From vintage collectors and mixology fans to surf, rockabilly and punk music scenesters, the escapist vibes of the tiki scene still have a strong hold on Los Angeles. And at Tiki Oasis in San Diego, everyone comes out to play.

IT’S TIKI TIME!

By Lina LeCaro
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GO LA...7
Get a taste of ancient wines, listen to an incomplete masterpiece, see what treasures artists have created out of salvaged and reclaimed materials, and more to do and see in L.A. this week.

EAT & DRINK...15
SoCal is the destination for tiki, here are the 12 creations found in or near L.A. to imbibe for the ideal tropical experience.

ARTS...17
Famed photographer Gordon Parks’ controversial 1961 photo essay is given new life at the Getty Center.

FILM...18
Quentin Tarantino’s latest, Once Upon a

LA WEEKLY
CONTENTS

Time in Hollywood, succeeds in transporting audiences back to 1969, even if the plot is thin at times. BY LINA LECARO.

TELEVISION...19
Comic-Con 2019 gave the public a glimpse into the TV’s brave, new women-powered landscape. BY MICHAEL COOPER.

MUSIC...21
Four decades after Cherie Currie and Brie Darling revolutionized rock & roll, they’re teaming up for a new album. BY BRETT CALLWOOD.

ADVERTISING CLASSIFIED...26
EMPLOYMENT...26-27
REAL ESTATE...27
BULLETIN BOARD...27

ON THE COVER:
Danielle Mann — Photo by Vixen Photography
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Accompanying the Norton Simon’s current exhibition “The Sweetness of Life: Three 18th-Century French Paintings from The Frick Collection” (on view through September 9), film critic Peter Rainer put together a series of movies by French women directors, whose movies themselves have focused on aspects of the female experience. The films conclude with tonight’s presentation of avant-garde classic, Agnès Varda’s Vagabond (1985), which like the others in the series will be introduced with remarks from Rainer. Vagabond offers a flashback narrative structure, telling the episodic story of the protagonist’s increasingly dangerous and unhallowed existence which begins with a poetic, subversive for freedom and traded into the Latinx community. The sixth annual Cinearte: A Latinx Queer Film & Art Festival, an event and nonprofit run by the Los Angeles LGBT Center, returns for more screenings of feature films, documentaries and shorts, both in English and Spanish. Friday kicks off with live music by LillyFlor y Los Compas and DJ Sizzle, in addition to a reception for “Liberacion: From Volcanoes to Hope,” an exhibit of paintings, photographs and mixed media by 12 Salvadoran artists (running through September 21 in the center’s gallery). And Saturday continues with more than a dozen shorts organized into two sections, “Revolutionizing Familiy” and “Reflections,” and feature films, including Werk of Art, a documentary about the L.A. drag scene, as well as workshops and discussions with the movies’ cast and crew. Los Angeles LGBT Center, The Village at Ed Gould Plaza, 1125 N. McCadden Place, Hollywood; Fri., Aug. 2, 7-10 p.m. & Sat., Aug. 3, 1-8:30 p.m.; $10, $8 seniors and students. (323) 993-7400, cineartela.org. —SIRAN BABAYAN

Wine Time Capsule

During the salon Bacchus Uncorked: Villas and Vineyards, you’ll learn how wealthy and well-heeled ancient Romans figured out that the volcanic soil around Mt. Vesuvius made for some pretty badass wines — and oenophilic archaeologist Steven Tuck will clue you in on all the grim horrors and hot lava that went into making those tasty tipples. Roman villas were a subculture unto themselves, seamlessly meshing architecture, design and wine to create a seemingly endless fount of aesthetics and inebriation. You’ll also sample an illuminating selection of those selfsame wines — just so you can see how the other half lived. And died! The Getty Villa, 17985 Pacific Coast Highway, Pacific Palisades; Sat., Aug. 3, 5:30 p.m.; $75. (310) 440-7300, getty.edu/visit/cal/events/ev_2755.html. —DAVID COTNER

Surrealism Three Ways

A trio of new exhibitions open this weekend at elevated urban art emporium, Thinkspace Projects, fresh off curating another excellent year of Pow! Wow! Long Beach. Back at their Curver City HQ, Michael Reeder’s “The Other Realm” visually combines elements of cut-ups and figurative and abstract painting to portray the existence of divided consciousness. Kyle Bryant’s “On Broken Wings” in the office galleries executes finely detailed, collage and illustration-based surrealist storytelling with the crispness of drawing and the logic of a dream. And in the project room, Matthew Grabelsky’s “Jungle Train” wonders what a less humanoid, more post-species type world could look like. Thinkspace, 6009 Washington Blvd., Culver City; opening reception: Sat., Aug. 3, 6-9 p.m.; through Aug. 24; free. (310) 558-3375, thinkspaceprojects.com. —SHANA MYS DAMBROT

Caribbean Ballet

Don’t expect tutus or familiar story ballet music, but do expect energetic action and highly trained ballet dancers, when Kenneth Walker Dance Project and its contemporary ballet dancers take the stage. As a choreographer, Walker is known for drawing on atypical scores ballet, here turning to music from North Africa for his latest, In Her Footsteps. Invited guest company Jose Costas’ Contempo Ballet reflect a Caribbean sensibility fueled by Costas’ Puerto Rican heritage. Among SoCal’s growing ranks of contemporary ballet companies, the 10-year-old KWDP is notable for giving dancers from the company’s South Bay home base an alternative to leaving to dance elsewhere. Cal State University Long Beach, Martha P. Knoebel Dance Theatre, 6200 E. Atherton St., Long Beach; Sat., Aug. 3, 7:30 p.m. & Sun., Aug. 4, 2:30 p.m.; $17-$18. arful.by/kenneth-walker-dance-project/store/events/18102. —ANN HAIKIMS

Flying High

Channel your inner Kite Man with today’s Giant Kites of Guatemala afternoon of fun, during which you delve into the Guatemalan cultural touchstone of building bright eye-catching kites — also known as barriletes — that double as poetic metaphors for the fragile and wind-swept nature of existence. They use them during Dia de los Muertos in Guatemala. You’ll make your own kites to fly and honor the dead — whether they’re looking down on your beautiful creations from the Great Above or looking up at them from the Great Below really depends on your own fluttering concepts of the afterlife. The Fowler, 308 Charles E. Young Drive N., Westwood; Sun., Aug. 4, 1 p.m.; free. (310) 825-4361, fowler.ucla.edu/events/fowler-families-giant-kites-of-guatemala. —DAVID COTNER

Reimagining the Palette of Pop Culture

Linda Vallejo is a monumental presence in the local art scene. One of the first art teachers at Self-Help Graphics and the founder of Galería Las Américas, the East L.A. native has long been fascinated by the collision of pop culture with ethnic identity, and in her exhibition of new and recent work, Linda Vallejo: Brown Belongings, the painter/sculptor repopulates an almost exclusively white cultural landscape with brown faces. In her provocative series, “Make ‘Em All Mexicans,” for instance, Vallejo recasts such cultural icons as Marilyn Monroe and Mickey Mouse as Latino figures, leavening her pointed imagery with sly wit and rampant style. LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes, 501 N. Main St., downtown; Mon., Aug. 5, 1-5 p.m.; through Jan. 13; free. (213) 542-6259, lapca.org. —FALLING JAMES

