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GTT ★

By MICHAEL HOINSKI Published: July 19, 2012

Our quirky, discerning picks for the most interesting things to do around the state this week.

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Xavier Lhospipe

Ellise Pierce, who hails from Denton and lives in France, will teach her Paris-accented cooking methods in five Texas cities.

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AUSTIN

Art for Profit

The producer Elizabeth Avellán launched her career with "El Mariachi," the independent 1992 movie Robert Rodriguez made for \$7,000. Now, she's one of Hollywood's leading filmmakers, with credits ranging from "Spy Kids" to "Grindhouse." And she has done it mostly outside Hollywood, running Troublemaker Studios in Austin with Mr. Rodriguez, to whom she was married for 16 years before they separated in 2006.

One of the questions she is most frequently asked at events like Sunday's "A Conversation in Film with Elizabeth Avellán" is, "How do I build something like Troublemaker where I live?"

"Start out by creating from within," Ms. Avellán said. "You take people who were maybe your P.A., and little by little they become costume designer."

Ms. Avellán will also try to convince aspiring filmmakers that art is about making money. "There are many, many ways to monetize your talents."

She will use "Blacktino," a 2011 film made by her son Aaron Burns, as a guide to independent production. She will probably also talk about her coming movie "When Angels Sing," a Christmas story starring Harry Connick Jr., Connie Britton and Willie Nelson.

"Willie plays the magical character in the film," Ms. Avellán said. "That twinkle in his eye really comes through."

Harry Ransom Center, July 22, 3 p.m., austinfilmfestival.com

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FORT WORTH

All Mixed Up

“Cowgirl Chef: Texas Cooking with a French Accent,” the new cookbook by the Denton native Ellise Pierce, was born of desperation. Ms. Pierce, an expatriate living in Paris, learned to make do with the ingredients and cookware available to her.

To make tortillas, she uses a cast-iron crepe pan instead of a comal. Because fresh jalapeños are scarce in France, she has adopted Moroccan peppers.

“A lot of people are recipe followers,” Ms. Pierce said. But her book is “about breaking the rules when you can.”

Chefs with rebellious streaks will be able to express themselves in [Ms. Pierce’s classes](#), coming to Central Markets in five cities over five days, starting in Fort Worth and ending in Austin.

Ms. Pierce’s Peanut Butter Chocolate Soufflé, which she calls “an inside-out Reese’s,” should appeal to junk-food lovers and French traditionalists alike.

Central Market Fort Worth, July 25, 6:30 p.m., [cowgirlchef.com](#)

HOUSTON

Doggone

Watching the world-famous [Westminster Dog Show](#), how many proud owners have opined that their dogs are every bit as marvelous as the ones being trotted around the stage? Well, at the 35th annual [Reliant Park World Series of Dog Shows](#), owners can prove it.

My Dog Can Do That! is a free event complementing the official competition, and it invites all breeds and mixes to show off their agility on an obstacle course. Don’t worry if your dog doesn’t perform as hoped. Professional trainers from the American Kennel Club will offer pointers.

And the 12-pound Pekingese named [Palacegarden Malachy](#), this year’s Best in Show at Westminster, will also be there to rub it in.

Reliant Center, July 20-22, 8 a.m., [reliantdogshows.com](#)

SAN ANTONIO

In the Groove

Ohio State’s marching band dots the “i,” the University of Texas bangs Big Bertha and the University of Hawaii makes a Stick Man. “The [Crossmen](#) are known for a groove,” said Fred Morrison, the director of the San Antonio drum corps. “If you’re not tapping your feet and bopping your head, we’re doing something wrong.”

The Crossmen is the only World Class division drum corps in Texas, with 72 brass, 40 percussion, 36 color guards and two drum majors. It is one of four corps from Texas competing against 23 squads from across the country in the [Drums Corps International](#) Southwestern Championship.

About 4,000 college and high school students who have spent the summer training and performing on the D.C.I. circuit are expected to participate.

“A lot of our members want to be professional musicians or band directors,” Mr. Morrison said, “and this is part of their education on that career path.”

Alamodome, July 21, 1:30 p.m., [dci.org](#)

SAN ANTONIO



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Brown Thumb

What appears to be the beginning of an extended drought has homeowners rethinking what to plant in their yards, and the [Tough Texas Landscapes series](#) will help them make informed decisions about Xeriscaping and hearty native vegetation.

San Antonio Botanical Garden, July 21 and 28, 9 a.m., [sabot.org](#)

DALLAS

Rooting Around

Now that [Sarah Jarosz](#), the [Grammy](#)-nominated bluegrass prodigy from Wimberley, has turned 21, she can accept beer from fans grateful for her original mix of traditional music and Tom Waits and Radiohead covers.

The Kessler Theater, July 20, 8:30 p.m., [sarahjarosz.com](#)

[mhoiniski@texasmonthly.com](#)

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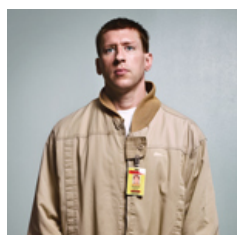


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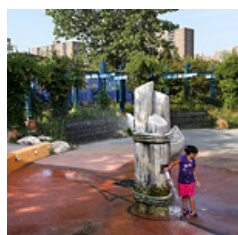
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