

OPINION

“(Heather’s) still nursing the knife wound in her back.”

David Spade

On the feud between actresses Heather Locklear and Denise Richards, which is said to have stemmed from when Richard’s began dating Locklear’s estranged husband Richie Sambora. Currently, Spade is linked romantically to Locklear.



The
Weekly
Diversion



By Penner Guayabera
Entertainer Contributing Writer

Putting on the Ritz

The Majestic Theatre holds a special place in my heart.

Since 1929, more or less, San Antonio residents have flocked to the theater in search of entertainment. The theater began life as a movie house and was the site of protests in the early '60s that lead to its desegregation in December 1961. Declining ticket sales forced management to shut the theater down for a few years in the '70s, but the Majestic was reborn as a stage for the performing arts and enjoyed a \$4.5 million restoration that led to a grand re-opening in the late '80s.

Since then, everyone from the San Antonio Symphony to Van Halen to the gang from Blue’s Clues have performed at the hollowed venue.

Countless onlookers have marveled at the ornate plaster carvings that burgeon around the stage. With a stunning façade full of arches, baroque columns, floral designs, peacocks and cherubs, it’s a Mediterranean wonderland up there, full of fantasy, romance and adventure.

Countless times have I driven or walked down Houston Street and enjoyed watching concert-goers file in through the front gates. Dressed in coats and ties and fine evening gowns, their elegance calls to mind a simpler time I never really knew.

I would have liked to live in the '50s. Sure, the decade had its problems. There was the Korean War, McCarthyism, the boom of suburban sprawl, the suppression of civil rights, and the rise of television, but I sure like the way everyone would dress up. Back then everyone wore a hat. Try wearing a hat and suspenders these days. People think you’re making some sort of statement.

You may get some compliments, but you’ll stick out. Back then, it was all about not sticking out. Ah, sweet, homogenous conformity, but with style! These days, conformity is all about sneakers made in China and boxy cars and ipods and silicone gel

bracelets debossed with words like “strength,” or “Spurs.” I’m all about strength and the Spurs, and I’m sure it was for a good cause, but those bracelets are cheesy.

Thank goodness, that fad is almost dead. I wonder what everyone will do with their silicone gel bracelets once the craze is over? Is there some sort of silicone gel bracelet recycle center to which they can turn?

Disney’s “The Lion King” is in town and the Majestic is the production’s temporary home. I went this week with my son and you should know that the show lives up to its hype. Our outing, however, was not just about watching Simba fulfill his destiny and cast his handicapped uncle out of the pride land. Our trip to the Majestic gave me the perfect excuse to get the boy a haircut and dress him up in a suit and clip-on tie.

Getting dressed up is about more than just looking good. When we put on our fancy duds, we’re donning the costume of our ideal self. Clothes are, after all, what separates us from the animals. Many of us picture God as a bearded guy in a robe, but isn’t it more comforting to think of him in pinstripes with a stylish fedora?

I remember almost getting into a fight in high school. Before we engaged in battle, my adversary took of his shirt and carefully folded it. He wasn’t going to risk soiling his short-sleeve with something as animalistic as violence.

People tend to behave when they get all dressed up, because they look like that person they have the potential to be: a gentleman or a lady.

Like Frankenstein’s monster dressed in a tuxedo singing, “Putting on the Ritz,” we have the opportunity to momentarily deny our base instincts and reach for something finer. Of course, we all know how it ended with Frankenstein, but my kid, at least, seemed to enjoy the show.



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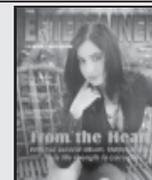
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NEWS

IN MEMORIAM

Rosita Fernández 1918-2006



Courtesy photos

Rosita Fernandez, a long time San Antonian and pioneer of Tejano music, passed away on Tuesday, May 2. She was 88 years old.

Born in Monterrey, Mexico in 1918, Rosita was one of 16 children and the daughter of a military officer. She was educated in Laredo, Texas and moved to San Antonio with her family when she was nine. Rosita married Raul Almaguer of San Antonio in 1938 with whom she raised son Raul Javier Almaguer, and daughter Diana Rosa Orellana. Devoted to her family, she chose to remain in San Antonio despite her blossoming career in movies. As her popularity grew, she became known by adoring fans simply as "Rosita."

In over 60 years of entertaining, Rosita, performed Mexican ballads for foreign and U.S. dignitaries including Pope John Paul II, Prince Charles, and five U.S. presidents. She performed at President Carter's inauguration, and often sang for guests of President and Ladybird Johnson. It was Ladybird Johnson who bestowed upon Rosita the title "San Antonio's First Lady of Song" in 1968 at a special performance for 40 ambassadors at the Arneson River Theatre. It was also in 1968 that she was named an international ambassador for HemisFair, the world's fair held in the city that year. She recorded the song "San Antonio: ciudad de encantos" for the event.

Rosita's career began in the 1920s when she started singing with her uncles in the "Trio San Miguel." After moving to San Antonio as a young girl, she continued to tour with her uncles in tent shows across south Texas. With the increased popularity of radio, she auditioned and became the lead in a 1932 WOAI radio show. By the following year, Rosita was the voice in several radio commercial jingles. As a recording artist, she made hundreds of recordings and was on the RCA, Decca, and Brunswick labels, among others. She was also a pioneer in television, appearing in San Antonio's first television broadcast on WOAI-TV, and performing on a weekly basis in several subsequent television programs. Among the notable stars she worked with are Xavier Cugat, Garry Moore, Dean Martin, Joan Crawford and Ed Sullivan. Expanding into movie roles, her largest part was as the leading lady in Disney's 1963 "Sancho, the Homing Steer," based on J. Frank Dobie's true story. She also appeared in the 1960 John Wayne film "The Alamo" and had roles in "Three Hundred Miles for Stephanie" and "Seguin."

Locally, Rosita was best known and loved for her performances at the summer-long Fiesta Noche del Rio at Arneson River Theatre in San Antonio. She began at the theatre in the late 1950s, dressed in elaborate and colorful costumes, many of which she made herself. She also was a main attraction at the Fiesta event, A Night in Old San Antonio. She officially retired in 1982 after entertaining for over 60 years. In retirement, she traveled abroad with her husband and continued to sing for charity benefits several times a year. She and her husband also became spokespersons for Secure Horizons, a senior insurance health plan. She also promoted and supported charitable causes by performing at fund-raisers for the March of Dimes, Brooke Army Medical Center's Burn Unit and local Catholic, Jewish and Protestant churches, schools, and organizations.

Rosita received numerous awards in appreciation of her dedication, talent, and loyalty to San Antonio. Among the most visible is the "Rosita Bridge" named in her honor, which spans the San Antonio River at the Arneson River Theatre. The bridge was dedicated to her by city officials in 1982 and filmed by a Japanese television company for a special on the world's bridges. She was inducted into San Antonio's Musicians Hall of Fame in 1979, and proclaimed Woman of the Year by Mayor Henry Cisneros in 1983. Rosita was also inducted into the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame in 1984. *Courtesy of UTSA Archives*



Compiled by Kiko Martinez

MAY 5 - 11

From television show premieres to art exhibits to concerts, find out what you should look for this week in the entertainment world.



