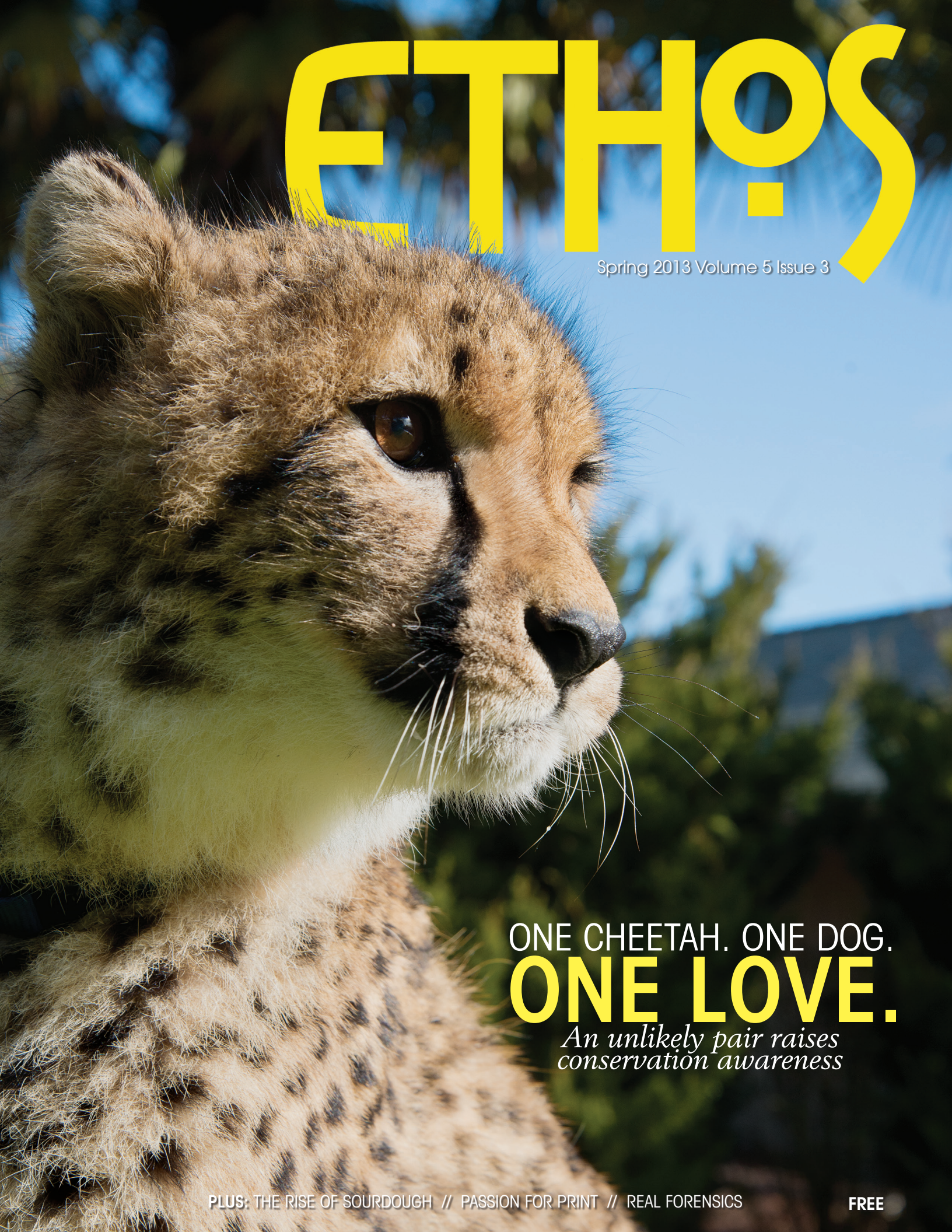




ETHOS

Spring 2013 Volume 5 Issue 3

ONE CHEETAH. ONE DOG.
ONE LOVE.
*An unlikely pair raises
conservation awareness*

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spring 2013

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EDITOR'S NOTE



In his memoir, *On Writing*, author Stephen King states, "Writing isn't about making money, getting famous, getting dates, getting laid, or making friends. In the end, it's about enriching the lives of those who will read your work, and enriching your own life, as well."

It's true that writing or publishing any form of journalism can bring about some, if not all, of those things. But at the end of the day, the core of a journalist's work is much truer than that. As storytellers, we are acutely aware that the values and lessons we learn from our sources can be used to educate, advocate, and entertain our readers. In our story "Beneath the Hijab," page 34, one writer uncovers the essence of religious clothing, while in another, "Uncontrollable Actions," page 20, we provide a glimpse into Tourette Syndrome, a well-known, yet mysterious neurological disorder affecting thousands of Americans. The piece, "Tattooed and Employed," page 24, explores the prejudices facing women with body art and the proactive action one group is taking to demolish those stereotypes.

Narrating stories such as these has allowed *Ethos* to illustrate countless aspects of the human condition through the last eight years, and my hope is that *Ethos* continues to document our ever-changing cultural landscape long into the future.

To the community members who have shared their work, lives, struggles, and dreams with our writers and readers, we dedicate this issue of *Ethos* to you. Without your perspectives and insight, *Ethos* could not create such intimate reflections of what it means to be human in today's world. So even if somewhere down the road getting dates or getting famous arises from our careers in journalism, please remember that these superficial benefits could never match the rewards we gain from working with you. Thank you for allowing us to share your stories. Enjoy.

Lacey Jarrell

Lacey Jarrell
Editor in Chief

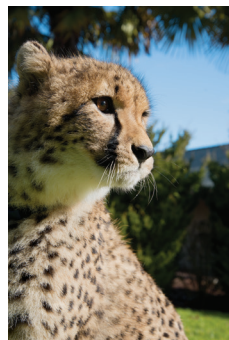


Photo editor Will Kanellos captured cheetah cub Khayam posing for visitors at Wildlife Safari in Winston, Oregon.

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Congratulations to the *Ethos* staff, both past and present, for its award-winning work. For its previous issues, *Ethos* received multiple awards from the Associated Collegiate Press and Columbia Scholastic Press Association, including its first Digital Magazine Silver Crown and two Society of Professional Journalists Mark of Excellence Awards.



Forensic anthropologist Nici Vance says dental work analysis is one of the most reliable methods for positively identify skeletal remains.

THE MYSTERY IN THE BONES

Oregon's head forensic anthropologist uncovers the secrets of the deceased by analyzing their remains.

Like many of the students in Veronica "Nici" Vance's University of Montana anthropology class in 1989, she had no idea what the word "forensic" meant. So when her professor asked, "Is anybody interested in working on a forensic case?" Vance, somewhat bewildered, cautiously raised her hand. She was the only student who did. At the time, the Missoula city police did not have an anthropologist to investigate deaths, so the crime lab turned to the university for guidance. Vance teamed up with a group of experts who were assigned to determine the gender, age, kind of trauma, and ultimately, the identity of a recovered body. The process was mysterious to the 19-year-old Vance who, at the time, had no idea how forensic science would apply to her future career. The team eventually concluded the remains were of a 16-year-old female homicide victim, but for Vance, the greatest discovery was her revelation of a new passion: forensic anthropology. Today, peering over a sterilized lab table, Vance examines bone trauma in the Oregon state medical examiner's office in Clackamas, Oregon. Since 2004, she has been the state's head forensic anthropologist, examining skeletal remains from every county in Oregon. She splits her time between working in the field recovering human remains for local police departments and identifying those remains through forensic analysis in her laboratory. Although Vance has successfully identified 15 missing people in the last 11 years, an expansive closet containing more than 80 unidentified body samples still awaits her study. In a process that involves unwavering patience, acute attention to detail, and collaboration with police and fellow scientists alike, Vance's career is, in the simplest terms, an enduring puzzle.

Reuben Unrau: What has been the most important step in your education to get where you are today?
Nici Vance: In 2003 I began mentoring under the wing of Dr. John Lundy, Oregon's head forensic anthropologist at the time. He earned his PhD in South Africa, and he urged me to do the same because so many people die there every year who can't afford funerals or burial plots, so they donate their bodies to science. The medical schools are amazing because there is about one cadaver for every two students, which is nuts [most universities in the US can only assign one cadaver for every 20 students]. It's a sad state of affairs, but it warranted a lot of important hands-on, gross anatomy experience for me. When I returned in 2007 with a PhD, Dr. Lundy had retired, and I became the state forensic anthropologist. He didn't hand me the reigns—he literally threw them at me.

RU: What was it like being surrounded by death and uncertainty as a 19-year-old undergraduate student, and even now as a professional?
NV: I grew up Catholic—I went to church every Sunday, and my brother is actually a Jesuit priest, so we had a lot of spirituality growing up. I had a pretty reflective conversation with myself early on and said, 'Ok, you can go one of two ways with this: You can either get totally freaked out by what you're looking at and what you're touching, or you can acknowledge the fact that you can't bring that person back—you can't do anything to help them in life. But in death, you can do so many things to help a person's case, to bring justice for their families, to bring closure for the people that loved them.' I really choose to focus on it that way. I try to pull myself out of the muck and look at it from a justice perspective.

DESIGN DELANEY PRAIT

PHOTO ANDY ABEYTA

“ IN DEATH, YOU CAN DO SO MANY THINGS TO HELP A PERSON'S CASE, TO BRING JUSTICE FOR THEIR FAMILIES, TO BRING CLOSURE FOR THE PEOPLE THAT LOVED THEM. ”

RU: What has been the most crucial technological breakthrough in forensic science?
NV: In 2004, the University of North Texas launched an extensive database called the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NAMUS). Before that, all of our information was scattered in boxes and files, and everything was extremely disorganized. Now, probably 95 percent of the cases that are in our storage facility for skeletal remains have a number, have been analyzed, and have a full biological profile. These profiles are sent to NAMUS and divided into categories: there's a missing person database, an unidentified remains database, and a convicted offender database. It's a dynamic tool, and it's national, so every sample gets put into it. It's kind of a civil liberties issue knowing that this one system holds everyone's personal information, but if it can further our investigations, I'm all for it. My mother always said, 'If you haven't done anything wrong, then why are you worried?' You can't really argue with that logic.

RU: Do you think forensic-themed TV programs like *Bones* and *CSI* inspire young people to get interested in forensics, or do they over-glamorize your career?
NV: I think TV shows are misleading because they show people in this career as antisocial, dark, surly, and sulky. We're really way more outgoing than those people, and we have lives; we have families, and we are truly passionate about what we do. But I think the programs are good because they show how fascinating my kind of work is. A lot of us like the way that they have furthered people's knowledge of science and the things that can be found at the crime scene. In fact, we find jurors to be more educated than they were ten years ago, but they also expect much more from us. Jurors tend to throw out blanket statements like, 'Why didn't you look for DNA?' without ever understanding the principles of how evidence is analyzed. Attorneys across the country have begun to call it 'the CSI effect.'

RU: What makes you a good forensic anthropologist?
NV: Curiosity. I feel like I'm smart, but I'm certainly not the smartest person. As a scientist, I am inherently curious about how things work and how things look. It's the puzzle solving, and the nuances of things, and trying to think outside the box: 'What else can we look for? What are we missing?' Everything I do is a puzzle, and many forensic cases can be frustrating because you can't solve them like a jigsaw. Sometimes you don't find that last piece, so you don't feel that true sense of accomplishment because a piece will always be missing. In many cases, animals seem to have always dragged something away.

RU: Even when cases seem to linger on forever, do you persist?
NV: Yes, absolutely. I want that closet empty by the time I retire, which may not be ever. I just absolutely love this career, and I feel it is my mission to answer every one of these unsolved questions. But really, I don't lose sleep. I feel good about the work I do, but I can leave it behind at the end of the day. I'm just like anybody else with a family to come home to and a life outside the laboratory. **o**

- REUBEN UNRAU



Information from each of the unidentified skulls in Vance's office is entered into a computer database where it can connect with more evidence that could one day solve a case.



Vance says each case that comes to the state medical examiner's office is placed in one of her four examination rooms.

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Dancing Along the Equator

Traditional dance performances reflect the spiritual, religious, and cultural values of three island nations.

Around the equator, three culturally diverse island nations—Maldives, Kiribati, and São Tomé and Príncipe—unite in the performing arts. Through theatrical performances, elaborate headdresses, and culturally unique instruments, these countries illustrate that dance can be more than just a form of body movement—it can provide insight into national heritage.

As a global form of expression, dances are performed worldwide for a number of reasons, including celebration, ritual, art, and entertainment. In these three equatorial countries, dance is considered an expression of history and can sometimes reflect culturally established social norms. Although dance adaptations vary from country to country, dance is a global language that, once the underlying history is understood, anyone can speak.

Spiritual Connection

São Tomé and Príncipe, a small island nation off the Atlantic coast of Central Africa, celebrates its mixture of African and European cultures through dance.

Roman Catholicism—brought to São Tomé through Portuguese colonization in 1472 CE—is the most commonly practiced religion in the country. By 1975, when São Tomé and Príncipe became a republic, the indigenous belief in communicating with ancestors took place alongside the Portuguese influence of the supernatural god and heaven.

Male and female *Djambi* dancers aim to cure a patient's illness by connecting with the supernatural world and accessing spirits. To the beat of a drum, the performance begins with psychotropic drugs that send the patient and onlookers into a trance.

An entire neighborhood will sometimes gather to witness the spirit possession as patients ceremonially cut themselves in the hopes of communicating with the dead to improve health, gain protection, or get attention from a lover. Those dancing *Djambi* believe in the unity of body and soul, the sacred act of honoring ancestors, and the fusion of the living world and the supernatural world.

Also brought to São Tomé by the Portuguese, *Tchiloli* is a meaningful dance that expresses much of the country's underlying history. *Tchiloli* dance performances are theatrical productions that narrate sixteenth-century Portuguese plays such as the Renaissance text, *The Tragedy of the Marquis of Mantua* and the Emperor Charlemagne. With faces covered in white powder, and dressed in sunglasses, decorative headdresses, ribbons, and knee socks, *Tchiloli* groups perform at local festivals and abroad to honor the connection between the nation's contemporary culture and its Portuguese influences.

Historic Expression

Located just north of the equatorial line and southwest of India and Sri Lanka is the small Islamic island nation the Republic of the Maldives. Through dance, the people of Maldives express their country's sacred Islamic customs by presenting theatrical performances that represent aspects of the country's past.

Buddhism was the Maldives' primary religion from the third century until 1152 CE, when its people adopted Sunni Islam. From that point on, citizens of Maldives adhered to Islamic rule, as other religious practices were prohibited. Because religion is such an essential element of the nation's culture, dance is used to engage audiences in a journey through historic ritual customs.

The *Bolimalaafath Neshun* dance reenacts a ceremonial gift offering of shells to a sultan, the king who held power and authority over Maldives before the country became a republic. The dance is traditionally acted out by 24 women who present the shells to the sultan in a vase called a *kurandi malaafath*, which is covered with a silk cloth. The women carrying the vase wear brightly colored silk dresses that cover their bodies from shoulder to ankle. Before the performance, the dresses are scented with incense to represent the Islamic belief in paradise—the sacred afterlife where believers live in blissful happiness. To the beat of the music, small steps are taken as groups of two to six women are formed. The women then sing and dance towards the sultan, expressing their sentiments as they prepare to present the *kurandi*.

