

ARTS

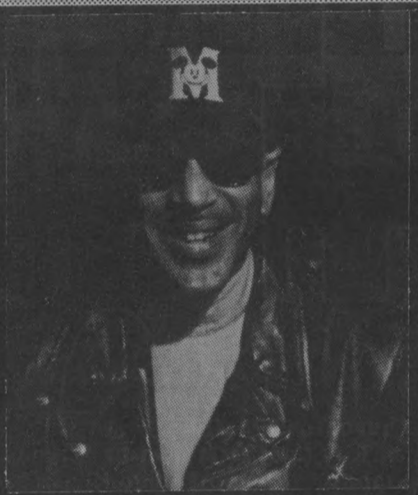
week

july 29 - august 4

the arts and entertainment section of the daily nexus

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SYLLABUS:

Thursday, July 30

• *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, a presentation of the Andrew Lloyd Webber/Tim Rice musical by the Santa Barbara Civic Light Opera's Youth Musical Theatre program; San Marcos High School auditorium, 8 p.m.; runs through August 1

• Another evening of Art Song and Opera with Elizabeth Mannion directing participants in the UCSB Summer Vocal Institute; Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall, 8 p.m.

Friday, July 31

• Jerry Garcia; Ventura Fairgrounds
• African-American culture expert and gifted storyteller Akoni the Storyman will spin tall tales at the Santa Barbara museum of Natural History; Fleischmann Auditorium, 3 p.m.

Saturday, August 1

• Hear the joyful notes of a well-played bouzouki and sample some sizzling souvlaki at the 19th annual Santa Barbara Greek Festival in Oak Park; 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sunday, too!

Beach getting old? May we suggest ...

— ARTSWEEK'S —
official guide to the top tens of summer.

TOP TEN videos

- 1. Shakes the Clown** — Heralded by some to be the "Citizen Kane of clown movies," this is probably one of the greatest films ever. Ever. Bobcat Goldthwaith wins our hearts as Shakes, the alcoholic clown, who must battle the evil Binky, the drug dealing clown. In his way, he battles Rodeo clowns and goes under-entertainment. Sublime cover as a mime.
- 2. Until the End of the World** — The only problem you could possibly have with this film is sitting through all three hours of it in a movie theatre. Well, fear no more! Director Wim Wenders (*Wings of Desire*) shot this film all over the world so it's like taking an international trip, except you don't get to decide where to go and you can use your own bathroom.
- 3. Billy Bathgate** — This Dustin Hoffman vehicle really isn't that great, but it features the full frontal nudity of Nicole Kidman. So, next time you bump into Dianetic Macho-Man Tom Cruise, you can really piss him off and say, "I saw your wife naked, and she was hot."
- 4. The Flash** — This was originally a T.V. movie that was also the pilot for the series about the Flash — the red suit who runs really fast. It's probably one of the most creative things ever done on network television. The show was cancelled just a few days after its star, John Wesley Shipp, came out of the closet. Makes you wonder ...
- 5. Deep Throat** — Have you ever seen it? Well, then shut up. It's really funny — on purpose.
- 6. The Best of John Candy** — Coming out later this month. All his greatest from SCTV. At long last, the man is recognized for his genius.
- 7. The Rapture** — This is a pretty weird religious film. In all truth, it's depressing. However, Mimi Rodgers does appear topless in it several times. So, now that you
- 8. Slacker** — It doesn't have a plot. It just kind of follows around a bunch of people as they babble uselessly — much like ourselves. So, now that I.V. is abandoned for the summer months, you can rent this and it will be like you were back at a big I.V. party.
- 9. Time Life Books Presents: Trials of Life** — Actually, you can't rent this nature series. It's one of those only available through the T.V. offers, but I like the part in the commercial when the pelican and the shark are fighting. That doesn't stand a chance.
- 10. Taps** — So, now that Tom is purple with rage (and he can't hit you because of religion), he might moon you. You can just sit back and say, "No thanks, I've already seen it." —Anonymous

see page 4A

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STAGE review

Shawn's Bitter, Tasty Lemon

Campus Play Gets the Point Across, But Hits a Sour Note

By Pax Wassermann
 staff writer

Wallace Shawn is a man with a lot on his mind. The author of *Aunt Dan & Lemon*, which opened locally at the UCSB Main Theatre last Friday, Shawn uses the theater as a vehicle to express woe-ridden thoughts, which range from the Holocaust to free sex to Henry Kissinger. And for the most part, his works are a welcome, sometimes even enriching, experience.

