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MEGA TIME SQUAD
Doors open at 8:15 PM

FEBRUARY 14-20, 2019
WEEKLY ALIBI
3rd Thursday!

February 21, 5 - 8:30 p.m.
3rd Thursday (Free)

Prosperity and Good Fortune

Discover the work of this year’s lobby installation artist Karl Hofmann

At 6 p.m., Museum Director Andrew Connors talks about how Islamic art influenced Spain

At 7 p.m., listen to traditional Iraqi music from internationally-renowned oud player Rahim Ali-Haj

Create a work of art based on the exhibition Visions of the Hispanic World

Happy Hour specials in the Lobby Lounge and Grab and Go snacks available from 5 - 8 p.m. from State at The Museum. Galleries open: 2000 Mountain Road NW (In Old Town) 505-243-7255 or 311 • Relay NM or 711

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Live Taos native music, and Q&A with cast and crew including
Narrator Ali MacGraw and Director & Writer Mark Gordon

Sunday, February 17 @ 7 pm
Tickets $15-20
Kimo Theatre — 423 Central Ave NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102
Get your tickets at kimotickets.com or at the door
awakeningintaos.com
in the past. Assman told reporters he doubts the plate will be approved “because SGI is SGI. They’ll do what they want anyway.”

Dateline: Louisiana
A New Orleans’ Saints fan died to avoid watching Super Bowl LIII, claims his obituary. New Orleans native Henry Jaume was a US Army veteran who served as a local law enforcement officer. Last week his obituary was published by the New Orleans Advocate, stating that he’d passed away on Sunday, Feb. 3 at 1pm—mere hours before kickoff—“determined not to watch Super Bowl LIII.” Jaume’s alleged posthumous protest of the game coincided with a gathering of thousands of Saints fans who took to the streets of New Orleans during the Super Bowl in protest of an allegedly missed call made in an earlier game that kept the Saints from playing. According to CNN, game officials may have failed to notice a pass interference during the final minutes of an NFC Championship Game leading up to the Super Bowl, allowing the Los Angeles Rams to profit from a stretch of overtime and ultimately win. US Sen. Bill Cassidy, of Louisiana, took to the Senate floor last month to demand answers for the no-call from the NFL. His argument included visual aids and reportedly lasted for nearly seven minutes. Jaume, remembered by family and friends as a charismatic man who always made people laugh, has been held up as a hero by fans who honored him with posts on social media. His funeral was held Feb. 5.

Dateline: United States
Public outcry over a flirtatious napkin produced by Coca-Cola and Delta Air Lines caused the companies to apologize last week. CNN reports Delta passengers were given a napkin last month with Diet Coca-Cola branding that said, “because you’re on a plane full of interesting people and hey … you never know.” On the back of the napkin was the message: “be a little old school. write down your number & give it to your plane crush. you never know … .” Spaces were left for passengers to fill in their names and telephone numbers. While some people seemed to enjoy the marketing move, others were upset. One Twitter user posted a photo of the napkin, saying, “These napkins are creepy AF . Pretty sure no one appreciated unsolicited phone numbers in the ‘good old days’ and they sure as heck don’t want the number of someone who has been gawking at them on a plane for hours today. Not a good look.” Last week the Coca-Cola Company made a public statement: “We sincerely apologize to anyone we may have offended.” The company said steps were being taken to remove the offending napkins. A spokesperson for Delta Air Lines told USA Today, “We rotate Coke products regularly as part of our brand partnership, but missed the mark with this one. We are sorry for that and began removing the napkins from our aircraft in January.”

Dateline: Canada
A man’s request to use his last name on a vanity license plate was denied on the grounds that it was too offensive. CBC News reports Dave Assman of Melville, Sask., was told by Saskatchewan Government Insurance that he could not use his name, pronounced “Oss-men,” for a personal license plate because it was an “unacceptable slogan.” Assman says he’s proud of his family name—which he says has an honorable history—and pointed out that it’s the only name he’s ever had. When he asked SGI why his application had been rejected, he was told that the plates could be misconstrued as offensive by members of the public who were unaware of its pronunciation. “Even if a word is someone’s name and pronounced differently than the offensive version, that’s not something that would be apparent to other motorists who will see the plate,” SGI spokesperson Tyler McMurchy wrote in an email to CBC News. Assman has appealed the decision, but McMurchy expects it to be upheld, as the personalized license plate review committee has rejected the name.

Compiled by Joshua Lee. Email your weird news to josh@alibi.com.
Governor Pulls Troops From Border

Last week Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham ordered National Guard troops deployed at New Mexico’s southern border to withdraw. CNN reports Lujan Grisham ordered the withdrawal to combat President Donald Trump’s attempts to militarize the nation’s border with Mexico. During a press conference, she told reporters, “I’m not going to participate, nor do I think it’s appropriate in any shape or fashion to use the National Guard to attempt to militarize the border where we’re dealing with asylum seekers who their constitutional rights continue to be breached.”

Lujan Grisham said she’d met with the National Guard and Border Patrol to discuss the reserve military’s presence, and they’d failed to convince her that the National Guard had played any significant role in curtailing criminal activity at the border.

The order was reportedly given just before the president’s State of the Union address. A total of 118 National Guard soldiers were deployed in New Mexico, according to the governor’s office. Of those, only 11 to 15 soldiers will remain at the border reportedly to help with humanitarian needs. National Guard troops from six other states were ordered to return to their home states.

Chaco Oil and Gas Lease Sale Deferred

Federal officials announced they will not be moving forward with the sale of oil and gas leases for land parcels near Chaco Culture National Historical Park until further analysis can be conducted.

According to the Associated Press, land managers with the US Bureau of Land Management chose to delay the decision after being criticized for pushing forward with the controversial plan without notifying the public.

Tom Udall of New Mexico told reporters that BLM scheduled the lease sale during the 35-day shutdown in which he called an “opaque process.”

Chaco—a significant historical and cultural site that’s centuries old—is located in a remote area, and opponents of the sale say leasing the land near the site to oil and gas companies could have a negative impact. The decision to delay the sale until its repercussions are fully analyzed was a reversal from a notice given by the agency in January that it would proceed with drilling permit reviews and energy lease preparations with the sale scheduled for March 28.

This is reportedly the third time the BLM has deferred on selling the land parcels under the Trump administration.

Grants Awarded to Battle Homelessness

State programs that help support those experiencing homelessness have received a boost in funds thanks to an infusion from the federal government.

KOBI reports the US Department of Housing and Urban Development announced nearly $2 billion in grants to fund local social programs across the country aimed at battling homelessness. New Mexico was reportedly awarded $11,187,659.

According to HUD, the grant money will be used to support a “broad array of interventions designed to assist individuals and families experiencing homelessness.”

Paying For Success

Financing dominates debate

BY AUGUST MARCH

You don’t have to tune into the teevee news or pick up the right-of-center daily to get hip to major themes at this year’s Legislature. It’s possible to discover the overarching plots of this year’s 60-day engagement without even relying on social media.

Listen to folks dishing at the local coffee shop, hear the conversations taking place at one’s favorite grocer, the Rail Runner cabin you’re sitting in. Chances are you are hearing about two things: education reform and, specifically, public education financing.

After last week’s stunning defeat of an APS election whose victory would have seen an untimely increase in property taxes traded for improvements to the aging school district’s infrastructure, the issue of public education in New Mexico can be distilled down to a quest for the money necessary to implement reforms without raising taxes—at least that’s the way voters see it.

The intensity of the debate about how to pay for the revitalization so necessary to our state’s public education system is matched in fervor by the discourse about what shape reform should take in order to lift our state from the educational abyss to which it was consigned by La Tijana and her operatives.

As if relevantly linked to the minds of their constituents—for the first time in eight years some would argue—legislative committees met this weekend to discuss the public schools and money, seeking input and looking for a way forward for issues that have dogged New Mexicans for several election cycles.

A Public Election

At the beginning of the month, Albuquerque voters were asked to approve raising $900 million over the next six years—through a bond measure and two tax levies—to pay for “basic public facility maintenance, replacement of 60-year-old school buildings, providing basic classroom equipment such as furniture, technology and, yes, musical instruments …” That’s according to Kirtie Wijenje, who is the Executive Director of Albuquerque Public Schools Master Plan.

The problem is that the brain trust at APS hadn’t sent feelers out into the community to test for amenability. This lack of probing resulted in a landmark failure. The combination of funding questions, if answered affirmatively, would have resulted in property tax increases in the range of five percent.

In a stuttering New Mexico economy where local homeowners and small businesses are still treading water, where fixed incomes are de rigueur for older property owners, in a time when the former ruling party used the no new taxes slogan to garner political—if not fiscal—support, it’s no wonder the measures failed.

Here, entrenched fiscal conservative didactics and progressive think tank rhetoric like that at the Rio Grande Foundation—who lambasted the proposal, writing that it would have “detrimental effects”—came together with a message that was much more convincing than any of the APS bean-counters could muster. The only issue that remains, of course, is who is going to pay for maintenance improvement and, indeed, a complete re-envisioning of our state’s public education system?

In Rides the Legislature

While the question of providing funding for capital outlay projects in the public education arena remains to be solved within the walls of the APS boardroom or at the merry Roundhouse, the debate over providing funding for improved curricula has reached fever pitch.

On Saturday the state House Commerce and Economic Development committee voted yes on House Joint Resolution 1, ensuring the legislation would be heard on the floor of that same chamber—but not without some pointed dissent.

The resolution, HJR 1, as readers may recall, calls for allocating funds from the state’s Land Grant Permanent Fund—a reservoir of capital that comes from revenue derived from oil and gas leases and royalties as well as subsequent investments—to pay for a major upgrade to New Mexico’s public educational process. That necessary upgrade is called “pre-kindergarten initiatives.” If approved the resolution would result in a statewide ballot to amend our state’s constitution to allow for such programatic funding.

In case you wanna know, social scientists and seasoned educators agree that one way up and out of the miasma our culture finds itself swamped by is to start educating citizens at a very young age, to guarantee that by the time they reach elementary school, they have developed reading, writing and critical thinking skills that will increase their chances for success in today’s world.

The fund is currently valued at over $17.5 billion and already pays for many public education programs as well as funding projects at state community colleges and universities. Projections for fiscal year 2019 show that nearly $750 million is already earmarked for sustaining and improving education in the state. HJR 1 asks that an additional amount of about $150 million per year be set aside annually for our state’s youngest learners.

