

POPPYCOCK

100% Portland. 100% nonsense.

MONIKER

We sit down with Portland's own songstress to talk about her new LP, *The Cruellest Month*, and her musical journey to this point in her life.



Holdfast Dining

A Look at Portland's
Secretwave Scene

An Exclusive Interview
With Anna Tivel

Walnut Studiolo

Bodypainting with Matt
and Gretchen

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the nonsense!

Just as it was with the first “beta” issue of *Poppycock*, I am amazed we got the magazine out to you on time without any industrial accidents in the workplace.

With absolutely zero background in design, the change from issue “beta” to this first issue is astonishing. I also got some very helpful advice from one reader who had great constructive criticism about the look and design. Thanks, Byron.

We are four writers strong in this issue, but the content is diverse. We have makers, a teacher, musicians, an artist, poets, all of varying ages and backgrounds. We have more 2-page spreads, varied column design, and this issue is far more photo heavy than the last. This issue is closer to the dream I had for *Poppycock* years ago when the idea began to take root.

For those of you reading this who know nothing about us (let’s call you “the overwhelming majority”), *Poppycock* started as just a blog where I had the hopes to find other creative people and writers to just hone their craft and have a place where they can write the stories that they wanted to write. I know, not a unique idea. The hope was really to eventually pull together a group of people who wanted to put something more out in to the world.

Just as a church isn’t the building, but the congregation; Portland’s identity isn’t the city limits and the buildings, but the population. We are a do-ocracy. We are participants, adventurers, passionate people who all have a story to be told.

This issue has a lot of photos and a lot of words, but there is one thing we don’t have: advertising.

I am of the mind that you should get what you pay for. If the magazine were totally free, then yes, you’re gonna see some ads; a lot of ads. *Poppycock* costs money, and what you are spending your hard-earned dollars on is not pages hocking cars, cigarettes, and liquor. You are buying our content, our stories. Since that’s what you are buying, that’s what you will get.

We are exclusively reader supported. The more support we get, the better we can do our job moving forward.

I want to take a second to thank everyone who let us do a story about them. It takes a lot of guts to let a total stranger come in to your life and poke around. I want to thank the magazine’s writers for taking the time and care to do the great job that they did on their stories. I want to thank my friends and family for their support, story ideas, patience during my panic attacks, and understanding when I didn’t return your calls and texts because I was busy putting this out. These are all the people who really made this magazine and every subsequent issue possible.

Then there is you, the reader. I hope we give you something you can take with you once you’ve put this magazine down. I always attempt to inform, inspire, and entertain in some way. I know that *Poppycock* isn’t for everyone, but for those of you out there looking for in-depth stories about people and projects beyond cursory blurbs covering the 5 W’s, I hope you find something here worth your time.

Lastly, send us your ideas and advice and I promise they won’t fall on deaf ears. Also, if you want a place to showcase your work, passions, art, creations, whatever, send me an email. We are always willing to consider showcasing the works of the people of Portland.

Oh, and if you want to be a part of the team as a writer or photographer, I’d love to hear from you, too.

Thanks for giving us a chance,
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GRACE • CATON

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WOOD + LEATHER + LOVE

It may have started with a scoff, but Walnut Studiolo is nothing to kid around about now. Celebrating their fifth year this October, this husband and wife duo turned a part-time hobby into an international success.

W E S L E Y • B A U M A N

Portland is Bike City, USA. We are always near or at the top of every bike-friendly list in the country. Maybe it's the quaint size of the metropolitan area and the limitless outdoors that keep us pedaling, but this is a city that takes life on two wheels very seriously.

In the community of bicycle accessories for tricking out your vintage Schwinn or performance road bike, a name you've definitely heard is that of Walnut. From Singapore to Switzerland and even Korea, you can get your hands the world 'round on leather cinches, handlebar wraps, mud flaps, U-lock holsters, and even portage straps. If you can customize it on a bike, they've got it; but it's in SE Portland on a dead end street out of a two-car garage that this mom and pop shop call their headquarters.

Geoffrey and Valerie Franklin never set out to create Walnut Studiolo. It kinda created itself.

Geoffrey is a design grad from University of Oregon. A bike enthusiast himself, and a designer by nature, Geoffrey was the buzz of his fellow cubicles at an architectural firm as he always brought his customized bike in to work with a new bike hack. He was raised on a farm and his experience with leather horse tack and his design background gave him the savvy to simply make the things he couldn't find online for his bike.

"I feel like what I learned [in college] is directly applicable to what I do now: Strength of material, value engineering, minimizing the number of connections and making them as strong as possible."

The architecture industry took a downturn around 2008, as most everything did, resulting in rounds of layoffs at work. By luck, Geoffrey was working on one of the few profitable projects left as a lead designer of a winery. Though he was one of the last fifty or so people left at the firm which once boasted more than 200 employees, he still found himself with free time to play around with new designs to create.

It was in October of 2009 that his wife Valerie suggested they throw a few of the products Geoffrey had made up on the maker site *Etsy*.

Geoffrey scoffed at the idea. Who would want to buy this stuff? Geoffrey just liked to make it and was in it for himself and his bike. Valerie cobbled together their digital storefront with no expectations. They had just a couple of sales that year, but even that trickle of interest coupled with a why-the-hell-not attitude was enough to keep them interested.

It's said that an architect would rather be doing anything



else. In 2010, after surviving waves of layoffs, Geoffrey got his chance when he too was finally laid off. He worked on Walnut products while looking for work when it just became clear that they really had something here. He stopped sending out resumes and instead kept sending out orders.

Thanks in part to some good press from *Gizmodo*, *Real Simple*, and a solid burn on *bikesnobnyc.com*, along with a successful write-up after their first “booth” (i.e. card table) at the bike craft fair put on by *bikeportland*; Walnut was kind of a big deal.

While Geoffrey was full-timing it at Walnut, Valerie was holding down a day job until 2012 when she too was laid off from her job in wind power, joining the company full-time. Really, this just meant spending a lot more time in the garage with her husband and growing their business without interruption. (Well, no interruption beyond a half-day to read the *Sunday New York Times* as she is wont to do.)

Walnut has come a long way since the days of *Etsy*. This burgeoning company that was never really supposed to be anything but a lark began to ship all over the country. Every new state or city tracked by a pin on a map, it quickly became moot as they covered all fifty states and jumped across the pond in to international shipping.

What was once a couple of items grew into full product lines from cribbage belts (Yeah, I said “cribbage” and

“belt”) and architectural plan holders to business card holders and even wine bottle cinches...ya know, for your bike. Duh.

The six-pack cinch is by far the coolest thing you can get from Walnut and is their signature item. It started its life as a custom order from a guy in Seattle looking for a classy and novel way to get his bike polo mallets from A to B.

Geoffrey loved the design, the guy loved the custom item, but after three months listed and zero orders, Geoffrey was scratching his head.

“I’m sitting in the garage one night and I’m staring at it. I’m like three beers in to a six-pack and it hits me like a bolt of lightning. This frame cinch should hold a six-pack of beer. There’s my architect mind at work: It is holding the six-pack in suspension, not compression like a column.

“I did some test rides, jumping curbs, just putting it through the paces in the rain. Sure enough it turned in to one of our best-selling products.”

About half of their products came from such a tale of something custom ordered that made for a potential crowd-pleaser.

