August Cover Artist Sezayi Erken

Our cover art this month comes from local artist and photographer, Sezayi Erken. A prolific artist in many mediums, Sezayi discusses his inspiration and shares a window into his childhood memories. You can follow Sezayi on Instagram @sezayi.us.

Growing up between multicultural crossroads, rugs have had an impact on my childhood. I was born into an isolated Abkhazian community in Turkey. As a prominent family, my ancestors were able to bring their belongings when they were sent into exile. Their beloved antique Caucasian rugs and many other items that they acquired from different corners of Anatolia decorated the family house wall to wall for as long as I remember.

Later in life, I have discovered that those rugs have become my first visual memories of childhood. Drawing all those shapes with my eyes, looking at their colors, forms, their relations within repetitions, were all appealing to my little mind. Trying to find their imperfections was a game I played by myself.

Many years later, I moved to Anacortes due to political and social reasons, not expecting that my childhood memories would create a backward line to the country where I was born. Rugs, after so many years, have become my connection to my heritage, my family, my culture, and surrounding communities at large. As a means of process I have decided to reshape and recolor every effect they have left on me.

No Live Music Allowed

by Correspondent Nick

Amid a surge of Covid-19 cases throughout Washington State in July, Governor Jay Inslee announced a ban on all live entertainment, including indoor and outdoor music, starting July 20. Although the transmission of the virus in outdoor settings is rare, the act of bringing folks together is risky. Some venues, bars, and restaurants hosted outdoor entertainment in a physically distanced setting with 50 people or less prior to the new restrictions. Locally, Anacortes Music Project has delayed its AMPulance tour to responsibly bring outdoor music to various neighborhoods with resounding success. The new order will keep the AMP crew sidetracked until possibly Phase 3 or longer of the governor’s plan. Skagit County is currently bogged down in Phase 2, and the governor has hinted at another stay at home order. ■

One Last Show: Woohoo + AMPulance

AMP was very pleased and excited to have Woohoo play our second AMPulance tour on July 18. High school rockers Kyle Nesset, Sam Hardesty, Woojun Jeong, and Henry Ermi played 4 sets while traveling the town. The sunny tour started on 11th and K at a neighborhood yard sale, then to bubbleland at M and 20th, back downtown to our iconic Causland Park, then out to the water, sand, and picnickers of Washington Park.

It’s a catchy experience as the band plays just long enough for people to notice something is going on, then off and away! Catch them if you can, with your mask on! AMP is trying to keep joy and hope alive by way of music encounters that are safe and sane. We’re currently on hold, in compliance with the statewide ban on live entertainment, but keep your ears open for when we’ll be out again. ■

Woohoo rocks the AMPulance tour. Photos courtesy of Todd Young and Clarity Miller.
Clarity Miller wears a button that announces “I need a kidney.” Clarity grew up on Guemes Island and has been involved in the Anacortes music scene from a young age. She lived at and helped run the Department of Safety venue that was a pillar of the music and art community. We’re lucky to have her as our very own AMP Vice President, where she pours her love and energy into enriching the Anacortes musical community. Now, due to a genetic kidney disease called Cystinuria, she is in Stage 4 kidney failure. The only cure is a kidney transplant. But finding a live kidney donor is not an easy task. We spoke with her about what it means to be a kidney donor and how our community can rally to support her and her family.

**Show Chime:** Hi Clarity. What is the story with your kidneys?

**Clarity:** I was born with a genetic disease and I got sick when I was 8. I’ve had a lot of surgeries, which helped, until now. My kidneys have deteriorated to the point where I need a transplant. If all the tests look good, a surgery date will be set. The kidney is removed laparoscopically—a small incision. It’s a couple of days in the hospital and then 4-6 weeks of rest for the body to fully recover. There is no cost for the donor, including the testing/screening involved. Surgery and testing are done at the Virginia Mason transplant center in Seattle with my team of doctors. The donor does not have to match my blood type.

A type of surgery arrangement called a domino exchange exists, where kidneys are swapped between several people so that everyone gets a new one that fits their blood type. I just have to submit one for the swap.

**SC:** What is your timeframe, how urgent is the situation?

**Clarity:** This is fairly urgent. I need to find a live donor within 6 months. After that, based on the deterioration of my kidneys, I’ll have to go on a waiting list for a cadaver.

