

# Versus

Entertainment & Culture at Vanderbilt

MARCH 13—MARCH 19, 2008 No. 8

## GUITAR TOWN

Nashville's beloved guitar shops: the music, the history, the love

Spring Break '08! Adventures and inspiration at home and abroad

Revenge of the '90s: Soundtrack to spring on page 4.

Up for a challenge? Flip to the back page.

## PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE TO SEE

### THURSDAY, MARCH 13

#### **Jumbo Shrimp — 3rd and Lindsley**

This Cajun-influenced duo from Rochester, N.Y., are known for their infectious live shows and energetic covers of Jack Johnson and other acoustic favorites. (Cover TBD, 7 p.m.)

#### **Van Morrison — Ryman Auditorium**

There is a not a seat to be found for this show; if you can get your hands on a ticket, though, don't miss this Irish rock legend. (\$130, 7:30 p.m., 115 5th Ave., 889-3060)

#### **Project Darko — The Muse**

High-energy thrash metal ensemble Project Darko brings its thundering bass lines and percussion work to Nashville. (\$8, 7 p.m.)

#### **Lauren Lucas — Douglas Corner Cafe**

This South Carolina native should feel right at home in Nashville playing her soulful country-pop, backed by a five-piece band. (\$5, 8:30 p.m., 2106 8th Ave., 298-1688)

#### **Blues Episode feat. Reeves Gabrels — FooBar**

Gabrels has worked with the likes of David Bowie and Public Enemy and is now making a Nashville appearance. (Free, 8:30 p.m., 2511 Gallatin Ave., 226-7305)

#### **In the round with Gary Nicholson, Colin Linden and others — Bluebird Cafe**

Enjoy this medley of jazz and blues musicians as they jam up close and personally at the most famous venue in town. (\$10, 9 p.m.)

#### **Special Consensus — The Station Inn**

With over 30 years of touring under their belts, bluegrass quartet Special Consensus combines its original work with traditional favorites. (\$10, 9 p.m.)

#### **Pizza Party USA — Mercy Lounge**

Kick back with a drink or two on Cannery Row with a few popular cover songs performed by this off-the-wall band. (\$5, 9 p.m.)

#### **The Titts with Los Cobra — The End**

These Nashville natives may be a bit young, but they still manage to crank out some rockin' tunes in the vein of AC/DC and ZZ Top. (\$5, 9 p.m., 2219 Elliston Place, 321-4457)

#### **Brett Rosenberg with Leslie McClure — The Family Wash**

Rosenberg combines personal lyrics with his impressive guitar skill, which has rocketed him from subway gigs into the spotlight. (Cover TBD, 9:30 p.m., 2038 Greenwood Ave., 226-6070)

### FRIDAY, MARCH 14

#### **Kenny and Amanda Smith Band — The Station Inn**

Kenny Smith, a renowned bluegrass guitarist most known for his role in the Lonesome River Band's lineup in the 1990s, and his wife Amanda, who has been writing and recording since she was 19, share their new breed of bluegrass. (\$10, 9 p.m.)

#### **Blind Melon with Moonlight Towers — Mercy Lounge**

After suffering from the untimely death of vocalist Shannon Hoon in 1995, the rock band that made the contagiously upbeat "No Rain" is back on the scene, bringing psychedelic rock to Nashville. (\$16, 9 p.m.)

#### **Brian Richey with Fluid Oz and Stephen Belin and the Minor Keys — The Basement**

Check out Dylan-sound-alike Stephen Belin, who in one performance might play the electric and acoustic guitar, bass, banjo, mandolin, harmonica, B-3 organ, percussion, and piano. Oh, and he sings too. (\$5, 9 p.m.)

#### **Foreigner: Feels Like the First Time Tour — The Wildhorse Saloon**

Foreigner's timeless hits like "Feels Like the First Time" and "I Want to Know What Love is" are just as popular among today's music crowds as they were at the peak of their fame in the '70s and '80s. (\$35-\$150, 9 p.m.)

#### **Ani DiFranco with Over the Rhim — Ryman Auditorium**

Promoting her first retrospective album "Canon," DiFranco shares her musical journey, starting from her earliest recordings in the 1990s to her latest poetic musical endeavors. (\$26-\$36, 8 p.m.)

#### **Gypsy Pompe — Cafe Coco**

This bluegrass group will bring you back to the days of cowboys and hoop skirts with charming fiddle and string arrangements. (Free, 11 p.m.)

#### **Clay Cumbie — Edgehill Studios Cafe**

This Nashville-based pop country crooner bar hoops just as much as the average Vandy student — only Cumbie heads to Fuel and 3rd and Lindsley to perform his warm and feel-good music. (Free, 6:30 p.m., 1201 Villa Place)

#### **Global Music Series Rocks with Peter Cooper, Jen Gunderman and friends — Blair School of Music**

If you have taken any of Cooper's or Gunderman's classes at Vandy, heard their stories, or know about their respective careers, you know how cool this concert will be. With no cover charge, there is no better show to see tonight. (Free, 8 p.m., 2400 Blakemore Ave.)

#### **In The Round with Tiffany Goss, Sarah Gunsolus, Seth Jones and Jeff Ross — The Bluebird Cafe**

Head to The Bluebird to hear Nashville's up-and-coming songwriters showcase their talent. Grab some good food and enjoy. (Free, 6:30 p.m.)

#### **Jami Grooms and the Catfish Johnston Band — J.C.'s Bullseye Sports Bar**

After years playing the Nashville club scene, Grooms has a traditional country sound with roots in the music of Waylon Jennings (\$3, 9 p.m., 3248 Blackwood Drive)

### SATURDAY, MARCH 15

#### **Beethoven Takes a Stroll — Schermerhorn Symphony Center**

Ji-Yong plays the piano in this continuation of the SunTrust Classical Series with an arrangement of Beethoven's "Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 68." (\$30-\$105, 8 p.m.)

#### **Drive-By Truckers — Cannery Ballroom**

The Atlanta-based band is headlining The Home Front 2008 World Tour with their new CD "Brighter Than Creations Dark." (\$20, 9 p.m.)

#### **Spoken Nerd, 247 and the Whickersham Brothers — Cafe Coco**

When asked, Spoken Nerd describes their sound as an eclectic blend of hip-hop, experimental beats and lounge music. (\$5, 8 p.m.)

#### **The Greg Wilson with The Janissary and Darla Farmer — Exit/In**

Check out the comedic stylings of Greg Wilson, who Stuff Magazine describes as "the wildest comic ever." (\$8, \$12 day of, 8 p.m.)

#### **Strawberry Deluxe, SpellPlay and Spice J — The 5 Spot**

If you feel like dancing tonight, get down to the funky grooves of Strawberry Deluxe's '70s sounds. Come out and dance until you drop. (\$5, 9 p.m.)

#### **Justin Thompson — F. Scott's**

The Mecca of Nashville jazz is showcasing Thompson with his newest album "Brand New Same Old Obsessions." (Free, 7:30 p.m.)

#### **Blair Signature Series: Tell Me If You've Heard This One! — Ingram Hall**

The piano faculty of Blair will be performing some of their favorite obscure pieces by Brahms, Mendelssohn and Ginastera. (Free, 8 p.m.)

#### **Grand Ole Opry — Ryman Auditorium**

The Grand Ole Opry always brings the best country to Nashville — but this week the headliner is Carrie Underwood. Get your tickets ASAP. (\$34-\$49, 6:30 and 9:30 p.m.)

#### **Luck of the Irish Party — Fuel**

Get your beads, leprechaun hats and favorite limericks and get ready to party as Fuel offers free green beer until the cask runs dry. (Free, 8 p.m.)

#### **Dan Paisley and the Southern Grass — The Station Inn**

Bluegrass veterans Dan Paisley and the Southern Grass will have you falling in love with fiddles and mandolins all over again. (\$10, 9 p.m.)

### The Regulars

**THE RUTLEDGE**  
410 Fourth Ave. S. 37201  
782-6858

**MERCY LOUNGE/CANNERY BALLROOM**  
1 Cannery Row 37203  
251-3020

**BLUEBIRD CAFE**  
4104 Hillsboro Road 37215  
383-1461

**EXIT/IN**  
2208 Elliston Place 37203  
321-3340

**STATION INN**  
402 12th Ave. S. 37203  
255-3307

**THE BASEMENT**  
1604 Eighth Ave. S. 37203  
254-1604

**F. SCOTT'S RESTAURANT AND JAZZ BAR**  
2210 Crestmoor Road 37215  
269-5861

**SCHERMERHORN SYMPHONY CENTER**  
1 Symphony Place 37201  
687-6500

**3RD AND LINDSLEY**  
818 Third Ave. S. 37210  
259-9891

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# Versus

MARCH 13—MARCH 19, 2008 No. 8

## Versus Magazine

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## FROM THE EDITOR



And we're back. I hope everyone's spring break was eventful (or uneventful; if your goal was to lounge about like a vegetable for a week, I hope you were able to do such things) and everyone returned only slightly sunburned and perhaps with only a bit of dignity lost. It was after all, "spring break '08!" a declarative statement my friends and I liked to shout in the most inopportune moments: while getting patted down in airport security, after we were asked to participate in what common law refers to as prostitution and to a snake-man parading his boa constrictor down the main strip in town for tips. Oh, you know.

Furthermore, apparently there are as many different ways to spend your spring break as there are ... stars in the sky. From camping in three feet of snow in Yosemite for the common good of Alternative Spring Break to combing the "clubes" in Miami, you'll find that your Vanderbilt cohorts are up to crazy things. We highlight four such compelling trips on page 6. Check them out.

But what we've really been up to this week (or at least, live music fanatic Owen Canavan has been up to; the rest of us have just been downright lazy) is guitars. As is our style to tell you about badass things in Nashville, here we go again: vintage guitar shops. Hit them up. As the moniker suggests, Music City boasts more than just performance venues and record companies, and the colorful, personality-infused guitar shops downtown are some of the city's best-kept secrets and wells of Nashville history and culture. As his story indicates, Owen's trip downtown proved to be much more than a leisurely perusal of the finest stringed instruments this side of the river — what's more, he got himself an education. What can I say? "BALLIN."

