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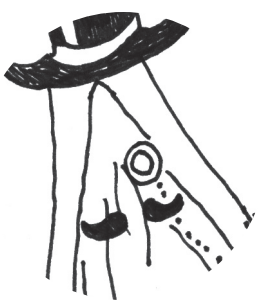
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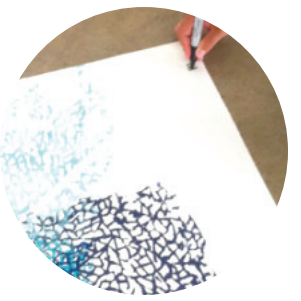














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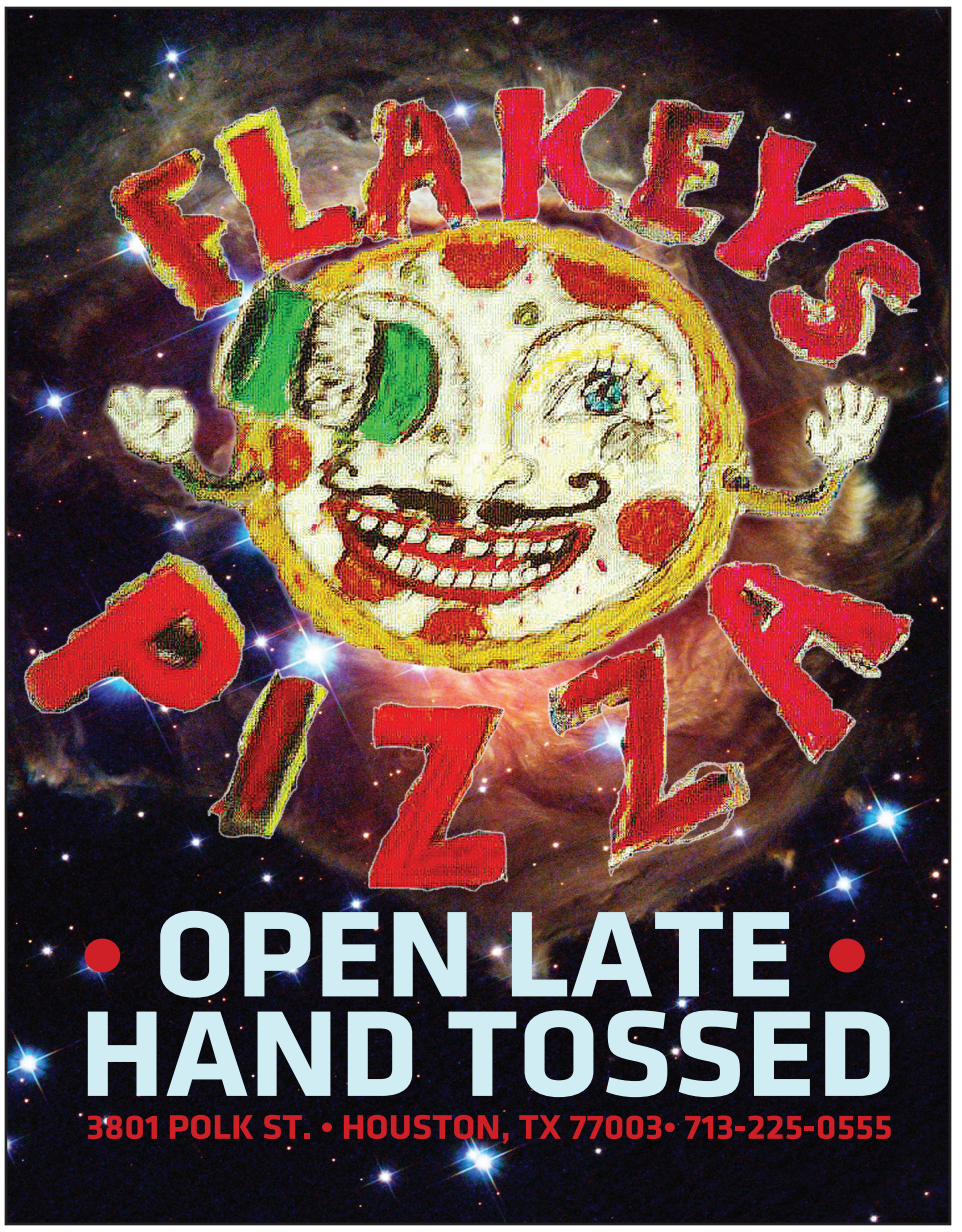
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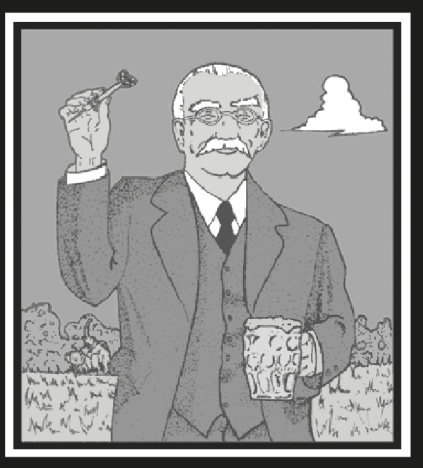
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Open Mic Comedy

TUES. 3RD
Tour Fundraiser Show, Venomous Maximus, The American Heist, A-dream

FRI. 6TH
The Suffers, The Bandulus

SAT. 7TH
Dogz On Parole, Penny Arcade, The Bad Drugs, the Swamps

MON. 9TH
Open Mic Comedy

THURS. 12TH
A Couple of Stand Up Guys

FRI. 13TH
Electric Frankenstein, The Lovesores, The Swingin Dicks, Automatic Thrill

SAT. 14TH
Amplified Heat

SUN. 15TH
Cory Branan, Audra May

MON. 16TH
Open Mic Comedy

TUES. 17TH
Grown-Up Storytime

WED. 18TH
English Muffin Divers

THURS. 19TH
The Anthemeers, Spain Colored Orange, Handsome Ransom

SAT. 21ST
Giant Fight, The Young Leaves, Penny Arcade

SAT. 21ST
Eagle Claw, From Beyond

MON. 23RD
Open Mic Comedy

THURS. 26TH
Tiziano Dominico

FRI. 27TH
Mynabirds, Deep Time

SAT. 28TH
Masada, Toy Subs

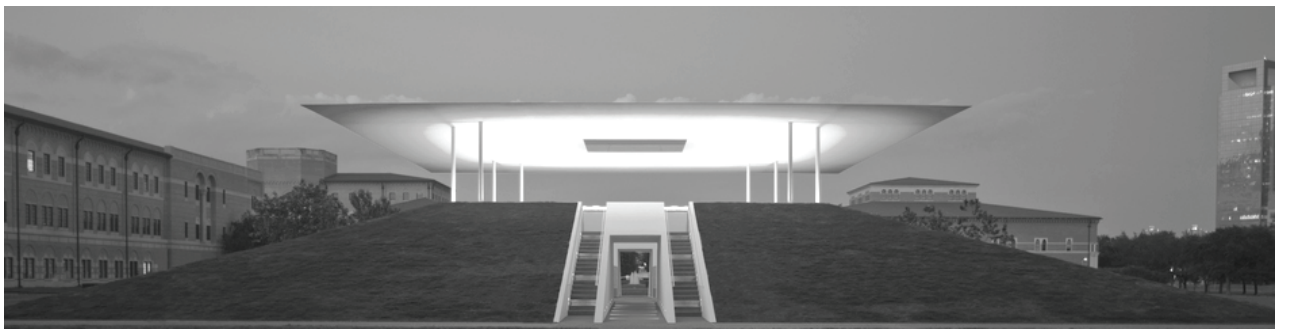
MON. 30TH
Open Mic Comedy

ALL SHOWS 21 AND UP / MUSIC STARTS AT 10PM!

I am trying harder and harder every day to blur the distinction between work and play. But as we constantly expand the scope of what we do here at the Free Press-Industrial Complex, I find I am spreading myself thin. Many days I arrive to the office become so inundated with 'peripheral' matters, I lose sight of what we started here as 10 years ago: a newspaper. Admittedly, my duties as a Managing Editor have been put on the back-burner. So, I have decided to hand these duties to my trusted friend and fellow hummus-eater Brigitte Zabak starting next issue. Brigitte has written for us and other media organizations for years now, is well versed on Houston's arts/music/culture, and even knows how to operate spell check. She is a total badass and we are lucky to have her. That said, I will still be sticking my nose in her biz, offering up articles, and writing this here Editor's Letter. But please, please, please do not contact her if you want your band to play FPSF, want free tickets to some show, or want to know what time some band goes on.

art

DEBRIS: Space Me
By Buffalo Sean



Twilight Epiphany, Photo by Paul Hester



Transmission Light series

LIVING IN HOUSTON, you can sometimes forget about the inky blackness of the night sky au natural; purple blooms, orange hazes and grey expanses are more likely to greet eyes turned skyward. Suburban light pollution, oil refinery plumes of fire, streetlights, headlights and strip mall floodlights all contribute to a blotting out of the stars and their abyss of a backdrop. Despite this context, or perhaps because of it, Houston has grown to love the artworks of James Turrell. Turrell has often contemplated the wonders of our atmosphere, permeating social fascination with technology and imagery with a moment of post-minimal wonder. His works focus on light and space- usually without a physical object at all. Framing the ways that light can affect viewers' moods, Turrell is able to create something out of nothing and solicit a genuine calm. In the midst of our hectic rat race, a Turrell artwork is a fragment of peace floating in the chaos of it all.

Bringing natural wonder indoors has been Turrell's focus for over forty years. Isolating subtle impermanence has taken the form of light sculptures, architectural cutouts, holograms, skywriting smoke, sensory deprivation experiences and a museum in Argentina without a single physical object. Two of Turrell's most famous works are here in Houston- The Light Inside, a tunnel under the Museum of Fine Arts, and the Live Oak Friends Meeting House on West 26th street in the Heights. Rumor is that a retrospective of Turrell will be coming to the MFAH next year.

Twilight Epiphany, 2012, is a new evolution of Turrell's work that hearkens back to Stonehenge with its mystical ritualism. Placed near Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, the skyspace is a raised mound of earth around a square concrete space. Rising above the space on thin pillars is an open ceiling with a centered cutout to expose the sky. 40-minute light shows at sunrise and sunset cast contrasting colors inside the ceiling to highlight the experience of the ambient sky transitioning from darkness to daylight. On the other end of the Turrell spectrum, opening July 14 at Hiram Butler Gallery, several holograms from the "Transmission Light" series will be on view. These rare 2D works appear to contain indeterminate space, using 3D technology to cast a holographic light inside the space in the optical illusion. Introduced in 2009, the holograms briefly shocked the unshockable New York artscene when they were exhibited at PaceWildenstein.

