

SLUG

MAGAZINE

BIG HEARTS
BUY SMALL:
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• DECEMBER 2021 • ISSUE 396 • VOL 32 • SLUGMAG.COM •



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ABOUT THE COVER: For our *Big Hearts Buy Small* cover, Ashley Fairbourne vivifies the generous souls of Utah shoppers. Bags in hand, her beaming character trapes across the city in search of fresh finds. View more of Fairbourne's work on Instagram @ashleyfairbourneillustration.

Lexi Kiedaisch

Contributor Limelight
Marketing Intern



Having joined the *SLUG* team in April of 2021, Lexi Kiedaisch has developed her natural skills for marketing and events effortlessly. She says, "I've found a love for marketing and event production during my internship. Helping the team build a successful event from beginning to finish is very rewarding." We are grateful for Kiedaisch's talent and enthusiasm!

Aidan Croft

Contributor Limelight
Contributing Writer/Copy Editor



No one can write an introductory paragraph like Aidan Croft. Her sharp tongue and sense of humor adds an inviting edge to *SLUG*'s feature articles and music reviews alike. Whether she is writing or copy editing, her ability to find undiscovered texture within the written word is one for the books. Read her entry in *SLUG Mag's Top 5 Albums of 2021* feature on pg. 21!

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Carving A Niche With South Pacific Island Art

By Alexis Perno
alexis.perno1@gmail.com
Photos by Keisha Finai

Far from the ocean, *South Pacific Island Art (SPIA)* founders Iuni U. Wolfgramm Tuaimē'uta and Sailosi Fa'onelua Tuaimē'uta bring the vibrancy of Polynesian culture to Utah through their Taylorsville storefront. At *South Pacific Island Art*, you can immerse yourself in traditional Polynesian art, jewelry, food, clothing, music and history.

Faced with the decline of cultural arts such as hand carving bones, weapons, wood and seashells, *SPIA* aims to preserve the history of these practices. Hand carving has a rich history; ancient Polynesians used the carvings to record their experiences, and traditional carvers were the key to keeping Polynesian heritage alive. Now, the honor falls on *SPIA*. "It is our responsibility to keep the art of hand carving and histories alive," Iuni says. "The next generations rely upon the information carved on the bone and wood carvings to rekindle the past to the present. By educating them, it will instill a greater love and appreciation of their heritage."



All of *SPIA's* whale-bone jewelry must be sourced by Native Alaskans and either 100 years old or fossilized.



Iuni takes pride in showcasing *SPIA's* process of making traditional jewelry out of bone.

The carving process is a lengthy one, and even gathering the materials can be difficult due to regulations: Only a cow's femur can be used, wood must be shipped in from Maui and whale bones, provided by Native Alaskans, must be either over 100 years old or fossilized. Still, *SPIA* perseveres, and their online store boasts a wide selection of intricate carvings, each with their own historical description. Their Double Twist cow-bone carvings are one example, and through *SPIA*, I learned that the three holes on the pieces represent body, mind and spirit. Twisted together, the carving becomes a symbol of two people united through friendship and love for infinity.

SPIA is much more than a store, focusing more on the art and history than the business side. As Iuni says, the rich history of Polynesia creates the business. "Our main focus was to build upon the foundation of our ancestors' migrations and heritage. We wanted to develop a place where art, culture and education can be shared," Iuni says. "The public can come shop, learn and leave with a greater understanding and deeper appreciation of the Polynesians."

Although the storefront just opened Nov. 8, the permanent physical space has been a long time coming, Iuni says. Previously, *SPIA* made an appearance at events such as the 9th and 9th Street Festival and even spent time traveling around the United States, showcasing their work in places like Hawaii, Nevada, Colorado and Florida. "Sharing South Pacific art with the community

has been a [lifelong] dream come true," Iuni says. "My parents [have] had this vision and inspiration since we came here to America."

Beyond carvings, there's plenty more to explore at *SPIA* and even newer things in the works. Currently, *SPIA* hosts baking, cooking and craft demonstrations, an open mic, tours of the space to learn about the history of Polynesian migration and offers a fresh flower lei service for events. Alongside the carvings, you can purchase handcrafted South Pacific jewelry, Polynesian-inspired shirts and mugs or baked goods from *MO's Lovin Oven* in the store.

Iuni says that creating the center has been one of the best decisions they've made. "The reaction from the public has been very positive," she says. "Everyone who has come into our store is just amazed and so grateful for [us] bringing Polynesia and its history to help them learn and appreciate the Polynesian culture."

In the future, *SPIA* hopes to continue developing programs to share Polynesian culture by partnering with other local organizations and schools. To support *SPIA*, stop by the store at 5612 S. Redwood Rd. View the full collection of carvings at myspia.com, and stay up to date with events through *SPIA's* Instagram @myspia. "Being the very first Polynesian cultural store of this kind will educate so many people on a very different experience," Iuni says. "We hope that it will be a place to come see and experience when visiting Utah."

IRIS

PIERCING STUDIO
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@IRIS_PIERCING_STUDIOS

2431 S HIGHLAND DR SLC, UT 84106

Gift IDEAS

FROM INDIE UTAH BUSINESSES 2021



The holiday season is upon us. As a responsible adult, you've definitely prepared for it and you're definitely not sweating right now, on the verge of getting gift cards or stalking social media for any inkling of what to get someone. Completely unrelated, here are some

gift ideas from independent Utah businesses that are sure to shake up the typical rolodex of holiday fair. Whether it be thrifted gold or fantastical comics, we've got inspiration for just about everyone!

BLACK CAT COMICS

"I think comics make the perfect gift. It doesn't really matter what you like—there's a comic book for that interest. There are an infinite amount of storylines to explore," says *Black Cat Comics* owner **Greg Gage**. The Sugar House-based shop strives to maintain its reputation as one of the best purveyors of older comic books around while also keeping up with the latest releases. Gage's goal for *Black Cat Comics* is to provide a space for everyone to find a story that speaks to them. "We want to make everyone feel welcome and wanted," he says.

During the publishing hiatus of 2020, *Black Cat Comics* still had plenty of back issues and lesser-known titles for their customers to experience. The shop also carries a healthy stock of local and

exclusive releases, offering exciting titles for comic book aficionados and collectors that are difficult to find anywhere else, such as *House of Slaughter* from **BOOM! Studio**. "You never know who'll be the next 'big thing,' and it's fun if you stumble on that early," says Gage.

With the 2021 holidays promising supply shortages within many different industries (including paper), *Black Cat Comics* plans to weather the storm with an extensive collection of back issues, as well as comic book collectible t-shirts, posters and action figures. You can also expect to find newer releases, such as the highly anticipated *Hulk #1* by **Donny Cates** and Utah-based **Ryan Ottley**. New releases and re-orders are updated weekly on the *Black Cat Comics* website. —*Ali Shimkus*

2261 Highland Dr., SLC | M-Sa 11-7, Su 12-5
801.461.4228 | blackcat-comics.com



Photo: Keisha Finai



Despite the spacious size of *Dancing Cranes Imports*, this gift shop keeps a positive, warm and inviting atmosphere that's felt in similar shops in small ski towns. Upon walking into the store, the abundant plant decor, smell of incense and the central Koi pond transporting you to a faraway and exciting world. When I stopped in, it was a busy Thursday afternoon filled with what I guessed to be holiday shoppers. The sheer amount of eye-catching items meant that I would definitely be spending some time in the store.