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the life of W.A. Mozart in the 1979 play Amadeus by Peter Shaffer and the related popular 1984 film, which feel more like cute and sentimental fairy tales than works of real substance. The reality of Mozart’s short, brilliant life is far more interesting than any corny theatrical adaptation, although what ultimately matters is the Austrian composer’s music. Tragically, Mozart didn’t live long enough to finish Requiem in D Minor, the moving piece that stands as a mournful epitaph to his life. In a kind of midsummer night’s elegy, conductor Iván Fischer guides stellar Trinidadian soprano Jeanine De Bique, mezzo-soprano Kelley O’Connor and Budapest Festival Orchestra through the dramatic requiem. Hollywood Bowl, 2301 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood; Tue., Aug. 6, 8 p.m.; $1-$162. (323) 850-2000, hollywoodbowl.com. —FALLING JAMES

Speaking Out

“All my life when I’ve tried to talk to men about sexism, my main obstacle has been trying to convince them, quite simply, that it exists,” Chavisa Woods writes at the outset of her new book, 100 Times: A Memoir of Sexism (Seven Stories Press). One of the disheartening things about the era we live in is that, even as women are bravely uncovering and going public with their personal stories of oppression, many of the men on the planet remain blissfully disingenuous about gender inequities. With her forthright, stark style, Woods reveals and examines the abuse she and so many other women have endured, which she will amplify further in a discussion with incisive queercore icon/poet Michelle Tea. Skylight Books, 1818 N. Vermont Ave., Los Feliz; Wed., Aug. 7, 7:30 p.m.; free. (323) 660-1175, skylightbooks.com. —FALLING JAMES

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ART

Wrecking Crew

For the 12th year in a row, the Loft at Liz’s presents its beloved Diverted Destruction exhibition, curated group shows featuring artists who use salvaged and reclaimed materials to create original collage, assemblage and installation-based art. As a purveyor of antique hardware that is itself often saved from a trip to the junkyard in a diamond-in-the-rough sort of way, these shows are close to the curator’s heart, and always feature artist talks and workshops that address the specific dynamics of upcycling in art history. Many but not all of the artists included already use these techniques in their work and are happy to share the source-material anecdotes and imaginative sparks that animate their practices. The Loft at Liz’s, 453 S. La Brea, Mid-Wilshire; artists talk: Wed., Aug. 7, 7-9 p.m.; through Aug. 19; free. (323) 939-4403, theloftatlizs.com. —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

CULTURE

Helter Skelter

Writers, artists and filmmakers alike remain fascinated by Charles Manson, a despicable historical figure who took advantage of disenfranchised youth, inciting them to kill innocent people for the thrill of it and as revenge for his failed entertainment career. He was also a racist who hoped to ignite an apocalyptic race war, which he named after the Beatles’ “Helter Skelter.” So why does the general public remain fascinated by this monster 50 years later? Prurient curiosity? Coming to terms with the dark nature of humanity? These are questions to ask ourselves as we watch Tarantino’s latest, set just before the Tate/LaBianca murders and while checking out the Lethal Amounts’ new exhibit, Once Upon A Time in ’69. If any art space could explore this polarizing man in an unflinching way, it’s this one. Which never shies away from and often seeks out provocative and controversial art. Presenting artifacts from the era in addition to ephemera from the collections of John Aes-Nihl (an archivist and collector who created 1984’s Manson Family Movies, a faux home movie–style film about the cult), the show will also include writings, photographs, original art and ephemera, much of it never before seen or available to the public. Q&As, walkthroughs and more are promised. Lethal Amounts, 1226 W. 7th St., Westlake; Thu., Aug. 8, 7-11 p.m., through Aug. 11, times vary; $19.69-$40. seetickets.us/mansonfamily. —LINA LECARO
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The word “tiki” specifically refers to a stone or wooden carving, usually with a sinister face representing a god of some sort, found throughout the Polynesian islands — but sometime around the ’40s and ’50s it came to mean a lot more. It became a culture represented by colorful umbrella-adorned cocktails and ceramic mugs, Hawaiian-print wardrobes, kitschy island home decor, and surf and exotica music. Capturing the care-free escapism one feels while on vacation, particularly an island vacation, tiki culture’s vibrant aesthetics are undeniably retro; and yet, they remain timeless, maintaining an avid following of diehard drinkers and collectors and seducing new enthusiasts with cheerful and friendly vibes.

“It encompasses so many things,” says L.A. author Sven Kirsten, the recognized authority on all things tiki, with four books about the topic for Taschen to prove it. “It’s kind of a roleplay thing — it’s cocktails, it’s music, it’s fashion, and to me as a cinematographer who came to it from the literal side, it’s very much about design and architecture, which I put forth in my books.”

Though there were times when tiki’s popularity waned a bit, it was always a cool niche interest surviving inside a handful of restaurants across the country (some of the most memorable right there in L.A.) and home tiki bars. The latter, DIY hatch and bamboo-swathed structures with touches both nautical and campy, were usually found on neighborhood back patios or, if inside, as kitchen-adjacent drinking stations. In many ways they were the first “man caves,” though their fanciful elements and tasty treats appealed to women as well.

“After the war, the islands became the dream destination for Americans, and with jet travel and Hawaii becoming a state it came into reach of thousands more people,” Kirtsen explains. “So they reimported it into their own backyards. And that was also the appeal of the tiki bars, which said ‘you don’t have to go to Hawaii, you can come here.’”

In California, tiki destinations pretty much established the culture in general in terms of nightlife and hospitality. Don the Beachcomber (a.k.a. Ernest Raymond Beaumont Gantt) was pivotal and his Huntington Beach namesake was our most honored landmark until it was sold to new owners and eventually closed. Trader Vic’s followed, attracting Hollywood types with its fantasy, frolic and frothy libations.

Though tiki faded a bit from the ’70s through the ’90s, some original bars and eateries survived — Bahooka was big favorite before closing six years ago while Damon’s Steakhouse offered a place to soak up island vibes (and still does). Many believe the authenticity and drink quality diminished during this period, as public interest did, but the scene always had its die-hards. As far as the general public’s recognition of tiki, it was probably Chinese restaurants that really helped with that, as their drinks (and take-home souvenir mugs) remained a staple on menus consistently, even when they weren’t so trendy.

“Chinese restaurants and tiki bars all shared...
one thing — America’s passion for the exotic, at that time in the postwar era it really didn’t matter the origin of the exotic as long it was exotic,” explains Bobby Green, who just re-opened the Formosa in West Hollywood and made sure to include some classic tiki-style cocktails. “Tiki restaurants serve Chinese food, Chinese restaurants served what we now know as tiki drinks, and it was all a very symbiotic relationship.”