Turrell's passion for flight and time spent as a pilot informs his oeuvre, few people are as familiar with the monochromatic subtlety of the Earth's atmosphere as he is. In these artworks that we can see here in Houston we have the perfect environment to contemplate the future of Space City. An obsession with space and space travel has fuelled the cultural imagination of Houston for half a decade and despite NASA's degradation the city should not give up on its dreams. Space exploration is beginning a new chapter in the 21st century, and Houston's role in the 20th century's space race will propel the city's involvement in the increasingly accessible and egalitarian space exploration beginning right now. Space X, who just launched a supply pod to dock with the International Space Station, is considering Brownsville for its commercial and touristic operations. Blue Origin is testing its New Shepard space module in west Texas. Since sea transport is necessary for rocket production and shipping, the industrial complex of Houston is perfect for construction and fuelling of the new generation of spaceships. As a stopping point for international travel Houston may become a gateway for space tourists- and with nearly ten thousand millionaires here in town the first sales office should be in the Galleria. If the inspiration can be found, the pieces will fall into place to make Houston Space City all over again. **FPH**


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Once There Was, Once There Wasn't

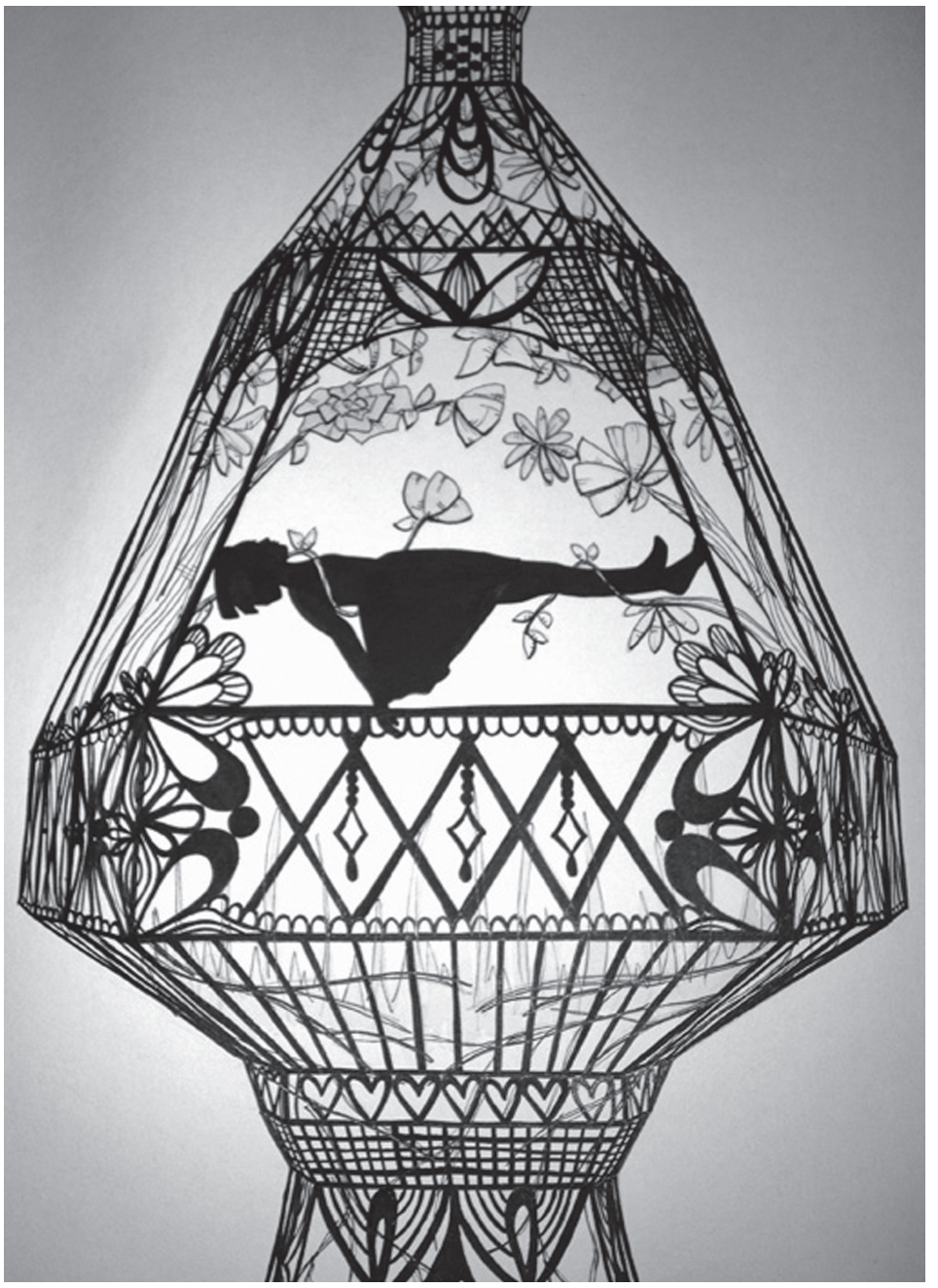
By Michael Pennywark

THE FASCINATION WE HAVE WITH FAIRY TALES is as strong today as it has ever been. Television series such as Once Upon a Time and Grimm have sought to infuse our reality with the cherished figures found more often in the realm of Disney, while reimaginings of classic stories such as Snow White have found just as eager an audience on the big screen. Perhaps it is an inherent desire in each one of us for something not quite so real as our real lives, a nostalgia for our childhood where ideas like truth and beauty, and good versus evil were concrete and immutable. Even though we know the impossibility, we sometimes yearn for a world where the bad guys wear black and there weren't always so many gray areas to navigate. At least we do when our ex-girlfriend gets mad and posts evil comments about us on certain social media websites just because we slept with her best friend, even though she said she was "fine" with it.

Anyway, while these shows and movies retell already familiar stories, local artists Lisa Chow and Y. E. Torres explore their own self-created fairy tales in a collaborative visual and performance installation exhibition hosted by Spacetaker Gallery at Fresh Arts. In Once There Was, Once There Wasn't, the two very different worlds of these very different artists collide and exist within the one gallery space, not unlike the binary oppositions of light and darkness that one might expect to find in a fairy tale universe. Chow's is a world of whimsical drawings and paintings, where a girl and her not-so-imaginary-friend, Rabbit, venture from reality into a new imaginary world they build together. As time goes on, Chow's world is slowly supplanted by the darker and more deviant world of ms. YET's Bad Unicorn. As YET explained to me, her installation will "morph the gallery space (literally PUSHING Lisa Chow's work out of the way) into 'sets', which will be activated through various scheduled performances."

Chow points out that "Halfway through the exhibit, while both our aesthetics are merged in the space, we will host an afternoon tea party to celebrate and indulge in all things feminine and pretty and sultry and quirky and fun." She promises it to be "just as any afternoon tea party should be, treats you eat with your fingers, tea - of the innocent and adult variety, rosy cheeked girls, pretty dresses, masks and games." What more could you want? YET adds that "It is an opportunity for everyone to see the show right in the middle of the transformation between Lisa's aesthetic and my own - where Girl and Rabbit join up with an Evil Bunny and a very Bad Unicorn."

YET's dark and seductive installation performance is in stark contrast to Chow's candy-colored world that examines the sometimes blurry line between reality and the imaginary. A visual artist and belly-dancer, YET draws on her multi-disciplinary background and the distorted fairy tale trope of the bad unicorn to delve into our unconscious desire to seduce and control, and pursue hidden pleasure. Combining performance art, movement, and music by viola player Jo Bird, the audience can expect "A festive exhibition of deviance and sweetness, glitter, paper maché, a Bad Unicorn stand, some sorts of trees, amputated Unicorn horns, Jo Bird, handmade fabric Unicorn penises and vaginas, and me wearing a tail... you know, the usual," says ms. YET. FPH



Once there was,
once there wasn't:
Two tales from the minds of
Lisa Chow & Y. E. Torres

On view July 9 – August 18,
Spacetaker Gallery at Fresh
Arts (Located in Winter
Street Studios)
2101 Winter St., Studio B-11
Houston, TX 77007

Opening Reception
(Lisa Chow)
July 14, 2012, 7-10p

Afternoon Tea Party
(joint reception) with
Lisa Chow & Y. E. Torres
July 29, 2012, 2-5p

Artist SPEAKeasy featuring
Lisa Chow & Y. E. Torres
August 15, 2012, 6:30-8:30p

Closing Reception
(Y. E. Torres)
August 18, 2012, 7-10p

Second Saturday
Open Studios at Winter
Street Studios
July 14, 2012, 2-5p
(showcasing Lisa Chow)
August 11, 2012, 2-5p
(showcasing Y. E. Torres)





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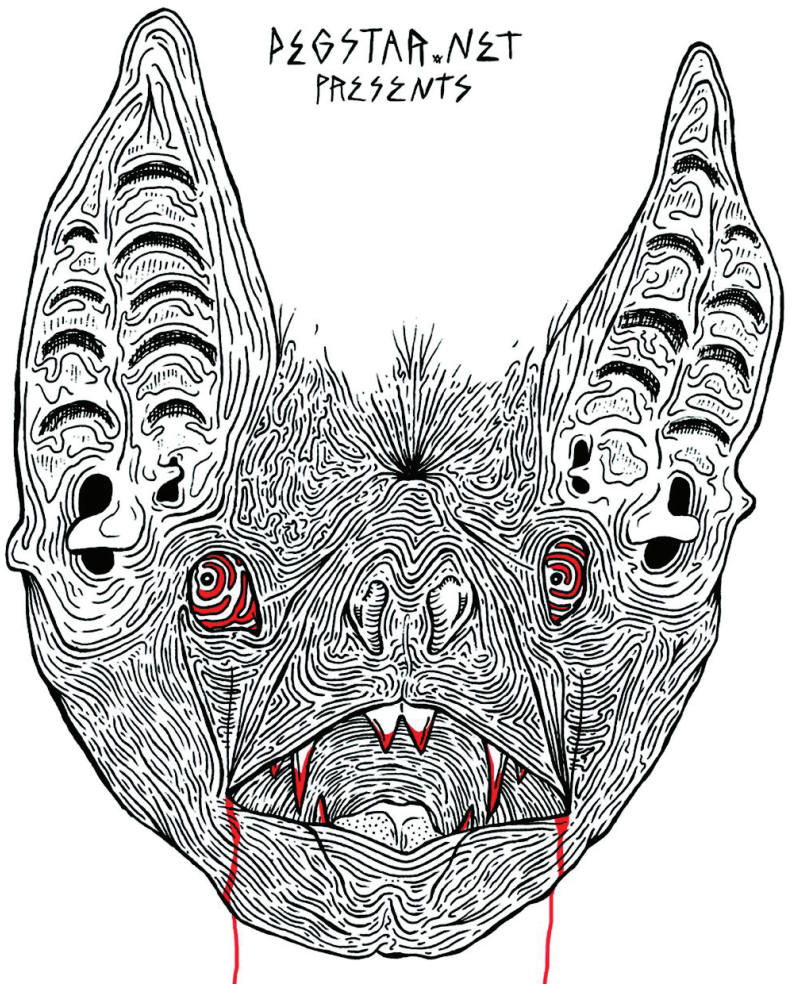
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POSTER BY WILL HARRISON

PEGSTAR PRESENTS

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Elephant in room By Michael Bergeron



THERE'S ALWAYS THE ELEPHANT in the small glass room. For July it's The Dark Knight Rises, with over one-hour of scenes shot in IMAX, not to mention it might be a totally higher level of dreaming from Inception.

And then there's The Watch, which is curiously aligned with the Treyvonn Martin case but not really. An early trailer emphasized the vigilante aspect of the movie but really it is a more rounded version of Paul an alien dork comedy from last year, which the second trailer emphatically points out, not unnoticed by anyone following marketing politics. You could do worse to watch either one. Perhaps not oddly in The Watch, after Ben Stiller, Vince Vaughn, Billy Crudup, Jessica DeWittt and a few others you have Richard Ayoade who also directed the excellent Submarine, a small Welsh film from last year that played for a week. And that is the economic model of films in Houston in 2012. Some of the best films this year have played in theaters for one-week.

BRAVE

Mark Andrews tells a round table of interviewers "I was born and raised in California, I'm as Californian as you get. I just don't surf or have blond hair." Andrews is in town promoting the new Pixar film Brave (distributed by Disney).

Typical of Pixar productions there's a duality to the story that's not apparent in other animated movies. Issues of matricide are raised and traditional male female roles become reversed. The hero's journey becomes internal. Look for the wink-wink nod to Miyazaki's Spirited Away in the portrayal of the witch. Andrews was candid and animated as he related his own journey, from Iron Giant, to Spiderman, to John Carter to Brave.

There's three directors listed in the credits. On a project like this how are the duties divided?

We don't all work art the same time. Brenda Chapman was the original director. Steve Purcell is the co-director, which is like your wingman. Co-director is really the hardest role on the picture because you're not in a supervising capacity but rather right there with the director helping them enforce their vision. When I came on as director I took over from Brenda, 18 months ago in the Fall of 2010. When I came on I kept Steve as a co-director because of his connection with everything that went before. Steve co-wrote with me. At the end of the day it's the director who's making the final call.

