

The Pitch

September 2026 | FREE | THEPITCHKC.COM



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SEPT 14-20
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.....

This graphic features a dark background with various dessert illustrations in white and pink. On the left, there's a coffee cup, a vanilla bean, and some berries. In the center, there's a stack of cakes and a chocolate bar. On the right, there's an ice cream cone and a croissant. The text 'Dessert Week' is in a large, pink, cursive font, and 'SEPT 14-20' is in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below it, 'HALF PRICE DESSERTS ALL WEEK' is in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.



CRAFT COCKTAIL WEEK
DEC. 14-20

This graphic has a dark background with white and gold illustrations of cocktail glasses, a martini glass, and a cocktail shaker. The text 'CRAFT COCKTAIL WEEK' is in a bold, gold, sans-serif font, and 'DEC. 14-20' is in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.



TACO & NACHO Week
NOVEMBER 16-22

This graphic has a yellow and orange background with a green vertical stripe. It features illustrations of a taco and nachos. The text 'TACO & NACHO Week' is in a bold, red, sans-serif font, and 'NOVEMBER 16-22' is in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

The Pitch

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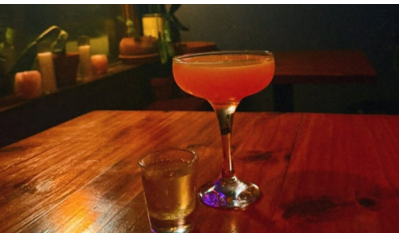
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Photo by Annelise Hanshaw/Missouri Independent

Missouri’s out-of-touch Republican politicians keep going to war against Missouri—including their own voters

Our political columnist Michael McGrady takes a deep dive into the tremendous loss Republican Amendments suffered in August’s Missouri elections. Why? Because they’re at odds with what Missouri wants, no matter which side of the aisle you claim.



Courtesy of Northside Social

Drink This Now: Sex Work is Real Work

Not-so-politically-correct cocktail names are getting new awakenings at Northside Social, where the Sex Work is Real Work replaces the porn star martini. This politically correct concoction, complete with sparkling wine sidecar, is Music Editor Nick Spacek’s new go-to.



Data, by Brookings Institution

Deportation campaign in 2025 cost jobs for American workers, including in Kansas City

If you think that ICE’s campaign of rounding up immigrants for mass deportations is a good idea... well, why the fuck did you grab this issue? But have a look at the numbers—and the lives they represent—as reporter Mary Sanchez hears what they have to say.



Cine Local: Flora from Kansas, Radkey, EZGI, and more local music videos

Did you know our music editor rounds up the best local music videos once a month? Our recent Cine Local shares animation in the style of Disney meets *Dragon Ball Z*, TheBabeGabe’s extravagant hyperpop diva romp, and what-have-you. You won’t find this anywhere else.



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Dessert Week

SEPTEMBER 14-20

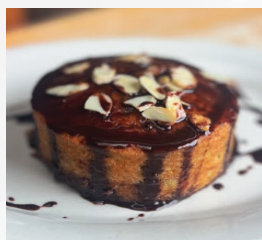
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Letter from the Editor

Stalking suffers and the semantics of sermon By Brock Wilbur

Dearest readers,

Thanks for picking up a copy of the September issue of *The Pitch*. Virgo season is in full effect, and I will be behaving accordingly. What impact will this have on the tone of local journalism? Oh, you'll know it when you see it.

A few nights ago, I was swept into a very trademark KC nonsense adventure—one that promised simplicity on the surface and quickly trapped me in the undertow. And, like any good blindsiding experience, it left me with scrambled meditations on life, the universe, and everything else.

I was at Screenland Armour for the screening of a new indie horror flick, written and directed by Omaha emo icon Tim Kasher.

Kasher's band Cursive built a multidecade career on aggressively confessional material, with the trademark twist of keeping the genuine pain at arm's length via a shove of self-deprecating humor. These hymns often start with an external target, then quickly turn that rage or indignation inward, before the very structure of songwriting winds up catching strays.

Kasher is a storyteller who lashes

out at the medium's limitations. There is always so much more story to tell than what fits into the format that we know how to consume. As far back as the 1998 track "Semantics of Sermon," you can hear him deride the music industry for asking him to take huge ideas and shove them into 3-minute tracks—comparable to scribbling on the limited space afforded by a postcard.

It comes as no surprise that this guy would also be making movies, in search of expression, with a sliding scope and scale for what lives inside his head. Kasher's new feature film *Who's Watching* is a stalker thriller about a weird little guy frustrated by the limitations of the form of movie-making, who also finds cold comfort performing in a rock band on the side.

You get it. You see it. Okay, cool.

Who's Watching takes some delightfully creepy, meta turns. More importantly for a KC audience, the band Radkey co-stars in the movie as members of misogynist metalheads under the moniker of Toxic Cock Syndrome. [You'll remember last month's issue of *The Pitch* featured a Radkey interview regarding their new album. We failed to have them defend the period wordplay fake sludge act on the silver screen, but when you catch this flick on VOD, I assure you that you'll have a fantastic time, as they are *eating* with these roles.]

After the credits rolled and the Q&A wrapped, Kasher moved the audience into Rewind—Screenland Theater's subterranean, neon-lit arcade bar. To thank the audience for coming out, he tuned up an acoustic guitar and gave us

a full-length set of famous Cursive tracks from across their discography. Just me, 30-ish people on couches, and one of my heroes. A very Kansas City turn of events, which would be impossible to describe to my friends on the coasts. Not that they would understand how thrilled I was to see Tim Kasher and Isaiah Radkey screaming a Toxic Cock Syndrome song from six feet away.

Despite riffing on songs he's performed since the early 2000s, Kasher noted that a few were arrangements getting tweaked for solo performance. Notably, and perhaps ironically, he closed with "Art is Hard"—pre-apologizing that it was only the latest attempt at making the song work without a full band.

My drive home was spent whirring on that last bit. A song that isn't just burned into my brain, but encoded in my DNA, is still a work in progress for the guy who wrote it. The idea that nothing creative is truly ever finished continues to ring true, but I'm caught on the idea that stories themselves might constantly be seeping out—a creature seeking shape.

The Pitch has always prided itself for being a platform where stories get told. Especially the ones that would otherwise have never found their shape. It isn't just the talented staff, freelancers, columnists, interns, designers, and editors in our orbit, but those readers who see a chance to trust us with their tales.

There's been an influx of late in submissions to our KC Voices column, where community 'Letter to the Editor' musings get to share our signal. I like getting those. You seem to like reading them. In fact, if you've got anything you want us to hear about this life we share, hit me up at tips@thepitchkc.com and tell the city what you've kept inside for too long.

Art is hard, but if your story doesn't fit on the back of a postcard, bring it our way.

Pitch in and we'll make it through,

P

Brock Wilbur



Tim Kasher and Isaiah Radkey, photo by Brock Wilbur

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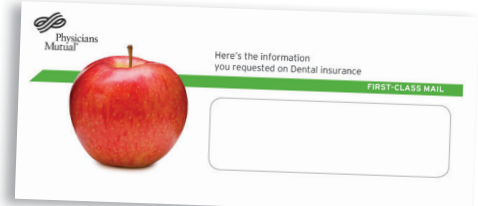
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Plumbing Industrial Complex

THE RENOVATION AUTHOR KENAN ORHAN
DISCUSSES HIS BOOKER PRIZE NOMINATION

By Abby Oclese

There's "famous," and then there's "literary famous."

