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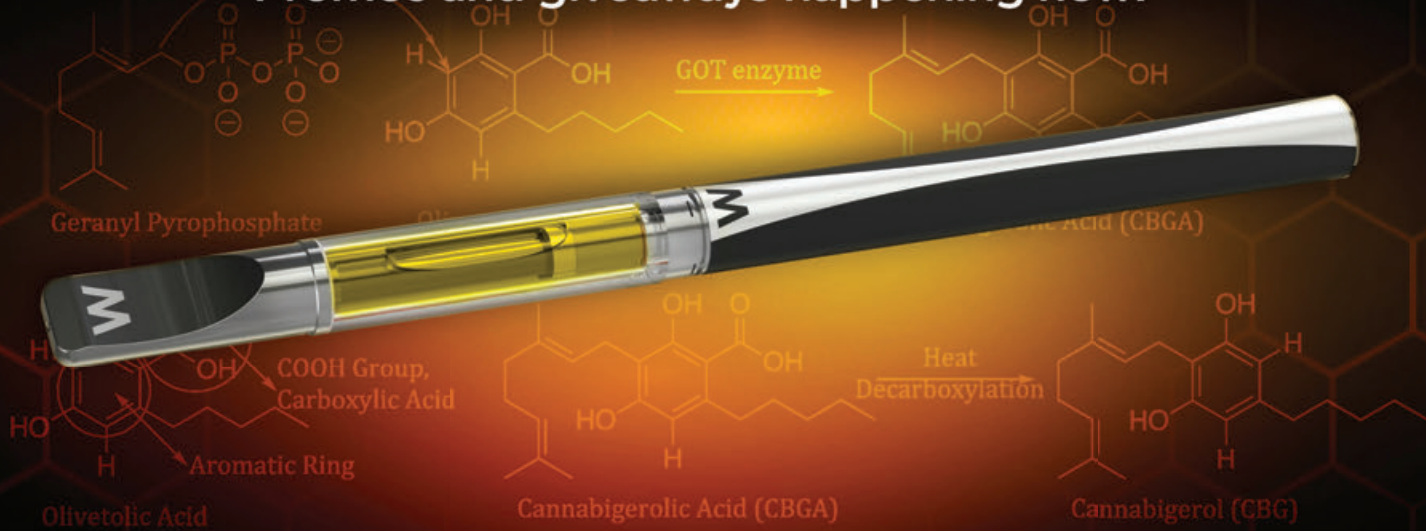
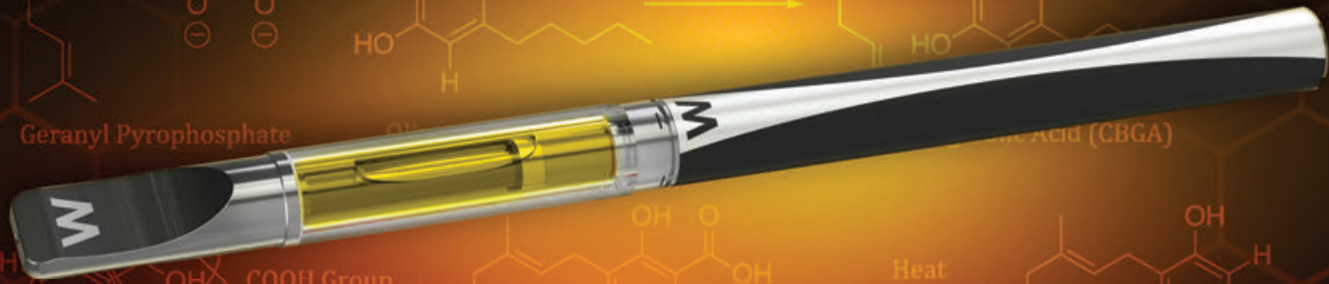
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Thousands of food vendors roam L.A.'s parks, roads and beaches. Now they're waging an epic battle for legalization

BY SARAH PORTNOY

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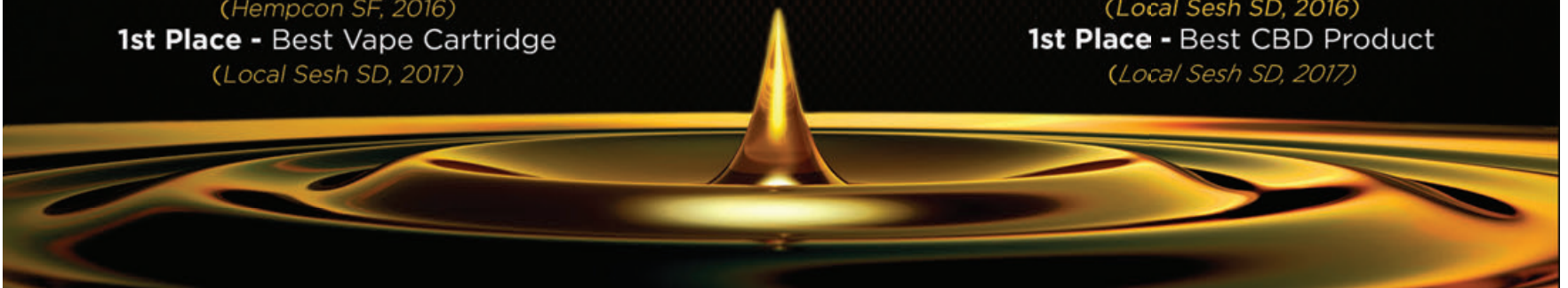
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STREET FIGHT

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Thousands of food vendors roam L.A.'s parks, sidewalks and beaches. Now they're waging an epic battle for legalization. **BY SARAH PORTNOY.**

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In pre-Hispanic times, people from all over Mesoamerica converged on the market of Tlatelolco, located on the site of a present-day neighborhood in Mexico City. Markets have always been a focal point of Mesoamerican trade and gastronomic abundance, as Bernal Díaz del Castillo, a soldier in the army of Hernán Cortés, observed in 1519, when he visited what is now Mexico City. Díaz found all manner of basic and luxury goods being sold on the streets of the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán — cacao, vanilla, insect eggs, even iguana meat. Today, ven-

You can get *tacos de canasta* for less than a quarter on the side streets near the Zócalo, the city's main square; little hotcakes with *cajeta*, or goat milk caramel, on the cobblestone streets of San Ángel; and *esquites*, boiled corn kernels seasoned with salt, epazote, butter and lime, in Coyoacán.

As scenes from Diego Rivera's famous mural at the National Palace in Mexico City demonstrate, street vending in contemporary Mexico has significant pre-Columbian roots that reflect the rich traditions and resourcefulness of Latino communities on both sides of the border.

because it remains the only one of 10 major U.S. cities where street vending is illegal. An estimated 10,000 to 12,000 vendors sell food at the beaches, parks and sidewalks all over Los Angeles.

The Latino vendors — many of whom are undocumented Mexican and Central American immigrants — have suffered decades of discrimination and fines from law enforcement, not to mention extortion from gangs. Police harassment and ticketing continue to be occupational hazards for street vendors. In 2013, for example, police made 1,200 arrests for sidewalk vending.

Recently, with the campaign rheto-

owners.

"We have to acknowledge that street vending is already a part of Los Angeles' culture and, for thousands of mostly immigrant families, their only source of income," Huizar told *L.A. Weekly* via email.

Early in 2017, the City Council will hold another meeting to vote on the proposed framework and its amendments. Community organizer Roberto García-Ceballos says that the priority for this meeting is for the City Council "to decriminalize vending right away, given the current political climate of the new presidency."

STREET FIGHT

Street vendors working late at night on York Boulevard in Highland Park

Thousands of food vendors roam L.A.'s parks, sidewalks and beaches. Now they're waging an epic battle for legalization

BY SARAH PORTNOY • PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANNY LIAO

dors at *tianguis* — markets in Mexico — as well as sidewalks in Los Angeles sell a vast array of ceramic cookware, household goods, fruit and prepared foods. These foods also are found on thousands of street corners throughout Mexico and Central America. The *vendedores ambulantes*, or street vendors, are a vital part of the countries' informal economy. In Mexico City alone, at least 200,000 street vendors try to make a living on the city's sidewalks every day.

The tradition of street vending is one that has traveled with migrants from Mexico and Central America to Los Angeles, as well as other cities throughout the United States. On sidewalks across L.A., street vendors sell bacon-wrapped hot dogs, sliced fruit with chili powder and lime, tacos and *paletas* (popsicles), as well as clothing and seasonal holiday items. Los Angeles stands out among other American cities because of its sheer number of Latino migrants, and

ric and election of President Donald Trump, the vendors' already precarious situation has become far more critical. L.A.'s city officials have finally recognized the need to legalize and decriminalize street vending in Los Angeles. On Dec. 12, councilmembers Curren D. Price and José Huizar held a hearing at City Hall to begin the legalization process. Hundreds of vendors and their supporters filled the chambers, along with a contingent of small business

Throughout his campaign, Trump threatened to deport undocumented immigrants with a criminal record. The election results struck outright panic in the hearts of undocumented immigrants, including many of L.A.'s street vendors, who can be arrested at anytime on criminal misdemeanor charges and — if Trump's threats become reality — threatened with deportation. After years of councilmembers dragging their feet on the issue, it was Trump's (10 »

» 9) election that finally pushed them to act.

“Today, given the background of a Trump presidency and assuming he’s going to go after immigrants, there is a renewed energy to move forward and decriminalize vending for one, and adopt a legal framework second,” Huizar’s office said in a statement to *L.A. Weekly*.

Why do street vendors continue to hit the pavement despite the risk of fines, police harassment and even imprisonment? Typically, vendors have limited education and most are undocumented; therefore, they have few employment alternatives and need to provide for their families.

The story of Boyle Heights vendor Caridad Vásquez, a dynamic, warm, almost 60-year-old woman originally from Colima, Mexico, echoes this trend. As a child, she sold tamales on the streets to help her family make ends meet. After marrying her husband in Michoacán, her mother-in-law taught her to prepare different traditional salsas, *nopales* and other recipes. With the knowledge she gleaned from her mother-in-law, Vásquez prepared and sold food to support her family. In 1995, she came with her husband to the United States. As she tells it, when she arrived she realized she “didn’t know how to do anything ... not sew, cut hair, nothing. All [she] knew how to do was be a street vendor,” so that’s what she did, despite the hazards. Soon after arriving in the United States, she set up a little stand selling enchiladas, but the police stopped her. Later, she reinvented herself as a nighttime vendor of *pozole*, a traditional Mexican stew, and began to frequent the Breed Street area of Boyle Heights, a Big Lots parking lot that became a nighttime market filled with vendors during the peak of the recession. In 2008-09, when the recession hit, many Latinos lost their jobs or saw their incomes cut drastically. As a result, Vásquez and hundreds of other vendors began to sell food — or anything else — to survive. Today, Vásquez serves a selection of tacos, quesadillas and salsas on the sidewalks of Boyle Heights.

For Vásquez, street vending offers a vital form of economic mobility and entrepreneurship. Given the undocumented status of many vendors, they also have limited political clout with politicians, creating another obstacle in the fight for legalization. In her study, *Struggles, Urban Citizenship and Belonging: The Experience of Undocumented Street Vendors and Food Truck Owners in Los Angeles*, academic Fazila Bhimji found that even though the vendors work outside the formal economy and often lack legal status, street vending allows them to participate in the public sphere. The fight for legalization has given them a sense that they have a voice in their community.

The value of people congregating around a cart on a sidewalk while stopping to buy fruit or a taco as they walk home from work can be easily over-



Avenue 26
taco stand



Hooper Avenue,
downtown L.A.



Street vendor on
Olympic Boulevard



Beekeeper Amadeo Delgado has sold his honey on the street for six years.

Police harassment and ticketing continue to be occupational hazards for street vendors. In 2013, for example, police made 1,200 arrests for sidewalk vending.

looked, but in low-income Latino neighborhoods these scenes are a vital part of everyday life. Vendors often create a vibrant street culture. More than 100 vendors work downtown on weekends in the area known as the Piñata District — or the Mercado Olympic, as it’s informally known. By noon on a Sunday, the sidewalks are teeming with people shopping, eating and socializing.

One of the vendors, Amadeo Delgado, a Boyle Heights beekeeper, has been selling his delicious flavored honey on the sidewalks of downtown’s Piñata District on Sunday for the past six years. Delgado had to relocate his stand a few blocks because, quite often, “The city came and took away our things and we had to run away. There was always drama,” he says. Now, Delgado rents a sidewalk space from the adjacent piñata warehouse to feel more secure.

He thinks the prospect of legalization is “amazing, as it would help us to get money to maintain our families and will create more money for the city of Los Angeles.” Delgado estimates that the Piñata District vendors together gross \$70,000 to \$80,000 each weekend, “even though the government does not accept it.”

With a wave of his hand, Delgado emphasizes, “All these people you see here

vending food, they are hard workers and they contribute to the city.”

Another Mercado Olympic vendor, Merced Sanchez, also seemed hopeful about the recent steps at City Hall: “The city doesn’t want to see that we are not an economic burden. We have fought hard and knocked on many city councilmembers’ doors for years — Huizar, Buscaino, Martinez, Price, even the mayor has received us in his office — but now it seems like finally they are willing to work with us.”

The city of Los Angeles has not always been so inhospitable to street vendors. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, L.A.’s population soared from 50,000 to 1.2 million. Tamale carts lined the streets of downtown, selling to the new migrants in search of an affordable meal. Yet, as Jeffrey Pilcher observes in his book *Planet Taco*, these vendors often were reputed to have “deviant sexuality” and were associated with alcoholism, simply because they often clustered around bars, catering to late-night drinkers.

Although street vending was allowed, vendors had to comply with many regulations, and their position was always precarious. When the automobile took over city streets in the 1920s, pedestrian

traffic and mobile vendors were pushed onto the alleys and sidewalks. In these public spaces, according to popular culture and newspaper reports of the time, vendors often were accused of perversity, criminality and unsanitary practices. These actions restricted sidewalk activity and made sidewalk vending more challenging.

In later decades, as the city expanded, it became a car-oriented metropolis of freeways, a poor system of public transportation, and pedestrians struggling in an inhospitable environment. The Los Angeles City Council voted in 1974 to ban sidewalk vending throughout the city, but then-mayor Tom Bradley vetoed the ordinance because he was concerned that it would victimize struggling populations. Just as proponents of street-vending legalization argue today, the mayor believed that it was important to “encourage, not discourage, the creation of new small-business enterprises, without which upward mobility on the socioeconomic ladder would become that much more difficult,” according to Mark Vallianatos, professor and policy director at Occidental College’s Urban & Environmental Policy Institute.

Despite Mayor Bradley’s veto, a ban on sidewalk vending was successfully instituted in 1980. At the same time that the selling of street food was banned on Los Angeles’ sidewalks, Mexican, Guatemalan and Salvadoran immigrants began to pour into the city looking for employment opportunities following an early-’80s economic recession in Mexico and Central America. The spike in migration caused an increased demand for street food from new immigrants for whom it was culturally familiar. (12»



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» 10) This ban on the underground economy, long a part of the city's public landscape, caused vendors to be seen as criminals and violators of a city ordinance. Many vendors were arrested; some were beaten, and others served jail time. In her street-vendor study, Bhimji writes that their actions were considered misdemeanors and they could serve up to 180 days in jail if convicted of vending, despite earning as little as \$20 a day.

The ban turned vending into a political issue and motivated vendors to organize. In 1987, street vendors began meeting to discuss their targeting by the Los Angeles Police Department; the next year they established the *Asociación de Vendedores Ambulantes* (Association of Street Vendors). The association discussed immigration, police harassment and other human rights issues, as well as legalizing vending. Five years later, in 1993, as many as 100 vendors packed a City Council committee meeting to ask the council to set a date for legalization.

A year later, the Special Sidewalk Vending District Ordinance was

cause was taken up by East Los Angeles Community Corporation (ELACC) and Leadership for Urban Renewal Network (LURN), organizations that work on behalf of the Latino residents of East L.A. and Boyle Heights. In 2010, the first vendor community forum to discuss legalization was held. After that, the movement began to build momentum; it began to push the city toward legalization. The groups organized town hall meetings with thousands of vendors around L.A. County to hear their concerns and see how the vendors envisioned the legalization process.

In 2012, ELACC and LURN teamed up with a working group from the Los Angeles Food Policy Council to draft a proposed ordinance for legalization. In November 2013, city councilmembers José Huizar and Curren Price authored a motion to look at legalizing the practice, but they met with resistance from some members of the City Council.

In May 2014, the Chief Legislative Analyst's office recommended that Los Angeles adopt a citywide street-vending program. Since then, more than 60 organizations from different sectors

a mere \$15 a day and had no means to pay the hundreds of dollars in tickets. To pay off the debt, the elderly Calderón would have to do 38 hours of labor, an excessive amount of time given her age. Under their professor's supervision, the law students stood with Calderón in court and grilled the police officer who cited her. Still, weeks after the court date, when most of her tickets were dismissed, Calderón was cited again.

With the media attention and interest from City Hall, the movement backing the vendors now had growing support from the public.

As the years passed, the vendors and their supporters became increasingly frustrated with the city leaders' inability to move forward, as well as with their loss of property during crackdowns. During raids, the police confiscate vendors' carts and merchandise and threaten vendors with citation if they do not allow their goods to be taken away. "When the police come, there is panic," street vendor Merced Sanchez explains. "They take everything: tables, tents, merchandise. Sometimes when they come to arrest people who sell boot-

supporters find the restriction of two vendors per block and the veto power of the brick-and-mortar business owners over street vendors to be unfair and illogical. "This newest move is welcomed, and for the most part the proposal for a citywide framework is good," Rudy Espinoza, executive director of LURN, says, "but we have a few concerns. Limiting two vendors per block does not consider the diversity of our city. Some areas should have two per block, and some should not. It's an arbitrary number that doesn't make sense. This is not what capitalism in America is about."

Espinoza says that he also is concerned about the power the proposed framework gives to small business owners because it opens the door for exploitation. It gives business owners the opportunity to say that they are not going to sign unless the vendor pays them to do so. "You can't tell businesses to sign off on vendors," he says. "If I'm a coffee shop owner, there is no law that a Starbucks can't open on my block. It should be the same for vendors; the city must treat people the same or it is unfair."



Mercado Olympic vendor
Merced Sanchez



Street vendors along Olympic
Boulevard downtown

enacted to allow selling in eight designated areas of Los Angeles, as part of a two-year pilot program. Several hundred vendors celebrated their newly legal status, but six months later Robert Lopez of the *Los Angeles Times* reported that no vending licenses had been issued and that vendors continued to complain of harassment by LAPD. Lopez reported that vendors were protesting police harassment outside a police station, waving signs that read "*Somos vendedores, no criminales*" ("We are vendors, not criminals").

In many ways, the city's attempt to impose geographic limits on the practice of vending was a failure. Only one zone was established, and today there are none.