Operating in SLC for over 15 years, *Dancing Cranes* offers a vast array of treasures from around the world such as jewelry, art, pottery, crystals, prayer flags, candles, clothing and even **Bob Ross** socks! This is the perfect place

to shop for a gift for those in touch with their spiritual side as the store offers a wide selection of ritual and meditation products at reasonable prices.

I picked up a beautiful Peridot ring (\$23) and a desert art print titled "Dynamic Duo" from Moab artist **Serena Supplee** (\$25). For those who don't need to shop but enjoy the atmosphere of *Dancing Cranes*, there is a space inside the store called *Café Gēbō* that offers *Caffè Ibis* coffee and fair-trade teas as well as light lunch options like grilled cheese for only \$4. This café offers a comfortable space to sit down and get some work done, as well. Visit their website, dancingcranesimports.com, or give them a follow on Instagram @[dancingcranesimports](https://www.instagram.com/dancingcranesimports). —*Gabby Dodd*

673 E. Simpson Ave South SLC | M-Su 10a-6p
801.486.1129

DANCING CRANES IMPORTS



Photo: Kevin Edwards



BLUE VELVET BUNNY

Sarah Daya started the eclectic vintage shop *Blue Velvet Bunny* in 2019 and opened its first brick-and-mortar location in April of this year. A life-long thrifter and sustainability advocate, Daya has curated a specific line of pre-loved clothing, housewares and accessories. "I'm influenced by modern and pop art, kitsch, transgressive cult films and punk rock," says Daya. Basically, the items sold at *Blue Velvet Bunny* feature a specific brand of badass. The shop is a piece of art itself, featuring statement pieces such as a 2000s-era television and giant, fuzzy dice blocks. "I love creating a unique, inviting and inspiring space that allows people to feel safe and excited to express themselves!," she says.

Apart from the aesthetic appeal, Daya is

also passionate about offering sustainable alternatives to fast fashion. From throwback Disney sweaters to Y2K platform sandals, the unique inventory at *Blue Velvet Bunny* invites shoppers to express themselves while also joining a larger movement that centers the health of our planet. "I am inspired to educate people about this wasteful cycle," says Daya. As the most waste-producing holiday approaches, *Blue Velvet Bunny* invites shoppers to reduce their footprint by gifting loved ones high-quality, vintage clothing with history.

To shop their ever-changing offerings, visit *Blue Velvet Bunny's* downtown location at 451 E. Broadway, open Wed-Sun. You can also make purchases online at bluevelvetbunny.com. Daya posts new items on Instagram @[bluevelvetbunny](https://www.instagram.com/bluevelvetbunny). —*Avrey Evans*

451 E Broadway Suite 200, SLC | W-Su 12-6
385.549.1987 | bluevelvetbunny.com



Photo: Keisha Finai



DRUPEFRUIT is a young business founded during the pandemic that's already causing a stir in Salt Lake's beverage scene. Owned and operated by **Brooke Marple**, DRUPEFRUIT sells delicious, hand-made shrub. What is shrub, you might ask? It's a non-alcoholic mixer made from fresh fruit, apple cider vinegar and sugar. DRUPEFRUIT shrubs make an excellent addition to seasonal cocktails, but Marple also suggests drinking them on their own. "I feel a deep passion to introduce people to healthier drinking alternatives, rather than just soda or alcohol," she says. Marple's favorite way to enjoy her shrub is poured over a tall glass of ice and topped with soda water—the perfect sipper for Dry January participants and non-drinkers alike.

Browsing DRUPEFRUIT's vibrant inventory, shoppers can find a variety of enticing flavors made with seasonal ingredients. "I have a lot of love for fleeting, seasonal fruits and I wanted my shrubs to show that off," Marple says. The Mango Hibiscus Chili makes a unique gift for that neighbor who doesn't partake, and the Peach Tomato Basil Balsamic is perfect for the niece with a courageous palette. Even the health-nut coworker finds their taste well suited with the kombucha-like Ginger Coconut Orange Blossom flavor. When you find yourself struggling to choose between just one shrub, DRUPEFRUIT offers sample packs. To purchase their recent flavors, head to drupefru.it/shop or, pick up a bottle at a small business near you such as *Animalia*, *Boozetique* and *Central 9th Market*. Find DRUPEFRUIT on Instagram @[drupefru.it](https://www.instagram.com/drupefru.it). —*Aorey Evans*

drupefru.it.com

DRUPEFRUIT



Photo: Kevin Edwards



Owned and operated by **Bradley and Molly Heller**, *The Tea Grotto* exists as a quaint, cozy shop for all tea-lovers. Situated in Salt Lake's ever-changing Central 9th neighborhood, the store has described itself as the city's "premium loose leaf tea house" since its opening in 2004. Inside the warm, woodsy shop, the herbaceous overtones of tea flood visitors' senses. While you can (and should) stop in for a to-stay cup as you enjoy a good book at one of *The Tea Grotto's* rustic tables, the store also offers a range of products for take-home purchase.

On the merchandise end, *The Tea Grotto* offers a wide variety of kettles, presses, cups and more that range from practical and simple to ornate antiques. The former

could provide the perfect gift for the burgeoning tea fiend, while the latter is an apt choice for the loved one in your life who wants to elevate their tea experience with imported ceramics from countries such as China and Japan.

Then there's the tea. On their site shop, *The Tea Grotto* currently lists 150 different blends for sale, from a range of classic greens and jasmine teas sourced from East Asia to unique flavors such as Chinese Dragon Pearls and Chocolate Mint Rooibos. More than just boasting the flavors of their teas, *The Tea Grotto* also looks toward the health and medicinal benefits of the herbal drink, offering a set of medicinal teas that can assist with allergies, stress relief, lung health and more. —*Audrey Lockie*

401 E. 900 South, SLC | 801.466.8255 | M-Sa 11a-7p
Sun: 10a-6p | theteagrotto.com

THE TEA GROTTA



Photo: John Barkiple



LILLIES OF THE FIELDS

Lillies of the Fields is a thrift store in the heart of the Ballpark neighborhood whose goal is helping those in the community who need it most: newly released prisoners, the houseless and those struggling with mental illness.

Founder **Mary Daniels** started the 501-C3 nonprofit after being the main supplier for a charitable program in *Pioneer Park* where she was receiving more donations than she was able to supply to the homeless. "We carry gifts and treasures; at least 90% was donated," says Daniels.

While the store has the essentials such as clothes, furniture and dishware, there is also a funky collection of art on the walls, music equipment and vintage barware. For Daniels, those who are in need of anything at *Lillies of*

the Fields can take home needed items on an honor system. "If you need it and don't have funds you have instant credit. You can take it home and you are responsible for the payment—we don't call you. We let your heart call us," says Daniels.

