

# NORTH OF CENTER

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2011

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VOLUME III, ISSUE 18

## Something's happening here



Occupy Lexington Day 3. Crowds have increased each of the 12 days the block has been occupied.

### A nation starts to mobilize

By Michael Benton

The question that must be asked is whether we are witnessing the birth of a new social movement in America. As I am writing this article Occupy Wall Street is starting Day 25 and it is spreading on a national and global scale. There are now Occupations and Meetups in 1359 cities operating in solidarity with the protesters in New York City. (You can find lists of current Occupations across the globe at [www.meetup.com/occupytogether](http://www.meetup.com/occupytogether).) Occupy Lexington was the third city to organize an Occupation when a few protesters gathered on September 29 at noon in front of the Downtown JP Morgan Chase Bank plaza.

I first heard about the plans for the occupation of Wall Street from *Adbusters'* editor and writer Micah

White in July of 2011. Soon afterward, I saw the ads of a ballerina doing a pirouette on top of the iconic Wall Street bull statue appearing in the magazine's September 2011 "Post-Anarchism" issue and in various announcements from activist groups.

Slowly people started discussing the possibilities of the occupation through emails, in person, and on forums.

#### Global roots: Looking east, south and west

Where, then, did the inspiration for the Occupy Wall St. and the solidarity protests arise from? Perhaps the most electrifying moment was the Arab Spring of 2011 which seemed to happen spontaneously across the Middle East and North Africa, with predominantly

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### Occupy Main Street

By Danny Mayer

"Don't be fooled by the complaints that the Occupy Wall Street movement hasn't got a clear set of demands. Everybody in a position of power knows exactly what the people want. They simply don't want to acknowledge it. Because, one issue at a time, the demands all boil down to one thing: we don't want you running the world any more. You're bad at it. The future you imagine is a vision of hell. If I were in charge, I wouldn't want to acknowledge that, either."

—Ben Tripp, "What are your demands?"

The day before it came to Lexington, the Wednesday *Herald-Leader* ran a feature piece touting the new Tiffany Jewelry Plant

as a "super-duper" addition to city," September 28, 2011, my first trail cut into the Occupy Main Street protests comes from the west and the south, ferrying across an 8:00 A.M. traffic jam along Vine at Rupp Arena, eddying south and then west around the homeless encampment cut into the honeysuckle understory lining DeRoode, and then whopping it to City Hall, which sits chilled in the early-morning shadow of the JP Morgan Chase Building, for a meeting with Councilmember Steve Kay regarding the amount of public money that might be committed to flow into the proposed Rupp Arena Entertainment District.

An hour before its noon Thursday start, I come from the north under a late morning sun, traveling against

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## Reckoning with feminicide

### Diane Kahlo's Wall of Memories

By Beth Connors-Manke

Until November 4, the Tuska Center for Contemporary Art at the University of Kentucky is exhibiting *Wall of Memories: The Disappeared Senoritas of Ciudad Juárez* by Lexington artist Diane Kahlo. The show presents portraits of the more than 350 disappeared and murdered women of Juárez, Mexico.

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It's not shocking until you remember that they've been killed—horribly. In the portraits they are darling young girls, outlined in gold, as if they are everything we'd want: innocent, curious, luminous and fresh in the world.

Sometimes a frame has a name but no portrait. Instead, there's a small metal bird, or a sequined butterfly, or a rose, or *La Virgen*, or the Sacred Heart. These girls seem further from us, their violent erasure more complete.

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One of these girls had four heart attacks before she finally died, her heart trying to protect her from the horror. Another girl was simply a vest found in the desert; her mother has nothing else by which to identify her.

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In 1993, young women began disappearing in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, which sits across the border from El Paso, Texas. The young women, often workers at the assembly plants along

the border, are found around the city or in the desert, tortured and mutilated. Many believe that the murders are partially the result of neoliberal economic policies, drug trafficking, and governmental corruption. One can only say 'partially' because the murders have never been solved and the situation in Juárez is a confusing web of violence, drugs, conspiracies, and fear. While many news reports put the number at 350, scores more women are believed to have been killed under similar circumstances.

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Kahlo: "The portraits are very tiny. I want them to be little precious icons—to take someone who has been considered disposable and make an iconic image of her, immortalizing her."

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The room is bright, the frames are purple, the crosses anchored in sand are pink, the girls are luminous: the exhibit doesn't *feel* like death. But if you're in it, if you sit with what this room has become—walls lined with the evidence of feminicide—you understand the world you live in that much less.

.....

*Femicidio*, feminicide: "the murder of women."

*Feminicidio*, feminicide: "the homicide against women, it's really directed against women—almost like genocide against women, because they are women. It's a concern among feminists

and activists in the Southwest; it's certainly a mark of globalization."

"There's murder against women all over the world, but this is right at our border, it's right at our back door. Most people attribute it to NAFTA. There were factories that produced goods for export in the border cities before NAFTA, but after NAFTA was implemented, thousands of these *maquiladoras* sprung up."

"People come from all over Mexico looking for work, and they come to the city [Juárez] because of the factories. They are hiring mostly women because women don't want as much—they don't want as much per hour, they don't rebel as much as men would. The women were coming, often leaving their families behind. They are coming and they are alone—they have no support system at all."

"Juarez doesn't have the infrastructure for that many factories, that many people. So shantytowns grew up around Ciudad Juárez. Many young women are coming and going from work and school into these shantytowns. They don't have their families and sometimes people don't even know when they are missing, so there are many who are unaccounted for, too."

.....

Looking at the double row of portraits lining the gallery, you realize that after the first one or two (does anyone

*continued on page 3*

### Depicting the difficult: a project generator for writers and artists

This project generator is open to writers, visual artists, filmmakers, performance artists, and musicians working on projects about visceral social and political issues, especially those related to violence. The goal of the workshop is to gather together writers and artists to share their current projects and to catalyze future multi-modal, collaborative, politically-engaged projects in Lexington.

Diane Kahlo, creator of *Wall of Memories: The Disappeared Senoritas of Ciudad Juárez*, will speak about her process of researching and depicting the women killed in Juárez, as well as her theoretical approach to feminicide and the socio-political issues along the U.S.-Mexican border.

Set in the midst of Kahlo's powerful *Wall of Memories* exhibit, the project generator will be held on Thursday, October 20 from 6:30-8:00 P.M. in the Tuska Center for Contemporary Art at the University of Kentucky. Kahlo's *Wall of Memories: The Disappeared Senoritas of Ciudad Juárez* will be showing until November 4, 2011.

The event is free and open to the public. Pre-register by emailing [b.connors-manke@uky.edu](mailto:b.connors-manke@uky.edu).

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### Coming soon

*A garden detective mystery*

*Food, not bombs*

*Rupp update*

OCTOBER 12, 2011

# Life in a branded world

## Advertising landscapes

By Dave Cooper

I am standing on New Circle Road, and this is what I see: flags everywhere.

One flag says “90 Day Refills.” The next one reads “One Hour Photo.” Then “Drive Through Pharmacy.” In the next block, a matching pair of flags shouts out the message “SONIC.” Just past the flags is a large sign that says “Salvation Army Thrift Store.” Across the street another announces “Brothers Auto Sales.”

Looking up and down the road: “Swiftly - Pay Cash and Save,” “Burgers 99 Shakes,” Check Advance, Golden Corral, Advance Auto Parts, Beds To Go, Bryan Station Inn, “We Buy Gold,” “Buy Sell Trade Anything of Value,” Quality Auto Sales, “We Buy Anything,” “GOLD,” “For Sale,” Kroger, Firestone, Marathon, Demovellan.com, “Now Hiring,” Frito-Lay Sun Chips, “Welcome UK Credit Union Members,” Fed Ex, “Financing Available,” “Free Carfax Report,” “Big G Express Trucking.” On the corner is my favorite: “S&M Pawn Shop—Where Courtesy is a Must.”

It’s enough to make you sick, all of this visual junk. Most outdoor advertising is done as garishly as possible, using big, thick block letters to bash us over the heads with thick, blockheaded messages.

