TIME FOR A
Cannabis
TIME FOR A TESE

Burlesque artist Dita Von Teese discusses her New Year’s Eve plans, #MeToo and diversification

BY SUSAN HORNK
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THE RESIST BOREDOM SALE

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UCLA is conducting a clinical trial to examine the safety of a medication, pomaglumetad methionil (POMA), and methamphetamine. Investigators at UCLA are conducting this study to find out:

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Call 310-905-2570 for information on the inpatient meth study or to make an appointment at our research clinic in Santa Monica or visit www.uclabam.org/meth.
CULTURE

FRI 12/28

Excelsior!

Writer-publisher Stan Lee created or co-created an entire universe populated by such flawed but relatable superheroes as the Incredible Hulk, Doctor Strange, the Scarlet Witch, the X-Men, Iron Man and Spider-Man, yet many of his most fantastic adventures for Marvel Comics took place amid the urban landscapes of Manhattan and other American cities. So it’s perhaps fitting that GeekMaddness Cosplay’s March to Honor Stan Lee takes place today on Lee’s birthday along a boulevard that’s inhabited by cosplay doppelgangers of some of his famous creations, including at least two variously moody Spider-Men. The march starts at Shake Shack and heads west toward Buffalo Wild Wings, near the site of Lee’s star on Hollywood Boulevard. Shake Shack, 6201 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Fri., Dec. 28, 10 a.m.; free. facebook.com/events/362766260964560.

SAT 12/29

Throw It Back to a Groovier Time

When it comes to music, December is often the bleakest month, as the deadly combination of too much sugar and holiday sentimentality inevitably turns most music into a treacly seasonal mush. But Chapel of Love’s ‘60s Dance Party brings a ray of light into the wintry gloom with DJ Adam Staf ford spinning “girl groups, sunshine pop, soft psych, bubble gum, yé-yé” and other vintage tunes. In keeping with the velvety spirit of the evening, a new Lee Hazlewood tribute band, We Hazlewood, makes its live debut. Zebulon, 2478 Fletcher Drive, Elysian Valley; Sat., Dec. 29, 7 p.m.; free. (323) 662-0966, zebulon.ticketfly.com/event/1795200-chapel-love-60s-dance-party-los-angeles.

FILM

Mondo-Inspired Medley

“It’s the 21st century, and the definitions of ‘art’ and ‘cinema’ no longer have to be inaccessible or pretentious,” declare the folks behind Mondo Cult Film Variety Showcase #3. This evening’s screenings of a dozen international short films encompass both high art and low comedy, along with stranger experiments. The subject matter includes an artificial-intelligence machine making jokes inspired by the film Deathstalker II (MST3K_V3), the Queen of Meatloaf coming to the rescue of a ‘50s housewife (Commercial for the Queen), and a pet-store fable based on an Aimee Bender story (End of the Line) and a lonely man looking for salvation by joining a cult from outer space (Cult Film). Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Sat., Dec. 29, 7:30 p.m.; $12. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com/content/mondo-cult-film-variety-showcase-3-dystopia.

SUN 12/30

Pick Your Architectural Exploration

On what will most likely be a beautiful, crisp “winter” morning, the Pasadena Heritage Foundation offers a choice between two of its most popular Architectural Legacy walking tours. If you’re feeling wide tree-lined streets leading to treasures of Craftsman-style estates and archetypal bungalows, the Hillcrest neighborhood is your Greene & Greene happy place. For those feeling a touch more urban (aka food and shopping-adjacent), try the Civic Center District and Fountains tour, which tells the stories of the area’s National Planning Landmark Award for its 100-year-plus history of beautification and Mediterranean-inspired civic design, including some majestic and deeply Instagrammable public fountains. Pasadena (meeting location provided with tickets); Sun., Dec. 30, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; $15-$20. pasadenaheritage.org.

MON 12/31

Ring in 2019 With Class

The Portland, Oregon, mini-orchestra Pink Martini sends off the tattered remnants of the old year and welcomes the shiny new one with a blend of musical disguises that are borrowed from various regions around the globe and fashioned into a snazzy, jazzy pop spectacle. The group features two dynamic and charismatic vocalists, original singer China Forbes and former hard-rock wild woman Storm Large, who insinuate themselves within eight languages and even more genres on their recent album, Je dis oui! If at times the theatrical artifice gets a bit distancing, bandleader-pianist Thomas Lauderdale reins in the group with diplomatic aplomb, especially on the more nuanced cabaret ballads. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Mon., Dec. 31, 7 & 10:30 p.m.; $87-$226. (323) 850-2000, laphil.com/events/performances/319/2018-12-31-new-years-eve-with-pink-martini.

