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LAWEEKLY

GO L.A.

FRI 9/6

TELEVISION

What's on TV?

Still looking for a new, binge-worthy obsession to fill the void after *Game of Thrones*? At PaleyFest Fall TV Previews, you can hang out with a small-town choir, a teen detective, an animated Mexican-American family, Batwoman or the Wu-Tang Clan. The Paley Center's most popular, annual event hosts screenings of TV and the internet's hottest, upcoming comedies and dramas, as well as receptions and discussions with some of the cast and crew, including: *Perfect Harmony*, *Sunnyside* and *Bluff City Law* (Sept. 5); *Undone* (Sept. 6); *Batwoman*, *Nancy Drew* and *Katy Keene* (Sept. 7); *Almost Family*, *Prodigal Son* and *Bless the Harts* (Sept. 9); *Wu-Tang: An American Saga* and *Dollface* (Sept. 10); *Bob Hearts Abishola* and *All Rise* (Sept. 12); *The Misery Index* (Sept. 13); *Mixed-ish*, *Stumptown* and *Emergence* (Sept. 14); and *The Casagrandes* and *Disenchantment* (Sept. 15). A highlight this year is a screening of a classic episode of *Mad About You*, with Paul Reiser and Helen Hunt in attendance, in anticipation of the sitcom's limited-series reboot for Spectrum Originals later this year. *Paley Center*, 465 N. Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills; Thu.-Tue., Sept. 5-15, various times; \$20. (310) 786-1000, paleycenter.com. —SIRAN BABAYAN

ART

Under the Rainbow

We Choose Art has been doing some very fine art-centric event curations at the Montalban the past few years, often with a progressive social perspective, and always with cocktails. Friday night's RAINBOW SHIFT: A Queer Homecoming Celebration will be the fourth edition



Ligia Lewis' *Water Will* (in *Melody*)

PHOTO BY MSRIA BARANOVA

of its totally joyful LGBTQ-awareness series, and features not only visual (sculpture, craft, drawing, painting, photography) and performance art but also writers and community organizers, curated by Baha Danesh and Tiger Munson. Getting there early is a good idea, not only because with advance tickets your first drink is free before 9 p.m., but also because energetic art performances from Planet Queer and Miss Art World start right at 7 p.m. *The Montalban Theater*, 1615 Vine St., Hollywood; Fri., Sept. 6, 7-11 p.m.; \$10-\$15. facebook.com/WeChooseArt. —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

FOOD&DRINK

Get Cracking

From sea to shining sea, the humble lobster has reigned supreme — celebrate its 23rd year of benevolent rule at this year's **Long Beach Lobster Festival**. Flown in fresh from Maine, this year's crop of crustaceans will fill your heart with buttery, high-caloric goodness as you dance, enjoy live music, rest up in a blessedly shady tent, and enjoy lobster from sliders to rolls to lobster on a stick. There's even a powerful drink called the Screaming Lobster, which — and let's not kid ourselves — takes its inspiration from the moment your lobster gets an icepick right through the medulla. *Rainbow Lagoon Park*, 400 E. Shoreline Drive, Long Beach; Fri., Sept. 6, 5 p.m., Sat.-Sun., Sept. 7-8, noon; \$5-40. (562) 495-5959, originallobsterfestival.com —DAVID COTNER

PHOTOGRAPHY

Historic California in Focus

What started as a small group show at the Michael Dawson Gallery in 2010 has become an annual art fair celebrating both classic and contemporary photography. Marking its 10th anniversary, **Classic Photographs Los Angeles** at Bergamot Station gathers more than a dozen galleries from around the country — even Paris and Shanghai — to showcase works by such names as Andre Kertesz, Edward Weston, Eadweard Muybridge, Bruce Davidson, Garry Winogrand and Jim Marshall, some dating back to the 19th century.

