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As officials commit to CPS closures, are Chicagoans being heard?



(Bea Malsky)

**INSIDE**

*A modern Daguerre's pictorial provocation*  
*Cyber Ritmos fabulosity in Pilsen*  
*A Beverly coffee house with character*



**NEW CITY**



(Bea Malsky)

## Beverly Swills

Hardboiled Coffee  
BEVERLY

by Patrick Leow

**PHILIP MARLOWE IN RAYMOND** Chandler's detective novels was probably too comfortable in a fedora and a crisp white shirt, too good at the thoroughly sedentary sport of chess, too smitten with chasing down baddies in sun-kissed Southern California to ever have taken a trip down tumbling hills of snow and ice. But there they were, a family of four—mom, dad, son, and daughter—bursting into Beverly's Hardboiled Coffee on a Sunday afternoon, discussing their recent winter ski trip over cups of coffee next to an impressive typewriter from the thirties, the opening paragraphs of Chandler's "The Big Sleep" wedged inside.

The family was from the area, and their happiness this Sunday was thanks in no small part to Hardboiled Coffee, a neighborhood joint newly opened in February that provided the setting for this scene. Gregg Wilson, the grey-haired owner with a background in selling fine wine, has filled his shop with vinyl records of old crooners and tinkling ivory, posters of obscure film noir from the fifties, and paperback novels about the hardboiled detectives who gave the shop its name. It's a throwback to a bygone time, sure, but it's also one that seems like it is contextualized by the neighborhood it's in.

Wilson himself tries to burnish his Beverly credentials by sourcing plenty in his shop from the area. He boasts that the neon sign out front was made by a Beverly store, told newspapers of how he hired

businesses from Beverly's 60643 ZIP code, and insisted that "everyone who is part of this place is from around here."

And it seems like these efforts have paid off, less than a month since Hardboiled opened its doors. The family next to the Marlowe typewriter talked of heading to the nearby Aldi after the daughter, no older than ten, had finished her fruit smoothie. They gave the smiling cashier a cheery goodbye as they packed up and left, a promise to see her next weekend, maybe. An elderly pair of friends lounged on a comfortable green satin couch as they carelessly flipped through Beverly's 19th Ward Quarterly, bemoaning the retirement of a doctor somewhere in the neighborhood. Apart from myself and the two friends I brought along that day, there seemed little hint that there were interlopers from outside the neighborhood that morning.

Beyond Wilson's conscious efforts, though, an establishment like Hardboiled Coffee given to celebrating a slower-paced past seems uniquely suited to a neighborhood like this. The streets outside in wider Beverly also seem resistant to the rush of modern Chicago.

It's a stretch of the city that is shorn of the kinetic energy that seems to power most other parts of town. Far from the busy Union Stock Yards or the throngs of young people on hip Milwaukee Ave, Beverly's quiet is everywhere: its low-density cul-de-sacs full of standalone town-

houses, the signage at Top Notch Beefburgers a vestige from the 60s. Its streets go virtually unmolested by the CTA's squawking announcements, and it's a place where one can go a long time without seeing Judge Mathis' smiling face tacked to the front of the bus's bike racks. It's even a relative bastion of Republicanism, a neighborhood that gave the Romney/Ryan team its second-highest amount of votes (10,133 votes in the 19th Ward, in case you were wondering) within city limits.

In a city where progress is the watchword and terms like "global city" are bandied about with regularity, it's essential to have a neighborhood dedicated to the preservation of a less frenetic way of life. Hardboiled Coffee, with its shelves of pulp magazines and walls of long forgotten film noir, is only the latest addition to a neighborhood that's unafraid to wear its history on its sleeves.

No matter how perfectly crafted their trip back in time, though, Hardboiled would never succeed if their coffee and food weren't up to snuff. In this respect, they certainly don't disappoint.

Their coffee is roasted in full view on the premises, and that remarkable freshness was unmistakable in a tasty cup of cold-brewed iced coffee. The Hard-boiled Freeze is a concoction of mocha, caramel, and espresso that verges on too-sweet but remains refreshing.

The pastry case holds up too, full of

pastry puffs and muffins baked each morning. Most other coffee shops can get away with serving stale pastries, the food an afterthought in the core business of serving coffee and providing a place where the young can see and be seen through the course of an afternoon spent next to a conveniently placed power outlet. The food certainly wasn't secondary here, and the cashier I spoke to took obvious pride in the fact that Wilson and his team made everything on offer themselves. The Elvis, an open-faced Nutella, peanut butter, and banana creation was enjoyably flaky. The "Jazzed Up" banana nut muffin smacked of real banana and wonderfully soft bread.