CINCO DE MAYO

1. CINCO DE MAYO

The holiday (let's call it Fiesta Round 2) commemorates the victory of the Mexican militia over the French army at the Battle Of Puebla in 1862. It is primarily a regional holiday celebrated in the Mexican state capital city of Puebla and especially in U.S. cities with a significant Mexican population. Bring out the Tecate here in San Antonio and find a party.

2. THE ANI ANIMATION FESTIVAL

The "Ani's" Animation Festival, the third annual festival of the best student, professional and independent animation in the San Antonio area, will be held May 9 at the San Antonio Museum of Art at 7:30 p.m. Tickets to the one-night only event are \$10 and available on line at the official Web site www.san-antonio.sigagraph.org or at the door.



TEJANO CONJUNTO FESTIVAL

3. TEJANO CONJUNTO FESTIVAL

The 25th anniversary of the Tejano Conjunto Festival will take place from May 10-14. The opening night begins at the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center (1301 Guadalupe) from 6-9 p.m. with entertainment by Juan Tejeda y Conjunto Atzlan. For a complete listing of events see page 6-7 or visit www.guadalupeculturalarts.org.

4. THE 800-LB. FILM FESTIVAL

The North East School of the Arts Cinema Department will present the annual event on May 11 at 7 p.m. The festival will be held at the Robert E. Lee High School Auditorium located at 1400 Jackson-Keller Road. Tickets are \$5. Free admission for children under five.



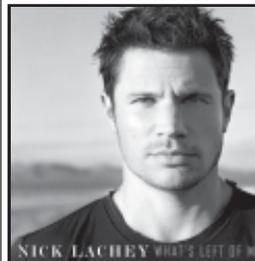
AN AMERICAN HAUNTING

5. AN AMERICAN HAUNTING

The film opens at theaters on May 5. Based on true events validated by the State of Tennessee of the only case in U.S. history where a spirit or entity caused the death of a man, the film stars Sissy Spacek ("In the Bedroom") and Donald Sutherland ("Pride & Prejudice"). See the *Entertainer's* interview with director Courtney Solomon on Page 9.

6. SIX STRING MASTERPIECES: DIME BAG DARRELL ART GUITAR TRIBUTE

The event highlights a collection of over 40 Dean IM Guitars that have been hand painted, illustrated and sculpted by top musicians, tattooist and visionary artists in tribute to Dimebag Darrell, the late guitarist of Pantera and Damageplan. The opening reception takes place May 5 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Sunset Station.



NICK LACHEY

7. NICK LACHEY CD RELEASE

The album, which will be released on May 9, is the ex-98 Degrees band member's first real project since his breakup with superstar Jessica Simpson. Fittingly titled *What's Left of Me*, the CD includes the songs "I Can't Hate You Anymore," "On Your Own" and "Outside Looking In." Hey, Nick! Can you be anymore obvious?

8. MUNICH ON DVD

Steven Spielberg's Oscar-nominated film goes on sale May 9. The film follows a group of Israeli government agents hired to track down and execute those responsible for the murder of Israeli Olympic athletes in 1972.



BARNEY LIVE!

9. BARNEY LIVE! THE LET'S GO TOUR

The children's show is at the AT&T Center on May 9 and begins at 6:30 p.m. It's time to turn on your imagination and get in gear for fun as Barney and his friends take you on a trip to a Tee-rific Toy Workshop! When BJ and Baby Bop's favorite toys are broken, Barney whisks them away on a magical adventure where they meet new friends and larger than life toys.

10. RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS CD RELEASE

The group releases their new album *Stadium Arcadium* on May 9. Songs included on the CD are "Hump De Bump," "She's Only 18" and "Slow Cheetah."

FILM

SNEAKING INTO THE MOVIES

with La Prensa
film critic
Kiko Martinez



Trigger-happy Cruise rounds out trilogy with best 'Mission' yet

Nevermind that Tom Cruise could possibly be considered the most hated actor working today. Nevermind that Cruise may or may not believe in Xenu, the alien ruler of the Galactic Confederacy, who 75 million years ago killed billions of Earth-dwelling people with hydrogen bombs.

We may not be able to ever fathom the ideas brought on by the beliefs of scientology, but what we do know about Cruise is that he rarely makes bad career moves

he is called on for one more mission, however, Ethan takes the case, which ultimately leads to the kidnapping of Julia at the hands of ruthless underground arms dealer Owen Davian (Philip Seymour Hoffman). With precious time ticking away, the only way for Ethan to get back the woman he loves is to give Davian what he wants - a mysterious item known only as the Rabbit's Foot.

Barreling right into the action right from the get-go, director J.J. Abrams (TV's "Alias") has a keen sense of where this rescue mission has to produce its most effective and jarring moments. Along with the hyper-energetic action sequences (Ethan sliding across the side of a building with no grip is exciting), there is an emotional connection to these characters. We truly loath Hoffman's evil character, whose uncompromising nature is enough to make anyone shutter. Actually, we could have used more screen time for Hoffman, now an Oscar winner, if we wanted to get picky.

And, of course, there is the in-



Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

Tom Cruise, with Michelle Monaghan, stars as secret agent Ethan Hunt in the anticipated summer blockbuster "Mission: Impossible III."

tensity of Cruise and his band of buddies, including actor Ving Rhames, who returns as Ethan's right hand man Luther Stickell.

When it comes to summer blockbusters (because everyone knows no matter how many couches Cruise jumps onto people

are going to spend their dollars to be entertained) it really does not get much better than "Mission: Impossible III." It is one helluva ride.

FILM REVIEW

B+

(someone give him a mulligan for "Vanilla Sky"). His decision making skills show once again with the third installment of the "Mission: Impossible" series. And, truth be told, it is the best one of the trilogy.

In "Mission: Impossible III," secret agent Ethan Hunt has decided to put his life of spy games behind him and focus on his relationship with his soon-to-be wife Julia (Michelle Monaghan). When

NEW RELEASES

HOOT

Do not think you are taking your kids to a Discovery Channel-like lesson about burrow owls, the birds that are being saved in this family film about land development and the uprooting of an endangered species. There is very little, if anything, said about this peculiar animal, which is unfortunate since more screen time for the feathered creatures would have been less time for the inane human characters. **Grade: D**

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE III

Barreling right into the action right from the get-go, director J.J. Abrams has a keen sense of where this rescue mission has to produce its most effective and jarring moments. Along with the hyper-energetic action sequences there is an emotional connection to these characters. **Grade: B+**

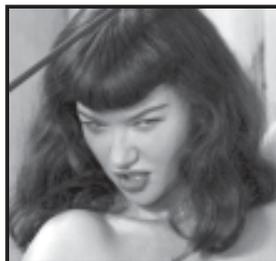
THE NOTORIOUS BETTIE PAGE

Like her 2000 film "American Psycho," director/screenwriter Mary Harron plays it safe with the biopic of '50s sex goddess Bettie Page (Gretchen Mol). Despite Mol's sharp performance (currently, it is one of the year's best but will probably be forgotten once award season comes around), Harron merely skims the surface of the real Page's life and makes her out to be as naughty as a peck on the cheek instead of the grand icon she once was. **Grade: C**

