

# ARTS *in Alabama*

november 2010

volume 1, issue 7



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# PETER PAN



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The River Region's  
**Wave of the Future!**

Alabama Frontier Days (Ft. Toulouse)	Nov. 3-7
Cruise In Car Show (Tallassee)	Nov. 20
Christmas on the Coosa Ball	Nov. 27
Wetumpka Tree Lighting	Nov. 29
Millbrook Tree Lighting	Dec. 2
Eclectic Christmas Parade	Dec. 4
Millbrook Christmas Parade	Dec. 4
Elmore Tree Lighting	Dec. 4
Tallassee Christmas Parade	Dec. 4
Christmas on the Coosa Decorations Contest	Dec. 6
Christmas on the Coosa	Dec. 11
Nativity & Luminaria (Wetumpka)	Dec. 17
Cruise In Car Show (Tallassee)	Dec. 18
New Year's Eve Asteroid Drop	Dec. 31

*See all the listed events and more at*

[www.visitelmoreco.com](http://www.visitelmoreco.com)

Cover photo: Peter Pan performance courtesy Alabama Shakespeare Festival. For more information visit [www.asf.net](http://www.asf.net).



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Arts in Alabama is a free monthly publication distributed throughout the state. Our mission is to promote and preserve arts and culture in Alabama, while giving art students a chance to have internships, in turn giving them an opportunity to become successful in their artistic endeavors. For internships, contact the Publisher. For advertising information, contact the Publisher or any member of our team.

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With the holidays right around the corner, most of us are either putting together our gift list, or maybe we're super organized and we've already started shopping. Either way, if there are children in your life, giving them gifts to help develop their creative sides is a great alternative.

Growing up, I remember always having art supplies and books. My dad's old guitar hung on the wall for decoration, but he never minded if we tried to play it. I never quite got the hang of it, but my younger brother picked it up. All of the books and art supplies had to have contributed to my career choice in some way.

I never thought about it much, and I continued the tradition with my children. Both of my sons can draw well, and my oldest plays about three instruments. All three sing well and my daughter is a great dancer.

I'm not bragging here, because none of us are Picasso, nor do they get paid for their musical abilities, but being comfortable with a paint brush or a guitar is a great outlet. It also gives you a wonderful appreciation for working artists.

In today's high-tech world, it's easy to get caught up in gadgets. Kids want a new phone, an iPod or a portable DVD player. Before we buy these things we should really consider what we're giving them.

An iPod can easily be replaced with a guitar. Pawn shops are a great place to buy instruments if you're not sure if the child will really try to play it. My son's first guitar only set me back \$100. It was a good thing, too, because he lost interest in it quickly when he realized it took work to learn how to play it. Months later, he picked it up again, and the love of playing hasn't left him.

Instead of a DVD player, how about a camcorder? If the child loves movies, let them create their own. Many low-end camcorders are about the same price as a portable DVD player. There are also dozens of free editing software to be found online.

There are all sorts of age appropriate art supplies.

Skip on the coloring book and buy a ream of copy paper. There are watercolors and washable markers for the young. Charcoal pencils and sketch paper, the list goes on. Glue and popsicle sticks or Legos are great for teaching the basics of architecture.

Having creative materials on hand also gives children something else to do when they tire of their video games. I believe well-rounded children are at least comfortable with the concept of art, even if they're not good at it. Art stimulates the imagination and increases their awareness of things around them.

Giving the gift of art is giving a gift that will last a lifetime.



*Gwen Bishop*

Gwen Bishop  
Publisher/Editor









Settled in Wilcox County, Gee's Bend produces the talent of a community of quilters. The quilters and their quilts are well known all across the nation. From California to Chicago, Washington State to the White House, the quilters have met thousands of people from everyday fans to First Lady Laura Bush. The quilts of Gee's Bend are renowned all over the world and have brought a tiny community, with a huge talent and history, onto the map.

Driving 45 minutes west of Selma, down some winding, hilly roads, you will see large signs along the road, showing a quilt pattern. Gee's Bend is dotted all over with these signs that are approximately seven feet high. The signs represent not only Gee's Bend quilts, but also stamps the postal service used to use, which can be ordered, since they no longer run.

Continue driving through the country roads, past some of the most beautiful landscape you've ever seen, and you'll eventually come to the Pettway Family Mercantile Store; a little white store with a spray-painted sign that reads, "That's Sew Gee's Bend." Inside the main room of the store, customers can buy a soda for a dollar, as well as a snack or two. Set off to the left is a clash of colors trying to pour their way into the main room. This is the quilting shop. Quilts of blanket size, as well as pot holders and tea cozies hang on the wall or lay folded on a bed. The scene is like walking into a museum; a complete difference from the convenience side of the store.

On this particular fall day, Minnie Pettway greets customers at the door, then introduces Tinnie Pettway, her sister, who is later referred to as their "fearless leader" by one of the other quilters, Jessie Pettway, and Revil Mosely. All live in Gee's Bend and all have quilted for the majority of their lives. Some used to be and still are members of Gee's Bend Quilters Collective, which should not be confused with That's Sew Gee's Bend, a company run by Tinnie and Minnie.

Yes, these women have quilted for the majority of their lives; most since childhood. Revil spoke of how painful quilting could be; "I poked my finger and poked my finger and Momma said 'That's life.'" Minnie mentioned, "We were young. You didn't use a thimble on your finger; you just got the tip [of your finger] tough." Much different from the calluses kids get from the monkey bars these days.

"My mom taught me. I've quilted since I was eight years old. I didn't do it right at first, but she kept on sewing pieces together until we learned. First we'd sew two pieces and then we'd get it to a whole block," Tinnie said. Often, in the beginning,

# the famous gee's bend

story by Kristen Morrison  
photos by Lynne Richardson  
AIA Interns





learning quilters don't quilt the top by themselves. As Tinnie said, they'd sew some of the pieces, or squares, together to create a block. Only once they'd had enough practice would they begin to piece the blocks together to make the top layer.

Life was so different back then. Most kids today would play with toys around the age of eight years old, but back 40 or 50 years ago kids, were learning how to quilt to help their families.

When asked about combined experience, nobody really knew what to say. Forty-five years one person said, someone else announced their age and tried to count back, so instead the ladies talk about the importance of quilting and why it was done.

"Everybody quilted to keep warm. There [weren't any] heaters in these rooms. That's how you kept warm. We don't know when it started; it just continued. That's all everyone did and everyone depended on it. You use it for blankets for the baby, throw rugs by the bed, for everything," Minnie paused for a second and said with a smile, "But you know that was the good life."

"We didn't know [any] better," Revil said.

Nowadays, when the ladies are traveling around the country, they find quilts



in a number of fashions. Revil mentioned the various fashions and uses for quilts; “Everywhere we go we see them. Tea cups, lamp shades, neck ties, scarves. They all wanted some. In Chicago, so many of them wanted some [to wear as scarves].” Definitely more uses for a quilt than one would think.

Minnie related the uses back to the past and how tough times were when it came to getting fabric for clothing, much less quilts. “They didn’t have much material in that time, and they wore the clothes until they absolutely fell off; they couldn’t hide themselves they wore it so long. I can remember men running around almost nude and that’s all they had, those clothes were raggedy.”

They all chimed in and talked of how each person would get two pieces of fabric a year. Everyone would get “two pairs of overalls in the fall of the year,” Minnie said. Tinnie said “the ladies got two pieces of material for their dress.”

“[Women] couldn’t fix their hair up. When the stockings wore out they took it and twisted their hair up some kind of way and it sure [looked] pretty,” Revil said. Quilts were used for every part of the clothing ensemble, especially when those ensembles began to fall apart. When the clothes would start wearing out, they’d patch them up.

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And, as Tinnie said, “You’d get a hole and patch the patch.”

Typically cotton was used for the padding of the quilt. However, if they couldn’t get a hold of cotton they’d “use old raggedy quilts and put them between the lining. It made for a very heavy quilt to keep warm for the next winter. It made them almost impossible to wash. It didn’t matter how [strong] your [clothes] line was it’d come down, because those quilts held so much water. We only washed them once a year, in the spring of the year,” Tinnie said.

Or “In the spring everyone would hang them on the line, in what they called airing them out,” Minnie added.

As hard as the quilts were to wash and clean, Minnie made a point to mention how so many quilts got made back then. Tinnie added “That’s how they got so many quilts made, having each other help. I’d have my quilt on a frame and my sister, Minnie, would have hers on a frame, but we’d call others to come in to help.”

So, it seems, with the help of the community, quilts were made. Just exactly *how* were those quilts made? What determines how each quilt will look?

“Each person builds their own quilt. We could be sitting in a house together and they won’t be the same. We come up with our own style, our own pattern,” Minnie said. And Revil, seemingly the blunt, voice of reason adds, “Both of them are gonna end up being a quilt.” Have truer words ever been spoken? Probably, but those words are right at the top.

So, what’s the difference between a \$4000 quilt and a \$400 quilt? Tinnie said, “The difference is depending on who made it.” Minnie added, “Sometimes what it’s made from. And sometimes it’s the material and how involved the quilt is. If you make a simple quilt and do don’t a whole lot of work then that one is cheaper.”

Despite the fact Gee’s Bend has a theme or style all of its own, they still do work on the side when people request it. During the visit, Tinnie was working on a quilt for an Auburn fan.

Still, those familiar with Gee’s Bend, know a Gee’s Bend quilt when they see one. Minnie mentioned how fans would point it out if a quilt didn’t seem to fit with Gee’s Bend’s style. “When we [make it a different way], and it’s not made by blocks, they say it’s not your quilt. Despite the fact we do Gee’s Bend style, we *can* do something

else and that's what makes Gee's Bend so popular."

Probably the best part of quilt design is the fact that the public tends to like what the quilters don't. "Everybody's got their own taste. [There is] nothing ugly or beautiful, that's just what it is. Sometimes we make some quilts that really don't look good to us and some people adore them." Tinnie said.

But that really is how it always goes. Beauty is always in the eye of the beholder, no matter what. Take a look at some of the quilts the quilters of That's Sew Gee's Bend have made, and it'd be hard not to find the beauty within.

In today's world, as Revil said before, we don't know any better either. We see these beautiful quilts and often don't think about what it took to get them here. There is a history behind these quilts, there's a life's story and journey. What we now have as a beautiful piece of art to hang on our walls or across our beds, was once a staple of everyday life for families and communities, and it still is to some. Where we may use it simply to cover up, or may never use it as it hangs like a tapestry, others used and reused their quilts until they were like the scraps they started off being before the quilts were made; the quilts were recycled until they could not be used any more.

It is stories like these that make quilts what they are and quilting makes these stories. Perhaps learning about quilting isn't always about where to put the needle, what pattern to stitch in, how to arrange your pieces, or the difference between a nine pack and an eight-point star, but perhaps it's more about the lives of those who make the quilts. What is being put into the patterns, how the patterns are forming, where the needle is supposed to go, where it pokes, and if it ever hurts. Like Revil said, "That's life."

Gee's Bend offers quilts, wall art, pot holders and more. Grab the phone and call 205.408.2969 or 334.573.2513, shoot them an email at [tinnieminnie@aol.com](mailto:tinnieminnie@aol.com), or search them online at [www.geesbend.net](http://www.geesbend.net). There's no reason to pass up an opportunity to have a little bit of Gee's Bend in your home.

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If one full-time artist is creative, one plus one may well add up to more than two in intensity. Deb and Steve Garst, internationally acclaimed artists living in Wetumpka, found each other in a second marriage for both. They have developed a symbiotic relationship that has turned out to be amazingly motivational; they are both driven to paint their way to the top. Married on the beach in an informal ceremony, these two started their lives together a few years ago. With every year, their devotion to art seems to expand along with their devotion to each other.

They laughingly point out that well before they met, they both had collected seashells and blue glass. Those collections are concrete symbols indicative of their deep passion for the water. Deb rattles off a list of canoes, sailboats and a baby pontoon that belonged to her before they were married. "I grew up in Birmingham, but my family spent a lot of time at Lake Weiss or Lake Martin," she recalled. "Now, Steve and I love to go to Lake Jordan."

Steve, on the other hand, grew up by the coast and Dauphin Island near Mobile. "As a boy, I lived on the water; we swam, boated, and ate seafood. I fished, crabbed and sheepheaded (Which he was quick to explain was a type of fish, not a sheep.).

When school was out, I lived outside. I assumed everybody knew how to drive a big boat because I had been doing that since I was five. All of this life style soaked into my psyche; every smell and every sight I soaked up like a sponge. Later when my

family moved to Montgomery, I was shocked and surprised to find out how special and different that experience had been," he said.

Fortunately, when he later moved to Wetumpka, he was placed in a high school art class where his art teacher and still-cherished friend, Bobby Carr, saw something special in him and encouraged him to continue on to Ringling School of Art. After graduating as an honor student, he immediately found professional work as an illustrator for a chain of furniture stores and "worked 1000 jobs in the next 37 years." The late Grace Bishop, his beloved tenth grade English teacher, wisely noted that Steve was "the only student I've ever had who is perfectly content to stare out the window, longingly looking outdoors, yet it didn't bother me because I knew he had vision and a plan."

This affinity for the outdoors is one interest that not only draws the couple together, but propels their art. They have worked together to rehab Deb's tiny pontoon boat, "Size Matters" (her own humorous choice of name), with special seats, steering and real bells and whistles, or at least quite an impressive horn. What is even more remarkable, though, is that this passionate love of water permeates their art. Deb's prize-winning "Uncommon Egret," for instance, started with an image she managed to capture while literally bobbing on a boat.