One thing I wish were different was the relative lack of seating space—Hardboiled's small number of tables was dwarfed by a large amount of empty space behind the counter. I wasn't able to ask Wilson why this was so, but it would be a shame if more people were forced to pass up on a couple of hours over coffee, pastries, and a good Dashiell Hammett yarn because they peered through the window and saw the few tables already full.

*Hardboiled Coffee, 9135 S. Western Ave. Monday-Friday, 6am-4pm; Saturday-Sunday, 7am-4pm. (773)238-8360. [hardboiledcoffeecompany.com](http://hardboiledcoffeecompany.com)*

## Give it Shine

### Merengue meets techno-pop in Pilsen

by Katherine Jinyi Li

**CHICAGO-BASED PARTY COLLABORATIVE DALE SHINE** knows there's no better way to bring people together than a cozy space and good music. Boozy chelas? Check. Crackling chicharrones? Definitely. Thudding cyber ritmos? Claro.

It's six o'clock on a Thursday night in Caminos de Michoacán, Pilsen's neighborhood bar, where small groups of friends both young and old have already gathered for the evening's rounds of hearty five-dollar micheladas and, from aguardiente to rumchata, a wide selection of alcohol that any latin@ would yearn for. Salvador Torres, the bar's owner of over thirty years, bustles about making sure that everybody's got a steady stream of complimentary fried pork skins and unshelled peanuts, leaning against the counter every once in a while to watch the baseball game or chat with those at the bar.

The customers don't seem to notice Dale Shine's three DJs in the back of the room, putting together their sets for the night's musical event: "Otra Onda: Cyber Ritmos." As the music starts, more groups of people gradually fill up the bar until every table is crowded with dancing people, snacks, and buckets of beer. Blanca Méndez, aka DJ Blancateli, is up first with a mix of Chilean pop, Argentinean electrocumbia, Chicano classics featuring Selena and even some bilingual Beyoncé.

A Tejana and graduate of Northwestern's journalism program, Méndez began the Dale Shine party series with an eye on other urban music projects. She drew inspiration from DJ Geko Jones' QUE BAJO?! of Brooklyn, which mixes traditional Latin beats with the greater party scene, and the DJ wars of Ghe20 G01k, also based in New York City, which provide a safe common space for all kinds of people to have a thoroughly good time. Dale Shine strives to bring that same sort of multi-community party to Chicago. "We want to show that Latin music and culture is just as much merengue as it is technopop," says Méndez. "We value our diversity – it's showcasing new Latin sounds, bringing out the queer community, providing a space for all kinds of musical and artistic expression."

Dale Shine started off last autumn with a Chicago-wide call for DJs, artists, writers, community activists, and generally music-savvy individuals on the independent Latin music blog Club Fonograma, where Méndez is a regular writer and host of the Fonocast compilation series. Among those who responded are tonight's DJs: Calixta, a Pilsen resident and community organizer who suggested Caminos de Michoacán for the event, and DJ Cavrita, a native of both Mexico City and Aurora as well as a former contributing journalist on Pilsen's independent youth station Radio Arte.

Dale Shine has only hosted two events, the first of which, Muerte Midi, involved local DJs and a large-scale celebration of Día de los Muertos on Chicago's North Side. Although Dale Shine's members come from across the city and the collaborative is not located in or affiliated with any particular Chicago neighborhood, Méndez does note that Pilsen as a neighborhood "fits well with what we're about." As for the name "Dale Shine"—literally "give it shine"—it's hard to describe exactly what the phrase means in all of its popular contexts. To understand Dale Shine's true fabulosity and flavor, Chicago will just have to go for it.

## Past, Imperfect

### John Neff at the Renaissance Society

by Tobi Haslett

**IN 1822, LOUIS DAGUERRE UNVEILED HIS DIORAMA, A CRUDE**, lurching ancestor of the cinema. A rotating platform, operated by the clanging of levers and cogs, would turn the audience to face large paintings that lined the room's circular wall; this, coupled with a system of shutters and screens that let sunlight flicker into the theater, created the illusion of movement, the sense of a vast, continuous reality unfolding before the eyes of stupefied Parisians.

But in subsequent years, Daguerre perfected the daguerreotype, the first widely used form of photography. This new technology incited such popular fervor that when his huge, creaking diorama caught fire in 1839, Daguerre hardly cared that he had lost his precious paintings. But photography, for all of its eerie precision, never aspired to the grand vision of its slighted older sibling—a photograph did not build a new world for itself, content to offer us a sliver of the old one.

