

wed **21**

**get yer ya-yas out!** It's that time again. Yes, you too can be a part of a truly historic night when **Soma Holiday, Circus, Pop Gem Factory**, and the **Brown Fellinis** all perform their hearts out at the Bay Guardian's third **Demo Tape Live** showcase. And bring your opinions with you, because you'll be handed a ballot at the door and asked to vote for your favorite

band of the night — the winner gets recording time at Different Fur Studio. Who knows? They could all go on to fame and fortune, and you can say, "I was there when...." 10 p.m., Paradise Lounge, 11th Street and Folsom, SF. Free. (415) 861-6906. (Kurt Wolff)

**awaiting lefty** Solo performer **Josh Kornbluth** is bringing back his soon-to-be-a-major-motion-

picture (really) show, *Red Diaper Baby*, a funny, touching exploration of coming-of-age, sex, and the peculiar particularities of having Communists for parents. (Kornbluth appears Wed.-Sun. through Nov. 8. Call for dates and times.) 8:30 p.m. at the Magic Theatre, Fort Mason Center, Bldg. D, the marina at Buchanan, SF. \$16-\$20. (415) 441-8822. (J.H. Tompkins)

**9 artists in search of a (progressive) candidate** Well, they

aren't going to find one this year, but Barbara Boxer's campaign and the Clinton-Gore ticket are deserving of all the support they can get. Especially when the performances are provided by folks like Spalding Gray, ROVA Saxophone Quartet, Nina Wise, and Isabel Allende. **Performances for the New Era**, 8 p.m., Bimbo's 365 Club, 1025 Columbus, SF. \$25. (415) 454-4757. (Miriam Wolf)

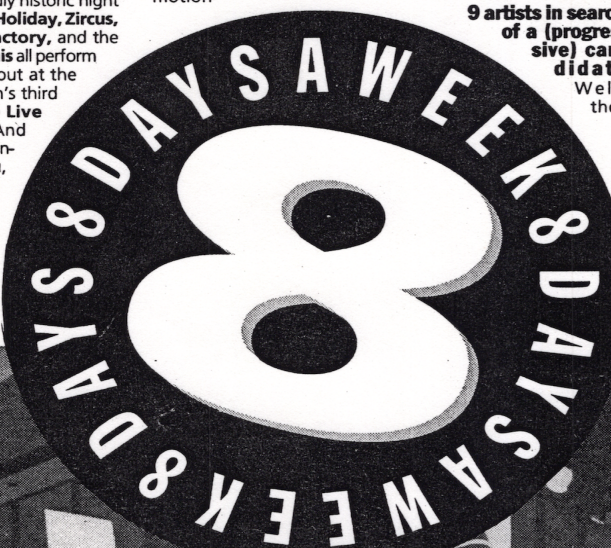
nos records (outsinging such puffed-up maestros as Michael Stipe, John Lydon, and Jack Bruce), which she followed with a record of her own, 1989's *Surprise*. Maybe that record suffered from overproduction and too many famous hands in one pot, but live she kicks ass. We're still waiting for another record from this woman with the golden throat. Until then, dig the show tonight. She plays with collaborator Peter Holsapple's band the Continental Drifters. 9 p.m., Slim's, 333 11th St., SF. \$10. (415) 621-3330. (Wolff)

**put your rump, p** Even the Parenth for Choi working food (from more Gr Val 21, music (by good cor hold an Herd). Pa we've ju: tional am 6:30 p.m Townse: 441-785 'billboard altered, Today, as Smashi Informa takes on I Scott Wil cutting v. p.m., and nal Plaste War III, il: cial comp formance

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**she's kinda nutty**, a lot of fun, and she's got a magnificent voice. **Syd Straw** was the unknown vocal star of the second and third Golden Palom-

**finding the nixon within** Anyone strange enough to embark on this quest is worth a look — and solo performer **Charlie Varon** is on the hunt. He's funny and a little strange, and he blitzes through politics, religion, improbable realities, and probable insanities. 8 p.m., The Marsh, 968 Valencia, SF. \$10. (415) 641-0235. (Tompkins)



Politics as unusual with the American Nazi Party in one of Bill Stamets' films. See Sat/24

## Close Enough For Jazz

BY DERK RICHARDSON

**L**OOKING AT THE 17-day program for the 10th anniversary San Francisco Jazz Festival, one is tempted to ask a cynical question: What purpose do jazz festivals serve anymore, other than to redistribute income from the audience to the performer with a little on the side for agents, managers, promoters, airlines, hotels, and limousine services? This is prompted not by ticket prices — which hit a top end of \$50 but also plummet through the \$10 and \$5 levels to zilch (for "Youth in Jazz" in Union Square).

The question arises rather out of a critical curiosity about the social role of jazz festivals — their relationship to jazz culture and how they serve what is all too casually called "the jazz community." What, for example, is the compelling reason to attend the "legendary" Monterey Jazz Festival? If it's the music, you can eventually hear most of the acts at Kimball's or Keystone Korner Yoshi's. If it's the Monterey Peninsula environment, you can hike through the Pt. Lobos nature reserve or scuba dive off Carmel River Beach. If it's the legend, well, Dan Quayle's bound to become a legend too.

The fundamental weakness in the concept of most jazz festivals is that they have no concept. In too many cases they have degenerated into little more than a gussied-up assemblage of acts booked into town at the same time, or "special packages" put together by some New York booking agency and sold on the festival circuit around the country.

I don't know if exceptions actually prove the rule, but everybody

seemed to get exc

shoot  
out the  
lights

jazz has grov  
deserving of hig