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Local Beer & Spirits



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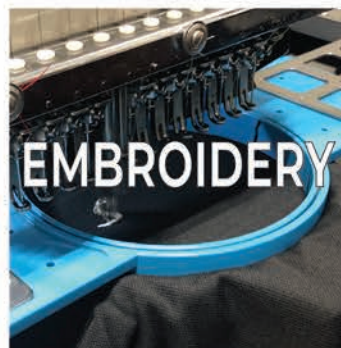
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**ABOUT THE COVER:** For our annual Local Beer & Spirits issue, artist **Chrystal Dawn** depicts the magic of brewing and distilling through a mythical painting. Find more of her enchanted art and shop for prints and stickers on her Instagram [@chrystal.dawn.art](https://www.instagram.com/chrystal.dawn.art).

## Emily Ward

### Contributor Limelight Contributing Writer



A passionate music journalist as well as an accomplished poet, Emily Ward has interviewed countless metal bands for *SLUG* over the past year. Read her feature on hi-fi bar *The Green Room* on page 10 and find more of her published work online at [linktr.ee/emthusiasm!](https://linktr.ee/emthusiasm!)

## Diego Andino

### Contributor Limelight Photographer



Diego Andino's sick black-and-white shots of punk and hardcore shows, from **Chat Pile** to **Bikini Kill**, have graced our coverage since last June. Check out his photos of this month's *Localized* headlines on pages 24-25 and see more of his work on Instagram at [@diegoandinophotography](https://www.instagram.com/diegoandinophotography).

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# IRIS

## PIERCING STUDIO — JEWELRY —



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pegasus landed on the hewn wooden table. As we looked up from our drinks, a tattooed woman looked back at us. "Is this a magical artifact?" asked the dark-haired cidemaster across the table. "Street treasure," she replied. "I found it on a walk today and wanted to give it to the Guild."

My tablemates looked at each other and smiled. "Peter, this is one of our bartenders," the sandy-bearded guildmaster and tavernkeep told me as he slid the statue towards his companion. At *Thieves Guild Cidery*, this kind of random event happens all the time. "A lot of the things on the shelves were gifts from patrons," owner and aforementioned cidemaster **Jordy Kirkman** says.

"Yeah, nerds are pretty cool," adds **Max Knudsen**, *Thieves Guild's* other owner and guildmaster/tavernkeep. Since opening in October 2024, the fantasy-themed cidery and meadery has received a resounding welcome from Salt Lake City. "We see the numbers go up every month," recounts Knudsen. "We're pretty stoked about that."

The success of *Thieves Guild* is not chance: inspired by the idea of third spaces, Knudsen and Kirkman have worked hard to cultivate community while filling an untapped market. A third space is a public place people can gather and socialize in without spending too much money.

"Max and I met [on the] opening day of *Quarters*," remembers Kirkman. "I would go there on weekdays and paint and get to know the bartenders and chill. I didn't want to be at home and wanted to be in a cool, creative space."

"If we were gonna make a bar, it was gonna be the bar we wanted to drink at," adds Knudsen. "What drives a lot of [our] decisions here is making it a place [where] people don't feel that financial burden — they can just come, enjoy the space and do the things that they want to do."

That's where the fantasy element comes in. Every corner of *Thieves Guild* is filled with purposeful detail: The walls are adorned with swords and fantasy creatures while each bathroom has a different theme ("They're portals to different planes — they just

# Thieves Guild Cidery

Rolled a Nat 20 on Their Charisma Check

By Peter Eckhardt  
eckhardtwrites@gmail.com

happen to be functional bathrooms from the tireless efforts of our house mages," explains Kirkman). Behind the bar is a card and board games library and series of taps fashioned to look like wooden kegs. Lighting the room are a series of LED sconces and candles that the pair designed, printed and installed themselves. "It took a lot of learning electrical engineering," Kirkman laughs. "Luckily, we have friends who are really smart."

Knudsen and Kirkman's shared love of nerd culture makes the space welcoming. The duo has made gaming events an important part of the tavern's identity, featuring *Dungeons and Dragons* night every Tuesday, nerd trivia every other Wednesday, and *Magic: The*

*Gathering* night on Thursdays — filling the bar with people eager to learn and interact with the fiction of the *Thieves Guild* universe. "We thought maybe 20 people would show up," says Knudsen. "Getting to role play those stories that you've always thought about doing is very gratifying."

Topping off any visit to *Thieves Guild* is a glass of house-brewed cider or mead. The founders began brewing together during the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing them to perfect a number of nerd-named ciders like *Neverwinter*, a dry, boundary-pushing cider, and *Prancing Pony*, a traditional-styled cider made from the Kirkman family farm's apples. "It's a growing market. Ciders and meads can be as diverse as all the beers people know about," Knudsen states.

Looking ahead, the duo hope to sell cans, host an in-house renaissance fair and educate Utahns about the complex natures of cider and mead. For now, the two are happy. Our glasses empty, Knudsen and Kirkman grin. "Not only is this a place to relax," begins Knudsen, "but a place to find the quest to go on."

Still thirsty for more adventure? Follow the tavern on Instagram at @thievesguildcidery for updates.



Photo: Gabriel Kegami

Max Knudsen (left) and Jordy Kirkman (right) are the co-owners and tavernkeeps at *Thieves Guild Cidery*.

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On an unusually warm false spring day, I feel like I've won the lottery — I'm drinking a can of sold-out Fonio from *Kiitos Brewing*. This revolutionary quasi-beer, quasi-seltzer marks a new chapter of *Kiitos'* brewing, and it has me eagerly anticipating the arrival of summer to pair with this sensational light and fruity beverage.

*Kiitos'* Fonio is the first beer made in the U.S. that features 100% fonio grain, an ancient cereal grain that needs minimal water and no fertilizer to grow. The grain is traditionally grown in Guinea and other parts of Western Africa and just recently made its way onto the brewing scene, with large breweries including Guinness, Carlsberg and Brooklyn Brewery all featuring the grain in 2024.

"We decided to showcase it in its naked form," says *Kiitos* production manager **Patrick Bourque**. "We just shot from the hip and made this beer without hops, without really anything traditional to beer except yeast, and just hoped it would work out."

*Kiitos'* specialty equipment — a High Efficiency Brewing System (HEBS) — allowed them to feature the grain as a solo act. No hops, no malted barley, no wheat — just water, yeast and fonio. Fonio is so novel to international brewing that *Kiitos* actually got on a pre-sale waiting list to purchase it and brewed with it the day it arrived.

"Bringing unique products to people seems to be a way to capture people's attention," says Bourque, who has been brewing with *Kiitos* for just over a year. "We have this unique piece of equipment that can allow us to make different things."

The resulting first-of-its-kind beer will be only the first of many iterations to showcase the grain in a new experimental series from *Kiitos*, which will counterbalance Salt Lake staples like their Big Gay Ale as well as seasonal favorites like the Pumpkin Latte.

"This version of Fonio will probably exist in some form going forward, but fonio as an ingredient is going to become a playground for us as we try different techniques, recipes, comple-

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# FONIO

at  
*Kiitos Brewing*

By Rachel Brooks  
rachel.brooks94@gmail.com

Photo: John Barkiple

mentary flavors, usage of hops, all that stuff," Bourque says.

This naturally gluten-free beer is nearly clear, and features notes of peach, lychee and passionfruit, a made-to-be pairing with Tsuki Sake (stay tuned, folks). The initial batch sold out in less than two weeks, perhaps *Kiitos'* fastest-moving brew of all time. The second batch, identical to the first in recipe, should be hitting fridge shelves any day now.

Fonio joins the ranks of *Kiitos'* other gluten-free offerings, of which there is always at least one on draft. Currently, they're featuring a Gluten-Free Golden Ale made from a blend of millet, buckwheat and rice.

"We're trying to lean into what people come here for," Bourque says, describing the soon-to-be-expanded gluten-free lineup to include a dark beer and an IPA, all thanks to the HEBS which can process millet and other gluten-free base grains.

*Kiitos* is currently sourcing fonio, which is approximately five times the cost of barley, from RahrBSG and hopes that its increased use will support local farmers and industry in West Africa.

