

EXTRA



READY, WILLING, AND DISABLE

Everyone wants their fifteen minutes of fame. The women of the band Disable only want two. The seven members, M, A, J, E, C, K, and S, keep their true identities under wraps and their songs under eighty-eight seconds. Their music tends toward fleeting, fragmented exchanges with the listener, often sung in "Chinglish," a Chinese-English hybrid. You pick up on bits, and what you don't get you feel the force of intuitively. Longing for love is, after all, an international phenomenon. Disable was discovered after Chinese megastar Faye Wong let slip to Hong Kong tabloids that the then unknown band was on heavy rotation on her car stereo. "The next thing you know, we're singing karaoke to our own songs!" says the band's drummer, C. Disable is a truly worldwide phenomenon—albeit among a very specific worldwide audience familiar with downloadable music and of a Cantonese cultural background. "A journalist asked us about communism last week and how we survive under it," laughs Disable guitarist A, in British-accented English. "We don't need to answer more questions about communism to legitimize our own racket. I mean, we're mature enough now to question our own legitimacy. That's difficult enough." Cryptic shit, girl. *Ho teng* (Cantonese for "sounds good"). **Cynthia Leung**

Photo Mariah Robertson

To Desire is to Disable will be released in the U.S. in 2003, and is currently available as a bootleg in any marketplace where Chinese CD piracy thrives.

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L.A. STORY

In her new film *Laurel Canyon*, director Lisa Cholodenko (*High Art*) resurrects some of the themes that made her first movie great: sex, the artist's enclave, and pouty brunettes. Set in the titular Los Angeles neighborhood (which is shot, not unintentionally, to look like the Garden of Eden), the film stars Christian Bale and Kate Beckinsale as two straitlaced Harvard-med graduates spending a summer with Bale's mother—a bohemian record producer (Frances McDormand) who's sleeping with the lead singer of her latest band (Alessandro Nivola)—and gradually finding themselves seduced out of their spheres. With excellent performances (marred only slightly by shots of the sun shining through a distractingly wispy Beckinsale) and a score by Sparklehorse and Folk Implosion, the film is an astute examination of seduction theory and the nature of identity in relationships. What you'd expect, naturally, to get out of a trip to L.A. **Michael Martin**

Photo Neal Preston

Alessandro Nivola and Kate Beckinsale

Laurel Canyon comes out in March from Sony Pictures Classics



EVERYTHING'S GONE GRAY

Dior Homme's new five-pocket, two-cut jeans are a Diorification of the most basic menswear garment. No item of clothing has had more research and development thrown at it than blue jeans. So what then does Dior Homme bring to the picture? Well, for one, there's the currently requisite worn-in wash, complete with pre-made stress lines and mineral deposits at the back of the leg. But the real innovation is in the fit. Low slung but not too low, tight but not too tight. Think of these as custom jeans for skinny guys. Colors include a basic indigo, and a faded black verging on a very Dior shade of gray. As we all know, the future of blue jeans is definitely not blue.



WOMAN OF STEEL

There is something supremely cool about a woman holding a camera. Picture Dorothea Lange or Diane Arbus or Inez van Lamsweerde. In one regard, it's a reversal of the sleazy *Blow Up* cliché of the macho photographer pointing his mechanical phallus at the trembling blonde. But in more immediate ways, it works as an essential breaker in an ocean of images largely sailed by men. The definitive poster woman of the tough-as-nails-female-shooter movement is Margaret Bourke-White. This is an artist who entered booming American factories and found a strict, modern design in the interlocking gears. She is the woman who shot the first cover of *Life*, who documented the bombs falling during Moscow in WW II and the aftermath of the Nazi death camps, and who took a portrait of Gandhi hours before he was assassinated. "Margaret Bourke-White: The Photography of Design" follows her career from 1927 to 1936. Her daring vision makes a lot of the male photographers working today look like pretty little boys with broken wands in their hands. **Christopher Bollen**

Photo Margaret Bourke-White, *Diversion Tunnel*, 1936

"Margaret Bourke-White" is at the Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., through May 11, 2003

For info: www.phillipscollection.org



LET THERE BE LAMPS

No matter how well designed, a lamp is only as beautiful as the light it casts. In other words, that fluorescent rod leaning against the wall in your apartment may be very "Dan Flavin," but the blinding glare creates all the ambiance of a cheap Chinese restaurant. After designing light for the likes of Dior Homme, Ann Demeulemeester, and Helmut Lang, Thierry Dreyfus has created a series of lamps (or as he calls them "elements of light") all his own. In two of the models, light is diffused through salt crystals to create a subtle, soothing—and, we might add, incredibly flattering—pink or lavender glow. Turn it on and order in.