While *Bolimalaafath Neshun* is performed as a historical display, *Boduberu*, literally meaning “big drum,” is performed by males and females dancers under a night sky as entertainment at nearly all celebrations. The dance begins with a solo lead singer, while the rest of the participants join in using their hands to beat on engraved coconut drums that emanate a hollow sound. As the music intensifies, spectators join in with clapping and dancers frantically move their bodies to the beat of the drum. The performance is often so enthusiastic that the music is referred to as “vibrating the island” and the dance has been said to send performers and audiences into a trance.

Accentuating Women

In Kiribati, a small island located in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, dance allows the predominantly Christian women to break out of traditional gender roles.

Christianity came to Kiribati in 1852 with the arrival of foreign missionaries and has since become a major cultural influence on the society's expectations of gender roles and equality. While men fish, construct houses, and build canoes, women clean, cook, and take care of children. Men hold much of the power in the home as well as the workplace.

Dance plays a huge role in the lives of the Kiribati people as a domain where power, authority, and sexuality can become blurred. Exaggerated body, hip, and neck movements bring women to life in a display of their strength, beauty, and power.

Kaimatoa, the most widely practiced dance on the island, represents strength. The dancers test their physical endurance by lifting their arms into the air for the duration of the dance. Although strength is typically

associated with a dancer's physical stamina, emotional endurance is also expressed in *Kaimatoa*, and occasionally the dancers weep.

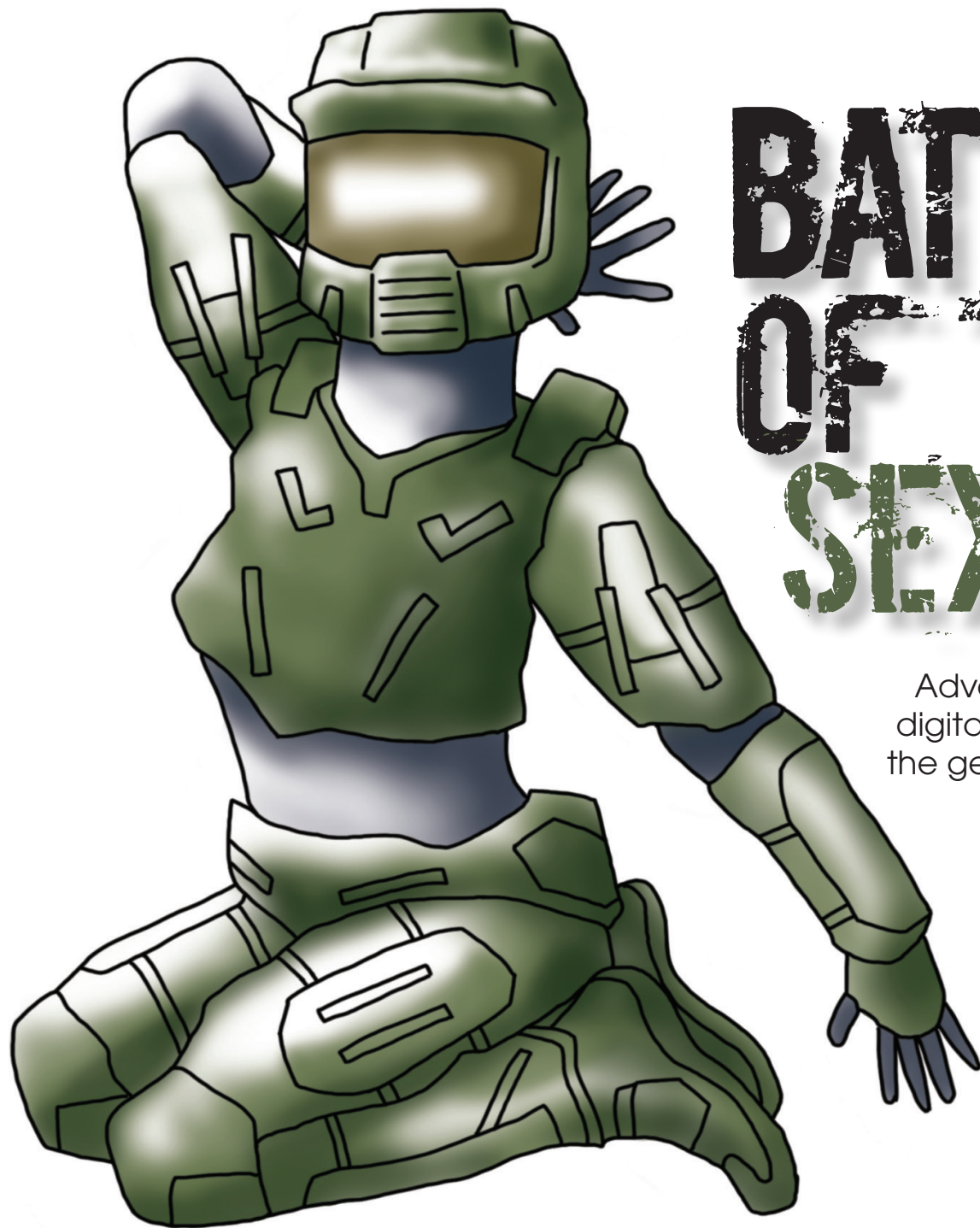
The women wear straw hats and long red skirts decorated with silver embroidery. Their arms are wrapped with red, yellow, and orange flowers. Men wear only tan skirts and straw hats, and their bodies are decorated with the same flowers. Staggered in sitting and standing positions, the dancers move slowly, twisting their arms to allow the flowers to shake back and forth. Hand clapping, foot stomping, and loud singing, draw the audience in and enliven the performance.

The Kiribati women are supposed to be at their most attractive when performing traditional dances because it gives them an opportunity to embrace their gender and be looked at with admiration. Such a physical view of women would not traditionally be accepted in Kiribati, but dance provides a rare opportunity for women to publically express their emotion and individuality. ♀

—HANNAH ZIMMER

DESIGN SHAWN TAYLOR

ILLUSTRATION AUSTIN POWE



BATTLE OF THE SEXIEST

Advances in the digital domain fuel the gender equality debate.

The battle for gender equality is an ongoing controversy that only seems to be increasing with the influence of new media outlets. As a realm of pseudo-reality where players can actively participate in the enhanced digital domain, video games have landed in the middle of this debate.

Part of the controversy surrounds the over-sexualized ideals game characters present to audiences: Women, although now being portrayed in more central roles, are often designed as exaggerated, voluptuous, hyper-sexualized vixens, while “idealized hero” male characters showcase an unrealistically muscular physique. On the other hand, some argue that’s the name of the game. Despite the social backlash from an abundance of exaggerated virtual bodies in game design, there is one major reason why marketers and game developers might see success in sexualized features: profit.

According to the market research firm DFC Intelligence, it’s estimated that by 2017 the gaming industry will surpass an \$87 billion global market value. In November 2012, the fourth installment of the popular *Halo* series brought in a record-setting \$220 million the day of its release. After attracting an estimated 4 million players who accumulated 31.4 million hours of game play in the first five days after its release, *Halo 4* was named one of the top-rated video games of 2012.

The science fiction, first-shooter game experience, now produced by 343 Industries, is centered on the cybernetically enhanced soldier known as Master Chief Petty Officer John-117. He is a cool, silent protagonist whose primary role is “protector.” Master Chief’s female companion, Cortana, is an artificial intelligence hologram. The Cortana character, although portrayed as smart, has become increasingly sexualized through *Halo*’s four series installments. In *Halo: Combat Evolved*, the first game in the series, Cortana

was androgynous, with cropped hair and few defined physical features. By *Halo 4*, Cortana’s figure is highly suggestive: Wide hips accentuate a narrow waistline, while her hair is longer and her breasts are more pronounced. And with the exception of the tattoo-like covering over her genitals and breasts, Cortana is nude.

Even before Cortana evolved into a hyper-sexualized character, the *Halo* franchise was widely popular among first-person shooter fans. Andy Sheridan, an employee at CD/Games Exchange in Eugene, Oregon, says he has been playing video games since he was old enough to hold a controller. Sheridan believes most games that are considered offensive contain sexual and/or violent content. “When you think about most of the people who play those games, they’re probably young men,” he says. “I’m not saying girls don’t play those games, but they’re probably appealing to their audience. Sex sells. I think that’s been proven. I think it’s definitely something that should be changed though.”

DESIGN BRITANY BERSIN

Although the sexualized evolution of video game characters like Cortana may appear to promote stereotypes, these enhancements can also create a more dynamic gaming atmosphere. Higher quality graphics are part of what appeals to game consumers, and competitive industry standards are being set higher every year. Nintendo’s *Metroid*, which began as a two-dimensional single-player narrative, has experienced this evolution firsthand.

This action-adventure game chronicles Samus Aran, a young female bounty hunter, who must conquer space pirates trying to control the Metroids, artificial organisms that can be transformed into bioweapons. Twenty-seven years after its release in 1986, *Metroid* was recognized in the *Guinness World Records 2013 Gamer’s Edition* as one of the earliest games with a female protagonist. Ms. Pac-Man was Samus’s only competitor at the time. Samus was and continues to be considered representative of a strong female protagonist character.

ILLUSTRATION AUSTIN POWE

As the *Metroid* series progressed through its 11 installments between 1986 and 2010, much like many female video game characters, Samus was shown in more revealing clothing. Originally, Samus wore a cannon- and gun-fitted “Power Suit.” With the 2004 release of *Metroid: Zero Mission*, the sixth segment in the series, Samus’s sexualization culminated with the introduction of a form-fitted “Zero Suit.” At first, the suit was worn under her Power Suit, and each suit had its own benefits in game play. But now, Samus goes through large segments of the game wearing only the skintight Zero Suit.

In 2012, women and men took to Twitter to discuss sexual objectification in the gaming industry under the hashtag “#Ireasonwhy.” The discussion was kicked off with a tweet from a Kickstarter employee, Luke Crane, who asked why so few women create video games. The

“If you’re a stable person you should be able to draw the line between **FICTION** and **REALITY**”

#Ireasonwhy movement brought about collaboration among game developers, critics, and players in attacking misogyny within the gaming industry. Many responses placed the blame for female game design objectification on male game developers, and several critics cited negative portrayals of women as an explanation for women’s lack of interest in video games. Indie role-playing game designer Elizabeth Sapat (@twoschooters) responded, “Every post-release positive review I’ve seen of games I’ve designed/published has couched praise for it/me in sexual innuendo #Ireasonwhy.”

Aside from the attack on the gaming industry, the hashtag also began generating dialogue outside the social media site. In the *Forbes* article, “The One-Sided Problem of Oversexualization in Video Games,” technology contributor Paul Tassi posits the question: “Is it even possible for a male video game character to be a sex object?”

Tassi centers his argument on the typical archetypal male hero whose anatomy he says represents “the pinnacle of human perfection.” A character, he adds, that embodies the ideal male physique, accentuated with “hulking and chiseled abs and broad shoulders,” and is similar in effect to hyper-sexualized female characters. Tassi points out that as female characters’ shrinking waistlines and ever-growing breasts become more scantily clad, male characters have also undergone physical changes—the only difference is females are seen as objectified and males aren’t.

When making the comparison, Tassi cited games such as *Soul Caliber*, a 3-D fighting game. Much like *Halo*’s Master Chief and Cortana, the features of *Soul Caliber*’s characters are exaggerated. But unlike Master Chief, whose body is covered in armor, *Soul Caliber*’s male protagonist, Misturugi, is shirtless. Tassi describes Misturugi as a “Samurai warrior that would likely make many women swoon if he was a flesh and blood man.” Although Tassi admitted *Soul Caliber*’s hero is idealized, he seems certain that if Misturugi acted out suggestive poses like his female companion, the result would fall flat, possibly even striking audiences as comedic.

According to the Entertainment Software Association, “Forty-seven percent of all players are women, and women over 18 years of age are one of the industry’s fastest growing demographics.” Some franchises, such as BioWare’s *Mass Effect* trilogy, have already begun responding to stats like these by moving in a gender-neutral direction—even if still highly sexualized—that could eventually quiet the stereotype debate. Regardless of whether game developers choose to portray more realistic characters in the future, Sheridan says video games shouldn’t influence someone’s outlook on reality. His opinion on sexism in the video game industry is simply this: “If you’re a stable person, you should be able to draw a line between what’s fiction and what’s reality.”

- ELENI PAPPELIS

A cheetah stands in the foreground on the right, looking towards the left. It is surrounded by tall grass and some dried, dark seed heads. In the background, a wire fence runs across the frame, and behind it, a herd of elk is visible in a green field. The background is slightly out of focus, showing rolling hills and trees under a bright sky.

COMPANIONS FOR LIFE

A unique cheetah and dog partnership in Winston, Oregon,
could help save the cheetah species from extinction.

STORY FELICIA KLOEWER
PHOTOS WILL KANELLOS
DESIGN KEVIN PIASKOWSKI



Sanurra, the cheetah, and Ellie, the Anatolian Shepherd, have been companions at Wildlife Safari in Winston, Oregon, since 2006. Sanurra was born as part of the park's Cheetah Breeding Program, and Ellie was partnered with Sanurra to ensure she had a companion.

Mud clings to Ellie's beige coat as she pads through the muddy grass. On the other side of her enclosure, an elk barks a loud warning at Ellie and her cheetah companion, Sanurra, as they investigate too close to the fence. Trotting back and forth, the small elk herd's fearful eyes lock on the predators, but the pair have already grown bored of the elk. Ellie bows, begging Sanurra to play. Sanurra flops down for a moment and lifts a paw leisurely as Ellie nuzzles close. As an adult cheetah, Sanurra rarely plays anymore, but sometimes Ellie, an Anatolian Shepherd dog, can coax her into a quick game.

To some this pair may seem unusual, but at Wildlife Safari, a drive-through wildlife park in Winston, Oregon, Ellie and Sanurra's story educates the public about wild cats and raises awareness that may help save the cheetah species from extinction. "It's a good story for guests. Most people have not seen a carnivore cat in with a domestic dog. A lot of people ask us, 'Is it her dinner?'" laughs Arielle Schepmoes, Wildlife Safari's lead cheetah keeper.

Ellie and Sanurra became companions at the park in 2006. Sanurra was born on November 15, 2005 in the organization's Cheetah Breeding Program, which has produced 171 cubs since 1972. Although the program has been successful, not every cheetah cub grows up with its mother. Female cheetahs often abandon single cubs in favor of later having a litter of multiple cubs because maternal energy can be better used ensuring the survival of more young. As the only cub in her litter, Sanurra was rejected by her mother when she was only 11 days old. The Wildlife Safari staff quickly stepped in and cared for Sanurra, but they worried she would grow lonely when the staff wasn't by her side; instead, they decided to get Sanurra a companion. As an Anatolian Shepherd, Ellie, who was only a few months old at the time, was chosen to help symbolize her breed's relationship to cheetah conservation efforts in Africa. When visitors at Wildlife Safari are curious about the domestic dog living in the same enclosure as a predator, the staff cheerfully shares Ellie and Sanurra's story.

"Having Ellie here really helps bring in that link from Africa. A lot of the time, people are interested in hearing about the cheetahs we have here and they forget about the animals in the wild," says Beth Benjamin, a Wildlife Safari cheetah keeper.

In Namibia, where the largest population of cheetahs is found, the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) created a guardian dog program in 1994 when it began providing farmers with Anatolian Shepherds to protect their livestock. There are no laws in Namibia protecting cheetahs from being shot, and they are often killed on sight if seen on a farmer's land. By first allowing dogs to ward off the cats, lethal conflicts between humans and cheetahs are greatly reduced. Kate Vannelli, a student at

the University of Oregon, interned with the CCF in the fall of 2012 and witnessed the guardian dog program in action: "It's had a really high success rate. I think 90 percent of the farmers have reported reduction in livestock losses since they got a dog," she says.

