

by Chris Dunn

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?* For Houstonians, not necessarily a complimentary analogy. Shakespeare, in his most famous sonnet, continues his theme and laments that *summer's lease hath too short a date*. By the time August shakes the darling buds of May off the bougainvilleas and chars them into something like chalk, most of us would like to default on the summer contract. There are no holidays in August and school starts up again (depending on your situation, either a blessing or a curse). So now, during *National Psoriasis Awareness Month*, it is a good time to at least try to follow August's other sobriquet, *Admit You're Happy Month*.

**2 - 5 & 9 - 12, Houston Shakespeare Festival** at the Miller Outdoor Theatre. Witness Shakespeare's bloodiest (and, for its day, extremely popular) play *Titus Andronicus*. Or if you are not into mutilation, misogyny and torture, fall for Shakespeare's last play, the Late Romance, *The Tempest*. All shows curtain up at 8pm. *Titus Andronicus* plays August 3, 5, 9 and 11. *The Tempest* plays August 2, 4, 10 and 12.

**4, 11, 18 & 25, Mixers, Elixirs and IMAX®** - The Houston Museum of Natural Science presents a clever twist on Friday nightlife. Back by popular demand, Mixers, Elixirs and IMAX® is the summer spot where adults can mix and mingle, enjoy an IMAX® film, dance under the dinosaurs to new live music each week, and sip captivating cocktails. The Museum is the place to be Friday nights from 6 to 10pm thru August 25. The party starts at 6pm in the Grand Hall with a live DJ from Club Opus. Doors open at 7pm for the live band, dancing under the dinosaurs, cash bar and appetizers provided by Whole Foods Market. **Live Music Schedule:** August 4, Texas Johnny Brown; 11, The El Orbits; 18, Grupo Batacha; 25, The Fab 5.

**5, 12, 19 & 26, Get on The Dark Side of the Moon** - Pink Floyd's legendary album returns this summer in full-dome, full-color computer animation, using all of the capacities of the Burke Baker Planetarium's new high-definition, full-dome video system. Fantastic sound and incredible images create an unforgettable experience. It's not a laser show but a totally new digital revolution in sight and sound - surrounding you, immersing you, losing you on the Dark Side of the Moon.



by Patricia Gras

We've all been there with our own parents at some point, as a teen or a young adult. **Flipping through the channels or watching a movie and then it happens - an uncomfortable sex scene.** Usually we ignore it or nervously laugh, maybe someone gets up for popcorn. Now it's your turn, as an adult to go through this with your teen. Will you get over the uncomfortable emotions and teach your child about sex? Or let them wing it...

"Sex involves your whole self" is the nugget of advice that local teen sex educator Marybelle Perez offers to uninformed - or misinformed - teens and their parents. **There are many reasons for the lack of sex education**, but Perez wants to help parents give the information to teens that they need to become responsible with sex.

Perez strives to give them the crucial and often embarrassing information they need to make the decision they will be comfortable with for the rest of their lives.

Many children are unaware of sex education because they are not getting the information they need from their parents who are most likely the people they most trust. **Perez believes there is a lack of preparation among parents. This may be because they either never had the birds and the bees conversation with their own parents** or they may still be uncomfortable with their own sexuality.

Perez offers some simple tips for parents who want to begin communicating with their teens about sex. **Find appropriate moments such as after a sexual TV commercial or TV show.** Your teen is probably as uncomfortable as you are. Don't be afraid to talk. Ask them how they felt about the particular situation or what impression the show has made on them. Another way to begin talking is when driving in a car and a billboard that is using sex as an advertisement is passed, point it out and ask them about it.

The easiest tip to follow, Perez says, is to **listen to their cues.** All too often we ignore or don't pay attention to our teens' words. Sometimes they want to talk but don't know if it is appropriate to talk to you about it. Or perhaps they do not know how to bring it up. **Listening is the key ingredient when it comes to the parent-teen sex talk.**

Many physical and mental changes occur during the time when teens begin to think about sex. Perez advocates teaching teens that these changes are normal and it happens to all of us.

The goal of her sex education classes is to provide kids with the facts so they can make decisions about abstinence and sex without fear or as a result of being pressured. **She wants them to know when they are absolutely ready to be intimate.** "It's about teaching them values. Abstinence is not a dirty word."