On New Circle Road, at a given point, it is possible to read as many as 42 different advertising messages up and down the roadway. This number

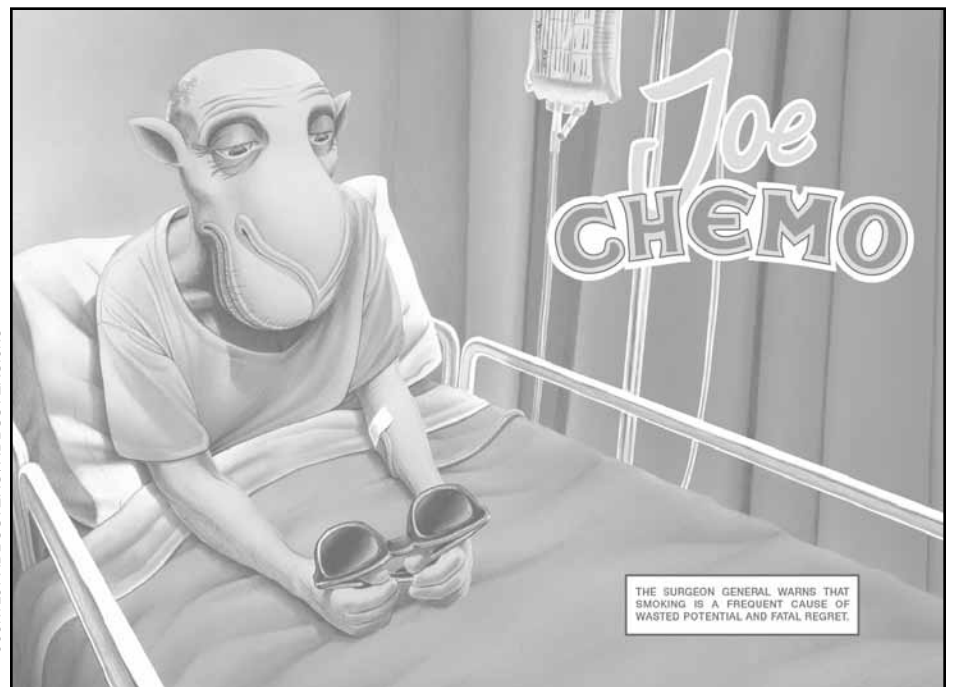
does not include those ubiquitous little plastic yard signs in the medians. From my New Circle Road vantage point, I can see one that says “I Buy Diabetic Test Strips.” (Used ones?, I wonder.) Nor does it include the orgy of advertising that exists at most gas stations and convenience stores. Some have so many decals and stickers on their front glass doors that you can barely see inside. Outside on the light poles, zip-ties affix cheap, ugly plastic signs advertising beer, cigarettes, lottery tickets and soda. Running out of light poles, I have noted that cigarette and beer companies sometimes drive metal fence posts into the ground—then attach more signs to the fence posts.

In my neighborhood a Marathon station employs a yellow plastic corrugated sign with a picture of a cow stampeding across a dusty plain and the word “LONGHORN” at the top. Alongside the cow it says “NEW LOOK! SAME GREAT TASTE!” Nearby pictures of two plastic tobacco tins are accompanied by text reading, “Long Cut Wintergreen” and “Fine Cut Natural” flavors.

How did we allow things to get this bad?

### Adbusters

This constant bombardment of advertising cheapens and degrades our quality of life. It’s visual clutter. Outdoor advertising assaults our senses and desensitizes us. It’s stupid, crude and ugly. It uplifts no one. Just imagine



how beautiful it would be if every sign and billboard on the northeast part of New Circle was replaced by a mature tree, providing cooling shade in the summer for all the motorists stuck in traffic. Wouldn’t that be better for everyone?

Many years ago I subscribed to an anti-consumerism magazine called *Adbusters*. They advocated, among other things, “Buy Nothing Day” on the Friday after Thanksgiving every year. [Editor’s note: See Michael Benton’s “A nation starts to mobilize,” in this issue.]

The main thrust of *Adbusters* was culture-jamming: using advertising against itself. One of the most famous

*Adbusters* images, a 1990s satire of the Camel cigarettes cartoon icon Joe Camel, was “Joe Chemo.”

There’s nothing funny about chemotherapy, of course, but at the time, the tobacco wars were still raging and the cigarette companies deserved every bashing they got, and then some.

*Adbusters* also subtly encouraged and inspired readers to perform billboard liberations: modifying billboards to ridicule or subvert the advertising message. I only did this one time, in Meigs County, Ohio, at Mountain Justice Spring Break in 2008. We staple-gunned a bed sheet with a large

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# Announcements

### UK Lecture on autonomous spaces

On Friday, October 14, John Paul Jones and Keith Woodward will deliver a talk on the politics of autonomous spaces.

Jones is a former geography professor at UK and current Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Arizona, while Woodward is a former UK grad student flunkie now a geography professor in Madison, Wisconsin.

The talk will take place in the West End Boardroom, 18th Floor of the Patterson Office Tower, at 4 P.M. Free drinks follow at the reception, 6:00 until the booze runs out, in the UK Commonwealth House (Gaines Center), located on Maxwell behind Memorial Coliseum.

### Latitude’s Lives shaped by boxes

On Thursday, October 20, “Lives shaped by boxes...”, a box-folding ritual performance/meditation, will take place at Latitude Artist Community, 167 Saunier Street. “Boxes” examines the tedium associated with work/employment common to those considered to have disabilities, a group offered mostly isolating and unfulfilling employment/labor opportunities.

For more info, contact Bruce Burris (859) 806-0195, [latitudearts@yahoo.com](mailto:latitudearts@yahoo.com)

### Homeless resource connections

On Thursday, October 20, Central Christian Church (205 E. Short Street) will host a variety of community outreach programs aimed at those who do not have access to regular shelter. Available at the resource connection: Health screenings, comfort kits, VA and Social Security benefits information, and referrals to a variety of other services such as housing, employment and general relief. The resource fair will last from 9:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M.

### NoC Fund-raiser Nov. 1

The first ever *North of Center* fund-raiser is scheduled to take place throughout the night of Tuesday, November 1. It will draw attention to some things the paper does and values: public watersheds, public air waves, and public music-making.

With the desire to make money and remain committed to open access for all, the fund-raiser will be made up of three related events: **B E T W E E N** 6:00 and 8:30 PM at John Lackey’s

Homegrown Press studio, we will host Rat Shed Radio for the fat-cat admission price of \$25. Modeled on an old-timey radio show, Rat Shed will feature readings and music related to the Kentucky River watershed. Local first from Harlan to Port Royal.

For those out of town or without the means to leave their home or workplace, at 8:30 PM *NoC* editor Danny Mayer will co-host on Brian Connor-Manke’s Tuesday night WRFL radio show, *Flying Kites at Night*. Those in Lexington can tune their dials all the way to the left and volume all the way up to hear the show; out of radio-wavers can log onto the WRFL website to listen in live.

Mayer will do two 30-minute sets of John Hartford songs that celebrate public radio, regional local history and river life. Tune in and sing and dance and laugh and share in on the good times collectively with everyone else.

The final event starts at 8:00 and can run until whenever you want to leave (or when Will needs you to leave). Head to Al’s Bar for open-mic night, where admission and music-listening is free, and PBR and High-Lifes are 2-for-1 all night. Mayer has reserved a 30-minute “set” at open mic, beginning precisely at 9:00 P.M. sharp.

At this time, the bar will listen collectively to thirty-minutes of exquisite John Hartford musical love piped in on the radio waves. More live free, public music will commence thereafter. At Al’s all night, we will be taking voluntary donations and handling raffles to fundraise to keep the paper running.

Times are tight and there are more worthy places to give. But if you can spare a dollar, please do. And if you can’t, enjoy the free music, collective gathering and good vibes. They are important.

*Check [noclexington.com](http://noclexington.com) for event updates.*

lives shaped by boxes...  
a box folding ritual performance/meditation which examines the common forms  
of work/employment typical to/for those of us who are considered to have disabilities...  
thursday . october 20 . 9:00am-3:00pm  
special presentations . 12:30pm-1:00pm  
free and open to everyone  
by latitude artist community with caitlin serey  
at latitude artist community 167 saunier street lexington, kentucky  
contact bruce burris (859) 806-0195 [latitudearts@yahoo.com](mailto:latitudearts@yahoo.com)



Though later it turned out that the couch had belonged to Dalbert, when we first asked him if it was his—as a way to get to the follow-up question, “Will you sit on it for a photograph?”—he said he had no idea whose couch it was and continued to work on repairing his truck. We asked a few more people, all of whom said no. Before long, Alpha came out of the house, having just finished showering. She had overheard our questions and wanted to be photographed. Cleveland and his wife Janet approached at that very moment and asked if they, too, could be in the picture. Once the three of them expressed interest, Dalbert, too, joined the couch party.

*Image and text by Kurt Gohde and Kremena Todorova, Discarded project.*

# Encounter at Steamboat Hollow

## Frankfort to Elkhorn: an imaginative stretch

By Wes Houpp

*Editor's note: The slackwater venture paddlists have floated through Frankfort, down Lock 4, and arrived at Steamboat Hollow on mile 58 of the Kentucky River, where they have braved stinging nettles, set up camp and eaten of a buffalo sausage four-squash red sauce ladled over a slightly al dente penne pasta. On a night walk of the bottom, the author has become separated from the rest of the party.*

"Do you own this place?" I asked in the quavering tone of a child who's just crossed a forbidden fence. "I just stopped here to stretch my legs. I've been paddling all day."

"Son, I've seen your camp and your comrades. Your dinner and subsequent grunts of satisfaction reminded me of the commendations heaped upon James Harrod by new members at his Boiling Springs settlement in the summer of 1775. They were as much impressed with his ability to cook as by his great knowledge of the country. They were delighted by his 'excellent stew of buffalo and as much lettuce and endive as they could eat.' I mean you and your company no harm. But I'd appreciate your cooperation. Just come with me."

