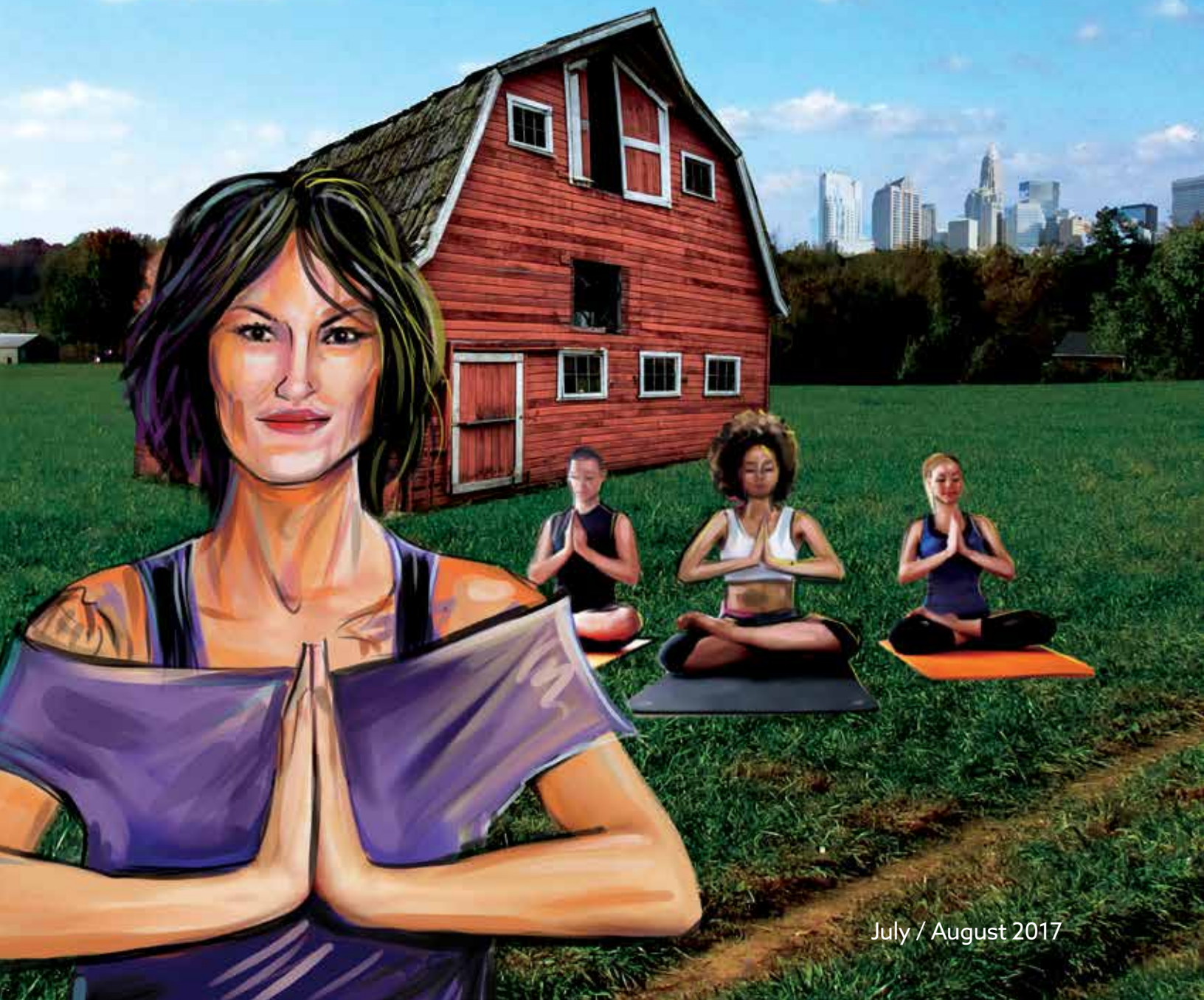


# My City



July / August 2017

# Letter From The Editor

July / August 2017

Hi Charlotte,

It is officially vacation season. If you are stuck in Charlotte or are traveling, My City Magazine is a perfect companion. In this issue, Becky Huskins reviews David Childers' new album and we give Tommy Heffner a chance to rant about the SCENE. Martin "the Clown" Barry, as always, gives us his thought-provoking advice column and "Micro Monsters". *(Disclaimer regarding this month's comic strip from Barry: My City Magazine loves all persons named Chad.)* We take a look at what Mandi Murrow has been up to, provide you a few entertainment options in our event listing, and we take a stroll through the Magnolia Emporium. We also meet local artist Dusti Pearson Williams and see some of her creations.

