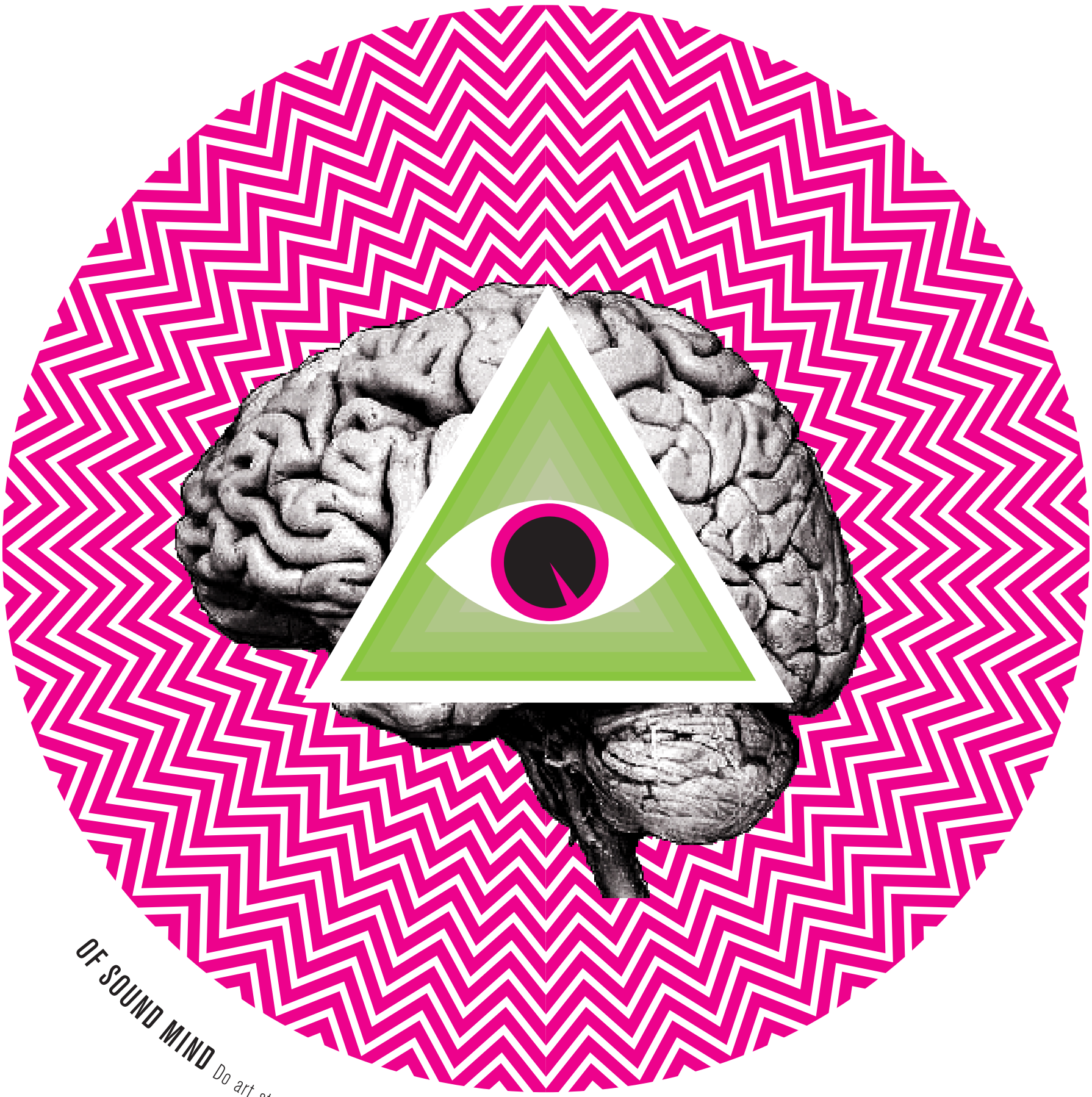
A STUDENT JOURNAL OF ART, CULTURE AND POLITICS

APRIL 2012

fNEWSMAGAZINE

THE SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE
OF CHICAGO



OF SOUND MIND *Do art students struggle emotionally more than others?*

STRUCTURAL DAMAGE *Tearing down a bridge between the past and the future*

KONY 2012 Can getting "Internet famous" bring actual change in the real world?

HIGHER LIVING
MEETS HIGHER EDUCATION

Apartment-style living for the independent student.

the BUCKINGHAM

Experience better living in a modern, downtown building within walking distance to the city's top colleges and universities, public transportation, the lakefront and all the world-class attractions Chicago has to offer.

Living spaces at the Buckingham aren't dorm rooms — they're spacious, fully furnished apartments. From studios to 4-bedrooms, all units come with all the conveniences and amenities of modern apartment living.

Free Perks Include:

- In-unit washer and dryer
- High-speed Internet access
- 42" flat screen HDTVs
- 50+ cable and 5 ESPN channels
- Local phone service

AVAILABLE FOR SUMMER AND ACADEMIC YEAR HOUSING 2012 • 773.840.8127 • THEBUCKINGHAMCHICAGO.COM

April

WEB EXCLUSIVE
FNEWSMAGAZINE.COM

Luminous Field: Public Reactions
F Newsmagazine Multi-Media editor Diana Kadic captured audience reactions to SAIC Alumni artist pair Luftwerk’s “Cloud Gate” projections.

F Profile: MsPixy – Burlesque Extraordinaire
F writer and illustrator Nicole Rhoden sat down with one of the founders of Belmont Burlesque and mastermind behind “Boobs and Goombas.” Find out how she got her start in Burlesque and what her current projects are.

Music: Ty Segall
F Music Editor Brandon Goei compares Segall’s albums Melted (2010) and Goodbye Bread (2011). The web article includes links to Segall’s “Imaginary Person” and “I Am With You.”

If you have a story, article or note that you want published on fnewsmagazine.com, send submissions to: webeditor@fnewsmagazine.com.

Cover Illustration
“My Mind’s Eye”
by Patrick Jenkins

F Newsmagazine
A journal of art, culture and politics.
A student publication of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.
To advertise in F, call 312.345.3838 or email fadvertising@saic.edu.
F is a free monthly newsmagazine open to art and article submissions from any member of the SAIC community. We also welcome and publish letters from all of our readers. Please contact the editors at editors@fnewsmagazine.com for information, comments, or observations. Visit our website www.fnewsmagazine.com

12th ANNUAL

SPRING ART SALE

APRIL 13 • 14

Purchase original art by SAIC students.

SAIC Ballroom, 112 S. Michigan Ave.

Friday, April 13, 2012
11:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.

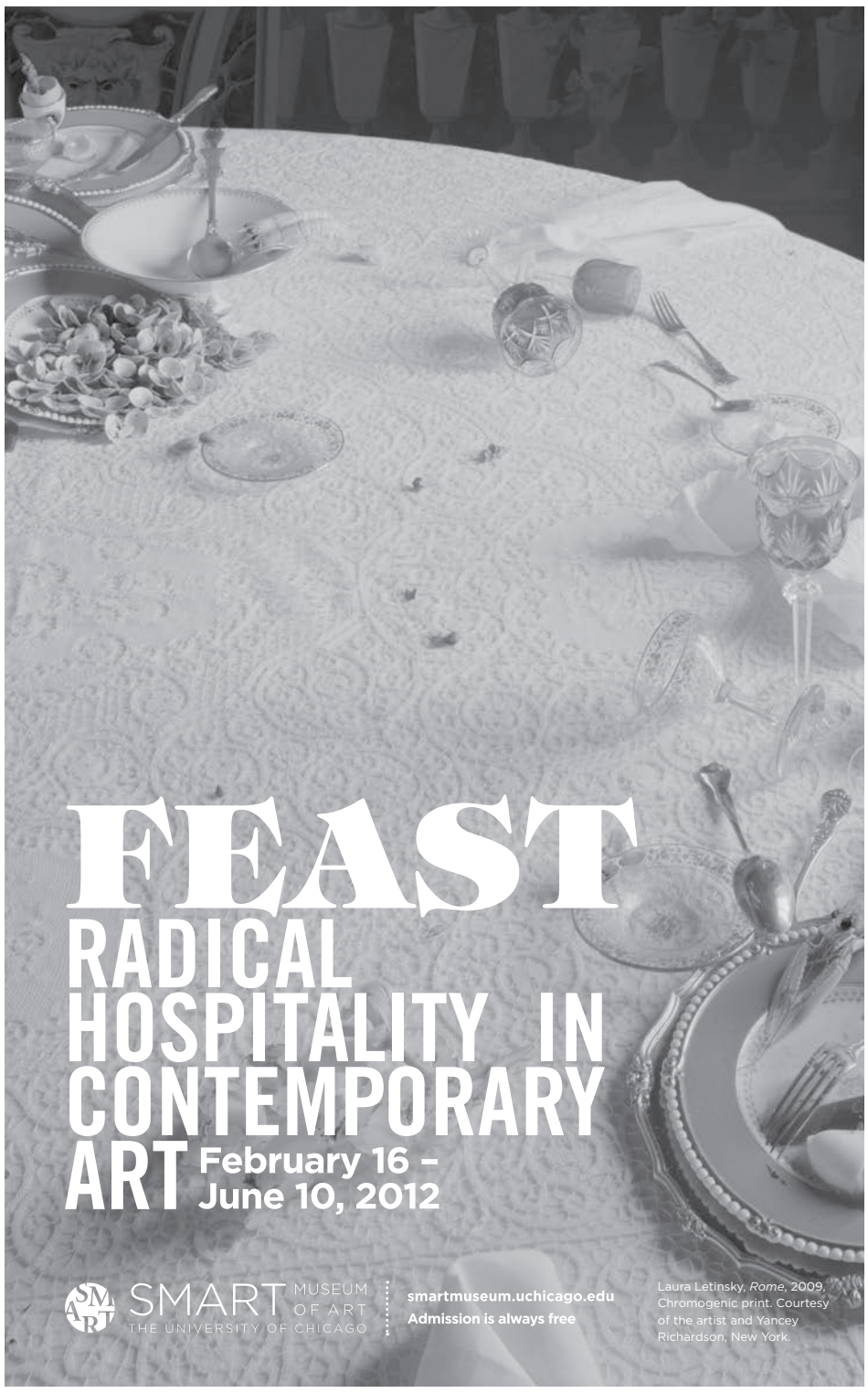
Saturday, April 14, 2012
10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

FREE ADMISSION
saic.edu/springsale

The Spring Art Sale is sponsored by SAIC Student Association and Campus Life. All work at the Spring Art Sale is created by current SAIC students. For more information about the sale, contact Campus Life at 312.629.6880 or email student_life@saic.edu.

SAIC School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Poster designed by SAIC student Darrin Higgins (BFA 2012)



FEAST
RADICAL HOSPITALITY IN CONTEMPORARY ART
February 16 – June 10, 2012

SMART MUSEUM OF ART
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

smartmuseum.uchicago.edu
Admission is always free

Laura Letinsky, *Rome*, 2009, Chromogenic print. Courtesy of the artist and Yancey Richardson, New York.

SAIC School of the Art Institute of Chicago

BE AT THE CENTER

THE LEROY NEIMAN CENTER
DEDICATION

MONDAY, MAY 7
4:00–6:00 P.M.

37 SOUTH WABASH AVENUE

Beginning May 7, join us for a week of dedication activities at the LeRoy Neiman Center.

Find out more at blogs.saic.edu/thecenter.

Illustration by Alli Berry

TIP SHEET

Bad Luck 2.0

BY BRANDON GOEI

Luck and superstition are two concepts that almost all of us grow up with — from blowing wishes through the smoke of birthday candles to the found four-leaf clover that sparks an investment in the Powerball. The absurdity of it amuses us here at F News-magazine, and so we've thought of a few of the traditional bad omens that we think needed an update grounded in modern times. So gather up all your dreamcatchers and Maneki Nekos and learn why it might be a bad idea to piss off a three-toed bird.

