

THE RELIABLE SOURCE

Beam us up! Oh, wait . . .

Why Leonard Nimoy fans can't make a pilgrimage to see the Air and Space Museum's Starship Enterprise. **C2**

BOOK WORLD

Final flight of the Condor?

James Grady's CIA hero is back, this time running from an artfully skewered national-security state. **C4**

MUSIC REVIEW

Stepping up for the BSO

Pianist Louis Lortie, right, shines in a Mozart concerto, as does conductor Nicholas Hersh in a fill-in role. **C5**



DANCE REVIEW

Dark humor, in gold lamé

Choreographer-performer Jack Ferver's "Chambre" is a sardonic, genre-crossing joy. **C5**

LIVE TODAY @ live.washingtonpost.com Act Four Live: Pop culture with Alyssa Rosenberg **1 p.m.** • Talk about Travel: Post editors and writers take your questions **2 p.m.**



HAL YEAGER FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

*A need that far
outlasts five
hours of energy*



Lonnae O'Neal

Confession: I've got a stash of empty 5-Hour Energy bottles behind my desk and several two-packs tucked in my cupboard. I grabbed a bottle at the grocery store the other day, and when I reached for my wallet, I found three partially drained ones already in my purse. Someone saw an energy drink in my editor's office and knew right away it was mine. "I thought Lonnae had given those up," he said.

I tried, but I can't. I realize I've got the monkey on my back. It's not primarily an addiction to the drink so much as a reaction to the modern social and workplace mandate that we all do more, more, more, right to the edge of our physical capability, then past it. That we get everything that we're supposed to get done, done! Now! And although nobody who cares about me wants me to be an energy-drink addict, little in the culture supports me being anything else. Not everyone was born with the same levels of heartiness.

A 2010 New York Times Magazine
O'NEAL CONTINUED ON **C3**

DANCE REVIEW

**Mark Morris:
Full of surprise
and full of logic**

BY SARAH KAUFMAN

Philosophers and physicists can go on debating whether logic and unpredictability can coexist. Mark Morris has already answered the question.

Predictably enough, the Mark Morris Dance Group's program at George Mason University over the weekend offered a cascade of surprises. Three of the works were new to local audiences, but the surprises bubbled up even in the welcome return of "Grand Duo," with its propulsive, folk-dance score by Lou Harrison for violin and piano that is underpinned by meditative mystery but finishes with an exhilarating sensory rush.

As is typical for Morris, this program delivered a luxury of live music. "Pacific" was accompanied by excerpts from another magnificent Harrison work, the Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano, where the rumblings of a kind of sonic Siberian peat bog yielded gradually to a shower of light. Felix Mendelssohn's tuneful

DANCE CONTINUED ON **C8**

EYES ON A FADING PRIZE

BY KRISSAH THOMPSON

SELMA, ALA. — It's a Sunday afternoon in the midst of a season of remembering here. Rep. Terri A. Sewell is back in her home church, her home district. One by one, senior citizens step forward, and she places medal after medal around their aged necks. Fifty years ago, they marched from this little church to the state capitol in Montgomery, a tense, dangerous journey in the face of segregationist opposition to their right to vote.

These men and women changed history. But they're also part of her history.

The Rev. F.D. Reese, who invited the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. to come to Selma in 1965, steps up. "My high school principal!" Sewell calls out.

In Selma, Rep. Terri Sewell battles for the opportunities that her parents' generation marched to achieve

Rep. Terri A. Sewell (D-Ala.) greets the Rev. F.D. Reese at Brown Chapel A.M.E. in Selma, Ala. Sewell was a baby when the Selma marches occurred.

Then comes Elmyra Martin Smith, moving gingerly now — Sewell's old high school guidance counselor. She marched, too.

Next is Sewell's childhood babysitter.

Her Uncle Boo Boo's name is called — by Sewell's mother, Nancy, who is running the program — even though he couldn't make it today.

Then comes one of her teachers.

The congresswoman, a Democrat, smiles broadly. "I'm home," she says.

Sewell, 50, born just two months before those marches, was raised here, in the first generation of African Americans to benefit from the hard-fought victories of the civil rights movement. The first black valedictorian of Selma High School, she

SELMA CONTINUED ON **C5**

His street cred? It's so good he can make this crime stuff up.

Crime novelist Richard Price fills notebooks with research, but his imagination still rules

BY NEELY TUCKER

NEW YORK — Richard Price, one of the really great American novelists of the past 40 years or so, this endlessly entertaining conversationalist, has such a stellar reputation as a hang-out artist — with cops, criminals, pool hall hustlers — that even when he's making stuff up, people still think it's fact.

Take "Clockers."

That 1992 doorstop was *the* book on the crack-cocaine epidemic, powered by its hallucinogenic detail about the street-level drug dealers whose trade gave the book (and the 1995 Spike Lee film) its title. Price spent three years, off and on, researching the book, and the term became so prominent that the Oxford English Dictionary staff asked Price to verify the usage.

But, ah, nobody other than Price ever called a drug dealer a "clocker." Not even in Jersey City and Newark, where the man hung out with cops and criminals.

