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## OCWEEKLY

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### GO FOR THE LOWRIDERS, STAY FOR THE CANADIANS

The varying quality of two new Grand Central Art Center exhibits

BY THEO DOUGLAS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2006 - 3:00 PM



No Impala. No Caprice. Image: Meter Beater by Jim "Redd Dogg" Muir. Photo by Eric Stoner

work also appears here—there's more to lowrider culture than this. Sure, it doesn't compare to the Expressionists, or the Dadaists—or even the Nihilists—but lowriding deserves more than Fat Mark's tagged-up window frames and rusty Columbia bicycle. Lowriding is about paint—not rust. And this is a show about lowriders *with no lowriders*—no '64 Impalas, no Chevy Fleetlines, no Caprices. Maybe the murals of Aztec warriors and chola girls are implied. There are a handful of lowrider-ish bicycles (Fat Mark is known for his custom bikes, as a recent show at Track 16 Gallery demonstrated), but they bear none of his trademark striped paintwork. They're primed. It's sad.

And art? There is some: a handful of compelling oils and acrylics of scantily clad women by Natalia Fabia that greatly overshadow their titles (*Blue Hooker*, *Green Hooker*, *Dancing With Scissors in the Library*). Fabia's forms are somewhat rudimentary—there's no painting with a one-haired brush here—but a lack of detail makes her shadowy rooms and fallen women all the more intriguing. They could be someone you know, with a motel room in her bed.

\* \* \*

Much more entertaining—and enlightening, if you're all into learning stuff—is "Take Off Your Coat. Stay Awhile," Ratpowered Films' revolving showcase of strange short subjects you've never seen. The day I was there, artist Jim Munroe's peacenik take on the video game *Grand Theft Auto—My Trip to Liberty City*—was playing. Munroe—utilizing the characters of a Canadian tourist and a priest—was doing what we all talked about at the *Weekly* but none of us ever did: play the game without killing a bunch of German tourists or whatever (the "whatever" being: get a hooker and not pay). You can do that, and, as Munroe's tourist discovers, it's a gentle kind of fun. Canadians! Munroe provides the voice-over:

"I know there's been a lot of talk about all the cars in *Grand Theft Auto*, but if you're walking, you see things you wouldn't see in a car," he says as his Canadian tourist gawks at the concrete. And then sometimes, when the mob boss tells you to go collect on this guy, you'd rather take

#### ARTS



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### CALENDAR



Saturday



Sunday



Monday

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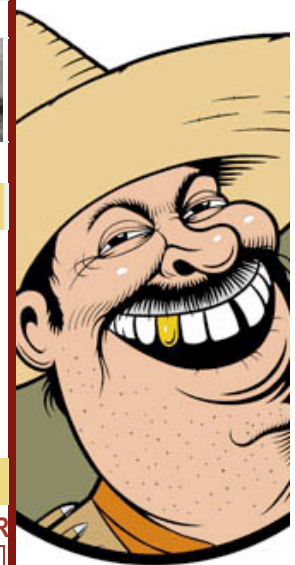
### THIS MONTH

### SEPTEMBER

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### Why aren't there any Mexicans on "Star Trek"?

## ASK A MEXICAN!



## OCWEEKLY

the afternoon off and go to the park. And so you do.

"I know I was supposed to go and take care of this guy," Munroe says, explaining why his character deviated from the mob boss's orders and will surely not get rich *and* die tryin'. "It was just great to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city and hang out in the trees." Good for him. The world needs park-goers.

This being a rotating exhibit, you won't see *Liberty City*, but it sets the tone for what's on tap in upcoming weeks. Still ahead are cooking show send-ups (Elizabeth Crummett's *Let's Fuckin Cook*, hosted by Crummett as chef/host Prunella Phucklesworth); Richard Ankrom's legendary *Guerilla Public Service*, a look at how Ankrom manages to change up LA freeway signs without killing us all; and the more straight-forward *Harker*—a film short with puppets, done in the style of the German Expressionists. (Like *Nosferatu* played by *Wallace & Gromit*, but good.)

It flits about—from obtuse educational films to blocky cartoon shorts—but "Take Off Your Coat" makes you want to watch the whole thing even as it reminds you of *Wonder Showzen*. And its inspired idiocy makes you feel intelligent—not just knowledgeable.

"FM RIDES ALONE: LOWRIDER ART AND CULTURE" IN THE MAIN GALLERY. THROUGH OCT. 1. "TAKE OFF YOUR COAT. STAY AWHILE" IN THE PROJECT ROOM. THROUGH OCT. 22. GRAND CENTRAL ART CENTER, 125 N. BROADWAY, SANTA ANA, (714) 567-7233; [WWW.GRANDCENTRALARTCENTER.COM](http://WWW.GRANDCENTRALARTCENTER.COM). OPEN TUES.-THURS. & SUN., 11 A.M.-4 P.M.; FRI.-SAT., 11 A.M.-9 P.M.

**ALSO IN ARTS**

**PAVED PARADISE**

*Transforming OC*  
Thursday, September 14, 2006 - 2:00 pm

**TOY SHOW**

*Alpha cult's 'Exhibit A' is irresistible bliss*  
Thursday, September 7, 2006 - 3:00 pm

**TELEPHONING BUDDHA**

*'Westward Toward the East'*  
Thursday, September 7, 2006 - 12:00 pm

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