

WAKE THE ZINE NO. 9



ABOUT

Wake the Zine is a monthly DIY publication that gets the word out about local music in Galveston. We distribute primarily through MOD Coffeehouse. Huge thank you to our volunteer team and our local sponsors!

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NO. 9

Wake the Zine / July 2016

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Hand-picked Galveston events list

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VENUE WATCH



Lauren reviews some recent developments on a topic we can't stop talking about: local music venues. From the sudden opening of The Gypsy Joynt (pictured above) to several closures and transitions, Galveston's scene is rapidly evolving over the summer of 2016.

NU GRUVES

4101 Broadway

Status: Closed

If you drove by Nu Groves on June 24th looking for the party known as Hesh's Friday of Summer Freshness, you may have been puzzled by a shuttered venue.

Remember our interview with Pete Hesh last month? "Right now," Pete said, "Nu Groves is a really good spot that we've found. There's plenty of room [and] it's got the perfect stage for a venue." Almost as soon as the ink dried on that interview, Nu Groves closed. My attempt to contact the venue for comment was unsuccessful.

KONA

2720 Market Street

Status: Closed

KONA House of Culture seemed like a natural place to move the event after Nu Groves closed, but the venue followed with an announcement of its own. KONA was planning its one-year anniversary bash

when the news hit: "Basically the property owner sold the building, and we were under a month-to-month lease," the folks at KONA explain. "The new owners wanted the building clear." There are no plans to continue at a different location. Meanwhile, the property is listed for \$230,000 and the location is billed as a potential coffee shop on "an established main street." That claim is about as solid as "great curb appeal" at present, but this side of town is certainly on the radar for entrepreneurs.

SEASONS

2701 Broadway

Status: Now Open / Under Fire

KONA's anniversary show was rebranded as Independent Sound Fest and moved to an unlikely location: Seasons Gourmet Food & Grocer. Some in the local-food community have challenged descriptors like "local" and "farm-to-table" in the first month of opening. However, the owner replied to our query with some examples of how Seasons is pursuing these goals. We get the feeling that Seasons' goals for sourcing are still very much in progress.

OLD QUARTER

413 20th Street

Status: Open / Rumors Unconfirmed

Meanwhile, Old Quarter Acoustic Cafe is rumored to be on the market. I did not succeed in finding the listing, nor was I able to contact Wrecks Bell via email.

THE CLAM

2222 28th Street

Status: Back in Action

The second edition of this free outdoor show will take place on July 9th at the bandshell facing McGuire Dent Rec Center. The community event begins at sundown and features projected visuals and sound. Thankfully, fears that the DIY event would be shut down did not materialize at the first show, and upwards of forty people enjoyed a Gulf breeze and a show headlined by EVAK. Read about this ongoing project in our interview with Michael Stuart Allison of Live Visuals.

THE PROLETARIAT

2221 Market Street

Status: Back in Action

You may have noticed a lull in live music at the Proletariat Gallery & Public House after the Roz and the Rice Cakes show in March. Shows were on hold due to noise

complaints by former residents, but live shows are back in a big way. Things kick off on July 27th with the WRAY, \GT//, and EL LAGO show. On August 6th, catch Dressy Bessy and Rose Ette, fresh from their show the night before at Walter's Downtown.

THE GYPSY JOYNT

2711 Market Street

Status: Now Open

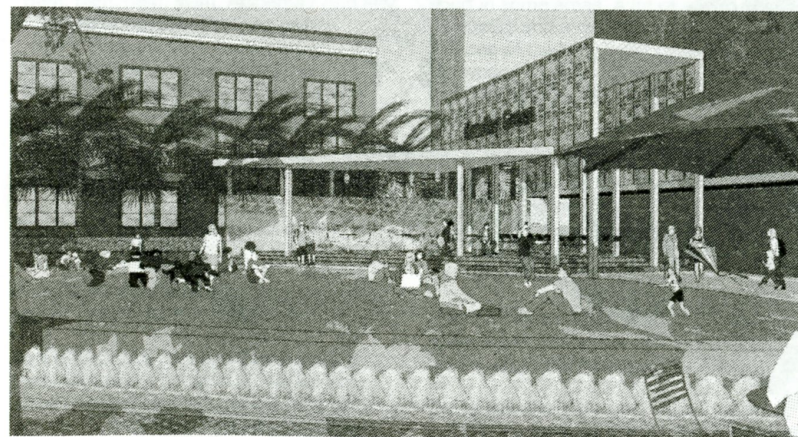
Considering the eternity it takes for most businesses in Galveston to open, I was tempted to interpret "sometime in July" as "sometime in August... maybe." I don't know about you, but I am blown away that this family-run restaurant across from Maceo's is up and running as of July 1st!

