

# NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 6, 2004

## Alt Culture Highlights from the Imagine Festival.

Many of the most provocative convention-week events are presented under the auspices of the Imagine Festival of Arts, Issues, and Ideas, a six-day onslaught of dance, music, theater, film, and art—more than 125 shows in all. The **Freedom of Expression National Monument** (a megaphone in lower Manhattan for New Yorkers to voice their opinions) and **Photographs by Iraqi Civilians, 2004** are among the installations that run throughout the convention. The festival screens Spike Lee's *We Was Robbed*, about the 2000 Florida election, and Robert Altman's *Secret Honor*, a cinematic riff on the Watergate scandal. **American Oligopoly**, in Washington Square Park, allows participants to join in an interactive theatrical "game" played on a gigantic Monopoly board; acclaimed storytelling collective **The Moth** hosts a story slam at the Bitter End; and *Patriot Acts—Patriots Gone Wild* has Taylor Mac, the Dazzle Dancers, and others lampooning the administration's obsession with patriotism. Margaret Cho's **State of Emergency World Tour** opens at the Apollo Theater, and in perhaps the most ambitious (or at least masochistic) festival happening, artist Marshall Weber performs **NYC Odyssey and The Iliad**, a marathon reading of Homer's epics while riding the Staten Island Ferry, which is expected to take two days. Go to [imagine04.org](http://imagine04.org).

### FESTIVAL Use Your Imagination

Is the politically themed **Imagine Festival**, running August 28 through September 2, a Republican conspiracy to keep would-be protesters distracted? Well, maybe it'll cut both ways. Beyond the obvious shows—a topical new A. R. Gurney play, Margaret Cho waxing radical, Marisa Tomei reading *Electra*—there might be enough *faux*-conservative larks from the likes of country-send-up performance artist Tammy Faye Starlite (pictured) and inventors of the interactive board game **American Oligopoly** to draw unsuspecting delegates new to the principles of satire. (See "Off-Off Broadway.")

