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# Artsweek

The Weekly Arts and Entertainment Supplement to the Daily Nexus

## Performance Group

Mike Lin and Eric Steuer speak with UCSB students in the cast of *Singin' in the Rain*.

UCSB students Stacy West, Sheldon Peregrino and Amy Runjavac are ensemble performers in the Santa Barbara Civic Light Opera's current production of *Singin' in the Rain*. *Artsweek* recently spoke with these hard-working students about their work onstage.

*How'd you guys get involved with the Civic Light Opera?*

**Stacy:** Freshman year, I wasn't doing much besides taking classes, and I was pretty bored, so I took a class at the Dance Warehouse in Santa Barbara. Someone came in one day who told us about a tap production they were putting on. I had done theater in high school, so I figured I'd see what it was all about.

**Amy:** I did my first show there when I was 14, and ever since college, I've been a lot more into it. I'm not really

complicated because there are more things involved. It's bigger; there's more people coming to see it. It's a big challenge, especially with school as an added pressure.

**Amy:** I'm really tired. I work at the bookstore too, and so I just do my homework during intermissions, sleep when the show is over. It's hard.

**Stacy:** For me, it's turned out to be a great part-time job. They pay you and it's something I love to do, so I'm happy. Plus, we're able to work with great people, famous people, people who work on Broadway. Like the wife of the star of *Singin' in the Rain*, her name is Jodi Benson, and she's the voice of the Little Mermaid.

*Does the work interfere with having a social life?*

**Stacy:** I think a lot of people don't know what to do so they go party. A lot of people just really party out of bore-



DJAMEL E. RAMOUL/Daily Nexus

involved in anything at school, and I decided I wanted to get into something fun outside of UCSB.

**Sheldon:** I did musicals in high school and I started dancing in my first year at UCSB. I progressively became more involved until I got to this.

*Are you able to keep your sanity when you're both in a production and going to school?*

**Sheldon:** It's a big time commitment, without a doubt. I was in UCSB's production of *Chicago*, and this is more

dom, and I've found that I don't have to go through with all that uncomfortableness of partying and that I can get an intellectual high, so to speak, from performing.

*Do you plan to continue performing after you leave UCSB?*

**Amy:** I think I want to do this throughout my life, but not as my profession. It's too hard. But it is a good way to relieve stress, and I want to stay into it.

**Stacy:** I'm going to LA after I graduate. I want theater to always be a part of my life, but I know that I'm gonna need a real job too.

## Singing Praises

There are few films harder to dislike than the Gene Kelly classic *Singin' in the Rain*. Unlike today's blockbuster hits, *Singin'* doesn't have a single explosion, spaceship or alien, but what it lacks in gross monsters and even grosser special effects, it makes up for in a hilarious and brilliant plot about a silent film actor struggling with Hollywood's transition to talking pictures in the '20s.

It wasn't until last week that I learned there was a stage adaptation of the 1952 musical film, but it only seems natural that there is — the movie is filled with dancing, singing, laughs and suspense, the perfect ingredients for a successful musical theater performance. In capturing these essences while offering the audience a fresh look at



a classic story, the Santa Barbara Civic Light Opera's recently opened presentation of *Singin' in the Rain* does not disappoint.

Performed in the mammoth Granada Theater in downtown Santa Barbara (well, mammoth for downtown Santa Barbara, at least), the production stars Ray Benson as Don Lockwood, the happy-go-lucky star of silent screen who, alongside his childhood friend Cosmo Brown (played by William Akey), has built a career rising up from the turn-of-the-century vaudeville scene to become a top player in 1927 Hollywood.

Lockwood and his acting partner Lina Lamont (played by Kelli Gannon of *Carnival*, *Princess and Norwegian Cruise Lines* fame) are the most famous team in Tinseltown. But technological progress threatens their happiness — with the success of *The Jazz Singer*, the innovation of talking pictures catches on in a big way, and Lamont's annoying, squeaky voice counters the beautiful face that made the duo dynamite.

Benson and Akey are terrific in their roles as the two friends, and they should be — they've been playing their respective parts for years, though this is the first time they've acted together. The duo complement each other with good timing, although during the performance I attended, a considerable number of their jokes fell flat with an audience comprised mostly of retired people who overdressed for the Saturday matinee.

Anyway, the Civic Light Opera production is a spectacular frenzy of funny dialogue and fancy footwork, with colorful costumes and sets and some of the best tap sequences I've seen in a long time. I was entertained throughout the entire performance, and didn't even check my watch during intermission. *Singin' in the Rain* is definitely worth seeing, even if only for the simulated rain during the famous lamppost scene. Yes, torrents of water spray onstage, not unlike a Sea World water show. Bring your umbrella!

