

Life's a Beach tips from No Fear and Bad Boy Club artist

Some young people are so into the partying thing. When I used to party I had some really mind-opening experiences. I could see through all the crap that other people were about. I took this and applied it to my art. Every time I partied, I painted. After each party I had a piece of art to show for it. It was passive aggressive destruction. Back then I had a full mohawk. I was surfing in Florida with cut-off jeans.

I met up with three guys who were motocross racers. They came to Miami to make jams. They were all from Chicago and none of them knew how to surf. They asked me to make them a logo, but I didn't.

About three years later, I was strolling through California asking people if I could paint on surfboards to make some money so I could eat. Then one day I came across a Life's a Beach ad in a surfer magazine. I called the number and drove out to see my old friends. I showed them some of my work.

Later I met up with them and made the logo for their clothing brand. They wanted to call it the Bad Boy Club so that's what they had me do first. Life's a Beach. I sat there and started drawing a pissed off character, a bad boy. God gave me the Bad Boy Club logo.

When I showed it to Mark Simo, he lost it. He said it was perfect. I wanted to fix the letters, but he told me, "no it's just right. It's perfect just the way it is."

"Are you kidding me?" That's what I was thinking. This logo generated millions and millions of dollars. LATimes.



Bad Boy Club original logo design by Mark "Boogaloo" Baagoe.

From then on, life was perfect. The bad boy is so bad that he's good. Life's a Beach! They were into what they were creating. I kept making choke T-shirt designs and they kept giving me money.

Inside the shirts there were care tags with little tips that said things like:

- *be kind to animals*
- *don't be a cement head*
- *don't play with matches*

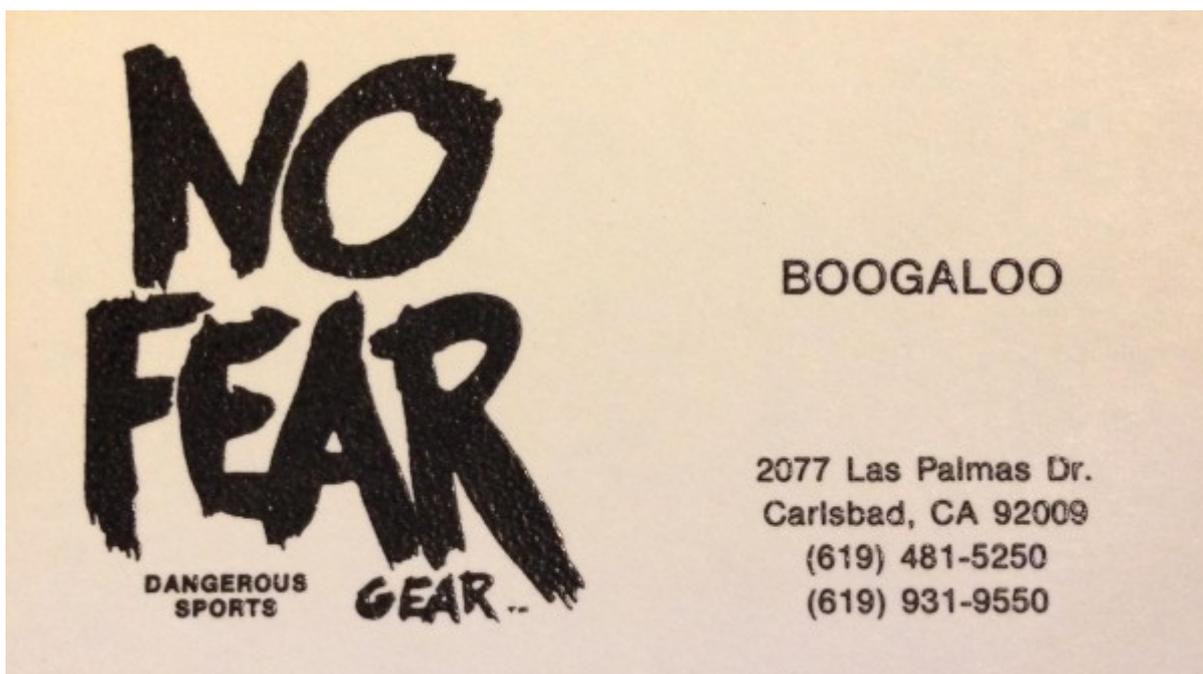
We did that for the mothers. They loved that stuff.

After I did the first logo, they wanted me to put a different spin on their Life's a Beach logo. Here's what I came up with:



Life's a Beach logo design by Mark "Boogaloo" Baagoe.

No Fear was our second company which was dubbed as dangerous sports gear. No Fear was all about dangerous sports goods: boxing, big wave riding, extreme fighting, mountain climbing, guys on skis killing big mountains, skaters, surfers hitting 100-foot waves, drag racers . . . that sort of stuff.



After designing and creating lots of T-shirts designs for No Fear, I was able to afford a five-bedroom house on the beach in California. I carpeted the floor and walls of my garage. We played music there and I painted there. Quite often I'd stretch my own canvas. I had a safe full of cash. I'd burn a hundred dollar bill in the garage just because I could. It's not about the money for me. It never was.



