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CONTENTS

NEWS...6
The Porter Ranch gas leak is finally plugged. Can the environmental damage it caused be reversed? BY GENE MADDAUS. Coroner’s report shows ecstasy caused one teen’s death at last year’s Hard Summer. BY DENNIS ROMERO.

GO LA...11
Titmouse screens teeny-tiny animations, New Agers clear their heads at the Conscious Life Expo, Will Forte talks about his Fox sitcom and more fun stuff to do and see in L.A. this week.

CULTURE...16
In CULTURE, a look back at 25 years of Final Draft, a software that revolutionized scriptwriting. BY VINCENZA TOBIA. All Eyez on Me hits theaters this week. BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL.

MUSIC...35
JEFF WEISS looks back on 2Pac’s All Eyez on Me on its 20th anniversary, and talks to DJ Dodger Stadium about their work on the new Kanye West album. Plus: HENRY ROLLINS: THE COLUMNN, LINA IN L.A., listings for ROCK & POP, JAZZ & CLASSICAL and more.

THE 99 ESSENTIALS
Each year we get to return to the places that make L.A. a joy for food lovers, discover new flavors, and catch up with chefs and restaurants that have fresh and exciting things to offer. BY BESHA RODELL AND GARRETT SNYDER.
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The gas leak at the Aliso Canyon Storage Facility — plugged last week after nearly four months — was an unparalleled disaster. Though the cost of stopping the leak and relocating thousands of families is still being calculated, Southern California Gas has estimated that it could run as high as $300 million. But that figure does not include the most far-reaching impact of the leak: the tremendous effect on the climate from releasing 94,000 metric tons of methane into the air. The leak generated emissions equivalent to adding 1.6 million cars to the road.

It is, of course, impossible to undo the damage to the atmosphere. But Gov. Jerry Brown has ordered the gas company to “fully mitigate” the climate effect of the leak. It is not clear what this will mean, or what it will cost. As environmental groups prepare their arguments over the issue, there are few, if any, precedents to rely on.

“We’re charting some new territory,” says Tim O’Connor of the Environmental Defense Fund.

Polluters are generally required to clean up their messes. But when cleanup is not possible, some attempt is made to offset environmental effects. The most common example is wetland development, which occasionally is permitted on the condition that other land is set aside for conservation. But it’s relatively new to apply the concept to unlawful carbon emissions.

“It’s not as if there are dozens and dozens of cases that establish a clear road map,” says Frank O’Donnell, president of Clean Air Watch.

His group is urging the Environmental Protection Agency to impose stringent offset requirements on Volkswagen for cheating on emissions tests. He pointed to similar penalties that were imposed on Kia and Hyundai for emissions violations.

But the auto industry is covered by clear pollution-control standards. Natural gas storage is not regulated under California’s cap-and-trade system, which sets a limit on pollution and allows emitters to trade carbon credits on an exchange. That makes the Aliso Canyon leak a more difficult case.

At the heart of the debate is the issue of how to put a price on carbon. Some argue that this is impossible, so the state should instead focus on levying stiff fines and enacting new regulations.

But others contend that there is a fair way to do it, which would both punish the gas company and result in real benefits for the environment. One idea is to require the gas company to buy carbon credits from the state cap-and-trade exchange, which would lower the state’s pollution cap.

“I think that’s the cleanest way of ensuring the atmosphere is made whole,” says Alex Jackson, an attorney at the Natural Resources Defense Council, who suggests the proceeds from the purchase could go toward pollution-reduction projects.

Depending on how the figures are calculated, the cost could run to $50 million or more. For comparison, Hyundai and Kia were forced to surrender credits worth $200 million for overrating their cars’ fuel economy.

Some environmentalists think allowing SoCalGas to buy credits would be letting the company off too easy.

“I don’t think that’s gonna cut it,” O’Connor says. “We can’t just let them write a check and be done with it.”

O’Connor argues that the release of methane ought to be offset by the retention of methane — not by a reduction in carbon dioxide. He estimates that Southern California Gas loses 300,000 tons of methane every year via small leaks in the course of normal operations — three times the amount lost at Aliso Canyon.

“There are opportunities across the value chain for us to be finding these reductions,” he says. “That’s where we need to be focusing.”

His goal is to avoid an argument over how to convert methane emissions into equivalent amounts of carbon dioxide.

Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas, though it does not linger in the atmosphere as long as carbon dioxide. Over a 20-year horizon, it’s about 87 times more potent than carbon dioxide. But over 100 years, it’s more like 25 to 36 times more potent.

O’Connor worries that if the state gets drawn into a debate over which numbers to use, it will end up understimating the climate impact of the leak.

Food & Water Watch also does not believe the gas company should be able to use carbon credits. Scott Edwards, an attorney with the organization, argues that carbon brokers scour the country looking for climate mitigation projects that are already in place, which can be used to offset pollution in California.

“If it’s a pay-to-pollute system,” Edwards says. “It’s really just a shuffling of paper credits. We’re not solving anything.”

The California Air Resources Board, which administers the cap-and-trade program, has given until March 31 to come up with a mitigation plan for Aliso Canyon. Dave Clegern, a spokesman for CARB, says it would be unworkable to require the gas company to buy carbon credits.

“Cap-and-trade requires a fair amount of certainty since it’s based on a market,” he tells the Weekly via email. “One emergency can’t be allowed to throw the market out of balance.”

Last fall, CARB issued a draft strategy to reduce emission of “short-lived” pollutants such as methane, black carbon and hydrofluorocarbons. Among the ideas are the removal of wood-burning fireplaces from homes; increased composting to reduce methane emissions from landfills; and better monitoring of industrial gas leaks.

“We’d be open to the mitigation of this leak simply being folded into that larger strategy,” the NRDC’s Jackson says.

The short-lived pollutant strategy is likely to form the starting point for CARB’s discussion over the Aliso Canyon response. CARB is expected to take up the issue for the first time at a hearing on Feb. 18.

Rob Jackson, a Stanford professor who has studied methane leaks, suggests that SoCalGas should be forced to spend money on monitoring and research that would lead to industrywide upgrades.

“It all starts with measuring and monitoring leaks,” Jackson says.

Gas utilities have already undertaken costly improvements to their distribution systems in response to the San Bruno explosion, which killed eight people in 2010. Whatever measures are imposed on Southern California Gas, environmental groups agree that it should be in addition to existing requirements.

L.A. elected officials also have weighed in on the debate, urging Gov. Brown to focus the mitigation efforts in the community around Porter Ranch. According to Alexandra Nagy, an organizer with Food & Water Watch, Mayor Eric Garcetti has talked about using mitigation money to buy electric buses.

But for Edwards, all of this discussion is somewhat beside the point. Mitigation, he argues, is akin to a license to continue to pollute.

“We can’t mitigate what’s already been done. The methane genie is out of the bottle in Porter Ranch,” Edwards says. “We believe this facility should be shut down and the company should be heavily fined. That money should be going to promoting clean, renewable energy so we can get off fossil fuels sooner rather than later.”

For its part, the gas company has committed to full mitigation but has not offered a proposal on how to do that.

“Right now, the company’s top priorities are to permanently seal the well and support the community as they begin to return home,” says Javier Mendoza, a company spokesman.
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ECSTASY CAUSED TEEN’S DEATH AT HARD SUMMER

After six months, coroners released their findings about one of two young women who died at the electric dance music festival

BY DENNIS ROMERO

The deaths of two teenagers at the Hard Summer Festival happened more than six months ago, but it has taken until now to get conclusive information about what happened.

Word from the Los Angeles County Department of Medical Examiner-Coroner is that 18-year-old Tracy Nguyen of West Covina died from MDMA “intoxication.” She was at the electronic dance music festival at the Fairplex in Pomona in early August when she reportedly collapsed; she later was pronounced dead at a hospital.

Another young woman, 19-year-old Katie Dix of Camarillo, died after she reportedly was found at the fest unconscious. The results of her autopsy have been deferred pending the conclusion of toxicology testing, a coroner’s official said this week. The medical examiner’s office has been short-staffed, leading to months-long delays for drug-test results.

The demise of both women, however, was quickly blamed on possible drug overdoses, most likely ecstasy.

Advocates of the drug, also known as MDMA and molly, believe that testing pills for adulterants, educating ravers about proper water intake and encouraging cool-off breaks for partiers will help prevent deaths. The “harm-reduction” approach has been around for 20 years, but as dance festivals have grown in size to tens of thousands of attendees, ecstasy deaths have become a consistent part of the festivities.

The Cow Palace in the Bay Area tried harm reduction in 2010. “We basically had worse results,” venue CEO Joe Barkett told us that year.

“It is very possible to overdose on MDMA,” Scientific American wrote in 2001. “These overdoses may produce fatal- ity by heart failure or extreme heat stroke.”

In 2014, 19-year-old Emily Tran died after attending that year’s Hard Summer festival at Whittier Narrows Recreation Area. Her death was attributed to “acute MDMA intoxication,” a coroner’s official said that year. No other drugs turned up in her system.

A string of drug-related deaths, about one a year, on average, have dogged Electric Daisy Carnival since it moved from Los Angeles to Las Vegas in 2011, following the 2010 death of a 15-year-old girl who sneaked into EDC at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum and overdosed on MDMA.

A subsequent corruption scandal chased raves out of the publicly owned venue. In a case that’s still pending, the Los Angeles district attorney alleges that over the course of several years, leading up to 2010, rave promoters paid an L.A. Coliseum manager under the table for easy access to the facilities.

L.A. County Supervisor Hilda Solis proposed an EDM festival ban following the tragedies of summer 2015. (The Hard Summer sites, Whittier Narrows and the Fairplex, are run by the county government.) The Board of Supervisors, however, backed off Solis’ ban after promoters instituted tighter security and implemented a 21-and-older door policy.

After the August event, Beverly Hills-based Live Nation, Hard Summer’s promoter and the largest concert concern in the world, addressed the tragic loss. “We extend our deepest sympathies to their families and friends,” the company stated.

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**ANIMATION**

**Take Five**

In the time it takes you to read this sentence about the Titmouse 5-Second Animation Night, you could have already watched one of its cartoons. The annual event offers a glimpse into the roiling creative id of the award-winning Titmouse animation studio, and this year’s lineup features the usual fleeting moving images along with animations from the Titmouse vaults, which span everything from the brain, spinal cord and nerves. A disorder that causes tumors to grow on their underpants, the run raises money to combat neurofibromatosis, a genetic disorder that causes tumors to grow on the brain, spinal cord and nerves.

Belasco Theatre, 1050 S. Hill St., downtown; Sat., Feb. 20, noon; $55. cupidsundierun.com/city/los-angelenos. —Gwynedd Stuart

**RACES**

**A Brief Encounter**

Last weekend, while the rest of us were enjoying a light brunch followed by a heavy nap, thousands of indefatigable athletes ran 26 miles in the L.A. Marathon. It’s not that those who didn’t participate are lazy, per se — we were just resting up for this weekend’s Cupid’s Undie Run, a party that culminates in a whopping 1-mile, clothing-optional run around downtown. Besides being an opportunity to ogle a bunch of fellow Angelenos in their underpants, the run raises money to combat neurofibromatosis, a genetic disorder that causes tumors to grow on the brain, spinal cord and nerves.