I took over for Brenda mostly due to creative differences. Brenda came up with the idea for the project in 2004 and pitched it to Pixar and John Lasseter. They loved the story that is at the heart a parent child conflict. The film was in its development phase where enough work has been done that it's green-lit into production. Then you start designing the sets and characters, getting them ready for animation. The process is we build the story in story reels, we look at the whole movie and look at it and go this isn't any good. Then we take it down, change elements around because the story is really alchemy. We're trying to change lead into gold, find all those directions and characters and themes and line them up and tell this great story. Brave was running into story trouble. At the 18-month deadline, where you have a year-and-a-half before the movie comes out, something's got to happen. That's when Pixar approached me to take over for Brenda. It's unfortunate to have a director change, but it happens; and it's all done to get the best story. We did it on Ratatouille, we did it on Toy Story 2. It happens all the time on live action. Films get stuck and they need that kind of change. I'd already been loosely involved with the project since the get-go as a consultant on all things medieval, Scottish and Celtic, all the research books came out of my library. I'm friends with Brenda, I wanted to do right by her story, and all the bones of her story are there.

Are there times when you get executive notes to tone down the darkness, the film has a very dark color scheme for instance?

The great thing about Pixar is that they constantly continue to push. When John saw this, and we're getting dark, he thought it was fine. It served the purpose of the story, it raises the stakes of the tale. You can't pretend that there's a lesson to be learned unless there's real consequences. It's why in The Incredibles Bob gets hurt fighting the big robot. We could of gotten PG-13 with the violence and level of scariness, but we wanted to get the whole audience so we made it properly scary. Then balance that out with the humor and the action and the heart.

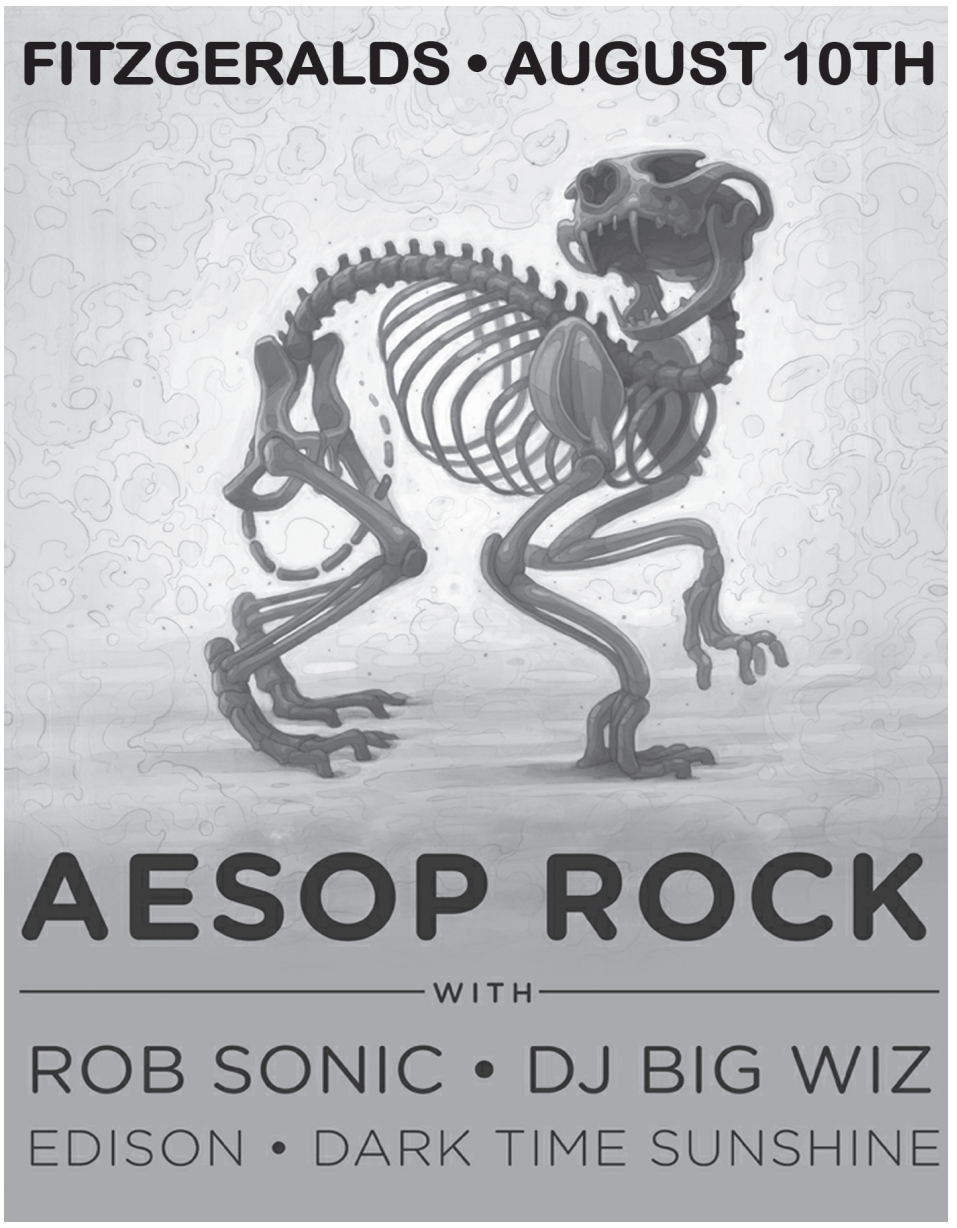
How does someone get a gig working as a storyboard artist on Spiderman?

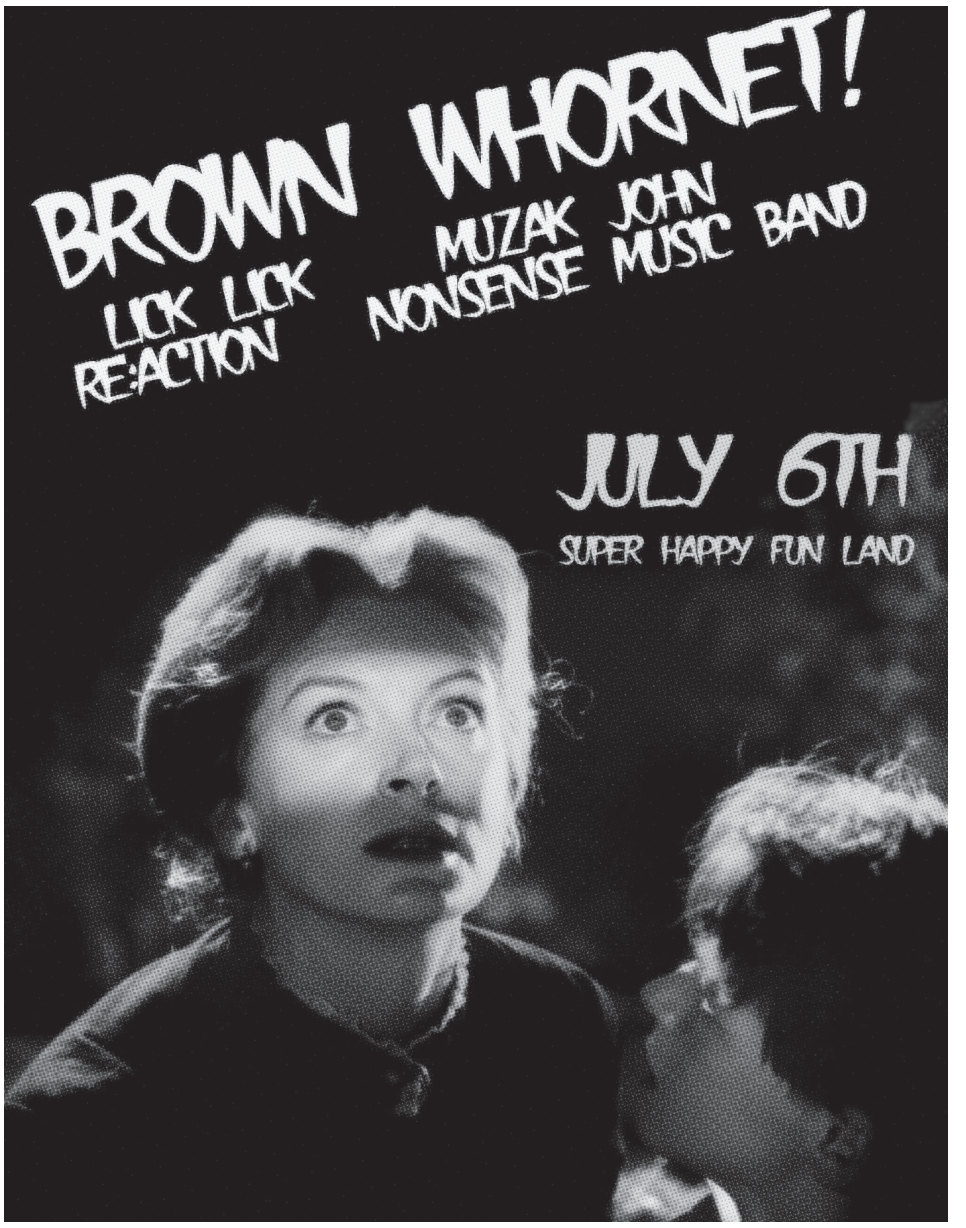
You know that old saying, it's all who you know? That's pretty much it. My boss at the time, the head of story on Iron Giant was Jeff Lynch. Lynch went on to work with Sam Raimi doing storyboards on A Simple Plan, For the Love of the Game, The Gift and then Sam got Spiderman. When that happened Jeff called me and said, 'Dude, Spiderman.' And I'm like 'I'm totally there.' The same day I got that call, Brad Bird called me to ask me to come work with him as head of story on The Incredibles. I said sure as soon as I'm through on Spiderman. It's all about reputation in the biz, if you do good work, word gets around like wildfire.

You were one of the writers on John Carter, along with Andrew Stanton (also one of Brave's executive producers), and Wonder Boys author Michael Chabon. It's so rare to have a full-blown romantic fantasy sci-fi film. It was also a case where most people seemed to review the film's production history and not the film itself.

We were all in the same room, me and Andrew for the first … okay, there are dates in making a movie. Once you get the rights, you have 18 months to get a script, then it's approved, in this case by the Burroughs estate, then you have 18 months to get into principal photography. So for the first 18 months it's just me and Andrew writing the script, adapting the story. Once we got the approval Andrew wanted to get Chabon on board because of his literary sense. He came in and put the dialogue and characters in that period. Between me, Andrew and Chabon we make the perfect writer: we all have our own individual super powers. Chabon has that beautiful literary language; Andrew is the editor supreme, he can take all the pieces and go boom boom boom now we have it; and I just shove out material like you wouldn't believe, I can write a 120 page script in under a month. There was a lot of yelling in the room, it was a fun process.

What I've just recently found out, is that John Carter is the most downloaded ripped off movie in film history. Beyond Avatar, by a factor of ten. I saw a graph and it's like way over here. So all the bad press has actually sold it to where people want to see what the fuss was about. [In its first week on DVD/Blu Ray John Carter moved over 648,000 units.] How does Chronicles of Riddick keep getting remade? Or Underworld, or Resident Evil? And you don't want to see another John Carter movie? We have the whole story all plotted out over three films, but the first one was designed to be a stand-alone film. **FPH**





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THERE'S A THOUSAND YOUS, THERE'S ONLY ONE OF ME

K to the M to the A



DRINKING. It is a wonderful enterprise that ends with the word "king." Not a coincidence, I am the ruler of all that surrounds me: this napkin, these chips, the empty laptop sleeve. July; independence, free from the reign of tyranny, but only to inflict upon ourselves tyranny and lord theories. Sandusky fucked the boys, and now is fucked. Oh boy, Lebron James finally did it. Non-sequiturs. I enjoy a bad transition every now and then. Fathers and mothers, what the hell are you calling clothes these days? Seriously, as a person with a daughter I hope to never… My son will meet a decent girl eventually, but until then, "Son, do you see those shorts? Daughter, hell no you can not have those shorts!" And the cycle begins again…

Work. The centerpiece of our society: Productivity, labor, to work ourselves into an early grave, or to never work as a sign of life management. To work for one's self, entrepreneurship, to live to work, to work to live, to live and not have to work, to work at making a living. Life is but a diagram, and at this point I am on figure 13.2. Time and work and play, the conundrums, the worries, the addition and subtraction, the days spent thinking of the days spent as the day is spent thinking of the one day. As I gaze out of this window, disguised as a computer or phone screen, thinking of clever quips and one-liners, I say to myself, "Self…" and then I am interrupted. Gotta go back to work, but at least I am the Drink King.

