

A LOT OF THE **BEST** AND A LITTLE OF THE **WORST** IN HIGH & LOW CULTURE IN **2007**

DECEMBER 17, 2007

PLUS:
THE TEEN
SEX
TRIALS OF JEFFREY
EPSTEIN
By Philip Weiss

NEW YORK



Albu



**INSATIABLE CRITIC
GAEL GREENE**

The Smith

55 Third Ave., nr. 11th St.
212-420-9800

In no time at all, East Villagers have discovered the Smith with its good, honest el cheapo grub. Not to be confused with Nevada Smith's across the street. The week it opened, it was almost empty. We scarfed up a ton of comfort in the super-crisp Alsatian pizza, wonderful baked penne (spaghetti now) with meatballs, and "almost burnt" mac 'n' cheese. I obsessed all week about scraping that macaroni crust from the bottom of the pan. Now we're back seven days later. The joint is jumping—stuffed with students from NYU and Cooper Union, plus an occasional elder. No one can resist the chips that morph too quickly

into a Gorgonzola slog. We have to lean in to talk and repeat everything twice for our movie-star pretty and unflappable waitress. The big room looks good, with photographs of Victorian nudes and acres of white tile ("Sort of *faux* Odeon," our guest observes.) The tangy Moscow Mule (\$8) and a very good Negroni (\$9) tempt us to forgo our usual red wine. Starters like the fried egg on a chunk of fatty bacon and the irresistible macaroni (sent back for another hit of the broiler) make up for unremarkable fried calamari and simpering sweet wings. I wonder how a kitchen capable of first-rate short ribs, this nut-brown skate, a juicy and well-seasoned pork chop, and textbook-moist chicken could turn out a slab of hanger steak so unchewable. But the joy of the steal returns with \$5 sundaes and monster chocolate-chip cookies warm from the oven.

JOHNNY DEPP,
TIM BURTON
Sweeney Todd
The Best Serial Killer Musical Movie Ever!

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henom,
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Radiohead,
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est Stinkers!
burning questions as
Whacked?