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How L.A. helped birth goth and is keeping the culture alive

By Lina Lecaro and Lisa Derrick
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Photo of Zakkarrii Edison Daniels, Queenie Black and Tara Murphy by Levan TK

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Take a Wine Break
Wine Wellness, celebrating yoga, wellness and wine, takes place this weekend in Los Olivos, for those craving a break in nearby Wine Country. Organized by Chiara Shannon, the Yogisommelier, in collaboration with area wine producers and wellness professionals, the weekend targets health- and wellness-minded consumers with a timely mission: Teach mindful wine appreciation and raise awareness about local producers that make environmentally conscious wines. Attendees will practice yoga, meet winemakers and learn about organic and biodynamic farming while relaxing and exploring Wine Country. Relax on Friday with yoga class, VIP tours, wine tasting and lunch at the biodynamically certified Beckman Vineyards. On Saturday, shift over to the town of Los Olivos for more yoga, and pick up a map for the organic wine crawl, starting at the certified-organic Coquelicot Estate tasting room. Check website for registration and more information. Beckman Vineyards, 2670 Ontiveros Road, Los Olivos; and Coquelicot Estate, 2884 Grand Ave., Los Olivos; Fri., Oct. 26, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.; Sat., Oct. 27, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; $55-$95.

Take a Trip to Halloween Town
Jack, Sally and Oogie Boogie are unforgettable characters who captured the imaginations of kids and adults alike in Tim Burton’s animated classic, but seeing them in person is an other-level treat every fan should do once. It’s like celebrating Halloween and a cool Yule party at the same time! The Hollywood Bowl’s annual Nightmare Before Christmas in Concert is back at the landmark venue with musical director Danny Elfman at the helm and guests Catherine O’Hara and Ken Page lending their voices to the masterfully macabre tale of holiday hijinks. It’s the 25th anniversary of the film, which is just one more reason to celebrate and skatelebrate! Hollywood Bowl, 2301 N Highland Ave., Hollywood; Fri–Sat., Oct. 26–27, 8 p.m.; Sun., Oct. 28, 7:30 p.m.; $37.50 and up. hollywoodbowl.com/events/performances/527/2018-10-26/danny-elfman-halloween-the-nightmare-before-christmas/. —LINA LECARO

Nocturnal Wonderland
Halloween may be the time of the year for jack-o’-lanterns and other creepy glow-in-the-dark art, but it’s a decidedly less macabre and lighter affair at the Moonlight Forest Lantern Art Festival. The Chinese-influenced (from the Sichuan province, to be exact), mile-long installation features a cornucopia of lantern art based on the themes of nature, children’s garden and Chinese culture. And it wouldn’t be a festival without the requisite food and drink offerings, including the ‘Triple Threat Truck, Son of a Bun and several other food trucks. If a particular evening is sold out, use ride-sharing to get to the Arboretum, show your receipt and you’ll be able to buy up to four tickets. Los Angeles Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia; Fri., Oct. 26, 5:30, 7 & 8 p.m.; exhibit: Wed–Sun., 5:30-10 p.m., thru Jan. 6; $28, $23 7 & under, $25 seniors. (626) 821-3222, arboretum.org/moonlight-forest-magical-lantern-art-festival. —AVEN BISSETT

The Architecture of Tomorrow
Japan House L.A.’s public arts programming continues apace with a new exhibition of images and sculptural models from celebrated architect Sou Fujimoto. Winner of the prestigious 2013 Serpentine Pavilion commission in the U.K. and named 2014 WSJ architecture innovator of the year, Fujimoto’s practice is based geographically and culturally in his native Japan, but its innovations, creative material and cultural influence are felt globally. Of special interest to local architecture aficionados will be his stated aesthetic of the “primitive future” — a vision that melds cutting-edge materials and sustainable practices with an intuitive humanistic relationship to nature and outdoor space, especially in the urban context. Japan House, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Mon.–Sat., 10 a.m.–8 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.–7 p.m.; runs thru Dec. 12; free. (800) 516-0565, japanhouse.jp/losangeles. —SHANA MYS DAMBROT
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Hitting the Trifecta

Three new shows open this weekend at Arts District bastion Hauser & Wirth L.A. A massive sculpture by Alexander Calder activates the central courtyard, as some 30 smaller stabiles and mobiles fill an interior gallery and the adjacent garden. New York artist Zoe Leonard (also the subject of a new show at MOCA) presents her epic “Analogue” cycle, in which she documents the disappearing mom-and-pop storefronts of the Lower East Side from 1998 to 2009. Her 400-plus images capture a period of gentrification that she links to issues of capitalism, colonialism and cultural agency — issues denizens of the Arts District know a lot about themselves. Finally, artist and filmmaker Julian Rosefeldt’s triumphant feature Manifesto, in which Cate Blanchett enacts the artistic philosophies of a series of the 20th century’s most influential creative movements in high-production character with humanity, passion and a mind-blowing mimicry, will be shown in its original concept as a 13-channel video installation. Hauser & Wirth, 901 E. Third St., downtown; opening reception: Sat., Oct. 27, 6-9 p.m.; exhibit: Tue.-Sun., 11 a.m.-6 p.m., thru Jan. 6; free. (213) 943-1620, hauserwirth.com. —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

A Life’s Epic Work

Can an artist truly make one single work that encapsulates the whole of their practice? Well, in the case of icon Robert Rauschenberg (1925-2008), he spent 17 years trying. Made between 1981 and ’98, and measuring end to end a full quarter-mile, Rauschenberg’s epic The 1/4 Mile or 2 Furlong Piece comprises nearly 200 component panels, which in turn incorporate the eclectic olio of found materials, objects, photographs, collages, textiles, furniture, paint, cardboard and even traffic lights that characterized his omnivorous taste for appropriated and recycled sources. The mammoth work serves not only as a self-styled survey of his own practice but also as a kind of travel log, in which time spent in Asia, Latin America, Europe, Africa and the United States yielded the mother of all souvenir archives. Notably, LACMA’s installation of this astonishing work of patience, obsession and subversive art history will be the first time it has ever been exhibited in its complete form. LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; exhibit runs thru June 9; $20. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

Skin-Deep

On the eve of All Hallow’s Eve, the Annenberg Community Beach House artist and writer in residence Catherine Coan invites
ters, 6000 Santa Monica Blvd. Hollywood; Sat., Oct. 27, noon-mid.; $25, 8 & under and seniors free until 4 p.m. ladayofthedead.com. —LINA LECARO

ART

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Skin-Deep

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A Halloween Classic Rescored

Over the past few years, L.A. Opera’s annual screenings of silent horror films amid the macabre opulence of the Theatre at Ace Hotel have become a fun Halloween tradition. This year, the films are paired with live performances of evocative new scores by such avant-garde composers as Philip Glass and Matthew Aucoin. Tonight’s offering, following a 50th-anniversary screening of Bob Rafelson — was a surreal, subversive lone feature-length film — 1968’s Head, featuring mezzo-soprano Taylor Raven, with Aucoin conducting a chamber ensemble. Theatre at Ace Hotel, 929 S. Broadway, downtown; Sat., Oct. 27, 8 p.m.; free. (310) 485-4904, annenbergbeachhouse.com. —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

Hey, Hey, It’s the Monkees

The Monkees were ostensibly just a made-for-TV imitation of The Beatles, albeit an unexpectedly brilliant, prolific and legitimate band in their own right. But The Monkees outclassed their inspirations in at least one crucial way. While the Fab Four’s films were either enjoyable or lightweight comedic larks (A Hard Day’s Night, Help) or self-indulgent psychedelic muddles (Magical Mystery Tour), The Monkees’ lone feature-length film — 1967’s Head, co-written by Jack Nicholson and director Bob Rafelson — was a surreal, subversive opus that destroyed their career by juxtaposing shocking footage of the Vietnam War with nonlinear vignettes that satirized their own fame. Singers Micky Dolenz and Michael Nesmith appear for a discussion following a 50th-anniversary screening of the bizarre film. Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Thu., Nov. 1, 7:30 p.m.; $15. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com. —FALLING JAMES

Black Madonna

Painter Mark Steven Greenfield’s “Love and Loathing” is on view for only two weeks, but it covers a lot of territory. With examples of both recent and new work, the presentation offers highlights of Greenfield’s perennial project, unpacking the exponential complexities of African-American life and history through images of community, commerce, pop culture and how aspects of contemporary culture are rooted in global mythologies. In three particularly impactful new works, the artist muses on the iconography of the Black Madonna. “There are over 300 of them in the world,” Greenfield explains, often made as intentional appeals to indigenous populations that colonial powers sought to convert, and some associated with folk legends and miracles. Greenfield’s updated considerations add art historical conventions to the library of source material from which he so insightfully draws. Cal State L.A. Fine Arts Gallery, 5151 State University Drive, El Sereno; exhibit: Mon.-Fri., noon-5 p.m., thru Nov. 16; reception: Nov. 3, 5-8 p.m.; free. (323) 343-4040, calstatela.edu. —SHANA NYS DAMBROT
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WORK ELECTIONS
RAISE YOUR VOICE

Mark Gonzalez, L.A. County Democratic Party chair, urges you to get out and vote on Nov. 6

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

Mark Gonzalez, chair of the L.A. County Democratic Party, has been fighting injustice since he first became aware of it while in school. He worked hard and, in adult life, has risen quickly through the ranks of the party.

