

ISSUE 14



Q2 2019

# Almost Real Things

INSPIRE

CREATE

CONTRIBUTE

SET  
YOUR MIND  
**FREE**  
READ ME



A free, self-guided art event.

# WEST AUSTIN STUDIO TOUR

May 11-12 & 18-19, 2019  
11am - 6pm

8TH  
ANNUAL



A program by  
**Big Medium**



[west.bigmedium.org](http://west.bigmedium.org)



# Women of WEST go East

May 3rd & 4th

**Cloud Tree Studios & Gallery**  
3411 East 5th St

A pop-up exhibition curated by  
Laura Johnson featuring artists  
in stand-alone studios participating  
in the WEST Austin Studio Tour.

This show is the first of many  
programming events organized  
by Pump Project and hosted by  
Cloud Tree Studios & Gallery.

[BIT.LY/2CPPLCC](http://BIT.LY/2CPPLCC)



pump project

# A

# VIVID

/'viv-id/

*adjective*

- 1 powerful feelings of powerfulness
- 2 intensely bright; the light that blinds you when someone opens blackout curtains way too early
- 3 the feeling inside a wind-up toy before it starts

**See also:** livid, tivid, nivid, sivid, rivid, bivid, flivid, shivid, mivid, trivid, lativid, and bold





## Almost Real Things

Creating truly vivid work requires bravery. Any time you decide to go too far to one side of the spectrum, you are consciously making a definitive decision. You are picking a side. You are pushing yourself to the limit.

For this issue, our definition of vivid extended beyond bright, saturated color palettes. We chose contributors based on their passion for their craft and the intensity they bring to each project. Vivid works of all mediums have a contagious quality. They radiate the emotion of the creator, making the audience automatically want to come along for the ride. Upbeat music, visually striking art and passionately written pieces induce a reflex in me. I can't help but tap my foot or widen my eyes.

Of course, we couldn't release a VIVID issue without experimenting with design. We explored bold typefaces, powerful illustration and opened ourselves up to new color palettes. We felt free to explore more extravagant concepts than the norm.

**So in that vain, welcome to Issue 14 "VIVID."**

**Bold, bright, without bounds.**

Those are all the applicable words starting with a "B" I could think of for now. Bye!

Natalie Earhart  
Editor-in-Chief

Zachary Zulich  
Creative Director

# MAGAZINE MEMBERS

## FOUNDING MEMBERS

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**ZACHARY ZULCH**

Creative Director / Event Organizer / DJ.  
Vicariously tall.



**NATALIE EARHART**

Content Developer / Editor.  
Vivaciously tired.

## A.R.T. CREW MEMBERS

---



**AKKI BRATHWAITE**

Maker of things.  
Vibrantly hermit-like.



**NOBLE CRAWFORD**

Photographer Extraordinaire.  
Visually talented.

## CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

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Ransom Ashley, Whitney Batres, Beast Syndicate, Big Jaw, BlackLight, Big Medium, Aria Brownell, Brutha Liberty, Leah Dorrian, Kalee Espitia, Jon Garza, Xachery Goldsman, Larry Goode, Lauren Goulet, Josh Green, Hopscotch, Ion Art, Nicole Jensen, Brittany Johnson, Tsz Kam, Emmy Laursen, Meena Matai, Cameron McNeil, Tim Ochsenreither, Gabriel Portillo, Pump Project, Jamila Ralph, Raw Paw, Efren Rebugio, Stephen Rendon, Ruffhouse Arts, Alicia Wells.

Almost Real Things, LLC is a sponsored project of Artus Co 501(c)(3),  
and operates under their non-profit status.

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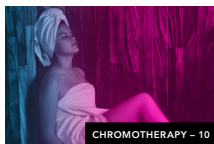
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Contributions from great up-and-coming creatives



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Neon dreams and Surreal Seas with Sharon Keshishian



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Get rekt in this lit game of generational slang



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Play with music and color with frontman Clint Roth



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Add some quirk to your work with this creative crew



HOPSCOTCH - 52

Jump into an interactive world of sensory exploration

# How to: WEST

Headed WEST? Check out our tips & tricks to make it a memorable adventure!

## see

Variety sets this event apart from the rest. Mix in large exhibitions with intimate home studios. Here are some must sees:

**WEST Group Exhibition**  
**Avery Orendorf**  
**Blue Genie Big Top**  
**Hallie Rae Ward**  
**Industry Print Shop**

## eat

WEST is a marathon and for us that means snack breaks. Hit up these local stops to refuel:

**El Primo Tacos**  
**Bananarchy**  
**Thai Fresh**  
**Manoli's**  
**Tacodeli**  
**Loro**

## explore

Driving from stop to stop can be exhausting. Why not make it a part of the adventure instead? Plan your tour by finding clusters of stops to walk to. Better yet, let us take the wheel! Hop on the Almost Real Things Safari bus to experience WEST from an artist's perspective. You'll never even have to put down your drink! [almostrealthings.com/wildwest](http://almostrealthings.com/wildwest)

## remember

As both a participant and attendant, we've learned a few tricks along the way:

- Interact! Ask artists questions and tag them in photos
- Keep cash and credit card on hand (for art and donations)
- Bring a bag for the art and goodies you pick up
- Jot down names of artists you want to connect with



Almost Real Things PRESENTS

# Wild WEST

ART SAFARI BUS TOUR



**Make WEST easy—join us on an excursion through the wilderness of west Austin's art scene!**

Sip on provided drinks and venture to new exciting locations each day with Almost Real Things Magazine as your guide. Board the ART Safari Bus to learn insider facts about each exhibit before disembarking to view a diverse group of artists in their natural habitat.

**May 11–12 & 18–19: 12–6pm**

**Schedule, pricing, and pre-sale passes:**

[ALMOSTREALTHINGS.COM/WILDWEST](http://ALMOSTREALTHINGS.COM/WILDWEST)

# Chromotherapy

GAME: NATALIE EARHART

Emotions are pigments. If you add or subtract a little of one thing, it can completely change your mood. If you replace the word "thing" with color, my philosophy will start to make sense.

It is believed by some that color greatly influences perception. Have you heard the phrase, "Are you feeling blue?" What about "Is your pink eye back?" You get it.

We've laid out real life scenarios that everyone experiences every week. After studying the healing properties of each color, write the scenario number in the corresponding color box.

Stimulation  
Inspiration  
Vitality

#  
\_\_\_\_\_

Happiness  
Creativity  
Warmth

#  
\_\_\_\_\_

Youthfulness  
Softness  
Caring

#  
\_\_\_\_\_

Renewal  
Growth  
Nature

#  
\_\_\_\_\_

Indifferent  
Reserved  
Neutral

#  
\_\_\_\_\_

Passionate  
Aggressive  
Assertive

#  
\_\_\_\_\_

Innovation  
Sensitive  
Intuition

#  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tranquility  
Serenity  
Cooling

#  
\_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual  
Royalty  
Insight

#  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Scenarios

1. The weekend is here! After a crazy busy week full of deadlines and frozen meals, it's time to treat yourself. Sit back, relax and free your mind.
2. Your hotheadedness got you in trouble when Melinda ate the rest of your corn nuts. Keep cool, take a deep breath and cover yourself in this tranquil shade.
3. You're stuck in Aunt Tara's downtown condo for the weekend while your apartment gets bombed for super ants. You're desperately seeking a connection to the outside to quiet the chaos in your head.
4. Time to pick your team for footsketball. You know Terry is a quality center striker but he's a nightmare. Trust your instincts on this.
5. Your arch nemesis got the promotion you banked on but whatever, who cares. Wrap yourself in some of this color and avoid pursed lips and squinty eyes in public.
6. You're babysitting so your friend can compete in a Cheez-it eating contest. Time to soften out your hard edges emotionally, and actually cover those sharp corners because those are super dangerous too.
7. Cloudy weather is slowing you down (literally, you're walking like a sloth) and you need to feel good again. Clear your mind with a pop of this color.
8. You're sleeping in until 3pm and finding yourself daydreaming about your crush during your waking hours. You fantasize about hand-feeding fish in the local pond but you need an extra push to ask them out.
9. The weekly team happy hour is approaching and you are in charge of choosing the venue. You must beat Shelly's "Wine & Dine at County Line," and you've forever blocked Pinterest.



