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THE ANALOG GOLDMINE ... 9
Master recordings — from Abbey Road to Born to Run — could be lost forever, without archivists’ help. BY MATT WAKE.
Together, we’ll write the next chapter.

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In a room on the second floor of the cylindrical Capitol Records building is a beige, boxy convection oven that could pass for a droid R2-D2 might “swipe right” for on Tinder. This type of Lindberg/Blue convection oven is primarily used in laboratories and for product testing. At Capitol, it’s used to resurrect priceless analog tapes containing some of popular music’s most landmark recordings.

One floor below, down a hallway lined with black-and-white photos of such Capitol Records artists as Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney and Glen Campbell, these tapes are stored in a high-ceilinged room, its walls lined with industrial metal shelving. From several steps back, it almost looks like a roomful of old Yellow Pages phone books. But move closer and you see that the shelves contain rows and rows of vertically stored analog audio tapes, labeled in black marker on yellow spines.

The shelves’ contents will blow a music fan’s mind. A row of Beatles master tapes for *The White Album*. Masters for John Coltrane’s *Blue Train*, filed next to Miles Davis’ *Birth of the Cool*, Billy Idol’s *Rebel Yell* masters on the same shelf as a fleet of Frank Sinatra tapes.

A master tape is the final mix from a recording session, often on quarter-inch or half-inch two-track tape. The Capitol production library also contains some multitrack recordings from which masters are typically mixed, as well as digital sources. If an album was recorded earlier than about 1994, it was likely cut on tape.

But analog tapes are subject to physical decay, especially if they’re stored incorrectly or have absorbed moisture. And ironically, while older tapes from the ‘50s and ‘60s generally remain robust and pristine-sounding, some tapes from later eras, particularly the mid-’70s to mid-’80s, are of inferior quality and much more susceptible to breaking down. So now, labels like Capitol are in a race to make sure that all of their master tapes get digitally transferred before they eventually become unusable.

“They’ve changed the formulation of tapes several times over the years, and all those things age,” says Dave McEowen, a Capitol Records archive transfer engineer for 22 years. “They’re organic compounds. And they...
On a recent morning, McEowen is seated at a table inside Capitol’s climate-controlled production library, some reels from a vintage Beach Boys concert in Long Beach in front of him. New tapes come into the archives all the time from various sources and go into his digital-transfer queue.

The biggest challenge McEowen faces as an archivist: “The condition of the tapes, because they’ve been stored for so long,” he says. With his glasses, gray ponytail and beard, he looks both professorial and like a longtime Allman Brothers fan. “Some of them are 40 years old or so. They may have absorbed moisture if they haven’t been stored correctly. And that requires baking, in an oven at 120 degrees for six hours. Oxide loss off the tapes creates droplets; sounds will either completely go away or will fade out and come back.

“The other thing would be edits in the tapes,” he continues. “A lot of these songs come from multiple takes, so they will splice individual parts, like the chorus from one in with the verse from another. And if the splicing tape has dried out, those will just come apart on you, so lots of times you’ll have to go back and replace them all.”

McEowen revels in the details of his job. “How can I get this tape to play back absolutely perfectly?” he says. “It’s very challenging to get a perfect [digital] recording that is as true to the original analog tape as we can possibly get. And the challenge in that, I find very satisfying.”

Handling legendary tapes is a regular part of the work. But every once in a while McEowen will have, say, the original Abbey Road master in his hands and think to himself, “Shit. The LP I listened to when I was 12 was probably made from this tape.”

Capitol’s chief archivist, Jack Arenas, selects the tapes that McEowen will be working on each day; lately his queue has included masters from The Beatles, Nat King Cole, Sinatra and Dean Martin. McEowen takes those tapes over to the Gогerty Building, which neighbors the Capitol Records building. Once there, he puts the tape on a Studer, a Swiss-made tape machine known for its reliability and for being very gentle on tapes. McEowen uses test tones on the tape to align machine and tape correctly and maximize fidelity.

“THEY’RE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS ... AND THEY WILL GET TO THE POINT WHERE THEY WILL BE UNPLAYABLE.”

—the Capitol Records archivist "DAVE MCEOWEN"

The Studer is hooked up to a desktop computer running Pro Tools. McEowen plays a tune through, noting the peaks, and adjusts his analog-to-digital converter, a hugely important link in the digital-conversion chain. The hi-res digital copies are extremely detailed. 192 kHz/24-bit, meaning the sound is sampled 192,000 times per second. (Commercial CDs, by comparison, sample at a rate of 44.1 kHz/16-bit.)

In the archiving business, they refer to quarter-inch master tapes as “assets.” Assets that have not been under Capitol’s care often have a lot more problems, McEowen says. “I’ve had tapes where you open up the box and it’s just a pile of loose tape, just like spaghetti, all tangled up together.”

Aside from improper storage, analog tapes can suffer from sticky shed syndrome, a condition resulting from tape binder deterioration, causing gummy residue to collect on tape heads during playback. If you put a tape with sticky shed on a machine without treating it first, you’ll literally rub the information right off the tape. This is where baking comes in — but only in a convection oven, as a regular oven will melt the tape. Baking analog tape correctly reconstitutes the tape’s binder, giving engineers a 24- to 48-hour window to work with the tape without ruining it — but tapes with sticky shed, particularly those made after the mid-’70s, are at greater risk of becoming unplayable.

Getting engineers and archivists to acknowledge which titles are most at risk from sticky shed and other factors is nearly impossible. No one wants to “out” artists whose recordings are marred by lost or damaged masters. More than once, sources interviewed for this story declined to name which artists’ recordings were involved in the tape mishaps they recounted, instead referring vaguely to a “’70s rock artist” with mold issues on their privately stored tapes, or “’pop from the 1980s” where the tape had dried out to the point that it was flaking off, or a “giant group” working on reissues whose tapes from the 2000s (to this day, a small percentage of bands still records on analog) were already afflicted with sticky shed.

Universal Music Group, which purchased Capitol Records in 2012, has literally millions of tapes. Around 2,000 or so are in the Capitol library, mostly in-demand artists and titles used most frequently for remastering, hi-res digital transfers, restoration or research. But like much of the recording industry, Universal keeps most of its tapes in rural western Pennsylvania, more than 200 feet underground in a former limestone mine owned by Iron Mountain, a data storage and records management company.

Many of the masters for jazz giant Blue Note Records are stored by Iron Mountain at a separate facility in Hollywood. Don Was, known for his work as a producer with artists including The Rolling Stones, Bonnie Raitt, John Mayer and Lucinda Williams, became president of Blue Note in 2001. Was is invested in the durability of older tapes and doesn’t “feel tremendous pressure to get things over” to digital, saying that converting Blue Note masters to hi-res digital is “really for the listener” (though he acknowledges that he’s seen his share of sticky shed syndrome in ’80s-era tapes).

Blue Note, which also is owned by Universal and does its transfers at the Capitol Records building, keeps a library of original vinyl pressings to reference when digitally transferring and remastering analog tape. It has about 80 percent of its titles in-house and reaches out to a collector known as “Mr. Blue Note” for the few it’s missing. Was would even occasionally seek counsel from legendary jazz audio engineer Rudy Van Gelder, who recorded many Blue Note classics by Coltrane, Miles, Thelonious Monk and others before his death in August at the age of 91.

“As mediums change, people make attempts to improve upon the original,” Was explains. “Over the years it shifts — not through any kind of evil-spirited moves; people just reinterpret things. But the question becomes: If you have a classic piece of music that everyone has known and loved for years, should you editorialize it at all, even if technology allows you the opportunity to do so? And in our case, we decided you shouldn’t. You should stick with the thing that everyone was excited about when they released the record. Even if it’s got some artifacts that might go against the precepts of high fidelity. Sometimes distortion is desirable; sometimes distortion has a character that is inseparable from the music.”

That kind of attention to detail hasn’t always been part of the digital remastering process. Was recalls working with The Rolling Stones in the ’90s, remastering the band’s post-Sticky Fingers catalog.

“Even after we approved a mastered sound, we’d play back CDs and they didn’t sound the same as the test CDs,” Was says. “And when we looked into it, we found that quality control at that time consisted of making sure there was data on the CD. But no one was listening to it. As long as there was something printed on it, it was acceptable.”
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> 10 ) Was fears what might happen to some of the records he’s produced, such as Raït’s Grammy-winning Nick of Time, if they’re reissued many years from now. “I know how much work we put in to getting everything just right, and I don’t want to think about some guy that I don’t know, that doesn’t have any connection to the records I’ve made or any of the artists I’ve worked with, making some decision after we’re all dead and adding more treble to something.”

Just a few blocks from Capitol on Gower Street stands a green, modern-minimalist building that houses Bernie Grundman Mastering. From the front door, there’s a nice view of the Hollywood Sign. The space’s interior is airy and decorated with modern art — one wall is covered with platinum records from artists including Michael Jackson, Prince, Madonna, Steely Dan and Stevie Wonder. The records Grundman has mastered, which include Purple Rain, Thriller and The Chronic, have played a large role in defining the sound of popular music in the last 30-plus years.

Mastering is the crucial final step of fine-tuning and polishing a recording before commercial consumption. The goal is to make the release sound as vibrant, cohesive and impactful as possible, however it’s listened to, whether it’s an MP3 on earbuds, streaming audio on a crappy car radio, or 180 gram vinyl on a high-end home stereo. And as playback technology and consumer habits continue to evolve, mastering — the art of taking a previously mastered record and reshaping it to sound just as good in a newer format — has become an equally important part of the business.

A recent afternoon, Bernie Grundman is sitting inside a red-walled mastering studio in front of a customized console that looks like a set piece from a classic sci-fi film. In this acoustically balanced space, even silence sounds better. Wearing taste-}

Daniel Lanois has produced albums for U2 and Emmylou Harris.

“Analog has the information spread out over a really big area, so it can withstand deterioration better,” he explains. “The problem with digital is when it goes bad, you lose it; it drops out and it actually shuts off because it can’t form a signal or it gets real staticky. When it goes bad, it goes bad in a bad way. Whereas analog tape is a gradual thing, and if it’s going to go bad, you might get a little more noise from losing these particles, but it usually plays OK and then you catch it and make a copy.”

As durable as classic, well-cared-for analog masters can be, they can get worn out, especially if they’re of popular titles. In the analog era, master tapes also were used to make “safety copies,” for remastering, reissues and other purposes. Engineers weren’t original master. “There’s nothing you can do except go back to the original, if you’re a real die-hard audiophile and you want the absolute best quality.”

Grundman’s friend Bob Ludwig, a veteran engineer who mastered classic albums for Jimi Hendrix, Queen, David Bowie and Led Zeppelin, also would much rather work with an original master, but these days he doesn’t always get the chance. Record companies have become increasingly reluctant to ship original masters to his Gateway Mastering Studios in Portland, Maine, so about 80 percent of the time now, he estimates, he’s given access to hi-res direct stream digital copies instead of the actual tapes. This was how he remastered the recent early Rolling Stones records in mono, which have drawn raves.

“We’re an independent business, and we’re hired to do what we are and we work with what we’re sent,” Ludwig says. “Sometimes I know what kind of machine they used to do the transfer. And there are good times when they will do a transfer and they used just the machine I would have, and other times (they don’t). It’s luck of the draw sometimes.”

When it comes to remastering, Ludwig is less of a purist than Don Was. To remaster a recent multi-album set of Bruce Springsteen reissues (he jokes that he’s probably remastered Born to Run five times by now), Ludwig used something called the Plan-gent Processes Playback System, a hybrid of analog and digital technology that can correct some of the natural distortion present on any analog tape.

“If you have the original master tape,” Ludwig explains, “this guy Jamie Howarth, who invented [Plangent], has a way of using special electronics that completely lowers the distortion on recording tape. If the tape machine was not as up to snuff as they could be then, it could really behove you to use the Plangent Process on those master tapes. It removes the wow and flutter from the recording. In the case of those early Bruce Springsteen recordings, like Greetings From Asbury Park or The Wild, the Innocent & the E Street Shuffle, if you hear these new reissues that are out now, you’ll be shocked hearing how much cleaner they are. I’ve known these [records] my whole life; to hear the extra detail that can be gotten out of those old tapes was really quite amazing.”