—Nick Robertson

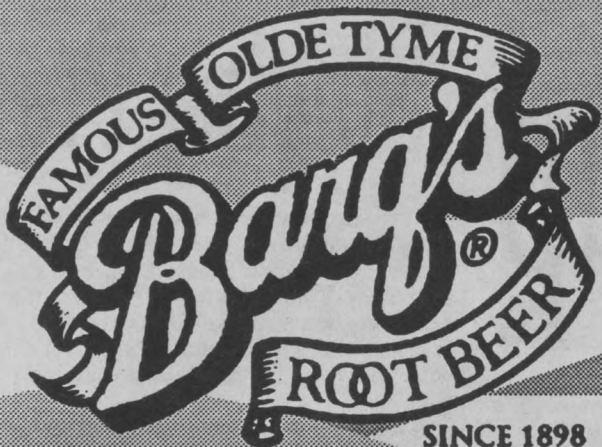
# ATTENTION!

There will be an Artsweek meeting on Monday, October 7 at 8:00 p.m. Past, present and future writers should attend. The office is under Storke Tower and we'll be waiting for you with bells on. Call 893-2691 for info.



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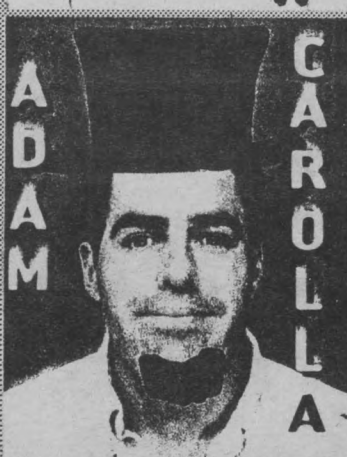
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1995

Nuthin' and don't you forget it

multitude of different answers I could give you, because a burning bush can be a lot of different things. But I suppose you just want the straightforward answer. Correct, Shorts?"

"Sure, Uncle Joe."

"OK, then sure, Shorts. That Burning Bush was an avatar. And if you don't believe me, you should go ask good ol' Moses."

"Uncle Joe, Moses is

dead and nobody knows where he's been buried. Only God, or one of them avatars, knows."

"Shorts, you been listening to that Bible-learnin' class?"

"Aren't I supposed to?"

He finished off his lemonade and got the last bit off his lips. "Shorts, let's walk. Let's go on a long walk."

We started walking and I asked, "Uncle Joe, why do you call me Shorts when my name is Jason?"

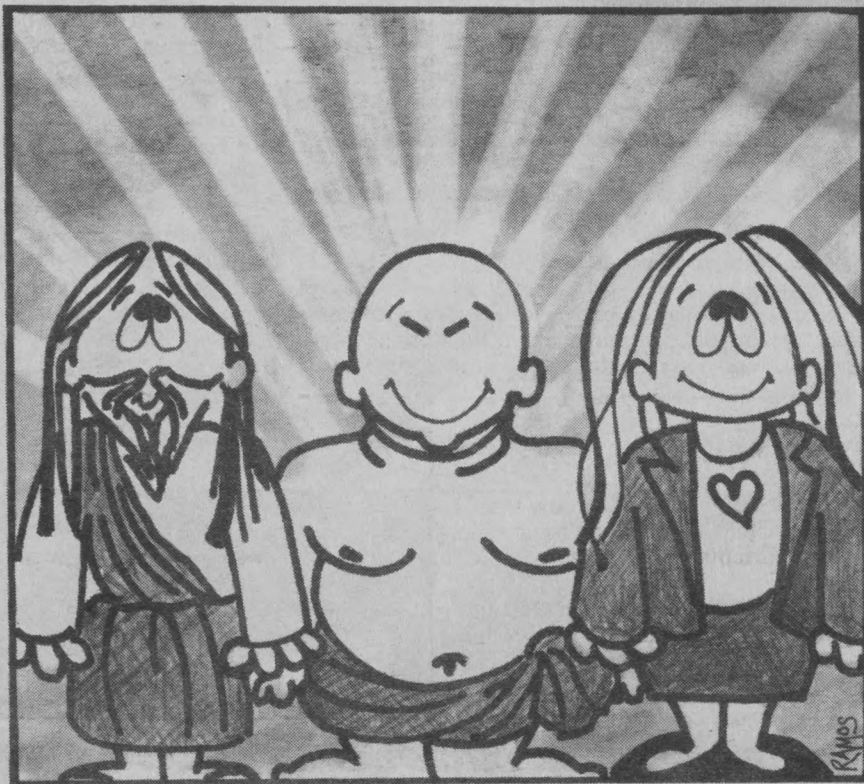
"I call you Shorts to remind myself that if I were to borrow your pants, they would

**M**y uncle, a man named Joe, taught me what an avatar is. "An avatar is," he said, "an incarnation of God. God living on the Earth as a real person."

"A lot of people believe that Jesus was an avatar. Same with Buddha and Krishna and Ram. And a lot of people think that that lady—what's her name? She draws that Cathy cartoon.... Darn, what's her name?"

