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SAN DIEGO

ROUBADOUR

Alternative country, Americana, roots, folk, gospel, and bluegrass music news



December 2003

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welcome mat



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Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

A couple of weeks ago, the *San Diego Troubadour* received the honor of "best paper for musicians without amps" by *CityBeat*. And although the category was a bit unusual, what was written was much appreciated.



But Lyle and I do want to spotlight the fact that, though we did come up with the original idea and vision for this monthly paper, it would not have happened without Liz Abbott and Kent Johnson (aka Phil Harmonic), the backbone of the whole operation. Had it not been for Liz, the graphic designer, we would have had no more than a little 8 1/2 x 11" newsletter, photocopied to give away. Liz was able to put all of our ideas into form and, with her graphic art skills and creative touch, give it the look that it has today...an attractive, unique, and credible-looking newspaper.

Kent Johnson's energy, along with his distribution experience, brought the paper to the streets all across the county. His interpersonal skills naturally placed him in charge of advertising as well. Liz and Kent's organizational skills carry the paper to this day. By the time the first paper was out, we had joined together as a team, complementing one another's strengths and weaknesses. Lyle and I really consider all four of us to be the founders of the *Troubadour*, as from the start we have all worked together to get the paper out for you, the reader.

I speak for all four of us when I say that our monthly read would have no soul without the grass roots efforts of all our great columnists and writers. Columnists Lou Curtiss, José Sinatra, Russell Bauder (Gus Williker), Les Brennan (Jimmy Diesel White), Paul Abbott, Jim McInnes, Dwight Worden, and all the other writers who have contributed over the past two years have been the heart of the *Troubadour*, along with the photographers, especially our very own Millie Moreno.

Liz, Kent, Lyle, and I just want to say thanks to all of you who've supported the *San Diego Troubadour*, whether through writing, photography, advertising, delivering, letters, or just by your encouragement. Thanks to all the musicians and to all of you who support our local music scene. And last but not least, thanks to *CityBeat* for the nice words!

We at the *San Diego Troubadour* wish you and your families a happy and safe holiday season.

Cheers,
Ellen Duplessie



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Fri. 12th	R23 Orchestra & Blue 44	Sat. 27th	Pete of She Blonde Swede & Benzo Youngblood
Sat. 13th	The Enchanted & Angela Correa	Sun. 28th	Car Kinsey
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by Bart Mendoza

While San Diego hasn't been thought of as much of a jazz town until recently, the truth is that many famed jazz era musicians got their start here, from Arthur Blythe to the Liggins Brothers. Even among such illustrious company, it's clear that one of the most important jazz players ever to emerge from our town is saxophonist Harold Land.

Born on December 12, 1928, in Houston, Texas, Land arrived in San Diego in 1933, at the age of five. His family lived at 1703 Imperial Ave. and he found his love of music early. He attended Memorial Jr. High in Logan Heights and then San Diego High School, graduating in 1946. According to his wife Lydia, "He was in the San Diego High School orchestra, but jazz was his love. He'd had piano lessons, but after he heard Coleman Hawkins, a saxophone was all he wanted to play. When he was 16 he was given a tenor saxophone. Mrs. Land recalls, "Harold had a music teacher who was very strict. Everything had to be a certain way, so for fun, whenever the teacher would leave the room, he would let go with music the way he wanted to play it, taking the same songs and rearranging them." He had just graduated when a friend, bass player Ralph Houston, helped him join the Musician's Union, setting him on the path toward becoming a world-renowned musician.

Land was influenced by other famed saxophonists of the day, including Lucky Thompson and especially Charlie Parker, and became part of the house band at the Creole Palace as a member of Fro Brigham's group. "During these jobs my closest friend and musical colleague was the drummer, Leon Petties," Land remembers. Quoted by Leonard Feather in the liner notes to Land's own 1959 album, *The Fox*, he spoke of his days in the club's small combo. "We played the floor show and jazz sets too. Sometimes men like Hampton Hawes, Teddy Edwards, and Sonny Criss came down from L.A. and worked with us. This provided a great stimulus."

Harold in the Land of Jazz

Though the Creole Palace was a mainstay, Fro Brigham's band played many other venues. "I was a jitterbugger when I met Harold at the Club Romance in 1949," says Mrs. Land. "That club was just two blocks south of the Creole Palace." Of the band at the time she says, "They played all the jazz, well really bebop, that they could in a set, and all the jitterbuggers would be there. People just loved Fro's voice and wanted to dance."



Harold Land as a young man

On April 25th of that year the band, under the moniker the Harold Land All Stars, cut four songs at Savoy Records in Los Angeles, resulting in the regional hit "San Diego Bounce" (Regent 1020) when released in 1950. The song also proved to be a huge hit in Jamaica, where it was bootlegged under the titles "Downbeat Shuffle" or "Coxsone Shuffle." The other three songs recorded at the session would have to wait until the late seventies to finally see the light of day on a Savoy Records anthology, *Black California*.

Land and Petties soon left the Creole Palace to work on the road, first spending a year in a group led by guitarist Jimmy Liggins and then in the band of his slightly more

famous brother, Joe "Honeydripper" Liggins. Although Land considered his rhythm-and-blues road experience invaluable, he was soon back at the Creole Palace, though by 1954 he had moved to Los Angeles.

Mrs. Land states, "We lived in San Diego until 1954, and our son was born there. We left San Diego when he was four and not long after that Harold joined up with Max Roach."

Following a succession of menial jobs, close friend flutist Eric Dolphy invited Land to play a jam session at Dolphy's house. Both Clifford Brown and Max Roach came to check out Land for their musical projects on Dolphy's recommendation. "Eric had known me since the San Diego days and after I moved to L.A., we became good friends," Land says in that interview. "He was beautiful. Eric loved to play anywhere, any hour of the day or night. So did I." Land passed the impromptu audition and was soon a rising star in the jazz world, recording enough material to appear on the pair's 16 albums (including reissues) over the years. He left the employ of Brown and Roach in 1956 due to a family illness but continued to tour, notably with Curtis Counce.

More important, he began to play sessions and went on to become one of the leading horn players of his day. He's on literally dozens of the greatest jazz sides ever released. Just check out this roll call: five discs with Bill Evans, 13 with Dinah Washington, six with Thelonius Monk, 12 with Bobby Hutcherson, four with Wes Montgomery — and that's just the tip of the iceberg. It's an incredible discography, which includes countless recording sessions for the likes of the Platters, Sam Cooke, Ella Fitzgerald, Art Farmer, Donald Byrd, and many, many more. Notably, Land made the acquaintance of trumpeter Jack Sheldon (later band leader for *The Merv Griffin Show*) in 1957, playing on his album *Jack's Groove* and co-authoring the standard "Fabulous."

As a solo act he signed to Contemporary Records in 1958, releasing three highly acclaimed albums in quick succession: 1958's brilliant *Harold in the Land of Jazz* and *Grooveyard*, then *The Fox* on the small Hifijazz label in the year that followed. Contemporary Jazz records re-issued the album in 1969. He next surfaced on Jazzland Records with a pair of classics: *West Coast Blues* (1960) and



Eastward Ho! Harold Land In New York (1960).

Hear Ye was next, seeing Land as co-group leader with Red Mitchell. It was released by Atlantic in 1961 and has been re-issued six times since, including once in 1967 under the "hip" title "And Keep On Swinging." A series of indie releases followed, all stellar. Over the next four decades he appeared on every jazz label of note. The year 1963 saw the release of *Jazz Impressions of Folk Music* on Imperial and 1967 had *The Peace-maker* on Cadet, while 1969 found *Take Aim* issued by Blue Note.



Land at the Jazz Bakery in L.A., 1990s

It was during this time frame that several rock luminaries let their love of Land's music be known. On July 25, 1969, prog-rock pioneers Yes included a tribute tune called "Harold Land" on their debut album. And none other than Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page took a shine to "Fabulous" and recorded it, eventually seeing its release on countless compilations and reissues since the early seventies. When asked about the many cover versions of her husband's music, Mrs. Land replies, "Harold wrote a lot of music," says Mrs. Land. "It's hard to keep track of everything. There have been so many re-issues, especially since CDs came out. And then they change the names of things," she says of the record labels' practice of endlessly repackaging an artist's catalog. "But we do get statements, so we know what's out there."

Land continued to tour, including a stint in Las Vegas as star player with Tony Bennett. He also appeared on all the talk shows of the day including *The Tonight Show*, *The*

Merv Griffin Show, and *The Mike Douglas Show*. 1971 saw a pair of releases by Land for Mainstream Records: *A New Shade of Blue* and *Choma*. It also saw the initial release of *Damisi*, an album with a tricky history. It would be reissued in 1972, '74, and '91 (at least), with each issue containing a slightly different choice of songs. You need the 1991 CD re-issue to get it all.

Next Land worked on a co-band leader production with Blue Mitchell, releasing *Mapenzi* for Concord Jazz in 1977. It was followed by *Live at Junk* in 1980, a release only available in Japan, the same year he joined the Timeless All-Stars, which included Hutcherson, Billy Higgins, Cedar Walton, Curtis Fuller, and Buster Williams. *Xocia's Dance* on Muse came in 1981, with *A Lazy Afternoon* on the indie Postcards label released April 1995.

Unfortunately that would be his last release for seven years. As fate would have it, Land had a resurgence of popularity in 1999 when Paul McCartney recorded "Fabulous" on the B-side of the "No Other Baby" single from his acclaimed oldies album *Run Devil Run*. He didn't release an album of new recordings again until 2001's *Promised Land* on Audiophoric. Sadly, Land passed away on July 27, 2001, but he remained fond of San Diego. "We would return fairly often," says Mrs. Land. "He would play there whenever he could, like when he would play the Athenaeum in La Jolla or even the Summerhouse Inn, for two weeks at a time. He loved it."



San Diego's Creole Palace, a hot spot for black entertainment in the '20s, '30s, and '40s, at Third and Market St.

