

ROCK HARD

with the

CLOWNS

a love story about addiction



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studios

Love



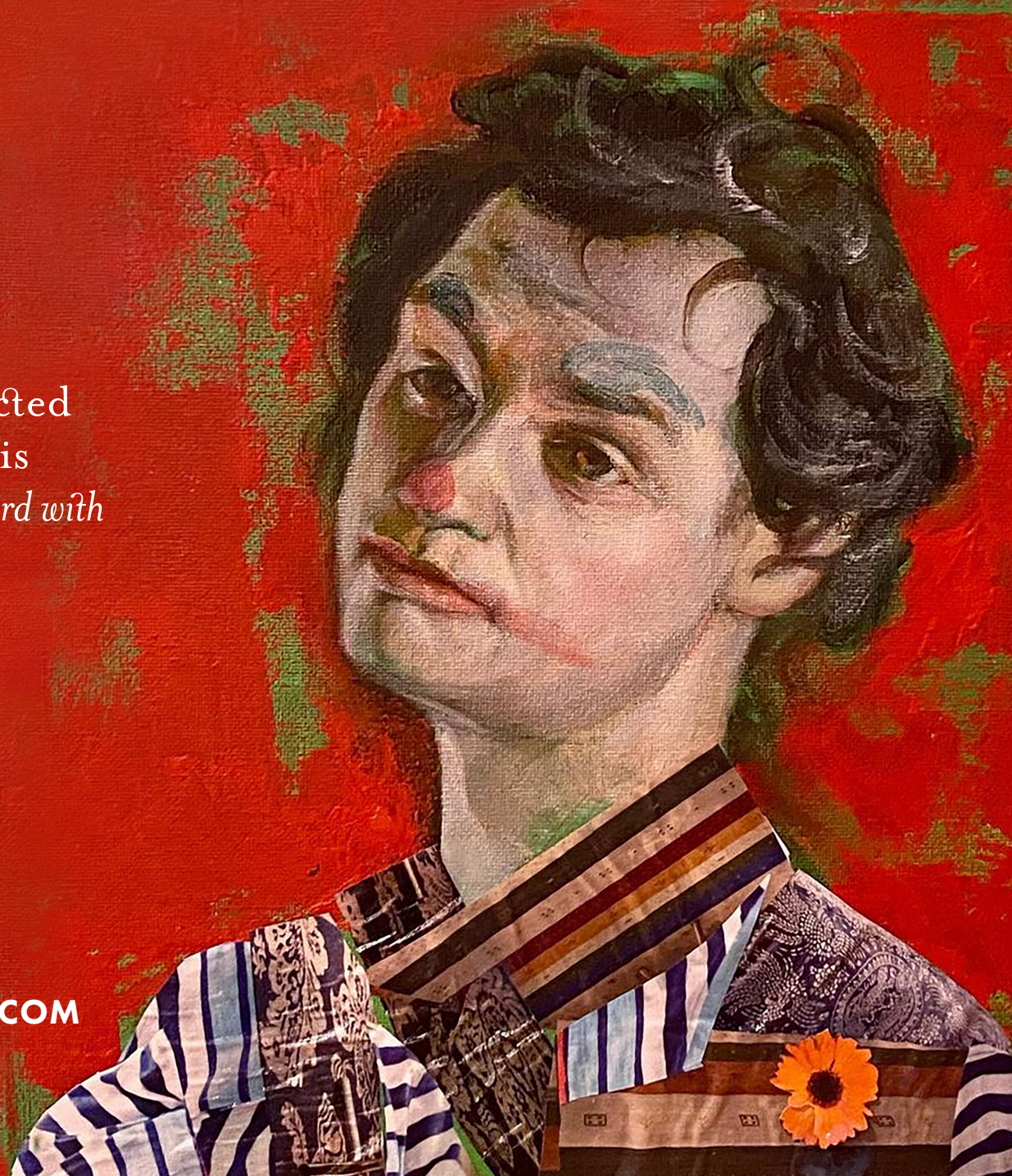
Sucks

In *Rock Hard with the Clowns*
a performer falls
in and out and in and out
of love
with his addiction

The series, which will be directed
by Eric Wakefield Thompson, is
based on the short film *Rock Hard with
the Clown* by Mike Shea.