Nearly three decades later, street vending remains a contentious — and illegal — activity in Los Angeles. But over the past few years, community-based organizations have begun to recognize the need for creative solutions to support the vendors. In 2008-09, the vendors'

have been working tirelessly with vendors throughout L.A. to make legalization a reality. Together they formed the Los Angeles Street Vendor Campaign, an initiative to legalize food vending on L.A.'s sidewalks.

Leaders of the movement have held large demonstrations at City Hall and have engaged in a social media campaign on Twitter and Facebook. Yet the proposal has been delayed time and time again as different city departments weigh in. During one of the vendors' visits to City Hall in 2014, Spanish-language media captured the plight of Rosa Calderón, a septuagenarian vendor who has no family in the United States and has faced constant arrest and harassment by police. Among other citations, she was last arrested for selling Christmas tree ornaments. Calderón's story inspired UCLA law school students to represent her at her trial after she accumulated seven tickets for violating the ban on street vending. Calderón estimates she earns

legged items, they give everyone tickets that range from \$300 to \$2,000."

On Oct. 30, 2015, the vendors filed a lawsuit alleging that their constitutional rights had been violated. The vendors and their powerful lawyers, the ACLU and other legal groups, held a news conference outside Los Angeles police headquarters, announcing that they were suing the city of Los Angeles and a local business improvement district in federal court. They say their carts and belongings have been improperly seized, and they were not given a receipt or any opportunity to reclaim their property. The current unregulated system creates a legal limbo and breeds these sorts of violations of constitutional rights.

The proposed framework now under consideration calls for a limit of two vendors per block in commercial districts and requires vendors to obtain permission from adjacent businesses to operate. While the plan is encouraging for vendors, some merchants and their

When questioned about this aspect of the framework, Councilman Huizar's office explained that whole blocks of businesses would not be weighing in; instead, it would be only one business. "The goal is to get something adopted as soon as possible. We need some framework that's going to get us the votes needed for approval."

Why is street vending still illegal in the city with the highest number of vendors of any in the United States? There are numerous reasons that politicians and business owners have been opposed to vending. Some brick-and-mortar businesses oppose the vendors because they say they create congestion on busy sidewalks, interfere with strollers and wheelchairs, leave trash behind and offer unfair competition, since vendors do not pay taxes or rent and can park their carts just outside of restaurants. Yet some businesses also benefit from the increased foot traffic. Others criticize street vendors because they

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» 12) believe they are unsanitary, or they fear that the vendors attract gang activity and violence.

Supporters of the vendors argue that instead of creating crime, the presence of vendors and their clients in dangerous neighborhoods acts as a deterrent for crime and gang activity.

Studies show that business owners and street vendors can coexist. According to a 2015 report from the Economic Roundtable, vendors avoid selling close to retailers who offer similar products. Instead, the report explains that vendors play a complementary role to brick-and-mortar establishments and that brick-and-mortars suffer when vendors leave the neighborhood.

Vendors make financial and cultural contributions to the city. The Sidewalk Stimulus Report estimates that street-food vendors generate more than \$100

at the positive impact of vending in the area. The study conducted a pedestrian survey that found community members ate frequently from the vendors: 16 percent as often as once a week, 16 percent a few times a week and 20 percent at least once a month.

It is estimated that 25 percent of street carts already sell whole and/or cut fruit and vegetables. Proponents of legalization argue that a permit process would further the selling of healthy food by providing incentives for healthy-food vendors, such as expediting the permit process, offering discounted permits and allowing produce vendors to sell near schools and other restricted areas. Legalization could make it easier for healthy-food vendors to create a needed service in their communities.

The street vendor's way of life is part of what makes Los Angeles such



Vendors speak before the City Council

million annually in income for the Los Angeles economy, and vendor spending sustains 5,234 jobs.

Sidewalk merchant Merced Sanchez explains that her own business is interconnected with other immigrant entrepreneurs. "What the city officials don't realize is that at the end of the day we all contribute to the city's economy," Sanchez says. "I buy my merchandise from a Korean vendor, and if I don't go and buy from him, he doesn't make the money for his rent."

According to a fact sheet by the Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College, it would prove beneficial not only for vendors but also for the city to allow vendors to participate in a proper system of taxation and registration.

Street vending also allows easier access to healthy food in low-income Latino neighborhoods considered food deserts, areas with many corner and liquor stores but few affordable, healthy food options. A 2010 study by the USC School of Policy, Planning and Development titled "Street Vending in Boyle Heights: Examining the Challenges and Opportunities" recognized the concerns of community members and local business owners, as well as those of the vendors themselves, while also looking

a Latino city, a Mexican and Central American immigrant city dotted with rainbow-colored umbrellas and carts selling sliced fruit, *raspados* (snow cones) or *birria* (goat stew) tacos, where undocumented workers can be small business owners who support their families, even if they do so at constant risk of police harassment and fines. The stories of Vasquez, Sanchez and Delgado are part of a larger story of a disenfranchised group trying to use their cultural heritage to make a living. Their stories show that, despite their outsider status, the vendors find empowerment through vending.

And the city is starting to come around. In an email to *L.A. Weekly*, Councilman Huizar says he is hopeful that "at long last we can move forward with a plan to legalize street vending in the city of Los Angeles. We need to bring them out of the shadows, regulate this industry and create a system that is fair to all parties."

After decades of struggle, a path to legalized vending is closer to becoming a reality.

This is adapted from the chapter "Street Food Vendors in Los Angeles" in Food, Health and Culture in Latino Los Angeles (2016) by Sarah Portnoy.

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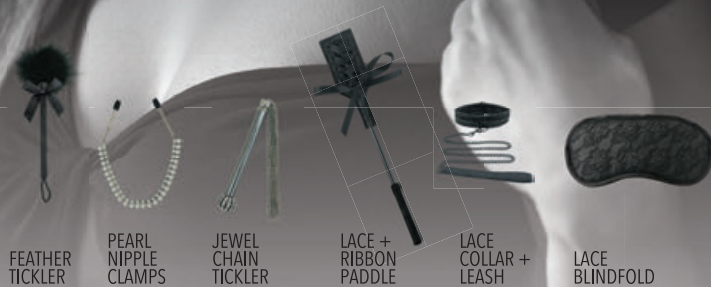
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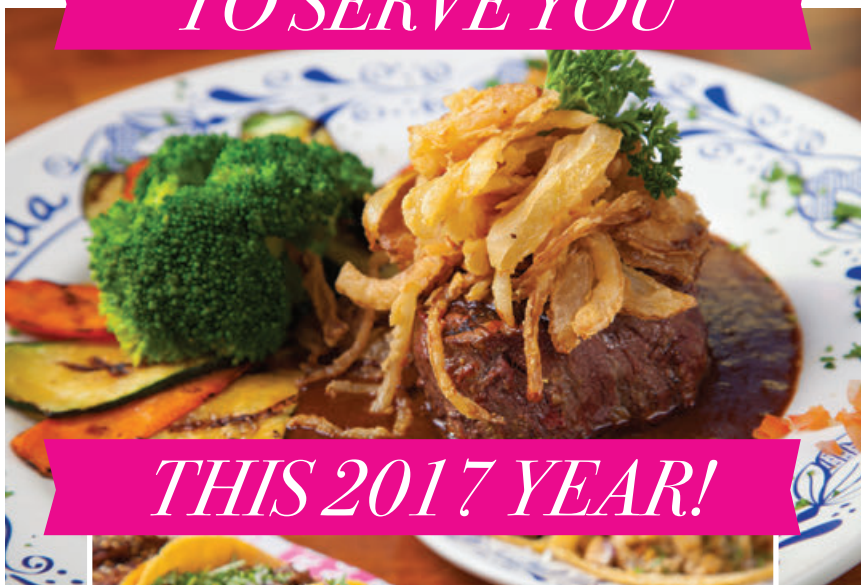
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TAKE CHARGE

Restaurant owners are turning to service charges to address wage issues. But some employees see it as legal wage theft

BY BESHA RODELL

It doesn't matter how much we, as a culture, love food. It doesn't matter how many cooking shows are on TV, or how many new restaurants open, or how many articles are written about those new restaurants. Unless something changes, the food world is about to collapse on itself.

"It's a system that, fundamentally, is broken," says Curtis Stone, chef and owner of Maude in Beverly Hills and Gwen in Hollywood. He is not the first to say so — not by a long shot. All over the country, restaurateurs and food writers and analysts have been shouting from the rooftops: This industry is doomed unless we come up with a solution, and fast. How is it that, in an era when food is more culturally relevant than ever, when more people are spending more of their incomes on eating out, we could be facing such a dire outlook?

There are a host of reasons for this pessimism, and they spring from a baseline reality that the restaurant industry was always a tricky equation. Profit margins are tiny, costs are high, and it's traditionally taken a fair amount of capital to even enter the game in the first place. The public's attention span is incredibly short, in part because of all those new restaurants opening. Restaurant ownership is not a particularly good gamble, even at the best of times. But new economic forces are making those already poor odds even worse, and they mainly come down to one word: labor.

The minimum wage is going up. By 2022 it will be \$15 an hour in California. Owners are looking at the mathematics of a vastly increased payroll and wondering where the money will come from. At the same time, a long-standing malady in the restaurant industry is coming to a head: the divide between tipped front-of-house workers (servers), and non-tipped back-of-house employees (cooks, dishwashers, porters).

Stone explains the conundrum: "If you look at a city like L.A., where minimum wage is \$9 an hour, and you've got a dishwasher coming in for an eight-hour shift, at \$9 an hour, how is he going to pay his rent? And then you've got a server coming in for a few hours, and they also get that \$9, but they walk away with a few hundred dollars in tips on top of that. It leads to an industry where, eventually, no one wants to wash the pots, or cook in the kitchen for that matter, and everyone wants to carry the plates, because that's where the money is. But it's not necessarily where all the skill is, or the training, or the requirement for education."

Stone's use of the phrase "carry the plates" might sound casual, but it's an important distinction. In court cases that have decided the intricacies of labor laws as they relate to tipping, the divide between who may share in tips and who may not hinges mainly on physical interaction with customers at the table. In other words, if you put food on the plate but don't leave the kitchen, no tips for you. If you carry that plate from the kitchen to the table, you are eligible to share in tips.

This has always been a factor and a point of contention between front- and back-of-house staffs, and in recent years (as kitchen workers dwindle, due to the lack of decent pay), there's been a move by restaurateurs — most notably and vocally by New York's Danny Meyer — to move away from tipping altogether. There are a few ways to go about that, but in Los Angeles a growing number of restaurants have implemented a "service charge," meaning an automatic charge — usually 18 or 20 percent — added to your bill at the end of a meal. While consumers might think that

THERE'S BEEN A MOVE TO DO AWAY WITH TIPPING ALTOGETHER.

this charge simply replaces the tip they're used to leaving, the truth of the practice is much more complicated.

A couple of months back, I wrote an article about the fact that in many restaurants where a service charge has been added, it's easy for the charge to go unnoticed by customers, leading them to mistakenly leave a full extra tip. Many restaurants work hard to make sure the diner knows a charge has already been added, but some do not, and it can feel to the customer as though the server is sneakily hoping for a double tip. Like most people, I assumed that the service charge is a tip. In fact, it is not — in Los

Angeles, the money belongs 100 percent to the business itself.

"It is a total land grab," one L.A. server, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, told me the day after my service-charges story came out. "These guys are just taking the money and running. It's bullshit." The server described the experience of working in one restaurant that operated with the service-charge model. "At first it was great — we were all making a ton of money. The dishwashers were making, like, \$18 an hour! It was amazing for them to have an actual living wage. Everyone was so happy. The servers were making money, the cooks were making money. And then the owners realized that there was all this cash that was legally theirs, and they were giving it away. And slowly, the money started to disappear. We weren't any less busy. But the money went away, and it went straight into the pockets of the owners."

I was told by another disgruntled employee (who asked for anonymity) that it's now becoming commonplace for owners to pocket "service charges" in some of the city's high-end sushi restaurants. Many laws have been put in place over the years to avoid the practice of owners or managers taking the tips of their service staff. In fact, that's exactly what the law excluding kitchen staff from the tip pool was meant, in part, to do. But calling the tip a "service charge" offers a way around that, unless a city provides specific laws that stipulate otherwise. Santa Monica is one of those cities — it has an ordinance that "requires that employers who collect service charges from customers must pay the entirety of those charges to the workers who performed those services." That can include kitchen staff, but owners cannot keep any part of the charge.

Of course, the L.A. operators who agreed to speak with me (there were a few who didn't respond to requests for interviews) don't see it as stealing tips — they see it as a way to more equitably pay all of their staff members. The charge allows them to distribute those funds between employees as they see fit.

Emil Eyvazoff, the owner of 71Above, opened the restaurant with a service charge in place. He is an enthusiastic advocate of the system, saying that the flexibility it allows to redistribute wages is one of the only ways restaurants will be able to stay in business as labor costs rise. But, Eyvazoff says, "One hundred percent of those charges go to the staff." Eyvazoff and his management team have figured out a formula whereby a certain percentage of the service charge goes to servers while smaller percentages go to bussers, kitchen staff, dishwashers — everyone but owners and managers.

"It is also completely transparent," he says. "If anyone on staff wants to see what money came in, where it's going, they can do that." (I independently confirmed with one of the servers at 71Above that this is indeed the system, and that he feels it is above-board.) The upshot, Eyvazoff says, is that kitchen staff make a slightly higher wage than they usually would, and service staff make a slightly lower wage. But because 71Above has high check averages, the servers still are doing well, (19 »



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Clara Polito of Clara Cakes in her Atwater kitchen

PHOTO BY HEATHER PLATT

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TEEN BAKER STARTED AT THE SMELL

19-YEAR-OLD CLARA POLITO IS CUTE, BUT THAT'S NOT THE POINT

Irarely drive. Like, when I drive with my mom, she's always stressed out." Clara Polito is clutching the steering wheel of her white Toyota Scion. It's 10:30 a.m. on a Friday morning and while many teens her age are studying for college exams, the 19-year-old brunette is swerving through traffic on the 110 south through downtown with aluminum containers of vegan cupcakes in tow. She is en route to Mercado La Paloma to make her first delivery of the day, to the vegan Ethiopian restaurant Azla.

Despite being relatively new to driving, Polito is not new to the business of selling baked goods. The teen baker, who goes by Clara Cakes, began selling her goods at downtown music venue the Smell at age 12. Though the famous punk venue seems an unlikely locale for a tween's bake sale, Polito was no stranger to the music scene.

"I had always grown up with punk around me because my mom always played different punk music. She grew up in L.A. during the '80s. So she was a New Waver and punker at the same time. My dad was in a band before he had us, too. Also, my two brothers had a huge influence on the music that I liked. I started selling at the Smell basically because my brother introduced me to No Age and this whole L.A. downtown scene." She points out that the Smell's all-ages policy made it easy for a youngster to do business there.

When asked if her love of baking ever got in the way of schoolwork, Polito says that it helped her academically. "My parents always just let me and my brothers kind of do what we wanted to do. I was able to balance

both because I think they were so different that it almost worked to my advantage, where school was an escape from baking and baking was an escape from school."

Ultimately, baking seemed to be the better escape. After moving from middle school in Moorpark to high school in L.A., she opted to graduate early. "I couldn't fathom being stuck in that place for four years like that. So I did independent study and got out in three years instead."

Polito bakes out of her home kitchen in Atwater Village, where she lives with her mom. Seven years after setting up shop at the Smell, she sells wholesale cupcakes to various restaurants, and custom cakes, cookies and pies to clients all over L.A. Her first cookbook, *Clara Cakes: Delicious and Simple Vegan Desserts for Everyone* is due out in March from Powerhouse Books.

"Powerhouse emailed me about a year ago. I think someone had told them about me and my baking. From there they researched me and asked if I'd ever thought about doing a cookbook. I thought about it for a month or two. In the end, it felt like the best decision," she says of her book deal.

At Azla, Clara Cakes' cupcakes dominate the sweets menu. "They wanted to start carrying vegan desserts and they approached me about it."

Pizzanista, in the downtown Arts District, is the next stop on her delivery route. "I got Pizzanista because I took a picture (on Instagram) of my pizza from Pizzanista. I don't even remember what I said, but Salman, the co-owner, wanted to talk to me about selling my desserts there. Instagram has definitely been a huge platform."

Despite all of this smooth sailing, there are challenges to being such a young entrepreneur. Until recently, Polito relied on her mom to drive her everywhere. And being taken seriously isn't a given.

"I'm still consistently described as 'cute.' I think most people that aren't in the food industry don't realize how much hard work goes into just making the food. I have my hands in everything, both the business and the book, stuff way beyond being in my kitchen now."

Polito's s'mores bars, soft Oreo cookie-stuffed chocolate chip cookies and fluffy cupcakes speak for themselves. Anyone who describes Clara Cakes as "cute" is



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not wrong. But anyone who has eaten her sweets knows that is definitely not the point. -Heather Platt

BURRITOS

One of L.A.'s Best Breakfast Burritos Is at the Flower District Farmers Market

Growing up in Orange County, for me Saturdays were breakfast burrito days. My dad and I would drive down to local-ish mini chain Los Primos, grab a couple \$2.99 chorizo, egg and potato burritos, take them back to the apartment, and eat them in front of the TV while watching college football just like any self-respecting American would.

I had no idea what chorizo was back then, aside from the spicy, textureless flakes of reddish-brown running through the mass of scrambled eggs. I vaguely remember seeing cooks thwap down a hunk of mysterious meat product on the flat-top, but that was the depth of my knowledge. And it didn't really matter what I knew, because it was objectively delicious.

After eating a chorizo verde breakfast burrito at the Flower District Farmers Market, I wish I could take back every other chorizo breakfast burrito I'd ever eaten. This burrito was retroactively-ruin-your-childhood-memories good.

Humberto Raygoza, better known as the Chori-Man, started slinging chorizo to restaurants out of a mobile cooler back in 2014, and he has since started supplying to big-name Mexican spots such as Salazar

and Sonoratown. And as good as his chorizo tastes in chef Esdras Ochoa's potato hash at Salazar, the best experience always comes directly from the source.

His breakfast burrito starts with some uncased chorizo that's chopped and sizzled on the flat-top. You get your choice of whatever chorizos he has available, but for the most unusual — and, to me, delicious — go with the *chorizo verde*. Rather than getting a flavor boost from dried chilies and spices, the Chori-Man's bright green sausage is infused with fresh cilantro and jalapeños, which gives it this bright, fresh flavor profile that tames the bursts of pork fat. I never thought I'd describe a sausage as verdant, but damn if this isn't a verdant sausage.

Raygoza throws a scoop of frozen tater tots — aka the best kind of tater tots — onto the griddle, and rather than making a scramble, he cracks the eggs and breaks up the yolks to create a fried and scrambled hybrid. I believe kids these days are calling this technique "frambing." Whatever. Everything gets thrown into a Chipotle-sized flour tortilla and wrapped up with a handful of Monterey Jack cheese to create a melty, hangover-curing masterpiece.

The fun doesn't stop inside the tortilla. The X factor here is the vat of oil-based, Veracruz-style *salsa macha*, roasty and packed full of four different chilies, that you're encouraged to slather on every bite. The end result is an incredibly complex and nuanced take on an L.A. classic.