Yeah, that was weird for me too.

Darcy Newell

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## PIC OF THE WEEK



NIKKY OKORO/VERSUS



*Dine from a unique, eclectic and diverse menu of dishes from around the world*

### Lunch favorites-

- Wasabi crusted tuna salad
- Asian style shrimp dumplings
- Smoke Salmon pizza

### Dinner Favorites-

- Maple glazed duck over sweet potato risotto
- Black pepper crusted salmon
- Moroccan lamb shank
- Brazilian style Paella in spicy tomato broth

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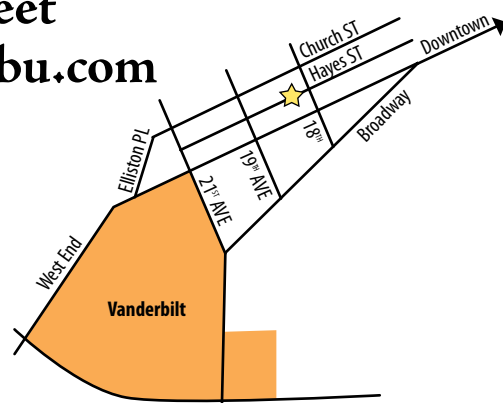
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### Directions from Vandy:

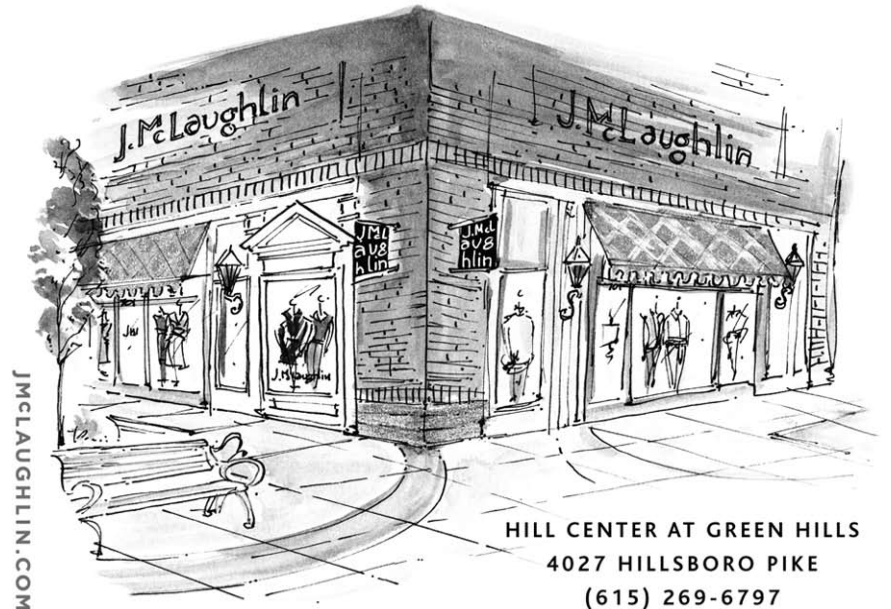
Travel heading toward downtown, go to 19th Avenue and take a left, take a right on Hayes Street and Mambu is on the left between 18th and 19th Avenue.



## J. McLaughlin

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## SHORT STORY

## A Phone Call

WILL PARKS  
Contributor

She was sitting in the cafe wearing a pink and yellow horizontally striped Polo shirt and a white frilled skirt that looked like snowflakes sewn together. She had the most uniquely curled blonde hair that fell in front of her face each time she finished laughing. She had her own persona, her own style that no one I have seen before wore with such decadence and dexterity. Her eyes were molded like almonds that bore pearls made of baby blue and sparkled each time she was complemented or expressed sincerity. Her nose had a delicate curve to it that careened down her face and molded a perfect shape to her nostrils, classical and symmetric. Her mouth held powerful subtlety, quaintly exposing her natural teeth, unharmed by any sort of orthodontic work. She was a tremendous contradiction but I sat there and watched her read a book of Blake poetry we were studying in class in complete awe. I immediately searched the racks for the biggest book I could find and ended up coming back to the cafe with Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina," hoping she would recognize me. She read for 20 minutes and then left with her back turned towards me. I sat there quietly enthralled by her presence and even more so by her absence. Awkward and confused, I could not comprehend my attraction towards her. She gave me a phone call last night that was momentary and mistaken; she had dialed the wrong number. I have felt it ever since, as if her being had infected me and then lay dormant in my cells, waiting for the right time to break out in plague.

This is what I have resorted to. She is an exhibit and I am an open-eyed tourist with a cheap camera. The crowds around me felt strange and ineffectual; a companionship vaguely passing by me in pure inexistence where I floated away and knew that my thoughts are broken mutterings of a havoc that yearns to be outlined and published to rave reviews. I am standing outside a pompous store composed of overly scented candles and dildo-shaped wax structures gazing at someone caught up in a different life. I am a walking cliché, an emotional teenager with nothing worthwhile to share but exuding a certain cadence you could see if you were looking for it. If I were a color I would be labeled dull tangerine but only be used by first-graders looking for peach or neon orange to illustrate facial features and shades of the sun. Standing out there, thinking of the sexual positions she has experimented with, I remember the times I would wander down the streets of my neighborhood late at night, drunk off my parent's wine. I walked down long straight roads passing by off-white houses that glowed in the dark night, capturing a type of essence I always wanted, bathed in crepuscular rays of nonchalance. Rest, dear house, rest in your sepulchers of certainty that we have adorned with orchids and a thin nimbus of jealousy. I stand in front of your store, your house, toxic and not knowing if I am dreaming because I want so desperately to doubt the real. Flicker in and flicker out; help me escape and arrive riding a pathway of the stars with a head high and proud.

But am I uniquely alone or do I whisper deluded litanies to the envied that smile politely, pretending to listen? I want to reach out and grab the streetlights above me but they are ever so high, ever so bright, tempting. The streets those nights were deep and intimidating, bleeding into night down the horizon in an area of complete mystery so I walked inside, intrigued and pitied. It starts to rain so I walk inside. I walk inside because I never know if I truly did or not.

There was a faint adrenaline rush through my body followed by an enormous loss and I suddenly knew what it was to be an addict, pardon generalizations. My mouth hung open a little bit and I began to question whether she was human. She is an entity of envy at which I will grasp, dying to come closer to the streetlights that line every street I will ever stumble down. As if scripted, she finished her coffee, gathered her belongings, and glided out the door, untouched by the rain. She gave me a phone call and I wanted to reach out and touch her. She representing nothing but all I wanted to do was touch, to be touched.

## PHOTOGRAPHY



NIKKY OKORO / Versus

## FICTION

The reason a writer writes a book is to forget a book  
and the reason a reader reads one is to remember it.  
— TOM WOLFE



## HAIKUS

Words to live by  
in seventeen syllables

Hi! How was your break?  
Is that our only greeting?  
In truth, yes it is.

Five syllable words  
Are quite rare, but they exist.  
Indefensibly.

## POETRY

## The New Dead Language

MICHAEL SARNOWSKI  
Contributor

-Who would read poetry in a time of crisis?

-Who will write it?

We speak in a dry tongue, thirsty for the words  
that will ease our troubles, incite riots in our chests,  
darken loose leaf, burn belief into action,  
make natural disasters beautiful.

We need words to be our life vests, defibrillator paddles,  
inspiration. If art doesn't make us question, what is the point?  
We should be sick of words that are not held accountable.

Like pretty girls and world leaders.

Can we start new? Strip clean the soil like hair from a chemo patient?

We can be the silent film brought to life. We are the war  
raging in your streets. We are the lives ending in between.

We are the words that are written in metal gates entering death camps  
and on aerial banners over the coastline. We are ugly and important,  
underappreciated adornments. We give our words value every time  
we say what we mean. Let this be the time there is no confusion  
and we're honest with our loved ones. Let this be the time we act  
with the courage we get away with when we speak.

## PHOTOGRAPHY



OLIVER WOLFE / Versus



# MUSIC



*"Each generation wants new symbols, new people, new names. They want to divorce themselves from their predecessors."*  
—JIM MORRISON

## SETLIST

### THURSDAY, MARCH 13

Enjoy a slew of acoustic singer-songwriters tonight at 3rd and Lindsley, which is featuring **Eliot Morris**, **Drew Holcomb**, and several others. The Birmingham-based Morris touts a number of folk influences on his 2006 album, "What's Mine Is Yours," while still displaying a rare acoustic originality. The show begins at 8 p.m., tickets \$8.

### FRIDAY, MARCH 14

Having thoroughly warmed themselves up at the Led Zeppelin reunion concert in December, legendary rock group **Foreigner** is making an appearance at the Wildhorse Saloon, beginning at 6 p.m.

### SATURDAY, MARCH 15

Get your Southern rock fix at the Cannery with the **Drive-by Truckers**, based in Athens, Ga. General admission tickets will cost you \$20 apiece, and the show starts at 8 p.m.

# QA WITH DAVE SILVERSTEIN



Editor in Chief Darcy Newell had a little heart-to-heart with Music Group Co-Chair Dave Silverstein to discuss the exciting and diverse lineup for Rites of Spring 2008. This year, The Music Group has put together an eclectic group of performers to satisfy nearly all musical tastes, from rap to bluegrass to indie.

Indie rock band Spoon will headline Friday, April 18, and rapper Lil Jon will headline Saturday, April 19.

Here, Silverstein delves into The Music Group's criteria for performers and the group's commitment to making sure students experience a wide variety of artists in just two short days.

### VM: What can students expect from this year's festival?

**DS:** The weekend will be action-packed. The Music Group has tried to craft an experience from which Vanderbilt students can truly get a taste of Music City and what it has to offer.

### VM: What goals did the Music Group have in attaining a lineup for Rites of Spring?

**DS:** We are looking to create a diverse lineup that's high in energy. The music group wants to create a true festival atmosphere. We want to bring the best talent in all genres, from blues to hip-hop, pop to rock and folk, and so forth.

### VM: How does this lineup compare to those of the past in your opinion?

**DS:** This year we wanted to make sure we brought in artists that were critically acclaimed within their genres but also had considerable name recognition. We wanted musicians whose sounds would come together to create a well-rounded festival at all points during the weekend. In my time working with The Music Group, we have never had a stronger supporting lineup.

