

CULTURE, ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



BEST LOCAL ARTIST Cryface

Riverside artist and designer Cryface (that's Stephen Bunnell to his mom and the IRS) found the inspiration for his name and creative handle from an emoticon he used whenever he killed yet another opponent while playing online games. But in past year, he has enjoyed even greater success with his aptly named Scream Bloody Murder clothing line that included a killer launch party featuring live music by his thrash pals and found him adding names like GWAR, Black Dahlia Murder and Last to Fall to his roster of T-shirt design customers. Featured in a cover story for our June 22 issue (with some groovy Captain Caveman-inspired artwork), Cryface has left a smile on many an art lover's face. And who knows what the next year will bring? Maybe he'll branch out into starting his own chain of ghoulish-punker boutiques. Might we suggest "Rot Topic"?

BEST ART EXHIBIT OF 2010 Imagination Squared

When local artists Dolf James and Christina Foard sent out the call for local artists to stop

by their studio and pick up a blank 5-inch-by-5-inch square with the promise that it would be part of a community arts experiment, the enthusiastic response proved that, given the chance, Northeast Florida artists will create together enthusiastically. Any skeptics can wander over to MOCA Jax and behold the exhibit "Imagination Squared: The Creative Response Experiment," a 50-foot-by-8-foot wall composed of more than 900 pieces painted by many known and lesser-known artists, proving once again there's nothing square about practicing a little artistic unity.

BEST MUSEUM Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens

Located on the St. Johns River and featuring three distinct flower gardens (one nearly a century old), the Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens is a must-see Northeast Florida cultural landmark. And that's just the backyard, folks! The museum's permanent collection boasts an impressive array of antiquities, porcelains and notable works of 19th Century landscape paintings, celebrated Old Masters and distinctive treasures such as Bougureau's

1878 mystical contemplation, "Return from the Harvest." This past year, the museum hosted the "locals-only" exhibit "Collector's Choice," which allowed area collectors to flash their cultural bling. The current exhibit is "The Art of War," a collection of WWII propaganda that runs through Nov. 14. "Arts Ventures" opens on Nov. 18 and runs through Jan. 2.

BEST GALLERY Waterwheel Art Gallery

Since 1983, Fernandina Beach's Waterwheel Art Gallery has prided itself in displaying works by local artists and being a willing and helpful liaison between the artist and prospective buyer. Owner Stephanie Medina was raised in an artistic family and is an artist in her own right, but prefers to focus her creative talents in helping clients find just the right piece, as well as offering full framing and restoration services. Located near the marshes on Amelia Island, the gallery takes its name from the waterwheel that sits on the property.

BEST ART WALK First Wednesday Art Walk

The first Wednesday of each month finds art

lovers, movers and shakers, as well as gawkers and Tweeters descending on downtown Jacksonville's core for First Wednesday Art Walk. From fine to freaky, the culturally curious can satisfy their cravings for all things creative and enjoy live street performances, vendors at Hemming Plaza selling everything from lithographs to lemonade, and more than 40 galleries, museums, eateries and bars. Any belly-achers who moan that there's "nothing to do" in Northeast Florida haven't hit this open-air party.

BEST LOCAL MUSICIAN Nate Holley

Illinois-import Nate Holley has been localized by the Jacksonville Beach music scene to the point of kicking a tattoo that features the Sunshine State with a big heart to represent J-ville. But his music goes deeper than mere municipal affections, with this electro-acoustic singer-songwriter's tunes finding an audience whether he plays a solo gig (Holley playing over digital "loops" as a 21st century one-man band) or to a packed room at Freebird Live. His latest release, "Dance Above the Details," is another collection of Holley's solid songwriting chops, backed by an adept crew of area players.

BEST PLACE TO ATTEND A CONCERT St. Augustine Amphitheatre

Northeast Florida is smitten with the St. Augustine Amphitheatre — and with good reason. The 4,000-seat, St. Johns County-owned outdoor venue brought some gangbuster shows in 2010 (read: My Morning Jacket, Sublime with Rome, Aretha Franklin, Ringo Starr and Toby Keith). Built in 1965 to commemorate St. Augustine's 400th anniversary with regular performances of "Cross and Sword," the 16-acre section of Anastasia State Park underwent some major renovations in the early 2000s to become one of Florida's prime live music venues. Shows we'd like to see in 2011 include Beck, Band of Horses and LCD Soundsystem.

