

Subscribe Today

1 Year for \$29.95



Iconic. Provocative. Influential.

rollingstone.com/subscribe

Digital Edition Available on Tablet and Mobile:

















RS1284 "All the News That Fits"



FEATURES

28

Guns on Campus

More than 200 colleges now allow firearms in classrooms. Why arming students makes them less safe.

By Ben Wofford

00

Trump the Destroyer

His Cabinet of tyrants and imbeciles is built to destroy our government from within. By MATT TAIBBI

42

Jidenna

He went from Nigeria to Stanford, then made a stunning debut album. He's convinced he could even run for president – if he wants to. *By* BRIAN HIATT

46

Werner Herzog

After five decades of obsessive filmmaking, he's still seeking a deeper truth. By Erik Hedegaard

ROCK & ROLL

¹³ Green Day Take a Victory Lap

The bands arena tour includes marathon shows, renewed energy and lots of *American Idiot*.

16

Chuck Berry's Surprise Final Gift

The 90-year-old godfather of rock & roll no longer performs, but his first album in 40 years is on the way.

18

Spoon's Secret Influences

Spoon's frontman, Britt Daniel, on the acts that inspired their great new LP.

DEPARTMENTS

Letters......8 | Records.....51 Playlist.....10 | Movies......54

ON THE COVER Illustration of President Trump by **Victor Juhasz**.

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER: Jann S. Wenner

MANAGING EDITOR: Jason Fine
DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR: Sean Woods
ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITORS: Christian Hoard, Alison Weinflash SENIOR WRITERS: David Fricke, Andy Greene, Brian Hiatt, SENIOR EDITORS: Patrick Doyle, Rob Fischer, Thomas Walsh ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Hannah Murphy
ASSISTANT EDITORS: Rick Carp, Jason Maxey, Phoebe Neidl
ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER: Ally Lewis ASSISTANT TO THE EDITOR AND PUBLISHER: Ally Lewis ASSISTANT TO THE MANAGING EDITORS: Ellen Nelson CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Matthieu Alkins, Mark Binelli, David Browne, Rich Cohen, Jonathan Cott, Cameron Crowe, Anthony DeCurtis, Tim Dickinson, Jon Dolan, Raoul Duke (Sports), Josh Eells, Mikal Gillmore, Jeff Goodell, Vanessa Grigoriadis, Erik Hedegaard, Will Hermes, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Steve Knopper, David Kushner, Greil Marcus, Alex Morris, Charles Perry, Janet Reitman, Stephen Rodrick, Rob Sheffield, Paul Solotaroff, Ralph Steadman (Gardening), Nell Strauss, Matt Taibbi, Touré, Jonah Weiner, Christopher R. Weingarten, David Wild

DESIGN DIRECTOR: Joseph Hutchinson CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Jodi Peckman
ART DEPARTMENT: Matthew Cooley, Mark Maltais (Art Dirs.)
PHOTO DEPARTMENT: Matthew Cooley, Morth Maltais (Art Dirs.)
Griffin Lotz (Assoc. Photo Ed.), Sandford Griffin (Finance Mgr.)

HEAD OF DIGITAL: Gus Wenner

ROLLINGSTONE.COM EDITORIAL: Jerry Portwood (Deputy Ed.), David Fear, Lauren Kelley, Hank Shteamer (Senior Eds.), Joseph Hudak (Senior Ed., RS Country), Jon Freeman (Staff Ed., RS Country), Almed Fakhr (Online Photo Dir.), Elisabeth Garber-Paul (Culture Ed.), Jason Diamond (Sports Ed.), Jason Newman (Senior News Ed.), Sarah Grant (Deputy News Ed.), Kory Grow (Senior Writer), Shara Sprecher (Social Media Ed.), Brittany Spanos, Tessa Stuart (Staff Writer), Suzy Exposito (Prod.), Rochelle Morton (Assoc. Photo Ed.) DIGITAL CREATIVE STUDIO: Scott Petts (Digital Creative Dir.), Sarah Allison, Ryan Casey, Taryn Wood-Norris, Billy Woodward (Art Dirs.), LaurieAnn Wojnowski Billy Woodward (Art Dirs.), LaurieAnn Wojnowski (Senior Prod.), Daniel Filipe, Al Gandy (Motion Graphics Designers), Brittany Fallussy, Chelsea Johnston (Designers), Sarah Greenberg (Jr. Designer), Brandon Hauer,
Justin O'Reilly (Video Eds.), George Chapman (Prod.), Adam Bernstein, Tess Bonn, Ruth Umoh (Assoc. Prods.), ROLLING STORE VIDEO: Wegam McBride (Dir of Video), Jonathan Cabrera (Creative Prod.), Daniel Halperin (Video Prod.), Christopher Cruz (Assoc. Prod.)
DIGITAL SALES: Nina Sasson (Los Angeles), Brian Sceika (Chicago) Brian Szejka (*Chicago*)

DIGITAL OPERATIONS: Alvin Ling (*Exec. Dir.*)

ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT: Gabe Newman (*Dir.*),

Christine Chung, Kimberly Rimmey CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER, ROLLING STONE:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DIGITAL ADVERTISING:

HEAD OF MARKETING: Kerri Mackar

HEAD OF MARKETING: Kerri Mackar
EAST COAST DIR., BRAND PARTNERSHIPS: Dereck Gelb
ADVERTISING BUSINESS DIRECTOR: Adam Bracco
NEW YORK: James Craemer, Craig Mura, John Stark
MIDWEST: Adam Anderson (Dir., Brand Partnerships)
WEST COAST: Kurt DeMars (Dir.)
SOUTHWEST: Adam Knippa, Ellen Lewis, Michael Stafford
SOUTHEAST: Adam Knippa, Ellen Lewis, Michael Stafford
SOUTHEAST: Adam Knippa, Ellen Lewis, Michael Stafford
SOUTHWEST: Adam Knippa, Ellen Lewis, Michael Stafford
SOUTHWEST: Adam Knippa, Ellen Lewis, Michael Stafford
SOUTHWEST: Made Not Coast South Stafford
SOUTHWEST: Adam Knippa, Ellen Lewis, Michael Stafford
SOUTHWEST: South S

PUBLICITY: Kathryn Brenner

CIRCULATION: Flyse Kossin (Dir.). Amy Fisher MANUFACTURING: Chris Marcantonio

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: Timothy Walsh GRIEFA INANCIAL OFFICER: Immony Waish GENERAL COUNSEL: Natalie Krodel HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR: Victoria Kirtley Shannon EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LICENSING: Maureen Lamberti CONTROLLER: Karen Reed

Wenner Media
CHAIRMAN: Jann S. Wenner
VICE PRESIDENTS: Victoria Lasdon Rose,
Timothy Walsh, Jane Wenner

BandLab Technologies
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Meng Ru Kuok CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER: Ivan Chen CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER: Tom Callahan

MAIN OFFICES: 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY

MAIN OFFICES: 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New Yorl
10104-1298; 212-484-1616
NATIONAL MUSIC ADVERTISING: 441 Lexington Ave.,
New York, NY 10017; 212-490-1715
DIRECT-RESPONSE ADVERTISING: 212-484-3492
SUBSCRIBER SERVICES: 800-283-1549
REGIONAL OFFICES
333 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1105, Chicago, IL 60601;
312-782-2366
5700 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 345, Los Angeles,
CA 90036; 323-930-3300
Lewis Stafford Co., 5000 Quorum Dr., Suite 545,

Lewis Stafford Co., 5000 Quorum Dr., Suite 545, Dallas, TX 75254; 972-960-2889 Z Media, 1666 Kennedy Causeway, Suite 602, Miami Beach, FL 33141; 305-532-5566

Copyright © 2017 by Rolling Stone LLC. All rights reserved Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited. Rolling Stone* is a registered trademark of Rolling Stone LLC. Printed in the United States of America.

RAIPH I GIFASON 1917-1975 HUNTER S. THOMPSON 1937-2005

ROLLING STONE is printed on 100 percent carbon-neutral paper.

ROLLINGSTONE_COM





52ND ANNUAL **ACM AWARDS**

From Florida Georgia Line's Nineties-inspired collaboration with the Backstreet Boys, to show hosts Luke Bryan and Dierks Bentley, we look at the best and worst moments.



MARIJUANA MICRODOSING

Cannabis potency has been rising for years, but getting the most benefits from pot - from creative thinking to a calmer mood - could come via small doses throughout the day.



HALL OF FAME **INDUCTION**

With Pearl Jam, Tupac Shakur, Yes, Electric Light Orchestra, Joan Baez and Journey being voted in, we'll be there reporting live at Brooklyn's Barclays Center on April 7th.

POLITICS

CULTURE

MATT TAIBBI

'MUSIC NOW' PODCAST

It's the 20th anniversary of U2's Pop - and the 25th of Bruce Springsteen's Human Touch and Lucky Town. What happens when great artists hit moments of creative confusion? Host Brian Hiatt is joined by fellow ROLLING STONE senior writer Andy Greene for an in-depth discussion. The podcast airs live Fridays on SiriusXM Volume.

ALL THIS AND MORE AT ROLLINGSTONE.COM/PODCAST



RollingStone.com/sheffield PETER TRAVERS

ROB SHEFFIELD

RollingStone.com/travers

ROCK & ROLL DAVID FRICKE

RollingStone.com/fricke

FOLLOW US ON











ROLLING STONE (ISSN 0035-791x) is published 22 times per year, of which four are double issues, for a total of 26 issues per annual term (the number of issues in an annual term is subject to change at any time), by Wenner Media LLC, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104-0298. The entire contents of ROLLING STONE are copyright © 2017 by ROLLING STONE LLC, and may not be reproduced in any manner, either in whole or in part, without written permission. All rights are reserved. Canadian Goods and Service Tax Registration No. 8125041855. International Publications Mail Sales Product Agreement No. 450553. The subscription price is \$39.96 for one year. The Canadian subscription price is \$52.00 for one year, including GST, payable in advance. Canadian Postmaster: Send address changes and returns to P.O. Box 63, Malton CFC, Mississauga, Ontario L4T 3B5. The foreign subscription price is \$80.00 for one year, payable in advance. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Canada Poste publication agreement \$40683192. Postmaster: Send address changes to ROLLING STONE Customer Service, P.O. Box 62230, Tampa, FL33662-2230.







STARBUCKS®

NARIÑO 70 COLD BREW

— C O F F E E —

SUPER-SMOOTH FLAVOR



Correspondence Love Letters & Advice



Oliver's War Cry

THERE IS A WAR GOING ON over the new administration's warped sense of reality, and John Oliver [The ROLL-ING STONE Interview, RS 1281/1282] is a formidable weapon against such absurdity, offering fact, reason and a focus on issues. His segments unfold with surgical precision, and his dry humor and wit make them engaging and entertaining.

Scott Oliver, Gorham, ME

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY 50-plus years, I've just read an interview of a man by a man in which one of the questions is about work/life balance after the birth of his first child. Hallelujah! In a year in which it feels like all we are doing is walking backward, Rolling STONE just showed me that progress continues forward.

> Brenda VanHorn Casablanca, Morocco

AS A PROUD HAT-WEARING ("Make Donald Drumpf Again") viewer of Last Week Tonight, I was happy to see Oliver on the cover. After last week's show, I was more worried that Putin's boys would "take him out" than I was about him being deported. I always look forward to Sunday's collection of facts and "wink-winks."

> Charles Roth Glendale, AZ

Revolution in Rojava

In RS 1281/1282, contributor Seth Harp traveled to the front lines of Syria to profile Western leftists fighting with the Kurds against the Islamic State ["The Anarchists vs. ISIS"]. Readers, some of whom know the subjects, responded.

THE FOURTH-GRADE teacher of Brace Belden and as a lefty myself - I'm proud of him for putting his life where his mouth is, unlike many of us liberals. He was such a creative, funny kid.

Katie Gibbs, Portland, OR

AMAZING STORY. ONE OF the men is a dear old friend of my daughter. He's also my new hero. Heartbreaking yet encouraging all at once. You go, fellows!

> $Monica\ Collins$ $San\,Francisco$

THE KURDS HAVE been fighting ISIS for years without much support. Bravo to these young revolutionaries,

who are idealistic and passionate and determined. I admire their ideals and their camaraderie. I also love that feminism is a core principle.

 $Linda\,Maley, Phoenix$

TOMMY MØRCK SAYS HE suffered from bipolar disorder until he realized "it was the modern world that was sick." I'd like to think I'm not overly sensitive, but to present a serious mental-health issue with such a dismissive tone is dangerous.

Brooke Goodman, Boston

THANK YOU, SETH HARP, for coming to Rojava to report a great article. If anyone



has questions or wants more stories, pictures or videos, message me on Facebook. Revolutionary greetings!

Tommy Mørck Ayn Issa, Rojava, Syria

Atlanta All-Stars

MIGOS ARE "THE BEATLES OF this generation" ["Hip-Hop's Fab Three," RS 1281/1282]? Delusion runs rampant when some artists become rich and famous. They will not have 1/50th the impact on the world that the Beatles did. Congrats on all the success, but, seriously?

Ken McNeill, Virginia Beach, VA

WHY PROMOTE THIS HOMOphobic and seemingly misogynistic rap trio? In this time of rising racial inequality and institutionally supported hatred, it's your obligation to call out

this kind of talk for what it is: bullshit that shouldn't be tolerated in any form.

> Nick Arneson $Via\ the\ Internet$

Vote by Numbers

GOOD PIECE FROM TIM DICKinson ["What the People Really Want," RS 1281/1282], but unfortunately useless to reference, as almost every paragraph uses statistics to make its point, yet nowhere in the article are any of those statistics either footnoted or sourced.

> Andrew Dorfman Woodland Hills, CA

Trump Truthers

MATT TAIBBI'S "THE END OF Facts" [RS 1281/1282] only further paints liberals as "whining snowflakes." We already know this administration reinvents facts, but what are we going to do about it?

> AJ FortunatoSilver Spring, MD

I TRULY FOUND MYSELF thinking when I read Taibbi's line about Trump's staff tearing apart tradition "like a troop of apes let loose in the Louvre" that the comparison was insulting to apes.

> $Risa\ Bernasconi$ Via the Internet

Rock Stars Revolt

I AM PROUD OF THE ARTISTS who join us in protesting the damage being done by the Grifter in Chief ["Rock's New Protest Era," RS 1281/1282]. We will protest the entire four years of this nightmare.

> Nathan Pinnhead Via the Internet

Shania Speaks Up

SPASMODIC DYSPHONIA IS devastating ["Shania's Hard Road Back," RS 1281/1282]. Doctors said I'd never regain a normal speaking voice, but a healthy lifestyle and avoiding stress help a lot. After reading Twain's book, I saw childhood trauma as a possible cause too. Carry on, Shania. You're one strong woman.

> Donna Austin Horan Ontario

Contact Us

LETTERS to ROLLING STONE, 1290 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10104-0298. Letters become the property of ROLLING STONE and may be edited for publication.

E-MAIL letters@rollingstone.com SUBSCRIBER SERVICES Go to RollingStone.com/customerservice

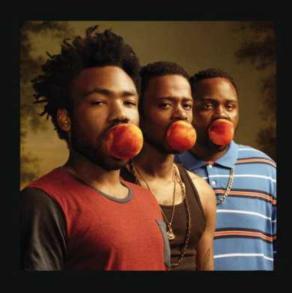
•Subscribe •Renew •Cancel •Missing Issues •Give a Gift •Pay Bill •Change of Address



BEST SHOW ON TELEVISION* THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON A M E R I C A N C R I M E S T D R Y



BEST DRAMA ON TELEVISION* EAMERICANS



BEST COMEDY ON TELEVISION*

* THE PEOPLE V. O.J. SIMPSON: AMERICAN CRIME STORY - MOST #1'S OF ANY SHOW ON TELEVISION 2016 |
A.V. CLUB + COMPLEX + DECIDER + EAST BAY TIMES + ESQUIRE + FORBES + HALL OF FAME MAGAZINE + MERRYJANE +
MTV NEWS + NEW YORK MAGAZINE/VULTURE + NEWSDAY + THE OREGONIAN + ORLANDO SENTINEL + PHILADELPHIA
DAILY NEWS + SALON + SCREENER + SIOUX CITY JOURNAL + SLATE + THE STAR-LEDGER + ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH +
TIME MAGAZINE + TYGUIDE.COM + UPROXX + USA TODAY | THE AMERICANS - MOST #1'S OF ANY DRAMA SERIES ON
TELEVISION 2016 | ADWEEK + A.V. CLUB + THE BOSTON GLOBE + BUZZFEED + COLLIDER + THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER
+ IGN + LAS VEGAS WEEKLY + PASTE MAGAZINE + POLYGON + REASON + ROGEREBERT.COM + SCREENER + TV GUIDE
MAGAZINE + US WEEKLY + THE WEEK | ATLANTA - MOST #1'S OF ANY COMEDY SERIES OR NEW SERIES ON
TELEVISION 2016 | A.V. CLUB + BUSINESS INSIDER + CLEVELAND SCENE + NPR + NEW YORK MAGAZINE/VULTURE +
ROGERCATLIN.COM + ROLLING STONE + SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE + SLANT MAGAZINE + UNDEFEATED + VARIETY



The Playlist

OUR FAVORITE SONGS S AND VIDEOS RIGHT NOW "Redmercedes Portland rapper Aminé isn't a superstar yet, but he should be. This ecstatic ode to his ride ("Trunk so big it could fit my reverend") is an instant hiphop car classic.

2. Girlpool "123"

This raw, minimal L.A. punk duo blew us away with the bruising intimacy of their 2015 debut, Before the World Was Big. Here, they push past that murmured intensity and go for shouty guitar catharsis, like they're ready to leave their room and bumrush the world.

3. Alt-J "3WW"

The beguiling U.K. crew returns with a prog-rock puzzle that somehow mutates into a moving, heartfelt ballad. In five minutes, you'll go from confused to crying.

4. Low Cut Connie

"Revolution Rock n Roll"

If the New York Dolls had done a session with Jerry Lee Lewis, it'd sound a lot like the Philadelphia rockers' new one - a political anthem drunkenly teetering on platform heels.



5. Benjamin Booker

Like his pal Jack White, this New Orleans boogie-blues revivalist delivers his throwbacks with a modern wink. Check the wry distortion he slathers over "Witness." With soul matron Mavis Staples helping out, there's plenty of old-school spirit here too.



Neil Diamond

Five Songs That Influenced Me

In celebration of his 50th anniversary as a recording artist, Diamond is hitting the road this year for a world tour.

Lonnie Donegan "Rock Island Line"

I first heard this when I started playing guitar. It was a combination of folk and rock & roll, and it angled me into the world of Woody Guthrie.

The Everly Brothers "Bye Bye Love"

If you were a teenager into music at this time, you loved the Everly Brothers. Anybody could do harmonies, but nobody had their sound.

Peter, Paul and Mary "Blowin' in the Wind"

This actually talked about current events. It spoke about an issue that had been boiling for years and was ready to make itself known.

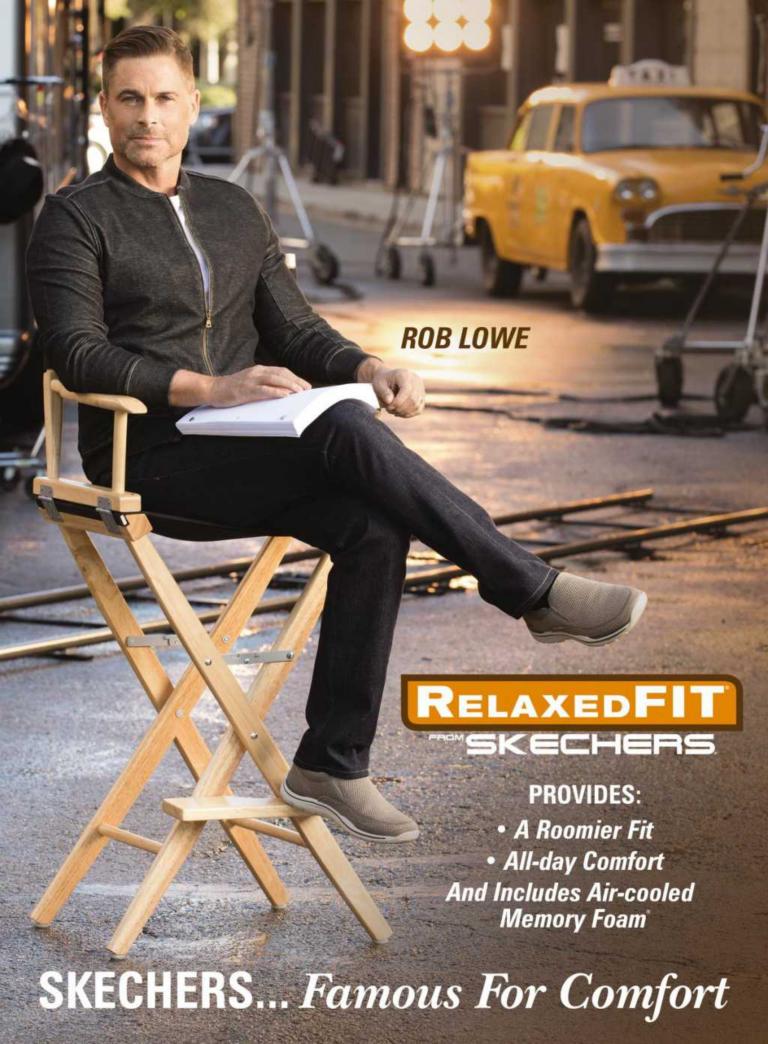
The Rolling Stones "Satisfaction"

This had a black groove. not only by white people but non-American white people. They were as responsible as the Beatles for the British Invasion.