For Ludwig, Howarth’s invention is a reminder of the importance of preserving analog master tapes. “Something else in the future we’re not even thinking of could be invented, and amazing things could be done from those original masters yet again.”

Storing analog tapes takes up significant space, and transferring those tapes to hi-res digital formats costs thousands of dollars per record. Although Universal and Capitol have been actively archiving and making digital transfers for decades, they have decades to go before they’ve addressed all their tapes. For an industry that has seen its revenues plummet over the past 15 years, the storage and transfer costs of analog can be daunting.

“Think the worst-case scenario would be a world where people think music should be free, and as a result there’s not the kind of investment capital there to sustain our rich history,” says Barak Moffitt, Universal’s executive vice president of content strategy and operations, speaking by phone from the company’s Santa Monica corporate headquarters. “People don’t think about that. People think a lot about current artists, but our history is in the middle of this paradigm shift from ownership to consumption as well.”

Moffit’s awakening to the power of original analog masters happened inside Capitol’s Studio A. He was listening to playback
master tapes.”

For many years, original studio multitrack tapes were even less well-preserved than the masters. The general feeling in the ‘60s, ‘70s and ‘80s was: Once a song was mixed, why would anyone ever go back to the multitracks? But when the video game Guitar Hero came along in 2005, offering players the chance to play and sing the individual parts of popular rock songs, the industry went looking for those two-inch reels containing isolated vocals, drums and guitar parts — and freaked out when, very often, it couldn’t find them.

Patrick Kraus, Universal’s senior vice president of studio, production and archive services, remembers the Guitar Hero scramble as a turning point for industry archivists. “Lots of stories about deals being done: ‘Yes, we’re going to do this whole album on Guitar Hero. Amazing! Hey vault, give me the multitracks.’ ‘We don’t have them.’ And there’s nothing you can do. But it was great from an archivist perspective, because suddenly industrywide, people started to recognize, ‘Wait a minute. This stuff in the vaults is really, really valuable.’”

Like Grundman, Kraus, who began his career as a recording engineer and later worked as an executive at Sony and Warner Elektra Atlantic, is confident in the durability of well-cared-for, non–sticky shed-era original masters. He’s more worried about the longevity of the hardware and specialized skills needed to maintain them.

“The thing that concerns me the most about analog-tape preservation,” Kraus says, “is that we lose the expertise and the machinery and all the peripheral equipment that is necessary for analog tape to work. Leader tape. Splicing tape. Tape heads. Resistors. All those little things that go into the transfer, there’s not a whole lot of incentive for people to continue to make those materials because it’s such a tiny little market.”

Universal owns about 30 tape machines, including several at the Capitol building. They cannibalize some of the machines for parts for repairs. Universal’s strategy going forward is to continue to acquire tape machines, seek out expertise and train new engineers to handle tape and the machines properly.

“We at Universal are going to make sure we aren’t going to be in trouble,” Kraus says, “but I think people who aren’t necessarily thinking about it right now will be in trouble in 10 years, for sure.”

Because of The Grateful Dead’s vast catalog of live recordings from their 30-year career, the pioneering jam band boasts one of the largest analog archives of any recording artist in history. Their tape archives were relocated from the Bay Area in 2006 and are now housed in a non-descript warehouse in the San Fernando Valley. The climate-controlled and highly secure facility features two shell-like layers constructed into it, for protection from the elements and other hazards. Inside, in the central area, it’s shelves upon shelves of tapes, dating back to the mid-‘60s, organized chronologically by format.

“It looks like the last scene of Citizen Kane,” says Dead archivist David Lemieux, who’s based in British Columbia. A fan and former amateur taper who recorded around 50 Dead shows from between 1989 and 1991, Lemieux has been the band’s official archivist for 17 years now. He’s the man behind the Grateful Dead’s Dave’s Picks live archive release series, taking over where late Dead archivist Dick Latvala’s Dick’s Picks left off.

There are still reels in the archive that blow Lemieux’s mind, like the more than 75 reels of tape recorded for what became the landmark Dead concert LP Europe ’72. Perhaps even more mind-blowing is that the collection’s many tapes that were once stored in less-than-ideal conditions still sound pretty good — like the 1971 reels found on former Dead keyboardist Keith Godchaux’s parents’ houseboat, or the missing 1969 and 1970 tapes a former crew member found and returned, after they’d been stored for years in his garage in the balmy South. “We’ve always been able to bake a tape to get the proper play out of it to do the hi-res backup and the CD production,” Lemieux says.

With so many superfans still eager to hear and purchase their concert recordings, the Dead have a huge commercial interest in maintaining their archives. But Lemieux says it’s more than that. He sees these reels as holy relics.

“That is the original document that has the provenance of having actually been at that Grateful Dead show,” Lemieux says. “It would be similar to a photographer. Ansel Adams’ archive probably has these fantastic negatives from which they’ve made as high-resolution of a scan as you could do, but they would never get rid of the originals. Because that’s the original document.”
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BY BESHA RODELL

These past few months have been especially hard on most people’s capacity for national pride, and it’s been easy to fall into a pit of despair over the state of our culture. So amid this glut of negativity, let us take solace in the small victories. Let us be thankful for spicy fried chicken.

I’m not sure why the hot chicken revolution took so long, but rather than dwell on that, let us instead celebrate our new national shared understanding: that spicy fried chicken is one of the greatest culinary gifts of all time. It’s strange that outside of Tennessee and a few fast food chains we didn’t succumb sooner to the joys of spicy fried chicken.

The chicken at Gus’s is delicious, in the true Nashville-style hot-chicken joints, with that low-level chili sting of spiciness. There’s only one level: “hot.” Plates come with two or three pieces of chicken, or you might get at a Gus’s in Tennessee or Memphis. It’s now a bona fide national chain, with 17 restaurants across the South and Midwest.

The L.A. location, which opened in June at the corner of Crenshaw and West Pico in Mid-City, is the first Gus’s west of Texas. Each location is based on the Memphis store, which is to say they all feel homey and un-chainlike. The L.A. version is a fairly decent approximation of the Memphis Gus’s — the brick walls are festooned with memorabilia and neon and Budweiser mirrors (despite the fact that there is currently no beer or booze for sale), and there are too many large-screen TVs playing sports.

Unlike Prince’s or Howlin’ Ray’s or any of the true Nashville-style hot-chicken joints, Gus’s does not have different categories of spiciness. There’s only one level: “hot & spicy.” Plates come with two or three pieces of chicken, white or dark meat, atop a slice of white bread and with baked beans and coleslaw as sides. The coating on the chicken is thin and shattery. It seems as if they have somehow taken the skin of the chicken and imbued it with a slow-burning heat and lots of salt and crisped it to the point where the fat has liquefied and re-fused and created a perfect amalgamation of crackling schmaltz and cayenne. Yes, the interior is juicy, even on the white meat, and if you order the three-piece dark meat plate, you may find yourself dazed and covered in red and brown grease and wondering where all that chicken went when you had planned to take at least one piece home with you. And maybe you want another piece. Maybe you could just sit here and eat this chicken indefinitely.

There are treats here beyond the chicken, especially for Southerners craving a taste of home. This might be the most authentic and decent iced tea in town (half sweet, half unsweet is the way to go), and the fried okra, collard greens and coleslaw all do their job very well, though they fail to reach the heights of the chicken. If you’re a lover of creamy-style mac and cheese, Gus’s delivers a tangy, delicious version. All of the sides are good without being stunningly great, which is fine because they aren’t the star of the show anyway.

It’s hard to resist ordering a slice of pie at the end of your chicken bacchanal, especially because finding great chess pie in L.A. is a struggle. But I thought Gus’s version was a little too eggy, the crust too stiff even when offered slightly warmed. The best chess pie manages to remake sugar into a molten, stretchy, almost liquid substance, and I’m afraid I may have been ruined by my North Carolina mother-in-law’s version, which tastes more like everything amazing about caramelized sugar and less like too-sweet custard. Are my standards unfair? Probably. Once you’ve tasted greatness there’s no going back.

Is the chicken a little less spicy than what you might get at a Gus’s in Tennessee or Mississippi? I think it is. It’s possible my tastebuds and memory are playing tricks on me, and either way I’m not complaining. The chicken at Gus’s is delicious, in Memphis and in L.A. If extreme heat is what you’re after, there’s a two-hour line at Howlin’ Ray’s with your name on it.

The dining room at Gus’s is one of the most diverse, customewise, that I’ve seen in L.A., which is a trait I’ve noticed at other fried-chicken spots in the South and beyond. The company proudly claims that from its earliest days in Mason, this chicken brought black and white people to the table together, when that wasn’t common. It’s probably ridiculous for me to hope, on this of all weeks, that fried poultry might be something that works to unite us. But looking out over the dining room at Gus’s, with that low-level chill ringing warm your soul, you might at least take comfort in this one small miracle: Spicy chicken’s time has come.

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Sun.-Thu., 11 a.m.-9 p.m.; Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Plates, $8.90-$15.90 | No alcohol | Street parking (lot parking for carry-out customers only)
Eats // Squid Ink //

## EVERYONE LOVES MARCUS

AND THE CELEBRITY CHEF LOVES L.A.'S STRIP MALL SUSHI

No one has a bad word to say about Marcus Samuelsson. The Ethiopia-born, Sweden-raised, Manhattan-made chef has worked at and opened a lot of restaurants on the East Coast, as well as participating in various TV food shows. By all accounts, he is kind to everybody. He doesn’t have to be. He’s friends with celebrities, is married to a fantastic woman and has one of the flyest wardrobes in New York. But Samuelsson, be it by design or by nature, is still an easygoing man of the people. When meeting reporters in the lobby of the Ace Hotel downtown, he told us not to wait for him while he got coffee, and gave us his room key.

So it’s no wonder chefs all over the world open their kitchens to Samuelsson. He’s bouncing around the country in support of his new book, Red Rooster Harlem: The Cookbook, and between a dinner at Leona and a lunch at Chi Spacca, he talked about local chefs from Nyasha Arrington to Wolfgang Puck and why the food scene in L.A. is so exciting — it’s because we come from all over the world.

### SQUID INK: You did a dinner at Leona with the chef there, Nyasha Arrington. Have you worked with her before?

**MARCUS SAMUELSSON:** Yeah, of course! I love Nyasha. You don’t post up with just any chef. I’ve always been a big admirer of Nyasha. I got to know her first through Jo-siah Citrin, who is always for me an iconic L.A. chef... When he says, “Look at this person,” it’s a good sign. There’s something very cerebral and focused about her.

### Have you had Ethiopian food here in L.A.?

**MARCUS SAMUELSSON:** Yeah! I love Merkato, I love Little Ethiopia. One time I was here on, like, Ethiopia Day, and there was a parade, which was cool. There were kids, and the whole community was out. It’s just nice that in the middle of the city you have this sticking-togetherness. One of the things I love about L.A. is that the food scene, through the lens of the immigrants in L.A., is just incredible. I don’t know any food town like L.A. It’s magical. Ktown is just magical. Little Ethiopia... I’m deeply in love with that little mall sushi that you have. We can never get that game in New York.

### Why not?

It’s deep... honestly, you guys are just closer to Asian culture. Not just geographically, but the whole understanding of the culture. Not just Japan, but all the other Asian cultures... the Vietnamese game is right here, and of course Mexican... I just love the ethnic food scene in L.A. All of it.

### And what about the big-name restaurants in L.A. — have any favorites?

Mozza is delicious. I love what Ludo [Lefebvre] is doing. He carries the French flag so beautifully, but he does it in a very contemporary way and he’s a great teacher. Those students who come out of his kitchen are good. That’s the next generation. Also I love Night + Market. I love what Kris [Yenbamroong] is doing. And, being an immigrant like me, Wolfgang [Puck] will always be my man. Even when he screams at me! He’s the American dream.

Have you told him you feel that way?

Listen, there’s not much I can tell Wolfgang. He tells me what to do. I don’t know when we’re actually going to change that relationship, when I can tell him anything, but I’ll call you the day I can do that!