It was the mixology trend, not restaurants, that gave the tiki scene its biggest shot (of rum) in the arm. Around the early 2000s, bars and nightlife saw a return to its fresh ingredients and whimsical presentation, and many bartenders sought inspiration from classic tropical recipes, as seen in Jeff “Beachbum” Berry’s bible of tiki cocktails known as *The Grog Log*. Art shows and books (Kirsten’s specifically) celebrating every aspect of the culture — home design, mugs, branded swizzle sticks for stirring, tokens, floral fashion, etc. — followed and suddenly, it seemed vintage mongers had a new obsession.

Los Angeles is largely recognized as a tiki capital, thanks to family-owned Tiki Ti (opened by Ray Buhren, who worked at Beachcomber, Seven Seas in Hollywood and The Luau in Beverly Hills; now run by his son Mike and his sons) in Silver Lake and San Fernando Valley mainstay The Tonga Hut (which immortalizes patrons who can drink the entire Grog Log on its wall), but San Francisco (Martin Cate’s bars), Palm Springs (the Shag store and Tonga Hut P.S.) and San Diego are right behind or beside us, depending on who you talk to. The latter has in fact become one of the most high profile places to immerse oneself in tiki culture, thanks to L.A.-bred, S.F.-based events guru Otto von Stroheim and his wife “Baby” Doe von Stroheim (of burlesque and go-go dance group The Dev-il-Etes), who have been throwing the biggest tiki event in the country, Tiki Oasis, for 19 years now every summer.

Oasis began in Palm Springs, but has called San Diego’s Crowne Plaza hotel (a tiki-themed hotel) home for several years now, attracting thousands every year for a wild weekend of vibrant vintage and island dress-up, live music, educational symposiums, art, shopping, burlesque, contests and non-stop booze. It takes over the entire hotel, and in addition to two stages, a car show and the five days of entertainment and events, the people who stay there throw elaborate room parties most nights into the wee hours.

Von Stroheim, who comes from the punk scene originally, got his start throwing tiki-themed backyard bashess back in the late ‘80s when he lived in Venice Beach. After starting a zine that covered tiki life, he began promoting the Oasis with Doe. Two kids and 20-plus events under their grass skirts later, Tiki O remains one of alternative culture’s biggest and best weekenders out there, a happening boasting family-friendly elements that also manages to capture a hedonist spirit for adults.

It’s a very immersive event. You can go and be a looky-loo, but at some point you’ll want to participate in the fun too, donning florals and brights like the regulars (lots of vendors are on-hand to make this easy), sampling the liquor available (rum sponsors abound) and getting into the music, which is a big part of what this event is all about, often driving the “theme” the promoters choose each year.

Past events themes have included 2014’s “Beat Tiki” (beatinik), 2015’s “Tiki in Outer Space,” and 2016’s “Monster Island;,” all of which invited attendees to bust out wild Comic-Con-esque level costumes. Though the time frame for themes has always been within the pretty strict window of ‘50s and ‘60s culture (pin-up, mid-century modern and Old Hollywood all fold in nicely) this year, the Stroheims are doing something very different which seems to have generated renewed excitement for the event, even as some purists seem a little skeptical.

Titled “Catch the New Wave,” Tiki Oasis goes ‘80s this year, celebrating the era of crazy hair and gaudy makeup with a decidedly alternative punk rock/new romantic spirit that will reference not only synthy British bands, but also a lot of surf and rockabilly as well, both of which saw resurgence in the decade. While the ‘80s might not immediately scream “tiki,” moving a little forward era-wise makes sense when you think about the outsider elements of the culture and the kind of people who are most into it. Patrons will be dressing up for the ‘80s theme on Saturday night, which also corresponds with the T.O’s costume contest (lots of Devo domes, geometric sunglasses and flashy Madonna/Cyndi Lauper jewelry and hair are expected).

Fashion and theme dress-up are always a big part of this event’s appeal, but the von Stroheims say their themes will always be more about music than cosplay.

Though there isn’t one specific “tiki sound,” certain genres have always tended to complement the vibe at Tiki Oasis and at tiki bars in L.A. too — namely exotica, lounge, surf and rockabilly. Bands such as The Tikiyaki Orchestra, The Ding Dong Devils, The Hula Girls, Jason Lee and the Riptides are just a few of the Cali-based faves with presence at the gathering but a lot of international acts from these genres are booked as well.

“We often get inspired by a music genre,” says Doe. “In the ’80s, surf music in particular had a revival. A lot of people don’t really know about that second wave. So we’re really excited in that we’ve been able to book bands that were instrumental in bringing that second wave of the genre. The ‘new wave’ thing is really a funny way for us to educate about [that] while allowing people to go off a little and do whatever they want for dressing up, ’80s- or new wave-related.”

Otto touts some legendary “gets” this year, including Jon & The Nightriders, Agent Orange, The New Waves and The Insect Surfers on Friday; The Outta Sites (featuring Debora Iyall of Romeo Void, Tim Polecat of the Polecats) and Josie Cotton on Saturday, and the Fleshtones on Sunday. Those who get there on Thursday night will also get to see an all star-band called The Tiny Bubbles featuring Devos’ Gerald Casale and Judd “The Fink” and Burt “Fuzz” Nutley of The Maikai Gents.

Kirsten will be doing a slideshow presentation about his punk rock days and how they led him to tiki life. His openness to a more modern theme notwithstanding, the historian does take issue with other non-related cultures tiki-fying everything these days.

“A lot of so called nerd cultures have discovered tiki and have this urge to make it part of their own subcultures or to bring something to it… like meshing Star Wars culture for example, “he says, most likely referring to a line of Star Wars tiki mugs currently on the market or even the new Disneyland Galaxy’s Edge Cantina, which boasts tiki-style drinks. “It started with rockabilly, which actually never really had much to do with tiki. So all these crossover interests that have co-opted tiki and they’re a little bit painful to me.”

Disney and Disneyland sort of get a pass when it comes to referencing tiki due to their awesome bar, Trader Sam’s, and of course, their iconic attraction, “The Enchanted Tiki Room,” complete with the nostalgic frozen treats sold nearby, The Dole Whip (Tonga Hut references the pineapple fave in one of their most popular drinks).

When it comes to the mainstreaming of the culture, hardcore tikiheads find a couple other trends more problematic. Chain restaurants calling their sugary concoctions “tiki” just because they have pineapple or coconut in them is a big one. There’s the plethora of Party City/Target tiki crap which they feel cheapens the aesthetic (an exception is plastic cups and sippers for carrying around drinks, so you don’t risk breaking your fancy mugs at events like Oasis).

Ultimately, tiki is about connecting with others and feeling good. “It’s an easily accessible and friendly scene,” says Otto. “Nobody is judging you at a tiki bar. Nobody is going to notice your pants. Just top it off with a Hawaiian shirt and you’re good to go,” to which his wife adds, “You’re kind of forgetting the outside world and all of the crazy chaos of your everyday life in this scene.”

