

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days

Opens 7 March
Starring Anamaria Marinca and Laura Vasiliu
Princess Theatre (10377 82 avenue)

Released to universal critical acclaim, this Romanian film captured the elusive Palme d'Or at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival and currently has a rating of 97 on Metacritic, giving it the fifth-highest score ever. In only his second feature film, director Cristian Mungiu tells the emotionally gut-wrenching story of two students living in Bucharest, Romania in 1987, during the twilight years of Ceausescu's communist dictatorship.

After one of the girls becomes pregnant, they organize an illegal abortion in an era where the Romanian government authoritatively enforced childbirth as a way to strengthen their country and economy.

PDB Bach: The Vegas Years

by Peter Schickele
Runs 7-8 March at 8pm
Winspear Centre (4 Sir Winston Churchill Square)

The 21st of Johann Sebastian Bach's 20 sons, PDQ Bach was a forgotten musical outcast of one of the most prestigious musical lineages ever. An apprentice to the inventor of the musical saw, in 1756 PDQ met with Leopold Mozart and urged him to teach his gifted son Wolfgang Amadeus how to play billiards. Renowned for wanton musical plagiarism, Bach is known for some of the most inept compositions in history and is, in fact, a fictitious, satirical creation of music professor Peter Schickele.

But true or not, this series sees a "reproduction" of PDQ's music during his years in Sin City, making one of the most humorous orchestral shows you'll see anywhere.

Golden Key Charity Concert

Saturday, 8 March at 7pm
The Pawn Shop (10549 82 avenue)

The University of Alberta Golden Key society is holding a benefit concert in support of USC Canada, a nationwide charity that helps provide food security and promote human rights in third world countries. Featuring five local bands of the rock and metal variety who donated their time and effort for free to the show, all proceeds go towards USC donations.

Tzadeka CD Release Party

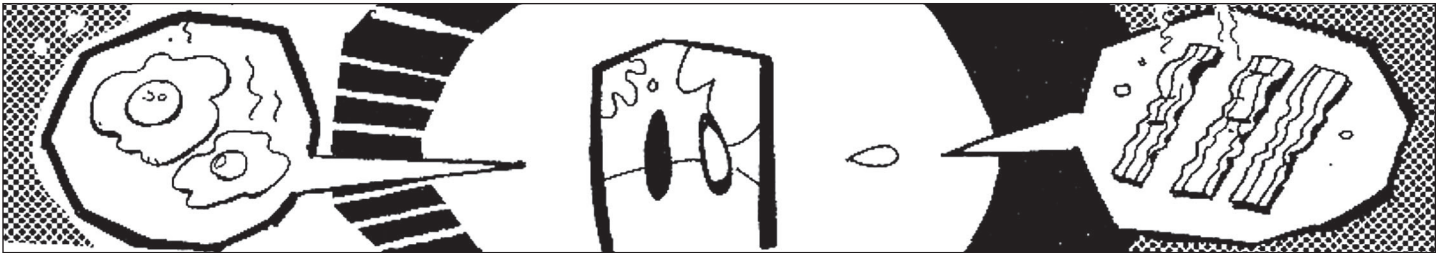
With Corvid Lorax and People's Poets
Friday, 7 March at 8pm
Velvet Underground (1003 102 street)

Also known as Solar Warrior from the Edmonton rap collective Eshod Ibn Wyza, MC Maigan van der Giessan releases her solo album under the guise of Tzadeka at this show in the Velvet Underground. Taking a different direction than her group's rap-influenced path, Tzadeka sounds like old-school '50s jazz singing, Billie Holiday-style, mixed with elements of hip hop and reggae.

Steve Earle

With Alison Moorer
Wednesday, 12 March at 6:30 pm
Jubilee Auditorium

Now recognized more for his ardent political vocals and activism than his previous problems with drug use and the law, Steve Earle embodies down-home American folk rock as much as Bruce Springsteen, despite staying considerably more low-key. The two-time Grammy-winner has led a storied three-decade career and, in recent years, has been one of the music business' most vocal opponents of the Bush administration. Such sentiments continue on his latest release, *Washington Square Serenade*.



