

resto



REQUIEM FOR A BUTCHER,  
A HOOCH MAKER, A GRANDFATHER

The Sausage Maker

By Michael Nagrant

I IMAGINED THE UNBURDENING WOULD COME MUCH LATER; a slow uncoiling where memories like ethereal tendrils eventually roiled around and invaded my indifference. But, the literal heft of death unraveled the protective order of my subconscious sooner. For the weight of bearing a pall-draped twenty-gauge steel casket and the body of my grandfather was much heavier than I expected.

For ninety years, Alexander Maziarz was the embodiment of the stoic patriarch. He was the cornerstone, a cheerleader, the doting grandparent, the inspirer. He lived through WWII and endured the communism that befell Poland in its wake. In emigrating from Poland he gave up a convenient life as a successful manager of a commercial dairy for wrist-wrenching servitude as an assembly-line butcher to better life for his family in America. And, of all my grandparents, my mother’s father, Alexander Maziarz, was my favorite.

Though he spoke little English, our currency toward intimacy was sports and food. Sometimes, it was sports alone, the exchange of grunts and curses while watching the once and still hapless Detroit Lions on a rabbit-eared console-style Zenith tank of a tube TV that always bore terrible reception. Thankfully we had the Red Wings, the grace of their mid-nineties Stanley Cup wins to balance us out, and my grandfather’s faithful questioning Polish-accented refrain, “Vings gud, no?”

Sometimes we spoke through sports and food. On June 10, 1983, he took me to my first baseball game, the Detroit Tigers vs. the Cleveland Indians. I remember the wide-eyed moment of emerging through a narrow tunnel and out to the verdant expanse of grass and an azure sea of plastic seats. But, what I remember most were the hot dogs.

My grandfather was a sausage maker for Kowalski Sausage Co. in Hamtramck and the trip to the ballpark was a company-sponsored outing. Before we boarded a bus bound for the corner of Michigan and Trumbull, there was a pre-party in the company parking lot where he handed me my first Kowalski dog, a pink charred number with a natural casing full of sputter and sizzle. In that moment, the relationship between hot dogs and baseball transformed from an abstract American cultural phenomenon to a personal obsession. Every bite of a Best’s Kosher at US Cellular Field since, as well as the adoration of snappy Vienna at temples like Hot Doug’s and Jimmy’s, was an attempt to revel again in that moment.

Mostly, though, my grandfather spoke to me through food alone. As a butcher, he made plenty of homemade kielbasa, dense thick porn-worthy wrinkled links full of chunky bits of white fat and god knows what else. They were terrifying, and yet, when my mother sliced off rounds, fried them and sandwiched them between grilled cheese, the sausage became a surefire dose of culinary comfort.

Though they’re not nearly as garlicky, at least one afternoon a month I hunker down in my car and listen to the roar of cars fording the Kennedy Expressway while I chomp on a Maxwell Street Polish from Jim’s Original. I perform this ritual in the hope that as a Detroider who’s fallen madly in love with this city, a consistent diet of Polish sausage from a legendary stand will somehow get me closer to being a real Chicagoan, but mostly because it keeps me close to my grandfather.

When we weren’t chowing on sausage, my cousins and I were filching swigs of his homemade spirits stash. The firewater, a blend of Spirytus or 190-proof clear spirits, that I often bought him at Binny’s, and fruit from the trees in his backyard muddled in Mason jars, would knock Muhammad Ali on his dupa (ass).

If hooch was his, pierogis or Polish dumplings were the domain of my grandmother. When she died (September 11, 2001 no less), my grandfather started making them for us. In between the time she passed away and the moment he picked up the dumpling vocation, I searched Chicago for a substitute, and found the blueberry pierogi at Smak Tak to be the best approximation. For various reasons, both objective and nostalgic, they were never quite as good, but it seems, once again, they’ll have to suffice.

Because my grandfather loved the carbohydrate comfort of his European childhood, he was a sturdy man, never fat, but always solid, and why ten or fifteen years ago, his casket would have been a monster to bear. The ravages of an ailing heart and the death of his wife, however, had wittled him down, and so while carrying him away was difficult, it was easier in the literal sense.