BEST CONCERT OF '10 The Black Eyed Peas

They may or may not be your preferred side dish, but The Black Eyed Peas know how to entertain. The foursome, consisting of will.i.am, apl.de.ap, Taboo and Fergie, came to Veterans Memorial Arena with openers LMFAO and Ludacris this past February on their The E.N.D. World Tour. Thousands of concertgoers were treated to tunes like "Don't Phunk With My Heart," "My Humps," an encore of "Boom Boom Pow" and "I Gotta Feeling." Not to mention the backup dancers, light show,



Best New Club: Whisky River



Best Gallery: Waterwheel Art Gallery

BEST OF JAX

aerobatics, slick costumes and pyrotechnics. Word's still out on whether nature called Fergie on stage ...

BEST LIVE MUSIC CLUB **Freebird Live**

Just in this past year, the stage of Freebird Live has featured acts ranging from the mellow surfer-stylings of Donavon Frankenreiter to the sonic assault of Sick Of It All, and will once again present J.J. Grey & Mofro for three nights in what has become the club's New Year tradition. By booking such diverse acts in a room that features two bars and a state-of-the-art sound system, it's no wonder fans flock to this much-loved Jax Beach club to get their musical fix.

BEST DANCE CLUB **The Pearl**

The Pearl on North Main Street is the hottest place to shake a leg. It's a smoker-friendly club with full bar, extensive beer and wine selection, DJs spinning the best in indie and pop dance tunes and an eclectic crowd. Situated in the old TSI location in Springfield, The Pearl offers kitschy décor including a huge fake tree growing through the building, mosaic-tiled bathrooms with marbles cemented onto the toilet seat, and a light-up dance floor. And if you get too sweaty, there's a big outdoor patio area to cool off.

BEST GAY/LESBIAN CLUB **The Metro**

The Metro is more than a bar. For the past 17 years, it has functioned like an Italian or German social club for the lesbian, gay and transgendered community. The Metro supports all sorts of community enterprises, including sponsoring a flag football team, raising money for PFlag (Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians and Gays) and helping sponsor River City Pride celebration. The club's design is more functional than fashionable, but with seven different venues inside, it shows how many different kinds of people make up the LBGT community. On any given night, there are games of Texas Hold 'Em, ballroom dance lessons, female impersonators, Karaoke, a DJ and someone nearby tickling notes on the glass-topped baby-grand piano. With all that to offer, it's no surprise Metro remains a solid city fave.

BEST GENTLEMAN'S CLUB **Gold Club**

Jacksonville's Gold Club on General Doolittle Drive is the premier place to ogle the female form. The building's façade is quaintly covered in cottage stone, while the inside features a light-up stage with poles, full bar and private VIP booths. They also have happy hour every day from 5 to 7 p.m., with a free buffet and daily lunch specials. According to its website, if your meal's not served to you within 15 minutes, it's free. But we're pretty sure you didn't go for the food.

BEST DJ **Jenny Seinkiewicz at The Ritz**

From Top 40 to hip hop to synth-pop, Jenny Seinkiewicz spins everyone's favorite dance music. You can find the 30-something manning the DJ booth at The Ritz in Jax Beach every Wednesday through Saturday starting around 10 p.m. According to co-workers, Seinkiewicz is a "cool girl who's funny, entertaining and just fun to be around." Of course, having an awesome soundtrack doesn't hurt.

BEST NEW CLUB **Whisky River**

Johnny Bush penned the tune, Willie Nelson sang it and now Dale Earnhardt Jr. is slapping it on to-go containers and pint glasses. This summer, Whisky River, a restaurant owned by



Best Place to Attend a Concert: St. Augustine Amphitheatre

Earnhardt, opened its second location (the first is in Charlotte, N.C.) at St. Johns Town Center. With menu items like Dirty Mo's Cheesy Sticks and Tiny Baby Corn Dogs, waitresses in tight leather vests and Daisy Dukes, a full bar open until 2 a.m., a dance floor, DJ and a mechanical bull, we're sure this new club will be around for years to come.

