

# NORTH OF CENTER

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2010

FREE

TAKE HOME AND READ

VOLUME II, ISSUE 2

## LexTran renovation at N. Limestone and Loudon

By Beth Connors-Manke

Having only recently moved to the north side, I walk around a lot, trying to get an eyeful of my new neighborhood. One place that has become central to my wandering to and fro is the intersection of North Limestone and Loudon. It's an interesting place: small antique shops and towing companies hold their own against industrial-scaled buildings like the old brick Farmer's and Builder's Supply Company. There's the railroad track on Lime south of the intersection, and there's a big utility facility—all of this with houses surrounding it.

It's "urban core" at its most urban: lower-income housing meets the grittiness of industrial development.

I appreciate that mixture, and I also value that this area of the city has the lowest rate of automobile ownership in Fayette County, according to

the Central Sector Small Area Plan. Whether by choice or necessity, many northsiders benefit from bikable streets, walkable sidewalks, and the bus system. This side of town needed, in a most basic way, the tax referendum passed several years ago that kept LexTran afloat and eventually allowed the transit system to grow.

LexTran, in fact, has its administrative headquarters at 109 West Loudon. The transit authority owns a large area near that intersection, including the old brick Kitchen Planning Center that sits right at the intersection and across from the HopHop building.

On January 11, LexTran officials, including General Manager Rocky Burke, met with several northside neighborhood associations at Al's Bar to discuss the future of the Kitchen Planning Center building. LexTran is considering plans for the vacant



The LexTran/Kitchen Planning Center building on the corner of North Limestone and Loudon Avenue.

Kitchen edifice as well as the long warehouse behind it that runs along North Limestone.

LexTran has a formal plan for the buildings on the books, one created several years ago. Now, with the growth the transit authority has seen in the last five years, LexTran is again looking at the possibilities for renovating or rebuilding the structure to house its more than 200 employees at the administrative office and make more room for buses.

The project is in its early stages and all the funding has not yet been secured, but LexTran is expecting to fund the overhaul through federal dollars. Based on design consultant projections, the project could cost \$10 million.

According to Jill Barnett, Community Outreach Coordinator for LexTran, the transit authority expects "to pay for the project with funds from

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## Gender & sexuality at Carnegie Center

By Michael Dean Benton

"Why should an artist's way of looking at the world have any meaning for us? Why does it give us pleasure? Because, I believe, it increases our awareness of our own potentiality."

— John Berger, *Permanent Red: Essays in Seeing* (1960)

"There are in fact no masses; there are only ways of seeing people as masses."

— Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society* (1958)

Gender and sexuality are important contemporary political concepts for understanding the constitution of our selves. They are important because they are a key to the production of our sense of self and identity as social beings, because they are experienced by every human being, because all societies seek to regulate what is acceptable in regards to gender and sexuality, and, because myths about gender and sexuality are tools for the control, demonization and oppression of groups of people. My claim for the importance of gender and sexuality as political concepts does not discount class or race, rather it recognizes that even within the hierarchical divisions of classes and races, there are further inequalities built upon perceived gender and sexuality differences (and vice versa). The discriminatory, power-based inequalities of gender and sexuality are even built into our everyday language.

While the construction of gender and sexuality is a serious subject for us to address, it is also a joyous, surprising, creative, and challenging project. Of all the personal illusions I continuously work to dispel, the myths of gender and sexuality are the most difficult; but, for that reason, also the most rewarding and enriching. The difficulty lies in my training from the earliest age to think of myself as a certain gender construct—a tough, heterosexual, working-class male—that must perform a certain rigid sexual role, and adapt the attitudes/poses

necessary to be accepted in my early social environments.

From the family to cultural institutions, in the pack of peers and through the ever ubiquitous media, I learned the dreaded consequences of transgressing the social conceptions of proper gender performances and sexual behavior.



Author Michael Benton bares his masculinity at family wedding.

I could go insane, become a degenerate deviant, be socially ostracized, mercilessly mocked by peers, randomly brutalized or murdered by strangers, and locked up by the authorities. Even my friendly childhood pastor got worked up on the pulpit about fornicators and homosexuals, declaring that they would burn in hell.

These lessons, as also outlined in the documentary films *The Celluloid Closet* (1995) and *Tough Guise* (1999), often involved verbal conditioning from peers in which the perceived weak male is called faggot, queer, homo, bitch or girl. The message was clear, your perceived weakness, makes you not-a-man, harden your exterior or you will be attacked. I was a rather small, bookish, quiet kid, who quickly learned that sensitivity and intellectualism made me an easy target for local bullies. I desperately imitated Clint Eastwood's steely stare, Jack Nicholson's manic craziness, and countless cinematic bad asses. I had

this desperate need to be threatening and tough. When I was 13 I decided I needed to harden my attitude and my body. No more books, no more thinking, no more empathy, as seen in this picture, a future of self-destruction and self-hatred was written all over my 16 year old, 125 pound body.

Further reinforcement was provided by the ubiquitous media. The popular stereotypes in film and on TV of sexual deviants and gender outlaws, those who lived outside the boundaries of accepted behavior, were usually portrayed as self-hating, degenerate outsiders. It was clear in these examples that these choices would lead to a life of quiet desperation, or, of quick extermination. These gender outlaws, like popular Western outlaws, were always at risk of being taken down by self-proscribed regulators of social codes. Like Brandon Teena (*Boys Don't Cry*), they were always vulnerable to attack, violation and murder for their perceived transgressions of the social order.

This extreme anxiety led to the construction of a psychological defense system that relied upon a smooth and seamless internalization of social myths about gender and sexuality, so effective that I forgot that I had ever thought or felt differently. Even more disturbing, I have had to

recognize that my self-destructive internalization of restrictive sexual and gender roles led to my own complicity in reproducing the violence and oppression of our society. I was no longer the weak, sensitive kid who wanted to create something beautiful; instead, I was the angry, anti-social bully who was going to make others pay for my pain. Like Zachary growing up in the working-class male world of Quebec (*C.R.A.Z.Y.*), I sought to erase my empathy for others and adopted the hard tough-guise of this world. Slowly, later in life, through the patient guidance of caring people who taught me about love, I slowly learned to recognize my betrayal of my inner self in order to fit into society's prescribed roles. As I once again began to open myself up to my creative side, I also became very interested in how other artists understand and portray identity issues. This helped me to recognize the warring selves inside me and allowed me to put them into dialogue with each other, with positive role models in my community, and with the cinema I study.

As a result, as a film and media scholar, I have been working with the concepts of gender and sexuality for a long time. This research and writing has led to the development of a course, "Gender and Sexuality: A Contemporary Cinematic Exploration," Wednesday nights at the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning (CCLL) during the month of February. The course is a part of the Lexington Film League's continuing series of film courses offered at the CCLL.

Cinema provides a unique opportunity for us to explore gender and sexuality. Issues of gender and sexuality have been treated in the cinema from every angle of vision and from all ideological perspectives while retaining the ability to continue to challenge us to reconsider our unconscious assumptions.