And after we did, we retired to his house after the wake to reminisce, and inevitably to claim a piece of memory, if that was even possible, through some of his possessions. I inherited his sausage maker, his cheese grater and his champagne coupes. The goldmine, however, was in the basement, a past season’s worth of his pickled and preserved fruit and vegetables. I grabbed a trove of the dill pickles, a bounty more garlicky than his sausages. As I write this, I anticipate crunching on them in the weeks to come. It seems, even in death, he’s once again found a way to speak to me, to soothe, and wouldn’t you know it, he did it through food.

clubs

TIP OF THE WEEK  
SHIT ROBOT



With a moniker like Shit Robot, perhaps DFA’s Marcus Lambkin doesn’t take himself too seriously. That would at least explain why dance-floor denizens hungry for his distinctively wonky tracks have had so little to chew on since getting a whiff of the danceable chaos of “Wrong Galaxy” or his remix of Dondolo’s “Dragon” in 2006. Shit Robot would release the “Chaos” single in 2007, which seemed to lean more towards the manic mutant disco of Emperor Machine, before releasing “Simple Things (Work it Out)” earlier this year—a subversively restrained number with humorous vocals, strains of classic NYC piano house and, of course, DFA-approved handclaps. Tonight, Shit Robot will be DJing, and while we haven’t had a chance to catch his sets before, we’re pretty sure you can expect to hear selections from the likes of Crazy Penis, Chicken Lips and Bangkok Impact—in other words, smoothed-out beats with just the right amount of wrong to keep it lively. Go Bang! resident Jordan Z opens, and Philly’s Tigersapien also performs live. (Duke Shin)

Shit Robot performs October 23 at Sonotheque, 1444 West Chicago, at 9pm.

→ One Night Stand: Black Holes, Diamonds, Bald Eagle, Kid Color, Willy Joy, Skyler, Team Bayside High Metro, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 11:30pm. \$6.

→ Shit Robot Tigersapien, Jordan Z See Tip of the Week. Sonotheque, 1444 W. Chicago, (312)226-7600. 9pm. \$10, free with RSVP.

= NEW  
Ben Watt/Smart Bar  
Distance/Smart Bar  
Lake Street Collective/Darkroom  
Michael Serafini/Lava  
Shit Robot/Sonotheque

→ =RECOMMENDED  
Selected club listings and previews appear below. To submit listings email [musical@newcity.com](mailto:musical@newcity.com); listings must be received two weeks prior to the publication date for the issue in which you want them to appear. We do not guarantee that all submitted listings will appear in print. For expanded coverage, visit [music.newcity.com](http://music.newcity.com).

THU/22

→ Distance Jeff Pietro, DJGC, Tranzformer Big Bass Thursdays continues the dubstep onslaught by welcoming South London producer, DJ and label owner Distance. The revered Planet Mu label is home to his critically acclaimed singles and albums, but his Chestplates imprint is stepping up the game, offering the style for which he’s best known: dark, brooding elegance fused with less wobble and more fright. With guest spots from genre headliners Skream and Benga, Distance and Chestplates are names to watch indeed. After a slew of hip-hop and dance-floor-aimed DJs, this Big Bass show promises a welcome shock to the system for dubstep fans. (John Alex Colon) Smart Bar, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 10pm-4am. \$10.

→ God’s Girls With Team Bayside High and Clayton Hauck. Sonotheque, 1444 W. Chicago, (312)226-7600. 9pm-2am.

Vintage Thursdays Featuring DJ Victor R and DJ Nathan Scott. Spy Bar, 646 N. Franklin, (312)337-2191. 11pm-4am.

FRI/23

→ Green Velvet, DJ Nique, Brian Heath, Nathan Zahn Smart Bar, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 10pm-4am. \$15.

→ Lake Street Collective Incubated in the warmth of underground loft parties, the Lake Street Collective makes another visit to the crimson-lit confines of Darkroom, where a mere \$5 after 11pm gets you a live dose of dubby rhythms and organic breaks from Elev8tor, along with DJ sets from Shifty Johnson, DJ Striz, Adrienne Sanchez and DJ 8 that are likely to go from nice to nasty. Elev8tor sports a trio of seasoned musicians on drums, bass and keyboards and loops to lay down enough funk to keep it moving, but with enough variety to avoid the Velveeta factor that seems to threaten any live band dealing in funk. Darkroom always seems like a comfortable place to hang, whether you’re lounging or dancing. Add in a good Friday night jam of varied homegrown thump for the dollar... give thanks to Revolutionary Music and ilmeasures for looking out for both ear and wallet! (Duke Shin) Darkroom, 2210 W. Chicago, (773)276-1411, at 10pm.

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# clubs (cont.)