HOLIDAYS

Family Values

Christmas, Chanukah and all those Nut-cracker ballets may have ended but Lula Washington Dance Theatre has one more winter celebration to share before the new year. For more than 35 years, choreographer Lula Washington and her respected contemporary dance company’s Kwanzaa Celebration has been closely associated with the African-American community. Kwanzaa began in L.A. and its attention to values of children, family and community are cause for all to celebrate. The show includes dance and drumming honoring the various values Kwanzaa celebrates over the festival’s seven days. Lula Washington Dance Theatre, 3773 Crenshaw Blvd., Baldwin Hills; Fri.-Sat., Dec. 28-29, 7:30 p.m.; Sun., Dec. 30, 3 p.m.; $35-$100, $25 student & seniors, $15 children 12 & under, $10 children 2 & under in laps. brownpapertickets.com/event/3908032.

HOLI DAYS

Rudolph and Red Lights

Los Angeles has its fair share of luminous events and installations during the season of holiday lights: the Eastern-influenced
Look Sexy...for the holidays

LA WEEKLY

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America’s New Year
Before college football’s Ohio State Buckeyes and Washington Huskies slug it out in the annual Rose Bowl game, the streets of Pasadena will be transformed into a massive garland of brightly colored flowers fashioned and festooned into elaborate floats that will unwind slowly through 5½ miles of Colorado Boulevard on what often feels like one of the coldest mornings of the year. Adding real warmth and soul to the sometimes-staid Tournament of Roses Parade will be this year’s grand marshal, funk and R&B empress Chaka Khan, who will embody this year’s theme, “The Melody of Life.” Orange Grove & Colorado boulevards, Pasadena; Tue., Jan. 1, 8 a.m.-noon; free. (866) 949-8007, lazoolights.org. —EVERY BISSETT

CULTURE
Shoot for the Stars
Whether you’re the type who has a noted and framed list of goals ordered by priority and ready to shame your peers with at 12:01 a.m. on Jan. 1 or the person who changes the subject at the mere mention of resolutions, New Year’s inevitably means New Year’s resolutions. Provided you are awake and ambulatory at the perhaps painfully early hour of 2 p.m., make attending the second annual Go Day! your first goal of 2019. The event’s premise is simple: “For all attendees to have started, put a dent in, completed or even just set a goal before the end of the first day of 2019, hangover be damned!” To that end, there will be work time with “curated workin’ tunes at the perfect volume,” a mandated stretch break and a panel of creative types to impart their wisdom. While the event is targeted at “artists,” fear not — this is Los Angeles, which means that label applies to about 90 percent of the population. Dynasty Typewriter, 2511 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica; Tue., Jan. 1, 2-4 p.m.; free. dynastytypewriter.com/calendar/godayjan1. —EVERY BISSETT

CULTURE
Celebrating Black Girlhood
In 1939 and ’40, psychologists Kenneth...
and Mamie Clark published papers detailing tests that showed that African-American children routinely chose to play with white dolls over black dolls. With this landmark study on self-image as an inspiration, the 38th annual Black Doll Show honors black girlhood in all its many splendors. Reclaiming the doll as both an affirming archetype and a blank canvas, the exhibition illustrates aspects of the black experience: activism, play (“Double Dutch — Black Girlhood” is the show’s theme this year), pride and self-worth, and hair — as seen through the prism of a child’s doll. William Grant Still Arts Center, 2520 S. West View St., West Adams; Thu., Jan. 3, noon; thru Feb. 16; free. (323) 734-1165, wgsac.wordpress.com/exhibition/annual-black-doll-show.

—DAVID COTNER

ART

Pop and Politics
Curated by Narei Choi (New York) and Nicolas Orozco-Valdivia (L.A.), Take My Money/Take My Body is a deft examination of the consumer/big data/performance/surveillance complex — specifically as it manifests in the global entertainment realm of K-Pop. Essentially deconstructing the purportedly progressive and futuristic aesthetic of freedom that K-Pop represents, the curators have chosen interdisciplinary works by artists from South Korea, China, Cuba, Spain and the United States that express not only the irrational exuberance of the genre but the similarities to populist political movements employing the same cultural strategies. Fanatical appreciation, irrational devotion, willing self-subjugation, blindingly bright colors, infectious tunes, specialized lingo — these are all fun and games, until someone loses to a fascist. LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions), 6522 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; opening reception, Thu., Jan. 3, 7-10 p.m.; exhibit: Wed.-Sun., noon-6 p.m., thru Feb. 24; free. (323) 957-1777, welcometolace.org.