The play, which many have touted as "disturbing," takes place in the apartment — and memory — of Lemon, a hypochondriac young woman played by Delta Rae Giordano. It seems Lemon, who lives a life of isolation in her London flat, hasn't had much of a life. "Most of my sex, if you can call it that," she relates, "has been with myself." She's had few acquaintances, outside of the occasional doctor and her parents (her father an eccentric American and her mother a proper Englishwoman). But her most significant acquaintance is her parents' best friend, a some-

what boisterous American known as Aunt Dan (Meredith McMinn) — a woman she idolizes. The play centers on Lemon's memories of the lively anecdotes which Aunt Dan would recount to the "young Lemon."

Using a minimum of props and set pieces, *Aunt Dan & Lemon* is presented as a string of discontinuous memories from both Lemon's and Aunt Dan's lives. The angle here is that, due to Lemon's oh-so-bland life, she has acquired the memories of Aunt Dan — including her adventures with a band of hep swingers — as her own. The stage becomes a forum for the unbridled regurgitation of these experiences.

Though this technique exposes the audience to a variety of viewpoints, it is also the production's greatest weakness, along with the caricaturish assortment of characters. On many counts the format works, due largely to tight blocking and some solid supporting performances from Ellen Margolis (Mother/June/Flora) and Shana M. Lynch (Mindy). But elsewhere, as in Father's monologue on



Aunt Dan and her trusty Lemon

working conditions in England, and Lemon's opening soliloquy, the characters turn into tedious caricatures that fail to connect with the audience. Though much of the humor suffices, the characters are distinctly unreal and, in the case of Lemon, a bit stiff.

Aunt Dan & Lemon succeeds more as a sounding board for Wallace Shawn's insightful commentaries — in this case, the existence of true compassion, in light of our fascination with violence and murder — than as an actual play. (This should come as no surprise to anyone who's seen *My Dinner With Andre*, a film Shawn co-authored which, though well-worth the price of admission, gave a new definition to the term "talkie.")

However, theater is many things. Despite *Aunt Dan & Lemon's* standard shortcomings, the play at least serves as a vehicle to get some important ideas across — an admirable task. *Aunt Dan & Lemon* plays July 26 at 2 p.m. and July 30, 31, and Aug. 1 at 8 p.m. For more info., call 893-3535.

FILM review

'Mo' Money' Sho' Is No Funny

By J. Christaan Whalen
 staff writer

So get this, ha ha, Damon Wayans starts working at a credit card company and he starts stealing returned credit cards! And then, *whoa!*, he goes out and buys a bunch of expensive watches and clothes on innocent people's accounts! And then, *tee hee*, he hangs a guy!

Funny. The way the new Wayans movie *Mo' Money* sells itself in its print ads and trailers as a feel-good, knee-slapping comedy about loveable con men ("This summer, comedy has a new face!" and "He's mo' fun, mo' outrageous!"), one might be inclined to think that the movie is a feel-good, knee-slapping comedy about loveable con men. However.

Mo' Money is a mean-spirited, poorly executed action movie with maybe three worthwhile comedy bits. Listen. It was directed by Peter MacDonald — the director of *Rambo III* — a guy who wouldn't know intentional comedy if you hit

him over the head with it. So, he hits us over the head with every spare brick of a joke and nightstick of a kung fu he can get his hands on. It's truly numbing.