We hope you enjoy this issue and thank you for reading. Don't forget to check out the exhaustive event listing on [MyCityMagazine.net](http://MyCityMagazine.net) and subscribe to our weekly newsletter.

Enjoy today and every day,  
Ellen Gurley and the other My City Magazine personalities



Ellen Gurley

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(This cover is of Mandi Murrow.)



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# Charlotte has SCENE Better Days

by Tommy Heffner

Everyone, who has ever lived in or grown up in a city, has, sooner or later, puffed up their chest and proclaimed to their friends, family, and fellow countrymen (and countrywomen) this profound epiphany that they, and they alone, have been enlightened to ... "the music scene in this city sucks!".

Hell, people who have never lived in said city will also utter the same proclamation even if said person has only been in said city for five minutes. Now, as fortunate as we all are to have these delightfully, enlightened people around us, or better yet, perhaps we might be one of those specially chosen folks to issue out the enlightenment, it is ok to disregard or at the very least attempt to formulate an opinion using our own cognitive abilities. The old schoolers are going to tell you the scene sucks and the new transplants are going to tell you the same thing. You can't win for losing. So, what are we going to do? Well, I guess we are just going to have to think. I know it sucks, but it's ok. You and I will go down this weary road together... hand in hand.

I am not the oldest schooler in the town, by far. I am also not the newest schooler, by far, but, I've been here over four decades and have both played in bands and spent a great deal of my time either attending shows in the city of Charlotte or working at it's music venues. That being said, I've seen what I feel is a pretty significant portion of the Charlotte's music scene and

it's evolution over the last twenty years (the amount of time I have been old enough to patron this city's music scene). Oh, by the way, if the use of the word "scene" makes you uncomfortable, feel disgusted, or if you just think it's lame, then that's cool. But do us both a favor and find something more productive to do with your time other than reading this article. Like perhaps, flossing your teeth... with a chainsaw.



Charlotte has had a music scene for a very long time... even far beyond the time frame that I would be able to comment on from my own personal experience. Charlotte was growing to be a crucial hub for the recording and expansion of country music before Nashville became the center for country music. As far back as the 1920's-1940's Charlotte was a vital place for recording and radio exposure for country music.

Recording and radio may not seem like important parts of a city's music scene the same way live music does, but the two are connected in defining what influence music has / had upon an area. But, you hate country music blah blah blah... so that just reaffirms your point that Charlotte's music scene sucks seeing as it's roots were in country, blues, gospel, and jazz... and that isn't cool music so....Lighten up Francis, it isn't all about what you like. Point is, music has been here for a very long time. Granted, this town is a banking town and finance and business have, more often than not, defined it's presence and it's growth far beyond cultural aspects like music and art. But, that doesn't mean that Charlotte is void of culture. It's here. It has been here for a while, perhaps not the same level of culture as Austin, Nashville, or whatever town you think is the coolest, but it is and has been here. Nonetheless, the support of culture hasn't always been here, but we'll get to that in a bit.

If you've been in Charlotte for any length of time, then you've heard of The (World Famous) Milestone (Club). If you haven't, well, you just did. I'm not going devote this entire article to that venue, because one could devote an entire book to it. However, discussing live music in Charlotte and excluding a venue that has been there for decades, has survived numerous owners, and has crawled back out from nearly ceasing to be several times, would be ludicrous. They've provided a stage and a audience floor for touring bands that went on to be globally celebrated acts, to local bands playing their first gig, and everything in between... for a very long time. It is noteworthy because it is a key part for the music scene here in Charlotte. You may say, "well, other towns have 3-4 places like The Milestone". Awesome, you can count. Charlotte has one then and it's a good one, too.



