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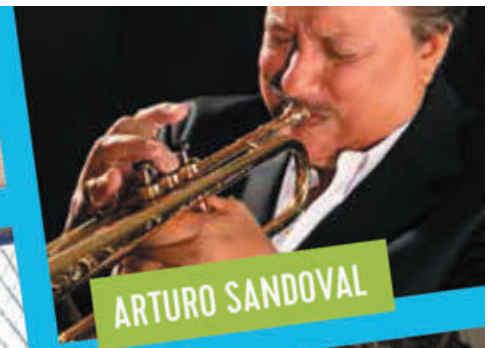
SUMMER OF SHARKS

GREAT WHITE SIGHTINGS ARE ON THE RISE NEAR OUR BEACHES ... AND IT'S A GOOD THING

BY MICHAEL ALBO



ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO



ARTURO SANDOVAL



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YO LA TENGO



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CONTENTS //

23



COURTESY DI ROSA COLLECTION, NAPA

NEWS...6

Why are Border Patrol agents arresting people in East L.A.? **BY JASON MCGAHAN.**

EAT & DRINK...15

The rocky start and bright future of Diego Hernández's Verlane. **BY BESHA RODELL.**

GO LA...20

Free dance lessons in Grand Park, a Morrissey-themed cruise, a celebration of bad gay movies and more to do and see in L.A. this week.

CULTURE...23

In ART PICKS, a rooster works out in an electric chair, an ocean liner collides with a sofa, and an Italian artist in her 90s finally gets her due. In STAGE, blindfolds and scares abound in *The Willows*, an immersive theater piece for the VR generation.

FILM...26

Finally, a *Spider-Man* movie with a comics flavor, says **ALAN SCHERSTUHL**, and **MELISSA ANDERSON** reviews *A Ghost Story*, plus Koji Fukada's *Harmonium*, and other movies OPENING THIS WEEK, and YOUR WEEKLY MOVIE TO-DO LIST.

MUSIC...33

STEVE APPLEFORD hangs out with The Melvins, whose music still packs a punch after 30 years, and gangsta rapper AD tells **JEFF WEISS** why fans don't say hi to him at the mall. Plus: HENRY ROLLINS: THE COLUMN!, listings for ROCK & POP, JAZZ & CLASSICAL and more.



SUMMER OF SHARKS ... 9

Great white sightings are on the rise near our beaches ... and it's a good thing.

BY MICHAEL ALBO.

ADVERTISING

CLASSIFIED...49

EMPLOYMENT...50

REAL ESTATE/RENTALS...51

BULLETIN BOARD...50

ON THE COVER:
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANNY LIAO

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News //

THE BORDER MOVES TO L.A.

Why are Border Patrol agents arresting people in Boyle Heights?

BY JASON MCGAHAN

On April 24, a team of agents from U.S. Customs and Border Protection descended on a Boyle Heights apartment complex and seized what they later reported to be more than 30 pounds of cocaine and \$600,000. The size of the drug haul seemed to overshadow the unusual fact that the agency that secures America's borders was working in an Eastside neighborhood more than 130 miles north of Tijuana.

Then, on May 18, the border agency returned to Boyle Heights and arrested seven more people.

Mark Endicott, a supervisory agent with the Border Patrol in San Diego, acknowledges it's uncommon for the agency to conduct enforcement operations in Los Angeles. "We do work from time to time in L.A.," Endicott says. "It's not something that occurs on a regular basis or very often at all."

None of the seven people arrested in May was charged with a drug offense, according to CBP. And while the agency partnered with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department on the cocaine bust, it carried out the May enforcement operation on its own, according to Endicott.

Legal advocates are beginning to wonder if the border agency, which has the authority to operate immigration checkpoints and to detain people without a warrant on the suspicion of being in the country illegally, is raising its profile in L.A. — and assuming a greater share of responsibilities from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

"There definitely are lots of concerns about CBP engaging in operations in central L.A.," says Emi MacLean, a staff attorney with the National Day Laborer Organizing Network who is investigating the circumstances of the Boyle Heights arrests. "We don't want them to be bringing the border up to the center of Los Angeles."

Endicott declined to compare the agency's activities last year with this year, saying the data isn't available. "I don't know if I can say there's an increase in activity in the L.A. area," he says.

One thing is certain: The second wave of arrests by CBP in Boyle Heights caused a stir, in large part because the agency went in targeting Cal State L.A. student and immigrant rights activist Claudia Rueda.

Endicott says Rueda and the others were targeted in relation to the drug investigation — which Rueda's attorney denies.

"What's contradictory is that in the same breath the Border Patrol alludes to Claudia's involvement in criminal activity, it says she's in their custody for immigration violations only," says the attorney, Monika Langarica. Rueda was released from custody June 9 and has since applied for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which offers some protections to certain undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as minors.

Rueda's mother, Teresa Vidal-Jaime, was swept up in the April 24 drug raid at the apartment complex where they live; she was not charged with a crime but was later found to be overstaying her visa. Vidal-

"WE DON'T WANT THEM TO BE BRINGING THE BORDER UP TO THE CENTER OF LOS ANGELES."

—EMI MACLEAN, NATIONAL DAY LABORER ORGANIZING NETWORK

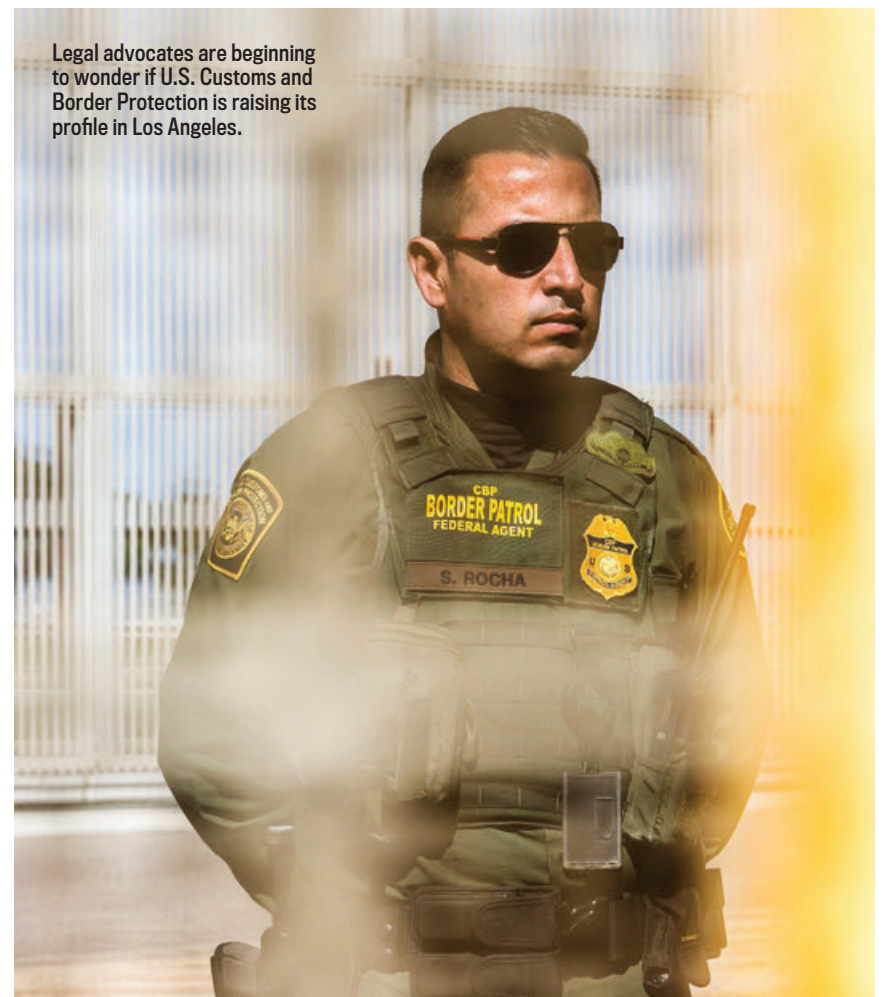
Jaime's husband, Hugo Rueda, was one of the men arrested on suspicion of drug possession.

In the weeks before her arrest, Claudia Rueda spearheaded a public campaign led by the Los Angeles Immigrant Youth Coalition calling for her mother's release. MacLean and other supporters say Rueda's arrest has the markings of retaliation from CBP.

Endicott says Rueda's arrest was related only to the cocaine bust in April.

The federal statute regulating Customs and Border Protection states only that the agency may enforce the law a "reasonable distance" from the border. The rule of thumb is 100 miles, though that distance is only a guideline from the Justice Department and is not strictly enforced. The "100-mile rule" applies to any external boundary of the United States, including its coasts, which is how L.A. is included.

"Roughly two-thirds of the United States' population, about 200 million people, lives within the 100-mile zone that an outdated federal regulation defines as the border



Legal advocates are beginning to wonder if U.S. Customs and Border Protection is raising its profile in Los Angeles.

PHOTO BY TED SOQUI

zone," states a fact sheet produced by the ACLU's Washington Legislative Office.

In 1993, the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled the Border Patrol exceeded its authority in conducting a search 235 miles from the border in New Mexico. In 2012, the ACLU filed a class action lawsuit against the Border Patrol over the practice of setting up vehicle checkpoints in Washington state — up to 200 miles from the Canadian border. CBP settled the lawsuit and agreed to retrain agents.

The ACLU has argued for Congress and the Justice Department to limit the CBP to a radius of no more than 25 miles from the border, or 10 miles for raids of private property.

Legal advocates have been critical of CBP for what they say is the agency's lack of transparency about its activities, particularly enforcement actions that occur far from the border. The ACLU of San Diego sued Customs and Border Patrol in 2015 to obtain records of the agency's enforcement activities beyond the 100-mile radius of the Mexican border. Attorneys from the ACLU of San Diego provided *L.A. Weekly* the records of 21 such enforcement actions conducted in the Greater Los Angeles area between January 2011 and July 2014.

The documents, which are not a comprehensive list of all such apprehensions, are mostly field reports from roving patrols of uniformed agents in marked service vehicles. The majority of arrests occurred in the desert region of San Bernardino or Riverside counties, with a few in Orange County.

There were five documented interior

enforcement operations in L.A. County, all of which occurred in Long Beach in 2011, when L.A. County Sheriff Jim McDonnell was the chief of police. As sheriff, McDonnell faced a backlash this spring for opposing California legislation that would prevent sheriff's departments from sharing information about undocumented immigrants with ICE. Compared to LAPD Chief Charlie Beck, McDonnell has expressed a greater willingness to cooperate with federal immigration enforcement.

The 2011 reports outline the arrests of Mexican laborers walking down the street in Long Beach. One report states that agents from the San Clemente Border Patrol Station were "called in to translate" for a Long Beach police officer who had arrested a Mexican boat cleaner from Huntington Beach.

Customs and Border Protection has significantly stepped up its interior enforcement activities nationwide over the past decade, according to Mitra Ebadolahi, a staff attorney with the ACLU of San Diego who is suing the agency. CBP's budget more than doubled between 2006 and 2014 — from \$6 billion to \$12.9 billion, Ebadolahi says. At the same time, the number of U.S. Border Patrol agents — from desert agents on horseback to inspectors at airports — ballooned from about 12,000 to more than 21,000.

The 2018 budget would support bringing on 500 new Border Patrol agents and 1,000 new ICE officers.

"If you were to plot the trajectory of their interior actions," Ebadolahi says, "it would be an upward slope."



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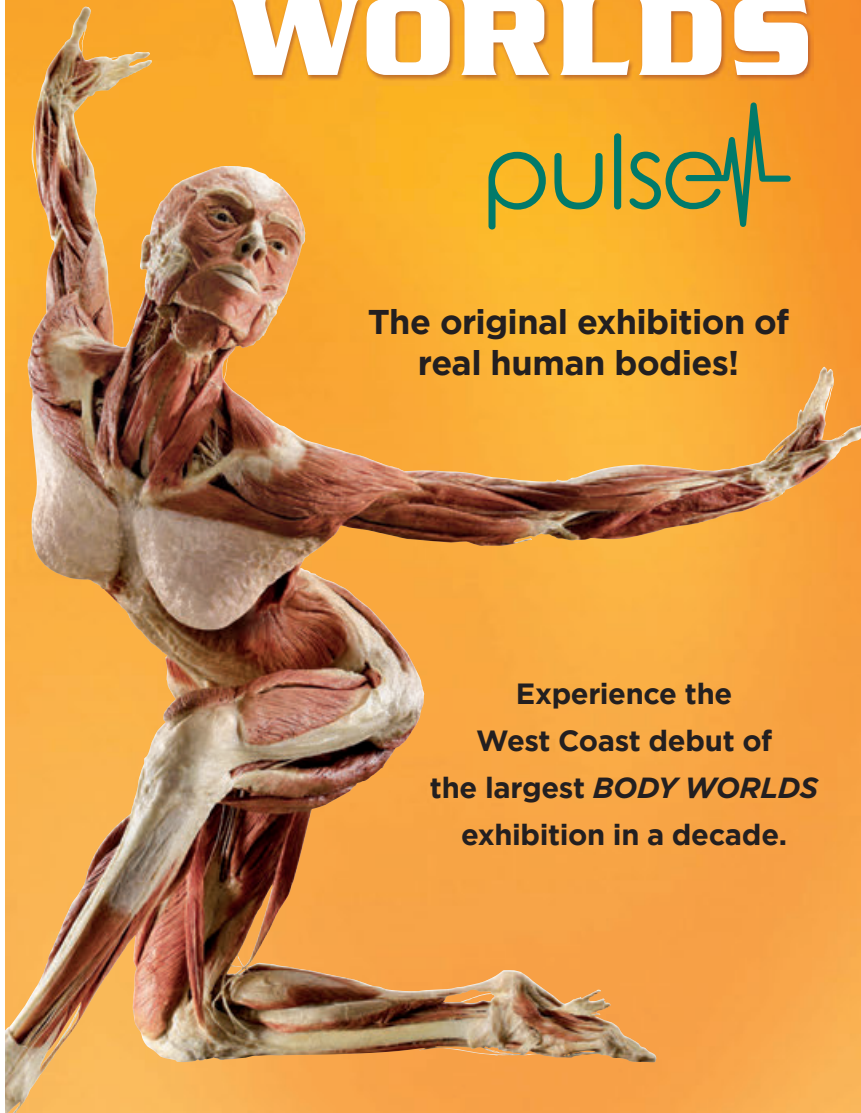
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Great white sightings are on the rise near our beaches ... and it's a good thing

BY MICHAEL ALBO
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANNY LIAO

It had been a perfect Southern California day. At a section of San Onofre State Beach called Church — named, old-timers say, for a long-gone Methodist steeple — a line of surfers bobbed on the waves, waiting for the next set. Leeanne Ericson swam among them. The 36-year-old mother of three wore a black wetsuit and short, stiff-bladed fins designed to help her catch the waves. Surfers often talk about the spirituality of their sport, but, unencumbered by a board, Ericson communed directly with the ocean. On shore, a group of young men played

beach games. One of them looked out at the group in the water. From below the surface, something else watched, too. On this late-April day, Ericson couldn't have known she was being sized up by a shark. They are masters of stealth. As it would for any prey, the shark would have lined up below and behind her, being careful to hide in the gloom just beyond the range of visibility. The shark's crescent-shaped tail flicked in short, powerful bursts that launched it at its target. In her black wetsuit and with fins on her feet, Ericson's silhouette could have been interpreted by the shark as an (10 »

>> 9) ungainly, and possibly injured, seal. Now that the shark was committed, there was nothing Ericson could have done, even if she had managed to see it coming.

Jen Adeva of Huntington Beach was waiting for a wave when she heard someone in the water shout, “Shark!” She pulled up her legs and began to paddle in. But then, as she told the *Orange County Register*, she heard someone call for help. She asked herself, “What if I was the one out there?” She paddled toward Ericson. The contact with the shark was over in less than a second, but as Thomas Williams, who was on the beach when Adeva brought Ericson to shore, told the paper: “All of the back of her leg was kind of missing.”

Since spring there have been numerous sightings of sharks in the waters of Southern California, from San Clemente to the ocean just south of Los Angeles. Shark season starts

manner.” On May 11, a pack of 25 sharks was spotted off the coast of Long Beach, and five more great whites were cruising around near San Clemente on June 26.

The theories behind the increase of shark sightings vary, from rising ocean temperatures to the ubiquity of mobile phones that are simply capturing the action more often. While sharks have a bad reputation, their presence off the coast is actually a good thing. Sharks are a natural part of a healthy oceanic ecosystem, and their growing presence indicates how well we’re now caring for our waters. Most of us haven’t experienced sharing the ocean with large predators, thanks to years of mismanagement and over-exploiting our natural resources. Sharks have returned, and it’s up to us to learn how to live with them. Sharks won’t change their behavior, but we can change ours.

the fact that bees, dogs, livestock and other humans all injure or kill more people each year than sharks do. Still, attacks happen, and when they do, it summons a primal fear.

There are few fates worse than being eaten alive.

Maria Korcsmaros, a personal trainer and triathlete, was on a conditioning swim at Corona del Mar on May 29, 2016. As she approached Buoy 3, the unthinkable happened. “I felt an intense pain in my torso,” she says. The reality of the situation registered quickly. “Oh, my God, I’ve just been bitten by a shark!” Fortunately, a lifeguard boat was nearby and Korcsmaros got its attention. “I was yelling, ‘Get me out!’” Lifeguards pulled her aboard and immediately raced around the jetty to Balboa Island to a waiting ambulance. “They kept asking me if they could cut my wetsuit,” Korcsmaros says.

fighting for its life,” says Robles, a South Bay real estate broker. “I didn’t see it until just before it hit. It came up right in front of me and locked onto my torso. I grabbed its nose and pushed.” Nearly two years later, Robles says he’s still dealing with nerve damage and post-traumatic stress. “I was back in the water six weeks after it happened, but the PTSD still plays with my mind.” Nevertheless, he’s planning to swim the strait between the Hawaiian islands of Molokai and Oahu.

Leeanne Ericson’s experience was much more serious. Fortunately, in Southern California, medical help is never far away. After Ericson was brought to shore, Thomas Williams — who had just completed an EMT training course — and others applied what aid they could until an ambulance arrived. It was a well-coordinated evacuation that involved both ambulance and helicopter.

“SEEING GREAT WHITE SHARKS SWIMMING UNDER THE MANHATTAN BEACH PIER SHOULDN’T INSPIRE FEAR. WHERE ELSE CAN YOU SEE THAT? IT’S COOL!”

—DR. CHRIS LOWE, CSULB SHARK LAB



Maria Korcsmaros, holding a necklace made of the staples removed from her injuries

in May and peaks by the end of July. Then they typically migrate southward around October. But this year’s season seems to be particularly intense. Beaches have been closed, with ominous “swim at your own risk” signs, after a fisherman reeled in what looked to be a 10-foot-long great white shark near the San Clemente Pier, according to video by Fox 11. In April, surfer Adam McKillican reported a nerve-wracking encounter at Oxnard Shores to the Pacific Coast Shark News website after a 10-foot shark chased him out of the water.

By May, schooling white sharks made Southern Californians take notice. Video footage from an Orange County Sheriff’s Department helicopter went viral, showing shadowy figures swimming in shallow waters, as Deputy Brian Stockbridge placidly makes a deadpan loudspeaker announcement to people below: “Attention in the water: You are paddle-boarding next to 15 great white sharks. Exit the water in a calm

Sharks have achieved totemic status across cultures. We see their image in everything from primitive petroglyphs to the works of painters like Winslow Homer and John Singleton Copley. The latter’s 1778 painting *Watson and the Shark* depicts a harrowing rescue of teenaged Brook Watson — who would eventually go on to become the peg-legged Lord Mayor of London — from the jaws of a shark in Cuba’s Havana Harbor. The First American Volunteer Group of the Chinese Air Force — better known as the Flying Tigers — stenciled stylized shark faces on the noses of their Curtiss P-40 Warhawks during World War II. An entire subgenre of horror movies is devoted to them. There’s the *Sharknado* series (the fifth, *Global Swarming*, premieres Aug. 6 on SyFy), *The Shallows*, *47 Meters Down*, *Mega Shark vs. Giant Octopus* and *Two-Headed Shark Attack*, to name just a few. Sharks occupy a lot of space in the collective human subconscious despite



The CSULB Shark Lab studies the behaviors of the ancient sea predator.

She managed to stay conscious all the way to the emergency room at Orange County Global Medical Center in Santa Ana. By the time she arrived, she says, “I was in intense pain. I asked, ‘Can you give me something?’”

Korcsmaros’ brief encounter resulted in three broken ribs, a triceps that had been detached from the bone, a damaged liver, a severed femoral nerve and a broken pelvis.

Korcsmaros, 53, now describes the experience as “surreal” and admits she’s had some lingering psychological effects from her encounter. “I’ve had anxiety,” she says. “There are some things that are still stuck in my head.”

While she has been back in the ocean since her recovery, she’s mostly limited herself to lakes and “controlled” waters. She says she’s more cautious now. “I assess the area now and use an app that monitors shark activity.”

Korcsmaros also stresses that she believes the shark wasn’t trying to eat her. “It was a baby, 9 or 10 feet long. It released me as soon as it felt how bony I was. We’re not really on their menu,” she says.

Steven Robles’ encounter with a young white shark was different from most. A long-distance swimmer — who, in the months before he was bitten, had swum from Santa Catalina Island to Palos Verdes — Robles was swimming near the Manhattan Beach Pier on July 5, 2015, when bad luck put him in the path of a young white shark that had been hooked by a fisherman. “That shark was

Ericson was at Scripps Memorial Hospital within 30 minutes of being bitten.

At a June 20 press conference, Scripps trauma surgeon Gail Tominaga said that Ericson “has been able to get up and has feeling in her leg. Her emotions and spirit are positive and optimistic. She’s pretty amazing for all that she’s been through.”

Since the April 29 attack, Ericson has undergone six plastic surgeries, plus repair to her sciatic nerve and skin grafting to close the wound. She’s also been on antibiotic regimens to ward off infections from the ocean water and the shark’s mouth.

Ericson’s mother, Christine McKnerney Leidle, set up a GoFundMe page that has raised more than \$90,000. But she has requested privacy — since the incident, the family has declined to talk to the media — for Ericson and the family during what promises to be a long and difficult recovery.