"This first fonio beer is kind of a launching pad to a whole world of things that we could do with it, and while we love it and it's very cool, we want to see what different yeasts we can use with it, what hops do with it, what dry hops do with it, maybe mixing other alternative grains into it," Bourque says. "It just opens up a whole world of exploration. This is the start, not the end. It's a launching pad into better and more interesting things."

*Kiitos* head brewer Patrick Bourque created the first 100% fonio beer in the U.S.

Fonio, the "naked" version, is not to be missed, but each future iteration will be worth a trip to the source — including *Kiitos'* soon-to-be-open Sugar House location. Currently, Fonio (get it while it lasts!) can be enjoyed over pinball on draft and in cans at 608 W. 700 S., their original brewery.

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# Notes of VIRIDESCENCE

## THE HOTTEST HI-FI BAR IN SLC

By Emily Ward • edubsmcfly@outlook.com  
Photos by Jovvany Villalobos



James Ramirez wants *The Green Room* to blend sounds and spirits perfectly.



Hi-fi bars originated from jazz kissa lounges in Japan after World War II. Because jazz musicians were too expensive to hire, the kissa lounges instead invested in high-end sound systems to play jazz records. “Hi-fi [bars] have been around for a long time in other cities,” says Ramirez. “Utah’s just always been late to the party.” Ramirez visited hi-fi bars in LA, New York, Chicago, Denver and Miami, gaining knowledge and replicating a classic, dimly lit hi-fi aesthetic geared toward smooth listening and even smoother drinks.

*The Green Room* supports an all-analog sound system to produce a warm, classic timbre, installed with the expertise and help of local venue *IYKYK HIFI+*. “Nothing in the bar is digital — we don’t even have televisions,” says Ramirez. “There’s no way to play music in this bar if it’s not on vinyl.” The sound system consists of tube amps from Poland while running Klipsch Heresy and Cornwall speakers from 1987 that were refinished to match the wood of the interior. The Condesa rotary mixer was handmade in Australia, paired with two Technics 1200 Turntables — redefining the meaning of high-end sound. The impressive vinyl collection lining

the wall of *The Green Room* belongs to Ramirez, who collects vinyl and worked as a DJ for over 20 years. The great quality of mixed tonality accents *The Green Room*’s great quality of mixed drinks. Their highballs bear titles after songs, artists and music genres, pairing tastes and tunes while amplifying an already colorful palette. One such libation is named Harmonious Monk after famed pianist and composer *Thelonious Monk*, and features a Harmony Gin liquor. Another highball, involving mezcal, is titled *El Segundo* after the song “I Left My Wallet in El Segundo” by *A Tribe Called Quest*.

*The Green Room* hosts events on music catered to liquor, pairing the two and providing an optimal ambience. “We have Ladies First Thursdays,” says Ramirez. “Everyone is invited, but women bring their own vinyl to play.” This “BYOV” event takes place on the first Thursday of every month with DJs from *KUAA* operating the helm. “There’s also a night called Straight No Chaser,” explains Ramirez. “It pairs whiskey with jazz, and there’s something really classic about that.”

*The Green Room* separates itself from the bustling party life of downtown Salt Lake City with its earthy undertones and cozy atmosphere, providing the perfect contrast with a calm experience and ability to navigate conversation without having to strain above the din. “This is a watering hole for music lovers and people who appreciate music on vinyl,” says Ramirez. “I want people to enjoy music and spirits on their own.”

You can find *The Green Room* at 17 E. 400 S. and follow them on Instagram for their latest news and events at @thegreenroom.bar.



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# SAFER UTAH

## CRAFTING LAWS FOR CRAFT COCKTAILS

By Bailee Elaine • [jessopbailee@gmail.com](mailto:jessopbailee@gmail.com)

Despite common assumptions, Utah is no amateur when it comes to alcohol. However, it is among the 17 states that are subject to a control system known as Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) — meaning the government controls distribution and sales of alcohol. For example, grocery stores in an ABC state can only sell beverages containing up to 5% alcohol by volume (ABV). Higher alcohol volumes must be purchased in a liquor store or at a bar.

While alcohol consumption is decreasing among young adults, the social beverage doesn't seem to be going anywhere. SAFER Utah, an organization that lobbies for smart alcohol laws, is bridging the gap between business needs and prevention efforts. **Crystal Young**, a contract lobbyist and spokesperson for SAFER Utah, says their mission is "blending fair alcohol policy with responsible drinking, in terms of both education and policy that actually prevent[s] unsafe driving and addiction."

The organization bloomed from a conversation that sparked over a celebratory toast, honoring Young's journey through breast cancer. Throughout the night, talks about alcohol laws and policies were brought up. "Usually what happens — for people who work in politics or government in some way — is everyone tells you what bothers them and how they can get involved or not," she says. "A group emerged who wanted to keep the conversation going."

Young expresses the need for a middleman between the people in the industry (those who make their living from alcohol or the representation of alcohol) and the people in prevention, working on public safety policy. That's where



Photo: Anna Chapman

In a state notorious for alcohol over-regulation, Crystal Young is lobbying for smarter liquor laws that benefit both consumers and businesses.

SAFER Utah comes in, advocating for sensible alcohol laws and promoting education surrounding the topic.

Since their launch in September 2024, SAFER Utah has passed a bill that protects alcohol-serving establishments from being liable for serving a person of interdiction (someone who cannot be served alcohol due to incurring multiple DUIs and/or having injured someone under the influence). This has been an issue for establishments and their employees because only law enforcement has had access to that information. Starting on July 1, the bill will require an interdicted person to have a unique driver's license or ID card that indicates they cannot legally be served alcohol.

SAFER Utah is growing and expanding, with a number of ideas and policies in the works — including fighting tax increases and pushing for high-point beer and alcohol on tap. Young expresses encouragement for the use and adoption of mobile IDs (GET Mobile ID is

an app for consumers while GET Mobile Verify is for liquor-selling establishments). The benefit of this is clear interactions between consumers and businesses, who will be notified if someone is legally prohibited from purchasing alcohol. (Not to mention the added bonus of consumers having their ID on them at all times — no more missing out on the fun.)

While there is a stigma around alcohol consumption, especially in Utah, it is a societal norm that won't be going away anytime soon. SAFER Utah wants to add to the conversation, bringing concerns to the surface while promoting the idea that alcohol can be enjoyed responsibly. "No one talks when they feel threatened," says Young, stating that there may be groups who disapprove of alcohol use in general, but there can be a conversation about laws that work for everyone.

Young defines safe alcohol consumption as "knowing your limits, and when you don't know yet, listen[ing] to your friends if they're telling you that you've had too much. Have a buddy system, a designated driver or a ride prearranged." She adds emphasis on adult education: "Research shows that children of parents who demonstrate responsible alcohol use are far less likely to become alcoholics."

SAFER Utah wants to hear from you! Whether you're a consumer, non-drinker, law enforcement or you work in the alcohol industry, your voice matters and you should have more say in alcohol laws. Follow @safer\_ut on Instagram for more insight on safe alcohol consumption, and add your input to their Booze Barometer survey at [saferdrinks.org](http://saferdrinks.org).



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Photo: John Barkiple



Primarily in the business of lagers and hops, the locally-owned *Templin Family Brewing* pours one out in the field of wine.

# AU NATUREL Templin Family Wines

By Rio Connelly • [globalricon@gmail.com](mailto:globalricon@gmail.com)

Some of you are confused, reading the title and thinking, "Isn't that the name of a brewery?" But the team at *Templin Family Brewing* wants you to know they make wine, too! Dipping their toes into wine production with a few beer/wine hybrids (known as "oenobeers") as early as 2021, they fully launched *Templin Family Wines* with the summer 2024 release of a 100% Riesling on draft and bottled as a pét-nat (a naturally sparkling wine). The response was positive and since then, the wine has been flowing!

fornia, where the team learned about the 'natural wine' approach and made connections for sourcing grapes. Making beer and making wine are different and methods don't always translate. "It's a little bit more barbaric," Watts adds. Kevin's fondness for German beer styles expressed itself in the choice to do a Riesling (a classic German grape) for their first attempt, which was fermented with natural yeast and no chemical additions or filtration. Eschewing long periods of aging, the wine was served relatively young on draft and the result was a bright, tart, bubbly and refreshing white wine, perfect for summer. A bottled pét-nat version followed shortly after and was extremely popular.