# MACRO WORLDS

PHOTOS: ALICIA WELLS, @ALITEXAS

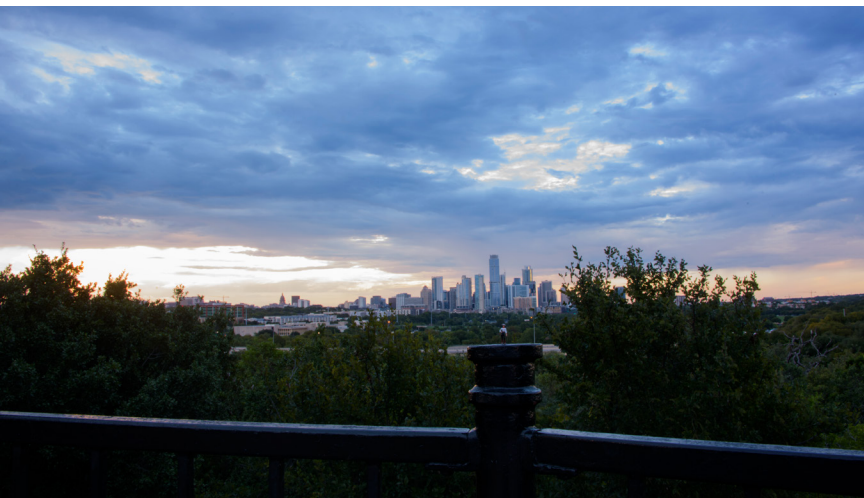
Austin artist Alicia Wells has come to appreciate the smaller things in life, literally.

Over the past year she has been honing her skills in macro photography, developing a series of little figures shot against the backdrop of familiar sites in Texas. By delving into detail, and focusing on smaller subject matter, Alicia shares moments of life worth celebrating. If you look close enough at your surroundings, you'll find things to celebrate too.

**CAN YOU SPOT ALL OF HER TINY FIGURES?**







# In the Know...

Keep up with opportunities to develop your skills as a creative professional!

## TCA Webinars

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**3<sup>RD</sup> WED: EVERY OTHER MONTH**

Free professional development webinars (from Texas Commission of the Arts) that are relevant to arts organizations and artists in Texas. New topics chosen each month.

[arts.texas.gov/initiatives/tca-professional-development-webinars](https://arts.texas.gov/initiatives/tca-professional-development-webinars)

## TALA Arts Legal Line

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**TUE, JUNE 4<sup>TH</sup>: 5:30–7:30PM**

Free short consultation with an attorney for questions related to the creative sector.

[talarts.org/arts-legal-line](https://talarts.org/arts-legal-line)

## Sales Tax for Artists Workshop

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**WED, JUNE 5<sup>TH</sup>: 6:30–8PM @ DOUGHERTY**

Learn how to obtain a sales tax permit, calculate sales tax, and file sales tax reports.

[austintexas.gov/artistresourcecenter](https://austintexas.gov/artistresourcecenter)

## Arts Respond Project

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**DEADLINE: JULY 15<sup>TH</sup>**

Short term project assistance grants for projects related to education, health & human services, economic development, public safety & criminal justice or natural resources & agriculture.

[tinyurl.com/y2vnkfj3](https://tinyurl.com/y2vnkfj3)

## Artist Resource Center

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**MON–THU: 10AM–10PM**

**FRI 10AM–6PM**

**SAT 10AM–2PM**

Free meeting and research space for the arts community at The Dougherty. No reservations.

[austintexas.gov/artistresourcecenter](https://austintexas.gov/artistresourcecenter)

## A.R.T. // Pump Project Community Room

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**VARIOUS RESERVATION TIMES**

Low cost conference room rental for meetings, workshops, or projects.

[almostrealthings.com/resources](https://almostrealthings.com/resources)

# LIT LANGUAGE

HEY **FAM**, READY FOR A GAME? **YEET**

GAME: ZACHARY ZULCH

Draw a line to each decade's closest synonym.

Check your score at [instagram.com/almostrealthings](https://www.instagram.com/almostrealthings) when you're done. We started you off with a couple because let's be honest, keeping up with the times is hard AF. If you're 20 and reading this... just wait.

GET THE STICKERS

[almostrealthings.com/shop](https://almostrealthings.com/shop)

**wewoke**

## 2015

## 2005

## 1995

**1-800-BOP**

Yeet	Word Up	Mad
Fam	Hella	Crunk
AF	Sketchy	Aight
Turnt	Wazzup	Frontin'
Sus	Dawg	Shady
Bet	Stuntin'	Fresh
Suh	w00t	Cheddar
Flexin'	Poppin'	Homie
Bands	Legit	Diss
Throw Shade	Tipsy	Boo Ya!
Lit	Hoe	Crushed
Deadass	Scrilla	Hoochie
Extra	Pwn(d)	Yo
Bae	Dime	Dope
Bop	Burn	Lol
Rekt	Sick	Keepin' It Real
THOT	Boo	Hottie
Snacc	Brutal	Straight
Mood	ROTFMAO	Babe
Fire	Flossy	Vibe
Savage	P.C.	Pissed
Salty	Feels	Wicked
Dead	Banger	Flashy
Woke	Butt Hurt	Jam

**extra**

**BET**



# COLORIZED

## (VISUAL SONGS)

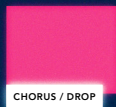
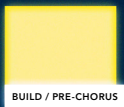
ARTICLE: ZACHARY ZULCH

### IS DANCE MUSIC GETTING SLOWER? DOES EVERY SONG NEED A FEATURED VOCALIST? WAIT, IS THIS POP MUSIC?

As a DJ, these are the questions that run through my mind as I comb through new releases in search of tracks that will make kids dance. I put my design skills and synesthesia to work and present to you an archeological approach to testing my theory that modern day electronic tracks are increasingly taking a pop music song structure. Let's revisit Colorized, an article that ran in our first issue, to get a glimpse of how tempos, song lengths and structures are shifting.

### REALIZATIONS:

- 2010–2015 dance music: 128bpm four-on-the-floor rhythms + Dubstep's implied 140bpm double-time rhythm. Modern examples hover around 100bpm.
- Trend towards 3:30 song lengths. Prior to 2010, 5 minutes was average.
- Today's top electronic songs are collaborations. If you can't sing, let a vocalist throw in some catchy hooks and promote to their fan base too.
- Atmospheric exits are out.
- Selena Gomez, Ariana Grande, and Taylor Swift all have the same number of letters in their first and last names.





