

*Magnus Man*

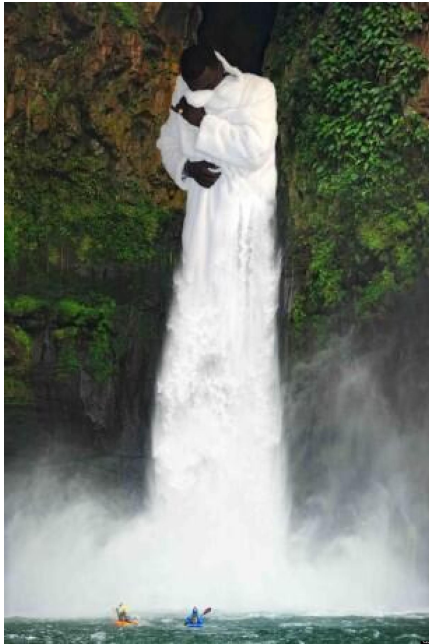
Zen



*I'm not trying to sugarcoat—I didn't go into this project with some well defined existential question or some spiritual journey that I wanted to pursue while on the visually artistic path. I simply wanted to make a film. I feel that at a certain point an artist becomes more about the meaning and origin of their work than the actual work—obviously a piece of artwork could have a beautiful story behind that adds to it being a masterpiece, but more often than not, artists are lost in an unappealing, self righteous state of mind as they produce mediocre work. I wanted no part of that. I aimed to create a film, but I wasn't sure what of. I desperately tried to think of something interesting to show an audience, as do all people with no artistic independence, so I thought of things that I would find interesting as a viewer. I thought to myself, what if I could create a character that holds such appealing values within himself that he would be captivating enough for an audience to watch just performing daily activities? I concluded that I had to create a character that would be visually fantastic, slightly immoral, and an all around treat to watch on the big screen. So I researched cool people doing cool things as inspiration for the character I would create.*

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## GUCCI MANE



Let's start things off with someone who I wouldn't say I look up to, but I appreciate what he does and I respect the career choices he's made: the one and only Gucci Mane of course. For you old white folk who don't quite recall who Gucci Mane might be, let me just refresh your memory. Gooch is an American rapper from Atlanta who started the Brick Squad label, which has covered many rappers from Waka-Floka to Chief Keef. His debut album was *Trap House*, released in 2005, and he's been in the mainstream media ever since. Now I am not sure what it is that I find so attractive about Gooch, but he oozes this aroma of swagger wherever he goes, and his music contains such a level of flow that you can't not like it. What I want to take away from him is his party-to-party attitude, but he keeps it safe while still managing to keep his street

credibility. He has said that wants to be able to reach out to his hood fans as well as his suburban fans, so he's aware of how diverse the market is out there, and he is trying to address that, while at the same time still staying true to the kind of music that he enjoys making.<sup>1</sup> The thing about Gooch is that he has that look that, even if you weren't aware of who he was, if you saw him you would think twice about pulling a move on him because you know he means business. But how he presents himself has such a creative and humorous style that you can't help but look twice at him. But he's just being who he is, arrested at least 6 times for multiple weapon, drug, and assault charges.<sup>2</sup> It's this level of ridiculousness that goes beyond annoying to something beautiful.

## THE ATL TWINS



Now that we have scratched the surface with Gucci Mane, I can start to uncover some of the people that I have put more of my time and effort into researching, because they relate more to the character I have created, and because they hold features that are more interesting to me. Meet Sidney and Therman Sewell, a pair of go-get-em twins from Chattanooga, Tennessee, now all grown up: people know them well as the "ATL Twins." What sets these twins apart from other regular twins is that they see themselves as one person in two different bodies—they sleep together, have sex with the same women, and the longest they have ever been apart was 6 hours. There are a handful of people who absolutely despise the sight of these twins—they see them as uneducated, flashy, materialistic people who just waste their life and make themselves look stupid.<sup>3</sup> The twins respond with these hateful comments with the truth: they own up to being materialistic, and they see nothing wrong with that. They aren't looking for any spiritual enlightenment—if anything they have already found it within each other. Rather, they are just looking to party and bang beautiful bodacious models all their life. From many sources that personally know the twins, people claim that they have never met a nicer, more real set of people in their entire life, because the twins grew up in a place where they had to learn how to be skillful in dealing with people. When they were little, they wouldn't really attend school; they would just skate, because that's what they wanted to do. They didn't really care for school, and with all the family trouble that they had, they really didn't see a point, so they dropped out at

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<sup>1</sup> "Interview: Drumma Boy Talks About Gucci Mane's Twitter Rant & How To Deal With A Pissed-Off Gucci." *Complex.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Apr. 2014.

<sup>2</sup> "Interview: Gucci Mane." *The FADER*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Apr. 2014.