Flame skull designed for No Fear by Mark "Boogaloo" Baagoe.

I am a true American artist. Our educational system is shit. I doodled in school. And then years later lots of kids recognized my logos. Now when they see them, they'll want to read my story and it will draw them to the higher power.

When I asked Boogaloo what he would say if he had the opportunity to stand up in front of a stadium full of people, the first thing that came out of his mouth was, "Mommy."

"I wouldn't want to stand up in front of a big crowd of people, but I've been doing so many art shows that I learned to enjoy meeting people who come to my shows. But I do I want to write a book. Want to write my story?" he asked.

"I can't promise a book," I said, "but I can do a blog post. What do you want to tell the world?" Here are the lessons he learned that he'd like to share:

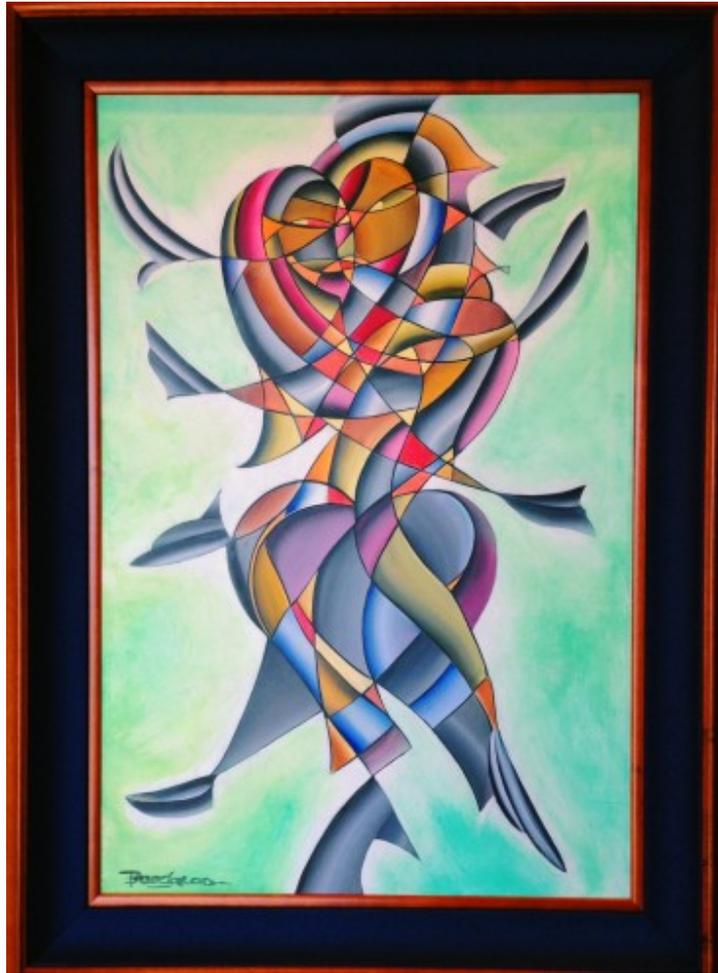
1. Always be true to your God-given talent.

I've reached a point in my life where I can't deal with the bullshit anymore. I know what's good for me and what's bad for me. I'm at that age and maturity where I understand these things. I'd been looking for this place forever and I finally found it. Always be true to yourself and your God-given talent.

2. Find where the pieces of the puzzle fit.

You have to find the pieces to the puzzle. They're linked with God and spirituality. I'm a big fan of numbers, math and geometry. I love shapes. Shapes make art. Math is undeniable. Our birthday is a certain number. There are 12 apostles and 12 months. Three is my favorite number.

My favorite letter is R because it reminds me of the color green. Maybe because Robin had an R on his chest. My mom was good on a sewing machine. She made me a batman costume when I was a kid. I didn't take it off for two weeks. I slept in that thing. Then my little brother wanted it and he slept in it for about three weeks. When all the pieces finally start to fit together, then you'll see the big picture.



Zootsuit Swing by Mark "Boogaloo" Baagoe.

3. Don't forget where you come from.

We're nothing. We're just a vapor in God's universe. I feel like a rock star on stage, but then I remember I'm just a vapor in God's eyes. And then I'm at peace. It helps me realize it's not about me. I'm two different kinds of people. My Chinese sign is the rat, so I'm a survivor. My astrological sign is Leo, the lion. I'm like a cat. I've always landed on my feet because I have protection.

<insert pic of blue black lines>

4. Stay in the loop.

It's not a time line. It's a perfect circle. A lot of people think they have a hurdle to get over to get back on a line.

But life isn't like that for me. It's more like a loop. Now things are going up and then it comes back full circle with my life and my art. I started out baptized as a baby. I was brand new. My name Mark was written in his book. He had my destiny predetermined before I was born. By keeping your finger on the pulse, you're staying in the loop.



Six Foot Shacks mascot
Surfer Joe designed by Mark
"Boogaloo" Baagoe in 1980.

Now I see how all this loops back around, but now I'm better. It's all about perseverance and being dedicated and being prolific. I'm still surfin' at 54! Here's one of my recent ventures in T-shirt design: Six foot shacks. Get shackled!



