

## PULSE

Thursday, August 14, 2003



**Ryan Nyburg**  
Budget rack

## Eugene's rockers superior to most

Most people don't seem to realize this, but Eugene has a pretty good music scene. By nature, I'm kind of a shut-in, so I don't see a lot of the local concerts, but I have a nice gig on the local campus radio station that allows me to sift through all the cool local demos, singles, EPs and LPs that pour in. With this as a background, I thought I'd use this column to go over some of the best local music.

- **The Courtesy Clerks:** This is the whoop-ass hard rock outfit that caught my eye when I first got into Eugene. They play cool, funny metal numbers with lots of bravado and panache: "Saving Rock & Roll, one mullet at a time," their press releases state. They have a couple of full-length albums out, at least one of which is available for sale at House of Records. With songs like "Rock and Roll Records" and "Jimmy Sold His Soul," the Clerks is one of my favorite local bands.

- **The Danged:** Further proof that the 1950s were the best decade for rock 'n' roll. The Danged play a cool mix of rockabilly and hard rock that will make anybody with any semblance of soul want to shake their groove thing. Any band that covers both Chuck Berry and Primus is fine by me.

- **Bloody Castles Ragtime Band:** Blues, ragtime, country and a style reminiscent of Tom Waits all combine to make a cool little old-time outfit. Plus they utilize a musical saw. Very nice.

- **Hello Lobster:** Funny, bizarre and nice to dance to. They write songs with titles like "Jerry Likes NASCAR" and "Missile Command." They don't take themselves too seriously and, best of all, make fun of Creed. Great fun.

- **The Sawyer Family:** How perfect is this band for someone who loves horror movies? They play a vicious form of rockabilly and sing about vampires, zombies, devils and murderers. Their name is even a reference to "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre." And to top it off, the guitar work is superb. They also have a full length album available at House of Records.

- **The Big Venus:** Pure rock 'n' roll just like they made it back in the day. This is one of the few locals I've actually bothered to go see live, if that tells you anything. They had one big local hit, "Rock & Roll Resurrection," a song of such garage rock brilliance as to deserve a place on a "Nuggets" compilation. I hope they're working up some new material for the future.

- **The Rock & Roll Soldiers:** I've seen these boys live as well, and thank the Lord for that. The music is so energetic and powerful that I'm sure they could build a giant fan base just using live performances, and their limited output of recorded work is hardly able to contain the music. So damn cool. Along with the

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## EXQUISITE EXHIBITS



University students Laurie Watts (left) and Grant Williams discuss drawings by Clint Brown during a class visit to the Jacobs Gallery.  
Jessica Waters  
Emerald

## STATE OF THE ART

Eugene's art scene is alive and well, with galleries showcasing local and international work alike throughout summer months

By **Ryan Nyburg**  
Freelance Reporter

While there might be more intense entertainment experiences, a quiet art gallery can still offer a great deal of pleasure. Here are a few of the showings going on around town for the artistically inclined to enjoy during the waning days of summer.

The Jacobs Gallery is holding an exhibit of drawings by Clint Brown entitled "Figurative Humanist." The charcoal drawings use the human figure to express personal or social concerns. The exhibit incorporates three different series created by Brown during the past decade, including "The Plague Drawings," a response to the AIDS epidemic. The Brown

exhibit will run through Sept. 6.

Jacobs will also host the Mayor's Art Show, which will run Sept. 18 to Oct. 23. The exhibit will feature artwork by Lane County artists and will accept entries on Sept. 8 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Jacobs Gallery sits below the Hult Center for the Performing Arts.

The White Lotus Gallery, which specializes in 20th century Asian art and currently boasts one of the largest collections of contemporary Chinese prints in the United States, is showing works from its standing collection. While the gallery has a large collection of prints, its emphasis is on originals. The White Lotus Gallery is located at 767 Willamette St.

