

August 3 2018

ROLLING EGG

notes from the Providence Fringe Festival 2018 // daily // free



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"EVERYONE EATS IN MY HOUSE"

regarding architecture, theatre, chairs I sat in, stuff I heard

This dance troupe is in regular clothes, wearing low-top Chuck Taylors and Capri pants. A casual outfit maximized for calf display. Capri has the pants that are halfway to shorts and the juice box that's just a bag, why is that? The pants thing kind of makes sense, because Capri is an island (high water). But why is that one juice in a bag and no other? They got a high cardboard import tax or something? Maybe it's simpler than that, maybe they just exhausted the market share for "juice in a bag" and the name is arbitrary.

The first and second nights of the fest had a bunch of food options but for the third night the only food available was hot dogs (?). so I walked to the Price Rite and got 3 bananas, an apple, and a jar of peanuts. \$4. I was hoping Price Rite would have that coffee soda they have sometimes, but I think they only have that by accident. Like they order that malted soda and 2 of the 5 cases are Manhattan Special, so they say Oh Well. There were a lot of people there on a Thursday night, and totally everyone was in a good mood. They were playing the Cure on the radio when I walked in, it was a good vibe.

There's lots of people having fun today, every crowd I'm in is here on purpose and having a great time. This other dance thing was standing room only and there were a few people waiting in the back with flowers! They were so proud of whoever up there they had a previously existing emotional connection with. I couldn't even see in the room it was so packed- there was a lady playing violin, 2 (!) people turning the pages of the music, and I could tell by watching someone's phone as they took a video that someone was walking in front of a white wall, but for what purpose I could not see. One of the flower-havers was really beaming joy from their face. I took it on faith that the show was nice and went to sit outside.

Everyone kept asking me what's going on inside that dome. I get that a lot but in today's case they weren't being metaphorical, there was an actual architectural dome with flashing lights inside. I said I didn't know. Even once I kind of figured it out, I still said I didn't know. Why deprive someone of figuring out the dome?