The film theorist Sophie Mayer (*The Cinema of Sally Potter*, 2009: 5-10), reminds us that films take place in

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*The Frugal Fisherman. Here.*  
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*I'm Not From Here*  
*Creekwater: Sawdust*

*Rupp Arena in poetry and prose.*

*Corporate personhood.*

*More from the Frugal Fisherman.*

## In forthcoming issues

# The Neighborhood

*North of Center* is a periodical, a place, and a perspective. Keep reading to find out what that means.

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## Building a basil economy

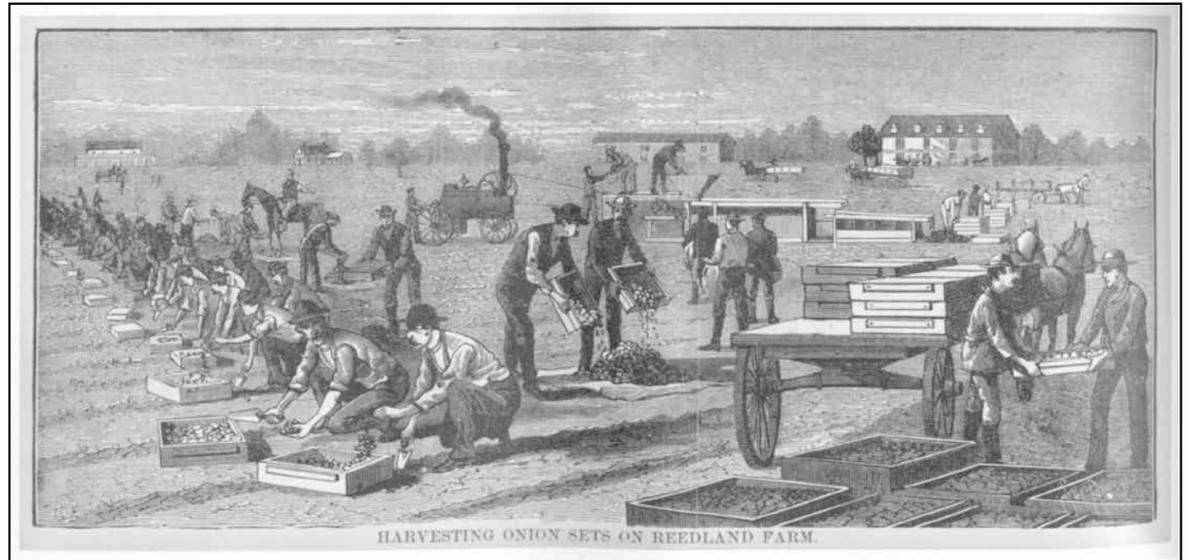
### An unemployed idea: more (labor intensive) farming

By Danny Mayer

Seed catalogs do not just sell seeds. Often, they function as repositories of all things agricultural. Most include some sort of instructions for growing each variety of seed, and nearly all

scale industrial production, the catalogs selling them have gotten even more interesting. In addition to instructions, most sellers of heirloom seeds include at least some stories about the seeds themselves. I enjoy learning about the depression-era history of, say, mortgage lifter

bought your Seeds, and buy them yet," says Abraham F. Hains, District of Columbia, 1884, page 15) and pouring over century-old planting ideas (which varieties of greens to plant—and how and when—for winter salads, page 31). As catalogs go, it's a keeper. It stays on



include brief descriptions for each fruit, flower or vegetable that they offer.

As my interests in seeds have drifted toward primarily heirloom varieties of produce, meaning that the seeds were developed through open pollination rather than manipulated for large

tomatoes in general, or of Halladay's Mortgage Lifter in particular. I feel the stories attached to the seeds—sometimes agriculturally focused, at other times culturally or socially so—better connect me to the long continuum of agricultural acts that comprise the bedrock of our culture.

Of seed catalogs, the D. Landreth Seed Company has the most fetching that I've come across to date. Established in 1780 in Philadelphia, Landreth's is the fifth oldest company in the United States. Its 2009-2011 catalog—which in addition to information related to ordering seeds is also filled with reproduced pages from over 150 years of Landreth's seed catalogs—is a beauty. I've spent several hours looking at images ("The grand display of D. Landreth & Sons, at the Southern Exposition in Louisville, KY, 1883," page 14), reading nineteenth century customer satisfaction notes ("When a boy, fifty years ago, I

my shelf long after its use as an ordering mechanism has passed.

One picture from the Landreth's catalog, entitled "Harvesting Onion Sets On Reedland Farm," stands out to me for its ability to glimpse a working agricultural economy. The woodcut offers a panoramic view of the farm as its workers—all white, seemingly all mustachioed—work together in digging up, sorting and collecting onion sets into a series of bins stacked on wooden horse-drawn trailers. Although the catalog gives no date for the image, the ratio of horses to tractors in the scene (5:1 by my count) suggests that it was produced at the beginning of the 20th century when mechanized labor (tractors and such) as yet did not have a stranglehold on our national agriculture. (Mass mechanization of our agriculture began to occur between 1930 and 1945, when

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## Someday is today: Burris exhibit engages politics, social justice

By Amber Scott

*We Will Someday, Someday We Will*, on exhibit at Institute 193 through Feb. 20, is artist Bruce Burris's optimism and activism captured in visual art form.

The pieces in the exhibit are sculptures, paintings, drawing and installations, but despite the presence of different media, everything is threaded together with a decorative text that has become Burris's signature style.

Well, it's held together by the text and the message of the exhibit, which is best exemplified by this excerpt from a picket sign attached to a 20-foot handle that's part of the show: *Time to fuckin stop our bleeding mountaintop.*

Burris, who is best known locally for his work with Latitude Artist Community, is, according to Phillip March Jones, creative director at Institute 193 and curator of this exhibit, the only contemporary artist dealing with the issue of mountaintop removal.

A native of Delaware and an import from San Francisco, Burris seems like he'd be just a teensy bit removed from the Appalachian issue of mountaintop removal, but, as evidenced by the work presented in *We Will Someday*, he understands it better than most of us who have genetic ties to the area or an economic responsibility for it.

"There are always huge, ripping issues wherever you are," said Burris. "I live in Lexington, and I find the

issue of mountaintop removal most relevant to my life. I breathe and drink and have a ten year old, so I A.M. drawn to it in this most ordinary way."

Burris has a knack for pointing out the obvious. His work generates power in part through its ability to highlight things we all live among yet at the same time are ignorant of. Through his swindly text and drawings, he crafts a picture of contemporary life, some of it so based in fiction that it is penetratingly real.

Take for instance the Lonely Mountain Community Center, a bulletin board covered in fliers announcing Stoner Creek Boys performances, the start of a meth support group, memorial services for legend-in-his-day (this day being over 30 years ago) local basketball star Summer "Time" McNeese. One particularly poignant notice says, "Feeling unsafe? Call 911." The 911 is scratched through and underneath it someone has pointed out what being forgotten feels like: *We don't have 911 jerk.*

As one patron said on opening night, "I can't tell if this is for real or not."

Are the fliers real fliers, posted by citizens of the Lonely Mountain Community? Probably not. But are the issues illustrated on them real to citizens of Appalachia? To us? Absolutely.