SPICES 4 YO DEVICES

FIONA APPLE

The Idler Wheel Is Wiser Than The Driver Of The Screw And Whipping Cords Will Serve You More Than Ropes Will Ever Do

The title is long, and I will admit I cut and pasted it, but the album is fooking fabulous, mate. Relationships happen between people, and people are full of shit: happiness, sadness, confusion, history, misconceptions, generalizations, etc. Some people write about stuff (I have no idea what any Radiohead song is about), and some people are more specific. I would classify Apple as the latter. Her songs are about her, how she feels, how she sees it, and what she thinks. And she thinks A LOT. The album opener, "Every Single Night," sets the tone in that it introduces our character. It lets us know who and what we are dealing with: A person in conflict with her brain. Throughout the 10 songs on this album, there is love, lust, and disgust. But more, there is a person dealing with herself, dealing with the people who've loved (or tried to love) them and how they (and she) made that difficult. She is victim and villain; she has and is the problem. "Left Alone" blatantly states, "How can I expect anyone to love me, when all I want to be is left alone." The sparseness in production, the bareness in arrangement, the uncomfortable nuances of her voice; Many singers use bombast to disguise or feign emotion, Apple needs not these adornments.

USHER

Looking 4 Myself

Usher has sort of established a new model for the R&B male: hood and Euro-pop. One would never guess the two would mix, but no one hates on making money, and the Euro pop made Ursher some money. So, his latest album is sort of a mix of dirty slow jams, liberation anthems, and dance floor fodder. But let us not bullshit, "Climax" is probably one of the best songs ever recorded. Pharrell did a song called "Twisted" that is friggin' bananas, and "I Care For You" is no punk.

DIRTY PROJECTORS

Swing Lo Magellan

Dave Longstreth has done an amazing thing. He has created a sound that can only be attributed to him. Now the Dirty Projectors sound like the Dirty Projectors, for better or for worse. Some love the harmonizing, some don't. Some think it is genius, some think it is overdone. I was not, at first, a fan of "Bitte Orca", but as I listened more, the weird R&B meets art rock thing grew on me. Dirty Projectors know a groove, and their first single, "Gun Has No Trigger," is a groove, and also kind of reggae. "Dance For You" is dynamic, and if these are snapshots of the album, I expect big things. Regardless, Longstreth, in my opinion, is a genius, beyond and before the three-girl choir (see "I Will Truck" and "Time Will Spill Blood"), so I'm on board. **FPH**


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music

Interview: Fat Tony | New record, new city

By Omar Afra | Photo by Mark C. Austin

Like many a successful local musician, Fat Tony has left the nest of Houston to seek greener pastures. As opposed to moving to Austin, Nigerian-American Anthony Obi has recently settled in Los Angeles to widen his scope and try his hand at the LA scene. His follow-up to 2010's RABDARGAB is a dual effort titled 'Double Dragon' which is collaboration with previous cohort Tom Cruz. We caught up with him to answer a few questions before his Houston release July 6 at Warehouse Live.



FAT TONY AT FPSF 2012

HOW MUCH HAS THE GEOGRAPHY AROUND YOU AND YOUR MOVE TO LA AFFECTED YOUR SONGWRITING?

I think Los Angeles tends to inspire artists to make fun ass records. Look at the Beastie Boy's Paul's Boutique or Supreeme's American Badass. Both are rap groups that come from places totally unlike California, New York City and Atlanta respectively, and make the excursion to the city of hell's angels to create some of their very best work.

The house I was living in had a nice sized garden and the L.A. River in the backyard. I spent many days just walking around that river and Griffith Park, listening to music contemplating on what I wanted to say with each new song. It's much easier to be happy when you're bombarded daily by natural beauty and smiling faces.

TELL US ABOUT WORKING WITH TOM CRUZ. HAS SHARING THE CREATIVE PROCESS BEEN A CHALLENGE?

I've worked with Tom Cruz before but this was the first time we got to be in the same space the entire time. I know it absolutely made the whole process better! He completely produced, mixed, and mastered by debut album RABDARGAB but most of it was done sending emails back and forth. That's kind of cool but ain't nothing like the magic of creating together face to face. This time around we were making two albums while living together and working in a studio with our engineer Paul Katzman.

We went back and forth on every song making sure it was tight from start to finish. I've learned so much about writing great songs from Tom Cruz. It wasn't a challenge to work with him cause honestly he's been the most fun person I've collaborated with ever but I did challenge myself to not write down a single lyric.

Both albums were done totally in my head, no pens, no paper, no typewriter; none of that shit. The music and meaning loses its magic soon as it hits the notebook. Songs are conversations, and to keep that essence you've got to create it all in your mind. Let it flow freely. By losing the paper I've been able to express what I'm saying in songs more directly and to the point. Fuck all the beating around the bush.

WHAT KIND OF PERSONAL EXPERIENCES DID YOU DRAW FROM WHICH INSPIRED THIS RECORD?

We made two new records, the first was Fat Tony & Tom Cruz - Double Dragon and the second was Fat Tony - Smart Ass Black Boy. The first record is a dynamic duo fun in the sun summer flow fest for all the girls & boys to drink Guinness and wear Denim to in the pool. The second record is a solo introspective journey through the mind of a young Nigerian-American man living and loving in the U.S.A.

On Double Dragon, I rhyme about many things... betrayal by a best friend & a girlfriend, the perils and immaturity of infidelity, going on tour against my girlfriend's wishes but one scary personal experience is captured in the song "I'm Worried" which is all about a young lady I met randomly last year whose infatuation with me bordered on stalking and harassment. On Smart Ass Black Boy, you'll hear me talking about my father, crying the first time I saw Spike Lee's Malcolm X movie during his assassination scene, and much more.

I SAW YOU LIMITED SALES TO YOUR 'HOMECOMING' SHOW FOR JULY 6. WHAT IS THE MOTIVATION FOR THAT MOVE?

Just wanted to play a club show while I'm here for a couple weeks. I'm calling it a release party for our Double Dragon mixtape since we haven't done a proper release party yet, only a listening party in L.A. at Blind Barber. We just finished touring this great nation all of June and I feel really good about the live show I've got with Tom Cruz, 10ille, and iPod Ammo right now. I wanna share all the joy I feel performing our new music with my family and friends here in my Houston home.

WHEN YOU WERE 12 YEARS OLD, WHOM DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

When I was 12 years old I heard Cam'ron and Juelz Santana's "Oh Boy" on my Walkman radio as I ran from 6th period P.E. to my 7th period Social Studies class for the very first time. The Just Blaze beat and the Dipset's rhymes blew my mind! I sat down 3 of my friends and decided we were going to be a rap group. I told two of my friends they would be the rappers, another friend he would be our manager, and declared myself to be a producer. I promised I'd bring some beats to school the very next day. Not knowing shit about shit, I used a Fischer Price tape recorder to record some random beats someone else made I found on Soundclick or something and played them for my friends the next time we had class. That was the beginning of the end.

WHAT COMES NEXT FOR FAT TONY?

More touring and another new record! I'll be on the road for as long as I can keep going, especially from now till the end the next year. God willing, this touring will last forever. The sophomore solo album Smart Ass Black Boy, also completely produced by Tom Cruz, is out in 2013! Can't wait to see where this world takes me next. Thank you, Free Press. FPH

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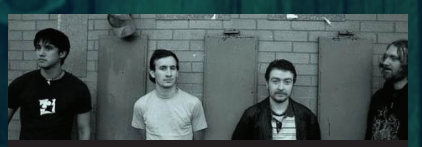


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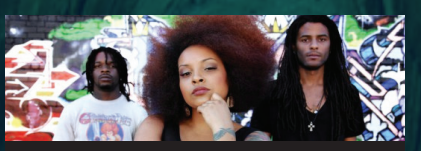
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FPSF 2012 RE-CAP

Photos by
Todd Spoth & Mark Austin

Often times, the most special moments for me are the simple human interactions. Despite the big headliners and the throngs of people, it is conversations that are otherwise benign that stick out. Right after Snoop Dogg got off stage, the headliner tent was surrounded by folks trying to get a glimpse of the world-renowned rapper hitting a blunt. As I walked in, Felipe from Los Skarnales was heading out. He stopped me to say, "Hey Carnal, they would not let us stay in the tent man, what gives?" I responded "sorry, this tent is for touring bands only." He then quipped in his famously friendly vato-esque voice "But we came here from all the way in Spring Branch holmes!" As much as I love me some Snoop, it is people like Felipe that make FPSF so special to me.
Omar Afra

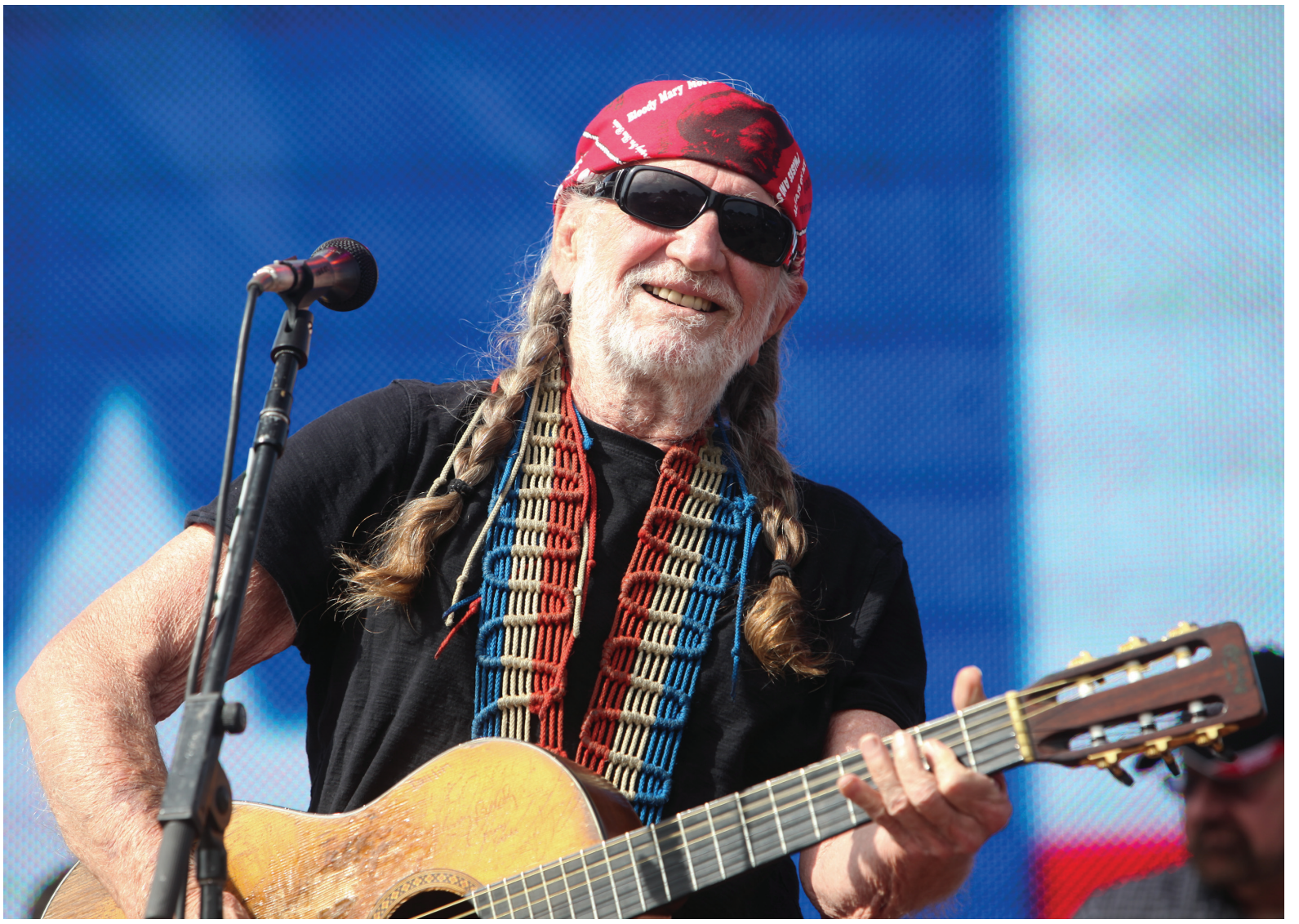


PHOTO: MARK AUSTIN



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There's this thing about FPSF that sets it apart from every other music festival you'll probably ever attend - and that thing is heart. The enthusiasm that oozes from the people who work, organize and, most importantly, attend FPSF is palpable and has grown stronger with each passing year. That excitement you see and feel around you isn't just because of the music – it's not just because of the promise of fun and a chance to see you favorite band. It's because all these incredible people who live and work and adore Houston are coming together to show the rest of Texas how we do. We are giving people a chance to see Houston through our eyes – the heart and soul of a city that either raised us or embraced us with no questions asked.
Brigitte Zabak



