

**Spend a day in Amazon Park with**

**Mad Duckling Children's Theatre**



**July 5-9 & 12-16, 2011**

*The Commedia*  
**Pinocchio**  
by Lane Riosley

*The story of a puppet who springs to life from a block of wood and has many adventures!*

**Bring your picnic lunch on Saturday, July 9, and stay after the show to eat lunch with the cast of Pinocchio!**

Performances start at 11 a.m.

Tickets \$5 at the door for those 3 years old and up. Group discounts available.

Produced by special arrangement with Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., Englewood, CO  
Produced in partnership with City of Eugene Recreation Services

Find more information at [pages.uoregon.edu/madduckling](http://pages.uoregon.edu/madduckling)

**recreation**  
SERVICES

**O** UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

**Science Factory Exploration Dome**

**Shows running July 7-13**

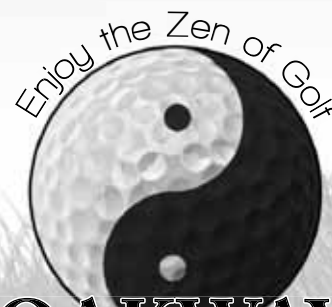
**Astronaut\*\***..... Thu-Fri 2pm  
**Astronomy for the Fun of It: Constellations\*\*** ..... Sat-Sun 1pm  
**Bugs! A Rainforest Adventure\*\***  
Mon-Wed 2pm, Sat-Sun 11am, 2pm  
**Seasonal Stargazing: Summer\***  
..... Sat-Sun 10:30am, 12pm, 3pm

\* Seasonal Star Show admission: FREE for Science Factory members and children under 3; Non-members: \$4.  
\*\* Science Factory live shows and full-dome movies are \$2 for Science Factory members; Non-members: \$4.

**2300 Leo Harris Pkwy, Eugene**  
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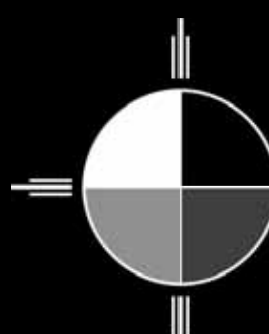
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**small screen** BY RICK LEVIN

**Burn, Baby, Burn**

HBO's *Hot Coffee* reveals a broken legal system



**B**efore I talk about coffee — and specifically, a very iconic cup of scalding hot coffee that left atrocious, skin-melting burns in the crotch of a 79-year-old woman in Albuquerque, N.M. — I'd like to talk about Nazis. When I lived in Oaxaca in 2001, I would get together once or twice a week with Jerry, a wiry old Jewish guy who, like me, kept finding himself living in southern Mexico. Jerry and I would meet up at our favorite cantina and chat over beers and shots of mescal, and one day — after hitting the mescal a bit harder than normal — Jerry, a spitfire liberal, leaned in and grabbed my arm. He'd been incarcerated in Auschwitz as a kid, he said, and had always been haunted by the dull, empty eyes of the SS guards who oversaw the daily routines of the prisoners. "I hadn't seen those eyes for 60 years, until I saw that motherfucker," Jerry whispered, and pointed up to Karl Rove's face on the bar's TV screen.

Rovelooms large in the new documentary *Hot Coffee*, a brilliant and infuriating work of investigative journalism that takes as its leaping off point the infamous, and widely misunderstood, verdict in the civil case of Stella Liebeck, who was severely burned by a spilled cup of McDonald's coffee (the photos of her wounds recall Hiroshima radiation burns). Prior to the much-maligned Liebeck case, McDonald's quality control manual required that coffee to be kept at a temperature of 180-190 degrees F, and the company had received more than 700 complaints from customers who'd been scalded. The jury awarded Liebeck, an able-bodied woman who'd only just quit working full-time, \$160,000 in compensation and \$2.7 million in punitive damages, which a judge reduced to \$480,000.

And so began a very dangerous urban legend about "jackpot justice" and "junk lawsuits" being waged by greedy citizens against poor, defenseless corporations like McDonald's and Philip Morris. As Ashland-based director Susan Saladoff proves so incisively in *Hot Coffee*, that legend is actually an obscurantist myth manufactured very systematically and very deviously by corporate interests — corporate interests with chilling reasons for hiding from the public the full truth of how a handful of politicians have rigged

the entire legal system to maintain their power and line their pockets.

A hot cup of coffee is only the tip of the iceberg. The documentary lays out in meticulous detail the way a clutch of sociopathic greedheads like Rove, Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush have waged a continual campaign to corrupt everything from tort law (by putting hard caps on punitive damages) to the structure of the judicial system itself. These completely unconstitutional shenanigans have been achieved by everything from repetitive propaganda and TV commercials to funneling huge sums of money into getting conservative, pro-business judges seated on state supreme courts. "In my line of work, you gotta keep repeating things over and over and over again for the truth to sink in, to kinda catapult the propaganda," George W. Bush, crouching like a campfire cowboy, tells a group of huddled constituents. You should hear the laughs.

Saladoff is thorough and relentless in the way she cuts through the fug of misinformation surrounding the public's understanding of the legal system, and for emotional emphasis she reveals the real-life victims of so-called tort reform and mandatory forced arbitration; for example, there is the case of Colin Gourley, who suffered twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome when Lisa Gourley's doctor failed to realize she had only one placenta. Because of caps on damages in malpractice suits, the Gourleys' initial award of \$5.6 million in damages (what it was estimated it would take to keep Colin alive) was reduced to \$1.25 million. All power in these instances is wrested away from the jury by legislators living in the pocket of the insurance industry. But the pain you witness in the Gourleys is beyond anger; even years later, they seemed stunned, bewildered.

*Hot Coffee* is a depressing and angering documentary, if only because the conclusions it can only hint are so devastating: Our democracy is rotten to the core, and it appears unfixable. The country is ruled by an oligarchy of maniacs hiding behind PR firms and doublespeak rhetoric. Of course, some viewers may find hope in the fact of *Hot Coffee* itself — that it could be made at all, that intelligent activists like Saladoff are around to keep up the good fight. Me, I'm not feeling it right now. **EW**

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