Over and over, you can see the sea birds, from gulls to egrets, showing up in their paintings. Steve often paints subjects such as a coastlines, fishermen at work, or their dog Marley frolicking on the beach. For fun, he even constructed a "Shovel-Butted Spoutbill" sculpture out of, as expected, a shovel and hose spout. When Steve has the world to choose from for his subject, humorous or serious, he is frequently drawn toward water. His works are extremely varied, often including multiple images, complex perspective or interesting faces such as a 97-year-old wrinkled man in "Prattville's Uncle Ward," or his first-prize winner "MJ and Billy," which is an old friend holding a parrot. Again and again, however, he returns to his love of the Alabama coast. Some of his latest paintings in progress include vast expanses of water and sky, punctuated by docks, boats or gulls. Another recent prize-winner, "Bay Dawning," portrays the deep green Dauphin Island coast with pale pink water reflecting the delicate dawn sky.

Even though Deb generally works with truly abstract painting, she often incorporates the image of a shell as a focal point, such as the nautilus shell in "Sea Borne" and occasionally even an actual shell or actual sand. "Peace and Love," a piece she did as a gift for Steve, includes some three-dimensional elements as well as words. Most of her work is extremely textural, built in layers of paint, ink and archival tissue, which she hand-dyes. She is delighted to tell the story of how a blind woman was able to enjoy one of her paintings: "The lady's husband described it to her, then asked if she could touch it. When she did, her face lit up, and she exclaimed, 'I can SEE it!'"

Although Deb's swathes of color are very different from Steve's blade-of-grass

# shared passions

story and photos by  
Libby J. Christensen  
AIA Visual Editor







realism, her work is still often inspired by a similar attraction to the outdoors. Just as they share a love of the water and of relaxing on a boat, they also share an intense passion for nature. Deb has earned the title of Master Gardener and loves to putter in her garden. She and Steve both lavish attention on their dogs and love watching the wild life, such as owls and hawks, in their back yard. Both of them grew up zealously watching the classic TV series "Wild Kingdom." Steve was absolutely thrilled to get a letter from Warren Garst, the videographer of that series who coincidentally shares the same last name. Warren Garst, who is also a keen genealogist, suggested that they may well be related and likely descended from Dutch explorers. Tall, blonde, and ruddy-faced with long hair, Steve does indeed resemble a Dutchman or maybe a Viking.

Viking or not, tremendously inspired by the "Wild Kingdom" series, Steve translated that love of nature through his pen and paintbrush onto his canvases.

Throughout their house hang paintings of eagles, hawks, turkeys, and even a tiger, which he did for a book called *Year of the Tiger*. In 1990, he won the Alabama Migratory Waterfowl stamp competition. The stamp itself is one that comes out each year and is used on the waterfowl hunting license. He only has a few of the stamps and the limited signed prints available on their web site, [www.garstart.com](http://www.garstart.com). He is also very proud to show the bronze cast made of a design that was actually reproduced on the Bassmasters Tournament trophies and reproduced on collectible buckles. Not surprisingly, he also worked for *Bassmaster* magazine as an illustrator for a time.

Steve's successes are too many to list. As a professional artist for over three decades, he has created illustrations for countless magazines, books and albums. From *Saturday Evening Post* to *Golf Digest* to *People*, his 2000+ covers prove he is an expert not only in painting but also in graphic design. One late night he created the logo for the Alabama Music Hall of Fame. Working for the U.S. Air Force as the senior illustrator and art director for Air University Press for over 20 years, he also illustrated 100's of scholarly books and journals. One of the most interesting pieces was not a cover, however. It was designed for a frontispiece for Secretary of State Colin Powell's book, *My American Journey*. When he was finished, Steve recounts, "I sent him the sketch, hoping that he would sign it," but it did not come back to Steve. Instead, he surprisingly received a generous check instead because General Powell liked the drawing so much that he bought it.

Deb has come later to the professional art scene because her earlier career was in education and speech therapy. Her creative spark, though, was clearly apparent when she was a child. While Steve was sketching and painting, throwing away the paint-by-number canvases to depict his own imagination, Deb was also gluing and painting. She attributes much of her inspiration to her





father, "He was a pharmaceutical sales representative. One of the things the company did was produce the packaging for the drug stores. Back then, they literally pasted up images to be photographed and reproduced. I enjoyed working with him on his big table made from an old door. He always said I should go into graphic design."

To this day, Deb loves to glue and paste, except now she loves combining textured materials with watercolor or acrylic. Currently on her big old drawing table rests a photographic collage literally made from photos of caladiums she printed on paper, cut out, positioned and painted. While Steve may approach a project using a logical, organized, neatly ordered graph drawn over his photos, Deb is more likely to feel her way into the subject, literally working with her hands and letting it evolve. Both of them, though, rely heavily on what Steve refers to as their own "library of photos," adding that they never have to look far for ideas. Just a few of their huge collection of moody shots of rivers, boats, clouds, and wildlife can be seen on their website and like their originals or prints, are often offered for sale.

Deb has been a photographer all her life. "As a child, I was the designated family photographer. Instead of being in the pictures, I was the one taking them." To prove her point, she has a great collection of old cameras, all the way back to her treasured box Brownie and Polaroids. She was active in art guilds in Birmingham long before she moved to the Montgomery area, repeatedly winning awards for her photography as well as her paintings.

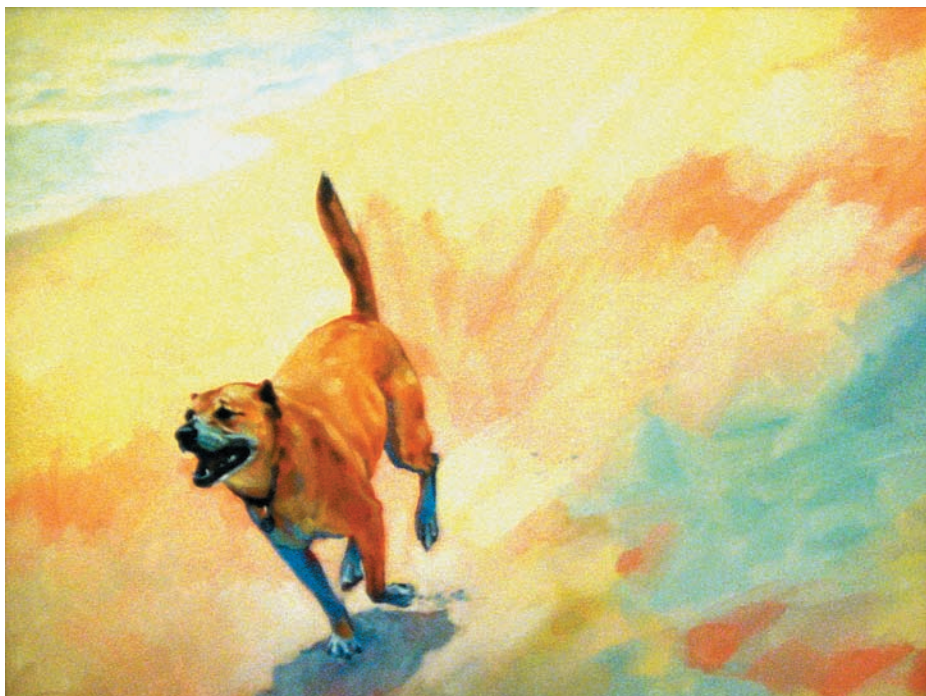
Both of these talented artists enthusiastically support the local guilds and have frequently brought home multiple awards from regional shows. Since Steve has recently retired, though, they are now able to travel a great deal more and reach farther afield to national and international shows. Together they achieved a major personal goal this year when both of them had pieces juried in to the International Society of Acrylic Painters (ISAP). Deb's "Sea Borne" was accepted, and Steve's "Sky Jack" won a \$500 Black Horse Fine Art Supply award in that competition. More than having a piece juried for a show, though, they truly hit a pinnacle when both of them received invitations to be "signature members" of this prestigious organization.

Deb explained that means they have earned "the privilege to use the society's name or initials for endorsement, and in turn, the society uses the names of its artists for promotion." Although Deb has held signature membership to the International Society of Experimental Artists since 1999, gaining ISAP status was more exciting for her because she and Steve were the first-ever married couple to be selected and because the juror was Gerald Brommer, an artist they have admired for years: "There were two works from Alabama entered, two works selected, and two artists named Garst!" The day they got the notice was a real red-letter day.

Together they are working to promote their art nationally and internationally. "Winning signature status truly opens up many doors," Steve explained. It is especially meaningful when competing for juried booths, such as the upcoming one they will share this month at the Dauphin Island Holiday Art Festival. "On November 20 we will be two of the 30-35 artists at Cadillac Square." Not only does the ISAP commendation add to Deb's and Steve's résumés, but the Dauphin Island association can boast having internationally rated artists. Enthusiastically looking forward to the festival, the two of them are feverishly working to have some new paintings available for sale there.

"It's different, though," Steve admitted. "When I was working, I had to produce 'art-on-demand.' Now that I'm not obligated to a regular job, I can paint what I want, when I want. The only pressure is self-induced." Then he corrected himself, "Sometimes it's Deb-induced when she finds out about another show that requires the digital photos to be sent in the next week." The deadlines of the shows can become the impetus for creativity, egged on by an admiring spouse. "We inspire each other,

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Facing page, two pieces by Deb: "My Caladiums," and one of many shell paintings she has done. Top, Steve's "Happniess Is."



and each of us is our own biggest fan," they profess, gazing at each other with great admiration.

It is not all about production, though. They are a social couple. Steve likes to play a bass guitar or banjo to unwind, and as with other interests, Deb shares his enjoyment of music. "We have made so many friends in the art community," Deb exclaimed with her eyes lighting up. "We meet at shows, we visit, we entertain, we take workshops." In turn, she and Steve would like to start hosting more workshops themselves. They recently shared a combination of his realism techniques and her abstract techniques in a Paint-In with a group of 14 non-painters. Deb described how "they crowded into

our studio. Some of them were afraid to try, but by the end of the workshop, every one of them used a variety of techniques." Steve was pleased to add that "all of them ended up with unique and beautiful work on canvas, using their own colors and their own ideas."

The Garsts' studio, called affectionately the Dog House Studio, is a work of art itself, also a labor of love. Just as they built their own deck (Deb says she wielded the nailgun with pride), they also built this two-story structure together, Deb researching the how-to handbooks and Steve climbing to the ceiling to do wiring. They have ended up with an artist's, or rather, two artists' dream. They have shelves and files, drawing boards and easels, a fridge and microwave, and even a shower in the bathroom if the paint gets too thick. Steve admits it was actually designed so that the building could be repurposed as a guest house sometime. In the meantime, though, it is decorated with hundreds of brushes, paints and portfolios. Deb likes to be downstairs where she can easily go in and out while Steve primarily works on the upstairs easel in the taller, brighter room.

"We are glad to be working here instead of our living room," Deb confessed, "because when we were first married, we had no place to have friends over. Can you imagine both of us trying to paint in there? It's nice to have our own spaces, but we still sometimes work together. If I need a taller space for an easel, I go up and use his. We occasionally paint all day in the same room, though we might not even see each other's work until the end of the day because we each get so involved in our own project.

"Steve can be annoying," she admitted. "He has a toy helicopter he's been known to fly down the stairs. I have to yell at him because it gets

noisy." Once in a while they truly work together, though. In their living room hangs an interesting abstract enigmatically signed "SDGA"—for Steve and Deb Garst. She did the underpainting, then gave it to him to finish off.

Mostly, though, they work separately, united by their inspirations. "We speak the same language," Steve said. "She'll start to describe something, and I can finish the sentence. We bounce ideas off each other." Asking each other "What do you think?" they often already know the answer. Working separately, yet thinking and feeling together, seems to be a successful merger of passions for this artistic pair.



Steve's "Prattville's Uncle Ward."



