

BEST OF AUSTIN 2008

# CRITICS PICKS

Arts & Entertainment

## Best DJ to Rally the Rumpshakers **DJ ORION**

Between beat-boy dance-offs to "Can We Kick It" and sweaty group sing-alongs of "Baby Got Back," this little trickster rallied the rumpshakers to the sounds of cumbias and *vallenatos*. Homegrown DJ Orion, resident DJ at Creekside Lounge this summer, opened up our sonic palates, inciting one and all to grab a partner and infuse moves with some fiery Latin passion. Admittedly, there were some awkward hip motions to dodge and an increased risk of spinning bodies colliding, but there was laughter! Smiles and giggles! Unabashed people moving their feet outside of their comfort patterns and having a good time. DJ Orion, who spent the better part of last year touring with Yo Majesty, has ratcheted up the dance scene here in the ATX. No more "Dancing With Myself" – let's get a little closer, swerve those hips, and spin, baby, spin.  
[info@djorion.com](mailto:info@djorion.com)  
[www.djorion.com](http://www.djorion.com)

## Best Local Champions of the Lush Life **LOVEY AND LOVEY**

When ColdTowne Theater's Tami Nelson and Michael Jastroch get to channeling the likes of Nick and Nora Charles in their tippie-happy sketch comedy *Lovey and Lovey*, even teetotalers in the audience get a little drunk on the brash badinage and gin-soaked barbs the hilarious couple unleashes. Hell, if they could just get Arthur Simone's Buddy to dress up as a wirehaired fox terrier, they'd be even better than the originals.  
4803-B Airport, 524-2807.  
[www.coldtowne.com](http://www.coldtowne.com)

## Best Street-Party Fundraiser **KLRU'S BLOCK PARTY**

KLRU's annual fundraising Block Party is one of the biggest, splashiest, and most far-reaching events in Central Texas. The party really began about 20 years ago as the *Austin City Limits* Gala but has morphed into the Block Party, with more than 800 attendees and top-name entertainment such as Robert Randolph, Los Lonely Boys, and Brad Paisley. As a fundraiser to manifest the planned ACL Studio Theatre in the Block 21 development across from City Hall, its success goes without saying ... but as a party, it is immaculately conceived and executed.  
2504-B Whitis, 471-4811.  
[www.klr.org](http://www.klr.org)

## Best Ambassador and Choral Director **HANNIBAL LOKUMBE**

There's a whole town just east of us giving that old truism "learning at the foot of the master" some legs ... and some voice. Jazz master and Smithville native son Hannibal Lokumbe (né Marvin Peterson) came home to Central Texas to settle in Bastrop after Hurricane Katrina. For the past two years, the Grammy-nominated trumpeter/composer has led that entire community in some fantastical bursts of cross-cultural exploration and improvisation in two glorious citywide New Orleans New Years celebrations which featured area school students pumping out some seriously fine holy modal jazz, a community choir of everyday folks tackling rhythm and harmony and sounding like angels, honored guests such as Irma Thomas, Dr. John, the Treme Brass Band, and more. This year, Africa Comes to Bastrop is not only the name of the holiday celebration slated for late December but what is going to go down, as Lokumbe and the entire city welcome West African master drummer Moussa Diabate and the 14-member Djeli Kunda drum and dance ensemble on the last Saturday of this year.  
[hannibalokumbe@afriglobal.net](mailto:hannibalokumbe@afriglobal.net)



SHELLEY HIAM

## Best Freak Show **999 EYES FREAKSHOW**

The last, or maybe just the newest, traditional touring freak show in America. What's that you say? "Freak" is a bad word? Then how about weird, marvelous, awesome, inspiring, educational, historic, entertaining, and even a little risqué? A glorious rebellion of biomorphic diversity in a world of physical orthodoxy.  
[999eyesfreakshow@gmail.com](mailto:999eyesfreakshow@gmail.com)  
[www.999eyes.com](http://www.999eyes.com)

TODD V. WOLFSON



## Best 'If You See the L **VICTORY**

Dropping by to hear a legendary club can be a hit days. Sometimes it's open, sometimes just for special mural – honoring Lavelle W of soul, and Johnny Holmes Grill in 1945 – has recently wall, the Victory seems thr around it. So catching it op ing a diamond glittering in 1104 E. 11th, 902-5057.  
[www.historicvictorygrill.org](http://www.historicvictorygrill.org)

## Best Lyrical Dream Ye **RYAN WILLIS ENEMY : T**

Designer Ryan Willis had a dream and built a mind-blowing book: lyrics of three Public Enemy albums presented with the aesthetics of a medieval Bible. Line numbers like a hymnal so you can reference Chuck D by verse and chapter. On fine hand-laid paper with the revolutionary verse o in Adobe Jenson, based on a in 1470. Now all Willis needs tract going and have this bo "Fight the Power."  
[ryan@flatcrabs.com](mailto:ryan@flatcrabs.com)  
[www.flatcrabs.com/p/public\\_e](http://www.flatcrabs.com/p/public_e)