Scratch Bar Is a Head-Scratcher • Who Killed 2Pac and Biggie?

ADVENTURES IN VINYL
A photographer and a journalist set out to capture the culture, personalities and nostalgia of L.A.’s record stores

BY PAUL T. BRADLEY
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<td>WHTC</td>
<td>3760 Cahuenga Blvd., Studio City</td>
<td>818-980-8338</td>
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<tr>
<td>DTHC</td>
<td>1420 South Alameda Street, Downtown</td>
<td>213-579-0742</td>
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<td>California Caregivers Alliance (CCA)</td>
<td>2815 West Sunset Blvd., #201, Silver Lake</td>
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<td>GSC 35 CAP</td>
<td>3549 Cahuenga Blvd. W, Studio City</td>
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<td>DTPG</td>
<td>1320 Mateo St., Downtown</td>
<td>213-747-3386</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pot Spot Collective</td>
<td>900 S Westmoreland Ave #102, Koreatown</td>
<td>213-381-9991</td>
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<td>Daddy's Pipes</td>
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<td>818-817-9517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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NEWS...8
Ballot measure madness: Here are the nuttiest ideas Californians are trying to put on the November ballot. 
BY HILLEL ARON.

EAT & DRINK...29
Phlip Frankland Lee's Encino reboot of his hyper-modern Scratch Bar is both fascinating and strange. 
BY BESHA RODELL.

GO LA...37
Among the best goings-on in L.A. this week: a week of TV panels, An Evening With Lily Tomlin and an excuse to drink beer in the middle of the day on a Thursday.

CULTURE...43
In CULTURE, Echo Theater Company launches its most daring — and most female — season to date. 
BY JENNY LOWER. In STAGE, a talking mongoose takes up residence in a dysfunctional family's walls. 
In ART PICKS, a short film captures the art of workers working.

FILM...50
Mary Elizabeth Winstead outfoxes the end times in 10 Cloverfield Lane. BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL. The documentary City of Gold follows L.A.'s best known eater, Jonathan Gold, from taco truck to dumpling palace. 
BY AMY NICHOLSON. Plus reviews of drone drama Eye in the Sky, French period piece Marguerite and other movies OPENING THIS WEEK, and YOUR WEEKLY MOVIE TO-DO LIST.

MUSIC...57
JEFF WEISS meets the men who think they know who killed Biggie and 2Pac, and HENRY ROLLINS shouts into the void of the U.S. presidential race. Plus: LINA IN L.A., listings for ROCK & POP, JAZZ & CLASSICAL and more.

ADVENTURES IN VINYL ...21
A new photography book celebrates L.A. record stores, which are still thriving, albeit in different ways. 
BY PAUL T. BRADLEY.

EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT...78
REAL ESTATE/RENTALS...78
BULLETIN BOARD...79

ON THE COVER: PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE SPITZ

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BALLOT MEASURE MADNESS

Welcome to California, where the initiative process looks a bit like a carny.

I've been to the supermarket lately, maybe you've noticed a guy out front with four clipboards in his hand, trying to get your attention. He's probably looking a bit like a carniesh vendor.

Welcome to California, where the citizen is the legislator — or can be, if that citizen pays $200 and manages to get a few hundred thousand signatures, qualifying his or her idea for the ballot.

There are more than 60 ballot measures floating around. Some are desperately trying to gather the necessary 365,880 signatures needed to qualify. Many others have folded or were never very serious in the first place. Experts are predicting that as many as 20 could end up on the ballot.

A few initiatives have already qualified for the ballot, including overturning the supermarket plastic bag ban and forcing porn actors to wear condoms. A number of others have crossed the 25 percent threshold, meaning they stand a decent shot of ending up on the ballot. These include raising the minimum wage to $15 an hour (the city of L.A. already did this), doing away with the death penalty, instituting a $2 cigarette tax that would include electronic cigarettes, banning large-capacity ammunition clips and, of course, legalizing weed.

But what about the fanciful ones, the nutty ones, the ones cooked up by right-wing crackpots, the ones that will almost surely not make the ballot? Here are nine of those, followed by some batshit crazy ones that have already been rejected:

9. California nationhood

No, this isn't a proposal for California to secede from the United States of America. That would be downright sensible compared with this ballot measure, which places the question of whether California should unilaterally declare independence from the United States ... and request admission to the United Nations.

Sounds crazy, sure. But if Trump becomes president, this starts to look pretty good.

8. The NASCAR Initiative

This brilliant idea, pushed by business owner John Cox, apparently was inspired by a Robin Williams stand-up routine, in which he suggested that politicians should wear the logo of their corporate contributors, à la NASCAR drivers. Cox thought that was a pretty good idea and had it written up as a ballot measure: the "Name All Sponsors California Accountability Reform," or NASCAR. It would require state legislators "to display on their persons the identity of the top 10 donors to their controlled committees."

According to Mashable, Cox has committed to spending $1 million to get the signatures. Unfortunately for him, with all the ballot measures out there, the price of a signature has gotten rather inflated — they're going for up to $4.50 each. The phrase "uphill battle" is being thrown around a lot for this one.

7. Expand the Legislature

The NASCAR thing might not even be Cox's wildest idea this year. He has another ballot measure to expand the California Legislature "almost 100-fold."

That's right: a state assembly of just under 800 members, along with nearly 400 state senators. These roughly 1,200 legislators would then elect "working committees" the size of the current Legislature, which would have the sole power to amend bills.

Calm down, Cox. The NASCAR thing was cute, but you're pushing it here.

6. Lower the minimum drinking age

Pretty straightforward, this one: Lower the minimum drinking age from 21 to 18.

Is that nutty? If you're old enough to carry an Uzi and kill for your country, shouldn't you be old enough to buy a six-pack of Heineken?

5. Create a state-owned electric company

This vaguely socialistic move would create the California Electrical Utility District — a bit like the DWP, only much bigger. It would ban "most investor-owned utilities, such as PG&E, Southern California Edison, San Diego Gas & Electric and Bear Valley Electric." Publicly owned electric utilities, such as the L.A. DWP, would still be kosher but could volunteer to be swallowed up by the newer, bigger utility.

4. Religious organizations

"Rescinds religious tax exemptions for religious organizations that interfere with legal proceedings by not complying with court orders, concealing or failing to provide testimony or using intimidation to prevent others from taking legal action against them." Scientology, anyone?

3. Ferrets

"Legalizes the possession, importation and transportation of pet ferrets." An idea whose time has come.

2. Shoot the gays

"The ‘sodomy suppression act,’ aka the ‘shoot the gays’ proposal, would have mandated that ‘any person who willingly touches another person of the same gender for purposes of sexual gratification be put to death by bullets to the head, or by any other convenient method.’" In June, a judge ruled the measure was "patently unconstitutional," but international headlines made California's initiative process look like the inmates are running the asylum, or at least gathering signatures to run the asylum.

1. Screw the guy who said "Shoot the gays"

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TODAY’S JOB SEARCH
THE WAYS WE FIND WORK ARE CHANGING

Today’s job search is different. Technology, social media, interview trends, remote work opportunities, and employers’ shifting priorities have made looking for a new position a very different process compared with even a few years ago.

TECHNOLOGY
“Technology has changed the behavior of both the applicant and employer. Information is readily available – a little digging can influence a decision,” said Darlene DuBert, Director of HR at Blue Microphones. “Online presence and persona has become the ‘suit and tie’ of the past.”

Whereas generic employment websites such as Monster.com or Craigslist were once the only options

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for job ads, niche sites like Dice and Glassdoor have been developed to target specific subsections of a given industry, DuBert explained.

“We’ve seen great results from Indeed.com,” she continued. “We can now also, more conveniently, create awareness within our own networks by using LinkedIn.”

“Technology has helped,” said Steve Aylsworth, Managing Partner and Founder of Tri-Search, Talent Recruitment with Intention. “By the use of video interviews, Skype and smart phones there are a variety of ways to remotely connect more with the candidates you are interviewing. This extra touch does help … especially when recruiting candidates on [a] national and international level.”

SOCIAL MEDIA

While some human resources professionals see social media as the current go-to platform for jobs, experts interviewed for this article had mixed opinions on the subject.

“Social media is a very useful and cost-effective tool for recruiting,” said DuBert. “[Its] channels cast a wide net to both the company’s and employees’ audiences … Meanwhile, social media allows employers insight to the candidate.”

Job seekers are even executing “reverse reference checks” through social media – that is, perusing a potential employer’s profiles and posts as windows into their workplace culture before even applying.

But there’s still a place for face-to-face networking, said John Addison, author of Real Leadership: 9 Simple Practices for Leading and Living with Purpose.

“Oftentimes, to land a better job, it is more than just what you know but more so who you know,” said Addison. “Making sure then you develop a real social network of people in ‘real life’ can often be more important than who you’re connected with online.”

INFORMAL INTERVIEWS

While formal employment interviews aren’t disappearing anytime soon, job hunters should also be prepared to participate in large-scale networking events, low-key local meet-ups, or just simple chats over coffee en route to a new position.

“Companies are working to make the interview process more natural. The overall company culture today is adapting this strategy,” said Aylsworth. “With such a competitive market today, companies are focusing on culture to attract the best talent.”

Networking situations and less formal interview environments can offer employers a more “authentic” understanding of who will be working for and with them.

“Formal settings make people nervous, but a more casual setting allows you to see their real personality and character,” said Addison. “While being smart is important, oftentimes someone who’s more personable and has other traits and characteristics can be more of an asset to your team.”

RESUMES & JOB POSTINGS

The contemporary relevance of resumes and job postings divided our experts.

“These still play a vital role. Employers looking to hire are still requiring standard resumes as part of the qualification process,” said Aylsworth. “Job postings are still
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In the past, [a resume] was the exclusive representation of a candidate, but more and more candidates get the chance to represent themselves in other ways (video interviews, information meetings, etc.),” said DuBert. “However, the resume is still used as a tool to evaluate a candidate. There will always be a place for the traditional methodology.”

Yet Addison sees the roles of these traditional methodologies as diminishing of late.

“With social media component and networking, people are identifying candidates in a new and different ways, and therefore, already know a lot more about them before even sitting down with them,” he explained. “This helps both the employer and perspective employee make better decisions.”

LOCATION

With many companies now offering remote work opportunities, location is less important to job hunting than it once was.

“This is one of the most major shifts over the past 10 years,” said Aylsworth. “Also, with the ramp-up of shared work space, this has allowed employers to have employees in remote professional work space as well.”

The Internet has also influenced the geographic component of a job search in indirect, less tangible ways, according to Addison.

“Technology has enabled people to stay in touch with family and friends if they work in other places,” he said. “In addition, the fact that today people know a lot more about other places makes the world a smaller place, and people are more open to new opportunities and experiences.”

But candidates should treat location strictly on a case-by-case basis, DuBert asserted.

“This really depends on the industry and the position – certain positions simply cannot work remotely,” she said. “It is a growing trend but should not be an expectation.”

WHO ARE YOU?

While experience and qualifications remain important, employers appear keener than ever to also know just who an applicant really is and what drives them as a person.

“This is what our recruitment business is built on,” said Aylsworth. “This has become very important as employers are focusing on hiring candidates that have a passion for what they do and what their vision is as a company.

“Today more than any other time it is crucial to align the true intention of what the company needs for the position to that of the true intention of what the candidates desires for the next step in the their career.”

“We prefer employees who want to be here out of passion for the brand, rather than someone with adequate experience who is just here for the paycheck,” said DuBert. “Brand-enthusiast hires also tend to have a more positive attitude when faced with stresses on the job.”
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“The opening of a Downtown campus allows us to better serve the higher education needs of those living and working in L.A.,” said Dr. Eric Bullard, Dean of Cal State L.A.’s College of Professional and Global Education.

“It also signals to the community that Cal State L.A. is committed to serving the needs of the local-area workforce and workplaces by providing training and degree opportunities for individuals, and corporate education for businesses, non-profits, and governmental agencies.”

Established in 1947 (as Los Angeles State College of Applied Arts and Sciences), Cal State L.A. has an enrollment of nearly 28,000 students served by more than 1,000 academic staff. It offers 129 types of Bachelor’s degrees, 112 different Master’s degrees, three Doctoral degrees (Ph.D. in special education, Doctor of Education, and Doctor of Nursing Practice), and 22 teaching credentials.
Based at a 175-acre urban campus in the University Hills district of eastern Los Angeles, Cal State L.A. was ranked at #24 in Time magazine’s top 100 colleges and universities in 2014, and last year at number 8 nationally in Washington Monthly’s College Guide for top Master’s Universities.

Under Covino’s leadership, Cal State L.A. worked for two years to identify and secure an appropriate location for a Downtown Los Angeles (DTLA) campus. The result is a 22,000-square-foot, 6th-floor facility at West Eighth Street and South Grand Avenue – on the edge of L.A.’s Financial District and at the heart of the Downtown’s residential development boom. Indeed, the recent revitalization of Downtown L.A. provided part of the impetus for the opening of the new site.

“We also recognize that many individuals are unable to access higher education because of a variety of factors, including family and work commitments, as well as urban congestion and traffic,” Bullard explained. “The Downtown campus is only 5 miles from our main [University Hills] campus; however, depending on traffic, it could take upward of 45 minutes to travel to our main-campus location.”

So the DTLA campus is a case of Cal State L.A. coming to Angelenos, rather than obliging them to travel, endure traffic, and secure parking in order to further their education. The new facility, which makes Cal State L.A. the only public university offering degree programs in DTLA, includes state-of-the-art classrooms, computer labs, collaboration rooms, and lounges.

“Many of our classrooms feature videoconferencing capabilities, digital lecture capture, and smart boards. This technology enables students and faculty to seamlessly collaborate and share ideas,” said Bullard. “We also offer students several collaboration rooms – spaces that enable them to share their computer desktops, collaborate on assignments and projects, and to videoconference with students and faculty across the globe.”

In addition to undergraduate and graduate degree programs, Cal State L.A.’s DTLA campus offers certificate programs, public seminars, and personal enrichment courses. Furthermore, the facility provides invaluable educational space for local businesses, non-profits, and governmental agencies. For example, it has already hosted several meetings for Cal State L.A.’s partners, such as the new student orientation for the incoming 2016 Southern California Leadership Network’s class for Leadership L.A.

“The Downtown campus is geared toward serving non-traditional students, those who are working full-time, those seeking career advancement, or those in career transition,” said Bullard. “Campus programming also is aimed at providing lifelong learning opportunities for Angelenos, such as non-credit courses in the History of Los Angeles, Conversational Mandarin, and Screenwriting.”

Several of the programs and courses offered at Cal State L.A.’s Downtown campus incorporate elements specific to a major urban environment like Los Angeles, including sustainability and diversity.

“We are working with our faculty to develop content that will address
urban sustainability in certificate and degree programs. These efforts are being undertaken by faculty who work in our campus Center for Urban Sustainability and Energy,” said Bullard.