Ritchie Valens "La Bamba"

It had the most infectious rhythm, with a certain magic that you hope for when you make a record. It was also fresh, with a great groove.

10 | ROLLING STONE





EXTREMELY CLOSE, EXTREMELY COMFORTABLE, ALWAYS FLEXIBLE.



Green Day's New Fire

Arena tour includes marathon gigs, lots of 'American Idiot' BY ANDY GREENE

ILLIE JOE ARMstrong is sitting backstage at the Verizon Center in Washington, D.C., about a mile from the White House, where Donald Trump is currently meeting with Republicans about a health care plan that would rob 24 million Americans of their insurance. But Armstrong is not planning to talk about the news onstage. "I don't want to go negative," he says. "I feel like it's a way of throwing more fuel on the fire. We're in a bit of a crisis mode, and for me it's more important that people feel unity when they come to a show."

But once he hit the stage, Armstrong couldn't help himself. During "Letterbomb," one





of seven songs Green Day play from their Bush-era protest LP, American Idiot, he launches into a rant about the Trump administration's assault on truth. "I can't stand any more of these goddamn conspiracy theories," he screams. "I'm sick of the blatant lies and the half-truths and the untruths! I want the truth!" He gets agitated when he sees a fan up front filming. "If you're looking through a screen, you aren't looking at me," he says. "You stare at that cellphone for 24 hours a day. Not tonight!"

It's just one cathartic moment during the arena set - a 33-song, two-and-a-half-hour

marathon heavy on Nineties classics as well as the band's new album, Revolution Radio. The group is fully warmed up after a long club tour last year, its first gigs since Armstrong kicked an addiction to prescription drugs in 2013. "Sometimes I have to get a B12 shot just to keep up," Armstrong says. "But I actually have more energy now than ever. I have a sense of gratitude every night, and now that we're touring again, I have a reason to get dressed in the morning."

That sentiment was clear at soundcheck. After a long drive from Virginia, the band blasted through several songs for an audience of only two: bassist Mike Dirnt's kids Ryan and Brixton, age six and eight, respectively, who ran wild up and down the empty aisles of the arena, around bemused security guards. During the 1997 deep cut "King for a Day," Armstrong decided to join them, grabbing his wireless mic and chasing Brixton into the concession area, all while nailing every word of the song. "We live an alternative lifestyle, but within that we find normality," says Dirnt, who is also happy to be touring again after a difficult hiatus in which his wife recovered from cancer. "I was doing these insane workouts, running around a lake in Oakland. I stopped one day and started walking, and I thought, 'What the fuck am I working out so hard for? I don't have anything coming up.' A good reason to tour is having a great record. We're playing half of it and the fans are loving it."

The show also includes a lot of old traditions. Armstrong invites a kid onstage to sing "Longview" (he does so well that Armstrong asks if he's trying to steal his job). He also brings up a 16-year-old girl to play guitar on Operation Ivy's "Knowledge." It's a stunt Green Day first tried in 1995, during a rough night. "It lit up the whole room and changed the show for me," says Armstrong. Dirnt says the move has backfired only once: "About 20 years ago, I let a kid play my bass, and he thought it would be cool to smash it at the end. It took everything I had to not knock his fucking teeth out.'

But the American Idiot songs get the biggest cheers of the night - especially during the title track, when Armstrong breaks his no-negativity promise and shouts, "Fuck Donald Trump!" Backstage, Armstrong is careful to say that he's not buying into the idea that Bush is tame compared with Trump. "As far as I'm concerned, Bush is a war criminal," he says. "With Trump, we have no idea. Right now it's just a freak show."

The tour continues through September, when the band plays the 92,000-seat Rose Bowl in L.A. Despite being Rock and Roll Hall of Famers 32 years into their career, Green Day are still finding new ways to have fun every night. "Yesterday, we were playing and Mike looked over at me, and I flicked this imaginary booger at him," says drummer Tre Cool. "He caught the imaginary booger in his mouth. Little shit like that is still cool."



BURNOUT

WAITING

SCATTERED

MINORITY RE WE THE WAITING

YMMIL THIAS

KNOWLEDGE

BASKETCASE

SHE

G FOR A DAY

STILL BREATHING

FOREVER NOW

Inside Green Day's New Set List

The band breaks down five highlights from the 'Revolution Radio' shows

"Bang Bang" Their new anti-gun-violence single has quickly become a crowd favorite. There are plenty of explosions, indicated with a bomb image on the set list (the fire signals "pyro"). "Everyone goes insane," says Dirnt. "It's like, now the show is on."

"Longview" "I love watching Mike and Tre play it," says Armstrong of their Dookie classic. "I like to watch the musicianship, hearing Mike play that bass line."

"Minority" The 2000 single has taken on a new life live. "When Warning came out, people were like, 'What the hell are you doing?' says Dirnt, referring to the band's folky sixth album. "Now, it's so many Green Day fans' favorite record "

"Basket Case" After thousands of performances, Armstrong never tires of this 1994 hit. "It's an anthem for weirdos," he says. "It's about losing your mind. Most people have had that experience."

"Jesus of Suburbia" All three members cite this nine-minute American Idiot epic as their favorite. Says Cool, "We all have our moments to stand out. It's pummeling and emotional at the same time."

Helping you feel safe in your lane.

The 2017 Toyota Corolla's standard Toyota Safety Sense™ P (TSS-P)¹ is designed to help keep passengers safe with a suite of systems including Lane Departure Alert with Steering Assist. This feature is designed to detect visible lane markers on the road, alert the driver if an inadvertent lane departure is detected and may also provide slight, corrective steering inputs to help keep the vehicle in its lane. With TSS-P's Lane Departure Alert, you'll feel greater peace of mind on the road.

The 2017

COROLLA

Toyota Safety Sense* Standard



Chuck Berry's Final Gift

The 90-year-old godfather of rock & roll no longer performs, but his first album in 40 years is on the way

BY PATRICK DOYLE

HUCK BERRY PLAYED HIS LAST CONCERT ON OCTOber 15th, 2014, three days shy of his 88th birthday, at St. Louis' Blueberry Hill. But like many of his recent performances, it was rough. Berry had trouble hearing, causing him to play off-key, and he forgot lyrics. "The audience was with him the whole way," says Joe Edwards, owner of Blueberry Hill, where Berry appeared once a month for 21 years. "But sometimes he'd come off and say, 'Oh, *man*, I could've done a little better.'" Berry, who always drove himself to shows, told Edwards he wanted to take the winter off, so he wouldn't have to drive in the snow. daughter Ingrid about what to expect from old age. ("That song brought my mom close to tears," says his son, Charles Berry Jr., who plays guitar on several songs.) In "Dutchman," Berry wanders into a bar and tells the patrons his story: "I used to be an artist/ Not one who sits and fiddles out on the curb/In my day and time, my music was considered superb."

After releasing *Rock It*, Berry turned his attention to touring the addice singuit "On the simplenes he'd always be suriting."

After releasing *Rock It*, Berry turned his attention to touring the oldies circuit. "On the airplanes, he'd always be writing," says Jimmy Marsala, his frequent bass player since the early Seventies. Berry recorded at his Berry Park compound outside

St. Louis throughout the Eighties, but a fire in 1989 destroyed the tapes. "My dad was determined to re-create as much of it as he could," says Charles Jr. Chuck later learned to use Pro Tools, and often invited his band over to play the parts he'd written on piano. "He'd be waving his long fingers, encouraging the guys to try things," says Edwards. Chuck would play the recordings for Themetta: "My mom would give a thumbs up or a thumbs down," says Charles Jr. "Thumbs up, he was done. Thumbs down, 'I've got more work to do.'"

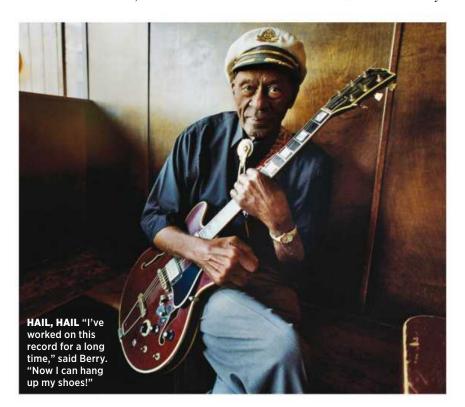
Berry discussed the material in 2012: "I have six songs that have been ready for 16 years now. As soon as I can get someone to guide me in that, I'm gonna come back and push 'em out, if you know what I mean."

But touring always came first. Charles Jr. tells a story about a 2007 European tour when they played 17 shows in 18 days, with the 81-year-old Berry driving himself between countries. "It would wear on him," he says. "But when it was time to do that show, he was rolling. At that point eightysomething years old, he had the energy of a 10-year-old child. It was inspirational."

After retiring from performing, Berry turned over most business decisions to his family, who in 2015 hired lawyer Gary

Pierson to sort through label offers to release the music, eventually settling on Nashville's Dualtone. Though his family won't go into detail about how much Berry was involved, Pierson insists Berry has authorized the project. "Everybody wanted to do what Chuck wanted," Pierson says. "He's 90, so he did need some help with the final steps, with making it all happen."

Now, Berry spends his days watching TV on two giant side-byside screens: news on one, baseball on the other. He stopped driving, and he's getting over a bout of pneumonia that has been difficult to bounce back from. "Time is marching on," says Edwards. "But he's still smiling. He still laughs." He describes a conversation with Berry a year and a half ago, when Edwards brought up the album: "You could tell he was really happy it was finally done. He said, 'Joe, this might be my last album.' And he got a look on his face. Not the whimsical, joking Chuck Berry – real serious."



Berry has not made a public appearance since. Which is why it's so surprising that in June he will release *Chuck*, his first new album since 1979's *Rock It*. Made up of material recorded between 1991 and 2014, the set is full of the music he invented in the Fifties: sped-up blues, double-stringed-guitar breaks, heavy wordplay. "Lady B. Goode" is a sequel to "Johnny B. Goode," and "Jamaica Moon" is a rewrite of "Havana Moon." (In 2001, Berry said he was reworking the song because he felt "Havana Moon" wasn't a hit due to "Fidel Castro, the whole Communist Cuba thing.")

But the album is also uncharacteristically reflective for Berry. In a statement last year, he dedicated *Chuck* to Themetta "Toddy" Berry, his wife of 68 years: "My darlin', I'm growing old! I've worked on this record for a long time. Now I can hang up my shoes!" He sings about her on the rollicking "Wonderful Woman." The gospel-steeped "Darlin'," meanwhile, is a love letter to his



THE NEW NESTEA. LESS IS MORE.



- No high fructose corn syrup.
- No artificial colors or flavors.
- Clean, refreshing taste.

Get a taste now at Nestea.com



Spoon's Secret Influences

Spoon frontman Britt Daniel is tired of being an indie-rock hero: "People say that when they mean junior-level rock & roll," he says. For the band's excellent new LP, *Hot Thoughts*, Daniel aimed big, embracing synths and the sounds of his arena-packing childhood heroes. Here's a guide to the acts that inspired the album. KORY GROW

Bruce Springsteen

Daniel divides songwriting into two schools: "Sometimes vou set out with clear intentions to write a song - I call that the Springsteen way," he says. "Sometimes lyrics lead you. I call that the Paul Simon way." Daniel recorded the moody rocker "WhisperI'llListenToHearIt" after seeing Springsteen live last year. With lyrics like "Someday you'll be where you should go," it's an imaginary conversation between Daniel and his dad. "He thinks because I'm not married that I'm lonely," Daniel says. "I'd argue with that." The frenetic guitar solo is inspired by

the sax solos on *The River*.
"It's a fucking blastoff," says
Alex Fischel.



Prince

Daniel calls Prince and David Bowie two of his biggest influences. "To lose them both was heavy," he says. "Watching Prince was like watching God's love. It was superhuman." After Prince's death, Daniel delved deep, buying 160 CDs of live and unreleased Eighties material on eBay. Prince's influence is "all over" *Hot Thoughts*, says Daniel, especially on "Pink Up,"



which strives for the "creepy, melancholy" vibe of "Purple

Rain." Its Prince-iest moment is the keyboard coda. "When he did horn parts on Oberheim synths, he took traditional R&B facets and made it sound like the future," says Daniel. "I see parallels to this record."

Talking Heads

Daniel has been channeling Talking Heads for years: In the early 2000s, he played a show accompanied only by a boombox – a move he copped from David Byrne in *Stop Mak*-

Prince

ing Sense. The Hot Thoughts sessions began with an acous-

tic song Daniel calls
"the best thing I'd
written. But then I
thought, 'Do I want
this on the record?
I want to do something like the Talking Heads instead.'"
The band's influ-

ence can be heard on tracks like the standout "Do I Have to Talk You Into It," full of huge hooks and synths.

Dr. Dre

In recent years, Daniel has become obsessed with West Coast rap. He cites Dr. Dre's production as an inspiration for tracks like "Can I Sit Next to You," which is highlighted by a gliding synth phrase straight out of *The Chronic*.

Johnny Cash

After going through a Cash phase, Daniel set out to write a "mythic-outsider tough-guy song." He wrote the somber "I Ain't the One." But after a night of heavy drinking, he hit the studio and turned it into a dance-y breakup shrieker: "There might

have been some marijuana involved," says Daniel. "We gave it a late-night kind of feeling."

ROM TOP, LEFT TO RIGHT: ® ZACKERY MICHAEL; RICHARD MCCAFEREY/MICHAEL MORDARRY (WEDGET TYY I MAGES), ROBERTA BACHEN GETERNS, MORETTY I MAGES; MORDARRY (WEDGET TYY I MAGES), WILLYAN BACHIN GETTY MAGES;



The Real Lives of Rock Moms

In a new book, Dave Grohl's mother, Virginia, dives deep into the joys and difficulties of raising a star

a high school English teacher from 1959 to 1995. But the first time she needed a substitute was in 1992, when her son, Dave, was making an appearance on national TV. "Nirvana was playing Saturday Night Live, and I went to New York to see them," she says. "Charles Barkley was the host, and I told my class I'd get him to sign some autographs. But if there were any [bad] reports from the substitute, then they would be null and void."

Virginia, in her late seventies, has attended dozens of her son's shows with Nirvana and Foo Fighters over the years, and was always surprised how rarely she ran into other moms out on the road. So she decided to track some down, and ended up interviewing 18 mothers of famous musicians for her book, *From Cradle to Stage*.

"They all said, 'Oh, there's nothing interesting about me except for my son or daughter.' And then it turned out that wasn't true at all."

In Texas, Virginia met Miranda Lambert's mom, Bev, who used to be a private investigator (including on the Paula Jones case against Bill Clinton). In Toron-

to, she talked to Geddy Lee's mom, Mary Weinrib, a Holocaust survivor who raised a family alone after her husband died. "Mike D's mom, Hester Diamond, is a very high-powered woman in the art world," Virginia says. "When Mike wanted to be a Beastie kind of boy, she was totally accepting."

Most of the women who appear are parents of especially well-adjusted artists (Josh Groban, Adam Levine, Tom Morello). One striking exception is Janis Winehouse, whose attempts to save her daugh-



ter, Amy, from addiction inspired the singer's 2006 hit "Rehab." "The Amy Winehouse story hits close to home because there are some parallels between Amy and Kurt [Cobain]," says Dave Grohl, who wrote the book's foreword.

Like Kurt's mom, Wendy Cobain, Virginia was a single mother.

She writes movingly about her relationship with Wendy, and argues that educators can create arts programs that meet the needs of bright kids who don't quite fit in. "She understands there are some kids who work outside of conventional systems," Dave says. As for her own son's legendary good nature, Virginia remains amazed. "I didn't need to tell him that even when we just had peanut butter and jelly for dinner he should still say thank you," she recalls. "He thanked me every time."

On SNL, you sang the line "bedding Taylor Swift every night inside the Oculus Rift." There was a lot of outrage afterward. You must have seen that coming.

The press won't get people's attention by writing, "Area man sings about the potential narcotic, soul-killing hazards of entertainment." And who else's name rhymes with Oculus Rift? I lost sleep over it because I knew what I was doing. I did all kinds of acrobatics in my head to find a way around it and change the lyric, but ultimately I had to sing what I wrote. Nothing I can do is going to please people who are determined to get bent out of shape about something. You have to be willfully ignorant of the fact the song is about more than that.

Still, it's hard to think of a single person on Earth more likely to cause a bigger reaction than her.

Right, which makes it the perfect subject for a song. At some point we all need to grow up. Bob Dylan would reference actresses by name in a surreal way to make a point about the culture. You were raised in a strict evangelical household. Can you understand why evangelicals supported Trump in such big numbers?

Over the past 20 years, we've thought of conservatives as being these moralistic, financially austere people who believe in dignity and free speech. With Donald Trump, we've seen none of them really give a shit about all of that. They're applauding him dumping a trillion ghost bucks into the economy and expanding the military and cutting taxes for the wealthiest. He is clearly not a Christian. What it shows is that the center of their worldview is a culture of resentment. That's the hum-

Father John Misty

Folk rock's sharpest wit explains his dark worldview – and why there's no dignity in the music industry

BY ANDY GREENE

ming dynamo at the center of all of it. There is so much animosity for Hillary Clinton in that world that people like my parents vote for Donald Trump.

What obligations do artists have to combat Trump?

People kept asking me what I was going to do on SNL. I think you only have to pull stunts if the content of your music is meaningless. Artists need to consider whether they can live with themselves if they're just singing about breakups and whatever. Lorde is on the show next week. The dichotomy between my performance and hers...I'm not gonna get into this. We need to realize there can be different types of music. But people only want symbolic victories in pop music, where you can vaguely project feminism even though the industry is so clearly antiwoman. If it's vague enough, narcissists can project. And we are living in a narcissist culture, so it makes perfect sense.

It's hard not to be bummed out while listening to *Pure Comedy.*

Well, there's a difference between art and entertainment. Entertainment is really about forgetting about your life, and art is about remembering your life. Sometimes remembering your life involves stronger emotions than the narcotic glow of entertainment. Jimmy Fallon is a fucking entertainer. What I've set out to do is more than to just entertain.

You have songwriting credits on Beyoncé's and Lady Gaga's new albums. What did those experiences teach you?

I gotta be careful here, but I will say this: When the average person imagines how a record is made, they envision people in a studio playing together and the artist taking the reins. Even when they hear someone else wrote a song, the presumption is that it's some kind of minor tweak. It is interesting when fans find out someone else more or less wholesale wrote a song. They get angry. What I see in certain corners of the musical intelligentsia right now is the idea that pop music is rooted in feminism. But this industry is horrible to women.

Horrible in what sense?

There's just so little dignity. Around the Nineties, the industry decided it didn't want to work with artists anymore because they're a pain in the ass. They realized, "We just need people with dreams of being a pop star. Not people who work to make music – people who submit to anything it takes." This hilariously incoherent idea that feminism is the byproduct of that world drives me insane.

OWNDER

You're still on Subpop, an indie label, after selling 250,000 albums. Were you tempted to sign with a major label?

I talked to every major label under the sun. They do this Jedi mind trick: "It's time to go to the next level." I've seen smart, principled people try, but it never works out. But as long as they say, "It's time to go to the next level," then you will forget all that. There are many other things I've said no to. I was asked to audition for the second season of Stranger Things. I didn't want that level of exposure. I don't want to be TV famous.

So how long ago did you take acid?

About three hours ago.

Did you drop acid before SNL?

Mm-hmm. It's just kind of like being a stoner. I'm not on a psychedelic journey all the time.

Do you worry about damaging your brain like Syd Barrett or Brian Wilson?

With them, the real danger was in the first time you take it. It can exacerbate pre-existing [conditions], like schizophrenia. I'm not ready to give it up. I think living is just a risk. In the next few years, we're going to start seeing the long-term effects of cellphones.

You recently erased your Twitter and Instagram accounts. Why?