# AROUND THE STATE



Now in its 17th year, the Sarah Towery Art Colony, held on Lake Martin every year, was well attended by artists looking to continue to improve their work. Clockwise from top: Kay Vinson won a Merit Award; Langley Tolbert with her Merit Award winner; Kamala Mclemore; and Holly Roberts instructs Mary Hardy.



photos by Kay Vinson  
AIA Contributor







photos by Libby Christensen  
AIA Visual Editor

From the Emerging Young Artists opening reception for their "EYA's Members Show," currently showing in the Anita P. Folmar Gallery in Montgomery. The EYA Association was created last year by Chintia Kirana and Iman Seraaj to "give exposure to emerging talent in the art community." It has already hosted two national juried competitions and is attracting members through its web site [www.eyartists.com](http://www.eyartists.com)



**11.01-12.31.10**

Alabama's Finest Artists  
Gadsden Museum of Art  
[www.gadsdenmuseum.com](http://www.gadsdenmuseum.com)

**11.05.10-01.07.11**

Time for Play: Festive Thoughts  
and Whimsical Expressions  
Alabama Artists Gallery,  
Montgomery  
[georgine.clarke@arts.alabama.gov](mailto:georgine.clarke@arts.alabama.gov)

**Through 11.06.10**

UAB Alumni Invitational Exhibition  
The Gallery at UAB, Birmingham  
[www.uab.edu/art/vagallery.php](http://www.uab.edu/art/vagallery.php)

Old Master Drawings from the John  
and Mable Ringling Museum of Art  
Jule Collins Smith Museum, Auburn  
[www.jcsm.auburn.edu](http://www.jcsm.auburn.edu)

**11.08.10-11.12.10**

The Mystical Arts of Tibet Mandala  
Sand Painting  
Alys Stephens Center, Birmingham  
[www.AlysStephens.org](http://www.AlysStephens.org)

**11.1-12.15.10**

Langley Tolbert  
Stonehenge Gallery, Montgomery  
[www.stonehengegallery.com](http://www.stonehengegallery.com)

**11.18.10-12.04.10**

Annual Juried Student Exhibition  
The Gallery at UAB, Birmingham  
[www.uab.edu/art/vagallery.php](http://www.uab.edu/art/vagallery.php)

**Through 11.20.10**

Nashville Portraits: Black and White  
Photography  
Wiregrass Museum of Art, Dothan  
[www.wiregrassmuseum.org](http://www.wiregrassmuseum.org)

Beautiful Again – Works by Dana  
Brown & Scott Smith  
Carnegie Visual Arts Center, Decatur  
[www.carnegiearts.org](http://www.carnegiearts.org)

**11.20.10-01.22.11**

1072 Society Exhibition and Recent  
Acquisitions  
Jule Collins Smith Museum, Auburn  
[www.jcsm.auburn.edu](http://www.jcsm.auburn.edu)

**Through 11.21.10**

Strings Attached  
Wiregrass Museum of Art, Dothan  
[www.wiregrassmuseum.org](http://www.wiregrassmuseum.org)

**11.21.10-02.06.11**

Rebels With a Cause: American  
Impressionist Women  
Huntsville Museum of Art  
[www.hsvmuseum.org](http://www.hsvmuseum.org)

**Through 11.27.10**

As Above, So Below: Recent Works by  
Scherer & Ouporov  
Jule Collins Smith Museum, Auburn  
[www.jcsm.auburn.edu](http://www.jcsm.auburn.edu)

**Through 11.28.10**

Helen Keller Memorial Sculpture  
Montgomery Museum of Fine Art  
[www.mmfa.org](http://www.mmfa.org)

**12.04.10-04.11**

Contemporary Glass  
Wiregrass Museum of Art, Dothan  
[www.wiregrassmuseum.org](http://www.wiregrassmuseum.org)

**Through 12.05.10**

Turning Wood Into Art: The Jane and  
Arthur Mason Collection  
Huntsville Museum of Art  
[www.hsvmuseum.org](http://www.hsvmuseum.org)

**12.11.10-03.12.11**

Stranger in Paradise: The Works of  
Reverend Howard Finster  
Jule Collins Smith Museum, Auburn  
[www.jcsm.auburn.edu](http://www.jcsm.auburn.edu)

**12.19.10-01.30.11**

thiNK: 2010 Boston Printmakers  
Members Exhibition  
Huntsville Museum of Art  
[www.hsvmuseum.org](http://www.hsvmuseum.org)

**Through 12.31.10**

Alabama's Finest Artists  
Gadsden Museum of Art  
[www.gadsdenmuseum.com](http://www.gadsdenmuseum.com)

**Through 01.02.11**

American Landscapes: Treasures  
from the Parrish Art Museum  
Mobile Museum of Art  
[www.mobilemuseumofart.com](http://www.mobilemuseumofart.com)

# visual calendar

Find more events under Things to Do  
at [artsinalabama.webs.com](http://artsinalabama.webs.com)





Anticipation was in the air. Huddled together stood a group of guys that were laughing and reliving memories. In the middle of them stood Bo Bice. Surrounded by catering services and the hustle and bustle of getting ready for the show, a conversation began that takes a look into Bo's world.

Bo began by saying it was great to be back in Alabama.

"Alabama is my home. I've been in Nashville for six years. There are so many pieces of my past that are left along I-65 down the interstate. I've lived everywhere from Muscle Shoals to Huntsville to Helena, south of Birmingham. It's funny because there is something about when we do come home and we cross the Tennessee state line to Alabama there is something about the grass being a different color. The smell's a little different and it's always good to be home.

"It's always good to come home, but you have to realize I am a huge Jamey Johnson fan and a fan of The Blind Boys. Damian Johnson is here and he was in a band called Brother Cain and he is working on a new project called Whiskey Falls and he played with Alice Cooper, another Alabama boy. A lot of the time you see the same people and you see how they've grown in their careers."

Some of Bo's fondest memories of Alabama are, "sounds almost dream-like and poetic." When he first started singing he sang "Long Haired Country Boy," which was also the first time he made money singing.

"My most memorable moment in my childhood may sound nostalgic. I was riding in my uncle's '69 Camaro across the Tennessee River Bridge listening to 'Sweet Home Alabama.' I was probably three years old. Something about that day is burnt into my mind. Most people would think 'Oh, it has to be Bo Bice Day' or this or that, but it's that day riding with my uncle."

Like most everyone else, Bo will blast the car stereo. Recently, he was listening to "Please Come to Boston." "I like Willie Nelson, 'Whiskey River', and the old standard stuff. Jamey Johnson is an incredible songwriter and 'In Color' is an incredible song. I find myself singing that. I am a big Shooter Jennings fan – he's pretty bad ass."

For Bo, relaxation mostly revolved around music.

"Music is what I do for fun," he continued. "I don't really relax and kick back. I have a wife and three boys. She does all the hard work. The thing I enjoy most is getting on my bike. I like to ride my Harley. I'm blessed I have a good woman that holds the fort down while I'm out doing what I love, playing music for a living. I also fish when I want, hunt when I want. She's prob-

# backstage with bo bice

story and photo by Julia Oakes  
AIA Music Writer/Photographer



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ably just as glad to get me out of the house, so it doesn't bother her."

Bo has a new album entitled "3", which showcases the real Bo Diddley. There is something for everyone: country, soul, rock 'n' roll. "It's like your favorite pair of jeans, it just feels right," he said. Influences on this album include everyone from Jim Croce, Van Morrison, James Taylor, Gram Parsons to the Black Crowes and Lenny Kravitz. One of Bo's favorite songs on the album is "Different Shades of Blue". "Take Yourself with You" is story-telling and poetic.

"Different Shades of Blue" is a song I wrote with Greg Barnhill. We also wrote 'Lonely, Broken and Wasted'," he said about some of the songs. "I liked the production of the album. I liked everything about it. The strings came out and everything kinda stands on its own."

Bo enjoys the entire process of making music.

"I like it all. Years kinda go by in musical seasons - kinda the way seasons run. At a certain time, we've toured, next it's time to do preproduction on the album and writing. Then we have a couple of holidays.

Recording the album is the next stage."

He continues with a side story of talking to one of his friends earlier and they have a mutual friend that is in the music industry.

"I asked how he was doing and my friend said he was doing good, he's been home for about a month and a half and he is starting to feel that his world's falling apart. There is something in (musicians) where we have to constantly be working," Bo said.

"We have to keep our dog in the race. There is a sense of urgency to really where we don't want to lose the race. It's not some kind of ego thing, but it's also faith in what we do.

We're not trying to cure cancer. We are just writing songs and playing music and if it helps take people away from dealing with the cancer or the

loss of a family member, then I am happy about that.

<http://artsinalabama.webs.com>



"I never overstate what we do - like I said we're not saving people - but I know how much music does for me when I'm down. Each year I hear a fan say 'That song changed a moment in my life.' I never want to lose track of that. There is a bigger purpose doing music other than coming out here to make a buck."

While backstage and getting ready before a show, Bo clears up a few misconceptions:

"It is a big myth that everybody wants to go backstage, everybody wants to come hang out. We've been here since two o'clock and we've sound checked, hung out.

"A lot of folks think we are back here partying. There are chicks swinging from the chandelier and we have strippers and there is whiskey flowing from fountains. It's really just us sitting back here talking about the last time we did a show together. That is how mundane it gets. I think that's the cool part," he said.

"Normally, my ritual is I'll say a prayer, call my family and go stand beside the stage and listen. A lot of the times it's your fans and the rumbling and the anticipation before the show that builds up at the last moment."

Over the many interviews Bo has given, there is one thing he's been longing to answer.

"I've always wanted someone to ask me why I had my tramp stamp tattoo laser removed, the one on my back," he laughed. "What are you talking about? I've never had one. I was waiting to see what you would ask. Fishing, waiting to see if I'd do something like that. I get tattoos, but not on my lower back."

On a more serious note, he went on to talk about how people asked him the American Idol questions: "'Is Simon a jerk?' 'Is Paula really on drugs?' 'Did she flirt with you?' Those are the questions that aren't cool. The Idol questions are fine that are relevant to the music.

"I like to give interviews to people that really want to know more about me, and if they find me interesting enough they will buy one of my albums and maybe my music will inspire them. It's a lot cooler when you get someone to ask questions that take you off of your guard because we have the standard answers to the standard questions," he said.

"What I really love is when they ask creative questions, ones they have really put thought into and you find out really cool stuff about me."

So what three things can Bo not live without? "God, family and music. I don't think I could live without music and doing what I do," he said.

A genuine, funny, down to earth guy that loves his Alabama roots - that's Bo Bice. With the longing to inspire people with his music, and a love for what he does for a living, we all could take a few cues from him on how live should be lived.



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The Jackson Clinic welcomes

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Jackson Hospital is pleased to welcome Kim Hindi, a certified registered nurse practitioner in internal medicine. Her primary interests are women's health, diabetes care and management, hypertension and preventative care.

Hindi is originally from Prattville, Alabama, however, life as a military "brat" allowed her to live overseas in Germany and graduate high school in Hawaii. She has a husband and four children and stays busy attending their sporting events.

Hindi joins physician James Mracek, II, MD at the Jackson Clinic.

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There is no doubt the Concerts for the Coast series has been a huge success with over 35,000 people in Gulf Shores to see Bon Jovi and Brad Paisley. The audience sang at the tops of their lungs to their favorite songs.

photos by Julia Oakes  
AIA Music Writer/Photographer





photos by Julia Oakes  
AIA Music Writer/Photographer

Lee Bice, Gretchen Wilson and Hank Williams Jr. rocked the The Wharf Ampitheatre to a packed house in Orange Beach. Fans were on their feet singing to the famous songs of the rowdy entertainers. Definitely a party at The Wharf!





photos by Julia Oakes  
AIA Music Writer/Photographer



The Alabama Cotton Festival in Eclectic ended with a bang with performances by Chad Wilson, Drake White and Wayne Mills Band. A variety of talented musicians participated in the Stars of Alabama Showcase contest. Look for the winners in next month's AIA magazine.

# guitars for troops

Right now, as you read this article, there are servicemen and women serving our interests in Afghanistan, Iraq, and various other locations world wide.

Picture this: a cool desert breeze blows. Hot and tired soldiers coming in from a long patrol pass by troops heading out on a new mission. They walk a path looking to somehow forget what they have just seen or heard. In a soft light just outside their living quarters, a few guys are sitting around playing guitars and singing songs that remind them of home and remove the sting of the separation. This is how some cope.

Those troops in the active combat zone of Afghanistan fight day and night for a small sense of normalcy or relief from an ever-present crushing stress. Music has always been known as a healer and coping friend that never leaves your side. Now, through a program that was set up and founded by two strangers - Alabamian and a Tennessean, there is ray of hope for some of our troops. The program is called Guitars 4 Troops.

"I didn't really choose [Guitar Gallery]; they chose me I guess you can say," Bob Persch, a Jacksonville troop forward deployed in Afghanistan, said. It started in June of 2009, when Sgt. Persch began looking for a company that would work with the troops to get guitars in country. His goal, along with others, was to pass the time by learning to play. Some comrades already played, and they would teach each other.

"We didn't want freebies; we just wanted someone who would wrap their arms around us and help us get a couple of guitars over here," he said. He sent out 100 emails to companies he found in a guitar magazine. Of the 40 percent or so that responded, a lot of no's were given, and many "yes, but it will take six months to a year."

Robin Weber, Guitar Gallery in Tennessee, said yes after verifying that the sergeant was who and where he said he was. "I don't know why (I did it). I just did," she said. The program, which didn't start out as one, has become very dear to her. Now through monetary and instrument donations, alongside personal purchase at reduced rates and agreements with national manufacturers, Robin sends these instruments over to troops on her extensive waiting list. "The cost is about \$300," per guitar, she said. She personally dedicates 10 percent of her store's profits to the program. To date, she has gotten near 70 guitars out to the troops, and she has about 40 people on the waiting list.

"I can't tell you how many letters I've gotten that tell how much these guitars mean to them. Music makes a big difference," she said. "I don't even know why I responded so strongly. I mean, I'm not in the military and never have been. I don't even have relatives in the military. It just resounded in my being that this is the right thing to do and, yes we will do this, and have been ever since."

Cap. Robert Law (pictured above right), an Elmore County native now in Afghanistan, is a recipient of one of the guitars from the Guitars 4 Troops program. He, like others, had never played nor had ever tried. "I have signed the guitar I received and will be passing it off to someone that will be here for another year, and he has agreed to do the same when he leaves," he said.

Simply put, having something positive like an instrument, those who received one and others around them as well, have a constructive outlet in dark and stressful location. If you are interested in donating or helping with the Guitars 4 Troops program, visit the website, [www.guitargal.com/guitars4troops](http://www.guitargal.com/guitars4troops). There you will find more information on how you can help.

