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35th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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ABOUT THE COVER: For February's 35th Anniversary Issue – Local Leadership, David Habben (@habben_illustration) portrays Emerald Project Co-Founder Nora Abu-Dan as a leader whose advocacy work for Utah Muslims reflects back on the community. Read about her on page 6.

Rose Shimberg

Contributor Limelight Editorial Intern



Rose Shimberg's internship at SLUG began in August 2023, but she has been blessing the magazine with expertly-crafted articles about her local community for over a year. Rose has a gift for sharing the stories of other, balancing passion and technical skill. Check out her coverage of hardcore disability activist Mike Farnsworth on page 8!

Nate Schwartz

Contributor Limelight Videographer



The ever-reliable Nate Schwartz has taken SLUG's social media presence to the next level starting in November 2020. From long-form YouTube videos to short-and-sweet Instagram reels, Nate's commitment and positive attitude shines through all that he does. Keep an eye out for his upcoming video coverage of SLUG Mag's 35th Anniversary Party!

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EMERALD PROJECT CO-FOUNDER NORA ABU-DAN IS

PROUD TO BE PALESTINIAN

By Asha Pruitt • asha@slugmag.com

Nora Abu-Dan and **Satin Tashnizi** first met at a pageant in 2014. Competing as Miss Palestine and Miss Iran, the two women won first place and runner-up, respectively. "It was a surreal moment," Abu-Dan says. "It was called the Miss United Nations Pageant, and at the time, [the Palestinian] flag wasn't up at the United Nations in real life." Three years later, Abu-Dan and Tashnizi founded Emerald Project to fight Islamophobia in Salt Lake City.

The nonprofit organization was first formed in reaction to the "Muslim Ban" passed by former President **Donald Trump** in 2017, but now it's evolved into something much more. "We had to transform our organization to address more of the root issues," Abu-Dan says. Now, she says, they focus on educating and empowering Muslim youth in the community, hosting annual events such as the Muslim Youth Conference and an educator workshop series called STEM Rooted in Culture. Coming up this spring is the fourth edition of Slam the Islamophobia, a night of prose, poetry and art performance by and for young Muslims to share their diverse stories.

Abu-Dan believes that art plays an important role in activism and solidarity. "I love poetry and I love spoken word," she says. "I always say it's in our blood, because my people have historically been poets—poets and farmers." To her, art is a form of cathartic release that has the power to be transformative in the larger

community. "If you look at the wall [between Israel and the West Bank], everybody paints murals on it," she explains. "The Palestinian people are so resilient. They write on the walls that keep them in."

In the wake of the ongoing war in Gaza, Emerald Project has also collaborated with the **Palestinian Solidarity Association of Utah, Arabs in Utah** and **PSL Salt Lake** (a local chapter of the Party for Socialism and Liberation) to hold rallies at the *Utah State Capitol* demanding a ceasefire and a stop to Israeli military aid. "Even for me, someone who hasn't been there a long time ... [Palestine] is still my home," Abu-Dan says about why she feels compelled to speak up and take action. "But I'm coming from a place of privilege. I'm not there; I'm not having bombs raining over me every day."

When I ask how the Palestinian community in Utah is coping with the humanitarian crisis overseas, Abu-Dan tells me, "We're not coping at all." Emerald Project has requested multiple times to meet with Governor **Spencer Cox**, who has publicly stated his support for Israel, and was denied each time. Palestinians in Utah, she says, are "dealing with the issue of wanting to speak the truth and wanting to stand up, but also taking care of their families here, because some people don't have the luxury of getting fired."

Despite the hopelessness, Abu-Dan is moved by witnessing local and international displays of solidarity for Palestinians. "I felt like I was speaking in this echo chamber where no one could hear me, and then all of a sudden, I woke up one day and I saw that people support us." If

you want to make a difference, her first piece of advice is to educate yourself about Palestine. Secondly, she says, know that "your voice counts, even if you're not Palestinian." As American taxpayers, our dollars fund the war so it's our duty to speak up and protest.

Abu-Dan wears her keffiyeh—a traditional scarf that has come to symbolize the Palestinian liberation movement—with pride. "There's been a lot of people who have tried to put me down for being Palestinian, for being Muslim, for being a woman," she says. "Even though I feel like I'm never doing enough, I'm proud that I've never shied away from who I am."

To get involved with Emerald Project, check out their upcoming events at emeraldproject.org. Young Muslims can apply to be ambassadors and anyone can become a volunteer.

Photo: John Barkiple



Nora Abu-Dan, co-founder of Emerald Project, wears a traditional Palestinian keffiyeh.



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MIKE FARNSWORTH: BUILDING COMMUNITY ACROSS TWO WORLDS

By Rose Shimberg | roseshimberg@gmail.com



Photo: Evan Hancock

By day, Mike Farnsworth works for local nonprofit Project Strong, but by night, he plays guitar for hardcore band Absolved.

Guitarist Mike Farnsworth's band, **Absolved**, may have released its first single in 2021, but he's been a long-time veteran of the Salt Lake hardcore scene. "The bassist and me, we've been friends since we were 15. And I've known the other [band-mates] through the scene for at least a decade," he says.

For years, this community has been a place for Farnsworth to meet like-minded people and share his passion for music. "I always say that punk and hardcore is kind of the place for broken toys," he adds. "It's a lot of people who [are] a little bit different. We have this niche interest that we all connect on."

By day, however, Farnsworth is immersed in an entirely different community. He's the director of marketing for **Project Strong**, a local nonprofit providing recreational opportunities for youth with neuromuscular diseases (NMDs). Farnsworth was introduced to this community through his cousin, who had an aggressive form of Duchenne muscular dystrophy. He's been involved with disability activism since he was a teenager, starting his volunteer work at just 16.

Project Strong's programming includes adaptive sports, dance and art. Their main event, Camp Happyland, is an overnight summer camp with activities tailored to the specific needs of children with NMDs. "Every one of us has these definitive growing-up moments and summer camp is a big one," says Farnsworth. Camp Happyland is a chance for these kids to experience that milestone with no need to worry about how their mobility needs will factor in.

Farnsworth experienced the power of community firsthand in the hardcore world. "For me, it's the same with things like Project Strong and Camp [Happyland] ... because it's giving people a place to be around their peers," he says. Even though members of the NMD community may be different in many ways, they share a lived experience in a world that isn't built to accom-

modate their needs. "Everybody's connected ... in the way the world interacts with them," Farnsworth says.