I was in the studio working on the album, and it was distracting. But think about what Twitter would look like if it was a physical space and the people who hung out there talked that way. Would you ever want to go there? There will be moments when I go on Twitter and let people hate me. It's, like, self-harm.

You've been described as a "hipster favorite." Does that ever annoy you?

No. Because what are the traits of a hipster? It's judgmental, petty people saying, "I'm cooler." At the core of leveling that charge, someone is saying you're not as cool as you think you are, so it's them tacitly saying they're cooler or more authentic than me. But isn't that what a hipster does?

You've also been called "insufferable" and "superwhite" online.

Again, that's white people saying

A lot of the songs on your new album reminded me of Neil Young's On the Reach

I think someone should start a website where they do modern-day music writing - the intersectional virtue-warrior style of music writing - about old albums. With On the Beach it would be, "Oh, great. Another white man singing about how tough it is to be white."

Halsey Aims for Pop Dominance

After topping the charts with the Chainsmokers, the singer recruits big names for cinematic second LP

HEN HALSEY STARTED WORK on her second album, June 2nd's Hopeless Fountain Kingdom, she faced an entirely blank slate, having written zero songs for it in the year since her debut, 2015's platinum-certified Badlands. "I'm a purger," she says. "I bottle everything up and purge it all out of me. That's why I write so quickly. It's like I'm vomiting months of psychoanalysis."

She worked with producers including Greg



Kurstin (Adele, Sia), Benny Blanco (Katy Perry, Ed Sheeran) and Ricky Reed (Twenty One Pilots), and the result, like Badlands, is a concept album of sorts. Its story centers on a pair of lovers in a limbo-like realm that connects to the futuristic setting of the previous album: Call it the Halsey Cinematic Universe. "I was a big comic-book kid," she confesses. "A big Marvel nerd."

She also came to realize that, sci-fi trappings aside, she was really writing about her own collapsing years-long relationship. "The whole reason you make a record," she says, "is to figure stuff out about yourself." She had been nursing a mysterious obsession with the story of Romeo and Juliet, which she finally connected to a feeling that "I had killed off a version of myself just so we could make our love work. Sometimes you're in a relationship for so long and you become a different person. You lose yourself because you change for that person." In the end, she says, "I put the seal on that relationship and fully purged myself of the feelings for that person at the same time as I finished my record."

> Halsey has talked down her own singing voice in the past, but she found new confidence in the recording process, stretching out into more nimble and soulful R&B-tinged moments. There's at least one pure piano ballad on the album, recorded with Kur-

"I bottle everything up and purge it out," she says. "It's like I'm vomiting months of psychoanalysis."

stin. "A lot of my sound has been attributed to this experimental pop production style," she says, "so stripping a song back is unique for me."

She credits "Closer," her smash single with the Chainsmokers, which vastly outperformed her own tracks on the charts, with having "fine-tuned my sense about my new music," even if she had never expected that song to have quite so much success. "It

threw me into the deep end," she says. "I went from being this underground blog girl to being this mainstream thing."

Her own debut, she contends, "wasn't supposed to be a radio album." Though she still sees herself as an "alternative" artist ("'alternative' used to mean alternative rock," she says, "but I think in 2017 the word 'alternative' means alternative pop"), she expects Hopeless Fountain Kingdom to generate some airplay. "I am more than capable of writing radio music," she says, "and hopefully I'll put my money where my mouth is on this album."



Season of the Bitch: Bette vs. Joan

Susan Sarandon and Jessica Lange are a perfectly vicious pairing on 'Feud'

BY ROB SHEFFIELD

AME - IT'S A HELL OF A DRUG. Feud is like watching Robert De Niro and Al Pacino square off in Heat, except with two of Hollywood's living legends playing a couple of dead ones. In Ryan Murphy's new anthology series, Susan Sarandon is Bette Davis to Jessica Lange's Joan Crawford, toxic movie divas madly in hate with each other. As Davis famously

FEUD SUNDAYS, 10 P.M., FX

snipped, "She has slept with every male star at MGM, except Lassie." Feud celebrates how they basically invented the modern celebrity beef, on the set of their 1962 horror classic, What Ever Happened to Baby Jane? Like a great rap war, the rivalry is part theater, part sincere fear and loathing. When Crawford died in 1977, Davis declared, "You should never say bad things about the dead, only good. Joan Crawford is dead. Good."

Sarandon and Lange revel in the evil vibes. Yet the miniseries hits home because the story is a lot bigger than just a couple of movie stars - it's a surgical dissection of American fame and sexism, and all the brutality and blood behind the dirty business of dreams. In lesser hands, Feud could have been just catfight camp, but Murphy turns it

into a TV event, ripping into the obsessions that drove his *The People v. O.J. Simpson*: money, sex, power, celebrity, and L.A. as the city where all of America's most depraved fantasies come together.

and Lange

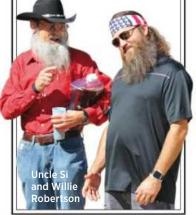
The whole cast thrives on the hostility: Stanley Tucci, so sleazy as studio boss Jack Warner; Catherine Zeta-Jones, so catty as Olivia de Havilland; Mad Men's Kiernan Shipka, so surly as Davis' teen daughter. Alfred Molina plays director Robert Aldrich as a bitter schlub, floundering in the years after his classic noir Kiss Me Deadly, and still a few years away from macho blockbusters like The Dirty Dozen and The Longest Yard, reduced to - the way he sees it - directing a couple of fading stars in a B-level horror flick.

Despite all the old-school touches - like Tucci listening to John Coltrane's My Favorite Things in his office to show off his good taste - none of this feels dated. In one chilling moment, Davis confesses that she sleeps with one of her Oscars: "He's the perfect companion - he doesn't talk back, he listens, he's patient." Feud has already been renewed - the second installment will be Charles and Diana. But the battle of Bette vs. Joan feels real-er, and more contemporary, capturing the raw emotional violence at the heart of America's celebrity fixation - both then and now.

Goodbye and Good Riddance. **Duck** Dynasty'

It was long past time for the last duck hunt

These days it's hard to find reasons to be cheerful about the state of the nation, but an America without Duck Dynasty is a good place to start. No show in TV history has ever sucked quite like this one. And if the TV gods cooperate, no show ever will again. It's poetic justice that 2017 is the year the Robertson family finally heads off to the duck pond in the sky. In cultural terms, Duck Dynasty was the pre-Trump Christian right's fantasy of itself - a family of hairy bootstrappers bowing their heads in prayer. In the age of Trump, they look pitifully dated. They weren't even fun to watch on a reality-trash level, because they were too phony to believe - so artificial in their scripted dialogue, so cynical in their piety, so boneheaded in their recycled sitcom plots. Hell, even their beards looked fake. The end of the Robertson era is a rare reason to celebrate in 2017 - but we'll take it.







Dr. Hunter S. Thompson

He had a briefcase of drugs and a supreme command of language. He built much of his legend at 'Rolling Stone,' and he changed journalism in the process

N JANUARY 1970, HUNTER S. THOMPSON WROTE JANN S. Wenner a letter praising ROLLING STONE'S definitive coverage of the disastrous Altamont festival. "[Print's] a hell of a good medium by any standard, from Hemingway to the Airplane," Thompson wrote. "Don't fuck it up with pompous bullshit; the demise of RS would leave a nasty hole." A bond was formed, and over the next 30 years, Thompson would do

much to redefine journalism in the pages of the magazine. He lived and wrote on the edge in a style that would come to be called Gonzo journalism. That term captured his lifestyle, but it didn't really do justice to Thompson's command of language, his fearless reporting or his fearsome intellect.

Thompson was born in Louisville, Kentucky, served in the Air Force, and worked as a journalist in Puerto Rico before moving to San Francisco, where an article about the Hells Angels turned into a book project. He spent almost two years riding with the outlaw motorcycle gang, and in 1966 he published a bestseller that took readers deep inside a subculture largely inaccessible to the outside world.

In that sense, Thompson and Rolling Stone were kindred spirits. After he wrote to the magazine, Wenner invited him to the office to discuss a piece that would be called "The Battle of Aspen," about Thompson's effort to bring "freak power" to the Rockies. Thompson had tried to get Joe Edwards, a 29-year-old pot-smoking lawyer, elected mayor; Thompson himself was running for sheriff of Pitkin County, Colorado. "He stood six-three," Wenner remembered years later, "shaved bald, dark glasses, smoking, carrying two six-packs of beer; he sat

down, slowly unpacked a leather satchel full of travel necessities onto my desk – mainly hardware, flashlights, a siren, boxes of cigarettes, flares – and didn't leave for three hours. By the end, I was suddenly deep into his campaign." Thompson and Edwards lost their bids by slim margins, but Thompson's fate as a self-described "political junkie" was sealed.

A year later, Thompson sent Rolling Stone the first section of a new piece he was working on. "We were somewhere around Barstow on the edge of the desert when the drugs began

to take hold," it began. "I remember saying something like, 'I feel a bit lightheaded; maybe you should drive....' And suddenly there was a terrible roar all around us and the sky was full of what looked like huge bats, all swooping and screeching and diving around the car, which was going about 100 miles an hour with the top down to Las Vegas."

"Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" became Thompson's defining

piece, and a defining literary experience for generations of readers. It had begun as an assignment from Sports Illustrated when Thompson was asked to go to Las Vegas to write a 250-word photo caption on a motorcycle race, the Mint 400. Introducing himself as a "doctor of journalism," he chronicled the fuel he brought along: "two bags of grass, 75 pellets of mescaline, five sheets of high-powered blotter acid, a salt shaker half full of cocaine, and a whole galaxy of multicolored uppers, downers, screamers, laughers...and also a quart of tequila, a quart of rum, a case of Budweiser, a pint of raw ether and two dozen amyls.... Not that we needed all that for the trip, but once you get locked into a serious drug collection, the tendency is to push it as far as you can."

The trip became less about covering the race and more of, in Thompson's words, "a savage journey into the heart of the American dream." When he submitted 2,500 words to *Sports Illustrated*, the piece was rejected, along with his expenses. But when Wenner read it, he seized on it. "We were flat knocked out," recalls then-managing editor Paul Scanlon. "Between fits of laughter, we ran our favorite lines back and forth to one another: 'One toke? You poor fool. Wait until you see those goddamned bats!"

ROLLING STONE sent Thompson back to Vegas to expand the piece, reporting on the National District Attorneys Association's Conference on Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs. The results were hilarious and electrifying. "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" ran in two parts, in the issues of November 11th and 25th, 1971, with illustrations by Ralph Steadman, and was published in book form the next year. (In 1998, it became a film starring Johnny Depp.)

Thompson was also reshaping what it meant to write about politics. He filed 14 dispatches for ROLLING STONE from the 1972



"Fear and Loathing" began as a caption about a motorcycle race and ended up as his definitive piece. presidential campaign trail. He lacerated the "waterheads," "swine" and "fatcats" of D.C. culture a tone far different from the reverent approach of the time - and lifted the curtain on the mechanics of press coverage. He exposed "pack journalism," puff pieces born out of schmoozing sessions between journalists and campaign aides. Many of Thompson's observations ring true today: "It's come to the point where you almost can't run [for president] unless you can cause people to salivate and whip on each other with big sticks," he wrote. "You almost have to be a rock star to get the kind of fever you need to survive in American politics."

But getting work out of Thompson was becoming difficult. The magazine put him up at hotels in San Francisco or Florida, and stocked his room with booze, grapefruit and speed. A primitive fax machine, which Thompson called his "Mojo Wire," was installed in the Rolling Stone offices, and he'd transmit his copy a few pages at a time at odd hours, adding the transitions and endings later. He would

often call Wenner at 2 a.m. to discuss the pieces. "It was a bit like being a cornerman for Ali," said Wenner. "Editing Hunter required stamina, but I was young, and this was once in a lifetime."

In correspondence between Thompson and Wenner, Thompson demanded albums and speed; Wenner chastised him for blowing deadlines, keeping the staff late and even stealing cassettes from his house. ("I did a lot of rotten things out there but I didn't steal your fucking cassettes," Thompson wrote.)

Thompson had become a celebrity - and it slowed him down. He was immortalized as Uncle Duke in Doonesbury. "All that kind of trapped him, between the fame and the drugs," said Wenner. "After the election and Watergate, he wrote small things for us. But he'd miss flights and never turn anything in." In one memo from around that time, Wenner checked in on seven features, none of which ever came to fruition. In 1975, Thompson traveled to a failing Saigon for a planned epic Vietnam piece, but he spent most of his time there drinking in the hotel courtyard with other correspondents. He conducted several interviews with Jimmy Carter that the former president remembered as lengthy and revealing, but Thompson lost the tapes.

Still, there were flashes of brilliance, such as his coverage of the 1982 Pulitzer divorce trial in Palm Beach, Florida, which summed up the Eighties culture of greed just as it was still taking form. In 1992, he published "Fear and Loathing in Elko," a surreal fiction piece in which he met future Supreme Court Justice Clar-





Life With Hunter

presidential campaign plane in 1976. (2) With Jann Wenner, 1996. (3) Taking aim on his ranch in Colorado, circa '76.



ence Thomas, stranded on a road with two prostitutes. "It was a remarkable comeback," said Wenner, who saw "Elko" as a bookend to the 1971 classic. "'Vegas' is so fun and hopeful. 'Elko' is this bitter, very dark tale, kind of a descent into some of the worst impulses of the human spirit."

Thompson wrote one final piece for ROLLING STONE, in 2004. In an uncharacteristically humble tone, he made a plea to readers to vote. By that point, Thompson's back pain had become chronic, and he required a wheel-

chair. His book editor Douglas Brinkley recalled taking a trip with Thompson to New Orleans in January 2005, where he was humiliated when he couldn't climb the stairs at a party thrown by James Carville. "He sulked at the downstairs bar, muttering cryptic things like, 'My time has come to die, Dougie,'" Brink-ley remembered. A month later, Brinkley reported that Thompson got into a shouting match with his wife, Anita, after he nearly shot her with a pellet gun. They made up the next day, but when she phoned Thompson from a nearby

health club, she heard strange clicking noises. After she hung up, he put a .45-caliber gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger.

Thompson left a suicide note, titled "Football Season Is Over," which was printed in Rolling Stone. "67," Thompson wrote. "That is 17 years past 50. 17 more than I needed or wanted. Boring. I am always bitchy. No Fun - for anybody. 67. You are getting Greedy. Act your old age. Relax - This won't hurt." Thompson's death recalled the suicide of his literary hero Ernest Hemingway. "Hunter had really gone from being a celebrity to being a legend," Wenner said. "Part of that legend is his suicide, much like Hemingway."

Thompson had one final wish. In August 2005, more than 200 friends, including Wenner, Jack Nicholson, John Kerry and Johnny Depp, gathered at Thompson's Colorado home, where his remains were shot out of a 153-foot cannon under a full moon. In March 2005, Thompson appeared on the cover of the magazine, with remembrances from Depp, George McGovern and Thompson's son, Juan, among others. Included was a letter Thompson wrote to Wenner in 1998, recalling his early days at ROLLING Stone: "My central memory of that time is that everything we were doing seemed to work.... Buy the ticket, take the ride. Like an amusement park.... Thanx for the rush." PATRICK DOYLE

Adapted from the book "50 Years of ROLLING STONE" (Abrams), which will be on sale May 17th.

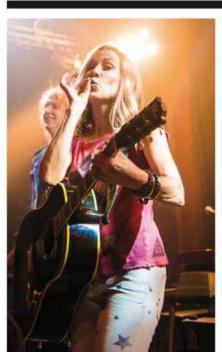
RandomNotes





BIGGIE LIVES

Diddy and Biggie Smalls' mother, Voletta Wallace, went to a Brooklyn Nets game on the 20th anniversary of Biggie's death. A halftime ceremony featured Diddy, Faith Evans and more. "To honor him is mind-blowing and humbling," said Diddy. Added Voletta, "There is a lot of love. I was surprised to see all this."



SHERYL'S NEW TRIP Sheryl Crow pretended to hit a joint while trying out songs from her new LP, *Be Myself*, in L.A. "I wanted to get back to how I started," she says of the album.

FIGHT SONGS

New Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee Joan Baez joined Jackson Browne for a duet on his 1974 tune "Before the Deluge" at Wavy Gravy's fundraiser in Hawaii to combat blindness. Baez has also played several Trump protests lately. "He doesn't care about anything but himself and money and power," she says.

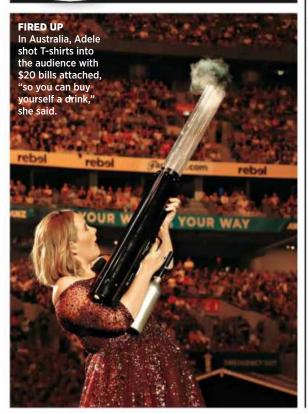


Chance Gives Back

Chance the Rapper visited the South Side of Chicago to present a \$1 million check to the city's public-school system, after the governor vetoed a bill that would have provided much-needed funds. "This isn't about politics," Chance said. "This is about taking care of the kids."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: © ROSS HALFIN; JAMES DEVANEY/GC IMAGES; STEPHAN







A New Cyrus in Town

The Cyrus crew took a family trip to L.A.'s iHeartRadio Music Awards to cheer on Noah, Miley's 17-year-old sister (right), as she sang her new breakup anthem, "Make Me (Cry)." "2017 is about to be Noah's year," Miley said.



DARLING NICKI Nicki Minaj took a page from the Lil' Kim playbook and rocked a nipple pasty at a Paris Fashion Week event.



BE OUR GUEST Madonna (along with photographer Steven Klein) went to a Purim party dressed as both Beauty and the Beast.



ROLLING STONE REPORTS

Inside the Fight Over Guns on Campus

More than 200 colleges now allow firearms in their classrooms – but experts say arming students only makes schools less safe

BY BEN WOFFORD

N A SWELTERING DAY LAST AUGUST AT THE UNIVERsity of Texas at Austin, a flock of 30 undergrads are settling into a frigid lecture hall when teaching assistant Nick Roland enters with his crimson-red tee hugging a holstered Glock 23. Three weeks earlier, Senate Bill 11, also known as "campus carry," went into effect in Texas, allowing students on 38 public campuses to carry concealed, loaded handguns to class. Roland, 32, is pursuing a Ph.D. in history after a tour in Iraq. Before that, he was an undergraduate at Virginia Tech in 2007, during the deadliest school shooting in modern history; among the 32 students killed was

Roland's hallmate. "I'll never forget that day," he says. Lean and handsome, with a crop of boyish brown hair, Roland says his gun has led to some tense discussions with grad students, a phone call from a parent and near-unanimous opposition from his colleagues. His class lecturer, Robert Icenhauer-Ramirez, told me, "I just hope someday the legislature allows guns to be carried into their offices." But none of this has kept Roland from carrying his gun most days to class, where the title of the course is projected in large letters at the front of the room: CIVIL WAR.

More than 200 colleges across the U.S. allow campus carry. Since SB 11 became law, statutes have gained a foothold in two more states, Tennessee and Ohio, and various legal actions have inched versions of campus carry into five others – including Oregon, Pennsylvania and Virginia. This year, 12 other states are considering similar legislation. "It's a disturbing trend," says Andy Pelosi, executive director of the Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus. "They're picking up one state a year."

With few exceptions, the public overwhelmingly opposes guns on college campuses (a recent poll in Florida puts opposition at 62 percent), as do a majority of chancellors, university presidents, parents, students, professors and, notably, campus police. But as Adam Winkler, a law professor at UCLA, says, "Because colleges have seen these high-profile mass shootings, campuses have become the fundamental battleground over guns and self-defense."

UT Austin, one of the country's premier public universities and a liberal enclave in the red-state South, marked campus carry's greatest achievement yet - and its fiercest point of opposition. On the first day of class, a student group called "Cocks Not Glocks" distributed approximately 5,000 dildos in protest of SB 11, highlighting a discrepancy in Texas law that bars sex toys in public but not handguns on campus. Students gathered under the UT Tower, as young women tossed dildos with the frenzy of a humanitarian mission. "If they're packing heat," one sophomore protester velled, hoisting a giant dildo with both hands, "then we're packing meat!"

UT Austin was also the site of the first campus mass shooting in American history. In 1966, Charles Whitman, an engineering student at UT, hauled a trunk of rifles, pistols and shotguns to the 28th floor of the campus' iconic tower, and meticulously gunned down 48 people over the course of an hour and 36 minutes. Roland notes that a few armed civilians had fired up at Whitman. "What we can hopefully do is give people the ability to fight back," Roland says.

After class, I visit with Roland at the weathered gray house he is sharing with a housemate and a pit bull named Dolly Parton. He leads me into his room - a shrine of sorts, with all four walls covered by Virginia Tech regalia - and hauls out his collection: a customized AR-15, 30-round magazines and a Romanian training rifle. At his desk, he swivels around with a loaded Remington 870 shotgun. "It seems like common sense to try to have some" - he searches for the words - "different options." He racks the slide with a startling shuck. "This is an issue I happen to be very passionate about," he says. "I want someone to look me in the eyes and tell me why, as an individual, I can't exercise a particular selfdefense option."