How did a brewery get started making wine? The brand's tongue-in-cheek tagline from owners **Kevin Templin** and **Britt Templin**, "My wife wanted to make wine, so we made wine," hints at the collaborative nature of the project — but Britt qualifies it, saying, "I don't know a ton about wine, but I know that I like wine. I knew that [Kevin] could nail it, and he did." For company Vice President **Brittany Watts**, it's all about new challenges. "I think there are a few breweries in the nation that are taking on wine production as well, and for us it's important to keep challenging ourselves," she relates.

Wine releases since then have included the 2024 Red Blend with big notes of leather, grape skin and a pronounced floral aroma, and a 2024 Pinot Noir, notably dry for the style with smooth, velvety tannins and tart berry notes. These are sold on draft in the *TF Brewing* taproom or bottled in their to-go shop. The initial risk of selling wine to beer drinkers seems to have paid off. "It's always scary, because wine drinkers are a whole different ball game. Pushing it out there to see, 'Do they like it?'" says Britt. "I think it's a really nice marriage of the two here." The brewery had been buying natural wines to serve in their tap-

room, but now sell far more of their own. The team at *Templin Family Wines* are just getting started. The barrel room at the brewery is stocked with barrels full of wines and oenobeers aging and maturing, waiting to be blended into future projects. Stop by their taproom and bottle shop at 936 S. 300 W. to try their latest releases and keep an eye out for what's coming next on their Instagram [@tfbrewing](https://www.instagram.com/tfbrewing). As long as we keep drinking it, they won't stop trying something new.

First steps included field trips to visit **Evan Lewandowski** of the popular and formerly Utah-based *Ruth Lewandowski Wines*, now based in Healdsburg, Cali-



featuring Casey Wardell  
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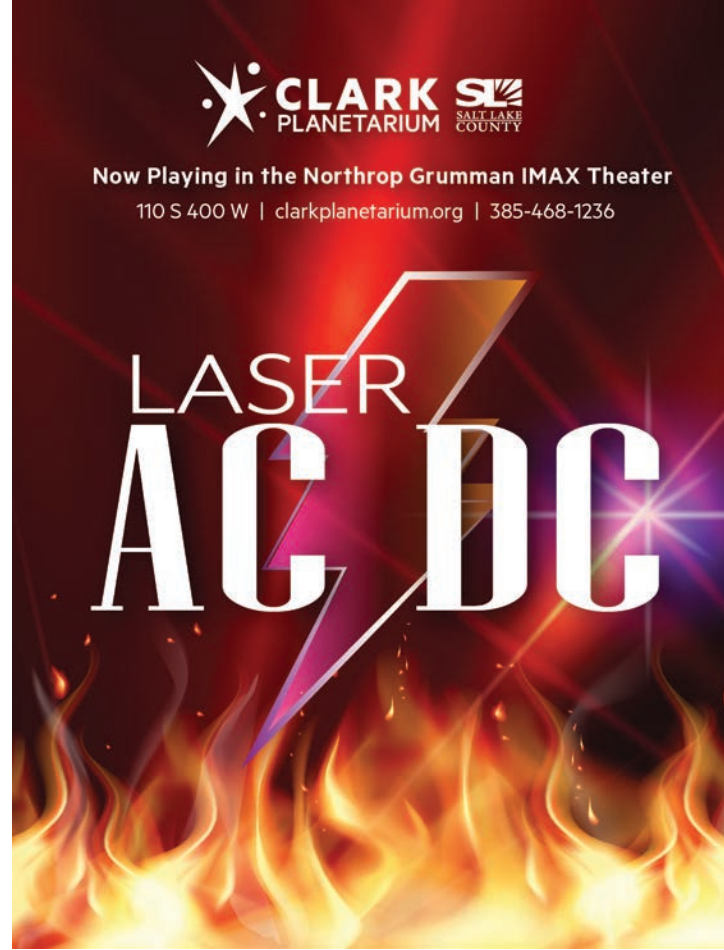
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UTAH'S BATSHIT



CRAZY COCKTAILS

By Alton Barnhart • [altonboy2009@gmail.com](mailto:altonboy2009@gmail.com)

Photos by Derek Brad

From the first drizzle of prehistoric floor berries to hazardous brewing in Prohibition-era bathtubs, alcohol is continuously on a bizarre adventure. But by reinventing the core model through wider access to materials, nothing toes the line between alchemy and mischief like a cursed cocktail. Okinawa, Japan numbs



your lips with the awamori drink of peppermint and liquified hornets. Yukon, Canada goes macabre with a severed toe shooter (bucket list idea!). But can Utah push the envelope in high-proofs? Let me be your fellow booze traveler and find out! Still thirsty? Check out more abnormal cocktails on [slugmag.com](http://slugmag.com)!

## CEREBRAL ASSASSIN

AT ACES HIGH SALOON

Pried from the cold, dead hands of the gone but not forgotten *Burt's Tiki Lounge*, this vile recipe has had the welcome mat rolled out at its new residency, *Aces High Saloon*. Some may think the sands of tropical exotica would only become muddied and brutally ravaged in a biker bar setting, but boy, does this little elixir make itself at home. Take a shot of bottom-shelf Old Crow, throw in a spoonful of Jagermeister and let it fizz with an off-brand energy drink — that's a heel kick to the goddamn diaphragm! It's diabolical to have such a stick-to-your-ribs hooch without ice, because the guttural flow goes down like Formula 44. However, a few sips changes all dread into a palatable, liquorice-flavored Four Loko. Or, you could just down it right before whatever heavy metal militia you came out to see. Pairs with: reruns of *Viva La Bam*, *Skid Row* and '80s body horror flicks.



## DEATH STAR

AT EL CHIHUAHUA

A zestier selection, *El Chihuahua Restaurant* has been dishing out Mexican cuisine since 1977. Manuel and Dolores Quinonez expanded their little taste of Mexican flair into a local phenomenon. Unfortunately, *El Chihuahua* is not infamous for its skillet-sizzled chicken fajitas or complimentary chip basket — it's known for the dark-sided temptation of the Death Star! Served in a literal fishbowl like a prop from a *Carrot Top* performance, the Death Star cranks out three high-octane liquors (Rothschild Vodka, Monarch 151 and — gag reflex — Everclear). The worst part? This was their size small! True sadists will sell their souls to the Duckie — all that changes is the addition of a fourth liquor and a rubber duck to take home. In its cloudy Windex, piña colada wonderment, ordering one without a dish is out of the question. Above all, it's one fucking ridiculous drink. Pairs with: Puerto Vallarta and DUIs after dinner.



## MIND ERASER

AT CHEERS TO YOU



When it comes to your first night of downtown bar-hopping in your roaring 20s, everyone has their starters. *Quarters Arcade Bar*, *X Wife's Place* and *Beer Bar* are worthy contenders, but for me, *Cheers to You* really got the party started. This alleyway sliver in the Grid City extends a golden mile to a night you'll (hardly) remember. Case in point? The Mind Eraser! It's Barton's Vodka, flavored liqueur and soda. My accompanying photographer, Derek Brad, clued me in on a similar drink he once had, except it had a Kahlua base and he straw-sucked it down immediately. *Cheers* flips the signature drink by providing different flavors, including a peanut butter and jelly variant. Although it was more watery than I remembered, it's a pleasurable brainwash that shoots me back to my college years. Pairs with: pool sharking some shit-kicking cowboys, pissing in the *Gallivan Center* ice skating rink and *Pie Hole* side quests at 2:00 a.m.

## ALTA BOMB

AT GOLDMINER'S DAUGHTER LODGE

Skiers rejoice! High within Little Cottonwood Canyon at *Alta Ski Resort*, the quaint and cozy *Goldminer's Daughter Lodge* has a simple yet potent beverage to heat up any mountain run. The recipe is basic: a full Solo cup of Pabst Blue Ribbon on tap and a shot of espresso. According to their Marketing Director Annie Simpson, every patron enjoys it differently, whether taking them separately or sipping each one at a time. However, like diesel fuel and gelatin to make napalm, the only way to feel its true effect is to bond it together! The bubbling concoction overflowing with a roasted aroma of both coffee and ale smells delightful. The taste, however, is mild in terms of a melted Starbucks drink. Maybe if I was up there for another hour to let altitude sickness get to my brain, I would then feel the buzz. Pairs with: no returned calls after a coffee shop date...



