

Through a lens of pleasurable discomfort, Detroit-based visual artist Lucy Cahill channels her own experiences and impressions of femininity and feminism, power, and the body, with pit stops at antique shops and showings of B-movies along the way. Perhaps her work can best be summed up in one word: weird. She chose that word, but it would have been my choice too, with its many fantastic meanings: odd, magical, uncanny.

Illustration and poster design are her specialties. Among these pages, you'll see some of her most vibrant posters showcasing out-of-town acts as well as local bands. Whether you're out and about in Detroit or clicking through upcoming shows online, a Lucy Cahill poster is visible from a mile away. Maybe you'll see a woman's face: enraged, disgusted, or some combination of both. Maybe her face will actually be that of a lizard. Or you might spot a strange grouping of objects, like a prayer candle, a citrus fruit, and big hairy spider, all encircled by a glaring moray eel. Bubbly lettering feels viscous rather than teenage, textured band names are shaky and anxious at times, kaleidoscopically elongated at others.

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Her work has a very distinct appeal, at once bringing to mind her core influences – midcentury advertising, femme fatales, graphic novelists like Daniel Clowes and Charles Burns – while having a fierce sensibility that is very much her own. But as attracted as she is to the aesthetics of material culture and mass consumption, she is just as troubled about the hollow consumerism and emptiness of the American dream that it all represents. Her work perfectly hovers in that space, dancing between celebrating the imagery of a time that never existed and burning down the capitalist system that built those falsehoods in the first place.

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