

MARCH 12 - MARCH 18 2014

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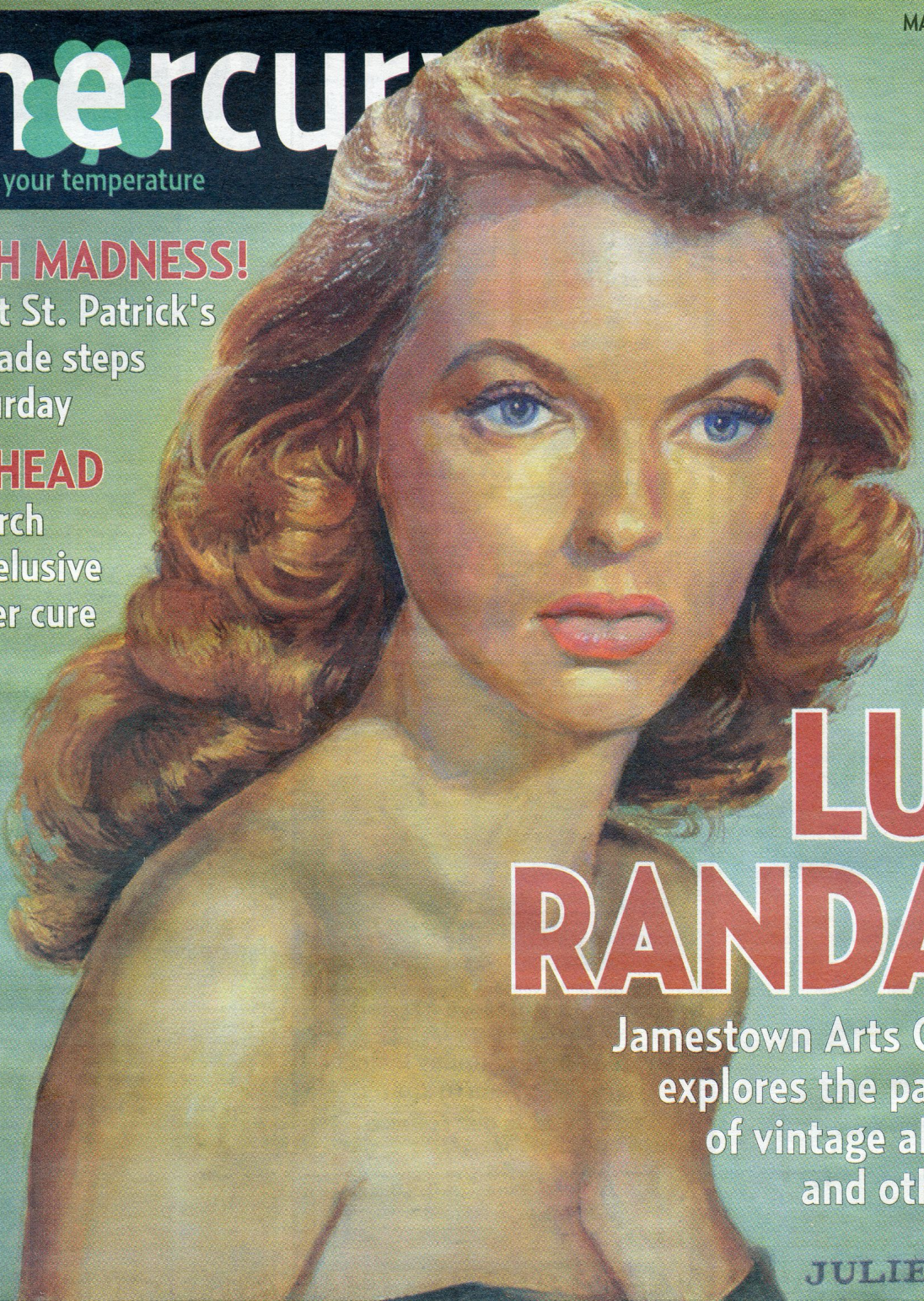


MARCH MADNESS!