It seems that John Neff's photographs, currently on display at the Renaissance Society, grasp—perhaps knowingly—at some of this strange, wistful history. Like Daguerre, Neff has given the world a technological innovation ("advancement" is not quite the word) in the form of his scanner camera, a coarse and ungainly contraption with an exposure time of several seconds. It is composed of the lens and body of a Kodak camera joined to a portable Canon scanner, so his little machine incorporates both analog and digital elements to capture and develop the black and white stills.

The show transports us to a bygone era, one of heaving pulleys and turning platforms, in how it seems to reenact the emergence of photography from the ashes of older media. Neff's photographs are arranged in a row that wraps, diorama-like, around the gallery walls, and the windows of the Renaissance Society have been tinted for the show, recalling the screens of Daguerre's clunking machinery that seemed to bring images to life with a mere glimmer of light. And yet the pictures themselves, in their technical imperfection and modest size, recall the ghostliness of those first photographs, those smudged, grainy traces of moments frozen in time.

In Neff's pictures, what emerge are intimate scenes—portraits, still lifes—that nevertheless bear the mark of their mechanical production. His photographs—of flowers, of furniture, but mostly of faces and bodies bathed in soft light—are scored by scanner lines and flecked with tiny errors. What we might otherwise dismiss as technical blemishes are instead central to Neff's practice. In these scarred pictures, intimacy registers as a kind of mechanical failure, such that feeling scratches its way into the image by a process of erasure. The less we see of Neff's subject, the more we feel its spectral presence.

For each of these photographs, the low quality of the image reminds us of Neff's odd machinery, which in turn places us squarely in the encounter in which the photograph was taken. In "1/22/2011," for instance, we cannot simply look at a man, sitting and wearing an eye patch, and rest assured that this is simply a random moment plucked neatly from time. We are instead forced to imagine Neff stringing up his awkward device, orchestrating a scene that appears natural or "authentic"—authenticity, remember, was what made the photograph superior to the diorama—so we come to see this photograph not as part of some boundless web of objective reality, but instead as the product of a relation between persons, a negotiation between friends, perhaps even between lovers.

And while Neff's lovers serve as frequent subjects, the evidence of his homosexuality—many photographs are of nude or half-dressed men, often gesturing tenderly—does not jump out at us with the aggression of, say, Nan Goldin. Neff's work bears none of the defiance of an earlier generation of queer artists, many of whom sought to depict the gay life as radically "other," either by mythologizing the delectable seediness of the drag scene or mourning for the ravages of AIDS. No, Neff's work is fastidiously apolitical—or so he claimed in his public conversation with Associate Curator Hamza Walker after the March 3rd opening. But maybe Neff has smuggled some political program into his work; maybe this new queerness, this new provocation, consists in daring to present gay life not as liberated, nor marred by persecution, but as defiantly normal, as life.

This, too, is sketched onto the photographs' blotchy surface. In shrugging off the burden of making images that point to some concrete truth, Neff need not use his pictures to expose or unveil the unknown. Rather than lay bare some shocking fact, some unpleasant but undeniable reality, he is content to give us tender recollections, splotchy memory, a reality speckled not with outrage or brazenness, but with nuance, with feeling. So we might think of this show as a nod to Daguerre's scorched, unredeemed diorama, whose wheels and handles, which now seem like cheap showiness, spun into existence a new way of seeing, a kind of image that was not just filched from reality, but made from scratch.

*The Renaissance Society, 5811 S. Ellis Ave. Cobb Hall 418. Through April 14. Tuesday-Friday, 10am-5pm; Saturday-Sunday, noon-5pm. Free. (773)702-8670. renaissancesociety.org*



(Courtesy of Renaissance Society)

# Behind the CPS Closures

*As officials commit to CPS closures, are Chicagoans being heard?*

by Hannah Nyhart



(Katherine Li)

**O**N MARCH 21, CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANNOUNCED THE CLOSURE OF SIXTY-ONE SCHOOL BUILDINGS, more than ten percent of the city's elementary and middle schools. CPS claims it faces a one billion dollar deficit next year, and since November has framed the crisis as one of underutilization. Although taxpayers pay to maintain facilities with a capacity for 511,000 students, the district claims, only 403,000 of those seats are filled. In response, CPS will close or restaff more than half as many schools as it has over the past decade. The decision comes after a five-month conversation with the communities it affects, communities that turned out in force to protest the closings. How that dialogue has unfolded over the past five months tells the story of a district's efforts to enact highly unpopular school actions on a scale unseen in the city. It also represents a heightened, highly visible effort at engagement that has been unable to overcome a widespread conviction that clos-

ings will fail students.