Perez believes teens can make decisions when they are armed with the right information. Religion, she says, plays an important role but it doesn't matter if you believe in God or something else. "We still have a spiritual part of our being that cannot be denied," she says. **Perez also tries to get across the message that drugs and alcohol should not play a role in sex**, regardless if it is adults or teens. Sex is something that can change your life and a possibly life-altering decision should not be influenced by drugs or alcohol.

Living smart is a part of Perez's daily life. "I know I am living smart because I'm being true to myself. Because I'm being the best person I can be. When I look at myself in the mirror, **I know that I am making a difference, it might be a little bit, but I'm making a difference.** I think that's really important. If we could all make a difference, whether it is family or work or whatever we do, I think we're contributing. We can go out saying, I left something behind that was of some good," she says.

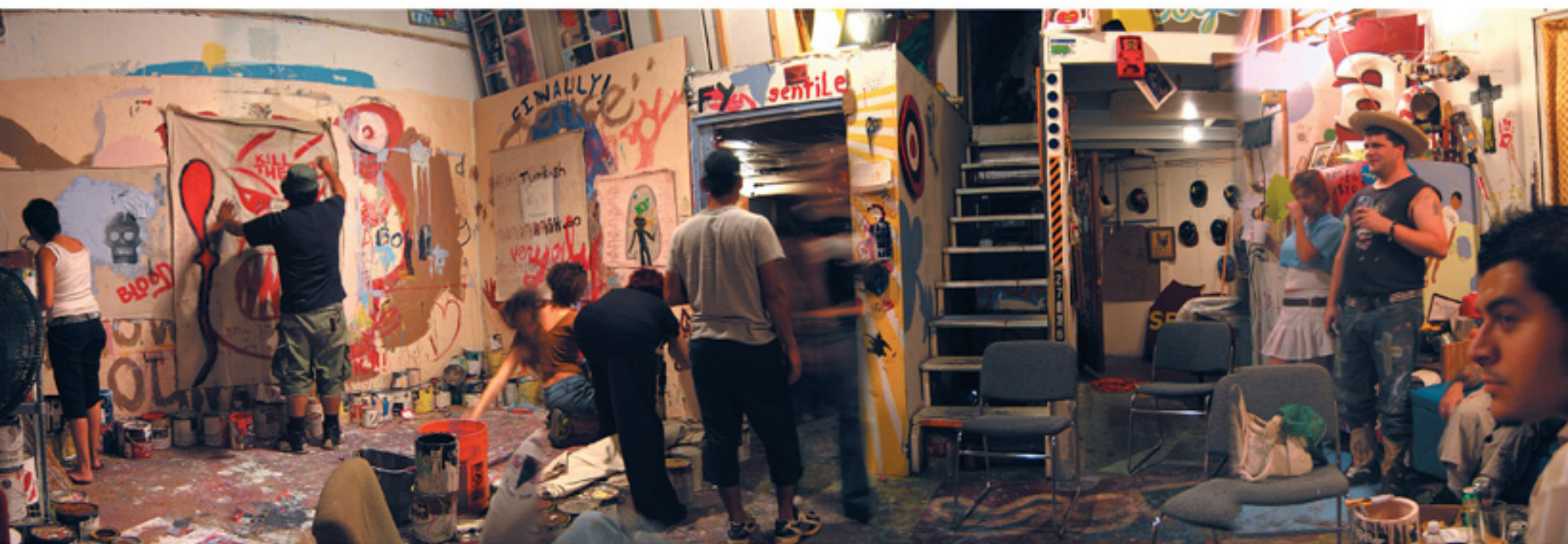
Marybelle Perez is currently working on her own foundation that will help to further educate more and more teens about sex. For more information, email [MarybellePerez@sbcglobal.net](mailto:MarybellePerez@sbcglobal.net) or visit [www.IWannaKnow.org](http://www.IWannaKnow.org).

Don't miss Marybelle Perez on Living Smart with Patricia Gras on Sunday, Sept. 17, at 3:30pm on Houston PBS Channel 8.

Patricia Gras is the host of "Living Smart with Patricia Gras," a new local PBS series on getting the most out of life. (It airs Sundays at 3:30pm and Thursdays at 1:30pm.)