5 SHOWS TO SEE NOW

1

## SHIT ROBOT

(Sonotheque)

The work of Marcus Lambkin

October 23

2

## BEN WATT

(Smart Bar)

Everything but Everything But the Girl

October 24

3

## DISTANCE

(Smart Bar)

Dubstep onslaught

October 22

4

## MICHAEL SERAFINI

(Lava)

Mr. Gramophone

October 25

5

## LAKE STREET COLLECTIVE

(Darkroom)

Elev8tor, Shifty Johnson, DJ Striz and more

October 23

SAT/24

### → Ben Watt Brad Owen

After all these years, Ben Watt is still best known as the beat-wizard behind the angelic voice of Tracey Thorn in Everything But The Girl. But Watt's life after EBTG has been dedicated to the art of DJing, be it by setting up a great label in Buzzin' Fly, producing hit tracks like "Pop A Cap In Yo Ass" and "Lone Cat," or touring the world performing—you know, when he's not publishing memoirs about his life and battle with a rare life-threatening autoimmune disease ("Patient," published in 1996 by Penguin) or breaking artists like The Libertines at one of the London clubs he co-owns. So yeah, forget all that, for tonight he's just spinning records. As a DJ, he possesses a deep soul and affinity for happy, thumpin' house—much like his earlier productions. Although he hasn't released much in the last couple years, his

last visits to Chicago showcased a newer, tech-influenced direction, apparent in his more recent productions. Watt has managed to use his passion for music to stay relevant, as Buzzin' Fly has helped break newer talent worldwide, like San Francisco's Justin Martin, and French deep innovators Manoo & Francois A. Supporting Watt on the decks tonight is Brad Owen, who also knows a thing or three about house music, be it deep and thumpin, or twisted and techy. (Duke Shin) Smart Bar, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 10pm-5am. \$15.

### → Hideout Dance Party!

When the bands finish playing, a dance party begins every Saturday late night. Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia, (773)227-4433. 11:30pm-3am. \$5.

SUN/25

### → DJ Chester, Bunny Riot, bOY13, eeks

Smart Bar, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 10pm. Free.

### → Michael Serafini

A longtime Chicago favorite behind the decks, Michael Serafini is capable of a frenzied dance floor or a relaxed lounge affair, sometimes in the same evening. As honcho at Gramophone and a resident at the legendary Boom Boom Room event, there's little question of his ear for quality house music. Julio Bishop developed his sound over years as a DJ with Chicago's venerable Soul Foundation crew and now applies his able ear as co-owner of RealDEEP Recordings. His sets blend stomping kickdrums, vibrant basslines and sultry vocal samples. Supported by Droopy's tech-house skills, this Detox session at Lava looks like a winner. (John Alex Colon) Lava, 1270 N. Milwaukee, (773)342-5282, at 9pm.

### → Uprising: DJ Zebo, DJ Major Taylor, DJ Blackish

With resident Papa G and weekly special guests. \$3 PBR, \$5 Red Stripe. Sonotheque, 1444 W. Chicago, (312)226-7600. 10pm-2am. No cover.

MON/26

### → Boom Boom Room

House music all night long at the city's longest running club night. With residents Michael Serafini, Diz, JustJoey, Uncle Milt and special guests. Green Dolphin Street, 2200 N. Ashland, (773)395-0066. 9pm-4am. Rsvp to rsvp@boomboomroomchicago.com.

### → Rehab

This new weekly features resident DJs Jordan Z, Derek Berry and Jimmy O. Expect electro-sleaze beats, along with indie, new wave and dance rock with a synth-beat shine. \$1 PBR's, \$3 shots. Svedka open bar from 10-11pm. Debonair Social Club, 1575 N. Milwaukee. 10pm-4am. No cover.

WED/28

### → Stephen P, Tyrel Williams, Blue J, Julian Pena, Michael Serafini

Smart Bar, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 10pm. Free.

# music

TIP OF THE WEEK

DAVID BAZAN



With his work in Pedro the Lion, David Bazan struggled with his religious faith as he told fictional story after fictional story of sin, regret, pain and, sometimes, hope. Some of those records—namely “Winners Never Quit” and “Control”—rank as a couple of my favorites of the decade. With Pedro now defunct, Bazan embarks under his own name with “Curse Your Branches,” and his songwriting style moves towards the autobiographical. He calls the new method “a new way, a different way, a more grown-up, more serious kind of way,” and while his past work was certainly serious, this record—rife with tales of addiction, confusion and uncertainty, is often devastating. But Bazan is a skilled craftsman who's developed over time, and while “Curse Your Branches” doesn't feature too much musically that goes beyond what he accomplished in Pedro the Lion, you can immediately tell this is a step forward. It just feels different. “I suppose I do have more freedom,” Bazan says of his career now. “I was the only one that was making things rigid before. I didn't have any pressure from anyone else. I was definitely a dictator. Maybe when you grow older, maybe you take things a little less seriously. That might be a factor.” Can you simultaneously write “more serious” music and “take yourself a little less seriously”? Well, “Curse Your Branches” is a success. (Tom Lynch)

David Bazan plays October 24 at Lincoln Hall, 2424 North Lincoln, at 10:30pm.