Those who have come out against the measure, unsurprisingly, are mostly from the New Mexican Coalition of Educational Leaders, a group that represents school board superintendents and public school administrators throughout the state. They believe adding pre-K initiatives to the appropriations formula would destabilize the fund, threatening sustainable school funding down the line.

Reckoning the nay-sayers in this case are of the same culture that spawned the awesomely great idea to get capital outlay funding from what amounts to a middle-class tax increase in Burque, it is reasonable to support the initiative with the belief that better, earlier educational opportunities will result in a plethora of benefits to our state from fewer dropouts to less dependence on welfare and economic growth too.

The next hurdle for this spending bill will likely be in the N.M. Senate, where members of that chamber’s finance committee have already called for the measure’s defeat. Let’s hope that this year, Republicans and Democrats on that key committee are listening to their constituents and not the pie-in-the-sky ideological discourse of school boards and school superintendents that have already proven themselves out of touch with the communities they serve.

After all, someone’s gotta pay.
Never Known Questions

City residents look toward solutions

BY AUGUST MARCH

Ah, good old Albuquerque, where February will fool you into thinking that spring has arrived, where a still-fresh city administration filled with educated, progressive technocrats and deep-thinking leaders will surely remove the obstacles holding us back.

Well, spring will get here; and change, though it’s on the horizon, will be slow. We’ve dug a pretty deep hole for ourselves, after all.

As 2019 takes root and prepares to bloom all over Burque, questions remain about the essential issues facing the city. But while some of these underlying reasons for our town’s high crime rate and middling economic standing have been and continue to be progressively addressed by Mayor Tim Keller and a City Council led by progressives like Klarissa Peña and Pat Davis, others, notably the ART project, seem to have disappeared from the discourse.

Clearly there are myriad issues facing the city. It’s hard work to even think about all the things we need to do together to keep Albuquerque on-track in the midst of things like the state education crisis or a federal administration hellbent on backwards thinking and corruption.

For the moment, we’re going to set those hot-to-the-touch items aside. Maybe they’ll cool off in the next couple of weeks as the Legislature reaches its peak, as special counsel Mueller finishes his report and a newly empowered US House of Representatives begins to flex its oversight muscles.

That said, partners, here’s an old-fashioned roundup of that stuff in the city that Weekly Alibi has been following the past week—while looking off into the distance, into the future, hopefully of course.

ART

There has not been much news about progress made—or otherwise—with respect to the ART project. A quick survey of news sources shows that only three recent published items exist on the project. A quick survey of news sources shows that only three recent published items exist on the project. A quick survey of news sources shows that only three recent published items exist on the project. A quick survey of news sources shows that only three recent published items exist on the project.

The vehicles chosen to replace the ill-fated BYD electrics—made by New Flyer, a Canadian company—run on natural gas, a nonrenewable energy source that has a deleterious effect on the climate, especially when it is extracted from the ground. A huge methane concentration is currently hovering over the Four Corners as testament to that outcome.

How that fact fits in with the new urbanist vision at the heart of ART remains to be adequately explained.

LEAD

In much more conclusive and therefore heartening news, the city has recently embraced a program called Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion in order to better deal with crime in the city. Though the actual implementation of the program hinges on the approval of the DOJ monitor assigned to Albuquerque, the county—where the plan saw its inception through BernCo Commissioner Maggie Hart Stebbins—has already moved forward with funds to hire case managers for LEAD.

Under the new program, diversion and not incarceration will be the priority for police and sheriff’s interactions involving low-level criminals and crime. Weekly Alibi spoke to Pat Davis about what the program meant to Burque and its citizens and the City Councilor from the International District—where the LEAD is designed to be initially activated—responded at length, telling our reporter, “We won’t arrest our way out of poverty or addiction. Instead of tagging low-level offenders with an arrest that follows them the rest of their lives, we’re looking for ways to interrupt their path and give them a fresh start.”

When asked to elaborate Davis continued, saying, “It’s smart for police and budgets. For the same amount of time and money the system invests in one arrest, warehousing them in jail, and months of court hearings and supervision, we’re investing all that up front in diverting them to a program with case managers and support that helps them address the underlying issues and avoid the lifelong cycles of incarceration that keeps them from finding housing stability, jobs and healthier living.”

Paid Sick Leave

Back in the summer of 2017, Weekly Alibi’s editorial board—which is mostly a cat named after a character in a Saul Bellow novel—wrote an award-winning editorial on the importance of implementing paid sick leave for workers in this city. We struck a progressive, even democratic socialist tone by writing in the conclusion that those who argue against providing such “run the risk of looking like craven capitalists at a time when our city and nation crave leadership imbued with a sense of shared purpose and moral responsibility. To be clear, providing for the health of our citizens through this ordinance is the first step in re-humanizing government services and business practices.”

Well we certainly stand by that statement and are encouraged that City Councilor Davis has submitted legislation to the City Council that would reintroduce the issue to leaders and citizens in our burg. Though the proposal has not yet been vetted in committee—Davis is waiting to find out how similar statewide legislation fares in this year’s legislative session—it’s a good step forward for the city.

This is especially true given the findings of research commissioned by the Council which found, among other things, that 90 percent of Albuquerque residents with incomes under $15,000 per year lack paid sick leave and that 36 percent of Burque workers employed by private businesses did not have paid sick leave as an option when illness inevitably struck.

The research report, conducted by UNM’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research is particularly critical of the leisure and hospitality industry here in town, strongly implying that lack of paid sick leave—which sometimes results in ill employees coming in to work out of fear of being canned—has the potential to be a public health issue.

The report also struck an inadvertent chord for worker’s rights by discovering through the scientific method that 83 percent of workers in El Duque are in favor of a paid sick leave ordinance, while 57 percent of local employers are steadfastly against such a measure. Clearly current cultural zeitgeist is available to be drawn upon in such a situation as this.

Citizens all over the nation are standing up to the regressive direction taken by the Trump regime, even electing a Democratic House of Representatives to provide oversight and consequences; it would be way cooler if the leadership class—much like Davis and his cohort—recognized the importance of a healthy working class in engendering a sustainable solution for workers in addition to the other work being done in the name of progressivism.

UNM

Though not a matter to be legislatively considered by the Keller administration—or by political progressivism in general—the debacle at the UNM department of athletics is embarrassing to both proud alums of the institution, this reporter included, and citizens of Albuquerque who have been treated to scandal after scandal at the state’s flagship university for nigh on 30 years now.

In what sounds like the latest charges being brought against Uncle Junior on “The Sopranos” teevie show, former UNM athletic director Paul Krebs has been charged with crimes like money laundering, tampering with evidence and fraud.

Though a supposed fundraising trip to Scotland in 2015 set off the crime detectors at the state Attorney General’s office in the Krebs’ case, it’s become clear that the perennially losing Lobos football team is just a symbol for massive dysfunction at the same school.

The University of New Mexico has presented this city’s citizens with a slew of unseemly, felonious and university-damaging shenanigans. Folks like UNM Anthropology professor Cristobal Valencia and former president E. Chris Garcia—who must carry the name “Burque Pops” around his neck like an albatross for all eternity—are pariahs and Krebs may soon face that unfortunate school-staining reputation too.

Given the latest news from the Roundhouse, that our new progressive minded governor has just appointed five new regents to UNM, that formerly Lujan Grisham voiced her criticism of the institution in certain terms, telling the Santa Fe Reporter just before she was elected that she was not satisfied with the work of any of the regents” we are hopeful that these appointments provide an opportunity to restore the dignity and lawfulness of an otherwise beloved college.

Because spring’s right around the next bend, isn’t it?
THURSDAY FEB 14

ALBUQUERQUE TOURISM & SIGHTSEEING FACTORY Alibiery is for Lovers. A ghost walk featuring ABQ’s greatest love stories gone wrong. Date night begins at the factory. Next stop is to enjoy a pint of beer and two slices of pizza before the ghost walk. 219 Central Ave NW Suite 102. $40. 7:30-9:30pm. 13+. 205-2642. alibi.com/v/6993.

HOLLOW SPIRITS DISTILLERY Fill the Hollow in Your Heart: Valentine’s Day Speed Dating. For all single professionals ages 21 to 45. 1324 First Street NW. $25. 6-8pm. 21+. 217-5485. alibi.com/v/6949.

LEARN SIDEWINDERS ABQ Kink Inclusive Society Stash. Meet and learn about the kink/BDSM lifestyle. Nipples and holes must always be covered and no penetration is allowed. Play is for demos only. Waiver required. 8900 Central Ave SE. 6:30-10:30pm. 21+. 265-5815. alibi.com/v/6994.

FRIYDAY FEB 15

SIDEWINDERS Non-Monogamy Meet and Greet. Find resources and information about polyamory, non-monogamy, open relationships, swinging and more in a safe, comfortable environment. 8900 Central Ave SE. 6:30-8:30pm. 21+. 265-5815. alibi.com/v/6995.

KIDS ABQ BIOPARK AQUARIUM Aquarium Overnight. Learn about ocean species and their fascinating nighttime behaviors. 2601 Central Ave SE. 8:00-7:00am. 379-3363. alibi.com/v/6996.

LEARN NATIONAL HISPANIC CULTURAL CENTER Colcha Community Stitch-Along. A monthly gathering for colchoneras of all skill levels led by Annette Gutierrez Turk in the traditional New Mexican style of embroidery. Bring a project and enjoy informal, community sessions. 1701 Fourth Street SW. Free. 9:30am-noon. ALL-AGES! 246-2261. alibi.com/v/6997.

TOMASTITA’S ALBUQUERQUE Facebook Business Basics Class. Learn the important difference between a personal page and a business page, when and how to use them and tips on the best way to monitor and grow. 4949 Pan American Fwy NE. $50. 1-4pm. 15+. 379-3363. alibi.com/v/6998.

WELLNESS/FITNESS ALBUQUERQUE SHAMBHALA CENTER The Art of Being Human. A balance of meditation, practice, stillness, movement, conversations, silence, movies of our minds, food, an engaging film and talks about basic, shared human goodness. 1102 Mountain Rd NW. $0-$100. 6:30-8:15pm. ALL-AGES! 505-248-1465. alibi.com/v/6999.

YOGA ART SPACE Valentine’s Couples Aerial Thai Yoga Massage. Learn and practice Thai yoga massage techniques that help to relieve muscle tension and stress. 8338 Comanche Rd NE. $15. 7-8:30pm. 15+. 663-9821. alibi.com/v/6990.