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TIME FOR A TEESE

Burlesque artist Dita Von Teese discusses her New Year's Eve plans, #MeToo and diversification

BY SUSAN HORNIK

Watching Dita Von Teese perform is a magical, sensual experience. Like a flickering candle, she draws you into her graceful movements, mesmerized. It’s no wonder her performances sell out: She represents that classic, incandescent Hollywood glamour.

Teese is also a self-styled fashion icon, featured on Vanity Fair’s International Best Dressed List and adorning numerous magazine covers, including Playboy.

The reigning queen of burlesque lives a full life, traveling on a whirlwind European tour with her latest alluring spectacle and designing her latest lingerie collection.

You can catch Teese on the small screen, too, as she recently appeared as a ghost named Vivienne on Netflix’s goth baking series The Curious Creations of Christine McConnell.

And she’s busy planning for her annual New Year’s Eve event, which returns to downtown L.A. at the Orpheum Theatre.

“I’ve created a show called The Art of the Teese, which we have toured successfully all over the United States, Canada and Australia,” Teese tells L.A. Weekly. “While performing in Europe, I have been working with some of my cast members on their new acts for the New Year’s Eve gala.”

Describing her vision for this year’s event, Teese admitted she’s always fantasized about a mythical NYE that evokes the golden age of Hollywood. “Last year’s event [at the Theatre at Ace Hotel] created a stunning atmosphere of opulence, with the sold-out audience dressed to the nines, creating that New Year’s scene I always dreamt of,” she exclaims.

This time, Teese has decided to up the ante, choosing one of L.A.’s most glamorous old theaters. “The Orpheum has a rich showbiz past, a stage made for vaudeville and burlesque shows, so it’s especially exciting to invite the audience into this historic space. It’ll be a night you’ll tell your grandkids about!”

With her delightfully sensual, visual stimulation, Teese takes great pleasure in planning her glamorous shows. The veteran striptease artist has worked on every aspect of her epic performances for years, from the exquisite sets and gorgeous costumes to the overall production, music and lighting.

“It’s a lot of fun to build a new show for New Year’s Eve! I usually create a couple of brand-new acts,” she says excitedly. “And sometimes, I really like to pick something from my older repertoire, that I don’t perform that much anymore. I like to think of ways to make the performances bigger and better.”

People who have been asking when she would do a burlesque performance again are excited to see it onstage. “Also, people that didn’t go to my shows five to 10 years ago get to watch something they’ve only seen in photos or video.”

Los Angeles Burlesque

While many in the Hollywood
celebrity gossip world will always remember her for marrying and divorcing the equally intriguing rock enigma Marilyn Manson, Teese’s legacy is far from superficial. Rather, her knowledge of burlesque has helped revive the once-dormant genre.

It’s no wonder, then, that Los Angeles continues to have a vibrant striptease and fetish scene, making it an ideal place for Teese to find new talent to feature in her vintage revue.

“Telling the stories of the women who broke barriers and set the stage for modern burlesque to be a legitimate art form is part of the reason I became a pinup girl and burlesque star. Finding myself on the stage is truly refreshing,” Teese notes. “There is a beauty in even the most mundane moments.”

So much of her imagery informed my own aesthetic sense.

One of the things Harrington loves most about Teese (“apart from the fact that she has one of the best — if not the best — private collection of lingerie in the world”) is how she has transformed her Hollywood career and become a true business mogul.

“Not only are her burlesque performances more popular than they have ever been before, she has a thriving lingerie line, several published books, a popular app, a glove line, a fashion collaboration … the list goes on and on. And her products sell out every single time,” Harrington points out.

“As someone who’s also an entrepreneur and small business owner, I see Dita’s career path as aspirational. The way she’s not only diversified her brand but stayed relevant the entire time is the ultimate goal.”

Harrington considers Teese a modern-day icon. “So many of her looks, her images, her pieces are instantly recognizable. We’re talking about someone who’s personal friends with the world’s greatest living couturier, Mr. Pearl, who also designed corsets for [Alexander] McQueen, [Thierry] Mugler and [Jean-Paul] Gaultier. “She truly understands and appreciates artisanship and craftsmanship, whether it’s in beauty or fashion or intimate apparel or even furniture.”

Writing and Music

Teese is also a prolific writer; her New York Times best-selling book Your Beauty Mark: The Ultimate Guide to Eccentric Glamour (Dey Street Books/HarperCollins) is 400 pages long. The book has been printed in numerous languages and is a delicious read for any fan.

