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*Issue 6
June 2009*

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SPOKE(a)N(e)

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Cover Photo of James Pants & The Royal Zodiac and Compulsive Chronichles photo by Tyson Habein*

We do our best to make sure all items are accurate and complete, if you notice a mistake, let us know and we will do our best to rectify the error.

I

Art should involve people. I don't mean a few people; I mean a lot of people. Art should actively seek to involve as many people as possible. Art shouldn't be created by, enjoyed by, and discussed amongst a select few. I'm all for the democratization of art appreciation.

N

This is what Spokane needs. This is what SPOKE(a)N(e) needs. Democratization. Action. Interaction. Conversation. This month's First Friday was a great one. There were several art displays that I knew I must see. There were several others that I wish I would have had time to see. The fact of the matter is that Spokane's art community is simply too large and too prolific for one person, group, or publication to cover. Sadly, despite our invite in digital form to a whole list of people, only a few said hi while we were out. We don't need everyone there every day/week/month, but we need folks who care about Spokane to come out every once in a while. We need your help.

T

Don't mistake this as a call for contributors (although we are always looking for those). This is a call for interaction. It's all about the last half of that word: *action*. If you are looking at SPOKE(a)N(e), then obviously you are interested in Spokane's creative culture. So what are you doing to help it? You don't have to put up money (although many artists need it). You don't have to publish a magazine (although we welcome the company). You don't have to show up to every event (who can?). What you need to do is interact. Look over at the person in the car next to you, roll down your window and ask "Have you seen any good art displays lately?" After they're done thinking you're crazy, maybe they'll think about what sort of art is available in Spokane. That's all it takes. Start the conversation. Let's get interactive, Spokane.

E

R

Can you tell I'm passionate about this stuff?

Tyson Habein
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Received via email:

Great First Friday write up.

T

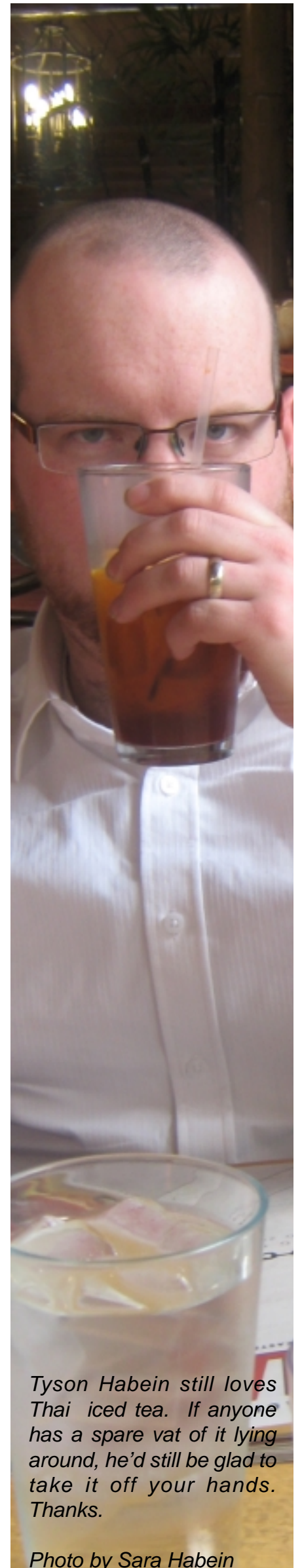
I didn't make it to any galleries that night, but my experience is usually right along the same lines, intense disappointment with just enough glimmers of hope to keep me motivated.

That's the first in-depth art walk coverage I've ever come across! And after living and making art in Spokane for my entire 27 years of life, I have complained A LOT about the lack of arts coverage/critique. Please keep it up... I'll keep making art (got a big show at the MAC in July) and I may have some advertising coming your way fairly soon, so I'll let you know. THANKS.

Gabriel Brown : Artist/Garbologist : www.gabrielbrown.net

Thanks for the note, Gabriel! We'll keep covering the arts and creative culture in Spokane as long as folks feel there is a need. Spokane has so much more to offer when it comes to creativity. It's good to hear that others agree with us in that regard.

Correction from Issue 5, May: The musician performing at Art Music and More who was listed as Brian Griffin should have been listed as Brian Griffing. We regret the error.



Tyson Habein still loves Thai iced tea. If anyone has a spare vat of it lying around, he'd still be glad to take it off your hands. Thanks.