Newport St. Patrick's
Day Parade steps
off Saturday

UGLY HEAD

The search
for the elusive
hangover cure



LUKE RANDALL

Jamestown Arts Center show
explores the painter's love
of vintage album covers
and other pursuits

JULIE LONDON

arts

A painter keeps eclectic company


Luke Randall is on a quest to fuse art and music in collaboration with the Low Anthem

'MULTI MEDIA: ART & INVENTIONS'

LUKE RANDALL

Jamestown Arts Center,

18 Valley St., Jamestown

 (401) 662-3839www.jamestownartcenter.orgOpening reception Friday, March 14,
6-9 p.m.

BY NICHOLAS POLITELLI

It's not that Luke Randall's interest in music was dormant throughout his career as a painter. But it took some time before the veteran artist realized the impact that music and the performing arts had on his work.

"I always wanted to be a painter, but I'm learning not to shut out my influences," says the 49-year-old Saundertown resident. In his earlier work, Randall would often incorporate records

with particularly striking album artwork into the background of many of his stills. Eventually he began to paint them directly.

And when he met Ben Knox Miller, guitarist and singer for the Low Anthem, Randall was inspired to continue to use music to experiment with other types of mediums. At a Low Anthem show in Providence, Randall recalls an instance where he noticed Miller turn his guitar amp toward to wall to dampen the volume. "He was experimenting with sounds," says Randall. After the show, Randall and Miller talked about ways in which they could collaborate, further legitimizing his personal quest to seek new methods to fuse his art with music.

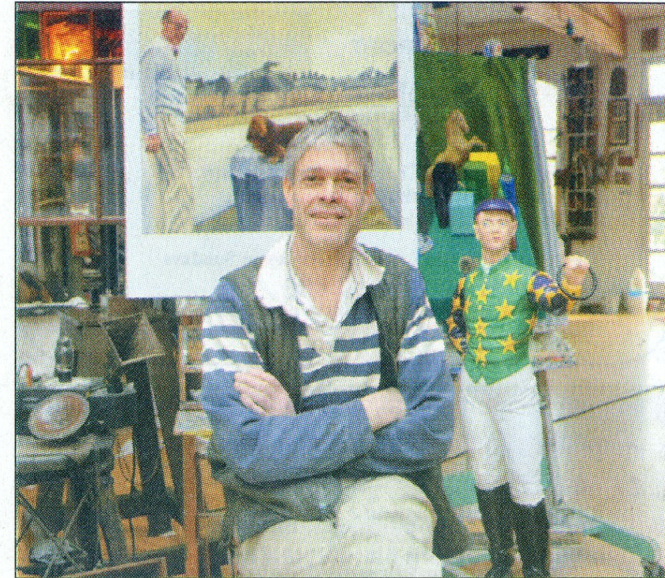
Randall's exhibit, "Multi Media: Art & Inventions" which opens Friday, March 14, at the Jamestown Arts Center, is an eclectic collection of Randall's paintings, photographs, hand-dyed hooked rugs, and "inventive machinery" — the latter revealing his deep

connection with music and performance. "Inventive machinery" refers to the many interesting amplification instruments and peculiar sonic devices that Randall has crafted. In 2012, he built the Moth Machine, a nine-foot motorized, moth-themed light show apparatus that the Low Anthem incorporated into their show while on tour.

Quality lies as the heart of Randall's work, whose discipline as a painter propelled a quest for excellence with his "inventive machinery." "For me using time-proven techniques and materials built to last allow me to make things that are quality," says Randall. "If you don't follow the rules, you're sacrificing the integrity of the object."

While the diverse exhibition showcases Randall's innovative ingenuity, he insists that the oil paintings, of which there will be about 30, are the highlight and main feature of the show. The detailed stills and vibrant album covers are expert and tasteful renderings of superior quality and taste.

"I'm afraid that I'm not going to be taken seriously as a painter," says Randall, who voices his concerns about

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Luke Randall's latest work has him recreating vintage Polaroids and finding ways to elevate kitsch into high art, hence the lawn jockey. Randall made these boxes after reading a vintage American cowboy leathercrafting book. PHOTOS BY MICHAEL DERR



Little kid inside artist wants to play

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having such a varied exhibit. “but I think you have to do what excites you.”