“Additionally, it is important for us to recognize and focus on diversity. Fostering a climate of understanding is critical to ensuring the future success of Los Angeles and Angelenos. Cal State L.A. is a beacon of diversity, representing many cultures, backgrounds, and viewpoints. As such, we feel it part of our mission to create safe and unbiased environments to facilitate dialogue amongst these unique individuals and cultures.”

Cal State L.A. is also a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI), meaning that it participates in a federal program designed to assist colleges and universities that attempt to assist first-generation, majority low-income Hispanic students.

To keep its programs relevant and timely, Cal State L.A. works with local area partners, its alumni network, and college and curriculum advisory councils to ensure that its curricula fulfill the current needs of an ever-evolving global economy.

Although Cal State L.A.’s Downtown campus only opened its doors on January 25 (a formal grand opening is imminent), there are already plans afoot for its enhancement and possible expansion.

“Over the next several months and during the years ahead, we will be adding new certificate, bachelor’s degree completion, and master’s programs that meet the needs of the local-area,” Bullard revealed.

“Based on our projected growth, we will very likely expand our footprint within the current facility. As part of our 10-year lease, Cal State L.A. has the option of securing an additional 44,000 square feet of classroom and administrative office space at 801 South Grand Avenue.”
LA Weekly has teamed up with Base Camp, a new RV & camping experience taking place during all three festival weekends this April in Indio, California. Base Camp will feature 40 acres of camping, swimming, music, art, hot air balloon rides, lake cruises & much more.

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On the surface of it, a vinyl record is just a plastic, disc-shaped sound-storage medium inscribed with a spiral groove. For most of the 20th century it was the primary medium used for music distribution. It has no inherent meaning on its own. But, because of how it ties one generation to its musical past and helps a new one imagine that past, the revived interest in vinyl that once seemed like a fad now appears to be here for good— and L.A., with its thriving community of old and new record shops, has become a hub for collectors.

Enter journalist Rebecca Villaneda and photographer Mike Spitz, whose recent *The Record Store Book* highlights 50 of Southern California’s record stores. With its artfully crowded photos and offbeat stories from store owners, the coffee-table book both celebrates some of our city’s more venerable record stores and reminds us of the breadth of vinyl’s current appeal.

Following Hardson’s poignant introduction, the book starts with some of the dusty, old-guard shops that have been around since the 1950s, such as Pasadena’s Canterbury Record Shop, before winding up at newer places like Hollywood’s 2-year-old Record Parlour. Throughout its pages, you get a sense that these are just folks plying a trade in something that gives them a sense of history and preserves music as a tangible commodity in an increasingly digital world.

“These guys that had grown up with vinyl as their first source of music just had

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“I remember pressing up my own records, and as you watch a machine press down on your own vinyl, you think, this is your precious thing that you created, and you think about all of the fights that might have happened because of one song, all of the money, and the time ... you see all of those things pressed inside of that one record.”

—South Central native and original Pharcyde member Tre “Slimkid3” Hardson

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**ADVENTURES IN VINYL**

A photographer and a journalist set out to capture the culture, personalities and nostalgia of L.A.’s record stores

BY PAUL T. BRADLEY
so many great stories,” Villaneda says. “I just feel so blessed that these guys opened their doors to me.”

Spitz, a 48-year-old Silver Lake photographer (and clinical social worker), says his love of vinyl goes back to his earliest memories of listening to music. “I have a long history of going to record stores. So when I was reaching back into my own nostalgic past, I thought, why don’t I do something about [them]. It’s very specific. It has all the elements, it has portraiture, urban architecture, music … all of the things I like to take pictures of.”

Spitz originally thought he would cover the whole country, but whittled down his scope to the Greater Los Angeles area after realizing that our region has more than enough shops to fill a book. “On a weekend, I would shoot two or three stores,” he says.

Villaneda probed the owners, to see what makes them tick. She says the conversations “turned into something deeper and more meaningful when we started to interview these older cats, like Music Man Murray, who is no longer with us. He was in the game for so long. Something like 30-plus years.” She even uncovered some truly odd stories, like a love triangle that emerged over the years among the owners of Norwalk Records.

The Record Store Book is a subjective survey of Southern California vinyl culture; Spitz focused on his favorite stores and deliberately omitted a few popular landmarks, such as Long Beach’s Fingerprints and Echo Park’s Origami Vinyl, in favor of stores that are more off the beaten path.

He also steered clear of anyplace where T-shirts and tchotchkes took up as much floor space as the vinyl. “They do it because they have to survive, so there’s an upside to that, but there’s also a downside,” he explains. “It took away from the authenticity of the store.”

Spitz fears that the current vinyl resurgence may yet prove to be an empty trend. “I just feel like my generation is more authentic. I feel more connected with those kinds of people. They’re not riding a trend; they are there because they appreciate records. They want to find something. They’re serious about it. They don’t care if it’s going to be a trend in two years.”

Longtime Origami employee Emily Twombly disagrees with that sentiment. She sees shops like hers as a way to continue a different tradition inherent in record-store culture — that of serving as tastemaker and supporting local bands.

“There are a ton of local bands here. And in this certain scene, vinyl is part of that,” she explains between fielding calls at the shop. “When we were growing up, to find out about new bands, we had to read zines, we had to go to shows, we had to be active about talking about music with other people and sharing music with other people physically, and not just MP3s. You had to invite your friend over to listen to a record.”

She continues, “Now, kids can just access this shit so easily — which is why a...”
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For Zane Landreth, co-owner of Highland Park record store Mount Analog (which appears in The Record Store Book), any so-called vinyl trend or resurgence is irrelevant to him and his customers. “Records came back. Sure. And now you can buy records in Whole Foods or whatever. But for me and everyone I know, I just never stopped buying records. “For most of the music I listen to and for most of the records we sell in the shop, vinyl is the only way you can get it. Just because other people are paying attention now doesn’t change the way I do my life or run my business,” he adds.

His business, which he runs with co-owner Mahsa Taghina, also finds that middle ground between old record-heads and those on the hunt for something brand-new. “When you come in, you’re comfortable here. You can learn about new things. It has that coffeehouse vibe. It’s like a cultural center. That’s the most fun thing about running the shop, getting to be someone’s tour guide into getting into some old or new weird shit.”

Michael Kurtz, co-founder of Record Store Day, the annual bonanza of limited-edition vinyl that’s now in its 10th year, doesn’t see any sort of rivalry.
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“Every store has its own personality. You figure that out, and you start going to them for those specific reasons — like they’re your own friends.” —Michael Kurtz, Co-Founder of Record Store Day

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**HEAD-SCRATCHER**

Phillip Frankland Lee’s Encino reboot of his hyper-modern restaurant is both fascinating and strange

**BY BESHA RODELL**

There was an interesting interaction during an episode of the current season of *Top Chef* between contestant Phillip Frankland Lee and fellow L.A. chef Michael Voltaggio. Voltaggio, a former contestant who was there as a judge, stopped by Lee’s workstation to discuss the challenges of the show. “I thought that I was gonna come in here and just do my food my way,” Lee said.

“But on *Top Chef*, they want us to cook food to make the judges happy.”

“For me,” Voltaggio responded, “it was just about cooking good food.”

In a season in which Lee had many memorable scenes (he played the part of villain perfectly, either through force of personality or force of clever editing), this moment was the most telling, not least of all because Lee and Voltaggio appear to be cut from the same cloth. As young chefs driven by ambition, the food at both of their restaurants redefine American culinary modernism, as well as poster boys for the kind of tattooed badass who embodies a culture as much as he does a career. Chefflife, and all that.

But dig a little deeper, and the two are quite different. For starters (spoilers ahead), Voltaggio won season six of *Top Chef*, while Lee was kicked off in the middle of the current season for serving a salad made of strawberries that the judges deemed too dessertlike. Lee has said his philosophy is to do “whatever the fuck you want”—and perhaps that’s the reason the *Top Chef* judges didn’t understand him. Without that attitude, he asks in his exit interview, “How will [the food industry] ever move forward?”

Voltaggio may give off the appearance of doing whatever the fuck he wants, but underneath it all is a rigorously trained chef, one who understands the rules before he breaks them.

This is the conundrum that lies at the heart of Scratch Bar: Can a chef really just do whatever the fuck he wants—with no classical training, no years spent working his way up through the ranks? Should the truly talented be able to fly free early and without constraints?

Scratch Bar first opened in Beverly Hills in 2013. In July 2015 it closed, and rumor was that Lee had a falling-out with the restaurant’s main investor. A week later, the Beverly Hills version of Scratch Bar reopened, without Lee’s involvement. It’s not clear how long that lasted; though a website still exists for the Beverly Hills Scratch Bar, it appears to have closed again.

In October, Lee’s new version of Scratch Bar opened in the second story of an upscale strip mall in Encino. We now know that he was also filming *Top Chef* in the midst of all this drama.

Lee started working in restaurants as a teenager, went to culinary school but quickly dropped out, worked as a cook and sous chef for a couple of years, and then became the chef at Scratch Bar when he was 26. Somewhere in there an attempt was made to crowdfund a movie called Cook, which Lee planned to write and direct, and if you Google his name along with “movie,” you can find a very bizarre trailer for the project, one that’s full of knives and tattoos and hot waitresses, along with a brooding voice-over about dreams and ambitions.

The new Scratch Bar might as well be the restaurant version of that movie, without the hot waitresses (there are no servers at all). The kitchen stretches along the back wall of the small room like a stage, and much of the seating is at a bar facing the kitchen, where the cooks also act as waiters. The space is all gleaming steel and dark walls and glowing embers from the large, open wood and charcoal grills.

These dudes are undeniably excited to serve you, to tell you all about the $40, $80 or $120 tasting menus, to watch you watch them put together dishes with the obvious goal of making them look like art (paintbrushes are utilized). Chef de cuisine Jonathan Portela is most often running the show, both in the kitchen and as the master of ceremonies. “We got two ways you can do this,” he’ll tell you from behind the counter as he looks at tickets and surveys his cooks. “You choose or I choose. I always recommend the option where I choose.”

If you go with his suggestion and opt for one of the tasting menus, you’ll likely start with a sake shooter layered with sea urchin and avocado mousse, with a green mussel and a sliver of serrano chili speared across the top. Right off the bat, this gives you an idea of what might go wrong with the meal ahead of you: The sake itself is assertively sweet, and it sets off the seafood in the most disconcerting way possible, like a dirty martini garnished with a maraschino cherry.

From there you might get a bowl of pop-corn touched with butter and thyme and salt and, yes, sugar. The salty-sweet combo doesn’t work any better this time around. There’s a soft roasted salmon, some of it cooked through and some of it rare, topped with beautiful rainbow carrots, salmon Roe and daubs of yogurt. A dish of toasted escorial over sunchoke puree with puffed amaranth doesn’t even need the nubs of sweetbreads under each slice of silken fish, but they don’t hurt, either.

Certain ingredients show up again and again, sea urchin and salmon roe in particular. The roe is best used on a dish of house-made chorizo over a smear of mushroom paste, the combination of the three disparate ingredients somehow coming together to taste like washed-rind cheese. Sea urchin appears in that sake shooter, over foie gras and in the kind of insane ode to lowbrow sushi rolls that the staff refers to as “dirty rice.” The dish is made up of a base of sushi rice topped with torched sea urchin, nubs of pork belly, diced cucumber and tons of salmon roe. Is it brilliant or an abomination? It’s hard to tell, honestly. It tastes good the way salacious sushi rolls taste good, and it leaves you feeling the same kind of queasy.

In case you missed the connotation, the “scratch” in the name refers to the fact that Lee and his band of cooks make everything, including bread and charcuterie and four kinds of cheese. Few chefs in America have a similar self-made cheese program, and some of Scratch Bar’s cheeses are pretty good. The cheddar tasted a little past its prime, but the ash-covered soft goat-and-cow cheese was tasty.

If you can get past the undercurrent of machismo that permeates Scratch Bar, there’s something genuinely heartwarming about the enthusiasm and sense of adventure that drive this troupe of cooks. I mean, they’re *making their own cheese*, for chrissake. When Portela delivers a scallop dish with apples, apple gelée and “apple jus” and describes it as “a reducency of apple,” it’s hard to know whether to slap him or hug him.

But the truth is, you can’t just decide “I’m gonna make charcuterie!” and look at a book and play around and get it right. For many kinds of culinary techniques, there really is no substitute for learning under a master, for being an apprentice rather than a wunderkind. This shows itself most obviously with disciplines.
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that are entire professions: the aforementioned charcuterie (which in the case of Scratch Bar is mainly smoked or cured pork that turns out far too salty and slick in all the wrong ways), as well as baking (the bun on the Scratch Bar burger is supposed to be brioche but is dense and almost crumbly and overwhelms the other ingredients).

Lee obviously revels in the passion of his chosen career path, but I wonder if he’s considered how he might register to a chef who has dedicated her life to charcuterie or baking: He appears to be someone who believes that training in those fields is optional, that some chefs can succeed through the sheer force of talent. Talent can get you far, but it can’t get you the precision that comes from years of training, and in this way Lee does a disservice to the very profession he aims to glorify.

Scratch Bar is all a little bizarre, as if you’ve stumbled into a community theater production putting on a play called Restaurant. (Or, perhaps, Cook.) The earnest enthusiasm it takes to launch a passion project like a community theater production or a hyper-modern restaurant can be charming. Scratch Bar goes so far as to make its own mustard, and when Lee steers away from his unfortunate penchant for sugar he comes up with flavors that are confounding and exciting.

But Lee eventually will need to learn the lesson he seems to have spent a lot of time deflecting: Being a chef is hard, and not just because of the hours, the cuts and burns and the tough-guy environment. It takes more than just talent and chutzpah. It takes training and time and the ability to recognize when people “not understanding” your food is actually just the food not tasting very good.

There’s plenty that tastes good at Scratch Bar. There’s inventiveness and excitement and food that could only come from the freedom Lee has given himself and his crew. But there’s also a lot that’s the result of someone so wrapped up in boundary-pushing that he can’t taste the flaws in his own cooking.

There are many chefs who have managed to push food forward. I doubt many of those greats would credit their success to doing whatever the fuck they want. For decades, the market for California sparkling wine has been dominated by a handful of major players: Mumm Napa, Domaine Chandon, Roederer, Schramsberg. Many were founded by French Champagne makers, who brought deep pockets and generations of knowledge to bear on one of winemaking’s most complex challenges. Making sparkling wine is not for the faint-hearted; it requires special equipment and several additional steps in the production process, and the final product is taxed at a higher rate than still wine, cutting into already-thin profit margins. Even for experienced winemakers, it’s an intimidating market to compete in.

“I just think we as winemakers maybe weren’t ready to go down that path,” says Tyler Elwell, assistant winemaker at Tablas Creek in Paso Robles, who just released his first sparkling wine under his own label, Halcyon. “I don’t know if it’s because you need other equipment...”
or that it’s labor-intensive. Or if we were just like, ‘Shit, we’re not gonna be able to make Champagne. So we might as well just buy that and make something else.’”