Cleanse by Mark "Boogaloo"
Baagoe in 2010

5. Ride the wave.

I've always been trying to paint what God looks like. But the only thing I've been able to paint that looks like God is a wave. Nothing can withstand the force of an ocean. Everything can be destroyed by a wave. Water is all-powerful.

In 2003 I went to Maui to visit a friend. After seeing the waves in Maui, I went back Florida to pack up all my stuff to move to Maui.

6. Be prolific.

If you work on your talent every single day, even if it's just one brush stroke every day. If you do this for 365 days over and over again, you'll be successful. As you get older, you realize you don't have to drive as hard to get where you want to go.

7. Success is one failure after another.

If I didn't pick myself up every time each time I failed, I'd be a complete failure. A failure is someone who doesn't pick himself up. When you get pounded by a wave, do you just lay there and get pounded? No, you get back up on your board. It doesn't mean you're a failure for the rest of your life. You're going to catch some of the greatest waves of your life. When you're under water and you get pounded by a wave and you can't see anything but grey and clouds of white, you reach for your leash and pull yourself to the floating board. When you finally get to the top you see another wave and you realize, oh shit.

Things like this happen. When you're getting tumbled around and you can't see what's going, you just let the water throw you around like a rag doll. The secret is that you don't panic. I have a hard time not panicking because sometimes my emotions take over. Nowadays, doctors try to turn people's emotions into phobias so they can give them pills.

8. Trials make you grow.

The thing I'm most grateful for is the trials in life. Because without the trials, I wouldn't know how much God loves me. Without trials, you don't know the great parts of life. When you're going through a trial, it really sucks, but we are put through these trials for one reason: to grow. We can't be better racers unless we can jump over the hurdles.

My Godfather gave me this book many years ago. It's very tattered like me. That's one of my inspirations. He was always telling me in his Jersey accent, "You gotta teach. You gotta teach art," almost sounding like an offer I shouldn't refuse. You're really good. I've always wanted to be an art teacher, but I've never been conservative enough to deal with the schools.

9. I'm the captain of my own boat.

I was married twice, each time for two years. One of my wakeup moments was after my 2nd divorce. People are so controlling. They want to control everything. When you love something so much, you think you can squeeze it and it will turn into a diamond. But that doesn't work. You have to let them go. It was all about a blame game. After the dust settled, everything changed for me.



Mark "Boogaloo" Baagoe in his studio in Maui in 2005.

10. Be aware all the time.

Pay attention. You know what you're going through in life, but you never know what other people are going through right now. I think about things like this. I can lose my temper very easily in this town when I get behind a slow tourist. I'm automatically judging people all the time. But I know I need to pay attention. And I'm constantly asking for forgiveness.

11. It's not my story.

Boogaloo walked to a closet and told us we were in for a treat. He pulled out a box that his mom had sent him recently. It was full of products, stickers, cards and toys . . . all with logos he designed.

This isn't my story. It's everyone's story. Over the years, I've given all my stuff away. Here's a Bad Boy watch, a Bad Boy key chain. I've always been a huge hot rod fan. We got together with Mattel, and we made a car. We made an Indy car. It was the best of all the racers. We made these Bad Boy watches.

We made Christmas cards and of course they were always late. He handed me one of the cards. "Here you can have this one," he said to me. I love my work as an artist. Thank goodness I never had to go to war and kill people. I sit with a good conscious because God was gracious enough.

My spirituality is like my muscles. If I don't work them out every day, they get weak and useless. It's the same for your body and mind. Spirituality is a muscle. If you don't work it out it goes limp and weak. Faith isn't something you push by the wayside.



12. God is not understandable.

Never rely on your own understanding about God. Plant a seed and let it grow. Don't keep messing with it. You plant it and let it go. Walk away from it and let it grow. Some land on the rocks, some land on fertile soil, but the main idea is to plant the seeds. Be the one bold enough to plant the seeds.

Now the No Fear logo is an antique. I can't believe what some of these things go for on eBay.

Boogaloo gave me some of his famous stickers and sent me off reminding me of his main message as an artist: **May God's gift to me be my gift to you.**



Mark "Boogaloo" Baagoe with his art at Binky's Banyan Boutique in Lahaina, Maui.

Mark "Boogaloo" Baagoe is an artist living a Lahaina a few blocks away from where his art sells at **Binky's Banyan Boutique.**



Mark "Boogaloo" Baagoe

Mark Boogaloo, aka "boogaloo," was born in 1960 in New Jersey to a Catholic family that believed in hard work and enduring faith. This has been an important guide in his life, but from a young age he struggled with the emphasis on short hair, collared shirts and uniform behavior. He saw beauty beyond these boundaries and began to draw fantastic, creative images at an early age.

Boogaloo specializes in hand-drawn art. If you're interested in a custom surf-board art, a logo or a commissioned piece, contact him at [StillQuietSoul\[at\]yahoo.com](mailto:StillQuietSoul@yahoo.com).



Mark "Boogaloo" Baagoe art in DeRubeis Fine Art of Metal Gallery in Lahaina, Maui.