HENDLEY GREEN

2028 Strand Street

Status: Open / In Progress

Hendley Green kicks off Music in the Park this summer, but don't hold your breath waiting for the stage to be built. According to Will Wright, GHF's Director of Special Events, the stage portion of the pocket park is not slated to be finished anytime soon: "I'd estimate in the next 1-2 years on that." When asked if they would be working with local bands, he replied that local and regional acts would be featured.



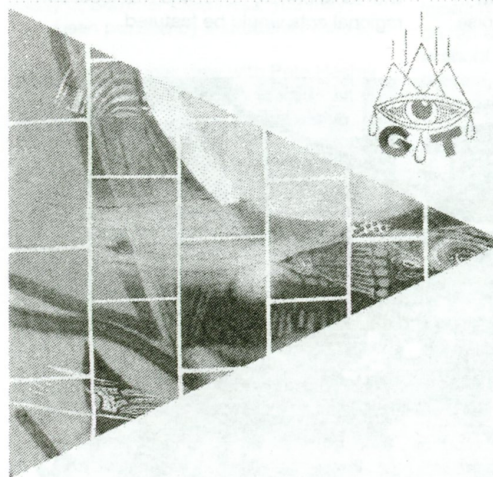
LISTENING GUIDE



► "RELATIVE" BY WRAY (BIRMINGHAM, AL)

By special invitation of Wake and EL LAGO, WRAY is playing the Proletariat July 27th.

soundcloud.com/communicating-vessels/relative



► "SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH MY MIND" BY \GT// (BIRMINGHAM, AL)

Also on Communicating Vessels, labelmates \GT// are touring with WRAY this summer.

soundcloud.com/communicating-vessels/06-somethings-wrong-with-my



INTERVIEW: WRAY

If you can't tell already, Lauren is super psyched that WRAY accepted our invite to play in Galveston! The band is David Brown on vocals and bass, David Swatzell on guitar, and Blake Wimberly on drums. Catch them on July 27th at the Proletariat with labelmates \GT// and Galveston's EL LAGO.

Lauren: In "Galveston, oh Galveston," we're stuck with a Glenn Campbell tune! Does Birmingham, Alabama have an alternative to Lynyrd Skynyrd?

David Brown: I prefer Ram Jam's "Black Betty" or the shout out at the the end of Beastie Boys' "What Comes Around":

"Bam, bam, bam, slam, Alabama / And kick it, Al-a-fucking-bama"

David Swatzell: Heh not really, unfortunately. Personally I like to think its "Deacon Blues" by Steely Dan or "Birmingham" by Randy Newman but the masses still embrace Lynyrd Skynyrd for sure.

Blake: Can I nominate "Birmingham" by Randy Newman? Please.

Are the three of you originally from the state? What's Birmingham like?

David Swatzell: We are! Birmingham is cool. It's a mid-size town so it's not mega small or super big. You get some of the art, music, and culture you'd get from a

big city but still go to shows and know just about everyone in the room somewhat from just being in the art and music scene for so long. It's always had a great DIY punk scene but it's really been growing in the last 10 years a lot.

Blake: Bama Boyz. Birmingham is trying. We're definitely in the middle of a growth spurt in some areas. A lot of money going into parks and new businesses, etc. We lost one of the best small club venues in the world last year (RIP Bottletree), but through them many other opportunities have risen.

David Brown: Birmingham is a great city to live (and visit). It has its fair share of social and economic problems but it also has a progressive and artistic community that is thriving. That support really helps us do what we do.

I read that you and David Swatzell have been playing together since the early 2000s. What were you up to before Wray?

David Brown: Off and on, yes. I grew up in the punk scene in Birmingham and have

started or been involved with countless bands and various influences. The few years before WRAY started I was writing mostly garage pop and rock n' roll, stripped down stuff.