For her, the charitable mission is the primary focus of the thrift shop, and she made a point to accept donations and stay open when possible during the hardest days of the pandemic. Daniels says, "We are now becoming more structural, hiring part-time employees and [making] other structural changes." Daniels says the best way for *SLUG* readers to help and get involved is to come in, check out the store, donate items and give feedback. —*Ali Shimkus*

1401 S Main Street, SLC | W-F 11-6, Sa 11-5
801.596.0706 | www.slcthriftshop.com



Photo: John Barkiple



THYME AND PLACE

Every place has its own plant shop with subtle hints of the city peeking through monstera leaves and cactus spikes. *Thyme and Place* serves as Salt Lake's local plant boutique owned by **Melinda Meservy**, who gave up a 20-year business career with multinational organizations to open the shop. Though she made significantly more money before, Meservy believes "life is made up of our time and experiences," and running *Thyme and Place* is far more fulfilling.

Since they opened in 2016, *Thyme and Place* has been serving the local community by hosting workshops, spotlighting the work of local artists, donating gift baskets to local causes and hosting a free propagation station in the store where people can exchange plant cuttings with one another. Between Salt

Lake natives and newcomers alike, the community finds ways to support and uplift one another, and Meservy shows her gratitude abundantly.

Employees at the shop are dedicated to understanding their customers and helping them find the right plant for their preferences. They pride themselves in matching plants to lifestyles, offering the kind of personalized customer service that defines luxury without being exclusive. Some of Meservy's favorite items in the store right now are hand-carved Olive Wood aerators, upcycled chapati (a bread made in India) board plant stands, **The Moody Cactus** (a local maker) cement planters and scented soy candles. *Thyme and Place* is one of the many shops that remind us why Salt Lake is home, keeping our community local and close. —*Harper Hasse*

362 E. 900 South, SLC | W-Su 11a-6p | Closed M-Tu
@[thymeandplaceslc](https://www.instagram.com/thymeandplaceslc)



Photo courtesy of Thyme and Place



Marissa's Books

A Treasure Trove for Bookworms of All Ages

3302 S. 900 East, Millcreek, UT 84106

By Mekenna Malan
mekenna.malan@gmail.com



Photos: Jehn Barkiple

Cindy Dumas (pictured) opened up Marissa's Books after acquiring a large collection of books at an auction.

A Millcreek gem with nearly 8,000 square feet of both new and pre-loved books, *Marissa's Books* is the kind of place that any bibliophile could spend a whole day wandering. If you can name the genre, *Marissa's Books* probably has it on the shelves—photography, architecture, mysticism, true crime, sci-fi, poetry anthologies and even a collection of books written by local authors—all surrounded by original art, sculptures and gifts. Rather unassuming from the outside, stepping into *Marissa's Books* feels exactly how the discovery of an independent bookstore should: a bit magical.

"This is an accidental but wonderful business," says Cindy Dumas, owner of *Marissa's Books*. After acquiring a large collection of books at an estate auction, Dumas opened a temporary warehouse from which to sell them during the holidays in 2012. She found that local interest for physical books was still strong despite any electronic-bound ideas to the contrary, and she went on to open the first *Marissa's Books* storefront in Murray in 2013. "My granddaughter Marissa was only seven at the time, but she and I enjoyed going to bookstores and spending mornings browsing the books and drinking hot chocolate," Dumas says of the bookstore's namesake.

In 2019, Dumas and her team made the old *Firestone Tires* building in Millcreek an unlikely—but quirkily aesthetic—new home for *Marissa's Books*. "Initially, I thought [having to move] was the worst thing ... But I soon found that it was the most amazing thing to happen for the store," Dumas says. "I knew we could make [the old *Firestone*

building] into an interesting and fun bookstore by keeping some of its own special charm."

Special charm, indeed. The space is full of windows and seems to go on forever as each room opens into the next. Each room feels full of hidden treasures—most of which are for sale. "During this past year and due to many requests, we have started to sell select items like some of the decor, original artwork, paintings, etc. that are arranged around the store," Dumas says. "Not everything is for sale, but at least 50% of what you see is."

Shopping at *Marissa's Books* is a way to support local authors, too. In addition to



Charming and eclectic, *Marissa's Books* carries almost any genre visitors can think of.

browsing the shelves of books written by Utahns, patrons of the bookstore can get their copies signed by the authors themselves at special events. "Prior to COVID, we had a number of local author book signings [in-store] and would like to get back to having them again on a regular basis," Dumas says. The first post-COVID book signing event was held just last month, and information about future book signings can be found via the bookstore's social media feeds.

Though *Marissa's* now has a website (marissasbooks.com) and recently started selling wholesale to local stores like **Smith & Edwards** and **Soelberg's Market**, nothing quite compares to walking among the shelves of possibilities at the flagship store. "It is more important than ever to support local, brick-and-mortar commerce," Dumas says. "Word-of-mouth and social media [are the best ways to support us]. Please post pictures of our unique store, both inside and out, and talk about the one-of-a-kind books that you find."

When I stopped by *Marissa's Books* for the first time on a Friday afternoon, I made the mistake of assuming I was simply going to wander for research purposes. Of course, I didn't stand a chance. I ended up with a copy of *The Moosewood Cookbook* (inside which I found a bonus recipe clipping from a 1995 newspaper for Greek potato salad) and a well-loved copy of **Tom Wolfe's** *The Bonfire of the Vanities*. And with the delightful array of offerings that *Marissa's Books* has, I'd be surprised at anyone who walks in and leaves empty-handed.



Alibi Bar & Place

369 Main St, Salt Lake City, UT 84111

Monthly Calendar December 2021

- 12/2 **Thurs.** Vibras Del Lago Monthly Cumbia Party
- 12/3 **Fri.** DJ: Bo York
- 12/4 **Sat.** DJ: Concise Kilgore
- 12/5 **Sun.** DJ: Andy Doors
- 12/9 **Thurs.** New City Movement Monthly Dance Party
- 12/10 **Fri.** DJ: Bo York
- 12/11 **Sat.** DJ: Flash & Flare
- 12/12 **Sun.** The Shake-Up w/ Robin Banks & Friends
- 12/16 **Thurs.** Night Court: Funk & Disco Dance Party w/ DJ's James Beard & Special Guests
- 12/17 **Fri.** DJ: Flash & Flare
- 12/18 **Sat.** DJ: James Beard Esq.
- 12/19 **Sun.** DJ: Spaz
- 12/23 **Thurs.** DJ Red Scare
- 12/24 **Fri.** Christmas Eve Throwdown w/ DJ: Bo York
- 12/26 **Sun.** Alibi Beat Club - Psychedelic Dance Party w/ DJ's Nix Beat & Retrograde
- 12/30 **Thurs.** DJ: Concise Kilgore



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SHOWCASE

Salt Lake boasts an impressive and eclectic group of stand-up comedians; each one brings a unique and hilarious perspective. Over the last five years of doing stand-up, I've had the chance to meet many creative and hysterical comics, among them the four comedians set for *SLUG's* upcoming *Localized Showcase* at *Urban Lounge* on Dec. 16 (doors at 7 p.m., show at 8 p.m.), sponsored by *Huge Brands* and *Uinta Brewing*. After a long, painful hiatus due to the pandemic, the show is finally back live and in-person! We couldn't be more excited to share these funny and wonderful people with you all.