Photo: San Diego Historical Society





Photo: Bill Richardson



Recordially, Lou Curtiss

Like many kids who grew up during the '50s, I guess I was attracted to (among other things) the Beat Movement. I read the books and fantasized about being "on the road" and even later did some of that, but first I had to check out the coffee house scene. It was 1957 (and I was still in high school down at Mar Vista in Imperial Beach). I don't know exactly how it all came about, but one of the first places I ventured into was called The Zodiac. It was on the street level of the same building that housed the Pacific Ballroom on the second floor, near the corner of 11th and Broadway. The artist I saw on that first visit was Mickey Myers and I don't remember anything about him except that he used the Mickey Mouse Club theme song as a closing number. About a year later I went to The Zen Coffee House and Motorcycle Repair Shop down at Broadway and India and saw Judy Henske there. I have to say it made a more lasting impression on me. Neither one of those places were around for very long, probably because of where they were located. At that time, downtown San Diego mostly attracted sailors on liberty and a few reckless souls (like me, occasionally) who were more interested in other kinds of music.

orable to me was The Upper Cellar at 6557 El Cajon Blvd. I first saw Fred Gerlach there, who encouraged me to buy my first Leadbelly record, and Hadley Bachelder, who got me hooked on Big Bill Broonzy. Along about 1960 Terry Houston and I got up on stage at an open mic at The Upper Cellar and sang a folk song (I don't remember what it was) and when people actually applauded, I was hooked. Bob Stane, the owner of the club and Pete Serniuk (resident comedian and emcee) were encouraging and told us to come back, which we did a few times. During the early '60s The Upper Cellar tried to move to a bigger location on University Avenue and took a stab at booking big name folk acts (I saw the Terriers there) but were only open for a short time. Bob went on to a long run as manager of the Ice House up in Pasadena and operates a coffee house in the L.A. area to this day.

About the same time a bunch of San Diego State students opened a place called La Parise just a few steps off the SDSU campus. Inside the walls were covered with murals of the interior of a French bordello, and all the faces of the many characters were those of the then students and professors at San Diego State. Not long after the place opened, the ownership changed and the name changed to Circe's Cup, but the interior murals stayed. The Ivory Tower Jazz Quartet played there regularly and that's where I saw Josh White, Juanita Hall, and several well-

known out of towners. The era of the Great Folk Scare was in full swing. The owner of Circe's Cup was a guy named Butch Miller, who kept it open for three or four years before eventually drifting on. After that it became a pool hall (called Circe's Cue — they only had to change part of the sign), then a sandwich shop (with all the murals painted over in a dull flat white), and now the building isn't even there any more since the university has taken over the whole area. Many people who remember The Cup also remember the cheap apartments upstairs, which you had to turn sideways to get in to. Bookcase, bed, hot plate, and not much else. Living upstairs at The Cup was always bohemian student life at its worst but then downstairs there was some mighty good music.

The other coffee house that made a lot of noise was The Ballad Man in La Jolla, first run by a guy named Jay Turner and then by Bill Sherman. I was only out there a few times, mostly to see someone I was familiar with from The Cellar or The Cup. There's a song Jay Turner wrote about The Ballad Man that I still hear people do today some 40 years later. That's pretty high praise for a small place on Pearl Street in La Jolla. Forty years — that's almost a folk song. The Ballad Man closed its doors at some point in the early '60s.

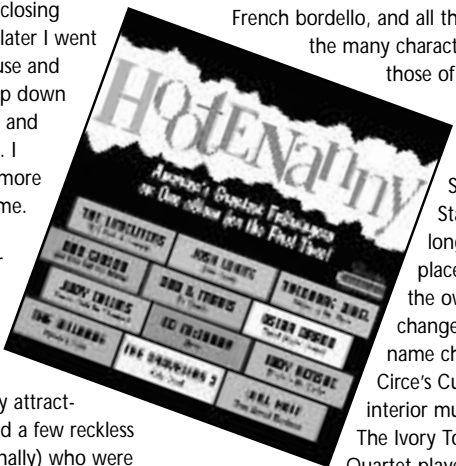
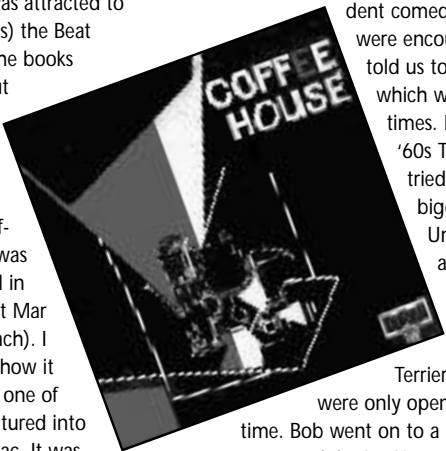
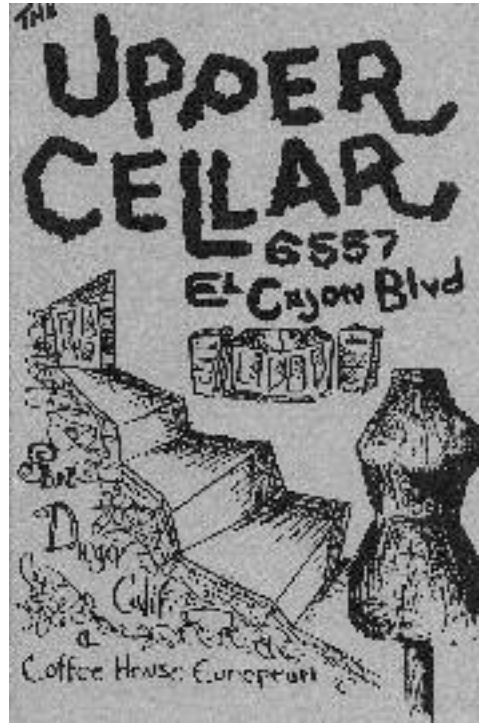
There were other coffee houses in those early years too. A place called The Voodoo Man in La Mesa was open for a short time, but I never went there. There were also a couple of places — I think three different ones — with the same name: La Bohème, however none of them lasted very long.

This was a time when folk acts moved into the restaurants and bars for the first time (when folk became pop for a while) and clubs like The Mantiki and others featured "striped shirt trios." Some of the performers who were working in San Diego coffee houses

during those early years, along with Fred Gerlach and Hadley Bachelder, included Ed Ellison, John Lee, Pattie Hodges, John Read, Eric Hord, Hoyt Axton, the John B. Trio, the Wee Three Trio, Bill Sherman, Judy Henske, and Jay Turner. I'm leaving a lot of people out, but I can't put names to the faces. I was starting to make trips to to L.A. then to places like The Unicorn and The Ash Grove and places in between like The Golden Bear in Huntington Beach and The Prison of Socrates in Newport Beach.

It was an interesting time, more or less disappearing for a year or two during the early '60s, and then making a comeback in the mid to late '60s with places like The Heritage, The End, and The Land of Odin, which I'll talk about later.

Recordially,
Lou Curtiss



Upper Cellar exterior



Interior of Upper Cellar



Lou & Virginia Curtiss

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Tristan Prettyman: Not Just Another Pretty Face

by John Philip Wylie

Six years ago, she could barely play a guitar. Prior to the spring of 2002, only a small circle of friends had ever heard her perform. And yet in March and again this month Del Mar's Tristan Prettyman found herself on a national tour, opening for critically acclaimed singer/songwriter Jason Mraz. Her meteoric rise is as baffling to the 21-year old Prettyman as it is to a growing number of veteran local musicians who would love to be in her shoes.



Prettyman with Jason Mraz

"I just picked up a guitar six years ago and kept at it," Prettyman said nonchalantly prior to performing before an enthusiastic Twiggs audience in early November. "Sometimes I feel like I don't deserve [all this attention] and that I haven't earned it, but at other times I feel like I just have to take off and run with it. I am my own biggest critic. I often feel like I am not ready for this. I was hoping something like this would happen eventually, but I had no idea it would happen so soon."

Prettyman was recently offered something that many coffeehouse musicians spend years striving for: a recording contract. But after conferring with her manager, she elected to turn it down.

"I play music just to play music," she explained. "I write for myself, not for the *Billboard* charts or for breakthrough hits. My favorite artists were never on the radio. When it comes down to it, music is for the artist and for the fans. If you are really touching people, that is reason enough to do it. If you have a fan base and can book your own shows, you really don't need a recording label." Prettyman fears that her style may be compromised once she is under contract, so she has so far resisted all of the overtures made to her.

Her thinking may fly in the face of conventional wisdom, but that doesn't concern her. Music is one of her passions and something that is uniquely her own. Surfing however, was her first love.

A regular at Pipes and Swami's for more than a dozen years, Prettyman took to the waves at the age of eight. Surfing was a way of life for the Prettyman family. By the time she had emerged from Torrey Pines High School three years ago, Prettyman was an accomplished surfer as well as a model for Roxy Surf Wear. Ironically, it was surfing that launched her musical career. Her first attempt at recording, a song called "Anything at All," ended up on the critically acclaimed surf film *Shelter*. It turned out to be a life-changing event. While she

channels a more of her energy into songwriting and performing these days, she continues to surf several times a week.

"I write a lot of songs in the water, but unfortunately I forget most of them," she quipped. "[The ocean] is a place where I can go and clear my head and be away from everything. A lot of ideas come to me there, but it is also a place where I relieve my stress and get calm. I feel fortunate to be able to come home and go surfing and then go on the road and play music."

The inner calm that she gains through surfing carries over when she is performing on stage.

"There is a grace about her that you usually don't find in folks her age," explained singer/songwriter Jeff Berkley of Berkley Hart. "She has what I would call an old soul. While she is very young, there is something about her that seems very experienced and aged. She also has a lot of intense energy."

That energy and poise was on display at her recent Twiggs performance as well as on her *Love EP* CD.

More than a demo, but not a highly polished recording according to Prettyman, she calls it, "a sketch of some of my songs so that people can hear them." Recorded in two weekends, the songs on the *Love EP* were recorded in three takes each with Prettyman accompanying herself on the guitar and drums and piano added later.

She sees her music as a work in progress and her style as one that is still developing.



"It is hard to develop an individual style. I tend to be easily influenced, so that can be a problem. It has helped to come back to where I was by listening to my own recordings and then trying to recreate that same raw sound."

Songwriting, like many things in Prettyman's life, seems to come naturally.

"The songs tend to come when they come. I don't sit down and say okay, I have to produce a song. They come regardless of whether I am happy or sad. I do most of it either

late at night or when I wake up first thing in the morning. My songs are about moments in my everyday life."

With a voice somewhat reminiscent of Jewel and lyrics that often ooze emotion and speak of heart ache and longing, it is easy to see how Prettyman, at the tender age of 21, has already established a loyal following. And this could be just the tip of the iceberg.

Tristan Prettyman performs at Kelly's Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., on December 19.