The figure turned, faced in the direction of the bluff and pointed. "Just up the hill, there in the woods." He began walking, one arm extended before him, the other motioning me to join him.

Despite gripping fear, I began to move, but rather than join him my legs hefted me on a parallel course. The succulent stalks of soybeans snapped beneath me, their velvety foliage sweeping reluctantly against my pajamas. I was drawn on phantom power toward an ever-deepening darkness of wood. In a matter of minutes I stood in the overhang of the tree-line, the soy field now enveloped behind me. The figure was gone, and I quickly dropped to one knee to conceal my location. A twig snapped directly in front of me, and

there the figure reappeared, arms on each hip, no more than four feet from my crouched position.

### Colonel Chinn reveals himself

"It's okay, lad. I'm more familiar to you than you might recognize. The name's Chinn. Colonel George Morgan Chinn, although you can just call me Colonel."

"Colonel Chinn of Mercer County? The Colonel Chinn who lived in the stone house atop the palisade opposite Minter's Branch near High Bridge? The Colonel Chinn, former director of the Kentucky Historical Society?" I asked, straining to see his face.

"The one and only." Suddenly a match-head exploded in the darkness and rose to meet the bowl of a burled pipe clinched in his jaw. The figure wore Marine Corps dress blues and white hat, and an arm extended, the hand opened for a shake. Rising slowly to my feet, I hesitantly took the calloused hand in mine.

"Sir, pleasure to meet you, sir. But...uh...didn't you die sometime in the late '80s?"

"Well, that's a matter for semantics..." He paused and removed the pipe from his mouth. "Let's just say it's a matter for ontological conjecture. It seems that those of us who make the river a life-long obsession never pass away completely. The river, as you might have suspected, persists in us, a living, flowing history, and finds its way into the bloodstream, even when the bloodstream dries up. Everything, after all, is part of the same living current, just as Thoreau mused to his brother near the end of their week-long float down Concord and Merrimack:

'All things seemed with us to flow; the shore itself, and the distant cliffs, were dissolved by the undiluted air. The hardest material seemed to obey the same law with the most fluid, and so indeed in the long run it does. Trees were but rivers of sap and woody fibre, flowing from the atmosphere, and emptying into the earth by their trunks, as

their roots flowed upward to the surface. And in the heavens there were rivers of stars, and milky ways, already beginning to gleam and ripple over our heads. There were rivers of rock on the surface of the earth, and rivers of ore in its bowels, and our thoughts flowed and circulated, and this portion of time was but the current hour. Let us wander where we will, the universe is built round about us, and we are central still. If we look into the heavens they are concave, and if we were to look into a gulf as bottomless, it would be concave also. The sky is curved downward to the earth in the horizon, because we stand on the plain. I draw down its skirts. The stars so low there seem loath to depart, but by a circuitous path to be remembering me, and returning on their steps.'

So here I am yet, my hand flowing into yours on this beautiful gift of a night."

The Colonel continued: "What started out as a casual get away for you boys several years ago—an opportunity to get out of town and lollygag on the water—has turned into quite a quest, an obsession if you will. You are driven to paddle this whole blessed river, and you won't be satisfied until you set foot on the muddy banks of the Ohio. I know. I've been watching your progression."

I balked. "You've been watching? How is that possible?"

"Hey, son, anything's possible when you've experienced the kind of transubstantiation that I've experienced.

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## May Day Kid attends 1st protest

### Josie Rose wags fingers at JP



May Day Kid cries out against corruption at JP Morgan Chase.

### NoC News

Josie Rose, the May Day Kid, attended her first occupation on Friday, September 30, Day 2 of the Occupy Main Street gathering in front of JP Morgan Chase Bank in downtown Lexington. It was the day before her 5-month birthday.

Though Josie did not speak directly to reporters, her father told *NoC* that he felt it important to let his baby feel the excitement of people working to make a better world. "I want her to know that she was here, that her body helped forge a local dent in this large moment of world history making. I want her to grow up feeling what it is like to stand with people, together, publicly."

For her part, the Kid (born May 1, 2011), made her solidarity known by screaming loudly and wagging her fingers vigorously upon her approach to the JP brand logo. Dad couldn't have been more proud and speculated that—since Josie was due for a feeding soon—the cry was in solidarity for all children experiencing hunger.

"JP Morgan has a significant presence in the food stamp business," he noted. As an issuer of food stamp "debit cards" (EBT accounts) for 26 states and Washington D.C., the bank

has a strong foothold in the profitable business of public welfare management. "This includes Kentucky," Mayer continued. "With the state outsourcing its responsibilities to the public, JP makes money by charging service fees on the EBT cards. Call it a corporate taxation on poor and lower-middle class America. How many kids' families can't buy bread because they're paying three dollar bank transaction fees on their food purchases to maintain the inflated salaries at JP Morgan?"

And with food stamp participants increasing from 26 million to 46 million U.S. residents over the past four years, the market has become so profitable that even an executive at the bank openly acknowledges that food stamps are a very important business to JP Morgan.

"No wonder the May Day Kid is screaming bloody murder," Mayer concluded. "I'm pissed, too."

*Editor's Note: The Kid soon returned home, where she consumed her first solid meal as a human being. It was a gruel of ground meal and mother's milk that she took happily from a spoon held by her mother's hands, truly a special feast to mark a memorable day.*

## Reckoning (cont.)

*continued from page 1*

even know who the first one was, you wonder), the rest probably didn't matter to those who could have stopped the violence. If you don't intercede after the murders of Angélica Márquez Ledezma (15 years old) or Martha Gabriela Houlgín Reyes (22 years old), then Ana Azucena Martínez Pérez (9 years old) and the hundreds of others seem nothing more than proof of corruption, misogyny, and a profound sadism structuring our world. Those with the power to stop the brutality have neither the courage nor the inclination. I count us among those people.

.....

"These murders were happening before the drug cartels were quite as prevalent. Many people feel the lawlessness [in Juárez] is now due to the impunity of these murders that began in the early 90s. For instance, women are found murdered, beaten, strangled, raped, mutilated. Nobody is going to jail, nobody is being punished for it. So it becomes a lawless land."

.....

If you wonder in what manner the women were murdered, beaten, strangled, raped, mutilated, if you are curious about details, wonder why you are wondering. This isn't *Law & Order SVU*, which makes women's and children's violations a nightly private entertainment.

Instead, meditate on what it feels like to have your last moments of life be sheer terror, excruciating pain. Wonder if, after experiencing that brutality, death comes as a welcomed relief.

.....

"Sometimes I become very saddened, very affected by it [the work] because I am looking into the faces of

these beautiful young girls, some as young as 10 or 11—the average probably being 16, 17, 18. You see some of them in their graduation outfits with their mortarboards, some of them in their tiaras for their *quinceañeras*."

"So it's hard, many of them look like my daughter. I see one occasionally that looks like me when I was 16. Like you do in medicine, I have to detach myself sometimes and just look at a face as a formal structure—there's a shadow here or there—because I do become deeply, deeply saddened by it."

.....

Kahlo has more strength and courage than I (or probably you) do. I couldn't be with this—be in this alien world of death as everyday currency—as she has done for years.

.....

"We've all heard how many thousands died in Vietnam. But when you go to that wall, you see all those names so it becomes very real and very tactile, too. I felt like painting the portraits went a step further: it really personalized these faces—even though I am not going to have faces for all of them."

"Nor can I ever possibly finish because the murders continue."

.....

At the entrance to the exhibit is an *ofrenda*, an altar at which to leave prayers for the dead or the wounded. After reckoning with the feminicide in Juárez, it's hard to know what kind of prayer to offer.

*All quotations from an interview with Diane Kahlo in February 2011. In part two of this series, Beth will report more on the feminicide and socio-economic situation in Ciudad Juárez.*



A previous incarnation of the Wall of Memories exhibit, when the work was still in process.

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## Music

## Live music to be a human being to: 10/13 - 21

So last time out I was pretty down, and couldn't really muster the energy to tell you about all the wonderful live music due to be played in our fair city in the fortnight following the last issue's publication. As you almost certainly don't recall, I was feeling confused and hurt by Opeth's latest release, and the world of music seemed so barren.

But I'm good now; I'm over it. I got my groove back. I still don't like the album, but it's a big world, you see, and there's much more to listen to. Such as...

**Thursday, October 13**

Greg Abate

*Natasha's; 112 Esplanade. 9 P.M.*

You like jazz? No? Then you're a goddamn Philistine. Enjoy your algorithmically generated, mass-marketed bullshit "music." In fact, let's see what

rhythmic components. This is true. Don't believe it? Like to believe in a creation myth? Look it up for yourself.

And this is why you don't like jazz: a person actually made it. Jazz hasn't been vetted by one of the four remaining record labels on Earth. It doesn't follow a computer-determined formula. In fact, because it's human music, it changes all the time; what comes out of Greg Abate's saxophone one night isn't necessarily what's gonna come out the next, or what he played on the record. Jazz players don't use algorithms, man. They just play.