## i love you baby: over the edge of art



LIKE A SINCERE, BUT SPECIOUS MANTRA OF AN UNFAITHFUL LOVER, I LOVE YOU BABY'S NAME GETS IN ONE'S HEAD AND JUST WON'T GO AWAY.

Experiencing I Love You Baby, Houston's famous and infamous art collective, has much the same effect. How does one experience I Love You Baby? View their art? Yes. Go to the website? Definitely. Get to know the personalities involved? Most definitely.

In a sketchy area of downtown sits the Commerce Street Artist Warehouse, where various up-and-coming artists, including I Love You Baby, make their magic happen.

The exact nature of the magic of I Love You Baby is difficult to define. The group concretely consists of Rodney Elliott, 33; Paul Kremer (either 48, 33 or 36); and Will Bentsen (age withheld, and also the nephew of Senator Lloyd Bentsen); Chris Olivier, 32; and Dale Stewart, 31. Mark Flood, 50, is said to be an "associate" but is clearly a key part of the inspiration and collaboration. In addition to these key players, a number of friends, fellow artists and

random acquaintances flow in and out of I Love You Baby's crazily cluttered studio to add a splash of paint, crushed-up Cheetos, cigarette ashes and other elements to their "canvases."

"What do you think about that?" Elliott says, looking down at a found architect's rendering of a country club, splashed with red paint, crushed Cheetos, torn dollar bills and an assortment of other odds and ends gathered from around the room and out of people's pockets.

"I like it," Kremer replies.

"I don't" Rodney says.

I Love You Baby is art with no rules, no boundaries. The method is, as Stewart says, "Anyone can paint over anything." In the ensemble's painting sessions, one person's art is another person's trash, and can be trampled on, obliterated or delicately decorated without a thought or an explanation. Not only do the artists build on, change and destroy each other's work at will, they collaborate in the free-form manner of high school boys playing a prank – egging each other on with ideas and

making fun of each other. "Our collective art is your basic battle of egos," Bentsen says.

For I Love You Baby, the process is as much an act of art as the finished project. That is why the website ([www.iloveyoubaby.org](http://www.iloveyoubaby.org)) is so important. "It's not art if no one's looking," Stewart says. **I Love You Baby's artistic method is unusual, edgy, fun and ultimately freeing. It's easy to get into the I Love You Baby spirit. Even the notes for this article were tweaked with suggestions and instructions for "factual" insertions and quotes that must be included. And in the spirit of I Love You Baby, I must comply. If I can paint on their canvas, surely they may write on mine.**

I Love You Baby is about stretching the limits, about making fun of the eternal question "What is art?" while simultaneously asking that question. **Not everyone will get it, certainly not everyone will like it, but anyone who experiences I Love You Baby will not forget it.** In the words of Mark Flood, "It's so bad, it isn't good. So funny the art world forgot to laugh."

→ [www.iloveyoubaby.org](http://www.iloveyoubaby.org)

it's not art if no one's looking

for art's sake **ceramics dude, shane tidmore**

SHANE TIDMORE, A LOCAL CERAMICS ARTIST, IS NOT AFRAID TO DO THINGS THE HARD WAY. IN FACT, HE CHOSE TO HONE HIS TRADE IN FARAWAY LANDS, LEARNING FROM MASTERS WHO ESCHEWED MODERN CONVENIENCES FOR TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES. **HE PREFERS USING WOOD KILNS TO FIRE HIS PIECES RATHER THAN MODERN GAS KILNS, AND HE LIKES THE IDEA OF HAND MAKING EVERYDAY OBJECTS RATHER THAN BUYING THEM AT THE STORE.**

Neither Tidmore's mother nor his father expected their son to grow up to be a cowboy or an artist, but somehow the do-it-your-own-way philosophy of the Southwest and the artist's way of life got into his blood. And he knew that was the life for him at an early age.

Tidmore grew up a military brat in the flatland of Wichita Falls, Texas – a town he describes as having one tree. His family vacationed in Colorado and sometimes spent time in Santa Fe, where Tidmore was exposed to galleries and people living and making a living in art. **And although his parents "didn't really dig" that lifestyle, Tidmore says, "they made the mistake of at least showing me more than one piece of the puzzle."**

Though, Tidmore doesn't literally ride the range or rope steer, his prevailing philosophy comes from a country and western movie. "I do this and I do it my way, and that's the most important thing," Tidmore says, paraphrasing a silver screen cowboy's words.