Anyone who has been in Charlotte since, oh, say late 80's/early 90's, will also recall a number of other venues that gave Charlotte an outlet for awesome music; The Pterodactyl, 4808, Park Elevator, 1313, Rocky's, Jeremiah's, Heretics, Fat City, etc. All of those places were, at one time, sources for live music entertainment and they had the support of the people in Charlotte that craved it. There are still places in Charlotte that are or have recently provided the same outlets for great live music; Snug Harbor, Tremont Music Hall, The Chop Shop, Amos' SouthEnd, (Yeah, I mentioned that. Don't get smug, because chances are you went to at least one show there, too. Hop off of the self-righteous seesaw.), The Station, Tommy's Pub, and, of course, there are more.

Charlotte has always had good local bands here, too. I don't have the room in this article

to discuss each of the ones I personally find appealing specifically, but trust me there were good bands playing this local circuit in the 80's-90's (and before) and there are really good local bands playing in Charlotte to this day. Yes, perhaps Charlotte doesn't have the amount of venues, or bands, or as rich of a history as other cities by comparison, but that doesn't warrant labeling Charlotte's current or past music scene as one that sucks. There have been venues, owners, bands, promoters, etc. that have sucked, but they don't define any part of Charlotte's musical culture as a whole. There have been a lot more of the good venues and bands than there have been bad. Charlotte has always had diversity in musical styles represented locally. There have been periods in Charlotte where the diversity seemed a bit out of proportion, but that fluctuates with trends and fads as it does anywhere with almost anything.

If it would tickle your fancy for me to be critical of Charlotte's music scene (I know that is important to many of you) then ok, I'll shoot. We lack in support from the fans and the people as the better part of their time is spent constantly crying about the state of culture in Charlotte. I'm not saying that no one supports music in this city. I'm just saying that a lot more could and should be done. If you want more, you have to put in more.

Charlotte does get skipped over often for shows that go the Triangle area or to Asheville because there is more assurance of support there. Demographics and location obviously play a big part in that. Those areas are located closer to multiple Universities and therefore a larger portion of younger people live there, nonetheless Charlotte has always been sketchy regarding consistently supporting bands and venues on a reasonably comparable scale to other cities in the state/region. There is a reason why people joke about the weather affecting turn out in Charlotte. It is because jokes are funnier when there is some truth to them.

"I don't understand why more people didn't come out to this show!" "Well, it is Thursday night, it is raining, AND we are in Charlotte." I'm not trying to beat anyone over the head about supporting live music. There are already enough people doing that. I'm just saying that if you do love a venue or a band, then go out as much as you want to and can afford to. Go see the local band you really dig as much as you want to and can afford to. Do the same thing with the touring bands coming through. Buy some of their stuff if you have the money for it. Tell your friends about them. The thing you shouldn't do, though, is to complain about live music when you don't do the things I just mentioned. And don't even think about running your mouth about how Charlotte has no music scene. Lastly, don't bitch and whine about paying a cover in order to enjoy a band, venue, or environment. A cover charge is a necessary thing in almost every case and complaining to door staff about paying one pretty much tells everyone, "Hey I'm an a--hole, can I come in?" Thank you.



# Mandi Murrow

words by Ellen Gurley  
photos by Mitchell Kearney



I've known Mandi Murrow for more than twenty years. All the while, I have relentlessly clowned her for any and all of her interests.

I call her a health nut and I refer to many of her associations / collaborations / groups as cults / cult members. I'm not into yoga and if you start talking about your third eye, I tune out faster than you can say "align chakras".

In reality, I am proud of my colleague, Mandi. Not only does she monetize her hobbies, she has chosen her own path with much momentum, even if that means having no free time. It was fine when she was just a sought after hair stylist, I could call her vain... and all of her clientel, too (jokingly, of course, ladies and gents), but now she is empowering other women's bodies and their dang psyches. Vomit.

All jokes aside, a mother and step-mother to a "slew" of good-looking youngens, she still manages to style, throw clothing swaps, maintain a recently obtained farm, host yoga, and run meditation retreats... all while being active in the community via nonprofits and local events like Creative Mornings.

Below I have listed all of her upcoming collaborations and events. She is working towards her life coach certification, studying to get be a health coach, is educated in Reiki and finishing her yoga instructor training. Follow her on Facebook at Clean Living with m.e., if you aren't already, as she has been sharing some lifestyle tips pro bono pre paperwork. Oh, and chase your own dreams, too, even if that road leads to *clowning*. We all have a place.