As chair, he’s got a job on his hands right now, preparing for the midterm elections in November. He knows that there are a number of seats in California that can change the national outcome, and there are seven seats that are flippable.

“That’s why California’s preaching the big blue wave,” Gonzalez says. “Those on that level are so significant for that change, but in California we have to maintain our supermajority within the Assembly. The downticket is going to be a big deal because you’re not just talking about these big national races. California is going to be leading the way and changing the national conversation as well.”

California is firmly blue, and here in L.A. it can be easy to feel as if we’re living in a glorious, liberal bubble. That can lead to apathy when it comes to voting, however, and Gonzalez has to fight through that.

“At the end of the day, I think the number is 27 counties in California [out of 58] went red for Donald Trump in the 2016 election,” he says. “We can’t forget that there are still a number of those counties that exist. We live in the bubble of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles city, you’ve got Long Beach, San Francisco — those are blue areas. But there’s also Central California as well, that we can’t forget. Making sure we keep those areas blue is what’s gonna maintain us and keep California that leading defense against the Trump administration.”

As chair, Gonzalez is responsible for helping to raise the funds that will ensure the party can promote candidates. Eighty-eight cities and more than 150 races — it’s one hell of a task, but he’s up to it.

“It’s making sure that our Democratic endorsed candidates at the local level from school board to water board get elected,” Gonzalez says. “We have 2.7 million Democrats throughout L.A. County. We’re one-third of the voting base in the state. If we really all turned out, we can make that significant impact. As the party leaders, we have to make sure that we’re getting out the vote. For me, being that face of the Latino community, to say this is why it’s important for us to turn out, is actually key. Making

They’re loyal to the Democratic Party and reminding them why.”

If the Democrats are going to be successful, Gonzalez knows that they need to address mistakes made in the recent past.

“I will be the first to admit that I think, on a national level, there are some instances where we forgot to speak to people,” he says. “We spoke to people in the room but we forgot to speak to people in their living rooms. We forgot about some of the main objectives. People care about jobs. People care about economics — making sure they can put food on the table, clothes on their back, making sure the kids have a good education. Sometimes we forgot that. Our goal as a party is to move forward and hopefully get a candidate that will win so we don’t find ourselves in this predicament in 2020. There’s no doubt that we’re going to have a significant amount of Democratic candidates. We know that. There are rumor mills about who it’s going to be. But outside of that, our first job is to motivate our base for Nov. 6.”

Ultimately, the message from Gonzalez is: Get out and vote. We all watched the Kavanaugh hearings with horror, but this is every citizen’s chance to make a real difference.

“It’s about feeling empowered, but it’s about reminding them that the person in that position of power basically got a Republican Senate to pass through somebody who has a term for the rest of their life,” Gonzalez says. “When you think, look at what not voting has done by allowing people to stay in that position of power, to allow folks like Kavanaugh to now remain in power for the rest of their life because you didn’t want to vote that day. This Nov. 6 election is what’s going to determine our election in 2020 to take back the House. No excuses. Let’s do it together.”
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As the 1970s were winding down, the decadence of the era began to devolve into darkness. Disco started to seem gauche, while punk’s anti-establishment ethos felt, at times, more like pointless aggression. Pop culture was changing, as it does, and the ‘80s seemed to inspire darker forms of expression in terms of subculture fashion and music. Death rock, new romantic or, as it was dubbed around this time, gothic rock was born, and some 40 years later the aesthetic not only survives but continues to thrive. No one necessarily loves the label, and “goth” has come to mean different things to different people, but in general, as a music genre, it conjures a moody aesthetic and a sort of sinister, cinematic vibe. As a fashion statement, it is expressed by a menacing kind of glamour — black clothing, dramatic makeup, embellishments that reference both horror and religious iconography.

The U.K. usually gets credit for birthing the movement, in clubs and on the street, but the United States — and specifically Los Angeles — was its enticing evil twin from the start, possessing post-punkers with a gloomy aura and allure. L.A. was one of the most significant locales in the world in terms of spreading and exposing the scene, and it most definitely has become the most enduring epicenter as far as nightlife and lifestyle go. Despite the beach-babe stereotype, L.A. is a city of dark angels who can’t be denied and just won’t die.

Bauhaus’ “Bela Lugosi’s Dead,” released in 1979, is for many the starting point, but here in L.A., bands such as 45 Grave and Christian Death were already doing much of the same stylistically, adding something new to the theatrics already emerging in rock & roll via Alice Cooper, Black Sabbath and, of course, David Bowie. Still, it took an L.A. music lover and eventually record store owner to help goth — back then pretty much exclusively called death rock — grow, manifesting from a macabre misfit thing in the ‘80s and ‘90s to a familiar style recognized by the mainstream today.
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“The first goth clubs were in England,” DJ and nightlife legend Joseph Brooks recalls of his first foray into fiendish sights and sounds. “Henry [Peck, Brooks’ former
port Show
Vinyl Fetish by day; by night she was rocking jewelry (fashioned from Shrinky Dinks) at Mary Sims-Rosas aka started the re.

Both Brooks and Cancer assert that the influence of Old Hollywood, both in the U.S. underground and overseas, was important. And not just for ladies. Androgyny and a fascination with filmic depictions of ghoulishness influenced everyone (and still does today), male and female. Cancer says she was highly inspired by TV shows like Dark Shadows, The Adams Family and The Mummies as a kid.

She shared this love of creepy culture with her friend Rozz Williams, lead singer of Christian Death, to many of the ultimate tortured figure of the goth scene, now and forever. Williams hanged himself on April Fools’ Day, 1998, and has a memorial and plaque at Hollywood Forever Cemetery (his ashes were scattered over Runyon Canyon). He, maybe more than anyone else other than Peter Murphy and Bauhaus, has had a profound and elemental influence on goth culture, inspiring tens of thousands of disaffected youths and hundreds of bands as well as artists and filmmakers to express themselves in dark and dramatic ways. He was a painter and collagist whose work has been exhibited in Los Angeles and Atlanta, and is the subject of more than one film.

Nightlife promoter/punk art curator Danny Fuentes of Lethal Amounts Gallery is currently producing and directing a feature-length documentary called Spiritual Cramp (a Christian Death track) about the man, his mystique and the scene itself.

“It is a project I started after working with several members of the original lineup, doing a Rozz Williams exhibit and archiving Edward Colver’s negatives,” Fuentes says. “I think what made Rozz so unique and appealing was his attitude and delivery of his art. Lyrically he was more sophisticated, drawing inspiration from surrealist writers and artists, while combining the aggressive and unapologetic attitude of SoCal punk mixed with the provocative experimentations of Throbbing Gristle and the gender-bending of David Bowie and the glam era. Christian Death were more of a reaction to the newly defined and codified look and sound of punk, pulling away from the three-chord wonders and creating atmosphere and texture rather than a catchy hook.”

Williams first began performing with his then-boyfriend Ron Athey (now a world-renowned performance artist) in the industrial art project Premature Ejaculation, back in 1981, and he played many gigs with Christian Death alongside 45 Grave throughout the decades. He also made many appearances at Brooks’ clubs. His live shows evoked despair, brutality and, some might say, shocking imagery. In many ways the stuff Williams was doing with Athey initially and later with Christian Death pre-dated the rise of feminism, sadomasochism, modern primitivism and performance art that delved into these ominous forms of expression.

Fuentes recently threw a fundraiser for his film at one of the oldest churches in L.A. Another pioneering goth-rock group, Kommunity FK, performed, as did former Christian Death members Eva O and Gi-tane Demone. The crowd — a sea of black velvet, lace and fishnet fabrics and ghostly white skin — was split between long-in-the-fang O.G.s (original goths) and drearily dolled-up millennials who clearly did their homework, singing along to KKF leader Patrik Mata’s somber musings and donning garb straight out of the Veil and Club Scream circa 1981 to 1989.

Androgyny and a deathly appearance were very raging back when they started but today, in the wake of drag’s popularity and couture runways’ incorporation of certain dark elements, it’s almost commonplace. It’s still a pretty fierce fashion statement, though, especially when taken to extremes via makeup and audacious accoutrements such as crucifixes, piercings, fishnet stockings worn as tops, electrical tape as pasties,
growth in Los Angeles during the height of the AIDS crisis in the late 1980s and through the mid-'90s, confronting the temporality of the body and the reality of death, Thanatos embracing Eros. Meshing seamlessly with the corsets and latex of the fetish scene, goth style — which draws on everything from the Victorian era through the Weimar Republic and beyond — made it more comfortable to be gay, queer, trans at a club. Makeup, butch-wear, latex, leather, dangerously high heels were, and still are, worn as self-expression by anyone so moved. The music became a bit more aggressive as the scene progressed — anguished, sexual, driving, forming a counterpart for consensual whipping and spanking scenes. Although electronic and industrial sounds became more popular at goth parties, they still maintained a feeling of doom. After Fetish, in the late '80s, Brooks' DJ skills saw him providing sounds for Club Scream, one of the most legendary live happenings in L.A. (Jane's Addiction got their start there) and subsequently, Riki Rachtman's neo-glam grotto Cathouse.

