

## **Pillar Point - Self titled Album Art - Development**

*Pillar Point was a new musical project that I was developing and debuting with Polyvinyl Records in 2012, presenting an opportunity to premeditate the entire presentation of the project - and in this case the album art for the record, in a way that I hadn't before. I was moving away from my project Throw Me The Statue, into a heavily electronic and synthesizer oriented musical direction. I was also leaving a project that had started as a solo project but had grown to become something people knew as a band. Pillar Point was decidedly a solo project in nature, and so I was pretty sure I wanted to use a picture of myself on the cover to make it very clear that the Pillar Point persona = me.*

*The new music I had made was darker in theme, chronicling my parent's divorce and a breakup of my own. I wanted a graphic identity that matched, and I also wanted to draw a line in the sand regarding my previous albums, which had been generally perceived as bright and summery pop music.*

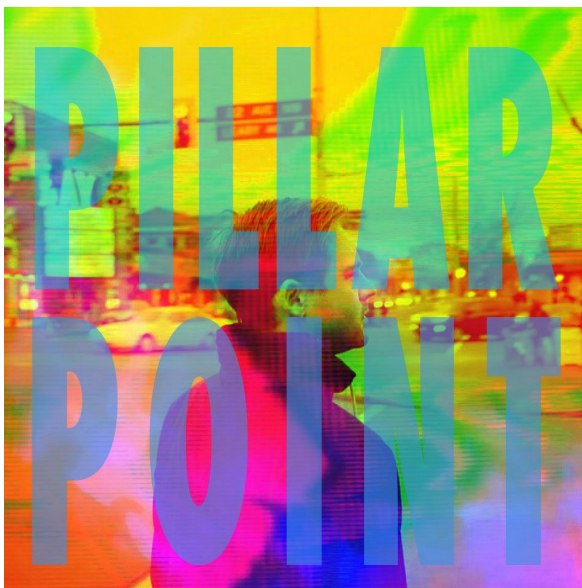
*What follows is an outline of the art development that the Graphic Designer Jess Merrill, Polyvinyl Records Label Manager Seth Hubbard, and I went through to arrive at the final product (pictured here).*



## ALBUM ART - DEVELOPMENT

### IDEATION

Prior to engaging the services of graphic designer Jess Merrill I played with some photos I had of myself and saw how they looked in black and white. I also tried something completely opposite - manipulating some images in Photoshop with psychedelic neon themes and big chunky 90's inspired titles. These felt too trendy to me; I wanted something that felt more classic. And while I liked the black and white photo idea, but I didn't have the right portrait of myself yet.