While no one saw the shark, it is suspected that it was one of the juvenile white sharks that frequent the area or, possibly, a sevengill shark. But as Dr. Chris Lowe of Cal State Long Beach’s Shark Lab points out, sharks aren’t out to get us. “Occasionally we’ll have a situation where somebody’s bitten, but if you look at the number of people bitten relative to the number of people going in the ocean, the shark attack rate is actually declining. By comparison, 40 people are killed by riptides every summer. What we’re really seeing are signs of ecosystem recovery.”



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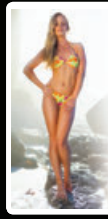
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» **10**) **The waters of Southern California** are ecologically distinct. Los Angeles is situated in the middle of the Southern California Bight, that long scoop of coastline that runs from Santa Barbara down to Baja. Cold ocean currents from the Gulf of Alaska stir up rich nutrients, which are the foundation of a diverse and thriving ecosystem that has been exploited — and overexploited — since the Chumash indigenous people populated the coastline many years ago.

Although our ocean has always been filled with sharks, not much science was devoted to them until after World War II. The U.S. military had a problem on its hands. Fear of sharks created a significant morale problem among sailors and airmen. Downed pilots and shipwrecked sailors reported shark horror stories such as what happened to the crew of the USS *Indianapolis* — famously memorialized by Robert Shaw's character in *Jaws*; as he says, "Eleven hundred men went into the water, 316 men come out, and the sharks took the rest. June the 29th, 1945." The date may be wrong — the sinking actually took place on July 30 — but the horror of what remains the greatest loss of life in the history of the U.S. Navy, much of it attributed to sharks, struck a nerve among the ranks.

Congress entered the picture following the war and charged the American Institute of Biological Sciences, now headquartered in

receivers and other innovative devices using declassified military technology to better acquire a more detailed picture of shark behavior in the wild. Eventually, in 1969, he founded the Shark Lab at California State University at Long Beach.

Now headed by Lowe, one of Nelson's former students, the Shark Lab has become the one-stop clearinghouse for answers about sharks, especially in our local waters. The office on campus looks equal parts scholar's den and adventurer's lair, and a few steps away is a lab that hums with activity as students work with soldering irons and screwdrivers building tracking devices and transmitters. The walls are lined with sturdy fishing poles and outside is an open dinghy Lowe takes out to tag sharks. It looks fragile and entirely too small to safely approach large sharks, but Lowe assures with a laugh: "It's fine." There are also a couple of large, concrete tanks with sandy bottoms that hold several docile horn sharks, which laze like hounds on a hot summer porch. Above them swims a more animated little dogfish. Lowe himself is tall, tanned and fit and has the look of a surfer. He's an enthusiastic booster of the mostly misunderstood shark.

Commercial fisherman never really targeted white sharks, but they slaughtered the creatures typically on the predators' menu. Lowe

ground for large sharks. "This is a nursery for pretty much all our big sharks," Lowe says. "We have the conditions sharks like. The water temperature and food supply draw them here. White sharks come to Southern California to give birth, mako sharks come here, thresher sharks come here, salmon sharks come here, blue sharks come here — they all come here to give birth."

Lowe explains the somewhat existential psychology of why baby white sharks flock to the beaches. "A white shark doesn't know it's a white shark until it's about 10 feet long. They're scared of everything when they're small. It hasn't learned what's going to harm it yet, so the safest place for it is right off the beach. They have to learn how to catch things. One of the most abundant, easy-to-catch things is stingrays. We have truckloads of those things. When we look at [sharks]

really seen near shore."

With the population recovering, we're again seeing the practice of great white fishing re-emerge, as in those days after *Jaws* hit the mainstream. As young white sharks become more established, they've also spawned a subculture of pier and shore fishermen. While white sharks are protected, the law simply says that they can't deliberately be caught and, once identified, they must be cut loose. It's a convenient loophole. A casual YouTube search shows a number of examples of young men hooking white sharks to the tribal cheers of their friends as they haul the poor sharks through that void between sea and pier. Backs are slapped as the shark agonizes on the deck until it is unceremoniously pushed over the edge back into the water.

While some fishermen are hauling in



Shark tracking devices provide insight into the creatures' movements.



Dr. Chris Lowe heads the Shark Lab at Cal State Long Beach.

McLean, Virginia, to put together a group of ichthyologists to develop an effective shark repellent — a quixotic quest that, to this day, remains elusive (despite the results you may have seen Adam West achieve in the 1966 film *Batman: The Movie*, when the Caped Crusader battled a rubber shark from the rungs of a rope ladder suspended from the Batcopter).

Among this elite team of ichthyologists was scientist Don Nelson, who was also a respected waterman, a world-class spear fisherman and one of the first proponents of the SCUBA system. Nelson realized right away that the research into developing a repellent faced a significant obstacle: Nobody really knew very much about sharks. Nelson, who had received his Ph.D. from the University of Miami, loved going underwater and observing sharks in person, but he realized there were limits to that method. He began cobbling together a variety of transmitters,

says that seals and sea lions eat the same fish we do and were seen by the fishermen as competition. So they were ruthlessly exterminated in Southern California. By the 1920s, scientists believed that the California sea lion was on its way to extinction. Pet-food barges anchored outside Los Angeles Harbor bought seal carcasses from commercial fleets that had a shoot-on-sight policy. The sea mammal meat was sold to process into dog and cat food. Now that their favorite lunch item could no longer sustain their numbers, adult white sharks cleared out of the region.

With the passage of the Marine Mammal Protection Act in 1973, the seal population began to recover, and with it, the sharks began to return. "After 1973," Lowe says, "you see a steep rise in northern elephant seals, harbor seals, dolphins — and great whites. If you stop killing them, they come back."

Our waters are also an ideal pupping

we've dissected, the most common thing in their stomachs are stingrays and bat rays. That, and the water's a little warmer and they like that."

While young sharks congregate along beaches for their own safety, human beachgoers are easily alarmed when a fin peeks up from the water. And yes, you can blame *Jaws*.

When Peter Benchley's novel was published in 1974, followed the next year by Steven Spielberg's film adaptation, fisherman looking to boost their macho bonafides headed out on their boats to engage — and kill — the scariest fish in the sea. The impact was noticeable. "Earliest dates for white sharks being taken in our fisheries date to 1936," Lowe says. "But in 1974 and '75, there's a spike. That's directly attributed to the book coming out."

Today, shark sightings have become more common than ever.

Robert Pelton, 65, the operator of a boat and bait shop located near the Santa Monica Pier in the late 1960s, says the recent increase is noticeable. Pelton's an adventurous man — who, according to his daughter Tristen, "always made me, my sister and my mom clean the fish he caught" — and he loved the water and spent a lot of time on it. "At the time, our only encounters with sharks came when we'd fish in deep water — 350 to 425 feet — for rock cod," Pelton says of those days. "These were blue sharks. They mainly got tangled up in our lines. Big sharks weren't

sharks for Instagram fame, other anglers respect the ancient sea beasts. Tom Hilgert is a shore fisherman who runs a website called Prehistoric Soul, which is dedicated to "land-based big-game fishing."

Hilgert and the fishermen who frequent his site are not great white hunters; they take care to respect the ocean and its wildlife. "We're strictly catch-and-release," Hilgert says, "but legal-size halibut go home with us. They're just too tasty."

Hilgert and his cohorts are fascinated by "what lies beneath," especially sharks. It's an adrenaline rush. "The waves are breaking and you have a shark snapping at you while you're trying to not get bit — or hurt the shark. We take the hook out, get some measurements, get some data points, and they're back in the water within five minutes," he says.

On a spring evening on a spit of sand near Solana Beach, Hilgert and his friend Steve Kastama — who also answers to the name "Sasquatch" because of his large frame and friendly nature — set up and prepare to engage their quarry. The sun has just dipped below the horizon and everything has taken on shades of blue and gray. The primordial smell of the sea hangs heavy in the air. Not far away, cafes and bars buzz with customers and cars hiss along the streets, but just beyond the shoreline lies an unseen wilderness ruled by fin and fang.

The beach clears as Hilgert and Sasquatch set up and night begins to fall. The last to

leave is a group of teen models shivering in the growing chill as the photographer shepherds them to the parking lot. The orange glow of a distant ship looms on the horizon. "Be careful where you step," Sasquatch cautions. Hilgert adds, "Kids dig holes in the sand during the day. People worry about sharks, but you're more likely to be hurt falling into one of those things."

"Or getting sliced by a ray's barb," Sasquatch adds.

Both men set up bespoke rods with homemade rigs, weighted with objects that look like the old Soviet-era Sputnik satellites; these will catch on the ocean floor and hold the bait in place. In a cooler is cut mackerel. They cast into the darkness, green glow sticks bobbing eerily at the tip of the rod. Then they wait.

It's not too long before something takes Hilgert's bait. The glow stick dips as the stout rod bends and Hilgert fights the fish, drawing it closer to shore. It writhes in the foam with the undulating motion of a snake. It's a sevengill shark that measures close to 10 feet long. This is a primitive species known for its ability to hunt cooperatively with other sevengill sharks. The guys take a quick measurement and snap a few pictures of the gray, mottled creature, which sports dentition that mirrors the tooth pattern found on the blade of a crosscut saw. Sasquatch removes the hook, a feat in itself, and the men walk the shark back into the surf, where it streaks off.

When it comes to the great whites that have been spotted off the coast, these fishermen don't target them. But like all who hunt nearly mythical beasts, the guys have their

own legends about close calls. "At this point, when I hook something, I'm 80 percent sure what species I've got," Hilgert says. "Soufjin sharks will take the bait and run hard, rip sideways, they come up to the surface. Sevengills come up and start flapping their tails. But every once in a while we'll hit something different, and it's very different. Last year we hooked something I'm certain was a white shark. Lot of splashing, weird angles, super heavy, but I can't confirm the species."

Sasquatch is more certain, "For it to bite through a 200-pound steel leader, nothing but a white shark could do that. And it was a clean cut. It couldn't have been done by anything else."

For Hilgert and Sasquatch, sharks inspire a sense of joy. Like shark-bite victims Korcsmaros and Robles — who don't see evil in the animals — the guys acknowledge that when a shark encounter happens, the sleek creatures are just doing what they've done for thousands of years: They're surviving.

The reclamation of our waters by this ancient species is fascinating to watch play out in real time. "It's a different ocean than it was 40 or 50 years ago," says the Shark Lab's Lowe.

We will have to adapt, but we shouldn't let fear rule us.

"Millions and millions of people use the ocean recreationally, and shark numbers are going up," Lowe says. "But when it comes to animals biting people, our rationality goes out the door. Seeing great white sharks swimming under the Manhattan Beach Pier shouldn't inspire fear. Where else can you see that? It's cool!"



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MEXICAN EVOLUTION

The rocky start and bright future of Diego Hernández's Verlainé

BY BESHA RODELL

The most exciting food trend of 2017 isn't hot chicken or handmade pasta. Nor is it the arrival of restaurateurs from New York and San Francisco, who are showing up en masse to open L.A. outposts of their various empires. Those aren't the imports that are likely to solidify our dining reputation. What's truly exciting is the potential for Los Angeles to become America's capital of modern Mexican food.

The city has always been home to the most diverse Mexican cooking in the country, so it's unsurprising that the modern and high-end evolution that's taken place in Mexico in recent years would manifest here as well. That evolution is already well underway, with L.A. chefs such as Ray Garcia at Broken Spanish leading the charge. But now we're beginning to see some of Mexico's most respected chefs launch new projects in Los Angeles.

One of those chefs is Diego Hernández, whose restaurant Corazón de Tierra in Baja's Valle de Guadalupe has racked up admirers

and accolades, including a ranking of No. 39 on The World's 50 Best Restaurants of Latin America. In October, Hernández announced he would open a restaurant called Verlainé in the old Dominick's space in West Hollywood, which had closed in 2015 after a 67-year run. Hernández's arrival, it seemed, could only further the city's status as a capital of modern Mexican food.

It was surprising, then, that the chatter in the weeks after Verlainé's late-March opening was mainly negative. Readers wrote me saying the food was bad; friends reported disastrous service. On my initial visit in early June, I encountered overcooked meats and a cocktail that tasted a lot like Robitussin. The outdoor dining room is lovely (though I'm as sad as anyone about the loss of another historic L.A. restaurant), and some of the food was quite good, but something seemed off. Was Hernández struggling with the task of running operations in two countries?

A month later, Verlainé hasn't quite worked out all its kinks, but it is much closer to the restaurant it's obviously destined to become. And that restaurant is just as thrilling as we all hoped it would be.

For proof, look no further than the unassuming, dark red, oily liquid that comes alongside the ceviche of the day. The ceviche itself, generally made with Hiramasa yellowtail, is vibrantly fresh and lightly flavored with cilantro and lime. It comes with house-made tostadas on the side, and two ramekins, one with mayonnaise and one with that red stuff, a "matcha" sauce made

from fried guajillo chilies and scorched peanuts. It has a dark smokiness, the edge-of-burnt peanuts presenting a radical kind of nuttiness. It isn't particularly spicy — it's the complex tang of the chili that comes through rather than its heat — but it is deeply savory, beautifully balanced and insanely delicious. It's also precise and deliberate, the work of a chef who knows how to tease out specific and delicate aspects of ingredients and have them work in a union so harmonious it seems predestined. Is it good on the ceviche? Sure. It would be good on just about anything.

If the matcha sauce is indicative of Hernández's ability to present beautifully intricate flavors, his grilled oysters showcase an opposite talent, one in which simplicity is king. These are just oysters, grilled in their shells with some butter and a touch of sage. But they're somehow intensified, cooked so they're still briny but also creamy, the butter working to make them more decadent, the sage acting as a fragrant bridge between the dairy and the shellfish. It's easy to roast or grill an oyster in its shell; it's devastatingly hard to do it so the flesh is neither under- nor overcooked. Hernández does it perfectly.

The silkiness of that same Hiramasa yellowtail is heightened when served raw and layered over lush mayonnaise atop a tostada, its flavor enhanced by the slight perfume of cilantro flowers and ginger.

The vegetal bitterness of sorrel lightly punctuates a tamal made of masa that Hernández sources from Taco Maria in

Costa Mesa, made from Mexican heirloom corn. After being mixed with sorrel and Swiss chard juices, as well as pork fat, the masa is strained through a sieve to give it a light, almost airy consistency, then poached in water. It's served enveloped in a mole *amarillito* and dusted with onion ash. The flavor of the masa and the ash and the mole is like three different kinds of duskiness, all of them intensely savory.

The ways in which Verlainé still struggles are mainly peripheral and logistical but not insignificant. It's hard to get a meal paced properly, especially if you order a lot of smaller plates rather than one appetizer and one entrée. (It's advisable to go the small-plates route; the cooking problems I encountered — including dry chicken and overcooked fish — were relegated to the entrées.) One night, when a server tried to deliver all at once six of the eight plates we'd ordered, we begged for mercy and a slowing of the flow. After that, it seemed as if the kitchen wanted to teach us a lesson, waiting 45 minutes after our initial plates were cleared before sending out the rest of our food. Integral ingredients advertised on the menu might be swapped out without warning or explanation, and servers range wildly in ability and demeanor.

Drinks were also an issue. In addition to my Robitussin experience, I found it odd that there wasn't one Mexican wine on the decently long list. Hernández and co. have insisted that this isn't a Mexican restaurant but rather a modern American restaurant with Mexican influence and flavors. Still, the chef made his name in Mexico's most famous wine region, and to neglect that region altogether seems strange.

Both the cocktails and the wine list are in the midst of a reboot, thanks to the recent hiring of beverage director John Neumueller, who previously worked at the Tasting Kitchen and Scopa. The new menu debuted last week, and there was a change in the quality of the drinks: a chartreuse swizzle made with mezcal, both complex and refreshing; a tropical but grown-up Trinidad sour. I'm also told the wine list will feature many more wines from the Valle de Guadalupe and that the issue has been as much about sourcing as anything else.

I'm tempted to use some kind of Euro-centric comparison to sum up Verlainé, something along the lines of how Hernández's talent for burnt peanut sauce is just as impressive as the skill of a chef who has mastered sauces with cream or butter at their core. But that would undercut the newness of this food and the history that came before it. If I need to tell you that Mexican flavors are capable of being just as complex and delicate and cerebral and pleasurable as French flavors, you're probably not the right audience for this restaurant. If you are excited at the prospect of our city's modern Mexican offerings getting more diverse and expansive and impressive, then you're in luck. Because although Verlainé still has its flaws, at his best Hernández delivers some of the most thrilling food I've eaten in L.A. this year.

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Though some might try to make the case that ice cream is a dessert best suited to winter (high calories equal higher body heat, or at least that's what Benjamin Franklin said),

almost everyone associates it with summer. To get into the spirit, we've compiled a list of the best purveyors of ice cream, sorbet and gelato across town. Each shop offers some kind of rarely found flavor — but you can always find chocolate, too.

Helados Pops

Helados Pops specializes in fruit-based ice cream, using products found at local farmers markets whenever possible. Obviously, the tropical flavors require imported frozen fruit. Owner Marthin Ken points out that one can't follow an exact recipe, "because fruits aren't the same." Sometimes this means far more or far less of a particular fruit. Ken also believes in using as little sugar or sweetener as possible. One of the most interesting sorbet flavors is *marañón*, the cashew fruit. It requires seven to eight pounds of the fruit, acidic skin removed, to get the true flavor. The flavor is a sort of a melding of mango and pineapple. Another sorbet you're unlikely to find elsewhere is *arrayan*, known in English as the sartre guava. And yes, you can get it served in a coconut. —Jim Thurman
450 N. Maclay Ave., San Fernando; (818) 371-3538.

Salt & Straw

Hailing from Portland, Oregon, Salt & Straw brings a little more flair to the local ice cream scene. With flavors such as tomato water, Ojai olive oil sherbet, and avocado and strawberry sherbet, this is definitely not your grandmother's ice creamery. For noncommittal types, there's a flight of flavors, which includes four choices for \$10. Other sweetly sensational options hail from the drink side of things: a lavender bitters and spruce cola float and a barrel-aged maple syrup and walnut shake. Everything for the Los Angeles shops is made from scratch at Salt & Straw's kitchen in Boyle Heights.

—Angela Matano

Multiple locations; saltandstraw.com.

McConnell's

Based in Santa Barbara since 1949, this company — with a stall in Grand Central Market — uses milk and cream from its own grass-grazed cows. The flavors are a mix of old and new, and the ice cream itself is creamy and rich without being too sweet. The McConnell's version of the now ubiquitous (but still worthwhile) salty caramel is a salted caramel chip with enough depth of flavor to approach the intensity of coffee. The chopped-up, bittersweet Guittard chocolate balances out the sweetness, making for a decidedly sophisticated flavor. The Earl Grey tea float is another unusual and delicious choice. —A.M.

Multiple locations; mcconnells.com.

Mateo's Ice Cream & Fruit Bars

A little Culver City Mexican ice cream shop, Mateo's Ice Cream & Fruit Bars serves up paletas, *jugos* and house-made *gelados* in a stunning array of flavors: smoky *leche quemada* (burnt milk), pas-



PHOTO BY DANNY LIAO

sion fruit, tamarind, guanabana and more.

Coconut bowl at Helados Pops

Mamey, a creamy Mexican fruit with a subtle flavor that's halfway between peach and pumpkin, turns into an even creamier pink ice cream with a hint of something floral. Playing with ice cream pairings among the 18 or so flavors is a fun game. (The tart passion fruit is perfect for cutting through the sweetness, and coconut works with just about anything.) Several of the flavors are made without dairy, but even the sorbets are so dense and creamy, we'd be hard-pressed to pick them out in a blind taste test. The stunner is the coffee and chocolate ice cream, easily one of the best in the city. This is no frozen frapuccino, struggling to mask the flavor of coffee with enough sugar to turn an elephant hyperactive. This ice cream seems designed to ensure you never forget its coffee essence, and it's riddled with small hits of chocolate. —Elina Shatkin

4929 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City; (310) 313-7625.

Mashti Malone's

This one's a bit of a sleeper: Mashti Malone's has been around practically forever, so in the last few years, with the deluge of new ice cream shops around L.A., it's nearly been forgotten. But the Persian dessert shop is still churning out a high-quality product, sometimes in flavors hard to find elsewhere, such as cucumber, rosewater and ginger. Those fall under the "refreshing" category, but



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—Katherine Spiers

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Scoops

Tai Kim, the owner of the original Scoops location on Heliotrope Drive near Melrose Avenue, expanded his innovative ice cream empire with independently owned branches in Palms, Chinatown and Highland Park. Each Scoops location serves up a rotating list of regular and nondairy flavors, boasting creative combinations using multiple ingredients, every day except Sunday. That means up to 50 flavors a week. There's usually only one constant on the menu, the customer favorite "brown bread": caramel ice cream with candied Grape-Nuts. —Jessica Koslow

Multiple locations.

Carmela

The Third Street location of Carmela, just west of the Grove, is tucked snugly into a row of stores on a bustling, traffic-heavy street. It's easy to pass by if you aren't looking for it. But the scores of kids who race through the doors with their parents close behind know exactly where to find Carmela. The shop carries goodies such as cones, toffee and cookies, made in its creamery and original shop in Pasadena. The sorbet flavors, from cucumber to blueberry thyme, follow the seasons. Popular picks include salted caramel, made with homemade caramel, and mint with cacao nib. The secret to the in-demand mint flavor: fresh mint leaves steeped in the milk. For Valley dwellers, there's also a newer location in Woodland Hills. —J.K.

Multiple locations. carmelaicecream.com.

Bulgarini

Owner Leo Bulgarini is a gelato connoisseur. He studied gelato-making in Italy and imports his almonds from Sicily and chocolate from France. At Bulgarini's Altadena shop, foreign films such as *Matrimonio all'italiana* are sometimes screened for the public during the summer. The ice cream case stands just inside the front door, greeting customers with colorful gelato and sorbets. Bulgarini offers three kinds of chocolate — salted, regular and orange flavor — and customer favorites are the standard chocolate chip, almond and vanilla. There's house-made pasta, too, if you need a little something savory before dessert. —J.K.

749 E. Altadena Drive; Altadena. (626) 791-6174, bulgarinigelato.com.

Sweet Rose Creamery

Sweet Rose Creamery carries at least 15 flavors daily, inspired by what's in season, such as a nectarine sorbet during summer. The two most requested flavors are salted caramel and fresh mint with homemade chocolate chips. Peering out at customers from a tall case by the door are Guittard chocolate-dipped bananas, classic and seasonal bon bons and Valrhona fudge pops. Also on the menu are brownie bites, sundaes, shakes, floats and one of the best banana splits in L.A., featuring one scoop each of old-fashioned

vanilla and chocolate (substitutions allowed), a ripe banana, homemade hot fudge and whipped cream topped with toasted almonds and a strawberry. —J.K.

