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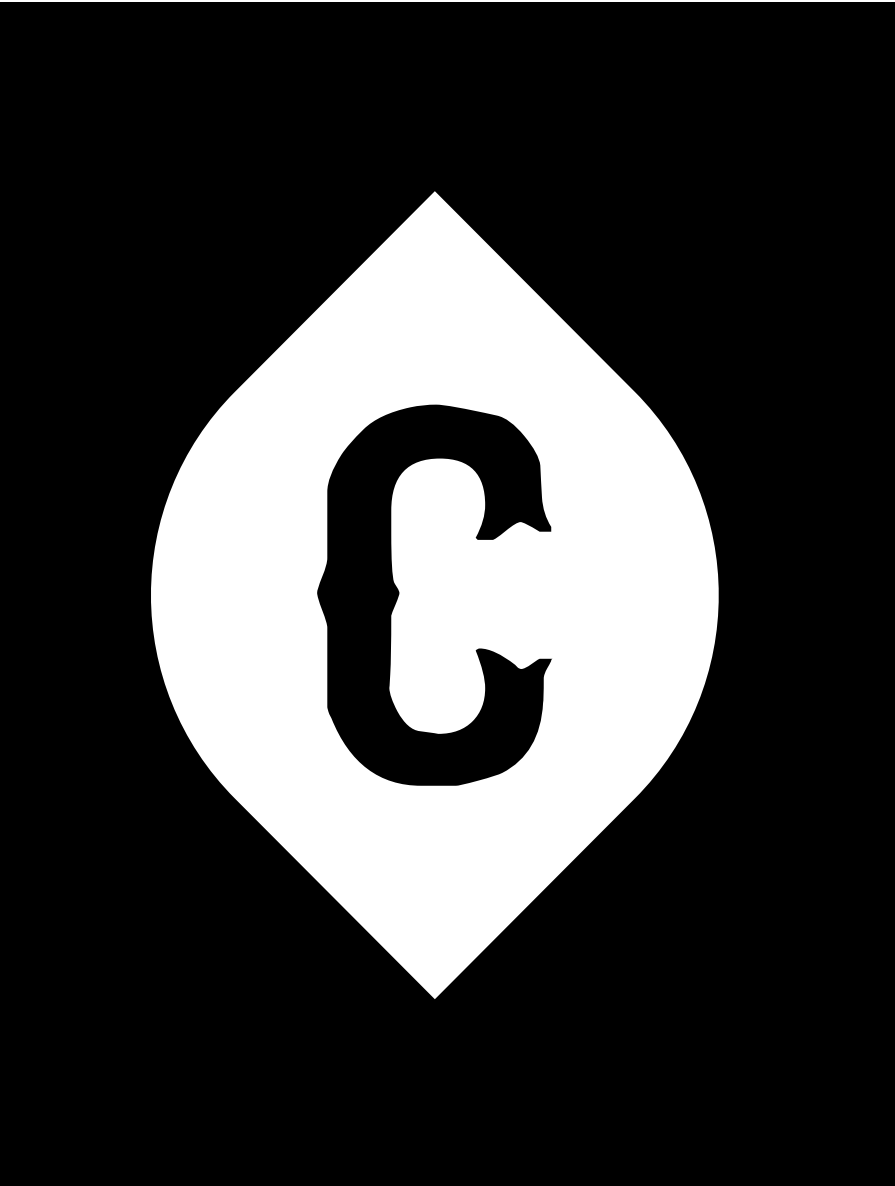
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A P R I L



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**THURS. 9TH**

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W/ CACTUS FLOWERS, BELL AND TOM

**FRI. 10TH**

TEXAS MOD CRUSHERS, VELOSTACKS,  
DYKES ON BYKES, THRILL

**SAT. 11TH**

JOHN WAYNE IS DEAD, KILLER HEARTS, CRIMSON DEVILS

**MON. 13TH**

OPEN MIC COMEDY NIGHT

**FRI. 17TH**

GENERATION: LANDSLIDE! COUP DE VILLE, ROCKETSHIPAJAX

**SAT. 18TH**

TOUR CLOSER KENNY ZIMLINGHAUS:  
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**WED. 22ND**

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**FRI. 24TH**

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WHO TO WEAR, WHEN TO SMELL, WHAT TO GO

BY LAILA KHALILI WITH MEGAN MCILWAIN

ILLUSTRATION BY AUSTIN SMITH

**FREE PRESS SUMMER FEST 2015** is just around the corner! This is your guide for getting to the festival, dos and don'ts, and safety for a good fucking time!

#### TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

Getting there: Firstly, the address for Eleanor Tinsley Park is 500 Allen Parkway. The gates are located near Downtown/Sabine and Taft on Allen Parkway, and open at 11 am. If you are driving to FPSF you have several options for parking. Parking is free on most streets downtown, there are parking garages literally everywhere, and if you're broke you can have your mom give you a ride. Please don't drink and drive. You can't party if you're in jail, or worse, dead. Make a plan for how you are getting to and from the festival. Take an Uber, pick a designated driver from your super cool friend group, or take public transportation. If you're nearby, walk over, use B-cycle, or ride your bike. There will be tons of bike racks located by the festival entrances, and the environment will thank you for it!

#### DOWNLOAD THE APP

Do it! Right meow! It will have a map of the festival, lineup, band schedules, cool photo frames to use on social media, and important updates.

#### WHAT TO BRING

It's gonna be hot Hot HOT so wear cool, comfortable clothing, and feel free to wear your swimsuit! Wear

“sensible” shoes, since you'll be doing a lot of walking, jumping, and dancing. At FPSF, always put SPF on your BFF! You should bring sun-friendly items, such as a hat, sunglasses, sunblock, or even a personal umbrella. If you're afraid of dirt, towels are welcome, but please do not bring chairs.

#### DON'T BRING THIS

People have tried to bring their pets, coolers, motorized vehicles, and tents in the past. Don't do that. They're not allowed. Do not bring weapons of any kind into the festival, because then you will have to leave. We know you'll want to document every single moment of the weekend, because it's going to be that fun, but that said, selfie sticks are annoying and not allowed. Make some friends and ask someone to take to take a photo for you with a normal camera or your cell phone. Professional photography and video recording equipment will not be permitted.

#### HYDRATE!

Fun fact: 72% of the human body is made of water! There will be free water stations all over the park, so bring a water bottle, camelbak, or water reservoir of some kind so you can fill up and stay hydrated throughout the day. All containers must be empty upon entry into the festival—bags and bottles will be searched at the gates—so don't get any ideas about bringing your own booze, because it will be

thrown away and that's just a waste. Pre-game at home, fools.

#### WHAT TO SEE!

Aside from enjoying the kickass lineup, there will be oodles of other cool art at FPSF. Local artists Dual and Eyesore provide fields of wheatpaste, and expect some sweeeeet live spray painting from Nicky Davis and Scott Tarbox. From Art Cars to acrobatic yoga to Jermaine Rogers' art hanging from the overpasses, there will be no shortage of things to make you “oooh” and “ahhh!”

There won't be any excuse for you to get hangry at your friends, since an abundance of food will be available to fuel maximum partying. Bring cash (small bills) and credit cards (ATMs will be available throughout in the park) so you can delight in all the awesome food trucks, snow cones, and beer! Be sure to sip on some White Noise, an exclusive beer brewed just for FPSF by Saint Arnold Brewing Co.

FYHA (Fuck You Houston's Awesome) will be selling their clothes celebrating Houston, as will Joey and Jaime! INCA WASI Artist Crafts will have hand-made jewelry, bags, ceramics and clothes for sale. In case you forget some basic festival necessities, Fabulously Cool will be selling a Festival Survival Bag with sunscreen, hand sanitizer, ear plugs, advil, and a poncho.

#### WEATHER

We will be monitoring weather conditions to maintain Ultimate Festival Fun Quotient, so keep your eyes on the large screens on the stages, check our mobile app and social media for any announcements, updates, or weather warnings. All you need to know is that lightning is the enemy.

#### R-E-S-P-E-C-T

If you aren't going to be a decent person to the people around you, don't come to the festival. Seriously. We want everyone to have a good time and enjoy themselves, and that is 100% possible if you treat each other with respect.

If you're suddenly overcome with the urge to touch a butt, touch your own. In the event you see any knuckleheads causing problems, please notify a security guard and let them handle it.

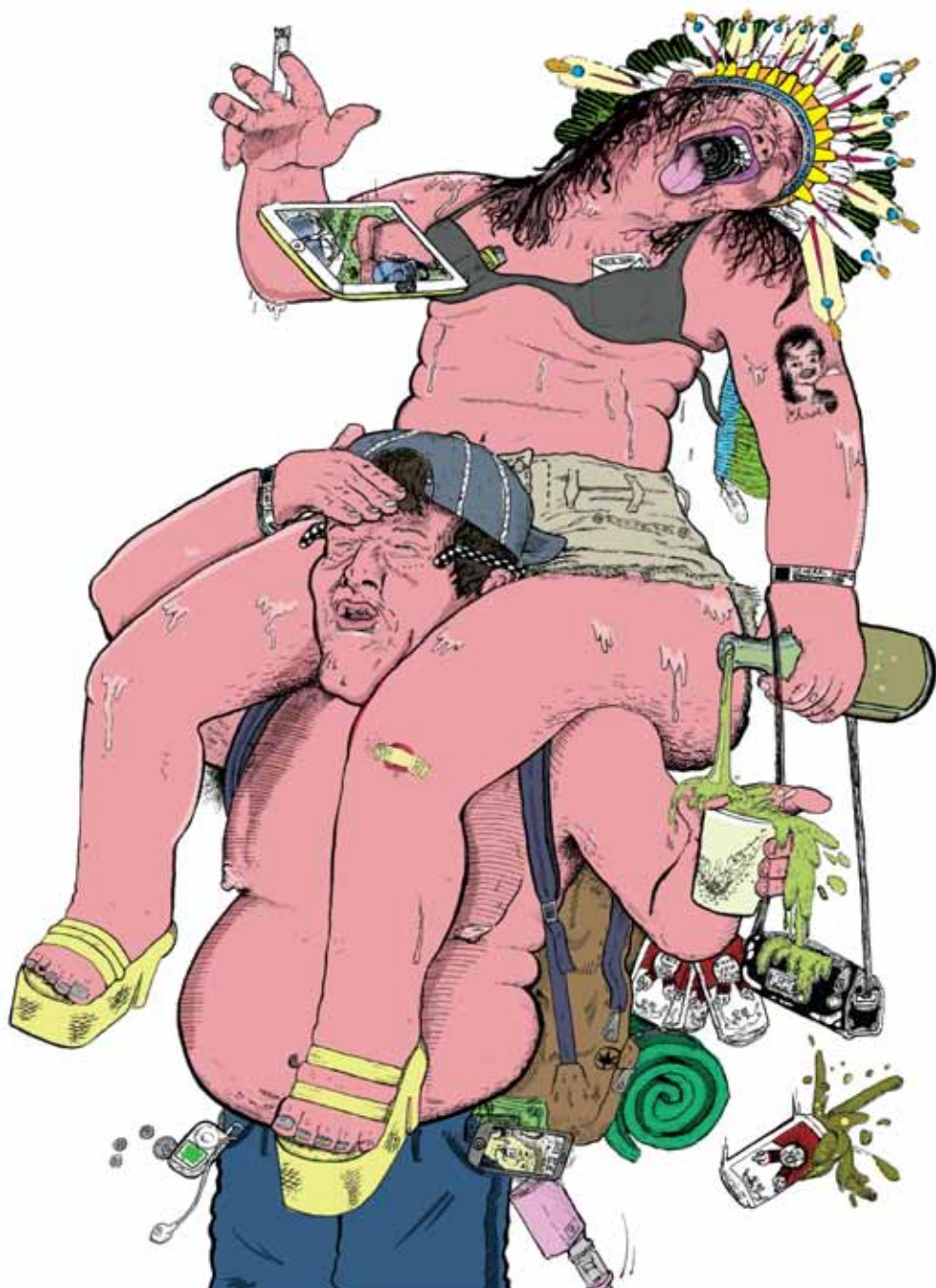
#### STAY SAFE, KIDS!

