



interview by Elizabeth Rhodes
photographer Tyler Curtis

Cloak & Dagger

Chances are you have seen the photos in black and white of a smoke-filled dancefloor lit by prayer candles lining the outer perimeter of the DJ booth with an entirely black-clad crowd, all of which provides the signature ambiance for the event called **Cloak & Dagger**. After gaining popularity among members and social media fans for the stylized images of the highly secretive event occurring weekly in **Los Angeles**, Cloak & Dagger's founders **Adam Bravin** and **Michael Patterson** have expanded the event two-fold by creating a **festival** that debuted in October 2017 and taking Cloak & Dagger to new cities, beginning with **Chicago**. We spoke with Bravin after the first installment of the festival wrapped about the origins of Cloak & Dagger and the purpose of creating such a unique event.

Give me a rundown of Cloak & Dagger and how did it come about with you and Michael?

Adam Bravin : It's a rather complex answer but I'll make it as simple as possible. I have been a DJ in Los Angeles for a long, long time. I have DJed parties in every genre you can imagine at one time or another. I have a hip hop background but I have DJed house nights, disco nights, hip hop nights, dance hall and reggae nights, you name it. And I've also been going out in Los Angeles since I was sixteen. I also have a club that happens on Saturday's called Giorgio's.

Is that at The Standard in Hollywood?

AB : It is. We have been doing that for almost five years now. My partner, Bryan Rabin, has been a promoter in Los Angeles for as long as I have been a DJ and he's

done some of the most historic clubs of all time including one called Cherry which was the Rock and Roll Club. So after doing Giorgio's for a number of years with Bryan, I learned a lot of things from the promoter side of things. I've learned some lessons that would ultimately be incorporated into Cloak & Dagger. So I guess the original idea for Cloak & Dagger came from being at Giorgio's. At Giorgio's we don't allow photos or video. I have some friends that come from, for lack of a better word the goth side of things or industrial or whatever you want to call it. I never know how to define it but they would come to Giorgio's and they would want to support Bryan and I they just fucking hate disco.

To each their own, but yeah.

AB : Totally understandable. So I remember thinking it would be cool to have a

place where people could go and listen to a different kind of music. Then a person who said that to me and Bryan is a celebrity, who doesn't go out very often, and the reason why they don't go out but they come to Giorgio's is because they can come there and just relax and be themselves and not worry about a ton of people harassing them and trying to get photos of them or with them. So I thought, wow, what if there's a place where this person and some of their friends, whether they're celebrities or not, could go and hear dark music, not disco. Then I started thinking about just dark clubs, "dark" again for lack of a better word because I don't know how to describe any of this shit, just the landscape of these kinds of clubs in Los Angeles and what you get when you go there. From music to aesthetics to fashion, etc. And then I just started thinking about how in my opinion, and as much as I love all these clubs, in my opinion I feel like in a lot of ways that scene hasn't evolved, especially in terms of music. When you go to one of these clubs you pretty much know what you're going to get. You know what I mean? 90% of what you hear is probably what you've been hearing since the 90s.

Even though new stuff has been coming out.

AB : Even though new stuff has been coming out and they incorporate it in very well, the majority of what you hear not only is older music but from the same types of genres, it's either goth or industrial or something closely related. But I know from having such a large musical vocabulary and having DJed all kinds of clubs throughout my career that every genre has a darker side. I know that hip hop has so much dark music to offer that nobody ever plays. And if they do it's very rarely.

Interesting, is that because it's not necessarily well received by the dance floor audience who is looking to hear more of the A-side, not the B-side track?

AB : Sure, but okay. So if there's hip hop, if there's house, if there's pop music, if there's Motown, if there's rock and roll, if there are all these genres that have a darker side, and one could figure out a way to weave them all together where sonically they make sense and thematically they make sense, it would make for a pretty special set. This was my original thought. And again, I just happen to know a shit-ton of music, I've also been DJing most of my life so I'm technically really good at DJing and I know that I could figure out a way to present it all in a way that made sense. When you talk about it, when I try to explain it to people they're like, "I don't get it. How does Britney Spears' "Toxic" fit into that conversation? That doesn't make any sense to me. Or how does Notorious B.I.G. fit into that conversation? I don't get it." And I go, okay, well, you know. I can try and explain it to you or you can come hear it for yourself. If I try and explain it to you, I can say, well, Notorious B.I.G. has a song called "Suicidal Thoughts". If that's not dark as fuck, I don't know what is.