“I think that writing my books has helped me to have a voice; it means a lot to me to be able to inspire others to embrace their sensuality and beauty,” muses Teese.

“I enjoyed writing about the things that first sparked my love of glamour, the reasons why I became a pinup girl and burlesque star. Finding my confidence is something I always wanted to share, in hopes that it could inspire others.” She is currently working on her next book, to be published in 2019.

Recently, Teese wrote the foreword to Robert Flynn Johnson’s book Working Girls: An American Brothel, Circa 1892, providing an insightful essay into the significance of these photos.

“The local photographer and his anonymous models appear to straddle an artful titillation, at times striving toward Degas nudes and at another, more in the spirit of a strip and tease,” she notes. “There is a beauty in even the most mundane moments.”

Teese’s vibe is so alluring that she attracted the attention of a French musician. Earlier this year, her self-titled debut album was released via the Paris-based label Record Makers. A collaboration with singer-composer Sébastien Tellier, the album conjures up a modern
day Brigitte Bardot or Serge Gainsbourg feel.

“I’m not a professional singer; in fact, I’m quite uneasy about recording my voice,” she says in the album bio. “But I do enjoy the thrill of doing things that are outside of my comfort zone, so in the past, I’ve collaborated with artists I admire that have invited me, such as Monarchy and Die Antwoord.”

But nothing compares with this project with Tellier, she acknowledges. “Having been a fan of his music for a long time, I would go to see him play live in California. And when I performed for the first time at the Crazy Horse in Paris, I invited him because I was such a fan, not daring to imagine that someday he would compose an entire album for me.”

When the duo began recording, Tellier offered to let Teese write some lyrics. “But I preferred the feeling of letting go, of making a Sébastien Tellier record,” she says. “To describe the album is difficult; perhaps it’s me with less makeup. At times, there’s a certain vulnerability, which stands in contrast to my stage image of a confident and glamorous woman. I would never dare say such things in real life.”

Tellier had long imagined creating music for a woman. “I was looking for someone both beautiful and unique. When I saw Dita dance to a piece of music I had written for her, I had a feeling that her physical presence and her personality were a perfect fit with my music and I started to compose only for her.”

Tellier says Teese reminded him of Snow White, because she has the “freshness” of a cartoon character.

“But when I saw her arrive at the studio in her black Mercedes, I understood that she was a ghost,” he said. “Observing her, always smiling, available, I thought of mermaids, shells, mother-of-pearl objects and of marble. My wife, Amandine de la Richardière, wrote some sexy pop lyrics to balance the melodrama of my tragic vision that love always ends — in my songs — in bitterness and regret.”

After having worked with her, Tellier describes Teese as a fantasy factory, “in the sense that when you think that you’ve finally pierced her mystery, she turns out to be more than ever a creature of dreams, totally out of reach.”

#MeToo

With the #MeToo movement, one might wonder if this vintage theatrical entertainment has been impacted by recent events.

“I certainly can’t speak for everyone,” Teese says, “but it’s hard to think of the ways that it has affected burlesque from my point of view. Unlike burlesque of the 1930s and 1940s, the neo-burlesque world isn’t really driven by men, so I think the industry of burlesque isn’t really subjected to the same kind of issues as, say, the movie industry.”

“Men aren’t the most powerful icons in burlesque anymore; that’s just one reason why the revival is much different than it was in the old days. Women are in charge in modern burlesque! That’s not to say that they might not be in #MeToo situations stemming from women in power.”

Teese is a fearless feminist; she once spoke at the Oxford Student Union in England, where other elected speakers have included the Dalai Lama, Mother Teresa, Tony Blair and Anna Wintour.

An advocate in the fight against HIV and AIDS, Teese was MAC Viva Glam spokesperson from 2006 to 2008 and in 2009 participated in the H&M/Fashion Against AIDS T-shirt campaign. She also has performed and appeared at several events for AmFAR and was honored with its Award of Courage in 2008.

“I am still with AmFAR and the MAC AIDS Fund occasionally,” Teese says. “Being a spokesperson, it was amazing to see what a difference their work has done in the fight against AIDS. So whenever they ask me to be present for something, it’s a pleasure to be involved.”