"Maybe I heard somebody say it one time," he's saying on a recent afternoon, the sun fading by degrees outside his Harlem brownstone, "but it wasn't anything anyone really used."

So let's check out "The Whites," his first novel in seven years, which he'll be talking about Monday night at Politics and Prose.

In the bleeding-of-authenticity book, a "white" is cop slang for a killer who beats the rap yet is still pursued by the cop who first caught the case. Years pass, decades go by. Marriages, affairs, alcohol, slacking skin, receding hair, advancing waistlines, swelling or diminishing bank accounts. And still, like the white whale that Captain Ahab pursued across the seas in "Moby Dick," these cops can't stop pursuing their most personal of demons. Their very own "white."

Isn't that great?

But, ah, 21st-century homicide dicks

PRICE CONTINUED ON **C2**



JESSE DITTMAR FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Richard Price's first novel in seven years, "The Whites," is written under a pen name, Harry Brandt.

THE RELIABLE SOURCE



HELENA ANDREWS AND EMILY HEIL

THE SCENE

Chamber Dance's soul mates

On Saturday night, Washington's newest contemporary ballet company, Chamber Dance Project, held the Stretch Your Soul gala at the Katzen Arts Center, with proceeds benefiting the company's 2015 season. NPR's always charming **Murray Horwitz** hosted the lighthearted evening, which included performances by the Chamber Dance Project dancers and string quartet before a seated dinner and dancing.



Playwright and creator of NPR's radio game show "Wait, Wait . . . Don't Tell Me" Murray Horwitz with his wife, Lisa, at the VIP reception for the ballet company's gala.



From left: Chamber Dance Project board members Edward Asher, Jessica Marks, Reina Brekke (also the gala chairman), Diane DeFranco and Michael Frankhuizen with Chamber Dance Project Artistic Director Diane Coburn Bruning at the organization's benefit gala Saturday night at the Katzen Arts Center. Below, dancers perform a preview of works planned for this year.



PHOTOS BY KATE WARREN FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

HEY, ISN'T THAT . . . ?

Outgoing U.S. Attorney General **Eric H. Holder Jr.** and about 30 close family and friends celebrated Holder's last days heading up the Justice Department at Boss Shepherd's on Friday.

After a goodbye ceremony filled with tears, the unveiling of Holder's official portrait and a surprise performance by **Aretha Franklin**, Holder and friends headed to the downtown power spot. Also in attendance was first lady **Michelle Obama**, who, along with her husband (one contributor of tears), is a platinum member of Holder's inner circle. (Or are Holder and his wife, **Sharon Malone**, members of the Obama inner circle?)

Our source said the restaurant remained open to the public, and no one clamored for a selfie with Holder, including longtime local news anchor **Gordon Peterson**, who was also in the house.



Eric Holder's praises were literally sung by Aretha Franklin.



MARK AVINO/SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION'S NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS

A studio model of the Starship Enterprise is part of the Smithsonian.

Model to live long, prosper at Udvar-Hazy

With the death Friday of "Star Trek" actor **Leonard Nimoy**, mourners might be looking for a place to pay tribute to their favorite Vulcan.

Alas, the Smithsonian's model of the Starship Enterprise used on the cult hit TV series isn't available for public view, although it's part of the Air and Space Museum's vast collection.

Paramount Studios donated the 11-foot model used in filming to the Smithsonian in 1974. But the Enterprise, a Smithsonian spokesman tells us, is currently in a conservation laboratory at the Udvar-Hazy facility in Chantilly, where it's being cleaned, X-rayed and rehabbed in preparation for its next public viewing, to coincide with the show's 50th anniversary, in 2016.

So Trekkers (Nimoy's preferred sobriquet for fans) will have to wait — including **President Obama**, who, in a statement Friday, said: "Long before being nerdy was cool, there was Leonard Nimoy."

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Making his fiction improve on reality

PRICE FROM C1

aren't really into 19th-century whaling lit.

"I just made it up," Price says, waving a hand good-naturedly. "Never heard a cop use the term." Later: "It *is* fiction, I mean."

And so it goes: One of the major American novelists most associated with obsessive research doesn't really *use* his research to tell his stories. On street corners, in the back seat of cop cars, he fills notebooks with data. At home, he piles up, unread, not consulted, lonely little orphans of the novel-writing process. The notes, the time on the street — it's all set decoration, atmosphere absorbed by osmosis, and never as much as you think — maybe a day a week for "Clockers," less for his other books.

"I just want to know the parameters of plausibility, and then I want to lie responsibly," he says. "All the notebooks? I don't know that I ever opened any of them once I got home."

Okay, so, for "The Whites," how much research did you do?

"I did zero research on that book." But it took you four years to write, so —

"Four years, yeah, but I was working on television scripts and screenplays."

The detail, though, about the New York Police Department night watch shift that the book's protagonist, Billy Graves, lives and breathes, surely —

"I did spend three evenings with the night watch — St. Patrick's Day, Halloween, New Year's Eve — but that was much earlier, before I was working on this idea."

Well, but those rap lyrics the young black gunman in "Lush Life" pens in his diary, that has —

"Whole cloth."