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Harmonija Delivers Heavenly Harmonies

by Paul Hormick

The music of Bulgaria is impossible to describe; to compare it to anything familiar could not do it justice. In reviewing *Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares*, a CD of the Bulgarian Women's Choir, the BBC simply said, "This is the most beautiful music in the world." And for the past eight years the all-female quartet Harmonija has brought the same searing, sublime harmonies and seductively complex rhythms of Bulgaria, along with other offerings from Eastern Europe, to the stages and coffeehouses of San Diego.



Harmonija

"I feel high when I sing this music," says Mary Ann Downs, one of the sopranos of the group. "The harmonies and rhythms, that's what moves me. It's marvelous to sing." Downs fell in love with Bulgarian music while she was performing with a Slavic chorus in Boston and joined the Bulgarian chorus, Malaika, when she moved to San Diego.

When two of its members moved away and Malaika disbanded, Downs got together with neighbor Sue McGuire and Marie Hayes, a fan of Malaika, and formed Harmonija. Two years later Sanna Rosengren joined the ensemble. Rosengren says that after all this time the band has gelled and it is now effortless to sing the difficult harmonies and rhythms.

Rosengren, a trained musician from Sweden who has played Brazilian and other music, explains the unique beauty of the Bulgarian music. "Bulgaria fell under the Ottoman Empire, but they still used the western scale," she says. The western scale is the *do re mi* that we have all grown up with. This mixture of East and West produced something, "different enough but not impossible to understand," she says.

"It's a challenge to sing," says McGuire, who has a degree in musical engineering. Some of the harmonies rely on what she calls "crunch notes, seconds that don't resolve." She also says that the method of singing differs from that found in most music familiar to us. Instead of using the chest as the resonator, typically the way an opera singer gains projection and volume, the source of resonance is the head. This gives a different timbre to the voice, as well as a penetrating projection.

The rhythms are also unfamiliar to western ears. Some of the songs are in rhythms of $\frac{7}{4}$, $\frac{5}{4}$, or even $\frac{11}{4}$, requiring the singers to count 1-2-3-1-2-1-2, or 1-2-1-2-1-2-3-1-2-1-2 to themselves as they perform. Hayes says, "It took me an entire year to learn the count for $\frac{7}{4}$."

As none of the women speak Bulgarian, they use a variety of methods to learn their repertoire. They pick up songs from Bulgarian records, recreating not only the difficult harmonies, but the unfamiliar words as well. They also attend workshops given by Bulgarian immigrants and attend the 'Bulgarian Camps' that are held each

year, one in Mendocino and the other in Maryland. Knowing that she wanted to sing this type of music after attending a Bulgarian concert, Hayes describes her initial steps to teach herself, "At first I would sing into a tape recorder while I played CDs of the Bulgarian Women's Choir. I would do it over and over until I memorized the songs," she says. McGuire adds, "Because the music is not in English, our harmonies have to be right on." The women realize that a whole program of eastern European music might be difficult for the average listener. If they are performing at a coffeehouse, fighting the espresso machine, they might mix in some jazz tunes. "We are ambassadors, not purists," explains Rosengren. In a concert setting with a more receptive audience, they will perform more of their Bulgarian material.

Harmonija performs the evening of December 6 at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Hillcrest. Find out more about these women and their wonderful music at www.harmonija.com



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by Robert Woerheide

Until I met Rookie Card, I thought "pop" was a dirty word—right up there with "commercialism" and "target market." But that changed when this San Diego band, fresh from a turbulent, lengthy formation and with demo CD in hand, showed me what pop could really be. Their debut release, *First Day of Class*, is a collection of well thought-out songs delivered with confidence but not presumption.

Rookie Card—consisting of founding member Adam Gimbel (lead singer, rhythm guitarist), Nasrallah Helewa (percussionist), Jason Hee (bassist), and Dylan Martinez (lead guitarist)—is doing everything it can to get noticed these days. And that sticky moniker, pop, is following right along.

"I'm totally fine with that," Gimbel explains. "I think more than anything I write pop songs, and we dress them up different ways: country, indy rock, blues, whatever. I'm geared to write something that's catchy, and I hope that is the main mission of what we do. Pop to me just means a catchy



Rookie Card at the Casbah

song, and we're all about that."

This may be true, but for many of us the term pop still has a bad after-taste. If Rookie Card is pop, then it is pop at its best, pop the way it should be, pop on artistic steroids.

Proof in point: *First Day of Class* is really only a demo, but it has managed to get Rookie Card considerable attention in San Diego, garnering a nomination at the 2003 San Diego Music Awards for Best Local Recording.

Gimbel tells of their surprise at the nomination: "We were shocked. Our CD says right at the top that it's a demo. And not just a demo but a debut demo. To have it nominated for Best Local Recording was just unreal." The four-song demo has been re-released to include seven songs and can be picked up at Lou's Records, M-Theory Music, The Muse, and Off The Record.

What makes Rookie Card remarkable is their energy and conviction, coupled with just the right amount of tongue-in-cheek humor. Whether it's coming up with anagrams for their band name (they're up to 16, including OREO KID CAR and I ADORE ROCK) or lacing their songs with careful sarcasm, these rockers maintain a palpable wit.

This wit is something Gimbel recognizes with reluctance. "[Humor is] a small part of our music, I'd like to think. I'll try to be interesting or clever

can rookies save pop?



outside of San Diego. We're trying to impress some folks and spread the word."

The album, tentatively titled *Near Mint*, will feature 12 tracks and should be released sometime next spring or summer.

If the songs on their debut demo release are any indication, Rookie Card's first official album should definitely get them

noticed. In a remarkably short period of time, they've managed to leap the urdle so many other, more experienced, bands continue to trip over: maintaining a sound all its own, without releasing an album full of tracks so similar to one another they become patently redundant. The only thing redundant about Rookie Card is the satisfying nature of their songs. Like sherbet on a summer day, these guys couldn't have come around at a better time. Just in time to save pop—but no pressure, guys, honest.

... but most happy, fun music I think comes off cheesy. We try to make well thought out, good music that might have something a little clever in the lyrics. We don't want to be a novelty band."

So what do they want? Fame and success? The two seductive tangents of the rock 'n' roll triangle, sex and drugs? Fortunately, they are able to see past such artistic distractions. "If I could snap my fingers and [get us] huge success, that's not really what we want," Gimbel says, "but if we could quit our day jobs and do Rookie Card full time that would be great."

"The problem with trying to be a musician is you gotta have a day job."

We [recently] went on a four-day road trip and just had so much fun, and kept saying it would be so great if we could do this full time."

In the meantime, the band has its sights set on the future. "We're going back into the studio to record an album. We've got enough songs we're happy with to make a record, and still have some left over. We're going to take some time to get our CD out to more people—record labels and press



Rookie Card at M-Theory



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parlor showcase

by Ellen Duplessie

The mysterious Billy Midnight. Who is he? Where did he come from? How come the music this group puts out is so good? And how come I haven't heard more about them?

Okay, even my questions are a bit confused as to whether Billy Midnight is a "he" or a "they." Billy Midnight could be a cool stage name for a solo artist. It is actually the name of this four-member group. I had at least found out that much before I ever heard them play but the rest was, to me, still a mystery.

In a little promo blip in the 2002 Adams Avenue Street Fair program, this band was described as "Pink Floyd meets Gram Parsons." This really sparked my curiosity. I wanted to know more. I wondered why I hadn't heard of them before. The answer was simply that they didn't travel in the same folk-country-rock circles that I did, which basically centered around Java Joe's, Mikey's, and the whole coffee-house scene. Little did I know that they had already won a San Diego Music Award in 2001 in the "Best Roots, Rockabilly, or Swing Band" category, and that Billy Midnight had already been together since 1999.

So, back in September of 2002, I made my way to the DiMille's Stage at the Street Fair just in time to catch their act. I was immediately captivated by their show. Not only were they amazingly talented musicians, but they played some great original music as well. After their performance, I told them that we'd like to do a story on them.

A year passed by since then. I had read a couple of mentions about them in *CityBeat's* "Locals Only," and that was about it. We still hadn't gotten around to doing their story. Then I saw them again this past September on that same stage on Adams Ave. They were even better than before. Billy Midnight was still much of a mystery to me and, like a good detective, I had to investigate. Not only would I get my questions answered, but I knew that this was one group that, in my humble opinion, the whole world should know about. Of course, the *San Diego Troubadour* doesn't quite reach the whole world, but at least we can get the word out to a few more folks.

So finally I was able to sit down last month with the founders of Billy Midnight at Gelato Vera in Mission Hills to solve the mystery. Here is what I found out — first of all, the band was formed by brothers Billy

THE BILLY MIDNIGHT MANGOSTERY



Billy in Fiji



Bobby in Fiji



Billy



Bobby on drums



The Brothers Shaddox



At the Adams Ave. Street Fair



Wild and crazy guys (l to r): Jeremy Cooke, Bobby Shaddox, Billy Shaddox, Ben Cook

parlor showcase



Bobby Shaddox. I also found out that these two guys are very smart. When they stayed for a month in Fiji this past year, the islanders expressed the same thing after hearing Billy playing some of his lead guitar for them. "He's a smart man, a very smart man!" the Fiji folks proclaimed.

"People in our Western culture don't appreciate musicians like that. It's like, if you can play guitar or any instrument really, there's a certain science about it." Billy shared. "Our culture just thinks of it as a nice hobby." Billy has a degree in civil engineering, while Bobby has one in art (graphic design), both from SDSU.

Not only are they smart, but they are also wise. They both have jobs to support their music. They play because they love it and it's a huge part of who they are, but they have realized that enjoying what they do is most important, rather than trying to "make it big."

"Think about all the people that you really enjoy," Bobby enthusiastically shares his words of wisdom. "They weren't out to be stars. It's just that they were good, and people realized it. I think that if you try too hard, it's not going to happen to you. I think that what makes you more famous is if you really like and enjoy what you're doing. Then people will notice that and they'll come see you."

"We had a record deal and we turned it down. It would have been one more voice in the equation that would have really complicated things . . . like someone telling us to play this style or that," adds Billy from his mathematical mindset.

"We talk about music being fun and having a good time, but when it's about money and financial obligations, that's just too stressful. We've always said that as soon as we stopped enjoying it, we'd quit." They both agree.

The boys figure that if you're good, people will eventually find out through word of mouth.

"We don't hype at all," declares Bobby.

"Yeah, we're really bad at promoting ourselves," Billy adds, laughing.