—Katherine Spiers

## LIQUOR LICENSES

Bar Covell Is Officially a Bar, for the First Time

It borders on cultural phenomenon. The New York Times put it on a short list of destinations for swank libations. Thrillist exalted it as L.A.’s favorite on its roundup of the country’s best wine bars: a massive wine selection printed nowhere and instead individually concierged into your glass by an encyclopedic bartender.

But on paper at L.A. City Hall, Bar Covell was a juice bar. Dustin Lancaster, who founded Covell on his own vision after years of tending bar at Café Stella, learned about the discrepancy when it was time to renew his use permit, the city’s approved record for a specific category of business.

Somehow Covell was licensed to serve alcohol by the city and the state while an-other department logged it as a juice spot, even through another round of related permitting when Lancaster expanded Covell’s square footage in 2011 and then got clearance in 2014 to build his five-room Hotel Covell directly above the bar.

All permitting applications were completed to the letter — from Covell’s side. Elizabeth Peterson, who assisted Bar Covell with its alcohol permit, also has completed the process for other prominent local bars Library Bar, Broadway Bar and
in L.A. Though it’s highly competitive, the embrace of the creative spirit here means a potential to win big in terms of revenue, customer base and critical acclaim. And Los Angeles has become one of the country’s main food destinations.

What exactly about the L.A. food scene appeals most to culinary professionals looking to grow their career and business? We asked local chef/restauranters Ted Hopson of the Bellwether, Erik Oberholtzer of Tender Greens and Jed Sanford of Blackhouse Hospitality Management.

Global influence

It’s often said that L.A. doesn’t have its own unique culture — yet while it may not have the history or clear demographics of other cities, L.A. offers something even better: an always-overlapping array of cultures and, in turn, cuisines.

Sanford, one of two partners behind Blackhouse Hospitality Management and its seven local restaurants, notes that he and his business partner chose to open Abiguile and subsequent concepts around L.A. due to the area’s cultural landscape, which he says offers “a ton of opportunity for restaurateurs to try new things.”

After moving here to be executive chef at Shutters on the Beach, Oberholtzer knew he wanted to start his next chapter in L.A. He and his partners chose to launch Tender Greens here as L.A. is “big, international, forward-thinking, dynamic, with great climate and a rich history.” He believes that “people in L.A. are open, sophisticated, globally influenced in culture and cuisine.”

Pop culture

It’s pretty much impossible to examine any part of L.A. without considering the influence of Hollywood. Cuisine is no exception. Sitting in the hub of popular culture, restaurants in L.A., as well as the chefs behind them, can set trends, rise quickly to fame and influence the larger national and international restaurant landscapes.

This is especially true with the emergence of social media as one of the most powerful tools for marketing, especially when it comes to food-centric social media. Says Oberholtzer, “L.A. has a lock on American pop culture. If you can create buzz here, you can grow very quickly.”

Middle ground

Traditionally, the culinary landscape has been characterized by an atmospheric gap: Restaurants have fallen at either the casual or uber-fancy end of the spectrum. Hopson, who worked as the executive chef at Lukshon and Father’s Office before opening the Bellwether in 2015, recognizes that this divide became even more obvious after the recession, when “L.A. really lost a huge chunk of the high end of dining and gained an army of food trucks.”

According to Hopson, this shift created a space for restaurants to fill this gap. “Now, years later, we have hit that middle ground.” This middle is what inspired him to open the Bellwether, an example of what he calls “neighborhood places with amazing food — nothing pretentious, nothing too fancy, but really good.”

These concepts, melding chef-driven menus with a comfortable atmosphere, define the local culinary landscape and, Hopson says, “are becoming the backbone of the L.A. dining scene.” — Nile Cappello
THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR ARTISTS AND SPONSORS!

SEE YOU IN 2017!
**DANCE**

**Full Force**
With the exception of New York–based choreographer Gregory Dolbashian, L.A. Contemporary Dance Company stays true to its localism in its fall repertoire concert. Under the banner Force Majeure, LACDC unveils new works from locally based choreographers Christian Denice, Micaela Taylor and its artistic director, Genevieve Carson. One of the city’s perennially interesting companies, LACDC made its mark presenting a range of choreographers, not just the artistic director stepped aside; the choice of this atypical venue, known for plays more than dance, may reflect some of Carson’s vision for the company as the new artistic director, as well as a chance to view her choreography. Atwater Village Theatre, 3269 Casitas Ave., Atwater Village; Thu.-Sat., Nov. 10-12, 8:30 p.m.; Sun., Nov. 13, 6 p.m.; $25, $20 students. forcemajeurelacdc.brownpapertickets.com.

**POP Goes the Opera**
The folks at Pacific Opera Project love classic operas, but they never allow a reverence for tradition to get in the way of their ruddy funny makeovers. In September, POP brought back its popular, space-out, Star Trek–themed reinterpretation of Mozart’s The Abduction From the Seraglio, and this weekend sees a revival of its daft update of Gioachino Rossini’s The Barber of Seville. Cesare Sterbini’s quaint original libretto has been overhauled by POP music director Stephen Karr to reimagine the beloved Rosina (mezzo-soprano Meagan Gomez-Rejón) and the irrepressible celebrity hairstylist Figaro (baritone Bernardo Bermudez). Highland Park Ebell Club, 131 S. Avenue 57, Highland Park; Fri.-Sat., Nov. 11-12, 8 p.m. (also Nov. 17-19); $20-$120. (323) 739-6122, pacificoperaproject.com.

**OPERA**

**The Art of Coffee: Enlightenment in a Cup**
unveils the history and rituals surrounding the miracle of coffee. Celebrated and banned, worshipped and decaffeinated, its roots stretch from antediluvian Africa to this morning’s salon, during which culinary archaeologist Maite González-Rejón and educator Mary Lenihan will show off LACMA’s exhaustive collection of coffee pots you didn’t even know it had. From there, the group trots over to Ray’s for baked goods and several kinds of coffee. It’s never too early (or late) for a dose of caffeine. LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Sat., Nov. 12, 9 a.m.; $55, $50 members. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org/event/art-coffee.

**SHOPPING**

**You Don’t Know Jack**
Jackalope: An Indie Artisan Market is the brainchild of three women who decided to launch a community-driven craft fair in each of their hometowns: Pasadena, Denver and Phoenix. Melissa Shipley, Laura Fischer and Sara Diederich all wanted to create a semiannual tradition in the form of a curated bazaar where both local and national makers offer handmade wares to the public. With more than 200 artisans on hand, shoppers can browse everything from high-quality clothing and accessories to superior examples of art and design. It’s an ideal opportunity to take care of some early holiday shopping while supporting independent artists. Central Park, 275 S. Raymond Ave., Pasadena; Sat.-Sun., Nov. 12-13, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; free. (323) 989-2278, jackalopeartfair.com/pasadena.

**COMEDY**

**Motorcycle of Abuse**
Based on the Marvel Comics character, 2007’s Ghost Rider starred Nicolas Cage.
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L.A. Contemporary Dance Company, See Friday

As a stunt motorcycle rider who sells his soul to Mephistopheles and then becomes a flaming-skulled vigilante trying to take down a group of bad guys, led by the devil's son, Blackheart. The picture garnered bad reviews plus a Razzie Award nomination for worst actor for Cage. Marc Calderaro, however, has seen it more than 150 times, and he's determined to make you a fan, too. Calderaro began hosting his unironic live commentary, Ghost Rider: My Favorite Film, in his native Austin, Texas, in 2010. He screens the movie while providing in-depth knowledge of the original story, development, casting and special effects, in the hopes of getting you to give it a second chance. For his first Los Angeles show, Calderaro will be joined by Ghost Rider actor Jonathan Oldham (he played a motorcycle cop). The event is BYOB, and it'll help if you're nicely liquored up. Nerdist Showroom at Meltdown Comics, 7522 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Sat., Nov. 12, 3-5 p.m.; $10. (323) 851-7223, nerdmeltla.com.

—Siran Babayan

TALENS
Pretty Talk
David Sedaris is like the Picasso of the personal essay. Mining his childhood — and adulthood — for funny stories, Sedaris has managed to release eight books, including a compendium centered around his childhood speech impediment and the Christmas favorite Holidays on Ice, in which he details the winter he spent as an elf at Macy’s. Reading Sedaris is one thing, but listening to him tell his stories is an even more complete experience; he’s long been a favorite contributor to the public radio standby This American Life. At An Evening With David Sedaris, expect stories about sister Amy, partner Hugh and the rest of the characters in the author’s orbit. Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena; Tue., Nov. 15, 7:30 p.m.; $42-$175. visitpasadena.com/events/david-sedaris.

—Gwynedd Stuart

FOOD & DRINK
Plant One on Me
It’s a vegetable bonanza at the California Vegetarian Food Festival, a one-day food extravaganza at Hollywood’s Raleigh Studios. Speakers will hold forth on topics related to health, such as how to go vegan, what organic means, sports nutrition, weight loss and more. There will be vegan recipe demonstrations. Vendors from Donut Farm, India Jones Chow Truck, Bomb Fries & Ice Cream, Farm Fresh to You and more will be on hand giving out food samples and selling full meals. There also will be live music and an area for dancing. Raleigh Studios, 5300 Melrose Ave., Larchmont; Sun., Nov. 13, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; $30. cavegfoodfest.com.

—Katherine Spiers

CULTURE
Someone’s in the Kitchen
Anthony Bourdain lives a charmed life. After working his way up through the ranks in restaurant kitchens and serving as head chef at New York City brasserie Les Halles, Bourdain gave foodies a glimpse behind the swinging doors in the memoir Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly, which turned him into a culinary celebrity. Now he gets to travel the world and eat great food and tell us all about it on TV. In his new live show, Anthony Bourdain: The Hunger, he delivers a monologue about his travels, street food and more, and then opens the floor to questions from the audience. Want to hear more of his thoughts on beer snobs? Now’s your chance. Pantages Theatre, 6233 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Mon., Nov. 14, 7:30 p.m.; $65-$170. hollywoodpantages.com.

—Gwynedd Stuart

TUES
11/15

MUSIC
Words/Smith
There are plenty of books about Morrissey — including his 2013 memoir — but now British guitarist Johnny Marr finally gets to have his say on The Smiths and more in Set the Boy Free, which he discusses with KCRW’s Jason Bentley. Marr talks about doo-wop, glam rock and other early musical influences of his youth in 1960s Manchester, England. In 1981, he, Morrissey, Andy Rourke and Mike Joyce formed one of the greatest indie bands ever; The Smiths lasted only five years but
influenced countless alternative bands that followed, from Stone Roses to Oasis to Radiohead. Marr opens up about leaving the group and enduring one of the most oft-asked questions in pop music. (Marr admits he and Morrissey seriously discussed a Smiths reunion in 2008, but plans went nowhere.) Marr also chronicles his equally notable post-Smiths career, which includes three solo records and prolific collaborations with The The, Electronic, Modest Mouse and The Cribs. Vista Theatre, 4473 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Wed., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m.; $35 (includes book). (323) 660-1175, skylightbooks.com. —Siran Babayan

COMEDY

Native Tongue

If, as the old saying goes, comedy is tragedy plus time, then Native Americans should sadly have no shortage of material. Despite this, they are still woefully under-represented in comedy roles on stage and screen. Presented in conjunction with the L.A. Skins Fest — a Native American film festival now in its 10th year — the Native Sketch Comedy Showcase was established in 2013 to provide greater exposure for Native American comedians and actors. Just as important as the increased attention, however, the showcase offers the seven featured actors the opportunity to finally reclaim narratives that have been written by others for too long — and do so with a heavy dose of humor. Comedy Central Stage at the Hudson, 6539 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood; Wed., Nov. 16, & 18, 8 p.m.; free with RSVP (rsvp@laskinsfest.com). (323) 856-4249, laskinsfest.com/event/sketch-comedy-showcase. —Matt Stromberg