Medical tents will be located throughout the festival grounds, so if you feel ill for any reason at all do not hesitate to get help from those around you. If you see someone who looks sick, don't just leave them there. Stay with them while a friend seeks help, or go with them to get assistance. Basically, be a good person. If you are ill, remember, refusing medical attention in the heat and humidity can be fatal. There is no need to be ashamed or concerned about the medics judging you, regardless of what caused the illness; your safety is our number one priority. Dancing is number two.

#### WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

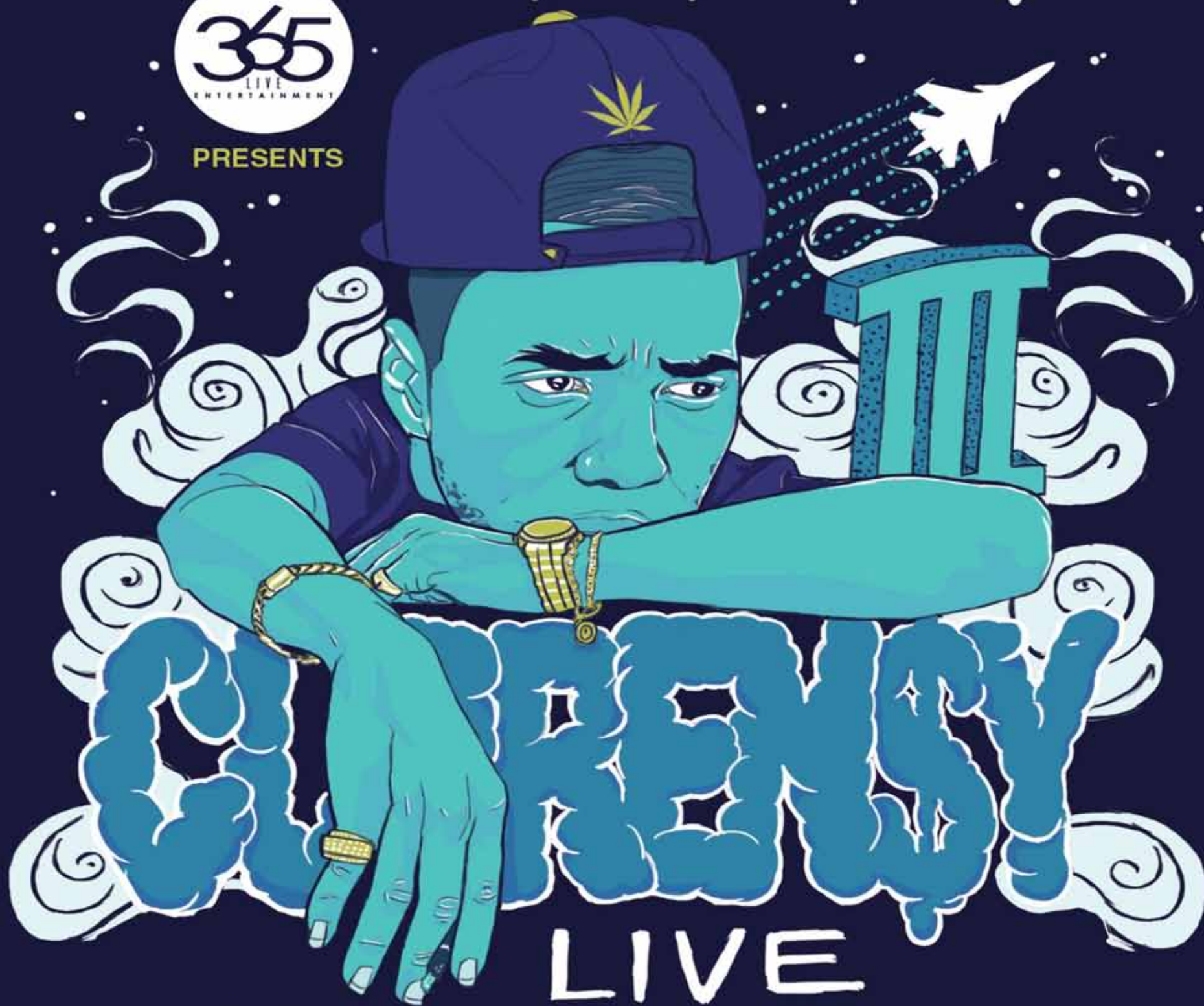
We've said this before and we'll say it again: this is your festival. What that means is we want your feedback all year long. Drop us a line. Tell us what you liked, what bands you want to see next time, what made you absolutely miserable, and what could be better. Stay in touch!

Y'all ready for this? **FPH**





PRESENTS



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# CHEF ADAM DORRIS

BRISKET HERO & HOT TUB SALESMAN

BY MILLS MCCOIN

FPH 06 15



IT WAS LATE IN THE EVENING and Houston's newest culinary jewel was winding down the night's festivities when I walked in. A familiar Ryan Adams track was playing throughout the dining room at the perfect volume to muffle the typical clamoring and clanging of a restaurant. I grabbed a seat at the bar and waited patiently for Chef Adam Dorris to emerge from his kitchen. Smiles and laughter and thank you's and "We're totes coming back with our friends," accompanied every exiting patron.

While waiting for Chef Dorris at the bar, the wine wizard Chris Fleischman sidled up next to me and offered me a beverage. Something very lovely and unpretentious about Pax Americana is an item on their drink menu called "The Steve McQueen" - a shot of Bulleit Rye and a Bombshell Blonde beer in a can. T'was the obvious choice for my evening of interviewing a burgeoning culinary superstar.

Opening to rave reviews in the late summer of 2014, Pax Americana swiftly made its mark as one of Houston's best restaurants... and Houston is like the Food Energy capital of the world. This modern American restaurant sports an all-American wine list (literally, all of the wines are from America) shepherded by general manager and wine wizard, Chris Fleischman. It features a

beautiful dark wooden bar covered in craft cocktails, walls adorned with the artwork of Keith Haring and, of course... there's "the Warhol."

Like a lipsticked, communist beacon at supper, he hangs out every evening and watches people eat in the dining room... "Chairman Mao", an original work by Andy Warhol.

Any combination of these traits (plus the food) has culinary writers all across the nation talking about Pax Americana. Such noble and honest voices as GQ Magazine, Texas Monthly and culture-map.com have showered praise onto Pax Americana and Chef Adam Dorris...which is where this story begins.

Soon, Chef Dorris exploded out of the kitchen with all of the usual trappings of his personality intact after a full day's and night's work. Grinning like a child who ate ice cream for dinner, Chef Dorris greeted me, kissed my face, then asked me what I wanted to eat. I mentioned that it was late and the kitchen was closing, so whatever he wanted was fine with me. Hastily, he obliged and disappeared into the kitchen once more.

In his absence, I continued sitting at the bar, sipping my whiskey while marveling at the brilliant success and future of Adam Dorris. Chef Dorris' life has not always been Warhols hanging on the wall and dark wooden bars. Like many, his life had a much more humble beginning...in Oklahoma.

Chef Dorris' youth was filled with skateboarding and misbehavior of every kind; tumultuous to say the least. But at the youngish age of 24, Adam Dorris moved to Houston from Oklahoma, leaving behind—and I'm not joking—a promising career as a hot tub salesman.

The chef returned to the bar with a dish consisting of sliced sirloin on a "bed" or "texture mattress" of potato gnocchi. And then we were off! Eating and drinking and talking about all of Chef Dorris' life-wonders that led him to the sweet life he has today.

HOW DID ALL OF THIS COOKING BEGIN FOR YOU? In my early twenties, I started cooking and I enjoyed the communal aspect of preparing a meal and people enjoying it. And it was also a thing where it was something that I could do when not much was going right in my life and I would get an immediate positive response. I remember thinking I really wanted to be a chef but it didn't make sense in Oklahoma.

WHAT FORMAL CULINARY EDUCATION DO YOU HAVE? OR DID YOU NOT PURSUE THAT AVENUE AT ALL?

I went to culinary school for a matter of months. And it was a situation where... I'm a terrible student, first and fore-

most. I have a tough time with that type of social anxiety. Put me in a classroom and I'm pretty much going to lose my shit, eventually. Not because I think I'm better than the other students or anything, but it's just hard for me to be in that environment. I wish that I was, but I'm not.

WHAT INFLUENCES YOUR ART? WHAT MAKES YOU WALK INTO THE KITCHEN WITH A BRAND NEW IDEA?

The seasons. So I'm influenced when I taste something, in its raw form and then figuring out how we're going to use it next.

HOW DO YOU MAINTAIN THE GENERAL MORALE AND DISCIPLINE OF THE RESTAURANT?

Chris [Fleischman] and I—and the rest of our management staff—have a standard. We set it for ourselves and we set for everybody else. And sometimes, you know, that standard is unachievable, but it's still the standard. And we hold people accountable to it. And we hold ourselves accountable also.

WE'VE CHATTED FOR A WHILE NOW. IN FACT, I'M PRETTY BUZZED. IN ANY CASE, YOU HAVE YET TO TALK ABOUT THE JOY OF ASSEMBLING A DISH. MY ASSUMPTION IS THAT THERE'S SOME TRADE STATEMENT THAT CHEFS USE TO DESCRIBE HOW WONDERFUL IT IS TO PUT ELEMENTS TOGETHER AND CRAFT A BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF ART AND BLAH BLAH BLAH FOOD. BUT YOU SEEM TO CARE MORE ABOUT THE OVERALL DINING EXPERIENCE THAN YOU DO ABOUT- Ego?

I LIKE YOUR DICTION.

The way that I run my kitchen. I could be very militaristic and have a brigade system and you couldn't talk to me. You could only talk through someone else to me or any of that shit. And I could do that but that doesn't appeal to me. While this is kind of my show, I don't need for everybody to know that it's my show.