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"We just missed having the experience of a really beautiful craft cocktail," says **Kelly LaPlante**, co-founder of Eighteen Thirty-Three, a non-alcoholic craft cocktail pop-up event every Thursday from 5-10 p.m. at *Eclipse House* in Salt Lake City.

Non-alcoholic spaces and events are few and far between, and when *Curiosity SLC* — one of the city's only zero-proof bars — closed, it left non-drinkers without a social place to congregate. "And **Matthew** just had this idea — he was like, 'What if we just open one?' And I was like, 'Yeah, absolutely,'" says Kelly.

Siblings Kelly and Matthew LaPlante's event creates a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere where people can gather, drink and skip the alcohol breath, the \$30 Uber ride home and the scary drunk men.

"A lot of people have either stopped drinking or cut back, but we still need beautiful third spaces where people can have a lovely time, and they shouldn't have to be centered around alcohol," says Kelly.

My favorite drink of the night was The J. Strang, which had a little kick and little spice — it was fun and gorgeous. I also think the Lyre's spiced cane and mint tea dusted lime on top cleared my sinuses. As I watched Matthew make this drink, Kelly shared a funny childhood memory with me. Both Kelly and Matthew used to play bartender at their grandparents' home, and the painting that hangs on the wall next to the bar belonged to their grandparents. I felt a sweet, full-circle moment within that story.

The G. Taranto was another favorite of mine, a mellow and smooth orange drink that Kelly describes as "an adult Shirley Temple." And I couldn't agree more. The G. Taranto had a mixture of Lyre's Italian orange and San Pellegrino sparkling mineral water, making it enjoyable. Come summertime, I'm going to need about five of these while I lie poolside, absorbing the sun.

Eighteen Thirty-Three is doing more than creating a safe third place, though. The LaPlantes foster a communi-

# No Booze, No Problem.

EIGHTEEN THIRTY-THREE  
DECENTERS ALCOHOL

By **Kyra Cortez**  
kyracortez23@gmail.com  
Photos by **India Mendoza**



Kelly and Matthew LaPlante pour a glass of The M. Pattirini mocktail.



Eighteen Thirty-Three boasts a wide variety of non-alcoholic drink ingredients.

ty through donating their proceeds to charities each month. Initially, this wasn't the plan, but after their first event, when they donated to the *Salt Lake Harm Reduction Project*, they decided to continue supporting charities within the community because "it felt so good," Kelly says. This night's charity was Amplify Utah, an organization supporting and facilitating dynamic journalistic storytelling to celebrate diverse points of view.

Another drink I quite enjoyed is The M. Pattirini, which was served in a pitcher so everyone else got to enjoy it, too. Named after **Brigham Morris Young**, the son of **Brigham Young** and who went on to perform as a drag queen under the name **Madam Pattirini**. This drink was as cute as I imagine Madam Pattirini when she's dressed in drag. The beverage tasted fruity due to its Anima Mundi black elderberry syrup but not overpoweringly so. It was also slightly tart and refreshing.

Guests have described their experience at the *Eclipse House* as "soul-healing," a moment Kelly has kept close to her heart. "When you're creating a space and you're creating a vibe and you're creating drinks, we want people to come in and feel like they got their soul fed," she says.

Unfortunately, The Nettie B. was not my favorite drink of the night. It was quite bitter, and it tasted how I imagine an alcoholic cocktail would taste. (I'm just guessing here. I've never actually had an alcoholic cocktail because I'm 20.) But as you can tell, I'm a fan of fruity drinks, so this one was a bit too grown-up for me. When I'm 35, I'll probably return to it, though. However, I did enjoy Eighteen Thirty-Three's newest drink, The E. Fordham. I felt quite luxurious sipping on this one. The orange juice added sweetness and citrus flavors that felt perfectly balanced. I also loved the Bing cherry on top.

Eighteen Thirty-Three officially opened in January, and if you haven't set a New Year's resolution, it's not too late: Visit Eighteen Thirty-Three and learn more on their Instagram @1833craft and at their website, 1833craft.com.

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# It's a Crispy Boy Revolution AND UTAH BACKED RIGHT INTO IT

By Steve Koonce • @thedailybeard

It finally happened. Because of draconian laws on what we can drink on draft, the latest craze in craft beer has caught up to the Beehive State, almost like lapping the slowest kid in class during the mile run. More and more people are ordering something light and easy-to-drink at the bar these days — and wouldn't you know it, Utah's craft breweries are more than happy to oblige. Even with the ABV limit being graciously raised by state lawmakers to a very mid 5% (it was not the state lawmakers' choice to raise it, but that is a different column), imbibers are craving crispy lagers and lighter ales over the heavier IPAs and stouts now more than ever before. By "before," we are talking about 15 years ago. What led the craft beer drinkers of Utah finally to see the light?

There is a theory that yesterday's IPA chuggers are today's lager enthusiasts. Let's face it, 10% ABV hop bombs aren't just exploding with aroma and flavor, they also tend to set off a timed implosion of the tummy. Popping open a pilsner means less alcohol, hoppy hiccups and money spent on TUMS. There is also the added benefit that you can throw back a couple of them without becoming too intoxicated to jump on the right TRAX line home.

Locally made lagers have expo-

mentally increased in quality and quantity. Craft brewers today have become experts at utilizing a soft touch when it comes to lower-ABV beers. Brewing an amazing IPA isn't easy, but brewing a drinkable one isn't that hard. Think of it like this: I look amazing in a tuxedo. Take that tuxedo off and you've got a 40-something-year-old body, 30 pounds from dad bod status, in a pair of boxers and socks. IPAs taste fine with a lot of hops and a little booze, but strip away all the hops and booze and that beer has nowhere to hide. Lagers brewed today with amazing ingredients, expert brewing practices and increasingly forgiving bottom-fermented yeast is like if I started Ozempic, got an Anytime Fitness membership and started a strict Mediterranean diet. In other words, craft pilsners and lagers brewed today look good and taste even better.

Local tap handles are now filled with excellent beers, though that wasn't always the case. In Utah, we have been spoiled with *Bohemian Brewery's* excellent Czech Pilsner, but now we also have amazing pilsners from *Fisher Brewing Company*, *Proper Brewing Co.* and *Templin Family Brewing*. Delicious Mexican-style lagers from *Bohemian*, *Uinta Brewing Co* and *Shades Brewing* can be spotted at bars and restaurants around town.

*Kiitos Brewing*, one of Salt Lake's better-known breweries for big, bitter beers, has started to see people choosing lighter, hoppy beers. Director of Brewing **Patrick Bourque** says, "At *Kiitos*, most of our IPAs have taken this shift as well — to make them more drinkable and refreshing, rather than heavy and cloying."

But big IPAs still reign supreme. *Squatters Pub Brewery's* Hop Rising Double IPA is the best-selling beer at Utah's liquor stores, according to the Utah Department of Alcoholic Beverage Services (DABS). But go down that list and you start to see some lighter options. *Modelo Negra* is the second-best seller statewide and *Epic Brewing Company's* Los Locos Mexican-style Lager is in the top 20, with *Blue Moon* and *Bell's Brewery's* Oberon Ale not too far behind. Revolutions never start with a bang, but with the soft crack of a beer can opening. I think **Patrick Henry** said that.

"All across the country, I would say there is a universal shift toward lagers," says Bourque. "Salt Lake City is finally starting to see this trend. We are usually a few years behind places like Denver or Portland."

It doesn't matter how we got here; it matters that we finally arrived. In a state known for seeing visions and witnessing miracles, it's about time the crispy boy revolution came to the Beehive State and allowed Utah's craft beer community to finally see the light.