"Isn't her name Cathy, Cathy Guisewite or something?" I said.

"Yeah, her. A lot of people think she's



DEBI RAMOS/Daily Nexus

an avatar." Joe then took a long drag from his corn pipe and exhaled into the sun. Lifting his other, non-pipe-holding hand, he revealed a bright yellow glass of lemonade in a crystal-clear glass. He lifted the glass into the sun and tilted it down, and got his mouth underneath the stream of lemonade just in time. "Darn fine day," Joe said and smiled.

It was a Sunday, and Joe was born for Sundays, 'specially summer Sundays when afternoons are twice as long and twice as sunny as usual. Joe enjoyed them usual Sundays too.

"Uncle Joe," I said, and my voice was girlish and allowed to be—I was only 11. "Uncle Joe, that Burning Bush, was that an avatar?"

"Now you don't know much about the double meaning of words, do ya?" he asked with a great deal of suspicion in his voice.

I shook my little head emphatically from side to side. I shook it so hard it seemed like I was going to shake the freckles straight off my cheeks.

"Because, if your old Uncle Joe weren't in the company of exclusively you, Shorts"—he called me "Shorts" all the time—"and I was in the company of some of my friends, I would find myself with a plethora of witty options on how to answer that question. I mean, there's a

just be shorts on me. Make sense?"

I giggled and imagined big Uncle Joe walking around in my Toughskins.

Joe had lots of ideas, but he called them "idears" because he was born someplace where they trained people to talk different. Of them idears I remember, I think his best ones had to do with how hallucinogens were going to change the media. "Even sitcoms have flashbacks," he explained.

"Is that when the people on the show remember what happens and they show old episodes in the middle of new ones?"

"Pretty cheap, huh? Imagine catching one of them flashback episodes when it's on as a rerun. Now that would be trippy." He then made me do the imitations of different TV stars that he had taught me.

I had just finished my last "Dy-no-mite!" when Joe asked, "You know what I hate?"

"No, Uncle Joe."

"When radio stations play so-called 'flashbacks' of songs they never ever played, that's no good." He kicked some dirt out in front of him. "Don't ever forget what you're known for, Shorts."

"What am I known for, Uncle Joe?"

"Nuthin', and don't you forget it."

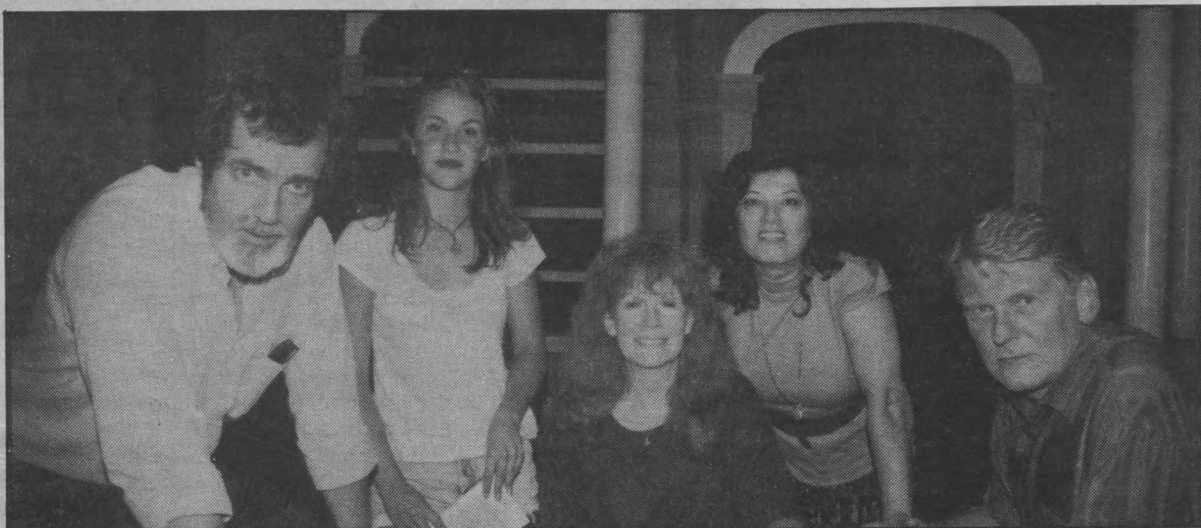
## LYRIC OF THE WEEK.

"AND JUST LIKE A PIECE OF SIZZLEAN /  
YOU'LL FIT INSIDE MY STOMACH WITH THE  
EGGS AND GRITS BETWEEN"

—Craig Mack



# Theater This Week



TAG (Theatre Artists Group) was formed in 1982 by members of the Dramatic Art Dept. at UCSB as a performing ensemble of theatre professionals in the Santa Barbara area. Throughout this year, the group — made up of UCSB faculty, staff and students, and other local actors and theatre artists — plans to showcase talent not regularly seen. In other words, TAG performances may be the only times this year when you get to see your professors act in a play!