For those looking for art that could never be described as fine, there is the Museum of Unfine Art & Record Store. Run by Shawn Mediacast, the museum has featured more than a hundred local artists since its January 2002 opening. The gallery is displaying works by lo-

cal artist Melissa Emerson, including paintings, photos and even figurines made from utensils. The museum is located at 537 Willamette St., across from the post office.

Cafe Paradiso, located at 115 W. Broadway, is showing works by late local artist Raymond Raymond. The cafe rotates its art monthly.

The University offers options for art patrons, too. The Adell McMillan Gallery is exhibiting a collection of photo collages by Mary Daniel Hobson entitled "Mapping the Human Body." The exhibit will run until Sept. 1. After Sept. 3 the gallery will be showing works by Mike Van and Frank Gosar. That exhibit will run through Sept. 24.

The Aperture Photo Gallery is showing works by Jade Bunker, a show that will run through Aug. 30 and will be followed by an exhibit of works by Jon Myskens, which will run

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## 'SPUN' explores subterranean drug world

By **Steven Neuman**  
Freelance Reporter

A trip unto itself, "SPUN" is a movie that makes "A Clockwork Orange" look like Saturday morning cartoons.

This dawns on the audience sometime after the main character leaves a girl handcuffed to his bed — naked, gagged and blindfolded with duct tape — listening to a skipping CD, and inadvertently keeps her there for at least a day. Add that to graphic nudity, sex, explicit drug use, physical violence and you have "SPUN."

The film follows college dropout and all-around loser Ross (Jason Schwartzman), who, in exchange for speed, contracts himself and his beat-up Volvo into the service of a motel room methamphetamine manufacturer known only as "The Cook" (Mickey Rourke). Along the way, "SPUN" introduces the audi-

ence to an ensemble cast of scummy meth users and dealers whose stories eventually intertwine with horrifying predictability. As the movie progresses, Ross falls in love with The Cook's girlfriend, Nikki (Brittany Murphy), and the whole world goes to hell.

The characters are replete with the obligatory rotten teeth, pasty complexions and bowel issues one should expect in a drug flick about speed (Mena Suvari makes a memorable appearance as a junkie struggling on a toilet with the constipating effects of meth), but most characters fail to portray any real depth.

The collapse of character development is lifted by some brilliant acting by Rourke, who plays The Cook as a cross between General Patton and good-old-boy white trash; John Leguizamo, who portrays the inadequate dealer Spider Mike with a kind of dark comedic streak; and Schwartzman, who captures the denial and softness of his character while still making Ross' mean streak plausible.

Although some characters lack depth, the blame rests on a weak

script and equally inadequate narrative that introduces too many characters without designating much importance to any of them. This trend of seemingly involuntary and extraneous action and dialogue is fostered by director Jonas Åkerlund's willingness to overwhelm the audience with cuts and editing. The style was obviously meant to convey the sensory overload of taking speed — the problem is that all the self-conscious technique gets old very fast.

Åkerlund has been known for his innovative music videos, like Prodigy's controversial "Smack My Bitch Up," and I was looking forward to seeing him explore a longer format — making the jump from the small screen to the big like Spike Jonze (Being John Malkovich, Adaptation) — but somehow Åkerlund missed the boat. In this case the frantic editing that Åkerlund often employs, with breathtaking results in a three minute video clip, detracts from the scant plot of SPUN, and becomes tiresome after the third time he shows an actor's pupils contracting.

Åkerlund does his best to salvage a sloppy story line, and some of the best scenes utilize classic visual humor, like the mock-cop show that Åkerlund develops into a sort of slapstick "Starsky and Hutch."

Furthermore, the grime and reality of the setting of the movie seems a little too realistic. Take out the sunshine and the palm trees, and you have something that bears a good resemblance to parts of Eugene and Springfield, which is not surprising considering the connection between "SPUN" and our own fair hamlet of Eugene.

Although both screenwriters, Will De Los Santos and Creighton Vero, are from the area, the movie was not shot in Eugene, as was previously rumored. Rather, it was created in various seedy locations in downtown Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.

In 1996, Vero, a graduate of the University, was working on a documentary about Eugene methamphetamine

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### Movie review