While his two spheres may not have much overlap on the surface, Farnsworth transfers skills between them to foster growth in both communities. The marketing experience he employs at Project Strong, for example, he first gained by working with bands. "I try to take some of that punk, DIY energy [to Project Strong]," he says. "I've always preferred being boots on the ground—someone who's gonna sit there and do the work." Benefit shows are a mainstay of the hardcore community, and though there hasn't been one for Project Strong yet, Farnsworth has received ongoing support from others in the scene. "I see a lot more willingness to help from my friends in the hardcore scene," he notes, crediting their DIY ethos. "It's that idea of, 'this needs to be done, I can just do it.' ... I love that."

Though Farnsworth is hesitant to label himself as a leader, he maintains that the most important thing he can do in both the hardcore and NMD communities is to lead by example. "Sometimes you gotta do the stuff that's not fun, that's not glamorous ... that idea of perseverance is key," he says. As a mainstay of the hardcore scene, Farnsworth has witnessed its ebb and flow over the years and is excited about its recent growth in Salt Lake City. "We just want to keep that going—encourage other bands, encourage people to make more music ... anything that helps build and grow and keep people together," he says.

The current objective at Project Strong is outreach. The nonprofit took a hit during the COVID-19 lockdown and when operation resumed, many of their connections had aged out of the program or moved out of state. Farnsworth hopes to expand these efforts to reach more parents with children who could benefit from their programs. "We're trying to find more people who we can help," he says.

Learn more about Project Strong's events at goprojectstrong.org or find them on Instagram @[go.projectstrong](https://www.instagram.com/go.projectstrong). Listen to Absolved's recent music at absolved-hc.bandcamp.com/music.



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PEOPLE OVER PROPERTY

Wasatch Tenants United Shows the Political Power of Community

By Emma Anderson • emma@slugmag.com

In an era of skyrocketing rent prices and a wealth gap growing wider by the day, it's easy to let hopelessness lead to isolation. **Wasatch Tenants United (WTU)**, a grassroots, volunteer-run organization advocating for dignified housing for all, exists to stop this pattern of discouragement in its tracks. Long-time organizer **Newlin**, who prefers to go by his last name only, defines the group as, simply, "an organization of volunteers, of tenants, just trying to help each other out." As one of their core beliefs, WTU asserts that housing is a human right that should be decommodified.

In WTU's approximately five-year history, members have successfully organized Salt Lake City Council pack-ins, marches and rallies. According to Newlin, who has been a WTU organizer for the last two years, such demonstrations were "really, really successful." He goes on to say that the organization "put a ton of pressure on the city for a very long time, but at the end of the day, it never changed [the city's] mind on anything because they have the developer's interests at heart way more than [the] tenant's interests." Fellow organizer **Jameson**, who requested to be identified only by first name, agrees that "the city doesn't do much in the first place" and is concerned that focusing on government interaction only gives the city power to continue ignoring the demands of the working-class public. For this reason, WTU has been re-evaluating their approach.

WTU's primary focus right now is on building community and fostering trusting relationships among tenants. "We don't want to be shout-

ing at the city council anymore. What we want to be focused on right now is building up membership among tenants [so they can] organize themselves to fight back against landlords directly," explains Newlin. Sparking real change on a city level is, of course, still the end goal, but the current organizers believe that this can only successfully occur when there is a strong, well-organized community of support to build upon.

As an organizing tactic, Jameson is in favor of "emphasiz[ing] the relationships you already have." He explains that "tenant law is purposefully vague, but what's not vague is going down three flights of stairs" to connect with neighbors and fellow tenants who likely share your concerns. WTU organizers have conducted door-knocking sessions in buildings all over Salt Lake City to encourage tenants to learn from and connect with each other. In some cases, the community power that comes from a single session has been enough for a building's management to make changes. "When you build power in the hands of people to take care of things themselves, they learn that the big shots aren't all that big after all," says Newlin.

In addition to door-knocking sessions, WTU hosts political education workshops and events, where some of



their best ideas come to light. Growing this community built upon shared experience and two-way trust through face-to-face interactions is the most powerful part of the work WTU does. Connecting with fellow tenants through WTU gives people a "contact for who you can call if something goes down in your building and [the knowledge] that all the other tenants have your back, not just in your building," Newlin says.

Anyone can get involved with WTU, as long as they have tenants' and working-class people's best interests in mind. There is no limit to how much or how little a member can or should participate, but the group's non-hierarchical democracy and community-building focus is essential. "Reach out and get involved and great things can happen," Newlin says. "When you're by yourself, everything is stacked against you, but when you've got a whole union backing you up, things start to swing in your favor."

Get involved with WTU and learn how to organize your neighbors at wasatchtenantsunited.org or follow them on Instagram @wasatchtenants.



WTU puts pressure on the Salt Lake City Council through organized demonstrations.

Photo courtesy of Wasatch Tenants United



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A Different Kind of LDS Trailblazer:

Sebastian Stewart-Johnson Confronts Ignorance through TikTok

By Nicole Gaddie • nicolegaddie@gmail.com

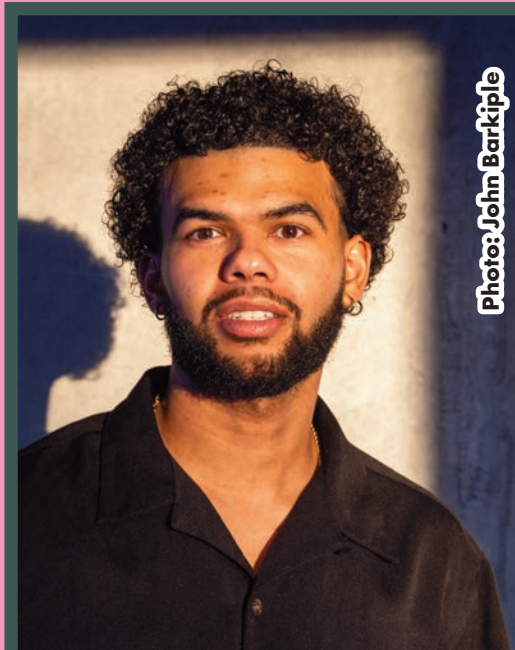


Photo: John Barkiple

Sebastian Stewart-Johnson co-founded Black Menaces after growing tired of the ignorance he witnessed on the BYU Provo campus.