So, you can live your so-called life as they want you to, or you can find your own path. Lexington doesn't get many players as accomplished as Abate, so your path ought to wind by Natasha's on Thursday. If not, enjoy what they give you.

*Hate Shrines open for In Defence at the Green Lantern.***Sunday, October 16**

In Defence with Hate Shrines  
*Green Lantern; 497 West Third. 9 P.M.*

For those of you, like me, who grew up not only listening to underground metal but underground hardcore as well, you will be delighted to check out a band playing the Green Lantern by the name of In Defence. These guys hail from St. Paul, Minnesota, and play music in the vein of old school hardcore bands such as Disrupt, Gorilla Biscuits, Minor Threat, Strife, and from time to time throw some thrash metal in for good measure.

This is not the type of metal—chugga chugga, cookie monster vocals—that they call hardcore these days, but rather the true hardcore that is unapologetic in its simple expression of kick-you-in-the-teeth brazenness that demands you jump around and throw up a fist or two. After a slew of record releases on various underground record labels and a few member changes, these guys have been around long enough to get their point across.

Once again, in this sea of radio monotony, we here in Lexington get to experience a band that truly expresses what it is like to feel angry about the world around us. Hopefully we will have more bands like this coming through our small town.

—Andrew Hibpshman

**Monday, October 17**

Jerad Finck

*Buster's; 899 Manchester. 9 P.M.*

Long ago, there was Abraham, who begat Marshall Crenshaw, who begat the Gin Blossoms and Toad the Wet Sprocket, who begat Matchbox 20 and John Mayer's first album, who begat Jerad Finck. And God looked down, surveyed all he had created, and said, "well, there's always a market for it."

**Friday, October 21**

The Compromise

*Cheapside; 131 Cheapside. 9 P.M.*

It's unfortunate that these guys chose to call themselves what they did, because all I can think when I see the name is the great Rush lyric from "The Spirit of Radio," the one that goes, "But glittering prizes and endless compromises / shatter the illusion of integrity, yeah." Great lyric.

Not all Rush lyrics are great, of course. Famously, from "The Trees," there's this: "But the oaks can't help their feelings / if they like the way they're made / and they wonder why the maples / can't be happy in their shade."

That's an extended metaphor for something or other, but still: ugh. And this is beside the point. While the sort of musical compromise Neal Peart wrote about in 1980 is exactly what I'm so angry about today, in the case of the Tennessee's The Compromise, I think what must have happened is simply that we're reaching, as rock 'n' roll reaches Social Security age, a critical shortage of band names. It isn't that all the good ones are taken, but most of them are, so upstart artists are scrambling to find unused words and phrases that 1) haven't already been used by somebody else, and 2) don't absolutely suck. And the latter criterion seems to be optional for a lot of bands these days.

So, no, I don't think The Compromise consciously compromise their music, and I imagine most of their fanbase couldn't care less about their name, as long as they keep layering sweet, poppy melodies on authentic indie-rock rhythms. See them Friday or Saturday, as the Cheapside persists in their back-to-back booking scheme.

—BE

*Greg Abate improvises at Natasha's.*

you're listening to these days...a quick check of the Billboard charts reveals that Adele still holds you in sway. Yeah, whatever. Number two: Maroon 5 and Christina Aguilera. What, Alvin and the Chipmunks weren't available to collaborate?

Moving on: Foster the People. I have no idea what that is. Can't be good. Number four: Gym Class Heroes featuring Adam Levine. Wait—is that?—goddammit, yes it is. Chipmunk dude is everywhere. What's your fascination with castrati? Have the emasculating tendencies of American life in the new millennium subconsciously convinced you that male singers sound best in the gonad-free vocal range? For Pete's sake, go listen to four hours of Teddy Pendergrass and get your mind right.

I've never heard of #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10, or #11. #12 is Lady Gaga, and Jackson Cofer can say whatever he likes, but I still think she's an immoral influence. Anyway, #13, #14...#19, #20... none of this is worth a damn. Next page: wait—Britney Spears is still making records? Well, it's your fault, isn't it? You bought that crap in the '90s, and now she thinks she's got a mandate.

#21...I can't even continue with this. You realize you listen to this worthless noise because you've been told that you're supposed to like it, right? You don't even actually know if you do like it, do you? I mean, it's what all your friends listen to, so like a lamb to slaughter, you follow the crowd. Meanwhile, there's an A&R guy...no, wait, they don't even have A&R guys anymore, because all this "music" is now designed by a computer program that analyzes and corresponds sales trends with harmonic content and

**Friday, October 14**

These United States

*Cosmic Charlie's; 388 Woodland. 9 P.M.*

I just wrote about these guys a few weeks ago, so instead of rehashing the past, I'll just tell you that their music is almost certainly better than whatever you listened to in the car today. And by a large margin, I'll warrant. Go ahead: prove me wrong.

**Saturday, October 15**

Dom Wier

*Lynagh's; 384 Woodland. 9 P.M.*

As you might suspect, the process of composing this music calendar consists of little more than surfing youtube videos and writing snarky remarks for a few hours, in the hope of eliciting a chuckle or two from the three or four of you who actually read this page. However, every now and again I find a new artist who surprises me, who excites me, and who makes me genuinely enthusiastic. In the case of Dom Wier, I'm pleased to find an artist who plays straight-up American rock 'n' roll, the way John Mellencamp used to play it, without artifice, pretension, or self-consciousness.

Because that's the thing now, to be ironic, isn't it? As always, it's the hipsters' fault. You can't just be aware of the absurdity of human existence and still write earnest, heartfelt, true-believer music anymore, right? No, you have to be too cool for that, right? Well, then Dom Wier isn't cool enough for you. Go listen to your deconstructionist post-rock and smirk into your Pabst. Dom is gonna rock the house anyway.

—Buck Edwards

*Didn't we just run this picture? Again, then: These United States.*

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# Film & Media

OCTOBER 12, 2011

## A native son finds filmmaking fortune Audley proves that success is possible in a midsize city—even Memphis

By Lucy Jones

One of Tennessee's most celebrated film directors has a name more evocative of that state's neighbor to the north. Kentucker Audley (nee Andrew Nenninger, for those who might remember his face from the halls of Lexington Catholic) adopted the moniker when he claimed Tennessee as his new home. "When I moved to Memphis, I wanted to keep Kentucky with me," explains the 29-year-old writer, director, and actor.

Indeed, Audley has maintained his Kentucky roots. Recently, he proved Thomas Wolfe wrong by returning to his hometown of Lexington for a screening of his third directorial feature, *Open Five*. The sixty-three minute, largely improvisational film was shown on September 27 at the Kentucky Theatre as part of the 2011 Boomslang Festival.

Thom Southerland, a Lexington resident and accomplished filmmaker in his own right, had suggested the film as a perfect fit for the festival's focus on new, independent, and cutting-edge artists. Having first seen *Open Five* on the festival circuit while screening his own work, Southerland was impressed by the raw candor of Audley's latest movie.

"The first time I saw it I was struck by the film's patience, how Kentucker took his time telling his story," explains Southerland. "The underlying tension and emotional complexity kind of sneaks up on you. I think future generations will look at films like *Open Five* and other so-called 'low-budget' films as more honest, accurate depictions of our present times than a hundred Diablo Cody or Aronofsky films."

### Mumblecore

It is this commitment to veracity, partnered with character driven storytelling and the stripped down aesthetic of lower budget filmmaking, which has led film critics (fairly or not) to associate Audley with the mumblecore film "movement." For those not familiar with the term, mumblecore is a genre seemingly more defined by what it isn't than what it is. Unlike traditional Hollywood fare, a mumblecore picture eschews fancy set pieces, convoluted plot points, highly stylized direction, special effects and/or explosions (an amusing backyard firecracker scene in *Open Five* notwithstanding) in favor of a naturalistic approach to exploring character relationships.

As happens with any loose-knit conglomeration of similarly minded artists, the filmmakers associated with mumblecore have swiftly found themselves pigeonholed for the sake of media convenience. A recent *Huffington Post* article did everything short of anointing Audley as mumblecore's voice of the South, and glowing reviews of *Open Five* in *The New Yorker* and *Variety* couldn't help but reference the film in relationship to its ascribed genre.

Of course, the already loose term has become increasingly diffused of meaning with every evolving entry into the perceived cinematic order. According to media definitions, mumblecore films are heavily dependent on improvisation (except when they're not), are about twenty-somethings (except when they're not), and utilize non-professional actors (except when they don't). When Aaron Katz's latest film, *Cold Weather*, was heralded as mumblecore's "first thriller," the parameters of a genre previously marked by its dismissal of conventional plot structure became even more nebulous than they were before.

Audley doesn't mind being associated with filmmakers who he respects, but has always felt like he was on the fringes of what others deemed mumblecore. He also believes that the term, as a defining concept, is on the decline. "People still say the word, but I don't think it's being treated as a movement anymore."