SATURDAY FEB 16

ABQ BBQ Speed Dating for the LGBTQIA Community. A series of 5-minute dates with up to 20 singles. 7520 Fourth Street NW. $20. 2-5pm. 21+. 361-2278. alibi.com/v/6991.

SOUTHWEST ORGANIZING PROJECT ABQ Democratic Socialists of America General Meeting. Meet your friendly local democratic socialists at the monthly general meeting. 1002 Park Ave SW. 2-4pm. alibi.com/v/6992.


SPORTS UNM CONTINUING EDUCATION BUILDING N.M. Trout Fly Fishing Coaches. The concise addresses all aspects of fly-fishing with featured speakers Landon Mayer, the renowned fly-fishing guide, author and lecturer; Jason Randall, 1634 University Blvd NW. $40. ALL-AGES! 505-328-1489. alibi.com/v/6994.

OUTDOOR ALBUQUERQUE OPEN SPACE VISITOR CENTER Trail Watch Volunteer Training. Become part of the community and lend abilities from special events to education, interpretation, gardening, publicity, trail maintenance and more. Registration required. 6500 Coors Blvd NW 9am-noon. 897-8331. alibi.com/v/6995.

WEDNESDAY FEB 20

KIDS ALBUQUERQUE MUSEUM OF ART AND HISTORY Six-Week Teen Studio February. An after school art program for teens, ages 15 to 17 to enhance skills and build a portfolio. 2000 Mountain Rd NW. $75. 4-6pm. 15+. 764-4515. alibi.com/v/6996.


OUTDOOR ALBUQUERQUE OPEN SPACE VISITOR CENTER Trail Watch Volunteer Training. Become part of the community and lend abilities from special events to education, interpretation, gardening, publicity, trail maintenance and more. Registration required. 6500 Coors Blvd NW 9am-noon. 897-8331. alibi.com/v/6998.

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THURSDAY FEBRUARY 14

A SINGLE WITH A TWIST
Weekly Alibi presents a Singles Dance for the holiday everyone hates. Ease the blow of this annual lonelyfest with the other singles of all ages (well, 21 and over), genders and sexualities in a fun, intimate setting. Head just around the corner from Posh and you’ll find Twist Nightclub. Its neon, rainbow logo serves as the threshold for the evening of potentially lucrative entertainment. DJ DraZtk spins danceable tunes while the crowd takes a chance at games for prizes from Self Serve Sexuality Resource and others, enjoys craft cocktail specials and shows up wearing their hottest red numbers. Valentine’s Day, Thursday, Feb. 14, is the night. 8 pm to 1 am is the time. Save the date but don’t bring one because this is for the single-folk only. Tickets are $6 for pre-sale and $10 at the door. Twist Nightclub 109 Fourth Street NW, 8 pm to 1 am. alibi.com/v/6b6f. (August March)

ROMANCE, CLASSICAL GUITAR AND HIGH TEA
Martin Ly is a local classical guitarist who attended Manzano High School before studying classical guitar performance at the University of New Mexico. The guitar program at UNM, as one might recall, is headed by the heady and totally awesome Michael Chapdelaine, who’s been guiding young hands as they explore the frets and frequencies associated with the nylon-stringed axe for over 30 years. It figures then, that Ly rocks too; you can hear his amazing reach and subtle sonics on Tuesday, Feb. 19 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm when Ly gigs at the St. James Tea Room. While listening to Ly play, one can also enjoy the tearoom’s “La Vie en Rose” Menu. Reservations for this special, 13-seat event are available for $58 per person at reservations.stjamestearoom.com. Hmm … maybe Bach’s on the menu, too! St. James Tearoom 320 Osuna Rd NE, 6:30 to 8:30 pm. alibi.com/v/6bf6. (August March)

THE SHEER MAGNITUDE OF MOVEMENT
The Alvin Ailey Company is historically one of the most poignant dance companies in the world with an intentionally and beautifully inclusive selection of dancers, choreographers and culture of powerful movement, Ailey led the original incarnation of the ensemble to fame in New York, breaking barriers and destroying people’s perceptions of African Americans in dance, while holding true to the culture that fueled his creative expression. Ailey II was created by Ailey’s current creative director, Troy Powell for aspiring young dancers to keep the Ailey legacy alive and in the forefront of modern dance. Popejoy Hall hosts this legendary company in a one night only performance on Tuesday, Feb. 19 at 7:30 pm. This is a wonderful opportunity to flood young dancers with inspiration at this all ages show with tickets ranging from $25 to $49 plus a few fees. Popejoy Hall 203 Cornell Dr NE, 7:30 to 10 pm. alibi.com/v/630g. (August Luisa de Frechina)

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 16

ALL YOU NEED NOW IS A GOOD DERBY NAME
If you’ve ever been to a roller derby match and thought “I, too, would like to slam into some roller skaters with reckless abandon,” this one is for you. The Duke City Roller Derby is hosting their spring bootcamp, the kick-off for their 10- to 12-week training program, on Saturday, Feb. 16 at Heights Community Center. From 8 am to 1 pm, skaters learn the fundamentals and rules of roller derby and practice with the current derby team. All skill levels are welcome—even if you don’t know how to skate! Please bring a fitted mouth guard, plenty of water, some snacks to keep you energized and roller skates and pads if you have them. Roller derby is only open to those 18 or older, but check out their junior league if you’re younger. Visit dukecityderby.com to find out more and register for the (free) bootcamp. Heights Community Center 823 Buena Vista SE, 8 am to 1 pm. alibi.com/v/695j. (Robin Babb)

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 20

SOUTHERN COMFORT IN THE COMFORT OF THE SOUTHWEST
Flights to Kentucky are expensive, and they have Polar Vortices over there. (Yes, that is the plural of vortex. Look it up.) Instead of making that trek on the hunt for some strong liquor and Southern hospitality, why not do some barstool tourism at O’Neill’s Pub in Nob Hill? This Wednesday, Feb. 20, come by to enjoy pairings of four Kentucky bourbon whiskeys with four Southern comfort dishes any time between 5 and 8 pm. You’ll sip on Eagle Rare, E.H. Taylor, Buffalo Trace and Blanton’s bourbon while the kitchen serves up fried green tomatoes, honey corn fitters, smoked brisket and a pecan pie tart. Not a bad way to spend a Wednesday night, huh? The pairing is $25 per person and, obviously, only for those 21 or older. O’Neill’s Pub 4130 Central Ave SE, 5 to 8 pm. alibi.com/v/6b6d. (Robin Babb)
Haunting City Portraits

Poet and photographer team up for book and exhibit

We Are Neighbors is a new collection of poems and photos from poet Hakim Bellamy and civil designer/photographer Justin Thor Simerson, both of Albuquerque. Buy the book at Bookworks (4022 Rio Grande Blvd. NW) or see the exhibit at the Rainosek Gallery (UNM School of Architecture & Planning, 2401 Central Ave. NE) through March. The following is an excerpt:

“There’s no La Llorona for the aquifer; only the river. They warned Johnny, Junior about the arroyo, but not the underground. So when the City (or Base) dug up his street in search of oil, he considered it an opportunity to see if China, Australia or Alice in Wonderland really did exist. No one has seen him since. It was sad, but it served a purpose. See, Johnny Junior was a very good, albeit curious, 9-year-old boy. Well liked by his peers and all the other parents in the neighborhood. Perfect grades, even better manners. Obedience, down the rabbit hole, he made history. He finally achieved what he wanted, to be the kid parents base) has not made so much as a shovel’s worth of protest against it. On the off chance Junior had not changed there.”

Her Kappa Kappa Gamma sisters were so impressed by Padilla’s skills that when cosmetics giant M.A.C. opened an Albuquerque store, they all suggested Padilla apply. Padilla got the job, which included extensive makeup skills training and led her to meet the producers of the film Gamers, shooting in New Mexico at the time.

“They came into the store, asking if one of us would be interested in being a makeup assistant on a movie. I was, like, ‘Sure! I’ll do it.’ Before I knew it, I was spray-tanning Gerard Butler. We bonded over the fact that we both had pugs. His pug was going to marry my pug. The rest is history.”

Padilla gave up law school plans and moved to Los Angeles to study film and TV makeup formally, at the now-defunct Westmore Academy of Cosmetic Arts.

Since then, Padilla has worked consistently, for the past 10 years, on films and television shows shot in New Mexico, and has also been hired for projects shot elsewhere, including Avengers. But her steady gigs have been as a staff makeup artist on the television shows “The Night Shift” and “Better Call Saul.”

We caught up with Padilla to ask her a few questions about her career, the local film and television business and, of course, celebrities.

Photos and poems reprinted with permission from Justin Thor Simerson and Hakim Bellamy. Follow them on Insta: @iminphotos and @thakimibe

BY ALISA VALDES

Bliss and Makeup

Local makeup artist soars in film industry

Albuquerque’s Ashlyne Padilla majored in business marketing at the University of New Mexico, with an eye towards being a lawyer. But the universe had other plans—plans that led to Padilla becoming one of the most sought-after makeup artists in the New Mexico film and television industry.

“I was in a sorority at UNM,” she explained. “One year I volunteered to do everyone’s makeup for our formal. It all changed there.”

What are some of the biggest misperceptions people have about makeup artists?

Padilla: There’s a perception in the general public that makeup artists in the movie industry are glamorous people, that we’re hoity toity, that we go around looking like what Instagram makeup artists look like. The truth is so far from that! We rarely wear makeup ourselves. We’re tired, we’re in the middle of nowhere. We’re the first ones on set, and the last ones to leave; we’re out in the elements, freezing in the snow or roasting in the hot sun. If the movie shoot is 12 hours long, we are the ones who are there for 16 hours. We have to get the actors ready beforehand, and then we are there to make sure their makeup stays the same, constantly fixing things. And then we are there to clean them up after all is said and done. Remove the fake blood, all that, give them spa treatments so we don’t damage their skin.

What’s it like working with famous actors all the time?

This is something else people don’t realize about makeup artists. It’s not only about being good at your craft. It’s also about customer service, and actors are our customers. We spend hours and hours with these people, and while most actors are wonderful, they’re actors for a reason, psychologically. They require attention, so you have to give them that attention. I have a great appreciation for what they do. They have a really difficult job. I could never do it. So understanding why they may be stressed, if they’re in a crazy scene and that emotion carries over, being able to be mindful of the actor is very important to me. Paying attention. If an actor really likes to talk, I follow the lead. Others like to put on headphones and not talk, and it’s not that they’re not assholes, they’re just preparing. And I respect that. I don’t take it personally. Just realizing that they’re all human beings; they have bad breath too, they go through breakups, they’re normal. We’re so used to seeing them on the screen, and we have this idea that they’re these immortal gods. They’re not. They are people.

