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### • **SFJAZZ Spring Season Out of Control; Lou Donaldson, Tomasz Stanko, Hypnotic Brass Ensemble, Caetano Veloso, more**

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14th December 2009

### [SFJAZZ Spring Season Out of Control; Lou Donaldson, Tomasz Stanko, Hypnotic Brass Ensemble, Caetano Veloso, more](#)



Jesus Lord, why do they do it to us? SFJAZZ's spring season is announced today, and once again the booking has turned up a crazy, diverse lineup full of wide-ranging talent and scattered must-sees. Exciting stuff to say the least.

On May 29, Blue Note legend **Lou Donaldson** blows soul-jazz roots at the Herbst. On Apr. 11, my man **Tomasz Stanko** drops in with his quintet to the Florence Gould Theatre at the Legion of Honor; the ticket includes entry to the museum. (Stanko's recent tribute to Krystof Komeda is sublime.) Apr. 25 brings **Charles Lloyd** with **Jason Moran, Reuben Rogers and Eric Harland** to the Palace of Fine Arts; this quartet [is incredible](#) and shouldn't be missed.

On Feb. 21, Touareg political pioneers **Tinariwen** plays the Palace of Fine Arts. Count the cratediggers on Apr. 17 for Brazilian pioneer **Caetano Veloso** singing at the Masonic, and on June 11, the excellent bassist **Marcus Miller** replays Miles Davis' electric era at the Herbst.

It keeps going on! On May 1 it's the **Hypnotic Brass Ensemble**, the Chicago-bred sensations, playing two shows at the Palace of Fine Arts. On Mar. 20, the hip-hop-influenced **Robert Glasper Quartet** plays with Japanese star **Hiromi** at the Herbst Theatre. And Mar. 13 brings alto saxophonist and former Vijay Iyer collaborator **Rudresh Manthappa** to the Swedish American Music Hall.

**Keith Jarrett, Pharoah Sanders** and **Joshua Redman** all play separate solo shows, and **Bobby McFerrin, Chris Thiele, Salif Keita** and **Max Raabe** are in the mix, too. There's way more; check out the full and complete lineup [here](#), and if you're like me, you'll start saving up for tickets.

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14th December 2009

### [Live Review: Lady Gaga at Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, San Francisco](#)



“Well, San Francisco,” cooed Lady Gaga, wearing one of dozens of bazonkers outfits eclipsed in ridiculousness only by the feathers, leotards, Mickey ears, sequined chokers and ill-fitting hot pants donned by her audience, “this is our first date together, which means I can suck your cock and still feel okay.”

So yeah, let us hail the emergence of a new pop star and all that. Lady Gaga sang, danced and swore her way into the shamelessly superficial affections of San Francisco for two very fun hours tonight, asserting her perfectionist dedication to fame, fashion, sex appeal and music. In that order. She also loves to say “fuck.” She may love to say “fuck” more than making music. Crass, vulgar, loves it. Selections from the Gaga patter book:

“I don’t know if you’ve heard, but I have a pretty tremendous dick.”

“Let me see your fucking teeth! *I am not a dentist!* I’m a free bitch!”

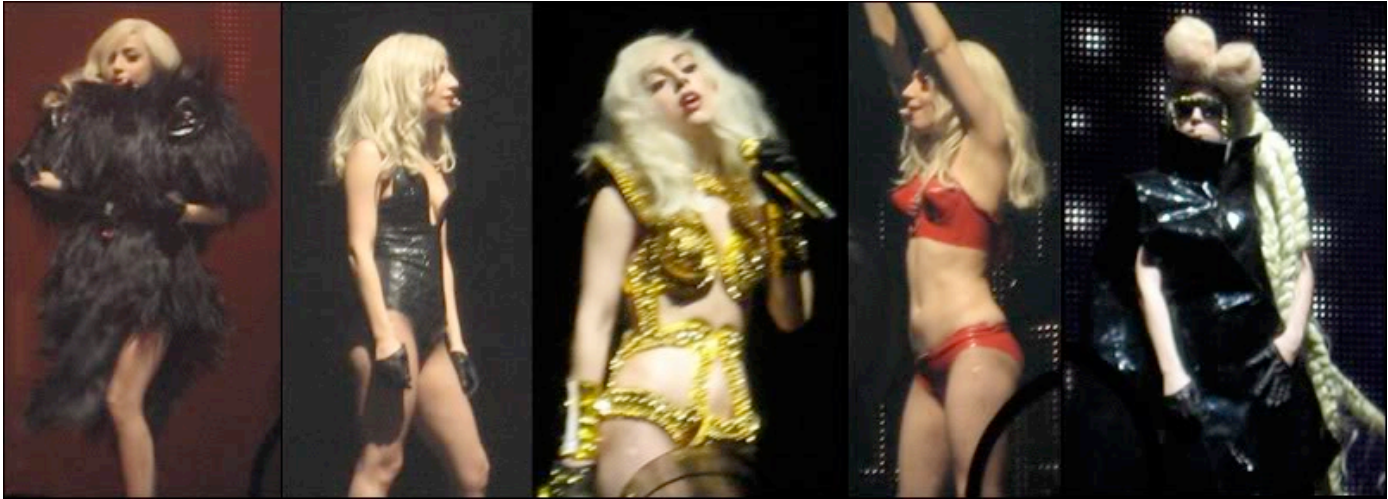
“Do you like my show so far? If you don’t, I don’t care, ’cause you can fucking leave!”

