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sense. But I really only changed a word or two. Later, I went to read up on the flood to see if I was just making a mockery of the whole thing. It turns out that whatever I had imagined was pretty much what had happened. It was almost a true story that I feel like I was channeling, because I didn't really know the story before I wrote it down.

S.Z.: *Can you quickly summarize that story for someone who hasn't heard Vanport 1948?*

L.L.: There was a housing community of big public works project, it was called Vanport and it was in North Portland. It was called Vanport because of Vancouver and Portland. And it was a housing project set up primarily for workers in the Kaiser shipyards who had all moved to the area to aid the war effort. And because of their working on the war effort, there was a very relaxed policy along race lines. It was an integrated community which was incredibly rare for Portland, then – and to a degree, now.

There were a lot of lower-income African American and white folks living there and it was built on really low-lying land near the Columbia River. And at one point one of the dykes burst and flooded the entire area and displaced thousands of people. Because of certain race policies at that time in Portland, the displaced African American people were not allowed to move anywhere into Portland except into very specific areas. There were only certain places that it was acceptable for a black person to live in those times. It put a lot of strain – there was a lot of influx – into an area that was already fairly crowded.

Vanport was interesting to me because it was very much like the Katrina situation in New Orleans in that as late as like a couple of hours before the dam burst, people were worrying, waters were rising, and they had actually sent flyers around on all of the houses telling people not to panic, that everything was just fine and there was no need to move to higher ground. And by three o'clock that afternoon, people were on the roofs of their houses. The places were all hastily built – all these apartment buildings – it was far from an ideal community. But it had been so hastily built that there weren't proper foundations on a lot of the places so when the water started rushing in, entire apartment buildings would sort of lift off and then float over and then smash into another apartment building. It was terrible.

S.Z.: *Does "Vanport 1948" have relevance in Portland today?*

L.L.: Definitely. Portland is still like an incredibly white-bred city. It's an incredibly sort of segregated city in its own way. I'm from New Mexico, which is pretty diverse in that it was white, Latino and Native American cultures all living together. But they have been assimilating each other for hundreds of years. I can't speak to what it's like compared to a city like Chicago or Washington, D.C. Portland seems to pride itself on this sort of grooviness that they've got and how hip it is. A lot of this has been built on a horrible bed of inequality and terrible practices against people of color. So a story like "Vanport 1948" is still good for people to hear. People who do not know history are doomed to repeat it.

S.Z.: *At the CD release party for "Tales of the Left Coast Roasters" last June, you had all sorts of media options for your fans, everything from digital download codes printed on compostable cards with wildflower seeds in them to old-school, vinyl albums. What are your thoughts about the direction that music distribution is heading?*

L.L.: I understand the need for it all. I am impressed by the convenience for people to just download music, but I myself am a fan of vinyl. I like records. I still feel the sound of analog music is far superior to that of digital music. I was just on tour with my band in Alaska and the drummer had his iPod. I was thankful to have 10,000 songs to listen to, so I'm totally down with that. And I understand the convenience of not having an entire wall of EPs like I have at my house (laughs).

"There is a case to be made where, realistically, the whole concept of "cleaning up music" heavily is not real anymore. This is coming from someone whose main way to interact with music is through live performance. ... The more successful albums for me are the ones where you can actually hear the room around the people."

But at the same time, the part that I really am less comfortable with about the whole switch is the fact that the concept of an album, the concept of a folio of songs as a collection, is now going by the wayside because, as things become more convenient and people become more addicted to technology, if people hear a song they like, they'll just go download that one song. Which is fine, but it also deprives the artist of the full income of selling a full album. To record and put music down for posterity, it all takes money. Most musicians out there are not making tons of money. Even truly famous bands are not always making huge bank. Also, many times I buy a record because I like that "one song" and fifteen listens later, my favorite song is some other song on the record. I'm disappointed that (the loss of the album) seems to be an inevitable thing.

S.Z.: *Digital music is so much "cleaner" from an audio perspective. Why produce vinyl albums?*

L.L.: It may indeed be more clean. But life is not clean. You could make a million cases for all sorts of things. There is a case to be made where, realistically, the whole concept of "cleaning up music" heavily is not real anymore. This is coming from someone whose main way to interact with music is through live performance. So, it's not like hearing an acoustic guitar mic'ed up perfectly so that you don't hear any finger squeaks on it as you play – that's not natural to me because I want to hear an acoustic guitar the way it sounds. The more successful albums for me are the ones where you can actually hear the room around the people.

S.Z.: *What advice do have you for musicians trying to break into the Portland music scene?*

L.L.: Keep your nose to the grindstone and focus primarily on just doing your music – making your music good. Satisfy yourself first and foremost with your music and with your art. Secondary to that would be getting it to the people. Because if your art, your music, is fantastic, then it will help you go a long way if you are comfortable with your art. Just concentrate on making your own music and satisfying yourself. Beyond that, go out and see a lot of shows, socially integrate yourself into places. Show an interest in other people's music, be a part of the community. It's important that the community supports itself.

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JESUIT VOLUNTEER CORPS NORTHWEST

AMERICORPS

Maple and Bacon Doughnut

By Michael Vance

They controlled me
My whole life –
Faces, memories, bottles,
Complexes, paranoias, bongs,
Fears, shape, regrets, dope
I just got used to it.
Called it "my truth"
And made it my home.
I cried to God with all my fury,
"Take this from me
Just like back in the days when your word
Was still being recorded
For the Holy Book,
Send them into a
Herd of pigs
Screaming, flailing, biting
And foaming at the mouth
So they can run
Possessed, over the edge of a steep and
Jagged cliff and die
Over and over again forever
Amen."

Sleeping In Wind

By Kareem Ali

He pulls the darkness down
Down to where the stars
Reach his eyes

Only because
The pigeons will collect
The cans that revolve
Around his feet

By morning
He drinks his beer
From a fountain
And panhandles for sun
Before the cement changes its mind.

Strange Love

By Michone Nettles

When vows are made, not to be broken
Makes you wonder were the I do's true spoken
The link is real
The link is true
Wishing only it's true for both of you!

When my days gone by and years proceed
So sad when things don't heed!
Breaking true love seems unheard of
So let it go of its own true love!
North South East West
Keep love close true spoken from the mouth.

Keep it close and cherish it
Don't lose pride
Keep living life
Don't miss a stride.