What do you think the local film industry is headed?

I’ve always loved Michelle [Lujan Grisham] and I’m sure with her in office it’s just going to keep growing. It’s so beautiful here, you hear these Hollywood people say that over and over. They fall in love with the Land of Enchantment. One actress I worked with wants to move back here and just wait tables at the Flying Star. She loves it that much. We have all four seasons, climates that can pass for just about anywhere. The only thing we don’t have is the ocean, and you can always CGI that in now.

What’s next for you?

I’m teaming up with another makeup artist in town, Noel Dalton, to create our own film and TV makeup school, the kind you’d find in New York or LA. With the increase of projects coming to New Mexico, it just makes sense to start doing that kind of training here, for our own people. Hoping to open that soon.

Just beyond the threshold of kitchen door, they are engaged in a philosophical debate about planter boxes. He says, “It’s odd. In the desert, plants are like zombies. Engagement in a philosophical debate about planter boxes. He says, “It’s odd. In the desert, plants are like zombies. I’ve always loved Michelle [Lujan Grisham] and I’m sure with her in office it’s just going to keep growing. It’s so beautiful here, you hear these Hollywood people say that over and over. They fall in love with the Land of Enchantment. One actress I worked with wants to move back here and just wait tables at the Flying Star. She loves it that much. We have all four seasons, climates that can pass for just about anywhere. The only thing we don’t have is the ocean, and you can always CGI that in now.

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BY ALISA VALDES

Albuquerque’s Ashlyne Padilla has found success as a makeup artist in major film and TV projects shot in New Mexico

“Burn victim” makeup by Ashlyne Padilla, as seen on the series “The Night Shift”
Yoga Versus PTSD
Matt Hinojos teaches yoga to heal fellow veterans

BY ALISA VALDES

Lance Corporal Casey Casanova was 22 when a roadside bomb killed her in Iraq. Matt Hinojos blamed himself. Just 22, he felt he should have known about the bomb—though of course he couldn’t have.

“Casey’s death hit me hard,” said Hinojos. “I lost other friends, too. I felt responsible.”

War left Hinojos with post-traumatic stress disorder. The military gave him Effexor, a prescription drug. It made him worse—so much worse he hanged himself with a martial arts belt from the bathroom door in his barracks. Friends found him just in time. The military sent him to OASIS, a treatment facility at the Naval Medical Center in Port Loma, Calif.

“That’s where I found yoga,” said Hinojos.

“And yoga literally saved my life.”

Now 30 and a yoga teacher in Albuquerquee, Hinojos is on a mission to help others to overcome PTSD through yoga. This spring, he will launch his innovative 911 Yoga method at Elevation Yoga & Wellness Studio. Classes will be donation-only, and for free to those who cannot afford them.

David Hall, 65, is one of Hinojos’ existing yoga students. Also a veteran, Hall says he has PTSD not from war but from growing up in a bad area.

“I’ve seen people murdered as a child. I held my own brother in my arms after he was shot. There are neighborhoods in America where everyone has PTSD,” said Hall.

Hinojos began to take Hinojos’ class after his wife of 28 years passed away. “I could not move on from it,” he said. “I would just lay on the floor and pant like an animal, for days. I was considering suicide. I went to the VA and they suggested yoga.”

When he met Hinojos, Hall recognized in his eyes “a shared pain that served as a bridge between us. It takes a lot for a man to be vulnerable in our society, and Matt was vulnerable. He shared his pain with me, so that I would know I was not alone. And it was through this that I healed. Not through medications. Through love. Through compassion. Through kindness. Yoga gave me back my breath, when I hurt so much I couldn’t even breathe anymore.”

Post-traumatic stress disorder itself is a widespread problem worldwide, that is not just limited to veterans. According to the National Institutes of Health, 6.1 percent of the world’s population suffers from some sort of PTSD, in the wake of natural disasters or some form of violence. Symptoms include “re-experiencing, avoidance, arousal, cognition and mood symptoms.”

Even though the military continues to increase its use of yoga as a treatment for PTSD, the NH1 remains skeptical of its efficacy. In 2013 the NH1 published the results of a study called “Yoga for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder—A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis,” concluding that “only a weak evidence for yoga as an adjunctive intervention for PTSD can be made. More high quality research is needed to confirm or disconfirm these findings.”

The study concluded that talk therapy and drug therapy were the best method of controlling PTSD.

“I’m not surprised they’d say that,” said Hinojos. “But here’s the thing: You’re the NH1, but you say we need more quality research. Why aren’t you doing high-quality research? Could it be that your low-quality research is funded by big pharma? They just want to push their drugs. And if talk therapy and drugs worked, we wouldn’t be losing 22 veterans a day to suicide. I’ve lost three friends to suicide since I left the military. It’s a crisis.”

Many experts in the field of trauma say mind-body therapies, including yoga, can be extremely helpful in treating PTSD. Among these is Albuquerquee’s own Natalie Smith, director of Awake & Aware, a local psychological trauma treatment center whose pioneering program, Healing in the Desert, makes use of yoga and other therapies.

“Yoga is a practice that helps one calm the mind and body,” Smith writes on the center’s website. “In recent years, research has shown that yoga practices can improve neuroendocrine and hormonal activity, decrease physical symptoms and emotional distress, and increase quality of life. Paired with self-regulation, yoga is a promising therapy for helping patients address the cognitive, emotional and physiological symptoms associated with their trauma, and PTSD specifically.”

“Our medical system, as it is, is making people like me worse,” said Hinojos. “I want to help revolutionize the way we deal with PTSD, addiction, mental health issues and people who are suicidal. All because of my yoga, my PTSD symptoms have all but gone away. I’m off all prescription medications, and I’ve lost 85 pounds. I can sleep through the night, and my depression and anxiety are manageable. Why wouldn’t I want to share this with everyone who needs it?”

“What greater gift than to take something that saved your life and turn around and give it to someone else?” said Hall. “When he says yoga saved his life, Matt means it. And now, it has saved mine, too.”

Compiled by Ashli Kesali. Submit your events at alibi.com/events.
**FOOD | RESTAURANT REVIEW**

**Don’t Wait Until Next Valentine’s Day**

Restaurant Antiquity makes any night of the year a great date night.

**BY ROBIN BABB**

From the moment I stepped in the door at Restaurant Antiquity, any notion of this evening being for work kind of drifted into the ether. I found my phone staying solidly in my pocket all night and my restaurant critic self taking a back seat. She made the occasional comment from back there, but mostly she was just enjoying the scenery.

I wanted to feature Antiquity in this issue because it’s known as a romantic place to take a date and, you know, Valentine’s Day. On this particular night my date was my old friend Natalie, who never fails to make me laugh embarrassingly loud in public, and who cleans up nicer than me but lets me choose the wine. I think it’s a pretty good dynamic.

We walk in a few minutes before my 7pm reservation and sit on the built-in benches by the front door to wait for our table. The roaring wood-fired grill that cooks all the meat entrees at Antiquity is right by the door, making for a warm and bracing entrance on a cold February night. Cooks stoke the fire and shuffle pans in and out, the stove’s polished brick façade reflecting the flickering light of the flames. We quickly come to tell us the specials. We look over the wine list and giggle at the header “Distinctive Whites” (“like us, I say, stupidly), then ask James for a recommendation. I walked in already knowing I wanted to order the scallops, so he suggests the Joseph Drouhin Pouilly-Fuissé ($56 bottle), a white Burgundy made from Chardonnay grapes. It’s the color of white gold in the glass, with a distinct buttery flavor and very mellow acidity throughout. It’s very dry, definitely minerally, with notes of orange blossom, jasmine and green apple. “I guess I don’t hate all Chardonnay,” says Natalie. I’ll call it a hit. We nominate over our glasses for a while before ordering our meal.

Natalie orders the tenderloin au poivre ($28.95) and I get the scallops jalapeño ($30.95), a house specialty made with giant scallops that are delivered fresh daily. Every entrée comes with a choice of appetizer and entrée comes with a choice of appetizer and sides, and we both order the soup of the day—a cremini cream soup—and the potatoes in cream sauce. It’s cold outside, and we’re not in a salad mood tonight.

By the time our food comes out from the kitchen we’ve made each other laugh-cry at least once, and wondered, too loudly, why the table across from us had brought what seems to be a newborn infant to the restaurant. We’re having too much fun for such a well-heeled venue, probably, but there’s nobody who feels compelled to shush us.

The scallops are gorgeous. Three jumbo scallops cooked in a citrus cream sauce with tarragon and fresh jalapeño, which is surprisingly mild on the spice scale. That’s fine by me—I haven’t had scallops in forever, and I’m just savoring the clean, ocean flavor of these barely pan-seared little medallions with a squeeze of lemon on top. Steamed zucchini, carrots and broccoli with a little olive oil and salt accompany, along with crispy potatoes in a lightly sweet cream sauce.

When Natalie bites into her tenderloin au poivre her eyes flutter closed, and I think I hear her whisper “good god,” under her breath. “That good!” I ask, and she nods seriously. The two tenderloin medallions are served with a mushroom cream sauce on top that’s rich and savory and totally indulgent. They’re cooked beautifully rare as requested.

Natalie says she thinks this is an ideal date. “Two women getting a little drunk, talking about their projects and accomplishments, getting served by a man.” It’s both meant to be funny and also not a joke at all, you know?

The food is delicious, the wine list is ridiculous, the space is lovely, but Antiquity wins most of its points in the ambiance department. All of the servers are friendly and attentive without being overbearing—they know that people come here to have a special night, a quiet and intimate dinner that’s more about the company than it is about what precisely is on the plate. Those details are brushstrokes on the canvas, but the focal point is the two people sitting at a table together—two people who really like each other, and who hopefully like each other a little bit more when they walk out of the room.