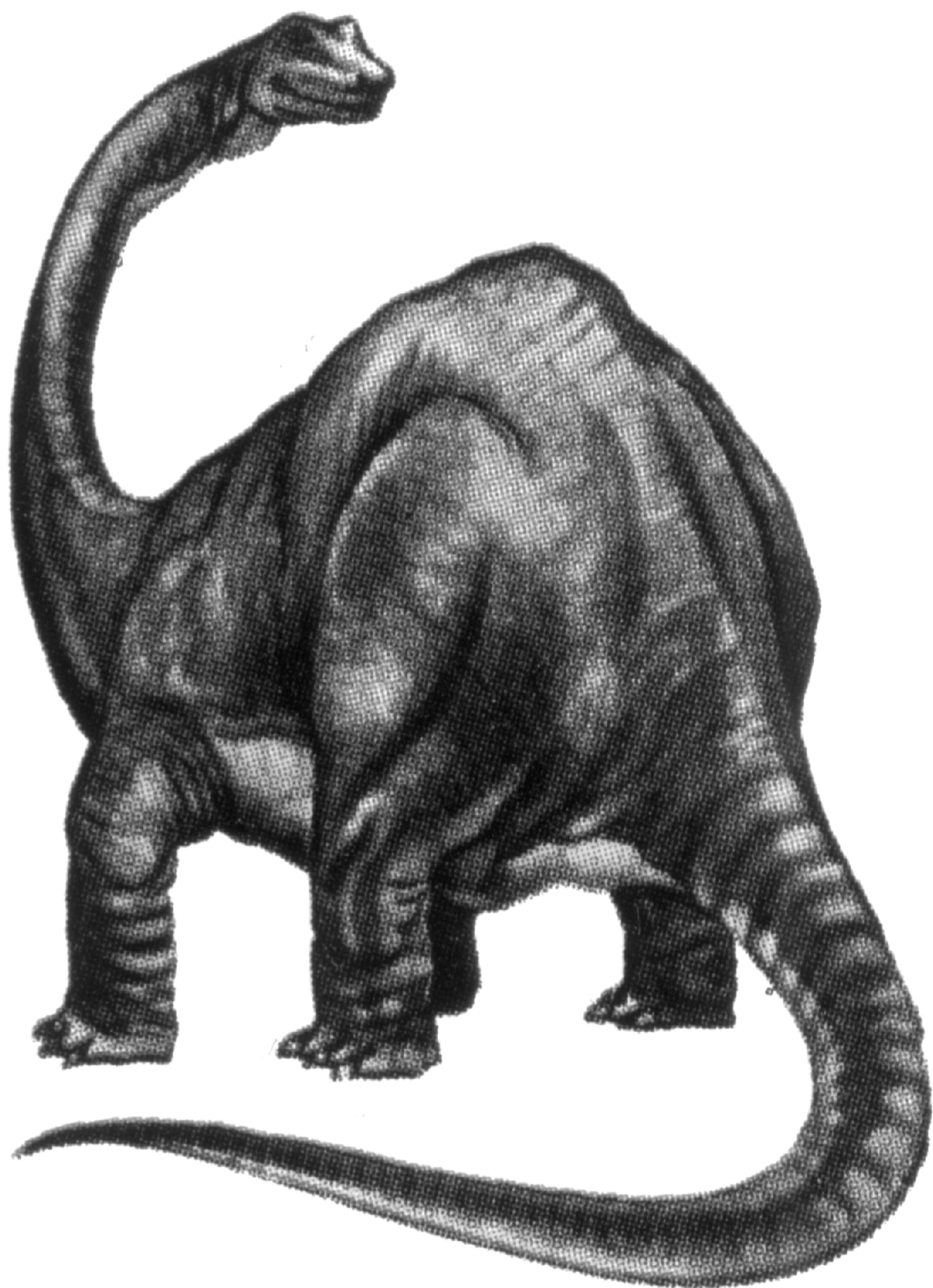


Caught another great dance thing, This one is about Cystic Fibrosis, and there's an intro spiel about it from the choreographer. She's saying "CF" a lot and I keep getting distracted because I have a friend who we just call "CF" so I keep thinking of him. "CF is a curse but in some ways a blessing". That's not my personal experience with my CF (who I repeat is a human being and not strictly speaking a genetic disorder). "People that don't have first-hand experience with CF have no idea what it's really like", that I can attest to. My CF seems tough or mysterious but really he just loves music, French pastries, and origami. Anyway the dance was great, the dancers were top notch, the music was cool, and she was talking about taking it on the road to schools, I think that could really help a lot of people out. While you can pick out a gesture here or there, there isn't really a language of dance. So when you see a dance performance that's like, about something, you really have to think about it and and try to get inside it, and because of that it can really stay with you. It was great! Inspiring even!

"DEFENDING MY THESIS"

Overheard someone describing the plot of Whatever Happened To Baby Jane while I was eating my apple outside, and I started thinking about movies. Then I realized that I never saw a movie in the theatre where I was sitting next to someone who personally loved one of the actors. That's something special about theatre at this level. The closest I got was watching a movie with someone who was in the movie, but they weren't full of love for themselves in that moment, far from it. I mean movies are great, I watch them all the time. But it's nice to sit in a crowd at the theatre and one by one picture every person in the crowd saying of an actor "that's my baby". You're gonna be right a couple times! So nice!

I really dipped around and didn't catch like "full sets"- I realize this is not an option for many theatregoers and is less than ideal for most if not all theatricians. Nevertheless...