Every time we're supposed to have a comic moment — and some of them are pretty promising in the set-up — we are bludgeoned with oversimplification and condescending explanation. For example, in a typical "con" for the movie (this is yet another movie about con men where all the cons are not really cons at all, just rip-offs), the Wayans brothers go into a deli and Damon starts bouncing up and down and chanting and breaking eggs and essentially busting up the store. His brother, newcomer Marlon Wayans, starts pleading with the store owner to make him a turkey sandwich because Damon "needs the lactate." OK, I guess that's pretty funny. He fakes some sort of seizure, destroys a couple hundred dollars worth of food and the boys triumphantly emerge with a single turkey sandwich. Director MacDonald robs this moment of

any humor, however, by going back into the deli after the boys have left and having the store owner inexplicably faint. Oh! I get it! The store owner was upset by all this! Oh!

Damon Wayans wrote this movie — what else is it but delusions and ego-trip day dreams to write his own character doing superhuman Chuck Norris-type stuff by the end of the movie. Here we have "Johnny" jumping off a moving monorail onto the top of a meat truck some 20 feet below and then immediately jumping off the meat truck onto the roof of a moving luxury sedan another 15 feet down. This happens to be the bad guy's moving luxury sedan. So, our Johnny rides on the roof of the car at speeds of 40 mph, crashing through back alleys and fruit stands. Then he smashes his bare fist through the sun roof and then chokes the driver while carrying on a conversation with him. Then he gets shot in the shoulder and then he beats the guy up and hangs him. It's not like any of this was done with a sense of irony or a

hint of the fantastic like some urban *Total Recall*, it is simply what it is; it's simply what happened.

Better films in this genre, like *Beverly Hills Cop* and *Fletch*, were able to combine comedy with action and mystery easily and fluidly. While neither Axel Foley or Irwin M. Fletcher were play-by-the-numbers type guys, they were intelligent, truly witty and morally good. Both of them were con men, but they didn't steal money from innocent, faceless people. And when violence called, they didn't turn into Lee Majors or Bruce Lee. They stayed in character: Axel Foley simply shot the guy and Fletch distracted them with bad jokes.

What we have here is two movies. One, a comedy where the pinnacle of humor is a joke about using people's fear of AIDS (by acting like homosexuals and sneezing on salespeople) to con a jewelry store. The other, a confusing, plotless action-mystery as predictable as sunrise. Neither of these movies is any good.

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Local Band Thinks, Drinks and Winks in I.V.

By Bonnie Bills
staff writer

*I'm just a guy in I.V.
Checkin' out the girlies I see.
Stay out late, party 'til three
Fucked up — you know me
I just can't wait 'til Saturday night
Wash my jeans and put 'em on tight
Rage all day and into the night.*

So go the profound lyrics of local metal-rappers 40-OZ's epic song, "Guy in I.V." ... OK, OK, so maybe the song isn't so penetratingly poignant. But the words do represent the mindset of a band composed of, well, just a bunch of guys in I.V. A bunch of guys who not only seem to have honed a keen sense of what the overpopulated student ghetto is really all about (bands and booze). They like it.

"There's a lot of barbar-

ism in Isla Vista," says Ed Diamond, 40-OZ songwriting tour-de-force and I.V. aficionado. "And there's a lot of barbarism in me and in the rest of the band."

This barbaric squad of musicians just brought their Urban Dance Squad-inspired blend of funky guitar riffs and rap back to the local scene after a year long absence. While Diamond doesn't necessarily look like the typical Isla Vista front man, he says he and his band are most at home in a place where students can drink free beer and watch bands play for free.

"We like to promote ourselves as an I.V. band," says Diamond, a middle-aged music industry veteran who refers to Isla Vistas as "kids." Born in a Los Angeles housing-project "100 years ago", he was indoctrinated into the I.V. lifestyle when he lived in a garage at the boathouse and had to take showers outdoors, using a garden hose.

The band was originally

launched in 1990 at a weekend party, quickly marking their territory with the stench of their "x-rated" raps, which local venues were quick to sniff out. Songs like "She's a Ho," cost them gigs at the local Boys' Club and the Graduate because of their "offensive" lyrics.

Diamond says these lost ventures don't bother him in the least. "Now, if we play anything in Isla Vista it'll be free gigs for the kids," he says, hailing Del Playa's balconies as his "favorite place to play in the entire stinking town."