But over the past five years, that’s started to change. More and more California winemakers are adding bubbles to their product line, often experimenting with different grapes, styles and production techniques to set themselves apart. Many of the best new sparkling wines are coming from small producers on the Central Coast, just a few hours north of L.A.

Elwell, 34, is emblematic of this new wave of bubble-makers. Halcyon, the boutique winery he founded two years ago with his fiancée, Kim Schultz, focuses exclusively on cabernet franc, a red French varietal best known as a Bordeaux blending grape. Inspired by cab francs he tasted in France’s Loire Valley, where the grape is used on its own to make everything from earthy white wines to bright, acidic sparkling rosés, he and Schultz decided to release their own sparkling rosé of cab franc — something virtually unheard of in the California market but, with a minuscule production run of 25 cases, an experiment Elwell felt he could afford to make.

“We’ve never really liked rules very much, and we don’t feel like we’re pigeonholed into anything,” Elwell remembers thinking. “So why not make sparkling? This could be fun.”

Like most winemakers, he made his bubbles using the traditional méthode champenoise, named after the world’s most famous sparkling-wine region. (Even if you use the Champagne method, however, you’re not allowed to call your product “Champagne” — just as all sparkling wines but also imparting your product “Champagne”; just as all sparkling wines but also imparting your final product cloudier and drier than their flat counterparts, sparkling wines without a dosage tend to be much drier than their flat counterparts, sparkling wines without a dosage tend to be much drier than their flat counterparts, sparkling wines without a dosage tend to be much drier than their flat counterparts), Elwell left the lees in the bottle, making his final product cloudier and drier than most sparkling wines but also imparting a “kind of a yeasty, bread-y quality.”

One of the few places consumers can buy Halcyon’s limited-production wines is at the Garagiste Festival, a traveling event held at the Garagiste Festival co-founder Stewart McLennan. Both Elwell and Kessler nodded in agreement when Yost described the growth of Central Coast sparkling wine as an “explosion.”

“It’s exciting to see, because we have some great grapes down here,” Yost said. By his count, there are now more than 20 winemakers doing sparkling in Santa Barbara County alone, with many more in San Luis Obispo and Monterey counties farther north.

Many of these wineries, such as Riverbench, Sanford, Sea Spray and Kessler-Haak, are making more traditional, Champagne-style bubbles, which are made from pinot noir and chardonnay grapes. But many others, like Elwell, are thinking outside the box. Palmina, a Lompoc winery specializing in Italian varietals, is making a red sparkling from the barbera grape and a white from malvasia bianca. Solminer, in Los Olivos, has experimented with a sparkling, dosage-free syrah. Even Yost, who began with pinot noir and chardonnay, added a pinot blanc bubbly to his repertoire in 2010, starting with just 25 cases and ramping up to 150 today. “I’m actually contemplating making a little bit more, because there’s become a little bit of a following for this wine. Who would thunk?” he says with a laugh.

One thing that has made sparkling-wine production easier for smaller winemakers has been the arrival of companies like Rack and Riddle, a “custom crush” production facility in Sonoma County, which will handle every step of the secondary fermentation process, from the labor-intensive task of “riddling” the bottles (painstakingly turning each bottle a few degrees every day, so that the lees all collect in the neck) to disgorging to dosage. Equipment and labor costs for all these extra steps can add up, so it’s attractive to outsource them to a specialist — but the tradeoff, Yost says, can be a loss of control over your final product.

“That’s why we do everything in-house,” Yost says. He jokingly refers to Flying Goat’s warehouse production facility in Lompoc as “an homage to Home Depot,” with homemade riddling racks and other “rather rudimentary” equipment. But at the end of the day, he, like Elwell, prefers the more low-tech, hands-on approach.

“I’ve touched probably each one of these bottles several times,” he says during the seminar, as volunteers pour tastes of his sparkling, deliciously citrussy pinot blanc for the audience. “It’s really a labor of love for us.”

—Andy Hermann
Why Islands Burgers Has the Greatest Happy Hour in Existence

It’s a scientific fact: America is one of the most overworked countries on Earth. Sure, most of us might not be hauling blocks of granite like ancient Egyptians, but the physical and mental toll caused by sitting eight hours in front of a computer is very real. That might explain our country’s fascination with the concept of happy hour. I mean, who doesn’t love happy hour? Despite what you may have been told, happy hours aren’t just about attracting customers with potential savings. They also offer a subsidized version of what sociologists refer to as the “third place,” an area where we can decompress and socialize and cushion the stark transition between a soul-crushing job and an eternally messy apartment. Maybe Starbucks is your preferred third space, or that goddamn CrossFit gym.

For me, that special place is Islands Fine Burgers & Drinks, the Southern California–based, Hawaiian-themed restaurant chain known for bottomless fry baskets and frosty beer mugs. Yes, Islands’ entire image is unabashedly kitschy, but what wonderful and rejuvenating kitsch it is — a culturally homogenized tiki bar where surfboards serve as tables, Jimmy Buffet is on the speakers and palm fronds drape over the bar. It’s like a miniature, clichéd Hawaiian vacation.

And I would gladly argue that the burgers, even the one sluiced with teriyaki sauce and topped with a too-thick slice of pineapple, are much better than the ones at most casual restaurants. But that’s beside the point. You go to Islands for the happy hour, which usually runs from 4 to 7 p.m. on weekdays, and you order two things: the cheddar fries ($4) and the “hand-shaken” strawberry daiquiri ($5). There are many items on the happy hour menu, including serviceable Hawaiian sliders, a chicken quesadilla with sour cream, Buffalo wings and a standard-issue plate of nachos. As for the cheddar fries, it’s probably unnecessary to extoll the glutinous virtues of a heap of fries smothered in melted cheese and green onions and served with a side of that creamy, diner-style ranch dressing.

I was originally more skeptical of the strawberry daiquiri and its cheaper sibling, the mai tai, which will set you back $4 during happy hour. The daiquiri and the mai tai are two essential, rum-based cocktails, each with a long and glorious history, and if you’ve never tried a version crafted by a true, professional bartender (the kind in a button-up vest), go do that first. But afterward, you should try the ones at Islands, because they’re delicious in a stumbling-down-the-French-Quarter-during-Mardi-Gras way. Their strawberry daiquiri gets extra points despite its higher price for: 1) including fruit, and 2) being “hand-shaken,” which sounds like pointless jargon but actually makes for a delightfully frothy drink.

If you’re not into cocktails, even really cheap ones (seriously, where can you find a cocktail for less than $5?), there is discount beer, too. There are even IPAs if you want them, but honestly, if you’re drinking beer out of a frozen mug, there’s no shame in Coors Light.

Of course, as much as the bargains at Islands’ happy hour draw the big crowds, that’s not the full scope of its appeal. Neither fully a bar nor a restaurant, Islands exists in the low-key gray area between the two — it’s just chill, brah. I’ve never seen a fight break out at Islands, or even an argument, and surely that limited anecdotal evidence is proof enough: No happy hour is more chill than the Islands happy hour. Islands founder Tony DeGrazier, a former G.I. who dreamt of capturing the vibe of a 1960s Hawaiian beach bar, expanded his original concept in 1982 into 57 locations across California, Hawaii, Nevada and Arizona. Like him, I have found bliss in the sublime tropical fantasy, no matter if it is totally fake. —Garrett Snyder
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... into one that presents adventurous dances from a dance-oriented service organization. The DRC continues its transformation from a dance-oriented service organization into one that presents adventurous performances. The DRC continues its transformation from a dance-oriented service organization into one that presents adventurous performances. Bootleg Theater, 2220 Beverly Blvd., Westlake; Fri.-Sat., March 11-12, 7:30-9 p.m.; $20 in advance, $25 at door. bootlegtheater.com. —Ann Haskins

COMEDY

Catch Some Rayburn
One of the L.A. Gay and Lesbian Center’s most popular events returns for another round of retro shenanigans. The MisMatch Game parodies the 1970s CBS game show Match Game, which featured contestants attempting to match answers given by celebrities. Standing in for Gene Rayburn, creator Dennis Hensley hosts a panel of dozen TV and Internet actors impersonating past and present stars, everyone from Jack Nicholson to Pamela Anderson to Danny Bonaduce. Los Angeles LGBT Center, Renberg Theatre, 1125 N. McCadden Place, Hollywood; Fri.-Sat., March 11-12, 8 p.m.; $15. (323) 993-7400, laqbtcenter.org. —Siran Babayan

TELEVISION

Chat TV
At PaleyFest 2016, you can spend a week hanging out with a crooked lawyer, a female superhero, zombies and a bunch of nerds. The Paley Center’s biggest event of the year is full of panels featuring the casts and creators of some of TV and the Internet’s most popular comedies and dramas: Empire (March 11), Better Call Saul (March 12), Scream Queens (March 12), black-ish (March 13), Supergirl (March 13), Scandal (March 15), The Big Bang Theory (March 16), Difficult People (March 18), Fear the Walking Dead (March 19) and American Horror Story: Hotel (March 20). The fest’s highlight is “An Evening With Dick Wolf” (March 19), a salute to the TV producer featuring actors from Law & Order: Special Victims Unit, Chicago Fire, Chicago P.D. and Chicago Med. Dolby Theatre, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Fri.-Sun., March 11-20, times vary; $30-$80. (310) 786-1000, paleycenter.org. —Siran Babayan

MUSIC

Mac and Me
In title alone, Taylor Mac’s 24-Decade History of Popular Music sounds like a preposterously ambitious, even presumptuous undertaking. But Mac — whom you could call a theater artist, although the term seems a restrictive way to describe this wacky pop historian/court jester/trilling songbird/guardian angel — makes clear that his rigorously researched take on the past 240 years of American history is a highly subjective one, too. More to the point, Mac’s a wonderfully engaging performer whose interpretive wizardry and fascinating discoveries can make you laugh and move you to tears. UCLA Royce Hall, 3400 Royce Drive, Westwood; Sat., March 12, 8 p.m.; $19-$49; $15 UCLA students, $25 UCLA faculty & staff. (310) 825-2101, cap.ucla.edu. —John Payne

COMEDY

Gilded Lily
Lily Tomlin has experienced a nice career resurgence lately. The comedic legend received Golden Globe nominations for her performances in both 2015 dramedy Grace and Frankie and Netflix’s excellent series Grace and Frankie. Co-created by Friends producer Marta Kauffman, Grace and Frankie stars Tomlin and Jane Fonda as aging women whose husbands divorce them after coming out as gay. Tomlin returns to her stand-up roots for An Evening With Lily Tomlin, a one-woman show that mixes new and older material, resurrecting some of her Laugh-In characters — including Ernestine, the sassy telephone operator, and Edith Ann, the philosophical little girl in the big chair — which have endured for 40-plus years. Carpenter Performing Arts...
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FOOD AND DRINK

Pig Out
There’s no porkier food festival in the country than Cochon 555, a butchery-based culinary competition in which five local chefs prepare more than three dozen dishes made from the nose-to-tail cuts of heritage-breeder pigs. This year’s L.A. event features a slew of big-name chefs: Carlos Salgado of Taco Maria, Bruce Kalman of Union, Jason Neroni of Rose Café, Brooke Williamson of the Tripel and 2015 champ Walter Manzke of République. In case you’ve still got room, there’s also a whiskey bar, beer bar, tartare bar, ramen bar, oyster bar and cheese bar, among other surprises. Gluttony awaits.

Viceroy Santa Monica, 1819 Ocean Ave., Santa Monica; Sun., March 13, 5 p.m.; $125 general admission, $200 VIP. (678) PIG-LUVN, cochon555.com/2016-tour/los-angeles.
—Garrett Snyder

BOOKS

A Lonely Hunter
In his new memoir, Stories I Tell Myself: Growing Up With Hunter S. Thompson, Juan F. Thompson writes about his tumultuous relationship with his famous dad, both as a legendary gonzo journalist and author and as an alcoholic, drug-addicted and violent father. In the book, Thompson’s memories begin at age 2 and end with his father’s suicide in 2005, which was followed by the funeral where the ashes were shot out of a cannon. Along the way, the younger Thompson describes his childhood on a farm outside of Aspen, his parents’ divorce and the writing of his father’s most notable works, including Hell’s Angels: The Strange and Terrible Saga of the Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas and Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail ’72. Book Soup, 8818 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood; Sun., March 13, 4 p.m.; free, book is $26.95. (310) 659-3110, booksoup.com.
—Siran Babayan

CONS

A Perfect Circle
Depending on how you look at the world, a hula hoop is either a dumb plastic toy that’ll make you throw out your back or a new-agey way to exercise and dance and be weird. People in the latter camp gather in Echo Park for Hoopurbia, a weeklong event for hooping enthusiasts, which features classes, performances, competitions, flash mobs and things called “hoop jams.” The extravaganza, which originated in Berlin, comes to L.A. for the first time. Put on some Spandex, grab a hoop for each limb and get your hip swivel on.

Echo Park Recreation Center, 1632 Bellevue Ave., Echo Park; Mon.-Sun., March 14-20; $99-$649. (213) 378-5746, hoopurbia.com.
—Gwynedd Stuart

COMEDY

Get Real Estate
Reality TV makes everything look cutthroat — dating, dieting, dancing, cupcakes. Among the first series on Seeso, NBC’s new streaming comedy channel (where it premieres March 17), is Bajillion Dollar Properties, a parody of TV shows such as...
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Bravo’s Million Dollar Listing. Produced by Kulap Vilaysack, Thomas Lennon, Robert Ben Garant, Scott Aukerman and David Jargowsky, the spoof is set at a high-end, dog-eat-dog real estate firm, and will feature guest spots by Patton Oswalt, “Weird Al” Yankovic, Nick Kroll, Adam Scott, Gillian Jacobs and Jason Mantzoukas. Before its March 17 premiere, UCB introduces cast members Paul F. Tompkins, Drew Tarver, Ryan Gaul, Tim Baltz, Dan Ahdoot, Mandell Maughan and Tawny Newsome, who’ll perform in this improv show alongside actual broker Jamie Blake Sher for some real-estate realness.

UCB Sunset, 5419 W. Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Tue., March 15, 8:30 p.m.; $5. (323) 908-8702, sunset.ucbtheatre.com. —Siran Babayan

FILM

One Good Kern
You couldn’t have a series titled Underground USA: Indie Cinema of the ’80s without Richard Kern. Tonight the director appears in person for a retrospective of his cinematic and photographic works, with a Q&A moderated by Apology magazine editor Jesse Pearson. Kern rose to prominence making low-budget 8mm films such as Fingered, Serial Killers and Submit to Me Now alongside like-minded contemporaries such as Nick Zedd and Scott and Beth B. Kern still keeps his transgressive gaze fixated on the world of images, so expect to get an earful about eyefuls.

Cinefamily, 611 N. Fairfax Ave., Beverly Grove; Wed., March 16, 8 p.m.; $12. (323) 655-2510, cinefamily.org. —David Cotner

MOVIES AND MUSIC

Chariots of Fire
While Sting’s been off having tantric sex or whatever, fellow founding member of The Police Stewart Copeland has been hard at work composing an original score for the film Ben-Hur: A Tale of the Christ. That’s not the Technicolor Charlton Heston version but rather the 1925 silent version, which has a chariot scene that might be even more iconic than the one in the film that succeeded it. The score will be performed by the Pacific Symphony, with Copeland himself on percussion.