“Do you want to fuck me? Come on, San Francisco!”

Adding up the costume changes, set changes, stories about her fans and her pushy record label and her days living in a studio apartment plus legs legs legs dance dance dance skinny skinny skinny epic chorus part dance breakdown red bikini flip hair #1 song in the country scream scream gay gay gay keytar fame fame aliens tinkerbelle i love you i love you i love you i love you **hundreds of counterfeit tickets outside** dance dance fuck off dance rah-rah ah-ah-ah-ah skinny skinny fame crawl crawl shake shake singy singy sing song, Lady Gaga is decidedly here to stay. Despite sometimes not making very much sense when talking to a crowd.

“Some of you may not know where to fit in in the world, but know that you always have a place with me. When you are lonely, I’ll be lonely too. And that is THE FAME!!” Huh?

“The way my fans work their cameras, it’s like kings writing the histories of their kingdoms.” *Huh?*



But fuck it, she was genuinely appreciative of her fans—she thanked them, like, 30 times, I swear—and put on A PARTY-BLIZZARD OF A SHOW. Entire auditorium letting hella loose for “Just Dance,” “Paparazzi,” “Poker Face,” “Shameless,” and big cluster-love *we are one* closer “Bad Romance.” (It helped that her warm-up music was 35 minutes of MJ, which killed it more than opener Kid Cudi.) Everything on point, choreographed or improved with such fluidity so as to look choreographed, real live actual singing, backup dancers great, huge spectacle. “How to Give Fans Their Money’s Worth,” by Lady Gaga, coming soon from Da Capo Press.

Gaga makes a big deal of being “from the underground” and doing things her own way, and it’s true—no major label is going to call a meeting to say, “You know, you’ve got the sound, the look, the moves, but what you really need is a *video screen of a waifish girl throwing up all over you*. Maybe you should also put the barrel of a machine gun in your mouth when you’re at the piano and tell your audience to fuck themselves.” That’s all her.

But what Gaga has is a fulfillment of dual needs; one for that uncensored down-to-earthness and another for something that we kinda forget in all this dancing on the grave of the record industry that we’ve been doing. We need pop stars, no matter how obvious the myth. “The thing I hate more than anything is the truth,” bespoke Gaga at one point tonight, “I can’t stand the truth—in fact, I prefer a giant dose of bullshit.”

Fuck if Lady Gaga doesn’t have the whole illusion down.



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13th December 2009

## [The Cassette Gods Are Reading My Mind](#)



Domino Records released the Dirty Projectors' *Bitte Orca* on cassette! [It can be bought here.](#)

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9th December 2009

## [Top 20 Albums of 2009](#)



1. **Dirty Projectors** – Bitte Orca (Domino)
2. **The-Dream** – Love vs. Money (Def Jam)
3. **K’naan** – Troubadour (A&M / Octone)
4. **Nellie McKay** – Normal as Blueberry Pie (Verve)
5. **Thorns of Life** – Live at 924 Gilman (Torrent)
6. **Sunn o)))** – Monoliths and Dimensions (Southern Lord)
7. **Tyondai Braxton** – Central Market (Warp)
8. **Nomo** – Invisible Cities (Ubiquity)
9. **P.O.S.** – Never Better (Rhymesayers)
10. **Litany for the Whale** – Dolores (Molsook / PMM)
11. **Grizzly Bear** – Veckatimest (Warp)
12. **Superchunk** – Crossed Wires (Merge)
13. **Not to Reason Why** – Would You Hug Fire? (Pandacide / 1912)
14. **Vijay Iyer Trio** – Historicity (ACT)
15. **Passion Pit** – Manners (Frenchkiss / Columbia)
16. **Adam Theis & the Jazz Mafia** – Brass, Bows & Beats (Jazz Mafia)
17. **Souls of Mischief** – Montezuma’s Revenge (Heiro)