Walked in on this one thing while someone was saying "LIZARD" very forcefully, it made me mad I missed the build-up. No further explication. Later at a different thing there's a part where someone barely whispers a single word and at first I was sure they said "...lizard..." and it made me jump in my skin. Then I figured it out. No spoilers. Yesterday walking home late I saw a *W*izard (Bill of Olneyville Square) so tonight walking home I kept my eyes out for a *L*izard but to no avail. Did see a great painting of a frog but everyone knows that's different. Frog's an amphibian. What's the main attribute of a lizard, that its tail falls off? Sorry but if you were in the audience for that first one I might have to copy your notes. Lizards have cold blood, which is traditionally sinister, but it also means they have to sit on a warm rock for most of the day, and that's cute. It could go either way. Lizard people are bad, meaning people that are lizards wearing fake human masks. But lizard people qua "I carry a huge lizard everywhere", that's kind of cute, if a little sad. Anyway like I said it could go either way.

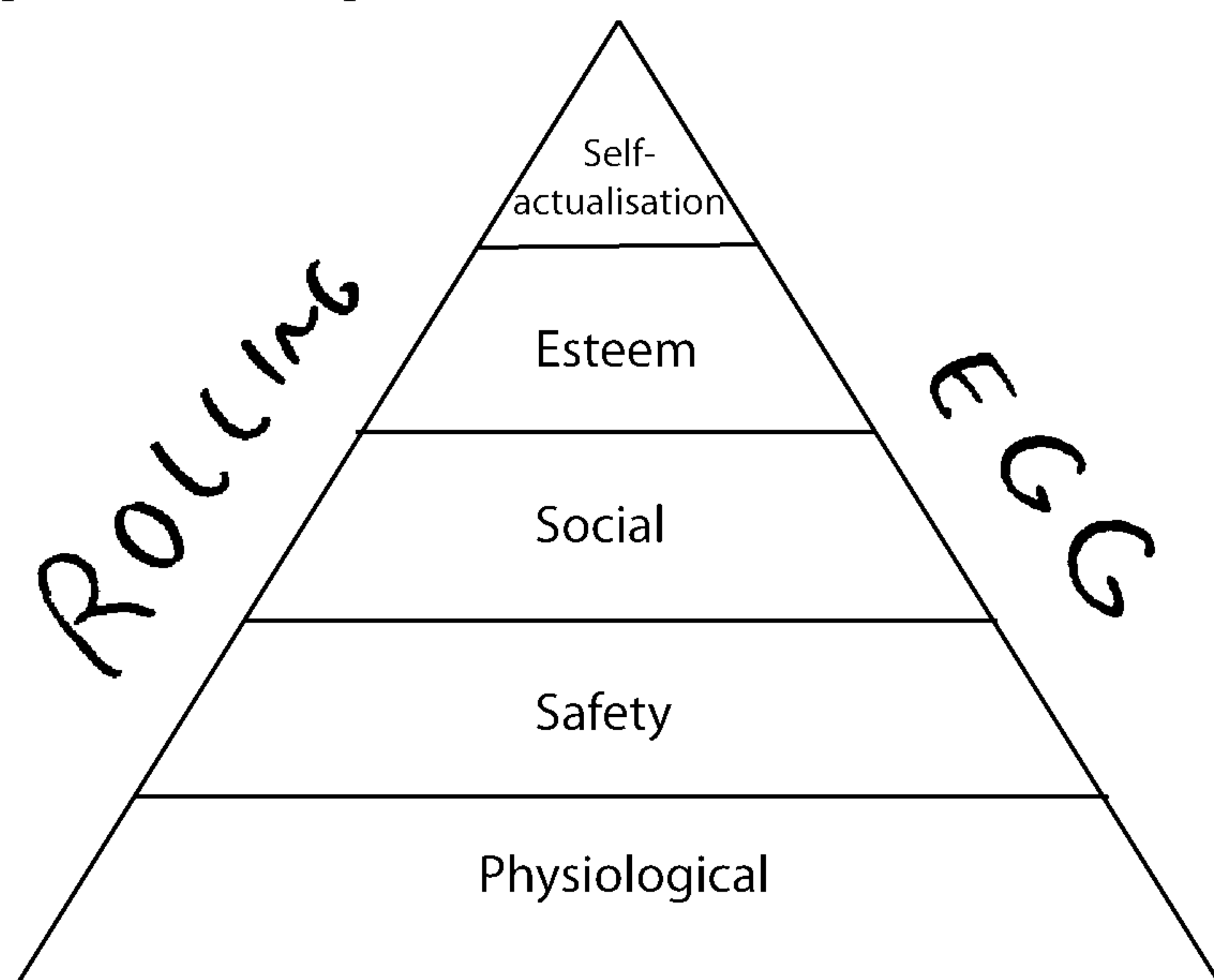
The sky outside between acts was really majestic in a classic American painting way, I got to thinking how the sunset was enabled by the parking lot, opening up an artificial field and clearing out trees that might be in our sightlines. Parking lots everywhere used to bum me out but it only takes a few years of inaction for a parking lot to turn back into a meadow or whatever. And a great thing about modern buildings is that when they get demolished it's like, just a bunch of metal rods. Ivy grows over it, then different grasses, some bushes, dirt blows over it, pretty soon there's trees, birds, huge rats, snakes I guess... no problem! I guess it should be no surprise that a theatre would turn into something else... it's a space with a lot of practice pretending to be other things.

