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ART and DESIGN

MARCK

April 18–May 1, 2016

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By Carl Swanson

AND

MAPPLETHORPE to Kara WALKER

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FEATURING

Can an Artist OWN a COLOR?

AND

LIVING as CANVAS

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ADELAIDE De MENIL

VITO SCHNABEL

ALBA CLEMENTE

By Wendy Goodman

What WON'T JAMES FRANCO

Do for His ART?

A CONFRONTATION WITH HIS CRITIC

JERRY SALTZ



The Urbanist:



Can Boston Ever Be Fun?

It's certainly trying, by altering laws—and, when that's not possible, wiggling around them.

BOSTON HAS A LONG HISTORY of being not much fun, dating back to the time of the Puritans. Nearly 400 years later, the bars and trains still close early; getting a liquor license is a nightmare; and if you want to sit outside of a restaurant, you can't simply order drinks—you have to order food, too. Which is why everyone was thrilled when pro-nightlife mayor Marty Walsh, who was elected in 2013, commissioned a late-night task force. After years of deliberation, the commission released its report this January. The suggestions were met with reserved optimism. Then, in March, an extension of weekend public-transit hours was ditched, and locals began once again to despair. On the upside, a BYOB ban will likely be lifted by the summer. And Bostonians are now figuring out how to weasel their way around antiquated nightlife rules: playing a cat-and-mouse game with the cops, with after-hours spots popping up, folding, then re-popping up. In aboveground establishments, proprietors have long made the best of it: by, among other things, crafting a mean cordials-only cocktail.

4 A.M. AT
AN AFTER-HOURS
BASEMENT PARTY
IN ALLSTON.

NICK LEHR



A Timeline of

What Made Boston So Bleh

1650s-1660s: Un-Puritan acts, like playing, uncivil talking, and drinking on Sundays, are prohibited by law.

1659-1681: Celebration of Christmas banned.

1885: The first Irish Catholic mayor is elected, and the statehouse takes control of liquor licenses to move power away from

the city. What this means for Boston today is that bars have to beg the state for more licenses.

Late-19th-to-early-20th century: "Banned in Boston" becomes a well-known phrase, as city officials prohibit anything they consider salacious or offensive—including theater, books, and movies.

1984: Happy hour is banned.



1992: Liquor stores can open on Sundays from the weekend before Thanksgiving through New Year's Day.

2003: Governor Mitt Romney repeals the state prohibition on the sale of alcohol on Sundays. Sunday sales can begin at noon.

2014: Late-night T service is extended by two hours, to 2:30 a.m. on weekends. Shortly afterward, the MBTA scales back to 2 a.m.

2014: Mayor Marty Walsh launches a late-night task force to

find ways for Boston to liven up its nightlife.

December 2015: Boston City Council passes a bill allowing BYOB.

January 2016: Walsh's task force releases recommendations that include extending liquor and entertainment hours for restaurants and allowing people to drink on a patio without ordering food; they are currently being reviewed by the mayor.

March 2016: MBTA ends late-night T service as part of an effort to balance its budget.

**THE COPS
TROLL
FACEBOOK—
LAMELY**

"One time a police officer was trying to figure out the location of an underground party, and he posted on a message board with some lame thing like: 'The cops do break balls something wicked here. What's the address for Saturday night? I love DIY concerts.'" —Adam S., music therapist

The Promise of BYOB

In December, City Council president Michelle Wu led the passing of a bill that allows BYOB in Boston restaurants.

"IF YOU'RE A mom-and-pop shop, you have to justify a liquor license with revenues that are going to come from either a ton of people coming through or charging more. That's why we see so many big, generic bars and pubs. We want there to be more options, and BYOB can open the door for different types of cuisines to prosper here and in different neighborhoods. The mayor's goal was to see BYOB implemented by the end of this calendar year, so my fingers are crossed that we'll be able to do it in time for the summer."



