



Alchemical Records

Magazine

Issue #1

Alternative
Pop
Visionary

**Elijah
Cruise**



World Premiere of **'The Alchemist' Comic**
Multidisciplinary Artist **Ronya-Lee Anderson**
Documentary Photographer **Farrah Skeiky**



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Artwork by Dylan Keegan

Thank you so much for taking part in the journey of Alchemical Records over the years. Our transmutation from record label to music news and discovery platform has been an impossible adventure turned into a larger-than-life reality only because of the support of readers like you and our incredible team of contributors. I'm amazed by how far we've come, that we are now here in print is a dream come true. I can only imagine what will come next!

The focus of this first issue is on overcoming obstacles. It is a topic that takes many shapes and forms. Facing obstacles is arguably a necessary part of life that occurs daily for individuals and organizations alike. How odd it is then that we attempt to lock away parts of ourselves in order to hide the physical, emotional, and spiritual struggles from our public narrative. We believe that hearing the stories of the creatives in this issue will encourage and empower you, and we appreciate them for having the courage to share so much of themselves with all of us.

We did it!

Daniel Warren Hill

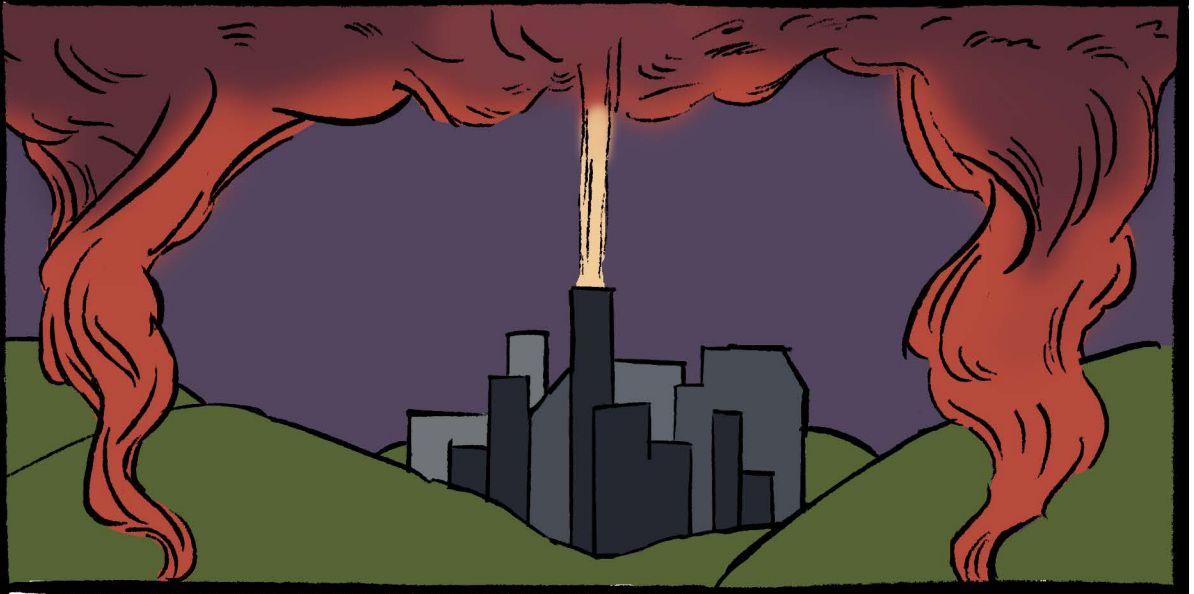
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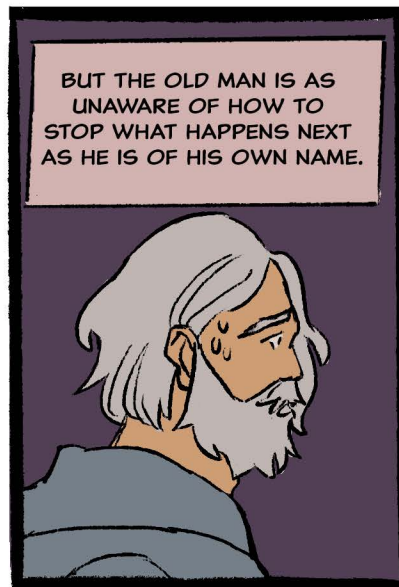
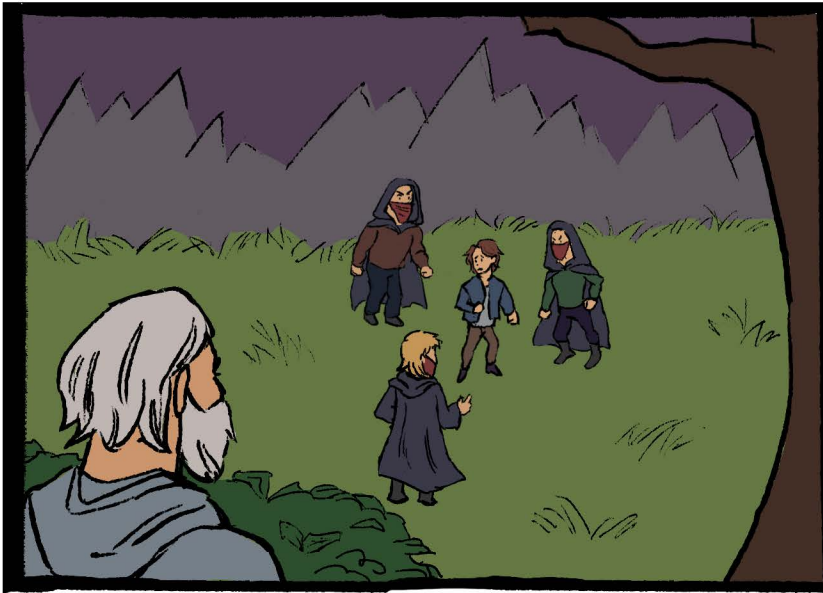
IF EVER THERE ARE
NORMAL NIGHTS,
THIS BEGAN AS
SUCH A NIGHT.