I, for one, welcome our new artisanal breakfast burrito overlords. -Josh Scherer

Check facebook.com/thechoriman for dates and locations.

>> 17) even by fine-dining standards.

Chef David Schlosser at Shibumi takes a similar approach, though because he has a much smaller operation, the math is somewhat simpler. "We are implementing an 18 percent service charge," he told me via email. "Fifteen percent goes to the front-of-house, and we are retaining 3 percent in order to pay the back-of-house a more living wage." He estimates that customers are tipping on top of the service charge about 20 percent of the time, and that extra money goes directly to the servers (as do additional tips in all of these instances, as mandated by law).

Curtis Stone takes a different approach at Gwen and Maude. There, the restaurant keeps 100 percent of the service charge, and all employees are paid an agreed-upon hourly rate. Stone says the service charge goes toward supplementing higher wages all around, as well as funding health insurance for all employees.

Stone's approach is somewhat similar to the system at Barcito, another L.A. restaurant that's trying to address the tipping issue, with a few major differences. Barcito allows no tips at all, and there is no service charge. Prices are about 22 percent higher in order to fund health care, higher wages for front- and back-of-house staff, and a profit-sharing model. The absence of any tip or fee with the word "service" related to it leaves little room for confusion on the part of the customer about where

their money is going. When I spoke to Barcito owner Andrea Borgen about her no-tipping policy, she was very upfront about her belief that owners should have control of the wages — all of the wages — of their employees. "Employees' incomes will be put back in the hands of the employers, creating a meritocracy that has never before existed in this industry," she said.

All of the operators I spoke with appear to be earnestly trying to come up with a system that will allow them to pay higher wages without damaging their business model, as well as create some equity between front- and back-of-house staff. But as the disgruntled server I spoke to will tell you, not everyone is guaranteed to play fair. Anyone who has been in the industry long enough will tell you that many owners will — and do — steal tips. This gives them a legal avenue to do so. Even Eyvazoff admits this: "From a legal standpoint, I have zero obligation to pass on those funds to my employees," he says.

Eyvazoff says he hopes that does not become the trend, for reasons that go beyond fairness. "This is maybe our one chance to save this industry," he says. "If people abuse it, it will fall apart. Maybe you'll make some extra money for a year or two, but at what long-term cost? If workers distrust it, if the public distrusts it, the model will go away. And right now it's our only hope for a restaurant industry that's economically viable."

A portion of this year's The Essentials proceeds benefit 

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ART

South of the Bowie-der

In 1997, Mexico City-based rock photographer Fernando Aceves was contacted by a concert promoter and offered the chance to document David Bowie's first and only visit to Mexico. With Bowie's band along for the ride, Aceves photographed the legendary musician with a variety of cultural landmarks, from early Mesoamerican pyramids to Diego Rivera murals. Aceves' photos come to L.A. for the first time for the "David Bowie: Among the Mexican Masters." The exhibit at Forest Lawn Museum features 27 color images taken while Bowie was in Mexico for his Earthling Tour. *Forest Lawn Museum, 1712 S. Glendale Ave., Glendale; Fri., Jan. 27, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (runs through June 15); free. forestlawn.com.* —Gwynedd Stuart

DANCE

Bloc Party

Guest artists from Seattle's **Radost Folk Ensemble** join Los Angeles Ballet dancers with live music from the Varimezov Family Band. Since 1976, Radost has toured the Northwest presenting dance and music from Eastern European nations including Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Croatia, Macedonia and Bosnia. For the past week, Ivan and Tzvetanka Varimezov have been in residence at LAB. Don't look for pointe shoes as the LAB dancers join in performing Eastern European dances for this party. "Radost" translates to "joy" in Slavic languages. Joy may be the goal, but fun is certainly on the menu. *Los Angeles Ballet Center, 11755 Exposition Blvd., Sawtelle; Fri., Jan. 27, 7 p.m.; \$15. facebook.com/events/1070712816407286.* —Ann Haskins

COMEDY

Off the Wall

Partially inspired by President Donald

Night on Broadway:
See Saturday.

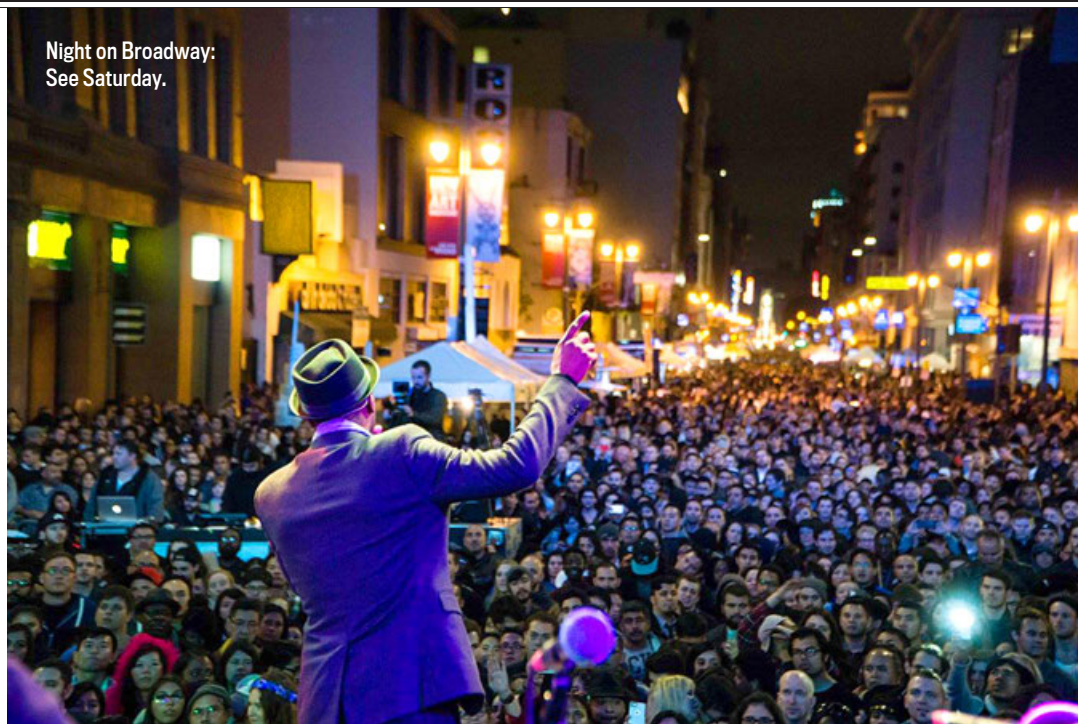


PHOTO BY MICHAEL FREY

Trump's anti-Latino and -immigrant rhetoric, Second City combats all the hate with what it does best: comedy. Directed by Martin Garcia, the theater's latest sketch show, **Hispanic Attack**, mocks ethnic misconceptions about Hispanics, including the myth of foreigners stealing Americans' jobs, and blasts stereotypical film and TV roles, such as the nanny, janitor or fiery Latina. The cast, featuring Roxana Altamirano, Mario Barra, Jorge Berrios, David Luna, Jay Pichardo, Jennifer Polania Garcia and Xochitl Romero, even sings a parody of "Part of Your World" from *The Little Mermaid* to spoof Trump's proposed U.S.-Mexico border wall. *Second City Studio Theater, 6560 Hollywood Blvd., 2nd floor, Hollywood; Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. (also Fri., Feb. 3); \$12. (323) 464-8542, secondcity.com/shows/hollywood.* —Siran Babayan

sat 1/28

FOOD & DRINK

Something's Brewing

With samples from 40-plus indepen-

dently owned brewers from around Los Angeles County — they're representing more than 100 beers — the inaugural **L.A. Beer & Food Festival** may well be the best beer event in L.A. Among brewers represented at the event are Angel City Brewery, Arts District Brewing, Eagle Rock Brewery, Mumford Brewing, Ohana Brewing, Iron Triangle Brewing, Timeless Pints and Boomtown Brewery. Entry buys you free samples from the restaurants at the event, all chosen to pair well with beer. Blue Palms Brewhouse, Eagle Rock Public House, Poppy + Rose, Sausal, Simzy's, Stout and others will be on hand. *Mack Sennett Studios, 1215 Bates Ave., Silver Lake; Sat., Jan. 28, 3-6 p.m.; \$60, \$75 VIP. labrewersguild.org/labeerandfood.* —Katherine Spiers

FILM & MUSIC

Safe and Soundtrack

Curated by Elvis Mitchell, **Bring the Noise** is Film Independent at LACMA's latest movie series. For its first installment, the museum screens *Welcome to the Dollhouse*, Todd Solondz's 1995 cult classic about nerdy, bespectacled 12-year-old Dawn "Weiner Dog" Weiner (Heather Matarazzo), who's tormented in junior

high and ignored at home, accompanied by an original score performed by Seth Bogart of L.A. band Hunx and His Punx. You may recall the original soundtrack featured the theme song "Welcome to the Dollhouse" by Daniel Rey, some classical music and — speaking of junior high horror — Debbie Gibson's 1988 ballad "Lost in Your Eyes." Future screenings in the series feature live soundtracks played by T Bone Burnett, Michael Andrews, Yacht, Jack Antonoff of fun. and Bleachers, Warpaint's Emily Kokal, Kinky's Ulises Lozano, Yeah Yeah Yeahs' Nick Zinner and Bauhaus' Kevin Haskins and Daniel Ash. *LACMA, Bing Theater, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Sat., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m.; \$50, \$35 students and seniors. (323) 857-6010, lacma.org.* —Siran Babayan

ARTS & CULTURE

The Neon Lights Are Bright ...

Produced to tout city councilman José Huizar's Bringing Back Broadway initiative, the third annual **Night on Broadway** is a radiant evening of art and music set along one of the world's oldest and most-loved movie theater rows. Inside Broadway's classic theaters, music and art abound, from tech-art-music showcase "The Advent of the VJ" at the Orpheum to musical and stand-up comedy at the Palace (plus a psychedelic black-light installation). The art and music spill out onto the street, where you'll find a dodgeball cage match, chess boxing, food trucks and more. Open to all, rain or shine. *Broadway between Third Street & Olympic Boulevard, downtown; Sat., Jan. 28, 4-11 p.m.; free (registration requested). (213) 200-9974, nightonbroadway.la.* —David Cotner

sun 1/29

HISTORY

Carroll on

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designated Hollywood's Earl Carroll Theatre at 6250 Sunset Blvd., home of Nickelodeon Sunset, a Historic-Cultural Monument. Built in 1938 by film and theater producer Carroll and designed by Gordon B. Kaufmann — the man behind the *Los Angeles Times* building, Hoover Dam, the Hollywood Palladium, Santa Anita Park and the Greystone Mansion — the art deco nightclub employed actresses Yvonne De Carlo, Mamie Van Doren and other starlets as showgirls, and had above the entrance a neon sign that read: "Through these portals pass the most beautiful girls in the world." The theater later operated under different names, including Moulin Rouge, Hullabaloo, Kaleidoscope and Aquarius Theater, which hosted *Star Search*, the Jerry Lewis MDA Telethon and *The Chevy Chase Show*. At **An Afternoon With Earl Carroll**, Richard Adkins of Hollywood Heritage and Marc Wanamaker of the Bison Archives discuss the history of the venue and screen the Carroll-produced, 1940 Paramount musical *A Night at Earl Carroll's Egyptian Theatre*, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Sun., Jan. 29, 1 p.m.; \$12. (323) 461-2020, americancinematheque-calendar.com. —Siran Babayan

BOOKS

Take a Hike

Casey Schreiner has written one hell of a useful guidebook. **Day Hiking: Los Angeles** is packed with trails that span the county and range from beginner trails to treks for the experienced outdoors person. Schreiner, who founded the popular website Modern Hiker, rates trails according to difficulty, points out which ones are dog- and/or kid-friendly and keeps readers informed on great views and historical details. He's spending the weekend promoting the book and will lead a Saturday hike at the Audubon Center at Debs Park. If you would rather read the book before hitting the trail, get your copy signed on Sunday, when he'll be talking about it with Curbed's Alissa Walker. *The Last Bookstore*, 453 S. Spring St., downtown; Sun., Jan. 29, 6 p.m.; free (books to be signed must be bought at the Last Bookstore). (213) 488-0599; lastbookstorela.com. —Liz Ohanesian

MUSEUMS

Look East

Los Angeles is home to a thriving Iranian community — the largest outside of Iran — where traditional Persian customs, music, art and cuisine are kept alive. The second biennial exhibition "Focus Iran 2: Contemporary Photography and Video" presents the work of dozens of artists who explore Iranian culture and heritage. An international jury of citizen journalists, archivists and storytellers — who are connected to Iran by ancestry or simple admiration of its culture — selected work by emerging and midcareer artists to reflect the diversity of contemporary Iranian life. The resulting show presents a culture that is deeply connected to history yet constantly evolving and very much

alive. *Craft & Folk Art Museum*, 5814 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; opens Sun., Jan. 29, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. (runs through May 7); \$7; \$5 students, teachers and seniors; free CAFAM members; pay what you can Sundays. (323) 937-4230, cafam.org/exhibitions. —Matt Stromberg

mon 1/30

CULTURE

The X Factor

Before he died in 1987, essayist and social critic James Baldwin was working on a book called *Remember This House*, which summarized his memories of civil rights figures Medgar Evers, Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X. Tonight's screening of *I Am Not Your Negro* — director Raoul Peck's documentary encompassing the subject matter of Baldwin's memoirs — spans the breadth of those civil rights legacies, interweaving them with footage of its leaders, the Black Power movement and other milestones in race relations, all narrated by Samuel L. Jackson. Peck will be present for a Q&A after the screening. *Billy Wilder Theatre*, Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Mon., Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m.; free. (310) 443-7000, hammer.ucla.edu. —David Cotner

tue 1/31

THEATER

Strong Suit

When Luis Valdez's *Zoot Suit* premiered at the Mark Taper in 1978, it was nothing short of a sensation. The play, which centers on L.A.'s *pachuco* culture in the early 1940s — specifically the Sleepy Lagoon murder of 1942 — sold out in L.A. for almost a year before moving on to Broadway, and it brought a whole new audience to the theater. In 1981, it became a film starring Edward James Olmos, who also played the lead at the Taper. In honor of the Center Theatre Group's 50th anniversary, in association with El Teatro Campesino, it's reviving *Zoot Suit*, a play that's still seen as a landmark of Chicano theater. *Mark Taper Forum*, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Tue., Jan. 31, 8 p.m. (runs through March 19); \$25-\$99. centertheatregroup.org/tickets/mark-taper-forum. —Gwynedd Stuart

wed 2/1

COMEDY

Trippy, Man

Cannabis and comedy go together like cannabis and Totino's Pizza Rolls. But stand-up comic Shane Mauss is more fond of joking about his use of psychedelics, including mushrooms, LSD and DMT. The Wisconsin-born Mauss has

been a comedian for the past 12 years and a “psychonaut” for 20. He’s appeared on *Conan*, *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, Comedy Central and Netflix specials, and hosts the podcast *Here We Are*, on which he interviews academics about science, psychology and philosophy. For his current tour, **A Good Trip With Shane Mauss**, which he describes as “part stand-up, part storytelling and part TED Talk,” Mauss cracks wise about the positive effects psychedelics have had on his life and career. *Largo at the Coronet*, 366 N. La Cienega Blvd., Beverly Grove; Wed., Feb. 1, 7 p.m.; \$30. (310) 855-0350, largo-la.com. —Siran Babayan

thu 2/2

MUSIC

Romeo and Dudamel

Remarkably versatile Georgian violinist **Lisa Batiashvili** joins the L.A. Phil and conductor Gustavo Dudamel for an evening of music apparently linked by sheer sonic joie de vivre. Batiashvili’s highly regarded sensitivity and fire bring the passions to a boil in Tchaikovsky’s rousing Romantic concerto. Sort of based on *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Schnittke’s *(K)ein Sommer-nachtstraum* is puckishly good-humored modern classical music at its most enlightening. In the selections from Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet* we hear a subtly modernistic take on Shakespeare’s tale,

whose timeless thrills are sold via plentiful supplies of sprightly dance tunes and a superbly widescreen tonal palette. *Walt Disney Concert Hall*, 111 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Thu., Feb. 2, 8 p.m.; \$20-\$176. (323) 850-2000, laphil.com. —John Payne

COMEDY

Flop House

Rodgers and Hammerstein, Stephen Sondheim, Tim Rice and Stephen Schwartz are behind some of the biggest musicals of all time, but they were also responsible for some Broadway failures — ever heard of *Pipe Dream*, *Anyone Can Whistle* or *The Baker’s Wife*? Originally staged in 2013, Proof Doubt Closer theater company’s **“Carrie” That Tune: Hit Songs From Flop Musicals** showcases songs from ill-fated or forgotten productions that became successful after they were recorded by other artists, such as “Feeling Good” from *The Roar of the Greasepaint — The Smell of the Crowd*, “He Touched Me” from *Drat! The Cat!* and “One Night in Bangkok” from *Chess*, whose music was co-written by ABBA’s Benny Andersson and Bjorn Ulvaeus. Complete with props and costumes, the cast sings selections from other flop musicals, including 1988’s *Carrie: The Musical*, which, after only five performances, was one of the Great White Way’s costliest disasters. *Au Lac*, 710 W. First St., downtown; Thu., Feb. 2, 8 p.m. (runs through March 2); \$10. proof-doubtcloser.com. —Siran Babayan

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Arts // Art Picks //

SHE AND HYMN

ARTIST THEASTER GATES
DECONSTRUCTS "MY COUNTRY, 'TIS OF THEE" IN HOLLYWOOD

BY CATHERINE WAGLEY

This week, an artist remembers the time a rock star tried to kill him, and pregnant women present their work.

Let freedom ring

Two performers from the Black Monks of Mississippi are sitting at tables in front of a church altar in the only video in Theaster Gates' Regen Projects show, "But to Be a Poor Race." One has a keyboard in front of him, another a drum, cymbal and array of percussive instruments. They're in an intoxicating groove by the time artist Gates comes in, walks past them, nods, then goes up to the altar and starts to sing "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." His voice is a little raw and overly enthusiastic, which makes the song sound slightly comical. Then he's done. The musicians sit back, turn on a prerecording of their playing and Gates comes back, stands right between them and starts again. This time, his version of the patriotic anthem is especially melodramatic. He turns from side to side, inserts sultry-sounding "yeahs" and repeats words so he sounds like a virtuosic skipping record. The sound from this performance bleeds into the other galleries, where Gates has installed concise sculptures and paintings, including two wall-hanging assemblages of used fire hoses and gorgeously bound back issues of *Jet* magazine on customized black shelves. 6750 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood; through Feb. 25. (310) 276-5424, regenprojects.com.

