



RYAN NYBURG
BUDGET RACK

Knock, knock. Who's there? Spike Jones, humor music

In my last column I asked readers to send ideas for worthwhile cultural activities for students to get involved in on campus. The responses didn't exactly flood my mailbox, so I think I'll hold off on that one for a while. Until then, I'm just going to write more crap about musicians nobody has ever heard about. We do enjoy our esoteric ramblings here at the Pulse desk.

So what's the question of the day? Ah, here we go: "Does humor belong in music?" Those of you who understand the reference inherent in that question already know the answer, but for the rest of you it's time to sit back while pompous ol' professor Nyburg begins the lecture.

Humor and recorded music go way back, but for me the show really gets on the road with Spike Jones. Through the 1940s and '50s, he and his band created some of the best novelty songs around, performing a calculated deconstruction of popular songs of the era. Rather than just rewrite the song with funny lyrics, the band would instead recreate it from the ground up, mercilessly deflating it of all pomp and pretense. To this day it is no longer possible to take a wide array of classic pop songs seriously due to the damage Jones and Co. did to them. ("My Old Flame" done in a maniacal Peter Lorre voice, "You Always Hurt the One You Love" done with explanatory sound effects and "The William Tell Overture" done as a horse track announcer's narrative.)

Jones' work stands out because it remains fresh over repeated listenings. Most comedy music is good for a laugh or two the first couple of times, but nobody except Dr. Demento sits around listening to it all day. Who out there still owns all of those "Weird" Al Yankovic albums they bought in middle school? You loser.

What Jones discovered is that comedic music could hold its own if the music itself were well executed. If you actually listen to the music itself, never mind the parody, it sounds tight and inventive. The rhythms are constructed out of the oddest percussion instruments ever recorded, with cowbells, gun shots, tin pans and a wide array of human and animal sounds all blasting out in time to the beat. Listening to the original songs alongside Jones' take on them is remarkable. For anyone interested in picking up something by Jones, I would recommend Proper's excellent "Strictly for Music Lovers" compilation. With four discs of about 24 songs apiece, it's as close to comprehensive as anyone is likely to find. It also has a relatively low retail price for such a collection.

This isn't the only route to quality comedy in music. Another performer from the same era as Jones laid out a good way to make humorous music with real lasting power. Tom Lehrer was an adept songwriter who wrote satirical vignettes about drug dealers and homicidal maniacs at a time when Marilyn Monroe's chest was the most scandalous thing out there. Lehrer took classic folk and pop melodies and turned them inside out

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Bon appétit

Thanksgiving dinner made easy with recipes and cooking tips provided by local chefs

BY NATASHA CHILINGERIAN
SENIOR PULSE REPORTER

For some students, Thanksgiving dinner means taking a break from simple college apartment dinners and getting spoiled by mom's homestyle cooking. But for those who won't be going home this week, Thursday's meal can pose a big challenge. Students who are staying in town to tackle their own Thanksgiving feasts have a variety of options for making the dinner easy and creative.

Preparation of the Thanksgiving turkey might seem overwhelming, but knowing the secrets of making a succulent bird ahead of time can improve your results. Lane Community College Executive Chef John Onstenk said allowing for adequate thawing and cooking time, as well as letting the turkey reach the correct temperature, is important. University Housing Chef Bill Town said that a turkey isn't fully cooked until its juices run clear.

Onstenk mentioned that students need to avoid getting raw turkey juices near their faces or on the countertops.

"Food safety is a big concern this time of year; it's when we see more food-borne illnesses," he said.

Town suggested easy recipes for stuffing and gravy that don't involve from-the-box ingredients.

"For stuffing, get breadcrumbs and ground sage and mix it with melted butter and chicken stock," he said. "My mother always put in water chestnuts and mushrooms, and celery and onions have always been stuffing mainstays. For turkey gravy, take the drippings from the bottom of the pan and mix it with flour and water."

For a change of pace on Thanksgiving, Town said lasagna, with a little pork sausage mixed in with ground meat for extra spice, is a great dish to serve.

"It's simple, and it's something all of us can afford," he said.

If a group of Thanksgiving diners are only able to make it through half a turkey, they might wonder what to do with all those leftovers. Besides turkey sandwiches for lunch every day, the meat can be used for some creative dinner options. Onstenk said turkey enchiladas and turkey with dumplings are great dishes, and Town suggested a turkey noodle casserole with vegetables.

University graduate Nikki Ferguson took on the task of preparing Thanksgiving dinner at her friend's apartment last year when neither of them were able to make it home, and she said the culinary aspect was very successful with a little over-the-phone help from her mother.

"We had a whole feast," she said. "We had turkey, homemade macaroni and cheese, stuffing, peach cobbler, green beans, mashed potatoes and Franzia wine. I called my mom like 16 times that day."

For students who want to take the easy way out in the kitchen, there are a number of simple, pre-made options. They can purchase a pre-cooked turkey breast which only needs to be heated for an hour, canned vegetables and cranberry sauce, instant potatoes and stuffing, frozen biscuits, packaged turkey gravy and pumpkin pie



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LAUREN WINTER

Local bars and other venues provide a variety of entertainment options for students staying in town for Thanksgiving weekend

BY AMY LICHTY
PULSE REPORTER

Thanksgiving is usually associated with turkey, cranberries, stuffing and, of course, family. Going home for Thanksgiving weekend is common for many students, but some can't go home because they live in other states or countries, or they just don't want to leave. For those sticking around Eugene for the Thanksgiving weekend, for whatever reason, there are events going on around town to entertain.

Many bars around town will be closed for Thanksgiving Day, but there are establishments ready to entertain no matter what. Celebrate Turkey Day by time-traveling back to the rockin' '80s by going to Ladies '80s Night at Diablo's and the Downtown Lounge or '80s Night at John Henry's. Both start at 10 p.m.

On Friday night, several bars and concert venues in Eugene will be open to visitors. At 6 p.m., Luna will host Erik Muiderman, a Eugene-based singer and songwriter. At 8 p.m., Ritmo De La Noche hits the stage with its Latin jazz beats. The cost is \$5.

John Henry's will be holding its Second Annual Moustache Rally. The cost is only \$2

for everyone except those with a "stache," who will be admitted for \$1.

Down at Diablo's and the Downtown Lounge, Motorama will play its revved-up rock-and-roll sounds. The show begins at midnight.

The McDonald Theatre Lounge is also open Friday at 9:30 p.m. and will be featuring a live DJ.

Café Paradiso is also hosting some fun Friday evening. Americanistan and featured dancer Deena present an "Evening of Music and Dance" beginning at 8:30 p.m. Americanistan performs original and traditional melodies from the East on rare acoustic and ethnic instruments such as the kanoon, oud and harmonium, just to name a few. Add to that Deena's double veil dance for an evening of fun and exotic belly dancing. The cost is only \$5. The show is for those 21 and over.

Near the campus area, the Oregon Ballroom Dance Club is hosting a dance Friday evening. Formal wear is optional, although leather-soled shoes are advised. Not knowing how to dance is not a problem as hour-long lessons are offered beginning at 7:30 p.m. The dance

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