The Alchemist
Written By Daniel Warren Hill
Art, Color, Ink, Lettering by Abby Downes

AND THEN...







Continued at the end of this issue.



The Resonating Pulse and Choreographed Threads of

Ronya-Lee Anderson

By Charlie Maybee

Multidisciplinary artist, Ronya-Lee Anderson, pinpoints the Saturday night parties her parents would throw when she was a child as a key element of her artistic upbringing. As part of a West Indian family based in the isle of Jamaica, these weekly social gatherings were formative in a way that speaks to the power of a living culture where food, music, and dancing were abundantly present. A space where art and life are deeply intertwined.

"I do recall nights I would go to bed on Saturday nights after the parties and they would still be going. So, they would send us to bed with the babysitter and you could still, in your bed, feel the pulse of the bass in the music as it lulled you to sleep."

As her parents, family, and extended community continued to party late into the night, Anderson found herself resonating with celebratory familial energy that would profoundly impact her connection to music, and dance as an extension of that vibrating pulse.

"While that was happening, of course, there was church on Sunday!" Anderson noted with a laugh, "So, we'd get ourselves up and go to church!". And while that may seem like a stark contrast at first glance, history shows that celebration and spirituality have always been deeply enmeshed within the various cultures of the African diaspora, especially within the Black church. "Sunday afternoons were filled with my mother playing piano where we would all gather and sing" When I think back on it, music, dance, and spirituality were all intertwined in this very particular way over the weekend."

Renowned music scholar Amiri Baraka wrote in his seminal text *Blues People* (under the pen name LeRoi Jones), that, when it comes to Afro-Christian music in America, "The spirit will not descend without song." And, though Anderson's recollection of the Black church comes specifically from a West African and Caribbean perspective, it's easy to see how similar characteristics made their way to Black churches of North America by translation and transmission during the Atlantic Slave Trade.



Curious?

Scan the QR code for more information.

Photo by Michael Clark



“In terms of crafting the songs, it would honestly happen in the middle of the night when you’re trying to sleep, but you can’t.”



"I was involved with the church choir as a kid, and I remember the pastor's wife saying 'Hey, don't you dance? Can you start a dance group?'. And that was it, now you're doing the dance thing, so there were always these threads between all of these things."

So, when I tell you that Ronya-Lee would go on to get her undergraduate degrees in Dance and English, her master's degrees in Divinity and Dance, and is now working on her Ph.D. in Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies at the University of Maryland at College Park, it should be no surprise that these connective threads continue to hold strong as she has developed her artistry with an astonishing refinement.