Kirsten concurs. “Tiki was and is a great game to play. It’s a game of creating tropical paradise in your own backyard. You can’t take it too seriously…it’s sort of a tongue in cheek thing. I think we all know at this point that paradise on earth does not exist, but tiki allows you to play with the concept and sort of knowingly pretend that it does exist, and create that for yourself.”
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Many places up and down this coast offer tiki special "Tiki Thursdays" through the summer. Started blending up coconut and rum for their Mixing Room at the Marriott downtown has original cocktails riffing off the classics, and even the Tuesday every week with intricately crafted Hideaway in Highland Park features a Tiki bar. For a summertime monthly tiki event, Sonny's pop-ups abound: The Spare Room in Hollywood; 12808 Victory Blvd., Valley Glen; (818) 769-0708, tongahut.com. From Disney? But underneath the gorgeous, frivolous decor is a drink program executed from Disney? But underneath the gorgeous, frivolous decor is a drink program executed from Disney? But underneath the gorgeous, frivolous decor is a drink program executed from Disney? But underneath the gorgeous, frivolous decor is a drink program executed from Disney? But underneath the gorgeous, frivolous decor is a drink program executed from Disney? But underneath the gorgeous, frivolous decor is a drink program executed. Blend up coconut and rum for their original cocktails riffing off the classics, and even the Tuesday every week with intricately crafted Hideaway in Highland Park features a Tiki bar. For a summertime monthly tiki event, Sonny's pop-ups abound: The Spare Room in Hollywood; 12808 Victory Blvd., Valley Glen; (818) 769-0708, tongahut.com.
Cocktails are a huge part of the tiki scene and their popularity has spread beyond tiki bars, with tropical drinks popping up at traditional bars and restaurants too. Tiki and tropical drinks aren’t exactly the same, however. Consider them cocktail cousins. A tiki drink will be multi-layered and rich, while a tropical one will be light, refreshing and fruity. Either one can be an escape from your reality, especially when presented in a lovely venue that reminds you of the islands, a beachy oasis or a scene from a hip, old TV show. Renewed interest in these colorful libations means that, in L.A., tiki pop-ups abound: The Spare Room in Hollywood hosts bartenders from around the world for a summertime monthly tiki event, Sonny’s Hideaway in Highland Park features a Tiki Tuesday every week with intricately crafted originals riffing off the classics, and even the Mixing Room at the Marriott downtown has started blending up coconut and rum for their special “Tiki Thursdays” through the summer. Many places up and down this coast offer tiki and tropical drinks seven days a week, but when it comes to the tastiest and the “tiki-est” and tropical drinks are just as important as the food. Although they have frosty blended drinks on the menu, the standout here is a mezcal number called the Mermaid Voyage, with aperol, lemon and pineapple for that final sunny kick. 416 W 11th St., downtown; (213) 741-0612, themermaidla.com.

**Navy Grog at Tonga Hut**
At Los Angeles’ longest continually running tiki bar, the decor is basically as it was when it opened in 1958, but lovingly restored — along with their drink menu. For those up to the task, drinkers can become a member of the Loyal Order of the Drowning Bastard by completing cocktail guru Jeff Beachbum Berry’s Grog Log, featuring 78 old school tiki drinks. For those who just want to try one of the best drinks in the place, they make an excellent Navy Grog (rums, citrus, honey) complete with a sugar stick to stir with. 12808 Victory Blvd., Valley Glen; (818) 769-0708, tongahut.com.

**Ray’s Mistake at Tiki-Ti**
Opened by the legendary Ray Burn (an original bartender at Don the Beachcomber) and still run by his son and grandson, this neighborhood treasure may be tiny but people are willing to wait in line to get in for one of their drinks — and they have nearly 100! (They don’t sell beer.) The cocktail of choice here goes to Ray’s Mistake, which has secret ingredients that admirers have been trying to decipher for decades. If you ask, they’ll tell you: “It’s rum and juice.” But it’s a lot more than that. 4427 Sunset Blvd., Los Feliz; (323) 669-9381, tiki-ti.com.

**Zombie at Trader Sam’s**
Deep within the heart of the Disney Resort is a tropical oasis meticulously created to be as perfect as possible. What else would you expect from Disney? But beneath the gorgeous, frivolous decor is a drink program executed by gifted bartenders whose talents rival imaginative. The Zombie, a drink so potent they won’t serve you more than two, is one of the tastiest things on the menu and goes down far too easily.

**Lychee Luau at Tiki No**
Step into this beautiful, lush bar off the grime streets of Hollywood Boulevard, decorated with treasures and paraphernalia from long lost tiki bars, for their signature cocktail: Curse of Lono. It’s got rums, exotic juices, spices and a hot topping... fire! 6611 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; (323) 848-4475, lonohollywood.com.

**Curse of Lono at Lono**
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**Puka Punch at Bamboo Club**
Long Beach finally got its own tiki bar, and it has that beachy charm, along with the requisite thatching and fun murals painted by tiki artists on the walls around the pool table. It also has a menu of the classics, including the delicious Puka Punch, made with some of the best rums, falernum, honey, fruit juices and bitters. 3522 E Anaheim St., Long Beach; (562) 343-2534, facebook.com/bambooclubby/.

**Blue Hawaiian at Clifton’s Pacific Seas**
Clifton’s Pacific Seas is definitely one of the most beautiful tiki bars around, filled with natural and island antiques and even a vintage Chris-Craft boat! The drink menu consists of some originals but one of the classics reigns supreme at the moment: the Blue Hawaiian. The drink that inspired a fear of all things blue behind the bar has been returned to its original state, with coconut cream instead of sour mix, so that a delicious version is represented in this lovely space in all its blue-hued glory. 648 S Broadway, downtown; (213) 627-1673, cliftonscla.com/pacific-seas.

**Lychee Luau at Tiki No**
Deep in the Valley is a spot covered with bamboo and dangling pufferfish lights that also has a karaoke night to go with the drinks. The Lychee Luau is an original worth checking out: along with the rums, pineapple, lemon and falernum you would expect in a tiki drink, the lychee liqueur (made from the strange looking Chinese fruit) takes it to the next level. 4657 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood; (818) 766-0116, tikinola.com.

**Mermaid Voyage at The Mermaid**
Disclosure: I love tropical drinks and bars so much I invested in this one! This aquatic hideaway in Little Tokyo gives the impression that you are underwater when you walk in from the outside: blue and green lights shimmer against the walls, kelp dangles from the ceiling and mermaids peek through a porthole at the end of the seating area. The menu features tropical drinks made with various spirits, but the Mermaid Voyage, made with rums, a lime cordial, lime juice, housemade hibiscus syrup and mint, has quickly become the fan favorite. 428 E 2nd St., downtown; themermaidla.com.

**Sierra Norte at Dama**
This downtown eatery takes its tropical from the Latin side of things and the drinks are just as important as the food. Although they have frosty blended drinks on the menu, the standout here is a mezcal number called the Sierra Norte, with aperol, lemon and pineapple for that final sunny kick. 612 E 11th St., downtown; (213) 395-9532, freehand-hotels.com/los-angeles/broken-shaker.

**L.A. Bae at the Broken Shaker Los Angeles**
This Florida transport brings the colorful beach vibe with it, but has created a distinctly Los Angeles tropical menu that changes seasonally. A summer standout would be the L.A. Bae, which takes vodka and flavors it up with banana, bitter florals, lemon and a berry granola orgeat for a refreshing sipper. 416 W 8th St., downtown; (213) 395-9532, freehand-hotels.com/los-angeles/broken-shaker.

