

## LIVING

## Winehouse's death in a word: sad

The seeming inevitability of the troubled young singer's fate only adds to the sting

By RYAN WHITE  
THE OREGONIAN

It's nothing but sad. When someone — anyone — dies young, it's just sad. We can sub in tragic, or heartbreaking, or even unfair, and those words are all applicable, but they're nothing but variants of sad.

British singer Amy Winehouse was 27 years old when she was found dead in her London home on Saturday. That the outcome felt so inevitable, so cliché, made it all the more sad.

Unlike most sad stories in a tragic world, hers was headline news because she was famous, though, by the time the predictable happened, it

might have been hard to remember Winehouse once had so much talent and so much promise.

For years, her music, powered by a big, soulful voice, had been overshadowed by drug- and alcohol-fueled behavior. It was as if her name had officially been changed to Troubled Singer Amy Winehouse. Or perhaps she had taken the middle name Meltdown. The autopsy results will come later, but it's hard to imagine anything other than intoxicants turned toxic.

But in 2007, she was one of the biggest singers in the world. A year earlier, her second album, "Back to Black," was released in Europe. It arrived in the United States in 2007 and took

off on the strength of her biggest hit, the prophetic "Rehab."

To those introduced to Winehouse through that song, the first they heard from her was the lyric, "They tried to make me go to rehab. I said, 'No, no, no.'"

On the album, which sold more than 1 million copies and won five Grammy Awards in 2008, "Rehab" is followed by "You Know I'm No Good":

*I cheated myself;*

*Like I knew I would.*

*I told you I was trouble.*

*Yeah, you know that I'm no good.*

Please see **WINEHOUSE**, Page B2



**Winehouse**  
Singer found dead at home Saturday

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

## WEEKEND REVIEWS

## Sugar high with a tequila chaser

Kenny Chesney brought his "Coastal" tour to the Rose Garden on Saturday night, and it was more bright lights and loud songs than quiet, moving moments.

DANIA MAXWELL  
THE OREGONIAN



KATY PERRY delights a Portland crowd with pop confections that are surprisingly filling

By GRANT BUTLER  
THE OREGONIAN

Katy Perry sure is sweet. When she launched her "California Dreams" tour this year, she promised a show that would be deliciously different from the typical summertime concert.

"I have this whole thing in my show that is about candy and cupcakes and meat," she said. "It's both really sweet and shocking, but not in a sexual way."

And so it proved Friday night at the Rose Garden, where Perry gave her fans a sugar high with a spirited two-hour set of infectious songs performed on a stage that resembled an adult version of the children's board game Candy Land.

And her audience was ready for the fix. Before the lights went down, seats filled with teen and preteen girls wearing pink tutus and bright blue wigs, middle-aged moms in gumdrop-covered dresses and cupcake bras, and one young boy wearing a kingly red cape festooned with white, lacy fringe, carrying a lollipop-shaped sign that read "Katy, will you be my queen?" The arena even *smelled* cloying, thanks to all the cotton candy-covered glow-sticks people were munching on.

Channeling equal parts Betty Boop, Bettie Page and Betty Crocker, Perry often looked like a sexy confection, wearing low-cut dresses decorated with swirling

Please see **PERRY**, Page B3

KENNY CHESNEY lets the good times flow and takes his fans on a fun, 90-minute ride

By MICHELE COPPOLA  
SPECIAL TO THE OREGONIAN

On the surface, there's not much difference between a Kenny Chesney concert and that of any other country music superstar: enormous video screens; a mile-high wall of strobe lights; 90 minutes of pop-country; singalong hits; and thousands of screaming, tipsy fans in sundress and cowboy-boot couture.

What makes a Chesney show different is that instead of just celebrating the working-class world of country music, he wants to help his fans escape from it.

Chesney made his entrance with translucent curtains lifting around the main stage, printed with a postcard-perfect Ca-

ribbean shoreline and the ubiquitous logo of the tour's sponsor. As Sammy Hagar's "Mas Tequila" pounded from the speakers, roadies tossed T-shirts from the three stage runways and silhouettes of the headliner and his band flashed from behind the curtain, which eventually dropped as Chesney launched into "Live a Little," a recent hit that sounds similar to several other rock-country hybrids he's released in the past few years. As he checked off radio staples "Summertime," "Big Star" and the wistful "I Go Back," he galloped around the runways, waving and grinning, as comfortable onstage as in his deliberately sun-faded jeans and sleeveless T-shirts.