### = NEW

Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Symphony Center  
David Bazan/Lincoln Hall  
Lucero/Bottom Lounge  
The Raveonettes/Metro  
Royal Bangs/Schubas  
Steve Martin/Cadillac Palace Theatre



### =RECOMMENDED

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### MUSIC

THU/22

### POP & ROCK

Elephant Gun, Meah!, Wounded Roots, Animal City, Reddelicious  
Ronny's Bar, 2103 N. California. 8pm.

The Get Up Kids, Kevin Devine, The Life and Times

Metro, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 9pm. \$23-\$26.

Kittie, Soil, Arkaea, Straight Line Stitch

Double Door, 1572 N. Milwaukee, (773)489-3160. 9pm. \$15.

Kraak & Smaak, Fort Knox Five  
Subterranean, 2011 W. North, (773)278-6600. 9pm. \$15.

Lake, Karl Blau, Cains & Abels  
Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, (773)525-2508. 9pm. \$8.

Lionlimb, The Summer Pledge, Birds and Arrows

Quenchers, 2401 N. Western, (773)276-9730. 9pm. \$5.

Samantha Crain & The Midnight Shivers, Cameron McGill & What Army, The Lost Cartographers

Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, (773)276-3600. 9:30pm. \$8.

### BLUEGRASS

### → Steve Martin

Man, I wish I could be so wildly successful at comedy that when I'm 64, I can say, “You know, I'm tired of stand-up. I think I'll go on a banjo/bluegrass tour,” and only not can I embark on such a tour as specifically quirky as the banjo-picking kind, but I can go play freaking Carnegie Hall. Such is the state of Steve Martin's career as he rolls into town with the acoustic bluegrass quintet Steep Canyon Rangers. Martin's been plucking away since the seventies, but back then the banjo was usually a

prop to his zany, whimsical stand-up. These days, Martin has made it clear that bluegrass is a serious artform and ambition for him, but that will surely not keep the former Three Amigo/Father of the bride/Sgt. Bilko from throwing in a bunch of jokes in between songs (can “King Tut” be performed bluegrass?). As for his banjo skills, Martin's no chump, making him one of the few performers who can cross into another medium and not embarrass themselves, which a pretty impressive feat, at least until Paul McCartney takes a stab at a stand-up career. (Andy Seifert) Cadillac Palace Theatre, 151 West Randolph, (312)902-1400.

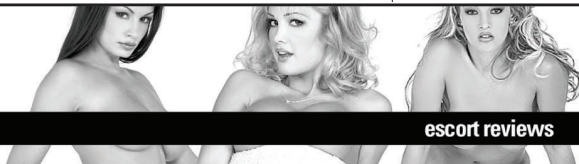
### CLASSICAL

### → Chicago Symphony Orchestra Muti conducts Brahms

Keeping up with Riccardo Muti while he has been in town these two weeks has not been an easy task: not only has he been rehearsing the orchestra, conducting concerts and already holding auditions, but he charmed CSO trustees, the media, the public at large, even the mayor. The big discussion with the mayor was about “Chicago pizza,” which Muti admits he likes, despite it being “forty times thicker” than what his native Neapolitans, whom he insists invented the dish, would call pizza. “Thirty years ago in Germany I found that it was very easy to make music there, but you couldn't eat there: there was no olive oil in the entire country.” As to why Muti picked Chicago over New York, which had courted him for years: “Every place makes the claim that theirs is the best orchestra in the world. It turns out that Chicago is right and the rest are lying. Saying ‘yes’ to leading an orchestra is much like becoming involved with a beautiful lady: yes, you could have a ‘fling,’ but sometimes you meet one that is so interesting, so fascinating, that you want to share your intellect and bond much more deeply.” Muti finds Chicago a “very clean city,” hardly surprising since the centuries-old tradition of Naples is to toss garbage out the window. Muti wants to expand the audience of the CSO to the community at large, to neighborhoods, even prisons. “We who have so much must give back to the community.” Muti especially wants to reach out to the young, “not just the ones from rich families, the joy of feeling the music.” At his first subscription concert last week, the coughing and hacking was so loud as he began the hush of the Bruckner Second Symphony that Muti abruptly stopped and began again. Performing the same piece for a younger crowd at a free performance Saturday afternoon, he complimented the audience after the piece on how attentive it had been. “We feel that deeply,” he said, “and it completes our performance. It is a mark of culture and civilization.” This week, Muti will conduct the Brahms “A German Requiem,” a piece for vocalists (soprano Elin Rombo and baritone Russell Braun) orchestra and chorus that will play to his strengths as the longtime former director of

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NICOLE ATKINS AND LIGHTS  
HIT SUBTERRANEAN

Night and Day

By Tom Lynch

TWO VERY DIFFERENT FEMALE ARTISTS come to Subterranean this week, one a young popster who plays a keytar, the other a soulful, folky crooner who’s drawn comparisons to Roy Orbison.