Before Namibian farmers agreed to participate in the program, the CCF created a "model home" to convince farmers that the benefits of protecting livestock with Anatolians outweighed the expense of caring for a dog.



Cheetahs can reach speeds up to 60 miles per hour in as few as three seconds. Although Sanurra was raised by Wildlife Safari staff, care is taken when she is near humans, and trainers use large rakes to prevent Sanurra from getting too close to visitors.

"It's more effective to show native Namibians that the livestock guardian program works if we actually demonstrate [it first]," Vannelli says. With only a few breeding dogs, the demand for the puppies has outgrown the supply, and there is currently a two-year waiting period for farmers to receive an Anatolian Shepherd puppy.

The CCF chose the powerful, thick-muscled Anatolian breed because its dogs are known to be attentive, aggressive animals with protective instincts. To forge the strong protective bond the breed is famous for, Anatolian puppies bred by the CCF are given to farmers when they are about nine weeks old and then raised among livestock. Because a cheetah's lean body is not built for physical confrontations of brute strength, an Anatolian's loud bark can often ward off a hungry cat. In most encounters, a cheetah chooses to abandon its prey rather than risk being overpowered by another predator.

While Anatolians in Namibia are warding off cheetahs, back at the Wildlife Safari, Ellie and Sanurra bring awareness to the CCF's cause. "The pair brings attention to the CCF and it lets people know we are associated with a foundation that is trying to change the mindset of people who see cheetahs as pests," Schepmoes says.

As Ellie and Sanurra explore their habitat, a rumbling purr vibrates from Sanurra's throat. She jumps onto one of the enclosure's wooden platforms and sniffs the air, her purr fluctuating with each sniff. "Cheetahs are one of the cat species that only purrs and doesn't roar," cheetah keeper Benjamin says, adding that cats can either do one or the other, but not both. Wading through the mud, Ellie finds Sanurra, and Benjamin encourages Ellie to jump up and join her companion. Without a running start, Ellie jumps clumsily, her two front paws barely finding traction on the platform slick with rain. As she tumbles backward, Benjamin shouts, "Sorry Ellie!"

Despite her playful nature, Ellie is seven years old and suffers from arthritis. Sanurra is also seven. When she's feeling ill, Sanurra seeks out Ellie

for comfort, often rubbing her face on Ellie in affection. Even when the two are in separate enclosures, they lick each other through the fence. "We associate it with being like siblings. There's just this built-in love that we don't have a part of," Schepmoes says.

At the Wildlife Safari, Sanurra isn't the only cub to ever have been abandoned by its mother. Cubs Khayam and Mchumba, born on February 29, 2012, were also abandoned when they were just 24 hours old. Now they are on their way to becoming the new ambassadors of the park. Benjamin says even though most female cheetahs only abandon their young after giving birth to a single cub, sometimes two or four cubs are abandoned.

As ambassadors, Khayam and Mchumba will be the facility's face for education and cheetah conservation efforts,

and they will travel with Wildlife Safari staff to schools and organizations to help spread conservation awareness. "Their main job is to get people to care about cheetahs, not necessarily in captivity, but in the wild, too. We'll take them out on daily walks—and of course everyone wants to stop and take pictures—so we tell them [the animals'] story and then try to throw in a little bit of a conservation message," Benjamin says.

In addition to conflict with humans, wild cheetahs, listed as vulnerable on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species, also suffer from lack of genetic diversity. According to the CCF's website, about 10,000 years ago, all but one cheetah species, *Acinonyx jubatus*, became extinct near the end of the last ice age. As the animals died off, inbreeding led to lower genetic diversity, low survivorship, and poor sperm quality. While most mammals have about an 80 percent genetic variation, cheetahs have a 99 percent variation, meaning they have a less diverse gene pool. This makes the species less likely to ward off disease or to quickly adapt to environmental changes like natural disasters. "We try not to pull [cheetahs for conservation] from the wild anymore because

their numbers are so bad. We want to keep a genetically diverse captive population,” Benjamin says. “That way, if something does happen in the wild, we would be able to replenish the species.”

Zoos share similar concerns about animals in captivity. To support genetic diversity among captive cheetahs, the Wildlife Safari has partnered with the Association of Zoo and Aquarium’s Species Survival Plan (SSP). Once a year the SSP meets and allows seven US cheetah breeding facilities, including the Wildlife Safari, to review breeding recommendations. Cheetahs are then shipped to member facilities across the US where they breed with other cheetahs to promote an increase in genetic diversity and to improve the success rate of cheetah births. “We try to trace back lineage all the way to the wild, but with some cats, it’s not really possible. We do it as best we can,” Benjamin says.

She and Schepmoes each hold a thick leash attached to Khayam’s collar as they walk the one-year-old cheetah toward the park’s open lawn near the flamingo enclosure. The two leashes are used for added protection and control. Visitors marvel at the predator as he walks out with his guides. “Look at that sweetheart! Oh my gosh!” one man exclaims, picking his daughter up to get a better look. Jumping on a nearby bench, Khayam poses as he’s given raw meat treats. While Schepmoes and Benjamin keep Khayam at a safe distance from the visitors, Bethany Baran, a cheetah keeper intern, educates visitors about Wildlife Safari’s cheetah conservation efforts.

Khayam, a 13-month-old ambassador cheetah, has been trained to be comfortable around large crowds. As a park ambassador, Khayam will travel with Wildlife Safari staff to raise awareness about cheetah conservation.

A little girl in the background squeals, and Khayam’s ears perk up immediately. “What is he looking at?” a woman asks.

“Cheetahs are predators, so they look for the weakest prey,” Baran jokes.

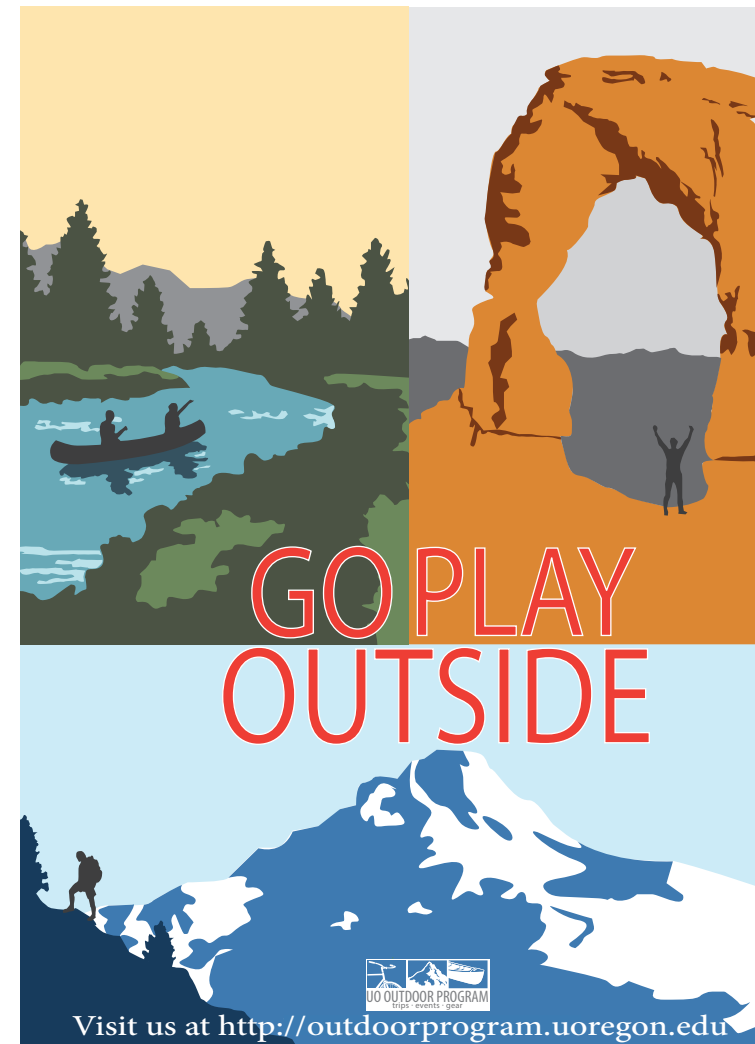
As ambassadors for Wildlife Safari, Khayam and Mchumba were trained to become accustomed to public appearances. When the staff took the cubs in their care, they immediately began teaching them to be comfortable around loud noises, sudden movements, and other actions that might trigger the animals’ natural fight or flight instincts. Even with these preparations,

cheetahs are still wild animals and the staff must take precautions.

When a lawn mower revs to life, Khayam scurries backwards

while Schepmoes and Benjamin keep him in their control. Determining there is no threat, Khayam quickly calms. It’s a subtle reminder that despite his adorable face and tuft of fur sticking up from his neck, Khayam remains a powerful predator. Schepmoes rewards him with a chunk of meat for quickly regaining his composure.

While Khayam shows off for visitors, Mchumba paces the length of the park’s cheetah spot enclosure where the staff teaches visitors about the animals’ conservation message. Mchumba eagerly waits for her brother to return because, like Ellie and Sanurra, the cubs will be companions for the rest of their lives. Tired from a long day, Khayam flops to the ground and rolls his bright yellow fur through the moist grass. ♀



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The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion

Jonathan Haidt

Thomas Cooley Professor of Ethical Leadership, New York University

Wednesday, May 29, 2013

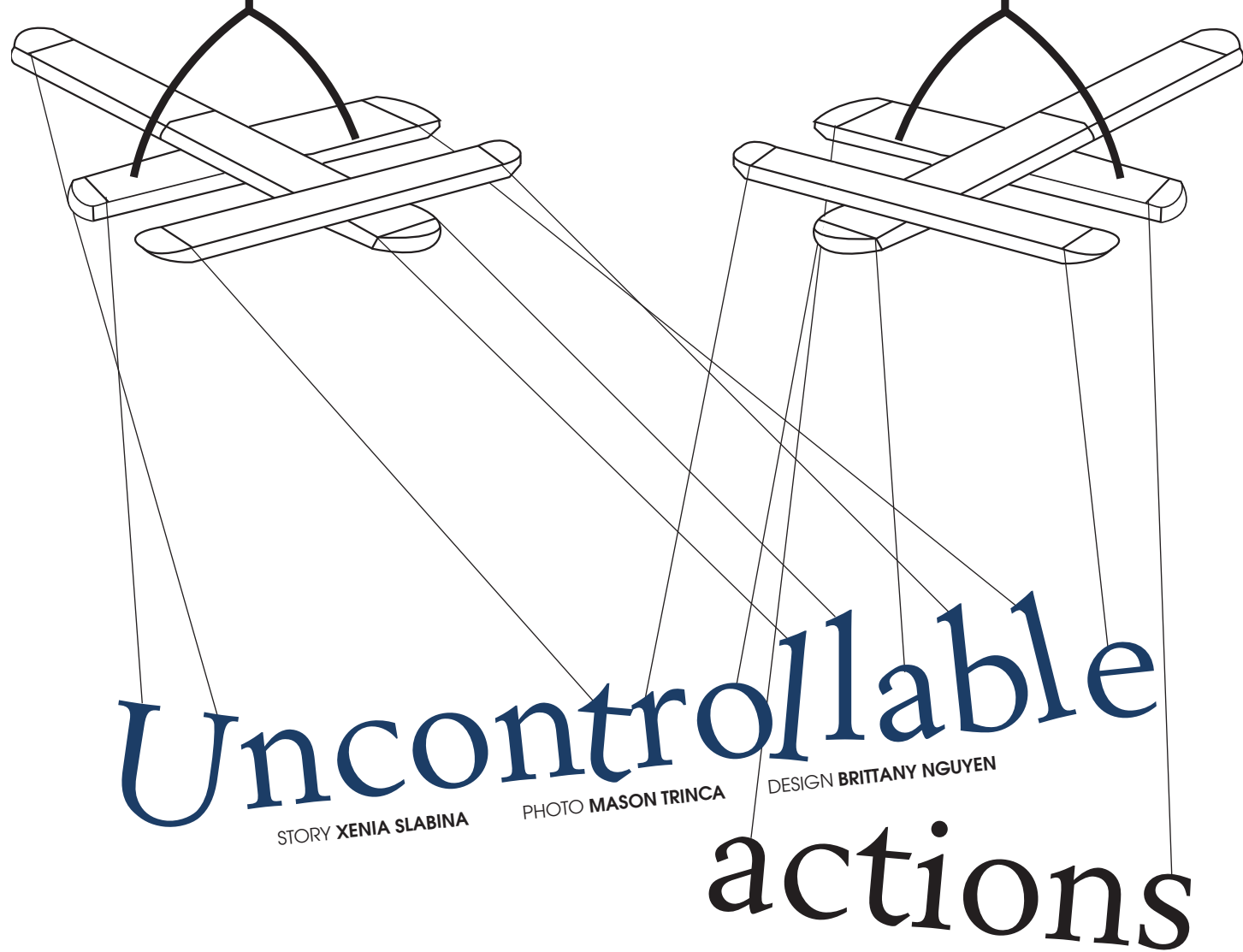
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Uncontrollable actions

STORY XENIA SLABINA PHOTO MASON TRINCA DESIGN BRITTANY NGUYEN

A story of living with Tourette Syndrome.

Standing between two large brick columns in front of his house, 18-year-old Jordan Britton stumbles to the right, hitting his knee against the hard concrete. “Ouch, I bricked my knee,” Britton says, watching a drop of blood trickle down his leg. Then he giggles, adding, “I’m used to it, you know.”

Although Britton has experienced physical tics like these since he was seven years old, just looking at him, few would guess he is one of the 200,000 Americans who have been diagnosed with an extreme case of the rare neurological disorder known as Tourette Syndrome (TS). The disorder is characterized by repetitive involuntary physical tics, much like Britton’s stumbling, tripping, and hand and head shaking. Britton also experiences the most well-known symptom of TS: vocal tics, or corporalia, which cause him to utter words against his will. “I can say random things, really inappropriate things. My classmates are not supposed to laugh, but even I laugh,” he says.