There’s only one thing in the note file on my phone from that night: “It feels like the bottom and the top of the Titanic had a baby,” which is something Natalie said regarding the ambiance of the restaurant, and which I can’t really elaborate on further, honestly. That was before we’d had anything to drink, too. I think she was saying something about the low wooden ceilings juxtaposed next to the smartly-dressed servers and the romantic lighting. There is nothing shiny or trendy about the way Antiquity looks, inside or out. It’s all original unpainted wood, a warm fire and simplicity. Which is what makes it such a wonderful place to take somebody you care about, and not just on Valentine’s or your anniversary or when one of you lands a promotion. Antiquity is a testament to things that endure for the right reasons. That kind of enduring is about what happens between the big milestones: the everyday, the unglamorous and the subtle. The Thursday night dinners when nothing big is really happening, but you’re just glad to be together.
When Coffee is a Family Affair

Tasting Columbia with Michael Thomas Coffee

BY CHRISTINA HARTSOCK

Michael Sweeney is a savvy businessman as well as a longtime friend of mine. He has expert knowledge of his product, customers and employees at Michael Thomas Coffee (MTC), which he opened in 2004. He’s been roasting coffee for 14 years, and several mornings a week he’s in his shop roasting beans before the rooster crows. He strikes up easy conversation with his customers, many of whom he’s on a first name basis with. He also has a laid back demeanor with his employees, three of whom are his adult children. I’ve been buying my coffee beans from MTC for many years, but was naïve about how roasting and origin influence so many of the qualities of each particular coffee. I recently sat in with Sweeney, his daughters Alyson and Kate (also roasters) and his shift supervisor, Katina, for a cupping, which opened my senses to the complexities of coffee.

It feels like a clandestine encounter when I entered the building across from MTC on Carlisle that serves as their storage space. I immediately encounter stacks of giant burlap sacks full of raw coffee beans, and from the darkness inside emerge a couple of voices telling me to come to the back of the room. The paraphernalia for a mystifying coffee ritual greet me—three sets of five glasses are neatly organized around a table. Each glass contains a small amount of ground coffee of a different color. The color variation is due to the temperature and duration of the roast—the longer the beans are exposed to heat, the darker they get. Next to each set of glasses are large spoons, and in the middle of the table are two small glasses of water.

“Cupping” is a standard evaluation tool roasters use to determine the quality of their beans and create a flavor profile for each coffee. Sweeney takes the process seriously, and he shares the Specialty Coffee Association of America’s (SCAA) Cupping Protocol handout with me. There is no talking during cupping so that tasters don’t influence anyone else’s opinion.

First, we quickly pick up each cup to smell the dry coffee grounds. Next, Alyson adds 200 degree water, and after steeping for a few minutes we “break” the skin of grounds with the back of a spoon and deeply sniff the coffee to get a better read on the aroma. I was thankful for the level of comfort I felt in the room, given that loudly slurping the coffee from a spoon is the next step. The slurping enables the coffee to spread to the back of the tongue, allowing all the taste buds to get involved, and it increases aeration to properly allow flavors to pop.

On this particular day the team is trying out coffee from three different Colombian farms (1 only sample two) to choose which one they would sell at the shop. The beans are micro-lot, which means they are grown on a small lot of land typically yielding only about 40 bags a year. The beans can also be traced to the very farmer that grew them.

The first coffee we sample is from the Cauca-Supremo region. After tasting the coffee from each glass we dip our spoons in the glasses of water, so there is no cross-contamination of flavors. The goal is to quickly taste all the roasts and then choose one or two as favorites. Then the silence is broken and the team shares their opinions, working to describe qualities of the coffee’s taste such as flavor, body (mouthfeel or texture) and aftertaste. I’m still at a loss to find words to describe what I taste, but others use “salty,” “buttery,” “no aftertaste,” and “not balanced” as some of their descriptions. All in all this coffee didn’t knock anyone’s socks off.

The next cupping was for Inza-Excelso. Our favorite roast is selected and the descriptions roll out—there are many more for this coffee. They describe the aroma as fruity, nutty and sweet. Flavors are light mango, grape, stone fruit, tart cherry, milk chocolate and walnut. The body is buttery, and the aftertaste is cranberry orange. Sweeney tells me, “the coffee as it cools should get better, still be pleasing and not sour.” This coffee rises to the occasion.

Cupping is a daily experience at MTC, which is one way Sweeney ensures quality of product at his shops. Excellent customer service is also a hallmark of MTC, as is coffee expertise and professionalism. Sweeney hopes that his daughters can develop their palates and learn from each of these cuppings, to increase their confidence in their coffee knowledge. After all, they’re as much a representation of MTC as he is now.
FILM | FILM REVIEW

Tito and the Birds
Brazillian cartoon paints a dark picture

by DEVIN D. O'LEARY

Fantasy is often used to address real-world concerns. And animation has long been employed by the film industry to candy-coat difficult life lessons for younger viewers. Rarely have those techniques been pushed to the limit as much as in the Brazilian-born animated feature Tito and the Birds. The film unabashedly rips its inspiration from today’s headlines, producing a dark, deeply expressionistic fairy tale for modern audiences. What seems, on the surface, like an imaginative sci-fi fantasy aimed at kids is actually a moody fable speaking just as loudly to adults about today’s contentious political landscape.

“Fear is contagious,” speculates 10-year-old protagonist Tito Rufus (voiced by Pedro Henrique) at the start of the film. It’s a grim philosophy handed down by his father. The senior Mr. Rufus was a crackpot scientist who believed he could talk to birds and spent years laboring over a machine to accomplish that far-fetched goal. Dad didn’t simply want to chat with them about worms, either. He believed that, since the dawn of humanity, birds have served as harbingers of earthquakes, fires and wars. He was convinced that if he could communicate with our feathered friends, he could save mankind.

But an accident in dad’s laboratory led to an explosion. Fearing for his son’s safety, Tito’s mom Rosa (Denise Fraga) kicked dad out and began watching over Tito like an outcast friend. With the help of his outcast friends Buíu and Sarah, Tito has recreated his father’s bird-communicating machine. But yet another accident at the school science fair gets Tito kicked out of school—much to the delight of his academic rival, rich-kid inventor Teo.

Adding to an already outlandish narrative is the fact that Teo’s dad, Alaor Souza, is a right-wing television personality, stoking fears on his bombastic nightly news program. He’s also offering

Disney, this ain’t.

Tito and the Birds
Directed by Gustavo Steinberg, Gabriel Bitar & André Catoto
Starring the voices of Pedro Henrique, Marina Serrettiello, Matheus Solano
Opens Friday 2/15.

(for a tidy price) the perfect solution to all of today’s worries—the ultimate gated community, a luxury neighborhood hermetically sealed off from the rest of the world under a glass dome. Souza’s timing couldn’t be better, for the world is under the grip of a bizarre plague known simply as “The Outbreak.” The Outbreak is a fear-based disease that causes people to devolve into immobile, limbless lumps of rock.

Naturally, Tito believes his father’s invention is the key to saving mankind. But can he and his friends convince people in time?

The plot of Tito and the Birds—a 10-year-old inventor tries to convince pigeons to save the human race from a contagious fear virus—is a hard pill to swallow. And the film’s central message—about the media stoking fear and paranoia for its own cynical gain—isn’t what you’d call subtle. Still, this unfiltered flight of fancy emerges as a dystopic delight thanks to its imaginative animation.

Much of the film—particularly the backgrounds—are rendered in the thick, shadowy impasto of traditional oil paints. The Oscar-nominated 2017 film Loving Vincent employed a similar, art-heavy, multimedia style. Vivid colors, distorted perspectives, sharp angles and a swirling, sweeping camera perspective give Tito and the Birds the heightened emotional effect of an Expressionist painting—something between Kandinsky, Ralph Steadman and “South Park.”

America, it turns out, isn’t the only country to plunge into conservative paranoia these days. Brazil recently elected South America’s version of Donald Trump, far-right firebrand and self-styled political outsider Jair Bolsonaro. He got there by enflaming public fears about crime, corruption and “the other” (foreigners, homosexuals, liberals). This growing climate of paranoia is undoubtedly the inspiration behind this film’s political allegory. A lot of us, it seems, can sympathize.

The ultimate moral flying around Tito and the Birds is both simplistic and convoluted. It’s a storybook with too few many ideas and a few too many pages missing. Despite the fact that the filmmakers hammer their point home confidently and resoundingly, not everyone will be able to stitch together the film’s flashes of political demagoguery, postcolonial guilt and fascist fearmongering. Even if kids manage to pick up on the “fear is the enemy of freedom” slogan, they may not be the best audience for this surreal journey. Adults, on the other hand, will certainly appreciate the film’s visual brio—which reads like a child’s bedtime story run through a Museum of Modern Art nightmare machine.
Mysterious Ways

“Miracle Workers” on TBS

You could categorize TBS’ “Miracle Workers” as yet another workplace sitcom. Except, in this instance, the workplace happens to be Heaven. Based on the book What In God’s Name by Simon Rich (“Man Seeking Woman”), this seven-episode “limited series” follows Hollywood’s current obsession with the afterlife. Unlike ABC’s “The Good Place,” however, it deals with questions of spirituality rather than philosophy. And unlike CBS’ “God Friended Me,” it’s a mostly cynical upending of traditional Christian theology.

Instead of the usual clouds and pearly gates, “Heaven Inc.” is a rundown factory staffed by a bunch of stressed-out, overworked angels. Seems that God (Steve Buscemi, because—why not?) has had a rough few thousand years. “You know how long it’s been since anyone sacrificed a ram to me?” he laments. His greatest creation, Earth, has devolved into a cesspool of war, climate change and road rage. Instead of performing miracles and bathing in the afterlife, unlike ABC’s “The Good Place” (which it, inevitably, must be), “Miracle Workers” isn’t nearly as smart nor innovative. It doesn’t tackle issues of cosmic significance with the same level of gusto. It’s mostly just a good-natured, fantasy-based rom-com-cum-office-sitcom with some funny, broad-target jokes. The cast interacts well, with the twitchy Radcliffe and the optimistic Viswanathan bouncing off one another nicely. Like prayers to God, questions regarding the mechanics of this odd, corporate afterlife are mostly unanswered—or are at least left hanging until later episodes. The show’s concept has its flaws and logical gaps, but they don’t spoil the fun. Appropriately—given the setting—“Miracle Workers” ends up finding empathetic, energetic satire in odd places.

