

nashville

From the honky tonks on Broadway to the house parties hidden down side streets, this Southern metropolis makes good on the nickname Music City. But what you won't learn from a Taylor Swift song is that Nashville also has a thriving community of designers, artists, and entrepreneurs who have turned it into the coolest city you've never visited.

BY REBECCA WILLA DAVIS. PHOTOGRAPHED BY KRISTIN EDDINGTON

POPULATION: 596,462
FACT: "The Grand Ole Opry" has broadcast every Friday and Saturday night since 1925, making it the longest continuously running live radio program in the world.



diarrhea planet performing at the nashville's dead party at glenn danzig's house.

NASHVILLE'S DEAD

YOU DON'T HAVE to enter Glenn Danzig's House to know that there's something happening in this police precinct-turned-music venue named in honor of the Misfits frontman. On a quiet, residential street, guys with long hair and headbands and girls wearing platform shoes and crop tops mill about on the sidewalk, smoking cigarettes, drinking 40s, and chatting quietly. But it's only once you go through the metal door and enter this concrete bunker that you hear it: loud rock 'n' roll that will leave your ears ringing for days. Nashville is full of creative types attracted to the cheap rent and laid-back lifestyle, but only in the past couple of years has anyone tried to harness this energy. Chief among them is Ben Todd, who started the local music blog Nashville's Dead a year ago with a friend (who has since moved to New York City). Just a few weeks after launching the site, Todd moved into a new apartment, and inspiration struck: "It was like, alright, let's start

having shows because this is a weird big space with a stage," he explains after a last-minute show he threw for *NYLON*. Not only did he catch the attention of local bands like Heavy Cream, Pujol, and Cy Barkley, who regularly play at Glenn Danzig's House and are often the focus of his posts, but also Nashville celebrities like Jack White, who recently had Nashville's Dead curate two nights of shows at the Third Man Records space. (We spotted White's Dead Weather cohort, Jack Lawrence, at aforementioned free, all-ages show.) And while Todd has big plans for Nashville's Dead—including a label to put out his friends' music—the bottom line remains pretty basic: "Everybody loves to party; I threw this together in two days and everybody came out and partied so hard. As long as I can put on shows with good bands for cheap and it's all ages, I'll keep doing this forever." nashvillesdead.com



Album covers, press photos, live shots...if you're a Nashville band, Bekah Cope has probably snapped your photo. bekahcope.com



FROM LEFT: tk, davis chatfield, sarah-brooks levine
NITE NITE
myspace.com/niteniteband



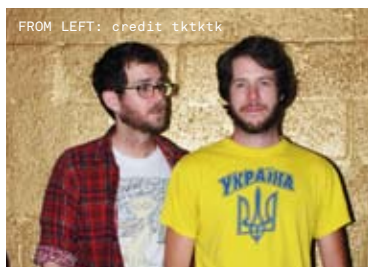
FROM LEFT: tk, charles, tk
HANS CONDOR
myspace.com/thatbandhanscondor



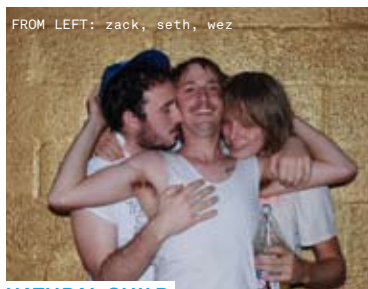
FROM LEFT: ivan, seth, tk
USELESS EATERS
myspace.com/uselesseatersmemphis



FROM LEFT: tk, tk, and daniel pujol
PUJOL
myspace.com/danielluccapujol



FROM LEFT: credit tktktk
TALLEST TREES
myspace.com/tallesttrees



FROM LEFT: zack, seth, wez
NATURAL CHILD
myspace.com/naturalchildband

SOUND OFF
 six up-and-coming nashville bands you need to know.



The Parting Gifts, Coco's side project with Greg Cartwright, are releasing their debut album *Strychnine Dandelion* this month.