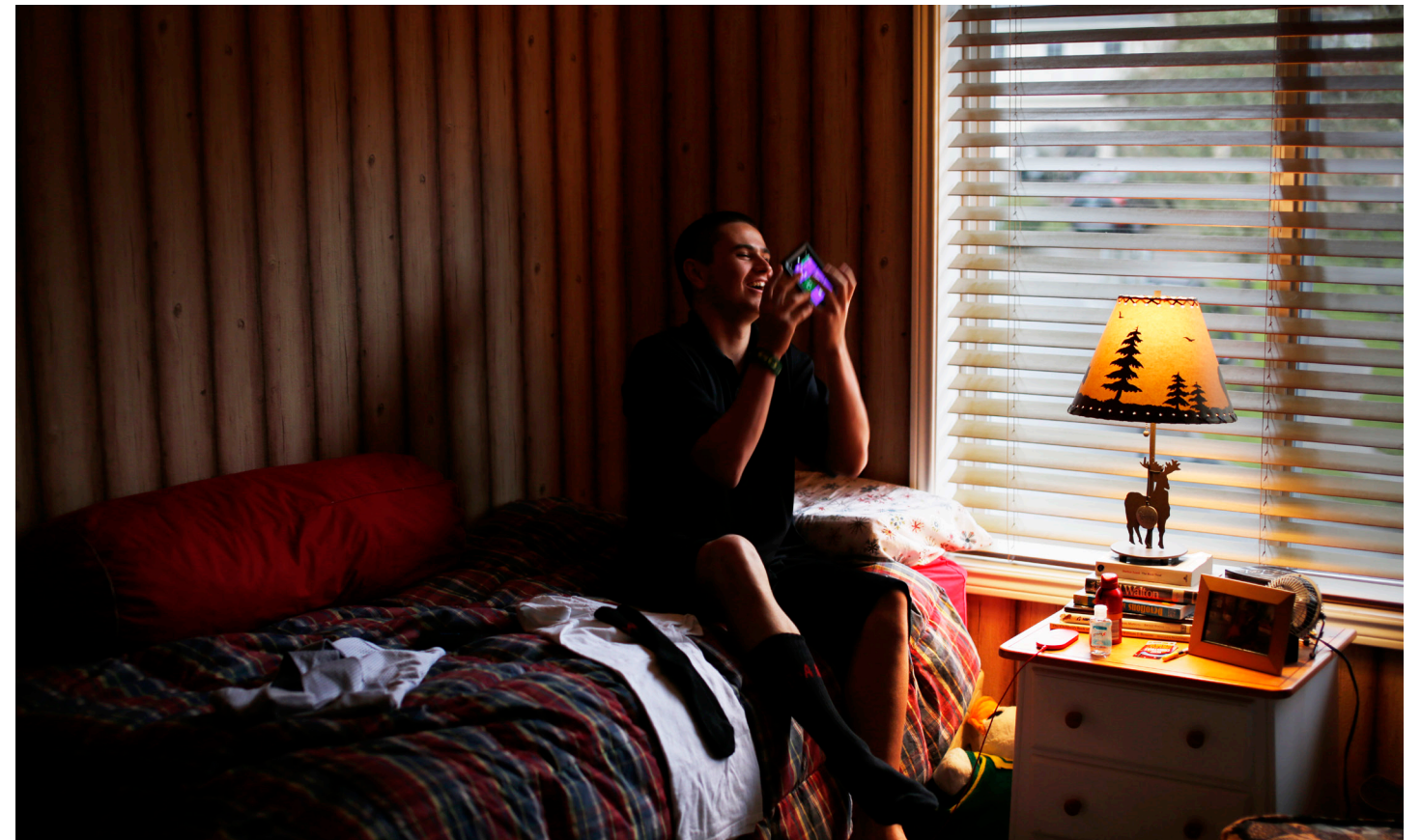
Unlike his peers at Thomas Edison High School in Beaverton, Oregon, Britton doesn’t go to movies often—he says it’s difficult to suppress the tics for two hours in a quiet theater. It has become a habit for him to repeatedly apologize for his behavior. “Sometimes when I tic, it’s like there’s another person in there controlling my brain. It’s like I can’t really do anything about it, but I try to fight through it, and even though it’s tough, I do my best,” he says.

To raise public awareness and to make sure no one is offended by his tics, Britton carries with him little cards provided by National Tourette Syndrome Association (TSA) and hands them out to people who seem disturbed by his occasional outbursts. Each card communicates the following message: “Why do I act this way? Because I can’t control it. I

have Tourette Syndrome—a medical condition. It causes me to make loud sounds, have twitches and say things I don’t mean. I can’t help it any more than you can stop a sneeze or cough. I’m sorry if it bothers you—it bothers me more.”

Tourette Syndrome is a neurological disorder with an unknown cause and no known cure. Studies suggest that TS is the result of abnormalities in three important brain neurotransmitters—serotonin, dopamine, and the stress hormone norepinephrine, which transmits impulses between nerve cells. Norepinephrine is known for its adrenaline-like qualities, such as a triggering excitement and rapid heartbeats. Imbalances in norepinephrine can lead to overactive releases of dopamine, a chemical messenger regulating emotions and movement. Normally dopamine only sends messages to the body when performing an action is necessary, but in people with TS, dopamine keeps telling parts of the body to move, causing random nerve twitches.

In Beaverton where Britton lives with his parents, Genee and Chuck Britton, he struggles daily with his tics, often during activities others may take for granted. When the family gathers around the dinner table, Britton’s mother situates two chairs with pillows on either side of him in case a tic throws him out of his seat. Britton also uses plastic silverware because his arm tics may cause him to accidentally hurt himself. Tics that make Britton throw things up in the air have caused him to stop using knives while eating and pencils while writing. Genee says sometimes her son does his homework lying on the floor because he cannot sit at his desk for long periods of time. Walking long distances and going up and down the stairs can also wear him out. “He gets tired really easily,” Genee says. “Because of



TOP: Jordan Britton can often control his tics by focusing on objects, such as his cell phone, that can distract him from unwanted reactions. He says being with animals or his family also calms him. **BOTTOM:** Britton reacts to accidentally throwing his cell phone at the windowsill. His tics often cause him drop, or even throw, his phone uncontrollably.



Britton, who was diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome at the age of seven, lives a lifestyle similar to any other 18 year old.

his tics, his body moves four or five times more than all of ours. We don't even see all the little movements."

Britton has an outgoing personality, and unlike many who have TS, he is not ashamed to speak about his disorder in public. To learn how to better talk about his disorder with others, Britton became a member of the TSA's Northwest Washington and Oregon Chapter, which provides information to families and individuals struggling with TS, as well as educates agencies, legislators, healthcare professionals, and educators, about all aspects of TS.

In the fall of 2009, Britton was nominated to be a TSA youth ambassador. The following spring, he traveled as a TSA representative to Washington DC and learned how to advocate for people with disabilities and how to speak about TS. There, together with Oregon state representatives and state senators, Britton talked about how he coped with TS. Genee says the primary goal of TS advocacy is to raise public awareness and to put a face to the disorder with the hope that the public will become less judgmental.

After returning to Oregon, Britton was joined by his mother and Northwest Chapter Vice Chairwoman Erin Farrar while he gave speeches about TS at Century High School in Hillsboro. In 2012, Britton was asked to speak at the annual Thomas Edison High School breakfast, where in front of a 400-person audience, he tried his best to help them understand the difficulties people with TS endure, what his personal struggles with the disorder are, and the challenges anyone with a disability faces. "Advocating for TS helps me a lot because it gets my stress out and tells people about me as a person," he says. "It helps people know more about Tourette's. If they see this disability, they won't judge right away."

But despite the efforts of TSA and members like Britton to raise awareness, many people still express bias against the disorder. In Britton's last year of middle school, Genee says his teachers at a small private school near Portland asked him to leave. Britton was the first student with TS at the school, and his mother says because he didn't fit into "the box," it was just easier for the school to remove someone who was different, even though his classmates cherished him and he had many friends. "Students loved Jordan; he is very magnetic," Genee says. Now, he is finishing his senior year at Thomas Edison High School, which caters to learning differences.

Like many teens, Britton is into music, and he has his own music mixer and deejay turntable. He says his favorite pastime is spending time outdoors with friends. "It calms me down and gets my focus off my Tourette's. When I'm being social, you wouldn't really be able to tell that I have TS," he says.

Britton says there are times when he feels stressed from not knowing what to do about his tics, although there are moments when he can almost forget about them. He believes being around people and pets helps him relax. "When I'm with friends, there are no tics. It's like a therapy. When I'm doing something I like or when I'm with somebody, I don't feel pressure," he says, adding that he also enjoys petting his golden retriever Sadee. "When I'm with an animal, it seems to soothe me."

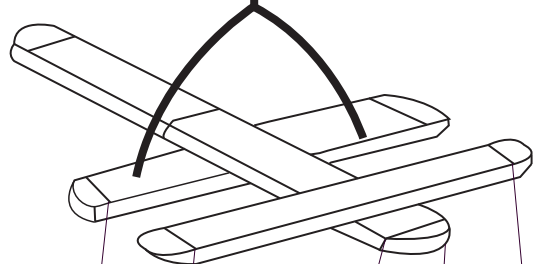
Britton also enjoys playing sports like ultimate Frisbee and basketball. "It's hard for me to walk, but I can run when I'm focused," he says. Britton's father, Chuck, finds it strange that while Britton has difficulty walking and standing, he has no problems with running. "Once he starts running, he can sometimes run like the wind," he says. "We kind of draw an analogy where there are other people who stutter, but they can sing beautifully."

Occasionally as a person ages, the frequency of tics decline or TS symptoms can disappear completely. It is estimated that 1 million Americans may exhibit mild symptoms of TS, and in 20 to 30 percent of cases, their symptoms disappear entirely when they reach their

twenties. Beginning at age three and lasting until he was 12 years old, Eugene resident Azoulas Yurashunas experienced symptoms of mild TS. As a child at Santa Rita Elementary School in Los Altos, California, Yurashunas says his tics manifested in blinking and crossing his toes often. "Because I was a little strange, because of the blinking and all other physical tics that I might have exhibited, I was somewhat a social outcast. Nobody wanted to associate with me," he recalls, adding that he remembers feeling self-conscious about doing something that might be noticed by the other children. "It was very frustrating, which contributed to lower self-esteem because I felt I was failing to be my own master."

Although Azoulas, who is now 25, did not treat his TS symptoms with medication, they eventually subsided. It has been 13 years since Azoulas has experienced an uncontrollable tic. "When I reached the age of 12, the TS stopped; I became more confident, got more friends, and started having a more normal childhood. I don't even think about it anymore," he says.

For some, Tourette's can be complicated by other disorders: TS is often associated with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). According to Chris Mason, author of *What Makes Me Tic: Living with Tourette's Syndrome*, about 30 percent of children with TS in clinical populations meet the diagnostic criteria for OCD. The medications used to treat TS, called dopamine blockers, are from an antipsychotic class of drugs that block messages sent by dopamine. The blockers are meant to prevent unwanted signals from reaching other parts of the body. Mason, age 43, has been living with OCD and a severe form of TS for most of his life.



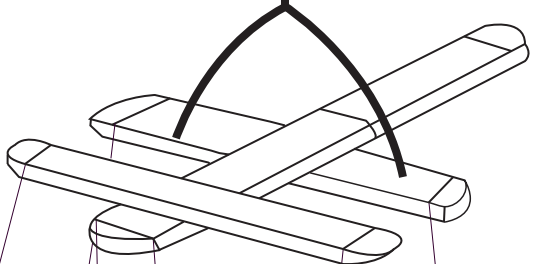
"Sometimes when I tic, it's like there's another person in there controlling my brain."

Mason is thankful there are medications that have lessened his symptoms, which include shoulder shrugging, swallowing, making fists, coughing forcefully, grunting or clearing his throat, curling his fingers and toes, and biting his fingernails. Mason describes the emergence of his tics like this: First, an area of his body starts getting tense, and it's impossible to ignore. Then, the urge to tic appears and stays until he performs the tic. The longer the tics are suppressed, the more severe they become. "There is no way I could have lived with the tics. I wouldn't really be living, since I wouldn't be able to function at all," he says. Mason started having TS symptoms at the age of six, but was he wasn't officially diagnosed with the disorder until 14 years later in 1990, when his mother unexpectedly learned about the disorder from a medical program she was listening to on the radio and realized it was her son's condition. At the time, Mason lived in Walnut Creek, California, and TS was not well known. Neither he nor his doctor had heard of it before.

At the age of 20 Mason was prescribed a medication called Omap, which he still takes today. On the fifth day after initially taking the prescription, Mason's tics were gone. At the same time, he was also put on Prozac to get rid of the intrusive and obsessive thoughts that are common with OCD. Although Mason stayed on Prozac for only four years, his OCD has completely subsided.

But along with removing his tics, Mason's medications cause serious side effects. Besides making him gain about 60 pounds within the first three months of taking the drug, Mason says the medication also makes him extremely tired. "I sleep whenever I lie down. I would sleep all day if given a chance. I have what is called 'cognitive dulling,' where my brain works very slowly, and I often don't have clear thoughts or a clear mind. I also feel like I have a bad hangover all day, every day. I have had that hangover every second of my life for the past 23 years," he says. Mason believes that being on medication is only a little better than not being on it.

The side effects of the medication, Mason says, have caused him to either not be hired for jobs or to be fired shortly after being hired. During his lifetime, he has held more than 30 part-time or seasonal jobs, although he says he has applied for about 130 part-time and full-time positions. Because Mason's disorder has kept him from maintaining steady employment and a regular salary, he says there were times when he was homeless living in his car or in a board and care home. Mason admits the side effects from the medication are so severe that he's fallen asleep while driving. In addition, he is now in danger of developing diabetes because he is overweight, out of shape, and doesn't eat healthy. "The medication makes me too tired to exercise, but I'm also always hungry. It's a catch-22," he says.



"It's like I can't really do anything about it, but I try to fight through it, and even though it's tough, I do my best."

"I don't think there's ever going to be a chance of me losing the weight I have gained because I am probably always going to have those problems."

Instead of being physically active, Mason spends his time writing about TS. He lives in a residential hotel because that's what he can afford with the disability payment he receives each month. "I wish I would have known about it and applied for disability 20 years ago when I was first eligible. Then I would have always had money coming in and I never would have been homeless," he says. But optimistic by nature, Mason says in some respects, his experience has been beneficial because it changed his views about people with disabilities. "I have gained a greater respect and understanding for disabled people. I know what they go through because I have walked in their shoes," he says.

In February 2011, Mason published an anthology called *Touretties* featuring 21 short stories authored by people with TS. His own story about what it's like living with TS, titled "Halfway to Hell and Back," was also included. He's also working on publishing a memoir and a children's picture book, which will include three stories about people with TS. "There are so many people who think they understand it, but they don't. This leads to stereotyping, discrimination, ignorance, and the spreading of false knowledge," Mason says.

Like Mason, Britton has also taken medication to treat TS, but now he is experimenting to see how his body will operate without it. Living with TS has certainly been challenging for Britton and his family, but his parents have learned to adapt to their son's way of life to make him feel more comfortable. They say Tourette's has given them an opportunity to know more about other people who have disabilities. "Although TS caused a lot of difficulties and struggles in our lives, it really opened my eyes to a world I wouldn't have known about had Jordan not gone through what he is going through," Genee says. "It makes me realize there are people and families out there who need help more than we do."

Chuck says TS taught the entire family to be more compassionate towards others. Despite his son's youth, Jordan has embraced that compassion and begun volunteering and helping with food distribution every Saturday at Sunshine Pantry in Beaverton. He has also started volunteering for the Boys and Girls Clubs of America in nearby Sellwood.

"All I honestly wish is for people to be more understanding," Britton says. "If you have any questions, do not be afraid to ask somebody because it's totally natural. You may be afraid to ask somebody about their disability, but you know, they want to explain—they want to open up and talk to somebody. I'm really social and I want to open up and talk to people if they have any questions." ☺



Tattooed AND Employed

The women of the philanthropic Modified Dolls organization break down barriers and dispel myths surrounding those with body art.

STORY **ALEXANDRA HICKS** PHOTO **MATT WILLIAMS** DESIGN **HEIDI REELEY**

It's hard to hear above the blaring sound of the punk-rock band warming up tonight. My booth at Cozmic Pizza is in one of the darkest spots in the already dimly lit restaurant. Impatiently, I scan the room looking for my interview subjects. Finally, Tawnee Suchey and Shirley Esterline burst through the door. Both women are covered in tattoos. Suchey has a total of 17 spanning her chest, arms, neck, and legs. Esterline has only 11, but her body features 28 hours of needle work on her arms, chest, and the massive peacock on her back. Apologizing profusely for their tardiness, the women sit down across from me. They had just come from getting pierced, Suchey explains, showing me the new magenta stud in her lip. Esterline says she chickened out. In fact, Esterline confides, she has had to attempt each of her facial piercings multiple times—she is afraid of needles.