They recently gleaned more wisdom through a bad experience on their last tour. This is where another mystery unfolds, one that has not yet been solved. In April of 2001, the band booked a West Coast tour. Being on a tight budget, they either camped or slept in their van. After a gig one night in Eugene, Oregon, they were invited to stay the night at the home of a guy who lived three doors down from the venue. They accepted the offer.

"At some point during the night I either fell out of bed or got up to go to the bathroom or something, and I fell down. I hit my head really bad and had some hemorrhaging in my brain. It really messed me up. So that was the end of touring for us." Billy remembers.

Bobby interjects, "We had to stop the tour and he had to stay in the hospital for a week. At a certain point we thought he was going to die. We didn't know what was wrong. We thought that maybe he'd had an aneurysm or something.

"Yeah, I cracked my skull."

"I personally think he was hit by someone, because he couldn't have fallen like that. It was really strange. After that, he had to recover at our parents' house for six or seven months."

Since that dark day in 2001, the band has given much thought to their vision, goals, and direction. They've chosen not to tour at this time. Touring was draining, both financially and emotionally, so they've decided to simply stay here in San Diego and just play their great music for all their local fans.

"We really like the Bay Area. For roots rock and Americana-type music, that's the place to be. We'll probably still go up there a couple times a year. San Diego is not a great town for the Americana/country-rock kind of music we play, but there is a scene that we're grateful for. There is an audience, and sometimes it can be small, but there are enthusiastic people out there and we're grateful for that," Bobby shares.

Billy adds, "Adams Avenue Street Fair has been great for us, and we've gained a lot of new fans through that."

Growing up together in a musical family in Dehesa out in East County, they moved to Jamul when they were in high school. The brothers were immersed in music at home. They both learned rhythm guitar, but it seemed like Billy never really differentiated between rhythm and lead when he started playing.

"My dad, the way he plays, has a real Doc Watson style of holding the pick and using his fingers. He combines a lot of melody with rhythm. I grew up with that sound just ingrained, and I naturally emulated that."

Billy continues, "When I got my first electric guitar, I was really into Jimmy Hendrix. I'd sit and listen to him all the time. I wanted to learn how to do that. I never learned how to read music or anything. I just listened and tried to learn things by ear. When I play, I try to tap into that feeling where you're just trying to get something out. It doesn't happen all the time. It's really a magical thing when it happens."

Bobby excelled as a rhythm player and he also learned drums. In addition, he was a natural lead vocalist and front man with stage charisma to spare.

By the time they were 15 or 16, they started playing together in various bands, most of which were rock. Bobby was the front man for their earlier bands, putting on quite a show with influences by such theatrical acts as David Bowie and Queen. In 1999 Billy Midnight was formed, with Bobby taking over on drums and harmony vocals. Billy headed up the band on guitar and lead vocals. Ben Cook, another intelligent member of the band majoring in the academic study of religion at UCSD, joined in on bass. The newest member is Jeremy Cooke, who must be pretty smart as well . . . at least he knew enough to join such a fantastic group! Jeremy was added to play fiddle, lap steel, and "various noisemakers." Their new band took on a whole new direction.

"At first we were more like a straight country-rock thing. The country music was what we grew up with — my dad and my grandpa were these bluegrass picker-country singer/songwriter guys. And then I saw this group — The Band — who mixed rock, country, folk, and blues," Bobby recalls.

He continues, "What stood out for me about The Band was that there was history in their songwriting. They pulled from the roots of American music. And they were really rough around the edges. No one in The Band had a perfect voice. I think for Billy — he kind of found his voice there, because Billy doesn't have a polished Michael Bolton-type voice or anything, but his voice is soulful. Soulful, yet not polished."

"Yeah, The Band was a major influence, along with the Mother Hips." Billy agrees.

So, in time, Billy Midnight evolved from plain country-rock to an eclectic, psychedelic mix of country, blues, and roots-rock.

"Our first CD was basically just a demo to get gigs. We landed all these 3-4 hour gigs and that's where

we really cut our teeth. We did lots of covers because at that time we only had about 10 or 15 originals. We jammed a lot, too," Billy remembers. "I didn't really start writing much until after this band got started."

The boys played around town at local bars and venues, gradually gaining a following. The band graduated to gigs at the Casbah and the Belly Up. Now that they've stopped trying so hard to get out and "make it," everything's just starting to happen for them. For example, instead of trying to get a gig at the Belly Up, this popular venue just called them up out of the blue to book them. They opened there in October for the Bastard Sons of Johnny Cash.

They've released three CDs altogether, the first being the demo called *Live at the Tradewinds*. The next album is their self-titled CD, released in 2001. The third recording is *Live at Earthling*. Billy has recently finished his solo album *Mellow Me*, an acoustic version of some new Fiji-inspired songs. Bobby has his creative projects going as well. He heads up his own group called Bobby Fantasy, which usually includes players from Billy Midnight. He spent quite a bit of time playing with the Stereotypes but has now left them and is joining up with Greg Loacono from the Mother Hips to play in a new band called Sensations. That band will be playing some shows together with Billy Midnight.

The best way to sum up is to start back at the beginning with the words that first intrigued me from the Adams Avenue Street Fair promo blip. This came from their own bio on the billymidnight.com website:

"Their youthful, live energy, tight harmonies, and Billy's raw (often experimental) guitar style has earned them the comparison of 'Pink Floyd meets Gram Parsons.' Listening closely to they boys' sound, one can definitely detect a childhood steeped in California rock, à la the Beach Boys, the Eagles, and the Byrds. Billy Midnight's rootsy, West Coast sound borrows from the past while still pushing ahead in a fresh direction. Our music is something your dad might dig. It's got harmonies and riffs that remind him of the Rolling Stones, but then we'll dive into a noisy wall of sound that he can't relate to and it'll freak him out. He's never listened to the Pavement or Wilco albums that we have."

"The band's latest release is a return to do-it-yourself rock 'n' roll. Everything from the recording to the packaging has been a labor by the boys themselves. The songs range from raw country ballads to progressive songs of space exploration such as 'Mir,' a song Roger McGuinn might have created had he ever collaborated with Yes. Billy Midnight is taking California rock into new territories; it's the sound of the song from the past surrendering to the noise of the future — coyotes howling above the roar of four lanes of traffic en route to field of bermuda grass grown on solid granite beneath a sky of birds dodging jet planes carrying humans to the moon and back."

If that description doesn't get you out to one of their shows, then nothing will. I hope now that you're at least as curious as I was. They say that curiosity killed the cat. But at least the cats surely find some fantastic, amazing things along the way!

Billy Midnight will play Friday, December 5 and Monday, December 15 at the Ould Sod, and on Saturday, December 6, at the California Club with Rookie Card and Bart Davenport. See page 13 for a review of the Billy Midnight CD. Find out more at billymidnight.com and bobbyfantasy.com.



ramblin'

Bluegrass Corner

by Dwight Worden

Here are three key individuals you should know who make bluegrass music happen in San Diego.



Wayne Rice

WAYNE RICE

Wayne produces and hosts KSON's "Bluegrass Special" every Sunday, 10pm-midnight, for which he received IBMA's

Broadcaster of the Year award in 1995. Now entering its twenty-seventh year, Wayne plays the best of bluegrass music, featuring local bands and new material. This year he produced the annual IBMA awards ceremony in Louisville, Kentucky, generally considered to be the "best ever," having served as master of ceremonies in prior years. As an active musician throughout his career, he was a member of Brush Arbor, a country/gospel group that recorded for Capitol records in the early 1970s and was named Vocal Group of the Year by the Academy of Country Music in 1973. As a five-string banjo and guitar player (and he sings, too!) he currently performs with Lighthouse and Grassology, two local bluegrass bands.

Wayne knows absolutely everybody in the bluegrass world and has been a major influence in bringing top national acts to San Diego. He has exceeded many local shows and has generally acted as "Mr. San Diego." They don't call him the Bluegrass Ambassador for nothing! El Cajon even declared a Wayne Rice day in 2001! We are lucky to have him.

MIKE NADOLSON is owner and operator of Tricopolis Records in Lake Elsinore. He has produced many successful local concerts and, for the last two years, has undertaken the production of some key bluegrass festivals, including the Great American Festival in Hesperia and the Temecula Bluegrass Festival. This year, Mike took over production of the annual Julian Bluegrass Festival in September, which had a strong first-year showing with the Ronnie Bowman Committee in a rare San Diego appearance along with perennial favorites Bluegrass Etc. and Silverado, led by Mike on lead guitar and vocals.



Silverado with Dennis Caplinger

Mike and his Tricopolis Records are a constant presence at most festivals West of the Mississippi. The colorful Tricopolis booth carries a stunning collection of bluegrass CDs, guitars, banjos, dobros, and every kind of paraphernalia a bluegrass could want.

Mike says he wants to be the main source for our bluegrass needs and is well on his way to achieving that status. If you need information or supplies, stop by his booth at your next festival visit, or check out his great web page any time: www.tricopolisrecords.com.

MIKE TATAR is president of the San Diego Bluegrass Society and sits on the board of the California Bluegrass Association as San Diego's regional representative. He also hosts a weekly web-based bluegrass radio show, "Bluegrass Central," where you can hear great music and discussions on bluegrass topics. It's on every Sunday, 11am-1pm, and rebroadcast on Wednesdays, noon-2pm. He also plays banjo in Virtual Strangers, one of the area's top performing bands where he takes on the lion's share of lead singing. Look for Virtual Strangers to open at the Rhonda Vincent concert at the La Paloma theater on February 9.



Virtual Strangers

Mike has been a key leader in helping SDBS evolve into a vibrant and active San Diego organization, having organized the first Summergrass Festival last August. His stature in the local bluegrass community is reflected by his being named Chair of the 2004 Summergrass committee by his peers, which under his guidance promises that next year's show will be even better than the first one.

RESOURCES FOR BLUEGRASS MUSICIANS

www.jaybuckey.com offers free stuff you can access and download and sells instructional products. Jay Buckey's Virtual Band products feature bluegrass classics, both instrumental and vocal, which let you play along on your instrument at varying speeds.

www.firebottle.com/flatpik is Steve Kaufman's site, which caters mainly to guitar players. Whatever your instrument, though, consider getting a copy of his *Four-Hour Bluegrass Workout*, a set of CDs that allow you to play along with each song, once at a slow speed and once up to speed. Also included is a music book.



www.homespunta.com is the premier site for instructional videos on every instrument imaginable, some of which feature many bluegrass greats.

www.tricopolisrecords.com, Mike Nadolson's site, offers event calendars, event tickets, CDs, products, and instructional aids.