And (although the band has been playing downtown clubs as of late) he spews contempt for venues like the Graduate/Anaconda. "We'll never play that building ... unless they burn it down again and put some windows in."

While his lyrics may sound superficial, Diamond's attitude towards people isn't. The words "making a difference," pop



Ed Diamond and his trusty drummer

NOAH MARTIN/Daily Nexus

up often in his talk of entertaining Isla Vista folk, and he says he hopes to raze the barriers erected between people over issues like AIDS, racism and sexism.

At the same time, he says his lyrics are about what goes on around him — the simple perspective on life of

a guy in I.V. Even a song with a feminist-baiting title like "She's a Ho" is an anthem of appreciation, not degradation, he claims.

"It has nothing to do with misogyny — we're dutifully praising the oldest profession," he says. "Basically, you get what you want when

you pay a hooker — you're happy, she's happy, everybody's happy."

Nice philosophy. 40-OZ will be playing at Felix's (that funky little hangout in old town Santa Barbara) with DOG and Soul Force on Thursday, July 30.

ARTS interview

Strunz and Farah: Off Beat World Beat You Can't Beat

By Jeanine Natale
staff writer

If you think Eddie Van Halen can rip on guitar, and that only blues musicians know how to jam, wait'll you hear George Strunz and Ardeshir Farah. These guys are two Los Angeles-based guitarists who have mastered the volatile combination of technical perfection and rhythmic passion to come up with the out-of-this World Beat sounds of Strunz & Farah.

In anticipation of their show at the Anaconda Theater this Friday, *Artsweek* spoke with George Strunz, who shed some light on the deep cultural roots that give Strunz & Farah their dramatic musical power.

Artsweek: Your music seems to have a strong flamenco influence — very passionate, intense strumming and finger-picking patterns on nylon-string guitarism ...

George Strunz: Well, I consider flamenco, or Spanish style guitar, to be the most beautiful, ancient sound in the world. It has definitely influenced our playing, but we also have an Afro-Cuban percussionist, a Colombian bassist and an African drummer, who all add to our sound. Also, Ardeshir is from Iran, and so adds a Middle Eastern flavor too. The style we play, I believe, is called World Beat or World Music.

Artsweek: Isn't it hard to blend all these different styles into something a guitarist can play?

Strunz: No, because the guitar is a very good translator. It makes everything sound good.

Artsweek: But you must have studied for years — the pieces you and Ardeshir play seem incredibly difficult to master.

Strunz: Actually, we are both self-taught. I studied some flamenco as a teenager, and Ardeshir moved around between England, America and Canada at 14,

and so westernized his playing.

Artsweek: (dumbfounded silence ...)

Strunz: Well, we did have very clear musical goals in mind, and we were aware of how much work was involved in mastering different playing techniques, but a lot of it was just learning how to manipulate scales over chord progressions.

Artsweek: ... uh, a lot like jazz musicians do, you mean?

Strunz: Yes — right. Like I said, we have been influenced by many different styles.

Artsweek: In some of your pieces you use unusual windchimes or whistles that sound like bird calls ... are these traditional Latin or African instruments?

Strunz: They are actually Pre-Columbian — dating back to before 1492. Luis Perez is the guy that handles those sounds, and he performs with us about 50 percent of the time. Many are ancient instruments that fell into disuse when the Spaniards and later missionaries began to colonize the Mayan and Aztec Indians, and so it's a mystery as to how they were used back then. Luis is basically reinventing the sound as he plays — he's great.

Artsweek: Was it hard to make a name for yourselves in the music business with your style of playing? I mean, do you consider Strunz & Farah to be successful as a group now?

Strunz: Music is a tough business, and it wasn't until our fifth album that we began to have some clout as serious musicians within the industry. You know, I'm always surprised by the fact that California is rather ignorant of flamenco music — despite all the cultural influences, the music doesn't seem to be as popular.

Artsweek: Do you think there are a lot of musicians out there who are truly ta-

lented, but just aren't being heard?

Strunz: No, many really great musicians I know are being recorded ... talent will win out. I just think it has to have meaning for the times. You have to have something to say to the world.