The production of George Bernard Shaw's *Heartbreak House* in the Hatlen Theatre at UCSB promises to be an intricately woven series of sometimes confusing relationships, dealing with political, sociological and generational changes. The play is well directed, with lively performances and interesting use of the stage throughout. Go and see it, if only to tell your parents that you're doing something culturally enriching in between back-to-school parties.

*Heartbreak House* opens on Oct. 4 in the Hatlen Theatre and plays through Oct. 13. For ticket information, call 893-3535.

—Lori Culwell



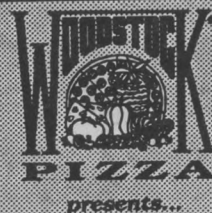
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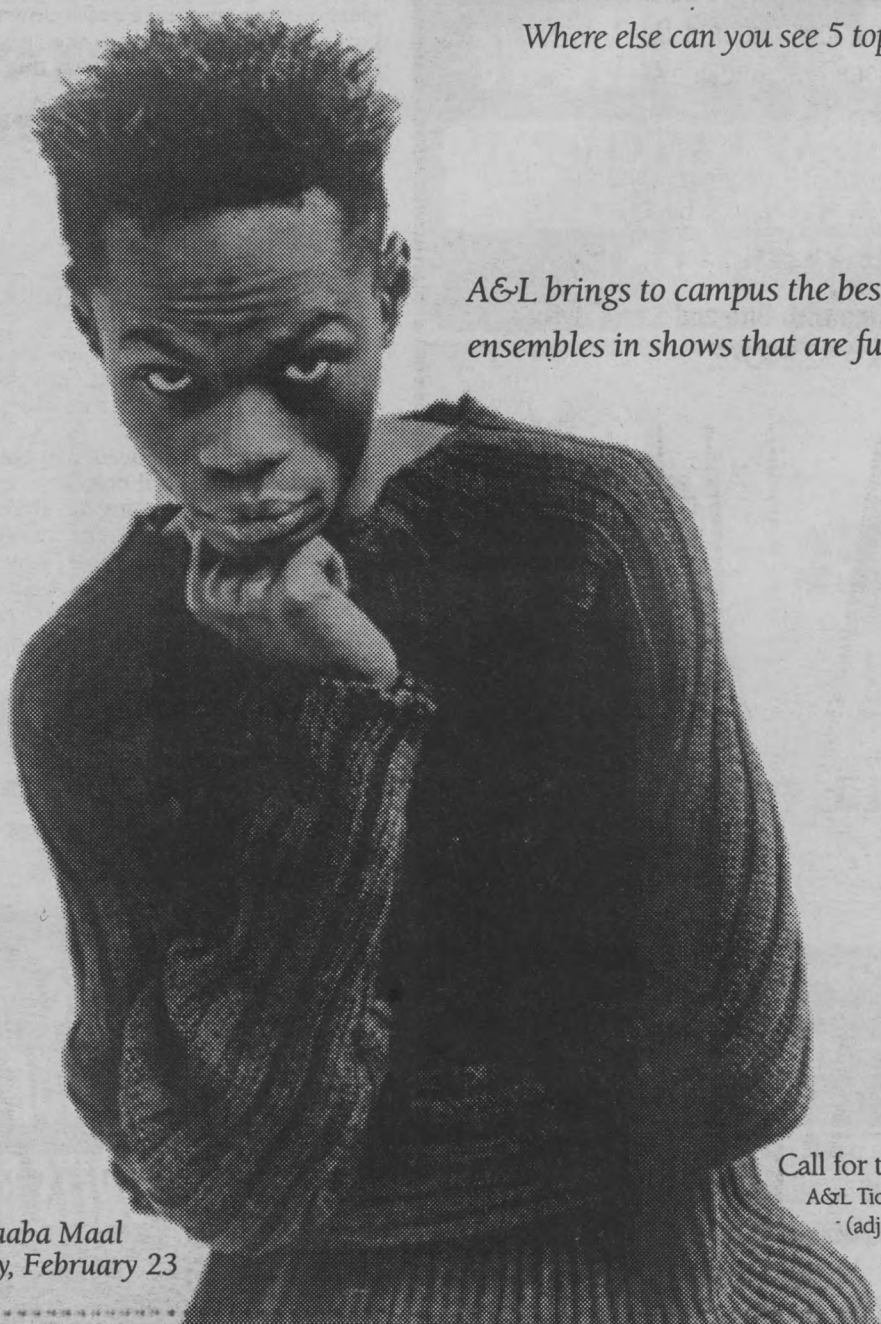
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# Happy Campers

Jolie Lash speaks with Summertime.