Suchey and Esterline had gone to the piercing parlor with five other members of the Oregon Chapter of the Modified Dolls, a global organization aimed at breaking stereotypes associated with tattooed and pierced women. This night, the chapter was hosting its first major event, a concert at Cozmic Pizza in Eugene, Oregon, to raise money for the Special Olympics. Much like other philanthropic groups, the Dolls hold monthly meetings, fundraise, and host charity events. There's just one catch: Each member has at least five visible body modifications.

“So maybe when somebody sees a crazy tattooed woman from across the street, their first instinct isn't ‘party animal,’ or ‘floozy,’ or ‘freeloader.’”

Suchey, whose body art ranges from a butterfly tattoo to a Mexican flag honoring her heritage, says it's no secret that tattooed women have a certain image in the public mind. Rebel, wild, dangerous, and irresponsible, are just a few examples she offers when describing prejudices modified women are often tagged with. Although she had often received insults like these herself, it was only after seeing the Modified Dolls' Facebook page a little over a year ago that she decided to become proactive about her body art. Initially, Suchey donated to a national Dolls charity fundraiser. Then after attending several local events, she felt inspired by seeing women who looked like her helping neighboring communities, and she officially joined the Modified Dolls Oregon Chapter.

Modified Dolls founder Holly Roettger-Duncan is all too familiar with negative stereotypes being attached to her appearance. As a modified woman, she was looking for a way to get involved in her community while demolishing negative labels typically directed at women with body art. She had been a member of several modified women groups where she lived in Kennewick, Washington, but disliked their appearance-driven nature. “They were all about ‘Look at me’ instead of ‘Look at who I am on the inside,’” Roettger-Duncan says. “So I decided starting my own group was the way to go.”

In August 2011, she and ten modified friends got together with the intention of creating a small group dedicated to helping their community. Those first ten members quickly grew into 200 over the next two years, and now Modified Doll chapters are located in 48 states and eight countries around the globe. In 2012, the group was officially granted non-profit status. The Dolls have a highly organized structure in which each state has a chapter, and each chapter is often divided into subchapters because

members are not expected to drive more than an hour for meetings. Meetings are held monthly to plan the group's upcoming charity events. Each month a different charity is chosen by the national organization headquartered in Kennewick, but chapters can partner with local charities as well. The Modified Dolls have supported numerous organizations such as the Special Olympics; Women's Space; and the Race, Abuse, and Incest National Network.

Members are referred to as “Dolls,” and each Doll has a “doll name.” Suchey, the Oregon Chapter's second-in-command and longest-standing member, chose Tawnee Amber. Esterline goes by Sorelle. “It's a variation of Esterline, I can't remember from where,” she says. “But I like that it sounds like ‘so real.’”

Esterline is the Oregon Chapter's Head Doll, meaning she acts as president of the chapter. Her responsibilities include contacting organizations, maintaining a strong social media presence, working on public relations, and most importantly, selecting new members to become Modified Dolls.

The group's application process is rather extensive. On the first and the fifteenth of each month, the national office sends out applications from prospective Dolls to each state's Head Doll. The Head Doll then carefully reviews each application. The only requirements are that the women must

be over 18 years old and have at least five visible body modifications, which can include tattoos, piercings, gauges, or subdermal body implants. To be considered for initiation into the group, applicants must send photographic evidence of their body modifications. But even after the applications are reviewed, the process isn't quite complete.

To ensure commitment to the Modified Dolls' mission, organizers ask that applicants complete challenges like photographing themselves passing out fliers to raise awareness about the group and its events. “We want to make sure they are actually committed to the organization, so we have little challenges like these,” Suchey says. “A lot of people join thinking it sounds cool without realizing it will actually take work.”

The Oregon Chapter often receives applicants who want to use the organization as a means of exposure or to promote a modeling career. But the Modified Dolls are not about looks in any way. This is a stark contrast to other modified women's groups that have gained mainstream publicity in the past few years, such as the Suicide Girls based in Portland, Oregon. The Suicide Girls is an “adult lifestyle brand” that features videos and posters of modified pin-up style models on its website. Suchey explains that the Suicide Girls once featured heavily modified women of all shapes, but the group has now moved to a standardized “model” look featuring women who sometimes have only one small tattoo. In contrast, the Modified Dolls look for women of all shapes and sizes who want to do more than just show off their bodies. “We stalk applicants' Facebook pages,” Esterline says bluntly. “We want to make sure they're not projecting the stereotype that we're trying to demolish.”

Despite the popularity of tattoos and body modifications—more than 14 percent of Americans are now tattooed—Esterline says increased exposure doesn't always equate to acceptance. Women who choose to get body art are still subject to unjustified and sometimes hurtful treatment.

TOP: Modified Doll Jessye “Danger” Gresswell announces raffle winners at the Oregon Chapter's first charity event at Cosmic Pizza in Eugene, Oregon. The winners received tattoo and piercing gift certificates and art made by the Dolls. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Head Doll Shirley “Sorelle” Esterline's 11 tattoos took 28 hours to complete. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Tawnee Suchey received her first tattoo, a tribal butterfly on her forearm, when she was 15 years old. She now has 17 tattoos and says she plans to continue decorating her body.





Tawnee Suchey at home with the family dog, Margo. Suchey says being a member of the Modified Dolls provides a positive outlet for debunking stereotypes associated with body art.

As a mother of three kids ages seven, 11, and 14, Esterline often feels judged for being a parent with modifications. "I'm a great mom," she says. "I've been a Girl Scout troop leader and a Boy Scout pack leader, but you would never know that just by looking at me!"

And although she has not had a problem finding work as a result of her body art, Esterline says she still experiences discomfort because of her appearance. As an employee at Fred Meyer, Esterline says she receives frequent stares and comments from customers, including one man who remarked that her tattoos looked "festive." When she asked what he was referring to, he pointed directly at the two cherries located on either side of her chest. Esterline says she was offended because she felt she was being discriminated against as a modified person, in addition to being singled out as a woman with tattoos. "There's definitely a double standard for women," Esterline says. "[Maroon 5 frontman] Adam Levine can be on the cover of a magazine and have all of his tattoos showing, but [actress] Megan Fox can be on the same cover and has to cover them up."

Suchey has experienced similar scrutiny. Before moving to Eugene in January, she lived in a much smaller Oregon city. There, she says it was impossible to escape the constant stares of passersby and judgments based solely on her appearance. Because she had body art, Suchey felt she was instantly labeled a troublemaker in the small-town culture she believes held unfounded, preconceived notions about people with tattoos.

Even within their own community of tattooed women, the Dolls say they face prejudice. Esterline describes another experience she had with a customer recently: "An older woman was giving me a lecture on my tattoos, especially the ones on my chest and my arms for being 'too visible,'" she says. "But then she mentions that she got a tattoo for her fiftieth birthday. She lifts up her pant leg, and she has a tiny ladybug tattoo on the side of her calf." Attitudes like this, Esterline says, reconfirm the double standard she feels modified women face even among other tattooed women—that

women can have tattoos, but only if they are considered "feminine."

But despite the stereotypes some women have toward each other, being a member of the Modified Dolls gives Esterline and her fellow Dolls a sense of empowerment in the face of discrimination. "I don't have [tattoos] so people will look at me," Suchey says. "I enjoy looking at myself and seeing tattoos. When I go places with my mom, she's always the one who says, 'That lady is looking at you!' but it doesn't bother me. If anything, I hope that they're enjoying them as much as I do."

This is the self-confidence the Modified Dolls want to inspire.

The girls we have are of all shapes and sizes," Suchey says. "I think girls have really messed up body images; that's why we have all different types of women. We have older women, younger women, big women, skinny women—it doesn't matter. And once they join, they feel that camaraderie."

Suchey says the camaraderie is what she has grown to cherish most about the Modified Dolls. When she joined the organization a little over a year ago, Suchey was one of just five members of the Oregon Chapter. Since then, she has watched the chapter grow to 13 dedicated women—all of whom she feels fortunate to call close friends. "I didn't really have a lot of girlfriends before this, but now I feel like I've met a strong group of girls who have my back," she says. "There is definitely a feeling of sisterhood."

Inspired by the support and self-assurance generated within the Modified Dolls, Suchey plans to continue breaking down ignorance surrounding women with body art. "It gives you confidence to be a part of something, especially something positive," Suchey says. "So maybe when somebody sees a crazy tattooed woman from across the street, their first instinct isn't 'party animal,' or 'floozy,' or 'freeloader.' They're good people; they want to do good. They're just regular women who happen to be modified." ♀

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Reading into the Past

One Northwest book conservator preserves historic documents, antique books, and family heirlooms, to link the present with the past.

STORY **MEGAN DOUGHERTY**
PHOTO **MATT WILLIAMS**
DESIGN **CARLY ELLIOTT**

Opening the glass-paneled doors of her bookcase and picking up a cloth-bound book with gilded pages, Virginia Klaasen slowly turns to the inside cover and points to an inscription that reads “Christmas 1902.” Her mother had penned it many years before. “I grew up loving books,” Klaasen says, “loving the physicality of them—holding them, smelling them. Books have a smell, a wonderful smell.” On the shelves sit books from her past—books such as *Wanted—A Chaperon*, *Girl of the Limberlost*, and *Flower of the Dusk*, once belonged to her parents and grandparents. These novels are not among the list of classics most would render meaningful, but to Klaasen, they have great value. They are heirlooms that remind Klaasen of her family, some of whom she has never known. Still, she considers these mementos a part of her personal history.

Susan Lunas has a knowledge and appreciation for books that helps people like Klaasen stay connected to these histories. Lunas is a book conservator who founded Many Moons Book Conservation in Eugene, Oregon, nearly 26 years ago.

Lunas’s interest in book restoration began when she was restoring textbooks as a librarian at North Eugene High School. When a bookbinder came to town offering an instructional class, her supervisor at the high school encouraged her to take it. Later, Lunas and her husband relocated to Wyoming, where she learned of a program in New York that could lead her further into the world of books. Lunas initially passed up the opportunity because she was hesitant about traveling from Wyoming to the East Coast, but when her husband landed a job that led the couple to New Jersey, she was close enough to commute into New York City for school. She soon enrolled in Columbia University and the New York Institute of Fine Arts, where she received degrees in book and paper conservation and library sciences.

Lunas says her schooling translated into an education in “book structures, the chemistry of paper, adhesives and leather, and the heating ventilation systems of buildings ... Anything that could cause something to deteriorate.” When Lunas graduated the market for book conservation was relatively small, and when she began working as a professional in the field, she found it difficult to find a job. So instead, in 1987 she opened Many Moons Book Conservation in New Jersey. After moving back to the West Coast to be near her family, Lunas re-established Many Moons in Eugene.

Now one of the Northwest’s few book restorers, Lunas stays busy fulfilling requests for her specialized services. “I repair and restore books, but I also restore family documents and anything that’s on paper. It can be a Japanese folding fan, military papers—anything,” she says.



Susan Lunas, owner of Many Moons Book Conservation, says religious books and cookbooks are two of the most common projects customers bring her. Here Lunas is seen restoring a Bible.

“I grew up loving books—holding them, smelling them. Books have a smell, a wonderful smell.”



Lunas has been asked to restore many cookbooks throughout her career. She says the books' recipes often serve as family heirlooms that are passed down through generations.

Working out of her home in an attached second-story studio, Lunas is surrounded by the tools of her trade. Her many paintbrushes, scales, pastes, and magnifying lenses sit atop her worktables, and her desktops are covered with stacks of paper—projects from around the country that customers have sent to be restored. In one corner of her studio, covered by carefully placed parchment, sits an intricate drawing of a cat that she is restoring, while a Bible and an aged book titled *New England Legends and Folklore* lay nearby. Folders containing old, loose-leaf papers await the day Lunas can begin placing the pages in a restored book format where, together, they can tell the story they once told. Lunas's work requires a great deal of expertise, which she's gained through experience. "I've learned to think about myself as an artist," she says.

One of Lunas's more special projects is restoring a Winnie the Pooh book for Klaasen—it's one of the many texts Klaasen's family cherishes as an heirloom. Klaasen grew up reading an original copy of A.A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* after she received the book around the age of three, and she says its stories are a vivid memory of her childhood. Through the years, the book came to have more meaning as it was passed down through the generations of her family. She has enjoyed reading the same book to her children, grandchildren, and now, to her great grandchildren. "The memory of the *Winnie the Pooh* books is probably one of the most deeply ingrained of my whole life," she says.

When Klaasen had children of her own, her mother gave the second book in the *Winnie the Pooh* series, *The House at Pooh Corner*, to Klaasen's son, Christopher. Klaasen read these books to her son, and he grew to love

the series just as she had. Later, after he was grown, Klaasen sent *The House at Pooh Corner* to Lunas for restoration. The damage was minimal, but the original binding was worn. Lunas gave the book a new binding and placed it, and the book's original cover, into a custom-made book box. Klaasen then sent it to her son in British Columbia.

In the summer of 2012, tragedy struck when a mudslide leveled his home, pushing Christopher's house off its foundation and down a mountainside. Nearly all of his family's possessions were destroyed. About a month after the slide, Christopher went searching for items that may have survived the disaster. In the ruins of his basement, he saw a hole in the wall made by debris during the slide. Inside the hole, Christopher found *The House at Pooh Corner*. "He was so amazed and so touched by it, he sent the book to me with one of the most beautiful letters I've ever received, telling me about this experience," Lunas says. "He asked, 'Do you think there would be any hope of it getting restored again?'"

So once more, *The House at Pooh Corner* sits on a table in Lunas's studio. This time, in much worse condition. The book box is so badly bent and distorted Lunas cannot open it to take out the book. She says the restoration process will be involved. Lunas expects she'll need to first humidify the book box before she can open it and get to the book inside. Then she'll reassess the condition of the book itself, which she expects may require another humidification process for its cover and its many pages. "A lot of things I work on just have sentimental value," Lunas says. "Others may have a really high dollar value, too. But most of the time, it's just something that someone really likes and wants to keep."

"If we lose the paper book, there won't be anything to have an emotional attachment to. By keeping the tangible book, they will still be there to know, love, and read in the future."



Humidifying, drying, and pressing, are just a few techniques Lunas uses to restore old texts and documents.



Lunas explains that the book restoration process varies based on the age or wear of a text and the elements it has been exposed to.

Because books are often shared among families or given as gifts, their pages can become carriers of emotion and memory for their owners. "A lot of the books I do are Bibles or religious books and cookbooks," she says. "Those are the two things that people use a lot, or have used a lot, and they fall apart." Although these documents may not be valuable in the monetary sense, their personal meaning can render them priceless.

Lunas is also working on a book of love letters. In its current state, the project is a correspondence written in the form of telegraphs and letters on college fraternity letterhead—words written between a young couple separated during college. The couple's great-grandchildren found the letters and wanted to preserve them as part of their family's history. At their request, Lunas is binding the papers into a book that will forever be in the family's possession.

Although books can link people, places, and events from the past, their place in the future is uncertain. Lunas says she is unsure what role the printed book will hold. Although mere paper, ink, and binding, have held countless pieces of sentiment, culture, wisdom, religion, and adventure since the invention of the Gutenberg printing press around 1449 CE, times have changed. Written books have taken on new meanings and adapted to new formats. Lunas, who has restored documents dating back to 1572, says many old-looking books are now being used as decorative pieces of furniture in homes or museums. She believes these texts representing pieces of history, if left unrestored, will fade into the past. Even documents from just 40 years ago, Lunas points out, have elements that no longer exist. "On older books you can actually feel the imprint of the text," she says. "Now [books are printed] with a process where you can't feel the imprint of the press, and that's something you can't feel with an electronic device."