- For cut, color, extentions, and other hair transformations, Mandi is available in Bentala Salon at 1800 Camden Road and can be followed on Facebook at Mandi Does Hair. Text 704-644-0070 for an appointment.
- Thursdays @ Kale Farms (3232 Kale Ln., Matthews) : 6:30-7:30pm Back Yard Yoga by Clean Living with m.e. (information: [mandienglish@gmail.com](mailto:mandienglish@gmail.com)) Kale Farms is home to a dozen chicken, a couple of rabbits, three ducks and cats, and is also selling eggs and natural household products. Find out when and where by following the Clean Living with m.e. Facebook page.)
- Sept. 8th-10th @ Sacred Grove Retreat: [RootToCrownProductions.com](http://RootToCrownProductions.com) (collaboration w.Kim Irene Barker) Presents: Fade into You ~ a weekend of rest & restoration w.yoga, sound soak w.Beth Brown, clean eating, meditation & much more for tickets contact [mandienglish@gmail.com](mailto:mandienglish@gmail.com) | Follow site above for upcoming workshops, events, and retreats.

# Ask The Clown

*What do I know I'm just a clown?  
Advice from Martin "The Clown" Barry*



Q

Dear Clown,

I have been on the receiving end of quite a few no-shows lately. This has happened with friends and with potential dates. We make a plan in advance and they either bail at the last minute with a message or excuse, or they just don't show up and I find out why a few days later with a weak apology. Should I just stop trying?

Sincerely,  
Stood Up and Fed Up

A

Dear SUFU,

Standing someone up is possibly the worst thing to do to someone in a budding friendship. Don't allow that feeling to make you feel like you are not worth someone's time. Your efforts are not in vain and your time is valuable. Don't give up, but do be wise enough to disallow second chances. Let the pursuit come to you once in a while. Remember that you have worth in the scheme of all this. Know that worth and refuse to tolerate those that do not appreciate it.

Cheers!  
The Clown

Q

Dear Clown,

I am a polyamorous male and I am married. I have recently had a lot of conflict with my wife. She has found out about a couple of the women I have been with and it made her angry to the point of suggesting that we divorce. I don't want that to happen as we have two children and a history prior to our marriage. She has maintained that our marriage was a commitment to each other exclusively, but I feel like she is just being a child. What do you suggest?

Sincerely,  
Trying

A

Dear Trying,

Is your wife aware of you polyamory? It seems to me that you don't quite grasp that concept and she does see you as cheating. Are the other women aware of your polyamory? If not, then you are not polyamorous at all. You are what the ladies call a f---boy. Polyamory is based in WAY more respect than you have expressed here and the bonds of trust are probably way outside of your capability. You strike me as the sort of person that picks up on a concept and adopts it because they think

it is the cool thing to do. Next, we will find you talking up some awful tasting beer and insisting you have a refined palette. The fact of it all is that you have no clue as to who you are and it is causing damage to others. Give that woman a divorce. You don't deserve her and she and your children deserve better. I hope all of your visits with the kids are supervised.

Bye now,  
The Clown

Q

Dear Clown,

I have been shouted down by "friends" and some family for simply being me. I do not bring up my lifestyle or the things I believe in at any time, but assumptions are made about me accompanied by loud hateful speech and sometimes threats. If I do speak up to defend myself, they shout that my types are not as tolerant as we claim to be. None of this frightens me and I have stopped being around the "friends" that have done this. How do I deal with the family, though? I don't want to miss family gatherings, weddings, etc. Help?

Sincerely,  
Bent, But Never Broken

A

Dear Bent,

It seems that there are rashes of this sort of thing popping up all over. Decency, courtesy, and manners seem to have taken a holiday. During this period, we hold our heads up and forge ahead as we are. The shouts will fade and those that harbor this hatred will recognize the waste of energy eventually. As to the tolerance bit, it is always fitting to tolerate a person as they are and to tolerate what they believe, however, the loudest seem to have these uninformed viewpoints that they repeat ever louder hoping that it will become the truth. DO NOT tolerate this. Walk away, disconnect, and spend no time worrying about these people, even if they are family. You can easily avoid them at the next family gathering. These people deserve the isolation that will be the eventual cost of their hatred.