Our interview ended in the very early hours of the morning and I left with a grand impression of a talented, young artist in Chef Adam Dorris. In an art form that is increasingly the subject of media attention and social stresses, Chef Dorris seems to have perfectly insulated himself from the poisons that come from high profile careers in art. Working seventeen hours a day for six days a week can make you into a machine and cause you to forget that your task is not one of simple assembly. Chef Dorris is a gregarious, lovable monster inside the kitchen and out. His creativity comes from the joy of using whatever components are available instead of forcing everything to be exactly how it is in his head. **FPH**



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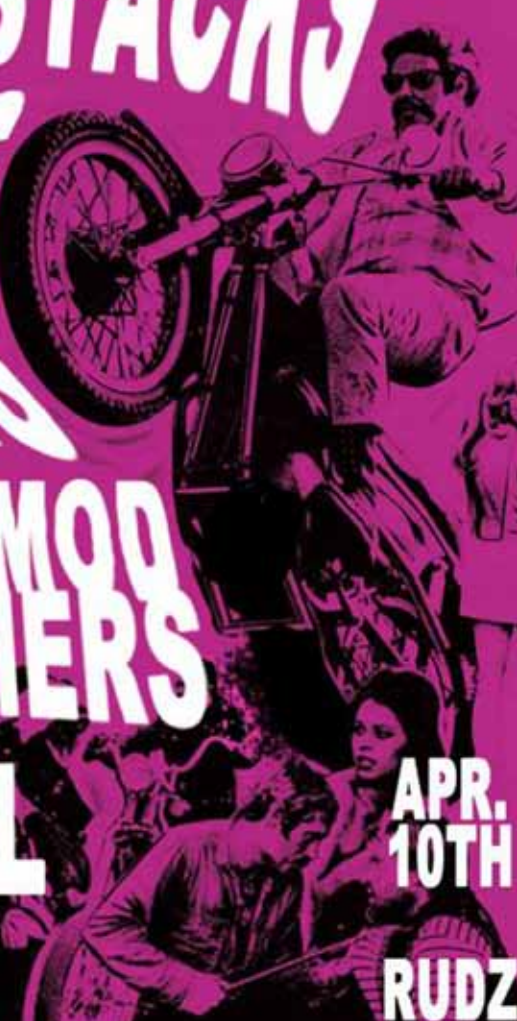
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**THE VELOSTACKS**  
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**TEXAS MOD CRUSHERS**  
**THRILL**  
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**RUDZ**



IT'S ONE OF THE MOST UNBELIEVABLE FILMS ever made. And through the use of action set-ups, editing and cinematography the movie Roar becomes a relentless action thriller that pits human against animal.

Shot in a pell-mell fashion over a period spanning years in the 1970s, when Roar was released in 1981 it played only overseas and made back a fraction of its \$17-million budget. Multiple times throughout production, filming would shut down due to injuries to the cast and natural disasters that destroyed sets.

Free Press Houston spoke to one of Roar's stars by phone. John Marshall acknowledged he didn't even know the film was being re-released until he started getting calls from the press.

"The whole family went over to Australia for the world premiere," says Marshall. "I saw audience reactions and I went off for a month where every single day it was a new city, a screening, newspapers, radio, television. I get nightmares when I watch it now. I got my first good night's sleep the other night since I've started doing this press thing in the last two or three weeks."

Roar was a passion project for then-couple Noel Marshall and Tippi Hendren, who maintained an animal sanctuary at their ranch north of Los Angeles. They enlisted their children from previous marriages, Melanie Griffith, John and Jerry Marshall, to round out the cast.

"Dad and Tippi would often go to Africa. One time in Zimbabwe they saw this house overrun with lions and thought it would make a great movie," says Marshall.

Animals in the line-up of over one hundred big cats include such hammy felines as Togar, Robbie and Gary (Robbie's son). While the film takes place in Africa, and some establishing shots were filmed on that continent, most of Roar was shot at the Shambala Preserve in Acton, California. In pre-production, every animal trainer in Hollywood warned the filmmakers against having two grown male lions in the same shot, much less over a dozen at a time. On the advice of the animal trainers the couple started to raise their own cubs.

"By the time we got financing for the film," says Marshall, "they were starting to get pretty big,"

The family started collecting the cats when they lived in Sherman Oaks, but eventually they moved to their ranch for more open space, as well as to appease nervous neighbors who were complaining to police when lions would show up in their gardens.

"I lived in Sherman Oaks with Tippi and Melanie and my brothers. We had the ranch at the same time. We raised the cubs, so they were separated from their mothers, but we also had big cats. When animal control would catch us, we

would send the big ones to the ranch," says Marshall.

"Then I lived on the ranch for two years of prep. Working on the house, set construction, stuff like that," recalls Marshall. "We kept getting all these different species, we started getting tigers. There are no tigers or mountain lions in Africa," laughs Marshall.

"When we started filming we became different people to the cats. We're not the guys that are in charge; who they respect. We're acting like we're running from them and being afraid. I was the one that got in the most trouble because I would stand up to my father. There were times where I

remember you anymore. All they remember is the people that are running and hiding," says Marshall.

At one point a flash flood destroyed the ranch along with the movie set. "It ruined the editing room, the chems were totally filled with mud," says Marshall. The film had to be washed and cleaned by hand. "We shot 1.5 million feet of film."

As terrifying as some of the scenes are, this is a family film both literally and figuratively, in the sense that it feels like a Disney nature film gone amok.

Roar was shot by the brilliant Dutch cinematographer Jan de Bont, now mainly known as the director of Speed (1994). "This was his first film in America,



just said 'No. Melanie doesn't want to do that scene,' or 'I don't want to do that scene.'

"It takes a long time to set up a shot, you have three or four cameras and you're shooting into each other so you have to camouflage the cameras with tree branches. It takes a long time," says Marshall. "What you do is have the 15 lions in a holding area so that they want to get out. When we start[ed] shooting I'd limp and drag my foot like [I was] injured. Survival of the fittest. If you act injured the cats get excited. So I'm dragging my foot and I cluck like a chicken and now they want to chase me.

"They start rolling the cameras and I'm running and acting afraid. They run after me and trip me - these lions are my friends, except Donny," emphasizes Marshall. "Donny is six-inches away from biting me on the ass. I just turn around a smack him in the nose. My father yells 'You ruined the shot.' And I replied, 'Hey but I'm not on the way to the hospital.'

"We were supposed to film for nine months [but] it took five years of principal photography. By about year three, we're all getting kind of tired. The animals that you grew up with and slept with and nursed as babies don't even

and to my father's credit, he discovered Jan in Holland, where he was very famous," says Marshall.

The actors performed their own stunts. In one scene, Marshall drives a motorcycle off the roof of the house into an adjacent lake.

"The hardest part was stuff on the ground with the lions and the elephants. The motorcycle was nothing, the only thing you have to know is when the bike goes off the roof you don't want to ride it into the water so just push it away from you," laughs Marshall.

Referring to his actual injury on the set Marshall recounts an incident where Togar bit his head: "My one real bad one was not even on a shoot day. It required 56 stitches and it took six guys 25-minutes to get the lion off of me. He was a nice lion, he just playfully knocked me down, and then jumped on my legs like any animal and bit me.

Roar was never released in the United States in 1981. Drafthouse Films, which obtained the theatrical rights through Olive Films, opened the film in limited venues last month, finally marking its American premiere.

A longer version of this interview can be found on the Free Press Houston website. **FPH**

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BY KM ANDERSON

## JIM O' ROURKE SIMPLE SONGS (DRAG CITY)

Jim O' Rourke has catalog and lineage. He is known, by some, more for his engineering and accompaniment work more than his albums, maybe with the exception Gastro del Sol. But upon hearing that O'Rourke would release a solo album after almost 10, my interest was piqued. This is immaculate music, excellently recorded, meticulously played; it is the reason he has recorded everyone from US Maple to Joanna Newsom. His singing voice is tuneful but seemingly conversational, his humor dry. For instance, in "That Weekend," he sings "You should really wash your car, it's a different color than before, maybe you should trade your car," only to segue into "Let me come over"—it is the nature of the pickup, the feigned concern, the subtle insult, the possible sex apology. Jim O' Rourke makes an opera of the ordinary. "Last Year" details disappointment and longing for friendship or love, all the while striding a line between the Eagles and Polvo. The album displays of greatness in effortless strokes rather than cheap tricks.



## PART TIME VIRGO'S MAZE (BURGER RECORDS)

Part Time's Virgo's Maze has a song called "Stranger's Eyes" that is reminiscent of The Cars, "My Jamey" has a similar thing—bright dry keyboards with slightly echoed 80s Britpop vocals—but in a sincere way, never appearing as an attempt to recreate or mock a genre. "Don't Sweat The Small Stuff" is 60's psych rock, while the title track seems like something Culture Club could have recorded. A maze is an appropriate signifier of the sound—music that takes many directions depending on the approach—there is a continuity more in spirit than sound, and not so much a strict adherence to style.



## TYONDAI BRAXTON HIVE1 (NONESUCH RECORDS)

Tyondai Braxton is known by some because of his brief stint in the band Battles. He is also known for his wonderful last album, Perfect Pitch, that combined what was basically an orchestral piece with touches of electronics and other spices. HIVE1 is the latest offering and it continues the marvelousness of his previous soundpieces. "Scout1" is delicious, a slow travel from a sort of drone and some minimal percussion to a full-on electro samba, sounds enter and exit over the rhythmic base, each movement signals a new color palette: purple, a lighter shade, violet, a deep red."Gracka" is inspired by his wife, vibrant in spirit, bright and fluttering; handclaps help lay down a cadence, but as soon as it seems to establish itself, as soon as you recognize the form, it flies away, to be remembered only in its fleeting beauty. Tyondai is the master of building to a moment, of showing how the drizzle and wind are equally as majestic as the storm.



## UNKNOWN MORTAL ORCHESTRA MULTI LOVE (JAGJAGUWAR RECORDS)

Unknown Mortal Orchestra is the product of multi-instrumentalist Ruban Nielson and it has all the things you would expect: the prodigious instrumentation, the multi-tracked vocals, the Prince/Stevie Wonder leans. "Like Acid Rain" pulls from both Prince and Stevie, with a touch of hip hop Off The Wall style—it is a jam. "Can't Keep Checking My Phone" is downtown Saturday night, and maybe the song is about distraction in the apocalypse. "We eat crickets in the future... drink chicha in the jungle, sounds great, I'm kinda busy, could you call back later..." Yeah, I have no idea what that is about and many of the lyrics are like that, vague for the sake of, like if he were to explain it to you, you would be like "Oh!!!" but when listening to them they seem to just be vocal instruments on top of the other instruments—flow more than fluency. Still, a great head-phone album, a good album in general: technically adept and funky enough.



## TORRES SPRINTER (PARTISAN)

Torres occupies that space of dark rock so well displayed by bands like Queens Of The Stone Age, Black Heart Procession, or the artist this album will be most compared to: PJ Harvey. Now, to be fair, Rob Ellis and Ian Oliver (the famous PJ Harvey rhythm section) do play on this album, but I would say that this album is its own thing; resemblance more than facsimile. "New Skin" is a great example, with the lyric "If you never know the darkness, then you're the one who fears the most," a wonderful use of the quiet/loud dynamic; "Cowboy Guilt" rides an electronic beat and minimal arrangement, allowing the bursts of sound to be more jarring. All of these songs benefit from a bareness that accents singer Mackenzie Scott's voice, conveying controlled rage, fear, and lucidity, giving each song the proper narration to set and maintain the tone of the songs. Yes, very good.