What interests Audley is following his own filmmaking style, one which focuses on exploring how real people react to one another in (almost) real situations. "My first film, *Team Picture*, was scripted," states Audley. "But my last three films [the sequel to *Open Five* is in post-production] have been entirely improvised. My primary focus is to make films that feel real, even at the expense of story or a clear 'point.'"

Audley credits the ability to make the kind of films he wants, in part, on the early support and encouragement of the Memphis Digital Arts Co-operative. The media co-op, born when the desire of a dedicated group of filmmakers aligned with the availability of a free space in a neighborhood church building, was an organization for people interested in giving how-to knowledge and hands on help in exchange for shared equipment.

"Memphis Digital Arts was very important in my life," explains Audley. "It was the first time I was around serious filmmakers who were actively pursuing a life of filmmaking. It was several things—a theater where we could show our work and get feedback and have premieres; it was office space where we could write and edit; (and) it was a meeting spot, where we could have workshops and meet and greets."

### A Lexington film co-operative?

Thom Southerland has long believed that a similar model could work in Lexington. Familiar with the success stories that have emerged from Memphis Digital Arts, Southerland is interested in creating a Lexington film co-operative where filmmakers can give their time (via class instruction and/or production support) in exchange for the use of shared equipment.

"Lexington's art scene is growing in many ways," says Southerland. "But we're still in the mindset that luring Hollywood here with big budget films about horses is the only real filmmaking—as if a film can only be made with thousands of extras, famous actors with large trailers, and lots of stressed-out looking people from bigger cities. But film, as much if not more than any medium, has been altered by the digital revolution. Access to the tools of filmmaking is no longer for the privileged few."

Southerland cites increased affordability and easier access to film equipment as an encouraging trend for local filmmakers. "It's a great time for Lexington to embrace this revolution. We can give people the tools to tell their stories here and share them with the world. The spirit of the co-op is one of artistic support mixed with hard work. We really are all in this together. The idea is to succeed on a more local scale. Find your audience here, and you will find it in larger venues eventually."

Audley agrees that Memphis' co-operative model could have equal success elsewhere. "It's definitely possible in other cities. It could be any scope. It could start with three people. It could start as simply as borrowing each other's equipment and making short films as exercises."

Audley's support of a localized film community extends beyond production. In order to be economically successful, films must be seen. In this spirit, Audley has been exploring out-of-the-box distribution models that will allow local, independent films to be viewed nationally. His new website, nobudgetfilms.com, arose from such a desire. On the site, for free or by a small rental price, films can be viewed by people who otherwise would not have access to them.

"I released my film, *Open Five*, on my website last fall and it was a success," explains Audley. "Five thousand people watched the film in three weeks, and we were covered by legitimate publications like *The New Yorker*. It was fine to host it on my personal website, but I thought it would have been a better



Kentucker Audley discusses "Open Five" at the Kentucky Theatre.

experience if it felt more communal, if there were other films around. There weren't any websites of this nature (that released films straight-to-internet) so I started one."

When asked his criteria for selecting films for the site, Audley explains: "I pick films that excite me, that feel fresh."

By creating alternative film distribution methods, Audley helps empower local filmmakers to remain in the communities that support them. "Hopefully, it becomes more and more possible to scrap by in mid-size cities. I love New York and L.A. but I don't wanna live there."

Lexington, take notice.

## Local film happenings

### Re:Play Screening at Loudoun House

Loudoun House's Re:Play exhibit, an installation of video works by contemporary artists using found media, will close on October 16. The final special event in the exhibit's run, a co-production of the Lexington Art League and the Lexington Film League, will be a screening of Craig Baldwin's avant-garde masterpiece "Mock Up on Mu." This feature length film is a narrative collage assembled from elements as varied as vintage home movies, NASA footage, b-movie sci-fi trailers, industrial films, and World's Fair promotional videos. Described by the *New York Times* as "by turns absorbing, confounding, exhausting and altogether stranger and more rib-ticklingly funny than most fiction," the film takes on the "mostly true" story of California's post-war subcultures with a special emphasis on the rise of Scientology. The screening starts at 7:30 P.M. on Thursday, October 13 and is free and open to the public. Learn more at [www.lexingtonartleague.org](http://www.lexingtonartleague.org).

### Horror Classics at the Kentucky Theatre

The Kentucky Theatre's monthlong celebration of Halloween continues! Remaining screenings include "Jaws" (October 13-14), "An American Werewolf in London" (October 20-21), "Night of the Living Dead" (October 27-28), and "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" (October 28-29). The first three films will be shown at 9:40 P.M. on Thursday and then at midnight on the following day. "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" will, as one would hope and expect, screen exclusively at midnight. For more, visit [www.kentuckytheater.com](http://www.kentuckytheater.com).

### Community Cinema Screening at ArtsPlace

On Thursday, October 20, KET will host a special screening of "Deaf

Jam" at ArtsPlace on North Mill Street. The one hour documentary tells the story of Aneta Brodski, one of the first deaf teenagers to participate in the U.S. National Poetry Slam. The film follows Brodski's journey from her early involvement with an American Sign Language poetry group to her ultimate participation in spoken word on a national stage. The film, part of KET's monthly Community Cinema Series, will begin at 6:30 P.M. and will be followed by a discussion. There will be a brief reception preceding the screening at 6:00 P.M. For more information on Community Cinema, please visit [www.ket.org/communitycinema](http://www.ket.org/communitycinema).

### "Legendary" World Premiere at the Kentucky Theatre

On Tuesday, October 25, the Kentucky Theatre will premiere the feature length documentary "Legendary: When Baseball Came to the Bluegrass." The film follows the Lexington Legends baseball team from their challenging inception in the late 1990's to their status as a community fixture in the present day. The documentary is the fourth directorial effort by Kentucky filmmaker Michael Crisp, whose diverse earlier work has covered topics as serious as the 1958 Floyd County schoolbus disaster ("The Very Worst Thing") and as lighthearted as the 1970's Lexington children's television program "Happy's Hour" ("When Happy Met Froggie"). The screening will start at 7:30 P.M. and will be followed by a Q&A. Panelists will include Crisp, producing partner Scott Hall, recently retired Legends' CEO Alan Stein, and other team representatives tbd. There will be an after party at Trust Lounge, the Main Street jazz bar that is owned by Legends' General Manager Andy Shea. For more information on the film, you can visit Facebook and search for "Legendary: When Baseball Came to the Bluegrass."

OCTOBER 12, 2011

# Rupp re-dos and sports event economics

By Danny Mayer

If you want to know how the Rupp Arena Arts and Entertainment District Task Force will shake out, look no further than a Friday, April 1, 20011, *Lexington Herald-Leader* editorial entitled, "Not just another pretty venue." The editorial lays out all the basic talking points used by virtually every leader and writer covering the topic. It begins with three paragraphs duly noting that, yes, Rupp is already a world-class facility that is the envy of the basketball world, and that, yes, neither the replacement nor the renovation of it should rank high on "Kentucky's, Lexington's or the University of Kentucky's [list of] most pressing needs."

After making the brief case for why it is utterly useless and irresponsible to do *anything at all* to Rupp, the editorial spends the final 15 paragraphs rolling out the city and university's sales pitch to the public, their plan for doing what they've just told you they shouldn't do. Their idea is that a shitty project for the city, state and university can be securitized into one giant super-shitty project that will magically turn profitable for all interested parties.

Coach Calipari, who gets paid \$4 million dollars because he coaches in Rupp Arena, and Athletic Director Mitch Barnhart, whose \$700,000 salary rests entirely on Coach Calipari's success on the court, both use the term "gold standard" to describe it. Mayor

Jim Gray and the design and development crowd taking part in the Rupp Arena Task Force prefer the phrase, "Now's the time to dream big." This latter group aim to use UK's misguided interest in committing public funds toward a quasi-private basketball team as leverage to secure development funds for the rest of the nearly 50 acre block surrounding Rupp. For city leaders, the imperative to create a downtown "event experience," what Rupp Task Force chair Brent Rice defines as "a focus on what happens before, during and after an arena event," is of vital concern to city development.

The *Herald-Leader* editorial favors the common sense economic rationale. "[M]oving Lexington up the list of attractive places to live or start a company," it argues, is potentially sufficient reason for pooling large amounts of public money and resources into the creation of an Arena, Arts and Entertainment District where hitherto one did not stand. In the official language of economic policy, the tag line is "Rupp Opportunity Zone."

And why not? The Rupp boondoggle is a win for all involved parties. In order to better attract 4 world-class basketball recruits a year, UK gets to shower their slice of public money onto a Rupp project that everyone but UK Athletic Association Boosters deem unnecessary. The city and state get to divert public money needed for real public infrastructure projects to attract a small group of "creative" types, a class of economic wizards who apparently circulate the globe on a monster Endless Summer quest for the perfect urban experience. City leaders get to atone for past mistakes in urban planning by paying top city dollar to ensure the most up to date of best design practices—and to reap suitable rewards in the process.