BEST COMEDY CLUB **The Comedy Zone**

Northeast Floridians seeking a little comic relief for recessionary woes find it at The Comedy Zone. For nearly two decades, the comedy club in Mandarin's Ramada Inn has hosted some of the brightest, funniest yucksters on the laugh circuit. This past year saw Carlos Mencia and Jon "That thing got a Hemi?" Reep wisecrack from the club's stage, and every weekend seems to find another legendary or lesser-known act clowning around. And if you think you're funnier than that rube on stage, the club is now accepting students for a forthcoming workshop to let hecklers and hopefuls put their money where their mouth is. Who knows — you may be the next Robin Williams. Or at least the next John Byner. Who's John Byner? Exactly.

BEST KARAOKE **Austin Karaoke**

So you think you can sing a mean Stevie Nicks, but the only one who's heard it is your beagle Bob? Well, Austin Karaoke on Beach Boulevard is the best place to give your pipes a full-scale audition. This Karaoke empire has semi-private rooms to help keep hecklers and bachelorette parties out, and you can bring your own food and drinks, or choose from their selection of beer, wine and traditional Korean snacks. Austin Karaoke accommodates parties from two to 50, but reservations are required on weekends.

BEST POOL HALL **Pete's Bar**

Bob Dylan reportedly said you can "measure the pulse of a town by its pool room." That's true enough at Pete's Bar in Neptune Beach, where the cue-stick crowd ranges from sk8ters and lawyers to bikers and surf bunnies, with a strong showing from the U.S. Navy. Tom and John Whittingslow are the fourth generation (Pete Jensen's great-grandsons) to run the place, where it's still just a quarter to throw down. The center room at Pete's, where most of the tables are, was the original site for the mom-and-pop Rite Spot restaurant. Check out the décor in The Hut: Your picture may be on the wall (ours is!). And we're not saying anyone's a hustler, but Arlington Fats? Mayport Slim? C'mon.

BEST TRIVIA **Mellow Mushroom**

The best place to unload all of that useless knowledge you've been storing up for 30 years is Mellow Mushroom. A national pizza chain with

three locations in Northeast Florida, the eatery offers more than just eclectic pies, a full bar and cold beer. Right before NFL football, the 'shroom hosts "Trippin Trivia," a two-hour, team-style live trivia game with \$100 in prizes awarded every Monday night.

BEST LOCAL ACTOR/ACTRESS **Ashley Green**

Born in Jacksonville and a onetime Wolfson High School student, 23-year-old model and actress Green has appeared on TV shows like "Punk'd" and "Crossing Jordan," as well as starring in films like "Skateland" and "Summer's Blood." People Magazine named her one of their "World's Most Beautiful Women of 2010" and most recently she was a presenter at the 2010 MTV Video Music Awards. But Green is surely best known for her role as Alice Cullen, the vampire vixen who can see into the future in the immensely popular "Twilight" films. We can only hope that Green didn't predict the news about what could be her greatest achievement yet — appearing in Folio Weekly, y'all!

BEST COMMUNITY THEATER **Players By The Sea**

Since 1966, this Jacksonville Beach community theater group has consistently delivered impressive stage productions allowing local thespians to emote in front of packed houses filled with equally enthusiastic and loyal audiences. This past season featured productions of such diverse offerings as the romantic musical "Sabrina Fair," Allen Bennett's monologue-driven "Talking Heads" and "A Moon for the Misbegotten" by Eugene O'Neill. Currently staging the popular, boys-bare-all comedy "The Full Monty," this year's upcoming season at PBTS includes "Dracula" as well as a production of acclaimed playwright August Wilson's "Gem of the Ocean."

BEST PLACE TO SEE A MOVIE **Cinemark Tinseltown**

Judging by the rising wave of local film festivals and cinema societies, Northeast Florida film buffs love the intimacy of smaller movie houses and venues that screen indie flicks. But when we want to graze on popcorn and plop our ample derrieres into stadium seating whilst having our central nervous systems pleasantly altered with full surround sound and mega screens, we know where to go — Cinemark Tinseltown, baby! Located on Southside Boulevard, this 20-screen megaplex offers the latest in cinematic satisfaction, with XD sound and Real D 3-D projection, simulcasts special "live" broadcasts such as rock and opera concerts, and features killer eats like burgers, pizza, ice cream and even "designer coffee" drinks to help keep you awake once you decide to watch that new Louie Anderson-driven Space Opera yet again! Third time in a row? You dog!