# POP ICONS

## THANK U, NEXT

ARIANA GRANDE

107 BPM 3:27



## HANDS TO MYSELF

SELENA GOMEZ

111 BPM 3:21



## LOOK WHAT YOU MADE ME DO

TAYLOR SWIFT

128 BPM 3:32



## MILLION REASONS

LADY GAGA

130 BPM 3:25



## 7/11

BEYONCÉ

136 BPM 3:34

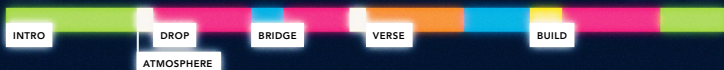


# DANCE ICONS, 2010

## LEVELS

AVICII

126 BPM 3:39



## TITANIUM (FT. SIA)

DAVID GUETTA

126 BPM 4:05



## SUMMER

CALVIN HARRIS

128 BPM 3:43



## GHOSTS 'N' STUFF (FT. ROB SWIRE)

DEADMAUS

128 BPM 5:29



## SCARY MONSTERS AND NICE SPRITES

SKRILLEX

140 BPM 4:03



# DANCE ICONS, 2020

## NEVER BE LIKE YOU (FT. KAI)

FLUME

119 BPM 3:55



## STAY

ZEDD &amp; ALESSIA CARA

102 BPM 3:30



## HAPPIER (FT. BASTILLE)

MARSHMELLO

100 BPM 3:34



## LINE OF SIGHT (FT. WYNNE & MANSIONAIR)

ODESZA

90 BPM 3:57



## TIE ME DOWN

GRYFFIN &amp; ELLEY DUHÉ

99 BPM 3:38



# BIG JAW

INTERVIEW: NATALIE EARHART


## Frontman Clint Roth tells of his colorful journey leading up to their Midwest tour

Ten years ago, Clint Roth came up with the concept for **Big Jaw**. He wanted to start a band that was the culmination of Paul Simon joining AC/DC while refusing to help with the lyrics. Two years later, Clint set out to Austin to make it happen.

His quest was not unusual. Like many who come here, Clint felt Austin was the place where he could fully realize his vision. He's been playing music his whole life, learning guitar at 13, and forming a band in high school.

But then he put the guitar away, spending most of his 20s working as a studio engineer; a job he initially pursued because he wanted to record his own music. Upon turning 30, and after realizing his side gig had turned into a full fledged career, Clint decided to get back into playing.

However, finding serious players proved to be more complicated than he initially thought. For those on the outside looking in, Austin seems like a musician's wonderland. And although it is a beacon for experimentation and collaboration, taking your creative profession to the next level is a hurdle that many are not able to overcome. But in spite of these challenges, Big Jaw persevered. Their success is the result of Clint's dedication to the craft and enthusiasm for simply creating.

Big Jaw dropped their **Apophenia EP** earlier this year, with the energetic single "Mess Around" leading the way. Apophenia is defined as the tendency to assign meaning to things where there is no meaning. In other words, the life of an artist. 





We asked Clint to play a game: "recall memories that led to your life in music and match them with the corresponding color."

After The Gold Rush is my favorite record from one of my favorite songwriters, Neil Young

The color of my first guitar, bought from the Sears catalog for \$100

The color of my Mom's Pontiac Bonneville that I was riding in when I first heard Jimi Hendrix

Third Eye Blind's Blue was the first major label record I had credit on

The color of the spare bedroom walls in the Fort Wayne house I rented where I wrote and recorded Big Jaw's first EP, Appetite for Construction

**TURN IT UP!**

[bigjaw.bandcamp.com](http://bigjaw.bandcamp.com), [@bigjawband](https://twitter.com/bigjawband)

The color of the two guitar pedals that are the meat of my guitar tone: JHS Charlie Brown Overdrive and Earthquaker Devices Hoof Fuzz

# ANTI-VIBRATION TECHNOLOGY

R E P ! E N T

## SEDATE YOUR LEGS

Expel your demons



See the light



**RLS Aide**  
24 Pills + 24 Pills!

**\$29<sup>95</sup>**  
Plus S & H

[www.rls.org](http://www.rls.org)

**1-800-RESTLESS**



# The Musical Cookbook *feat.* **BLACKLIGHT**

BlackLight and Wisüchee, his producer/drummer, share their “secret recipe” for a great track within their scene. It’s less about the formula and more about the tools and workflow to expose tips and inspiration!

## 1 THEME

Our music is definitely **Hip Hop**, leaning toward conscious rap at times—touching on sociopolitical themes—and comes full circle with contemporary club bangers. Most of our songs are meant to get people moving; each a hustlers anthem in its own right.

## 2 GEAR

We use **Ableton** to create and mix beats and **Pro Tools** to record vocals, mix and master. I start with an idea, search for sounds in my sample library and together we fine tune everything. We use a **MIDI keyboard (M-Audio Keystation 61)** to get ideas down. The **Shure SM7B microphone** is the best one we’ve used and versatile for vocals and drums. We also use the **Apollo Twin Interface**. The software helps with CPU load and has a lot of different features to mess around with.

## 3 LIVE

A lot of rehearsal goes into our live performance beforehand, and we’re constantly experimenting with ways to make a connection with the audience. The live drums add a lot to our performance. It’s always a different show and we can really make the songs impactful. I use an **Orange County Drum Percussion** kit. I also use a **DW 9000 pedal**. Playing with anything else feels unnatural now.



### GET A TASTE OF BLACKLIGHT

[soundcloud.com/blacklight\\_headbang](https://soundcloud.com/blacklight_headbang)

[facebook.com/atxblacklight](https://facebook.com/atxblacklight)

[instagram.com/blacklight\\_hip\\_hop](https://instagram.com/blacklight_hip_hop)

[blacklighthiphop.com](https://blacklighthiphop.com)



# Artist Spotlight

## A SHOWCASE OF INSPIRATION

The following section is composed of talented artists of all mediums. No discrimination here. Whether art is their forte by day or their after hours outlet, these creators live to push their art form forward.

## THIS EDITION'S FEATURED ARTISTS

Brutha Liberty

Leah Dorrian

Cameron McNeil

Whitney Batres

Brittany Johnson

Beast Syndicate

Aria Brownell

Jamila Ralph

Meena Matai

Ransom Ashley

Xachery Goldsman

Gabriel Portillo

Larry Goode

Tsz Kam

Ruffhouse Arts

Kalee Espitia

Stephen Rendon

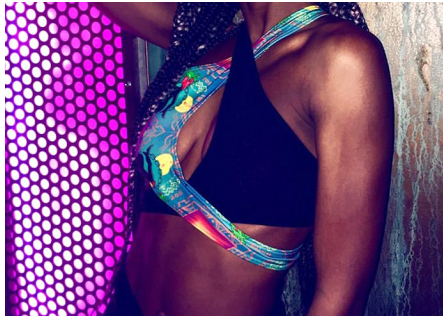
Efren Rubigio

## CONTRIBUTE YOUR WORK

This zine is built on collaboration. If you have finished or unfinished work you would like to feature, please follow the steps on [almostrealthings.com/contribute](https://almostrealthings.com/contribute).

## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: BRUTHA LIBERTY

Painter: [instagram.com/brutha\\_liberty](https://www.instagram.com/brutha_liberty), [etsy.com/shop/artxbruthaliberty](https://www.etsy.com/shop/artxbruthaliberty)



I want to encourage anyone to be themselves without oppressive restrictions through positive enjoyment, authenticity and love.





**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: WHITNEY BATRES**

Mixed Media Artist: [whitneybatres.com](http://whitneybatres.com), [instagram.com/whitbat](https://www.instagram.com/whitbat)



MEMORY CATCHERS, 2015



MEMORY CATCHERS (DETAIL), 2015

My inspiration comes from family and cultural traditions of domestic craft.  
I aim to bridge the gap between craft and fine art in my work.



HEIRLOOM II, 2018

## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: ARIA BROWNELL

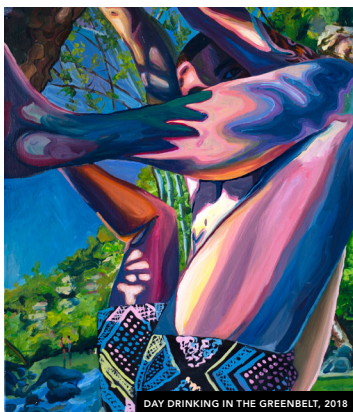
Painter: [ariabrownell.com](http://ariabrownell.com), [instagram.com/ariabrownellstudio](https://www.instagram.com/ariabrownellstudio)

CALL OUT OF WORK, 2018

I love a good cavorting between friends. An uncomplicated and comfortable grace. Insouciance and play and jovial danger all burned into my thoughts.



