



OTTAWA CITIZEN



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INSIDE TODAY'S CITIZEN

The best Indian food in the city

That's our Dining Out reviewer's appraisal of Coconut Lagoon. The cooking standard is very high, and the bill fair, she says.

Anne DesBrisay, A12

Resolutions that are easy to swallow

Our wine columnist outlines some goals for the New Year — starting with 'Taste a lot of chardonnay.'

Rod Phillips, A13



Just try rolling bagels for a living

Artist/musician Hayden Menzies answers 20 questions ranging from 'Who was your greatest role model' to 'What is the worst job you ever had?' **A10**

ARTS & LIFE

BRUCE DEACHMAN 20 QUESTIONS

Brushstrokes and drum beats

Artist/musician

HAYDEN MENZIES

on rocking the house
and rolling the bagels

1. What was the oddest thing you ever heard anyone say about your work?

It wasn't really a comment about the work, but there was a show that I had and someone didn't want to pay the price that was listed. And I'm more than willing to negotiate with people who are legitimately into the work and like it — I would love to see someone go home with it who really liked it but just couldn't afford the price — but he started breaking it down into how many hours it took me, and wanted to give me an hourly rate, basically a minimum-wage rate. It was an odd conversation. I didn't know quite how to stay civil.

2. What did you have on your bedroom walls when you were a kid?

A lot of either cut-outs from comic books, or *Dungeons and Dragons* stuff. I still play D&D with one of my brothers, but you might not want to print that part.

Other than that, mostly punk bands ... Fugazi, Misfits ... that's what I grew up on.



3. Who was your greatest role model?

I think the most honest answer was always “local heroes” — people that I chose to surround myself with, the people whose company I kept because I admired what they did and the initiative they took to do what they wanted to do with their lives.

4. What useless skill(s) do you possess?

The ability to overanalyze and stress and worry about the most insignificant things. I do that quite well.

5. What was the first object or theme you obsessed over drawing or painting?

I drew hands all the time, and I still do that. They were tricky to draw, and when I was in art school, they would shove down your throat that you can brush over the whole thing, but if there's one thing to spend time focusing on, it would be appendages — feet and hands and things like that. They're articulate — they show a lot of tension or weight.

6. If you could be one fictional character for a day, who would it be and why?

I narrowed it down to two. One was Sport Billy, from the animated show *Sport Billy*, about this kid who had this magical briefcase, and out of this

briefcase he could pull anything — a sailboat or a full-size car or a sandwich, it didn't matter. That blew my mind.

The second is Garfield, 'cause he doesn't do jack-squat. He doesn't have to do a thing. He has no worries. He just sits around and eats. That's all he does.

7. Of the so-called “master” painters, who do you think would most likely have been a drummer, and why?

A logical answer would be someone like Da Vinci, who was ambidextrous and who was really anal-retentive and particular about the things he did. And also an inventor, so if it didn't exist, he could make it. But I would like to think a more creative answer is someone like Alberto Giacometti, who had this chaotic sense of style to his work, but it was always extremely focused.

8. What was the first album/cassette/CD you ever owned?

Either Weird Al Yankovic's *Even Worse* or Slayer's *Seasons in the Abyss*.

9. If you could pick a name for a colour, what would it be and why?

I would probably rename a colour I continually use. It's called “Unbleached Titanium,” a sort of creamy

white. I would call it “Old Faithful,” because I use it in pretty much every painting I've done.

10. What's on your iPod?

Oh, man, that's a long list. The stuff I'm listening to most is Young Widows, a band from Kentucky. I love '90s grunge music, stuff like The Jesus Lizard or The Melvins. The new Portishead is out of this world. There's a band called Metz that's a great band, there's also a folk-country band from Toronto called The Youngest ...

Wait, isn't Metz the name of the band that you're in?

Yeah, that's right.

OK, sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt.

No, that's OK. I've just been listening to my own record. Also a band from Vancouver called Black Mountain. And I can never get enough of The Band, Black Sabbath, Curtis Mayfield, Otis Redding.

11. In what painting would you most like to spend the rest of your life?

Probably the one of the dogs sitting around playing pool or poker.

12. What is the worst job you ever had?

I was a bagel-roller for two days. That was the worst only because they refused to pay me until my bagels were aesthetically pleasing, so they could be sold. I asked how long the



PHOTO CREDIT

'Inside & Out,' an exhibition of new paintings by Hayden Menzies, opened Friday at La Petite Mort Gallery, 306 Cumberland St. The show continues there until Feb. 4.

training period could go and they said up to two weeks, so I quit.

I was also a security guard for two days, which is pitiful — I'm a 90-pound weakling who couldn't stop anyone at any point. The job entailed sitting in my car — my mom's car, rather — for 12-hour shifts. I wasn't allowed to listen to the radio, read or anything, because I was supposed to be on the lookout for someone who was fired from the establishment that I was guarding and swore he'd come back and shoot up the place. I had no training, no nothing. Keep in mind I'm getting seven bucks an hour to do this, and they told me, "If you see him and think you can take him, like, go for it."

13. Who is the most visual songwriter?

Townes Van Zandt.

14. Did you ever make — and keep — a New Year's resolution? If so, what was it?

I've made them. I've never really kept them. Not to sound hokey, but if there's something I want to change, I shouldn't need to wait for the New Year to do it. But I understand and appreciate the need for a marker date. But no, I've tried to stop drinking so much beer and it's just never stuck.

15. Who is the most overrated painter?

There are probably some artists that I'm not a fan of their work, but everyone has reasons for what they do when they do it, so if people can find something in people's work, even if all they find is that, "Oh, this guy is really popular. I need to take a second look," that's pop culture. That's how it works.

16. What celebrity did you have a crush on as a kid?

The first one was Diane Lane from *The Outsiders*.

17. What have you never done that you'd like to try?

I'm a big fan of stop-motion animation — things like *Brothers Quay*, and Jan Svankmajer from the Czech Republic. I'd like to try that.

18. Which three artists — living or dead — would you most like to spend a night with in a bar?

Andy Goldsworthy, a current artist who lives and works in Scotland; Frida Kahlo — I can imagine she'd have lots of stories to tell; and Bob Ross, the PBS painting-show host with a soft voice and a big afro. I have a few seasons on DVD and I watch them all the time, and if you watch enough of them, he'll give you little hints about his life, that he might have had a haunting, weird messed-up past, where maybe he just snapped one day and started to talk softly. I'd love to get to the bottom of that.

19. What is the most serious doubt you harbour about yourself?

I think it's just being happy and making sure I don't settle for things that are less than I want and deserve. It sounds selfish, but I have a hard time putting myself first, and putting my needs above those of people around me.

I've lived a charmed life and been very privileged and fortunate, so I have this guilt that if I have any opportunity to help people around me, I just feel it's wrong to pass those opportunities up. And if it means putting something for myself to one side or giving something up, I always say, "Well, I can deal with that." But I doubt sometimes that I can take care of myself, that I can balance those two well.

20. What would you like your headstone to read?

"F--k it."