

PULSE

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Aaron Shakra
Art falls apart

Artistic mentality can drive creation

Art does not exist in a vacuum — for those who allow it into their lives, anyway. There is a portion of the populace who have become alienated from an artistic life because they view it as something dispensable and separate. As if art is over in one corner — here is art, and here is living — and the twain only meet optionally.

This is simply not so. I am here today to equate art to life, and life to art, and say: They are one and the same.

Citizens and governments within the "civilized" Western world are increasingly conforming to nonexistent standards and riding on unparalleled heights of consumerism at the expense of the majority, of the rest of humanity. It only makes sense that the current delivery methods of artistic expression — film, painting, writing and so on — reflect these values and sensibilities. The result is, predictably, a highly disposable product that lacks originality, heart and enthusiasm.

In other words, it's absolutely dead on arrival. Stop me if you've heard this one before. The only value is numbing entertainment, distraction, frequently propagating prejudice, status and snap judgments.

The summer movie season, now in full swing, is always a prime example. Year after year, more of the same time-wasting dreck is hurled out to be remembered briefly then quickly forgotten. Or even worse, it is reified by the consumer as something important, and a place to continually focus attention. For example, let Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life forever endear your heart by buying the poster and action figure.

But, really, the movie theater is the Matrix, and we are willingly plugging ourselves in, even as the film bangs you over the head with a metaphorical frying pan. This screams of how willingly distracted and conformed we are becoming.

I know this perhaps sounds extreme. It really isn't my place to judge one thing as art and one thing as not art. All I can do with this column is trace themes, and hope readers can fill in the rest with details from their own lives. I don't want to alienate anyone, I just want people to appeal to their hearts for a truer form of art, one that permeates every modicum of our lives. Art should not be pretentious; art is about awareness, and awareness is a continual process.

Then again, it is not about any one thing. One art form does not exist higher than another; one piece is not better than another. Art encompasses the entire spectrum of forms. It is about creation and expression of everything. Of course, you jest, this could be anything. But I leave it to non-conformed souls to decide what I'm talking about, and merely say: The products being pushed by corporate pimps are absolutely lifeless and

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Musical mid-year

Eugene will play host to dozens of musical artists this summer, in genres from rock to bluegrass and reggae to folk

By **Ryan Nyburg**
Freelance Reporter

Summer is concert season: a time when the big name tours roll, Sherman-like, across the country, and the smaller venues are packed with acts aiming for the big time. Here are some of the concerts to anticipate in the Eugene area this summer.

The McDonald Theatre, one of Eugene's few medium-sized venues, has a wide range of acts for the summer. Canadian singer/songwriter Bruce Cockburn will be playing July 31, Grateful Dead interpreter Dark Star Orchestra will be in concert August 4, Funk outfit Tower of Power will be playing August 11, Bela Fleck and the Flecktones will be performing August 16 and Grammy-winning reggae legend Burning Spear will appear September 15.

Tickets for McDonald Theatre shows are available in advance at TicketsWest outlets, or at the McDonald Theatre box office the day of the show.

The WOW Hall also has a bevy of shows planned for the summer. On July 18, local punk outfit Bastard Saints will have a CD release party with special guests PB Army, Not a Part of It and Dirty Rigs. International Reggae System will be performing July 19, with special guest Zawadi. Art rock act Clem Snide will be playing July 20, along with The Long Winters and Portland's The Carolines. Popular art music act The Trachtenburg Slideshow Players will be playing July 23. July 25 has local rockers The Koozies and Toad in the Hole performing. Popular Portland-based rockers Floater will be playing August 2. Country singer/songwriter Robert Earl Keen will be performing August 9.

Tickets for WOW Hall shows are available at various outlets around Eugene, including CD World, Face the Music, House of Records, La Tiendita & Taco Loco and the University Ticket Office, as well as the Community Center for the Performing Arts Box Office.

For those looking for larger shows, the Cuthbert Amphitheater has a few big-name performances planned. July 21 brings Crosby, Stills & Nash to Eugene, and July 22 brings singer/songwriter Jackson Browne, along with Keb' Mo' and Steve Earle. Tori Amos, with special guest Ben Folds, will be in concert July 27. Tickets are available at the Hult Center Ticket Office and the University Ticket Office, or at the Cuthbert Amphitheater Ticket Office an hour before show time.

Fairs and festivals also offer opportunities for concert-goers. The Lane County Fair, which runs Aug. 12-17, has some of the biggest tickets of the summer. Heart will be performing Aug. 12, the Beach Boys Aug. 13, Sixpence None the Richer Aug. 14, Rascal Flatts Aug. 15 and Lonestar Aug. 16. On Sunday, the closing day of the fair, there will be a free funk and salsa show, featuring Pepe & The Bottle Blondes and Hit Explosion. Tickets are available at Tickets West outlets.

If you are looking for a lower-key show, Sam Bond's Garage might have what you need. July 18 brings accordionist Jason Webley, July 19



Eric Layton Emerald

has banjo picker Danny Barnes and on July 20 Tony Kaltenberg will have a CD release party. Also, every Tuesday the venue hosts free bluegrass jam. Tickets for all shows are available at the door.

Another of the smaller venues, John Henry's, will also be hosting a few concerts during the summer. July 22 brings Scotch Greens, with Mike Walker and Pellet Gun. On July 26 the Eric McFadden Trio will be playing the venue for the fourth time. McFadden is the guitarist and mandolinist for George Clinton/Parliament Funkadelic. Organic Assault Weapon will open the concert. Tickets are available at the door. All events at John Henry's are 21 and older.

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My House organizers (clockwise from upper-left) Inga Markstrom, Jesse Garlick, Carly Boyer and Marc Moscato.

Closing art venue to host free event

Local art pad My House, host to dozens of events over the last year, is closing after its owner decided to sell the space

By **Ryan Nyburg**
Freelance Reporter

"I was just thinking of how many people have passed through our basement," said Marc Moscato, an organizer and agent provocateur of local independent art venue My House. "It must have been thousands."

Moscato has reason for reflection. After hosting more than 40 events during 13 months, the humble My House venue will close its doors. Moscato formed the venue with the house's owner, Jesse Garlick, who recently decided to sell the property. My House has presented everything from independent films to zine workshops to almost any musical act capable of performing in a basement.

"I came out here from Buffalo, New York, about two years ago and realized that there were no venues for independent arts," said Moscato, a recent University graduate. "I felt there were all these things that Eugene lacked. Soon I met others with the same frustrations, and things began to take off."

Local, national and international music acts, along with internationally acclaimed artists, filmmakers, cartoonists and zine writers have all made appearances at the humble basement of Moscato and his fellow organizers Garlick, Inga Markstrom, Carly Boyer and Erik Kessler.

The group has also hosted events outside of the basement. One of these, the "No War" art show held in March, attracted hundreds of patrons and artists.

"(As a measure of its success,) it didn't stop the war. But it was an opportunity to

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