

## Journey to the Journeyman

### By Michael Nagrant

**LIVING IN A CITY WITH MORE THAN 6,000 RESTAURANTS,** why would you ever drive 150 miles to eat in a city with a population of 1,500? For me, it's a kind of a Hillary Clinton-type thing. She was right, it does take a village to raise a child. Unfortunately for my wife and I, parents of a 16-month-old boy who believes soil is a basic food group, we left the village back in our

home state of Michigan when we moved to Chicago. So when we need a break from the exhaustive process of keeping our son's mouth free of dirt and other things you find on the average floor, we gotta go to the village.

It turns out Fennville, a one-Subway-franchise town surrounded by farmland and located two hours from Chicago and about six miles from the nearest freeway, is the perfect halfway point between Lansing, home of my in-laws, and our West Loop loft. Luckily for us, it's also home to one of Michigan's best restaurants, the Journeyman, our drop-off point for junior's sleepovers, aka parental-sanity breaks, with the grandparents.

The Journeyman is a culinary dream, a destination so incongruous with its location you're not sure it really exists. It's the real-life embodiment of fictional isolation fantasies like the Brick bar and restaurant from the TV show "Northern Exposure" or the "Mystic Pizza" parlor. The Journeyman sits smack dab in the middle of a charming ramshackle downtown, where the tattered awning from the local video/electronics flutters in the breeze. Downtown Fennville is so small, your average little leaguer could easily toss a baseball its entire length, and locating a "gourmet" restaurant here feels like an exercise in entrepreneurial suicide.

Fennville is the kind of place where you find a mom-and-pop pie shack (Crane's Pie Pantry in this case), not a topnotch culinary destination that features handmade charcuterie, wood-fired hearth-baked breads and some of the best farm-to-table fare this side of Chez Panisse. But owners Matthew Millar and Amy Cook didn't worry much about that. They just put their heads down and set about their goal of creating a "fresh dialogue about food and a new ethic in cooking."

The Journeyman is a place where the community spirit is as warm as a cup of great steamy coffee. There are places in Chicago that attempt to be like the Journeyman and come pretty close, but there's nothing here that's quite as pure. In Chicago, when restaurateurs talk about establishing a small family-run seasonal spot, it's more often an exercise in PR fantasy. In Chicago, when restaurants talk about their farm-to-table philosophy, it usually means getting fresh produce and meat that's been driven at least a few hundred miles from surrounding farms in Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin.

When the Journeyman puts a chicken leg on the menu and girds it with oozy dill flower and squash risotto and a zingy red-beet-and-cassis vinegar reduction, that chicken was raised ten miles away at Providence Farms in nearby Saugatuck. Salad greens, tossed with blue cheese, scallions and truffle-oil vinaigrette, come from Eater's Guild, a veg and fruit farm located in Bangor, Michigan twenty miles away.

The sausage is house-made and studded with fennel. The creamy foie and chicken liver pate slathered on the wood-fired, homemade crostini melts in your mouth and is served alongside Armandino Batali's salumi, Paul Bertolli's sausages and a selection of pickles and cheese.

Rustic presentations here aren't garnished with frilly bullshit or molded in ridiculous shapes. There are no chemical stabilizers in the bourbon maple gastric paired with juicy Creswick Farms pork tenderloin and belly.

Though Chicago is a town of pizza, we are more a town of stomach-distending deep-dish slices and wispy, bubbly Neapolitan-style crumb. Though Burt and Pequod's come close, we don't quite have the perfect Sicilian airiness of the square wood-fired crust topped with the rich, funky blend of aged parmesan, provolone and "Fumicata" mozzarella cheeses served here.

Simply put, even if you don't have a demanding dirt-eating toddler that you plan on dropping off with the grandparents, you should make the drive to Fennville and eat at the Journeyman. You could also make a side trip to peruse the nearby art galleries in Saugatuck or play on the shore of Lake Michigan in South Haven—but once you stop in at the Journeyman, you probably won't want to leave.

Journeyman is located at 114 East Main, Fennville, Michigan, (219)561-2269, journeymancafe.com

# words

WHAT I TALK ABOUT
WHEN I TALK ABOUT
THIRTY YE
RUNNING
MURAKAMI

## Run, Boy, Run

NONFICTION REVIEW

THIRTY YEARS AGO, Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami owned a jazz club in Tokyo. It was a tiny place. During the day, he served coffee; at night, the club became a bar. Murakami closed up himself, arriving home as the sun was rising in the sky. It had never occurred to him to do

anything else, let alone write fiction. And then, it did.