Good point.

AB : You know what I'm saying? In my opinion it doesn't just have to be the notes that the band or artist chose to play or incorporate into the song. It can be the lyrics. It can be the sonics. It can be the vibe. There's something about all that music that has a common thread and it's just that somewhere in it there is something that I personally consider dark and other people can consider it dark or not. It doesn't really matter within the context of what we're talking about here, I just have a vision of a bunch of music that fits together because of the definitions that I've incorporated into what I believe dark music can potentially be or is.

Did you have in mind the crowd that you would see at this event when you were initially putting it all together?

AB : I did. In the same way there's basically one sentence that describes who we're looking for and we never really say what it is. But, in the same way that we have basically the same ideology as to who we invite to Giorgio's, Bryan Rabin, and I, it's the same thing. It is hard to describe without really giving it away. But to answer your question yeah I knew who I wanted in there, and it was just people who were going to add something beautiful in whatever individual way they would add it to the experience.

Well stated. When did Michael Patterson become part of this? Were you talking about this with him from the beginning?

AB : We were talking about it from the beginning.

Was he feeling a similar kind of void or need for this type of event?

AB : It was really just, "I want to go out all the time and there just isn't anything that I want to go to." Again, I love all the people who throw these club events in Los Angeles, they're all friends of mine and I love their events, it's not that I don't want to go there. It's that I just had an image of a place in my mind that didn't exist and I wanted to try to create and bring to life. Michael and I love all the same types of music because Michael, like myself, has a hip hop background. He mixed a lot of stuff for Bad Boy in the 90s. He worked with Puff and that is why my band She Wants Revenge initially hired him to mix our first two albums because he understands the low end of hip hop, which we have in our music, as well as the low mids and high mids of rock and roll, and not a lot of guys understand that. Coming from a sonic standpoint, we knew that we needed him to mix our records because Justin Warfield, my partner in She Wants Revenge, and I both have hip hop backgrounds so our music incorporates hip hop into it as well as a number of other things. And so that's how Michael, Justin and I all became friends because we share a lot of the same musical taste. When I started thinking about this club, Michael and I also are really good friends and love a lot of other common interests that we've incorporated into the club including immersive theater, elements of secret societies and the occult. These are things that we would just discuss all the time before the club was even an idea. We started thinking it would be cool if there was a club that played Siouxsie and the Banshees and The Cure but also Wu-Tang Clan and Mobb Deep. We thought, well, if we are going to go that far, why not take a few extra steps and try to incorporate some of these other ideas that we've always wanted to do into the club itself and then we just kind of took it from there, and then it started.

I'm really interested in hearing more about your pursuit to find an alternative to the alternative, or really creating an experience where you are immersed in a dark atmosphere that is without names, without boundaries. Actually, it is a very punk way to think about having an event. We have all these names for genres but there is a lot of dark stuff that people are drawn to, why don't we put this together and really showcase it in an eclectic mix of music and a dark environment that you can really lose yourself in? You can lose the day that you came from or the problems in your life and come to this and really be part of something different and special. Am I getting it right?

AB : You know, not only... look, you nailed it. And not only did you nail it, you nailed it in a way that I needed to hear today. And I'll explain to you why.

Oh cool. Okay.

AB : Punk rock, a punk rock way of thinking. There are people out there in the world who could look at what we do and say to us that what we created is actually the opposite of what the types of people who go to, for lack of a better word, goth or industrial kinds of places would want to be a part of. They could say that what we do is completely non-inclusive, in fact it's exclusive by making it members only, by forcing people to wear all black, to have all these rules. That's not what people who are punk rock or goth or industrial want, they're the outsiders, they're the loners, they want to be part of something that's inclusive and not exclusive. And they're completely off the mark. They just don't understand and that's fair. Because they've probably never been. But the truth is, it's exactly what you said, it's a very punk rock way of thinking outside of the box creating something, it's a family, it's a community within a community, and it's an important place for people to be a part of and a special place for people to be a part of, and I'll explain to you why without going into too much detail because I can't. There's a bigger philosophy to the club than just a place where you can hear a bunch of different kinds of music and a bunch of people wear black. That's a big part of it, you know, it's bigger than a place where you know if you're one of the chosen few you can

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experience the immersive theater side of the club which not everybody, A, knows about, and B, gets to experience. There are all of these elements of the club that are very important and special to the club, but there's a fundamental ideology behind everything, which is, we need a place where people can feel like they're a part of something, where they feel like they're protected, where they feel like they can drop their armor at the door, and where they can, if they want to, help other people within the community or get help from other people in the community, or both. It's a very special place where everyone has the opportunity if they want to take advantage of it, to become better versions of themselves in a number of ways. And that's one of the philosophies behind what we do. It's not about the money at all, in fact we've never made a dime in two years and we're not interested in that. It's just a place for people to come together and experience something in a way that they're not experiencing it anywhere else.

