

## Nothing's Obscure: Five Local Art Treasures You May Have Overlooked

**By Wayne Alan Brenner, Thu. May. 9** Some of these things are current and fleeting. Some of them are new but will persist in accessible forms. Some of them are from a while back, but bear revisiting – or experiencing for the first time, if you missed their debut.

**1.** This first one is a comic book – *Shadow Healer #1*, by **Morgan Coy**, **Karen Davidson**, and **Chris Chalik** – and it's so new it's not available until next week. Chalik's amazing artwork – *better than much of what's seen on the interior of major industry titles* – provides the visuals for a narrative that's like ... [hold on, let me activate the Descriptive Reduction Apparatus here] ... it's like *some weird amalgam of Carlos Castaneda and David Lynch set in the slackerly neighborhoods of East Austin and beyond*. This first issue will be released from the indie media moguls of Monofonus Press at a **beer-fueled party** in Farewell Books on *Wednesday, May 15, at 7pm*. Will there be a three-wolf moon in the darkling sky that night? In spirit, yes, at the very least.

**2.** This next one is the current exhibition, "**Artifact**," at **Tiny Park Gallery**, right there across the street from the fresh oysters & other culinary delights of Hillside Farmacy. We won't go on about the rest of what's in Tiny Park right now; we'll just point out what the ever-fascinating Beili Liu has provided: Four doorsized panes of dark glass sitting in salt-saturated water in metal trays, the crystals and encrustations of sodium chloride having climbed up the bottom of the glass panes and worked their way over the trays' edges even while eroding the metal itself. Stunning. Eerie. This is not the sort of installation a person buys for their home, even if they could afford it. This is the sort of installation you'd see along the pristine wall of some minimally furnished and high-ceilinged chamber in the **Tyrell Corporation HQ** just before they administer the Voight-Kampff test to you. And *this is the final Saturday to see it*, coming up: The gallery's open from noon to 5pm on that day. Go ahead – walk in long enough to take in the strange beauty of this saline-and-glass quartet, just ... mind the tiny origami unicorn near the door, okay?

**3.** We're partial to anything having to do with good barbecue, whether it's the *ding an sich* said to be waiting at the end of the line at Franklin Barbecue or Micklethwait Craft Meats, or the collection of pitmaster-tended beauty contained in **Wyatt McSpadden's** superlative *Texas BBQ* book of photography. We also have a soft spot in our funnybone for local improv comedy. Combine those predilections and you know why the idea of the Braised in Texas show at ColdTowne Theater is so appealing. The basic concept is "a day in the life of competitors, judges, and bystanders at a barbecue competition in Central Texas," the cast is fierce, and the whole thing's narrated by **John Ratliff**. Hell, yeah – *on Saturday nights through the end of June*.

**4.** It could be that the only thing that's equal to great barbecue is great sex – or maybe even great *writing* about sex? Well, maybe not that second thing, but the first is a sentiment Austin's own **Rosie Q Weaver** (of Bedpost Confessions fame) would likely agree with, as witness the compelling tales in her collection of literary erotica, *The Little Lovers and Other Perversions*. The author's got a deft way of exploring the moist intersections of the carnal and the fantastic, and it's perfectly showcased in this handsome paperback volume. Pro tip: Get you a copy soon-like, and you could even have Weaver autograph it at the *next* Bedpost Confessions show, coming up soon.

**5.** Speaking of books, but not necessarily one created in the ATX: We're going to stretch this post's theme by noting that *gravity* is local *everywhere*. We're going to stretch it, because *Gravity* is a collection of essays by **Joseph Lanza** on that titular topic – but it's by no means a series of dry, plodding observations or a dull catalog of Einsteinian theorizing. No, what this paperback (with its knockout cover design) is, is a thematically linked array of scholarly showmanship, wherein Lanza waxes all pop-cultural clever and erudite about the enigmatic force that pulls at everything. His attention roves among the legacies of cinema and elevators and airplanes and music and skyscrapers and rollercoasters and spaceships and more, weaving a brightly-threaded tapestry of facts and correspondences, of acumen and allusions, that will have you considering the phenomena of mass and force in ways you never have before.