Back from beyond the expiry date

Four years after he got a serious case of creative burnout, Rob Schrab's resurrected his cult hit *Scud the Disposable Assassin*—though not every fan has welcomed the robot's return

TYSON DURST
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Scud The Disposable Assassin, an independent comic book created by Rob Schrab, captured a loyal following way back in 1994, publishing 20 issues and even a couple of spinoff titles over four years. Then the comic disappeared, leaving fans wondering when or if it would ever return.

Ten years later, Schrab is back to finish his cult hit with issue 21 of *Scud The Disposable Assassin*. The story takes place in a comically absurd future where people can buy assassin robots out of vending machines to do their bidding. When they kill their programmed target, they self-destruct. The titular assassin, however, has self-preservation on the mind.

"I'm doing this mostly for myself because I hate walking away from anything, and I hate quitting stuff, to a fault. With *Scud*, at the time, it was something I was working really hard on, and I wasn't really getting the same joy out of it that I did when I was first working on it," recalls Schrab, who now resides in LA.

Trying to make a small publishing company work, along with getting a couple of *Scud* video games on the Sega Saturn and PC, began to eat into Schrab's creative time and energies, eventually leading to a burnout that would put the comic on hold.

"It was a weird time. I never really wanted to be a businessman. I only wanted to draw and create," he says. "I found myself dealing with more things like the video game, and it was taking time away from the comic book. I was trying to make things easier on me by having more spinoffs come out like

La Cosa Nostroid and *Tales From the Vending Machine*. I thought, 'Oh, this'll fill up the gaps in between books, and maybe I can spend more time on these books and make them better.' But it just made more work for me because even when I did get artists and writers that I really liked, I did have to oversee them, and it gave me more uncreative work to do."

"I'm doing this mostly for myself because I hate walking away from anything, and I hate quitting stuff, to a fault."

ROB SCHRAB
SCUD CREATOR

Since putting his comic career on hold, Schrab has been working in Hollywood on various TV and movie projects with many high profile talents and companies. Coming back to finish *Scud the Disposable Assassin*, he's painfully aware that some of his harshest critics may be former readers.

