How the once-gritty beachside community became Beverly Hills

BY HILLEL ARON
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A JUSTIFIED KILLING?
New details could challenge LAPD account of Boyle Heights teen shot by cops

BY JASON MCGAHAN

The mother and father of José Mendez, a 16-year-old boy shot and killed by Los Angeles police in Boyle Heights early last year, filed a lawsuit last month in federal court against the Los Angeles Police Department for wrongful death. Information in both the lawsuit and the autopsy report could be used to challenge LAPD’s account of the shooting — including whether Mendez pointed a weapon at the officers and why they moved the body. 

The lawsuit seeks to “establish the true and unequivocal facts surrounding the shooting occurred. Officers surround the body, and at one point two of them appear to put down the pockets of Mendez’s cargo shorts. L.A. Weekly showed the video to Ambrosio Rodriguez, a 13-year deputy district attorney for Riverside County who is now in private defense. Rodriguez called the police actions in the video “extreme.”

“Their version that he immediately left the vehicle and pointed the gun at them is directly contradicted by the coroner’s account that he had to be cut out of the car he was in,” says Arnuldo Casillas, the attorney representing the family.

The family’s lawsuit states that the shotgun was concealed underneath the front passenger seat and that officers did not discover it until after the shooting had already occurred. In response to the police report that his son was driving a stolen vehicle and a toxicology report that found he had methamphetamine and amphetamine in his system when he was killed, Juan Mendez says: “People do bad things all the time; life continues for them. My son was the way he did.” LAPD spokesperson Officer Norma Eisenman declined to comment on the Mendez shooting, citing the pending litigation.

According to Chief Beck’s report to the commission, officers Merida and Wagner were wearing body cameras at the time, but neither activated his camera until after the shooting. The report states that one of the officers had completed his 90-day training period on proper use of the body cameras — and therefore should have had his camera on — while the other was still in the grace period at the time. The names of the officers are redacted in the report.

The commander of the Hollenbeck Division filed a personnel complaint to address the reason for the officer’s delay in activating the body camera, the report states. Mendez says he was prepared initially to accept the police at their word until he and his wife, Josefina, went to the scene a day after the shooting and discovered the surveillance camera. Mendez says the footage of officers dragging his son down the sidewalk was painful to watch and made him suspicious.

L.A. Weekly consulted several experts, including city and county officials, for examples of suitable reasons to move a body from a crime scene. Speaking in general terms, LAPD spokeswoman Herrera says, “Usually there’s no movement of the body, unless for special circumstances, whatever that is.”

Some officials said that if the body were obstructing traffic, for example, or there were a public danger, such as the presence of an additional suspect who is armed, the police might call to request permission from the medical examiner’s office or paramedics to move the body from a scene.

Dan Baker, chief deputy at the L.A. County Office of the Inspector General, has handled more than 100 officer-involved shootings and says rarely was a body moved. “Most commonly it’s been either if a body were on a freeway or if the person were still alive and in need of immediate medical attention.”

The officers in the video do not appear to try to provide José Mendez assistance. Officers surround the body, and at one point one of them appears to put down the pockets of Mendez’s cargo shorts.

L.A. Weekly obtained last week, indicates Mendez was still wearing his seatbelt at the time he was shot — which has led the family’s attorney to question how Mendez could have pointed the shotgun at the officers. “Police fired numerous rounds before cutting him from his seatbelt and dragging him down the sidewalk where [paramedics] determined death on scene,” the report states.

The report does not indicate the reason for moving the body. “Their version that he immediately left the vehicle and pointed the gun at them is directly contradicted by the coroner’s account that he had to be cut out of the car he was in,” says Arnoldo Casillas, the attorney representing the family.

The family’s lawsuit states that the shotgun was concealed underneath the front passenger seat and that officers did not discover it until after the shooting had already occurred. In response to the police report that his son was driving a stolen vehicle and a toxicology report that found he had methamphetamine and amphetamine in his system when he was killed, Juan Mendez says: “People do bad things all the time; life continues for them. My son was shot to pieces; I can’t accept that my son died the way he did.” LAPD spokesperson Officer Norma Eisenman declined to comment on the Mendez shooting, citing the pending litigation.
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THE GILDING OF VENICE

How the once-gritty beachside community became Beverly Hills

BY HILLEL ARON

by 10-minute walk from Venice Beach, but it somehow feels much farther. The ocean breeze doesn’t reach that far. You can’t hear the waves. Instead of the smell of the Pacific Ocean, inscrutable scents spill out of tiny, high-end boutiques.

So much is crammed into that half-mile stretch, running from Venice to Westminster, yet you’d be hard-pressed to find a swimsuit, much less a surfboard. You’ll sooner find a $200 wool poncho than a $12 pair of flip-flops. You won’t see Harry Parry, in his white turban, Rollerblades and bull’s-eye Stratocaster; you’re more likely to spot Tim Robbins riding his bicycle down the sidewalk, as I did on one unseasonably hot winter’s afternoon, dressed head to toe in black, including a black beanie, like a cat burglar.

The stores here have whimsical names such as Scotch and Soda (clothes), Chariots on Fire (jewelry and pottery and such), Huset (IKEA for rich people) and the Butcher’s Daughter (juice and coffee but also wine and flowers and candles; one scent: basil honeysuckle and white grapefruit). Each one could be the name of a New Yorker short story or an indie rock band.

The smell of freshly made waffle cones from Salt & Straw dominates the intersection of Abbot Kinney and California. The ice cream shop boasts such flavors as avocado-and-strawberry sherbert, black olive brittle and goat cheese, and foie gras oatmeal-raisin cream pie.

And, of course, there are myriad coffee shops: Intelligentsia, Blue Bottle Coffee and Blue Star Donuts, which sells coffee along with maple bacon doughnuts and passion fruit cocoa nib donuts. Even Tom’s Shoes sells coffee — more coffee, it would seem, than shoes.

“Many of the stores on Abbot Kinney are run as loss leaders,” says Ira Koslow, a longtime Venice resident who’s also president of the Venice Neighborhood Council. “It’s become such a phenomenon to have Abbot Kinney on your letterhead or on your website. The stores don’t have to make that much money. Your brand is getting that bump.”

And then there is Abbot’s Habit, where I walked in to find a girl paying with change she counted out carefully from a plastic Ziploc bag. The 1990s-era coffee shop is the last place in the vicinity where you can get a drip coffee for $2.25. At 24 years old, it’s the longest-operating establishment on Abbot Kinney.

“The street is changing, obviously,” says Nina Santangelo, the owner. “Every three years it changes.

When Intelligentsia opened its Abbot Kinney branch in 2009, Santangelo says, her business grew. “But now it’s saturated. Tom’s Shoes has a coffee shop. Which is fine. Down the street has a place with butter in their coffee. And then there’s the one with nitro.”

Locals used to come to Abbot’s Habit, or they went to Hal’s, which was forced to move up the street, to the less fashionable part of Abbot Kinney north of Westminster, after its property sold for a staggering $40 million.

“Every day another customer comes in and says they’re moving,” Santangelo says. “My employees all used to live in Venice. Now none of them do.”

Santangelo, too, is planning an exit. Bariring some last-minute reversal, she says, Abbot’s Habit will close its doors in June.

“We’re trying to stay ourselves, but the rent doesn’t allow that,” she says. “I live in Venice, but we never eat in Venice. You’d think you could walk down the street and get something to eat that doesn’t cost $80.”

Koslow agrees: “The stores have changed. It’s sort of more for tourists than for locals. It is sad, in a way. But the residents are changing as well.”

Over the course of just a couple of years, Venice has become one of the most expensive neighborhoods in Los Angeles. According to the real estate website Zillow, it is the seventh most expensive neighborhood in which to buy a house, its median home value — $1,578,200 — coming in just behind the Hollywood Hills and just ahead of Beverlywood. According to
So how did Venice become Beverly Hills?

Many neighborhoods in L.A. have fought development, but none has done it with quite the same zeal as Venice.

According to census data analyzed by Dario Álvarez, an urban planner who works with Murphy, the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area (which includes Los Angeles and Orange counties) added nearly 2 million housing units between 1960 and 2010. Housing capacity grew from 2.5 million to nearly 4.5 million units, an increase of about 80 percent.

By contrast, the number of housing units in Venice (everything north of Washington Boulevard), near the canals, about halfway between Abbot Kinney and the ocean. He constructed the building in the 1980s, a rectangular thing, gray, yellow and turquoise with square windows, three stories, five units on two lots. This is what passes for density in Venice.

“Me to build this building today would be highly difficult,” he says. “I would get three or four units as opposed to five. The rules haven’t changed. But the way they interpret those rules has. And that’s politics.”

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When Kinney died in 1920, a power struggle developed between local business interests, and Venice began to fall into disrepair. Its canals, lovingly installed by Kinney to mimic the city’s namesake, grew stagnant and slimy. The obvious solution was for the town to be absolved by San Pedro and the water in the Owens Valley, and it took Venice, annexing it in 1926. But the powers that be didn’t like what they got. They didn’t like the Mediterranean architecture, the narrow streets, the growing up on a walk street not far from the beach.

“It was a smaller town, a poorer town,” Scott says. “A lot of us were on food stamps, welfare. But definitely more of a community. It had like a beach town vibe.”

Scott started surfing when he was 7. He was friends with Tony Alva and Jay Adams — part of the Dogtown crew — though he was a bit younger than they were. Even on weekends, they largely had the beaches to themselves.

In the spring of 1972, the city opened a bike path along the boardwalk, part of an 18-mile route connecting Torrance with Santa Monica. Also in the early ‘70s, the polyurethane wheel was invented. The softer wheel had a better grip, allowing skateboarders to take to the streets.

Slowly, Venice began to resemble a typical L.A. suburb. But the city neglected Venice, which became shabby. By the 1950s, people were calling it the “Slum by the Sea.” In reality, it was an eclectic mix, with European immigrants, clothing—optional beaches, senior housing, Holocaust survivors, artists, beatniks and an African-American working class that settled in the Oakwood area.

In the 1960s, Los Angeles decided to raze much of Venice. More than 500 buildings, including a historic hotel, were demolished before residents obtained a court order to halt the destruction. Venice was allowed to hang on as a quirky, sleepy bedroom community. The last remnants of Abbot Kinney’s amusement park faded away. Any tourist who happened upon the boardwalk likely was lost.

Frank Murphy moved to Venice in 1975 from St. Louis. His first job was working for artist Chris Burden, who was constructing something called a B-Car, a small, one-seat automobile that was supposed to go 100 miles an hour and get 100 miles to the gallon.

“He was a crazy sonofabitch,” Murphy says. “He could drive that thing up and down the boardwalk testing it out, going 70 and 80 miles an hour. There was nobody here.”

Around that same time, Solo Scott was and roller skaters to take to the streets. Then, in 1977, someone started renting roller skates out of the back of his van near the boardwalk. He called his business Cheasypalates. Between the new plastic wheels, the new bike path and the rise of a new musical genre called disco, the boardwalk began to attract a new kind of visitor.

“Basically what happened was the disco craze came to town,” Scott says. “Disco, roller skating, and then vendors started setting up shop. That’s when it started to change. That’s when it turned into a tourist attraction again.”

But the disco skaters and street vendors didn’t fight crime, which continued to skyrocket throughout the ‘80s and early ‘90s, especially in Oakwood, where the Venice 13 and Shoreline Crips gangs regularly did battle.

“It was so prevalent that the cops just waved their hands,” Scott recalls. “They weren’t doing anything.”

The number of homeless people sleeping on the streets of Venice began to grow exponentially.

“In the ‘80s, there was a huge homeless encampment on the beach,” Venice resident Anne Zimmerman recalls. “When the city broke it up, it felt like an assault in Vietnam. There were helicopters on the beach shining spotlights. It was intense.”

For all the dizzying changes Venice has been through, there are still homeless encampments up and down Rose Avenue. There are still throngs of tourists at the boardwalk on the weekend. There are still incense sticks for sale, and henna tattoos, and gutter punks loitering about. There are still the Sidewalk Café and Small World Books, the same slices of pizza for a few dollars and the same sunglasses for $5.99. There are still Muscle Beach and paddle tennis and basketball and handball, still music blasting from boom boxes and still Harry Parry. Yes, there is a newly opened Poké Shack, and the Jamaicans who sell their homemade CDs now accept credit cards via Square on their iPhones.