David Swatzell: Well we had a shoe gaze band called the 39 Steps together probably 13 years ago that didn't do much and then we played in a math rock band called Comrade together and just were always going to punk shows together growing up when we weren't playing in the same band. We even had a record collectors group that used to get together and trade records back in the day for a while.

So you moved from guitar to bass for Wray. Did you play bass in bands prior to that?

David Brown: I didn't. When the three of us started playing together, we were both playing guitar. After playing with a couple different bass players, the project started fizzling out. A few months went by and we decided to get together again. I hopped on bass to write and it just worked.

Do you feel like you're in a different headspace as a bassist? Has it expanded the way you think musically?

David Brown: I do and yes. I sometimes think that I play bass like I play guitar. Other times, I know that I have to fall back and play simply with the drums. It's cool to

write lines and melodies up the fretboard but also hit lows and ride with repetition. I definitely consider all of those things when we write.

Do you still write on guitar? What is your writing process like as a band?

David Brown: I have been writing more on guitar recently. I have missed it but that writing is likely going towards my own music. WRAY songs have always been written together; it's an organic process. We mess around on riffs and structure songs together. Then, we make a shitty iPhone recording and I will take it with me and write lyrics and vocal melodies. We have discussed taking a different approach in the future, but we prefer our music to be a true collaborative effort.

Galveston is your one and only stop in Texas. When you dropped Houston and confirmed Galveston, a few people were puzzled--us included! What went into that decision?

David Brown: We had already confirmed a show in St Louis for the 29th. If we had played Houston, it would have been over a 12 hour drive the next day. And it really sucks to play a show after you have been in the van that long.

Blake: I'm not sure, but when we got the opportunity to play in Galveston we were all pretty excited. Seems like an interesting

place.

You have played in Austin recently. How was SXSW 2016? I've been told that it can be hellish one year and absolutely fantastic the next.

David Brown: 2016 was really cool. We were asked to play in the first Part Time Punks showcase and got to play with some bands we like. Both years, 2015 and 2016, we played two shows (an official and an unofficial). Maybe that's the key? We got in and out pretty quickly.

Blake: We usually get in and get out as quickly as possible. It's worked well for us the past two years. Beat the crowd before they beat you.

David Swatzell: Yeah SXSW is generally really chaotic and kind of annoying. We have been blessed with very successful SXSW experiences. The whole point really is networking and meeting industry folks and we always get there early in the week, play a few shows, do the little bit of schmoozing that we are supposed to and get the hell out so it's never been too bad for us. It's just gotten way too big now and there are like 10,000 little bands going thinking they're gonna get their big break for some reason.

Consequence Of Sound describes the band as "quintessential shoegaze," adding that you've "mastered the model set by [the] forebears" of the genre. That's a high compliment, but do you feel like the shoegaze tag overshadows other elements of your sound?

David Brown: Yeah I do. Our musical influence is vast, we all listen to different stuff. And of course we share a common fondness over some genres and bands. I would say a lot of that tag is referring to the guitar layers and reverb drenched vocals. On the other hand I can think of a lot worse, less descriptive genres we could be lumped into. The nature of musical criticism is to compare music to other music, so we will take it as a compliment.

Blake: It's certainly present, but I feel there's plenty more to go around. We all bring elements from our own corners and integrate together...new wave, psych, krautrock, dream pop, post-punk. It's

definitely a sum of its parts, but people tend to tag things to a certain label for simplicity's sake.

How would you describe your label, Communicating Vessels? Is that where you record?

David Swatzell: They're great! Jeffrey Cain, the owner, is one of the nicest, most generous people you'll ever meet and has done so much for us. He is also a musician. He played in a band called Remy Zero and currently has a band called Isidore with Steve Kilbey of the band The Church. Him being a musician and not just a businessman helps a lot. He understands the struggles of being on tour and trying to finish albums and has tons of great advice. They have an incredible studio that we did the newest album in with tons of great gear which is very nice as well.

As a band, how do you feel about recording? Is getting lost in the studio something you enjoy or do you prefer to cut to the chase?

David Brown: For us, I think it is a challenge, a rewarding one. We all have ideas about what kind of finished product we want. While recording *Hypatia* we got lost a bit, went down a hole and had to dig ourselves out. I am happy with what we have created. We hope to write our next release in isolation, somewhere we can get lost in a good way.