BOOKS

I Smell a Brat

San Francisco-based writer Kevin Smoker discusses the real and fictional towns of his favorite childhood films in his new book, Brat Pack America: Visiting Cult Movies of the ‘80s. Organized according to themes — movies set in the 1950s, sports movies, early hip-hop movies, John Hughes’ entire canon — the chapters map out the locations of some of the decade’s biggest flicks, from the San Fernando Valley of Valley Girls to the Universal Studios backlot that stood in for Hill Valley in Back to the Future to the Hughes-created Shermer, Illinois, used in Breakfast Club, Sixteen Candles, Ferris Bueller’s Day Off, and Weird Science. Smoker also includes interviews with actors and filmmakers such as Sixteen Candles’ Gedde Watanabe, directors Amy Heckerling, Martha Coolidge and Savage Steve Holland and writer Daniel Waters. Stories Books & Café, 1716 W. Sunset Blvd., Echo Park; Wed., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m.; free. (213) 413-3733, storiesla.com. —Siran Babayan

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Maria Bamford’s show-business parody about a comedian in Hollywood struggling with bipolar disorder, no doubt you’re thirsting for season two. But fans of Bamford know she was a comedy star long before her Netflix series, perfecting her wholly unique, woman-below-the- funny-voice stand-up since she was in her early 20s. (In an episode of Comedy Central’s This Is Not Happening last month, Bamford riffed on taking nearly two years off work after checking into a psychiatric ward. And in a recent appearance on The Late Show With Stephen Colbert, the host told her point blank she was his “favorite comedian on planet Earth.”) Catch Bamford in her stand-up element as she takes a new special for Comedy Central. With opener Jackie Kassian. The Novo by Microsoft, 800 W. Olympic Blvd., downtown; Thu., Nov. 17, 8 p.m.; $39.50- $39.50. thenovodtl.com. —Siran Babayan

FILM

Pod People

Comedians/filmmakers Chris Mancini and Graham Elwood co-host the Comedy Film Nerds podcast and produce the annual L.A. Podcast Festival. Tonight, they screen the premiere of Ear Buds: The Podcasting Documentary, which chronicles the medium’s origins, rise in popularity and role in promoting live comedy. Mancini and Elwood interview star hosts such as Marc Maron, Chris Hardwick, Jimmy Pardo, Joe Rogan, Aisha Tyler, Scott Aukerman, Doug Benson, Todd Glass, the Welcome to Night Vale guys and many others — some who’ve been podcasting for more than a decade — and look at the significance of episodes such as Glass coming out and President Obama’s interview, both on Maron’s WTF. The movie also delves into the tight-knit, far-reaching group of fans from L.A. to Sydney to Tokyo, who listen to their podcasts not only as a diversion but also as a form of therapy while coping with cancer, mental illness, deployment and even natural disasters. The Improv, 8162 Melrose Ave., Hollywood; Thu., Nov. 17, 7:30 p.m. (doors 7 p.m.); free. (323) 652-2553, hollywoodimprov.com. —Siran Babayan

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With Stephen Colbert

Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Wed., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m.; free with RSVP (rsvp@laskinsfest.com). (323) 856-4249, laskinsfest.com/event/sketch-comedy-showcase. —Matt Stromberg

[Image 194x187 to 684x596]
WITCHY WOMAN

Writer-director Anna Biller conjures the spirit of classic Hollywood in her new feature The Love Witch — but don’t compare it to a Russ Meyer movie

BY GUSTAVO TURNER

Most people have by now forgotten that the ubiquitous concept of “glamour” was originally part of the vocabulary of witchcraft.

Before the 19th century, “glamour” referred to a spell cast by a witch to cause people (generally men) to see things or people (usually the bewitcher herself) as the enchantress wished. She could create an irresistible impression on the minds of men in order to weaken them and lead them to perdition. Usually via sex.

The medieval and modern concepts of glamour meet in The Love Witch, L.A.-based feminist filmmaker Anna Biller’s stunning second feature, which follows the havoc being wreaked by a love-obsessed witch and indie crafter (seriously, she makes soaps and candles) named Elaine. She arrives in a California town like a Hitchcock heroine and immediately begins casting spells on all the men in her path; she’s a sexual Goldilocks trying to find one who’s just right.

Biller’s carefully constructed imagery is dazzling: colorful sets, detailed props (many of which are either handmade or authentic antiques), spot-on casting of character actors with looks seldom seen in contemporary cinema, and a lead actress (newcomer Samantha Robinson as Elaine) made up and styled to mesmerize. When the trailer for The Love Witch emerged online a few months ago, it became a cult hit with fans of the classic era of sexy, saturated-color horror films, circa 1967 to ’73. The Hitchcock-meets-Hammer Films vibe of The Love Witch serves as its siren call, but there’s much more to the film than what’s on its retro-tastic surface.

“When I first started working on The Love Witch, I was going through a terrible time in my personal life,” Biller says, sitting in a private dining room at Echo Park landmark Taix. “I felt like my heart was actually broken into pieces. I tried to memorize that feeling because I knew I wanted to put it in a movie.”

Biller’s filmmaking process is insanely intricate and laborious. The CalArts-trained filmmaker has managed to make lavish films (shot on actual film) with DIY craftiness and minute indie budgets for a couple of decades. She develops her scripts over many years, obsessing about the psychological reality of her charac-

ters. Then she sketches the elaborate sets and props and assembles them or makes them out of whole cloth (literally, in the case of drapes). Then she finds a vintage-looking cast. Oh, and she also writes and arranges much of the music.

“When all the people at the prop and scenery houses around Hollywood knew me because I was there all the time,” Biller says. “I used to get all my scenery from Warner Bros., MGM and Universal, but now, due to a couple of lawsuits, they only let me in during a designated window where I can go to salvage places and pick out old windows and doors. That’s how I put my sets together — a door here, a fireplace there. It takes years.”

If the vintage piece doesn’t exist, such as a pentagram rug Biller drew for a ritual scene, then she hooks it herself. “It took me six months working at night to hook the pentagram rug. It’s all Persian rug wool — I wouldn’t use acrylic — so it was also expensive. And then I had to learn how to make proper magic wands and soaps.”

Her previous movie, 2007’s underrated Viva, was a deep, moving satire about an innocent suburban housewife (played by Biller) getting lost in the sexual revolution of the early 1970s. Viva offered a modern, feminist take on Voltaire’s Candide, though several critics dismissed it as “trashy fun” and couldn’t look beyond what they saw as “Russ Meyer pastiche.”

Now, with The Love Witch, it seems they can’t stop talking about giallo films, the Italian genre from the 1960s and ’70s (think Dario Argento or Mario Bava) known for stylized sets and camera angles, as well as beautiful, undressed women.

“When I was researching the script, I looked at a lot of movies, including giallo films, [but] I couldn’t find a single giallo film that seemed like what I wanted to do,” Biller says. “I was trying to do a modern take on a powerful woman that was a femme fatale, a siren. It’s really more like the noir films, thematically.”

Biller has been showing The Love Witch at festivals for several months now and has noticed that the film works its magic differently on women and gay men than on straight guys.

“Women are looking at it, and they’re asking about the issue of heartbreak, about the men who are self-entitled and disappoint Elaine, about female subjectivity in film, about her princess and wedding fantasies,” Biller says. For straight men, “Elaine is a knockout, she has these mesmerizing eyes, she says very little, she listens to men adoringly, she’s cooking and baking and stripping for them — they tend to watch the movie as if it’s one big girlie mag for their pleasure. All they see is [actress] Samantha, and she looks like Edwige Fenech and Barbara Steele — and then I get compared to filmmakers I have nothing in common with, like Russ Meyer.”

Biller’s work is, however, informed by being a born-and-bred Angeleno. “I’m definitely a Los Angeles filmmaker,” Biller asserts. “I’m making films about Los Angeles, about the history of Hollywood.” She grew up in L.A. with artsy, bohemian parents — her father, Les Biller, is a painter and her mother, Sumiko, is a Japanese-American fashion designer who has run a namesake avant-classy boutique for decades.

Having a deep love and understanding of classic Hollywood glamour made Biller a misfit among her self-serious, mostly male, Stan Brakhage–influenced classmates. According to the director, her very aesthetic was controversial. The artifice of acting and emoting, anything theatrical, was considered vulgar by the art-film establishment.

That she’s a woman wasn’t trivial, either. Like many film students of the era, Biller was influenced by Laura Mulvey’s groundbreaking essay “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” with its critique of the pervasive “male gaze.”

As a writer, Biller has studied the dynamics between the genders and says it’s where she gets her psychological material. “There is the danger of falling in love and becoming destroyed by it,” she says. “I think that this is why men avoid it: They’re afraid of it, they want it to be more playful and just about sex because they don’t want to be destroyed by love.”

Elaine’s power is that she is better than men at love and certainly more dominant — she can just rip their hearts out.

Biller’s domestic partner is, in fact, also an expert on a different kind of “love witchcraft.” She’s in a relationship with Robert Greene, author of corporate management/inspiration best-seller The 48 Laws of Power — and also of erotic advice best-seller The Art of Seduction.

“That book is dedicated to me,” Biller says. “He’s more famous than I am. He’s fantastic. His readership is very different than my viewership. We’re both interested in classic movies. We watch them together. I edit his books and he helps me with my visuals. He has a strong feminine side and I have a strong masculine side, so we balance each other out.”

Biller thinks that if men watch The Love Witch and fear Elaine, they’re mirroring the men in the film. And perhaps some women find her a complicated, powerful role model. “That’s one thing I’m consciously trying to do,” she concludes. “I wanted to create a character that has the power of the old mythical sirens, the way old Hollywood used to create a cult around its female stars with makeup and lighting.”
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ARTS // Art Picks //

DARKNESS FALLS DOWNTOWN
THE BROAD’S NEWEST EXHIBIT TAKES A GRITTIER LOOK AT THE MUSEUM’S COLLECTION

By Catherine Wagley

This week, one artist leads a feminist parade in Westwood, and another hangs a minimalist tsunami on a white wall in Hollywood.

Disaster amid the leaves
David Wojnarowicz’s painting Late Afternoon in the Forest (1986) is a grisly fairy tale; gray, brown and green dominate. A beaked skeleton protrudes from the nose of a crashed plane, guts and intestines visible inside the plane’s broken body. Visible in the distance, at the painting’s top left corner, are columned capital buildings, precise and well-lit, seemingly aloof, willfully oblivious to the mythical destruction happening in the forest. This is the first painting you see when you enter “Creature,” a show that takes a grittier, darker approach to the Broad’s collection. Another highlight: recent collages by Polish artist Gosłena Macuga, who has inserted images of preoccupied young women into photos of the sun or a fried egg. Joe Sola’s More Cinematic LACMA on Fire, a video riff on Ed Ruscha’s 1965 painting of the museum in flames, serves as something of a roast: Onlookers gawk as black smoke billows above LACMA’s Ahmanson Building.

Still on fire after all these years
A bright orange fiberglass carrot hangs outside the entrance to “L.A. Exubérance,” a show that comprises gifts artists gave to LACMA this past year. The museum turned 50 last year, so L.A.-based artist Catherine Opie led a birthday campaign, encouraging her peers to donate their art (she gave her stirring series of photographs from Obama’s 2009 inauguration). John Baldessari made the carrot. He also donated a number of works from his collection, including a painting by Meg Cranston of an eager puppy beneath what is either the sun or a fried egg. Paul Sietsema’s new paintings at Matthew Marks have the precise realism of photographs. They’re minimally composed, mostly white, gray and green. Sietsema’s image of a telephone, for instance, shows a white receiver and cord on a white surface. 1998 and 1997 resemble plaques in the ground, the dates at their centers seemingly etched into water-stained stone overgrown with moss. Other paintings depict a palette, map and coffee cup sitting on a newspaper. All together, the work reads as a painstakingly produced, obsessively well-rendered archive of objects that might, in other circumstances, seem inconsequential. 1082 N. Orange Grove Ave., West Hollywood; through Dec. 3. (323) 654-1830, matthewmarks.com.

Sex-positive suffragettes
In summer 2015, in Basel, Switzerland, Lara Schnitter staged a parade along narrow brick streets. Women in long black, white and gold dresses led the way, holding on sticks sculptures that looked like innovative corsets or creatures fashioned from discarded nylons. Behind them, men in dark jumpsuits carried a float-sized, hazily glittery goddess. Schnitter called this performance Suffragette City and she will restage it in Westwood this weekend.