Raised a member of the LDS church in Arlington, Texas, Sebastian Stewart-Johnson was urged by his church leaders to attend Brigham Young University. In the fall of 2020, he made his way to Provo, Utah for his freshman year.

“Very quickly, I grew tired of BYU,” Stewart-Johnson says. “After being on campus for a whole semester, that’s when I was like, ‘Wow, y’all are pretty bad at doing things.’” As a Black student on an overwhelmingly white campus, he saw and heard things that shocked him. “Our classmates are being called the N-word [and other] crazy things. We would complain about the Black experience and nobody would listen. There is just an overall apathy and ignorance that are multiplied together, which create silence. And BYU does a pretty good job of keeping people quiet,” says Stewart-Johnson.

He wasn’t the only member of the **Black Student Union** becoming depressed. One night, after hearing LDS leader and BYU professor **Bradley Wilcox** deliver a racist speech about Black church members, they decided they needed to do something. Stewart-Johnson and his fellow students filmed a response video to Wilcox’s remarks and posted it on TikTok. They woke up to see the video had 5k views.

A new wave of activism at BYU had begun. Stewart-Johnson suggested the group call

itself the “menaces,” a nickname he called his little brother growing up. As Blackness was integral to the creation of the group, the name “Black Menaces” was born.

The **Black Menaces** continued filming videos on the *BYU Provo* campus, exposing the ignorance tied to the belief structure of the institution and LDS Church. “Our fifth video was the most iconic,” says Stewart-Johnson. “I was asking everybody what their favorite thing about BYU was. Basically, every Black person was like, ‘Nothing.’ It was satirical but depressing at the same time. And it hit a million views.” After just a week, the group had amassed 10k followers on TikTok. “It was easy to figure out questions to ask because it was based on lived experience and what we saw on a day-to-day basis,” he says.

In an early video, he approaches students on campus and asks if they can identify a photo of **Rosa Parks**. “Oh man, I’m going to fail, doggone it,” responds one faculty member after being unable to identify the woman. “I hope I don’t sound stupid if I get it wrong. It’s not **Harriet Tubman**, is it?” asks a student. Hundreds of users commented on the video in disbelief.

Stewart-Johnson and the Menaces kept asking questions and expanding their topics: dating as a person of color, the 2020

presidential election, feminism, sexuality, race and abortion. They organized a nationwide protest in which 40 colleges and high schools spoke out against religious universities’ ability to legally discriminate against individuals.

What started as an escape from an isolating culture evolved into a mission for change as the Menaces decided their goal would be to spread awareness and amplify voices for marginalized communities on campus. “Within Mormonism, you’re taught not to speak out and go against what is taught by people. The whole Black Menaces page is pushing back against the status quos that exist,” says Stewart-Johnson.

Today, the Black Menaces’ TikTok page has more than 700k followers and has accrued over 31.5 million likes. The core founders of the group have all left the LDS Church. Stewart-Johnson graduated early and has moved to Salt Lake to continue his advocacy and local leadership work. The 23-year-old is now a full-time content creator and travels across the country to different universities to continue his man-on-the-street style interviews. “There are so many stories and so many college students who are grossly ignorant to reality, either by will or lack of exposure,” he says.

Check out the Black Menaces’ content on TikTok or Instagram @blackmenaces.



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Get Intimate at The Carriage House Sessions with Steph Clotele

By Libby Leonard laleonardwrites@gmail.com

In the daylight, the carriage house behind *Ellerbeck Bed and Breakfast* serves as *Cafe 140B*, welcoming Avenues residents with warm morning light filtering through sheer curtains to sip coffee at picnic tables or in small nooks. It feels close and cozy; the floor-to-ceiling wood paneling gives the space a light and airy warmth. When *The Carriage House Sessions* are on, however, that heat is turned up to eleven—all that coziness becomes a bejeweled sense of intimacy. The coffee-shop-turned-music-venue lights up with red bulbs and sparse lamplight and the picnic benches are arranged like church pews. A bright spotlight on the barn doors provides most of the room's lighting and lights up the performer like the rapture is nigh.

The Carriage House Sessions, created by Steph Clotele, Victoriya Baskin and Chase Gillins, hosts a series of local-focused performances each month, including open mics, concerts and recording sessions. At the album release party for local folk artist Molly Mars of *The Godfrey Daniels* on January 5, the venue's spiritual feeling was in full swing—all that wood allowed her angelic voice to reverberate around the room. Mars says she's been coming to *The Carriage House Sessions* since their first open mic, and says "I've always felt comfortable, warm and professional here. I love the feeling and the group of people that coalesce here."

Clotele and Baskin are the innkeepers at *Ellerbeck*. Gillins has extensive experience working in the music indus-



Local singer-songwriter Molly Mars performs at *The Carriage House Sessions* for her album release show.

try and is a musician himself, along with Clotele. This combination of expertise in hospitality, industry knowledge and creativity has allowed them to establish a venue in SLC unlike any other. They began *The Carriage House Sessions* in 2022 to raise money to benefit Ukraine, where Baskin is from, and have been hosting regular events with a focus on community-building ever since. Baskin says, "My family would always have gatherings where there was a food aspect, a drink aspect and a music aspect. We're very inspired by incorporating all three into this music venue." Some events feature a home-cooked meal made by Baskin; others feature local bakery pop-ups.

Clotele, Baskin, Gillins and their videographers Jeffrey Flowers and Nick Chase endow performers with the opportunity to build their careers. "We aim to promote up-and-coming artists," says Clotele. "It's so hard in those early stages. We record video and audio for artists if they need it, and our goal overall is to create a place for people to get together and practice and have a good time." A good time is essentially a guarantee at these sessions—at Mars' event, donation-based snacks and drinks were available to guests, and the small space combined with a limited guest list demanded mingling. Gillins says that his past

experience promoting large shows "felt pretty impersonal, like you're trying to get everyone taken care of and you're not watching or enjoying the music. This is the antithesis of that."