Actors, directors, rock stars, and major public figures get stopped in the street and asked for photos because they're recognizable on sight. Famous authors (with the exception of Stephen King, Margaret Atwood, or George R.R. Martin), by contrast, live relatively unbothered. You know their names, but not their faces.

Even if you did, enough dudes look like Jonathan Franzen that you can't tap every guy who resembles him on the shoulder at Whole Foods to ask for an autograph.

Turkish-American Overland Park native Kenan Orhan is currently literary famous—and only looks a little like Jonathan Franzen. If you don't know his name yet, you're about to.

Orhan's career is still young, but he's already racked up serious attention. In 2019, his short story *Soma* received an O. Henry Prize. The 2023 short story collection *I Am My Country*—his first published book—was a finalist for the prestigious PEN/Robert W. Bingham Prize and longlisted for The Story Prize.

Now, Orhan gets to add the most exciting accolade yet: Booker Prize nominee for his first novel, *The Renovation*.

Even if you don't follow the UK-based Booker Prize, you're almost certainly familiar with some winners and nominees,

including Atwood's *The Testaments*, David Mitchell's *Cloud Atlas*, Percival Everett's *James*, and Ian McEwan's *Atonement*. So far, Paul Beatty (*The Sellout*) and George Saunders (*Lincoln in the Bardo*) are the prize's only American winners. Should Orhan win, he'd be the first Turkish-American recipient, and the first from Kansas City.

If none of that got you excited, consider this: Pulp frontman Jarvis Cocker is one of this year's judges.

Orhan's stories tackle serious subjects like loss, identity, and memory, tinged with playful surrealism.

In the short story *The Beyoğlu Municipality Waste Management Orchestra*, an Istanbul garbage collector creates a cultural center in her attic made up entirely of items (and people) who've been thrown in the trash. In *The Renovation*, a woman discovers her renovated bathroom doesn't contain a new toilet or bathtub, but a maximum-security Turkish prison, complete with guards.

The Booker Prize longlist of 13 novels, including *The Renovation*, was announced July 28. The list of six finalists drops Sept. 22, with the winner announced Nov. 9.

Orhan spoke with *The Pitch* about his work, his reaction to the nomination, and life as a full-time author in Kansas City.

How does it feel to be nominated for a Booker Prize for only your second book, after your first was nominated for a PEN? And for your first novel?

Kenan Orhan: It feels really great. I think it's easy in the arts to view the success of others in a way that removes success from you. Social media lends itself to that, and I don't do much social media now, so it changes how I learn about new books. I talk to booksellers and check new release tables. So all that to say, (the release of *The Renovation*) felt kind of insular this time around. It primed me to appreciate every moment of the release. With (*I Am My Country*), having never published a book before, I was more anxious.

With the Booker announcement, I felt like I was prepped for a huge moment of euphoria. It feels like the biggest thing in the world to me. It still feels shocking and dreamlike. I credit that mostly to the lack of sleep and the fact that when they called me, I was in Seattle, so I already felt off from the time change. I was anxiously awaiting the 8

a.m. reveal, and I had a strange fear they'd contacted me by mistake. Goes to show no matter what I do, I'm anxious about stuff.

How do you describe your own work? I can think of other authors it reminds me of, like Kafka or Jorge Luis Borges, but it's also pretty hard to pigeonhole into a subgenre.

I like to call myself a fabulist because it's very related to (*Invisible Cities* author) Italo Calvino, who's a huge influence. In the visual art world, the term surrealism carries preconceptions. It makes people expect something like Salvador Dalí, which I don't really do. I shy away from that term, but I don't mind it. Magical realism has that same thing too, where it encompasses a more specific place and time, like late 20th-century South America. Fabulism feels truer to me anyway, because much of my work is rooted in the traditions of fantasy, fables, and fairy tales. Not high fantasy necessarily, but basic, short stories, like Grimm's tales and Calvino. There's a desire to have fun tricks in my stories every



Photo courtesy of Kenan Orhan

now and again.

Many authors who work in a similar arena come from underrepresented backgrounds or from places associated with political dissent and exile. Why do elements of surrealism and fabulism work for exploring eras of cultural and political turmoil, like the moment we're in right now?

If you look at it historically and politically, it generally offers a useful way to counter traditionalists or an empowered culture. It stands in contrast to social realism, the quiet interior, less emotion, WASPy literature that was bigger in the 50s and 60s, though postmodernism was around then, too, but it's breaking out of those expectations and traditions. Surrealism and fabulism lend themselves to that.

Fabulism, being born out of oral traditions, has shaped it as a mode that can really speak to the hallmarks of those experiences, those of people not in power, suffering under structures of oppression. It's built to speak out against Authoritarianism. Authoritarianism seeks to force things into a nostalgic past, but surrealism is born of disillusionment with the systems at play and an enormous amount of hope, which is interesting because I don't consider myself a very hopeful person. I think any mode of storytelling that uses magic a little is so life-affirming for some reason. Realism can be life-affirming too, but something about fabulism is well-poised to speak to those things.

In general, I've noticed a lot of speculative fiction and work featuring magical realism and surrealism (like R.F. Kuang, Stephen Graham Jones, or Nnedi Okorafor) showing up on best-of lists and awards lists lately. Does it feel to you like that corner of literature is having a moment?

I've noticed it as well. I'm biased because when I was teaching, that was my bread and butter, and I still read it a lot. But other authors and professors I knew even then had been complaining about the slide away from realism, so that must mean that it's happening. I admit, I think I've noticed the shift most in visual media. Indie and arthouse movies often feature more surreal moments and strange situations. It's really interesting.

Part of the appeal, to me, is that it's a universalizer. No one knows what it's

like to suddenly have a prison in their bathroom. If I start with a premise like that, it creates a place where readers start from the same point. The reader might have no experience of political oppression or maybe they do, but no matter what, it all starts with "this is weird." It's a level jumping-off point to prime us for the empathy required in reading. It helps us live the character's experiences.

I'm confident life has always been strange, but I think our ability to record and present the strangeness of life to all the people on earth simultaneously has created this idea that life is strange. It's easier to see everything. That comes with its own weirdness.

You write mainly about Turkey under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and people living with the effects of that Authoritarian regime. But I notice a lot of parallels to the way you talk about, say, damage to monuments and cultural institutions in Istanbul, and the way Americans are currently experiencing similar damage under Trump. It never fails to shock me that you can just do that stuff to buildings and organizations that have been around for generations.

It's wild what a system of government can do when it ignores rules. Turkey is an interesting case, situated on the periphery of Europe and influencing other Authoritarian movements across the continent. It's also unique in that it's created an Authoritarian multiparty parliamentary system. It gives people a way to feel like they're part of an opposition that's a compromised opposition.

"Palace of favors" is how things are ruled over there. That's the most disheartening thing I see repeated globally and in our backyard. This idea that justice only exists as a warped thing that you pay for is all too obvious a next step after our healthcare system. Looking at Turkey since 2013 and hoping Western democracies see this as a cautionary tale, but instead watching them use it as a pathway to their own Authoritarian means has been really disheartening.