“I’m a scholar as a painter, but I’m like a kid in the Boy Scouts with electronics,” Randall explains, “and it’s the little kid inside me that wants to play.” That’s not to say his inventions are any less impressive — they are functional and well-crafted. In addition to the Moth Machine, Randall also built a Leslie-style amplifier, which rotates sound waves for a unique, circular tremolo effect for the Low Anthem to use on tour and in the studio.

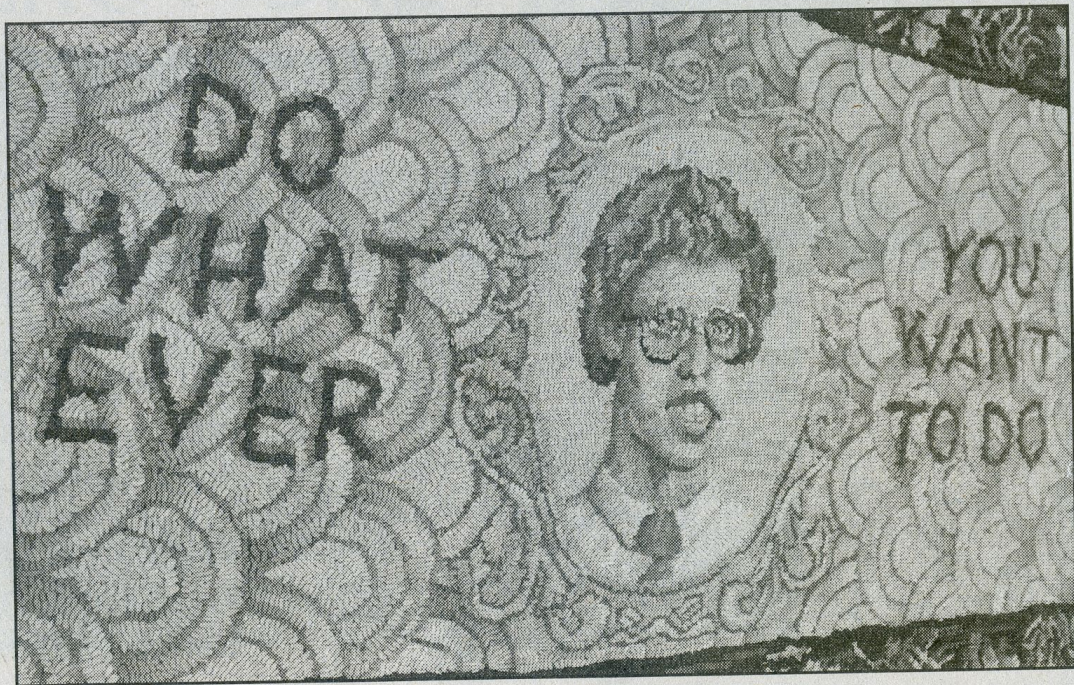
It’s no surprise then that the Low Anthem will join Randall at the opening reception, which runs from 6-9 p.m. on Friday, March 14. The group will perform with Randall in a spontaneous jam, as they react to the psychedelic atmosphere that the Moth Machine creates.

“In working with the Low Anthem, I’m involved in a whole new creative world,” says

Randall, who recalls past jams with the band in which he provided percussion with typewriters and drills. “We jammed in a way that reflected what was happening — I played a bunch of different weird things.”

“But the painter in me will never leave me,” says Randall. And that will be clear at the show. Randall’s more eclectic projects are meant to combine the music, art, and performance into an imaginative, engaging collaboration: a collaboration that neither distracts nor detracts attention from his paintings. Instead, the performance provides visitors with a way to understand the creative enthusiasm that drives an artist’s pursuit for originality and quality.

And so the Napoleon Dynamite-inspired inscription on one of the wool rugs Randall plans to exhibit makes perfect sense, as it accurately represents his current perspective. It reads, “do whatever you want to do.”



The movie character Napoleon Dynamite inspired Randall’s hooked rug. PHOTO BY MICHAEL DERR