Photo by Sara Habein

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Photos Submitted by Leeth

The Basics: name, occupation, where you're from and if it's Spokane, what keeps you here?

Carl David Leeth. Graphic artist to pay bills. Photographer and writer by heart. I'm mostly from Spokane, though I've also lived in Bismarck, ND; Ontario, CA; and Seattle. Spokane is my home, and home is important to me. Sometimes I wish home was in a more job-filled market.

How did you get started, not only shooting, but doing as much post-processing as you do?

I only started photography so that I might use Photoshop, though I don't PS everything. I use Photoshop because I'm a frustrated artist. I used to draw very precise pen and ink portraits, but it was unrewarding; I was merely copying photos. I could never draw from my imagination and that bothered me. Photography and Photoshop give me more artistic freedom, and it's a lot more immediate. I could get hit by a bus any day. I want results now.

I post-process because my photos never look like the world I'm seeing. Sometimes it is much more colorful and vibrant. At other times it is populated with demons and ghosts.

A gallery calls you tomorrow. Are you interested in putting together a show?

I actually have been offered a showing, but it was in January with all the snow and crap, and I just couldn't muster any interest. I'm not against the idea and still might do it if the opportunity ever presents itself, but I'd really much rather have my photos displayed on LCD screens instead of paper. The printed page is just not satisfactory.

When did you start working with the panoramas and 360 degree view pieces?

I first got the idea for a panorama when I was in London. I had just climbed over 3,000 steps at St. Paul's Cathedral and emerged onto a circular deck that overlooked the city. There was no question that I would have to do a

360 panorama of London. It was the only way to communicate what I was seeing. The world is often too large and beautiful (or scary) to be contained in a single frame. At least it is to me.

How long does one of the 360 degree view pieces take you to complete?

I've done so many panos that I can put one together in a night, most of the time. The post-processing is another story. That varies.

Why hand-stitching everything vs. a program to do it for you?

Well, with some photos I actually do use Photoshop's photomerge function now, as the first step. But that works better with distant shots or landscapes. Some of my panos are closer and too detailed, and auto-stitch software makes errors. I have to cover those up. But I like to do it by hand because it's meditative and part of the process for me. For my Duncan Gardens 360, there was no question it had to be done manually. Auto-stitch just wouldn't work with the hundred or so figures that follow me through the pano. It was the most complex one I've ever done, and took over three nights to stitch together. A couple of times I thought I couldn't complete it because of perspective problems.



Who is your work aimed at?

My work is aimed at myself, and is often personal, but I put it out there for an audience in order to connect and communicate what I'm feeling or seeing. If you look at my stuff and just see a photo, then I haven't really done what I want. If you laugh, or are creeped out or are impressed in any way, then I've done right. That doesn't happen as often as I'd like.

Who or what would you say is influencing you right now?

My friends influence and inspire me. Getting older influences me hugely. How I look at the world has changed

(continued)



Carl David Leeth is someone I've been watching develop as an artist for the past year or so. I was first drawn in by the intricate and careful Photoshop work that has become his signature, with 360 degree panoramas and graphics seemingly pulled out of thin air. As of late, his photography has grown to match the skill of his digital manipulations. I thought it was time to put the SPOKE(a)N(e) profile questions to him.

-Profile and Portrait by Tyson Habein



so much over the years. I guess nothing has more power over me than time. It's hard to explain.

What do you like about Spokane's creative community, and what would you like to see?

I'm probably not the person to ask this question, because I don't go out a lot and mingle with the creative community. I don't enjoy crowds and I utterly suck at small talk, so I tend to withdraw around people I don't know. I can tell you what the creative community doesn't need : self-absorbed hermits like myself.

You can see more of Carl David Leeth's photographic and photoshop work at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jibbyimages>



Photos Submitted by Leeth





Band Concert and Live Event Photography

A photograph of a musician playing a keyboard on a stage. A large, bright fire effect is visible in the background, creating a dramatic scene. The musician is shirtless and wearing a dark skirt or pants. The stage is dimly lit, with the fire providing the main light source.

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A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sky is filled with orange and yellow clouds, and the sun is low on the horizon. In the background, there are dark, silhouetted mountains. The water in the foreground is calm, reflecting the colors of the sky.

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What I am about to tell you will either make you even more determined to learn how to knit, or you will turn away in disgust if you happen to see some yarn or knitting needles appear.

