 PM SHOW, 5:00 PM DOORS  
8:00 PM SHOW, 7:45 PM DOORS

**TUESDAY, MARCH 6TH**  
**BENJAMIN JAFFE (OF HONEYHONEY) AND JAKE DECKER**  
7:30 PM SHOW, 6:30 PM DOORS

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7TH**  
**AN EVENING WITH HISS GOLDEN MESSENGER**  
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**THURSDAY, MARCH 8TH**  
**TROUT STEAK REVIVAL**  
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**THURSDAY, MARCH 8TH**  
**BILLY STRINGS**  
9:15 PM SHOW, 9:00 PM DOORS

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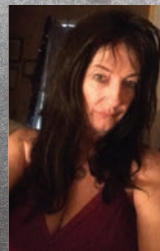
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# AQUARIUS

The Water Bearer Jan. 20-Feb. 18

When I was in my early twenties, I smoked marijuana now and then. I liked it. It made me feel good and inspired my creativity and roused spiritual visions. But I reconsidered my use after encountering pagan magician Isaac Bonewits. He didn't have a moral objection to cannabis use, but believed it withered one's willpower and diminished one's determination to transform one's life for the better. For a year, I meditated on and experimented with his hypothesis. I found it to be true, at least for me. I haven't smoked since. My purpose in bringing this up is not to advise you about your relationship to drugs, but rather to urge you to question whether there are influences in your life that wither your willpower and diminish your determination to transform your life for the better. Now is an excellent time to examine this issue.



Illustration by Lauren Barfield

BY ROB BREZNY

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** Would you like to shed unwieldy baggage before moving on to your next big challenge? I hope so. It will purge your soul of karmic sludge. It will prime you for a fresh start. One way to accomplish this bravery is to confess your sins and ask for forgiveness in front of a mirror. Here are data to consider. Is there anyone you know who would not give you a good character reference? Have you ever committed a seriously unethical act? Have you revealed information that was told to you in confidence? While under the influence of intoxicants or bad ideas, have you done things you're ashamed of? I'm not saying you're more guilty of these things than the rest of us; it's just that now is your special time to seek redemption.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** In all of history, humans have mined about 182,000 tons of gold. Best estimates suggest there are still 35 billion tons of gold buried in the earth, but the remaining riches will be more difficult to find and collect than what we've already gotten. We need better technology. If I had to say who would be the entrepreneurs and inventors best qualified to lead the quest, my choice would be members of the Aries tribe. For the foreseeable future, you people will have extra skill at excavating hidden treasure and gathering resources that are hard to access.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Stories have the power to either dampen or mobilize your life energy. I hope that in the coming weeks, you will make heroic efforts to seek out the latter and avoid the former. Now is a crucial time to treat yourself to stories that will jolt you out of your habitual responses and inspire you to take long-postponed actions and awaken the sleeping parts of your soul. And that's just half of your assignment, dear Taurus. Here's the rest: Tell stories that help you remember the totality of who you are, and that inspire your listeners to remember the totality of who they are.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Author Anaïs Nin said, "There are two ways to reach me: by way of kisses or by way of the imagination. But there is a hierarchy: the kisses alone don't work." For two reasons, Anaïs's formulation is especially apropos for you right now. First, you should not allow yourself to be seduced, tempted, or won over by sweet gestures alone. You must insist on sweet gestures that are synergized by a sense of wonder and an appreciation of your unique beauty. Second, you should adopt the same approach for those you want to seduce, tempt, or win over: sweet gestures seasoned with wonder and an appreciation of their unique beauty.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Are you more inclined right now to favor temporary involvements and short-term promises? Or would you consider making brave commitments that lead you deeper into the Great Mystery? Given the upcoming astrological omens, I vote for the latter. Here's another pair of questions for you, Cancerian. Are you inclined to meander from commotion to commotion without any game plan? Or might you invoke the magic necessary to get involved with high-quality collaborations? I'm hoping you'll opt for the latter. (P.S. The near future will be prime time for you to swear a sacred oath or two.)

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** In March 1996, a man burst into the studio of radio station Star FM in Wanganui, New Zealand. He took the manager hostage and issued a single demand: that the dj play a recording of the Muppet song