Valley Performing Arts Center, 18111 Northhoff St., Northridge; Wed., March 16, 8 p.m.; $50-$99. (818) 677-3000, valleyperformingartscenter.org. —Gwynedd Stuart

MUSIC

Head Games
What, exactly, goes on inside the brain when a musician creates something new? It’s more than just a fanciful, hypothetical question to L.A. Chamber Orchestra concertmaster Margaret Batjer. As part of LACO’s Westside Connections series, which this year focuses on the intersection of music and neuroscience, host Batjer tonight asks if there’s a doctor in the house — in particular, Dr. Charles Limb, head of the otology/neurotology department at UC San Francisco. As the chamber ensemble performs selections by Beethoven and Smetana, the good doctor will explain how these composers continued to make stirring music even after they went deaf. Intriguingly, Limb also will chart changes in the brain in real time as LACO music director Jeffrey Kahane takes flight and improvises on piano.

Moss Theater, 3131 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica; Thu., March 17, 7:30 p.m.; $65 & up. (213) 622-7001, laco.org. —Falling James

ST. PATRICK’S DAY

Top o’ the Afternoon
Need an excuse to leave work in the middle of the day to go drink beer? We didn’t think so, but anyway, Pershing Square’s midday St. Patrick’s Day Celebration serves to legitimize the decision. The celebration of our drunkest holiday starts with a parade that travels south on Hill Street, west on Seventeenth and then north on Olive to Pershing Square, where Irish cover bands, food trucks and a beer garden await revelers in “Kiss Me I’m Irish” T-shirts. Or you could just finish out the day at work. Whatever.

Pershing Square, 532 S. Olive St., downtown; Thu., March 17, 11 a.m.; free. laparks.org/pershingsquare. —Gwynedd Stuart

COMEDY

Irish Guys Are Smiling
Gabe Greenspan and Ryan Bowers of Idiot Chimney invite you to celebrate the one holiday that encourages alcoholism at A Very Idiot Chimney St. Patrick’s Day Show. The two sketch players, who perform monthly at iO West, join fellow sketch group Sasquatch Comedy and guitar-playing come-

See the full list of free events at bookitloveitLA.com.
The main purpose of this study is to evaluate how well a two-drug combination of study drugs will suppress HIV at 24 weeks after starting treatment.

The study will also look at the safety and tolerability of this study drug combination, and factors that may affect how well it works in different individuals.

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- No active hepatitis B infection
Holly, the transgressive, tangerine-haired rock-er protagonist of *Bed*, Sheyla Callaghan’s world-premiere play now onstage at Echo Theater Company, is a rare stage creature. More than once, other characters describe her as feral. Played by Kate Morgan Chadwick, she first enters on all fours, crawling as if through a dreamscape, clawing her way through strewn trash, rumpled clothes and wadded-up song drafts. She boasts all femininity’s sensuality but none of its meekness. She seldom walks but slogsgers and sways, whether she’s wailing on her guitar or throwing a one-night stand to burn [her husband] down, going to burn her marriage down, going to burn everything down.

In other words, a perfect fit for Echo. Over its two-decade history, the troupe has presented more than 40 world premiers by both established and emerging playwrights, often pairing tricky subject matter with a fierce respect for writers. That approach has paid creative dividends: In 2014, the company finally put down roots at the Atwater Village Theatre Complex and promptly won five Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards for its inaugural season there, including nods for playwrighting, direction and production. The same year, *L.A. Weekly* dubbed the group “Best Bet for Ballsy Original Plays.”

This year marks something of a turning point. *Bed* launched the company’s most ambitious mainstage season to date, a lineup that includes four world premiers and one West Coast premiere. Perhaps even more remarkable is how prominently women figure in the mix: Holly is the first in a string of female protagonists — many of them conceived by female playwrights — appearing on Echo’s stage this year.

“I think for a theater like Echo — for any theater — to be really interested in the voices of unapologetic women is an extraordinary thing,” says Mary Laws, whose *Blueberry Toast* hits Echo’s stage in September. The savage farce, “a chaotic conversation about what the American Dream looks like,” draws on the 29-year-old’s upbringing in a master-planned community.

The emphasis on women wasn’t by design, says Jennifer Chambers, director of *Bed* and Echo’s co-associate artistic director alongside Tara Karsian. “It’s always been about the writer and doing plays that are evocative and structurally exciting and well-written.” But, she adds, “All the plays in this season definitely have a sense of boldness about them. All of them feel very exciting, like we haven’t heard this kind of voice before.”

Following *Bed*, Barbara Tarbuck will put up *Stopping By*, a Wednesday-night solo show that recounts a spontaneous journey to Burning Man. And in April, there’s the West Coast premiere of *Dry Land*, a naturalistic drama by 22-year-old Yale graduate Ruby Rae Spiegel, about two girls in a high school locker room trying to cope with an unwanted pregnancy.

Even this season’s two works by male playwrights give unusual primacy to women. The lead role in *Captein of the Bible Quiz Team*, a site-specific world premiere by Tom Jacobson, was originally written for a man, but the part of a Lutheran pastor will be portrayed by both sexes when the show comes to area churches in May. In July, Erik Patterson’s *One of the Nice Ones* will bring back Rebecca Gray, who played the anti-heroine Miss Keever in Echo’s 2014 pedophilia scorchers *Firemen*.

Both men’s scripts are products of Echo’s elite writers lab, now in its second year; Laws is also a member. Run by associate artistic director Chambers, the monthly workshop brings together a half-dozen cherry-picked playwrights and runs the length of the school year. The class is Echo’s first stop for recruiting quality scripts; artists who don’t land an in-house job in L.A. and called up her mentor for help finding “a theater family” out west. Ruhl told her to track down Fields. Laws sent him a couple scripts, including *Blueberry Toast*.

Reading the absurdist tale of “a suburbanfrau driven mad,” Fields says he was captivated by how Laws rendered “the insanity that percolates beneath the calm suburban exterior of America.” He thought, “Who is this? What is this? OK, I’ve got to find this woman.”

Echo did an in-company reading, followed by a public reading in summer 2015. During the rehearsal process for the latter, Fields asked about the script’s ending, which Laws admits “no one seems to love” (for reasons we won’t disclose here). In her opinion, the play feels “pretty baked” as it is, but Laws says the rehearsal process will be an opportunity to try out rewrites in a safe space with objective collaborators. “It takes a village to raise a play. Echo is a really incredible laboratory environment with people who are able to help bring that play into its best and smartest adult state of being.”

But if any offering this season unsettles audiences, chances are it’s Spiegel’s *Dry Land*. Already the recipient of rave reviews in New York, the play is singular not only for its direct approach to subject matter some may find upsetting but also its nuanced portrayal of a complex alliance between two young women feeling their way into adulthood.

“I’ve always been attracted to stories about female friendship,” Spiegel says, noting, “There has been a long history of women helping other women in times of bodily crisis.” But, she adds, “Abortion is politicized in our country in a way that often makes it feel abstract. It felt important to me to create a specific and visceral depiction of a young woman struggling to abort her pregnancy to push against the vagueness of popular representation.”

The graphic result “may not be for everyone,” acknowledges Fields, who has two teenage daughters close to the age of the characters. But “As uncomfortable as it is, [Spiegel] earns it, and then she deals with it. She deals with it in a wonderful way.”

So does tackling a solid slate of financially risky new plays ever give Fields pause, especially when the season’s only field-tested show turns on some wrenching scenes? “The board yells at me,” he says. “But you do the plays that speak to you. You do the plays you have to do.”

That sentiment has served as the company’s north star and will continue to do so, barring the failure of the pending lawsuit against Actors’ Equity to block changes to the 99-seat plan, which Fields says would be a “theater killer.”

“At Echo, we want to look beyond the surface. We like to give life to complex characters,” Chambers says. “I like that people come to our shows craving that.”
**MEET MISS FORTUNE**

Lauren Weedman shows self-indulgent millennials how memoirs should be done with her second

**BY PAUL TEETOR**

There’s been a tidal wave of early- and midlife memoirs recently, most of them self-indulgent, self-referential and occasionally even wildly narcissistic. But Lauren Weedman’s *Miss Fortune* is like a pearl that washed up on a beach full of seaweed, tar balls and plastic six-pack holders. It’s a jewel sparkling amid a landscape of literary pollution.

Imagine Hannah Horvath, Lena Dunham’s character on *Girls*, has grown up into a middle-aged single mom telling her crazy life story to a random guy she met five minutes ago at a Santa Monica dive bar. That’s a fair approximation of Weedman’s hilarious, seen-it-all voice as she narrates her second showbiz memoir. Once a *Daily Show* correspondent (she was fired, she says, for treating host Jon Stewart like a regular guy and not a king), Weedman played Horny Patty to great acclaim on HBO’s *Hung* and is probably best known for her role as Doris on another HBO show, *Looking*. But career highlights don’t do justice to her funny, interesting life story.

*Miss Fortune* (Penguin Random House, $16) fills in all the delicious details. Reading it is like hanging out with that quirky, artsy bohemian girl you had a crush on in high school but didn’t pursue as a friend or lover because she seemed like such a drama queen that, back then, you couldn’t have handled her shit-storm of a life. But now that you’re her adult friend, listening to her tell too-wild-to-be-made-up stories about her wonderful, horrible life is mostly just a lot of fun.

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One of the most appealing parts about Weedman’s inspired balance of comedy and tragedy is the just-one-of-the-guys approach she takes when discussing her own sexuality. There’s no coyness here, no blushing maiden posing demurely as she fights her way through the never-ending gender war. Like when she joins a theater troupe in Holland and learns her contract forbids dating within the group: “I’m free now to be my best creative self and free to pretend that secretly everyone wants to have sex with me but they’re contractually bound not to.”

Such carnal frankness comes naturally. “I have always been candid about sex,” Weedman said in an interview. “I suppose to a degree that harms me in terms of dating, but that’s who I am.”

The book’s main plot point — Weedman filing for divorce from her second husband when she discovers he’s bragging the baby-sitter — is a Hollywood cliché at this point, but Weedman insists it’s true. Names were changed to protect the not-so-innocent, but the whole damn kaleidoscope of a story is bona fide, starting with her adoption by an Indiana family, her introduction into showbiz by a gay high school music teacher who died of AIDS, her long slog through the showbiz minor leagues in Europe and Seattle, and her eventual call-up to the big leagues in L.A.

Mr. Critzer, the high school choral teacher, emerges as a tragic figure, a talented musician and closeted gay man who, because it was the Midwest in the 1980s, had to hide his real life and real self from his devoted students. Weedman pays tribute to him by using his real name.

The long sections on Mr. Critzer reveal a deeper truth about Weedman: She has always had an affinity for gay guys, even the ones she dated in high school before they realized they were gay. “I have always felt like an outsider. I think that’s the root of the gay connection,” she says. “The gay boys tend to be artsy and weird, and so much more fun than other people. I’m definitely a fag hag.”

Apart from serious chapters about Mr. Critzer and her relationship with her birth mother, the book aims for laughs over tears. In more ways than one, her recollections nail the L.A. experience, from living in a run-down, rent-controlled Santa Monica apartment to taking her son to the playground every day: “The Euro moms dominate the sandbox, the Santa Monica moms are in the west corner under the oak tree, and the Spanish-speaking nannies in hospital scrubs (which I really hope was their idea and not their employers’) are sitting on the benches.”

Though she’s only 47, *Miss Fortune* is Weedman’s second memoir, following 2007’s *A Woman Trapped in a Woman’s Body: Tales From a Life of Cringe*. She’s already succeeded in showing millennials how memoir writing is done — with lots of well-digested experiences, an original voice and a scathing wit — but let’s hope we don’t have to wait another nine years for volume three.

Weedman will be at Book Soup on Tuesday, March 15, at 7:30 p.m. Info at booksoup.com.
TODAY'S PICKS

**The Art of Workers Working**

**Also, Over-Stressed Chiffon and an Art Gallery You Can Only Visit by Phone**

**BY CATHERINE WAGLEY**

This week, artists and academics get together to grapple with immigration, and a fish refuses to be filleted.

**Running from climate change**

Artist Regina José Galindo once moved her small family into a holding cell, the same kind that privately owned Texas prisons use to detain families of immigrants. She also carried a basin of human blood, stepping in it periodically and leaving bloody footprints in her path in protest of the presidential candidacy of former Guatemalan dictator Efraín Ríos Montt. She is among the artists scheduled to perform at REDCAT at the start of a two-day seminar on art and immigration. On day two, Nonny de la Peña — who’s known for her 16mm footage to understand workers’ motions. Dahlberg’s film screens at LACE, as part of “A new job to unwork at,” about artists and labor. 6522 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Wed., March 16, 6:30 p.m. (323) 957-1777, welcometolace.org.

**Dial-up therapy**

When you call into 323 Projects, a gallery in the form of a voicemail service, you’ll be greeted by High Priestess No. 34, who would like “to acknowledge how terrible you are” and invite you to “embark on a journey of love, healing and a really good bowel movement.” Then you’re off, listening to monologues about sex parties in California (“They do that out there”) and about the ridiculousness of soul mates. Why does your soul need a mate? Does it need someone to pick it up at the airport? The show, put together by artist Michelle Chong, includes only teachings by women artists. The line is open 24/7. (323) 843-4652, 323projects.com.

**Fish on the loose**

Kelly Kleinschrodt’s video *water cut* plays on a loop in “Siren,” the group show at 5 Car Garage. In it, a fish escapes during the filleting process, flapping away with only a third of a body, leaving blood in its wake. It’s like a bad dream — squirm-inducing yet transfixed. Near Kleinschrodt’s video installation, Adrienne Adar has put together her sonic succulents. When you stroke the plants’ needles, sound emanates. Near a back wall, Stephanie Taylor’s sculpture drones “mommy” when activated by remote control, and this is only a sampling of the art in the show. If all the works are in use at once, the experience can easily veer toward sensory overload. But there’s something great about a show that offers too much. Santa Monica, address available upon request; through March 18. (310) 457-6895, enmagrayhq.com.

**Silly, heavy sketchbooks**

For “High Bottom,” her show at REDCAT, artist Kajsa Dahlberg made drawings in wirebound notebooks, encased the notebooks in resin, then attached the plasticized reams of paper to colored chiffon. The effect is quirky and childish, but the my-kid-could-do-that looseness is deceptive (as it usually is). Physically and psychologically loaded objects — the drawings include mantras and dangle objects — the drawings include mantras and depict tangled infrastructure — dangle from something delicate, the chiffon hold-

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IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK ...
A traumatized family has an interesting houseguest in The Mongoose

BY BILL RADEN

There’s a wickedly disarming ratiocination at work in The Mongoose, Will Arbery’s sprawling, crackingly funny black comedy, which is making its world premiere at Road Theatre Company. It’s the kind of disorienting, off-kilter logic that one typically experiences in dreams, in-patient psychiatric facilities or in any pathological relationship where unpleasant truths are couched in the kind of everyday evasions that, unchecked by outside reality, can coalesce into a hermetic mythology of surreal proportion.