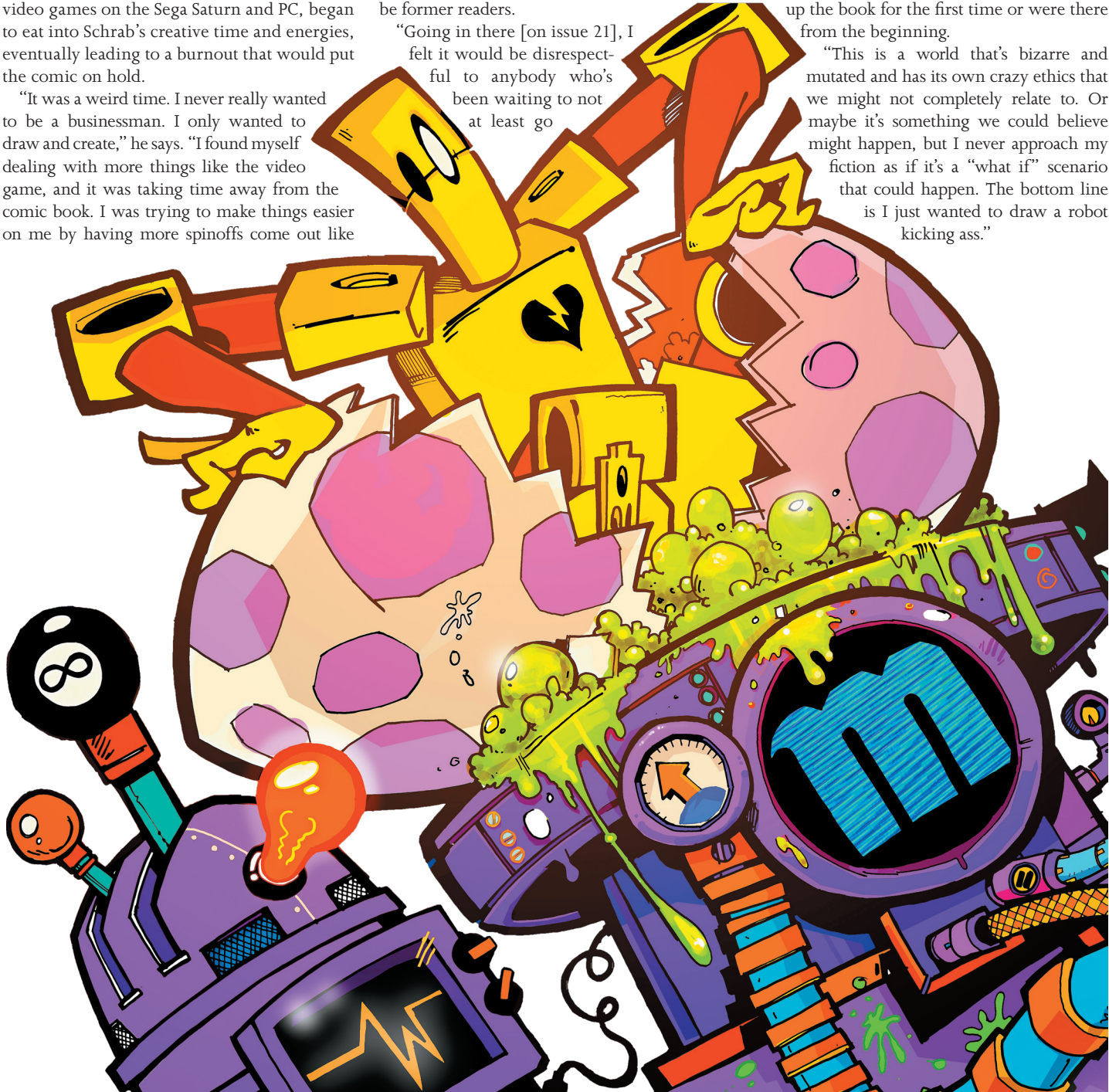
"Going in there [on issue 21], I felt it would be disrespectful to anybody who's been waiting to not at least go

'Hey, I understand. You have every right to hate me and the book.' I was googling 'Scud 21' to look and see if anybody was liking it, and I was getting lots of really great feedback about it. But then I found this one review that just tore it to shreds. It really bummed me out because this guy was just: 'This is drawn horribly, and Schrab's really let himself go; who cares? I let go of *Scud* long ago,' and I was just like, 'Wow.'"

"There was just so much venom there that I realized that I really hurt and pissed off a lot of people, and I don't blame them. In issue 21, *Scud* actually looks almost right at the fourth wall like, 'I don't know how I'm going to do it, but I promise I'll make it up to you.' And that was the goal: to try as hard as I could to make it up."

Four new and final issues of *Scud* are being published to complete the saga, accompanied by guest covers drawn by renowned artists Ashley Wood, Jim Mahfood, David Hartman, and Doug Tennapel. On top of the new issues, an omnibus edition is due out this summer, collecting the entire *Scud* series. Considering this news, Schrab is off to a solid start delivering on that promise to fans, whether they're picking up the book for the first time or were there from the beginning.

"This is a world that's bizarre and mutated and has its own crazy ethics that we might not completely relate to. Or maybe it's something we could believe might happen, but I never approach my fiction as if it's a "what if" scenario that could happen. The bottom line is I just wanted to draw a robot kicking ass."



JOHN KMECH
He knows the capital of Thailand all too well