UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PAN AMERICAN MARIACHI Capitol Theatre Saturday, April 29, 7 p.m. As the final performers in the Quad City Arts' 2005-6 Visiting Artists Series, the University of Texas Pan American Mariachi will perform in a series of educational workshops, and present a public concert at Davenport's Capitol Theatre on April 29. Yet for those whose knowledge of mariachi performers ends with "Aren't they those wondering musicians who sneak up behind you in Mexican restaurants?", the U. of Texas' ensemble should prove positively revelatory. The group has long been considered the top mariachi ensemble in the nation, having won five consecutive first-place awards at the annual National Mariachi Competition, and its blend of traditional European and Mexican instruments – among them violins, trumpets, and the Mexican guitars the *guitarró n* and the *vihuela* – results in a rich, vibrant sound that, states a Quad City Arts press release, "is the heart and soul of Mexico." The University of Texas Pan American Mariachi concludes a sterling season for the Visiting Arts Series, after which only one expression seems appropriate: *Felicidades!* For more information on the group's local appearance, call (309)793-1213 or visit (http://www.quadcityarts.com)
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– Mike Schulz

PATIENCE* AND *THE CRUCIBLE
Centennial Hall and Hancher Auditorium
Friday, April 28, through Sunday, April 30

The question "Light or dark?" generally accompanies "How do you like your turkey?" This spring, it could just as easily follow "How do you like your opera?" On April 29 and 30, Opera@Augustana presents Gilbert & Sullivan's beloved *Patience*, which concerns a simple woman who learns to love, a group of swooning maidens, the military officers they fall for, and a pair of poets who form an intense rivalry. ("Couplets at dawn!") For darker fare, visit Iowa City's Hancher Auditorium, where the University of Iowa's Martha-Ellen Tye Opera Theatre performs the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Th e Crucible* April 28 and 30. Based on Arthur Miller's classic Joseph McCarthy indictment, and set amidst the notorious Salem trials, the *New York Times* ' John Rockwell wrote of the production, " *The Crucible* has a superb libretto ... and it has a score that balances folkish Americana with devil-possession effects." I guess it's not over 'til the fat lady sings ... or gets burned at the stake for being a witch. Tickets to *Patience* are available by calling the Augustana ticket office at (309)794-7306; reservations for *The Crucible* can be made through the Hancher box office at (319)335-1160.

– Mike Schulz

DAMON DOTSON
Rock Island Brewing Company

Friday, April 28, 10 p.m.

In an interview with the *Iowa Entertainer*, Milford, Iowa, native Damon Dotson revealed that he performed his first public concert at age six. Granted, it was on top of his bunk bed, Dotson's spotlight came from the flashlight a friend was shining in his face, and the four-string guitar he was playing had only one string, but still ... . From such humble beginnings can greatness come, as audiences will see and hear during Dotson's April 28 performance at the Rock Island Brewing Company. Listing The Beatles, The Eagles, and Dave Matthews as influences, the young singer/guitarist/drummer toured with numerous jazz and rock ensembles throughout the Midwest before embarking on his solo career; in recent years, the 26-year-old musician has opened for Honey Tribe, Kenny Loggins, and the Beach Boys, released two CDs – *Atmosphere* and *Better Left Unsaid* – and formed his own recording label, Llama Records. Dotson is poised to head straight to the top ... and not just of a pair of bunk beds. For more information on Dotson's area appearance, and all of RIBCO's future musical offerings, visit (http://www.ribco.com).

– Mike Schulz

STREET OF DREAMS
RiverCenter
Saturday, April 29

A Davenport native is coming home! Professional dancer and area native Rachelle Roehlk-Ochsner will premiere her new dance workshop, *Street of Dreams*, at the RiverCenter on April 29 and 30. The two-day event will feature classes focusing on an array of dance styles – such as ballet, jazz, and hip hop – taught by the group's professionals. Roehlk-Ochsner spent her youth following her own dreams of becoming a professional dancer, teacher, choreographer, and creator of her own workshop; in the *Street of Dreams* press release, she is quoted as saying, "I ... was always that girl who lived and breathed dance." After high school, she pursued her aspirations in Los Angeles and New York for six years before moving to Chicago to open Excel Dance Production. On the 29th, the group's public performance, the *Street of Dreams Gala*, will be performed at the RiverCenter. The show begins at 7 p.m., with an admission price of $2, and more information on the event is available by calling (708)491-7370 or visiting (http://www.streetofdreamsdance.com).

– Jesse Virgil

OUT LOUD ANTHOLOGY PUBLISHING PARTY
Midwest Writing Center
Thursday, April 27, 7 p.m.

Any writer will readily tell you: The day your work is published is a day worth celebrating. (That 's why I spend every Wednesday morning at the *Reader* office drunk.) Numerous local writers are currently celebrating the publication of the Midwest Writing Center's *Out Loud Anthology*, and the public is invited to celebrate with them, in a publishing party held on April 27. Refreshments and open poetry readings will highlight the bash, where the book – the first of what the Writing Center plans to make an annual publication – will be on sale for $10. The anthology features 29 poems from nearly 20 writers, including poets laureate Dick Stahl, Rebecca Wee, and Kathleen Lawless Cox. The last time I wrote a calendar glance involving Ms. Cox, I included a haiku written in her honor, and as I'm a poetry neophyte, I understood why I never received a thank-you call. But I've learned a lot in the past six months. So without further ado: "Attention, poets! / The Midwest Writing Center / May publish your stuff!" Pretty great, huh? Huh? Hmm. I can't *imagine* why my phone still isn't ringing ... . For more information on the *Out Loud Anthology*, contact Brenda Brown at (563)324-1410.

– Mike Schulz