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you've dealt with this too.

Sean Ghazi: What is very interesting to me is on face value there is a lot of judging that goes on. You look different, you sound different, your passport is a different color. It takes a little bit of due diligence to get that perception changed. On my way to the U.S. from Malaysia, I would be stopped by very gruff immigration agents. And then they see the level of Visa that I have and the demeanor would immediately change.

M.Z.: It's a situation that feels like you are guilty until proven innocent. It is a global issue, and it's one of the conundrum of our species.

S.G.: (In a mock French accent) "Will you be having the Conundrum de Species? It's slightly on the spicy side. You might want to have the white wine with that." (Laughter)

M.Z.: The challenge to me, having lived in many places in the world, how do we break away from that guilty-until-proven-innocent approach to others, to other people. It takes a lot of trust. The general tendency in the political climate today, which is security – national security and all of this. It is basically just banner waving. It is not really giving us any more security. I don't believe that. We are basically creating more resentment throughout the world and less security. Ultimately, constantly seeing people with suspicion just breeds more discontent and less understanding. I think we can learn to appreciate one another a little more. And then it goes both ways, when you extend appreciation, it comes back to you.

S.Z.: What was it like moving to the United States?

M.Z.: I was 15 years old when I moved to Portland. We had lived in New York for a while, when I was 13. I went to middle school there for about six months. And it was a disaster. So we moved back to Peru.

S.Z.: What was disastrous about it?

M.Z.: Well, my mom came to school one day to see what was going on because she was surprised that I didn't have really any homework.

I like school. I like learning. I had good teachers everywhere I went. I found people who really loved to teach. At the school in New York, there was hardly any class, much less homework. We lived in a pretty bad neighborhood – a horrible neighborhood. It was violent. Someone shot at the car once. The bullet ricocheted off the side (of the car). It didn't hit any of us, but it was ... kind of frightening.

My mother came to school one day and saw that kids were basically just shouting and throwing paper, and the teacher was just reading the newspaper, sitting there waiting for class to end. There was nothing they

could do. A lot of these kids had weapons and the teachers had no authority. Try as they might, there was nothing the teachers could do.

S.Z.: You left New York, went back to Peru and then moved to Portland when you were 15 years old. What brought your family here?

M.Z.: My mom, Luciana Proaño. She is a bit of an adventurer, and my stepdad, who is from here. His name is John Butler. He is a jazz guitarist – a fantastic musician. He taught me how to play guitar. In fact, I learned how to play guitar before I played drums. That's one thing that most people don't know, they say, "Oh you're playing guitar on the album, what's going on?" I have always (played guitar) I just didn't really do it much because it wasn't the focus of my career.

S.Z.: You're really blessed with a rich musical family, not only here in Portland, but worldwide as well.

M.Z.: That's right. Portland is a bit of a Mecca for creativity. I don't know what it is, but people seem to come here for music and art.

S.Z.: Is this a help or a hindrance to you as a musician?

M.Z.: I'm pretty well placed in it. So, for me, it has been a help. People are actually pretty open about receiving newcomers and embracing other people. It's very community-oriented – as much as it can be in the United States. I would like to see more of that.

When we have all of these wonderful, creative people in one place, then why not get out of your house? Instead of renting a movie or buying some beer at the pub, why not go buy some beer where they are playing live music?

S.Z.: The album title is a catchy one that pays homage to city public transportation system.

M.Z.: The title of the album was suggested by Dave Eggar; he studied with Leonard Bernstein. He also co-produced my album. He and I wrote the string arrangements together and he played them all. He has been an inspiration and a good friend. So I asked him what the title of the album should be and he had me read down the list of song titles. When I got to "Two Dollars to Ride the Train," he said, "Stop. that's it."

S.Z.: What is it like to tour with Pink Martini?

M.Z.: I can sum it up in one phrase which was just written in the Portland Monthly Arts and Entertainment guide: "Despite a decade with Pink Martini, Martin Zarzar retains a youthful face." I don't know what more could be said about a rigorous tour schedule.