Fresh out of Santa Barbara comes the pop band Summertime, whose glittering melodies landed them a deal with Madonna's Maverick Records. While gearing up to record their debut album in January, the four boys of Summertime, singer/guitarists Tim Cullen and Sean McCue, bassist Misha Feldmann and drummer Tony Sevens, took precious time out of their schedule to invite Artsweek into their practice studio for a chat.

*I ran into Dishwalla at LAX and I asked them if they were pissed off that people in Santa Barbara didn't start noticing them*

*until after they were signed to a major label. The same thing is sort of happening with you guys, signing to Maverick and being playlisted on KJEE.*

**Tim:** I'm not sure if it was the radio airplay or the buzz of like, "Oh, those guys are supposed to be good," but I think there are people taking us seriously that didn't before.

**Misha:** Like, "I went to high school with that guy!"

*You don't actually have people coming up to you like that, do you?*

**Tim:** Yeah, we're getting that at some of our shows in town.

*How weird.*

**Tim:** Yeah, because be-

fore, we had a pretty good group of devoted fans that were just friends of ours and we sort of developed our own scene just through the bands that we know [in the SB area]. We would go to see their shows and they'd come to see ours and it was a community.

**Tony:** It's not like a Santa Barbara scene, it's like a big following of bands.

*Is that because of some kind of trend where people don't want to seek out live music anymore?*

**Tim:** I think people don't actively seek it out because there's nowhere

See SUMMER p. 5A

## Did You Miss Fall Rush?

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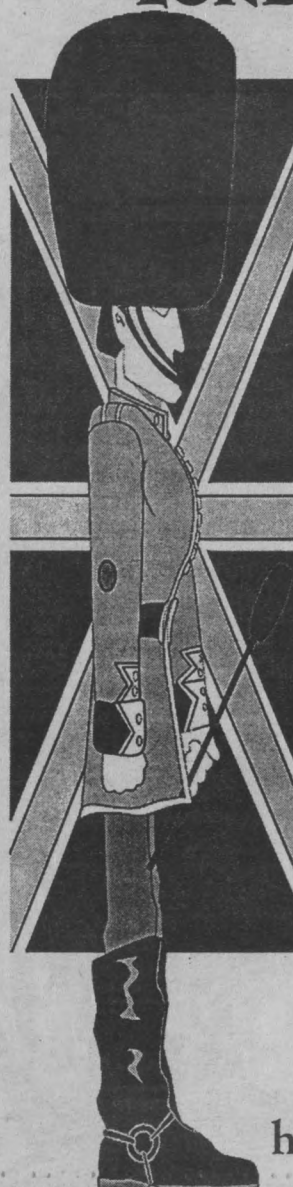
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JOLIE LASH/Daily Nexus

## SUMMER

Continued from p.4A  
to play. In I.V., it's easier  
to just set up on DP....

**Tony:** You get stopped  
really early, though.

**Would you guys play  
DP?**

**All:** Yeah.

**Tony:** I used to play in  
I.V. years ago when people  
could set up on the lawn.

*Are you guys into sing-  
alongs?*

**Tim:** Like hootenan-  
nies? You mean like "I  
Wanna Rock n' Roll All  
Night," or someone play-  
ing guitars and everyone  
singing?

**More like road trip  
Brady Bunch theme song  
sing-alongs.**

**Tim:** Yeah, we usually  
make up our own lyrics to

the songs. Tony's kind of  
the master of that. You  
hear a hit song on the ra-  
dio and then Tony will  
find a way to change it and  
keep the rhyme scheme.

*What's been your best  
one?*

**Tony:** It's too obscene.  
That band Self does  
that to an Alanis song.

**Tim:** Someone was tell-  
ing me about that.

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# Silver greens

## PRESENTS YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE BY LINDA C. BLACK

To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

**Aries (March 21-April 19)** - Today is a 5 - The most logical answer may not be correct, and the one that works might not be logical. Don't even try to figure it out now; postpone the discussion until tomorrow. A friend is having trouble at work. Suggest an athletic diversion.

**Taurus (April 20-May 20)** - Today is a 7 - You are one of the calmest people you know today. The others will rely on your strength, so don't flinch. Advise a co-worker not to say something that's sure to upset the boss. You'd make the best spokesperson for the group, if a conflict needs to be resolved.

**Gemini (May 21-June 21)** - Today is a 6 - This is a good day to go shopping. You'll be cautious about spending, yet drawn to only the highest quality. You might not buy much, but what you do select should be well worth the money. If you want a commitment from a loved one, ask for it early in the morning.

**Cancer (June 22-July 22)** - Today is a 6 - You're strong today, but so is your opposition. In fact, you may be fighting the battle on three fronts at the same time. Don't worry - you're not alone. Especially if the conflict is a romantic one, conditions change in your favor late tonight.

**Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)** - Today is a 7 - Suggest that the people at work put off any major decision-making until Monday. The dust should have settled by then. A short drive to a beautiful location this evening should turn out very well. Take care of an obligation while you're out there.

