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Queerly Trans

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Dreaming In Fluorescent/Wicked Cliche Art Show

Twelve paintings at the [Middle East Nightclub](#)



Jymi Cliche 19 hours ago · 6 min read



Photo by Rachel Malley at the Middle East Nightclub bar. Art on walls by the author, Jymi Cliche

When Parama Chattopadhyay of Out Of the Blue Art Gallery told me a few weeks ago that I had an opportunity to show twelve paintings at the Middle East Nightclub, and that there was going to be a show there for me and my fellow artist friend Prospero Eaton, I almost declined the offer; and not because I didn't wanna do it. I wanted to do it, but ever since the pandemic began almost two years ago, I've hardly left the house, and I hadn't been out to a bar or club or even out for dinner since early March of 2020. I hadn't been a passenger in a car, especially an Uber, in all that time either. Ever since a bad car accident almost a decade ago, I've been absolutely petrified of riding in cars, especially as a passenger. The Middle East isn't in the most accessible area to drive to, so public transportation is usually the best way to get there. I'm not comfortable taking trains or Ubers alone anymore though. I find as a mentally ill trans man, it's not safe for me. I've had too many creepy experiences that trigger my PTSD. I knew that if I were to go to this show at the Middle East, I'd need someone reliable to come with me. The first person I thought of was my sister; so I asked her to come. I didn't expect her

to be able to make it at the last minute, but I was grateful she did.

I honestly didn't know if I'd be able to handle the stress of it all, but I made it there and it was a great time with almost no stress at all! Even being in a car wasn't as bad as I remembered! That alone made it a great night, but there was so much more.

The music for the event was provided by Parma Chai who I have had the pleasure of seeing live many times and even rapped over their music in the past. They played along with the Parma Chai Jazz Band.



Parma Chai Jazz Band provide music on the small stage. Photo by Jymi Cliche

The Middle East served delicious hummus, falafel, salad, rice, and beans.



Dinner plate from The Middle East Nightclub in Cambridge, MA. Photo by Jymi Cliche

I did several tours of the bar, showing off my art. I must have given at least six art talks, one of which was done with a microphone in front of the whole place. People were visibly moved by my words, but I hardly even remember what I said. I'm sure it was real though. I'm always real. The other talks I did were for small groups of people who came through the bar, as well as one friend who's considering buying my cat painting, but said he had to ask his wife first...



"Feline Friend" by Jymi Cliche, on the walls of the Middle East Nightclub. Photo by Lisa Leslie



Jymi Cliche in front of his cat painting and wearing his Jimi Hendrix tarot card art. Photo by Rachel Malley



Parama Chattopadhyay of Out Of the Blue Art Gallery hanging Jymi Cliche's art at The Middle East. Photo by

Jymi Cliche

Parama is an awesome person and friend with many talents and passions who hosted the event for Prospero Eaton and myself. Prospero's art has been up since early October and will be coming down in early December, so I was very glad to get to see it all in person. It looked amazing! It's bright, with great textures. He even uses spaghetti in some of his art!



Prospero Eaton giving a tour of his show "Dreaming In Fluorescent" at the Middle East. Photo by Jymi Cliche