Stay true,  
The Clown

---

Do you have a question for The Clown? Write him at [Martin@MyCityMagazine.net](mailto:Martin@MyCityMagazine.net)

# Events In Your City

by Ellen Gurley



My City Magazine has the most exhaustive event listing in town. We kid you not and we know that we do as we've seen all of the rest. Why go to all the websites when you can go to just one and see the only go-to event listing in town? Subscribe to the weekly event newsletter while you are there. You can do this at the bottom of any page. We spend a lot of time on our list and want you to be able to enjoy it. We no longer have room to list all four pages of events that we normally run in our print edition but we urge you to go to [www.MyCityMagazine.net](http://www.MyCityMagazine.net) and subscribe today.

Here are just a few events in the Charlotte area for the months of July and August 2017.

## **Sundays @ NoDa Company Store**

12-8pm Free Burger Brunch  
7.09 the Inagural BMC of NC & Beards beCAUSE  
Charity Car Wash (benefiting Safe Alliance)

## **Sundays @ Snug Harbor**

3rd Sundays 2pm Potluck Dance Party w.DJs Sir  
Chocolate Milk & Elon

## **Mondays @ Lebowski's**

1/2 off bottles of wine

## **Mondays @ the Evening Muse**

8pm "Find Your Muse" open mic band night w.guest  
headliners

## **Mondays @ the Rabbit Hole**

8-11pm 1st & 3rd Mondays : "Monocle" : Improv  
Monday

## **Mondays @ the Visulite Theatre**

Monday Night Allstars

## **Tuesdays @ Morehead Tavern**

8pm Bill Hanna Jazz Jam

## **Fridays @ Trinity Presbyterian Church**

5-9pm [Facebook.com/CotswoldTrucks2017](https://www.facebook.com/CotswoldTrucks2017)

## **Fridays @ Camp North End**

5-9pm live music & beer thru October

## **Fridays @ Petra's**

last Fridays : Mirror Moves ('80's/'90's) w.DJs Cody  
Hare & **Jah-Sun Rising (Jason Herring)**

## **Fridays @ the Comet Grill**

the Lenny Federal Band

## **Fridays @ Cinebarre**

1st & 3rd : Rocky Horror at Midnight feat. [ThatType.com](http://ThatType.com)

• 1st Fridays in SouthEnd Gallery Crawl

## **Fridays @ the Last Word**

FNM Magic the Gathering

## **Sat., July 1st @ the Milestone**

Dirty South Fest Day 2. feat. Drunk in a Dumpster,  
South Side Punx, the Beatdowns, Weary Legs,  
No Anger Control, Minimums, Dirty South  
Revolutionaries, the Hooliganz, Diseased Earth, Black  
Power, Weary Legs

## **Tues., July 4th @ Snug Harbor**

Alternative Champs, Dirty Art Club, TKO Faith Healer,  
Brut Beat, Fat Face Band

## **Wed., July 5th @ Snug Harbor**

Spirit System, Hardcore Lounge, Sext Message, Lara  
Americo

## **Fri., July 7th @ the Neighborhood Theatre**

'90's Tribute to Benefit Levine Children's Hospital feat.  
**Ancient Cities, Jason Scavone, Modern Primitives,  
Astrea Corp., Sam the Lion, the Business People, the  
Wormholes, RevelWood Mission, Maya Beth Atkins,  
Good Bones, members of Faye & Late Bloomer,  
Evergone & many more**

## **Sat., July 8th @ Stage Door Theater**

Recital of the Lotus feat.music performances by: the  
Secret Poets, One Big Love, Grey Revell, the Gamblers



Band, Black Light Nation, Jason Hilliard, Rich Boy the Drummer & the Genesis Band & Drum Village + poetry performances by: Vivian Page, Brian Templeton, Ta'Vondre Quick, Indigo Jo, M.O.B.E. (Mind Over Body Experience) & ML Tuck + more

**Tues., July 11th @ Ovens Auditorium**  
8pm David Blaine

**Tues., July 11th @ PNC Music Pavilion**  
Incubus, Jimmy Eat World

**Thurs., July 13th @ Spectrum Center**  
New Kids on the Block, Paula Abdul, Boys II Men

**Sat., July 15th @ Snug Harbor**  
10pm Sinners & Saints, David Childers, It's Snakes, Timothy Eerie

**Sat., July 15th @ the Dilworth Neighborhood Grille**  
8pm [PlanetImprov.com](http://PlanetImprov.com) Presents: the Gummi Worm Comedy Improv Musical Variety Extravaganza Starring the Chuckleheads