Tsunami.1507
David Wojnarowicz’s Late Afternoon in the Forest

Careful collector
Paul Sietsema’s new paintings at Matthew Marks have the precise realism of photographs. They’re minimally composed, mostly white, gray and green. Sietsema’s image of a telephone, for instance, shows a white receiver and cord on a white surface. 1998 and 1997 resemble plaques in the ground, the dates at their centers seemingly etched into water-stained stone overgrown with moss. Other paintings depict a palette, map and coffee cup sitting on a newspaper. All together, the work reads as a painstakingly produced, obsessively well-rendered archive of objects that might, in other circumstances, seem inconsequential.

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NO DAY AT THE BEACH

Dennis Wilson Forevermore: A Beach Boy’s Fable turns the deceased drummer into a sad celeb rather than a rock & roll tragedy

BY BILL RADEN

Playwright Eric O’Meara is hardly the first to turn to a real-life 1960s rock idol in order to explore the driving ambition, extreme solipsism and high-flying excess that seem to be occupational hazards for pop celebrities cursed with talent, artistic vision and too-early success. Its casualties are legion in both rock history and the literature that celebrates it.

The figure of the self-destructive rock star is so commonplace, in fact, that its venerable subcategory — the fatally-plagued, John Bonham-esque drummer — was officially inducted as a rock-martyrological cliché by the 1984 heavy-metal satire This Is Spinal Tap, which mercilessly dispatched the stereotype in a single, winking one-liner.

That kind of insight and economy, however, gives the classic Rob Reiner mockumentary a crucial step up on Dennis Wilson Forevermore: A Beach Boy’s Fable. O’Meara’s overly literal and superficial homage, which is receiving its world premiere at Santa Monica’s Promenade Playhouse, is at once so stilted by its gush of fanboy infatuation, and so undernourished of either original source material or poetic uplift, that it plays as little more than a Wiki-deep summary of the Beach Boys mythology.

In O’Meara’s telling, however, even that famously compelling Oedipal narrative, in which troubled wunderkind producer-songwriter Brian Wilson (underplayed here by John Staley as a mercurial if couch-bound stone), is artistically crippled by the Wilson brothers’ controlling and physically abusive father, Murray (a frightening Glenn Ratcliffe), gets reduced to a sidebar. Instead, the playwright argues that the band’s guiding artistic spirit should have been — or could have been — Dennis Wilson (gamely played by Ryan Boone), had the fun-loving and compulsively womanizing drummer concentrated less on sex and drugs and more on the rock & roll part of the enduring-fame equation.

To make that case, O’Meara mostly reworks dramatic high points from the band’s story, but with Dennis rather than Brian placed at the center of the action. The play briefly comes into its own — and delivers its only convincing ring of authenticity — when dealing with Dennis’ notorious involvement with Charles Manson just before the 1969 Tate-LaBlanca murders. Mark Casamento is chillingly effective as the manipulating, amphetamine-amped and aggressively menacing cult leader, and Natalia Lazarus’ maddeningly unfocused direction for once serves, rather than obscures, the action by lending the scenes nightmarishly hallucinatory edges.

Curiously, the only musical performance during the evening is Casamento’s convincingly twisted acoustic rendition of the twisted Manson ballad “Cease to Exist.” Evidently O’Meara was unable to get rights clearance to either the Beach Boys songbook or the Dennis Wilson solo album Pacific Ocean Blue, which figures so prominently in the second act. But for such a stridently naturalistic work, the absence proves fatal. By merely insisting on Dennis Wilson’s musical genius instead of allowing the audience to hear for itself, rather than the rock & roll tragedy O’Meara intends, Dennis Wilson Forevermore clocks in as an exasperatingly inept portrait of yet another sad celebrity consumed by grotesque self-indulgence.

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Imagined bringing a cute little baby alligator home from the pet store only to see it grow into a giant 15-foot gator that takes over your house and dominates your daily life. That’s how David Thomson sees the history of TV in his blockbuster new book, *Television: A Biography* (Thames & Hudson, $34.95).

A recent Nielsen survey revealed that the average American watches more than five hours of TV per day. Factor in the recommended eight hours for sleep (sounds high) and eight hours for work (sounds low), and the math says a majority of our free time is spent watching TV. It doesn’t matter whether it’s on a traditional full-size screen or through a streaming service on your computer, a tablet or the smartphone stuck in your back pocket. It’s all TV almost all the time, regardless of the platform.

So what are some of the unintended consequences of having 500 channels coming at us like a mudslide hurtling down a high Sierra burn area? And how the hell did we get from the black-and-white good guys–vs.–bad guys of *Dragnet* to the transgressive drama of *Breaking Bad*, from the conservative, all-American domestic humor of *The Donna Reed Show* to the progressive, transgender humor of *Transparent*?

Equally important: Where is TV going? The illuminating answers can be found in Thomson’s deeply insightful, gracefully written, totally compelling new book. Plowing through this 416-page anthropological monster you will know all you need to know about the evolution of TV over the last 70 years and — more important — how and why it has assumed such a central position in our lives.

Indeed, there is no better indicator of TV’s emerging cultural primacy than the publication of Thomson’s book itself. He is, after all, the author of the seminal work *The New Biographical Dictionary of Film*, a must-have for any serious student of cinema. That landmark book was first published in 1975 — it’s been revised and updated five times since — at a time when the 500-pound gator in the room. But that was 41 years ago, and a lot has changed since then for anyone interested in telling stories by way of words and moving images.

Before taking us into the psychological dissection of what’s on TV tonight and why it’s on, Thomson first makes his case that TV has become such a familiar, constant and comforting presence in our lives that we can no longer imagine life without it: “Every hotel room has one; there’s one by your hospital bed. So many threats of solitude or loneliness have a set at hand, like oxygen or the morphine button in that hospital. You get on a plane and the screen is embedded in the back of the seat in front of you. In prisons, cells have screens. (Why not in solitary?)… Growth up children wander from room to room carrying their iPads; it is like an IV, and seems to be life–supporting. You see the cardboard and tent cities under freeway ramps where ‘derelicts’ have a set and the community has a battery to power it.”

Thomson says he typically watches four hours of TV a day just for his own amusement. But in researching and writing the book he had to watch thousands of hours of old and new TV.

While doing that, he estimated the total of all TV programming made in the last 70 years would take 5,000 years to watch. That staggering figure gave him a jumping-off point to gaze into TV’s future: “Television isn’t just its own golden age of shows and stories and personalities. It’s the harbinger of the computer screen, the internet, your smartphone, the thumbnail that is tracking your head that one day will play Mahler, observe the daily life of the celeb or teach you Hungarian. Not to mention the screens to come in the next 5,000 years.”

One of the book’s most fascinating chapters involves the history of advertising on TV. Thomson points out that marketers learned to sell products with arresting visual images backed up by short, nifty slogans like “The Real Thing,” “Think Different” and “Because I’m Worth It.”

With apologies to those mad men geniuses, Thomson’s book is worth it because he thinks differently and has written the real thing when it comes to understanding the 500-pound gator in the room.
ISABELLE OF THE BALL
French actress Huppert’s presence at the 30th AFI Fest lends additional prestige to the proceedings

BY MICHAEL NORDINE

If you’ve seen the billboards and bus-stop ads, you know it’s coming. AFI Fest, still the most significant week for film in L.A. — sorry not sorry, Oscars; actually kind of sorry, Los Angeles Film Festival — begins Nov. 10. Adorning those posters are the names of glamorous stars of yore: Dorothy Dandridge, Ida Lupino and Anna May Wong, all of them luminaries of a bygone age that the free weeklong festival, now in its 30th year, seeks to evoke.

You might not see Isabelle Huppert among those Tinseltown demigoddesses, but her presence at this year’s edition of AFI Fest could hardly be more fitting. The annual affair exists at the confluence of Hollywood glamour and art-house prestige. It has two main spheres: red-carpet Hollywood glamour and art-house prestige. The AFI Fest could hardly be more fitting. The festival fare to A-list prestige pictures. The down-ballot races are no less exciting. Maren Ade’s Toni Erdmann might be the year’s funniest movie, though her 162-minute follow-up to caustic relationship drama Everyone Else isn’t exactly a comedy. In it, a straitlaced woman receives a surprise visit from her semi-estranged father, a prankster whose practical jokes tend to amuse only himself. She becomes his captive audience, though, slowly coming to understand why he is the way he is.

Not yet seen by this writer (but at the top of my list) are Bertrand Bonello’s Nocturama, about a group of teenage terrorists enacting a lethal plot in Paris, and Cristian Mungiu’s Graduation. The latter director is among the standard-bearers of the Romanian New Wave, which has been in full force for long enough to no longer qualify as new; the movement announced itself most loudly when Mungiu’s 4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days, aka “the Romanian abortion movie,” won the top prize at Cannes in 2007. The country remains a cinematic hotbed nearly a decade later, and excitement at Graduation’s presence here is tempered only by the fact that Stereovanda, the latest by Mungiu’s countryman Cristi Puiu, didn’t also make the cut.

Bonello, meanwhile, is revered on the festival circuit for films like House of Tolerance, an opium-laced account of a late-19th century brothel, but the subject matter of his latest has understandably caused many to take pause. It was passed over at Cannes and played to largely empty theaters in Toronto. But most who have seen Nocturama have praised its vision, however difficult it is to endure.

Taken together, these selections offer a snapshot of the year in film, from low-key festival fare to A-list prestige pictures. Which only makes Huppert’s prominence at AFI Fest — and the fact that she, too, has been named as a potential Oscar nominee — all the more impressive: Hollywood has come to Huppert just as much as Huppert has come to Hollywood.

SCIENCE-FICTION EPIC ARRIVAL IS BEST WHEN IT LOOKS WITHIN

Denis Villeneuve has a great eye — his images are at once elegant and forbidding — and in films like Sicario, Prisoners and Enemy he has honed the ability to immerse you in an unreliable, deeply unsettling worlds. He’s at his best with mood pieces, when he’s not trying to navigate through conventional story beats and resolutions. Which might be why Arrival — about the mysterious appearance of 12 floating extraterrestrial vessels in different corners of the world — is the best film the director has made so far: Its atmosphere is its story.

Arrival finds Louise (Amy Adams), a grief-stricken linguist, and Ian (Jeremy Renner), a scientist, recruited by the U.S. military to communicate with the aliens, called “heptapods” due to their seven long tentacles. Hearing a recording of their inchoate wailing — part whale song, part human — Louise realizes that she must actually be in their presence to understand them.

Sure enough, when she does “meet” the heptapods, she realizes that their real language is not spoken but written, consisting of circular swipes in which every little wave and eddy and brush stroke conveys meaning. To find out why the creatures are here, and whether they come in peace, Louise and Ian try to master this nonlinear language.

If this all sounds very tone poem-y to you, that’s because it is. But Villeneuve can ground the metaphysical and the metaphorical without undermining the mood he’s created. I have to respect a wide release with the gall to spend so much of its running time watching a linguist translate cryptic alien messages. And Adams, with her melancholy curiosity, does a fine job with this beautifully suffering character. — Blige Ebiri

ARRIVAL | Directed by Denis Villeneuve | Written by Eric Heisserer | Paramount Pictures | Citywide

COURTESY OF SUNDANCE SELECTS
FIND A FAMILY FACING HORROR OF THE OLD SCHOOL

IRRESISTIBLE THE MONSTER FINDS A FAMILY FACING HORROR OF THE OLD SCHOOL

BY APRIL WOLFE

It's impossible not to think of the T-Rex scene in Jurassic Park while watching Bryan Bertino's chilling and succinctly titled The Monster. You remember: It's dark, and the rains have started. The Jeeps have stalled en route to their destination. The kids are in one car, adults in the other, and all the grown-ups can do is watch through a fogged windshield as the children are terrorized by a vicious, many-fanged dinosaur. Now imagine the bright yellow of the Jeeps and green lizard tint have been replaced with a palette of inky black and midnight blue, the only light source two high beams of an old Chrysler on a deserted, tree-lined backroad. And instead of scientists questioning the ethics of genetic mutation, a mother and daughter are saying goodbye to what's supposed to be their last trip together — that's The Monster.

