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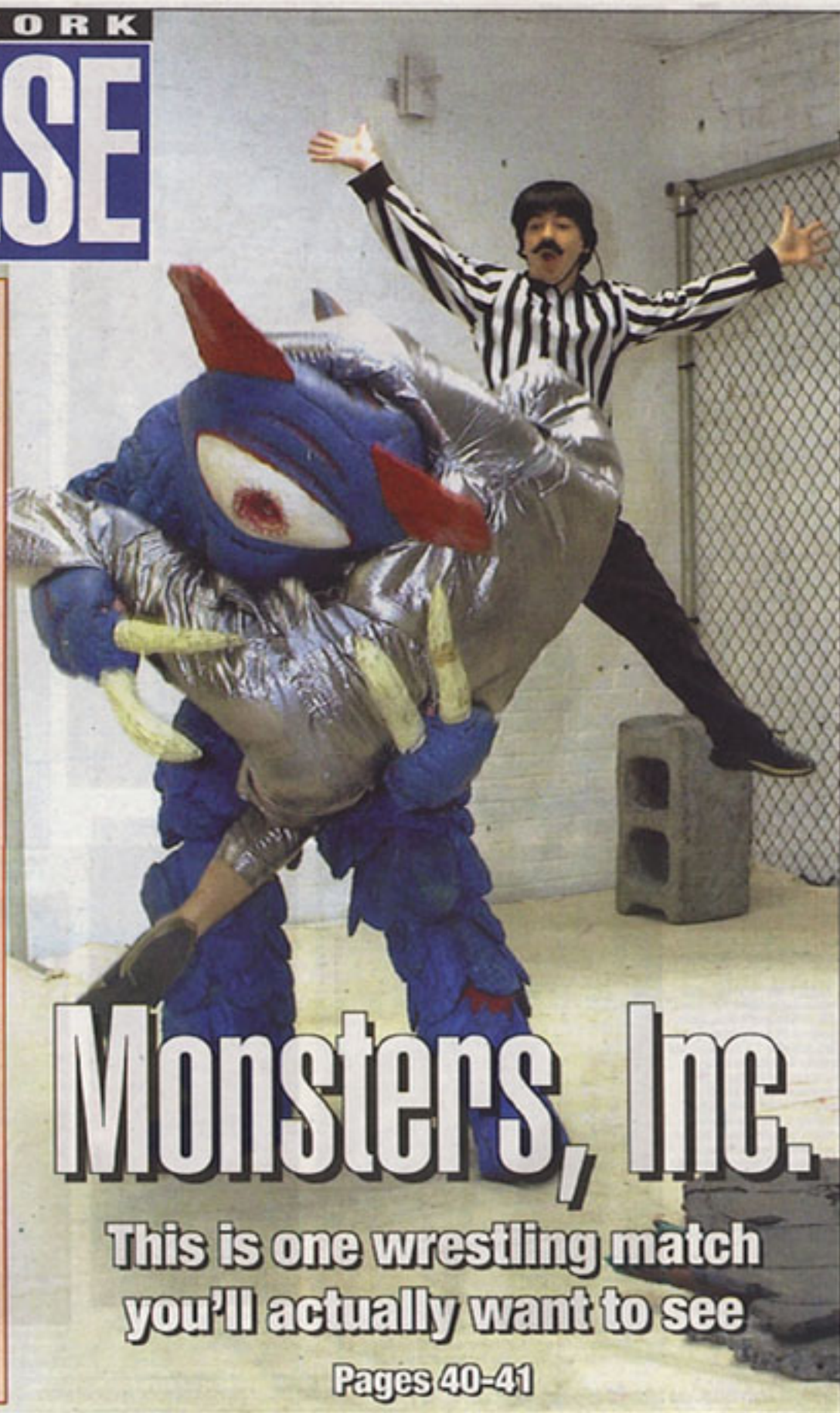
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# Monsters, Inc.

**This is one wrestling match  
you'll actually want to see**

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## Sideshow hogs

It's not just monster-wrestling that's thrilling spectators — all kinds of old-fashioned sideshow entertainment is popular. And the more bizarre, the better. Here are three standout sideshows not to be missed:

### THE WHI WHI SISTERS

This sibling duo (whose last name is pronounced "va va") claim they can "mix martinis in a handstand while smoking Pall Malls and thinking impure thoughts." Their act includes singing naughty songs, playing the guitar, and swinging on the flying trapeze.

### THE BIRDLESTIFF FAMILY CIRCUS

This faux-family act bills itself as an old-time vaudeville act — but they work blue. Acts include a "drunken hobo" clown who entertains with raunchy balloon animals, flame-throwing from unlikely parts of the body, and one trick with a cigar that got the act banned from Austria forever. Not for the little ones.

### THE MELTED MEN

This Athens, Ga.-based duo use turntables to showcase their samples of every type of sound available — from electro-pop to birdcalls — while they play live percussion, show old commercials, change from one oddball costume to another and tell rambling stories (one recently dressed as Kenny Rogers and talked about chicken while "The Gambler" played in the background).

# Monster bash

## Like the WWF, but cool

By SARA STEWART

In this corner of the ring: A man in a red, white and blue leotard, topped with a giant bug head. In the opposite corner: A six-foot-tall can of soup with arms.

In a steel cage surrounded by miniature cardboard skyscrapers, they will battle for world domination — and they'll do it again this Thursday, when they headline a show at the Roxy.

