

Gallaher

by Bunny LaValliere

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Trey Gallaher visit
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Trey Gallaher

"It's like the Allens are watching us and thinking, what are those creatures doing sitting there staring at these light boxes, it's like they are glued there." Our conversation was anything but brief, concise, or even on target, but my interview with Trey Gallaher was insightful, and most of all, passionate. At the end of such a long week, I would have expected an instructor to be running to the door after his last class on Friday, but every word that he spoke was full of vigor, with a tablespoon (or two) of witty humor. The less-than-structured interview turned into a full-on beautiful conversation; Gallaher enlightened me on everything from *Robin Hood*, to garage bands, to the Democratic voting system.

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Media Arts & Animation instructor, Trey Gallaher, is a homegrown northern Californian, from a middle class cul-de-sac family. Both of Trey's parents worked at his high school, his mother in admissions and his father was the school's favorite physics teacher. In seventh grade, one of Gallaher's first pieces of artwork finally made it to the top of the refrigerator. This first best seller; displayed on the family fridge, was an illustration of two geese perched atop a rock that was matched with a poem written by what he calls his childhood "little league arch nemesis," (that's another article all together!)

Beginning with the fridge-winning artwork and onward, Gallaher's love of painting took off. After high school he attended American River College and later transferred to San Jose State University, where he concentrated on illustration and obtained a bachelor's degree in Graphic Design. As the overachiever that he is, he then moved to New York where he received an M.F.A. in Illustration from Syracuse University.

Gallaher now instructs the fundamental drawing courses at The Art Institute of California – San Francisco. Gallaher's favorite part about teaching, is the students. "There is so much diversity, and interests that steps into the classroom, its an honor to be with so many inspired minds," he says. He loves to teach drawing because illustration is his passion; it is what he does at home, and all the time. Gallaher enjoys sharing his passion with others who are potentially budding into his love affair.

In addition to his love for illustration, Gallaher's fondness of the written word empowers him creatively; *Robin Hood* among other classic novels "gives me the inspiration for drawing," he said. In fact, when I asked Gallaher if he could have one superpower what would it be, he said he would want to be able to make people read more.

"The culture today has shifted from books to movies and other visually stimulated forms of entertainment, instead of relying on your mind to produce the mental box office hits," he says, "Reading also stimulates the fundamental conversation

skills that help us relate to one another—besides, do we really need all those sequels?"

Instead of metaphorically duct taping him to the television, Gallaher chooses to listen to National Public Radio and our local Jazz station 91.9. His favorite musicians are Jon Coltrane, Johnny Cash, Flogging Molly, and "older Dylan." Gallaher's love for the classics goes beyond books, he says, "the best movie ever made was Casablanca, and my favorite actor is Humphrey Bogart." When I asked Gallaher to discuss his greatest accomplishment, his face lit up and he told me that it was never giving up on his dreams. He says, "if you compromise your dreams then you're lost; it may be scary as hell, but you have got to hold fast and firm. The mistakes [we make] are the lessons, and the heartaches are only bittersweet—you have to give it your all and not settle for anything less."

Trey Gallaher is an amazing individual, not to mention, one of the best conversationalists I have ever met. If you have a free moment, go ahead and knock on his door, and get ready for a great couple of minutes.

