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FEATURES



EROTIC CITY: MISS EXOTIC EDITION

your favorite industry column covers all things miss exotic

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evaluating all your childhood cereal box heroes page 20 | by wombstretcha the magnificent



HOW TO WRITE A HIT SONG

six magnificent suggestions guaranteeing you stardom

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POCKET-CHEESE MAN

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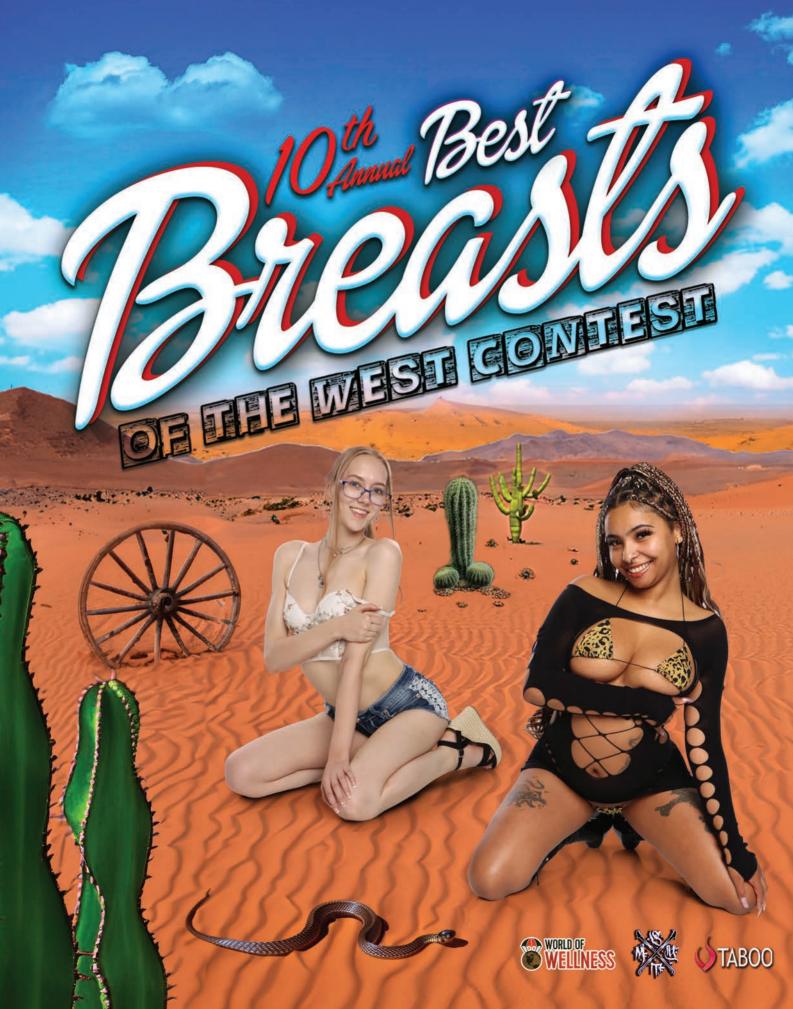
MISS EXOTIC OREGON 2025
EXOTIC PINUP PAGES
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CLASSIFIEDS
VAGINA BEAUTY PAGEANT RECAP

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MISS EXOTIC

As summer winds down and fall approaches, anyone who's been part of our local industry for even a short time knows what's around the corner. That magical time of year when the industry's top performers grace us with their immense talent and show us how truly special our industry and its many art forms really are!

We are incredibly excited to announce Miss Exotic Oregon 2025 this year—now with the largest cash prize in the pageant's history, but before we get into the specifics, I'd like to spend some time reminiscing about how we got here. In the not-so-distant past, we here at Exotic embraced the mayhem of bringing three major events to the industry each and every year. Perhaps few will remember the name of all three—two are easy, but one has been retired for over five years. Yes, it's really been over five years since the last Ink 'n' Pink competition, which is really hard to believe.

It might surprise many to learn that *Miss Exotic Oregon* is not *Exotic's* oldest competition—*Ink 'n' Pink* actually is, and it's not even close. The very first *Ink 'n' Pink* competition happened in the fall of 2000, and there was actually live tattooing that took place during the competition. It was quite the spectacle indeed, and even though *Exotic* itself had barely turned seven, we still threw a party that even Hef would have approved of (and even if he wouldn't, we know Charlie Sheen would)!

Fast forward a decade, and *Exotic* would announce its next reoccurring, mainstream event. Any guesses? *Miss Exotic*, you say? Well, you'd be wrong. *Polerotica* was announced in January 2010, and the competition has been held annually ever since (except, of course, 2020 and 2021, which 'rona so cruelly robbed from us...). And that brings us to what's "technically" *Exotic's* youngest competition—*Miss Exotic Oregon*. Wait...what? Don't all the *Miss Exotic* promotional ads say, "The industry's largest and longest-running pageant?" They do, and please let me explain before all the "Liar!" rants begin...

The format and structure of the Miss Exotic

Oregon pageant you know today was actually first created and operated in 2009 under a different but very similar name. The details of its demise are quite juicy, but we will—as they say—let dead dogs lie. The point is, while it may boil down to semantics, Miss Exotic Oregon's format and structure make it technically the industry's longest-running pageant, albeit the lawyers forced us to reformat the name. Why is all this important? Read on, me laddies.