What’s next? “I’d like to take more vacations. Right now, at the top of my list is a nice tropical holiday, on the beach, under a big hat, with a coconut drink in my hand!” she quips.
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BY MELISSA CURTIN

Ayara Thai Cuisine

PHOTO BY MELISSA CURTIN

Proud Bird

11022 Aviation Blvd., Westchester; (310) 670-3093, theproudbird.com.

For almost three decades, Hal’s Bar & Grill has been a Venice landmark, but now you can find Hal’s on Runway Boulevard in Playa Vista with a jazz brunch on Sundays and jazz on Mondays. At this new mod space filled with world-class contemporary art, chef Lee Garman’s menu includes braised short rib paired with chorizo red beans and rice; duck pan-roasted sea scallops with guava jelly and pickled jalapeño; and collard greens salad with blue cheese crumbles, crispy bacon, candied pecans and honey cider vinaigrette. Our favorites include whipped avocado dip; hummus made from roasted pumpkin seeds; and the buttermilk fried chicken sandwich with house-made pickles, purple slaw, aioli and pimiento cheese. For a jazzy brunch, amble excursion. A pre- or post-airport outing make that hellish drive to LAX a memorable excursion.

For 14 years the family-run Ayara Thai Cuisine has been serving home-cooked Thai selections with California flair. The simple restaurant creates authentic dishes with a harmonious balance of flavors providing that unique Thai blend of sweet, sour, salty, creamy and spicy.

Order the rich coconut soup tom kha with Thai herbs, wild mushrooms, lemongrass, kaffir lime, Thai chili and your choice of shrimp, chicken or tofu. Healthy heating cold shrimp spring rolls are stuffed with carrots, green leaf lettuce, cucumbers, alfalfa sprouts, egg noodles and sweet basil leaves. Wrapped in rice paper, the rolls come with Ayara’s famous peanut sauce for dipping. Try a northern Thai specialty like curry noodle soup (khao soi); the Ka-Pow Belly with spicy chili basil and greens stir-fried with crispy pork belly; or the sweet creamy red curry cu chee salmon with steamed broccoli. 6245 W. 87th St., Westchester; (310) 410-8848, ayarathai.com.

Superba Food & Bread’s bakery-cafe-restaurant expanded from Venice to the outdoor shopping mecca at the Point. Dine in the sunshine and impress out-of-town guests with a healthy Angeleno order: Brussels sprouts with melted onion and soft egg; avocado toast grilled with watermelon radish, beets and burrata; or a grain bowl with sprouted brown rice, baby kale, egg, almonds, avocado and seared tuna. Top off your perfectly L.A. order with a local beer or tequilas. Besides ending with fried ice cream or caramel-stuffed churros dipped in chocolate or peanut butter and vanilla ice cream, you can pick up iconic Randy’s Donuts and a Philz coffee (San Francisco-born) right next door. 2191 Rosecrans Ave., El Segundo; (424) 269-2322, calokitchen.com.

The Manhattan Beach area is an easy detour from LAX to walk around and stretch your legs. Pubs and upscale eateries abound. If you’re looking for a homey diner with outdoor patio seating and views of the ocean, visit true classic Uncle Bill’s Pancake House before 3 p.m. for pancakes and waffles. Try a cheddar cheese and bacon waffle or a pumpkin spice pancake. 1305 Highland Ave., Manhattan Beach; (310) 545-5177, unclebills.net.

One reveler bragged of landing at LAX and taking the free shuttle to departures straight to the Courtyard Marriott and then walking to Sam First. With its midcentury-modern vibe, cozy seating, walls and ceilings lined in stretchy industrial cords and perfectly placed glowing orbs, this eclectic, refined cool bar is where you’ll find the world’s best jazz musicians. On Sunday evening the intimate space was packed with an attentive audience relaxing to the jazz trio helmed by drummer Joe La Barbera. The booker (also a talented bassist) has great contacts, so expect the best new young talent in L.A. and legendary musicians here. Jazz is offered Thursday to Sunday nights at 8 p.m., with a second set at 9:30. You wouldn’t think an airport detour could be so unforgettable. 6171 W. Century Blvd., Suite 180, Westchester; (424) 800-2006, sanfirstbar.com.

If you don’t have much time, consider showing off L.A. to your friends with a pit stop at the iconic In-N-Out Burger drive-thru burger joint with the LAX runway across the street. The menu is small but mighty — burgers, fries, shakes and sodas. See why Californians have been obsessed with this burger since 1948. 9149 S. Sepulveda Blvd., Westchester; (800) 786-1000, locations.in-n-out.com/117.
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HEROIC EFFORTS
Filmmakers empower the superhero genre anew

BY DAVID WEINER

Can you remember a time when some superhero saga wasn’t grabbing all the attention at the movies? As a steady supply of Marvel and DC films continues to command the multiplexes, it’s easy to get blasé and forget the myriad reasons we love the genre. Three new films have been released in the last two weeks alone — Once Upon a Deadpool, Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse and Aquaman — and there’s no escaping the feeling that the dominant genre at the box office (six of the current top 10 for 2018 are major-studio superhero sagas) may have found its most formidable villain yet: audience apathy.