FROM LEFT: johnny "shoulders" cauffiel, maria "poni" silver, lindsay "coco" hames, and jeremy "jem" cohen.

the ettes

THE FOUR MEMBERS of the Ettes have spent time in New York City, Los Angeles, Berlin, and North Carolina, but they seem most at home in Nashville—especially the afternoon we meet them at their favorite local dive, Dino's. Over French fries and a pitcher (or two) of beer, the beat punk band talk to us about moving to the South and working on a new album.

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO SINCE RELEASING YOUR THIRD ALBUM, DO YOU WANT POWER?
 Lindsay "Coco" Hames: We just

finished our fourth album in London. Jeremy "Jem" Cohen: It's coming out some-time in spring. Hames: It's a change—we recorded the last album in town at a friend's studio in five days, and a bunch of Nashville musicians stopped by. Cohen: It's Joe Meek meets psychedelic-pyschometal-surf-Ettes.

YOU MOVED TO NASHVILLE BY ACCIDENT—BEN FOLDS ASKED YOU TO HOUSE-SIT FOR HIM AND YOU STAYED. WHAT'S SURPRISED YOU MOST ABOUT THE CITY?
 Hames: Everybody's nice.

Maria "Poni" Silver: You walk down the street and people are like, "Hi!"
Hames: And you're like, "What the fuck do you want?! Don't touch my wallet!"
Cohen: It's nice how supportive the community is, no matter what music you play. Everyone just wants to help out and is really cool.

IS NASHVILLE REALLY MUSIC CITY?

Cohen: There's truth to that name.
Hames: You're better off just asking, "What instrument do you play?" rather than, "Are you a musician?"
Silver: Or, "Are you in a band?" I don't even know anybody who isn't. myspace.com/theettes

TRISTEN

IT'S BETWEEN SETS at Nashville's iconic bluegrass venue, The Station Inn, but Tristen Gaspardrek can't help but tap her toes to the beat of some imagined song. "I was a singer from the time I could actually talk," she says, dark chocolate eyes expanding as if she can hardly believe it herself. She learned to play the piano at age eight, and started writing songs at 14, but it was only when she came down to Nashville to record an album in 2007 that Gaspardrek—who goes by just Tristen onstage—decided to get serious about music. Her sound, which she describes as "neo-traditionalist pop," is as much about telling stories as showcasing her sweet, soulful voice, both of which are on display on a 7-inch she released last month and a full length, *Charlatans at the Garden Gate*, out a February 2011.

myspace.com/tristentristen



ALTHOUGH IT'S ONLY 9 a.m., sweat is already starting to trickle down our necks as we bike down a tree-lined residential street and turn onto a bustling commercial strip behind Elise Tyler. Not even the 95 degree heat is stopping the co-owner of Halcyon Bike Shop, a two-year-old store that sells used bicycles, recycled and new parts, and locally

made gear, from giving us a two-wheel tour of Nashville. "It's simple little things, like a bicycle ride, that completely change your day," she says, smiling as we lock up our bikes to get breakfast at Fido, a nearby café (whose name was inspired by the previous tenant, a pet store). Tyler, who before opening Halcyon with her now-husband Andrew

Parker was a band manager and booking agent, has found a way to meld her creative interests with her business venture. Shop mechanics include members from Nashville bands Jeff the Brotherhood, Heavy Cream, and Natural Child, and for sale are creative goods like bike bags by local designer Alexia Abegg (whose sewing co-op

includes Tyler) and an art book by Infinity Cat's Bob Orall. "It was kind of unintentional—we wanted Halcyon to be a community place, but the bike shop has been a connecting place for a lot of different people, which is cool to see," she says. It's not just hipsters who are supported by Halcyon; in addition to serving Nashville's growing biking popu-

12th avenue south, the street next to halcyon bike shop, is perfect for exploring on two wheels. here are a few places to stop:

BURGER UP

2901 12TH AVE. S.
 Truffled fries, Jack Daniels maple ketchup, and juicy beef burgers sourced from the Triple L Ranch in nearby Franklin round out the superb menu here.