With an emphasis on the West Coast, the mostly black-and-white prints give a glimpse into historic California, whether it's Big Sur, Yosemite, Venice Beach, Sunset Boulevard or the Pacific Coast Highway. **ROSEGALLERY** at Bergamot Station, 2525 Michigan Ave., Santa Monica; Fri., Sept. 6, 6-8 p.m.; Sat., Sept. 7, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sun. Sept. 8, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; free. (310) 264-8440, classicphotographsla.com. —SIRAN BABAYAN

SAT 9/7

ART

Island Art

"I imagine my work as artifacts discovered by a future archaeologist, clues to an unknown civilization," Joy Ray offers in her bio. The Hawaiian artist plants enigmatic clues in her mixed-media artifacts, coiling flowery, sinuous strands of twine against an abstract but evocative and haunting collision of black and white paint (Talisman: Dream Siege) and burying hints of letters, words and other attempts and vestiges of communication under a seemingly random splatter of entropic plaster (Artifact: Never). The two-person "Beyond/Within" exhibition also features Samuelle Richardson's rough-hewn cloth sculptures of disembodied heads and wire-legged, squawking birds spliced up with scarlike stitches. "Influences are numerous and come from sources that strike me as vulnerable and off-guard," the local artist writes. *Launch LA*, 170 S. La Brea Ave., Hancock Park; reception Sat., Sept. 7, 6-9 p.m.; through Sat., Sept. 28; free. (323) 899-1363, launchla.org. —FALLING JAMES

FILM

Get Gory

Produced by Sam Raimi and star Bruce Campbell, *The Evil Dead* remains a masterpiece of gore and mayhem with imagery that is, at this point, iconic to lovers of horror and scary-film fare. So it's no shock that Burbank's beloved Bearded Lady Museum (know for artistic homages to haunted subject matter and macabre movies) is taking a

stab at celebrating the film with another one of its eerie exhibits and parties. Showcasing original props from the film, the Lady touts this as one of their most immersive experiences with photo ops, tribute art and other unexpected creepiness. They are working directly with Renaissance Pictures LTD, so the show promises authenticity that is sure to possess fans and freaks alike. Opening night features a DJ, complimentary drinks and treats from the Rad Coffee Truck outside. All ages OK, but children must be accompanied by adults. *Bearded Lady's Mystic Museum*, 3204 W. Magnolia Blvd., Burbank. Sat., Sept. 7, 8 p.m.; \$12, \$25 VIP for early entry. squareup.com/store/BeardedLadysMysticMuseum/. —LINA LECARO

ART

Love Yourself on Hollywood Boulevard

Saturday night the stretch of Hollywood Boulevard where LACE and the WUHO Gallery are located turns into an activated cultural site as Free-waves and Dis...Miss present **LOVE&/OR FEAR: A Celebration of Genders** — gathering together more than 35 artists and groups in a micro-festival of engaging performance and visual art, installations and participations, advocacy and community-building. Performers and postcard artists include some of L.A.'s most prolific and progressive voices, including Marcus Kuiland-Nazario, Think Nguyen, Jennifer Moon, Kristina Wong, Christy Roberts Berkowitz, Austin Young, Yozmit, Dakota Noot, Cassils, April Bey, boychild, Alexandra Grant, Micol Hebron, Shizu Saldamando, Julio Salgado, #SNATCHPOWER, Marsian De Lellis, and Yarn Bombing L.A., along with orgs like Peace Over Violence and Black Lives Matter. *LACE (Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions)* 6522 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Sat., Sept. 7, 8-11 p.m.; free. freewaves.org. —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

ART

Art All Night

Just like Christmas, *Muse 'til Midnight* comes but once a year — and, much like Christmas, the



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illuminating gifts it provides are priceless beyond compare. This year's theme? The Allure of Music, which comes from the concurrent exhibition "The Allure of Matter: Material Art from China." Curated by the beast with many heads that is tonight's collaboration between dublab and Ninja Tune, and boasting musical manifestations by Actress, Octo Octa, Maral, and Julianna Barwick, there's also a plethora of food, drink and experiences that will buoy you throughout the night, even after the last chime of midnight has faded away. *Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Sat., Sept. 7, 7:30 p.m.; \$20 LACMA members/\$30 general. (323) 857-6000, lacma.org/event/muse-allure* —DAVID COTNER