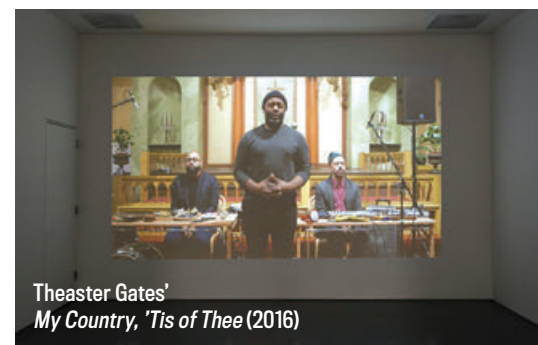
Public with a baby bump

When comedian Ali Wong shot a Netflix special while pregnant, not mentioning her growing belly until the end, the pregnant part is what seemed to make the biggest splash. She "did what no pregnant woman had done before," wrote *Elle* (no other pregnant woman, apparently, has shot a special). In her book *The Argonauts*, Maggie Nelson talks about book touring while pregnant, and being asked by a "patrician white guy" about writing while pregnant: to point out "that wild oxymoron, the pregnant woman who thinks." At the Women's Center for Creative Work, five performers who are currently pregnant will present new work and then discuss it. Rachel Kauder Nalebuff, who wrote a play called *Bump*, co-curated the event, which includes work by Rebecca Aranda, Deana Barone, Cristina Fernandez, Kanya Iwana and Deborah Rosen. Childcare provided

with RSVP. 2425 Glover Place, Elysian Valley; Mon., Jan. 30, 7 p.m. womenscenterforcreativework.com.

Punk star roommate

Todd Gray, an artist who makes sculptural photographs and wears costumes, has circulated in many of Los Angeles' strange creative spheres. In the 1980s, he worked as Michael Jackson's personal photographer. During the recent Hammer Biennial, he performed in the clothes of his friend, Doors keyboardist Ray Manzarek. His performance this week, *Iggy Pop Tried to Kill Me*, is about the time Gray spent as Pop's roommate in Laurel Canyon in the 1970s. He'll be telling the story in the style of a West African griot. This could be effective, uncomfortable or both, given that Gray's performance happens in the context of Art Los Angeles Contemporary, an art fair where class and cultural-appropriation issues can be glaring. 3021 Airport Ave., Santa Monica; Fri., Jan. 27, 1:30 p.m. (323) 851-7530, artlosangelesfair.com.



Theaster Gates' *My Country, 'Tis of Thee* (2016)

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Time makes no sense

"Will Have Been," Angus McCullough's exhibition at AA|LA, examines standardized time in a sprawling way that's haphazard and methodical at once. There are stopped clocks, drawings of train routes and videos of maps obscured beneath tinted glass. Water from overturned plastic bottles slowly drips onto rocks. In a darkened, makeshift room, a male voice explains on film the illogical nature of standardized time. Towns used to all have their own high noon, he says, so that the local experience of light changing and time passing would be in sync. Not so anymore. The show's strength is probably its chaos. It's high-tech and low-tech, well-researched, literary, and still looks a lot like a mad science project. 7313 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood; through Feb. 18. (323) 592-3795, aala-gallery.com.

Mad psychiatrist out of context

Chris Christian's film installation *Axis of Ego: When and Where I Enter* riffs on religious architecture, incorporating confessionals, among other things. Dr. Mabuse, a fictional hypnotist who manipulates others to commit crimes for him, appeared in a series of filmmaker Fritz Lang's movies in the 1920s and '30s. He appears in Christian's *Axis of Ego*, too, as do the voice of James Baldwin and samples from *A Soldier's Story*, the 1984 film about WWII soldiers trained in the Jim Crow South. The installation is part of Far Bazaar, the two-day alternative art fair held at Cerritos College. 11110 Alondra Blvd., Norwalk; Sat.-Sun., Jan. 28-29, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. cms.cerritos.edu/farbazaar.

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THE FLAMINGO OF WEHO

“Monochromatic” Kitten Kay Serra is making a living off of living her life completely in pink

BY LINA LECARO

Los Angeles is home to a variety of eccentrics, but the ones who become legends are those who've cultivated eye-catching looks. Their colorful appearance hints at the weird lives they must lead, leaving us to speculate about their origins over drinks with fellow Angelenos and to proudly announce sightings on social media.

There have been many over the years: the platform shoes-wearing lady who lived in the Lava House near Melrose (she recently died); the “Walking Man” of Silver Lake, with his tiny shorts and newspapers (also now deceased); '60s siren and *L.A. Weekly* cover girl Kari French — and then there's the most “famous” of all, Angelyne the billboard queen, still rolling about town in her pink Corvette, a sort of ironic symbol for a Hollywood dream that almost came true but didn't. She'll never wake up from her dream, and that's why people love her.

West Hollywood resident Kitten Kay Serra is another such mystical creature and, like Angelyne, color is a huge part of her flamboyant existence. The Texas-born actress, singer and author is a cupcake come to life, a bubble gum-hued obsessive who lives every single aspect of each day immersed in the color pink. Her hair, her clothes, her belongings and the entirety of her living space (everything down to her kitchenware and toiletries) are some shade of fuchsia, rose, Pepto or hot pink. Serra is monetizing her rose-colored reality even better than Ange these days, too, creating music and books and garnering appearances on TV, all fueled by her passion for the girliest hue on the color wheel.

“I'm what I call a monochromatic,” Serra said at a recent pinky powwow (she served us strawberry Nesquik with pink straws) in her glam-Barbie grotto. “There's only certain people who do this ... live their life in one color. One day, I would love to talk to others and do my own documentary on ‘the monochromatics.’ There are more of us.”

We all have a favorite color, but some of us get more into it than others. I love purple, and my bedroom probably looks like a guest room at Prince's place. I have clothes, shoes, jewelry and makeup in shades of plum, orchid and amethyst. But, like most people, I enjoy the occasional break from

the raspberry barrage. Not Serra.

“I'm just always tickled pink all the time,” declares Serra, who even speaks like a confection, with a distinctly sassy Southern drawl (she moved from Texas to L.A. in 1999). “I just love it. It makes me happy, and I always think why not surround yourself with what makes you happy and gives you joy. You have one life, so do what you love and express yourself the way you want.”

Serra was a singer back in Texas, and while she always loved the color pink, she didn't dedicate her life to living in one color until 1980, when she tossed everything that wasn't pink or painted stuff so it would be. When she moved to California, it didn't take long for her to be known as the “pink lady of Hollywood.”

“My acting and reality TV appearances sort of took off pretty quick,” she explains. “I would just walk down the street and people would be like, ‘Hey, we have a film we want you in, or a commercial you'd be great for!’”

“I'M WHAT I CALL A MONOCHROMATIC.”
—KITTEN KAY SERA

In the age of famous-for-being-famous types aggressively brand-building on social media, Serra's got as much game as the savviest millennial. She has more than 17,000 followers on Instagram, and most of her fans are girls who show no restraint when it comes to pink heart emojis. Serra's pink passion clearly connects with alt-chicks, pop fans, gays and, most important for her career, the creative community.

“Kitten is a ray of pink sunlight,” says fashion photographer Ellen von Unwerth, who's worked with everyone from Madonna to Janet Jackson. “I love how she creates in this rough surrounding her own fantasy world, oozing with positivity, generosity and happiness.”

The fashion world has taken note of Serra just recently, in fact. She was featured in *Harper's Bazaar Spain*, after being written about in countless publications from *The Daily Mail* to *Business Insider*. She gets a lot of action at her local Starbucks, where she and her dog, Miss Kisses, are approached often to audition as a package deal. Serra and Miss K (who is dyed pink with vet-approved beet juice)



PHOTO BY JORDAN RING

have been on *The Dog Whisperer*, *My Crazy Obsession* and Anderson Cooper's daytime talk show. They had a nice cameo in *Beverly Hills Chihuahua 2*, and Serra's role in a national commercial for the cholesterol medication Vytorin has, she says, “supported me for the past year.”

Residual checks only get you so far, but Serra is resourceful. “I don't have a regular job. I support myself with my pinkness,” she proclaims, adding that she rents out her apartment for photo shoots. Paris Hilton, Ruby Rose and, most recently, Duff McKagan's daughter's new band have used her place as a backdrop.

Her WeHo abode is certainly a sight to behold, a cozy one-bedroom apartment in an unassuming building off Santa Monica Boulevard that's '50s-'60s movie-star kitsch meets dolly dream house. The pink palace gets screen time in Serra's campy music videos, “Sex Kitten” and her latest, “Whatchamacallits,” a track she promoted late last year with an all-pink pool party featuring pink floaties, treats and boys in pink Speedos. “Sex Kitten” features backing vocals by none other

than Beyoncé.

Serra knew the young Ms. Knowles back in Texas (they went to the same performing arts school) and they've stayed in touch. “I just asked and she agreed to do it,” says Serra, who made sure she got all the paperwork to promote the guest spot, garnering lots of YouTube attention in the process. “It's being used overseas on a TV show right now, and it's helping pay the rent!”

Serra's latest endeavor features Miss Kisses in a prominent role, spreading her message of individuality, cheer and pink pleasure. “It's a children's book called *The Pup Who Turned Pink*,” Serra says as her blushed best friend wags a fluffy tail. In the book, “Miss Kisses finally becomes the doggie she always dreams of being.”

After a successful GoFundMe campaign, the book will be released in April, and Serra is having fun planning her next soiree to celebrate. “My life is like 50 *Shades of Pink*,” she explains with a wink. “The color just makes people happy. It's putting positivity out into the world. And why not be a flamingo in a flock of pigeons?”

Stage //

SILENT NIGHT, DEADLY NIGHT

A pair of serial killers and a pair of cops act out our human savagery in *Grimly Handsome*

BY BILL RADEN

In an unnamed East Coast city, it's the Yuletide season, a time when vacant lots are transformed into festive mini-forests of freshly cut fir trees and piped-in carols — and when vaguely sinister, Slavic-accented Christmas tree salesmen enact a grim ritual unspeakably darker than the peddling of holiday decor.

Or at least that's the setup of *Grimly Handsome*, Julia Jarcho's philosophical and blackly funny, 2013 burlesque, which is receiving its West Coast premiere at Santa Monica's City Garage Theatre. The script, which riffs on the venerable serial-killer suspense thriller, deftly uses the ultra-familiar conventions of the police procedural to lure audiences into the deeper mystery of identity, and how human intimacy is ineluctably intertwined with a predatory savagery that defines us as a species.

Act 1 follows the antics of Gregor (Andrew Loviska) and Alesh (Anthony Sannazzaro), a duo of émigré Slavs who may be linked to Balkan war crimes, as they role-play in preparation for their next victim. That turns out to be Natalia (Lindsay Plake), an emotionally broken and lonely reader of hardboiled serial-killer pulp fiction. Act 2 pivots to the murderers' police counterparts as homicide detectives Greggins (Loviska) and Alpert (Sannazzaro) probe the latest predation by the holiday psychopath whom the press has dubbed the "Christmas Ripper."

It is with the entrance of Alpert's wife, Nelly (Plake), and the introduction of her extramarital affair with Greggins that the play makes a loopy left turn and the investigation begins its delirious inward spiral. Jarcho's close parallel of relationship triangles — one of killers and victim, the other of lovers and cuckold — collides in a tangle of plot lines and characters that swap identities like quick-change costumes.

"I think we might be wrong when we call each other by names," Nelly tells Greggins at one point. "And so you and Al, for instance, you're the same event, just laid out at different points in time and space." That "event," an Act 3 homage to Stanley Kubrick's 2001: *A Space Odyssey* suggests, is the process of subjectification through which we construct the identities and root the

relationships that stave off dislocation and keep our bestial natures safely stowed in the evolutionary closet.

JARCHO'S CLOSE PARALLEL OF RELATIONSHIP TRIANGLES COLLIDES IN A TANGLE OF PLOT LINES AND CHARACTERS THAT SWAP IDENTITIES LIKE QUICK-CHANGE COSTUMES.

Director Frédérique Michel's fluid staging ably animates Jarcho's trove of ideas and poetic images (abetted by Charles Duncombe's sleek production design and



Andrew Loviska, left, and Anthony Sannazzaro in Julia Jarcho's *Grimly Handsome*

PHOTO BY PAUL M. RUBENSTEIN

Josephine Poinot's witty costumes), and Loviska, Plake and Sannazzaro act with versatility and conviction — perhaps a bit too much conviction, as it turns out.

Jarcho, who has a long association with New York experimental playwright Richard Maxwell, is well known for sharing Maxwell's rigorous style of deadpan neutrality and punctuated inflection. Here, Michel opts for something more heightened and emotionally schematic. In a town dominated by industry camera

acting as Los Angeles is, the compromise is understandable, but the lost layer of formal irony exacts a cost. Her production delivers *Grimly Handsome's* intellectual goods but clocks in shy of what should have been a much heartier laugh quotient.

GRIMLY HANDSOME | City Garage Theatre at Bergamot Station Arts Center, 2525 Michigan Ave., Building T1, Santa Monica | Through Feb. 26 (310) 453-9939 | citygarage.org

A DOG'S LIFE

This production of Dominic Finocchiaro's *The Found Dog Ribbon Dance* wants to be wry and whimsical and deeply revelatory but succeeds only fractionally, especially with the revelatory part.

The story revolves around Norma (Amanda Saunders), a professional cuddler who services folks in need of affection, touch and reassurance and who customizes her sessions — you can sleep or remain awake, engage in conversation or be silent, for example — to their particular predilections. Though a genuinely caring person who appears good at her job, Norma is unattached, and her venture into the dating game with a local barista, Norm (Steven Strobel) is a rocky one, due mostly to his neuroses but also her own skittishness when it comes to relationships.

Norma does, however, form an attachment to a dog (Dan Hagan, wearing a T-shirt that reads DOG) that she found on the street. She advertises, unsuccessfully, to find its owners and, as time goes on, her bond with the animal evolves. A couple of people show up to claim him, but when it's obvious Dog doesn't know them, Norma battles them away and he remains with her.

Between Norma's clients and the would-be animal owners, her studio is host to a parade of offbeat or just plain disturbed characters — an insulting and pugnacious youth (Gabriel Notarangelo), a silent elderly man (Gregory Itzin),

a young woman whose arms are covered with self-inflicted wounds (Clarissa Thibeaux). One very needy client (Eric Gutierrez) mistakes her professional tenderness for an invitation to sexual intimacy and she has to fight him off. Norma does her best to handle it all with dignity, compassion and aplomb, but these experiences are wearing on her, and are perhaps why the dog becomes important in her life.

One reason the production doesn't quite gel is that Saunders seems wrong for the role. She's fine portraying Norma the caretaker, where she reflects a natural inner grace, but under Alana Dietze's direction, the edginess and insecurities that would make this character, and the play itself, more intriguing aren't visible to the audience. As her hyper-nervous suitor, Strobel is exaggeratedly one-note — so in the end you don't really care about this relationship. Several of the other supporting performances are also without layers; however, there's good work (the best of the evening) from West Liang as a disgruntled customer who decides this touchy-feely stuff is all BS, and from Julie Dretzin as a strident woman who insists on having the dog although it isn't hers. Hagan is consistently entertaining as Dog.

The other aspect of the production that had



Eric Gutierrez and Amanda Saunders in *The Found Dog Ribbon Dance*

PHOTO BY DARRETT SANDERS

me wondering was the set design (by Kirk Wilson), which has a bed on an elevated platform at the center of the proscenium (the same one used in the production of Sheila Callaghan's *Bed* last year?) with the audience on three sides. It makes sense from a symbolic standpoint, I guess, since cuddling on the bed is the focus of Norma's life, and a number of scenes take place there. But the platform takes up a lot of space, and the practical results are to shift other important interchanges to the periphery, where they are not always easily visible or in focus to everyone. —Deborah Klugman

FOUND DOG RIBBON DANCE | Atwater Village Theatre, 3269 Casitas Ave., Atwater Village | Through Feb. 26 (310) 307-3753 | echotheatrecompany.com

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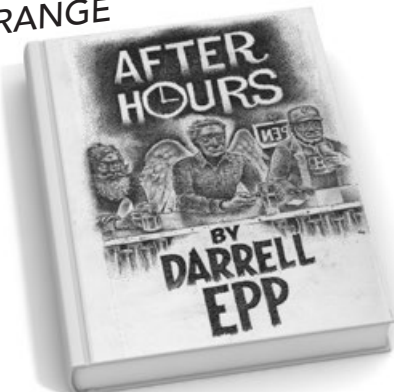
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Matthew McConaughey,
left, and Edgar Ramirez
in *Gold*

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Film //

GLITTER-FREE

Don't expect *Gold* to set a new standard for crime capers

BY APRIL WOLFE

Gold's value lies chiefly in the hearts and minds of those who seek it. The noble metal has driven humans to perpetrate ignoble acts on their quests to unearth it since at least 5000 B.C.E., when slaves divined for golden veins to lavish their pharaohs with jewelry. The Incas even thought golden nuggets were tears of their sun god, which only increased their value. But the mass hysteria surrounding this once-rare metal has more to do with power than with money. It's like the cynical punch line of the Golden Rule from the old *Wizard of Id* comic strip: "Whoever has the gold makes the rules."

In Stephen Gaghan's inspired-by-true-events crime adventure *Gold*, Matthew McConaughey plays a slovenly King Midas-type prospector, Kenny Wells, who's lost his touch after his father dies and leaves him a formerly booming mining company. Desperate to make a hit, he pursues the partnership of a brilliant young geologist, Michael Acosta (Édgar Ramírez), who'd hit on a huge copper mine in Indonesia before going bust on another prospect. The simple story is that two men knee-deep in failures form an unlikely bond — one a loudmouth alcoholic, the other a poetic, stern adventurer — to prove to the world that they've still got it by discovering the biggest gold mine of all time ... until it's not.

Gold isn't just about gold; it's about knocking the elites off their Wall Street towers, a kind of *The Big Short* meets

The Goonies parable, barely addressing the irony that these men are seeking to become the same money monsters as the bank executives, only in sheep's clothing. So for all the prospects this parable holds, it's merely gilded in those big ideas — the bulk of it is made of dense, dull materials already hashed out in numerous other capers.

Gaghan's choice to set the drama in 1981 is the first poor decision. The real story this film is based on is actually from 1993, but the director is bent on aping the attitudes and styles of late-'70s heist movies, complete with copious split screens, getting-rich montages and sexy women as set dressing. It's as though the flash and false glamour of that disco era are the stand-ins for real character or story development — but all that glitters isn't good.

McConaughey's Kenny is a disheveled, balding man whose hair and face perpetually glisten with sweat. The audience is supposed to champion his cause because the banker "suits" lack his charisma and Everyman charms, but Kenny is the kind of blowhard antihero we've been fed as the "good guy" for far too long. From the very beginning of this film, he's trading gold for power, giving a tacky watch to his longtime girlfriend, Kay (Bryce Dallas Howard), who is so far out of his league that it boggles the mind — why must he have such a comically pronounced paunch and thinning hairline? McConaughey turns his Everyman into a caricature of the working class, his version of lesser than.