Old: *Opening umbrellas indoors*
New: *Wearing Snuggies outdoors*

Not only is opening an umbrella indoors bad luck, it's also super awkward – especially if you're trying to evoke the playful spirit of Mary Poppins, but only end up jousting the breakables off your mantel and the eyes from your roommate's face. A modern update to this superstition amps up the awkwardness by displacing the Snuggie from the comforts of the couch, cursing its user to both bad luck and the stigma of looking like a backwards wizard in the brutal elements.

Old: *Stepping on cracks*
New: *The floor is lava*

As the old line goes, "Step on a crack, break your mother's back," which is a horribly morbid thing to be rhyming as a child, in the same way that "Ring Around the Rosie" is about the Black Death or how "Rock-a-bye Baby" is apparently a song you sing to babies about babies falling out of trees. All three examples are quaint and dated, and at the very least, if you're going to spend your time hopping around like an idiot, it might as well be a dubious leap between the couch to the ottoman because you believe the ground is made up of molten rock.

Old: *Breaking a mirror*
New: *Cracking a touch screen*

Oh, the drama of breaking a mirror! The shards of flying glass, threatening to pierce and tear at flesh, the bone-chilling sound that hangs in the air like a crisp winter wind, the ominous curse of seven years of bad luck.

Oh, the annoyance of cracking a touch screen! No Facebook, no Twitter, no Reddit...

Old: *Crossing paths with a black cat*
New: *Crossing paths with pigeons that have an odd number of toes*

Cats are (and I say this as a loving cat owner) needy, manipulative, opportunistic hairball machines that run laps in your apartment at 3 a.m. and shit in boxes in the corners of your house. But one thing cats aren't – black or otherwise – are the uncanny carriers of witch souls as they were once assumed to be. To update, we turn to the city, where the truly frightening freaks of the animal world hang out. The next time you pass by a pigeon, look closely and count its toes. You might be surprised at the numbers you don't reach...

Old: *Walking under ladders*
New: *Using incandescent lightbulbs*

When taking care of tasks in the upper-third airspace of a living room, a ladder becomes an unwieldy but necessarily tool. Here's the catch, if your apartment is anything like mine, the light fixtures are too high for step stools, but the room is too small for full height ladders, meaning any reasonable waythrough is a "bad luck zone," which means no stepping under penalty of strange occult forces burrowing into your unconscious. But really, you've got worse things to worry about because – what's that in your hand? An incandescent light bulb? Don't you know that those things are wasteful? They use four times as much energy as compact fluorescent lamps, or CFLs, as those of us in the know call them. Plus incandescents aren't as efficient – they lose 99% of their energy in heat radiation, whereas CFLs stay nice and cool and last 10 times longer and save you about 12% on your electric bill and – oh my, this won't do at all. You're practically begging for bad luck.

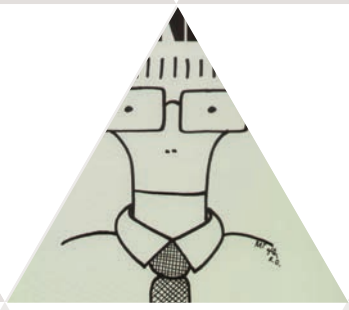
Weird Shit

Bring on the Bungle, Bring on the Beefheart

BY BRANDON GOEI

Spring is here — the birds are chirping, the sun is shining and you can tell who the tourists are by who's still wearing gloves and North Face coats. But as the tulip bulbs start breaking through cold soil, I often find myself staring outside at the lakeshore and wondering if this is the same place where cars were stranded in the huge snow dunes of last year's blizzard, or if those wimpy 15-minute squalls were the "worst winter in years," as the papers heralded in late autumn. So here's the backlash: 12 tracks from the stranger side of music to contest with the pleasant (but ultimately boring) weather that brings Segway-mounted sightseeing to the sidewalks of Michigan Avenue. We're not sadists here at F Newsmagazine (most of the time) so these are still somewhat palatable selections, but rest assured, they'll still twist your ears more than a bit.

YEAH!



"I Wanna Be A Bear" by Descendents

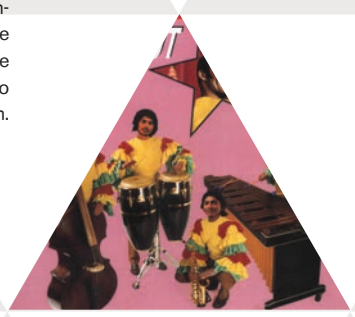
from Milo Goes to College (1982)

I haven't done any real research on this (like some sort of journalist or something), but I'm willing to bet that there isn't another song out there that's both under one minute long and as absurdly misogynistic as this Descendents tune. In that tiny window of time, the band manages to cover: A) the manipulative nature of women; and B) the simplicity of life as a bear. An example from item B: "I want to shit in the woods, in my cave." Poetry.

"Judges" by Colin Stetson

from New History Warfare, Vol. 2: Judges (2011)

If you know Colin Stetson for anything, it's probably for the horn he plays, a bass saxophone, which is nearly as tall as he is. Listening to "Judges," though, appearances are the least important thing – Stetson employs circular breathing to keep the drone alive, occasionally vocalizing through the reed, while feeding clicks and squawks to multiple microphones to keep the rhythm. All in real time.



"Autobahn" by Señor Coconut

from El Baile Alemán (2000)

Everything Señor Coconut touches turns to Latin gold, which is strange because he's actually from Frankfurt. Regardless you would never know this fact from the joyous Latin American sound he culls from behind the steely thud of the Kraftwerk original. This is one of those songs that appears somewhere between William Shatner's "Rocket Man" and the Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain's "Anarchy in the UK" in a playlist called "wtf?".

"Disengaged" by Grouper

from Dragging a Dead Deer Up a Hill (2008)

I've had this and more of Grouper's albums in my music library with plenty of plays for quite a while now, but I wouldn't be able to describe a single one of the rest of their songs to you. It's no coincidence that this is the first song on "Dragging" – as soon as this song hits its stride as a nebulous nursery rhyme, my eyes glaze over and I suddenly want to curl up and drift off to sleep.

"(Something)" by The Microphones

from The Glow, Pt. 2 (2001)

This track starts and ends with the bleat of a distant fog horn, and in between those warm beacons of tone lie some of the most articulate feedback patterns known to man. Listening to this track is like sitting on the beach at midnight while a lovable killer robot passes by.

LO-PER

HYPER

“Squeeze Me Macaroni” by Mr. Bungle

from Mr. Bungle (1991)

Mr. Bungle is the Red Hot Chili Peppers precedent you’ve never heard of. Blending elements of funk, metal and rap, “Squeeze Me Macaroni” throbs with perverse sexual impulses fueled by speedballs and bolstered by the voices in your head. It’s the soundtrack to the mid-1990s Lollapalooza freakshow you were too afraid to attend.

“Chez Yves (Alice et Clara)” by Sonic Youth

from Simon Werner a disparu (2010)

One of the more popular theories about today’s “culture of nostalgia” is that it’s eating itself slowly and steadily. Here to prove that theory is Sonic Youth. The strangeness comes in when you realize this is from a soundtrack for a movie set in 1992, and that Sonic Youth is attempting to emulate themselves at around that time – it yields something that sounds pretty good but also feels like they’re cheating off their own tests.

“Epochs” by The Knife / Planningtorock / Mt. Sims

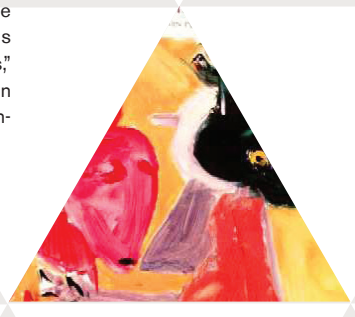
from Tomorrow in a Year (2010)

Traditionally, electronic music’s beats have been limited to venues that either have dancefloors or couches, but the Knife and their collaborators have created a new place for buzzes and blips: the opera. “Epochs,” is the first proper number in the sprawling epic based on Charles Darwin’s 1859 work “On the Origin of Species,” though I doubt its accuracy since Darwin probably had a very limited arsenal of synthesizers.

“Boots” by The Residents

from Meet the Residents (1974)

You want subversion? You want irreverence? You want some really weird shit? Well, that – all of it – is the Residents’ specialty, and no one was doing it remotely as well at the time. In 1974, the Kool & the Gang couldn’t stop jungle boogie-ing, Barbara Streisand fondly remembered the way we were, and the Residents defaced a Beatles album cover while butchering a Nancy Sinatra song.



“Bat Chain Puller” by Captain Beefheart and the Magic Band

from Shiny Beast (Bat Chain Puller) (1978)

Captain Beefheart was a manipulative asshole, but sure did know how to fit a round peg into a square hole. This late-period tune has a strong machine-like rhythm (perfect for the man who ran his band like a submissive cult) and the usual half-brained snarl (fitting for anyone who’s claimed to have only half a day of kindergarten under his belt).

“You Suffer” by Napalm Death

from Scum (1987)

Blazing fast and to-the-point, “You Suffer” is five seconds of pure grindcore crunch. Plus I can fit all the lyrics of the song in this blurb and still meet a 50-word limit: “You suffer / But why?” And done. (With seven words to spare.)

“No More Hot Dogs” by Hasil Adkins

from Out to Hunch (1986)

Certified backwoods madman Hasil Adkins shows us just the kind of charm he’s known for in this track, which is part rollicking rockabilly barn burner, part homicidal threat, part ode to a classic American food and part maniacal laughter.

WAT.

listen on Spotify

INTERVIEW

Illustration by Emily Haasch

"I think [piracy] is just the culture now. I read an interview with Steve Albini and he essentially said that 'sharing music is the new radio.' And that's the truth. … [But] music is never going away and peoples' love of music is never going away. You just have to find different ways of making a living out of it."

Erik Hall

Looping Above the Clouds

A conversation with Chicago musician “In Tall Buildings”

BY KRIS LENZ

In Tall Buildings is the musical project of Chicago-native Erik Hall. His first album was written and recorded in Hall’s home studio. Hall wrote, recorded and played every instrument on the album. His work echoes that of his contemporaries, including Andrew Bird, Fleet Foxes and, in both source and form, Bon Iver. Recently, Hall met with F Newsmagazine to discuss his creative process and what it’s like to record in a post-Bon Iver world.

Kris Lenz: *How did the In Tall Buildings project come to be?*

Erik Hall: I had been touring and recording with a couple other bands pretty regularly since college. I was really busy and always in and out of town but I always had a really strong desire to make my own record, which I hadn’t done before.
In one sense I had been working on this album since college. It just took me a long time to find my voice and figure out what kind of songs I was trying to come up with.

Where does the In Tall Buildings moniker come from?

It has a couple origins. It comes from the name of a song by John Hartford. He’s really fantastic, but I originally heard the song from a cover by Gillian Welch. It also reflects my general upbringing — I grew up in Chicago and I’ve always lived in the city. It’s really a figurative and literal reflection of my environment.

Can you describe your songwriting process?

My process is inextricably linked to my home studio. I have ideas elsewhere, in my head or playing a guitar somewhere, but the songs don’t really take shape until they are being recorded. Basically I don’t make demos and write a song and record it. I am recording from very first seed of an idea that will become the foundation of a song, even when I am just messing around.

Do you start with lyrics or music?

Oh man, I tend to start with music. Lyrics aren’t secondary, but they aren’t what get me writing. I almost always have the music to a point of near completion before I record any vocals or before I finish writing lyrics for any song. The melody always comes early, but lyrics do not. I don’t have notebooks full of lyrics or anything. Sometimes it feels almost like a chore to be a lyricist. But I do want to be a “songwriter.” Eventually I’m happy with my lyrics, but it takes me a long time to craft them. They’re usually pretty vague, and there are a lot of metaphors. They’re very personal to me, though I don’t tend to write about specific events or relationships. When I’m singing a song that has a first-person narrative, it’s not really me singing to a specific person in my life. The narrator is really the collective experiences of me or the people I know or the tendencies of humanity for good or evil.

Do the arrangements change when you’re performing live?