The creators take inspiration from the pioneer ancestry of the inn, which was built in 1892 for Henrietta Ellerbeck, a plural wife who was one of the first to sue for divorce and win. Owners Kara and Tyler Alden work faithfully to restore and maintain the manor's original Victorian aesthetic, and Clotele says that their leadership and trust has allowed her and her co-creators to flourish. Working closely with artists in this space has deepened the passion for music making of Clotele and Gillins, who perform as the folk duo *Little Lonesome*. Baskin says, "Nothing is quite like watching [Little Lonesome] perform in a place like this. It feels like a living room. It feels personal—everybody is here to share an experience. This is a space that I think artists thrive in."

Forthcoming from *The Carriage House Sessions* is a recording session with Andrew Wiscombe, which will be available on their YouTube channel on Feb. 23, and open mics will resume March 4. Learn about upcoming events at carriagehousesessions.com.



Photos by Ashley Christensen

As a musician herself in the duo *Little Lonesome*, Steph Clotele aims to promote up-and-coming artists.

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SLUG MAG

35TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY

SLUG: You foresee Salt Lake City in 35 years as _____.

"The new *Blade Runner* movie."
-Salt Lake City Demons

"One of the first lunar colonies, if we don't change our ways."
-Doli

"The biggest hive of development for local and regional artists in the Midwest."
-IMAGINARY FRIENDZ

"A massive hub for music as the city continues to grow and expand its collective consciousness."
-Lady Infinity

"An underground safe haven for rebels and miscreants."
-Reverend Morley

For 35 years, *SLUG Magazine* has been amplifying Salt Lake City's thriving alternative and underrepresented music, arts, events and community subcultures with thoughtful media coverage and exclusive event curation.

In celebration of our anniversary, we're holding a one-of-a-kind night of live music where 35 local artists will perform one song each on Saturday, February 10 at *Urban Lounge* and *Blue Gene's*. Doors open at 7 p.m. and music starts at 8 p.m. — get your tickets in advance for just \$10 before they sell out!

In anticipation of our biggest event of the year, *SLUG* asked each performing band or artist to fill in the blanks to the following statements, explaining their music in their own words and imagining what the next 35 years will bring to SLC.

"The weirdest big city in America."
-Milk Money

"One giant *Olive Garden* restaurant."
-Whisperhawk

"Having more music venues and all-ages venues in the city! Emerging from pandemic, live music made a comeback with lots of new venues like *The DLC*, *Aces High Saloon*, *The International* and *Black Lung Society*. With more DIY shows happening ... the next 35 years will only see more spaces for musicians to share their art."
-Jacob T Skeen

SLUG: The SLC music scene in the future sounds like _____.

"Pluggstalgia."
-GANKY

"Musor."
-Musor

"Bands that only use drum machines; bands that only use tin cans and string."
-Body Horror

"Our Western roots bleeding through our rich punk and metal heritage, continuing on the cutting edge of electronic music like we have for decades."
-Little Lonesome

"The indomitable human spirit and the pursuit of hope against all odds. Each chord and lyric serves as a testament to a world rebuilt with both the scars of its history and the unwavering belief in a brighter, harmonious future."
-Riff Ticker

"Underground techno, heavy bass lines and screams of pure joy and bliss."
-Spaz

"The final resting place for each member of *Dad Bod*."
-Dad Bod

"A retro society of rebels who resist conformity."
-Numbs

"A wedding DJ with too much freedom on the aux, just going for it. In other words, I think SLC's music scene in the future will be more diverse than we've ever seen it, combining the sounds of the hardest dance music with some of the best indie-pop around, all living only a few blocks away from each other."
-Armacat

"Neo-punk, grindcore, dub, indie-folk, 'hey ho' fusion."
-Kid Kawali

SLUG: Your music would smell like _____.

"Lotso, the bear from *Toy Story 3*."
-Stardance Riot

"Old Spice Fiji."
-Turntable Tyson

"Maple pancakes and a spliff being smoked by a fire."
-Ambedo

"The *Pirates of the Caribbean* ride."
-The Buttons and Bows Show

"Espresso and cigarette smoke."
-Bad Luck Brigade

"Flowers and champagne."
-Kimi

"Weed or Nag Champa [incense]."
-Savage Daughters

"Gasoline, skunk or your childhood best friend's home."
-Blisser

C. Valenta



"A Dorito crumb-covered Xbox 360 controller."
-Olivia Bigelow

SLUG: To you, "underground" means _____.

"For the people."
-C. Valenta

"Focused on the art and not the fame."
-fezmaster

"The sound of the future, shaking hands with the sound of the past."
-Banshee Twin

"A direct result of oppression."
-Swarmer

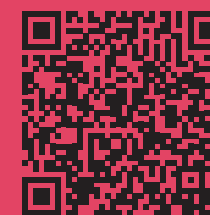
"The truth before it gets paid."
-Toto Peña

"Digging for the music you like. It's not the music you turn on the radio and hear. It's gritty, it's hard; it's aggressive, rough and dirty. It's the music and the scene that the masses don't want."
-Endless Struggle

"Making things for the love of the game."
-Lit'l Grim

"Independent and experimental."
-Jill Whit

SCAN HERE TO GET TICKETS:



GANKY



Little Lonesome



Turntable Tyson





SENATOR JENNIFER PLUMB KNOWS ACCESSIBLE NALOXONE CAN SAVE LIVES IN UTAH

By Liv Glod • oliviaglod@gmail.com

Seventeen-year-old Jennifer Plumb swore she would never return to Utah when she graduated from *East High School*. But even though her studies took her to Los Angeles and Indiana, she kept finding herself called back to the community and landscape of her home state. Today, Physician and Senator Plumb is one of the state's most prolific leaders, serving as co-founder of the non-profit Utah Naloxone alongside her brother, **Sam Plumb**, and fighting for equality and equity for marginalized communities in the Utah State Senate.

"I get to hold a microphone that many others should be holding," she says. "So it's my responsibility to speak on behalf of and for those people." Plumb's career in state politics may be nascent—she was elected in 2022 and started her term as state senator just last year—but her and her family's active involvement in advocacy has left a profound impact on Utah since 1996, when her brother died from a heroin overdose. "How you find peace out of pain is different for all of us," she says.

At the time of her brother's death, addiction was still widely stigmatized, making her work to bring awareness to the disease all the more difficult. But the Plumb family continued to have tough conversations with neighbors and legislatures while Plumb leveraged her trust within the pediatric department at the *University of Utah* to tackle substance use, abuse and prevention.