As a multimedia artist, Ronya-Lee Anderson works with movement, spoken word, costume design, film, and music to create robust performances that often reflect and critique notions of gender and race in relationship to popular culture. *Black Madonna and Miss America*, a piece she devised and choreographed, specifically hones in on the iconography of Black women asking questions about scrutiny, mistreatment, and the differences in safety between icons and common folk.

Anderson fills the piece to the brim with references including an a capella rendition of "This Land is My Land", propulsive footwork and clapped rhythms, and personal stories about women being mistreated and abused by police. Behind them stands large panels with chalk-written words like "Dope," "Unapologetic," and "Truly Emotional." "I began to think about the ways in which Black femininity is trafficked, tried on, appropriated, and used," Anderson says, "and how the people who are part of those cultural productions are unvalued."

A few Black pop culture icons came to the forefront of her mind as she and her dancers began the crafting process. "One thing that sparked that piece was an article that came out right when Aretha Franklin passed away that commented how she looked in a fur coat regarding her weight. It was shocking to see that in print. It highlighted for me how a woman like Aretha Franklin after all she had accomplished that she was still sitting right on the line or the edge of being treated like any Black woman in... I don't know, let's say Detroit, for instance – or the city Baltimore or right up the street from where I live. There was no separation between her as the artist and her as a young Black woman going about her business in the world."

"I was also thinking about people like Sandra Bland at the time, and Breonna Taylor a little bit later – what separates a Sandra Bland from a Beyonce? Could the terrible things that happened to them have happened to Beyonce, or Nia Franklin [Miss America 2019]?" The answer comes in the form of a very thin line that changes based on one's proximity and orientation to it, and the four women give their all between explosive movements and tender moments of reflection and connection.

You can see that there is something inherently social happening inside the choreography of *Black Madonna and Miss America*. The dancers call and respond to each other, their movements and percussive sounds converse as they forge a distinct bond of sisterhood where celebration and mourning can occur simultaneously.



**"HOW COULD YOU
BE BLACK IN
AMERICA AND NOT
BE ANGRY"**



"In terms of crafting the songs, it would honestly happen in the middle of the night when you're trying to sleep, but you can't," she says in soft reflection, "And that's where the spirituality comes in where I really do believe that sometimes the stuff just drops from the ancestors, God, the universe, however, folks want to name the beings that are outside of themselves that communicate with them. It felt like that was the portal for a lot of the movement and a lot of the music."

While I was listening to her speak about her process, I thought about a younger Ronya-Lee listening to the bass from her Saturday night parties. Embedded in the DNA of the choreography, you can literally hear the pulse of the bass from Anderson's childhood rings through with each stomp of the foot, each swivel of the hips. As I watched her and the rest of the cast mobilize these cultural modes of expression to think critically about such complex concepts, I was awed by their tenacity and ability to pull weave these choreographic threads so thoughtfully.

If you peruse Ronya-Lee's official website, you will also be treated to a teaser of something new she's been working on that blends choreography, theater, and creative writing with more of a punk-futurist sort of lens; and her name is Melaneena. Described as a space for a "rage practice", we only get a 40-second clip of her fierceness as she sings the pop song "Titanium" by David Guetta and Sia with blacklight illuminating her face and wig made of party streamers. I won't spoil the ending – just go check out the video!

"Melaneena always brings a smile to my face," Anderson says fondly. "She's in the beginning stages, right now, and I'd like to push the boundaries of her character even further. I think of her as a character who says the things that we want to say, but don't. A kind of omniscient character who is laughing at us, but in a loving way like, 'I tried to tell you!'"

Anderson goes on to paraphrase a James Baldwin saying "How could you be Black in America and not be angry" as she contemplates notions of politeness in relationship to Black femininity.

"There's been a lot of talk around rage and practices of rage. So, of late I'm thinking more and more of Melaneena as that space of a rage practice; of saying the things that can certainly be said, but when they come from Ronya-Lee that means something different than when it comes from Melaneena."

As this new, punchy, and aggressive alter ego continues to think about Blackness in both a global and cosmic way, I have been assured that Melaneena is here to stay and will be back in future projects that Anderson has planned.



Ultimately, when it comes to Ronya-Lee Anderson, the concepts of genre and categorization melt away as she finds new ways to creatively explore the intersection of performance and the sociopolitical aspects of everyday life. She notes that one of her latest projects, the soul-pop music videos of Ronya-Lee and the Light Factory, is a step towards bringing everything together.