Assuming the recommendations made by CPS CEO Barbara Byrd-Bennett are approved by the school board in May, CPS will close fifty-two elementary schools and one high school program—the upper grades at Mason Elementary—due to under-utilization. Crispus Attucks Elementary in Bronzeville is to be phased out over two years. Six additional schools will be turnaround schools, in which all administration and staff will be removed, and management turned over to the non-profit Academy for Urban School Leadership. Another eleven schools will become part of co-locations, in which two separate schools with independent administrations are housed in the same facility. Not every proposed action involves a building closure.

All told, a CPS spokesperson put the number of students affected—those who are projected to enroll in “welcoming schools” next fall—at 32,436, eight percent of the district's current enrollment.

Effects of the measure tilt heavily toward the South and West Sides, a distribution that fits into the broader trend of CPS closures. More than ninety percent of the district's 104 closures and turnarounds (in which a school is completely restaffed) since 2001 have been in those sections of the city.

Throughout the process, the district has emphasized its efforts toward community engagement and transparency. While CPS is required by state law to publicize any school closings by December 1, last November Byrd-Bennett successfully pushed for a four-month extension on that deadline in order to solicit community feedback. In exchange, the CEO promised a five-year moratorium on closures, a move to stabilize a district shaken by controversial reform efforts and last September's teachers strike. With that postponement came the initiation of what the district promoted as “a rigorous, transparent, and open dialogue,” which included the appointment of a nine-member

Commission on School Utilization that would hold four data-gathering meetings and six community meetings, in addition to offering online avenues for community feedback. Along with the commission, CPS also organized a lineup of twenty-eight community meetings. Held across the city over the course of two months, the district estimates the meetings had a combined attendance of at least 20,000.

On February 19, community members from the district's Burnham Park Network—an administrative region stretching from the Loop to 67th Street—convened at Saint Anselm Church in Washington Park for the network's second and final meeting. The stakes were high: twenty-four Burnham Park schools remained candidates for closure, more than in any other network. Each school had five minutes to state its case to CPS officials on hand, supported by crowds of parents, teachers, students, and alumni.

At an earlier meeting in Saint Anselm, held two weeks prior, the large church had

been full. This time, the church was overflowing; pews on the ground floor and balcony were packed, and dozens of people stood in side aisles and at the back of the chapel. Community meetings across the city saw similar turnout. A few weeks earlier, a crowd of more than a thousand led to a police barricade at a meeting in Little Village; at Saint Anselm patrol cars lingered outside.

Speaking on behalf of Dumas Technology Academy in Woodlawn, mentor and school advocate De'Andre Short offered one variation on an argument given by many of the schools that followed him: in closing Dumas, he told the board, "you will be dividing a family." Others challenged the district's utilization formula, the basis for its lists of 330 and later 129 candidates for closure. They cited uses for rooms that ranged from after-school programming to special education classes and GED programs for parents. Regardless of the nature of the argument, the facts were often laced with a fundamental distrust of a school system that speakers felt had historically manipulated and underserved their community. Nona Burney, head of the Bronzeville Community Action Council, places the current consolidations in a context of school actions taken by the district in Bronzeville, referencing the tumultuous pasts of schools on the closure list. Crispus Attucks, which was represented at the Burnham Park meetings, is one of those schools. Attucks received the students displaced by the 2004 closure of

nearby Raymond, and was relocated four years later to a building that had housed John Farren Elementary until it too was shuttered in 2006. "Before the community action council existed, schools in Bronzeville had already been dismantled, destabilized by closings...There's a whole history," said Burney.

That history prompts the question of whether or not the newest CPS efforts have represented a move toward genuine engagement. CPS has been keen to distance its efforts in the most recent closure cycle from those in past years; for the first time, a CPS spokesperson said, community feedback had been solicited prior to recommendations being made to the board. District officials visited every school proposed for consolidation, and the independent Commission on School Utilization supplemented initial meetings over the course of December with additional conversations with Community Action Councils and Local School Councils. Byrd-Bennett was not present at all of the meetings, but received a record of all feedback.

Burney, at least, is pleased with the district's engagement efforts. As she says, "We were able to be closer to the pre-decision process of saying, 'Here's what we have in our community, here's what we want in our community, and we believe that all of our buildings need to be left alone so that we can do the work that we had originally outlined to do.'"

Eleven Burnham Park schools are closing or being turned around, among them

Dumas and nine schools within the Bronzeville CAC. Despite outcries, some closures were not at odds with community input. Burney cited the consolidation of Williams Elementary and Williams Middle, which typically serve the same student population as a closure backed by the community.

But that feeling of inclusion didn't translate to the community meetings, CPS's broadest effort at engagement. De'Andre Short, speaking before the final closure list was announced, said of his turn at the mic, "It leaves you kind of defenseless. You don't want to not do it because you got to take any chance you can get, but at the same time you walk away not knowing how effective you actually were. Am I actually being heard? Is this just a facade to say that we did hear you, or is this something that you're actually considering?"