18. **The Full Blast** – Black Hole (Atavistic)  
 19. **Finale** – T.I.M.E. (River City)  
 20. **Green Day** – 21st Century Breakdown (Reprise)

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9th December 2009

## [Johnny Downer, R.I.P.](#)



Like many of you, I heard the sad news that Johnny Downer, guitarist for the excellent Sonoma County band Free Peoples, died unexpectedly while vacationing in Mexico over the weekend. He leaves behind a huge group of loving family and friends, as well as his exemplary recorded work with Free Peoples. He played the hell out of the guitar, man. I saw him play with Free Peoples several times, and it was my pleasure to present his deserving band with a gold record award last year at the North Bay Music Awards. He will be missed.

Condolences are collecting [here](#) and [here](#). A memorial is planned for Dec. 18 in Costa Mesa, CA, and the Hopmonk Tavern in Sebastopol is hosting a fittingly lengthy tribute show on January 9, from 4pm 'til close. More info, as it comes in, can be accessed [here](#).

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7th December 2009

## [One Love](#)



My constituent David Sason has a [cover story](#) in the *Bohemian* this week about the rampant homophobia in reggae music, tracing it to the sources in Jamaica and examining the cultural roots of hatred. It's worth a [full read](#), and when you're done, there's even more [here](#).

Dancehall artist Beenie Man has a quote in the article:

*Beenie Man proudly performs his controversial songs, including "Damn," which has him "dreaming of a new Jamaica" where he can "execute all gays."*

*But perhaps it's just a matter of semantics. In a 2006 statement, Beenie Man explained his point of view: "Jamaica is not against gay people. Gay means consented sex. What we have in Jamaica is not what it is in England, where two men live together. That's not it in Jamaica, and these people fail to understand that. In Jamaica, gay is rape. It's a big man with their money going into the ghetto and picking these little youth who ain't got nothing. And then give them money and then involving them."*

*"There were 550 youths who got raped inna Jamaica, you know? And nobody seems to speak of that. Nobody sees the youth get raped and throat cut because the man who raped him, he knows him, and he doesn't want him to go back and say he did it. And these things still happening."*

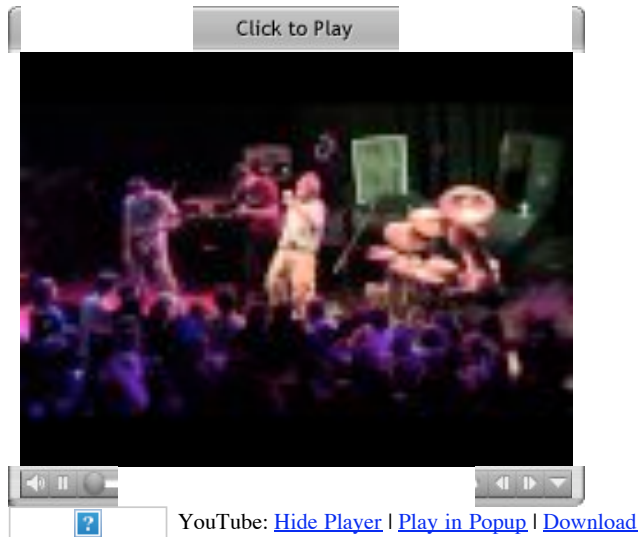
Obviously, Beenie Man is a confused individual with no proper set of logic and probably, I'm guessing, no gay friends. His explanation is about as preposterous as myself saying, "Santa Rosa is not against Canadians. Canadian means nice person. What we have in Santa Rosa is not like other places. In Santa Rosa, Canadian means fucking asshole. 550 youths were beat up by fucking assholes. Nobody seems to speak of that. All these fucking assholes are still around. That's why I have a song called 'Canadians Are Fucking Assholes.'"