“Miracle Workers” airs Tuesdays at 8:30pm on TBS.
**NEW 2019 Oscar Nominated Short Films: Live Action**

Imagine watching five Oscar-nominated films in one screening. You can do that with this year’s Best Live Action Short Films. Seven minutes. From Spain, Canada, Ireland and the US are presented. High-lighted on this evening are two short films that draw an elderly woman whose friendship with a new nurse allows her to unpack decades of hidden longings and以 a tense-based-on-a-true-story drama about a 10-year-old boy detained by the police after a suspicion of murdering a toddler. 110 minutes. Unrated. (Opens Friday 2/15 at Guild Cinema, High Ridge)

**Caperanum**

From Syria comes this hard-hitting, social realism melodrama. While serving a 5-year sentence for a violent crime, a 12-year-old boy (Zain El-Rifai) from a poor family finds himself sharing a shanty with a largely untrained cast, each embodying characters close to their own life stories. It’s a long, dark journey down this all-too-realistic (but also questionable courtroom drama), but most everyone involved manages the infamous "laplace’s equation," bringing with them the darkness, squalor and human misery. In Arabic and Amharic with English subtitles. 126 minutes. R. (Opens Saturday 2/16 at Guild Cinema)

**Cold Pursuit**

Perpetually vengeful old man Liam Neeson stars as a Colorado snowboarder looking for revenge against the drug dealer who killed his son. Director Hans Pet- ter昆仑 Dirksen’s screen play is based on novelist Jo Nesbo’s thriller about the hitman turned vigilante (Neesbo’s remake of his own 2014 Norwegian import, In Order of Disappearance). It’s familiar stuff but has the quirky, self-amused air of an Andrey Zvyagintsev film. PG-13. (Century Rio, AMC Albuquerque 12, Flix Brewhouse, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque, Rio Rancho Premiere Cinemas, Cottonwood Stadium 16, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**Bohemian Rhapsody**

Rami Malek ("Mr. Robot") takes on the task of embodying the rock icon Freddie Mercury in this entertaining but uncomplicated musical biopic chronicling the years leading up to Queen’s legendary appearance at the Live Aid concert. Bryan Singer (The Usual Suspects, X-Men) directs. 134 minutes. PG-13. (Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX, Century Rio, Century 14 Downtown, Movies 8, Movies West)

**Five Seasons: The Gardens of Piet Oudolf**

Revolutionary landscape designer Piet Oudolf is featured in this poetic visual poem that depicts a 3,000-acre garden in upstate New York, where he created a unique environment that brings life back to a forgotten meadow. 84 minutes. Unrated. (Century Rio, Century 14 Downtown, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**The Social Network**

Prince T’Challa (Chadwick Boseman) returns to the throne in the wake of his father’s death. 134 minutes. PG-13. (Century Rio, 50 percent)

**Insidious: The Last Key**

The long, it’s about 50 percent too much film. But it’s a good indication that Warner Bros./DC has finally united Federation and Neo-Zeon forces to hunt the cutesy voice of the dog, who narrates the film in a playful way. 122 minutes. PG-13. (Century Rio, Century 14 Downtown, Flix Brewhouse, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque, Rio Rancho Premiere Cinemas, Cottonwood Stadium 16, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX)

**Young Ladota (2012)**

This sociological documentary headquarters to the Pine Ridge Reservation where Sunny Clifford, her twin sister Serena and their neighbor Brandon Ferguson, dream of making a difference for themselves and the community around them. When South Dakota passes a law criminalizing all forms of abortion, the first female president of the Oglala Lakota, takes a stand by proposing building a women’s health clinic on sovereign reservation land. "Our young subject is seen during this political storm, forcing them to make choices that will define who they are and what kind of adults they will become. 83 minutes. Unrated. (Guild Cinema)

**A Dog’s Purpose**

This follow-up to the movie A Dog’s Purpose could be the most emotionally manipulative tearjerker ever conceived. Seems that an impossibly cute puppy named Bella is adopted by a kindly young man (Jonah Hauer-King) as a non-emotional support animal for people in hospitals. But when the man dies, Bella must embark on a 400-mile journey to get home. Along the way, she comforts homeless veterans, rescues people from avalanches and performs all sorts of miraculous deeds. Bryce Dallas Howard provides the cutesy voice of the dog, who narrates the film in voice-over. Humor columnist Bruce Cameron (A Simple Rules For Dating My Teenage Daughter) wrote the script. PG. 95 minutes. (Century Rio, Rio Rancho Premiere Cinema)

**Escape Room**

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**STILL PLAYING**

2019 Oscar Nominated Short Films: Animation

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**Altai: Battle Angel**

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Yorgos Lanthimos (Dogtooth, The Lobster, The Killing of a Sacred Deer) offers up his most accessible, least surreal film to date with this delightfully wicked costume drama. Review in v27 #101, pg. 137. (Winrock Steak 16 IMAX & RPX, Century Rio, Century 14 Downtown, High Ridge)

Free Solo
Alex Honnold, the first person ever to free solo (no ropes, no partners, no safety equipment) climb up Yosemite’s 3,000 foot high El Capitan Wall, is the subject of this jaw-dropping documentary. Inspiring and occasionally heart-stopping, this sporting documentary deserves to be seen by anyone that is interested in rock climbing. 100 minutes. PG-13. (High Ridge)

Glass
The moratorium on spoiler alerts has long expired. Writer-director M. Night Shyamalan’s 2016 horror thriller Split was actually a sneaky sequel to his 2000 superhero film Unbreakable (which was pretty sneaky about its true intentions to begin with). Now all the cats are out of the bag, and Shyamalan is free to complete the trilogy by getting his superhuman hero (Bruce Willis) and his two supervillains (Samuel L. Jackson, James McAvoy) together for their first, real-deal comic book-style conflict. 129 minutes. PG-13. (Century Rio, Century 14 Downtown, Flix Brewhouse, Rio Rancho Premiere Cinema, Cottonwood Stadium 16, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX, AMC Albuquerque 12)

Green Book
A working-class, Italian-American bouncer (Viggo Mortenson) from New York City finds himself acting as chauffeur for a wealthy black concert pianist (Mahershala Ali) as he goes on a tour of the segregated Jim Crow South. In 1962, this family friendly tale of discrimination clearly flips the script on the Driving Miss Daisy/Centaurian Quest/Dad’s Army dynamic. Peter Farrelly (who, along with his brother, gave us Dumb and Dumber and There’s Something About Mary) directs with comedic flair. Bob (Mortenson), who operates a funeral parlor with his brother, gets Dumb and Dumber and There’s Something About Mary money to open a restaurant in the black section of the city. One of the many amazing things about this movie is that it is so completely free of the usual racial stereotypes. It’s a thoughtful, hilarious and surprisingly romantic comedy. It’s from the maker of Dumb and Dumber. (Chris Pratt) has his optimism tested when his homeless best buds. 125 minutes. PG-13. (Century Rio, Century 14 Downtown, Rio Rancho Premiere Cinema, Cottonwood Stadium 16, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX, AMC Albuquerque 12, Flix Brewhouse, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque)

Happy Death Day 2U
Happy Death Day, the comedic slasher film version of Groundhog Day, was a surprise hit back in 2017. So, naturally, we’ve got a sequel. Jessica Rothe returns as Tree (who gets caught transporting $3 million worth of cocaine) and her brother, gave us Scream, and he’s back with another update that interested in rock climbing. 100 minutes. PG-13. (High Ridge)

Stan & Ollie
In the mid-’50s, an aging Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy tried to revive their careers with a stage tour of England. Recreated here by British funnyman Steve Coogan (Stan) and America actor John C. Reilly (Ollie), the famed duo are big and bumbling with startling authenticity. Not only do Coogan and Reilly look the parts, but they’ve studied every mannerism and speech pattern. As the tour kicks off on both health and finances, the two men dance with the terrors behind their long-ago breakup. It’s an intimate, behind-the-scenes film, but the story and chemistry of the stars imparts a bittersweet sense of nostalgia. Reviewed in v28 #103, 97 minutes. PG. (High Ridge)

A Star Is Born
Bradley Cooper (the Hangover films) turns writer-director-star in this remake of the remake of the remake of A Star Is Born. Cooper plays the burned-out rock star who discovers a golden-voiced ingenue (Lady Gaga) whom he mentors to stardom. (Century Rio, Century 14 Downtown, Rio Rancho Premiere Cinema, Cottonwood Stadium 16, Winrock Stadium 16 IMAX & RPX, AMC Albuquerque 12, Flix Brewhouse, Icon Cinemas Albuquerque)

Miss Bala
Gina Rodriguez (“Jane the Virgin”) stars as Gloria, a struggling Latina whose crew arti...
Master of Concerts!

Dedicated to how I’m rocking you

BY AUGUST MARCH

Okay. This is the part of the column where I usually let loose with some textual reduction of this or that rockabilly song, all in the hopes of somehow enticing you, the typical Alibi reader, to go out and see some local shows.

The problem with Metallicca, and sorry if you don’t agree, is that the dudes aren’t what one would call masterful lyricists. Sure the part about “breakfast on a mirror” is high-larious, but generally speaking their flow is an awkward one. Thanks be to Thlema that they can handle their instruments in a vigorous way. Awesome, right? Just ask Dave Mustaine.

Anywho I decided to dispense with this week’s lyrics for the aforementioned reasons plus the fact that the words to “Master of Puppets” are so sad and lonesome, dang it. Now, you don’t wanna think about all that dreary existential rot but you’re on the way out the door to what may prove to be one of the greatest local gigs ever, amirite?

I knew that, but I still sorta like the idea: Becoming a master of anything means practice and dedication, a thing listeners can achieve, then, by attending show after mind-blowing show.

With that said, here are this week’s opportunities to rock out. Master them if you dare.

Friday
I am totally psyched that Five Mile Float is getting gigs in Burque’s clubland. The able quartet will be gigging at Moonlight Lounge (120 Central Ave. SW) on Friday, Feb. 15.

Why, just about four years ago, I referred to this rock ensemble as a cadre of wonderkind. Now that they’re old enough to hit the adult rock circuit (goodbye youth, goodbye good old rock circuit) I am sure that they are going to slay in a way that some of their peers are going to be danged despondent until they heard that Hippie Sabotage, a duo of electro-wizards from out of Caliwill be performing at the Sunshine Theater (120 Central Ave. SW) on Sunday, February 17. Comprised of the brothers Sauer (Kevin and Jeff), Hippie Sabotage has made a career of making fabulous remixes, mostly of the work of Tove Lo, a darkwave Swede, and Ellie Goulding, a singer-songwriter from outta Old Blighty.