Blake: The first album was definitely a cut to the chase. We had all the songs ready to go, jumped in, recorded, and moved on. That was before we were with Communicating Vessels. With *Hypatia* there was a conscious effort to take our time and flesh things out more openly in a studio environment. We're still aiming to do more of that, really dive into something. Preproduction, more intensive demoing, etc. Something different from the beginning. New writing techniques, new setups, anything really so that when we do finally go back into the studio we have a solid base off of which to go. From there... who knows. It's a mix of coming in and having finished songs to set in stone and having the looseness to allow others to grow from that entrance.

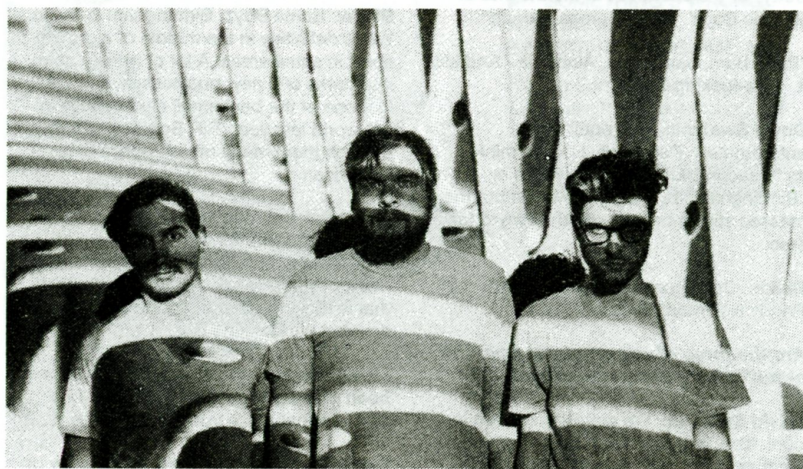


Photo courtesy of Dan King of 2ThreeFive

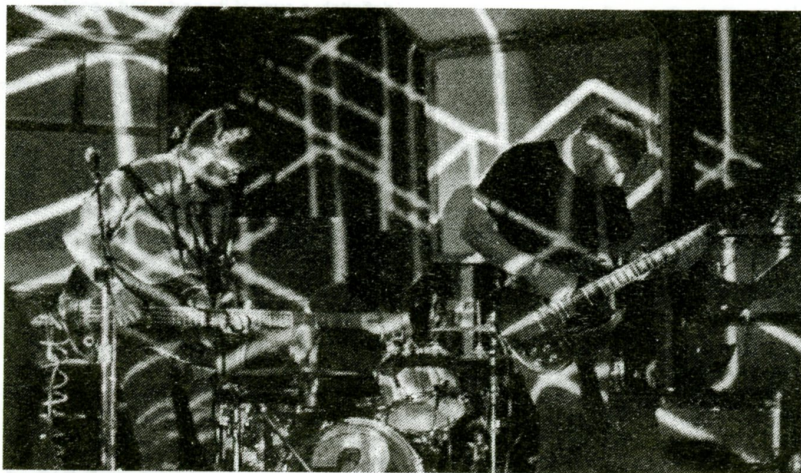


Photo courtesy of Johnny Nevin

David Swatzell: I love recording. We do a lot of tweaking song structure in the studio which I enjoy. We will write a song at practice and then when we get in the studio we start dissecting it and changing things up and I love doing that cause you can start to hear it back and hear instant results and it's easier to judge when something really sucks or is totally working and great. So yes I do like getting lost in the studio to a certain extent but you can get lost to a point that you're doing no good and not moving forward.

Tamaryn is credited for the cover art for the new album along with Shaun Durkan of Weekend. How did that come about?

Blake: Tamaryn and Shaun have worked together both musically and within design on multiple projects. When it came time to work on art for the new album, we were discussing pieces we really liked. Tamaryn's previous album, *Tender New Signs*, particularly stuck out. As luck would have it we shared the same publicist so there was an in. We sent her some rough tracks and she came back fairly quickly with a direction and Shaun designed and fleshed it out. We're all fans of both of their works, musically and visually, so getting to work with them was an absolute pleasure.

On your self-titled, there's a long, unexpected fade-in on the first track,

"Blood Moon," which ends very abruptly. Also, "May 15" drops the vocals after a couple of minutes and beats out five minutes of this sustained groove. Where did that direction come from in the studio?

