



Good God Damn by Bryan Schutmaat. Trespasser, \$40.

Shot in Leon County, Texas, over the course of ten days, *Good God Damn* documents the last days before Bryan Schutmaat's buddy Kris went to prison. The photographer gives the reader no information about Kris' sentence and never mentions the details of the crime, because that's not the point. It's about that one last romp. It's also about forging a lasting connection to the land we assume he calls home — a grounding before being uprooted. The images are desolate but celebratory, as the two friends spend their time drinking around campfires, hunting and mudriding in the woods. Schutmaat's collection doesn't omit that looming darkness, but he reassures his friend that the fire will still be burning when he returns.

Ya Heard Me, Let's Go Get Em, Come See About Me by Michelle Elmore. Artvoices Art Books, \$60 each.

There is no place in the world like New Orleans. The music and culture is live and breathing. Anyone who visits can feel how special it is. And Michelle Elmore found it to be the only place she ever felt comfortable in her own skin. This trilogy is her way of paying homage to the place she grew to call home and the people that became family.

Ya Heard Me showcases tight shots of shiny grills and the NOLA hip-hop and bounce scene. She catches artists like Mannie Fresh, Juvenile and 5th Ward Weebie posing for frames (and even ended up shooting Juvie's wedding when his photographer flaked).

Let's Go Get Em is a tribute to the Mardi Gras Indians, their rich traditions and meticulously "pretty" suits.

Come See About Me documents the second line so vividly you can hear the brass bands. Elmore explains how she became known as "the picture lady" and returned every Sunday with prints for the subjects.

Like countless others, Elmore lost a lot to Katrina, but luckily she moved her negatives before the storm hit. This power trio is the product of sifting through those twelve salvaged boxes.

Prince: A Private View by Afshin Shahidi. St. Martin's Press, \$35.

Beyoncé's foreword puts it best: "Truth be told, the word 'icon' only scratches the surface of what Prince was and what he remains to me." *Prince: A Private View* shares a good mix of moments on and off stage. Afshin Shahidi captures Prince reviewing tapes of his own late-night performances like a coach after the game, clowning at the airport, window shopping, impromptu album cover shoots and the star-studded 3121 private parties. The captions go beyond the basic details of the image, letting us in on the story behind and beyond the shot. The geek in me loved learning how they reviewed the work together and how it led to Prince's having a stronger appreciation for long exposures/shutter drags.