This charming, sober little book tells the story of how, shortly after he embarked on a career as a novelist, Murakami was blindsided by an even unlikelier idea: to go for a run. One can understand his surprise. At the time, he was smoking sixty cigarettes a day. He had never been an athlete. But he was a solitary person, and before long, he was hooked.

Runners will find a kindred soul on these pages. Here is Everyman, hitting the pavement, falling into that peculiar mental void that opens up on a long jog. He endures the indignities of the sport, too. Completing his first marathon in Greece in midsummer, his sweat dries so fast, it leaves behind smears of salt. "When I lick my lips," he writes, "they taste like anchovy paste."

Since that race, Murakami has run a marathon every year without fail. "What I Talk About When I Talk about Running" skips around these races, circuitously filling out Murakami's thoughts on running as it links to writing—the two habits becoming a feedback loop. In this sense, the book provides a fascinating portrait of Murakami's working mind and how he works his magic on the page.

Since the early 1990s, with novels ("Dance Dance Dance") and stories ("The Elephant Vanishes"), he has been one of the world's most vibrant, spontaneous storytellers—a modern-day Kafka. Apparently, though, there is no magic to what he does. "Writing novels, to me, is basically a kind of manual labor," Murakami writes. "I have to pound the rock with a chisel and dig out a deep hole before I can locate the source of creativity." This droll little book reminds how he has pounded at that bedrock, one mile at a time. (John Freeman)

"What I Talk About When I Talk About Running: A Memoir" By Haruki Murakami Knopf, 192 pages, \$20

#### READINGS

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Elaine Szewczyk

The author discusses "I'm with Stupid." The Book Cellar, 4736 N. Lincoln, (773)293· 2665. 7pm. Free.

#### John Talbott

The author discusses "Obamanomics." Barbara's Bookstore, UIC, (312)222-0890. 7:30pm. Free.

### Josef Steiff & Contributors

Writers read their work from "Battlestar Gallactica and Philosophy." Women and Children First Bookstore, 5233 N. Clark, (773)769-9299. 7:30pm. Free.

FRI/8

Colleen Payne-Nabors

2665. 7pm. Free

The author reads from "I Did It My Way And...It Worked!" The Book Cellar, 4736 N. Lincoln, (773)293-

### Joanne Passet

The author discusses "Sex Variant Woman: The Life of Jeanette Howard Foster." Women and Children First Bookstore, 5233 N. Clark, (773)769-9299. 5pm. Free.

#### **Ryan Claytor**

The comic book artist discusses his selfpublished thesis on autobiographical comics. Quimby's, 1854 W. North, (773)342-0910. 7pm. Free.

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#### E. Lynn Harris

The author reads from "Just Too Good to Be True."

Barbara's Bookstore, Oak Park (212) 222-

Barbara's Bookstore, Oak Park, (312)222-0890. 2pm. Free.

-MON/11

#### Erick Lyle

The author reads from his new book, "On the Lower Frequencies: A Secret History of the City."

Quimby's, 1854 W. North, (773)342-0910.

Quimby's, 1854 W. North, (773)342-0910. 7pm. Free.

# NEWCITY



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# museums

#### MUSEUMS

**Chicago History Museum** 1601 N. Clark, (312)642-4600. CHICAGO: CROSSROADS OF AMERICA provides an examination of the city's history, exploring culture, economy, neighborhood development, and everything in between. Ongoing. OUT OF THE LOOP: NEIGHBOR-HOOD VOICES is a multimedia exhibition providing a unique view of Chicago during the last half of the twentieth century. Ongoing. CATHOLIC CHICAGO examines the history of the Catholic Church in Chicago. Nestled on the second floor of the Chicago History Museum, the "Catholic Chicago" exhibit graces with a superb twelve-foot painting of "Our Lady of Guadalupe," which was created on Mexican paper and done using gold leaf and pigmented dye. This large piece is flanked with an array of photos showing kids in Catholic school and finally footage from the International Eucharistic Congress of 1926-the first and largest pilgrimage event in America. Despite the airy feel of the building, these striking images alone could appear intimidating, particularly those not necessarily affiliated with the Catholicism. Despite this. expect to be greeted with an exhibit that intertwines the very roots of Chicago with the Catholic Church to a dizzying degreeócreating a very personable approach to a incredibly broad topic. "Catholic Chicago" goes beyond the common facts and pertinent Catholic local fig ures; instead, the exhibit once again attempts to engross the audience-going so far as to feature a short film on Catholic school in front of two school desks (from a real Catholic school mind you), and offers a replica of the church experience, complete with pews, altar and piped-in music from different services and congregations. Perhaps most telling is that the exhibit strives to exemplify the diverse notions of what it means to be Catholic by covering a number of denominations and cultures (there's an audio tour in both Spanish and Polish). Because of this widespread approach, "Catholic Chicago" is approachable by not only those who are themselves Catholic but really for anyone curious about both the religion and how it guides a person's way of life. (Thomas Barbee) Ongoing. Hours: Mon-Wed 9:30am-4:30pm, Thu 9:30-8pm, Fri-Sat 9:30-4:30pm, Sun noon-5pm. Fees: \$12; \$10 seniors 65+ and students 13-22 w/ID. Members and children under 12