Wendy Katten, director of parent group Raise Your Hand, was also critical of the meetings as an engagement model. "Having a one-sided, non-interactive conversation and then telling parents that the district leader will listen to the feed-

back on an audio-tape," she said, "does not really provide confidence that any kind of information is really getting to the right people."

The case of Brentano, a Logan Square school that serves students from Pre-K through eighth grade, offers a view of the organizing manpower necessary to keep a school from closure. "We approached it like a campaign," said Will Guzzardi, a community organizer in the neighborhood. "We had some strategy sessions early on where we hammered out our messaging, how we were going to talk about this to people in the community and elected officials and to the CPS administration, and all the different players." Though Guzzardi said the community meetings had offered a valuable chance to display broad support for the school, it was only one element of a larger strategy that included a public presentation of a community petition, securing vocal support from elected officials, and eventually meeting with someone from CPS. "We had a meeting with a CPS administrator with our school and the two other elementary schools in Logan Square, where he was



(Bea Malsky)

asking what the Logan Square elementary school scene looked like and why Brentano was an important piece of that," remembers Guzzardi. Brentano was spared closure in the final list. "It's hard to say which of those aspects was the deciding one," says Guzzardi, "but I think all together they really created a powerful message about the school."

Many of the recurring concerns community members held up in the meetings—fears about the transfer of special education students and homeless students, as well as student populations that would be crossing gang lines—were given detailed treatment in the recommendations that the Commission on School Utilization published in its final report. CPS has reflected many of the same themes in the transition plans they have published for each school. Community input on how schools will be closed, then, has had a definite effect. But the larger complaint may be one that, from a CPS perspective, was never up for debate.

At a rally in Daley Plaza on March 27, as speakers and protesters echoed concerns that had been raised throughout the engagement process, they held aloft a banner reading, "Don't close our schools." One hundred and twenty-seven protesters were removed and ticketed after blocking LaSalle Street, but overall protest turnout became one more number to haggle over. (On the day of the rally the Chicago Teachers Union estimated the crowd was somewhere between 5,000 and 6,500, the police estimated it was a mere 700–900, and the next day's Sun-Times analyzed a photograph to peg it at a minimum of 2,750.)

While a polarized vision of Us vs. Them had been a common thread throughout community organizing efforts and testimonies given at local meetings, by the start of the Daley Plaza protest that vision became explicitly Us vs. Him. A sign with a caricature of Rahm Emanuel screamed, "Your ego needs right-sizing." Protesters chanted, "Hey hey, ho ho, Rahm Emanuel's got to go!" And CTU President Karen Lewis said to the assembled crowd, "To close schools down when people say they want their schools is unjust. And when you have an unjust leader, you must rise up."

The protest comes a week before CPS will initiate another wave of engagement. Between April 6 and May 2, the district will hold two community meetings and a public hearing for each consolidation or co-location. Each of the six turnaround schools will also have a public hearing, for a total of more than 180 meetings in a little more than a month. The Board of Education is expected to cast a final vote on the closures on May 22.

Despite the meetings, recent comments by Byrd-Bennett, who has committed to staying the course on closures, and Mayor Emanuel, who has said that the time for negotiations is over, indicate that there is little chance officials will alter any proposed school actions. At the time of Emanuel's comments, CTU spokesperson Stephanie Gadlin had already publicly called the May 22 board meeting a "rubber stamp." Lewis has issued repeated cries to for opposition to school closures through civil disobedience, including encouraging students to show up at their current schools next fall, regardless of closures. Others are less quick to dismiss the opportunity. In a brief phone interview, 3rd Ward Alderman Pat Dowell called the meetings "a chance for communities and elected officials to continue to press their case with CPS." Asked about her own role, she said only, "I will continue to fight for my schools." Bronzeville's Burney was hopeful for the meetings: "I'm going to act as if this is different and encourage schools to make their cases for either remaining open, if that's what they want, or making sure they are clear about what they need for the transitions to occur...I want to believe that this is not the rubber stamp that I felt [it was] last year."

Asked about the meetings' possible effect on the proposed closures, a CPS spokesperson said that the feedback would continue to inform Byrd-Bennett, CPS, and the Board. As a testament to the value that the CEO places on engagement, a spokesperson said Byrd-Bennett would receive the recorded comments from the meetings. If the promised three meetings per fifty-four schools run as scheduled, for two hours each, that will be 324 hours of feedback.