Geoff and Valerie aren’t looking to build a massive corporation or jump in to a factory. That’s not what Walnut is about. Geoff doesn’t want to get away from design or being an intricate part of what makes this handmade mom and pop shop run.



Valerie explains that though they never had a real plan to start the business, they now have a loose plan for the future:

“I think we can grow to having a few craftsmen one day. A few people, some full-time, others part-time, maybe a foreman of some kind. We might grow to that, but I don't think we will ever get away from handmade, craftsman made, American made things and become a factory.”

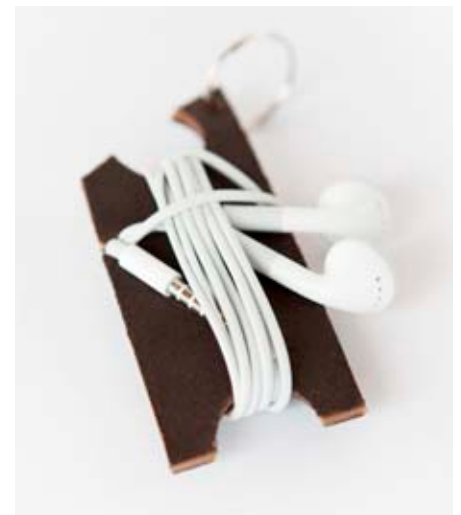
Now in their fifth year of business, Walnut Studiolo is celebrating by introducing five new product lines. They have released travel games like laser cut dominoes with a fun take on pip layout in a nifty case, and they are taking the custom touch inside with leather handles for your kitchen cabinets/drawers with more items to come. Yeah, from bicycle to silverware drawer...a natural progression. Geoffrey thinks so.

“We're making things that primarily I'm interested in. My interest in bikes has never changed, but as a craftsman I think I have this innate desire to replace everything in our lives that is factory made. So, as we continue to knock things off of the list I think they have a pretty good chance to make it onto the Walnut website.”

It started as a hobby and is now a business. Speaking from experience, going from working out of love to filling orders and meeting deadlines can kinda suck the joy out of it. Geoffrey has made some of these items a thousand times. It stops being fun, it stays familiar, but it beats digging ditches while he gets to put something beautiful and unique in to the world. He gets to design still, and that's important to him.

“Designing went from the majority of what I do to design being a portion of what I do. If I have to put up with everything that goes along with this to have that, then I say it is easily worth it.”

Be sure to check out WalnutStudiolo.com for everything they offer for your bike and beyond as they reach their fifth anniversary this fall.



*“We do have a few products that are being **knocked off**. So, our response to that is to phase it out and **make something better**.”*
-Geoffrey Franklin





“Our goal and how we see ourselves is as a *design house* rather than a *manufacturer.*”

-Valerie Franklin



ellen whyte

Ellen Whyte, thrice Grammy considered, has taken her experience and passion for the blues and is showing people the validity and need for the creativity of music in our schools.

GRACE • C A T O N

Some spend their whole lives searching for a career and what their purpose is. Ellen Whyte isn't one of these people. Blues music found her. She's taken it on as her mission to spread the joy that it brings her to Portland, and most of all, Portland public schools.

The minute I say *blues*, her face lights up. She can't help it. It's instinctual, and it comes from a place so deeply rooted inside of her. From that instant, I'm hooked.

"Here! I'm going to write a song about *Poppycock!* The only blog in town...the only blog you'll ever need. The only blog you'll need to read..." sings Whyte. "Hey, you never know, I might surprise you."

Blues music has blazed different trails over the years with innumerable influences. Anyone from Hank Williams, Bonnie Rait, to the one and only B.B. King have brought something to the table. It's simple, it's emotional, and most importantly it tells a story.

Whyte has the blues swagger down. Her sway, her tempo, her radiant smile—she embodies every aspect of this genre. There are some artists who make you dance, some who make you awestruck, but Whyte makes you want to participate and respond. She makes music approachable and accessible to anyone.

Whyte's musicianship is captivating. She sings a Billie Holiday cover and brings you to tears, or sings her song about "B-b-bacon!" which makes you hoot and howl. I've never been so excited to sing about bacon. She evokes such a broad range of emotion through the stories she tells. Something tells me she knows what she's doing.

The blues have shaped Whyte's character. Ellen grew up on her own, living in and out of foster homes, and eventually went to boarding school in North Carolina.

"I met a young woman who played guitar. I said, 'Show me,' and the rest is history. It was the first introduction I got to how emotions are presented in music."

Through years of struggle and the adventure of the 60's and 70's, Whyte knew that her only reliable, consistent rock to lean on was blues music.

After recording four albums, collaborating with fellow musicians, receiving three Grammy Award considerations, and writing song after song, Whyte found a new way to spread the word about the blues: teaching.

"I've never been busier than I am now," says Whyte. "It exploded, and I have not looked back."

Recently, Whyte finished an Artist in Residency for Estacada School District. From January to April 2014,





she developed a curriculum and taught students K-12 the history of blues music. Through storytelling, she evoked emotion and understanding with students about slavery in the United States. Eventually, these students wrote their own songs, music, and performed in various assemblies with the help of Whyte and her plus-sized band.

It's one thing to preform the blues, but to teach it is another beast. Guiding these students to write their own music was challenging, but she was surprised at how receptive they were.

"The kids respond much more with a visceral experience rather than just an academic one. It's oral, visual, touching into your learning style—it's a full body workout doing a residency with me. I want every student in Portland to have an art experience—they must have several," says Whyte.

With the help of her agent, Whyte is participating as much as possible with Portland schools. Her most recent start-up project is called Broadway Bound, where she will be teaching a guitar class on how to sing and play simultaneously.

"Every single experience brings something new," explains Whyte.

She's ready in a true, chill, blues form: "It's the excitement of not knowing what's happening next."

Whyte has mastered the art of being spontaneous yet focused. Through demonstration, she strives to show Portland and surrounding school districts what the arts

and music can bring to a child's learning experience.

"Each child is unique in how they see their world and adapt to it. When I was in high school, I remember there were art classes all across the board. You had to complete these classes to graduate; mandatory, but all the creative classes went away," says Whyte.

Portland is fortunate to have someone like Ellen Whyte present. Arts and music are constantly being put on the back burner, and she will fight to keep the energy and excitement that creativity brings to the classroom.

"I want to have a voice in this," says Whyte. "If I can get their attention, then I've done my job."

Whyte's new chapter may be to teach, but it will never stop her from songwriting, performing, and telling stories. She's buzzing. The wheels in her brain are constantly turning, but what sets her apart from so many other artists is that she comes up with an idea and actually makes it a reality.

All of these years she's had the spotlight, but "it's time to pass it on," she says. Her goal is to get people moving on their feet, involved, and inspired.

She's putting her talents toward a good cause: to help students develop the desire to learn. Her energy gives Portland arts and music hope.

There is indeed a noticeable glimmer and twinkle in Whyte's eye that tells us creativity is not dead.

JUST ANOTHER CANVAS

Bodypainting dates back as far as man can track. The decoration of the body for war, matrimony, the hunt, celebration, status, are all a part of rich cultures. Bodypainting today takes on a different meaning for many people, but for Matt this is an artistic expression and one that has been censored on occasion because people can't separate the canvas from the paint.

Matt Huntley explains to his model, Gretchen Leigh, how best to get the pasties to stick to her nipples.

“I try to be very clinical when I’m talking to models, but this is going to sound like what it is: I need you to get them erect.”