There have been several different versions of the live band. We’ve been a trio, quartet and quintet. Lately Quin Kirchner and I have been playing a lot of shows by ourselves. The challenge is figuring out a way to still convey the important elements of the song as whatever version of the band we are that day. It’s been cool, but we’ve definitely failed before — there have been shows when I’m like, “Oh, we didn’t think this one through. It didn’t translate.” But we’ve also had great successes as well.

When you’re playing as a duo, do you still use Andrew Bird-style looping?

Yes, a little bit, but there’s a distinction to be made. Andrew Bird is a wizard of looping pedals in a way that’s a part of his performance. It’s a vital element of his show. I end up using loops more as a problem-solving device, to fill it out in places where there would be more musicians. When we don’t have a bass player on stage, Quin and I incorporate some samples to cover the low end. We took that leap even though I was hesitant for a while. I still kind of go back and forth on whether or not it’s conceptually and aesthetically what I prefer.

What is your aesthetic hang up with looping?

I guess it always just depends on how a show comes off as a whole. I’ve been to shows where it’s just a dude playing and singing along to a track and it’s completely lame. But I’ve also seen that show be totally awesome because that guy is just jamming hard and it works. Musically, it makes sense and nothing is compromised. I don’t have an inherent rule about whether it’s bad to have prerecorded tracks. In our band the tracks just help Quin and I bolster what we’re doing on stage. I know it works…
I think I like it.

It seems like you have a love/hate relationship with technology?

Yeah, I think part of me likes the purist’s approach to the live show; that what you hear is what is being played right in front of you. For my first album I was really set on doing the whole thing myself — writing and recording it. But that’s not an absolute priority for me now.

Who would you cite as your influences?

My influences are all over the place. Lately I’ve been listening to a lot of Low and Deerhoof lately. There is always — always — a Neil Young presence in my record queue. I also listen to a lot of classical music, including dangerously cheesy 20th century works. But when I’m at home just listening to music it’s nothing like what I end up playing or creating.

You don’t think it bleeds into your writing?

Oh, it absolutely does. But I don’t know how obvious it is to other people. The past few years I haven’t been listening to much new indie rock music. All the bands that I read about — I don’t know what they sound like. Obviously some stuff makes its way into my awareness, and I have been really into some records from the last couple years.
Take Bon Iver — I love both of his records and I’m very encouraged by the precedent that he’s setting. It’s no new thing that bands record at home or that a band is one dude in his house. But it is cool to have such a success in the last few years, and so close to home, musically, aesthetically and geographically.

How do you feel about piracy and the new ways of digital distribution?

I think it’s just the culture now.
I read an interview with Steve Albini and he essentially said that “sharing music is the new radio.” And that’s the truth. That’s how people hear about a new band. The culture is such that people sample music, they literally listen without committing to buy. If they like it, they buy it. I’m not compelled to be up in arms about people not wanting to pay for music. I think that enough people appreciate better quality audio from a record or CD to keep us making records. Music is never going away and people’s love of music is never going away. You just have to find different ways of making a living out of it.

Look and listen to In Tall Buildings at *www.intallbuildings.com*

A SEPARATION

An insightful gaze into the Iranian everyday

Film Still from "A Seperation"

BY DEVDUTT TRIVEDI

Iranian cinema was the revelation of the late 1980s and the early 1990s as it overwhelmed audiences with its emphasis on the everyday and unconstructed narrative. "A Separation" is the latest addition to a long list of penetrating dramas centering on the political through the personal directed by acknowledged masters of Iranian cinema like Mohsen Makhmalbaf and Abbas Kiarostami.

The narrative is dense. It begins with a married couple that choose to divorce when they disagree on the logistics of leaving Iran. Simin (Leila Hatami) longs to move abroad to ensure a better future for their daughter Termeh (Sarina Farhadi), whereas Nader (Peyman Moadi) insists on remaining in Iran to take care of his father who suffers from Alzheimer's. Their lives are transformed when one day Razieh (Sareh Bayat) arrives to take care of Nader's father and is accused of stealing money and is physically abused by Nader.

"A Separation" is a meditation on a single event and how its experience makes the characters already faced with a situation (i.e., divorce) encounter an unmediated experience of the real. This notion of the "real" is constituted by the mechanistic workings of the Kafkaesque legal offices and jails in Tehran. Razieh and her husband Hodjat (Shahab Hosseini) are introduced to the audience before she is accused of stealing, but the event changes the social nature of their interaction into an increasingly legal one — one mediated in the presence of the legal system whose representative is the judge.

The film is careful in its handling of the contradictory nature of society in Iran, especially with regard to the society's link with modernity. Characters live the materiality of the modern world while at the same time they have a deep-rooted faith in matters of the spirit. Director Asghar Farhadi is able to achieve a balanced view of the differences in the domestic space and the cityscape. An example of this is his handling of the interiority of the domestic space of the house and the randomized exteriority of the city epitomized by the machinery of the legal system. Like most Iranian filmmakers before him, he displays finesse in his handling of the everyday.

The most memorable moment in "A Separation" is the last sequence where Termeh must decide which parent she would like to live with after the divorce. The titles roll up as Nader waits outside unsure of his daughter's decision.

Film Still from "In Darkness"

IN DARKNESS

Holland still can't see the light

BY DEVDUTT TRIVEDI

Agnieszka Holland's excruciatingly long "In Darkness" is another addition to the overpopulated list of films about the Holocaust. Set in the Polish city of Lvov, the film is a dramatization of burglar Leopold Socha's attempt to rescue a set of Jewish refugees by way of the town's sewers over a period of 14 months.

The film is Holland's third attempt at the Holocaust genre after such critically acclaimed works as "Angry Harvest" (1985) and "Europa, Europa" (1990). Hollywood's appetite for Holocaust films is evident in consistent Oscar nominations.

Adapted from Robert Marshall's novel "In the Sewers of Lvov," the film comes across as a rehash of Steven Spielberg's "Schindler's List." Holland begins the film as a historical survey of the Polish occupation. The group of Jewish refugees forms a different and disconnected society not linked to the historical flow that pervades the rest of the film. The space in itself is split between the wide-open streets that define the exteriority of the town and the dingy, claustrophobic and exasperating interiority of the sewers.

Holland emphasizes the relationship between the individual and the group. The group has an identity antithetical to that of the individuals who comprise it who want to break free from the grid of sewers and be in the outside world even if it means death at the hands of the Nazis. The struggle lies in the fact that the individuals are bound to connect and form a bond resulting in the group. The group will acquire such a force that it will unintentionally move against the interests of the individuals that formed it.

Like in Holland's earlier Holocaust work "Europa Europa," sexuality is the link between ideology in the group and communal action, evoking the writings of Austrian psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich. Reich emphasized ideology rooted in the sexual. Holland represents the Jewish group as being sexually liberated and therefore not prone to Nazism which, according to Reich, came to power because of the sexual repression of the proletariat in Germany at the time.

The film uses extremely conventional techniques of dramatization, prioritizing the adaptation of Marshall's novel through theatrical performances, over a sense of rhythm or mood. Holland's approach is unresolved in its attitude towards character development within the logic of the narrative. The director fails to generate fluency with her material making the exaggerated actors appear like they have no ground beneath their feet.

Illustration by Patrick Jenkins

Go Midwest, Young Man

First issue of magazine offers a mix of features, profiles and creative writing

BY THANIA RIOS

The history of Chicago publishing, as told by local writer J. C. Gabel, is one of innovation and exodus. Magazines as influential and varied as Playboy, Esquire and Stop Smiling all originated in the Windy City, but soon relocated to the coasts in order to establish a lasting presence in the tumultuous world of journalism.

"There is little well-paid creative work for the hungry freelancers — the writers, artists, photographers, editors and designers — who call Chicago home," writes Gabel in his introduction to the newly relaunched The Chicagoan. "Locally, what work there is pays a pittance … this might help explain the mass exodus from Chicago of creative minds of our generation throughout the last few years. Opportunities on either coast — or overseas — eventually come calling, and although they retain pride in their erstwhile Midwestern hearts, they cease to be Chicagoans by physical address."

Gabel believes that the city's literary dearth has warped the way Chicago and the Midwest are perceived by the wider world. Despite the fact that the city has birthed so many prominent publications, he believes that there is no widely-read venue in which one can publish a lengthy piece about the Midwest.

This spurred him to create a magazine that would run the sorts of articles that Gabel wanted to read about Chicago: "original and timeless long-form stories, capturing not just our hometown of Chicago, but also the greater Midwest — the way the Oxford American covers the American South or how Texas Monthly covers the enormousness of Texas — from a national point of view." Taking its name from a Jazz Age magazine, Gabel's The Chicagoan debuted last March, featuring writing that he believed "couldn't have appeared anywhere else."

Capturing all of Chicago, let alone the entire Midwest, in less than 200 pages is a tall order, but Gabel and his editorial team diligently approach the task. Issue 01 is divided into three sections. The first, "Tales from the City," offers an eclectic mix of interviews and features, covering subjects as diverse as architectural superstar Jeanne Gang, skyscraper-scaling daredevils and a ruminative beat cop. The second, "Literary Supplement," features creative pieces written by local authors, including an essay about David Foster Wallace by SAIC MFAW graduate Kyle Beachy. The last section, "Into the Great Wide Open," consists of profiles of various Midwestern citizens.

The wide range of perspectives that The Chicagoan attempts to encompass is ambitious. An interview with Alex Kotlowitz and Steve James about their anti-violence documentary "The Interrupters" is followed by a profile of the locavore chef Tana Lane, which is in turn followed by a series of snapshots taken by skyscraper-climbers.

But throughout the articles compiled in "Tales from the City" runs an irritatingly insistent undertone, a defensive proclamation of the city's importance. It brings to mind comments made by New Yorker critic Nancy Franklin in her review of the short-lived crime drama "The Chicago Code:" "[Producer Shawn Ryan] seems to get Chicago, but … he pushes the city's myths a little too hard. The characters wear their Chicago-ness like a brocaded cape, flourishing it and calling our attention to it, as if it didn't speak for itself. Perhaps this insistence is Ryan's way of illustrating a Second City mentality, but what hits our ears … is a barrage of very familiar metaphors."

The same could easily be said of the first dozen articles of The Chicagoan. The interviews with Mike Reed, Jimmy Boyce and Jeanne Gang are all well-written, but they lack the incisiveness characteristic of the average New Yorker profile. The New Yorker does not content itself with demonstrating the various ways in which a given figure is noteworthy; rather, it analyzes the cultural forces that have led to this particular person being deemed important, and investigates the positive and negative consequences of their role in society.

The reader gleans a similar ambition in The Chicagoan, but "Tales of the City" feels stymied by an editorial need to prove that Chicago is an indisputably important city, home to indisputably important people. More successful are "Into the Great Wide Open" and the literary supplement. The supplement accomplishes the magazine's goal of featuring an eclectic mix of well-written pieces without slipping into a defensive tone, and the "Into the Great Wide Open" pieces avoid mythologizing simply by virtue of profiling places that are typically considered too unimportant for mythologies, such as Omaha and Dighton, Kansas.

Though The Chicagoan has a righteous mission, its first issue doesn't entirely live up to its promise. But considering the fervor with which Gabel writes of his cause, this might not always be the case — and anyone with an interest in the future of a uniquely Midwestern style of writing should keep The Chicagoan on their mind.

The Chicagoan
$20 at independent booksellers
thechicagoanmedia.org

Still from "Kony 2012" courtesy of Vimeo.com

famous KONY /famous

What impact will Kony 2012 have on the media landscape?

BY SARAH HAMILTON

Early on the morning of March 7, I received a text message from my brother: "You have to watch this video 'Kony 2012.' It's 30 minutes long, but people are angry." Over breakfast that morning, I watched the video on YouTube on my iPhone, and over lunch later, I screened the film for my media studies students. Over the course of the day, I watched the number of views jump from three million at breakfast to 11 million by dinner. As it stands at press time, the video has over 80 million views on YouTube and 17 million views on Vimeo, making it, according to the Pew Internet Research Center, "one of the most viewed videos of all time on those sites."