THEY'VE FIGURED OUT HOW TO MAKE STRONG CORDIAL COCKTAILS

Because it's so difficult and expensive to get a liquor license, many restaurants opt for the much-easier-to-acquire cordial-and-liqueur license. It dates back to the early '90s, when restaurateurs in the Italian North End wanted to offer guests liqueurs at the end of their meals. The "Sambuca bill," as it came to be known, allowed restaurants to serve these traditional sips without a full liquor license. And in recent years, a creative cordial-cocktail scene has sprung up. According to Jodie Battles, beverage director of Coppa (which has a cordial-only license), "You can actually make really cool drinks from cordials and liqueurs." Right now, for instance, one of Coppa's most popular drinks is called the Po Punch. "We're able to use a gin called Barr Hill from Vermont (which is considered a cordial owing to its sugar content), mixed with Lambrusco and Amaro Montenegro, which is 46 proof."



It's light outside, and the Sunday-afternoon Wave party is raging.

They've Learned How to Do Day Dancing Right

Since the city shuts down so early, Bostonians just pushed the party up a few hours.

“ In the summer, Dancing on the Charles is held at this old VFW post [American Legion Marsh Post No. 442] right on the Charles River. You show up mid-afternoon. The sun is shining. Friends are working the entrance, people are playing Frisbee, some are selling jewelry. It seems like the same 100 people are there all the time. They'll have four or five DJs playing at this huge outdoor dance area right on the river, and they'll play this light,

summery music, and there's a bar inside the Marsh Post. It ends at 11 p.m. and then people will head to after-parties. You can be with the same people for 12 hours—it's like you go on this journey with everyone from the afternoon into the next day.”
—Rachel S., grad student

“ The Wave takes place every month at the Middlesex in Cambridge. The beginning at 4:30 is more socializing—if you come early, you end up talking to people and meeting people. It's daylight out. You can bring in food. You get comfortable with one another. The second DJ will come on when the place starts to fill up, around 6:30. And by 8:30, the closer will be on. By the time of the last DJ, it's a full-on dance party. There are a couple of benches in the club, and by the end no one is sitting down.”
—Kibbee Miller, social-media-marketing manager

MEANWHILE, THE HIP-HOP SCENE IS ON THE UPSWING

According to local rapper Akrobatik.

"I'm actually feeling good about the prospects for hip-hop here. I think five years ago it might have been considered a wasteland. There's a regular show called Motivate Monday, which is run by a guy named Mark Merren, who is basically the guy bringing in most of the hip-hop and soul and funk. I think there are more people working in the business, more people trying to get there, and because of that, the promoters are never at a loss for getting people onstage."

"I like to throw parties at this bar Michael's in Somerville. You'll see the place transform from a dive bar of regulars to a dance party full of kids. At first the regulars were like, 'What the hell is going on?', but then they realized that if you can't beat 'em, join 'em.'"
—Miles McAlpin, digital-marketing specialist

The Codes to Know

For sidestepping the rules.

Order the Cold Tea

"Even if you go at 3 a.m., there are restaurants in Chinatown that are just packed. The secret is to ask for 'cold tea,' which is code for iced-tea cans filled with beers. **Every place serves it in a Lipton can.** Every now and then they'll take the can back and refill it so it doesn't look like you're piling up cans of tea. It's hard to get rowdy because the employees are quick to interrupt raucous behavior that gets out of control. I've seen a five-foot lady just scare the shit out of a bunch of bros who got a little too chatty." —Justin R., grad student

Ask a Punk About the Womb

"People have to keep their house parties on the down-low, because the cops create fake accounts on Facebook and then bust it up. **Now when organizers post about a house show, they'll say 'ask a punk' for the location.** I usually just ask one of my friends in a band because they've played at all the houses around here. Whenever there's a new apartment or practice space that starts hosting shows, they'll usually give the place a code name, like 'the Womb,' 'What We Talk About,' or 'Wilder Zangcraft.' Sometimes you just get the street name and you have to wander around until you find it." —Jen S., orientation and mobility instructor

Get the Dollar Oysters

"There are laws that say you can't have happy hour and you have to order food if you want to drink outside, so some restaurants in Boston offer dollar oysters as a way to get around this—and so they can get on Eater's dollar-oyster roundup lists. **Most of these oysters aren't great, but there are some exceptions:** The Merchant has an excellent oyster bar that's off everyone's radar, and they have dollar oysters on Mondays." —Jacqueline Church, founder of the Oyster Century Club

"There's a bar that I don't want to name that closes at 2 a.m., but if you want to stay later, you just don't leave. You have to be committed, though: They don't open the door again until 6 a.m. Everything's locked; there are no windows. No cop can see in from the street." —L.P.