The Canadian LIGHTS, born Valerie Poxleitner, a 22-year-old Juno Award-winner, plays a remarkably catchy brand of new wave synth-pop that’s as mainstream as Kylie Minogue or Kelly Clarkson, and yet, the songwriter embarked on the Warped Tour this summer and has just enough quirks to appeal to an underground audience as well. Her name has been legally changed to LIGHTS, after all.

Her debut full-length, titled “The Listening,” features enough hooks to kill a small animal, and while it’s certainly overproduced, the heavy electronics recall the bouncier moments of M83 records. LIGHTS has mentioned influences ranging from Bjork to Phil Collins, and it comes through—she’s a songstress, but also an entertainer, and can’t afford to bore. The high energy is cosmic and otherworldly at times, to a degree that’s nearly confounding. It doesn’t help that LIGHTS looks like one of those beauty queen reality-show teens that cameras follow around twenty four hours a day.

“I love playing there, oh my goodness, it kind of reminds me of Toronto,” she says of Chicago. She talks nine-million-miles-an-hour. “It’s a big city but feels like a small town. I remember going to a cool comic-book store when I was there. It was fantastic.”

The young artist is truly the brains behind her material—no team of ghostwriters here—which is impressive considering the often odd constructions of some of her songs. “It was an organic, really natural situation,” LIGHTS says of putting the album together. “I didn’t have an end in sight when I was creating it, I was just gonna write music, and [I felt] I had what I needed [to do so].”

The keytar is certainly a visual distraction. You can’t not ask about it. “You know, the keytar is a real fine line,” she says. “It’s a novelty, it’s gimmicky. But if it’s done right and played with grace, it will shine for its practical qualities. I’m able, as a keyboard player, to be more portable. That’s the sole reason I play it. But I’m careful to minimize the spotlight on the keytar.”

Nicole Atkins’ 2007 record, “Neptune City,” is as much a tribute to New Jersey roots as any early Bruce Springsteen, less epic maybe, but just as insightful. Atkins finds an unsettling balance between lovely melody and haunting, mysterious darkness—her “The Way It Is” is as creepy as it is pretty, big and bold but boasting verses that hide in the shadows. Atkins’ music, helped by her band The Black Sea, is theatrical, circus-like. It’s nighttime sound, and her voice will keep you up at late hours.

“It’s more informed by the landscape,” Atkins says of how her New Jersey home affects her songwriting. “I grew up in an eerie, desolate river town, with the sounds of buoys and birds and wind chimes, with the wind whistling through windows. In wintertime everybody leaves, and I romanticize that, the isolation of the town in wintertime, to make me actually enjoy being in it.”

Atkins receives comparisons of wild variation, and I wonder how she reacts to such disparate perceived similarities. “At least some of them,” she says, “I’m like ‘Holy crap, sure, awesome.’ I don’t mind it when it’s Roy Orbison or Loretta Lynn. Some of the more contemporary stuff, like Jenny Lewis...I sound nothing like her. We both have bands, that’s about it. There are elements of her voice that I wish I had—a clear, high register—but I don’t have any high register. But yeah, maybe I sound like Jenny Lewis if you threw her into a swamp.”

Atkins has made appearances on Letterman, Jool’s Holland and commercials for Old Navy and American Express. She’s comfortable with the exposure. “It’s pretty surreal, but also a dream come true,” she says. “I hope I can keep it up. Any reason to get dressed up and have someone do your hair—hell yes. When I was young, I was a very dramatic kid. I would answer the door covered in a blanket for the mailman and pretend to be Marilyn Monroe. I would interview myself in the mirror when I was 9. I always liked entertaining people.”

Nicole Atkins & The Black Sea plays October 24 and LIGHTS plays October 28 at Subterranean, 2011 West North, (773)278-6600.

La Scala. If last year’s Verdi “Requiem” is any indication, this is a “don’t-miss” concert and the last opportunity to hear Muti before he officially becomes music director next fall. (Dennis Polkow) Orchestra Hall at Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan, (312)294-3000. 8pm. Also Oct 23-24, 8pm, Oct 27 7:30pm.

FRI/23

POP & ROCK

The Airborne Toxic Event, The Henry Clay People, Red Cortez Metro, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 7:30pm. \$17.50.

The Disciplines, Scott Lucas & The Married Men, Tafka Vince and the Nuclear Power Plants Subterranean, 2011 W. North, (773)278-6600. 9:30pm. \$10-\$14.