Matt and his assistant, Terra McGill, set up their workstation of paints on a folding card table in the basement studio of Purely Yours Photography in Gresham.

Gretchen is lazily snapchatting and texting on the couch waiting.

When Matt’s ready and all of her pasties are in the right place, she takes off her top and Matt begins painting in white the base of the designs on her bare body.

It takes only about thirty minutes of white outlines and broad strokes of black and red before the novelty of blush-worthy semi-nudity wears off and you realize what you’re actually watching for the next five hours: paint drying.

Matt works around Gretchen’s body again and again, creating layers as Terra fills in areas with black. Matt has a vision for the final work in his mind, but on this particular job that’s something only Matt can see.

This isn’t his first rodeo. He’s been an artist of one kind or another for basically the entirety of his life. Whether it was watercolors, metal work, sculpting, woodworking, special effects make-up, if it could have been interpreted as art over the last 2,000 years; he’s probably done it.

As he outlines and fills in shoulder, breast, and back with black; he explains that this is art to him. You just don’t see the girl. Matt has competed at bodypainting competitions, taking second place in Canada recently. He will be attending competitions in San Francisco and Atlanta this year, but begrudgingly can’t make it to Austria for the World Bodypainting Festival.

Gretchen and Matt talk nonchalantly about Gretchen’s current events. You’d think that the reality of his being inches from her bare thighs would at least give a hiccup in the conversation, but for them this is not their first time working together and there’s nothing sexual about it for either of them.

Gretchen goes on about a boy she might be seeing, her lifting exercises, and her pride in hip-thrusting 365 lbs. and explains that’s where the little bruises on her hips came from.

At 22 years old, Gretchen is a Jane of all trades. A barista and social media manager by day, she is a bit of a gym rat, can harmonize on short notice, but







her undergrad is in psychology and gender with the eventual goal to go in to counseling and human sexuality.

“For a long time I had an eating disorder and was really small. When I decided to come out on the other side of that, I was really tired of trying to make myself as small as possible. So, I felt that the way to connect with my body was to try and make it as strong as possible. That’s my way of taking control over my body. It’s a way for me to have a positive connection with my body instead of a negative one.”

I asked her about what she gets out of being painted. When you think about it, she stands around about as nude as you can be without being naked for sometimes eight hours with nothing to do but stand still and keep from fainting.

“Matt can tell you that my body has completely changed of the four years of us painting together. When he met me I was very skinny. I just have a very different body now. I have been doing yoga for a long time, personal training sometimes, too. I have really been trying to take control of my body and I like body stuff. There are certainly things, even doing this [being painted], that aren’t perfect on my body I don’t really like, but I am working on making myself as functional as I can be. This can be really boring just standing here, but also meditative.”

There can be a sexual component to the process of painting a naked person (Matt has painted male models as well). He’s turned down painting gigs from the weird to the incredibly uncomfortable.

“Some people have asked me to paint at their fetish events. If it’s not a sexual thing and there is nothing going on, then sure. There are also events where I’ve been asked and I am just like, ‘Noooo, but thanks anyway.’”

Portland’s affinity for art of all kinds has found Matt live-painting at Club Sesso before. Sesso is a premiere swingers club in Portland, and their First Thursdays event is open to the public to view erotic artwork (complimentary champagne and appetizers).

“We have two or three models per person and we have two or three painters when we go in and paint. Now, that’s as about as risqué a venue as I will paint at. The venue makes it risqué, but it is basically the same concept as what we would do for Last Thursdays on Alberta.”

Just as any other art form, it has its detractors and its supporters. While for some even painting a picture of a nude woman like so many frescos of centuries passed is disgusting and sexual, so too can painting a nude model be construed as nothing but lewd and unseemly.

Nowhere else has Matt felt the ire of the opposition more than in social media. It has proven tough to promote himself and his work in the past on a social media forum like *Facebook*. What was art to him was seen as pornography to what he felt was *Facebook* itself.

In January, Matt was at the center of a story about this very censorship. *Facebook* shut down his Bodypaint By Numbers fan page.

“Starting on Monday, January 6th this year, *Facebook* started flagging pictures on my page. By Tuesday at about two o’clock they stopped flagging them, because they had hit every one of my pictures. This was *Facebook*, not a person. They basically deleted the page. They didn’t want it on the site. One of my friends

contacted *The Oregonian* and they did a story. Then the news ran with it. Then a radio station, a magazine in England, a magazine in Russia, and I'm thinking, 'Are you guys serious?' After about a month or so of interviews I figured I'd take a shot at putting it back up. *Facebook* had changed their rules and in there it says you can have art in relation to nudity."

Matt still gets flagged for images of his work from time to time. Someone electing themselves the decency police will flag what they think is inappropriate. You've gotta take it with a grain of salt and know that if you're putting yourself out there for scrutiny to basically the entirety of socially connected humanity, you're going to have some haters.

Toward the end of the painting, as the blending of colors and the airbrushing begins to take shape, you stop seeing Gretchen.

She sees me looking at her: "I can always tell when we're almost finished by the way photographers look at me differently."

A mix of Harley Quinn and some kind of striking, demonic geisha, you start seeing the artwork. You scrutinize the details and take the body of paint in as

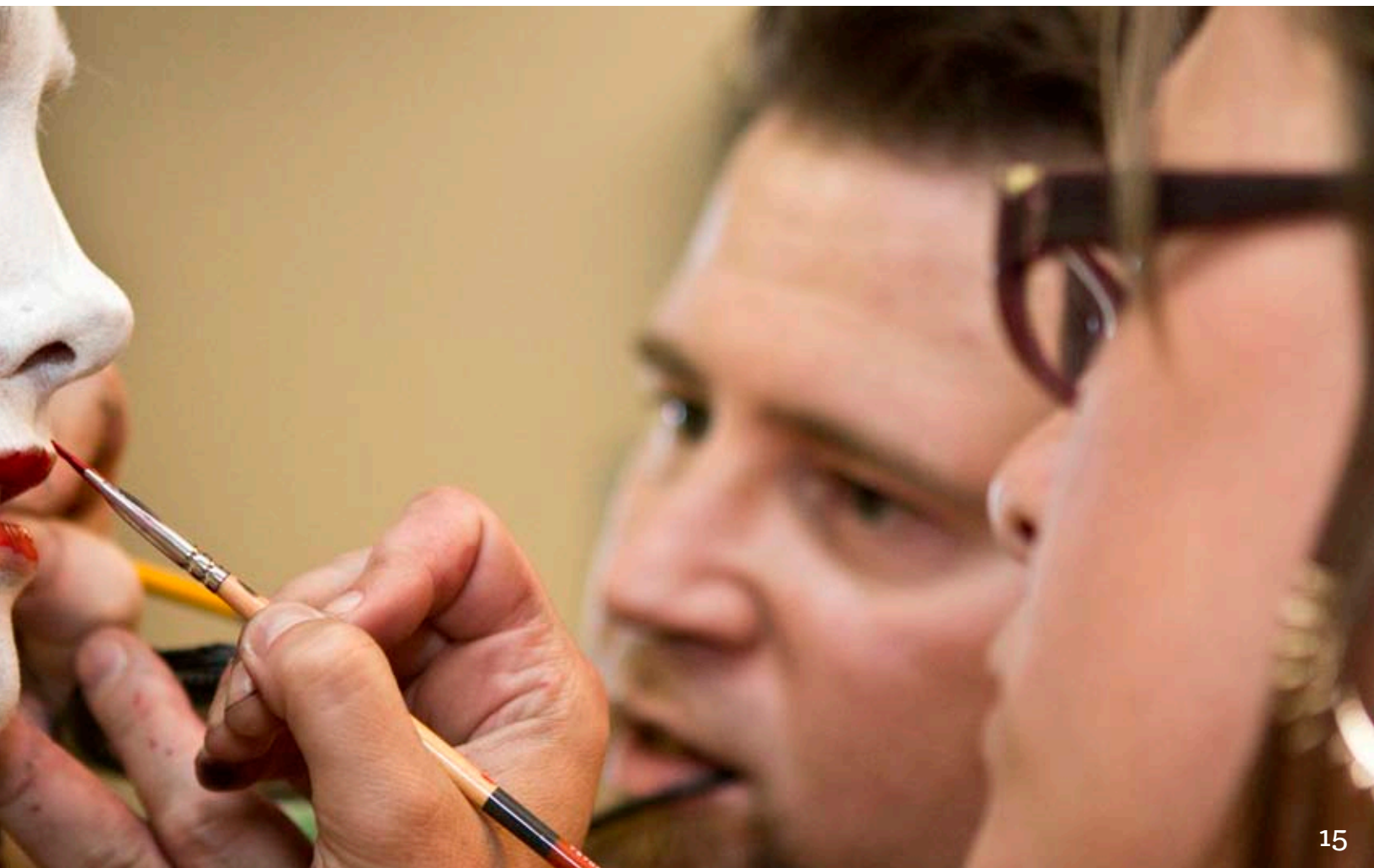
a whole. Five hours later, I don't even recognize the girl disrobing when we started.