“When I was coming up, everybody did everything,” she says, “It was a thing: you danced, and you would sing, and you would act, and you would draw.” But over time, it became clear that the default professional trajectory for a triple threat (or quadruple threat and beyond in Anderson’s case) was musical theater and Broadway, which wasn’t the right fit. So, this move toward the Light Factory became an opportunity to embody some of the pop iconography that she was already examining in her choreographic work.

“I think presently people are a bit more skeptical when you do multiple things, and I’ve been struggling over the last couple of years to make sure that I’m not putting myself in a silo, chopping myself up, separating myself out.” Ronya-Lee states plainly, “So, for me, Light Factory is a step in the direction of doing all the things, like Black Madonna in that it brings everything in, but just in a different way.”

With two singles already released in the past year (“Light” and “More” are both available on major streaming platforms), both of which were accompanied by music videos that feature stunning and elaborate use of dance and set design, Ronya-Lee and the Light Factory poses itself as a pop music experiment that rearranges her various artistic elements into something altogether new. Something that demonstrates total control over so many vibrating threads that harmonize with each other in profound ways.

And the best news of all, Ronya-Lee shared with me that a brand-new EP is planned for release in 2023. So, if, like me, you find yourself captivated and mesmerized by her soulful blend of audiovisual radiance, be sure to keep an eye on her social media platforms for updates on, what is sure to be a fantastic new release early this year.

Among the many projects and accolades that she’s cultivated over the last several years as a DMV artist, one of her most recent is her inclusion as part of the cohort of Dance Place’s 2-year Artist-In-Residence (AIR) program. She’s currently utilizing this new partnership and institutional resources to develop new community-oriented projects including new dance classes, a monthly jam session for dancers and musicians, a podcast with fellow AIR, Robert Woofter, choreographing a new work to premiere in April 2023, and finding a place for the Light Factory to live within the Dance Place community.

As I end, I feel compelled to share a quote from her exquisite keynote speech delivered at the opening of the 2022 BlackLight Summit. One of the best speeches I have had the pleasure of experiencing in my lifetime that truly captures her power, intellect, and grace. The moment I first got to hear traces of the resilient, celebratory, and pulsing bass that continues to vibrate within her from her childhood.

“You better be ready.” She said with urgency, “You better be ready to compose songs no one will hear. To write stories no one will ever read. To make dances no one will ever see. Savoring your time like the butterfly. Abandoning progress and embracing becoming. That we might make some things worth living for rather than live to make things that we hope will be discovered. That we might, through our own becoming, inspire awe in others and ourselves as we cultivate the resilience that we are in dire need of.”

Photo by Michael Clark





Sem Hastro by Farrah Skeiky



STRAIGHT-AHEAD



MY WAY



'Who Is Holding the Camera Has a Lot to Do with the Story That Is Told'

FARRAH

SKEIKY

By Cynthia Gross

Arab American photographer, creative director, writer, and musician Farrah Skeiky is best known as a storyteller. Equal parts joy and rage, her work creates a space for underrepresented groups to be seen unapologetically. With an impressive list of clients, including Fender Guitars, Rolling Stone, National Geographic, The Wall Street Journal, NPR, and AARP, Skeiky has already made quite a name for herself; and yet, she is most excited about the opportunities to come.

Learn more about Farrah Skeiky's exciting journey with The Alchemist, including how she learned to embrace her unique self; what has surprised her most about her career thus far; and why she believes "the art of telling the story is telling the whole story."

Farrah Skeiky's interest in visual storytelling began in 2008 during the Tumblr era. For Skeiky, Tumblr offered more than a platform for sharing memes and jokes; it opened a portal for her to discover news styles of art. Skeiky's influences are many. "I don't know exactly where to start," she shared. "I often say that photographers who inspire me the most are the ones I haven't found yet. I'm always looking to younger artists to show me what is happening and what I don't know about."

While she gravitates toward newer artists, Skeiky also values seasoned talents such as D.C.-based photojournalist Jim Saah, a fellow Arab American who has been an iconic part of the scene since the 80's, as well as Philadelphia-based photographer Phobymo, who specializes in portraiture that celebrates diverse bodies.

There is a distinct element to Farrah Skeiky's work – something untethered, unfiltered, unbothered, and captivating. Skeiky notes that paying attention to photographers whose work has "everything or nothing to do with music" adds depth to her creative lens. "If you're looking at the same thing, how much inspiration are you going to bring?" she challenged emerging photographers. "Look somewhere else."