By Sam D'Antuono • sam.dantuono@gmail.com | Photos: Keisha Finai

Stand-up is an individual sport. What is said on stage is the result of one person's ideas, which is often what makes an average comedy open mic feel like a roller coaster of personalities and themes. Dallas Briggs takes a rather straightforward approach to stand-up. He would tell you that he just tells jokes and that the significance of them is simply to be funny. "If someone saw my act and said it was really poignant or something, I'd probably write that person off as an idiot," he says. "I'd probably be upset if they liked me."

A lush to be envied, Briggs can almost always be found with a seltzer of some sort in hand, when telling jokes or otherwise. His slurred, lucid musings pack a punch that some would call reminiscent of **Norm Macdonald**, but Briggs' approach to standup is not as casual as one might observe. It is cynical, and as such he does not have a specific process for coming up with material and does not write in one particular way all the time. "It's a major hindrance in being a good comedian," he says.

Sam Poulter is a familiar face among Salt Lake City comedians. His career is the longest of the group, spanning eight years since late 2013. He thinks that "there's nothing like laying an egg right as the sun peaks over the horizon." With a rather protracted and dark style, Poulter will lay that egg with his entire life story inside right on your head. A more lackadaisical approach to coming up with material, Poulter simply waits for divine inspiration, laying down or going birdwatching.

Tanner Nicholson views comedy as a tool for interpreting the world around us in a way that adds levity to what can be an otherwise messy place. "Comedy is, in my opinion, our best vessel for talking about difficult subjects—



• DALLAS BRIGGS •



• SAM POULTER •



• JORDAN HARRIS •



• TANNER NICHOLSON •

racism, mental illness, etc.—without getting too rough," he says.

In another light, Jordan Harris is a force to be reckoned with. Harris has a high energy and bawdy style. Her approach to coming up with material is not much different. "I live my life and if I find myself laughing really hard at something, I write it down and come back to it later," Harris says. "I also follow a 'fuck around and find out approach,' where I just record myself telling a story at open mic and finding the laughs that way."

Briggs may seem like a sweetheart with a penchant for making his own hot sauce—and he is—but he is also a skinny caveman who will pick a bone with anyone for any reason. Briggs started doing stand-up in late 2017—"I don't really remember why, but it was probably a stupid fucking reason," he says. In the time

since, he has pulverized audiences with a blend of non-sequiturs and harsh contradictions.

In contrast to Briggs' curt approach, Poulter is apologetic about being histrionic from the get go. His comedy weaves a verbal tapestry of drug experience and abuse, family trauma and a violent love affair with trains in a muted style of absurdist confessions. "I try to keep an air of, like, 'don't hug me' about it," he says. Poulter is a talented writer whose jokes have a literary quality about them, especially in his more autobiographical material. He chronicles his life from childhood to step-fatherhood through endearing, clever and sometimes uncomfortable observations.

As a labor and delivery nurse by day, Harris has a unique perspective on life itself. Her stories and funny observations about the job will make you laugh and remind you that

you're a disgusting little slime ball that slithered out into the sun just as gross as we will leave its rays. Despite her self-described adult and gross content, Harris has a clear ring of joy that permeates all her work—a welcome change from the more cynical and anhedonic attitudes of most comics. For someone with a job as messy as hers, joy is a fitting tool for hope. "You don't have to have trauma in your life to be funny, but it definitely helps," she aptly says.

Nicholson's comedy blends stories and jokes inspired by his life—some of which include encounters with rambunctious customers in the bar he works in, *Johnny's on Second*—stories about working in a youth correctional facility and observations on race and culture. "There are so many different ways to be Black that it's impossible to count," he says. Nicholson's presence on stage is interknit with a cheeky, thoughtful outlook. At several shows that I've seen Nicholson on, he takes a giddy delight in recounting the events of some perfectly odd or drunken stranger. With each story, audience members feel as though they're privy to something they won't hear anywhere else. Nicholson would describe his comedy as "good enough to get me laid once in a while"—a truly Herculean feat among comedians. We fear and respect him most of all.

Briggs has opened for such names as **Rachel Feinstein** and **Paul Virzi** and can be seen at provincial shows around town and at *Wiseguys Comedy Club*, frequently. You can also find him on Twitter @*thedallasbriggs* and Instagram @*dallasbriggsy*. You can see Nicholson at the open mic he hosts every Monday night at *Johnny's on 2nd*. You can also follow him on Instagram @*funnymantann*. You can see Jordan Harris on Dec. 9 on *Provo Uncensored*. Follow her on IG at @*jordanleilani* for more updates and upcoming shows! You can also follow her stand-up comedy production page on IG at @*buxomandbawdy*, where she produces and hosts local shows with her partner in comedy, **Rachel Rothenberg**. You can get more of Mr. Poulter on his podcast about addiction and other related subjects called *Junkyland*, which he does with comedian **Andy Gold**. Follow him on Instagram @*sampoulter69*.

Come see these talented, wonderful people at *Urban Lounge* on Dec. 16! Bring your vaccination cards or a negative test; masks are required and be ready to laugh! I'll be your host for the evening—I simply can't wait to see these comics perform and I hope you can't either!

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By Kara Dempsey
karadempsey@karadwrites.com
 Photos • @tbzdphoto

In the heart of Midway is a charming Alpine restaurant called *Café Galleria*. Yanked straight from a fairy tale, the rustic building is surrounded by a stone patio where the acclaimed *Alpenglobe* private dining shelters await guests. There is no shortage of comfort, whether dining in a climate-controlled globe or in the quaint dining room. While being carefully restored in 2020, the owners kept all of the magic of the original 1898 building. Nearly every space of the cabin-esque interior is covered with photographs of celebrities, vintage cars or black-and-white adventure shots. Coupled with the agrestic design, it gave me the companionable sense of visiting a close friend rather than stepping into a busy restaurant.

Serving breakfast, lunch and dinner, *Café Galleria* has a little bit of everything to make almost everyone happy. My date and I started our meal with their visually stunning Bruschetta (\$11) served on a wooden board. The bread was toasted just enough to keep its shape while supporting a smear of pesto, fresh tomato, tender mozzarella, thin slices of prosciutto and a drizzle of balsamic reduction. The appetizer was just the right size for two, although it could very easily serve more. It's not often that you see house-

made Meatballs (\$9) on a menu as they are often too time consuming for kitchen staff. I ordered it with high hopes and was not disappointed. They arrived on a bed of sweet marinara that paired beautifully with the spicy, well-seasoned meatballs. Each was soft, moist and packed full of flavor.

As my date and I were sharing dishes and *Café Galleria* is known for their pizzas, it would have been a sin not to try one. We chose a small Buffalo (\$13) Pizza with San Marzano sauce, three types of cheese (fontina, mozzarella and Parmigiano), fresh oregano, roasted bell peppers and red onions. While the quantity of cheese was slightly overwhelming, the flavors were not. The crust was exactly what I want from a wood-fired pizza—it was crisp, not overly yeasty in flavor and had a slight char to the edge that added great texture to each piece. The buffalo sausage was piquant and the roasted peppers and onions were sweet, but not too much. Just like the bruschetta, the small pizza was a decent size that could have served one or two more diners.