**Mai Tai at Ventiki**
This Polynesian pop patio and tiny bar in Ventura has friendly service and innovative drinks, as well as a wonderful selection of mai tais. Aside from the Trader Vic’s-style classics, they have concocted a few locally inspired versions, including the very popular Ventiki Mai Tai made with a blend of rums, orgeat, orange curacao, lime and simple syrup. If that doesn’t do it for you, try the top shelf version for a bit more money and get fancier rums in the mix. 701 E Main St. Ventura; (805) 667-8887, ventikiloungeandlanai.com.

**Yee Mee Loo at The Formosa Cafe**
It may seem that this lovingly restored Hollywood landmark shouldn’t be on this list, because it’s a Chinese restaurant with a trolley car straight out of an old bar in Chinatown. But Asian eateries have a long history of serving tiki drinks — essentially saving them from extinction — and this spot is no exception. The Yee Mee Loo is a homage to a classic Chinatown dive bar with the same name (and home to the trolley), which served this blue drink of rum and pineapple. This one uses classier ingredients for a tasteful upgrade, just like the owners did with the Formosa itself. 7156 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood; (323) 850-1009, theformosacafe.com/
Women’s voices take center stage at Chapman University’s College of Performing Arts

**THEATRE**
Department of Theatre’s upcoming season entitled “#HERSTORIES: A Celebration of Women’s Voices and Women’s Stories.”

**DANCE & MUSIC**
Department of Dance and the Hall-Musco Conservatory of Music will be highlighting works composed and choreographed by women throughout the 2019-20 concert season.

**CHAPMAN CELEBRATES SCHOLARSHIP GALA**
Chapman’s scholarship gala will be “Celebrating the Female Voice” in November as proud Chapman parent, Vanessa Williams, receives the Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award.

For details, visit Chapman.edu/voices or contact the box office at (714) 997-6624.
A 1961 photo essay that sparked controversy gets a new life — and a Getty Center exhibition

BY JORDAN RIEFE

In 1961, celebrated photographer Gordon Parks was assigned by *Life* magazine to create a photo essay on poverty in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro. Originally he was to follow the daily struggles of a working-class family man, but instead Parks chose an undernourished boy named Flávio da Silva, caregiver to his six younger siblings. The blockbuster story that came of it sparked a saga interwoven with themes of fake news, Cold War politics, and imperialism — but it has mainly seemed to be their friendship on display at the heart of *Gordon Parks: The Flávio Story*, at the Getty Center through November 10.

Parks, who spent 11 years on the *Life* magazine masthead, had resigned only a year before the assignment when he agreed to photograph its subject, which was well within his wheelhouse, judging by previous assignments documenting Chicago’s Southside in 1941, or in 1942 the life of Ella Watson, a custodian at the FSA (Farm Security Administration) in D.C. where he worked at the time.

For context, in January of 1961, President Kennedy had announced the Alliance for Progress, an aid program meant to counter Fidel Castro’s influence in Latin American countries. Parks’ photos would constitute the second installment of *Life*’s corresponding series titled *Crisis in Latin America*, under a headline reading, “Freedom's Fearful Foe: Poverty.”

A day after his arrival in Rio, Parks spotted Flávio at the foot of a steep path in the Catacumba favela and decided on his subject. “This one resonated in part because of the age of Flávio, he was only 12,” says Getty associate curator Amanda Maddox, who collaborated on the show with Paul Roth, director of the Ryerson Image Centre in Toronto. Maddox adds, “Flávio was on the verge of death, he was severely asthmatic. That made it one of the most heart-wrenching stories that Parks ever covered.”

The story ran across a mere 12 pages in *Life*’s June 1961 issue, with images of Flávio messily feeding his baby sister, pouring boiling water as he prepared breakfast for his younger siblings, and the family of nine crowded into two squalid beds. The response was immediate — $30,000 in unsolicited donations heading for the aid program.

A month later, on July 5, Flávio flew to the U.S. to receive treatment for his asthma at Denver’s Children’s Asthma Research Institute and Hospital, where he was restored to good health.

His two years in Denver are glimpsed in candid photos by José Gonçalves, whose family hosted Flávio in their conventional, comfortable suburban lifestyle of school, sports and social events with kids own his age.

“The Gonçalves family were very responsible and helped me get to school and learn English and writing and there was no difficulty. I learned in one month. I was a child, and children learn faster,” says Flávio. Now 70, his recent arrival in L.A. marked his first visit to the U.S. in 58 years — to the day.

While young Flávio was in Denver, his family in Rio was relocated from their shack to a simple concrete home in a working-class section of the city, outfitted with conveniences like running water and a washing machine. All were happy about the change in circumstances; all except the politically vulnerable Brazilian President Janio Quadros that is, who was not pleased with the unflattering depiction of his nation’s most famous city.

Photographer Henri Ballot was soon dispatched by one of Brazil’s most popular magazines, *O Cruzeiro*, to New York City where his assignment was to return with similar photos depicting unspeakable poverty. In the magazine’s October issue, his images were juxtaposed with those by Parks. The dispute escalated when each accused the other of staging photos — hence the charges of “fakery.” To Parks, the conflict only drew attention away from the horrid conditions he’d sought to illuminate.

“There were accusations about the situation but it was not true,” says Flávio. “There’s nothing that was made up. It’s important everyone know that,” he says, emphasizing the persistent crippling poverty in the favelas. “Even today, from 1961 to 2019, it’s still the same. It doesn’t change.”

Parks and Flávio kept in touch through the years, meeting again in the 1970s when Parks published a book, *Flávio*, on their experience together. By then, the photographer had found success in Hollywood directing the hit film, *Shaft*. Flávio went on to marry and have children, then separate from his wife. He worked cleaning and construction jobs, a long stint as a security guard, and in a restaurant for a spell. Parks and Flávio were united again in the 1990s, when the former was in Brazil shooting a documentary. It was the last time they met before Parks’ death in 2006.

During that visit, Flávio asked about people he knew during his childhood visit to the U.S., and learned that many were dead. “That broke my heart because some were friendly and lovely people to me,” he says. “I had been accepted with love and good treatment from everyone.”
FLASHBACK-FILLED FAIRY TALE

Once Upon a Time in Hollywood immerses you in '60s-era Hollywood, even if the plot is not fully fleshed out

BY LINA LECARO

Watching Quentin Tarantino’s highly anticipated ninth film, Once Upon a Time in Hollywood, recently at the Cinerama Dome was a surreal experience, and not just because the filmmaker was there to excitedly and, as he admitted, tipsily introduce the film and watch it with us. The historic theater and Sunset Boulevard (circa 1969), get some screen time in the movie, which incited cheers from the audience we saw it with, as does Hollywood Boulevard with the venerable Musso & Frank, Pussycat porn theater and Grauman’s Chinese Theatre (where the official premiere took place) all gregariously aglow with nary an LCD in sight.