**Sat., July 15th @ the Underground**  
Raekwon

**Sat., July 15th @ the Milestone**  
Digital Noir w.DJs Spider & Michael Price

**Mon., July 17th @ Charlotte Metro Credit Union Amphitheatre**  
Primus, Clutch

**Fri., July 21st @ Snug Harbor**  
Modern Primitives (video premier)

**Fri., July 21st @ Knight Theater**  
Paula Poundstone

**Sat., July 22nd @ Stage Door Theater**  
Jazz Room w.Corey Wilkes playing Freddie Hubbard

**Wed., July 26th @ the Comedy Zone**  
Blayr Nias' Almost Famous Comedy Show

**Fri., July 28th @ the McGlohon Theater**  
Bruce Hornsby & the Noisemakers

**Sat., July 29th @ the US National Whitewater Center**  
7-10pm River Jam w.Reeve Coobs

**Sat., July 29th @ Midwood Country Club**  
12-5pm [www.100Gardens.org](http://www.100Gardens.org) Presents: the 2017 Homegrown Tomato Festival (free)

**Sun., July 30th @ the Neighborhood Theatre**  
Jimmy Herring & the Invisible Whip

**Wed., Aug. 2nd @ the Neighborhood Theatre**  
Michael Franti + Spearhead

**Fri., Aug. 4th @ Charlotte Metro Credit Union Amphitheatre**  
Kidz Bop Live

**Fri., Aug. 4th @ the Fillmore**  
Descedents

**Sat., Aug. 5th @ PNC Music Pavilion**  
Foreigner, Cheap Trick, Jason Bonhams Led Zeppelin Experience

**Sat., Aug. 12th @ PNC Music Pavilion**  
Goodie Mob, Erykah Badu, Babyface, Jagged Edge

**Sun., Aug. 13th @ Belk Theatre**  
the Australian Pink Floyd Show - the Best side of the Moon

**Mon., Aug. 14th @ the Fillmore**  
Tesla

**Fri., Aug. 18th @ the Spectrum Center**  
Earth, Wind & Fire, Nile Rodgers

**Sat., Aug. 19th @ the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture**  
7-11pm LGBT & Allies 2nd Chance Prom hosted by the Professionals

**Sat., Aug. 19th @ the Fillmore**  
Social Distortion

**Aug. 26th & 27th in uptown Charlotte**  
[CharlottePride.org](http://CharlottePride.org) Festival & Parade

**THRU mid July @ the McColl Center for Art + Innovation** John W. Love Jr.'s outside poem banners (Betwixt)

**THRU July 29th @ Lark & Key Gallery**  
Mary Alayne Thomas & Jess Polanshek (Keepsake)

**THRU July 28th @ the NASCAR Hall of Fame**  
Petty - Building a Family Legacy

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# Magnolia Emporium

words & photos by Ellen Gurley



There are a lot of hidden gems in Charlotte and My City Magazine has made it their job to point them out to readers one-by-one. I apologize for not introducing you to Magnolia Emporium before, but I recently had the pleasure of meeting owner, Randolph Gareth James. I came in a little early and caught him in conversation with a client in his element at his boutique. I came to a conclusion quickly. If you looked up worldly in the dictionary, Randolph's photo would be there. When I say worldly, I don't mean bougie. While Randolph has traveled and lived in some of the finest places, he has a down-to-earth head about himself. Though he has serviced some of the biggest names, he is proudly here in the Gold

District of Charlotte for us to patronize. He can both tell a mean story and listen like no other and his impeccable taste is apparent throughout the store. You'll find a slew of finer pieces and some of the most adorable tongue-in-check gift grabs. He carries hard-to-find pantry must-haves, fun vintage finds to pass the time and entertain guests, and some pieces that may remind you of a '70's pad.