### VM: What lesser-known acts do you want students to be aware of?

**DS:** Hill Country Revue featuring the North Mississippi All Stars will tear the house down on Alumni Lawn. Grace Potter and the Nocturnals will also bring a high-energy performance that students should look forward to. And while not lesser-known, Old Crow Medicine Show won't hold back playing in their hometown on Vanderbilt's campus.

### VM: Do you seek to book bands that are diverse in nature or is that something that just happens naturally?

**DS:** We specifically make sure we consider as many genres as possible. Sitting in on a Music Group meeting is kind of like watching a kid in a candy store — the sky is the limit with the different types of combinations of sounds and artists that we put together for the Vanderbilt community. We are looking to cater to all different music tastes. As far as the committee makeup, all the individuals bring their own sets of musical tastes and expertise and are able to work together to craft one of America's largest student-run music festivals.

### VM: What made Lil Jon stand out among other artists in the hip hop and rap genre?

**DS:** Lil Jon is the epitome of a high-energy, charismatic performer. Not only does he have music that appeals to all types of listeners, but his dynamic personality has become iconic, one that transcends music and instead relates to culture. We thought would make a fantastic last act for Rites of Spring, ending the festival on a really high note.

### VM: For students who are not familiar with the music of Old Crow Medicine Show, what is the band about and why should students get excited for their performance?

**DS:** For me, when I think about Old Crow, their specific sound is hard to place within a subgenre of country music. Some people argue that they are bluegrass, others think they are acoustic honky tonk, but for me they represent an all-encompassing sound of Nashville — their songs are gritty and edgy while maintaining a light-hearted and sometimes emotional attitude and tone. With that said, I think their sound is extremely user-friendly, whether you know all of their songs or don't know a single one, everyone can rally around it and enjoy their performance at Rites of Spring.

### VM: This year, three female musicians (Feist, Colby Caillat and Grace Potter of Grace Potter and The Nocturnals) occupy spots high on the list of performers, which is something we haven't seen in past Rites' lineups. Was this a deliberate decision to pursue female musicians, or did their selection happen naturally?

**DS:** The ultimate goal of The Music Group is to create a lineup comprised of critically acclaimed artists. We want to get the best representation from every genre that we can bring into the mix with the best sounds that are out there. This year we did exactly that, and pursued the sounds that we thought would make this year's Rites of Spring unique and well rounded. My rule of thumb is that great music isn't gendered. With that, I am pleased to be able to bring three very powerful female artists to Rites and give the Vanderbilt community exposure to their different sounds: Grace Potter's blues-influenced rock 'n' roll sound, Feist's unique breed of indie folk, and Colby Caillat's acoustic pop. All three performances will be highly anticipated.

## ARTIST PROFILE

# Spektor's music just might make you feel 'Better'

TAWNEY MILAM  
Staff Writer

"Come in. Come in. Come into my world ..." With these words from "Hotel Song," the talented and quirky Regina Spektor invites you into her world of imagination and creativity.

The singer-songwriter is best recognized by her unorthodox



approach to music. While playing on the piano, her songs are decorated with a range of vocal sounds that include the buzzing of verses, broken words, breathy embellishments and pops and clicks. She is also known for using a drumstick on a chair for additional texture. Spektor describes her music on MySpace as "piano, voice, drumstick on chair, heart, mind, time ..."

At only 27 years old, Spektor reportedly has around 700 songs in her continuously growing collection. Many of her songs surround the themes of love, death, religion (with attention to both the Bible and her Jewish roots) and city life (since she now lives in New York City after a childhood in Russia). Most of her songs are inspired by stories, either literary or based on characters from her imagination, rather than acting as autobiographical reflections. For instance, Spektor tells the story of the biblical Samson and Delilah from Delilah's perspective in the popular track "Samson."

After immigrating to the U.S. with her family to avoid religious and political persecution in 1989, Spektor continued taking piano

lessons as she had in Russia. But without a piano of her own, she took to practicing on any hard surface. Interestingly, this technique continues to be seen as a stylistic element with her stick-on-chair routine.

Just as life's circumstances shaped Spektor's style, her father's music collection played a role in coloring her image of the musical landscape. The music of The Beatles, Queen and The Moody Blues continues to influence Spektor's artistic process. Other influences include Bob Dylan, Billie Holiday, Radiohead, Tom Waits and Frederic Chopin.

Once exposed to the work of singer-songwriters Joni Mitchell and Ani DiFranco, Spektor realized she also had the power to create her own songs. By age 16 she was writing a cappella pieces and by age 18 began incorporating the piano. During her college years at Purchase College, Spektor started playing at East Village's Sidewalk Cafe. It was here that she began getting noticed on the anti-folk scene.

The anti-folk scene includes artists like Beck and The Moldy Peaches and originated in the 1980s with inspiration from the politically charged music of the 1960s. Songs of this musical sub-genre generally sound raw and experimental, mocking the seriousness of mainstream music and even their own work. During her performances at venues like the Sidewalk Cafe, Spektor sold her self-produced albums "11:11" (2001) and "SONGS" (2002).

Spektor's debut album with Sire Records, "Soviet Kitsch," was released in early 2005. By 2006 she was learning to expand and experiment further with her already unique singing voice. With a freer spirit and more playful approach, Spektor released "Begin to Hope."

That same year she received more mainstream buzz with recognition as "VH1's You Oughta Know: Artists on the Rise." Since then, Spektor has yet to release another



album, though she did cover John Lennon's "Real Love" on the compilation "Instant Karma: The Amnesty International Campaign to Save Darfur" in 2007. And just last February, she performed at the Oscar de la Renta Fall 2008 show for Fall Fashion Week.

Spektor's fun demeanor can be seen during her live performances and clearly comes through in her music. She is prone to laughter and jokes and wants her audience to join in. Her music is so dynamic and diverse that there is always material to keep you interested. The beauty of the piano, amazing quality of her vocal range, humor with vocal ornamentations and variety of stylistic influences are always entertaining. ☼

If you have yet to experience Regina Spektor, here are a few good songs to start with:

"Fidelity" from "Begin to Hope"

"Better" from "Begin to Hope"

"Us" from "Soviet Kitsch"

## ALBUM REVIEW

# Ludo continues the progressive tradition

CHRIS GEARING  
Managing Editor

I think we can all agree that Queen, Yes and David Bowie (in at least one incarnation of his eclectic career) share the bill of quintessential progressive-rock bands. Their music was all about big riffs, deep lyrics and an odd visual quality to the music that really brought things up a notch for an entire generation and even today. However, these

bands may have to pass the torch to newcomer Ludo, a band that brings the musicality and showmanship to carry on the prog tradition with a modern and unique fusion that really brings a new twist to their sound.

This St. Louis-based quintet has been working its way up the ladder for years. Ludo first formed with a vocal and guitar duet between lead singer Andrew Volpe and guitarist Tim Ferrell playing their off brand of humor infused rock 'n' roll. Through the years, they have added the rest of the members and began their impressive tradition of almost constant touring. They have won contests to play at Warped Tour, the South By Southwest mega-music festival and they even got a video produced by Fuse (who also named Ludo "The Next Big Thing"). They just finished their second studio album, "You're Awful, I Love You," which was released nationally at the end of February. If you want to get a good feel for the band's eccentric humor, look for the video for their newest single "Love Me Dead" on YouTube (make sure to read the lyrics beforehand; they're awesome).

Although the name may have

come from a giant muppet in the cinema classic "Labyrinth," Ludo definitely has some serious musical skill. Their newest album is no slouch either — the hits abound.

The band definitely likes to have fun with songs like "Go-Getter Greg" that describes "that guy" who keeps calling and trying to be your special someone.

One of my personal favorites, "In Space," keeps a convincing metaphor going through the use of inventive prose, space-

age synthesizer music and their constantly rocking riffs to describe the alienation and loneliness when partners in a relationship grow apart. The ballads "Streetlights" and "Topeka" are oddly touching in an everyman kind of way and moving music that complement the lyrics perfectly. The single "Love Me Dead" is also an excellent place to start, with funny lyrics and great prog-inspired melodies that discuss the self-destructive nature of love/hate relationships. Wherever you decide to begin, this album has something to offer for everyone.

If you aren't convinced to download at least a couple tracks off this album, then all hope is lost for your musical salvation. Ludo is a great band that definitely has a bright future ahead of it, and hopefully, they can pick up the torch from the recent downfall of Motion City Soundtrack. Even if you haven't been following the band, you should definitely pick up "You're Awful, I Love You" because its quirky lyrical style and diverse music samplings will keep your friends jealous and you smiling for months to come. ☼





**SUNDAY, MARCH 16**

Langerado alums **Steel Train** bring their energetic indie-rock sound to Rockettown, just months after the release of "Trampoline." The evening kicks off at 7 p.m., advance tickets \$10.

**MONDAY, MARCH 17**

After relocating from Australia to Baltimore, a quick stop to Exit/In should be easy for **The Death Set**, who elegantly combine punk and electronica. Snag a ticket for \$8; doors open at 8 p.m.

**TUESDAY, MARCH 18**

Funk-rock trio **N.E.R.D.** hasn't been in the news much lately, but that may change with the release of their third studio album. That being said, don't miss them live at City Hall at 8 p.m. this evening, tickets \$25.

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19**

A self-described "song sponge," bluegrass virtuoso **Tim O'Brien** has been a household name in the traditional music circuit since the 70s, earning himself a Grammy in the process. Check him out at the Station Inn, Nashville's bluegrass hub. The doors open at 8 p.m.; tickets are \$15.



**Dave Silverstein**, co-chair of The Music Group, shares what he's listening to when he's not booking the kick-ass lineup for Rites of Spring.