THE MORNING AFTER THE LAST EVER THIRSTY GAMES, 2018



DAY DRINKING IN THE GREENBELT, 2018

**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: RANSOM ASHLEY**

Photographer, Actor & Cinematographer: [ransomashley.com](http://ransomashley.com), [instagram.com/ransomashley](https://www.instagram.com/ransomashley)

**HALEY REBIRTH**

Within the LGBTQIA+ community, there are different amounts of representation for each identity that is reflected in our society as a whole. Within my newest body of work, I have taken an extrospective approach to examine the realities of the more marginalized in our circles.

Often, those among us who are more eccentric or different are also the most persecuted. I want to shine a light on these people and their stories that have so often been over looked and underwritten.

**CHANEL ANDREWS**





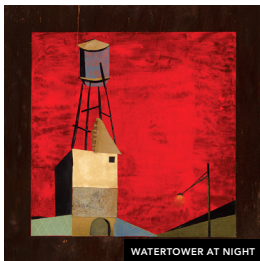
CHANEL LIPS

# ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: LARRY GOODE

Mixed Media Artist: [larrygoodeart.com](http://larrygoodeart.com), [instagram.com/larryduane](https://www.instagram.com/larryduane)



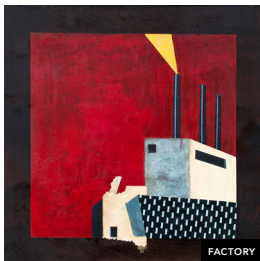
ASCENSION DAY



WATERTOWER AT NIGHT

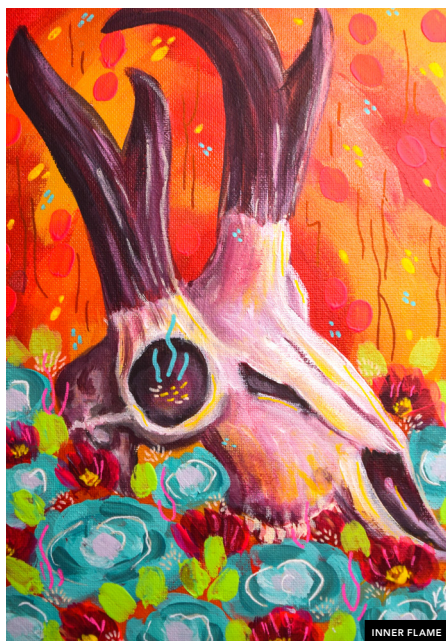
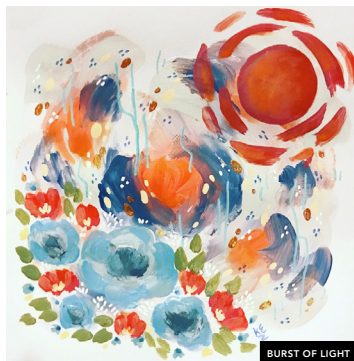
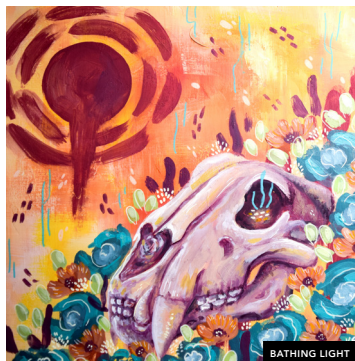
With my work I try to instill a sense of wonder, curiosity, and melancholy.

I'm looking for memories forgotten, then half remembered, but altered.



FACTORY



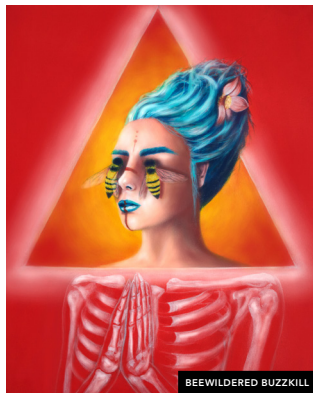
**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: KALEE ESPITIA**Painter & Illustrator: [kaleeespitia.com](http://kaleeespitia.com), [instagram.com/whispering.bones](https://www.instagram.com/whispering.bones)

The contrast between the skulls and flowers allows me to explore how I can bring light to dreary subject matter.



**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: LEAH DORRIAN**

Surrealist Painter: [leahdorian.crevado.com](http://leahdorian.crevado.com), [instagram.com/leahdorian](https://www.instagram.com/leahdorian)



I begin each painting session with a meditation to focus my attention and clear my mind so ideas, dreams, and visions can come through.



**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: BRITTANY JOHNSON**

Artist, Therapist & Muralist: [instagram.com/blondebrittattx](https://www.instagram.com/blondebrittattx)



I use vibrant colors to  
paint colorful portraits  
of female figures.





**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: JAMILA RALPH**

Illustrator: [instagram.com/jamiladraws](https://www.instagram.com/jamiladraws), [redbubble.com/people/jamilaralph](https://www.redbubble.com/people/jamilaralph)

I don't know what I want to pursue in my future, but my hope is that if I get my artwork out it can make my decision easier.



"YOU NEED ID TO BUY A CARTON" -  
 a jarring start to the night - those gas station  
 wine clerks discussing the price of Tic  
 Tacs in some language I will never know -  
 as if weighing the merit of my determination  
 that two dollars is simply one too many for  
 fake white pills - but in that fluttering  
 fake flourensece I'm as confused as  
 you man - TO THE PARTY - we immediate!  
 hello graffiti smell music,  
 hello painting in silk-lined suits -  
 hello synthesizers on sawed-off  
 NO PARKING signs -

"CONNOR MAKES EVERYTHING" -  
 hello Symbiotic dancing - "what can I do  
 You for?" The Empty Bucket asks - Burners  
 name everything - as people grab the hands  
 of passerbyes - unsolicited communication  
 HELL, shake it up - how long we stay (UNINTELLIGIBLE) -  
 hello saddest orange cones - old municipal  
 cars - hello cigarettes bummed under  
 fictional pretenses -  
 hello door guys  
 remembering real girls' pants -  
 and older women from Anchorage asking  
 about Mr. Blueberry -  
 "this jacket has never smoked  
 Meth" - "neither has this vagina" -  
 something about umbrellas -  
 Matt, Megan and Michael don't  
 Give a fuck - Seed of Soul with  
 Rubberband mandolins -  
 hello Dog shit foot  
 Just finished his 10th nutcracker -  
 well those are different people but  
 have YOU ever watched fingers  
 On a saxophone? -  
 Yes, time well wasted in a  
 room full of online punks  
 in an old church with bees in the wall  
 and airplanes so low.

## WHEN THE PARTY WRITES THE POEM

Four weeks into not having  
 a functioning cell phone, I  
 attended an art party here in  
 Austin. I had adopted other  
 means of remembrance and  
 decided to carry around  
 a little yellow notepad to  
 write down my thoughts  
 and observations, as well as  
 vignettes from my own and  
 others' conversations.

The result is a vibrant  
 stream of consciousness  
 recollection of a night at  
 two Austin art parties.

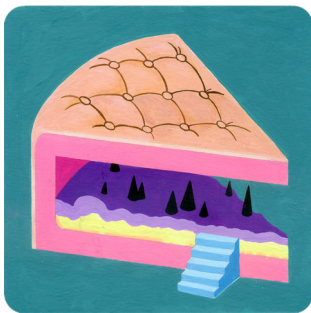
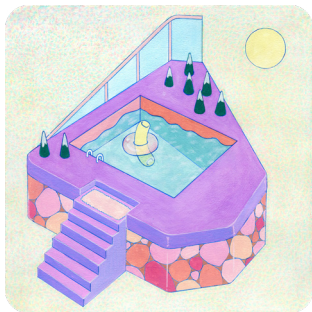
These are the notes  
 from a night in Austin  
 but they are not  
 the main plot  
 line.