So, let's retrace. Worldly? Yes. Bougie? No. However, this place is just a front. The real secret is that he is an awarded designer and this is nothing but a mere showroom. Outside of the beauty of this inviting storefront, Randolph is available to give you some true designer-to-the-stars treatment in your own home. Who knew that behind all of these Shiva statues and soaps, a worldclass space creator was humbly hiding? Now you do. However, if you're not in the market for a living room facelift or a closet redesign, keep in mind that he is available for consults. Stop in to check out Magnolia Emporium. It is not a large space, but I managed to spend over an hour in there poking around. You're welcome to do the same. *(And there's beer next door at the Craft Tasting Room.)*

[MagnoliaEmporium.com](http://MagnoliaEmporium.com)

Instagram: [@magnoliaemporium](https://www.instagram.com/magnoliaemporium)

Facebook: [MagnoliaEmporium](https://www.facebook.com/MagnoliaEmporium)









# David Childers: Run Skeleton Run

review by Becky Huskins



I have to make two disclaimers before I can even begin talking about this record. First off, I love David Childers. I have a piece of David Childers art hanging in my house. I've even heard my husband refer to him as his idol. I adore his art, his music, and his personality. So when this new record came out a few months ago, it was kind of a no-brainer that it would make it into our home. Several months ago, when I heard previews of the title cut, "Run Skeleton Run", I put it on blast to everyone I knew.

Second, I didn't want to write a review on his new record. There's not much I could tell you about David Childers that you can't read / listen to just about everywhere you turn in local and national press. He is beloved by his fans and peers and is regularly covered by North Carolina darlings, The Avett Brothers. I've seen him out at shows and realized he's not only admired on stage, but is fawned over as a person. It's easy to see why. He's a regular, down-home dude (who lives in my own home county) and is making extraordinary music. So since I could expound more on that, I'll just talk about this new record.

Right out of the gate, "Run Skeleton Run", grabs you with a spoken word story (spoken by Scott Avett, no less) and then bursts into a rollicking tune that is not unlike Johnny Cash or other early rock/country idols of the 1950's. This song begins a tale that is told throughout the record that I will call the three L's: love, loss, and learning.

"Radio Moscow" is a more somber song that brings to mind something many of us remember about our own childhoods: how to carve your way into and out of a small-town world that can't quite hold you. The decades might be different, but the sentiment is the same.

"Greasy Dollar" takes us forward to David's adulthood and how hard it can be to drag yourself to that J.O.B. every morning. Here's a good song to play on your I-hate-my-job days... "but I've got to go and earn my greasy dollar, so I can keep on working 'til I die." Luckily, "Collar and Bell" kicks your spirits back up and helps you make it to the weekend. And who doesn't have a long-lost love they think about every now and then? "Ghostland" takes you back to that memory.

I have to stop here and say something about the at-times mournful and other times playful violin on the record. There's something about this sound that takes me back to me childhood, mountain ancestry and roots across the pond in Scotland and Ireland. Does everyone from Western North

Carolina relate to that sound like I do?

"A Promise to the Wind" might be the most modern-sounding song on the record, even though the idea is repeated by every man who couldn't do right and then wrote a song about it: what to do about the woman you can't stop loving but also can't seem to stand still with? "Once the wind has caught it, it's gone, gone, gone, it won't be back!" You said it, mister!

"Belmont Ford" has all the makings of a song that will be sung to children years from now as an old folk spiritual of Gaston County. "Bells" reminds me of myself. Sometimes it's hard to explain what's in your own mind even to the person who loves you best.

I need to stop here to say something directly to Robert Childers, another respected artist and musician many of us are lucky enough to know and who also contributed art and percussion on the album. Do you know how cool your Pops is? Fair enough, let's continue.

"Thanks to All (Long Ago)" seems to be David's heartfelt song of gratitude to all the individuals who kept him fed, educated, loved, aware, healthy, and alive long enough to make it to the age he is today. I don't think I know a single musician who doesn't owe this song to several folks along the way. "Manila", again, speaks to both David's generation and mine in remembering Vietnam, the war that hurt the men who fought it and the children who came after. How it manages to be so upbeat, I can't imagine, but that's just more of the David Childers magic!

"Hermit" is probably my favorite song partly because it sounds like something George Harrison and Roy Orbison would have created together, and it's just so fun and rocking. "Goodbye to Growing Old" has a simple but beautiful line that has stayed with me since I heard it... "and I'm a better man for loving you." Oh, and it has a harmonica! The country girl in me loves it even more... "I'll get on in the game, I ain't about to fold." Bless the old gambler who can't throw his cards down.