"The Rainbow Connection," as sung by the puppet Kermit the Frog. Fortunately, police intervened quickly, no one was hurt, and the kidnapper was jailed. In bringing this to your attention, Leo, I am certainly not suggesting that you imitate the kidnapper. Please don't break the law or threaten anyone with harm. On the other hand, I do urge you to take dramatic, innovative action to fulfill one of your very specific desires.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Many varieties of the nettle plant will sting you if you touch the leaves and stems. Their hairs are like hypodermic needles that inject your skin with a blend of irritant chemicals. And yet nettle is also an herb with numerous medicinal properties. It can provide relief for allergies, arthritis, joint pain, and urinary problems. That's why Shakespeare invoked the nettle as a metaphor in his play "Henry IV, Part 1": "Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety," says the character named Hotspur. In accordance with the astrological omens, Virgo, I choose the nettle as your power metaphor for the first three weeks of February.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** \*Knullrufs\* is a Swedish word that refers to what your hair looks like after sex: tousled, ruffled, disordered. If I'm reading the astrological omens correctly, you should experience more \*knullrufs\* than usual in the coming weeks. You're in a phase when you need and deserve extra pleasure and delight, especially the kind that rearranges your attitudes as well as your coiffure. You have license to exceed your normal quotas of ravenousness and rowdiness.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** In his "Crazy Lake Experiment" documented on Youtube, Harvard physicist Greg Kestin takes a raft out on a lake. He drops a tablespoon of olive oil into the water, and a few minutes later, the half-acre around his boat is still and smooth. All the small waves have disappeared. He proceeds to explain the science behind the calming effect produced by a tiny amount of oil. I suspect that you will have a metaphorically comparable power in the next two weeks, Scorpio. What's your version of the olive oil? Your poise? Your graciousness? Your tolerance? Your insight into human nature?

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** In 1989, a man spent four dollars on a painting at a flea market in Adamstown, Pennsylvania. He didn't care much for the actual image, which was a boring country scene, but he thought he could use the frame. Upon returning home, he found a document concealed behind the painting. It turned out to be a rare old copy of America's Declaration of Independence, originally created in 1776. He eventually sold it for \$2.42 million. I doubt that you will experience anything quite as spectacular in the coming weeks, Sagittarius. But I do suspect you will find something valuable where you don't expect it, or develop a connection with something that's better than you imagined it would be.

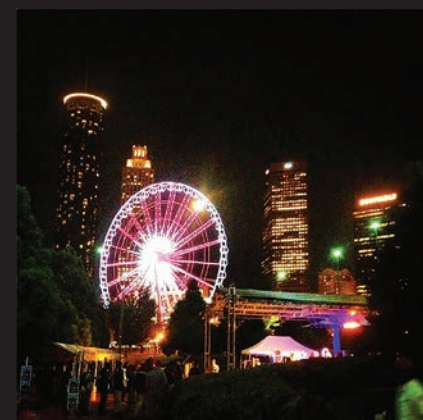
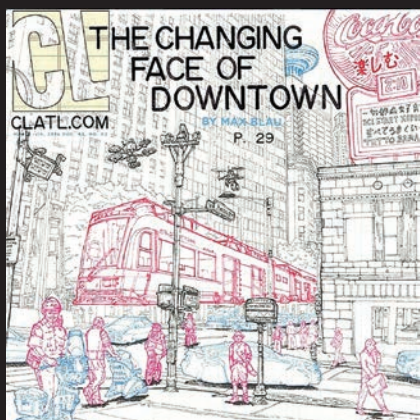
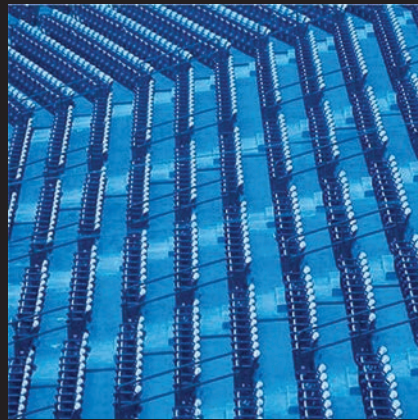
**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** In the 1740s, a teenage Capricorn girl named Eliza Lucas almost single-handedly introduced a new crop into American agriculture: indigo, a plant used as a dye for textiles. In South Carolina, where she managed her father's farm, indigo ultimately became the second-most-important cash crop over the next 30 years. I have astrological reasons to believe that you are now in a phase when you could likewise make innovations that will have long-range economic repercussions. Be alert for good intuitions and promising opportunities to increase your wealth.