She began applying for grants, such as the Community Access to Child Health (CATCH) grant from the *American Academy of Pediatrics* that she and her brother Sam would dedicate to their cause, ultimately championing naloxone, the opioid overdose reversal commonly referred to by the brand name Narcan. By 2015, Utah Naloxone's founding year, their work scored them an invite to an FDA briefing for naloxone in public spaces.

"We were primed to come back to Utah and do policy," says Plumb. "We wanted to get naloxone kits out anywhere and everywhere, not just [at] the doctor's office or the pharmacy." In the past decade, Utah Naloxone has helped pass statewide orders so that any individual in Utah has the tools, resources and training to administer naloxone anywhere, in addition to a series of Good Samaritan and harm reduction laws such as safe syringe exchanges. The impressive partnership between Utah Naloxone and state policymakers is a huge reason why Utah is scheduled to receive nearly \$300 million in opioid settlement funds. "These are the policies I wish made front page news," she says. "Instead, we bicker about bathrooms."

Continuing to witness bipartisan support for Utah Naloxone's efforts and policy recommendations motivated Plumb to run for office. "We spend so much time being polarized," she says. "But there are policies that are really changing communities and saving lives that we don't

nearly spend enough time talking about."

Plumb believes we often overlook the realistic ways in which we can support people, especially those who are, unfortunately, "never treated as equals," such as unsheltered individuals, those struggling with substance abuse and Utah's transgender community. She endorses laws she believes will create a tangible effect—stable housing, affordable medication and improved public transportation—ensuring greater opportunity is assured to the state's most vulnerable populations.

Today, ten Utah adults die every week from drug overdoses, according to Utah's Indicator-Based Information System for Public Health (IBIS-PH). Plumb is proud of what Utah Naloxone has accomplished thus far, but she's keen on "staying engaged and progressive on this," she says. Utah Naloxone welcomes anyone looking to volunteer or learn more about the cause, including joining virtual naloxone administration training and gathering at community events to build naloxone kits.

"Whether you want to carry naloxone or carry conversations, anywhere you can be a part of that positive change is crucial," she says. "It's on us to embrace the people who are living through stuff that we might not understand but still care like hell about." Get involved at utahnaloxone.org.



Physician and Senator Jennifer Plumb advocates for free access to naloxone in public places to prevent opioid deaths.



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By Elle Cowley
ellecowley003@gmail.com

You'd be hard-pressed to find a vegan, punk or vegan-punk in Salt Lake City that hasn't heard of *Mark of the Beastro* and its attached sober all-ages venue, *The Beehive*. Known for its vegan spins on classic diner food, *Mark of the Beastro's* menu boasts chicken and waffles, burgers and loaded fries. Andrew Earley, owner of the restaurant and venue, wanted to create a place that combined his passion for alternative, underground art and meat-free, greasy diner food.

Before *Mark of the Beastro*, Earley worked at another food-slash-arts space. "I used to run a coffee shop called *Baxter's Cafe* where we did a lot of shows, poetry slams and all sorts of other community events," he says. "We all got fired. The manager came in, kicked everybody out and was like, 'We're just gonna start fresh.'" About 10 years later, a friend came to Earley asking him to come check out a property in Salt Lake with the address 666 South State Street. A month later he had the keys and after three years of hard work, *Mark of the Beastro* was up and running.

Mark of the Beastro illuminates the busy intersection with a bright neon sign reading "Vegan Diner," complete with an arrow pointing hungry customers to the entrance. Walking in, customers are greeted with red walls, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* posters and collectable figures galore. "A lot of my employees say that this is just like a random snapshot of the inside of my head," Earley laughs. "It's all stuff that I've always loved." After 2020, Earley took over *The Beehive* as well, becoming the sole owner of the space.

In the back of the restaurant is the entrance to *The Beehive*, an all-ages sober venue for shows, workshops and more. "Having one accessible all-ages venue in a town that has a really solid, really powerful DIY scene just isn't enough," says Earley. "We needed another spot and to me music was and is, I think, the most impactful for kids as they're growing up." Creating space for community art is the driving ethos behind *The Beehive*.

From poetry slams and drawing workshops to hardcore shows and local art markets, *The Beehive* hosts events for everyone. Last month's highlights include a live wres-

Andrew Earley's passion for his community has him running a nonprofit, a vegan restaurant and a live music and arts venue out of the same space on 666 S State St.



ting/hardcore show mashup, a black metal yoga class and a cabaret performance. "I think the fun part for me is having new and exciting things constantly, and challenging ourselves to do that," says Earley, the executive director of *Alternative Arts and Music Programs (AAMP) Utah*, a nonprofit dedicated to amplifying Salt Lake's alternative arts scene for which *The Beehive* is the home base. "We have some really, really awesome arts nonprofits in Salt Lake, but there's definitely things that fall through the cracks," says Earley. AAMP has partnered with numerous local groups and artists, such as a local theater project. He says, "We're always trying to diversify what we do as far as art—we're trying to bring in as much [art that's] creative, cool and maybe a little underrepresented, because there's some really incredible stuff that flies under the radar."

Starting a business and fostering a community can be difficult, but Earley chooses to keep a positive attitude and continue to push forward. "I think for me, one of the big lessons has been [the importance of] focusing on the positive side of the community that we've built ... That resilience has turned into so much cool stuff," he says. "[You have to keep] maintaining that focus so that you don't get discouraged—and again, keep after it."

Keep up with *Mark of the Beastro*, *The Beehive* and *AAMP Utah* by following their Instagrams @markofthebeastro, @beehiveslc and @aamp Utah respectively, and be sure to check out *The Beehive's* monthly calendar to stay up-to-date on upcoming events.

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Lavanya Mahate

Building a Compassionate Culinary Community

By Addison Austin-Lou • addiesan.sl@gmail.com

It is rare to meet someone who moves through life with a capacity to put their head down and work, undeterred by external factors or judgements, who also exudes compassion and a holistic sense of self. Lavanya Mahate, founder of *Saffron Valley Indian Restaurants & Catering*, *Bix Bakery & Cafe* and *RISE Culinary Institute*, is one such person. She has pushed against the patriarchal conventions of women in Indian culture to craft a path that lifts up others and highlights her own glowing, entrepreneurial success.