# Countdown to spring: Top 10 '90s hits

ANDREW LEVY  
Staff Writer

Coming back from spring break and finding Nashville covered in snow, it became clear that the weather gods need a little help remembering that

spring is now almost officially upon us. What better way to get back in the spirit than by recounting the great ballads of the '90s that still have the power to rock out any spring party? Therefore, allow me to present the top 10 '90s songs that will help rock Nashville back to good weather:

- 10.** **BLUES TRAVELER, 'HOOK'**  
Blues Traveler's memorable melodies and lyrics starts any occasion off right, as people from all backgrounds will surely rise to their feet, waiting for the inevitable burst from the harmonica, as they let the "hook bring them back" into the greatness we call spring.
- 9.** **COOLIO, 'GANGSTA'S PARADISE'**  
"Dangerous Minds" was first to introduce us to the legend that is "Gangsta's Paradise," as we all surely remember trying to impress other middle-schoolers by singing along with every word, whenever Coolio hit the radio. Well, nothing has really changed, except now we are in college still rapping along to our old favorite.
- 8.** **TLC, 'WATERFALLS'**  
Rest in peace, Lisa "Left-Eye" Lopez. This fallen hero, along with her sidekicks, T-Boz and Chilli, taught us the importance of "sticking to the rivers and lakes" we are used to, as this dynamic trio played an undeniable part in raising our generation. Not only did they instruct us on waterfalls, but also staying away from "Scrubs" and being "Unpretty."
- 7.** **WILL SMITH, 'WILD WILD WEST'**  
This was, hands down, Will Smith's worst movie, but with every dark cloud there must be silver lining, and the soundtrack's title track was just that and more. Nothing like this collaboration from the Fresh Prince and Sisqo to get any event starting off real wild.
- 6.** **LFO, 'SUMMER GIRLS'**  
There's really not much to say here, I just think the relevance is obvious. Who doesn't like girls that wear Abercrombie and Fitch?
- 5.** **THIRD EYE BLIND, 'SEMI-CHARMED LIFE'**  
Their third eye may be blind, but this clearly does not detract from the band's unreal ability to turn any casual standing around into a jumping mess of delightful rage. From the first notes of the song, any listener immediately knows the pleasure that will grace them for the next four and a half minutes.
- 4.** **HANSON, 'MMMBOP'**  
It's easy to poke fun at the brothers/sisters of Hanson, but any negativity about this heavenly ballad is clearly slander, as it is not possible to have a soul and not love this classic tune. You can try as hard as you want to put down this great ballad, but "Mmmhoh, ba duba dop ba du bop," it is just not possible.
- 3.** **SMASH MOUTH, 'ALL STAR'**  
Who doesn't know every word to this song? This great sing-along can brighten up even the worst of days, because no matter what happens: Hey now, you're still an all star.
- 2.** **CHUMBAWAMBA, 'TUBTHUMPING'**  
Nothing like a great life lesson from our friends in Chumbawamba. Yeah they drank a whiskey drink, a vodka drink, a lager drink, a cider drink and then they got knocked down. But guess what? They got back up again.
- 1.** **TAG TEAM, 'WHOOMP! (THERE IT IS)'**  
"Party on party people let me hear some noise/ DC's in the house jump jump rejoice/ There's a party over here/ a party over there/ Wave your hands in the air  
Shake your derriere/ These three words when you're gettin' busy/ Whoomp there it is!" Need I say more?

- 1. "FLY BY NIGHT"**  
*Nanci Griffith*
- 2. "FREE RADICALS"**  
*The Flaming Lips*
- 3. "BERLIN"**  
*Black Rebel Motorcycle Club*
- 4. "BREAD AND WATER"**  
*Ryan Bingham*
- 5. "APPLY SOME PRESSURE"**  
*Mark Ronson*
- 6. "IF YOU WANT BLOOD"**  
*AC/DC*
- 7. "LIFE IS A CARNIVAL"**  
*The Band*
- 8. "BIG TIME IN THE JUNGLE"**  
*Old Crow Medicine Show*
- 9. "THE WILD AND THE YOUNG"**  
*Quiet Riot*
- 10. "SONS AND DAUGHTERS"**  
*The Decemberists*

## Classic albums you need to hear: The Smiths' 'The Queen is Dead'

DAVIS MACMILLAN  
Staff Writer

The Smiths, and more specifically lead singer Morrissey, have always inspired a rabid, all-consuming love in their fans.



When I was first introduced to the band, a friend of mine said that fans, normally middle-class and British, male and female, would fight their way onto the stage for the opportunity to throw their arms around the singer. A recent photography exhibit by Ryan McGinley, featuring rapt concertgoers staring at Morrissey like God himself is singing, seems to confirm this point.

"The Queen is Dead" is the third of The Smiths' four studio albums, and is widely considered to be the best. Morrissey's lyrics are literary and emotional, but feature a sharp, dry British wit. Johnny Marr's guitar work is frequently brilliant, adding weight to some songs and lightening others. He spans a number of genres, from pop to country and folk on songs like "Vicar in a Tutu" and "Bigmouth Strikes Again."

The songs on "The Queen is Dead" can be divided into two

categories, with a few falling somewhere in the middle. There are the heavy, overly sad songs like "I Know It's Over" which personally, I find to be a bit of a drag. In contrast, there are upbeat, poppy masterpieces like "The Queen is Dead" and "Frankly Mr. Shankly." These songs are frequently funny, starting out with lines like "Sweetness, sweetness, I was only joking when I said by rights you should be bludgeoned in your bed."

Morrissey is an amazing songwriter; he has a light touch for a lot of heavy subject matter and manages to be sharp and cutting without much of an effort. The song "The Queen is Dead" is about sneaking into the palace and killing the queen and is a laundry list of social complaints that somehow evades being labeled as whining. "Some Girls are Bigger than Others" is about some girls being, um, bigger than others, and is probably the lightest song on the record.

One of the largest problems with The Smiths' legacy is that recently they've become associated with a lot of really bad pop culture (their song "How Soon is Now" is the theme for the WB's "Charmed"). The band is occasionally thought of in the same vein as modern emo music, which could not be less accurate. "The Queen is Dead," excluding a song or two, completely disproves this point.

The Smiths are one of the best rock bands to come out of the 1980s. Their lyrics are brilliant and their songwriting is original and interesting. The devotion of their following is surprising only in its extremity; the music is wonderful and stands up very well over repeated listens. "The Queen is Dead" is a great album and deserves a listen today. ☞

## Sometimes, death means musical immortality

JORDAN BOND  
Staff Writer

Death. It is not typically seen as a positive in any field of business. Even so, this principle does not hold true for the music industry. In fact, the one thing that can make a career rocket from relative obscurity to urban legend-turned-truth is a musician's death. Even though this may seem like an amusing coincidence, it appears to be a cultural phenomenon that has changed the perception of musical norms. For example, with the deaths of Janis Joplin, Kurt Cobain, Gram Parsons and Jimi Hendrix, there was a fascination with young, promising musicians and the impact their short-lived legacies would leave on the complexion of modern music.

Joplin and Hendrix both epitomized the 1960s hippie era with their "work hard, party harder" philosophies. Using any and all drugs, other musicians of the era met similar demises via drug overdose. Drugs seemingly enhanced creativity, and musicians were at the epicenter of the creative movements thrust into the media limelight. Joplin was determined to leave her mark on music, and she soon became the female representation the 1960s needed. Even though other women were making music at the time, none seemed as independent and self-sufficient as Joplin, setting herself apart that is still recognized today.

Hendrix was already a household name before his untimely demise. He became known as one of the most prolific guitarists of all time. However, an even more noteworthy fact was that Hendrix had to teach himself to play a right-handed guitar upside down, since no guitars were yet made specifically for left-handers. From the Star Spangled Banner to Purple Haze, Hendrix did them all, with an unparalleled but often imitated panache. But after Joplin died of a heroin overdose and Hendrix passed due to asphyxiation after consuming nine sleeping pills, their legacies still remain embedded in the spectrum of musical history.

Also, with the deaths of certain individuals, entire music movements

may also come to an end. With the death of Kurt Cobain in April of 1994, the Seattle-based grunge era of the 1990s died with him. Even though other participants of this genre still exist, such as Pearl Jam, it never was the



HENDRIX



JOPLIN



COBAIN

same without the Nirvana frontman talking about "Teen Spirit" and how it smelled. What strikes a chord with fans was how disputed Cobain's cause of death has been since 1994. The recorded cause was suicide, but many still persist he was murdered by girlfriend at the time Courtney Love. Even so, the tale remains and keeps comparisons of up-and-coming bands to the likes of Nirvana.

Speaking of comparisons, no young musical prodigy has gone without being compared to Gram Parsons. Parsons' style led to the foundations of quasi-genre alt-country. Due to his work with the Flying Burrito Brothers and later solo work, many recognized Parsons' talent. However, many saw his decline coming, as too much Southern fried foods, LSD, whiskey and eventually morphine led to his death in 1973 at the age of 26. The mystery behind his death lies in two friends stealing his body and attempting to cremate him at Joshua Tree National Monument, per Parsons' wishes. However, the body was recovered and the remains returned to his native Louisiana. Bizarre, but all the more fascinating about country's proclaimed wunderkind.

With these examples and countless more, the question becomes why are we so enamored with musicians and their deaths, particularly young artists? Perhaps it has to do with how they embodied the rock 'n' roll "lifestyle" and pushed their boundaries beyond their limits. Being famous translates into media spectacle and a life under the metaphorical microscope. Seeing one's ascent to the top and decline seem to give us a perspective we only see in those closest to us. It seems that with these iconic figures, we see how we could be in terms of success and the lives we all dream of living. With gossip magazines galore, access to the most intimate details of a musician is hardly difficult. Media influences suffocate the private lives of many idols in the music business. Whatever the case may be, they still have continued to captivate us posthumously and bring back memories and stories we surely do not forget. ☞



## TRAVEL

## Adventures in Uruguay

DAVE SILVERSTEIN  
Staff Writer

The trip took 22 hours, door to door. Falling asleep on an airplane for 10 hours and miraculously arriving in South America will always be an interesting memory. I pulled back my seven years of public school Spanish prep from the annals of my intellect and for one week stumbled through an interesting country of social extremes, oily steaks and “loose tea” drinking bohemian seductresses all the while trying to cope with a language barrier. The entire time I tried to figure ways to make Senora Joseph, my ninth grade Spanish Teacher (who sent me to detention multiple times) proud. Alas, during my time in Uruguay I never did ask how to buy a ticket at the train station, nor for directions to the butcher like I had been prepped.