And relationships don’t get more evasive or pathological than in the haplessly dysfunctional middle-class family whose stability is already in free-fall at the start of Arbery’s story. That’s because Leanne (Blaire Chandler), the family’s depressive matriarch, has walked out of her marriage and abandoned her teen brood to the care of Cole (Dirk Etchison), their ineffectual and psychically shell-shocked father, who wanly explains the absence by saying she’s “off selling knives in New Orleans.”

With Leanne away and the passive Cole incapable of parenting, the job of maintaining the fractious clan’s equilibrium falls to levelheaded but overwhelmed second daughter, Kay Bailey (Arielle Fodor). But that’s not so easy when it comes to controlling an overweight and violent sociopath of a brother, Joe (the fine Kevin Shipp), and the peculiarly maladjusted sister Maddy (an antic Hannah Mae Sturges), who turns for maternal sustenance to Jeff, the talking (but never seen or heard) 300-year-old Indian mongoose living inside the house’s walls.

As Leanne first withdraws from the home and then disappears altogether, the play quickly transits from commonplace family strife to increasingly grotesque and preposterous fantasy.

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The New York Times

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Rosanne Cash with John Leventhal

SAT / MAR 12 / 7:30PM

Musician Rosanne Cash and her husband, producer-guitarist John Leventhal, take audiences on a soulful journey to the South with an evening of music from their 2014 triple Grammy Award–winning release Speaking in Tongues.

LUCIANA SOUZA’S
Speaking in Tongues
featuring Lionel Loueke, Grégoire Maret, Massimo Biolcati, Kendrick Scott

FRI / MAR 18 / 7:30PM

The Grammy Award winner returns with guitarist Lionel Loueke, harmonica virtuoso Grégoire Maret, bassist Massimo Biolcati, and drummer Kendrick Scott. This is World Music at its best—no frontiers, just infectious music that reaches the soul.

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SMELLS LIKE TEEN ANGST

Housed in the Autry Museum, Native Voices is dedicated to portraying the experience of Native Americans. In his family melodrama They Don’t Talk Back, playwright Frank Henry Kaash Katasse does a pretty good job of it.

It’s 1994. Nick (Roman Zaragoza) is your typically disaffected teen when he arrives at the home of his grandparents, Paul Sr. (Duane Minard) and Linda (Jennifer Bobiwash), in a small village off the Alaskan coast. Cash-strapped but happy, the couple already share their domicile with another grandson, Edward (Kholan Studi), who sleeps on one of two couches in their shabby, cluttered living room. When Nick, just to be mean, lays claim to it — further threatening his cousin with a beating if he “touches his stuff” — the genial Eddie just smiles, takes a beat and shrugs.

Directed by Randy Reinholz, Katasse’s play builds around the ethical learning curve for Nick, whose mom is a junkie and whose dad is AWOL when it comes to parenting. The disrespectful swagger he affects as protective armor vanishes soon enough after his grandpa applies a firm hand to whip him into shape. Taught by his own grandparent to respect nature, his culture and himself, Paul Sr. is the kind of strict, just and ultimately forgiving patriarch the world needs more of. A stickler with the boys, he’s putty in the hands of his sweet and sunny wife.

Though the play features the weepy earmarks of an after-school special, the writing is fairly solid and Katasse’s portrayal of a loving elderly couple is a touching one.

Composer Ed Littlefield’s compositions, designer John Novi’s sound (especially of the rain) and production designer Tom Ontiveros’ collage of visuals helps conjure the sense of a centuries-old culture steeped in the wild.

Some of the performances, however, need refining. Bobiwash is well cast as the loving Linda, but when she clutches her side and winces to show pain, it looks pretty stagey. Minard and Zaragoza likewise depict their characters too broadly. By contrast, Studi’s agile and amiable Edward lights up the stage; he’s a pleasure to watch from first to last. And Brian Pagaa Wescott is effective as Nick’s unstable, itinerant father, who drifts in and out again.

Through it all, director Michael Fodor is superb as Kay Bailey, the play’s bedrock of common-sense reality, whose stubborn disbelief is eventually unmasked as merely another manifestation of the family’s collective trauma. And Michael Dempsey provides hilarious support as Dave, Cole’s newfound friend, who may or may not have triggered the crisis in the first place.

Throughout it all, director Michael Thomas-Viglar’s masterful staging (on Chad Dellinger’s seamy kitchen and living-room set) keeps all of the story’s roccoco ironies in play while Joseph “Sloe” Sławinski’s sound and Derrick McDaniel’s lights provide effective transitions and moody counterpoint.

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NEW TO L.A.!
THE FINAL FINAL GIRL

Mary Elizabeth Winstead outfoxes the end times in *10 Cloverfield Lane*

BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL

In one key way, the kinda-maybe sequel to *Cloverfield Lane* might be the purest example yet of the J.J. Abrams house style. Directed by first-timer Dan Trachtenberg but produced by Abrams (*Super 8, Lost, Alias, Cloverfield, etc.*), the thriller is yet another of the fannish wunderbrand’s mystery boxes, a genre tease whose marketing makes a secret as urgent as a twist. But of its very premise. The innovation this time? Now the characters are actually inside the mystery box itself, either by proud choice (John Goodman’s whackiness survivalist), desperate fear (John Gallagher Jr.’s even more whiskery builder bro) or terrifying, mysterious happenstance (Mary Elizabeth Winstead). That’s no spoiler. Some three minutes in, after opening titles that give jaw-ringing new meaning to the term “smash cut,” Winstead’s Michelle awakens in a cinderblock cell, cuffed to a cot and bleeding from a head wound. But we immediately glean how resourceful she is, as she’s wearing the official uniform of intrepid young women in genre movies everywhere: a tight white tank top. We also can tell because Winstead is adept at puzzling things out as we watch, letting us see her eyes take in each clue around her, and suggesting, with quick glances or a hitch of her swooping eyebrows, that she’s resolved to take resourceful action. Seeing what she does next — with a lighter she’s tucked upon or a crutch she’s whittled into a shiv — is one of the film’s true thrills.

Even when Michelle is playing nice for her captor, Winstead’s eyes are alert, even calculating, and director Trachtenberg usually lets us know everything that she does. That makes *10 Cloverfield Lane* engaging in a way Hollywood event films usually aren’t: It invites us to work out what her next move should be. It’s like one of those locked-room, team-building games where you have to figure out how to escape with the couple of items you’ve been given, except with John Goodman insisting that, no, actually, you don’t want to get out — this is a survival bunker, and there’s been an attack of some sort, terrorist or alien or *Cloverfield*, and the air outside will kill you. Michelle’s glimpses of the farmland surrounding the shelter aren’t encour-

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**DESPITE ITS VIEW, DRONE DRAMA**

**EYE IN THE SKY SEES NOTHING NEW**

Gavin Hood’s drone-warfare drama *Eye in the Sky* sets its sights on a planned strike in Kenya that, besides taking out a few high-profile targets about to embark on a suicide mission, likely will result in the death of a little girl selling bread near the point of impact. Key players confined to cold, official rooms on different continents realize the danger just in time to debate whether or not to move forward anyway: Helen Mirren is the trigger-happy colonel hoping to fire now and ask questions never; Alan Rickman is a lieutenant general tasked with convincing governmental higher-ups of the strike’s urgency, and Aaron Paul is one of two reluctant pilots actually controlling the drone from a base in Las Vegas. This is the banality of necessary (?) evil in 2016. The problem with movies depicting the banality of anything, of course, is that they tend to be pretty banal themselves; in setting out to be the exception to that rule, *Eye in the Sky* only proves it.

Accounting for nearly half the film, the centerpiece sequence begins in earnest with Mirren sending an IM to Rickman to alert him that things are a go on her end. Rickman then argues with a room full of suits over the legal and political implications of the strike for the remainder of his time onscreen. It’s the war on terror as backroom chamber drama, a who-watches-the-watchmen descent into moral culpability in a system designed to avoid it. But *Eye in the Sky* engages these questions with such ineligence that its main resonance comes from featuring the late Rickman’s final in-the-flesh performance. —Michael Nordine
BY AMY NICHOLSON

Halfway through Laura Gabbert’s documentary City of Gold, a salute to the former L.A. Weekly and current L.A. Times food critic Jonathan Gold, the Pulitzer Prize winner’s brother Mark reveals a dark family secret: Gold grew up devouring iceberg lettuce and orange Jell-O.

Every day, we eat. It’s a must. And those meals tell a story: the peanut sauce Grandma made for the filth crossing the street for a bowl of caldo. From my stiff movie theater seat, I would have traded every obstacle — from satisfying Tallulah’s sweet tooth to calming Sam’s anxiety attacks — for one of the film’s funniest scenes is of Gold’s brother Mark, an environmentalist, taking him to task for supporting sushi restaurants that sell bluefin tuna.

“Jonathan is eating everything I’m trying to save,” he sighs, though Mark is grateful his brother decraved shark-fin soup.

Yet City of Gold’s most resonant moment is Gold walking through an art museum with his son and daughter, passing on his father’s love of culture to the next generation. When his boy asks why a figurine doesn’t have eyes, Gold explains that sometimes the facts of a portrait aren’t the priority — a philosophy his reviews serve up with every plate.

While there’s plenty of darkness in this unconventional romance — abandonment and suicide, parents who either clung too tightly or care too little — Weitz presents events through the sunny filter of Scout’s resourceful optimism. Every obstacle is viewed as a creative challenge, from satisfying Tallulah’s sweet tooth to calming Sam’s anxiety attacks.

For Gabbert, the challenge was getting Gold to finish a piece that takes “psychotic harassment,” and Gabbert cuts to Gold refusing to answer her phone. If anything, City of Gold could use a dash more Jonathan Gold. Only toward the end does it reveal that he grew up in South Central, where his earliest memories were tanks growling down the streets during the Watts riots. At 12, he was a cello prodigy. At 20 he was grinding the cello in a punk band, and soon met his wife, Laurie Ochoa, at the L.A. Weekly. When she was an intern and he a proofreader. Twenty-five years of marriage later, she’s still his favorite taco-truck date. And despite the last decade of accolades, he remains punk at heart, sniggering at a Vietnamese joint named Pho Kim.

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COURTESY OF SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

OPENING THIS WEEK

ABOUT SCOUT In a twist from writer-director Laurie Weitz, About Scout’s title character is a manic pixie-with-few-dreams girl. In hopes of some residual stardust, Scout Havers’ (India Ennenga) late mother named her and her sister Tallulah (Onata Aprile) after Demi Moore’s daughters. (Sorry, Rumer.) But now they’re scraping by in rural Texas with their grandmother (Ellen Burstyn), sunk deep into her recliner and persisting on prescription pills and trashy talk shows. A quick-witted and light-fingered 15-year-old, the irrepressible Scout projects a cheeky confidence that disguises the guarded Sam Prescott (James Frecheville), whose mother has committed him to a posh mental hospital. It takes very little to convince Sam to accompany Scout on a road trip to retrieve Tallulah, who’s been taken by their irresponsible carry father.

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While there’s plenty of darkness in this unconventional romance — abandonment and suicide, parents who either clung too tightly or care too little — Weitz presents events through the sunny filter of Scout’s resourceful optimism. Every obstacle is viewed as a creative challenge, from satisfying Tallulah’s sweet tooth to calming Sam’s anxiety attacks. Ennenga (Treme, The Returned) made her first screen appearance as a toddler in Weitz’s debut, Wrestling With...
Alligators (1998), and they collaborated on the story for her second film (shot in 2013 and originally called simply Scout). Their wish-fulfillment fantasy takes the M.P.D.G. trope of a wisecracking eccentric whose function is to enliven the sullen and makes her happiness tantamount to that of her male counterpart, allowing Scout's never-say-die persistence to pull everyone forward instead of leaving her behind. (Serena Donadoni)

THE AUTOMATIC HATE I be thankful your family isn't as twisted as Davis Green's (Joseph Cross). In Justin Lerner's dour drama The Automatic Hate, the closer this clan gets together, the further apart they'll have to stay. Davis is navigating rough roads with his live-in girlfriend when an eerie run-in with a never-before-seen cousin named Alexis (Adelaide Clemens) leads him to rediscover his family's darkest secrets. If he's not careful, he might find that their flaws run within him, too. Lerner shares a credit with first-time feature co-writer Katharine O'Brien, but the script does no favors for its female leads, Davis' ballerina girlfriend Cassie (Deborah Ann Woll) and Alexis, the lusty cousin. Both are painted as unstable forces of (emotional) nature looking to unhinge the poor bro. Richard Schiff plays Davis' opportunistic father, but even his quirky behavior is only matched by Davis' chilly Uncle Josh (Ricky Jay). Their silence feels like a put-upon conceit that needlessly drags the movie toward the 90-minute mark. These characters feel like wisps of ideas crashing thunderously into each other to make noise, be it screaming, yelling or a punch-out during dinner. All I heard over the din were the echoes of a hollow script. As unpleasant as it is to watch the story's incestuous ties unravel and escalate, The Automatic Hate also can't salvage its forced family mystery. The film is about as enjoyable as your worst family vacation landing on a repeating Groundhog Day. Please let me leave the table before dessert. (Monica Castillo)

BACKGAMMON The creators of the lame psychological thriller Backgammon try and fail to nail 20-something bourgeois-bohemians by treating them like human boardshorts. This suffocating chamber drama, from director Francisco Orvañanos and co-writers Todd Niemi and R.B. Russell, focuses on socially anxious artists who alternatively seduce and psychoanalyze one another while vaca-tioning at a secluded mansion. These stereotypes, snobs, pitch fits and quote poetry and drink heavily because they cannot see — and therefore do not care about — anyone but themselves. As a result, you can't really tell why Lucian (Neal Silver), a muddled junior history student, ditches girlfriend Elizabeth (Olivia Crocicchia) in order to pursue manic-depressive dream girl Miranda (Brittany Allen). We know that Miranda is mercurial because she encourages Lucian to join her for a spur-of-the-moment skinny-dip moments before she makes pompous observations about monogamy, as when she claims that "romance exists outside marriage." And we know that Lucian is sensitive because he takes three showers in pseudo-sorrowful piano score plays. But we don't know what motivates Lucian and Miranda's unhealthy relationship beyond overeating and bald, expository dialogue. Lucian's cartoonish naïveté makes him an easy target for viewers' scorn: You want to warn him to run away whenever Miranda acts out, as if he were a cluelessly oversexed slasher victim knocking on Jason Voorhees' door. Still, it's Orvañanos and the gang's barely repressed sexism that takes the cake, especially when Miranda mounts a credit with first-time feature co-writer Katharine O'Brien, but the script does no favors for its female leads, Davis' ballerina girlfriend Cassie (Deborah Ann Woll) and Alexis, the lusty cousin. Both are painted as unstable forces of (emotional) nature looking to unhinge the poor bro. Richard Schiff plays Davis' opportunistic father, but even his quirky behavior is only matched by Davis' chilly Uncle Josh (Ricky Jay). Their silence feels like a put-upon conceit that needlessly drags the movie toward the 90-minute mark. These characters feel like wisps of ideas crashing thunderously into each other to make noise, be it screaming, yelling or a punch-out during dinner. All I heard over the din were the echoes of a hollow script. As unpleasant as it is to watch the story's incestuous ties unravel and escalate, The Automatic Hate also can't salvage its forced family mystery. The film is about as enjoyable as your worst family vacation landing on a repeating Groundhog Day. Please let me leave the table before dessert. (Monica Castillo)