I officially learned how to knit on August 21st, 2006. I remember this well because my best friend Rayleen had come up for a visit and she was determined to make me join the cult of knitting since she herself had learned a year earlier. When Rayleen wants something, you don't argue with her, especially when she's waving around pointy objects.

To be honest, I was excited because all my life I wanted to knit my own sweaters. I was already an accomplished crocheter, but crocheted sweaters never wind up looking as nice as knit ones, and there are only so many doilies one can make before realizing that doilies are kind of ridiculous.

Anyway, she sat me down and taught me the basics. Little did I know that knitting would have such a high learning curve. Because I was so impatient to make a sweater, I didn't want to sit around and knit up a bunch of scarves and washcloths — I just wanted to get right to it. Of course, when my first project disaster happened while making a simple scarf, I wanted to cry. No one ever explained to me that I was going to make a ton of mistakes before I'd get good enough to reach my goal of the perfect sweater, and my failures were a rude awaking.

The first failure and valuable lesson I learned was to never use expensive yarn for a project if you don't know what you're doing. I had been knitting for just a few days when I decided that I wanted to make my mother a nice scarf from a skein of yarn that was a beautiful blend of silk and sea cell (fiber made from sea weed). It was such beautiful yarn that it had cost me \$35 dollars for just one skein. I did the unthinkable with this beautiful yarn: I let my inexperienced hands attempt to knit with it, and I paid dearly for my ignorance.

Silk yarn is very slippery. I could barely knit and purl properly, how was I going to be dexterous enough to keep this yarn from slipping off my needles? Oh, that's right, I wouldn't! I was also stupidly attempting to do the drop stitch, which is not a silk yarn-friendly stitch. In addition to this, I wound up making it way too wide, and it was becoming obvious that it would wind up more like a shawl than a scarf. So I had to rip it all out and start over. I wound up ripping out my project 3 times. And then my yarn started to get all tangled up and lose its sheen because it had been used too much and the friction deteriorated the fibers. In the end, I couldn't get it to wrap up into a neat and tidy skein again, and I wound up throwing it into a drawer, knots and all, and tried to pretend like I didn't just waste \$35 and countless hours of my time for nothing.

Another lesson I learned later on was about gauge. Gauge is the hardest thing to master, but if you want to knit clothing, it is essential to making sure that your project fits properly when finally finished. It would be easy if everyone knit with the same amount of tension, but it never works out like that. I am a relatively loose knitter, probably because in the end I'm pretty laid back. My friend Rayleen, however, is more of a high-strung worrier, so she tends to knit very tightly because she can't relax. If we were to make the same project, I would have to use smaller needles than her to make our projects wind up being the same size.

Of course, when I first began knitting, I didn't take gauge very seriously. Who wants to take the extra time to knit a test piece for something? Not me, I'm lazy! I had just learned how to knit cables, and I was excited to start a cabled sweater for myself. I didn't test my gauge and just guessed at what size needles I should be using. Well, when I was done making the front and back pieces, they seemed a little large. I figured when I made the sleeves, I would just make them smaller and that everything would wind up working out when I seamed all the pieces together. Not a chance! My finished sweater bunched up around the sleeve seams, the neck hole was way too big, and it hung like a lumpy blanket off of me when I tried it on. Plus, I hadn't knit the yarn tight enough, so the stitches were all too big. It was an obvious disaster that could have been prevented if only I'd paid attention to detail.

Did I mention that you could hurt yourself while knitting? If you become obsessed with finishing a project within a certain time,

then you might decide to knit for hours, for days on end. Many a dedicated knitter has done this, and you wind up with 'knitter's wrist.' Of course, the internet will tell you to step away from the needles for a few days, but what does the internet know? I refuse to turn into a pussy and I work through the pain! That sweater isn't going to knit itself!

Then there was that time when I was making a sock using some metal and extremely pointy double pointed knitting needles — my favorite kind of needle for making socks. I was knitting along, minding my own business, when suddenly the lead needle slipped out of my hand. I went to grab it in mid-fall and it wound up sticking straight into my palm. I had to literally pull it out of my skin! Thankfully it wasn't that deep of a wound, and it didn't really bleed too much.

And that's not all. You have to be prepared to be okay with spending thousands of dollars on knitting supplies and yarn. I am not even kidding. At some point you will decide that you need to have nearly every single size of knitting needle ever made in the material of your choice, and if you have a favorite size of needle, you're going to need more than one of them. Then you're going to need an awful lot of yarn for all the projects floating around in your head that need to be made. I have walked out of yarn stores having spent over \$200 many times. Because once you realize how many beautiful luxury yarns are out there, just waiting to be turned into sweaters or hats or socks, cheap acrylic just won't do!

