

South Texas Entertainment Art Music

# STEAM

MAGAZINE

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2016

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ISS 10

FEATURED  
ARTIST  
DOUG LaRUE

DEF LEPPARD

RON BAKER  
A CAREER  
WITH PRIDE

PRODUCT  
REVIEW



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# STEAM

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ALTERNATIVE WEEKLY NETWORK

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# DOUG LARUE

switching it up, keeping things spicy

By Tamma Hicks, STEAM Magazine

Doug La Rue was drawing from example from the beginning. Born into a family of artists he was exposed to a wide range of creative expression from a very early age. The raw organic nature of Painting and Sculpture expressed by his mother Sharon La Rue an oil painter who created landscapes and portraits. His sister Sheri La Rue who owned an Art gallery in McKinney, Texas spent many years traveling the festival circuit selling art, Sculpture and handmade jewelry and now is an Art Teacher. Doug learned the technical aspects of photography and design from his father Edward La Rue, a structural Engineer Designer noted for his work in Aeronautics, Transportation and the Helium Industry. His father's friend Dan Coleman a photographer, who studied and worked with the great Ansel Adams, introduced the art of printmaking to Doug when he was 12 years old.

La Rue was fast tracked through high school and attended summer classes in photography offered by Southern Methodist University. While in high school, Doug worked for the yearbook as a photographer and designer. The yearbook won a national design award and was featured in a documentary film about the process of making annual books. Doug also worked for a large camera store in Dallas, Texas which gave him the opportunity to intern with professionals before going off to college where he worked as a photojournalist and artist for newspapers, magazines and as a stringer for Associated Press and United Press International.

Doug La Rue earned a degree from Texas A&M University in the college of Architecture. La Rue spent 3 years with the Texas Veterinary Medical center as a Medical Illustrator where he continued to study art by attending various workshops related to art production techniques. After moving to Austin, Texas, La Rue took a position as an Art Director for a small publishing company and accepted a seat on



the board of directors of the Artist Coalition of Austin. LaRue collaborated on the design and story creation of a very unique series of history books for young audiences. He also designed two commercial buildings and had the opportunity to work on a movie called *Rigged* starring Academy Award winner George Kennedy.

In 1994 Doug founded Glaze Studio, a creative media design and production company. The studio's first project was for the Texas Department of Transportation producing a statewide identity campaign for the Motorcycle Safety Bureau public service announcements. The project, called "CycleVision" included promotional branding, collateral advertising and television commercials starring Jimmie Vaughan with a pair of magic sunglasses.

LaRue was Director of Photography for two Spectrum Films productions focused on Archeology and Anthropology featuring the Native Bolivian Imarra tribe's ancient boat building masters filmed on location on the island of Sireque, Lake Titicaca in the shadow of the Andes Mountain range. The second film was focused on research related to solstice alignments and sacrifices at the temples of Tiwanaku, Bolivia. Footage from these films aired on The History Channel's "Digging for the Truth" in 2008. LaRue has continues to work on movies, music videos, documentaries including *Austin Groove* and *Strange Daze*, a documentary that chronicles





SENTIENT SURFER (ACRYLIC); WAKING ELEPHANT (ACRYLIC);  
DOUG IN HIS STUDIO WITH TOMMY DORSEY (OIL); RINGSIDE PRESS (OIL)



the life and death of the legendary Austin Music Network.

I'm looking at the walls in your studio and I see everything from Samuel L. Jackson in Pulp Fiction to a couple making out in the car an 1880 style Tesla, a guitar player, a rockin' rooster, and various people holding cameras. How do you come up with some of your designs and ideas?

I don't know, I was thinking about just that the other day. When I was a kid I played a lot of sports. Baseball, football, soccer, basketball, track, golf, basically I played a little bit of everything and I think that's where the multi talent comes from, because once I went into art it was photography, filming, illustration, and painting. My mother was a painter, so that's how I got started with that. She was taking classes and she came home and she'd set everything up while she was cooking dinner and she would reiterate exactly what the instructor told her to me. She was more or less just talking out loud and I was there listening, so I learned a lot that way because I went through the tutorials and class program with her. I was about 4 when she was doing these classes and I did my first real oil painting when I was six; I still have it. Strangely enough it was a chicken, not a rooster, in a chicken coop.

