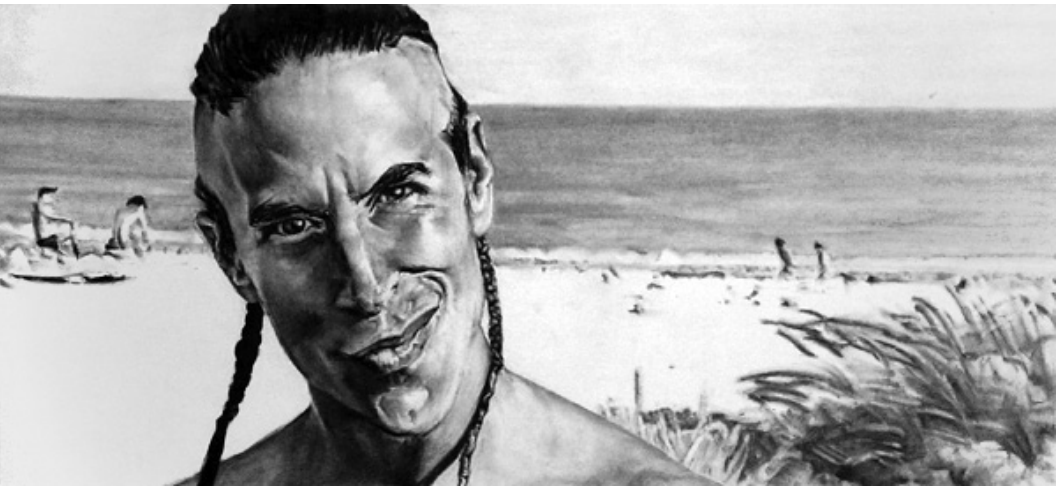


FROM THE EDITORS



Kiedis, Jack Lovell, 2005

These, friends, are historic times.

Our historic president is pressing Congress for historic reforms. We're in the midst of a historically-unprecedented global economic downturn, facing cataclysmic environmental collapse. The international balance of power is shifting, unemployment is skyrocketing, and somewhere in Los Angeles, a Mr. West is conducting historic research on just how far you can go if you be, in fact, major. Not to mention, the world is scheduled to end in three years.

Between the Mayan apocalypse and the apocalyptic markets, and with all the talk of home prices and health coverage and *history*, it's easy to feel unimportant. Especially when you're toiling in near-obscurity in a dark corner of the internet on an infant lit mag. (Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia for Christ's sake, is trying to delete our magazine's entry for lack of "significance," because we can't furnish enough "legitimate" *print* references. We would advocate for a mass burning of Wikipedia volumes, if only such a thing were possible.)

But we here at *Wag's Revue* have been reading a little history ourselves. Specifically, we've delved into the history of the American literary magazine. And we've made some surprising finds about this history, which can be reduced to the following two: 1) it is long; and 2) it contains many things.

For instance! The words to the Star-Spangled Banner first appeared, not, as many believe, laid in diamonds on the crown of Lady Liberty, but as the poem "Defence of Fort McHenry" in *Analetic Magazine*, a monthly that ran from 1812 to 1820. Also of note! William Gaylord Clark's magazine *The Knickerbocker* ran a nonfiction essay about a white whale known as Mocha Dick, a piece which subsequently inspired Melville's great novel. (Honestly, why are you laughing about that sentence? Gaylord? Knickerbocker? Mocha dick? Get your mind out of the gutter.)

Of course, for every *Analetic* or *Knickerbocker*, there are the thousands of magazines that vanish without publishing

anything of note. And for every *Atlantic* or *Harper's*, those old sesquicentennial standbys, there are the far vaster multitudes that close up shop in a year or two.

The literary magazine, we've learned, is almost certainly destined to be ephemera. Its significance, its power, comes at those rare moments of convergence where it can capture something contemporary that is also historic, and in so doing transcend its own moment by delving into it.

In this vein, a historical coincidence, albeit a sad one, has befallen our humble magazine. In early July, we solicited material from this issue's featured *Revue* artist, Jack Lovell. The waggishly inspired, masterfully rendered charcoal drawings you'll see throughout the magazine are stills from the 1991 heist/surfing/skydiving so-god-fucking-awful-that-it's-surely-a-work-of-genius action flick, *Point Break*. And when you turn the page after you've finished this essay, you'll see an image of the movie's biggest star, the recently deceased Patrick Swayze.

Yes, *Point Break* has plot holes Mocha Dick himself could ream his giant mass through. Yes, Keanu Reeves' dramatic delivery as FBI rookie Johnny Utah resonates about as well as a sledgehammer smacking molasses. Yes, Gary Busey, as curmudgeonly old-cop Pappas, serves up plenty of vintage Busey buffoonery. But Swayze—in the role of Bodhi, the movie's spiritual surfing guru and (spoiler alert!) anti-establishment, Reagan-mask-wearing bank robber—digs deep.

Sure, the man's physically gifted—he eschewed stunt men to do the movie's surfing and skydiving and fisticuffing himself. (He parachuted 55 times for the shoot, and cracked 4 ribs.) But he goes beyond that. In a movie full of actors merely reciting lines, and characters rendered with only the faintest hint of a second dimension, Swayze fully invests himself—however comically—in Bodhi's lovable air-headedness: the surfer bro espousing the beauty of the wave. And in a movie with a script so mind-numbingly hackneyed, Swayze manages to wring

something authentic from every brainless turn of phrase. By the end of the movie, when Swayze's Bodhi takes to the waves on a suicide surf, you realize that he—the bad guy—is the only character you ever felt anything for in the movie, the only one you ever really loved.

Point Break will be all but forgotten in the eulogies, lost between *Ghost* and *Dirty Dancing*. And, in many ways, rightly so. But in this amazingly terrible (terribly amazing?) movie, Patrick Swayze accomplishes all that any of us—any creators of non-history, of certain ephemera—could hope to do. He makes you miss his contributions when they're gone.