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Michael Barnes is Entertainment Editor for the Austin American-Statesman. He lives in South Austin with his partner, Kip, two dogs and two cats. [More on Out & About.](#)

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Review: Ballet Austin's 'Don Quixote'

In an impromptu fashion, the dancing started outside the Long ...

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11 Austin bands I adore right now

By **Michael Barnes** | Tuesday, April 29, 2008, 11:48 AM

Back during my first Austin club phase in the 1980s, I dickered with late psycho-punk (**Butthole Surfers**), more disciplined rock (**Zeitgeist/Rievers**), novelty pop (**Poi Dog Pondering**), singer-songwriters (**David Garza**), blues guitar (yes, devoutly, **Stevie Ray Vaughan**) and even country crossover (**Ricky Trevino**, but just to flirt). Notice any threads among these local acts?

For 15 years, occupied as arts critics for the American Statesman, I missed almost a generation of Austin club music. It was not until 2005, when I toured 100 Central Texas music venues in a single month for a pair of XL cover stories that I discovered the next wave of club talent. I even encountered some acts well before the official music critics began to write about them. My most recent crush: **Alpha Rev**, whose pop rock "The Greatest Thing I Ever Learned" is alarmingly sophisticated.

Here go 11 Austin acts I adore right now, in alphabetical order: **Alpha Rev, Band of Heathens, Explosions in the Sky, Ghostland Observatory, Ghost of the Russian Empire, Grupo Fantasma, Jets Under Fire, Meridianwest, Nelo, Pompeii and White Ghost Shivers.**

Notice that three have "ghost" in their names. I suspect you will hear a lot about this sweet almost dozen in our various publications soon.

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By David Ohlerking

May 2, 2008 4:25 PM | [Link to this](#)

The 'Darling New Neighbors' flat out kill.
The 'Calm Blue Sea' is also teh awesome.

By Jennifer

May 1, 2008 5:11 PM | [Link to this](#)

My top Austin picks include (in no particular order) :

The Ugly Beats
Shapes Have Fangs
Nic Armstrong
The Summer Wardrobe
The Fall Collection
The Steps
Electric Touch
Moonlight Towers
The Rite Flyers
Household Names
Future Clouds and Radar
Ripe
Hacienda

By Amy

April 29, 2008 5:24 PM | [Link to this](#)

'Fantasma' means ghost in Spanish, so you actually have 4 bands with "ghost" in their names.

Oooooooooooooo...

By Man Man

April 29, 2008 12:27 PM | [Link to this](#)

Shearwater
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