Photo of Farrah Skeiky
by Sloane Dakota





Raised in Seattle, Washington, a city overshadowed by the Amazon effect, Skeiky came to the Maryland suburbs “kicking and screaming,” as a high school student, after her father landed a job in the area. “I really did not want to move into a house that looked like all the others on the street,” she laughed. After realizing the move was inevitable, Skeiky tried to convince her father to push up their moving date by three months so she could see Q and Not U’s farewell show in D.C., but she did not win that battle either.

As a new Silver Spring resident, Skeiky spent much of her free time exploring the area’s creative spaces. She soon discovered D.C.’s legacy of all-ages shows, which was invigorating since they did not exist in Seattle, as well as mixed bill tours. In the 80’s and 90’s, for instance, it was common to see mixed bill shows with punk and go-go such as Trouble Funk with Government Issue, “and no one would bat an eye.”

Published in 2020, *Present Tense: DC Punk and DIY, Right Now*, Skeiky’s latest body of work, is a photo book of images from D.C. punk, hardcore, and DIY bands captured in traditional venues, dive bars, basements, warehouses, churches, restaurants, living rooms, and more. The impressive collection, which celebrates “bands who define the present,” stands proudly in defiance, countering any claims that D.C. punk died in the 90’s.

Perhaps what is most noteworthy about *Present Tense* is Skeiky’s ability to bring to the forefront individuals who are traditionally sidelined – from underrepresented groups to oft-underappreciated band members like drummers and bassists. “First of all, it’s important to note the person holding the camera; who they are and what their story is has a lot to do with the photos that are gotten,” Skeiky explained. “When you’re in a space, you’re looking for your people. If someone who is othered is photographing something, you will notice the other others a little more.”



Bacchae by Farrah Skeiky

The child of immigrant parents from Lebanon and Sierra Leone, Skeiky began playing upright bass in fourth grade. Although her parents intended for her to play a “pretty” instrument like violin, cello, or flute, Skeiky was already tapping into her penchant for counterculture. As a bassist or drummer, “we’re not the ones people are photographing,” she said, noting her friends have told her after a release show that there are no photos of them since the lead singer was prioritized by the hired photographer. In her work, Skeiky is committed to giving all contributors their due moments in the spotlight.

“The art of telling the story is telling the whole story,” said Skeiky, underscoring the importance of Black and brown people taking ownership of their narratives. “We can’t depend on the majority to tell our stories. We have to tell our own stories, or they are going to be forgotten or told in a different context by someone else.”

Skeiky notes that the average person in the United States would describe Lebanon as a “war-torn, dusty country with camels” based on the media’s portrayal. “I’ve never seen a camel in my life,” joked Skeiky who has been in Lebanon during times of war and peace. “Lebanon is actually 60% Christian. The economy is not good, and the government is not doing great, but it’s a gorgeous place with a lot of different kinds of people.” In fact, the striking beauty of Beirut led to its being dubbed the Paris of the Middle East.

“So much of our culture is commodified,” Skeiky added. “People love Middle Eastern food, but what about the people? People love Black culture, but not Black people. People love Asian goods, but how Asian folks have been treated in this country, especially during the last few years,” is telling.

This inclusive lens is what Farrah Skeiky dedicates her work to capturing even when the mainstream does not embrace it. Case in point, several years ago, Skeiky was hired by a publication to photograph a young woman who grew up in Afghanistan and had become an outspoken activist post-9/11, as well as an education advocate for girls. The young woman was targeted by the Taliban.