Mom Kathy (Zoe Kazan) and daughter Lizzy (Ella Ballentine) clash on nearly everything. Kathy's a young alcoholic sleepwalking through parenthood, waking up only to order Lizzy to do small favors for her; Lizzy's the alert planner, cleaning up after all of mom's parties. The girl's also emotionally stunted, reverting back to childish mannerisms with an old tape of nursery rhymes — one of her greatest comforts. The two have reached their end, as Kathy reveals to Lizzy that she's taking her to live with her dad when they're already on the road.

Kazan makes Kathy a convincing, petulant mom who's just as much a child as her daughter, while Ballentine (who's also the new Anne of Green Gables) infuses her character with adult anxieties as she frets about the blood-drenched wolf her mother has just hit, taking their car out of commission on the rainy, barren road. The wolf is a puddle of wet matted fur, headlights just coasting over its body and illuminating it with a shadow and mystique, but it's also a red herring.

When the monster does finally show its face, it's appropriately terrifying, and the thick streams of rain pounding down on the scene — headlamps reflecting in puddles — disorient. An ill-fated tow-truck driver loses a limb to the monster and crawls from the mud at the edge of the woods across the road, like that frightening crawl of the carriages in 1932's Freaks. The faint mist, the eerie silence, the saturated blacks — so much of this film is reminiscent of the classic monster movies of the '30s and '40s.

This is a full-fledged monster movie, but Bertino delays the reveal until halfway through the film, writing the first half like a thrilling play in a confined space; these two characters are tit for tat, arguing and trading cutting remarks until they realize how high the stakes are. Flashbacks butt into the narrative, revealing how their relationship got so tumultuous, the most salient showing Lizzy holding a knife to her passed-out mother's neck.

The result is a stunningly simple but fierce horror film that departs from the genre's fast-paced contemporary tendencies (including Bertino's own The Strangers) in favor of the seeping dread of old-school horror.

Last year, Bertino produced Oz Perkins' The Blackcoat's Daughter, another slow-burn psychological throwback. It seems he's been affected by this in a good way, and we've only just begun to see what he's capable of.

THE MONSTER | Written and directed by Bryan Bertino | A24 | Sundance Sunset

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**BALDWIN TRAP** Bad things happen in threes in Almost Christmas, David E. Talbert’s routine tears-and-gags holiday homily. It is the number of times that poor Danny Glover, headlining as Walter Meyers, a recently widowed Alabama paterfamilias preparing for the Yuletide arrival of his extended brood, must struggle through the making of a pumpkin pie (when he’s not demonstrating his incompetence with 21st-century living through commands like “No tweet-bookin’ or Face-programmin’!”); the number of close-ups given to the bottle of pain pills that Janie (Jessie T. Usher), Walter’s college-football-star-youngest, secrets in modern actors; a tricky enterprise recitation of facts, along with re-creations and-white clips illustrate a droning begins ponderously and seems destined to the Manchurian city of Mukden, of war captured by the Japanese and of friends themselves — now American Richard L. Anderson, hit their budget, this at first threatens to make by modern actors; a tricky enterprise

“ Billy Lynn’s Long Halftime Walk is a small film burdened with the epic, thanks to both its subject and its setting. Based on Ben Fountain’s 2012 novel, it depicts a day in the life of a young soldier (Joe Alwyn), briefly returning from Iraq to be honored with his squad during a Thanksgiving Day NHL halftime performance by Destiny’s Child. As he flashes back to his time in combat, our hero is torn between horror at what he’ll soon return to and his dedication to his fellow soldiers.

Billy’s memories of the war are not just flashes: The heroism he’s being recognized for involves his killing an Iraqi insurgent. “It is sort of weird,” Billy remarks, “being honored for the worst day of your life.” So, in a relatively brief amount of time, director Ang Lee has to use these recollections to place us in the reality of war, achieving both intimacy and immersion, scale and substance.

The director has chosen a technological solution to this problem. *Billy Lynn* was shot utilizing a new high frame rate (HFR) system, at 120 frames per second (as opposed to standard cinema’s 24 frames per second).

It’s a disaster. This is that “video effect” that gives some high-defini tion images the textural quality of a daytime soap opera. There’s a stylized artificiality to film acting, to cinematic dialogue, and in that stark reality, every line seems overwritten, every performance stilted. I later saw it projected at the movies’ traditional speed: In 120 frames a second, both Alwyn and Kristen Stewart came off as hopelessly stilted; at 24 frames, they breathe with life. —*Bilge Ebiri*
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extra dreamy look, and it's all propelled by his own 30s-tired, synth-heavy score. (Brian Weik)

**IVORY: A CRIME STORY**

Sergey Yastrzhembskiy's skillfully translated import doc *Ivyre: A Crime Story — playing..." It's the 29th the... the same week that the slick *Ivyre* premiered on Netflix — offers a speedy, enraged survey of the illegal ivory trade, revealing its roots, its enablers and the poor bastards who actually do the poaching. Yes, China imports the bulk of the world's illegal ivory, which duly gets smuggled into the country's legal ivory trade, but even stonking that out wouldn't solve the problem. The Ivory Game... for the elephant population." We see... won't be possible to ask of respect [sic] for the elephant population."

**LAZY EYE**

The narrator states, "it won't be possible to ask of respect [sic] for the elephant population." We see... won't be possible to ask of respect [sic] for the elephant population.

**NO PAY, NUDITY**

Gabriel Byrne assumes his schilliest form in *No Pay, Nudity* as Lawrence Rose, a barely working New York City thesian who believes himself fit for King Lear but repeatedly winds up half dressed and stewed for Shakespeare’s *Lover’s Quair*, while being told through a precisely controlled naturalism that’s entirely cinematic. What results is an intimately scaled film with two fully realized and human leads, played effectively by Lucas Near-Verbrugghe (as Dean) and Aaron Costa Gannis (as Alex). While the dramatic conflicts between the two men unfold in a slightly unwieldy fashion, with occasional bumpy narrative exposition, the actors handle their roles deftly. Notably, in an era in which sexual content in film and television so often is included for the purpose of making unsexed points about objectification, the sexual chemistry between the two leads is off the charts. Writer-director Tim Kinner’s keen eye for gesture and posture, and their complicated relationship with interiority (and in one lengthy, illuminating flashback, he proves adept at handling the unreliability of memory), unifying everything is Dean being diagnosed, in the first scene, with a lazy eye. It’s a condition, as it turns out, he arguably could have prevented by taking earlier action, and his new glasses deliberately force him to look at everything differently. It’s literally as on the nose as a pair of glasses, but *Lazy Eye* transcends its limitations to become an affecting and emotionally honest drama. (Dannny Bowes)

**CERTAIN WOMEN**

**ONGOING**

**BEAUTY BITES BEAST**

**BEHIND BAYONETS AND BARBED WIRE**

**THE TRANSLIST**

**USS INDIANAPOLIS: THE LEGACY**

Nicolas Cage may have just headlined a fictionalized drama about the July 30, 1945, WWII sinking of the *USS Indianapolis*, but viewers will learn far more about its story — immortalized by Robert Shaw’s famous speech in *Jaws* — from *USS Indianapolis: The Legacy*, a documentary comprised of 104 new interviews with survivors and their family members (as well as the descendants of Japanese commander Mochitsura Hashimoto, whose sub torpedeed the ship), Sasha Vladic’s film was produced over 10 years and is buoyed by a wealth of amazing archival film footage and photos. Nonetheless, it’s her speakers’ first-hand recollections that truly harrowing. Seamlessly edited together into a unified narrative, these testimonies cover the *Indianapolis’s* delivery of the first atomic bomb, the sailors’ postbomb experiences abandoning ship and their struggles to survive in the waters for four long days for their eventual rescue — all while fellow crewmen were eaten by sharks numbering in the thousands.

**Vladic also covers Captain Charles B. McVay’s unjust court-martial for his actions and the survivors’ efforts to overcome their lifelong PTSD. Horrifying in their immediacy and heartrending in their details, these accounts — told through tears and infused with gratitude and survivor’s guilt — are unbelievably gripping, and combine to form a vital record of this most nightmarish of historical events. (Nick Schager)**
your weekly movie to-do list

see gena rowlands or tippi hedren in person
friday, nov. 11
the new beverly pays tribute to the inimitable john cassavetes over the next week, beginning its seven-film series, appropriately enough, with opening night and a woman under the influence. both essential films star the writer-director’s wife and collaborator, gena rowlands, who delivers what might be the most devastating performance ever captured on celluloid in the latter half of this double feature. rowlands and cassavetes are something like the first couple of independent film, and their joint body of work is an heirloom that we’re all lucky to be able to share. rowlands is scheduled to be present for a qa between films. new beverly cinema, 7165 beverly blvd., fairfax; fri., nov. 11, 7:30 p.m.; $8. (323) 938-4038, thenewbev.com.

depending on how the election goes, something more slapstick might make for a less heavy start to the weekend. if that’s the case, the nuart’s midnight screening of blazing saddles ought to do the trick — though it’s also a reminder that we lost gene wilder this summer, because 2016. maybe instead of watching mel brooks’ satirical western, which also stars cleavon little and harry korman, you might want to just huddle under the covers for the next month and a half and hope that 2017 is less cruel to our heroes. nuart theatre, 11272 santa monica blvd., west la; fri., nov. 11, 11:59 p.m.; $11. (310) 473-8530, landmarktheatres.com.

saturday, nov. 12
anna may wong’s face can currently be seen on banners and posters across the city for afi fest. at cinefamily on saturday, the silent-era star also can be seen in old san francisco, playing the deceitful daughter of a gangster. her character conforms to the dragon-lady stereotype then so prevalent in hollywood; as recent whitewashing controversies show, we’ve yet to fully live down that legacy. alan crossland’s film will be shown on 35mm with its original sound effects and vitaphone score, which should prove especially vital during the climactic earthquake sequence. cinefamily/silent movie theatre, 611 n. fairfax ave., fairfax; sat., nov. 12, 2 p.m.; $12. (323) 695-2510, cinefamily.org.

if binge-watching all eight episodes of stranger things left you feeling empty inside, consider revisiting one of the netflix series’ main reference points: e.t. the extra-terrestrial. steven spielberg’s childhood classic plays at the drive-in for maximum nostalgic effectiveness, so bring your Reese’s Pieces and don’t forget to phone home. electric dusk drive-in, 2930 Fletcher drive, glassell park; 7165 beverly blvd., Fairfax; Fri., Nov. 11, 7:30 p.m.; $8. (323) 655-2510, cinefamily.org.

sunday, nov. 13
not that you need a special reason to watch the birds, but here are two: tippi hedren will appear in person for the aero’s screening of alfred hitchcock’s avian thriller, and it’s being shown on 35mm. the actress will be signing copies of her memoir, in which she confirms our worst fears about hitchcock’s treatment of her and makes the production of the birds sound more horrifying than the film itself. aero theatre, 1328 montana ave., santa monica; sun., nov. 13, 6:30 p.m.; $11. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecal.com.

tuesday, nov. 15
at 178 minutes, the longest day might be deemed the longest movie by impatient viewers. but ken annakin, darryl f. zanuck, andrew marton, bernhard wicki and gerd Oswald’s film, which follows the d-day landing from both the allied and axis perspectives, has long been heralded as a classic befitting its momentous subject matter. many of the actors were veterans of the war, as were a number of consultants hired to ensure the utmost accuracy. the longest day received a best picture nod for its efforts but ultimately lost to an epic based on the first great war: lawrence of arabia. lacma, 5905 wilshire blvd., mid-wilshire; tue., nov. 15, 1 p.m.; $4. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org.

wednesday, nov. 16
robert de niro is god’s lonely man in taxi driver, a lost soul who wishes the rain would wash the scum off the streets and doesn’t realize that description most likely applies to him. “you talkin’ to me?” remains the most quotable line in martin scorsese’s 1976 benchmark, but travis bickle (de niro) is at his most disturbing when he’s quieter and still trying (but failing) to get “organized.” arclight sherman oaks, 15301 ventura blvd., sherman oaks; wed., nov. 16, 7:10 p.m.; $16. (818) 501-7033, arclightcinemas.com. —michael nordine
BIRD OF A DIFFERENT FEATHER

Former Wild Pack of Canaries frontman Rudy de Anda explores his Latino roots — but isn’t defined by them — in his jangly, melodic solo work

BY SARAH BENNETT

Rudy de Anda is a man of many metaphors. Ask him what L.A. sounded like to a self-described, first-generation Mexican-American weirdo growing up between Compton, East L.A. and Long Beach in the ‘90s and he’ll tell you it’s kind of like the time he abandoned the mix of rancheras and old-school R&B at a family quinceañera to sit in his parents’ car and bump Jeff Buckley’s Grace.