Meanwhile, Kay is the super-hot good girl next door who'll support her man through thick or thin despite his lack

of redeeming qualities, with the drunk smashing glass after glass against the wall when he doesn't get his way. Even as the film slaps Kenny on the wrist for not taking more menial jobs to help support the couple, it's mostly condoning his big-dreaming maniacal obsession with gold. It's what we see time and again from these films that glorify the single-minded infatuation men have with objects or ideas, laying waste to anyone in their circle, specifically women, who are the first casualty on a man's conquest. Kay's only function here is to be a kind, dim-witted pretty thing against which we can gauge her man's waning morality.

Ramírez does his best to straight-man his way through McConaughey's clowning performance — where it seems almost a contest to see how gross he can make his character. (Does he have to wear slightly wet tighty-whiteys so often?) It's Ramírez's subdued, thoughtful turn that lends the film credibility as a drama, but it's his character's function as the white-passing but exotic South American that grates. Since the film is so much about these men selling the idea of their gold mine to trick investors, Michael being the tall, suave Latino does make sense in a meta way — the Americans are taken by his rugged exoticism, and he plays that up with poetic talk about gold. But it's worth noting that the real person on whom Acosta is based is a short-in-stature Filipino man, and I have to wonder if perhaps Gaghan or the studio didn't think Americans could buy a short Asian man wielding such persuasive power.

Over and over again, the film seems to be asking: What makes a man a man? And the answer it gives is that a man is not a man without absolute power, so this is what he should strive for. In the end, the whole thing is a bit like one big golden shower pissing contest, with every male character vying for top of the trough. Frankly, after thousands of years of this, a reprehensible new president and one other abysmal treasure-hunting film from McConaughey (*Fool's Gold*), I'm a little tired of men gilded in a shimmering psychosis.

GOLD | Directed by Stephen Gaghan
Written by Patrick Massett and John Zinman
The Weinstein Company | Citywide

WALKING AND TALKING ... AND PREVENTING HIV

Told in real time, *Paris 05:59* Théo & Hugo devotes the first 18 of its 93 minutes (not including credits) to the frenzied fun happening during the wee hours in the red light-bathed basement of a gay sex club in Les Halles. It is there that Théo (Geoffrey Couët) and Hugo (François Nambot), among the slightest of the writhing, moaning, mostly epehic figures, lock eyes while mounting other partners, soon to be ditched so that these two can be more fully intertwined with each other. Filmmakers Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau cleverly capture the codes and customs that guide even extreme Dionysian milieus — the lube and condom dis-

pensers, the coat/clothing check and settling of drink tabs that follow the group rutting — with an attention to detail that keeps viewers engaged when the bland, acharismatic central couple, who cycle, walk, talk, kiss and fight in a predawn City of Light, fail to.

Recalling other cine-duets, both straight (Richard Linklater's *Before Sunrise*) and gay (Andrew Haigh's *Weekend*), *Paris 05:59* distinguishes itself by seamlessly including a lesson on HIV post-exposure prophylaxis: The protocol is outlined by an imperturbable doctor at a hospital in the 10th Arrondissement once the men discover, minutes after leaving the club, that they have discordant serostatuses and failed to follow safe-sex practices. These medical facts, along with the delights of Paris particulars — the Canal Saint-Martin in the dead hours, the faces of early-morning



Paris 05:59
Théo &
Hugo

COURTESY OF WOLFE RELEASING

Metro riders — give the film ballast when Théo and Hugo's getting-to-know-you patter grows too precious. —Melissa Anderson

PARIS 05:59 THEO & HUGO | Directed and written by Olivier Ducastel and Jacques Martineau | Wolfe Releasing | Music Hall



The Salesman

COURTESY OF COHEN MEDIA GROUP

Film

NOT BUYING IT

ASGHAR FARHADI REMAINS A MASTER DRAMATIST, BUT *THE SALESMAN* FAILS ITS NAMESAKE

BY BILGE EBIRI

Iranian director Asghar Farhadi's *The Salesman* is a tense, visceral drama of wounded masculinity — and therein lies part of its problem. Farhadi, whose *About Elly* and *A Separation* are two of the greatest movies of the past decade, can find tension in the most mundane of exchanges, and he can bring your heart to a stop with just a few glances. But he also brings a sociological rigor to his work: Class, gender, property and the law often are at the root of his films. *The Salesman* works well on a ground level, but everything resting atop the foundational drama slowly crumbles.

The film opens with married theater actors Emad (Shahab Hosseini) and Rana (Taraneh Alidoosti) being forced out of their apartment building after it starts to shake and crack, thanks to a construction project next door. Through a colleague, they manage to find a flat that's about to be vacated by another woman, Ahoo. But she never shows up to take her stuff away. That puts a strain on Emad and Rana's own relationship, a situation that becomes dire when Rana is assaulted in their new place after letting in a mysterious man whom she thought was Emad.

Horrified, humiliated and

shaken, her husband sets out to find the culprit, who in a rush left his cellphone and van behind. All the while, Emad and Rana are performing in a version of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* onstage — a seemingly random and unwieldy juxtaposition whose thematic link to the couple's offstage drama gradually becomes a bit clearer. The play soon is affected by their fraying relationship and recent trauma, but it also, in turn, seems to affect their reality.

I ADMIRERED THE IMMENSITY OF FARHADI'S SKILLS EVEN AS I CALLED BULLSHIT.

It's tough to do justice to my complicated feelings about Farhadi's latest without giving away several climactic reveals. So let me put it this way: The director's ability to stage a scene, to build the tensions between his characters until you're bursting with anticipation, remains so potent that I admired the immensity of his skill even as I called bullshit on much of what I was seeing. Farhadi's mastery of intimate drama, of the glances and slights

and minor transgressions that can poison relationships, is predicated on moving the pieces of his narrative puzzle into just the right configuration for maximum conflict. This time, as he manhandles things into place, cracks begin to appear in his artifice.

Part of that may have to do with the fact that even as *The Salesman* shifts focus to the ostensibly intellectual Emad's shattered pride and thirst for macho vengeance, you can't help but wonder about Ahoo, the unknown woman who once resided in the flat. We never see her but we sense her presence — so much so, in fact, that she becomes a defining absence for the first half. She's a collection of signifiers, and the film effectively presents her as an irresponsible, even manipulative woman with a surprising number of male callers and a child out of wedlock.

Now, Farhadi understands forgotten women; *About Elly* was all about one. And the way his camera settles its gaze on the objects Ahoo left behind — a kid's bicycle, toys, a variety of elegant shoes and dresses — and the way the neighbors gossip and complain about her makes it clear that he wants her to linger in our consciousness. But by denying Ahoo any real agency or specificity, he has unwittingly generalized her or, rather, reduced her to a symbol that would make any religious conservative proud: the irresponsible "loose" woman who ruins everything for everyone.

It doesn't quite end there, either. The ultimate cause of the assault on Rana appears to turn on the notion that men, even good men, are powerless against their urges when left alone with a woman. That's an idea worth exploring, perhaps, but here it's treated more as a narrative convenience, and not a particularly convincing one at that. The movie constantly hints at broader issues — a class element is at play here, for instance — most of which are too muddled to have the proper impact. Watching *The Salesman*, I can't help but feel that this is the first time Farhadi's mastery of the particular is undercut by the artificiality with which he's treated the general. He remains one of the world's foremost filmmakers, but this time around, his expertise and artistry are undone by phoniness.

THE SALESMAN | Directed and written by Asghar Farhadi | Cohen Media Group | Royal

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WHATEVER A DOG'S PURPOSE IS, IT ISN'T TO BE IN MOVIES LIKE THIS

A *Dog's Purpose*, based on the novel by W. Bruce Cameron, combines the philosophical belief that living beings are reborn into a different physical body after biological death with the voice-over narrative technique of *Look Who's Talking*. The main character, Dog, dies in multiple wrenching scenes and is subsequently reborn; during his many lives, his thoughts are voiced by Josh Gad, and he engages in a lot of internal doggy eschatology, wondering about the meaning of life and what he's meant to do.

Well, a dog's purpose, it turns out, is to be reincarnated into a different sappy mini-Hallmark movie after every death. A less brainy (and less violent) *Amores Perros*, the film is ridiculously manipulative, guiding the audience through scenes of doggy loneliness and low-grade cruelty from humans — not outright sadism but terrible neglect.

Which brings us to *A Dog's Purpose's* purpose. In *Blade Runner*, the cops test people for replicantism by asking



A Dog's Purpose

COURTESY OF AMBLIN ENTERTAINMENT

them questions intended to evoke an emotional response — most of which involve animals dying. That's a really simple button to push: big, red and shiny, easily accessible for even the clumsiest interrogator. Director Lasse Hallström, known for *What's Eating Gilbert Grape* and *Chocolat* (not to mention *My Life as a Dog*, which isn't about an actual canine), isn't notably clumsy, but given a script that called for repeatedly mashing that big, red button, he's smacked on it like the bongos in a Santana song. —Chris Packham

A DOG'S PURPOSE | Directed by Lasse Hallström
Written by Cathryn Michon | Amblin | Citywide

OPENING THIS WEEK

I AM MICHAEL *I Am Michael* recounts, sometimes artlessly, the true story of Michael Glatze, a gay activist and publishing impresario who renounced rainbow flags to embrace Christ and heterosexuality. It stars James Franco in the title role — casting that proves to be the film's biggest burden. Based on Benoit Denizet-Lewis' 2011 *New York Times Magazine* article "My Ex-Gay Friend," Justin Kelly's movie opens somewhere in Wyoming with the principal, his hair as stiff and short as that of a '50s TV dad, counseling a teen tormented by his desires: "Gay doesn't exist. It's a false identity." We flash back 10 years earlier, to 1998, when Glatze, an amateur queer theorist, his tresses now shaggy and bleached blond, utters similar words — but with a completely different context and meaning — to his colleagues at the Castro office of XY, a twink-targeted magazine: "Gay and straight are just social constructs." (Denizet-Lewis' article probes this irony much more than the movie does.) A health scare is the putative reason that Glatze abandons his happy, thriving throuple (his long-term boyfriend is played by Zachary Quinto, and the most recent addition to the ménage by Charlie Carver) and his commitment to LGBTQ-youth outreach for Ann Coulter tomes and furiously highlighted Bible passages. Much of the tormented protagonist's shifts in thinking are awkwardly conveyed through reams of off-screen monologuing: Glatze's blog entries are read aloud by Franco, an infamous graduate-degree collector not so long ago, in a voice that suggests poetry-MFA earnestness, horrible acting or both. Or maybe something worse: a reprise of the actor's own inflated sense of himself as faux-mo provocateur — a cynicism and smugness left over from *Interior. Leather Bar.* (2013), his unendurable *Cruising* vanity project. (Melissa Anderson)

LOST IN FLORENCE *Lost in Florence* is like a feature-length commercial for a travel agency. While writer-director Evan Oppenheimer's tale of love, sport and Italian culture captures the landscape with a pleasant sheen and certainly makes Florence look like a lovely vacation destination, its narrative contains little emotional pull and too few surprises. The film opens with the kind of cutesy scavenger-hunt proposal setup that makes you instantly distrust the couple at its center. From there the plot thickens, mildly, as Eric (Brett Dalton), the blandly hunky protagonist, is rejected by girlfriend Colleen (Emily Atack) and left to sulk around Florence in search of diversion and meaning. He finds some respite in the ancient Italian sport of *calcio storico*, a combination of rugby and street fighting, which offers an emotional outlet — as well as mild homoerotic spectacle. Eric ultimately ends up falling for Stefania (Alessandra Mastroradi), the girlfriend of his teammate; though an appealing presence, she eventually makes you wonder how to say "manic pixie dream girl" in Italian. She and Eric ride Vespas and eat gelato, and it's all just a bit too cute. Perhaps if Oppenheimer had focused more on Eric's relationships or his athleticism, the film would have more of an impact, but in trying to bring relationships and sports together in a glistening, advertorial-ready Italy complete with an uncannily generic-sounding score, neither narrative thread makes much impact. *Lost in Florence* mostly has the effect of lulling the audience into a craving for wine and spaghetti. (Abbey Bender)

THE MARSEILLE TRILOGY Gentle, humane, embracing a full range from slapstick to tragedy, Marcel Pagnol's trilogy about the people of the Marseille waterfront has bewitched audiences for decades. While Pagnol's films — *Marius* (1931), *Fanny* (1932) and *César* (1936) — have been out of print for years on American home video, Janus Films has undertaken a 4K restoration. Pagnol was a schoolteacher

until, after a few flops, a hit stage comedy called *Topaze* turned him into a highly successful playwright. His follow-up, *Marius*, began its run in 1929 as talking pictures were crossing the Atlantic. At the time, many in the French film industry were dismayed by the upending of silent-movie traditions; Pagnol, on the contrary, saw splendid opportunity. *Marius* was filmed at Paramount's French studio, with Alexander Korda as director and with the original cast uttering virtually the exact dialogue they had on stage. Certainly the Marseille trilogy doesn't have much in the way of flashy film technique, but that doesn't mean these three films are uncinematic. Numerous scenes are filmed outdoors, to take advantage of the uniquely beautiful light in the South of France. To fill bit parts, Pagnol often pulled locals right off the street. Each entry runs more than two hours, taking its time with the characters — their sacrifices

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and selfishness, their blustering arguments both verbal and physical, the lies they tell one another and also the truths. Of this garrulous, prank-playing, passionate group, it is Raimu who offers the keenest delight. A former music-hall performer in Marseille, he acts with the whole of his lumbering, slouching body, whether it's all in frame or not. His César is hot-tempered, mule-headed and consistently hilarious. (Farran Smith Nehme)

STRIKE A POSE The male backup dancers for Madonna's 1990 *Blond Ambition* tour assume the foreground in the documentary *Strike a Pose*: The six surviving members of the original seven are always excellent company, though Ester Gould and Reijer Zwaan's film at times seems frustratingly under-researched. The now middle-aged men are frequently juxtaposed with their younger, most fabulous and famous selves as they revisit clips from Alek Keshishian's immensely pleasurable vérité backstage/concert doc *Madonna: Truth or Dare* (1991). In present-day sit-downs, they offer cogent and clear-eyed reflections on being unofficial ambassadors of queerness — all but one of the dancers is gay — during the height of the AIDS crisis (the disease that killed Gabriel Trupin in 1995, remembered by his colleagues as their boss's "unofficial favorite child"). The same holds true for their thoughts on Madge herself, whose

absence here is conspicuous though by no means detrimental. There are tears, regrets and, for some, like Carlton Wilborn, scorching self-rebuke, but no displays of score-settling or self-pity, no matter how straitened their circumstances may be today. Yet for many in this sextet, the specifics of their lives — jobs, relationships, hopes, plans — since their early-'90s zenith remain too little explored by Gould and Zwaan. "We carried our flamboyance as a warning," Luis Camacho — who, along with fellow House of Xtravaganza member Jose Gutierrez, was most responsible for teaching Madonna the intricacies of voguing — tells the filmmakers early on. What provided their armature over the past 25 years? (Melissa Anderson)

GO THEY CALL US MONSTERS In the opening of director Ben Lear's heartbreaking and illuminating documentary *They Call Us Monsters*, screenwriter Gabriel Cowan sits at a table with four boys in a juvenile detention facility. For the next several weeks, Cowan will visit the boys and write a short screenplay with them that he'll then direct. To start, Cowan teaches the boys how to play the "Yes, and..." game to collectively write a story, but as hard as he tries to end the narrative on a positive note, Jarad, 16, just won't let it happen. "That's not how it actually ends," Jarad says. The brutal reality these boys face

YOUR WEEKLY MOVIE TO-DO LIST

A Weekend With Werner Herzog

Friday, Jan. 27

Molly Haskell's recent book *Steven Spielberg: A Life in Film* points to an unexpected movie as the director's best: *Empire of the Sun*. An adaptation of J.G. Ballard's World War II novel, it introduced the world at large to Christian Bale and is, in Spielberg's own words, like "the opposite of *Peter Pan*." It thus marked something of a departure for the filmmaker, who was still better known for the likes of *Jaws* and *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* than *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *The Color Purple* — part of a cinematic adolescence that saw him grow into the director we now know. *New Beverly Cinema, 7165 Beverly Blvd., Fairfax; Fri., Jan. 27, 7:30 p.m.; \$8. (323) 938-4038, thenewbev.com.*

A new cult classic whose small but devoted following is still hoping against hope for a sequel, 2012's *Dredd* is, like a lot of dystopian sci-fi, the kind of movie whose vision of the future seems a lot less implausible now than it did on Nov. 7. Karl Urban takes over for Sylvester Stallone in this remake, which is ultraviolent but less concerned with merely serving as the prelude to yet another installment than most would-be franchise starters. *I am the law! Nuart Theatre, 11272 Santa Monica Blvd., West L.A.; Fri., Jan. 27, 11:59 p.m.; \$11. (310) 473-8530, landmarktheatres.com.*

Sunday, Jan. 29

If you haven't seen *North by Northwest*, all you really need to know is that Alfred Hitchcock directed it, Bernard Herrmann composed the score and Saul Bass designed the title sequence. As tends to be the case when those three conditions are met, the film is a classic of suspense. Also very much of note: the screenplay by Ernest Lehman, who set out to write "the Hitchcock picture to end all Hitchcock pictures." *North by Northwest* doesn't lack for competition in that regard, but neither does it have much difficulty standing out among so many other masterworks. *Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Sun., Jan. 29, 5:30 p.m.; \$11. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com.*

We're all albino crocodiles in Werner Herzog's world, especially his 3-D documentary *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*. The one-of-a-kind filmmaker-philosopher will appear in person to discuss his film, which closes out *The Inferno of Werner Herzog*, a weekend series that includes *Into the Inferno*, *Encounters at the End of the World* and *Fitzcarraldo*. No two Herzog movies are weird in quite the same way, and this one finds him spelunking among the most well-preserved cave drawings on the planet. Watch for the coda, which contains one of the



COURTESY OF WARNER BROS

most mind-blowing insights of his entire career. *Aero Theatre, 1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; Sun., Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m.; \$11. (323) 466-3456, americancinema.thequecalendar.com.*

Monday, Jan. 30

All too often, a small movie will receive a theatrical release in New York but never make it to the Best Coast for a proper run. *MA* almost falls in that category, just as it's almost fallen through the cracks: Celia Rowson-Hall's debut feature is screening for one night only at Cinefamily with the director-star in person. A semi-silent reimagining of the Virgin Mary in which she wanders through the Southwest, the film has drawn attention for its dancelike movement and enigmatic narrative. If you want weird movies to come to Los Angeles, sometimes you have to go to them. *Cinefamily/Silent Movie Theatre, 611 N. Fairfax Ave., Fairfax; Mon., Jan. 30, 4:30 p.m.; \$12. (323) 655-2510, cinefamily.org.*

Tuesday, Jan. 31

Not about moderate Republicans (remember those?) but rather a bizarre love triangle, *In Name Only* finds Cary Grant as a well-to-do suburbanite who falls in love with a widow (Carole Lombard) long after he's fallen out of love with his wife (Kay Francis). His attempt to consciously decouple is rebuffed, however, as the mis-sus openly admits to being with him only for his high rung on the social ladder. *LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Tue., Jan. 31, 1 p.m.; \$4. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org.*