Now that you have some practice materials, here are a few tips on how to maximize the benefits of your practice, no matter how much, or how little, time you have.

- 1. ESTABLISH A GOAL** for each session and make it modest, i.e., today I am going to learn all the 7th chords in every key; or learn a new song or practice reading music.
- 2. EXERCISES** It's important that you exercise your techniques every session, such as scales and arpeggios.
- 3. FOCUS** Turn off the television and focus on your music—15 minutes of focused practice is better than an hour of noodling in front of the TV.
- 4. METRONOME** Practice with a metronome at least some of the time. Get a loud one so you can hear it over your instrument.
- 5. TAKE IT SLOW!** Practice new material slowly and correctly. While learning, *never* (without reason) go so fast that you make mistakes. Practice doesn't make perfect, it makes permanent! If you practice it wrong, it goes into your muscle memory incorrectly and then you have to unlearn it and relearn it, which is much more difficult.
- 6. SPEED** When learning, occasionally it's okay to play fast deliberately as an exercise to help build speed, but only after you've lodged the piece in your muscle memory slowly and accurately.
- 7. BE PATIENT** As a rule it is good to have long-term goals. If you are a beginning to intermediate player, decide on a five-year goal. Recognize that there is no shortcut. Studies show practice is way more important than talent in determining how good you become.
- 8. HAVE FUN!** Reserve a portion of every practice session for fun: play whatever you like.
- 9. GET OUT AND PLAY!** Whatever your level, try to get out and play with others. It's fun and instructive. Whatever you can play in your living room at the A level will probably drop to B or lower until you get the hang of playing with others! Next month I'll have more info and tips for you bluegrassers out there!

Radio Daze

STORIES CULLED FROM THIS DEEJAY'S 30+ YEARS IN THE BIZ

by Jim McInnes

Mixed Media (part two)

When I (my future wife, Sandi, and I) chatted for a couple of hours about whatever ... including my passion for playing basketball 365 days a year. Finally, I had to go. As I reached the front door of my friend's house, Sandi shoved a note into my jacket pocket and said goodbye.

When I got into my car I read the note. "Give me a call. Let's play basketball." The next day I called her and we met at the playground near her house in P.B. She looked *so hot* in her sweats! I could tell right away that ... this woman had never even seen a basketball!

After crushing Sandi in 36 consecutive games of "Horse," we went to her bayside condo and watched the sun glistening on the water. When it was time for me to leave I asked her if I could kiss her. She kissed me above and beyond all my expectations. I won't go into details. Over the next few months, Sandi and I would hook up whenever and wherever we could, usually at my low-rent hovel in P.B. ... or in her Jeep at the top of Mt. Soledad ... or in her Jeep in the KGB parking lot ... or in her Jeep in the desert ... or on top of her Jeep....

In July of 1981, Sandi divorced her radio deejay husband and moved in with her new radio deejay boyfriend, even though *her employer* (the original 106.5 KPRI) had explicitly told her that she *could not date Jim McInnes!* (Huh?) So we had separate phone lines after she moved in ... and we never talked about our respective jobs when we were together. That way we couldn't be accused of sharing "trade secrets"!

A couple of months later, I received a call from a guy who wanted to interview me for his tiny radio fanzine, *Skedge* (a publication whose circulation made this paper



Jim McInnes

seem like *USA Today!*). Two days later he and I met at The Loading Zone, a convenient watering-hole. We had been amiably chatting for almost an hour when Sandi walked in and joined us at our table. I (stupidly) introduced her as my girlfriend, the Music Director and Assistant Program Director at (the original) KPRI 106.5 (The Enemy!).

"Who's ever heard of *Skedge?*" I chuckled as Sandi and I drove home. "I hope he sends me a copy, 'cuz I don't know where to find one."

A few weeks later came the new *Skedge*. There I was ... in pictures and in words ... only it was no longer an interview with me, it was an interview with WE!

The day after the issue came out, Sandi was called to the (original) KPRI 106.5 general manager's office. When she walked into his office, he was holding up, at eye level, a copy of the brand new issue of *Skedge*.

She spent the next 18 months looking for work in the business she loved.



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RANTHOUSE

GUS BIDS ADIEU

by Gus T. Williker

This is the end, my friend the ... mmm...naw.

Hit the road me, and don't I come back ... uh ... er ...nooo...

So long, farewell, alf ... alveeter ... alfee ... ohh fergit it.

Saying goodbye ain't easy, but it can git cheesy, so I decided to make it short 'n' sweet like a minigoat's teet.

I'm taking my retirement from the *Troubadour*. My demanding career as a superpinup (www.WhiteHotTrash.com) combined with my hugely successful hat biz (www.ClunkerStore.com) have sucked up all my time. I thought 'bout trying to write a moving, masterful farewell, but a "Best Of" * seemed like the right way to sum up my turn at the *Troub* (okay, okay, it's also pretty much a cut 'n' paste job...so yeah, I'm a lazy bastard, too).

My column began in October 2001, and carried the moniker "Gus Knows Best." It was quickly changed to "Local Yokels," and finally finished up as "RantHouse, The Local Music Scene (Well, Mostly)." Here's sum highlights...

Dec. 2001 – Vol. 1, No. 3 – Local Yokels

Yes, I have the talent, but you have a receiver, and you should feel good 'bout the part you play each week: turnin' yer knob.

March 2002 – Vol. 1 No. 6 – Local Yokels

Oh sure, when the deadline dings at the door, plenty o' writers have no problem fillin' thar columns wit' watered down junk, like wine coolers in a canteen.

Aug. 2002 – Vol. 1 No. 11 – Local Yokels

Instead o' whinin' like a billionaire pop star who lost his touch (cept on his crotch, which has bin tugged more times than the Queen Mary), I decided to take the criticism to heart and make sum changes.

Dec. 2002 – Vol. 2 No. 2 – Local Yokels

It's time fer every patchwork publication 'n' media halfwit to come out with thar "Best of" lists fer 2002. It's a buncha generic crap like "Best Jazz Band" or the "50 Most Beautiful People," and I fer one ain't gonna play that lame game. (Donald Rumsfeld? I reckon it's beautiful to blow folks up? Whut ever happened to big-boobed gals fer world peace?!)

Jan. 2003 – Vol. 2 No. 4 – Local Yokels

Are you a regular reader who can't make it thru the month without *Metamucil* and *MY* column? Or, could ya take it or leave it like a free can Koozie from K-mart?

March 2003 – Vol. 2 No. 6 – Local Yokels

"Free Bird" ain't just fer Skynard no more. Yer favorit double-wide deejay has busted loose like a rabid goose and dropped his last gig like seagull doo on a day-tripper from Des Moines.

June 2003 – Vol. 2 No. 9 – RantHouse

Hey, 94.9 ... we're all really proud that yer deejays don't talk over the music, but howz about shutting up that whiney promo guy, eh? I'd rather hear Harvey Fierstein sing "Frère Jacques" over an intro than yer cooler-than-thou craptalk.



Our man fer all seasons, Gus Williker

Aug. 2003 – Vol. 2 No. 11 – RantHouse
You see, deejays can't just say swag, which is bad enough. NOPE, they have to pronounce it 'schwag,' as if those crappy CD singles and Incubus posters are some kind of pirate's booty.

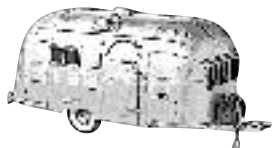
Nov. 2003 – Vol. 3 No. 2 – RantHouse
Everybody Hurts when they're exposed to R.E.M.'s music. It's the End of the World as We Know It? No, but I am worried 'bout losing my lunch, let alone my religion.

Hope ya got at least one giggle out of my column over the last couple years. Thanks fer readin'!

xoxo,
Gus

*Lazy Basturd Part II. The "Best Of" was culled from whatever issues I could dig out of my second-level storage room minutes before writin' this column and does not reflect the totality of my genius.

P.S. I'll be a little hurt if I don't git any e-mails, or at least one letter to the editor, so write ... dang you ... gus@whitehottrash.com



Hosing Down

by José Sinatra

One of the more provocative diversions I concocted during my street theater years (1972-present) took place in this city's most "happening" country western bar, in the wake of the faddish *Urban Cowboy* film. If you're over 25 or so, you may recall those disturbing few years when America found in country music a viable alternative to disco and New Wave and again started to lose its collective mind (once again confusing style with substance). Line dancing (to me as visually repulsive as the concurrent robotic/aerobic styles) was becoming quite the rage, but of equal importance to well-executed dance steps was the crisp "manliness" of the accepted uniform. Yup, them was the days when the gals was purdy and the dudes thunk, drank, even talked like Texans — 'least 'til closin' tam. Some of the most gawdawful commercial country crap was hungrily gobbled up in them days, and the aftertaste even now occasionally burps up like a lonely, jilted mechanical bull.

Even after the craze dried up, most guys kept their Stetsons hanging some place in their living rooms for years, before eventually storing them away in the closet or passing them on to their kids on Halloween. They were rarely just tossed out, serving as valued reminders of happy times when the wearer was a self-assured sombitch, a genuine, high-falutin' party dawg.

Oh, Lord. Then came Hip Hop. But that sad story will not concern us today.

Anyhow, I divulged my plan to some friends and had little trouble

accepting their monetary bets that I wouldn't carry it out.

I won a hundred bucks that night.

I would walk into that country Mecca down on Midway Drive, staying long enough to finish a pitcher of Budweiser, dressed up as Clint Eastwood's man-with-no-name character: battered cowboy hat, serape (!), cheroot, stubble, the works. I was even able to borrow a pair of cowboy boots from Bruce, a retarded guy down the street.

My first bit of trouble was with the doorman (named Yancy or Nancy, I think) who demanded that I take the big silver cap gun out of its holster and leave it back in my car. I gave him my practiced squint and hoarsely whispered, "Yeah . . ." still feeling pretty secure with that can of mace I always had in my back pocket.

I went into the club. No sooner had I settled down in the one available booth in a corner than a pretty waitress appeared, politely asking me to take my feet off the table. When she returned with my frosty mug and pitcher, I paid and tipped her. But under the brim of my hat I could only see her delicious thighs for a remarkable amount of time: she hadn't left. I raised my orbs of steel to encounter a smile that threatened to melt my prairie oysters. "Are you for real?" she asked sweetly.

"Yeah. . . . Got a spittoon here, ma'am?"