I'm writing very specifically about Turkey, and there is some overlap, but I want to talk about what's happening to



Photo courtesy of Kenan Orhan

Turkish people. I hope it resonates with others not because I hope they also live under a regime like that, but because American writers and readers owe it to the world to be more cognizant of foreign literature and cultures.

(America has) such a huge impact on a global stage. It's kind of a disgusting amount of power. If we're going to wield it with the best intentions, we should be cognizant of the world around us. Being mindful of our neighbors is an enormously helpful thing. It's kind of disgusting the number of times I interact with people who don't know anything about the situation in Palestine, for example. We're part of a system that discourages us from looking outside, and it has far-reaching effects.

What do you like about living and working in Kansas City?

I grew up in Overland Park, left for grad school in Boston, and spent a year in Colorado. I came back here in 2018. It's difficult to be an artist anywhere, so when you can be in a place that doesn't pressure you to struggle to survive from a basic socioeconomic standpoint, places like Kansas City are great for artists. There are places like the Nelson-Atkins that are free. It's a big culture shock to me any time I go to a bigger city and try to go to a museum, only to walk in the door and find it's \$40 to go in. This is a city that's more affordable than many other places. I'd have to sell astronomical amounts of books to live in a bigger city.

I really like that affordability means we're getting more artists who come here and more who come from here.

It does surprise me because I grew up when that was unheard of, but I'm seeing more and more artists who were born in Kansas City, Overland Park, or Independence. It feels like creatives are still being generated here and interacting with their roots, which is nice. I am kind of fearful it'll cause a rise in the cost of living, which might then destroy one of the nicest things about being an artist here. We have a lot of interesting stuff people don't know about, and I don't mind keeping it a secret for now.

What does the Booker announcement mean for the future of your career?

The Booker news is so monumental because it feels like I have a stable career for the first time in my life. I can just do this (writing). I do miss many aspects of teaching, but I also think I got out at the right time. When I was teaching, students still did most of their own writing and reading. Hearing from friends who still teach, I'm getting the sense it's getting tougher, and the joy I got out of it might not be there anymore. It was exciting to introduce students to Octavio Paz, Calvino, and other fabulists, and to show them that literature doesn't have to be just Hemingway and Carver.

Do you want to keep writing short stories or focus more on novels moving forward?

I love short stories; I love reading them and writing them. I'm probably a better short story writer, though evidence is mounting to the contrary. But I wonder if I'm a novelist masquerading as a short story writer. I could never get stories under the 5,000-word count that most magazines ask for.

I think I found my home in novels, which is a little sad for me because short stories hold such an important place in my writing. I wrote one in the last year that was in *McSweeney's*. For the first time in my life, I'm not producing three or more stories a year. But four days before the Booker news, I finished drafting a new novel, and I'm sending it to my publishers soon.

So fingers crossed! **P**

PROVING GROUND

REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT KIDS
FIND NEW FOOTING IN KC SOCCER
DOCUMENTARY *CHASING GOALS*

By Kylie Volavongsa

A boy melts trash bags over some socks over a fire to make a soccer ball.

So it goes in the trailer for *Chasing Goals*, an upcoming documentary from local filmmaker-slash-director Josh Gloer. It follows Global Futbol Community (Global FC), a Northeast KC soccer org that serves refugee and immigrant youth.

More specifically, the story revolves around a team of teenage boys representing 29 different home countries. They have just 30 days to prepare for the USA Cup, a first-time undertaking thanks to the club's then-new director of coaching. Competing against 15,000 other players, mostly from elite clubs, Global FC is the underdog.

The premiere at August's Full Tilt Film Festival was the culmination of three years of filming. And while its production was outwardly small in scale, putting it all together was no tiny feat.

Having lived in Los Angeles for 15 years, Gloer has a background in film and television; think drunk housewives and the true-crime genre.

"This kind of stuff, it's not satisfying in any way," Gloer says. "I was searching for stories that would have some kind of meaning. If not for anyone else, then for me personally."

That was in 2021, when American troops withdrew from Afghanistan. It resulted in the resettlement of nearly 200,000 Afghans to the US as part of the Biden administration's Operation Allies Welcome, which was later extended and renamed to Operation Enduring Welcome, per NPR.

"I actually heard people saying, 'Yes, let's bring all the Afghans back with us as long as they don't live in my neighborhood.' It pissed me off. These are people who helped our soldiers, our 18-year-olds survive in Afghanistan," Gloer remembers.

According to the Center for Immigration Studies, about 43 percent of children in Afghan immigrant homes currently live in poverty.

Wanting to do something, rather than "sit around and complain," Gloer began to volunteer at KC resettlement agencies and soon involved his daughter, who began to play with an all-refugee soccer team. That, of course, would be Global FC.

The club launched in 2014 thanks to founder and director Mariya Dostzadah

Things warmed up when one of the boys got cheeky.

"I asked his name, and he told me some professional soccer player's name, but I didn't know soccer. I didn't know for months that he was messing with me," Gloer recalls. "Two months later, I realized it and that I had been accepted immediately."

Gloer explains that the team is hard on one another in this way—fighting, yelling, making fun of each other—but that's



Photo courtesy of Wavelength Productions

Goodbrake, herself a former refugee from Afghanistan. From her experiences, she understood the precarity of growing up displaced and—after a visit to Syrian refugees in Jordan—how soccer could be a means of finding hope and normalcy.

Despite their differences, that glimpse of normalcy among the boys at Global FC training sessions struck Gloer, who at first found it intimidating to walk up to a large group of strangers who all knew each other and spoke languages he couldn't understand. Especially with the goal of following them around with a camera.

simply because they're kids and, really, it's out of love.

After all, kids from anywhere in the world are still kids at the end of the day.

"Just because this one doesn't have a cellphone plan doesn't mean that this one doesn't. You also have to separate the fact that they're late or didn't show up from the idea that it's always because they don't have a car, their dad has work, or whatever. It could also be because they're teenage boys, not just refugees," Gloer adds.

On the heels of the 2026 World Cup, the documentary couldn't have arrived at a

better time. Not only in the spirit of soccer itself, but thanks to the discourse it sparked in the States.

When the US Men's National Team exited in the Round of 16 (a 4-1 loss to Belgium), American fans questioned whether the States' current player development system could actually produce a winning squad.

Contrary to the millions who apparently benefit from American pay-to-play, a story from *The Athletic* showed that then US Soccer Sporting Director Matt Crocker believed that the number of male top-50 players produced on the US side... is zero.

"We're talking about kids who don't have cars, don't have cellphone plans, have mismatched shoes—holes in their shoes—and one soccer ball between all of them," Gloer explains in contrast. "It's kind of a big deal to be going up against, you know, a white suburbanite who has practice cleats, indoor cleats, outdoor cleats, warmups, three coaches, and parents that give you rides."

In the same way that there's something to be said of prioritizing the accessible grassroots version of American soccer, the same can be said of showing (as *Chasing Goals* does) what it means not only in a competitive sense, but on a human level—with athletes who more than deserve the chance to prove themselves.