Please see **CHESNEY**, Page B3



For longer reviews and more reviews: [oregonlive.com/entertainment](http://oregonlive.com/entertainment)

Katy Perry's self-written tunes set her apart from many of today's other pop songstresses. Her Friday night concert at the Rose Garden didn't disappoint her fans.

DOUG BEGHEL  
THE OREGONIAN

## PICA names artistic director, filling void

Angela Mattox is currently a San Francisco curator

By MARTY HUGHLEY  
THE OREGONIAN

The Portland Institute for Contemporary Art has hired a full-time artistic director, filling that post for the first time in six years, when the organization's founder, Kristy Edmunds, departed the position. After a six-month search process, PICA chose Angela Mattox, currently the performing arts curator at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco.

Mattox, 36, will start her job Sept. 1, just before the opening of PICA's annual Time-Based Art festival, Sept. 8-18. For the past several years, including this year, the festival has been curated by guest artistic directors from the East Coast. The orga-

nization hopes that the return of a resident artistic director will enhance its year-round impact and improve its long-term planning.

According to executive director Victoria Frey, the position attracted about 30 "viable candidates" from around the United States and Europe, in sharp contrast to when PICA undertook a similar search in 2005.

"No one wants to follow a founder, especially a charismatic one such as Kristy Edmunds," says Frey. But the guest director model allowed PICA to demonstrate its long-term viability. "Now there's a lot of people who see it as a prized platform."

Frey jokingly calls it "a big step for us to be getting married again," but

Please see **PICA**, Page B2



JOHN LEE

Angela Mattox will become the new artistic director of the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, starting Sept. 1. "What's really exciting for me is joining that team of people," she says of PICA.

## Portland Playhouse tries to get in just the right zone

A neighbor's parking complaint has the group out of its cozy converted church for now

By MARTY HUGHLEY  
THE OREGONIAN

Portland Playhouse has established itself as a theater-scene favorite through its thoughtful, affecting productions but also through the casual intimacy of its home, a converted church nestled in a quiet Northeast Portland neighborhood. But part of that winning combination is in jeopardy, due to a zoning issue that will force the company to move its season-opening production to another theater downtown.

"Gem of the Ocean," the August Wilson play scheduled to run Oct. 8-30, will be staged at the World Trade Center Theater, Portland

Playhouse artistic director Brian Weaver said Friday. As an experiment, the company already had booked the Trade Center space for its December production of Tony Kushner's "Angels in America." So performances will return to the church, at 602 N.E. Prescott St., in January at the earliest.

Weaver said he'd been under the impression that although the building on Prescott Street is in a residential area that permission to have public gatherings there carried over from its traditional use as a church. This spring, however, a neighbor lodged a complaint with the city over the street parking

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# Chesney

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And though there's no such thing as an unscripted moment in his show, Chesney still manages to evoke surprising emotion from some of his most well-worn hits: "There Goes My Life," a plaintive story song about a teenage pregnancy, was startlingly beautiful with just piano accompaniment, and his acoustic performance of the new single "You and Tequila" was as moving in a packed arena as it might be in a bar after hours.

Those quiet moments didn't last long, however. Soon the big bank of strobes was flashing and Chesney was bouncing through "Young," and "She Thinks My Tractor's Sexy," a song whose video made the man, along with his tight physique, a star. Then it was back to the beach for a couple of big hits from Chesney's island stash, including "When the Sun Goes Down," which he sang solo despite the fact that the single is a fun duet with Uncle Kracker, who opened the show.

Ninety minutes and one encore later the ride was over; and though it's obvious he's squatting in Margaritaville, what really marks Kenny

Chesney as Jimmy Buffett's heir apparent is the fact that he knows his greatest product isn't music or sunglasses or tequila, it's the chance to buy a ticket and escape with a guy who really knows how to show you a good time.

Professional sidekick Uncle Kracker opened, looking as if he just rolled out of bed after a two-day bender, and providing suitably pleasant seat-finding music. He was followed by equally scruffy Georgia singer Billy Currington, whose sultry, muddy-river vocals are a perfect match for the soulful, '70s-inspired country he favors. His hits such as "Must Be Doing Somethin' Right" and "People Are Crazy" are a

notch above the typical Nashville single.