The Lexington Center Corporation operates the Convention Center and Rupp Arena, which underwent \$50 million renovations in 2004.

## 99ers: Read your sports page

The verdict on large-scale public financial support for pricy downtown arena and entertainment districts is disappointing. The boosters running this show haven't yet acknowledged it, but cities investing in such high cost leisure/entertainment infrastructure projects often find themselves in trouble. Here's a description by sports journalist Dave Zirin on London's version of the Rupp Opportunity Zone and its connections to uprisings there this past summer, part of a number of summer uprisings throughout Europe:

"[T]he Olympics aren't a parallel operation to the mass civic unrest but an aggravator. As social services wither, the Olympics will cost upwards of 20 billion pounds...Ask the residents of Clays Lane Estate, in East London. Clay's Lane Estate was the largest housing cooperative in the UK, and the second largest in all of Europe. Over

protests, Clay's Lane was demolished to make way for Olympic Facilities. The protests haven't been heard, and we get riots, or, as Dr. King put it, 'the language of the unheard.'

In Vancouver, host of the 2010 Winter Olympics, sports infrastructure planning cost the city nearly a billion dollars. The city recently completed a 563 million dollar renovation at BC Place to house the Vancouver Whitecaps and BC Lions. In Indianapolis, a place the task force visited, the city is paying \$10 million per year to help the Indiana Pacers make rent on the Conseco Fieldhouse (\$183 million construction in 1999).

This figure is two-thirds of the entire cost to operate the building for the privately owned sports team.

*The first of two public hearings has been set for 6 P.M., October 18, at Buster's on Manchester Street.*

## Castlewood Neighborhood Association

Annual Potluck / Officers Election

Thursday, October 27

6:30 pm at the Loudoun House

## Steamboat Hollow (cont.)

continued from page 3

I materialize with the river mist." He motioned with his hand and cupped a palmful of vapor.

"What is it that you wanted to show me in the woods?" I asked. He turned and pondered the darkness behind him.

"Nothing really. I just like standing over here. Those soybeans were chaffing my legs." He stooped over and swept the back of his hand across his perfectly creased pant legs. "You know, you're not the first Houpp I've pulled out of rank to lecture. Back in '56 I pulled your father out of line at the Wilmore First National Bank. He was on furlough from Camp Lejeune. Recognizing a fellow jarhead, I pulled him aside, asked his name, rank, outfit, what his plans were and offered some fatherly encouragement: 'Well, son,' I said, 'as a Marine you'll never have to apologize for being in the Army.' And that's the sort of thing I'd like to say to you."

I stood in silence for moment. "But I'm not nor ever have been in the Marine Corps. I do, however, enjoy war narratives. By trade, though, I'm just a lowly English teacher." He scoffed and waved his arms.

"Of course you're not a Marine. A Marine doesn't stumble around in the fog like some Nancy with slumped shoulders and a pocketful of hootch. My point is that you, your comrades and I share an obsession, a deep and abiding love of the river, and this obsession puts you in the company of an elite group of past, present, and future river rats. Know, too, that your obsession with paddling the length of the river will exact a spiritual as well as physical toll. When it's time to punch your card, you may find yourself, like me, haunting the river mist."

By this time, I couldn't tell if the moisture dripping from my brow was sweat or mist. Not wanting to play the fool to such an august and worldly apparition, I nonetheless...did. The

only words I could find were "Wow. That's...uh... real good information." No sooner than I had opened my mouth, the Colonel was gone in a swirl of mist and everything else went black.

## Lost and found

When I came to, Danny and Troy were standing over me shining their headlamps in my face. "What happened to you? That last round of gin shots must've gone straight to your head," Troy chortled as he helped me to my feet. We were standing in the middle of the soybeans, precisely where I'd first seen the Colonel rise from the mist.

"Where'd you guys disappear to? You won't believe who I was just talking to." I looked around in vain, while Danny and Troy looked at each other and then back at me.

Danny explained, "We just stopped back there to wait for Lyle. You weren't talking to anybody. You were standing here for a minute, and then you were down on the ground. We thought maybe you got sick or something and had to sit down." They both laughed and shined their lights back to where Lyle and Josh were admiring the cosmos through a break in the mist.

"Hey guys," Lyle called. "Looks like the fog's lifting. It's near midnight. We're heading back." The fog was lifting, but my mind was still thick with it. A heron squawked down by the river, spooked by something passing too close in the darkness. I decided it best to save my story for morning. Sleep might bring some clarity.

*Head to the web version of this story to hear a campfire song on Judge Dick Henderson's 1775 legal theft of the land south of the Kentucky River. (More commonly known as the Dan'l Boone brokered Watuaga Treaty, between the Cherokee Indians and the land corporation known as the Transylvania Land Company.) Trip to confluence of Red River concludes in the next issue...*

## Kentucky Rat Shed Radio

Where local first reaches from Harlan to Carrollton.

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Featuring the music, voices and words of Warren Byrom, Dan'l Boone, Beth Connors-Manke, Wes Houpp, Danny Mayer, G.W. Ranck, Gortimer T. Spotts and others

Tuesday, November 1, 6:00-8:00

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*Don't worry Dallas. We'll give you the skinny about Rat Shed Radio on November 1.*

—John Hartford

Tickets \$25.

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To purchase a ticket or make further inquiries, contact Danny Mayer at Mayer.Danny@gmail.com

*Watching the river go by  
Watching the river go by  
Watching the river go by  
in the evening.*

## Help wanted: sports writers and photographers

*North of Center* is looking for interested sports writers and photographers to provide regular coverage and reports on the town's diverse sports scenes. We are actively interested in writers to cover bike polo and disc golf.

Other sports coverage options include Lexington Bocce League, Woodland Park skateboarding, Latino baseball at Coolavin, Croquet on Clay, Creacy kickball games, Castlewood ping pong matches, alley cat races, soapbox derbies, or any other sports event

you can convince us needs coverage.

We are interested in any ideas potential writers may have and are always on the lookout for celebrating the public sporting use of our public parks and lands. We are not seeking coverage of UK sports or anything to do with cornhole.

The paper has a rich tradition of solid local sports coverage from a variety of voices. Past coverage can be found archived on our web page's sports section.

# Opinion

OCTOBER 12, 2011

## Nation mobilizes (cont.)

*continued from page 1*

young people taking the forefront of these movements to challenge authoritarian dictatorships. Their embrace of social media, which had been viewed with suspicion by many cultural critics in the West, demonstrates that effective social movement organizing is possible through social media technologies. The revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, as well as the courageous challenges of young protesters in the face of draconian measures in all of the regional protests, inspired people around the world.

Another primary inspiration was the Spanish *acampadas* (camping, or temporary encampment) that began out of disgust for electoral politics as usual in Spain and continued to spread and grow as the politics of occupying urban spaces interweaved with networking through social media. Beginning with several hundred people on May 15, the Spanish occupations increased into the thousands by the time of the May 25 elections and continues still today. These *acampadas* provided a model for the Occupy Wall Street protests with their emphasis on occupying urban spaces through festive gatherings. Their emphasis on peaceful protesting, consensus decision-making, leaderless movements (or better yet an emphasis on autonomy, whereby all have the capabilities/responsibility to lead) and a push for *Democracia Real Ya* can be seen in the current Occupy protests.

Although not as often cited as direct influences, but no doubt significant, were the various Latin American campesino land movements and the dramatic, successful, 2000 Cochabamba resistance of citizens against foreign companies attempting to privatize and control all water resources in Bolivia.

What must be recognized here is that American social justice movements had lost their focus and been weakened by state repression. The various movements centered upon environmentalist, anti-war and social/economic justice issues had faced state repression in the aftermath of 9/11, when the American Homeland security forces began identifying domestic activists as terrorist threats. Furthermore, the wide variety of important social justice issues tended to divide the force of these groups into a cycle of fractured attempts to

create meaning through repetitive Washington, D.C. marches.

The rest of the world in their continuing fight for justice have provided us maps for once again speaking truth to power and claiming our responsibilities as citizens in a democracy. The world has been waiting for us to wake-up and this may be our American Autumn.

### Birth of a movement: Americans join the world

When the Occupy Wall Street occupation began on September 17, it was predominantly young people that gathered in the heart of America's financial district. This made it easy for many to dismiss participants as hippies and naïve young college students. Surprisingly I found some of the most committed activists rejecting them because they did not have a set "program" as if they should be Athena springing fully formed from Zeus' skull. (Other, more cautious, activists declared that they needed time to develop their voices and that if people were concerned they needed to join with them in occupying Wall Street or a location near them.)

The young activists' determination in the face of increasing police brutality stunned many older progressives out of their lethargy and softened many more conservative people to their message. Despite the corporate media's near blackout on the issue the first week, word about the occupation was being spread through email, websites, Youtube videos and social media.