KATY K'S RANCH DRESSING

2407 12TH AVE. S.
 This vintage emporium has been around for a while, and the just-opened store-within-a-store, Closet Case Vintage, has one of the most carefully-curated selections in the city.

LAS PALETAS

2907 12TH AVE. S.
 Cool down from a long ride with an avocado, tamarind, or chili hot chocolate gourmet popsicle from this upscale hole-in-the-wall.

lation (the city was just awarded an \$8 million grant for more bike initiatives), the shop runs a non-profit arm, which teaches homeless and under-privileged youths how to work on two-wheelers in exchange for free bikes. halcyonbike.com



FROM LEFT: pierrette, alexia, and jemina abegg.

the abegg sisters

YOU MIGHT NOT recognize the Abegg sisters by name, but you're likely familiar with the work of at least one of them. "Playing sports or being a doctor, that was never allowed. I feel like that would have disappointed our parents," half-jokes the youngest sibling, Jemina, the former Be Your Own Pet front-woman better known by her stage name, Jemina Pearl. She, along with her older sisters Alexia and Pierrette, have done their artist parents proud: Besides Jemina, who is writing and recording music for her new band Trans and a still-developing solo project, Alexia started a sewing school called Stitch, launched Green Pea Patterns, and is organizing a sewing co-op that includes Pierrette, who is working on a clothing label. All three recently spent time in New York City before returning to their hometown of Nashville and cite the move as the reason why they've been so busy. "I grew up here so I wanted to experience something else, and then living there it was like, 'Oh my gosh, you can do anything in Nashville!'" says Pierrette. "Nashville has its own opportunities, it allows you the freedom to explore without all that pressure." Adds Alexia: "A lot of our friends are just doing it. Action—not talking about it." But the biggest inspiration of all for this creative threesome? Each other. "Having sisters is the best thing ever," exclaims Alexia, to her siblings' giggles of agreement. "Two people that I can bounce absolutely any idea off of, whether it has to do with my personal life, work life, or aesthetic decisions...it's awesome." myspace.com/jeminapearl, alexiaabegg.squarespace.com.

three nashville designers to watch out for:

JAMIE AND THE JONES

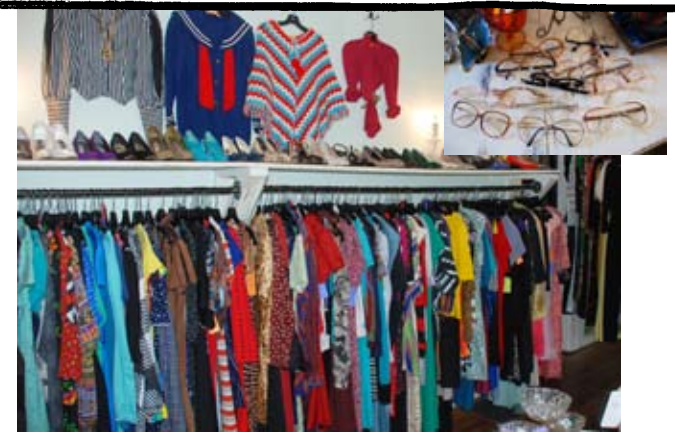
Delicate, embroidered dresses and chunky crochet crop tops round out this line by two recent art school graduates. etsy.com/shop/jamieandthejones

VALENTINE VALENTINE

With a grandfather whose name is Valentine Valentine and a brother who plays in Maroon Five, it's no surprise that Amanda Valentine's line of shredded and quilted clothing is bright, bold, and completely unique. amandavalentine.com

AMERICAN GOLD

Whether you want to channel Françoise Hardy or Stevie Nicks, Suzanne Ford Carafano's collection (sold on her vintage clothing site, Spanish Moss) has you covered. theamericangold.com



SPACE INVADER

LOCAL HONEY

YOU COULD CALL Shea Steele's boutique Local Honey a happy accident. "I went through this phase where, after being in art school and doing exhibi-

tions, [art] started to feel really forced and stale. So I took a break from it all and looked at everything in life as a creative process, and when I got into altering and eventually making clothes, I realized that it was a perfect career—it kind of stuck," explains Steele, who opened Local Honey in 2005.