But his proclivities remained with darker, dance-driven environments. Club Fuck! was making an impact on the underground and co-founder James Stone joined with Brooks to go bigger with the L.A. Fetish Ball, a large-scale erotic extravaganza held near or on holidays such as Halloween and New Year's Eve, featuring traditionally bewitching acts such as Nina Hagen and (often) The Cramps. Around the same time, they created Sin-a-matic, a weekly party encouraging freaky fetish looks and showcasing S&M, bondage and polysexual expression, all driven by DJs and dancing to dark electro and atmospheric noise.

The industrial goth scene sort of exploded at that point, and made for some very important, long-running clubs that deserve mention, including Perversion from Michael Stewart and Bruce Perdew (of Club Scream), Kontrol Factory and the extremely popular Das Bunker from Rev. John Giovanazzi, which spawned his Glendale club Complex (now closed). Bunker still goes off with special events at Jewel's Catch One.

Traditional goth clubs never went away, either. Of note are Helter Skelter and Stigmata (from Stewart and Perdew), the early-scene vampiric soiree called Fang Club (whose creator, Jack Dean, tragically committed suicide this year), and the LADead (Los Angeles darkside) events of Xian Vox, which turned the Monte Cristo club into a true haunt for dark souls until it closed last year.

Two favorites from the '90s recently hit the 20-year mark this year: Long Beach party Release the Bats (which recently announced it will close after its anniversary party on Friday, Oct. 26) and the gothic grandaddy, Bar Sinister, the longest consistently running dance party in L.A., of any genre, and still going strong. On any given Saturday, the Bar Sinister dance floor (at Boardner's) fills with a mix of darkly draped newbie goths as well as elder fiends who never got rid of their fishnets. Suicide Girls, who capitalized on the inherent sexual energy of the aesthetic via the web years ago, now are featured dancers at the club and bands new and old play outside in the New Orleans–style courtyard. Upstairs, the intricate shibari and other consensual BDSM provides a voyeuristic respite.

It bears noting that while the goth scene in L.A. is comprised of outsiders and “freaks,” it is, in fact, one of the most cohesive communities in nightlife. Its followers are, for the most part, not actually depressed or morose, though like any scene it has its mix of personalities and motivations. It might be a little incestuous, and it has seen its share of competitiveness and drama, but inspiration, mentorship and passing the torch (or rather, candelabra) have contributed to its fortitude and, ironically, its refusal to die.

Jason Lavitt was attracted to goth culture the second he was exposed to it. For the San Fernando Valley native, The Beatles’ White Album, which his parents had played on vinyl since he was a baby, was a compelling intro to music. “Songs like ‘Dear Prudence’ were in my DNA,” he says, “so when I got into ‘80s music it was only natural to be obsessed with Siouxsie & the Banshees, who put out the very same song, but with a more dark, updated feel.”

Pre-internet, and coming from areas ranging from Granada...
Coven, which opened in '89. “I was a Jewish kid from the Valley in my early 20s. But Joseph knew it all. He took it to the next level, providing entertainment, visuals, invites with beautiful artwork. He really schooled me in the arts, and this was where I got my education.”

Lavitt has become one of the most successful club promoters in Los Angeles, delving into many different music styles. He and Brooks shared a long and storied co-promoter relationship throughout the '90s, which included Club Makeup at El Rey (glam rock), Shout! ('60s and soul) and Bang! (Brit and modern pop of the moment). The promoter-DJ has come full circle, too, rejoining forces with Stewart and Perdew for their popular Club '90s nights. He also does the long-running gay pop club Tigerheat at the Avalon. Still, his heart lives with goth.

“The strongest part about the goth scene is incorporating crossovers and meshing similar genres,” says the DJ, who presents goth-themed '90 nights these days. “This is my belief about why goth still lives on as every era evolves. Every new goth club DJ, I update the format. A song at a goth club today would never have been played yesterday.”

Adam Bravin, aka DJ Adam-12, would tend to agree. Bravin is the co-founder, with producer Michael Patterson, of the newest dark-minded mashup in nightlife, the weekly members-only Cloak & Dagger. Also a native of the San Fernando Valley, he was exposed to a wide range of music, from Top 40 hits and punk to hardcore rap and hip-hop. Plus, as a teen, he could tune in, as most L.A. teens did, to KROQ, which beguiled him with artists like Bauhaus, The Cure and Depeche Mode just makes you feel a certain way — every genre has a dark side.”

This dark side of music gets full play at Cloak & Dagger, where Bravin spins everything from his teen goth faves to early ska and Biggie Smalls, who the DJ points out has a song called “Suicidal Tendencies,” which like Britney Spears’ “Toxic” is pretty dark if you pay attention.

“Michael Patterson and I just created Cloak & Dagger because ... I just wanted it. I couldn’t go anywhere to hear dark music in all the different genres that I wanted to hear it in,” Bravin says. While his sonic passion was a motivating factor in foundining Cloak & Dagger, he admits there is more to the club than meets the casual glance into the mandatory all-black clothing club.

“Notice for marketing macabre right in their faces, cultural influences are constantly fed Illuminad and Mexico City. Cloak & Dagger opens & Dagger into monthly events in Chicago and immersive theater, and to create a unique place where people can get a little bit more,” he says.

That “little bit more” has grown Cloak & Dagger into monthly events in Chicago and metal acts around the world. Bravin started DJing at 15, playing music for parties and clubs in all different scenes. “Every band has a dark song,” says Bravin, who would go on to find the darkwave band She Wants Revenge with Justin Warfield. “There are hip-hop artists that are dark, soul artist that are dark. Even pop artists that are dark. Whether sonically it’s dark, whether lyrically it’s dark, whether it from the French Revolution; it was worn by that time's version of goths and punks. It was a mockery of how people’s necks were shaved and their hair tossed forward for the guillotine, a dare to death.”

Seyer, who is married to tattoo artist Kat Von D (another champion of dark imagery and style via her successful makeup line), took the memento mori theatricality and melded it with his Latino culture to create the “cholo goth” genre (as seen at monthly Cholo Goth Night at the Lash Social, DJ’d by his partner in Prayers, Dave Parley). Prayers may have tweaked the look and style but they know where it came from, and not everyone who identifies as goth does. Take note:

“So goth has all these classical, Euro-white influences from literature like Bram Stoker, Poe, Huysmans, Rimbaud, Baudelaire. And in the arts, Felicien Rops, Aubrey Beardsley, Harry Clarke, and then movies like Nosferatu and Dracula, and of course the fashions of those time periods,” reflects Seyer, pausing for a moment before explaining how he sought to blend the...
historical elements that started it all with the cholo culture that "emerged from the brutal colonization of Mexico, and before that our Aztec roots, both of which were heavy with death."

Much has been theorized about why Latino people are particularly passionate about expressing themselves through goth, and there are obvious links. "Latinos in general are raised Catholic and have a certain appreciation for the beauty in the macabre after those depictions of Christ and the Crucifixion," Lethal Amounts' Fuentes explains. "Mexican culture also celebrates the Day of the Dead, focusing on a positive way to view death instead of fearing it."

Cultural influences are constantly feeding off of one another with the march of time, and goth is no different. Some of the facets have become so prevalent they're considered cliché at this point; that, coupled with the melodrama and portentous (some might say pretentious) vibes, makes the lifestyle ripe for parody (think SNL's "Goth Talk" skit). "The Goth aesthetic truly has proven more influential than anyone could have imagined. Leafar Seyer of the Dark Delicacies on Burbank. There are also several conventions in L.A. for horror and gothic fans to buy unique T-shirts, accessories and decor, including Scare L.A. and Monsterpalooza. Mainstream fashion has made punk and goth clothing easier to find, while online, sites like Dolls Kill and Rebels Market have found their niche. There's just more cool stuff to wear, buy and surround oneself in.

True goth fans want to see the darkness permeate culture as much as it can. Queenie Black is a shining example. Known as the "Gothic Martha Stewart" on social media and YouTube, she's been a successful multimedia artist active in the spooky art scene since the turn of the century, and she's all for keeping the culture's original style and ideas alive in a contemporary forum. Known for her Pocket Full of Posiez dolls, sold at Hot Topic in the mid-2000s, she says of the new generation, "While it's important to know your history, and to remind baby bats where our culture came from, us elders need to remember that scenes evolve and grow. Goth doesn't belong just to us because we happen to be born in the 1900s. Everyone is invited to the party but some just arrive fashionable late."