As for images, I don't know what makes me pick certain things. I wonder about that quite a bit actually. I studied architecture in school, which is basically the art of engineering and all of my professors were very conceptual by the way they approached architecture; they were very artistic, at least for the ones that I liked. I learned concept from them. Then starting from concept and going more towards the arts and using those skills and mindset rather than just making something pretty that goes with the couch.

I noticed that about your pieces. I see a lot of your personality coming out in your work. We've seen that with some artists there's a reoccurring topic that runs through their work. The Rooster and the chicken story is what made us think about this. Do you have something that reoccurs or have you ever noticed that in your work?

I guess the closest thing to that that I have focused on lately is the cameras; people taking pictures. I began coming up with these images that at first started out with selfies. I had

~ CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 ~

this concept in mind before I was commissioned by Strange Brew for a poster for the band Wrenfro. The poster is of a monkey with a monkey on his back taking a selfie with his GoPro while skateboarding down a hill and listening to an iPod and sharing earbuds.

We know that typically for a commissioned piece has to be done within a certain timeframe, so how long does a piece take you to do, commission or not?

It really just depends on the type and size of the piece because these aren't quick pieces that I do; they're pretty detailed, hand drawn, and the original art is typically much bigger than the mixed media piece or print, but I've kind of gauged my time over the years to about 10 hours per square inch.

You were saying that you were into a variety of sports as a kid and now in your life there are the different types of art you are involved in including filming, photography, illustrating, and painting. Is there any means to the end or will it always be

evolving?

Well, I have a brand services company, Glaze, so I do creative branding that includes photography, web development, illustrations, photography, graphic design, and whatever else needed. We've won two national awards for packaging designs.

Glaze is an interesting name, how did you come up with that?

Glaze is like glaze on a doughnut. We provide a service that adds the sweet sugary sparkle to your product.

To tell the story of how you got into documentary filmmaking you also have to tell the story of how you met your wife, so... how did you get into documentary filmmaking?

Well, in the mid-90s I had started an art and entertainment magazine here in Austin. About four years before I started the magazine, I was doing a t-shirt design for a guy who had a bungee jumping company and he said, "I know this photographer whose taken pictures for us and I think you and she would really hit it off." So unannounced to us, he and

his fiancé invited me and Laura (Roja-Larue) to film and photograph their wedding. Well, photographers are very competitive and we didn't get along. Now fast forward four years and I'm interviewing Loris Lowe about her show "Local Licks", which I believe is the longest running local music program in Austin today. Anyway, I was doing a story about Local Licks and Loris said she knew a photographer that I needed to meet and it was Laura. So I was doing the magazine when we were dating and she just jumped in and here we are.

The magazine, Capital City Art & Entertainment, was printed for about a year and then we kept it online for a while after that. It was a lot of fun and a great experience that opened my eyes to a lot of other things including documentary films as well as independent features. People had been telling us that the magazine should be a TV show, so it was kind of a natural step to move to the documentary films. We were very involved with the Austin Music scene and did two documentaries, Austin Groove and Strange Daze.

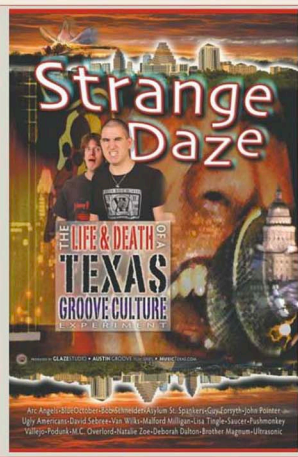


REBIRTH OF A  
FALLEN SOLDIERS  
CROSS (MIXED  
MEDIA);  
RETRO HIPSTER  
SELFIE (PEN &  
INK); BOLIVIA FILM  
CREW, DOUG;  
LEFT/STANDING  
(PHOTO BY LAURA  
ROJO-LARUE);  
STRANGE DAZE  
MOVIE POSTER