Miss Exotic was created for one purpose: to showcase the wide-ranging talent, skills, and creativity of exotic entertainers in the Pacific Northwest, especially to those who are not consistently visiting industry establishments and may have skewed views of what our industry represents. Being reborn through the scenario described above, it was created with the utmost integrity in mind...to give all contestants a completely level playing field and an entirely equitable chance to win or place. Such integrity cannot exist when a competition or pageant is owned and operated by a gentlemen's club, and history has proven that. It takes a third-party operator with no vested interest in the outcome. Period.

Have we made some mistakes over the years? Yes, we have. And with every mistake that was made, I've personally taken the challenge to improve the pageant and ensure that it was never repeated. As with all things in life, there's a learning curve, and it's not a perfect process, but it's how you respond to the challenges that is key.



As promised, let's discuss some of the specifics of the contest. Only the elite of the top entertainers who join move on to the Finals of *Miss Exotic*. How do they qualify, you may ask? Well, let's break it down... it's dependent on their ranking in the following categories: *Theme, Stage Presence & Interaction, Body/Figure, Grace, Agility & Skill, Outfit/Costume, Originality, Beauty, and Class/Style*.

The final component of their overall ranking and a chance to compete in the Finals is customer votes. They need *your support* through your attendance, voting, and, of course, tipping! We hope that everyone will come and celebrate the wide range of diversity and talent that makes our industry thrive, as it's showcased throughout October and November. Please visit page 24 for all the dates and locations, and let's make this year's pageant a memorable one! See you at Kit Kat Club on Friday, October 4, to kick it all off!

THE P-TOWN HAPS

Summer may be coming to an end, but industry events are still in full swing. It's going to be a busy month, so fasten your seatbelt and book your rideshare!

["Birthday Song" by 2 Chainz plays unexpectedly...] When I die, bury me inside the strip club (no, really, that's in my funeral directive, so it has to be followed). But enough about me, it's all about this month's birthday girls! It all kicks off on Friday, September 6, at Guilty Pleasures for Karisma's Pink Birthday Party! A few weeks later, on Friday, September 20, it's Nellie's Birthday Bash, right back at Guilty Pleasures. (We love you, Nellie!!) I would suggest asking to spend the night because Mochie's Birthday Party is the very next night, on Saturday, September 21. at—you guessed it—Guilty Pleasures! We hear Mac can be bribed quite easily with Boston creams from Heavenly Donuts, so that's your in. And while you're in the giving mood, make sure to buy all these lovely ladies a birthday shot! Happy Birthday from Exotic!

And while we're on birthdays, we'd like to congratulate DJ Dick Hennessy and *Boom*

Boom Room Sundays at X Exotic Lounge on their third anniversary! Industry theme nights are often short-lived, so 36 months of existence is quite impressive indeed! If you haven't checked out the chill vibe and smooth sounds of Sunday nights at X, you're missing out. Come celebrate with them on Sunday, September 8, and you can cop the new Pancakes and Yellow Tape album at the release party!

Moving on to other industry events, Kit Kat Club will celebrate Rose City Comic Con with their annual Superheroes vs. Supervillian lineups. That's right, all weekend long, from Friday, September 6 through Sunday, September 8. You won't want to miss this!

On Saturday, September 14, head on over to Devils Point and wish Jade a proper industry farewell at her retirement party! This will be your last chance to see her perform, so don't miss this night! We'll miss you, Jade!

Wrapping up this month's events is "A Fall Masquerade Ball" at Stars Cabaret in Salem on Saturday, September 28. Folks, this is the real deal, complete with formal attire, masquerade masks, a special dinner menu, and cocktails, as well as prizes and giveaways. If you're looking for a unique industry event to attend, look no further.

And, of course, we can't forget Dick Hennessy's 10th Annual *Best Breasts of the West Contest*, kicking off on Saturday, September 7, at The Venue. Check out the rest of the dates on page 16!

Bis nächsten Monat!

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Zeroliccity spotlight

FRI 06 – GUILTY PLEASURES KARISMA'S PINK BIRTHDAY PARTY

FRI 06 – KIT KAT CLUB SUPERHEROES VS. SUPERVILLAINS

SAT 07 - DREAM ON - KINKY COMIC-CON PARTY

SAT 07 – KIT KAT CLUB SUPERHEROES VS. SUPERVILLAINS

SAT 07 – THE VENUE BEST BREASTS OF THE WEST (ROUND 1)

SUN 08 – KIT KAT CLUB SUPERHEROES VS. SUPERVILLAINS

SUN 08 – X EXOTIC LOUNGE 3-YEAR ANNIVERSARY & PANCAKES AND YELLOW TAPE ALBUM RELEASE PARTY

FRI 13 – X EXOTIC LOUNGE BEST BREASTS OF THE WEST (ROUND 2)

SAT 14 – DOMINIQUE STELLA
BEST BREASTS OF THE WEST (ROUND 3)

SAT 14 - DEVILS POINT JADE'S RETIREMENT PARTY

THU 19 — CLUB DETOUR
BEST BREASTS OF THE WEST (ROUND 4)

FRI 20 – GUILTY PLEASURES NELLIE'S BIRTHDAY BASH

SAT 21 — GUILTY PLEASURES MOCHIE'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

SAT 21 – STARS CABARET (SALEM)
BEST BREASTS OF THE WEST (ROUND 5)

SAT 28 – GUILTY PLEASURES
BEST BREASTS OF THE WEST (FINALS)

SAT 28 – STARS CABARET (SALEM) A FALL MASQUERADE BALL

OCTOBER

FRI 4 – KIT KAT CLUB MISS EXOTIC OREGON 2025 (ROUND I)



BREAKFAST CEREAL MASCOTS—EVALUATED

We know them. We grew up with them. They're the characters created by marketing people to sell us breakfast cereals. All of them distinct in their ways, but at the end of the day, that was their point: make you want the product they're selling.