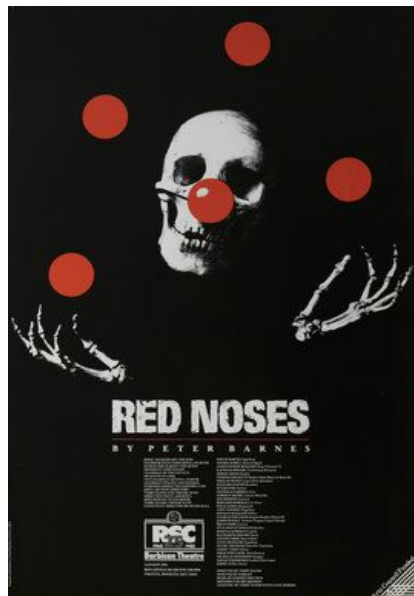




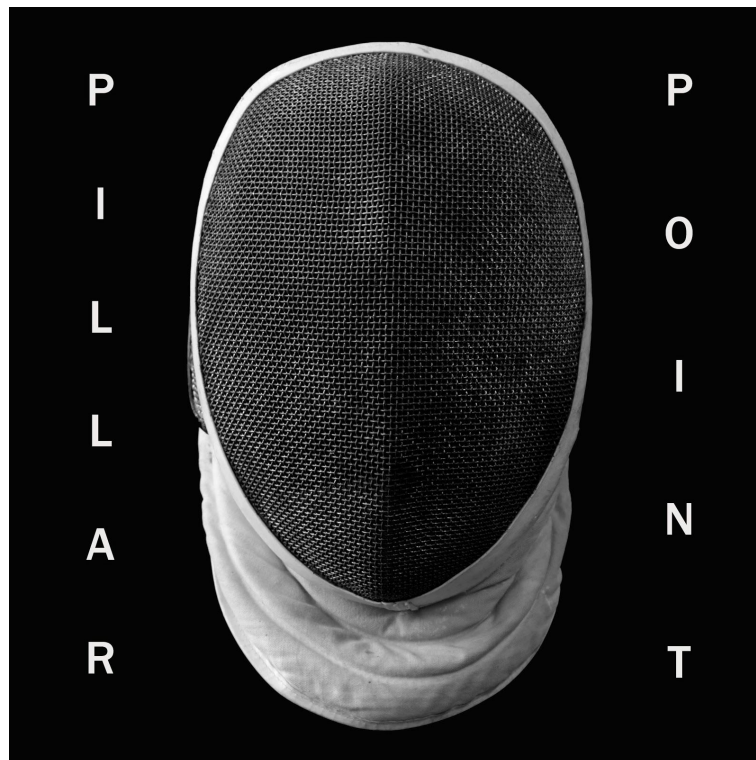
## Album Art Development

### Round 2

In building a moodboard of inspiration for the cover image I had unsuccessfully tried to dig up an image of a particular Antony and Cleopatra poster I had put up on a wall years ago. In my digging, though, I'd found these other examples of bold, stark, and darkly themed Shakespeare/RSC posters. In turn I created a mockup of one album cover that featured a fencing mask, which never got used for album art but would get developed a year later into a poster (sold along with a download link to an album of remixes of our music). I liked the menacing and iconic quality of the fencing mask, but ultimately knew I wanted to stick with a picture of myself for this album cover.



Here are the two mockups of the fencing mask Album Cover idea. The poster I eventually made with this imagery appears elsewhere in my portfolio.



## Album Art Development

### Round 3

I hired photography Lauren Max to take some pictures of me in Seattle's Volunteer Park Conservatory. I made the two cover mockups below using photos she took of me that day. I was not sure if I'd gotten my cover image out of our photo shoot, but I did like the white banding on the image to the left. It was starting to feel simple and elegant. But I thought the album could should be more personal, and ultimately help tell the story of the album, the lyrics of which laid things pretty bare for the listener.



I decided to open a folder of self portraits that I'd taken over the course of the previous year - one every day first thing when I woke up - even though I'd undertaken that creative project under the guise that I wouldn't release the work. It was an interesting project to make, one portrait a day, not only because you could look back and see where you work up each morning but also the way that your body changed. And little did I know what life events would happen on the days in that calendar year, and it was poignant to look back to those mornings in the photographs later on.

Here's a sample of some of the thumbnails from that year.



I decided to search those morning portraits for one that told the best visual story, and perhaps didn't have me slobbering out one side of my pre-caffeinated mouth. I picked the below image, and decided to go with it. It was from a morning in our apartment in LA, with my girlfriend sleeping in bed behind me and the sun coming in through the curtains. It was as personal as I could make this cover, and ultimately I felt that was the strongest way to present my new solo project.





## Album Art Development: *It exists!*

Here's the final version of the album on yellow vinyl, laid out by Jess Merrill. My photographs appear here, one of a beaten up old floor tom drum head, and another of a mess of cables and gear from the studio in which we made the record. The drum head was meant to reinforce the theme of feeling beat up and weathered, and of course more literally illuminated the abundance of walloping drum beats on the album. The image of cables from the studio speaks to the many layers of instrumentation throughout this darkly electronic album. "Young Hearts Don't Lie" is a lyric from the song Strangers In Paradise.