PHOTO: MARK AUSTIN



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I was on the stage during Pretty Lights set and saw Bun step onto the scene and call out the crowd to put their H's up and then totally destroy it with a rap he had written on his way to the festival that day in his car. H town really brought it this year.
Paul VanDermark

How was it all? It was sort of a ball, I went with the family and saw a few jams, some were on point, someone's smoking a joint, and some could have been better. And did I mention the weather? Though now it is over, we will next year make our pitch that the next will be better, and it will still be hot in that bitch.
Kwame Anderson

You could rub sunblock in my eyes, add 20 degrees to the temperature and only serve Jagermeister. There's not another place on Earth I'd rather be lugging 20 lbs of cameras around on my back in June than Free Press Summer Fest. Heck, I don't even need to see the lineup. I could care less. It's going to be a good time. THIS IS HOUSTON!
Mark Austin

Each time I ventured outside my small little (air conditioned) gated area into the chaos that was the Main Stage area, I was always greeted by someone I knew, who had a smile stretching from ear to ear and "Thank you's" vomiting out of their mouth. Each person I spoke with had just experienced an amazing set by some performer at some stage... most of the time I hadn't a clue what they were talking about BUT THEY WERE UNREASONABLY EXCITED ABOUT IT! The notion I take-away from that is this: "It does not matter who you are" was a motto that FPSF lived up to and I'm proud to have been a part since the beginning. Cheers.
Mills McCoin

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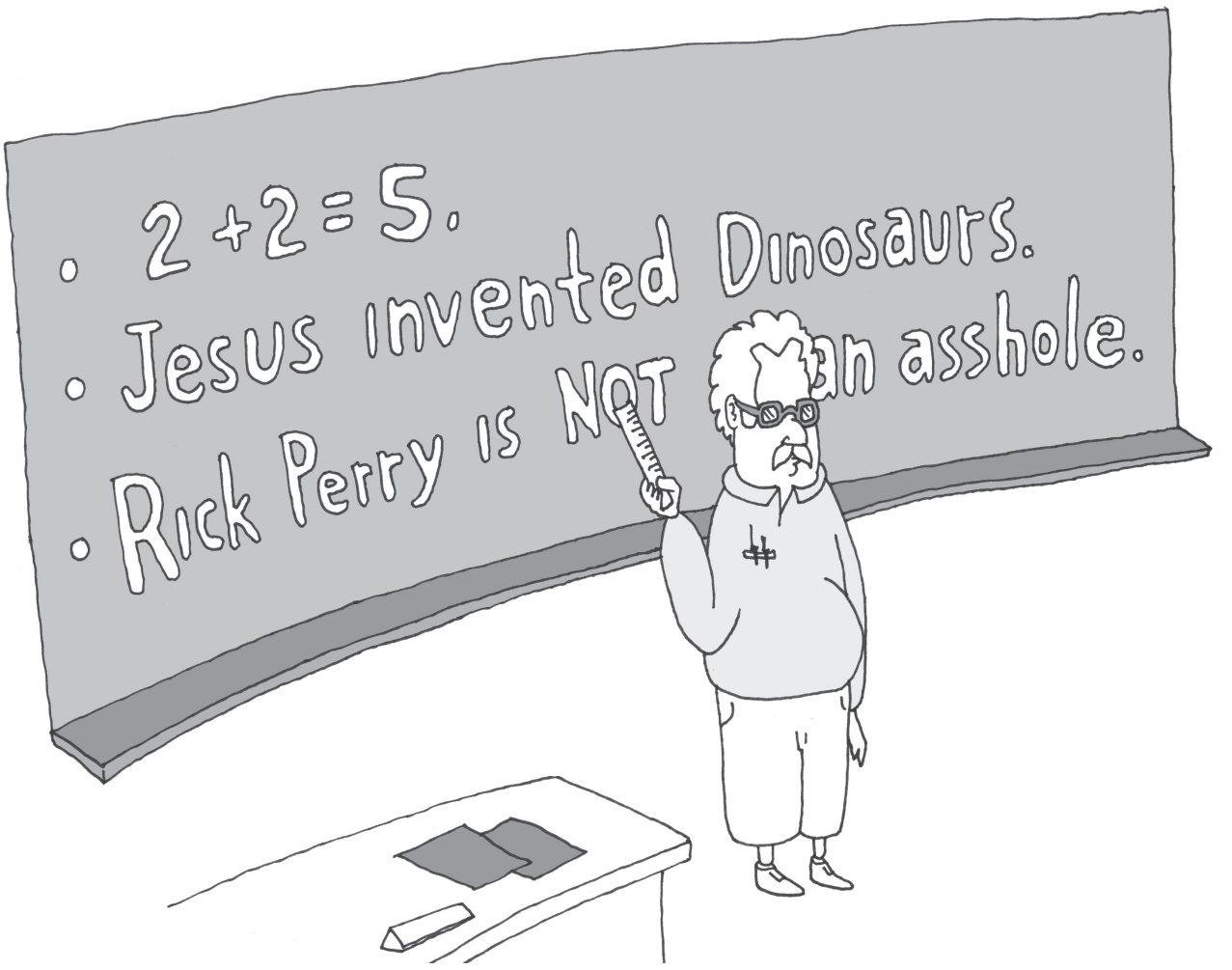
By Amanda hart

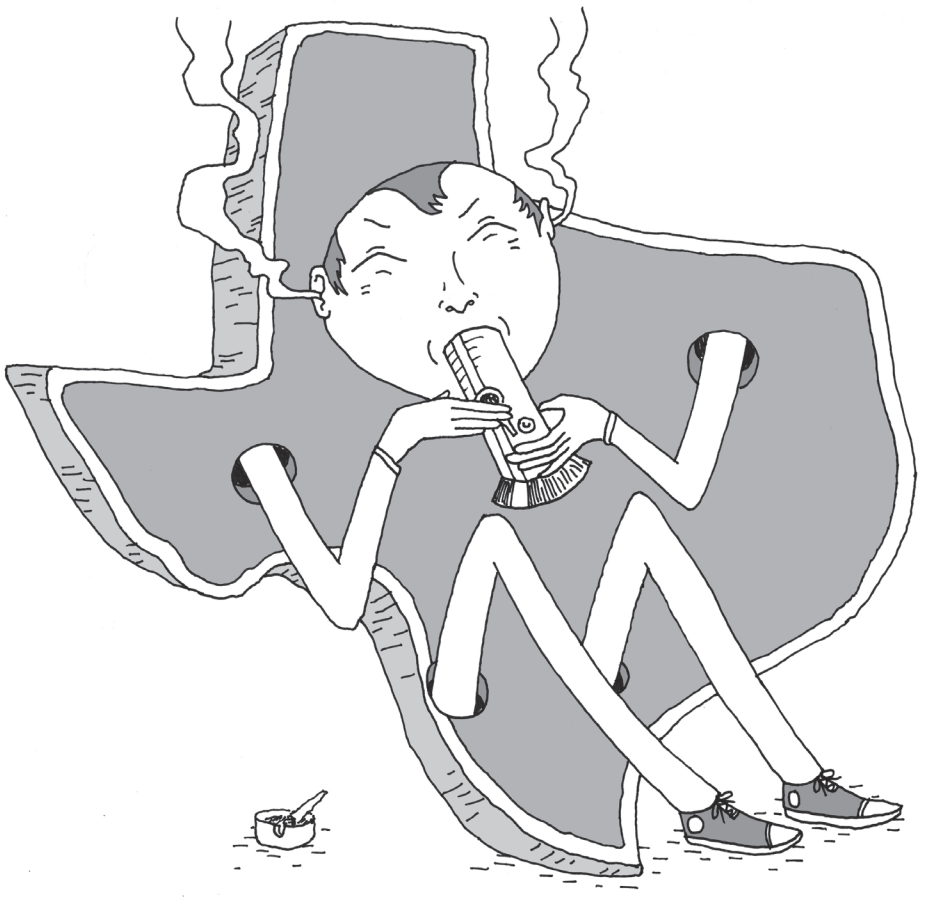
DID YOU KNOW that there has not been a single Democrat to be elected to any statewide office since George W. defeated Ann Richards for Governor in 1994? Damn, I know I say I miss the '90s frequently, but I really, really mean it this time. I know the GOP has this state by the balls, but surely we could squeeze in a few Democrats here and there, right? This was one of the main talking points this past month at the George R. Brown convention center, where the State Democratic Convention was held. Well, that along with the legalization of Mary Jane, gay rights, public education, student loans, women's reproductive rights, the economy, healthcare, the death penalty, immigration reform, and all the other royally fucked things in this state.

Quite a few things came out of the Democratic convention this year, including a new party chair head, Gilberto Hinojosa, who is the first Hispanic person to hold the position. A 41-page platform document is online for your viewing pleasure if you feel so inclined to read it in its entirety. Otherwise, here are a few highlights:

I'll start with the one you all want to hear about, glorious weed. Although this section of the document begins with a disclaimer that states, "Decriminalization of marijuana does not mean we endorse marijuana use," let's be honest, yes it fucking does. What Democrat in Texas does not smoke weed? We live in fucking Texas; of course we all need something to deal with having Rick Perry as a governor. Most of the convention attendees stayed at the Hilton and someone should tell them that shoving a towel under the door does not in fact conceal the smell of marijuana wafting into the hallways. All jokes aside, the platform covered all the bases for why weed should be decriminalized. Everything was cited, from drug cartels to overcrowded prisons. They even included a statement saying that weed is in no way a "gateway" drug. They are requesting that the President, Attorney General and Congress support legislation that would make the sale and distribution of marijuana on par with the sale of tobacco and alcohol.

Alright, now that we have all rolled one up and smoked it, let us move onto women's reproductive rights and marriage equality. I decided to make marijuana the precursor to this section because, frankly, I need a little something to take the edge off when addressing these particular issues. Maybe it's because it makes me fucking crazy to think that we even need to be discussing them in the first place. Really, both of these issues come down to equality and respect, something Republicans seemed to have misplaced in their Sunday-school lesson plans. The platform calls for the repeal of the Federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), the Texas Defense of Marriage Act and the Texas Constitutional Marriage Amendment. They support all couples in their right to marry freely and request all benefits be given to same sex couples that are allotted to heterosexual couples. I know, how "progressive". The platform states that not only should we trust families to make their own marriage decisions, but to make their own reproductive choices as well. This includes having access to affordable birth control from a provider of your choosing, as well as access to safe and legal abortions and comprehensive sex education. Key word there being "comprehensive," because as much as Republicans really want to believe that teenagers are not having sex, (I am assuming because maybe they aren't having sex due to their obvious fear of vaginas) the reality is they are fucking like rabbits. So let's cut the crap and give them some condoms, some birth control and a fucking pamphlet on how to find the clitoris. Bottom line, we should trust people to make their own life decisions even if it makes you jealous that you don't know where you wife's clitoris is located.