It is scathing and oddly enjoyable to have your ignorance pointed out to



A snapshot of Burris' "Lonely Mountain Community Center" installation/bulletin board, where free kitten fliers rest against write-ups of illegally overweight coal haulers.

*continued on the next page*



## Rock docs at BCTC

### Mayer's ENG 281 open to public

NoC News

Beginning this Thursday, January 28, Bluegrass Community and Technical College instructor Danny Mayer will open to the public his Spring 2010 film class on Rock and Roll documentaries, held in the spacious Oswald Auditorium from 5:00-7:45 P.M..

When asked to comment on his hare-brained idea, Mayer responded: "It came to me late one night last December, about 3 or 4 in the morning as I was preparing at home for the class by viewing some musical documentaries and hopped up on some particularly strong coffee. Halfway through a *Devil and Daniel Johnston*>>>*Marjoe*>>>*Last Waltz* triple-play, I thought, 'This shit can't be shut off inside the classroom.' It was a spiritual—if strange—musical night for sure, and I've just kind of ridden with the idea since then."

Though the story sounds cute, if a little odd, some educators have questioned whether Mayer is pulling a fast one. In addition to his idea to throw open the classroom to the public, effectively allowing non-students to drop in on his class to watch free weekly documentaries, the BCTC teacher has also lined up a series of guest speakers to teach his class for him.

Here's how it works: students and the public file in for class, where Mayer promises to "introduce" the work before showing that night's rock documentary. After the documentary, the class and any interested stragglers from the public will have the pleasure to participate in a more in-depth discussion of some aspect of the documentary until class is over. The catch? Mayer is leading less than half of those discussions, leading some in the education field to question whether the community college teacher is getting out of his teaching responsibilities.

Mayer quickly brushes off that criticism, in part by claiming a strong pedagogical value in subcontracting his responsibilities to friends in the field.

"Look, there are a number of sound teacherly reasons for doing

this. For one, I get to model being an engaged student—one who asks questions out of curiosity rather than classroom necessity. In fact, it is my hope that the public who shows up to class out of their own curiosity and interest will also help break down that bullshit wall that separates students, who *have* to learn for a grade, and engaged community members, who are just interested in learning for the fun of it. I'd open my ENG 101 classes to the public for the same reasons, too, if I thought anyone might show up."

"And as far as getting others to teach the class for me, well, we need more, not less, of that in education. I can only teach so many perspectives effectively. Getting other interested people to present their perspectives on documentaries of their choice seems like a smart way to tap into people's talents. I've got film studies scholars from BCTC and UK coming in and speaking on punk, mockumentaries, and the Stones. I hope to have a person come in and lead a discussion from the production side of things—what choices they make as makers of a music documentary. I'll have two musicians—one a professor at Middle Tennessee State University, the other local musician Chris Sullivan from the Swells—talking about the political efficacy of folk music and the drift of Romanian music, hopefully with instruments in hand. That's not being slack; it's called diversity. A much greater diversity than I could offer my students on my own."

The next three documentaries to be shown offer a musical snapshot of the years spanning 1965-1975. Taken together, the three documentaries comprise, along with *Woodstock* (1970) and *Monterey Pop* (1969), what many film critics claim as both ur-texts and highpoints of "rockumentary" filmmaking.

On the 28<sup>th</sup>, Danny Mayer will present D.A. Pennebaker's *Don't Look Back* (1967), which follows Bob Dylan on his 1965 solo tour through England. (Pennebaker would also follow Dylan around Great Britain the next year during his 1966 tour, when the singer "went electric." His footage

find yourself defending a movie like *Alien vs. Predator 2: Requiem* for its subtle political undertones as I once did (please don't think less of me), then you are a science fiction geek.

With that said, prepare to read a biased review of *Moon* (2009).

*Moon* is the best film ever made in the history of mankind. Just kidding. Make no mistake, this is a very good sci-fi movie, but for you blasphemous few who think *2001: A Space Odyssey* is too slow, *Moon* is not for you. The movie begins with an astronaut and mining engineer, Sam Bell (Sam Rockwell), in his final weeks of a three-year contract. Sam works for LUNAR, a global corporation that extracts Helium3 from Moon rocks to supply Earth with energy. Sam is alone

ENG 281: Intro to Film: Rock Documentaries

Danny Mayer (Danny.Mayer@kctcs.edu)  
Office Hours: M/R 12-2, T 1-2  
Office: 247 Oswald Bldg

#### CLASS SCHEDULE

##### January

14 Introductions: Springsteen  
21 Woodstock and the 60s (Danny Mayer)  
28 Don't Look Back (Danny Mayer)

##### February

4 Gimme Shelter (Gerry Adair)  
11 The Last Waltz (Danny Mayer)  
18 Be Here to Love Me (Danny Mayer)  
25 TBA

##### March

4 U.S. v. John Lennon (Wes Houp)  
11 NO CLASS: MIDTERM  
18 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK  
25 Joe Strummer: The Future is Unwritten (Michael Benton)

##### April

1 The Filth and the Fury (Brian Connors Manke)  
8 Spinal Tap (Colleen Glenn)  
15 Metal: A Headbanger's Journey (Keith Halladay)  
22 Latcho Drom (Chris Sullivan)  
29 Student Choice (TBA)

of that more famous tour would form the basis for *Eat the Document*, which was never widely released.)

A week later, on February 4, BCTC film studies professor Gerry Adair will present *Gimme Shelter* (1970). Directed by Albert and David Maysles, the documentary follows the Rolling Stones on their 1969 American tour; much of the film, however, focuses on the disastrous show at Altamont, California, where a black teen was stabbed to death by a white member of the Hells Angels, a biker gang hired for security with promises of cases of beer for payment.

Mayer will conclude the run of Sixties rockumentaries with a viewing of the Martin Scorsese classic *The Last Waltz* (1978) provides an insightful look at The Band's last concert on Thanksgiving Day 1976 at the Winterland Ballroom in San Francisco. Though the documentary was filmed and released well into the 1970s, *The Last Waltz* in many ways narrates what guitarist/vocalist Robbie Robertson

suggested was the "beginning of the beginning of the end of the beginning." Though Robertson is talking about his band, The Band, Scorsese's documentary in many provides a closing chapter on the early history of rock and roll.

Later documentary screenings will be publicized in forthcoming issues of *North of Center*. The Oswald Auditorium, located in the Oswald Building of BCTC's Cooper campus (next to Commonwealth Stadium), will open beginning at 4:50. Class—which you may ignore or participate in—will begin at 5:00, and viewings will commence at 5:20 P.M. each Thursday night. After the documentaries, you are welcome to stay to hear the featured speaker discuss the film with the class (and public). Class ends at 7:45 P.M.. do not sit in the first 4 rows of seats, which are reserved for students of the class.

Parking sucks and is UK operated. Walking or biking or hopping a bus might be a better option.