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SWAP MEET

TOP TEN bars

1. **The Red Door** — You could walk right past it and not even know. I found it making a wrong turn on Cota. It's a pretty tiny joint, no cover charge, and friendly people who know how to dance. In the wee hours, the DJ tends to put on *disco* and things get kinda out of control.

2. **Art's Bar** — This small dive is located on upper De La Vina. You got your bar, you got your pool tables, and you always got your blues band. The crowd is older and mellow — somewhat of a retired Hell's Angels gang.

3. **Mel's** — Just like Art's but smaller. Much smaller. We're talking a nice-sized shed. Actually "hallway" is a better word — lots of sweat

and sticky bodies. They play a lot of good rock 'n' roll, like White Lion, and attract the children and grandchildren of the retired Hell's Angels from Art's.

4. **The Monkey Bars** — This hang out, found at the Santa Barbara Middle School on Garden St., is definitely for the outdoorsy type. Get there early to get a seat on the swing set, but the slide or jungle gym are just as good. The crowd tends to be on the small side.

5. **SoHo** — If you're in the mood to listen to great jazz in posh surroundings, this is the place to go. Words of warning: the dim lighting is overdone. You can't see a

thing.

6. **Hershey Bar** — This is one of my favorites. Especially with almonds.

7. **State and A Bar & Grill** — I really like this place. It does lean towards the conservative side, and the crowd tends to be older. But that changes after-hours — the party sizzles 'til the cooks show up the next morning.

8. **Salad Bar at Sizzler** — Probably the best deal in town. All you can eat, cheese bread a bonus.

9. **Gus's Cocktail House** — A good place. Usually very quiet and empty, but you

can make as much noise as you want and *nobody* cares. If you're special, the bartender will order pizza and flow quarters for the jukebox.

10. **Prison Bars** — The perfect way to end a long night of bar-hopping is to get a good night's sleep and a hearty breakfast the next morning. What better place than the local jail — there's always a spare holding cell, it's free and it's fairly easy to get in. You don't have to be 21 (in fact, it helps if you're not), and all you have to do to get past the big guy at the door is break the law.

—Anita Miralle

ARTSWEEK'S

official guide to the top tens of summer

TOP TEN albums

1. **EPMD, "Crossover" 12-inch (Def Jam)** — This bomb from the underground hip-hop godfathers could possibly be the only man fly enough to knock House of Pain's "Jump Around" from its position as joint of the summer. With its funky lyrics and unforgettable Zapp sample-hook, expect this track to be rocked in Jeeps, low riders and Range Rovers everywhere.

2. **The Brand New Heavies, Heavy Rhyme Experience (Delicious Vinyl)** — The long awaited second album from the BNH is finally here. Ex-Brand, Nubian

Grand Puba Maxwell, Master Ace, Main Source, ED OG, Jamalski and others kick crazy lyrics on top of some of the Heavies' inimitable funk-thick acid jazz.

3. **Sonic Youth, Dirty (DGC)** — All right, so "100%" isn't exactly the best Sonic Youth song I've ever heard — but check it. Have you heard the rest of the record? "Youth Against Fascism" alone should be convincing enough for you to buy this record. Trust me, *Dirty* will blow the fuck up much like the Space Shuttle Challenger.

4. **Messiah, "Temple of Dreams" Manix Remix 12-inch** — I'll be the first to admit that techno isn't for everybody. But if you *do*

like it, you'll *love* this single from Messiah. It has everything a hardcore techno track needs to kick your butt: strictly killer, no filler, straight up Armageddon-style.

5. **Pete Rock and C.L. Smooth, Mecca and the Soul Brother (Electra)** — My vote for one of the top five hip-hop LPs of the year. Remixer extraordinaire Pete Rock and his lyrical cohort C.L. Smooth have jam-packed their first long-playing release full of hip-hop joints that will surely stand the test of time.

6. **Slug-Swingers, "Magnatone 10"** — A lot of times, when I listen to Slug, I feel that I know what the Apocalypse will at least *sound* like. The third release from the L.A. alternative rock gods, this 10" may be diffi-

cult to find in larger record stores.