## ALABAMA SHAKES SOUND AND COLOR (ROUGH TRADE/ATO)

From the opening harpsichord, to the last note of this album, it is pure perfection. People talk of soul and there is that generic version—the Isley Brothers "Twist and Shout" vs. "Voyage To Atlantis"—this is the latter. It is thick, dark in places; it is bottom heavy; there is the beautiful and the scarred. "Don't Wanna Fight No More" could easily be about a relationship or ambivalence towards the "struggle" amidst the daily struggle of life and living. "Dune" is a song that is equal Al Green and Mountain, the attempt to find happiness, to make sense of it all, "I don't know whose fuck to give." Producer Blake Mills found the sweet spot of the gentle and chaotic, songs played so delicately in places that the restraint accentuates the bombast. "This Feeling" rides so smooth, it warms and cuddles you, like when you first lay in the bed and slowly sink into the sheets, ultimately comatose in the comfort. "Shoegaze" is fried chicken and Kool Aid, the scent of burning mesquite in the air on a cloudless day, "Gemini" is a slow burn, space jam, Parliament stoned out, you fade out to it, fall in through it, a slow fuck. You need this one in your life, for really really really real. **FPH**





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BADVICE  
BY MARINI VAN SMIRREN  
ILLUSTRATION BY SHELBY HOHL

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MARINI

FUCK SOBER, THOUGHTFUL, LEVEL-HEADED ADVICE. HERE'S THE TRUTH: BADVICE

DISCLAIMER: YOU DON'T HAVE TO FUCKING READ THIS IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT. I KNOW I SOUND LIKE AN ASSHOLE. THE TITLE STATES: "BADVICE" WHICH THEREFORE CONSTITUTES AN AWARENESS THAT ONE READING SHOULD ANTICIPATE THE NATURE OF SAID BAD ADVICE.

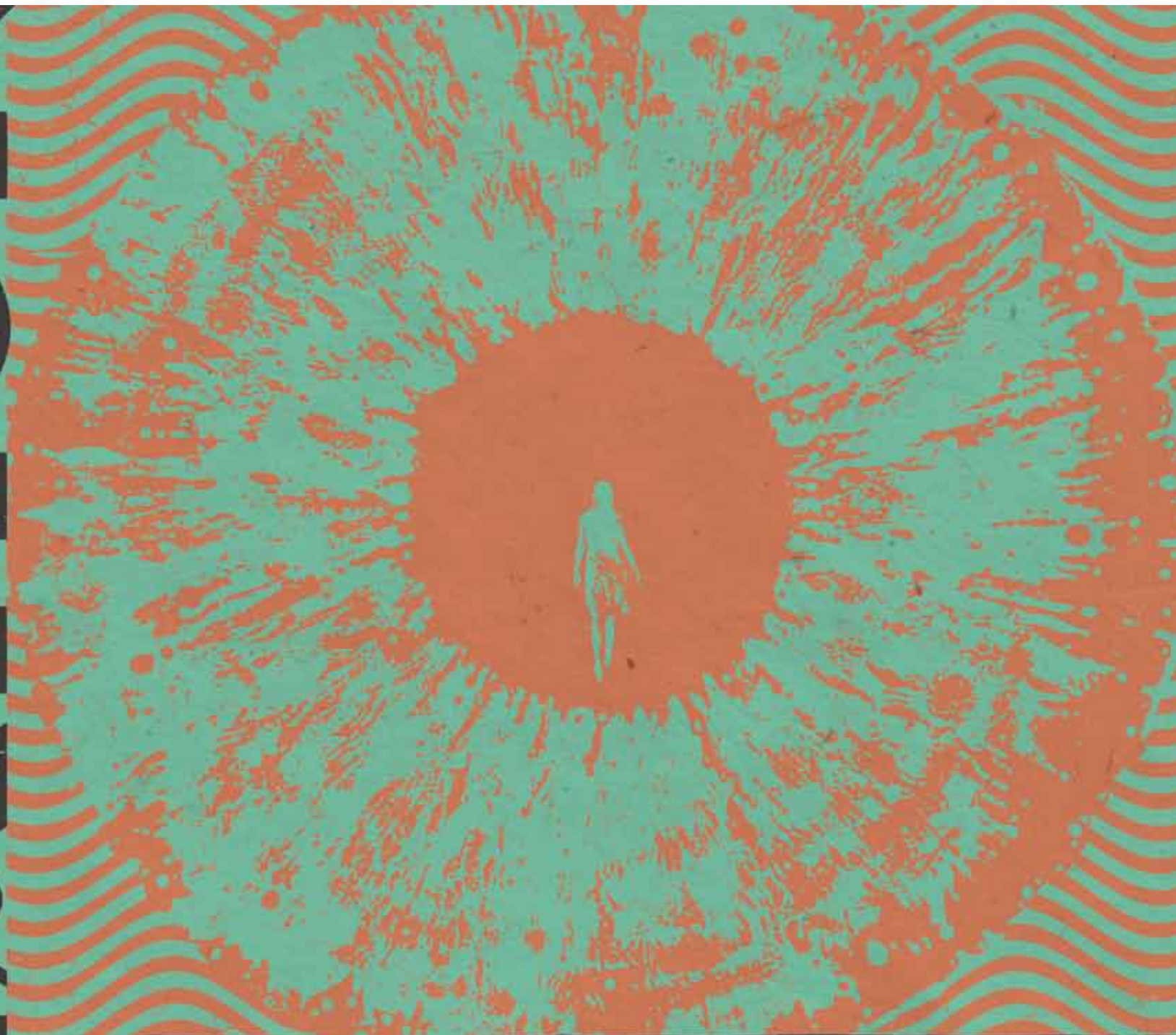
SOOOO... I DITCHED A PARTY TO HAVE A COKE-FUELED ORGY ON 4/20 AND NOW THREE DIFFERENT PEOPLE WON'T STOP TEXTING ME TRYING TO HIT IT AGAIN. DID I FUCK UP OR WAS THIS THE BEST DECISION OF MY LIFE??

I MEAN, I THINK YOU MADE A GOOD DECISION. NOT NECESSARILY THE BEST DECISION OF YOUR LIFE (MAYBE SO FAR) BUT HOPEFULLY NOT THE BEST ONE EVER. YOU'RE GONNA BE ABLE TO LOOK BACK IN TIME AND SAY YOU DID SOMETHING PRETTY "KINKY" (SINCE I'M TOO STONED TO THINK OF ANOTHER WORD) AND I THINK IT'S GOOD TO GET THAT SHIT OUT OF YOUR SYSTEM.

AS FOR THE PEOPLE HOLLERING AT YOU, JUST BLOCK THEIR NUMBERS. IT'S 2015. YOU CAN EASILY DO THAT SHIT NOW.

SO, SERIOUS QUESTION. I WORE A SAARI TO PROM AND I GOT HELLA BASHED ON TWITTER AFTER POSTING PICTURES OF IT. WAS THAT FUCKED UP OF ME, A PERSON WHO IS NOT APART OF DESI CULTURE, TO WEAR THEIR TRADITIONAL DRESS?

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# A SUCCESSFUL DOCTOR

PHOTO: NBC

**NOT SINCE THE DAYS OF HOUSTON'S FAMED COMEDY WORKSHOP** has the comedy scene here felt so electrifying and full of talent. Right now, there are more comics doing things and going places than in the last twenty years. One of those comics is John Nguyen. Nguyen won the Laff Town's Funniest Comedy



Contest in 2014, as well as beating thousands of comics from all over the country to become a finalist in the Stand Up NBC contest. Becoming a finalist has landed him touring work, a possible deal with NBC on future projects, and well the respect of his comedy peers. Around town he's been in both the Come And Take It Comedy Festival and Houston's Whatever Fest, as well as grabbing opening spots at the Improv. FPH caught up with him to find out more about who he is and where he's going.

**YOU'RE FROM HOUSTON RIGHT? HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DOING STAND UP?**

I'm actually from Somerville, New Jersey, and I moved here in the early 2000's. My mom and dad got divorced, and my mom asked if I wanted to move here with her, so I did. I've been doing comedy for three years.

**YOU JOKE A LOT ABOUT YOUR PARENTS AND THEIR VISION OF A LIFE FOR YOU OTHER THAN THE ONE YOU'VE CHOSEN. DO THEY REALLY WANT YOU TO BE A DOCTOR OR DO THEY SUPPORT YOU DOING STAND UP?**

That joke is actually true. My mom really doesn't know that I do stand up. She knows that I work at the Improv, but that's about it. I started to explain it to her once, but she didn't really understand, so I didn't try to explain harder. She mentioned that I could be a successful lawyer or a doctor, but ultimately, I think she just wants me to be successful at something.

**YOU COME OFF AS THE MOST HUMBLE COMIC IN HOUSTON. I SEE YOU'LL GET ON A SHOW AND YOU'LL POST HOW YOU "DON'T KNOW WHY THEY CHOSE YOU," FOR THE SHOW. OR YOU'LL SAY THAT YOU "ONLY HAVE 15 MINUTES OF MATERIAL."** YOU DON'T SEE YOURSELF AS A STRONG COMIC?

I think I just don't have enough material. If a joke isn't up to par by my own standards, then I won't put it in my set. But, I'm also my own worst critic.

**YOU HAD A BIG 2014 AS A FINALIST IN THE STAND UP NBC COMPETITION AND YOU BEAT A PRO TO WIN THE**

**LAFF TOWN'S FUNNIEST COMPETITION, AS WELL. WHAT DID THAT FEEL LIKE?**

The NBC thing was totally surreal. I remember being in my hotel room in Hollywood and thinking, "This is not real." On the Laff Town contest, I mean, obviously Rob Mungle is a better comic than me. I think just the general bullshit vibe of a contest makes things different. The way Steven [Padilla] set it up—with two nights of finals—really made it more of an even playing field. Everyone had great sets; I just lucked out.

**LOUIS CK RECENTLY SAID, "WHETHER IT'S A ROOM OF 15,000 OR A ROOM OF 15, A COMIC WILL ALWAYS FIND THE PEOPLE WHO ARE DISAPPOINTED." AS A GUY WHO HAS PLAYED BIGGER ROOMS AND SMALLER ROOMS, DO YOU FEEL LIKE THAT'S TRUE? YOU HAVE SUCH A STRIDE TO YOUR ACT THAT I CAN'T IMAGINE YOU EVEN NOTICING THEM.**

I can't speak for a room of 15,000, but I know what he means; and yeah, I can always find the disappointed people.

**FAVORITE COMICS OF THE PAST, AND OF THE PRESENT?**

It was really only George Carlin from the past. I'd listen to my friend's dad's records, and not get any of it, but laugh at all the swear words. From current comics, I really like the way Conan O'Brien writes, and I really like Pete Holmes, John Mulaney, and Louis C.K.

**AS A DEMOGRAPHIC, THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A LARGE NUMBER OF ASIAN COMICS. WHAT ABOUT STAND UP DREW YOU TO DOING IT?**

Well, certainly not my mother, but seriously, it came from Louis C.K. I discovered his stuff, and I looked up all of his clips to check his stuff out. I saw him at Bayou Music Center when it was still called Verizon, and it changed my life. Watching him really made me want to try to do it on my own.

**NO ONE IN THE HOUSTON COMEDY SCENE WILL SAY A BAD THING ABOUT YOU, AND MOST WOULD PUT YOU AT THE TOP OF THE LIST OF NEWER COMICS. DO YOU THINK THAT'S DUE TO THE FACT THAT YOU DON'T HANG OUT AS MUCH OR THAT YOU DON'T GET INVOLVED WITH A LOT OF THE GOSSIP AND DRAMA OF THE SCENE?**

I think that there will always be drama whenever there's a group of people who hang out together, so it doesn't necessarily apply to just the comedy scene. But, if I hung out more, maybe those guys would get to know the real me, and end up thinking, "Hey, he's just another asshole like us. He's not humble at all."

**WHAT'S YOUR DEFINITION OF A SUCCESSFUL COMEDY CAREER?**

I think having my own sitcom like Seinfeld did, but calling it Nguyen. And then going ahead and stealing the music he had on the show with the same premise. You could be in it and be Kramer, because you're tall. Or, well, actually you'd make a better Elaine, but in drag. I'd also like to insist on an alternate pronunciation of my name just to confuse America. That, and that alone, is my idea of a successful comedy career.