"The reality of the industry is that, unless you have that sort of A-list glitz and glamor and star power in your story, it's hard to get funding," says Executive Producer Jon Weidman. "This is not like *Welcome to Wrexham*, this is not like the Lionel Messi documentary. This is not the kind of project where the industry is like, as soon as they hear one of the names involved, there's going to be a bidding war."

Weidman continues: "We need to elevate these types of stories more, and to recognize that there is something beyond the pay-to-play travel club soccer culture happening here and all over Kansas City."

Gloer claims that soccer is by no means a sport that teaches survival skills. And yet, there was a moment in which one of the Global players told him, "If he wasn't playing, he would be dead."

"The rest of their lives, they're the underdog who probably isn't gonna win," Gloer says. "But when they play soccer, they don't feel the pressure. On the field, they feel free. They're the winners." **P**

Of Blends & Ends

CROWS COFFEE DESTIGMATIZES DEPARTURES WITH DEATH CAFE

By Kolby Brown

Photo courtesy of Death Cafe



Founded in 2014 at South Plaza, Crows Coffee has grown to three locations across the metro, serving fresh-baked goods and cultivated caffeine. Now there's a darker roast on the menu: Monthly Death Cafe encourages open dialogue between attendees about earthly endings.

The Death Cafe events happen on the last Monday of each month at the Waldo location, not as a grief counseling session but to reduce the stigma around death itself. Crows Coffee barista and community outreach coordinator Kalista Schwartz began the event at Crows three years ago after realizing she had valuable insights into the topic following her dog's passing.

"My journey helping my dog die, and kind of that process of dying, was the catapult that really transformed my mind of how I think about death," Schwartz says. "It went from me being really scared of death, and it's this void no one knows about, to really being in a process with my loved one."

Soon after her dog passed, Schwartz's grandmother passed away—another experience that helped her understand the death process more deeply and introduced

her to the benefits of Death Cafe events.

"My grandmother, who was my idol in life, her passing was sad and hard for me. And that's when I found Death Cafes. She had a beautiful death, so I talked about that," Schwartz says. "The value of community, especially when it's not just your family and close friends but strangers, with these varied backgrounds, is unmatched. You have all these different tips and suggestions people have that can help you with things you've never even thought of."

Death Cafes aren't a new concept to KC, with other events held around the metro. Schwartz's event is left open-ended and with no target audience—a welcome discussion for curious attendees and those struggling with a recent death alike.

"I'm not a counselor; that's not its purpose. It's not a storytelling event, but it's anything related to death and dying," Schwartz says. "People come and tell their story of almost dying, or about a loved one passing. Some people come curious, just wanting to be around people to talk about it."

Though Schwartz attends and sets

up each event, she doesn't facilitate or structure the conversation beyond setting ground rules and providing a history of Death Cafe discussions.

"I give a bit of history and basic house rules of kindness and keeping it to your story, then they start. I've asked a question maybe once or twice, and I've done this for almost three and a half years," Schwartz says. "People just have things to say about death and dying, whether it's their own or an experience they've been through."

Attendees have name tags and get to introduce themselves at the start, then the circle discussion begins. Schwartz also has her "death deck" to spur the conversation if it stalls, a stack of cards similar to tarot cards with questions to begin thinking about death.

Schwartz says everyone can gain something different from attending a Death Cafe, including finding a comfortable space to continue to share their experience.

"You don't ever get over a death; you just kind of learn to deal with it in surprising ways, and what's hard is that feeling of no one holding space for me anymore, but I'd like to talk about that person," Schwartz

says.

Many people attend Death Cafe to overcome their own fear of death, which Schwartz reinforces is normal and should be talked about.

"Being in an environment where people talk about it without it being scary, just being more like, 'Hey, it's going to happen,'" Schwartz says. "These are some of the realities. No, you're not alone; your feelings aren't wrong and weird. It's normal to be fearful of death. I think it makes people feel a little bit more at peace with what's coming."

Schwartz's hope is that attendees leave feeling present in their day-to-day life, enjoying each moment without fear of the future.

"My desire for people is to help them live more presently. We don't know if we have days, years, decades, whatever. So, we should live more presently with the life we have," Schwartz says.

The Death Cafe events recur monthly. Attendees do not need to RSVP, but check Crows' socials for upcoming dates. [P](#)



Photos courtesy of Jill McKeever

Perfume Genius

Jill McKeever's 'perfume organ'—a crescent moon-shaped wooden row of shelves holding scent bottles—is on a worktable in the back of her perfumery, For Strange Women. This is the lab where she meticulously crafts her fragrances, mixing extracts to the thousandth of a gram. She can personally recognize and describe over 200 unique scents, and she can train you to do the same.

For Strange Women was established by McKeever in 2009, selling her entirely plant-based scents to a large online audience and from their storefront in Crossroads Art District ever since. While McKeever loves what she does, she says she had to carve her own path: There aren't many places to learn the science of scent.

"We don't have training in real life; we don't have education," McKeever says. "We don't have classes at school that teach us scent, and when we're young, we don't get taught scent the way we get taught vision."

McKeever has been looking for an outlet to share her expertise in this field and realized that more people wanted to learn her skill than she expected. Her first

session on scent perception—"Perfume Club"—was on July 27 of this year, and she says these workshops will continue to help her customers learn what they like and how to describe it accurately.

"I'm trying to bridge a gap for people. They know they love a scent, but they don't know why or what they love," McKeever says. "They're trying to define what they're looking for and learn a little more about it. It's not about making your own so much as having an appreciation for scent itself and perfume."

Attendees will get a list of terms to help them describe smells, and McKeever will walk them through their feelings, descriptors, and even memories they associate with each scent.

"I've noticed an increased interest in the last five years or so," McKeever says. "People keep asking if I'll do a workshop or a class; people are really more excited about perfume

JILL MCKEEVER WANTS TO TRAIN YOUR SIXTH SCENTS

By Kolby Brown

than they used to be."

Teaching how to make perfume is certainly no easy task, as McKeever says it would take years to impart her secrets of perfumery. However, olfactory training is a skill accessible to all, and that's what McKeever has decided to focus on teaching.

According to McKeever, olfactory training is similar to wine tasting with its sensory perception, yet the world of scents has far more to explore.

"With perfume we have so many different natural materials, and all of these have their best regions, exactly the same as wine in terms of the beauty of this craftsmanship," McKeever says. "This is a palette that is just a million times more interesting and expansive than wine alone, and people love learning about it."

Scent memory is a big focus for McKeever's fragrance creation as well

as the Perfume Club event, as McKeever says that's the quickest way for people to begin to remember and distinguish smells.

"Once you have a scent memory, once you can say you know what cedar wood smells like, or something else really common in your life, like people love petrichor, the smell of rain, you can begin to branch out from there," McKeever says. "There are lots of things you already have in your scent memory; it comes down to studying and expanding that slowly."

Beyond scent memory and descriptive words, McKeever teaches how to use adjectives associated with the senses other than smell to define a perfume or extract.

"There are all these other descriptors that aren't smell-based. This is something I use a lot in my work; I like to go tactile with my perfume. I like to explore dry, dusty, oily, feathery, waxy, silky," McKeever says. "You want those types of textures in a perfume because you can go that direction with it."