The video features a story about a Ugandan man — a former child soldier named Jacob — as told by American filmmaker Jason Russell. Russell uses Jacob's story to illustrate the Ugandan conflict and to talk about the practices of warlord Joseph Kony. The video also details the actions of Russell's not-for-profit group Invisible Children in trying to raise awareness about Kony, including their successful petition last year for the United States Government to send military advisers into central Africa to help the Ugandan army track Kony, who has moved from northern Uganda into the Democratic Republic of Congo. Their goal, as stated in the video, is to raise enough awareness about the issue that it remains in the best interest of American politicians to keep the military advisers in central Africa until Kony is found and arrested.

In the weeks since the video has emerged, there has been both an outpouring of support as well as sharp criticism, ranging from close examination of Invisible Children and their financial records to criticism of how the film portrays Uganda and its simplification of an extremely complex political situation. Voice of America reported on March 16 that a screening of Kony 2012 in northern Uganda erupted in violence over the directive within the film to "Make Kony Famous," and all future screenings of the film in Uganda have been cancelled.

On March 15, Russell was arrested in San Diego for drinking and masturbating in public, something which has come as a shock and disappointment to many Invisible Children supporters.

"Kony 2012" raises some profoundly interesting questions about contemporary media outside of the context of Uganda, Kony and Invisible Children. The film opens with the statement: "Nothing is more important than an idea whose time has come/whose time is now," an allusion to the viral nature of both the Internet platform and the memesis of global political movements over the past 16 months. "We are making Kony world news," explains Russell, "by redefining the propaganda that we see all day, every day, that dictates who and what we pay attention to."

This desire to upend contemporary media is not unique to Kony 2012, but has been characteristic of social movements that have taken to the Internet since the 2009 Iran election protests (when everyone on Twitter was asked to colour their photos green in support of the opposition candidates). The question that arose at that time was: "How do you translate this remote interest into real political action?" As every social media novice knows, just because you have 1000 friends on Facebook, doesn't mean you have that many in real life.

Kony 2012 seems to be trying to answer that question of virtual engagement by drawing on the memetic nature of the Internet. The video asks audiences to "Make Kony Famous" by sharing the video, liking the video, putting up posters and more in an effort to make the name Kony a household name, to pressure the American government until Kony is found. Indeed, one of the the key images of the video is when Russell talks about traditional media power structures in the United States:

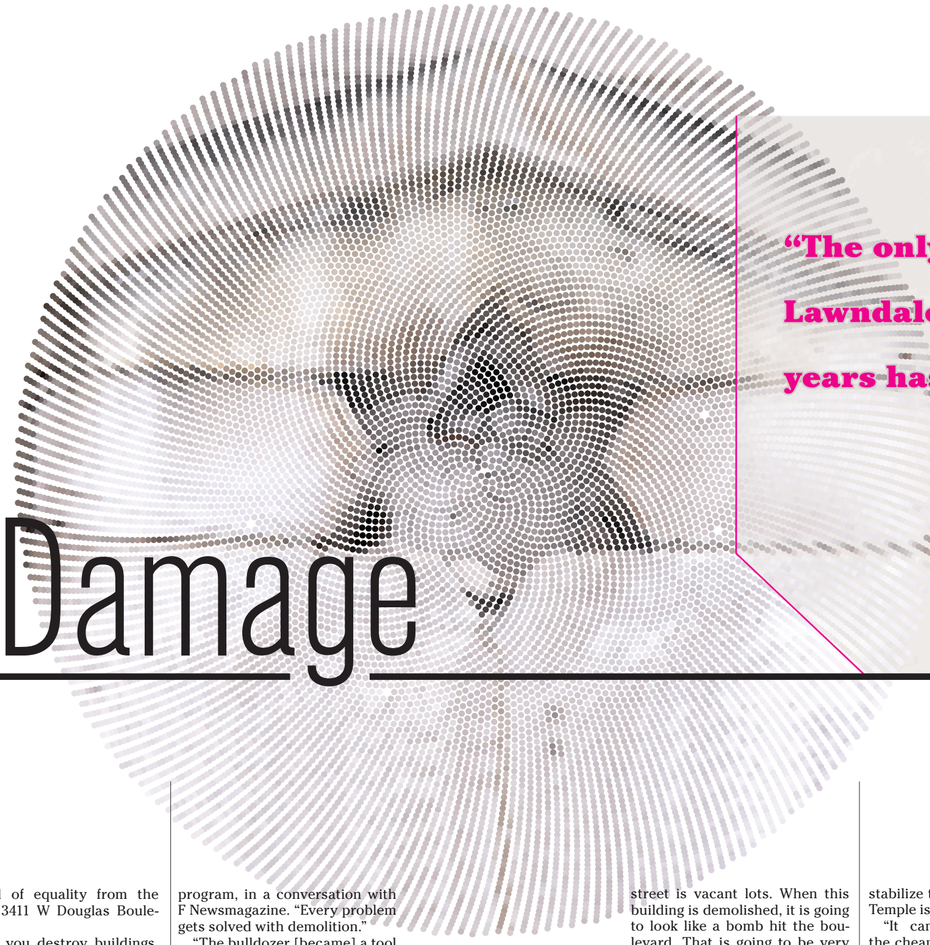
"It's always been that the decisions made by the few with the money and the power dictated the priorities of their government and their stories in the media. They determined the lives and opportunities of their citizens. But now, there's something bigger than that: the people of the world see each other, and can protect each other. It's turning the system upside down and it changes everything."

As Russell speaks, the image transitions from an upright triangle to an inverted one. Russell is correct — the media landscape is changing, and so are the power dynamics that come with it. Russell is articulating a sentiment that social media users and hacktivists have sensed for quite some time. Still, Russell's imperative seems like a cynical response to a broken political system. Whether or not that means something good for the people of central Aftrica will be determined if Kony is arrested in 2012. What it means for the people of the United States is that there's still a long way to go in terms of media representation and power dynamic.

"We are making Kony world news by redefining the propaganda that we see all day, every day, that dictates who and what we pay attention to."

— Jason Russell

APRIL 2012



> **"The only urban policy in North Lawndale over the last 30 or 40 years has been demolition."**
>
> **— Vincent Michael**

Structural Damage

Demolition machine strikes Lawndale landmark

BY ANNETTE ELLIOT

Snow fell softly on the forgotten temple. The effects of ten years of vacancy could be seen in the boarded up windows, gaping holes in the roof and crumbling façade. Built almost a century ago, Anshe Kenesseth Israel Synagogue on 3411 W Douglas Boulevard, later known as Shepherd's Temple, now faces the wrecking ball. On December 21, the City Department of Buildings issued an emergency demolition order, declaring that the "building was in imminent danger of collapse."

Architect, preservationist and member of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, Carey Wintergreen leads a grassroots effort to save the old synagogue from destruction. Not only is the building important as a monument to North Lawndale's rich, conflicted past, but its restoration could spark the revitalization of an economically depressed neighborhood.

Chicago Sun-Times architecture critic Lee Bey argues that historic structures can become catalysts for urban renewal. "The quality buildings of Garfield Park are not just remains of a time before white flight and the 1960s riots," maintains Bey in his article "Can Architecture Save West Garfield Park?" "They are the foundations upon which — with preservation and reinvestment — this community can be rebuilt."

In the early 20th century, North Lawndale was known as Chicago's Jerusalem, home to the largest Jewish population in the Midwest. The terracotta arch of the Anshe Kenesseth Israel Synagogue loomed over the elegant greystone houses along Douglas Boulevard. It was the largest of the 60 synagogues built on Chicago's West Side.

In the autumn afternoons of the High Holy Days, Douglas Boulevard was filled with people dressed in white. As the sun set on Rosh Hashanah, worshippers recited prayers and cast off their sins into the waters of Douglas Park Lagoon.

The 1950s brought a shift in demographics — blacks migrated to North Lawndale from Chicago's South Side and from the Deep South as the white middle class deserted the city for the suburbs. By 1964, the neighborhood was 91% black. The old Jewish synagogue became home to Friendship Baptist Church, a center of civic and religious engagement.

In 1966, Martin Luther King Jr. moved his family into a dilapidated North Lawndale apartment. He hoped to draw public attention to racist housing policies that segregated blacks and kept them in a slum environment. During the civil rights protests of 1966, King preached of equality from the steps of 3411 W Douglas Boulevard.

"When you destroy buildings, you destroy history, because you destroy the ability to tell the story of what happened in this neighborhood," argues director of Preservation Chicago Jonathan Fine in a 2011 Chicago Tribune article. This year 3411 W Douglas Boulevard joined the ranks of Prentice Hospital, Chicago Theological Seminary and Pullman Historic District on Preservation Chicago's list of Seven Most Endangered Buildings.

The City of Chicago is quick to raze decaying structures. Organized by the Chicago Architecture Foundation, the 2006 exhibition "Learning from North Lawndale" portrays the 1980s citywide fast-track demolition policy that "allowed city officials to tear down buildings that they deemed structurally damaged or possible havens for criminal activity."

Architect and structural engineer James Peterson challenges the city's claim that Shepherd's Temple is a threat to public safety: "Although this building currently has critical maintenance issues to address and is presently unoccupied … the repair does not require major reconstruction."

"The only urban policy in North Lawndale over the last 30 or 40 years has been demolition," argues Vincent Michael, SAIC director of the Historic Preservation program, in a conversation with F Newsmagazine. "Every problem gets solved with demolition."

"The bulldozer [became] a tool of urban planning, public safety and law enforcement," declared the Chicago Tribune in the 2003 article "A Squandered Heritage," which criticized the demolition machine set in motion by then mayor Richard M. Daley. Preoccupied with the development of downtown and gentrifying neighborhoods, the city administration promoted rampant destruction in West and South Side neighborhoods.

"When you add another vacant lot to a neighborhood that already has too many vacant lots, it is reverse urban planning," argues Fine.

"I've lived here all my life," community organizer and development consultant Valerie Leonard told F Newsmagazine. "When you live in a community that has been torn up from within by poverty, a community that has suffered long-term neglect both by people who live here and policy makers, a community that has fallen victim to the subprime mortgage crisis, just the thought of losing yet another building and having yet another vacant lot is tragic.

"When you lose this particular building, you will not just end up with a vacant lot on Douglas and Homan — you are actually going to end up with a hole an entire block long because half of 15th street is vacant lots. When this building is demolished, it is going to look like a bomb hit the boulevard. That is going to be very difficult for the neighborhood to recover from psychologically. Enough is enough."

The activists began to develop a new plan for Shepherd's Temple to celebrate the historical legacy of North Lawndale. They proposed to create a Martin Luther King Jr. museum. Leonard hoped the building would become a cultural center, a West Side hub. "We don't have cultural centers on the West Side. I really think this has a negative impact on our kids and a negative impact on the adults. As cultural activities go, so goes the society."

"The challenge with these inner-city buildings is that they've been falling apart for 20 years," explains Michael, "so a problem you might have been able to solve for $100,000 20 years ago now costs $3 million because it has been getting worse over time. This is what happened to the Uptown Theater. You might ask, 'How can you spend $60 million on a building?' Well, you let the pipes freeze, you open up the roof and let it snow in there for 10 or 15 years, and the problem will get that big."

Leonard admits that it will take a financial miracle to save 3411 W Douglas Boulevard: "Unless there is some angel that comes forth with $100,000 that we need to stabilize the building, Shepherd's Temple is a goner."

"It cannot always be about the cheapest way of doing something," Fine explains to F Newsmagazine. "If you live in an enlightened, progressive society that values its historic architecture and cultivates the fabric of its neighborhoods, then sometimes you might end up spending more money, and in some cases more taxpayer money, to rehabilitate historic structures."

The current owners of the building have had since 2007 to address building code violations. Their time ran out March 14. Five days later the red cranes and excavators of Heneghan Wrecking Company invaded the property. The grand façade of Anshe Kenesseth Israel now lies as a mountain of rubble.

Fine reflects on the effort to stave off demolition: "Unfortunately, it was a perfect storm. The problem was you had an owner who was not maintaining the building, you had a community whose history had been ignored for over 50 years, and you had a very difficult building type that did not lend itself easily to adaptive reuse."