You can learn a lot from a guy who's as humble as Nguyen. When you speak to him, you realize that while he's gotten plenty in his short time at a mic; he's nowhere near satisfied with himself as a stand up. You can catch him on June 19th when he features for Iliza Shlesinger at Warehouse Live. The all-ages show has doors at 7:30 and tickets are \$20.00. **FPH**

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# VONNEGUT KNEW THE IRAQ WAR WOULDN'T END

BY NICK COOPER

## A WAR BASED ON LIES

Before the U.S. attacked Iraq in 2003, there were many voices for peace, warning about potentially dire consequences. Those voices for peace have proven themselves far wiser than the neo-cons who clamored for war. We know now that Donald Rumsfeld, Dick Cheney, Condoleezza Rice, Colin Powell, George W. Bush, John Ashcroft, etc. spread lies, made absurd predictions, engineered a lasting failure, destroyed a country, committed war crimes, and legalized torture. Nonetheless, they are doing fine. Rice is teaching at Stanford, Cheney, Rumsfeld and Ashcroft write books, give interviews, and receive awards. Bush seems to be enjoying himself. None have been charged for their war crimes.

On February 15, 2003, there were mass international rallies against the war. Those of us who marched and spoke out then predicted another war would be another disaster. The professors, artists, students, authors, parents, grandparents, and children understood the implications of re-attacking Iraq better than the experts, but still, we aren't considered experts. We were right, but so what? That doesn't un-attack Iraq.

## 12 YEARS EARLIER

The most prescient speech, however, came 12 years earlier. In 1991, there were smaller pockets of folks speaking out against Operation Desert Storm. Speakers at rallies predicted suffering, mission creep, and explained how the U.S. had engineered the crisis in Kuwait. However, on January 15, 1991, at an anti-war rally at Columbia University, Kurt Vonnegut made a speech that went much further.

"This war will be the end of public health, and education," Vonnegut said. "This war will be the eventual end of everything. There will never be a way of stopping it."

Back then, not even critics imagined that the war on Iraq would significantly affect the U.S. economy, or that one war would lead to an inescapable spiral that would end "everything." In fact, 40% of Americans thought the war would be over in a few weeks, and support for the war was 76-79%. Although Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush had already pitted social programs against 'defense' spending, Vonnegut's assertion that attacking Iraq could somehow deplete the money required to fund public health and education was too far-fetched for even the one-in-five of us who opposed the war to embrace. It is only now that we realize that this most dire prediction was right on.

At the end of six months, Saddam remained in power, and 148 U.S. troops and 100,000 to 200,000 Iraqis were killed. Hundreds of thousands were injured.

## DECADES MORE OF DESTRUCTION

After Desert Storm came Bush and Clinton's crippling sanctions against Iraq. Though perhaps cheaper in terms

of cost to the U.S. and U.S. lives lost, the sanctions targeted the poorest, youngest and most vulnerable Iraqis, while the powerful and wealthy did fine. 500,000 small children died as a result of the sanctions, with estimates of total deaths up to 1.7 million. Clinton's Secretary of State, Madeline Albright was famously quoted as saying the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children, "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price – we think the price is worth it."

Then came 2003's Operation Iraqi Freedom. George W. Bush jumped in with the support of Congress, erstwhile critic Colin Powell, and the American people. Despite a mood of post-911 McCarthyism, public support for this invasion was lower—only about 50%. Confirmed deaths due to the war number over 200,000, and estimates for total deaths range into the millions. This brutal campaign, based on lie that Islamic fundamentalists controlled Iraq, was destined to prove itself true, eventually delivering large swathes of Iraq to Islamic fundamentalists who had not been there before.

## IRAQ WAR REDUX

Today, with no viable strategy for bringing peace and prosperity to the region, we stand at the precipice of another war to be launched in the name of making Iraq better. It is quite possible that Hillary Clinton or a Republican president will decide to attack ISIS, Iran, Syria, or all three. If the trends continue, the next invasion by the U.S. would be even more destabilizing, unpopular, expensive, and longer, but warmongers aren't concerned about any of that.

What is clear now is that it isn't over. Iraq is not Mission Accomplished. It would be hard for anyone to argue that ISIS isn't worse than Saddam. The eternal mission of the U.S. seems to be to attack, arm, train, tear apart, and/or punish this defenseless country.

Vonnegut knew that Iraq and the region wouldn't be like WWII or even Vietnam. He knew we wouldn't lose or win, rather, that it was destined to be our country's Waterloo.

This war will be the end of public health, and education. This war will be the eventual end of everything. There will never be a way of stopping it.

Vonnegut's speech in 1991 wasn't even optimistic about the possibility of Americans doing anything about it.

"Can we stop them?" he asked. "I don't think so." **FPH**

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# FPSF 2015 STAGE GUIDE

SATURDAY JUNE 6

| MARS                      | VENUS                                            | JUPITER                        | MERCURY                          | SATURN                                        | NEPTUNE                     |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| THE VANITY<br>12:00       | POPE<br>12:20                                    | WE WERE WOLVES<br>12:20        | DJ FREDSTER<br>11:10             | DEEP CUTS<br>11:30                            | SECOND LOVERS<br>12:00      |
| FREEMAN<br>1:00           | SERATONES<br>1:40                                | CATCH FEVER<br>1:30            | GIO CHAMBA<br>12:30              | TWIN PEAKS<br>12:40                           | SARAH JAFFE<br>1:20         |
| STURGILL SIMPSON<br>2:10  | HOUNDMOUTH<br>3:10                               | THELASTPLACEYOULOOK<br>2:40    | BOAN<br>1:20                     | THE SUFFERS<br>2:10                           | THE SWORD<br>3:00           |
| GARY CLARK JR<br>4:10     | THE BRIGHT LIGHT<br>SOCIAL HOUR<br>5:10          | SCALE THE SUMMIT<br>4:20       | NIGHT DRIVE<br>2:10              | PORTUGAL. THE MAN<br>3:50                     | RL GRIME<br>4:40            |
| BAND OF HORSES<br>6:00    | BEN KWELLER<br>7:00                              | GOATWHORE<br>6:10              | YUNG LEAN & SAD BOYS<br>3:10     | WELCOME TO HOUSTON<br>FT. THE SUFFERS<br>5:30 | TEARS FOR FEARS<br>6:50     |
| CHANCE THE RAPPER<br>7:50 | CHARLES BRADLEY &<br>HIS EXTRAORDINAIRES<br>8:50 | RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS<br>7:50     | DPAT<br>4:20                     | ST. VINCENT<br>8:00                           | MASTODON<br>9:00            |
| R.KELLY<br>9:50           |                                                  |                                | PEACHES<br>5:40                  | STEVE ANGELLO<br>9:50                         |                             |
|                           |                                                  |                                | LECRAE<br>6:50                   |                                               |                             |
|                           |                                                  |                                | ODESZA<br>9:00                   |                                               |                             |
| FANCY PANTS<br>TENT       | PORTUGAL. THE MAN<br>ACOUSTIC SET 1:40           | ROBERT ELLIS<br>COVER SET 3:10 | BEN KWELLER<br>ACOUSTIC SET 5:10 | TYCHO<br>DJ SET 7:00                          | BUXTON<br>ACOUSTIC SET 9:00 |

FPSF 2015 STAGE GUIDE

SUNDAY JUNE 7

| MARS                         | VENUS                   | JUPITER                    | MERCURY                          | SATURN                                         | NEPTUNE                       |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| MOJI<br>12:00                | GUILLA<br>12:50         | PRISMO<br>11:30            | HIRAM<br>11:10                   | BUXTON<br>12:10                                | KULT DIZNEY<br>11:40          |
| THE BAND OF HEATHENS<br>1:30 | GRIZFOLK<br>2:30        | PALLBEARER<br>XX:XX        | GEORGE WEST<br>1:10              | THE TONTONS<br>1:30                            | FUTUREBIRDS<br>12:40          |
| TOVE LO<br>3:20              | MOON TAXI<br>4:10       | MUST BE SUNDAY<br>12:50    | SLAPTOP<br>2:00                  | BRANDI CARLILE<br>3:00                         | ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT<br>2:10 |
| FLUME<br>5:00                | ROBERT ELLIS<br>6:00    | CON BRIO<br>2:00           | TUNJI IGE<br>3:20                | BEN HARPER & THE<br>INNOCENT CRIMINALS<br>4:40 | FUTURE ISLANDS<br>3:50        |
| MAJOR LAZER<br>6:50          | BENJAMIN BOOKER<br>7:50 | DIARRHEA PLANET<br>3:20    | ILOVEMAKONNEN<br>4:30            | THE DECEMBERISTS<br>6:30                       | FLOGGING MOLLY<br>5:30        |
| SKRILLEX<br>8:40             |                         | THE MOUNTAIN GOATS<br>5:00 | GTA<br>5:30                      | WEEZER<br>8:50                                 | BELLE & SEBASTIAN<br>7:40     |
|                              |                         | ICEAGE<br>6:30             | G-EAZY<br>6:40                   |                                                |                               |
|                              |                         | GLASS ANIMALS<br>8:00      | TYCHO<br>7:50                    |                                                |                               |
| FANCY PANTS<br>TENT          | ICEAGE<br>DJ SET 1:10   | DIPLO<br>DJ SET 2:20       | THE SUFFERS<br>ACOUSTIC SET 4:10 | FUTURE ISLANDS<br>DJ SET 6:00                  |                               |

# POT, POLICY, & POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

BY JACOB SANTILLAN

**CHANCES ARE**, some of you flip through Free Press Houston, bowl packed and at the ready, casually skimming the articles. Maybe you're sitting on the couch or laying on the bed, enjoying life as much as you can, whenever and however you can under late capitalism? No one can properly blame you, the world being what it is in 2015.

I certainly won't; I wholeheartedly hope you enjoy something which makes life a little sweeter - perhaps there's a special occasion? Or maybe you partake for the fuck of it just because it's Tuesday. Whatever reasons we all use cannabis, it remains tragically illegal.

I don't get to partake primarily because it violates Army regulations (I'm in the Reserve), but I'm also not shy that I prefer cannabis over alcohol nor about my intention to fire up a vaporizer the very next day after I leave the service.

My two tours in Iraq (one of them lasted only three months), while valuable life experiences, weren't particularly remarkable. I've never been in a firefight, I was never wounded, and I don't have PTSD. Others are not as lucky.

In short, I came home whole. Others didn't. Those of us unaffected by injury or illness obviously like cannabis because it makes us feel good. Others need it because of what ails them, and Texas has taken a few steps in the right direction with a series of medical cannabis bills aimed at loosening regulations, as reported earlier by Free Press Houston.

Cannabis legalization enjoys generally strong support from Texans, 77% of whom think it should be legal to some degree. But recently, the Texas House voted to kill a medical cannabis amendment to House Bill 3404. The bill mandates Health and Human Services Commissions to conduct a study to evaluate possible treatments of veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Longview Republican State Representative David Simpson submitted the amendment to HB 3404, which authorizes the use of cannabis for studies in its efficacy in treating P-T-S-D, but the amendment was voted down in a 54-80 vote.

## A BRIEF ASIDE ON CANNABIS AND GOD

Maybe you read that last paragraph a few times just to make sure you read correctly that a Texas Republican filed a pro-cannabis amendment. Indeed, Rep. Simpson is also the lone author of House Bill 2165, which repeals cannabis prohibition entirely. The House Criminal Justice Committee even approved it in a 5-2 vote. His reasoning is as surprising as HB2165's progress — he opposes prohibition on conservative Christian principles.