**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: TSZ KAM**

Painter & Embroiderer: [tszkam.com](http://tszkam.com), [instagram.com/tszkam\\_art](https://www.instagram.com/tszkam_art)



I create textures  
in my paintings  
that often provoke  
feelings of desire,  
repulsion and  
curiosity.





## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: STEPHEN RENDON

Writer & Poet: [instagram.com/stephen\\_rendon](https://www.instagram.com/stephen_rendon), [tinyurl.com/y2u5n786](https://tinyurl.com/y2u5n786)

And you move your head  
For new angles  
You wish there was more color  
You want flashes of pink  
or a dark to light purple shift  
While you're talking to them

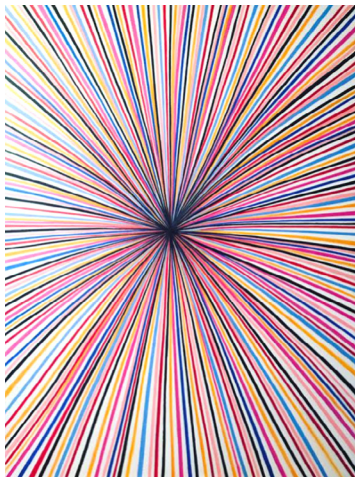
A pulse  
light waves around you when you learn  
about signs that would've kept you  
from going to school  
with a quarter of your friends.

To drip with brown and red  
seeing their tilted brains  
try to bend memories down to the mouth  
you want the earth dark brown  
You think there's more significance  
Than school or friends say  
Or don't say  
and that's what shows how unimportant they think it is.  
But those lights would let them know

History doesn't disappear  
it soaks in and changes colors.  
Here they are. Here it is:  
It's just a few different shades out the window.  
And you're still walking to grandpas.

For me writing about the town of Seguin, TX, is a conscious choice to try my best at not overlooking a group that's too often overlooked even by us who are a part of it: poor Mexican Americans.

These are the people I grew up with and love and am frustrated with and who I want to write about in the most honest way I can. To turn them from people you look over into vivid lives people can care about.

**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: CAMERON MCNEIL**Illustrator: [artistcamg.com](http://artistcamg.com), [instagram.com/cameronary](https://www.instagram.com/cameronary)

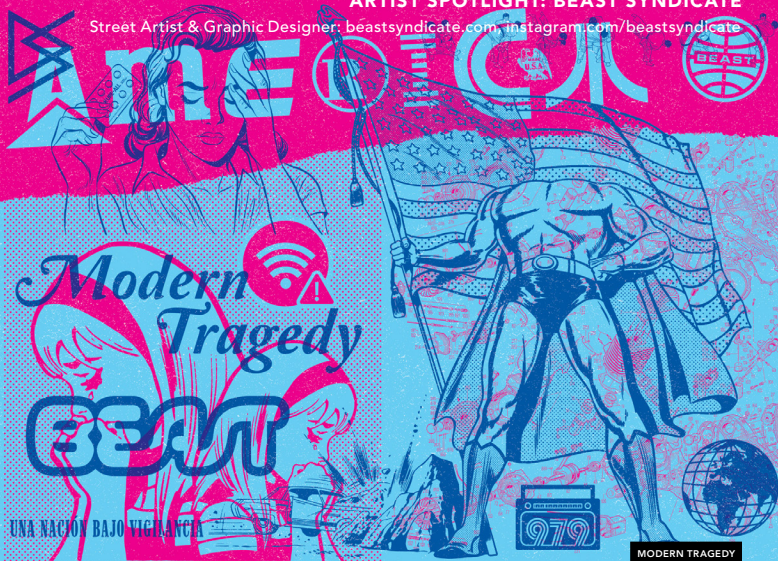
SETTLING INTO THE PRESENT MOMENT

My process is very fluid and whenever I'm stuck, an idea usually comes to mind that I say "no way, that'd be crazy" and that's always the cue to absolutely go for it.

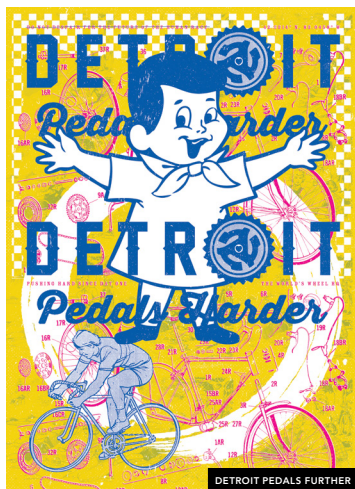


TOUCHING DOWN

## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: BEAST SYNDICATE

Street Artist & Graphic Designer: [beastsyndicate.com](http://beastsyndicate.com), [instagram.com/beastsyndicate](https://www.instagram.com/beastsyndicate)

MODERN TRAGEDY



DETROIT PEDALS FURTHER

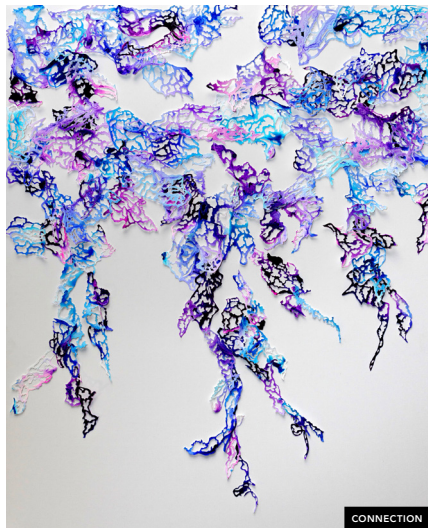
My artwork blends familiar visual references with subversive undertones, often employing the distressed textures of print-making and everyday detritus as a metaphor for the decay of the so-called American dream.



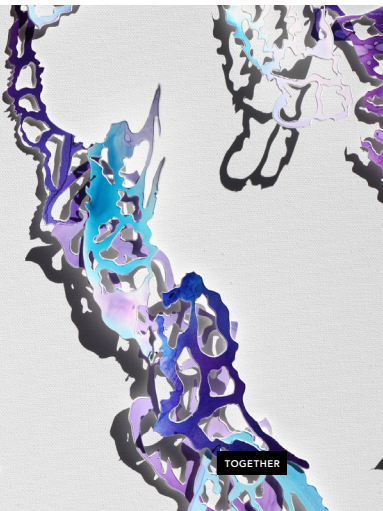
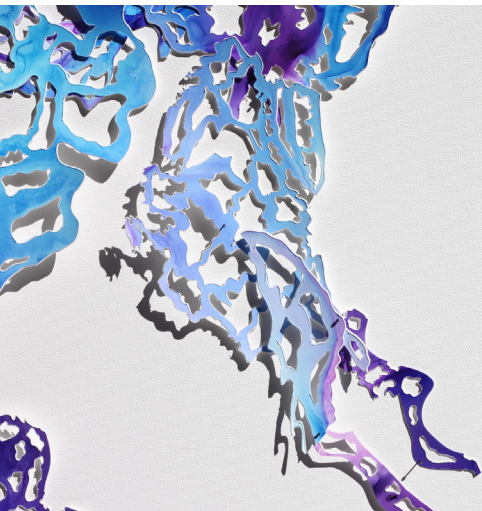
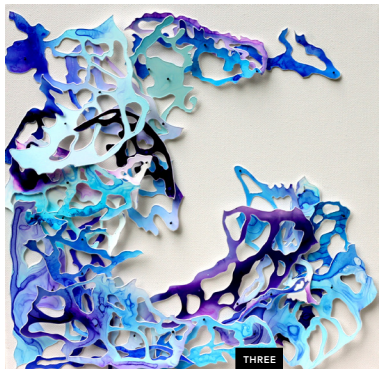


## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: MEENA MATAI

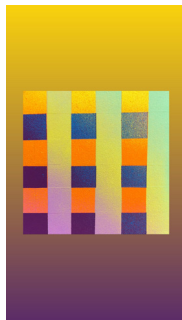
Abstract & Sculptural Artist: [meenamatai.com](http://meenamatai.com), [instagram.com/meenamataiart](https://www.instagram.com/meenamataiart)



We, as humans, are more alike than different. Just as colors come together to form beautiful art so do people to form a supportive community.



## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: GABRIEL PORTILLO

Painter: [instagram.com/\\_paste](https://www.instagram.com/_paste)

"Road to Space" is all aerosol.

It is a vivid connection  
of colors, shapes, and  
textures bringing you  
through a road to space.



## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: RUFFHOUSE ARTS

Illustrator: [ruffhousearts.com](https://ruffhousearts.com) [instagram.com/ruffhousearts](https://instagram.com/ruffhousearts)

SATURN BLUES

I just let things happen organically, the art dictates the meaning.







## ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: EFREN REBUGIO

Painter & Muralist: [everydayresearch.com](http://everydayresearch.com), [instagram.com/erthink](https://www.instagram.com/erthink)

on the cover



ER.

The Miami vibes and bright colors found in Efren's murals radiate positivity, and mirror his presence exactly.

Step 1: choose VIVID as our theme. Step 2: commission ER. for the cover. Simple as that. We've been following Efren for years, watching his growth and gradual takeover of Austin walls. His hand is quick and his eye for harmonious palettes is second-nature. Equally impressive is Efren's dedication to teaching his craft at school demos and private lessons in his backyard.





**"It's up to us to keep Austin weird, authentic and to keep this space special as it continues to grow."**

**DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE.**

My work is vibrant and colorful, with a lot of movement. I use animals as symbols of how we can conduct our lives.

**ANY SPECIFIC ANIMALS?**

For me sharks symbolize momentum. They're always moving forward. Even when they sleep, they have to keep swimming. Flamingos get their color from what they eat, so I think of it as "you are the energy that you surround yourself with." They also symbolize balance.

**DOES COLOR PLAY A ROLE?**

I grew up in Florida and had been surrounded by the beach my whole life. The colors I use are how I picture the sunset—purple, turquoise, pink and a lighter yellow. They resonate with me.

**DO YOU PREFER A BRAND OF PAINT?**

I go for Loop because they have a good color palette and they're affordable. Also Montana Gold.

**WHAT'S THE HARDEST THING TO LEARN ABOUT SPRAY PAINTING?**

The first time it felt like I was using a water hose as a pen. It's a thick medium, so you have to be aware of the pressure and how to use the different caps. That's why I like working large. It's easier to paint details. If you make a mistake, it's pretty easy to cover up.

**CASTLE HILL CLOSED. THE NEW HOPE OUTDOOR GALLERY IS STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS. WHERE DO YOU PRACTICE?**

I was fortunate to have access to HOPE as I was learning and experimenting. Later, I built walls in my backyard to practice on. Live painting is also great for practicing.

**IS THE MEDIUM COMPETITIVE?**

More artists are diving into outdoor art and murals but there are so many opportunities in Austin. I love the community here. There is so much talent and no ego. Artists share work if they can't do it. I've gotten so many gigs from other artists.

**WHAT'S YOUR OPINION ON CORPORATE COMMISSIONS?**

It's a double-edged sword. The companies I've worked with have been open minded, allowing artists to express themselves. That's better than hiring someone to be "the hand" that just paints their logo.

**DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR ANYONE GETTING STARTED?**

Practice, practice, practice! I'm still learning. Austin has been great for that. There are opportunities for all creatives here, and it's up to us to keep Austin weird, authentic and to keep this space special as it continues to grow. 



# PAW PAW

## Working their Paws Raw

INTERVIEW: NATALIE EARHART, PHOTOS: JON GARZA

*Bright, vibrant, energetic!*

These ingredients perfectly describe both VIVID and Raw Paw. As mutual lovers of print, oddities and art space we approached the collective / creative agency / production house for nonsense at noon.



### WHAT IS RAW PAW'S VIBE?

**Jinni J:** Colorful, youthful and lots of positive energy.

**D'Anna Siciliano:** Happy vibes!

**Chris Dock:** It's welcoming and inspiring. Each one of us has a different taste. We wanted to lean into that. Each person does what they're drawn to but everyone participates. It's a look we've cultivated. It's what feels right.

### WHERE DID THE NAME COME FROM?

**J:** We hosted a Poetry Potluck, and it came out of a hat.

**C:** We actually lived all over the world at the time, and we woke up at the same time and just knew.

**J:** Yes, a cloud took shape in the sky.

### YOU OPENED A BRAND NEW SPACE LAST YEAR. HAS IT CHANGED YOUR BUSINESS?

**D:** It's nice to have one central location where everything is in one space. It makes it easier for production, commissioning artists and hosting events.

**J:** This is our first public space so it's like a grand experiment. It feels surreal to be here. We have control over everything.





## HOW DO WE GET PEOPLE TO BUY ART?

**D:** Our artist series shirts are a good example. We commissioned artists to design them and created art that was affordable so that anyone could own it.

**C:** Our ethos from the beginning has been to price art in an affordable way. We want to make it accessible to spread ideas. If you water the soil around you, things start growing. Art is a good investment.


**J:** For people with money, seek out people in your community that are young, passionate, and make cool shit. You might feel disconnected, but artists need those benefactors to motivate them. Don't miss out on these young artists that are going to be famous. Get a piece now!

## DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR ARTISTS WHO ARE NEW TO THE SCENE?

**D:** Drop into the shop, or come to our events!

**J:** The way to find your family when you're somewhere new is to go out. And our events are great for that. People have met at our events and have gotten married later.

**C:** They've even gotten married at our events!

**J:** Whatever you're interested in, find out what's revolving around that. Make it easy for people to respond to you. Think about what you can do and what they need. The hardest thing to do is to persevere. It's okay to doubt yourself, you are an artist. 

## READ THE FULL INTERVIEW

[almostrealthings.com](http://almostrealthings.com)  
[rawpaw.ink](http://rawpaw.ink)  
[@rawpaw](https://twitter.com/rawpaw)



# ION ART

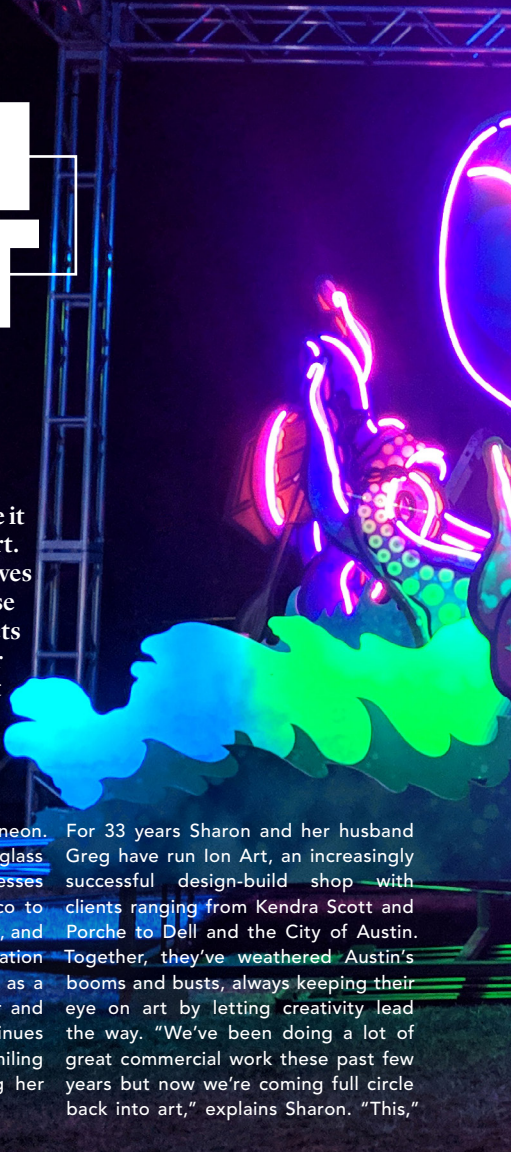
WORDS & PHOTOS: ZACHARY ZULCH

[ionart.com](http://ionart.com), [@ion\\_art\\_atx](https://twitter.com/ion_art_atx)

If you've seen any neon in Austin, there's a good chance it was made with love by Ion Art. They've established themselves as the go-to production house for creative corporate projects and now they're well on their way to creating Austin's next big annual art exhibition.