It's not a unique concept by any means. Many products have mascots, and many have been around for decades: there's Kool-Aid Man, Michelin Man, Colonel Fuckin' Sanders, Ronald McFuckin' Donald, Mr. Peanut, Mr. Clean, and so on. For reference, people have asked Procter & Gamble if Mr. Clean is gay, and the response was, "he has no interest in anything but making things clean." Nice dodge. However, that is not the focus here. I'm gonna pick some of the most famous breakfast mascots and give you all the breakdown.

Ranked in no particular order.



Coco the Monkey

Cocoa Krispies have been around as long as the late '50s. That's right, they are *that* old. However, Coco the Monkey only came into being in the 1960s. Their prior mascot was apparently an elephant named Jose, who also liked chocolate cereals. He was dropped, and Coco stepped in. Coco has been around since, selling kids sugary delights. They even acknowledged the well-known fact that it turns the milk into chocolate milk in the ads. However, his appearance was stifled by contrived controversy over events in the recent past. He was far less of an asshole than a lot of the other cereal mascots out there, despite efforts to make a cereal-loving monkey more

hip-looking since the late '80s. Just let him be a monkey, damn. Did he need jeans and a hat? However, he sang a catchy song about being a monkey and liking Cocoa Krispies. Not bad, Coco. You get a B.



Toucan Sam

Follow your nose. I never understood that catchphrase, as Froot Loops don't really smell like anything but unvacuumed carpet. Maybe if you have a big-ass beak like his, the nose knows where it goes. However, unlike other cereal mascots, he would lead the kids to the cereal rather than prevent them from having it. He deserves points for that, despite being annoying and British, for no particular reason. Are these even sold in the UK? My research shows that they were...once, for about a year. The Brits didn't care for Froot Loops, and they stopped distributing them after poor sales. Grade: D.



Cinnamon Toast Crunch Bakers

Now, this does reach back a bit. They used to

have three cartoon bakers in the ads for Cinnamon Toast Crunch in the 1990s and early 2000s: the lead baker, Wendell, and side bakers Bob and Quello, all manufacturing this cereal that gets soggy if you look at it sideways, but was still pretty decent. Bob and Quello were eventually removed from the ads, leaving Wendell to be the main and only cartoon baker in charge of making Cinnamon Toast Crunch. It is rumored that he murdered them both with a cinnamon-coated whisk. He was eventually replaced by something far dumber but plump, jolly Wendell was the mascot for a long while—1990 to 2009. I'm assuming he stayed on top by mercilessly slaughtering his enemies with cinnamon toast-related implements before being brought down by his hubris. Grade: C.



Trix Rabbit

Now, this fucking guy...he hatches bizarre schemes involving elaborate disguises and premises to obtain fruity cereal from children. The kids are never fooled. "Silly rabbit; Trix are for kids." Just give him a bowl of damn cereal, and he won't have to spend half his paycheck at Spirit Halloween buying costumes. Also, why would he not simply spend his disguise money on a box of the stuff? You're an idiot, Trix Rabbit. You get a D.

Lucky the Leprechaun

Lucky. Lucky is an asshole. He spends his entire existence preventing children from eating cereal, yet claims it's "part of this complete breakfast." I always, even as a kid, noted that the "complete breakfast," of which it was a part, was this mammoth affair with OJ, milk,



toast, a whole chicken, and fucking dinosaur eggs. In conclusion, Lucky can vacuum farts out of a kangaroo's hopping ass, but points for keeping those kids off his dry, stale marshmallows. Grade: C-



Tony the Tiger

I can't hate Tony. Not a bit. Not only was he positive as can be, he was also an enduring cereal mascot who provided cereal to kids and encouraged athleticism. He's probably the GOAT of cereal mascots. He's grrrreat, even though he did cheat on his wife with a soap opera actress and got blown out in the news that one time. Grade: A.



That Insane Honeycomb Creature

Do you remember those Quizno's commercials with those absolutely spastic creatures

called Spongmonkeys trying to sell sandwiches? That's what this shithead reminds me of. He's like a...neurotic and cereal-obsessed hairy CGI muppet who basically gets his PTSD triggered by seeing Honeycomb cereal and *must eat it!* Imagine having your breakfast stolen by a psychopathic mop. Fuck this guy. He gets an F. Stay away from children, asshole! Also—and this may be subjective—Honeycomb cereal is two inches from tasteless. It tastes like almost nothing...kinda like Kix. Fight me.