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6th December 2009

## [Things You Don't See at the Phoenix Everyday](#)

It's always a special treat when Tom Gaffey, usually with a broom or an apple in his hand, takes the stage at his own theater to sing a song or two. This past weekend, as the Phoenix Theater celebrated its 105th anniversary, [Toast Machine](#) cajoled him into the spotlight for "Rock and Roll All Night":



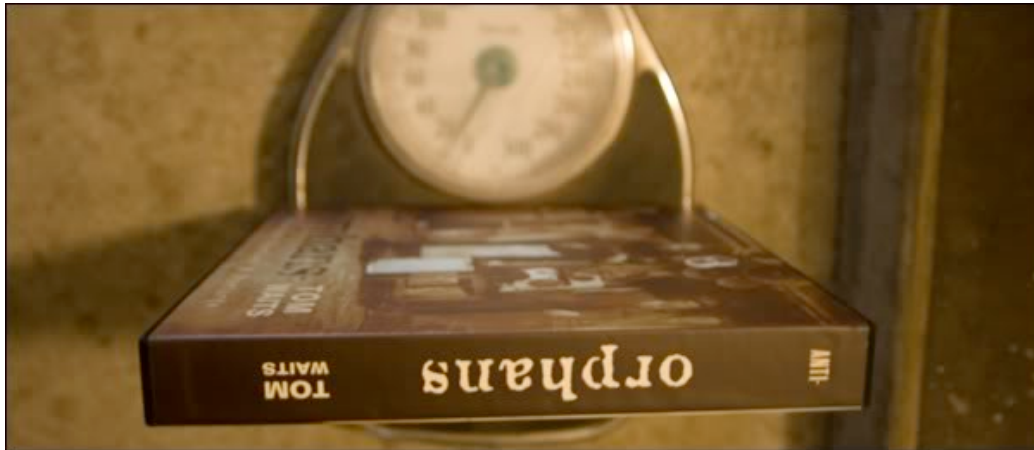
Such happenings came at the end of an unusual week for the Phoenix. On Thursday, Petaluma's Kala Ukelele Co. hosted a ukelele workshop, where everyone in the crowd learned how to play a few chords. Any local hardcore bands looking for a ukelele player?



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6th December 2009

## [On the Stereo: Tom Waits 'Orphans' 7xLP Box Set](#)



**My scale says it weighs 8 1/2 lbs.**

Seven LPs, 180-gram each, separate jackets. Huge 32-page booklet. Bonus disc with six extra songs not on the CD version, including the OG “Diamond In Your Mind,” Fats Waller’s “Crazy ‘Bout My Baby” and Kurt Weill’s “Cannon Song.” Canvas-wrapped box, *Anthology of American Folk Music*-style, with embossed spine. **The thing is beautiful.**

[I was plenty excited when the CD version of Tom Waits' \*Orphans\* came out](#), but this is on some other shit entirely. ANTI- is being vague about exactly how limited it is, but I'd pick one up while you have the chance. It officially comes out Tuesday, Dec. 8. **IMPORTANT:** there's been a couple early reports about some sets missing an LP, or with two copies of the same LP, so check it out thoroughly after you buy it. **As if you wouldn't anyway.**



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5th December 2009

### [Wears the Late Crown](#)

[This has got to be one of the most amazing newspaper corrections I've ever seen.](#)

posted in [Uncategorized](#) | [1 Comment](#)

2nd December 2009

## [Too Much Joy, Four Sad Cents](#)



The name [Too Much Joy](#) might not ring any bells, or, if it does, it's a tiny bell also sounded flatly by forgotten major-label bands like Dog's Eye View, Cry of Love or Butt Trumpet. Being forgotten by the public is manageable—maudlin drinking can provide acceptance of failure for most ex-stars. But what about being forgotten by your record label, an entity that's contractually obligated to keep records of your dead band's meager sales?

Tim Quirk, the singer of Too Much Joy, shares an irresistible story over at Gizmodo, "[My \\$62.47 Royalty Statement](#)," chronicling a thirteen-month battle to convince Warner Bros. to report his band's digital sales. The three Warner Bros. albums by Too Much Joy haven't been in print physically for ten years, but Quirk knew that nostalgia-driven downloads of his band were a very real thing,

because he works for Rhapsody. Not too surprisingly, his royalty statements from Warner Bros. reflected absolutely zero downloads.

In the course of a few tangents involving a Warner Bros. employee laughing that "\$10,000 is nothing!," a primer on how unrecouped bands such as his have actually earned a profit for their label, and lots of keen insights into the world of digital reporting, Quirk gets his next statement. It shows the sum of \$62.47. Quirk:

*The sad thing is I don't even think Warner is deliberately trying to screw TMJ and the hundreds of other also-rans and almost-weres they've signed over the years. The reality is more boring, but also more depressing. Like I said, they don't actually owe us any money. But that's what's so weird about this, to me: they have the ability to tell the truth, and doing so won't cost them anything. They just can't be bothered. They don't care, because they don't have to.*

Read the whole thing [here](#).

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