Meet Kaiju Big Battle, a group of 15 men and women who regularly don enormous monster costumes and then wrestle

each other to the sounds of punk rock — and wildy cheering twenty-somethings.

Kaiju Big Battle (Kaiju means "monster" in Japanese; Big Battle is their broken-English version of "big battle") is the brainchild of Randy Borden. In 1995, when he was a student at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, he and three friends planned a short film featuring Japanese-style movie monsters

fighting in a cityscape (think "Godzilla" — the old, badly-dubbed one).

It took them a year to make the costumes, but before the four had a chance to film the movie, they were asked to "perform" live at the Revolving Museum in Boston.

The response to their comical act was overwhelmingly positive. Requests for more shows started piling up. More characters were born. Soon, the act had become a full-time gig, and Borden asked his brother David — who, conveniently, had experience managing live rock events — to join them.

Kaiju brought on several non-wrestling members (none of the Kaiju troupe will reveal their names, ages, or day jobs) to write and wrestle in shows. And they launched an elaborate Web site ([www.kaiju.com](http://www.kaiju.com)) featuring, mostly in comically broken English, descriptions of the characters.

Before long, Kaiju Big Battle performances were regularly packing clubs up and down the East Coast, with respected indie rock bands like Les Savy Fes, Enon and Pirkald as opening acts for Kaiju. "But it got to the point where bands were getting heckled and booed," David Borden says — because audiences were there for the monsters. (They've since replaced the live acts with a less conspicuous lineup.)

Now the group includes snowboarders, ex-gymnasts and musicians — "a core group of people who show up and work the ring every night," says David. The more they rehearse, the fiercer the moves. (And they can get pretty fierce — in a recent match, one of the wrestlers fell so hard he cracked the floor.)

During their last New York appearance, at Williamsburg's Warsaw last June, Kaiju performed for a packed house. Paul Beddoe-Stephens, a producer at Comedy Central and self-confessed Kaiju fan, was there.

"I'm not a wrestling enthusiast," he says, "but by the end, I was screaming for blood."



**Freak show alert!**

Coney Island, the home of the original (and now-defunct) freakshow, is now offering Sideshow School for all aspiring glass-eaters and would-be dog-faced boys. Veteran sideshow guy Todd Robbins ("amusement is his business") will teach you "Jackass"-style stunts like fire eating, sword swallowing, broken

glass walking and lying on a bed of nails for a mere \$600. He'll also spend a weekend helping you hone the dangerous and/or disgusting act of your choice, for the low price of \$250.

Classes begin on Nov. 15 at Sideshow by the Seashore, at the corner of Surf Avenue and West 12th Street in Coney Island. Call (718) 372-5158 for more info.

### Los Platanos

**SIGNATURE MOVE:** The "Cuban clothesline."

**WHAT'S THEIR DEAL?** South American freedom-fighting guerrillas who wage war against colored-fist persecution. **OFFICIAL KAIJU DESCRIPTION (IN SPANISH):** "El loco Puppet Dictator son los muertos en el dia con mucho sonajal."

## Scene

## American Beetle

**SIGNATURE MOVE:** The "presidential pounce."  
**WHAT'S HIS DEAL?** His immigrant single mother loved U.S.A. so much she dressed her son exclusively in Captain America Underoos.  
**OFFICIAL KALJU DESCRIPTION (IN BROKEN ENGLISH):** "He thinks was famous American president. Face is distinctive with the bug-type look, but is ugly because is five hundred foot tall boxing insect."

## Silver Potato

**SIGNATURE MOVE:** The "su-gratin-style kick."  
**WHAT'S HIS DEAL?** Blockbuster employee whose DNA became fused with a potato's in a freak explosion.  
**OFFICIAL KALJU DESCRIPTION (IN BROKEN ENGLISH):** "Also is shooting hot melted butter at enemy and breaking fan."

## Uchu Chu the Space Bug

**SIGNATURE MOVE:** The "hyperspace slinger."  
**WHAT'S HIS DEAL?** Came to earth after a Royal Jelly drought on his native planet.  
**OFFICIAL KALJU WARNING:** "Watch out for psychological jilly junkie baggage of death!"

## Kung-Fu Chicken Noodle

**SIGNATURE MOVE:** The "steam roller."  
**WHAT'S HIS DEAL?** Was once a depressed soup factory worker who tried to commit suicide by jumping into a vat of soup and emerged with superpowers.  
**OFFICIAL KALJU DESCRIPTION:** "The Asian man's Bruce Springsteen."

## Sky Deviller

**SIGNATURE MOVE:** The "ewoop 'n' eat attack."  
**WHAT'S HIS DEAL?** Found in the Arizona desert in a glowing egg pod.  
**OFFICIAL KALJU DESCRIPTION:** "Sky Deviller doesn't have a nose anymore because big blue alien beasts lose their noses during puberty, right after their baby teeth."

## Sio Feng

**SIGNATURE MOVE:** The "umlaut confusion."  
**WHAT'S HIS DEAL?** A motorcycle-riding Swede who came to America for fame and fortune.  
**OFFICIAL KALJU DESCRIPTION (IN BROKEN ENGLISH):** "Resemble strong odor, hairy super-trooper food group type."



## **Monster Mash**

By Sara Stewart

**New York Post**, November 10, 2002

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