<sup>3</sup> "Meet the ATL Twins | VICE United States." *VICE*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Apr. 2014.

eighth grade. All they wanted was to be rich and famous and they didn't care how. Well, their uniqueness and spunky attitudes have really caught the attention of the media, and they've been featured in *Rolling Stone*, *GQ*, and other high-end magazines. They have created quite the name for themselves. But the twins aren't idiots—they realize that living the life they want to live requires work, and most people wouldn't guess, but the twins work as paralegal attorneys during the day to pay the bills. At night, they put the grills back on and start to party.<sup>4</sup>



Beside the fantastic look that the twins have created for themselves, I am interested in them because of how they are approaching their life. They purposely keep their day-to-day jobs on a low profile because they see that as their private life; they have formed an understanding with two types of worlds, the social and the business.<sup>5</sup> But besides the morality of the twins, if you ever get a chance, find a video of them and just listen to them talk. It's a magical experience that I can't really explain. They are so fluent in their thoughts, finishing each other's sentences, copying each other's mannerisms—it's just a treat to watch.

## YUNG LEAN



<sup>4</sup> "Meet The Twins of Atlanta | VICE United States." *VICE*.

<sup>5</sup> "PAPERMAG: A Guide to the ATL Twins." *PAPERMAG: A Guide to the ATL Twins*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Apr. 2014.

Over the past few years I have been growing a stronger love for rap music. Maybe I am just giving in to the hype of the friends and people that I go to school with, or maybe I can relate to a genre that put a voice out there who couldn't be heard before. Who knows, also who cares? Rap itself has created so many different genres and artists and styles, some too obscure for your mind to comprehend, some rigid and strictly about the rhythmic lines of the rap. But nowadays it has become about more than the music that you produce—you have to have an image to back it up, an image that fans can see and relate back to the music easily. A rapper whose image has possibly surpassed his music altogether would be the young Swedish rapper known as Yung Lean. He's known for representing some high-class brands such as Gucci and Prada, but his all time favorite brand to represent would be Nike. He calls himself "luxurious," and he's not too far from it. He has created a persona that could not be paralleled by any imitator or jealous up and coming artist. He has many themes in his style, such as early 2000 Internet work, drugs that give the apparent "lean," and Japanese culture.

Now this one I have trouble explaining, but what you need to know is that he is just an extremely cool kid who's got some great ideas and a great sense of style. His lyrics are obscure but rather interesting at the same time. Maybe it goes back to what I was saying before—that he is just past the level of ridiculousness where it's annoying, and now it's amazing (but I wouldn't go as far to say he could ever be called annoying because I am such a fan). Here are some of his lyrics from the song "Hurt" –

*"Emotion boys we in the UFO  
Skies pink when I'm on ecstasy  
In Tokyo, playing Mario  
Sad boys blast your stereos  
Sucking on my nuts like pistachios"*<sup>6</sup>

## THE 12 O'CLOCK BOYS



While we're talking about ridiculous people, I suppose this is a good enough time as any to bring up my next specimen, the infamous 12 O'Clock Boys, a dirt bike gang from Baltimore

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<sup>6</sup> "Yung Lean – Hurt." *Rap Genius*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Apr. 2014.



that run the streets with their high wheelies and fast riding, becoming a nuisance for the Baltimore police, and spawning enough attention to have a documentary made about their gang.<sup>7</sup> Now when I say dirt bike gang I mean literally that. When you look at this group of people from the hood of Baltimore, it's really a more positive outlook than standing at the corner of the street, hustling drugs and instituting violence throughout the neighborhood. The goal of the gang is not to create havoc within the town of Baltimore. All they want is to ride their motorcycles; it's a passion that most of them can share together. Now this reckless, well, I wouldn't go as far as to call it reckless—this *adventurous* behavior is something that I want to bring into my film's character. Throughout the documentary many of the 12 O'Clock Boys state that for them, another day is nothing promised where they live, so every time they get on that bike they just want to make the most of it. They don't have time to wait for anything else, so they just do what they love while they still have the chance. Frankly that is just too awesome—I mean the fact that death could creep up on them like a shadow at any given moment really sucks, but they're just being real cool people, keeping everything straight, and without a doubt, dirt bikes are the coolest thing any person could have, which will be a good way to veer into my next and final character study.

## LUKE GLANTON



Let me introduce you to Luke Glanton. Granted, Luke is the one character on this list that is actually fictional, but he might be my favorite. He's character played by Ryan Gosling in the film "The Place Beyond the Pines." Luke is a blonde, motorcycle-driving, bank-robbing badass who messes with no one and knows exactly what he wants. Let me just take a moment to critique the film: the film was absolutely excellent, but I didn't think the writer took into account that the actor playing Luke would be someone as amazing as Ryan Gosling, so writing him off as dead halfway through the movie (spoiler) really was a fault, because without him, this movie would've been a piece of shit.<sup>8</sup>

Although I like the character of Luke so much, I wouldn't want that much of him to bleed into *my* character, simply because he's too cool and mysterious for anyone here at Oxbow to

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<sup>7</sup> "12 O'Clock Boys." *12 O'Clock Boys*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Apr. 2014.