Multiple locations. sweetrosecreamery.com.

Ihwamun

Michael Kim, owner of Ihwamun Ice Cream, makes and rotates about 36 flavors through his shop in the Little Tokyo Galleria. The choices range from classics like chocolate and vanilla to more trendy scoops such as chai latte and matcha. Kim sources his organic dairy base from Straus Family Creamery, up north in Petaluma. The ice creams are all densely textured, not airy, and concentrated with quality ingredients. The ingredient mixed into Ihwamun's ice cream with the most history is *yakgwa*, which translated means "medicinal snack"; it is a fried cookie made with honey and sesame oil. The crunchy cookies are broken into small pieces and folded into the ice cream. —Eddie Lin

333 S. Alameda St., Little Tokyo; (213) 537-0380, ihwamun.com.

THE ENVIRONMENT

Stop Using Plastic Straws

There are some medical reasons why people need to use straws. In fact, that is apparently why the little disposable drinking tubes were made commercially: to halt the spread of germs in hospitals — the idea being that even a washed cup can be a little gross to share among sick people.

Straws made out of bark and grass had been in use before the turn of the last century, when they were made with paper. But in the 1960s, the plastic straw was invented and marketed to restaurants, and now here we are, with literally tons of trash generated by these items we don't even think about but that can be deadly to sea life. (If you want to become very upset, just look up "turtles plastic straws" on YouTube.)

The idea of doing away with plastic straws has been quietly percolating on the fringes of the environmental movement. Perhaps unsurprisingly, it's gained the most traction in seaside communities. Manhattan Beach, for instance, banned "polystyrene food service ware" in 2013. Some restaurants there even have incentive programs for customers who bring their own mugs and to-go containers.

One small step you can take as a consumer is to request straw-less drinks at bars and restaurants, and even in your delivery orders. (When you order food online, they only pay attention to the "special requests" section about one-third of the time, I've found, but it's a start.) If you really want to drink from a straw, there are metal versions available everywhere, including Amazon. They usually come with a pipe cleaner — isn't that thoughtful?

If you really want to be earth-friendly, you'll make an entire utensil set part of your everyday carry. We'll get there. Start with straws. —Katherine Spiers



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7-13

P. 20 **FRI**
DON'T GET MORRISSEY-SICK
ON THIS LONG BEACH CRUISE

P. 20 **SAT**
A POLYNESIAN PARTY IS TAKING
OVER THE EGYPTIAN THEATRE

P. 20 **SUN**
THE TOP-SELLING CONDIMENT
HAS ITS OWN FESTIVAL



P. 22 **THU**
THE STARS OF FAME REALLY DID
LIVE FOREVER

fri

7/7

DANCE

Grab Your Partner

There are only a handful of dances you don't really need natural rhythm or more than a modicum of coordination to be able to perform, and line dancing is one of them. (Don't kill me, country folk.) But that's what makes it fun. Now in its 13th year, **Dance DTLA** is hosting a series of biweekly free dance lessons in Grand Park. This week, grab your cowboy boots to learn line dancing and two-step. (The coming weeks' lessons include Bollywood, disco, tango and salsa.) Never struggle with the Electric Slide or Cupid Shuffle at a wedding again. *Grand Park, 200 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Fri., July 7, 7-11 p.m.; free. musiccenter.org/events/dancedtla.* —Gwynedd Stuart

CRUISES

Ahoy, Morrissey

Although fans of morose British crooner Morrissey likely will feel more at home at a dark club or graveyard poetry reading than aboard an ocean liner, not even the most misunderstood emo kids can resist the siren call of the high seas. At least that's the thinking behind **Morrissea: A Morrissey/Smiths Tribute Boat Cruise**, which combines a New Wave/Britpop dance party with a maritime excursion. Organized by Depeche Boat (the puns never stop), the event features three levels of DJs, as well as a live performance by Morrissey/Smiths tribute band Maladjusted. Dust off your black eyeliner and misanthropic sense of alienation and set sail! *Grand Romance Riverboat, 200 Aquarium Way, #4, Long Beach; Fri., July 7, 10 p.m.-2 a.m.; \$30. facebook.com/events/1879867722263792.* —Matt Stromberg

sat

7/8

POLITICS

Call Me Al

Hosted by Live Talks Los Angeles, **Sen. Al Franken** discusses how he went from a political satirist to a real politician as detailed in his humbly titled new book,



Renegade Craft Fair: See Saturday.

COURTESY RENEGADE CRAFT FAIR

Al Franken: Giant of the Senate, with Chelsea Handler. In his memoir, Franken describes his liberal, Jewish upbringing in Minnesota and breaking into comedy with high school friend and writing partner Tom Davis. They were two of the original writers hired at *Saturday Night Live*, where Franken spent 15 years and created the memorable character of Stuart Smalley, the effeminate, self-help guru, who coined the affirmation: "I'm good enough, I'm smart enough and, doggone it, people like me." Franken also recounts his post-*SNL* career, which includes several books on politics, hosting on the now-defunct Air America radio network and running for senator of Minnesota. Additionally, he writes about the Trump presidency and calls Ted Cruz the "Dwight Schrute of the Senate." *Alex Theatre, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Sat., July 8, 8 p.m.; \$55-\$100. livetalksla.org.* —Siran Babayan

PARTIES

Polynesia Amorous

Exotica comes of age at the **13th annual Tiki Night**, gracing darkest Hollywood with the gentle breezes of tropical paradise and all the celebration that implies. You'll thrill to a nostalgic Tiki Marketplace boasting only the finest exotic ephemera, followed by the dulcet sounds of King Kukulele & the Friki Tikis and the Polynesian Paradise Dancers. There's also a tiki bar, food trucks and a special 35mm screening of 1994's *Rapa Nui*, a timeless and timely story of class struggle and climate change amidst the hulking stone *moai* of Easter Island. *Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd.,*

Hollywood; Sat., July 8, 1:30 p.m.; \$15, \$12 members. (323) 461-2020, americancinemathequecalendar.com. —David Cotner

INDIE CRAFTS

Crafty Devils

Don't let the heat scare you away from outdoor shopping. The largest DIY craft fair in the world, the **Renegade Craft Fair** was founded in Chicago in 2003 and has spread to 12 cities in the United States and the U.K. This weekend more than 250 independent crafters, artists and designers will gather at Los Angeles State Historic Park, recently reopened after a three-year renovation, to sell personal and kitschy items — everything from apparel, jewelry, apothecary and ceramics to dog treats, laser-cut wood and burlesque-inspired lingerie. The event also features workshops, giveaways, photo booths and DJs. If you get hungry looking for those one-of-a-kind gifts, stop by one of several food trucks, serving up everything from grilled cheese sandwiches to lobster to falafel. *Los Angeles State Historic Park, 1245 N. Spring St., Chinatown; Sat.-Sun., July 8-9, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.; free. (213) 620-6152, renegadecraft.com.* —Siran Babayan

sun

7/9

FOOD & DRINK

Some Like It Hot

You think you know salsa? Well, you can always learn more — like, for instance, that salsa is apparently the top-selling

condiment in the United States. The two-day **Salsa Festival**, held at Pershing Square, has a huge array of salsas for visitors to try, from red and hot to green and mild — and absolutely everything in between, including mole. The event, which includes live music, is free to attend, but salsa-tasting tickets must be purchased, either on-site or ahead of time. You'll get chips, of course. Beer and wine margaritas also will be for sale. *Pershing Square, 532 S. Olive St., downtown; Sun., July 9, noon-8 p.m. (also Sat., July 8); free (tasting packages \$5-\$15), \$60 VIP. latinsalsa festival.com.* —Katherine Spiers

VARIETY SHOWS

People Are Strange

After a brief hiatus, local performance artist and comedian Dynasty Handbag (Jibz Cameron) relaunches her freaky monthly variety show **Weirdo Night**. Featured guests this time include artist Nao Bustamante, fresh off a performance at the Whitney Biennial; Oakland-based musician and choreographer Brontez Purnell; and Heather Jewett, frontwoman for queer punk band Gravy Train!!!, in character as Jerry Jergens, an aging roast comic. The night concludes with a group session of Dance-y-oke, which — as you might've guessed — is a dance version of karaoke set to such hits as Janet Jackson's "Rhythm Nation" and the Kate Bush classic "Wuthering Heights." Dynasty herself may make an appearance in an especially timely and irreverent *Handmaid's Tale*-themed mini-play. *Zebulon, 2478 Fletcher Drive, Elysian Valley; Sun., July 9, 7:30 p.m.; \$12. zebulon.ticketfly.com.* —Matt Stromberg

COMEDY

What About Bob?

Just a few weeks ago, season nine of *Ru-Paul's Drag Race* wrapped up and Sasha Velour was named "America's Next Drag Superstar." Season-eight winner Bob the Drag Queen appeared in the finale to relinquish her crown — reluctantly. It's been a big year for Bob. *Cherry Pop*, a film in which she has a starring role, was released, and she also taped a stand-up comedy special. In **Suspiciously Large Woman: Bob the Drag Queen Comedy Special** — showing as part of Outfest — Bob returns to his hometown of Atlanta to deliver a routine about Beyoncé, NYC, sex and white people. Sasha Velour's cool, but she'll never make us laugh like Bob did. *Harmony Gold Theater, 7655 W. Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Mon., July 10, 9:30 p.m.; \$15. outfest.org.* —Gwynedd Stuart

COMEDY

Sara Smile

Earlier this year, **Sara Schaefer** created *Women Online*, a web series for the comedy news network Seriously.TV, where she takes a humorous look at how women use dating apps and how they're harassed on the internet — even one of her own Twitter trolls — with help from fellow comedian Jen Kirkman, author Lindy West and others. Originally from Virginia, Schaefer is a stand-up comedian and writer whose long list of credits includes writing for *Not Safe With Nikki Glaser*, *Problematic With Moshe Kasher* and *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, hosting MTV's *Nikki & Sara Live* and blogging for *Late Night With Jimmy Fallon*, which won her two Emmy Awards. Schaefer performs a monthlong stand-up residency at the Lyric Hyperion, with Glaser, Barbara Gray and other guests. *Lyric Hyperion Theater & Cafe, 2106 Hyperion Ave., Silver Lake; Mon., July 10, 8 p.m. (Also July 17 & 24); \$5. (323) 928-2299, lyrichyperion.com.* —Siran Babayan

COMEDY

Winter Is Here

Sunday, July 16, brings purpose and joy back into our collective lives with the return of *Game of Thrones* on HBO — what better way to prepare for it than with tonight's *GOT* gabfest **Talk the Thrones**? Presented by the Ringer, *Talk the Thrones* is a reunion of players from HBO's 2016 *After the Thrones* decompress-fest — Andy Greenwald and Chris Ryan — as well as Mallory Rubin and Jason Concepcion, co-hosts of the podcast *Binge Mode: Game of Thrones*. You'll weep openly at violent deaths, laugh at the frailties of the Lannisters and maybe even put odds on which of Khaleesi's three dragons will die first. *Largo, 366*

N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Grove; Tue., July 11, 8:30 p.m. (doors 7 p.m.); \$30. (310) 855-0350, largo-la.com. —David Cotner

DANCE

The Dude Abides

Does summer really begin before the Hollywood Bowl season opens? Well, summer definitely starts now, with the Bowl's classical season launched by a star-studded quartet of ballet luminaries and Gustavo Dudamel conducting the L.A. Phil. With music by Tchaikovsky, Adam and Prokofiev, **Dudamel and Stars of Ballet** highlights some of the most popular ballets ever. Two of ballet's reigning queen bees, Misty Copeland and Natalia

Osipova from American Ballet Theatre and Britain's Royal Ballet, respectively, are joined by ABT's Marcelo Gomes and Royal Ballet alum Sergei Polunin. Not sticking strictly to a classic approach, Gomes is slated to don feathered knickers for the White Swan solo from Matthew Bourne's *Swan Lake*, with Copeland essaying the more traditional choreography. Osipova and Polunin appear in an extended *Giselle* excerpt, and Copeland and Gomes pair up for the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*. The Dude and the Phil contribute other selections from these ballets and Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty*. *Hollywood Bowl, 2301 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood; Tue., July 11, 8 p.m.; \$1-\$154. hollywoodbowl.com.* —Ann Haskins

SCIENCE

Drawing Nye

With his baby-blue lab coat and kicky bow tie, Bill Nye became an icon of '90s pop culture with his hit half-hour TV series, *Bill Nye the Science Guy*. The show was as quirky as it was educational, and, according to the National Academies Press, it was effective, too. Kids who watched it wound up being better at explaining science than those who didn't. After appearing on air for five seasons and winning a bunch of Emmys,



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WWW.STARSOFPINOT.COM

JULY 19, 2017

Nye sits down with chapeaued journal-ist Patt Morrison for the **Los Angeles Times Ideas Exchange With Bill Nye** to discuss his new book, *Everything All at Once: How to Unleash Your Inner Nerd, Tap Into Radical Curiosity and Solve Any Problem*. Indeed, science rules. *The Theatre at Ace Hotel*, 929 S. Broadway, downtown; **Wed., July 12, 7:30 p.m.**; \$25-\$100. (213) 623-3233, acehotel.com/calendar/losangeles. —Tanja M. Laden

thu 7/13

FILM

A Fright at the Movies

Anyone can talk smack about a shitty film, but leave it to professional comedians to turn the smack-talking into an entire show. Since 2014, actor and Groundlings alum/instructor Drew Droege and former MTV VJ and author Dave Holmes have hosted **Bad Movie Night** as part of Outfest. With help from guest stand-up comics who provide commentary, the two screen and lam-bast a crappy piece of LGBT cinema that makes gay-cult stinkers like *Showgirls* and *Mommie Dearest* look like *Citizen Kane*. While the movie is kept secret until the evening of, past obscure titles have included *Ben and Arthur*, *That Tender Touch* and *The Plug Lady*, about a New York drag queen who goes by the name ... the Plug Lady. *REDCAT*, 631 W.

Second St., downtown; Thu., July 13, 9:45 p.m.; \$15. outfest.org. —Siran Babayan

TRIBUTES

Gonna Live Forever

Before *American Idol*, *America's Got Talent* and *So You Think You Can Dance*, there was *Fame*. Based on Alan Parker's 1980 film, the 1980s TV series centered on a group of aspiring artists at a New York performing arts school. They had big dreams and big perms, and learned life lessons, often while breaking into impromptu dance numbers in the cafeteria. The opening credits included the famous line from Debbie Allen's dance-teacher character: "You want fame. Well, fame costs. And right here is where you start paying ... in sweat." For the first time in more than three decades in the United States, cast members Allen, Jesse Borrego, Cynthia Gibb, Erica Gimpel, Billy Hufsey, Carlo Imperato, Valerie Landsburg, Lee Curreri and P.R. Paul appear in **Fame 35th-Anniversary Reunion Concert**, where they'll perform music from the TV show's soundtrack albums, namely the iconic theme song "Fame." Proceeds benefit the Actors Fund, which provides programs and services to professional performing artists and members of the entertainment industry in need. *The Troubadour*, 9081 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood; **Thu., July 13, 8 p.m.**; \$55-\$175. (310) 276-1158, actorsfund.org/fame. —Siran Babayan

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COCK OF THE WALK

A BUFF ROOSTER MAKES AN APPEARANCE IN A SHOW OF "NUT ART"

BY CATHERINE WAGLEY

This week, a rooster works out in an electric chair, an ocean liner collides with a sofa, and an Italian artist in her 90s gets her due.

The nuttiest among us

A ship crashes into a porcelain sofa that Richard Shaw made in 1971, and two brown ceramic monsters, crafted by Clayton Bailey in 1970, swim across the wood floor in "Nut Art." Parker Gallery's inaugural exhibition takes its title from a 1972 show at the Bay Area's Hayward Gallery. Most of the "Nut" artists in this current show were delightfully out of step with the zeitgeist. Their take on pop was kitschy and campy, not slick. Sam Parker, who organized historically savvy shows for the Landing before opening his own space, paired work from the '60s and '70s from these Bay Area artists with new work from L.A. Hannah Greeley's 2017 sculpture *J-o-B* — two sets of gangly legs with letters of the alphabet for heads — shares space with a glittery painted snake by Maija Peeples-Bright and a sculpture of a buff rooster in an electric chair by Peter Saul. The older artists give the space its liberated charge, but the younger artists are catching up. 2441 Glendower Ave., Los Feliz; through Aug. 5. (213) 631-1343, parkergallery.com.

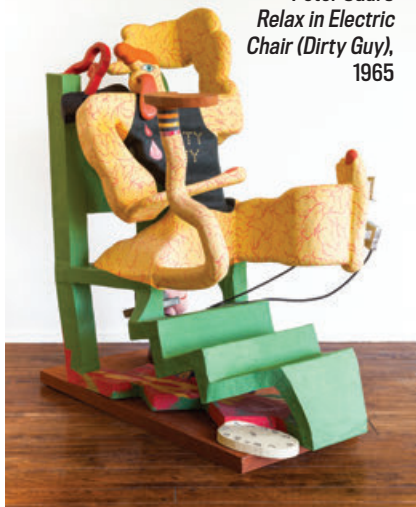
Hanging from the sky

In 1966, Italian artist Marisa Merz used aluminum sheeting to make twisting, dangling figures that looked like limp robots, defunct yet adorable. She called these forms *Living Sculpture* and initially installed them in her kitchen in Turin. Now they hang from the ceiling at the Hammer as part of the 91-year-old artist's first major retrospective. "The Sky Is a Great Space" originally appeared at the Metropolitan Museum and includes an array of tenderly strange objects. Merz wove nylon delicately around nails in the late '60s, and made misshapen heads of clay, wax and steel in the '80s and '90s. The work conveys a sense of freedom, but no recklessness — Merz has made what she pleased for half a century, carefully and methodically. 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; through Aug. 20. (310) 443-7000, hammer.ucla.edu.

Mass consumption of cake

Nancy Buchanan bakes a cake in 1984 video *The Work of Art in the Age of Electronic Reproduction*. We see her frosting the cake as the footage begins to spin, becoming kaleidoscopic, black-and-white and grainy. Buchanan titled the video, playing on a loop in the group show at POTTS, after an oft-quoted 1936 essay by theorist Walter Benjamin, who wrote about the effect mass image reproduction would have

Peter Saul's *Relax in Electric Chair (Dirty Guy)*, 1965



COURTESY DI ROSA COLLECTION, NAPA

on art. "The video is like a combination between Julia Child and Walter Benjamin," she said, talking about how "the media force-feeds us the information it wants us to consume." She eats the cake, savoring the frosting, eating well while contemplating mass consumption. 2130 Valley Blvd., Alhambra; through July 23. potts.la.

More, better colors

When he opened the Underground Museum back in 2012, artist Noah Davis built a replica of a neon sculpture by revered minimalist Dan Flavin and installed it in his new, raw storefront space. He wanted to give his neighborhood access to blue-chip art but didn't quite have the access himself. The museum has that access now. For the past two years it has partnered with MOCA, and now, as part of "Artists of Color," a bona fide Flavin sculpture hangs in the space. Artist EJ Hill installed something far less cold and spare: cursive blue neon script that reads "We deserve to see ourselves elevated." There are plenty of artists of color in this show, a rarity in exhibitions about color-field painting, light and space, and other such form-focused movements. The show aims to survey how artists use and play with color in a wider, more diverse way than usual, and it does so elegantly. 3508 W. Washington Blvd., Arlington Heights; through Feb. 2. (323) 989-9925, theunderground-museum.org.

Everything altogether at once

"Sunlight Arrives Only at Its Proper Hour," at 356 Mission, includes too many artists to keep track of. Jean-Léon Gérôme's 1887 painting of a fierce cherub holding Medusa's oversized, anguished face coexists with Nicolas Ceccaldi's *Wings*, a 2017 sculpture in which natural, dark feathers surround an unidentified animal's skull. In 2015, Michael E. Smith hung a sunflower stem across the black plastic seats from prison transport vehicles. This shares space with dark, introspective drawings like Lee Bon-tecou's 1962 one of the fierce, circular machines she sculpted obsessively in her early career. Melancholic but materially rich and surprising, the show lulls you into a trance: You stop trying to understand what you're seeing and just enjoy the moody diversity. 356 S. Mission Road, Boyle Heights; through July 20. (323) 609-3162, 356mission.com.

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HALLOWEEN IN JULY

Blindfolds and scares abound in *The Willows*, an immersive theater piece for the VR generation

BY JORDAN RIEFE

It's 9:30 on a warm summer night and I'm standing at the corner of Olympic and Fourth Street in Koreatown. There's a shadowy figure down the sidewalk, lit by a lantern. I greet him and am met with a monotonal "Name?" He checks me off a list and tells me to join a small group of strangers standing nearby. Moments later, a passenger van pulls up and we are blindfolded and told not to speak. During our short journey, we receive instructions for our dinner with *The Willows*, an immersive theatrical experience running through July.

As we pull up to a spooky 1912 house, we remove our blindfolds and are greeted by the silhouette of Lindsey the butler, eerily framed by a window in the front door. As we approach, Uncle Ricky arrives behind us, carrying a bag of groceries. He apologizes for his tardiness and warmly welcomes us in. Pop songs from the 1920s fill the air as Lindsey guides us toward the parlor where Claudia, a recent widow,

serves wine. The mentally challenged Conrad and his kissing cousin Angela join in as we learn the purpose of our gathering: to honor Claudia's late husband, Jonathan, who died under mysterious circumstances.

"I've always thought that human beings are scarier than vampires or werewolves," creator Justin Fix says. In addition to *The Willows*, his company, Just Fix It Productions, also presents *CreepLA* and *Slaughter Summer*, Halloween-themed immersive shows. "Over the past few years [there] has been a surge of shows kind of popping up. We can attribute that to escape rooms, originally. Our fan base goes back to gamers, VR, augmented reality. They love to participate," he says of the mostly millennial audience.