Nashville, Tenn., to Montevideo, Uruguay, isn't a trip many take, but for the group of Vanderbilt Jewish students going on Hillel's Alternative Spring Break the whole week turned out to be a quixotic quest of sorts. The trip took on multiple purposes. We went to connect with the large Jewish population in Montevideo but also to somehow accomplish the arduous task of building four houses for four impoverished families before we left the country. We had little knowledge of how we would accomplish the job, but were assured that somehow other groups had done similarly in the past. Ultimately, I suspended my disbelief when I realized that my concept of “house” truly didn't connect with the rest of the world.

The houses we made were 20 feet by 10 feet. The houses we worked to replace were made of tin mostly, and other ramshackle pieces of debris. Many people would crowd to sleep in each these hut-sized homes. My group's assigned family had three children, all very smart, fun and charismatic. One would learn to speak a good deal of English

by the time we finished. They appreciated our work. They would smile with each hammered nail and would try and help as we raised high their new roof beams. Their dorm-room sized house symbolized their new future and a veritable step forward with which to progress from. As we finished the house, I remember thinking about how I fought with my own sister about getting the “small room.” How silly of me.

My concept of poverty changed. The impoverished individuals I saw had family, community, love and hope. Families worked alongside one another and laughed. On breaks I would take time to play country music songs to Miguel, the patriarch of the community, who responded to my “Wagon Wheel” by Old Crow Medicine Show with “La Bomba” by Richie Valens and so forth. Each Vanderbilt student worked through sweat and freezing rain at points with a smiling, giggling child strapped to their back, only fueled by the will to help and the need to finish the their respective house projects by time of departure. I could go on about the local culture, my observations, the food, the fact that they only sell beer in liters, etc., but ultimately the image that stays with me had to do with the three children running around on their new wooden floor boards, cackling about the sound it made compared to their old dirt floor. ☞

## TRAVEL

## A novelty spring break

ANDREW LEVY  
Staff Writer

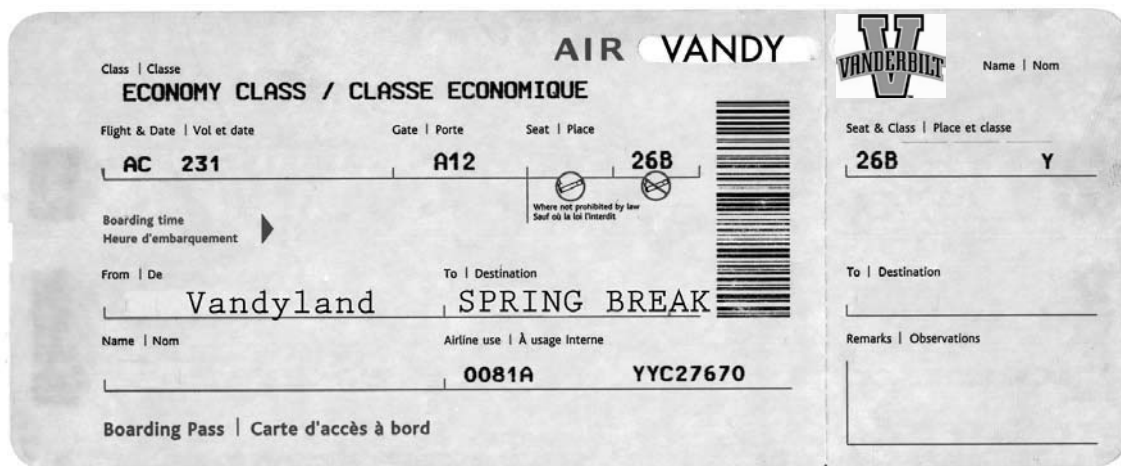
One month ago, clicking purchase at the bottom of the computer screen defined certain uncertainty. I, along with four others, had just bought a round-trip ticket to Lima, Peru in South America, which was a continent, a country and a city none of us knew anything about.

Fast-forwarding about 21 hours into the trip: It is 9 p.m., and our group has just crammed itself into the car of a random Peruvian headed toward the party city, Asia (pronounced Ah Sia). Although some would consider this decision dangerous, our driver Rocké quickly earned our trust after he voluntarily stopped for us to get a case of beer and a bottle of liquor. Sure he wasn't a real taxi driver — none of his windows worked, and he had to use his hazards while going 100kph on the highway because he didn't have headlights — but we made it there, so whatever. However “there” was not the crazy beach town we had expected. Apparently Sunday night is universally lame, but somehow with our terrible Spanish we were able to work an invitation to a local Peruvian house party, and after a quick discussion on the way to the main road regarding the potential danger of these strangers, we were headed to Buhama to meet up with our new friends.



It was closing in on midnight and we were now walking down a pitch-black alley, all rethinking our last decision, until we could faintly begin to see lights coming from a house down one side-street. Exiting the shadows, we found our friends drinking and talking outside a small shanty house. Right then the night picked up as our group and the locals jumped and danced around, downing the local favorite beverage, Cerveza Cristal. At one point, a local pulled out his machete, and everyone proceeded to circle a tree, taking turns chopping it down. Adult-style piñatas, a somewhat destructive tradition Vandy parties should definitely look in to.

The next day we hopped on a bus, and traveled four more hours south to the 100-person town, Huacachina. It was dark when we arrived, but the thousand foot sand dunes that surrounded the city were still quite a sight, especially the following afternoon as we flew up and down the sand cliffs on a local dune buggy. Never before have I been able to make a 360-degree turn and see nothing but sand — it was an amazing site. Watching the sun set behind these sand monsters, I was three days into a truly novel spring break. ☞



## TRAVEL

## A Vandy girl conquers the wilderness

Instead of hitting the beach for a week, an Alternative Spring Break group set out for an adventure in Yosemite National Park.

COURTNEY ROGERS  
Culture Editor

I'm not exactly a camper. In fact, prior to last week, I had never engaged in any kind of wilderness activity that could be construed as “roughing it.” I mean, I was a girl scout, but as far as sleeping in a tent and existing in a world where trash bins have locks to prevent nefarious, hungry bears, I was far from knowledgeable. I have always classified myself in the realm of high maintenance; not a princess per se but someone who enjoys creature comforts enough to choose adventures that involve showers and internet. With this in mind, I took a leap of faith and ranked Yosemite National Park high on my Alternative Spring Break application. When I got Yosemite, my friends and family were surprised and responded with, “You know there are bugs in the forest, right?” “Camping? Really?” And, “That's priceless, good luck.”

With these words of encouragement in mind, I began to have serious doubts about my future as a wilderness girl. Upon realizing that though Yosemite is in California, it is a very snowy forest with mountains, I began to wonder if my placement on the site was someone's idea of an extended joke. Some of my friends even encouraged me to drop out of the trip and to opt instead for a week of shopping and relaxing. But I was determined to prove them wrong, so I stayed in the group, calling my outdoorsy friends for camping supplies and investing in some serious Under Armour and other synthetic cold gear that was less than fashionable. Hint: It involved ski masks that would be dubbed ninja masks because I looked like a polar fleece ninja ready to strike with

only my eyes and nose visible. I left Vandy with two zero-degree sleeping bags and a hockey bag full of polar fleece and thought to myself, “I'm ready.”

It turned out no one was really prepared for Yosemite; the overwhelming beauty of the park took us all by surprise. Even those who had visited in the past had to stop and silently take in the stoic beauty of Yosemite's granite cliffs and towering trees. Of course, Yosemite's beauty initially took a back seat to adapting to its chilly conditions. The area around the park entrance was green and lush, but our campsite was an entirely different story — a story that involves three feet of snow.

Setting up the tents and unloading the car, I wondered how this wilderness adventure would work out. I wore six (yes six) shirts to bed and hoped for the best. Campers in RVs drove by the next day and told us we were “either real campers or really crazy.” Along the way, I discovered we were definitely a mix of both.

It's hard to recount my memories of my trip because without the personalities and the places to show first hand, a lot gets lost on paper. But with the help of a new group of friends, I learned some important lessons. For starters, there are very few foods that cannot be enhanced by the addition of Nutella and peanut butter. From pancakes to tortillas, even oatmeal if you're feeling really bold, PB and N is a wonderful combination. Rice needs to be added AFTER the water boils, and brown sugar turns into a brick when left in a bear box overnight. Lolly is Laurence for short and no matter how cool your group is, inventorying a warehouse full of toggle bolts and thousands of manila envelopes will never be a fun way to spend an afternoon.

But the most important lessons I learned on my trip

were to appreciate the people I see every day and to push myself to go outside of my comfort zone. With each day that passed, another pair of the group would share their “life maps.” All too often, it's easy to get bogged down by the little quirks everyone has. Hearing peoples' stories and experiences gave me so much more of an appreciation for their personalities.

And yes, camping was a huge step outside of my comfort zone. There was one point when we moved to the new campsite and I thought that I was lost in the wilderness. It was completely dark except for the small glow of my head lamp (yes I just admitted to owning and wearing a head lamp), and I was convinced that I would be eaten by a bear or die of hypothermia in the wild of Yosemite. Of course, no more than two minutes went by before I realized, genius that I am, I had merely been walking in the wrong direction, and the campsite was directly behind me.

After that embarrassing incident, I realized that to be a real camper, I just had to keep my cool and roll with whatever came my way. If it was cold, I put on another layer or made a “hot water baby” by filling my Nalgene with boiling water for my sleeping bag at night. I learned to build picnic tables like a pro, and in the end I found that even the preppiest of Vandy girls can leave the pearls and make-up behind for a simpler lifestyle. I can't call it glamorous, but the memories I made and the places I visited over break are some of my fondest so far at Vandy.

