



- [Previous](#)
- [Articles](#)
- [People](#)
- [Movies/Videos](#)
- [TV/Radio](#)
- [Music](#)
- [Theater](#)
- [Books](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Explore Pittsburgh](#)

Arts & Entertainment

Short Takes: Andrew Johnson installation puts viewer into Middle East conflict

Tuesday, March 04, 2003

Arts & Entertainment writers offer capsule comments on this, that and the other thing ...

FANTASY BASEBALL CHALLENGE
Click here for details

FANTASY RACING CHALLENGE
Click here for details

Addicted to TV?

TV Q&A
Submit your question
CLICK HERE

DINING GUIDE
CLICK HERE

Weddings
TIPS, TRENDS
LOCAL VENDORS
AND MORE.
CLICK HERE

Weather
CLICK HERE

'Pressed: When Words Were Earth'

"There can be no separation between pure and political language; therefore cultural language (such as art) is always political language, a voice raised either in assent or dissent."

Whether or not one takes issue with the breadth of this assertion by Gary Nickard, made to accompany a 2001 installation by artist Andrew Johnson, its fit with Johnson's oeuvre -- which mixes hot issues and cool reason -- is a good one.

In visual drills that are savvy, poetic and raise questions that society would like to ignore, Johnson, like a conceptual Cubist, challenges his viewers to consider events from perspectives other than mainstream via work that is intensely researched and painstakingly crafted.

"Pressed: When Words Were Earth," at Chatham College, is a response to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that at first seems benign. As the visitor walks between the tracks of the Caterpillar bulldozer looming ahead, the stroll becomes burdened: by the discomfiting audio, by the rows of barbed wire cutting access to verdant olive trees and crystalline blue, by an American flag, by the fruit and child's backpack lying in mud that begins to look more like mangled flesh.

The visitor is implicated. It's where Johnson wants him/her to be.

"Pressed" continues through March 15 in the Woodland Art Gallery. Gallery hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. For information, call 412-365-1232.

Review by Mary Thomas, Post-Gazette Art Critic

Common

It was a night when hip-hop bared its soul and roots.

It began with the English female duo of Floetry, whose strong songwriting ability was showcased in their debut single "Floetic." Although they live now in Philadelphia, they were fresh faces to the 800 people packed into Metropol on Sunday night.

Talib Kweli, minus his famous counterpart Mos Def, performed a couple of their tracks along with his instrumentally charged release "Get By." Focusing on lucid lyrics and crystal-clear sounds, Kweli has risen from the pigeonhole "conscious" emcees often find themselves in to the status of a focused musician.

One of the grandfathers of the industry, Gang Starr, with DJ Premier and Guru, set the score straight with an educational lesson on tracks and beats. Premier stopped the revelry to announce, "I'm going to drop some records and you've got to sing. If you don't know it, then you're in the wrong place." His prowess on the turntables has made Premier one of the most sought-after producers in the business, working with artists from Eminem to Biggie.

Common, with his unassuming smile and melodic rhyme, summed up the evening by starting his set with "Soul Power" from his new album "Electric Circus." "I Use to Love H.E.R.," off his "Common Sense" album, mesmerized the audience. The night ended with a tribute to Big L, an up-and-coming rapper who was shot and killed just blocks away from his Harlem home in 1999.

Review by Sarah Lolley, For the Post-Gazette

'Live and Learn'

The cabaret revue "Live and Learn" at the Gemini Theater is a genial look at life through song, from a poignant tune about growing up from the Tom Hanks film "Big" to the quintessential song about old age, Stephen Schwartz's "No Time At All" from Pippin.

In between, Anthony "Tony" Dale, Dixie Tymitz and Lenore Milner brighten, charm and bring humor to our lives for an hour and a half on a chilly winter evening.

Dale has chosen material that isn't overly familiar and shows his respect for songwriters by including song prologues when appropriate.

Tymitz and Dale team up effectively for duets such as "Well, Did You Evah" and "Anything You Can Do."

But Milner steals the show with "Miss Byrd," a prim real estate agent with a secret lust for life, namely the condo super ("in more ways than one").

Pianist Matthew Brown provides the fast-paced musical accompaniment.

At the Gemini Theater at the Factory, 7501 Penn Ave., Point Breeze, 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. Tickets, \$10; 1-866-243-6460.

Review by Nancy Anderson, Post-Gazette Staff Writer

The Music

Before Coldplay on Sunday night at Palumbo, there was music by none other than The Music, a new British band touted by the New Musical Express as "potentially the most important group since Oasis."

Arriving 10 minutes early to maximize its stage time, The Music bucked the garage trend by combining a hyperactive beat with the shoegazing guitar work of My Bloody Valentine.

On top of that was shaggy-haired singer Robert Harvey sounding like Perry Farrell auditioning for a Rush cover band. In all that wailing, it was possible to pick out only a handful of words in the entire set, so, fittingly, one of the songs was introduced as "The Truth is No Words." While songwriting and stage presence aren't the selling points, The Music compensates with caffeinated energy and dizzying guitars.

One thing, though, mate: Just how important was Oasis anyway?

Review by Scott Mervis, Post-Gazette Weekend Editor

Sage Francis

Despite, or possibly because of, an eerie vocal similarity to Eminem (which could just be because he's white), Sage Francis is making a name for himself as a hot new talent on the hip-hop underground. One critic hailed Francis' "Personal Journals" as the hip-hop album to beat in 2002 and wrote, "The hip-hop gods must have been drunk when they created Sage Francis." Francis brings his tour in support of the album to Club Laga (412-323-1919) tonight at 8 with Gruvis Malt, a more experimental opener that's definitely worth the effort of getting to the show on time. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door.

Preview by Ed Masley, Post-Gazette Pop Music Critic

John Prine

For a guy who likes to boast on stage that he's too lazy to learn more chords, John Prine is a busy guy. He's back on the road, this time for a 14-date tour that brings him to Wheeling on Friday.

After wrangling his previous releases for his own Nashville label, Oh Boy Records, in the 1980s, Prine now markets his albums and merchandise and pushes the music of singer/songwriters Todd Snider, Donnie Fritts, Heather Eatman, R.B. Morris and Grammy-winning Western band Riders in the Sky.

Oh Boy, which also rescued the music of classic country artists including Conway Twitty, Roy Acuff, Merle Haggard, Roger Miller and Lorrie Morgan, in 2001 released its first set of original videos and DVDs. "John Prine Live From Sessions at West 54th," with guest vocalist Iris DeMent, captures the entire 13-song performance used in part for a PBS broadcast as well as outtakes from his interview with the series' host, John Hiatt. "Steve Goodman: Live from Austin City Limits and More" is a 20-song collection culled from the late Chicago folk

singer's appearances on "Austin City Limits," rare interview footage and the comments and memories of Goodman's old friends, Prine, Kris Kristofferson and Arlo Guthrie.

Prine plays Wheeling's Capital Music Hall at 8 p.m. Friday. \$28 and \$34, 1-800-624-5456.

Preview by John Hayes, Post-Gazette Staff Writer

[Back to top](#)  [E-mail this story](#) 

[Search](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Help](#) | [Corrections](#)

Copyright ©1997-2019 PG Publishing Co., Inc. All Rights Reserved.