And though Tidmore has struggled to make money and gain popular acceptance for his work, all while supporting a family and raising a young son, he has not stopped doing what he believes in.

His friend and onetime colleague, Doug Peck, an art teacher at Blinn College in Brenham, says, "I have to admire his maturity and dedication. His knowledge is as endless as it gets when it comes to clay." Despite the fact that "his personality does not come across as that mature," Peck says, **"he has a maturity about him. He has had hardships. But that has not stopped him."**

Today, Tidmore is the head of the ceramics department at Glassell School of Art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. He has recently bought a small piece of land in Cleveland, Texas, where he is building a very large wood kiln – the kind he learned to love during the time he spent as an apprentice and full-time artist in Korea and Japan. "The kiln," Tidmore says, "will be unique in Texas and even in America." **He hopes to add many more kilns to the land and establish a Texas ceramics art ranch where artists and novices alike can gather and fire clay pieces.**

Tidmore's work is earthy, traditional, contemporary and authentic all at the same time. When he digs up clay for his works, he leaves the debris in it, to create texture and spontaneous patterns. While he has been influenced by the



Japanese tradition, he has been careful not to copy it, taking care to stay true to his own roots. "I'm Texan and I'm white," he said, but that does not mean he will not "let the winds of change be an influence."

Although Tidmore still occasionally receives calls from his parents encouraging him to change professions, he continues "not succumbing to the pressures of society."

Success, however, is not something Tidmore scoffs at. **He hopes to leave his mark on Houston and further generate recognition for the Texas ceramic art scene.** His work will be on exhibition alongside the ceramic work of his former student Brett Osborne in the show "Internal/External." **The opening reception is Friday the 13th and ends with a closing reception on Saturday the 21st at Winter Street Studio Gallery.**



**"Hopefully, I'll never have to be that cowboy that gets gunned down and dies fighting,"** Tidmore says.

**Spacetaker** and **Whole Foods Market** unite their efforts to make life more delicious. **CALL FOR ENTRIES!** For the launch of their "Feeding the Arts" partnership, Spacetaker and WFM invite Houston artists to submit original designs for a limited edition t-shirt, featuring the slogan: "Feeding the Arts." Marshall Lightman and Wayne Gilbert will jury the design competition. Designs must correspond with the theme. Entries will be accepted between February 1 – April 1. Jurors will select one winner and two honorable mentions. Prizes include WFM gift certificates, in-store marketing and promotion, and t-shirts. The "Feeding the Arts" celebration culminates on June 21 with a 5% shopping day at all four Houston WFM locations benefiting Spacetaker (a non-profit organization). For submission guidelines, contact [info@spacetaker.org](mailto:info@spacetaker.org).

Mondays in February at Clark's Recording Studio:

**February 6, 9pm – How to Be a Canadian** (in case you're planning on defecting), a film event co-presented by **Aurora Picture Show** and **Clark's Recording Studio**.

Curated by Astria Suparak and Brett Kashmere, the evening's offerings include works by Brett Kashmere, Jake Kennedy, Shari Boyle, Jubal Brown, Daniel Barrow, Jon Sasaki, Dorion Berg, Jim Munroe, Jeremy Bailey, Daniel Cockburn, Paige Gratland and Tom Sherman. For more information, go to [www.aurorapictureshow.org](http://www.aurorapictureshow.org), or call Clark's Recording Studio at 713.237.8220.

**Thru April, 11am – 6pm – Do Not Ask Me**, Artist Mel Chin's new one-man show at the **Station Museum of Contemporary Art**. Chin, considered one of the most important artists of his generation, creates artworks in a broad range of media. Works present a complex, original aesthetic and an extraordinary range of issues that intersect human experience, including intellectual and scientific investigation, dreams, wars and political and social concerns. For more information, contact the **Station Museum at 1502 Alabama at La Branch in Midtown 713.529.6900**.