## Moon: the answer to our energy crisis

By Stan Heaton

I think we all have a favorite genre of movies. Sometimes it's easy to know what yours is. If you're a hopeless romantic who "just hasn't met the right woman yet" despite 45 years of tirelessly searching every sticky bar in town, or if you sob uncontrollably when screen couples share that first passionate kiss, your genre is probably chick flicks. Most times, choosing a favorite genre is more difficult. Maybe you love so many different types of movies that you just can't decide. For me, declaring the golden group is all about what you're willing to put up with. It's about the blatant shittiness that you guiltlessly brush aside without a second thought. If you one day

on the Moon, except for a robot assistant named GERTY (voice of Kevin Spacey)—think HAL with emoticons. GERTY is actually nothing like HAL, but the lasting power and brilliance of *2001* make it nearly impossible to see a monotone robot on the big screen and not think some innocent human is about to get tossed helplessly into space. GERTY is really more like Sam's mother. He feeds Sam, patches him up when he burns his hand, and pats him on the back when he needs a little cheering up. GERTY even gives birth to Sam, sort of.

When Sam, who looks more like a gas station attendant than an astronaut, travels out to one of the mining vessels, he crashes into the treads of the gigantic machinery. The next scene is GERTY mending Sam at the moon base. Only, it's not Sam. The new character is a Sam clone, awakened by GERTY and implanted with memories. Before you begin to hate me for revealing the secrets of the movie, just know that this happens early in the film and is hardly a mystery if you've seen the previews.

What follows is far more provocative and interesting. *Moon* presents viewers with a world in which the energy crisis has been solved at the greatest possible cost. Humans are treated like interchangeable parts in the quest for Helium3. What's worse is that, like most interchangeable parts from large corporations, there is a strategy of planned obsolescence. All the while, these same corporations control the flow of information technology

to conceal the truth from the lowly human cogs. Ringing any bells?

The best part of *Moon* is Sam Rockwell's performance. His is the only face we see for the majority of the movie, unless you count GERTY's emoticons (which I do). Not only that, he also plays two versions of himself: one a newly awakened man of passion dealing with his separation from his family, the other an aged and deteriorating hobbyist dying to see his daughter, both coming to terms with their LUNAR role in different ways. Rockwell is nothing short of excellent and is truly engaging for the full 97 minutes.

The special effects are decent, not spectacular, but they are appropriately used to situate Sam in the desolate landscape of the Moon. The effects also make two Sams on screen at once quite believable. They even play ping-pong together while in the same shot. Overall, the movie is impressive for a \$5 million budget.

*Moon* is an early effort from Director Duncan Jones (David Bowie's son, by the way), and he seems to have gotten it right. The staple of any good sci-fi flick is a thoughtful criticism of present times in a future setting. The film achieves that and so much more in the way of exploring the love/fuck triangle between man, power, and technology. *Moon* is available on Blu Ray and DVD now and is a must-see for science fiction fans. For everyone else, casually add it to your Netflix queue and watch it when you get tired of crying at the end of *The Notebook*.

## LAST CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Lexington Film League DO-ERS Video Contest  
Extended Deadline: February 1, 2010

Submit your video to YouTube and send an email or send a file on a disk at:

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Lexington, 40505

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# Music

## Review: Street Gnar's *Lion's Head*

By Patrick Smith

I've been anxiously awaiting my chance to listen to this tape ever since I first heard Street Gnar's waves of electro-static warmth in a cramped living room on Maxwell nearly a year ago. The solo project of local skater and barfly Case Mahan, Street Gnar works as a demonstration of his knack for crafting intricate and subtle soundscapes via electric guitar.

Side 1 of *Lion's Head* begins with a surprising blast of high-energy lo-fi indie rock, the track's driving drums and chorused vocals pushing it to nearly anthemic heights before Case punches STOP on his 4-track recorder.

The following song shifts the mood into a lower gear, a warped folk ballad with phased acoustic guitar and vocals seeping in from an A.M. radio turned on in a room down the hall.

The remainder of the tape is all transcendental instrumental meditation, looping guitars and soft synthesizer squelches recalling underwater explorations and distant mountain sunrises. Taken as a whole, *Lion's Head* plays like the post-party soundtrack for cerebral rockers and college weirdos. After the bottles have been drained and smashed on the kitchen floor, everyone settles around the TV to smoke one, watch Planet Earth, and drift off to sleep. Sounds like a good time to me.



Street Gnar.

## \$14.7 million and only half a bus route

By Troy Lyle

How can the pundits down at LFUCG and over in Frankfort think spending \$14.7 million to widen Clays Mill Road makes any sense at all? Especially in light of the fact that Lextran doesn't offer a continual bus line for much of the roads entirety. The current line, No. 4, veers off at Fayette Mall, leaving nearly two miles of Clays Mill residents without a busing option. The other line, No. 36, only offers service to those residents in and around Man O'War. Residents between Man O'War and Wellington have to walk as much as a mile to even sniff the diesel of a Lextran Bus.

Wouldn't it make more sense to add the other two or so miles into the current Clays Mill route to extend Lextran's coverage out to Man O'War and then on to the mall?

One would think \$15 million would justify such an extension. But common sense approaches to real world problems aren't LFUCG's, nor the state's, forté.

Business as usual is more like it. In their minds it's easier to pack the streets of Lexington with single car drivers and add some new pavement—or worse, enforce the laws of eminent domain and widen a road—than to look at the big picture.

With an annual operating budget of more than \$28 million, with more than 70 buses and 900 designated stops, with \$173 million designated for road improvements in Fayette County alone, how does a road with a population density as great as that of Clays Mill only justify half a bus route? The short answer is it doesn't.

Instead of widening Clays Mill, maybe the city should expand bus service there.

## Live music in Lex: the next two weeks

Thursday, February 4

Mountains w/ Tape and Kraken Fury  
Al's Bar. \$5. All ages.

Once again the progressive folks down at 88.1 are bringing the people of Lexington fresh and forward thinking sounds. On February 4th at Al's Bar, WRFL will present Mountains, Tape, and Kraken Fury.

Both Brooklyn's Mountains and Stockholm's Tape incorporate tapestries of acoustic balladry with warm and smart electronic leanings. Both groups sound otherworldly. Mountains warble on a path between rustic and swarming, while Tape floats through a milky blizzard of nostalgia for European and Asian lands, past and future.

The two touring acts seem a fitting pair as both play on suspense without the shock. If you're a fan of the post rock Chicago of yore, a la Gastr Del Sol, but without any over the top pretense and a hundred times the color, these bands are for you. This is soul music for sure. Lexington's Kraken Fury are opening the show so expect either mind bending full on kraut inspired prog/doom rock or an acoustic set reminiscent of Jackson C. Frank/John Prine so intimate you'll never want to leave because you think you're home. —Ma Turner

Friday, February 12

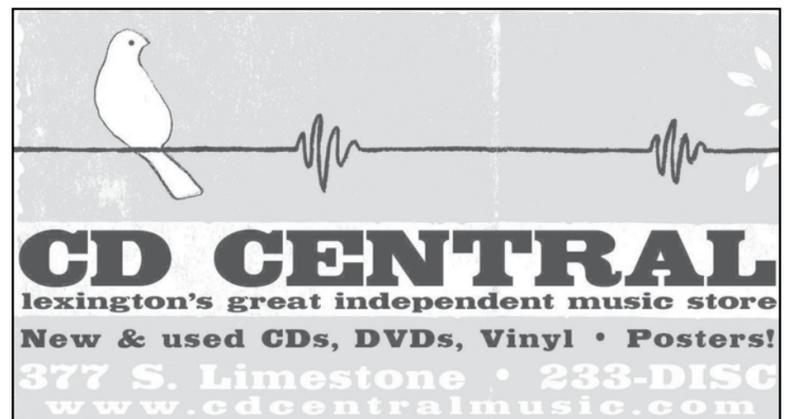
GIVERS w/ Matt Duncan  
Al's Bar. \$5. All ages.