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)** - Today is a 5 - There's a lot of action going on, and quite a bit of confusion. If you can stay out of the traffic, you'll do your nerves a big favor. You're getting wiser about love, starting today. Prove it by dropping a bad habit.

**Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)** - Today is a 6 - A strong woman wants you to do one thing while a father figure wants you to do something else. If you can hold out until Monday, you might get your own way. Meanwhile, pay attention and learn. Also, teach them by sharing your insights.

**Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)** - Today is a 7 - A long distance contact provides the support you need. Don't even hesitate - it's worth the money. Expect a hassle at work this afternoon and be prepared. The breakdown's not your fault, but you can make points by keeping things under control.

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)** - Today is a 7 - People come to you for advice, since you're very objective. If friends are having troubles, advise them to wait. You might also let them know that exercise will calm their nerves. Then prove it by taking a long, relaxing walk this evening.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)** - Today is a 6 - This could be a very exciting day, or an exhausting one. The difference is in your attitude. You have too much for one person to do, again. If you share the load, you'll find it easier to cope. Make up a ditz person's mind for him or her.

**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)** - Today is a 5 - Circumstances beyond your control make for a stressful workday. You'd rather be off on a scientific expedition to the Australian outback, or anywhere, actually. Your complaints would just make the situation worse. Plan something outrageous for this weekend instead.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)** - Today is a 6 - Your sweetheart is under even more pressure than you are right now, so plan something nice for this evening. A few hours of quiet in a luxurious setting would be perfect - by yourself or accompanied by your sweetheart, if she or he would enjoy it.

**Today's Birthday (Oct. 3)** - A conflict between responsibilities at work and home could lead to improvements both places. A decision about money in November will help you plan a change for December. Your family helps you through a mess in January. Recommit to an old friendship in February. Face a challenge in April and graduate to a new level. You may get a promotion in July, if you pass the test. Let a friend coax you out in August. Keep a lover's secret in September.

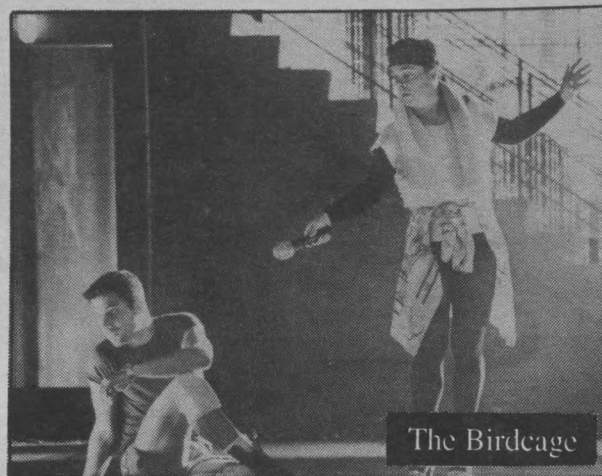
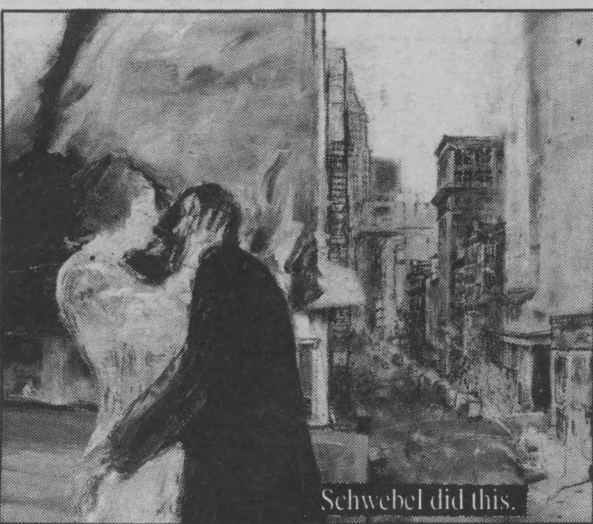
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# Hey! What's Going On?

This very night at 8:30 p.m., make sure you get out to the Hub to catch recent Maverick Records signees Summertime, before they follow Dishwalla into the major leagues. Support will be offered from Fidget, and while they won't be roasting marshmallows, at only three bucks a pop, you won't want to miss this shining opportunity to attend camp.

If you wanted, you could plan yourself a full evening, if your schedule permits, by attending the Robin Williams film *The Birdcage* beforehand in Campbell Hall tonight at 7 p.m.

The Theater Artists Group begins its run of George Bernard Shaw's play *Heartbreak House* Oct. 4-6, continuing Oct. 10-13 at the on-campus Hatlen Theater.



On Friday, 6636 DP will be a-rockin' ska style with Henchmyn, at 10:30 p.m.

Saturday night, for less than the price of a medium pizza, see the Refreshments, "Who sucked out the feeeeeeellin'?" Buzz-Binners Superdrag, and The Ocean Blue at Backstage downtown at 8 p.m.