HORTLY AFTER THE VIRGINIA Tech shooting, in 2007, Republican presidential candidate Fred Thompson suggested the massacre might have been averted had other students been armed. The comment was met with national ridicule; even the NRA's Wayne LaPierre disavowed the idea. But for a small group of conservative college students, mostly in the South and West, it was a rallying cry. One of them, an undergrad at the University of North Texas, launched a Facebook group: Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, or SCCC (later shortened to SCC). Its first stunt an "empty holster protest" - was picked up by Glenn Beck on CNN. "The only people with guns in schools are the bad guys," Beck thundered - which was news, surely, to many thousands of campus police. Months later, Northern Illinois University had a campus shooting. "Suddenly, we



STRAPPED STUDENTS On the first day of class at UT Austin, August 2016, a "Cocks Not Glocks" group highlights "the absurdity" of state laws that allow guns in public places, like campuses, but not sex toys.

were the hottest ticket in town," says Scott Lewis, an SCC founder in Texas. "Within a week, we'd been on $Good\ Morning\ Amer$ ica, Fox News, CNN." The exposure, he says, "was addictive."

The concealed-carry movement had spent two decades advancing citizens' rights to carry a handgun in almost every state; SCC was pushing to expand those rights into classrooms and other school facilities. "Why am I allowed to carry at a local movie theater, but not the campus theater?" asks Lewis. "That's the case we made." The group attracted interest from the Second Amendment Foundation, a fringe gun-rights group that is currently suing the State Department on behalf of the inventor of the 3D-printed gun. SAF's founder, Alan Gottlieb, who is 69, hosted some of the SCC members at a 2007 conference outside Cincinnati and saw a "perfect marriage" with the pro-gun millennials. Before a crowd of elderly white men, SCC's college-age leaders were greeted like rock stars. "Not old, white, bald guys!" Gottlieb says. "It was great!"

By 2009, SCC had expanded its chapters and gained the support of the NRA. But that same year the group lost its first battle in Texas - outflanked by opponents at UT, led by grad student John Woods, who had lost his girlfriend in the Virginia Tech shooting. "I couldn't believe these people were trying to use our tragedy to push this agenda," Woods says.

But an idea for how to bypass state legislatures soon struck another SCC member, Jim Manley, who was then a 26-year-old law student at the University of Colorado. On behalf of the SCC, Manley filed a pre-emption lawsuit, which can overturn local gun bans on the grounds that they are "pre-empted" by state laws that safeguard gun rights; Gottlieb's SAF claims to have struck down 600 ordinances with the technique. "I graduated in May," Manley says with a chuckle, "and in December, I sued my alma mater.'

The case, Regents v. SCCC, eventually went before the Colorado Supreme Court, and was decided in March 2012. Because Colorado's concealed-carry law omitted "campuses" on its list of exempt spaces, the court found, guns had to be allowed on public campuses throughout the state. Manley got the news while exiting a plane in Denver. "I opened it on my phone," he says, "and just yelled in the airport."

The floodgates opened: Wisconsin, Mississippi, Kansas, Idaho and Arkansas each passed campuscarry bills. By the time Lewis' efforts in Texas paid off last year after three failed attempts - the NRA was calling the legislation "NRA-backed campus carry." "Let's be candid about it," says Gottlieb. "If we go back five years, the concept of getting states to pass laws to carry guns on college campus was a dream. Well, now it's a reality. It's happening.'

In Gottlieb's analysis, two iconic events buoyed support for gun rights: September 11th, and the Supreme Court's landmark Heller decision, in 2008, which overturned local bans on handguns. Now, he says, the right student in the right classroom at the right time could change the American gun debate immeasurably. "If the person with a gun stopped a campus shooting, support for gun rights would jump, and I think the increase gain would stay," he says. "It would spread like wildfire."

A DAY AFTER "COCKS NOT Glocks," I navigate UT's Liberal Arts Building to find the office of

Jennifer Glass, a sociology professor who filed for an injunction to halt SB 11 (it failed) and has since sued the university with two other professors. "Hi," Glass says when I arrive at her door. Under the law, faculty must verbally inform visitors their office is gunfree - every time - so she quickly adds, "No guns are allowed in my office. If you are not carrying, please come in."

With Midwestern directness, Glass sums up the new rules under SB 11: No one, not even police, can ask students if they're armed; guns must remain near their owners - a backpack or purse is fine; UT managed to restrict guns from parts of dorms and some offices, but elsewhere students can keep a bullet in the chamber, ready to fire. Glass suggests the risks are a high price to pay in the name of avoiding another Virginia Tech. "We're talking about blackswan events - exceedingly rare," Glass says. "A gun could go off accidentally, or be used by a student on drugs or alcohol. All because you're afraid of a mass shooter?"

Government data suggests homicide rates on campus are minuscule, about one percent of the general public's. "We know classrooms are among the safest places that people can be," Glass says. But there

OCKWISE FROM TOP: RODRIGO PENA; ® MSNBC/ZUMA PRESS; JAY JENNER/"AUSTIN AMERICAN-STATESMAN"/AP IMAG

ROLLING STONE REPORTS

are about 43 firearm accidents every day across the country, a statistic borne out at a handful of campus-carry universities. In 2011, at UT Austin, a fraternity brother was arrested for firing his rifle inside the house's laundry room. In 2012, a Utah student's gun went off, wounding him in the leg. In 2014, a professor at Idaho State shot himself during class. SCC members cite data showing no uptick in crime at universities with campus carry, but student license holders, it turns out, are still students: Harvard researchers have found that students who keep guns are more prone to impulsive decision-making and dangerous habits, like drunk driving. "Arming young people who tend to drink and do crazy things," says the study's author, David Hemenway, "seems like a recipe for disaster."

To avoid the threat of guns, some students and faculty have found creative sanctuaries. I leave Glass' office for the Cactus Café, an on-campus bar. The dildo protest had roared near the entrance, but inside the mood is sedate. In a corner, Robert Oxford, a sandy-haired graduate student in the history department, quietly grades papers. "Welcome to my office hours," he says.

Bars are among the few spaces exempted from campus carry - just like in the Old West, guns have to be left at the door of the Cactus Café. Oxford describes the growing paranoia on campus. "We now have this added drama, this unknown, whether anyone has a gun," he says. "And we're not allowed to ask. It puts the whole classroom on edge." A young woman joins our corner, 23-year-old Andrea Fuentes, a recent graduate who declined to attend UT's film school due to SB 11. This week, she is saying her goodbyes. "This could be the last time I'm on campus," Fuentes notes. "In the last semester, the only mood I've been able to see is from people who are terrified."

Outside the Cactus Café, I meet Dave Palla, a 21-year-old senior with curly blond hair and a fraternity-rush T-shirt. He has a license to carry. "They think we're too dumb, or something, to be responsible," he says, "which in my case is 100 percent not true." Palla tells me about a UT sophomore who stormed the library with an AK-47 in 2010, before killing himself on the sixth floor. By all accounts, the response from police and SWAT teams was nearly perfect they arrived in under four minutes, the result of millions of dollars in training spent after Virginia Tech. But if something similar happens, Palla isn't taking any chances. "I'm not going to be sitting around," he says, "with nothing that I can do about it."







GUNFIGHT (1) A live-shooter training drill at a hospital in California. **(2)** Professors at UT Austin have to designate their offices as gun-free zones. **(3)** Virginia Tech shooter Seung-Hui Cho.

Pete Blair, a former cop who now runs ALERRT, one of the most elite training facilities in the U.S. for active-shooter drills. Since Virginia Tech, law-enforcement professionals and private citizens have made trips here, running through simulations with actors playing the likes of Seung-Hui Cho or Adam Lanza. As gunshots boom outside his dusty trailer office, Blair describes the "nightmare scenario" that haunts every officer: friendly fire.

Imagine, for instance, an armed student had responded to the gunman in the UT library. "He wants to be a good guy and do the right thing," says Blair. So the student runs inside, only to confront another armed student responder. They might simultaneously fire. Or they begin screaming until police arrive, who also might mistakenly shoot. Or the students find the assailant, and miss. Blair described a recent po-

lice firefight in Times Square in which two bystanders were struck – NYPD officers, some of the best-trained in the country, average about 34 percent accuracy. "Anytime a weapon discharges, that bullet's going to go somewhere," says Blair. "That somewhere could be an innocent person."

In fact, during the 2010 library shooting, Austin's police chief, Art Acevedo – who testified against SB 11 – ordered plainclothes officers to stay outside the building in order to avoid confusion. "In the past, if you saw someone on campus with a firearm," he says, "we could assume that, more than likely, it's a violation of law. Now it's a totally different set of circumstances."

Across the U.S., campus-safety experts warn of ways an active-shooter intervention can go south. During an experiment run by the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, police department in 2009, students at Muhlenberg College were given standard firearms training, then handed practice Glocks and placed in a classroom. When a mock shooter stormed the room, the armed students were consistently mowed down in seconds – shot in the head and chest, often before anyone could unholster a gun. "My heart is still pounding," one of the students later said. Another described how little prior training had helped: "It's just completely different."

There has yet to be a recorded case of a school shooting stopped by an armed civilian, though two incidents came close. In 1997, a high school student in Pearl, Mississippi, shot nine classmates, killing two; the shooter was fleeing in his car when an assistant principal confronted him with a handgun. Then there was the 2002 case at Appalachian Law School, a small campus in Virginia. After a disgruntled student shot four students and two faculty members, he walked to the front pavilion, lowered his emptied gun and kneeled. Two other students - both off-duty cops - ran to retrieve guns from their cars. Meanwhile, two unarmed students tackled the assailant, with the gun-wielding pair close behind. State police lauded the unarmed bystanders, but gun-rights advocates spun the event as an instance of guns on campus stopping an active shooter. "I'm a gun advocate, but it really irritates me that people are trying to use this as a plug," one of the unarmed students, Ted Besen, said afterward. "The NRA is minimizing the tragedy that happened here."

According to a report that ALERRT coauthored with the FBI, which cataloged 14 years of active-shooter incidents, 26 cases were stopped by a civilian - 21 unarmed, five armed (the five included four off-duty security guards and a former Marine). A 2014 campus shooting at Seattle Pacific University ended when a student charged the shooter with pepper spray. "Congresswoman Giffords, when she was shot, the [shooter] stopped to reload, and the guy tackled him," says Blair, whose ALERRT Center teaches a defense protocol called Avoid-Deny-Defend for unarmed civilians. "When you start talking about training someone for combat shooting, that's a whole other level of training."

Last summer in Maryland, police chiefs convened for the Campus Safety East summit, where hundreds of officers sat through glum presentations like "New Perspectives on Active-Shooter Training." When I ask a dozen attendees at one seminar, "Strategies for Unarmed Security," who among them supported campus carry, the question is met with silence. "As a gun

guy, I generally favor concealed carry," says Lt. John Weinstein of NOVA College in Virginia. "There are permit holders who could shoot the hair off a gnat's ass, but there are a lot of people who can't, and these same people are running around college campuses."

A bear of a man with a long nose and a crisp mustache, Weinstein is an NRA supporter who left a gig as a professor of international relations to become a cop. A few weeks after the conference, I visit him at his tiny Virginia office. As opera plays on the computer, Weinstein presents a granular case against campus carry, from the dynamics of weaponry to the odds of a classroom shooting ("34.6 times 10 to the minus seventh"). "As an archconservative," he says at one point, "it pains me to be making the argument of the left."

"We now have this added drama – this unknown, whether anyone has a gun. And we're not allowed to ask. It puts the whole classroom on edge."

Weinstein explains, for example, what went wrong in the Muhlenberg experiment. "At around 150 to 175 heartbeats per minute, you start to lose your peripheral vision, lose your auditory acuity, and your body goes into survival mode," he says. "I'm in a crowded classroom, my hands are shaking because my heart is beating, I've lost my peripheral vision, I don't know who's on either side of me, I have audio exclusion, and now I'm going to take a shot?" He shakes his head. "The chances are greater you're hitting another evacuee."

Back at the ALERRT Center, Blair directs me past the booming gun range and into a spacious hangar containing simulated school and office spaces. ALERRT leaders tell me that UT Austin is "seriously considering" a program to train undergraduates here in armed-response drills. Texas is one of the few states that require time at a gun range for a concealed-carry license. But in 2013, the state reduced its training requirement from six hours to four - a course I passed easily, having never before touched a gun. A well-known loophole allows Texas citizens to get a license after viewing a 30-minute YouTube video and parting with \$19.99. The workaround is valid in 31 states.

In the hangar, a swarm of men in green camouflage and police baseball caps glide in delicate packs, squinting down rifle barrels. Today's drill, a "breach exercise," is inspired by Virginia Tech. A squad of six burly men surround a steel door. A blast of metal on metal erupts, and the squad leader, gripping a 12-gauge shotgun, hustles his unit into the faux conference room. "If there are going to be people with firearms on campus," Blair says, "then we can get them the highest level of training."

AYS AFTER THE DILDO PROtest, pro-gun activists released a video depicting female protesters shot in the head (SCC denounced it). Across campus, anonymous students left bullet casings outside classrooms; a sliver of paper inside one read, "Triggered?" That week, a 21-yearold student flashed his gun in the Perry-Castañeda Library, a clear violation. Then, in mid-September, a student's gun misfired in a dorm room at Tarleton State, one of the 38 public-college campuses in Texas enacting SB 11. SCC, which had previously rebutted its opponents for failing to provide evidence of misfires, rushed a press release attributing the event to a "period of adjustment." Roland was still undeterred. "Looking at the big picture," he says, "being able to potentially defend ourselves with firearms is a better situation than the reverse.'

No one, not even the SCC, knows *exactly* how many American campuses now allow guns. Universities are required by law to disclose basic safety information, but that doesn't include statistics on campus carry, such as accidental discharges, gun-flashing, or whether a school allows guns in the first place. Rep. Keith Ellison, D-Minn., has introduced legislation to change that, requiring universities to publish gun policies for prospective students. "That's a big hole," says Ellison. "Students and families need to be able to make a rational choice about their exposure to guns."

In the meantime, campus carry continues to pick up states. Last December, Gov. John Kasich signed a campus-carry bill in Ohio. Unlike Texas', Ohio's law allows for an opt-out clause; campus carry is no longer illegal, but universities set their own rules. SCC's new entity, the SCC Foundation, is financing more insurgent lawsuits, and leaders believe they've found up to 30 states where universities could allow guns. Next up: legal battles in Georgia, Arkansas and Iowa. "There seems to be more of an appetite by the gun lobby for these bills," Pelosi says. "They smell blood."





Trump the Destroyer

In a chaotic rollout for the ages, Trump stuffed his Cabinet with tyrants, zealots and imbeciles – all bent on demolishing our government from within

By Matt Taibbi

Illustration by Victor Juhasz

***NATIONAL ** AFFAIRS **

T'S LIKE THE CAMPAIGN NEVER ENDED. IT'S THE SAME

all-Trump, all-the-time madness, only exponentially worse.

¶ Morning, February 24th, National Harbor, Maryland, the Conservative Political Action Conference. Chin up, eyes asquint, Donald Trump floats to the lectern on a sea of applause and adulation. The building is shaking, and as fans howl his name – Trump! Trump! Trump! – he looks pleased and satisfied, like a Roman emperor who has just moved his bowels. ¶ "Great to be back at CPAC," he says. "The place I have really…" ¶ The thought flies into the air and vanishes. Last year at this time, Trump was bailing on a CPAC invite because a rat's nest of National Review types was threatening a walkout to protest him. There was talk of 300 conservatives planning a simultaneous march to the toilet if the formerly pro-choice New Yorker was allowed onstage. ¶ Whether Trump remembers this now, or just loses his train of thought, he goes silent.

"We love you!" a young woman screams, filling the void.

"I love this place!" Trump exclaims, sunnily now. He recalls the tale of his first major political speech, which was delivered to this very conference six years ago. Back then he was introduced to the beat of the O'Jays soul hit "For the Love of Money," and over the course of 13 uncomfortably autoerotic minutes flogged his résumé and declared it a myth that a "very successful person" couldn't run for president.

He starts to tell that story, when suddenly he spots something in the audience that knocks him off script.

"Siddown, everybody, come on," he says. A lot of the people can't sit down because they're in standing-room-only sections. There's confusion, a few nervous laughs. Frowning, Trump plows ahead.

"You know," he says, "the dishonest media, they'll say, 'He didn't get a standing ovation.' You know why?"

Those of us in the dishonest-media section shoot befuddled looks at one another. Not one of us has a clue why.

"You know why? No, you know why?" he goes on. "Because everybody stood and nobody sat. So they will say, 'He never got a standing ovation.' Right?"

This makes no sense, but the crowd roars anyway. Trump leans over and pauses to soak in the love, his trademark red tie hanging like the tongue of a sled dog. Finally he turns and flashes a triumphant thumbs-up. A chant breaks out:

"U-S-A! U-S-A! U-S-A!"

Reporters stare at one another in shock. They were mute bystanders seconds ago; now they're the 1980 Soviet hockey team. One turns to a colleague and silently mouths: "U-S-A? What the f..."

Nearby, another press nerd is frowning to himself and counting on his fingers, apparently trying to use visual aids to retrace Trump's reasoning. Was the idea that reporters wouldn't notice a standing ovation unless the crowd eventually sat down? Helpless shrugs all around.

In a flash, Trump is launching into a furious 15-minute diatribe, bashing the "Clinton News Network" (Trump continually refers to Hillary Clinton as if the campaign were still going on) and describing the press as the "enemy of the people."

Within hours, Trump's aides will bar a group of news outlets from a White House

Trump has always been a reality star without peer.
But as president, he is a prisoner to his talents as an attention-generation machine.

gaggle, in a formal declaration of war against the media. The next morning, a still-raging Trump will tweet out his decision not to attend the White House Correspondents' Dinner – no great loss, since the event has never not been a wretched exercise in stale humor and ankle-biting toadyism, but still. How long can he keep up this pace?

Since winning the election, Trump has declared interpersonal war on a breathtaking list of targets: the Australian prime minister, an acting attorney general, seven predominantly Muslim countries, a "socalled" federal judge, Sweden, "Fake Tears" Chuck Schumer, Saturday Night Live, the FBI, the "very un-American" leakers within the intelligence community, and the city of Paris (it's "no longer Paris"). He's sideeyed Mark Cuban, John Mc-Cain, millions of protesters, Lindsey Graham, Richard Blu-

menthal, Chris Cuomo, the University of California at Berkeley, ratings "disaster" Arnold Schwarzenegger, Nancy Pelosi, the "TRAITOR Chelsea Manning," Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto, Barack Obama and the city of Chicago, among many, many others.

There is no other story in the world, no other show to watch. The first and most notable consequence of Trump's administration is that his ability to generate celebrity has massively increased, his persona now turbocharged by the vast powers of the presidency. Trump has always been a reality star without peer, but now the most powerful man on Earth is prisoner to his talents as an attention-generation machine.

Worse, he is leader of a society incapable of discouraging him. The numbers bear out that we are living through a severely amplified déjà vu of last year's media-Trump codependent lunacies. TV-news viewership traditionally plummets after a presidential election, but under Trump, it's soaring. Ratings since November for the major cable news networks are up an astonishing 50 percent in some cases, with CNN expecting to improve on its record 2016 to make a billion dollars – that's billion with a "b" – in profits this year.

Even the long-suffering newspaper business is crawling off its deathbed, with *The New York Times* adding 132,000 subscribers in the first 18 days after the election. If Trump really hates the press, being the first person in decades to reverse the industry's seemingly inexorable financial decline sure is a funny way of showing it.

On the campaign trail, ballooning celebrity equaled victory. But as the country



is finding out, fame and governance have nothing to do with one another. *Trump!* is bigger than ever. But the Trump presidency is fast withering on the vine in a bizarre, *Dorian Gray-*style inverse correlation. Which would be a problem for Trump, if he cared.

But does he? During the election, Trump exploded every idea we ever had about how politics is supposed to work. The easiest marks in his con-artist conquest of the system were the people who kept trying to measure him according to conventional standards of candidate behavior. You remember the Beltway priests who said no one could ever win the White House by insulting women, the disabled, veterans, Hispanics, "the blacks," by using a Charlie Chan voice to talk about Asians, etc.

Now he's in office and we're again facing the trap of conventional assumptions. Surely Trump wants to rule? It couldn't be that the presidency is just a puppy Trump never intended to care for, could it?

Toward the end of his CPAC speech, following a fusillade of anti-media tirades that will dominate the headlines for days, Trump, in an offhand voice, casually mentions what a chore the presidency can be.

"I still don't have my Cabinet approved," he sighs.