One time I drove through Lafayette, Louisiana on my way to Baton Rouge from Texas. Tired and lost, passing sign after sign for emergency alternate hurricane routes, I finally deemed

a coffee stop necessary. A fan of linguistics, I was pleasantly surprised to encounter one of the best accents I've ever heard, coming from three different people! Sultry, slightly gritty, but smooth - "What're y'all doin' 'ere in LAFF-ee-yet? We sure are glad y'all're 'ere," accompanied by beaming smiles and sweet faces. It seems minor, but the moment was so unexpected and endearing to a road-weary traveler that it's one of the parts I still remember vividly from the trip.

GIVERS hail from Lafayette, and I can only imagine they're friends with the sweet baristas we met. Their music evokes such joy that you find it pretty impossible to not let your heart fill with sunshine while listening. It's music that makes you want to run around in a field with flowers in your hair, letting your skirt bustle in the wind. Combining everything that is good in the world, GIVERS mix indie-pop with cajun zydeco and afro-beat to create a magical blend of rock that can chill you to the bone yet quench your thirst for happiness. Imagine if Vampire Weekend was from the bayou and grew up listening to classic rock jams with dad in the garage...and you might have a start.

Fresh off a tour opening for Dirty Projectors, GIVERS are now embarking across the US on their own to spread smiles all around. And what better setting for a little pick-me-up than Lexington in February? Opener Matt Duncan, who is in my opinion the best pop outfit in town, couldn't be a better match. Put your cares aside for the night and find yourself at Al's on the 12<sup>th</sup>—you won't regret it. —Eli Riveire



## Big Fresh play Buster's

By Ashleigh Lovelace

"Big Fresh Forever." I'd have to agree with that sentiment; the one with which the Lexington-based Big Fresh christened their second full length album (shorthand B.F.F.) which was produced by Garden Gate Records in 2009. Last Saturday, Big Fresh was the headlining act at Buster's, appearing at a stately midnight after Robot Cowboy and Matt Duncan warmed up the small but steady fan base that came out to see them.

Big Fresh's studio work leads the casual listener into a keyboard-heavy frenzy of electrified pop and surfer rock. All obvious allusions to Chicago's brass tinted accompaniments fall by the wayside when seeing and hearing the energy they put into creating music. The end result sounds more like the love child of New Wave darlings Devo and a psychedelic version of the Beach Boys.

Live, Big Fresh gains an entirely new persona—the spacey synth found in their studio recordings gives way to a keyed up version of themselves. Visually, the interpretive dancers and the band's overwhelming zest for the moment, for music, is akin to a 4 year old hopped up on a year's supply of pixy stix or your Uncle Harry still tripping from the first time he saw 2001: A Space Odyssey. But there's more to it than that.

There was an indescribable transformation in an audience that meandered back and forth between the bar and the front of the stage, listening with active, yet cursory interest to the

opening acts. When Big Fresh took the stage and jumped right into their set with a verve that acknowledged midnight only as a new day, a wave of energy hit the audience. People jumped up in anticipation of the rhythmic flood to ensue.

Big Fresh exude a kind of quirky science fiction reminiscent of Dr. Who. A straw covered Cousin It and gas mask-wearing trench coated figures dance around the stage amidst the vocal harmonies and eclectic pop. The whole scene creates a palpable intensity, a sort of organized chaos that you might expect when seven people gather on stage to rock out.

The encore took place around 1:30 to a smaller crowd who were still feeding off the last few songs. As often happens at these moments, the energy seemed to increase. Founding member John Ferguson proceeded to lie on his back, head hanging off the stage at a precarious angle, all the while singing in what I previously believed to be a position that rendered pitch control impossible. And if that wasn't enough, the entire audience was invited to dance onstage as the band wailed out its last number.

I left Buster's Saturday feeling at once like I had just witnessed something intoxicating—a delightful pleasure that I knew I would eagerly indulge in the future. Big Fresh is an invigorating part of the Lexington music scene, and one that I know will get its due attention again and again in an era of music when fresh notes are lauded by all.

Sat, January 30

at 8:30 P.M.

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with a portion of your \$10 door going to the Haitian relief efforts of

Doctors Without Borders

and introducing

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Playing new originals and new covers, including vintage Traffic, John Mayer and Stevie Ray Vaughn!

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Lexington

## River Hill Ice Bowl

### Disc golfers support God's Pantry

By Troy Lyle

Having fun and getting in a little extra practice wasn't the only objective of the 36 disc golfers who participated in the inaugural River Hill Ice Bowl on January 16. Many hoped to do some good for the community as well.

"The event raised \$600 and more than 200 lbs. of canned goods to support the work of God's Pantry locally," said Lewis Willian, longtime Bluegrass Disc Golf Association (BDGA) member and tournament participant. "It's a national tradition of all winter disc golf tournaments to raise support for the needy through a charity event. As a matter of fact, we (BDGA) are not allowed to call it an 'Ice Bowl' if we do not."

Willian said the non-sanctioned, or not-for-points, tournament was also the perfect chance to expose some local disc golfers to the new nine hole

course at River Hill, all while allowing the BDGA more leeway in terms of how the tournament was executed.

"Having a non-sanctioned event like this one allows us to give all the proceeds to charity," he said. "It's all part of disc golf giving back."

And being non-sanctioned allowed the event's organizers to throw some extra fun the golfers way as well. Each participant was given the chance to improve their final score by purchasing up to 9 mulligans, at 3 mulligans for \$5 or for five cans of food. Those mulligans could be used in either of the two rounds of play, with each round consisting of 18 holes, one in the A.M. and one in the P.M..

Disc golfers competed in either the Open (Pro), Advanced, Intermediate, Recreational or Women's divisions. Golfers were paired up in nine groups of four, based on skill level, with most pairings organized by division.



River Hill Ice Bowl competitors assemble in the playground.

## Get ready for spring — tackling tackle

### Shootin' n snaggin' with the Frugal Fisherman

I A.M. in no way a professional fisherman. I'm far too lazy to be all that good at anything.

I do however love to fish. Have since I was a little boy growing up in Southern Virginia. To this day some of my fondest memories are associated

going to talk about how I fished, what I fished for and hopefully how I cooked my bountiful baskets of fresh brim, trout, catfish and crappie. Mingled into these fishing adventures will at times be my take on life. My take on food. My take on conservation, poli-



A selection of worms, jugs, and spinnerbaits emptied from the Frugal Fisherman's cluttered tackle box.

tics, the community, and a whole host of other subjects I've yet to realize. To make sure I'm ready for the upcoming fishing season I decided I'd begin with cleaning out my tackle box. You can't catch fish without bait, whether natural or artificial, so it seemed the likely place to start. And moreover a great way to pass some time and shake off the cold of winter.