Cap'n Crunch

As stated in the ads, you and the Cap'n make it happen. I liked the character, but eating Cap'n Crunch was the polar opposite of eating Life cereal. Life gets soggy when you blink*, but eating the Cap'n is like setting off a nail bomb in your mouth if you don't let it sit for a few minutes first. His commercials even had him fighting bad guys called "soqgies" for a time—enemies who would try to sog up Cap'n Crunch's cereal. Nothing doing, you brigands! The Cap'n took a hard rudder to starboard and gave them a full, 30-cannon broadside, then sent a boarding party to capture their ship and execute the crew. All joking aside, that stuff would, as promised, remain crunchy. Cap'n pulls a solid B+ as a mascot. He did what he said he was gonna do: secure crunchiness. He was eventually promoted to Real Admiral Crunch.



Snap, Crackle, and Pop

Fuck these elvish assholes. Did we need elves to sell us Rice Krispies? No. However, I wonder who would win in a fight between them and the Keebler elves. I rank Snap a C-, Crackle a D, and Pop a C+. Pop more-or-less knew what was going down.

Dig'Em Frog

Yeah, we get it. He's "urban." A wonderful way to dodge, yet implement, stereotypes. That said, I do like his cereal, and he was generally a fairly wholesome, if stupid, character. Grade: B.



Sugar Bear

He and Dig 'Em Frog kinda sorta fall into the same category, and I know they're both iconic mascots, but...why does he sound like Dean Martin? Do kids even know who that is? They'd probably listen to ol' Dino and be like, "Hey, he sounds like Sugar Bear." He gets a B+just because that was the direction they took a cartoon cereal mascot. "I know! Let's make him an animated cereal-bear Dean Martin!" Can't get enough Super Golden Crisp. I'm surprised nobody made a Jerry Lewis mascot to sell Grape Nuts or something.



Sonny the Cuckoo Bird

Yes, he is cuckoo for Cocoa Puffs. Sonny, you're a wannabe Toucan Sam, you know it, and you're an alcoholic who pushed his aunt down the stairs to steal her wheelchair. Grade: C-.

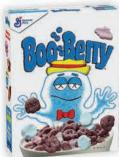
Honorable mentions:

Monster Cereals

Count Chocula (despite unresolved, important dental issues), Franken Berry (despite having a serious heroin problem all the other monsters are worried about), Boo Berry (de-









spite his love of jacking off in his neighbor's bird bath), Fruit Brute (who is now known as "Frute Brute," is currently in prison for stealing an ambulance to go make out with a grade-school teacher), and Yummy Mummy (who is missing, and presumed to be in Mexico, hiding out). Grade B+.

Cookie Crisp

Yet another in a series of mascots who care to deprive people of cereal. Cookie Crook (and his dog, who for some reason also wears a mask over his eyes) would purloin the famous Cookie Crisp cereal, only to be caught by the Cookie Cop. Though, after it all resolved and Cookie Crook was behind bars for the heinous crime of cereal theft, Cookie Cop would just *fucking eat it* after he locked them up. In front of Cookie Crook, even! Isn't that evidence? You goddamn fascist. All of you get a grade D. Except for the dog. He gets a B.

I think I have covered most of the major players in the cereal game. There are many more out there, and perhaps I'll grade some more on their performance and share it with the class at a point, but I think I covered most of the heavy hitters.

Now, everyone has their own opinions, but I am talking mostly about the characters and not so much about the products. These are, in many cases, evolutions of concepts that have gone through focus groups, marketing meetings, graphic designers, film directors...all manner of industry experts, executives, and then more. Sometimes, though, you still end up with the weird Honeycomb hairball thing at the end of the day.

Eat a good breakfast, and enjoy life.

-Wombstretcha

*This is not a comment regarding existential dread. It's just about Life cereal. But I guess both can apply.

Wombstretcha the Magnificent is a Honeycomb demon, writer, retired rapper, and part of this complete breakfast from Portland, OR. He can be found at his website wombstretcha.com, on Twitter/X/whatever as @wombstretcha503, and on MeWe and (begrudgingly) Facebook as "Wombstretcha the Magnificent."