With a sound that’s slyrighty, spooky and just about as laconically guitar-infused as anything in the EDM groove right now (Viz.: “Righteous,”) the work of Hippie Sabotage is indeed very much anti-hippie, vibe wise. But you didn’t need that long skirt and load of precious beads to dance anyway, did you? Substitute some sounds that bring memories of the sea into reach, throw in some longing and just enough autotune to prevent old-time ravers for reaching for the vapor rub tube, and yeah, this is the next level, kids. Although I could always do with less autotune. Anywho, put your JNCOs on and give this show a go.

Saturday
Trumpeter Ryan Montaño has worked diligently to get to where he is. Renowned as one of the finest horn players in El Burque and well beyond, Montaño’s career blossomed as he took on smooth jazz and then composition, bringing substance and vibrancy to a genre that many are content to use as a demonstration of facility at the expense of passionate expression. The jazzman responsible for cracking the lid on the top 40 jazz gold mine once only accessible to certain Los Angelinos will perform on Saturday, Feb. 16 at the Barelas Event Center (907 Fourth Street SW).

Weekly Alibi recently asked Montaño about his latest work and he told us about his new album Truth Journey, which dropped in December, saying, “what I was finding was that commercial jazz has a really strict formula that determines whether it gets played or not. I found that my songwriting and what I was doing as an instrumentalist was starting to be structured around that format. I began to wonder what could take me to the next level of getting known. I went through a period of trying to determine exactly what I was trying to do musically. I started writing a lot of songs, with my friends and by myself at the piano. What I like about this album is that it encompasses that spectrum [of exploration]. It really comes from the heart. Some of it has that commercial sound, but it is all part of my musical journey of truth!”

Sounds to me like you ought to show up! 7pm • $20 • All-ages.

Sunday Part I
One of the ways to tell that spring is in the air, in this part of the Southwest anyway, is to wait for a concert by The Reverend Horton Heat to come into view. Well, here it is, folks.

Those acclaimed psychobilly priests of all that is hot and rocking will be playing Sister (407 Central Ave. SW) on Sunday, Feb. 17.

Composed of Jim “Reverend Horton” Heath, bassist Jimbo Wallace and a revolving coterie of cray players like Arjuna Contreras, Matt Jordan and Diego Randall, the band brings a swinging, ebullient energy that mimics spring using a slick combination of surf sounds, rocking ’50s conceits, big band shenanigans and the blistering fret work of the Reverend himself.

These dudes have been at it since they debuted in Deep Ellum back in the mid-’80s and bring a cool credibility to every show they make happen. Though they are primarily known as a live band, early Sub Pop and Interscope records like Liquor in the Front and It’s Martini Time say these fellows mean business. Rock business that is. Swinger sounding legends Big Sandy, Voodoo Glow Skulls and Delta Bombers complete the scene. Going to this gig is as close as you’re gonna get to springtime in February, dang it, so dust off your dancing boots, jump into your favorite Mopar super stock and head toward the bar with the best booking agent in Burque. 7pm • $25 • 21+.

Sunday Part II
Having not heard a peep from the forces of EDM of late, local music critic August March was about to become danged despondent until he heard that Hippie Sabotage, a duo of electro-wizards from out of Cali will be performing at the Sunshine Theater (120 Central Ave. SW) on Sunday, February 17. Comprised of the brothers Sauer (Kevin and Jeff), Hippie Sabotage has made a career of making fabulous remixes, mostly of the work of Tove Lo, a darkwave Swede, and Ellie Goulding, a singer-songwriter from outta Old Blighty.

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7pm • $25 • All-ages (13+).

Monday
Lemme see about that: “Yes, Yes, Y’all” is part of a longish, party-positive phrase that’s been used in hip-hop, mostly by MCs, since the early days of the form. Though there is some contention as to the actual source, many attribute it to Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five in a flow called “Supertrappin.” Spoonie Gee and Rahim used the term early on too, before folks like Aesop Rock, Mos Def and Los Beastie Boys made generous references to the phrase and its totally fun consequences.

Now and today, míos y míyas, it’s the name of a rapper here in the Burkes, too. Pope YesYesYall will bring his history-coated and super-silvery spit to Sister (407 Central Ave. NW) on Monday, Feb. 18. According to the press release I was just handed, dude is “coming back to Earf to give the good people of Albuquerque some classic hip-hop vibes full of intergalactic fun!” That sounds like more thrills than seeking out a super-secret sauce recipe whilst driving around in a Jaguar XKE. For realz.

The Pope will be joined by DJ Flo Fader and A. Billi Free, whom I’m told will be “bringing future soul in new dimensions.” This show sounds most excellent: You know what to do, homes, it don’t ever stop. 8pm • $5 • 21+.
**AURAL FIXATION!**

**BY AUGUST MARCH**

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**KlezmerQuerque is Here**

A little dancing never hurts!

KlezmerQuerque is coming to town this week, and man, am I excited!

KlezmerQuerque 2019, a yearly festival—now in its 17th year—produced by Congregation Nahalat Shalom, takes place this year from Feb. 14 through 17.

This year’s theme focuses on the genre’s affiliative association with the music found in Romanian culture and how that affiliation contributed to a form of music created by Ashkenazi Jew, influenced by canonical music and later revitalized and re-envisioned by 20th century Jewish immigrants who were exposed to American musical forms like jazz and the blues, as they assimilated into our great melting pot of a nation.

This year’s fest will be especially notable as it features the work of several local artists as well as internationally renowned musicians who’ll be making the trip to the Duke City to play some of the most engaging, heartfelt folk music ever devised and disseminated by the human tribe.

Violinist and ethnomusicologist Maimon Miller, who used a Fulbright scholarship to spend a year studying Transylvanian folk music, will perform on Saturday night along with Isaac Sadigursky a clarinetist and accordionist who is a major proponent of the Klezmer tradition and its Balkan-influenced repertoire.

Additionally, Cristian Florescu and Sonia Dion will present a brief program of Romanian folk dance, demonstrating how two folk traditions became danceably intertwined.

This compelling combination of music, dance and spirituality includes movie screenings on Friday night as well as a children and family dance event, a potluck dinner and a Holy Shabbat service on Saturday morning that includes a performance by Beth Cohen and the Alvados Ensemble, a reading from the Torah, a guided meditation and community conclusion featuring traditional Kiddush Oneg (grape juice and fruit).

Most importantly this event is also an opportunity to hear some of Burque’s most accomplished folk musicians as they jam to a form of music that is ancient, arcane and awe-somely fun to experience.

The Rebbe’s Orchestra, featuring Burque folk stalwart and Nahalat Shalom Cantor Beth Cohen, local Klezmer trio Di Kavane Kapelye as well as the Nahalat Shalom Community Klezmer Band and the Rikud Dancers will also lead performances during the course of the festival.

This year’s KlezmerQuerque comes to an informed and innovative conclusion on Sunday night, Feb. 17 with four 90-minute workshops on Klezmer music and traditional Romanian-Jewish dance.

Individual event prices range from free to $25; the senior/student all-event price is $95 and general admission is $115. All events take place at Nahalat Shalom (3606 Rio Grande Blvd. NW), between Candelaria and Griegos, in beautiful Burque. For more details, a complete schedule and to purchase tickets, visit nahalatshalom.org/klezmerquerque-2019.
Marijuana advocates in New Mexico have been holding their breath until their faces turn purple waiting to see which way the wind is going to blow for recreational marijuana legalization. The proverbial iron is white-hot and all signs indicate that now is the time to strike and let our lawmakers know how we feel.

Overnight, it seems, control of our state government has flipped over to the Democrats, and to many, that means cannabis legalization is a given. I’ve been assured by many that legalization is an inevitability now that Democrat Lujan Grisham is sitting in the governor’s seat, but I’m still not sure. Maybe it’s my innate distrust of authority figures or my knowledge of history, but I don’t really believe campaign sizzles made by politicians until I get to see the steak, if you follow me.

The governor gave her first State of the State address last month and mentioned including opioid addiction on the list of qualifying conditions for the state’s medical cannabis program. She made no mention of legalization. Nevertheless, Rep. Javier Martínez introduced House Bill 356 soon after—a piece of law that would legalize possession of up to two ounces of cannabis for adults over 21 if approved. The bill would impose a nine percent surcharge on all sales that would go toward research, workforce training, substance misuse treatment, mental health treatment and youth drug-education programs. The bill would also seal certain cannabis-related criminal records and allow for the dismissal of sentences currently being carried out by prisoners incarcerated for cannabis-related crimes. Cities and counties would be able to opt out of allowing recreational cannabis sales if they wish.

I would like to have heard the governor give at least some lip service to the idea, but I am not surprised in the least, dear reader. Steve Terrell at the Santa Fe New Mexican claims “conventional wisdom at the Capitol is that the bill will pass the House but could stall in the Senate, where Republicans and conservative Democrats have sunk such efforts in the past.” I’m not sure who the sage behind this advice could be, but I’m inclined to agree.

Now before you jump to any conclusions about those many conservatives, I’ll point out an investigative piece written by Mike Gallagher of the Albuquerque Journal which said legislators are leery of passing any laws that could endanger the state’s booming medical cannabis industry. As you can imagine, I get stuck in conversations about cannabis legalization all the damn time (I’m sick of it), and I’ve rarely heard a conservative oppose it on moral or ideological grounds. Oddly, it’s much more common for me to hear concerns about The Big Guy coming in and pushing out The Little People who’ve made a living for themselves built on years of effort. That’s not just a Righty view by any means. These days I can’t vomit my anarchic legalizational rhetoric at anyone without them visibly cringing. It’s terribly embarrassing.

Rep. Javier Martínez told Gallagher that he traveled across rural New Mexico to hear the concerns of the state’s harshest conservative voters and found more counterintuitive stances: “I think the level of opposition was softer than I expected. People were asking about funding treatment and education on the issue.”

And here’s the other thing: Lujan Grisham was the secretary of the Department of Health when the current program was initiated. I’d put my left hand on the line to say that she’s retained her contact list from the good old days, and that’s why we’re going to see her deliver on promises like lifting the cap on the number of plants producers are allowed to grow. (One can hope anyway.)

What we probably won’t see are any nods to legalization coming from Lujan Grisham’s camp for the time being. I really hope I’m wrong. I’ll totally submit to the stocks at Civic Plaza.

**War on CBD Begins in Earnest**

New York City just banned CBD edibles, and it might be a trend.

According to The New York Times, the city’s Department of Health and Mental Hygiene ordered restaurants under its jurisdiction not to sell food products containing CBD. City inspectors were reportedly confiscating CBD-infused products at eateries last week. In a statement, health officials said restaurants were not “permitted to add anything to food or drink that is not approved as safe to eat.”