As far back as I can remember, I always wanted to watch *Goodfellas*. Easily the best gangster movie to lose the Best Picture Oscar to *Dances With Wolves*, Martin Scorsese's mafioso masterwork glams up La Cosa Nostra before reminding us that even made men can end up living the rest of their lives like schnooks. Just don't call it funny. *Arclight Hollywood, 6360 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Tue., Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m.; \$15.75. (323) 464-1478, arclightcinemas.com. —Michael Nordine*

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in a juvenile justice system that wishes to treat them as adults is encapsulated right there: Hope and joy turn quickly to inevitable pain. Each boy infuses the characters of that screenplay with his own personal stories. Juan, 15, speaks shyly of being afraid of love and being in love with a girl named Abigail — a name then given to the protagonist's friend. But as open as these boys are with emotions, they're also master defectors, often telling the stories of their own lives as though they were tales they'd overheard. What's fascinating is how absolutely normal, hilarious and hyper-intelligent these kids are. In this structured environment, they treat one another like brothers, sharing food and offering encouragement. They respect their superiors, whom Lear often catches trying to hide fatherly smiles from them. The director doesn't make the boys saints — there are interviews with their victims — but he does paint a complex

portrait of underserved children seemingly destined to end up in prison for life for no better reason than that they had no support. (April Wolfe)

ONGOING

LA LA LAND The cussedness of *La La Land* is almost enough to recommend it. Damien Chazelle's sumptuous tribute to romantics (Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling) trying to keep lit the fire of a guttering culture is defiantly old-fashioned in form and style. It is, among other things, a throwback to the great MGM musicals of the Gene Kelly era, just starring people who haven't devoted their lives to the talents such musicals demand. That failure to live up to the past is, in its way, Chazelle's subject. Everyone involved in *La La Land* is plucking up their grit and striving to pull off the impossible. His musical numbers explode with so much color and movement that to watch them is something like sticking

your head into a confetti cannon. The best dancer in the movie is the camera operator, who Steadi-snakes through platoons of hoofing extras, capturing the idea of a dazzling musical more often than the performances that truly dazzle. It's almost clever that these sequences exemplify strain more than grace, as if Chazelle is saying, after each flat note or out-of-focus face, "See how much better things used to be?" The tone here isn't all *Singin' in the Rain* giddiness. The darker moods of *It's Always Fair Weather* movingly weight the film with adult loss and disappointment. Its L.A. is muralled over with the faces of the stars of the past, but its movie palaces and jazz clubs keep closing down. My favorite scene is the simplest: the leads sitting down to dinner, facing at last everything that's not working out in their lives. For once we're watching something that could unfold on a stage — we're watching performance. (Alan Scherstuh)

Annie Hardy with her cat Angel Baby and a photo of her late boyfriend, rapper Cadalack Ron



PHOTO BY REZA BAHRAMI

Music //

DRAG SLAYER

After two years of unimaginable loss, Annie Hardy ditches the name Giant Drag and returns to making music

BY FALLING JAMES

Ten years ago, Annie Hardy was seemingly on top of the music world, or at least well on her way there. As lead singer, songwriter and guitarist of Giant Drag, she combined coolly groovy pop melodies with grungy power chords in a way that felt brash and new. The San Clemente native was both charmingly idealistic and archly sarcastic, and she belied her innocent-waif look with such provocative yet enigmatic songs as “Kevin Is Gay” and “YFLMD” (as in “You Fuck Like My Dad”).

In 2006 alone, Giant Drag appeared at Coachella and the Reading and Leeds festivals, and Hardy — deemed one of the Top 50 Coolest People of the Year by *NME* — sang onstage with The Jesus and Mary Chain and recorded the profanely irreverent incantation “Pink Cellphone” with Deftones. Even after drummer-keyboardist Micah Calabrese left the band, Hardy continued to perform sporadically under the name Giant Drag with other lineups before mysteriously dropping out of sight.

She re-emerged last year with a series of low-key monthly solo shows at El Cid, where she debuted a brace of astonishing-

ly vulnerable new songs of heartbreaking loss and redemption.

So what happened? “Whatever your name is — whether it’s a band or a business — it always takes on the energetic frequency of the name,” Hardy explains in an interview at her North Hollywood home. “Giant Drag was always these huge bummers.”

After Giant Drag broke up, Hardy started a short-lived new project, PNP (“Party ‘n’ Play”). “Our best song was a 51-minute freestyle improv musical called ‘AIDS Vampire,’” she says, before explaining that most of that recording has disappeared. “I lose everything all the time,” Hardy admits. “Some parts were so offensive, I couldn’t send it to some people, so I chopped it up into pieces.”

Now 35, Hardy says, “When I turned 30, I started an extreme transition, getting spiritual and taking responsibility for myself and doing things myself.”

She drifted away from the music scene completely when she moved to Rancho Cucamonga to live with a controlling, manipulative boyfriend. It was only after a friend spirited Hardy away in the middle of the night, when the boyfriend was passed out, that she finally realized how dysfunctional and soul-crushing the relationship had been.

She didn’t fully get back into music right away, even after she fell into an intense and tempestuous relationship with a new lover, Robert Paulson, better known as local battle rapper Cadalack Ron. Although their relationship was off and on, Hardy was determined to settle down into a life of domestic simplicity once she became pregnant.

“I did put all my musical equipment away when I was pregnant,” she says. “I was done with music because I thought I was going to be a mom.” Following a long and difficult labor, Hardy gave birth at home to a son she named Silvio. Tragically, the baby died less than three weeks later from SIDS in March 2015. He was only 17 days old.

At first, the new parents grew closer after Silvio’s death. “Fate brought us back together,” Hardy says. “We did gardening until 4 a.m., all night, whatever it took to not be in so much unimaginable pain.” She also felt compelled to make music in tribute to her departed son. “The only instrument hanging around was my autoharp, so I wrote ‘Mockingbird’ on autoharp. After my son died, it all had to come back out. ... Writing these songs saved me.”

The achingly tender acoustic ballad “Mockingbird” was the first of several songs in which Hardy tried to say goodbye

to her lost son and make sense of his sudden death. The austere, funereal, organ-pumped ode “Batman” (named after the superhero onesie Silvio was wearing the day he died) echoes the fragile, childlike yearning of Daniel Johnston. The Icarus Line’s Joe Cardamone encouraged Hardy to keep going and produced enough songs for her new solo album, *Rules*.

Not every track is about loss. “Jade Helm,” co-written with Cardamone and featuring drums by The Germs’ Don Bolles, is a bizarre, apocalyptic fable about a soul-bartering starlet who moves to L.A. to make it in show business, set against an Orwellian backdrop of war and FEMA camps. “Soldiers on the street/ Cameras watch from rooftops, recording everything,” Hardy murmurs over a gently rolling wave of keyboards and hypnotic guitars that sounds like a hazily paranoid lost track from Neil Young’s *On the Beach*.

Even stranger is “Jesus Loves Me,” a weepy yet trippy piano ballad laced with bittersweet streaks of violin from That Dog’s Petra Haden. Hardy sounds both solemnly sincere and a little cracked when she bleakly confesses, “These days, everyone can blow me/Talking shit, acting like they know me. ... They can all make fun of me, but I know Jesus is my homie.”

“Music has a spiritual aspect,” Hardy explains. “You’re kind of like a radio dial. You’re either tuned into static or some disembodied spirit’s frequency that starts feeding you, from start to finish, a song. ... Everyone on this planet is sort of blocked off from that inner well of emotion, so I’m trying to send a bucket down there.”

Hardy’s sadness doubled when Paulson died from a drug overdose at the age of 34 in January of last year. Not knowing what else to do, she plunged into keeping as busy as possible.

At the El Cid residency, she began improvising spontaneous songs based on three words suggested by random people in the audience. This ability to freestyle complicated musical arrangements and silly lyrics that resolve into satisfying stories grew out of her live Periscope show, *Band Car*, in which she drives around and creates songs based on suggestions texted in real time by her fans. She’s often accompanied by friends who supply beats while Hardy simultaneously sings, plays keyboards, comes up with melodies and adapts the nonstop texts into lyrics.

“I’m a Gemini, so we love to multitask,” she says.

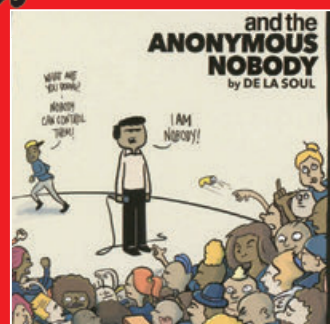
Has she ever gotten into an accident while driving and performing? “I made contact with another car while on *Band Car*,” she admits, adding that the collision was minor. “Luckily, it was a hit-and-run — I hit them, and they ran!”

Additionally, she has two ongoing YouTube shows, *Spirit Anniemalz* (a psychedelic look at insects and other natural life in her backyard) and *King Trammell C’s Kingdom* (a comic feline-reality show starring one of her cats). She’s also on Patreon, where supporters can access her unreleased demos and other recordings.

“I’ve ruined my life trying to make everyone happy,” she says. “I’ve been going through hard times for so long, I’ve stopped regarding them as that.”



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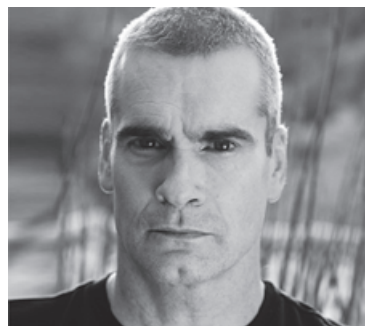


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Henry Rollins The Column!



END OF THE ROAD

For performer types, their feelings about being on the road are as unique as the individual. For me, about 10 shows before the end of a tour, depression starts to creep in, as re-entry into the real world draws closer. Night to night the show is fine, but the hours leading up to it become increasingly difficult.

There are a lot of things about the limitations of life on the road that I prefer to real life. The comparative lack of options serves me well. This is probably a result of conditioning but there is something really great about putting myself into a few things with great intensity, rather than a lot of things with far less. To live for the show, to start working on it hours before at the gym, the wall of exhaustion that hits me a few minutes after I walk offstage — it's a striving for ultimate output that I can't get any other place.

At the beginning of a tour, it takes about 10 shows before I feel that I have earned enough dents on the frame to say that I am actually on the road and not just visiting. There is a constant body ache and level of fatigue that runs like a dull current through my body, which takes a few days to get used to. Once I acclimate, I become it. This is the part of living out here that is the hardest part to give up.

About 36 years ago when I started living on the road, the first several months were quite an adjustment. Nothing in my life had prepared me for it. My bandmates, by comparison, were battle-hardened, road-wise, feral motherfuckers.

I was smart enough to keep my eyes open and pick up on things that informed my new life. Within a year, I had become hyper-aware and adequately desensitized. It hit my young mind that it was on the road where all the big stories were, and that the relative still life that waited for me when a tour ended was a living end.

As the years went on, my alienation from the mainland grew. It became a place I struggled to understand and had to live by approximation to exist in.

I have been, with little interruption, bouncing all over the world for the last 13 months. Right now I am in Ponte Vedra, Florida. Tonight will be the second-to-last show.

I have started packing and clearing my gear out of the bus that I have been living in since October. In corners and flat spaces all over the front lounge are gifts and letters from members of the audience. I do my best to answer them,

but what I don't get to I load into a box, which I will drag into my office and dip into as time allows in the weeks ahead. The level and abundance of kindness and affection bestowed upon me is much more than I am wired for. It fills me with a gratitude that is almost paralyzing. I just don't know what to do with it.

It is not a one-way street. My affection for the audience is absolute. It is the best yet most complicated relationship I have ever known.

I will be onstage soon and need to start putting my energies toward that.

Next day. I am in Orlando. Tonight's show will be the last one of the run.

Last night's show had an interesting and typical element. Several minutes in, I was rattling away at a high rate of speed and suddenly a woman in the audience started yelling. She was not yelling at me but with me, punctuating my lines with loud affirmation. One or two of these are fine but past that, it's a distraction that holds me back and quickly wears on the audience's patience.

I thanked her for her enthusiasm and asked her to cool it. She kept right on. The audience started booing her, but that didn't seem to make any difference to her. I suspected there might be some alcohol involved.

Finally, she either stopped or was removed. I found out later that it was the latter. She was apparently intoxicated to the point of having

I HAVE NO SHOW TONIGHT AND CAN FEEL THE PANGS OF WITHDRAWAL STARTING.

to be carried out of the venue and, in a what-could-possibly-go-wrong move, taken to her car. She had just returned from Afghanistan hours before and my show was her big night out. Welcome home.

Next day. I am at the airport in Orlando, in and out of it on a couple of hours of sleep.

I am happy with last night's show. I told the audience that it was the one I didn't want to do. I could hear their confusion and then explained that, at 156 shows, this was the last one and there was no place I would rather be than in front of them with a microphone in my hand.

I have no show tonight and can feel the pangs of withdrawal starting.

Later. To perfectly and appropriately cheapen the return, I was met in baggage claim by a man with several photographs of me to sign. As I was parting with five bucks for a cart, he came up to me with one and offered it to me. I saw the quid pro quo he was attempting to establish, bought my cart and went to the carousel to wait for my gear.

A friendly man from TMZ was there with his camera and asked if I wanted to talk to him. I declined. I am almost 56, with no 22-year-old girlfriend or court dates. What could he possibly want with me?

On the way out, there were three autograph/eBay guys waiting for me. What a comedown. Into a taxi, back to the office. Fuck this.

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Music // Bizarre Ride //

WEST COAST RISING

SINGER, BASSIST AND WEST COAST GET DOWN CO-FOUNDER
 MILES MOSLEY COULD BE THE NEXT BREAKOUT STAR FROM L.A.'S RED-HOT JAZZ SCENE

BY JEFF WEISS

Miles Mosley has a theory: You can learn everything about a musician by the character he chooses in Street Fighter. The virtuosic upright bass player and vocalist for the West Coast Get Down conceived this idea during epic video game battles with his bandmate, saxophonist Kamasi Washington.

"As a bass player, you have to hold the music down and make sure it doesn't go off the rails. No matter how many ideas happen, you need to get through them without leaving anybody in the dust," Mosley says, wearing a black beanie and jacket, sipping tea at a Hollywood cafe not far from the Piano Bar, where the Get Down held a now-legendary residency for most of this decade.

"That's the secret to playing with Sagat," Mosley continues, naming his preferred fighter. "You've got to be calculated and hold your ground, know when to jump in and attack. Same with me on the bass — I hold it down, but when I see a weakness, I get on the distortion pedals and go for the kill."

If Washington is the soul of the Get Down, Mosley is the heart, oxygenating the outfit's celestial grooves. But when the situation calls for it, he'll blast wah-wah pedal detonations and psychedelic funk-rock licks that disabuse you of any erroneous notion that you're just watching a traditional jazz outfit.

You can also understand this from watching Mosley sing "Abraham," the first single from this month's *Uprising* album, released on World Galaxy/Alpha Pup. With its biblical themes and supernatural squall, it's the closest thing that you'll find to a new jazz standard being written in 2017. It sounds both ancient and futuristic, a rebuke of omnipresent mediocrity and a testament that the best might be still to come.

The album was recorded during the same marathon, 30-day jam sessions in 2012 that yielded Washington's *The Epic*. Mosley estimates that each member of the Get Down got roughly three albums apiece out of that feverish burst. Indeed, records from pianist Cameron



Miles Mosley

PHOTO BY AARON HAXTON

Graves, drummer Ronald Bruner Jr. (brother of Thundercat) and keyboardist Brandon Coleman also will see release in the imminent future.

It's a combination of talent and volume that probably hasn't been seen since the first round of Wu-Tang solo projects. While I'll spare you from matching the members of Wu-Tang to the West Coast Get Down, it's not unreasonable to think that the group can continue to have a similarly seismic impact on jazz.

"Kamasi was like the grenade that went off and everything went boom," says Mosley, who first met the saxophonist at Hamilton High School's music magnet. The pair both later attended UCLA's school of ethnomusicology. (And in case you were wondering, Washington plays Street Fighter as Blanka.)

"When the spotlight hit with Kamasi and *The Epic*, we really made a commitment to him as a brother and to push our sound up the mountain as far as it would go," Mosley adds. "Now I'm like the

WITH HIS NEW ALBUM *UPRISING*, MOSLEY GETS A MUCH-DESERVED STAR TURN.

sniper coming in to follow up."

Even before the Get Down blew up, Mosley had carved a reputation as a brilliant session man and composer, backing Nas, Kendrick Lamar, Rihanna, Fergie and Herbie Hancock. He wrote music for the trailers of *The Muppets* and *The Dark Knight Rises*. But with *Uprising*, Mosley gets a much-deserved star turn.

"I wanted an album with heart-wrenching songs of loss and disappointment, but also [for it] to be a cup of coffee in the morning," Mosley says. "I want it to be a soundtrack for this crazy time that people can lean on. Some songs will inspire bravery, some hope, but if anything, I just want to help inspire fulfillment — so that you don't feel empty."

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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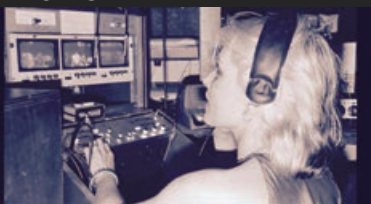


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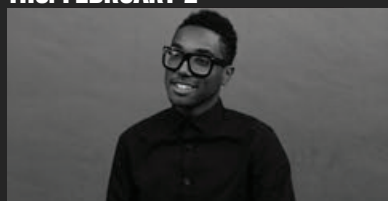
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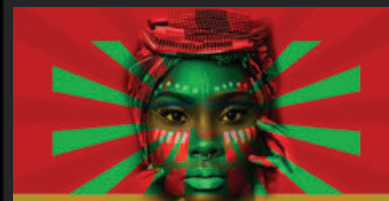
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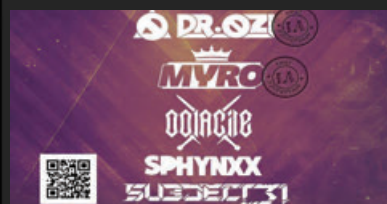
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Thursday • February 2 • 6 PM

GABRIEL GARZON-MONTANO

Celebrating the release of his debut album, *Jardin* (out 1/27 on Stones Throw), with a live set and signing at Amoeba!

Gabriel's aesthetic is an extension of his French-Colombian heritage. His influence is a pastiche of Bach sonatas, Cumbia records, and machine gun funk.