In Los Angeles, the enduring popularity of this culture is obviously, in part, a reaction to our sunny environment. But it's actually less about the reality of our surroundings and more about a reverie of spirit. "We live in Tinseltown, where dreams come true," Brooks says. "The mystique of Hollywood and the drama and the mystery are a big part of why it happened here and why it lives on."

And while the L.A. stereotype is one of glitz and fashionably late fabulosity, Brooks and his peers made sure we were early to the party. Goth culture has continued to haunt imaginations ever since, ensuring new followers and maintaining loyalty from those who loved it early on, especially in L.A. Here, it seems, goth will never grow up, get some color or rest in peace.

"If you felt alienated by the hypermasculine and often homophobic hardcore punk scene and you were too weird for the '70s/80s gay scene, death rock provided an escape." — DANNY FUENTES

Innovative undertones (from Marilyn Manson to Ghost and black metal), dark art (from the vintage characters of Edward Gorey to the modern work of Mark Ryden) and supernatural literature (Stephen King, Anne Rice, Twilight's Stephenie Meyer) continues to resonate with new generations. Particularly when it comes to fantasy, freakier is better, as the success of Tim Burton has proved. Disney got wise to this pretty early on, and has smartly catered to goth consumers via its Villains and Haunted Mansion merch, not to mention Nightmare Before Christmas everything.

Bats Day in the Fun Park, the annual goth gathering at Disneyland, put the potential for marketing macabre right in their faces, and that event — like almost everything that helped gothic aesthetics spread in L.A. and eventually the world — grew out of nightlife and creator Noah Korda's desire to bring the scene together. His Black Market place off-site brought designers and crafters together to buy and sell unique dark items, but indie stores like Necromance (which put together the original "Black Market" selling alternative merchandise) and Retail Slut, the seminal punk-rock shop, both on
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Feeding a Community

DTLA Dinner Club brings neighbors together over a meal

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

The DTLA Dinner Club is still going strong after eight years, bringing the downtown community together on Wednesdays for free pop-up dinners featuring some of L.A.’s best chefs. The only thing they ask is you bring your own personal zombie survival kit in costume, if you’re into wandering the DTLA streets.

Anyone who lives in DTLA is a member of the Los Angeles Athletic Club or is a founder or CEO of an L.A.-based company is welcome to sign up to be invited.

Chefs Sam Udell, of Wholesam fame, and Muaz Mansour recently took over the rooftop at Emmer’s El Dorado Penthouse on Spring Street at sunset, with its sweeping views of downtown, to serve a healthy feast that included vegetable and meat stations, with passion fruit cake with downtowner Gelateria Uli’s agave fresca sorbet for dessert.

There were roasted mushrooms with baby squash and chermoula relish; herbed potatoes with shishito peppers; mung bean noodles with egg, scallions and carrot; and glazed Brussels sprouts with candied citrus and hazelnuts to fill in lettuce cups.

The steak with herb butter was given a last-minute blowtorch char, alongside the slow-roasted lamb neck and spiced chicken thighs. All was presented with Udell’s flavorful selection of sauces and garnishes, including smoked tahini, jalapeño salsa, tomato vinaigrette, garlic lemon aioli, radishes, celery and avocado.

The dinners, which are sponsored by Melissa’s Produce and the Mayfair Hotel, are designed to create a sense of family and community downtown. They are free to guests and take place almost every Wednesday through the end of January, and then will begin another season in March.

Couples should be prepared for intermingling — Emmer makes a point of assigned seating and separating pairs at the dinner table to encourage new conversations.

Originally built in 1913 and home to Charlie Chaplin for a time, the 12-story El Dorado Hotel has been converted into lofts and houses the underground El Dorado speakeasy as well as the elegant Le Petit Paris on the ground floor.

For more info on upcoming chefs, including Hatch chef Daniel Sheriff Shemtob, and how to join the invite list, go to dtladinnerclub.com.

Halloween Libations

If you happen to be in downtown Los Angeles for Halloween searching for spirits and you’re not afraid of heights, the new Skyspace bar at the OUE Skyspace L.A. is serving up a scary lineup of special drinks, including a Fright Flight line of shooters and candy corn martinis, through Wednesday, Oct. 31.

The shocking shooters are as follows:

The green Beetlejuice made with Midori, Malibu rum, Peachtree, pineapple and Sierra Mist; the red and white Vampire with strawberry, vodka, cherry liqueur, vanilla ice cream and strawberry syrup; a blood orange margarita; and the purple bubbling witches brew, comprised of vodka, blue curaçao, pineapple and cranberry juice.

If that doesn’t slay you, guests are encouraged to take that liquid courage and ride the Skyslide — an all-glass slide suspended 1,000 feet above downtown — or go to dtladinnerclub.com.

For Anthony Bourdain, El Mexicano: Café de Olla with crème fraîche and hibiscus sauce.

Border Grill’s Day of the Dead cocktail tributes include:

For Jonathan Gold, a MariGOLD Margarita: Viva Reposado Tequila, Araceli jicama salsa and queso fresco; and pan de muerto and café de olla with crème fraîche and hibiscus sauce.

Border Grill’s Day of the Dead cocktail tributes include:

For Anthony Bourdain, El Mexicano: Café de Olla with crème fraîche and hibiscus sauce.

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For Robin Leach, El Royale: Chambord and Champagne, topped with pomegranate seeds; for Jonathan Gold, a MariGOLD Margarita: Viva Reposado Tequila, Araceli jicama salsa and queso fresco; and pan de muerto and café de olla with crème fraîche and hibiscus sauce.

For Anthony Bourdain, El Mexicano: Café de Olla with crème fraîche and hibiscus sauce.

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THE ART OF DINING

Mrs. Fish's speakeasy hideaway is a treasure trove of Japanese art alongside the sushi and whiskey

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT

The proprietor of Mrs. Fish loves three things — sushi, whiskey and art. Well, it's four things if you count architecture. Which you should, because Mrs. Fish occupies a stunning and surprising basement space in the historic Pershing Square Building downtown. Opened in 1924, its architects were Curlett & Beelman, who took their inspiration from the 1910 redesign of the whole park's footprint in a lavish Beaux Arts style. Hence the speakeasy-esque entrance, which opens onto a grand staircase leading down to a lofty space of parquet flooring, gilded decorative details, glass-encased industrial retrofitting and a structurally integrated overhead fish tank. It's impressive, but it's nothing compared to the big three. Again, that's sushi, whiskey and art.

Mrs. Fish's owner, who eccentrically forgoes identification of either himself or his all-star kitchen staff, nevertheless pours a lot of himself into the project. Perhaps most intriguingly, is how much time and personal effort went into the vast assortment of contemporary Japanese art that's installed throughout the restaurant's many chambers.

“I was very intentional in the selection process of the art at Mrs. Fish,” the owner says, “with the final deciding factor being the same as what built my personal art collection — the art pieces needed to speak to me. Additionally, I wanted each of the pieces to be from a Japanese artist and that the pieces should, collectively, make a unique art experience for the observer.”

With scores of paintings, drawings, photographs and textile-based works by dozens of artists, the juxtaposition of the architecture's golden-age aesthetic with striking, bold, colorful and often surreal works of Japanese visual art is an adventure in its own right. From a row of psychedelic, anime-inspired character portraits by Ai Kato, to a doe-eyed blonde by Final Fantasy creator Yoshitaka Amano, and the owner's personal current favorite — a mixed-media work depicting Darger-like young geishas by Ai Yamaguchi — a certain tone of pop culture is set.

However, majestic large-scale works — such as the stunning and exuberant tableau Lucky Dragon by Nanami Ishihara, a photograph of a geisha attacking a watermelon with gusto in a private moment by famed artist Nobuyoshi Araki, and a regal work of surrealist landscape by painter Daisuke Fukunaga — set a more spectacular, art historical scene.

“My appreciation for art goes back to my college and graduate days in New York,” the owner tells us, “where I spent time enjoying the local art galleries and museums. The Mrs. Fish art collection started about three years ago and spans multiple trips to Tokyo, where I visited individual art collections, galleries and museums to learn about the local, up-and-coming Japanese artists of Tokyo.”

Many of the artists are established within the Tokyo art scene but the collection also includes young and emerging talents. Indeed, besides the more theatrical works, hidden gems abound, among them the witty, poignant painting Speech by Hideaki Kawashima of a young man in tighty-whities, who clearly has something to say. Of special note is the small-scale but finely detailed drawing of a tattooed woman by Shohei Otomo (the son of the director of Akira), as well as the deceptively traditional, modernism- and surrealism-inflected Old Story by Yujiro Miyazaki, in which a geisha (there are a lot of geishas) confronts a fawn with a crystal skull while she paints a scroll of a mushroom cloud in a pastoral forest.