Belasco Theatre, 1050 S. Hill St., downtown; Sat., Feb. 20, noon; $55. cupidsundierun.com/city/los-angelenos. —Gwynedd Stuart

**Lucky Number 99**

Each year in L.A. Weekly’s massive, mouthwatering 99 Essentials issue, food critic extraordinaire Besha Rodell shouts out one-shy-of-100 restaurants that have become or remain integral to the city’s dining scene. Consider the issue, which hit the streets on Friday, the appetizer before The Essentials, a party featuring bites from dozens of the city’s best eateries, from newcomers such as Echo Park barcade Button Mash to tried-and-true crowd-pleasers like Spago. There’s also music from DJ Tropikal and wine from an enormous roster of wineries. We’re probably biased, but it’s gonna be a good time.

California Market Center, 110 E. Ninth St., downtown; Sat., Feb. 20, 6-10 p.m.; VIP hour 5-6 p.m.; $45-$105. laweekly.com/essentials. —Gwynedd Stuart

**FOOD AND DRINK**

**Flour Power**

Carb consciousness be damned — at least for a couple hours. Chefs Avner Levi — former pasta chef at Bestia and Sotto — and Santos Uy, both of the DTLA pasta pop-up Cento Pasta Bar, head to Mission Wines in South Pasadena for a one-night pairing of Italian cooking and Italian wines. Part cooking demo, part tasting, the event pairs three dishes, such as fresh gnocchi with marinara, with three wines selected by Mission Wine’s staff. Advance tickets are required. Mission Wine & Spirits, 1785 E. Washington Blvd., Pasadena; Fri., Feb. 19, 5-7 p.m.; $25. (626) 794-7026, shop.missionwines.com. —Garrett Snyder

**COMEDY**

**Did I Do That?**

The Katydidis are further proof that the Internet leads to good TV comedy. The troupe of six women, all of whose names derive from Katherine, have been performing stand-up and improv in L.A. for years, as well as producing online videos that have drawn fans on MTV, the Huffington Post, Funny or Die and the Onion. Based on their web series, Caitlin Barlow, Katy O’Brien and Kathryn Renee Thomas write and star in new TV Land sitcom Teachers, about a group of woefully unqualified elementary school teachers who display all sorts of bad behavior on the job, including falling asleep, drinking and fornicating.

With Cook County Social Club. UCB Sunset, 5419 W. Sunset Blvd., East Hollywood; Fri., Feb. 19, 7:30 p.m.; $10. (323) 908-8702, sunseet.ucbtheatre.com. —Sriran Babayan

**DANCE**

**Tilting at Windmills**

An airy confection of pyrotechnic dancing, the ballet Don Quixote is loosely extrapolated from Miguel de Cervantes’ masterpiece about Don Q’s exploits pursuing goodness, truth and an elusive beauty named Dulcinea. Los Angeles Ballet’s 10th-anniversary season continues with co-artistic directors Thordal Chris-
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tensen and Colleen Neary’s ambitious new production of the full-length Don Quixote. The challenging grand pas de deux is a familiar crowd-pleaser, but the rest of the ballet is a fun-filled excursion brimming with Gypsies, matadors, windmills and that knight errant, Don Quixote, with his amusing sidekick, Sancho Panza. Adam Lüders, a former principal dancer with New York City Ballet, guests as Don Quixote, a role he once danced for George Balanchine.

Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center, 1935 Manhattan Beach Blvd., Redondo Beach; Sat., Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m.; $31-$99. (310) 998-7782, losangelesballet.org.

—Ann Haskins

sun

SPORTS

Golden Globetrotters
Far more than just a team of basketball players, the Harlem Globetrotters are an all-star assemblage of ambidextrous sleight-of-hand magicians, high-flying acrobats, masterful pickpockets and sublimely expressive mimes. They defy gravity and the laws of physics by dunking, dribbling and nonchalantly looping crosscourt passes with a seemingly effortless aplomb and sinuous grace. Although they no longer have charismatic showmen such as Meadowlark Lemon (who died in December) and long-retired Fred “Curly” Neal, the Globetrotters keep on keepin’ on, maintaining the old traditions seamlessly with a new era of players, much like similarly multigenerational troupe the Bolshoi Ballet. Celebrating its 90th anniversary, the team features such stellar female athletes as TNT Maddox and Sweet J. Ekworomadu among its three touring squads. Staples Center, 1111 S. Figueroa St., downtown; Sun., Feb. 21, 12:30 & 5:45 p.m.; $25-$260. (213) 742-7340, staplescenter.com.

—Falling James

ART

Keanu and Improved
Alexandra Grant and Keanu Reeves’ first collaboration was 2011’s Ode to Happiness, a picture book of the L.A. artist’s drawings paired with the actor’s writings. Grant and Reeves reunite to discuss their latest collaboration, Shadows, at Art Catalogues at LACMA. In the book, Grant’s photographs of Reeves’ shadows and silhouettes have an X-ray effect, and are accompanied by more of Reeves’ text. Images from the book are on display at the ACME gallery through March 12. LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire, Sun., Feb. 21, 1 p.m.; free. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org/event/grant-and-reeves. —Siran Babayan

mon

CONVENTIONS

New Age Girl
If you’re beset by evil forces, wish to channel a dead person or need assistance navigating the increasingly fragmented “New Age,” let the veritable who’s-who at the 14th annual Conscious Life Expo assist you. The event features more than 200 speakers, workshops, lectures and vendors, including panels that explore ancient aliens, vaccines, divination, near-death experiences and UFOs (not to mention enough incense, crystals and readings to get you through the Armageddon of your choice). On Monday, the four-day gathering’s final day, big names including “investigative mythologist” William Henry, reporter Linda Moulton Howe, Toltec teacher Don Jose Ruiz and alchemist/astrologer Laura Eisenhower host seminars. Keep your mind open (but not so open that your brain falls out). LAX Hilton, 5711 W. Century Blvd., Westchester; Fri.-Mon., Feb. 19-22, 9 a.m.-10:30 p.m.; admission prices vary. (800) 367-5777, conscio...
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**FILM**

**Golden Boy**
The Hammer Museum screens *City of Gold*, Laura Gabbert’s 2015 documentary on Pulitzer Prize-winning *L.A. Times* (and former *L.A. Weekly*) food writer Jonathan Gold. Gabbert chronicles the life and career of Gold as a restaurant critic as well as cultural commentator who has championed every type of distinctly L.A. cuisine, from Korean food trucks to street tacos. Due in theaters March 11, the film follows Gold as he visits his favorite eateries from Boyle Heights to Alhambra, and includes testimonials from family, co-workers, fellow food critics and restaurateurs who attest to the power of his recommendations. Gold takes part in a Q&A following the screening. Hammer Museum, 10889 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Wed., Feb. 24, 7:30 p.m.; free. (310) 443-7000, hammer.ucla.edu. —Siran Babayan

**Orange You Glad**
Sean S. Baker’s 2015 feature, *Tangerine*, is probably best known as “that movie that was filmed entirely on an iPhone,” which is unfortunate if only because it reduces a fresh, funny and deeply human story to a gimmick. The slice-of-life picture follows a handful of L.A. denizens — a pair of transgender prostitutes, a taxi-driver john, a drug dealer and an unfortunate hostage who gets caught in the middle — as they spend a day traversing the streets of Hollywood. Much of the time, the city feels like the movie’s true star. Baker and star Kitana Kiki Rodriguez appear for a screening of the film and a discussion afterward. Will & Ariel Durant Branch Library, 7140 W. Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Wed., Feb. 24, 3 p.m.; free. (323) 876-2741, lapl.org/whats-on/events/tangerine-screening-followed-director-and-cast-qa. —Gwynedd Stuart

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BY VINCENZA BLANK

ike so many people who move to L.A. to break into the film industry, Marc Madnick can point to the exact movie that planted stars in his eyes: Back to the Future. “In 1985, I was a junior in college. I'll never forget it. I thought it was the most perfect film. It was adventurous, had a little bit of a love story. It made sense, the time travel.” The day he saw Back to the Future, he knew he was destined to come to Hollywood and, if all went well, to make a movie just like it.

Madnick made it to Hollywood, but his career in show business took an unexpected turn when in 1991, he and his buddy Ben Cahan launched Final Draft. It wasn’t the first screenwriting software on the market and it’s far from alone in the field today, but in Hollywood, you’re about as likely to find Final Draft on someone’s laptop as iTunes or solitaire; it’s ubiquitous and generally accepted as the industry standard.

Still, for a quarter-century, Final Draft remained an indie business operating out of humble headquarters in Calabasas with a staff of about 40. That changed early this month when, on the eve of its 25th anniversary, Final Draft was acquired by the payroll and production company Cast and Crew Entertainment Services.

Whether it’s the end of an era or the start of a new chapter — pick your story-telling cliche — the sale and the land-mark anniversary have given Madnick a chance to look back to the start.

When he arrived in Hollywood, Madnick actually did find work in the movies. Amazingly, he worked on both of the Back to the Future sequels. Unfortunately, it was as a production accountant. He says as exciting as it was to work on those films, he didn’t enjoy many aspects of the job. During the filming of BTTFII, his office was the closet of a motel room, and he worked 14 hours a day, six days a week.

The conditions made Madnick realize that he wanted to be his own boss. He also wanted to start doing what he’d come out West to do: write.

Screenplays have to be formatted in a very specific way for them to look professional and be taken seriously by anyone in the industry. Trying to format a screenplay manually is, in short, a gigantic pain in the ass. When Madnick and his then-roommate Cahan began co-writing scripts in the late 1980s, they found the tools were inadequate. Cahan, who is a “heck of an engineer,” according to Madnick, was sure he could create something better.

“If you write it, I’ll sell it,” Madnick says he told Cahan. “In a much grander example, he was the Steve Wozniak to my Steve Jobs. I was business and sales and he was the engineering.”

Even in the age of computers, the process of writing scripts had remained difficult. Patrick Tobin, who wrote the Jennifer Aniston vehicle Cake, recalls, “Floppy disks were, let’s just say, fragile — magnets for coffee spills and cigarette ash. The worst feeling in the world was hearing the spinning disk and realizing your computer couldn’t read it.”

Scott Alexander (who, with Larry Karaszewski, is half of the screenwriting team known for Man on the Moon and Ed Wood) was an early adopter of screenwriting software because he met the creators of a program called Scriptor at USC. In 1985, it felt as if only a dozen people in the world had it. Actually completing a script took a suite of programs: WordStar 4, Scriptor and SmartKey.

“It was kinda cute,” Alexander says of having to carry around a plastic box of floppy disks. Even with this early screenwriting tool, a writer might have to resort to Scotch tape to communicate the intended effect.