Now if only I could stop craving peanut butter and Nutella, it would be a perfect world. ☞



## SOCIAL

## To friend, or not to friend: the Facebook question

AMY JOHNSTON  
Staff Writer

There is more to spring break than raging, tone-deaf singing and ensuring a future generation of skin cancer victims: Facebook friends. For those Vanderbilt undergrads who gallivanted abroad, the best part of spring break is returning safely home to a fresh batch of friend requests on their Facebook accounts. But here is a word of warning: Don't be too hasty in pressing accept as your head swells

with a burgeoning sense of cyber validation. There are certain criteria you should follow when navigating this delicate area. Remember, colleges do not accept applicants willy-nilly, and neither should you. Read on to discover whom you should or should not bequeath the honor of reading your wall posts, scouring your Mini-feed and photo-stalking you for the rest of Facebook eternity.

However, despite all of the criteria, this decision can prove arduous. If you cannot make a decision of whether to accept a certain applicant, and cannot bear the thought of him or her wallowing in the agonizing purgatory of "Friend Request Pending," remember:

...There's always limited profile. ☼

## Accept the following requests:

- Anyone who might tag you in his/her photos (if only for the purpose of detagging later).
- Any random hookups you can remember the name of, but not what they look like.
- Any of the girls you bonded with in the bathroom that you just know you'll always keep in touch with as BFF's.
- Anyone off whom you did body shots.
- Anyone who you gave a nickname to (who knew that Sunburn McShaves-his-chest's real name is Benjamin).
- Anyone who you think might want to get tested.
- Anyone who might tell you to get tested.
- Anyone who you yearn to show that you are much more photogenic than when you passed out sitting straight up at Senor Frog's.
- The ex of your current boyfriend who you accidentally ran into and accidentally pumped for information about how they broke up while she was inebriated.
- Anyone who you think might help you recover anything you have lost, including: your passport, your wallet/purse, your dignity

## Do NOT accept these requests:

- Anyone who told you they were a senior ... then a law student ... then a professor.
- Anyone with a question mark for a profile picture. As freshman Sydney Gallobin says, "It's called Facebook, not Punctuation!"
- Anyone who did body shots off of you.
- Any foxy boy/girl who morphed into a hyena when the strobe lights stopped.
- Anyone who told you that this year was the absolute best college spring break they had been on ... since 1994.
- Any creeper who goes to school near you, and you might actually see again ... outside your window.
- The "Stage Five Clinger" who grandly insisted on buying you drink after drink ... at the all-inclusive bar.
- Anyone who addressed himself to you in the third person (as in "the Steve wants to dance with you").
- Anyone who confessed his or her undying love to you one night ... after calling you by the wrong name.
- The crazy ex of your boyfriend who happened to be at every club you frequented ... and in every cab.
- Anyone who offered you the hottest new "club drug of spring break '08!" ... GHP.

## BOOK REVIEW

## A book for a brain break

MARIA HIBBARD  
Staff Writer

I spent my spring break partying. Not necessarily in the literal sense, but I definitely checked my brains at the door while reading Lauren Weisberger's "Everyone Worth Knowing." Since the author also penned "The Devil Wears Prada," I expected (and desired) a light read with a catchy, trendy storyline that focused on a stylish, attractive, young business professional, interweaving her office life with her personal life — and including a few indulgent girly and romantic scenes, of course.

Yes, I asked for predictability in a light spring break read — and indeed, I was met with predictability to the extreme.

Weisberger chooses to cast the young business professional as Bette Robinson, a typically stylish, intelligent, yet restless young New Yorker who is completing her fifth year at an intense investment banking firm as the story opens. She enjoys drinks with her best friend, brunches with her gay uncle and her square of rented New York real-estate apartment, but is bored and frustrated with her obviously un-chic job.

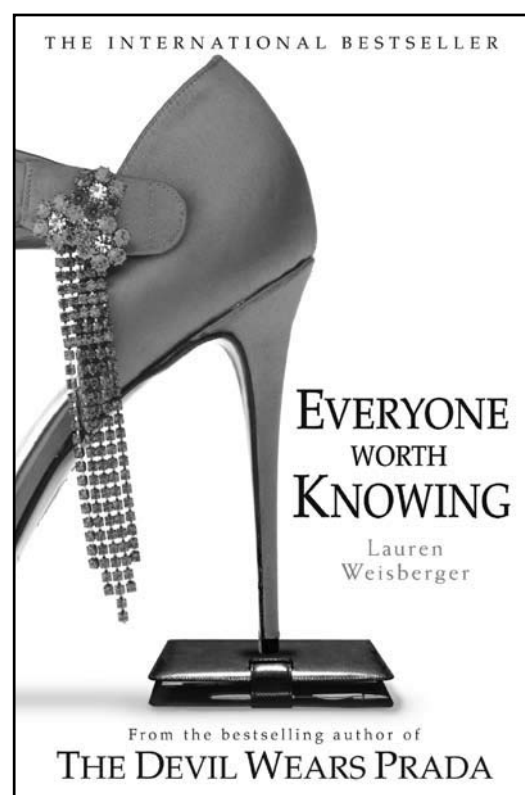
Time to move on to — what else? — party planning (of course, to satisfy the practical everyday reader), an occupation that Bette feels slightly uncomfortable doing at first, but she eventually accepts the drama and required tasks of "partying" the job requires. Much of the following two-hundred pages details the various stresses of putting together appropriate guest lists, choosing the right dress to wear to nightly parties and worries about relationships with her coworkers and family. To the joy of her boss, she even agrees to act like she is dating a famous New York socialite to drum up press for the public relations company.

Page after page, Bette would continue the saga of her recently exciting life, and although I had to endure many paragraphs detailing surprisingly dramatic days at the office, followed by descriptions of the various catastrophes at the night's ensuing parties, I was also granted my wish of a few indulgent, girly, romantic scenes. Bette pretends she is dating Phillip Weston, New York's self-proclaimed "gift to women" — but of course, she has a crush on the down-to-earth, yet attractive bouncer. To Weisberger's credit, the technique of combining Bette's

professional and personal lives causes a few unexpected interruptions and twists in both realms of her life. Most of the time, however, I could predict the events, and most of them consisted of stressful party planning, mixing with famous people, scandalous photos and a therapeutic phone call with the best friend. Mix and repeat — for around 300 pages.

The book is current enough that the celebrity names Weisberger drops are not passe, but who knows how long it will be until Jessica Simpson, Lindsey Lohan and Jay-Z are too old to party with the young crowd? Thankfully, the novel is written in first person, so I was able to be reminded that Bette did not completely resemble her ridiculous colleagues periodically throughout the dialogue-heavy prose. Because of this lightweight writing style however, it is a quick and easy read.

Quick and easy it may be, but with no overarching purpose. Bette plans parties. Bette goes to parties. Bette experiences relational drama. Bette recovers from drama. Bette resolves conflict in a typically predictable way (I'll save you the melodrama, so that if you so desire, you can read it yourself). But hey, I wanted trivial. Looking for a satisfyingly unintelligent read? Here's your perfect pick. ☼

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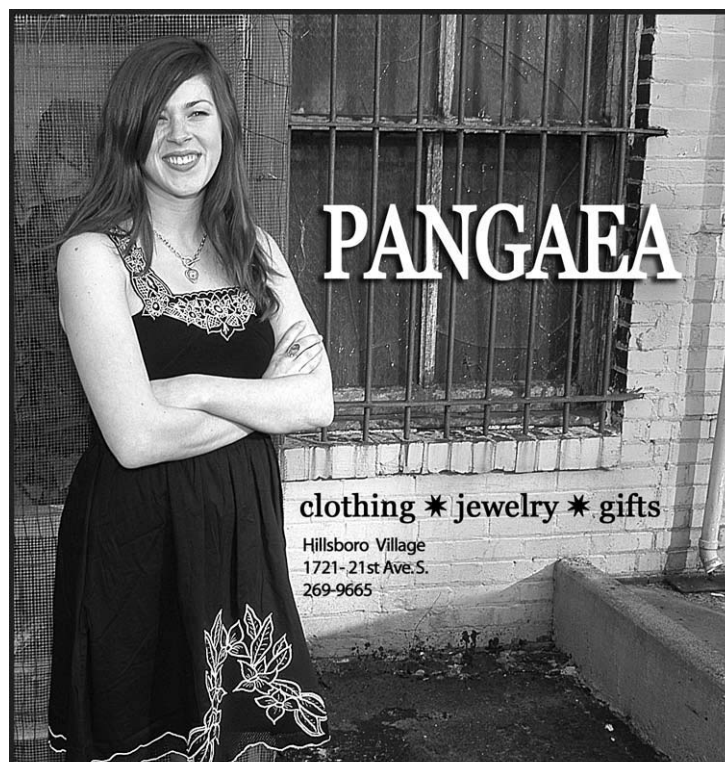
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MOVIES

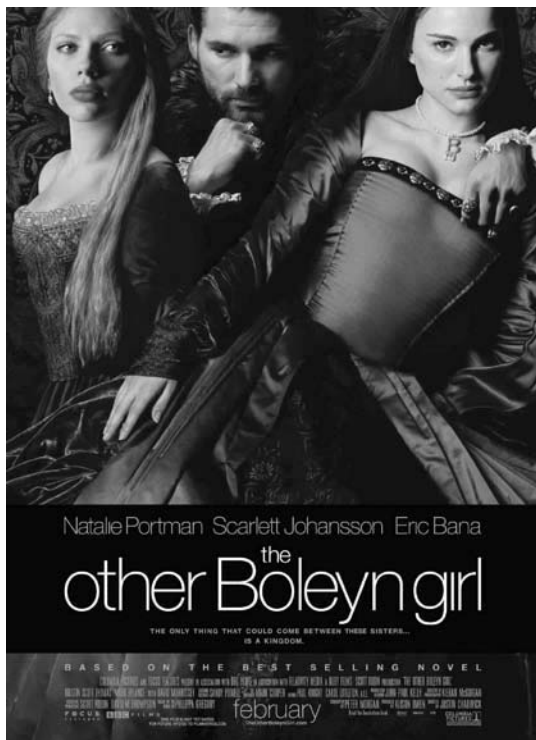
# ‘The Other Boleyn Girl’ makes history boring

CHRIS GEARING  
Managing Editor

As I strolled into the theater, I was a bit skeptical as to what I was about to see. This movie looked like a big chick flick a la the deception and intrigue only the British royal family can deliver. But as I turned to the poster on my walk into the theatre, I remembered why I was OK with seeing “The Other Boleyn Girl” — Scarlett Johansson and Natalie Portman in steamy bedroom scenes for a couple hours. Oh yeah, now I feel better.