Gretchen poses and contorts, playing to the cameras for as long as the paint will keep from cracking or running from sweat. She let's her hair down and the look is completed. This is less Gretchen and more Matt's handiwork while he cleans up and gets out of the way for all of us to photograph her as fast as we can.

In a few hours it'll wash away and Gretchen will be swabbing paint out of her ears and navel (among other places) for the next week. What took five hours to create will disappear. Unlike other works which may stand the test of time to be marveled at like the pieces on display across the world, this is art with a shelf life. You literally need to be there to appreciate it for as long as it lasts before the canvas needs to get home or go to work.

For more of Matt's work, go to his *Facebook* fan page by searching FB for *Bodypaint by Numbers*.









MONIKER

With her release of *The Cruellest Month LP*, Monica Metzler connects ancient mythologies with modern vulnerability while marrying her folk roots with newfound electronic acumen.





K I M • B I R K L A N D

Monica Metzler, stage name Moniker, gravitated to music early. From banging on pots and pans to singing and recording songs with her Fisher-Price® microphone, she was born with a talent she couldn't ignore.

It began in earnest with piano lessons inspired by her mother, but she hated all the practice. She then turned to guitar and took voice lessons before she picked up the ukelele, bass, percussion, and sound engineering. Each new interest didn't start with tutelage though.

"I've always been more of an autodidactic. I'll teach myself first and when I get to a certain point, I'll seek out help; some structure. I studied. I got a music minor in college. I did a lot of theory and ensembles."

Her newest album, *The Cruellest Month*, is set for a June release. *The Cruellest Month* showcases her new folktronica sound.

"I started out playing rock and folk, as you do...I got my influences like Bjork, iamamiwhoami, CocoRosie, lo-fi weirdos; things that are really off the map which have this really organic element to it. As much as I appreciate pop sensibility, I've done that route. I've done a lot of covers, I get it. I just sort of merged at a point where I wanted to experiment more, I was getting more into electronic sounds. I started buying more electronic equipment and I bought a loop pedal. I'm using guitar and vocals, but I'm also using a sampler pad or creating loops that sound more electronica-like, so I was like *folktronica*. I like to play around and experiment with it. On the album I use Kaoss Pad, I use Moog, I really like that synthesis of organic with the new age. That's sort of our time, and that's what's happening. That's my music, that fusion."

Her songs feel eerie, haunted, otherworldly. At the same time there is a sexiness to it, something that draws you in. There is an emptiness and mystery to the songs that makes you want to know the girl behind the music. You want to know about Monica.

Specifically, the sentiment and ideas behind her latest album draw influences from diverse sources: Toltec mythology, Shambhala Buddhism, and Tibetan Buddhism.

"For me it's about fighting. You are in this dark period of time. You need to fight the *mitote*, the









parasites in your mind. As a warrior, as a human being, but also as an artist it's about slaying the parasites; creating your own story. The cruelest month is that period of time when everything is really dark and terrible and you are really down and you want to give up."

At 17, Monica was hospitalized for an auto-immune disorder. During that time when she felt distanced from the rest of the world, music got her through. She knows that music has helped her survive some of the most painful periods in her life, and is what has kept her emotionally stable.

"I have to do it. If I don't do music, I'll go crazy. For me it's a mental health issue. For a lot of artists, that's the truth. In the old Aztec traditions February was the cruelest month. That is the month when a lot of people would die. I could just give up. I could have some nice job, have music as a hobby, and I could do ok. Or I can fight. It's that split-second where you decide if you are going to flee or if you are going to fight. I'm not done fighting."

Monica credits music with providing her an outlet for her creative force, and wants to give that back through her music therapy and working with kids. She is a music teacher at My Voice Music, leading music therapy workshops for kids. Her latest workshop is for teens with illness sponsored by a grant from The Pollination Project.

"This is who I am. This is what I want. I don't want to apologize for it anymore. I'm not going to ask permission to do something I know is right for me. I know music is what I have to offer. I can't imagine my life without it. For me it's just survival. Whether or not I want to push it into the public realm, I don't know, it will always happen for me. But this is a period of my life where I'm just going to do it."

Monica is truly the embodiment of seeing the light in the darkness. Her latest album is a manifestation of this idea. She wanted to create something beautiful from so much pain. Monica recognizes that she struggles with painful emotions, and that serves as the greatest inspiration for her music.

"You think, 'We shouldn't feel bad. We shouldn't feel like this. This should be easy. It should be effortless.' But it's not going to be that way, so don't deny the gift of that darkness. Sometimes you have to feel like you are on the wrong path or you are not doing it right. So, I think it is super important to have a 'cruelest month', but not too much. It's a thin line, but you have to accept it."

Monica is the first to admit that being an artist is a different way of living, and if anything, she has mastered the art of being an artist.

"In my thirties I'm finally coming into myself understanding the tools needed to navigate this wild,

creative emotion. What came first? I don't know. Are artists just sensitive and different? Or is it that the process brings it up? I definitely feel the pressure of getting a career at this point in my life. Being thirty years old and having people say, 'What are you going to do?'"

She is always changing, always evolving, constantly expanding and diverging from what she knows. Music is how she has gotten to know herself and understand the world.

"It's very personal, but at the same time it's universal too, because we are all creative. I think everybody is creative. I think they can tap into that. It's a very interesting process of self-reflection, and that's what I love about music. I've learned so much about myself through music; more than I ever could have if I hadn't done music.

"I think I bring to the music authenticity, which is synonymous with vulnerability...and I feel like it's that sort of vulnerability which I feel like is a lost art these days in music sometimes. The artists I love are vulnerable. You know it, you hear it, you see it, you experience it. It takes me to that place with them. It's ok to be vulnerable. It's ok to feel messed up. It's ok to feel like you are not worthy. We all do that. Let's not pretend otherwise. So, why don't I use my experience to help you with your experience?"