THE PROMISE (WU JI)

Another perfect example of art over substance, the Asian martial arts film, unlike "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" or "House of Flying Daggers" is passionless and questionable on many of the computer generated effects. Stuff that works in films like "Kung Fu Hustle" really does not have a place here. **Grade: C-**

CINEMA SNIPPETS



GRETCHEN MOL IN 'THE NOTORIOUS BETTIE PAGE'

STILL IN THEATERS

AKEELAH AND THE BEE

A great family film with a purpose, "Bee" stands out for its strong performance by actress Keke Palmer as the title character. Sure, an unsupportive, cliché mother (Angela Bassett), who does not want her daughter to waste time with spelling bees, can put a slight damper on the overall gleam of the film, but just focus on Akeelah and it'll have you cheering for these kids all the way to the finals. **Grade: B+**

AMERICAN DREAMZ

Taking, of course, most of its sparkly shots at "American Idol" and current American President George W. Bush, there are hits and misses when it comes to the lampooning of certain issues we face today as a society. Forget about whether or not the jokes are politically correct, most of

them are simply not entertaining enough to support an entire feature film. **Grade: C**

THE BENCHWARMERS

As a team of geeks who return to the baseball diamond to teach a league of baseball bullies a lesson, actors David Spade and "Napoleon Dynamite" star Jon Heder are terribly unfunny. Although comedian Rob Schneider somehow pulls off a "cool guy" approach with his character (something he has never been given a chance to do in his 17 year career), the film is morose in every other way. "Producer" Adam Sandler really has to stop making these types of films with his Happy Madison company for his ex-SNL buddies because its just not panning out well for anyone. **Grade: D+**

FAILURE TO LAUNCH

A sunny and fairly unique rom com that does not always have to be sweet to prove its point. It's humorous when it's sarcastic and entertaining if you can ignore the slapstick and looney-goosy final act. **Grade: B**

HARD CANDY

Taking a film and revolving it around two antagonists that give intensity a new meaning, first time feature film director David Slade has crafted a fine thriller that, although might not say as much as we would like about the topics presented, really is able to crawl not only under your skin, but into your bloodstream. **Grade: B+**

THE HILLS HAVE EYES

If you like your steak bloody and rare, "The Hills



CECILIA CHEUNG IN 'THE PROMISE'

Have Eyes" is what you should order up. If not, it's a basic horror remake at its most relentless. **Grade: C+**

ICE AGE: THE MELTDOWN

John Leguizamo's voice work is genius, but like the original film of 2002 the storyline is far too unoriginal to keep anyone above the age of 10 too interested in what is happening, even if there seems to be some political undertones thrown in the mix. **Grade: C**

INSIDE MAN

Entirely too slowly-paced to be considered any type of crime thriller, the mind games Frazier (Washington) and Russell (Owen) play against one another are not very engaging as we are left with weak character motivation and some bad humor and racial clichés. **Grade: C**

LA MUJER DE MI HERMANO

Bored with her marriage to a wealthy businessman, Zoe (Bárbara Mori) looks for sexual healing from her brother-in-law. Playing out like an overproduced novela, the Spanish-language film stays steady on its sensationalized beat and attempts to pull itself together through passionate sex scenes. Although the story provides an intimate feel throughout, it also feels out of touch with reality, keeping itself inside its small little world of adultery, which is not too interesting when predictable storylines and twists come around. **Grade: C**

LUCKY NUMBER SLEVIN

The script is clever. The script is clever. The script is clever. Or at least it thinks it is. First-time feature film screenwriter Jason Smilovic manages to remind us how witty he is by attempting to top every scene that proceeds it with endless dialogue and one of the longest concluding film twists ever seen on the big screen. Even with names of gold like Oscar winners Sir Ben Kingsley and Morgan Freeman, the plot never comes in sync long enough to care about the characters. By the time you know it, it's stumbling down the homestretch. **Grade: C-**

MUNICH

With its subject matter so timely for today's current state of the world, it is amazing to witness a story so politically motivated, yet so balanced and highly insightful. It is both eye-opening and terrifying. **Grade: B+**

SCARY MOVIE 4

Stumbling through spoofs of films including "Saw 2," "Million Dollar Baby," "The Village" and even "Fahrenheit 9/11" with Leslie Nielsen ("The Naked Gun") as President George W. Bush, "Scary Movie 4" refreshes dull jokes (more

Continued on next page

PELÍCULAS

Michael Jackson, "Brokeback Mountain" and fatulence gags if you haven't had your fill) and crams the rest of its short, whew, very short 83 minute runtime with bad slapstick. **Grade: F**

THE SENTINEL

It's textbook action disguised as a wannabe political thriller. Not much is said that we have not heard before in "Sentinel." The only real twist comes from the fact that instead of the President having the illicit affair, it's the First Lady. It would be easy to call the film a bad episode of "24" since actor Kiefer Sutherland plays one of the Secret Agents, but this really should not even get that much credit. **Grade: C**

THE SHAGGY DOG

It is harmless family fare that falls under the category of remakes that did not need to be reinvented. Topped with all the dog cliches from cartoons and bad sitcoms ever imagined, Tim Allen once again proves why he does not have what it takes to be a leading man. **Grade: C**

SILENT HILL

A degrading addition to the horror genre, this video-game based movie was not directed by Uwe Boll ("Alone in the Dark"), but it might as well have been. With a too complicated script and a runtime of two hours, this journey into a evil town is one trip that should not be on your itinerary. **Grade: F**

SLITHER

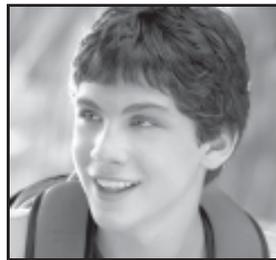
Slugs from outer space invade a small town and turn innocent folks into killer zombies by entering their body through their mouth. It's a campy mess with some satisfactory laughs and some computer generated work that is questionable. **Grade: C+**

STATES OF GRACE

The Mormon film proves that talking about



VING RHAMES IN 'MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE III'



LOGAN LERMAN IN 'HOOT'



NIKKI SOOHOO IN 'STICK IT'



LILI TAYLOR IN 'THE NOTORIOUS BETTIE PAGE'

religion and faith does not mean that filmmakers must preach to the audience to get their message across. The storytelling by director Richard Dutcher never bows out by taking the safe road that it could have. **Grade: B+**

STICK IT

As it strays away from what should be its focus - the gymnastics - so goes the entire film. Missy

Peregryn as the trouble-making and flexible Haley is cute and charming but the script's final act decides to take a turn into what it feels is a unique step. It is, however, not as entertaining as it would have been if we could just see these girls give us all they've got. **Grade: C-**

SYRIANA

As a controversial film about the oil industry, the

attempt is second to none. As something that can be puzzled together in only one screening, you're asking for the impossible. With enough characters to make up the population of Iran, "Syriana" is mesmerizing half the time and entirely too complex for its own good for the other. **Grade: C+**

TAKE THE LEAD

It is through its cliché themes where the problems begin for "Lead" and weighs down the most interesting parts of the film - the music and the dancing. Screenwriter Dianne Houston decides to put this aside and focus on a few secondary stories that make Pierre's (Antonio Banderas) efforts all the more formulaic and passionless. **Grade: C**

THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

Tobacco lobbyist Nick Naylor (Aaron Eckhart) spins the truth about cancer sticks to keep everyone puffing away. With Eckhart and William H. Macy giving excellent performances, it is enjoyable in small doses, but ultimately as empty as an organic herb cigarette with a minty taste. **Grade: C**

UNITED 93

A intense look at what is thought to have occurred during the hijacking of United Airlines 93 during the 9/11 attacks, the film is emotionally heavy and important to witness. Director Paul Greengrass ("The Bourne Supremacy") has done a stellar and very classy job in rekindling the horrors of the dark day and does it with realism and heart. **Grade: A-**

V FOR VENDETTA

Written by the Wachowski brothers of "The Matrix" fame, "Vendetta" is not a nonstop, computer generated free-for-all, although there are some very interesting fight sequences that are both entertaining and arduous. Instead, the film experiments with deeper meanings behind the character's motivation for what they are doing. **Grade: B**

LAST RUN	
MOS DEF IN '16 BLOCKS'	B
16 BLOCKS	B
BASIC INSTINCT 2	D
DATE MOVIE	D-
EIGHT BELOW	B+
FIREWALL	C
HOODWINKED	C-
NANNY MCPHEE	D-
THE PINK PANTHER	B
RUNNING SCARED	C
WHEN A STRANGER CALLS	C

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FIESTA STADIUM 16 800-FANDANGO 3754
 De Zavala at Vance Jackson

Adv. Tix on Sale OVER THE HEDGE (PG) *
 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING (PG-13) dig (1155 1230 220 300 440 520) 705 735 935 1020
 THE CHILD (L) ENTAN (R) - ID REQ'D dig (1215 240 505) 740 1005
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 AKEELAH AND THE BEE (PG) dig (1150 225 500) 735 1010
 THE SENTINEL (PG-13) dig (1145 1230 215 300 445 530) 725 800 1000 1040
 AMERICAN DREAMZ (PG-13) dig (1205 235 510) 740 1015

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TIMES FOR FRIDAY MAY 5 - THURSDAY MAY 11
 TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

SILVERADO 16 STADIUM 496-2221
 1604 AT BANDERA

MAYAN PALACE 14 STADIUM 496-2221
 IH-35 AT S.W. MILITARY

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THE PROMISE (PG-13) 11:55 2:25 5:10 7:40 10:15
HARD CANDY (R) 11:45 2:05 4:40 7:10 10:00
LA MUJER DE MI HERMANO (R) 12:15 2:40 5:25 7:55 10:10
THANK YOU FOR SMOKING (R) 11:35 1:55 4:25 6:55 9:55
ADAM & STEVE 12:25 5:40 10:25
TSOTSI (R) 2:55 8:10

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SCARY MOVIE 4 (PG-13) 1:05 3:10 5:20 8:00 10:10 12:20
THE WILD (G) 12:05 2:15 4:35 6:50 9:05
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RIALTO CINEMA BISTRO STADIUM 496-2221
 LOOP 410 at IH-35

EMBASSY 14 STADIUM 496-2221
 BITTERS RD at 281N

NORTHWEST 14 STADIUM 496-2221
 LOOP 410 at IH-10

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ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN (PG) 10:10
THE WILD (G) 12:45 3:00 5:10 7:50 10:05
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AKEELAH & THE BEE (PG) 1:40 4:20
THE BENCHWARMERS (13) 7:15 9:50

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE 3 (PG-13) 8:30 12:45
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SILENT HILL (R) 10:15
RV (PG) 8:20 12:00
ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN (PG) 10:10
AKEELAH & THE BEE (PG) 10:20

SPOTLIGHT

Music from the Heart

The Tejano Conjunto Festival en San Antonio is 25 years old and still bringing in some of the most talented musicians the country has to offer.

By Kiko Martinez and Roberto Pérez Jr.

Entertainer Editor and Entertainer Staff Writer

It has been a quarter of a century since the first Tejano and Conjunto bands took the stage at one of the city's premiere musical events held on the West Side of San Antonio.

From 1982 until now, the Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center has held the Tejano Conjunto Festival en San Antonio close to their hearts. Anyone can see that the festival is special to the Center with each official poster of the annual event hanging on the walls of the establishment. Through these past 25 years, musicians from across the world have taken part in what is now a week-long event. This includes artists such as Narciso Martinez, the Father of Conjunto Music, Fred Zimmerle, Laura Canales, Roberto Pulido and Esteban Jordán.

This year, names like Eva Ybarra, Joel Guzman, Santiago Jimenez, Jr., Linda Escobar, Ram Herrera and Flaco Jimenez are on the bill.

Juan Tejeda, who helped establish the first festival in 1982 as the Chicano music director at the Guadalupe, said although the Tejano Conjunto Festival has lost some of its flair in the past 25 years, it is still a cherished tradition in the community. Tejeda, who left his post at the Guadalupe in 1998, will perform at the opening mixer of this year's festival on May 10 with his group Conjunto Aztlan.

"The important thing is that (the Conjunto Festival) still exists," Tejeda said. "We've built up a festival that is important and is unique to the City of San Antonio. We wanted to pay tribute to those pioneering performers within conjunto music that created this genre. We wanted to educate people about conjunto music so they can learn about the music and the instru-

ments."

Tejeda also said he remembers when Tejano and conjunto bands would come from across the world, including groups from France, Brazil, Germany and even a conjunto band from Japan.

"We proved that we had the best conjunto bands coming from everywhere," Tejeda said. "People recognized that San Antonio was the capital of conjunto music."

Although there are no bands from outside of the U.S. this year, there is still an array of talent for the Silver Anniversary performance. This includes this year's Tejano Conjunto Festival poster boy Mingo Saldivar, who will be on the Rosedale Park stage May 12 from 7:30 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

"The most important thing is to get the people's support," Saldivar said. "I've been fortunate enough to be blessed with a good talent and have been able to take advantage of it."

Playing the accordion since 1947, Saldivar, a self-taught musician, remembers his parents singing and playing the guitar in the house. Saldivar said he quickly adapted to the music. Now, he is excited to once again share what he has learned throughout his life with audiences who still have a soft spot in their hearts for his squeeze box. According to Saldivar, he and his group have played in 24 of the 25 Tejano Conjunto Festivals since 1982.

"If you play at the Conjunto Festival, that is the gig everyone wants," Saldivar said. "It's something to be really proud of. It's something that has really grown over the years."

The 25th annual Tejano Conjunto Festival en San Antonio will take place this year from May 10-14. For more information on the event visit the Guadalupe's Web site at guadalupeculturalarts.org.



Courtesy photo

Eva Ybarra entertains her fans with her skills on the accordion. She will perform at the 25th annual Tejano Conjunto Festival on Friday, May 12 at 6 p.m. at Rosedale Park. Joel Guzmán will perform at the Tejano Conjunto Festival on May 12 at 9 p.m. at Rosedale Park. He will also head the Accordion Workshop at the Guadalupe Theatre from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. the same day.

Did you know?