Social media debates about whether or not “superhero fatigue” is dead or alive boil over with the arrival of every new hero flick, and knee-jerk fan/troll reactions to every new trailer and box office stumble show that, despite often-fantastic returns, the genre as a whole struggles to maintain its shiny appeal. (I was ready to take an extended break myself at the tail end of 2017 due to the incessant redundancy of the major studios’ superhero output, comparing and contrasting “Disney Marvel” to “Fox Marvel” movies, for an extra-special treat that comes after the end credits.

The cape-and-Spandex genre is evolving in large part due to the vocal demands of the media-savvy audience ever assembled: they’re willing to shell out $25 for a 3-D IMAX experience — and instantly share their unfiltered opinions on social media. Not only do they pine for traditional escapism but they require whip-smart writing and self-reflexive material that more closely relates to their daily lives.

2018 will be remembered as the year Stan Lee died. The beloved comic-world icon, whom many have compared to Walt Disney for his depth of imagination and massive positive influence on the culture, makes a pair of posthumous curtain calls in both Spider-Verse and Once Upon a Deadpool. At the tail end of the Deadpool credits, touching interview footage shows Lee discussing his legacy. Asked how he hopes people will remember him, Lee replies, "'He wrote some really good stories.' I don’t think about that much. When I’m gone, I really don’t care. It doesn’t do you any good when you’re gone." Set to an acoustic version of A-Ha’s “Take on Me,” the tribute is capped with the icon’s catchphrase, "Excelsior!" and it’s mighty powerful stuff for any comic-book fan worth his salt. Who knew that the post-credit sting of the new Deadpool flick would leave not a dry eye in the house?

In Spider-Verse, Miles Morales purchases a cookie-cutter Spidey costume from a store owner, played by Lee, wondering aloud if it will fit. With a glint in his eye, Stan tells Miles knowingly, "It always fits, eventually." In the end credits, we’re left with a fitting Stan Lee quote that encapsulates his legacy and the essence of the genre itself: "That person who helps others simply because it should or must be done, and because it is the right thing to do, is indeed, without a doubt, a real superhero."
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Mac Sabbath serve up a musical meal with organic appeal

BY KATHERINE TURMAN

Mac Sabbath play the Fonda Theatre on Friday, Dec. 28, with The Dickies and PPL MVR.
**FRI 12/28**

**Mac Sabbath, The Dickies**

* @ THE FONDA THEATRE

On paper, this would appear to be a lineup of supremely ridiculous punk and hard-rock bands to close the year. Mac Sabbath perform Black Sabbath songs while wearing costumes of characters from McDonaldland (see Music, page XX), whereas The Dickies' oeuvre consists of homages to Barney Rubble, killer clowns, Howdy Doody, hunchbacks, Tntia Toyota and Sammy Davis' glass eye. But Mac Sabbath's parodies are laced with barbed lyrics about factory farming that even Morrissey might appreciate (“We found ways to feed cows scraps of other cows that get left behind”), and The Dickies' silly symphonies and Banana Splits covers are mixed with non-sarcastic pure pop gems such as “Rosemary” and “Fan Mail.” Meanwhile, PPL MVR dress in yeti costumes, and Captured by Robots features two robots bossing around a single human acolyte. —FALLING JAMES

**Tropa Magica**

* @ ECHOPLEX

Brothers David and Rene Pacheco already stir up a frantic ruckus as Thee Commons, recklessly mixing garage, punk and cumbia to create a newly compelling variation on these three ancient music forms. But when they perform in their latest project, Tropa Magica, the Pacheco brothers conjure a much more mysterious sound that they describe as possessing a “cinematic, orchestrated and carnivalesque twist.” The song “Tropavision” unwinds with a febrile sax melody over a cyclical groove. “LSD Roma” is even more exotic, as jazzy tendrils of acoustic guitar splinter outward against a spaghetti Western backdrop. Elements of Manu Chao's shape-shifting of genres blend with a Django Reinhardt–style traditionalism to form music that is both danceable and psychedelic, familiar yet also strange. —FALLING JAMES