The Secret Places to Party

Poker megaclubs and a 50-year-old woman's basement.



A Poker Warehouse in Allston

"When I went the first time, it was in a huge warehouse that reminded me of a mental hospital. But the minute you open the door to the poker room, it's boisterous. There are fridges full of beer, a kitchen where they make you burgers. **Anything you want, they take care of: I have a headache, they give me Advil.** I asked a dealer what time the game ends. He goes, "Depends, man. Gotta give 'em what they want, gotta give 'em what they need." —Jeff Gilbride, DJ-promoter

A Commercial Building in South Boston

"My friends and I have a private underground bar that we go to in an old commercial building. It has about 90 members. Once you're in, **you get a key, and it's come-and-go 24/7—it's always stocked with booze.** There are a couple of TVs, a card table, and a foosball table. Even though the area is changing, there are still a lot of these little doors in Southie. And you just have no idea what's behind them." —Sean "Milky" McColgan, sales rep

A Basement in Cambridge

"You enter through a gate on the street and walk to the back of the house and ring a doorbell. **Then a woman, probably in her 50s, answers, looks you up and down, and decides whether to let you in.** Inside, it's like someone's basement—kinda grungy, tile floor, there are some couches and a bar. You can order beers and also some basic well drinks. Cash only, of course. It's something different and most likely illegal." —Faye H.

A Recording Studio in Somerville

"After the closing of RISE—an after-hours club in Boston—I discovered this roving dance party. They'll hire a DJ and rent out a space and have these parties that go till 6 a.m. One I went to was at this recording studio in Somerville. When we showed up, the bouncer started shushing us. It was in a residential area. It was a small space. **But because the room was sound-proof, no one knew it was happening.**" —Andrew R., grad student

Fun Things to Do on a Weekend, for Adults

THURSDAY

"**Brick and Mortar** in Cambridge might have been one of the first places—definitely the first in Central Square—where you could get a decent drink. It's got this kind of nondescript, industrial vibe; there's no sign outside, no art on the walls, no frills. But the drinks (I'll order the Under the Gun, a tequila-based cocktail with chile bitters) are good, and the bartenders are really attractive." —Rachel Coburn, executive assistant

FRIDAY

"Once it gets warm, the first Friday of every month, the **Institute of Contemporary Art** will host concerts. They'll get a bar set up, and the artists—I've seen Lucius, Autre Ne Veut, Mykki Blanco, !!!—will perform on this back patio, which has this amazing view of the harbor that you can't get anywhere else in the city." —Doug Robinson, consultant

SATURDAY

"A perfect Saturday night in the summer can be spent exploring Fenway: Just around the corner from my restaurant Eastern Standard, a new dinner favorite of mine is **Tiger Mama**, an awesome new Southeast Asian spot from Tiffani Faison (try the Luk Thung cocktail). Then cap it off with wasabi roulette and a great selection of sake at **Hojoko**, a high-energy Japanese pub from the O Ya team. If you're still hungry, the window at **Tasty Burger** is open till 2 a.m." —Garrett Harker, owner of Eastern Standard, the Hawthorne, and Branch Line

IT'S NOT JUST BOSTON

Other cities that are trying to have a better time.

VANCOUVER

In response to complaints from business owners, customers, and tourism officials, **British Columbia legalized happy hour.**

LONDON

In March, Mayor Boris Johnson launched a **Night Time Commission to protect the nightlife economy** in the wake of club closures.

NEW DELHI

The Delhi government is proposing a **law that would allow more restaurants and bars to stay open 24 hours.**

SAN FRANCISCO

The **curfew for bonfires at Ocean Beach was just extended** (they can now go until 9:30 p.m.).

BARCELONA

As of mid-March, Barcelona's bars and restaurants will **no longer need to have a license to offer live music.**