There is a sort of cultural inertia on the boardwalk that’s impervious to gentrification. The buildings just off the boardwalk, however, are a different story.

There aren’t many apartments in Los Angeles that stand three feet from the sand, with bedroom windows that look out onto the Pacific Ocean. Carlos Camara has one of them.

Camara is from Mexico. He moved to L.A. about 20 years ago to study physics at UCLA. He lived in Westwood, near campus, but with that view, who could resist? Since he moved in. The rent was close to $2,000 a month — a hefty price tag at the time, but with that view, who could resist? Since the apartment is covered under the city’s rent-stabilization ordinance, which limits how much a landlord can raise the rent, Camara pays $2,600 a month today — in a neighborhood where rents average more than $5,000, according to Zillow.

“Right now it’s a deal,” he says. “Of course I’m fully aware of that.”

Living where he does was great, he says, until about three years ago, when a guy named Carl Lambert bought the building. From then on, when a tenant moved out, his or her room would be converted into a short-term rental. That is, the Waldorf was slowly being turned into a hotel. Now, Camara says, there are only 10 long-term tenants left in the building of 32 units.

“We don’t know our neighbors,” says Camara, who lives with his wife. “Not having neighbors is a big deal. What it means is you don’t have people who have a vested interest in the place being safe.”

Today, construction workers are a near—constant presence at the Waldorf, gutting vacant apartments and turning them into modern hotel rooms. Camara’s apartment, meanwhile, has cabinets that don’t quite close and windows that barely open. According to Camara, Lambert also tried to take away the remaining tenants’ parking, but he backed off when Camara and the others got a lawyer.

“The intention is clear,” Camara says. “If it was up to him, we’d be out of here.”

Lambert owns at least four other buildings like the Waldorf, all right on the beach, which he has casually and, some
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say, illegally converted into hotels. In June, the city attorney filed a lawsuit against Lambert over a different building, the Venice Suites, not far from the Waldorf.

“In a city with a profound shortage of affordable housing, unlawfully converting rental units to operate hotels has got to stop,” according to a press release from L.A. City Attorney Mike Feuer.

Lambert declined to comment for this story, saying only, “With all due respect, I don’t want any quotes from me right now.”

Lambert isn’t the only property owner converting rent-stabilized units into short-term rentals. Venice is teeming with them. A six-story building at 5 Rose Ave. used to be rent-stabilized and Section 8 housing. Now it’s a boutique hotel, Air Venice, where rooms start at $179 a night. Next door, at 15 Rose Ave., is another apartment building that’s been converted into a hotel — the Rose.

“We never set out to create the perfect hotel,” its website reads. “Our walls are thin, and the building is wonky. ... But it’s not like any other hotel. And we like it just like it is.”

Rooms with queen beds and, yes, shared bathrooms start at $185.

The residential section of Venice, meanwhile, is littered with houses sporting numbered keypads at their front gates — the telltale sign of an Airbnb rental.

According to the website Inside Airbnb, which scrapes data from Airbnb, there are nearly 2,000 listings in Venice. The vast majority of these listings are entire homes or apartments. A 2015 study by the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (a union-backed group) found that in Venice, “As many as 12.5 percent of all housing units have become Airbnb units, all without public approval” — a far higher concentration than any other neighborhood in the city.

Airbnb spokeswoman Shannon Murphy calls the numbers used by LAANE and In- and Airbnbb’s “cherry-picked” and “inaccurate,” and says “the scale of Airbnb activity in Los Angeles is too small to have a significant impact on housing prices.”

But housing advocates say short-term rentals — whether done on Airbnb or privately, as in the case with Carl Lambert — have eviscerated Venice’s already precarious rental market.

“We’re talking about thousands of rent-stabilized units in a very tight market with very little production,” says Becky Dennison, executive director of Venice Community Housing. “There’s no getting around the fact that Venice has been the most impacted by short-term rentals.”

Dennison lived in Venice for about a decade, starting in 1992. Even though the boardwalk was a tourist destination, she says, “Venice emptied overnight.” One of the few hotels in the neighborhood, the Hotel Erwin, almost went out of business.

That has changed in the last five years, with the rise of Abbot Kinney as well as Airbnb, which offers customers a taste, supposedly, of what it is like to live in Venice as Venetians do.

“I have one catty-corner, one next to me, one behind me, one two houses down,” says Zimmerman, describing her block on one of the idyllic walk streets near Lincoln. “I don’t know who’s turning on the lights next door. I don’t know who’s parking illegally in my parking space. It’s very weird.”

She adds: “I just want real neighbors.”

Since 2014, Los Angeles City Council has been struggling to come up with a law that would regulate short-term rentals. An ordinance sponsored by Councilman Mike Bonin, who represents Venice, has been bouncing around from committee to committee, with no end in sight.

In Venice, meanwhile, short-term rentals continue to crop up, unfettered, and every week more rent-stabilized units go off the market.

“There’s just no incentive to have a long-term tenant there,” says real estate agent Alex Quaid. “Santa Monica has cracked down on it, but the city of L.A. hasn’t.”
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Reasons, and not because we’re hippies

Ten years ago, when Ubuntu opened at a certain brand of meat-free restaurant: “The food just happens to be vegan!” It’s a nice thought, but what they really mean to say is, “We limited ourselves for creative reasons, and not because we’re hippies who care about animals.” That doesn’t have quite the same ring to it, does it?

The new brand of vegan restaurant, run by chefs who are not vegan (or even vegetarian) themselves, is far more calculated. By chefs who are not vegan (or even vegetarian) — to great effect — at Rustic Canyon and where it felt right, and is now doing so — to great effect — at Rustic Canyon in Santa Monica. But a decade later, his idea seems to have caught on, and all of a sudden Los Angeles has a number of restaurants with meat-eating chefs serving meat-free menus.

The most interesting of these might be Erven, the Santa Monica restaurant that employs the hashtag (on its website and elsewhere) #coincidentallyvegan. The place is named for its chef, Nick Erven, who captured our attention a couple of years back at Saint Martha in Koreatown. But a decade later, his idea seems to have caught on, and all of a sudden Los Angeles has a number of restaurants with meat-eating chefs serving meat-free menus.

The place is named for its chef, Nick Erven, who captured our attention a couple of years back at Saint Martha in Koreatown, where he worked in an open kitchen under a neon sign that read “hipster,” and served modernist dishes such as seaweed “doritos” with sea urchin tataki and avocado mouse. Saint Martha was an immensely playful restaurant, one that showed Erven’s talent for inventive cooking that was fun but also elegant. That it closed after less than two years was sad but also somehow befitting the freewheeling, experimental nature of the place. Erven (the man) was for a brief while the chef at Fundamental L.A. before joining forces with some of his Saint Martha business partners to open Erven (the restaurant).

Erven is one of those double-storefront eateries that feels all inviting and glowy from the outside, especially on these rare rainy winter nights, and that feeling extends long after you’ve entered. Often there’s a complimentary taste of cider or some other beverage when you’re seated, and I’ve rarely come across service so gracious and enthusiastic as what the servers at Erven manage, even when they’re exceedingly busy.

It helps that they are obviously true believers in this food. If you choose prudently from the menu, you might come to share their enthusiasm. Plenty of dishes here showcase that same playfulness and bright creativity that made Saint Martha so appealing.

Seated under a giant image of Mick Jagger making out with Gandhi (Because veganism is rock & roll? Who knows?) you’d be wise to order the chickpea fritters, turned inkly with the addition of activated charcoal and black garlic. The severely square snacks possess a subtle, roasty sweetness, which is offset by the zing of yuzu. Many of Erven’s best dishes rely on this kind of acidity, which seems to come from left field in the best possible way. Soft tofu arrives in a bowl under a flurry of almost-charred Brussels sprout leaves — a nice textural juxtaposition — but the real thrill is the puckery one-two punch of pickled garlic ponzu and lime-cured onion.

Erven makes the argument for coincidental veganism, but we’re not convinced

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While it’s not unusual to see white chefs around the country cooking food from other cultures (such as Rick Bayless of Red O and Andy Ricker of Pok Pok), a number of L.A.-based chefs are cooking food from other cultures while making their own ethnicity a sort of punch line. Walk along Broadway downtown at night and you’ll likely find Ben McMillan manning his White Boy Tacos stand. Instead of your regular carne asada, McMillan piles onto his tortillas more Southern-inspired fillings, such as barbecue pulled pork and lime-ginger shrimp. As a bonus, customers get to do good while they eat here: Buy three tacos and a fourth will be given away for free. McMillan, a Cleveland transplant who grew up on Taco Bell, knew he couldn’t compete with the plethora of amazing Mexican spots in L.A., so he tried to pay homage in the only way he knew how. “[I thought,] ‘Here’s what I know how to do and it seems to fit fairly well on a taco,’ so that’s kind of how I came to doing a different style of taco,” he says. “If you look at what we’ve done with pizzas and hamburgers, we’ve taken the tradition and fusionized it. I’m not the first one to do it. We all know you put Korean barbecue and hamburgers, we’ve taken the tradition and fusionized it. I’m not the first one to do it. We all know you put Korean barbecue in a taco and you’re famous in a couple of years.”

He came up with his street cart’s name when he was developing his menu; his former girlfriend, who is Latina, joked that he was making white-boy tacos. “I didn’t create and she didn’t create that term — it’s the kind of how I came to doing a different style of taco,” he says. “When I first started, there was no name really — it’s just what people started referring to me as — the greatest irony being that I’m Persian,” he says. “But I guess ‘Persian Guy Pad Thai’ doesn’t have the same ring to it.”

Generally he doesn’t run into issues with his name, but that’s because most of his clientele know his backstory. “Occasionally I get some pushback, and I’ve had a few people go as far as call it racist, to which I just ask, ‘What is racist about it?’” Sharp says. “I believe those people are typically missing the absurdist joke that there’s a ‘white guy’ authentically replicating an experience that you don’t typically find on this continent.”

White Guy Pad Thai has been in business for years, but the name may not be around much longer. Sharp has partnered with Grand Central Market’s Sticky Rice and says, “We are mulling a name change, because the old one doesn’t make a lot of sense with the direction we’re headed.”

When a chef does cook food from other cultures, knowing how to treat care-fully isn’t always clear-cut. Golden Boys Chinese, a Chinese-inspired pop-up run by Hunter Pritchett and Adam Midkiff (whose culinary pedigree runs the gamut from Son of a Gun to Red Medicine), moves around from space to space sling-ing dishes such as “typhoon shelter” lo mein with clams and uni butter, and crispy orange chicken sandwich. In September, New York Times columnist Lucas Peterson tweeted that he had issues with Golden Boys’ bio, in which they describe their food as “a unique take on a more fun, healthful and transparent approach to Chinese Food in Los Angeles.”

“What I really objected to was...
ful’ and ‘transparent,’” Peterson says. “It plays to stereotypes that Chinese kitchens are opaque, less clean, making unhealthy food laden with chemicals and MSG, cooking with mysterious ingredients that are not hygienic or ‘normal’ like a typical American kitchen.”

Peterson adds, “When I eat Chinese food — or any other kind of food — I don’t particularly care if a chef is a woman or the city of the chef. When you’re cooking the food of another country, though, especially in a city where there are so many Chinese people and excellent Chinese restaurants that haven’t been adequately and equally recognized by our food media, you have to approach it sensitively and with more respect.”

Attorney David Chan, who is known for eating at more than 7,000 Chinese restaurants and keeping track of them in a spreadsheet for 20 years, says of Golden-Boys’ description, “It’s fairly innocuous from my point of view.”

Chan says it’s true that most Chinese food isn’t very healthy. He says his “diet goes out the window” when he visits restaurants in China or Hong Kong. “Being Chinese, being aware of stereotypes and anti-Chinese discrimination, I don’t like to make blanket statements, but when it comes to [Chinese] food, most [of these chefs] are about taste and they really don’t care what’s in the food,” Chan says.

He references the old jokes that say, in the “A-B-C gradings of Chinese restau- rants, C is better than B, and B is better than A,” and “C really stands for Chinese.” Chan says that’s partly because Chinese people find certain U.S. Department of Health regulations unnecessary and, as a result, get dinged during the grading process. As an example, he refers to the long fight over the non-refrigeration of Peking duck; the kind you see hanging in the windows of Chinese barbecue joints.

GoldenBoys’ Pritchett says they’ve had “great dialogue” with Peterson since that tweet. They’ve also removed that description from their bio. “We are highly conscious of what we look like, who we are and what we do,” Pritchett said via email.