Although it started as a vintage clothing store, the boutique now carries Nashville designers alongside her thrifted finds, making it the destination for shoppers who want to support homegrown talent. Notes Steele, "It's for, and by, people here." localhoneynashville.blogspot.com

THIRD MAN RECORDS

THERE ARE A lot of rules at Jack White's Third Man Records. Visitors are not permitted to take photos of the office (which features mounted buffalo heads, hippo skulls, and floor-to-ceiling images of the Stooges), employees are not allowed to wear anything but white or yellow button-down shirts, and shoppers are strongly discouraged from selling the limited-edition vinyl for a sharp mark-up on eBay. But despite all the guidelines, a sense of fun permeates the Third Man headquarters in downtown Nashville. "We're all old friends who talked about [starting a label] for years, and finally we got it off the ground," says Third Man's general manager, Ben Swank, of the year-and-a-half-old space, which in addition to the store in the front and the mail order distribution in the back includes an area for shows, photo and video shoots, and live recordings. "There is no stated philosophy, but it's music we genuinely love and want more people to hear," explains Ben Blackwell, who oversees the vinyl record production (the label does not put out anything on CD). Third Man's releases are varied, from White Stripes re-issues to Karen Elson tri-color records to 7-inch singles of local bands like Pujol, but Blackwell promises that there's something for everyone. As he points to two regulars who are lined up outside the store nearly an hour before it's set to open, he adds, "If you like that collector's game of seeking things out, that's there for you. But if you just want to hear good music, that's totally available and will be there for you, too." thirdmanrecords.com



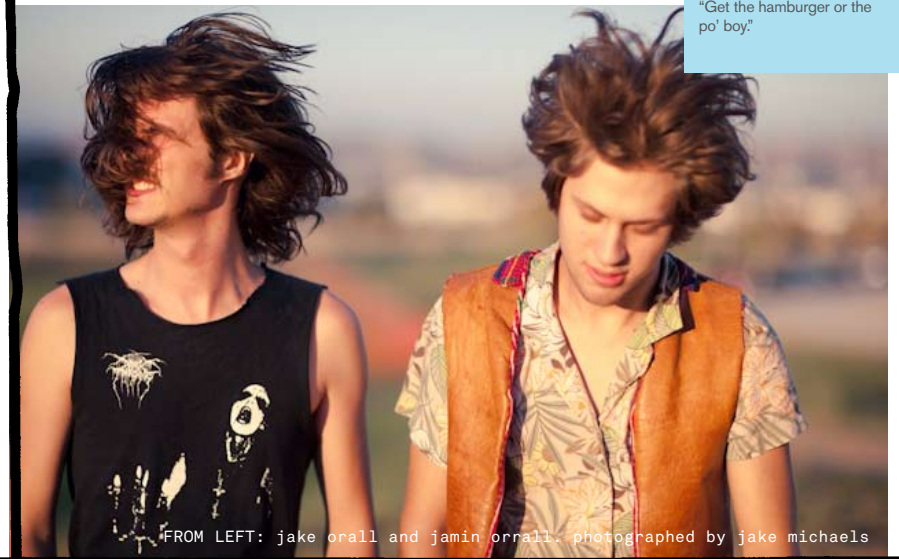
FROM LEFT: ben swank and ben blackwell in the third man records store.