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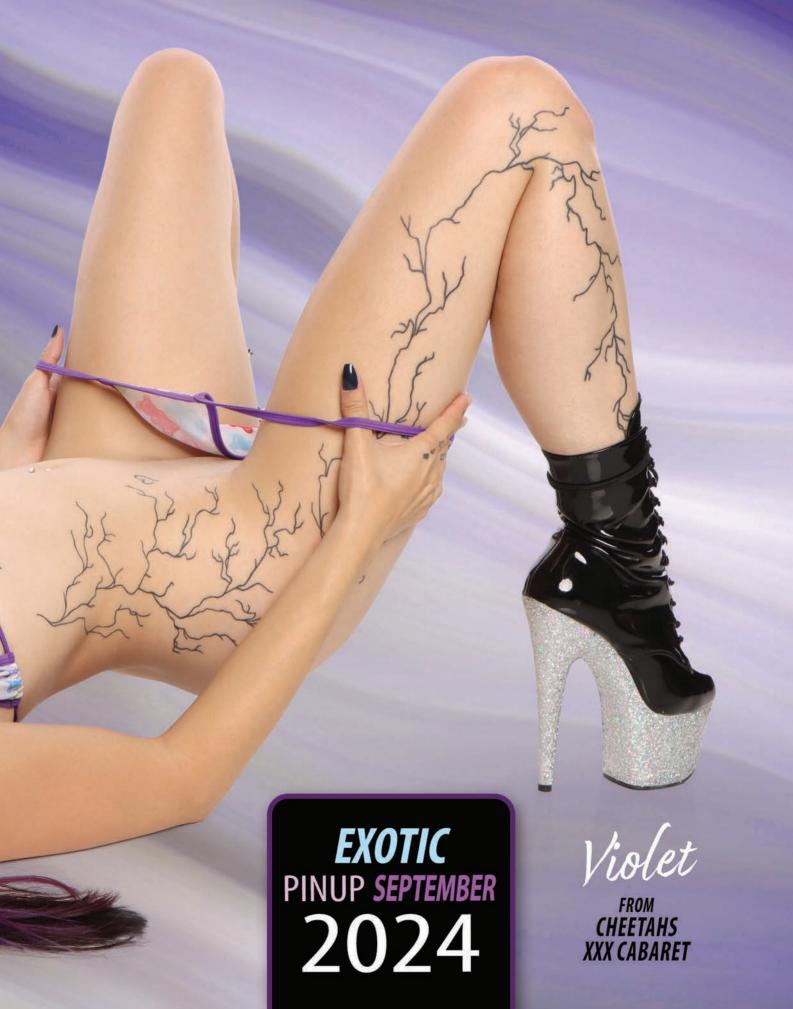
















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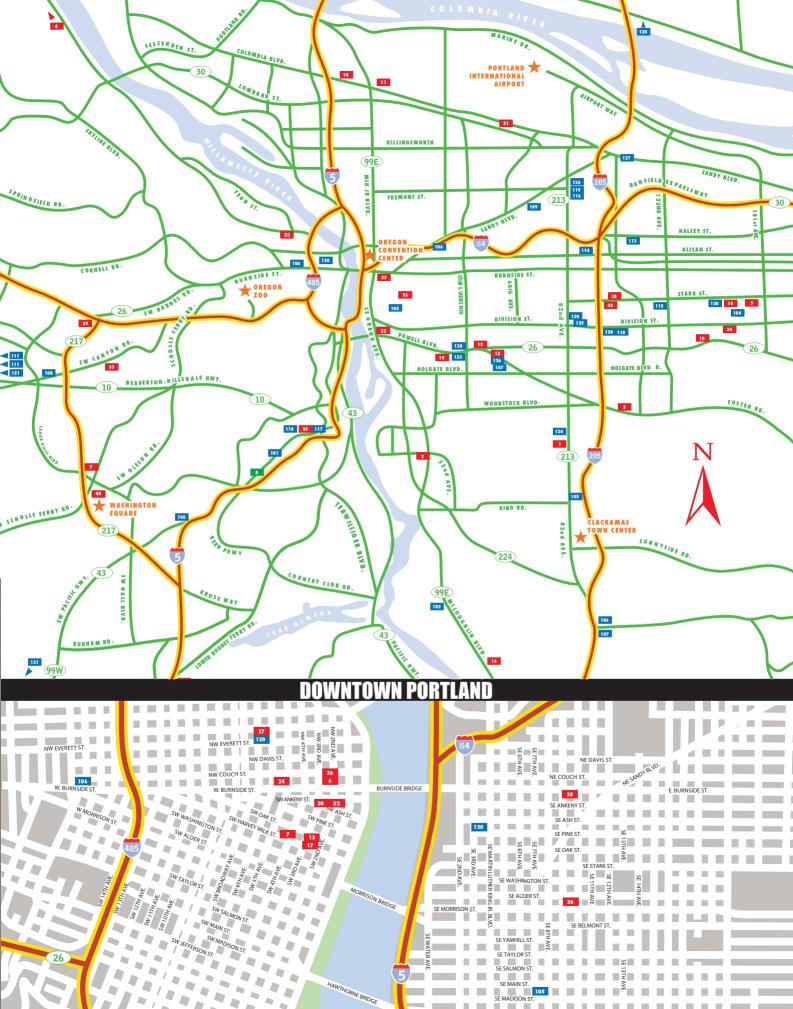


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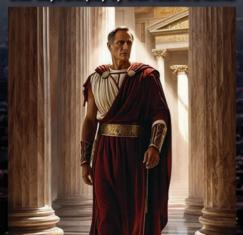
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How to Write a Hit Song By Blozer Sporrow

After recounting a few Los Angeles misadventures last month, it got me thinking more about that Godforsaken cesspool cosplaying as some sort of cultural hub. I promise you, I'm not delusional or jealous. I'm very aware of LA's stranglehold on the music industry to some truly alarming degrees. It's where the money is. It's where the studios are. It's where the record executives are. Rampant capitalism's invisible hand can be felt non-consensually caressing every market in America, including music. Due to horizontal integration, it's pretty much a race to the bottom of California.

I remember reading Michael Azerrad's New Yorker piece, looking back on his time with Kurt Cobain. If you have even a passing interest in music journalism, do yourself a favor and read his book "Our Band Could Be Your Life." Anyway, in the piece, he talks about when he first met Kurt and Courtney in 1992, at their cluttered apartment in not Seattle but Los Angeles. Less than a year after Nirvana blew up, they'd already decamped. I have a friend who's close with Gerard Way, and when I asked a question about living in New Jersey, I learned that Mr. Not Okay Himself was also living in Los Angeles and had been for a while.