But lest you think that knitting is just a completely crazy past time, nothing compares to that final moment when everything has lined up perfectly — the yarn is perfect, the pattern is great and easy to follow, the gauge is spot on, and when you've bound off the last stitches and are able to see the finished object in its entirety and it has come out flawless, *that's* what knitting's all about. The desire for a one-of-a-kind object has been fulfilled, and *you* were the one that made it happen — with nothing but some yarn, some pointy sticks and talent.

— Faythe Saxton



To read more of Faythe's knitting madness and general finger-pointing, visit amateurmalcontent.blogspot.com

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Spokane's annual ArtFest event, created by the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture 24 years ago, once shared the event with the Spokane Art School until the school closed last year. It is again solely a MAC-sponsored and run event and operates over a 3-day period in the beautiful Olmsted Brother's Coeur D'Alene Park, located in historic Browne's Addition. 100+ vendors from all over the Northwest and beyond exhibited and sold their work, while an estimated 22,000-24,000 visitors also enjoyed an array of live music, a children's activity area and more food than you could ever eat in a year. The event is held in the late Spring of each year. *(Photos and Interviews by Lloyd N. Phillips)*



Name: Josh Cote

City: Blachly, OR

Occupation: Artist and wire sculptor

Tell me something interesting about yourself: "I've been working with wire, doing wire sculpting, for about 4 years now. I tore apart a trailer and started sculpting with the copper (wire). Originally, I had been working with stone and wood, but found that the wire sculpting was selling better than the wood working."

Other interesting facts about his work: "To create something the size of the horse [pictured on the table at the left] takes approximately 1000 feet of wire." Standing behind Cote and a customer is his wire sculpture "I'm So Hungry I Could Eat a Cowboy," one of the more unique pieces at ArtFest this year. It certainly drew an audience. "That was created entirely from electrified fencing wire," he said. Inside the horse's belly was a cowboy playing a guitar.

My Two Cents: Cote's art is unique. His exhibit was well-presented and had no shortage of visitors, whether they were curiosity seekers or buyers. During one of our visits, a woman commissioned a piece of his work. This was my favorite exhibit of the entire show.

Name: Donzell Milam

City: Spokane, WA (originally from Tri-cities)

Occupation: Graphic artist and sketch artist

Tell me something interesting about yourself:

“I was the color designer and illustrator for The Crescent [Department Store] years ago. Did that for 25 years, their cosmetic ads, and my perfume bottles were so detailed that it was like a finished and unsigned work of art by the time you were finished. The shoes too, those were mine.”

Other interesting things about Milam:

“I went to school years ago for design. The Allied Alarm sign, the reflective one? That’s my design. I’ve been doing fine arts off and on since I was a kid and had my first show in the 7th grade. What I do with my art is I try to evolve an emotion. When you look at it you think.”



My Two Cents: Milam was one of a handful of artists and musicians scattered around just outside the ArtFest perimeter. He is a well-known and in-demand sketch artist around town, has participated in several Spokane First Friday art walks, exhibited at Nordstroms during Black History Month and has a studio downtown. If you don’t recognize his name, my guess is you’ve probably seen him. My feeling is that art works-in-progress, within reason, just might build more interest for ArtFest, draw in a bigger crowd, and with a bigger crowd, more vendors and revenue.

Name: Amy Sanchez

City: Spokane, WA

Occupation: Designer/Owner, Dahlia Jewelry – “I’ve been doing this full time for about 5 years now.”

Tell me something interesting about yourself:

“I’m a collector, I collect things. If I see that rusted piece of metal on the side of the road, it’s coming home with me! When my friends and me go walking, they say, ‘Can you not find something?’ “

Other interesting facts: “I’ve been making jewelry since I was a kid.” She also collects old furniture. “I’m a very eclectic and creative person. I’m into lots of different things and I think that comes out into my jewelry.”

How do you envision Spokane’s art community 10 years from now?

“I’ve been really impressed with the people coming out this weekend and the interest shown in what [the artists] are doing. I’m very impressed with the younger [artists] pushing the envelope and I think the community will continue to grow.”