Mahate was born in Southern India into a multigenerational home with a rich culinary tradition. One of her most pivotal childhood mentors was the family's kitchen help, **Kanthama**, from whom Mahate learned to cook her first recipes. After moving west to study communications in college, she developed an affinity for street food. While these travels broadened her horizons of Indian cuisine, she says "even someone who has been studying Indian food their whole life will not grasp the breadth of the country."

Following her then-husband to Utah, Mahate arrived eager to begin working. She had to go back to school for a second master's degree due to visa restrictions, this time studying marketing, before she was hired as an intern for the *Salt Lake Chamber*. Over the next eight years she went from intern to marketing manager before landing a position as director of the *Women's Business Center*. "I had the opportunity to meet so many amazing women, and had several mentors at the Chamber," Mahate reminisces.

Mahate still wanted to pursue a passion project, however, which brought her back to food. She start-



Saffron Valley was the first restaurant opened by Mahate—now she operates five locations as well as Bix Bakery & Cafe.



Photos by Katarina Duerr

Lavanya Mahate's affinity for Indian street food and her comprehensive marketing skills make her a talented chef and entrepreneur.

ed producing spice blends to sell at the *Salt Lake Farmers Market* in 2010. This served as a litmus test for the SLC community's interest in Indian cuisine, which was met with great support. "I'm all about bringing Indian food to the mainstream and doing it well," Mahate says. A year later, *Saffron Valley Indian Restaurants & Catering* was born at its first location in South Jordan.

When I ask if she faced discrimination as an immigrant or as a woman entering the food service industry, Mahate explains, "I realize there were moments, but I am not here to prove myself to anyone." *Saffron Valley* was created to showcase Indian classics from all regions, with a consistent menu and inviting environment. Since its inception, the restaurant group has expanded to include five locations.

Mahate's next culinary endeavor was a series of bakeries, culminating in *Bix Bakery and Cafe*. "Creating inviting spaces for people to come enjoy food and create memories around food [is] a passion of mine," she says. *Bix* is the kind of place where you want to sit

down with a cup of freshly-brewed chai and stay for hours. Their pastries are inspired by European tradition; they also offer all-day breakfast and an afternoon tea menu.

With the success of these two businesses, Mahate turned her attention toward a project that would allow her to give back. *RISE Culinary Institute* provides hands-on culinary training, paid internships and assistance with job placement to low-income refugees in Salt Lake City. *RISE* also partners with the *Utah Refugee Center* to ensure trainees receive well-rounded support to establish stability in their personal and home lives. Each year they take on four cohorts of twelve people—that's a lot of lives being changed.

Lavanya Mahate believes the saying that everything we ever want is on the other side of fear. She exemplifies what it looks like to face new experiences with grace, turning them into opportunities for self-discovery. She admits that there is still much to learn; if you want to evolve, the journey is never-ending. Despite being a powerhouse entrepreneur, she expressed that "*Saffron Valley* is not my identity, being a business owner is not my identity. Being a mom is also not my identity. I am a soul who is having a human experience." Isn't that a good lesson for us all?

To support *RISE*, check out riseculinaryinstitute.org or visit their Instagram [@riseculinaryinstitute](https://www.instagram.com/riseculinaryinstitute). Check out delicious menus for *Saffron Valley* at saffronvalley.com and *Bix* at bixbakeryandcafe.com.



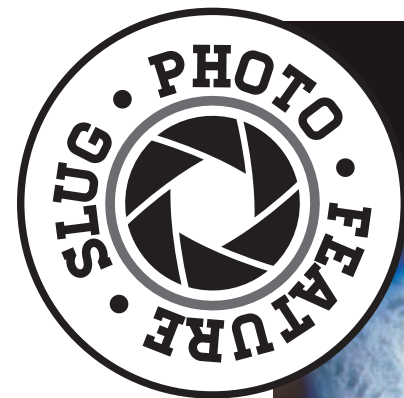
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SNOW

This season didn't get off to the greatest start but many riders, including Kale Cimperman, were still able to dial in their early-season tricks at the

Bone Zone in Brighton Resort. The Bone Zone is now closed for the season as Brighton prepares to open more terrain. Happy shredding!

By Andrew Kooyman • andy.kooyman@gmail.com



Kale Cimperman - Grab Grind - The Bone Zone

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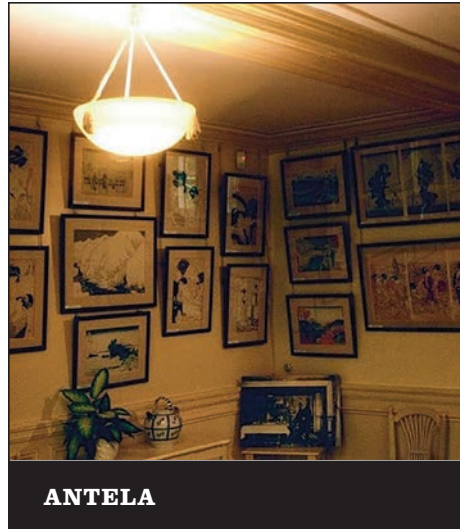
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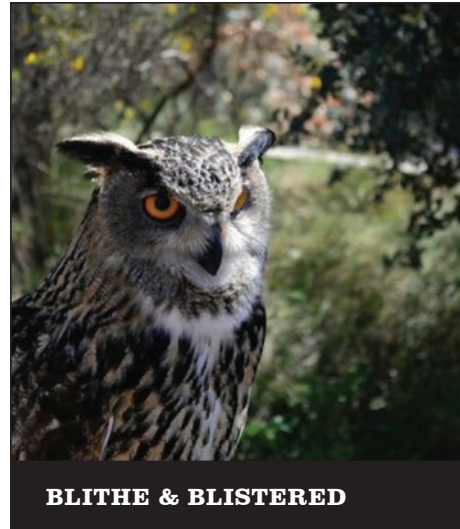
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LOCAL MUSIC SINGLES ROUNDUP

Ah, February. Spring is nowhere in sight, and there's even an extra day this year to drag it on that much longer. Luckily, *SLUG's* Local Music Singles Roundup is here to keep you warm. Whether you're blasting **City in Dust's** "Jobs or Jail" as you shovel snow or staving off seasonal depression with **SoulFang's** pop-rock banger "Rollercoaster," this month's lineup will help you fight the winter blues.