BARNEY THOMPSON Dark comedies, even at their most blood-soaked and mean-spirited, only actually shock if they make us care about the characters' fatal misfortunes — or, at the very least, if their onscreen survivors convince us they care. Barney Thompson, the directorial debut of Scottish actor Robert Carlyle, is littered with corpses, dismemberment and misanthropy. Shot in stark grays by Fabian Wagner, it's true to its door glass setting. But it operates in such an exaggeratedly heartless world — even parents of the deceased can't be bothered to mourn — that we can laugh at unlamentable deaths without remorse. It's never more than superficially disturbing, but what it lacks in boldness it more than makes up for with rude, vibrant wit. Carlyle stars as Barney, a reviled barber who lives with his surly caps (a divinely scabrous Emma Thompson, shrouding as Barney, a reviled barber who lives with his surly caps (a divinely scabrous Emma Thompson, shrouding as Barney, a reviled barber who lives with his surly caps) whose function is to amuse us. Davis Green's (Joseph Cross). In Justin Lerner's dour drama The Automatic Hate, the closer this clan gets together, the further apart they'll have to stay. Davis is navigating rough roads with his live-in girlfriend when an eerie run-in with a never-before-seen cousin named Alexis (Adelaide Clemens) leads him to rediscover his family's darkest secrets. If he's not careful, he might find that their flaws run within him, too. Lerner shares a credit with first-time feature co-writer Katharine O'Brien, but the script does no favors for its female leads, Davis' ballerina girlfriend Cassie (Deborah Ann Woll) and Alexis, the lusty cousin. Both are painted as unstable forces of (emotional) nature looking to unhinge the poor bro. Richard Schiff plays Davis' opportunistic father, but even his quirky behavior is only matched by Davis' chilly Uncle Josh (Ricky Jay). Their silence feels like a put-upon conceit that needlessly drags the movie toward the 90-minute mark. These characters feel like wisps of ideas crashing thunderously into each other to make noise, be it screaming, yelling or a punch-out during dinner. All I heard over the din were the echoes of a hollow script. As unpleasant as it is to watch the story's incestuous ties unravel and escalate, The Automatic Hate also can't salvage its forced family mystery. The film is about as enjoyable as your worst family vacation landing on a repeating Groundhog Day. Please let me leave the table before dessert. (Monica Castillo)
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MARGUERITE IS TIGHT-MINDED
ABOUT QUIRKINESS

Willing ignorance as a character trait typically evokes annoyance in those who witness it — at least in real life. In many French films, however, a character who’s willfully ignorant is portrayed in the twee manner, encouraging us to believe it is their blissful view of the world we should accept, not the real one. In the beloved Amélie, Audrey Tautou’s title character romps through the world with rose-colored glasses, but imagine for a moment that every step of the way, Amélie’s friends are quietly looming with the bad news that all of her fantasies are bullshit. This is Marguerite.

Catherine Frot, who may be unknown to American audiences but has an illustrious career in France, plays Marguerite, a middle-aged, lovelorn baroness who possesses all the faculties for enjoying music and none of the talent to sing, despite her many efforts. At the heart of the story is a lie that becomes a bigger lie, as everyone who surrounds Marguerite is complicit in feeding her delusions of vocal grandeur. But it is Frot’s performance — full of warmth, humor and hope — that carries the story and even leads to some laugh-out-loud moments.

The film around her mimics the composition of an opera painting. Crushed blacks abound, with accents of Prussian blue and a muted red creating a textured look, where the edges seem to dissolve into a black velvet curtain, all of it framing Marguerite and the motley crew of characters who come to love and support her. Their dialogue is filled with deliberate, telling lines, and director Xavier Giannoli allows these characters to develop in small but surprising ways. — A Wolfe

MARGUERITE | Directed and written by Xavier Giannoli
Cohen Media Group | Landmark

Marguerite

HYENA ROAD

In Taliban-occupied Kandahar, “even the dirt is hostile,” an omniscient narrator declares — but sounding about as foreboding as a sleep-deprived game-show host. “Birds fight birds,” he continues. “Dogs fight dogs. And men … kill men.” “Birds fight birds,” he continues. “Dogs fight dogs. And men … kill men.” This anti-war movie is more passionate than most of its contemporaries, and it gives the horror of bloodshed. (Sam Weisberg)

ME HIM HER

The directorial debut of Max Landis, who penned the scripts for Chronicle and American Ultra, the manic sex comedy Me Him Her has an admirably buoyant energy but a murky message and shortage of laughs. At the film’s outset, Benton (Luke Bracey), the star of an NCIS-like show, calls his best friend Cory (Dustin Milligan) in a panic: He thinks he might be gay, and he begs his high-school buddy to come about their assignment. In case those sentiments aren’t trite enough, there’s a funeral procession with bagpipes and an obligatory down-time dancing sequence, set to “Play That Funky Music.” (Just so we know the fun won’t last for these troops, the funk segues ominously into an ambient dirge). The sole suspense in Hyena Road, also written by and starring Gross, lies in whether a creepy, dual-eyed-colored Afghani mystic known locally as “the Ghost” is a friend or foe of the Canadians. Waiting for the answer, viewers are graced with a few disappointingly subdued action scenes, two humdrum romantic subplots and a virtual museum of bad acting. We get it all: the mumbly, the tic-ridden, the stiff and the apollectic (a soldier smashes an office apart as he vents his rage at “medievalists.”) The one standout performer is Nabil Elouahabi as a wise-cracking, wily informant. Some moments can be found in Karim Hussain’s slick camerawork as he tracks the whooshing trajectory of a sniper’s bullet, though it’s often canceled out by the overwhelming score (lots of timpani and discordant wailing). Most gratifying is the film’s dogged respect for military code. Nowhere else — besides maybe a truck-driving class — will you hear this much alphanumeric lingo (“I got a 4198226.” “Roger that, Alpha 66.”) This anti-war movie is more passionate about CB radio communication than the horrors of bloodshed. (Sam Weisberg)

A Guide to Life, Love and Happiness

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HYENA ROAD in Taibani-occupied Kandahar, “even the dirt is hostile,” an omniscient narrator declares — but sounding about as foreboding as a sleep-deprived game-show host.


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to L.A. to do “emotional damage control.” There, Cory meets Gabbi (Emily Meade), a lesbian who’s just been dumped by her girlfriend. The two hit it off and end up having sex, spurring Cory to spend the rest of the movie chasing her down. At times Landis seems to be aiming for the feverish energy of the past has documented abandoned bread factories in early Hollywood. Charles Vidor’s The Player, a bedridden protagonist who parts former lovers from their riches and falls in love with a pregnant woman in the former and a down-and-out country singer in the latter, for which he won an Oscar. Tender Mercies in particular is quietly moving, an understated look at hitting rock bottom and slowly building your life back up — it’s a clear influence on Crazy Heart, for which Jeff Bridges likewise won an Oscar for playing a similar character. Aero Theatre, 1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; Mon., March 14, 7:30 p.m.; $11. (323) 486-3456, americancinematequecalendareaeroteatro.com.

Tuesday, March 15

Movies about performers aren’t known for depicting the business of show in a favorable light — doubly so in early Hollywood. Charles Vidor’s Cover Girl, starring Rita Hayworth as an upstart It girl and Gene Kelly as her mentor/increasingly jealous inamorata, isn’t much of an exception. Still, the popular Technicolor musical from 1944 is far from doom and gloom, and Kelly’s creative control led to several of its best-known dance sequences. LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Tue., March 15, 1 p.m.; $5. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org.

Wednesday, March 16

Put yourself to the fullest possible use — which, as any HAL 9000 computer can tell you, is any conscious entity can ever hope to do — by seeing 2001: A Space Odyssey. Silver-screen sci-fi reached its zenith with Stanley Kubrick’s 1968 masterpiece about all manner of life (whether primal, artificial, extraterrestrial or otherwise) on Earth and beyond; Solaris, Star Wars, Alien and The Thing are all grand, but Zarathustra only spake for 2001. ArcLight Hollywood, 6360 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Wed., March 16, 7:30 p.m.; $14. (323) 464-1478, arclighthollywood.com. —Michael Nordine
## HOLLYWOOD & VICINITY

### AMC CINEMAS 108
3200 W. Sunset Blvd.  
Fri.-Sat., 12 noon, 1:30, 2:30, 3:20, 4:30, 5:40, 6:40, 7:30, 8:30, 9:20, 10:20 p.m.; Sun., 12 noon, 1:30, 2:30, 3:20, 4:30, 5:40, 6:40, 7:30, 8:30, 9:20, 10:20 p.m.

### TCF CHINESE THEATRE IMAX 6925
Hollywood Blvd. (323) 461-3331
The Divergent Series: Allegiant  
Thu., 7:45 p.m.; Fri., 4:10, 6:15, 8:20 p.m.; Sat., 6:10, 8:20, 10:20 p.m.; Sun., 6:10, 8:20, 10:20, 12:30 p.m.

### 10 Cloverfield Lane
The IMAX Experience  
Fri.-Sat., 12 noon, 2, 4:15, 6:30, 8:45, 11:15 p.m.; Sun., 12 noon, 2, 4:15, 6:30, 8:45, 11:15, 1:30 p.m.

### Pacific’s THE GROVE STADIUM 14
198 The Grove Dr., Third & Fairfax  
Fri.-Sat., 12 noon, 4, 7, 10, 1:30, 2, 4:30, 5:30, 8, 8:30, 10, 11 p.m.; Sun., 12 noon, 4, 7, 10, 1:30, 2, 4:30, 5:30, 8, 8:30, 10, 11 p.m.

### HOLLYWOOD & VICINITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movie</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Brothers Grimsby</td>
<td>Fri., 3, 11:45 a.m., 9 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Divergent Series: Allegiant</td>
<td>Fri., 1, 3:30, 7 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Witch</td>
<td>Fri., 10 a.m., 11:10 a.m., 12:20, 1:45, 3:50, 7 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zootopia in Disney Digital 3D</td>
<td>Fri., 10:15, 1:15, 4:15, 7:15 p.m.</td>
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### CITY OF HOLLYWOOD

#### HAMMER THEATER

<table>
<thead>
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### DEPARTMENT STORES

#### RAVE CINEMAS BALDWIN HILLS

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<tr>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Deadpool</td>
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<td>Mon.-Tues., 11:10 a.m., 2, 4, 6:10, 8:10 p.m.</td>
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### CULVER CITY, LA.

#### MARINA DEL REY

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whiskey Tango Foxtrot</td>
<td>Fri., 11:45 a.m., 12:45, 2:30, 3:30, 5:10, 6:30, 7:55, 9:10, 10:35 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Brothers Grimsby</td>
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### BEACHES

#### Santa Monica, Malibu

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### ENTRANCE TIMES

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<td>Hollywood Blvd. (323) 461-3331</td>
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###鄰近地區的電影院

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CASE CLOSED
A NEW DOCUMENTARY LAYS OUT THE MOST COMPPELLING THEORY YET FOR WHO WAS BEHIND THE BIGGIE AND 2PAC MURDERS
BY JEFF WEISS
I have dozens of questions for former LAPD homicide detective Greg Kading, but only one really matters.

“How sure are you about your theory of who killed Biggie and Pac?”

“One hundred percent,” responds the lead investigator behind the task force commissioned by the city of L.A. to unravel the murder mysteries. No pause to weigh his answer, just absolute confidence.

“This is undoubtedly the definitive explanation,” Kading continues, wearing confidence. “I think that truth rings for everyone who has a background or history in investigating the case.”

He’s right. I’ve squandered countless hours over the last two decades watching documentaries and reading books, interviewing attorneys for the deceased and viewing attorneys for the deceased and former cops were working for Suge Knight. It’s one thing to read Keffe D’s confession in the Murder Rap book,” Dorsey says. “But it’s so much more compelling to be able to watch him do it with his street vernacular and voice.”

A producer and editor at the Discovery Network, Dorsey spent three years and more than $30,000 of his own money on this labor of love. Since the film’s release on iTunes last month, most stories about it have focused on the possible link between Combs and 2Pac’s death. But roughly half its run time is spent making the case for Knight’s role in the murder of The Notorious B.I.G.

Through complicated maneuvering, Kading and company extract a confession from Knight’s ex-girlfriend, alleging that the former Death Row don paid $13,000 to an associate named Wardell “Pooch” Fouse to kill Biggie. The evidence is as damning as it is unsurprising.

Kading says, “Before, you were offered self-contradictory, problematic conspiracy theories with nothing to back it up.” Kading says. “But I think this will set the story straight, and the conspiracy theories will die off. We might never get judicial resolution, but that doesn’t mean we can’t feel assured as to what happened. We’re trying to set history straight.”

An L.A. native, Jeff Weiss edits Passion of the Weiss and hosts the Shots Fired podcast. Find him online at passionweiss.com.

MURDER RAP MIGHT BE THE CLOSEST THING WE’LL GET TO CLOSURE.

Filmmaker Mike Dorsey, left, and former LAPD detective Greg Kading think they’ve solved the Biggie and 2Pac murders.

We might never get judicial resolution, but that doesn’t mean we can’t feel assured as to what happened. We’re trying to set history straight.”

GOLDSMITH & EFF present: BARONESS on FRI. 3/11 @ 10PM

GOLDIE with We Were Promised Jetpacks on FRIDAY 3/11 @ 10PM

HIPPY SABOTAGE 2nd Show Added on FRIDAY 3/11 @ 10PM

HIPPY SABOTAGE on FRIDAY 3/11 @ 10PM

LIGHTS (Acoustic) on FRIDAY 3/11 @ 10PM

GOLDSMITH & EFF present: BARONESS on FRIDAY 3/11 @ 10PM

GOLDSMITH & EFF present: BARONESS on FRIDAY 3/11 @ 10PM
I don’t have a crystal ball, but it very well might be that 50 percent of voters will consume the campaigns like someone consuming a Teflon Don. Super Tuesday starts in a few hours. Projected stats have Donald Trump handily advancing past his rivals in several states except Texas, which at this moment has Ted Cruz out front. Thinking of Mr. Trump, I am taken back to the days of my youth, when Richard Nixon was president. Republicans had some very intelligent people in their party back then. I try to imagine how Trump would have been able to hang with a guy like Henry Kissinger. I think Trump would have been laughed out of the room as a lightweight pretender. Even in the days of Reagan, Trump would have been little more than a colorful donor, who got to spend a night in the Lincoln bedroom. In 2016, he very well could be the Republican nominee.