My two cents: Among all the vendors at ArtFest, Sanchez was the first I came across in my search for someone from Spokane. (I was able to find 4, although the MAC listed 12). She was fun and interesting. On the last day of the show, she showed me a box which someone had traded for \$50 of her jewelry. Inside were what looked like several old cameo pins or broaches, sterling silver flatware, an old bus token, some coins and other assorted items. She was excited; she’s a collector and to her, it was the world. It was to me too.

Name: Bill and Karma Simmons

Occupation: Artists, sculpture, furniture designers, etc.

Town: Valleyford, WA

Tell me something interesting: “Two years after Karma and I met we got a sailboat and learned to sail. We went from Seattle to Mexico, then to Hawaii and then back up to Northern Canada.”

More interesting facts: “We’ve built the perfect studio, with living space upstairs, out in the country. It definitely has more studio space than living area, but we enjoy that.” Their runners sculpture [pictured] is going up in front of the Comstock Park pool in Spokane. “She drew it,” Bill said, pointing to Karma, “but we built it together.”

How do you see Spokane’s art community 10 years in the future? “We have a lot of great talent here now. Spokane’s not going downhill; it’s better than ever and can only get better!”

My two cents: After talking with the Simmons’ and listening to their stories over the three day period, I have to conclude that they are indeed truly dedicated artists. On the final day, I watched as Ms. Simmons sprayed down their sculpture, while answering the question over and over again, “What are you doing?” I’d also asked earlier. “We spray it with water to speed up the rusting process,” she said. I look forward to seeing the sculpture in its place at the park.



Name: Jason Rounds

City: Marysville, WA (grew up in Spokane)

Tell me something interesting about yourself: “My father started [Circlewood Products] 35 years ago, and I worked with him while I was growing up. I was going to school to be a teacher, which pretty much left my summers free to work on this. When he passed away, I just couldn’t let go.”

How do you see the future of the Spokane art scene 10 years from now? “It is improving and will continue to improve!”

My two cents: The wooden trains in this exhibit were very interesting and seemed to draw a lot of attention.



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The trouble with a free festival peppered with so much good music is that you find yourself losing track of how much money you spent on food and drink while in between tunes. And the people behind Elkfest must know this because I can't think of any other reasoning behind the audience waiting forty-five minutes or more between bands. In 90 degree weather, I imagine that sells a lot of beer, and yes, someone's got to pay for that sound system.

Still, my inner roadie had to wonder: Is there not a stage manager working this thing? One who could tell the band members that the time to eat dinner is not when they're due to haul their gear on stage?

Despite the time between sets, over the course of the three-day event, I heard no shortage of recommendable music. Elkfest may be one the best annual events Spokane offers, often held the same weekend as ArtFest held just up the road in Coeur d'Alene Park. Though the beer gardens are a popular place to watch the show, I do appreciate the open, truly all-ages atmosphere. I saw newborns, I saw teenagers, and I saw boomers. I saw a surprising influx of hippies — not to be confused with the ever-present hipsters, of course — original and otherwise. If anything, music festivals should encourage absolutely everyone to get out and have a fantastic time.

Tyson and I came late to Friday's lineup, only able to see Yarn Owl and the first half of The Globes' set. While Yarn Owl sounded rather good, The Globes made me a bit sad we had to go before they finished. Should the opportunity arise, I'll want to see them play again. Like a lot of bands, they've moved the rock show to Seattle.

Kaylee Cole opened Saturday, backed by a full band. What can be said about Kaylee Cole that no one's said before? She's a top shelf talent, and the addition of viola, guitar and drums to her already well-crafted songs made the heat easy to forget.

Ex-Hockey member Joel Smith arrived with his band, The Hands of Plenty, bringing a folk- adjacent set and a sense of humor. One song he introduced as revisionist history, about "the land surveyors, Mason and Dixon, as a gay couple breaking up."

Surprised, the bass player answered with an un-miked, "Really?"

And fair play to those two sets starting the day off right so that I wanted to stay for The Maldives later that evening. After finishing their dinner, Whiskey Dick Mountain took the stage with their unfocused, meandering blues-rockabilly hybrid, followed by local favorites, La Cha Cha. Maybe I'm in the minority, but rather than stay bored, I needed my own dinner. The Maldives put on a great show, with nine guys and possibly a million instruments on stage. They ended our day on an up note, with two tired children uninterested in waiting for Shim.