**February 2, 11am – This Must Be What Heaven Looks Like** at The Law Office, 5106 Center Street. Three Houston artists: Mary Curry, Jo Ann Park and Frances Trotter imagine what lies beyond the pearly gates. Each transformed a

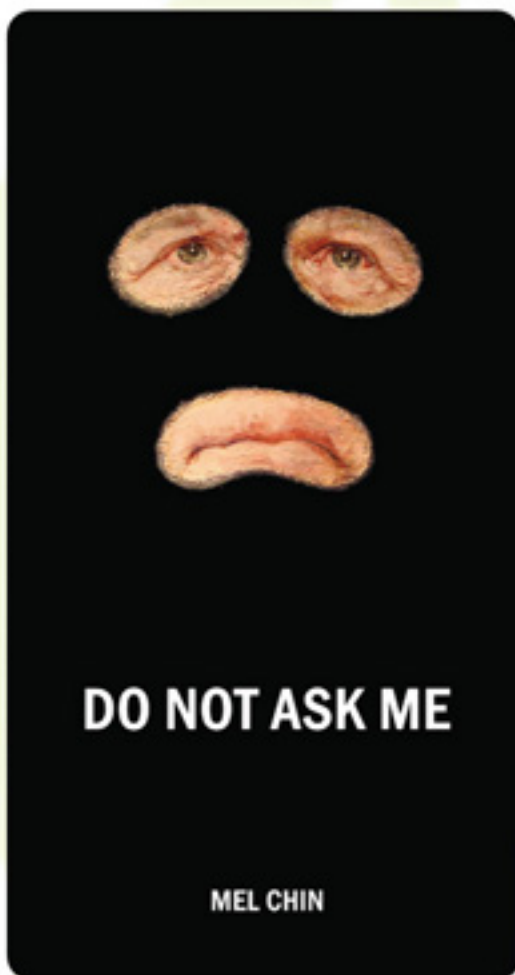
small room into a heavenly environment. Come see what the "high life" might look like. Presented by **Buffalo Bayou ArtPark 713.520.0152** and **SPACETAKER 713.416.2633**.

**February 9, 7pm – Guerilla Girls on Tour**, this famous theatre collective brings a 70minute play entitled **Feminists are Funny** to the University of Houston. An energetic romp through their herstory, *Feminists are Funny* aims to educate the community about the current state of sexism at the same time proving that feminists **are** funny (best of both worlds: funny "haha" and funny weird). Co-presented by the Blaffer Gallery, the Women Studies Program and the Women's Resource Center of the University of Houston, the performance at the Moores School of Music, 120 School of Music Building, is FREE. For more information, contact the **Blaffer Gallery at 713.743.9530**.

**February 4, 7pm – Urban Bonfire Gala Fundraiser**, party with Suchu Dance Company and bust some moves at David Adickes' SculptureWorks warehouse at 2500 Summer Street, just one mile west of Downtown. The atmosphere is sure to be down-and-dirty, super-sexy and surreal. For more information, contact **Barnevelder Movement/Arts Complex at 713.529.1819**.

**February 4, 6:30pm – For uptown galateers, the Inprint Poets and Writers Ball** at the Houston Country Club furnishes a literary feast for the soul. Featuring an after-dinner talk by Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Michael Chabon, as well as brief before-dinner readings by three "Texas" writers, plus fine food and music, the event is sponsored by Inprint, Inc., and chaired by Karen and Harry Pinson. For more information, contact **Inprint at 713.521.2026** or [www.inprint-inc.org](http://www.inprint-inc.org).

**February 18, 7:30pm – Mercury Baroque** presents Handel's pastoral opera *Acis & Galatea*. The tale of two lovers who overcome death was Handel's most popular work in his lifetime, and its lightness and sensuality beckon us into the laughing, chattering court audience of the English masque. Fully staged with costumes, sets and surtitles at Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby, tickets are \$25. For more information, contact **Mercury Baroque at 713. 533.0080**.



MEL CHIN

**EVENTBRAVISSIMO DAVIDWHYTO HONOR FORMER GENERAL DIRECTOR DAVID GOCKLEYWHERE & WHEN THE CORINTHIAN NOVEMBER 15**

Houston Grand Opera's best honored David Gockley's 33 years with the company before he departed for San Francisco in a magical evening including sumptuous eats provided by Jackson and Company and performances honoring his extensive and memorable work in Houston.



David Gockley, Terrylin G. Neale



Jana and John "Scotty" Arnoldy



John and Sylvia Sullivan, Diane Zola



Kathryn and David Berg