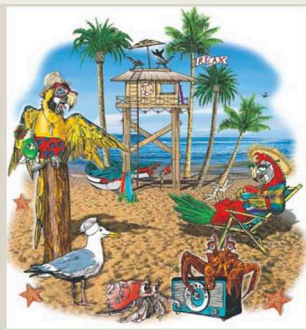
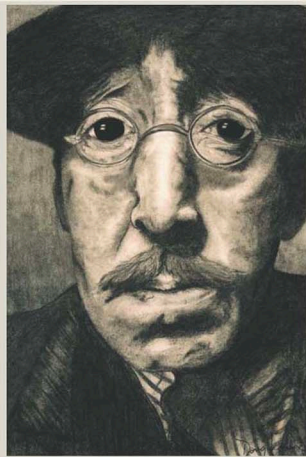
Our Film Crew in Tiwanaku, Bolivia

Harvard, University of Pennsylvania, Spectrum Films, Inc and Glaze Studios, LLC





AUSTIN ARTISTS (PEN & INK); SUM GUITAR (MIXED MEDIA); JAKE THE POET (PENCIL); THE BALLERINA; (PENCIL)  
PARROT BEACH PARTY (MIXED MEDIA)



Strange Daze was about the Austin Music Network which was a public access channel the city of Austin turned it into a 24/7 all Texas Music station. The city had an \$800,000/year budget and operated the station from 1993 to 2003. You can see it on my YouTube.com channel, Doug LaRue.

**That sounds very interesting. And Austin Groove?**  
Well, that was actually a precursor to Strange Daze. Austin Groove is more about how people came to Austin and we interviewed a bunch of those artists; it's kind of a fluff piece on the Austin Music Scene while we were teaching ourselves about documentary making. Then we got into the real meat and learning about what was happening with the Austin Music Network and how the whole staff was being pushed around by the politics. But because of Austin Groove we were able to go in behind the scenes and see how things were working for Strange Daze.

**So how did you get into photography?**  
My dad was into photography and one of my dad's best friends Dan Coleman taught and taught classes with Ansel Adams so I started hanging around with my dad's best friend. Dan's whole house was full of original Ansel Adams and he taught me darkroom and printing techniques.

**That's very cool. However, I know that times have changed and I see that your equipment is digital. Do you have a favorite camera?**  
Oh man, I have so many cameras now. That was another reason Lauren and I got along so well; we use Nikon and had interchangeable lenses. I had the better camera and she had the better lenses. Currently it would be the Nikon D800E, 36.2 megapixel. Canon and Nikon bodies are so close together that it really doesn't make a difference, it's mainly in the lenses that make the difference.

**What programs do you use?**  
I use the Adobe CS6 suite. I use it with almost everything I do including painting, photography, and illustration. In my mixed media illustrations such as this guy in between you guys, Slim Guitar, I started that is an original pen and ink and then I scanned it in and I worked it again with a Wacom Pen Tablet in Photoshop and added a background. So now I've got an original of that cowboy that doesn't look like the one hanging on the wall, because it doesn't have the digital things added into it. This piece has been pirated all over the world. That is Slim Lawrence from the band Back Porch Mary, it just came out very nice and I put it up on my site and not too long ago I did a photo search on it and found it being used by different music groups all over the world including a Jazz Festival in Sweden.

**Is it worth the trouble of getting a hold of these people and telling them "hey, that's mine you can't just use it"?**  
It really depends on the situation. With some of things you can say it's not a big deal, they're not doing anything with it. But what makes me mad is when I send them and they've ripped my name off; at that point I send them an invoice through PayPal. Typically those people will stop using my image from that point on.

**Do you have a favorite genre that you prefer to work in over another?**  
I just like to switch it up, keeps things spicy. I don't get bored that way and I've got to learn things all the time. For example building websites I have to learn new code, JavaScript, and HTML all the time, the companies and corporations I work with through Glaze are pretty specific on what they want, however I decide how to put my creativeness to use for them. I build their website so I'm able to help them with Photography and illustrations, so it does keep things moving. I relay building a website to a video game; it's about how you get the information in, make it look good, and usable.

**To see more of Doug's work and information on upcoming gallery shows: DOUGLARUE.NET**  
GLAZE.NET