For Strange Women is in the Crossroads Art District behind The Bauer. Check their socials for upcoming events. **P**



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Disco Burger

Photo by Jordan Baranowski

LET'S BOOGIE

Another contender for “Kansas City’s Best Burger” has arrived in Brookside.

Disco Burger, which began life as a smash burger pop-up and currently operates in permanent residence at Varsity Club in the River Market, just opened its second location, this time as a stand-alone spot. Located in what used to be The Flying Horse Taproom on 63rd and Cherry, the new Disco Burger is currently taking online orders for pick-up at their takeout window for the next few weeks while they finalize the interior space.

Then, the party can really get started.

Matt Chapman and Darren Carter, co-owners of Disco Burger, have no plans to change anything with their residency at Varsity Club. However, a stand-alone location has always been the ultimate goal and opens up several new opportunities. “Our spot at Varsity Club was a great way to get our name out there and refine our recipes with a lot less risk,” Chapman says. “It really allowed us to get creative and find out what our customers want from us—and our River Market location isn’t going anywhere.”

Having a second location, especially a place of their own, is only going to let them get more creative. Chapman says that creating menus and developing new recipes is a collaboration between himself, Carter, and a few other team members, namely Dustin Mays and operations manager Jake Smithmier. “We’re huge food dorks. We all love breaking down the food we like or have nostalgia for and

then trying to improve on it. We’re always asking questions like ‘Why do we like this?’ and ‘How do we do this?’ Once we nail that down, we try to figure out how we can do it better,” Chapman explains.

The team’s food-science approach to recipe development has helped them create some top-notch flavors, and the expanded footprint of the stand-alone spot will let them dig even deeper into those nostalgic flavors. Their standards from the River Market location are all spinning up in Brookside.

Their signature item is the namesake Disco Burger: a smash burger with one, two, or three patties, topped with cheese, pickles, onions, and Disco Sauce. Disco Burger’s patties are true smash patties; the team took inspiration from West Coast burgers to develop the recipe. Soft, squishy potato buns contrast the crispy, thin texture of the patty edges, and the Disco Sauce tang definitely rings the bell of a few childhood fast food memories.

Other items currently on the takeout menu in Brookside will look familiar to people who have visited the River Market. Disco Dogs (with spicy Cowboy Relish and Gold Sauce), patty melts, and crinkle-cut fries are all available, along with vegetarian and vegan versions of the signature burger.

All these menu items may be the greatest hits, but the real showstoppers are going to drop when the dining room opens. That’s when Disco Burger will be able to start showcasing the new recipes they’ve been working on.

DISCO BURGER’S SECOND LOCATION OPENS IN BROOKSIDE AND THESE “FOOD DORKS” ARE READY TO GET CREATIVE

By Jordan Baranowski

“We’re going to be introducing some really fun stuff once we’ve hit our stride,” Chapman says. “The new Disco Burger is going to have soft serve ice cream. We’ll have space to expand the menu with some really tasty stuff like steak frites and a dill Caesar salad. We’re working on a knock-your-socks-off fish filet sandwich, and we’re roadmapping our monthly specials. Most of our specials are going to feature fresh, seasonal ingredients to help balance out the meat-heavy focus of our regular menu.”

Once the full space opens, Chapman says there will be about 40 seats inside, along with patio seating for another 20–25 people and some picnic space in the back lot. The goal is to make Brookside’s Disco Burger more of a neighborhood hang, rather than the late-night party vibe that comes with their location at Varsity Club. Even still, they’ll be ready to party: The Brookside location will have a full bar once the interior is finished, including a handful of zesty, citrus-forward cocktails to help play up the warm-weather diner mentality. Chapman also worked as the GM for Big Mood Natural Wines before it shut its doors, and he plans on bringing his experience with natural wines to the bar program at Disco Burger.

There are even bigger plans to continue the momentum of Disco Burger.

Right now, they’re only open for to-go orders from their takeout window for dinner on Thursday through Sunday. Once the dining room opens, they’ll expand to

dinner more nights of the week, and they’ll also start opening earlier on weekends for a lunch crowd. There are even plans for a burger-focused brunch menu once they’ve got their main service locked in.

For Brookside residents who want to try out one of KC’s best smash burgers, lace up your dancing shoes and head to Disco Burger’s takeout window soon. Keep an eye out for the dining room opening in the next month.

Disco Burger’s second location is at 600 E 63rd St, Kansas City, MO 64110. **P**



Photo by Sarah Sipple



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Photos courtesy of Unforked

unforked

HOW JENNIFER LEBLANC IS USHERING IN UNFORKED'S NEXT ERA AS A NEIGHBORHOOD SPOT

By Tiffany Watts

Unforked has long built its reputation on scratch-made meals, locally sourced ingredients, and a healthier approach to fast-casual dining. Now, its Woodside location is entering a new chapter.

One that extends well beyond the menu. Leading that evolution is chef and operating partner Jennifer LeBlanc. Trained in Southern California, her career has spanned fine-dining steakhouses, sushi kitchens, and more than a decade in Kansas City's culinary scene.

After several months consulting with owner Jim Sheridan at Unforked's Overland Park location, LeBlanc was asked to take the reins at the Woodside restaurant. The opportunity gave her a chance to build on what Unforked already did well while tailoring the experience to the people who call the Woodside neighborhood home.

"The demographics here are different," LeBlanc says. "It's a lot of professionals who want healthy, clean food. They're going to the gym, spending time at the

pool, then grabbing something quick that doesn't feel heavy."

Her understanding has informed nearly every aspect of the restaurant's evolution. The menu is being refined to reflect the surrounding community better while preserving Unforked's commitment to scratch cooking and thoughtfully sourced ingredients. The most noticeable additions, however, are still on the horizon.

Unforked plans to debut a full-service bar featuring signature cocktails, draft cocktails, and a new happy hour menu. Also in the works: a grab-and-go market featuring chef-prepared meals, intended to give residents a convenient option for high-quality breakfasts, lunches, and dinners that fit busy schedules.

Yet the restaurant's transformation isn't centered on cocktails or new menu offerings. At its core is a renewed emphasis on hospitality and creating the kind of neighborhood restaurant guests genuinely want to return to.

"The biggest thing people remember isn't always the food," she says. "It's how they felt when they were there."

That philosophy has become the foundation of the restaurant's new direction.

Over the past two months, LeBlanc has focused on reshaping the restaurant's culture. That work has included regular staff coaching, one-on-one mentorship, and a renewed emphasis on hospitality.

The objective is simple: every guest should feel welcomed, recognized, and valued the moment they walk through the door.

She envisions Unforked as the kind of place where regulars are greeted by name, where someone stops in for a quick lunch one day and returns for happy hour the next.

Valuing the restaurant's relationship with the neighborhood, LeBlanc has worked closely with Woodside residents, property managers, and nearby businesses. Through tasting events, guests have provided candid feedback on new dishes, helping to hone the menu and future offerings.

Plans are also underway for a neighborhood street fair this fall. Unforked and neighboring businesses will introduce seasonal offerings while gathering additional feedback from the community.

That collaborative mindset carries into the kitchen as well. LeBlanc has

formed her culinary philosophy around seasonality and strong relationships with local producers. As the restaurant's operational changes take hold, she plans to incorporate more seasonal ingredients while continuing to highlight regional farms and suppliers.