"I don't believe that when God made marijuana he made a mistake that government needs to fix," Rep. Simpson writes in an op-ed published by the Texas Tribune entitled "The Christian case for drug law reform."

I'm a stone cold atheist in the same vein as some very punchy, controversial, thoughtful, and courageous public figures like Bill Maher, Sam Harris, and Christopher Hitchens, so Rep. Simpson's Christian case, which he doesn't elaborate as much as I'd like, is fascinating to me. Whatever his reasoning, my would-be fellow stoners, we have an ally on the other side of the aisle.

It's been explained to me by a friend of the Orthodox Christian religion that his co-religionists view the church as a hospital for the soul and medicine a gift from God. The body and soul are entwined and that healing should be both physical and spiritual;

if someone is getting physical healing, but ignoring the mental or spiritual aspects, they're doing themselves a disservice. Borrowing from the language of the religious, veterans afflicted with PTSD often suffer physically and spiritually and with the story of Christ healing the blind and the sick as told in the Gospel, a Christian rationale for cannabis decriminalization, at the very least for medical use, seems entirely rational.

## ITS THE SCIENCE, STUPID

The Drug Enforcement Agency opposes cannabis legalization of any kind, having ruled that there is "no accepted medical use." Their cynical, hair-on-fire take necessarily draws comparisons to the film "Reefer Madness", the risible, panic-mongering anti-cannabis morality tale ruthlessly lampooned 77 years after its release. The film is available for free in the public domain. But there's a funny thing about the DEA's judgment that cannabis has no accepted medical use — it makes obtaining clearance to study cannabis so difficult that when someone manages to secure permission it makes national news, which brings me back to the dead amendment to HB 3404.

"[The Texas legislature] voted to not even allow a study of medical marijuana in veterans with PTSD. We consider that to be an act of willful ignorance," says Dave Bass, Texas NORML's Director for Veterans' Outreach. "It's the year 2015. 23 states in our Union have medical marijuana programs. Of those states, 11 allow PTSD as a qualifying condition. Veterans are currently, right this minute, using medical cannabis to treat their PTSD and it's working very successfully."

The anecdotal evidence of the efficacy of medical cannabis can seem powerfully convincing, even for people as high-profile as CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta, who came out as a supporter of medical cannabis after previous opposition. "Anecdote," however, isn't a synonym for "data."

The outlook for medical cannabis in Texas is not good for the 2015 legislative session. Both bills to reduce or eliminate cannabis penalties as well as two more approving medical cannabis, seem headed for the same fate. The one bill which remains, HB 892, if approved, may prove useless to many in need of medical cannabis, according to some medical cannabis advocates.

Despite setbacks in Texas, veterans and others suffering from PTSD may fortunately rest their hopes on a woman by the name of Dr. Sue Sisley. She's the former assistant professor fired from the University of Arizona under questionable circumstances, which some believe was due to her advocacy for research into the medical benefits of cannabis. She's one of a handful of researchers to receive clearance from the US Department of Health and Human Services, the Food and Drug Administration, and a \$2 million grant from the State of Colorado to legally study the effects of medical cannabis on PTSD. The question that remains is whether, or how much, the DEA will obstruct her research.

Medical cannabis has been studied for a number of other ailments with promising results. My personal interest in cannabis is merely recreational. While I hope I never need it medically, I hope the day I do, it will be legally available. For those who need it now, I wish them, and Dr. Sisley the best. **FPH**

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The exhibition *Sensor* at Fotofest targets the US military and CIA drone programs operating within the War on Terror. Despite the lack of human aboard, drones cast long shadows.

Lisa Barnard’s series *Too Thin Too Blue* is composed of eight aerial photographs and one wall text. These desert landscapes overflow with vast ridges and valleys—there are no humans, no animals, and no horizon visible. The mountainous imagery spreads across the field of the photographic paper. Each image has been printed with a hazy blue tint. The black vinyl letters on the white wall offer context: corresponding with each photograph is a list of statistical data referring to specific drone strike missions in the Waziristan region between 2007-2011.

The artist states that the aerial photos were taken from a “drones-eye” view of Waziristan, a region that overlaps Southeast Afghanistan and Northwest Pakistan. On first viewing, I credulously accepted what is tacit in the artist’s statement; I assumed that these photos were taken from a US Military drone operating in the never-ending War on Terror.

Upon multiple observations, I started to doubt the veracity of what I viewed.

The Department of Defense generously displays copyright free images from their photographic archives on their website [www.defense.gov/multi-media](http://www.defense.gov/multi-media). One can scour through and use thousands of images without fee or penalty. I hoped to find something similar to Barnard’s drone Point of View amongst this library. To the credit of the DoD, it’s effortless to become lost in such an abundance of images: the photos are vivid, of high resolution, shot from multiple angles, and cover a broad array of themes.

I typed in a search with relevant keywords such as drone, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, and MQ-9 Reaper. I found an overwhelming archive including long shots of U.A.V.s in flight, multiple shots of mechanics working on drones, and numerous close-ups of pilots in virtual cock-pits surrounded by joystick controllers and monitors. What I did not find were images from the Point of View of a drone’s camera, not even inoffensive landscapes similar to Barnard’s photographs.

On Youtube, one can find videos from the drone’s perspective. All of

these videos display navigational graphics in the margins of the screen. Lisa Barnard’s photographs are decisively different. In *Too Thin Too Blue*, the absence of navigational tools and horizon line denies orientation; the viewer is suspended.

The curator of *Sensor*, Jennifer Ward, later revealed to me that the photographs were shot by Lisa Barnard from a piloted plane following the paths of drones. This explains my inability to match Barnard’s photos, but it still does not explain the Point of View of the artwork and that of the ‘drone’s eye’ view.

Barnard refers to herself as a photographer working “in the genre of Contemporary Documentary;” this is notable because of the credibility documentary elicits. Viewers often assume that the camera records objectively. It is a common misconception that Point of View in documentary is even more credible than ‘eye witness’ accounts. Anyone with a digital camera knows that cropping, color saturation editing, and selection (editing) are common methods to establish Point of View.

The parameters of this artwork are established with every cropped, edited, and selected photograph. This also occurs with the framing devices in the gallery: the wall text, the artist’s statement, and the arrangement of the photographic series. Borrowing the cold, bureaucratic deadpan of military verbiage, one segment of the vinyl wall text reads:

Related ID # 8 Location: Zamazola Bureau ID: B8 Dates: 1/16/2007 Area: South Waziristan Target Group: Number of Deaths: 8 Civilians Killed: 0-8 Injured: Unkown Children Killed: Summary: 8 Killed, reportedly Taliban or innocent woodcutters.

It is still unclear how to make any distinction between combatant and civilian deaths. *Too Thin Too Blue* is as murky as the U.S. government’s drone program is opaque.

Why is the line between combatant and civilian death so muddled?

Herein lies the elephant in the room: the clues come not only from the photographs, but also in the context surrounding such imagery: declassified government documents and the spin doctoring of the White House.

Since taking office, the Obama Administration has ruthlessly increased the use of ‘signature strikes’ in the War on Terror; drone strikes in which the identity of the targets are unknown when the order is given. According to Micah Zenko, the Douglas Dillon Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, “most individuals killed are not on a kill list, and the government does not know their names.” Only after pulling out bodies is it possible for people to be identified.

All military-age dead males in ‘signature strike’ zones are designated combatants, unless some extraordinary evidence surfaces to overturn this classification. Recently, it was reported that two men killed in a ‘signature strike’ were Al Qaeda hostages: 74-year-old American Warren Weinstein and 39-year-old Italian Giovanni Lo Porto. Posthumously, these two men were granted the designation of non-combatants and innocent. President Obama issued an unprecedented apology for the deaths of Weinstein and Lo Porto. The President’s address was in glaring contrast to his silence about the estimated 452 civilians killed in drone strikes who happen to have been born outside of the United States and Europe.

Like the White House omissions of civilian deaths, is *Too Thin Too Blue* reinforcing an ideological position—intentionally or not—by selectively omitting controversial imagery? The title to Barnard’s artwork is a reference to the Errol Morris’ documentary film *The Thin Blue Line*. The film casts doubt on the conclusions of institutional power—in fact, it resulted in the exoneration of an innocent man on death row. In Barnard’s artwork, the saturated blue of the photograph exaggerates this reference, while countering assumptions that documentary is an objective medium.

Unlike Morris’ work, there is no visible life in Barnard’s series to be exhumed nor exonerated; this blue-tinted aestheticization of war is sterile. Barnard’s series employs methods arousing doubt and disorientation which occur parallel to the public position of the US government’s drone programs. Its Point of View is unverifiable. Some might believe this subtle, but I find it problematic. **FPH**

LISA BARNARD  
LANDSCAPE #2, FROM THE SERIES TOO THIN, TOO BLUE, 2012  
PROJECT WHIPLASH TRANSITION, 2010-2014  
COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



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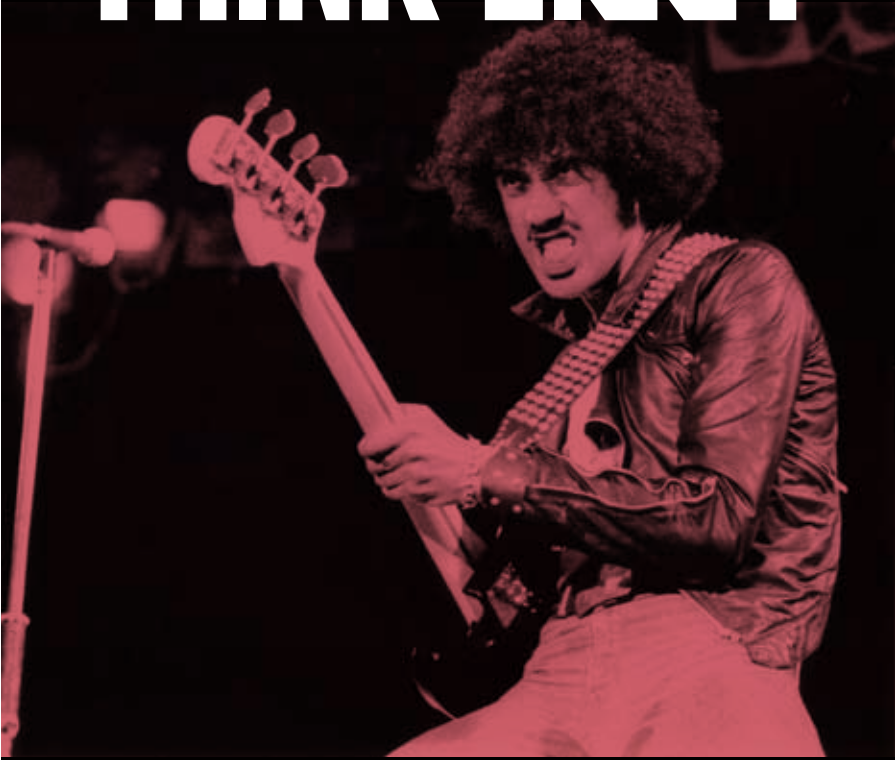
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# TREAD LIGHTLY

MASTODON RETURNS TO HOUSTON

BY DAVID GARRICK

PHOTO: COURTESY OF WARNER BROS. RECORDS

IF YOU'RE PLANNING ON ATTENDING this year's Free Press Summer Fest, there's more than enough bands that are worth your time. The lineup this year is one of the most diverse in the festival's history, and will bring our city together as varying genres mix it up in Eleanor Tinsley Park. One of the higher energy acts performing at the top of the list, is Atlanta's metal ambassadors, Mastodon. In fifteen years the band has set the bar high by releasing concept albums, video albums, and igniting stages all over the world. Here in support of last year's amazingly well-crafted album, "Once More 'Round The Sun," the band will cover all of their bases in a set that's bound to impress casual and longtime fans alike. FPH got to sit down with lead singer and drummer, Brann Dailor to talk about what the band has in store for fans at the festival this year.