<http://artsinalabama.webs.com>



story by Jonalan Wright  
AIA Music Editor  
photo submitted



# audio calendar

**11.01.10**

Ra Ra Riot with Givers  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

**11.02.10**

The Aggrolites  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

**11.03.10**

Easton Corbin  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

New Mastersounds  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

UAB Student Recital  
Mary Culp Hulsey Recital Hall, B'ham  
[www.music.uab.edu](http://www.music.uab.edu)

**11.04.10**

Galactic with special guests Cyril  
Neville and Corey Henry (Rebirth  
Brass Band) & Vertigo Jazz Project  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

American Aquarium  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)

Pseudo Nein  
Head on the Door, Montgomery  
[facebook.com/headonthedoorbar](http://facebook.com/headonthedoorbar)

UAB Faculty Recital  
Mary Culp Hulsey Recital Hall, B'ham  
[www.music.uab.edu](http://www.music.uab.edu)

**11.05.10**

Parachute w/ Hot Chelle Rae &  
Brendan James  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

The Blueprint Dance Party  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)

Alamantra  
Head on the Door, Montgomery  
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Aerophonics Atlas  
Marty's, Birmingham  
[www.martysbar.com](http://www.martysbar.com)

The Last Waltz Ensemble  
Bourbon Street Bar, Auburn  
[facebook.com/bourbonstreetbar](http://facebook.com/bourbonstreetbar)



Sarah McLachlan  
Alabama Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.alabamatheatre.com](http://www.alabamatheatre.com)

**11.06.10**

Tyler Hilton & Josiah Leming w/ Lee  
Anna Culp  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

Fat Mouth Blues Band  
Marty's, Birmingham  
[www.martysbar.com](http://www.martysbar.com)

**11.07.10**

Reaction Media Presents: Cannibal  
Corpse, Dying Fetus, Vital Remains  
and Devourment  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)

Matthew Devine's Incestet  
Marty's, Birmingham  
[www.martysbar.com](http://www.martysbar.com)

UAB Choirs Fall Concert  
Alys Stephens Center, Birmingham  
[www.music.uab.edu](http://www.music.uab.edu)

**11.09.10**

Reaction Media Presents: The Acacia  
Strain, The Red Chord, Terror, Gaza,  
The Contortionist and TBA  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)

T. Junior  
Head on the Door, Montgomery  
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UAB Percussion Ensemble  
Alys Stephens Center, Birmingham  
[www.music.uab.edu](http://www.music.uab.edu)

**11.11.10**

Lee Brice  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

**11.12.10**

Wrongway: A Sublime Tribute  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)

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Bonus Round  
Marty's, Birmingham  
[www.martysbar.com](http://www.martysbar.com)

UAB Computer Music Ensemble  
Mary Culp Hulsey Recital Hall, B'ham  
[www.music.uab.edu](http://www.music.uab.edu)

**11.13.10**

Brooke Fraser  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

Jerry Joseph w/ Wally Ingram and The  
Big Nekkid  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)

Needley and Kendra Sutton Band  
Marty's, Birmingham  
[www.martysbar.com](http://www.martysbar.com)

The Grand Magnolias  
Bourbon Street Bar, Auburn  
[facebook.com/bourbonstreetbar](http://facebook.com/bourbonstreetbar)

UAB Brass Chamber Ensembles  
Mary Culp Hulsey Recital Hall, B'ham  
[www.music.uab.edu](http://www.music.uab.edu)

**11.14.10**

Nemesis Entertainment presents: Battle  
of the Bands  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)

Mark Kimbrell Trio  
Marty's, Birmingham  
[www.martysbar.com](http://www.martysbar.com)

**11.16.10**

Zoogma with Papadosio  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)



UAB Jazz Combos in concert  
Mary Culp Hulsey Recital Hall, B'ham  
[www.music.uab.edu](http://www.music.uab.edu)

**11.17.10**

Reckless Kelly  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)

Easy Kiddo/Bonejackal  
Head on the Door, Montgomery  
[facebook.com/headonthedoorbar](http://facebook.com/headonthedoorbar)

Scott Hudson  
Marty's, Birmingham  
[www.martysbar.com](http://www.martysbar.com)

Michael Tolcher w/ Garrison Starr  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

Red Mountain Entertainment  
presents: Punch Brothers featuring  
Chris Thile  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

UAB Piano Studio and Piano  
Ensembles Recital  
Mary Culp Hulsey Recital Hall, B'ham  
[www.music.uab.edu](http://www.music.uab.edu)

**11.19.10**

The 17th Floor  
Zydeco, Birmingham  
[www.zydecobirmingham.com](http://www.zydecobirmingham.com)

The Issues  
Head on the Door, Montgomery  
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Sweetwater Road and Zach Doll Band  
Marty's, Birmingham  
[www.martysbar.com](http://www.martysbar.com)

Blackberry Smoke  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

**11.20.10**

Scott Ward Band  
Marty's, Birmingham  
[www.martysbar.com](http://www.martysbar.com)

Larry Keel & Natural Bridge  
WorkPlay Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.workplay.com](http://www.workplay.com)

UAB Opera Scenes  
Mary Culp Hulsey Recital Hall,  
[www.music.uab.edu](http://www.music.uab.edu)

## Keith Moody, Lines 2010

Keith Moody, though only 27, has a certain maturity to his voice that keeps you coming back for more. His experience as a well-traveled, experienced person comes through with emotion in his new EP, *Lines*.

The first three songs, "Next In Line", "Do It Over Again", and "Up!" are full of energy. While listening, you cannot keep your feet still if your standing, or your head from bobbing if you are driving or sitting.

From "Up!":

"Now I'm up in the morning,  
such a beautiful day.

"No matter where I'm going,  
its always the right way!..."

The last track, "Red Line", is probably one of the favorites from the EP. Keith Moody has a sultry, soulful tone to his voice that makes you want to see what is next.

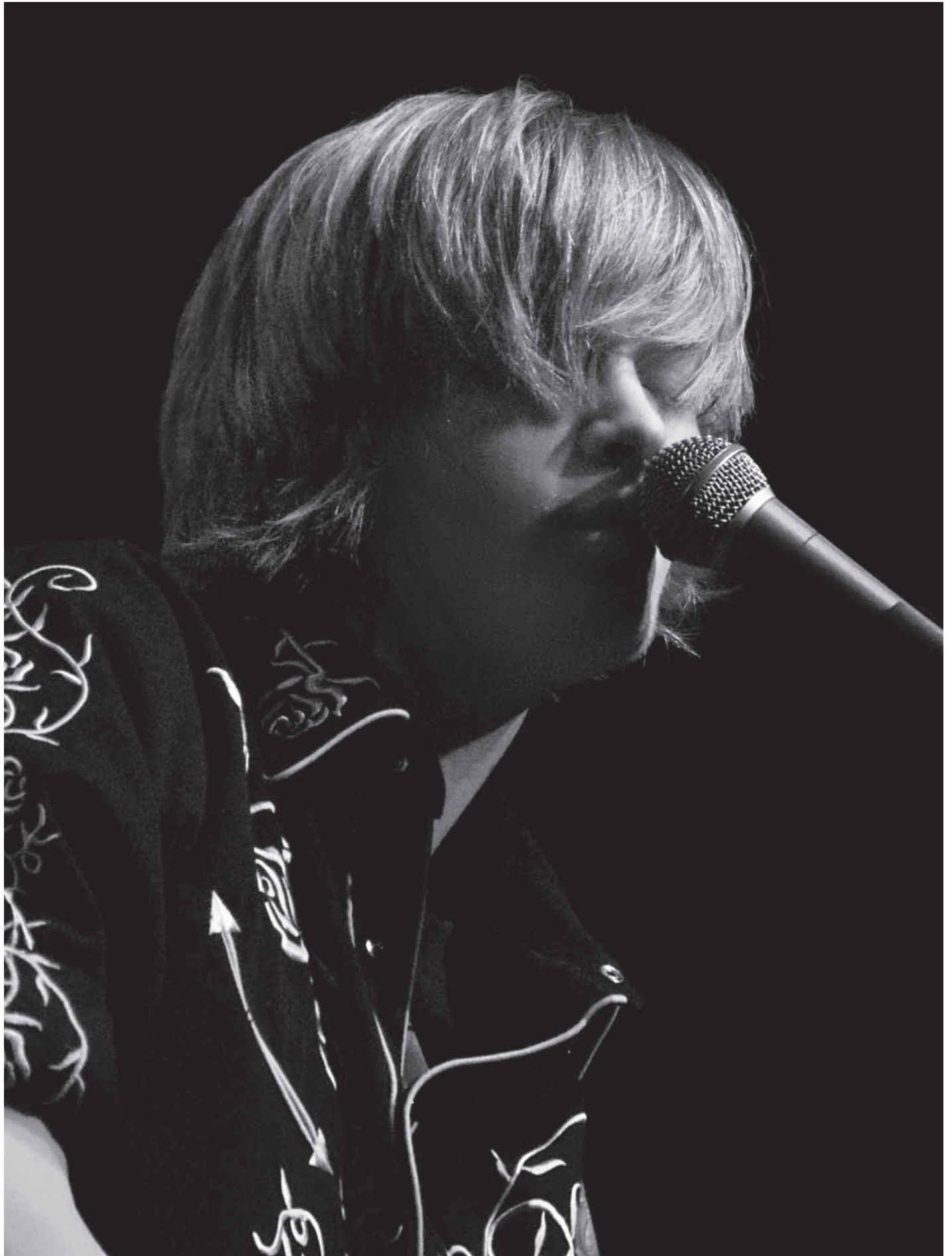
This EP is one definitely one worth listening too and will leave you longing for more.

Lynne Richardson



new music





Imagine you are 22 years old and pursuing your dream and passion for playing music. Now take let your thoughts wander a little farther and imagine that Hollywood filmmakers are following you in your daily life, during your shows and around the country, and that they will eventually debut the resulting documentary at the Sundance Film Festival.

If you are local guitar phenomenon Todd Simpson you don't have to imagine this because it is your real life. And it is not the first unusual occurrence in Todd's short life.

Todd Simpson has spent the last four years honing his craft in the Southeast and as far west as California. But his life wasn't always so focused on music. Todd spent the first three years of his life, more than 700 days in the hospital, battling DiGeorge Syndrome, a rare medial condition that created heart complications and autoimmune disorders that almost took Todd's life. When he finally made his way home, he required a nurse to care for him and, as the story that is now local legend goes, this nurse happened to be a blues fan who shared her love for great blues masters with the young Todd.

Todd seemed to soak it all up for a few years and when he was eight he picked up a harmonica and started to play. His dad, Wes, was so impressed that Todd had the natural ability and love for music that he contacted the late Willie King and within a couple days Todd was onstage with King at City Stages in Birmingham. Music was a great change of pace from all the medical issues that had plagued Todd, and his family was more than happy to help him pursue something that gave him so much joy. But Todd didn't stop there. At 18 after watching a Jimi Hendrix DVD he emerged a few days later playing the songs on an electric guitar. He had not played guitar before and really seemed to channel the music. Within a few weeks he and his dad formed a band with a couple other musicians and started playing live as Todd Simpson and Mojo Child.

In the past few years Todd and the band have played most of Birmingham's venues and won the Magic City Blues Society's Battle of the Blues bands. This honor allowed them to represent Birmingham and compete at the International Blues Challenge in Memphis, Tennessee. Later Todd caught the eye of Lexi Alexander who was working on an Independent Film called *Lifted*. Considering Todd for the lead role, she later decided he was too old for the part and wrote a special part just for him. The film was recently showcased at the Sidewalk Film Festival where Todd was in attendance.

Filming for his upcoming documentary started with the Sidewalk Film Festival. Cameras followed Todd to the screening. You would imagine that would make him a bit nervous, but he shared, "The first day we began filming was at the Sidewalk Film Festival in Birmingham. It was a little uncomfortable at first, but after a few hours I got use to, now I barely notice; which isn't always a bad thing."

The documentary is being directed by Dash Mihok and being produced by Gat 3 Midsouth and Round Table Productions. Dash is an accomplished actor who met Todd during the filming of *Lifted*. "I heard about this extraordinary kid with an extraordinary story. I really didn't know anything about him, but from the moment I met him I felt an amazing kinship with him," he said. The documentary will show Todd as a person, not so much in a biographical sense, but in his daily life and how he has come to survive, Dash said.

"It will be a documentary about my life, so wherever I take the cameras is where it will be filmed. We know for sure it will be filmed in Birmingham and Los Angeles, however, it will be a year's worth of filming, so you never know. The concept is to show that no matter what disabilities you may have, or the struggles you may go through, as long as you persevere anything can be accomplished," Todd said.

The band is currently in the process of planning a three to four month tour on the west coast and Europe, and recording a CD. Todd also shared, "We are keeping our options open. One thing that I have learned is not to focus on the horizon, because by doing that we see the end. So, I choose not to look for the horizon but wait for it to appear around the next bend."