If anything, Monica is an inspiration for everyone to take the harder path. She hasn't made the easiest choices herself. She chose to make music a full-time part of her life. It has taken sacrifice and she is always working against societal and family pressure. It's a constant battle.

"If I can do it, anyone can do it. I think people talk themselves down, out. People don't give themselves enough credit. That doesn't service anyone. The time is now. You've got to do it. We all have creative powers and creative talent. I think that's one of the main reasons we are here. For me, I can't deny that. Realize, 'what is stopping me?' Own it. 'This is who I am. This is what I want. And I'm not sorry.' That's what I want to do more and more. That's my idea of being a musician. If the rest comes, sweet. If not, I'm ok with it."

Find more about Monica Metzler and her new album, *The Cruelest Month*, at bookofm.com.

For an exclusive one-shot clip of Moniker performing a song for *Poppycock* and more photos of Monica, check out projectpoppycock.com





HOLDFEAST DINING

A photograph of a restaurant interior, showing a long row of tables set for dining. In the foreground, a tall glass of beer with a golden head of foam is in sharp focus. Behind it, several other glasses of beer are visible, slightly out of focus. The tables are set with white napkins, silverware, and dark placemats. The background is blurred, showing more tables and the warm, ambient lighting of the restaurant.

They don't have an open sign,
they don't take walk-ins,
and they don't take phone calls.
It's not even technically a restaurant,
but that doesn't stop them from
serving some of the finest and
freshest meals in Portland.

The seating may be limited,
but the menu is not.

GRACE • CATION

Prawn heads. All I see are eyeballs and antennae.

Will Preisch smirks at me, “We like to...challenge our guests.” The next thing Preisch hands over to me is a thin green plant. “It’s a sea bean. We went out and got it from the ocean a few days ago.”

“Amazing! And also, you guys are too polite and nice to be chefs,” I say.

“Ha...I’ve definitely made people cry,” says Stocks.

How do you classify Holdfast Dining? You don’t.

A true Holdfast Dining experience consists of a tasting menu laid out over nine courses and five different wine pairings. With foraged edible plants and ingredients from their own garden, here are Portland’s very own food masters, Will Preisch and Joel Stocks.

These two young gentlemen are living every chef’s dream. They cook what they want, how they want, where they want; no restrictions. They have all of the power, and they will beyond satisfy your taste buds.

They create a new menu every week. There is no single inspiration or cuisine they follow.

“It’s not hard coming up with a new menu every week because we don’t classify ourselves,” says Preisch.

They shop at local markets and always cook with what ingredients are in season.

“We’ve recently been getting seafood from a new distributor. We told them that any strange or rare fish they catch on a line that they weren’t expecting or don’t want with their bunch of salmon or cod—give us a call,” says Stocks.

They forage at the Oregon coast every other week. Yes, that’s right... picture two men with their pants rolled up, searching in the Pacific Ocean and tide pools for plants that will soon be on a plate in front of you. This is one of the many factors that set them apart in the Portland food scene.

They pick fresh ingredients from Stocks’ home garden. These chefs really work for the food they put on the plate and can personally assure the



ATTENTION TO DETAIL IS THE KEY TO BUILDING EACH DISH, EVEN IF IT MEANS USING A PAIR OF KITCHEN TWEEZERS FOR EXACTING PRESENTATION.





WILL PREISCH DISCUSSES WITH THE GUESTS WHAT THEY ARE EATING AND WINE PAIRINGS. WILL AND JOEL ALTERNATE PRESENTING AND PREPARING AS DISHES ARE ASSEMBLED. "WHAT I LIKE ABOUT OUR EXPERIENCE IS HOW SOCIAL IT IS. WE TALK TO THE GUESTS," EXPLAINS PREISCH.

freshness of each ingredient.

A dinner guest knows only three things: a time, a place, and the cost. How do they know? They've gotta be on the list, and they've got to be quick on the draw. The guys send out a blast email and the first 14 people to reserve a seat are in. Slow to check your email that day? You're probably sitting this weekend's dinner out.

Each dinner is a mystery menu. Guests have no idea what they will be served. No food allergies are considered. Oh, and rest assured, these two know their wines. Each wine served at the meal is paired perfectly with the courses being served.

Five years ago, Preisch and Stocks worked together at The Bent Brick in Portland. About one year ago, Preisch started Holdfast Dining. Stocks graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in New York and finished working at Graham Elliot, a 2 Michelin star restaurant in Chicago, Illinois. Stocks returned home to Portland and joined Preisch at Holdfast.

Preisch is 30 years old and Stocks only 26, but don't be fooled by their age. They've both been working in kitchens since they were kids. Preisch grew up around his father's diner in Cleveland, Ohio—practically born and raised cooking. Stocks has worked in fine dining restaurants since he was 15. There's no doubt that they're food savvy.

"Our food is elegant. It's food with finesse," declares Stocks.

Essentially, they could be considered a pop-up kitchen, but they haven't moved yet. Holdfast is part of a kitchen collective at KitchenCru in NW Portland. They share the industrial kitchen with other companies. They like the KitchenCru space because it's beyond well-equipped, has a chef's table, and creates the environment that they want their guests to experience.

"We present the food how we'd want it to be served to us," hollers Preisch over the gangster rap blaring in the background.

"We want to take anything and everything pretentious out of a fine dining experience," says Stocks. "Oh, it's definitely going to smell like caramel corn in here."



FROZEN YOGURT, HONEY



**STRAWBERRY, CREAM,
LEMON BALM, ELDERFLOWER**

There are ups and downs to sharing a space with others. Although the smell of candy is lingering during the dining experience, it adds to the casual, relaxed flow that Preisch and Stocks want.

Sometimes their methodical, precise, clean style can be messed with from sharing with other companies.

“Let’s just say, not everyone who works here is as anal retentive as we are,” says Stocks graciously.

The upside about being in Holdfast Dining is that there are no employees to worry about, no servers to get annoyed with, and no managers breathing down their necks.

“If I’m not at work on my day off, I don’t have to worry about what’s going to happen to my kitchen or if my walk-in is going to shut down,” says Preisch.

Over the past year, Preisch and Stocks have developed



**SCALLOPS, WASABI,
COASTAL VEGETABLES, APPLE**

a flawless dining experience. Their precision, their pallets for assembling ingredients, the plating presentations, and some mutual particularities for detail are just a few reasons why they work so well together to create the level of cuisine they serve.

“We have the same vision. We also have a very similar style,” says Stocks. “It’s nice working with someone where you don’t have to worry about what the other is doing. At my old job, it was a 12-person kitchen. I felt like I was babysitting all the time.”

As integral a part of the Holdfast Dining experience as the eating, is being audience to the preparation which happens before your eyes.

Watching Preisch and Stocks work together is like watching a ballet. It’s dinner and a show. I’ve never seen chefs flutter with finesse while no words need be exchanged. To watch, drink, eat at Holdfast you’ve got to be quick to respond and open to dining on whatever thoughtfully prepared menu these two young culinary savants have in store for 14 lucky guests at a time.



To be a part of the Holdfast email list and reserve a seat at this chef’s table rubbing elbows with other culinary adventurers like yourself, sign up to get your invites at holdfastdining.com.

anna tivel

From playing fiddle to picking up the guitar and breaking into the Portland music scene, Anna's adoption in to the Fluff & Gravy Records family has fostered a creative period that now sees her releasing her first LP, *Before Machines*. This incredible songwriter with her fragile voice talks with us about her journey to this point, her odd comfort on stage but discomfort off, and her off-the-cuff recording choice for the album.