The best descriptions, however, are reserved for his current solo project, the eponymous Rudy de Anda band, which has found the mild-mannered, 28-year-old singer, songwriter and guitarist playing his jangly, Latin-tinged indie-pop everywhere from the El Rey to dive bars in Tijuana to the mainstage at September’s Music Tastes Good festival.

“I think of ‘80s Mexican rockers’ Caifanes or Tame Impala, but this is something that’s hitting a little closer to home.”

This year’s Echo Park Rising, for example, found de Anda, Chicano Batman, Thee Commons and Buyepongo (who are all friends) playing within walking distance of one another. While they might not sound like obvious kindred spirits with their disparate sounds (danceable psych-rock, Wu Tang-inspired cumbia, Mac DeMarco guitar-pop), the connection is more common culture than common influences.

“People finally feel they’re being represented in a more accurate way, which in reality is us just saying, ‘Don’t label us, don’t judge us, we’re just here,’ de Anda says. “Isn’t that what the black and brown community has always wanted?”

It was never de Anda’s plan to pick up his mom’s old Leo Dan records or to start writing songs in Spanish. Conceived in Mexicali but born in L.A., he lived in Compton until the family’s house turned to ashes during the 1992 L.A. Riots. After a stint with an aunt in East L.A., de Anda’s dad and uncle bought a duplex in Long Beach, where he spent his formative years hitting between backyard barbecues in the Valley (where his “chola cousins” would bump Tupac) and anarchist punk shows (where he picked up a healthy distrust of music theory).

In between, another uncle introduced young Rudy to Bob Marley, Mano Negra and King Crimson. He also discovered the rich musical legacies of his now-permanent hometown — not only Sublime but also The Mars Volta and Black Flag. By the time he picked up a guitar and started his first band in high school, he was deep in the discordant world of art rock and mingled in the Smell DIY circuit, far from the Los Tigres del Norte that floated through speakers at his grandma’s house.

“I think I grew up mostly as a Southern California kid,” de Anda says, noting that his upbringing was not unique. “I felt like I was proud of being Mexican, but I also embraced showing people that’s not even a term. You can pigeonhole us as a community, and definitely not me personally. I’m going to make it impossible to try to figure me out.”

“I'M GOING TO MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO FIGURE ME OUT.”

While working on new material for Wild Pack a few years ago, de Anda noticed a change in some of his songwriting. He had rediscovered his love for old rock en español bands and, through some internet searching, located other musicians his age (such as Dënver, Astro and El Guincho) who were finding creativity in the places where Latin music and Western rock culture meet.

Soon he was sitting on an album’s worth of new songs that didn’t quite fit with the organized sonic chaos for which Wild Pack had become known. So when Wild Pack’s members started to drift into their own separate projects, de Anda teamed up with bassist Lily Strätz, went into the studio with Ikey Owens (The Mars Volta, Jack White) and took the new tracks solo.

“[Latin music] was right under my nose the whole time. I went on this musical journey of discovery and it brought me back to my roots,” de Anda says. “Now I can bond with people who are in this new generation with me.”

His five-song debut, Ostranenie, released in July 2015, 10 months after Owens’ untimely death, introduced an entirely new side of de Anda, whose crowning once was hidden beneath layers of dense atmospherics. Songs such as “Tu Esquina” — which slows down a plucky surf-rock song with a soft electronic beat, over which he pines for “Tu Esquina” —which sits in his parents’ car quinceañera.

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Delay, Cadaver of a Day, which is getting a proper vinyl release on Nov. 18, expands on this new Rudy de Anda sound, letting his fret-fleeting dance with core member Stretz’s Buzzcocks bass over eight songs that sound about as “Latin rock” as Bauhaus.

With two former members of Wild Pack now playing with the band (Delay producer J.P. Bendzinski on guitar and Alfred Hernandez on drums), de Anda is ready to take his solo effort in yet another direction, exploring his love for tropicalia.

At a recent practice session, the group launched into “Los Canarios,” a new song that’s already been recorded for the still-unnamed next album. With the flick of a pedal, de Anda’s guitar turns into Ray Manzarek’s organ dragged through a Peruvian rainforest, and he sings as if members of romântico groups Los Ángeles Negros or Los Pastelos Verdes were watching. The tune is a dreamier take on the psychedelic chicha genre. It wouldn’t sound out of place as the last dance at a ‘70s quinceañera.
If you want to understand Ice Cube’s Death Certificate, you might need to start by listing those it slanders:

Punk motherfuckers trying to ban rap. The Raiders and Al Davis. The entire genre of R&B.

Daryl Gates. Old English 800. Jews. Koreans, clueless parents, “scandalous bitches,” pop music, gay people, N.W.A. St. Louis gangsters, McDonald’s, STDs, George H.W. Bush, Jesse Jackson, AT&T, Republicans, the Senate, pit bulls, Spuds McKenzie, Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital, interracial dating, Color Me Badd, the Hand. "the rankest sort of racism and homophobia," while The Source's editor, James Bernard, countered by saying that it captured the “anger and rage and frustration that many people are forced to deal with every day.”

Even if some of Cube’s screeds were indefensible, nothing better captured the simmering discontent of South Central L.A. circa 1991. This is the warning shot that preceded the riots of the following year, an indelible portrait of the injustices that continue to plague American cities.

On a literary level, Cube’s storytelling easily surpassed his predecessors. “My Summer Vacation” illustrated the dark side of L.A. gangsters setting up shop in the Midwest. “No Vaseline” might be the greatest diss song ever written. “A Bird in the Hand” was repurposed for Kendrick Lamar’s Good Kid, m.A.A.d City.

Ice Cube’s Death Certificate later matched by 2Pac on his Makaveli album. It’s intelligent and ignorant, problematic and powerful, filled with brilliant narratives and uncorked poison. Ice Cube branded himself the “nigga that you love to hate.” America’s favorite villain: too artful to ignore but too incendiary to escape condemnation.

“It was a record where I was in transition,” Ice Cube told XXL in 2011. “I was learning knowledge of self, our history here in America. I was trying to bring our fans along with it. Trying to show them you don’t have to stay straight hood, straight gutter. You could add some intelligence with it.”

On its way to platinum certification, Death Certificate was greeted with a New York Times essay wondering, “Should Ice Cube’s Voice Be Chilled?” The Simon Wiesenthal Center called it a “cultural Molotov cocktail” and demanded the nation’s major retailers yank it from their shelves. Billboard described the album as “the rankest sort of racism and homophobia." On its way to platinum certification, Death Certificate was greeted with a New York Times essay wondering, “Should Ice Cube’s Voice Be Chilled?” The Simon Wiesenthal Center called it a “cultural Molotov cocktail” and demanded the nation’s major retailers yank it from their shelves. Billboard described the album as “the rankest sort of racism and homophobia."
I’ve been looking forward to November for several months. The election cycle has been a severely injured animal that needed to be put out of our collective misery. For the longest time, it howled and gnashed its teeth, seemingly not caring who it injured. It brought out the worst in so many, who crossed lines they never knew existed and might not get back to who they were before.

As screwed up as things are, I think the USA might be at its most transparent. Too bad it is what it and, no doubt, many will just dig in deeper and invest in their hysteria with more zeal. To have paid attention to a presidential election is an almost natural impulse. It’s what you do. I usually stay with it but as best I can, but this time around, I found it so consistently depressing and so insulting that I would tune out for days. Upon returning, I would find that things had only grown more toxic. Weeks ago, I decided the election is an almost natural impulse. It’s bad it is what it is and, no doubt, many will try to stay away from the television that’s always on in our tour bus. I have had it with all the worthless speculation, the perfect election cycle and the disgust it has left me. I would tune out for days. Upon returning, I would find that things had only grown more toxic. Weeks ago, I decided the election could go fuck itself.

November is one of the greatest of the 12 months for listening to intense music. Where in other times of the year some records could be considered overly serious and dreary, in November they make perfect sense.

Music is perhaps the single most consistently good thing I’ve ever known. No matter what’s happening around you, if you can hear some music, you stand a chance. Obviously, you need a bit more than your record collection to get you through the madness, but it’s a solid go-to. More on that later.

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Petersen Auto Museum

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Waffling Around
Wanderlust Creamery
Westbound
WP24 by Wolfgang Puck
Bang Boom Bash
@ SEAPORT MARINA HOTEL
The biggest lure at this weekend punk rock and burlesque festival is a rare West Coast appearance on Saturday by The Dictators, the cartoonish, early-‘70s hard rockers from New York who paved the way for The Ramones and countless other bands that mixed metallic raw power with punk tempos. They’ve rebranded themselves as The Dictators NYC because founding guitarist Scott “Top Ten” Kempner and the group’s bassist and main songwriter, Andy Shenoff, aren’t taking part in this ongoing reunion, but singer Handsome Dick Manitoba and fleet-fingered lead guitarist Ross “The Boss” Friedman still stir up much of the old demented energy. Other highlights include old-school resurrections from Shattered Faith, JFA and Rikk Agnew alongside such newer pop-punk stylists as Go Betty Go. Also Saturday, Nov. 12. The Dictators NYC also play the Viper Room, Friday, Nov. 11. —Falling James

A Club Called Rhonda
with Soul Clap
@ LOS GLOBOS
Soul Clap command cultlike devotion. It’s not so much that the Boston-sprung soulful house duo require this from their fans; it just happens. Eli “Elyte” Goldstein and Charles “Cync” Levine are on their second, self-titled album, on which they continue to cater to the refined palate of a mature dance floor. Funk is Soul Clap’s identifier, in large part due to their involvement with George Clinton and Nona Hendryx; the latter appears on the disco-flecked “Shine (This Is It).” This funk feel permeates the glitch electro of Nona Hendryx; the latter appears on the funk feel permeates the glitch electro of disco-flecked “Shine (This Is It).” This funk feel permeates the glitch electro of disco-flecked “Shine (This Is It).”

Midnite Communion IV
@ QUE SERA
The fourth edition of this annual celebration of doomy heavy metal and equally moody dark art has expanded to three days and three different venues across Long Beach. Salt Lake City sludge purveyors INVRDS headline the Friday night installment at Que Sera with a particularly caustic take on the plodding doom-metal blueprint but also switch it up by integrating moments of punk chaos that cut through the muck. Virginia doomsters Cough headline Saturday night at DiPiazza’s with their more psychedelic and emotionally draining take on the well-worn tropes of the genre. A Sunday matinee at Alex’s Bar features local LBC greats Destroy Judas, who dish out equal-
ly potent slabs of apocalyptic doom. The weekend’s music will be accompanied by dark art installations from artists both local and international. Also Saturday, Nov. 12, at DiPiazza’s and Sunday, Nov. 13, at Alex’s Bar. —Jason Roche

Camp Flog Gnow
@ EXPOSITION PARK
One of the best (and last) festivals of the year is the Tyler, the Creator–curated Camp Flog Gnaw. Part carnival, part Odd Future merch bonanza, the festival’s lineup has quietly made it a must-attend event. Amidst its distinct state-fair vibe, the festival has been home to many memorable moments, such as a surprise N.E.R.D. reunion, the unveiling of Jack Ü and Kanye West hopping onstage with Tyler and Earl Sweatshirt. This year’s lineup features a variety of artists from Sleigh Bells to Kehlani, Death Grips to DJ Mustard, Lil Wayne to Chance the Rapper and, of course, Tyler himself. Don’t be surprised if this unique event continues to grow into Los Angeles’ next mega-festival. —Daniel Kohn

Serj Tankian
@ VALLEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
In the early 2000s, System of a Down were at the forefront of the progressive-metal genre, as well as being the most fun band to sing along to while sitting in traffic on the 405. Trying to keep up with Daron Malakian and Serj Tankian’s vocal acrobatics would sometimes be impossible, thanks to their turbo-speed tongues and ranges that could go from the pit of the stomach to the highest falsetto within moments. Now Tankian is bringing his impressive range (spanning four octaves, to be exact) to the Valley Performing Arts Center, joined by the CSUN Symphony, to perform a selection of his orchestral compositions. We’re not sure his new music will be as fun to sing along to as “B.Y.O.B.” but we do know you won’t want to miss it. —Artemis Thomas-Hansard