<http://artsinalabama.webs.com>

# the todd simpson film

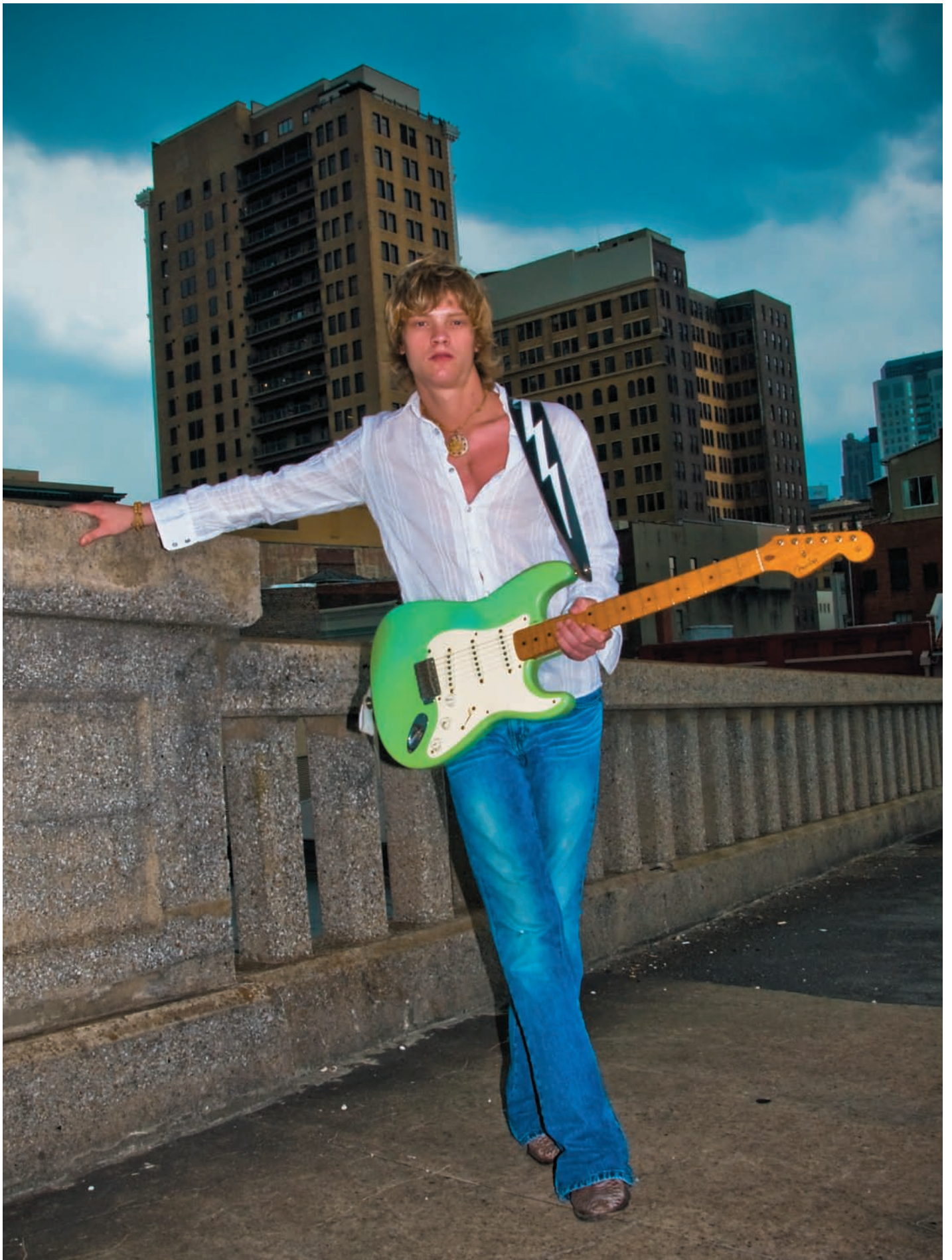
story and photos by Jan King  
AIA Contributor





Todd realizes that his musical gift has given him the opportunity to share his journey with others.

“I use my disability to affect others in a positive way. In my opinion, our only purpose on this earth is to affect others. I want this documentary to show more than anything that I am no more than a drop of paint on a canvas, I may be a beautiful color, or hold a special meaning for those coordinates; but I am nothing without the rest of the dots and strokes of paint. Once we all come together, what a beautiful picture we will paint,” he said.





## Inception, R (2010) Christopher Nolan, director

Yes, it is as good as you've heard.

Around the time of its release, critics were wondering whether or not Christopher Nolan could direct a movie that would top *The Dark Knight* (2008). Nolan has a fairly short list of movies to his credit, 10 to be exact, but all have given him a solid reputation (*Memento* 2000, *Batman Begins* 2005 and *The Prestige* 2006) as a powerhouse writer and director.

The trailers and written descriptions of *Inception* do not capture the true essence of the movie. Sure, the special effects are there and the movie looks great, but there's no way to describe the dream sequences without actually watching it for yourself. For anyone with an active dream life, the movie will indeed capture the imagination.

Leonardo DiCaprio has chosen his last several movies wisely. All slightly different, he is able to show his true act-



ing ability, captured early in his career in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* (1993).

In *Inception*, DiCaprio plays Dom Cobb, a renegade dream thief, so to speak. By entering into others' dreams, he is able to steal information and plant ideas. The planting of ideas is known as inception, and when a client asks him to do this, he knows he's probably the only person who can. Although risky business, he employs his team and recruits Ellen

Page (Ariadne) as a builder. Builders enter into the dream and are responsible for constructing a believable backdrop to the dreamer's subconscious mind. If the dreamer doesn't believe any part of the backdrop, the subconscious will try to "oust" the thieves from their dream.

Yes, heavy, confusing stuff, but somehow Nolan is able to convey the tale clearly. Even without all the special effects, the script is written so that anyone can understand how the dream thieves

## Giallo, R (2009) Dario Argento, director

Amidst lawsuits and hurt feelings, Italy's Dario Argento's latest *giallo* film was finally released in America.

The story goes that Adrien Brody never got paid for the film and also that until he was paid, no likeness of him could appear in connection with the film. There were also rumors that Brody ended up not liking the film and didn't want it distributed.

With all that hopefully behind them now, the film is the latest installment of Argento's "B" horror/thriller movies. The term *giallo* is actually derived from films directed by Argento in the 70's. The famed director has made a name for himself in this genre, and at 70, still has it in him. Although the plot, gore and slain women are what you would expect from an Argento movie, the superb acting from Brody (Inspector Enzo Avolfi) and French actress Emmanuelle Seigner (Linda), carry the movie into a bigger place than what



it really should be. The most notable letdown is the music which sounds like Argento may have reused bits from one of his productions from the 70's or 80's. It's just plain irritating and bad.

Another Argento characteristic is that his protagonist will have other struggles besides just catching the bad guy. There are several Avolfi flashbacks explaining why he is so dark and brooding, and how he is able to track

down killers so efficiently.

Seigner's role as an irritating, helpless sidekick is far from her usual roles, but she plays it well. Following Avolfi around and showing up when she isn't needed, then actually coming on to him, puts her well into the "helpless woman" category until she actually figures out the clue that turns the manhunt around.

For Argento fans, this is an enjoyable movie, or even a good introduction to his filmmaking style. For everyone else, it can easily be skipped. *Gwen Bishop*

manipulate the dreamer's subconscious. As the thieves go deeper and deeper into one man's subconscious to perform inception, the viewer is able to follow the complicated process while still enjoying the special effects. *Inception* is definitely a thinking person's action movie. Unlike most action movies, this one is not chock-full of one-liners. The dialog actually means something.

Cobb's closest partner Arthur, played by Joseph Gordon-Levitt, is portrayed as the more level-headed dream thief. Arthur's role in the thievery is to make sure everything goes as planned and to initiate a bailout of sorts if things start to go wrong.

Gordon-Levitt, best known for his years on TV's *Third Rock from the Sun*, is beginning to take the spotlight as a leading man. His somber, mostly serious roles began with *Brick* (2005) and his acting skills have continued to place him in roles in outstanding movies such as *Inception*. The sign of a good actor is usually that you forget who you're watching. The actor owns the role and becomes that character. Gordon-Levitt, and still newcomer Page, own their roles in this movie. A great feat for such young actors. Canadian Ellen Page didn't become a household name until *Juno* (2007), although she had notable roles in *Hard Candy* (2005) and *X-Men: The Last Stand* (2006).

Although the storyline is complicated, the movie is one that can be watched again and again, and with each viewing new things can be discovered. The *Inception* DVD/Blu-Ray release is currently scheduled for mid-December. *Gwen Bishop*

## Orlando, PG-13 (1992) Sally Potter, director

Originally distributed in 1992, Sally Potter's *Orlando* was re-released last summer. Potter adapted the screenplay from Virginia Woolf's 1928 novel "Orlando: A Biography" about an individual who changes genders halfway through her over 400-year long life. The movie is divided into seven sections: Death, Love, Poetry, Politics, Society, Sex and Birth.

Excruciatingly slow and cryptic, *Orlando* is nonetheless a gorgeous work of art. Its enthralling music, mostly composed by Potter and David Motion, contributes to the film's dreamlike ambiance. *Orlando's* color palette is also extraordinary. Cinematographer Aleksei Rodionov shoots the Rococo period's pastel blues and pinks in muted light. Candles illuminate the Renaissance's bold outfits and elaborate rituals.

Tilda Swinton looks the part of the androgynous Orlando, but the movie's acting and writing are stilted and bizarre. Amongst the film's many unobvious messages, its most powerful theme is that of identity. Though difficult to get through, *Orlando* has an entrancing originality. *Noelle Matteson*



## The Social Network, R (2010) David Fincher, director

*The Social Network* is a classical tale of power and revenge. It begins in 2003 at Harvard, where undergraduate Mark Zuckerberg invents the vast social networking website Facebook. Director David Fincher (*Fight Club*, *Se7en*) intersperses Mark's upward trajectory with scenes from two lawsuits against him, one from his friend and co-founder Eduardo Saverin and one from classmates Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss.

Aaron Sorkin, also a playwright, adapted this outstanding script from Ben Mezrich's mostly true book *The Accidental Billionaires*. Language is as central to this film as it is to any play. Conversations are the equivalent of car chases. In spite of its cleverness, the dialogue remains remarkably natural.

The fast talk is aided by snappy editing and pumping music, which sometimes turns as ominous as the darkly lit Harvard campus. Even glamorized scenes of elite parties are shot in somber tones. Further visual ingenuity is evinced in one scene in which the camera makes the world of a rowing race look like a perfect toyland. This athletic struggle mimics the characters' over arching business battles.

Impeccably cast, *The Social Network* is also a fascinating character study. Played by Jesse Eisenberg, Mark's intelligence and drive dominate the story. So brilliant he occasionally comes across as an evil genius, Mark is lonely, self-centered, and contemptuous. (His outfits consist of hoodies and sandals.) This protagonist's tragic flaws allow him everything but friendship.

The film is tilted towards Mark's former friend Eduardo (Andrew Garfield). While his decency and victimization are overemphasized, the character is quite believable and certainly sympathetic.

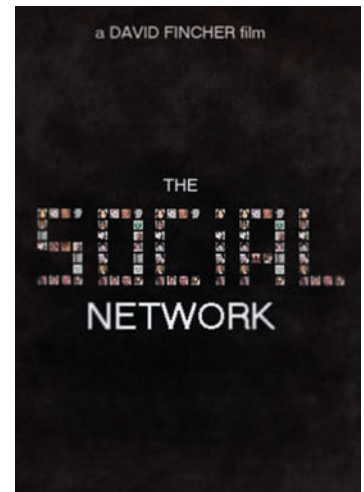
Also interesting are the amusing Winklevoss twins, played by Armie Hammer (thanks to incredible special effects). Tall and gorgeous, these Olympic class rowers resemble Olympians. They may be entitled, but their plight is understandable.

Even Sean Parker (Justin Timberlake), the creator of Napster and the man who seduces Mark into a larger life, comes across as more pathetic than villainous. Sean has surface charm and appreciates Facebook's potential, but he is at best unreliable and sophomoric.

Smaller parts are likewise well acted, including Mark's level headed and thus brief girlfriend (Rooney Mara) and the twins' furious friend Divya Narendra (Max Minghella). The only misstep is Rashida Jones as a (gorgeous) lawyer who is bizarrely compassionate to Mark, in an apparent attempt to make him more likable.

Certain aspects of the story are sexed up and simplified. Only the exclusive side of Harvard is explored. Most disturbing is that the characters on which *The Social Network* is based are still alive. Though mixing fact and fiction can be dubious, the creators of the film performed extensive research and invited everyone to give their input. Understandably, Mark Zuckerberg declined to participate.

Fast paced, hilarious and parabolic, *The Social Network* will ensnare many into its world of competition and self-destruction. It is an excellent portrayal of internet and youth culture in all its innovation, imagination, selfishness and insolence. Amongst questions of class and control, we watch Mark and others chase after a sense of happiness that is ultimately hollow. *Noelle Matteson*





# new releases

## in theaters

11.05.10  
Megamind, PG  
Tom McGrath,  
director



Due Date, R  
Todd Phillips,  
director

127 Hours, R  
Danny Boyle,  
director

Fair Game, PG-13  
Doug Liman, director

For Colored Girls, R  
Tyler Perry, director

Client 9, R  
Alex Gibney, director

Red Hill, R  
Patrick Hughes, director

11.10.10  
Morning Glory, PG-13  
Roger Michell, director

11.12.10  
Unstoppable, PG-13  
Tony Scott, director

Skyline, PG-13  
Colin Strause and  
Greg Strause,  
directors



Cool It, PG  
Ondi Timoner,  
director

Helena From the  
Wedding  
Joseph Infantolino, director

Tiny Furniture  
Lena Dunham, director

11.19.10  
Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows:  
Part 1, PG-13  
David Yates, director

The Next Three Days, PG-13  
Paul Haggis, director

Made in Dagenham, R  
Simon Curtis, director

11.24.10  
Tangled, PG  
Nathan Greno and Byron Howard,  
directors

Burlesque  
Steven Antin, director

Love and Other Drugs, R  
Edward Zwick, director

Faster, R  
George Tillman Jr., director

The King's Speech, R  
Tom Hooper, director

The Nutcracker in 3D, PG  
Andrei Konchalovsky, director

- from [imdb.com](http://imdb.com) and [themovieinsider.com](http://themovieinsider.com)

## in alabama

Through 11.3  
Cairo Time  
Capri Theatre, Montgomery  
[www.capritheatre.org](http://www.capritheatre.org)

Through 11.4  
You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger  
Crescent Theater, Mobile  
[www.crescenttheater.com](http://www.crescenttheater.com)

11.5-11.10.10  
Lebanon  
Capri Theatre, Montgomery  
[www.capritheatre.org](http://www.capritheatre.org)

11.11.10  
Stripes  
Capri Theatre, Montgomery  
[www.capritheatre.org](http://www.capritheatre.org)

11.13.10  
Hell On Wheels  
Crescent Theater, Mobile  
[www.crescenttheater.com](http://www.crescenttheater.com)

11.12-11.18.10  
Never Let Me Go  
Capri Theatre, Montgomery  
[www.capritheatre.org](http://www.capritheatre.org)

11.15.10  
Southern Circuit Tour of Independent  
Filmmakers: Artois the Goat  
Capri Theatre, Montgomery  
[www.capritheatre.org](http://www.capritheatre.org)