"We can't rewrite history," Fine laments, "but we can start planning for the future." Preservation Chicago hopes to collaborate with the Commission on Chicago Landmarks and the Department of Housing and Economic Development to create a framework for the revitalization and reuse of vacant landmarks. Instead of building new facilities for libraries, schools and cultural centers, the city could invest in renovating existing historic structures.

Writer Gore Vidal warns of a United States of Amnesia, where we learn nothing because we remember nothing. Preservation is not about saving every old building, but preserving history.

Photo by Jan Tichy

SUBMIT YOUR WORK TO F.

2-D media*—
paintings,drawings,
photos, prints,
illustrations
and comics.
Writing—
$$ for reporting,
interviews, reviews
and commentaries

Email your art work to artdirector@fnewsmagazine.com
and writing samples to editors@fnewsmagazine.com

*Proofs must be JPEGS, no larger than 1MB and must be 72 DPI. SAIC community only.

OxBow
SCHOOL OF ART AND ARTISTS' RESIDENCY
2012

Earn SAIC credit this summer in an idyllic natural environment

There is still space available at Ox-Bow this summer

register online at www.ox-bow.org

Ox-Bow offers studio and liberal arts courses including:

glass, ceramics, painting and drawing, printmaking, art history, science, sculpture, metals, performance, new media, photo, video, and fibers.

Email **ox-bow@saic.edu** or call **800.318.3019**
with any questions, or stop by the office **Sullivan 1425**

Ox-Bow fulfills SAIC's off campus study requirement

Ox-Bow is proudly affiliated with SAIC School of the Art Institute of Chicago

OF SOUND MIND

SAIC's plan to quell the increased issue with poor mental health among students

BY ALEJANDRA GONZÁLEZ ROMO AND BRANDON GOEI

"To say 'I need to see someone because something is wrong with my mind' is scary. But then again, it's also the use of the term 'wrong with' that causes these problems too. No one wants to be at a disadvantage and no one wants to know that there's something wrong with the way they process the world," said Jessica Mazza, a leader of the Active Minds student group at SAIC.

Mazza's statement illustrates one of the many possible reasons why the majority of students in need of mental health care do not ask for help. According to the 2009 Healthy Minds Study conducted at SAIC, only 41 percent of students who screened positive for depression or anxiety disorders sought treatment of any kind in the past year. This number is especially concerning because, in concordance with the troubled artist myth, artists have much higher rates of mental disorders. The SAIC student body has numbers between two and five times higher than the national rates of mental problems.

The SAIC community is aware of disorders that exist within school walls, though many view their prevalence as less of an epidemic and more of a lifestyle. "I think that we romanticize artists as troubled types," says Peter Kusek, a student pursuing an MFA in Film, Video and New Media and an MA in Art History. Kusek's sentiments echo a stereotype that has been prevalent in mainstream society ever since artists like Vincent van Gogh and Arshile Gorky rose to prominence after tumultuous lives and gave way to similarly troubled modern figures like Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. "In our art school culture, there's still a value to being dysfunctional," says Kusek, "and in general, our culture gives extreme allowances to people who are seen as 'talented.'"

But even Kusek identifies mental illness as "an edge that enhances productivity and makes work more personal." Adding that "there's also a general fear that if you don't have it, you won't be able to make what you make."

This mindset is indicative of the lack of a typical stigma associated with disorders at SAIC. Less students think of their moods as being "abnormal" which could possibly be stunting the number of students who seek treatment. Alex Rowland, a fourth-year BFA student in the Visual Communication Department, thinks of art school as the kind of place where artists are allowed to flourish regardless of their psychological state. "I don't feel like it's a social issue [at SAIC]," he says. "Art schools lend themselves more to these types of mental disorders — it's a more emotional environment where you're always venting feelings." Rowland is also quick to identify that the peers and colleagues he shares creative space with are like-minded with respect to the kind of emotional release that art-making affords. "[Expression] is helpful because

Healthy Minds Study

SAIC

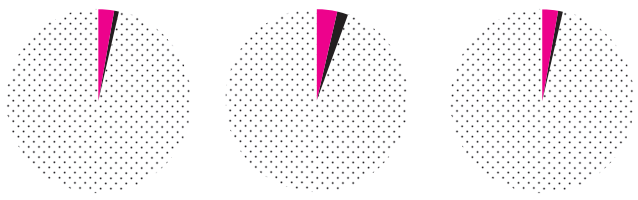
NATIONAL SAMPLE

ANXIETY DISORDERS

25% to 13%
Any anxiety disorder

15% to 8%
Generalized anxiety

6% to 2%
Panic disorder



3% to 1%
Social phobia

4% to 2%
Obsessive-compulsive disorder

3% to 1%
Post-traumatic stress disorder

MOOD DISORDERS

25% to 14%
Any mood disorder

8% to 4%
Major depression

5% to 1%
Bipolar disorder

OTHER DISORDERS

9% to 6%
Attention deficit disorder

5% to 3%
Eating disorders

5% to 1%
Any substance abuse disorder

HEALTH BEHAVIORS

30% to 15%
More likely to use marijuana

we're also letting it out in a beneficial setting," he says.

Kusek feels similarly about the cathartic properties of art-making. "Art is therapeutic," he says, "and the people that are drawn to making it are often trying to remedy something."

Raising Awareness

"At the Wellness Center what we are trying to do is make sure we are identifying students at risk early and intervene with them earlier, developing integrative care services," says Joseph Behen, Executive Director of Counseling, Health, and Disability Services at the school. Recently SAIC was awarded the Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Grant, which consists of a three-year grant of $306,000, a sum which was matched by SAIC. Part of the strategy to prevent fatal consequences of mental disorders is the exchange of information between physical and mental health services. "Our health services regiment includes screening for depression, alcohol abuse, etc., with help from nurse practitioners, and if students screen positive, we let them know about care options," says Behen.

Among the projects the school will develop with the grant money is a third Healthy Minds Study two years from now, which will refresh data. The Mental Health First aid training on campus will also be expanded — around 100 staff members have already been trained and the Wellness Center expects to cover the majority of the staff, as well as interested faculty and student leaders. There are also plans for the implementation of web-based self-aid programs that will offer help to students with depression by giving simple instructions and recommendations for wellness and health.

Related to the grant is the Student Resource Room in the Wellness Center with light therapy for Seasonal Affective Disorder, where a health promotion specialist is present eight hours a week. Also planned are suicide prevention workshops called "Making Connections," a program that started at Columbia College when they received the same grant in 2005.

Thinking back to the results of the study conducted in 2009 and taking place again currently, it is inevitable to ask why artists seem so much more prone to these problems when compared to the rest of the population. The prevalence of bipolar disorder at SAIC, is five times higher than the national sample of college students (5% to 1%), and the same ratio is true of the category of "any substance abuse" though Behen says there might be more than a few overlapping cases.

Daniel Grant, author of several books about artists' lifestyles considers the challenge of attending art school particularly stressful compared to other forms of education. In an article for the Chronicle of Higher Education, he says that artists "may receive a certain level of technical training — how to draw the human figure, how to cast bronze, how to render a design on the computer — but they are expected to produce something that is original almost from their first class."

"[Artists] have to be creative on demand," says Patricia Farrell, director of the counseling center at the Maryland Institute College of Art. "They then have to handle a public critique," she explains.

According to Grant's article, "many of the therapists and psychologists working in art colleges' counseling centers tend to have a connection with art." Some of them seem to be very aware of the relation between mental issues and creative practices. Martha Cedarholm, a nurse practitioner and director of the Pratt Institute's counseling center, says in the article that her staff is attentive to the problems of "treating depression or Attention Deficit Disorder, without flattening students so that they lose some of their creativity."

At times SAIC has embraced some of these problems by celebrating the work created by artists who experience mood disorders. "Touched by Fire," which started in Toronto, made its way to Chicago, where SAIC entered 45 submissions by students with mental disorders, of which 10 were selected and exhibited. The project has an annual juried show in November, as well as an online virtual gallery.

For Behen, trying to determine the causes behind the high rates of mental disorders among art students might amount to nothing but speculation. Nevertheless, he thinks that "it goes with the territory of being in an art school that makes work on the cutting edge and whose students perhaps live their lives in such a way." On the other hand, this is by no means a state to be seen as permanent. Emilie Smith, Mental Health Promotion and Care Specialist at SAIC (who was hired as part of the grant) explains: "If someone has depression it doesn't mean that they came out of the womb that way and they are going to die that way — that is not who they are as a person. Things shift and change. People get help and improve. So it isn't like those are the only students we have and that's what it's going to always be. It's important to know that the work that we and the counselors do helps and changes things."

The American College Health Association's 2009 National College Health Assessment said that 19 percent of all U.S. college students report some kind of mental disorder. So the problem goes far beyond art schools. Colleges nationwide are aware of this and are already working together to fight these problems by sharing information and seeking common solutions.

The National College Depression Partnership (NCDP) is a group of universities and university counseling centers that have identified the need to work together to better address mental health issues among their students. "We have a need to do a better job to detect students in distress before they harm themselves, and then secondly, once we detect them, to engage them in care as soon as possible. We would then use the latest evidence-based approaches to care so that we can maximize the student's ability to return to academic function," explains Henry Chung, the project's director and former Associate Vice-president of Student Health in New York University on the NCDP website. SAIC is a member of this partnership.

"We have also developed an extraordinary relationship with faculty over the years," said Felice Dublon, Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs. "This year in particular, the Faculty Senate, under the leadership of Patrick Rivers, has shown a commitment to working with the Wellness Center in identifying how they, and in turn, their faculty colleagues, can reach out to students in need with information about the many resources available at SAIC." Dublon also goes on to voice her approval of the school's recent efforts, commending Behen, his staff, Student Affairs and all other involved parties for "having some of the best resources for all students exploring their mental health."

Treating mental disorders is extremely expensive and

Why are artists are so much more prone to these problems when compared to the rest of the population? The prevalence of bipolar disorder is five times higher than the national sample, and the same ratio is true of the category of "any substance abuse disorder."

The Healthy Minds Study (HMS) is an annual, national survey that examines mental health issues among college students. It is a partnership between the University of Michigan School of Public Health, the multidisciplinary University of Michigan Comprehensive Depression Center, and the Center for Student Studies in Ann Arbor, MI. Since its launch as a pilot study, 50 schools including SAIC haveparticipated in HMS's three data collections.

Anyone who is suicidal may receive immediate help by logging onto Suicide.org or by calling 1-800-SUICIDE. Suicide is preventable, and if you are feeling suicidal, seek help immediately.

MENTAL HEALTH AT SAIC COMPARED WITH NATIONAL AVERAGES

27% to 16%
More likely to screen positive for depression

21% to 11%
More likely to screen positive for an anxiety disorder

25% to 15%
More likely to have engaged in self-injurious behavior

time consuming, and given the high rates at our school, the challenge becomes more complicated. For staff, SAIC has three psychologists and one postdoctoral fellow in psychology, besides four students from local doctoral programs training through part-time externships and Behen himself who is a clinical psychologist. According to Behen, in terms of student-to-counselor ratio, we compare favorably to other schools, but what SAIC is able to offer is assessment and 16 sessions of brief psychotherapy. It does not offer psychiatric care — students in need of such treatment are referred to outside treatment centers.

Unlike SAIC, two of the largest independent art colleges in the United States, the Pratt Institute (4,800 students) and the Savannah College of Art and Design (9,000 students), both have full-time psychiatrists or psychiatric nurses who can write prescriptions.

Finding Help

When about the source of psychological disorders in art students, many members of the SAIC community acknowledge the issue, but hesitate to see it as a deep-seated problem or epidemic. "I don't know if there's an outright cause that brings out these sorts of mental disorders — it could be genetic, or a change in one's personal life or something school-related — but it's also good to be critical of diagnoses in general," says Jon Satrom.