In truth, Trump does have much of his team approved. In the early days of his administration, while his Democratic opposition was still reeling from November's defeat, Trump managed to stuff the top of his Cabinet with a jaw-dropping collection of perverts, tyrants and imbeciles, the likes of which Washington has never seen.

En route to taking this crucial first beachhead in his invasion of the capital,

FLY BY NIGHT

Trump on Air Force One with Chief of Staff Reince Priebus on January 26th. The next day, the president announced the travel ban.

Trump did what he always does: stoked chaos, created hurricanes of misdirection, ignored rules and dared the system of checks and balances to stop him.

By conventional standards, the system held up fairly well. But this is not a conventional president. He was a new kind of candidate and now is a new kind of leader: one who stumbles like a drunk up Capitol Hill, but manages even in defeat to continually pull the country in his direction, transforming not our laws but our consciousness, one shriveling brain cell at a time.

the most overanalyzed person in the world, but Trump arrived in Washington an unknown. His shocking victory had been won almost entirely outside the Beltway, via a Shermanesque barnstorming tour through white-discontent meccas in states like Iowa, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, where he devoured popular support by promising wrath and vengeance on the federal government.

Trump didn't appeal to K Street for help, didn't beg for mailing lists or the phone numbers of millionaire bundlers, and never wrung his hands waiting for favorable reviews on *Meet the Press*. He was the first president in modern times to arrive in Washington not owing the local burghers.

What that meant, nobody knew, but it probably wasn't good. Leaders in both parties had reason to panic. Democrats were

calling him illegitimate. Leading Republicans had abandoned Trump during the "grab them by the pussy" episode. In a true autocracy, theirs would be the first heads gored on stakes as a warning to the others. Many D.C. bureaucrats had no idea what to expect. They were like shopkeepers awaiting the arrival of a notorious biker gang.

Candidate Trump had lied and prevaricated so fluidly that it was impossible to be sure where he really stood on any issue. Was he "very pro-choice," or did he think women who got abortions deserved "some form of punishment"? Was he an aspiring dictator and revolutionary, or merely a pragmatic charlatan whose run for president was just a publicity stunt that got way out of hand?

The mystery seemed to end once Trump started choosing his team.

Some appointees were less terrifying than others. Former ExxonMobil chief Rex Tillerson at least pays lip service to climate change and probably has enough smarts to complete one side of a Rubik's Cube. Treasury pick Steven Mnuchin would struggle to make a list of the 30 most loathsome Goldman Sachs veterans. These and a few others were merely worst-case-scenario corporate-influence types, industry foxes sent to man regulatory henhouses.

But the rest were the most fantastic collection of creeps since the "Thriller" video. Many were blunderers and conspiracists whose sole qualification for office appeared to be their open hostility to the missions of the agencies they were tapped to run.

Trump's choice for EPA director, Scott Pruitt, was a climate-change denier who infamously zeroed out the environmental-enforcement division from the Oklahoma attorney general's office. For secretary of labor, Trump picked a fast-food titan who prefers robots to human workers (robots, he said, don't file discrimination suits!).

Trump put a brain surgeon in charge of federal housing, picked a hockey-team owner to be secretary of the Army, and chose as budget director a congressman best known for inspiring a downgrade to America's credit rating by threatening to default on the national debt.

Trump's pick for energy secretary, Rick Perry, reportedly not only admitted that he didn't know what the Department of Energy actually does, but had called for that very agency's elimination as a presidential candidate (and forgot that fact during a debate). Moreover, Trump had brutalized Perry during the campaign as a dimwit among dimwits, whose "smart glasses" affectation didn't fool anyone.

For Trump and his inner circle to name Perry to any Cabinet post at all felt like trolling, like a football team wrapping the mascot in packing tape and mailing him to Canada. But to send someone you're on record calling an idiot to run the nation's nuTrump's lead adviser, the fast-talking Breitbart Svengali Steve Bannon, would ultimately explain the thinking behind Trump's appointments in front of the CPAC audience. "If you look at these Cabinet appointees, they were selected for a reason," he said. The mysterious figure described that reason as the "deconstruction of the administrative state."

This seemed to confirm the darkest theory of the Trump administration: a state-smashing revolution disguised as populist political theater. A do-nothing Cabinet could ease back on its discretion-

ary authority to save public lands, enforce workplace protections, uphold emissions standards. It could (and soon would) stop investigating crooked police departments. It could redirect funds meant to study climate change or viral outbreaks.

Continuing a theme that dominated election season, both parties were painfully slow to accept the reality of what they were dealing with.

The early response of the Democratic leadership to Trump's picks was a shocking strategy of partial accommodation and "picking their battles."

"I call it the law of conservation of no's," says Jeff Hauser of the Revolving Door Project, which monitors federal appointments. "The Democrats felt they could only say no to Trump so many times, that they had to hoard their political capital for one or two battles."

Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and Co. decided to focus their oppositional efforts on a few select targets, particularly Trump's Health and Human Services nominee, Georgia Rep. Tom Price.

An orthopedic surgeon with snow-white hair, sallow cheeks and the voice of a man complaining to a waitress, Price is probably best known for spending the past eight years leading the effort to overturn the Affordable Care Act.

In a classic example of Beltway-Clintonian triangular thinking, the Democrats felt that Price was their best bet to score a crossover win because of his history of favoring cuts in the popular Medicare and Medicaid programs.

After a paradigm-crushing year in which Trump won the presidency claiming vac-

Contributing editor MATT TAIBBI will be covering the Trump administration every month in the magazine. cines were a hoax, global warming was a Chinese conspiracy and Ted Cruz's dad killed JFK, Democrats were clinging to a Nineties-era playbook that said forcing Republicans into a corner on Medicare and Social Security was still a no-lose play in American politics.

The focus on Price was another example of Democrats' inability to recognize a changed political landscape. But even before Trump came on the scene, this lack of vision doomed them.

In 2013, then-Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada eliminated the filibuster procedure for presidential nominees. Passage of the so-called Reid Rule was widely hailed by Democrats because it solved the

POWER GRAB

Trump's chief strategist, Steve Bannon, describes the Cabinet picks as part of the "deconstruction of the administrative state."

short-term problem of Republican obstruction of Obama.

In reality, Reid just sabotaged the future self-defense capability of the entire Senate. This was one of many examples of Democrats cheering an expansion of executive power that later left them weakened under Trump. Delaware Sen. Chris Coons was one of the first to get religion late last year, once he started to see Trump's loony nominees marching up the Hill.

"I do regret that," Coons told CNN in late November. "[The filibuster] would have been a terrific speed bump."

Still, it's not clear that Democrats would have used the filibuster, even if they had it holstered. At an early-December meeting at North Dakota Sen. Heidi Heitkamp's Washington home, several prominent Democrats reportedly met over Chinese food and emerged with a crack-suicide-squad strategy for fighting Trump: Talk more about pocketbook issues and maybe take on Price.

One Democrat after another sounded notes of accommodation. West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin said he planned to generally support Trump's picks "unless there's just something scathing coming out that I don't know about." Sen. Brian Schatz of Hawaii added, "We can't very well be at a fever pitch on everything."

Price sailed through hearings and was confirmed along party lines basically without a struggle, and the Democratic "resistance" looked cooked out of the gate.

Another early nominee who skated through was CIA chief Mike Pompeo, a Jesus-humping conspiracist who embraces torture and once called politics "a neverending struggle...until the Rapture."

A spy chief who believes in literal Armageddon apparently wasn't "scathing" enough to be "fevered" about, and 14 Democrats supported his nomination in a whopping 66-32 confirmation.

Ohio Sen. Sherrod Brown and Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts then gave voice votes in favor of Trump's choice to run the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Ben Carson.

Even if Carson were not an addled mystic who thinks gay rights are a Marxist plot and "hummus" a Palestinian terrorist group, putting a doctor with no economics background in charge of

an agency about to take part in one of the most complex financial projects in our history – the reorganization of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac – seemed like madness.

Carson, through an aide, said as late as November he didn't want to take a Cabinet post because he "has no government experience," saying he didn't want to do anything that could "cripple the presidency."

Mark it down as another first in the Trump era: Politician formally announces his own incompetence in an attempt to prevent his own nomination, gets nominated anyway, and is even supported by members of an opposition party that perhaps unconsciously has begun to grade Trump's insanity on a curve – an early example of how the relentless Trump show bends our perception of reality.

Democratic members who cast early yea votes were besieged when they went back home. Warren was deluged with furious Twitter responses ("Ben Carson is ok?! Wtf is wrong with you!"), while Schumer appeared at a rally in Battery Park in Manhattan, only to be hectored: "Stop voting for his nominees!"

The Women's March also shocked Democratic leadership. Some reports called it

the largest protest in our history, with as many as 4.2 million people marching in 600 different cities.

These people didn't want Democrats "picking battles" and "conserving no's" – they wanted them to hurl themselves under tank treads to stop Trump at every turn. But what really made the message sink in for Democrats was a mid-January hearing that provided one of their first up-close encounters with Trump's invasion force.

HE TURNING POINT COMES early on the evening of January 17th, in Room 430 of the Senate's Dirksen Building. At the center of this imposing hearing hall with majestic circular paneling, built in the Fifties to provide the Senate with a dramatic venue fit for the television age, sits the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee's first visitor from Planet Trump.

She is a mute, unassuming woman with straight blond hair, glasses and a quizzical expression, perched at attention like someone awaiting a sermon.

The nomination of Betsy DeVos to be education secretary was surely meant on some level as an insult to the Senate. The daughter of an auto-parts billionaire, DeVos is also married to the heir of the Amway fortune, which makes her something like America's reigning Queen of Suckers. Her family has given as much as \$200 million to conservative causes and politicians over the years.

It has to have entered Trump's calculations that a large percentage of senators for this reason would not be able to reject her no matter what she said or did under questioning. It's exactly the sort of cruel theater in which Trump the reality-TV producer once specialized.

DeVos arrives dressed in a blazer of bright purple. (Historians will note this is the same color of the robes worn by Incitatus, the horse Caligula used to troll the Senate.) Over the next three and a half hours, she will prove to be the worst witness since William Jennings Bryan sent himself to the stand in the Scopes Monkey Trial.

A well-known charter-school advocate who had said that "government really sucks" and that public education was a "dead end" – who had neither attended public school nor sent her kids to one – DeVos is at first standoffish but predictable in her answers. But things turn surreal when Minnesota Sen. Al Franken asks her where she stands on the question of proficiency versus growth.

Do we judge schools according to how much their students know, or should we better measure how much students know relative to how much they knew before? It's the education equivalent of asking if a football coach prefers the run or the pass.

DeVos has no idea what Franken is talking about.

"I think, if I'm understanding your question correctly around proficiency, I would also correlate it to competency and mastery," she says, "so that each student is measured according to the advancement that they're making in each subject area."

"Well, that's growth," Franken says. "That's not proficiency."

DeVos stammers a brief response, then freezes. She looks like a duck trying to read a parking meter.

As the hearing progresses, DeVos tires and her Sunday-school smile wilts around

Every move confirmed the darkest theory of the Trump White House: A state-smashing revolution disguised as populism.

the edges. By the time Sen. Chris Murphy of Connecticut asks if guns should be allowed in schools, she's fed up.

"I think probably there, I would imagine that there is probably a gun in the school to protect from potential grizzlies," she says, in reference to an earlier exchange with Wyoming Sen. Mike Enzi.

Murmurs shoot through the rear of the hall. The members are unaware that the hearing is trending on Twitter. The "grizzlies" line, to use an overwrought cliché, broke the Internet.

Committee Chair Sen. Lamar Alexander, a pink-faced Southerner whose own fringe presidential runs in the Nineties in some ways presaged Trump's – the difference being Alexander's populist affectation was a red-flannel shirt instead of conspiratorial xenophobia – had miscalculated in his apparent attempt to hide the hearing by scheduling it at night.

The Republicans also failed to adjust for the new Trump-era media landscape. Twitter that day boiled with hot stories. Trump's NSA communications pick, pearlearringed Fox News blockhead Monica Crowley, had to step down over plagiarism accusations. Trump was continuing his days-long flame war with Georgia Rep. John Lewis, and blasting his approval ratings as "rigged." Some 51 members of Congress were announcing plans to boycott Trump's inauguration. And so on.

"During the day, seven crazy things were happening," a committee aide explains. "But in the evening, this was it."

When the hearing ended, ranking member Sen. Patty Murray of Washington was amazed to find out that the HELP committee had somehow become the center of the social-media universe.

"I looked down at my phone and saw all of these texts," she says now. "I was like, 'Wow."

A video from the hearing would garner 1.2 million hits on YouTube, beyond anything in the committee's history.

The impact of the DeVos implosion was twofold. First, the Democrats realized they could and should fight back. Second, Republicans found the downside of party-line votes. Many received a torrent of abuse from constituents who demanded they vote DeVos out.

"I have heard from thousands, truly, thousands of Alaskans who have shared their concerns about Mrs. DeVos," said Republican Sen. Lisa Murkowski, who dealt with protests outside her Alaska office and later estimated that 30,000 constituents called to complain.

Murkowski announced that she would pull her vote for DeVos, as did Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine. A senator voting against his or her own party's nominee is the Beltway equivalent of an eclipse or a volcanic lightning strike – rare and frightening to the natives.

True to form, the Democrats – they have been a step behind Trump for a while now – never managed to peel off a third defector to defeat DeVos. But Republicans still suffered the indignity of needing Vice President Mike Pence to break the tie, another thing that had never before happened in the Senate's history.

The DeVos debacle impacted Trump's choice for labor secretary, Andy Puzder. The CEO of CKE Restaurants, which includes the Hardee's and Carl's Jr. chains, the lecherous and moronic Puzder made DeVos look like Robert Frost.

Earlier that week, it came to light that Puzder's ex-wife had appeared in disguise on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* back in the Nineties to talk about being abused. Moreover, Puzder greenlit a line of pseudopornographic commercials, including one that featured babes in postage-stamp bikinis opening wide to wolf down "three-way burgers." Even his name, Puzder, sounds like an unmentionable sex act.

To be confirmed, Puzder would have to run the same gauntlet of HELP committee

···NATIONAL ·· AFFAIRS ··

senators: Murray, Franken, Murphy, Warren and Bernie Sanders, among others, all of whom had turned their cross-examinations of DeVos into viral hits.

If silly Betsy DeVos crashed Twitter, what would hours of live Q&A with a cleavage-obsessed multimillionaire do?

Before it came to that, four Republicans – Collins, Murkowski, Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina and Sen. Johnny Isakson of Georgia – announced they were withholding support for Puzder's bid. Soon after, he pulled out, and Democrats for the first time drew blood against Trump. Puzder later told Fox News that the DeVos hearing "actually is what killed" his nomination.

From that point forward, there was no more "conservation of no's."

"I think before, some people might have been saying, 'Somewhere in his heart [Trump] must love the country. We'll give him the benefit of the doubt," says Murray, stressing she herself never felt this way. "But after DeVos, everyone realized, you can't give him the benefit of the doubt."

Murray adds that DeVos provided what seemed like proof of the Bannon theory of Trump's governance by self-sabotage.

"You sensed it before, but now it's jelling in people's minds," Murray says. "This was

a completely different kind of administration. We had to consider that this was a really focused deconstructive effort."

N THE CHAMBERS OF THE SENate and on social media, the battle over Trump's nominees felt like a comedy of manners. But out in the real world, there were already people staring at the business end of his presidency, and the costs were very real.

On the evening of January 28th, Munther Alaskry sits on the tarmac in a Turkish Air Lines jet in Istanbul, his wife and two young children by his side. They are on a stopover, headed for Houston. An Iraqi native, Alaskry had served in combat in Iraq as a translator alongside American soldiers dating back to 2003. He'd carried a weapon in the field, wore an Americanissued uniform and been hunted by militias in his own country for more than a decade.

He applied for a visa to the U.S. in 2010 and, after nearly seven years of paperwork and interviews with practically every American security agency, was finally granted permission to immigrate in December 2016. "If that is not extreme vetting, I don't know what is," he says.

But before his jet takes off in Istanbul, a woman comes down the aisle and asks his wife for her passport. Alaskry knows instantly the game is up. He and his family are pulled off the plane and flown back to Baghdad at his expense. There is nothing to go back to. He'd sold his car and furniture. He and his wife had quit their jobs. He is also sure to be executed if the wrong people find him. They hide in his father-in-law's house.

"We had no idea what to do," he says. "We had nothing."

Trump's infamous executive order on January 27th barring immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries was initially taken by conservatives as proof that he was a doer, not a talker. MAN OF ACTION HAS PRESS, DEMOCRATS AND HOLLYWOOD IN A DITHER, *The Washington Times* gushed.

But the episode ended up being classic Trumpian ineptitude. The order was so poorly thought out that even the meanest judge couldn't ratify it. It originally included a de facto exemption for Christians, making it a glaring violation of the Establishment Clause of the Constitution. A Bush-appointed judge, James Robart, struck it down out of the gate, and Alaskry was shortly after able to get his family to Rochester, New York. He marveled at Americans' inability to distinguish, say, an



ISIL fighter from people like himself, to say nothing of his children.

"The veterans, they know," Alaskry says.
"But the normal people, they do not know the difference."

A president like Trump can have an impact even if he never manages to get a single law passed, simply by unleashing stupidity as a revolutionary force. Of course, no one can draw a direct line from Trump to incidents like the one in Kansas, where one of those "normal people" shot two immigrants from India, killing one, after accosting them about their visa status. Nor can anyone say that the Trump effect caused a Sikh man with American citizenship to be shot outside Seattle by a man yelling, "Go back to your own country!"

If Trump and his supporters don't want to take credit for this exciting new era of not knowing what a Muslim is, but shooting people for being one anyway, that's OK. But Trump's executive orders were the hallmark of his first days in office, as he signed the travel ban, pledged to overturn the Dodd-Frank financial rules and ordered the construction of the so-called "Great Wall of Trump," among other things.

But in most cases these orders only announced the start of long legal battles with

highly ambiguous chances for success. Take away the impact they had as symbols of action, and most of what Trump has actually done so far, concretely, is pick a team. He soon enough stopped bothering with that, too.

At State, "the level of paranoia is off the charts," says one former D.C. official.

FTERNOON, FEBRUARY
16th, the Senate. Up in the
gallery above the dais, in the
cheap seats near the ceiling
where they keep the reporters, rests a copy of Robert Caro's tour de
force Master of the Senate. As you sit flipping the pages of the colossal tome, reading
decades-old descriptions of the very "drab

39

tan damask walls" next to which you sit, you learn that this body, like a heavy oceanworthy ship, was designed to withstand the most violent changes in circumstance.

Even two centuries ago, people like Jefferson and Madison understood that Americans were likely to go crazy from time to time, and so infused the Senate with awesome powers to stall and block the "transient impressions into which [people] might be led."

On the floor below, Democrats are playing out the script, furiously arguing against Mick Mulvaney, Trump's nominee to head the Office of Management and Budget. Emboldened by their clash with DeVos and the withdrawal of Puzder, they're finally fighting in earnest using traditional legislative weaponry. But they still have no answer for the post-factual revolution raging outside the Capitol that saddled them with a figure like Mulvaney in the first place.

The South Carolina congressman with the cropped hair and the bulldog face is one of the most disliked people on the Hill. Mulvaney orates with the charm of a prison guard and behaves as if smiling on Capitol grounds would violate the Framers' vision of limited government. He fits the Bannonite vision of revolutionary destruction, having for years led a gang of fiscal con-

I Love A Good Political Fight.

But Are we going to Fight

To A Decision...

Or just Keep fighting?

Chin Institute

How I back

This is who we are.

***NATIONAL **AFFAIRS **

spiracy theorists who, based on nothing whatsoever, believe that nothing bad could come from the United States defaulting on its national debt.

"I have yet to meet someone who can articulate the negative consequences [of defaulting]," he said in 2010.

Shortly after saying this, the United States' credit rating was downgraded from AAA to AA+ by Standard and Poor's, thanks in large part to congressional Republicans like Mulvaney threatening default. This episode will cost American taxpayers an astonishing \$18.9 billion due to higher interest rates just on American securities issued that year. A similar episode two years later cost the economy another \$24 billion, making Mulvaney and his bund of congressional "debt truthers" perhaps the most expensively stupid people ever to be elected to federal office in America.

As the Mulvaney vote nears, one Democratic senator after another stands up in the gallery to call him out. Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois notes that Mulvaney once questioned whether the Zika virus caused birth defects, apparently because he didn't want the government spending money on scientific research.