Available through Colette: www.colette.fr



HIGH-SCHOOL REUNION

Many of us spend the entire rest of our lives trying to forget high school. And just when you've managed to put behind you the cafeteria cliques and the prom songs and the aching internal terror that you don't know who you are (and may never find out), an old yearbook jumps out of the closet like a cheerleader and brings it all flooding back. It's in this sense of our teenage past haunting our adult present that artist Pierre Huyghe and novelist Douglas Coupland have teamed up to produce *School Spirit*. The book is essentially an assemblage of old California-high-school-yearbook pages, intertwined with Coupland's eerie first-person profile of a dead student who forever prowls the halls. Smiling faces of the drama club are nestled next to those of the beautiful, cool rich kids hanging in the parking lot and the shirtless boys of the football team gearing up for a big game. Yearbook quotes like "Dave, you probably don't even know who I am but I always knew who you were," "Dale, have a nice summer and don't get too stuck up," and "Sharlyn... Can I borrow your sweater forever?" are mixed in with Coupland's musings: "All schools do is keep you off the streets until you're 18." The eyes are so wide, the emotions so pure, the future not yet wrinkling, destroying, or picking off the dreams one by one that you end up wondering, *Jesus, was I ever that boy who drank Coors Light in the woods and drove home at midnight with the windows down and G'n'R turned all the way up?* **CB**

School Spirit is out now from Dis Voir
For info: www.artbooks.com



POETRY POLICE

It used to be that the closest cops got to poetry was the soulful lamentation of an apprehended DUI driver or a mentally deranged escapee wearing a string bikini and a tire iron and locked in the back of a squad car. Things are always safer behind chain-link and bulletproof glass. Poets, however, have always been particularly outrageous social deviants. With the publication of *Off the Cuffs* by Soft Skull Press, they have gone ahead and messed with the whole well-preserved art-versus-law enforcement dynamic. Three hundred pages of verse are set to the topic of the fuzz and the feds. What's more, superstar writers like Sharon Olds and Colette Inez aren't the only ones given room to write about holdups, false arrests, and love in a lineup. Editor Jackie Sheeler has put pens into the hands of mothers, bike messengers, career criminals, journalists, dancers, and, yep, even detectives on the beat. It's an incredible range of tones and voices in a verbal class of civilians and cops, all decked in their own imagistic riot gear. Lord, the book party for this one should really get going once it's busted for noise violations. **CB**

Off the Cuffs is out this month from Soft Skull Press
For info: www.softskull.com



OH, MY PRECIOUS

Stuart David is busy. But when he's not making records, scoring independent films, organizing music festivals with his little band Belle and Sebastian, or recording with his very artsy side project Looper, he finds time to write the occasional book. This March sees the American publication of his debut novel, *Nalda Said* (Turtle Point Press). In it, a nameless narrator, the son of a failed jewel thief, is convinced that he lives with the most valuable of his father's stolen jewels hidden in his belly. He has spent most of his life in the care of his aunt Nalda, a woman of questionable sanity who exists "in a complicated array of rags and tatters, silent and afraid." Her childhood stories, while they fancifully explain away the horrors of the world, have left the narrator in a state of fairy-tale delusion. The novel hesitantly reveals his struggle to interact with a world all too eager to steal the priceless secret he holds inside. Deeply allegorical and perhaps frustratingly sad, *Nalda Said* might not break your heart the same way spinning your well-worn copy of *Tiger Milk* does, but it provides a similarly satisfying dose of imagination to the melancholy soul. **T. Cole Rachel**

Nalda Said is out in April in the U.S.
For info: www.artbooks.com



THE WRONG STUFF

A 360-square-inch patch of vacant Chelsea doorway is home to the Wrong Gallery, the latest curatorial venture by Ali Subotnick, Massimiliano Gioni, and Maurizio Cattelan—the formidable team behind *Charley* magazine. The exhibition program boasts a who's who of *Flash Art*, *Frieze*, and *Artforum* cover stars and emerging startlets. Externally, it resembles any other blue-chip enterprise, yet the Wrong Gallery is no more a gallery than *Charley* is a magazine. The organizers describe it as "the back door to contemporary art: you never know what will sneak through." To this effect, passersby needn't enter, and artists participate in a crawl space the size of a coffin. Penlights illuminate Elizabeth Peyton portraits, but the drawings never trade hands, nor do secondary-market Warhols finance the operation. In fact, neighboring gallerists Anton Kern and Andrew Kreps provide operational sustenance—from electricity to venue space for junior-associate soirées—to fuel the project. Sound parasitic? Perhaps so. Like *Charley*, the Wrong Gallery exists as a mushroom stool, a benign fungus, from atop which the organizers posit questions about art's accessibility, consumption, and reliance on codified structures such as magazines and galleries. Although Subotnick quips "We are too small to annoy anyone," the trio's squat operation nonetheless faces one long-standing nemesis: the fire marshal. **Michael Clifton**

Photo Jason Nocito
Phil Collins installation

The Wrong Gallery is located at 516A½ West 20th Street, NYC
"Sam Durant" opens March 3, 2003