It was during the second week that we saw the possibility for people to use social media technologies to amplify their voices and concerns when the corporate media wouldn't give them a voice. In a few days of concentrated police brutality, America and the world saw videos of the highest ranking police officers (white shirts signifying the rank of Lieutenant or higher) pepper spraying peaceful young women in the face, smacking heads of young men against vehicles, and mass arrests of peaceful protesters.

The message being communicated was very clear: the word had come down from the upper echelons to the ranking police officers: this must end now. The resounding response to these brutalities was more protesters joining the Occupy Wall Street and the beginnings of solidarity protests in other

cities. By the time of the mass arrests of 700 protesters on the Brooklyn Bridge on October 2, the slumbering, powerful New York unions decided that they would join with the protesters and many influential people began to join with the Wall St occupation providing statements of support.

The third week started with a video of Wall St executives coming out on their balcony to mockingly toast with champagne glasses the marching protesters. It was a scene that etched in the minds of viewers the extreme hubris of the finance sector. They were literally fiddling like Nero before the fires that were plaguing their empire. At the same time thousands of print copies of a new publication, *Occupied Wall Street*

*Journal*, began to be distributed in New York. Readily available to anyone in the world as a PDF file online, on October 9 the second issue was released, while the first issue was featured in publications from *The Nation* to the *Business Insider*.

In the meantime, we have seen the beginnings of a national and now global movement of Solidarity Occupations and Meetups to join and discuss this movement. The world has been wondering how long American citizens would remain quiet about the excesses of their corporate financed oligarchy. The question has at least been raised, and now we must answer whether this is truly our American Autumn.

## Occupy Main Street (cont.)

*continued from page 1*

traffic on Limestone and then against traffic again, turning east onto Main and through the JP Morgan Chase Bank Plaza, where between 6 and 10 police officers circulate in small groups under the cautious surveillance of a couple circling bike scouts. Later that

her 50s who says she's being harassed by a big bank, lingers for a while before drifting down Main. Karen establishes guidelines for dealing with drunks who fuck with the occupiers on weekends. Jim and Freddie and Tonya work to diversify the movement's color. Harold—blue slacks, jacket, big hillbilly beard—sees the



*Occupy Lexington Day 3. Crowds have increased each day of the protest.*

night walking home from BTC, I will approach it from the south and east, cutting across UK's campus and up Rose to Main Street, now walking with traffic, and cross at the Kentucky Theater to make first contact: two humans and a bunch of signs.

The pathways start to pile on top of each other, angular vectors all leading to and from the same place. 3:00 A.M. Day 1, leaving Occupy Main Street and making an excited beeline four blocks straight up MLK for home. 5:18 P.M. Day Four, leaving south from home for a General Assembly, down Limestone against traffic, left at the courthouse and upon the encampment's backside, Esplanade, Jim Embry manning the flank with a sign reading Jobs! Jobs! Jobs! By day five, on paper things begin to resemble a giant squid. My great tentacled circuits flail about the city, plug into a body that wraps around an entire city block in downtown Lexington, and funnel back out with the speed and force common to all newly tapped energy sources.

Coming into camp, you notice different things. Your tarp is now in use, thrown over benches for a make-shift sleeping room; the food has been organized; a sign station appears; General Assembly meetings grow from 20 to 30 to 60 strong. A candidate for state governor shows up. Curly fro'd John offers website creation. Tyler, a sustainable ag student at UK, helps teaching non-verbal consensus decision-making. Bob, a homeless man in his fifties originally from Massachusetts, starts spending the night regularly.

It is a slow growth, a hardening off amidst millions of tiny fall blooms. Ramona, a graduate of the BTC Film Certificate program, begins filming interviews on day one, editing and then posting them to youtube. Steve from Somerset photographs and photographs and photographs the early establishment of the station camp. His pictures capture several great shots of Mike, a migrant organic farmworker on his way to a farm in Michigan who provides an early burst of romantic inspiring energy. Judy drops into General Assembly, a white woman in

action while driving by, parks his vehicle, and joins.

I am just one moving part, a journalist/participant drifting by on the fall tides, but by now this much should be clear. Something is happening here in Lexington, KY, at the foot of the JP Morgan Chase Bank.

*General Assemblies nightly at 6:30. It's a 24/7 occupation, so you are always welcome. There is no bad time. Main Street at the corner of MLK: JP Morgan Chase.*