"I'm not making this up," Durbin pleads. The Republicans yawn. One of the brilliant innovations of the Trump phenomenon has been the turning of expertise into a class issue. Formerly, scientists were political liabilities only insofar as their work clashed with the teachings of TV Biblethumpers. Now, any person who in any way disputes popular misconceptions that balancing a budget is just like balancing a checkbook, that two snowfalls in a week prove global warming isn't real, that handguns would have saved Jews from the Holocaust or little kids from the Sandy Hook massacre - is part of an elitist conspiracy to deny the selfhood of the Googleeducated American. The Republicans understand this axiom: No politician in the Trump era is going to dive in a foxhole to save scientific research. Scientists, like reporters, Muslims and the French, are out.

Most conservatives who opposed Trump over the past two years on grounds of basic logic now realize that they'll suffer if they take stands against his conspiratorial ideas on immigrants, the budget, "so-called" judges, climate change or anything else. Trump has made being the voice of reason politically dangerous. Arizona Sen. Jeff Flake, for instance, is already saddled with a Trump-aligned primary challenger and the enmity of Breitbart, which ran a photo of him next to an "I'm With Her" logo.

After Mulvaney squeaks through, the Democrats plunge into desperate tactics to stop the next bugbear, EPA nominee Pruitt. The drawling, devout Oklahoman represents the epitome of the Bannon ethos, failing in committee to name a single environmental regulation he supported.

To try to stop him, Dems invoke one of those senatorial stalling tactics, a rule that allows them to hold off a final vote for 30 hours, provided they keep the floor open through the *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* technique of continuous debate. They stay up all night, with one member after another blasting Pruitt as the kind of man who would use a spotted owl as a dashboard ornament. But in the many rhetorical dead spots, they hit the theme of the month: Russia.

At the time, Trump's national security adviser and noted Pizzagate conspiracy theorist Gen. Michael Flynn had just resigned, after revelations that he had unreported contact with the Russian ambassa-

A president who is both a tyrant and disinterested in governance would have blown the Founding Fathers' minds.

dor prior to Trump's inauguration. Within a few weeks, Attorney General Jeff Sessions will be rolled up in a similar imbroglio.

No matter what you believe on the Russia front, the manner in which the story is being prosecuted is striking. After failing to stop nutcases like Mulvaney using conventional tactics, the Democrats forayed into the unconventional. The scandal so dominates blue-state media that *Russia Wars* can almost be said to be the Democrats' competing reality franchise. This show even incorporates Trump's sensational political style, cycling lurid accusations with tune-in-next-time promises of future revelations. As damaging as it's been, it's yet another example of Trump's uncanny ability to Trump-ize the world around him.

All of Trump's opponents sooner or later fall victim to the same pattern. He is so voluminously offensive that Christ himself would abandon a positive message to chase his negatives. His election so completely devastated Democratic voters that many cannot think of him except in the context of removing him as soon as possible.

A scenario under which he is impeached somehow for colluding with Vladimir Putin to disrupt last year's election seems like the needed shortcut. Unfortunately, despite a lot of lies about meetings and conversations and other curious behavior, there's no actual proof of conspiracy. The former director of national intelligence, James Clapper, said there was "no evidence" of such collusion as of his last day in office.

That has put congressional Democrats in the perilous position of having to litter their Russia speeches with caveats like, "We do not know all the facts" and "More information may well surface." They're often stuck using the conspiracy-theory technique of referring to what they don't know as a way of talking about what they hope to find out.

Trump has responded to all this in a predictable manner, leveling wild counter-accusations, saying Obama had been "tapping my phones" and was a "bad (or sick) guy." Trump's senior adviser Kellyanne Conway, who will either be ambassador to Mars or in a straitjacket by the end of this presidency, followed up by suggesting the government may have used a microwave oven to surveil Trump Tower during the election.

Maybe Trump didn't plan this, and it's just coincidence that where we are now dueling accusations of criminality, investigations instead of debates, jail promised to the loser – is what politics would look like in a WWE future where government is a forprofit television program. And maybe it's not the Trump effect that has Democrats so completely focused on him instead of talking to their voters, a mistake they also made last election season.

Still, the Russia story is the ultimate in high-stakes politics. If proof emerges that Trump and Putin colluded, it could topple this presidency. But if no such evidence comes out, the gambit could massively backfire, validating Trump's accusations of establishment bias and media overreach.

In the short term, however, there's no question that Russia is bloodying Trump politically. An evening speech during the Pruitt hearings by Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar hits the typical notes.

She cleverly references a trip she made to Ukraine with McCain and Graham, both owners of key votes in future legislative battles. She then goes all out rhetorically, hinting at bombshell future revelations: blackmail, betrayal, treason.

"If we are committed to ensuring that Russia's hacking invasions and blackmail do not go unchecked," she says, "we must do everything in our power to uncover the full extent of this interference in our own political system..."

This goes on all night. Democrats stick it out until morning, only to wake up to find that two of their own caucus members from coal country have crossed over to give Pruitt their support.

Their cave-in shows that the power of Trump's base extends even to Democrats.

The two senators, Heitkamp of North Dakota and Manchin of West Virginia, both face re-election in 2018 and hail from states where Trump won handily. So much for throwing their bodies under tank treads: The Democrats can't even convince their members to forget about re-election long enough to save the EPA. The ayes have it, 52-46, handing environmental enforcement to a man likely bent on a campaign of inaction, portending perhaps a return now to the good old days of the Cuyahoga River spontaneously catching fire.

s the month of february nears its end, Trump has won far more than he's lost on the nomination front.
But he appears to have been

scarred by this process that saw one appointee resign (Flynn), four more withdraw (Puzder, Crowley, wouldbe Army Secretary Vincent Viola and Navy Secretary pick Philip Bilden), and another, Sessions, caught up in scandal and forced to recuse himself from the Russia probe after possibly perjuring himself during his confirmation.

As much of a dumpster fire as it may have seemed from the outside, the rocky nomination process has actually been a honeymoon of sorts for Trump, a period when he only needed a simple majority in a 52-Republican Senate to

get his people passed. Going forward, as of now, for actual legislation, the filibuster will be in play, and Trump will need 60 votes to do real damage.

"The 60-vote universe is where he's got a problem," says longtime Democratic strategist Simon Rosenberg.

That theory is borne out a few weeks later, when a House bill to repeal the Affordable Care Act runs into trouble in the Senate, and no fewer than eight Republicans announce their objections. The Congressional Budget Office complicates the picture by scoring the Republican bill and concluding that it would leave 14 million fewer people insured next year.

This contradicts Trump's "drinks for the house!"-style assertion that a new plan would mean "insurance for everybody." OMB head Mulvaney quickly jumps in to say the CBO is "terrible at counting" and dismisses the score as bad math. Newt Gingrich, whose continued relevance as a go-to talking head is another unfortunate consequence of this presidency, goes further, crying that the CBO should be "abolished" and replaced by "three to five professional firms." In modern American politics, every game is a blown call by the refs.

Just a month or so into Trump's administration, one of the central promises of his campaign - the killing off of the Affordable Care Act – is in trouble. Trump's inability to hold coalitions together, or really do much of anything beyond generate TV ratings, is already showing. But just as it was last year when the punditocracy told him he'd made himself unelectable, Trump's ace in the hole may be that he doesn't care. His history is that when the playing field doesn't work for him, he moves it. The Framers may have designed the government to withstand bouts of popular madness, but there are no checks and balances against the power of celebrity. A president who is both a tyrant and disinterested in governance would have blown their minds.



TRUMP'S PARTY

In February, Trump spoke at the Conservative Political Action Conference – last year, he declined to attend over threats of a boycott.

T SOME POINT, HE JUST stopped appointing people," says an incredulous Hauser, the capital watchdog, at the end of February. "He's only made 30 appointments. That means he's still got over 1,000 empty posts. Nearly 200 ambassador posts are in limbo. He named Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court, but not a single judge beyond that – with over 100 empty federal seats to be filled. Nobody knows what the hell is going on."

Sources theorize that Trump's appointments slowed thanks to a combination of factors. Those include a fear of more De-Vos-style blowback and an inability to find people capable of passing security clearances (at least six White House staffers reportedly had to be dismissed for this reason).

A darker explanation was offered by a ProPublica story revealing that Trump sent waves of nonpolitical appointees to the agencies in so-called beachhead teams, i.e., people sent in groups under temporary appointments of four to eight months.

These appointees did not have to be confirmed by Congress. Some are freaks and fringe weirdos on a level below even the goofballs in Trump's Cabinet. A fair number carry amorphous "special assistant" titles, making it difficult to know what their duties are.

More unnerving is the presence in the Cabinet-level agencies of a seemingly new position, "senior White House adviser."

Some Hill sources believe these new officials are reporting directly to Steve Bannon, who is fast achieving mythical status as the empire's supreme villain. On the surface, Bannon is just another vicious ex-hippie of the David Horowitz/Michael Savage school, a former Grateful Dead

fan who overswung the other way to embrace a Nazistic "culture first" alt-right movement. Everyone from Time magazine (which called him "the great manipulator") to The New York Times (which called him a "de facto president") is rushing to make him into a superempowered henchman of the extreme right, a new Roy Cohn - fitting, since Cohn himself was one of Trump's first mentors. But whether he's Cohn or just a fourth-rate imitator with a fat neck is still unclear.

Rosenberg believes the anemic pace of Senate-track political nominations, coupled with this flood of unconfirmed politi-

cal hires, may be at least in part a conscious strategy to try to decrease the autonomy of the agencies and increase the control of the White House, in particular the Bannon camp.

Even at Tillerson's introductory speech, Rosenberg points out, a young Trump campaign organizer and former Chris Christie aide named Matthew Mowers is seen standing next to Tillerson.

"He's like a 27-year-old kid," Rosenberg says. "Normally you would never have a young political appointee in the shot with the principal."

This sounds like Kremlinology – the days when we were forced to try to figure out who was on the outs in the Soviet Politburo by seeing who sat next to whom in photos of Red Square parades – and it fits the Soviet flavor of the news leaking out of the agencies. Congressional sources in contact with the State Department report that some "beachhead" appointees wanted to start making immediate drastic cuts, closing consulates abroad willy-nilly, without asking for information or visiting the locations.

The Trump government has been besieged with damaging leaks – everything from internal Homeland [Cont. on 56]

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTAAN FELBER ELL BEFORE HE started dyeing his hair red and

styling himselflike a Harlem Renaissance-era dandy, before he ditched his last name, signed to his friend Janelle Monáe's label, or began singing and rapping in his arrestingly incongruous array of styles, Jidenna Mobisson was already confusing the hell out of people. "My whole life," he says, with an undisguised hint of pride, "I've had a lot of 'what's this?' moments." ¶ The earliest of those came in the first six years of his life, in his father's native Nigeria, where trips to the market with his Massachusettsborn mom, "the only white lady" for miles, would end with locals swarming their car under the incorrect assumption that they were rich tourists. Next, he moved all the way to the suburbs of Boston, where blending in was again not an option. On his first day of school in the States, he recalls, "this dude

He grew up
in Nigeria, went
to Stanford,
then made a
stunning debut.
He's even
convinced
he could be
president if he wants
to be

BY BRIAN HIATT





with a mushroom haircut punched me under the seat and called me an 'African nigger' after I said the A-B-C-D's and the 1-2-3's in a Nigerian accent," which he has long since shed. Later came the prestigious Milton Academy ("Mama put me in a school with the Kennedys," as one of his songs accurately describes it) and Stanford – which he chose after turning down several of the Ivies, including Harvard. "Everywhere I went," he says, "it was an arrival."

After teaching high school in New York for a few post-college years, Jidenna made his musical arrival in 2015, at the age of 29, with the appealing, if mildly gimmicky, radio hit "Classic Man": "You can be mean/When you look this clean," he rapped, claiming to have "charm like a leprechaun" (he does wear a lot of green) and name-dropping Nat King Cole.

Epic Records had picked up Monáe's Wondaland Records, where Jidenna was among the inaugural signings, and execs there were so excited by "Classic Man" that they decided to rush-release it, before Jidenna had any other solo songs ready. He barely had time to get publicity pho-

tos taken before it came out. He spent months promoting that one track, leaving him little time to start writing and recording more, and its popularity quickly became perilous to his career – even as

"Classic Man" got a Grammy nomination and scored a pivotal scene in *Moonlight*. "It followed him everywhere he went," says his co-manager Mikael Moore, who quit his job as Congresswoman Maxine Waters' chief of staff to work with Monáe and the Wondaland artists. "We would go places and people would be like, 'Classic Man!' Nobody knew his fucking name." With a single song that matched his hyperstylized image to a fault, Jidenna seemed, to the uninitiated, to be the very model of a one-hit wonder.

But the artist himself never feared that fate. "Once they think they figure it out with 'Classic Man' – no, brother," he says. "That ain't all of me, nigga! That's just me in a suit. I knew I had a width and a depth that was just waiting to go out." He kept his look, pushing it further with the collarless Nigerian suits known as up-and-downs – the day we meet in New York, he's wearing a green number, paired with a pocket square, a wooden-brimmed fedora and unlaced Timberlands: There are definite handsome-leprechaun vibes. As with his other suits, his up-and-downs are bespoke. "I'm not worried about being called 'weird'

Senior writer Brian Hiatt interviewed John Oliver in February.

or a 'gimmick,'" he says. "I'm the real deal, bro. I walked through the hood dressed in suits with a finger-curl in my hair, man."

In February, he finally dropped *The Chief*, a debut album that more than justifies his confidence. Standouts range from the Nineties-style banger "Long Live the Chief" – which went *is-that-really-the-"Classic Man"-dude?* viral last year after Jidenna performed it on an episode of Netflix's *Luke Cage* – to the Magic City-ready "The Let Out" (with Quavo of Migos), all the way to the gorgeous single "Bambi" (it's Sam Cooke meets the Wailers with trap high-hats, and it's 2017's best song so far).

Before he sang his way through tears recording "Bambi," the true story of a now-married ex-girlfriend (the part about his polygamist grandpa having seven wives is *almost* true – he had six), Jidenna had a chat with the spirits of Bob Marley and Nat Cole. For "Long Live the Chief," he asked Tupac Shakur for help. Jidenna's father was an observant Catholic, but his son has been on an eclectic spiritual quest ever since he experienced a powerful vision in college, one that he's not quite ready to

though," Jidenna says. "I was shy as a kid. It helped me bring myself out of my shell."

When he performs for the cameras later, he's buzzed at best, but acts drunk, sipping from a tumbler that's actually just water: He spent time in his dressing room watching clips of purportedly boozy Rat Pack performances for acting inspiration.

Jidenna's self-assurance extends well beyond music. He's got some kind of "100-year plan" that includes fostering a tech boom in Africa, and is pretty sure that he could be president of the United States. If he wanted to, that is. "It's an option," he says. "Do I have the option? Sure. But do I think entertainment is more powerful than the presidency? Sometimes, yeah, it is."

idenna's name means
"embracing the father" in Igbo
- and when his dad named
him that, he was talking
about himself, not God. His
late dad, Oliver Mobisson,
made it from rural Nigeria

to MIT via a government fellowship, and upon his return, with Jidenna's mom in

tow, he ended up creating the ASUTECH 800, one of the first computers to be manufactured in sub-Saharan Africa. He also became a village chief and helped support the Biafran secession movement. He ex-

pected Jidenna, his youngest son, to do even more with his life.

One night when he was five years old, Jidenna and his family were attacked by armed robbers who waylaid their minibus on the way to the airport. The profoundly traumatic incident is one of his earliest memories. When one of the attackers fired a warning shot into the ground, it struck Jidenna in the foot. "I just remember the warmth of a bullet in your body," he says, "and the blood just warming me." The perpetrators got distracted after another car hit an obstacle they'd placed in the road, and Jidenna's family escaped. "My mom puts me on her back," he says, "and we run through the jungle. Somebody eventually takes me off her back, and then I blacked out. I remember them coming after us, shooting as we're running into the jungle. And the hiss of snakes, ssssssss - and blackout."

And how did that horror affect him? "It either fucks you up," says Jidenna, who admits to yearning for revenge over the incident, "or makes you a really good person." And is he a good person? "I was a good kid," he says, sipping a sidecar in a hotel lounge the evening of his *Colbert* performance. "I became a great man....Good is for suckers. I'm a great person. Meaning,

"He was intense," Jidenna says of his father. "He did something to my brain where I'm always looking for extreme excellence."

share. When he told classmates about it, they called him crazy.

He kept an elaborate shrine in the studio, with candles, herbs, rice, and holy books from various religions, including the Talmud and the Koran. "I always do the same rituals," he says. "I read out of one of those books, I pray, I flip the rice in the air, I smoke, I drink and I make a record. And I call upon the ancestors of music to help me out."

Though he's a serious fan of both Kanye and Drake - his obsession with The College Dropout nearly convinced him to drop out himself, and he credits Drake and J. Cole for paving the way for "middle-class" rappers - it was another category of artist altogether that got him to add singing to his palette: "I got into my classic-rock phase. Paul McCartney and Marvin Gaye and Led Zeppelin and Marley were bigger influences. I just happened to be smoking a lot of motherfuckin' weed." He still smokes, and likes to balance it with alcohol, though he's slowed down on the latter. "At least I don't drink before noon anymore," he says with a laugh, cracking open a beer around 2 p.m. one Monday in the basement of the Ed Sullivan Theater in New York, where he's about to perform "Bambi" on The Late Show With Stephen Colbert. "I've been drunk for years,



Hail to the Chief

(1) Performing "Bambi" on The Late Show With Stephen Colbert in March. (2) With Janelle Monáe at a Black Lives Matter march in Chicago, 2015. Jidenna is signed to Monáe's label, Wondaland. (3) As a toddler, with his dad. A village chief in his native Nigeria, Jidenna's father attended MIT and created the ASUTECH 800, one of the first computers to be manufactured in sub-Saharan Africa.



in my intention, my passion and anything I do, whether clean or dirty, is great."

After the attack, his mother insisted on moving him to the U.S., but his father stayed behind in Nigeria for a few years until he had a stroke and was forced to surrender to his wife's care. As Jidenna recalls, his dad, who had already been dictatorial, was now sometimes downright irrational – he went from demanding perfect grades to berating his son for becoming first in his class: "'Ah-ah, you're number one, now what will you do? Now you can only go down from number one! Why are you number one?'"

For years, Jidenna says soberly, "I hated him. I revere him now, but I couldn't stand him." And his dad equally loathed the idea of his brilliant son becoming a musician. "He was like, 'How are you going to change the world with music?'" But in the last year before his death in 2010, Oliver began

to understand. "He accepted that I was serious about music, and so he said, 'You're an inventor.' That was the way he rationalized it. He said, 'Late at night, do you get struck with ideas?' I said, 'Yeah, yeah.' And that's how we started bonding."

In the last months of his life, his dad gave Jidenna some advice. "He said, "If you're gonna do music, make sure you put a mirror to the world, so people see themselves. Make sure you invent yourself, you invent music that's never been heard. Invent an album that's never been done. If you are not innovative, then you are not my son."

Jidenna laughs a little. "He was intense," he says. "I'm intense." He'd like to have his own family eventually, but at the moment, he blames his own intensity for a bit of loneliness. "I'm still trying to figure out how to hold a woman right now because my standards for myself and other people are high," he says. "My father did something to my brain where I'm always searching for extreme excellence."

So, he says, "Right now, man, I'm single and I'm not even fucking. I can't remem-

ber the last time, bro! I'm not like the fun rapper telling you I'm fucking, like, a hundred bitches and shit. I'm not, man. I'm really not. I'm out here like regular people, wishing, thinking, jerking off at night, singing songs, drinking in a hotel, making 'Bambi' records." This is, he admits, a waste of his burgeoning celebrity, but he's not a one-night-stand guy, and anyway, he doesn't trust random women not to post stuff about him on social media. "You wake up, and a woman's up before you, she's on Snapchat, you gotta wonder...."



HEN JIDENNA heard about Donald Trump's election, he was "so grateful." "It's gonna make the messages that I

have for the world more effective," he says, casually. Really? Jidenna, who, to be fair, is on his third sidecar of the evening, nods. "I prayed, and this is what came in prayer: You cannot have Moses without Pharaoh." He also received a song in his prayer, with the chorus "It ain't the end of the world/ Just the end of the day." He repurposed it for a line in the new song "Bully of the Earth," which is about his dad as much as it's about Trump.

Jidenna himself isn't Moses in his scenario, or at least not the only Moses. ("Do I have a messianic complex? Of course I do....All I'm doing is recognizing my power. But do I think I'm above a single human being? Hell fucking no, are you crazy? I'll pick up dirt, I'll clean up shit, I'll do whatever I got to do to live on this planet.") He's "aggressive about being progressive" and convinced that the extremism of Trump's agenda will "wake people up" and create a powerful liberal backlash that could pay off as soon as 2018 - while also paving the way for a new era of deeper music and culture. "Does this sound naive?" he asks. "It does a little bit. It does."