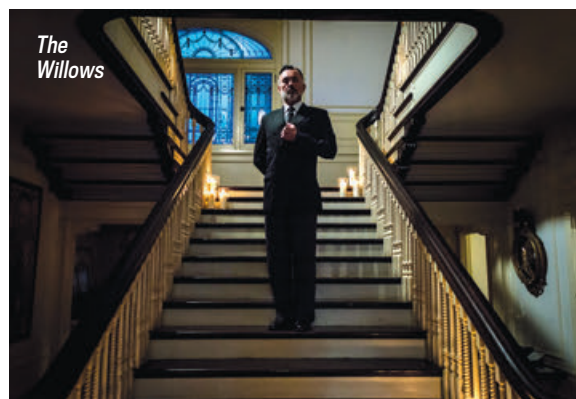
The cast assumes we're old friends of the deceased, and I somehow feel compelled to hide the fact that I have no idea who Jonathan is, lest I insult them or, worse, am deemed an interloper and dealt with accordingly. When asked, Uncle Ricky jokes that he "works in ladies undergarments" but is scarce on details. It seems we're expected to interact with the cast,

but maybe it makes them work overtime, improvising answers based on backstory prep.

"It's a drastically different experience as an actor, with someone who's interrupting you with questions all the time," offers Dasha Kittredge (Angela), who works with three different L.A.-based immersive theater companies. "It's more difficult as an actor if someone is engaging so much they wind up making the show about themselves."

Before dinner we gather in the foyer to greet the stern matron of the house, Rosemary Willows, an intimidating figure descending the grand staircase. She invites us to join her in the dining room, where we feast on cheese and fruit as conversation again turns to Jonathan, prompting disagreements and reprisals from Mrs. Willows. After dinner, she leads a parlor game in which participants mimic a series of meaningless gestures. It seems harmless enough, but woe unto those who make a mistake.

As the show moves into the homestretch, audience members are paired for dancing in the parlor, then blindfolded and led to a new partner. Seconds later the music fades or doesn't; it's hard to remember as confusion reigns. A wave of voices washes over the room as participants are blindly led amid hissing and whispering: "You should



The Willows

PHOTO BY HATBOX PHOTOGRAPHY

be a better husband," "You don't spend enough time with your children," "Your career goals are outside your grasp." That last one may or may not have been uttered, but it's impressive how the comments seem so specific to real-life anxieties yet broad enough to fit many.

"What VR is doing for film and TV, we are doing for theater and space. People want to engage a little differently nowadays," Fix says. "We're always wanting more, more, more, now, now, now."

Kittredge attributes it to that insidious catchall, the internet. "Everyone is on their computers. They're not immersed in the world anymore. They're immersed in their screens," she says. "I think people are really craving real shit in front of them really happening. It makes them feel alive again."

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Film //

WELCOME BACK

Spider-Man finally gets a movie worth cheering

BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL

Most hero stories dating back to Achilles are fantasies of power, of the world made right through violence. What sets Spider-Man apart, outside his joyous bouncing through New York City, is that his stories are also fantasies of responsibility. Rather than just kick bad-guy ass, Spider-Man must forever fight to save his family, his friends and every stranger who chances near the fray, always in the process destroying his own life as Peter Parker. Seven years ago, in a storyline in Marvel's *Amazing Spider-Man* comic book, Parker vowed that, on his watch, nobody in New York would ever die again, and he nearly died himself trying to make it so; in that series' current issue, Spider-Man bails on a brawl with the latest iteration of Dr. Octopus so that he can rescue civilians caught in the dust-up.

Nobody speaks his famously humane credo — that with great power must come great responsibility — in Jon Watts' brash *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, the first Spidey flick as ebullient as the comics you read when you were a kid. But that truth pulses through the film: He's protector rather than avenger or punisher, not just of the young woman he crushes on (Laura Harrier) but also of his Queens neighborhood's ATMs and bodega cats, of his classmates and families, even of the criminals he busts (for whom he exhibits a compassion rare in American hero stories).

As in Sam Raimi's soulful *Spider-Man 2*, the most rousing of the many and varied action set pieces here find him helping rather than hitting, trying to make sure regular people get home safely. This time, though, a moral question underpins the excitement. In many of these rescue scenes, on ferries and monuments, it's thanks to Spider-Man's recklessness that everyone is in danger in the first place. The movie is buoyant even as it charts the young hero's cock-ups, glancing against its lessons rather than hammering them home: Responsibility means actually being responsible, not just performing heroics, so the web-slinger has to learn not to pick fights with hoods in the middle of New Yorkers' commute. Meanwhile, a quick, priceless early scene teaches him — and, I hope, America — the dangers of jumping to conclusions about who's a criminal.

This Spidey (Tom Holland) sometimes gets it wrong, but he's always striving to be better. That's at odds with decades of violent Hollywood heroes, whose zealous mindset has become something of a national pathology: *I am certain I'm right, therefore whatever havoc I wreak is just.* Holland's Peter is still in high school, but

he's more of an adult than almost anyone on multiplex screens this summer.

The film skips right through these ideas. You know how some comics fans insist that they read *sequential art* or *graphic novels*? *Spider-Man: Homecoming* is comics, unapologetically, as close as blockbuster filmmaking gets to cartooning. Early scenes of the teen hero patrolling Queens edge toward sketch comedy. He gives street directions to the elderly; he performs acrobatic feats for fans on the sidewalk; he chases goons through suburban backyards with no buildings to swing from, a witty homage to the classic *Amazing Spider-Man 267*, by Peter David and Bob McLeod.

Out of costume, Holland's Parker blends attributes of the previous actors to play the role: He's a soul-sick worrier, like Tobey Maguire's, and a spaz who doesn't know how hunky he is, like Andrew Garfield's. Despite his Hollywood abs, Holland is scrappy, a squeaky motormouth whose words scrape against the back of his throat as they gush out. His rasp and stammer at times suggest a raw young Michael J. Fox, without the ironic detachment. His characterization echoes the '00s *Ultimate Spider-Man* comics, by Brian Michael Bendis and Mark Bagley, though the filmmakers borrow elements from all of the half-century-old character's eras.

The most welcome of these: a best-friend character, borrowed from Bendis, who catches on to Parker's secret — and geeks out so winningly that the hero can't mope in his bedroom, as Maguire's Spidey used to. Jacob Batalon and Holland have chemistry like vinegar and baking soda, fizzing a little out of control whenever they're put together. Two other friendships, with Robert Downey Jr.'s Tony Stark and Jon Favreau, as Stark's driver and assistant, serve as counterpoint, each actor so nimble in his comic duets with Holland that their

Spider-Man: Homecoming



COURTESY COLUMBIA PICTURES

roles never feel like franchise-building drop-ins. These characters seem to share a world, and director Watts (*Cop Car*) finds laughs in the incongruity between Parker's everyday worries — field trips and a homecoming dance — and Avengers business.

That world proves more bold, more diverse, more lively and lived-in than most of the Marvel movies. Don't look for the *Avengers* films' usual scenes set in stainless-steel labs — or the Noo Yawk construction Joes of the other *Spider-Mans*. *Homecoming* is precise in its milieu, vaulting along Queens Boulevard and the elevated 7 train, attentive to local color and addresses, populating its sunny magnet school with young people who look as if they might actually live in the borough. The women around him don't get enough to do but for once they're (mostly) not just problems and plot points for him to deal with. (His secret life means that he must disappoint them all, of course.) Too many male characters leer at Marisa Tomei's Aunt May, but Zendaya, as a lefty bookworm who is essentially a conscientious objector to high school, commands many scenes with just a caustic line or eyeroll.

Coming from the other wing of American politics is Michael Keaton's Adrian Toomes, the villain. He's a screwed-over forgotten-man type who gives speeches about systems being rigged and, once

legit business proves unprofitable, will do whatever it takes to make a score. His schemes — snatching tech we've seen in the other Marvel movies and selling modified versions of it to local crooks — are as down-to-earth as they can be for a heavy in a flying-vulture powersuit. Keaton is all earthy menace, a tough guy who believes he's doing the right thing by seizing back a bit of the America that richer men have yanked from him. Superhero fans once balked at the idea of Mr. Mom playing Batman. Now, in this most comic of comic-book movies, Keaton's mere appearance can turn a scene dead serious.

In his abbreviated screen time, Keaton jolts *Homecoming* with just a scowl and those wily and restless eyes. The climactic battle, as in most of these films, is a blurred bore puked up by a computer, but the spoken showdowns between hero and villain prove tense and thoughtful. Here are two different understandings of the responsibility that great power demands, perfectly opposed views of what we owe one another in this world. The compassionate one, of course, prevails only in the movies and in the funny pages.

SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING | Directed by Jon Watts | Written by Jonathan Goldstein, John Francis Daley, Jon Watts, Christopher Ford, Chris McKenna and Erik Sommers | Sony Pictures | Citywide

KOJI FUKADA'S HARMONIUM SMASHES ITS OWN FAÇADE

You can't be blamed for wondering, quite a while into Koji Fukada's *Harmonium*, just exactly what kind of movie it is. Tense family melodrama? Middle-aged infidelity thriller? Study of repression? Psycho-vengeance genre spree? All of the above? Maybe the measured, calm, withholding pace of the film, particularly in its first half, should be its own ominous clue. Pots with tight lids eventually blow.

Fukada introduces us to a typical nuclear-family micro-unit: Dad Toshio (Kanji Furutachi) is an inattentive machinist working his own shop. Mom Akie (Mariko Tsutsui) is a tense, vocally Christian helicopter-er, hovering over their

young daughter, Notaru (Kana Mahiro), who's learning a school piece on their clunky harmonium. The clacking beat of the girl's metronome suggests a life of forced order, and Fukada paces his scenes exactly that way — without momentum or variation. The strategy doesn't lull us so much as it tunes our ultrasounds for tiny cracks in the façade — mostly from Tsutsui. Anxious and unpretty, Akie can't hide her pious yet paranoid discomfort with just about everybody, including her little girl.

But then the truth beneath all of this repressed politesse sprouts, and *Harmonium* turns into a methodical cascade of very bad things, compounded by lust and guilt and retribution and tumbling out over years. Fukada's cautious visual tone doesn't really change but the characters do, twisting under pressure



COURTESY FILM MOVEMENT

and closing in on madness. As in the best old-school, James M. Cain-style noir, Fukada's film is eloquent about the fragile privileges of modern urban life, and the hidden lies it can be built upon. —Michael Atkinson

HARMONIUM | Directed by Koji Fukada | Film Movement | Monica Film Center



A Ghost Story

COURTESY A24

Film //

AIN'T THEM BODIES HAIN'TS

LOWERY'S *A GHOST STORY* GETS LOST IN TIME AND SPACE

BY MELISSA ANDERSON

“E very love story is a ghost story,” David Foster Wallace wrote, more than once. That evocative observation is probed in David Lowery’s *A Ghost Story*, a film that occasionally reaches a similar level of eloquence. Lowery’s fourth feature reunites Rooney Mara and Casey Affleck, the leads of his second, the dolorous, stiff neo-Western *Ain’t Them Bodies Saints* (2013). In *A Ghost Story*, they play a couple, identified only (and not until the final credits) as M and C, respectively. We first see the pair cuddled on the couch, their affectionate murmurings interrupted by a flash of ectoplasm on the wall. The spouses don’t appear frightened, though, perhaps feeling that the cocoon of their intimacy provides unbreachable protection.

The opening — and best — scenes of *A Ghost Story* are animated by such moments of deep conjugal closeness. After M and C are roused from their sleep by some supernatural sounds, they calmly return to bed; an unhurried take shows them wordlessly, half-drowsily navigating their immediate erotic needs. But too soon Lowery switches from the specific to the cosmic, as the

screen fills with the star-filled heavens and Daniel Hart’s score thickens with solemn strings. A Terrence Malick epigone, Lowery also relies too heavily on that elder filmmaker’s fondness for crepuscular light and time-toggling, impoverished signifiers of what Malick likes to call “life’s journey.”

An extremely unsophisticated device, however, proves strangely potent, at least ini-

AN EXTREMELY UNSOPHISTICATED DEVICE PROVES STRANGELY POTENT, AT LEAST INITIALLY.

tially: a white sheet in which eye holes have been cut. This simple ghost costume adorns Affleck’s character after Mara’s identifies C’s body at the morgue. The getup is undeniably goofy but also atavistic; the elemental design made me think of the similar — if all-black and more menacing — garb worn by the phantom in Maya Deren’s avant-garde wellspring, *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943).

The C specter returns to the compact Texas ranch house he shared with M, watching his beloved consume a chocolate pie, a real-time episode of emotional eating (and emesis) that’s not much more than a misguided salute to Chantal Akerman’s masterwork of mundanity, *Jeanne Dielman*. That this episode of sugar-snacking is the most we see Mara do after C’s death makes me pray that the talented actress will take a break from movies set in the Lone Star state — the backdrop for *Saints* and Malick’s *Song to Song*, a movie that also underutilizes the performer — and directed by quasi-macho, quasi-mystical romantics. (Maybe she should stick with the geography traversed in *Carol*?)

M moves out, others move in, time rewinds and advances and doubles back again, Kesha makes a cameo: The ghost bears witness to it all and even makes a friend, a fellow sheeted spook, haunting the next house over. But after this meeting of wraiths takes a cloying turn, I found it difficult to continue suspending my disbelief. Lowery, in a way, had given up the ghost.

A GHOST STORY | Directed and written by David Lowery | A24 | Landmark, ArcLight Hollywood

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12:25 a.m.; Sat-Sun, 10:15, 11:15 a.m.; 12:15, 1:15, 2:15, 3:15, 4:15, 5:15, 6:15, 7:15, 8:15, 9:15, 10:15, 11:15 p.m.; 12:15 a.m.; Mon., 10:10, 11:05 a.m.; 12:10, 1:05, 2:10, 3:05, 4:05, 5:25, 6:25, 7:25, 8:25, 9:25, 10:25, 11:45 p.m.; Tues., 10:40 a.m.; 12:45, 1:55, 4, 6:30, 8:15, 9:50, 11:30 p.m.; Wed., 10:30, 11:45 a.m.; 12:45, 2:45, 3:45, 4:55, 5:50, 7:40, 9:55, 11:30 p.m.

Spider-Man: Homecoming

Fri., 3:30, 5:15, 6:15, 8:30, 9:10, 10:45 p.m.; Sat., 3:30, 5:15, 6:15, 8:30, 9:10, 10:45, 11:45 p.m.; Sun., 10:45 a.m., 3:30, 4:15, 5:15, 6:15, 7:15, 9:45, 10:45 p.m.; 12 mid.; Mon., 10:30, 11 a.m., 12 mid.; Tues., 10, 11 a.m., 12 noon, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11:15 p.m.; 12 mid.; Wed., 10:45, 11:30 a.m.; 12:30, 3:15, 4:15, 5:15, 6, 7, 9, 9:45, 10:15 p.m.; 12 mid.; Fri., 10:45 a.m., 3, 4:15, 5:45, 7, 8, 9:45, 11:15 p.m.; Sat., 10:45 a.m., 1:30, 3, 4:15, 5:45, 7, 8, 9:45, 11:15 p.m.; Sun-Wed., 10 a.m., 1:30, 8, 11:15 p.m.; Thurs., 10 a.m., 1:30 p.m.; Fri., 10 a.m., 1:30, 8, 11:15 p.m.; Fri-Sun., 11:30 a.m., 12 noon, 1, 2, 2:30 p.m.

Spider-Man: Homecoming 3D

Fri., 11 a.m., 1:45, 7:30, 10:15 p.m.; 12 mid.; Sat., 1:45, 7:30, 10:15 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m., 1:45, 7:30, 10:15 p.m.; Mon., 11:45 a.m., 2:30, 10:30 p.m.; Tues., 11:30 a.m., 2:30, 5:30, 10:45 p.m.; Wed., 12 noon, 2, 7:30, 10:45 p.m.; 4:45 p.m.

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Fri., 10:25 a.m., 1:20, 5:05, 7:15, 10:05 p.m.; Sat., 10:05, 11:55 a.m., 1:20, 5, 7:25, 10:35 p.m.; 12:25 a.m.; Sun., 10:10 a.m., 1:15, 4:55, 7:25, 9:25 p.m.; Mon., 10:30 a.m., 1, 3:30, 5:45, 8:05, 10:35 p.m.; Tues., 10:05 a.m., 12:10, 3:05, 5:45, 8:35, 10:35 p.m.; Wed., 10:25 a.m., 12:25, 2:40, 5:05, 7:05, 9:05, 11:55 p.m.

Baby Driver

Fri., 10:25, 11:25 a.m., 12:25, 1, 2, 3, 25, 4:45, 5:25, 6, 7:15, 8:10, 9:05, 10:30, 11:15 p.m.; 12 mid, 12:35 a.m.; Sat., 10:25, 11:25 a.m., 12:25, 1, 2, 3, 25, 4:30, 5:15, 6, 7:15, 8:10, 9:30, 10:30, 11:15 p.m.; 12 mid, 12:35 a.m.; Sun., 10:25, 11:25 a.m., 12:15, 1, 2, 3, 20, 4:30, 5:15, 6, 7:20, 8:30, 9:45, 10:30, 11:20 p.m.; 12:15 a.m.; Mon., 10:05, 11:15 a.m., 12 noon, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6:05, 7:45, 8:45, 9:45, 10:45, 11:30 p.m.; 12:15 a.m.; Tues., 10, 11:30 a.m., 12:35, 1:30, 2:30, 3:10, 4, 5:15, 6, 7:15, 8:15, 9:45, 10:45, 11:15 p.m.; 12:15 a.m.; Wed., 10:15, 11:25 a.m., 12:40, 1:40, 3:10, 4:55, 5:55, 7:45, 8:45, 9:45, 10:45 p.m., 12:15 a.m.

The Big Sick

Fri., 10:10 a.m., 12:45, 2:45, 4:30, 7:55, 9:45, 11:45 p.m.; Sat., 10:25 a.m., 12:05, 2:40, 4:50, 7:50, 9:45 p.m.; Sun., 10:20, 11:25 a.m., 1:30, 4:50, 8:05, 10:05, 11:45 p.m.; Mon., 10:20, 11:30 a.m., 12:35, 2:10, 3:10, 4:40, 5:50, 7:20, 10:15 p.m., 12:10 a.m.; Tues., 11:15 a.m., 2:45, 5:35, 7:45, 10:25, 11:45 p.m.; Wed., 10:05 a.m., 12:05, 2:20, 5:10, 8:05, 10:30 p.m., 12:05 a.m.

Wonder Woman

Fri., 10:05 a.m., 1:25, 4:35, 7:25, 10:35 p.m.; Sat., 10:25 a.m., 1:25, 4:35, 7:20, 10:05 p.m.; Sun., 11:05 a.m., 1:55, 4:35, 7:10, 10:05 p.m.; Mon., 11:10 a.m., 2:25, 5:15, 7:35, 11:20 p.m.; Wed., 11:15 a.m., 2:05, 4:40, 7:50, 11:10 p.m.; Tues., 10:35 a.m., 2:15, 5:10, 8:05, 10:20 p.m.

The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers

Mon., 7:30 p.m.

Dim the Fluorescents

Sun., 8 p.m.

Future '38

Mon., 8 p.m.

LOS FELIZ 3

1822 N. Vermont Ave. (323) 664-2169

The Beguiled 1:45, 4:30, 7:20, 9:50 p.m.

Despicable Me 3 1:45, 4:30, 7:20, 9:50 p.m.

Baby Driver 1:15, 4:15, 7, 9:50 p.m.

TCL CHINESE 6 THEATRES 6801

Hollywood Blvd. (323) 461-3331

War for the Planet of the Apes 3D Thurs., 7, 10:30 p.m.

Falsettos Wed., 7 p.m.

Planet of the Apes Triple Feature Wed., 4 p.m.

Spider-Man: Homecoming Fri., 12:15, 3:30, 7, 10:15 p.m.; Sat-Sun, 9:20 a.m., 12:40, 4, 7:30, 10:45 p.m.

Mon-Wed., 12:45, 4, 7:30, 10:30 p.m.; Thurs., 12:30, 3:45 p.m.; Fri., 12:15, 7 p.m.; Sat-Sun, 9:20 a.m., 12:40, 4, 7:30, 10:45 p.m.; Mon-Wed., 12:45, 4, 7:30, 10:30 p.m.; Thurs., 12:30, 3:45 p.m.

Mad Monster: Spider Baby

Thurs., 9 p.m.

TCL CHINESE THEATRE IMAX 6925

Hollywood Blvd. (323) 461-3331

Spider-Man: Homecoming An IMAX 3D

Experience Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Sat., 7 p.m., 6:30 p.m.; Mon-Thurs., 7 p.m.

Spider-Man: Homecoming The IMAX 2D

Experience Fri., 12:30, 4, 10:45 p.m.; Sat., 12 noon, 3:30, 10:30 p.m.; Sun., 11:30 a.m., 3, 10 p.m.; Mon-Thurs., 12 noon, 3:30, 10:15 p.m.

Lobbyists & Handprints Tour

Fri., 12:45, 1:20, 2:15, 2:45, 4:15, 5:15, 6, 8, 8:45, 9:30, 11 p.m.; Sat., 12:15, 12:45, 1:20, 2:15, 3:30, 4:15, 5:15, 6, 8, 8:45, 11 p.m.; Sun., 11:45 a.m., 12:15, 12:45, 1:20, 3:30, 4:15, 5:15, 6:45, 8, 8:45, 10:15, 11 p.m.; Mon-Tues., 12:15, 12:45, 1:20, 2:15, 3:30, 4:15, 5:15, 6, 8, 8:45, 11 p.m.; Wed., 12:15, 12:45, 1:20, 2:15, 3:30, 4:15, 5:15, 6, 8, 8:45, 11 p.m.; Thurs., 12:15, 12:45, 1:20, 2:15, 3:30, 4:15, 5:15, 6, 8, 8:45 p.m.

TCL Chinese Theatre Tour

Fri., 9:15, 9:45, 10, 10:30, 10:45, 11:15, 11:45 a.m., 12:15, 3:30, 6:45, 10:15 p.m.; Sat., 10:30, 10:45, 11:15, 11:45 a.m., 2:45, 6:45, 9:30, 10:15 p.m.; Sun., 10:30, 10:45, 11:15 a.m., 2:15, 2:45, 6, 9:30 p.m.; Mon-Tues., 10:30, 10:45, 11:15, 11:45 a.m., 2:45, 6:45, 9:30, 10:15 p.m.; Wed., 10:30, 10:45, 11:15, 11:45 a.m., 2:45, 6:45, 9:30 p.m.; Thurs., 10:30, 10:45, 11:15, 11:45 a.m., 2:45, 6:45, 9:30 p.m.

