

## **Yorodeo** – Three Dee Realms

Three-dimensional imagery has become synonymous with Hollywood blockbusters such as James Cameron's *Avatar*. But Yorodeo's red and blue anaglyph prints—and the kitschy, iconic cardboard glasses required to view them—are more of a throwback to the cultish origins of 3D films, like 1954's *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*. That's not to say that Seth Smith and Paul Hammond, the Halifax artists behind the Yorodeo name, have abandoned modern conveniences: Their fantastical handprinted landscapes are built with the assistance of meticulously planned Photoshop layers, passed back and forth like cartographers drawing a map from memory.

In fact, Smith and Hammond could be considered modern explorers, much like their clan of grinning animal astronauts in "Space Portraits." The duo pushes the possibilities of traditional printmaking, while revealing fantastical in-between regions inhabited by lizard men, wily raccoons and mountains that drip with ice cream caps. Like any journey worth its while, there were challenges, such as maintaining the almost dirty telephone-pole poster appeal of their textures, without losing important visual details required for a proper 3D viewing.

As with many younger artists, Yorodeo does not differentiate between "low" and "high" art. Pop culture materials, including comic books or science-fiction films, are all legitimate influences in the *Three Dee Realms* frontier. Although it's tempting to read the series as Yorodeo's version of the Underworld, there is no narrative or moral message here. Nor should it be read as a critique on urban encroachment, where renegade animals take back civilization. Rather, the series broadens the pair's iconography of characters, shapes and patterns that they've developed since their early days as Halifax's best-known music poster artists. Multi-lined spirals, pyramids, volcanoes, bears and birds once again make appearances, only now in three dimensions. In fact, as the series grows, *Three Dee Realms* begins to take on the shape of a multi-level video game, where each world conquered opens up to the next adventure and challenge.

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