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# Clothier leaves rhinestone-studded legacy

Ah, there's a blue moon in Nashville tonight. This last week saw the demise of Nudie, the far-famed King of the Cowboy Clothiers. Nudie, who died at 81 in Burbank, Calif., was the man who made the rhinestone as much a part of country music as the steel guitar. It was Nudie who took the unassuming, innocuous rancher's gabardine suit and sent it uptown with a vengeance. Gilt fringe, silk lapels and jeweled patterns of wagon wheels, cacti and musical notes made hash out of haute couture in Nashville in the late '50s and '60s. There were times when the popularity of Nudie's creations made it seem as though the Opry dressing rooms had been usurped by a gang of demented peacocks.

Nudie outfitted hundreds of singers along the lines of Roy Rogers, Hank Snow, Dolly Parton and — of course — Porter Wagoner, but he also did a pretty good carriage trade in Hollywood, where Marilyn Monroe, Gary Cooper and Humphrey Bogart were among his customers. Two of Nudie's most famous creations survive him: the 20-lb. gold lamé tux he made for Elvis Presley and the Western suit with spangled naked ladies and marijuana leaves that Gram Parsons commissioned for the cover of the first Flying Burrito Brothers album.

Austin singer/songwriter Butch Hancock once said he would like to have a jacket by Nudie. And what would it have on it, someone asked. "Aw," he replied, "probably a dead coyote hangin' on a barbed wire fence..." In rhinestones, of course.



**Country Music**  
 John T. Davis

Bobby Bridger has been described as combining "the beauty of a poet with the insight of a historian." Bridger has returned to Austin from sojourns at the American Indian Theater in Tulsa and the Eugene O'Neill Theater in Waterford, Conn., where he put his latest epic ballad, "Aldebaren and the Falling Star," through a workshop. This "space myth" as Bridger calls it, has been in the works for the past seven or eight years and now, with the aid of the actors and directors at the O'Neill, Bridger has put it into definitive shape and even plans to take a production of the show to England before the end of the year.

But before he does, he will be playing a rare two-night stand at the Capitol City Playhouse Monday and Tuesday. Monday, he will present selections from the three-hour production of "Aldebaren" and Tuesday he and his band (Jim Schulman, Fletcher Clark and David Roach) will be hosting an evening that will include music from Bridger's three albums and his earlier epic ballads, "Seekers of the Fleece" and "Lakota." The two nights promise an evocative combination of music and theater and a lot of fun to boot. Performances start both nights at 8 p.m.

For those who don't mind a bit of a drive to hear good music, the late



Cowboy clothier Nudie has left his mark on country western aficionados. Who could forget Porter Wagoner's, left, classic suit of sequined wheels, stars, cacti and eagles? Bobby Bridger, above, has returned to Austin for a rare two-night stand at Capitol City Playhouse Monday and Tuesday. The performances will include excerpts from his epic ballads "Seekers of the Fleece" and "Lakota."

Sunday, the Austin Songwriters Fest will be at the Loading Chute in Temple, the Lounge Lizards and Emily Kaitz will be at the Hyde Park Showplace at 8 p.m. and Crow Johnson plays at Soap Creek Saloon, also at 8.

Monday, Balamil will be hosting Baile Grande at Soap Creek and Bobby Bridger will be at the Capitol City Playhouse.

Tuesday, Bobby Bridger will be at the Capitol City Playhouse and the Carl Hutchens Band continues at the Hyatt during Happy Hour.

Thursday, Whoa! Trigger will be at Soap Creek, Rusty Wier will be at Texas Money and The Kerrville Folk Festival kicks off with Wayne Kennemer, Emily Aronson and Wayne Green, Larry Williams, Jan Marra, Don Sanders, Bobby Bridger and Townes Van Zandt.

Friday, Kerrville continues with Bill Neely, Courtney Campbell, Banded Geckes, Steven Fromholz, Nanci Griffith, Allen Damon and Josh White Jr. Also, Mason Dixon will be at the Double Eagle, Bert Rivera will be at the Little Wheel and Townes Van Zandt will be at Soap Creek.

Free concerts in the parks this week include Freefall (7 p.m. Saturday at Givens Recreation Center), Cool Breeze and Mainstream (2:30 p.m. Sunday at the Elizabeth Ney Museum), The Concept Orchestra (8 p.m. Sunday at Zilker Hillside Theater), Sunrise (7 p.m. Tuesday at the South Austin Recreation Center), Ernie Sky and the K-Tels (7 p.m. Wednesday at Auditorium Shores) and Better Than Ever (noon, Friday at Wooldrige Square).

songwriter Clyde Buchanan will be honored at the "Austin Songwriter's Fest" at the Loading Chute in Temple on Sunday from noon 'til midnight. Performers on the bill will include Gary P. Nunn, Townes Van Zandt, Billy Joe Shaver, Rick Cardwell, Jimmie Gilmore, Ray Wylie Hubbard, Blaze Foley, Rusty Wier, Butch Hancock and, as they say, "many others." The show will be taped for presentation on the Killeen-based cable TV music program, "Austin Pickers," a show whose title derives from one of Clyde's songs.

will be gratified to note the reopening of the venerable Little Wheel, the roadhouse on Highway 290, just this side of the Travis County Line. The remodeled bar is once again advertising live music and "the coldest beer in town," and it commences reopening tonight with Bert Rivera.

And (gawd!) the 13th annual Kerrville Folk Festival commences Thursday at Rod Kennedy's Quiet Valley Ranch at 6 p.m. The festival will continue through Monday the 28th and then recommence from June 1-3. Information on times, camping and tickets can be obtained by calling (512) 896-3800.

Austin and environs are playing host to a musical cacophony. Further proof, if any were needed, is provided today at Auditorium Shores, when the Fabulous Thunderbirds host their second annual T-Bird River Fest with Delbert McClinton, Joe Ely, Los Lobos and Steve Bassett. The musical madness commences at 3 p.m., when the gates open. The promoters of the show promise that (unlike past shows at the Shores) inadequate volume will not be a problem, to put it delicately. Also, Texas Money continues its grand opening with the Marcia Ball Band and Ernie Sky and the K-Tels. Also, Roadway will be at the Pier and Johnny Lee will be at the Double Eagle.

And if that weren't enough, a new club is opening on Sixth Street featuring... not ferns, not weird drinks with umbrellas, but... live music! Hot dawg. Texas Money will be taking over the space once occupied by the defunct Truly Tasteless club. Co-head honchos Tina and Betty Sue Edwards are boasting about the easy availability of cold drinks, smoky barbecue and hot music, all under one proverbial roof seven days a week. One definitely hopes they make a go of it, since the room is one of the better live music venues in town. Doubters can satisfy their reservations on that account tonight when the club continues its grand opening with the Marcia Ball Band and Ernie Sky and the K-Tels. The show starts at 8 p.m.

And parched music fans out in the dry precincts of Hays County

**Critic's choice**

Davis	Ward
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T-Bird River Fest, Saturday at Auditorium Shores. Featuring the Fabulous Thunderbirds, Joe Ely, Delbert McClinton, Los Lobos and Steve Bassett.</li> <li>• Bobby Bridger, Monday and Tuesday at Capitol City Playhouse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grandmaster Flash, Saturday at 6th St. Live. He didn't invent the street sounds of New York, but he did perfect it.</li> <li>• Sonny Okosun &amp; his Ozidi, Sunday at Liberty Lunch. Okosun sings in English and plays a wide variety of styles.</li> </ul>

Staff Graphics by Pam Tabery

Music critics Ed Ward and John T. Davis each week will tell you their choices for the top acts to catch in town.