Unfortunately, that laid-back style made Currington's set a bit of a snooze; he finally engaged with the music and the audience during a cover of Hank Williams Jr.'s "Family Tradition" and his own "Good Directions," a song written by Luke Bryan, who tore up the stage at Tim McGraw's recent show. Currington might want to consider not only acquiring more of Bryan's songs but also a little of his stage presence.

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DOUG BEGHTEL/THE OREGONIAN

Katy Perry's "California Dreams" tour was sweet and sugary, but not just empty calories.

# Perry

Continued from Page B1

peppermint candy, rainbow-colored boas and peacock-feather trains. In all, there were 16 costume changes, seven of them in one song alone, thanks to some onstage magic tricks.

But unlike pop shams such as Britney Spears and Kesha, the dress-up act wasn't a disguise for a lack of talent. Perry wrote or co-wrote her addictive songs, and some of them, such as "I Kissed A Girl" and "Last Friday Night (T.G.I.F.)," have lyrics about ditching social constrictions and embracing personal oddities. When she performs them, Perry is all about empowerment, made all the more tasty with dollops of butter-

cream frosting. That's a pretty great message from a pop role model these days.

Though Perry's show is built around up-tempo production numbers such as "Waking Up in Vegas," which featured an Elvis impersonator, a dancing slot machine and curvy showgirls, she proved she could slow things down, too. She ably played the guitar and purred out a handful of ballads that revealed more musical depth than she's given credit for.

And Perry has vocal chops. After sounding a little off-key in her opening number, "Teenage Dream," Perry's voice steadily improved as she belted out a string of Top 10 and No. 1 hits, culminating in "Firework" and "California Gurls." The strong finale numbers had plenty of visual pop, thanks to pyrotechnics, machine guns that sprayed the

crowd with whipped cream, and confetti cannons shooting out pink crepe paper.

Stringing the songs together was a fantasy video story — something about a demonic butcher, a cute cupcake baker, a runaway cat and a drug-laced brownie — that provided an excuse to fill the stage with dancing gingerbread men, backup dancers dressed like candy canes, and a couple of scary mimes doing so-so aerial acrobatics.

Like eating too much candy, Perry's show is a sweet rush. But there's so much artistry, catchy melodies and enthusiasm at work that it's in no way empty calories. After all, everyone needs a handful of Jolly Ranchers, Red Hots or Dots from time to time.

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## CALL BOARD

**University of Portland Orchestra:** The community of players is seeking new members, especially low strings and horn. Call to schedule an audition. 503-943-7382.

**NESNW Talent:** The pageant presenter seeks performers, children to young adults, for acts performed during the shows. Upcoming performance dates include Aug. 6 and Sept. 16-18. [www.nesnw.com](http://www.nesnw.com).

**Mt. Hood Pops Orchestra:** String players, trumpets and horns are needed for the orchestra. [www.mthoodpops.org](http://www.mthoodpops.org) or 503-669-1937.

**Pacific Youth Choir:** Singers in grades K-12 can audition Aug. 31 for the season. [www.pacificyouthchoir.org](http://www.pacificyouthchoir.org) or 503-780-1675.

**"Richard III":** Portland Actors Ensemble is auditioning Aug. 1-2 for roles in the play. [www.portlandactors.org](http://www.portlandactors.org) or 503-729-4511.

**"Talent for Murder":** Magenta Theater seeks adult actors in their late-20s to 70 for roles in the play. Auditions July 26; no appointments needed. [www.magentatheater.com](http://www.magentatheater.com) or 360-606-0033.

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Due to the volume of mail we receive, not all questions can be answered in these columns. If you are in pain or have reason to believe you may be seriously ill, please see a physician.

"Garth Brooks sold almost as many albums as Elvis, and his great idea was to become a washed-up Australian pop star named Chris Gaines. All he did was confuse his fans."