According to Juan Tejeda, one of the founders of the Tejano Conjunto Festival in 1982, the name for the event originated after a typo was found on one of the festival programs. Originally, the festival was supposed to be called the Tejas Conjunto Festival, but the word Tejas was accidentally changed to form the word Tejano.

**25th Silver Anniversary
Tejano Conjunto Festival
en San Antonio
May 10-14, 2006**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wednesday, May 10

Opening mixer
Guadalupe Theater,
1301 Guadalupe
6-9 p.m.
Juan Tejeda y Conjunto Aztlan
Tickets \$25

Thursday, May 11

Senior Dance, free
Guadalupe Theater, 1301
Guadalupe
9-11 a.m.
Entertainment to be determined.

Rosedale Park, 303 Dartmouth
6-11 p.m.
6:30 - 7:45 p.m. -
Henry Zimmerle
8:00 - 9:15 pm -
Los Dos Gilbertos (Pharr, TX)
9:30 - 10:45 pm -
Hometown Boys (Lubbock, TX)

Friday, May 12

Accordion Workshop
Guadalupe Theater,
1301 Guadalupe
10:00 am - 3:00 p.m.
Joel Guzman in conjunction with
Karlitos Way Accordions, Reyes
Accordions, Guzman-Fox
Creative, Inc.
For more information visit
www.reyesaccordions.com

Rosedale Park, 303 Dartmouth
6:00 p.m. - Midnight
Admission \$7.50

6:00 - 7:15 p.m. -
Eva Ybarra y su conjunto
7:30 - 8:45 p.m. - Mingo Saldivar
y sus Tremendos Cuatro Espadas
9:00 - 10:15 p.m. - Joel Guzman
y Los Aztecs with Special Guest
Sarah Fox (Buda, TX)
10:30 - 11:45 p.m. -
Ram Herrera

Saturday, May 13

10 a.m.-Midnight
Rosedale Park, 303 Dartmouth
Admission \$7.50

11:00 - 11:45 a.m. -
Student Recital
Noon - 1:15 p.m. -
Los Cuatro Aces (Miss. City, TX)
1:30 - 2:45 p.m. - Juan Chapa
(Azusa, California)
3:00 - 4:15 p.m. - Xpresion (Lakin,
Kansas)
4:30 - 5:45 p.m. -
Los Cuatro Vientos de Jimmy
Bejano (Freemont, Ohio)
6:00 - 7:15 p.m. -
Santiago Jimenez, Jr.

L...o

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For more... available at... \$25

SPOTLIGHT

Director Harron highlights the heyday of 'The Notorious Bettie Page'

By Kiko Martinez
Entertainer Editor

In only the third film of her career, director Mary Harron ("I Shot Andy Warhol" and "American Psycho") returns to the big screen with the biopic "The Notorious Bettie Page." The film follows the life of sex icon and '50s pin-up model Bettie Page, who, has been one of the most photographed models in history. According to sources, Page is said to have been photographed more than Marilyn Monroe and Cindy Crawford combined.

During a roundtable interview with Harron, which included *La Prensa's* *Entertainer*, the director talk about finding the perfect actress to play Page, the production of the film and what Bettie Page herself thought about the final cut.

Take us through the casting of Bettie Page and how Gretchen Mol was finally chosen for the role.

Mary Harron: I looked at a lot of different people. When it's a real life person with such a strong image, you start with just the physical appearance and resemblance. Who looks like Bettie Page? Who has the same qualities as Bettie Page? A lot of people came into read for it; well-known people, not well-known people. We must have seen 40, 50, 60 people. Then we made a list, but I didn't check Gretchen's name. I knew Gretchen. I had originally cast

her for "American Psycho" before she had to drop out because of scheduling conflicts. I really liked her and thought she was an underrated actress. But I thought, 'She's not Bettie Page.' But she came in and she just gave a beautiful, natural reading and I thought, 'That was very good.' That night, I looked at all the tapes of the day and I knew I had already found (Bettie Page). For (all the other actresses) everyone was straining and for (Mol) it was as natural as breathing to be this character. She brought this joyfulness and innocence. The foundation of the performance was original.

You've done films based in the '50s, '60s and '70s. Would you ever think about doing a film set in modern times?

MH: I would love to do something modern because it is so much easier. In terms of films, I am just very interested in history. I love recreating a world. I am sort of addicted to it.

How long did you spend shooting this film?

MH: It was 32 days. I actually reshot the ending. The original ending was shot in black and white and it was (Bettie) preaching on a street corner. When we tested it with an audience, it just seemed flat. We decided to shoot it, instead, in a park.

Can you talk about why you decided to shoot some of the film in

black and white?

MH: I always imagined the film in black and white from the very beginning. That's partly because the pictures from the '50s and the '60s are in black and white. It seemed aesthetically right.

What kind of research did you have to do for this film?

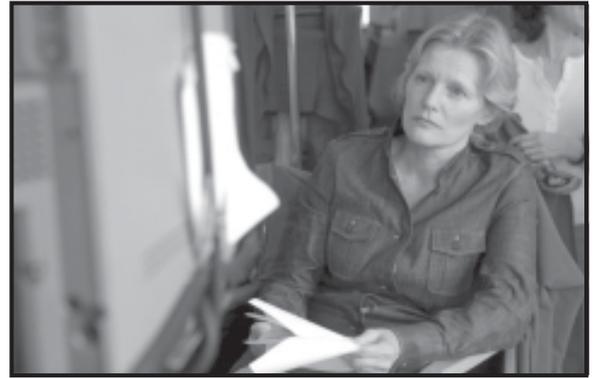
MH: The research was over many years. I was going to make this film before I made my first movie. We spent a lot of time reworking the script. We realized that this was a story about (Page's) heyday when she got to New York and started modeling. We wanted to have some background about her but we wanted to focus on the '50s.

Have you gotten any reaction from anyone in Bettie Page's camp?

MH: Bettie has seen it. I think she is still processing it. I think it was hard for her to see her own life. I think the hardest thing for her was actually seeing the Senate hearings. I think that is a painful memory for her. I think she was enjoying it up until then. She saw it at the Playboy Mansion with Hugh Hefner.

Why do you think Bettie Page decided to chose the career path she did?

MH: She fell into it. There are different ways to look at her pin-



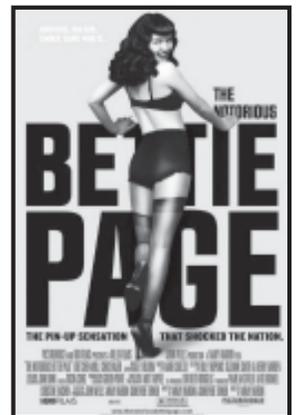
Photos courtesy of Picturehouse

Director Mary Harron on the set of her new film "The Notorious Bettie Page," which chronicles the life of the '50s pin-up model.

up career. For a woman in the '50s, who was poor and escaped from a bad marriage, there were very few options she had. For her, she could earn in an afternoon (modeling), more than she could earn in a week as a typist or a telephonist. And for her it was great. She loved being photographed. To her posing in costumes, she didn't really see it as sexual. She didn't feel ashamed of it. She found enormous satisfaction in being photographed. That's why she was so good at it. She loved the camera.

What is the next film that you are working on?

MH: Another period film about New York punk rock in the '70s.