“The experience of reading a page of script should be the same as watching the movie,” Alexander says of his writing style. “I always think it’s interesting to put [foreign-language] dialogue in a script that you can’t read.” He doesn’t mean subtitled; rather, he wants the audience to feel as disoriented as the character who doesn’t speak the language. For instance, Alexander recalls a time he and Karaszewski wrote a character who needed to yell in Chinese. They went to a Chinese restaurant to pick up fortune cookies and took them to Charlie Chan Printing, where they played with the Chinese-language side of the fortune until it was the exact same size as the 13-point font of a screenplay.

“Each time I printed out the script I would have to get out my Chinese letters, tape them onto the script page and re-Xerox that one page,” he says.

The movie, Screwed with Dave Chappelle, actually got greenlit, but Alexander could never just hit send on a rewrite because he “always had to insert this one friggin’ page.”

Final Draft originally was for Macs only. They would refer PC users to another company, Scriptware, and Scriptware returned the favor. In 1995 Final Draft released a product for PCs, making it the first company to offer screenwriting software for both.

Madnick acknowledges, “Software has gotten to the point where making it has become a lot harder.” With separate apps for the Mac, Windows, phone, iPad and iPhone, “You almost spend all your dollars on engineering what you have but there’s a lot of opportunity for what we could do.” He feels Final Draft now has a big brother with the resources to help.

Over the years, hidden behind the scenes, Madnick has become part of the fabric of film by helping facilitate the telling of countless other stories. He hasn’t gotten around to writing his own Back to the Future yet, but when he does, he’ll have the right tools.

“THE EXPERIENCE OF READING A PAGE OF SCRIPT SHOULD BE THE SAME AS WATCHING THE MOVIE.”

—SCREENWRITER SCOTT ALEXANDER

Of selling his company to Cast and Crew, Madnick says, “When I was signing the papers, my hand shook a couple times, quite frankly. It’s been a lot of mixed feelings, but [Cast and Crew Entertainment] is making it a lot easier. So far it’s been a wonderful experience.”

Everyone is still employed, including Madnick. The plan is to expand. Remaining small and independent set it apart, but Final Draft may have been nearing a critical point where it was necessary to grow to remain the industry leader. Cheaper, sleeker-looking alternatives have come on the market, although they all feature note their files can be converted to Final Draft.

Madnick acknowledges, “Software has gotten to the point where making it has become a lot harder.” With separate apps for the Mac, Windows, phone, iPad and iPhone, “You almost spend all your dollars on engineering what you have but there’s a lot of opportunity for what we could do.” He feels Final Draft now has a big brother with the resources to help.

Over the years, hidden behind the scenes, Madnick has become part of the fabric of film by helping facilitate the telling of countless other stories. He hasn’t gotten around to writing his own Back to the Future yet, but when he does, he’ll have the right tools.
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BY CATHERINE WAGLEY

This week, a former punk musician channels Pee-wee’s Playhouse and a Berlin-based artist puts on an eerie spin on playground equipment.

Family resemblance

For her current show at Park View, J. Parker Valentine dug up some of her late mother’s old source material and artwork. She projected a slideshow from her mother’s archive against a muslin sheet that she also drew on, and she hung in the walk-in closet a painting her mother never finished. A leopard climbs a tree, a snake wrapping itself around him. Loopy graphite lines overlay the scene. Similar graphite marks appear above milky-white paint in two of Valentine’s paintings, which lean in a corner of the main room. Unlike her mother’s work, Valentine’s scene includes no zoo animals, but there’s still a formal, noticeable resemblance. It’s sweet but also no zoo animals, but there’s still a formal, noticeable resemblance. It’s sweet but also

Goop and glam

When artist Seth Bogart, formerly frontman of the punk band Hunx and His Puns, installed his “televisional” set in the basement gallery at 356 Mission last year, it was like a mix between Pee-wee’s Playhouse, a vintage toothpaste commercial and an underground nightclub. Fake commercials made by Bogart played. Now Bogart is doing a live show at the Echoplex, with live techno by Geneva Jacuzzi and a set that likely will be vampy and memorable. Apparently there will be “lots of surprise guests!” 1154 Glendale Blvd., Echo Park; Fri., Feb. 18, 8 p.m.; $11.50, theecho.com.

Bronze aliens and loose limbs

Roughly painted limbs — arms, legs, breasts — intersect bold, straight-edged rainbows in Marty Schnapf’s new paintings at MaRS. Some of these painting are too nicely composed, so reminiscent of old-school abstractionists like Kandinsky, that their garishness gets lost. But the ones that work best feel like battle scenes in which good taste rapidly loses ground. Then there are the bronze sculptures sitting on pedestals and looking like the kind of aliens that fabulists might have drawn up a century ago, before computer graphics infected our imaginations. Smooth horns grow out of rough bodies dotted with heavily lidded eyes. 649 S. Anderson St., downtown; through March 5. (323) 526-8097, marsgallery.net.

Haunted playground

Berlin-based artist Przemek Pyszczek riffs on child’s play in his current show at Mihai Nicodim Gallery. Candy-colored metal jungle gyms cover the floors and playful metal grids overlay the color-block paintings on the walls. One such grid consists of shapes resembling trees in a field. It all seems pleasant enough at first. But the jungle gyms lean or lie on the floor and have missing rungs. They’re not really functional. The paintings have a dark side, too, given that Pyszczek based their compositions on low-cost prefab housing complexes in his native Poland. The thing that most drives home the show’s creepiness is the series of crumpled metal car parts scattered in and around the playground equipment. The artist has printed glossy family photos on this metal, so a smiling child’s face might appear on the apparent leftovers of a car wreck. 571 S. Anderson St., Ste. 2, downtown; through March 5. (323) 262-0260, nicodimgallery.com.

Totems for the lighthearted

The snaky, human-sized plaster sticks that stand in the back of Evan Holloway’s current exhibition at David Kordansky Gallery look vaguely alive. Rusty batteries protrude from them and they’re grouped together so it seems as if they’re a tribe of some sort, maybe a tribe en route to a sports game. Goofily totemic is probably a good way to describe the work of Holloway, an L.A. artist who’s influenced many peers but hasn’t had a solo gallery show here since 2004. In this show, a leaning tower of caggy heads, one with a light bulb for a nose, stands next to an ultra-modern, abstract looping monument. It looks like marble but isn’t. Instead it’s made of fiberglass and epoxy, and has a stick of burning incense sticking out of its side. The only thing that detracts from the eccentric mood is sculpture of plants under lamps, so obviously illustrative and movie set-like that you might accidentally start to think the show makes sense when the best parts actually don’t. 5130 W. Edgewood Place, Mid-City; through March 26. (323) 935-3030, davidkordanskygallery.com.
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MOZART MEETS MODERN ART

The Magic Flute’s charming melodies aren’t overshadowed by L.A. Opera’s fantastical, surreal staging

BY FALLING JAMES

A handsome prince finds himself in the belly of a glowering dragon. The Queen of the Night makes her grand entrance as a skeletal spider stalking on eight tall, spindly legs. Three whiteface choirboys are lowered in a basket carried by a gigantic moth. Later, a drunk bird catcher parties with a herd of cartoonish pink elephants who, improbably, twirl parasols and flash their legs in striped tights.

The nonstop animated imagery is surreally enchanting in L.A. Opera’s latest presentation of The Magic Flute at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. The stunning visuals are courtesy of Australian director Barrie Kosky and designers Paul Barritt and Suzanne Andrade of British theater group 1927, who first brought this production to Los Angeles in 2013. Their playful version of composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and librettist Emanuel Schikaneder’s operatic fairy tale has helped trigger newfound interest in the work even among audiences who don’t normally go to the opera.

Those who missed it the first time around get five more chances to witness this unusual blend of projected animation and live staging, as L.A. Opera encores the production with a new cast of singers. For all the fantastic imagery — including a descent into hellish catacombs and a despairing heroine perched precariously atop a steep cliff as she is menaced by skull-faced gryphons and a dark sky of raining daggers — it’s ultimately Mozart’s charming melodies and the singers’ consistently excellent performances that make this reinterpretation of The Magic Flute so memorable.

Prince Tamino (tenor Ben Bliss) awakens after being rescued from the stomach of a dragon by three sarcastic and saucy goddesses (Summer Hassan, Peabody Southwell and the vocally vibrant Stacey Tappan), who work for the Queen of the Night (So Young Park). Tamino and a feckless bird catcher named Papageno (Jonathan Michie) are recruited by the queen to rescue her daughter Pamina (soprano Marita Sølberg), who’s been kidnapped by the villainous Sarastro (Wilhelm Schwinghammer). To assist them on their journey, the heroic duo are given...
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SEAN HAYES
AN ACT OF GOD

WRITTEN BY DAVID JAYERBAUM  DIRECTED BY JOE MANTELO

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a magic flute and a set of bells (whose mesmerizing, chimelike tones are evoked by the orchestra through a keyed glockenspiel).

Bliss is a dashing, clear-voiced presence, while Michie draws the most laughs with his pratfalls and comic body language as he’s pushed, prodded and poked by the various interfering gods and goddesses. Accompanied by tenor Brenton Ryan (as Sarastro’s henchman Monostatos), Schwinghammer is a properly imposing figure with his deep bass vocals. But the most impressive singing comes from Sølberg and Park. Decked out in a Louise Brooks–style bob, Sølberg is a radiant force as she laments her apparent loveless fate while ensconced in a funereal snow globe, stirring up lulling black pools of sorrow during a solo in the second act. As the queen, Park draws even louder applause as she skillfully navigates Mozart’s tricky scales with a powerfully birdlike charisma.

Conductor James Conlon was typically savvy. Not only did he revive Mozart’s beloved melodies without allowing the orchestra to lapse into syrupy sentimentality, he also gave succinctly humorous insight about the opera in his pre-concert lecture, explaining how Schikaneder’s seemingly daft German-language libretto is actually full of Freemason symbols and infused with humanistic themes of enlightenment and brotherhood.

THE MAGIC FLUTE | Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown | Sat., Feb. 20, Wed., Feb. 24 & March 2, 7:30 p.m.; Sun., Feb. 28 & March 6, 2 p.m. | (213) 972-7219 | laopera.org

OH MY, GOD

Directed by Joe Mantello, An Act of God is one of those comedies that will be disappointing if you go in expecting to split your sides laughing but is perfectly acceptable if you’re content to be reasonably entertained.

The play is written by David Javerbaum, whose résumé includes a stint with The Daily Show, and features Sean Hayes, widely known for his role as the impish Jack McFarland on the long-running TV sitcom Will and Grace. Hayes aptly applies his charm as the physical embodiment of God, who’s arrived in Southern California to apprise us of changes he’s made in the Ten Commandments. Some of the rules, such as “Thou shalt have no other God before Me,” remain the same. But others, like “Thou shalt not tell others whom to fornicate,” are clearly updates.