<http://artsinalabama.webs.com>

# on disc

11.02.10

Centurion, R (2010)  
Neil Marshall, director

The Hungry Ghosts, R (2009)  
Michael Imperioli

The Dry Land, R (2010)  
Ryan Piers Williams, director

The Sound of Music (1965)  
Robert Wise, director

Toy Story 3, G (2010)  
Lee Unkrich, director

Winnebago Man, NR (2010)  
Ben Steinbauer, director

11.09.10

Antichrist, NR (2009)  
Lars Von Trier, director

11.15-11.18

Waiting For Superman  
Crescent Theater, Mobile  
[www.crescenttheater.com](http://www.crescenttheater.com)

11.16.10

Southern Circuit Tour of Independent  
Filmmakers: Burning in the Sun  
Jule Collins Smith Museum, Auburn  
[www.jcsm.aub.edu](http://www.jcsm.aub.edu)

11.18.10

Southern Circuit Film Screening:  
Burning in the Sun  
Alys Stephens Center, Birmingham  
[www.alysstephens.org](http://www.alysstephens.org)

11.19-11.24.10

Soul Kitchen  
Capri Theatre, Montgomery  
[www.capritheatre.org](http://www.capritheatre.org)

11.26-29.10

The Girl Who Kicked The Hornets' Nest  
Crescent Theater, Mobile  
[www.crescenttheater.com](http://www.crescenttheater.com)

11.26-12.07.10

Jack Goes Boating  
Capri Theatre, Montgomery  
[www.capritheatre.org](http://www.capritheatre.org)

Charlie St. Cloud, PG-13 (2010)  
Burr Steers, director

Grown Ups, PG-13  
(2010)  
Dennis Dugan,  
director

The Kids Are All  
Right, R (2010)  
Lisa Cholodenko,  
director

Knucklehead, PG-13 (2010)  
Michael Watkins, director

Love Ranch, R (2010)  
Taylor Hackford, director

Lovely, Still, PG (2010)  
Nicholas Fackler, director

The Mayor of Strawberry Fields  
Nate Harar, Torre Catalano and Chris  
Harar, directors

The Nature of Existence, NR (2010)  
Roger Nygard, director

Ramona and Beezus, G (2010)  
Elizabeth Allen, director

Scott Pilgrim vs. the World, PG-13  
(2010)  
Edgar Wright, director

The Song of the Little Road (2003)  
Priyanka Kumar, director

Women Without Men, NR (2009)  
Shirin Neshat and Shoja Azari,  
directors

11.16.10

Best Worst Movie,  
NR (2009)  
Michael  
Stephenson,  
director

Cats & Dogs: The  
Revenge of Kitty  
Galore, PG  
(2010)

Brad Peyton, director

Disney's A Christmas Carol, PG (2009)  
Robert Zemeckis, director

Eyes Wide Open (2009)  
Haim Tabakman, director



Lottery Ticket, PG-13 (2010)  
Erik White, director

The Extra Man, R (2010)  
Shari Springer Berman and Robert  
Pulcini, directors

The Last Airbender, PG (2010)  
M. Night Shyamalan, director

11.23.10

Countdown to Zero, PG (2010)  
Lucy Walker, director

Eat Pray Love, PG-13 (2010)  
Ryan Murphy, director

Flipped, PG (2010)  
Rob Reiner, director

I'm Still Here, R (2010)  
Casey Affleck, director

The Disappearance of Alice Creed, R  
(2010)  
J Blakeson, director

The Expendables, R (2010)  
Sylvester Stallone, director

The Winning Season, PG-13 (2010)  
James Strouse, director

11.30.10

Cairo Time, PG-13 (2010)  
Ruba Nadda, director

House Arrest (2009)  
Jarrell Crump, director

Knight and Day, PG-13 (2010)  
James Mangold, director

The Sicilian Girl (2009)  
Marco Amenta, director

The Sorcerer's Apprentice, PG (2010)  
Jon Turteltaub, director

Vampires Suck, PG-13 (2010)  
Jason Friedberg and Aaron Seltzer,  
directors

Waking Sleeping Beauty, PG (2010)  
Don Hahn, director

Walt & El Grupo, PG (2009)  
Theodore Thomas, director

- from [imdb.com](http://imdb.com), [themovieinsider.com](http://themovieinsider.com) and  
[moviefone.com](http://moviefone.com)





Chae Hyang Soon captures the essence of a flower with "The Fan Dance". With each snap of the fans opening and closing, the audience imagines wind massaging the flowers on a spring afternoon.

Chae Hyang Soon, a dance troupe from South Korea, claims to "present the essence of Korean art." This essence goes undefined, but it seems that their entire show is devoted to the task, leaving the audience with an understanding of this essence through their recent performance, *Dynamic Korea: Dance and Song*. Sponsored by the Alabama Asian Society, the program exemplifying Korean art far exceeded expectations with an astounding plethora of cultural insights for the Virginia Samford Theatre audience.

The attempt is Herculean. Utilizing several musical instruments, costumes and songs, Chae Hyang Soon explores a wide spectrum of traditional Korean art and

art culture with two hours of dance, music and song. The performers even synthesize traditional dances to pop music showing the audience a slice of contemporary art splashed against dances hundreds of years old. In their "Taffy Peddler" dance, after giving the audience 17th century Korean candy produced in a 21<sup>st</sup> century factory, they used children's scissors as musical instruments. Perhaps they were humble in claiming to present the essence of Korean art - maybe they wanted to show the essence of Korea itself.

# the essence of korean art

story by Erik Hagen  
AIA Staff Writer  
photos courtesy Alabama  
Asian Cultures Foundation

Through Chae Hyang Soon we experience Korea historically, socially and religiously.

Of the 12 compositions, three relate directly with the ruling class. Both "Koryo Court Dance" and "Choson Court Dance" take their names from dynasties in Korean history while "The Love Song" from *Song of Ch'unhyang* offers "a window into Choson Dynasty feudal society." The description of these dances communicates a purpose for the art primarily as celebration of leadership and as a prayer for the health of the rulers. The *hanbok*, or traditional Korean clothing, shows us the eloquence and artistry of Korean designers.

Insightful among social themes, *Dynamic Korea* suggests that women are the pre-

servers and communicators of artistic tradition. It can be inferred from the *hanbok*, music and choice of dances, that many arrangements are specifically intended to be performed by women. And though many of the songs utilize giant drums with booming bass typically associated with masculinity and war, there is only one male in the group. In a few instances, women donned male *hanbok* further illustrating artistic equality among the genders.

One of the most famous Korean *pansori* (similar to opera) is the story of Ch'unhyang. The legend follows a young woman who falls in love with and marries a young man studying to become a judge. While her husband is away, a corrupt local magistrate becomes attracted to Ch'unhyang and orders her to become his concubine. The local magistrate reasons that since her mother was a concubine Ch'unhyang cannot escape that destiny. Angered by her persistent refusal the magistrate orders her death. But just before her execution, the husband, now a representative of the king, returns to remove the magistrate from power and rescue Ch'unhyang.

The story of Ch'unhyang is incredibly significant for Korean culture possibly comparable to the pervasiveness of *Romeo and Juliet*. Significantly, it is feminine-centric. The protagonist is a woman describing her love and devotion for a studious man who chooses to face death rather than break her commitment. Accompanied by a male drummer lazily keeping beat as he pounds the drum, a singer often takes the voice of Ch'unhyang or other characters, while at times serves as a narrator, a female third party singing about the strong-willed Ch'unhyang.

Korean religion, mainly Buddhism and local Shamanism (Confucianism was ever present, but served more as legal code), appear in nearly every dance from the meditative Buddhist prostrations in "The Lotus Dance", to a Shamanistic prayer to "ward off evil spirits and renew the collective energy of the community" found in "Drum and Hat Dance". "The Lotus Dance" functions as a metaphor for the Buddhist lesson on purity of body and spirit, "expressing the beauty and essence of the Buddhist aesthetic." We see art functioning practically as teacher, leader, worshipper and appeaser. Watching *Dynamic Korea* was more than an aesthetic experience, it was a spiritual one as well.

Attending future performances may be the only method to judge Chae Hyang Soon's success. But having performed for the South Korean presidential inauguration and audiences around the world, their expertise and authenticity confirms their reputation. As if to emphasize the uniqueness of their performance they exposed their audience to a fully blossoming world of Korean art, but are only performing at five American venues for this tour.

The Alabama Asian Society is working on funding for a location capable of supporting events like this and providing greater opportunities to engage the entire state in cross-cultural communication. Chae Hyang Soon challenges us to expand our cultural, artistic and aesthetic understanding in enlightening and illuminating ways. Keep your eyes open for chances to learn about other cultures; keep your ears perked for how the Alabama Asian Cultures Foundation will enchant audiences with new and wonderful events.

<http://artsinalabama.webs.com>



In "The Monk Dance", the dancer's ghostly sleeves extend a few feet past her hands concealing mallets with which to hammer on a giant drum in the background. The performance is hauntingly memorable as she floats across the stage, the sleeves punctuating her movements.



# aso performs city lights

Music in film can sometimes feel an afterthought in modern movies. There are exceptions, but most of the time it feels like the music is an afterthought – the movie is made and then the music is written to match whatever occurs on screen. This was the challenge tackled by the Alabama Symphony Orchestra;

to make music the main attraction, the reason for attending, a character in and of itself.

Beautifully accomplished and insightfully executed, the symphony inspires the audience to take a new look at the role music serves in film and see *City Lights* illuminated by the eyes of Principal Pops Conductor Christopher Confessore.

When Charlie Chaplin started making *City Lights*, he already possessed complete creative control over every process of the film (producer, director, lead actor and musical composer). The story is fairly straight forward, possessing occasional arbitrary scenes inserted for comedy. Chaplin's flagship character, the Tramp, falls in love with the blind Flower Girl and then he uses his little amount of money to maintain the perception that he is rich.

It's at this stage that we can see Chaplin's hand shine. Chaplin decides the Flower Girl's music needs to be soft and romantic – so we hear the violins beautifully offer their interpretation of the Flower Girl through the Tramp's eyes. In contemporary cinema, most of the time, a musical composer watches the whole movie without sound and crafts the score to match the situations. This process adds another hand, another artistic insight to the film. While this can be beautiful and essential to the art of the movie (remember Hans Zimmer in *Inception*), *City Lights* allows the whole film to be through Chaplin's eyes. And since he is also the protagonist, the audience experiences the film through the Tramp.

The music, therefore, is an expression of Chaplin's will, the heartbeat for

the Tramp. The audience hears the soul of the character. After he purchases a flower from the blind Flower Girl, she hears a car door shut and tries to give him change. She can't see that the car door closing was someone else. She also can't see the Tramp looking reverently at her. Her vulnerability and loneliness don't affect the music, which continues softly and elegantly. Despite such an expression of powerless kindness, the music tells us that the Tramp doesn't feel pity, but admiration. The Tramp is touched by her beauty and content to sit in the corner watching her. The complexity of emotions, between the audience's instinctive compassion and the Tramp's internal rapture, occurring on the screen is contrasted with such innocent music.

This is why the Alabama Symphony Orchestra playing the music is so artistically powerful. The live symphony amplifies every emotional response originally intended by Chaplin. In one comedic scene, at a party in the house of a



story by Erik Hagen  
AIA Staff Writer

millionaire, the Tramp accidentally swallows a whistle and can't stop hiccupping. Each time he hiccups, the whistle blows. A man in a suit stands near the piano and prepares to sing, but can't get anything out due to the distraction by the Tramp. The symphony is silent except for the whistles. The party guests all stare at the Tramp. The audience keeps waiting for music, or something, to happen to interrupt the awkwardness of silence at a party. We become like the guests - tense, nervously laughing, trying to find a way for it to end. The hiccupping and false starts by the hopeful singer continue for too long - like any joke carried passed the point of humor. Why doesn't the Tramp go outside sooner? Why does he repetitively look at the woman to his right? And at about the fifteenth whistle, it hits us; each time the symphony sounds the whistle, we see each sharp hiccup as a note on sheet music. The hiccups aren't arbitrary, but occurring exactly as the music demands.

Then an epiphany hits the audience - the whole movie looks like a symphony; each scene a movement. The comedy scenes that repeat themselves over and over again are Chaplin manifesting repeat signs from sheet music into a physical expression. And everything can be seen musically: the boxing dance, the drunk driving, the yarn pulled from his clothes, him saving the suicidal millionaire. The profound pairing of mediums illuminates how close a relationship film and music can hold, and the Alabama Symphony Orchestra has wonderfully demonstrated this effect. If the film is watched standalone, or without an orchestra, how could anyone see this marriage of art?

Take a look at *City Lights* and try to understand how the whole film looks like music - listen to the visuals and hear the characters expressing notes in their smiles and steps. And as the awkward and shy Tramp stupidly smiles with the flower near his mouth at the very end, hold in your heart the movie's crescendo to this exact point. The climax and crescendo are actually the same, fused together by complimentary flutters of artistic inspiration. Hear how relieved and happy he is that the flower girl loves him in his ragged clothes - at her new gaze piercing through the fog of the whole experience. And while the audience may think they're watching love bloom, they're actually hearing it.

## upcoming aso concerts

### CONCERTMASTER & FRIENDS

All Baroque!  
Daniel Szasz, violin  
Wei Liu, cello  
John McElroy, trumpet  
Lester Seigel, harpsichord

Brock Recital Hall  
November 2, 7:30 PM

### REGIONS MASTERWORKS

Brown Plays Shostakovich  
Justin Brown, Conductor  
and Piano  
John McElroy, Trumpet  
November 5 & 6, 8 p.m.