Here in the last few years I've gotten away from fishing. Chalk it up to life's travails, a busy work schedule or my extreme need to procrastinate. Either way I just didn't, or couldn't, seem to find the time for fishing. This year that's all going to change. This year I'm going to go fishing once a week, rain or shine. Call it a promise to myself.

And with each outing I'm going to report back to you with my catch. I'm

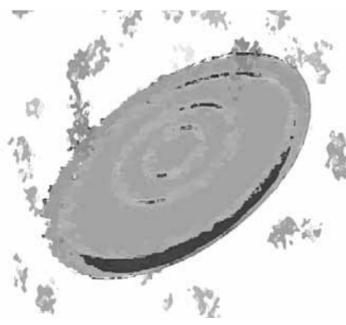
going to talk about how I fished, what I fished for and hopefully how I cooked my bountiful baskets of fresh brim, trout, catfish and crappie. Mingled into these fishing adventures will at times be my take on life. My take on food. My take on conservation, poli-

tics, the community, and a whole host of other subjects I've yet to realize. To make sure I'm ready for the upcoming fishing season I decided I'd begin with cleaning out my tackle box. You can't catch fish without bait, whether natural or artificial, so it seemed the likely place to start. And moreover a great way to pass some time and shake off the cold of winter.

If you are at all like me your tackle box is an utter mess. I can't figure out how it seems to happen, but regardless of what I do my tackle box becomes a cluster of chaos by season's end. To make matters worse I haven't done much fishing the last two years. So to call my tackle box dysfunctional would be a huge understatement.

2010 Winchester-Clark County Parks and Recreation First Annual

## FROZEN IRON ICE BOWL



This Saturday, January 30, at Ironworks Hills Park (Winchester)  
Registration begins at 8-8:45 A.M.; players meeting at 9 A.M.; start of play 9:20 A.M.

Go to [www.bdga.org](http://www.bdga.org) to pre-register, or call Lewis Willian, BDGA tournament director, at 859-749-6666 for more information.

Winners within each division included:

*Open*, Jon Winfrey, -18  
*Advanced*, Dillon Nickell, -17  
*Intermediate*, Collin Nickel, -11  
*Recreational*, Casey Hudgins, -8  
*Women's*, Kirsten Coggen, 32

Willian said a similar setup will be used in this upcoming weekend's WCCPR (Winchester-Clark County Parks and Recreation) Frozen Iron Ice Bowl located at Ironworks Hills in Winchester. Only the Frozen Iron tournament will be sanctioned, meaning no mulligans and particular rules.

"Sanctioned events must be approved by the Professional Disc Golfers of America (PDGA), have divisions based on skill level and require certain standards concerning fees, payouts and prizes," he said. "This will be our 3rd PDGA sanctioned event in Winchester—beginning with the WCCPR Amateur at Ironworks Hills in September (45 players) and the WCCPR Turkey Toss in November (64 players)."

There are already more than 50 golfers pre-registered, out of a total of 90 spots, for this weekend's Frozen Iron Ice Bowl, he said. Golfers who enter this weekend's tournament will also have a chance to win a \$120 raffle prize consisting of a variety of eight Innova Discs stamped with the Ironworks Hills 2010 tournament logo and a brand new Innova starter bag.

Everyone will receive a raffle ticket for playing in the tournament, Willian added. But in addition to this single entry ticket, golfers and spectators can earn extra tickets by bringing a can of food (1 additional ticket), purchasing a BDGA disc the day of the event (3 tickets), buying lunch (1 ticket) or simply making a \$1 donation (1 ticket).

Golfers can also enter the Ace Pool at a cost of \$3. Proceeds will be split up evenly among ace pool winners. If there are no aces, there will be a throw after the final round with the closest disc winning one half the pool, he said.

Regardless of who wins what prizes, the main thing is for everyone to come out, have some fun and do some good for the community, Willian said.

My jig baits are buried under a mound of worms. My hooks are tangled with old pieces of monofilament. My bobbers are everywhere. I can't locate any of my jerkbaits. Several crankbaits are missing treble hooks. And all my plastic baits have united to form a singular mound of molten plasticity. Nothing short of disarray. So much so that I had to move from my kitchen table to my living room floor to find enough space to lay everything out.

After nearly three hours I finally started to make a dent. My plan was simple. I'd organize each bait according to its function—hooks with weights and bobbers, curly-tail jigs with rubber worms, crank baits with jerk baits, and on and on. That way I could fully utilize each container of my tackle box according to the type of fish I would be pursuing. If I was heading to the Kentucky River to try and catch some brim, I could grab the brim/crappie box with its bobbers, small hooks, lead weights and rubber jigs, and not have to carry my entire bait selection.

And that's important. For one, I have way too many lures. It's almost as if I had a lure fetish at one time. There are literally more than a thousand artificial lures in my tackle box. Ridiculous! Secondly, you don't need to

have a thousand lures at your fingertips. You can only cast one at a time anyway. I know myself. I tend to get impatient if the fish aren't biting. So if I have access to a thousand lures you better believe I'll try and cast everyone at least once thinking this will do the trick. The reality is it's best to plan ahead, carry a few baits and target a certain fish. At least that's what I'm going to attempt to do differently this year. I'll keep you posted on how it turns out.

One of the unexpected wonders of organizing my tackle box was the flood of memories I experienced as I handled each bait. Like the time I caught an 8 pound largemouth using this sparkly, chartreuse colored buzz bait. Or the time I pierced my stepdads ear lobe trying to cast a top water Zara Spook with a bait casting reel. It was like each lure was a time machine to an all but forgotten era of my life.

And with each recollection my desire to fish grew. When it's all said and done I might not catch many fish this year. But it won't be for a lack of trying. And it won't be because my tackle box isn't organized. To be honest, landing a lunker or frying some catfish seems secondary to the wealth of memories just getting ready to go fishing has provided.

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Post-game shenanigans at Al's

## Carnegie carnality (cont.)

*continued from page 1*

the world, not just in the theater, and that films have just as much power as our “real” experiences to construct an understanding of our world. This is because of cinema’s “haptic” effect, which alludes to film’s ability to “touch us,” to make us feel as if we have actually experienced the events on the screen, and its profound ability to cause us to “rethink ways of seeing that link the viewer into the body of the protagonist.”

The multi-media artist, performer and filmmaker Sally Potter explains to Mayer the power of film to initiate critical reflection.

“In the act of surrender to it, what the film experience can offer is the possibility of saying ‘There you are! This is your life: your life is this and more. This is a journey inside your brain, or your experience, or your relationship with people, things, places, spaces.’ It’s not just through identification or projection onto characters, it’s the totality of experience itself being thrown back at you. With the best [films], you come out with the feeling that you took a walk through your own brain and remembered that you were alive in the big, spacious universe that you’re occupying.”