Along with our steaming and delicious coffee (\$3) roasted by *Pink Elephant*, we enjoyed a single Crepe (\$8, +\$2 for the extra

topping) with fresh blueberries, peaches and whipped cream. They have nine different toppings to choose from—including pineapple, various berries, Nutella and ice cream. The crepe was paper thin, cooked just right and folded into a triangle. The French pancake was light and delicate—it was the best way to wrap up our meal (no pun intended).

Surrounded by breathtaking mountains in the adorable town of Midway, you can't go wrong dining inside (or outside in a globe) any time of year. During the warmer seasons, they have live shows with talented musicians out on their patio. *Café Galleria* is not just a relaxed and cozy eatery but also a delightful experience. The location, bucolic atmosphere and friendly staff ensure that each and every visit will be memorable. Call to make reservations or go online at thecafegalleria.com/reservations to book a private *Alpenglobe* (\$30 for an hour and half). You can also reserve their Veranda Room (\$200 for two hours) for special occasions and events. Their full menu can be seen at thecafegalleria.com/menus. Follow them on Instagram and take a look at their gallery of artistic photos @[cafegalleriamidway](https://www.instagram.com/cafegalleriamidway).

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(L-R): Work from Jane Philips, Soft Talk and Bunnies and Bears.

DECEMBER POP-UP SHOPS @ Finch Lane Gallery

By Tim Schoof • t.schoof7@gmail.com

For 12 days in December, the *Finch Lane Gallery* will host its first *Pop-Up Shop* series. Each day showcases a hand-picked artist who has the entirety of the four-hour session to run their pop-up shop, displaying and selling their goods to attendees. “It’s sort of a meshing between our typical exhibitions and our *Winter Craft Market*,” says **Claire Taylor**, Visual Arts Coordinator for the **Salt Lake City Arts Council**. “I felt like this was a good way to highlight individual artists, bring new artists into the gallery and to speak to the fact [that] individual artists are a business of their own.” Originally, Taylor planned for nine artists to participate, but after receiving many great submissions, she masterfully fit in three more slots to accommodate more shops. 11 out of the 12 artists in the *Pop-Up Shop* run will be first-time presenters at the gallery.

The *Pop-Up Shop* provides artists a venue where customers can connect with them and their work in-person while also increasing accessibility for those who can’t run an on-line storefront. Some artists plan on selling home goods: For example, **Alise Anderson’s** Dec. 17 shop, *Soft Talk*, offers contemporary home goods and furniture from jesmonite bowls to tufted rugs. Anderson currently enjoys an artist residency at the *Utah Museum of Contemporary Arts*, bringing her more traditional artistic background to the *Pop-Up Shop* with one-of-kind, creative pieces.

Also providing home good options is **Jane Philips**, displaying wood-fired porcelain and stonework from Boulder, Utah on the 18. The flashing method defines her teapots, teacups, whiskey sippers and other goods, where deposited wood ash from the firing process leaves behind distinct unique marks. “To me, these objects embody the story of raw material, fire, water and time coming together to create a utilitarian container that encourages relationship with the earth and the elements,” says Philips. In her opinion, online market spaces fail to translate the quality of her work, so a physical shop allows customers to appreciate these daily-use goods before they purchase them.

However, home goods represent only a small slice of what attendees can expect from the *Pop-Up Shop*. **Zubaidah Sadeq’s** Dec. 7 shop features hand-crafted jewelry made from high-quality raw materials. “I’m interested in face-to-face markets because I love connecting with people and think there’s a great potential to grow my business when I meet people and share my story,” says Sadeq. “In everything I do in my business, I am focused on bringing together different cultures and societies.” Sadeq participated in a previous *Craft Lake City DIY Festival*, but is otherwise new to the craft market scene.

Lindy Coburn’s pop-up on Dec. 11, *Bunnies and Bears*, offers hand-knit dolls, each with their own unique name, personality and costume. “I am a proud introvert, so I have been practicing my whole life for [the] COVID quarantine,” says Coburn. “I spent my quarantine hours hand knitting emotional support animals (bunnies and bears) that I have donated to children’s hospitals and will be selling at my *Finch Lane Pop-up Shop*.” Unlike most of the other shops, Coburn caters specifically to kids.

During the *Pop-Up Shop* sessions, guests also see pieces entered into the *Utah Division of Arts & Museums 2021 Statewide Annual* competition for Craft, Photography, Video & Digital. The exhibit offers a more conventional gallery-going experience, displaying some of the best works in the state.

The *December Pop-Up Shop* series will run Dec. 4–21 at the *Finch Lane Gallery*, located at 54 Finch Lane, in SLC. Weekday sessions go from 4–8 p.m., and weekend sessions run from 11 a.m.–3 p.m. For more information about *Finch Lane Gallery*, the *Pop-Up Shop* and artists who make them possible, visit the Salt Lake City Arts Council website saltlakearts.org/finchlanegallery.

ENGINEER by day ROASTER by night.

LIAM & IAN COFFEE ROASTERS

By Katie Hatzfeld | katie@slugmag.com
Photo by Kevin Edwards



Wilfredo Alonso uses his background in engineering to guide the science behind *Liam & Ian Coffee Roasters*.

Wilfredo Alonso is a man who wears many hats—father, engineer, husband and coffee roaster, this Puerto Rican American is now the proud business owner of *Liam & Ian Coffee Roasters*. Named after Alonso’s two sons, both avid coffee lovers, *Liam & Ian Coffee Roasters* is still relatively new. What began as a hobby became an online business and can now be found at local farmers and holiday markets. How did this full-time engineer find interest in starting a coffee roasting business? Where did this love for coffee begin?

Alonso started drinking coffee at about seven. “I remember sitting with my cousin, **Justin**, in front of a TV with a cup of coffee with milk and a piece of bread with butter. That was the afternoon snack,” he says. As he got older, coffee became Alonso’s drink of choice—especially during his university studies for civil engineering—but always with milk and sugar. One day someone challenged his approach toward coffee, saying, “If you have to put sugar in your coffee, it’s not good coffee.” With an inquisitive mind, Alonso decided to test that theory for himself.

On an experimental visit to a local coffee shop, Alonso’s world was changed: “They gave me an Ethiopian coffee, and, oh man, that blew my mind. I was like, ‘How is this possible?! This coffee—with no flavors and no sugar—tastes like blueberry!’” Once Alonso got up the courage to try roasting

on his own, he found that a background in engineering was the perfect foundation for learning about the roasting process. As an engineer, he says, “I understand about gradients, temperature gradients, materials ... So the first [time] I saw a roasting profile graph ... I knew right away what I was seeing.”

Alonso dove headfirst into the science of coffee roasting. “I started roasting using a popcorn popper which I tweaked to control the heat and airflow,” he says, until he was able to buy an industrial roaster. With grid paper and a pencil, he hand wrote his own roasting profile and rate-of-rise graphs, making notes on which flavors and processes worked and which didn’t. “I got into it and I got better and better, and I learned from my mistakes,” he says.