As an instructor in the FVNMA department, Satrom has a first-hand perspective on the types of expression that beget passionate artworks. He is compassionate towards those who find adversity in their lives, but also states the difficulty of pinning down a disorder as such: "Overdiagnosis is a problem in our culture. I'm not against medicine or treatment, but one can ask: Is art school a Mecca for weirdos? Yes. It's a unique place that attracts folks who see the world differently. Some might need clinical treatment, some may find consolation in their art, and some may simply operate at a different frequency."

Nick Foster, an SAIC student, was diagnosed with Bipolar I 10 years ago and echoes Satrom's sentiment about "overdiagnosis."

"I am leery of psychiatry and its neat (and often arbitrary) diagnoses and what it considers pathological and 'disordered,'" says Foster. "That's not to say pathology doesn't exist. … [I] have suffered through debilitating depressions, delusional manias, drug overdoses, shock treatments, and multiple arrests and hospitalizations. According to current western psychiatric practice, someone with this history would need to be medicated so that he or she could maintain 'stability.' Though I am not advocating this for everyone, I take no medicine and have been 'stable' for more than four years."

Foster also goes on to state his independence from substance use/abuse, saying, "I don't get high or drink anymore. … I ride my bike and do my work. I don't view myself as disordered."

Still, a history of trauma cannot be taken lightly in any setting. "When I first started college, I was doing a lot of cocaine and ecstasy, which coupled with my temperament and resulted in acute psychosis," Foster continues. "I had a total psychic break. I had to drop out of school. … I had a couple of nearly successful suicide attempts."

The issue of suicide at SAIC is one that the Wellness Center does not take lightly. The results of the 2009 Healthy Minds Study showed that 10% of SAIC students had suicidal thoughts in the previous year (compared to the national average of 7%). According to Joseph Behen, SAIC has gone seven or eight years since the death of an enrolled student by suicide. Behen attributes this particular low number to "the significant efforts we make through Counseling Services, Health Services, the Disability and Learning Resource Center, Residence Life and Academic Advising to provide students struggling with significant personal distress with a strong safety net."

Behen goes on to state that SAIC's interest in pursuing the SAMSHA Campus Suicide Prevention Grant was "motivated not only by our interest in continuing to prevent suicide among SAIC students, but also to reduce suicidal behavior, self-destructive behavior and other adverse effects of unaddressed student distress."

As for Nick Foster, the events in his life eventually led him to "decide to live," which he adamantly states "was [his] choice and [his] alone." The self-empowerment that Foster witnessed in his own life ultimately imparted a disbelief in the potential for a "grand solution," in his words: "There is no bureaucratic solution, as much as this administration wishes there was." Foster's belief is that students should help each other in promoting good mental health, stating, "I would suggest that people look after one another. … It's not complicated — if you see someone suffering talk to them."

Wellness Center
116 South Michigan Ave., 13th floor
Hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Phone: 312.499-4288
Fax: 312.499-4290
Email: healthservices@saic.edu

FINANCES, TIME USE, AND ATTITUDES

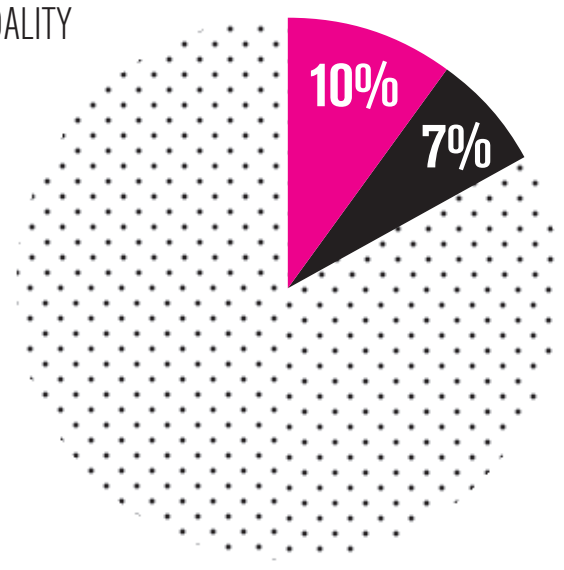
37% to 20%
More likely to feel that their current situation is a financial struggle

65% to 82%
SAIC is less confident that completing degree will be worth time, cost, and effort in a scale of

5.09% to 3.68%
Higher than average work in paid job hrs

52% to 71%
SAIC is less optimistic about job prospects after finishing education

SUICIDALITY



1% to 1%
Attempted suicide in the last year

1% to 2%
Students who seriously thought about suicide last year

Infographic by Patrick Jenkins

STILL HUNGRY

FEAST at the Smart Museum of Art

Each of us, artist or not, has experienced the magic of cooking or being cooked for.

BY DARJA FILIPPOVA

"Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art" is dedicated to sharing food. The opening of the show at the Smart Museum on February 15 — boiling in relational aesthetics — reached and spilled over capacity early. There are not many things that I would be willing to wait for 40 minutes in the drizzling cold February weather, but the art-crowd appetite was well sustained as the long, hungry line of anticipation to the door was fed Iraqi cuisine (hummus with stuffed olive leaves) from Michael Rakowitz's food truck "Enemy Kitchen." Furthermore, the dish was effectively sprinkled with the delicious rumors that Marina Abramovic was present inside. Given the unprecedented popularity of the show, I suppose the only thing hotter than pretension, which the art scene has been braised in, is free-flowing food.

Upon entering I was greeted with "slatko" (strawberry jam) — a Serbian gesture of hospitality by artist Ana Prvacki — and mellifluous sounds of a live blues band. Inside the galleries, artwork ranged from writing about cooking to videos of various foods being made or consumed, to documentation of community activism projects. With work from over 30 international artists, the exhibition "examines the history of the artist-orchestrated meal, assessing its roots in early 20th century European avant-garde art, its development over the past decades within Western art and its current global ubiquity."

The participatory nature of the show was foregrounded; much of the artwork is the documentation of ongoing Chicago-based eating projects. For example, a dinner table in one of the galleries is the installation "Dining Project" by artist Lee Mingwei, where guests are chosen in a lottery to dine with the artist in the museum after hours. Theaster Gates hosted the "Soul Food Pavilion" in a home, serving delicacies from Southern cuisine to a select audience in order to engage with political conversation within the comforting atmosphere of ritual, song and hospitality. Mella Jaarsma's traveling performance "I Eat You Eat Me" hosts events around the world (many in restaurant settings) where people wearing colorful bibs order food and feed each other their meal across a small table. Throughout the duration of the show, the audience is encouraged to attend several events, concerts and symposia with appealing titles, such as "The Act of Drinking Beer is the Highest Form of Art," on May 3.

The concept of sharing food is not original to "Feast." Rirkrit Tiravanija has fed hoards of art-goers and Tania Bruguera infamously offered lines of cocaine to a conference audience in Bogota in 2009. Each of us, artist or not, has experienced the magic of cooking or being cooked for. But there were no haters at "Feast." Instead, there was the sensuous pleasure of having the visual slip off the exhibition space and enter the "cavitas oralis" — you could contemplate things while chewing them. Again and again, there is something fantastic about the ability of relational aesthetics to break down the horrendous walls that separate the warring domains of concept and affect.

Yes, we love eating and drinking and interacting in the name of art, but the question remains: "What are we starving for?" I believe we are starving for the sweet taste of conceptual affect. "Feast" gives it away by the spoonful — get your fill.

Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art
Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago
Through June 12
smartmuseum.uchicago.edu

INTERVIEW

Orchestrating a Feast: A Conversation With Stephanie Smith

Images courtesy Smart Museum

"Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art" allows you to trace how, since the 1930s, the gesture of sharing food and drink has been used to stimulate critical conversations. F Newsmagazine sat down with Stephanie Smith, "Feast" curator and deputy director of the Smart Museum.

BY DIANA BUENDÍA

Diana Buendía: Congratulations, I heard the opening of the exhibition was a big success.

Stephanie Smith: Yes, we had around 800 people here and the next night we had a crowd of about 1,000 people at Marina Abramovic's lecture at the First United Methodist Church [in collaboration with the Chicago Humanities Festival]. It was in a category beyond any of the openings we've had at the Smart Museum.

DB: Why do you think people are excited about the exhibition?

SS: Enthusiasm for this particular project is probably related to the fact that there are so many different kinds of communities that are touched by the local artists who are featured in "Feast." I also think the nature of the topic is connected to the big changes in food culture in the United States over the last five years and an interest in the artisanal and the crafted. There are also questions about democracy and with whom we're eating and how we connect to other people when we are moving so fast.

DB: How did the idea for "Feast" develop?

SS: One point of inspiration was a gift from my brother: the English translation of "The Futurist Cookbook." In my own curatorial work over the past decade I have been focused on art that has one foot inside the museum and one foot out, so I know about a lot of artists who have been incorporating meals into their practice.

DB: Can you talk about some of the participatory events that are scheduled as part of the exhibition and how you approached their inclusion?

SS: Both Michael Rakowitz and Theaster Gates have international practices and their reputations are rising very quickly. They have opportunities to do projects all over the world, but they were both interested in the opportunity to do something here in Chicago where they live — shining a particular kind of light on this experience of being rooted here while speaking out to the world.

Lee Mingwei, on the other hand, is based in New York and will be coming to host a series of dinners for the "Feast" symposium. Mingwei has thought a lot about what it means to be a host and he takes that responsibility very seriously. He's a great cook and he also asks about dietary preferences, and makes it a point to remind the guests that they will be eating without shoes so they should, for example, wear a good pair of socks. He acknowledges that eating at a museum with a stranger could be awkward.

DB: What do you think is the main message they should take from these participatory works, which are an intrinsic component of "Feast?"

SS: One of the things that I've really been concerned with as a curator is thinking about how elastic the space of the museum is. This is a show that, on the one hand, seeks to do what museums do well, which is to frame something out of everyday experience and help people make connections among things that they otherwise would not connect and to. On the other hand, I'm also interested in thinking about work that moves inside and outside — or entirely outside — the space of the institution and that is important to contemporary life and art. I'd be thrilled if people came away from this exhibition not only with a greater degree of understanding of the richness of participatory activity, but also a zone of activity that has an extensive history in art over the past century.

In the Near Future (detail), 2005–09. Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Leighton Gallery, Berlin.

Were you talking to me?

Sharon Hayes at the Art Institute of Chicago

BY MICHELLE WEIDMAN

Sharon Hayes is the epitome of what formalist and conservative aesthetes hate about contemporary art. Her work is queer, political and feminist but these aren't the only reasons to love her.

Hayes also addresses the complexity of communication depending on the temporal and social context in which it is located. She asks questions such as how many voices can be heard at one time before the result becomes noise? Every utterance from a long gone companion may be impossible to forget. Alternately, we may not hear a single word from a Republican primary debate broadcast and re-broadcast through a 24-hour news cycle. Voice carries varying weight depending on who is speaking and why, as well as who is listening. We may have never listened to Rush Limbaugh, but we have certainly heard him lately.

Hayes' first solo museum exhibition in the US at the Art Institute of Chicago (AIC) closed on March 11. It addressed not only the convergence of public and private speech, but also the potential of communication wrapped in various forms of political affect. Hayes, a mid-career artist based in New York, was featured at AIC as a part of the contemporary art focus series.

The exhibition was comprised of three parts, the video installation "Parole," seven digital chromogenic prints of spoken word record covers arranged thematically titled "An Ear to the Sounds of Our History," and finally, "In the Near Future," a room of slide projections.

"Parole" circulated thematically connected videos around four screens of varying size that were embedded in an enclosure constructed from plywood and soundproofing foam. The fabricated space acted primarily as a symbolic barrier from the rest of the gallery. Included in the installation were diverse forms of speech — from a lecture and discussion by University of Chicago professor Lauren Berlant, a speech by James Baldwin, a letter to a friend, to some of the artist's public performances.

In many of the videos, performer and artist Becca Blackwell travels through various public and private spaces — a kitchen, recording room, public squares and outdoor shopping malls (which are now often the same thing) — recording, listening, justifying viewership through example, yet rarely reacting to the events and speeches that are occurring. Her presence is formal, offering continuity, but also representing a model of contact. She never speaks but she is not inactive.