On to education. Where to begin? From pre-k to higher education, everything is currently one giant cluster fuck. Well, unless you live in a rich white neighborhood or your parents pay your tuition and fraternity dues. Otherwise, go ahead and place yourself in the fucked column. The platform calls for a universal pre-k/kindergarten system to be put in place. Did you know that a 5 year old can learn up to 15 new words a day in multiple languages? Their brains are little sponges and deserve to be treated as such. I know adults that don't learn 15 new words in a year. The platform is also calling on all attempts to destroy bilingual education to be halted. Pssttt, Republicans… racism called and would appreciate it if you would make an attempt to let it be a part of our embarrassing history instead of our immediate future. Do it for the kids. The State Board of Education (SBOE) was cited as a "laughingstock of our state's process for developing and implementing school curriculum standards" in the platform document. Allow me to translate: Our SBOE is a bunch of right wing, power hungry, overzealous, bible thumping racists who have managed to rewrite school history books to fit their ideologies. And this wouldn't be a state run by conservatives if the teachers weren't being shit on as well. The Texas Legislation cut 5.4 billion dollars from the budget this past legislation cycle leaving an already burdened system to crumble. Due to the cuts, we are looking at upwards of possibly 50,000 education jobs being slashed in the public sector and another 68,000 in the private sector. This means a higher student to teacher ratio, which is not only an unhealthy environment for our children, but for our underpaid and overworked teachers as well. I could have also sworn that we figured out years ago that teaching to a test was as useful to our children's futures as the current SBOE is. Apparently though, the morons running our state missed that memo, seeing as they are spending more tax dollars to create a NEW standardized test. Maybe that memo was misplaced underneath the "we love money more than children" plaques sitting on their desks. Right next to their "we love money more than children" plaques, I am pretty sure one could locate a gold encrusted time bomb that is our higher education system. They have cut essential money to all two and four year universities, deregulated tuition, slashed grant funds and financial aid and put schools in a position of laying off professors and causing a reduction in the amount of classes offered. Community colleges in particular are really getting the shaft in this deal. As a current student at HCC, I have noticed the spike in my tuition as the access to grants and financial aid plummets. The state Democrats, children, teachers, and I are begging you to please pull your head out of your ass and invest in our future.

Being a Democrat in Texas is like being a vagina during a Senate hearing on birth control: both have the experience necessary to create valuable solutions, yet neither ever gets a fucking chance on the floor. We need to change this. Now. It is so easy in this climate to accept a defeatist attitude and conclude that nothing will ever change. But I challenge you to reconsider and get involved, not just in the national election but more importantly state and local elections as well. Volunteer your time to a local candidate by block walking for them. Donate, even if it is just a little, to the starving campaigns going on around you. And most importantly, show up and know what your candidates stand for and why you are voting for them. I mean, you want to legally smoke your weed right? **FPH**

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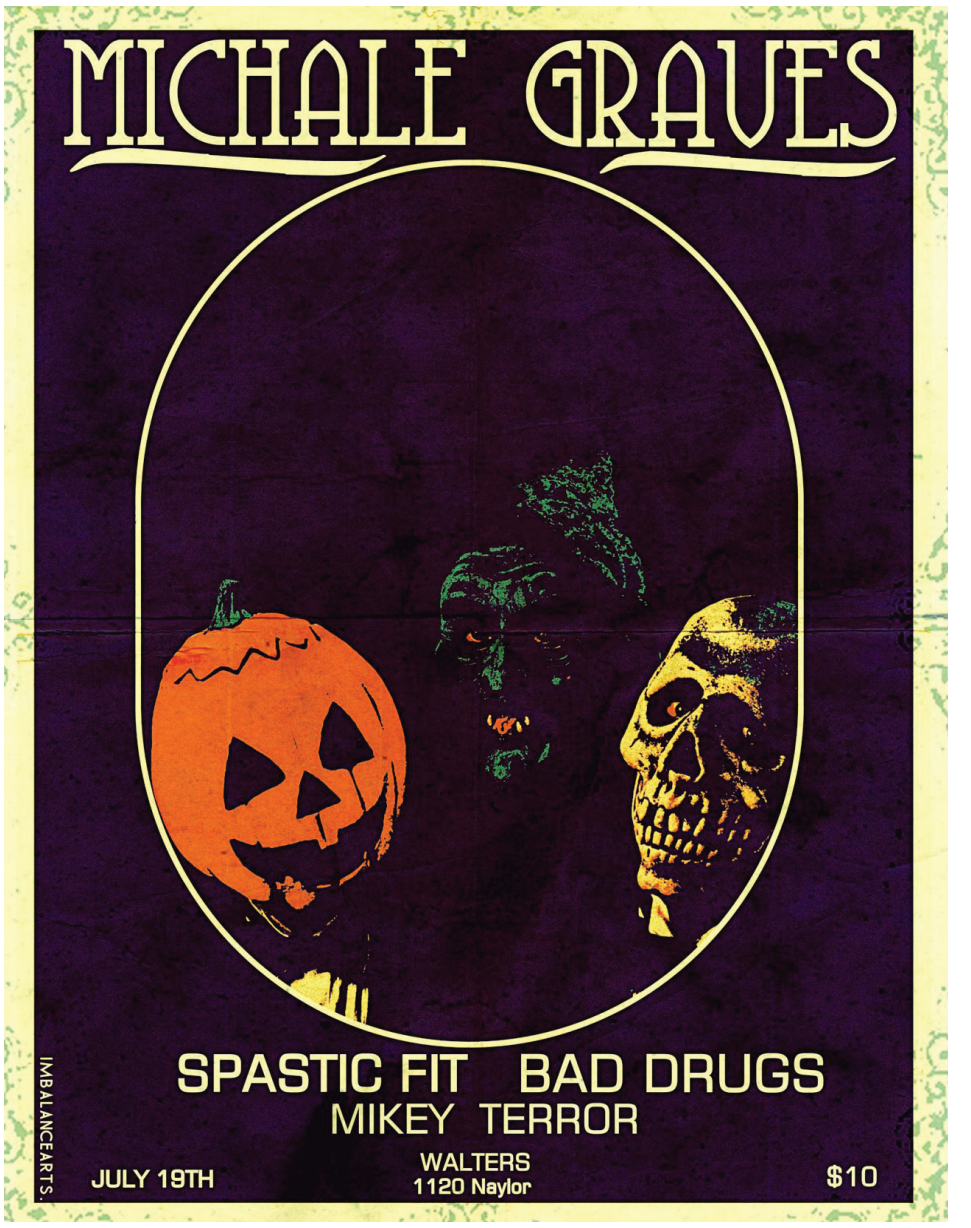
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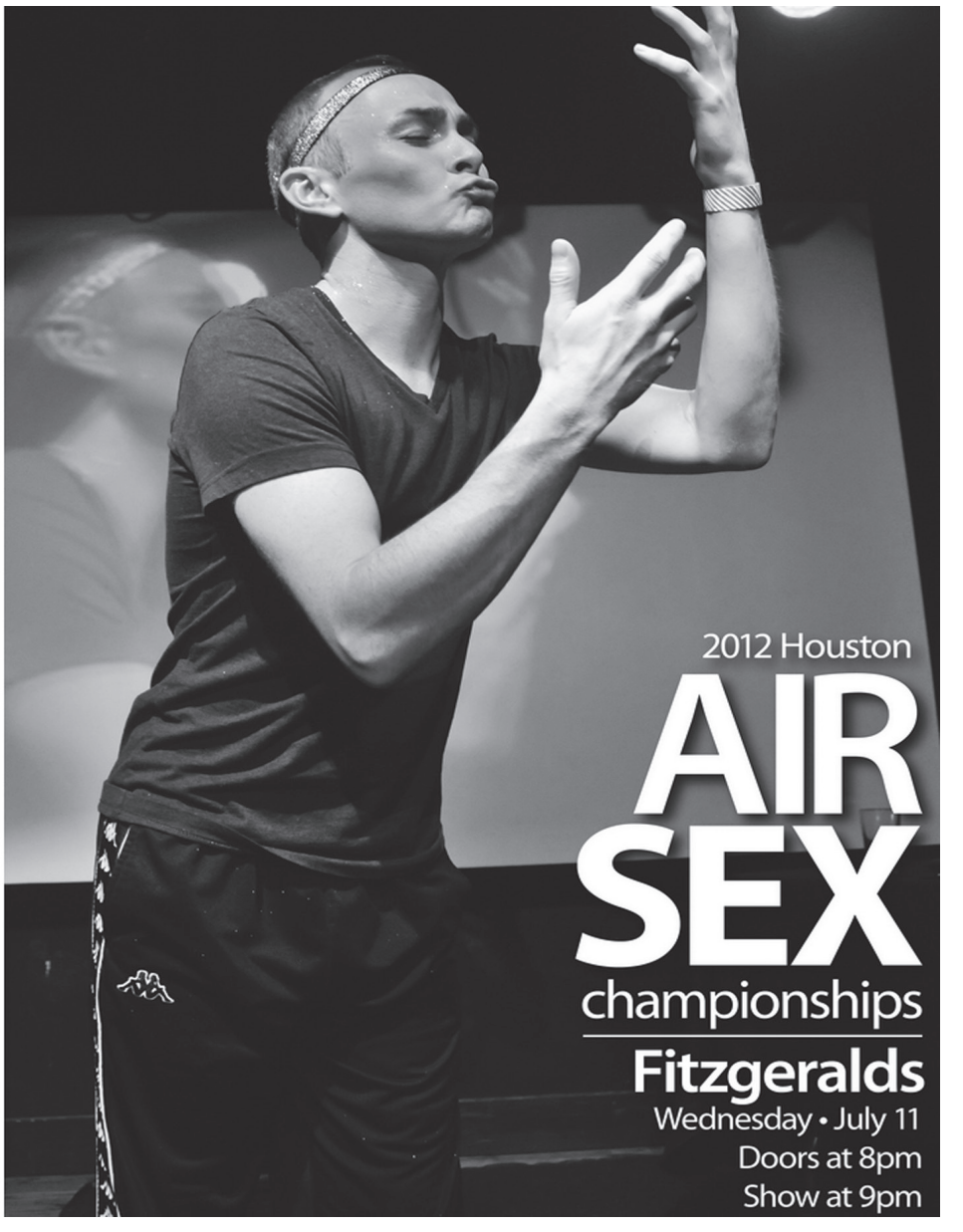
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Interview
Matthew Broussard - Sculptor, comedian, boat shoes

By Mills-McCoin



VICTORY! The battlefield, commonly referred to as "Houston's comedy scene," is freshly littered with the destroyed entrails of his opponents. And now, Matthew Broussard is all alone. Newly crowned "Houston's Funniest Person Contest" winner, Broussard stands with some of Houston's finest comedians such as: Ben Mowbray, Altimore Fields and Robin Weinburgh (yeah, me neither). What's a bit more fascinating is that Broussard, a youthful 24 years of age, won this competition of comedy on the one-year anniversary of his first open mic performance.

Hailing from all over, but mostly Atlanta, this Rice University graduate of applied mathematics first caught my attention at Fitzgerald's Open Mic Knight (a thing I do on Wednesdays) when he took the stage and said, "A lot of people say I'm cocky. But I'm not cocky. I just have a lot going for me." And his appearance suggested he wasn't lying, especially in comparison to most other comics in Houston. Broussard is fit and healthy, wears collared shirts, and speaks intelligently. Though I must admit, after his first performance I thought his stage persona was so real that the next Wednesday when he came to Open Mic Knight at Fitzgerald's (2706 White Oak), I rudely introduced him as "Washington Avenue Incarnate." Rightly so, he didn't speak to me the rest of that evening. Since then, he has taken his comedic career to exciting places in Houston, not limited to the "Houston's Funniest Person Contest." Broussard has also performed at the "A Couple of Stand Up Guys" showcase back in May and recently traveled on the road for the first time.

