

# BC alumnus in the Big Apple

By Chloe McGee  
Arts & Life Editor

Upon graduating with a degree in Art from Brevard College, 2018 alumnus Thomas Ruple packed his bags to pursue a career as an artist in one of the world's most iconic metropolises—New York City.

Before moving to New York City, Ruple had only visited the city twice. The first was a two-day trip with his family and the second was a four-day trip when he was a student at Brevard College.

"I used those four days to really fall in love with it here, and that was enough to convince me to make the move after graduation," said Ruple.

Ruple and his cat Walden currently reside in Harlem—a Manhattan neighborhood known for its rich history and artistic movement known as the Harlem Renaissance. He rents an additional studio space nearby to paint at.

Ruple finds it important to have "separation between work and leisure" and "would hate to accidentally kill [his] cat with all the fumes," he says.

Before coming to Brevard College, Ruple lived his entire life in Columbia, South Carolina with his parents. "It's definitely different than Harlem," he said, but that may be an understatement.

Painting is Ruple's medium of choice, as he works almost exclusively with oil paints, but he also dabbles in drawing using graphite pencils.

Ruple and his work is inspired by contemporary, Caravaggio-influenced artist Roberto Ferri, Caravaggio himself and American painter John Singer Sargent.

In his free time, Ruple spends his time "walking around midtown or lower Manhattan, looking at the architecture, or swinging through

a gallery or museum space," he said.

Ruple enjoys visiting art museums in New York City such as the Met, the Museum of Modern Art and the Frick. However, as an avid traveler, Ruple has had the opportunity to see and fall in love with the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

Since moving to Manhattan, Ruple has participated in an exhibition and sold several of his pieces.

Ruple's current pursuit as an artist is to perfect his technique in regards to a concept that he has recently begun to develop.

As for long-term goals, Ruple says that he hopes to continue his educational career and receive a Master's degree in Fine Art.

"I feel like higher learning is where the world begins to change. After I get my MFA, I'd love to be an art professor and continue to live in that progress that is found on college campuses," said Ruple.

While Ruple appreciates the lively and "progressive" atmosphere in Manhattan, "a con to the city is definitely how fast everything goes," he said, "There's a whole lot of weird shit that goes on up here and it tires you out after a while, but if you stop to catch your breath, you get left behind."

Ruple believes that the art department at Brevard College did a "great job" in preparing him for life outside of school.

"They taught me how to be self-motivated and professional, and I'm finding that a lot of folks out here lack the skills that Brevard College taught," said Ruple.

"It really doesn't hurt to exert any connections you can find when making a big move. More often than not, people would love to help you out. Also, take money seriously but try not to worry about it too, too much," said Ruple in his advice to future college graduates.



Photo courtesy of Thomas Ruple

Ruple is photographed sitting in front of one of his own paintings.

## Review of Lana del Rey's album 'Norman F\*\*\*\*\*g Rockwell!'

As many may know, Lana Del Rey's new album, "Norman F\*\*\*\*\*g Rockwell!" came out recently and is her sixth studio album. It has 14 songs and is just as chill and relaxing as any of her other albums.

One of the first singles released from the album was a sublime cover of "Doin' Time." Rey's cover has more of a relaxing sound and is much more of an easy listen than the original. Her soothing voice melts all of the words together perfectly and doesn't sound too

butchered or like she is trying hard like so many other covers. It could easily be a Rey original.

This isn't Rey's best album, but it also isn't her worst. There was a normal dosage of melancholy tones and lyrics throughout all of the songs. There was no drastic change between moods within the 14 songs on the album, everything was fairly steady and had the signature Rey pessimistic vibe.

I am not too disappointed with "Norman F\*\*\*\*\*g Rockwell!" It is not Rey's best work.

In my opinion, "Ultra Violet" or "Born to Die" are her two best albums. I am excited for her next album, in hopes that there will be different changes in moods in the songs and hopefully another cover as good as "Doin' Time" and for Rey to keep her very real, pessimistic vibes in the songs.

— Lande Simpson