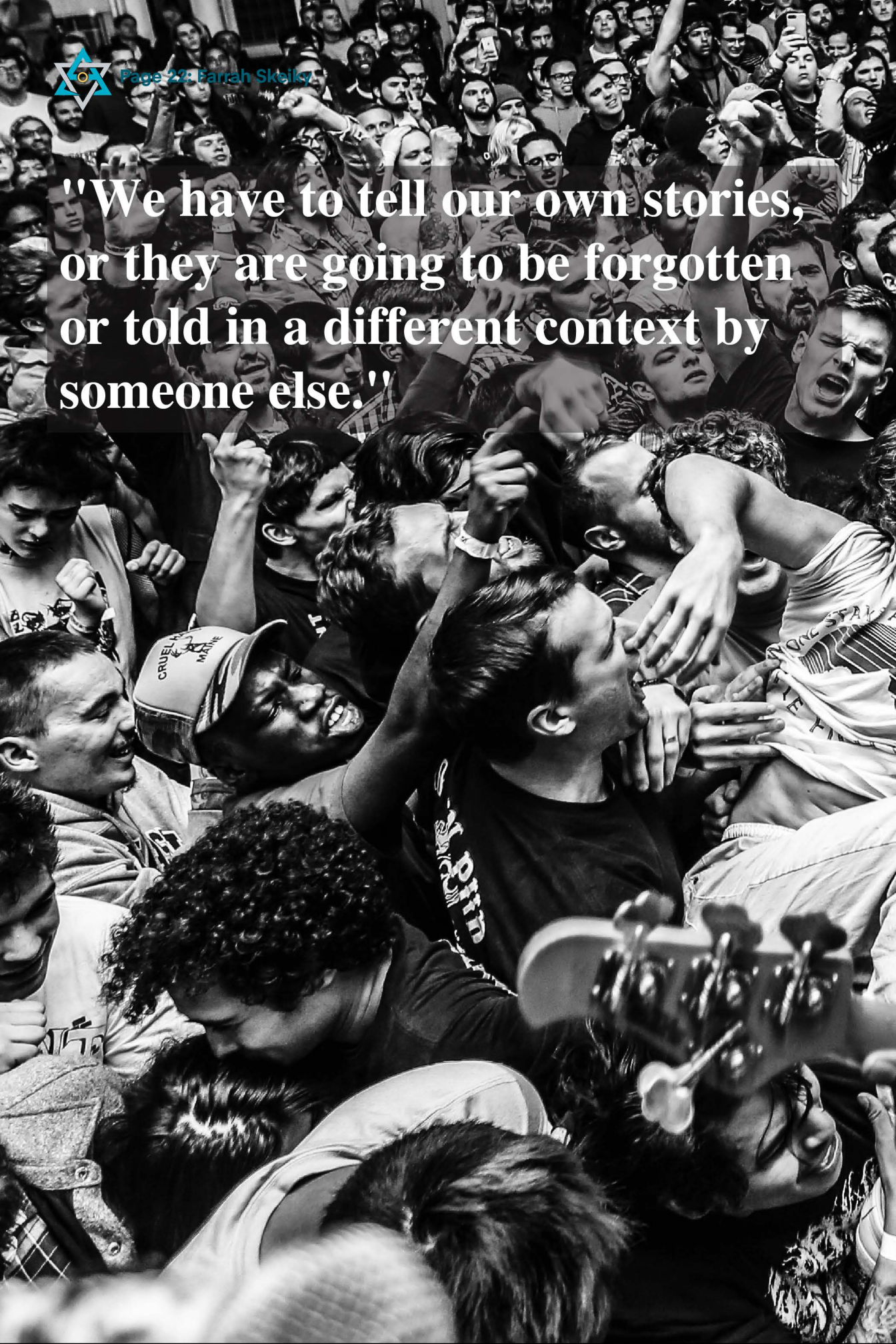


Olivia Neutron John by Farrah Skeiky

When Skeiky shared her favorite photo from the session on social media, it did not get many likes compared to her typical numbers, including a selfie she posted soon after. Admittedly, the response could be due to a number of environmental factors beyond interest, but the impact was felt. “A lot of time, you feel like you’re throwing stuff in the void, hoping you’ll get something back,” said Skeiky. “I really pushed myself to tell the story of an incredible person,” and “it can be disheartening.”



"We have to tell our own stories, or they are going to be forgotten or told in a different context by someone else."





Baltimore Punk Band, Turnstile by Farrah Skeiky



Not one to dwell on the fickle nature of external validation, Skeiky refocused her attention on the bigger picture: her mission to empower individuals society seeks to marginalize. “Are you sharing your work on Instagram because you want to get likes, or because you want your work out there?” she said, seemingly as a note to self.

When asked what has surprised her about her career as an artist, Skeiky shared, “For a long time, I was afraid of owning that title because people are going to think I take myself too seriously. But I’m learning I’m not as scared as I thought I was. I’m more willing to take the risk and not just play it safe. We have to be loud about what we’re doing and why it matters. If you are silent about your pain, they’ll kill you and say you enjoyed it,” she added, quoting acclaimed writer Zora Neale Hurston.