“From the beginning of GoldenBoys, we’ve made it a point to be respectful of the incredibly hard-working people in Chinese cuisine. We are in no way trying to ‘el- evate,’ water down or ‘Columbus’ Chinese food, and have learned to stick to just cooking the food we love and not feel pressured to create taglines or hasty branding.”

Chan says there’s a presumption in the public eye that only the Chinese can cook their ancestral culture’s food. The Thai owners of restaurant-bar Same Same in Silver Lake are putting their own spin on the cuisine. Same Same is version 2.0 of what was the long-standing Thai restaurant Rambutan. Thai cousins Katy Noochla or and Annie Daniel, owners of Rambutan, partnered with Last Word Hospitality (Holly Zack, Adam Weisblatt and Angus McShane) this year to become Same Same, which still serves mostly traditional Thai fare but has a new wine-bar program and a chic makeover.

Same Same recently launched the monthly event “Pretty Thai for a White Guy.” At its Dec. 14 debut, they presented a Thai-inspired burger along with some wine pairings. Every month, they plan to feature a new dish that melds the comfort fare of American and Thai cuisines.

Last Word Hospitality’s Weisblatt, who bonded with the cousins over their restaurant experiences and travels to Thailand, points out that one of the best restaurants in Japan, L’effervescence, has Japanese chefs cooking French food. “I think anyone can do it, but you have to pay homage and show respect for the culture and show you’ve done your research, and it’s not like, ‘Oh, this is a Thai burger because I added one chili.’”

In a recent think piece about this topic in the East Bay Express, Luke Tsai writes, “At the end of the day, chefs should cook whatever kind of food they love to cook, and they should do it with all of the passion, skill and technique they can muster. But, as [Oakland Indian restaurant] Juhu Beach Club’s Preeti Mistry pointed out, white chefs in particular should also be willing to engage their critics and speak to why they’ve chosen to focus on a certain cuisine or why they’ve decided to prepare a dish a certain way.”

Circling back to authenticity in Chinese food, Chan says he has a problem with people looking down on the word “fusion” because to them that means inauthentic. “But then if you look at some of your better Chinese restaurants, both in the U.S. and abroad, part of what makes them good is the fact that they innovate,” Chan says.

“And what’s to distinguish innovation from what’s referred to as ‘fusion food’?”

White Guy Pad Thai’s Sharp says, “Maybe in 50 years, when someone else replicates what we did, people will be comparing us against it, writing articles about whether or not it is authentic.” —Jean Trinh
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**COMEDY**

**Father Knows Squat**

Think your dad is embarrassing? Jokes about parental issues are as much a staple of stand-up comedy as hecklers, and co-hosts Mary Sasson and Marissa Strickland are working out their childhoods in *The Bad Dad Game Show*, “the only game show that celebrates negligent fathers and the comedians who had to grow up with them.” (Strickland’s father once defecated in her fifth-grade teacher’s car. Try to beat that.) In their Match Game–style show, the UCB regulars invite two audience members to match answers with three fellow comics — tonight it’s Justin Michael, Melissa Stephens and Dan Gregor — who’ve had similarly unusual experiences. Prizes may include a jar of pickles. It’s complicated, and you’ll find out why. **UCB Franklin, 5919 Franklin Ave., Hollywood; Fri., Jan. 20, 11:59 p.m.; $5. (323) 908-8702, franklin.ucbtheatre.com. —Siran Babayan**

**Odyssey and Oracle**

L.A.’s newest dance festival takes up residence at a venue known as a respected theater, and now emerging as a welcoming dance venue. While most festivals offer brief pieces from many companies, *Dance at the Odyssey* presents four companies, with each given one or more evenings; the debut last weekend was devoted to German dance collective MAMAZA. This Friday the physical theater of Galiana & Nikolchev’s Useless Room explores a graying existence in *The Last One*. Sunday belongs to flamenco, with Olé Flamenco, led by dancer Yolanda Arroyo and her husband, guitarist Paco Arroyo, plus dancers Mikaela Kai, Jani Quintero, “La Pimentilla” and “La Miki.” Next weekend the fest concludes with L.A. Contemporary Dance Company’s *Force Majeure*, a quartet of works that enjoyed an extended, sold-out run of several weeks in late 2016. **Odyssey Theatre, 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., West L.A.; Fri., Jan. 20–Sat., Jan. 28; $15-$35. (310) 477-2055, odysseytheatre.com. —Ann Haskins**

**Ooh, That Mel**

“Hello, handsome. Is that a 10-gallon hat or are you just enjoying the show?” It’s an appearance by showbiz legend Mel Brooks in an up-close-and-personal talk about his career, plus inside stuff about the making of his classic movie *Blazing Saddles*. In *Mel Brooks: Back in the Saddle Again* the director- funnyman gives the inside poop-scoop on that disgracefully hilarious masterpiece of cinema, whose very creation initially shocked solid, staid America and, wouldn’t you just figure, went on to be regarded as one of the best and biggest comedy films of all time. Brooks engages in live conversation and an audience Q&A. **Microsoft Theater at L.A. Live, 777 Chick Hearn Court, downtown; Fri., Jan. 20, 8 p.m.; $39.50-$109.50. (213) 763-6030, microsofttheater.com. —Matt Stromberg**

**March on**

Welp, it’s happened. A misogynist prick who brags about grabbing women by their pussies has become president of the United States, a nation that, last time the Census Bureau checked, is nearly 51 percent female. The day after Inauguration Day, any Angeleno who “stands for human rights, civil liberties, tolerance of diversity and compassion for our shared humanity” — female, male and non-gender-conforming — will gather in Pershing Square for the official **Women’s March Los Angeles**. The march will weave through downtown and loop back around to Pershing Square, where there will be entertainment, food trucks and informational booths. The election is over, but the fight is just beginning. **Pershing Square, 532 S. Olive St., downtown; Sat., Jan. 21, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; free. womensmarchla.org. —Gwynedd Stuart**

**Wine About It**

For the second year in a row, **Uncorked L.A. Wine Festival** will be taking over Union Station for an evening of wine-soaked revelry. Some 50 wineries will pour tastes at the event, mostly California growers and bottlers. In addition to the quaffs, a number of food trucks will be on hand to help prevent any fermented-grape juice–induced hangovers. There will be live music, too, in case you like it loud. **Union Station, 800 N. Alameda St., downtown; Sat., Jan. 21, 5–9 p.m.; $60, $70 VIP. uncorkedwinefestivals.com/los-angeles-wine-festival-2017. —Katherine Spiers**

**A Collective Experience**

A city as big as L.A. is overrun by artist collectives whose members are looking further their creative opportunities. Curated by Kara Tome, “The Collectivists” showcases works by members of six such networks of supporters located in downtown, Highland Park and the Eastside. More than 60 artists representing Durden & Ray, Eastside International, Manual History Machines, Monte Vista Projects, Tiger Strikes Asteroid and the Association of Hysteric Curators will display paintings, photographs, sculpture and mixed media, as well as take part in panel discussions and workshops throughout the exhibit, which opens Saturday and runs through March 12. **Brand Library & Art Center, 1601 W. Mountain St., Glendale; Sat., Jan. 21, 5–9 p.m.; $60, $70 VIP. brandlibrary.org. —Siran Babayan**

**Hollywood v. Hitler**

Villa Aurora, the Spanish–style home in Pacific Palisades that once belonged to German author Lion Feuchtwanger and his wife, Marta, was an intellectual watering hole in the 1930s and ’40s for both
European expatriates and other German-Jews fleeing the Nazis, including Kurt Weill, Bertolt Brecht, Arnold Schoenberg, Fritz Lang, Thomas Mann, Charlie Chaplin and Charles Laughton. Now a residency for visual artists, filmmakers and musicians, Villa Aurora hosts ongoing salons such as tonight’s discussion, Artists in Exile, which looks at the community of European émigrés in L.A. around WWII. Panelists include Academy Museum of Motion Pictures curator Doris Berger, Villa Aurora project coordinator Friedel Schmoranzer, music producer Neal Brostoff and moderator Donna Rifkind, whose upcoming book, The Sun and Her Stars: Salka Viertel and Hitler’s Exiles in Hollywood, is about the Viertel actress who lived in Santa Monica and wrote the screenplays for Queen Christina and Anna Karenina, both starring Greta Garbo. Villa Aurora project coordinator Fritz Lang, Thomas Mann, Charlie Chaplin and Charles Laughton. Now a residency for visual artists, filmmakers and musicians, Villa Aurora hosts ongoing salons such as tonight’s discussion.

**PERFORMANCE**

**Blissed Out**

Wayang, Indonesian shadow puppetry, is a centuries-old theatrical art form in which skilled performers manipulate puppets behind a lighted scrim to tell enthralling, epic stories. Acclaimed Indonesian artist Eko Nugroho has updated this tradition by introducing street art, hip-hop, found objects and live actors to create a dazzling, hybrid form called Wayang Bocor, which often takes on contemporary social or political themes. REDCAT presents God Bless (In the Name of Semelah), which re-counts how Islam came to Java in the 15th century, mixing with Hinduism, Buddhism and animism to make Indonesia the most populous Muslim-majority nation in the world. REDCAT; 631 W. Second St., downtown.; Sun., Jan. 22, 7 p.m.; $12-$25. (323) 227-2800, reduct.org/event/eko-nugroho-and-wayang-bocor. —Matt Stromberg

**THEATER**

**Leading Ladies**

Every week on their podcast Leading Ladies, the duo present themed evenings of music and stories about their favorite female characters. Other people like to show off by proving how smart they are to a bunch of strangers. Some people like to show off by proving how smart they are to a bunch of strangers. REDCAT; 631 W. Second St., downtown.; Tue., Jan. 24, 7 p.m.; $12-$25. (323) 227-2800, reduct.org/event/eko-nugroho-and-wayang-bocor. —Matt Stromberg
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Jonathan Katz’s cult classic animated show gets real at Riot L.A.

BY JULIE SEABAUGH

F un fact: Jonathan Katz once sold a vial of Robin Williams’ urine to a rabid fan for $500.

The unassuming comedian, writer and actor behind the influential ’90s animated series Dr. Katz, Professional Therapist began his entertainment career late, forming a six-piece R&B band called Katz and Jammers when he was deep into his 30s. “On a good night we would make $600,” he says. “We never had a good night.”

Katz was a stand-up comic who married Williams in 1978. When she attended Vermont’s liberal Goddard College with classmate Valerie Velardi, who married Williams in 1978, when she passed along some of Katz’s songs to the crowd, people left.”

“Back then, I could be in the middle of a row, even if you’re a trained artist, you can’t do it exactly the same,” Katz explains. “That’s why the characters vibrate and move, but they don’t go anywhere.”

In 1995, Dr. Katz, Professional Therapist debuted on Comedy Central. The half-hour sitcom centered on a divorced therapist and single father whose patients happen to be professionally funny. Early guests included Ray Romano, Dave Attell, Dom Irrera, Larry Miller and Andy Kindler.

“Squigglevision” aesthetic was created using an algorithm based on human error. “If you try to draw the same thing twice in a row, even if you’re a trained artist, you can’t do it exactly the same,” Katz explains. “That’s why the characters vibrate and move, but they don’t go anywhere.”

In 1995, Dr. Katz, Professional Therapist debuted on Comedy Central. The half-hour sitcom centered on a divorced therapist and single father whose patients happen to be professionally funny. Early guests included Ray Romano, Dave Attell, Dom Irrera, Larry Miller and Andy Kindler.

Katz struggled to occupy the stage alone. His stand-up incorporated prerecorded material and a guitar fitted with a tape recorder. As he pretended to play, the crowd suddenly heard the voice of his conscience, a one-sided conversation with an audience member or the harmony of backup singers. An offer to perform on NBC’s new Late Night With David Letterman — sans any gimmicks — permanently weaned him from the guitar.


HBO execs Stu Smiley and Caroline Strauss soon invited Katz into a brainstorming session with talent including Larry David, the Higgins Brothers and future Mystery Science Theater 3000 host Joel Hodgson. The goal: Program and launch a new endeavor called the Comedy Channel. Within two years the channel had merged with Viacom’s Ha! Network to become CTV: The Comedy Network, soon renamed Comedy Central.