→The Royal Bangs Drummer

The Knoxville, Tennessee alt-rock group is finally poised to hit the big time after years of doing it by themselves. Thanks to an arrangement with record label Audio Eagle (which released their their third disc, “Let it Bleep”), they can now afford luxuries like a booking agent and a publicist—something they couldn’t even think about when they first went on tour in support of 2007’s “We Breed Champions.” Back then, they had to do everything on their own—a thankless task young musicians have to go through as they pay their dues. Newly focused solely on making music, the quintet formed by Ryan Schaefer (vocals, keyboards, beats), Henry Gibson (bass), Chris Rusk (drums), Brandon Biondo and Sam Stratton (guitars) came up with a solid album that features a cohesive mix of electronica, garage rock and other tendencies. Schaefer’s vocals scream over the instrumentation effectively, while the guitars give the music the kind of texture the Rolling Stones would have had they appeared during the twenty-first century. This is certainly a group to keep your eyes and ears open to in the coming decade. (Ernest Barteldes) Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, (773)525-2508. 10:30pm. \$12

Ludo, Ha Ha Tonka, Meese, Without a Face Bottom Lounge, 1375 W. Lake, (312)929-2022. 6pm.

Off With Their Heads, The Copyrights, Smalltown, Le Plebe, The Reaganomics Beat Kitchen, 2100 W. Belmont, (773)281-4444. 9pm. \$8.

Pretty Lights, Dark Party Park West, 322 W. Armitage, (773)929-5959. 8pm.

Thin Hymns, Horns of Happiness, Dan Mohr Ronny’s Bar, 2103 N. California. 9pm.

Venetian Snares, Wisp, Surachai Reggie’s Rock Club, 2105 S. State, (312)949-0120. 9pm.

Welcome to Ashley, Hallelujah the Hills, Soft Speaker Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, (773)276-3600. 10pm. \$8.

Will Hoge, Andrew Ripp, Jerome Holloway Double Door, 1572 N. Milwaukee, (773)489-3160. 8pm. \$15.

BLUES

Lonie Walker & Her Big Bad Ass Company Band Underground Wonder Bar, 10 E. Walton, (312)266-7761. 8pm.

SAT/24

POP & ROCK

The 69 Eyes, Dommin, The Becoming Reggie’s Rock Club, 2105 S. State, (312)949-0120. 6pm.

Blues Control, Michael Columbia, Axis:sovA Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, (773)276-3600. 7pm. \$3-\$8.

→David Bazan

Say Hi See Tip of the Week. Lincoln Hall, 2424 N. Lincoln. 10:30pm.

Horse in the Sea, Venna, Kevin Andrew Prchal Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, (773)525-2508. 10pm. \$5-\$8.

Karl Densons Tiny Universe, Lubriphonic Double Door, 1572 N. Milwaukee, (773)489-3160. 9pm. \$25.

The Lawrence Arms, The Menzingers, La Plebe, Mike Park Metro, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 6pm. \$16.

→Lucero

Amy Lavere, Cedric Burnside & Lightnin’ Malcolm Combine punk and country? Dude, can’t be done! Those are just two diametrically opposed genres—it’s like mixing oil and water, right? Well, Memphis sextet Lucero set off to prove me wrong back in 2001, and the results were pretty solid—a seamless blend of alt-country’s riffs with punk-rock’s sloppy guitar and scratchy vocals. Nowadays, Lucero has cleaned up and refined its sound, as the band’s newest, “1372 Overton Park,” reflects an act that has evolved over six albums and is now a suspicious duplicate of The Hold Steady (if

EVERYONE’S GOT AN OPINION

“Harmony was a capitalist plot to sell pianos!”

-THE COMPOSER

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# music (cont.)



PASSING THE BATON AT THE CHICAGO SYMPHONY, WITH HOLES

## Leapfrog Maestro

THE HISTORY OF THE CHICAGO Symphony Orchestra is one that, like Swiss cheese, is full of holes. Founder Theodore Thomas usually gets his due, as does his longtime successor Frederick Stock. From there, however, the history gets hazy and even those with a passing knowledge of it often skip three music directors to Fritz Reiner, who made pioneering stereo recordings with the Orchestra that have yet to be surpassed, and then another skip of a music directorship altogether to Sir Georg Solti, who not only won more Grammy Awards than any other artist (thirty-two), but who was the first to take the CSO around the world and cement its reputation as “sine qua non” as Time magazine so famously labeled it in a cover story on the Solti-Chicago phenomenon. With nearly a year before Italian conductor Riccardo Muti officially becomes the CSO’s tenth music director in its nearly 120-year history, another clear gap is emerging in the CSO story: from Solti to Muti, skipping over the fourteen-year controversial tenure of Daniel Barenboim.