Although digital books, which can be purchased and downloaded with the touch of a button, are rising in popularity, traditional books still exist to be used in a practical sense. "Although a lot of people enjoy using Kindles, Nooks, and tablets to read on, it seems that people still enjoy the tactile use of a real book," Lunas says.

But amidst the ever-advancing digital age, the effect is evident. The Eugene Public Library began digital audiobook lending in 2006, began offering Kindle format eBooks in September of 2011, and then added Adobe ePUB format eBooks in 2012. Jessica Stinson, an adult services library reference assistant, has taught classes on the use of digital literature at the Eugene library for the past three years. She teaches a class called Welcome to eReaders and Tablets, and she's planning to add three new courses specifically designed for iPad, Kindle, and Nook users. "I do prefer an E-Ink device to any book that consists mostly of text," Stinson says.

Stinson prefers electronic books because she likes having several books available in one device. She also likes that digital readers are easier to transport and more convenient because she can download a book at any time. However, she still sees value in paper books. "They don't run out of battery power; they are more private; they don't require computer skills, and the tangible books can be made of materials that are pleasing to hold, smell, and experience."

Lunas believes no matter what the future holds for the printed word, books will forever be valued. Maybe not in the same way they used to be, but as a way to connect with history and to cherish memories of people and times past. "If we lose the paper book, there won't be anything to have an emotional attachment to," Lunas says. "By keeping the tangible book, they will still be there to know, love, and read in the future." ☐





BENEATH THE HIJAB: UNCOVERING THE WOMEN OF MOROCCO

By the time our van parked in front of our Moroccan host family's home, the heat was stifling. Our group of 13 students with the Morocco Exchange program had been traveling for more than six hours from Seville, Spain, to Tangier, Morocco. The city bustled with activity as I pressed my cheek against the glass, straining to see my new surroundings. Around us the streets were crowded with women hurrying from the market, their hands filled with groceries as they tugged along small children. Most had their hair hidden beneath brightly colored scarves and wore loose clothing covering their ankles and wrists where gold and silver bangles were visible just beneath the fabric.

As our guide ushered us out of the street and into our home, I noticed the surrounding run-down buildings—not a far cry from the Morocco I had imagined. But after passing through an ornately carved wooden door and climbing a steep marble staircase, we entered an immaculate living room lined with blue and gold sofa benches. Our host, Yalda, a gray-haired woman with a friendly smile, poured traditional Moroccan mint tea, while her daughter-in-law, Fatima, presented an enormous platter of couscous and began serving us. I noticed neither of them wore the scarves I had seen women on the street wearing. On the sofa across from us, the men shouted at a televised soccer game, or football game, as Moroccans call it. My hosts embodied everything I had pictured of a traditional Moroccan family—the men were the breadwinners; the women, homemakers. That is, until Fatima mentioned that she was on maternity leave from her job as an attorney.

I was stunned. So often Arab women had been presented in American media as controlled by men, their sole purpose being to serve others. I thought I knew everything about Morocco—after all, I had seen *Casablanca* five times. Yet Fatima was the picture of a modern woman: She had her own career, her own money, and she was in control of her life. I began realizing my preconceived notions could not have been more wrong. I had a lot to learn about Morocco, and more importantly, its dynamic women.

PHOTO WILL KANELLOS ILLUSTRATION AUSTIN POWE DESIGN HALEY MARTIN

The next afternoon, Fatima shared pictures of her five (yes, five) wedding dresses with us before we left for DARNA, a local women's center that provides safe harbor, career training, and adult education for the women of Tangier. There we participated in a panel discussion with three female Moroccan students, Youssef, Hicham, and Noora, who wore a stunning gold head scarf commonly referred to as a *hijab*. As we discussed Moroccan religion and education, unspoken questions hung in the air: 'What about your *hijab*? Don't you hate being forced to cover your head?' Seemingly reading our minds, Noora answered for us.

In Morocco, women are not required by law to wear a *hijab*, and none of the women in Noora's family wear one. But after studying Islam, Noora chose to wear a *hijab* to honor her faith at age 14. The *hijab*, she explained, is not a sign of submission or inferiority, but a public declaration of the strength of her religious conviction. She dresses for herself, transforming what is sometimes interpreted as a symbol of oppression into a symbol of devotion. I was in awe of her courage. I thought back on my

experiences with faith, on the number of times I had stayed silent about religion in fear of being persecuted for my opinions. How silly I had been living in the "land of the free," but afraid to speak out, while every day Noora wore her beliefs openly.

For Noora, the *hijab* is a symbol of pride—a greater pride than I had ever experienced in my own faith. Noora also explained that much like American styles, the *hijab* comes with stereotypes. In America, women often face judgment based on how they dress: A woman who wears a crop top and high heels is labeled a "slut," while a woman who wears a high neckline and long pants is labeled a "prude." Appearance can instantly classify a woman as wealthy, trashy, trendy, old-fashioned, strange, or beautiful. In Morocco, I thought the uniform manner of dress would eliminate such shallow judgments. Once again, I found myself completely off base.

I witnessed these prejudices firsthand when our group toured the city with two male university students. We took this as an opportunity to ask questions about relationships between men and women in Morocco. Did men and women date before marriage? I believed they spent time together, although they never touched, and when a man was interested in a woman, he courted her before marriage. Telling our guides this, they burst into laughter. They said some Moroccan women chose not to date, but many did much like Americans. They believed women who chose not to wear a *hijab* were open to dating, while women who wore a *hijab* were conservative and probably not interested in interacting socially before marriage. As a woman, I was offended by this blatant superficial judgment. At home, I had seen women wearing *hijabs* discriminated against as a result of cultural intolerance and as a bias towards conservatism, but I had no idea women were discriminated against within Arab cultures as well. Once again, the layers of culture began unpeeling, and I began to realize how little I had truly been exposed to until now.

Our final night in Morocco, the women of our group walked down a narrow alleyway toward one of the most enlightening, yet mortifying experiences of our lives: the *hammam*, a Turkish bathhouse. Nervous laughter filled our conversation as we discussed what we knew about the *hammam*—we had to scrub our skin with loofas, use olive oil soap, and we had to be topless. Once we entered the *hammam*, a Moroccan girl led us to a changing room where we were told to undress. Awkwardly staring at each other, we burst into anxious laughter. My cheeks crimson red, I struggled to keep myself covered. Other American tourists were doing the same—hiding behind towels, covering their chests with their hands, and sprinting to the bath before anyone

could see. When I finally entered the bath, I froze, unable and unwilling to move.

The room was filled with bathing Moroccan women who seemed unaware that they were topless. 'How is it possible that women who cover their heads, wrists, and ankles, in public are comfortable exposing their most private features?' I wondered. For the first time in my life, I truly felt like an outsider. I had always thought of America as carefree and liberated;

yet somehow, these Moroccan women were more comfortable with their bodies than I was with mine. Inspired by their confidence, I slowly uncrossed my arms and began to bathe.

After leaving the *hammam* I felt a new sense of self-awareness. Until then, I had known only one narrative about Moroccan women, naively believing they were controlled in most aspects of their lives. I was unaware that women were allowed to choose what they wore, and I was taught to view those wearing a *hijab* as oppressed and conservative. I was equally as ignorant after arriving in Morocco, declaring Moroccan women were pillars of strength that American women should emulate. Although my intentions were sincere, I was doing them, and myself, an injustice by over-simplifying women. Only after truly getting to know the women of Morocco as individuals and reflecting upon their lives did I finally gain a clearer perspective. There is no singular definition of a Moroccan woman; each is as complex and multi-faceted as the country she lives in. All I needed to do was look beneath the *hijab*.

- ALEXANDRA HICKS



After traveling to Tangier, Morocco, author Alex Hicks discovered a greater sense of cultural awareness.



making something that wasn't there before appear out of thin air," Cadaver says.

Cadaver is a black palette with messy jet-black hair, creamy white skin, and tattoos that peek out from beneath a black V-neck and hoodie. He has gauged ears, and his fingernails are painted to match his black jeans. It's his day-to-day wear and traditional garb at live paintings. It gives a look of goth or darkness, but it's not a reflection of the inner Cadaver. "I don't think Davey's external self is reflected in his work," says Chris Moon, a friend and fellow artist. "There is a controlled spontaneity about him that shows up in his work, but his work is really aggressive and unplanned."

Each painting has a story, Cadaver says, and most of the time, its concept emerges as he works. A word in a song. A sentence uttered by someone a year ago. A conversation had earlier that day. These words stream through Cadaver's head as he paints. Occasionally they're jotted down on a piece of canvas or wood, or if he remembers, a piece of paper. "Those words are what I use for the piece and I play off those emotions," Cadaver says.

In one of Cadaver's larger pieces, *It Can't Rain All the Time*, vivid colors, dreamlike qualities, and feelings of the supernatural cover the canvas. Next to two human-like figures Cadaver has written 6:19. He explains that the number was inspired from the lyric in Marilyn Manson's song "If I Was Your Vampire," in which Manson sings, "6:19 and I know I'm ready." Cadaver believes painting words and numbers allows viewers to interpret them openly. To him, 6:19 represents a beginning—the moment that he's ready to paint more, ready to elaborate on the story he's creating, and ready to let go and

give everything to his art. "I think about things a lot and try to find duality, juxtaposition, and multiplicity of meanings behind things," he says.

To promote his name, sell his art, and demonstrate his process, Cadaver paints in front of live audiences. At first, Cadaver thought that live art shows were events for sellouts. "Once I confronted my true feelings though, I realized that I was just pissed off for not having the balls to do

having many children in his life, and is not used to having them at live shows. The unusual experience, he says, helped him discover that he could also influence young people. Cadaver remembers thinking, "Wow, this is an interesting feeling, this environment for kids. I don't really see many children, or interact with many children, but [the boy] became so fascinated. I just hope he grows up and does something that he cares about, too."

Much of Cadaver's work is inspired by the James O'Barr graphic novel series *The Crow*, which revolves around a suffering protagonist who uses the guidance of a crow to seek vengeance for the one he loved. For Cadaver, *The Crow* is a reminder to keep going. Music also inspires him, particularly the album *Three Cheers for Sweet Revenge* by My Chemical Romance, which he has painted to numerous times.

In his studio, Cadaver smears layers of paint left, right, up, and down, and says he often ruminates on two words: revenge and vengeance. Though, to him, the words are not so much about getting back at the world or at people who have hurt him, but about turning a negative into a positive. "I like to tap into a sense of positivity, but I also find beauty in things that aren't necessarily beautiful," he says.

To Cadaver, life is directed by the filters people create in their minds; he believes people view art through the lenses they have manifested. What makes Cadaver and his art stand out are the filters he presents to his audiences. Everyone begins on the same playing field, he says, but it's our processes that make us different. ☐

- COLETTE LEVESQUE

I LIKE TO TAP INTO A SENSE OF POSITIVITY, BUT I ALSO FIND BEAUTY IN THINGS THAT AREN'T NECESSARILY BEAUTIFUL.

SPEAK TO ME

Artist Davey Cadaver rides a stream of verbal consciousness to create his haunting paintings.

Davey Cadaver is up. It's 8:59 p.m. and he is just now saying good morning. Crossing his small studio apartment's paint-spattered hardwood floors, he says hello to his live-in girlfriend, Hillary. Recently having rid himself of booze and cigarettes, Cadaver has replaced those habits with maté and strong coffee. After pouring himself a cup, Cadaver takes his first sip. The caffeine high, essential to his daily routine, hits his body, and he is ready to paint.

Cadaver is an artist who, before the age of nine, had already lived in two countries, five states, and ten cities. His father, one of his biggest inspirations, was an artist and a military man who changed bases frequently. So at a young age, when most children were playing outside, Cadaver was reading books, creating worlds in his head, spending his money on graphic novels, and falling in love with painting. "The first thing that I ever wanted to be was an artist," Cadaver says. "I wanted to be like my dad."

Now 27 years old, Cadaver creates art that is known for its dark, ominous figures, heavy strokes, magical realism, and words that are layered with vivid colors, haunting lyrics, parking tickets, and sometimes spit. The more basic elements of his works incorporate combinations of acrylics, oil pastels, and colored pencils, along with spray paint, markers, glitter, eyeliner, nail polish, and mirrors. To Cadaver, being a painter is like being a magician. "It's kind of the same thing, like pulling a rabbit out of a hat and



LEFT PAGE: Davey Cadaver's original painting, *It Can't Rain All the Time*. This piece was inspired by Marilyn Manson's song "If I Was Your Vampire." **ABOVE LEFT:** Two tubes of acrylic paint are just a couple of the varied art supplies filling Cadaver's studio. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Cadaver takes a few minutes to reflect on a painting he is developing for a client. From start to finish, he explains, each painting evolves as thoughts, ideas, and words stream through into his mind.



Breaking Bread

Bakers celebrate the flavor region-specific sourdough “starters” infuse in their bread.

In the back room of Eugene City Bakery, Micah Kenworth sets a heap of dough on a baker's scale. Ripping a piece from the pale beige blob, he checks the scale again. This time, it aligns perfectly. He begins placing double-fistful mounds of the dough into baskets on a metal cart, repeating the motion until both of the cart's two shelves are filled with 12 baskets each. It's almost time for them to be baked into golden loaves of sourdough bread, but before being placed in the oven, the dough must rest and absorb the heat that will activate its yeast. Within minutes the dough is rising, crowning over the baskets' edges. Lifting the dough to his nose, Kenworth deeply inhales. One sniff, and he knows it's ready for baking.

Kenworth's baking process is as much an art as it is a routine. Sourdough bread requires a perfect balance of water, flour, salt, and the most essential ingredients: yeast and bacteria. The principle part of any sourdough bread recipe is the sourdough starter that produces the bread. This simple combination of flour, water, and yeast is much wetter than the average bread dough. Bakers from different regions use a variety of yeasts—whether airborne or those that grow on vegetables or waxy fruits—to generate starters that can last for years. How a starter is

conceived is a baker's secret, but the regional flavor produced by local yeast makes each recipe distinctive.

Katie McNeil, founder of Pacific Sourdough in Waldport, Oregon, created her starter in 1994 through pure experimentation. After reading an article in *Gourmet* magazine, McNeil combined a mixture of staple sourdough ingredients with

“You know when it's going to be great sourdough.”

yeast from frozen grapes to create the foundation for her popular bread. She is part of a long line of sourdough bakers that dates back to sixteenth century BCE in ancient Egypt, when a mixture of water and grains used for beer brewing was fermented and led to the discovery of “leavened,” or rising bread.

“I taught myself how to do it,” McNeil says of her starter. She grew up eating her mother's homemade San Francisco sourdough recipe, but McNeil never learned how to make it, and the starter she uses today is far different from her mother's. McNeil says she never intended

to make a career out of baking, but with the influence of *Gourmet*'s article and her mother's tasty sourdough, she fell into the occupation on a whim 20 years ago.

McNeil says the process of making the bread is more complicated than her simple ingredient list suggests. Her 36-hour method includes “feeding” the starter by adding flour and water, fermenting the dough in a large tub, waiting for the dough to rise, and shaping each loaf before placing it in an oven to bake at a high temperature. Despite her lengthy process, McNeil says there's nothing more satisfying than knowing families across Oregon are making toast with her bread. “I hand-shape every single loaf,” McNeil says proudly.

