



**May/June 2011  
Issue 3**

**The U.S. Information Resource Center (IRC) of the American Embassy in Athens is happy to provide you with *Latest on Humanities*, a bulletin focused on American society and culture. This publication is a bi-monthly compilation of recent articles from a wide range of authoritative journals and periodicals. By organizing and disseminating one more thematic publication about the United States, IRC seeks to promote better understanding of the principles and institutions that shape American values.**

**1. Creation Myths**

(*New Statesman*, May 2011, pg. 40)  
Terrence Malick's *The Tree of Life* which was more than two decades in the making, finally premieres in May. Ryan Gilbey salutes a mysterious, visionary director.

**2. The Trials and Triumphs of Austin Pendleton**

(*American Theatre*, May/June 2011 pg. 26)  
Austin Pendleton on Anton Chekhov: "I feel more alive when I work on his plays than on anybody else's." A pair of lustrous Chekhovs has put a new spotlight on a 71-year-old artist-who-does-it-all.

**3. Why She Fell**

By Daniel Mendelson  
(*The New York Review of Books*, May 12, 2011, pg. 24)  
"The transformation of humans into monsters or animals is a standard feature of two great genres: classical Greek and Roman myth and American comic books...As happens so often in both myth and comic books, the attempt to fuse two species resulted in the creation of a monster." The article reviews the

theatrical production *Spiderman: Turn off the Dark* directed by Julie Taymor.

**4. Yours, Bess**

By Elizabeth "Bess" Corey  
(*American Heritage*, Spring 2011, pg. 48)  
Young, naïve, and irrepressible, a turn-of-the-20<sup>th</sup>- century Iowa teacher documented her coming of age in letters home.

**5. Fleet Foxes**

(*Spin*, May 2011, pg. 40)  
Robin Pecknold found his (gorgeous) voice fronting this Seattle-based band of merry men. And with their stunning new album *Helplessness Blues*, Fleet Foxes may just find mainstream success.

**6. "Dear Picasso"**

By Ann Landi  
(*ArtNews*, May 2011, pg. 93)  
"Revisiting and recasting the master's work, from Cubism through *Guernica* to the *Mosqueteros* of his old age, new generations of artists are discovering Picasso all over again. In Europe, painters as diverse as Richard Hamilton and Martin Kippenberger paid homage to Picasso, while Pop artists in the United States like Claes Oldenburg and Roy Lichtenstein, reworked his subjects in soft fabric or Benday dots."

### **7. Tap's Leading Lady**

By Emily Macel Theys

(*Dance Magazine*, May 2011, pg. 26)

"Dormeshia Shumbry-Edwards' tap shoes spit out sounds a mile a minute. She builds a percussive plotline to any song and fills the musical gaps seamlessly with her own riffs and rhythms...Sumbry-Edwards uses tap to converse, tell stories, show emotion, and continue a legacy of all the great hoofers who came before her."

### **8. Quality Time, Redefined**

(*The New York Times*, May 1, 2011,

Sunday Styles section, pgs. 1, 12)

By Alex Williams

The fully wired American living room often seems less like an oasis for shared activity than an entangled intersection of data traffic. Why this might not be such a bad thing.

### **9. Steve Earl and Will Sheff**

By Michael Tedder

(*Spin*, June 2011, pg. 72)

"We brought the outlaw-country giant and the Okkervil River frontman together to discuss the state of folk rock, the ever-evolving audience, and why they're now making records for nerds."

### **10. The Genius of Buster**

By Jana Prikryl

(*The New York Review of Books*, June 9, 2011, pg. 30)

On the occasion of twelve feature-length and twelve short films by Buster Keaton at Film Forum in New York City from May to August 2011, Jana Prikryl offers an in-depth portrait of the famous American comic actor.

### **11. Live and Learn: Critic at Large**

By Louis Menand

(*The New Yorker*, June 6, 2011, pg. 74)

"Society needs a mechanism for sorting out its more intelligent members from its less intelligent ones, just as a track team needs a mechanism (such as a stopwatch) for sorting out the faster athletes from the slower ones. Society wants to identify intelligent people early on so that it can funnel them into careers that maximize their talents. It wants to get the most out of its human resources. College is a process that is sufficiently multifaceted and fine-grained to do this." Prominent American writer and academic Louis Menand is debating the value of college.

**NOTE: *Latest on Humanities* is available to subscribers only. You may contact us through telephone, fax or e-mail to order the requested material. Full text of articles will be faxed to you as soon as possible. Please send your comments and remarks to [AthensIRC@state.gov](mailto:AthensIRC@state.gov)**

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