The piece plays most of its funniest riffs earlier on, as in the recounting of the creation of Adam’s helpmate, Steve (not Eve), who is described as “ripped, and cut, and hung like unto a fig tree before the harvest; yea, and a power bottom.”

By the fifth or sixth new commandment, though, you’re wishing “God” would pick up the pace. Even so, Hayes continues to display considerable comic chops. If your attention wanders now and then, it’s not because of his delivery.

As the Almighty, Hayes is abetted by David Josefsberg as the archangel Michael, who naïvely challenges God’s will (and pays the price, as one of his wings abruptly falls off), and James Gleason, extremely funny and on point as Gabriel, a scripture-intoning figure who calls to mind an archetypally uptight Christian pastor.

Scott Pask’s scenic design — complemented by designer Hugh Vanstone’s lighting, with its abundance of purple and blue — is comic, colorful and pleasing to the eye. —Deborah Klugman

AN ACT OF GOD | Ahmanson Theatre, 135 Grand Ave., downtown | Through March 13 (213) 972-4400 | centearthre.org

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Run, Jesse, Run
Owens inspires, but Race stumbles to the finish line

BY SCOTT TOBIAS

There is precisely one attempted coup de cinema in the Jesse Owens biopic Race, which otherwise defaults to the backlot handsome of other Great Men tributes from Hollywood. In 1935, Owens (Stephan James), a freshman sensation on the Ohio State University track team, returns to the locker room after practice on the Ohio State University track team, but making an inspira-

The screenplay, by Joe Shrapnel and Anna Waterhouse, Wi-ki-skims through the fascinating basics: With Nazi Germany on the rise, the cigar-puffing elites in the Amateur Athletics Union of the United States are divided over whether to boycott the Olympics. Before the final vote is cast, Avery Brundage (Jeremy Irons), a forceful advocate for participating in the Games, closes his eyes and plugs his nose through signs of persecution (actual signs, like “No Jews or Dogs Allowed”) to get assurances from the Nazis that they’ll dial down the Nazism a bit. Meanwhile, the NAACP pressures Owens to withdraw, believing that will send the world a powerful message. With Olympic gold medals a year later in Berlin over the roars of 100,000 people and a glowering Adolf Hitler. And it’s also a useful metaphor for Race, which cuts an aerodynamic swath through the headwinds of history. In the filmmakers’ defense, the once-over-lightly approach to Owens’s story may be the only way to tell it efficiently; the ugly politics surrounding the Berlin Games are difficult to parse, to say nothing of the discrimination Owens faced back home. FDR’s White House didn’t even acknowledge Owens’s achievement, much less celebrate it, but the film is so busy hurting other obstacles that the snub is tucked into the closing credits. Few athletes are more inspirational than Jesse Owens, but making an inspira-

tional movie about him isn’t so easy.

THE WITCH MAY BE TRUE, BUT IT’S NOT GOOD

A laugh comes at last just before the end credits of Robert Eggers’ lit-class horror-bummer The Witch: a boastful note attributing to the documentary truthfulness of the dialogue in the movie we’ve just seen. During 90 minutes that prove shriekiness is no impedi-
ment to ponderousness, we’ve beheld the harrowing of a Puritan family cast out of a Plymouth-like settlement for not being precisely the right kind of pious. We’ve admired the effort put into the realization of a 1630 New England, the thatched-roof production design and the scratchy woolen shifts, and the way most shots’ stark boldness suggests 17th-century woodcuts. We’ve invested, perhaps, in the suffering of young Thomasin (Anya Taylor-Joy), unjustly accused — as all bonnet-wearing teens in movies must be — of witchcraft.

We’ve maybe relished the occasional vision of mythic, pre-industrial terror: the hag fondling a baby, the goat whose teat spurts blood, the apple whose red has been made even more lurid with a coating of gore. And we’ve seen wholly unambiguous evidence that, in the reality of the film, there are witches in the woods, and that Satan does have noth-
ing better to do than to dick around with pioneers’ livestock. The Witch offers the same cheapjack lesson field-trippers get when they visit tourist-trap museums in today’s Salem, Massachusetts. Eggers’ film sides with the preachers and executioners. It literalizes the fevered horrors of our God-mad ancestors — and then brags that it’s all steeped in research. It’s like if, a couple centuries from now, the latest holodeck true-crime horror flick is a West Memphis Three story that wraps with the boys high-fiving Lucifer. — Alan Scherstuhl

RACE | Directed by Stephen Hopkins
Written by Joe Shrapnel and Anna Waterhouse
Focus Features | Citywide
**Film**

**Heart of Darkness**

**EMBRACE OF THE SERPENT IS A STUNNING MEDITATION ON EXPLOITATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL

A legitimate stunner in that word’s truest sense, Colombian director Ciro Guerra’s river-trip Embrace of the Serpent mesmerizes and jacks with you, leaving you not quite certain, at its end, how to go about the rest of your day. The film is beautiful and ferocious, calm and torrential, a plunge into the ol’ heart of darkness and then some organ darker still. It’s both an adventure movie — one as hardy and demanding as *The Revenant* but less preening about it — and a thorough brief on the horrors that civilization has wrought upon indigenous peoples. With a clever double-journey narrative that spans the first half of the 20th century, Guerra traces the devastating impact of white interlopers upon Amazonian tribes across generations. It’s both an Apocolypse Then ... and Later.

That’s not to say it’s without its pleasures. Much of the film is given to gliding along South America’s great rivers in hand-made canoes. The cameras of cinematographer David Gallego make America’s great rivers in hand-made canoes. The cameras of cinematographer David Gallego are made life at that mission more tolerable. Guerra is as unstinting as the Romans visited upon his lords. Guerra is as unstinting with brutality as he is generous with beauty.

That mission sequence is a linchpin to the film’s second-narrative. In the 1940s, a second white explorer (Brionne Davis), this one American, also passes that way, also in search of the fabled *yakruna* plant, and also — we come to realize — led by a wiser Karamakate (played by Antonio Bolivar). The decades have made life at that mission more perverse than it already was, a telephone game of biblical misinterpretation at the end of the world, with the priest’s zeal meeting the strongman cruelty of the rubber barons. The best of civilization is represented in *Embrace of the Serpent* by the kind of treatment the Romans visited upon his lords. Guerra is as unstinting with brutality as he is generous with beauty.

EARLY on, that the tribe that has stolen his compass will as a consequence lose its unique traditional methods of navigation, but he seems to harbor no such concern for the results of the work of a missionary encountered downstream. He doesn’t worry over the conversion of souls until that work grows violent. In a hard-to-shake set piece, native children who have been rescued from the rubber plantations sing hymns in immaculate vestments — but then also suffer, at the hands of the priest, the kind of treatment the Romans visited upon his lord. Guerra is as unstinting with brutality as he is generous with beauty.

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The main narrative is set in 1909, as German explorer Theodor Koch-Grundberg (Jan Bijvoet done up like T. Coragheesean Boyle) traverses the Colombian Amazon in search of a rare flower that the local tribes hold sacred — and that may hold great healing powers. He’s led through a rainforest of undiscovered tribes, mad missionaries and enslaved rubber workers; his guide is a philosophical shaman named Karamakate (Nilbio Torres), the last surviving member of a tribe that, sadly, has been discovered. Lugging his boxes of plants and butterflies against his guide’s advice and chewing down on fish he’s been told not to eat, Theodor falls predictably sick, and Karamakate often administers a potent smoke-puff curative. But these men from different worlds — and one companion from both, the pants-wearing westernized native Manduca (Miguel Dionisio Ramos) — warm toward each other.

Almost every moment of cross-cultural understanding or pristine wild beauty is tinged with hints of corruption, with the sense that Theodor’s very presence on this river will hasten its doom. He worries, knowing that the last thing they need is outsiders, well-meaning or not. When things and people go rotten, as they must, Guerra gets pedantic about it, even over the top, but that’s hard to gainsay. What’s gained by insisting artists depict the eradication of native cultures with reserve? The best of civilization is represented in *Embrace of the Serpent* by the kind of treatment the Romans visited upon his lords. Guerra is as unstinting with brutality as he is generous with beauty.

That mission sequence is a linchpin to the film’s second-narrative. In the 1940s, a second white explorer (Brionne Davis), this one American, also passes that way, also in search of the fabled *yakruna* plant, and also — we come to realize — led by a wiser Karamakate (played in this timeline by Antonio Bolivar). The decades have made life at that mission more perverse than it already was, a telephone game of biblical misinterpretation at the end of the world, with the priest’s zeal meeting the strongman cruelty of the rubber barons. The best of civilization is represented in *Embrace of the Serpent* by the kind of treatment the Romans visited upon his lords. Guerra is as unstinting with brutality as he is generous with beauty.

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YOUR WEEKLY MOVIE TO-DO LIST

Revisit Heaven’s Gate
Friday, Feb. 19
If you take the prospect of an all-female Ghostbusters re-make as a personal affront, allay your misplaced anxiety with the NuArt’s midnight screening of the original. Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Sigourney Weaver, Ernie Hudson, Harold Ramis and Slimer remain a formidable ensemble in everyone’s favorite paranormal comedy; dress up, bring your own ectoplasm, but be sure to never cross the streams. NuArt Theatre, 11722 Santa Monica Blvd., West L.A.; Fri., Feb. 19, 11 p.m.; $11. (310) 473-8530, landmarktheatres.com.

Sunday, Feb. 21
Not every movie’s reputation is fixed. Three decades after sinking a studio and ending the director-driven New Hollywood era, for instance, Heaven’s Gate is now hailed by forgiving proponents of the auteur theory as a misunderstood masterpiece. Michael Cimino’s follow-up to The Deer Hunter concerns a dispute among ranchers in 1890s Wyoming, which is to say that the period piece is now oddly timely after that business up in Oregon. Screening as a tribute to its late director of photography, Vilmos Zsigmond, the event is co-presented by American Cinematographer magazine and the American Society of Cinematographers. ASC’s M. David Mullen will introduce the 219-minute opus. Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Sun., Feb. 21, 7:30 p.m.; $11. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com.

Monday, Feb. 22
With a flesh-and-blood turn in The Hateful Eight and affecting voice-over work in Anomalisa, Jennifer Jason Leigh just had a banner year. Less than a week before the Oscars — where, if there’s any justice in the world (spoiler: There isn’t!), she’ll be honored for her performance in Quentin Tarantino’s latest provocation — the Aero puts on a JLL double feature: Fast Times at Ridgemont High and Single White Female. As a high school student who’s gotta be somebody’s baby in one and the roommate from hell in the other, Leigh displays in these films the impressive range that has made her a vital presence on the silver screen for more than 30 years. Aero Theatre, 1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; Mon., Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m.; $11. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com.