*Additional reporting by Katherine Jinyi Li.*

## STAGE & SCREEN

### Amleth

The princess of Denmark returns for her father's funeral only to find her father buried and her mother quickly and happily remarried. She seeks consolation in her lover Ophelia and fosters hatred for her newly concupiscent mother—sound kind of familiar? Dream Theatre continues its series of dark takes on old tales with "The Tragedy of Amleth, Princess of Denmark." Follow along with Amleth as she travels the road to womanhood by questioning every once-undeniable truth of her innocent childhood, as her mother and her changing morals shake the princess's once simple view of life. Sure to be a production of infinite jest and most excellent fancy. *Dream Theatre, 556 W. 18th St. Through April 7. Thursday-Saturday, 8pm; Sunday, 7pm. \$16-\$20. (773)552-8516. dreamtheatrecompany.com* (Jacqueline Nesbitt)

### Jar The Floor

What's fast, furious, and entirely female? That's right: a production of Cheryl West's "Jar The Floor." Set in the southern suburb of Park Forest, the dramedy chronicles the firestorm of rifts and reconciliations that occurs when women of four generations meet to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of their matriarch, MaDear. You can expect verbal pyrotechnics as the play's cast of five women plumbs the depths of some tough subjects, including breast cancer and domestic abuse. Ilesa Duncan directs this engaging show, which attempts a light-hearted take on some of the darker aspects of the African-American woman's experience. *eta Creative Arts Foundation, 7558 S. South Chicago Ave. Through May 12. Friday-Saturday, 8pm; Sunday, 3pm and 7pm. \$10-\$30. (773)752-3955. etacreativearts.org* (Emily Holland)

### Tour Guides

Originally produced in 2010 by the Poetry Performance Incubator at the Guild Literary Complex, a reworked "Tour Guides" will receive another three performances in April at the Beverly Arts Center. Directed by Coya Paz and featuring the works of twelve other poets, the show offers an exploration of Chicago's cultural landscape that skips the landmarks of double-decker bus or segway tours in favor of those intimately connected to its denizens. Stops along the show's poetic tour range the Red Line to a comparison of how men pick up women in different neighborhoods, ("Ay baby, I'd like to see your South Side" has proven universally ineffective.) "Tour Guides" offers a view of the city that blends a slew of voices into a unique work that blends theater and poetry. *Beverly Arts Center, 2407 W 111th St. April 5-6 at 7:30pm, April 7 at 3:30pm. \$16 admission, \$13 for members. (773)445-3838. guildcomplex.org* (Ben Boyajian and Hannah Nyhart)

### Time Travelers Meetup

Are you traveling time? Yes, you are. Can you conceive of time as non-linear? Probably, with some difficulty. At this moment, are you attending a Time Travelers Meetup? No, but in another moment, you are. If you find yourself wondering about the anomalies of the passage of time, its distortions and the travelers who exploit them, you will also find yourself at the Oriental Institute for a gathering of curious strangers. The asteroid symbol chalked and spray-painted in public hints at this event; look for three lines tracing the shape of a shuttlecock. A source suspects that there may be an actual time traveler or two present, however the meetup is also for the "uninitiated." Spread the rumor. *The Oriental Institute, 1155 E 58th St. Friday, April 6, 12pm. Free. Information available from ilinx@uchicago.edu* (Jon Brozdowski)

### Carmen & Geoffrey

Carmen de Lavallade and Geoffrey Holder burst into the world as tremendous dancers, but their impact extends far past the stage. "Carmen and Geoffrey: A Memoir in Four Movements," screening at the DuSable Museum, shows the interdisciplinary nature of the duo, whose combined professional careers exceed a century. Holder made his mark across the theater and onto the silver screen, as well as a dalliance with writing. De Lavallade, a stunning beauty whose every movement exuded elegance, redefined the performing arts through her work around the New York arts scene. Their success in dance is upstaged only by the duo's breadth of cultural and artistic impact, as shown in the DuSable's ongoing exhibit, which accompanies the film. Divided into the sections of family, art, dance, and theatre, the exhibit follows the couple's influence on the entertainment industry through various art forms. De Lavallade considers their iden-

ties as a dancers unique, regardless of how broad their reach extended. Dancers "don't see the world like most people, they just see their world," she says. "If you have a desire, it doesn't matter what the world's doing. You're gonna do it." *The Dusable, 740 E. 56th Pl. Screening Saturday, April 7, 2-4pm. Free. Exhibit through May 5. Tuesdays through Saturdays 10am-5pm, Sundays noon-5pm. \$10 adults, \$7 students, free on Sundays. (773)947-0600 ext. 290. dusablemuseum.org* (Cydney Grannan)