<sup>8</sup> "The Place Beyond the Pines." *IMDb*. IMDb.com, n.d. Web. 25 Apr. 2014.

portray seriously. Staying near the adolescent and immature side of things makes my character more relatable and will in turn make the acting come off as much more natural. But Luke is one of those badass sweethearts that you cant take your eye off.



I hope to be able to parallel some level of Luke’s style to my character, because Luke holds things like his family very seriously, which is beautiful. And every teenager holds something to them that they see as a very serious matter, and they cherish that thing, whether it be a relationship with a friend or mom, or maybe a passion for something—whatever it is, it’s always there. Luke wasn’t the only thing I took away from this film though. The cinematography was absolutely spectacular—they managed to capture the feeling of the situations, rather than simply documenting them rather, giving the viewer a strong level of engagement and rush as they watch it.

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With these combined characters, I wanted to create my dream boy, the protagonist in my own story: Magnus. It wasn’t easy—I could possibly have ended up with someone with conflicting morals and no appealing argument, which is definitely something I didn’t want.

## MAGNUS RONKO

All right, meet Magnus. Magnus is a 17-year-old white redneck, hailing from West Virginia, now residing in the Napa Valley, California. I have decided to shoot a documentary on Magnus because I haven’t found a more interesting young boy. He doesn’t seem to report to any law officials, or respect the authority of any of them whatsoever. He refuses to go to school because he hates being told what to learn. He chooses to teach himself within his own time by reading books or magazines, but he greatly prefers magazines. He enjoys reading *New York Times* articles because they are vastly informative, but also because he feels they make him look more sophisticated. Magnus is one of the more interesting boys I have stumbled upon in my travels—he comes from a wealthy family, but he rejects any thing that he is entitled to. In fact, he says he often doesn’t go home for days at a time, and just sleeps under a bridge or some random vacant house. He claims that he doesn’t appreciate people who just have everything handed to them; he’d rather just have nothing than have people give him anything he wants. I’m not quite sure

how I would explain Magnus in words, because he's such a contradicting specimen that it doesn't make sense when verbalized. He values many things like religion, science, self image, and bees no doubt, yet he allows himself to do such corrupt actions like tricking and convincing a medical specialist that he is a desperate orphan who has just broken his ankle and is in need of oxycontin, then proceeds to sell the oxycontin to local hikers in the city's forest. Despite Magnus's high moral code, there are darker parts of his life that he tries to refrain from. For example, growing up he admired his mother, but spent far too much time with his father for his comfort. His father worked at a mill during the day, but at night was a supporting member of a KKK group. His father, almost always drunk with rage and racist attitudes, would force Magnus to come to the gatherings of this group. Although young, Magnus did not feel right discriminating against black people, although he still wasn't entirely sure what that meant. Being young and small, Magnus was bullied often in school, causing him to look up to the strong masculine figure his dad had become. As he aged, Magnus realized how wrong racism was, but still holds subtle key traits of racism every now and then, always kept inside him like an everlasting, watching father.

One of Magnus's dreams is to move to Baltimore; he dreams of this because he watched the documentary *12 O'Clock Boys*, and became obsessed with the idea of riding a dirt bike through the streets. But since he doesn't have enough money to afford one yet, and he refuses to let his parents buy him anything, he imagines his regular bike is actually a dirt bike, and he finds the steepest incline possible to simulate the rush he sees in that documentary as well as in the film *The Place Beyond the Pines*.

Magnus considers himself a good dancer, though he will not talk about it very publicly. He dances in private. Luckily I have gotten the chance to witness this, and it's amazing. Magnus loves junk food more than anything, but he's very self-conscious about his figure. He's greatly influenced by *People* magazine—he is constantly reading it and analyzing what is considered “hot” in males. He tries to work out as much as possible, but he usually becomes too tired to finish, which in turn causes him to become enraged and act out in anger.

#### Things Magnus Likes:

- porn
- fighting
- money
- blood
- running at people
- pranks
- biking
- going fast
- smashing things
- girls
- mayhem
- being buff
- dancing in private

#### Things Magnus doesn't like

- reading
- waiting
- standing
- people
- parents
- school
- authority
- fat people
- bitchy people
- talking about art
- being weak



Making a feature-length film was too much to handle during the time frame of Final Project, so I came upon the decision to create a trailer for a documentary instead, or rather a “mockumentary.” This way I would have some leeway with how creative I could get with the material while making a shorter film. Through the process, Magnus has become this redneck character with certain hobbies and fetishes that set him apart as an individual, while still making him relatable and loveable at the same time. I like the idea of creating an artificial life, giving my fake documentary some significance. I wanted to make a trailer that I could pitch to several funding websites, in an attempt to generate funding for a project that is only manifested in my mind, as a test to see the legitimacy of the work. The chances of it actually gaining publicity and significance in the eyes of any media are slim to none, but I think it’s worth a shot.