In the interim Katz notched a couple of appearances on The Tonight Show With Johnny Carson, a writing and creative consultant gig for Politically Incorrect With Bill Maher and correspondent appearances on Michael Moore’s TV Nation. Comedy Central took particular notice of The Biography of Mr. Katz, a cartoon Katz produced with the help of educational-software designer Tom Snyder. Its unique brand identity was critical to Comedy Central from 1995 to 1999.

Katz died of multiple sclerosis, Katz has increasingly experienced painful neurological symptoms called trigeminal neuralgia, which prompt sporadic pauses in conversation. “It’s only happened once onstage,” he says. “I’m not sure the audience picked it up on it. They just thought it was part of my act, taking an incredibly long pause.” A motorized scooter and cane aid his mobility.

Since his 1996 diagnosis of multiple sclerosis, Katz has increasingly experienced painful neurological symptoms called trigeminal neuralgia, which prompt sporadic pauses in conversation. “It’s only happened once onstage,” he says. “I’m not sure the audience picked it up on it. They just thought it was part of my act, taking an incredibly long pause.” A motorized scooter and cane aid his mobility.

From his longtime home in Newton, Massachusetts, Katz additionally produces the nostalgically folksy podcast Hey We’re Back! and is working on a top-secret project for Audible.com involving Silverman and Andy Kindler. He doesn’t consider himself much of an improvisational actor, but his continued interactivity with peers, younger comics who grew up watching Dr. Katz and multiple generations of fans indicates a talent for inspiring trust on par with that of real doctors.

“Unlike the TV show, Dr. Katz Live requires me to be present in the current moment.”

Kinder. “The patients were really a marketing tool for Comedy Central,” Katz says. “Half kidding. “Also they gave us 11 minutes out of 22 minutes with their material. That was comedy we didn’t have to write; they had already written it for us.”

Though Katz and Snyder outlined scripts, comedians tended to simply ad lib their way into their acts’ more psychologically explorative bits. It wasn’t until audio was finalized that animated likenesses of the participants were rendered and implemented. The concept, unique look and deceptively low-key tone helped lend
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This study is for HIV-positive people who are taking antiretroviral therapy and are interested in strategies to reduce heart disease.

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this week, on Inauguration Day at LACMA, an artist explores a contentious moment from Reagan’s inauguration: a day later, artists stage performances at the Hammer.

Post-Truth ad nauseam
For his Susanne Vielmetter show, Karl Haendel annotated the Declaration of Independence in a cranky way, like a scholar fed up with an over-hyped source. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all people evolved differently,” he writes below, in an amended, less idealistic version.

Haendel's Declaration

The Declaration leans against a navy wall that also displays a meticulous graphite drawing of a coyote in a child’s bedroom, and a white-on-black sign that reads “Post-Truth” over and over again. The show, which has two more rooms of work and ends with a monumental portrait of Hillary Clinton next to an equally monumental white, famous contemporary Ralph Waldo Emerson’s prim, neat desk has a sculpture of her that was always fully formed. Most of the time, one smaller sphere of iridescent color floats inside a bigger ellipsoid or rectangular shape. Colon makes these sculptures that were always fully formed. Most of the time, one smaller sphere of iridescent color floats inside a bigger ellipsoid or rectangular shape. Colon makes these sculptures using a plastics manufacturing process called blow-molding, which contributes to their aura of perfection. But engaging with these objects has to be a full-body process. If you don’t move around them, from one side to the next or backing up and then getting close, you won’t see how colors change, slightly at times and at other times so dramatically it seems as if the inner shapes are disappearing into their outer skins. Diane Rosenstein, 831 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood; through Feb. 18. (323) 857-6010, lacma.org.

Deceptive perfection
Gisela Colon’s sculptures appear deceptively effortless, as if they’re alien beings that were always fully formed. Most of the time, one smaller sphere of iridescent color floats inside a bigger ellipsoid or rectangular shape. Colon makes these sculptures using a plastics manufacturing process called blow-molding, which contributes to their aura of perfection. But engaging with these objects has to be a full-body process. If you don’t move around them, from one side to the next or backing up and then getting close, you won’t see how colors change, slightly at times and at other times so dramatically it seems as if the inner shapes are disappearing into their outer skins. Diane Rosenstein, 831 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood; through Feb. 18. (323) 462-5905, dianerosenstein.com.

PARANOIA, SEXUAL HARRASSMENT AND THE DIVISION OF LABOR

Day two begins and “Paranoia, Sexual Harassment and the Division of Labor.” Day two begins and ends with veteran dancer Simone Forti’s “News Animation” performance, in which she speaks and moves improvisationally in response to newspapers she crumples, drops, holds and walks on. 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Sat.-Sun., Jan. 21-22, 1-5 p.m. (310) 443-7000, hammer.ucla.edu.

1981 all over again
Artist Edgar Arceneaux calls his screening of Until, Until, Until... (2015-16) a “Counter-Inauguration Event.” The film’s subject is Ben Vereen’s blackface performance at Reagan’s 1981 inauguration. Vereen channeled vaudevillian Bert Williams, who performed in blackface while having (like Vereen) black skin. Vereen sang the show tune “Waiting for Robert E. Lee,” then pretended to ask a bartender for a drink. His request was denied due to his skin color. For a drink. His request was denied due to his skin color. Vereen’s performance, so few Americans saw it in full. Arceneaux restaged Vereen’s performance in New York last year, and this film documents that restaging and the live audience’s response. 9005 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Fri., Jan. 20, 7:30 p.m. (323) 857-6010, lacma.org.

Dancing to the newspaper
The two days after the inauguration, the Hammer Museum will host “At night the public realities, private frustration, politics and recreation all hold equal weight. 6006 Washington Blvd., Culver City; through Feb. 11. (310) 857-2117, vielmetter.com.

BY CATHERINE WAGLEY

The two days after the inauguration, the Hammer Museum will host “At night the public realities, private frustration, politics and recreation all hold equal weight. 6006 Washington Blvd., Culver City; through Feb. 11. (310) 857-2117, vielmetter.com.

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Are you interested in trying to improve the way your brain works?

If yes, you may be able to join a study where you add FDA-approved medication(s) to your HIV-regimen to improve neurocognitive performance.

This study is for HIV-positive people who also have HIV-associated neurocognitive disorder (HAND) as defined by the Frascati criteria.

It will help us to identify if adding Maraviroc (MVC) and/or Dolutegravir (DTG) to their current antiretroviral therapy will improve neurocognitive performance. Participants will be enrolled in this study for about 96 weeks. Compensation will be provided.

To join you must be:
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For more information contact the UCLA CARE Center at careoutreach@mednet.ucla.edu or via phone 310-557-9062

There are limitations to the confidentiality of email communications. Do not include any sensitive health information if you choose to contact the study team via email.

UCLA Meth Clinical Trial
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Are you using meth and looking to stop?

A UCLA meth clinical trial may be able to help. UCLA is conducting a clinical trial to find out if an anti-inflammatory medication can help patients to stop or reduce their meth use, and improve mental functioning, by reducing toxic brain inflammation caused by meth. Counseling, study medication, and compensation are included in this 18-week outpatient clinical trial.

If you are 18 years or older, using crystal meth, and looking to stop, call our research clinic in Hollywood (866) 449-UCLA or visit www.uclabam.org/meth

National Research Institute is conducting a clinical research study of an advanced form of fatty liver disease called non-alcoholic steato-hepatitis or NASH.

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A MOB SCENE

Rocky star Burt Young takes the stage as an aging criminal in The Last Vig

BY DEBORAH KLUGMAN

Mobsters, especially Italian ones, are as much a part of American folklore as cowboys. Writer-director David Varriale capitalizes on our fascination with them in The Last Vig, a character-driven dramedy that features seasoned actor Burt Young as an aging mob boss beset with family problems, diminishing revenues and a shrinking sphere of influence. The script isn’t wildly original but its colorful dialogue and eccentric characters promise an entertaining evening. That never evolves, however, for a couple of reasons, mainly Young’s failure to establish a strong stage presence, despite his endearing persona.

Big Joe (Young) operates out of the back room of a seedy Chinese take-out place where he’s catered to by his youthful gofer, Bocce (Ben Adams), and sometimes assisted by the restaurant’s immigrant proprietor (Clint Jung). The play’s seminal event is the disappearance of a courier with $100,000 worth of borrowed gambling chips, which Joe is now on the hook for.

Joe turns to an old friend, Jimmy D (Gareth Williams), to help solve his problem. Jimmy successfully negotiates a loan from another mob boss to pay for the chips, but the appearance of a crooked detective (Bruce Nozick) throws a wrench in Joe’s plans to remunerate his debtors, and underscores his growing vulnerability.

The increasing precariousness of Joe’s situation is the drama’s overarching theme, and Young’s gruff, tough, rough-around-the-edges mien is the perfect conduit for this kind of story. The problem is that the performer’s delivery, while suitable for film or TV, proves inadequate for the stage, even given the production’s small prosenium. Nor is audibility the only issue; Young is too often seated at times when the action calls for a bolder physical confrontation.

These issues affect the other ensemble members and throw their performances off balance. You can see them summoning their craft in an attempt to compensate, but you get the feeling they’re working without much specific direction. It also bears mention that several particulars of the plot are left hanging, and the ending is abrupt and not wholly satisfying.

Joel David’s detailed set includes photos of the pope, Muhammad Ali and Sophia Loren, and altogether furnishes an appropriately shady environs for the narrative.
The Founder finds America (and its food) turning nasty

BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL

Like its subject, the man who took McDonald’s from a single burger shop to a globe-straddling child-fat-tener, John Lee Hancock’s The Founder can’t stop selling. The first fast-food kitchen, set up in 1953 by the solemn McDonald brothers in San Bernardino, gets celebrated here as rousingly as John Glenn’s first orbit in Hidden Figures. “If there’s time to lean, there’s time to learn,” says one of the brothers. Their advice is for fry cooks. Rather than time-is-money killjoys whose assembly-line efficiency is ushering us toward our automated no-job future, the McDonalds (John Carroll Lynch and Nick Offerman) come across as eager dreamers protecting a vision. The Founder’s tour of their operation mixes Capra uplift with those training videos Mike Travis animation; America is bound to be reawakened. The Founder slowly reveals itself as a don’t-let-the-devil-into-your-house parable, one that uses all the techniques of inspirational moviemaking to disguise that devil’s intentions, even from the devil himself.

Kroc repeats a motivational mantra he plays on a record from a Dale Carnegie–like speaker, some gibberish about perseverance being the only true seed for success. He, too, believes the little guy is bound to succeed. In the first scenes, he’s persevering but getting nowhere, insisting to the owners of sleepy Midwestern diners that a machine that can make six milkshakes at once might improve business. Kroc still gets laughed at by the Swedes at his Illinois country club even after he’s convinced the McDonald brothers to let him oversee the franchising of their model restaurant. He even sits through a scene I thought had died, one that for decades has signaled the gritty determination of so many male movie heroes: His wife (Laura Dern) sighs that he’s not home enough and suggests that maybe it’s time to abandon his dreams.

In all these moments The Founder cues audiences to see that Kroc is the hero, that he and the McDonalds all are scrappy George Bailey types just trying to get their piece of the pie. Once Kroc discovers how much money he could be making without them, the brothers

Kroc fights with the brothers over cost-cutting measures, and we’re cued to like him less, now, because he says the one word that Hollywood knows Middle America hates most: goddamn. Then he enlists the help of goddamn’s top competitor in that category: lawyers.

Hancock’s cautionary tale never examines the ways that McDonald’s altered American life. Dieters are not consulted. There’s no elegy here for the diner or for variety; nobody complains that, when you drive across this country today, the businesses at the highway exits repeat like the recurring backgrounds in a Flintstones episode.

Still, in The Founder’s final third, all the sugar and carbs it feeds audiences curl into something productively sick-making. We see Kroc, like any McDonald’s eater, struggling to keep it all down. But he’s a salesman, persevering, the billionaire little guy standing up to the snobs and prigs. Everything he’s done he’s done because he’s the hero.

THE FOUNDER | Directed by John Lee Hancock
Written by Robert D. Siegel | The Weinstein Company | Citywide

IN THE FOUNDER’S FINAL THIRD, ALL THE SUGAR AND CARBS IT FEEDS AUDIENCES CURL INTO SOMETHING PRODUCTIVELY SICK-MAKING.