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Music
Picks //

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1/27

Girlschool 2017

@ THE BOOTLEG

Not to be confused with Lemmy Kilmister's hard-rocking British peers Girlschool, this three-day music fest benefits the Rock n' Roll Camp for Girls L.A. and celebrates the diverse array of women making music today. The lineup encompasses the sunny pop chansons of Friday's headliners, The Bird & the Bee, and the darkly powerful emotional catharsis of Chelsea Wolfe, who closes the fest on Sunday. In between, there's a little bit of everything, from the sweetly engaging pop confessions of Summer Twins to the similarly poppy but more pointedly defiant and lyrically punky Regrettes. Deap Vally eschew most pop conventions for a thoroughly rousing, provocatively head-banging melee of grunge and punk. Other highlights include The Wild Reeds' lilting harmonies and Rituals of Mine's soulful electronica, as well as DJ sets from Bleached and Tamaryn. Also Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 28-29. —Falling James

Josh Nelson Discovery Project

@ BLUEWHALE

Los Angeles has been home to many tremendous jazz pianists, from transplants Victor Feldman and Jimmy Rowles to homegrown talents Hampton Hawes and Patrice Rushen. Josh Nelson is of the latter category, one of the best jazz pianists to have resided in Long Beach since Nat King Cole. Most of his brilliant L.A. contemporaries (Tigran Hamasyan, Gerald Clayton, Kris Bowers) have moved away, but Nelson loves the area too much to be anywhere else. His latest multimedia project, "The Sky Remains," is a love letter to his city, with collaborative music and video examining all things Los Angeles, from its freeways, bridges and parks to its gifted composers, including Rowles, Jerry Goldsmith and Elliott Smith. Fans of the Oscar darling *La La Land* should appreciate another homage to jazz and Los Angeles — especially one with a soundtrack of actual jazz music! —Gary Fukushima

sat

1/28

'80s Weekend

@ MICROSOFT THEATER

Though packaged here as a celebratory nostalgia-fest, many of the acts on this almost entirely European bill lace their era-defining pop with sociopolitical commentary still pertinent in Trump's America. Driven by Martin Fry's exquisitely nuanced vocal, ABC's "United Kingdom" eloquently critiqued Margaret Thatcher's business-first Britain, while The English Beat's "Stand Down Margaret" was danceably blunt. Nena's ostensibly carefree mega-hit "99 Luftballons" was a Trojan horse of Cold War paranoia and

protest, and even Altered Images — known Stateside almost solely for their jingle of a single "Happy Birthday" — were not bereft of wry commentary (on their bipolar 1981 debut, at least). Elsewhere, outspokenly conservative Spandau Ballet crooner Tony Hadley and the relentlessly optimistic Howard Jones separated music and politics, while Anglo-Burmese singer Annabella Lwin was, after all, only 13 years old when she joined the tom-tom-driven Bow Wow Wow. —Paul Rogers

Miles Mosley and the West Coast Get Down

@ EL REY THEATRE

Upright/electrified bassist-singer-composer Miles Mosley's new record, *Uprising* (World Galaxy/Alpha Pup), reveals a masterful musician in full control of his considerable resources and loaded with great ideas. Mosley feels jazz has lost its coiling tension, its liberating burn, and his uprising is really a full-on attack on all our shopworn thoughts about what this too-hallowed genre is about. On *Uprising*, he brews a Hendrix-y haze of soul, R&B, funk and jazz, whose jolting joy is a visceral demonstration of strength in numbers, featuring as it does the West Coast Get Down crew that he helped organize here in L.A. At this hometown show, that revolving crew will feature heralded saxophonist Kamasi Washington, trombonist Ryan Porter, trumpeter Dontae Winslow, pianist Cameron Graves, keyboardist Dennis Hamm and drummer Tony Austin. —John Payne

Dorothy

@ THE TROUBADOUR

"Nothing good comes after midnight," Dorothy Martin warns on her eponymous band's debut album, *Rockisdead* (released last year on Jay Z's Roc Nation label). But the local singer never comes off as a naive Cinderella who's worried about her ride turning into a pumpkin. Instead, Martin's rich, sultry vocals are steeped in a wisely knowing brand of late-night blues, pumped up further by her group's hard-rock riffs. Dorothy the band aren't doing anything new, but they nonetheless do it very well, taking the retro classic rock and blues instincts of Grace Potter and adding more of a dangerous hard-rock edge. On moody, midtempo tunes such as "Medicine Man," Martin sends out a fervent prayer for salvation amid a mesmerizing swirl of gospel Hammond organ and electric guitar. —Falling James

sun

1/29

Gene Loves Jezebel, Fatal Jamz

@ THE ECHO

Insouciance and decadence descend

Dorothy:
See Saturday.



PHOTO BY DANIELLE DEFOE

from on high when Gene Loves Jezebel perform at the latest installment of Part Time Punks. This is the Michael Aston version of the band in their first PTP appearance, performing songs from the early-'80s "Shaving My Neck" era all the way up to romantic, impertinent bangers like "Desire" and "The Motion of Love." They're suitably paired with openers Fatal Jamz; the vocal qualities of Aston and Jamz master Marion Belle inhabit the same insolent galaxy of expression. Fatal Jamz's *Coverboy* LP, purportedly three years in the making, came out last September, and they're still riding very high on its mix of Skid Row swagger and pastel '80s pop. Local post-punks Choreography round out the bill. —David Cotner

mon 1/30

The Molochs

@ THE ECHO

"Patterns of emotion follow me like they're on a leash," Lucas Fitzsimons admits, as he pines for a lost lover on The Molochs' recent album *America's Velvet Glory*. He surrounds himself with a thicket of Ryan Foster's jangling guitar for consolation, and the rest of the band picks him up with a rootsy drive. The Molochs evoke '60s garage-rock bands on such harmonica-pumped workouts as "No More Cryin'," but the local group's easygoing pace and Fitzsimons' laconic, laid-back delivery is a refreshing change of pace from other garage revivalists' slobbering intensity. Instead, The Molochs come off a little like early Green on Red or midperiod Kinks, making the focus more on Fitzsimons' bleary lyrical observations than on duplicating the same old, traditional, Yardbirds-style rave-ups. —Falling James

Devendra Banhart
@ THE MAYAN

Early in his career, Devendra Banhart was at the forefront of a group of Northern Californian artists, alongside Joanna Newsom and Vetiver among others, who updated the sound of the San Francisco psychedelic folk-music scene of the 1960s by adding elements of world music and experimental electronics. Since moving down to Los Angeles, Banhart has drifted away from that sound on his more recent albums, including his latest, *Ape in Pink Marble*. Instead of so-called “freak folk,” listeners get elements of gentle R&B, whispered reggae rhythms, touches of Brazilian singer Caetano Veloso’s softer works, and Japanese musician Haruomi Hosono’s experiments with American rock and exotica music. Although the music might be a little more eclectic and electric, Banhart hasn’t lost the mystical earnestness that made him an interesting artist in the first place. —Sam Ribakoff

wed 2/1

Run the Jewels
@ SHRINE EXPO HALL

Some of the most intensive, darkly aggressive music today isn’t being made by a punk or death-metal band. Instead, the most sonically furious and lyrically confrontational music is being created by a couple of rappers, Killer Mike and El-P, under the name Run the Jewels. On the duo’s most recent album, *Run the Jewels 3*, Killer Mike declares, “I move in a world of conspiracies/Obey no rules, I’m doing me.” His partner, El-P, chimes in, “I’m dirt, motherfucker/I can’t be crushed.” The rest of the record is a seedy travelogue through the new world disordered, culminating in an apocalyptic state-of-the-disunion address, “A Report to the Shareholders/Kill Your Masters.” Killer Mike insists, “We the gladiators that oppose all Caesars,” as guest vocalist Zack de la Rocha joins the rebellion with his own bleakly furious battle slogans. —Falling James

Eliza Rickman
@ THE HOTEL CAFE

Fans of spooky humor podcast *Welcome to Night Vale* will recognize Eliza Rickman, the singer/songwriter/multi-instrumentalist who has been frequently featured and toured with the live incarnation of the show. Like *Night Vale*, Rickman doesn’t belong to any one time. Decked out in vintage dresses, she plays instruments such as toy piano and autoharp and sings with a voice that would fit as comfortably in a classic film as it does on a present-day nightclub stage. Unsurprisingly, she has successfully covered both “Moon River” and



PHOTO BY TODD WESTPHAL

Run The Jewels: See Wednesday.

Nick Cave’s “Into My Arms.” Outside of a *Night Vale* guest spot at last fall’s L.A. Podcast Festival, it’s been a good while since Rickman has played here, and she’ll have a full band with her, so this show is not to be missed. —Liz Ohanesian

thu 2/2

Ty Segall, Flat Worms
@ TERAGRAM BALLROOM

Ty Segall’s monstrous 2015 album, *Emotional Mugger*, was a Carpenter-Cronenberg delirium vision as fed through (or to) space aliens like Chrome, Devo and Iggy circa *The Idiot*. Now Segall’s back with a just-out self-titled album on Drag City, and if it’s not exactly gentler, it’s more recognizably human. Singles such as “Orange Color Queen” and “Break a Guitar” are overcranked Bowie/Bolan glam, inspired by the deepest of the deep cuts and crackling with Segall’s characteristic lightning personality. On *Mugger*, Segall performed as the baby-headed Sloppo, and on 2014’s *Manipulator* we met ... well, the Manipulator. Maybe with this, his second self-titled LP, he’s reawakening simply as a guy named Ty. With L.A.’s excellent Flat Worms, whose raging 2016 EP on Volar is smart, pissed-off art-punk that comes off like Joy Division’s *Warsaw* tracks supercharged with screaming SST-style guitar. —Chris Ziegler

Obliteration, Inculter, Reptilian
@ UNION NIGHTCLUB

Norway has long been home to some of the most notorious bands in extreme metal, and it’s where Mayhem and Darkthrone gave birth to the modern black-metal movement. These younger Norwegian bands are forging a new path with their metallic dins. Obliteration have been around the longest, debuting in 2007, and they continue to refine their haunting death metal, finding the sweet spot between the Scandinavian death sound of the early ’90s and classic ’80s Venom discord, most recently on 2013’s *Black Death Horizon*. Inculter’s 2015 debut, *Persisting Devolution*, is a furious burst of crust-thrash that will surely inspire a wall-to-wall pit. Reptilian’s 2016 debut, *Perennial Void Traverse*, is a throwback to when death metal sounded ugly, when seminal bands such as Autopsy were paving the way with their brutal metallic chaos in the early ’90s. —Jason Roche

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- ALEX'S BAR:** 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. Strung Out, Twilight Creeps, Sederra, Riverboat Gamblers, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m., \$25. Throw Rag, Riverboat Gamblers, Kim & the Created, Hardship Anchors, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., \$20. Drago, Bad Acid Trip, Beneath Flesh, Saprofagous, Sun., Jan. 29, 9 p.m., \$5.
- AMOEBA MUSIC:** 6400 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. DJ Rani de Leon, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m., free. Gabriel Garzón-Montano, Thu., Feb. 2, 6 p.m., free.
- BOOTLEG THEATER:** 2200 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles. Girlschool 2017, with The Bird & the Bee, The Regrettes, Vox, Luna Shadows, Kona, Summer Twins, DJ Tamaryn, Fri., Jan. 27, 7 p.m., \$16-\$45 (see Music Pick). Girlschool 2017, with Francisca Valenzuela, Deap Vally, The Wild Reeds, Pearl Charles, Boyfriend, Winter, Trace, Liphemra, Bleached (DJ set), Sat., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m., \$16. Girlschool 2017, Sun., Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m., \$16. Albert & His Dreamboats, Laura Jean Anderson, Wistappee, Mon., Jan. 30, 8:30 p.m., free. Dear Lemon Trees, Ben Jaffe, The Fuzzy Crystals, Thu., Feb. 2, 8:30 p.m., \$15.
- CAFE NELA:** 1906 Cypress Ave., Los Angeles. The Ingrates, Groovy Rednecks, Talkin' Treason, Ryman Rails, Fri., Jan. 27, 9 p.m., \$5. The Freetks, Leaf, Extra Frothy Dynamite, Mr. Me, Sat., Jan. 28, 8:30 p.m., \$5.
- CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF ABNORMAL ARTS (C.I.A.):** 11334 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood. Big Stir: Power Pop & More, with Leslie Pereira & the Lazy Heroes, Plasticsoul, The World Record, The Armoires, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m., \$10. Blake Jones & Trike Shop, Suite 100, Ruby Free, Robbie Rist, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., \$10.
- CANYON CLUB:** 28912 Roadside Drive, Agoura Hills. Lisa Loeb, Fri., Jan. 27, 9 p.m., \$24-\$34. Ace Frehley, Enuff Z'Nuff, Sun., Jan. 29, 8 p.m., \$38-\$58. Marc Cohn, Thu., Feb. 2, 9 p.m., \$28-\$48.
- THE COACH HOUSE:** 33157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano. The Blind Boys of Alabama, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Wed., Feb. 1, 8 p.m.
- CODY'S VIVA CANTINA:** 900 Riverside Drive, Burbank. Steve Waddington & the Retro Rock All-Stars, Susan Ritter, Jan. 27-28, 7:30 p.m.; Sat., Feb. 4, 8 p.m., free. The Cody Bryant Experience, Sat., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m., free. Debra Lee & Trigger Happy, Sundays, 6:30 p.m., free. The Pete Willcox Elvis Tribute Show, Mon., Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m., free; The Brombies, Mondays, 7:30 p.m., free. Tracy Dawn, The Cody Bryant Experience, Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., free. Jimmy Angel, Lou Farrah, Cody Bryant, Mike Hastings, Thursdays, 6:30 p.m., free; The Glen Roberts Big Band, Thursdays, 7 p.m., free; Karen Tobin, Thu., Feb. 2, 8 p.m., free.
- THE ECHO:** 1822 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. Lemuria, Mikey Erg, Cayetana, Fri., Jan. 27, 8:30 p.m., \$16.50. Gene Loves Jezebel, Fatal Jamz, Sun., Jan. 29, 8 p.m., \$18 (see Music Pick). The Molochs, Ottofox, Exploding Flowers, Deep Fields, Mon., Jan. 30, 8:30 p.m., free (see Music Pick). Leopold & His Fiction, Hearty Har, Loveyou, Tue., Jan. 31, 8:30 p.m., \$9.50. The Paranoyds, Egrets on Ergot, French Vanilla, L.A. Drones, Thu., Feb. 2, 8:30 p.m., \$9.50.
- THE ECHOPEX:** 1154 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles. Prof. Finding Novyon, Metasota, Willie Wonka, VerBS, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m., \$14.50. Daniel Caesar, Sabrina Claudio, Sun., Jan. 29, 8:30 p.m., \$15.50. Dub Club & Subsuelo, with The Angel City All-Star Brass Band, DJ Tom Chasteen, MC Jah Faith, Mello Banton, Wed., Feb. 1, 9 p.m., free-\$7. Pinback, Vertical Scratchers, Thu., Feb. 2, 8:30 p.m., \$29.50.
- THE FEDERAL BAR:** 102 Pine Ave., Long Beach. No Age, Traversura, Sun., Jan. 29, 9 p.m., TBA.
- FIVE STAR BAR:** 267 S. Main St., Los Angeles. Holokaust, Social Conflict, Mob Attack, Left in the Attic, Palabras, Nightmare Enterprises, Revolting Sounds, Sat., Jan. 28, 7:30 p.m., \$5.
- GASLAMP RESTAURANT & BAR:** 6251 E. Pacific Coast Highway, Long Beach. The Wailing Souls, Sat., Jan. 28, 5 p.m., TBA. Chad Smith's Bombastic Meatbats, Sun., Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m., TBA.
- GENGHIS COHEN:** 740 N. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles. Rondonjuan, Fri., Jan. 27, 9:30 p.m., TBA. Emily Gerber, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., TBA; Janet Robin, Christie Lenee, Sat., Jan. 28, 9 p.m., TBA. Heather Mae, Grace Pettis, Shani Rose, Sun., Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m., TBA.
- GRAMMY MUSEUM:** 800 W. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles. A Celebration of the Ash Grove With Ed Pearl, with Jackson Browne, Barbara Morrison, Claudia Lennear, Bernie Pearl, Rhiannon McGavin, Mon., Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m., \$15. Sierra Hull, Wed., Feb. 1, 8 p.m., \$15. OK Go, Thu., Feb. 2, 8 p.m., \$15.