The sort-of, almost plot revolves around the times and trials of the Boleyn sisters, Anne (Portman) and Mary (Johansson). Henry VIII (played by Eric Bana) is having a bit of trouble producing a male heir to the throne with his wife, Katherine of Aragon (Ana Torrent). Where to turn? Oh yeah, the obvious choice — a mistress. Not only is this suggested to Henry on the sly, but the members of the court downright set him up with the Boleyns. Yeah, a real step forward for women’s rights. Once Henry visits the Boleyn girls out in the country, the games begin as both Mary and Anne vie for his affection and favor. This all leads to broken hearts, intrigue and even the offhanded decision of Henry’s to break away from the Catholic Church just to get Anne Boleyn to “give it up.” Yeah, Henry made some poor decisions back then, but at least it doesn’t all end badly. Oh wait, yeah it does.

Where to begin on how terrible this movie is? It’s like reading a history book while a monkey beats you with a wooden ladle but with more pauses and ridiculous atmospheric touches. Honestly, the film feels like it’s dragging from the very beginning. There are a lot of pauses and “nuance” with characters simply looking at each other and “making eyes” with longing. Seriously, the quiet time isn’t even poignant or meaningful like in most movies — it’s just empty time to bring the ultimate running time of the movie up to about two hours (even though it feels like eight). Now, I’m sure the story is fascinating for those who have no idea how the Church of England was formed. But for all the eighth graders who haven’t read a history book, that part of the story is simply a footnote in development of a boring plot



around some amazing historical events. I can’t even put the blame solidly on one or all of the actors, they all did a fine job in their respective roles: Bana as a jacked and disturbed Henry, Johansson as the shy and simple Mary and Portman as a shrewd and conspiring Anne Boleyn. The whole thing together is just a big old boring mess of a movie. Honestly, the aforementioned history book would be shorter and more interesting.

I should have known when a “title drop” occurred within the first 10 minutes of the movie, there was something wrong. The worst part — the film was definitely lacking steamy bedroom scenes with either of the starring knockouts. Take it from me, if deciding whether or not to go see “The Other Boleyn Girl,” choose the other movie. ☹

**RATING: ★★☆☆**  
‘The Other Boleyn Girl’ is rated PG-13.

MOVIES

# Miami International Film Festival beats the sunshine

ELLIE MIX  
Fiction Editor

Those of us lucky enough to head south to Miami for Spring Break got more than just tans and mojitos. The Miami International Film Festival celebrated its 25th year in what we natives call the capital of South America. Each year Miami hosts hundreds of films from Egypt to Colombia, some that were honored in Cannes, some making their first or U.S. premiers. This year’s lineup was, as expected, even better than the last. With 200 films being shown across Miami and South Beach, theaters were packed with international spectators and even stars; Kate Hudson herself was spotted attending multiple showings throughout the week with her son, along with Demi Moore and Michael Caine.

The week started off with the Mexican film “La Misma Luna” (Under the Same Moon), a poignant story about a mother and son’s journey to reunite after experiencing the cruelties of illegal immigration. The director, Patricia Riggen, was honored with a toast at the gala that night for her regional premiere and received an influx of questions after the showing.

One of the kicks of the Miami International Film Festival is getting to know the actors and directors up close and personally, as after every showing there is a question-and-answer session. Directors like Wang Honghai (“My Dream”) and Yang Zhang (“Getting Home”) traveled from China to show their immensely picaresque films and be honored at the awards ceremony. Zhang’s film garnered laughs and tears as the protagonist, Zhao, embarks on a journey to take his dead friend home to be buried by carrying him on his back through beautiful landscapes and contemplations. Where else can anyone see the real China through the eyes of a simple, committed worker and friend?

The real winner in my eyes this year was the shocking “Vengo de un Avion que Cayo en las Montanas” (Stranded: I’ve Come from a Plane that Crashed on the Mountain) directed by Gonzalo Arijon about the infamous crash of a small Uruguayan airplane that landed on a glacier in the Andes in 1972. “Stranded” tells the harrowing story of the 14 survivors’ hell over 72 days in their own words in this partly acted, partly documented film. Arijon’s friendship with the survivors led to his production of this movie in an extremely intimate fashion: with interviews taken on the very mountain of their peril (albeit in summer), the survivors were able to recount the horrors of the crash and their struggle to stay alive. The news of this crash shocked and horrified the entire world 35 years ago as it was discovered that the survivors resorted to peaceful cannibalism to survive. In the film the survivors explain that food ran out after two weeks ... there was no other choice. It was an intense, extremely personal ceremony, however, as in their eyes they saw this as a type of religious communion, the eating of the body. One of the survivor’s eight-year-old son even said of the departed members, “They lent their muscles so you could walk.” Because of their endurance, several members were able to climb snowy mountain after mountain, and were saved by a shepherd across the Argentinean border who then reported the crash. Their survival is nothing short of a miracle, and this film is a true testament to the enduring nature of the human body and spirit in life and in death.

So instead of Netflixing the latest Hugh Grant comedy or another season of “Lost,” give one of the many international films celebrated in Miami this week a try. You never know what kind of gem you may discover from across the world. ☹

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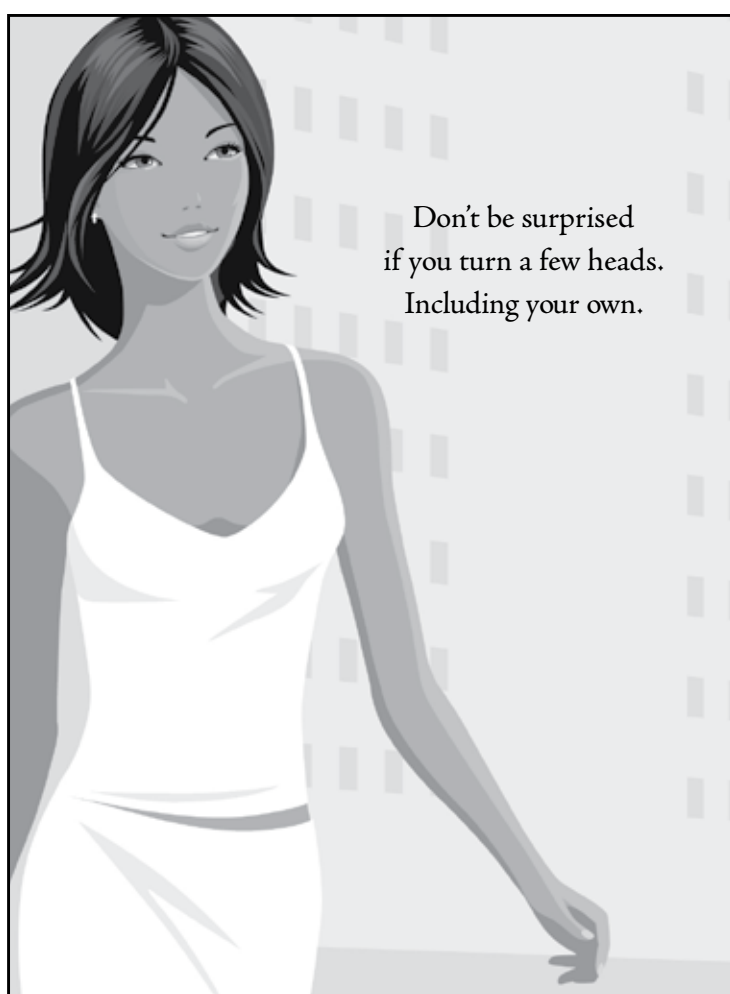
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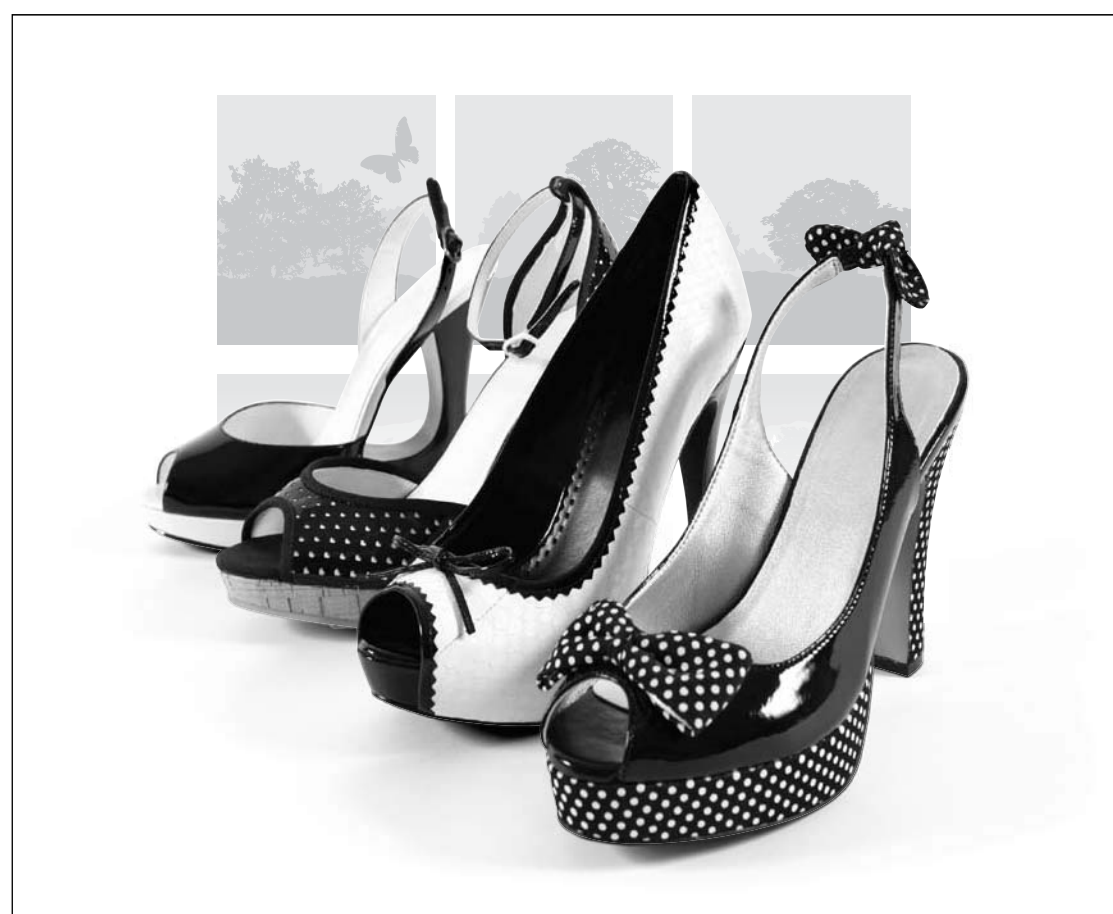
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# GUITAR TOWN