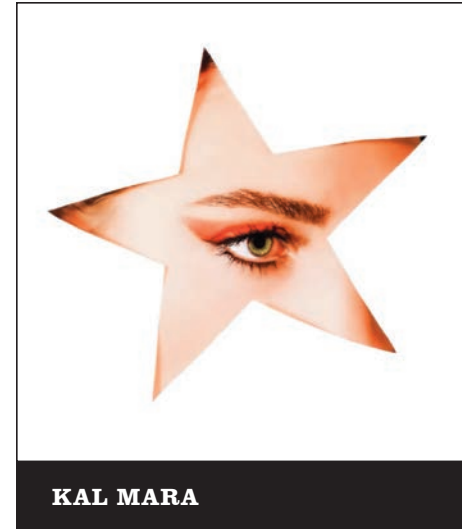
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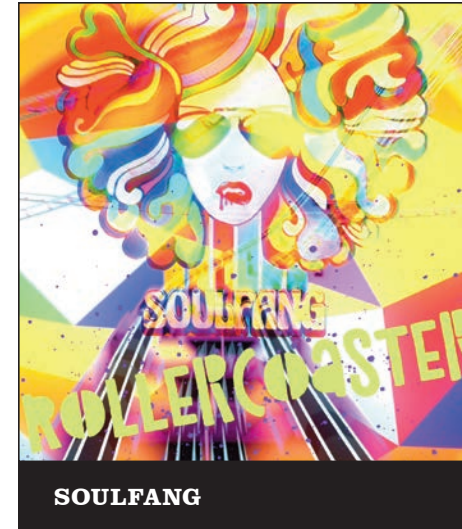
BLITHE & BLISTERED



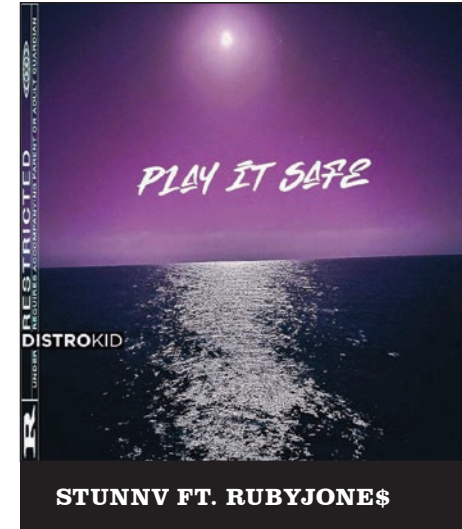
CITY IN DUST



KAL MARA



SOULFANG



STUNNV FT. RUBYJONES

"I Know"
Himalayan Flavor
Street: 11.04
Antela = (The Avalanches)^Dean Blunt

Antela's latest single "I Know" sounds like something I've heard before, but I can't quite pinpoint from where—not in the sense that it's derivative, but rather that it feels nostalgic and fuzzy around the edges, like a discarded demo track from a bygone era. The gentle syncopated riffs followed by catchy, nasal vocals seem like standard indie-pop fare, but it slowly becomes something more jazzy and difficult to pin down when the saxophone enters and the rhythm evolves. At over six minutes long, "I Know" takes its time to explore how the sax can tell a story, using it as a second vocalist that weaves in and out of the beat instead of limiting it to a brief, gratuitous solo, as many other bands tend to do. The lyrics are vague and carefree but never lazy—"I know this can't be you / In my dreams I see / A world, but it can't be."
—Asha Pruitt

"Owl"
Self-Released
Street: 12.04
Blithe & Blistered = Maggie Heath + Odie Leigh

Singer-songwriter Blithe & Blistered recently released their single "Owl," a folk song about losing one's faith. The track's bright and hypnotic vocals are supplemented with a steady, head-nodding, narrative melody of guitar plucking that feels akin to an anthem for a fantastical protagonist learning about life's intricacies on their grand hero's journey. The pacing and upbeat tone allow listeners to smoothly bob along, while the lyrics provide playful and weighted allegories about curiosity and religion. Overall, the track is heavily reminiscent of the whimsical bubbling of words featured on **Panic! At The Disco's** "Behind the Sea"—both songs offer powerful themes that nod and croon in the same tongue as a children's limerick. I highly recommend listening to "Owl," not only for the stunning vocals, but also because the track makes it easy to detach from the world and become the main character for a moment.
—Jamie Christensen

"Jobs or Jail"
Self-Released
Street: 12.17
City in Dust = Converge + Botch + Discordance Axis

On first listen, the third track off City in Dust's debut self-titled EP feels like being aggressively shaken awake. There's a panicked urgency in the opening riff, accompanied by blunt, painful lyrics about soul-crushing capitalism. The frantic playing continues into a breakdown that conjures images of broken noses and knocked-out teeth, maintaining ferocious speed and unnerving dissonance throughout the track. It's hard to tell if the brutality of the screams comes from rage or despair, but the cries of "Jobs or jail? Work or war?" imply a combination of both. Solo artist **BJ Barrett's** lyrics make painfully clear the self-defeating trap of living in a world defined by military aggression and corporate greed. City in Dust takes the elements of metalcore worth listening to, the expert riff-crafting of thrash and the fast-paced chaos of grindcore to create the perfect soundtrack for grieving a just society that never existed.
—Emma Anderson

"STAR"
Self-Released
Street: 12.14
Kal Mara = BADLANDS-era Halsey + Dua Lipa tone

Kal Mara's "STAR" brings the energy back to a dreary winter. Its cellophane sound crinkles with iridescent lightness as Mara's husky voice murmurs throughout the song. With a rich depth of tone similar to—and made famous by—Dua Lipa, Mara pulls her emotion from the throat. Ethereal electronic beats float in and out as the lyrics slow down and match the pace of the melody. Nodding along, her message inspires power: "My energy is bright as a star / If you look outside yourself, you lose who you are." This is a polished addition to the Salt Lake City-based artist's discography, exploring layers of sound and pushing her voice to even lower notes. A clear progression from her earlier 2023 track, "Duality," Mara's latest single is evidence that she is carving a path toward elusive, all-original sound and pushing the boundaries of alternative rock.
—Katie Hatzfeld

"Rollercoaster"
SexyMetallic Records
Street: 01.19
SoulFang = Little Big Town x Metallica