"I BLAME EVERYONE!"

Walking to the event in the evening and walking home at night, BOTH TIMES, in the SAME SPOT, I heard someone playing MJ "Don't Stop Till You Get Enough". Once from a car and once from a boombox on a BIKE! Xander told me that about a year after MJ died, she heard some kid grab the mic at Price Rite and say over the intercom "Attention Shoppers, Michael Jackson is still alive". MJ's ghost in the night streets of 2018. "Don't Stop" is an all-time great song but to be honest almost every time I like to stop just before I've got enough. Sometimes it's good to leave a party while your memories are still beautiful.

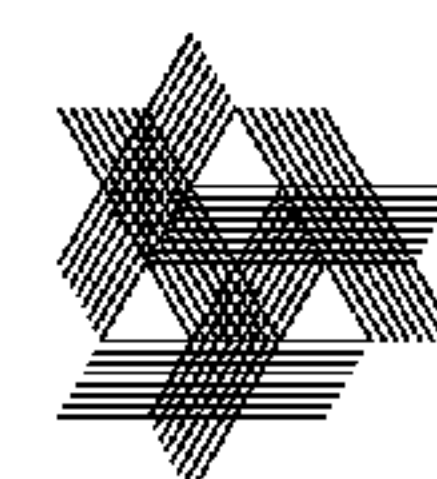
I don't want to make anyone feel bad but one thing that irked me about the third day of shows was that no one in any of the acts I saw ate anything. I know this is unreasonable but at some point in my life I started doing this thing where if no one eats in a movie I think "they never eat?". I mean it's really unreasonable to have a character that's like out fighting crime or whatever and they don't do anything to keep their energy up. I remember seeing 4 Weddings And A Funeral in... 1992? and it opens with every major character making and eating breakfast, I thought "Now this is a movie". The first day of shows had donuts and barbeque potato chips, the second day the characters offered each other food, or listed foods they enjoyed, that's close. Third day nothing. Come on guys we can do better. Bonus points for healthy snacks. Blueberries are great this time of year.

I found that by day 2 that the volunteers reading the opening spiel for each play got way more relaxed in their delivery, maybe on the verge of being too relaxed. Looking back upon my life (not recommended btw) I think that's a standard trajectory for any performative art- from Kind Of Nervous into Artificially Over-Relaxed. So I assumed that on the third day they would hit the next common step, The Easiest Emotional Content Is Anger. Or maybe they'd fly over that one into Slight Accent From Nowhere. Alas, instead of either of these goofball moves, everyone seemed to just posture up a little and project from the diaphragm, with a confidence that was easily shared. From this point anything is possible. Buckle up.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

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