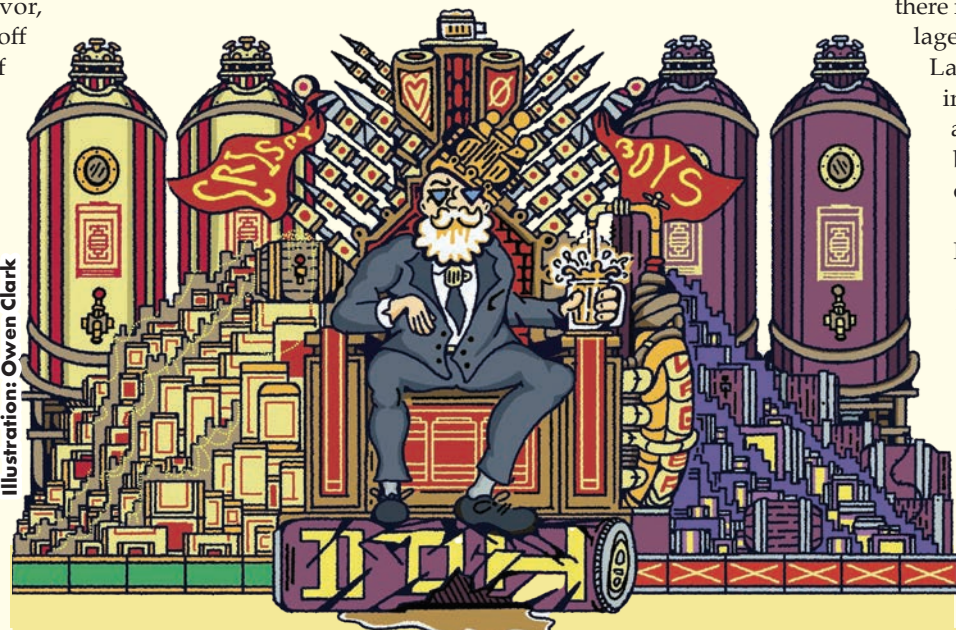


Illustration: Owen Clark

Steve Koonce is leading the charge for light, crispy ales as more and more breweries are vanquishing heavy IPAs and stouts.

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Illustration: @ginski.creative

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# BEYOND THE BAR

## How Shantelle Pace is Crafting Up Cocktails Through Online Mixology

By Caitlyn Hartung • @hybirdole  
Photos by Talyn Bezhad



### Rosé Americano

- 1 oz** Campari
- 1 oz** Waterpocket Distillery Toadstool Notom Amaro No. 1
- 5 oz** Sparkling rosé
- 3** Dashes orange bitters
- 3** Drops saline (optional)
- Orange slice to garnish

- In a tall collins or double rocks glass, combine the Campari, Waterpocket Notom Amaro, orange bitters and saline drops.
- Fill the glass with cubed ice.
- Slowly pour the sparkling rosé over the top and gently stir to blend the ingredients.
- Garnish with a fresh orange slice.

Shantelle Pace isn't just shaking up cocktails; she's shaking up the entire mixology game by creating engaging content for her ever-growing audience. But just like her drinks, her story is far from traditional.

In 2021, Pace made the bold move to transition from working in corporate America to bartending, a decision that was equal parts gutsy and liberating. "After a year working from home because of COVID, they [were] trying to get us back into the office," she recalls. "I [was] just like, 'Fuck that. I'm not going to live my life in a fluorescent box.'" With the support of her then-boyfriend, now-fiancé Colby, she swapped conference calls for cocktail strainers and never looked back.

Pace's journey from behind a desk to behind the camera started with private bartending. She then started bartending at *Ginger Street*, a now-closed restaurant, before transitioning into content creation in 2023.

Now, with a following of over 80,000 on Instagram and 139,000 on TikTok, Pace has solidified herself as an online mixologist with a sharp wit and original background. "I have a more unique perspective on alcohol, simply because of how restrictive it is [in Utah]," she explains. "To people in California or New York, Utah is a weird place ... It's a whole different world. And I'm that person for other people, where they're exposed to a world that shocks them."

Her approach to content has evolved to include both education and entertainment. "What I've found is that people want to know the history and the basics of cocktails," she says. "[Viewers] don't really care about cocktails that you created because they can't take that to a bar in Wisconsin."

Of course, being in the social media spotlight comes with its challenges. Pace is learning how to handle the pressure. "It ebbs and flows," she says. "I think that when it's ebbing, I've been learning to take a step back and stop scrolling because social media can make me think I'm a shit person. When I get like that, I get offline. I'll read some more books and get inspired in a way where I'm not comparing myself to someone else."

At the end of the day, Pace loves what she does. "I love being seen. If you don't love being seen, you wouldn't pursue something like this, and I'm okay with being seen," she declares. "That doesn't mean that I don't get nervous or that I don't feel weird or embarrassed sometimes. But I enjoy [content creation]." She's also here to challenge outdated ideas. "We don't have to stick to dumb stereotypes," Pace says. "I have no problem using a hundred-dollar bottle of whiskey and putting it in a cocktail because that's how I drink. Just because this product is great by itself, I will sip it, I will appreciate it — but then I'm going to be figuring out what I should pair it with."

Through it all, her brand stands as a testament to representation in the industry. "When I was learning how to make cocktails on the internet, it was all men. After a while, I wondered, 'Why am I not seeing any women pop up?' That's why I named my brand 'She the Bartender.' I want to make a space where women are represented even more."

Pace proves that when she sets her sights on something, she makes it happen — from bartending for the cast of *The Real Housewives of Salt Lake City* to crafting the perfect espresso martini. Find her at @she\_thebartender on both TikTok and Instagram.

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# Localized



Photo: Diego Andino

(From L-R) Olympic Deth is Tate Grimshaw, Eli Andersen, Diego Labrador and Jerik VanPatten. Not pictured: Jackson Larson.

## OLYMPIC DETH

April has been celebrated for centuries as the start of spring. And what a time for new beginnings — two of the bands on this punk-ish lineup have new names. Featuring co-headliners Olympic Deth and **Vape Plug** (formerly Ashbury Yacht Club) with opener **YOUCH!** (formerly Girl Meet), this show is bound to be sonically unpredictable and unmissable. Catch *SLUG Localized* on Tuesday, April 22 at *Kilby Court*. As always, tickets are just \$5 for this *Riso Geist*-sponsored show. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. and music starts at 8:00.

By wphughes

**Eli Andersen** started Olympic Deth in 2021 as a personal project — something creative to fill the void after his previous Provo-based band **Hobo Sapien** had started to fade away, seeing many of its members move north to Salt Lake City. Andersen would eventually make the same migration, but for the time being, he recorded alone on an 8-track in a shed (credited on his projects as Big Shed Provo), an act that came naturally to him: “I’ve been recording myself making music for a really long time, since I was a little kid — not for any reason other than it feels like I have to,” says Andersen.

Writing has been a lifelong passion for him, and he finds the act of recording as a wholly unique element to creating music, one that takes precedent over producing a polished end product. “I am okay with sacrificing the fidelity of a recording just to get the idea out,” he says. At the same time, Andersen fell in love with the one-of-a-kind DIY music culture of Provo. He performed some of his favorite shows at the area’s most unique venue *Thrift Rx*, where he not only played in front of his closest friends but become more imbedded in the local music scene. “In a place like [Provo],

people become hungry for anything crazy. It’s something I haven’t always seen in SLC,” he says of the strong counterculture that exists in Utah County.

Though Andersen has recorded “well over 100 songs,” the Olympic Deth catalogue is still in its early stages with an initial self-titled EP released in 2022 and the full-length LP *Nevada Homeslice* in 2024. The raw and rough elements that come from Andersen’s recording philosophy have become signature to Olympic Deth’s sound, which can be heard most clearly on the track “Total Child Kid” — drowning in compressed vocals and oppressive drums that take dominance over any other instrumentation on the track. “Most of the songs I put out are practically demos,” says Andersen, and though he’s spent hours trying to properly record a more polished version, he always gravitates back to the rougher original take. “I recorded [*Nevada Homeslice*] three different times but ended up going with the first recordings,” he says.

Andersen is most influenced by the sounds of early **Ariel Pink**, **Animal Collective** and **Hella**, notably their drummer **Zach Hill**

— though Andersen swears he “doesn’t sound anything like Zach Hill or Hella.” To me, Olympic Deth doesn’t sound like any of those bands, and Andersen agrees: “[Olympic Deth] is math-y, kinda post-hardcore, but there’s a lot of post-rock in there too. I don’t know; it’s so tricky to talk about influences.”