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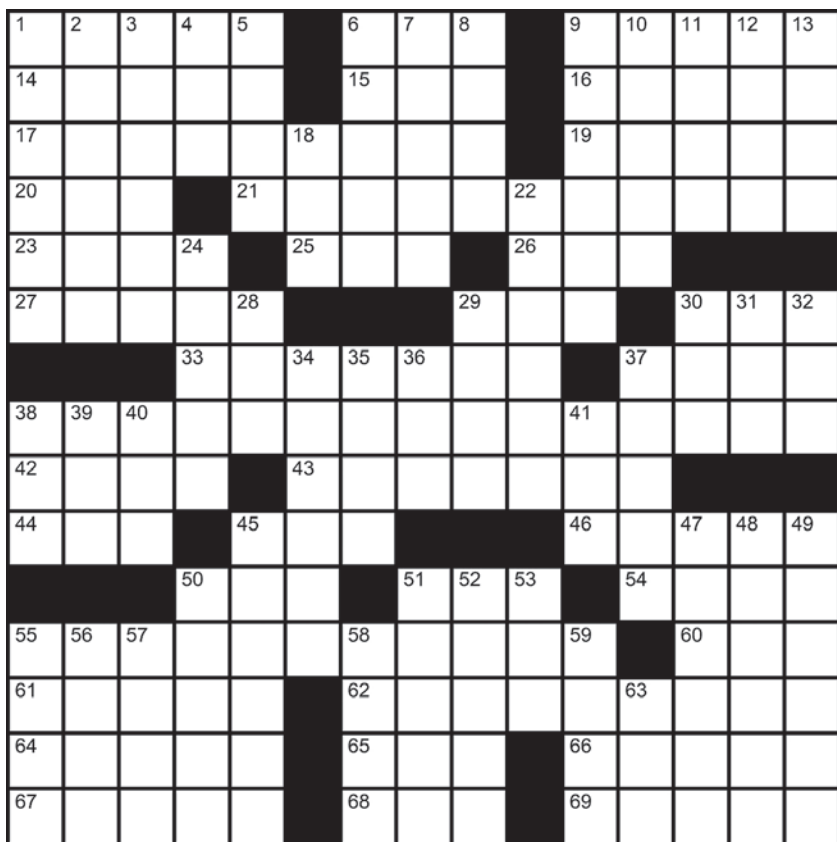


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instrument

37 Facebook ac-  
tion

38 Oscar news  
about “Reds” or  
“Bulworth” (or  
“Network”)?

42 Shirt sleeves

43 Journalist  
Cokie who ap-  
pears on ABC  
and NPR

44 Afternoon  
break

45 Part of FWIW

46 Congo basin  
animal

50 Solar system  
center

51 Surprised  
sounds

54 Madeline of  
“Blazing Sad-  
dles”

55 Much, much  
smaller?

60 Fish eggs

61 “That’s \_\_\_  
shame”

62 Go out with  
Carrie Ann of  
“Dancing With  
the Stars?”

64 Blue-gray  
shade

65 Back in time

66 Ambulance

attendant

67 Scammed

68 Actor Jeong

69 Hard worker’s  
output

Down

1 Under one’s  
control

2 Grassland

3 Do some flying

4 Figure out

5 First of its kind  
(abbr.)

6 Made some  
barnyard noises

7 Half of a 1960s  
pop quartet

8 Put a sharper  
edge on

9 “\_\_\_ Un-  
chained” (Taran-  
tino movie)

10 Continent-  
wide money

11 Chicken Cor-  
don \_\_\_

12 Triangle sound

13 Late-night  
host Meyers

18 Program be-  
gun under FDR

22 Alchemist’s  
potion

24 Stadium ca-  
pacity

28 Crispy sand-

wich

29 Mild

30 Drill piece

31 Island strings,  
for short

32 Diploma  
equivalent

34 Power in old  
movies

35 \_\_\_ about  
(roughly)

36 Show sorrow

37 Eye surgery  
acronym

38 Outlaw

39 Notable pe-  
riod

40 Current mea-  
sure

41 Utmost de-  
gree

45 Put gas in

47 Holiday pro-  
cession

48 Intense fear

49 Short play

length

50 What a two-  
letter abbrevia-  
tion may denote

51 “August: \_\_\_  
County” (2013  
Streep film)

52 Show interest  
in, in a way

53 Figure out

55 Laundry

56 “Alice’s Res-  
taurant” chroni-  
cler Guthrie

57 Affirmative  
votes

58 Bismarck’s  
home (abbr.)

59 Wheel acces-  
sories

63 Word after  
“brand spanking”

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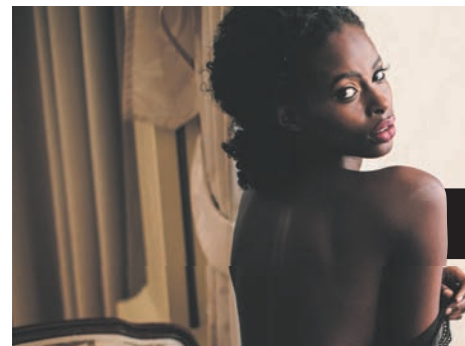


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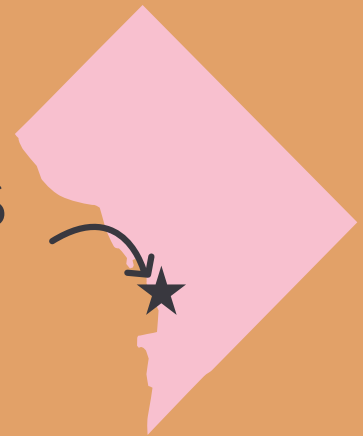
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