Blake: The fade-in came through track listing. We couldn't figure out where "Blood Moon" was going to fall, and when it ended up being first, the fade in became necessary. It's actually one of the choruses copied and placed in front of the first verse for the entirety of the fade in. Studio magic! As for "May 15," I can't deny a good sustained lock-in groove. One of my favorite parts of that album. I love a long build. It's definitely our Krautrock side coming out, though I could just as easily liken it to the build, plateau, build sentiments found in techno. Of course there'd be no techno without Krautrock.

David Swatzell: We just didn't like the intro we had to "Blood Moon." It just wasn't great and we were trying to figure out a better way to start it and a fade-in was suggested and it just worked. Then we thought it would be cool to start the record with a fade-in. It sorta makes you turn the music up loud from the start. With "May 15" we had been playing that song pretty much like that live for a bit when we recorded it. We have always been influenced by motorik kraut rock bands like Neu and Can and that was sort of our

outlet for that influence.

You mentioned that you were going for a more cohesive sound for Hypatia. What did you mean by that?

David Brown: We wanted this album to fit into one holistic concept. The first album was shorter and a bit broken up; a synth song, a loud song, a rockier song. The goal for *Hypatia* was for the album to wax and wane but still sit in a specific realm.

Does "May 23rd" on Hypatia have anything to do with "May 15" on the self-titled?

David Brown: We saved those songs on our iPhones as the day we wrote them. It's easier than coming up with a bullshit name on the spot. Those just stuck.

"Jennifer" by Faust is a rare cover from you on the new album. Why that song? Did you debate including a cover?

David Brown: We were asked to do a cover for a local production called Spectra Sonic Sound Sessions. Somehow that came out of it and we were already in the studio recording so we decided to lay it down. I'm glad it made it on the record.

Blake: We've only tried one other cover, The Chill's "Pink Frost." That one never made it out of the practice space. We didn't plan to have "Jennifer" on the album, or at least weren't sure how that'd work with it being a cover. But, when we got the go-ahead, it found its place.

I feel like there is a healthy wave of music right now coming out of the underground / alternative tradition. I sometimes wonder if we're building something that is genuinely counterculture in our time. What do you think?

David Brown: Maybe that depends on where you live. In Birmingham we are definitely and gladly a part of counterculture and born out of it. It is hard to speak generationally but I would like to think that it's ongoing.

David Swatzell: I'd like to think that is happening but with technology today

everything comes and goes so fast. I feel like the days of the "punk" movement and the "grunge" movement and things like that being able to happen might be gone but you really never know. The music world sure needs a cleansing again though since we live in the days now where there are super shitty bands headlining festivals and arenas in front of 100,000+ people calling themselves "indie rock" and "indie folk" I feel like in hindsight when people look back they probably will see a bit of a counterculture underneath all the Mumford and Sons fake indie rock bullshit and we will all be in that counterculture to a certain extent.

You'll be here on July 27th at the Proletariat with GT, also on Communicating Vessels. What is GT's live show like? How is your live set different from the albums?

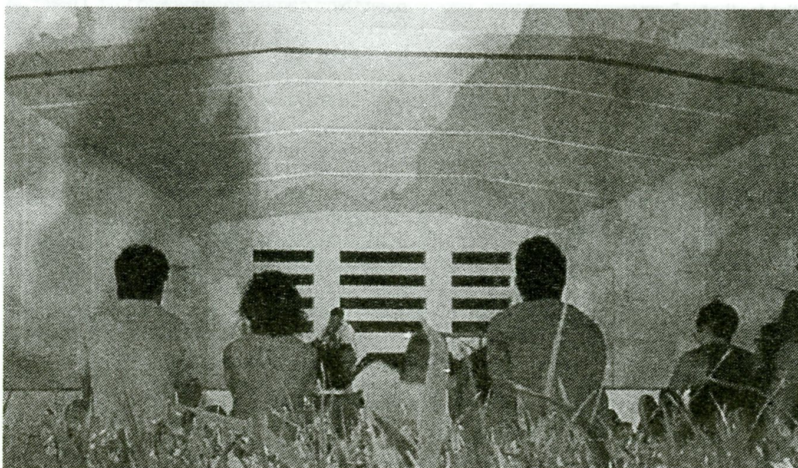
David Swatzell: GT's live show is loud and kinda punk as fuck at times but they really have a cool thing going that's hard to describe. It's part southern, part psychedelic, part stoner, part punk and their frontman Scotty Lee is one of the craziest, most fun characters you'll ever meet. He'll wanna smoke your weed, take your acid and freestyle for you the entire time while doing so. Our live shows are a bit more mysterious and dreamy but still aggressive and loud.