Alonso’s roasting philosophy is all about balance—finding that space between bitter and sweet, surprising and familiar. He aims for medium roast, asking himself, “Is this a coffee I can drink every day?” Carefully testing each batch of coffee “as the customer will drink it,” Alonso experiments with all brewing methods, such as V60, moka pot, drip, French press and AeroPress.

For Alonso, Salt Lake is home, and as a business owner, it has its perks too: “People love to support local businesses here; they’re really loyal when it comes to local businesses,” he says. Selling at the *Herriman Farmers Market*, Alon-

so loves the opportunity to engage with his customers and form relationships with them. “I have so many customers that come every Monday to get one or two bags—every Monday,” he says. “When I see them coming, I know what they want.”

Alonso roasts and bags all his coffee on his own, sometimes aided by his sons Liam and Ian, working out of a kitchen space rented from West Jordan’s Puerto Rican restaurant *Papito Moe’s*. Right now, *Liam & Ian Coffee Roasters* is selling a Guatemala single origin and a Central American Blend of Guatemalan and Nicaraguan coffees. Alonso also has a Holiday Blend in the works—a medium-roasted combination of coffees from Papua New Guinea, Brazil and Ethiopia.

You can keep up with *Liam & Ian Coffee Roasters* on Instagram @[liam_and_ian_coffee_roasters](https://www.instagram.com/liam_and_ian_coffee_roasters) and Facebook. They will be selling at upcoming holiday markets, and their coffee can always be found at *Papito Moe’s* Puerto Rican restaurant.

SLUG MAG'S TOP FIVE ALBUMS OF 2021

Here you have it, folks—it's the end of the year (yikes!), which means it's time for *SLUG*'s Top 5 Albums of 2021! This year, we've selected albums from a host of styles that have earned our applause. Wrap your hands around a mug of hot cocoa (or whatever sugar-free, dairy-free, organic substitute you've learned to love), get a fire started and let your eyes and ears feast on this fantastic recap of music greatness. Read more Top 5 reviews at *SLUGMag.com*.

FOLK/TRADITIONAL ALBUMS THAT KICK UP NEW DUST

Marina Allen – *Candlepower*

Lilly Hiatt – *Lately*

Lingua Ignota – *SINNER GET READY*

Emma Ruth Rundle – *Engine of Hell*

Adia Victoria – *A Southern Gothic*

THE BEDROOM POP FETISH

Claud – *Super Monster*

girl in red – *if i could make it go quiet*

Kowloon – *Come Over*

The Marias – *CINEMA*

Men I Trust – *Untourable Album*

SLUG MAG'S TOP FIVE ALBUMS OF 2021

POWERHOUSE FEMME INDIE-ALT ALBUMS

Bachelor – *Domin' Sun*

Japanese Breakfast – *Jubilee*

Indigo de Souza – *Any Shape You Take*

St. Vincent – *Daddy's Home*

Faye Webster – *I Know I'm Funny haha*

LADIES AND THEYS OF METAL WHO CAN STEP ON ME (PLZ)

Body Void – *Bury Me Beneath This Rotting Earth*

Fire-Toolz – *Eternal Home*

King Woman – *Celestial Blues*

PUPIL SLICER – *Mirrors*

Victory Over the Sun – *Nowherer*



Adia Victoria *A Southern Gothic*

Atlantic Recording Corporation
Street: 09.17

Adia Victoria = R.L. Burnside + Erykah Badu + Terrence Trent D'arby

Decades ago, William Faulkner's fictional Yoknapatawpha county and Flannery O'Connor's short stories helped define the idea of southern gothic. On Adia Victoria's phenomenal new album, *A Southern Gothic*, the artist taps into this invisible force and her haunted stories come flooding out.

"There's a quiet to everything," Victoria sings on "Please Come Down"—she's right. There is nothing loud about these songs, but they scream like punk rock. Victoria writes about gin-soaked God's people sinning and

killing as they waded out deep into the blues. "And if you see my shadows through the pines," she growls on "Mean Hearted Woman." "Babe, it's too late. It's killing time." Victoria's songs are sludgy, swampy and sticky with a sliver of funk; she delivers them with a pulsating precision that stays in your skull.

The standout track "You Was Born To Die" is an over-the-top burner with Kyshona Armstrong and Margo Price trading vocals with Victoria, all building up to a Jason Isbell guitar solo that burns like napalm. "They say a Black woman got steel for a spine," Victoria sings later on "Deep Water Blues." "She'll carry your weight, she'll carry it fine." Adia Victoria is a legend in the making, and with *A Southern Gothic*, she has proven she can carry that weight. —Russ Holsten

Men I Trust *Untourable Album*

Self-released
Street: 08.25

Men I Trust = Phoebe Bridgers + Mac DeMarco

In the first seconds of manipulated synths, *Untourable Album* catapults a melancholy and surreal ambience. It's a sad undertone that is manifested somewhere in the instrumentation at all times and subsequently gives *Untourable Album* the "it" factor. Often this feeling is carried in the synths, sometimes the bass line or sometimes in the vocals. Before I swallowed any of the lyrics, the bittersweet feeling of nostalgia was present on *Untourable Album*.

The album straddles jazz, pop and alt rock, much like past Men I Trust releas-

es. Their ability to create perfectly meshed, syncopated and subdued grooves is their staple. *Untourable Album* doesn't disappoint in this area, most notably with the tracks "Oh Dove" and "Sugar." They're the kind of songs you hear once and don't know how you went on living without hearing them before.

The album as a whole shows another, more vulnerable and mysterious side to Men I Trust—the lyrics are written like prose. After getting the nostalgic feeling on the first listen, I dove into the lyrics and found the past written all over them. From track to track, *Untourable Album* happens to you the same way life happens to you—the baggage and past trauma you carry never really goes away, but you can learn to groove with it. —Mary Culbertson



Indigo De Souza *Any Shape You Take*

Saddle Creek
Street: 08.27

Indigo de Souza = Lala Lala + girl in red x WILLOW

I have a crush on Indigo De Souza. I love her dynamic songwriting, her unapologetic confidence and the fact that her mom is the artist behind both of her stunning album covers. I'm left mesmerized when I listen to her breadth of songs, feeling like she'll be there for me through it all. This is especially true on her sophomore release, *Any Shape You Take*.

While the first half of the album comprises De Souza's most pop-driven tracks to date, her affective songwriting really shines in the second half of *Any Shape You Take*. Throughout these, the 24 year old comes to terms with themes like self-discovery, self-love and growing up. "I'm nothing like the girl you loved / I haven't seen

her in months," she sings on "Die/Cry." De Souza's angst presents itself throughout the album in unexpected ways, like the harrowing cries of anguish that escalate into blood-curdling screams for almost two minutes on "Real Pain." De Souza manipulates her voice from a near-whine to a stunning falsetto on songs like "Bad Dream," showcasing her abilities as well as her full range of emotions.