As you're saying this I'm really struck by the word ritual. For example, when a judge goes into his chambers and changes out of his street clothes to walk into the court room, he puts on a robe. Right? He puts on a different garment, we could call it costume, but that transforms him from his name and titles of father, husband, employee, et cetera to this role. That is an important process and that is ritual. You're talking about leaving your armor at the door and walking into an environment that has been curated specifically to allow you to lay down your judgments about what you're about to see or hear, to accept others for their differences or even accept that they have more in common with you than you thought, if at first glance they don't look the same as you or your identified peer group. You have a framework through the all black dress code, the members only stipulation, the way even the photographs are always black and white in Cloak & Dagger's social media presence, to really making sure that this is not just a "let me go out and get drunk at the club and stumble home" event... Everything is speaking to ritual. You are talking about the elevation of an experience and I would guess if other people are trying it they certainly aren't pulling it off in a way that is as fully thought out and developed as what you're talking about. I think that's something for you and Michael to be very proud of. What an incredible opportunity for people to experience that.

AB : It's something we take really seriously, you know... There's just so many levels of it that I wish I could explain to you that I can't.

And for the sake of this interview and where it will be going in the public eye and all that, it is so important that you keep that obscurity. You know, that it does not become transparent. Ritual.

AB : Absolutely, for sure. It's really a special place and we really spend a lot of our time making sure that it evolves and that the people who come have the opportunity to evolve as well. And we don't force feed anybody anything, we allow everybody to be a part of it or not, evolve or not, continue to evolve if they choose, everyone's welcome, just figuring out how to become a part of it is the trick. Some people could look at our social media and go, "oh, you guys always let in hot models". Or you know, we get these kinds of comments. It's not that at all. Everybody has something beautiful about them and those are the people that have become members.

Again, part of the ritual is each person asking themselves why you would become part of this group if you didn't have a purpose or an intention to be there.

AB : Intention is a very important word and again you nailed it, intention is a very very important word, within not just what Michael and I do, but within the context of the rituals that happen behind closed doors or out in the public in terms of at the club. There's all kinds of rituals on a weekly basis, and again, you nailed it when you said everything we do is a ritual in one way or another. But intention, you know, our intention, the people who come weekly, their intention, the people that perform the rituals, their intention. The healing rituals we do, everyone's intention

who are involved in those, you know, we offer people opportunities to help people around them or reach out to the people around them and us to help them in whatever it is they need help with. If they need help. It's what it's all about.

That is so different than really any other club or event that you can think of. Anywhere.

AB : At a certain point, the club is incidental. It's just a bonus. It's a bonus that you can come and dance and socialize and flirt and drink and do all the things you would do at any other club or event. That's the bonus part of it. That's just a byproduct of the philosophy that we have behind the scenes.

Perhaps this all reflects an aspect of our humanity, going back to what human connection was about long before what we consider the modern era. When people would gather for any occasion there would be a considerable amount of intention there because it would take effort to travel to somebody else's home or to a space that was safe and warm to be able to share something. So whether it was sharing a celebratory evening or paying a visit to a loved one and so on, I think you're getting back to a very powerful thing which is communion, you know, coming together, that is community. As I hear you speak about this, I keep wondering... It's so interesting that this is happening in the backdrop of Los Angeles, which has a reputation for being vapid and superficial, it could not be more wrong in a lot of ways regarding the area, and yet, that is a layer of the reality here. So I think it's really interesting that in one way you're mirroring the place that you're in to say if you want to see the illusion that it's just a club, you can see that illusion and that's fine. Take it for what it is if you see it that way. But if you see more, you're going to get so much more.

AB : Absolutely. I mean, that's part of the philosophy, that's again where it comes from, you get out of it what you intend to get out of it.

And we could say that for both living in a city like Los Angeles and attending Cloak & Dagger, right?