The next 20 minutes were thrilling, as far as I was concerned. I feigned indifference to the fact that I, a mysterious loner, was becoming the talk of the room. Every lady wanted me alone, (oh, yeah), and all the guys wanted me dead but seemed baffled trying to figure out why and



Photo: Toots von Weston

The debonair Mr. Sinatra

how. Was I just a misfit (duh) or was I, in some rude way, showing disrespect toward their recreational lifestyle?

The beer was delicious. The dance floor magically parted when I made my exit.

The only further words spoken to me were from the two malcontents who followed me out and tried to grab me as I unlocked the driver's door to my car. They are words as fresh in my ears today as they were when originally screamed so long ago:

"You mother! You mother! Dang! You mother!" the gender-confused apes cried as they rolled around the parking lot pavement, clutching their faces as I drove off into another San Diego sunset. I'd get a new can of tear gas in the morning.

And I'd use the hundred bucks to buy something I'd never had before: my own pair of brand-new cowboy boots.

They never go out of style.

Have a merry one and a happy one, folks. I'll see you next year, God willing.



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the highway's song

Eliza Gilkyson: A Warm Presence on a Chilly Evening

by Ellen Duplessie

What a lucky lady I am! I got to go see Eliza Gilkyson to hear some of the best music I've ever heard. And to catch her show in the warm and intimate setting of Jimmy Duke's home was a privilege indeed! I knew little about her, other than having heard her name mentioned in the same circles with Kim Richey, who is a definite favorite of mine. To think that I almost didn't make it out that night makes me feel extra thankful that I did.

Now living in Austin, folk singer extraordinaire Eliza comes from a long family line of folk singers. Her stories usually preface her songs, which are sung with a slight cynicism gathered from the well-traveled roads of life. But included also is an idealism that she has seemingly not allowed to be trampled under along

the way. Her poetic and personal lyrics expose her gift as a songwriter, along with a sound that reminds me of a mixture of Patty Griffin, Lucinda Williams, and Casey Chambers, though she's totally unique. Unique, yet so familiar.

Eliza tells how her father moved the family to Hollywood when she was very young. He was a folk singer and was one of the few to bridge the gap from folk song to commercial success. But this accomplishment was not looked upon fondly by his folkie peers. In fact, she said that they really didn't like him for that and were quite angry about it. One of his many songs is the well known and loved by all, "Bare Necessities"...yes, the theme song from the classic Disney movie *The Jungle Book*.

His daughter's songs are even better. They are so good that they are addicting. I bought one CD from



Photo: Ellen Duplessie

her that night. I feel bad about the fact that after I tell my friends about her or let them listen, I can't even lend it to them because I'm hooked! I just can't get her songs out of my head. To live one week without that one CD would be more of a sacrifice than I am willing to make. Okay, I'm selfish...but at least I want to make sure that you know about Eliza Gilkyson, so that you can enjoy her music as well.

I am now a hopeless fan for life. I can't wait for my next chance to see her again. And I hope that you will get to see her too!

Lestats Adds Live Taping of Local TV Show to Diverse Schedule

by Phil Harmonic

San Diego has never had as many venues for musical talent as it does today. With the number of clubs and coffeehouses increasing, you can also add a number of spaces that promoters are leasing, such as house concerts, halls, and community centers. But how many of these actually suit the needs of the musician?

One coffeehouse has risen to the forefront as a great place to perform. Lestats on Adams Avenue near Felton Street, which is also open 24 hours, has constantly improved in ambience, lighting, seating, and sound.

Owner John Hustler is the man responsible for making available this wonderful space. His involvement and backing, along with the vital contribution of sound man, Louie Brazier, has turned Lestats into a first-rate concert hall. Brazier's dedication, working countless hours to give the musicians the best sound possible, has been key in making this one of the best small music venues in San Diego.

Lestats has begun hosting a live television show every Wednesday called *San Diego's Finest*, which features local music talent. Musician-songwriter Delmus Jeffrey from Sing on the Web.com, a co-sponsor along with Lestats, is the man behind these shows, the first of which was taped on November 12. Jeffrey and Kelley Buhles videotaped the entire event, which was hosted by local musician Jenn Grinels and Lestats barista Troy Garland and included excellent performances by Gregory Page, Robin Henkel, Anya Marina, and the Jenn Grinels Band.

Gregory Page, a master songwriter who plays old vintage acoustic guitars, recreates an authenticity reminiscent of 1930s' jazz songs. He was joined on stage by violinist Floyd Fronius who offered traces of Joe Venuti with a style that blended very well with Page's tunes. Co-host Grinels and her top-notch



Photo: Ken Johnson
Jenn Grinels, Troy Garland, and Gregory Page

trio followed with tight originals that showcased her incredible voice. I especially liked the song "God Bless the Pretty People," which almost became the theme song for a reality TV show called *Rich Girls*. At times Grinels' voice was reminiscent of the group Heart, but her Peggy Lee style on the song "Friction" demonstrated her diversity and talent.

Performing third was Robin Henkel, a powerhouse of a musician whose drug of choice is the blues. A virtuoso guitarist and innovator, he is what the old jazz musicians would call "a cat," man! Outside of performing, he teaches music and offers "rhythm clinics" to his students who learn concepts and how different instruments work together. Annie Dru joined Robin for a clever, racy original song by Dru that set up the last performer, one of the queens of racyism: Anya Marina. Marina's wistful vocal style is smooth and easy to listen to and was welcome to my ears, especially as the evening wound down. Marina, a multitasking persona, writes, sings, and plays guitar, but what commands the attention of her audience the most is her banter between songs and her masterful story-telling ability. She is one comedian who is very funny and entertaining.

This first show was highlighted by an impressive roster of talent deserving of being on television. It will be interesting to see whether the final edited version captures an essence that grabs you and causes you to say, "I really like that show" in addition to determining the show's success. *San Diego's Finest* is taped live every Wednesday evening at Lestats.



Old Farts Don't Fizzle

by Philippe Navidad

What separates the Classic Rock Allstars from so many other touring R&R revival shows is its similarity to a real Revival—emotions are soaring, flowing freely from their healthy, happy pores.



l to r: Spencer Davis, J.J. Breeze, Dennis Noda

The enthusiasm on stage is real. The vocals are inspiring and passionate, the fullness of the arrangements amazing for so small a group, the musicianship masterful and tight as a spandexed rear end.

The Allstars recently ignited the stage at Sycuan, and the happy pilgrims in attendance were gifted with one of the most surprising, superb concerts of the year.

The core of the group (veterans who've been together now for 12 years) consists of Jerry Corbetta (Sugar Loaf, the Four Seasons) on keyboards, Dennis Pinera (Blues Image, Iron Butterfly) on guitar, Dennis Noda (Cannibal and

the Headhunters) on bass, and Peter Rivera (Rare Earth) on drums. All of these ageless masters shared vocal chores, often even improving on their original renditions of seminal hymns like "Green-Eyed Lady," "Land of 1,000 Dances," "I'm Losing You," and the transcendent "Tobacco Road."

Luckily, the local show also included the double-barreled blast of occasional adjuncts Spencer Davis (the Man!) and J.J. Breeze (the Box Tops). The sextet created rocking symphonies of several classics ("I'm a Man," "The Letter," "Gimme Some Lovin'," "I Just Want to Celebrate") that may never receive finer readings.



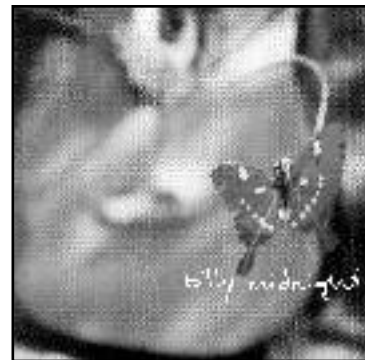
l to r: Spencer Davis, Dennis Pinera, J.J. Breeze

Photos: Bill Richardson



Spencer Davis

Breeze (a.k.a. Jason Mershon) will be taking an extended break from the group to focus on his musical, *Heaven Rocks*, while the others remain perpetually on tour. Your soul will thank you for tracking them down and treating it to the Classics.



Various Artists

Aspasia Aid

by Phil Harmonic

Here is one CD that everyone should own. For all of you that received a free one, I suggest that you go buy another one or two to send to someone you know. There are many reasons for doing this. One is to help Aspasia acquire the money needed for her operation, which of course is why this CD was compiled in the first place. The second reason is to expose the incredible local talent to other parts of the country. The all-star line up includes Lisa Sanders, Jason Mraz, Gregory Page, Steve Paltz, Tom Brosseau, Lindsay and Anna Troy, Carlos Olmeda, Dead rock West, Patrick Dennis, Atom Orr, Berkley Hart, Angela Correa, and Bushwalla.

Most of the recording and production was done by Gregory Page on Ben Pan Recordings except for Jason Mraz's "Most Unusual," Bushwalla's "White Girl in a Soul Train Line," and a version of "When You Wish Upon a Star," which were all recorded and produced by Peter Brentnall. The Truckee Brothers (Patrick Dennis and Atom Orr/Christopher Hoffee) were responsible for recording and producing their individual efforts in "Toro Toro" (Dennis) and "Smoke Machines" (Hoffee) as was Angela Correa on her "South Sea Juan." Add Page's handling of Lisa Sander's "Crazy for You" and another by Mraz "On Love in Sadness," Poltz's "Sex You Up," and "My, My, My," written by Jeff Berkley, Calman Hart and (a not-credited) Dave Howard.

Because of the stellar list of performers, there may be a time in the near future when this collector's item may not be available. To order the CD on line, go to www.lousrecords.com/order:HTML. I know that Aspasia is incredibly grateful to those who have contributed and to you for purchasing her CD.

J. Turtle Turns

by Phil Harmonic

J. Turtle, formerly of Jason and Jane, has a newly recorded solo demo CD, titled *Turns*, containing five formidable songs that he wrote, produced, mixed, and recorded, except for "A Sonnet in Lieu of a Special Occasion" by Brian Hurley, who wrote the lyrics. And I must say that Turtle did an excellent job of recording and producing these tunes. He adds various percussion, instrumentation, and vocal backgrounds to create a complete package with a high quality professionalism. His capabilities and technical knowledge enable him to enhance each song with nuance and dynamics layered on top of catchy melodies and intelligent lyrics.