The approach aligns naturally with Unforked's long-standing commitment to scratch cooking—a distinction she believes many guests still don't fully recognize.

"Most people don't realize everything we're doing here is from scratch," she says. "We're doing it the hard way."

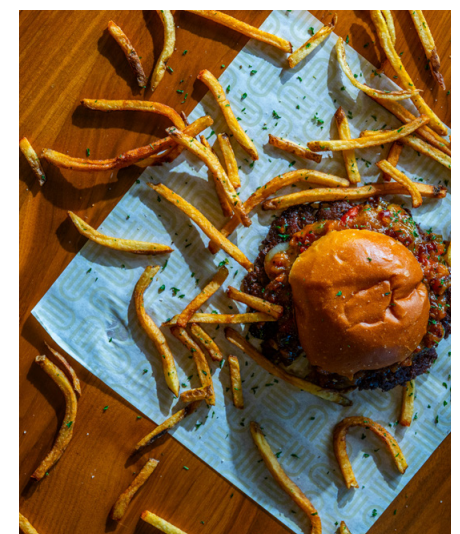
Whenever possible, Unforked sources ingredients from local producers, prefers organic products, and serves Creekstone Farms beef raised in Kansas. And those decisions aren't simply selling points. They're an extension of the restaurant's values and an opportunity to tell a more complete story about the ingredients and the care behind the people who produce them.

In a dining landscape increasingly defined by convenience, Unforked is betting on something different: culinary integrity, thoughtful hospitality, and genuine neighborhood connection. The goal isn't simply to serve guests quickly. It's to prove that convenience and craftsmanship can exist on the same plate.

Success, however, won't ultimately be measured by annual sales figures. It will be reflected in the familiar faces who return week after week.

"If it's Tuesday at 5:30 and I know who's walking through that door for happy hour," LeBlanc remarks. "That's success."

Unforked has locations in Overland Park, Westwood, and Crown Center. **P**





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Mise en Place

📍 Silo Modern Farmhouse
17501 W 87th St,
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FROM 22-HOUR DAYS AT THE K TO DEFINING SILO MODERN FARMHOUSE, CHEF LAURA FAVELA SHARES HER INSPIRATION FOR FEEDING KANSAS CITY

By Sarah Sipple



Photo by Sarah Sipple

At Silo Modern Farmhouse, Executive Chef Laura Favela blends the curiosity-driven wisdom from her grandmother with large-format adaptability gleaned from years working in stadiums and casinos.

We sat down with Chef Favela to learn more about her source of inspiration and how it all comes together on the plate.

The Pitch: Tell us about yourself.

Chef Laura Favela: After crossing the border to finish high school in Texas, I went to The University of Texas at El Paso. I started doing food science there. I was always interested in food because my grandma, Felipa, would cook at home. We would go to the markets and make everything by scratch. I said, maybe I can make my own food, own ingredients from farmers, and cook like my grandmother. All my inspiration is from my grandma. She was a really good cook, and everything related to food is because of her.

Is there a specific recipe that helps you feel the most connected to her?

It's not about recipes; it's about the effort that she put into it. She made me try all kinds of stews and tacos; she'd bring peppers from Mexico City to see how they're different from what's in Chihuahua; go to Puebla to try all the moles. Can you even imagine? As a child, I tried all sorts of stuff, and I was into it because of her.

Tell us more about your chef journey.

I moved to Austin, Texas, and started working in a hotel where I met a really good chef, Jeffrey Troiola. He invited me to Chicago, and that's when my journey really started as a chef. We worked in this private club: the University Country Club in Chicago. I was there for six years, and the food was excellent. And then they decided to move him [Troiola] to Kansas City, where he asked me to join him at the Carriage Club.

After that, he left, and I decided to take some time away from the country club setup, and I went to open the Hollywood Casino. I was there for two years because I wanted the experience of opening a place. Then I went to Aramark—for the Royals, Chiefs, other entertainment.

They flew me to Minnesota to open the U.S. Bank Stadium, as well. So, I'd go there, do concerts, and then come back here to do

the games. And that was in 2014 and 2015, so I was busy! When they played in San Francisco, I don't know if you remember, but near the end of the game everybody's like, "Okay, they lost," so we wrapped everything, closed the kitchens; we were ready to go. And they call us in the parking lot, "Guys, they won... We open tomorrow." So we worked for 22 hours straight to put the stadium back together. And in 2015, same story.

Then, they called me from this place [Silo]—I don't know how they got my resume! We opened in 2018, then COVID hit, and then we reopened again. Basically, I opened it twice.

Can you tell us the story behind "Chef Laura's chicken salad"? Why does that one have your name on it?

It's just because nobody makes it in that way anymore. Nobody takes the time to boil a farm chicken with mirepoix. Nobody takes the time to let it rest, shred it. Nobody uses local anymore; they just want a chicken breast all shredded and ready to go... dry. I was like, let's put some love in there: some apples, apple juice, a little cider, a little creamy bacon thyme dressing. So that's why I call it that, because I'm proud of the process, even if it's chicken salad.

You've been in the restaurant industry for a long time, in different areas, so if you could fix one issue in the overall industry with a snap, what would it be?

More authenticity—make it your own. A lot of places just buy everything ready to go. Just open boxes, ready to go, and the cooking part is missing. They try to open [a restaurant] with too little effort. Like we make our crackers, for example. It's so easy. They don't make rolls—they don't even try.

Where would you go bop around on a day off to eat and drink in Kansas City?

I love Messengers for the croissants and everything. So even though I'm not too much of a coffee fan, I like matcha. For lunch, I'd say Zero Zero Handmade Pasta. Then Ocean Prime for appetizers. But I don't go out for dinner so much. It's hard, you know? I love sushi, though, as a late-night meal. Also, Anjin. **P**



By Ava McCluer

DRINK THIS NOW: KNAFEH LATTE AT TURATH COFFEE

📍Turath Coffee
9916 College Blvd,
Overland Park, KS 66210

The global Dubai chocolate craze began in 2023, when TikTok fed us videos of influencers tasting the dessert, sparking a culinary sensation. This Arab treat features milk chocolate filled with a pistachio-tahini cream, inspired by elements of knafeh, a traditional Arab pastry.

Soon, big brands joined in; Shake Shack released its Dubai Chocolate Pistachio Shake, and Costco started selling Dubai chocolate ice cream bars. Though the trend has mostly died out in 2026, the main ingredient in the dessert—pistachio—has outlasted its predecessor.

The Pitch tried three banana lattes for the August print edition, and is continuing to explore trends in coffee. This time, trying five pistachio lattes to find the best one in the Kansas City area.

Turath Coffee, an Arabic coffee shop, boasts an inventive menu, utilizing flavors like tiramisu, dates, figs, and ube. I tried their Knafeh Latte with pistachio cream, vanilla, cold foam, knafeh topping, and finely chopped pistachios. There were also pistachio pastries, as well as their Baklava Latte, which also includes pistachio cream, along with rose water and cold foam.

The lightness of the cold foam balanced out the naturally rich flavor in a way other shops couldn't achieve. I found the overall flavor in the latte is more subtle, but still aromatic and present. The pistachio cream has an almost piney taste to it.