On the subject of the Academy Awards, let it never be forgotten that Paul Giampatti not getting nominated for Sideways ranks among the most egregious snubs of our young century so far. As part of the Greg Proops Film Club, Alexander Payne’s wine-soaked road-trip movie plays Cinefamily. Melancholy and hilarious, it’s a comedy of disappointment, midlife crises and the faint possibility of a fulfilling second act — if only there can be enough pinot noir (and never, ever merlot) to bring it about. Cinefamily/Silent Movie Theatre, 611 N. Fairfax Ave., Fairfax; Mon., Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m.; $12. (323) 655-2510, cinefamily.org.

Tuesday, Feb. 23
Despite working with the likes of James Stewart, Kim Novak, Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman, Grace Kelly, Tippi Hedren and many others, Alfred Hitchcock directed only one of his performers to an Oscar win: Joan Fontaine in Suspicion. (Maybe it had something to do with him thinking they should all be treated like cattle.) Fontaine plays an heiress who, upon tying the knot with a charismatic fellow played by Grant, begins to suspect that her new beau wants to off her and pocket said inheritance for himself. LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Tue., Feb. 23, 1 p.m.; $5. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org.

James Dean starred in just three pictures before dying in a car accident at the age of 24, earning Oscar nods for two of them. (The one he wasn’t nominated for, Rebel Without a Cause, is still the most famous.) The last of these was released posthumously: Giant. Beginning in the 1920s and ending after World War II, George Stevens’ epic document the lives of a Texan cattle-ranching family led by Rock Hudson and Elizabeth Taylor. Dean’s legacy is outsized for a reason, and this is the largest canvas we’ll ever get to see him on. ArcLight Hollywood, 6360 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Tue., Feb. 23, 7:30 p.m.; $14. (323) 464-1478, arclightcinemas.com.

Thursday, Feb. 25
ARRAY @ the Broad, a new screening series established by Ava DuVernay’s arts collective to highlight films by women and people of color, co-presents Ashes and Embers along with REDCAT. About a black veteran who returns home from war and has to reconcile the ideals that sent him halfway across the world with the disenchancing realities of his new life, Haile Gerima’s post-Vietnam drama has rarely been seen since its initial release in 1983. DuVernay will host the festivities. Broad Contemporary Art Museum, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Thu., Feb. 25, 8-30 p.m.; $20. (213) 237-2800, reductag.org. —Michael Nordine

OPENING THIS WEEK

CRAZY ABOUT TIFFANY’S

Crazy About Tiffany’s’ Gone are the days when women wanted to get married at 22 with a big-ass rock weighing down their fingers, but Matthew Miele seems to forget this in Crazy About Tiffany’s, his ode to the luxury brand. Through a flashy series of graphics summarizing the company’s history, Miele makes clear within the first three minutes of the film that he is not interested in exploring how Tiffany’s went from a stationery store to an Avenue mainstay and situate it as an American institution as relevant as it has ever been. Almost everyone that Miele interviews is involved with Tiffany’s as either an employee or a stylist. This, of course, presents a one-sided picture — we might as well read the Tiffany’s Blue Book. We do meet a handful of design scholars unaffiliated with the company, but the only dissenting opinion is that of Erica Sutton, a Cornell BFA student, who points out that today, Tiffany’s represents an antiquated view of love and success. Miele struggles to construct an argument proving Tiffany & Co.’s continued relevance to anyone but the super-rich, in part because he fails to provide a coherent narrative arc. One moment Baz Luhrmann discusses the Chinese economy, and the next Katie Couric throws her 50th birthday party (which, by the way, looks amazing). This is all to say that Crazy About Tiffany’s lacks urgency. Were Miele to pare out Tiffany’s early-years identity crisis or why it is that the brand has only had one female design director in its history, maybe then this documentary would be something to get crazy about. (Julia Martini)

ROLLING PAPERS

For once, a documentary that matches the spirit and aesthetic of its subject. Mitch Dickman’s Rolling Papers charts Colorado’s first calendar year of legalized marijuana through the lens of Ricardo Baca, the cannabis editor of the Denver Post; this appointment, it probably goes without saying, was the first of its kind from a major daily newspaper (ditto the pot critics who were also taken aback). Dickman laces early scenes with both the good-times vibe of bassy-hip-hop and the paranoid scrawl of onscreen text, enhancing the experience without overwhelming it. But the film’s not just for potheads. It proves
Baca spearheads a report on improperly labeled THC levels in edibles while his reviewers break down different strains the way a sommelier might describe the grapes of a vintage pinot noir. Without coming across as a soapbox for nars or unseemly stoners, Rolling Papers gives a clear-headed account of things as they stand and where they might be headed — the ink-stained wretch as pot-smoking aesthete. There’s no haze, but it’s a good trip all the same. (Michael Nordine)

**WE ARE TWISTED F***ING SISTER!** Even if your disco-loving heart has nothing but disdain for Twisted Sister — or, for those young enough to recognize frontman Dee Snider only from his appearances on *Love the ’80s* — you have to acknowledge their place in the history of loud music. In unabashedly epiphanizing Decline of Western Civilization-style excess, they represent the high-water mark of hair metal, which, if nothing else, inspired the ripostes of grunge and alt-rock. (Whether or not you consider that a good thing, I leave to you.) Too bad that *We Are Twisted Fucking Sister* embodies the band’s brashness in title only, soberly charting their groupie-chasing early days through their chased-by-groupies peak with the usual mix of archival footage and talking heads (but not The Talking Heads). Andrew Horn’s documentary also ends, somewhat curiously, just as Snider and the other principals finish recounting their ascent to the top — their entire career post-Stay-Hungry (read: “We’re Not Gonna Take It,” “I Wanna Rock” and a stunned Tipper Gore) is relegated to a title card before the credits start rolling. Crowdfunded in 2014, *We Are Twisted Fucking Sister* comprehensively documents this origin story in a way that’s clearly geared toward diehards. Calling a movie too long is among the least useful of all critical judgements, but you could almost listen to the band’s first five albums in the 135 minutes it takes to watch this cut-and-dried doc. It’s all steak, no sizzle — the opposite of Twisted Sister. (Michael Nordine)

**ONGOING**

**THE BOY AND THE WORLD (O MENINO E O MUNDO)** Tension between the city and the country has been a fertile topic for as long as there’ve been cities, and Abé Abreu’s phantasmagoric *The Boy and the World* explores this eternal conflict in a family yet wholly original way. The boy in question is Cusa, who lives a comparatively simple life in the country. When his father leaves for the big city, Cusa follows after him, exploring the expanding world. The city here is the classical definition of a metropolis, including visions of dehumanized workers inside a dark satanic mill, which evoke the anonymous world of working-feeding Fritz Lang’s infernal machines. The film doesn’t have all that much new to say about the impact of industry and globalization on the human spirit (verdict: not good); instead, *The Boy and the World* is its animation — the real (ahem) draw, a sort of handmade collage of all sorts of different styles — oil pastels, colored pencils, fountain pens, found objects such as books and magazines — while maintaining the feeling that it’s being filtered through a child’s sensibilities. It’s masterful in expressing ideas and emotions without speech; what dialogue there is conveys as much meaning as the adults’. A recent Oscar win for animation makes it a must-see for anyone interested in animation in general; not for the first time, the film demonstrates that animation in general and the animation medium specifically has something to say about the state of the world. (Nick Schager)

**DEADPOOL** Deadpool is his film’s own junky, retrograde Rifftrack, cracking endlessly about balls and gawness, about burn victims and 90s bands and the conventions of superhero movies. Marvel comics’ “merc with a mouth” is a sort of shock-jock Spider-Man, with the Punisher’s arsenal, Wolverine’s healing powers, and the dialogue of one of those open-mic comedy dudes who believes his own kind of coarse humor too much. (Amy Nicholson)

**THE DANISH GIRL** The Danish Girl, Tom Hooper’s portrait of Jazz Age painter Gerda Wegener and her spouse, Einar, who buttressed into Lili Elbe via the first sexual-assignment surgery, is about gender and it isn’t, like its subject, it’s basically resolved to fit an ideal: the noble Oscar-bait biopic. If the script swapped transsexuality for heroin addiction, the beats would scarcely change. There are secret jaunts, desperate doctor visits, pleas to change, and, finally, the slow, chilly acceptance that a partner simply can’t. The film’s about how love can endure even when the person you married vanishes. Reminiscing one night on their bed, now divided exactly in two by a sheet, Gerda (Alicia Vikander) smiles that it “wasn’t so long ago we were married, you and me.” “You and Einar,” corrects Lili (Eddie Redmayne). Redmayne plays Lili like a saint. Yet there’s sedition in the script and a showdown for the film’s soul as Vikander, the stronger actor of the two, forces us to witness how much her wife loves to give Lili life. I’ve seen it twice and I still can’t figure out how Hooper feels about these characters. He at first presents this as a sort of horror story. Then there’s Lili’s exaggerated, simpering body language, all head-dancing and languid carresses, which makes her study a peep-show stripper — someone playacting a faux femininity for men. Still, perplexingly, we can’t help noticing that their marriage becomes increasingly hierarchically — practically patriarchal — with Lili forcing Gerda to submit to her terms. Gerda is dicked at dinners, abandoned at her art shows, and thrust into celibacy. No matter what the empathetic score might insist — Lili can still act like a dick (Amy Nicholson).

**DEADPOOL** Deadpool is his own family tragedy that calls Ellis back to Ireland, where her mother and her best friend unsuitably conspire to pair her with a single suitor (Domnall Gleeson) in order to re-entrench her in her native land. The question of what — and how one — defines home becomes an urgent dilemma for Ellis, as she’s pulled in two directions by competing feelings and forces. (Nick Schager)
Forsaken's cast is headed by Kiefer and Donald Sutherland, Brian Cox and Demi Moore, and yet only character actor par excellence Michael Winsc
cott — with a low Southern drawl and a finely manicured 'stache and chin hair — looks and sounds as if he be-
longs in the Old West. Inauthentic visages and accents, however, are only part of this Western's problems, as it so rigorously adheres to cliche that it never develops a
personality of its own.

Directed by Jon Cassar (24), Forsaken concerns the
return of gunslinger John Henry (Kiefer Sutherland) to his home, where his estranged preacher father (Donald Sutherland) condemns him for his murderous ways. John Henry is on a turn-the-other-cheek redemptive path, which is complicated by the fact that villainous James McCurdy (Cox) is using a gang of killers — led by Winscott's dignified Dave Turner and Aaron Poole's psychotic Frank Tollman — to strong-arm families out of their homes. Cassar favors tight close-ups and medium shots that

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**THE FORBIDDEN ROOM** | Directed by Guy Maddin and Evan Johnson | Kino Lorber | Anna Cinema

We learn nothing about how Saul came...
THE BIG LEAGUES
DJ Dodger Stadium were buzzed-about local dance music producers with an underground following. Then Kanye West called

BY JEFF WEISS

The request was so weird, that it had to be true. About a month ago, the social media pages of DJ Dodger Stadium and their management blew up. Kanye West wanted to see them immediately. Could the dance-music duo come to his home studio in Calabasas?

They said “Yes” faster than you read this sentence.