Jason (J. Turtle) grew up in northern California and was trained on the piano from the time he was five years old through high school. His high school a capella choir experience helped develop his vocal abilities and by his senior year he took up the acoustic guitar. He began writing songs in community college and, while attending the SDSU School of Music for four years, he was starting to play local coffeehouses. The positive feedback he received encouraged him and in 2000 he formed a duo with his friend Jane, called Jason and Jane, which lasted until February 2003. The following months after breakup were filled with intense songwriting. *Turns* is the result. "Day Five's" melody bounces through its lovelorn message. "Naked Hands" is a haunting ballad with a chordal progression and walk-down melody that hints at an influence of Gregory Page. J. Turtle is definitely a new name to add to the long list of talent spilling over the brim of this cup of San Diego mocha.

Abbie Huxley Pop [R.E.D.]

by Frederick Leonard

This is a different CD. Imagine Freddie Mercury (my left eyebrow raises) buried in one of his tongue-and-cheek, campy show tune melodies — only on a coffeehouse open-mic-night guitar. This is what opens the CD with a track called "Laughing Eyes." It's hauntingly weird and trippy. It's even a little uneasy. I even find myself a little shaken as soon as it's over. Resolve is then established on the second tune, "For Me," which is more of a keyboard Oasis/Verve take and still kinda trippy but a little more tangible on pop terms. And I feel somewhat better.

Then we're back to the Freddie thing on song three, titled "Humble Pie," and my eyebrow raises itself again. And wouldn't ya knowit, according to a seeming logic, track four of Pop [R.E.D.] resumes a more palatable soundscape. Only this time it resonates hauntingly more so like the Beatles' "Because."

Now, this work bears some brilliant musical ideas. And Abbie can definitely sing very "chops" vocal parts, stunning in some cases. There are gorgeous arrangements and plenty of unique musical situations. But there's another element.

This is the kind of recording that challenges the listener with its own unorthodox musical behavior. With no expectations for the norm, it contains something familiar while also bearing the unfamiliar. In some cases while exploring a variety of influences, he wears them proudly within the arrangements. On the other hand there is something that demonstrates an affection for a retro sort of show tune quality here, and it seems to pop up consistently as a recurring theme.

And it's from Nashville, no less.

Annie Bethancourt The Garage Sessions

by Frederick Leonard

This debut solo effort by Annie Bethancourt features 13 tunes rendered, with a few exceptions, on one guitar and one sweet voice. The cover of this CD shows her jamming in front of an auto garage, open-mic style. *The Garage Sessions* was produced by her father and partially influenced artistically by her mom, this humble production boasts no pretensions.

I'll get my standard quota of suspicion over with first. On several tracks you can hear the influences of Joni, Alanis, and Jewel's too-many-syllables, rocking firmly on her sleeve. But I don't wanna talk about that. Why? Because this humbly recorded demo-esque CD has a couple of serious "hits" on it in raw form — the truest test of a great song, which exceed any of my modest criticisms.

"My Beloved" is a beautifully written ballad that's free of influences and truly her. Lyrically speaking, she sings so sweetly a universal message, transmitted in a gorgeous time-transcending melody, that seems to swirl through its pretty changes. And her talent shines through like a ray of hope.

"Lemonade Iced Tea" touches on a classic theme, while the lyrics are the kind that could be spoken either to her lover, or to God. She does a wonderful job here, balancing interesting metaphors with raw images of her realism. She offers admissions and ponders the most challenging of all questions. (you'll have to listen for yourself...). She's young but is thinking like a matured woman.

"En Cuanto a Mi" testifies that anything sung in Spanish is beautiful. This is by far my favorite track for its inherent beauty alone. It sounds like another hit to me. Although it's in Spanish, I would bet that one could probably sing along with it, anyway. And, once again, Annie is talking about bigger things in simpler terms . . . sacrifices, waiting, dedication. Siempre.

Beware of hidden tracks.

Billy Midnight

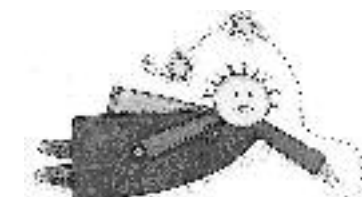
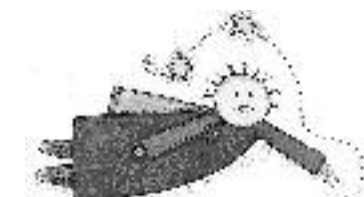
by Phil Harmonic

This 13-song CD has an added surprise track that reinforced a feeling I had prior to hearing it — I had a flash of a country Pink Floyd with Gram Parsons and Roger McGuinn. There is a fusion of something here at any rate. A band that is traditional and underground at the same time. A true dichotomy that bleeds itself into the songs, both lyrically and musically.

This stellar band, comprised of the Shaddox brothers, Billy (guitar and vocal) and Bobby (drums, vocals), Ben Cook (bass), and Jeremy Cooke (fiddle, lap steel), can deliver with a high intensity kickback energy that ignites and amps the voltage of any soul to more inspirational, thought-provoking soundscapes.

In "Golden Coast," writer Billy Shaddox states, "Somewhere it seems I lost my dreams or it might be that they were all taken away." "Long Time Lady," which to me is a metaphor for Mother Earth, is a captivating piece. "Old Saloon" talks of the many gigs where you are "payin' your dues." Billy Midnight's sound runs the gamut of emotions, from the intoxicating "Rancho Ghost Town" to an insightful song about space station *Mir*. "Green and Blue" is a highly reflective, hypnotic dream-like piece. Every song on this CD is superb, but what is truly notable are the exceptional harmonies of the Shaddox brothers. Their cohesive blend and matching tones evoke the likes of the Everly brothers or the Louvin brothers. Flawless arrangements, excellent lyrical phrasing, and musicianship of the highest quality breed this charismatic sound. The last two tracks, "Home" and the surprise track have a driving beat that becomes magnetic and infectious. I really liked all 14 songs well enough to put it in my car, along with the Wallflowers' *Bringing Down the Horse*. I have a habit of listening to just one CD for weeks. so when I say I'll put it in my car, it's got to be pretty special.

See cover story on Billy Midnight in this month's issue, pages 8-9. Billy Midnight plays the California Club on Saturday, December 6. See calendar, p. 14.



the local seen

DECEMBER CALENDAR

tuesday • 2

Virtual Strangers, SD North County Bluegrass/Folk Club, Round Table Pizza, 1161 E. Washington, Escondido, 7pm.
Earl Thomas, Seville Auditorium, SD City College. Call for info.

wednesday • 3

Sue Palmer Supper Club w/ Deejha Marie & Sharon Shufelt, Caffe Calabria, 3933 30th St., 6pm.
Deborah Liv Johnson, Christ Lutheran Church, 4761 Cass St., P.B., 7pm.
Hot Club of Cowtown, Casbah, 8:30pm.
North Star Sessions/Kevin Tinkle/Madafacts/Pariah, Lestats, 8:30pm.
J.J. Slyde Pro Blues Jam, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 8:30 pm.

thursday • 4

Eleanor England, Prioli Bistro, Solana Beach. Info: 1-800/206-4258.
Stand Up for Kids Benefit w/ Sven-Erik Seaholm Band/Gandhi Method/The Cat Mary/Vertibird/HM75/Acoustic Funk Society/Peter Bolland/Danielle Lo Presti/Carol Ames/Dave Howard/Lisa Sanders, Humphreys Backstage Lounge, Shelter Island, 7pm.
Charlie Daniels/Kelly Bowlin Band, Sycuan Casino, 8pm.
A.J. Croce/Steve Poltz, Croce's, 8pm.
Meghan La Roque/Gentle John/Josiah/Anna Troy, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

friday • 5

John Bosley, Golden Goose, 10001 Main Ave., Lakeside, 7:30pm.
The Cat Mary, 101 Artists Colony, Encinitas, 7:30pm.
Deejha Marie & Pieces CD Release w/Sue Palmer, Dizzy's, 8pm.
Pete Thurston/Chris Carpenter/The Inside/Snow on Roses/Katie Strand, Twiggs, 8:30pm.
Vertibird, Kelly's Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm.
Tod Steadman, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa, 9pm.
Robin Henkel, Lestats, 9pm.
Billy Midnight, Ould Sod, 9pm.

saturday • 6

Willie Nelson, 4th & B. Call for info.
Boys Choir of Harlem, Ca. Ctr. for the Arts, Escondido. Call for info.
Jim Earp, Wynola Pizza Express, 4355 Hwy 78, Wynola, 6pm.
Not Quite Open Mic Hootenanny, San Dieguito United Methodist Church, 170 Calle Magdalena, Encinitas, 7:30pm. Info: 858/566-4040.
Harmonija, Mtg. House, 1st Unitarian Church, 4190 Front St., 7:30pm.
Tom Brosseau/Gregory Page (American Folk Singers), Millies by the Bay, Pacific Beach, 8pm. Info: 858/273-1880.
Collin Elliott/Dave Easton/Randi Driscoll, Twiggs, 8:30pm.
Kova & Dehra Dun, Lestats, 9pm.
Robin Henkel, Patrick's, Poway, 9pm.
Jake, Kelly's Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm.
Flying Putos (ex-Beat Farmers), Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm.
Billy Midnight/Rookie Card/Bart Davenport/Two Pump Chump, California Club, 5522 El Cajon Blvd., 9:15pm.

sunday • 7

Tom Brosseau/Gregory Page, KSDT, UCSD, 10pm-midnight. Info: ksdradio.org.

tuesday • 9

Gospel Overdrive, SD Bluegrass Society Mtg., Fuddrucker's, La Mesa, 7pm.
Hot Club of Cowtown, Dark Thirty Productions, Lakeside, 7:30pm. Reservations: 619/443-9622.

wednesday • 10

Sue Palmer Supper Club w/ Deejha Marie & Sharon Shufelt, Caffe Calabria, 3933 30th St., 6pm.
Saba/Mike Flynn/Soothsayers/Katie Strand, Lestats, 8:30pm.

thursday • 11

Meghan La Roque/Eddie Anthony/Jamie Crawford/Sara Bancroft, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

friday • 12

Robin Henkel, Coyote Bar & Grill, Carlsbad, 6:30pm.
Joe Marillo/Gary Lefebvre, Dizzy's, 8pm.
Autumn/Teflon/Matthew Foster/Jack the Original/Leigh Taylor Band, Twiggs, 8:30pm.
Baja Blues Boys, Patrick's Irish Pub, Poway, 8:30pm.
Carol Ames, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St.
Sven-Erik Seaholm Band/Gandhi Method, Tio Leos, 9pm.
Rock Trio w/ Joey Harris, Kelly's Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm.
Billy Midnight, Ould Sod, Adams Ave.