**SAT 12/29**

**Jamie Jones b2b The Martinez Brothers**

* @ HOLLYWOOD PALLADIUM

There is never a shortage of party choices for New Year's Eve weekend in Los Angeles. Insomniac's “underground” brand, Factory 93, offers one of the better options with Jamie Jones b2b The Martinez Brothers from open to close at the historic Hollywood Palladium. Both Jones and the Martinezes are leaders in classic house and melodic techno sounds and standard bearers in DJing, producing and releasing the highest quality music in those genres. Having them going head-to-head will be sure to enhance the already superior experience. The pro tip here is to carbo-load, arrive before doors and be mentally and physically prepared for the long haul into the early hours. This kind of singular curated event does not need a special occasion to make it the destination party that it is. —LILY HOAYER

**SUN 12/30**

**Adler’s Appetite**

* @ WHISKY A GO GO

Steven Adler could be forgiven for feeling a little aggrieved as his former Guns N’ Roses colleagues tour the world’s arenas and stadiums, raking in the cash. Sure, Slash, Axl and Duff have thrown him the occasional bone and allowed him to guest at a gig here and there. But Adler has openly admitted in the press that he wants to be in a band with his friends again. That doesn’t look as if it’ll happen anytime soon, though, so for now he’s going to have to satisfy that thirst with these club dates with his own Adler’s Appetite band, performing GN'R classics with some competent session players. Hey, there are worse ways to spend the night before New Year’s Eve — both for Adler and for us. Venzer, Motor Sickle, 79’, Wild Ride, Charlie Bonnet III & the Folkin’ Gasholes and Crowded Reflections also play. —BRETT CULLWOOD

**Laura Veirs**

* @ MOROCCAN LOUNGE

“Now she’s married to the swell/She’s swaying in the shells/A whisper in the waves,” Laura Veirs coos on “Margaret Sands,” a track from her latest album, The Lookout. With images of bones and seagulls, the tune is a typically gentle folk-pop interlude, much like the rest of the record. Produced by Veirs’ husband, Tucker Martine, the album segues from laid-back pop (the title track) to intimate folk balladry (“The Meadow”) as the singer charts the course of her heart via nature-based imagery. This has been a productive year for Veirs, who debuted Midnight Lighting, a new podcast about musicians with kids, and wrote a children’s book, Libba: The Magnificent Musical Life of Elizabeth Cotten. She’s also part of a folk supergroup with Neko Case and k.d. lang that’s simply titled case/lang/veirs, but her personality shines brightest on her solo recordings. —FALLING JAMES

**Jesika Von Rabbit**

* @ THE VIPER ROOM

Former Gram Rabbit frontwoman Jesika Von Rabbit is one of music’s great one-offs. She’s simultaneously pop and art, accessible and avant-garde. Her new album is called Dessert Rock, and that’s just fucking perfect because it manages to bring to mind dusty, grimy rock & roll (Joshua Tree is her home) and the sugary goodness of dessert. Von Rabbit’s music is all of that and more. She’s a mass of contradictions in the most glorious way and her influences, which touch on ’80s MTV pop and ’70s tie-dye psychedelia with dabs of Gaga and Nico, prove that very thing. Her new album is wonderful, but she really excels in the live environment. That’s where she can allow the visuals to blend seamlessly with the sound. Above all, Von Rabbit is a true artist. ARSNK and Jane
**COMING SOON:**

**THUR. DECEMBER 27**
- GOLVENVOICE PRESENTS: 1TAKEJAY
- GOLDENVOICE PRESENTS: 1TAKEJAY
- PROJECT BLOWED ANNIVERSARY
- PROJECT BLOWED ANNIVERSARY
- SWEET SATURDAYS
- SWEET SATURDAYS
- MANUPP PRESENTS DILF LOS ANGELES
- MANUPP PRESENTS DILF LOS ANGELES
- SWEET SATURDAYS
- SWEET SATURDAYS
- SUN. JANUARY 6
- MANI COOLIN
- MANI COOLIN

**THUR. DECEMBER 27**
- NEW YEAR’S PROM 2019
- NEW YEAR’S PROM 2019
- XCELLERATED & KILLAHURTY NYE
- XCELLERATED & KILLAHURTY NYE
- RIOT! AT THE DISCO NYE
- RIOT! AT THE DISCO NYE

**MON. DECEMBER 31**
- PANDEMIONIUM / LATIN BASMENT NYE
- PANDEMIONIUM / LATIN BASMENT NYE
- CLUB 90’S NEW YEAR’S EVE 2019
- CLUB 90’S NEW YEAR’S EVE 2019
- XCELLERATED & KILLAHURTY NYE
- XCELLERATED & KILLAHURTY NYE
- RIOT! AT THE DISCO NYE
- RIOT! AT THE DISCO NYE