### REGIONS MASTERWORKS

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto  
Justin Brown, Conductor  
Vadim Gluzman, Violin  
November 19 & 20, 8 p.m.

### COFFEE CONCERTS

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto  
Justin Brown, Conductor  
Vadim Gluzman, Violin  
November 19, 11 a.m.

### ASYO

Inaugural Concert  
Fawzi Haimor, Conductor  
November 20, 3 p.m.

For more information, go to  
[www.alabamasymphony.org](http://www.alabamasymphony.org).

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# 10 minute plays

Theatre University of Alabama at Birmingham has begun its 40th season and its seventh producing the Festival of Ten Minute Plays. Assistant professor Lee Shackleford, UAB's playwright in residence, first produced the weekend of new fare in 2003 and he has been delighting sold out audiences ever since.

This year eight students from the Beginning Playwriting class wrote their plays based on the theme "If You Could See Behind My Mask." The variations on a theme are never repetitive or predictable, and come with a warning that the language and subject matter is for mature audiences. These are novice playwrights are trying to earn reputations; they have nothing to lose so they risk everything. If you don't like the play about people who hide behind their grief, in about eight minutes you're going to see a different play about people hiding their desires. If that sounds too formal, there's a character who declares "It's krunk time, bitches!" as if it's an inalienable right.

The directors, most of whom are students, deftly avoid the trap of saddling the mini-dramas with long waits to change heavy drapes and ornate scenery. By cleverly arranging a few scenic elements - a wooden desk, a coat rack and two chairs - the stage represented an executive's suite. Natalie Kinsaul used lengths of rope to fuse characters to their grief in "Stuck." Lee Shackleford used eight stacking potato chip chairs, flashing lights and some rumbling noises to suggest a subway car. Whitney Rooks scattered the cast of "How to Solve the World's Problems" among the audience as they shouted out their innermost thoughts.

For plays of extreme brevity it's easier to change clothes than it is to change scenery and Anissa Jones' insightful costume coordination bears the brunt of delivering the time, place and mood messages. It took thought to notice that Brittney Williams' blood red blouse stood in stark contrast to the faded plaid shirt and rumpled khaki pants worn by a sheepish Kevin Allinder in "The Red Variation." An ensemble of

young, professional women wearing smart, business casual clothing was ironically accessorized with one shrunken head pendant in "Socially Acceptable."

While the evening was strong in theme, some plays were flecked with a bit of shaky acting. These infrequent moments were soon overshadowed. A standout delivery of broad, physical comedy featured Shaun Matthews putting on a overcoat as if he's wrestling badgers in Peter Krothapalli's "Quitting Time." Kelsey McClure and Ross Collier exchange caustic barbs between classic spit takes in "What Kind of Day Has it Been?" Cerebral performances from Bradley Foster in "Operation: First Day" and Jonecia Spencer in "Socially Acceptable" are equally strong in more traditional, dignified approaches. Overall, every performance was prepared and passionate, even if technique and experience may have been in short supply.

Make plans to attend UAB's next Festival of Ten Minute Plays planned for fall 2011. Every 10 minutes holds the possibility that you could be in the audience of the next Samuel Beckett or August Wilson. The variety offered practically guarantees you will see something that you'll like, and with a modest admission price of \$3, it's the best theatre bargain in the state.



story by Cheryl Hall, AIA Contributor  
photos by Lee Shackleford, AIA Contributor

**11.09-12.10**

Alabama Repertory Dance Theatre  
Fall Concert  
Morgan Auditorium, Birmingham  
<http://theatre.ua.edu/site>

**11.10-21**

Venus  
Alys Stephens Center, Birmingham  
[www.theatre.hum.uab.edu](http://www.theatre.hum.uab.edu)

**11.11.10**

The Mystical Arts of Tibet perform  
"Sacred Music Sacred Dance"  
Alys Stephens Center, Birmingham  
[www.alsstephens.org](http://www.alsstephens.org)

**11.11-14.10**

The Ransom of Red Chief  
Shoals Community Theatre, Florence  
[www.shoalstheatre.com](http://www.shoalstheatre.com)

**11.11-21.10**

The Rose Tattoo  
Gallaway Theatre, Birmingham  
<http://theatre.ua.edu/site>

**11.13.10**

ASC Kids' Club presents "The  
Bollywood Experience"  
Alys Stephens Center, Birmingham  
[www.alsstephens.org](http://www.alsstephens.org)

**11.13-14.10**

A Montgomery Holiday Tradition  
featuring "Messiah" "Favorite  
Dances of Christmas" and "The  
Little Match Girl"  
Davis Theatre, Montgomery  
[www.montgomery.troy.edu/davis](http://www.montgomery.troy.edu/davis)

**11.17.10**

Moscow Ballet Great Russian  
Nutcracker  
Alabama Theatre, Birmingham  
[www.alabamathreatre.com](http://www.alabamathreatre.com)

**11.19-12.31.10**

Peter Pan the Musical  
Alabama Shakespeare Festival,  
Montgomery  
[www.asf.net](http://www.asf.net)

<http://artsinalabama.webs.com>

**11.20.10**

Mr. Snook's Army  
South Baldwin Community Theatre,  
Gulf Shores  
[www.sbct.biz](http://www.sbct.biz)

**12.02-11.10**

White Christmas  
Millbrook Theatre  
[www.millbrooktheatre.com](http://www.millbrooktheatre.com)

**12.03-10.10**

My Three Angels  
South Baldwin Community Theatre,  
Gulf Shores  
[www.sbct.biz](http://www.sbct.biz)

**12.10-19**

Alabama Ballet presents The  
Nutcracker  
Samford Wright Center  
[www.alabamaballet.org](http://www.alabamaballet.org)

**12.03-15.10**

Miracle on 34th Street  
ACTA Theater, Trussville  
[www.actatheater.com](http://www.actatheater.com)

**12.17-20.10**

The Nutcracker  
Davis Theatre, Montgomery  
[www.montgomeryballet.org](http://www.montgomeryballet.org)

**01.07-16.11**

The Emperor's New Clothes  
South Baldwin Community Theatre,  
Gulf Shores  
[www.sbct.biz](http://www.sbct.biz)

**01.13-23.11**

Bear Country  
Alabama Shakespeare Festival,  
Montgomery  
[www.asf.net](http://www.asf.net)

**01.27-30.11**

The Great American Trailer Park  
Musical  
Shoals Community Theatre, Florence  
[www.shoalstheatre.com](http://www.shoalstheatre.com)

**02.04-03.19.11**

The Flagmaker of Market Street  
Alabama Shakespeare Festival,  
Montgomery  
[www.asf.net](http://www.asf.net)

**02.09-23.11**

Funny Money  
South Baldwin Community Theatre,  
Gulf Shores  
[www.sbct.biz](http://www.sbct.biz)

# Stage Calendar

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"They are pretty much like Southerners -- except with worse manners, of course, and terrible accents."

**Margery Mitchell on Yankees in *Gone with the Wind***

The South has a long tradition of losing its most beautiful belles to the North. France "Frank" Armstrong Crawford of Mobile became the second Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt; Zelda Sayre of Montgomery became the iconic Mrs. F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Adelaide Anderson, the Cotton Queen of 1934, left Memphis for good in 1939, later marrying inventor William Leverett Cummings.

Today Miss Adelaide, age 95, is a renowned, award-winning poet who lives in West Falmouth, Massachusetts. A recipient of the national Barnes & Noble prize for poetry, she has lived more than nine decades as a Radcliffe graduate, a freelance journalist, a world traveler, a wife, a mother, an editor, an avid sailor, a tennis pro and now as bard.

Though Miss Adelaide began seriously writing poetry for her three children later in her life, her journalism career began in the 1930s with *Life* magazine and continued on with a position as editor of *Child Life* for 13 years between 1951 and 1964. Her work is peppered with two juvenile-age books (including the still-in-print *Mystery on Cape Cod*), an adult biography, and regular columns in the *National Observer*, which included the well-received, weekly political satire "Zoos Who."

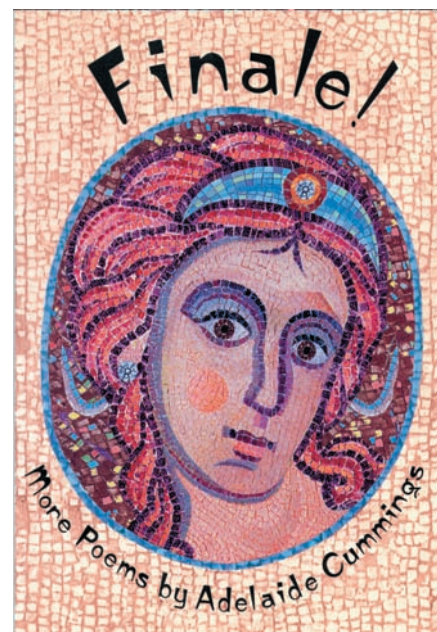
In her 90's, after a decade as an octogenarian tennis player (She won four Senior Olympic gold medals in Women's Singles, Women's Doubles, Mixed Doubles and a U.S.T.A. National title.), Miss Adelaide re-invented herself once again as a poet. Since then she has written a quintet of collected poems.

Today, visitors to her Massachusetts home chat over beverages (Iced tea only between Memorial Day and Labor Day.) and cookies in her garden, aptly named "Palette" after one of her philosophically botanical poems. Though Miss Adelaide has

gone far from her southern roots, she has a nephew, Alexander McGregor Anderson, who lives with his wife in Fairhope.

Inspired by and named for her paternal grandmother, Miss Adelaide also draws from the deep-rooted southern heritage of her grandmother on her mother's side, Martha Cooper Cawthon Crook. Grandma Crook's brother, Christopher C. "Chick" Cawthon, was killed while serving as a sergeant in Company I of the 13<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry of the CSA. Another brother, Miss Adelaide's uncle, William L. "Billy" Cawthon, was also killed at the of age 19 while serving as a private in Company C of the 21<sup>st</sup> Tennessee Cavalry.

sweet  
adelaide





Miss Adelaide's parents were Judge Harry B. Anderson, who died in 1935 (Mr. Anderson was appointed federal judge for the Western District of Tennessee in 1925.) and Martha "Patty" Cawthon Crook. Patty Crook Anderson's father, Dr. Crook, graduated from Jefferson College in 1870 and began his long medical practice in Henderson, Tennessee, before moving to Jackson in the late 1880s, where he and his son, Dr. Jere Lawrence Crook, built and operated the Crook Sanitarium for many years.

Miss Adelaide attributes her love of poetry to her paternal grandmother, Adelaide Bennett Anderson, a grande dame of Memphis society, adding that the resulting effect of that love for verse is the key to staying sharp and active.

"I wrote prose for years and a number of short stories for young adults," Miss Adelaide said, "and as a child I was adept at short jingles for special occasions such as birthdays. I always admired the poets Sara Teasdale, Matthew Arnold and Edna St. Vincent Millay, and I, not hesitating to tread on toes, rate *New Yorker* 'poetry' as I do the Emperor's clothes."

As for her work today, Miss Adelaide added, "I vastly prefer *Finale's* poems. *Pastiche* being my first contains my thoughts on many subjects important to me. The poem 'Analysis' is one of my all-time favorites; my second favorite is the poem 'Finale'."

Her latest poetry offering is *Curtain Call*, with cover art by another nephew, Jeffrey Anderson of Brooklyn, New York, who does the covers of all her books.

Miss Adelaide is in good company when it comes to Memphis belles, among whom are a socialite, a political activist, an author, and a Hollywood entertainer: Ann Donelson Jennings (the daughter of circuit judge John Martin Donelson IV); the late Ann Heiskell Rickey of the celebrated Lamar family; her daughter, writer and educator Lamar Rickey Hawkins of Topanga, California; and actress/singer Cybill Shepherd.

"Adelaide has always been a favorite aunt," nephew Jeffrey said, "but until about 15 years ago I only saw her infrequently at weddings and family get-togethers. I did not know her as well as I would have liked, since we did not see each other that often.

"In the mid-1990s, Adelaide called and asked me if I would be willing to design the cover for a poetry book that she was writing called *Pastiche*. I went to her home in West Falmouth to discuss the book cover design with her in person. Adelaide's many charms instantly won me over, and we became the great buddies that we are today."

In his youth Jeffrey spent time with his aunt and her second husband William Leverett Cummings, the inventor who founded Wilevco. Mr. Cummings was an accomplished sailor, whose jaunts with his wife to their second home in the Bahamas may have been the impetus of one of her earlier juvenile works *Adventures in Cloud 9*, in which a young boy suffering from claustrophobia has a spring vacation on a sail-boat in the Bahamas, fulfilling the dream of his life.

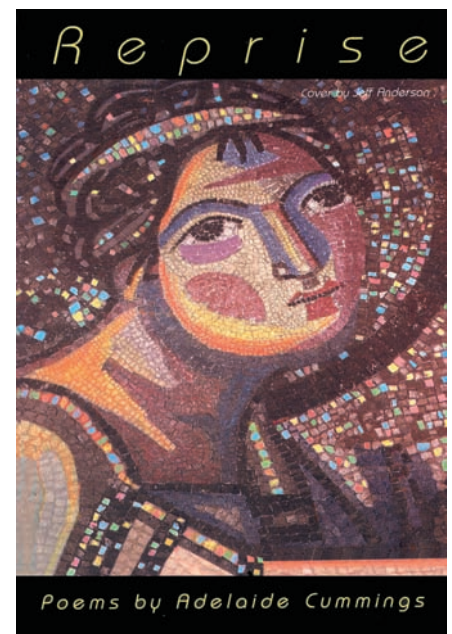
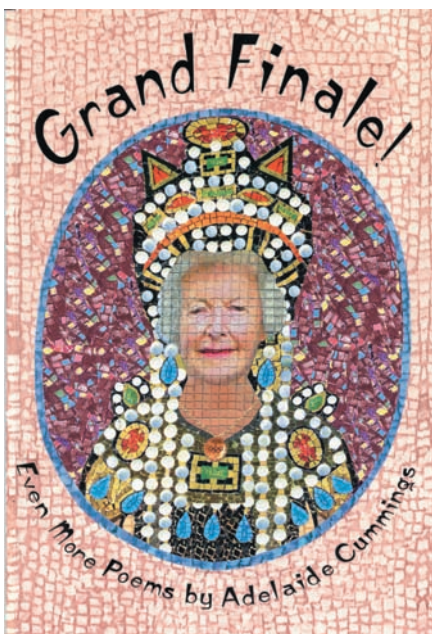
The Cummings' last voyage together to the Bahamas was aboard the *Victor*, named after the 75-footer Mr. Cummings' late father had owned and the brass of which he, as young boy, had fond memories of polishing.