SPACE INVADER

imogene + willie

"WE CAME FROM a family business that developed denim for many premium brands for 26 years. We saw the ending of that family business coming—so Imogene + Willie [was started] really out of necessity to be employed," explains Carrie Eddmenson, who, with her husband Matt, is co-owner of the year-old made-to-measure denim store in Nashville. The space, a converted retro gas station, features their signature jeans (which come in two styles for women and one for men) alongside vintage Louis Vuitton bags, roughed up cowboy boots, and soft, drapery tees from Lanston. If you can't make it down for a one-on-one bespoke session, Imogene + Willie is launching its website this month, with personalized virtual attention (from store manager Ian Leach) for its online shoppers. imogeneandwillie.com



FROM LEFT: jake orrall and jamin orrall. photographed by jake michaels

JEFF THE BROTHERHOOD



INFINITY CAT

The brothers Orrall have been playing music together since 2001—and have been running a music label for nearly as long. Infinity Cat's past-and-present roster is a who's who of Nashville rock bands, including Be Your Own Pet (which Jamin was briefly in—that's him on the July 2006 cover of *NYLON*), Pujol, and Heavy Cream. Jake and Jamin's dad Bob, who long before writing songs for the likes of Taylor Swift and Hannah Montana was a rock star in his own right, oversees the label from the heart of Music Row in Nashville when the band's on tour. infinitycat.com

LAST MARCH, JAKE and Jamin Orrall of Jeff the Brotherhood decided to make a change. "We both quit our jobs, moved out of places, put our stuff in storage, and tried to book as many shows in New York as we could," explains younger sibling Jake. It's paid off: Since then, the band has happily been touring non-stop, winning over fans from barely-legal loft parties in Brooklyn to Los Angeles all-ages venue The Smell. But ultimately, the heavy psych rock-meets-muscle power-pop duo (whose next album, out in early 2011, mines '90s grunge for inspiration) just care about doing well in their hometown of Nashville. "There's not a lot of room for our scene, because of all the colleges and the music industry, so we have to be tight knit," explains Jake. "We're just not too concerned with expanding." myspace.com/jakeandjamin

where jeff the brotherhood go to get over a hangover:

LA HACIENDA

2615 NOLENSVILLE PIKE
"We just call it Margartaville, because they make them real strong. We like to go on Sunday mornings."

ATHENS FAMILY RESTAURANT

2526 FRANKLIN PIKE
"It's Greek food and diner food mixed together, open 24 hours. They have really good eggs Benedict for real cheap."

HERMITAGE CAFÉ

71 HERMITAGE AVE.
"Get the hamburger or the po' boy."

THE DEAGOL BROTHERS



FROM LEFT: shelly marie shartzter, andy duensing, and leah high. FAR RIGHT: a still from make out with violence.

LONG BEFORE ZOMBIES became the horror device du jour, a group of high school friends had an idea: start a film collective. That way, if one of them made it big, the others could come along for the ride. The result is the Deagol Brothers, a Nashville-based group that has been making short and feature length films since 2001. The zombies came later—2004, to be exact, when Andy Duensing, along with three partners, wrote the screenplay to *Make Out With Violence*, an indie movie that is more about high school heartbreak than the undead. It follows two awkward brothers and the women they pine for—one alive (Addy, played by Leah High), one not (Wendy, played by Shelly Marie Shartzter). It's *Twin Peaks* meets *The Virgin Suicides* meets *The Adventures of Pete & Pete*, with an absorbing story and beautiful cinematography (and, because this is Nashville, a killer soundtrack—the two guys who wrote most of the film's songs ended up forming a band, the Non-Commissioned Officers, and have played Bonnaroo and CMJ). After a successful screening at the 2009 South by Southwest Film Festival, it's been picked up by Factory 25 for a DVD release this month. Up next? "A family drama based on the lives of the Brontë sisters," offers Duensing. "We just try to make movies that have some kind of all-encompassing world." makeoutwithviolence.com



best historic theater to watch indie films
BelcourtTheatre.belcourt.org



FROM LEFT: jeremy lister (kneeling), will sayles, kyle andrews, madi diaz, joy williams, trent dabbs, butterfly boucher, erin mccarley, matthew perryman jones, mikky ekko.