The third feature film by director Mary Harron.

'American Haunting' director describes story as 'pretty freaky stuff'

By Kiko Martinez
Entertainer Editor

Bit by the filmmaking bug at the age of 19, director/writer Courtney



SOLOMON

Solomon said there is nothing else in this world he would rather do than be on a movie set. His first experience with the film industry came when he was 14 when his mother, Fran, began working as a production coordinator while living in their hometown of Toronto, Canada.

After releasing his first film "Dungeons & Dragons" in 2000 under Sweetpea Entertainment, the production company he founded,

campaigning for his "American Haunting," novel "The Bell Witch" is the only U.S. history in which caused the death

Taking time out to speak to *La Prensa's* *Entertainer* via phone from New York, Solomon talked about his research for the film, working with author Brent Monahan and whether or not he believes in ghosts.

Kiko Martinez: How did you come to find this story of the Bell Witch?

Courtney Solomon: I actually found it on amazon.com in 1998. I did more research on the Bell Witch. I was looking for something to adapt in this supernatural thriller (genre).

KM: What resonated with you about this story?

CS: It was pretty freaky stuff. It was scary that this story actually happened and that it could happen to somebody. Then I went down to the town itself and spoke to the people that believed in the legend. That is what finally sold me.

KM: There has been over 20 books written on the subject of the Bell Witch. Were you at all surprised that a film had not been made yet?

CS: Yeah, I was. I was kind of happy actually. (*laughing*) I thought to myself that maybe no one had

made it...because nobody really knows about the Bell Witch because it is a southern story. I think that it probably slipped under the radar. I didn't know about it until I read the book.

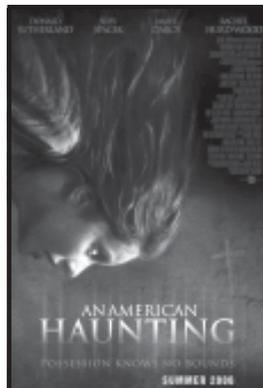


Photo courtesy of Freestyle Releasing LLC

The film "An American Haunting" tells the story of the only documented case in U.S. history in which a spirit caused the death of a human being.

KM: Were you able to speak with Brent Monahan, author of "The Bell Witch," for this project?

CS: Absolutely. Once I did my research and decided that I wanted to do it, I got in touch with him directly and we got along really well. He agreed to give me the option on the book. I involved him in the screenplay process. I would send him copies of the script. I would get his input as to what he thought, which is not usually the way things are done. It was big benefit.

KM: What are your personal thoughts on ghosts and other entities? Are you a believer?

CS: Absolutely. I think that there is something out there that comes in various different forms of energy. I certain believe that something happened in Adams, Tenn. (the setting of 'An American Haunting'), which is one of the things that made me interested in the story. You see so many of these movies that say they are 'Based on a true story' but it's just a marketing ploy. The fact that something did happen here, to me that just makes it evermore scary and

makes me think about what else can happen. What could happen in present day if something were to come into our houses?

KM: Have you ever seen a ghost, and if not, would you like to see one?

CS: I think I would like to see one. I would like to have what I believe confirmed. I wouldn't like it to do to me what it did to Betsy Bell but I certainly would like to see one. I better be careful of what I ask for but I would. Donald (Sutherland) told me a story that he actually lived with a ghost that would play the piano and did all these strange things. And he swears it was there.

KM: What have you learned about the supernatural that you didn't know before making this film?

CS: That it can operate in all sorts of ways and the causes of it can be the things that we at least suspect. The supernatural is ingrained from our real lives and our past lives. I sort of learned the way all that stuff plays off itself and off of each other. It does originate from some real energy to begin with.

MUSIC

STILL
JUMPIN'
& JIVIN'

Courtesy photo

Charlie Alvarado 1959



Photo by Kiko Martinez

Charlie Alvarado 2006

Currently in the writing process for a new album, rock 'n' roll pioneer Charlie Alvarado says the best is yet to come

By Kiko Martinez
Entertainer Editor

Almost half a century has passed since Charlie Alvarado left the Marine Corp. and started his own rock 'n' roll band, Charlie & the Jives, in 1957. A lot has changed in those years. A lot has changed, except Charlie.

Today, Alvarado, 70, who calls himself "semi-retired," is once again looking back on his career and letting everyone know that it is not quite over yet. Currently, the master saxophonist and bandleader is writing new and original songs, which he promises he will record in the near future.

"I want these songs to be tough and solid," Alvarado, who attended Lanier High School in the early '50s, told *La Prensa's* *Entertainer*. "I still think I have a great fan base."

His last album, 1998's *Memories*, was a reissue of the Jives' hit songs from the '50s and '60s. During these early decades, Alvarado said he saw over 50 band mem-



Courtesy photo

Charlie Alvarado (far right) was the leader of his own band, Charlie and the Jives, in the '50s and '60s.

bers become Jives and then continue their music careers by starting their own bands. This included band mates like Willie "Jitterbug" Webb, James Kelly and Eddie "Pineapple" Marconi.

"One thing that I pride myself is that most of the people that played with me went on to play with their own band," Alvarado said. "I always would pick the best musicians all the time. I was very fortunate because I usually had two, three and sometimes four people in each position wanting to be in the band."

Although Charlie & the Jives officially ended in the mid-'70s, Alvarado feels like the group has never ended. This is because he continues to get calls to perform across San Antonio.

"I'll still get some guys together," Alvarado said. "Of course, they're not all the originals but if I am on the bandstand with a saxophone and we're playing, it'll always be Charlie & the Jives."

Shakira announces U.S. arena tour; Superstar to hit S.A. on Sept. 22



Courtesy photo

Shakira will perform at the AT&T Center in San Antonio on Sept. 22.

International singer Shakira will bring her "Oral Fixation" arena tour to 23 North American cities this summer. Beginning August 9 at the

Don Haskins Center in El Paso and culminating on Sept. 25 with a performance at the Dodge Arena in McAllen, this highly anticipated

tour is being produced by Live Nation and presented by Verizon Wireless. Shakira will be at the AT&T Center in San Antonio on Sept. 22. Tickets are currently on sale.

Singer/songwriter, five-time Grammy winner Shakira is without a doubt one of the most galvanizing live performers onstage today. A self-taught musician who speaks five languages, Shakira signed her first recording deal in 1991 and has gone on to sell 33 million albums worldwide.

Her U.S. career took off in 2001 with the release of "Laundry Service," an album that sold more than 13 million copies worldwide. In 2005, Shakira won three Billboard Music Awards (Hot Latin Song, Best Latin Pop Artist and Best Latin Pop Album), an American Music Award for Favorite Latin Artist and took home the trophy for Best Female

Artist at the MTV Video Music Awards.

Her latest work, "Oral Fixation Vol. 2," debuted on the charts at #4, the third Top Five debut in Shakira's career, which after the stunning debut earlier in the year of "Fijacion Oral Volume 1," made her the only artist ever to debut in the top five albums in English and Spanish in the same calendar year. Energized by her Top 10 hit "Hips Don't Lie," "Oral Fixation Vol. 2" is firmly planted in the Top 10 of the album charts and has already sold well over a million copies in the U.S. alone.