By far, Sunday offered some of the best music. Seattle's Pickwick, with their Andrew Bird-esque sound, remain my Elkfest favorite. If they don't make it, something has gone awry. Should you decide to further investigate any band mentioned here, they're it.

James Pants & The Royal Zodiac, fresh from the Sasquatch festival, had the largest crowd of the three days. As wary as I am to believe massive amounts of hype, the man earns every bit he's received. Engaging, talented and fun, they had the entire audience dancing and clapping with a level of enthusiasm unseen prior. Vellela Vellela continued the party after the break between, and if these two acts ever play on the same bill again, you'd best clear your schedule.

Minor complaints aside, Elkfest deserves to become a long-running Spokane fixture. Five years in, they've benefitted the neighborhood, local business and further brought attention to the area's best bands. I look forward to what and who the coming years will bring.

(--SaraHabein)



The Maldives
(Photo by Tyson Habein)



Yarn Owl
(Photo By Tyson Habein)



Joel Smith and The Hands of Plenty
(Photo by Tyson Habein)



*Whiskey Dick Mountain
(Photo by Tyson Habein)*



Pickwick
(Photo by Tyson Habein)



Father's Day



*A Photo Essay
by Sara Habein*



I borrowed these without asking.



The regular stuff really *is* too sweet.



Other people think they can take Glacier National Park Photos.
Yours are better.



This was what I bought you for Christmas that year.



I forget to talk about you in the past tense.
(1955-2005)

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Photo by Jonathan Martinez

I'll start off by thanking Paddy Hoy and Jonathan Martinez for saving my butt this art walk. I had no images to go with my experience, due to camera issues -- i.e. I walked out the door without a memory card because I'm that cool. They came through with some quality shots that illustrated a couple of our stops, and I appreciate it.

How often do multiple Spokane news outlets talk about the same show? It's almost never that the show that they discuss is an *art* show. However, that's what has happened with "Overripe Apple Pie," the exhibit in the Saranac Building that displays the works of Scott Kolbo and Meagan Stirling. The show deserves all the attention.

Stirling's perfect houses blasted with a shotgun give way to thoughts of a suburbia falling apart. Then, as you step into the next room, things get really dark. Scott Kolbo's prints remind me of the comic book drawings from top level artists of my childhood. They also remind me of my favorite movie of all time, *Waking Life*. These drawings are sketches of humanity. These are drawings of our frailty and weakness. It's only a moment after you enter the room that you notice that parts of the drawings are moving. Pieces of the display are projected onto the prints, giving them motion in an otherwise still medium.

I could continue to be intellectual about the pieces represented here. I could continue upon the path set out by the quality reviews and commentary given by the Spovangelist blog, and the *Inlander* before me. But what I truly have to say about this show is exactly what I jotted down on a scrap piece of paper in my pocket:

This is some of the coolest shit I've seen in years. Wow.

And that's what it comes down to. You need to go see this show. It's only at the Saranac Building until the 27th of June. Get down there and check it out. I'll be headed back for another look. This was one of the best shows I've seen in my 6 years in Spokane.

-- Tyson Habein



Photo by Paddy Hoy

BrickWall Photo Gallery had an eclectic showing of photographic styles as usual. This month, the pieces on display were less gasp-inducing than in the past, but worth a brief visit nonetheless. The odd thing about Brick Wall Gallery is that they are currently showing “popular prints of Cal Crook’s 1948 photographs.” While these would be interesting from a historical perspective, it seems odd that a photography gallery in the burgeoning art community of Spokane, with limited wall space and a massive number of local and regional photographers to choose from, would choose historical pieces over current art.



Photo by Lloyd N. Phillips

Charcoals of famous personalities adorn the wall of Express Employment Professionals beside an old Monarch wood-burning cooking stove and a western-themed chair. The charcoals by Matt Smith were part of the exhibit which also included photography by Monica Smith, watercolors by Judy Doyle, and acoustic guitar music from Ken Davis. The artwork will be showing through June.



Photo by Lloyd N. Phillips

Nathan Huston reads poetry accompanying the exhibit “Derby Dolls” by Spokane artist and Lilac City Rollergirl Stacie Ellis at the Browne’s Addition Wellness Center. In her work, Ellis interprets her teammate’s personalities and trials of strength in her own life.