The songs on *Any Shape You Take* take many shapes in the form of genre influences, transitioning seamlessly from dance-y synth-pop to garage pop, post-punk and back again. "I will hold you / I will hold you, oh," De Souza sings with a staccato tone on the track "Hold U." She's talking to herself, I think. 2021 was the year De Souza learned to hold space for herself, no matter what shape she takes—an important lesson for every dynamic human. —Mekenna Malan

Victory Over the Sun *Nowherer*

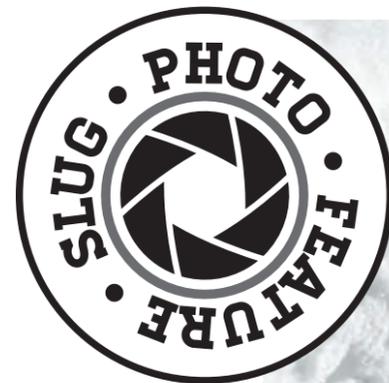
COARSE AIR RECORDS
Street: 04.23
Victory Over the Sun = Liturgy x Succumb

A defiant remodel of Vivian Tyllinska's previous album as Victory Over the Sun, the queasy and dissonant *A Tessitura of Transfiguration*, her 2021 microtonal black metal project, *Nowherer*, is awash in newness and clarity. Tyllinska achieves this in part through her multi-instrumental mastery, writing for custom-fretted guitars that lavish *Nowherer*. She also uses recordings void of excessive distortion, opening up the billows of her arrangements for a desolating landfall.

Tyllinska attacks from the onset of the opening title track, hammering her gnashing, crunching instrumentation to signify the album's no-holds-barred journey.

"Nowherer, battered, robbed of roads / Sequestered in cycle's yoke," she sings in a distant and pained performance. "God Howling in a Cage" offers up much-needed respite through misty arpeggios and layers of drones. Even in these early moments, Tyllinska's absolute vision of *Nowherer* is obvious, from the record's pristine sequencing and pacing to her hairline understanding of every beat of orchestration. The album is universally complete and complementary.

"Oscines," the 21-minute closer, is as astonishing as it is bizarre. Bathed in walls of guitar, the black-metal composition is carried by grooveless drums crashing out in protest of the clanging progression. The vision and scope of *Nowherer* is a standout experience of the year, giving avenue to rage at the disharmonies of the world through a bewitching showcase of metal ingenuity. —Aidan Croft



SNOW

By Jovvany Villalobos • countercultureconscious.com



Gabe Harris - Cab 5 - Brighton Resort, UT

Brighton Resort's My-Oh-My three jump line is one of the locals' favorite ways to develop their tricks and style on the mountain. Gabe Harris is one of these riders often found perfecting his flow with his homies in tow. He's a 19 year old from Tooele, UT, who's young, hungry and confident, as shown mastering his Cab 5 in this photo. While Salt Lake attracts some of the best riders from around the world, it's surprising how often you'll see the home grown talent this valley creates.

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SKATE

With one of the most stylish approaches in Salt Lake City, Scotty Rutherford makes skating look like an effortless game. He's the type of guy that shows up to a spot to enjoy time with the homies, but will then blow everyone's mind with tricks that make jaws drop. The dude is a smooth-sailin' ripper and the evidence can be seen at an undisclosed mountain DIY spot as Rutherford floats a backside flip over a highly-raised bench.

By Nathan Gentry • @nateflicks



Scotty Rutherford - Backside flip

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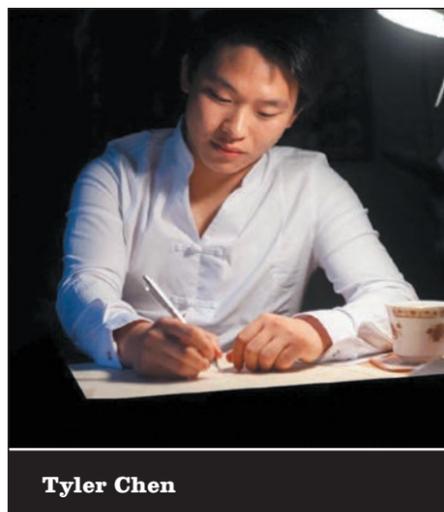
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LOCAL MUSIC SINGLES ROUNDUP

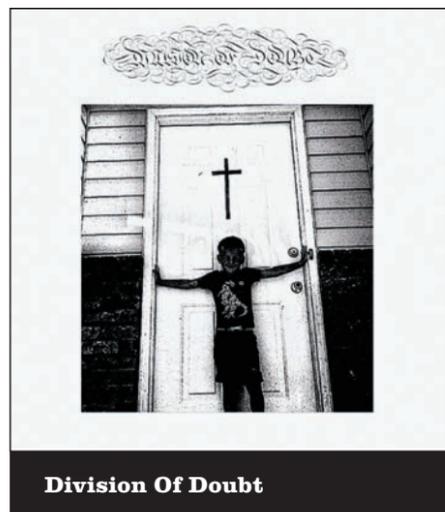
Imagine you're taken to a room. Lying face up on an armchair is a smart phone connected to a pair of headphones, its pale illumination the only source of light. You sit, bringing the phone into view: The word "LISTEN" blinks in bolded red letters and an arrow points down. You put the headphones on and tap the word. The screen goes dark and, as these songs begin to fill your ears, you close your eyes ...



Tyler Chen



Cum Fight



Division Of Doubt

"Acclimation"
Self-Released
Street: 09.08
Tyler Chen = Stan Getz + Glenn Miller

While there aren't any palm trees for miles around, that doesn't stop Tyler Chen's "Acclimation" from conjuring up scenes of twirling dancers in a steamy, tropical climate. Smooth phrases blend into each other, punctuated by the regular beat of a tambourine. Add in guitar and drums, and "Acclimation" comes closer to the velvety sounds of bossa nova than a traditional big band. Still, the saxophone and trumpet solos across this mid-length piece aren't lacking in toe-tapping flavor. For the first 30 seconds of the song, tension builds through a unique time signature until the rhythm unfurls into the warm sounds of horns. As wonderful as that section is, my favorite part is easily just after the piano solo around 5:00. The horns are gentle and bouncy before the tambourine leads them in picking the pace right back up. "Acclimation" is perfect for both the jazz newbie and the connoisseur. —Alexis Perno

"Hellscapes of the Fuckth Dimension Part 1: Trust Me This Isn't Fucking Porno-Grind"
Tribeless Records
Street: 09.30
Cum Fight = Jeff Witscher's *Approximately 1,000 Beers + winter quilt*

The new micro-release from the unclassifiable Cum Fight works in full overdrive. Each of the six sub-minute bites combine relentless blast beats with dry, lethargic text-to-speech singing. The snatches of sound range from nearly catchy, as in the opening track "Baiser," to the jilted stumbles of the nine-second "Donde." Outside of the obvious, shock-effect glee of these strange concoctions, Cum Fight furthers *Hellscapes'* interest through their deft production. The degraded digital vocals often sound like they're buffering behind the blistering beats, most notably on one of the longest cuts, "La Horas Ahora." A speeding guitar line slides and chugs alongside the tempo dips and rushes of the MIDI drums, while Cum Fight's vocals sound like they're trying to squeeze through a low-bandwidth internet connection. *Hellscapes of the Fuckth Dimension* wears its gauche audacity like a crown, breathing life into a tangibly human digitalism in the process. —Audrey Lockie

