

# ARKANSAS LIFE

## THE WORK OF ARTS

Inside the studios  
of six Arkansas artists

MAY 2017

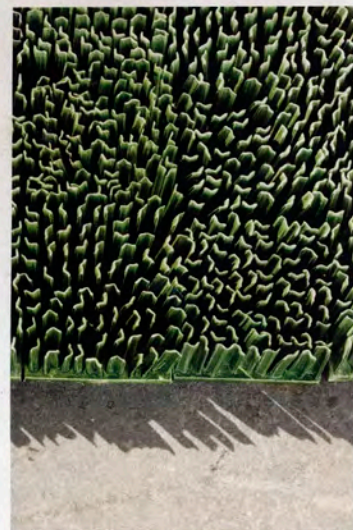
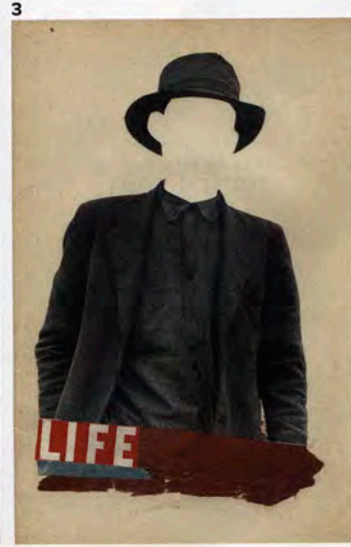
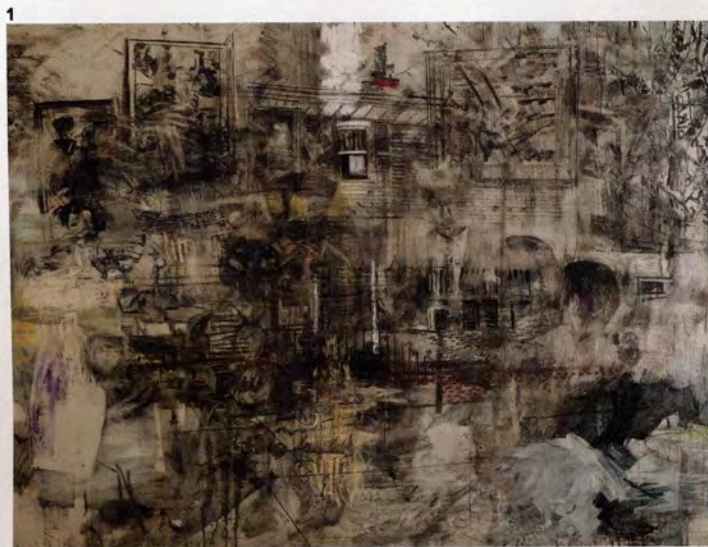
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ON THE COVER  
 ARTIST ALONZO FORD  
 PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
 ARSHIA KHAN

# FEATURES



1. David Bailin (image courtesy of the artist and Boswell Mouroit Gallery); 2. Louise Halsey (photo by George Chambers); 3. Michael Church; 4. Dawn Holder; 5. Newt Lalé; 6. Alonzo Ford (image courtesy of Arkansas Arts Center)

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## TRUE TO FORM

A paintbrush. A loom. The hot fire of a kiln. Tape and glue. Strictly speaking, these are the instruments of art—extensions of the artist's body, mind and heart. But as the six artists featured in this month's issue (and whose work appears above) will tell you, no matter their medium, no matter how academic or intuitive their varying approaches might be, the one thing that connects them all is their desire to create—and the tools that allow them to do so.

As told to Johnny Carrol Sain | Photography by Arshia Khan

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## ROAD TO JOY

Four months ago, Anna Horton and Joel Ludford of folk-pop duo Handmade Moments made their triumphant return home to Arkansas with a New Year's Eve performance in Fayetteville. Their fans in the audience might've noticed a few changes in the band since the last time they played in The Natural State—their replacement instruments, Joel's much-shorter hair, the scars on his feet. It'd been a brutal year—but despite all they'd been through, their music was just as strong as ever.

By Wyndham Wyeth

*“In front of a blank piece of paper,  
I feel a combination of anticipation  
and dread. I start with my own set of  
skills and approach, but as the drawing  
progresses, more artists come in and  
add their marks.”*

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# DAVID BAILIN

Little Rock • Drawing, Painting

MY FIRST DRAWING OF NOTE was a cartoon copied from the Sunday comics. I must have been 4 or 5. My father thought it was a good tracing, and I remember being angry, telling him I didn't trace it and then proving that my drawing was freehanded because it was bigger than the original. I took my first art class at the local visual art center in Sioux Falls when I was 6 and was moved into an adult painting class when I was 8. By junior high, I was receiving private lessons in drawing and art history from professors at Augustana College every other week for a couple of hours at my home or at their studios.

I try to understand what haunts me and to give it form. That hasn't changed for over 40 years during periods of performance and theater work, writing or drawing. Inspiration for me is the result of all the accidents and disasters that have accumulated on the drawing—there's nothing left to lose, and you draw upon the freedom to do anything. The underlying core of my work is the conformist who prefers order, habits of behavior, accumulating data and enclosed places but admits to feeling vulnerable behind locked doors.

In front of a blank piece of paper, I feel a combination of anticipation and dread. I start with my own set of skills and approach, but as the drawing progresses, more artists come in and add their marks. A bit of Cezanne, a touch of Matisse, Beckman, my friends ... By the final stroke, I have a party, and the drawing is finished.

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