Not one to rest on her success, Shakira is driven to give back to her homeland, starting her own foundation *Pies Descalzados* in 1994. Shakira and her foundation have donated over 2,000 school kits to the children of her hometown of Barranquilla, Colombia.

In addition, she has served as a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF since 2003. In keeping with her pioneering spirit, Shakira has taken the unprecedented step of offering a number of tickets to her U.S. "Oral Fixation" Tour at \$19.50, a decision she made to put her show within financial reach of all of her fans.

Shakira is well-known for using wireless technology to reach her fans. She was among the first music artists to introduce exclusive content to Verizon Wireless V CAST customers last year. To ensure that as many fans as possible can participate in the "Oral Fixation" tour, Shakira and Verizon Wireless are taking their relationship to the next level by bringing unprecedented interactivity between Shakira and her fans. Details of these initiatives will be announced by Verizon later this week. *Hispanic PR Wire*

PEOPLE

Cash's 'American V' to be released on Independence Day



Courtesy photo

The final songs recorded by the late Johnny Cash will be available on the new album *American V: A Hundred Highways*, which will be released July 4.

In the months leading up to his passing on Sept. 12, 2003, Johnny Cash had been recording new material with producer Rick Rubin. On July 4, 2006, *American V: A Hundred Highways*, the all-new Johnny Cash album taken from those sessions, will be released on the American Recordings label through Lost Highway. It will include the last song Cash ever wrote.

The songs that comprise *American V: A Hundred Highways* are as eclectic an assortment as any on the previous albums in the

American series: "Help Me," a poignant plea to God, the hauntingly beautiful ballad "If You Could Read My Mind," "God's Gonna Cut You Down," a traditional spiritual, the touching "Love's Been Good To Me," the heartrending "On The Evening Train," and "Further On (Up the Road)" are among the tracks on the new album. Songwriters for the tracks run the gamut from Hank Williams to Rod McKuen to Bruce Springsteen.

In addition, two original Cash compositions are featured, "Like

the 309" and "I Came to Believe." "Like the 309" is the last song Cash wrote and, like his first recorded single, 1955's "Hey Porter," is a song that incorporates one of his favorite settings, rains:

"Everybody take a look/See I'm doin' fine/Then load my box/On the 309." "I Came to Believe" is a song he wrote and originally recorded earlier in his career, and addresses the pain of addiction and connecting to a higher power.

"I think that *American V* may be my favorite of all of the albums in the American series," said Rubin. "It's different from the others, it has a much different character. I think that this is as strong an album as Johnny ever made."

The months following the May, 2003 passing of his wife June Carter Cash, were among the most physically and emotionally painful times in Cash's life, but keeping focused on the recording of *American V: A Hundred Highways* proved to be his salvation. Rubin remembers, "Johnny said that recording was his main reason for being alive, and I think it was the only thing that kept him going, the only thing he had to look forward to."

Cash and Rubin began recording the songs that would find their way onto *American V: A Hundred Highways* in 2002, specifically on the day after they finished "American IV: The Man Comes Around" which was released that November. Johnny feared that *Ameri-*

can IV might be his last release, so Rubin suggested that he immediately begin writing and recording new material. Over the next eight months, songs were cut at Rubin's Los Angeles studio and in Nashville at Johnny's main home and at his fabled cabin located across the road. Due to Cash's frail health, Rubin arranged for an engineer and guitar players to always be on call for the days that Cash felt strong enough to work.

"He always wanted to work," said Rubin. "Every morning when he'd wake up, he would call the engineer and tell him if he was physically up to working that day. Our main concern was to get a great vocal performance. Johnny would record a song, send it to me and I would build a new track up under it. In the past, at the end of this process, he'd come to L.A. And we'd go through everything together, he would re-record any vocal bits that needed re-recording. But this time, we didn't have that opportunity."

Last year, Rubin began going through these final recordings. He admitted, "I kind of dreaded doing it, after Johnny passed, going back and listening to it...it was difficult.

"With all of the albums Johnny and I made together, our goal was for each one to be the best it could possibly be, and that remained the case with *American V*," Rick explained. Eventually, Cash's long-

time engineer David "Fergie" Ferguson, Heartbreakers Mike Campbell (guitars) and Benmont Tench (keyboards), and Smokey Hornel (guitars), all of whom had worked on previous albums in the American series, along with Matt Sweeney (guitars) and Johnny Polonsky (guitars) went into the studio.

"We felt Johnny's presence during the whole process through to the end," said Rubin. "It felt like he was directing the proceedings, and I know that the musicians all felt that as well. Almost all of the songs were cut solely to Johnny's original vocal tracks, the musicians all keyed off his voice and were playing to him, supporting the emotion of his performance. More than once, Fergie and I would look at each other and say 'Johnny would love this,' because it was so good and so different from anything we'd done before, we knew he would be excited by what was happening."

It was decided to wait to release *American V: A Hundred Highways* until the recent Cash hubbub had run its course. What separates this album from the re-packages, compilations, movie soundtracks and everything else that has surfaced since Johnny's passing is, according to Rubin, "These songs are Johnny's final statement. They are the truest reflection of the music that was central to his life at the time. This is the music that Johnny wanted us to hear."

Iconos femeninos musicales se unen en 'El Canto de las Sirenas'

El disco "El Canto de Las Sirenas" reúne a algunas de las



CARR

Romo como portavoz del proyecto.

"Me pareció fantástico que me incluyeran en la colección y ser parte de las (artistas) que hemos cantado a la vida y al amor", dijo a EFE Romo.



GUILLOT

El álbum es el primero de una colección de diez volúmenes que incluye a luminarias de la canción de las últimas cinco décadas, con la

interpretación de clásicos de la canción.

"Es un proyecto lindo, como una educación musical de las canciones que cantaron nuestras madres y abuelas, que forman parte de la historia y que viven en la memoria", señaló la artista que acaba de participar en la telenovela "Alborada".

"Hay grandes arreglos, orquestas, y poesías que ha sobrevivido el paso del tiempo por ser verdaderas joyas", apuntó la cantante que recientemente lanzó su álbum "Es la Nostalgia".

Las mujeres que participan en "El Canto de las Sirenas" tienen diferentes nacionalidades, pero todas son hispanas y coinciden en haber dejado un legado a la música latina.

El despliegue de talento es vasto: Toña La Negra, Chabuca Granda, María Victoria, Sara

Montiel, Eydie Gorme y Los Panchos, Olga Guillot, Vikki Carr y



PRADERA

María Dolores Pradera, son algunas de las intérpretes. El estilo inconfundible de estas divas de la canción está plasmado en cada una de las 14 canciones románticas destacadas en esta nueva colección de Time Life Music.



GORME

La música no tiene tiempos y se siente tan vibrante hoy, como cuando fue grabado", dijo Michael Mitchell,

vicepresidente de Time Life Music sobre el trabajo de dos años realizado por Maribel Schumacher, presidenta de Tu Casa Entertainment.

"El Canto de Sirenas" incluye temas como "A Media Luz" por Libertad Lamarque, "Tu Me Acostumbraste" por Olga Guillot, "Macorina" interpretada por Chavela Vargas y "Cuatro Vidas" con Eydie Gorme y Los Panchos.