Within a competitive industry, Skeiky has found a great sense of community. “We don’t do anything in the world as individuals,” she said. “Everything you do in the world, someone has helped you to get there. Even down to, ‘I’m submitting this proposal, hey, can you take a look at it?’ That’s someone who has helped you.”

Skeiky also highlights the importance of pouring into yourself before drawing from community. “This is important for creative folks,” she said. “It’s so much about sharing, and social media, and partnering. You need to determine what you do that is for you.”

“The art of telling the story is telling the whole story.”

For Skeiky, this is creating music, which provides an outlet for her to capture her own story.

In the coming months, Farrah Skeiky has several projects on the horizon. She was tapped as the photographer for an Iranian American cookbook by a mother-daughter duo who became Tik Tok famous during the pandemic. The book is slated to publish in fall 2023. Skeiky will also try her hand at travel photography, as well as woodworking classes.

“Art framing has been really fun, working with both my hands with no screen involved, and I want to take it to another level.” Skeiky is bracing herself for Woodworking 101, considering the reality that “making a spoon” may be the major project, but she is excited nonetheless.

To anyone on the precipice of a new chapter, Skeiky encouraged, “Just because you haven’t done something doesn’t mean you can’t.” In addition to her new ventures, Skeiky is in the process of determining the direction of her next body of work, which she notes will be “very different” than Present Tense. Stay tuned for what promises to be worth the wait from this rising talent in the future.



Curious?
Scan the QR code for more information.



Pure Disgust by Farrah Skeiky



Elijah Cruise

'I FEEL LIKE EACH
YEAR I'M CLOSER TO
WHO I WANT TO
BE...ME'

by Cynthia Gross

The journey to discovering one's true self is arguably life's most important quest. Not the person other people expect or desire you to be, but instead, the person you know yourself to be – even if you have yet to embrace it. Nashville-based alternative pop artist, producer, and visionary Elijah Cruise is embarking on this very journey, creating a powerful space through his music that empowers individuals to settle for nothing less than their authentic selves.

Learn more about Elijah Cruise's inspiring story with *The Alchemist*, including the defining moment when Cruise realized that being himself is enough; a magical thing most people do not know about him; and the message behind his latest EP, *Suffocating/The Eulogy*, which serves as "a beacon to anyone on the outside looking in."

Ever since Cruise was young, the star in the making knew he was meant to pursue a creative career. However, his childhood aspirations centered around something much different than becoming a musician. "I always wanted to perform when I was a kid. I'd sing, dance, juggle, and very passionately do magic tricks," Cruise laughed. "In a different reality, I'm probably a magician." In homage to his younger self, Cruise notes that he has a tattoo of a bunny in a top hat.

There is something theatrical, grandiose, and mesmerizing to Elijah Cruise's style that hearkens back to the magician-turned-musician's roots. "I started producing music when I was 14 years old on an old laptop my parents had," Cruise shared.

"I used a DAW called Ableton Live, which I still use to this day, and ever since then, I've been working on

production and building out my sound and developing a brand."

Aesthetically, Cruise's latest EP, *Suffocating/The Eulogy*, takes cues from gothic themes and early 2000s punk and grunge, as well as inspiration from colorful, eclectic artists like David Bowie, Twenty One Pilots, Coldplay, and his lovely wife, Olivia Perdomo. And if that's not enough to draw you in, the captivating, contemporary nature of the rising star's songwriting certainly will.

Drawing from what feel like pages of his journal, Cruise explores death, life, and what it means to exist as an outsider in a cold society. From the very first line of "Suffocating," Cruise makes it clear that his music is not for everyone. Rather, it offers a "place for the misunderstood," a refuge for individuals society sidelines as outcasts, loners, and weirdos. By bringing his scars to light instead of attempting to hide behind a façade, Cruise normalizes the misfit identity in a compelling way.

Cruise admits that it has not been easy to get to the point where he realized that being his unique self is enough – attractive even. "I've always struggled with pretending to be something I'm not in order to fit in," he explained.

"Ever since I was a kid, I dyed my hair, dressed 'different,' and was more focused on being alive than conforming to any social norm. It's been a process of accepting and pushing myself to be fully free. I don't know if I'll ever have that absolute freedom, but I feel like each year, I'm closer to who I want to be...Me."