You don’t have to live in L.A. to dig the nostalgic immersion of this latest creation by the writer/director who no one would dispute is one of cinema’s greatest visionaries, but you probably do have to love this city on some level. I won’t say it’s a love letter to Hollywood/Old Hollywood or even the ‘60s, though some will surely use that old cliche. That’s much too trite for Tarantino, though. He doesn’t idealize his subjects or his settings so much as devour them and let us devour them with him, often fetishizing (their beauty, their brutality, their sensitivity, their style) then testing them, and at well-timed turns, tearing them open and bringing us along for the ride. And what a ride it is.

Expect plenty of rides in fact. Literally. Tarantino films his actors behind and in front of the wheel a lot, and it not only makes sense in terms of depicting our car-dependent culture (even in the ‘60s), it draws us into their physical space and unique point of view as they roll through the city and past the glamorous guises — neon, sunsets, flashy cars, even traffic — of the past. Visually stunning, even when it’s intentionally grainy and chaotic, the film was shot by Academy Award–winning cinematographer Robert Richardson, whom Tarantino worked with on request of the director — who has been asking journalists not to spoil the twist and reiterated this plea to us at the Dome — I won’t elaborate, except to say that there’s a pretty satisfying and Tarantino-esque climax.

Even without a proper narrative, this star-powered vehicle works. In case the title didn’t make it clear, Hollywood is both the subject and the star here, and she’s everything we might want from a leading lady — gorgeous, complex, familiar yet surprising at times, decadent, dangerous, almost too divine to be a real... She even outshines her co-stars—Leonardo DiCaprio and Brad Pitt, who turn in a couple of the most beguiling performances of their careers. Much has been made of Margot Robbie’s comparatively simplistic and scant role and indeed, her acting gifts are way underused, but her channeling of Tate is pivotal to the picture Tarantino wants to paint, wherein the entertainment industry’s evolution begins to usher in a colorful new wave, with bikers, hip-pies and models suddenly seeming a lot more interesting and sexy than cowboys, soldiers and housewives. The rising star’s murder near the end of her pregnancy and its peace-and-love era—ending eeriness notwithstanding, the real Tate’s role (and that of Patty Duke’s Neely O’Hara) in Valley of the Dolls is obvious subtext here, especially for the trajectory of DiCaprio’s Rick Dalton, a TV actor who battles alcoholism while trying to stay relevant as an actor and ends up making B-movies in Italy.

Pitt plays Cliff Booth, Dalton’s buddy, personal assistant and former stunt double from back when he starred on the popular ‘50s TV western Bounty Law. Dalton’s struggle to transition since his show ended means taking meetings with smarmy showbiz types (Al Pacino) at Musso, and prepping for smaller roles as “the heavy” in still-surviving, slightly corny episodic television fare. In addition to the parade of flashback sequences, commercials and trailers showcasing Dalton’s acting work throughout Once Upon a Time, we also get a story-within-the-story, with some really fun but hefty acting by Dalton/Dicaprio as a villain in the TV show Lancer, playing opposite Timothy Olyphant and Luke Perry as the title character (a bittersweet meta-casting if there ever was one; from TV star to movie star in his last role).

The studio backlot scenes are the best. They may not be as visually intriguing as those shots on the road, at the Playboy Mansion, inside the character’s fancy/filthy homes or inside Spahn Ranch (which I found underwhelming), but dramatically, they yield the film’s most profound pleasures, providing behind the scenes glimpses into set life and production, from the lofty, last-minute decisions made inside makeup trailers to heady conversations about “the craft” (here, had with a precocious 8-year-old) to the downtime, when stars are just hanging out, shooting the shit and showing off (the scene in which Bruce Lee gets his ass kicked is cringy and pure comic gold).

Though it runs at 2 hours and 40 minutes, Once Upon A Time rarely drags because there is always something to look at, notice or absorb. This attention to detail is something Tarantino has honed over the years, and it’s evident in the period styling (flawless work by costume designer Arianne Phillips) and of course, in the music, which is heard via car radios (cut with commercials from then-popular local radio station KFJ), on home turntables and as the filmmaker does so well, as a seamless storytelling device that functions as a cool time capsule-like score too. Tarantino is always heavily involved in the music of his films and he shamelessly plays his Scorsese card near the end of this one, tying things up with a melodic bow, only to brilliantly tear it open before credits roll. During a flash-forward sequence and airport montage, ‘The Rolling Stones’ “Out of Time” not only foreshadows this fierce fairy tale’s ending (though not in the way history might lead you to believe), it also evokes his characters, the film and Hollywood’s transition into a dark, less idealistic new era.
Once Upon a Time in Hollywood writer/director who no one would dispute is... took place) all gregariously aglow with nary... wood Boulevard with the venerable Musso &... time in the movie, which incited cheers from... because the filmmaker was there to excitedly... Sensitivity, their style) then testing them, and at... fetishizing (their beauty, their brutality, their... them and let us devour them with him, of/ten... Old Hollywood or even the ’60s, though some... Expect plenty of rides in fact. Literally. Taran-... entertainment industry’s evolution begins to... Leonardo DiCaprio and Brad Pitt, who turn in a... real… She even outshines her co-stars- Leon-... by Kurt Russell (who plays a stunt coordinator)... Manson family story-line could’ve been so... Helter Skelter stuff isn’t even really a subplot, but rath-... compelling in Tarantino’s hands. The Helter... veronica of the show be the moderator. It just worked much better than having journalists. The Good Place panel ended on a contemplative... note, with Bell responding to a question about if her two characters (Good Place’s Elea-... and Veronica Mars) were to interact. "That’s kind of a no-contest," she answered. "Veronica would slay Eleanor so bad. She would drag her. And Eleanor would barely survive but I think after Veronica really gave [it to her], Eleanor would have mad respect for Veronica and be a part of her crew.” There was also the Marvel panel, which re-... revealed the future of its cinematic universe (also known as Phase 4), including many enticing... upcoming Marvel Studio films: 2020’s Eternals, which features Angelina Jolie in the cast (she was also at the panel), Natalie Portman’s return as a female Thor in Thor: Love and Thunder in 2021, and Tessa Thompson’s Valkyrie, confirmed as MCU’s first LGBTQ superhero. The panel also included announcements about upcoming content streaming on Disney’s new platform. And finally, Netflix’s upcoming The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance, a prequel to the fa-... 1982 Jim Henson film The Dark Crystal, featured Henson’s daughter Lisa as well as two of the stars, Taron Egerton and the one and only Mark Hamill. Comic-Con also surprised... Hamill with the “2019 Comic-Con Icon Award.” The actor graciously accepted it and shared that a long time ago (before George Lucas’ galactic fantasy ever saw a movie screen) he came to Comic-Con in its infancy and there were only 5,000 people in attendance. Today there are over 130,000. And the universe continues to expand.