AB : Absolutely. To take it a step further, going back to what you were saying about communion and the historical aspects of it, I could be wrong but from what I understand there are very powerful people from all the different philosophies of magic that attend Cloak & Dagger on a weekly basis. Some of whom are very important members. And from what I understand there are very few places where you see people from all these different philosophies congregate. That's an important part. It's amazing to see all these people come together on a weekly basis and this is just a side note aside from everything else we spoke about. Some of these people could be coming from Hoodoo or the Wiccan side of things, there's so many different magical people that come from all these different kinds of philosophies who let us know that they're drawn there, that Cloak & Dagger is the epicenter of energy in certain ways that a lot of these people are just drawn to. And it gets stronger and stronger the more these kinds of magical people start to discover and come to. You understand what I'm saying?

Yeah, I do.

AB : And it's not just them, it's everybody. I could go on and on and on, and not to sound pretentious or anything, but I have to continue to say that it's a really special place in that the feedback from all these other people, they all know how special it is. We just sit back and kind of do our thing and these people continue to show up and discover this place and Cloak & Dagger evolves in that way. It becomes stronger and stronger just from the magical side of it. You know, I can't really go too much depth into it, just like I can't really go too much in depth on a lot of the aspects of Cloak & Dagger just because we don't talk about a lot of things and neither do any of the members. But I can say that it's a very magical place and I don't mean that in any other sense of the word than the truest sense of it. You know, it's a really powerful and magical and special place. And it took on a life of its own at a certain point and continues to evolve in ways that we hadn't initially



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imagined it would. And that's a testament to the people who are part of the Cloak & Dagger community.

So taking this from what we've been talking about, which is the weekly event, to considering taking this to a larger platform and opening it up to the public as the festival Cloak & Dagger: Dusk Till Dawn, how did that come about to say, "we should put together a live music festival and we should make it open to the public," but also how do we put the name Cloak & Dagger on that and maintain the ethos of that experience at Cloak & Dagger? How did you guys come up with that and how did you go about trying to protect that?

AB : The idea originally came from thinking about what a two-year anniversary party would look like. I'm in a band called She Wants Revenge and I imagined a two-year anniversary party that could potentially have my band playing, like a secret show, and maybe one or two other bands who are members of Cloak & Dagger because there are a ton of bands whose members are members of Cloak & Dagger. I thought, "Hey, why don't we do a two-year anniversary party, we'll play and a couple of other bands who are members will play, and we'll do something super cool, and small, and intimate for the members." Then I reached out to the She Wants Revenge agent, Pete Anderson, who's at a company called APA, who is amazing. I reached out to him and I said, "I have this idea to do this two year anniversary party but would you do me a favor and just, while I'm thinking about it and trying to imagine it in a kind of slightly bigger way, can you just do a little bit of investigation and see if there's any festivals out there you can find in the world anywhere that incorporate all the different genres of music that I incorporate into the weekly playlist?"

That's a tall order, Adam.

AB : Yes, just to see what's out there and at what level they're doing things. And what he reported back to me with was, there are a lot of goth or industrial or dark-wave festivals out there but most of them are exactly what you would expect them to be, with maybe one or two curve balls. But he couldn't find anything, not to say that nothing exists, but he personally couldn't find anything and neither could I when I did a little bit of research myself. Neither of us could find anything where it was a number of genres within the context of "dark" in the same way that I play music at Cloak & Dagger. It sparked an idea where we said, maybe we could be on to something if it's not just She Wants Revenge and two bands, maybe it's six bands and why don't we maybe try and reach out to a venue? You know, a smaller venue in town, because at Cloak & Dagger there's a stage there but it's super tiny, not to say that we couldn't do it there, but we thought why not make it a thing outside of the club? We started having conversations with Brian Tarney at Restless Nights and Mitchell Frank at Spaceland Presents, and once we started talking with Brian and Mitchell we realized it could be a lot bigger than maybe five or six bands at a venue, that it could actually be a festival where we could incorporate all kinds of genres just like I do at the club and not only that, the aesthetic, the immersive side, some of the philosophies, there's a way to do it we thought where we can expand on what we do at the club and make it accessible to whoever's interested in coming without giving away many of the things that we keep secret at the club. After discussing it for months, we all came to the same conclusion, which is, we definitely have to do this. And so, we spent nine months working on this thing, and you know, we figured out ways to do what we do at the club for the public without again giving away too much of what we do on a weekly basis.