- GRAND STAR JAZZ CLUB:** 943 N. Broadway, Los Angeles. The Rikk Agnew Band, Ford Madox Ford, Rough Kids, The Florida Mistakes, Sun., Jan. 29, 2:30 p.m., \$12.
- THE HI HAT:** 5043 York Blvd., Highland Park. The Donkeys, Dollie Barnes, Jackson Tanner, Balto, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m., \$10. Ty Segall, Peacers, Lars Finberg, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., \$20. Prism Tats, Dustin Lovelis, K Skeleton, Lens Mozer, Sun., Jan. 29, 8 p.m., \$7. Lilyer, The Tambo Rays, Blond Ambition, Turquoise Noise, Mon., Jan. 30, 8 p.m., free. Fea, Spare Parts for Broken Hearts, Tue., Jan. 31, 8 p.m., free; Kristeen Young, Tuesdays, 10 p.m. Thru Jan. 31, free. Aan, Water Slice, Cardiod, Goon, Wed., Feb. 1, 8 p.m., \$10. Miserable, Numb.er, Shannon Lay, Thu., Feb. 2, 8 p.m., \$10.
- HM157:** 3110 N. Broadway, Los Angeles. Themegoman, Devan M., Zac Monday, Danyell Aston, Arianna DeSano, Gordon Vandenberg, Sarah Problem, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., \$15.
- THE HOTEL CAFE:** 1623 1/2 N. Cahuenga Blvd., Los Angeles. Kitty Brucknell, Fri., Jan. 27, 7 p.m., \$10. Ben Grey, Avid Dancer, Eliza Rickman, Asaf Avidan, Wed., Feb. 1, 7 p.m., \$12 (see Music Pick).
- KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALL:** 21433 Strathern St., Canoga Park. Punk Rock Swap Meet, with Ill Repute, Naked Aggression, The Grim, Corrupted Youth, The Shermtones, Mother of Dissension, Bootleg Brigade, plus Michael Essington signing copies of his book (all ages), Sat., Jan. 28, 4-10 p.m., \$10.
- LARGO AT THE CORONET:** 366 N. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles. Jon Brion, Fri., Jan. 27, 9:30 p.m., \$30.
- LOS GLOBOS:** 3040 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. Kendall Lake, Still Rebel, Dyson, Myah Marie, Neaks, Thu., Feb. 2, 8:30 p.m., TBA.
- THE LOVE SONG:** 450 S. Main St., Los Angeles. Sophia Pfister, Sundays, 8:30 p.m. Thru Feb. 26, free. Spain, Tuesdays, 8:30 p.m. Thru Feb. 28, free.
- MAUI SUGAR MILL SALOON:** 18389 Ventura Blvd., Tarzana. Love Weapon, Fri., Jan. 27, 9 p.m., free. PBR, Bo & the Bluesdrivers, The Magnificent, Sat., Jan. 28, 9 p.m., free. Hash Brown, RJ Mischo, Sean Lane, Mon., Jan. 30, 8 p.m., TBA.
- MCCABE'S GUITAR SHOP:** 3101 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica. Big Daddy, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m., \$20. Ellis Paul, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., \$25. Sarah Kramer, Nels Andrews, Sun., Jan. 29, 8 p.m., \$15.
- THE MINT:** 6010 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles. Alma Lake, Reignbow & Dragonfly, Alicia Blue, Sonia Dali, Fri., Jan. 27, 8:30 p.m., \$12. Dave Cavalier, Alexis Keegan, Chris Lind, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., \$12. Peace Fiasco, KNMDK, Katalyst, Sat., Jan. 28, 10:30 p.m., \$12. The Helen Rose Band, Grant Farm, Sun., Jan. 29, 8 p.m., \$12. The Mint Jam, Mon., Jan. 30, 9:30 p.m., \$5. Adam Miller, Nevin Campos, Tim Barnett, Theko, Tue., Jan. 31, 8 p.m., \$8. Kitchen Dwellers, Stacy Rosch, Wed., Feb. 1, 8 p.m., \$12. The Walcotts, Brian Whelan, Thu., Feb. 2, 9:30 p.m., \$12.
- MISSION TOBACCO LOUNGE:** 3630 University Ave., Riverside. Mute Point, Shattered Faith, Mike Watt & the Secondmen, Hurricane Kate, The Neptunus, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., \$9.
- MOLLY MALONE'S:** 575 S. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles. The Reluctant Apostles, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., TBA. The Nick Sherwin Project, Wed., Feb. 1, 8:30 p.m., TBA.
- THE MONTY:** 1222 W. Seventh St., Los Angeles. Jesika von Rabbit, Sumo Princess, Native Fauna, Sat., Jan. 28, 8:30 p.m., free.
- MUSIC TASTES GOOD:** 635 Pine Ave., Long Beach. Sadgirl, The Buttertones, Peach Kelli Pop, The Paranoyds, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m., \$7.
- PAPPY & HARRIET'S PIONEERTOWN PALACE:** 53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown. Valley Queen, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m., free. The Sunday Band, Sundays, 7:30 p.m., free. Open Mic, Mondays, 7 p.m., free.
- PILATES & ARTS:** 1844 Echo Park Ave., Los Angeles. The Mourners, Sat., Jan. 28, 7 p.m., free.
- THE REDWOOD BAR & GRILL:** 316 W. Second St., Los Angeles. Night Dangers, Unit-F, Spanish Love Songs, Treetop Flyer, Fri., Jan. 27, 9 p.m., \$7. Chotto Ghetto, Canker Blossom, Birote the Musical, Falling Up, Sat., Jan. 28, 3 p.m., \$5. Sin Alley, Los Apaches, Sun., Jan. 29, 9 p.m., TBA. Acoustic Punk, Mon., Jan. 30, 9 p.m. Jack Rabbit Jade, Tuesdays, 9 p.m. Thru Jan. 31, TBA. Dave Hause & the Mermaid, Chris Shifflet, Thu., Feb. 2, 9 p.m., \$12.
- RESIDENT:** 428 S. Hewitt St., Los Angeles. Wilderado, Tuesdays, 8 p.m. Thru Jan. 31, free.
- THE ROSE:** 245 E. Green St., Pasadena. Eddie Money, Fri., Jan. 27, 9 p.m., \$38-\$58. Cubensis, Groove Session, Strawberry Moon, Sat., Jan. 28, 7 p.m., \$24-\$32. Timothy B. Schmit, Sun., Jan. 29, 9 p.m., \$38-\$44. Paul Stanley's Soul Station, Wed., Feb. 1, 9 p.m., \$38-\$58. The Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band,

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SAFETY SUIT, ARMORS: 7 p.m., \$20.50. The Regent Theatre, 448 S. Main St., Los Angeles.

GO SLEEP: With Melvins, 9 p.m., \$32. The Fonda Theatre, 6126 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles.

SMUT PEDDLERS, D.I., THE PAGANS: With The Cavities, 8 p.m., \$10. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

STRANGE LOVE, PLANET EARTH: 7 p.m., \$20-\$38. Saban Theatre, 8440 W. Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills.

SUNDAY, JAN. 29

ALAN CUMMING: 7:30 p.m., TBA. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles.

CODY JINKS: With Paul Cauthen, Ward Davis, in the Constellation Room, 9 p.m., \$20. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

DAN ZANES: 11 a.m., \$25-\$35. Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills.

GO DEVENDRA BANHART: 8 p.m., \$25. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

EXCISION: With Cookie Monsta, Barely Alive, Dion Timmer, 9 p.m., \$25-\$60. Hollywood Palladium, 6215 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles.

GOTZ: 7 p.m., \$65-\$205. Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena.

SYMPHONY OF THE HEART: With Rita, The L.A. Jewish Symphony, Emily Baer, Keshet Chaim, Ali Paris, 7:30 p.m., \$45-\$150. With Rita, Keshet Chaim Dance Ensemble, Melissa Manchester, 7:30 p.m., \$47-\$152. Valley Performing Arts Center, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge.

THORCRAFT COBRA: 12 p.m., free. Westfield Topanga, 6600 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Canoga Park.

VALERIE PERRI: 8 p.m., \$40 & \$60. The Beverly O'Neill Theater, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center, Long Beach.

MONDAY, JAN. 30

DANIEL CAESAR: 9 p.m., \$20. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

LEA MICHELE: 8 p.m., \$47.50-\$65. The Broad Stage, Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica.

TUESDAY, JAN. 31

GO DEVENDRA BANHART: 8 p.m., \$32.50. The Mayan, 1038 S. Hill St., Los Angeles. See Music Pick.

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 1

MARTY GRIMES: With Cal Scruby, in the Constellation Room, 11 p.m., \$13. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

GO RUN THE JEWELS: With The Gaslamp Killer, Spark Master Tape, Cuz, 8 p.m., \$33.50. Shrine Auditorium & Expo Hall, 665 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles. See Music Pick.

SANGO: With Monte Booker, 8 p.m., \$10. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

THURSDAY, FEB. 2

THE CALIFORNIA GUITAR TRIO: 7:30 p.m., \$25. The Ruth B. Shannon Center for the Performing Arts, 6760 Painter Ave., Whittier.

METHOD MAN & REDMAN: 8 p.m., \$30. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana.

TOM CHAPLIN: 8:30 p.m., \$29.50. El Rey Theatre, 5515 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles.

—Falling James

CLASSICAL & NEW MUSIC

GO THE ABDUCTION FROM THE SERAGLIO: The kidnapping in Mozart's comic opera takes place on board the Orient Express in the 1920s, in L.A. Opera's presentation directed by James Robinson. Sally Matthews, Hamish Linklater, Joel Prieto, So Young Park, Brenton Ryan and Morris Robinson are the featured vocalists. James Conlon conducts his 50th different opera for the local company, Sat., Jan. 28 & Feb. 4, 7:30 p.m.; Wed., Feb. 8, 7:30 p.m.; Sun., Feb. 12 & 19, 2 p.m.; Thu., Feb. 16, 7:30 p.m., \$22-\$309. Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave.

GO THE CALDER QUARTET: The string quartet and guest cellist Ronald Leonard open up Luigi Boccherini's Quintet in C major, Op. 28, No. 4;

John Luther Adams' *Canticles of the Sky*; and Franz Schubert's String Quintet in C major, D. 956, Sun., Jan. 29, 3 p.m., \$10-\$25. The Colburn School of Music, Zipper Concert Hall, 200 S. Grand Ave., L.A.

CATHERINE DEL RUSSO, KIRSTIN FIFE &

CHRISTOPHER AHN: Oboist Del Russo, violinist Fife and cellist Ahn assemble pieces by Quantz, Haydn and Fife, Wed., Feb. 1, noon, free. Glendale City Seventh-Day Adventist Church, 610 E. California Ave., Los Angeles.

COSÌ FAN TUTTE: Jonathan Lynn directs Pasadena Opera's production of W.A. Mozart and librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte's comic opera, set this time in San Francisco in the 1960s, Jan. 27-28, 8 p.m.; Sun., Jan. 29, 3 p.m., \$35-\$100. A Noise Within, 3352 E. Foothill Blvd., Pasadena.

GO THE FAIRY QUEEN: The ever-enterprising Long Beach Opera launches its new season with an unusual twist on Henry Purcell's venerable opera (which is based on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), in a new collaboration by Culture Clash and LBO artistic director Andreas Mitisek. In this adaptation, the story is relocated to a modern Las Vegas nightclub. Kim Jones and Marc Molomot sing the lead roles as Martin Haselböck conducts Musica Angelica, Sat., Jan. 28, 2:30 & 8 p.m., \$49-\$150. The Beverly O'Neill Theater, 300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center, Long Beach.

HUI WU: The pianist invokes Bach, Chopin, Stravinsky, Philip Glass and Donald Crockett, Sat., Jan. 28, 2 p.m., free. Brand Library & Art Center, 1601 W. Mountain St., Glendale.

GO INNA FALIKS: The Ukrainian pianist and UCLA professor wanders through Schubert's *Fantasie* in C major, D. 760, Sun., Jan. 29, 6 p.m., free. LACMA, Bing Theater, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles.

JOSHUA BELL & SAM HAYWOOD: Violinist Bell and pianist Haywood parry over sonatas, scherzos and other pieces by Beethoven, Brahms, Kernis, Ysaÿe, Rachmaninoff and Sarasate, Tue., Jan. 31, 7 p.m., \$35-\$65. The Granada Theatre, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara.

GO L.A. CHAMBER ORCHESTRA: Joined by members of the SITI Company, Jeffrey Kahane conducts a new production of Kurt Weill's anti-apartheid score *Lost in the Stars*, adapted by librettist Maxwell Anderson from Alan Paton's novel *Cry, the Beloved Country*, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m.; Sun., Jan. 29, 7 p.m. UCLA, Royce Hall, 340 Royce Drive, Westwood.

GO L.A. PHILHARMONIC: Conductor Gustavo Dudamel welcomes pianist Emanuel Ax for a concert that contrasts works by W.A. Mozart and Arnold Schoenberg, Fri., Jan. 27, 8 p.m.; Sat., Jan. 28, 2 p.m., \$20-\$201. Pianist Emanuel Ax sits in with members of the orchestra in an evening of chamber-music pieces by Mozart and Brahms, Tue., Jan. 31, 8 p.m., TBA. Georgian violinist Lisa Batiashvili wends her way through Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35; and conductor Gustavo Dudamel summons forth Prokofiev's selections from *Romeo & Juliet* and Alfred Schnittzke's anti-dream (*Kein Sommernachtstraum*, Thu., Feb. 2, 8 p.m.; Feb. 3-4, 8 p.m.; Sun., Feb. 5, 2 p.m., \$20-\$195. Disney Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave.

GO LANG LANG: The Chinese pianist ranges from the delicate melodies of Debussy and Liszt to the more propulsive sounds of Falla, Albéniz and Granados, Wed., Feb. 1, 8 p.m., \$54-\$130. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles.

PACIFIC SYMPHONY: The O.C. orchestra celebrates Chinese New Year with selections by Hua Wu, He Zhanhao & Chen Gang, and Debussy, and Pacific Chorale and the American Feel Young Chorus bolster "Ode to Joy," from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Sat., Jan. 28, 8 p.m., \$18-\$88. Conductor David Danzmayr evokes Scotland through Hamish MacCunn's *Land of the Mountains & the Flood*, Max Bruch's Scottish Fantasy for Violin & Orchestra (featuring violinist Ning Feng), and Felix Mendelssohn's Third Symphony, Thu., Feb. 2, 8 p.m.; Feb. 3-4, 8 p.m. Segerstrom Center, 600 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa.

SEAN CHEN: The pianist gives a recital, preceded by guitarist Tara Rose Davidson, Thu., Feb. 2, 7:30 p.m., \$10-\$20. California State University, Dominguez Hills University Theatre, 1000 E. Victoria St., Carson.

GO VICKI RAY: The forward-looking pianist dices up the world premiere of Dylan Mattingly's *Dreams and False Alarms* alongside works by Brad Lubman, Erik Griswold, Michael Gordon, Julia Wolfe and David Lang, Tue., Jan. 31, 8:30 p.m., \$35. REDCAT, 631 W. Second St., Los Angeles.

—Falling James

For more listings, please go to laweekly.com.

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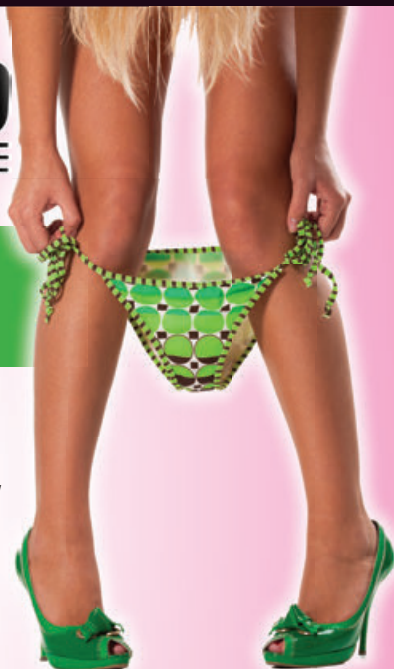
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Notices

656
Legal Notices

**ORDER FOR PUBLICATION
OF SUMMONS DIVORCE -
Case #PDO62556 SUPE-
RIOR
COURT OF CALIFORNIA,
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**
In regards to the marriage
of Petitioner Plaintiff: CINDY
ANN FLORES
and Respondent: MARCO
TULIO UYU IN THE STATE OF
CALIFORNIA, TO THE PERSON
NAMED ABOVE AS RESPON-
DENT: IT IS ORDERED that
the service of the summons
in this action be made upon
respondent MARCO TULIO
UYU, DISSOLUTION OF MAR-
RIAGE, by publication there-
of in LA Weekly, a newspa-

per of general circulation
published at Los Angeles,
California, hereby designat-
ed as the newspaper most
likely to give notice to said
respondent; that said publi-
cation be made at least
once a week for four con-
secutive weeks.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED
that a copy of said sum-
mons, said petition, and
his/her order for publi-
cation be forthwith deposi-
ted in the United States Post
Office, postage paid, direct-
ed to said respondent if this
address is ascertained be-
fore expiration of the time
prescribed for the publica-
tion of this summons. A
declaration of this mailing
or of the fact that the ad-
dress was not ascertained
must be filed at the expira-
tion of the time prescribed
for the publication. Dated
12/06/16, Judge Susan L.
Lopez-Ciss.

**ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE
FOR CHANGE OF NAME**
Case No. B5167298
Superior Court of California
Los Angeles Superior Court
111 North Hill Street Los An-
geles, CA 90012. On
12/29/16 - In the matter of
petitioner: Mechelle Maria
Stanford. It is hereby or-
dered that all persons inter-
ested in the above-entitled
matter of change of name
appear before the above-

entitled court as follows to
show cause why the peti-
tion for change of name
should not be granted. No-
tice of hearing: April 11
2017 10am Dept 44 Room
418 Located at Los Angeles
Superior Court 111 North
Hill Street Los Angeles, CA
90012 and a petition for
change of name having
been duly filed with the
clerk of this Court, and it
appearing from said peti-
tion that said petitioner(s)
desire(s) to have her name
changed from: Mechelle
Maria Stanford to My'kell
Miracle Gio'Vonni. Now
therefore, it is hereby or-
dered that all persons inter-
ested in the 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 or-
dered that a copy of this
order be published in the
LA Weekly, 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
01/12/17, 01/19/17,
01/26/17 and 02/02/17
Dated: Dec 29, 2016

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660 Public Notices

Fictitious Business Statement 2016300037. The following person(s) is doing business as: **Squeaky Clean Mobile Carwash 712 S. Westlake Ave. Apt 201, Los Angeles, CA., 90057.** This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on: n/a Signed: Jose Wenceslao Koh-Tec
NOTICE- THIS FICTITIOUS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE ON WHICH IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THE EXPIRATION. 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 1440 et seq., Business and Professions Code). **This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on: 12/12/16 Publish: 01/05/17, 01/12/17, 01/19/17, 01/26/17. LA Weekly**

660 Public Notices

ORDER FOR PUBLICATION OF SUMMONS DIVORCE - Case #KD096021 SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, 400 Civic Center Plaza, Pomona, CA. 91766 In regards to the marriage of Petitioner Plaintiff:
NOEMI PLACIDA MEDINA and Respondent: ERNESTO ORNELAS IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, TO THE PERSON NAMED ABOVE AS RESPONDENT: IT IS ORDERED that the service of the summons in this action be made upon respondent **ERNESTO ORNELAS**, DISSOLUTION OF MARRIAGE, by publication thereof in LA Weekly, a newspaper of general circulation published at Los Angeles, California, hereby designated as the newspaper most likely to give notice to said respondent; that said publication be made at least once a week for four consecutive weeks. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that a copy of said summons, said petition, and his/her order for publication be forthwith deposited in the United States Post Office, postage paid, directed to said respondent if this address is ascertained before expiration of the time prescribed for the publication of this summons. A declaration of this mailing or of the fact that the address was not ascertained must be filed at the expiration of the time prescribed for the publication. Dated 11/07/16, Judge John A. Slawson.

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API/ Data Product Mgr: B.S in comp. science or engineering + 18 mo exp. Req'd. Direct operations, set goals, procedures, manage products through data and API. tech design, app. integration, security & data. Mail CV to: Total Merchant Services, Attn: HR, 21650 Oxford Street, Ste 1200, Woodland Hills, CA 91367.

Bioinformatics Associate, Irvine, CA. Designing analysis strategies, algorithms, and tools for genome-wide DNA methylation and next-generation sequencing. MS in Bioinformatics & 1 yr experience. Mail resume to Angela Kim, HR Mgr, Zymo Research Corporation, 17062 Murphy Ave., Irvine, CA 92614.

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FINANCE Financial Analyst in Compton, CA: Collect operational data, determine cost of operations and reconcile daily ledger. Mail resumes: Harbor Green Grain LP, L. Bao, 20100 S Alameda St, Compton, CA 90221

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FAKEAR KALYA SCINTILLA & EVE OLUTION BARCLAY CRENSHAW
DIMOND SAINTS iLL.GATES B2B STEPHAN JACOBS
THE RANGE IVY LAB PSYMBIONIC STÉLOUSE
HEADPHONE ACTIVIST HEDFLUX ELOHIM ASADI
FRAMEWORKS CRi ERICA DEE PLANTRAE JADE CICADA
CHARLESTHEFIRST MADDY O'NEAL spacegeisha MAGIC MOMENTS

GRAND ARTIQUÉ

TOO MANY ZOOZ ELEPHANT REVIVAL THE CALIFORNIA HONEYDROPS
ORGONE DIRTWIRE ZACH DEPUTY VOKAB KOMPANY B-SIDE PLAYERS
W.C. THORNBUSH & THE GREAT AMERICAN SHOW HERBERT BAIL ORCHESTRA
GENE EVARO JR EDITH CRASH THE DELIRIANS ANDREW SHEPPARD
CACTUS WINE EXPERIENCE CARLO BOOSTIVE SHOVELMAN THE BLOODHOUNDS
BOOTLEG SUNSHINE ISRAEL MALDONADO TAH REI JOAQUPELLI

... AND MANY MORE!

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