For more of Michael Cooper’s Comic-Con 2019 insights, go to laweekly.com.
the pottery
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....redefined

BY BRETT CALLWOOD
MUSIC

THE RUNAWAYS’ CHERIE CURRIE AND FANNY’S BRIE DARLING GET TOGETHER FOR A COLLABORATION 40 YEARS AFTER THE "THE RUNAWAYS" CAME OUT "THE MOTIVATOR" IS AN INTERESTING CHOICE, UNDER A PRESIDENT WHO APPEARS TO HATE WOMEN. I THINK IT’S A WORLD ISSUE AND A HUMAN ISSUE. "I TRUSTED HIM AND HIS GENIUS," SAYS CURRIE. "I WAS DOING A RECORD WITH MY OLD FANNY, AND DARLING TAKES PLACE AT 7:30 P.M. ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, AT THE GRAMMY MUSEUM. "I KINDA MISS THE RUNAWAYS" IS THE SONG I WAS ASKED TO SING ON "WHEN WE NEED COMES A BETTER TIME" WE'RE ALL OF US DOWN HERE TRYING TO ENJOY WHAT TIME WE HAVE. WHY NOT SPREAD THE LOVE INSTEAD OF THE NEGATIVITY. OUT OF THAT HOPES COMES A BETTER TIME WHILE WE'RE HERE. "WE GOT IN A LITTLE LATE IN THE GAME, WITH THE CURRENT THING THAT WAS GOING ON, AND I WAS TRYING TO ENJOY WHAT TIME WE HAVE. WHY NOT SPREAD THE LOVE INSTEAD OF THE NEGATIVITY."
Cherie Currie and Brie Darling — two badasses who broke down all manner of boundaries when they were only teenagers, Darling with the early ’70s punk band Fanny, and Currie with mid-to-late-’70s punks The Runaways.

Fast forward 40 years, and they’re working together. The duo have put out their debut album The Motivator (named after the T-Rex song which is covered and featured on the record), and when we interview them by phone it quickly becomes clear that they’re having the time of their lives together. So how did they hook up?

“I was doing a record with my old Fanny mates, June and Jean Millington, a record called Fanny Walked the Earth that came out last year,” says Darling. “I had invited some of the girls from the girl groups that Fanny influenced — The Bangles, The Go-Gos and of course the Runaways. Cherrie came to the sessions, that’s how we met. Of course, I knew of her and had seen her perform way back in the day. I thought she was amazing. She has an energy and I was taken by her.”

For her part, Currie was massively impressed with the Fanny Walked the Earth comeback album, and Darling’s contributions in particular.

“Honest to goodness, when I first listened to the Fanny Walked the Earth album, and of course I was introduced to ‘When We Need Her’, which is the song I was asked to sing on [also featuring The Bangles, Alice Bag and Patti Quatro], I was so taken back by Brie’s voice, because I did not understand why this woman wasn’t a major star. Her voice slays me. So when I walked in to meet her, I just had to tell her so. For me, it was just such an honor and privilege to work with someone like her, that I immediately looked up to. She’s a darling human being as well, so that helps a lot.”

Fanny and The Runaways have more in common than their gender. Both found fame in their teens, when they were barely ready for it. Both are beloved by the loyal fanbases, but are not necessarily considered mainstream “names” in 2019. Naturally, they influenced each other.

“For me they were a big influence because first of all, back then we did not have the internet, or MTV or any of that stuff,” Currie says. “So I was not aware that they were teenagers. I don’t remember it being mentioned in articles. That was my mistake, because I thought that the Runaways were the first all-girl teenage rock group and I was absolutely wrong. I didn’t know they were all girls either. I for some reason thought there might be some males playing.”

“I had the honor of seeing [The Runaways] when they first came out,” adds Darling. “By that time, we were in our 20s. Music had started changing, and they were some hard, punchy rock. We came from a different time of rock. We started from Motown and soul music, and we were also influenced by the British Invasion — the Yardbirds, Animals and Beatles of course. But the Runaways were fresh and hard. That was different for us. For Fanny’s last album, Rock and Roll Survivors, we were a little bit more on the glam trip by then. So we were following a little bit of what they were doing by joining the current times. They were the current thing that was going on, and I love that. I’m totally open to that. We’re still influenced by what goes on today, which I think is a wonderful thing.”

The Motivator was produced by Darling’s husband, Dave Darling, who has six Grammy nominations and is renowned for his work with the likes of Brian Setzer/The Stray Cats, and Janiva Magness.

“I trusted him and his genius,” says Currie. “Brie and I were picking songs and running them through Dave, he was also picking songs. We had to completely trust Dave because he was picking songs that we weren’t really sure about, like ‘The Motivator.’ The original is very different, and when I first heard that track I was blown away. You can’t not move. The three of us worked really well together, and this is a culmination of our choices of songs, and what we brought to this little party.”

“The Motivator” is an interesting choice of a T-Rex song to cover — it’s not one of their better-known tunes. But Currie and Darling make it their own, with the help of Dave Darling. The same can be said for “Get Together,” a Youngbloods cover.

“That was our record company president Kirk [Pasich, Blue Élan Records] — he loves that song and suggested it,” says Darling. “But who doesn’t live that song? What a great song.”

“But, we sure need a song like that today,” adds Currie.

“We feel we have to ask these two strong, groundbreaking female musicians about their opinions of the current administration, under a president who appears to hate women.

“I think it’s a world issue and a human issue,” Darling says. “It’s beyond political. We have this little sliver of time to be here, and what better thing to do than to care about your brother man. We’re all of us down here trying to enjoy what time we have. Why not feel good? Spread the love instead of the negativity. Out of that hopefully comes a better time while we’re here.”

With the album due to drop on August 2, Currie and Darling will perform a special show at the Grammy Museum, while discussing the making of the record on stage. After that, the plans are a little up in the air.

“We got in a little late in the game, with the record coming out August 2,” Currie says. “So a summer tour is not in the works, but we did sign with TKO [Booking Agency] and Brie and I are gonna start doing rehearsals, fine tuning things while Dave [Schulz, keyboards] is on the road with Berlin. We might have a tour in the fall.”

The Drop with Cherie Currie and Brie Darling takes place at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 1, at The Grammy Museum.
FRI 8/2

Boy Dirt Car
@ COXIAL

The ‘80s were a great time for just picking up trash and beating on it if you wanted to start a band. Because that tended to infuriate both instrumental virtuosos in the "straight" music world and just ordinary people who took pains to heap scorn on everything they condemned as "not art," the practice carried with it a certain youthful allure. Decades later, most of those scandalized professionals and boojah scolds have either died, retired or otherwise fucked off, and now Midwest metal murderers Boy Dirt Car plague Los Angeles for the first time in 33 years. Original member Darren Brown is here in full effect with his partner Julie; also on the bill is Richard Skott — no slouch himself when it comes to banging on shit — of ‘80s Michigan noise merchants Hunting Lodge, and local noise chancer Nu Sire. —DAVID COTNER

SATURDAY • AUGUST 10

Back to School Sale!
20% Off Posters, Lunchboxes, Mugs, Headphones & Amoeba Gear!

