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GEEZERVILLE

A Geezer Remembers South by Southwest

By noon Thursday, the gray skies were gone, and the air carried a hint of spring. In the parking lot next to Trophy's, there was a rudimentary stage and sound system, and it seemed like 1940 all of a sudden. [The Get Up Johns](#) had driven from St. Paul, Minn.; this was their only gig of the weekend, and they were making the most of their 30 minutes. With an acoustic guitar, mandolin, fiddle, and brotherly harmonies, Josh Wenck and Jake Hyer recalled the Louvins, Stanleys, and Delmores with a youthful skill that exuded reverence. They supposedly garnered an opening slot on an upcoming Carrie Rodriguez tour from this appearance, so maybe the long haul down I-35 was worth it.

[click to enlarge](#)



Gary Lucas

Stopping by the Twangfest party at Jovita's early Saturday afternoon, I was expecting an acoustic set from Columbus, Ohio's [Two Cow Garage](#), but the quintet was in full blare mode. It all came into focus when they asked for requests. Someone blurted out "Stranglehold," and off they went into a guitar ramble that would have made the Nuge proud.

While everyone else was enjoying the Stooges late Saturday night, I decided to go to church. The Central Presbyterian Church on Eighth Street was an official venue, but I don't think it had been totally prepared for [Gary Lucas](#). First, the New York City guitarist provided a stunning solo live soundtrack to the 1920 silent film *Der Golem*, a German horror classic. With an incredible rack of effects pedals, Lucas proved he could make a guitar sound like almost anything on the planet.

He then led avant-punk legends Gods & Monsters through a set of noisy jazz-rock that was a welcome respite from all the folk and roots music I'd witnessed. But the big surprise was his band, which included Jerry Harrison of Talking Heads on keyboards, Billy Ficca of Television on drums, and Ernie Brooks of the Modern Lovers on bass. After Lucas introduced me to his friend, famed producer Sandy Pearlman, I walked out of that church with my mind truly blown.

Jim Caligiuri, Tue Mar 20, 3:57pm

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