A simple sourdough starter begins with blending the signature ingredients and leaving them to sit at room temperature. This allows wild yeasts to settle into the mixture and begin the fermentation that produces carbon dioxide gas, a natural leavener. While the carbon dioxide becomes trapped in tiny bubbles that causes the bread to rise, *Lactobacillus*, a naturally present strain of bacteria, feeds on carbohydrates in the dough and produces the lactic acid that eventually gives the bread its well-known sour flavor. The best sourdough would ideally have a

perfect mix of acetic and lactic acid. “You want a balance of those,” McNeil explains, adding that there's no such thing as a flawless sourdough.

According to Parker Hayes, another sourdough baker at the Eugene City Bakery, a key aspect of baking sourdough, aside from the starter's consistency, is regulating its temperature—whether it is the room temperature where the starter is stored or an oven's baking temperature, which McNeil suggests be set at about 450 degrees Fahrenheit. She says warm environments create the hot gas that causes the bread to expand, but they can also influence a sourdough's flavor by creating more lactic acid in the starter, which produces a less tangy flavor. Colder environments generate more acetic acid, which encourages a sour taste. A starter can be maintained for years by simply feeding the mixture every few days, and sourdough enthusiasts pride themselves on the longevity of their starters because age determines the tanginess of the bread. A starter's age can also

increase the predictability of a sourdough starter.

Since 1849, the Boudin family of the famous San Francisco Boudin Sourdough Bakery & Café has maintained a distinctive starter mixture that is uniquely West Coast. The regional wild yeasts found in the air containing the unique *Lactobacillus sanfranciscensis* strain of bacteria transformed the family's sourdough starter into the foundation of their popular bread's savory tang. The family's starter, which is still used today, created what has been trademarked as The Original San Francisco Sourdough. Even if the bread is not made in San Francisco, however, specific acid-tolerant yeasts must be in the air for the bread to take on its famous flavor.

The Eugene City Bakery's starter originated near San Francisco, in Santa Cruz, California, but over the years it has transformed, enriched by airborne Eugene-area wild yeast. The main difference between baking sourdough versus other breads, Hayes points out, is how long it takes. A simple white or wheat bread might only

require about five hours of prep and baking time because it does not rely on yeast to settle into the dough, but sourdough can take as several days just to complete the pre-baking preparation. It's a lengthy process that requires time and patience to get just the right temperature and humidity combination bakers need to cultivate the perfect amount of yeast.

At Eugene City Bakery, fellow baker Nicolai Otte walks into the back room and immediately picks up one of the sourdough baskets Hayes has set to rest by the oven. Otte examines the bread up close and then pinches the dough delicately as if it were a child's cheek. A toothy smile spreads over his face. His baker's sixth sense kicks in, and after a moment of silence he looks up and gushes, “You know when it's going to be great sourdough.”

- JAMIE HERSHMAN

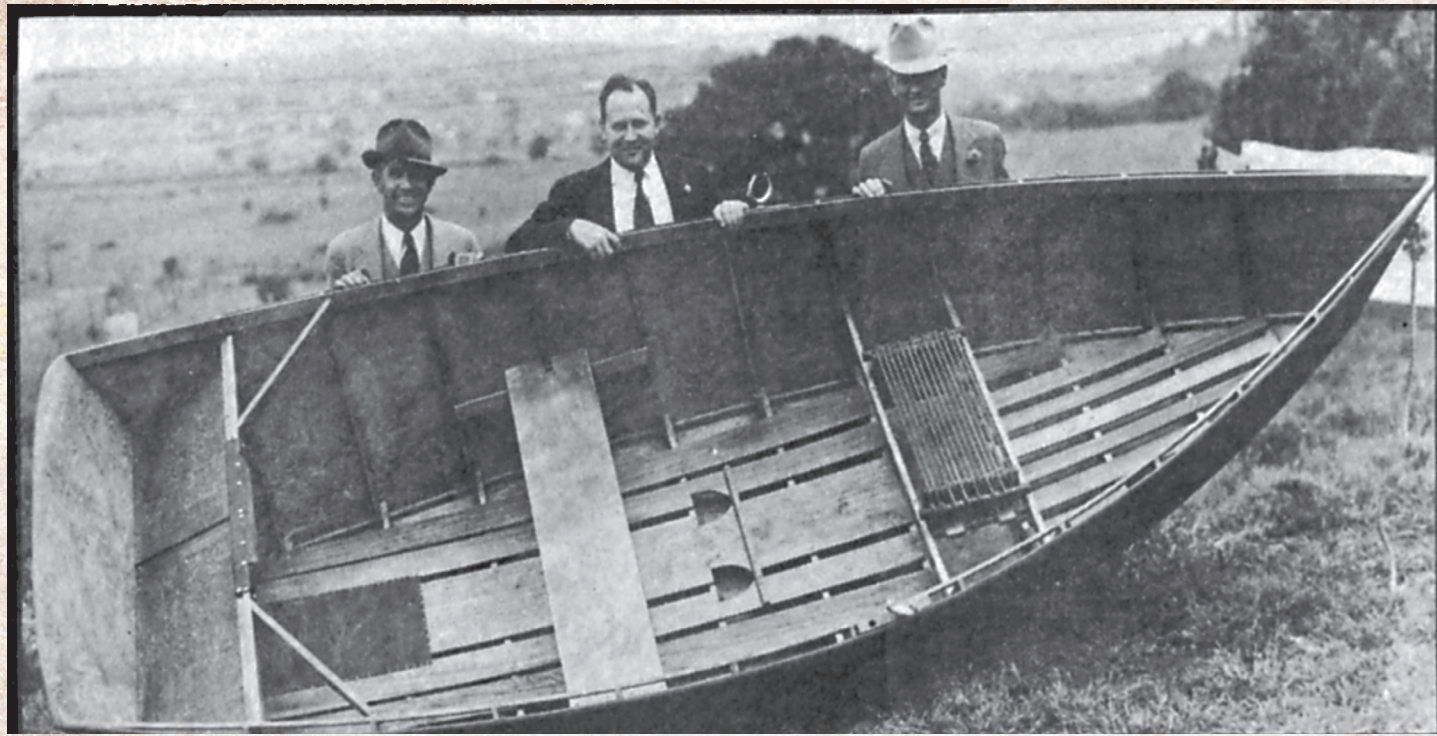


LEFT: Eugene City Bakery employee Micah Kenworth mixes freshly made multigrain sourdough. The bakery's sourdough is prepared at night to ensure its freshness the next morning. **ABOVE:** After baking, sourdough rolls are placed on racks to cool.

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PHOTO NATALIE CHAN DESIGN MORGAN ALFREJD



KEEPING HISTORY AFLOAT

Drift boat enthusiasts near Oregon's McKenzie River work to preserve the practice of handcrafting wooden vessels.

Firmly grasping the two oars of his wooden drift boat, Randy Dersham commands the rushing waters of the Pacific Northwest's McKenzie River. His boat rests atop the river's the waves as he weaves his way downstream, maneuvering through the rushing water with expert precision. His experience on the river becomes more evident with each meticulous stroke of the oar.

For Dersham, a float down the river in a wooden drift boat amounts to more than a mere ride—the experience creates a distinct connection extending beyond a basic knowledge of currents. “In a drift boat, you can feel yourself move with the river,” Dersham says. “It’s sort of like having a dance partner.”

During the first half of the twentieth century, the simple concept of a rowboat underwent modifications that increased maneuverability, provided greater stability, and improved the boats’ ability to battle rough water, which eventually resulted in the modern drift boat. Today, drift boats are designed with a V-shaped hull that makes them easy to steer and with a

solid wood frame that makes them durable and easy to stand in—two characteristics that are particularly attractive to fly fishermen. Their high prow, flat bottom, and flared sides provide the boats with enough steadiness and agility to navigate fast-moving, Class III whitewater rapids.

These river-conquering boats come to life in Dersham’s shop adjacent to his home near the McKenzie River in Vida, Oregon, where he

“In a drift boat, you can feel yourself move with the river. It’s sort of like having a dance partner.”

co-owns Tatman Wooden Boats with his son, Sanderson. Though the pair no longer sells boats and boat-building kits through the company, drift boats still hold a prominent place in their lives. “You just don’t live on the river without having a drift boat,” Dersham says.

Originally from Creswell, Oregon, Dersham has always lived near a river, but in 1989 he settled next to the McKenzie in Vida. “I’ve always

lived where you would vacation,” he laughs.

True to his words, he and his wife, Debbie, now operate Eagle Rock Lodge, a bed and breakfast on the same property as their home. Just across the street from Eagle Rock, nestled within the towering pines is Dersham’s shop, where he has built many drift boats by hand. Much like his boats, the workshop’s warm wooden accents have a tranquil, rustic feel, and the projects scattered around the area often leave visitors in awe.

The boat building process is simple, but it is labor intensive and requires precision. Dersham says evenly sanded edges are the key to constructing a sound boat, and each piece must be carefully handled to maintain its unique curves and angles. For some, the meticulous physical labor that goes into constructing a drift boat is what makes the process so rewarding. “It’s like tying your own flies and then catching fish with them,” says Dan Justus, who has been a river guide for nearly 20 years.

The evolution of the wooden drift boat has been credited to many individuals through

the past few decades. Veltie Pruitt and Prince Helfrich are two names Dersham quickly mentions when discussing drift boats’ defining historic moments. In the 1920s, Pruitt’s small drift boat design caught the attention of Helfrich, who immediately began working with Pruitt to create more compact and lightweight drift boat models. Pruitt and Helfrich later produced *Shooting the Deschutes*, a film that documented the duo’s drift boat expeditions and debuted at the 1949 World’s Fair.

Justus also praises the contributions of Keith Steele, a noted drift boat artisan. “Steele was probably one of the most prolific wooden boat builders on the McKenzie,” Justus says. Steele is known for his craftsmanship a skill he passed down to his son, Steve. Three of Steve’s handcrafted boats are on display at Cabela’s in Springfield, Oregon. Each of the display boats represent a 14-foot model from the 1940s and 1950s: a square-end boat that provided maneuverability and carrying capacity, a double-end boat built for navigating fast water, and a transom-end boat that allowed a motor to be attached.

Much like those who gather to marvel at Steve Steele’s handcrafted creations, enthusiasts also enjoy coming together to celebrate wooden drift boats and their history. Sharing knowledge of authentic wooden watercraft construction, such as using plywood as a primary building material, connects contemporary builders to the craftsmen who preceded them. “I take a lot of joy in the perseveration of the wooden drift boat because of its importance historically in western rivers—particularly the McKenzie. I want to be part of continuing that legacy,” says David Jensen, a 30-year McKenzie River resident and owner of two Keith Steele boats.

But Dersham admits he can’t ignore the decreasing use of wooden drift boats among younger residents who float the McKenzie River. He says the folks who have been part of the history are getting older, and that the wooden drift boat’s association with older generations may be turning young boat enthusiasts off. In addition, wooden boats have special storage needs because they must be kept out of the

elements, especially in the drizzly Pacific Northwest, which Dersham believes may also be contributing to the decline in the wooden boats on the McKenzie. “After living on the river for a number of years, it’s just really obvious that these things are all starting to slip away,” Dersham says.

To spark an interest in wooden drift boats, in 2006 Dersham made a handful of phone calls that resulted in the first annual Wooden Boat Festival hosted on his property at Eagle Rock Lodge. Although only 25 boats were featured the first year, Dersham says he expects 40 to 60 boats will be on display at the eighth annual festival at Eagle Rock this April 27.

Boat builders who venture to the festival park their boats on Dersham’s property near the McKenzie. There, they can mingle with fellow builders and admire each boat’s custom woodwork. “Some of them are like pieces of furniture. They’re beautiful, and you’re like, ‘Are you really going to put that in the water?’” Justus says.

In addition to hosting the boat festival, Dersham created woodenboatpeople.com, a website where collaboration within the drift boat community has crossed into a virtual threshold. Dedicated to wooden drift boat discussion, the website is aimed at preserving the boats’ cultural relevance. Drift boat builders around the world can connect to pass on their knowledge and share their passion with likeminded experts. “It’s using current social media in a way that hasn’t been available before,” Dersham explains.

On the site, members exchange tips, photographs, general information, and history. Dersham says he created the site to encourage a deeper understanding and passion for wooden boats within the community. “There’s

no agenda. There aren’t any rules ... It’s not a moneymaking thing. It’s just a bunch of people who are crazy about boats and want to share information with each other,” Dersham says.

By making drift boat information more accessible and drawing people from across the globe into a virtual community, woodenboatpeople.com is creating an archive Dersham hopes can keep this piece of McKenzie River culture afloat. **BRITTANY HALLIN**



LEFT PAGE: Boat builder, Veltie Pruitt (left) stands with his drift boat in 1939. Pruitt’s boat was one of the first constructed with plywood. Photo courtesy of Randy Dersham.

ABOVE: Dersham poses for a portrait among his unfinished drift boats in his workshop in Vida, Oregon.

LEFT: Dersham rows one of his handcrafted drift boats down the McKenzie River. Dersham’s passion for wooden drift boats plays a vital role in preserving the culture in Oregon.



PHOTO MASON TRINCA DESIGN ANNA BIRD



The members of Small Joys, left to right: Olivia Awbrey, Dan Klee, Will Bland, Mike Steinkirchner.

INTIMATE MOMENTS WITH SMALL JOYS

A Eugene quartet gives insight into the little things that influence their dynamic sound.

Mike Steinkirchner is hungry. “Let’s get a pizza!” he shouts. “With pineapple and onions!” Steinkirchner’s band mates, members of Eugene quartet Small Joys, laugh, agreeing to his suggestion. But they don’t want pineapple and onions. Dan Klee, the band’s guitarist and co-founder, says he doesn’t want olives. “I want olives oliv-er-it,” jokes Olivia Awbrey, Small Joys’ lead singer and songwriter. As if on cue, Steinkirchner responds, “Okay, Olive-ia!” Klee now claims he wants pepperoni. Will Bland, the band’s drummer, is a vegetarian. “I can pick off the pepperonis.” After a playful 25-minute pizza topping debate, the pie is ordered.

Less than 12 hours after winning *Ethos’s* annual Bandest of the Bands competition at the WOW Hall in Eugene, Oregon, Small Joys is upbeat. The night before, a cadre of fans had cheered them on as they commanded the

venue’s stage. It was no surprise the young college band, clearly a community mainstay, took the title of crowd favorite at their biggest show to date.

Awbrey and Steinkirchner began performing together after meeting in 2009 at the University of Oregon. Klee met the duo at an open mic in 2010. Soon after, Klee and Awbrey became close friends and began playing cafés and open mic events around Eugene, eventually formalizing their act as Small Joys. Having first gone his own way, Steinkirchner later rejoined Klee and Awbrey, and the trio began jamming together at Awbrey’s home. “I had secretly wanted in the whole time because I’d heard Olivia’s songwriting and was like, ‘Oh, wow, she’s good at this,’” Steinkirchner says. The band’s drummer, Bland, later rounded out the current lineup.

Each of the four band members brings a unique musical background to the group, creating an unconventional, but cohesive sound. When

trying to define what type of music they play, members list everything from folk to surf rock to “Honestly, we don’t know.”

As primary songwriter, Awbrey largely controls the band’s musical direction. Her taste centers on well-known UK folk artists like Glen Hansard and Frank Turner. Klee possesses less clearly defined music tastes. He cites bluegrass and folk, but in particular notes an affinity for grunge. Klee plays a Fender Jaguar, the same guitar used by Nirvana’s iconic front man, Kurt Cobain. The influence is obvious, but the tinny, reverbed guitar sounds Klee plays are equally reminiscent of the 1950s surf vibe produced by Carl Wilson of the Beach Boys. Steinkirchner’s tastes are more eclectic: He loves everything from Motown and funk to hip-hop, punk, and bluegrass. Bland shares Steinkirchner’s affection for hip-hop and funk, but also loves Latin percussion afrobeat, and says he would kill to

master the steel drum. “You know when you get into Will’s car, because it sounds like Miami in the 1980s,” Klee laughs.