The seven digital chromogenic prints of spoken word record covers that make up "An Ear to the Sound of Our History" were individually organized to suggest sentences comprised of the album titles. Along with their semantic suggestions they provide miniature aesthetic historical snapshots. They are the visual equivalent of the DJ set performed by Hayes in which she remixed her collection of spoken word albums.

The final room of the exhibition contained "In the Near Future" a collection of projected images from Hayes' protest sign performances that occurred between 2005 and 2009. In each projected image Hayes stands alone holding an emblematic protest sign. It becomes obvious quite quickly, however, that many of the slogans don't function in the orthodox timely and persuasive style of political street language. Some of the signs address the Vietnam War while others are declarations such as "I am a man." In this way the signs represent public address divorced from the urgency and the impotence of timely political speech.

In one section of "Parole," the voice of author James Baldwin considers the role and motivation of a writer. He notes that there comes a time when "a writer realizes he is involved in a language that he has to change." In the discussion with theorist Lauren Berlant, Berlant locates optimism in habitual acts of someone whose place in the world has been annulled. The example Berlant uses is the businessman who, after the financial collapse, would wake up every morning, put on his suit, take his suitcases and leave his home with nowhere to go. In the context of these statements "Parole" and the exhibition overall operates as a poetics of breakdown and hope in political language.

Expired Utopias

David Hartt's "Stray Light" at the MCA's Screen Series

BY MAURA LUCKING

Imitation teak paneling, burnt orange, glaring brass and dusty mauve — the aesthetics of mid-century "negritude" set the stage for an immersive and engrossing contemplation on the rise and fall of the Johnson Publishing Company in David Hartt's new show at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. The inaugural exhibition of the museum's new media-based "MCA Screen" series, "Stray Light," draws on a multitude of material and media sources to interrogate the socioeconomic undercurrents of the culture industry as embodied by the publisher of Ebony and Jet magazines. The company built its opulent Michigan Avenue headquarters in 1971 at the height of its success, only to embalm themselves in an elegantly preserved mausoleum to bygone values as the company suffered public financial troubles and, ultimately, sold the John Moutoussamy-designed building in 2010.

Michael Darling, James W. Alsdorf Chief Curator, curated the show (with cooperation from local gallery Corbett vs. Dempsey), consisting of a series of photographs and a 12 minute video of the company headquarters scored with a contemporary (yet deliciously retro) soundtrack by flutist Nicole Mitchell. The MCAs' notes that magazine title Ebony is, itself, a material reference, suggesting that perhaps there is a carefully drawn tautology between our own identity and those signifiers in the natural and man-made environment with which we surround ourselves.

For Hartt, a black-Canadian artist raised by Anglo-Jewish academics in suburban Montreal, race is very much an "aggregate construct," where, wielding a camera, he is able to create what Homi Bhabha refers to as a third space: the work is not an autobiographical embodiment, nor is it a distanced anthropological study. Rather, Hartt subtly inserts his own subjectivity (he spent years developing a relationship with the company in order to receive such unimpeded access) in order to follow with a sympathetic eye the construction of a new black identity in the United States through the accumulation of things.

In one shot, a tribal sculpture alights on top of a receptionist's desk set against the suddenly less synthetic-seeming fibers of the faux-rattan wallpaper. In the next, a naturalized portrait of a young black woman is set against a more feminine backdrop, recalling the contemplative virtue of the Harlem Renaissance. Hartt gives equal priority to the referents of modern office life, however, including close-ups of smiley face mugs and stickers speaking to the still almost entirely black employees, perhaps less fashionable or erudite than founder Joe Johnson had originally imagined.

The newest technologically available materials, the most forward-thinking corporate configurations and, ultimately, a magazine that they hoped might transcend the boundaries of black mass culture.

As a backdrop for these contemporary banalities of office culture, the sociocultural subtleties of Elrod's interiors come to life. A sort of cross between the orientalizing ethnographic exhibition designs of Renee D'Harnoncourt and others of the same period and the smart, aphoristic virility of the mid-century bachelor pad, the conscious selection of such interiors reinforce but also reinform notions of what this particular moment of self-identification entailed. Earthy and ontologically deterministic, to be sure, but also engaged in futurism: the newest technologically available materials, the most forward-thinking corporate configurations and, ultimately, a magazine that they hoped might transcend the boundaries of black mass culture.

In Hartt's configuration, "futurity" is figured as a radically different but no less legitimate heir to Johnson's aspirations. Soul singer Janelle Monae, featured on a recent Jet cover, is captured against a sea of faux-wood finish, an artist multifaceted and innovative in her syncretic combination of cultural and temporal references and fearless in her expansion of the codes of gender (and humanity) in a rigidly structured genre. Part James Brown, part cyborg, Monae seems to herself embody the contemporary feedback loop of identity formation to which Hartt refers. It is the reexamination of such expired utopias that preserves their value, like stray light in a closed room.

David Hartt, Kiosk, 2011. Edition of 6 + 1 AP. Image courtesy of the artist and Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago.

This letter was sent to F Newsmagazine in response to the interview with the Israeli historian Ilan Pappé published in the February issue. For the complete text and the interview with Ilan Pappé visit fnewsmagazine.com.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Want peace between Palestine and Israel? Don't listen to Ilan Pappé!

BY TALYA FELDMAN

In February, F Newsmagazine published an interview with Ilan Pappé, the author of "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine."

Pappé claims that Israel was established in 1948 as a result of the "Nazification of the Palestinians" at the hand of the Jewish Zionist leadership who sought to ethnically cleanse and de-Arabize Palestine.

A recent PBS documentary called "Auschwitz" defined a Nazi as "one who opposed democratic government, sought territorial gains, and ultimately strove for the elimination of all non-Aryan races."

Israel, however, is currently the only established democracy in the Middle East. 160,000 Arabs who accepted Israel's invitation for citizenship and peace in 1948 now make up over 20 percent of the Israeli population. As with all minorities in Israel, Arab-Israelis enjoy full human rights, including religious, sexual, political and free speech. Many Arabs hold high positions in the Israeli government, Supreme Court and military.

Ilan Pappé claims that Israel seeks to "downsize the Palestinian population." You would then expect that the 750,000 Arab-Palestinians who had lost their homes as a result of the Arab-Israeli war in 1948 would have decreased in number or remained dormant. A recent poll issued by the UNRWA (the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees) stated that there are over 5 million Palestinian refugees in the world today, and only a third of them are registered in the UNRWA refugee camps of Jordan, Syria, the Gaza Strip, Lebanon and Israel. This number does not include the descendants of the 850,000 Jews who became refugees from Arab countries also as a result of the Arab-Israeli war in 1948 nor does it explain why no Arab country has ever offered to absorb these Palestinians.

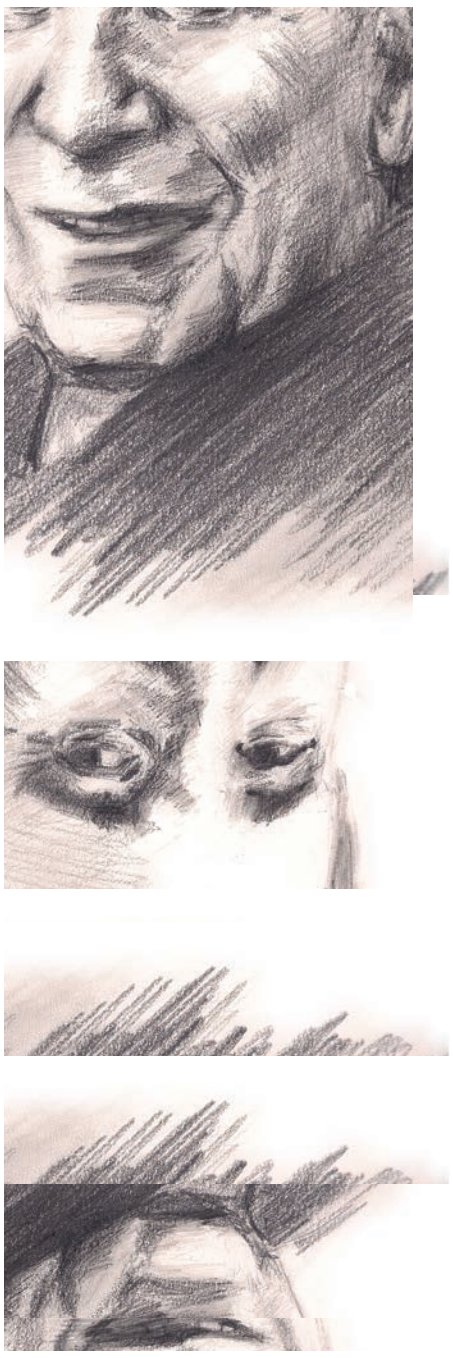
Ilan Pappé believes that the peace process has not "provided the goods" and would not do so in the future. Instead, he proposes supporting the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) movement that seeks to destroy Israel while ignoring the greatest obstacle to peace: terrorism.

In 1967, Israel accepted United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 that says that in exchange for some of the land Israel had acquired in the war of 1967, the Arab states would acknowledge Israel's right to exist within secure and defensible borders. Since the resolution, Israel has given back 91 percent of that land to Egypt and water rights to Jordan. Following the 1993 Oslo Accords and in an effort to promote peace with the Palestinians, Israel fully withdrew from the Gaza Strip in 2005, and has given the Palestinian Authority control over 98 percent of the Palestinians living in the West Bank.

The BDS movement refuses to condemn the extremist goals of terrorist organizations like Hamas who seek the annihilation of Israel while continuing to restrict the basic human rights of their own people. Palestinians living in Gaza under Hamas suffer from unwarranted torture, arrest and imprisonment.

As stated by Palestinian-Israeli reporter Khaled Abu-Toameh, to be a true pro-Palestinian advocate means to publicly fight against the moral and financial corruption of Fatah and Hamas, and not, like Ilan Pappé, call Israelis Nazis or support a movement like BDS.

Illustration by Nicole Rhoden



THE WRITER'S RESPONSE

BY DARYL MEADOR*
AND ANNAN SHEHADI

The most basic definition of Zionism calls for a Jewish state in historic Palestine. The movement began in the 1890s and came to fruition in 1948 when Jewish militias destroyed over 400 Palestinian villages and violently expelled at least 750,000 Palestinians from their homes. The right-wing and nationalistic militias, most notoriously the Irgun and the Stern Gang, hoped to achieve great territorial gains not only in Palestine, but in all of Transjordan for the not-yet-established state of Israel. In doing this, they advanced an ideology that called for the elimination or expulsion of non-Jews, particularly native Palestinians, in the land of Palestine. As the first Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben-Gurion stated, "I support compulsory transfer. I don't see anything immoral in it." These actions were what Ilan Pappé referred to when he claimed that 1948 saw a "Nazification" of the Palestinians at the hands of the Jewish forces — the Palestinians were punished for the actions of the Nazis in the Holocaust.

The Zionist movement is directly responsible for the largest refugee population in the world, numbering 4.3 million as registered by the United Nations, but 7 million by the Palestinian people, as the United Nations does not consider those expelled in 1967 as refugees but "displaced persons." The Palestinian refugees were met with ill treatment in many neighboring states, but this does not justify Zionism and absolve the violent creation of Israel from its ultimate responsibility for the creation of these refugees.

Israel cannot be a just democracy when it has occupied a people for decades and disallows them basic human rights. Today around 90 percent of the land in Israel is under the control of the Jewish National Fund and cannot be sold or rented out to the non-Jewish population. The Bedouin population within Israel experience constant destruction of their villages, so much that the village of Al-Araqeeb has been demolished and rebuilt 21 times.

Palestinians within Israel are allowed to vote, but they constantly suffer under discriminatory policies. In the occupied West Bank, Israel builds Israeli-only settlements connected by Jewish only roads. Palestinians and Jews have differently colored IDs and license plates. Palestinian land and resources are systematically stolen. Israel's apartheid wall is not built on the Green Line, but built within the West Bank, effectively cutting off much land from its Palestinian owners and destroying their livelihoods.