David Brown: Our set is generally faster and heavier live, the instruments might not be as reserved but we hope the feeling endures. GT's live set is loud, steady, and melodic. It's brain-melting.

Listen:
soundcloud.com/communicating-vessels/relative

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Experience:
 7/27 at the Proletariat



INTERVIEW: MICHAEL ALLISON

Hanna Gonzales of MOD Coffeehouse interviews the man behind Live Visuals and The Clam, a DIY visual / aural event that kicks off a second installment on July 9th.

Hanna: The Clam! What an incredible experience. What inspired you to use this space in the way you did?

Michael: I've lived on the island off and on for six years and have yet to stop discovering interesting new spots. When I found out that the gym at McGuire Dent was free for locals, I signed up and started exercising there occasionally. The treadmills face the bandshell (The Clam) through a run of tall windows and I would daydream about using it for shows, or at least wondered why it wasn't being used.

The more I researched it, the more frustrated I became that it wasn't being utilized. I dug through microfilm archives at the Rosenberg Library and online trying to find anything I could. The earliest mention of it was in the Galveston Daily News, summer of 1949, in which its construction was mentioned during a bond election. Later, and through the 60s, the city funded a 23 member municipal band that would play three shows a week throughout the summer.

My real motivation is the lack of purpose-built music venues in Galveston. Every show here is in a bar that happens to host music, not a music venue that has a bar. Most of those shows end up sounding terrible, are way too loud, or pushed into

a corner. They are just a way to increase alcohol sales for the night, which tends to exclude certain types of music, and also completely ignores the under-21 crowd.

What was your original vision for the show? What kind of vibe did you want to create?

I'm involved with Galveston's Own Farmers Market, which just expanded with a weekday market on the same property as The Clam. There was a lot of red tape involved in getting that approved; who's liable for what, insurance coverage, water and power usage, all that. While I'd love to have the city's blessing or sponsorship, the bureaucratic process would have killed it. As the buzz about it spread, the vibe I dealt with was anxiety. People were constantly asking questions. In the weeks and days leading up to the show, I warned people not to expect anything because it would probably get shut down. The day of, one of the acts I booked cancelled and there was a decent chance of rain. Everything was coming undone anyway, so I figured I had nothing to lose at that point.

As for the vibe that actually happened, the structure itself and the people that showed up to participate are responsible. The weather was perfect, Flynn Donovan and

Blaine Lunz were both gracious enough to take a risk and play some music. Despite intentionally under-promoting it, lots of people showed up and seemed stoked.

I was going to mention the promotion of the show (or lack thereof). Were the flyers and Facebook event the only forms of promotion aside from word-of-mouth? Since it didn't get shut down do you plan on promoting the next Clam more heavily?

As far as promoting the show goes, I was so concerned about getting busted that I only made 10 hand-drawn fliers. I originally created a Facebook event about a month out, but I deleted it the same day because it was receiving some unwanted attention. Generally speaking, I feel like promoting events online and posting fliers are both largely ineffective these days. If it's good, people will talk about it and show up; the people that missed the last one probably won't miss the next, and so on.

I'm not foolish enough to believe that the success of the first show was anything more than luck, so I'm just as anxious and will likely promote minimally again. I'm attracted to that formula and believe it's still an exciting and natural way to promote an event.

Obviously the projections were all-embracing. Tell me about the process behind creating them. How did the visuals for the clam come into fruition? Tell me about Live Visuals and how you got started.

I got into music and lighting by watching my older brothers and their friends throw raves in the late 90s and early 2000s.

Beyond my interest in the history of the bandshell, the structure is perfectly suited for projections and immersive lighting; it's essentially a giant three-dimensional canvas. Before I ever spoke a word of the idea to curate shows at The Clam, I would bring my projectors and speakers out there late at night, just for my own entertainment.