Somebody get this single on *Guitar Hero* and put that plastic Gibson Les Paul in my hands, stat. SoulFang has been creating genre-bending tunes since January 2022, and the four-piece's latest offering, "Rollercoaster," showcases the group's iconic soul/rock mash-up perfectly. It's funky! It shreds! **Liz Seibert's** vocals are sexy, twangy and crystal-clear. "You want on my rollercoaster / Come on, take a ride," she beckons. The well-produced music video similarly has it all: deadpan whacking in a neon room, the bright lights of amusement park rides and euphoria-inducing visuals. Between this and the brain-melting guitars in the song's closer, I'm hyped—and I'm not the only one, as evidenced by the 55 Kickstarter campaign backers who pledged over \$8,000 to get SoulFang's debut LP, *Passions, Potions, Wicked Lullabies*, off the ground. Expect to dance, kiss and headbang to it this spring.
—Mekenna Malan

"PLAY IT SAFE"
Self-Released
Street: 12.25
STUNNV = 808 Mafia + Travis Scott

STUNNV is a prolific artist, releasing over a dozen singles in 2023 alone, and "Play it Safe" is another in a long line of polished trap tracks. It sounds like it came straight out of the **808 Mafia** production house and shares the same rolling snare and high-hat beat. STUNNV has written a phenomenally fun and catchy song, and while researching for this review I found myself repeating the chorus, "Wait, wait, I gotta go play it safe, safe." It's a dreamy track, with every element floating seamlessly from foreground to background, grounded by an uptempo beat. RubyJones, whose lyrics come in the latter half, has a mesmerizing flow that blends so closely with the synth that at times they are indistinguishable from the backing chords. On the whole, it reminds me of "Hold That Heat" by **Southside** and **Future** feat. **Travis Scott**—perfect for a house party with your closest friends.
—wphughes

SLUG STYLE

KAT ALEMAN

Photos by Bonneville Jones • bonneville.jones@gmail.com

Kat Aleman is a force to be reckoned with in the realm of local arts and beyond. As the events manager for the *Utah Arts Alliance* and founder of her own booking and promotion business, *Y'allt Entertainment*, Kat's marketing expertise and love for her community is responsible for countless events that bring life to Salt Lake City's creative scenes. Keep up with her eclectic style on Instagram [@ravemilk_](https://www.instagram.com/ravemilk_) and her upcoming events through [@yalltent](https://www.instagram.com/yalltent). Read the full story on [SLUGMag.com](https://www.slugmag.com).



"Bettie Page was a huge influence on me growing up. I loved how fearless she was and I wanted to be just as fearless. If I could pick a fictional band I've taken influence from, it would be The Hex Girls from *Scooby Doo*."

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SATURDAY, JUNE 15 2 P.M. - 7 P.M.

ARTSPACE CITY CENTER PARKING LOT | 230 S. 500 WEST

**PINK MUG
BENEFITS**

**Planned
Parenthood®**
Association of Utah

KILBY BLOCK PARTY

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF KILBY COURT!



LCD THE POSTAL VAMPIRE
SOUNDSYSTEM SERVICE WEEKEND
WU-TANG CLAN DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE
INTERPOL JAI PAUL JOANNA NEWSOM
BELLE AND SEBASTIAN 100 GECS DAYGLOW
COURTNEY BARNETT TV GIRL ALVVAYS DINOSAUR JR.
UNKNOWN MORTAL ORCHESTRA GUIDED BY VOICES
CURRENT JOYS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ PEACH PIT THE GARDEN
YVES TUMOR PANCHIKO BEACH FOSSILS CAUTIOUS CLAY
BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB TY SEGALL POND YOKE LORE
YELLOW DAYS GINGER ROOT ANDY SHAU F SLOW PULP
PETEY CSS EKKSTACY YOT CLUB KROOKED KINGS CHOIR BOY
LUNA LI HEMLOCKE SPRINGS LOMELDA BLONDSHELL ODIE LEIGH
ROYEL OTIS ABBY SAGE HORSE JUMPER OF LOVE MALCOLM TODD
FAZERDAZE MODEL/ACTRIZ ARCY DRIVE ANNIE DIRUSSO
TAGABOW ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ WATER FROM YOUR EYES
JOANNA STERNBERG KARA JACKSON GUSTAF HANA VU
26FIX LITTLE MOON BLUE RAIN BOOTS SCULPTURE CLUB
NICOLE CANAAN DAYTIME LOVER DRUSKY BODY OF LEAVES
BOYFRIEND SUSHI TOWN PERSONA 749 BOBO

MAY 10 - 12 2024

WHERE'S THE SHOW? THE UTAH STATE FAIRPARK - 155 N 1000 W

★ SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH ★

GATES WILL OPEN @ 11:30 AM DAILY

WHERE CAN I FIND TICKETS? MORE INFO??

247IX.COM + KILBYBLOCKPARTY.COM

CHLOE MONSON 2023

The Annual Craft Lake City

Letter West

FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE HAND LETTERING

MARCH 2, 2024
9A.M. TO 7P.M.

TICKETS ON
SALE NOW



Seb Lester he/him
LONDON, UK
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
 @SEBLESTER



Ximena Jiménez she/they
BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA
KEYNOTE SPEAKER
 @JIMENEZLETTERING



Becca Clason she/her
LOGAN, UTAH
WORKSHOP INSTRUCTOR
 @BECCA CLASON



Skyler Chubak he/him
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
WORKSHOP INSTRUCTOR
 @LETTER.QUEEN



Shley Kinser she/her
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
PANEL MODERATOR
 @TINY_SCHLEY



Kyle Letendre they/them
PORTLAND, OR
WORKSHOP INSTRUCTOR
 @HEYKYLE

MIDVALE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
 695 W CENTER ST. MIDVALE, UT 84047

WORKSHOPS · PANEL DISCUSSIONS
LIVE MURAL-MAKING · MIXER · MORE!



FLOWER IS IN FULL BLOOM



BLUEBIRDS FLOWER

FLOWER AND PREROLLS



FIREBIRD INFUSED

INFUSED PREROLLS

NEON MOON

FLOWER AND MINI PREROLLS



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FOR 1ST TIME CUSTOMERS ONLY



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YOUR ORDER
WITH \$100 PURCHASE



SLG20S100APRIL24

\$15 OFF
YOUR ORDER
WITH \$60 PURCHASE



SLG15S60APRIL24

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VIEW SPECIALS ONLINE
deeprootsharvest.com



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