The gravitational force is strong. All roads lead to Los Angeles...which means if you want to succeed in music, you must learn their ways and play by their rules. It is Rome.



And like the Romans in their day, Angelinos are convinced that Los Angeles is the whole world, with the rest of us poor cities living in it (except New York, the barbarous outside

empire that can't be conquered).

So, I have sliced off and cooked down some of their empirical wisdom into some bite-sized bullet points for this nudie mag.

Get to the Hook

One thing I hear over and over from citizens and denizens of the Empiral Seat of Music Power is that it's all about the hook. Gotta hook 'em early and hook 'em good. They refer to the hook so often that you'd think Lost Angeles was a city of fishermen. This seems to apply to music as well as television, and even literature, with the crushing dominance of minimalism in the marketplace. Apparently, the average consumer has the attention span of a goldfish, or at least that's what everyone in the Imperial Cult thinks.

Repeat the Hook Ad Nauseum

This all-important hook not only needs to arrive within 30 nanoseconds of the song's start, but apparently, it needs to be repeated until the listener can literally hear nothing else in their goldfish brain. Not only is this sacred truth going to be told to you by producers, writers, and performers that moonlight (and daylight) as wait staff in the City of Angels, but they teach these lessons in college courses. I wish I was making this up. Imagine entire university courses dedicated to revealing the secret to chart success is just saying the same thing over and over again. I guess cults do love mantras.

Make the Hook Easy to Sing

And like a mantra, you gotta make sure those hooks are easy for your acolytes—I mean followers—I mean consumers—I mean customers to sing. All snark aside, this one isn't something I really have an issue with since music is supposed to be a communal experience. It's also why I love punk rock. The very essence of it (confirmed by all the early pioneers) is that anyone can do it. Anyone can sing it...often because the singers couldn't sing that well to begin with. Ironically, if you were to present a punk song to these Angelinos, their very first "note" would be to learn how to sing.

A Hook Is a Chorus, by the Way

In case you weren't aware of what the hell I

was talking about, a hook is basically a chorus. But they don't call it a chorus in Los Angeles, they call it a hook. For the life of me, I still cannot discern a describable difference between the two words. I only know that if you say the word "chorus," they'll respond with, "Oh, you mean the hook." Ave Imperator.

Move to Los Angeles

All roads lead to Los Angeles, and they expect you to head there. Regardless of the internet's democratization of access to music and the prevalence of high-quality recording studios literally everywhere around the country, the LA-ites insist that you need to live there to "get it." Almost every musician I know who's moved there has moved back broken and empty-handed, so I'm not sure what the benefit of performing for these hook-obsessed cultists is. They can just reject you via email.

Don't Be Old

At the end of the day, data don't lie, and really, it seems that if you want to succeed in music, you gotta be young and attractive. Look at the last few megastars to top the charts. If you're too old to be Leonardo DiCaprio's girlfriend, you're getting no help from the music gods in Los Angeles. Even if you follow all the fisherman's above-listed advice to the T, expect nothing but rejection and disappointment if you don't have a shelf life record labels can bank on. Retreat across the Rhine to live amongst the other Germanic barbarians in the woods, where you can make your little Bandcamp EPs that no one will listen to in peace. Perhaps one day, Rome will fall.



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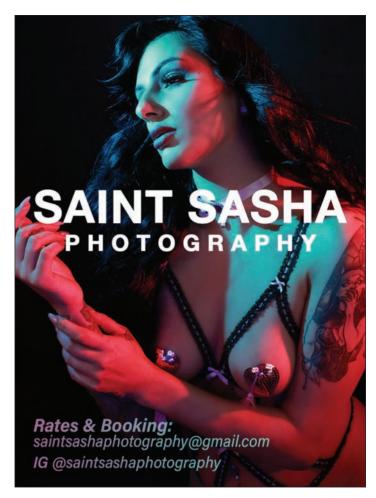




