

GRAVITY: A MAN, FALLING

Catch Twin Shadow and Alt-J in a double header at the Cuthbert on Tuesday

R&B artist George Lewis Jr., better known by his performance moniker **Twin Shadow**, embraces jumping off (metaphorical) cliffs and into the unknown. Rebirth, he calls it.

Whether falling or diving, Lewis has made leaps and bounds with his '80s-influenced pop music, a vintage sound that brings a breath of fresh air to a world he says is caught in its own downward spiral.

"The '80s were the golden era for the listeners, for the consumers," Lewis says. Born in the Dominican Republic, he had his first brush with music on a church piano in Florida, where he grew up. He would come to church before the service and let his fingertips roam over the stretch of keys.

Lewis was enamored of the timeless sounds of Bowie and Prince, artists he listened to in his teens and who ultimately became the muses for his career.

Lewis explains that the '80s became the musical era in which artists incorporated the recording feats of the

'70s while introducing new technological advancements such as synthesizers and visual imagery.

"I'm compelled to make music," he says. "It's always been like some unspoken force of gravity."

His natural curiosity caused him to churn out four full-length albums and create a sound perfectly balanced with power ballads and classic pop.

As an artist who built his career by looking toward the past, Lewis critiques, in his life off-stage, where our world is headed. He believes that an unconventional direction is what our society needs for its own sort of rebirth, and what (or whom) he believes in is women.

"Rebirth is always important," he says. "The truth of today may not be true next year or even tomorrow. Men being in power is and has been a very dangerous and tumultuous thing for the world. It's important for men to start thinking about that."

Lewis puts action to his mentality in terms of his ca-

reer. For him, this means collaborating with more female producers and artists (both visual and musical) in his upcoming album, *Caer* (the Spanish verb "to fall"), scheduled for release April 27.

Lewis emphasizes that instead of riding the bandwagon of popular political jargon, action — taking that first step off of the edge — is where to start embracing a change, a fall or a rebirth.

Whatever cliff he's taking diving off of next, Lewis will surely throw himself full force at the chance, as he has done with politics, music and his novel *Night of the Silver Sun* (it's about a motorcycle gang). His many outlets, he explains, are just a part of his rebirth mantra.

"In no way do I find them related to one another other than this idea of momentum," he says. And when you fall, hell, you sure do gain momentum. ■

Twin Shadow opens for Alt-J 7 pm Tuesday, April 24, at Cuthbert Amphitheater; tickets start at \$44 at thecuthbert.com.

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