Photo by Lloyd N. Phillips

Acquired in 1916 from collector William Manning, ‘Living Legacy: The American Indian Collection’ displays what was to be the founding collection of the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture. Included were a canoe and paddle built in 1905 by Chief Massalow (Masseslow) of the Kalispel Boundary Tribe and presented to Manning. The canoe was purchased by the museum in 1954.



Photo by Lloyd N. Phillips

First Friday visitors enjoyed “Joy in Emptiness: Thoughts on Healing,” a multi-artist photography exhibit held at Women’s Hearth, a program of Transitions. The drop-in center for homeless and low-income women received a grant along with several Cool Pix Nikon cameras. The women who took part in the project received their assignments and interpreted them as they saw fit. “A lot of the women who have participated, they’ve seen an increase in their pride and self esteem. It’s good personal growth,” said center director Mary Rathert. Local photographer Bob Rice volunteers at the center as an instructor, and musician/promoter Kari Knudsen, through her Spokane Babes of Music showcases, will donate the proceeds from that series to the center.



Photo by Lloyd N. Phillips

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We sit in hot cars and drive, drive, drive. We make mixes to fill the air. We try to soak in every moment, every song, and spend the breezy evenings in deep conversation. Every summer, we promise ourselves that after these long and sweltering months, we will return with stories to tell.

...

I am just past thirteen. When we walk in her back door, my friend's mom is dancing in the kitchen to what sounds like reggae. She sees us, turns up the volume and shouts, "I love this song! You have to listen to this."

Piece of shit car, I got a piece of shit car . . .

We become her back-up singers and the song stays on repeat for a while. The cursing only makes the song better. Late that evening, Elton John plays at such a volume that we end up closing the bedroom door so we can still talk. It is the beginning of a million stories I have told.

...

I am awaiting high school, and I am in love. It is not the first time, but it is the easiest to begin. He takes an interest in whatever music I have playing and buys Jewel's first album.

*Let the world spin outside our door
You're the only one I want to see*

People tell me I look like her, with blonde hair and crooked teeth. My friends later joke that he looks like the singer from Crowded House, but they don't mean it as a compliment.

By the end of the summer, I break up with him for a Pink Floyd fan. I find that I miss having someone who indulges the things I like.

...

:Compulsive Chronicles:

I am between ninth and tenth grade. Some of my friends can drive, and we do our best to wear out the car cassette players. They drive old Buicks and creaky Tauruses and we do not worry about all the gas we waste. We have a game that involves slapping the dashboard in a specific way every time we pass under a yellow light.

My friend and me, lookin' through her red box of memories

I help someone I've known since kindergarten move the contents of her bedroom into a new house. We spend a lot of time eating chicken ramen and listening to Our Lady Peace. I let her borrow The Verve's *Urban Hymns* and take calming breaths when she accidentally lets the liner notes become speckled with rain.

I begin making mixtapes for a car I do not own, nor one I am licensed to drive.

. . .

I am fifteen-going-on-sixteen, and I have recently attended his graduation. His band opens for Slackjaw when they play in a friend's basement, and then we drink gallons of coffee at the diner. "I'm on the radio tonight," he says. "You should give me a call." And I do.

Before I leave for South Carolina, where my car and a Pretenders concert await me, he buys me the *Isle of View* VHS for my birthday. He also buys me Sonic Youth and My Bloody Valentine albums, and I pretend to be more interested than I am.

I find myself listening to Pretenders' *Viva El Amor!* more than anything else, which I purchased on the long drive there.

Baby, they don't make 'em like they used to

We don't work out, but my tape of his last radio show will always make me laugh.

. . .

I am just past seventeen, and I am in San Diego at a yearbook workshop. We have embraced being the weird kids from Montana and have taken to filling our conversations with "The Safety Dance."

"Hey, do you know what time we're going to dinner?"

"No, but *you can dance if you want to . . .*"

We see Black Eyed Peas, Lit and No Doubt play at the arena. For some reason, I'm able to predict almost the entirety of the No Doubt set. They play "Trapped in Box" for their one oldie and I really hate her stupid pink hair.

. . .

The months bleed together, the friends scatter and the vacations happen less often. It'll never be the same, but I'd like more days where I need nothing but the company of others and a stereo.



Sara Habein would like to make a clarification regarding Issue #3. She does know that British and Irish are not the same thing, despite unclear writing that would imply otherwise. She promises her Irish friends she will pay more attention next time.

For mixtape artifacts of Sara's past, plus the song titles mentioned here, please visit glorifiedloveletters.blogspot.com

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