When Andersen plays live, you can find him sitting behind the drum kit and performing vocals at the same time. “A lot of people tell me that it’s crazy that I sing and drum but ... it just comes a bit more naturally to me,” says Andersen. “It does get sweaty back there.” Recently, he’s experimented with playing the role of a traditional frontman, standing out front and swapping the drum kit with a guitar.

While he’s not sure what setup he’s going to use for the show, he is sure about who he’s taking to perform along side him: **Tate Grimshaw**, **Jerik VanPatten**, **Diego Labrador** and **Jackson Larson** will support Andersen at April’s *Localized* show, and he might even sneak in a few new songs onto the set list as well.

# Localized



Photo: Diego Andino

(From L-R) Vape Plug is Andrew Tassell (vocals), Markus Birch (drums), Sam Kingdon (guitar) and Gray (bass).

## VAPE PLUG

By wphughes

Vape Plug was, up until November, going by the name **Ashbury Yacht Club**. I’ve written as much in my review of their recently released EP *Pixie Curb Stomp* under the new name, though that was before *SLUG* had booked the band for this upcoming show and before I had the chance to speak with the group. Long story short: Ashbury Yacht Club (AYC) is now an auspicious Salt Lake City label hoping to put out projects from local punk, metal and hardcore bands. “Vape Plug is the flagship band [for the label]. ‘Vape Plug,’ cause we’re the drug dealer for music,” says frontman and vocalist **Andrew Tassell**. The change came after a few AYC members left the group and new people came in, leading to the current lineup of **Sam Kingdon** (guitar), **Gray** (bass) and **Markus Birch** (drums).

But what *is* Vape Plug? We could talk genre and say their work falls under the wide umbrellas of punk, hardcore and anything that could’ve been the title song for your PS1 copy of *Tony Hawk’s Pro Skater*, but all of those description can fall a bit short. The key thing is, it’s off the wall: “We don’t want to take ourselves too seriously. We want to play shows where we can play more light-

hearted music but also switch into something more aggressive,” says Tassell. Much of that can be traced back to the varied backgrounds of each of the members.

Gray, the mononymously named bassist, met the other members of the band through his unnamed electronic side project when they were placed on the same show bill. When I ask about his approach to music, he remarks, “I’m all about the ephemeral nature of music — you have to be there and experience it.” That same type of experimentation shows up in his approach to writing bass lines for Vape Plug. “[I love] post-punk and New Order-style basslines, but currently I’m trying and incorporate pop sounds, jazz, hip-hop, even country,” he says. And while Tassell and Kingdon knew one another in high school, their musical paths differed quite a bit. “I definitely have a blues background, so the whole hardcore thing was definitely a transition. I was having to beat the swing out of my strumming,” says Kingdon. “I have a solo on one song where I was trying to do more bluesy stuff, but I had to make it more punk for the spirit of the song.”

Could we call this group a work in progress? Maybe, but only in the way that all bands are “in progress.” And besides, they’ve played a number of highly memorable, if not very chaotic, shows in their time. One of the group’s favorite memories was an impromptu show in a grocery store parking lot: “There was a kid climbing a light post and headbanging while people were moshing with a grocery cart,” says Tassell. At another recent show at *Twilight Lounge*, “a couple of girls were hunched over with their fingers in their ears. I think that’s really the spirit of the band,” says Kingdon. The members’ blended background is reflected clearly in the varied nature of the singles they’ve put out, and though some might view this as a lack of direction, Vape Plug sees it as an advantage: “You could say we’re still trying to find what works, but I think we’ve got a good thing going, even if it doesn’t have a clear direction,” says Kingdon.

Vape Plug is currently in the process of recording another EP, which will be out at end of the summer — though some of those new tracks will make an appearance at *SLUG Localized* on April 22.



# THE BAYOU WILL DO RIGHT BY YOU



The Bayou's signature Gumbolaya is a combination of Creole/Cajun classics jambalaya and gumbo.

The Bayou's menu features Popcorn Crawfish (top) and Red Beans & Rice (bottom).

By Christian Ledek • [sealedek@gmail.com](mailto:sealedek@gmail.com) || Photos by Nicole Marriner

Since opening its doors in 2002, *The Bayou* has become far more than just a Salt Lake City establishment — it's a full-blown institution, a fellowship of flavor enthusiasts and, dare I say, a culinary phenomenon. This one-of-a-kind beer garden boasts an impressive selection of hundreds of brews, but it's the Cajun and Creole cuisine that truly sets it apart. While the menu offers everything from burgers to pizzas to pastas, it's the bold, spicy flavors of the Southern bayou that steal the show. After all, how many places in Salt Lake City — or even the entire state of Utah — can proudly claim to serve authentic Cajun and Creole dishes? The answer is very, very few.

A quick glance at the appetizers section of *The Bayou's* menu will indicate you're in for something special. Leading the lineup is the Alligator Cheesecake (\$11) — "a savory cheesecake made with alligator sausage. Baked in a cracker pecan crust and served with roasted red pepper coulis." That's a WILD choice to kick things off, and one day I hope to be wild enough to try it. Maybe it's worth it just for the story, or maybe it's the kind of dish that surprises you, shaking up your taste buds with flavors you never imagined together...

Anyway, I got the Popcorn Crawfish (\$14). Lol.

Crawfish and the bayou go hand in hand like salt and pepper, two of a kind, kindred spirits. You get it. The Popcorn Crawfish is described as "crawfish tail meat, lightly breaded, deep-fried, and served with a side of tomato-chipotle dipping sauce."

It's a light, flavorful way to kick off a meal at *The Bayou*. However, I won't front — some bites packed more of a punch than others, with or without the sauce. That's likely just a case of uneven seasoning distribution, which happens. GET OFF THEIR BACK. Relax. If you find yourself in the same boat, take the advice I got from a server at a restaurant in New Orleans: "Hit it with the Crystal." Crystal is a mild hot sauce loaded with flavor, and since it hails from Louisiana, you can bet *The Bayou* has it ready to go.

For the main course, I went all in on two "Bayou Favorites" — Gumbolaya (\$19) and Red Beans & Rice (\$18). You can also go for the traditional Jambalaya (\$18), described as "a Southern classic. Choose from traditional made with sausage and ham or vegetarian." That sounds great on its own, but the Gumbolaya? That's *The Bayou's* "famous Jambalaya smothered in Gumbo to ensure full cardiac arrest." When I read that, I knew — oh hell yeah, challenge accepted. Y'all, the Gumbolaya delivers. It's everything you crave in a Cajun-Creole dish: rich, smoky, toasty, spicy, cayenne-kissed, garlic-loaded — straight-up tasty AF. Unlike the Popcorn Crawfish, where some bites hit harder than others, every single spoonful of this bayou favorite was packed with bold, perfectly balanced flavor. No misses.

The same goes for the Red Beans & Rice — no frills, no gimmicks, just the real deal. Described as "red beans, ham, sausage, green pepper, onion and celery cooked together and smothered over rice," it's as

straightforward as it gets. No BS. This dish knows what it is — a Cajun-Creole classic done right. Every bite had that deep, slow-cooked zest and freshness, packed with the amazing flavors you expect. The Andouille sausage already brings plenty of smoky, savory heat, but if you hit it with the Crystal? Game over. This isn't just food — it's a warm hug from the bayou, by *The Bayou*. It's the kind of meal that sticks with you long after the last bite. You'll be scraping the bowl to get every last bite you can muster.

*The Bayou* is a little slice of Louisiana tucked away in Salt Lake City. From the excellent flavors to the welcoming atmosphere, it's the kind of place that keeps you coming back, whether for the next round of brews, another shot at the Alligator Cheesecake, or just the comfort of a perfectly spiced bowl of Gumbolaya or Red Beans & Rice. It can be rare to find a spot that commits so fully to a regional cuisine, especially one as distinct and vibrant as Cajun and Creole food. *The Bayou* pulls it off, serving up food that's as unapologetically flavorful as the culture it represents. So, if you're craving a taste of the South with a side of good vibes, do yourself a favor — grab some friends, grab a beer and let *The Bayou* take care of the rest.

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# NCECA 2025!