Each work on display comes with a story, of course, of the owner crossing the globe, chasing down works that captured his imagination, sometimes pursuing artists for years in search of the perfect piece. But all you have to do is order an artisanal Japanese whiskey and perhaps the barracuda, and take it all in.

Mrs. Fish, 448 S. Hill St., downtown; mrsfish.com.
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October is the month Halloween fans await all year long. Luckily, for those of us who happen to be horror aficionados and dress-up fiends, Los Angeles provides no shortage of ways to get our spirits and spooks on. In addition to the plethora of haunted attractions that have opened up throughout the greater SoCal area, the entire month in L.A. is filled with wicked and wild events. We’ve got stuff for kids, we’ve got stuff for adults, and we’ve got stuff for everything in between and beyond. So, without further ado, here is got stuff for everything in between and wicked and wild events. We’ve got stuff for the entire month in L.A. is filled with haunted attractions that have opened no shortage of ways to get our spirits and chills you!

Family Fun
Before we get to the hard-core stuff, let’s start with some lighthearted fare. Our first item in the “Fun for the Whole Family” category is the inaugural Nights of the Jack. What we’ve got here is a display of thousands of hand-carved jack-o’-lanterns, illuminated and populating the King Gillette Ranch in Calabasas. Check the website to see a sampling of the intricate artistry that will be waiting for you and your family to marvel at. This one is definitely not for people who have a fear of pumpkins. Thru Nov. 4; King Gillette Ranch, 26800 Mulholland Hwy., Calabasas; nightsofthejack.com.

Throughout the month of October, Haunted Little Tokyo will play host to all sorts of seasonal delights. There’s a pumpkin patch, trick-or-treating, a haunted block party, and even the Haunted Little Tokyo Film Festival. If you haven’t been down to Little Tokyo in a while for your udon fix, why not go now and get a two-fer of noodles and chills? Thru Oct. 31; various locations in Little Tokyo; golittle tokyo.com.

Do you dare cozy up to Dracula, Frankenstein’s Monster or the Mummy? What if you were welcome to do so for a selfie? Madame Tussauds Hollywood Wax Museum has prepared for the Halloween season with “Illusions of Horror,” a variety of interactive creepy installations that guests are invited to jump right into. Care to share a nice chianti with Hannibal Lector? He’s there too ... just waiting to dine on ... er ... with you! “Illusions of Horror” is included with admission to the museum, and though it’s going to be a permanent exhibit, October is really the time to do it, isn’t it? Madame Tussauds, 6933 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; madametussauds.com/hollywood/en/whats-inside/illusions-of-horror.

Freaky Fun
If magic is what you seek, then look no further than Black Rabbit Rose. For their current show at the historic — and allegedly haunted — building, the resident conjurors expound upon the supernatural secrets of Old Hollywood, while beguiling you with mischief and magic. While these illusionists are dazzling some of your senses, don’t forget to dazzle the rest of them by sampling one or more of the venue’s hand-crafted cocktails. Thru Oct. 27; Black Rabbit Rose, 1719 N. Hudson Ave., Hollywood; blackrabbitrose.com.

It’s spooky, it’s nostalgic, it’s perhaps even a little anachronistic, but where would the world of horror entertainment be without a proper spookshow? What’s a proper spookshow, you ask? Back in the 1950s, spookshows (or ghost shows) were limited performance events featuring spooky magic, comedy, monsters, a séance and the blackout, during which the lights would go out and audience members would hear and feel strange, unearthly things brush past them. These types of shows aren’t around much, but this critically acclaimed performance of Doctor Zomba’s Ghost Show of Terror will be waiting for you during select times and dates this spooky season. Thru Nov. 3; Flight Theater at the Complex Hollywood, 6476 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood; doctorzomba.eventbrite.com.

Classic arts not your thing? Not a problem, here’s the latest in technologically advanced entertainment that promises to both entertain and horrify! Thru Nov. 4; location revealed with ticket purchase; eventbrite.com/e/theatre-macabre-2018-tickets-48319625300.

For anyone who has not experienced the delight and dread of the Urban Death show at Zombie Joe’s Underground Theatre, this is a good way to wet your beak ... with blood! Start off your tour of terror with a haunted mini-maze, and then enjoy an abbreviated version of Urban Death. The combo is to die for! We don’t kid, this is some extreme stuff. The subject matter, the gore, the nudity, it’s ... it’s ... maddening. What are you waiting for? Thru Nov. 3; Zombie Joe’s Underground Theatre, 4850 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood; urbandeath.com.

Monstrous Attractions
Last but not least, L.A. offers some of the best large-scale, immersive haunted attractions in the country, and it seems they’ve all stepped up their spook this year.

Universal Studios’ Halloween Horror Nights (halloweenhorrornights.com) has the must-see Stranger Things maze, while Warner Bros.’ “Horror Made Here” (wbstudiotour.com/horror-made-here) possesses patrons with experiences based on The Exorcist and The Conjuring.

Magic Mountain’s Fright Fest (sixflags.com/magicmountain/special-events/fright-fest-night) features a maze based on the new movie Hell Fest plus a 30-hour “coffin challenge” with cash prizes.

Queen Mary’s Dark Harbor (queenmary.com/events/upcoming-events/) offers a swing ride from Michael Jackson’s Neverland Ranch (scary!) and our fave maze of the season, “Intrepid.” Knott’s Scary Farm (knotts.com/play/scary-farm) has sprouted even more scare zones and Haunted Hayride (losangeleshaunted hayride.com/) celebrates its 10th anniversary with a hodgepodge of horrific scenes representing its full decade of frights. Do ’em all if you dare, but buy that fast pass or you just might want to kill someone yourself while waiting for hours in line.

Happy Halloween!
A bold new Suspiria stands alongside the original — but next time, let a woman direct

BY APRIL WOLFE

A sure-fire way for a director to get me to tune out of a horror film is to over-explain the origin of the movie’s evil entities. It’s the inexplicable and primal that are most thrilling, the abstract and destructive forces manifested in nightmares, the kinds of visions that vaporize just as you reach out to touch them, leaving the sense that something truly terrible happened, even if it was so fleeting it can’t be fully described. Dario Argento’s 1977 classic Suspiria exemplifies this. I cannot for the life of me recall the order of events in Argento’s movie but individual moments, spanning a few short seconds to a couple of minutes, have left lasting impressions on me that still chill me today.

So I must say I was apprehensive about 2018’s Suspiria, Luca Guadagnino’s remake of Argento’s film, as too many horror classics — like The Fog or The Amityville Horror — have gotten slicker, streamlined, modern, more conventional takes. But I’m happy to report that I have no idea what’s going on in Guadagnino’s Suspiria, and that’s wonderful. The two films function more as companion pieces than as mirrored twins, sharing only a few key details: There is a ballet school that is run by witches, and people are dying.

Other than that, the new version blazes its own path, which writer David Kajganich smartly intertwines with the politics of Cold War-era Germany. The film’s themes subtly remark on young people’s discontent with the past and the sins they were made to suffer for. There are some evergreen horror concepts, where the bare bones of the story are strong enough that they can be adapted and made over in multiple generations to express whatever fears and frustrations of the times in which they’re made. Invasion of the Body Snatchers is one of those, but maybe, just maybe, Suspiria could be another.

In this version, Dakota Johnson plays Susie Bannion, the name a homophone for the original’s protagonist Suzy Banyon. Susie arrives in Munich at a prestigious dance academy and pleads her way into getting an audition to join the company. She enters a spare, mirrored studio and whips her body around with such zealous purpose that it seems an act of sacrifice. She’ll hurt herself for her art. Her performance rouses the attention of the school’s master, Madame Blanc (Tilda Swinton), who senses Susie’s presence from another room. Meanwhile, an ominous, skinless figure lurks in the basement, a tell-tale heart whose blood gets pumping whenever Susie dances. We know Susie is special; we just don’t know how yet.

The women of the company welcome Susie, with the exception of a couple who seem psychologically scarred by the recent disappearance of one of the star dancers, Patricia (Chloé Grace Moretz). Madame Blanc and her witchy cohorts insist Patricia left of her own accord but dancer Olga (Elena Fokina) lets everyone know she doesn’t buy it. Of course, Olga must be shut up or the schoolmasters risk being exposed for whatever it is they’re doing at this school that makes young women disappear. But the manner in which Olga is punished is breathtakingly sick and gorgeous. I won’t spoil this scene, dear reader, but I will say that Fokina’s body movement and choreography in this moment unleash a torrent of anguished emotion and pain. Like great dance, it becomes an expression of the soul. The only thing worse than a gushing critic is a critic gushing pretentiously, but moments like these that remind me how vibrant and devastating art can be when it dares to go dark with abandon — this is some deep Hieronymus Bosch shit.

That’s not to say this film is some kind of flawless gift from the gods. But it is moving and mesmerizing, even in its clunkier non-sequitur montages of quick flashes of creepy objects and scenarios, some ripoffs of the work of the late artist Ana Mendieta, whose estate is now suing Guadagnino and Amazon. Personally, I hope the studio and filmmaker pay out to Mendieta’s estate and that the case drives hordes to this woman’s work.