Many shops combine the nutty syrup or sauce with a complementary flavor, like the vanilla in this latte. This is a smart choice, as it's easy to have too strong of a profile without it. The vanilla syrup is a perfect choice, and a great balancer.

Turath's authentic flavors beat bottled syrups, plus, the vanilla and cold foam, when combined with their pistachio cream, is a match made in heaven. **P**



Photo and illustrations by Ava McCluer



Photo by Samantha Russell

By Samantha Russell

EAT THIS NOW: POMMES FRITES WITH PORT WINE KETCHUP AT VOLTAIRE

📍Voltaire
1617 Genessee St,
Kansas City, MO 64102

I never thought I'd so highly sing the praises of ketchup.

Ketchup and I have always tolerated each other. I'm not one to turn my nose up at it the way I do with classic yellow mustard, and it doesn't side-eye me when I choose aioli or mayonnaise.

But oh, Voltaire's port wine ketchup is divine. Divine. Sweet port and tomato ketchup were always meant to go together like this.

Post-show in the West Bottoms, I was informed that food could be had at Voltaire, late, with a wide-ranging menu encompassing hearty soup and mussels—and the best fries in the city. A claim that made me raise my eyebrows with a curious appetite to find out.

Voltaire is just across from the Livestock Exchange Building on Genessee St. It's got a speakeasy feel with seating that nods to prohibition-era times and large speakers that spout tunes spinning on vinyl. The food descriptions are graced with dry wit after its philosopher namesake, not taking anything too seriously, providing good music and good food and good company at a reasonable price.

A quick description about the fries (\$12) so I can get onto the ketchup: they are slender, creating the perfect fry ratio of soft inside to crispy outside. They're dusted with grana padano and parsley, and a side of herbed jalapeño aioli decks one ramekin. Its creamy undertone uplifts the star of the show residing in the adjacent ramekin: port wine ketchup.

A dive into the dessert wine of Portugal occurs with each crispy fry dunk. Layers of tang and sweet rise in tandem, undulating apart, at last drawn back together with a tail-whip of sweet acidity that belies ketchup alone. Port wine grants new depth to the sauce of tomatoes and sugar, hitting every tastebud along the way.

I asked the bartender what ingredients make such a fantastic sauce, and she outright told me. I wasn't told *not* to tell, but I feel that I shouldn't. You have to taste it for yourself. **P**



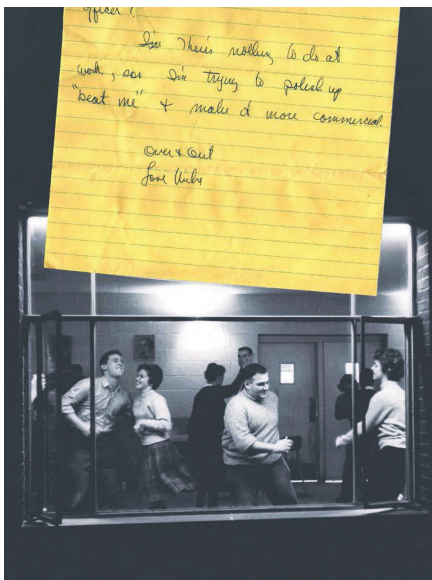
Photos courtesy of Third Man Books

ARCANE SUSTAIN

TONAL SHIFTS FROM THE WIRE-CROSSED
HEROICS OF ELECTRO-HARMONIX

By Brock Wilbur

Kids dressing up like Batman for Halloween. The teen in the Air Jordans. Draping yourself in the costume of your heroes can be all you need to propel towards the stars. Young musicians can buy knock-off replicas of the instruments they aspire to one day master, but guitarists in particular have spent decades trafficking in a much more elaborate facade.



In the 1960s, everyone wanted to sound like Jimi Hendrix. The problem was, well, no one really knew how to do that. Hendrix had electronics, amplifiers, and personalized instruments that worked in unison, but the proprietary arrangement, combined with his virtuoso skill, made it impossible to bottle that magic in any replicable way.

But an enterprising young New York dude named Mike Matthews wanted to try. He'd seen guitar pedals and other tone-changing functionality become economically viable, and he found an electrician from Bell Labs who enjoyed tackling experiments in his spare time. Matthews laid down a challenge (a sustain device that could make a guitarist sound like Jimi Hendrix), and Bob Myer accepted it, despite having no idea what Hendrix sounded like. Ultimately Myer simply built a circuit with "three transistors running full blast with high gain so when you put any kind of signal in, it would saturate and become a fully distorted and clamped signal."

To him, it was "ridiculous," but he built

it anyway because the technical challenge interested him.

That "ridiculous" circuit became one of the most iconic effects pedals in history, defining sounds from the dawn of classic rock to the grinding guitars of grunge. This was a new breed of audio technology—at an accessible price point—and would become a trademark of groups like Nirvana, The Smashing Pumpkins, Santana, The White Stripes, U2, Metallica, Rush, Pink Floyd, as well as Jimi Hendrix himself.

But Myer's curiosity didn't stop at guitar effects. He was simultaneously working on extracting electricity from the magnetosphere, building "aura machines" to photograph psychic energy, and designing flying machines... projects that Matthews funded not because they had obvious commercial potential, but because they emerged from the genuine curiosity and exploration that was within his reach.

America used to build things. Some of those things were failed psionic messaging platforms. Some were wildly successful tube screamers. We used to be a proper country, etc. This is how Electro-Harmonix

was formed.

Smash cut to 2021.

Josh Scott spent the pandemic tackling a personal project, because we all had the time to dedicate to hobbies while trying not to die. The founder of JHS Pedals and The JHS Show had built a wildly successful guitar effects pedal company right here in KC, and his edu-tainment videos had created an expansive online following. There are people who generally know about guitar pedals and their ability to help manufacture different voices and strength for the instrument. Then, there are people who have a near-unhealthy obsession with them—probably most comparable to sneakerhead culture in terms of physical and financial devotion, alongside spirited online debate and a fair amount of shit-talking.

From a pool of other online obsessives in this space, Scott formed a friendship with Daniel Danger. Danger is probably mostly widely known for his work as an artist—making limited, high-end tour art and gig posters for bands like Nine Inch Nails—amid a multidecade career as an illustrator across all media. Danger (also a musician with several stellar solo albums) is the kind of dude whose interest in the world of guitar pedals is all-encompassing.

Scott and Danger used the pandemic to deep-dive into the world of Electro-Harmonix's history, hoping to find a way to share the narrative of a truly original, singular contribution to rock'n'roll and the small team behind it. They began interviewing whoever they could track down with a history linked to this NYC start-up. Matthews himself made his time available, as did a number of other employees. Across their interviews, Scott and Danger got the impression that Myer had passed on from this world and would not be available to chat with them; a disappointing loss in the effort to tell this story, but considering the timeline... obviously not a shock.

An attempt to clarify the details of Myer's passing revealed that, well, he wasn't dead. He was alive and well—albeit in his nineties—and living in New Jersey.