PACIFIC'S EL CAPITAN

Hollywood Blvd., west of Highland (323) 467-7674

Cars 3 10 a.m., 1:15, 4:30, 7:45 p.m.

PACIFIC'S THE GROVE STADIUM 14

189 The Grove Dr., Third & Fairfax (323) 692-0829

War for the Planet of the Apes Thurs., 7, 10, 11:30 p.m.

War for the Planet of the Apes 3D Thurs., 9:15 p.m.

Planet of the Apes Triple Feature Wed., 4 p.m.

Spider-Man: Homecoming Fri-Sat., 9:30, 10, 11, 11:30 a.m., 12:30, 1, 2, 2:30, 3:30, 4, 4:30, 5:30, 6:30, 7, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10, 10:30, 11 p.m.; Sun., 9:30, 10, 11, 11:30 a.m., 12:30, 1, 2, 2:30, 3:30, 4, 4:30, 5:30, 6:30, 7, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10, 10:30, 11 p.m.; Mon., 10:30, 11, 11:15 a.m., 12:30, 1:10, 2, 2:20, 3:30, 4, 4:30, 5:30, 6:30, 7, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10, 10:30, 11 p.m.; Tues., 10:30, 11, 11:30 a.m., 12:30, 1:10, 2, 2:30, 3:30, 4, 4:30, 5:30, 6:30, 7, 7:30, 8:30, 9:30, 10, 10:30, 11 p.m.; Wed., 10:30, 11, 11:30 a.m., 12 noon, 1:10, 2, 2:30, 3, 4, 4:30, 5:30, 7, 7:30, 8, 8:30, 9:30, 10, 11 p.m.

Spider-Man: Homecoming 3D Fri-Sat., 12 noon, 3, 8, 9, 11 p.m.; Sun-Mon., 12 noon, 3, 8, 9 p.m.; Tues., 12 noon, 3, 8 p.m.; Wed., 12:30, 3:30, 6:30 p.m.

The Beguiled Fri-Sun., 9:50 a.m., 12:10, 3:05, 5:05, 6:05, 7:25, 10:15 p.m.; Mon-Tues., 11:50 a.m., 2:15, 5:05, 7:25, 10:15 p.m.; Wed., 11:50 a.m., 2:15, 5:05, 7:25, 10:30 p.m.

Despicable Me 3 Fri-Sun, 9:30, 10:15, 11:45 a.m., 1, 2:10, 3:10, 4:20, 5:40, 7:50, 8:45, 9:45 p.m.; Mon-Tues., 10:40, 11:45 a.m., 1:05, 2:10, 3:10, 4:20, 5:40, 7:50, 8:45, 9:45 p.m.; Wed., 10:40, 11:45 a.m., 1:30, 4:20, 6:30, 8:45, 9:45 p.m.

Despicable Me 3 3D

Fri-Sun, 12:30, 6:30 p.m.; Mon-Tues., 12:45, 6:30 p.m.; Wed., 12:45, 2:10 p.m.

The House

Fri-Sun, 11:35 a.m., 2:30, 5:45, 8:35, 11:10 p.m.; Mon-Wed., 11:35 a.m., 3:05, 5:45, 8:35, 11:10 p.m.

Baby Driver

Fri-Sat, 9:30, 11 a.m., 12:30, 1:40, 3:10, 4:40, 5:40, 6:25, 8:15, 10:20, 11:05 p.m., 12:20 a.m.

Sun, 9:30, 11 a.m., 12:30, 1:40, 3:10, 4:40, 5:40, 6:25, 8:15, 10:20, 11:05 p.m.; Mon., 10:35 a.m., 12 noon, 1:40, 3:10, 4:40, 5:35, 6:25, 8:15, 10:20, 11:05 p.m.; Tues., 10:35 a.m., 12 noon, 1:40, 3:10, 4:40, 5:35, 8:15, 10:20, 11:05 p.m.; Wed., 10:35 a.m., 12 noon, 1:35, 4:40, 5:45, 8:30, 10:20, 11:15 p.m.

The Big Sick

Fri-Sun, 9:50, 10:20 a.m., 1:40, 5, 7:15, 10:45 p.m.; Mon-Tues., 10:30 a.m., 1:40, 5, 7:15, 10:45 p.m.; Wed., 10:55 a.m., 1:40, 5, 7:15, 10:45 p.m.

Transformers: The Last Knight

Fri-Sun, 11:15 a.m., 2:35, 5:25, 8:05, 11:15 p.m.; Mon-Tues., 11:30 a.m., 2:35, 5:25, 8:05, 11:15 p.m.; Wed., 11:40 a.m., 2:35, 5:25, 8:05, 11:15 p.m.

Wonder Woman

Fri-Wed., 10:45 a.m., 1:50, 4:30, 7:30, 10:05 p.m.

VISTA 4473 Sunset Dr. (323) 660-6639

War for the Planet of the Apes Thurs., 8:45 p.m.

Spider-Man: Homecoming Fri-Wed., 1:45, 5:20, 8:45 p.m.; Thurs., 1:45, 5:20 p.m.

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DOWNTOWN INDEPENDENT 251

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CGV CINEMAS LA 621 South Western

Avenue (213)388-9000

Spider-Man: Homecoming 3D Fri-Wed., 10:45 a.m., 1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:45 p.m.

Wonder Woman 3D Fri-Wed., 10 a.m., 12:50, 3:45, 6:35, 9:30 p.m.

Anarchist From Colony (Park Yeol) Fri-Wed., 10:15 a.m., 12:50, 3:30, 6:15, 9:05 p.m.

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Nabucco Met Summer Encore Wed., 7 p.m.

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Falsettos Wed., 7 p.m.

Planet of the Apes Triple Feature Wed., 4 p.m.

Carole King: Tapestry - Captured Live Tues., 7 p.m.

Spider-Man: Homecoming Fri-Sun., 12:45, 7:45 p.m.; Mon., 12:45 p.m.; Tues-Wed., 12:45, 7:45 p.m.; Fri-Sat., 10:15 a.m., 1:30, 2:45, 5, 8:30, 9:45 p.m.; 12 mid.; Sun., 10:15 a.m., 1:30, 2:45, 5, 8:30, 9:45 p.m.; Mon., 10:15

a.m., 1:30, 2:45, 5, 7:45, 8:30, 9:45 p.m.; Tues-Wed., 10:15 a.m., 1:30, 2:45, 5, 8:30, 9:45 p.m.

Spider-Man: Homecoming 3D

Fri., 12 noon, 3:30, 7, 10:30 p.m.; Sat., 10:55 a.m., 2:25, 9:30 p.m.; Sun-Wed., 12 noon, 3:30, 7, 10:30 p.m.; Fri-Sun., 11:15 a.m., 6:15 p.m.; Mon., 11:15 a.m., 4:15, 6:15, 11:15 p.m.; Tues-Wed., 11:15 a.m., 6:15 p.m.; Fri-Sat., 4:15, 11:30 p.m.; Sun-Wed., 4:15, 11:15 p.m.

The Beguiled

Fri., 11:15 a.m., 1:45, 4:20, 6:45, 9:15 p.m.; Sat., 11:15 a.m., 1:45, 9:15 p.m.; Sun-Mon., 11:15 a.m., 1:45, 4:20, 6:45, 9:15 p.m.; Tues., 1:45, 4:20, 6:45, 9:15 p.m.; Wed., 11:15 a.m., 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10 p.m.; Thurs., 10:45 a.m., 1:45, 4:15, 7:15, 10 p.m.

Despicable Me 3

Fri., 10, 11 a.m., 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 10 p.m.; Sat., 10:15 a.m., 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10 p.m.; Sun., 10:45 a.m., 1:15, 4:15, 7:15, 10 p.m.

MUSICIANS' TALES SHAPE MALI BLUES

The steady, stinging pluck of Bassekou Kouyaté's *ngoni*, the traditional, lute-like African stringed instrument, suggests dust hitting your face on a Sahel wind at dusk, when the day at last starts to cool. An innovator within his tradition, Kouyaté has rigged his *ngoni*'s cowskin body with pickups and a wah-wah pedal, tingeing that wind with psychedelia, with distortion and drone, an electric blast from the Niger Delta. In his playing the meditative meets the rhapsodic; the ancient ways edge toward the Western pop that long ago grew out of them.

Tragically, senselessly, rather than being officially celebrated in his homeland, Kouyaté, like all the great Malian musicians featured in documentary *Mali Blues*, finds himself unable to play in large portions of it. Fundamentalist Islam has spread, and with it a Sharia injunction against secular music and dance.

Lutz Gregor's film, as beautiful in its photography as the desert blues Kouyaté plays, tracks four Malian musicians in the weeks before 2015's Festival of the Niger in southern Mali. There, the great world-pop singer



COURTESY ICARUS FILMS

Fatoumata Diawara will for the first time sing in the country of her birth. Before that marvel of a performance, Diawara will travel the country, despairing and defiant: In a village, before an audience of a dozen women, she sings a vigorous plea of a ballad exhorting them not to mutilate their daughters in the name of circumcision.

First-time feature director Gregor never imposes a narrative arc on his subjects; instead, we meet them, hear their hopes and their fears, and then savor performances of singular beauty, power and invention.

—Alan Scherstuhl

MALI BLUES | Directed by Lutz Gregor
Icarus Films | Music Hall

OPENING THIS WEEK

THE CONFESSIONS (LE CONFESSIOMI)

In Roberto Andò's *The Confessions*, an unorthodox birthday speech about the unforeseen moral consequences of economics ("For better or for worse, we are not God") kicks off an international whodunit. An octet of influential, platitude-spewing economists gathers at a hotel for a discreet G8 meeting, summoned by birthday boy and International Monetary Fund director Daniel Roché. At Roché's behest, a trio of outsiders (a monk, a musician and a writer) infiltrates the proceedings to assuage growing distrust from "suspicious media." Little do his guests know that Roché will be dead by dawn. But how? Having broken his vow of silence specially for this occasion, Toni Servillo's monk serves as the film's moral core (*quelle surprise*). He soaks up confessions like a sponge, including a lengthy one from Roché that puts the increasingly testy economists on guard, lest the monk reveal their secrets. While Servillo masterfully expresses charm and benevolence without being holier-than-thou, it's a shame that the other characters aren't given the same attention. Instead, many are reduced to nameless figureheads. (As the bullish "German minister," Richard Sammel and his razor-sharp cheekbones are sadly underused.) Cinematographer Maurizio Calvesi captures the luxe beauty of the German coastal setting — which almost makes up for a multilingual script dripping with humdrum philosophy about mortality, morality and metaphysics. A rumination on malfeasance for the sake of riches, *The Confessions* takes a leap of faith but merely ambles through its existential crises. (Tatiana Craine)

DO YOU TAKE THIS MAN By taking a low-key approach to a high-stress situation, Joshua Tunick turns a familiar rom-com premise into a treatise on commitment. On its surface, *Do You Take This Man* (origi-

nally called *Modern Love*) might at first seem like just another indie talkfest set in an idealized Los Angeles where prosperity and tolerance are a given. But writer-director Tunick uses an impending wedding as occasion for his characters to peel away well-manicured identities and confront the parts of their lives — and themselves — that aren't Instagram-perfect. The morning of their rehearsal dinner, Daniel (Anthony Rapp) performs an intricate cappuccino preparation that would shame most baristas and is savoring his creation when Christopher (Jonathan Bennett) breezes into the kitchen and brews a cup from a single-serving machine. This ritual highlights their everyday differences: Daniel is methodical and exacting, while Christopher favors ease and convenience. Their opposites-attract relationship is both a source of humor and the impetus for an argument that threatens their happily-ever-after. Tunick, who directed the 2001 documentary *Mr. Smithereen Goes to Washington* (about singer Pat DiNizio's U.S. Senate campaign), infuses his debut narrative feature with a sunny optimism that gives an emotional drama the air of escapism. With his emphasis on close-ups, a profanity-free script and the casting of TV regulars (including Alyson Hannigan and Thomas Dekker), *Do You Take This Man* could nestle perfectly in several basic-cable niches. Love is love in Tunick's comforting diversion, and the hard work of relationships is always worth the trouble. (Serena Donadoni)

THE INCOMPARABLE ROSE HARTMAN *The Incomparable Rose Hartman* is a gorgeously shot, sharply edited portrait of photographer Hartman, who in the 1970s and '80s haunted Studio 54, A-list New York parties and fashion designers' ateliers, perfecting what fashionista and writer Simon Doonan calls "impulsive portraiture." Filmmaker Otis Mass is sometimes affectionate and sometimes combative as he draws out the real Rose, a feisty East Village native, who

is still working at 80 and has no qualms about throwing elbows to take her shot: "Maybe that's true because I had to move so quickly — because otherwise you would give me your posed face," she says. "I don't want that ever." Starting with her now-iconic 1977 black-and-white photo of Bianca Jagger astride a white horse in the famed nightclub on West 54th Street, Hartman made a career of capturing fashion designers, models, musicians and movie stars in half-guarded moments, somewhere between unaware and aping for the lens, long before the Instagram era. Mass interviews Hartman's friends and colleagues (and at least one apparent enemy) and explores darker, thornier aspects of her life, in an effort to explain her drive to connect with her subjects, if only for an instant. An instant is all it took, though that connection, time and again, required alacrity, art and craft in composition, and a ticket to the scene, which she grabbed through force of will. "I want Jerry Hall's soul, even for a moment," Hartman says. "I wanted to penetrate that wall of fame and preparedness." (Daphne Howland)

LOST IN PARIS (PARIS PIEDS NUS) Fiona Gordon and Dominique Abel's signature style blends screwball and romantic comedy with playful fantasy, but *Lost in Paris* lacks the magical elements of their previous features (*Iceberg*, *Rumba* and *The Fairy*, co-directed with Bruno Romy). Instead of fanciful leaps of logic, their latest revolves around the actions of impulsive characters. Gordon and Abel continue employing clown techniques (exaggerating physical characteristics, heightening everyday absurdities, making the commonplace dangerous) while also adding elements of a mystery to the escapade. Timid Canadian librarian Fiona (Gordon) has long wanted to visit Paris, so she jumps at the chance to help care for her 88-year-old aunt, Martha (Emmanuelle Riva), a feisty former dancer who's being pressured to leave her apartment for a retirement home. She

arrives to find Martha missing, and the sheltered Fiona becomes the most helpless of hapless tourists. (There are some pointed Canadian jokes, including Fiona flying the maple leaf on her backpack and encountering a do-right Mountie.) Fiona soon attracts the cloying attention of Dom (Abel), a buff hobo inordinately proud of his antisocial skills. Gordon and Abel incorporate elements of lighthearted musicals and silent-film comedy (a scene atop the Eiffel Tower evokes the derring-do of Harold Lloyd), and provide themselves plenty of opportunities to stretch their pliant, wiry physicality. Riva is a bubbly delight in one of her final roles, her mischief perfectly at home in Gordon and Abel's escapist vision of a benign Paris where liberty and idiosyncrasy happily co-exist. (Serena Donadoni)

ONGOING

ALL EYEZ ON ME *All Eyez on Me* was seemingly rushed into production once *Straight Outta Compton*'s huge first weekend box office was announced. For fans of early-to mid-'90s rap, these movies represent a validation to the importance of the era and its biggest, most polarizing stars. It's too bad that the most soulless of the Hollywood tributes goes to the most compelling figure of that era, a self-proclaimed hell raiser whose bleeding-heart martyrdom defined a generation of thugged-out activism. *All Eyez on Me* suffers through a haphazard first act that speeds through Pac's childhood and early career. That's coupled with director Benny Boom and the film's producers failure to surround their

overwhelmed lead, Demetrius Shipp Jr., with co-star talent. Shipp resembles Pac so much he looks like he was spit out of a 3-D printer, but he's left to fend for himself throughout the film, with nobody to play off, a ridiculous burden for a young actor. The real Pac's movies, songs, music videos and interviews document a charismatic, shape-shifting, soul-bearing miscreant powered by pure, uncontrollable energy. Shipp fails to capture Pac's multiplicity. Director Benny Boom and his writing team seem most concerned with getting the minutiae right for die-hard Pac fans. They prioritize frame-for-frame re-creations of interviews and videos to the detriment of storytelling. The film finally settles on a pace when it catches up to Pac's sex-abuse conviction. The build-up showcases *All Eyez*'s lone strength — a willingness to deal head-on with what the filmmakers try to frame as Pac's contradictions but in reality was his hypocrisy. (Marcos Cabrera)

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THE NEW YORK TIMES

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GO BABY DRIVER Edgar Wright's *Baby Driver* is a remorselessly entertaining, impeccably assembled action-musical in which cars and people defy the laws of physics and common sense. They leap into gunfire and hop over hoods and careen down streets in perfect time to the beats of an unimpeachably cool soundtrack. It's all absurd but feels just right. And unlike, say, a *Fast and Furious* flick, Wright's movie delivers action that's convincing, concrete. This is the kind of pure pop confection that leaves you breathless with admiration for the director's supernatural command of his frame. But it might also leave you a little cold. Baby (Ansel Elgort), an introverted automotive savant who knows his music as well as his cars, works for Doc (Kevin Spacey), a smooth, calculating crime lord who plans immaculate heists that hinge on one key element: Baby's expertise behind the wheel. The assorted goons — stickup men played with grimy glee by the likes of Jon Hamm, Jamie Foxx and Jon Bernthal — are put off by our hero's aloof demeanor. *Baby Driver* is an almost perfect pastiche, a thoroughly enjoyable object. But sue me, I kind of miss the losers of Wright's masterpieces *Shaun of the Dead* and *The World's End*. In those, you roar with approval not just for the filmmaking but for the triumph of little people finding their rhythm. In *Baby Driver*, everybody is super-cool, and I'm not sure they ever quite come to life. Still, it's all so effective as demented action spectacle that I'll probably see it 10 more times. (Bilge Ebiri)

GO THE BIG SICK The pitch for *The Big Sick* might sound like a tacky weepie you'd have been afraid to watch on TV in the 1990s. But it's hard to do justice to the balancing act that the creators of this singular comedy have achieved. Based on events in the life of star Kumail Nanjiani (who co-wrote the screenplay with his wife, Emily V. Gordon), it starts as a lighthearted, free-

wheeling opposites-attract rom-com and then heads into surprisingly grim territory — without ever betraying its wild sense of humor. Nanjiani plays himself, a struggling comic and Uber driver; the exceptional Zoe Kazan plays Emily, a psychiatry student. Kumail can't bring himself to tell his parents about the new love in his life, which in turn leads to a nasty breakup. Then, suddenly, she's in the emergency room, and Kumail is the only one around to be by her side. Her condition worsens, and a doctor asks him to sign a form allowing her to be put into a medically induced coma. Soon, Emily's parents (Ray Romano and Holly Hunter, both fantastic) come to town. Trouble is, unlike Kumail, Emily shares everything with her parents, and her mom and dad have heard all about what a dick this young man has been to her. The excruciating period of waiting that ensues forces Kumail and the parents together, even as Emily lies perilously close to death, and needs more and more medical interventions. Yet even after it becomes a story about a person in a coma, the film is hilarious — I daresay it gets even funnier. (Bilge Ebiri)

GO CARS 3 Here's something I never guessed I would say: It might be worth going into the new *Cars* movie spoiler free. At its climax, *Cars 3* eases into a surprising new gear and takes a hard turn into becoming the movie that, during its earlier lulls, I had idly longed to see. The final scenes surge as though Disney's Pixar has huffed some *Fast & Furious* nitrous, but they also serve as an eloquent critique of the boilerplate franchise plotting to which the film has thus far adhered. There's even a moral: Let others take a turn sometimes, boys. Of course, to get to that ending you need to get through *Cars 3*, a prospect that turns out to be much more pleasant than a summary of its plot might suggest. For much of its running time, it tells the too-familiar story of an over-the-hill pro out to prove himself one more time. This time it's that zippy sentient race car, Lightning McQueen, who is bested by young bucks. Director Brian Fee and his team tear into this story with such vigor that it might not occur to you to wonder why exactly we should care. Lightning and his new trainer, a V-6 yellow sports coupe voiced by Cristela Alonzo, establish an uneasy friendship in the leadup to a big race, even baring their souls in a stinging argument. The series still hasn't solved the problem of how to make compelling scenes out of quiet conversations between big-eyed but inexpressive vehicles. But the ending is perfect and the set pieces dazzling. There's no reason this guaranteed blockbuster had to be this smartly engineered. (Alan Scherstuhl)

GO DAWSON CITY: FROZEN TIME Bill Morrison's method began as a poetic pivot. His early films, including his breakout mon-

YOUR WEEKLY MOVIE TO-DO LIST

Scum, Assassination and Political Intrigue

Friday, July 7

English playwright Roy Minton's TV drama *Scum* became a *cause célèbre* in 1978 when the BBC banned it for being too violent. It resurfaced a year later as a film, also called *Scum*, scored with critics, and is now the object of a significant cult following. A blisteringly violent look at a British youth correctional facility (or "borstal"), the film is tightly directed by Alan Clarke — who also mounted the TV version — and features a scalding early performance by Ray Winstone. Cinefamily screens a DCP recently restored by Kino Lorber throughout the week. *Cinefamily/Silent Movie Theatre*, 611 N. Fairfax Ave., Fairfax; Fri., July 7, 7:30 p.m.; \$12. (323) 655-2510, cinefamily.org.

Saturday, July 8

Bong Joon-ho is one of the few working directors who truly deserves the overused buzzword "visionary." His sixth feature film (and second in English, after 2013's *Snowpiercer*), *Okja*, revolves around the efforts of an intrepid young girl to liberate a genetically engineered "super-pig" from the clutches of an evil CEO (Tilda Swinton). This is your last chance to see what looks like a deranged update of *Free Willy* on a 35mm print struck especially for this limited engagement at the New Beverly Cinema. *New Beverly Cinema*, 7165 Beverly Blvd., Fairfax; Sat., July 8, 5:30 & 9 p.m.; \$12. (323) 938-4038, thenewbev.com.

Feeling glum about politics? There's nothing like cinematic self-therapy to soothe the cynical soul, and UCLA has a double dose of 1960s political thrillers that should do the trick. *The Best Man*, featuring a bracingly intelligent screenplay by Gore Vidal based on his TV play, dramatizes the plight of two presidential contenders (Henry Fonda and Cliff Robertson) as they each seek the endorsement of a dying ex-president (Lee Tracy). In *Seven Days in May*, Kirk Douglas plays a high-ranking aide who suspects his superior, an ambitious general (Burt Lancaster), of plotting a military takeover of the government. The emphasis on surveillance and nuclear disarmament remains eerily relevant, and Rod Serling's righteous screenplay crackles with some of the best lines of the decade. *UCLA's Billy Wilder Theater*, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Sat., July 8, 7:30 p.m.; \$10. (310) 206-8013, cinema.ucla.edu.