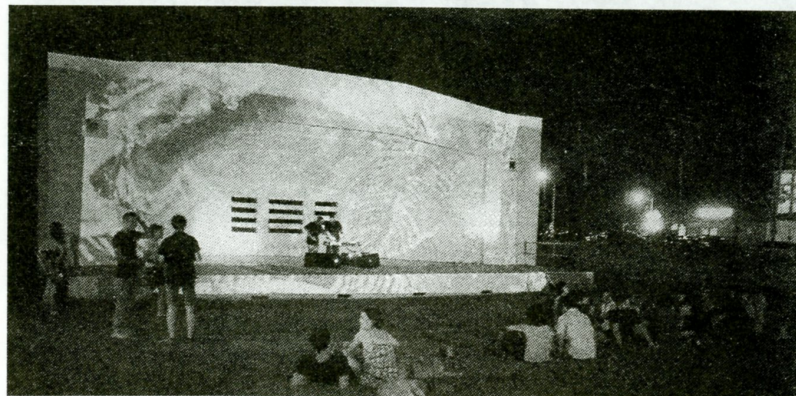
You played a set at the last show, was that your first performance? How long have you been doing music?

Just to clarify, I played last because I was sure it would get shut down. I wanted the other guys to play first, just in case. It was a reverse bill, with the 'headliner' first! I've been goofing off with electronic music since I was about 12 years old, but only as a hobby. I have played drums and bass guitar in bands and have been DJing forever, but never performed an all-analog electronic set like that night. No computer, just a drum machine and two little synths, making it up as I went.

What other projects are you working on? Still slangin' shrooms?

I'm restless, so I'm always working on something. After being laid off last year, I decided to take some time to pursue all these ridiculous ideas. I gave up a lot while I was pursuing my career offshore but I'm slowly regaining traction. A few of us have openly daydreamed about starting a record label with a tiny companion store, and as much as I hope to be involved in something like that, I'm not sure Galveston can support it yet.

I'm not sure we'll ever get there, but the primordial ooze that good scenes emerge from is washing up in Galveston.





GALVESTON'S OWN FARMERS MARKET

Sunday Market

2508 Post Office Street

June - September: 9am - 12pm

October - May: 9am - 1pm

Thursday Market

2222 28th Street

McGuire Dent Rec Center

3pm - 7pm



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THE PROLETARIAT

Gallery & Public House

2221 Market Street

Sunday - Thursday: 4pm - 12am

Friday - Saturday: 4pm - 2am

LOCAL CALENDAR



Houston's Mojave Red returns to Galveston with a fabulous solo set on Saturday, July 9th at the Clam.

Independent Sound Fest

A two-day music fest with a range of genres. Locals on the bill include Gnar World Order, Louis Morales, Soulfya and more.

Saturday, July 2nd —

Sunday, July 3rd

Seasons

Mojave Red w/ SLBBR KNCKR, Charles Eddy & TBA

This free outdoor show starts at sundown and brings chill sounds and visuals to a midcentury bandshell. Bring a blanket and snacks!

Saturday, July 9th

The Clam @ Menard Park
8pm - 10pm / free / BYOB

Matt Mejia w/ Charles Bryant

Local favorite Matt Mejia has been busy bringing Come See My Dead Person back from the... dead. That said, his solo show is not to be missed!

Friday, July 22nd

Old Quarter
9pm / \$8

WRAY w/ \GT// & EL LAGO

Read our interview with Birmingham-based WRAY, then catch the band with labelmates \GT// and Galveston's EL LAGO at the Proletariat. Live Visuals (Michael Stuart Allison) will be upping this party.

Wednesday, July 27th

The Proletariat
9pm
\$10 advance / \$15 at door

Free Spin at Sin

Pete Heshner and Grease Trap Syndicate bring a new kind of party to town. Bring Your Own Vinyl and take it for a spin at Sin Lounge.

Thursday, July 28th

Sin Lounge
9pm / free

The Ian Quiet Band w/ OffiSir God & TV Favorites

Things get noisy with Shreveport-based The Ian Quiet Band headlining. Stay tuned for details on the location! (RIP KONA House of Culture!)

Saturday, July 30th

Venue TBA
9pm

The Joyelles

A martini-sipping, diamond-wearing, 1960s lounge and jazz girl group.

Saturday, July 30th

The Proletariat