When you were selecting the bands that would play, it seems like the focus was on keeping it dark and showcasing a different side of what you've heard before. For example, attendees could choose between performances at the two venues but then you could also go to the basement of the Globe Theatre and see an emerging artist perform and your mind could be opened up to an artist you've never heard before but is perhaps sharing something that you need to hear.

AB : Absolutely. That's an extension of being a DJ that I don't think exists as

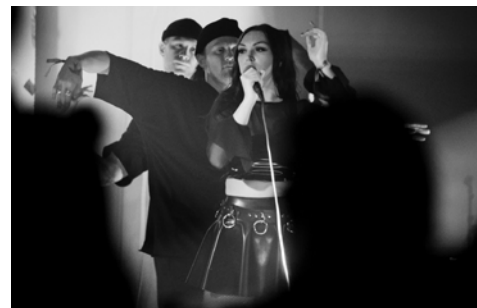
much as it used to because of the internet. You know, before everyone had access to everything, at any given moment, the DJs were the ones that were exposing people to new music first. And that was a really special and important thing for me.

It's like being the music shaman, you know. You're the medicine man.

AB : Exactly, a very close friend of mine has given me a nickname, you know like twenty years ago or more, which is the Witch Doctor. It's actually the Witch Doctor [with] the Mighty Heart, but we'll just focus on the Witch Doctor part. You know, the witch doctor was the one that created the rhythm, that created the ritual, and everybody would dance around the fire and get into a frenzy. Being the witch doctor in certain aspects for a number of years and being super excited about playing a record that was one of twenty copies that you could only hear at whatever club one of those twenty DJs who happened to have that piece of vinyl were playing at, it was that way for a long time and it was a really special part of my life. I still try to do that at the club, because again, if you're a hip hop head who comes to Cloak & Dagger and I play The Soft Moon you probably don't know what the hell it is but I know that you'll get into it. Just like if you're more of a goth or industrial kind of person, and I play Mykki Blanco or Champion Chills or Ramsey, these things are just a little bit left of what people may have access to or hear when they go out. It's important, I want to be involved in exposing people to new music and that's why having the basement at the Globe [Theatre] was so important, because it's not just about the bands everybody knows; it's about a community, we're all part of this community and we all want to help each other shine in whatever way it is that we shine. So there are acts that are just like you said, emerging, that you typically can only hear or see in certain circumstances and it's our responsibility to help our community be exposed to as many people as possible.

So now that the first Cloak & Dagger festival has passed, were you able to successfully execute the intention of the festival and do you have any observations to share about how people received it?

AB : I think that there are a lot of obstacles one could encounter when trying to produce a festival for the first year. We've all encountered them as festival-goers. So you know, Michael Patterson, Annie Lesser who was the writer/director of all the immersive stuff, Brian Tarney and everyone at Restless Nights, Mitchell Frank and everyone at Spaceland Presents, worked so hard on making sure that the obstacles we ran into or ones we could potentially run into were overcome in such a way that the intention of the festival was expressed in as clear of a way as possible. I think we accomplished that. I'm trying in as unbiased a way as I can possibly be but in my opinion, [it was] one of my favorite lineups of all time. From the feedback that we've received it was a lot of people's favorite lineups of all time as well. People really had a good time, were exposed to music that they weren't aware of, got to see some of their favorite bands play and were able to have access to immersive experiences. Some people don't even know that [the immersive theater] world exists and were brought into it and were blown away. That's another special part of the weekly club. And just to talk about that for one more second: normally when you go to an immersive event, obviously you know what you're getting yourself into and you're prepared for something. What we have going for us at the club is that we get people who come to the club who have no idea that there's immersive experience aspect of the club, they just come to party and dance, and suddenly somebody grabs them by the hand and takes them away to some other room and something happens. That's beautiful and they're blown away because they had no idea that was going to happen. I was seeing that happen to some of the people who were discovering the installations that were happening at the festival as well as some of the people who we were personally pushing through some of the one on one immersive events that were going on. So you know, I don't think it could have gone any better, honestly. I was running around like a chicken without a head most of the time, but for the moments where I've forced myself to kind of chill and appreciate it, as a music fan and festival fan, I really took a moment to look around and see that people were having a really great time and we've got nothing but amazing feedback. I think it's just a testament again to all



the people that were involved in putting it together; everybody executed it in such a way that it made overall a very successful first year which could have potentially had so many things go wrong. I'm so happy about that, you know, it's just it goes back to intention, that word is a really important word within the context of this conversation and in general but within the context of this conversation, it's possible to imagine something that doesn't exist and create it.