DETROIT UPDATE DOES NOT IMPROVE ON THE ORIGINAL

Detour’s cast is led by three of the more talented young actors working today — Tye Sheridan of Joe and The Tree of Life, Diary of a Teenage Girl, The Bel Powley and Emory Cohen of Brooklyn — none of whom are doing any favors by the dialogue they’re forced to work with here. Marked by sad strippers, law-school lectures and an abundance of split screens, Christopher Smith’s noir-inflected crime picture owes much to its namesake but adds little to its legacy. “I don’t wear a cape,” says Sheridan’s law student, whose comatose mother weighs heavily on his mind, “but I do find it hard to walk away from injustice.”

The young scholar suspects that his stepfather may be responsible for the car accident that led to his mother’s condition, so he hatches a harebrained scheme involving Cohen’s ruffian that, true to genre conventions, instantly goes wrong. The three principals set off together on a road trip of necessity, with Smith interspersing scenes from Edgar G. Ulmer’s excellent 1945 noir Detour in a needlessly overt homage. Suffice to say that none of this goes well for either them or us. As Powley’s stripper reminds us in one of her few meaningful lines, any man planning revenge should dig two graves — one for his enemy and one for himself. Anyone planning to watch a movie called Detour, meanwhile, need watch only one — and it was made in 1945.

DETOUR | Directed and written by Christopher Smith
Magnet Releasing | Music Hall

COURTESY OF MAGNET RELEASING

COURTESY OF THE WEINSTEIN COMPANY

THE FOUNDER stars as Ray Kroc in The Founder.
**Split Decision**

**SHYAMALAN’S LATEST IS NEITHER MESS NOR TRIUMPH**

**BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL**

Despite his reputation, M. Night Shyamalan has never lived and died by the twist. His best films, like *Unbreakable* or even last year’s cheerily nasty *The Visit*, work first as accomplished, emotionally engaging suspense. What’s most memorable about them isn’t the final-act revelations or even the quietly impressive framing and camera work. It’s that rare feeling of being unfixed in genre, of being uncertain just what kind of thriller the film will end up being: fairy tale or found-footage horror? Traumatized study of vengeance and survivor’s grief or paranoid superhero story?

Outside of its knockout first scene, in which horror insinuates itself into the everyday, Shyamalan’s latest, *Split*, is never so fruitfully uncertain. You always know just what sort of movie you’re watching: an *Oldboy*–*Cloverfield Lane*–style, locked-up-underground thriller spliced with the most howlingly ludicrous misunderstanding of mental disorders since the last time college freshmen got a DSM and started diagnosing their roommates. *Split* also is cruel and humorless by Shyamalan’s standards, with a wearily conventional climax and too many scenes of the villain, Kevin (James McAvoy), ticking among his multiple personalities — he has 23, none especially compelling. While Kevin alters his pitch and grows about his need to feed to some beast the impure girls he’s imprisoned, you’re left with little to think about besides whether a twist is coming.

The setup is no spoilable secret. Three high school girls (the lead is *The Witch’s* Anya Taylor-Joy) get imprisoned in the sprawling unfiniteness as baseline switches Kevin, the adult victim of abuse whose “horde” of personalities wrestle for dominance over one another.

At first Kevin adopts a different persona every time he enters his hostages’ cell: an abusive monster, a helpful janitor, a frightened child. Shyamalan milks the first appearance of Jackie, Kevin’s feminine self, for long, icky seconds, as if the sight of one born a man but dressed as a woman is hilarious and discomfiting.

Slightly more interesting is the fact that one of the less wicked personalities keeps emailing Kevin’s therapist, Dr. Fletcher (Betty Buckley), demanding an emergency session, which one of the other personalities then has to smile through, assuring her everything is fine. Since this keeps happening, the therapist’s quizzing of Kevin grows more intense. Which self is crying for help, before Kevin does something terrible? Might one personality be masquerading as another?

There’s a locked-room mystery going on inside Kevin’s head. But *Split* shows too little of the individual selves for viewers to develop a stake in puzzling out what’s up to what. McAvoy is impressive as he switches personalities, but never scary or moving; the script gives him many chances to exhibit virtuosity but too few for soulfulness.

Shyamalan’s less interested in who inhabits Kevin than he is in the idea of a crowd. He offers some parapsychological silliness about trauma possibly unlocking parts of the brain we don’t already use. He treats us to Dr. Fletcher giving a lecture via Skype about some multiple-personality miracles: the blind man whose other selves develop sight; the young person whose left hand and right hand simultaneously take different selves’ notes in what we’re assured is wholly different handwriting. Nobody’s ambidextrous note-taking looks like the same handwriting, of course, but it’s hard not to imagine, as Fletcher carries on, why the movie couldn’t have been about one of those odd cases rather than the ol’ killer in the basement.

What’s most engaging are the ways that the impulses of the humanistic writer-director seem at odds with those of the production company, Jason Blum’s horror-cheapie specialist Blumhouse. The story — or the producers — demands that the teen heroines lose their clothes as the movie wears on: The bad guy’s most OCD personality just can’t stand to see skirts and tops get dirty, so he makes the girls surrender them as soon as they’re besmirched. Tasteful Shyamalan can’t bring himself to let at the underwear on display, though, even in a close-up that shows a jagged knife tickling at the flesh just above the hem of a young woman’s panties — possibly the most lurid image in any of his films.

He seems embarrassed of this exploitation element, and he never even goes for the obvious sick joke: As the girls attempt to engineer an escape, they should frantically be scraping schmutz off the clothes they have left. Shyamalan is clever enough to seed a surprise plot development in the slow disrobing, buying himself some cover and apologists an excuse: The movie’s not selling the revelation and abuse of young flesh — it’s criticizing it. (All the way to the bank.)

For all that, *Split* is still a Shyamalan film, which means there’s joy in its craft and some inspired moments. Dig those in-camera split-screens, the best of the suspenseful incidents, its creator’s willingness to disorient us and seed a surprise plot development. *Split* isn’t the final-act revelations of *Unbreakable* or the most inspired turns in *The Visit*; it’s *Ponyo* with its turns even more intense. Shyamalan is never so fruitfully uncertain. You always know just what sort of movie you’re watching: an *Oldboy*–*Cloverfield Lane*–style, locked-up-underground thriller spliced with the most howlingly ludicrous misunderstanding of mental disorders since the last time college freshmen got a DSM and started diagnosing their roommates. *Split* also is cruel and humorless by Shyamalan’s standards, with a wearily conventional climax and too many scenes of the villain, Kevin (James McAvoy), ticking among his multiple personalities — he has 23, none especially compelling. While Kevin alters his pitch and grows about his need to feed to some beast the impure girls he’s imprisoned, you’re left with little to think about besides whether a twist is coming.

The setup is no spoilable secret.
Aero Tackles “Greatest Generation of Villainy” Friday, Jan. 20

It’s surely a coincidence that the Aero is screening The Great Dictator, Charlie Chaplin’s thinly veiled satire of Hitler, on the day of Donald Trump’s inauguration. Far be it from the humble programmers of the repertory theater to suggest a link between our president-elect’s rise to power and that of the film’s true subject, satirized here in the form of Adenoid Hynkel, the leader of Tomainia who seeks to persecute Jews and invade nearby Ostertich. Chaplin’s first all-talking picture, which screens on 35mm as part of The Greatest Generation of Villainy: The Movies vs. the Nazis, manages to end on a hopeful note despite being made in 1940; let’s hope it resonates. Aero Theatre, 1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; Fri., Jan. 20, 7:30 p.m.; $11. (323) 466-3496, americancinemathequecal.com.

Saturday, Jan. 21

For something less topical, try your lizard brain in action mode and indulge in the New Beverly’s double feature of The Yakuza and Rolling Thunder. The former, which stars Robert Mitchum as a World War II veteran who turns to the detective life after returning home, offers a Japanese-inflected take on the gangster picture, while the latter has been hailed by no less an authority than New Bev owner Quentin Tarantino as “one of the greatest action films of all time, the greatest combination of action film and character study I’ve ever seen.” New Beverly Cinema, 7165 Beverly Blvd., Fairfax; Fri.-Sat., Jan. 20-21, 7 p.m.; $8. (323) 938-4038, thenewbev.com.

Sunday, Jan. 22

UCLA’s essential Archive Treasures series presents The Barker, a semi-silent picture from 1928 about a carnival Barker who disapproves of his son’s blossoming relationship with a sideshow performer. (Though initially made without dialogue, the film went back into production in order to add talking sequences.) Though it’s fallen out of favor as cinematic source material of late, the circus once was the subject of a great many films — see also Freaks and The Greatest Show on Earth for a three-ring feature. UCLA’s Billy Wilder Theater, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Sun., Jan. 22, 7 p.m.; $10. (310) 206-8013, cinema.ucla.edu.

Though it’s one of the most vaunted of all Westerns, Once Upon a Time in the West isn’t even Sergio Leone’s oldest classic of the genre. The Italian auteur also was responsible for the Man With No Name trilogy — A Fistful of Dollars, For a Few Dollars More and The Good, the Bad and the Ugly — and is the premier spaghetti Western director. Widescrreen vistas abound in Once Upon a Time, a three-hour blood feud between Charles Bronson and Henry Fonda, co-written by Dario Argento and Bernardo Bertolucci. Also featured: one of Ennio Morricone’s many iconic scores. Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Sun., Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m.; $11. (323) 466-3496, americancinemathequecal.com.

Tuesday, Jan. 24

Kay Francis lights up LACMA once again in Another Dawn, another ‘30s drama with a lean runtime (73 minutes) and European backdrop. Errol Flynn co-stars in the film, about a British colonel who returns from a colony to England and falls in love with an American (Francis). There’s a problem, of course: Her aviator fiancé died in a plane crash and she isn’t ready for love. LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Tue., Jan. 24, 1 p.m.; $4. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org.

Thursday, Jan. 26

Cal State Northridge begins its semesterlong John Cassavetes retrospective with Shadows, which more or less ushered in the independent filmmaking movement. Raw, visceral and performed by a cast of nonprofessionals, it’s a directorial debut for the ages — and remarkably, a film Cassavetes improved upon several times over throughout his singular career. CSUN, 18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge; Thu., Jan. 26, 7 p.m.; free. (818) 677-1200, csun.edu.

Movies projected on actual film are a rarity these days, 16mm doubly so. Cinemafly offers an exception to the rule with Mike Leigh’s Naked, a classic of the ’90s featuring David Thewlis’ greatest performance (sorry, Professor Lupin fans). He plays Johnny, a miserable but philosophically minded Londoner ranting his way through the streets at all hours of the night — the kind of character it can be hard to root for but even more difficult to turn away from. Cinemafly/Silent Movie Theatre, 611 N. Fairfax Ave., Fairfax; Thu., Jan. 26, 7:30 p.m.; $12. (323) 655-2510, cinemafly.org. —Michael Nordine

OPENING THIS WEEK

ALONE IN BERLIN

Alone in Berlin subtly tells a true story of life during wartime, leaving the frontlines for the trenches of domestic suffering. While not the most formally adventurous or action-packed picture, it is a film of compelling urgency. In the opening moments, a young German soldier is killed in the fighting in 1940 France. We quickly learn that he was the son of Otto and Anna Quangel (Brendan Gleeson and Emma Thompson), a middle-aged German couple now consumed by grief. As a form of resistance, the two start sending out anonymous, anti-Nazi postcards, which quickly draw the ire of Berlin’s militant police force. Alone in Berlin is at its best when it homes in on the details of this tragically fated story:

Shots of the carefully lettered cards being placed around the city recall images from noirish films of the era such as Le Corbeau (1943). The banality of evil is a constant presence throughout the city’s constant suffering. We see not the horrors of concentration camps but rather quaint, dusty streets where Hitler Youth posters and swastika flags just happen to be present. Evil is integrated, and with their postcards Otto and Anna practice a small but meaningful act of rebellion. One of the early cards he writes urges readers to “stop the war machine,” a command that would resonate in too many periods of world history. While Alone in Berlin may at times come off as too understated (Otto and Anna are rather opaque characters), it makes for a fairly engaging exploration of how one lives day to day in the face of historical horror. (Abby Bender)

ROUGE

This dialogue-free French/Japanese animated fable — a low-key adventure about an unnamed shipwrecked bearded man who falls in love with nature — might serve as a potent antidote for post-election depression. The legion of animators, led by Hayao Miyazaki’s Studio Ghibli production company, inspires awe for the great outdoors with hand-drawn charcoal illustrations of lush bamboo forests and crystalline shorelines. Everything on the island, from the rustling of leaves to the buzzing of cicadas, encourages Beardo — and us to slow down to the pace of star-gazing and crab chasing. Once the bewitching title character is introduced, co-writer/director Michael Dudok de Wit and co-
SAVING BANKSY OFFERS A HISTORY OF CLIMATE-CHANGE EVIDENCE

Here’s a new despairing climate-change doc: Luc Jacquet’s Antarctica: Ice and Sky showcases a scientist who has been sounding the alarm about carbon emissions and the melting ice caps for so long that now he’s well over 80 and has passed a lifetime watching the world not bother to solve the problem. The film opens with aged Claude Lorius walking through an eerily tunnel of blue and white in the heart of a glacier, the persistent drip and crackle around him evidence that even this mighty ice cave is impermanent. Then he gazes at a barren valley that, via CGI, fills up with glacial ice, taking us back in time just 60 years, to Lorius’ first visit to Antarctica, 1956, which we see in a generous sampling of vintage footage.