W E S L E Y • B A U M A N

WB: I'd love to talk about your genesis getting into the Portland music scene. You had moved here and started waiting tables, and then broke into the Portland music scene. How exactly do you do that?

AT: It's one of the friendliest ones I've ever found in this city. I moved to Portland to go to school and then hung around. I wasn't writing songs or playing much fiddle with anyone, and I started looking for ways to play. I started writing songs maybe a few years ago and playing guitar. I wanted to do some more music and so I started looking on *Craigslist* on the musician page. There was everything from "dress up like a cow and play bluegrass in the mall for the release of a new app" or there's little bands people are forming.

So I started getting together with people. Everyone was just really friendly. Just kind of [made] my way through the grapevine, I guess. I played with a guy named Tyler Stenson for a little while and met someone else through him, and someone else through him. Eventually, I picked up a guitar and started writing songs and that's when

I really wanted to take it more seriously. I did that for a year and thought maybe I could stop waiting tables for a little bit and try it out and see if I could, between playing fiddle with other people and doing my own stuff, make ends meet.

WB: So it's working out? You're not waiting tables anymore?

AT: No, I was thinking about doing it this winter. I'm definitely not in the lap of luxury by any means.

WB: So you said you started writing songs about two years ago. What prompted you to begin writing songs for the first time in your life?

AT: I guess I've always really loved writing in general. I've always loved poems and stories, and the lyrics to things I've always been drawn to. I just didn't really have a vehicle to make stuff into songs and play guitar. Writing songs on fiddle never really felt natural to me. I just started playing my roommate's guitar a little bit and learning a few chords and messed around with words. Then it just clicked, I guess.

WB: So what do you draw from? There are a lot of different artists, and a lot of different styles or types of songs. Are you writing by opening your heart and writing from very personal experiences?

AT: I have this aversion to being too obvious in my songs, like saying the direct thing, whether that's a good thing or a bad thing. The more personal it is, or the feeling of it, the more truthful I feel like the song is. Then it kind of sticks and I want to play it, I'm proud of it, but when I'm writing a song that isn't as close to



home, it never really sticks.

WB: So you went from waiting tables to breaking into the Portland music scene, meeting people, and then you started writing songs. How did Fluff and Gravy come together? Did you have this album before you connected with the label?

AT: Kind of. I met Jeffrey Martin, who was living at John [Shepski's] place from Fluff and Gravy, two years ago I think, and started playing fiddle with him and singing; then we did some touring together. He knew John, and was playing the Wildwood Festival out in Willamina. I went out there and met them. It's the most wonderful family of people, musical people. They get together and have fires and jam all the time, and all their kids hang out.

I haven't been doing music in this way for very long. It's just a search to find how to make it feel right. When you're making an album, you're starting out as a musician, it's a lot of self-promotion. I'm never sure whether that's alright with me, or how to put that in a box. Fluff and Gravy just feels right to me, the way they go about stuff. John wants to do only vinyl, ever. He never listens to CD's or anything. He's all about the integrity of things. He writes beautiful songs, their band [Vacilando] is one of my favorite bands in Portland. It's just a good family. I'm really glad that I met them.

WB: Obviously, from what it sounds like, they just let you do whatever you wanted to do on this album. There was no real direction or editorial oversight, is that right?

AT: Yeah, I just kind of brought it to them. I really wanted to do it live, because I was touring a lot right then, so I was by myself and I don't usually have a band. I had a couple of friends I wanted to chord with. Sam Howard on bass, Taylor Kingman played electric guitar, David Strackany played drums, and then Jeffrey Martin did harmonies.

I just had this idea that it would feel really great to get together with them a couple times and just have a couple crash practices and record it live, all together in the room so we could feed off of each other's energy. I respect them as players. They care a lot. I kind of wanted that feeling of a performance where you're in the moment and everybody is watching each other for cues and the song takes on its own feeling from that. I brought that to John and in this tiny room in the studio they just made it work. They had never done that before. They just crammed us all into this room and rearranged things.

WB: That was my next question: It was a very interesting decision on your part to do a rougher, less practiced album. Are you happy with the end product?

AT: I'm really happy with it. I kind of want it to always feel like a real thing. Like right now, I'm learning so much

and I'm sort of new to performing and songwriting and all that. It feels like a really rough thing to me. Everything that comes out is sort of raw and I have to work on it, shape it, and it's not polished. That's the best part of that feeling to me, is being able to write and not judge yourself or polish it too much. The way you feel playing with people when you don't know the song, you just really connect with each other. I wanted to make that. You can't separate the words from the song, because we do it all live. So I couldn't sell it to commercials if they wanted; there's all this businessy stuff. It's not very clean, but it just feels good that way to me, I guess.

WB: Is that something that's possibly temporary just for this album or is that something that you think will permeate your style as a person and performer, not putting on any airs for your performances?

AT: Yeah, I hope so. I'm definitely not a performer. I don't say the right thing or dress the right way or anything. That's one thing about this kind of music that I really like, or the musicians that I really respect. Their songs can stand alone, and I'd like to be able to get there someday. Where you could just be wearing what you're wearing and you can stand up on a stage and really make people feel something. That's what I'll try to go for.

WB: So you've been performing in the Portland area and the Northwest, and you said you've been on tour. Do you still get stage fright? Also, what do you hear from fans or first time listeners that really does it for you, gets your heart aflutter?

AT: I guess if someone comes up and says, "This line made me think of this in my own life." That's like gold to me. It makes me feel like a million bucks for weeks. That they could take something that came out of my guts and it spoke to theirs.

I still get terrified. I'm no good at giving speeches, and being in front of people has never been what I'm good at. It's funny, there's this tiny pocket of this way that I can share something with people. When you can explain it in an artistic way, the way your lyrics are, you don't have to make sense, necessarily. Everybody takes from it what they hear in their own life, and I like that about it.

WB: So you're a bit of a shy person in general?

AT: Yeah.

WB: But you're at the folk festival in Texas right now and you get up on stage in front of God knows how many people. Sounds like a little bit of stage fright.

AT: Yeah, I guess. I'm playing some fiddle with Jeffrey Martin here and we're not performing too much, but



there's something really magical about standing in front of a whole bunch of strangers and singing an artistic version of something that you wouldn't tell your best friend; that you wouldn't have the words to tell. There's no other time in your life you really get to do that. It's a weird vortex.

WB: So, it seems like a bit of a whirlwind, a fairly short curve, from waiting tables and checking Craigslist, to you having a new LP coming out on the 17th of June. Then you're going on a Northwest tour, I see. How wild is this? Do you ever take a moment and sit back and go, "Holy crap, compared to where I was..." Do you feel like you've made it, or had that surreal moment where you're like, "I can't believe this is happening"?

AT: Yeah, it seems fast, but I think the whole thing is just this long, weird, wonderful journey that hopefully could go my whole life whether or not I'm always doing music as my main thing. I don't know what I did before I wrote songs. It was just this constant battle to speak to people. There's this little thing that really helped that. I've always been like that about music, I guess. I could go to a cocktail mixer and just claw my way out. Or I could go to a jam with a bunch of strangers with my fiddle and I just feel like it's the best party in the world. It's just friendly in Portland. Everybody helps each other out. They go to each other's shows and they play on each other's albums.