"My Aunt Adelaide's positive attitude, intelligence, wisdom, open-mindedness,

story by David Story

AIA Staff Writer

photos submitted by Jeffrey Anderson





sense of humor, kindness, empathy and warmth make her irresistible," Jeffrey said, summing up the essence of Miss Adelaide. "She is a remarkable woman. The more that I get to know her, the more that I love her. I've promised to visit her at the cape every summer. It's an easy promise to keep, since my visits to my aunt are always the high point of my year."

"At Radcliffe my writing gained me attention," Miss Adelaide concluded. "I'd bring roommates down to Memphis and introduce them to southern hospitality. To them, in the 1930s the South was a foreign country. Later, I would mock the stereotypes in my poems, and as I got older I discovered the *joy* of writing verse on any subject, some light, some serious. After that I never wanted to write anything else; it was fun versus labor. I'll continue to write light verse; prose is too much work."

Zelda Fitzgerald said in the *The Last of the Belles*, "I reckon you think that if you write the story often enough maybe some time, some way, it will have a happy ending." And, for Adelaide Anderson Cummings, she lives happily ever after, still 95-years-young. Mr. Vanderbilt, Mr. Fitzgerald, and Mr. Lev Cummings each sought happiness: one through wealth, one through literature, and the last through invention; but, perhaps the greatest testament to the wisdom of these three lies in the fact that each gained true satisfaction from marrying a beautiful belle of the South.

For more information on Adelaide's poetry, go to [www.adelaidecummings.com](http://www.adelaidecummings.com).



Miss Adelaide at 19

### Southern Moan

These great sins  
Can't be forgot.  
Up North they do things  
We do not.  
(Serve their bread  
cold,  
And their ham  
hot.)  
(p. 72, *Grand Finale*)

### Rules of Yesterday

If you were brought up in the South,  
No rude word must leave your  
mouth.  
To be polite was all-important.  
No word in the least discordant  
Should be ever, ever uttered.  
Well buttered be every breath,  
A rule to be obeyed,  
Least, oh fate far worse than  
death,  
You end up an Old Maid!  
(p. 81, *Finale*)

### Recipe

"Boil in oil, then slather butter."  
That's when I'm apt to hear you  
mutter  
"Calories will take some battening.  
Only southerners can make  
Vegetables fattening!"  
(p. 51, *Curtain Call*)

### Southern Belle Goes North

"Honey, your Mama shoulda tole ya,  
Warned you about little Miss  
Magnolia!"  
Her voice as slow as warm molasses,  
Seems to invite and then fend off  
passes.  
She steps close, leans on his arm,  
Turns on famed, high-wattage  
charm,

And in that voice as soft as butter  
"We haven't met. Don't get me  
wrong.  
But I need help and you look *strong!*"  
But then his sturdy Yankee date  
Throws in the towel, accepts her fate,  
And all those other rejects joins,  
Who stir his mind but, not his loins.  
(p. 18, *Pastiche*)

### Southern Belles

Way back then, our views were  
slanted.  
(Few radios and no T.V.s)  
We stayed near where we were  
planted.  
And in the land that drops its g's,  
We had one aim. To please.  
(p. 19, *Curtain Call*)

### Beyond Pearl or Price

*Grandmother.* That lovely name  
Such memories can evoke.  
Not only had she *time* for me,  
She listened when I spoke.  
She read great poems to me,  
Encouraged care for birds,  
And still today I hear her say  
"Love flowers and trees and  
honeybees,  
But most of all, love words."  
These ideas shared so long ago  
Still echo in my heart,  
I dedicate my poems to her  
Who more than did her part,  
And paying heed, alert to need,  
Encouraged me from start."  
(unpublished)

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**11.01.10**

Stones into Schools by Greg Mortenson  
Fairhope United Methodist Church  
[www.pageandpalette.com](http://www.pageandpalette.com)

**11.02.10**

My Only Sunshine by Lou Dischler  
Page and Palette  
[www.pageandpalette.com](http://www.pageandpalette.com)

**11.03.10**

Southern Plate by Christy Jordan  
Page and Palette  
[www.pageandpalette.com](http://www.pageandpalette.com)

**11.04.10**

Southern Plate by Christy Jordan  
Books-A-Million Brookwood Village,  
Birmingham  
[corbittc@bamm.com](mailto:corbittc@bamm.com)

Enchanted Evening Barbie and the  
Second Coming by Rheta Grimsley  
Johnson  
Bryant Conference Center, Tuscaloosa  
[rerbama@yahoo.com](mailto:rerbama@yahoo.com)

The Works of Matthew Blue, Montgom-  
ery's First Historian by Mary Ann Neely  
Bradshaw Public Library, Valley  
[johntidwell@chamberscountylibrary.org](mailto:johntidwell@chamberscountylibrary.org)

**11.05.10**

Montevallo Poetry Slam  
Eclipse Coffee & Books, Montevallo  
[NiteGlider@aol.com](mailto:NiteGlider@aol.com)

The Seasons Bear Us by Jeanie Thomp-  
son  
Alabama School of Fine Arts  
[tjbeifelman@asfa.k12.al.us](mailto:tjbeifelman@asfa.k12.al.us)

Extraordinary Ordinary People: A Mem-  
oir of Family by Condoleeza Rice  
Books-A-Million Brookwood Village,  
Birmingham  
[corbittc@bamm.com](mailto:corbittc@bamm.com)

**11.06.10**

Listening to a Special Voice by Peggy  
Bennitt  
Page and Palette  
[www.pageandpalette.com](http://www.pageandpalette.com)

Morning Haiku and I'm Black When I'm  
Singing, I'm Blue When I Ain't and Other  
Plays by Sonia Sanchez  
Birmingham Public Library  
[lwilson@bham.lib.al.us](mailto:lwilson@bham.lib.al.us)

**11.07.10**

Wings of Opportunity: The Wright Brothers  
in Montgomery, Alabama by Julie  
Williams  
Huntsville-Madison Public Library  
[Imorenila@hmcpl.org](mailto:Imorenila@hmcpl.org)  
<http://artsinalabama.webs.com>

**11.08-10.10**

BACHE Visiting Writers Series: Andrew  
Hudgins  
Various Alabama colleges  
[www.bache.app.uab.edu](http://www.bache.app.uab.edu)

**11.09.10**

Bankhead Visiting Writers Series: Ted  
Conover  
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa  
[bamafffi@gmail.com](mailto:bamafffi@gmail.com)

I Still Dream About You by Fannie Flagg  
Mobile Convention Center  
[books@pageandpalette.com](mailto:books@pageandpalette.com)

I Still Dream About You by Fannie Flagg  
Fairhope Civic Center  
[books@pageandpalette.com](mailto:books@pageandpalette.com)

**11.10.10**

UAB Writers Series: Andrew Hudgins  
UAB Spencer Honors House, B'ham  
[suekim@uab.edu](mailto:suekim@uab.edu)

The Works of Matthew Blue:  
Montgomery's First Historian by  
Mary Ann Neeley  
Governors Square Branch  
Montgomery Public Library  
334.284.7929

**11.11.10**

The Works of Matthew Blue:  
Montgomery's First Historian by  
Mary Ann Neeley  
Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts  
334.240.4333

The Perfect Love Story by Patti Callahan  
Page and Palette  
[books@pageandpalette.com](mailto:books@pageandpalette.com)

I Still Dream About You by Fannie Flagg  
Books-A-Million Brookwood Village,  
Birmingham  
[corbittc@bamm.com](mailto:corbittc@bamm.com)

**11.13.10**

Nature Journal by Larry Davenport  
Page and Palette  
[books@pageandpalette.com](mailto:books@pageandpalette.com)

**11.16.10**

To Kill a Mockingbird and Harper Lee:  
Discussion at Fifty Years  
Bevill Center-Snead State Community  
College, Boaz  
[cdenham@snead.edu](mailto:cdenham@snead.edu)

**11.19.10**

The Works of Matthew Blue:  
Montgomery's First Historian by  
Mary Ann Neeley  
Goat Hill Museum Store, Montgomery  
[goathill@preserveala.org](mailto:goathill@preserveala.org)

# typewriter calendar

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# hunter appreciation day

## arts and crafts festival

Only Alabama can produce a festival as unique as Pine Apple's Hunter Appreciation Day! The event began 15 years ago to celebrate the area's rich hunting heritage. Join outdoorsmen and artists Saturday, Nov. 27, for this family-fun event.

Throughout the day, artists and craftsmen will have their works on display and for sale. This is a great opportunity for art and outdoor enthusiasts to purchase beautiful pieces for their homes.

The day begins at 9 a.m. in the downtown area with vendors selling their arts and crafts. Artists will have their works displayed until 4 p.m.

Handmade arts and crafts, flowers, plants, jewelry, Christmas presents and decorations, plants, jewelry, furniture, leather goods, children's items, hunting paraphernalia, household items and food will be sold.

An antique car parade begins at noon and will include cars, trucks, horse riders, children on bicycles and ATVs.

At 7 p.m. prize money for the winner of the Les Moorer Memorial Big Buck Contest will be announced. This is the featured event of day. The hunt is from dawn to dusk with final scoring at 6:45 p.m. The hunter who kills the biggest buck that day will be awarded \$500. The ladies' grand prize is \$250 and the juveniles' prize (age 17 and under) is \$150.



The deer must be killed on the day of the event and a \$20 entry fee is required. All entries are due before 9 p.m. Friday, Nov. 26. The Buckmaster's scoring system is used.

Hunter Appreciation Day is presented each year as an effort to say thank you to the many hunters and their families who make the Pine Apple area their recreational home and to celebrate the opening of hunting season.

For more information, contact Joyce with Pine Apple Promotions at 251.746.2293.




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# home safety tips

story by Karen Channell,  
State Farm Agent

We all spend so much time at home, it's just smart to create a safer home by taking these simple precautions.

- Have telephones in easy reach of both your bed and the place you sit most often.
- Place emergency phone numbers on or near every phone in your home.
- Buy a first-aid kit. Keep one in both your home and your car.
- Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms throughout the house. Test them periodically to make sure they work. Batteries should be changed at least once a year.
- Place fire extinguishers in the kitchen and other rooms. Make sure you know how to use them.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Run electrical cords along walls, not under rugs.
- Don't overload outlets and extension cords.
- Keep space heaters a safe distance from combustibles. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's guidelines.
- Have more than one escape route from your home. Practice these routes with your family.
- Keep flammable objects such as curtains, aprons and dishtowels away from stoves.
- Never wear loose clothing near a stovetop while cooking.
- If a pan catches fire, carefully place a lid over the pan and turn off the heat. Leave the lid on until completely cool.
- Always clean appliances and surfaces after cooking to prevent grease buildup.
- Use a step stool instead of a chair to climb to a high shelf.
- Make sure staircases are well lit and have convenient switches and night-lights at the top and bottom.

For more safety tips, visit [www.statefarm.com](http://www.statefarm.com).



# staff picks

## top 5 movie directors

1. Stanley Kubrick
2. Ridley Scott
3. Steven Spielberg
4. Michael Mann
5. Francis Ford Coppola



*John Denney*  
Photographer

## top 5 blues artists

1. John Lee Hooker
2. Canned Heat
3. Eddie "Clean Head" Vinson
4. Odetta
5. Lazy Lester

*David Story*  
Staff Writer

## top 5 photographers

1. Annie Leibovitz
2. Ansel Adams
3. Robert Mapplethorpe
4. Dorothea Lange
5. Henri Cartier-Bresson



*Gwen Bishop*  
Editor

## top 10 poets

1. E.E. Cummings
2. Alexander Pope
3. William Blake
4. Stephane Mallarme
5. Oliver Wendell Holmes
6. George Gordon
7. Wilfred Owen
8. Anna Akhmatova
9. Siegfried Sassoon
10. Dylan Thomas



*Erik Hagen*  
Staff Writer

## top 5 festivals of all time (in no particular order)

1. Woodstock (1969)
2. Monterey Pop Festival (1967)
3. Atlanta (Byron) Pop Festival (1970)
4. Watkins Glen Summerfest (1973)
5. Pocono Rock Festival (1972)



*Wildman Steve*  
Radio Personality

Michael Sheehan

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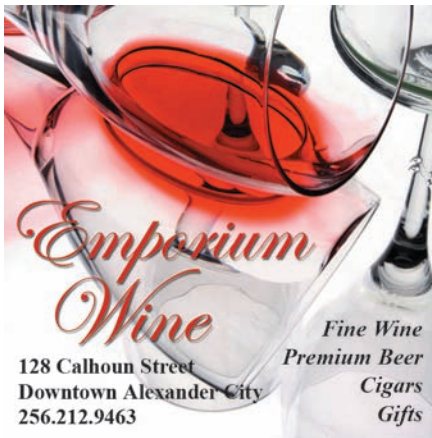
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