7. **"Singles" Soundtrack (Columbia/Sony Music)** — If someone asked your opinion on how well a Soundgarden-Alice in Chains-Mudhoney-Chris Cornell-Pearl Jam-Smashing Pumpkins-soundtrack-to-a-film-starring-Matt Dillon would do, what would you say? That's what I thought.

8. **Steven Jesse Bernstein, Prison (SubPop)** — Steven Jesse Bernstein was a poet. He lived in Seattle. One day, someone at an insignificant record label named Sub Pop asked him if he would record an album of some of his works. He agreed but at some point during the recording committed suicide. Sub Pop put the record out anyway. It's unreal.

9. **The Orb, U.F.O.R.B. (Big Life)** — The Orb is back with their *fourth* full release within the past year. If you liked "Adventures Beyond the Ultraworld" you'll *love* this. It's all that and more. This is the other end of the techno spectrum.

10. **Afrika Bambaatta and the Soulsonic Force, "The Planet Rocked" double 12-inch (Tommy Boy)** — Do you remember where you were when you first heard "Planet Rock?" I don't either, but if you want to relive that moment, don't sleep on this EP. With remixes by 808 State, Kraftwerk, DJ Magic Mike and LFO you can't go wrong. I'm out like classic rock.

—P.E.A.C.E.

1. **Blue Dolphinosis** — This culinary disorder subdues its victims with a steady glut of Breakfast Sandwiches, Coffee and the inexplicably addictive Pizza Omelette.

Victims often refer to Dolphinosis as "having breakfast."

2. **Pop existentialism** — As purveyed by The Cure and Scissorboy Johnny Depp, this soupy intellectual malaise strikes most effectively during the lazy fog-days of summer. However, it can be easily thwarted by stiff doses of Redd Foxx and Archie Bunker. Its symptoms include affected sighing and expensive shoes. Blue Dolphinosis often accompanies this unhappy ailment.

3. **Megadethalomania** — Literally, "much death" or "a great deal of death." Beware the easy slide into Megadethalomania and its sister affliction, Slayerosis. When possible, combat these disorders with large doses of Sade's "Smooth Operator," or, more simply, Jim Croce's "Operator."

4. **Food Catatonia** — A common predecessor to Dolphinosis, Food Catatonia strikes the decision-making portion of the brain and can be traced to the preponderance of Mexican food and sandwiches in Isla Vista's culinary swamp bog. Food Catatonia can lead to outright malnutrition, or at least intense indecisiveness when picking a place to eat.

5. **Hessianism** — Characterized by a resentment of affected sighing and expensive shoes, this malady is most easily recognized by

two symptoms: high-tops and men with panty lines. Its principal danger is to the thighs, whose growth may be stunted by constriction in black denim pants. Hair: big.

6. **Pyromoronia** — Victims can be found by following plumes of smoke to their base, where couches, box springs, coffee tables and other pieces of furniture have been set ablaze. The flames apparently have a mesmerizing effect on Pyromoronia sufferers, who gaze absently in the general direction of the fire until it either dies out or melts their pants.

7. **Europe** — Although this disorder is the only one found outside the bounds of I.V. proper, it is the most prominent — or at least most expensive — malady afflicting the town's summer-stricken residents. Its more recognizable symptoms are shiny new backpacks, Walkmans and designer sunglasses. Nine out of 10 victims will wear white T-shirts, shorts and hiking boots.

8. **Leisure Fetishism** — Characterized by such hobbies as paddleball, Monopoly and hippie sticks, Lei-

sure Fetishism can degenerate into the enfeebling Daytime TV Syndrome, which often leaves victims Jenny Jones' for the intimate details of blighted human lives.

9. **Sidney Sheldonism** — He will haunt you. If you read him, he will mock you until your dying day. Symptoms include literary guilt and excessive tanning.

10. **Metempsychosis** — The transmigration of souls after death. Not to be confused with disorder #11, metamphetamine psychosis.

—Charles Hornberger

TOP TEN summer disorders