Sharon Keshishian was raised on neon. She was exposed to the art of glass early, from Native American businesses in her home state of New Mexico to Route 66 road trips with her family, and brought that knowledge and inspiration to Austin to pursue art and neon as a full time job. Now, 40 years later and an expert in her craft, she continues to work with a youthful fervor, smiling with excitement when describing her upcoming passion projects.

For 33 years Sharon and her husband Greg have run Ion Art, an increasingly successful design-build shop with clients ranging from Kendra Scott and Porche to Dell and the City of Austin. Together, they've weathered Austin's booms and busts, always keeping their eye on art by letting creativity lead the way. "We've been doing a lot of great commercial work these past few years but now we're coming full circle back into art," explains Sharon. "This,"





gesturing to the conference room filled with client work, "this was never what we envisioned when we first started but we're always excited to see where we end up."

Despite its challenges—burns, cuts, electrocution—neon has captivated Sharon. "Neon is timeless; it can look vintage or modern. Everyone is

attracted to light." The only problem, it seems, is that the art form has been held hostage by the word 'sign'. "Anytime there's neon on an art piece people call it a sign. It's not. I'd like people to know that it doesn't have to be a sign or words, it can be anything you want it to be—shapes, animals, installations, abstract art."





Now, it's easy to rant about people's misuse of terminology but Sharon is literally putting her money where her mouth is.

In 2017 she dreamt up Surreal Jungle, an interactive art experience to celebrate 100 years of neon and to prove that it's much more than simple signage. The inaugural show featured over a dozen installations created by Sharon and her team, plus drinks and a DJ to stimulate all the senses.

It was a hit! Sharon immediately began brainstorming for round two: Surreal Sea (pictured). "This is my favorite project. We're pushing it as a yearly interactive art show that makes people see neon as art instead of signage. People still want to buy 'safe art' that everyone else has. We're showing how neon can be fine art in the same way."

It's true, the average person doesn't have many opportunities to experience neon up close in art. Even fewer have the tools to use neon in their own art.







"People still want to buy 'safe art' that everyone else has. We're showing how neon can be fine art in the same way."



"It's even harder than it seems," Sharon says with a laugh. "It's all melted glass done completely by hand in the same way that people have been doing for 100 years." She worked with glass before neon so she caught on quickly when she was learning. But since I wouldn't even know where to start, I asked for a quick tutorial.

1. Get a feel for the glass: how it feels when you melt it, how it bends, how to blow out the hollow tube while keeping it at an even diameter.
2. Learn patterns: practice every shape you can think up. 'U' patterns, 90° angles, parallels, etc.
3. Learn to pump: bombard it with high-voltage electricity and vacuum out the air and impurities.
4. Put neon gas inside:
  - Neon in a clear tube is red gas.
  - Krypton is a peach skin color.
  - Argon is light purple in dim glass. Add mercury for blue, white, green.
  - Today, most glass is made with a phosphorus powder calculated through a bunch of chemistry.

Got all that? Cool, good luck! 

# TIME TO PLAY HOPSCOTCH

If you've ever been hesitant to walk through an art museum or afraid you won't look the part at a gallery show opening, you're not alone. Even as an artist, I find myself second guessing whether I belong at some art events. Am I weird enough to be here? Am I fancy enough? Do I know enough about art to talk to anyone?

Nicole Jensen and Hunter Inman saw these limitations and wanted to break down the

barrier between artist and audience. Their solution was Hopscotch—a two-month long exhibit filled with immersive installations that beg for interaction. A vision of light and sound.

## LET'S PLAY!

In late 2016, Hunter proposed the concept of an immersive art event to Nicole. They were intrigued by the approach of Meow Wolf and saw a lack of similar experiences in Austin.

In their search for space, they brought on dadageek co-founder Lisa Woods to curate.

Lisa's connection to the creative scene was vital to the experience. Nicole and Hunter wanted to showcase Austin artists to support the community. They also partnered with HOPE Outdoor Gallery, allocating a portion of sales to support their upcoming Carson Creek location.

If it seems like Hopscotch appeared from thin air, that wasn't an accident.

WORDS: NATALIE EARTHART



MATRIX, MALIKA BOUDISSA. PHOTOS: LAUREN GOULET

"Fortune favors the patient." This was Nicole's mantra during the two-year period of preparation. She intentionally delayed announcing the exhibit until they were 100% certain that it would happen.


From the moment it opened, people flocked to swim in the LED ball pit and ruminate under Thunder & Lightning's balloon cloud storm. When I asked about the reactions, Nicole revealed that she was surprised at the close connections people made. "We even had a group that spanned four generations. A woman brought her 91-year-old grandmother, her mother and her daughter to experience the art."

By recognizing the typical barriers of entry for people attending art events, Nicole and Hunter created an atmosphere that could be anything the audience

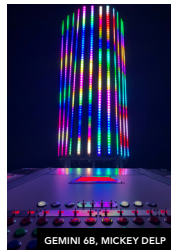
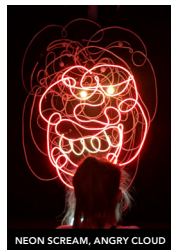


wanted, because they were a part of it.

"For me, it's a place where you can forget the outside world," explains Nicole.

The duo have already hopped to it, beginning build-out on a permanent location in San Antonio. The space will be a combination of immersive art provided by Texas artists and a few of the current installations on a larger scale. So don't worry, you'll get another chance to swim in the ball pit after all. 

[letshopscotch.com](http://letshopscotch.com)



**PEOPLE  
DON'T  
DRIVE  
CARS.**

**CARMA**

**SUPPORT THE DRIVER BAN IN TEXAS!**

**CARS  
DRIVE  
CARS.**

[almostrealthings.com/carma](http://almostrealthings.com/carma)



# We the incompetent drivers, **forfeit the right to operate a motor vehicle in the state of Texas.**

We understand that this will reduce our impact on the environment, decrease anxiety and improve the quality of life for all Texans. We accept these consequences and freely make this decision on our own accord.

When the driving ban is initiated, we will surrender our keys, including spares. Cars will be repossessed and repurposed by TxDPS, so we can expect the process to take 43 years. When the inevitable protest erupts from the pro-driving extremists, we will appease them by allowing them to keep their cars without their keys, prompting an era of Flintstones-inspired travel. We will not mention that cars are now automated, instead watching them direct their anger towards pointless causes.

We take full responsibility for the incompetence we inherited/learned/succumbed to while driving in Texas.

## Although we do not want to admit it, we have, on occasion:

- Pulled out onto a busy street while a car is heading our way at 40mph
- Pretended we didn't see the "Right Turn Only" sign and cut back
- Never used a turn signal
- Turned in front of a slow elderly couple
- Turned onto the freeway at the last minute
- Did donuts with swangers at the intersection of 7th & I35 Frontage
- Made a turn from the middle lane
- Used the shoulder to cut through traffic
- Driven through planters and sidewalk to get out of a parking lot
- Tailgated people driving the correct speed in a school zone
- Honked at a car not turning on a "No turn on red"

Whether or not we are guilty of some or all of the offenses, we accept the burden that such behavior has created. We accept walking, jogging, running and biking (not motorized) as alternative modes of transportation. Scooters will be collected and burned in a fire. Our repurposed car will be returned to us in the form of a fully autonomous vehicle, for a fee.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*By reading this sentence, you are entering into a legally binding contract.  
Please sign, date and mail to: TxDPS, PO Box 4087, Austin, TX 78773-0001.*

# VOCAL VEGANS VERBALIZE VULNERABILITIES FOR VOICELESS VET VICTIMS, VULGARLY VILIFY VORACIOUS VENTURES ON VIDEO




**IN A PROTEST ON TUESDAY, VEGANS GATHERED AT THE TEXAS STATE CAPITAL TO VOICE CONCERN OVER ANIMAL SHAPED FOODS, STATING "THEY TEACH PEOPLE THAT EATING ANIMALS IS OKAY."**

In a live-streamed video, the growing mob demanded a full boycott of any business turning a profit from animal shaped or themed edibles.