Sunday, July 9

Andrew Dominik's pretentiously mythic, shamelessly



COURTESY 20TH CENTURY FOX

Viva Zapata!
See Tuesday.

beautiful Western is as confident as its title is long. When it came out in 2007, *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* hardly made a dent at the box office, despite the heavyweight presence of Brad Pitt and rising star Casey Affleck. Yet it has gained a considerable reputation since then, thanks largely to the entrancingly elegiac tone, Roger Deakins' crystalline photography and Nick Cave's plangent score. *Aero Theatre*, 1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; Sun., July 9, 7:30 p.m.; \$12. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com.

Tuesday, July 11

Marlon Brando darkened his skin and flared his nostrils to play Mexico's most famous revolutionary in Elia Kazan's *Viva Zapata!*. But it was Anthony Quinn who wound up taking home an Oscar in the supporting role of Zapata's brother. Dated but still powerful, the picture is intelligently scripted by John Steinbeck, who is perhaps guilty of romanticizing one of the bloodiest armed conflicts of the early 20th century. *LACMA*, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Tue., July 11, 1 p.m.; \$4. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org.

Thursday, July 13

For this week's **Throwback Thursdays**, Laemmle's NoHo screens *Double Indemnity*, Billy Wilder's indispensable contribution to the noir canon. Deliciously pessimistic, the film is awash with the trademarks of the American crime cycle of the 1940s: idiomatic narration, entrapment motifs, fatalistic romance, murder and, of course, a femme fatale (Barbara Stanwyck, sporting a sexy anklet and a conspicuous blond wig). Wilder and Raymond Chandler adapted James M. Cain's novel, setting the noir bar for the next 10 years. Grab yourself a gimlet and get over to the theater. *Laemmle NoHo*, 5420 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood; Thu., July 13, 7:30 p.m.; \$11. (310) 478-3836, laemmle.com. —Nathaniel Bell

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tage, *Decasia* (2002), and his *Frankenstein* adaptation, *Spark of Being* (2010), used the viscous chaos of actual nitrate dissolution to create a sense of lyrical menace and mourning. But Morrison has become more genuinely interested in history itself. *Dawson City: Frozen Time* might be the Bill Morrison movie for viewers with little patience for Bill Morrison movies. He opens with a simple explanation of how nitrate was invented — as an explosive — and how film stock's ridiculously fiery temperament has shaped film history. Nitrate was the art form's suicidal imp, immolating one warehouse or theater after another and almost ensuring that film would never survive its own instability. The story moves to a massive cache of early-20th century films uncovered in the 1970s in Dawson City, Alaska, which allows Morrison to launch into a leisurely portrait of the Yukon Gold Rush, Dawson City's origins and growth (where, among others, Fred Trump began his fortune, with a brothel), and so on. The Dawson City footage — more than

370 films, some shot in the Yukon, some simply shipped in — zips by in bullet-like blips, and a lot of it isn't even decayed. We see what Dawsonites saw, on the frozen edge of a frontier: local prospector dramas as well as imported travelogues, serials, melodramas, newsreels and nature studies. The Dawson City prints are the only copies of these films to have survived. It's an orgy for film geeks and history jonesers. (Michael Atkinson)

GO SPIDER-MAN: HOMECOMING

Nobody speaks the web-slinger's famously humane credo — that with great power must come great responsibility — in Jon Watts' brash *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, the first Spidey flick as ebullient as the comics you read when you were a kid. But that truth pulses through the film: He's protector rather than avenger or punisher, not just of the young woman he crushes on (Laura Harrier) but also of his Queens neighborhood's ATMs and bodega cats, of his classmates and families, even of the criminals he busts (for whom he exhibits

a compassion rare in American hero stories). The most rousing of the many and varied action set pieces find him helping rather than hitting, trying to make sure regular people get home safely. This time, though, a moral question underpins the excitement. In many of these rescue scenes, it's thanks to Spider-Man's recklessness that everyone's in danger in the first place. The movie is buoyant even as it charts the young hero's cock-ups, glancing against its lessons rather than hammering them home. *Homecoming* is precise in its milieu, vaulting along Queens Boulevard, attentive to local color and addresses. Lead Tom Holland's rasp and stammer at times suggest a raw young Michael J. Fox, without the ironic detachment. Spidey's new best friend, Ned (Jacob Batalon), catches on to Peter's secret — and geeks out so winningly that the hero can't mope in his bedroom. Batalon and Holland have chemistry like vinegar and baking soda, fizzing a little out of control whenever they're put together. (Alan Scherstuhl)



The Melvins

PHOTO BY STEVE APPLEFORD

| Music //

KEEPERS OF THE NOISE

No one expected punk/metal experimenters The Melvins to still be around after 30 years, let alone making some of their best music

BY STEVE APPLEFORD

The man called King Buzzo says nothing as he paces the stage. Electric guitar in hand, hair a mushroom cloud of gray curls, he lurches forward with a brutal downstroke across the guitar strings, igniting an ominous, fuzzy slab of noise. The song is “Hag Me,” a growling, seven-minute echo from the grunge ‘90s as bleak and unhurried as Black Sabbath, and as weirdly threatening now as it ever was.

Onstage at the Observatory in Santa Ana, Buzzo and his band, The Melvins, are the same eccentric, unstoppable force that has influenced generations of underground rockers, including his high school friend Kurt Cobain. Looking like a psychodelic high priest in a custom muumuu covered with images of blazing eyeballs, Buzzo steps up to the microphone to roar a surreal, incomprehensible message: “I stole your gravity. ... Don’t hag me with your false green!”

What follows is a night in The Melvins’ noisy discomfort zone, where punk collides with the heaviest of metal. To hear The Melvins now is still like facing an oncoming truck, fueled by the muscular beats of drummer Dale Crover, Buzzo’s musical partner since 1984. A new double album called *A Walk With Love and Death* continues the tradition, sending their uncom-

promising musical impulses into a world that still, after more than 30 years, seems unready for them.

“We lose 20 percent of our audience with every record, but we gain new people along the way,” says Buzzo, aka Buzz Osborne. “They’re not universally accepted by any means, but they’re accepted enough where we can continue.”

While Osborne and Crover remain identified as Washington grunge icons, they have spent most of their careers in California, much of that in Los Angeles. On bass these days is Steven McDonald, whose life in the underground goes back even further, beginning as a middle-school musician from the original L.A. punk scene as a member of Redd Kross, and more recently with the hardcore band OFF!. The current Melvins trio, together since late 2015, have gelled into something thunderous and agile.

The Melvins have had several bassists over the years. Their 2016 album, *Basses Loaded*, featured five guest bassists and is where they first recorded with McDonald, whose predecessors have come and gone in good cheer and bad, a rotation Osborne has grown weary of. “I get too emotionally attached, and then it’s hard when it doesn’t work out,” he says.

On a recent morning, The Melvins are gathered at McDonald’s small studio and rehearsal space in Glassell Park. They share the room with OFF! and Redd Kross, and Crover has often filled in on drums for

both. Taped to a random surface is a master list of songs Crover needed to learn for this year’s Redd Kross tour. “It’s all become very incestuous,” the drummer says with a grin.

Together and apart, The Melvins have been prolific for three decades. In February, Osborne and Crover released an album collaboration with Teri Gender Bender (of Le Butcherettes) and Omar Rodríguez-López (At the Drive-In, The Mars Volta) as

“WE LOSE 20 PERCENT OF OUR AUDIENCE WITH EVERY RECORD.”
—KING BUZZO

the band Crystal Fairy. The new Melvins album, out July 7, delivers one disc of songs, plus a second disc of soundtrack music for a 33-minute experimental film. As always, the music is heavy and mind-expanding, including a 25-year-old song, “Euthanasia,” that the band have often performed but never previously released on an album.

The Melvins have another album already finished, and in August Crover releases his first full solo album, *The Fickle Finger of Fate*.

“They like to have things in the can,” McDonald says, plucking an unplugged

bass. “Of all the bands I’ve ever been in, they are the most on top of it. They are also probably the ones with the most dependable, sustainable careers. There might be a correlation there.”

Longevity was no one’s expectation when The Melvins began making noisy hard rock with subversive melodies in the era of hair metal and Phil Collins ballads. They were more in the tradition of Black Flag and Hüsker Dü, self-sufficient and utterly unknown to the rock mainstream, expecting no rewards beyond the chance to play club gigs for a crowd of fellow misfits. They escaped Seattle in time to watch the grunge explosion from afar.

Osborne still remembers local club nights there, sharing stages with Soundgarden and Green River for audiences of barely 25. When The Melvins left Washington, no one noticed. Now whenever the band play there, they are welcomed as returning heroes. “As soon as we moved away and came back, then it was way bigger,” Osborne says. “Where were you guys when we played here all the time?”

In the ‘90s, they were swept up in the major-label gold rush in search of the next Nirvana. The Melvins released three albums for Atlantic. “I thought it would be one record and we’d be out, and we’d get this weird experience out of the whole thing,” Osborne says. “We were doing OK before it happened. It wasn’t like they pulled us out of dishwashing jobs.”

We’re speaking a little more than a week after the death of Soundgarden singer Chris Cornell, whom they met when he was still the band’s drummer. “Back when no one gave a shit,” Osborne puts it. “He was a good drummer, too.” The Melvins have experienced the loss of friends and musical colleagues many times over the years. Cobain’s suicide at 27 in 1994 was a shock but less surprising than Cornell, who had survived decades beyond the most dangerous years for the grunge generation.

“It’s always horrible. It sobers you right up,” says Osborne, whose own survival to 2017 was unexpected. “I’m 53 years old. I didn’t think that was going to happen. You might as well prepare for it.”

Every year, the band record music in the winter and tour in the summer, hitting 80 to 100 concert dates a year. “Playing live has always been part of the thing,” Osborne says. “I saw something with Bob Dylan where he’s asked, ‘Why do you still tour?’ He goes, ‘That’s part of the deal I made. I’m holding my end of the bargain.’”

Their sound and career moves have always been instinctual. Osborne assumes they’d get nowhere if The Melvins tried to follow trends, and their role is different anyway. In his experience, when mainstream music gets too predictable, listeners start to wander, sometimes discovering a band like The Melvins.

“The bigger stuff gets, the more pop-oriented it is, the better it is for people like us,” Osborne says. “Not everyone wants to get their music dictated to them. Whether they know it or not, they will see the difference, because there is a difference.”

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BEYOND THE BLUE

COMPTON RAPPER AD PROUDLY
REPRESENTS HIS SET, BUT HIS
MUSIC AND PERSONALITY DEFY
GANGBANGER STEREOTYPES

BY JEFF WEISS

Don't get the wrong impression of AD, even if the wrong impression is partially right. AD, a rising star from Compton, has produced some of the most thundering L.A. gangsta-rap hits over the last several years. He's built like an offensive lineman, tatted like Kat Von D and goes harder than Halo. So if fans don't interrupt him to cheerily ask him how his day is going, it's no surprise.

"People listen to the music and perceive me like I'm some deranged, crazy gang member," AD says when we meet at a cafe not far from Hollywood, where he currently resides. "I'll see people at the mall and they'll recognize me, but won't say nothing because they're afraid that I'll bang on them."

This comes with the territory when your video for the YG-aided "Thug" (8 million-plus views) starts with a news account about an on-set shooting incident involving 30 spent shell cases from an AK-47. Or the clip for the G Perico collaboration, "#CripLivesMatter," where AD wears enough blue to get drafted by the Dodgers and gracefully C-walks across the screen.

"I'm with the business but I don't like confrontation," AD explains, wearing a black tank top, matching Reeboks and Dickies shorts. His tattoos are a road map of his past two decades: favorite video games (first-person shooters), music (Kanye's *Graduation* bear) and type of shoe (Jordans). There's a memorial to his grandmother on his neck, the "310" area code on his torso and "Trust God" on his fingers.

"I'll handle what I have to handle, but I'm an easygoing guy that shows everybody love," AD says. "Finally, people are starting to see the lighter tone."

It's readily apparent when you meet Armand Douglas in person. He's as quick to talk about growing up in the CPT with a father who constantly bumped DJ Quik as he is to wax philosophical about loving *Game of Thrones*, *Naruto* and *Scrubs*.

If one-dimensional stereotypes portray gangbangers as cold-blooded killers, AD exemplifies the nuanced portrayal much closer to the truth. He certainly doesn't shy from his roots in a Crip set on the west side of Compton



COURTESY AUDIBLE TREATS

but is also a devoted father and aspiring film critic.

"I grew up in a mostly Piru part of Compton, and they go hard representing," he explains. "So I felt like I had to go that hard, too, because I'm one of the few from that side holding it down."

His ascent traces to 2013, when he spent his last \$600 from working at Target on the video for "Compton." Sampling and paying tribute to Eazy-E, it elicited co-signs from Kendrick Lamar, Waka Flocka and E-40.

AD, seated, with producer Sorry Jaynari

"PEOPLE PERCEIVE
ME LIKE I'M SOME
DERANGED, CRAZY
GANG MEMBER."

In 2015, AD released "Juice," which detonated into one of the biggest street-rap hits on the West Coast that year. Without a major label, it wound up in heavy rotation on Xzbit's Open Bar Radio and The Real (92.3 FM). You heard it at Floyd Mayweather fights and Rams games. A specially made Clippers version even became the squad's theme song. AD followed up its success with his best full-length, April's *Last of the '80s*, a collaboration with producer Sorry Jaynari.

In the future, AD intends to evolve into an all-around entertainer, appearing in superhero movies and on TV, and attempting to be a positive force for Compton. But in the interim, his latest focuses on the values that made him.

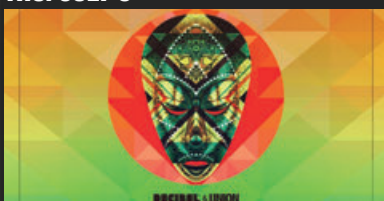
"I'm the last of the era that bought CDs," AD says. "Where you had to go to the store, learned every word and read the liner notes. In this instant accessible world, I want to make something that kids could listen to for longer than two weeks. Something with longevity and heart."

An L.A. native, Jeff Weiss edits *Passion of the Weiss* and hosts the Bizarre Ride show on RBMA Radio. Follow him on Twitter @passionweiss.

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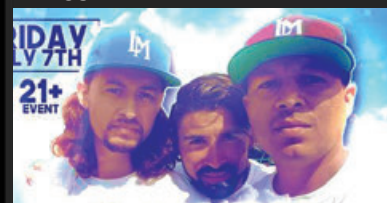
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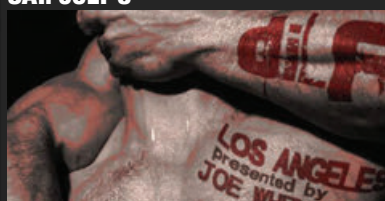
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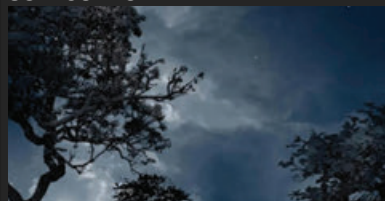
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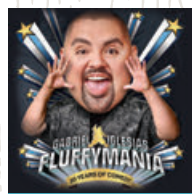
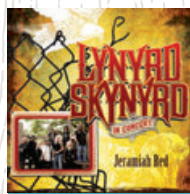
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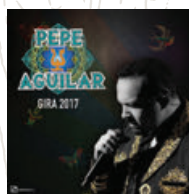
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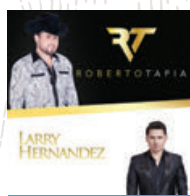
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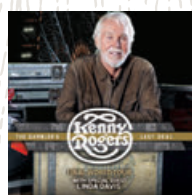
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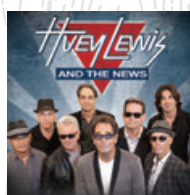
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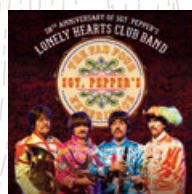
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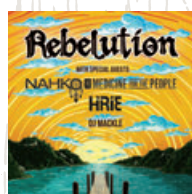
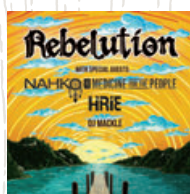
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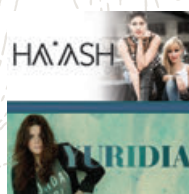
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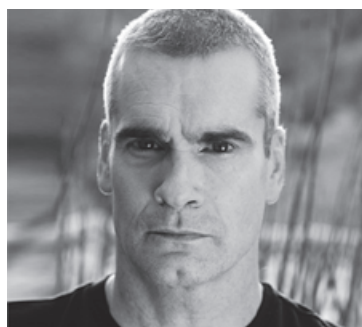
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Henry Rollins
The Column!

THE HARSH PLACE

Since the inception of America, as much concept as actual thing, the poor have been despised by the rich. It is an adversarial relationship that has not relented from then to this moment.

This antagonism and the agony it engenders is not only our collective story but informs much of our behavior now. No matter who you are or how you're living in this country, it has saturated your life.

A lot of good things have happened in America, but many of them were attempts to neutralize or correct some incredibly awful things that eventually became so egregious that enough people stood up. Rarely has there been a spontaneous act of kindness. There were presidents like Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson who went hammer and tongs at change and tried to improve things. While they weathered a ton of harsh criticism that persists to this day, their accomplishments are monumental but rare.

Since I've been alive, the country has operated like a stick-shift car, driven by someone who has no idea how the parts work. There's been a lot of damage without a lot of movement. For many wealthy people, the poor are, for lack of a better term, a pain in the ass.

"Illegals" often are preferred in the workplace because they know they have no recourse and just take it. This harkens back to a time when, for a stark minority, America was truly great. Slavery and indentured servitude were perfect deals. These other Homo sapiens were considered subhuman. They took what they were given and did what they were told.

Imagine how angry early America's rich were when they lost the right to own a person. Look at what they did to preserve their way of life; see how tenaciously their ancestors cling to these values and seek to roll back progress.

Just think how pleased Paul Ryan would be if millions of Americans would finally do the jobs that Americans don't want to do, for the wage that the boss tells them they're going to get. Try to calculate the level of Mitch McConnell's joy when millions of Americans would, rather than have the audacity to demand affordable health care, just die off.

The plea for equality is a hoarse cry in a country that was birthed in and operates on inequality. There's enough money and resources to allow all American citizens access to health care, but it has simply never been a sustained priority. It's been fascinating listening to politicians and think tankers

assure interviewers that the health care plan that was recently given a toxic bill of health by the CBO is the smart and sustainable replacement to Obamacare. They're trying to open a lemonade stand that sells piss. Not a single one of the members in either house of Congress will ever have to taste it.

There is no existential threat to America that rivals what America inflicts upon itself. Centuries of this is one of the reasons Americans are such rugged individuals. I say this with no irony. I have been all over the world and have witnessed some rough scenes, but America is still one of the harshest places I have ever been to. For a large fraction of the American population, this country is a coast-to-coast school of hard knocks and sucker punches. It has always been this way, and that's one of the reasons why "Obamacare" was met with such opposition. The Affordable Care Act, like the president, threatened too many long-standing ways of the road.

The new bill, a version of which could very likely become law, will be back to business as usual. The "safety net" is more pretty talk than anything else. The real safety net is drugs, tobacco, alcohol, cheap food, free porn and other ways to cheaply distract oneself from the pain of contemporary general population lockdown. There's no safety in any of it, just something to get you through for a little while.

THE REAL SAFETY NET IS DRUGS, TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, CHEAP FOOD AND FREE PORN.

It would be so refreshing if the GOP would just own up to it. Sure, there would be a lot of angry people but there's a lot of angry people already. At least we could have it all on the table. If they could just say that the country's always been the land of opportunity but with some basic and inflexible rules attached. There will be many, regrettably, who will have an endlessly challenging life, rife with misery and frustration. They'll have justice like they'll have equality and access to health care based on their race and economic class. No one's trying to be "mean" or in any way untoward. It's not us, it's history's great momentum! The frustration you feel is part and parcel of America trying to become great again.

I'm not saying lie down and die. I'm saying that it will be a miracle if America ever becomes scientifically inclined and peaceful, with levels of violence and discrimination that are less than horrifying. We're the scariest species on the planet, but one of the hardest parts to wrap your head around is that the one country that constantly reminds all the others of its greatness, supremacy and awesome military power, which also professes to be the fairest and free-est, has some of the most unenviable statistics.

If America's the best country, you would think that all other countries would want to do the same thing, right? If all countries were like America, how many more years do you think the planet would be able to sustain life of any kind?

USA is not only No. 1; it's the only one.

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Music //
Picks //

fri

7/7

Roman Flügel, Octave One, Heidi Lawden

@ UNION NIGHTCLUB

Since the early 1990s, Roman Flügel has produced scores of bleepy house and acid techno tracks under a variety of aliases for an assortment of labels. Among Flügel's many avatars (Acid Test, Eight Miles High, Soylent Green, etc.), he is perhaps best known as one half of Alter Ego, the duo he formed in Darmstadt, Germany, with Jörn Elling Wuttke. Alter Ego established themselves with the dreamy 1996 double LP, *Decoding the Hacker Myth*, and later achieved some degree of fame, particularly in Europe, with their 2004 electro-house corker "Rocker." Flügel, who will DJ, shares the top billing with legendary Detroit techno twosome Octave One, who perform live. Rounding out the lineup is veteran L.A. DJ Heidi Lawden. —Matt Miner

Munyungo Jackson

@ WORLD STAGE

Los Angeles is a town chock-full of great drummers of all stripes, and among the most valuable of our hometown players is veteran *timbales* titan Darryl Munyungo Jackson, an amazingly versatile session man and touring player who has supplied supple, percussive magic for Miles Davis, Stevie Wonder, Herbie Hancock, Dianne Reeves, The Temptations, The Four Tops, The Supremes, Marcus Miller and other giants too numerous to mention. Jackson, who is the nephew of the legendary singer-pianist Nellie Lutcher, often backs local and visiting ethnic music and traditional dance troupes of Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, Haiti, Brazil and Cuba. When he gathers his own ripping bands together to shred on a panoply of funk, jazz, Latin and reggae sounds, it's a thing of beauty to behold. —John Payne

sat

7/8

Reggie Watts

@ THE GETTY

It's hard to describe what Reggie Watts does, because no one else does anything quite like it. Is it music, comedy, performance art? Yes. Watts mixes his comedic, instrumental, beatboxing and vocal skills to soulful and sometimes hilarious effect, weaving improvised songs with seemingly as little effort as a skilled guitar player rips a solo or a more conventional stand-up comedian riffs on current events. Those mostly familiar with him as James Corden's bandleader and sidekick on *The Late Late Show* have seen only hints of what he's capable of; fans of his stint on IFC's *Comedy Bang! Bang!* have a slightly better idea of the funky, surreal ride they're in for. With an opening DJ set by L.A. art-pop duo YACHT. —Andy Hermann



Stitched Up Heart:
See Sunday.