Cinema incorporates the other arts, and makes unique use of our senses to engage our experienced memories causing us to reflect on our embodied feelings.

Cinema constructs a set of memories that work in conjunction with our experienced memories to create a sense of the world. With that in mind we must recognize the extremely influential power that cinema, and popular media in general, have to proscribe rigid, naturalized, unquestioned gender roles and sexual expressions. These controlling narratives support privileged modes of being in the world that dominate our choices on how we should be and relate in the world. This is why it is important to explore challenging films that contest these dominant and repressive constructions of proper gender roles and sexual expression.

Probably the most challenging film I have taught is John Cameron Mitchell’s *Shortbus* (2006) because it is such an honest and direct portrayal of sexuality, unlike any contemporary American film. The first time I watched it by myself I actually blushed during the first ten minutes of the film. I had a close friend get angry at me for telling him to watch it. I have had students walk out of class during the national anthem scene, yet no film I have ever taught has generated such amazing discussions of what it means to be a human in our current society or so many thoughtful, researched papers. As I worked with this film I began thinking what is it in our society that makes the honest direct portrayal and discussions of gender/sexuality so controversial for some and so invigorating for others? Put in dialogue with films like Fatih Akin’s German/Turkish film *Head-On* (2004), we also began, as a class, to wonder who was performing the true drag, Justin Bond expressing himself honestly in a dress in *Shortbus*, or the wild Cahit and Sibel

masquerading as a traditional monogamous couple in order to allow her to escape her repressive family structure.

This is how I began working on developing a course to explore how contemporary international cinema has portrayed gender and sexuality. The “Gender and Sexuality: A Cinematic Exploration” course will be structured around an introductory section; followed by three groupings of contemporary international films: 1) The Politics of Love; 2) Unruly Bodies; 3) Queerifying Gender and Sexuality. My choice to avoid typical Hollywood films is a conscious decision to explore unique examples that may not be familiar to most people. Also, by developing an international sampling of films, it allows us to understand the broader movement to challenge and change naturalized conceptions of gender roles, loving relations and sexual expressions. More popular Hollywood examples that reinforce rigid gender roles will, of course, be referred to as touchstones for exploring our examples from contemporary films.

### Introduction

*Un Chien Andalou*

(France: Luis Bunuel, 1929)

*Pretty Woman*

(USA: Garry Marshall, 1990)

*The Piano*

(New Zealand/Australia/  
France: Jane Campion, 1993)

*Boys Don’t Cry*

(USA: Kimberly Peirce, 1999)

*Secretary*

(USA: Steven Shainberg, 2002)

*Kinsey*

(USA/Germany: Bill Condon, 2004)

*Moolaade*

(Senegal: Ousmane Sembene, 2004)

*Brokeback Mountain*

(Canada/USA: Ang Lee, 2005)

*I.A.M. a Sex Addict*

(USA: Caveh Zavehdi, 2005)

*300*

(USA: Zack Snyder, 2006)

*Don’t Look Down*

(Argentina: Eliseo Subiela, 2008)

The introduction will be a discussion of the main concepts, questions, and theories framing the course through the images and themes of the feature films listed above. We will also watch various short experimental films exploring gender roles and expressions of sexuality.

### The Politics of Love

*In the Company of Men*

(USA/Canada: Neil LaBute, 1997)

*Yes*

(UK/USA: Sally Potter, 2004)

*Head-On*

(Germany/Turkey: Fatih Akin, 2004)

The themes of this section will be that “relationships are always political”: The consequences of the competitive nature of sexual conquest as framed by a hyper-masculine discourse (*In the Company of Men*); how perceived racial and class differences come into play to disrupt and complicate traditional gender/sexual roles (*Yes*); the challenge for second-generation Turks in Germany, who are redefining and resisting their culturally prescribed roles, and the

consequences of their transgressions (*Head-On*).

### Unruly Bodies

*Human Nature*

(France/USA: Michel Gondry, 2001)

*XXY*

(Argentina: Lucia Puenzo, 2007)

*4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 Days*

(Romania: Cristian Mungiu, 2007)

The themes of this section will be the “disruptive body”: The way in which a self-defined, advanced, “civilized” Western industrial culture rests its assumptions of cultural superiority on the extreme control of bodily functions (*Human Nature*); how science seeks to definitively control and define gender/sexuality through biological determinism and the problems that erupt from individuals that exist outside these deterministic boundaries (*XXY*); how patriarchal-authoritarian societies seek to control the bodies of their citizens, especially women’s reproductive systems, and the dangers that this poses for those that seek to evade this control (*4 Months, 3 Weeks, and 2 Days*).

### Queerifying Gender and Sexuality

*But I’m a Cheerleader*

(USA: Jamie Babbit, 1999)

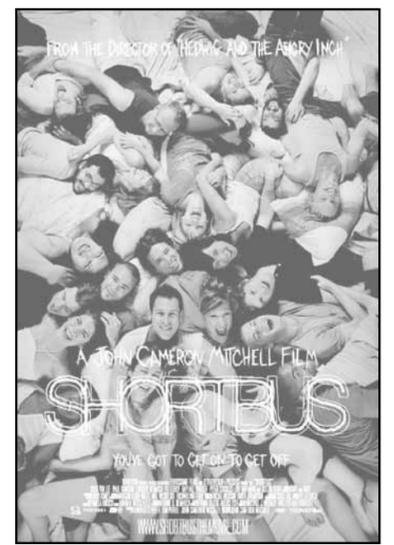
*C.R.A.Z.Y.*

(Canada: Jean-Marc Vallée, 2005)

*Shortbus*

(USA: John Cameron Mitchell, 2006)

The themes of this section will focus around “journeys”: The use of satire to queer perceptions of what is normal gender/sexual behavior and the lengths that society will go to reinforce



conforming gender identity and sexual expressions (*But I’m a Cheerleader*); how the repression of one’s innermost feelings can lead to destructive violence and self-hatred; how a conforming society teaches those that are viewed as sexually different to deny their identity (*C.R.A.Z.Y.*). And finally, in a Post 9-11 world how do we move beyond the limited and repressive sexuality of a fearful, fundamentalist American culture? Is polyamory a healthy alternative to a sterile sexual culture (*Shortbus*)? The course will be offered every Wednesday night from 5:30 to 7:30 P.M. during the month of February.

To find out more about the Carnegie Center for Literacy and Learning, visit their website, <http://www.carnegieliteracy.org/pdf/CCLLwinter2010.pdf>. Benton’s class is part of the Lexington Film League’s continuing series of film courses offered at the CCLL. For more information about their series, visit <http://www.lexingtonfilmleague.org/workshops.html>.

## Calling Ed Fields: letter from the editor

Dear Ed,

Your visceral reaction to Lexington’s landing of the Creative Cities Summit in the Jan 17 Letters section of the Herald Leader registered with me, too. Bland national gatherings of mostly wealthy white folks (ie, the “creative class”) lecturing to each other about things like creativity is not my cup of tea, either. I’m an academic, after all, and spent most of the last decade jaunting from panel session to keynote speaker at places like our downtown Hyatt.