### In the Heights

Get ready, Pilsen: a coalition of Chicago's best and brightest theater companies is teaming up for a South Side production of the Tony Award-winning musical, "In the Heights." Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Benito Juárez Community Academy, and Latinos Progresando will launch a concert version of Lin-Manuel Miranda and Quiara Alegria Hudes' exciting and poignant musical. This production marks part of an initiative with the Chicago Community Trust to advance the relationship between Pilsen and one of Chicago's largest and most prominent theater companies, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. "In the Heights" tells the story of New York's Washington Heights Latino community and features a salsa, rap, and hip-hop score. A true community production, the talents behind "In the Heights" features musicians from Cerqua Rivera Dance Theater, actors from Pilsen and Little Village, as well as work by muralist Pablo Serrano and students from Benito Juárez and Teatro Americano. *Benito Juárez Performing Arts Center, 1450 W. Genmark Rd. April 8, 7pm. \$5 students & parents, \$15 general. (312)595-5657. benitojuarez.net* (Meaghan Murphy)

### Solo Saturdays

The Venue, usually a stage for musical acts, hosts a monthly spotlight curated by Chicago Solo Theatre. Five performers from around Chicago will perform their stand-up, stories, poems and plays by themselves, alone. Solo. Expect both autobiography and fiction, struggle and triumph, profundity and trivia. This month's artists have been appeared on The Moth, Story Lab, WBEZ, Chicago's Laugh Factory and more. Past performances have covered everything from the existence of Santa Claus to the effectiveness of President Reagan's youth fitness initiative. Again, you'll see nothing like a cast of characters, unless those characters are all played by the same person. One at a time. Lonesomely. Because these are solo shows. *The Venue, 1550 S. State St. April 13, 8pm. May 11, 8pm. (312)674-0001. \$15. venueat1550.com* (Chris Deakin)

## MUSIC

### Widespread Panic

There are many ways to learn about human nature. You could read a lot of books and papers. You could ignore what everyone else has said and develop your own obscure theories. Or you could venture to the UIC Pavilion, where Athens, Georgia jam band Widespread Panic is playing for two—count 'em, two—consecutive nights in early April, and observe the dreadlocked suburban masses as they navigate an arena-sized petri dish. If you haven't been to Lollapalooza, Pitchfork, or their non-regional equivalents, this is the closest you'll come to some summer festival madness this season. As for the music, the band is breaking out their "full electric set up." What will ensue? Who will be liable for the damages? And how will humans behave when the illusion of civilization collapses in a fiery, Phish-like inferno? There's only one way to find out, and it involves scalping a ticket from some dude named Garth. *UIC Pavilion, 525 S. Racine St. Friday, April 12, and Saturday, April 13, 7:30pm. \$45. (312)413-5700. uicpavilion.com* (Nathan Worcester)

### Rodriguez

Sixto Diaz Rodriguez achieved relative popularity during the early '70s before falling into complete obscurity after both his records failed to sell well in the United States. Unbeknownst to him, however, his music achieved a huge following in South Africa, where his 1977 compilation "At His Best" went double platinum, but where the general consensus was that he had killed himself. In 2011, Swedish filmmaker Malik Bendjelloul followed two South African fans in their attempts to figure out the true whereabouts of Rodriguez in the Oscar winning documentary "Searching for Sugar Man." This afforded Rodriguez something rarely seen in the music industry—a second chance. Now, "Motown's Dylan"

is continuing his psychedelic influenced take on '60s and early '70s folk and enjoying a twilight resurgence. You can see him at McCormick Place's Arie Crown Theater this May. *Arie Crown Theater, 2301 S. Lake Shore Dr. Friday, May 17, 8pm. \$25-30 balcony, \$40-50 main floor. (773)525-2508. schubas.com/Page/Shows* (Jack Nuelle)

### Victor Wooten

Few musicians, let alone bassists, have succeeded in genre-bending as well as Victor Wooten. He's transformed contemporary free jazz into a funky-spiritual-organic-groovin' whirlwind to the point where "jazz" doesn't begin to cover what Wooten is capable of with a bass guitar in hand. No genre or stereotype is too big for this giant to handle. While he's the bassist for fusion group Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, Wooten thrives most on solo bass and has tackled jazz standards, pop tunes and classical music alike, all while maintaining a unique accessibility. Wooten provides a broad tasting platter outside of the music sphere as well, having written a novel in addition to his instructional music books and founding a music-and-nature camp, Vix Camps. His playing technique is divine—perhaps that's what earned him those five Grammys—and regardless of whether his style tickles your fancy, hearing such a finger-funkin' good game changer is not something to miss. *Reggies, 2105 S. State St. Saturday, April 20, 7pm. Price ranges from \$30-\$120. 17+. (312)949-0121. reggiestive.com* (Cydney Grannan)