My biggest peeve with Suspiria — aside from a cloying, mismatched score — is that, like the new Halloween, it’s written, directed, scored, edited and shot by men, though it almost solely stars and concerns women.

Kajganich and Guadagnino did the work of consulting with women choreographers, because as Kajganich has said, they wanted the dance to be authentically “female,” and yet Damien Jalet, a man, was the choreographer. I love this movie, respect Guadagnino as a filmmaker and Kajganich as a writer, and yet I cannot shut up the part of my brain that screams that, yet again, men are coasting on the labor of women and co-opting women’s work as their own. I suspect this was done with ignorance rather than malice, but ignorance can no longer be wielded as a shield for criticism — get it together, guys.

I’m so happy that Guadagnino’s Suspiria doesn’t seek to replace the original, and yet I am struck by how little has changed behind the camera since 1977. Here’s hoping the next iteration — and I hope there is one — changes that.

Suspiria | Directed by Luca Guadagnino
Written by David Kajganich | Amazon Studios
ArcLight Hollywood
STATE OF THE ARTS

Patrick Wang’s sprawling, hilarious *A Bread Factory* is one of the year’s great films

BY ALAN SCHERSTUHL

The biggest surprise about Patrick Wang’s sweepingly ambitious, two-part, four-hour ensemble piece *A Bread Factory* is: The film, a sort of cinematic state-of-the-arts speech, is relentlessly warm, playful and lovable, a sprawling and prankish hangout comedy with no clear precedent. Wang favors long, single-shot scenes capturing uninterrupted performance, his actors here often playing actors themselves or poets or tap dancers or singing real estate agents. Surveying the bustle around a small town’s performing arts center, savoring the quirks and ambitions of the artists who populate it, *A Bread Factory* at times suggests, in its nimble comic portraiture within a sprawling milieu, in its spirited blend of naturalism and sketch comedy, the work of Richard Linklater, Christopher Guest, Robert Altman and Edward Yang. And in its scenes of actors performing their characters’ own onstage performances, Wang proves himself among the best directors any community theater ever had.

The film is utterly singular, though, the kind of work that will become a point of comparison itself. Even its two halves proceed in different modes. Wang has crafted them to mostly stand alone, though you’ll get much more from each if you see them in sequence; he’s immediately following up *A Bread Factory*, his third feature, with his fourth, *The Grief of Others*, opening soon.

*A Bread Factory’s* first half, following the fight of the arts center’s founders — Dorothea (Tyne Daly) and Greta (Elisabeth Henry) — to prevent the local school board from withdrawing its funding, plays as a series of blackout scenes and sketches that rib and celebrate the lives of artists and the art-adjacent. An independent filmmaker (a wonderful Janeane Garofalo) harangues a Bread Factory audience for not having any Qs at a Q&A. Characters give monologues from plays they’re in or works they’re inventing on the spot. In a lavishly moving speech, Greta addresses a young volunteer (Keaton Nigel Cooke) whose parents have grown leery of his spending so much time with oddball artists, telling him just how much his help has meant. A newspaper (Keaton Nigel Cooke) whose parents have venting on the spot. In a lavishly moving speech, Greta addresses a young volunteer (Keaton Nigel Cooke) whose parents have grown leery of his spending so much time with oddball artists, telling him just how much his help has meant. A newspaper (Keaton Nigel Cooke) whose parents have grown leery of his spending so much time with oddball artists, telling him just how much his help has meant. A newspaper (Keaton Nigel Cooke) whose parents have grown leery of his spending so much time with oddball artists, telling him just how much his help has meant. A newspaper (Keaton Nigel Cooke) whose parents have grown leery of his spending so much time with oddball artists, telling him just how much his help has meant. A newspaper (Keaton Nigel Cooke) whose parents have grown leery of his spending so much time with oddball artists, telling him just how much his help has meant. 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Pierce Brosnan's final films as Bond, Neal Purvis and Robert Wade created Johnny English as an affectionate mockery, working with screenwriter William Davis, Purvis and Wade returned to Bond with Casino Royale (and co-wrote all the Daniel Craig incarnations), while Davis continued the adventures of 007's clownish cousin. He wrote the story for the 2011 sequel, Johnny English Reborn, and the script for Johnny English Strikes Again, this reboot that brings the retired M7 agent back into the fold and see the film remain the funniest, and Reborn has the best action. Johnny English Strikes Again serves as the best showcase for star Rowan Atkinson. Davis seems to have resurrected the character primarily to provide Atkinson with a greatest-hits reel, one that incorporates aspects of the comedian's other signature characters. Why else would the climactic G72 summit be held in a Scottish castle if not to get Atkinson into a suit of armor to recall Blackadder? Why put English in a high-energy dance club, other than so Atkinson can bust out his Mr. Bean moves? Director David Kerr engineers a series of some exercise in super-natural suspense. Nuart Theatre, 11272 Santa Monica Blvd., West L.A.; Fri., Oct. 26-Thur., Nov. 1, showtimes vary; $9-$12. (310) 473-8530, landmarktheatres.com.

Saturday, Oct. 27
The UCLA Film & Television Archive hosts a fundraising gala, with all proceeds benefiting its invaluable preservation work. Cocktail hour starts at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:30. Guest speakers include actresses Victoria Riskin, daughter of scream queen Fay Wray, and Leana Douglas, granddaughter of actor Melvyn Douglas; archive director Jan-Christopher Horak; Mark Rosenthal of Raleigh Enterprises; and Marty Cooper, the archive's board chair. The evening, which kicks off the series "Down & Dirty in Gower Gulch," concludes with a special 9 p.m. screening of recently restored The Embassy Van, a 1933 Poverty Row chiller starring the magnificently menacing Lionel Atwill. Raleigh Studios, 5330 Melfrose Ave., Hollywood; Sun., Oct. 27, 9 p.m.; $10 (screening only). (310) 206-8013, cinema.ucla.edu.

Sunday, Oct. 28
The Alex Film Society hosts a richly deserved tribute to Vincent Price, whose macabre roles earned him a legion of fans. House of Wax, the film that unoffificantly launched his career as a horror icon, will be screened in a 2-D, 35mm print. Film historian David Bel Vallee (author of Lost Horizons Beneath the Hollywood Sign and Six Reels Under) will pay homage to his late friend. There will be a reception at 6:30 displaying several pieces from the Vincent Price Art Museum. Alex Theatre, 216 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale; Sun., Oct. 28, 7 p.m.; $12-$17 (818) 243-2539, alextheatre.org.

Monday, Oct. 29
The Aeros screens a new DCP of Bill Gunn's altogether extraordinary independent genre exercise Ganja & Hess, co-presented by Ava Duverney's ARRAY Releasing. A remarkable hybrid of blaxploitation and unconventional horror grammar, Gunn's 1973 exploration of vampirism-as-African-American--allegory was reprogrammed by Spike Lee as Da Sweet Blood of Jesus. There will be a postscreening discussion with special guests TBA. Aero Theatre, 1328 Montana Ave., Santa Monica; Mon., Oct. 29, 7:30 p.m.; $20. (323) 488-3486, americancinemathequecalendar.com.

Wednesday, Oct. 31
Walt Disney Concert Hall celebrates Halloween with a screening of F.W. Murnau's German Expressionist classic Nosferatu (the unofficial first film version of Bram Stoker's Dracula), set to live music by organist Clark Wilson. A preshow talk with Alan Chapman is open to all ticket holders. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., downtown; Wed., Oct. 31, 8 p.m.; ticket prices vary. (213) 972-7500, taphil.com. —MATHIEL BELL

DO THE GREAT BUSTER: A CELEBRATION
“IT may not have been Houdini who said it, but what the hell,” Peter Bogdanovich says, in the voice of the Official Narrator, early in his joyous The Great Buster: A Celebration. He’s referring to the claim that the name Buster came from Harry Houdini, a friend of Keaton’s vaudevillian parents, who is said to have offered it as praise for the striking way the youngest of the Three Keatons took a tumble onstage — as a toddler. “That was a real buster!” the magician is said to have exclaimed. Bogdanovich’s chary uncertainty befits a film with the subtitle of A Celebration. He’s in print — the legend-mode, evangelizing a case close to beyond mere fact-checking. Despite talking-head testimonials from Carl Reiner, Johnny Knoxville, Leonard Maltin and Richard Lewis, The Great Buster at heart is an opportunity to hang with Bogdanovich as he screens favorite sequences from the Great Stone Face’s two- and five-real masterpieces of the ’20s. It’s a relaxed study of greatness, of exquisite physical comedy, of how he’d-do-that stuntwork, of a vigorous cinematic artist who saw and enduring possibilities for his medium. Always a showman, Bogdanovich shrewdly, bravely ups the usual life-passing-by structure to close with a lengthy appreciation of Keaton’s feature-length mid-’20s work. He selects highlights judiciously, gushes over them warmly and perhaps inevitably manages to work in an appearance from his old pal Orson Welles, introducing The General. Who could have guessed that in 2016 we’d see a new Welles film co-starring Bogdanovich (The Other Side of the Wind) and a new Bogdanovich film with a Welles cameo? (Alan Scherstuhl)