Scott and Danger flew out to meet with the legend who had redefined the sounds and the source material through which all modern rock DNA flows. After a few hours with Myer, the man asked if they would be interested in seeing his workshop. Part of

the legend of Electro-Harmonix involved Myer's decision to build a workshop on his property so he could work from home rather than in a cramped office or a loud factory in the city. The archivist and the enthusiast were quick to take him up on the offer, unaware of how the next few hours would play out like a cinematic fever dream.

The genius who had seemingly resurrected directly into their lives handed off the key to a kingdom.

As Scott writes:

As he opened the workshop doors, it was apparent that we had found something sacred. A mix of caution, fascination, and panic took control of us both as we started to assess the room and all that it held inside. Daniel's decades-long obsession with Electro-Harmonix products, which involved collecting and curating a museum worthy of public display, collided with my insatiable hunger to gather and preserve the stories and history of the same brand. I had been interviewing Electro-Harmonix founder Mike Matthews and his engineers past and present for several years, but stepping into Myer's somewhat preserved original workshop—a space that had sat largely untouched for decades—and meeting the retired Bell Labs engineer who had formed, with his own hands, the LPB-1, the Big Muff π , and countless other iconic circuits, I realized this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. This wasn't the same old thing that I had become good at—finding an inventor and preserving their story among guitarists. It became obvious by the end of our first afternoon prowling the remaining artifacts, file cabinets, and the stories in Bob's mind, that there was so much more to E-H than the public had ever dared to imagine.

This once-in-a-lifetime find solidified the next few years of work for all involved, as they put together a 500+ page book, weighing roughly as much as a brick, that captures the entire legacy of the people and pieces involved. It isn't just a marvel of archival work or narrative history; it is also perhaps the most gorgeous extended work of art design and presentation we've ever encountered in the music history space. But you don't have to take our word for it, since Jack White himself is the publisher behind its elaborate physical release.

Made On Earth For Rising Stars: The Electro-Harmonix Story is the definitive

visual history—exploring everything from Mike Matthews himself to the workers on the floor, from circuit designers to those seeking to cure death, from flying machines to mass ESP experiments. It's a chance to experience never-before-seen relics, prototypes, documents, photos, and stories. It also features exclusive interviews with Jack White, J Mascis, John Mayer, Wes Borland, Billy Corgan, Bill Frisell, Nels Cline, Adrian Belew, Vernon Reid, and more.

Somewhere between VH1's *Behind the Music* and *Storage Wars*, a true tale of rock'n'roll's alternative tone and the wild path towards punk accessibility stands in equal measure to a testament to the power of pursuing what you love. As Scott addresses repeatedly: this is about the joy in making something, whether you are building a little box, or a company, or a shed with your friend, or a political movement, or all of these at the exact same time. Fittingly, this stunning new book feels like the kind of object we'll be displaying on our coffee table for years to come... even if some sections delve so deep into a hyperfixation of fandom that it can come off as almost pornographic.

Through praxis made perfect, this is the only book we've ever encountered that is sold with a companion original guitar effect pedal. Based on circuit designs found in that mildly flooded garage, Scott and his team put together an alternative take on the Big Muff pedal—the jewel in the crown of Electro-Harmonix and a staple in most rock guitar rigs. It's a perfect coda to the book release, and a perfect launching point for the next rock star who wants to drape themselves in the costume of the heroes, but rebuild the world in a singular, signature style.

Made On Earth For Rising Stars: The Electro-Harmonix Story is available now through Third Man Records. At press time, the special edition with companion pedal is sold out, but we'll see what the future holds on that. Whatever form it takes, supporting the life's work and passion of those involved—especially KC's own Josh Scott—has never been easier as a sales pitch. We'd tell you to make this a stocking stuffer for the guitarist in your life this Christmas, but again the book itself could be used as a weapon, so maybe under the tree instead of the stocking. **P**



BOE EXOM

ROCK'N'ROLL FRONTMAN MAX INDIVERI'S NEXT ACT IS LAWYERING UP FOR THE CREATIVE CLASS

By Emma Goulding

Attorney Maxwell Indiveri is helping creatives retain their voice in the legal world, drawing on his background as a musician to bolster his support. Founded in April 2026, Funk House Law is built on visibility and accessibility for creative entrepreneurs in the greater Kansas City area.

A University of Kansas alumnus and member of The Whips, Indiveri started Funk House Law because he saw a need in his community for accurate legal representation concerning the industry. Indiveri's background as an artist and

musician at KU earned him insider knowledge, coupled with his business experience and law degree, which allowed his passion to come to fruition.

"I just kind of grabbed at anything I could get my hands on at KU in terms of work in the arts," says Indiveri. "I wore a lot of different hats; at one point I was a singing telegram guy, and I was also a dueling piano player, so I've seen every side of the business, and KU gave me a great opportunity to be in community with people who were doing art things as well."

While balancing being a band member



Photo courtesy of Max Indiveri

and starting a law firm may seem difficult, it was a natural transition for Indiveri. He believes that a performer on stage is the same as an individual contractor who is requesting a specific rate for the work they do.

"To me, they are one and the same," says Indiveri. "My life goal was always to be in community with artists, and so every time that my band undertakes a particular challenge, I'm thinking naturally about how to serve other people who might be undertaking the same challenge. That's not just limited to musicians or entertainers either; that's small businesses, entrepreneurs, restaurants."

After several months of being open, Funk House Law has garnered significant support from Indiveri's friends, family, professional network, and the creative community. According to Indiveri, he never expected some of his personal business acquaintances to need legal advice.

"It's wild to see; I feel really useful to the people around me, and I think that the service I am providing is one that's been needed," says Indiveri. "When you're starting a small business, like most of my clients are, you're really taking a bet on yourself, and I've been privileged to see that bet pay off."

Opening the law firm has not been without its own adjustments. Every day is different, with contracts to sign and

trademark work that can take up to three months. A main goal of Indiveri's has been to make the legal process as transparent as possible for his clients and to remove the mystique that often surrounds the legal world.

"The biggest adjustment going from music to law has been the way I interface with people, and frankly being okay with not being liked if I am saying the right things. I want to be kind more often than nice in the law world, because the stakes are really high," says Indiveri. "When you are a performer, you get on stage, and you want to say what the audience is going to receive well, but in the legal world sometimes you have to give people hard and serious news. The fact that I get to advocate for my people, though, is what helps me get over those hurdles."

Looking into the future, Indiveri believes his goals are well in sight, compared to music when his goal was to be able to feed himself. Now, he wants to become an institution in the KC community.

"I want to become someone you don't have to hear about from word of mouth, but rather someone creatives know far and wide who they can turn to if they're looking for a great work product at a reasonable rate that's readily accessible."

If you wish to speak with Max Indiveri on legal matters, consulting, or anything else, you can contact him at Max@funkhouselaw.com



Photo courtesy of Mari Silveyra

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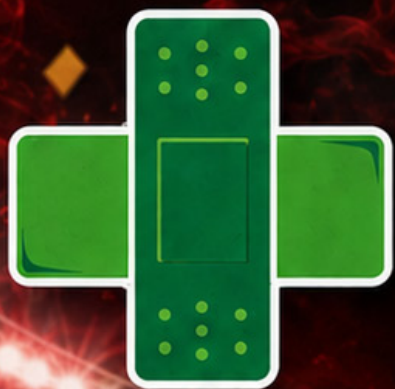
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