In fact, the entire Creative Cities Project sounds like some bland sexual progeny of the academic conference and self-help salesmen humping it around Holiday Inns across the upper Bible Belt. Read this description of the group putting on the Summit:

“Because of the complexity of the problems we face today (some say “wicked problems”) no one professional discipline will ever solve them. It is only through multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary work will we be able to address our most pressing challenges. In its own small way, CCP is a connector of those people and disciplines, a coordinator of those efforts and (hopefully) a catalyst to make change happen. And we do believe in capitalism and the power of markets. But as a friend of ours said “you can make difference and make a dollar.”

Good capitalists! You’ve got to admit. They knew their market. Travel to a city that is, in your words, “the most pompous, insecure and deluded town [you’ve] ever seen,” and convince them to pay you to have them hold a conference to tell you what to do in your community. It’s brilliant. Like one-stop shopping. We get Florida in Lexington, but if you miss it, don’t worry, you can catch the same creative act in the next city on the tour. And with prices starting in the low \$199’s and with some scholarships available, even some poor people and minorities might show up. Like universities, creative cities need a little poor and dark. It brightens the shine.

But enough about the Summit. I’m looking for you because I liked your

letter’s spirit if not everything in it and would like to offer you a position at the paper. That you can at the least formulate a coherent sentence already places you in the upper echelons of writers here, and I figure that it will give you a format to respond to one of the few critiques of your letter.

The critical poster wrote to you: “[Y]ou very clearly have no idea of the extent of the efforts being made, certainly without regard to racial or socio-economic considerations, by many in Lexington to evolve this city away from the culture that you describe. That doesn’t happen as a result of some ill-informed rant of a letter to the editor. It’s more often an outcome of intelligent, willful intent and implementation.”

I would like to offer you some space, as editorialist and reporter, to turn your “rant of a letter to the editor” into what the poster (and I) want: an “intelligent, willful” engagement with “intent and implementation.” (Excuse her Creative Cities diction.)

If you’re game, here’s an idea for a first editorial: you wrote two potentially contradictory things to close your letter: “Cities become great cities because the folks who live in them don’t know their place, they make their place,” you noted, before concluding. “And anybody here who wants to live in a great city is going to have to move.”

I get the first point: be rebellious. Don’t pay \$199 to attend a conference; do something that would actually be creative and helpful to the community with it. But your second point I don’t follow. If your point is that it’s ridiculous for any city to give two shits about being labeled great or creative or whatever word they hawk these days, right on. If it is that Lexington sucks and it’ll always suck, doesn’t that logically negate your previous statement? Like you, “Lexington sucks” is what all those creative people are saying after all when they fly to Madison or Austin to tell us how great Lexington can be.

So which is it? Know your place (Lexington sucks), or make your place? Contact me at [noceditors@yahoo.com](mailto:noceditors@yahoo.com).



Fatih Akin’s *Head-On* (2004).

COURTESY ARTIE FILMS

I'm not from here by Kenn Minter



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Creekwater, Chapter Two: Sawdust

Brine Manley &amp; J.T. Dockery



## Basil economy (cont.)

continued from page 2

tractors in use increased from 920,000 to 2.4 million, according to a 2006 USDA publication.)

Though I A.M. sure the farm life depicted in the image is idealized—the fact that it's populated entirely by white men, for example, suggests an implicit racialized and gendered order of workers on this Philadelphia farm—I was struck by the sheer numbers of workers in the landscape. Reedland farm at the time of onion set harvesting was a place bustling with human labor. To the left, workers on their knees dig up onion sets; at the picture's center two men chat and work together to dump the collected bins of sets into bigger piles; to the right, people stack and then haul the onions off to the horizon in horse-drawn trailers. All told, the picture shows more than fifty men employed in the process of harvesting a product that will eventually be grown and eaten—consumed—by people like Abraham F. Hains of the District of Columbia. Food production, the image shows, is a labor intensive process.

Or at least it was. Fast forward 80 years to what that picture of agriculture might look like now. The image that comes most readily to my mind, Kevin Costner alone on a tractor plowing up a portion of his corn farm for a baseball diamond in *Field of Dreams*, is in many ways the direct opposite of the onion set harvest at Reedland. In place of the vibrant social activity of laboring men working together, we get a single man, broke and lonely, sitting atop his tractor.

The two images, each an artifice in its own way, nevertheless leak a certain truth. In 1900, nearly forty percent of the U.S. population, 31 million people, farmed on about 800 million acres of land; today, that number is closer to two percent of the population, or about

5.84 million of us, farming on close to 1 billion acres. If the Reedland scene is depicted as vibrant, and if by contrast a hundred years later Costner seems so damn lonely on his corn farm, it's because less people farm the land today. Twenty-five million less people, to be exact, even though the U.S. population—those who farmers are theoretically tasked with feeding—has increased by more than 200 million the past century.

The current paucity of farmers in the country has produced and reinforced a number of destructive behaviors. When 20 million *less* farmers are tasked with farming 200 million *more* acres to help feed 200 million *more* people, some things have got to give.

And give they have. As farm owners have come to rely less and less upon human labor, they have become dependent more and more upon other forms of labor to supplement their lost manpower. They must pay Kubota for the tractor (and its upkeep), Monsanto for the genetically modified seeds, Du Pont for the pesticides; Cargill for the technical expertise of making all of the farm's mechanized "systems" work properly. They must scale up their production and trim down the number of crops they produce, such that over the past 100 years, average farm sizes have increased by 350 acres (to 450 acres) while the number of crops produced on them have decreased from 5 crops to 1 crop per farm. All these things have costs: monetary, ecological, cultural, demographic.

They also have great labor costs. As our farming has become increasingly mechanized, it has also become increasingly depopulated. Somewhere along the line, whether by choice or necessity (and probably a little of both), farmers chose to support machines and poisons over laboring human beings by putting their dollars behind industry and technology

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rather than workers. An estimated 15.3 million people were unemployed in December; we've lost 25 million farmers over the past century for an industry—basic sustenance—that never experiences a downturn and that, theoretically, cannot be outsourced. We should begin to think about how to re-people our farms—not as models of efficiency (though human labor on farms has the potential to decrease farmers' economic dependence on fossil fuel burning farm machinery and ecosystem-killing pesticides), but as a great source of jobs production. We want farmers because we all must eat in this country; farming is a basic and irreplaceable economic necessity and yet, as a percentage of our GDP, it registers a minuscule 0.7% (down from 7.7% in 1930).

I've heard a lot about the need for a "green" economy, mostly from

well-meaning liberal democrats. Usually what is had in mind consists of creating new energy grids and systems, investing in solar or wind, and re-fixating on super-fuel efficient cars. These are, of course, fine and needed things. But they also tend to require different sorts of outside inputs. For the most part, these things require access to exceedingly costly tuition dollars for the right to gain access into the new high tech green service economy that they are imagined to be a part of.

Perhaps a quicker, cheaper, and on the whole more effective way to "green" our economy and landscape might involve something a bit more basic and old fashioned. Why not begin employing the nation by *de*-mechanizing at least one industry?

Why not send the nation out into the fields?