So, in the ugly face of a deadline as usual, I grabbed Matthew Broussard for an interview while at Avant Garden where he was performing long form improv for the first time with The New Movement Houston. Here are some excerpts from that interview:

When you remove the competitive nature of the "Houston's Funniest Person Contest", all that remains is a month long showcase of Houston comics, which is great for the scene and the city. But the fact is that it is a competition. How does that set with you?
That's frustrating. It's an art form and you're trying to express yourself; not win.

And some of those people are your friends...
Those are my most favorite people in the world and by the end of the competition, I couldn't watch other people perform because I wanted them to fail. But at the same time, they were people I liked and I wanted to see them succeed. So, yeah, it was frustrating.





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What's your impression of the comedy scene in Houston right now?
So I wandered in as all of the comedy clubs had closed down. We now only have two left (the Houston Improv and The Comedy Showcase). And it makes the open mic scene that much more... I would say it increases the enthusiasm for open mic because it's the only thing we have. So all these people are so enthusiastic. And we're told from the start, "Do as many open mics as you can. Get as much stage time as you can." So we're all out here just grindin'. Going to crappy little bars with eight people in them just to get stage time. I love it. There's so much hustle. And hopefully, this increase in enthusiasm will bring more love for comedy in Houston and then another club will open up.

How many open mics do you perform at per week?
Maybe 4 or 5 or 6 during the week. And then maybe, hopefully, I'll get a club spot on a weekend.

Have you traveled outside of Houston for a show yet?
Two weeks ago I went to Paris, TX opening up for Slade Ham, which was an awesome experience.

Did you ride in the car together?
We did. No AC.

Whoa.
Hell yeah. It was just a taste of it for me, but some of these guys do it all the time. I might get to go to New Orleans soon. The road is an interesting place too. You have to play rooms where some of the people are not there necessarily to laugh. It's "invasive comedy" as I call it. "Uhhhh...Oh there's a show goin' on. I didn't know. I was just sittin' here."

As mentioned before, Matthew Broussard graduated from Rice University with a degree in applied mathematics. He has a day job as a financial analyst. At night, Broussard courageously tries his humble hand at comedy.

How do you balance having a legitimate day job and doing comedy?
I'm living two lives.

How did you craft the persona you have on stage?
So my persona is unknowingly arrogant and likes to flippantly mention how handsome he is and how educated and wealthy he is, but in a somewhat likeable way. It's a little close to me.

At least you can be honest about that.
I'm not going to go up there and talk about not getting laid and be awkward or stupid. I take pride in being educated. I can talk to girls. I'm not amazing at it, but I want to be as sincere as possible on stage. Some people get up there and do self-deprecation. I want to do the opposite.

A trait I admire about Broussard is his steadfast refusal to get involved with any of the frivolous and scene-damaging drama that goes on in the Houston comedy circuit. He plays the game like Mick Jagger, giving praise to all of the people he has met along the way, including Chase Durousseau, Barrett Goldsmith and John Wessling (those names you should definitely know if you've followed comedy in Houston at all in the past year).

In just a year's time, what's the best lesson you've learned thus far?
Record yourself. That's number one. I learned that three or four months ago. Anyone that does stand-up needs to record themselves every time. Never ever get on stage again without recording yourself.

On an amateur level, what are the things you're doing to further your career?
I'm not in to podcasts. I'm not really in to Twitter. I keep working pretty hard on my website.

Monday Punday.
MondayPunday.com. It's an extension of my humor. I draw a picture every week and you're supposed to guess the play on words it represents. That's been doing really well.

How are you as a visual artist?
I can draw pictures okay, basically. I can draw cartoons alright. I'm good at sculpture.

What now?
Sculpture is my strong suit. I started doing that at a young age. I construct miniatures out of sculpting clay.

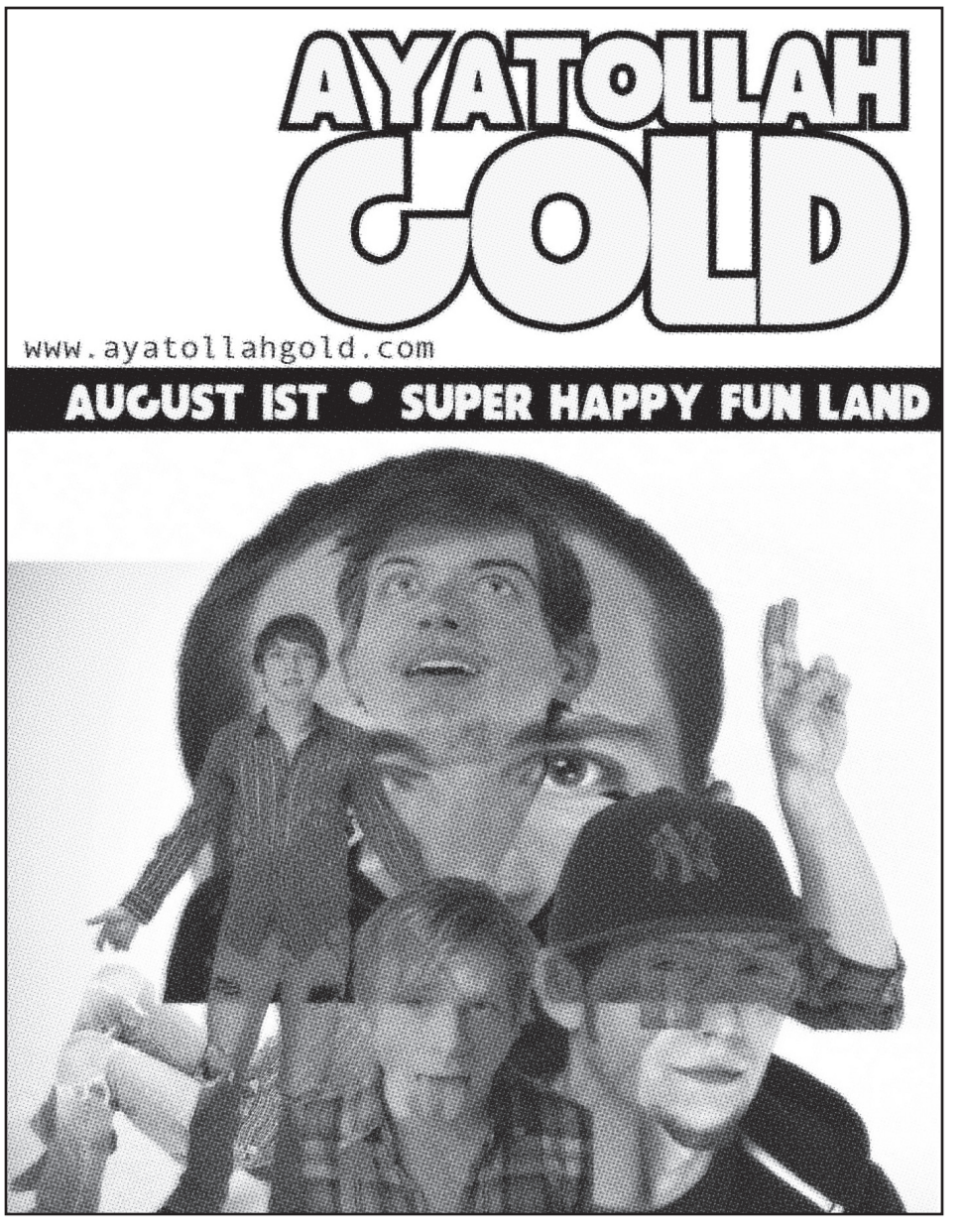
Well, that's pretty unique.
Thank you. Most people do it but then they quit when they're six, so I just kept doing it because I'm weird.

Broussard proceeded to show me pictures of his truly amazing collection of work.

Do you ever put these out there as an exhibition or showing?
Uhhh... no. These just sit around my house and when girls come over they're like, "That's kinda weird." So if a girl actually likes them, then she's a keeper. That's the girlfriend test right there.

There's no doubt that if you like comedy or enjoy laughter, you will see or hear from Matthew Broussard in the future, provided he remains in Houston and refuses to rush off to greener pastures (LA, Chicago, NYC, Isle of Capri Casino). And with aspirations of being a correspondent on Comedy Central's "The Daily Show," Houston just might lose its funniest person. Cheers. **FPH**


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Pole Tax
Local Strip Club Tax Passed to Fund Rape Kit Processing
By Erin Dyer

Houston's city council approved a law this past Wednesday that will require each local strip club visitor to pay a $5 fee upon entry in addition to any mandatory cover charges required by the club itself. Not only is the new fee enforced at all strip clubs, but also any other bar or club that occasionally hosts adult entertainment events such as wet T-shirt contests, etc. It is estimated that 30 clubs are subject to the tax.

This new local tax, similar to the Sin Taxes set on alcohol, gambling, junk food and tobacco, has been dubbed the "Pole Tax," and could generate up to $30 million of annual revenue. Supported by Mayor Annise Parker and passed by a 14-1 vote, this law was created with the intent that the collected money will help fund rape investigations in search for the victims' attackers by use of rape kits– packets that may include hair particles, blood specimens, and/or any other biological DNA evidence from the victim's body.

There are currently over 6,000 untested rape kits in Houston because the city lacks the funds to analyze the evidence. Hopefully the new Pole Tax will dramatically decrease the number of backlogged rape kits that are still yet to be processed and analyzed, some of which date back as far as the 1980s! Houston Police Department Assistant Chief Matt Slinkard claims that some backlogged rape kits are untested for various reasons besides lack of funding, including: a possible guilty plead by a suspect before testing, possible consent issues, charges possible rejected by the district attorney, or not enough evidence to remain testable.

You might find yourself asking, why is it necessary for strip clubs to provide funds for these rape kits? Supporters of the ordinance find it essential because the environment created by strip clubs cultivate negative attitudes toward women, which may lead to sexually charged assaults and has a culture that is more tolerant of sexual violence. Council member Ellen Cohen notes negative secondary effects associated with adult-entertainment establishments. On the other hand, Houston lawyer and local strip club representative, Albert Van Huff, states that there is no known correlation between people going to nice, high-end gentlemen's clubs and rape. Ordinance critics think the new fee is unfair.

Whether it makes sense for strip clubs to be responsible for shouldering rape investigation costs or not, what's another five bucks on top of the money you'll be spending at Treasures on cover charges, drinks, and dolla dolla bills to be thrown at the strippers? Who goes to a strip club and doesn't expect to make it rain anyway? If HPD really does need funding for rape investigations, perhaps this might help the system. Maybe displeased strip club visitors can learn to view the fee as a beneficial donation, and know that their money is being put to a good cause. **FPH**

Experts say that this tax on strippers could unfortunately result in the average dancer taking home $1995.00 as opposed to the usual $2000.00



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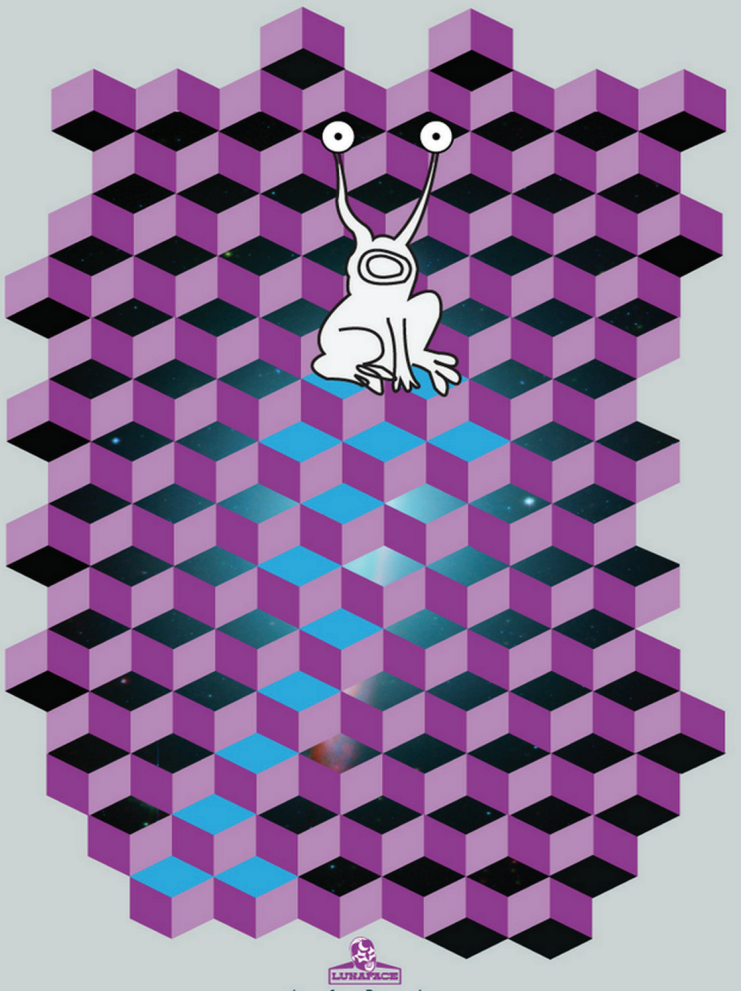
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Shades and Sounds: Artist Felipe Lopez

By Meghan Hendley

"If the planet understood how the brain functions we would resolve conflicts everywhere. Because people would understand how trivial and how deterministic conflicts and reactions and misunderstandings are." - Henry Markram

NEW YORK NATIVE Felipe Lopez is a Multi-Dimensional self taught visual artist whose career began with mixed media drawing and paintings. One of the youngest contemporaries in Houston touting an arsenal of self taught techniques and exhibitions in such spaces as Wade Wilson Art Lopez melds together his studies of sound, science, and psychology.