There are the stereotypical visions you may have of a Kanye studio session: crates of Champagne, Kardashians lingering, paparazzi lurking, Kid Cudi caterwauling into an existential void. But on that day it was shockingly low-key. Just West and his engineer, eager to meet Jerome LOL and Samo Sound Boy. Yeezus had heard songs from their brilliant 2014 debut, Boy. Yeezus had heard songs from their new album.

“Yeah, it was bizarre,” Samo says. “We've never produced for anyone else, and to get to help him, it was so incredible. We'd been working on. Then he explained what we were going for on the album in a Kanye kinda way.”

The exact description — to be said in your best all-caps Kanye voice — was: “Think about everything you ever wanted from music. This has to sound like that, all at once.”

Unless you have an Earthlink.net email address, you're aware that Kanye’s The Life of Pablo is the most anticipated album since, well, Kanye’s last album. But DJ Dodger Stadium (or DJDS if you're into brevity) are a significantly lesser-known commodity.

Starting around 2010, DJ Dodger Stadium began an underground cult with their own sample-driven origins, remixes and various other singles issued on their Body High imprint. Blending techno, house, soul, hip-hop, garage and Jersey club, they incubated a scene in the late-night industrial warehouse fringes of L.A. Their music stood in stark contrast to the dance-music narratives of the last decade, avoiding the sterile blending of trap, the fluorescent PLUR clichés of corporate rave and the astral hip-hop futurism of Low End Theory.

The aesthetic was nostalgic without being retro, romantic without sappiness, melancholic but never moody. It’s obvious that what Kanye saw in their productions was the same thing he initially became famous for — the gift of wringing dizzying wellsprings of emotion from fleeting vocal samples, revitalizing old fragments of sounds and using them to tell new stories.

Until a few weeks ago, DJDS had remained subterranean. So if you saw the now-iconic notebook paper with signatures from every collaborator on Life of Pablo, you’d be forgiven for overlooking the duo. After all, the short list of names also included 2 Chainz, Chance the Rapper, The-Dream, A$AP Rocky, Earl Sweatshirt and Andre 3000.

Yet it’s highly possible that no one, outside of West himself, sculpted the sound of Pablo more than the two producers who typically work out of a dilapidated, no-frills tenement building in MacArthur Park. Of the 11 album tracks that played at West's Madison Square Garden live stream on Feb. 11, DJDS worked on five.

Even after their contributions became an internationally recognized reality, Jerome and Samo still can’t help but marvel at how surreal it all seems. Just a few months ago, they paid for seats like everyone else to see Kanye perform 808s & Heartbreak at the Hollywood Bowl. Now they’ve received the most coveted co-sign in music. The greatest sampler of his generation recruited them to help him sample.

“A lot of our music and the way we sample wouldn’t even exist if we hadn't listened to Kanye’s music,” says Jerome LOL (aka Jerome Potter), 28, who grew up in Palos Verdes and Torrance.

“It was bizarre,” Samo adds. “We've never produced for anyone else, and to get to help him, it was so incredible. We'd been huge fans forever.”

They’re speaking by phone aboard the Holy Ship party cruise, where they’ll spin the next night somewhere in international waters off Nassau, the Bahamas. They’d spent the previous weekend with West in New York as part of a final, frenzied, 24/7 lunge to finish the album. The process was sort of like getting the golden ticket to Willy Wonka’s factory, but rather than receive the taste test and tour, they were required to help reinvent the entire concept of chocolate confections. Offer one wrong recipe and you’re Augustus Gloop. Instead, DJ Dodger Stadium became West’s active agent.

“We were there to provide creative energy and creative ideas. He surrounds himself with people who are there to help him in the grand mission of telling the story,” Jerome says.

“He'll know what he wants, but if you have a different perspective, he'll always hear it,” Samo adds. “Even if he’s 100 percent sure, he’s always looking for a new way to hear something.”

“Out of the stuff already sounded great, so we'd just do remixes of it, and sometimes parts that we did would be worked into the finished product,” he says.

They describe the experience with the post-baptismal fervor you might expect: thrilling, intense and otherworldly. They watched impromptu Kanye DJ sets of Cameo, Luther Vandross and ‘80s funk, where he’d tell them to “take it all in and make something that feels like this.”

One night, West delivered a dazzling MPC jam. Other nights, they caught frenetic Chance the Rapper freestyles and absorbed wisdom from The-Dream.

Most of the time, they worked in close tandem with Rap-A-Lot production legend Mike Dean, a longtime member of West’s team. It was a musical education you can’t pay for — and even if you could, no one could afford it.

Amidst all the chaos, DJ Dodger Stadium dropped their own superb sophomore album, Stand Up and Speak, last month. Stepping up to the larger Loma Vista label, DJDS largely eschewed samples for once, instead recruiting guest vocalists and instrumentalists to blend pop, R&B, dance music and soul, with little of the watery down often seen when artists expand beyond their initial comfort zone. Stand Up and Speak delineates them from their peers through their ability to capture the high and lows of human experience, wrapped up in 4/4 time signatures.

It’s not hard to understand why they became Kanye’s new favorite dance duo. At their best, DJDS deliver everything you want from music, at all once.

“He’s clearly always changing his sound and pushing it in different directions. With this album, he wanted to come into line with what we do in ours,” Samo says. “We try to make stuff that feels timeless. He was setting out to do something...”

“Grand,” Jerome finishes his partner’s sentence.

“Exactly. Something that’s at the core of why music is so important,” Samo continues. “If this was three years ago, when he was making Ye/eezus, we weren’t the guys he would’ve turned to. But now...”

But now it elevates the duo to an elite stature they deserve. They’ve long been one of Los Angeles’ best-kept secrets. Now DJ Dodger Stadium could become as famous as Yasiel Puig.

In the process, the collaboration bridged the chasm between the world’s most famous musician and the semi-legends in the few remaining corridors of L.A. that haven’t been gentrified, where they don’t search at the door and where underground isn’t an aesthetic, as much as it is a necessity.

Viewed in that light, the request wasn’t that weird after all. DJDS were there for a very crucial reason: to help Kanye West avoid losing his edge.
All Eyez on Me was our bible. That’s usually an overcrowded cliché, but in this instance, it’s the only appropriate analogy. If you were a West-Coast adorer in the 1990s, you illegally procured Thug Passion, memorized 2Pac’s blueprint to moneymaking and knew how to properly explain the differences between the Book of Ezekiel and the Book of E.D.I. Mean.

More people knew “Wonder Why They Call You B” than the story of Jesus. Do you know the California state anthem? The true answer is “I Love You, California.” The right answer is “California Love.”

Released 20 years ago this month, 2Pac’s fourth album fused fresh rap gospel with wrathful Old Testament vengeance and a wardrobe full of Fila and leather overalls.

You can still play “Ambitionz Az a Ridah” at a party in L.A. and even Kanye would want to come (maybe). After all, the greatest compliment he ever gave himself was calling himself “the new Pac.” When the drums kick in and Michael Buffer booms, “Let’s get ready to rumble,” it incites riots in real time. If it isn’t the hardest record ever made, it’s close — so cold-blooded it could make a priest burn.

It was the only album Tupac Shakur put out between his release from prison in 1995 and his death. Bailed out thanks to a Faustian bargain with Suge Knight, in 1995 and his death. Bailed out thanks to北方和南方两个强大的对手。1995年，他被释放后，他和史蒂夫·托马斯和乔治·克莱顿。这是众神理想的‘90s rap double album, a trend started by Pac and sustained by Wu-Tang. Bone Thugs and The Notorious B.I.G.

If The Beatles’ White Album shattered ground by containing an entire genre in every song, All Eyez on Me innovated by doing something similar with the full range of human emotion. There are few circumstances in life when a line or an entire song from All Eyez on Me can’t capture the feeling. Its 132-minute run time is a Whitman-like sprawl encompassing the Seven Deadly Sins and that innate desire for atonement.

2Pac acted out of fear and fearlesslessness. He could be sensitive yet callous, write sentimental requiems for fallen friends and act mercilessly toward his enemies. He was desperate for the trap- ping success but never forgot his friends and act mercilessly toward his enemies. He was desperate for the trap-

ness. He could be sensitive yet callous, write sentimental requiems for fallen friends and act mercilessly toward his enemies. He was desperate for the trap-pings of success but never forgot his Section 8 upbringing.

It’s almost unthinkable that he had lived so many lives and processed so much pain by the age of 24. Though he died at an age before Jay Z or Kanye had released their first albums, Pac left behind a timeless body of work.

With this quintuple platinum record reaching its platinum anniversary, you know what to do. Play it loud and ride around, light one up and pour out a little liquor for the late Makaveli. The same thing this coast has been doing for the last two decades.

An L.A. native, Jeff Weiss edits Passion of the Weiss and hosts the Shots Fired podcast. Find him online at passionweiss.com.
The backstage area is cold and lit by a fluorescent bulb, with boring, depress- ing band graffiti covering the walls. I will be on in less than two hours. This is the first time I have ever been to Ukraine.

We spent all day getting here. The airport in St. Petersburg demands two complete security checks. All electronics must be removed and, in my case, everything must be opened and explained.

We had a layover in Minsk, Belarus, and again, all the electronic gear was unpacked and displayed. Not one security officer seemed interested in the Amoeba Records bag I have stowed to the limit with vinyl.

Finally, we arrived here in Kiev. With only a few hours before show time, we went to the hotel. How the people waiting by the elevator explained.

It makes protests in America seem anemic by comparison. From the stage, I thanked my Ukrainian audience for a display of guts that I had nothing to compare it with.

Hours later. Now in Frankfurt, Germany. It’s Friday. Flying west will prolong the day by several hours into an ever-weirdening, stretched-gum continuum. Doing it in economy will make it all the more surreal. Eventually, I will reach L.A. and this ridiculously heavy bag of records, which puts the “lug” in luggage, will be something I can actually play instead of merely carry and try not to leave behind in a state of sleep deprivation.

The only thing that makes tolerable going to the airport, on about an hour of sleep. The show went well. I hope I get a chance to come back. The schedule being somewhat compact, there was no time to visit Independence Square beyond just driving by it.

If you have not checked out the documen-
tary Winter on Fire, it will give you a glimpse of what thousands of people in Kiev endured in standing up for what they thought was right.

I think humans are so highly functioning, their brains processing so quickly on multiple levels, that they seek to medicate or in some way deal with their condition — being alive. For me, music has been the best way to make sense of the world.

It’s time for me to pace back and forth and recite Lincoln, a preshow focusing exercise I have found to be quite effective.

Next morning, 0501 hrs. Burning out at the airport, on about an hour of sleep. The show went well. I hope I get a chance to come back. The schedule being somewhat compact, there was no time to visit Independence Square beyond just driving by it.

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tary Winter on Fire, it will give you a glimpse of what thousands of people in Kiev endured in standing up for what they thought was right.