The US Food and Drug Administration says CBD is still banned from use in food or dietary supplements, because it’s been used as a component in an FDA-approved pharmaceutical and can’t be included in over-the-counter products. But the authorities have been hands-off in their enforcement approach. The aggressive tactics of the city of New York signal an unfortunate change.

And they aren’t alone. Officials in Maine—a state where recreational cannabis is legal—recently banned the sale of CBD-infused edibles in stores, and police and health officials in Ohio made the rounds last week ordering stores to destroy all CBD products on their shelves.

Let’s just hope New Mexico keeps looking the other way I guess. ☝

Don’t forget to RSVP to Weekly Alibi’s Organabus CBD-sponsored 2019 New Mexico Cannabis Expo, happening Saturday, March 23 from 11am to 5pm at the Santa Fe Community Convention Center.
Aries (March 21-April 19): When directors of movies say, “It’s a wrap,” they mean that the shooting of a scene has been finished. They may use the same expression when the shooting of the entire film is completed. That’s not the end of the creative process, of course. All the editing must still be done. Once that’s accomplished, the producer may declare that the final product is “in the can,” and ready to be released or broadcast. From what I can determine, Aries, you’re on the verge of being able to say, “It’s a wrap” for one of your own projects. There’ll be more work before you’re ready to assert, “It’s in the can.”

Taurus (April 20-May 20): In accordance with astrological omens, I invite you to create your own royal throne and sit on it whenever you need to think deep thoughts and formulate important decisions. Make sure your power chair is comfortable as well as beautiful and elegant. To enhance your ability to wield your waxing authority with grace and courage, I also encourage you to fashion your own crown, scepter and ceremonial footwear. They, too, should be comfortable, beautiful and elegant.

Gemini (May 21-June 20): In 1995, astronomer Bob Williams got a strong urge to investigate a small scrap of the night sky that most other astronomers regarded as boring. It was near the handle of the constellation known as the Big Dipper. Luckily for him, he could ignore his colleagues’ discouraging pressure. That’s because he had been authorized to use the high-powered Hubble Space Telescope for a 10-day period. To the surprise of everyone but Williams, his project soon discovered that this seemingly unremarkable part of the heavens was home to over 3,000 galaxies. I suspect you may have a challenge akin to Williams’, Gemini. A pet project or crazy notion of yours may not get much support, but I hope you’ll pursue it anyway. I bet your findings will be different from what anyone expects.

Cancer (June 21-July 22): A study by the Humane Research Council found that more than 80 percent of those who commit to being vegetarians eventually give up and return to eating meat. A study by the National Institute of Health showed that only about 36 percent of alcoholics are able to achieve full recovery; the remainder relapse. And we all know how many people make New Year’s resolutions to exercise more often, but then stop going to the gym by February. That’s the bad news. The good news, Cancerian, is that during the coming weeks you will possess an enhanced power to stick with any commitment you know is right and good for you. Take advantage!

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22): Are there two places on earth more different from each other than Europe and Africa? Yet there is a place, the Strait of Gibraltar, where Europe and Africa are just 8.7 miles apart. Russia and the United States are also profoundly unlike each other, but only 2.5 miles apart where the Bering Strait separates them. I foresee a metaphorically comparable phenomenon in your life. Two situations or influences or resources that’s partially going to waste? Might you be able to enhance your possibilities by making some simple modifications?

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): “A freshness lives deep in me which no one can take from me,” wrote Swedish poet Gunnar Eklof. “Something unstilled, unstillable is within me; it wants to be voiced,” wrote philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. In accordance with your astrological omens, I propose we make those two quotes your mottoes for the next four weeks. In my opinion, you have a mandate to tap into what’s freshest and most unstillable about you—and then cultivate it, celebrate it and express it with the full power of your grateful, brilliant joy.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): In 1992, an Ethiopian man named Belachew Girma became an alcoholic after he saw his wife die from AIDS. And yet today he is renowned as a Laughter Master, having dedicated himself to explore the healing powers of ebullience and amusement. He presides over a school that teaches people the fine points of laughter, and he holds the world’s record for longest continuous laughter at three hours and six minutes. I nominate him to be your role model in the next two weeks. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, you will be especially primed to benefit from the healing power of laughter. You’re likely to encounter more droll and whimsical and hilarious events than usual, and your sense of humor should be especially hearty and finely-tuned.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): A study published in the journal Social Psychological and Personality Science suggests that people who use curse words tend to be more candid. “Swearing is often inappropriate but it can also be evidence that someone is telling you their honest opinion,” said the lead researcher. “Just as they aren’t filtering their language to be more palatable, they’re also not filtering their views.” If that’s true, Scorpio, I’m going to encourage you to curse more than usual in the coming weeks. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, it’s crucial that you tell as much of the whole truth as is humanly possible. (P.S. Your cursing outbursts don’t necessarily have to be delivered with total abandon everywhere you go. You could accomplish a lot just by going into rooms by yourself and exuberantly allowing the expletives to roll out of your mouth.)

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): In the mid-’90s, a California carrot farmer grew frustrated with the fact that grocery stories didn’t want to buy his broken and oddly shaped carrots. A lot of his crop was going to waste. Then he got the bright idea to cut and shave the imperfect carrots so as to make smooth little baby carrots. They became a big success. Can you think of a metaphorically comparable adjustment you could undertake, Sagittarius? Is it possible to transform a resource that’s partially going to waste? Might you be able to enhance your possibilities by making some simple modifications?

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Mongolia is a huge landlocked country. It borders no oceans or seas. Nevertheless, it has a navy of seven sailors. Its lone ship is a tugboat moored on Lake Khovsgol, which is three percent the size of North America’s Lake Superior. I’m offering up the Mongolian navy as an apt metaphor for you to draw inspiration from in the coming weeks. I believe it makes good astrological sense for you to launch a seemingly quixotic quest to assert your power, however modestly, in a situation that may seem out of your league.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): “A freshness lives deep in me which no one can take from me,” wrote Swedish poet Gunnar Eklof. “Something unstilled, unstillable is within me; it wants to be voiced,” wrote philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. In accordance with your astrological omens, I propose we make those two quotes your mottoes for the next four weeks. In my opinion, you have a mandate to tap into what’s freshest and most unstillable about you—and then cultivate it, celebrate it and express it with the full power of your grateful, brilliant joy.

Pisces (Feb. 19-Mar. 20): According to the Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology, the word “obsession” used to refer to the agitated state of a person who was besieged by rowdy or unruly spirits arising from outside the person. “Possession,” on the other hand, once meant the agitated state of a person who was besieged by rowdy or unruly spirits arising from within. In the Western Christian perspective, both were regarded as relatively benevolent, and their effect quite positive. As long as you don’t buy into the Western Christian view, I suspect that the coming weeks will be more palatable, they’re also not filtering their views.” If that’s true, Scorpio, I’m going to encourage you to curse more than usual in the coming weeks. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, it’s crucial that you tell as much of the whole truth as is humanly possible. (P.S. Your cursing outbursts don’t necessarily have to be delivered with total abandon everywhere you go. You could accomplish a lot just by going into rooms by yourself and exuberantly allowing the expletives to roll out of your mouth.)
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“Double Up”—the middle two from all five.

by Matt Jones

Across

1 “Downton Abbey” countess
5 PokÈmon protagonist
8 Fix, as the end of a pool cue
13 Strong cards
14 “SmackDown!” org.
15 High grade
17 Johnny Carson’s predecessor
19 “Sorry Not Sorry” singer Demi
20 Magic, on a scoreboard
21 Like toast without butter
22 So far
23 “Weetzie Bat” author Francesca ___ Block
24 Get a sense of importance, say
26 Children’s author Blyton
28 E-mail address part
29 Ancient Roman road
30 Indian restaurant appetizer
33 Hospital count
36 Places with IVs
37 “The Battle With the Slum” author and social reformer
40 ___ A. Bank (menswear retailer)
43 “Don’t move!”
44 Super Bowl XLI halftime headliner
47 Actress Hathaway of “Ocean’s 8”
50 1010, in binary
52 Gloom and ___
53 Figure out group emotions, maybe
58 Replacement
59 Wrigley Field judges
60 Boy band that sang “Girl on TV”
61 She, in Brazil
62 Surgeon for whom a mouthwash is named
63 Some purchases for vape pens
65 Prefix meaning “insect”
66 Their capacity is measured in BTUs
67 Attila’s band
68 “Quiz Show” figure Charles Van ___
69 1950s White House nickname
70 ___-bitty

Down

1 Persuades
2 Instrument in a Legend of Zelda title
3 Win back
4 Inquire of
5 In the know
6 Began to convince
7 She/___ pronouns
8 Chief Wiggum’s kid
9 Melodramatize
10 Copenhagen’s ___ Gardens
11 How short messages may be sent
12 Bring off, slangily
13 ___ A. Bank (menswear retailer)
14 ___ Beta Kappa
15 1950s White House nickname
16 Barely defeat
17 ___-bitty
18 prefect
19 1950s White House nickname
20 ___ A. Bank (menswear retailer)
21 ___-bitty
22 Say out loud
23 Legislative persuader
24 Get a sense of importance, say
25 Children’s author Blyton
26 Children’s author Blyton
27 Gp. that oversees the ATF
28 E-mail address part
29 Ancient Roman road
30 Indian restaurant appetizer
31 Airline based in Stockholm
32 False front
33 Slight decrease
34 Knightly title
35 Hall’s partner
36 Places with IVs
37 “The Battle With the Slum” author and social reformer
38 Hall’s partner
39 PBS’s “Science Kid”
40 Rapper in the Fyre Festival documentaries
41 With “of,” in total agreement
42 Shapes up quickly
43 “Don’t move!”
44 Super Bowl XLI halftime headliner
45 Barely defeat
46 Was unable to
47 Diplomat’s building
48 Actress Hathaway of “Ocean’s 8”
49 Podcast staffer
50 1010, in binary
51 “I couldn’t find it”
52 Good for something
53 Figure out group emotions, maybe
54 Horses for something
55 “Great blue” marsh bird
56 asthma
57 Actress Gretchen of “Boardwalk Empire”
58 Replacement
59 Wrigley Field judges
60 Boy band that sang “Girl on TV”
61 She, in Brazil
62 Surgeon for whom a mouthwash is named
63 Some purchases for vape pens
64 ___ A. Bank (menswear retailer)
65 Prefix meaning “insect”
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