## SALT LAKE CITY WELCOMES NATION'S LARGEST CERAMICS CONFERENCE

By Grace Simpson • [simpson.ograce@gmail.com](mailto:simpson.ograce@gmail.com) || Photos by John Taylor

The 2025 National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) Conference was held in Salt Lake City from March 26-29. It was the city's first time hosting the prestigious conference, with an estimated attendance of 5,000 people. The event welcomed artists, enthusiasts and collectors from around the country to showcase their work, discuss trends and hear from prominent artists. Over 55 exhibitions took place throughout the city, including 10 Featured and Cornerstone Exhibitions.

Horacio Rodriguez was chosen to be the on-site conference liaison in Salt Lake. Rodriguez has been an active ceramist for over two decades and has lived in Utah since 2016. He was excited to host NCECA here, having developed a deep appreciation for the state. "I love the art scene in Salt Lake. It's a hidden gem," he says. "I'm hoping that by [people] coming here and seeing the vibrant art scene and community, they'll see we have a beautiful state."

Organizing a ceramics conference of this scale came with unique challenges. Rodriguez has worked the past two years to ensure the city could successfully host the conference. "A big part of it was finding all the venues to house the shows," he explains. "Salt Lake doesn't have a lot of the infrastructure for three-dimensional shows. We've had to build pedestals for all the Featured Exhibition venues." Despite logistical hiccups, Rodriguez, dedicated volunteers and NCECA partners created stunning displays.

Three important shows, the NCECA Annual: "True and Real," the Juried Student Exhibition and the Multicultural Fellowship Exhibition, are currently hosted at the *Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (UMOCA)*. UMOCA's Curator of Exhibitions, **Jared Steffensen**, oversaw the installation and had to consider how visitors would navigate the space and engage with the artwork. Steffensen organized the exhibition to create a natural flow through the area. "As you walk through, you start to notice that there's one section that feels like it's more about the abstraction, the shapes and the relationships between the shapes," he says. "But then you move into work that is more socially and politically based, that's looking at issues that artists are trying to speak to through their work."

Another standout show is "Rebel Girl," a show at *Finch Lane Art Gallery* showcasing all-women artists. Meanwhile, an exhibition at *Mestizo Arts* called "Treading Lightly: Walking the Talk" features artists from as far away as New Zealand and explores environmental themes and sustainability. In addition to the exhibitions, NCECA featured talks and demonstrations. "There's speakers,

there's presenting artists, there's scholars, there's people showing off new products or new techniques," Rodriguez explains. "And then there's a vendor hall where all the different brands of clay and kilns are."

A special addition to the conference was a group of potters from Mata Ortiz, Mexico, who live locally. "They dig their clay from the Great Salt Lake and in St. George," Rodriguez says. "I was really happy to make that local connection and bring them into the conference."

NCECA is especially exciting because it offers a glimpse into where the medium of ceramics is headed. Over the past few decades, ceramic art has evolved from mostly functional pottery like mugs and pots into more experimental creations. Artists are exploring new approaches to ceramics by integrating other materials and tools, and Rodriguez notes a growing emphasis on sustainability. "There's been a shift back to working with local materials, gathering your own materials," he says. "There is a DIY aesthetic that I think is permeating the field. I think it's all incredible." Ceramics remains a dynamic and evolving art form.

While the conference lasted only a few days, many shows will be open throughout the month of May, including "Rebel Girl," "Treading Lightly: Walking the Talk" and the three exhibitions at UMOCA. Next year, NCECA will be hosted in Detroit, Michigan. For more information about the Salt Lake shows and next year's conference, visit [nceca.net](http://nceca.net).



Horacio Rodriguez selected UMOCA as the venue for the NCECA Annual: "True and Real" ceramic art exhibition.





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# MIKE BROWN Gen Z Isn't Getting Drunk!

By Mike Brown • [mgb90210@gmail.com](mailto:mgb90210@gmail.com)

My editors here at SLUG asked me to write an update about bar etiquette for this booze-infused issue. Well, I can sum that all up in this opening paragraph: Stop spitting your used ZYN packets in the toilets and tip more. That's it. Remember, the hands that clean the toilets at your favorite bar are the same hands that make your drinks.

And in this economy? A dollar a drink isn't letting me buy cat food for Princess Ramona these days. I don't make the rules, but I make the rules. And so does inflation. But seriously, the ZYNs in the toilet are disgusting — please stop doing that.

But when it comes to alcohol and all the silly problems that come with it, like DUIs and liver failure, there's one that's going under the radar that I'd like to put a spotlight on and could be much more dangerous than the aforementioned snafus. The problem is Gen Z isn't drinking. Well, at least not like previous generations.

Now, I don't really know what generation I belong to when categorically judging people by their age. I definitely have "get off my lawn" boomer vibes, but that's inevitable with aging. I'm not quite Gen X, but I don't think I'm a millennial — I remember using an answering machine and I know what it's like to get dumped by a girl IRL instead of getting ghosted after a bad Hinge date. But I really don't know where I fit in. I was too busy getting drunk to care about such judgements, I suppose.

But yeah, Gen Z isn't drinking, according to statistics I learned from my degree at YouTube University. Either way, I see this as a problem. Like, how will SLUG have a beer and spirits issue if their key demographic isn't drinking? Do we have to resort to a vape issue? Like, a



Illustration: Wes Wood

Has Gen Z replaced booze with vapes and ZYNs, an even nastier habit? Mike Brown tells us his best theories as to why young folks are drinking less these days.

whole mag dedicated to the interesting and fascinating history of douchebag nicotine? That could be rad, with interviews about some of Salt Lake's most prominent vapers.

The point is, why isn't Gen Z drinking? Is it because of the vape phenomenon? Or is there something else going on? And how do we get them to understand the sweet sensation of a hangover from half a bottle of Southern Comfort stolen from your stepdad?

Maybe these kids are already depressed and are cool with it. Alcohol is a natural depressant, so they probably don't need it as much as my awesome, in-denial generation does. Maybe they can't afford the hooch, which I understand. Have you gone grocery shopping these days? Not DoorDashing, but actual grocery shopping. My grocery list now consists of things I'm gonna actually buy and things I'm gonna try to shoplift. Just getting the essentials adds up these days, so if Gen Z is saving Venmo credits by not boozing, I don't blame them.

Or maybe the alcohol companies suck at marketing these days. Is there a way to infuse vape flavors into alcohol? I'm sure Smirnoff could figure this out. Or more TikTok ads? Gen Z loves the Tik and the Tok, right? Some sort of social media integration where you somehow get digital likes for every shot you take. I'm not exactly sure how Zuckerberg puts this together, but if there was a way to up your social media status with the amount you drink, I'm sure sales would go up. AI could take care of that.

Then again, maybe legal weed is affecting Gen Z's lack of keggers. Wine moms are now 200mg edible moms, which I know isn't Gen Z, but you get my point. Besides, Gen Z isn't making babies like previous generations either, so there will be no wine moms in the future. But maybe this is a good thing. No more fetal alcohol syndrome, and kids are annoying. The end.

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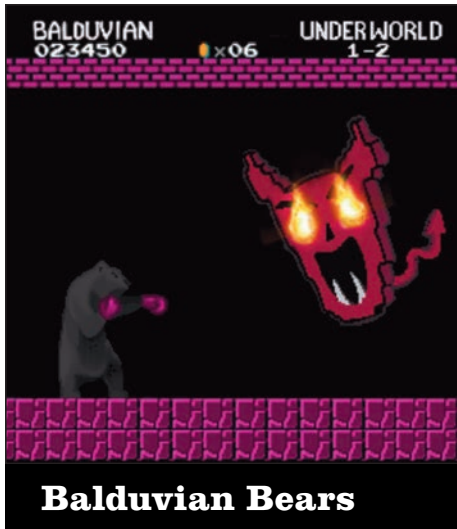
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# Local Music Singles Roundup

It's hard to be witty on command, and even though I get a couple of days (even weeks) to think of good intros for the section of the mag that I hold closest to my heart, sometimes I have to throw up my hands and say I got nothing — nothing but six excellent singles from six killer local bands.