50th Anniversary of the Sunset Strip Demonstration
@ THE ECHOPLEX
In the mid-’60s, rock bands started getting the mad idea that they could change the world with their music. On Saturday night, Nov. 12, 1966, young clubgoers who were protesting draconian curfew laws clashed with police on the Sunset Strip, setting the stage for larger protests against the Vietnam War later in the decade. Tonight, surviving musicians from the era appear alongside newer bands who perhaps too faithfully mimic the sounds of the ’60s. The Premiers came out of San Gabriel in the early ’60s and brought attention to L.A.’s growing rock scene with their hit version of “Farmer John.” Love Revisited feature original Love guitarist Johnny Echols, but they are sadly a faint echo without the late, mercurial visionary Arthur Lee. The Loons, The Pandoras and Frankie & the Witch Fingers are among the younger bands here bringing punky energy to the ancient garage-rock formula. —Falling James

In This Together Festival
@ AVALON HOLLYWOOD
Mental illness is often misunderstood and treated as a shameful secret, but the In This Together Festival attempts to shine a light and raise awareness and empathy for those who not only have the disease but also must deal with social rejection. The welcoming vibe starts with Paul Gilmartin’s podcast The Mental Illness Happy Hour, which is described as “a waiting room that doesn’t suck,”
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acting collective, the Reykjavik “band” GusGus swiftly became best known for its electronic music of non-genre-bound stripes. Through varying instrumental and lead-vocalist lineups, which have included the very interesting singer-composer Emiliana Torrini, the group has pursued consistently inconsistent personas that run coolly amok about the techno, house, downtempo, jazz and ambient worlds. Though their filmmaking cohorts in the collective have now split off, the remaining band members have soldiered on with a somewhat slicker sound that zeroes in on ear-friendly toe-tappers of the electro-pop variety, as heard on their respectively bumping recent album, *Mexico* (Kompakt). One thing remains the same: “GusGus” still means couscous, and it always will. —John Payne

**wed 11/16**

Låpsley @ THE MAYAN
As the days grow shorter and the nights get colder, the slow, glassy contemplations of Låpsley make for an appropriately wintry soundtrack. Her mellow, neo-soul soundscapes are filled with lonely voices calling out to one another across distant voids. Such mournful lamentations as “Painter (Valentine)” and “Falling Short,” from her recent *Long Way Home* debut, are big and roomy enough for the British singer’s voice and the occasional floating piano chord to trail off into the ether. At times, the sad temps and empty spaces can feel cold, although Låpsley picks up the pace a little on the relatively defiant “Hurt Me.” Her bittersweet yearning is more mysterious and intriguing on the ballad “Silverlake,” where she declares, “Beautiful now but soon you’ll be gone/Like silverlake I’ll leave the snake in the sun.”

—Paul Rogers

**mon 11/14**

Temple of the Dog @ THE FORUM
The ultimate grunge supergroup, Temple of the Dog formed in 1990 in tribute to late Mother Love Bone vocalist Andrew Wood and featured Soundgarden singer Chris Cornell and all of Pearl Jam’s musicians in its ranks. Eddie Vedder even dropped in some backing vocals from time to time. When it was announced earlier this year that the band would be reforming for a brief tour, the jaws of the previously plaid-clad could be heard dropping across the land. No one was expecting this, and as a result it feels more like an event than a simple concert. The band’s sole 1991 self-titled album is more like an event than a simple concert. Expecting this, and as a result it feels dropping across the land. No one was the previously plaid-clad could be heard reforming for a brief tour, the jaws of earlier this year that the band would be dropping across the land. No one was the previously plaid-clad could be heard reforming for a brief tour, the jaws of earlier this year that the band would be dropping across the land. No one was the previously plaid-clad could be heard reforming for a brief tour, the jaws of earlier this year that the band would be dropping across the land. No one was the previously plaid-clad could be heard reforming for a brief tour, the jaws of earlier this year that the band would be dropping across the land. No one was the previously plaid-clad could be heard reforming for a brief tour, the jaws of earlier this year that the band would be dropping across the land. No one was

—Falling James

**thu 11/17**

Kris Kristofferson @ THE ROSE
They don’t make Renaissance men like Kris Kristofferson anymore — helicopter pilot, Rhodes scholar, Muppet confidant, movie star, and he writes and sings a little, too. He was living a few lives at once for a while, majoring in literature, then training as an Army Ranger and moving on to man the mop bucket at a Nashville studio while he'd work on soon-to-be-immortal songs such as “Me and Bobby McGee.” In the last several years, a new generation has turned to his early work — reissue label extraordinaire Light in the Attic put out his first demos; Cinefamily screened his street-noir classic *Cisco Pike* — and he’s reportedly re-energized after righting a misdiagnosis of Alzheimer’s and taking treatment for Lyme disease. Think of it as just one more unexpected twist in what will surely be one of the best American autobiographies ever written — you are writing one, right, Kris? —Chris Ziegler

**tue 11/15**

GusGus @ EL REY THEATRE
Formed in the mid-’90s as a film and acting collective, the Reykjavik “band” followed by bravely vulnerable comedian Beth Stelling. The musical portion includes colorfully expressive pop/R&B vocalist Deqg Sue and the arthritic, heartfelt confessions of former Moldy Peaches folkie Kimya Dawson. As with Dawson, headliner Daniel Johnston sings his fragile, lo-fi pop ditties with an almost naively direct, childlike sense of wonder. His struggles with schizophrenia have seemingly opened up his mind in unusual ways. —Falling James

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ALICIA KEYS

AMOEBA MUSIC: 6400 Sunset Blvd., L.A. Alicia Keys, signing a new album, Fri., Nov. 11, 2pm, free; DJ Eddie Ruscha, Fri., Nov. 11, 8pm, free; Jane Siberry, Thu., Nov. 17, 6pm, free.

BOARDROOMS: 1652 N. Cherokee Ave., L.A. William, signing a new album, Fri., Nov. 11, 2pm, free; DJ Eddie Ruscha, Fri., Nov. 11, 8pm, free; Jane Siberry, Thu., Nov. 17, 6pm, free.


CANYON CLUB: 29812 Roadside Drive, Agoura Hills. John Mayall, Thu., Nov. 17, 7pm, $24-$38.


DUPPZ'S RESTAURANT & LOUNGE: 2052 E. Pacific Coast Highway, Long Beach. Midnite Communion IV, with Cough, Mirsk, Damald, Fistula, Hell, Seven Sisters of Sleep, Fester, Deathtahngs, Sat., Nov. 12, 4pm, $50 & $50.


EL CID: 4212 W. Sunset Blvd., L.A. Livi Sandler, The Pretty Flowers, Goosehappen, Gregg Garvey & the Wintergreens, Fri., Nov. 11, 9:30pm, $10.
Jeff Linsky, Jennifer Leitham, Sat., Nov. 12, 8 p.m.

THE CINEMA BAR: 3967 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City. Greg Felder, Fri., Nov. 11, 9 p.m., free. Defehaorphic, Gun Hill Royals, R. Jay Souza, Sat., Nov. 12, 9 p.m., free. Matt Doyle, Air Traffic Control, Sun., Nov. 13, 9 p.m., free. John McDuiffe, Tue., Nov. 15, 9 p.m., free. Rick Shea, Wed., Nov. 16, 9 p.m., free. Adam Smith, Thu., Nov. 17, 9 p.m., free.

THE COFFEE GALLERY BACKSTAGE: 2029 N. Lake Ave., Altadena. Gina Sicilia, Fri., Nov. 11, 8 p.m., $20. Butch Hancock, Roy Hancock, Sat., Nov. 12, 2 p.m., TBA. Liza Carbol, JP Durand, Sat., Nov. 12, 7 p.m., $18. Jeni & Billy, Sun., Nov. 13, 2 p.m., $20; Janet Klein & Her Parlor Boys, Sun., Nov. 13, 7 p.m., $20. Cliff Targum, Mon., Nov. 14, 8 p.m., $15. Kenny Stroser, Tue., Nov. 15, 5 p.m., $18.


JOE’S GREAT AMERICAN BAR & GRILL: 4311 W. Magnolia Blvd., Burbank. Magan Goh, Fri., Nov. 11, 9 p.m., free. James Involdl, Sat., Dec. 12, 9 p.m., free. Woody Mankowski, Sun., Nov. 13, 8 p.m., free. The California Feetwarmers, Mon., Nov. 14, 9 p.m., free. Flat Top Tom & His Jump Cats, Tue., Nov. 15.

—Falling James

AVENUE HOLLYWOOD: 1735 Vine St., L.A. Retro Bloom, with Alena Apina, Sat., Nov. 12, 6 p.m., $50; Luciano, Droog, Sat., Nov. 12.

CREATE NIGHTCLUB: 9021 Hollywood Blvd., L.A.

Michael Woods, Jack Novak, Fri., Nov. 11, 10 p.m., $12.65 & up. Mat Zo, Sat., Nov. 12, 10 p.m., $25.

DOROTHY CHANDLER PAVILION: 350 S. Grand Ave. DJ Stylez, DJ Joey Alphonso, Sat., Nov. 11, 10 p.m., $20 & $90. exchangeLA: 618 S. Spring St., Miami Horror, Bees Knees, Fri., Nov. 11, 10 p.m., $20 & $90. Lustrel, Theo Kottis, Yotto, Jody Wisternoff, Sat., Nov. 12, 10 p.m., $20 & $90.

LOS GLOSOS: 3040 W. Sunset Blvd., L.A. A Club Called Rhonda with Soul Clap, Fri., Nov. 11, 9 p.m., $20 (see Music Pick). Dan Darlington, Peter Naploi, Sat., Nov. 12, 10 p.m., TBA. Sargas & Bauska, Indy Rishi, Thu., Nov. 17, 9 p.m.; The Exchange, Thu., Nov. 17, 9 p.m.

LOT 613: 613 Imperial St., L.A. Dusky, Sat., Nov. 12.

SOUND NIGHTCLUB: 1642 N. Las Palmas Ave., L.A.

Chiptone, Fri., Nov. 11, 10 p.m., $18.33 & up; Cash After-Party, with Sander Kleinenberg, Sat., Nov. 12, 10 p.m., $23.60 & up. HOJ, Armen Mirjan, Mon., Nov. 14, 10 p.m., $13.

UNION NIGHTCLUB: 4607 W. Pico Blvd., L.A. Helicopter Showdown, Sluggo, Kid Nappa, Sprocket, Fri., Nov. 11, 9 p.m., free-$20; Jujo & Jordash, AAAA, Fri., Nov. 11, 9 p.m., $12-$20. Ray Gunn, Sasha Scarlett, Olivia Bellafontaine, Sat., Nov. 12, 7:30 p.m., $20-$30; Dave 1, Mija, Joey Purp, Durante, Electric Mantis, Sat., Nov. 12, 9 p.m., $15-$30; Marques Wyatt & Reelsoul, Jamie Thinnes, Kemal, Sat., Nov. 12, 9 p.m., TBA. Sargas, Jon One, Joey Purp, Saver, Tahl K, Wed., Nov. 16, 9 p.m., $5. Murlo, Grrl, Tdiyoe, Bianca Oblivion, Thu., Nov. 17, 10 p.m., $15.

—Falling James

For more listings, please go to laweekly.com.

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LA WEEKLY

SUMMONS

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: WILLIAM E. DILLON, residing at 11257 Main Street Santa Monica, CA 90403 - Superior Court of California - Santa Monica Courthouse, located in 1725 Main Street Santa Monica, CA 90401. On 09/30/16 - In the matter of William E. Dillon, an individual, and Ann M. Taylor, deceased, an individual. You are hereby notified that the plaintiff, BETH DILLON, of the above-entitled matter of the Superior Court of California - Santa Monica Courthouse, has filed a petition for change of name and that the name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff’s attorney is 15200 Ventura Blvd, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403.
How to: Fix your fatigue and get more energy

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