**SC:** How are you handling this?

**Clarity:** I’ve had my hopes up several times, but it hasn’t worked out yet to find a live donor, for various reasons. It’s an emotional rollercoaster.

**SC:** What do you want our community to know?

**Clarity:** Just that one can live a perfectly healthy life with one kidney. Even if it’s not a perfect match for me it still allows me the chance to get a live kidney.

I have a husband, a 13-year-old son, a 9-year-old daughter, four cats, and nine chickens. I am a self-employed artist and vice president of Anacortes Music Project. I volunteer in the Island View school garden, am a member of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, and have been involved in the art and music community as long as I can remember.

**SC:** Thank you, Clarity. We appreciate you and your family and your good work in our community. Hear ye, hear ye! Kidney For Clarity!

Learn more about how you can help Clarity by visiting her beautiful website at kidneyforclarity.com. Support. Donate. Spread the word. •

Photos courtesy of Katharine Williams Photography.
Old Home New Home: The Enthusiasts in the Recording Studio

After almost two years of fits and starts, The Enthusiasts are honing in on their first recording together. Brother and sister Sommer Carter and Andrew Velin join Mariah Erken, Doug Casab, Bob Carter, and Andy Brown to release their project: Old Home New Home, this fall.

Thanks to Nich Wilbur at The Unknown, and face masks, and a studio supplied hand sanitizer. Oh, and that, gigantic, beautiful, musical space. They may yet get to finish this project while navigating the virus. The loss of live music is a big one and playing a live show to release this record may not happen for ages. Still, the joy of working together, in a safe, big, open place is a joy they are holding on to. •

The Main Thing

It's the ring on the phone that gets me out of bed 'Cuz I've been lying there awake a long time. It's how the world will chime at all in places. When there's something that it wants to say. Life ain't clean, it ain't easy. I hold on to too much and not enough. Life's mess, that's the main thing. It's a winding road for happiness. I've got one foot in the north and one foot in the south trying to keep them steady. There's a war between the north and the south and my blood's all spread out along the way. Life isn't taken, it isn't easy. I hold on to too much and not enough. Life's a mess, that's the main thing. It's a winding road for happiness. I've had kisses on my lips, held babies to my breast. Life ain't clean, it ain't easy. I hold on to too much and not enough. Life's mess, that's the main thing. It's a winding road for happiness.

Verse Chorus Verse

Any lover who has ever gotten lost in the liner notes knows that reading the lyrics of a song can give you a whole new perspective on a band or musician. Here we highlight the words of one song with an Anacortes connection.

This month we have Sommer Carter of The Enthusiasts. “I wrote ‘The Main Thing’ shortly after moving to Anacortes eight years ago, I was feeling the excitement and anticipation of building a new life in a new town. One, or maybe under those emotions I was feeling the drag of controversial family dynamics, heart concerns, and the lonely way that is a nuclear family.”

Chime Chat with Cherry

In the tradition of the great personal advice column, Show Chime presents Chime Chat with Cherry. Do you have a problem you need help with? Are you wondering who you can turn to? Cherry doesn’t just dish out advice, she peers deeply into your soul to find the answers within you. She also specializes in naming bands, bands, bands.

DEAR CHERRY: My teenage daughter wants to legally change her name to Starcruiser Destroyer. How can I convince her this is a decision she should follow through with?

DEAR DOUBLET DAD: Has your daughter ever heard of the Zappa family? Starcruiser Destroyer is definitely up there with Moon Unit. Then again, I think I’ve seen both names better than Bob Johnson or James James (my high school art teacher). There’s something to be said for individuality, I follow your dreams, but entertain some possibilities beyond Starcruiser Destroyer, because frankly, that sounds like a video game.

DEAR CHERRY: I’d like to see some variety in the shows that come to town like we had with Department of Safety and recently with AMC. When can we have an awesome all-ages venue like that again?—Bored Music Fan

DEAR BORED MUSIC FAN: The Department of Safety was a wonderful addition to our community. The Anacortes Music Project hopes to one day have a similar space. Currently, they are not giving live music at their venue due to COVID-19. They are still offering e-commerce and fulfillment services to musicians, festivals, food artists, and more. The Department of Safety was an indie singer-songwriter band out of Anacortes. On Dec. 11, the band is performing a free YouTube concert. The main thing is that they are trying to move forward, and keep their community going.

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