At the CSO’s annual meeting last week—to which so much media and special guests had been invited that the meeting was uncharacteristically held in the hall itself—a dapper Muti appeared to a loud ovation with Lady Valerie Solti, widow of Sir Georg, on his arm. “Solti made this orchestra, a great orchestra, even greater than it was before.” said Muti. “We are all beneficiaries of what he did,” Muti continued, as if Barenboim, who had hired a third of the orchestra that Muti will inherit, had never existed.

Meeting with the press, including some that had covered her husband during his 1969-1991 tenure as CSO music director, Lady Solti virtually offered as close to an anointing of Muti by the late Sir Georg as is possible: “I am so delighted that Maestro Muti is coming here,” she said. “He is a wonderful musician and I know my husband would be pleased at what fine hands his orchestra is now in,” she offered. “Both of them are of the old school. My husband was an assistant to Toscanini as was Maestro Muti’s teacher, and both began by coaching singers, the best possible preparation for conducting.” Again, this was hardly the trajectory that Barenboim, a child piano prodigy who began adding conducting to his resume, had taken.

Since Muti had only conducted the CSO once during the entire Solti era, I wondered aloud how close the two had actually been. “Obviously, I was an admirer of his long before we ever met,” Muti responded, “and we did meet several times, and I was once a guest at his [summer] home in Tuscany,” he said, looking to Lady Solti, who nodded affirmingly. “He was a brilliant person, full of humor. We had many similar ideas about music. And of course, I was a huge admirer of his music making: everybody knows Solti Wagner is wonderful,” said the longtime former La Scala music director, “but I also particularly admired his Verdi, which is the highest compliment I could give him, since this is ‘our territory.’”

Lady Solti and Muti also announced the Solti Conducting Competition, which will allow winners to study conducting with Muti in Chicago and will emphasize the musicianship and skills that both feel are becoming an endangered species today. “There was a time when conductors studied music,” Muti mused during a “Town Hall Meeting” after a free Saturday afternoon concert with the CSO, “composition, counterpoint, orchestration, how to sight-read a full score at the piano, but today, they only study conducting.” At the annual meeting, Muti had been more explicit: “I could show anyone in this room how to wave a stick during a piece of music in five minutes,” proceeding to demonstrate the primary set of hand motions for pieces in three and four to uproarious laughter. “Seriously,” Muti continued, “I could show anyone here how to conduct an entire Schubert ‘Unfinished’ Symphony in eighteen minutes, twenty-five if you are not feeling well. To conduct is not a problem; to be able to *make music*, now this is a problem.” (Dennis Polkow)

Craig Finn had a pretty rough cold). But there are worse things to emulate than a band that emulates Bruce Springsteen, and Lucero should still appeal to anyone who gets off on loud, rambunctious horns section and a lot of tattoos. Plus, I think we’re all suckers for songs drenched in organs, trombones and whiskey anyway. (Andy Seifert) Bottom Lounge, 1375 W. Lake, (312)929-2022. 8pm.

### → Nicole Atkins & The Black Sea Rego, Ceiling Stars

See Feature. Subterranean, 2011 W. North, (773)278-6600. 9:30pm. \$12.

Rise and Fall, Cross Examination, Harm’s Way, Creatures, Duress Beat Kitchen, 2100 W. Belmont, (773)281-4444. 5:30pm. \$10.

Shopping Ronny’s Bar, 2103 N. California. 9pm.

Todd Hembrock & The Hemispheres Beat Kitchen, 2100 W. Belmont, (773)281-4444. 10:30pm. \$10.

→ You Weren’t There Party: Silver Abuse, Tutu & The Pirates, Wes & Brian Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, (773)276-3600. 10:30pm. \$10.

### BLUES

Lonie Walker & Her Big Bad Ass Company Band, Sarah and the Tall Boys Underground Wonder Bar, 10 E. Walton, (312)266-7761. 8pm.

### SUN/25

### POP & ROCK

Hurricane Reggae Band, Insane Plantains, Bifunkal Underground Wonder Bar, 10 E. Walton, (312)266-7761. 8pm.