PHOTO BY KEVIN ESTRADA

Madame Gandhi, Veronica Bianqui

@ THE ECHO

"There is power in what you say/Own your voice, don't be afraid/The biggest threat is a girl with a book," Madame Gandhi and guest Merrill Garbus (Tune-Yards) declare in a soberly uplifting exchange of words over a pulsating electronic groove on "The Future Is Female," from Gandhi's 2016 EP *Voices*. It's best not to underestimate Kiran Gandhi. The L.A. singer has an MBA from Harvard, is a former drummer for M.I.A. and has steadfastly championed the rights of women, in both her music and her life, including being famously unrepentant two years ago after visibly menstruating during the London Marathon. Gandhi's provocative soundscapes and funky beats are a distinct contrast with the breezy pop chansons and winsome melodies of L.A. native Veronica Bianqui, who gives classic girl-group melodrama a lush and endearing new spin. —Falling James

Stitched Up Heart

@ WHISKY A GO GO

Formed in 2010, gothic L.A. metallers Stitched Up Heart boast more former members than current, with a sound that has morphed accordingly. Last year's debut full-length, *Never Alone*, finds the quintet trading most of their previously overt metalcore motifs for a more mainstream, anthemic sonic statement reminiscent of similarly female-fronted Hot Topic heroes Evanescence, Lacuna Coil and In This Moment. Risking club-level cred for a grab at arena adulation, SUH bolt massive hooks and marvelously bombastic drums to ominously downtuned riffs to summon an era-straddling metallic mongrel made singular by the multipersonality, ultra-dynamic vocals of striking founder (and sole constant) Alicia "Mixi" Demner. While *Never Alone* is certainly heavily produced, Stitched Up Heart retain sufficient charisma and chemistry to make a legit play for radio-staple status. —Paul Rogers

sun

7/9

mon

7/10

Blondie, Garbage, Sky Ferreira

@ HOLLYWOOD BOWL

Crooning her slyly intoxicating synth-pop tunes and gently contemplative ballads, Sky Ferreira is already a major pop presence, but she's merely the new kid on the block on this star-laden bill. The Venice-raised singer has a harder-rocking side on such tracks as "Red Lips," which will help Ferreira set the mood for Garbage, who were as coolly assured as ever when they played the Greek Theatre in 2015. Lead singer Shirley Manson transcended that night's technical difficulties with her usual sharp wit as she imbued a set of Garbage's early anthems with her own brand of oxymoronic grunge glamour. Blondie's Debbie Harry still swings sweetly, and when guitarist Chris Stein occasionally digs out solos on guitar, you can hear lipstick traces of the group's Velvet-y Manhattan roots. —Falling James

The Roots

@ HOUSE OF BLUES ANAHEIM

The Roots contain multitudes of contradictions in their ongoing role as hip-hop's most versatile live band. The Philadelphia stalwarts, who earned serious respect with such confrontational and thought-provoking albums as 2002's *Phrenology* and 2014's surreally morbid concept album ... *And Then You Shoot Your Cousin*, are better known as the house band on Jimmy Fallon's talk show. The fiercely defiant Roots would seem like the last band you'd choose to camp it up with the ever-fawning, painfully inoffensive comedian, but they are skilled enough to make the shtick work with considerable style and improvisational deftness. Nonetheless, it's far more thrilling to see The Roots onstage, where they will likely delve into their upcoming album, *End Game*, unfettered by the constraints of network television. —Falling James

tue 7/11

J. Cole
@ THE FORUM

Compared to such contemporaries as Kendrick Lamar, J. Cole has flown under the radar. Sure, he's received plenty of accolades for his work, especially for his recently released *4 Your Eyez Only*, but he remains as underrated as it's possible to be for someone who's had four consecutive No. 1 albums. On this album — his first with Interscope — Cole tells the story of a man who goes from selling crack to turning his life around, with a twist on the final track. The rapper/multi-instrumentalist continues to deliver a dazzling stage show and evolve creatively in a manner that will both please his current fans and convert new ones in the years to come. Also Wednesday, July 12. —Daniel Kohn

Madame Gandhi:
See Saturday.



PHOTO BY ANNA MARIA LOPEZ

include The Box Tops, fronted by founding members Gary Talley and Bill Cunningham ("Cry Like a Baby," "The Letter") and The Archies' Ron Dante ("Sugar, Sugar"). Expect to hear all of these era-defining hits and more, as the musicians spend the show performing as a rotating, amorphous collective. Also Saturday, July 15, at the Saban. —Jackson Truax

wed 7/12

XXL Freshmen
@ THE NOVO

Since 2007, the staff at *XXL* magazine have become the self-appointed gatekeepers of new rappers, validating up-and-comers for older hip-hop fans and people not yet in the know with their yearly list of "Freshman" artists. Throughout the list's decade of existence, the editors have pulled together disparate factions of the hip-hop world, but this year's "Freshman Class" seems to be the most disparate and controversial of all. It includes Oakland's G-Funk queen Kamaiyah, major-label cloud rapper Playboi Carti, kooky underground personality Ugly God, viral hitmaker Aminé and outlaw sensation XXXTentacion. How all of these different personalities and styles will mesh together in one show is anybody's guess, especially considering the violence following XXXTentacion's current tour around the country, but it'll certainly be interesting. Also including Kyle, Kap G, A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie, PnB Rock and Madeintyo. —Sam Ribakoff

War Tapes, L.A. Drones, Le Cos
@ EL CID

Post-punk/goth/darkwave night Death Gaze returns to El Cid with the first live show in five years by War Tapes, the self-described "heart-quaking doom pop" quartet who made a brief splash in 2009 with their debut album, *The Continental Divide*. The band have been teasing new music since last fall, so this may be a chance for fans of their Cure-meets-Bunynym mix of swooning pop, razorblade guitars and goth-rock atmosphere to hear some long-awaited new tunes. Masked electronic duo L.A. Drones back up their clever double-entendre name ("*ladrones*" means "thieves" in Spanish) with droning synth jams that sneak up on you with unexpected pop hooks, dance beats and an occasional burst of saxophone. Le Cos deliver modern-day murder ballads with a garage-rock/post-punk twist. With resident DJs Neil Popkin (of War Tapes), Ammo and Josh Castro. —Andy Hermann

The Jigsaw Seen
@ SILVERLAKE LOUNGE

Despite their name, The Jigsaw Seen are all too rarely seen, even in their L.A. hometown. The quartet are sometimes written off as a mere revival group because of their unabashed love for vintage garage rock and power pop — band members Jonathan Lea and Tom Currier were even part of a surprise Kinks reunion in 2015 — but they are actually a harder-hitting ensemble who can fit in seamlessly on bills with more modern-minded alt-rock combos Eels and The Afghan Whigs. If you're ashamed that you've missed out so far on these local legends, their new rarities compilation on Burger Records, *The Jigsaw Seen for the Discriminating Completist*, is a pretty good place to start, mixing jangling pop ("Celebrity Interview") and surging rockers ("The Best Is Yet to Come"). —Falling James

thu 7/13

Happy Together Tour
@ CANYON CLUB

The Turtles' founding members Howard Kaylan and Mark Volman are bringing their perennially smile-inducing Happy Together tour back to Southern California, playing their '60s pop group's biggest hits and channeling their days of performing as Flo & Eddie. Returning artists include The Association ("Along Comes Mary," "Windy"), The Cowbells ("Hair," "Indian Lake") and Chuck Negron of Three Dog Night ("Easy to Be Hard," "Joy to the World"). New additions to the bill

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AMOEBIA MUSIC: 6400 Sunset Blvd. Garbage book-signing, Mon., July 10, 6 p.m., TBA. DJ Mike Huckaby, Thu., July 13, 7 p.m., free.
BARDOT HOLLYWOOD: 1737 N. Vine St. Autumn in June, DWNTWN, Hollis Brown, Badalax, Mon., July 10, 8 p.m., free.
BOOTLEG THEATER: 2200 Beverly Blvd. Rad Horror, Lumini, Bad Feelings, Fri., July 7, 8:30 p.m., \$7. Jesse Redwing, Cigarette Barbies, Sat., July 8, 8:30 p.m., \$8. Lord Dying, Yidhra, Rtg, Ironaut, Sun., July 9, 8 p.m., \$15. Dustin Lovelis, Two Sheds, Rufrano, Mon., July 10, 8:30 p.m., free. Dogbreth, Nice Try, Harmony Tividad, Tue., July 11, 8:30 p.m., \$10. Raquel Rodriguez, Malia, Wed., July 12, 8:30 p.m., \$10. LSD & the Search for God, The Stevenson Ranch Davidians, Jesus Sons, Dream Phases, Creatures Choir, The Family of Light Band, The Asteroid No. 4, The Turns, Thu., July 13, 8:30 p.m., \$14.
CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF ABNORMAL ARTS (C.I.A.): 11334 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood. The Starr Cullars Crew, Jinkies, Lauren Lakis, Rockit Writer, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m., \$10.
CANYON CLUB: 28912 Roadside Dr., Agoura Hills. Sir Mix-a-Lot, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., \$24-\$38. Junior Brown, Sun., July 9, 9 p.m., \$24-\$34. The Turtles, The Cowsills, The Association, Chuck Negron, Ron Dante, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m., \$48-\$88 (see Music Pick).
CODY'S VIVA CANTINA: 900 Riverside Dr., Burbank. Jhey & the Whee, The Blood Moon Howlers, Kassandra Carroll, Dale LaDuke, Melissa Moshe Shackett & AM Radio Hits, Fri., July 7, 7:30 p.m., free. Catahoula, The Cody Bryant Experience, Sat., July 8, 7:30 p.m., free. Bluegrass Ghosts, The Shuffle Brothers, Sun., July 9, noon, free.
DIPIAZZA'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE: 5205 E. Pacific Coast Highway, Long Beach. No Small Children, Kelly Mantle, Shitting Glitter, Abby & the Myth, Doll Parts, Sat., July 8, 7:30 p.m., \$15.
THE ECHO: 1822 W. Sunset Blvd. Fartbarf, Honus Honus, The Manx, Facial, Fri., July 7, 8:30 p.m., \$12. Madame Gandhi, Veronica Bianqui, Le Ra, Fawns of Love, Sat., July 8, 5:30 p.m., \$10 (see Music Pick). Gethen Jenkins, Brian Whelan, Desure, Professor Colombo, Sun., July 9, 3 p.m., free-\$5. Bloody Death Skull, Part Time, Wyatt Blair, The Fuzzy Crystals, Mon., July 10, 8:30 p.m., free. RAC, Wed., July 12, 8:30 p.m., \$19.50. Sports, Yeek, LTENGHT, Thu., July 13, 8:30 p.m., \$12.
THE ECHOPLEX: 1154 Glendale Blvd. Dem Franchize Boyz, DJ Jeremy Burke, DJ Cam Tang, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., \$10 & \$15. Battlecat, Moniquea, XL Middleton, Brian Ellis' Reflection, The Funk Freaks Crew, Sat., July 8, 9 p.m., \$19.50. The Phantom Limbs, Egrets on Ergot, Future Shoxx, Sun., July 9, 10 p.m., \$15.
EL CID: 4212 W. Sunset Blvd. L.A. Qoolside, Ora the Molecule, Fantastic Voyage, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m. Part Time, Haunted Horses, L.A. Drones, Deth Crux, Sat., July 8, 8 p.m., \$8. War Tapes, L.A. Drones, Le Cos, Thu., July 13, 9 p.m., \$5 (see Music Pick).
4TH STREET VINE: 2142 E. Fourth St., Long Beach. Space Waves, Highland Eyeway, Bundy, Sat., July 8, 8 p.m.
HANDBAG FACTORY: 1336 S. Grand Ave. White Suns, Wreck & Reference, Lee Noble, Some Pepper, Lay/Haug, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., \$8. Telecasts, Clay Rendering, Carlos Giffoni, Sun., July 9, 9 p.m., \$7.
HARVARD YARD BAR: 1400 S. Western Ave. Irene Diaz, Nicolette Smith, Maria Blues, Sat., July 8, 8 p.m., \$10.
THE HI HAT: 5043 York Blvd., Highland Park. The Eagle Rock Gospel Singers, Black Crystal Wolf Kids, Jamie Drake, Jason Hawk Harris, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., \$10. HOTT MT, Goon, Draag, Alyeska, Wolf Woodcock, Sat., July 8, 8 p.m., free. Winter, Franky Flowers, Golden Daze, Mon., July 10, 8 p.m., \$10. Rajas, All Souls, Big Pig, Wed., July 12, 8 p.m., \$10.
HM157: 3110 N. Broadway, L.A. The Jack Curtis Dubowsky Ensemble, performing a live score to *The Mark of Zorro*, Thu., July 13, 9 p.m., \$10.
THE HOTEL CAFE: 1623 1/2 N. Cahuenga Blvd. Zachariah Kaler, Trace Bundy, Mike Dawes, Fri., July 7, 7 p.m. Gene Evaro Jr., Sara Niemietz, Sat., July 8, 8 p.m. Moonrise Nation, Wed., July 12, 9 p.m.
HOUSE OF BLUES ANAHEIM: 1530 S. Disneyland Dr.,

Anaheim. Rozes, Sat., July 8, 7 p.m., \$12. The Roots, Mon., July 10, 7 p.m., \$55 (see Music Pick).

LA CITA: 336 S. Hill St. Mike Dobler, Pulsating Cyst, Loop Goat, Tue., July 11, 8 p.m., free.

LOS GLOBOS: 3040 W. Sunset Blvd. Los Malditos, Fri., July 7, 8:30 p.m. B. Ferg, Blurry Boys, Gcutty, King Rod, Sun., July 9, 7 p.m. The Love-Inns, Material Boys, Flying, Wed., July 12, 8 p.m. Trulio Disgracias, Downtown Brown, Year of the Dragon, Law, The Familyhood Nextperience, Project Liq&Lo, Deacon Strange, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m.; Moon Bounce, Thu., July 13, 8:30 p.m., TBA.

MCCABE'S GUITAR SHOP: 3101 Pico Blvd. Paula Cole, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., \$25. Peter Case, Sat., July 8, 8 p.m., \$25. NRBQ, Sun., July 9, 8 p.m., \$30.

THE MINT: 6010 W. Pico Blvd. Ouiwey Collins & the Funk Squad, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., TBA. Zookeeper's Palace, Mal, The Lovedrunk, Silver Maps, Seven Day Sleep, Sat., July 8, 8:30 p.m., \$12. A Horse a Spoon a Bucket, Tight Rope Sky, Dingo Down, Kylaiddo, Sun., July 9, 6:45 p.m., \$6. Headwaves, Mon., July 10, 7 p.m., free. Braiden Sunshine, Matt McAndrew, Dylan Brekke, Room 4, Tue., July 11, 7:30 p.m., \$15. The Velvetens, Juliet Strong, Safety Pins, Nebulamigo, Big Slumber, Wed., July 12, 7:30 p.m., \$10. Drama, Thu., July 13, 9 p.m., \$15.

94TH AERO SQUADRON: 16320 Raymer Ave., Van Nuys. Rosie Flores, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., \$15.

OHM NIGHTCLUB: 6801 Hollywood Blvd. Migos, 2 Chainz, Sun., July 9, 10 p.m., TBA.

THE REDWOOD BAR & GRILL: 316 W. Second St. Bad Idols, Dangerously Sleazy, Barrage, Tyler Durden, Beatrix Kiddo, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., \$15. The Cry, Paper Hearts, Dross, Infinite Signal, Sat., July 8, 9 p.m., \$10.

RESIDENT: 428 S. Hewitt St. Rozes, Carrie Lane, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., \$12. Mutoid Man, Helms Alee, MGR, Mon., July 10, 8:30 p.m., \$13. Sidebrain, Matilda Eyre, Rokem, Josh Spoon, Amp Live, Portrait XO, Tue., July 11, 8 p.m., free.

THE ROSE: 245 E. Green St., Pasadena. Junior Brown, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., \$24-\$34. Dwight Yoakam, Sat., July 8, 9 p.m., \$68-\$110.

THE ROXY: 9009 W. Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood. DragonForce, Once Human, Sat., July 8, 8:30 p.m. Steel Panther, Tue., July 11, 9 p.m., \$26. Luca Lush, Thu., July 13, 9 p.m., \$15.

RUSTY'S SURF RANCH: 256 Santa Monica Pier. The Jenerators, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m. Lumbercat, Sat., July 8, 10 p.m., free. Sol Rising, Thu., July 13, 10 p.m.

THE SATELLITE: 1717 Silver Lake Blvd. Sure Sure, Street Joy, Emerson Star, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., \$10. AOE, I Us & We, Wake the Wild, Mon., July 10, 9 p.m., free. All Things Blue, Barrie Rose, Bel Haven, Tue., July 11, 9 p.m., \$8. The Crazy Brave, Wed., July 12, 9 p.m., free. Psychic Love, Yeses, Thu., July 13, 9 p.m., free.

SILVERLAKE LOUNGE: 2906 Sunset Blvd. Ashes & Roots, Old Man's Money, Arthur Watership, Jane & the Jungle, The Hate Club, Fri., July 7, 7 p.m., \$15. Aydra Jenson, Juliet Annerino, Sat., July 8, 5 p.m. Audra Isadora, Sun., July 9, 5 p.m., free. Early Dolphin, Highland Eyeway, Dream Vacation, About the Noise, Mon., July 10, 8 p.m., \$10. Julian B, Chorice Mu, Tue., July 11, 8 p.m., \$10. Dante, The Gutter Daisies, Wed., July 12, 8 p.m., \$10. The Jigsaw Seen, Spidey, Bebopalula, The Forty Nineteens, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m., \$10 (see Music Pick).

THE SMELL: 247 S. Main St. Kicked Off the Streets, The High Curbs, Sweet Pill, The OK Shack, Ariel View, EMP, Fri., July 7, 7 p.m., \$5. Karen & Kill Evans, Abe, Dark Pulse, Sat., July 8, 9 p.m., \$5. Spirit Mother, Kevin Nichols, Ecstatic Union, Thu., July 13, 9 p.m., \$5.

THE TERAGRAM BALLROOM: 1234 W. Seventh St. Black Line, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., \$16. Joseph Arthur, Tue., July 11, 8 p.m., \$20.

THE TROUBADOUR: 9081 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood. Melvins, Spotlights, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., \$25. King Washington, Faulkner, Wilding, Hamster, Sat., July 8, 7:30 p.m., \$18. Jaymes Young, Matt Maeson, Tue., July 11, 7 p.m., \$15. Fame 35th Anniversary Reunion Concert, with Debbie Allen, Jesse Borrego, Lee Curreri, Cynthia Gibb, Erica Gimpel, Billy Hufsey, Carlo Imperato, Valerie Landsburg, PR Paul, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m., \$55-\$250.

UNION NIGHTCLUB: 4067 W. Pico Blvd. Mafia Rusa, The Delerians, ONK, The Meddlers, Los Cadejos, Los Alkiados, Uno Mas, Levin, Sun., July 9, 5 p.m., \$10. Substantial, Marcus D, Bop Alloy, Greenspan, Wed., July 12, 8 p.m., \$15. Moon Bounce, Omnibol, Ricky Rebel, Viva Cortez, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m., \$15.

THE VIPER ROOM: 8852 W. Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood. Adrenaline Mob, Fri., July 7, 7:30 p.m. Guitar Wolf, Isaac Rother & the Phantoms, Sly-Fi,

THE VIPER ROOM

<p>THURSDAY JULY 6</p> <p>ELECTRIC</p> <p>AEGES NEVERFADE MAD IN THE HAT</p>	<p>FRIDAY JULY 7</p> <p>Adrenaline Mob</p> <p>THE WILD! DAVANG SYN</p>
<p>SATURDAY JULY 8</p> <p>GUITAR WOLF</p> <p>ISAAC ROTHER & THE PHANTOMS SLY-FI EVOL WALKS</p>	<p>SUNDAY JULY 9</p> <p>BEST EX</p> <p>PROMISE OF REDEMPTION DAISYHEAD KOZIE</p>
<p>TUESDAY JULY 11</p> <p>DADA</p> <p>HAWKEYE AUSTIN SHAW THORCRAFT COBRA</p>	<p>WEDNESDAY JULY 12</p> <p>RIOT CHILD</p> <p>I DONT KNOW HOW BUT THEY FOUND ME IVY WOOD & MORE</p>

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TWILIGHT CONCERTS



FREE THURS
JUN 22 - AUG 17

(Skipping Jul 6)

Electric Mantis, Jon Mon, Fri., July 7, 9:30 p.m. Ben Gold, Mark Sherry, Barakuda, Sat., July 8, 10 p.m. TigerHeat, Thursdays, 10 p.m.

CREATE NIGHTCLUB: 6021 Hollywood Blvd. Sandro Silva, Fri., July 7, 10 p.m.; Noize Fridays, Fridays, 10 p.m. Arcade Saturdays, Saturdays, 10 p.m.; Max Vangeli, Felix Cartal, Sat., July 8, 10 p.m.

THE ECHOPEX: 1154 Glendale Blvd. Emo Nite, Tue., July 11, 8:30 p.m., \$10. Dub Club, a night of reggae with DJs Tom Chasteen, Roy Corderoy, The Dungeonmaster, Boss Harmony, Wednesdays, 9 p.m., \$7.

EXCHANGE L.A.: 618 S. Spring St. Standerwick, Alex M.O.R.P.H., Jonathan Mendelsohn, Haliene, Protoculture, Alex Di Stefano, Fri., July 7, 10 p.m.; Desert Hearts, Sat., July 8, 10 p.m.