As I listened to the record in its entirety and read some other reviews, I realized that I tend to interpret music in a very literal and real sense. The stories sound like real stories to me, not just symbols or metaphors. They're the stories of a man who has lived, loved a good life, and learned some lessons along the way. I'm not sure if that's what David was going for with the album "Run, Skeleton, Run", but it's definitely the road I traveled while listening. And, believe me, it was an old, country road winding through snow... and then rain... and then leaf-heavy trees. Just ask David Childers where that road is. He knows.  
[DavidChilders.com](http://DavidChilders.com)

• See David Childers live at the Royal American in Charleston on Saturday, July 1st, at Brawley's in Charlotte on Sunday, July 2nd, at the Capri on Main in Gaffney on Saturday, July 15th, and at the Bullpen in Durham on Saturday, July 22nd. Plus catch David Childers & the Serpents (4pm) in Elkin on August 5th at 222 East Main Street as they share a stage with the Marcus King Band, Town Mountain, Time Sawyer, William Wild, and Corey Hunt Band for day two of the [ReeveStock.com](http://ReeveStock.com) Music Festival.



# Micro Monsters

by Martin Barry





# Dusti Pearson Williams

words by Ellen Gurley

Some people get to grow up in the same town their whole lives. Sometimes they get to go to the same elementary school and the same junior high school with some of the same people. Sometimes they even get to go to the same high school with those with whom they shared their elementary and middle school years. And then, if they're lucky, social media will keep them in touch with those someones after graduation. For me, one of those someones is Dusti Pearson Williams. We went to Cotswold, Billingsville, Randolph, and West Charlotte together and now I get to watch her be a doting wife and an amazing artist... through Facebook.

I was lucky enough to take a short drive to Concord, where Williams' studio and residence are both located, to sit a spell and see what she does. It is a shared space with her sister, Brandi McKenna, with whom she not only shares a venue and creative bones, but they also get to share the stigma and annoyance of MS. With their good days and their bad days, art is always at the center. Each with her varying degrees of difficulty, they perfectly and competently run a shared business (Harlan McKenna Designs) and an optimistic outlook that is apparent throughout their brand.

Each of William's creations are like an affirmation; a promise that there is beauty in all things. Often using the skulls of animals that she has just found, literally, at her feet, she puts new life into everything she touches. No stranger to the rummaging and walking about at flea markets, that is required to harvest her components for her assemblage pieces, she finds her muses here and there. While most of Harlan McKenna Designs' work is in restoration (Dusti is always sanding and staining vintage farm tables, etc.), trumeaus, interiors like mirrors, over mantles, and screens, their one-of-a-kind sculptures, jewelry, seasonal decorations, and paintings get a lot of their time and attention. We are glad that they do.

In her warehouse, as far as the eye can see, there are working surfaces with old broaches and funky pins, pieces of fabric, nature finds, and display cases full of her creations. At any given time, there are





more than thirty things that Williams has in the works... and they are everywhere. I tried not to touch anything but after construction, her pieces are good to go and sturdy.

My City Magazine promises to stalk McKenna and get some of her art in print, perhaps around one of these autumns. Her Halloween pieces are literally the cutest things ever. We may even bug William's husband (of local Biggy Stardust fame), but in the meantime, check out these one-of-a-kind creations by her. Harlan McKenna Design's catalog is ever changing and available at their website and sometimes the girls make an appearance the second Saturdays of the month at the ClearWater Artist Studios' open house. Grab some of these conversation pieces and keepsakes now. Supporting local never looked cooler.

Photographed here:

- two different carved goat skull necklaces, a sister pair - one with a crown, one with a chandelier
- a mixed media assemblage in a drawer box
- three WIPs at different stages, goat, deer and goat
- a baroque assemblage necklace, a vintage porcelain fop mounted on vintage silver stampings and forming his masquerade get-up

[HarlanMcKennaDesigns.com](http://HarlanMcKennaDesigns.com) | [Facebook.com/HarlanMcKennaDesigns](https://Facebook.com/HarlanMcKennaDesigns)





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