Jidenna isn't scared to echo the kind of bold statements that led some to label even pre-Trump-supporting Kanye as unstable. If people call him nuts, he's heard it before. That college spiritual experience, which freed Jidenna from suicidal lows, led him to drop his engineering studies in favor of courses on religious rituals, and at one point had him "singing with mountain lions" under a full moon. "I've gone way far, bro," says Jidenna, who admires Jay Z's "composure" as much as Kanye's "passion."

Jidenna's musical goals, at least, are simple enough, if lofty – and when he's achieved them, he'll concentrate on acting (he's already been on HBO's *Insecure*) and "entrepreneurship." "Most artists just rule a decade," Jidenna says, taking one last sip of his drink, breaking into one more big smile. "So I'm out here to rule a decade, bro."

He's been called a madman and a genius. But after five decades of obsessive filmmaking, he's still seeking a deeper truth

Ine Peculiar Mr. Herzog

By Erik Hedegaard

Photograph by Dan Winters

OT FAR FROM THE BIG ROUND DOME ATOP the Griffith Observatory, leaning on a railing that overlooks the Greater Los Angeles sinkhole, the German director Werner Herzog, 74, removes a tissue from his pocket and dabs at his eyes. His eyes are leaking. They've been leaking for the past hour or so. The tear fluid builds up in

the corner of one of his blue eyes, then starts to cascade down his cheeks, halted only when he dab, dab, dabs.

He does not explain this. In fact, him being Herzog, he would never explain this, if only because it's not in his nature to even think about something so trivial and beside the point. Only one thing matters to him: his movies. He's got two new feature films coming out: *Salt and Fire*, an ecological thriller, and *Queen of the Desert*, a biopic about the British explorer Gertrude Bell. Plus, just yesterday, he returned from Austria, where



he opened a Herzog retrospective that includes everything he's ever done, from his early career-establishers (1972's Aguirre, the Wrath of God and 1982's Fitzcarraldo) to his more recent documentaries (2016's Lo and Behold, Reveries of the Connected World, about the possible existential consequences of an Internet-driven world), along the way revealing much about what interests and fascinates him - in brief, everything. He's made movies about nomads, auctioneers, televangelists, monks, hot-air balloonists, ski-jumping woodcarvers, volcanic eruptions, cave paintings, grizzly-loving (and eventually grizzly-eaten) loner outdoorsmen, desolate Antarctic snowscapes, the list does not end. He's been called "a genius," "a madman," "a visionary," "the last great hallucinator in cinema" - and that list does not

Today, he's frowning and speaking in his famous half-flat, half-amused Germanic voice. "Yes, they are showing all 70 of my films," he says, "but there may be more. It depends on how you count. For example, some people count the eight films in my 'Death Row' series as one film. So, do you count it as eight or do you count it as one? I guess it depends on your mood." He pauses. Then he says, "I've never counted them myself. I don't care."

Which is just like him to say, to display a good bit of interest in the mundane, then proclaim no interest whatsoever. On the other hand, there's no curbing his ardor once he starts in on how his documentaries are so vastly different from almost everyone else's, mainly because his contain made-up elements, which he believes is a good thing, since pure fact is apparently just another hobgoblin of the feebleminded.

"In the film I did about the oil fires burning in Kuwait," he says, puffing up his chest a little, "it starts off with a quote from [17th-century philosopher and physicist] Blaise Pascal. And it's a beautiful one. It says, "The collapse of the stellar universe will occur like creation, in grandiose splendor.' But Blaise Pascal did not say that. I did."

Without explaining how making up quotes improves anything, he swiftly offers another example, this one involving the radioactive albino mutant crocodiles that appear at the end of 2010's *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*. Seems that while they are indeed albino, they're not radioactive or mutant, Herzog snorts. "My producer said, 'You cannot do that because if you do, one day they'll take you away in a straitjacket.' And I said, 'Fine! That's a moment I look forward to!'" He goes on, "Those who tell you we should be like the fly on the wall are losers. Losers! They make what I call 'the accountant's truth.' But I am fascinated by the

Contributing editor Erik Hedegaard wrote about Glenn Beck in October.

possibilities for a deeper stratum of truth, although please don't ask me what I mean by truth, because nobody can answer that one. But, you see, we are creators. What I do is elevate the audience. I'm intensifying facts to such a degree that they start to get the glow of illumination for you. They acquire insight and poetry of an ecstatic nature, like medieval monks."

A moment of silence follows. Herzog's words hang in the air with the kind of significance that only he, with his even-keeled, softly forceful delivery, can bring to them. It's the same delivery that inhabits his documentaries and films, and thus makes him and his movies seem intertwined and all part of some kind of ongoing public performance.

thing to know about Herzog is that his first childhood memory is of the Bavarian city of Rosenheim, during the last World War, engulfed in fire after a bombing raid in 1945, as seen at night from a distant hill, he and his older brother brought there by their mother, to witness the kind of destruction that had caused them to flee Munich and live

in a remote backwoods Bavarian Alps village, no running water, no toilets, no phones, cut off from all civilization but for this one surreal vision.

Right now, Herzog is looking out at the vast sweep of Los Angeles, but his thoughts are still on the fire.

"At the end of the valley," he says, "you saw the sky orange and yellowish and red. And my mother said, 'Boys, the city of Rosenheim is burning.' The entire sky was pulsing. And I knew there was a big city out there burning. And it was more beautiful than anything." Such was his first taste of the glow of illumination that is, in theory at least, at the heart of all his documentaries.

As to the heart of the man himself, the stories most often trotted out to define

him have always been of the look-at-Herzog-isn't-he-nuts variety, and they are legion. He walked 1,000 miles to propose to his first wife. A random, errant bullet winged him in the gut during a live interview once (and to whom but Herzog could this ever have happened?) and he kept right on talking, brushing aside the wound as coming from "an insignificant bullet." He started a film school called the Rogue Film School, said he preferred that

his students be "people who have worked as bouncers in a sex club or have been wardens in the lunatic asylum," and featured courses on the art of lock-picking and forging filming permits. He knows how to hypnotize chickens. He spent two years in the Amazon jungle trying to haul a steamboat over a mountain for Fitzcarraldo. Earlier, while filming Aguirre, the Wrath of God, the star of that film, the late, totally insane Klaus Kinski, threatened to leave the project. Herzog said he'd shoot him, and Kinski stayed put. When Kinski was writing his autobiography, he and Herzog, Roget's Thesaurus in hand, collaborated on Kinski's description of the director as "dull, humorless, uptight, inhibited...hateful, malevolent." Also long-winded: "Even if his throat were cut and his head were chopped off, speech balloons would still dangle from his mouth."

And yet what does any of it really say about Herzog, the pallor-faced, balding, slightly rumpled figure standing here today? In a sense, it all seems to obscure the man as much as reveal him.

Herzog and his family returned to Munich when he was 12; he began watching films, came across a 15-page encyclopedia entry on filmmaking and discovered

his life's purpose. He kickstarted his dreams by stealing a camera from a Munich film school, with not a second's regret. "I don't consider it theft," he once said. "It was just a necessity. I had some sort of natural right for a camera." So, even then, he was full of himself. And today he says, "Very early in life, I have understood my destiny. My destiny has been made known to me. And I have a duty to it. They sometimes call me 'mad.' But that's just a projection of things, maybe of my leading characters, onto the person who created them. If I could be anonymous, that would be best. But I don't care. I don't care whether they label me. The only thing that counts is what's up on the screen." He looks down at his feet. He goes on, "I own very,

very few things. The shoes I'm wearing are the only shoes that I own, along with a pair of heavy boots and a pair of really good sandals. This is what I wear." He plucks at his sweater. "I wear the same sweater all the time. It's wool."

His first film was a short, in 1962, titled *Herakles*, and featured bodybuilders intercut with scenes from a Le Mans carrace wreck that cost some 80 spectators their lives. "For me, it was fascinating to

"They call me 'mad.' But I don't care. I have a duty to my destiny. The only thing that counts is what's up on the screen." edit material together that had such separate and individual lives," he once said, a technique that he's used ever since, sometimes making it up as he goes along, what with his phony crocodiles and all. Then, in 1972, came Aguirre, the Wrath of God, which follows a Spanish soldier, played by Kinski, as he searches for El Dorado, the lost city of gold, and only finds madness and death. It bombed and was immediately dropped by theaters. "This is it," Herzog says he thought. "'I'm fucked." In 1975, however, two small theaters in Paris picked it back up and started it on a sold-out run that lasted for two and a half years. "So, it caught on," says Herzog, "but even then not very well, but a decade later it was rereleased and two decades later rereleased, and all of a sudden it became some sort of a household item. But it took 35 years."

Through it all, he's been married three times ("It has somehow been harsh to live with me"), had three kids, told one and all he doesn't own a cellphone and said a bunch of other portentous stuff like, "Men are haunted by things that happen to them in life."

And what haunts him?

"I don't want to understand what haunts me," he says. "I do not like self-inspection."

He's going on now about President Trump, saying, "He's the first time you have a real independent. He's turned against the Republican Party, and he's vehemently against the media, justifiably so to some degree, and I find this a very significant novelty. I see significant changes and significant new approaches. Trump and Bernie Sanders stuck out because he's authentic. And it's mysterious how Trump is getting away with literally everything. I see it with great, strange fas-

cination. Very, very unusual." He refuses to specifically say whether he likes Trump or not, but it often sounds like he does.

Then he talks about the Internet and some of the dangers featured in Lo and Behold. "We are a civilization that is overdependent on the Internet at a time when the population is at least one and a half times too big. If the Internet goes down, all the basic things of our civilization will be wiped out. It'll be like Hurricane Katrina [but] in

THE ESSENTIAL WERNER HERZOG

For nearly 55 years, he's chronicled the weird, the strange and the obsessed



Aguirre, the Wrath of God 1972

Man and nature the primal conflict in nearly all Herzog films, finds its fullest, fiercest expression in this tale of conquistadors, madness and obsession.

Nosferatu, the Vampyre 1979

Herzog's tribute to F.W. Murnau's great silent film of 1922 is an indelible take on the Dracula legend, with Klaus Kinski looking unsettlingly ratlike as the title character.



Fitzcarraldo 1982

Rubber baron Fitzcarraldo (Kinski, more crazed than ever) hires a crew to pull a steamship over a mountain in the jungles of Peru. Only Herzog would do it for real, screw special effects.

Little Dieter Needs to Fly 1997

The limits of one man's endurance is the theme that attracted Herzog to tell the true story of Dieter Dengler, a pilot taken prisoner and tortured by the Viet Cong





Grizzly Man 2005

Arguably the peak in Herzog's biographical documentaries. Activist Timothy Treadwell lived among the grizzlies of Alaska until one clawed him to death in 2003.

New York, no electricity, no running water, tens of thousands of people roaming the streets in search for a toilet. There's only Central Park for food, and only a few squirrels there."

Left to his own devices, he'll go on like this forever, spinning out his various visions of the world. After a while, however, it gets to be a little much. His distaste for self-inspection noted, perhaps it's time to wander over that way again anyhow.

Does he have any vices? Lips purse. "No. Nothing comes to mind."

What makes him happy?

A scowl, one that pulls together many of the folds and creases in his face. "Oh, happiness isn't of so much importance to me."

What is he afraid of?

"Fear is not in my vocabulary. It just doesn't exist in me. The scarier a situation gets, the more calm I am."

He once said, "In my profession, you have to know the heart of men." So what about his heart? Does he know it?

His mouth turns down, his lips press hard, he shakes his head. "Look. I don't circle around my own navel. I'm not interested in myself. You should not expose the deepest recesses of your own soul. It doesn't do anyone any good."

Before he goes, however, Herzog says a few more things about himself. He sometimes cries during movies, and once, while watching a silent film called La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc, he fainted dead away, as he also tends to do whenever blood is drawn from his arm. He's never tasted any kind of illicit drug and is not in favor of legal drugs either. "I have taken less than 10 aspirins in my whole life," he says. He will enjoy a glass of red wine, but the last time he got drunk he was 13. He has no hobbies. "Not a one."

He's entirely single-minded, every action directed toward the re-creation, in one way or another, of the fires that burned Rosenheim to the

While promoting Grizzly Man, "My wife, Lena, took a photo where you can see a grizzly bear right behind me. She was worried about my safety. But I couldn't care less. I only disliked the situation

because the bear was so close that I could smell his very foul breath. It's a very foul breath. So I didn't like that. But that was the only thing." He pauses, then goes on, "I'm not that interested in whether I perish or not. It would be of very minor significance." As long, of course, as his films, all 70 or 78 of them, he's never counted, survive his bloody mauling and stick around to glow with such illumination as only he alone is capable of producing.

PINK FLOYD THE EARLY YEARS THE INDIVIDUAL VOLUMES



CAMBRIDGE ST/ATION - 2xCD/1xDVD/1xBlu-Ray



1968

1970

1972

GERMIN/ATION - 1xCD/1xDVD/1xBlu-Ray



DRAMATIS/ATION - 2xCD/1xDVD/1xBlu-Ray



DEVI/ATION - 2xCD/2xDVD/1xBlu-Ray



REVERBER/ATION - 1xCD/1xDVD/1xBlu-Ray



OBFUSC/ATION - 2xCD/1xDVD/1xBlu-Ray

AVAILABLE NOW

6 Individual Volumes available as Multi-disc Book-bound packages Featuring Rare Tracks, Demos, Interviews, and Film Footage Each 'Year' CD, DVD & Blu-Ray package includes Photo Book & Memorabilia

Audio tracks also available digitally

Reviews

"Close to my heart she came, Only to fly away. Only to fly, As day flies from moonlight." - "This Nearly Was Mine"



Dylan, Deep in the Wee **Small** Hours

His third collection of standards exudes and celebrates a majestic darkness



Bob Dylan

Triplicate Columbia

****1/2

BY MIKAL GILMORE

Bob Dylan's third foray into songs previously recorded by Frank Sinatra isn't only the largest set of new recordings he's ever released (three CDs, 30 songs), it's also majestic in its own right. Dylan moves through this area - the region of Sinatra, and also of standards songwriters like Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern, Hoagy Carmichael, Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein - as if it's territory for him to chart and command. Indeed, Dylan has now made more successive albums in this idiom than in any other style since his worldchanging mid-1960s electric trinity, Bringing It All Back Home, Highway 61 Revisited and Blonde on Blonde.

That's stunning - and not only because of the album's grand latter-day vision. When Dylan issued his first set of Sinatrarelated songs, 2015's Shadowsin the Night, the project re-

Reviews

flected the history of American music's oldest cultural war; the songs Dylan chose for that album, and a follow-up volume, last year's Fallen Angels, showed how well he understood Sinatra and the rarefied "Great American Songbook" era of Tin Pan Alley and Broadway musicals. When the rise of outsider forms - country music, rhythm & blues, rockabilly displaced all that in the 1950s, some reacted as if barbarians had stormed the gates. Sinatra was among them. "Rock & roll smells phony and false," he said. Dylan, though, had done something even more radical - maybe worse - and he knew it. "Tin Pan Alley is gone," he said in 1985. "I put an end to it. People can record their own songs now."

With the monumental *Triplicate*, he's certainly made amends. Though Dylan recently won the Nobel Prize in Literature for his own songwriting – that is, for how he expanded the arts with his use of language – songs have always been much more to him than wordcraft. Music itself carries as much meaning. A song isn't a song without melody, harmony and voice.

Time and again he proves the same thing on Triplicate. Though a handful of songs here are delightful bounces (including the opening track, "I Guess I'll Have to Change My Plans") and some easygoing almostblues ("That Old Feeling," "The Best Is Yet to Come"), most are downbeat, spectral ballads. In songs like "I Could Have Told You," "Here's That Rainy Day" and "Once Upon a Time" - ruminations on a memory of loss that is now central to the singer's being - Dylan raises devastation to a painful beauty. Other times, he intimates something ghostly. In Sinatra's original 1965 version of "September of My Years," arranger Gordon Jenkins opened with an eddy of

Hear key tracks from

these albums at RollingStone.com/albums.

strings, invoking the tide that eventually rolls in for everybody. Dylan's band creates the same undertow effect, sounding just as full, with Donnie Herron's steel guitar and Tony Garnier's bowed bass.

When Dylan first decided to sing Sinatra, the idea seemed far-fetched. Did he have a voice left that was possibly up to it? Dylan made plain at the outset of Shadows in the Night, in the opening measures of "I'm a Fool to Want You" - the most defining of all Sinatra songs, and one of his only co-writing credits - he was better than up to it: He did the song dead-seriously, and chillingly. "Smooth" is not a word you would use to describe Dylan's weatherworn voice. But he can wield phrasing as effectively as Sinatra himself.

Dylan uses only a quintet throughout Triplicate, no strings, no big band (though there's a small dance horn section here and there). They recreate the solemn openings to "Stormy Weather" and "It Gets Lonely Early" in all but instrumentation. He's picked his repertoire carefully and meaningfully here. Of the 50-some albums he released between In the Wee Small Hours, in 1955, and 1970's Watertown, Sinatra made about a dozen exploring loss, masterpieces every one. Dylan culls more than half of Triplicate's songs from those releases - particularly favoring Sinatra's often-overlooked last LP for Capitol, Point of No Return, from 1962.

He closes Triplicate, though, with something Sinatra sang many years earlier: "Why Was I Born," written by Kern and Hammerstein in 1929. It's a torch standard that epitomizes the sort of writing that Dylan killed off, asking the biggest questions - "Why was I born?/ Why am I living?/What do I get?/What am I giving?" - on the most personal level. Dylan is no stranger to dejection or hard self-examination. What he understands here is the triumph in surviving that darkness. It's in that survival, and how you put it across to others, that you find out why you were born.



Charli XCX Gets Down With the Robots

The hook-monster U.K. diva combines chilly noises and hot lyrics on a fun mixtape

Charli XCX Number 1 Angel Asylum ★★★½



Charli XCX was already an alternative-leaning pop star when she dropped 2014's *Sucker*, an EDM reinvention of quirky Eighties New Wave. But in the past year and a half, the 24-yearold singer has taken a neon night drive into the

avant-garde. For her 2016 EP, *Vroom Vroom*, her recent single "After the Afterparty," and this 10-song, 37-minute "mixtape," Charli has teamed with artists associated with the London label PC Music – people like A.G. Cook and Sophie, whose blipping simulacrum of pop music sounds like an arch joke about consumerism. Quite a move for someone who sang with Iggy Azalea on "Fancy."

But Angel makes this pioneering human-hologram aesthetic seem far more natural and cohesive than it did on the harsh, sculptural Vroom Vroom. The beats aren't as abrasive; her vocals are distended in ways that are disorienting but not jarring. The subject matter is still classic pop, mostly about sex and cars, with the yearning in the lyrics compounding the nostalgic feel of the music. On "ILY2" and "Emotional," the drones start to suffocate, creating a combination of wistful, erotic and isolated. In their mix of chilly noises and hot lyrics ("Cold like ice, petrified/ Loving what you're doing to me," she sings in "White Roses"), these robot sex anthems storm into the world like a dirty popmusic reboot of Blade Runner.



