

## **Thought Catalog Interview with Chris Lavergne, November 2010**

### **What is the Psychedoolia Movement? How does it inspire your work?**

The movement is a term coined by artist Marc Bell, who has been a positive influence on my work. Marc used the term to describe a book he compiled titled "Nog A Dod." The book features a variety of artists who I've identified with in the context of artists who make zines, mail art and primarily make drawings. I have collaborated with Marc and various artists in this collection. Such interactions inspired me to doing a lot of collaborations.

### **Will you share a couple of your pieces with us?**

Kayne West Lazer Eyes, Idea Man, Orca Inhale, Godspeed You! Black Emperor Poster and collaboration with Justin Morrison.

### **The first work was inspired by Kanye West's new album, what moves you about his record?**

I must say that I am not lyrically inspired by this album, but the music does move me. I love how Kanye challenges his audience within the framework of popular culture. He cares about art and collaborates with artists he admires. He's generous with his ego. There's not as many "David Bowie" like artists these days, and I feel that Kanye is bringing back that spirit, in the way he drastically changes his appearance, style and music. This new album has a lot of range in music styles, but doesn't go too far off course from being catchy and fun. I sometimes think that Kanye West is a product of the "now" generation, and he's a reflection of the haters. Whether one likes him or not, it's hard to deny he's made a huge impact on art in the past decade.

### **Are You Into Graffiti?**

Graffiti is labeled as vandalism over art, and unfortunately I can understand why people see it that way. The majority of critics aren't seeing the really great stuff that is out there, so graffiti gets an overall negative response. I respect it, but it's not a source of inspiration for me. I like street art. It's a different form of expression. It seems less about ego and more about connecting with the public in a way that's message is more obvious and less alienating.

### **How Did Island Folds Come About in the First Place? What is the Art Scene in Pender Island like?**

Islands Fold came about to combine by interest in art and my wife's interest in health and nutrition. I had a 6 week residency at The MacDowell Colony in New Hampshire in 2005, and that had a huge influence on me wanting to create a residency.

## **How do You Balance Corporate and Personal Work?**

I do very little corporate work, so there's not much of a balancing act there. When it comes to balancing between commercial and personal work, I try to make the commercial work as personal as possible, so it feels less like a job and more like another chapter in my story. As an example, I don't want to attract people asking me to draw things like a cat riding a bicycle eating an ice cream cone. Actually, that wouldn't be so bad. I feel fortunate that people ask me to do my thing. When there are guidelines, I see it as a fun challenge. If I'm going to put my name to something I make, I want to stand behind it. I don't want to see myself as a hired hand making art just for money. Selling out isn't doing corporate work. Selling out to me, is doing any paying job you don't like. When I look around at the world, there seems to be a lot of people who have sold-out. Criticizing artists who live off their passion for art, should be at the bottom of the list of people to point fingers at. Of course there are artists that cross some dirty lines, but it amazes me when someone says " yeah that band sold out" and then that person goes to their job at Starbucks. It's very hard to not be connected to a culture of economy. Money is a tool- a necessary evil. For those who have access to it, let's be responsible with it. Money doesn't have to own a person, and we need to stop feeding this way of thinking.

## **What Books Are You Reading Right Now?**

MW by Osamu Tezuka and Icaro by Moebius and Jiro Taniguchi.

## **Do You Have a Motto? What's Your Life Philosophy?**

I believe that everything in this life is connected in some way. To try and absorb all of the information that exists is overwhelming. I respect the virtual and technological world. I recognize it's importance, but I also fear humanity's disconnect with the natural and living world. I'm amazed at how much time we spend looking at boxes, and living in them too. I believe in a fifth dimension and it's fun to try and capture a morsel of it's perspective. This world has endless possibilities, so I have to remind myself to be grounded. To embrace things that don't take me away from truth and freedom. I think it's funny how one can misinterpret freedom. Sometimes too much choice is like a personal prison, and being too influenced by one thing is a prison too. Being aware of both leads me to inner freedom. I don't try to be open minded, I try to be simply open. It's all so personal, and I feel fortunate that I can feel liberated and humbled by my ability to loose control. I'm still trying to figure it out, and I believe that learning is living. Art allows me to be a part of this process.