YOU GUYS HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR 15 YEARS, DOES IT FEEL LIKE IT'S BEEN THAT LONG?

I don't know really. I guess everyone experiences time differently, but it doesn't feel like it's been fifteen years. Though, for me, sometimes I still look at the nineties like it was yesterday.

IT SEEMS WITH CONCEPT ALBUMS AND VIDEO ALBUMS, THAT THE BAND HAS REALLY EMBRACED DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY. DOES IT FEEL THAT WAY FOR Y'ALL OR DO YOU JUST DO WHAT YOU DO?

We just do what we do. We've always strived to be different and separate ourselves from the herd. It's always nice for us to try to surprise ourselves with every release.

THE NEW ALBUM, "ONCE MORE 'ROUND THE SUN" IS REALLY STRONG. THE SONG-WRITING REALLY FEELS LIKE YOU GUYS HAVE HIT YOUR STRIDE, AND IT HITS SONICALLY LIKE YOU WANT A METAL ALBUM TO HIT. DOES IT FEEL LIKE YOU'RE AT THE TOP OF YOUR GAME AS FAR AS SONGWRITING GOES, OR ARE YOU YOUR OWN WORST CRITIC?

I love the songs on the album, and I feel like they're more developed and even leaps and bounds from our stuff in the past. There's a comfort level we have with songwriting that's nice, but at the same time, I don't want to rely on it either. We'll definitely mix things up and change it on the next album so we can keep it fresh and different.

I SAW THAT YOU'RE REISSUING A SUPER LIMITED EDITION OF "CRACK THE SKYE" ON BLUE VINYL. IS THERE A REASON FOR THAT OR WAS IT JUST A CHANCE TO DO IT THAT PRESENTED ITSELF?

We're just vinyl nerds, and we want to see our stuff on cool colored vinyl. There's bands that we all follow who do



the same and so we want to put out our stuff in the same cool way. I love colored vinyl, it looks so cool.

YOU'RE A DRUMMER WHO SINGS, AND YOU CAN ACTUALLY SING WELL AND PLAY DRUMS WELL. HAVE YOU EVER REALIZED WHAT A SMALL PORTION OF THE MUSIC WORLD CAN DO THAT AND DO THAT WELL? I don't really think about it at all. Traditionally, I know the lead singer is supposed to be out in front, leading things. I know people look at us who haven't seen us before and think, "The drummer sings?" But, we lost our lead singer early on, and for a long time we just split up the vocal duties while we looked for a new singer. I don't think at this point we're really looking for a lead singer anymore.

YOU GUYS SEEM TO BE A BIG HIT ON THE FESTIVAL STAGES. DO YOU GUYS PREP A SET THAT'S REFLECTIVE OF THE TIME ALLOWED OR DO YOU JUST PLAY THE SET YOU'VE BEEN USING ON TOUR?

When we headline a show, we play the new album and go deeper with the songs we choose to play. On a festival set, we try to keep things at the level where the longtime fans will enjoy them-

selves, while playing more of the popular songs for the more casual fans. We try to appeal to everyone when we play a festival and lead with our best foot.

SPEAKING OF FESTIVAL PERFORMANCES, IT'S REALLY HOT HERE IN HOUSTON, ARE YOU GUYS READY FOR THE HOUSTON HEAT AT THIS YEAR'S FPSF?

I don't think the heat will be an issue and we play in the heat all the time. We're definitely ready for it.

FOR LONGTIME FANS OF THE BAND WHAT SHOULD THEY EXPECT FROM SEEING YOU THIS TIME, AND WHAT SHOULD NEWER FANS EXPECT FROM A FESTIVAL SET BY YOU?

It'll be a high energy and hard rockin' Mastodon show where we play our tunes for everyone who's there.

Houston, if you've never seen Mastodon perform, then I'd highly recommend catching them at the festival this year. These guys bring a crazy amount of energy to any stage that can handle them, and leave audiences forever changed afterwards. You can still grab tickets at [fpsf.frontgatetickets.com](http://fpsf.frontgatetickets.com) but grab them while you can. **FPH**

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Locals of FPSF  
By David Garrick

This year, I felt like the best way to introduce some of the local acts on [Free Press Summer Fest](#), was to actually hear from them directly.

HIRAM  
Photo by Jay Tovar

[Hiram](#) are more known than you'd think. The young producer recently dropped his old moniker, Yung Slutty in favor for one a little closer to home...his real name. Part of the [Prints NotPrince](#) crew, the sounds this guy makes are the kinds that either make you wanna' move, make you wanna' make love, or make you just wanna' chill in the Summertime with your homies.

FPH: Your music has the vibe of the traditional slow jam dreamscape, can you describe your sound for those who aren't familiar with you?

HIRAM: It's somewhere along the lines of R&B drums with tons and tons of layered synths. Although my DJ sets are radically different than the music I make, I'm working on bridging that gap by taking all those influences and adding my own flavor to it.

CATCH FEVER  
Photo by Trish Badger

This three-piece had their album praised locally by FPH and other outlets, they had that album mastered by Arcade Fire & Foo Fighters mastering guru [Emily Lazar](#), and they have the merch & marketing thing down to a science. Couple that with an appearance at the CMJ music conference in NYC last year, and you have a band doing everything they can to break out. Now, they're already putting the final touches on an EP to follow last year's "[Shiny Eyes](#)," which will be produced by Justin Nava of TheLastPlaceYouLook.

FPH: You guys are known for playing pop rock, is that a genre you're comfortable with, or is there another way you'd choose to describe the music you make?

CATCH FEVER: It's been interesting to see how people have labeled us over the past year...Pop Rock, Alternative, Indie, sort of electronic...I think that speaks to the variety of each band members influences and how we use these influences to attempt to create our own thing. We're definitely rooted in pop, but tend to label ourselves, broadly, as alternative. We feel that gives us freedom to explore a number of genres and experiment with different sounds.

WE WERE WOLVES  
Photo by Meagan Badger

Music industry analysts -- yes, that's a thing -- will tell you that guitar music or rock music is in a downswing, that EDM and hip hop are what's selling today, and that rock will have to take a backseat for now. But, when you look at a band like Houston's [We Were Wolves](#), things appear to be on the upside. In just two short year the band has gone from a good band from Beaumont, to moving to Houston, touring with Dwarves, releasing a great record, and even recording with famed producer Chris "Frenchie" Smith. Now they've landed themselves on Houston's biggest party, this year's [Free Press Summer Fest](#), and they're ready to prove that rock music still has a place in today's overcrowded landscape.

FPH: You're known for an energetic live show that feels more like a backyard party than most bands going nowadays. What do you have planned for the FPSF crowd?

WE WERE WOLVES: A party. We just want to play loud and have fun. This will be the perfect place for that to happen. Come by our stage and party with us.

GIO CHAMBA  
Photo by Alan Garza

[Gio Chamba](#) will bring his crazy blend of electronics, multi instrumentation, and Latin jams to our/his eclectic and diverse city. Chamba is like a mix of Carlos Santana, At The Drive in, and Tito Puente while still keeping things fresh and inventive. Anyone who's seen him perform just once can tell you about something crazy he's done for the sake of performing, and many believe that he could be the biggest act to come out of Houston in the past twenty years.

FPH: You perform a type of music you call Digital Cumbia. Can you describe what that technically is and what it means to you?



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# POLICING THE POLICE

H-TOWN COPWATCH

BY ERIC DEBRUIN

ILLUSTRATION BY AUSTIN SMITH

**ON APRIL 4, 2015**, in South Carolina, Walter L. Scott was shot five times by police officer Michael Slager. Coincidentally, Slager's original story of the shooting echoes that of Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson, who shot Michael Brown in August 2014. Both incidents, according to the officers, began with altercations close to the squad cars, followed by a period where either Brown or Scott fled and then reengaged the officer in such a manner as to pose a life-threatening risk, causing the officer to fire.

This risk, according to Slager, manifested itself as Scott tried to grab his taser before Slager fired eight times. Likewise, Wilson's testimony described Brown attacking Wilson and trying to grab his pistol inside the patrol car before being shot and fleeing down the street. Brown made it about one hundred and fifty feet from the squad car feet before supposedly turning, making a grunting noise, putting his hand beneath his waistband, and charging Wilson, who fired ten times, killing Brown. Despite the similar statements of the men behind the trigger, their stories follow different paths after their respective shootings.

After shooting Michael Brown, Darren Wilson drove himself back to the station, washed the blood off his hands, then checked his own gun into evidence, according to a November 26th Washington Post article. Wilson also gave a couple of unrecorded practice interviews to local officers before heading over to the local Fraternal Order of Police building to take photographs of the wounds that Michael Brown allegedly inflicted. At some point after that, he went home and went to bed, then got up the next day and gave a recorded statement of the events, which would eventually be submitted as evidence before the grand jury that chose not to indict him.

In the South Carolina incident, an audio recording from Slager's vehicle, obtained by the Guardian, records Slager's supervisor reassuring him that he will have a couple days to go home and relax before being interviewed on the record. "The last one we had," the

supervisor told Slager, "they waited a couple of days to interview officially." And it would seem, in light of what had happened to Darren Wilson, Slager would also be acquitted of all charges—if not for a bystander and his cell phone.

Soon after the shooting, the New York Times released a bystander's cellphone footage of Scott running from Slager—about twenty feet away—as Slager fires his weapon. Slager then moves over Scott's wounded and bleeding body, which is lying face down, to handcuff him, before dropping his taser nearby to corroborate his story. Finally, a second officer, Clarence Habersham, arrives on the scene in time to witness this taser planting, but later fails to mention it in his report.

Habersham's cover and the assurance of a couple of days off offered to Slager are the results of the same police culture of incestuous impunity that allowed Darren Wilson practice interviews before giving his official testimony. In Houston, it is this culture that returned serious disciplinary actions (a three day suspension or more) on complaints filed against HPD only seven percent of the time from 2007 to 2012. This culture of impunity would most likely have shielded Slager from prosecution, much like it shielded Wilson from prosecution, were it not for the damning video evidence.

The dominant media story line praises the bystander and his cellphone camera for letting the world see how this racist policing really goes down. But absent in these discussions is consideration for the mentality of the police as a group. National evidence suggests this police mentality treats Blacks as criminals and encourages unbridled impunity for those who wear a badge.

This mentality is not defined by the race of the officer. At a February 7th HPD town hall meeting, Chief Chuck McClelland, who is Black himself, deflected numerous charges of racism by the citizens by reminding the audience that, "HPD is a majority minority

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police department,” and this is totally true. It is also totally true that officer Michael Slager is white, and that officer Habersham, who fabricated his testimony to cover up for Slager and offered no aid to the handcuffed and dying Scott, is Black. The police mentality criminalizes Black people, regardless of the race of the officer, in such a way that affects the lives of Houstonians every day, even if it does not result in a police shooting.