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The SHORT Film

Mike, how'd you get yourself into this mess?

In 2009 my Halloween costume got way out of control. The costume became a character, then the character started doing stand up, then I got severely addicted to a severely addictive substance.

Getting sober, I turned my costume — Brown Frown the Clown — into a short film. *Rock Hard with the Clown* went on to achieve over 50 selections, nominations, and awards around the world, which is nifty because it was: 1) my first film; 2) a 42-minute-long drunk clown musical shot on the stringiest of shoestring budgets.

Eric Wakefield Thompson, who's worked with everyone from Lady Gaga to Walmart, saw the potential in my one-note character and helped me write a series with the depth of a symphony.

“

“Absolutely incredible ...
we want to watch more.”

— *Indie Short Fest*

“Mike is different. His
movie is really funny.”

— *RVA Magazine*

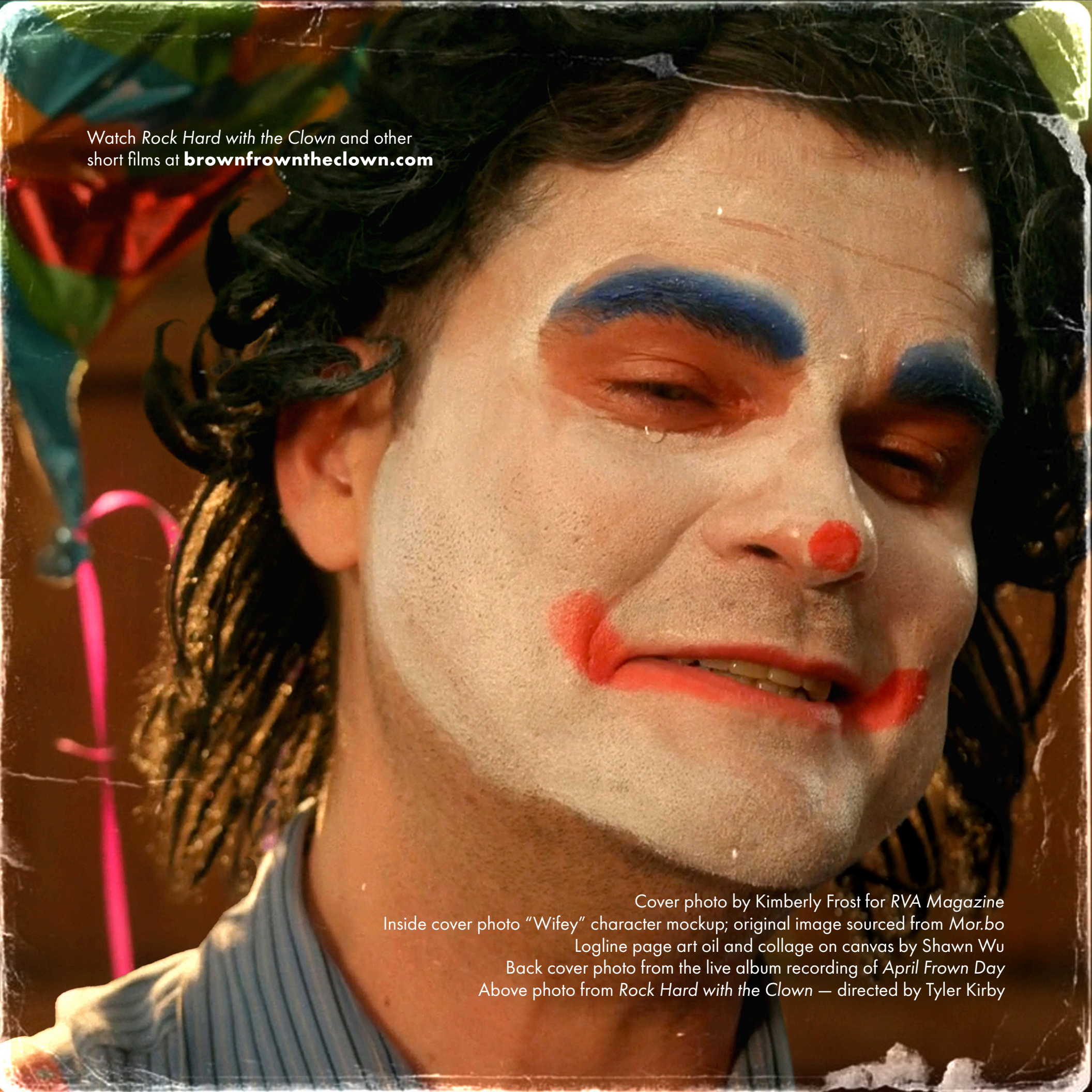
“A brilliant talent.”