Daniela Romo, recordada por su larga melena, incluye en el disco su éxito "De Mí Enamórate" y espera poder acompañar a algunas "sirenas" en una gira latinoamericana.

"Hay otras artistas desde los años cincuenta hasta los ochenta, con otro tipo de música, otra moda", añadió sobre el resto de la colección que será recogida en el disco "Lo Mejor de la Serie". EFE

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LOCAL

Un 'Granito de Arena' se presenta en El Esperanza

Por Adriana Ledón
Reportera del Entertainer

Jill Freidberg es una antropóloga que se ha dado a la tarea de luchar por la justicia, por la libertad y la paz durante muchos años. Ella inició como activista en movi-



FREIDBERG

mientos sociales, económicos y políticos, pero tomó la decisión de empesar dentro de los medios independientes y crear documentales con esta misma filosofía.

"Granito de arena" es una historia de lucha por la defensa de la educación pública en México, este es un gran ejemplo de lo que pasa en todas las sociedades del mundo, ya que estas imágenes son sólo una muestra de lo que sucede en un solo país.

Freidberg, ganadora de un premio de Filmación, ha estado produciendo, editando y dirigiendo documentales durante 10 años. Co-produjo el documental

This is what democracy looks like en el 2000, el cual ganó numerosos premios en diferentes festivales, se presentó en 50 países, y se presentó en el horario estelar de la televisión de Estados Unidos y Canadá.

"Granito de arena" -comenta Freidberg- trata acerca de un movimiento de maestros de escuelas públicas en México, estos maestros trataban de defender la educación que se veía amenazada a la privatización. El movimiento de los maestros tiene una historia de 25 años, pero en la actualidad sigue con mucha vigencia".

Dentro del documental se manejan dos historias paralelas, una es la historia de la llegada del neoliberalismo o globalización económica a México y la otra historia es la de los maestros. "Viendo el video se pueden dar cuenta de las políticas económicas globales y de las necesidades económicas primarias del pueblo", dijo Freidberg.

Las imágenes que se presentan en el documental "Granito

de arena" son totalmente reales, son imágenes históricas, desde los años 1982 y 1983, pero también muchas de las imágenes en el video son contemporáneas. Freidberg mencionó que estuvo filmando alrededor de 2 años en el sur de México, en los estados de Oaxaca, Chiapas y en Ciudad de México.

"Granito de Arena" ha llamado la atención de muchos y Freidberg piensa que esto se debe a que "es una historia que tiene mucha relevancia para mucha gente y no es algo que pasa sólo en México", y como se menciona en la película, la globalización afecta a todos los pueblos y a todas las comunidades; devora costumbres, tradiciones y personas.

Las imágenes presentan la cruda realidad de lo que sucede dentro del sistema educativo en el país mexicano, como las autoridades quieren detener la buena educación por conveniencia, de cómo estudiantes y maestros luchan por mantener la educación gratuita, las represalias de pertenecer a estos movimientos de



Foto cortesía

Granito de Arena es un documental que muestra la lucha por la educación pública en México. Jill Freidberg es la directora y productora de este documental, que el próximo 7 de mayo se presentará en la ciudad.

lucha y el terror que se vive estando en los enfrentamientos con las autoridades.

"Se lucha por oportunidades económicas, por oportunidades educativas, se pide democracia, soberanía y toca temas muy importantes como los de inmigración, no se puede hablar de educación sin hablar de inmig-

ración", finalizó Freidberg.

"Granito de arena" se presentará en el Centro Esperanza Paz y Justicia, el próximo domingo 7 de mayo, a las 6:00 de la tarde.

La admisión será gratuita y durante la presentación se tendrá la presencia de la productora directora de este magnífico documental, Jill Freidberg.

Local filmmaker giving Latinos what they want - movies by Latinos, for Latinos

By Jason P. Olivari
Entertainer Staff Writer

San Antonio director Paul Ramirez used to make music for a living but has recently switched to making movies after deciding to do something about a rising cry from his people for more films featuring more Latino actors, settings and concepts they could relate to. His first feature film "Tortillas Again?," is his answer to that calling.

Originally from San Diego, Texas, Ramirez grew up playing in Spanish music bands before turning his talents to video production and the music industry. While living in Corpus Christi, Ramirez got his calling to switch from music to movies as he began hearing a growing desire among his clients to see Latinos in film, a mission he would undertake with his production company, Lobo Video Productions.

While the 45-year-old director used to focus his talents exclusively to launching the careers of actors for the last 15 years after reading a producer/director's script, he is now focusing on movies targeting the Latino American audience on him that

someone ought to be doing the same for Latinos.

"Tortillas Again?," which Ramirez calls a "slice of life" kind of film, deals with a gentleman from the South Side and the family values he learns while desperately searching for a winning lottery ticket. One unique aspect of the film is Ramirez' efforts to intertwine both English and Spanish dialogue between characters, creating what he calls "fusion movies" catering to an 18 to 30-year-old demographic that understands but does not speak Spanish fluently.

Though the film's premise is simple, Ramirez believes this alone makes it a winner, since the idea of family is a very important aspect of the Latino value system. In following that premise, he made sure "Tortillas Again?" was truly a family affair, with his wife serving as casting director and his son, Matthew, a junior communication arts major at the University of Texas at San Antonio, co-writing the script with friend Sergio Ramirez, both of whom also play several parts in the film.

"I see them as the Latino Ben Affleck and Matt Damon because they do everything together when it comes to making movies," he

said.

As far as making the film itself, Ramirez said the process was equally "a lot of hard work and a lot of fun."

"The experience making this movie was a really smooth experience," he said. "It was just the grace of God because we found the right actors, vocal help and shooting locations with no problem at all."

The idea for "Tortillas Again?" began baking about two years ago, with the shooting and production following soon after. Thanks to Ramirez' connections with a distributor out of Florida, the independent project can now be found on DVD at retailers like Blockbuster, as well as Web sites like Netflix.com, www.bn.com and Amazon.com, with international distribution available next year.

According to Ramirez, interest in this film has been well-received, as Blockbuster Video stores around town have reported problems keeping the movie in stock. This, of course, makes the Ramirez clan excited, though this early success is only pushing them to make more movies featuring Latino characters and culture.

"I'm not trying to sound racist, but I think Latinos are tired of



Courtesy photo

Nicholas Dominguez (right) discusses college with his friend Victor over milkshakes in the film "Tortillas Again?"

watching white and black people on screen," he said. "They want to see their own people."

Locally, Ramirez plans to hold a premiere screening of his film at the Alamo Drafthouse on May 6 at 4 p.m. Tickets will sell for \$5.50 each at the door and all proceeds that day will go toward the San Antonio Food Bank. And he plans to continue opening-night nonprofit donations a regular procedure with the future films he is working on including a romantic comedy, "For Amor," and

"Coca," an action film dealing with drug trafficking through San Antonio. As with all his films, though, Ramirez hopes that this film will ultimately inspire the San Antonio community to begin supporting more local filmmakers by watching their movies and convince movie executives that the Alamo City is a great place to make movies.

"It's only a matter of time," he said. "I know that the Hollywood movie industry is going to begin showing an interest here."

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