HALLOWEEN (ONGOING)
There are two opposing films running simultaneously in David Gordon Green’s Halloween, a reboot/sequel of an endlessly rebooted sequel to John Carpenter’s Carrie and John Carpenter’s Carrie II, both of which were directed by David Gordon Green. One, written by James Lee Curtis reprising her role as Laurie Strode, pushes the horror genre into more cerebral, violent terror, with an eye on the very real effects of childhood trauma and assault. The other larger, dumfer film drags that first one screaming back to the ’80s. Yeah, I know John Carpenter and Debra Hill’s first Halloween was released in 1978, not the 1980s. But Green’s film’s slashier lineage doesn’t even stretch back to his supposed source material, it’s as if Halloween’s knockoffs had replaced the original in the director’s mind. What made the 1978 version work was the overwhelming sense of dread from being the third party to Michael Myers’ surveillance of these teens. The serial killer watches, and sometimes we watch him watch, and other times we simply wait to see him watch. Too often, Green doesn’t seem to know where to put the camera to elicit that sense of surveillance or being surveilled. Worse, that incompetence often works hand in hand with overwrought comic dialogue. But let’s get to what really works: Curtis. We meet Laurie in her super-sealed woodsyp compound, almost 40 years to the day after the 1978 murders. Laurie is a tactical assassin now, training in combat and armor, but not so adept that it’s implausible. But whoever made the decision to slash up some hot and horny teens to round out the movie has seriously undercut what might have been a horror achievement of weight and importance. (April Wolfe)
The Damned get political and channel evil spirits

BY BRETT CALLWOOD

The Damned, alongside The Clash, the Sex Pistols and a few others, were a part of the first wave of English punk bands, rising out of the pub-rock scene with Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood looking on. 1976’s “New Rose” is largely considered the first British punk single, while the Damned Damned Damned album from ’77 is a bona fide classic.

Over the years, band members have come and gone, but for the most part, they’ve kept releasing albums that have varied in quality somewhat but have never been terrible. 1979’s Machine Gun Etiquette is another near-perfect album, and 2001’s Grave Disorder and 2008’s So, Who’s Paranoid? aren’t too shabby, either.

That said, a full decade had passed since the latter before The Damned released Evil Spirits this year. It’s a typical riot — dark but campy fun, high-energy, infused with some topical lyrics that are largely unusual for frontman David Vanian. There are a few twists, but it’s largely business as usual for the Brit band. So what the hell took them so long?

“It’s a bit of a long story, but I could say that we were in a bit of a rut,” Vanian says. “Management, no record company—we were spiraling into that situation that bands sometimes do where you’re playing shows but you’re not playing anything new. It took a while to get us sorted out. I decided it was time and got some decent management in.

“Financially, we didn’t have enough money to make an album. Through pledge, we got enough to get that and through Raw Power and Search & Destroy, the management and record company, we got enough to get this album together. It was a long time. It’s a weird thing — it seems a long time but it didn’t seem a long time when it was happening, when you’re always busy.”

Yep, the older we get, the faster time seems to pass us by. Vanian takes his role in ensuring the integrity of The Damned’s legacy very seriously, and he didn’t want the band to spiral into oblivion without having one more really good record. They’ve achieved that goal.

“The thing about this album is, one thing that was clear to both Captain [Sensible] and I, I think we were very keen on melody and music, and catchy lines,” Vanian says. “Everything seemed to be working that way for both of us, even though we weren’t writing together—we were writing in separate places. But when we brought the material together, it locked together very easily. We were on the same page, so there wasn’t any conflict. Until we decided to do this, we hadn’t put any material together as The Damned. So when we signed with Raw Power and when we asked Tony Visconti to make the album, neither had heard a note. They went for it on trust, which was quite amazing.”

“That’s right — Tony Visconti, famed for his work with David Bowie among many others, produced Evil Spirits. Vanian says the experience was a positive one, albeit brief.

“It was short-lived, because it was nine days in Brooklyn, basically,” he says. “In those nine days, we probably did a month’s worth of work because there was a lot to be done. It was fun. I would have liked the luxury of a bit more time, but it was great.

Another change in personnel on the new album is the return of bassist Paul Gray, replacing Stu West, who in turn replaced Vanian’s wife, Patricia Morrison (also of Sisters of Mercy, Gun Club, The Bags).

“[Paul] came in at the last minute, in fact, when we’d written all the songs, and then Paul learned the songs and played his own parts,” Vanian says. “He added tremendously to the sound, of course. But he’s been coming and going. He’s not a permanent member of the band. He has a full-time job, and he was kind of retired out of the music biz, so we have him as a kind of luxury now and again.”

As previously mentioned, some of Vanian’s lyrics on Evil Spirits are uncharacteristically political. The Damned have dabbled before — the songs “Democracy?” and “W” (about George W. Bush) on Grave Disorder are clear examples. But this might be the first time politics has such a weighty impact on a Damned album.

“I usually don’t write so many politically minded songs,” Vanian agrees. “On this album I found myself writing political lyrics, because you can’t not write them. It’s so prevalent on everybody’s mind right now, what’s going on. I couldn’t turn my back on that. I found myself writing words that I didn’t expect to write. But nothing’s really planned with this band. You just start and see where it takes you. It grows organically. You start it off and there’s no telling where it’s gonna end.”

A first with Evil Spirits is the fact that it was funded through crowdsourcing. For Vanian, this approach just makes sense given the current state of the music industry.

“To be honest, the way of getting people to put in money to pay for something that they want to see or hear is really what punk rock was about — doing it yourself — and it enables artists to be totally free and do the job, whereas they might not be able to on their own, which is fantastic.”

On Nov. 2, The Damned play the Henry Fonda Theatre in Hollywood and then, the following day, the five-point Amphitheatre in Irvine with Danzig, Venom Inc. and more. Vanian says that coming to SoCal is a bit like coming home for him.

“Ever since we first came out in ’76, they always seemed to understand what we were doing more than anywhere else, I think,” he says of SoCal. “We always got a great reception, and there are so many interesting people over the years who have come to see us from all walks of life, so I always look forward to California. It’s got a wild, colorful aspect to it that some of the other places don’t.”

Naturally, Vanian was a fan of bands such as The Germs and X, while his wife was in L.A. punk pioneers The Bags. Apparently, years before they met, Morrison and The Bags were annoyed with Vanian and The Damned after the latter inadvertently “stole” The Bags’ idea of posing with paper bags on their heads (for the “Neat Neat Neat” single sleeve).

“I think they got a bit pissed off, because they’d already done it, and then our record sleeve came out and there we were with bags on our head,” Vanian says. “It was weird. It was one of those things that happened by accident. We were in a photo session at the guy’s house, and I spotted all of these brown bags that came over from America. We just started goofing around, thinking it would be great. Anti the beautiful covers that you got in those days — everyone in love with themselves.”

The Damned will, of course, be welcomed back to L.A. with open arms, and we’ll get a set that mixes old favorites with new goodies. It being so close to Halloween, we may get a few of the darker numbers, such as “Grirmly Fiendish” from Phantomasmagoria or “Plan 9 Channel 7” from Machine Gun Etiquette.

But for sure, they’ll be smashing the place up.

The Damned play with Radkey and The Darts at 8:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 2, at the Henry Fonda Theatre. They play with Danzig, Venom Inc., Power Trip, The Meteors and Mutoid Man at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 3, at FivePoint Amphitheatre in Irvine.
MUSIC

GO HEAR

FRI 10/26

Molly Burch
@ Bootleg Theater
Molly Burch is a native of Los Angeles who now lives in Austin, Texas. Her second album, First Flower, is a collection of languid pop songs tinged with a hint of country.

“This is a dangerous space/I hope I learn from my mistakes,” Burch sings amid the gentle chord changes of “Dangerous Space.” But most of the tracks on the new record don’t really communicate a sense of danger or darkness. Instead, the general mood is breezy and light on such adoring romantic shades as “Candy” and the title track. “I like the things you say, the things you do,” Burch confides with a simple earnestness on the latter song. “I don’t need to scream to get my point across,” she announces aptly on the sleepy reverie “To the Boys.”

—FALLING JAMES

Agent Orange/U.K. Subs
@ Alex’s Bar
Aka Awesome Punk Package Bill of the Week, No. 1. Veteran O.C. hardcore/surf punks Agent Orange are joining forces with old-school snotty English hooligans U.K. Subs. That’s an incredible double bill to begin with; Agent Orange’s Mike Palm and the Subs’ Charlie Harper are killer frontmen, mainstays of the genre that have worked their butts off to not let their standards drop. The Subs’ last album, Ziezla, was their 26th in total (a new album title for each letter of the alphabet), and it’s well worth a listen. Meanwhile, Agent Orange haven’t put out anything new since 1996’s Virtually Indestructible but Palm recently told us he wants to put that right. Both bands are sure to slay. And as if that isn’t enough, Huntington Beach’s own Guttermouth will open this Long Beach show.