#### Field Museum

free. Mon free.

1400 S. Lake Shore (at Roosevelt), (312)922-9410. → NATURE UNLEASHED. See Tip of the Week. Through Jan 4. CELE-BRATING WOMEN features multiple photographs by renowned photographer Paola Gianturco. Through Sep 7. MELTING ICE—A HOT TOPIC: ENVISIONING CHANGE. This small exhibit off the Field's main lobby is easy to walk past. "Melting Ice" occupies a sparse two-room alcove, darkly lit with the muted, cool tones of the arctic tundra. It's a "blink-and-you'll-missit" set-up, which is unfortunate, given the project's big, world-changing aspirations. Organized as part of the "Art of the Environment" initiative by the Natural World Museum and the United Nations Environment Program, the exhibit consists of twenty-three pieces from an international cast of artists. Using modern sculp ture, video installation, choreography and frank point-and-click photography, the exhibit documents the effects of climate change. Subject matter focuses on the arctic: endangered penguins in Antarctica,

Alaskan villages cobbled away by a rising sea, fresh water depletion and collapsing icebergs. Here and there are odd men out. such as Free Range Studios contribution: an idealistic, fictional documentary from fifty years in the future in which massive protests, bio-fuel and a laughable "Obama-McCain" ticket change the course of human history. Saturating the vibe of the entire exhibit is a driving urgency to fire up visitor's attitudes about global warming. This is art-meets-environmental activism, and one can't help but leave feeling invigorated with a renewed desire for change. (Laura Hawbaker) Through Sep 1. → MYTHIC CREATURES: DRAGONS, UNICORNS & MERMAIDS. This latest exhibit at the Field Museum should unleash the imagination of everyone who attends, as "Mythic Creatures: Dragons, Unicorns & Mermaids" delves into the realm of the relative unknown. The exhibit's divided into four sections: land, sea, air and dragons. Every room is beautifully crafted, with a quintessential creature recreated to match each room. In the sea themed room, the infamous Kraken, a gigantic sea monster that has been featured most recently in "The Pirate of the Caribbean" film series, appears to be coming from the floor of the exhibit room. with its serpentine tentacles winding up towards the ceiling. Mermaids are among the highlighted sea-oriented creatures, as the exhibit contrasts the numerous variations on the myths that range from the familiar to the relative unknown. In the aircreature section, a Roc greets the visitors with its seventeen-foot wingspan and equally massive talons: the room also takes a look at the egasus and a model of the Aepyornis. The latter is a now-extinct bird that was the largest to have ever lived, standing at more than ten feet tall. The kids also have an opportunity to create their own dragon using a touchscreen, if all the nifty models and short films aren't enough. With its wondrous layout, "Mythic Creatures" captures the imagination of all ages by not only making the unreal accessible, but also by allowing the same myths to take on a life of their own. (Thomas Barbee) Through Sep 1. Hours: Daily 9am-5pm. Fees: \$12 adults. \$7 children 4-11, \$7 students & seniors. With Chicago ID: \$10, \$6 children, \$7 students

Museum of Science and Industry

57th and Lake Shore, (773)684-1414.