*The ad that kickstarted a movement.*

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

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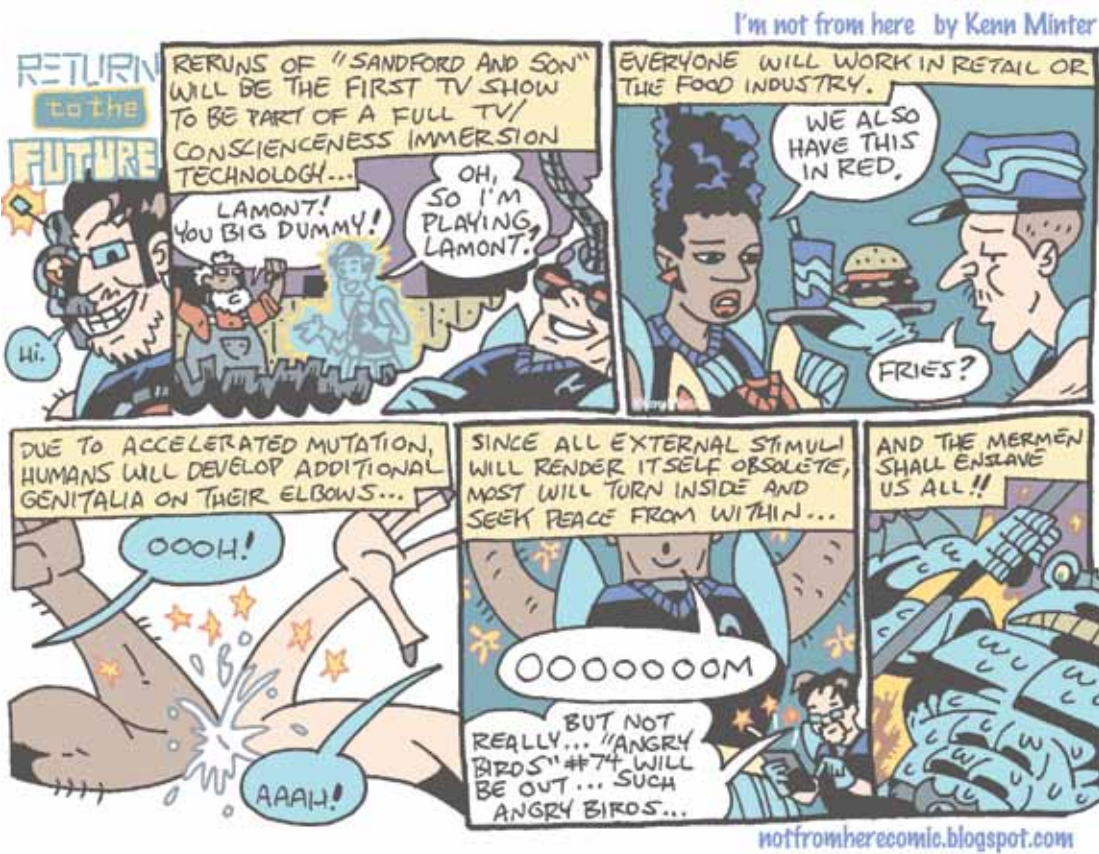
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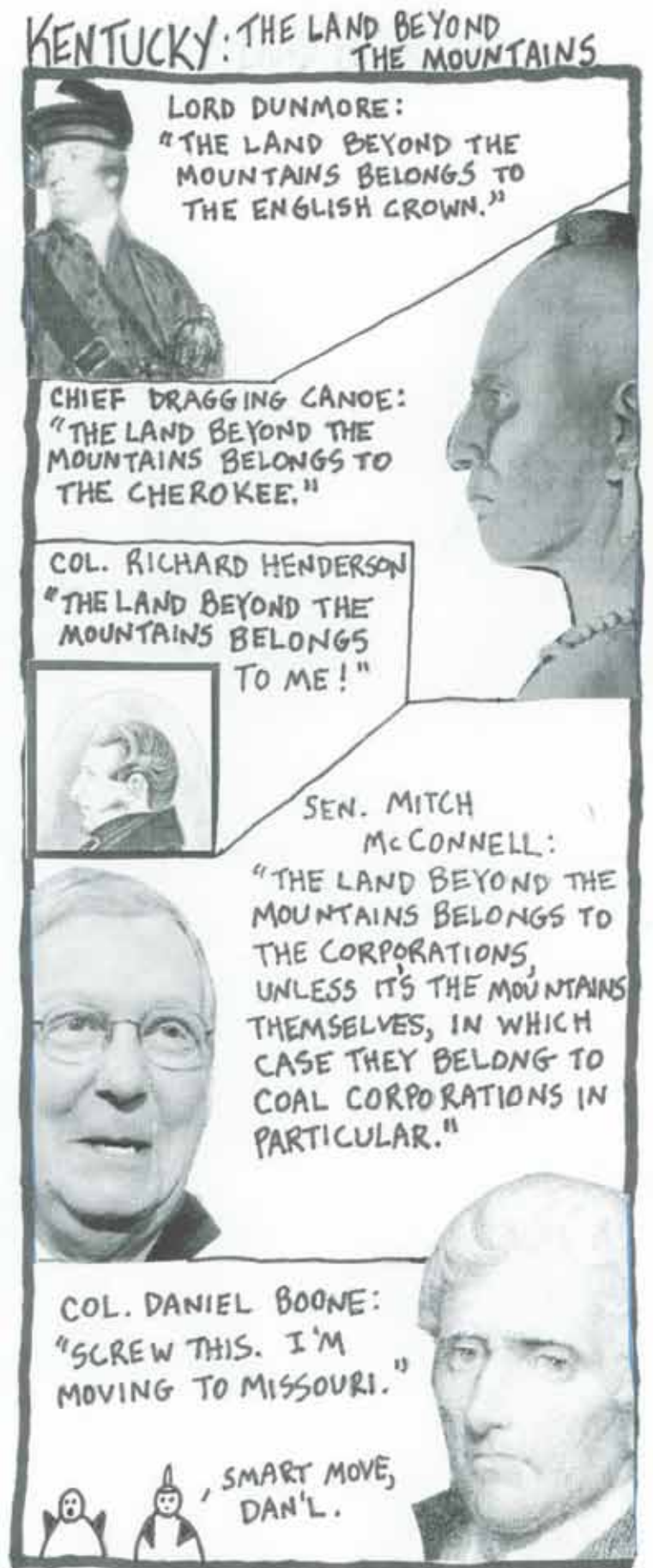
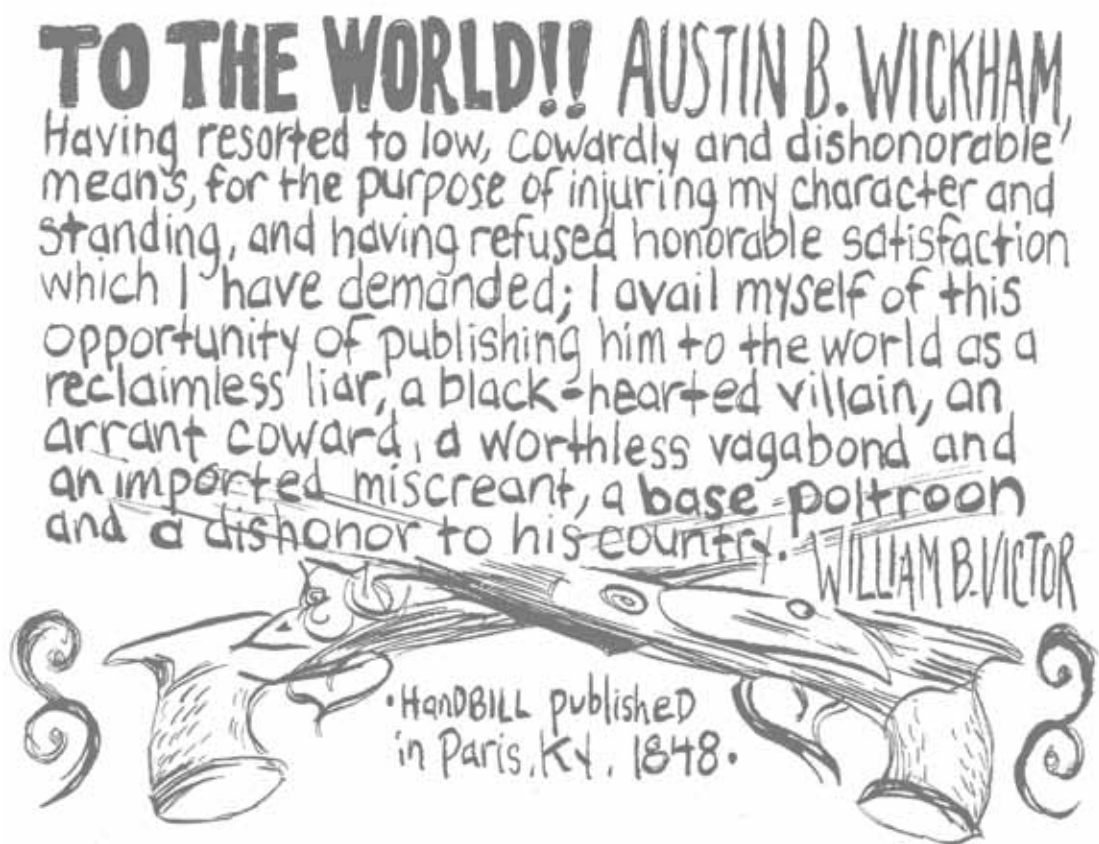
OCTOBER 12, 2011

## Comics



Lexington Public

Stacey Earley



## Branded world (cont.)

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skull-and-crossbones emblem onto a roadside billboard advertising clean coal. Unfortunately, the staples pulled out pretty quickly, but it stayed up for a few hours. The fun part was getting up in the middle of the night and climbing up in the dark on the billboard catwalk. It's scary and those billboards are a lot bigger than you might think.

I've since learned that rubber cement is a better way to attach images to advertising. The cement can be removed without damaging the underlying image. (Much more information on billboard liberation, including some "how-to" tips, can be found on line.)

## RJ CORMAN RAILROAD CO.

What got me thinking about *Adbusters*, Joe Camel and excessive outdoor advertising was the repainting of the railroad bridge on North Broadway around Sixth Street. If you have already seen it, you will know what I mean.

For those who haven't seen it, the RJ CORMAN RAILROAD CO. decided to take their dirty, greasy old railroad bridge, clean it up and paint it bright

red—and I mean bright red. To remind us all that they own the bridge, the company helpfully painted the words "RJ CORMAN RAILROAD CO." in three foot high white letters on both sides of the bridge. The message can be read from about a half mile away.

I think it's great that RJ CORMAN RAILROAD CO. is fixing up their old bridge. Other cities have made their historic bridges into landmarks: Think of the 1890's-era Walnut Street pedestrian bridge/walkway in Chattanooga near the Tennessee Aquarium, or the famous Roebling Suspension Bridge in Cincinnati that crosses the Ohio River. Cincinnati also has the Purple People Bridge, the old L&N Railroad bridge converted into a pedestrian bridge in 2003, which is an enjoyable and healthy way fun to cross the Ohio River.

The RJ CORMAN RAILROAD CO. bridge that now graces the main entrance into our town is but one of several newly painted RJ decals recently sprung around town. Two more Lexington railroad bridges are turning RJ Corman red: on Old Paris Pike at dead man's curve, and at an overpass on New Circle near Liberty Road. Another



RJ CORMAN RAILROAD CO.

THIS IS AN ADVERTISEMENT

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new Corman company building is going up at the intersection of West Main and Newtown Pike. This has brought five shiny red pieces of RJ Corman railroad equipment to the site, where they are now parked at the end of Newtown Pike. They are so spotless, it looks like some kind of railroad museum.

For me personally, though, my RJ bridge has become somewhat of a Lexington navigation landmark. When I tell people how to get downtown, I tell them go six blocks past the obnoxious red bridge.

Company founder Rick Corman, now seriously ill with cancer, built the Nicholasville-based company into a very successful railroad behemoth. According to the company website, Corman started building his company in 1973 just out of high school with only a single backhoe. It's an amazing success story. But still, shouldn't there be some limits on how many times a local company can plaster its name—in three foot high letters—on bridges or highway overpasses?

## Coda: public encounters at RJ's bridge

As I was taking some photos of the CORMAN bridge on North Broadway, a very intoxicated man sitting underneath the bridge accosted me.

"Man, you know what that is?" he said, pointing to the newly-painted bridge framework.

"That's PIG iron. That's PIG iron. Wont rust—ever!"

I told him I was writing an essay about the bridge for North of Center. I asked him what pig iron was: Is it different from steel?

He leaned into my face and pointed at the bridge again. "That's what—man, you don't know shit! That's the same thing they make battleships out of. And nuclear ... nuclear ... that's PIG iron. Wont rust ever."

I asked him if he liked the new bridge. The painters did a very meticulous job. Even the pigeons seemed to have a new strut in their strut.

"RJ Corman—that's HIS bridge. Man, you don't know shit!"

I tried to ask him a few more questions, but he obviously didn't like me. He staggered and waved his bottle around. I tried to be polite and asked if he had been in the Navy, but he became belligerent and began berating me: "You the biggest BABY I ever met! You the biggest BABY ever!"

Whelp, time to go!

As I turned to walk away, I noticed he was unzipping his fly. "I gotta take a PISS!" he announced to the world. As I got back into my car parked in the Subway parking lot, I saw that he was urinating in public underneath the shiny new bridge.

I wish I would have gotten that photo. It would be perfect for *Adbusters*.