The D.C. area holds a special place in the Knoxville, Tennessee-native's history. Several years ago, Cruise moved to the nation's capital "with a desire to explore America and move away from his hometown." His favorite memory of D.C. is biking around the city with his partner. "I loved walking everywhere, the coffee, food, and the overarching feeling that everything was alive and didn't sleep," he added. When the pandemic hit, however, Cruise and Perdomo felt too far removed from their family and friends and decided to relocate to Nashville, which functions as a middle ground between their home and access to a vibrant music city.

In addition to his promising solo career, Elijah Cruise is a rising star in the production scene, where he has collaborated with a growing number of artists, including DMV favorites like BRASSIE. In 2022, Cruise partnered with Canadian electronic duo, WE ARE FURY, on the breathtaking single, "Poem of a Killer," which reached an impressive 72,000 streams in less than two weeks, landing features on BBC Radio 1 with Annie Nightingale and more.

When asked what has surprised him most about his solo career so far, Cruise replied emphatically that it is all of the opportunities. "I've been in bands my whole life, and it always felt rare that everyone was on the same page as far as goals and desires to move forward."

"Once I started my solo project, I felt as though I was super open to any opportunity that would come my way. The coolest thing about the music industry is once you catch one 'break,' it leads to another. I feel like this is the first time in music that I feel free to be completely myself."

Perhaps what makes Elijah Cruise shine the most in a saturated market is the empathy behind his music and his desire to be a part of something much bigger than himself. With deeply introspective lyrics that beckon audiences to show up just as they are, Cruise creates a space of uplift and healing, which resonates widely within a society that has somehow lost its way.



"I think the human experience is dependent on our duality - highs/lows, pain/joy, light/dark. From personal experience, I feel a need to turn the hard things in life into something beautiful for myself and hopefully others,"
Cruise shared.

In a world that spins at an alarming pace, where it has become increasingly difficult to experience the wonder around us, Elijah Cruise shifts the energy to a liberating effect. Herein lies "a place for the misunderstood." A place where you are valued for your distinct beauty. A place where you are seen and heard. Consider this your invitation to reconnect with your true self there.

*And now, a special letter from Elijah
written especially for our readers:*

**Dear Alchemist
(or those it may concern):**

The merit of a human is based off our ability to withstand trials.

When all hope has left and you are stranded in the great chasm of society's blind spot

Know this - SURVIVE and you will see a garden of beauty rise from the ashes of your flame.

"WE WILL STAY ALIVE, WE WILL NOT DEPART, ME AND ALL MY FRIENDS, TOGETHER WE'RE VICTORIOUS. WE WILL NOT DIE, FOREVER WE'LL SURVIVE, WE ARE NOT ONE, WE'RE LIKE STARS, TOGETHER WE ARE GLORIOUS."

**BEST,
EC**

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for more information.





IN SPITE OF NOT KNOWING THEMSELVES, OR ONE ANOTHER...



SOMEHOW, A GLIMMER OF RECOGNITION PASSES BETWEEN THEM.



Next Issue

Danny Ramirez
Diego Castañeda
Richard Benjumia
of
De Sanguashington
and
SOROCHE

MegaGoneFree

Women in Music in DC



Photo courtesy of DeSanguashington

a brief lesson in alchemy
a brief lesson in alchemy

and now for a brief lesson in alchemy
and now for a brief lesson in alchemy

In modern times, it would be common for popular anime Full Metal Alchemist to inspire others to delve deeper into the history of the mystic arts of alchemy. We dare say that the word “alchemical” did not exist, or fell out of common practice until we began to use it in 2009. For us, the word is used to define a process rather than the more theoretical models that alchemy traditionally presents on its own. Our reference to the word “records” is not to be designated only to vinyl recordings, but to any type of record, from stone tablet to 8k video. Alchemy is shrouded in mystery and it is unlikely that all of its secrets will ever be revealed, but this predecessor of modern chemistry once contained elements of spirituality, and it is thought that the physical process of turning lead into gold may be just an allegory for human nature to seek to elevate itself to a higher plane.

a CRYPTOGRAM is a way of encoding a message. This cryptogram substitutes one letter of the English alphabet for another letter. can you solve this one? We'll give you a hint...these are lyrics from 2022 Wammie Award-winning song "After You're Gone" by Calista Garcia.

**K jhwfp dlweepd yfhw okhpl nkxpj k lyeemp
Htp jhwfp jyfxj hw htp cwhhwn, cqh htp lyeemp ekllypj wf.**

We'll reveal the answer next month (if you're lucky). Think you've got it? Tell us on social media
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GOT TONE?



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