But . . . but . . . you want to say. It's like leaving a Bourbon Street bar and only afterward do you realize that all the lady

at the pole revealed was a short skirt and cleavage.

It is, as the man says, *fiction*.

He's 65.

Hard to believe, you know? The Bronx-born wunderkind, the Columbia University student who wrote "The Wanderers" in 1974. He was full of "Last Exit to Brooklyn," "The Friends of Eddie Coyle," "The Jones Men." Raised in the projects and educated in public schools. His right hand marred by a slight birth defect. The sad-faced Jewish kid whose beloved heavy-set grandma took him to horror-movie marathons and wrestling matches.

He went on to write three sort-of self-conscious literary novels (two turned into films), toot fat lines of coke (it was the late '70s), clean up and then write screenplays such as "The Color of Money," "Sea of Love," "Ransom." And cable scripts for "The Wire."

Fat novels such as "Clockers," "Lush Life" and "Freedomland" came in and around those film projects, first-draft manuscripts of 1,000 pages, him churning everything into a pointillistic depiction of what he'd seen on the street.

His first script, "The Color of Money," was nominated for the 1987 best-adapted-screenplay Oscar.

"We were in the front row. It was the first award. Shirley MacLaine came down in a spaceship, and in the first five minutes, I lost. The show went on for another four hours and twenty-five minutes."

He admired the great Elmore Leonard, perhaps the only writer in America that one could say surpassed him in street dialogue.

"I'm a good mimic," Price says with a shrug. "Once you get the patter of how someone talks, you can replicate it. It's not verbatim. . . . It's like after George



JESSE DITTMAR FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Richard Price, above in his Harlem home, says his research sets the foundation so that he can "lie responsibly" when writing novels, TV scripts and screenplays.

Bush was president for eight years, if you told everybody in America to do Bush reading Shakespeare, everybody could do it. Maybe you'd [screw] up the Shakespeare, but you'd get the idea of how it would sound."

Actors he worked with: Paul Newman, Robert De Niro, Al Pacino, Jessica Lange and, hey, this year's best actress Oscar winner, Julianne Moore.

Let's check in with David Simon, his buddy and creator of "The Wire." We're all having dinner at Sfogli, a classy joint across from the 92nd Street Y, where they'll be talking onstage later in the evening:

"The humor, man," Simon says. "I'm not sure people get just how funny your

stuff is." Dark example, taken from "The Whites":

Billy Graves, guilt-ridden about his "white" getting away years ago, ponies up \$6,000 for the funeral of the twin sister of one of the child victims. After the vic was killed, her twin became a violent terror, until she, too, was killed on the street. No one but her grandmother comes to the funeral.

Here's the low-rent pastor, eulogizing the dead young woman, her body in a casket before him, comparing heaven to a cheesy nightclub:

"She has come into the club direct, has gone, in fact, straight to the VIP room, where He is waiting for her with two

chilled magnums of Holy Ghost love." "Are you kidding me?" Billy whispered.

"You said a hundred dollars for the celebrant," Redman whispered back. "That's what you get for a hundred dollars."

John Sterling, Price's editor on "The Whites," "Clockers" and "Freedomland," also edits literary novelist John Banville, who pens crime novels under the name Benjamin Black. Sterling says that when Banville, a Man Booker winner, works under a pseudonym, the results are wildly different from his usual style.

Price and, for this novel, his pen name Harry Brandt? Didn't work out that way.

"This isn't 100 percent Price," Sterling says of the new book. "It's maybe 90 percent."

He's correct. While it's clearly Price with the pen, the book is much shorter than his other works, much more high-concept ("cops hunt down their old cases"), much quicker with its depiction of minor characters. Like that itinerant pastor, above? In a regular Price novel, that scene would go for 10 pages, the pastor's church and background, the sway he holds over his flock. . . . Here, it's a single page of funeral humor.

Price says the pseudonym sounded like a good idea a few years ago, when he needed some cash. The idea was that he'd knock out a simple, mainstream book in a few months, writing in an assumed voice. The pen name would be a signal to readers that this wasn't intended to be one of his big books.

Four years later . . .

"The book kept expanding on me. It was probably foolish to think I could write in a voice other than my own. . . . It turned out to be a Richard Price novel after all."

Home life: two daughters grown, second marriage to novelist Lorraine Adams (who once worked at The Washington Post). Low-key, friendly, no real New York accent, Bronx boyhood be damned. Seems like a reasonable sort. You're sitting here in his gorgeously restored rowhouse — the tile, man, the woodwork — and you go upstairs, onto the book-lined third floor. He's got first editions here, including the works of Joseph Conrad, the Polish-born ship captain who, like Price, based his novels ("The Heart of Darkness") on in-the-field research.

And it dawns on you that Price, like Conrad, could go from literary setting to rough-hewn reality, then emerge with an allegory of the experience. The guys on the boat, or at the precinct, though, all they say is, "Hey, Richard? While we're young, brother. You coming or what?"

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Richard Price will discuss "The Whites" on Monday at 7 p.m. at Politics and Prose, 5015 Connecticut Ave. NW. 202-364-1919. www.politics-prose.com.