

# HER FAMILY / HIS

## Reviewing Family Entertainment



HERS

HIS

### It's March - Tulip Time Again

It is March, and every time I see a Hyacinth break through the soil in my spring garden, I remind myself how fortunate I am to live in Southern California. This spring I have discovered one of the reasons for this- the world of the bike path.

I live in a community with the most extensive bike path system in Los Angeles County. It weaves through neighborhoods, under blossoming trees, through green grassy meadows and over bridges and never comes close to tar-covered roadways.

This is a true bike path, something that should be a mandatory addition to every community. I quit riding bikes with my kids because I hated the back draft of carbon monoxide from cars flying by us as we made our way down a hot, asphalt road, hugging the lane closest to the curve. It wasn't recreation; it was survival of the fittest! This new bike path system is an exclusive roadway for walkers, skateboarders, inline skaters and bikers, with no worry for safety. I support community bike paths - they make good family sense

Access to culture is another advantage to living in Southern California. Several Sundays ago my husband forced the family to attend an afternoon jazz concert at the Thousand Oaks Civic Arts Plaza. I knew I would ultimately enjoy the afternoon, and he was right to insist since our son plays the trumpet, but it is sometimes hard to be proactive on a Sunday. We did go to the concert however, and it wasn't just any jazz ensemble- it was Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra- the epitome of jazz, the quintessential voice of American music. My son seemed to come to life as he heard the sounds of Louis Armstrong played by our premiere trombone, sax, trumpet and clarinet players. His feet kept time for two full hours and we all found ourselves transported by this uniquely American musical voice. This is our music and my family almost missed sharing the experience because of couch fever on a Sunday.

We live in a culturally rich city with the opportunity to see world-class talent just down the road at the local community Civic Center. For the sake of your family get off the couch on Sunday and embrace the opportunities. This spring, get up, get out and get going!



Jazz has a magical method of entering one's ear, toe and soul. When played through the body and spirit of a living master like Wynton Marsalis, nothing gets better than sitting in the presence of a group of great musicians that play jazz. My son plays the trumpet in a Ska, just-out-of-the-garage band. He knows something about music, but Marsalis recently shared a whole new musical language to our budding musician.

As a family we reveled in the electrifying performance led by Wynton Marsalis with his 14-member Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. It felt like a "session" than a concert because, although it was a sell out matinee show seating 1,800 totally engrossed people at the Thousand Oaks Civic Plaza, the show came off as a relaxed, unpretentious, late-afternoon rehearsal for the band. With some of the songs, we added to the music by stomping our feet, clapping our hands and calling out in delight as the musicians layered their melodic grooves into the space.

The Orchestra now has a permanent home in New York City at the Frederick P. Rose Hall. Billed as "the first education, performance, and broadcast facility devoted to jazz," it is located at Columbus Circle with breathtaking views of Manhattan's Central Park and inimitable skyline. If you're new to jazz music, don't hesitate to whet your appetite on one of Marsalis' 30 jazz and classical recordings, or better yet, attend one of his live shows - you'll be a part of something spontaneous and great.

Now flipping to a more strategic, calculated and lengthy-named event, I attended the second annual "The next BIG idea - west: The Future of Branded Entertainment, harnessing the power of movies, television, music, sports and games" (see...that's long) held in Beverly Hills. This well presented, day-long conference was primarily about how large corporations get us to recognize, trust and purchase the branded products or services they sell us in gargantuan numbers. A brand, in layman's terms, is the name/and or logo by which you recognize that product or service - kind of like seeing the golden arches and thinking about McDonald's.

According to the presenting professional brand managers, advertisers, marketing directors, and other informed folk about branding science, there actually isn't any "next big idea". It's now more about "how stealthily" rather than "how" you deliver your marketing message to persuade people to buy your goodies. With phrases like "just Tivo it!" creeping into our vernacular, advertisers are scrambling to embed branded goods into the fabric of television and film programs - for example, Coke cans prominently displayed in the auditioning room on American Idol. Expect more and more brands to become part of any entertainment we enjoy. You can't escape it, but you can always choose to avoid it.

*Both having degrees in theater and having studied in Oxford and Paris respectively, Suzanne and Chris Shoemaker have worked as freelance artists and writers in England, Canada, France, China and Hawaii. They now call Los Angeles their home where they live with 3 three sons and 2 grandsons. They can be reached at [suzanne@actsofcreation.com](mailto:suzanne@actsofcreation.com) or [chris2@actsofcreation.com](mailto:chris2@actsofcreation.com).*