Jesus and Mary Chain

Damage and Joy Artificial Plastic $\star\star\star$ 1/2

The surly goth-noise Scotsmen return for their first LP since 1998

After 30 years in the darklands, the Jesus and Mary Chain remain a tribute to the power of goth guitar noise, surly frowns and the kind of grudges only a pair of Scottish brothers can hold. Their first studio album since 1998 is full of fabulously morbid gems like "Simian Split" ("I killed Kurt Cobain/I put the shot right through his brain") and "Mood Rider," with its Hallmark-ready motto, "Kill everybody who's hip." Highlight: "Black and Blues," starring Sky Ferreira as the just-like-honey muse who sings along but refuses to cheer them up. ROB SHEFFIELD



Pitbull

 $Climate\ Change\ {
m RCA}$

The Miami superstar has a great time over an eclectic groove

In the age of DJ Khaled and Snapchat celebs, "Mr. Worldwide" is like a versatile oldschool showman. Here, Pitbull brings on Robin Thicke, Aerosmith's Joe Perry and Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker for "Bad Man," which is like U2's "Desire" as Miami club thunder, and gives the Soup Dragons' rave-pop classic "I'm Free" a reggaeton tint on "Freedom." The guy who promises to "pull a little hair/Smack a little oooh" on "Educate Ya" may not always be as charming as his one-world groove, but he knows how to host a party. JON DOLAN



Laura Marling

Semper Femina More Alarming $\star\star\star^{1/2}$

Joni Mitchell-loving songwriter explores women's lives

"A thousand artists' muse/But you'll be anything you choose," observes Laura Marling on her sixth album, Semper Femina, which ditches male pronouns to focus on women's lives and feminine mystique. Nick Drake haunts "The Valley," and Joni Mitchell remains a touchstone ("Nouel"). Producer Blake Mills highlights Marling's guitar while adding his own. But Marling's voice just grows stronger: On "Wild Fire," advising a lover or frenemy to "stop playing that shit out on me," she's a wordy folk-soul queen of her own making. WILL HERMES



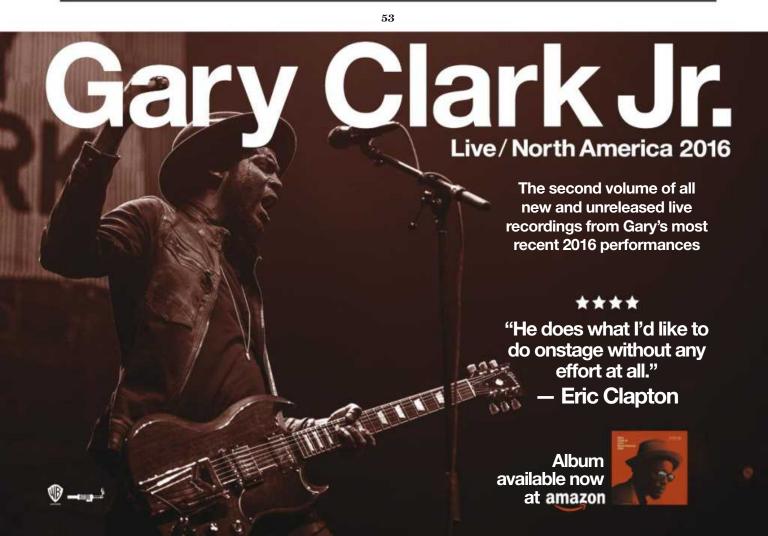
Jessi Colter

Psalms Columbia/Legacy

★★★½

Outlaw-country icon testifies with Patti Smith's quitarist

Waylon Jennings' widow and Shooter's mom, Jessi Colter, is also a forebear of outlaw-country-minded kin like Miranda Lambert. Here, Colter returns with biblical Psalms set to music shaped by Lenny Kaye. The result isn't far from Kaye's work with Patti Smith - clean guitar and a piano pushing words up front. In "Psalm 73," Colter ponders "the prosperity of the wicked" over a glistening electric guitar. "There's a lot to it," she says on the album with a chuckle - a preacher who reminds you these lines were outlaw sentiments once, too. WILL HERMES



Middle Age in Revolt

T2 Trainspotting

Ewan McGregor

Directed by Danny Boyle

IN 1996, "TRAINSPOTTING," from Irvine Welsh's 1993 novel, emerged as one of the great British films of its era, bristling with incendiary daring. The daring dims a bit in T2 Trainspotting, though returning director Danny Boyle and screenwriter John Hodge do their damnedest to force lightning to strike twice. Two decades on, four of the slumdwelling Scottish junkies who caught that generation-defining moment of youth in revolt have had some of the piss taken out of their characters.

When we left Mark "Rent Boy" Renton (Ewan Mc-Gregor), he'd betrayed his mates in a heroin deal. He's back to make amends. First stop is Simon "Sick Boy" Williamson (Jonny Lee Miller), who blackmails rich johns with the help of girlfriend Veronika (a terrific Anjela Nedyalkova), a Bulgarian sex worker. McGregor and Miller play off each other beautifully. "You two should fuck each other,"



says Veronika. Mark also finds his old mate Spud (a splendid Ewen Bremner), now scoring dope off dealers half his age. The script, loosely adapted from Welsh's 2002 followup, Porno, is laced with savage laughs; the prevailing tone is regret. It gets scarily violent with the return of Begbie (Robert Carlyle), just busted out of an Edinburgh prison.

Alluding to the story's past with flashbacks is a risky device that underscores the rush of blood the Trainspotting characters have lost in the intervening years. But Boyle offers a fierce, funny and surprisingly touching take on smack-addled Peter Pans facing the formidable foe of middle age. Simon says Mark is a "tourist in his own youth" - T2 Trainspotting may feel like that for those who raised a fist in unison with the first film's defiance. There's hardwon wisdom at work here, as well as an aching sense of loss. Any way you look at it, T2 takes

a piece out of you.

Woody Harrelson Gets Really Weird

Wilson

Woody Harrelson Directed by Craig Johnson

* * 1/2

WOODY HARRELSON IS THE life of this party, based on the graphic novel by Daniel Clowes (Ghost World). Harrelson has the right anarchic spirit for Clowes' world. Wilson is a neurotic grouch who rails against the Internet and enjoys making people squirm. What sparks the plot for screenwriter Clowes and director Craig Johnson (The Skeleton Twins)



is Wilson's reunion with exwife Pippi (a stellar Laura Dern), a recovering junkie who tells him the baby he thought she aborted 17 years ago is living with adoptive parents. Wilson tracks down his daughter, Claire (an excellent Isabella Amara), who's got a Wilson-wide cynical streak, and asks her to let him explain himself. Disaster awaits, but so does Clowes' serio-

comic tightrope walk. Missed opportunities hobble the film, but Harrelson is in there pitching his best game.

A Texas **Turkey**

Song to Song

Rooney Mara, Ryan Gosling, Michael Fassbender

Directed by Terrence Malick

THE MUSIC SCENE IN AUStin is alive with talent and energy. But not enough to bust director Terrence Malick out of the funk of his recent work (Knight of Cups, To the Wonder). Song to Song, despite glimpses of Patti Smith, Iggy Pop and Lykke Li, has no music in its empty soul. Malick indulges in his usual visual tropes, with characters wandering around aimlessly while mutter-



ing mock-profound thoughts in voice-over. Camera master Emmanuel Lubezki's visuals are gorgeous, but no substitute for narrative momentum. The plot revolves around Rooney Mara's Faye, an unchanging expression in search of a character. She's roused by Ryan Gosling's BV, a fellow songwriter. But she screws up their relationship with bouts of violent sex with Michael Fassbender's Cook, a volatile music manager. "I was desperate to feel something real," says Faye. Uh-huh.

Natalie Portman is thrown in as a waitress who takes up, tragically, with Cook. The great Cate Blanchett shows up as a new love for BV; she roams barefoot, musing about her tragic past. It all drags on for 130 minutes (first cut reportedly was eight hours). Says Faye, "Any experience is better than no experience." Not this time: Song to Song hits all the wrong notes.

THESHOP

ROCKABILIA.COM

With over 250,000 items to choose from, Rockabilia offers the largest selection of music merchandise you will find on the web – period. From men's t-shirts, women's fashion and babywear to barware, posters and rare collectables, you won't find this stuff anywhere else – trust us. Make us your source! Request a free catalog or place an order by visiting our website or calling 952-556-1121.

www.rockabilia.com



T-SHIRT QUILTS

Campus Quilt Company turns your t-shirts into an awesome new quilt. Get those hard-earned shirts out of your closet and off your back! We do all of the work and make it easy for you to have a t-shirt quilt in as few as two weeks. As featured on the Today Show, Rachael Ray Show, and Real Simple. Mention you saw us in Rolling Stone for \$10 off. 502-968-2850

www.CampusQuilt.com



BEANBAG OR A CHAIR? HOW ABOUT BOTH!

Sumo Lounge's Sway Couple chairs are designed with your relaxation in mind! We wanted to combine the comfort of a beanbag chair with the shape and efficiency of a regular chair! Have the best of both worlds with Sumo Lounge at 1-866-340-7866 or visit www.sumolounge.com



VIGOR LABS

Ball Refill and Chainsaw are the hottest new sexual enhancers that volumize semen and improve hardness for the ultimate sexual experience. Black Snake is #1 for increasing male size naturally without side effects. Combine your stack with Wrecking Balls to raise testosterone naturally to new heights. Users report dramatic results! Each product is \$19.95 and Black Snake is \$39.99 at 1 (888)698-6603 or

www.VigorLabs.com

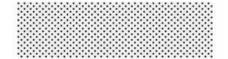




TO ADVERTISE, CALL 212-484-3492 OR EMAIL

JESSICA.GRILL

@ ROLLINGSTONE.COM



"INTERACTIVE JEWELRY FOR MEN & WOMEN"

Spin in style with the Kinekt Gear Ring & Gear Necklace. Sold separately. Both feature micro-precision gears that turn in unison when the outer rims are spun or by pulling on the ball chain. Lifetime Warranty. Free Shipping. Watch our Video. Order online or call:

888-600-8494 kinektdesign.com



VIAGRA, CIALIS, LEVITRA, PROPECIA, VALTREX ONLINE!

All FDA approved brand name medications delivered by USA Pharmacies and Prescribed by USA Doctors since 1998. Order Online, by Phone (800-314-2829) or Mobile Device! Safe – Secure - Discreet Special offers online at;

www.viamedic.com/rs/





DIVE BAR T-SHIRTS

Join the club and you'll receive a new T-Shirt every month from the best bars you've never heard of!

www.DiveBarShirtClub.com



TRUMP THE DESTROYER

[Cont. from 41] Security reports showing little risk from immigrants of "Muslim ban" countries to alleged orders to consider reopening CIA "black sites." D.C. has never seen anything like it: Reporters are able to get damaging information about the goings-on inside agencies just by cold-calling the right numbers.

The administration is so concerned with leakers within the State Department that Tillerson has supposedly banned note-taking at meetings. "The level of paranoia is off the charts," reports a former senior official.

Tillerson himself is said to have postponed some diplomatic business to focus on what is euphemistically described as "fixing" the State Department. Probably this means more weeding out of civil servants, something going on across government.

Most infamously, Attorney General Sessions – fast becoming the poster child for the Trump administration's inability to avoid stepping on its own genitalia – asked 46 U.S. attorneys to resign, including Southern District of New York chief Preet Bharara, who reportedly was specifically asked to stay on just after the election.

Some of these moves sound like Bannon's much-publicized bent toward Leninist thinking: Purge unbelievers, fill the bureaucracies with loyal dunces, concentrate power, eschew governance goals for political ones. But it's hard to say how much unanimity of purpose there could be.

When Sessions got caught up seeming to have lied to the Senate about meeting Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak, a video surfaced showing a scene in which Trump was reportedly raining expletives on Bannon and others over the Sessions fiasco. If all this chaos is part of a cunning plan to destroy government from within, it sure is cleverly disguised as a bunch of paranoid amateurs flailing around and turning on one another weeks into the job.

One reporter tasked with covering the appointments says the staffing issue comes down to the same question we always have about Trump: Is this a scheme to destroy government, or cluelessness? "It's just so hard to tell," he says, "where this falls on the stupid-to-evil spectrum."

While the chaos of Trump's first months has caused him problems in the Beltway, it seems not to have hurt him a lick with his fans. After the CPAC speech, Trump supporters offer their takes on the nominee battles. The consensus? The Democrats who opposed Trump's picks are a bunch of smartasses who need to lighten up.

University of Delaware student Daniel Worthington says the Democrats' grilling of DeVos really rubbed him the wrong way.

"You come off as douchey, when somebody's like, 'Oh, you don't know the difference between proficiency and growth?" he says. "I'd be like, 'You're kind of an asshole."

When asked if he thinks Puzder should have been confirmed, Worthington nods.

"Yeah, we don't get Carl's Jr. up here," he says. "But I like their commercials."

JUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28TH, A joint session of Congress, the last day of Trump's first full month in office. It's less than a minute into his first major national address, and Trump is already eyeballs-deep in bull.

"Recent threats targeting Jewish community centers and vandalism of Jewish cemeteries," he says, "remind us that...we are a country that stands united in condemning hate and evil in all of its very ugly forms." Just hours before, he told a group of state attorneys general that hate crimes against Jews were overblown, that "sometimes it's the reverse, to make people – or to make others – look bad."

Trump moves on to what the press will describe as an "emotional moment." He recognizes Carryn Owens, the widow of a Navy SEAL whose death Trump only hours before had blamed on both the previous administration and his generals. But on TV, Mrs. Owens sobs as Trump says her husband Ryan's name had been "etched into eternity."

The press goes wild. Van Jones of CNN, for years a fervent critic of Trump who notably called Trump's electoral victory a "whitelash," gushes that Trump "became president of the United States" during the Owens episode.

The New York Times, denounced as an "enemy of the American people" just over a week before, raves about the speech. They describe the "optimistic address" as "soothing comfort food" in which Trump "seemed to accept the fetters of formality and tradition that define and dignify the presidency."

The soft-touch treatment seems to make no sense, until one remembers that the pundit class is the cheapest of dates, and while President Trump may be a dolt, the reality-show Trump is as clever a manipulator as American politics has ever seen. Brilliantly, he's turned the presidency into a permanent campaign, one in which an ostensibly hostile news media has once again become accomplice to whatever the Trump phenomenon is, by voraciously feeding at its financial troth.

The genius of Trump has always been his knack for transforming everyone in his orbit into a reality-TV character. As a candidate, he goaded Lindsey Graham into putting a cellphone in a blender, inspired pseudo-intellectual Rand Paul to put out a video of himself chain-sawing a tax code in half, and pushed Marco Rubio into making jokes about dong size during a debate. He even managed to get into a public spat with

the pope. Whatever your lowest common denominator is, Trump will bring it out and make sport of it.

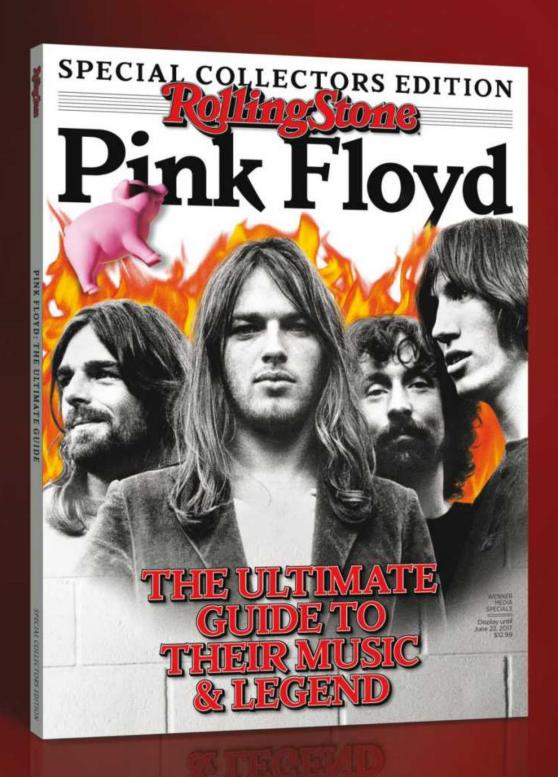
The same phenomenon is now in play with the whole world. President Trump, following Bannon's lead, describes the press as an "opposition party" out to get him, and before long, they basically are. Trump accuses the Democratic National Committee of rigging the game against Bernie Sanders; new DNC chair Tom Perez, in a tweet that could play in the Borscht Belt, says Trump's weekly address was "translated from the original Russian and everything." Even before Trump trolls Sweden, Swedish Deputy Prime Minister Isabella Lövin trolls him, running a photo of herself signing a law while surrounded by women - a parody of the already-infamous photo of Trump signing an antiabortion executive order while surrounded entirely by men.

And when Rachel Maddow finally gets hold of a tiny slice of Trump's tax returns, instead of soberly reporting it as a small-but-intriguing piece of a larger picture, she hypes it on Twitter like the scoop of the century – exactly as Trump would have done. Social media blasted Maddow as the second coming of Geraldo Rivera opening up Al Capone's vault. Everything connected with Trump becomes tabloidized. The show is unstoppable.

Nearly two years into our relationship with Donald Trump, politician, his core schtick is no longer really a secret. The new president swings wildly between buffoon and strongman acts, creating confusion and disorder. While his enemies scramble to make sense of the outrages of a week before or yesterday or 10 minutes ago, and spend valuable energy wondering whether the man is crazy or stupid or cunning (or perhaps all three things at once), Trump continually presses forward.

We always assumed there was a goal behind it all: cattle cars, race war, autocracy. But those were last century's versions of tyranny. It would make perfect sense if modern America's contribution to the genre were far dumber. Trump in the White House may just be a monkey clutching history's biggest hand grenade. Yes, he's always one step ahead of us, and more dangerous than any smart person, and we can never for a minute take our eyes off him.

But while we keep looking for his hidden agenda, it's our growing addiction to the spectacle of his car-wreck presidency that is the real threat. He is already making idiots and accomplices of us all, bringing out the worst in each of us, making us dumber just by watching. Even if Trump never learns to govern, after four years of this we will forget what civilization ever looked like – and it will be programming, not policy, that will have changed the world.



ON NEWSSTANDS NOW

Also available at bn.com/rspinkfloyd.



Ray Davies

The Kinks leader on success, ignoring your past, and why starting a band with your brother leads to 'bloodshed'

You're from the Muswell Hill neighborhood in London. What's the most Muswell Hill thing about you?

I was born in transit. My parents lived in Central London, and they moved to Muswell Hill during the Second World War to get away from the bombings. Their house was nearly demolished, so I'm a bit like a refugee. That's why I wrote the *Muswell Hillbillies* album. It's about people who were displaced, looking for a new life. It's also about urban renewal, which is not a cool subject for a record. But since I was born in transit, I've continued to live in the moment, just living wherever I am that day.

How do you relax?

I write outlines and short stories. I find it therapeutic. Relaxing has always been difficult, because my mind is very active. I can't think of anything that would appall me more than a beach. I did that once in Bermuda and got sunburnt.

What is your fitness regimen like?

I go to the gym three times a week. London is very hilly, so you have to walk up hills, like it or not. I've taken up tai chi as well, and I'm at an excellent boxing school. I like the exercise that comes with boxing, and the grace that comes with tai chi.

What's the worst part of success?

Having to do the same thing again, but better. I was lucky. When "You Really Got Me" dropped out of the Top 10, my record company said, "We need a follow-up." I wrote "All Day and All of the Night" in a few minutes, and we recorded it in a day. Bands go through an adrenaline period where they have hits for a year or two, and then they have to assess things. It's important to do that in any form of creativity. The secret is to know there's going to be downtimes where you need to re-energize and refocus.

Do you think the Kinks benefited by never becoming as big as Zeppelin or the Stones?

That was a deliberate move on my part. I don't feel sorry for the Who or the Stones, but I continue to keep a low profile and just do my work. That's really important. Is your past ever a burden when you sit down to write new songs?

No. When I was making my new record with the Jayhawks, I said to them, "We're going to make this record like it's the first one we ever made." I make every one like that. You'll never be able to be what you were. You'll never achieve what you achieved before. It's critical to be in the now. This is what I am, this is how I speak, this is what I write – take it or leave it. Thankfully, people have continued to take it rather than leave it.

Davies' new album with the Jayhawks, "Americana," is out April 21st.

Considering all the problems you had with your bandmates, do you ever wish you'd just been a solo artist from Day One?

I like the freedom of being solo, but sometimes I miss the band annoying me by saying they don't like the drum sounds or the lyric or whatever. In many respects, I've always been a solo artist. With a song like "Waterloo Sunset," I wouldn't let the band hear the lyrics until I'd done the back track, because the subject matter is quite personal. But, fair due to the band. They went with it, and we got good results.

They also caused you a lot of grief.

I could take that to a certain extent. At the end of the day, if we make good records, that's all that matters.

If someone came to you and said they were thinking about starting a band with their brother, what would you say?

Good luck. It didn't do bad for the Carpenters or the Everly Brothers. But whenever families work together, the rivalry is always there. There'll be bloodshed. We broke and smashed guitars, we ruined studios, televisions were thrown out of the window. But there's still a deep love and affection beneath all of that. Band members are always close, but it's nothing like being relatives.

Gene Simmons says rock is dead. Is he right?

The guy from Kiss? A certain element of rock is over, but I don't think it'll ever be dead. As long as there's a kid on the street with a guitar who

wants to make a noise, rock will be alive somewhere. Stadium rock, yes, I think that is over. Rock & roll's going to a period of transition. It's just gone to the Catskills. It'll come back. If the organizers of Desert Trip came to you and offered you \$15 million for a Kinks reunion, would

What's Desert Trip? Is that some sort of sightseeing tour?

It's the big festival at Coachella that had the Stones, McCartney, the Who....

you do it?

[I'd do it] if it fit into my plans. It's always a bad thing to do it for the money. Do it for the event.

If the Kinks never play again, will that be a big regret of yours?

Not really. The Kinks made an indelible impact on the music industry. The story has no ending yet, so I can't anticipate what I'll feel like.

Are you sick of always being asked about a reunion?

No. It just confuses me. Because with a reunion, people just talk about the fights and disputes. They want to see that again. Just be happy the music exists.

INTERVIEW BY ANDY GREENE



WR

NEW EPISODES | NETFLIX

OUR BEEK BEGINS BENEATH WINTERS BLANKET THERE ARE NO SHOKTCUTS TO GOOSE IPA



Even while the hop fields lie dormant, we're preparing for the next crop that will become Goose IPA.

Our brewers and the farmers at Elk Mountain

Farm in Northern Idaho work together to carefully plan the planting of an entire year's worth of great hops that make great IPA.