**Balduvian Bears**  
 "underworld"  
 darkTunes Music Group  
 Street: 02.14.25  
 Balduvian Bears = The Sisters of Mercy + Twin Tribes

Balduvian Bears wields the power of necromancy with their enticing vocals and desolate, existential post-punk sound. Their new single "underworld" embodies this alluring darkwave tone with an upbeat, melancholy beat and a slight delay and decay in vocals, setting a perfect spacey ambience. "underworld" describes a tale of being enticed by wickedness, as it coaxes the listener into an endless void, with lyrics like "Follow your eyes / Take a piece of me tonight / I fall in line / See you on the other side." Off the beaten path, Balduvian Bears' charming new single is perfectly curated for those who want to feel a sense of darkwave nostalgia. Perfect for goth night at the club or most suitable for some sort of video game, "underworld" is universal in its sound, and is worth checking out. —*Litzi Estrada*



**HVXLII**  
 "S&M"  
 Self-Released  
 Street: 02.14.25  
 HVXLII = Ayesha Erotica + Adam Lambert + DJ Sammy

Do chains and whips excite you? Did **FKA twigs'** latest album awaken your "24hr Dog" and submissive fantasies? Or do **Oklou's** *choke enough* and **Lady Gaga's** *Mayhem* have you fiending for more EDM-infused pop music? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you probably would've been lobotomized in the '50s — and HVXLII has a hot, raunchy new track for you! Using rhythmic synths, the Salt Lake City-based pop/rock vocalist and DJ revives a filthy pop duet, originally performed by **Rihanna** and **Britney Spears**. Serving bright and resonant Adam Lambert-esque vocals begging to be chained up, whipped and gagged, this remix of a remix is one for all the local deviants on FetLife, the pretty rave girls and gays who prefer *Club Try-Angles*. In our red state where oral and anal were still illegal for nine years after bad gal Riri first gave us "S&M," HVXLII gives Utahns a second chance to catch up to the culture — so don't miss out this time. —*Arthur Diaz*



**Still Fighting God**  
 "Parasite"  
 SFG Records  
 Street: 02.14.25  
 Still Fighting God = Ramones + Nirvana

Valentine's Day got just a little bit love-lieker this year with the release of Still Fighting God's newest single, "Parasite." A harsh, distorted single that sounds like a combination of both *Bleach*-era Nirvana and **Misfits**, the track also takes me back to "People Who Died" by **The Jim Carroll Band** with its walking bass lines. Maybe throw some **Green Day** in there for good luck as well. As the newest single dropped since the group's 2024 debut EP *Purgatory Inc.*, "Parasite" proves they still have some gas left in the tank. The emo world of the late '80s feels written all over this track, especially in the lead vocals that carry us into a kickass guitar solo that has no business being on this song. The accented guitar palm mutes create a fun, defiant pop-punk jam that knows exactly what it wants to be. —*Jake Fabbri*

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By Kevin TK Frantz • @kevinfrantzphoto

Bryan Gennaro — Pole jam on a bike rack — Cottonwood Heights, UT



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# SNOW

Gabriel Kraft grew up in Mt. Ashland, Oregon where his love of skateboarding inspired him to pick up snowboarding. He's spent the last four seasons riding at Brighton Resort, including two years working as a digger for the park crew.

By Jovanny Villalobos • [countercultureconscious.com](http://countercultureconscious.com)



Gabriel Kraft — Lipslide sameway — Brighton, UT

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**Willis** - 4.15 Soundwell | **Sarah and The Sundays** - 4.20 Soundwell | **Enjoy + Puzzle** <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> - 4.21 Soundwell  
**DJO** <sup>SOLD OUT</sup> - 4.21 The Complex | **Artemas** - 4.22 The Depot | **Maribou State** - 4.23 The Depot  
**Dean Lewis** <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> - 4.26 The Complex | **The Wrecks** <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> - 4.26 The Complex | **Chloe Moriondo** - 5.1 The Complex  
**Hippo Campus** <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> - 5.6 The Complex | **nothing, nowhere** - 5.7 The Complex | **Anees** - 5.10 The Complex  
**Trixie Mattel's Solid Pink Disco** <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> - 5.10 The Complex

## KILBY COURT

Evening Elephants 4.1  
 The Kilans <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> 4.2  
 Blindlove + Hollow Hill + Drunk in June 4.3  
 The Alpines + The Narcs 4.4  
 Abe Parker <sup>SOLD OUT</sup> 4.5  
 Baths 4.6  
 Capstar <sup>SOLD OUT</sup> 4.7  
 Johnny ManChild & The Poor Bastards 4.8  
 Olive Klug 4.9  
 Heart To Gold 4.10  
 Sofia Isella <sup>SOLD OUT</sup> 4.11  
 Kenzie Cait 4.12  
 Gracemaker + Swarmer + Nadezhda 4.13  
 Brenn <sup>SOLD OUT</sup> 4.14  
 Ingrown 4.15  
 Kevin Atwater <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> 4.16  
 Ray Bull <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> 4.17  
 99.9FM KUAA Presents:  
 Robret Lester Folsom 4.18  
 KBP Local Highlight: Poolhouse,  
 Over Under, Hurtado 4.19  
 Snooper 4.20  
 Spyhop Presents: Sunnies +  
 Almond Extract + Leslie Lewis 4.21  
 Chase Petra 4.23  
 Borzoi + Molotov Dress + Early Bird 4.24  
 The Ghost Club 4.25  
 Austin Giorgio 4.26  
 Cryogesyer 4.27  
 YHWH NAILGUN 4.30  
 BabyJake 5.1  
 Teen Mortgage 5.2

## METRO MUSIC HALL

The Browning 4.4  
 The Birthday Massacre <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> 4.5  
 Warbinger + Allegaeon <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> 4.6  
 MYKAH 4.10  
 Marrio Suzzanne & The Galaxy Band:  
 80s Drag Concert 4.11  
 Folk Hogan Album Release  
 w/ The Pickpockets 4.12  
 Reapers In The Sky 4.17  
 Wicked Temple 4.18  
 Paleface Swiss <sup>SOLD OUT</sup> 4.19  
 Vision Video 4.23  
 Rise Up Revival + Sisters Of The Moon  
 + No Such Animal 4.24  
 Marrio Suzzanne & The Galaxy Band:  
 80s Drag Concert 4.25  
 clipping <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> 4.26  
 Deafheaven <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> 4.28  
 Ty Segall 4.29  
 Foxy Shazam 5.2  
 Viva La Diva: Once Upon A Diva 5.3  
 Viva La Diva: Once Upon A Diva 5.4  
 Buzzcocks 5.6  
 In The Wave 5.8  
 Viva La Diva: Once Upon A Diva 5.9  
 Viva La Diva: Once Upon A Diva 5.10  
 Black Pistol Fire 5.12  
 Sharon Van Etten <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> 5.13  
 5.15  
 Kilby Block Party After Party:  
 The Emo Night Tour! 5.16  
 Kilby Block Party After Party:  
 The Lemon Twigs 5.16  
 Kilby Block Party After Party: Tennis 5.17  
 Kilby Block Party After Party:  
 Nation Of Language 5.18

## URBAN LOUNGE

Weezer Tribute Night! 4.4  
 Metalachi 4.5  
 St Cruz + Rejected Takeoff + The Stouts 4.9  
 Authority Zero 4.10  
 Die Shiny Album Release w/ KLAIE  
 + Sleepy Moon Ray 4.11  
 Panzer AG 4.12  
 Rosegarden Funeral Party 4.14  
 Clap Your hands Say Yeah 4.15  
 The Unlikely Candidates 4.16  
 Palace Of Buddies + Body Of Leaves 4.17  
 The Plastic Cherries + 26fix + Hooch 4.18  
 High Vis 4.19  
 Federale 4.20  
 Men In The Kitchen +  
 Cool Banana + Kid Kawaii 4.23  
 Cosmic Country Club:  
 Harpers + Third Ward 4.24  
 L.A. Witch 4.25  
 Upon A Burning Body 4.29  
 Stop Words + The Wildfires + Gilded Lillies 4.30  
 Pardyalone 5.1  
 L.S. Dunes <sup>LOW TICKETS</sup> 5.2  
 Circa Waves + Friday Pilots Club 5.3  
 Tribulation + Unto Others 5.4  
 Felix Indigo 5.7  
 Fur Foxen's Pink Party  
 w/ VadaWave + Bellagrace 5.8  
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