Not all Republicans are happy with this proposition. If Mr. Trump is their guy, Fox News and all the other pundits will have to get in line and stand by their man. If the Democratic front-runner is Hillary Clinton, there will be no small amount of discontent on either side. Her terrifying, fixed-eye smile often looks more like a mask than an emotional display. When she speaks, her digital delivery makes me think of a solid-state stereo amp.

Sen. Bernie Sanders, on the other hand, is all tube analog. When I listened to MSNBC’s Chris Matthews conversationally grapple with the Vermont senator a few days ago, it occurred to me that Mr. Sanders could not be the choice of an overwhelming majority of Democratic voters. His platform is the start-all-over-again, where those who dig his action will not be disappointed. But even if his numbers will probably go up and up, he will be able to say and do whatever he wants, and his numbers will probably go up and up.

As it is with any election, it’s not about the candidates, it’s about the voters. For the most part, Trump and Clinton are blameless for the fact that, as of this moment, they are the front-runners. They did not put themselves there. As always, this is on us.

Every country that’s ever been plagued by a Joseph Stalin or blessed with an Abraham Lincoln got the government it settled for. I think America is exhausted from nearly eight years of loving or hating President Obama. Americans are sick and tired of the bullshit they accuse the “other side” of being full of.

So now, we can look forward to a NAS-CAR/WWE election. Stay beautiful.

---

REALITY-SHOW POLITICS

It is 2206 hrs. on the last day of February. Super Tuesday starts in a few hours. Projected stats have Donald Trump handily advancing past his rivals in several states except Texas, which at this moment has Ted Cruz out front.

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José González
@ WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL
A Swedish-born singer-songwriter of Argentinean descent, José González has staked out his own fertile and febrile turf with several albums of exquisitely intimate folk songs with a twist — when carefully probed, they tend to flare up in one’s face. His latest, *Vestiges & Claws* (*Mute*), again shows what a meticulously musical arranger he is of his own material, his subtle meltdowns of folk, pop and world music betraying a studied but not sterile approach to his art, perhaps influenced by his former life as a Ph.D. candidate in biochemistry. González will be accompanied by yMusic, an exploratory strings/flute/clarinet/trumpet sextet whose members are known individually for their work with the likes of Bon Iver, Björk, Antony & the Johnsons and Ryuichi Sakamoto. Also Saturday, March 12. — John Payne

Warren Zevon Tribute
@ LARGO AT THE CORONET
Even in the ’70s heyday of singer-songwriters, Warren Zevon stood out. While many of his contemporaries were crooning wispy odes to peace and harmony, the Chicago native was growing boozily, Wittily literate rockers such as “Lawyers, Guns and Money” and the ubiquitous “Werewolves of London” alongside ballads like “Roland the Headless Thompson Gunner,” a pretty tune that happened to be about the messy fate of a CIA mercenary. It’s hard to predict who will show up at the typically freewheeling Largo. The evening likely will include comedy from host Judd Apatow, while Zevon’s longtime champion and former producer Jackson Browne reportedly is organizing the musical portion. Special guests will inevitably revive Zevon’s popular 1978 album, *Excitable Boy*, but let’s hope they also break out obscurities from such later works as *My Ride’s Here* and *The Wind.* — Falling James

K三大 González: See Friday.

Burger 5-Year Anniversary
@ THE OBSERVATORY
Seemingly every other week, Burger Records presents a showcase of its numerous garage, punk and indie bands, or even a full-blown festival, such as Burgerama or Burger Boogaloo. The Fullerton label marks its fifth year of hosting concerts at the Observatory with a weeklong fest that culminates in this weekend’s massive finale. Saturday is headlined by the majestic, shimmering dreaminess of Brit shoegazers Slowdive, juxtaposed with the animalistic raving of Atlanta sonic reducers Black Lips, S.F. psychedelic primitives Thee Oh Sees and the breathy-voiced, bleary-eyed electronica of Pittsburgh’s Black Moth Super Rainbow. Sunday closes with the percolating synth-pop of Toronto duo Crystal Castles, defiantly raucous rockers The Orwells, rap icon Too $hort and soul groovers Chicanos Batman. Arrive early Saturday for the soulfully lulling country-blues of S.F.’s Sarah Bethe Nelson, and on Sunday for reclusive psych-poppers The Jigsaw Scene. Also Sunday, March 13. — Falling James

Lightning Bolt, La Sera, Dent May
@ THE ECHO AND ECHOPLEX
For the past decade, Daniel Gill and his Force Field PR have represented indie bands like Sufjan Stevens, Toro y Moi, Ariel Pink, St. Vincent, Real Estate and Ty Segall. To celebrate its 10-year anniversary, the company is throwing itself a party with a killer lineup of current Force Field bands: noise-rock duo Lightning Bolt, Katy Goodman’s (Vivian Girls) La Sera, Dent May, Wax Idols and more. With a roster as deep as Force Field’s has been over the years, a few surprise guests could be on hand to pay tribute to the company that helped introduce them to the world. — Daniel Kohn

The High Curbs, Pookie & the Poodlez
@ THE SMELL
This is a Burger Records week here in Southern California, with five nights of official shows down in Orange County and a wave of just-spawned adjacent events like this one, in which rock & rollers from a few counties away team up to take over L.A. for a day. Tonight, thrill to the shredded-and-proud bubble-gum punk of Oakland’s Pookie & the Poodlez, led by course by the inimitable Pookie, whose vocals explode the limits of an adjective like “snotty” and who spoons out sing-along songs like some lost love child of Hunx, Nobunny and/or Harlem’s Michael Hunnicut. Arrive early Saturday for the soulfully lulling country-blues of S.F.’s Sarah Bethe Nelson, and on Sunday for reclusive psych-poppers The Jigsaw Scene. Also Sunday, March 13. — Falling James

PHOTO BY CHAD KAMENSHINE

Music Picks

UPCOMING EVENTS at AMOEBA!
All shows are FREE and ALL AGES
For a full calendar of events, visit AMOEBA.COM

Thursday • March 10 • 6pm
LUCIUS
Lucius celebrates their new album, *Good Grief* (*Mom + Pop*), with a live set and signing at Amoeba Hollywood. Purchase your copy of *Good Grief* at the in-store to get it signed after their performance. See them live May 5th at The Fonda!

Friday • March 11 • 8pm
ROTTATIONS: DEAN HURLEY DJ SET

Friday • March 18 • 8pm
ROTTATIONS: EKO DJ SET

Saturday • March 19 • Noon-4pm
S.IDEWALK SALE!
From 12-4 p.m. right outside the store, we’ll have sweet deals on DVDs, DVD box sets, Blu-rays, 45s, CDs and more. Come on down, score big on some fresh tunes & movies. Shop on and save!

Thursday • March 24 • 6pm
PLAGUE VENDOR
Whitmore’s Plague Vendor celebrate their new album, *Bloodseat* (*Epitaph*), with a live performance and signing at Amoeba Hollywood!

Friday • March 25 • 8pm
ROTTATIONS: LYNDON DJ SET

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Look for the NEW Bob Dylan Album “Fallen Angels” coming May 20th

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FRIDAY 3/11
@ 10 AM
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Use code TACOLAW to get tickets before they go on sale to the general public Monday at 10am.
SEE YOU THERE!

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2016 • 3PM-7PM
LAWEEKLY.COM/TACOLANDIA

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Carnitas El Momo
Chef Adria Marina
Chef Katsuji Tanabe
Chef Priscilla Curiel
Chichen Itza
Cielito Lindo
Colonia Tacos Guisados
Comida
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Corazón de Tierra
Corazon y Miel
Dia de los Puercos
Dos Chinos
El Colimense
El Coralense
El Marinero By Chef Ninive
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Frida Tacos
Galaxy Taco
Gracias Señor!
Guerrilla Tacos
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Kaya Street Kitchen
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La Calaca Fish Tacos
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La Flor de Yucatan
La Monarca Bakery
La Taquiza
Las 7 Regiones de Oaxaca
Las Molenderas
Loteria Grill
Mariscos Guerrerense
Mariscos Jalisco
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Mexicano & Flautas
Mi Ensenada Fish Tacos
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Taco Libre LA
Taco Maria
Tacos Kokopelli
Tacos Quetzalcoatl
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Urbana Anaheim
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SEE YOU THERE!

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2016 • 3PM-7PM
LA WEEKLY.COM/TACOLANDIA

PLUS CASH BARS, LIVE MARIACHI MUSIC AND
AWARDS FOR THE BEST TACOS COURTESY OF THE VENDYS!
Pure Bathing Culture
@ THE ECHO
After catalyzing a surge of underground, ethereal chillwave with the Richard Swift-produced Moon Tides in 2013, Portland duo Pure Bathing Culture (Sarah Versprille and Daniel Hindman of folk-rock act Vetiver) ignited the indie pop sphere once again this past October with their latest album, Pray for Rain, whose title track more resonates Like a Virgin-era Madonna than their typical low-key, Beach House-esque sound. The pair, who frequently draw comparisons to the legendary Cocteau Twins, bring their zoned-out yet still dance-y vibes to the Echo on a tour with the ever-so-synthy, Seattle-based Pillar Point for a night of chillaxin’, Pacific Northwest–style. –Artemis Thomas-Hansard

Richie Hawtin, Ean Golden
@ SOUND NIGHTCLUB
A true techno innovator, Richie Hawtin’s influence goes beyond his dance-floor cuts. He has been at the forefront of emerging technology, working on custom mixers, and was instrumental in the development of RADR, an application that allows DJs to tweet out their set lists in real time. His Monday night gig at Sound is part of his latest endeavor, Play Differently. Hawtin and engineer/product designer Andy Rigby-Jones teamed up to create a new line of DJ gear, including a mixer that he’ll be using during this tour. Details on the device are vague, but Hawtin will no doubt put it to good use. Joining him is controller Ean Golden, who is not only a fine DJ but also the founder of the stellar online resource DJ TechTools. –Liz Ohanesian

Fred & Toody
@ THE BOOTLEG
Fred Cole’s howling vocal style was so distinctively raw when the young Las Vegas native showed up on the Sunset Strip in the mid-’60s that it drew the praise of a similarly raspy singer named Janis Joplin. Although Cole recorded the dire garage-rock classic “You Must Be a Witch” with The Lollipop Shoppe in 1968, he disappeared for a long time with his bassist-wife, Toody Cole, and even tried to homestead in a tent in the Yukon before they built their own minitown in the woods outside Portland, Oregon. They’ve eked out on a series of projects, most stubbornly recorded in mono, from folksey country duo The Range Rats to the proto-punk savagery of Dead Moon and Pierced Arrows. Fred collapsed onstage at Bumbershoot in September, but the Coles are already back on the road on a rare SoCal tour. Also at the Observatory, Saturday, March 12, as part of the Burger 5-Year Anniversary, and Thursday, March 17, at Pappy and Harriet’s. –Falling James

Mark de Clive-Lowe
@ BLUEWHALE
He must be the pied piper of broken beats, for wherever he performs he is pursued by hordes of dancing fools entranced by his modified versions of trance and jungle. Mark de Clive-Lowe’s contributions to the dance scene in Los Angeles are immeasurable, yet there is no doubt the DJ/keyboardist considers himself a jazz musician in his core. MdCL plans to record a two-night live album at Bluewhale, featuring bassist Brandon Owens and drummer Gene Coye, with Nina Andrews on voice, plus and special guests. Also Friday, March 18. –Gary Fukushima
FRIDAY - Mar. 11

WYNDHAM, WHISPERTOWN, STEADY HEIGHT

SATURDAY - Mar. 12

SUGAR FLY (RECORD RELEASE SHOW), THE HERMOS, RUNNIN’ WILLIS III

SUNDAY - Mar. 13

MELISSA SULIVAN, SPOTLIGHT FLOODLIGHT

TUESDAY - Mar. 15

REGGIE WATTS & KAREN, THE FONTAINES

WEDNESDAY - Mar. 16

WEB SERIES UNPLUGGED

THURSDAY - Mar. 17

HONKY TONK HACENDA, KENNETH BRIAN BRAND, GRAND CANYON

FRIDAY - Mar. 18

INDIA CARNEY, BLACK GASTBY, SANTA MISSERA

SATURDAY - Mar. 19

WET & WEIRD, FESTIVAL, WESTERN SCENE

SUNDAY, MAR. 20

SULTY SWEET BURLESQUE

SUNDAY - Mar. 20

KING SHELTER, COYOTE, EYES ON THE SHORE

TUESDAY - Mar. 22

REGGIE WATTS & KAREN, THROUSHER

CLUBS

ROCK & POP


BARDSTOWN HOLLYWOOD: 1373 N. Vine St. Joon Moon, Mon., March 14, 8 p.m., free.

BOWLAMATIC: 8782 W. Sunset Blvd. Gnash, Goody Grace, Julius, Fri., Mar. 11, 8 p.m., $15. Vails Alp, Demo Taped, Sat., Mar. 12, 8:30 p.m., $15. fell Runner, The Alex Nose Seatst, Max Oxx, Jett K, Mon., Mar. 14, 8:30 p.m., free. Fred & Toody, Tue., Mar. 15, 8:30 p.m., $16 (see Music Pick). Frog Eyes, Wreck & Reference, Weds., Mar. 16, 8:30 p.m., $10.

CAFE NELA: 900 Riverside Ave. Bloodlines, Satan’s Chair, Headcare, thee Tes, Neco Bongos, Off Center & the Holes, Sat., Mar. 12, 8:30 p.m., $5. King Cotton, Radio Tequila, Sun., Mar. 13, 8:30 p.m., $30.


CODY’S VIVA CANTINA: 900 Riverside Ave. Drive, Burbank. King Cotton, Sat., Mar. 12, 7 p.m., free.

COMPLEX: 906 E. Colorado St., Glendale. Wooka, Teeth, Sutratma, Misery Ritual, Fri., Mar. 11, 8 p.m., $5-F. Inhalt, Deathday, All Your Sisters, Sat., March 12, 9 p.m., $10.


RAFA’S LOUNGE: 1836 W. Sunset Blvd. The Standards, Viggo Jones, Westerner, The Dinosaurs, Ryan Tamo, Hot Soul Hospital, The Dead Horse Rhythm, Sat., Mar. 12, 8:30 p.m., $5.


MOLLY MALONE’S: 575 S. Fairfax Ave. The McNaughtys, The Friday Night Band, King Chris, Sat., Mar. 12, 9 p.m., $10.


UCB SUNSET: 5419 W. Sunset Blvd. Sean Watkins, Good Graeff, Sat., March 12, 9 p.m., free.

UNION NIGHTCLUB: 4067 W. Pico Blvd. Counterparts, Expire, Gideon, Knocked Loose, Mercy Ties, Thu., March 17, 7 p.m., $15.