Lorius describes the thrill and the hardship, the beauty and the thrill of discovery. Lorius’ teams were at the cutting edge of the core-sample process that revealed, by drilling into glaciers, the record of the composition of the atmosphere in centuries and millennia past. In subsequent expeditions, the evidence becomes clear: As the amount of carbon in the atmosphere increases, so does the temperature.

Much of the film consists of last-century scientists marveling at tubes of ancient ice or drilling for such samples. A couple scenes have some power: a montage of Lorius testifying on TV about the dangers we face, all the way back in the 1980s; the closing monologue, wherein he wonders about the world his children’s children will inherit. The film itself is more a record than a narrative: proof to the future that, yeah, we knew. —Alan Scherstuhl

ANTARCTICA: ICE AND SKY | Directed by Luc Jacquet

Music Box Films | Music Hall

“THE BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR”

SLANT • SIGHT & SOUND • FILM COMMENT • CAHIERS DU CINÉMA • FILM COMMENT

LA WEEKLY

 critical reviews by top street artists, critics and museums around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art. They can’t referee. The film includes interviews with high-level casino owner he unwittingly gets on to him from the start of the case, which involves a drug deal gone wrong and police-issued bullets recovered at the scene. He’s confidently blase about being under suspicion, at least until his semi-estranged son is kidnapped by the high-level casino owner he unwittingly roped off. The Lorius share of what follows takes place during one long night impossible, is to look at it and leave it for others to see. (Chris Packham)

SLEEPLESS Say this for Sleepless: It gives Michelle Monaghan more to do than anything else you’ve seen her in lately, and confirms once again that she should be in the lead far more often than Hollywood would have us believe. The positives don’t extend much further for Baran bo Odar’s remake of the 2011 French thriller Sleepless Night, which shifts the action to Las Vegas and places Monaghan opposite Jamie Foxx’s corrupt — or, if you believe his side of the story, under-cover — cop. Her Internal Affairs agent is on to him from the start of the case, which involves a drug deal gone wrong and police-issued bullets recovered at the scene. He’s confidently blase about being under suspicion, at least until his semi-estranged son is kidnapped by the high-level casino owner he unwittingly roped off. The Lorius share of what follows takes place during one long night impossible, is to look at it and leave it for others to see. (Chris Packham)

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Staying Vertical (Buster Vertical)

In Staying Vertical, as in nearly all of French filmmaker Alain Guiraudie’s tonically unthorough work, the emphasis is on the abundant possibility of pairings and practices when people get horizental. As the film opens, Léo (Damien Bonnard) gets coolly rebuffed by Yoan (India Arie defined caretaker and likely to remember this one come April.

Though big feels glut as art — guides Mills’ movie itself, a slow bloody out from a stab wound to the way. (Alan Scherstuhl)

15-year-old Jamie (Lucas Jade Zumann), in the early days of the space program, have wondered if the freedoms you’re exercising by their politeness, he offers to escort

The second wave of feminism. Despite the film’s nocturnal timeline: remind

to their senses of second-wave feminism. Despite the movie’s title and Bening’s central role, however, women are oddly peripheral. Their misfortunes become slowly bleeding out from a stab wound to the way. (Alan Scherstuhl)

and the film’s nocturnal timeline: remind

that the way. (Alan Scherstuhl)

She is at least somewhat refreshing as on-the-nose as that dialogue, but the film

as art — guides Mills’ movie itself, a slow bloody out from a stab wound to the way. (Alan Scherstuhl)

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to their senses of second-wave feminism. Despite the movie’s title and Bening’s central role, however, women are oddly peripheral. Their misfortunes become slowly bleeding out from a stab wound to the way. (Alan Scherstuhl)

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15-year-old Jamie (Lucas Jade Zumann), in the early days of the space program, have wondered if the freedoms you’re exercising by their politeness, he offers to escort

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LA HONORS THE DOORS IN VENICE — WHERE MUSICIANS CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO LIVE

BY JEFF WEISS

“I am the lizard king, I can Snapchat anything,” croons Jim Morrison’s ghost. Or maybe I’m hallucinating, stirred by the wind, rain and ubiquitous smoke on this Thursday in Venice.

A half-century ago this month, The Doors released their eponymous debut, a record so indelible that the “Light My Fire” organ line soundtracks every imagined flashback of ’60s L.A. In tribute, the city of Los Angeles officially proclaimed Jan. 4 the “Day of The Doors,” complete with a beach-adjacent ceremony featuring the surviving band members, lifelong L.A. residents drummer John Densmore and guitarist Robby Krieger.

Growing up in L.A., The Doors were my favorite band, the archetypal eighth-grade obsession but one that I’d defend to the death. Other than Love, no Aquarian Sunset Strip outfit so effectively captured the city’s sunshine-and-noir dialectic. They embodied the notion espoused by Doors defender Joan Didion that “love is sex and sex is death, and therein lay salvation.”

RAY MANZAREK’S TWO-BEDROOM VENICE APARTMENT WAS $75 A MONTH.

“Light My Fire” could’ve accompanied the denouement of The Day of the Locust. At the ceremony, Densmore recalls that his two-room apartment over a garage with an ocean view was $75 a month. “We’d walk to Olivia’s Cafe on Ocean and Main and wrote ‘Soul Kitchen’ about it. A couple of blocks from here Jim had a loft … no phone, no TV.”

“It wasn’t a loft. It was a rooftop,” Krieger corrects him.

It’s easy to falsely mythologize the past but equally reductive to believe that all change is progress. In the ’80s and ’90s, Venice withstood turf wars between the Venice Shoreline Crips and the largely Latino VS-13 set. Now, someone mentions to me that Snapchat’s HR department overlooks this gathering.

It’s unquestionably good that crime and murder rates have fallen dramatically, but it’s a failure of public policy to protest rents from escalating to levels affordable only to the Patagonia posse talking streaming numbers inside coffee shops with signs outside that read, “Better latte than never.” They paved over semi-paradise and put up an Eggslut.

Some things never change. On the boardwalk, steroidal bodybuilders still flex for tourists and struggling rappers hawk mixtapes. Shoddy bongs and “This is what a cool grandpa looks like” shirts remain for sale. But the lawless psychedelic imagination and airborne Z-Boy spirit seems alien in this macrobiotic plutocracy. You can design a “Celebration of the Lizard” Snapchat filter, but that doesn’t mean it should exist.

“There’s always going to be places for young artists to gather,” Krieger says, taking the long view. “Unfortunately, Venice isn’t like that anymore, but nothing lasts forever. It’s tough to be an artist, but we thought it was tough back then. We never thought music would be our career. We thought we’d have fun for a few years and see where it took us.”

I consider those words after the ceremony, walking through rain-slicked streets searching for the rooftop where Morrison acid-tripped all summer and wrote the lyrics and poems that would become The Doors. When I finally arrive at 14 Westminster Ave., I realize it’s been rebranded the Morrison Apartments. A sign says there are singles and one-bedroom apartments and to “call for an appointment.”

An L.A. native, Jeff Weiss edits Passion of the Weiss and hosts the Bizarre Ride show on RBMA Radio. Follow him on Twitter @passionweiss.
FOUR YEARS OF CHECKERS

I am in Clearwater, Florida. The more I think about our present situation, the more interesting it gets. The USA has entered an era that is post-political and seemingly post-truth.

Several days ago on the CNN show New Day, host Chris Cuomo asked comrade Trump advisor Kellyanne Conway about what many people think was Trump’s mocking of a disabled New York Times reporter in 2015. Ms. Conway insisted that this is not what Trump meant and asked Cuomo, “Why is everything taken at face value?” She then added, “You can’t give him the benefit of the doubt on this and he’s telling you what was in his heart. You always want to go with what’s come out of his mouth rather than look at what’s in his heart.”

What’s coming out of his mouth … well, yeah, he’s days away from becoming the fucking president, so that’s what I would be going with. As to what’s in his heart, that line of logic is so much greeting-card bullshit.

Facts no longer seem to matter. American intelligence agencies conclude that Russia interfered with the last presidential election. The comrade-elect wants us to “get on with our lives.” In an age of computer espionage, hacking and cyberterrorism, Trump concludes, “I think that computers have complicated lives very greatly.” This is a presidential axiom that is post-political and seemingly post-truth.

In a lot of ways, despite all the frustration and conflict in America, I think we’re in a time of great transparency, and comrade Trump’s recent electoral college victory is a large part of that. We humans want what we want when we want it, and logic, morals, truth and law are often mere procedural pains in the ass. Homo sapiens has a capacity for selfishness and self-service that knows no bounds.

These traits are part of the reason why an animal so poorly equipped to endure the wrath of the planet’s natural state still endures. They also account for the harsher aspects of capitalism — which, in the case of America, attained much of its momentum and virulence in the days of slavery. It has since, to a degree, lost some of its speed and striking power by systems, just look at where your country is fed. The latter basically needs you to get out of the way or ride the wave as best you can. From looking at comrade Trump’s cabinet picks, it is the latter that will be determining the country’s immediate future.

It is a course informed by elitism, brutality and cowardice. Comrade Trump and his moll Ms. Conway are pathetic. He’s the embarrassing drunk who vomits on the banquet table. She’s the crime scene cleaner-upper who tells you it’s not puke but his essence, hurled onto the tablecloth to show you what’s in his heart. You only find it disgusting because you lost.

You don’t have to remind me that elections have consequences. One of the only people in the country who doesn’t seem to get that is the man about to be president. What starts this month is what USA voted for.

This is what I’m talking about when I say we are in an age of great clarity. Racist groups are out in the open and, if anything, are gaining legitimacy and acceptance. Homophobia and misogyny are mean hearts on sleeves.

A true test-tube baby of this era, and signpost for what’s to come, is Milo Yiannopoulos. An ultra-acerbic cultural deconstructuralist, he is part and parcel of what you get in this new age. His forthcoming book, Dangerous, due in March, is one I look forward to reading. I doubt I will find anything in it to agree with, but I am genuinely interested in where the man gets off.

I’ve read books by the likes of George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, Sarah Palin and Ann Coulter. They’re like Hunter S. Thompson on phencyclidine. If you are an adult citizen unhappy with who will be occasionally visiting the Oval Office and communicating via Twitter, you are not afforded much distance by the fact that you did not vote him. Comrade Trump will be the president of all Americans and there is not enough denial, vodka or Vichy to change that.