SATURDAY • AUGUST 10

Alison Sudol
@ The Moroccan Lounge

Alison Sudol is an actor and singer who has portrayed Queenie Goldstein in the Fantastic Beasts films. About a decade ago, she crafted intelligent, enchanting pop songs under the nom de plume A Fine Frenzy. But Sudol, who was born in Seattle and raised in Los Angeles, quietly drifted off the map a few years ago. “I’ve been disappearing for as long as I can remember,” the singer confesses on her website about her musical invisibility in recent years. “Since I was little, I’ve felt a vast, wordless sadness that I couldn’t explain.” And yet Sudol has finally re-emerged from the gloom with a 2018 EP, Moon, and a recent single, “The Runner,” in which her whispery vocals flicker enigmatically across a shadowy wilderness. —FALLING JAMES

SATURDAY • AUGUST 10

Imperial Teen
@ The Echo

Back when Imperial Teen formed in San Francisco in 1996, keyboardist Roddy Bottoms’ other band Faith No More were headlining festivals around the globe, having just put out the incredible King for a Day… Fool for a Lifetime album. But even then, this was no side project. Imperial Teen was and is a real band, a democracy consisting of four talented musicians, and they’ve put out six excellent indie-pop albums over the years, including this year’s Now We Are Timeless. The four members are now spread over four cities (including Will Schwartz, right here in L.A.), but it hasn’t dampened their ability to write catchy ditties with Mamas & Papas-esque male/female vocals. The Younger Lovers and DJ Javi En Rose also play. —BRETT CALLWOOD

SUN 8/4

Holy Grail
@ The Viper Room

Los Angeles rockers Holy Grail have flown the heavy metal flag proudly for a decade with a sound highlighted by nods to the early ‘80s’ new wave of British heavy metal and the harder-edged bands of that era’s Sunset Strip scene. Eli Santana and Alex Lee sling dueling shred guitar riffs while vocalist John-Paul Luna shouts for the heavens with an air raid siren approach. It’s been a few years since their stellar 2016 release, Times of Pride and Peril, but a taste of new material from an upcoming EP release awaits the heavy metal devoted. Canada’s Striker will also provide sufficient riffage, as last year’s Play To Win was an infectious record striking the balance between furious dosages of speed and the pop sensibilities of power ballad-era Scorpions. —JASON ROCHE

Carla Olson & Todd Wolfe, The Cherry Bluestorms
@ Skinny’s Lounge

The International Pop Overthrew festival culminates in dramatic fashion with a closing set by singer-guitarist-producer Carla Olson and Sheryl Crow guitarist Todd Wolfe. The duo ramble across a dusty landscape of blues, folk and classic rock on their recent album,
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The Hidden Hills Sessions, which includes a wearily heartfelt acoustic version of the Stones' "Wild Horses" and a poignantly affecting remake of Blind Faith's "Can't Find My Way Home." In the past, Olson has traded eloquently piercing licks with former Stones lead guitarist Mick Taylor and collaborated with The Byrds' Gene Clark, and she was a founding member of The Textones, the late-1970s L.A. power-pop group who introduced the world to future Go-Go's bassist Kathy Valentine. The IPO bill is bolstered by a set from The Cherry Bluestorms, who alternate energetic Beatles makeovers with their own radiant garage-pop original songs. ~FALLING JAMES

MON 8/5
Elvis Costello & the Imposters, Blondie @ THE GREEK THEATRE
Although Blondie tour these days without early members Jimmy Destri, Nigel Harrison, Frank Infante and Gary Valentine, the current lineup fronts by lead singer Debbie Harry, guitarist Chris Stein and drummer Clem Burke still packs considerable punch onstage. Harry's vocals remain lilting, Burke attacks his kit with a controlled chaos and visual flair that evoke Keith Moon, and Stein's occasional solos exude a seedy Velvet Underground vibe that hearkens back to the group's CBGB roots (one wishes that Stein did more of the soloing instead of the group's generic metal guitarist, Tommy Kessler). Blondie's better songs ("Dreaming," "In the Sun") remain timeless, however, Elvis Costello's ongoing attempts to approximate the wit and sophistication of Broadway tune-smiths continue to feel mannered and stilted compared with the driving urgency of such early tracks as "Pump It Up." ~FALLING JAMES

WED 8/7
James, Psychedelic Furs @ THE GREEK THEATRE
Another night of nostalgia at the Greek. In fairness, every time British post-punk band The Psychedelic Furs tours, they put together an excellent package. Previous tour-mates in recent years have included the Happy Mondays and the Lemonheads. And sure, everyone wants to sing along to "Pretty In Pink" and "Love My Way." But James is the really interesting element here. The Manchester indie rock band has a string of hits in the '90s, and all of them stand up to the test of time. "Sit Down," "Come Home," "She's a Star," and of course, "Laid." They're a bit chirpier than the headliners but still, two wonderful bands. Dear Boy also play. ~BRETT CALLWOOD

Buddy Guy @ THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL
Although this triple-threat blues bill at the Bowl includes the estimable harmonica player Charlie Musselwhite and former Fabulous Thunderbirds lead guitarist Jimmie Vaughan, the real thrills and chills will be stirred up by Buddy Guy. The Louisiana native declared in the title of his 1991 album, Damn Right I've Got the Blues, and he continues to rave the poetically retro modern-blues landscape with incendiary guitar playing that is overtly dazzling yet also infused with soulful force and a nimble-fingered dexterity. Beyond his guitar supremacy, Guy is a masterful showman who can invoke and salute his fellow blues legends with a piercing acuity, singing with a commanding charisma and wrestling with his guitar with an acrobatic flair. Damn right, he's great — the 82-year-old legend plays with more energy and intensity than any other living blues guitarist. ~FALLING JAMES

THU 8/8
The Original Wailers @ THE ROSE
This can get confusing. There's a band called The Wailers, currently on tour in Europe. Then there's this band, The Original Wailers. That's a bit Spinal Tap (/The New Originals), and we'll never know what Bob Marley would have made of it all. This version was formed by guitarists Al Anderson and Junior Marvin in 2008 after they left The Wailers. The name is a bit misleading too — there are no original Wailers in The Original Wailers. All of that said, this band put out the Miracle EP in 2012 and it was nominated for a Grammy for best reggae album. So forget the naming issues, don't worry about who's in the band, just dance. ~BRETT CALLWOOD

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THE WEEKLY
really date well. Separately, not very attract-
lineup is made up of three bands that didn’t
also on the bill, critics will point out that this
Costello/Blondie show. With Our Lady Peace
tue
aura that fans can’t help but gravitate toward.
lyrics, it’s her eccentric, care-free energy and
a few weeks a/f_ter her brother Jaden Smith’s
studio album, /T_he project arrives
18-year-old has /f_inally unleashed her third
her debut single “Whip My Hair, “ which was
/T_he R&B singer-songwriter blew up with
Jada Pinket Smith’s daughter, Willow Smith.

Smiths continue to feel mannered and stilted
the wit and sophistication of Broadway tune-
Costello’s ongoing attempts to approximate
CBGB roots (one wishes that Stein did more
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Clem Burke still packs considerable punch
Harry, guitarist Chris Stein and drummer
Although Blondie tour these days without
Elvis Costello & the Imposters, Blondie
mon
radiant garage-pop original songs.
energetic Beatles makeovers with their own
from /T_he Cherry Bluestorms, who alternate
Valentine. /T_he IPO bill is bolstered by a set
the world to future Go-Go’s bassist Kathy
founding member of /T_he Textones, the late-
with /T_he Byrds’ Gene Clark, and she was a
lead guitarist Mick Taylor and collaborated
My Way Home. “ In the past, Olson has traded
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8/7

BRETT CALLWOOD

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