Together, Small Joys’ sound is a blend of each member’s colorful musical influences. “If I played alone,” Awbrey says, “my music would probably just be called folk, but with all of them coloring it—” Klee cuts her off, “It’s gotten weird.”

Typically, Awbrey writes one of her folk songs alone and then plays it for the band. Following her lead, the members then fill in their parts, pushing and pulling the song in whichever direction their intuition takes them. This is precisely how one of their more recent songs, “Jericho,” came to sound as it does.

Alone with her acoustic guitar, Awbrey wrote “Jericho” for a close friend who had passed away. One day when she played it for the group, Bland felt an urge to give the song a Latin spice rhythm. “I just started laying down this Latin beat over that, and it turned into a jam with all three of [the guys] on percussion.”

The content of Awbrey’s lyrics is as varied as the group’s tastes, though her themes remain humble and relatable. She writes stories and paints pictures of things that strike her at any moment. Klee describes Awbrey’s songs as “intimate, yet casual.”

Another of Awbrey’s songs, “Toy Boats,” recounts a hectic day of travel from her time studying abroad in Germany. The train she was on broke down in an unknown town, and only then, Awbrey says, did she realize just how far from home she was. Feeling lost, she glanced

out the window to look for something familiar.

Outside by a pond, she noticed a small group of children yelling and playing with toy boats. Comforted by their careless joy, she mused, “This might be paradise.” Awbrey says she recognized how important these moments are in a world that requires constant drive and determination and wrote, “We are focused, we are pointed / We are centered, we are sheltered / From the very moments that we need.”

Klee tries his best to describe Small Joys, claiming the band’s essence is reflected in its name. “It’s about the small joys embedded in the epic moments,” he says. Later, Awbrey clarifies: “The song ‘Small Joys’ reflects the feeling of the band. We’re ready to take off on an adventure, and at the same time, we stay focused on the things in life that make us happy, and music happens to be it.”

In November 2011, Klee, Awbrey, and Simon Adler—a friend and Eugene musician—opened Awbrey’s home for concerts under the

venue name The Painted Porch. The stage was organized on her back porch where intimate bi-monthly shows called “Home-Brewed House Shows” were performed. In addition to music, guests at The Painted Porch enjoyed home-brewed beer and an opportunity to make art on a giant paint canvas. Awbrey says the venue quickly, but briefly, became established as the heart of the Eugene music community.

Together Small Joys has recorded one self-titled EP and a single called “Leaf Left” and has played shows in Eugene and Portland. But to everyone in the band, the short enthusiastic set surrounded by friends at the WOW Hall

felt like a milestone. Bland, who was awed by the experience of finally walking through the venue’s “mystical back door,” admits he was surprised by how plain the room was. “I’ve seen artists I worship walking in and out of there, but it’s nothing special,” Bland says. “It helped me connect with how we always hold musicians in really high esteem, but they’re just normal people.”

This topic seems to pique the band’s interest. Steinkirchner recalls how record labels were once intricately involved in every aspect of the music, from creative direction to distribution, ultimately building pop artists as larger-than-life cultural symbols. But that’s not the case any more, Klee says. Since new technologies have made do-it-yourself production and distribution a reality, the focus in has shifted squarely onto the individual artist. As a result, what matters now is community, performance, and intimacy. “It’s all so much more accessible—and not just for the artist, but for the fan,” Awbrey says. “They don’t see us as this enigmatic, ‘How did they do that?’ type of figure.” In this way, Awbrey notes, the line separating the artist and the audience is fading.

Few embrace this paradigm shift like Small Joys, who are truly the quintessential backyard band. As they humbly acknowledge that The Painted Porch was—in many regards—the only venue that qualified as the heart of a Eugene music “community,” a word choice the band explicitly prefers to “scene.” Having met, made their name, and created a broad community foundation that eventually led to the band opening the back door at the WOW Hall, it’s no surprise they cherish the intimacy. ♡

—BRADFORD ZUKERMAN

“WE STAY FOCUSED ON THE THINGS IN LIFE THAT MAKE US HAPPY, AND MUSIC HAPPENS TO BE IT.”



LEFT: The members of Small Joys often practice at songwriter Olivia Awbrey’s home. Awbrey’s back porch was once known as The Painted Porch, a community music venue known for its intimate neighborhood shows and home-brewed beer. RIGHT: Small Joys performs at the Bandest of the Bands competition at the WOW Hall in Eugene, Oregon. Their set brought the largest and most energized audience of the night.

Hear *Ethos’s* Bandest of the Bands winner:
www.ethosmagonline.com



PHOTO ANDY ABEYTA DESIGN CARLY ELLIOTT

THE ART OF MANGA

A comic genre unites words and pictures with people across cultures.



Manga illustration courtesy of Jonathan Mullins.

In a blue robe, paper mask, and belt, four-year-old Bird Man flew around fighting crime. He was the superhero alter ego of young Jonathan Mullins, who eventually came to the dream-crushing realization that he would never have real superpowers. But rather than let reality stamp out his imagination, Mullins was inspired to put his ideas to paper. He became an artist at the age of six. "I've always wanted to fly around and fight bad guys, but unfortunately those things don't exist," Mullins says. "So my back-up was drawing comics."

Mullins, who is now 22, currently works for the Texas-based comic book publishing company Antarctic Press. He says his first exposure to the world of cartoons was through Nickelodeon's *Doug*, a TV show about an ordinary kid who has interactions with purple and green people. Mostly, *Doug*'s adventures take place in his imagination with his own superhero persona, Quailman, who was the inspiration for Mullins's Bird Man.

With *Doug* as his gateway into the world of cartoons, Mullins soon discovered *Dragonball Z*, a popular Japanese adventure story that drew him into the genre of anime and manga. "As I got older, I watched more and more Japanese cartoons, and I really liked how they drew faces, clothes, poses—everything," Mullins says. "In the past few years, I've had a lot more cartoony influences, but ultimately, the Japanese manga look is the coolest to me."

Manga, or Japanese comic books, became mainstream during the 1950s in post-WWII Japan. The big-eyed cartoon style leaves space for dynamic interpretations outside the boundaries created by literal

representations of anatomy and stricter, more realistic styles of art. Rather than detailing veins, dirt, and other unflattering lumps like other comics might, in manga, more white space is incorporated into character and scene designs. It is common for manga artists to superimpose pre-made texture sheets onto their work by cutting shapes out instead of drawing a texture with ink, which is how textures are created in western comics. What sets apart the genre's characters from other cartoon styles is the way manga artists illustrate fashions and hair color. As a manga artist, Mullins has to come up with original ideas and designs for his characters within this spectrum of simplicity. "I usually daydream a lot," Mullins says. "When a cool idea comes to my mind, I try to keep that image in my head until I can get around some art supplies."

Historically in Japanese storytelling, words are accompanied by images reflecting the meaning of Japanese characters. In contrast, American picture books are generally associated with childishness because the pages of books for children are full of pictures with few words, while books for adults generally lack any prominent visual elements. According to Akiko Walley, assistant professor of Japanese art at the University of Oregon, there has never been a strict division between reading books and picture books in Japan. "That's kind of the way things developed in the West, but in Japan there has always been an interpenetration of image and text," she explains.

Manga's intense layered visuals and diversified content have made it socially acceptable reading material for all ages in

Japan. However, comic books in the U.S. appeal mainly to the teenage male demographic. Mullins incorporates the genre's defining elements into a manga series he writes and illustrates, titled *Chicken Fighter*. The main character, Johnny Mo, finds out his girlfriend, Pretty B, is pregnant. The couple's town, New Orleansavannahville, is terrorized by a gang of evil mutant chickens led by the villainous Clucker "Clucky" Cockerson. Clucky, seeking popularity, attacks Johnny Mo for being cooler than the chickens. Over the course of nine months, Johnny must defeat the chickens to score "cool points" and save the city before his baby is born. Hero adventures like Mullins's are a common theme among Japanese manga imported to the US, but there are many more titles and niche genres that never make it overseas.

As postwar Japanese children grew up, manga grew with them, catering to their college interests and, later, to their workplace and homemaker interests. Today, special interest manga series are devoted to anything from wine to erotica to *The Manga Cookbook*, which includes recipes for bento, a boxed meal, as well as instructions for eating with chopsticks. The wide spectrum of genres manga incorporates is one of its culturally defining traits.

Stuart Bracken, manager of Emerald City Comics in Eugene, Oregon, says the earliest manga to be sold in America were titles targeted at men and women in their teens and early twenties. Following WWII manga attracted fans in the US, creating a blend of American and Japanese markets during the era of economic restructuring. By the 1990s, manga had grown popular in America.

Bracken says the boom in manga's popularity since the nineties has stylistically inspired artists outside Japan. Canadian Bryan O'Malley's adventure comic series, *Scott Pilgrim*, was published in a manga pocket-sized digest and

produced as a major motion picture in 2010. The starry-eyed cartooning style also inspired Korean-American cartoonist Jim Lee, who worked on DC Comic stories such as *Batman: Hush* and *Superman: For Tomorrow*.

Over the decades, Bracken has watched trends in manga and anime shift the contents of his comic store. The emergence of online translations has reduced the amount of Japanese manga circulating in print, consequently creating holes in manga series—one particular volume may have been printed fewer times than its siblings because of its online availability, which can lower demand. With ongoing stories, such as the supernatural *Fruits Basket* series or the pirate adventure *One Piece*, avid fans try to amass an entire series, searching through comic book stores' used sections in the hopes of filling gaps

in their collections. Bracken also sometimes sees customers give up on titles as they grow out of a particular style. When they resell individual volumes to make space for a new favorite manga, Bracken is left with partially complete, abandoned sets. "There are none of those that can be re-ordered," Bracken says. "Keeping the stuff in print is sort of a deal that's done in Japan."

Since manga doesn't enjoy widespread popularity in the US, the question for Mullins is whether or not a market exists for his talent. "I don't think I'll ever stop drawing, and that's actually the reason why I'll succeed," Mullins says. "Every artist wants to be famous. If you enjoy what you create, be social enough to make connections, and never give up—being famous will just come."

- JULIA ROGERS

“ I don't think I'll ever stop drawing, and that's actually the reason why I'll succeed. ”

DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION CHARLOTTE CHENG



TUMBLING TOWARD PERFECTION

How one writer found strength by leaving the world of competitive gymnastics.

Flying is exhilarating. Hands gripping the uneven bar, every muscle is flexed, each limb extended. My head is spinning, yet through the chaos I remain in the moment. As my hands release, I spin through the air anticipating the moment when both feet hit the mat and my rigid body hits a strong-stuck landing.

I had been practicing for this moment nearly 18 hours a week, yet as the mat rushed closer, I knew something was wrong. Suddenly, I had no control. I had missed the landing. Emptiness filled my heart as shocks jolted from head to toe. Every muscle contracting, my limbs began to curl towards my body. In vain, I searched for any possible distraction to mask the pain. The sound of bones cracking echoed against the gymnasium walls as the fall replayed in my mind. Only one thought rushed through my head: "I can't do this anymore."

I entered the competitive world of gymnastics when I was five years old. From that point on, I knew I loved movement; I loved to live inside my body. Striving for perfection, I spent nine years defined by my score on the beam. But by the age of 14, the pressure to win eventually replaced my love of the sport.

Falling off the bar is not what made me quit gymnastics. Broken bones are nothing compared to a broken spirit. Whether it was a fall off the bars, a wobble on the beam, or a misstep on the landing, deductions were everywhere. The nature of the sport forced me to constantly criticize myself. The judges didn't care whether I was recovering from an injury or that even the simplest routine sent shocks through my body. They were there for only one reason: to determine who the best gymnast was. The judges decided whether I would be walking out of a competition with medals around my neck, silently announcing to the world, "I'm a winner!"

Although I understood that was their role, I still found myself wishing the judges would see deeper into me. I didn't want one fall from the beam to determine my worth. I feared breaking bones not because they hurt, but because an injury would hurt my chances of reaching my goal, which in the world of gymnastics, was winning. I wanted to be the best, but after years of investing time into something that diminished

my spirit, I realized I was no longer competing for the reasons I had started gymnastics in the first place. So instead of just longing to get out of a leotard to see if I could excel at something else, I finally did it. I quit gymnastics.

Although I left the sport, my need for movement remained. Yoga studios were popping up around my neighborhood; intrigued, I grabbed a flier for a free trial. After only one class, I knew I had found a replacement for gymnastics. Much like gymnastics, yoga allowed my body to shift through positions and angles to produce something uncommonly beautiful. Although I wasn't spinning through the air, stretching made me feel alive again.

"I found myself wishing the judges would see deeper into me. I didn't want one fall from the beam to determine my worth."

I found I could use the balance and strength I had honed in gymnastics and apply it in an activity centered on breathing and fluid body movement. Yoga was so simple compared to gymnastics. I loved that there was no pressure to win. No excessive training. It offered more than just a form of exercise and movement. Without competition, no one is "good" or "bad" at something—and no one is the same. As I took my place in the yoga studio that first week, I watched others moving through poses, challenging their bodies to extend and support their weight. But I had learned not to compare myself with others, to challenge myself to improve, and to cherish something that I loved the most about life: the ability to move.

While I wouldn't say that yoga changed me, I can say that it replenished my spirit. It revealed the best part in me: I could be satisfied with myself in a way that I could never be in a competitive environment. Whether stretching in a quiet backyard or moving through poses in yoga class, freedom from competition allowed

Writer Hannah Zimmer demonstrates the tree pose, a basic yoga stance used to restore balance within the body.



PHOTO WILL KANELLOS DESIGN NATALIE POMPER

me to live inside my body both physically and mentally. When I stopped competing, I was finally able to be comfortable in my own skin rather than striving to be better than someone else.

Dedicating such a large portion of my life to gymnastics made me lose track of what was truly important to me: my love of movement, not of winning. After leaving gymnastics, I understood that my score in a meet only defined my ability as a gymnast, and that I have more to offer than a perfect dismount. ☺

- HANNAH ZIMMER



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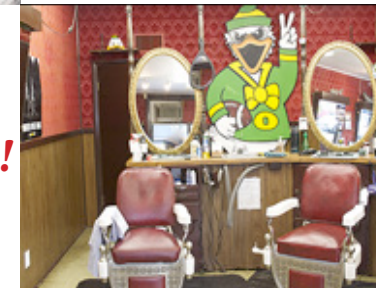


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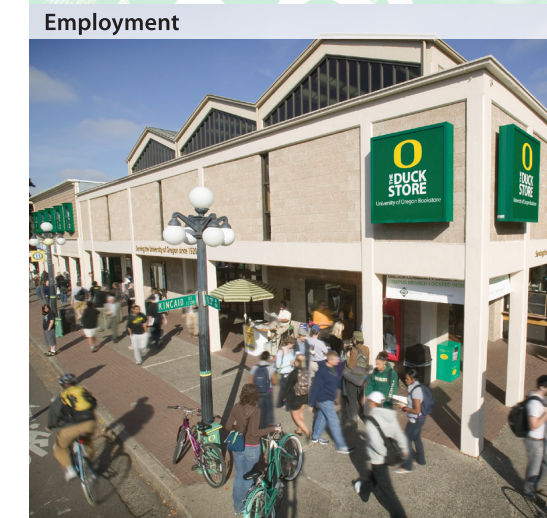


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