— *Virginia Film Office*

“Wow. The production
quality is fantastic and
the acting is excellent.”

— *Another Limited Rebellion*

”



Watch *Rock Hard with the Clown* and other
short films at brownfrownthecrown.com

Cover photo by Kimberly Frost for RVA Magazine
Inside cover photo "Wifey" character mockup; original image sourced from *Mor.bo*
Logline page art oil and collage on canvas by Shawn Wu
Back cover photo from the live album recording of *April Frown Day*
Above photo from *Rock Hard with the Clown* — directed by Tyler Kirby

Mashups

So you love *South Park* and *Euphoria*, huh?

David Bowie knew that to make something great, he had to take previously-proven mediums and mash them together to create something new. He took sci-fi, glam rock, and kabuki theatre to create Ziggy Stardust. I took my three favorite things — fatuous sitcoms with musical numbers like *South Park*, dark comedies about alcoholism like *Bojack Horseman*, and beautiful arthouse dramas about addiction like *Euphoria* — smashing them together to create *Brown Frown*. With the DNA of three successful mediums, *Rock Hard with the Clowns* has the potential to have a substantial cult following. Cult followings allowed *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* to make 226 million USD on a 1.4 million budget¹.



David Bowie sold more than 140 million records during his lifetime³



The Rocky Horror Picture Show was “ignored by pretty much everyone, including the future fanatics who would eventually count the hundreds of times they’d seen it”.

— Roger Ebert²

The projectionist at the premiere told me he speeds through indie screen tests because most are horrible. He watched *Rock Hard with the Clown* all the way through. **Twice.**



Photo by Monica Ramirez
— First Camera Assistant on
Rock Hard with the Clown

Audience

Who the hell is gonna watch a drunk clown musical miniseries?

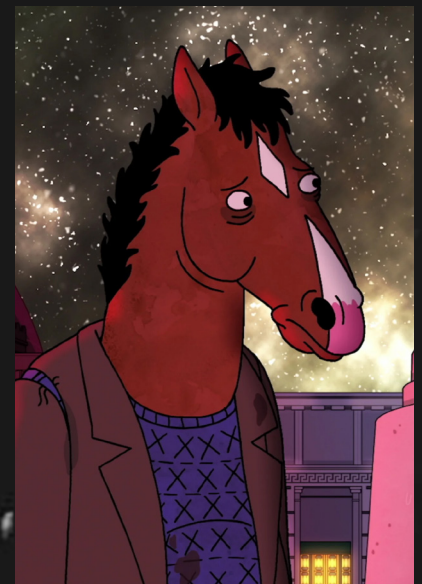
With its first season, *South Park* claimed the highest ratings for any basic-cable series, and reruns drew “five or six times” Comedy Central’s usual audience⁴. In 2021, the creators signed a \$900 million deal with ViacomCBS Inc., one of the biggest in TV history⁵.

BoJack Horseman became the first Netflix original to be syndicated to cable in the U.S.⁶, and was released on DVD and Blu-ray⁷. It was ranked as the best Netflix original by *Thrillist*⁸ and *Uproxx*⁹, and *IndieWire* named it the best animated series of all time¹⁰.

Euphoria has been praised as “visually stunning”¹¹. By the end of its second season, *Euphoria* was the second-most-watched HBO series of all time¹² (there just ain’t no competing with dragons).



South Park’s syndication generates an estimated 25 million USD a year¹³



BoJack Horseman had 17 times the demand of the average TV series in the U.S. as of September 2023¹⁴



Euphoria had the strongest
digital premiere night
performance since HBO
Max's launch¹⁵

(*upcoming*) SERIES

Ok fine, I'm a bit curious. What's it about?