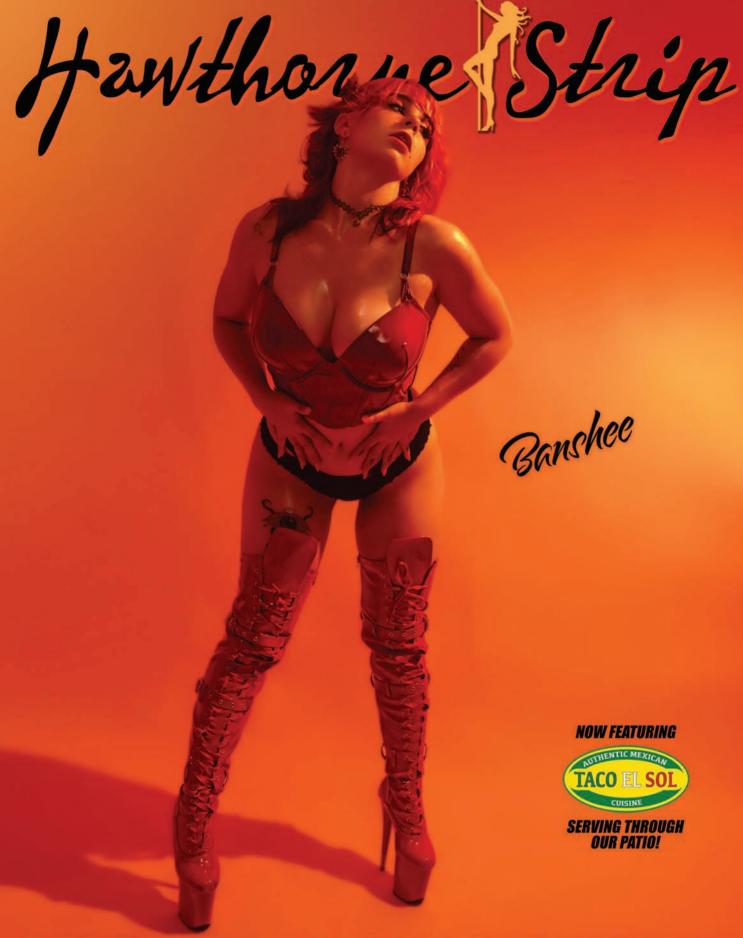












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POCKET-CHEESE MAN (AND OTHER SILLY STORIES)

BY HANNAH ONE CUP

I have learned many life lessons from watching my father live his life. Sometimes, he seems to live in a completely alternate reality from the rest of us mortals, which really gives me reason to contemplate what I would have done differently from a mere human's perspective. I wanted to share some of the lessons I've learned so far. Just a handful...I don't want to give away all of the sources of my sage advice.



Pocket-Cheese Man

My father keeps cheese in his pockets. It's just a thing he does now. It started on a ferry while we were on our European vacation from hell, where I was able to film him shoving a napkin full of hard cheeses into his windbreaker. Thinking no one noticed him, he looked up, saw me filming him, and quickly turned away—like he was getting away with something sinister.

This happened a subsequent time, just a couple of weeks back, when I was at the Australian Pink Floyd concert with him. This was a sit-down venue, with both my father and I sitting next to each other. I look over and notice him scrounging around in his jacket pocket. I was half ready to yell-whisper, "Dad, I don't think we can smoke weed in here," but I wanted to see how this played out. Lo—a sharp cheddar, Babybel

cheese comes to the forefront. He offers it up to me, like how I imagine an offering is made to a chipmunk. I stare at the cheese, then back at him, and simply say, "So this is what you do now? Pocket-cheese?" He simply shrugged and continued to unravel the cheese. He had two cheeses that were brought to this concert, and he thoroughly enjoyed them both.

The key takeaway here is not to care what others think of you. Enjoy your life, and carry cheese on you if you want to.



What I imagine camping might be if we had a tent

There Goes Our Tent Stakes and the Steaks

When I was a child, my family decided to go on a camping trip during the summer, like you do. We had a small speeder boat at the time, one of those boats you tend to see collecting rot and mildew in someone's yard. Ours was in fine shape, just old, but did the job required of it: carry a family of 4 across the water without sinking.

My father wanted to go across the river to this hidden gem we now nickname "Mosquito Island" for various reasons that would require another story. Camping with my mom was an event in and of itself. She packed like we were going away for an extended amount of time to practice living outdoors, possibly never to return. This made traveling by boat to the other side of the river a bit of a challenge. I forgot to mention that we

also had a canoe on this trip. Anyway, being an ingenious person with an IQ of over 155, my father took it upon himself to solve this travel problem by placing all of our heavier belongings into the canoe and tying it behind the speeder boat. Even after much disagreement provided by my mother, my father said, "It's going to be fine," as we

slowly motored down the river, immediately losing all of our camping gear and food into the very deep river.

Lesson to learn: Follow your gut. But if your significant other is throwing arguments for 13 minutes as to why something might not work...take this into heavy consideration before doing anything with your gut in the driver's seat.

The Ol'"Are You Happy?" Line

My dad has told me the story of "How I Met Your Mother" no less than 5 times, and each time he tells it, it sounds like something out of a 1990s rom-com. They were both at a bar one night, and my mother happened to be with a group of friends as they were celebrating something or other (possibly her birthday? You'd think I'd remember by now...). He walked over to my mom and introduced himself to her, and she politely stated, "I'm married..." Well, my dad, not one to give up, says the three words that make anyone question themselves and their life choices: "Are you happy?" To which she shook her head.

Well, they both went their separate ways that night, but not without him providing his contact information. My mother took it upon herself to call my father and tell him that she was getting divorced, and he should meet her at this local bar (Fir Valley Inn if anyone is that local or interested), to which my father immediately stopped everything he was doing. He hung the phone up, stopped frying his bologna for the sandwich he was about to make, and drove to the bar. The rest is history, albeit it did have a not-so-great ending 20 years later; I still like to think of this moment when I'm put in a scenario where I must choose between one thing or the other...what would Dad have done when he was frying his bologna?

The life lesson here is: Damn the situation you're currently in. You can change it if you want; just keep going for it and make your choice. You can always come back to your bologna sandwich. Also, always fry the bologna.