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Lady Of The Pearl

By Brendan Lee

Lady strides with black
Pomeranian puff dog
Leash in hand

Cell phone in other hand
Conversation in stride

Unknown caller to passersby

Lady dressed in black
High cut trench coat
High cut skirt beneath
Donned in black stockings

Trim dancers legs

She is a bleach blonde,
From brunette to blonde
Overdue, long golden-blonde locks

Dog barks as streetcar passes by

No flying monkeys,
Wicked Witch, Wizard of Oz,
Good Witch, Tin Man, Cowardly Lion,
Nor Scarecrow.

Yellow Brick Road is
A figment of our imagination.
Or the illusion that the Wizard
Will get Dorothy and Toto home to
Kansas and Auntie Em

Yes, Dorothy – there is no place like home
Just click your heels
SHAZAM!

Come my pretty
Beware not of the wicked witch
For she represents
The alienated self.

Be kind to self and others!
For no one chooses the alienated path
We all want and need love
From birth to death and the spirit world
May you shine brightly

Join the Fight to Protect Oregon Consumers.

Support fair and affordable utility rates.

CUB has saved Oregonians over \$5,400,000,000 since 1984.



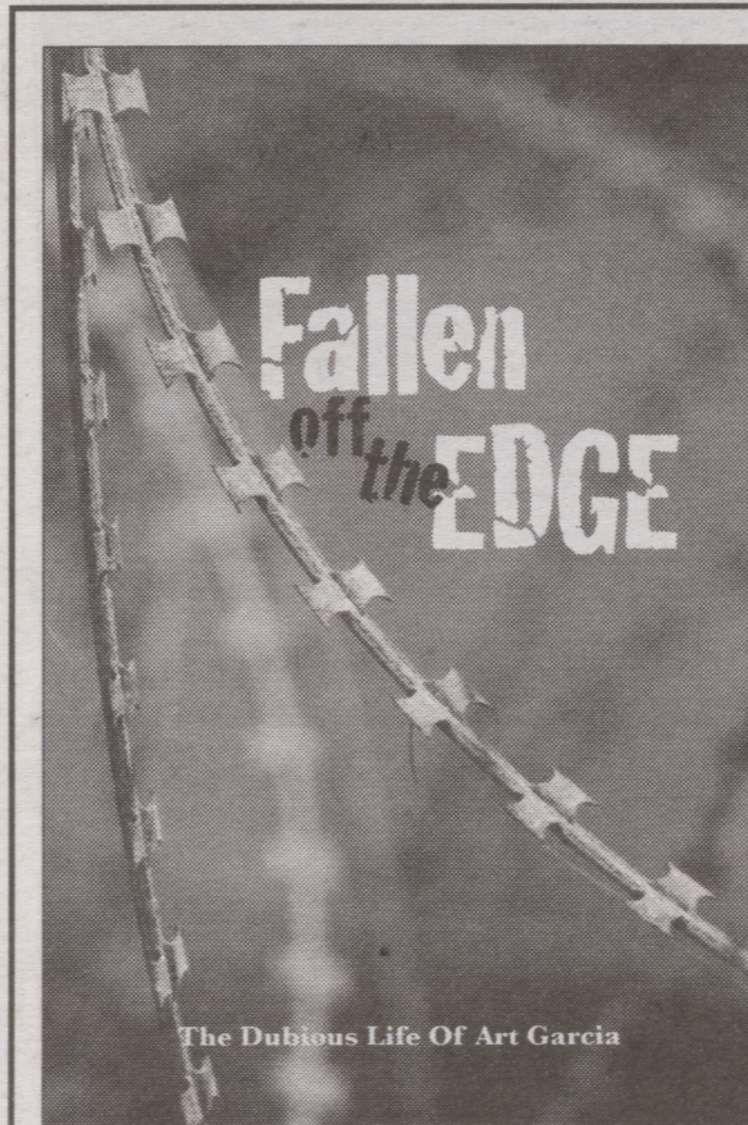
Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon

Help us save even more.

Become a CUB Member today!



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Fallen Off the Edge

A new book by Art Garcia

"Fallen Off the Edge" is a chronicle of one man's experiences after returning from the Vietnam War. Told through the eyes of Street Roots columnist Art Garcia, this book celebrates the major victories born from a series of questionable choices. Art's jocular storytelling takes the reader along with him in and out of the California prison system over the course of 10 years until he found the strength and courage to pull himself up from the fall.

The book is available online at www.blurb.com under searchword Art Garcia.