OWEN CANAVAN  
Staff Writer

## Other than love,

music remains the only universal language. And far more than New York or Los Angeles, Nashville remains the only real music town in the world. Blocks outside our warm, yet at times constraining campus boundary exists the backbone of the music industry's machine: Music Row. Though the physicality of the implied street extends beyond one single avenue, it is indeed no more than a five-minute walk from end to end. Music publishing groups, performing rights' organizations and record labels, however, are from the only institutions that allow Nashville's pseudonym—Music City—to actually live. In fact, many would argue that it is the vintage instrument shops, used repair depots and sales outlets that truly comprise the essence of Nashville's music scene, and I would agree. Last Saturday I was privileged enough to act on some of the friendships that I have made over the past two years, and learn some fascinating stories about how the last remaining small guitar stores serve as a backdrop against the city's history, the music business as a whole and the societal changes apparent throughout the country.

I began at Rock Block Guitars, a shop housed in a 100-year-old building on Elliston Place, directly adjacent to the Soda Shop. The place brings back personal memories, as I used to take lessons there from a southern rock guitar badass. The owner of Rock Block, Jerry O'Donnell—a Hammond B3 organ player himself—can be credited as having established a grassroots following for his shop. Drexel, the store's weekend manager, noted, "A major reason why such a small place has been successful is because of the fact that working musicians are the only ones who work the shop." Thus, a loyal constituency frequents Rock Block purely because of previously established friendships. He laughs, "Hey, that's still business."

Employing no marketing techniques or even advertisements, the fact that Rock Block is still a fully functioning shop speaks positively to the landlords as well, as the ride of corporate companies such as Guitar Center

and Musician's Friend generally have the leverage to force these small, in-house operations out of business. In addition, the fact that so many big-name musicians used to either work or hang out at Rock Block also play a role in the store's ability to maintain its reputation as a friendly shop with professionally trained employees. Drexel mentions toward the end of our encounter that members of the Allman Brothers, Gov't Mule and Charlie Daniels Band could be seen here almost on a daily basis, and they even used to rehearse here. Little did I know when I was taking lessons, I may have been plugging through the same amp riggings used during the Allmans' practice sessions ... if only I had grown up two generations ago.

Drexel's prophetic final words of the interview that surely extend as a motto to Nashville's entire music scene were that the store has "... always been word of mouth, and always will be."

AS I made my way downtown toward Lower Broadway, I wondered if I would have the same success at Gruhn Guitars, a shop widely considered not only the nicest of Nashville guitar shops, but also the most expensive and commercially penetrated. With a dose of good luck and perhaps even divine intervention, my time at Gruhn was markedly more successful than I had ever imagined. It's interesting to note that when I arrived in Nashville in August of my freshman year I actually went to Gruhn Guitars before setting foot on campus. Bizarre maybe.

Regardless, I approached my buddy Keith when I arrived and told him about the story I was working on. Without hesitation, he offered to take me upstairs to meet with owner George Gruhn himself. What was upstairs? I was only aware of the first-floor showroom until a short elevator ride admitted me to an area where the hundreds of thousands of dollars of products are kept. As I waited for Gruhn to finish appraisals, I asked if I could pick around for a bit on some of the guitars on display. Having received permission, I found myself playing a \$150,000 acoustic Martin from the 1920s—not too bad for arriving without an appointment. I entered Gruhn's office elated with the opportunity that had presented itself to me entirely by chance.

Upon entering, I couldn't tell if the office belonged to an environmentalist with an affinity for large snakes (living in his office were an Australian carpet python, a Cuban boa, an Everglades rat snake and a Mexican Gray Banded King snake, among others) or to the most important man in the vintage instrument business. It turned out to belong to both.

Gruhn explained that Gruhn Guitars' business model is different from any other store in town (and perhaps the nation), as the showroom is not the biggest area of the shop. Instead, the store consists of four floors, and the public only sees the first.

"You continually hear that new businesses generally fail in their first years because of insufficient capitalization and inexperience," Gruhn said. "One of the things I have always had in my business was the basic formula that one quarter would be showroom and the rest of it for support."

Yet, perhaps the most fascinating point of conversation was Gruhn's journey into the business.

"After my grad work I got a call from Hank Williams Jr., who said that Sonny Osbourne from the Opry had told him that I had a bunch of old guitars. He said that he would be there in four hours to buy some—and he did," Gruhn said. "He bought all the guitars he could hold, which was three, and then returned with a Cadillac Eldorado and bought enough to fill that. Then he said that Nashville didn't have anything like me, and said he would fund opening a shop for me. So I moved to Nashville and had an apartment waiting for me."

Gruhn explained that he began his collection of guitars in the classifieds, scanning for instruments to purchase. Despite the fact that "for every one instrument I would come across that I wanted to purchase, there were 50 to 100 that I didn't want," Gruhn bought almost all of them, re-selling them as a part of his collection for an elevated price.

This practice proved to be extremely lucrative, as, "within less than a week I would have sold everything to get my



money back," explained Gruhn.

Gruhn may have been one of the more interesting, bizarre and uniquely brilliant people I have ever sat down with for an extended period of time. I felt quite privileged to receive such a unique account on the vintage instrument business, and the story of how George came to be considered the best.

MY final stop led me four miles down 12th Avenue South to an old shop called Corner Music. Though not nearly as impressive as the aforementioned stores, it did offer a glimpse into what it's like to be an operating music store somewhat removed from downtown. Floor manager Jason Howes said the shop "... struggles because of the lack of tourist business that comes naturally with operating downtown." Instead, the majority of Corner Music's sales stem from professional musicians wanting a more personal connection with their salesmen. Nevertheless, it was impressive Corner Music remains a self-sufficient entity in a relatively isolated Nashville location.



AFTER a day well spent of learning about vintage guitars and the men that sell them, I realized that these owners keep their stores running purely out of their desires to keep an attachment to the past. Though it may seem that this triad of shops are the last glimpse of the way Nashville music used to function, I have a feeling that they won't be going anywhere, at least in the near future. Musicians and fans alike share the common joy of walking into a guitar store and marveling at the beautiful instruments, despite whether or not one can actually play them. Should an absence of such shops ever be realized in Music City, Nashville culture would suffer tremendously. Until then, in order to combat such a terrible, yet unlikely potential, take a trip downtown, pick up an instrument and find out what the noise is all about. ☘

**SOUNDTRACK TO THE ISSUE:** 1. "I Can Feel It," Sean Kingston and Phil Collins Remix 2. "Wishing Well," Blind Melon 3. "Shape I'm In," Stephen Belin 4. "Rush," Akon 5. "Fidelity," Regina Spektor 6. "Love Me Dead," Ludo 7. "Lay Down The Law," Switches 8. "Long Road To Ruin," Foo Fighters 9. "Go Go Gadget Flow," Lupe Fiasco 10. "This One's A Cheap Shot," Every Avenue

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**SUDOKU:** To solve, fill in the blanks so the numbers 1-9 appear just once in each horizontal row, vertical column and 3x3 box.

**SOLUTIONS**

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**CLOSING PICS**



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## Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Waterproof covers, briefly
  - 6 Tiller
  - 10 Hardwood trees
  - 14 La Scala show
  - 15 Needle case
  - 16 Actress Sorvino
  - 17 Religious grp.
  - 18 Flip through
  - 19 False god
  - 20 Quitter
  - 22 Handle with kid gloves
  - 24 Capital of Vietnam
  - 26 DIY buy
  - 27 Theater section
  - 30 Squid squirts
  - 32 Obligations
  - 36 Combination punch
  - 38 Removed with care
  - 40 Black goo
  - 41 Opportunity provider
  - 43 Wildebeest
  - 44 Arm of the Indian Ocean
  - 46 Caught sight of
  - 48 Bean or Welles
  - 49 Glitch
  - 51 Towel ID
  - 52 Buddhist sect
  - 54 Fight site
  - 56 Firedog
  - 60 Christmas star's spot
  - 64 Tender feeling
  - 65 Big rig
  - 67 Shop
  - 68 Young 'uns
  - 69 Greek god of love
  - 70 Bearer
  - 71 Tobacco kiln
  - 72 Chimney sediment
  - 73 Sergeant fish
- DOWN**
- 1 "Sweeney \_\_\_"
  - 2 Copier
  - 3 Gambling mecca
  - 4 Soothsayer
  - 5 Pacific island group
  - 6 Actor Charlton
  - 7 List-ending abbr.
  - 8 Feast on Oahu
  - 9 Belorussian city
  - 10 Left out
  - 11 Verdi opera
  - 12 Fast-food magnate Ray
  - 13 Preserving substance
  - 21 Alliances
  - 23 Downy ducks
  - 25 Flower arrangement
  - 27 State gambling
  - 28 During a broadcast
  - 29 Disinfectant's targets
  - 31 Actor Mineo
  - 33 Hobgoblin
  - 34 Sound adjuster
  - 35 Writer Terkel
  - 37 Director Herzog
  - 39 Singer Pete
  - 42 '52 and '56 candidate
  - 45 Runniest and squishiest
  - 47 Touring car
  - 50 Drawer
  - 53 Snouts
  - 55 Snug retreats
  - 56 Singing voice
  - 57 U.S. weather grp.
  - 58 Movies on PCs
  - 59 Roman fiddler
  - 61 Oz dog
  - 62 Black-and-white treat
  - 63 Fringe benefit
  - 66 Bovine reply

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**Solutions**

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