"Living creatures, and anything even resembling a life form should NEVER go in or around your mouth!" cried Diane Pizza, Vegan. We've reproduced their full demands (see right).

"I'm not even vegan, I just saw the activists while I was grabbing a taco and said 'hey, it probably feels pretty good to be a part of something'," explains Gabe Jackson.

Even vegan snacks like Animal Crackers aren't safe from the outrage, with SNAX ETF feeling the effects during Monday's 2% dip at opening. No research has been done to prove causality.

With a long road ahead, this unorganized group vowed to stand strong until human supremacy is eradicated from food. They dispersed at lunch. 

## BOYCOTT

Barnum's Animals® Crackers  
Haribo® Gold-Bears®  
Trolli® Sour Brite Crawlers®  
Swedish Fish®  
Just Born® Peeps®  
Meiji® Hello Panda  
Pepperidge Farm® Goldfish®  
Nabisco Teddy Grahams  
Yummy® Dino Buddies®  
Cadbury Creme Egg®  
Lindt Gold Bunny  
Sour Patch Kids (cannibalism)  
Easter Eggs

## INITIAL DEMANDS

Rename hot dogs  
Rename vegan buffalo wings  
No animal pancake shapes  
Ban Easter & Japanese snacks


**DISASTER  
CHANNEL**

## Where Tragedy Strikes®

Feed your wild side with the latest disappointing, disgusting and deadly national and international news stories. Grab your high blood pressure medication—we don't sugar coat it.

TIME	TOPIC	TOP STORY
9AM	LOCAL <b>Morning Update</b>	Traffic jam. Boil Notice: Austin water contaminated again. Landfill full, to become jungle gym.
10AM	WEATHER <b>Juxtaposition</b>	Black Clouds: 40° highs, flooding, high-speed wind. California Burning: watch in real time.
11AM	ANIMALS <b>Extinct or Soon to Be</b>	10 badass extinct species. Last panda won't bang, dies. Ice caps melted, Polar Bears hot and stupid.
12PM	MONEY <b>Stock Watch</b>	USA sells to China, markets plummet. Elon Musk is Satoshi Nakamoto, Bitcoin renamed sHiTcOiN.
1PM	FOOD <b>Diets to Die For</b>	Cancer curing miracle foods found to cause cancer. Is Topo Chico diluted cyanide? Bananas wiped out...
2PM	CELEBRITY GOSSIP <b>Your Idols are Trash</b>	Rehab Recaps: racist rants and more. Everyone's raping each other. Scientology's newest recruits.
3PM	TECHNOLOGY <b>AI Didn't Start the Fire</b>	Autonomous car software switched with bumper car software. Boston Dynamics loses all robots.
4PM	SPORTS <b>Oof! Ouch!</b>	Volleyball player breaks legs. Trump: Football is illegal, spites Kaepernick. UFC stars hug, angrily.
5PM	EDUCATION <b>Will We Ever Learn?</b>	Opioids in School: suicide or overdose? School shooter prep teaches shooter about vulnerabilities.
6PM	RELIGION <b>Rapture Watch</b>	Mayans dyslexic, end of days is really Dec 2021. Catholic church begs forgiveness for pedophilia.
7PM	WAR <b>Conflicts</b>	Domestic: War on Drugs, Racism, Sexism, Obesity Foreign: Pakistan, Yemen, Syria, Libya, Uganda,...

# FINISHIT

In an effort to clear both my mind and Google Drive (my storage space is seriously running low), I've set a task for myself: complete unfinished work. Though years have gone by, I feel I owe it to myself to finally finish the work that has collected digital dust on my desktop and move on.

In that regard, here is a piece started five years ago by 23-year-old me—fresh out of college and panicking at every waking moment.

WORDS: NATALIE EARHART

6:09pm at the corner of San Marcos and Hollister, number 11 bus headed towards Camino Real Marketplace. Clarence should have been here by now.

Clarence Willis: mid-thirties, looks like an ex-defensive tackle. He's the only bus driver who posts his full name above him. *He's never late.* Before the doors even open he's waving his large palm frond arms and scowling at you for fumbling through your wallet. If you're ten cents short don't even bother—Clarence doesn't take bullshit excuses in lieu of payment. "Is that a Canadian coin you just put in my machine young lady?" I've been studying Clarence for writing and revenge purposes.

I sit and wait on a bench at my stop which is conveniently chained to a trash bin. The other day a woman attempted to throw her blue bag of dog shit over my head but instead it just bounced off of me and into the bin. It was my first and last alley-oop.

Breathing in the rotting apple cores and cigarette butts has set my mind to rewind to graduation day. It's the moment where my life got stuck in pause and I took a long breath in that I have yet to exhale. I look down and see the high school graduation gown I borrowed. To be clear, I borrowed it for my high school graduation. Four more years have gone by and I haven't hit my growth spurt. My fingers are still crossed for age 24.

All of my family is at a distance, and distant from each other. They'll soon be signaling me towards their discrete meeting locations and I'll have to decide who to take a photo with first. I feel my life suspended in space and there is no pressing play until I know what comes next. *What comes next?*

My mind rewinds further to the last day of Senior Projects, listening to everyone discuss plans for the future. I am last in the circle. The repeating mantras of "I don't

know” and “Move home” proceed me and I’m convinced I’m in the clear. My shoulders relax until I hear that goddamn show-off Michael Tanner nonchalantly share his plans, “Well I just got this scholarship to Parsons for photography so I’ll be in New York next week.” Fuck you Michael.

I rewind once more to the day I changed my occupation on LinkedIn from “Natalie Earhart: Pizza Maker” to “Natalie Earhart: Artist.” Perhaps a more accurate description is “Natalie Earhart: Bus Rider.”


The thought of the bus jolts my memory back to the present day. So far this year I’ve spent every Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday sitting on the number 11 bus with nothing else to think about except the bus drivers. There’s Alma who’s always late, Sal who speeds through yellow lights, and of course, Clarence Willis.

My writing time has been designated to my fifteen-minute breaks at work and in between bus stops because I can’t be productive without such narrow time constraints. I’ve replaced my notebook with the back of last week’s paycheck stub.

I’ve lost myself in assistant teaching, a job both inspiring and torturous, because it is easier to improve others’ work than it is to start my own. Send me your paper and I will make it better. *I will make you better* in the hopes of making me better too.

I’ve grasped for inspiration many times before. I remember staying up until 5am making a project from stolen to-go cups and plastic straws that I strung along the hook designated for Marissa’s disco ball. Look, it’s kinetic sculpture! Sleep was impossible as I laid down on my itchy, brown, stained carpet and thought “What the hell am I doing with my life?”

Yesterday with no supplies in hand, I found myself once again laying on itchy, brown, stained carpet in a new house thinking, “What the hell am I doing with my life?” My thought quickly turned to the fact that in spite of moving four times in four years, every year I’ve ended up with itchy, brown stained carpet. An investigation into this may be a good use of my time.

It’s 6:16pm and here he is: the terror of Turnpike road. The disappointed parent of public transportation. The object of the creative cement I find myself stuck in. I think I’ll tell him that he’s late. I could use a walk and change of pace. 





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