I started playing fiddle with the Shook twins a few years ago and they've just been so great. I get to keep writing my own songs because of the work I get from them. They're just wonderful and I've learned so much. They let me play my songs during their set and they're just a family. That's what they want, for venues to remember how gracious they were and for their fans to feel like they're in their living room.

WB: Is that really unique to Portland? It sounds a lot less competitive than you might think the music business would be from a complete outsider like myself.

AT: I've never lived in a different city and done music.

I've briefly been through other places. I think folk music especially is a friendly scene, generally. I think people want to grow, and they're competitive with each other, but it's definitely not LA where business takes up a lot more space in the music world. You wouldn't move to Portland to become a star. You'd move to Portland to sink into a really wholesome, friendly music community where everyone is really supportive and you can work on your craft more than find the right places to get famous.

WB: It must help to have so many music venues in Portland. There's something going on every day. It's also a bit of a hub for any national tour. You go through Seattle, Portland, and then down to San Francisco as a pretty standard run. Has that helped, to have such a wide variety of venues and opportunities to play and hone your craft?

AT: Yeah, for sure. I am from a really small town in northern Washington, and when I moved to Portland I worked at this little movie theater serving popcorn. For a while I would spend all my money going to shows because I would look in the paper, or the *Mercury*, or *Willy Week*, and there would be something like six people in a month that I was like, "Oh my gosh! I'm probably never going to see them again!" I just had this small town mentality like, "I can't believe I could go see this in my town!" After a while I had to cut myself off and see one show a month.

You can definitely see people that inspire you, and there's also a variety of places to play if you want a smaller listening room or if you're looking for stages or places to play. It's really nice. It's not in every city where you can play in a small listening room and book it easily.

For more on Anna Tivel and her new album, *Before Machines*, check out FluffandGravy.com. You'll also be accidentally accessing a plethora of other local musicians you're about to fall in love with, too.



In myth ology, the psychopomp is the guide for the soul to the land of the dead. A guiding spirit that leads the essence of a man to his maker. For the creative person, this can easily be the description of force inside you that can't be denied as you search for a greater understanding of yourself and your craft. Angela and Frank are looking to gather others guided by that same burgeoning spirit in poetry. It is hard to take something from a cathartic, therapeutic, personal place and lay it out for criticism and judgment. In the past, both Angela and Frank have been slow to share and evasive with their work. For years, since meeting in an American Poetry class at PSU, both have kept their visceral outpourings limited to few eyes. Poetry isn't for everyone, and it's not like they just hang out with other poets. Angela works as a nurse and is an avid hiker. Frank just came back from a surprisingly reflective and trying year in France and makes his ends meet as a bartender. Neither of their vocations are brimming with abstract poetry enthusiasts by nature. After years of speaking to one another in quips and limericks and honing their craft while building up their confidence in what they painstakingly create from pieces of thoughts and suffering laced together with creative sinew and emotional detritus, the pair have finally turned a corner as Frank has returned from overseas. They have realized that there is no waiting for the right time until a salon, a poetry club, presents itself to them. They intend to gather like-minded creatives once or twice a month for little to no other reason than to find a fleeting thing many hunger for in this world: An immersive environment of similarly passionate and abstractly, personally creative minds. They are not waiting anymore to find a rotating collective of similarly creative and passionate individuals who think themselves poets by another name; bartender, hiker, nurse? Poets all the same. They hope to expose to the world themselves and everyone in their future group scribbling in obscurity wondering if there's anyone else left who does this. Poets aren't abstract personas far away, or long gone figures spoken of in a past tense and taught as curriculum. There is no reason that they can't answer the very question that seethe inside every maker set to cross a threshold in to the public space or expose themselves to the gruesome judgment of outside criticism: *Why not me? Why not this? Why not now?* Psychopomp poetry intends to answer those three burning questions with, "*Me. This. Now.*"

For more information on how to join this poetry salon contact Frank and Angela at salonspsychopomp@gmail.com. On the following pages are first three poems by Frank Russell followed by three poems on the facing page by Aleg Naj.



him

as an avatar
as a person so speak
for he so hyperbolic
and unwinding
he so gargantuan not
filigree

not sumptuous
but moribund

as a dynamo
or imago
him sensically perturbed
out of unconscious

he sings like a squeeze
dreams a dream
of historically correct
alchemy

him
a system of
aberrations

but he so lie

a stasis of alcoholism

digitus secundus manus

like you, I go too

it just flowers atop our heads

it's a miracle machine, the thing we've been given

so clap your hands! Sing!

turn your iron over

be not ashamed to juxtapose the ossified phalanges,

to scream

the memories broken and it is

within the reel of gust that the lemon swings her rind,

within the darkest night

that the nocturnal calculus orbits

it is of the most profound sound

sidereal and

the digitus secundus manus,

the annulus,

the metacarpals,

the incunabula of august

stevie

Oh my darling Lysander,
Tell how you hankered,

How you conquered, loved,
Commanded. Tell how much

Pain is unwound & how
The river Styx ever circles,

Flowing soberly throughout
Time. Weave a seminal tapestry for truth,

Centuries beyond your grave—
Tell of the Aegean littoral,

Your balls in your hand dancing,
Your flesh opening upon every event horizon,

Upon every single sea, my liege
Just like me

You are one chrysanthemum away from a bouquet—

You are one tiny heart kept from the world yet dying—

Premises

the promise (prospect) is in the parting.
and those trees, the naked ones (the winter ones)
--veins of black silhouette --
we pull them up; uprooted
dip into ink and brush the sky.
sacred geometry in the gases of our orb.

imprints everywhere.
on our flesh.
makes our muscles bind
a coating, and another --
tough
coats of,
tough white: and then an inner retina

Historical Fractions II

2.5

you've come into reinvention. and me?
without accomplice?
without you I gaze into windows, a life with a table and chairs.
as solo witness I confirm green sprouts through the ruins,

the promising painted sky liquefies at dusk --
spilling over bluffs, eroding summits, catching and combing the forest floor,
gathered masses: bathed, pushed into one.

it flows through the city streets so that I may drink from the gutter as a stream.

3

in the low light I watch your form when I catch you staring into a photograph.
I could claim you as my own -- a tribal sense
historically and before -- we landed, a meeting spot
outside, the herd of elk are staring at me.
indoors we slice open the ceiling, rubble tumbles in upon us.
buried alive in the human form!
it was the longing.
we wanted abundant light, hardwood floors, a clawfoot tub.
we could roll in dust and cough.
we could pound the walls and summon the neighbors.
you want it to be this way right?
you want our clothes and our blood, or just the memories?
young spirits buzz in old places, but here lies the mystery:
white blood cells - the fighters, the lymph.
cerebral cortex, tell me words tell me feelings
nutrients to cells, waste exchanged.
inspiration, expiration
and only one long passageway: mouth to anus.

i've seen the strata --
i've seen the slot canyons.
give me more fluids, and a pair of boots to overcome the remains.
calls come from around the globe: buy radishes and drink them like wine
yes, chop them, soak them. . .
3 drop iodine 1L h2o and you'll be ALL GOOD

Untitled

a lapse in the innate
breasts cupped and spine arched,
a bed of pine needles
there in the strata, our hologram
glimmer away
the cooled stardust
the water wheel
the cords of light
chords

this meat is hot
after all the lonely espresso
now it's blended with butter
we've got to get fluids into you somehow
or the fats
injections?

becoming the calorie
become the cal
red urine: beets or blood?
so many bodies in beds
sweet galaxy blankets
tucked and washed and
my friend from England kisses my mouth
what we see
from
this nostalgia

people like you and me
you'll look and listen
who know how to read and dig
diggers
some raw beating truth under there?
pulsing
birth
birth
birth
when will we dance?
like they do in Senegal

PORTLAND'S SECRETWAVE MUSIC SCENE

HUNTER • SKOWRON

An outsider walking down a typical street in Portland could hear a few things. To your left there will be dreadlocked and possibly “homeless” people banging plastic drums. Further down to your right you may hear some middle-aged men playing a fusion of jazz and rock bubbling out of a bar. Ahead you could hear (although half-drowned out by the twang and bang) a bro-type fellow fresh off the bus from Boise with an acoustic guitar playing a mix of country and rap (think Everlast).