ten out of tenn

WHEN KRISTEN AND Trent Dabbs moved to Nashville from Mississippi more than seven years ago, they thought there would be music—but not the type that they liked to listen to. “We expected to be immersed in this big country music scene, and quickly found out that there’s so much more to offer here, so much good music from so many genres,” says Kristen. It was from that that Ten out of Tenn, a collective of bands that tour and release albums together, came about. “We thought, It’s a shame that the rest of the world thinks of Nashville as Country Music City when actually it’s Music City.” Since starting in 2005, the group—which has expanded beyond the initial 10 performers—has released three compilation albums, one Christmas album, one documentary (which aired on PBS last month, and is available to buy online), and embarked on numerous tours in Willy Nelson’s old bus. “Not only are people singing their own songs and enjoying it, but their friends are backing them up,” notes Kristen, before adding, “The first word that comes to mind in Nashville is community—and I think Ten out of Tenn is just a small picture of that.” 10outof Tenn.com



heavy cream

IT WAS SOUTHERN barbeque that brought Heavy Cream together. “I just showed up at Hog Heaven—Daniel [Severs] worked there and would give me food—and I said, ‘I think I’m going to start a band today’ and I asked him to play bass,” says lead singer Jessica McFarland of the famous Nashville food spot where we’ve just demolished a plate of pulled pork and potato salad. Severs agreed, and they called up friends Mimi Galbierz and Melissa Burnett to play guitar and drums, respectively, and scheduled a rehearsal for that very night. “We had this epiphany and just started practicing all the time at all hours of the night, getting wasted together and writing songs,” she says. The result is *Danny*, Heavy Cream’s debut album released on Infinity Cat this past summer. Their sound—which they dub “primitive rock”—swipes the guitar fuzz from the Ramones and some snarl from the Runaways, yet still manages to sound fresh. “We just write simple songs because that’s what’s natural,” notes McFarland, who adds that their new tracks, which they hope to start recording this month, “are better than anything we’ve written in the past.” But they promise that you’re not getting the full picture if you haven’t seen them play. “We’re really entertaining live,” says Severs, “because we’re having a lot of fun when we’re doing it.” myspace.com/heavycreamband

FROM LEFT: jessica mcfarland, mimi galbierz, daniel severs, and melissa burnett.

HEAVY CREAM’S FAVORITE BBQ SPOTS

HOG HEAVEN
115 27TH AVE. N.
“Killer white sauce—it tastes like a miracle. Also, really excellent fountain drinks.”

JACK’S BBO
416 BROADWAY
“[Their] brisket rules. It puts me in a coma.”

TURBO FRUITS

FOR A SELF-DESCRIBED stoner, Jonas Stein is impressively busy. He’s launching a “concept label,” Turbo Time Records, later this year, with plans to release a single and a music video every month, culminating in a biannual Turbo Time compilation album. He’s also the brainchild behind Bruise Cruise, a multi-day lo-fi rock ‘n’ roll festival taking place on a boat sailing from Miami to the Bahamas in early 2011, inspired by Stein’s own

cruise ship experiences. “I’ve been on a couple of cruises before and I always had a good time, but I thought, Man this would be so much fun if I could just get my own people on here,” he says. And then, of course, there’s his band Turbo Fruits, which the former *Be Your Own Pet* guitarist started about five years ago. “We have a handful of new songs that we’ve been playing live,” says Stein, noting that the band’s sound has evolved dramatically. “[The

DAY TRIPPIN’ WITH TURBO FRUITS

“In the summertime I love going out to the river. We do this activity called cabrewing: canoeing while simultaneously getting really drunk and high. We do a five-hour lazy float out at Centerville, Tennessee.”

new tracks remind] me of a cross between, like, Black Sabbath and some bubblegum band from the ‘50s and ‘60s.” So how does he find the time to do it all? “I think staying busy keeps you more creative, because otherwise I’d just zone out and smoke a bunch of dope on my couch and procrastinate.” myspace.com/turbofruits