Struggling with sobriety-induced writer's block, a dying cough syrup-addicted clown tries to win back his estranged wife by making the world's greatest parody song.

Uh huh. So what's it *really* about?

Should love be unconditional? When I think about the series, which is a lot, I don't think about the jokes which are hilarious, or the music which is phenomenal. I think about the real moments in the script — the moments of struggling with loving others and loving oneself. The struggles of loving something hateful. The struggles of falling in and out of love.

I hope our clown has a happy ending. I did, but I'm one of the lucky few. Addiction doesn't just kill. It tortures people to death. This show is for those who can't watch it because they lost their fight. If our clown has a happy ending, perhaps a viewer might glimpse one of their own.

In 2021:

46.3 million Americans
had Substance or Alcohol
Use Disorder¹⁶



Only 4.6% of them
sought treatment¹⁶

More than 246,000
of them died^{17,18}



"Wifey" character mockup;
original image sourced from
Interview Magazine

THE TEAM *(so far)**

PRODUCERS MIKE SHEA & ERIC WAKEFIELD THOMPSON

DIRECTOR ERIC WAKEFIELD THOMPSON
Walmart, Audi, Capital One, Lincoln, Walking Dead, Dopesick, Swagger, Snoop Dogg, Lady Gaga, Arcade Fire, Hellmann's Mayonnaise, Duke's Mayonnaise

WRITER MIKE SHEA
Rock Hard with the Clown

DIRECTOR of PHOTOGRAPHY ERIC WAKEFIELD THOMPSON †

COSTUME BCALLA
Everything Everywhere All at Once, Lady Gaga, Miley Cyrus, Lizzo, Azelia Banks, Doja Cat, Emma Roberts, Rosario Dawson

PRODUCTION DESIGNER ERIC WAKEFIELD THOMPSON †

EDITOR MIKE SHEA †

CAST JUSTIN DRAY: *Ad Astra, It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia, CSI: NY, Heroes*
DIETRICH TESCHNER: *Headwaters Down, Blue Bloods, Turn*
RANDY BLYTHE: *Lamb of God (lead singer)*
SAMUEL JAMES HALL: *The Greatest Dancer (finalist)*
MIKE SHEA: *Rock Hard with the Clown, A Year's Worth*



BCALLA's "Weed Nug" piece was featured in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*

* Several roles, such as the other titular clown, "Wifey", are yet to be cast.
† Crew members with multiple hats may see some responsibilities outsourced as production continues and more crew members are welcome aboard.



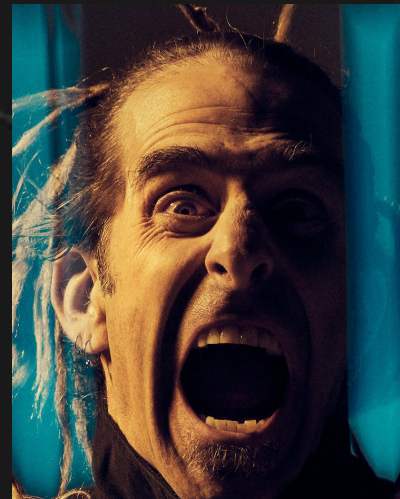
TBD



Justin Dray



Dietrich Teschner




Randy Blythe



Samuel Hall



Mike Shea

The background of the page is a dark, textured book cover. On the left side, there is a vertical strip showing a photograph of a bridge at night, illuminated with warm orange and yellow lights. The bridge has several arches and is reflected in the water below. The rest of the cover is a dark, almost black, material with some wear and tear, particularly at the corners and along the edges.

For Jack

This is for you
the young man who was already dead
by the time I squeezed your stiff hand
and promised I would never stop
fighting for you
and others like you
after addiction tortured you
to death

I hope I never have to squeeze
another stiff hand again

But if I do
it'll be
because I never stopped fighting
for that guy either

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Sources

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Unedited* Photo of Mike Shea & Brown Frown the Clown
by Kim Frost for RVA Magazine

**This is a lie*



A performer falls
in and out and in and out
of love
with his addiction

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