This is a picture of Portland’s music scene to an untrained ear; these are the stereotypes. Yet, over the past decade more than ever, Portland seems to have been built around certain rules and combinations of people and attitudes that have shaped what the general public thinks of this place. While some of these ring more true than others, one thing that is apparent is Portland’s broken up into small pockets. Each one is flowing with its own attitude and views about music, arts, and the city. This is perhaps the exact reason as a producer, writer, and musician I moved here to find music that is truly *Portland*.

From big venues and shows on national tours, perhaps my favorite musical experience is the house show. Back in New York, they have loft shows. In Los Angeles, they play at art galleries. In Portland, musicians who are not trying to be the next Whitey Ford or the fastest 5-gallon drummer in town have the amazing ability to come to

There’s mainstream, indie, underground, but what’s underneath underground? House shows? Deeper. Bedroom? That’s where you find Secretwave. What is Portland’s Secretwave music scene and where can we hear it?

one’s home and have an intimate evening with true fans. This leads me to the question - who are these musicians?

Portland’s music scene has always been mysterious and unique. The first time I ever came to portland many years ago, I wandered into a house party late on a warm July evening. I have no idea where this house was, or who the band was except that they were on tour from Alaska. There were burned CD-Rs flung around this person’s kitchen. One was a mix of various Magnetic Fields songs, which I still have. I swiped it from the table and listened to it continuously on the long drive back to San Francisco. I remember it sounding blurry and like it was from another time and place, which it was.

The Alaskan trio played and sparked energy and grooves to the 20-30 jammed into this living room. I left with the idea that maybe Portland’s real music lied in situations like this. Small and unique bands pop up and play their friends’ houses. Maybe they never make it past that, but they play for who will come and listen.

Scouring the internet will give you some leads to Portland bands that don’t fit the usual stereotype. The first

you can find (and a personal favorite of mine) is Liz Harris and her project Grouper. It's muddy and beautiful. Guitar and voice flutter onto cassette-quality sound giving it an organic and open feeling - sort of like Portland itself. Her tunes are strange, expansive and visual. You could picture her writing these songs - her window open overlooking a quiet part of town on a cold night. Sometimes you can even hear traces of cars driving by and a subtle breeze.

Then we have Yacht, a synth-based groove band that churns out music which doesn't sound very Portland. Yet, it's sort of nice to think that people around here are capable of making catchy songs. Their videos are cheery and sunny with an avante garde touch. While they brought a newer sound to Portland, they seemed to have packed up and moved down to Los Angeles, so we need to dig deeper.

Next up is a band called Genders, a popular Portland band. You can imagine their tunes pouring out of their practice space windows on a cold, rainy evening or may hear it coming from a backyard on a warm summer day; pine trees swaying and cold beers flowing, all the while their music bouncing into the long Oregon summer nights. It's fitting and unpretentious. They feel a bit more like that Alaskan band's sound I am trying to reconnect with, but I have to go even deeper.

What's the thing that's most connected to a house show? What is right beyond those living room walls that separate the makeshift stage and the Goodwill Superstore couch? The bedroom.

While bedroom musicians have been around forever, only recently have they been able to make hits and masterpieces that can be heard and distributed on a large scale. Bedroom musicians sprung to life again during the recession. Using cheap computer software or 4-track cassette players, they used their spare time between job hunting or post-collegiate blues to make new and unique music.

This leads me to a local project currently called Little Brother. Little Brother is musician and artist Scott Dougherty; some of his music recorded here and some in Austin, Texas. While various tracks of his pop up like hidden gems strewn across the internet, finding an entire album is elusive. His music is a very fitting project for Oregon. It's apparent that the shift in environment has been very influential for Little Brother, and it shows in his music.

"Environmentally, coming from a place as dry and dull as Texas, the grey skies and moss-covered trees offer a different mood than what I'm used to. Everything feels sort of dreamy. As for the community, it seems tight-knit, and is something I'd like to become a part of. It's comforting knowing there's room for collaboration." - Scott Dougherty

If you were to start a compilation of his music on the coast and listen to it all the way to the southeast corner of Oregon's vast deserts, his music would fit every possible ecosystem you pass through. Some of his music is foggy and driving. It chugs with that same hypnotic beat pulling you through like the lines on the freeway. Other tracks

offer twangy slide guitar and an unknown person harps beautiful lyrics over it. These songs feel warmer. Warbled organs suck you in while clicks and pops whisper around like a desolate wind. His music is relaxing and inviting and one can easily imagine these songs being made as described - deep in a Portland bedroom.

Portland is evolving. The idea of expression as only an external thing feels dated. Perhaps this secretwave of Portland musicians follows this logic. People like Scott Dougherty or the members of Genders simply don't need to overcompensate. They don't need wacky music videos or a gimmick. The music and their attitude speaks for itself. After all, from an early age you're taught that it's what's inside that counts, and this follows true for them.

"Portland's completely different from where I'm from. In Austin, psych-rock has taken over a majority of the scene. So, it's refreshing being in a place where every show I've gone to so far has varied in style. If I would like to see it go anywhere, it would go to a place with more exposure. I've seen a couple of local bands around town that deserve some notoriety on a larger scale." - Scott Dougherty on Portland's music scene.

The past decade has given rise to so many people who have been able to buy their status; whether by the clothes they wear, what type of musician they want to be styled after, and then falsely idolized on their favorite blog. This has made it very hard to decipher who is in it for what reasons. A good song shouldn't require you to pay for someone to give you a million hits, and rock music shouldn't require a leather jacket. It's almost reassuring and feels progressive to find a group of humble musicians making music for the love of it and would rather share it with a small, loyal fan base than to be sonic exhibitionists.

Looking back on the above musicians, it's apparent that we haven't even scratched the surface of Portland's secretwave scene. Perhaps it's all made up. Maybe this epic house show I remember was just one too many Campari's on ice mixed with nostalgia and a confused stumble of a once-tourist trying to find the Burnside Bridge from Rotture. Or maybe for however many Led Zeppelin or Pink Floyd cover bands this town can produce, there are a dozen Little Brother's, Grouper's, and Genders' tinkering away quietly, and all we have to do is find the house show.

Lastly, if you were at that show - whatever happened to that band from Alaska?

For more on some of the artists mentioned in this article, check out the below links:

soundcloud.com/little-brother-1

www.facebook.com/Dazzleshipsrecords

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grouper_\(musician\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grouper_(musician))

<http://genderspdx.bandcamp.com>



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