# In the music business, there are as many bad ideas as good ones

Ashland writer has some fun with his love of pop culture, humor and music

By **JEFF BAKER**  
THE OREGONIAN

Brian Boone thinks "99 percent of all concept albums are completely ridiculous." As evidence, he points to Roger Waters' "Radio K.A.O.S." Here's how Boone sums up "Radio K.A.O.S." in his new book "I Love Rock 'n' Roll (Except When I Hate It)":

"Radio K.A.O.S." tells the story of Billy, a boy in a vegetative state shut off from the world but in possession of an undiscovered gift — he can hear and transmit radio signals. (Waters might be hoping you confuse Billy with a deaf, dumb and blind pinball wizard named Tommy.) Billy can also use radio waves to transmit his thoughts because his brother stashed a stolen cordless phone under the cushion of Billy's wheelchair. Billy then sends messages around the world, culminating in a faked launch of ballistic missiles to make humanity think that World War III is under way. Why? To show people the need for peace and common decency to prevent the real World War III from ever happening. Of course, since Billy can feel, think, empathize, interact and strategize means

he isn't really a vegetable after all. And speaking of plant life, few of the loyal and sizable Pink Floyd fan base bothered to put down the bong long enough to buy a copy of 'Radio K.A.O.S.' ...."

OK, we get the idea. But Waters is responsible for "The Wall," one of the most successful concept albums of all time.

"Concept albums generally come after a big success," Boone said. "Look at Chris Gaines."

Must we?  
"Garth Brooks sold almost as many albums as Elvis, and his great idea was to become a washed-up Australian pop star named Chris Gaines. All he did was confuse his fans."

## Bookmarks

They were easily confused, anyway, and Boone correctly notes in his book that Gaines' look "eerily foreshadowed the rise of Derek Zoolander." Boone also nominates "Kilroy Was Here" by Styx, "Imaginos" by Blue Öyster Cult and "Operation: Mindcrime" by Queensryche as disastrous concept albums. And did you know that Christopher Lee, "the extremely old and creepy actor," recorded an album called "Charlemagne: By the Sword and the Cross"? I didn't, but I do now.

If all this sounds like fun, it's supposed to. Boone, 31, is a Westview High School and University of Oregon gradu-

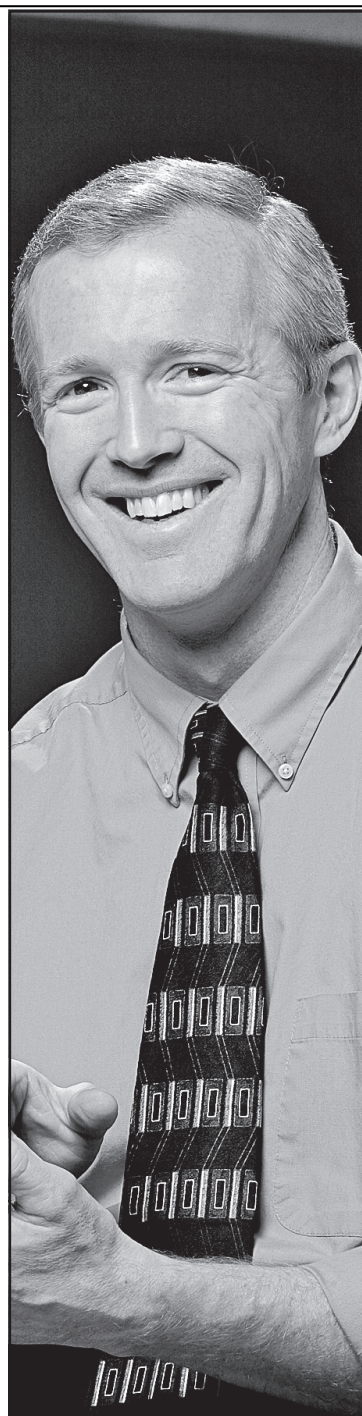
ate who grew up in Beaverton and now lives in Ashland, where he is a writer and editor for the Uncle John's Bathroom Reader empire. He studied journalism and theater at UO and always had a love of pop culture, humor and music. Working at Uncle John's helps Boone hone his trivia skills, and once he started blogging about music, he found a way to write about his passion.

"When people like a band, they gush about them," Boone said. "When they dislike a band, they hate them."

So where does that leave Lorne Greene's "Ringo," Edgar Winter's "Frankenstein" and James Blunt's "You're Beautiful," all listed by Boone as among the unluckiest No. 1 hits ever? Boone makes a great point when he describes "You're Beautiful" as a "plodding, Clay Aiken-on-Quaaludes ballad as if sung by a prepubescent Bee Gee." But what about "Sugar, Sugar" by the Archies? That was the No. 1 song of an entire year, 1969, when music supposedly was at its coolest. Go figure.

Boone discusses "I Love Rock 'n' Roll (Except When I Hate It)" at 7:30 p.m. Aug. 3 at Powell's City of Books, 1005 W. Burnside St.

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Scott,  
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