→ The Raveonettes The Black Angels, Violent Soho The idea behind The Raveonettes—the merging of 1960s Phil Spector pop with late-1980s shoegaze—was obviously natural. Of course, take the principles of production within the Wall of Sound (mainly, to drown out things with reverb), then syn-ergize them with the principles of shoegaze (mainly, to obliterate things with distortion) and the dual harmonies of the Everly Brothers. Bang! So long as a girl is singing, you’ve got gold. Thankfully, Sune Rose Wagner and Sharin Foo have not tinkered with the fundamentals of their existence for their newest record, “In and Out of Control,” the fourth such album to feature grimy instrumentation and seductive, layered vocals, the musical equivalent of some Scandinavian beauty riding through a beach on a motorcycle. I sometimes wonder—since I dig the shoegaze distortion and pretty much worship surf pop—why the Danish duo isn’t one of my favorite bands, and I can only conclude that either A) the songwriting is a little too cheeky, or B) music from Denmark can never be transcendent (sorry Mew and Lars Ulrich!). Nevertheless, The Raveonettes have indisputably emerged as dependable, premiere pop-makers, and this new album might be the catchiest, most streamlined thing they’ve done yet. (Andy Seifert) Metro, 3730 N. Clark, (773)549-0203. 8pm. \$18.

### MON/26

### POP & ROCK

→ Atlas Sound, Broadcast, The Selmanaires Bottom Lounge, 1375 W. Lake, (312)929-2022. 8pm.

→ Ingrid Michaelson, Matthew Perryman Jones Park West, 322 W. Armitage, (773)929-5959. 7:30pm.

John Jones, Double Shott, Jen Porter, Open Mic w/ Joanna Woods Underground Wonder Bar, 10 E. Walton, (312)266-7761. 9pm.

→ A Place to Bury Strangers, Dead Confederate, All the Saints Double Door, 1572 N. Milwaukee, (773)489-3160. 9pm. \$12.

### TUE/27

### POP & ROCK

Miley Cyrus United Center, 1901 W. Madison, (312)559-1212. 7pm. \$39.50-\$79.50.

The Runnies, Jack of Heart, Dumpster Babies Ronny’s Bar, 2103 N. California. 9pm.

Saul Williams, Hollywood Holt, Krak Attack Double Door, 1572 N. Milwaukee, (773)489-3160. 9pm. \$20.

Still Flyin’, Magical Beautiful, We Were Lovers Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, (773)525-2508. 9pm. \$8.

→ Tim Kinsella, Postcards, 1894, Ian Hatcher Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, (773)276-3600. 9:30pm. \$3-\$5.

### WORLD MUSIC

Israel Lozano, Ignacio Prego Instituto Cervantes, 31 W Ohio, 6:30pm.

### WED/28

### POP & ROCK

Death Before Dishonor, Steel Nation, Run With The Hunted, Doomhammer, Man Made Hell Beat Kitchen, 2100 W. Belmont, (773)281-4444. 6pm. \$8-\$10.

Factums, Bloodyminded, Zola Jesus, Radar Eyes, Is & Vertonen Empty Bottle, 1035 N. Western, (773)276-3600. 9:30pm. \$5-\$8.

The Gaslight Anthem, Murder By Death, The Loved Ones, The Measure Double Door, 1572 N. Milwaukee, (773)489-3160. 8pm. \$20.

Hanalei, Ghost in the Graveyard, The Damn Choir Ronny’s Bar, 2103 N. California. 9pm.

→ Lights The Stars of Track and Field, Deanna Devore See Feature. Subterranean, 2011 W. North, (773)278-6600. 9pm. \$12.

Mae, Deas Vail, Jenny Owen Youngs, Facing Forward Reggie’s Rock Club, 2105 S. State, (312)949-0120. 6pm.

### 5 SHOWS TO SEE NOW

## 1

NICOLE ATKINS (Subterranean)

The isolation of wintertime Jersey October 24

## 2

LIGHTS (Subterranean)

Toronto synth-pop...with a keytar! October 28

## 3

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (Symphony Center)

Muti conducts Brahms October 22-24 & 27

## 4

DAVID BAZAN (Lincoln Hall)

Ex-Pedro the Lion gets personal October 24

## 5

THE RAVEONETTES (Metro)

Shoegaze Spector? October 25

→ Mum, Sing Fang Bous, Hildur Guonadottir Logan Square Auditorium, 2539 N. Kedzie, (773)509-5019. 8pm. \$15-\$18.

Osso, DM Stith Schubas, 3159 N. Southport, (773)525-2508. 9pm. \$15.

Steakhouse Mints, Rich Pagano & The Sugarcane Cups, Scale Model Martyrs’, 3855 N. Lincoln, (773)404-9494. 8pm. \$7.

### BLUES

Lonie Walker & Her Big Bad Ass Company Band Underground Wonder Bar, 10 E. Walton, (312)266-7761. 9pm.

### JAZZ

→ Immediate Sound Series: Fred Lonberg-Holm & Lightbox Orchestra Hideout, 1354 W. Wabansia, (773)227-4433. 9:30pm. \$7.