Trump is not only an American but a product of America.
THU. JANUARY 19
THE WAR ROOM
ENGLISH LIT, CONTROL, LVNKY, AZKORE & MORE

FRI. JANUARY 19
THE TOASTERS

FRI. JANUARY 20
TRAP KARAOKE
LOW KEY, AUSTIN MILLS & FRIENDS

FRI. JANUARY 20
CAN YOU FEEL IT
JESSE SAUNDERS, TONY POWELL, OLGA ARTEAGA & HOUSEMECHANIX

SAT. JANUARY 21
XCELLERATED, HEAVY DUB & FUGITIVE SOUND SESSIONS

SAT. JANUARY 21
REMEMBER
MARQUES WYATT, DOC MARTIN & JUAN NUNEZ

COMING SOON:
1/19 THE WAR ROOM
1/20 THE TOASTERS
1/20 TRAP KARAOKE
1/20 CAN YOU FEEL IT W/ JESSE SAUNDERS
1/21 XCELLERATED
1/21 REMEMBER
1/22 SUPER CRACKIN FEFE IN LA
1/23 PEELING GREY, AS WE PART, READERSHIP HOSTILE
1/27 PERPETUAL DAWN FT. DNTL
1/28 BALANCE
1/28 CODE ORANGE, YOUTH CODE
2/2 OBLITERATION, INCULTER, REPTILIAN
2/4 WE LOVE KANDY
2/5 LOS ANGELES SKAWARS 2017!
2/15 EXPIRE
2/23 UNIFORM
3/16 XIU XIU

THU. JANUARY 19
UNDERGROUND RISING
W/ R-MEAN & BLIMES BRIXTON

THU. JANUARY 19
DBLTAP W/ K.CERO

FRI. JANUARY 20
THE TOASTERS

FRI. JANUARY 20
THE ARTIFACTS

SAT. JANUARY 21
THE ARTIFACTS

SAT. JANUARY 21
BOOTIE LA: WINTER POOL PARTY

SAT. JANUARY 21
CLUB 90s

SUN. JANUARY 22
VENZELLA JOY

SUN. JANUARY 22
BANJEE BALL

COMING SOON:
1/19 DBLTAP
1/19 UNDERGROUND RISING
1/19 INDIE NIGHT
1/20 TEEN PARTY
1/20 THE ARTIFACTS
1/21 BOOTIE LA: WINTER POOL PARTY
1/21 REVERIE
1/21 HIP HOP SHOWCASE #20
1/22 BANJEE BALL - MINI BALL DELUX
1/22 VENZELLA JOY
1/24 1960’S PROM NIGHT
1/25 SUNSET ECLACTICO PRESENTS:
SECRET AGENT
1/25 HOT SAUCE
1/26 FAMOUS DEX
1/27 HOSTILE
1/28 BOOTIE LA: ONESIES VS. JUMPSUITS
1/29 CLUB GOOD LIFE
1/31 COLORS COMEDY
Mavis Staples, Gregory Porter
@ SEGERSTROM CONCERT HALL

When the spotlight falls on venerable soul-gospel empress Mavis Staples, her very presence — a subtle yet compelling aura of grace and dignity, radiating like an bandstand aura borealis — is mesmerizing. But when she begins to sing, it’s an always transportive, downright spiritual encounter. Staples came up in legendary family group The Staple Singers, an illustrious upbringing that spanned a critical period in midcentury American culture (get a load of their unforgettable “Respect Yourself!” in 1973 music doc Wattstax). Now, 67 years into a remarkable career, Staples’ God-given talent provides her both a limitless range of expression and penetrating interpretive instinct. With California jazz-soul sensation Gregory Porter also on the bill, expect an unforgettable earful.

—Jonny Whiteside

Bang Tango
@ WHISKY A GO-GO

Joe Leste might be the sole remaining survivor from the classic Bang Tango lineup, but the frontman has enough energy and charisma to carry the band. Sure, the signature funky bass of Kyle Kyle is missed, as is the fretwork of Mark Knight, but Leste hinted in a recent interview that some of those original guys might show up for guest appearances at this gig. Regardless, what we do know is that this perennially underrated band burst out of the hair-rock scene in 1987 but always had a little more under the hood, as heard on cult favorites and minor hits such as “Someone Like You” and “Love Injection.” It was at a Whisky showcase that Bang Tango was signed to MCA Records back in the day, so the chance to see any version of the band at this famous venue is worth taking.

—Brett Callwood

The Sonics, Death Hymn Number 9
@ ECHOPLEX

The Sonics burst out of the woods in the Pacific Northwest the same year the British invaded, and they haven’t stopped fighting the good rock & roll fight since. Although original members Gerry Roslie (maniac frontman) and Larry Parypa (crushing guitarist) retired from stage performances last year, they still made a monstrous showing on The Sonics’ 2015 comeback album, This Is The Sonics. That all-out attitude attack includes the rager “Be a Woman,” written by Dave Faulkner of Australia’s Hoodoo Gurus and The Victims, a pedal-to-the-metal version of the latter-day Kinks track “Hard Way,” the firecracker “Bad Betty” and more. Live, original sax/vox dude Rob Lind is reinforced by veteran bassist Freddie Dennis and a crew of reverent new-schoolers. With able openers Death Hymn Number 9, who take philosophical statements such as The Sonics’ “Psycho” to the bloody, sweaty extreme. —Chris Ziegler

Nicole Moudaber & Victor Calderone, Raíz
@ FACTORY 93

Factory 93 could have been built with Nicole Moudaber’s MoodRAW nights in mind. Insomniac’s warehouse space, whose roots and ethos lie in the early ‘90s Los Angeles underground scene, is exactly the kind of place the lauded techno DJ has in mind to showcase her globe-romping party, which eschews flashiness for intimacy. Both the location and the music are dark, with Moudaber’s percussive and tough selections making the experience positively pulse. Moudaber’s marathon sets — particularly those for MoodRAW — are all about the locked-in, revolving beat. The expertise of dance music veteran Victor Calderone and brother duo Raíz make it a not-to-be-missed night from open to close.

—Lily Moayeri

Isaac Rother & the Phantoms, The Slow Poisoner, Bloody Death Skull
@ THE PROSPECTOR

Isaac Rother & the Phantoms bring back the simple, primal rock & roll of such inspirations as Bo Diddley and Sam the Sham. Although singer Rother brandishes a skull on a stick much as Screamin’ Jay Hawkins used to, the Phantoms’ take on garage rock is more lighthearted than truly chill-inducing. That said, the L.A. band are a fun diversion, with such charmingly retro tunes as “Heeby Jeebies” and the mock bravado of “The Phantom.” San Francisco cartoonist and one-man band Andrew Goldfarb, performing as The Slow Poitioner, has moved away from the gently goofy but relatively troublesome blues of his early recordings into a more satisfying blend of garage and pop psychedelia on 2016 album Swamp Fist! Bloody Death Skull add to the faintly macabre vibe with groovy ‘60s pop ditties mixed with more atmospheric chansons.

—Falling James

Turbulent Hearts, The Vigils, Electric Children
@ REDWOOD BAR & GRILL

“I was born on a red, hot moon/There was thunder and lightning.” Turbulent Hearts singer Suzi Moon declares on the title track of the local trio’s recent Crazy Girl EP. Bandmates Mark Johnson and Jay Skowronek echo her lyrics by stirring up a storm of hard-rock aggression and punk-rock tempos. Moon also reveals her pop side on such tracks as “Notice Me” and “Fallen in Luv;” but the Hearts are far more thrilling when they step on the gas pedal and don’t look back. Fellow locals The Vigils combine punk roots with traces of ’80s darkwave for an ambitious, unpredictable blend of shadowy romanticism. Meanwhile, Electric Children have expanded beyond their early punk influences into a more mesmerizing swirl of psychedelia and garage-rock fuzz, which has taken on even greater power with the addition of Blasters drummer Bill Bate-man.

—Falling James

Warby Jets, The Relationship, Frankie & the Witch Fingers
@ THE SATELLITE

There isn’t much recorded evidence yet of Warby Jets, but the local quartet’s one single, “Alive,” is a promising start. “I’ll
ALL PROCEEDS BENEFITTING ORGANIZATIONS THAT NEED OUR HELP NOW MORE THAN EVER!

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HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
PLANNED PARENTHOOD
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walk through the fire,” singer-guitarist Samuel Shea insists as his bandmates bury him in a rising swell of hard-rock riffage. The group have a fairly straightforward rock sound that’s made more intriguing by glitty flashes of such Britpop influences as Oasis and Primal Scream. Featuring Weezer guitarist Brian Bell on lead vocals, The Relationship mix hard-rock guitars with power-pop melodies. They’re not doing anything new, but it’s an enjoyable contrast with Bell’s main group. Frankie & the Witch Fingers are another local guitar band, but their hard-rock passages are leavened with elements of ’60s psychedelia, punk and garage rock. —Falling James

Celebrating David Bowie
@ THE WILTERN
A year after the death of David Bowie, it’s hard to think of another artist who had as massive an impact on music, fashion and culture, and whose incredible reach has endured for decades, still resonating on a global scale. Bowie spent his career reinventing himself and subverting cultural norms while still creating songs, albums and characters that have as important a place in the hearts of his fans as they do in popular culture. While Bowie tributes deservedly abound, this event offers a unique opportunity to revisit Bowie’s most indelible songs with his own bandmates, including Gail Ann Dorsey, Mike Garson and Earl Slick, among many others. After the first announced show, on Jan. 25, sold out, a second Jan. 24 show was added with former Police frontman Sting joining the bill as a special guest. Also Wednesday, Jan. 25 (without Sting). —Jackson Truax

Atomic Ape
@ BLUEWHALE
Guitarist-composer Jason Schimmel’s Atomic Ape is that new kind of beast, throwing down a sound that hints at a lot of things and isn’t quite any of them. Schimmel, who’s served time in combos including John Zorn’s, Secret Chiefs 3 and Estradasphere, puts his chops-heavy bandmates (featuring brass brothers Ryan and Trevor Parrish) through amazing mishmashes of genres with a feel and pull like something that’s always existed in a parallel and much better world. A slaming slate of metalized surf rock, avant-jazz, odd-metered prog angularities and an exceptionally cold-ass spy noir badness, Atomic Ape also weave in weird strains of Balkan and European folk melody in a cinematic way. Chock-full of surprises, this is an exciting band — or, perhaps more accurately, a small and very imaginative orchestra. —John Payne

Rest in Power: An Oakland Fire Relief Gathering
@ THE RECENT THEATER
DIY spaces nationwide are reeling in the aftermath of Oakland’s Ghost Ship fire, but for L.A. it hit especially close to home — Oakland is something of a sister city to our DIY community, as well as a much-loved next-door neighbor. Now Dublab and 100% Silk — the stellar L.A. label that lost artists and friends at Ghost Ship — have teamed up with Restless Nites, Far Away and L.A. Record (disclosure: my own publication) for this benefit show. There’s plenty to help with; one Ghost Ship relief organization says it has received hundreds of requests for assistance with funeral expenses, grief counseling and code-compliance projects at other DIY venues. This lineup is 100% Silk–ed out, with locals and labelmates Pharoahs, Maria Minerva, Magic Touch, Leech, Roche and others on deck; the first 40 Relief Gathering spots are still available (tickets go on sale Jan. 18 to benefit artists and venues in Ghost Ship’s sister city to our DIY community, as well as a much-loved next-door neighbor. Now Dublab and 100% Silk — the stellar L.A. label that lost artists and friends at Ghost Ship — have teamed up with Restless Nites, Far Away and L.A. Record for this benefit show. There’s plenty to help with; one Ghost Ship relief organization says it has received hundreds of requests for assistance with funeral expenses, grief counseling and code-compliance projects at other DIY venues. This lineup is 100% Silk–ed out, with locals and labelmates Pharoahs, Maria Minerva, Magic Touch, Leech, Roche and others on deck; the first 40 Relief Gathering spots are still available (tickets go on sale Jan. 18)."

Ras Kass, Bishop Lamont
@ SOL VENUE
This is a hometown gig in Carson for two of California’s most perennially underrated rappers. On one side of the bill, we’ve got Ras Kass, a cult hero thanks to his incendiary 1996 debut, Soul on Ice, who stormed back last year with a 20th-anniversary sequel, Intellectual Property: SOI2. On the other is former Dr. Dre protegé Bishop Lamont, who walked away from Dre’s Aftermath label in 2010 and finally released his long-promised album The Reformation, originally announced as far back as 2009, last year under the title The Reformation: G.D.N.I.A.F.T. (short for “Goddamn Nigga It’s About Fuckin’ Time”). Both rappers are known for their nimble wordplay and uncompromising attitude, which should make for an exciting, unpredictable night — and, thanks to Ras Kass and tracks like his classic “Nature of the Threat,” one laced with political fury. —Andy Hermann
THE GLASS HOUSE:
GASLAMP RESTAURANT & BAR:
THE ECHOPLEX:
DIEGO'S ROCK-N-ROLL BAR:
CODY'S VIVA CANTINA:
CANYON CLUB:
BOOTLEG THEATER:
BOARDNER'S:
BARDOT HOLLYWOOD:
ALEX'S BAR:

p.m., $15 (see Music Pick). Theo Katzman, Madison Ahn, Inara George, Eleni Mandell, Wed., Jan. 25, 8:30
Umm, Media Jeweler, Tue., Jan. 24, 8:30 p.m., $7. Sat., Jan. 21, 8:30 p.m., $8. Albert & His Dreamboats,
Marson, Leah Dou, Dyan, Mon., Jan. 23, 8 p.m., free.
Molecule, Stal, Thu., Jan. 26, 8 p.m., $5.