—BRETT CALLWOOD

SAT 10/27

Timmy’s Organism
@ The Hi-Hat
Timmy “Vulgar” Lampinen is a beloved figure within the tight Detroit underground rock & roll scene. Indeed, when The White Stripes broke through in the ’90s, and every label and critic was heading to the D to uncover the next garage-rock shining light, Lampinen’s The Clone Defects were a hot tip. His next project, The Human Eye, was equally revered on a local level for several years, thanks to a few fascinating, experimental albums. But the beginning of this decade heralded the formation of a new band, Timmy’s Organism. A deal with old friend Jack White’s Third Man Records has enabled Lampinen to take his unique noise to a wider audience, and that’s to everyone’s benefit. Expect uncompromising, thrilling post-punk action at the Hi-Hat. Zig Zags and The Fly Traps also play, and Don Bolles DJs.

—BRETT CALLWOOD

SUN 10/28

Busdriver
@ Belasco Theater
“Galaxies unfurled, children born from our fire/Swept up in technologies that we don’t control, condone, uphold,” Busdriver muses against traffic noises and an intimate, jazzy trumpet interlude on the title track of Electricity Is on Our Side, setting the scene for the galaxies of words and sounds that follow on the L.A. rapper’s 10th album. “I’m from the golden age of name calling,” he declares on the next song, “I’m From a Different Time,” setting himself apart from the judicial corruption and poverty that often define real life in the inner city. “I don’t want to hear your personal tale, the elders know,” Busdriver continues abstractly. “A branch of motor neurons being plucked like a six-string.” Featuring guest visitations from Daeedus, Helmedock Ernst, Denmark Vessey and Onetel, the record ranges from heavy rap and jazzy contemplation to more airy, psychedelic soundscapes that match Busdriver’s ever-intricate and poetically incisive wordplay.

—FALLING JAMES

Autograph
@ Whisky A Gogo
Pasadena hard rockers Autograph may not have reached the dizzy heights of a Mötley Crüe or Ratt, but they’ve stuck around, survived the ’90s and are still putting out quality albums, most recently last year’s Get Off Your Ass. All of this is particularly impressive when considering the fact that the group was created as a solo project for original guitarist and former Silver Condor member Steve Plunkett. In fact, by the time 2003’s Buzz came out, Plunkett was the only original member left. Now, in a complete reversal, O.G. lead guitar Steve Lynch and bassist Randy Rand are back in the band, and Plunkett isn’t interested so there’s a new singer, Simon Daniels. They might be playing personnel switcheroo but they’re still an impressive live unit.

—BRETT CALLWOOD

MON 10/29

St. Vincent
@ Hollywood Palladium
Earlier this month, St. Vincent performed an intimate concert at the Belasco Theater, backed only by pianist Thomas Bartlett, as
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**WED 10/31**

**Oh Sees**

@ TERAGRAM BALLROOM

One can’t help wondering which guise Oh Sees will wear for tonight’s Halloween show. Will it be the thrash-heavy band who churn out such heavy tracks as “Overthrown,” or perhaps the gentler, kinder combo who segue into such relatively gentle contemplations as “Last Peace”? Or will it be the freakified Oh Sees who expand into such trippy explorations as “Anthemic Aggressor,” from the San Francisco group’s latest album, *Smote Reverser?* Chances are it will be all three of these versions and more, as leader John Dwyer and his crew trip the light fantastic with bone-crushing hard-rock heavi-ness mixed with an almost jazzy psychedelic fluidity. Unlike so many bands who attempt to be psychedelic, Oh Sees blast away any pretense of revivalist nostalgia with sure-handed flexibility and bone-crushing power and exactitude. —FALLING JAMES

**TsuShiMaMiRe**

@ THE VIPER ROOM

A Halloween show at the Viper from Japanese surf-noise-punk trio TsuShiMaMiRe is entirely appropriate; the women — Mari Kono, Yayoi Tsushima and Maiko Takagi — have known for their disturbing lyrics and videos since forming in 1999. The band’s name isn’t a real Japanese word but rather an amalgam of the members’ names. And that quirky, sweet fun blends wonderfully uncomfortably with the group’s sinister edge. Following a couple of early demos, the *Pregnant Fantasy* album in 2004 really announced the band’s arrival, and subsequent efforts *Giving Blood, Shaking and Abandon Human* have cemented their standing as a Japanese underground superpower. Last year’s new album, honestly titled *NEW*, is further proof that more Westerners should know about them. —BRETT CALLWOOD

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**THU 11/1**

**Joan Jett, Morrissey**

@ MICROSOFT THEATER

Usually musicians are a bit too self-serv-ing to have a real mind-melter as their opening act. There have been exceptions, however, that escaped that black pit of ego and launched themselves into the skyscraper glories of immortality. Iggy Pop opening for The Rolling Stones in 1981, Kool & The Gang opening for Van Halen in 2012; and, rather fortuitously circuitously, The Smiths opening up for SPK in 1983. So when you hear that Joan Jett is opening up for Morrissey, you tend to sit up and take notice. She’s got a new documentary, *Bad Reputation*; his latest album is *Low in High School*. Chances are you’ve seen either of them more than a few times — getting Joan Jett’s peanut butter in Morrissey’s chocolate and Morrissey’s chocolate in Joan Jett’s peanut butter is just an extra added treat at this point. —DAVID COTNER


LOS GLOBOS: 3040 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. Mark Ellis, Fri., Oct. 26, 8 p.m. Project Pat, Thu., Nov. 1, 8:30 p.m.; Dee Justico, Thu., Nov. 1, 9 p.m.


OMH NIGHTCLUB: 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles. The Haunted Doll House, with Sawteeth, Fri., Oct. 26, 10:30 p.m. Migos, Tyga, Rich the Kid, Sat., Oct. 27, 9 p.m.


RESIDENT: 428 S. Hewitt St. Bootle LA: Halloween Boootie, with ShyBoy, Nubar, Sat., Oct. 27, 9 p.m.


THE TERAGRAM BALLROOM: 1234 W. Seventh St., Los Angeles. Real Friends, Fri., Oct. 26, 7:30 p.m. Mellowdrone, Sat., Oct. 27, 9 p.m. Youngblood Brass Band, Sun., Oct. 28, 8 p.m. Oh Sees, EXEK, Prettiest Eyes, Wed., Oct. 31, 9 p.m., $22 (see Music Pick). The Motet, The Dip, Thu., Nov. 1, 8 p.m.

THREE CLUBS: 1123 Vine St. The Fabiano Do Nascimento Trio, Wed., Oct. 24-25, 9 p.m. The Reed Simmons, Sat., Oct. 27, 9 p.m. Mike Keneally, Sat., Oct. 27, 9:30 p.m.

THE VERVE ROOM: 8852 W. Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood. Walking Papers, Palaalto, Darnyon & the Family Band, Fri., Oct. 26, 8 p.m. The Sunset Jam, Mondays, 8 p.m., free. Blood & Diamonds, Westfield Massacre, Sapphic Musk, Red Devil Vortex, Tue., Oct. 30, 8 p.m. TsuShiMaMiRe, Eolv Walks, Alex Cole, Wed., Oct. 31, 8 p.m., $10 (see Music Pick). Blac Youngsta, Thu., Nov. 1, 8 p.m.


ZEBSULON: 2478 Fletcher Dr. Cosmonauts, Tess Parks, Entrance, Fri., Oct. 26, 9 p.m. $10. Busdriver, Deantoni Parks, MatthewDavid, Sun., Oct. 28, 9 p.m., $15 (see Music Pick).

—FALLING JAMES

JAZZ & BLUES

1642: 1642 W. Temple St., Los Angeles. The Hi Fi Honeydrops, Wednesdays, 9:30 p.m.

ALVAR SHOWROOM: 147 W. Eighth St., San Pedro.

Candi Sosa, Cristina Rebull, Sat., Oct. 27, 8 p.m.


THE BAKED POTATO: 3787 Cahuenga Blvd. W., Studio City. Artyom Manukyan, Fri., Oct. 26, 8, 9:30 p.m. Mike Keneally, Sat., Oct. 27, 9:30 p.m.


CATALINA BAR & GRILL: 6725 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles. Lainie Kazan, Oct. 26-27, 8:30 p.m. Beverley Church Hogan, Sun., Oct. 28, 7:30 p.m.

CICADA CLUB: 617 S. Olive St. The Fresh Rhythm Haunted Orchestra. Fri., Oct. 26, 8:30 p.m.

VITELLO’S ITALIAN RESTAURANT: 4549 Tujunga Ave., Studio City. Ron Jones, Oct. 27-28, 7:30 p.m.

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