ISLE OF PRINTING

“I ALWAYS MADE fun of graphic designers in college,” says onetime sculpture student Bryce McCloud. “As

punishment, God made me become a graphic designer.” More specifically, McCloud’s focus is the letterpress, mak-

ing posters for rock legends like Bob Dylan and package design for brands including local gourmet chocolatier Olive and Sinclair. “We’ve got such a rich tradition of printing here,” notes McCloud, who spent time working at the iconic Hatch Show Print in downtown Nashville before starting his own studio, Isle of Printing, with old-school machines inherited from his uncle. “I’m just trying to find ways to insert fine art into people’s lives.” isleofprinting.com



mas tacos

TERESE MASON MOVED back to her hometown of Nashville, after a stint in New York City, to open a taco truck, with the intention to make it an after-hours venture. But the bar crowds she served weren’t satisfied: “People would come up and say, ‘I can’t wait until 10 at night, can you please open earlier?’” remembers Mason, who acquiesced and started serving lunch from her turquoise ‘74 Winnebago, relaying her location via Twitter and Facebook. But even that wasn’t enough, so earlier this year she opened a brick-and-mortar restaurant in East Nashville, serving up her signature fried avocado taco, roasted corn, and refreshing watermelon agua frescas with the help of her mother and just one other employee (who happens to be part of the Abegg sisters’ sewing co-op). The menu is influenced as much by what’s in season as the ingredients Mas Tacos’ numerous fans bring to her from their gardens. Says Mason, who’s wearing a Mas Tacos nameplate necklace and a shirt stamped with a logo designed by Isle of Printing’s Bryce McCloud, “I have a really easy time doing business in Nashville, because people love it so much and they want to support me—it really feels like a community.” twitter.com/mastacos

when she’s not behind the counter at mas tacos, you can find teresa mason eating here:

CITY HOUSE
1222 4TH AVE. N.
“It’s incredible—it’s kind of rustic, Italian, country cooking.”

PRINCE’S HOT CHICKEN SHACK
123 EWING DR.
“It’s not great for the old waistline, but it’s really delicious and worth a try.”

LAS AMERICAS
4715-A NOLENSVILLE PIKE
“It’s an El Salvadorian place, which is really nice.”



THE PATTERSON HOUSE

2 oz. Corsair Oatmeal Stout Whiskey
3/4 oz. Dolin Blanc
1/4 oz. Benedictine
2 blackberries
1 dash Angostura Bitters

Muddle the blackberries and add whiskey, vermouth, Benedictine, and bitters to mixing glass with ice and stir. Double strain into a chilled cocktail glass and zest some lemon over the drink.

A Nashville-inspired drink named after the Union officer who banned prostitution in the city during the Civil War, mixed exclusively for NYLON.

THE LIST OF DOS and don’ts that greet you at the door of Nashville’s The Patterson House are the first sign that this year-and-a-half-old speakeasy isn’t your average bar. “They let people know what they’re getting into before they actually get seated,” explains Benjamin Goldberg, who co-owns the space with his brother Max. “This is not the place to get a Jäger Bomb, cosmopolitan, or chocolate martini.” It is the place, however, to get a Juliet & Romeo, a gin drink with mint, cucumber, and rose water, or a Bacon Old Fashioned. Pair your seasonal, locally sourced drink with snacks (almost all made in-house), and be sure to save room for dessert—the donuts alone are reason enough to come to Nashville. thepattersonnashville.com



The meat and three is a signature Nashville meal—and no place does it better than **ARNOLD’S**, 605 8TH AVE. S.



FROM LEFT: TK, TK, TK, AND TK. photographed by colleen durkin

Nashville’s Kings of Leon may be one of the biggest contemporary rock ‘n’ roll acts in the world, but they still know their dirty dive bars. When he’s not behind the drum kit, you can find Nathan Followill at these hometown watering holes:

- MY HOUSE**
1911 DIVISION ST.
- LOSERS**
1711 DIVISION ST.
- THE PATTERSON HOUSE**
1711 DIVISION ST.
- CALEB’S HOUSE**
- REBAR**
1919 DIVISION ST.
- JARED’S HOUSE**
- SPRINGWATER**
115 27TH AVE. N.