Arts & Lectures is showcasing *Mystery Science Theater 3000: The Movie*, on Monday at 7 p.m. in Campbell Hall.

And speaking of things on Comedy Central, tickets went on sale Monday for "A Politically Incorrect Evening With Bill Maher," scheduled for Nov. 1, and there's still a number of seats available.

Lastly, an exhibit of works by American artist Schwebel, *Heroes of City Streets*, runs until Nov. 17 at the Manne Gallery downtown.

## Terrapin Station

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# Sure Shots

New music.

## Silver Jews / *The Natural Bridge* / Drag City

I've always appreciated musical humor, but Silver Jews' take on it has been nothing but frustrating. Offers prior to their new LP, *The Natural Bridge*, were silly attempts at ruining great songs with shoddy recording techniques. For instance, on 1993's *The Arizona Re-*



cord, songs were abruptly cut off at the good parts, as if someone had pressed stop while the song was being recorded. I found myself wishing that they would quit fighting my at-

tempts to like them.

Thankfully, *The Natural Bridge* is a break from Silver Jews' self-sabotaging ways. There are entire, fully audible songs! The songs are simply better too. Spare, distant, humorous lyrics — such as "The bartender said, 'We don't serve robots,' and I said, 'Someday you will,'" "The CPR was so erotic", and "One of these days, these days will end" — are what Silver Jews are into nowadays.

Bob Nastanovich of Pavement is absent from the line-up, although I suspect that "new member" Peyton Pinkerton is Bob's alias. Young, hip college teacher D.C. Berman is the songwriter/guitarist/singer for Silver Jews. This time, he's come up with some really beautiful songs, like "The Right to Remain Silent," "Dallas" and "Inside the Golden Days of Missing You." Enjoy some Jewish culture.

—Noah Blumberg

Les Claypool and the Holy Mackerel / *Highball With the Devil* / Interscope

The only thing more enigmatic than Les Claypool's bizarre hybrid bass stylings — which combine the eccentricities of funk, the smoothness of jazz, the experimental insanity of psychedelia and the rockabilly sensibilities of a hill-billy on acid — is his lyrics.

On *Highball With the Devil*, Les' poetics run the gamut of human experience, delving deep into the

psyche of a Budweiser-swilling Fishmaster pondering the mysteries of "the one that got away" on "Carolina Rig," and exploring the intricacies of lawn ornamentation on "Granny's Little Yard Gnome." It's all here.

However, what makes this CD truly remarkable is the music.

Anyone familiar with the virtually indescribable



blend of virtuosity and mental imbalance that is Primus will immediately recognize *Highball's* 15 tracks as classic Claypool. This air of familiarity can largely be attributed to the fact that Les plays more than one instrument on a majority of the songs, singly handling all of the musical responsibilities on six of the ditties.

If some tracks lack the complexities of meter and general unpredictability that have come to be associated with Primus, it's because *Highball With the Devil* is meant to serve solely as a showcase for Claypool's bass gymnastics and quirky songwriting skills. The disc will undoubtedly be a welcome find for the Primus fanatic who hankers for a hot hunkin' plate of steamin' bass.

—Bryce Baer

## Chuck D / *The Autobiography of MistaChuck* / Mercury

Public Enemy was it back in the day, when Chuck D, Flavor Flav and company were at the forefront of the creative and militant movements in hip-hop. In those days, Public Enemy was responsible for creating many of the influential records that are now considered classics. But sadly, the story is quite different in '96. The

Public Enemy of yesteryear is no more and the originality, activism and consciousness they brought to hip-hop is all but dead. So much so that when I first heard that Chuck D was coming solo, I wondered if he could still bring the noise.

Well, he can and he can't.

Chuck still delivers the positive, intelligent raps his fans are accustomed to, but something is missing from the mix. Chuck's urgent flow lacks the musical innovation of the Bomb Squad (who, even at their worst, were incredible), traces of which are nowhere to be found on *Autobiography*. As a result, the tracks are mostly boring, toeing the line between average and good. Guest appearances by some of Chuck's people add some needed "newness" to the album, but it's just not enough.

Chuck still gets ultimate respect for everything he's done — his new album is better than most of the stuff out today. It's just disappointing that his rhymes are not fitted to better beats. I'm hopeful that after a hiatus, Public Enemy will regroup and bring back what hip-hop has been sorely missing for too long: the art of invention.