It makes protests in America seem anemic by comparison. From the stage, I thanked my Ukrainian audience for a display of guts that I had nothing to compare it with.

Hours later. Now in Frankfurt, Germany. It’s Friday. Flying west will prolong the day by several hours into an ever-weirdening, stretched-gum continuum. Doing it in economy will make it all the more surreal. Eventually, I will reach L.A. and this ridiculously heavy bag of records, which puts the “lug” in luggage, will be something I can actually play instead of merely carry and try not to leave behind in a state of sleep deprivation.

1527 hrs. Los Angeles. The records, mostly used, many years old with their own stories that I’ll never know, have been unpacked.

Looking at them and thinking that I have all
Seth Bogart, Geneva Jacuzzi
@ THE ECHOPLEX
Seth Bogart has been outrageous for a long time, first with the shambolic Bay Area electro-pop outfit Gravy Train!!! and then with the garage-punk combo Hunx and His Punx. Now, as The Seth Bogart Show, he’s added a new visual element that matches his colorfully cartoonish image by hosting his own virtual television show, dancing and crooning in front of a video screen projecting animated Pee-wee’s Playhouse-style imagery. Bogart intersperses new, electronic-based dance songs such as “Eating Makeup,” a goofy duet with Kathleen Hanna, with silly commercials for fake products like Leggs Mantyhose.
Electronic shape-shifter Geneva Jacuzzi adds to the theatricality with her own twist on arty, multimedia spectacle. On her latest album, Technophilia, Jacuzzi evokes the freaky mood shifts of Nina Hagen with such tracks as “Ark of the Zombies” and the pulsating nu-disc of “Cannibal Babies.” —Falling James

Rickie Lee Jones
@ THE ROSE
Rickie Lee Jones’ early life story sounds like the plot of a corny movie. A restless and wild native of Chicago, she ran away to Los Angeles to work as a waitress and play in coffeehouses. Her songs somehow attracted the attention of Little Feat’s Lowell George, and she hung out with such mentors as Tom Waits. Jones’ self-titled debut album came out in 1979 and was, improbably, a commercial success. It featured the hit song “Chuck E.’s in Love,” a breezy tune inspired by one of her other pals, longtime Hollywood singer Chuck E. Weiss. The story could have ended there, the tale of a one-hit wonder, but Jones has pursued a stubbornly idiosyncratic career ever since. Her new album, The Other Side of Desire, alternates meditative balladry with such rootsy rambles as “J’ai Connais Pas.” —Falling James

Air + Style
@ L.A. MEMORIAL COLISEUM AND EXPOSITION PARK
The Air + Style sports and music festival, presented by professional snowboarder Shaun White, returns for a second year to the West Coast, moving from the Rose Bowl to the L.A. Coliseum’s Expo Park. The two-day, all-ages event is set to feature the world’s best snowboarders showcasing their tricks on a 16-story-high jump, as well as cutting-edge exhibits in fashion, art and technology and two performance stages. The lineup is a hodgepodge of reggae pop, alternative, EDM and hip-hop acts from the present and past. Scheduled performers on Saturday include J. Cole, Los Angeles pop/rock band Haim, Action Bronson, A$AP Ferg and The Struts. Sunday’s acts include Incubus, Rudimental, Flatbush Zombies, Migos, Danny Brown, Kaskade, Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker and others. —Jacqueline Michael Whatley

Summer Twins
@ NON PLUS ULTRA
Sisters Chelsea (guitar) and Justine Brown (drums) started out in 2008 by stirring up the sweetest and gentlest pop confessions. On Summer Twins’ latest album, Limbo (Burger Records), they reveal new layers of darkness and mystery. Their new songs are still frosted with the sisters’ sugary harmonies, but there are also hints of sadness underneath all the sunshine. As their titles suggest, “Ouija” and “Juju” are a little bit eerie, with a spooky organ wafting behind fuzzy garage-rock guitars. The five-minute-plus track “Fire” is the closest that Summer Twins have ever come to full-blown psychedelia, as a jazzy-blues groove culminates in a Bo Diddley-like rave-up. They also recall their early dream-pop idylls with such gentle tunes as “Helpless,” the stately ballad “Our World” and, especially, “Dreamin’.” —Falling James

Josh Nelson and Tyler Blanton Duo
@ E SPOT LOUNGE AT VITELLO’S
It’s an oft-repeated real-life storyline: Southern California artist relocates to New York, gets jaded and dark, becomes better artist. The city is a vibrant hellhole that chews up tender beings and spits out tougher ones. Tyler Blanton is as tough as the steel bars on his vibraphone, and he’s a survivor, forming alliances with jazz warriors like drummer Nate Wood (Kneebody) and saxophonist Donny McCaslin (heard on David Bowie’s swan song, Blackstar). They are on Blanton’s latest album, Gotham, named in honor of the city that kicked his ass. When things over there get a little too rough, Blanton flies west, where the sun shines in February and the musicians are nice. At the E Spot, Blanton shares the stage with longtime pal and pianist Josh Nelson, whose exquisite playing will make your inner sun radiate flowers and unicorns. —Gary Fukushima

Kid Cudi
@ HOLLYWOOD PALLADIUM
Nearly a decade into his career, Kid Cudi continues to be one of hip-hop’s
unique talents. His evolution from Kanye West–endorsed, storpy-rapper icon to a more experimental, alternative rapper has continued to win over new fans, even as he remains true to his backpack roots. His forays into acting, including roles on HBO’s How to Make It in America, Fox sitcom Brooklyn Nine-Nine and big-budget films like Need for Speed and Entourage have enabled him to grow beyond music. Despite personal problems with drugs, alcohol and depression that plagued him in the past, Kid Cudi has endured, working with such diverse artists as David Guetta, MGMT and Snoop Dogg and remaining one of the most popular and intriguing talents to emerge in recent years.

—Daniel Kohn

Decapitated
@ WHISKEY A GO-GO

Defying a truly cursed history — including two serious tour bus accidents, one of which killed drummer Witold “Vitek” Kieltyka and left singer Adrian “Covan” Kowanek comatose — Poland’s Decapitated sound remarkably unencumbered on 2014’s Blood Mantra. Indeed, this sixth full-length finds the quartet nimblly hopping the line between the technical death metal they helped to define in the 2000s and straight (if extreme) heavy metal. After all he’s endured, band mastermind and guitarist Waclaw Kieltyka (the late Witold’s big brother) sounds well aware of music’s role in the bigger scheme of life, and is actually seeking a little fun from what can be the most po-faced of genres. Whatever the intention, Blood Mantra is a rollicking ride of stop-start riffs, manically militaristic drums and the relatively intelligible gurglings of commanding frontman Rafal Piotrowski. —Paul Rogers

Low End Theory with Cut Chemist
@ THE AIRMILER

Cut Chemist is always up to something, and usually up to a few wildly different somethings at once. Recently he had a prime DJ slot at the all-vinyl, all-psychedelic Del Monte Speakeasy anniversary party, released a mega-mix from his compilation of French proto-industrial music; and of course hosted his locally famous Black Friday $1 record sale, where you could buy the actual albums he sampled on his own recordings. Cut pretty much does it all — often in ways you didn’t expect — and this Wednesday he’ll be materializing at Low End Theory for as close to a back-to-basics set (in that there will be bass, and lots of it) as he ever does. With local icons Kenny Segal, Sach and DJ Expo, plus residents Daddy Kev, Nobody, the Gaslamp Killer and D-Styles.

—Chris Ziegler
THE VIPER DRAGON: 15229 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades, Cadillac, plus the release of Mike Friedman’s new book, Addicted to Tragedy, Sat., Feb. 20, 9:30 p.m., TBA.

PEHRSSPACE: 225 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles. The Lowered, Ceo Volant, Casey Chisholm, Sun., Feb. 21, 8 p.m., $5. See Music Pick.

THE PEARL DRAGON: 15229 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades, Cadillac, plus the release of Mike Friedman’s new book, Addicted to Tragedy, Sat., Feb. 20, 9:30 p.m., TBA.

PEHRSSPACE: 225 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles. The Lowered, Ceo Volant, Casey Chisholm, Sun., Feb. 21, 8 p.m., $5. See Music Pick.

THE REDWOOD BAR & GRILL: 316 W. Second St., Los Angeles. The Infamous Stringdusters, Nicki Moreland, Lilly Hiatt, Tue., Feb. 23, 8 p.m., TBA. Monica. Missus Jones, Community Jazz Groovers, Wednesdays, 9 p.m. Thru Feb. 24, $5-$10.

THE ROSE: 1001 W. Riverside Drive, Burbank. Robbie Rist’s K-9 slate Sundays, 3-6 p.m., free. The Messaround with The Gears, The Sloths, Groovy Redneck Holsters, Sun., Feb. 21, 6-9 p.m., free; Glenn Allan Britain, Sundays, 7 p.m., free.


CARINA BAR & GRILL: 9725 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. Steve Thykier, Thursdays, 7 p.m., free. The Eric Ekstrand Trio, Mondays, 4:30 p.m., free. Tom Armbruster, Tuesdays, 7 p.m., free. Karen Hernandez & Jimmy Spencer, Wednesdays, 7 p.m., free. Trifecta, Thursdays, 7 p.m., free.

COLOMBOS: 1833 Colorado Blvd., Eagle Rock. Steve Thompson, Fridays, 5:30-9 p.m., free. The Eric Ekstrand Trio, Mondays, 4:30 p.m., free. Tom Armbruster, Tuesdays, 7 p.m., free. Karen Hernandez & Jimmy Spencer, Wednesdays, 7 p.m., free. Trifecta, Thursdays, 7 p.m., free.

DESSERT ROSE: 1700 Hillhurst Ave., Los Angeles. The Mark Z. Stevens Trio, Saturdays, 7:11 p.m. See Music Pick.


HAKELOE: 7321 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood. Brent Canary, Mondays, 8:30 p.m., free.

HARVELLE’S SANTA MONICA: 1432 Fourth St., Santa Monica. The Toledo Show, Thursdays, 9 p.m., $10. Harvelle’s Long Beach: 201 W. Broadway, Long Beach. The Toledo Show, Thursdays, 9 p.m., $10.

JAX BAR & GRILL: 339 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale. Kenny Stack, Sundays, 6-10 p.m., free. J.C. Spires, Mondays, 9:30 p.m., free. The Toledo Show, Thursdays, 9 p.m., $10.

JAZZ & BLUES


ARCADIA BLUES CLUB: 15229 Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades, Cadillac, plus the release of Mike Friedman’s new book, Addicted to Tragedy, Sat., Feb. 20, 9:30 p.m., TBA. Arcadia. Jamie Inviedt, Sat., Feb. 20, 7 p.m., $20.


CAZCA BAR & GRILL: 6725 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. Steve Thykier, Thursdays, 7 p.m., free. The Eric Ekstrand Trio, Mondays, 4:30 p.m., free. Tom Armbruster, Tuesdays, 7 p.m., free. Karen Hernandez & Jimmy Spencer, Wednesdays, 7 p.m., free. Trifecta, Thursdays, 7 p.m., free.