Almost a Preacher Until I Wasn't

Being young and desperate to get out of



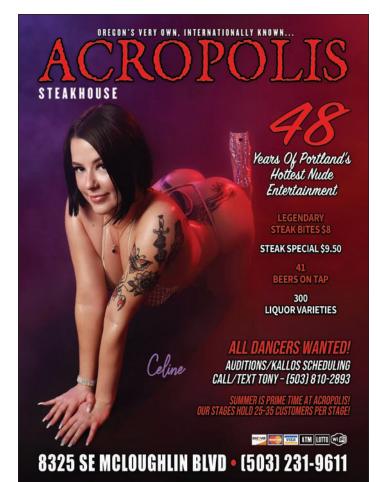
his parents' grip, but being raised in a very religious household made my father's choices on careers next to non-existent. Either you become a preacher, and we help, or you don't, and we won't. So, being the smart lad he was and not giving a flying bird about religion, my dad was a youth pastor for a bit in his late teens and early twenties. That is until he discovered how to make prison wine from Welch's Grape Juice. I have also heard this story told multiple times, and it tends to change a bit detail-wise, like when it occurred, how long he was actually a youth minister, and other insignificant factors. However, it's still a fun story.

After taking a decent cup or two of this intoxicating grape juice, my father drove his super beetle to the church where he was supposed to be delivering a sermon to the young folk (or something like this); he states he got up to the pulpit, was about to speak, and instead decided, "Eh, religion isn't fun. I'm going to vomit on this podium instead." He then just walked out of the building like nothing happened, drove his bug into the fence at the church, and never went back...to either that church or religion.

What I got from this was: Stick to your guns. If you don't want to do something, don't feel forced into it, and guit when you want to. No one's going to live your life but you. Also, don't drink and drive into a church fence—or any fence.

My father has lived a very full and interesting life. I guess I am lucky to be around, to have learned anything from it, and to have the ears and brain to comprehend and read between the lines when he tells me these stories. Since most of his stories are about outlandish things like stealing married women and throwing up on a pulpit, they can seem unrelatable. But once you really listen to the story, you feel like you've just listened to a great philosopher—like Søren Kierkegaard (a Danish guy you probably don't know about). Anyhow, I guess I should thank my pops for being so weird. Thanks, and thanks for having me, I think.

Hannah One Cup can be found online on Facebook by her name or on TikTok @thursdaynight_depression.

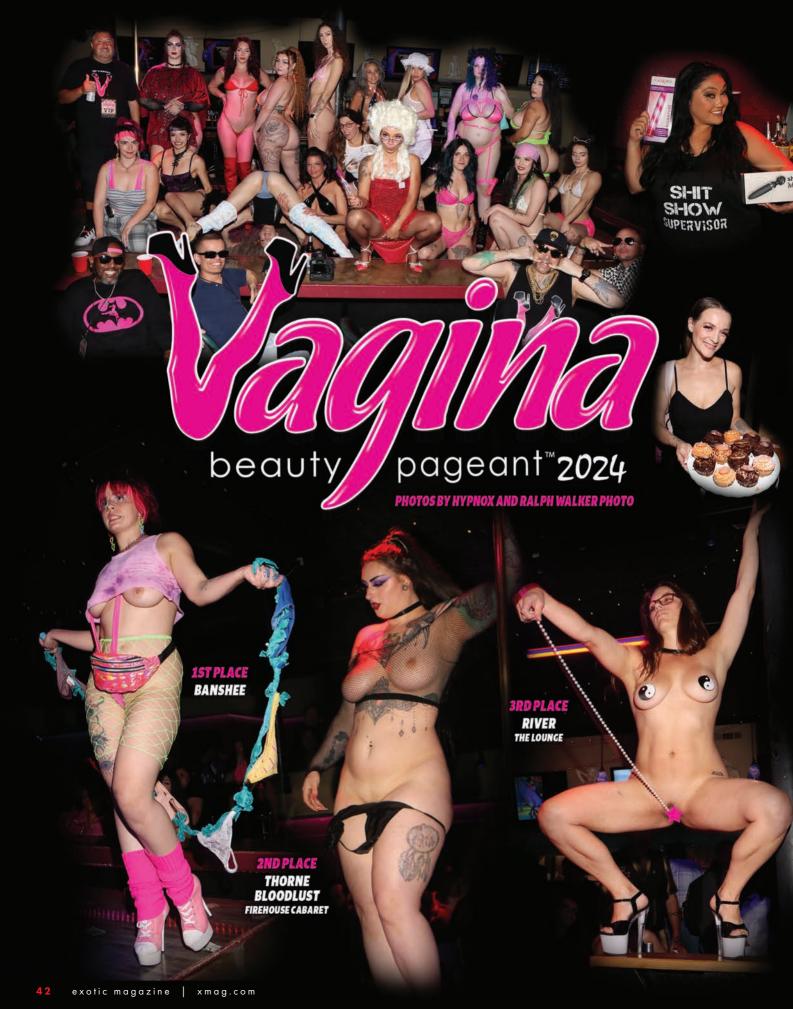








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UNDERSTANDING & PREVENTING OVERDOSES

Except for suicides, overdose deaths are always accidental. The word "overdose" has sometimes carried a moral judgment that the individual was "pushing their limits" in order to get as high as possible, as if it were their own fault.

This is not true. "Overdose" simply means taking too much of a drug and it is always accidental. Even daily opioid users who know that fentanyl is in their product have no way of knowing the amount.

Instead of blaming others, let's work together to end accidental overdoses.

Model: Gi Mary Jane Photographer: @saintsashaphotography











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