41 OCEAN: 1541 Ocean Ave., Santa Monica. Twilight Concert After-Party, Thu., July 13, 6 p.m., free.

GRAND STAR JAZZ CLUB: 943 N. Broadway. Club Underground, with DJs Larry G & Diana Meehan spinning Britpop, post-punk and new wave, ages 21 & over, Fridays, 9 p.m., \$8. Barrio Funky, second Saturday of every month, 9 p.m., \$5-\$10.

THE LINCOLN: 2536 Lincoln Blvd, Venice. For the Record, a vinyl night with rock DJs Bruce Duff & Kasey Bombers, Tuesdays, 9 p.m.-1 a.m., free.

THE LINE HOTEL: 3515 Wilshire Blvd. Stones Throw by the Pool, with RSVP, Saturdays, 1-6 p.m. Thru Aug. 26.

LOS GLOBOS: 3040 W. Sunset Blvd. Club '90s, Fridays, 10 p.m. DJ Corey Craig, Sat., July 8, 9 p.m.; Bootie L.A., Saturdays, 9 p.m. Pogo Pope, Rosie Bojangles, Paper Slang, Dark Pulse, Tue., July 11, 9 p.m. Hallyu Nights, Thu., July 13, 9 p.m.

THE MONTY: 1222 W. Seventh St. Velvet Tinmine, with glam-rock and bubblegum-pop DJs Noah Wallace & Don Bolles, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., free.

THE REGENT THEATER: 448 S. Main St. Scam & Jam, with Karinas, Que Madre, DJ Rawn, Sat., July 8, 10 p.m., \$15.

THE SATELLITE: 1717 Silver Lake Blvd. Dance Yourself Clean, Saturdays, 9 p.m., free-\$5.

SEVENTY7 NORTH: 12514 Ventura Blvd., Studio City. DJ Annalog, Thursdays, 10 p.m. Thru Aug. 3, free.

SOUND NIGHTCLUB: 1642 N. Las Palmas Ave. Cut Snake, Weiss, Tadman Bros., Fri., July 7, 10 p.m. Croatia Squad, Sat., July 8, 10 p.m.

UNION NIGHTCLUB: 4067 W. Pico Blvd. Sam Binga, Fracture, Loefah, Joe Nice, Gabriel Habit, Wraith, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m.; Roman Flugel, Octave One, Heidi Lawden, Fri., July 7, 10 p.m., \$25 (see Music Pick).

—Falling James

For more listings, please go to laweekly.com.

CONCERTS

FRIDAY, JULY 7

ALL TIME LOW: 7 p.m. The Novo, 800 W. Olympic Blvd.

AZIZI GIBSON: 8 p.m., \$10. The Observatory.

BEE GEES GOLD: 10 p.m., \$24.50. Saban Theatre, 8440 W. Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills.

GO BLONDIE, GARBAGE: With John Doe & Exene Cervenka, 6:30 p.m., \$39.50-\$79.50. Santa Barbara Bowl, 1122 N. Milpas St., Santa Barbara.

GRANT GEISSMAN: 6 p.m. LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd.

THE HILLBENDERS: 8 p.m., free. Levitt Pavilion Pasadena, 85 E. Holly St., Pasadena.

MANILLA KILLA, ROBOTAKI: 9 p.m. El Rey Theatre, 5515 Wilshire Blvd.

GO SEAN ROWE, ANNIE HARDY: 8:30 p.m., \$23. The Pico Union Project, 1153 Valencia St.

SIN BANDERA: 8:30 p.m., \$65-\$250. Dolby Theatre, 6801 Hollywood Blvd.

WESTERN STANDARD TIME: 7:30 p.m., free. Levitt Pavilion at MacArthur Park, 2230 W. Sixth St.

SATURDAY, JULY 8

DUNCAN DHU: 8 p.m. The Novo by Microsoft.

FRANCES LIVINGS' IPANEMA LOUNGE: 5 p.m., free. LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd.

LONG BEACH VEGAN FESTIVAL: With The Flusters, The Soft White Sixties, Rosie Flores, Grey, Bearcoon, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., \$17-\$45. Rainbow Lagoon Park, 400 E. Shoreline Village Dr., Long Beach.

MARGARITA LA DIOSA DE LA CUMBIA: 7 p.m., \$35-\$85. The Wiltern, 3790 Wilshire Blvd.

ORQUESTA CHARANGO: 2-5 p.m., free. Fisherman's Village, 13755 Fiji Way, Marina del Rey.

OUR LIFE FESTIVAL: With Casey Veggies, Shwayze, Nina Sky, Hirie, DJ Paper, Loveghost, Ameet Kanon, 4 p.m., \$20-\$60. The Autry, 4700 Western Heritage Way.

RAHIM ALHAJ: With Asher Shasho Levy, 8 p.m., free.

Sat., July 8, 8 p.m. Best Ex, Daisyhead, Promise of Redemption, Kozie, Sun., July 9, 8 p.m., \$15. Thorcraft Cobra, Dada, Tue., July 11, 7:30 p.m. Riot Child, Wed., July 12, 8 p.m. Haunted Garage, Void Vator, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m.

WHISKY A GO-GO: 8901 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood. Metalachi, Sat., July 8, 7 p.m., TBA. Stitched Up Heart, Hell or High Water, Sun., July 9, 7 p.m., \$15 (see Music Pick). Skumlove, Mon., July 10, 8 p.m., TBA. Get Scared, Famous Last Words, World War Me, Wed., July 12, 7 p.m., TBA. Sound Barrier, Thu., July 13, 7 p.m., TBA.

ZEBULON: 2478 Fletcher Dr. Drew McDowall, Hiro Kone, JH1.FS3, Encapsulate, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., \$12. Dynasty Handbag, Nao Bustamante, Brontez Purnell, Jerry Jergons, Sun., July 9, 7:30 p.m., \$12. (See GoLA.) Sextile, Flat Worms, Crush, Glaare, DJ Silent Servant, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m., \$12.

—Falling James

JAZZ & BLUES

ALVAS SHOWROOM: 1417 W. Eighth St., San Pedro. The Sabine Trio, Sun., July 9, 4 p.m., \$20.

AU LAC: 710 W. First St., L.A. Ted Falcon, Sat., July 8.

THE BAKED POTATO: 3787 Cahuenga Blvd. W., Studio City. Ohm, Fri., July 7, 9:30 p.m., \$20. Michael Thompson, Sat., July 8, 9:30 p.m., \$25. Go Shlomo, Sun., July 9, 9:30 p.m., \$15. Altered, Tue., July 11.

BLUE WHALE: 123 Astronaut E.S. Onizuka St. Vardan Ovsepian, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., \$15. Josh Johnson, Sat., July 8, 9 p.m., \$15. Mast, Sun., July 9, 9 p.m., \$10. Shai Maestro, Mon., July 10, 9 p.m., \$20. Ethan Sherman, Tue., July 11, 9 p.m., \$10. Fabiano Nascimento, Wed., July 12, 9 p.m., TBA. Antellog, with Rachel Eckroth, Thu., July 13, 9 p.m., \$10.

CATALINA BAR & GRILL: 6725 W. Sunset Blvd. The George Kahn Trio, Sun., July 9, 7:30 p.m., TBA. Max Haymer, Wed., July 12, 8:30 p.m., TBA. Nellie McKay, Thu., July 13, 8:30 p.m., TBA.

CLIFTON'S REPUBLIC: 648 S. Broadway Ave. The Dave Cavalier Trio, Thu., July 13, 9:30 p.m., free.

DESERT ROSE: 1700 Hillhurst Ave. The Mark Z. Stevens Trio, Saturdays, 7-11 p.m., free.

VIBRATO GRILL & JAZZ: 2930 Beverly Glen Circle, Bel-Air. Scott Martin's Latin Soul Band, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., free. The Alex Snyder Quartet, Hussain Jiffry, Sat., July 8, 6:30 p.m. Freddie Ravel, Sun., July 9, 8 p.m., \$20. Ali Blake, Tue., July 11, 8 p.m. The Mudbug Brass Band, Wed., July 12, 8 p.m., \$20. The Reverend Shawn Amos, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m., \$20.

VITELLO'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT: 4349 Tujunga Ave., Studio City. Nutty, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., \$20. Charlie Romo, Tue., July 11, 8 p.m., \$20. TeKa, Wed., July 12, 8 p.m. The Ruth Roberts Variety Show, Thu., July 13.

THE WORLD STAGE: 4321 Degnan Blvd. Munyungo Jackson, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., \$20 (see Music Pick). Joshua White, Sat., July 8, 9 p.m., \$20.

—Falling James

COUNTRY & FOLK

BOULEVARD MUSIC: 4316 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City. The Folk Collection, Sat., July 8, 7 p.m., \$17.50.

THE CINEMA BAR: 3967 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City. Scott Camera, Yeah Buddy, House of Rabbits, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., free. Del Guido, Sat., July 8, 9:30 p.m., free. The Great Escape, Sun., July 9, 9:30 p.m., free. Sergio & Tam, Tue., July 11, 9:30 p.m., free.

THE COFFEE GALLERY BACKSTAGE: 2029 N. Lake Ave., Altadena. The Jangle Brothers, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m., \$20. Andy Corwin, The Honey-Lulus, Sat., July 8, 7 p.m., \$15. Biffie & Shooster, Sun., July 9, 7 p.m., \$20. The John Jorgenson Bluegrass Band, Wed., July 12, 5 & 8 p.m., \$30.

E.B.'S BEER & WINE BAR, FARMERS MARKET: 6333 W. Third St. Terry Okey's Cactus Jam, Shand Walton, Sat., July 8, 7 p.m., free.

JOE'S GREAT AMERICAN BAR & GRILL: 4311 W. Magnolia Blvd., Burbank. Lee Harper, Fri., July 7, 9 p.m., free. Strut, Sat., July 8, 9 p.m., free. The Deep Cuts, Sun., July 9, 8 p.m., free. Bob Parins' Pint-Sized Cocktail Orchestra, Mon., July 10, 9 p.m., free.

—Falling James

DANCE CLUBS

ALEX'S BAR: 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. Roots, Rocksteady, Rebellion, Sat., July 8, 2-8 p.m., free; The Get Low, with DJs Yon Bon Yovi & B-Spin, Sat., July 8, 9 p.m., free.

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TERAGRAM BALLROOM

- 7/6: **BoomBox**
Ricardo Torres
- 7/7: **Black Line**
Surachai, Ssleeperhold, Bana Haffar
- 7/11: **Joseph Arthur**
Ray Goren
- 7/14: **Lone Hearts Ball feat Pity Party, The Read Pears**
Jurassic Shark, The Beach Bums
- 7/15: **Wicked Rap Party Vol. 1: Notorious B.I.G**
- 7/21: **Javiera Mena**
- 7/29: **Rooney**
Run River North
- 8/3: **Chastity Belt**
- 8/4: **Cosmonauts**
- 8/5: **3TEETH**
- 8/10: **SOLD OUT! Maggie Rogers**
- 8/11: **Jonny Lang**
- 8/12: **Nite Jewel**
- 8/14: **Omulu, Choppa Dunks**
- 8/16: **Neon Indian**
- 8/18: **Brazilian Girls**
- 8/19: **Jake Davis, Emily C. Browning, Elise Trouw**
- 8/24: **Tobacco**
- 8/28: **Mark Lanegan Band**
- 8/29: **San Cisco**
- 8/30: **Filthy Friends**
- 9/1: **Hunny**
- 9/2: **Watch What Crappens**
- 9/8: **D.D Dumbo**
- 9/9: **Quicksand**
- 9/12: **Ian Hunter & The Rant Band**
- 9/13: **Cigarettes After Sex**

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California Plaza, 350 S. Grand Ave.
GO REGGIE WATTS: With Yacht (DJ set), 6 p.m., free. The Getty Center, 1200 Getty Center Dr. See Music Pick.

GO THE REGRETTES: With Fringe, in the Constellation Room, 7:30 p.m., \$10. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

GO STEEL PULSE: With The Waitlers, Fortunate Youth, 5:30 p.m. Pacific Amphitheatre, 100 Fair Dr.

THE SUFFERERS: 7:30 p.m., free. Levitt Pavilion at MacArthur Park, 2230 W. Sixth St.

GO TIKI NIGHT: With King Kukulele & the Friki Tikis, The Polynesian Paradise Dancers, followed by a screening of *Rapa Nui*, 5 p.m., \$15. Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd. See GoLA.

SUNDAY, JULY 9

GO BLONDIE, GARBAGE, SKY FERREIRA: 7 p.m. Hollywood Bowl, 2301 Highland Ave. See Music Pick.

DEAN TORRENCE: 8 p.m., free. Levitt Pavilion Pasadena, 85 E. Holly St., Pasadena.

GO J. COLE: 8 p.m., \$29.50-\$125.50. Honda Center, 2695 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim. See Music Pick.

GO JURASSIC SHARK: With Prettiest Eyes, French Vanilla, Pure Muscle, 9 p.m., \$8. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

LOGIC: With Joey Badass, Big Lenbo, 8 p.m., \$29.50-\$69.50. The Greek Theatre, 2700 N. Vermont Ave.

GO STEEL PULSE: With Common Kings, The Simpkin Project, 5:30 p.m. Pacific Amphitheatre, 100 Fair Dr.

MONDAY, JULY 10

JAYMES YOUNG: With Matt Maeson, 8 p.m., \$15. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

LOGIC: With Joey Badass, Big Lenbo, 8 p.m., \$29.50-\$69.50. The Greek Theatre, 2700 N. Vermont Ave.

TUESDAY, JULY 11

GO J. COLE: With Bas, J.I.D., Ari Lennox, 8 p.m., \$29.50-\$125.50. The Forum, 3900 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood. See Music Pick.

MUTOID MAN: With Helms Alee, Painted Wives, 9 p.m.,

\$17. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 12

GO J. COLE: With Bas, J.I.D., Ari Lennox, 8 p.m., \$29.50-\$125.50. The Forum. See Music Pick.

P.O.D.: With Alien Ant Farm, Powerflo, 8 p.m., \$26. The Regent Theater, 448 S. Main St.

RADIO REBELS: 12:30 p.m., free. Pershing Square.

RUSS: 9 p.m. Shrine Auditorium & Expo Hall.

SHAWN MENDES: With Charlie Puth, 7:30 p.m., \$47.50-\$67.50. Staples Center, 1111 S. Figueroa St.

GO XXL FRESHMEN: With Playboi Carti, XXXTentacion, Kyle, Madeintyo, Ugly God, Amine, A Boogie Wit da Hoodie, Kamaiyah, PNB Rock, Kap G, 8 p.m., \$29.50-\$34.50. The Novo by Microsoft, 800 W. Olympic Blvd. See Music Pick.

THURSDAY, JULY 13

ANDRE THIERRY & ZYDECO MAGIC: 7 p.m., free & \$10. Culver City City Hall Courtyard, 9770 Culver Blvd.

DASHBOARD CONFSSIONAL: 7:15 p.m. Pacific Amphitheatre, 100 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa.

LA RESISTENCIA: With The Paranoias, Ghetto on Phyre, 7:30 p.m., free. Levitt Pavilion at MacArthur Park.

GO MARCIA GRIFFITHS: With Jah9, 7 p.m., free.

GO RICARDO LEMVO & MAKINA LOCA: 6:30 p.m., free. The Atrium, 4700 Western Heritage Way.

RHYTHM CHILD: 7 p.m., free. Levitt Pavilion Pasadena.

GO RISE AGAINST: With Of Mice & Men, 7:30 p.m., \$30. Shrine Auditorium & Expo Hall, 665 W. Jefferson Blvd.

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GO APERTURE DUO, AUTODUPLICITY: As part of DuoFest, the two duos work out pieces by Christian Wolff, Kaija Saariaho, Kurt Isaacson, Catherine Lamb, Andrew Tholl and others, and soprano Justine Aronson and baritone Scott Graff pool their voices for the world premiere of Jason Barabba's micro-opera *Any Excuse Will Serve a Tyrant*, Tue., July 11, 8 p.m., \$30. Boston Court, 70 N. Mentor Ave., Pasadena.



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CALIFORNIA PHILHARMONIC: Vocalists Kevin Earley and Annalise Staudt and organist Philip Smith gather for an afternoon of music by Rodgers & Hammerstein, Sun., July 9, 2 p.m., \$30-\$112. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave.

GO DUOFEST: The weeklong festival begins with the world premiere of Heidi Duckler Dance Theatre's *Beauty & the Beast*, or *The Enormous Wound*, which centers on dancer Teresa Barcelo and features new music by Joe Berry, Sat., July 8, 8 p.m.; Fri., July 14, 8 p.m., \$30. Boston Court, 70 N. Mentor Ave.

ESCOLANIA DE MONTSERRAT: The longtime Spanish choir arrives for its first SoCal appearance, Sat., July 8, 7 p.m., free. Pasadena Presbyterian Church, 585 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena.

GO L.A. PHILHARMONIC: Justin Freer conducts John Williams' score to *Harry Potter & the Chamber of Secrets*, Fri., July 7, 8 p.m.; Sat., July 8, 8 p.m., \$29-\$147. Gustavo Dudamel whips up selections from Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake*, Adolphe Adams' *Giselle* Suite, and Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet* Suite, while ballet stars Misty Copeland, Marcelo Gomes, Natalia Osipova and Sergei Polunin flit across the Bowl's expansive stage, Tue., July 11, 8 p.m., \$1-\$154 (see GoLA). Beloved former Dodgers announcer Vin Scully re-emerges from retirement to narrate Aaron Copland's *Lincoln Portrait*, which conductor Gustavo Dudamel bookends with Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* and Beethoven's magnificent and epic Ninth Symphony. Vocalists include so-

prano Amanda Majeski, mezzo-soprano J'Nai Bridges and tenor Issachah Savage, and Grant Gershon directs L.A. Master Choral, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m.; Tue., July 18, 8 p.m., \$1-\$154. Hollywood Bowl.

GO L.A. TAROT: Panic Duo proffers the world premiere of a new work by Juhí Bansal, and the program also includes excerpts from Veronika Krausas' *Hopscotch Tarot*. Meanwhile, vocalist Justine Aronson and pianist Richard Valitutto confer over composer Nicholas Deyoe's adaptation of words by Rilke, as part of DuoFest, Thu., July 13, 8 p.m., \$30. Boston Court, 70 N. Mentor Ave., Pasadena.

GO THE RAY-KALLAY PIANO DUO: Pianists Vicki Ray and Aron Kallay knead together new pieces for microtonal piano by Dylan Mattingly, Rand Steiger and Daniel Corral, as part of the weeklong DuoFest, Sun., July 9, 8 p.m., \$30. Boston Court, 70 N. Mentor Ave.

RED HEN PRESS: AN EVENING OF POETRY & PERFORMANCE: Composer Michael Roth's *Imagination Dead Imagine* is performed by a string quartet TBA alongside readings by spoken-word-smiths Brendan Constantine and T'ai Freedom Ford, Sun., July 9, 4 p.m. Edey Second Space, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica.

TRIO CÉLESTE: Violinist Iryna Krechovskiy, cellist Ross Gasworth and pianist Kevin Kwan Loucks perform a program TBA, Sun., July 9, 6 p.m., free. LACMA, Bing Theater, 5905 Wilshire Blvd.

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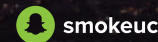


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FICTITIOUS BUSINESS STATEMENT
2017167072
The following person is doing business as Resource Tax Services, 27240 Turnberry Lane, #200 Valencia, CA 91355 LA COUNTY. This business is conducted by an individual. Registered Owner: Leo Salazar. The date registrant started to transact business under the fictitious business name above: 06/2017. Signed: Estrellita Polcarpio. NOTICE- THIS FICTITIOUS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE. The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code.) This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on: June 28 2017. Publish: 07/06/17, 07/13/17, 07/20/17, 07/27/17
LA Weekly

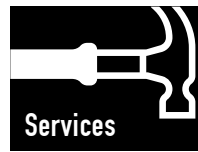
660
Public Notices

Order To Show Cause for Name Change Case #ES021661
Superior Court of California, County of LASC-North Central District Burbank Court-house 300 East Olive Avenue, Burbank, CA 91502 Filed on 06/16/17 in the matter of petitioner: **Zachary Curtis Wallace**, it is hereby ordered persons interested in the above-entitled matter of change of name appear before the above-entitled court as follows to show cause why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Court Date: 07/28/2017 Located at LASC-North Central District Burbank Court-house 300 East Olive Avenue, Burbank, CA 91502. And a petition for change of name having been duly filed with the clerk of this Court, and it appearing from said petition that said petitioner desires to have his name changed from: **Zachary Curtis Wallace to Zachary Curtis Scharlepp**. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered that all persons interested in said matter of change of name appear as indicated herein above then and there to show cause why the petition for change of name should not be granted. It is further ordered that a copy of this order be published in a newspaper of general circulation for the County of Los Angeles, once a week for four (4) successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing of said petition. Set to publish 06/29/07, 07/06/17, 07/13/17, and 07/20/17. Dated: June 27th, 2017



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Acupuncturist: Treat patients by inserting needles and using acupressure. Formulate, prepare and dispense herbal formulas. MS in Oriental Medicine req'd. Send resume to Are-A Acupuncture, Inc, 400 S. Western Ave. #203, L.A., CA 90020.

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Financial Manager (Hawthorne, CA) Plan, direct, coordinate accounting, investing, banking, & other financial activities of company; Prepare operational or risk reports for management analysis; Evaluate data pertaining to costs to plan budgets. 40hrs/wk Master's degree in Business Administration or related req'd. Resume to Intelli Transport Services Inc ATTN: PARK, Taewon, 12618 Yukon Ave, Hawthorne CA 90250

Graphic Designer: Apply by mail only to Section Studios, Inc., 207 S. Broadway, 3rd Fl., Los Angeles, CA 90012, attn. COO.

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Market Research Analyst: f/t; Conduct market research; Bachelor's Deg. in Economics or Related; Resume: NKOK GLOBAL, INC. @ 3580 Wilshire Blvd., Ste 1412, L.A., CA 90010

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Involved in implementation of back end server & client features, multiplayer game modes, online community features, & more. Req. Bach. in Comp. Science or rel. field or foreign equiv. & 5 yrs exp in job or 5 yrs exp as Programmer &/or Software Dev. or rel. occup. Any suitable combo of educ, training &/or exp is acceptable. Jobsite: Santa Monica, CA. Send resume ref#16207: K. Jones, Activision Publishing Inc, 3100 Ocean Park Blvd, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

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