Much of his creativity happened after leaving high school, disenchanted with the cattle call of public school education. 'I felt that the system didn't embrace the individual talents and learning styles of each student. I decided that I could teach myself anything I wanted to learn by delving into a topic and absorbing everything I could find about the topic.' Shortly after leaving school, Lopez found himself studying independently and taking art classes at MECA. While uncovering learning styles and how he learned as a student, he immediately gravitated towards the study of psychology and neurology.

'The design I produce with charcoal on paper was developed in my earliest works and the creation of my style was based off the idea of neurons,' said Lopez. 'As I dove into the studies of science, I latched onto the concept of the connectivity of neurons. As I rolled the charcoal across the paper and created patterns, I could visually display the tiniest traces of these connections of the brain.'

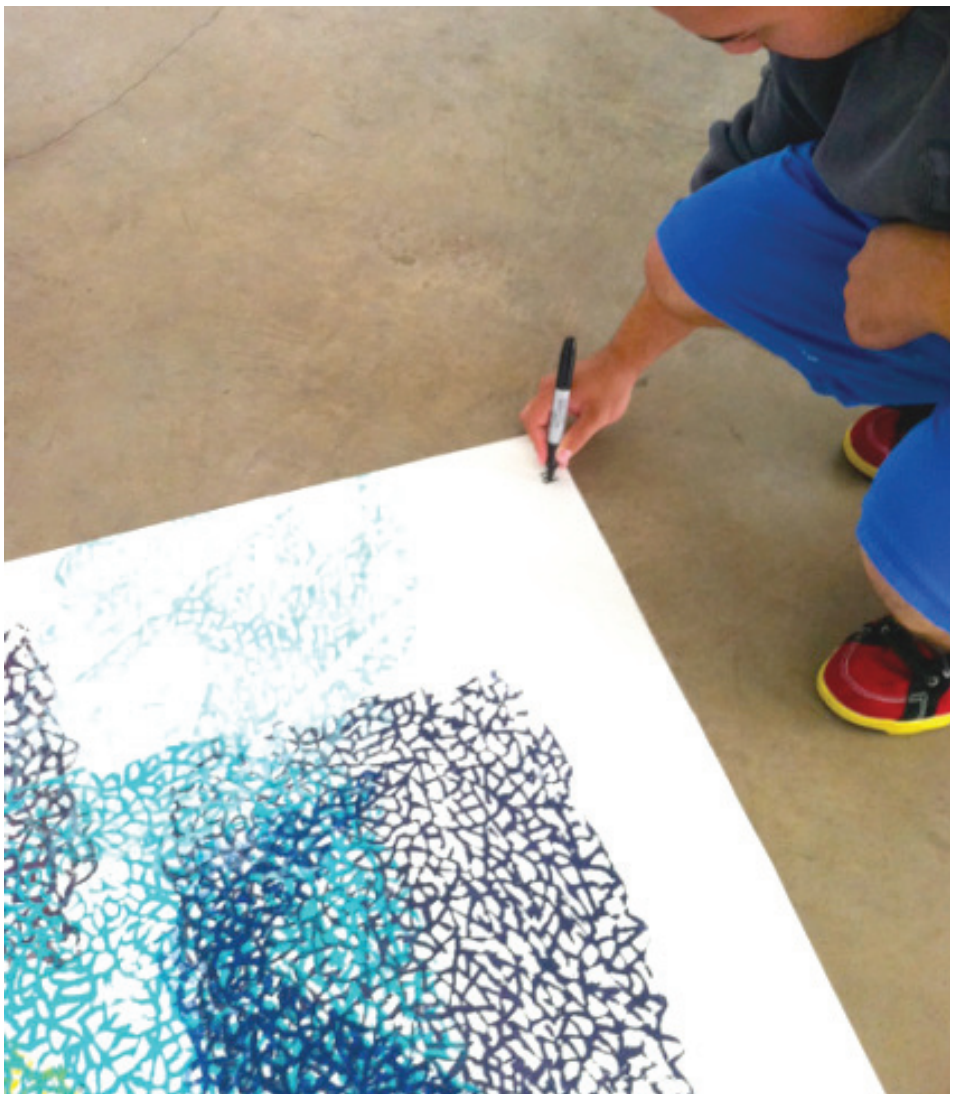
It was through the connection of music over a summer in New York City that sent more waves of creativity through Felipe Lopez's work. During the scorching months of 2011 Lopez found himself enrolled in Dubspot Academy, a cutting edge electronic music production and DJ school in New York City. Tedious classes of listening to beeps, boops, clicks, and synths trained his ear to address sound as an art form in itself. From all night sessions messing with an original moog in a loft apartment to rooftop parties pounding rhythms of drum and bass to intensive Abelton lessons, Lopez and his friends were subconsciously training their ears and morphing their minds to hearing the frequencies of sound as vibrations of color.

Upon returning to Houston, Lopez found himself melding the concepts of sounds and visual art. In the fall of 2011, Lopez began his Synesthesia Sound Series that emphasized the visual center of the brain and their connection to the auditory system. By creating works on Japanese paper with vibrant neon watercolors and oil bars, these pieces presented a visual moment of the recreation of sounds the artist saw around him. 'I came up with this experiment by having one headphone in my ear listening to different kinds of music including electronic music compositions I had created while leaving the other ear bud dangling allowing my other ear to listen to sounds in nature.' says Lopez.

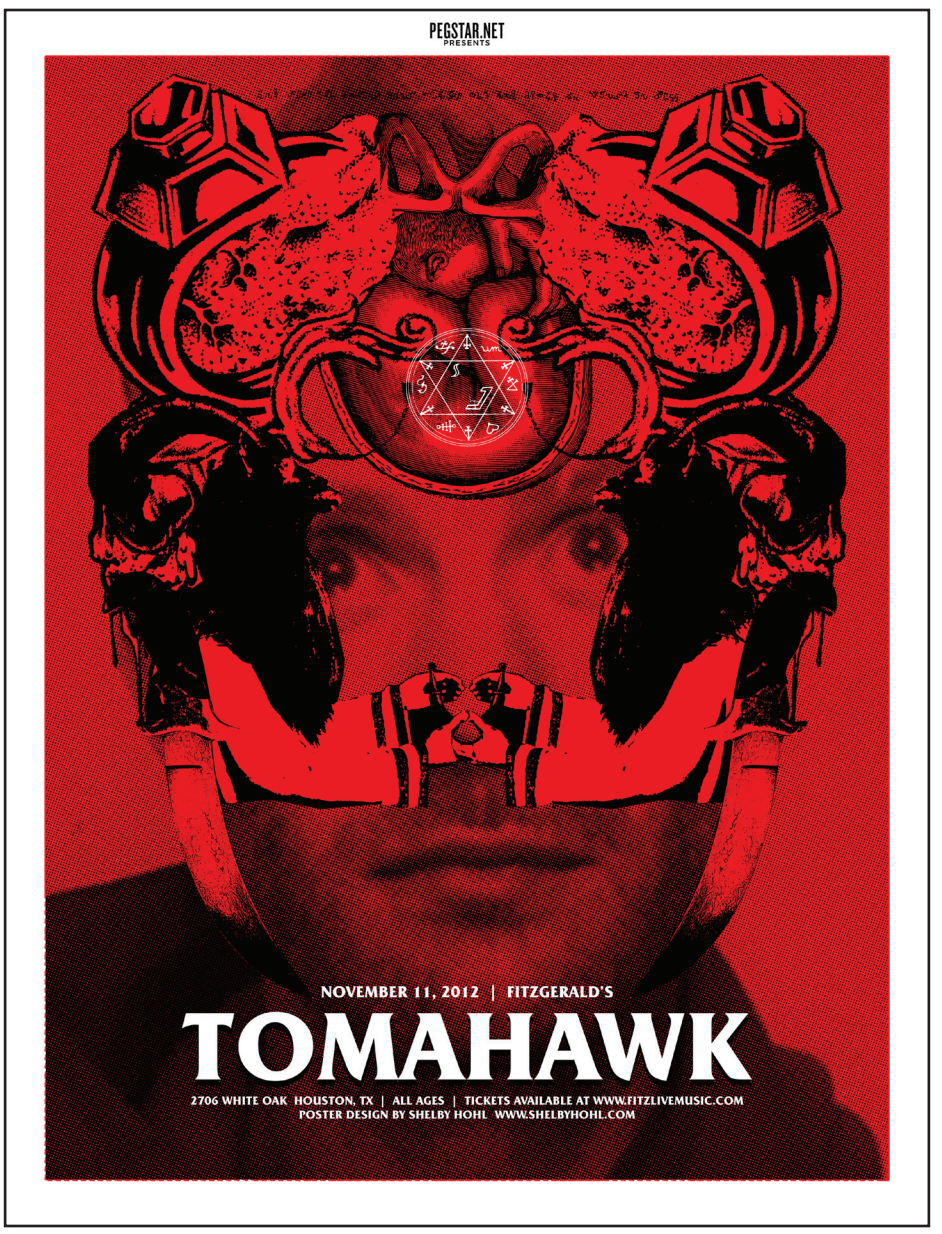
Sound to color synesthesia (better known as chromesthesia) is a condition where assorted environmental sounds such as dog barks, buzzing insects, clanging dishes, various voices, and musical compositions trigger color flares creating shapes that move around before fading when the sound ends. When your eye scans over the 16 pieces in the series, you take in the intensity of the color and shapes of the black streaks from the oil bar sending a signal of visual euphoric sound. As you study the breaks of blue, fuchsia, turquoise, and yellow your mind is stimulated with a shock to the senses before your vision crosses over into the fade-outs in the piece. The circular shapes offer directional movement of color and a chance to appreciate the originality of Lopez's artistic concept.

Recently Felipe Lopez has continued to add additional formulas to the science of his art. Still staying true to the art of independent study and discovery, Lopez embraces the balance of ideas and creative spontaneity. As intense storms rolled through Houston in May, Lopez casually filmed skies flashing from black to indigo to white shifting with lightning. Other daily moments were captured on his iPhone and then manipulated with various iPhone apps.

'The reason I make my video art based off individual stills and small videos is to show the mechanical aspect of everyday objects and natural elements. These videos play out different ways areas of the brain function to tell a story while bringing general awareness and appreciation to the connectivity of simplistic thoughts that compose more complex ideas. If art is an expression of the mind's endless creativity, then understanding neurology and psychology will allow us to understand why people work the way they do.' **FPH**






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