—Todd One

# Speak.

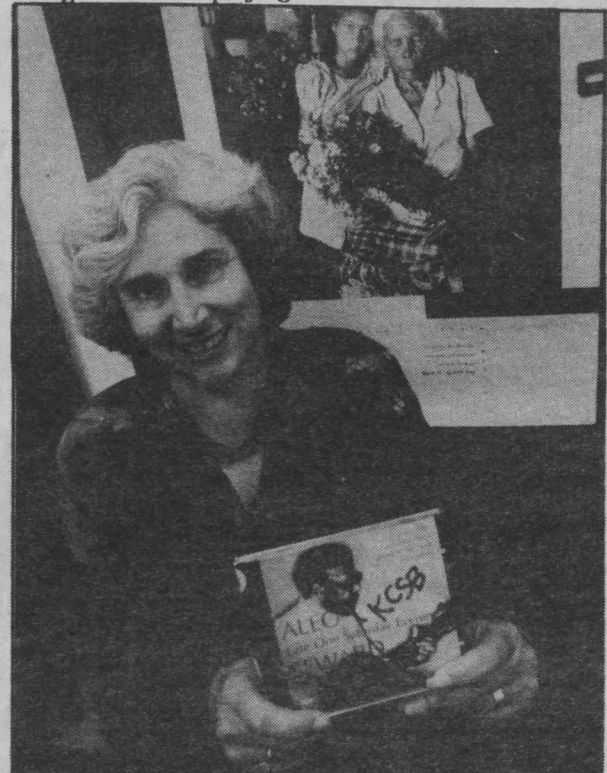
Elizabeth Robinson should know a lot about cool music. She is, after all, the advisor for campus radio station KCSB-FM. Artsweek recently asked her to choose an album from her collection and share her thoughts on it with us. She chose Alec Seward's *Late One Saturday Evening*.

Do you know a lot about blues music?

A fair amount. I like it in part because it's the music that a lot of other contemporary music is based upon. It was never a very commercially viable [music form], and it was a music that really came out of community — that sense of community as opposed to being really commercially driven, which is in part because it comes out of the black community which is poor and disenfranchised and the music reflects a lot of that. It's very humorous, some of it. It talks about all sorts of human foibles and human tragedies, and I think in contemporary terms, and the reason I selected this piece, is this is musicians making music for the joy of being together and

making music. It was literally done at somebody's house — a bunch of guys sitting around and playing

known himself. This is probably the only recording that features Alec Seward.



DANIEL E. RAMOUL/Daily Nexus

together. I also picked it because Alec Seward is one of those people who is unknown, generally. He was side-man to a lot of other people. He's not

Who has he played side-man for?

Primarily Sonny Taylor and Bonnie McGee, who are both much better known. He was their

friend as well as their musical companion, and when they got real old, he took care of them. They were like family and you get a sense of that in this album.

So this is true alternative music.

This is true alternative music, yeah.

What kind of things would you do to this record?

Well I like things like this when I'm in the car. I turn it up. It's pretty rockin', some of it.

Makes you drive faster?

I tend to drive too fast anyway.

Campus Police alert! Don't get me in any more trouble!

Is Seward a part of the do-it-yourself movement?

Well, yeah, before there was such a thing. It's where everybody got to sing — you didn't have to be a professional singer to sing. Like gathering around the piano. In my family when I was a child, when we'd go on long trips, we'd sing songs. And in the car when nobody's listening, I can sing one of the cuts on this.

KCSB's Elizabeth Robinson discusses Alec Seward's *Late One Saturday Evening*

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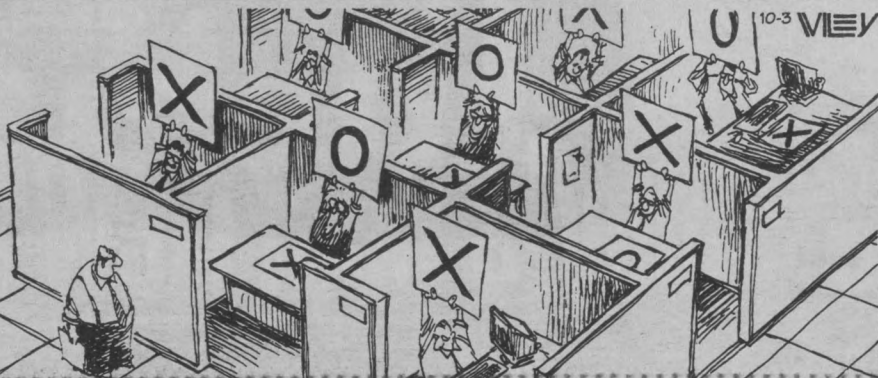
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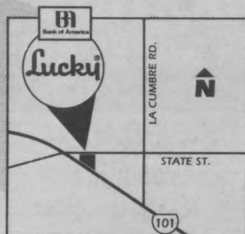
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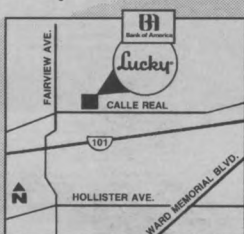
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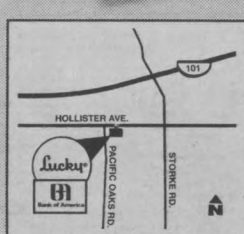
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