Backed by the US, Israel's ongoing colonization and oppression is proof of the ineffectiveness of the peace process, which has offered no just solutions for the Palestinian people. In 2005, Palestinian civil society issued a call for boycott, divestment and sanctions on the state of Israel as a means of non-violent resistance to its continued military occupation and apartheid. Inspired by the movement that helped topple apartheid in South Africa, BDS is not an attack against Israeli people but against the institutionalized system of oppression against the Palestinians. Ending the occupation and systematic discrimination against the Palestinians is not about being pro-Palestine or anti-Israel, it is about being pro-justice and pro-peace for all.

**Daryl Meador interviewed Ilan Pappé for F Newsmagazine's February Issue.*

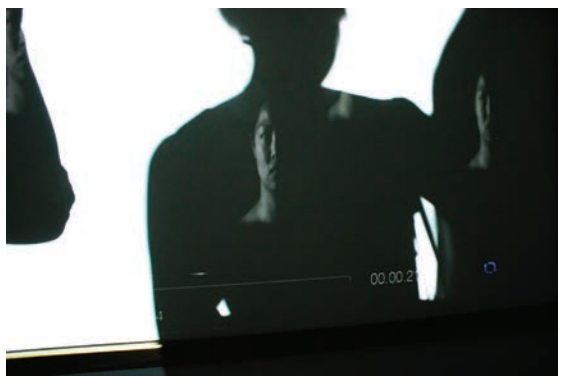
2012 BFA SHOW

Photos by Joe Carpenter

LING CHUN **Made By Chinese**

ALI LANDER SHINDLER **On The Origin of Species**

RUNA + –

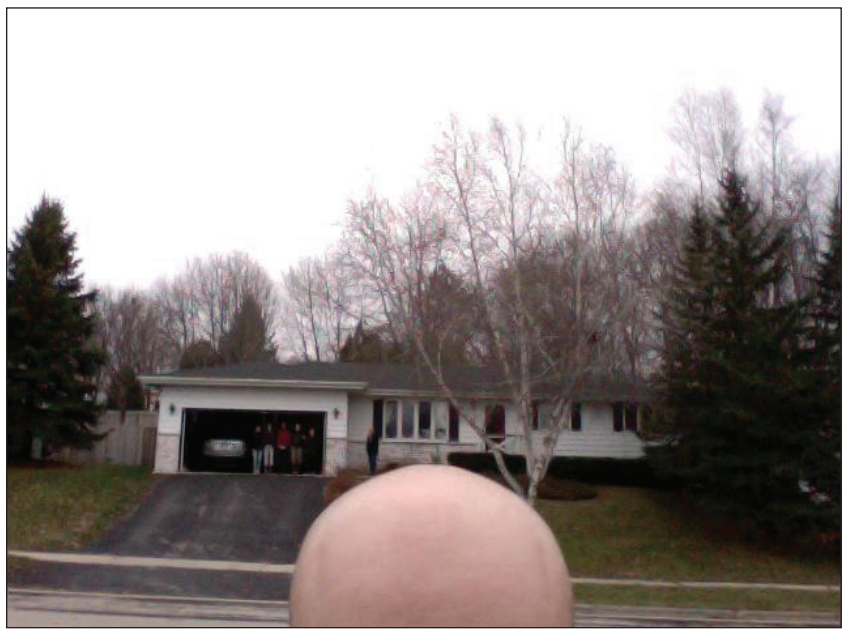


JESS GARTEN **“More” is Not Enough**

SAMANTHA ALAIMO **FLUX Lamps**

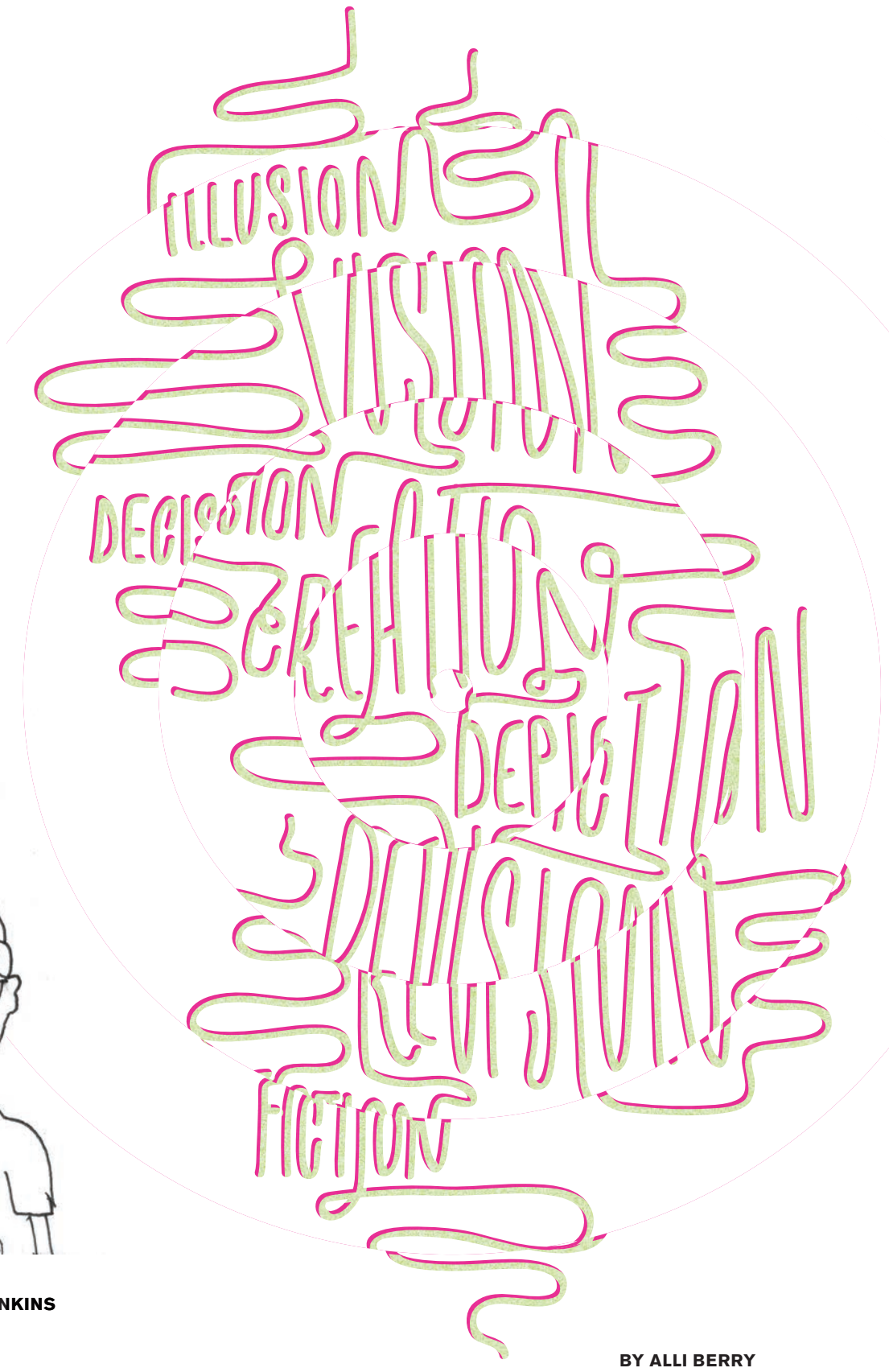
D.J. DEGAYNER **Negative: Headwear Collection**

DOODLES



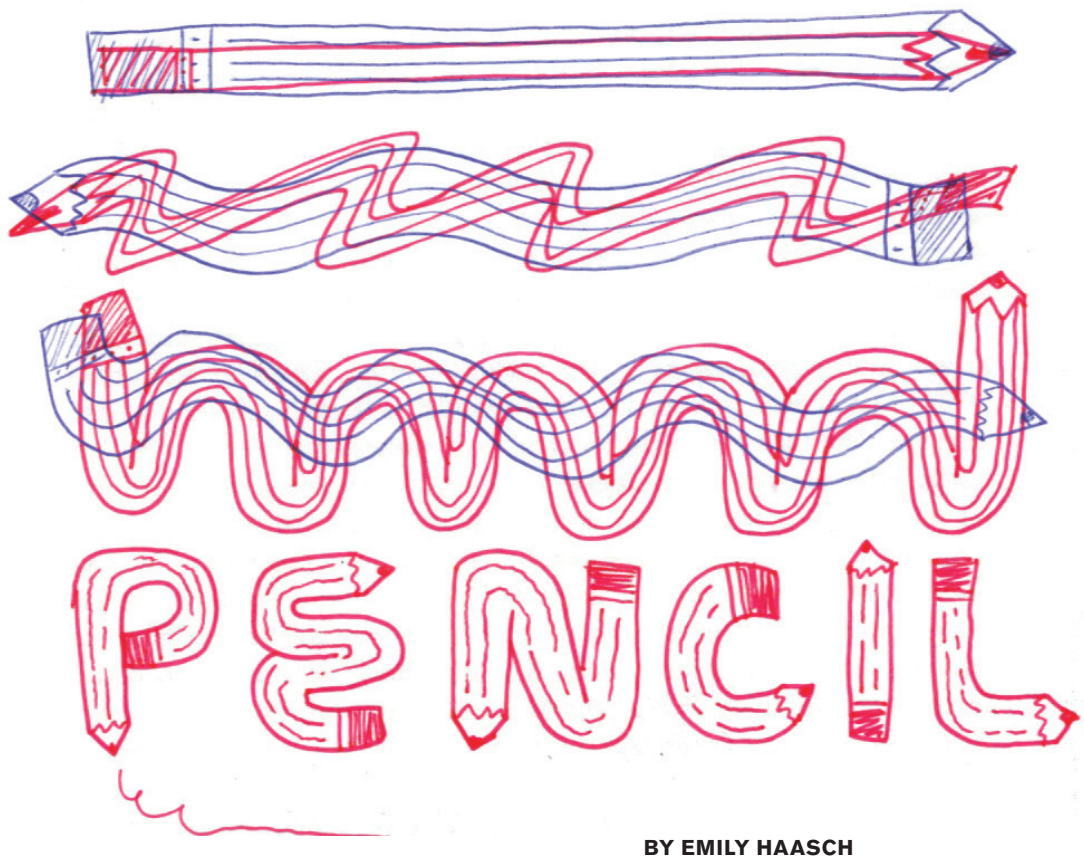
BY JOE CARPENTER

BY PATRICK JENKINS



BY ALLI BERRY

BY GABRIELA MAGAÑA



BY EMILY HAASCH

BLICK

EXCLUSIVE SAVINGS FOR SAIC STUDENTS!

EARLY BIRD SPECIAL

VISIT US BETWEEN
8:00AM AND 9:30AM AND GET

20% OFF

ENTIRE PURCHASE OF NON-SALE, IN-STOCK ITEMS

WHEN YOU MENTION "EARLY BIRD" AT THE REGISTER!

HAPPY HOUR SPECIAL

VISIT US BETWEEN
4:00PM AND 6:00PM AND GET

20% OFF

ENTIRE PURCHASE OF NON-SALE, IN-STOCK ITEMS

WHEN YOU MENTION "HAPPY HOUR" AT THE REGISTER!

GET THESE SAVINGS EXCLUSIVELY HERE:

CHICAGO LOOP

42 SOUTH STATE ST. (STATE & MONROE)
312-920-0300

VALID 3/30/12 TO 4/26/12

Blick Art Materials, Retail Inc., coupon must be surrendered at time of purchase; no copies will be honored. Limit one coupon per visit. Valid only on non-sale, in-stock items. Not valid with any other discounts or promotion, phone/mail/internet orders and purchases of gift cards. Promotion is valid with SAIC Student ID. Valid ONLY at Chicago Loop Location. **CODE 06843**

BLICK® Preferred Customer MEMBERSHIP CARD

Save an additional 10%* FREE FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS WITH CLASS LIST OR STUDENT ID

non-sale items only.
Early-bird and happy hour offers may not be combined.

VISIT US FOR DETAILS