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JAZZ & BLUES
Lina In L.A.
by Lina Lecaro

10TH ANNUAL DRE DAY

Gangsta love will be at all-time high (pun intended) as L.A. punk bands and rap fans unite to celebrate Andre “Dr. Dre” Young.

A belated birthday bash (his 51st birthday falls on Feb. 18), the annual shindig invites all to “button up your workshirts, crack open an ice-cold bottle of malt liquor and spark a fat blunt” as Dre-heavy playlists keep things poppin’.

Live performances by Revolution’s Pride, Gentlemen Prefer Blood, Pu$$y-Cow and Kim & The Creator will interpret the rapper/producer’s vast catalog with style.

Also enjoy a Chrono photo booth, free Dre stickers, a game of “Edward 40-hands” (Google it) and more.

THE DRAGONFLY: 1650 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood; Fri., Feb. 19, 8 p.m.-2 a.m. $30. 21+ | facebook.com/events/156705696885489


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THE DRAGONFLY

1489 E. Fourth St., Los Angeles. Loft Sessions, with Melanie Charles, Soloniz, Bay Cities & Teira Church, Fri., Feb. 19, 8 p.m.-1 a.m., $10.


AVALON HOLLYWOOD: 1735 Vine St., Los Angeles. Metro Boomin’, Southside 808 Mafia, Kittens, Fri., Feb. 19, 9:30 p.m., $15; Control, with DJs spinning dubstep and more, 19 & over, 9:30 p.m. Availand, where DJs are in the house with techno, trance and more. 21 & over, Saturdays, 11:30 p.m.-3 a.m., $5. Individual Sat., Feb. 20, 10 p.m., $10.

CREATE NIGHTCLUB: 6021 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles. Noize Fridays, Fridays, 10 p.m.; Eva Show, Fri., Feb. 19, 10 p.m., $25 & $45. Arcade Saturdays, Saturdays, 9 p.m.-2 a.m.

801 HILL NIGHTCLUB: 801 S. Hill St., Los Angeles. Sound Saturday Nights, Saturdays, 9:30 p.m.-2 a.m.

EXCHANGE LA: 618 S. Spring St., Los Angeles. Awakening, Fridays, 10 p.m.; Inception, Saturdays, 10 p.m. Hucci, G Jones, Thu., Feb. 25, 10 p.m., $20 & $90.

GENERAL LEE’S BAR: 475 Gin Ling Way. DJ Joey Altruda’s Shanghai Nai, Wednesdays, 9 p.m., free.

GRAND STAGE JAZZ CLUB: 493 N. Broadway, Los Angeles. Club Underground, with DJs Larry G and Diana Mehan spinning Britpop, post-punk and new wave, 21 & over, Fridays, 9 p.m., $8.

THE LASH: 117 Winston St., Los Angeles. Letta, Santa Muerte, JX Cannon, Katie Rex, Kush Jones, Sha Sha Kimbo, Swetta, Sat., Feb. 20, 9 p.m., free.

THE RECENT THEATER: 448 S. Main St., Los Angeles. Flygirk, with DJ DJO G, WOODY, Amy Pham, Kronia, Thu., Feb. 25, 9 p.m., $20.


SHORT STOP: 1455 Sunset Blvd. Dre Day LA, with Bottlecitc, Inka One, Expo, Seano, Fri., Feb. 19, 8:30 p.m., $10.


THAT ’80S BAR: 10555 Mills Ave., Montclair. ’80s Dance Party, with new-old-school and freestyle favorites, Fridays, Saturdays, 1 p.m., $5-$10.

THE TEATRE AT ACE HOTEL: 929 S. Broadway, Los Angeles. Dublab Vibing Time, with Dublab DJs, Sundays, 1 p.m., free.


THE VIRGIL: 4519 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles. Planet Rock, with DJs Chuck Wild & Canyon Cody flipping hip-hop, funk, Latin, reggae and disco house, Saturdays, 9 p.m., $10.

ZANZIBAR: 1301 Fifth St., Santa Monica. Seductive Saturdays, Saturdays, 9 p.m., $10. TBA. Soundstage, Saturdays, 9 p.m., TBA.

For more listings, please go to laweekly.com.

CONCERTS

FRIDAY, FEB. 19


CHUCK NEGRON, MARK FARNER: 8 p.m. $48-$57. Saban Theatre, 8440 W. Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills.

DR. DOG: With Hop Along, 8 p.m., $25-$30. The Wiltern, 3790 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles.


LEO FEST:

LEO FEST:

AIR + STYLE 2016:

LEO FEST:

THE DRAGONFLY

BASSLINE:

LEO FEST:

AIR + STYLE 2016:

LEO FEST:

AIR + STYLE 2016:

LEO FEST:

AIR + STYLE 2016:

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SANTA CECILIA ORCHESTRA: The group heads north for music from Scandinavian and Russian composers, including Grieg and Borodin, Sat., Feb. 20, 8 p.m., $24. Santa Cecilia Arts & Learning Center, 2751 W. Broadway, Los Angeles.

SAXOMANIA: The ensemble eschews works for clarinet by Alfred Uhl and Paul Harvey, in Samuelson Chapel, Fri., Feb. 19, 7:30 p.m., free. California Lutheran University, 60 W. Olsen Road, Thousand Oaks.

SEAN CHEN: The young pianist performs a recital of works TBA, Fri., Feb. 19, 8 p.m., $39. Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 3930 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills.

THE SILK ROAD ENSEMBLE: Yo-Yo Ma directs the globe-trotting musical group, Sun., Feb. 21, 7 p.m.; Mon., Feb. 22, 8 p.m., $50-$80. The Granada Theatre, 1214 State St., Santa Barbara.

THE SUSAN ALLEN TRIBUTE CONCERT: With musicians TBA, Sat., Feb. 20, 2 p.m., free. CalArts, Walt Disney Modular Theater (MOD), 24700 McBean Parkway, Valencia.

THE TETZLAFF TRIO: The group replicates piano trios by Schumann, Dvorak and Brahms, Fri., Feb. 19, 8 p.m., $48. Samueli Theater, 600 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa.

TURANDOT: Carl St. Clair conducts Pacific Symphony in Puccini’s opera, aided by Pacific Chorale and the Southern California Children’s Chorus, Sat., Feb. 20, 8 p.m.; Tue., Feb. 23, 8 p.m., $35-$510. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa.

VICKI RAY: The adventurous pianist debuts a new work, Four Elemental Songs, with the help of soprano Elisa Johnston, and also covers selections by John Luther Adams, Lin Mu-Xuan Lin (a world premiere), Dominique Schafer (another world premiere), Toru Takemitsu (with violinist Sarah Thornblade and cellist Erik Duke-Kirkpatrick), and Luciano Berio, Tue., Feb. 23, 8:30 p.m., $25. REDCAT: Roy & Edna Disney/CalArts Theater, 631 W. Second St., L.A.

WILLIAM HAGEN & HSIN-I HUANG: The violinist and the pianist, respectively, trot out selections by Mozart, Prokoviev, Tartini and Ravel at a recital, Sat., Feb. 20, 7:30 p.m., $10 & $25. The Colburn School of Music, Zipper Concert Hall, 200 S. Grand Ave.

THE YMF DEBUT ORCHESTRA: Soprano Kirsten Ashley West shines a light on Ligeti’s The Mysteries of the Macabre, and Yuga Cohler conducts Stravinsky’s Petrushka and Esa-Pekka Salonen’s Foreign Bodies, Fri., Feb. 19, 7:30 p.m., free. Aratani Japan America Theatre, 244 S. San Pedro St., Los Angeles.

YOUNGARTS L.A.: Student musicians gather for a program TBA, Sun., Feb. 21, 2 p.m., $15. Los Angeles Theatre Center, 514 South Spring St.
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**LA Weekly After Dark Newsletter**

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18+ ONLY

www.laweekly.com/newsletters

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Blackberry Purple Cream and more

$45

7 GRAMS OF

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$130

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1/2 OFF ADMISSION BEFORE 7

$5 OFF ADMISSION AFTER 7

1ST SODA FREE

ALCOHOL EXTRA • NO COUPONS ON TUESDAY WITH AD • LAW EXP 2/29/16

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**HAPPY HOUR**

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MUST BE 18+ W/VALID ID - SUBJECT TO MINIMUMS
NOT VALID FOR SPECIAL EVENTS
$10 ENTERTAINMENT FEE APPLIES - EXPIRES 3.15.16 LA WEEKLY
SPECIAL EVENTS NO PASSES WILL BE ACCEPTED
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23700 Western Ave., Harbor City 90710

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Lankershim
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818-980-6868
4713 Lankershim

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**IN NEED OF A HERNIA REPAIR?**

We are currently conducting a research study involving hernia repair. If you are 18 yrs or older, you may qualify to participate in this clinical research study. Participants receive at no cost:

• Study Related Procedures, including hernia repair.
• Medication
• Lab testing

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**ASTROLOGERS-PsycHICS-TAROT READERS**

P/T F/T at 812-336/hr. tambien en Espanol. 954-524-9039

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**OFFICIAL VICTORY LINE EXPRESS**

5/26/16   7:26 PM

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ATTORNEY
Rozalin Benlevi Kashani
Rozalin@eliteimmigrationlaw.com

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Attorney
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Best New Product Winner - Hempcon 2015
W is the newest in high tech oil pen design. Pure, potent, and incredible flavor, W Vapes provides the true premium cannabis oil experience.

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1 TO MULTIPLE GIRLS FOR HIRE!

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Divorce Party
Birthday Party
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Any Sexy occasion!

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**A research study of a new combination antibiotic is now underway for people suffering from Crohn’s disease.**

Doctors are seeking participants for a clinical study testing a novel approach for the treatment of Crohn’s disease: treating the bacteria which may be a cause of Crohn’s disease.

The study medication is in pill form and is a combination of three antibiotics: clarithromycin, rifabutin, and clofazimine. Remission at week 26 is the primary objective of the study; however, the study duration is approximately 62 weeks.

In order to participate, you must be diagnosed with Crohn’s disease for longer than six months and be 18 to 75 years old. Other criteria apply.

Study participants will receive study related exams, lab tests and study medication at no charge. Compensation is available.

Please visit www.medvinresearch.com to learn more or call 1-562-479-0330

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**Hernia Repair Research Study**

Lotus Clinical Research is conducting a research study to evaluate the efficacy, safety and tolerability of an investigational pain medication in patients who require hernia repair surgery.

To qualify, you must meet specific study criteria:

• Must be 18 years of age or older.
• Have a qualifying hernia that needs to be surgically removed.
• Medical Insurance not required.

You may be compensated up to $800.00 for study-related time and travel.

Study enrollment is limited.

We are conveniently located near public transportation.

To see if you qualify contact us at:
(877) Lotus-CR (568-8727)
Or visit us at www.LotusCR.com

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