Yes, absolutely.

AB : And that I think is the most important lesson if nothing else from this entire process. If people could just take that away from it, aside from seeing their favorite bands and partying and meeting people and socializing and doing all the things you do at a festival, people could take a step back and just see that one day Cloak & Dagger the club didn't exist, and then it did. One day, this festival didn't exist and then we imagined it and then it happened. It all goes back to intention.

That is really powerful stuff you just talked about, that's magic. That's the root of magic. It's intention.

AB : It is. I have so many friends that don't understand that side of it and I try to explain, you know, the "magical" side of Cloak & Dagger, and fair enough. Maybe they're not into it, maybe they just don't understand it, maybe they've never been exposed to it, maybe they just can't wrap their head around it. Maybe they just think of it in terms of Harry Potter movies. No offense to Harry Potter movies because I love them, or some of them. Intention, you know magic is just intention, magic is just a way of voicing an intention I guess. It's just the real world result of intention sometimes.

It's alchemical, transmuting something from a thought to a form to an action.

AB : Exactly. That's what this festival is, that's what all the music that I make is, that's what all the art I create is, that's what all of the music that everybody creates is, everything is magic. It's all magical and you know, it's just exactly what you said, forming a thought, taking that thought and making it something tangible in the real world.

So do you think this is something you will be able to produce annually or biannually, because you said this was a two-year anniversary, it came from there. Do you see there being a Cloak & Dagger Festival 2018?

AB : Absolutely. We're already talking about doing a number of things. It's just an extension of the club, that's all it is. I go in the club, I DJ, I put a bunch of songs together by a bunch of artists in a certain order and people dance to them, and that's kind of what a festival is. It's just curating bands and putting them in a certain order, and having them play for people, it's just kind of an extension of what we do at the club, and then we take all the aspects of what we do at the club and incorporating them into a bigger idea, and yeah, you know, after now accomplishing year one, even before the year one festival happened we were already starting to talk about year two.

That's very good news to people who are fans of Cloak & Dagger and who have been wanting a chance to participate somehow, this is going to give them another opportunity to do so. How cool is that?

AB : Absolutely! And who knows what's going to happen? But we are getting requests from other cities and other countries around the world you know, asking us if there's a way we can do Cloak & Dagger Festival in Mexico City or Berlin. Or London. Or New York or Chicago, you know, there's all kinds of opportunities here and we will explore all of them, and we will try to make the magic happen in as many places and as many times as it's possible for us to do.

I'm thinking about how earlier we were talking about Los Angeles and you could say the city itself is a member of Cloak & Dagger. The culture, the zeitgeist, you know, everything that makes this one place as complicated and beautiful and everything that it is, it really is part of Cloak & Dagger in a way

and yet, Cloak & Dagger can go somewhere else. Do you see Cloak & Dagger as something that would be challenging to move it to a different city?

AB : I don't see that as challenging. I think that this communion exists everywhere. It does. I think that in every city there exists a group of people who are the same as we are. And I know that we could potentially take this anywhere we want and these people that are just like us would come and support it.

You're getting back to magic, you know, not being something that's only accessible to a certain type of person or a certain socioeconomic status of a person. It's there for everybody. It's there to take because intention is there for everybody. It's part of your birthright being incarnated here. I really appreciate that our conversation has been on such a different level than just talking about a club or throwing a party. It's really about the heart of Cloak & Dagger and that is what people are craving to know. They want to know but maybe they don't know how to ask. So I appreciate you sharing all of this because it's really special.

AB : Well, you know, I appreciate having the opportunity not only to talk about it, because honestly we don't want to talk about it a lot, but also to talk about it with somebody who understands the vocabulary. I know that you get what I'm saying in a way that you can help express to the world what it is and to whoever's reading what you write. And it's important, you know, I can't express to you how important it is not only for me personally but everybody involved, how important this place is and special. Because it just feels like every day, week, month, year that goes by, the kinds of places I had the opportunity to go to when I was younger, and feel part of, are just disappearing. And you know it's my responsibility. I can't really speak for Michael, but I can say that it's my responsibility to pay it forward in that way. I wouldn't be who I am without being a part of Los Angeles you know. I am Los Angeles because Los Angeles is what informed me. In every way. And so, it's my responsibility to provide as much of that opportunity as I've been given to other people in whatever way that I can.