saturday • 13

The Mavericks, 4th & B, Info: 231-4343.
Will Edwards Band, 101 Artists Colony, Encinitas, 7pm.
Saba/3Simple Words/Mosaic/Mundaka/Lucy's Falling, Twiggs, 8:30pm.
Anya Marina, Kelly's Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm.
The Enchanted/Angela Correa, Lestats, 9pm.

sunday • 14

Third Coast Jazz Band/Eleanor England, Lestats. Info: 1-800/206-4258.

tuesday • 16

Blind Boys of Alabama, Ca. Ctr. for the Arts, Escondido. Call for info.

wednesday • 17

Sue Palmer Supper Club w/ Deejha Marie & Sharon Shufelt, Caffe Calabria, 3933 30th St., 6pm.
Driver Jake/Trevor Davis, Lestats, 9pm.

thursday • 18

Sue Palmer w/ Candy Kane Calypso Restaurant, Leucadia, 7:30pm.
Meghan La Roque/Jim Bianco/Tim Mudd, Twiggs, 8:30pm.

friday • 19

Patrick Landeza Hawaiian Slack Key, Normal Heights Comm. Ctr. 4649 Hawley Blvd., 7:30pm. Info: 619/303-8176.
Peter Sprague & Pass the Drum, Dizzy's, 8pm.
Renata Youngblood/Kat Parsons/Jim Bianco/Until John, Twiggs, 8:30pm.
Truckee Brothers/Ray Argyle, Lestats, 9pm.
Tristan Prettyman, Kelly's Pub, 6344 El Cajon Blvd., 9pm.
Big Daddy Orchestra, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm.

saturday • 20

Sue Palmer, Bookworks, Del Mar, 1pm.
Deborah Liv Johnson, Bamboo Yoga, 1127 Loma Ave., Coronado, 8pm.
Mermaids Journey/Christiane Lucas/Jim Bianco, Twiggs, 8:30pm.
Christy & Aliah Selah & Friends, Galoka Vegetarian Cuisine, 5622 La Jolla Blvd., 9pm. Info: 858/551-8610.

sunday • 21

Aliah Selah/Mama Christy & Friends, 101 Artists Colony, Encinitas, 7pm.
Lucy Falling/Angela Correa/The Walking, Lestats, 9pm.

wednesday • 24

Itai/Pepper Sands, Lestats, 9pm.

friday • 26

Saba/Gregory Page/Annie Dru/Robin Henkel, Twiggs, 8:30pm.
Powerthud w/ Joey Harris, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., 9pm.

saturday • 27

The Strummers w/ Peter Sprague/Sarah & Sean Watkins, 101 Artists Colony, Encinitas, 8pm.
The Inside/Anna Troy, Twiggs, 8:30pm.
Pete (She Blonde Swede)/Renata Youngblood, Lestats, 9pm.

wednesday • 31

Steve Poltz & the Rugburns, Belly Up Tavern, Solana Beach. Call for info.
First Night Escondido w/ Bluegrass Etc./Baja Blues Boys/Westlin Weavers/Anya Marina, 6pm-12:15am. Info: 760/788-7509/www.firstnightescondido.com
Peter Bolland, First Night on the Embarcadero, KSON Stage, 6pm.
New Years Eve Party, Lestats. Call for info.

WEEKLY

every sunday

7th Day Buskers, Hillcrest Farmer's Market/DMV parking lot, 10am-1pm.
Irish Dance, 3pm/**Michael McMahon**, 7pm, Dublin Square, 554 Fifth Ave.
Traditional Irish Music, Tom Giblin's Pub, 640 Grand Ave., Carlsbad, 3pm.
Celtic Ensemble, Twiggs, 4pm.
Cobblestone (Irish Music & Dance), The Field, 544 Fifth Ave., 5-6:30pm.
Jazz Roots w/ Lou Curtiss, 9-10:30pm, KSDS (88.3 FM).
The Bluegrass Special w/ Wayne Rice, 10-midnight, KSON (97.3 FM).

every monday

Open Mic Night, Lestats. Call 619/282-0437 for info.
Open Mic Night, Rosie O'Grady's, Normal Heights, 7pm.
Jenn Grinels (Irish music), Blarney Stone, Clairemont.

every tuesday

Open Mic Night, Casa Picante, 10757 Woodside Ave., Santee, 7:30-9:30pm.
Traditional Irish Music, Blarney Stone, Clairemont, 8:30pm.
Traditional Irish Music, The Ould Sod, Normal Heights, 8:30pm.

every wednesday

Open Mic Night, Metaphor Cafe, Escondido, 8pm.
Open Mic Night, Twiggs, 6:30pm.
Open Mic Night, Adams Ave. Studio of the Arts, 2804 Adams Ave, 8pm.
Skelpin, Dublin Square, 554 Fifth Ave., 8:30pm (also on Saturday night).
Brehon Law, Tom Giblin's Pub, 640 Grand Ave., Carlsbad, 9pm (also Wed. & Sat. nights).
Live Taping of San Diego's Finest TV Show, Lestats, 8:30pm (no shows Dec. 24 & 31).
Hatchet Brothers, The Ould Sod, 9pm.

every thursday

Rockabilly Thursdays w/ Hot Rod Lincoln, Tio Leos, 5302 Napa St., Call for info.
Celticana, Dublin's Town Square, Gaslamp, 9pm.
Open Mic Night, Just Java Cafe, 285 Third Ave., Chula Vista, 7-10pm.

every friday

Songwriter Showcase w/ SHEMM, Bridge Brigitte/Josi's Ghost/Renee Buchenroth/Karen Real, Caffiends Lounge, 634 Broadway, 609pm.

every saturday

Open Mic Night, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, 9015 Mira Mesa Blvd., 8pm.



the local seen



Photo: Paul Granger

Calman Hart at Dizzy's



Photo: Paul Granger

Robin Henkel



Photo: Paul Granger

Donielle Lo Presti at Dizzy's



Chuck Schire, Scott Wilson, Sven-Erik Swelom of the Grand Method in the SIX studio



Photo: Paul Granger

Jeff Berkley at Dizzy's



Waze N Lies at Just Java Open Mic Night



Photo: Zelle Medina

Anyu Marina

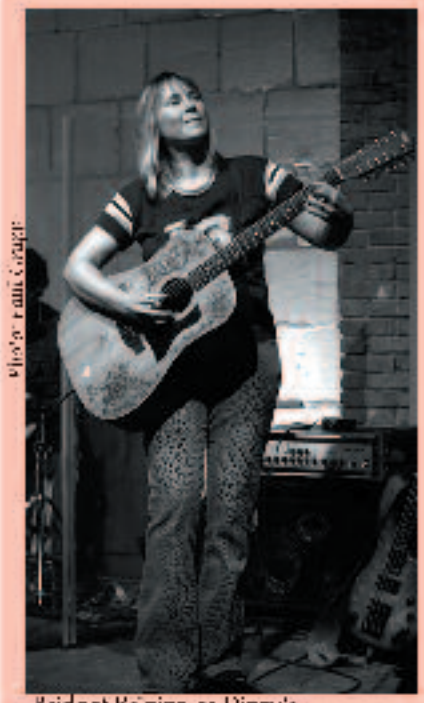


Photo: Paul Granger

Bridget Higgins at Dizzy's



Photo: Mike Johnson

Tim Flanery



Photo: Paul Granger

The Cat Mary at Dizzy's



Chuck Pyle



Photo: Paul Granger

Patrick Pickslay at Estata



Photo: Paul Granger

Renata Youngblood at Dizzy's



Photo: Zelle Medina

Jack Tempchin et al.



Mark Erelli



CHRISTMAS

FEATURING MUSIC BY

Carol Ames • The Gandhi Method • Vertibird
Sven-Erik Seaholm • Zigrans • Peter Belland & Broken Hills
Dave Howard • The Cat Mary • Danielle Lo Presto & The Masses

THURS DEC 4TH 7PM-1AM

Humphreys
BY THE BAY

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<http://standupforkids.org>

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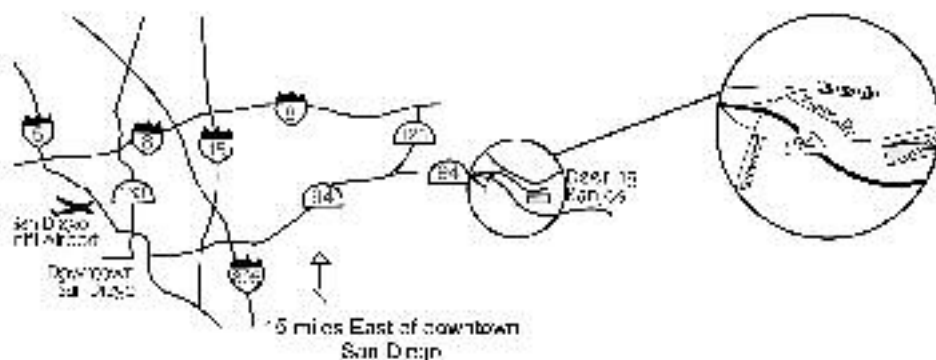
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Dec. 20th Deborah Liv Johnson :: A Holiday Concert

"It is not surprising that Johnson's luxuriant alto is her latest album's most affecting instrument. The result is a presence, a spatiality, a soulful, elegant simplicity that is unique among the hundreds of renditions extant." -The Los Angeles Times / concert 8pm \$15

January 17th Berkley Hart :: So Good, We're Doing it Twice

The two convey heart-felt stories with toe-tapping tunes and sad-slow ballads. Each song, whether it is a personal testament or an American tradition, rings true to this crowd as a few tears run down the cheeks of their listeners. / concert 8pm \$15

February 21st Lowen & Navvaro :: Don't Miss this Nationally Acclaimed Act

Behind the vocal harmonies, guitar jangle, and upbeat sonic approach, Eric Lowen and Dan Navarro bring real life themes—love, loss, family, yearning—all in their compelling, maddening glory. "It was so great to interview a couple of guys who are neck deep in integrity and oozing talent" -Bob Edwards, NPR's Morning Edition. / concert 8pm \$20

March 6th :: Classical Guitarist Michael Lucarelli

The Tucson Citizen writes: "In his playing, tone and attack, color and heart are precisely weighted, balanced and applied. He brings skill, taste and passion to a carefully selected, flowing recital disk that invites repeated listening"

Space is limited to 50 guests, please log on to www.bambooyoga.com for more information, reservations & pricing. Please direct all booking inquiries to Jeniffer at info@bambooyoga.com or 619.435.9119.

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