"Suffer, Sinner"
Self-Released
Street: 07.09
Division Of Doubt = PiL + Joy Division

The track "Suffer, Sinner" from Division Of Doubt is a post-punk burner engulfed in a light, gothic haze. Isaiah Michael's vocals demand to be heard—their style is loud and immediate, like a post-Sex Pistols John Lydon. The track rages perfectly at the nervous, razor-edge void we all live in. Matched with Michael's heavy bass lines, Jordan Strang's kinetic drumming provides an amped-up, Joy Division-esque intensity, leaving guitarist Sophie Day enough space to light the track on fire with her playing. Day's guitar swirls around like mid-career The Cure, sounding like fear and candy at the same time; her runs are melodic treasures. I love this track and found originality in its familiarity. Division Of Doubt's "Suffer, Sinner" is a perfect crystal—a crystal that reflects the past but also shines bright, scary and new. —Russ Holsten

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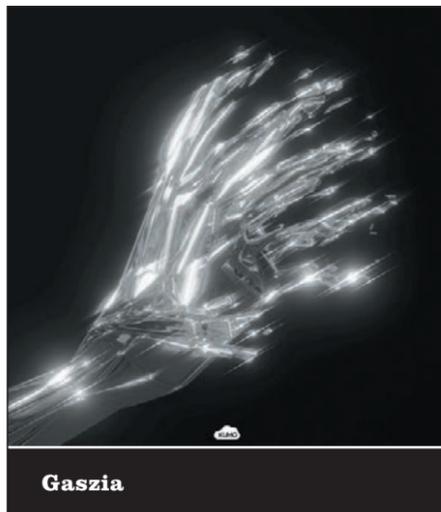
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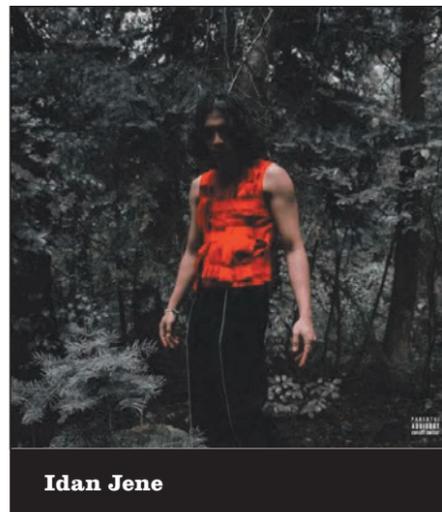
LOCAL MUSIC SINGLES ROUNDUP



Fil, Loloren



Gaszia



Idan Jene

"Upside Down"
Self-Released
Street: 06.25
Fil, Loloren = Biig Piig + Clairo

Unfortunately, Fil *and* Loloren's debut single is not as easy to listen to as the sense of the same name by **Jack Johnson**, but it is definitely in the running for a close second. The tune has a dreamy beat that runs from beginning to end and is definitely reminiscent of early **Katy Perry** in the most Gen-Z kind of way. And speaking of Gen-Z, should we talk about those lyrics?—"I lost my charger and I'm getting bored." In all seriousness, Loloren has a heavenly voice. Combined with Fil's high-quality production, "Upside Down" is a must. Plus, its summer-y melody is a nice distraction from the cold months ahead. I'm excited to see what Fil, Loloren drop next—whether together or separate—and after your first listen, I'll be shocked if you say that you aren't, too. —*Theadora Soter*

"ApexClub"
KUMO Collective
Street: 09.16
Gaszia = Baauer + Kaitlyn Aurelia Smith

Drawing in upon ice-cold, dripping plusations, Gaszia's "ApexClub" is quick to display **Aaron Spasiano's** deft ability to create infectious rhythms through sound mixes filled with minute textures. An attentive blending of percussive vocal samples—none of which draw too much focus or are leaned upon too heavily—pitted against sharper, digital drum kits creates a delicate interplay between the ears, chasing the track's swells and drops. Relieving us of a perpetual climb, Gaszia lingers in bass explorations for several dance-break moments throughout the song that tour grimey, thick beats to staccato grooves. "ApexClub" presents Spasiano's dynamic range of production savvy by offering a buffet of sonic palettes to choose from, each merging with the other in a concoction of pop-driven electronic music. It's the type of breadth so desperately wanted but rarely afforded in the sea of EDM debauchery. —*Aidan Croft*

"Gone"
7WingMoney
Street: 09.17
Idan Jene = Grouper + Lil Peep

Idan Jene's "Gone" looks toward contrasting sides of romantic loss—wallowing depression and bitter guilt. In the opening verse, Jene's voice floats over watery acoustics with various layers of autotuned harmony before a grounding piano melody jolts the track into its chorus. Here, the versatile singer diffracts even further into choral harmonies, rhythmic refrains of "I just hope that this songs gets to you" and a defeated plea of the track's title. "Gone" then drops all aqueous pretext and locks into a rigid, sad boi-trap beat. The vocal acrobatics don't let up, but now each snippet serves the urgency of the lead line's intonations: "I know / I can't / Change / The past / It's too late / For that." Each syllable sounds like it's eked out between shorted breaths, desperate and pained. The track melts back into its opening ambience in the final minute—calm sorrow after a brief outpouring of self-directed anger. —*Audrey Lockie*

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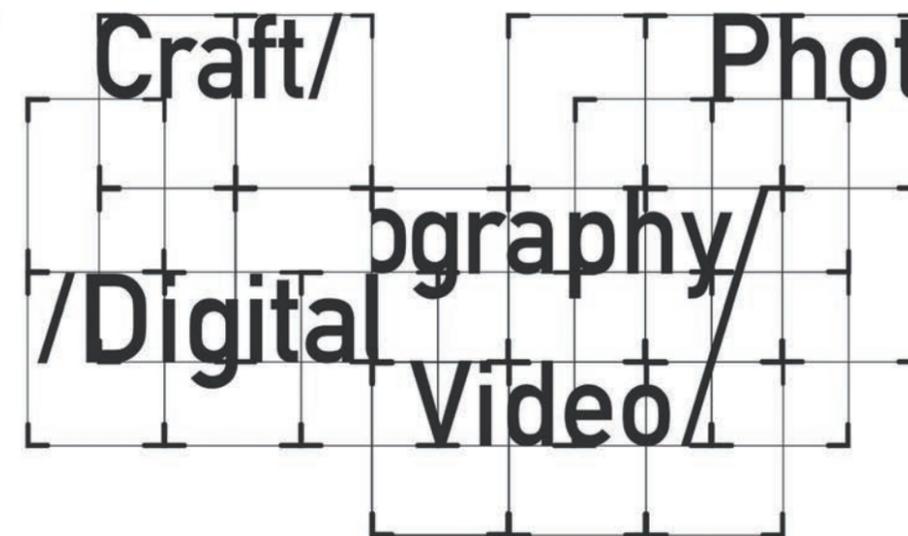


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