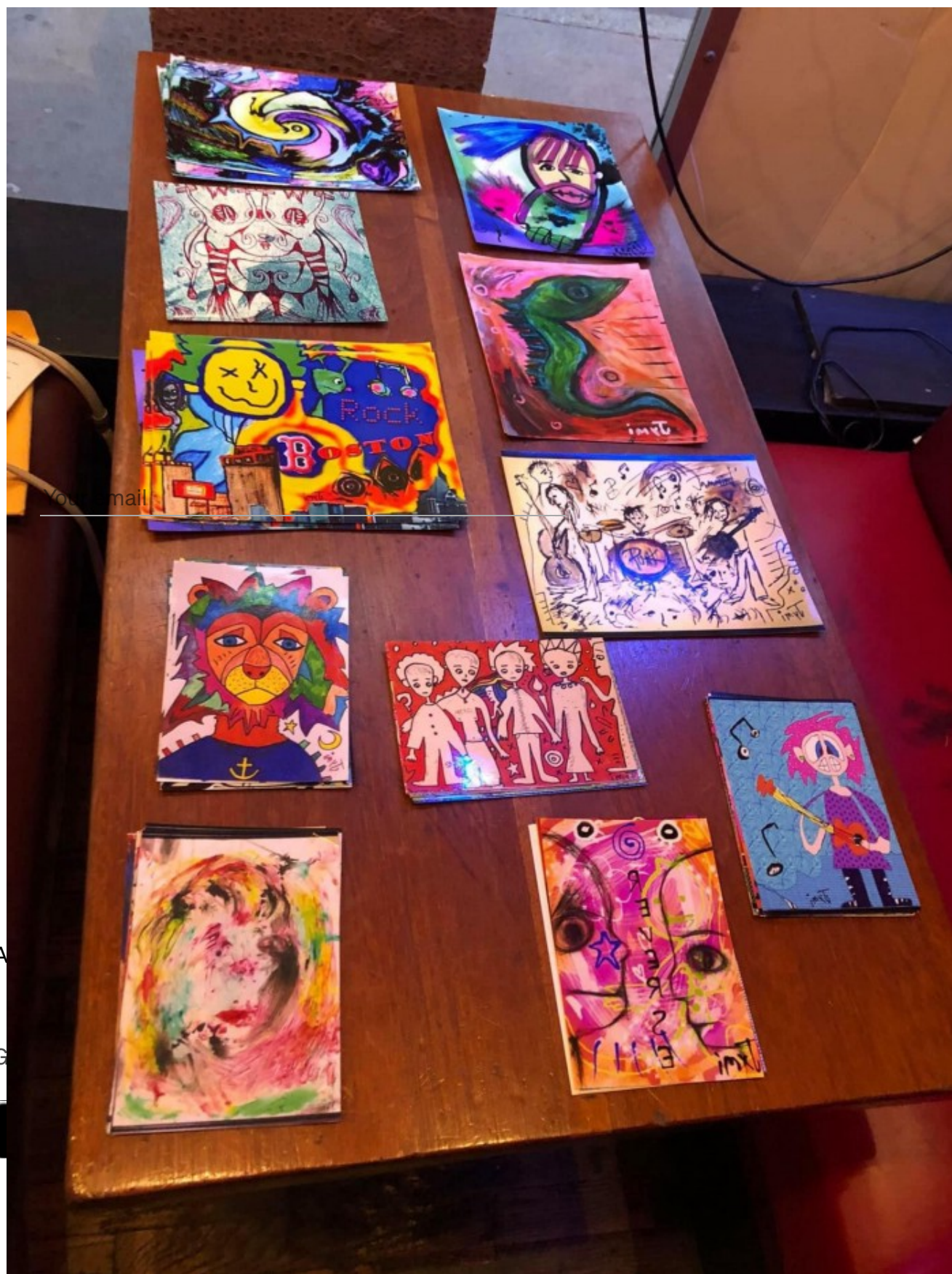
Art by Prospero Eaton. Photo by Jymi Cliche

Prospero is an extremely talented, creative, kind, genuine person, and you can see that in his art. Our expressive vulnerability is one of many similarities in our styles. We're relatively close in age and from the same basic area with artistic friends and similar interests, so I think it all affected how similar our art is in so many ways, yet a good eye can easily tell whose is whose because we also both have our own individual styles. It was a fun thing to put the two of us together for this show, and I was extremely grateful that it all went so well.



Friends of Jymi Cliche, photo by Jymi Cliche

I wish I'd remembered to take photos of everyone who came by because I had a great turnout, but I mostly only took pictures at the very beginning. My friend wore one of my shirts, which was neat. I appreciated everyone who came by, and I was excited that I sold some prints.



Art prints by Jymi Cliche on a table at The Middle East Nightclub. Photo by Lisa Leslie

I don't usually mention that I'm transgender when I speak about my art. I don't hide it either though. It just doesn't seem to be the focus of the art I make. I feel my art expresses my mental illness, and I usually talk about that aspect of it, but a lot of my trauma was related to growing up queer and finding out I was intersex in my early twenties, so that *is* sometimes part of my work as well. My artist statement hanging on the walls of the Middle East mentions being intersex because I said I was the author of a new memoir about that, but I almost never mention being intersex in my speeches either. I hit on those topics in my art, as well as the poetry and rap songs I've performed over the years, but while there are many queer people Out Of the Blue Art Gallery, it doesn't seem like the top thing to focus on when I discuss myself and what drives me to do the art I do. It's self-expression though and being queer, trans, and intersex is all definitely a part of me.

Early on, as a human rights activist and a young queer kid, I focused on LGBT rights, which is still important to me, but I guess my fight for quality mental health care took the front burner of my activism. It drives my art and my message to the world because of all I survived, but I try to live as an example of a good, yet highly imperfect person, and hope people will learn from my wisdom. I've come far and I'm the best version of myself there's ever been, so I'm proud of myself and grateful.

This is my second time showing my art at the Middle East Nightclub. I was through the roof with excitement the first time I showed at the Middle East, because it's an iconic and important establishment in the Boston art and music scene. Showing there is a big deal. To be up there *again* is hard to even fathom. I've been struggling with my mental health, but I'm trying to focus on what a great Opening Night I had and that my art is gonna be up there all through the holidays and until mid-January 2022.

Wicked Cliche Art and Books - Wicked Cliche

Jymi Cliche of Wicked Cliche Art and Books welcomes you to explore his page...
What is Wicked Cliche and what does Jymi...

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