SMART HOME: GREEN + WIRED. The Museum of Science and Industry's latest exhibit is a fully functioning three-story house, the "Smart Home," an ecologically sound building built on the foundation of material, energy and water efficiency. This is green living gone haywire. Museum guests are ushered through a twenty minute eye-opening (if somewhat rushed) tour of the house. Every aspect of the building is environmentally friendly, from the recycled construction material, to the organic food, to the to LED lights. An ethanol-burning fireplace. A "raw" wood kitchen table. And of course, in the garage, a hybrid car. The house is called "smart" for a reason. Even the house plants are clever. When a plant needs watering, a call is placed to your phone. That's right-your plant is calling to say it's thirsty. A black obelisk with blinking blue lights (that calls to mind HAL from "2001: A Space Odyssey") is the "brains and guts" of the "Smart Home"; it's an automated system that controls the heating, cooling and lighting of the entire house. A module of the house's network charts not only the amount of energy being used, but also the amount being produced. Guests are given a "Resource

Guide" which, like a shopping catalogue, details each gadget and piece of furniture, and where everything can be purchased. We all might not be able to live in technologically advanced, self-sustainable houses, but we can live green by bringing aspects of the "Smart Home" into our own. (Laura Hawbaker) Through Jan 4. →THE GLASS EXPERIENCE. Vases edged in filigree, windows like Japanese shoji screens, vibrant sculpture pods-one wouldn't expect an exhibit at the Museum of Science and Industry to feature galleries flaunting Tiffany lamps, Frank Lloyd Wright windows and a Chihuly Macchia sculpture garden, but "The Glass Experience" does just that. The exhibit celebrates the collaboration between glassblowing and science, a relationship in which the artisans of Venice and Murano jumpstart technological leaps forward in LCD and fiber optics. The scientific specifics are only touched on in favor of a more all-inclusive look at the glass world. The exhibit opens with a dark "Industry & Invention" bunker, which offers a hodge podge of glass facts: radioactive dishware, microscopes, windshields and witchglobes linked by one common thread-the material from which they're made. The "Invention" room offers tidbits and the various galleries present pretty things to look at, but what really makes "The Glass Experience" an event worth the trip comes near its end. Pathways gradually wind into larger spaces that culminate in two immense workshops peopled by real, live glass workers. Visitors can watch stained-glass artisans from the Botti Studio restore the Chicago Cultural Center's fragile, 120-year-old Tiffany Dome. Meanwhile, in-house master gaffers spinout glassblowing demonstrations during the Corning Hot Glass Show. The glassblowing show perfectly encapsulates the aim of "The Glass Experience" a hypnotic merging of art and science. (Laura Hawbaker) Through Sep 1. Hours: Mon-Sat 9:30am-5:30pm, Sun 11am-5:30pm. Fees: \$11, \$10 Chicago residents with ID; \$9.50 seniors 65+, \$8.75 city resi dents; \$7 children 3-11, \$6.25 city residents; children 3 and under & members free. Thu free. Omnimax, U-505 sub tour & CSI exhibit prices not included. Parking \$12 non-members

#### EVENTS

#### **Gold Coast Arts Fair**

The Gold Coast neighborhood hosts its fifty-first annual arts fair, with work from all over the country. 700 N. LaSalle, (847)795-1800. Fri-Sun.

#### **Korean Street Festival**

A celebration of Korean culture with food, drink and entertainment for all. Bryn Mawn and Kedzie, (773)583-1700. Sat 11am-10pm/Sun 11am-9pm. Free.

#### **Northalsted Market Days**

More than forty musical acts on three stages, arts and crafts and a variety of foods are just a handful of things to be found at this popular annual street fest. Halsted between Belmont and Addison, (773)868-3010. Sat-Sun. \$5.

#### Taylor Street Festa Italiana

Featuring Italian street performers, food from restaurants in the area and, of course, wine. Taylor between Loomis and Ashland, (847)795-1800. Fri-Sun. \$10. TIP OF THE WEEK
NATURE UNLEASHED



The Field Museum's "Nature Unleashed" opens with a tree cracked in half and stripped of bark. It is just one of many extraordinary visuals from the planet's most destructive natural phenomenon: earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, hurricanes and tornados. The exhibit juxtaposes Earth's callous meteorological and seismic forces with the poignant human stories affected by its disasters. Visuals mimic the colossal power of nature while smaller artifacts, such as handwritten letters from Hurricane Katrina survivors, tug at heartstrings. The recorded sounds of seismic activity (alien-like pops and scrapes) lend the space an omnipresent sense of doom, as if at any moment the floor might rupture. The exhibit's most impressive offering is the invention of stormchaser Tim Samaras, a digital recording device which allows guests to stand in a 360-degree video-viewing area that places them in an approaching tornado's path. For several heart-stopping seconds, visitors are encircled by the eye of the storm. (Laura Hawbaker)

"Nature Unleashed: Inside Natural Disasters" shows at the Field Museum, 1400 South Lake Shore, (312)665-7683, through January 4, 2009.