THE VIPER ROOM: 8852 W. Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood. Paradise Kitty, Fri., March 11, 8 p.m., TBA. Volto, Bob Margolin, Bob Corritore, Sat., March 12, 9 p.m., $20. Jack Greene, Skin & Bones, Sun., March 13, 8 p.m.; Mon., March 14, 8 p.m., TBA. The Cimarosa Fall, Sun., March 13, 8 p.m., TBA. Instinct of Aggression, Darksun, Six Foot South, Tue., March 15, 8 p.m., TBA. The Lower 48, Wed., March 16, 8:30 p.m., TBA. The Late Night Jazz Orchestra, Thu., March 17, 8 p.m., TBA. Instinct of Aggression, Darksun, Six Foot South, Tue., March 15, 7:30 p.m., TBA. The Lower 48, Wed., March 16, 8:30 p.m., TBA. The Julian Coryell Group, Wed., March 16, 9 p.m., TBA. Mark de Clive-Lowe, March 17-18, 9 p.m., TBA (see Music Pick).

WHISKY A GO-GO: 8901 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood. Puddle of Mudd, Fri., March 11, 7 p.m., TBA. Uli Jon Roth, Jennifer Batten, Andy Timm, Sat., March 12, 6 p.m., TBA. Sergio Michel, Thu., March 17, 8 p.m., $10.

—Falling James

JAZZ & BLUES


BLUE WHALE: 123 Astronaut E.S. Onizuka St. The Hamilton Price Quartet, Fri., March 11, 9 p.m., $15. Jonathan Pinson's Boom Clap, Sat., March 12, 9 p.m., $15. Carl Stone, Ulrich Krieger & Chas Smith, Sun., March 13, 9 p.m., $15. Lopenre, Mon., March 14, 9 p.m., TBA. The Late Night Jazz Orchestra, Tue., March 15, 9 p.m., TBA. The Julian Coryell Group, Wed., March 16, 9 p.m., TBA. Mark de Clive-Lowe, March 17-18, 9 p.m., TBA (see Music Pick).

CATALINA BAR & GRILL: 6725 W. Sunset Blvd. Roberta Gambarini, Chuck Berghofer & Joe La Barbera, Fri., March 11, 8:30 p.m.; Sat., March 12, 8:30 p.m., TBA. Donny Most, Sun., March 13, 7:30 p.m., TBA. Natasha Agrama, Wed., March 16, 8:30 p.m., TBA. Roslyn Kind, Thu., March 17, 8:30 p.m., TBA. Lynosphere, Mon., March 14, 9 p.m., TBA. The Late Night Jazz Orchestra, Tue., March 15, 9 p.m., TBA. The Julian Coryell Group, Wed., March 16, 9 p.m., TBA. Mark de Clive-Lowe, March 17-18, 9 p.m., TBA (see Music Pick).

CICADA CLUB: 617 S. Olive St. Chester Whitmore's Central Avenue Revue, Sat., March 12, 9 p.m., $30. Il Piccolo Verde: 140 S. Barrington Place. David Marcus & Jon Avrus, Thursdays, 8 p.m., free.

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COUNTRY & FOLK


THE COFFEE GALLERY BACKSTAGE: 2029 N. Lake Ave., Altadena. Tom Kell & Paula Fong, Fri., March 11, 8 p.m., $15. Dirty Cello, Sat., March 12, 3 p.m., $15; Acoustic 267 SOUTH MAIN STREET, DTLA 323-428-4492 WWW.FIVESTARBARDTLA.COM

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—Falling James

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COMING UP

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3/22: LUST FOR YOUTH
3/23: THE NAKED AND FAMOUS
3/24: RA RA RIOT
3/25: CITIZEN + TURNER
3/31: WHITE DENIM
4/1: WHITE OUT
4/2: THE FLOODIES
4/3: GEOGRAPHER
4/7: CULLEN OMORI
4/8: KID'O
4/16: SUICIDE GIRLS: BLACKHEART BURLESQUE
4/18: ENTER SHIKARI
4/19: CLOUD CULT
4/21: BOMBINO
4/22: ASFAL AVIDAN
4/25: TORTOISE
4/28: BLEACHED
5/5: DANCE YOURSELF CLEAN
5/10: RADICAL FACE
5/13: BOB MOULD BAND
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5/21: NANDA SURF

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A salon-style evening of song, poetry, improv and laughter
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FREAK SHOW AT THE CIA

I f you’ve never been to the California Institute of Abnormalarts (CIA), now is the time. The combination performance space and museum of oddities is one of the weirdest and most unique places in L.A., and this “dark comedic variety show” from hosts Tuesday Thomas and Cyrus Nadernour offers a great excuse to check it out.

This Freak Show features live entertainment from comics, sideshows, acasts, musicians and more. The mayhem starts with the drag-queen comedy of Diasterina, followed by the character-based one-woman sketch comedy of Lisa Laureta and musical comedy by Amir Kalil. Other stand-ups taking the mic include Henrietta Komras, Robbie Goodwin, Cyrus Nadernour, Tobi Muresianu and headliner Aida Rodriguez, best known as a finalist on Last Comic Standing.

Music by Rooster Head completes the evening’s live entertainment. But stick around for free tours after the show of the CIA’s various oddities and attractions, including the famous mummified clown.

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF ABNORMALARTS | 11334 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood | Sat., March 12, 8:15 p.m.
$10 | facebook.com/CIAbnormalarts

Eidolon, Sat., March 12, 7 p.m., $18. Adara Rae & the Homeweckers, Sun., March 13, 2 p.m., $15; Tim Weisberg, Sun., March 13, 7:30 p.m., $20. Larry Wilder, John Bergstrom, Mon., March 14, 8 p.m., $15. Patrick Ball, Tue., March 15, 8 p.m., $18. The Salty Suites, David Starr, Thu., March 17, 8 p.m., $18.

JUMBO’S CLOWN ROOM: 5153 Hollywood Blvd. Groovy Rednecks, Thu., March 17, 7 p.m., free.

DANCE CLUBS

AVELON HOLLYWOOD: 1735 Vine St. S.F.Y., Fred V & Grafix, Etherwood, Submogics, Oglowlow, Fri., March 11, 9:30 p.m., $25 (see Music Pick). Hernan Cattaneo, Danny Howells, Sat., March 12, 10 p.m., TBA. Maybeem, Wed., March 16, 9 p.m., TBA.

THE BELASCO THEATER: 1050 S. Hill St. DJ Autograf, Fri., March 11, 12:30-2 a.m., free; DJ Premier, Craze, Starro, Fri., March 11, 9 p.m., $25-$55.

DRAGON PHYSIC: 6510 Santa Monica Blvd. Electric Nostalgia, with DJs spinning Bowie and Deadmau5, Fri., March 11, 9 p.m.-2 a.m., $15. Heltter Skeltter: Christian Death Night, with DJs Michael Stewart, Bruce Peredow and others, Sat., March 12, 10 p.m., $5.

LOS GLOBOS: 3040 W. Sunset Blvd. Club 90s, March 12, 10 p.m., $5; DX, Nora en Pure, Croatia Squad, Antonio Giacca, Sat., March 12, 11 p.m., $50-$150; DX, Nora en Pure, TBA. Mayhem, Wed., March 16, 9 p.m., TBA.

MEDUSA LOUNGE: 3211 Beverly Blvd. Canikkicksrattn, with DJ Nicky Dac, DJ Jesse Cold Cut, DJ Mike Murda, Sat., March 12, 10 p.m., $5.

OHM NIGHTCLUB: 6801 Hollywood Blvd. Walshy Fire, Thu., March 17, 9 p.m.-2 a.m., $20.

SOUND NIGHTCLUB: 1642 N. Las Palmas Ave. MK, Kidd Kitt, Fri, March 11, 10 p.m., $20. Main Event 12, Sat., March 12, 7-11 p.m., $50-$150; DX, Nora en Pure, Croatia Squad, Antonio Giacca, Sat., March 12, 11 p.m., $40. Richie Hawtin, Ein Goldenen, Mon., March 14, 10 p.m., $25-$35 (see Music Pick).

UNION NIGHTCLUB: 4067 W. Pico Blvd. DJ Anjali, The Seth Bogart Show, With Mystic Braves, 8 p.m., TBA.

ELECTRA: 7 p.m., $12. The Teragram Ballroom.
HERB OHTA JR., BRYAN TOLENTINO: With Chris Kamaka, Del Beazley, Asa Young, Ililani Kamaka, 2 p.m., $47. The Ruth B. Shannon Center for the Performing Arts, 6760 Painter Ave., Whittier.

JOSE GONZALEZ: With YMusic, 8 p.m., $46-$124. Walt Disney Concert Hall. See Music Pick.


ROASANE CASH & JOHN LEVENTHAL: 7:30 p.m., $55-$58. The Broad Stage, Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center, 1310 11th St.

SILVASTER: With Being as an Ocean, Embarosa, Colorama, Ratty, 6:30 p.m., TBA. The Fonda Theatre, 6126 Hollywood Blvd.

 TAYLOR MAC’S 24-DECADE HISTORY OF POPULAR MUSIC: With Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles, 8 p.m., $19-$59. UCLA, Royce Hall, 340 Royce Drive, Westwood.

SUNDAY, MARCH 13

ANDREA GIBSON: With Soak, 8 p.m., TBA. The Fonda Theatre, 6126 Hollywood Blvd.

BURGER X OBSERVATORY FIVE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY: With Crystal Castles, Beach Fossils, The Owls, Too Short, Chinaco Batman, Tijuana Panthers, The Lemons, Mystic Braves, Bobay, Bum, the Created, Moving Units, The Pesos, Meatbodies, The Lemons, Mystic Braves, Nobunny, Kim Kalil. Other stand-ups taking the mic include Aida Rodriguez, best known as a finalist on Last Comic Standing.

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TUESDAY, MARCH 15


ESPERANZA SPALDING: 8 p.m., $35. The Regent Theater, 448 S. Main St.

EIGHTH WONDER: With Sahtyre, The Dream Junkies, 9 p.m., TBA. El Rey Theatre.

THE REVIVALISTS: 8 p.m., $20. The Teragram Ballroom, 1234 W. Seventh St.

YANNI: 8 p.m., TBA. Microsoft Theater.

BEN RECTOR: With Gavin James, 8 p.m., TBA. The Belasco Theater, 1050 S. Hill St.

TUESDAY, MARCH 16

MAGMA: With Helen Money, 8 p.m., $35.50. The Regent Theater, 448 S. Main St. See Music Pick.

Mirs, 9th Wonder: 8 p.m., TBA. The Belasco Theater, 1050 S. Hill St.

FLOGGING MOLLY, GOGOL BORDELLO, YOUNG THUG: 9 p.m., TBA. The Belasco Theater, 1050 S. Hill St.

ESPERANZA SPALDING: 9 p.m., TBA. El Rey Theatre.

ULRICH KRIEGER: 8 p.m. Boston Court, 70 N. Mentor Ave., Pasadena.

THE BROAD STAGE: Featuring the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. The chorus falls to Earth with selections by Bernstein, Copland and Reina Esmaili, Sat., March 12, 7:30 p.m.; Sun., March 13, 4 p.m., free. Atadena Community Church, 943 E. Atadena Drive, Altadena.

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND: Classical & New Music, Thursday, March 17

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

TRIO CÉLESTE: With Sahtyre, The Dream Junkies, 9 p.m., TBA. El Rey Theatre.

THE MERRY WIDOW: The ever-irreverent Pacific Opera Project shifts Franz Lehár’s opera to Gold Rush California. The cast is strong, particularly soprano Bevin Hill as the title character and baritone Nick LaJesse as Sheriff Danny Loewe, Fri.-Sat., March 11-12, 8 p.m., $15-$120. Highland Park Ebell Club, 131 S. Avenue 57, Highland Park.

PASadena master chorales: The chorus falls to Earth with selections by Bernstein, Copland and Reina Esmaili, Sat., March 12, 7:30 p.m.; Sun., March 13, 4 p.m., free. Atadena Community Church, 943 E. Atadena Drive, Altadena.

BRIAN ASAWA & DIANA TASH: Countertenor Asawa and mezzo-soprano Tash are backed by harpsichordist Arthur Omura and cellist Alexa Pilon for a midday set of music by Handel, Monteverdi, Purcell and Scarlatti, Sat., March 12, noon, free. Edendale Library, 2011 W. Sunset Blvd.


FALLUJAH: Long Beach Opera presents the world premiere of composer Tobin Stokes and librettist Heather Raffo’s English-language opera about a U.S. soldier who returns from the war in Iraq and attempts to reconcile with his family while dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder, Sat., March 12, 8 p.m., Sun., March 13, 2:30 p.m., March 17-19, 8 p.m.; March 19-20: 2:30 p.m., $67-$137. Army National Guard, 854 E. Seventh St., Long Beach.

FUJIKO HEMMING & MAREK SZPAKIEWICZ: Partially deaf pianist Hemming and cellist Szpakiewicz commemorate the victims of the tragic earthquake and tidal wave in Japan with piano sonatas, dances and more by Schubert, Ravel, Rachmaninoff, Mozart, Massenet, Chopin, Brahms and Liszt. Sun., March 13, 7:30 p.m., $25-$35. The Colburn School of Music, Zipper Concert Hall, 200 S. Grand Ave.

IGUDEMAN & JOO: Fri., March 11, 7:30 p.m., TBA. The Wilson Observatory, 740 Holladay Road, Pasadena.

JAMES GALWAY & JEANNE GALWAY: The flutists exhale melodies by Haydn, Faure, Debussy, Doppler, Bizet, Bone, Gossec, Marsias and Liszt. Thu., March 16, 7:30 p.m., TBA. The Broad Stage, Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center, 1310 11th St., Santa Monica.

JOE CANTRELL: Thu., March 17, 7:30 p.m., TBA. The Music Center, Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave.

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THE MERRY WIDOW: The ever-irreverent Pacific Opera Project shifts Franz Lehár’s opera to Gold Rush California. The cast is strong, particularly soprano Bevin Hill as the title character and baritone Nick LaJesse as Sheriff Danny Loewe, Fri.-Sat., March 11-12, 8 p.m., $15-$120. Highland Park Ebell Club, 131 S. Avenue 57, Highland Park.

PASadena master chorales: The chorus falls to Earth with selections by Bernstein, Copland and Reina Esmaili, Sat., March 12, 7:30 p.m.; Sun., March 13, 4 p.m., free. Atadena Community Church, 943 E. Atadena Drive, Altadena.


TAPEStery: The vocal group is accompanied by clarinetist James Falzone for starry renditions of music by Hildegard von Bingen, Debussy, Howaness, Randall Thompson and David Lang at the stellar location, Sun., March 13, 1, 3 & 5 p.m., $85. Mount Wilson Observatory, 740 Holladay Road, Pasadena.

TRIO CÉLESTE: The piano-strings-ensemble laces to gether Beethoven’s “Adagio” piano trio, Sun., March 13, 2 p.m., free. Rolling Hills United Methodist Church, 26438 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Peninsula.

ULRICH KRIEGER: The composer presents Universe, a work for electronics and saxophone, Wed., March 16, 7:30 p.m., free. Santa Monica Public Library, Main Branch, 601 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica.

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