



Photo by Josh Simmons



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Sometimes the graphic sex acts would get the Circus freaks run out of town before they got paid. Other times the late-night shows would bring in thousands of dollars.

"[The Circus] just wanted to be able to travel around and do what they did and be happy," Meschiya recalls. "They showed kids in small towns that they could do what they wanted, that they didn't have to go to school and get a fucking career if they didn't want to. That was the most gratifying part of it for me."

Although Aura enjoyed the rock-star life—being on the road, having instant money to pay for gas and partying—she never enjoyed being onstage. During the six months we spent together, I discovered that Aura was a skilled mechanic and a voracious reader. The lady was also unconventionally crafty. She would create art pieces out of 12-pack beer cartons, and some of my old HUSTLER Mag-



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azines live on as refrigerator magnets.

Aura maintains she has no regrets about her sordid past. "I don't give a fuck what people think," she says. "I did this for me." When asked why she'd tattooed her face, Aura replies, "I got tired of being a pretty girl."

However, she adds that her labia are a bit stretched from the dangling-lagers experience, and her piss shoots out sideways because of scar tissue. Since performing at Burning Man in 2004, Aura has returned to New Orleans, where she works as a short-order cook.

Caleb Schaber cut his teeth on writing, art and politics in Seattle's infamous Blue Moon Tavern. After graduating from the University of Washington with a degree in anthropology, he has held odd jobs that have taken him to such locales as Burning Man's Black Rock Desert and Iraq's ancient city of Ur—for a U.S. Department of Defense gig.



Photo by Gregory Spencer