

Like a Pavlovian Response

Small-Town DIY Makes a Magic City by Julianne Shepherd

I'VE LIVED IN A LOT of small towns. If them were shitholes, or at least I thought they were at the time, but all of them had something in common: a desperately thriving, do-it-yourself punk subculture. And something I've come to learn in experiencing these dismal places is that kids in small towns often produce some of the most pure art, mostly for lack of anything better to do.

Similarly, the town of Moberly, Missouri in *Magic City* (directed by *Punk Planet* film columnist David Wilson) has a self-sustaining culture of young "freaks" (read: skaters with bleached hair) creating a positive environment in response to their surroundings. See, the kids of Moberly feel

dicked over. They get arrested for skateboarding in town, and the only future they can see for themselves involves working in the surrounding factories. And they're living in "the underbelly of the Midwest" (or, as I fondly called it, "the armpit of the Bible Belt"), where there're lots of rednecks and fundamentalist Christians who want to squelch their *joie de vivre*.

Though it's only about 19 minutes long, *Magic City* encapsulates the feeling that *Gummo* director Harmony Korine is too trust-fund outsider to do. In the film, Wilson thinks that he lent some insight into the Moberly scene because of his outsider status—a filmmaker from the neighboring town of Columbia. But he han-

dles this easily exploitable subject with the delicacy of an equal. And if you've ever been to Columbia, MO, you'll know that's exactly what he is—someone trying to create art as a weapon against the ennui that so diligently envelops the inhabitants of small towns. Wilson shows the kids of Moberly trying to save themselves by creating this tiny music scene, but at the same time, you get the feeling he's also trying to save himself by making the film.

In Moberly, there are no bookers, no proper venues, no Bike-In Theaters, no Reading Frenzys for people to collaborate and distribute. They have to generate their own backyard punk shows, lest the town's kids—at least, the ones who opted out of the shitkicker lifestyle—wither and die. I think everyone who appreciates, loves, and participates in Portland DIY should see the glorious 19 minutes of Wilson's film—if not to remind ourselves how good we have it, then to witness that communities similar to our own exist across the world. Even in shitholes like Moberly, Missouri. ■

Charm Bracelet Presents:
PunkNotRock Tour 2001
Featuring *Magic City*
dir. Wilson
Thurs April 26
Meow Meow

suited hit men/bank robber curled black crook Sy Richa moll (a pre-cosmetically er Love) who end up in a craz that exaggerates the "life i Cox's beloved spaghetti. Ir native audio commentary, *Straight to Hell* is about "gu sexual tension," anticipating obsessions of the '90s.

Chances are you haven't two Anchor Bay releases. *Compass*, one of the few fi feel of the Borgesian literar Peter Boyle in a complex, c of a police detective who s investigating a series of biz futuristic city. And like a Luis *Businessmen* is about two f regular Miguel Sandoval, an ing to find a place to eat, a conversations instead. It is (

All three discs are packe documentaries/commentari reminders that one of the n DVD is the accessibility to tr filmmakers it can provide. C

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ARTLISTINGS

BY CYNTHIA SEWELL • cynthia@boiseweekly.com

Art News

HOUSE OF CELLULOID

You've long known House of Rock for its punk shows, but this week, the basement club is featuring something new—an evening of independent film. Set for screening is a fine double feature. *Magic City* is a documentary about teenaged-types in a small town in Missouri. Director David Wilson is interested in the ways that youth subculture—skateboarding, heavy metal *et al*—worms its way into the American outback.

The second film on the bill is *Good Grief*, written and directed by Andrew Dickson. The film is about a young fellow whose friends start bagging the usual Dungeons and Dragons marathons in favor of the celebrated triumvirate:

sex, drugs and you know the third part. *Good Grief* won an award at Portland's Northwest Film and Video Festival and is now on a cross-country tour.

Music lovers are in luck, though, even if the theme of the night is film. *Good Grief's* soundtrack is packed with independent music: Land of the Wee Beasties, Bugskull, The Portland Suede, The Silver Jews and lots of others fill in the background. On the live side, there's acoustic guitar by Johnny Cigarettes.

As always with this independent venue, watch for fliers downtown, or check in at Record Exchange. The show starts at 7 p.m. Friday, April 27, donation.

—Anna Webb

FULTON STREET THEATRE, 9TH AND FULTON STREETS, 331.9224, 8 P.M. THURSDAY-SATURDAY, APRIL 26-28; 2 P.M. SUNDAY, APRIL 29; \$15.75 THURSDAY/SUNDAY; \$19.75 FRIDAY/SATURDAY

THIS MUST BE THE PLACE

A comedy revolving around a famous artist and his plumber friend who decides to impersonate him to impress a Las Vegas showgirl. Add in a mix of other colorful characters and you have non-stop laughter. STAGE COACH THEATRE, HILLCREST SHOPPING CENTER, 342.2000, 8:15 P.M. FRIDAY-SATURDAY, APRIL 26-28; 2 P.M. SUNDAY, APRIL 29, \$10, ALSO PLAYS MAY 3-5.

TWO BY TWO

Richard Rodgers' musical is a witty chronicle of Noah and his cruise. KNOCK 'EM DEAD DINNER THEATRE, 333 S. 9TH STREET, 385.0021, 7 P.M. THURSDAYS, \$10, \$7.50 STUDENTS AND SENIORS; 8 P.M. FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS (DINNER SEATING AT 6:30 P.M.), \$28.50, THROUGH MAY 12.

THE FILMNY ROOM 404 S. 8TH ST