**COMING SOON:**
- 12/27 - EMX TAKEOVER
- 12/29 - AZAEL’S XMAS PARTY
- 1/3 - EMX TAKEOVER

1/5 - BACK TO THE UNDERGROUND
1/11 - DAS BUNKER DANCE NIGHT
1/18 - MAC & CHEESE
1/19 - YASSER RAMOS LIVE
1/19 - MANUPP PRESENTS DILF LOS ANGELES
1/19 - SWEET SATURDAYS
1/22 - THE MOTH
1/24 - KARAOKE IS FOR LOVERS
1/25 - CLUB 90’S
1/25 - TRYBVL
1/26 - A CLUB CALLED RHONDA
1/31 - KATFISH

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Sex Cell, My Life With the Thrill Kill Kult
@ ECHOPLEX
Maybe 2018 was a year that needs saying goodbye to with a night of harsh, cold industrial music. That seems appropriate. This Sex Cells event at the Echoplex should provide exactly that, and the highlight, of course, will be Groovie Mann’s sleaze-soaked Chicago Wax Trax stalwarts My Life With the Thrill Kill Kult. There are many reasons to love TKK, not least the fact that they came under constant fire from the Parents Music Resource Center back in the early ’90s thanks to their explicit and subversive lyrics. That alone is enough to offer the band tenure in the college of awesomeness, but, hey, they didn’t quit there. The last studio album, 2014’s Spooky Tricks, is a typically brilliant industrial disco treat. Hopefully there’s more new music to come. Egyptian Lover, Sateen, industrial disco treat. Hopefully there’s more pop chansons to occasionally heavier new range from gently weird breezy-listening the bill with his psychedelic musings, which might not give you a song bristling with words or melody, it’s still a work of art — in a transformational visceral vein. Sound bath lifeguard Kristin Palombo guides you via the energy of pure tones played on quartz crystal singing bowls. Those tones are designed to shift your mind — unless you’re a real jerk or a crybaby — into a more relaxed and receptive state of being, slowing down your brainwaves and presenting a state of mind known as the alpha state. The alpha state is renowned for unveiling inspiration, focus and creativity, the likes of which are generally reserved for us artists and visionaries who usually experience these things every damn day. —DAVID COTNER

Faster Pussycat, Hookers & Blow
@ WHISKY A GO GO
A solid New Year’s Eve night out. Taime Downe grew tired of Pussycat after the ’80s pomp, calling it quits after 1992’s Whipped! received a lukewarm reception and forming S&M-themed industrial rock band The Newlydeads. By the mid-2000s, however, Downe had put together a new lineup of Pussycat, blending that old-school cock rock with some Newlydeads darkness. 2006’s The Power and the Glory Hole is under-heard, though Pussycat have toured hard since then. Meanwhile, Guns N’ Roses keyboardist Dizzy Reed will be joined by the revolving lineup of hard rockers for a hard-partying set. It all makes for a stunningly decadent double bill, and you can be sure that the booze will be flowing freely as the countdown to 2019 commences. The Whisky will be the best cathouse in town. —BRETT CALLWOOD

SECRET STARE
@ THE STANDARD, HOLLYWOOD
Secret Stare are a new local band fronted by Erin Emslie. She’s best known as the drummer for Bay Area provocateurs Hunx & His Punks, but she takes on an entirely different persona with her new project. There’s a punk influence in some of Secret Stare’s still-unreleased songs but without the overly campy goofiness of Hunx. Instead, Emslie’s originals with Secret Stare, such as “Lone Wolf” and “Subterranean Brain,” are infused with traces of psychedelia, glitter and garage rock, and the overall mood is more mysterious than kitschy as Emslie casts out her dreamy imprecations with a regal, otherworldly charisma. Much of Secret Stare’s power comes from guitarist Sharif Doumani (Alice Bag Band), whose fuzzy chords and inventive licks lace together Emslie’s shadowy melodies. Foie Gras, Pink Sock and Tigercide also play. —FALLING JAMES

TWIN SEAS
@ ALEX’S BAR
East L.A. band Twin Seas claim to blend the synth-soaked sounds of ’80s new wave with the dreamier tones of 1960s and ’70s psychedelia. As far as they’re concerned, they couldn’t have been born in any other city; the beachy vibe was appealing from day one to the core duo of Eduardo Bueno (vocals and guitar) and Jose Cruz (guitar and keys), and the music reflects that very thing. By Thursday, the New Year hangovers might just be under control, and these guys will offer a set that is both warmly calming and thrilling. Chola Orange, The Kid Chocolate Band and The Charities also play. —BRETT CALLWOOD
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