Tue., Jan. 24, 8 p.m., free; Kristeen Young, Tuesdays,

Wed., Jan. 25, 8 p.m., free; Name the Band, The Julian
24, 9 p.m., $5. Secret Agent, Par Avion, Abstrakto,

Thu., Jan. 26, 8:30 p.m., $13.50.

p.m., $24.50 (see Music Pick). LSD & the Search for
Lizzo, Dizzy Fae, Fri., Jan. 20, 8:30 p.m., $16.50. The

Earl's, Hidden in Plain View, Fri., Jan. 20.

Hwy., Long Beach. Puddle of Mudd, Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30
p.m., $10. Kristeen No Parents, The Side Eyes, Blivet, Robber, Makeout

Sabbath, The Shrine, Fri., Jan. 20, 8 p.m., $30. Duf,
Ronnie Mack, Thursdays, 8:45 p.m., free.
Gwyn Ashton, Thu., Jan. 26, 8 p.m., free; Wilderado, Tuesdays, 8 p.m. Thru Jan. 31,
free. Nick Shattuck, Bloodweiser, Tue., Jan. 24, 8
p.m., free. Nick Shattuck, Bloodweiser, Tue., Jan. 24, 8
p.m., free; Wilderado, Tuesdays, 8 p.m. Thru Jan. 31,
free. Defend L.A. A Benefit for the L.A. LGBT Center,

THE ROSE: 247 S. Fifth St., San Pedro. Green Mountain, Jefferson
Starship, Fri., Jan. 20, 9 p.m., $38-$48. Eric Johnson,
Sat., Jan. 21, 9 p.m., $28-$38.

THE ABC's, Wed., Jan. 25, 9 p.m., $8. The Heirs,
Thread, Sun., Jan. 22, 8:30 p.m., $10. Warbly Jets,


THE ECHO: 1822 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. The
Aggregates, The Steady 45's, Fri., Jan. 20, 8:30 p.m.,
$16.50. Sam Outlaw, Michaela Anne, Jamie Wyatt,
Sat., Jan. 21, 5:30 p.m., $11.50. The Hangmen, Singer
Sinners, Satellite Sky, Sun., Jan. 22, 8 p.m., $9.50. The
23, 8:30 p.m., free. Jorga Smith, Tue., Jan. 24, 8 p.m.,
Jan. 25, 8 p.m., $9.50. Seratones, Communist Daughter,

THE ECHO: 1154 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles.
Lizzo, Dizzy Fae, Fri., Jan. 20, 8:30 p.m., $16.50. The
Sonics, Death Hymn Number 9, Sat., Jan. 21, 8:30
p.m., $24.50 (see Music Pick). LSD & the Search for
God, Asteroid #4, Nightmare Air, Sun., Jan. 22, 10
p.m., $13. The Flashbulb, Sarah Longfield, Five Step
Path, Tue., Jan. 24, 8 p.m., $14.50.
THE FEDERAL BAR: 3003 N. Lankershim Blvd, Chuck
FIVE STAR BAR: 267 S. Main St., Los Angeles. East Side
Agents, The Side Effects, Absurd Tones, Your Cruelly,
Voodoo Train, Sun., Jan. 22, 8 p.m., $5.
GASLAMP RESTAURANT & BAR: 6251 E. Pacific Coast
Hwy., Long Beach. Puddle of Mudd, Sat., Jan. 21, 7:30
p.m., TBA. ABBY ROAD, Sun., Jan. 22, 11 a.m., free.
THE GLASS HOUSE:
GASLAMP RESTAURANT & BAR:
THE ECHOPLEX:
DIEGO'S ROCK-N-ROLL BAR:
CODY'S VIVA CANTINA:
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CANYON CLUB:
BOOTLEG THEATER:
BOARDNER'S:
BARDOT HOLLYWOOD:
ALEX'S BAR:
Gifs, Jacob the Horse, Swerve, Fri., Jan. 20, 8 p.m., free. Hobart Ocean, Audriana, Tue., Jan. 24, 10 p.m., free. Cherry/Martin, Thu., Jan. 26, 7:30 p.m., free. 

TAIX FRENCH RESTAURANT: 1911 Sunset Blvd. French, Sat., Jan. 20, 10:30 p.m., pulsed, free. 

THE TERAGRAM BALLROOM: 1234 W. Seventh St., Los Angeles. The Early November, Hidden in Plain View, Sat., Jan. 21, 9 p.m. $20.

GABRIEL GARZÓN-MONTANO
The Dustaters, Fri., Jan. 20, 10 p.m.; Trap Karmic, Low Key, Austin Mills, Fri., Jan. 20, 8 p.m.; $20-$30. Peeling Grey, As We Part, Readership Hostile, Falling Away, Thu., Jan. 26, 9 p.m.; $5; Peeling Grey, As We Part, Readership Hostile, Falling Away, Thu., Jan. 26, 9 p.m. $18. 


WHISKY A GO-GO: 8901 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood. Saturday • February 4th • 4 PM, $20. Brett Daniels, and; TBA, with new album, For a full calendar of events, visit AMOEBA.COM matches all winning bids up to $1000. 

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COUNTRY & FOLK

E.B.'S BEER & WINE BAR, FARMERS MARKET: 6333 W. Third St., Los Angeles. Tom Gramlich & Mystic Miles, Terry Oke, Sat., Jan. 21, 2 p.m., $12. 


DANCE CLUBS
AVILO HOLLANDY: 1735 Vine St., Los Angeles. EDX, Teodol, Antonio Gacita, Amour, Fri., Jan. 20, 9 p.m., Ben Nicky, Kristina Sky, Sat., Jan. 21, 10 p.m. 

CREATE NIGHTCLUB: 6021 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles. Tiesto, Fri., Jan. 20, 10 p.m., $58-$125; Noize Fridays, Fridays, 10 p.m. Arcade Saturdays, 10 p.m., Lil Jon, Sat., Jan. 21, 10 p.m., $16.98 & up. 

EXCHANGE LA: 618 S. Spring St., Los Angeles. Awakening, Fridays, 10 p.m.; Cosmic Cate, Fri., Jan. 20, 10 p.m.; $30 & $90; Rihhah, Sat., Jan. 21, 10 p.m., $30 & $90; Inception, Saturdays, 10 p.m. 

FACTORY 93: 1756 Naud St., Los Angeles. Tiësto, Fri., Jan. 20, 10 p.m., $85-$125; The Early November, Hidden in Plain View, Fri., Jan. 20, 10 p.m., free. T.D. Lind, plus Hussain Jiffry & Tom Ranier, Sat., Jan. 21, 7 p.m., free. The Hot Club of L.A., Mondays, 8:30 p.m., free. Jason the Cosmic Cowboy, Sun., Jan. 22, 6 p.m., free. 


SOUND NIGHTCLUB:
1911 Sunset Blvd. Titanic Drive, Long Beach. The Palmer Jazz Organ quintet, Thu., Jan. 26, 8 p.m. $20. Billy Valentine, Thu., Jan. 26, 8 p.m., $20. 

UPCOMING EVENTS at AMOEBA:
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THURSDAY • JANUARY 19 • 5 PM
AFI
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THURSDAY • JANUARY 26TH • 6 PM
THE REGRETTES
LA punk band The Regretttes celebrate their new album, Feel Your Feelings Fool!, with a live set and signing! 

THURSDAY • FEBRUARY 2 • 6 PM
GABRIEL GARZÓN-MONTANO
Gabriel Garzón-Montano celebrates the release of his debut album Jardín (out 1/27 on Stones Throw) with a live set and signing! 

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SUNDAY, JAN. 21

SATURDAY, JAN. 21

CaliCann 2017: 8 p.m., $36.25-$185.80. Staples Center, 1111 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles.

Craig Davis: 9 p.m., $22.50. El Rey Theatre, 5515 W. Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles.

One Oak Rock: With Our Last Night, 6 p.m., $27.50-$150. Hollywood Palladium, 6215 W. Sunset Blvd.

A Prairie Home Companion: With Chris Thile, 7 p.m., 245 p.m. Pasadena Civic Auditorium, 300 E. Green St.

Sts9: 7 p.m., $29.50-$49.50. The Wiltern, 3790 W. Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles.


The Wonder Years: With Big Time Movie and Motion, 7 p.m., $12. The Roxy Theatre, 8215 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood.

Echosmith: With All Time Low, 7 p.m., $36.50-$85.50. The Forum, 18801 Von Karman, Inglewood.

Weird Al Yankovic: With The Princess Bride Live, 8 p.m., $10-$249.50. Key Arena, 700 Yesler Way, Seattle.

with Carl Vine’s Ave Linda Preludes, Tue., Jan. 24, 8 p.m., $39-$59. Wally Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills.

Julius Eastman: Gay Guerrilla: Monday Evening Concerts presents the local premiere of the late minimalist composer Eastman’s The Holy Presence of Joan d’Arc, as well as the work’s premiere, which features bass-baritone Davoine Tines. The multitalented African-American composer was far ahead of his time, but perhaps the music establishment is finally catching up to his bold, provocative works.

Joyce Yang: $49 & up. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa. See Music Pick.

The USC Thornton Symphony: The USC Thornton Symphony: for more listings, please go to laweekly.com.


Ram Meadow: The South Korean pianist roams from Claude Debussy and Robert Schumann to Enrique Granados and Alberto Ginastera, and moves forward with Carl Vine’s Ave Linda Preludes, Tue., Jan. 24, 8 p.m., $39-$59. Wally Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills.

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**ORDER FOR PUBLICATION OF SUMMONS DIVORCE**

**Case No. PDO 62556**

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

In regards to the marriage of Petitioner Plaintiff: Cindy Ann Flores and Respondent: Marco Tullio Ornelas

It is further ordered that a copy of this order be published in the LA Weekly, a newspaper of general circulation for the County of Los Angeles, once a week for four (4) consecutive weeks prior to the date set for hearing of said petition. Set to publish 1/12/17, 1/20/17, 1/27/17 and 2/3/17.

**ORDER FOR PUBLICATION OF SUMMONS DIVORCE**

Case No. PDO 62556

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

In regards to the marriage of Petitioner Plaintiff: Cindy Ann Flores and Respondent: Marco Tullio Ornelas

It is further ordered that all persons interested in the said matter of change of name appear before the above-entitled court as follows to show cause why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Notice of hearing: April 11, 2017 10am Dept 40 Room 418 located at Los Angeles Superior Court 111 North Hill Street Los Angeles, CA 90012 and a petition for change of name having been duly filed with the clerk of this Court, and it appearing from said petition that said petitioner(s) desires to have her name changed from Michele Maria Stanford to My Kell Miracle Gio Vanni. Now therefore, it is hereby ordered that all persons interested in the said matter of change of name appear at the above-entitled court on the date set for hearing of said petition.

**ORDER FOR PUBLICATION OF SUMMONS DIVORCE**

Case No. PDO 62556

Superior Court of California, County of Los Angeles

In regards to the marriage of Petitioner Plaintiff: Cindy Ann Flores and Respondent: Marco Tullio Ornelas

It is further ordered that the service of the summons in this action be made upon respondent Marco Tullio Ornelas, by publication therefor in LA Weekly, a newspaper of general circulation published in Los Angeles, California, hereby designated as the newspaper most likely to give notice to said respondent; that said publication be at least once a week for four (4) consecutive weeks.

**ORDER FOR PUBLICATION OF SUMMONS DIVORCE**

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A&P, Assistant Controller. Resp for mgmt & estab acctg policies over revenue recog. Eqs to proc to record mgmt fees, incentive fees, admin fees, among others. & mgmt contract to cash inflow. Req: Bachelor’s degree in Accctg or related field and CPA or eqv. plus 5 yrs exp as Assistant Controller. Accountant or rfd Rfd. Exp must include multi-national experience with complex accts standards incl revenue recog, fin instruments, multi-currency acctg, derivatives & invest securities. Candidate must have Big 4 exp & exp at a large multinational SEC-registered org. Must have demon wgk kw of GAAP & USGAAP Acctg. Contracts & General Ledger. Must have demon ability to successfully mng acctg teams. Funct under-standing of corp acctg pro cesses that underlie the preparation of fin statements prepared in accord with US GAAP and controlled under SOX 404. Re sume to Aleris Operations LLC, Attn: K. Fowler, 2000 Avenue of the Stars, 12th Fl, Los Angeles, CA 90067. No calls.

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