I'd love to hear anything you would like to share about your project Love, Ecstasy and Terror.

AB : Sure. I never sang before in my life. Ever.

Appreciating that pause before saying "ever".

AB : Yes. Maybe in the shower and I did karaoke once. The same night I did karaoke, I totaled my car. So we'll just leave it at that. My partner in She Wants Revenge, my best friend and someone I've known most of my life, Justin Warfield, suggested to me four years ago that I should stop everything I was doing at the time, which was producing other artists, and make an album and sing on it. And immediately I was like, there's no fucking way. One of my fears is getting up in front of people and singing and he pushed me and said, "look, dude, let's just go in the studio, I'll help you write a couple songs, I'll help you come up with the melodies, and you go in and sing them, and if you suck so bad that I don't think there's any potential for you to do something special, I'll tell you. But I know you, and I know that you as an artist finding a new way to express yourself at this point in your life would be a really special thing for you". And he was right. So we did a few songs. I really fucking hated it and then I wrote down a bunch of words, went in the studio and sang them, and everything changed. There's not a lot of things left for me to experience for the first time in certain ways at this point in my life, as an artist, and there's not a lot of big firsts in general. To be able to express myself in this way, which is the most intimate way I've ever expressed myself, singing that is, is a really special thing. And I just decided you know what, I'm just going to make a record. If no one ever hears it, I'm okay with that, because it's the process and it's setting goals and it's overcoming fears, all these things are what motivated me to make a record. If people hear it and they like it—great. If people hear it and they don't like it, fair enough. No expectations. I'm just setting a goal to make an album and complete it and sing on it, and that was the intention. And I accomplished it. I made a record, I sang on it, and I was able to sneak Love,

" When you're making the music, well, your songs are spells. When you're in the studio and you have an intention to make people dance and you make a certain kind of song, that's a spell. You're casting a spell when you make that song so that people dance when you play that song. That's magic. It's just all part of a bigger picture, which is all just magic. "

Ecstasy and Terror on to the lineup for this Cloak & Dagger Festival. So I got to perform and I was the first performance at the Tower [Theatre]. It was one of the most magical experiences of my life. Important and special. If I never did another show I'd be okay with that, if no one ever heard my record I'd be okay with that. It just goes back to the word of the day. Intention. You know, I had an intention and I made it happen and here we are.

It's a full circle, because we were talking about a time where there was an intention to create an event, a place where people could gather, have that communion, and you made it happen, and here you are, facing a fear, having the intention of putting something out there that feels really close to you, feels very vulnerable, and you made it happen.

AB : Well, you know what, I'll take it a step further. So I started making this record four years ago, right. After about a year, and this is a year before Cloak & Dagger the club was even an idea, a year after I started making a record, we started thinking of how we live in such a crazy world in terms of putting music out there and how to expose people to your music in a way that could potentially be a new way of thinking about it rather than just throwing it out on SoundCloud or trying to get a deal with a label, or the ways that people typically put their music out. What would be an interesting and new way of doing that? And this goes back to the initial ideas of Cloak & Dagger, asking what if you created a place where you could curate it in such a way that the people who you would want to hear your music from all walks of life could all be in the same room and hear it? By sneaking it into a set that was a bunch of other music that was along the same lines as it.

I see, yeah.

AB : That's where it all started. That was the intention. Make a record, create a place, create mixes of the kinds of music that we would play at the club and sneak in some of my own songs into that and not really name them or let people know what they are, just have them exist in a context for people and expose people to my solo project in that way. And you know what? That intention came full circle when I performed at the Cloak & Dagger Festival. Crazy.

That is awesome!

AB : It's magic. It's all magic, it really is. It's magic.

Who knew this conversation would be all about magic?

AB : And people, you know, the people around me who still on a weekly basis teach me more and more about magic. They teach me that when you're making the music, well, your songs are spells. When you're in the studio and you have an intention to make people dance and you make a certain kind of song, that's a spell. You're casting a spell when you make that song so that people dance when you play that song. That's magic. It's crazy. It's just all part of a bigger picture, which is all just magic.

We've come a long way, Adam. Thank you.

AB : We have. **A**

Cloak & Dagger Live 2018 will be held at The State Theatre in Los Angeles on November 10th. For more information on Cloak & Dagger check out their website www.xcloakanddaggerx.com and Instagram @cloakanddaggerx.