Think about the last time you were pulled over. Where were you? Maybe speeding through the Montrose or rolling a stop sign in the Heights, then you saw flashing lights and pulled over. But what happens next? Are you pulled out of your car? Are you handcuffed while you and your car are searched?

For the last three months I have been working with a group, H-town Copwatch, that has made weekly patrols of mostly the Alief neighborhood with video cameras to film HPD. Over the course of those three months H-town Copwatch has documented 16 stops (fifteen of which occurred in the Alief neighborhood), and in every case but one, the driver and occupants of the vehicle were Black. According to Alief ISD, less than 35% of its students are Black. If this percentage is indicative of the community at large and are small sample size is indicative of HPD behavior in Alief, then clearly there is racist policing at the point of the stop.

The justifications for pulling someone over are usually trivial, such as lacking a front license plate, or failure to signal a turn. In six different cases (37% of the time) we have seen people handcuffed, but despite these numbers we have never seen an arrest. Only twice have we been given any explanations for the detentions. Once, after talking to a supervisor, an officer told me a driver and passenger were handcuffed and their vehicle searched because the vehicle had a strong odor of marijuana; the officers, of course, found no marijuana. On a second occasion the officers were straightforward enough to tell me they handcuffed three Black passengers, who they suspected to be minors, simply for not having an ID, which is illegal.

On a separate occasion, a fifteen-year-old boy spent 25 minutes handcuffed in the back of a squad car only to be released and not ticketed; he later told me the HPD had followed him home from school before detaining him. This is the daily harvest of a police mentality that sews the criminalization of Black people amongst its members.

Across the country we have seen attempts to reign in the police with body cameras, Copwatch, and citizen review boards, to name some methods. Yet it seems the murder of unarmed Black people does not stop. And even on a smaller scale, justice is hard to come by. I confronted Chief McClelland at a February 7th HPD town hall meeting about his thoughts as to why HPD would detain three Black youth for not having identification, while I, a white man, was pulled over hardly a year earlier and my passenger was never even spoken to. The chief attempted to dodge the question but eventually agreed to view the video.

To this date, of course, despite numerous emails to the Chief’s command, I have yet to learn of Chief Chuck McClelland viewing it at all. I also delivered a formal complaint of the incident (along with unedited video), and was informed it would take internal affairs up to 180 days to weed through the evidence and come to a decision. Clearly, filing a complaint, even with a video, offers essentially no hope of disciplinary actions. But that does not mean filming the police is a worthless act. The video shot of Michael Slager gunning down Walter Scott offers a chance for justice to be served.

The idea of patrolling the police is certainly nothing new. The Black Panther Party for Self Defense

began an armed police alert patrol of their communities in Oakland in 1967. For decades, Copwatch groups have existed around the nation and often focus not just on filming the police, but creating a database through which to identify them, and educating the community about their rights during police encounters. Copwatch chapters have a long standing presence in Berkeley, New York, Cincinnati, and Denver, amongst others cities.

Locally, not just Houston but also Dallas, Arlington, San Antonio, El Paso and Austin have Copwatch chapters. Sometimes these groups call themselves peaceful streets projects, and some of the groups practice open carry while patrolling the police. This is sometimes the case for the Tarrant County Peaceful Streets Project and always the case for the Huey P. Newton gun club, an organization named for the Black Panther founder, which operates in Dallas.

It is likely because of these types of activists that Texas House Representative Jason Villalba, R-Dallas, introduced a bill banning citizens from filming law enforcement within 25 feet, and banning citizens with concealed handguns from filming within 100 feet. This bill, H.B. 2918, was filed on March 10th, and pulled just days after the murder of Walter Scott. Villalba said the Dallas Police Association originally proposed the bill, which is notable because it shows that Copwatch is, at some level, making the Dallas Police Department uncomfortable. But if the police were confident in their methods and tactics, one would think they would have nothing to hide from the cameras.

For years the idea of copwatching relied on having a video cameras, and then having the capability to edit the film once shot. This usually meant that copwatching was conducted by organizations who trained volunteers and then sent them into the field on patrols. Although noble in aspirations, teams of Copwatch patrols cannot cover an entire city, and undoubtedly miss more major incidents than they record.

Recently, with the advent of cell phones, the copwatching game has begun to change. The moment that heralded the modern age of copwatching was the murder of Oscar Grant during the early morning hours of January 1st, 2009. Oscar Grant was shot in the back while handcuffed and lying face down in an Oakland metro station. Berkeley Copwatch was not there to film, and instead a numerous people in a large group of spectators nearby took out their phones and filmed. The officer who pulled the trigger, Johannes Mehserle, was found guilty only of involuntary manslaughter, and sentenced to only two years in prison. This should not be taken as a sign of the impotence of filming the police, but indicative of the type of evidence necessary to bring any type of justice into these murderous situations.

Filming the police is not a panacea, as the video taped murder of Eric Garner and subsequent non-indictment of Daniel Pantaleo, the officer responsible, proves. But it does help, and with smart phones it is something almost anyone can do. Copwatch patrols are good, but a community that is educated and secure in its rights while dedicated to filming the police is even better. The accumulation of knowledge about HPD and their actions is beneficial to the safety of our communities, and beneficial to us who are concerned about enacting change to the way HPD operates.

Walter Scott was pulled over because his tail-light light was out, and luckily someone was nearby and concerned enough to film. So if we see someone pulled over for any reason, we should stop and film. Every once in a while, it’s a good idea to have someone’s back. **FPH**

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• NORTH •

APR. 9



**Y & T**

APR. 13



**FASTER PUSSYCAT**

APRIL 3  
**SCAB'D**

APRIL 4  
**TNT**

APRIL 10  
**VICTIM**

APRIL 11  
**MIKE TRAMP & RON KEEL**

APRIL 17  
**WATTZIT2YA**

APRIL 18  
**THINK LIZZY**

APRIL 24  
**KROKUS**

APRIL 25  
**ROCK ALL NIGHT SHOWCASE**

|                                            |                                                     |                              |                       |                                       |                                          |                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| SUNDAY                                     | MONDAY                                              | TUESDAY                      | WEDNESDAY             | THURSDAY                              | FRIDAY                                   | SATURDAY                                 |
| HAPPY HOUR<br>PRICES FROM<br>OPEN TO CLOSE | \$2 BURGERS<br>\$2 HOT DOGS<br>HAPPY HOUR<br>PRICES | STEAK NIGHT AND<br>SMITCHERS | 1/2 LUNCH<br>11AM-2PM | FREE POKER<br>CHEAP DRINK<br>SPECIALS | LIVE BANDS<br>INSIDE<br>LIVE DJ ON PATIO | LIVE BANDS<br>INSIDE<br>LIVE DJ ON PATIO |

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• GALLERIA •

APR. 18



**SWALLOW THIS**

MAY 2



**SABBATH  
JUDAS SABBATH**

APRIL 3  
**PIGS ON THE WALL**

APRIL 4  
**THE FAB 5**

APRIL 10  
**LA RAZA CONNECTION**

APRIL 11  
**NO REMORSE**

APRIL 17  
**BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S**

APRIL 18  
**SWALLOW THIS**

APRIL 24  
**THE GOODS**

APRIL 25  
**A SURE THING!!!**

|                                            |                                                     |                              |                       |                                       |                                          |                                          |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| SUNDAY                                     | MONDAY                                              | TUESDAY                      | WEDNESDAY             | THURSDAY                              | FRIDAY                                   | SATURDAY                                 |
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# ACTIVISTS PROTEST BILL TARGETING PREGNANT MINORS

BY LAILA KHALILI

PHOTO BY HEATHER BUSBY

“**GRACIELA’S FAMILY LIVED** in a tiny town—her step-father worked for the police department and everyone knew everyone. Her step-father was physically abusive to both [sic] Graciela, her mother and her two younger siblings.

‘We can’t report anything to the police about what he does to us,’ Graciela said. ‘He’ll just hurt us more.’

Graciela was terrified of what he might do if he found out she was pregnant, and she didn’t think it was right to bring a baby into her violent home.”

This is one of many true stories from Janes who have called the hotline in Texas which provides legal assistance to pregnant minors.

Over the weekend, activists clad in hospital gowns gathered at the Texas Capitol to protest a bill that would strip a vital protection for some of the most vulnerable in Texas—pregnant minors.

Under current law, a person under the age of 18 cannot get an abortion without the consent of a parent or legal guardian. Most teens who get abortions are able to do so with consent from their parents, but for a small number—between 200 and 300—this is simply not an option. These minors are called Janes.

In 1999, judicial bypass was adopted by the state of Texas with bipartisan support, and it allows a judge to grant

Janes abortion access without the notification or consent of the parent(s).

If a Jane is in danger of facing physical, sexual, or emotional abuse as a result of notifying their parent, or has no parent to give consent, judicial bypass is in place to help them.

HB 3994, authored by Rep. Geanie Morrison (R-Victoria), would alter the judicial bypass system, making abortion for minors incredibly difficult to access.

Morrison’s bill would add the following restrictions:

Requires minors to provide “clear and convincing” evidence that obtaining consent from a parent could put them in harms way, increasing the burden of proof. The original language in the law requires only a “preponderance of evidence.”

Requires minors to file their applications for judicial bypass with a judge in their home county, unless the county has a population under 10,000, or the county in which the abortion provider is located. The current law allows minors to file applications in any county.

Requires doctors to ask any person seeking an abortion for a government-issued ID. The doctor can still perform the abortion without an ID, but will then be required to report it to the Department of State Health Services.

Requires doctors to notify the parents if they perform an abortion on a minor in the event of a medical emergency.

Extends the time frame for judges to rule on a case from two days to five.

States that if the judge fails to rule on the bypass request within those five days, that means the request is denied. The current law states that the bypass is considered approved if a judge does not rule.

Requires county clerks to make public the names of judges who grant bypasses, removing the confidentiality of this system.

Some proponents have stated this bill will close up “loopholes” in the current law. The Texas Alliance for Life, which worked closely in drafting this legislation, claims it will protect parental rights. During debate on the House floor, Morrison argued, “It would be traumatic for a teen to have an abortion without her parents there.” Some have even gone so far as to claim these minors are purposefully going through the court system just to lie to their kind, loving parents.

Anti-abortion politicians have stooped so low in their attempt to eradicate safe, legal abortion access they have blinded themselves to the reality of who these laws were created to protect, even if it means putting teens, sometimes even children, in unconscionable situations. Legislators who drafted HB 3994 did not consult organizations like Jane’s Due Process, which provide legal representation to Janes seeking a judicial bypass.

One “Jane” activist explained this is exactly why the #HereforJaneTX movement was launched.

“It is time to stand up and elevate the untold stories of Janes across Texas. Each Jane is different, and every reason they need help is valid.”

She and other “Jane” activists stood in the Capitol holding signs with the ages and circumstances of real Janes who have used the current judicial bypass system.

The reasons Janes need this system are numerous. Oftentimes, these minors face severe abuse at home, or their parents may be deceased, incarcerated, or are abusing drugs and simply aren’t around. Some Janes are survivors of rape or incest, homeless, or are undocumented.

Without an effective, expeditious judicial bypass system, Janes in Texas will be left with few options and more vulnerable than ever.

To learn more about this legislation and ways to take action through this grassroots movement, visit the #HereForJaneTX website. For more information about the judicial bypass process, visit Jane’s Due Process, a non-profit which provides legal representation to pregnant minors. **FPH**



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