### KRS-ONE

WOOP-WOOP! That's the sound of socially conscious rapper KRS-ONE imitating a police siren. It's the sound that began as a catchy, memorable representation of police brutality and institutionalized racism. Through the depoliticizing magic of popular culture, it's now another rallying cry for intoxicated college-age party-goers (experts call this the Tubthumping Effect). If you've ever wondered about the man behind the addictive whoop, come to the Shrine on April 22 and hear him in person. KRS-ONE will perform with reggae artists Mykal Rose and Sister Carol. Close your eyes during the concert and you can be in three places at once: Chicago, Jamaica, and the Bronx circa 1993. *The Shrine, 2109 S. Wabash Ave. Monday, April 22, 8pm. \$28.50-425. FYI, \$425 gets you "VIP Bottle Service" if you really want to ball hard. 21+. (312)753-5700. theshrinechicago.com* (Nathan Worcester)

## VISUAL ARTS

### Big Dreams I'm Chasing

Find inspiration at "Big Dreams I'm Chasing," an exhibition at the Free Write Jail Arts and Literacy Program which works to display the abundant creativity to be found within the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center. From painted murals to comic books, to poetry and music, the artwork is meant to show "the opposite of being dead." Working to deliver an arts and humanities education to the city's most underserved kids, Free Write conducts daily arts and writing workshops for incarcerated youth. A culmination of these artists' labor, "Six Feet Over" features the work and performances of incarcerated youth and affiliated members of Free Write. Showgoers will be able to record their reactions and write notes to the young artists, who will not be in attendance. The vitality of the young inmates runs wild with possibilities towards a future. The show reveals expression, sensitivity,

talent, kindled hopes, and castles in the sky. *Chicago Art Department, 1932 S. Halsted St. Friday, April 12. 6-10pm. (773)412-5789. freewritejailarts.org* (Seunghee Han)

### Hall of Khan

Horses have carried conquerors and heroes throughout history, but how often does the animal itself get any credit? Jeremiah Hulsebose-Spofford is putting the spotlight back on the creature beneath the saddle in the most literal way possible with his new installation, Hall of Khah. He's bringing live horses into the gallery. The interaction of horse and abstract forms representing riders undermines traditional equestrian sculpture and its symbolic meanings. For all you neigh-sayers unsure about hoofing it to HPAC just for ponies, the exhibit incorporates other, less mobile pieces, including an architectural construction modeled after World Fair exhibition halls. However, if you can't get enough of everything equine, the horsing around will continue with a summer camp for teens and various events in collaboration with stables and riding groups from the Illinois area. *Hyde Park Art Center, 5020 S. Cornell Ave. Opening reception April 14, 3-5pm. Through July 28. Monday-Thursday 10am-8pm; Friday-Saturday 10am-5pm; Sunday 12-5pm. Free. (773)324-5520. hydeparkart.org* (Hanna Petroski)

### Adversity

Faced with a housing crisis and a market collapse, interior designer Linc Thelen moved back to painting. In a solo show at Bridgeport's Zhou B Art Center, Thelen presents his frustration and subsequent reinvigoration with "Adversity." Rejecting the complacency of realism and still life, Thelen plays with circular forms. Spontaneous and intuitive, his work is an adventure of self-exploration, centered on the balance of deconstruction and harmony. He works with large canvas and a dark color palate, creating studies and forms around the theme of the sphere. "Adversity" catalogues Thelen's own experience and his search for control within chaos. The exhibition opens with a reception on April 19. *Zhou B Art Center, 1029 W. 35th St. Opening reception April 19, 7-10pm. Through May 11. Monday-Sunday, 10am-5pm. Free. (773)523-0200. zhoubartcenter.com* (Meaghan Murphy)

### Forlesen

While The Renaissance Society comes to the end of another season, William Pope.L at the UofC's Department of Visual Arts is launching into new spaces with refreshing familiarity. An interdisciplinary artist best known for his tactile public performance of "crawls" across New York City, Pope.L ingeniously exercises his sense of self to tackle a complex knot of social realities like race, class, and politics. With Forlesen, his latest work and first solo exhibition since moving to Chicago, Pope.L hones in on the way in which difference is demarcated between the polar fringes of these intricate social threads, paying particular attention to the spaces separating blackness and whiteness. In effect, through inventive play with media—an installation of walls, drawings, sculptures, and video room projections—Pope.L reconfigures The Renaissance Society, transforming the space into a reflection and investigation of the mazelike texture intrinsic to these controversial issues. *The Renaissance Society, 5811 S. Ellis Ave. Reception April 28. Through June 23. Tuesday-Friday 10am-5pm, Saturday-Sunday 12pm-5pm; closed Mondays. Free. (773) 702-8670. renaissancesociety.org* (Candice Ralph)

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