SUN 9/8

FOOD & DRINK

Pub at the Club

Badminton at a club in Manhattan Beach immediately brings to mind four-letter words like "posh" and "chic," but before you get your shuttlecock in a knot, you should realize that all the money from the 4th Annual Pub at the Club benefits local junior athletic programs, war veterans and people with special needs. What you'll get as you're luxuriating in all your newfound kindness: over 20 beers and ciders from far and wide, the treasures of wineries like Comstock, Kinship and Chalk Hill, and the finest dishes from upwards of a dozen local restaurants such as Sausal and Locale90. *Manhattan Beach Badminton Club, 516 18th St., Santa Monica; Sun., Sept. 8, 2 p.m.; \$89-109. (310) 545-9052, pubattheclub.com* —DAVID COTNER

MON 9/9

CULTURE

Don't Fear the Reaper

Death is often treated as a dirty secret in many parts of Western society, but author-mortician Caitlin Doughty has made it her life's work to demystify death and inspire people to look at mortality from a more natural viewpoint. As the madly irreverent but sincerely passionate host of the YouTube series *Ask a Mortician*, the local undertaker is unafraid of taking on taboo subjects like necrophilia or getting into intricately macabre details about what actually happens to rotting corpses. In this presentation from Book Soup and Spaceland, Doughty takes questions from the audience and discusses her latest book, *Will My Cat Eat My Eyeballs?: Big Questions From Tiny Mortals About Death*. *The Regent Theater, 448 S. Main St., downtown; Mon., Sept. 9, 8 p.m.; \$35 & \$45; all ages. (323) 284-5727, spacelandpresents.com.* —FALLING JAMES

ART

Good To Go

"B.A.T." is one of those bits of art-studio lingo that printmakers use to communicate; it stands for "bon a tirer" which translates as "good to pull," meaning that a print has been proofed and the

satisfied artist is ready to go forward with producing its edition. In CSULB's new exhibition **B.A.T. State III: Women Artists In Conversation with El Nopal Press**, curators Anita Bunn and Francesco X Siqueiros survey the innovative prints (lithographs, reliefs and monoprints) produced by 37 women across 30 years of Siqueiros' legendary DTLA print studio, El Nopal Press. Artists include Bunn herself, as well as figures as diverse as Lisa Adams, Judith F. Baca, Judie Bamber, Carolyn Castaño, Chelsea Dean, Diane Gamboa, Sherin Guirguis, Annie Lapin, Laurie Lipton, Mara Lonner, Ruby Osorio, Renée Petropoulos, Analia Saban, Susan Silton, Linda Stark, and Liat Yossifor. *Kleefeld Contemporary Art Museum, Cal State Long Beach, 1250 Bellflower Blvd., Long Beach; opening reception: Sun., Sept. 8, 4-6 p.m.; exhibition: through Nov. 14; free. (562) 985-4111, csulb.edu.* —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

WED 9/11

LITERATURE

Storytelling Sorority

The *Secret Society of the Sisterhood* is an ongoing series in which a diverse variety of fascinating women tell real-life stories. The theme this time around is "If at first you don't succeed," with comedian-host Trish Wilson presenting actor-writer Mara Wilson, comedian Cameron Esposito and writer-comedian Akilah Hughes. "The topic of my talk is fear," says Jackie Fuchs, the lawyer, former Runaways bassist and recent *Jeopardy!* champ, in a general description of her piece. The storytelling will be broken up by the endearing pop songs of Letters to Cleo's Kay Hanley, who was also the singing voice of the title character in the 2001 film *Josie and the Pussycats*. *The Masonic Lodge, Hollywood Forever Cemetery, 6000 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood; Wed., Sept. 11, 7 p.m.; \$20. (323) 469-1181, hollywoodforever.com.* —FALLING JAMES

THU 9/12

DANCE

Deconstructed Fairy Tales

REDCAT, CalArts' cutting edge presence downtown, opens its 2019-2020 performance season with choreographer Ligia Lewis' *Water Will (in Melody)*. This third section of a trilogy opens with pastoral sounds as Lewis leads viewers into a deconstructed grim fairy tale about a misbehaving or maybe just being a lonely child. Dominican Republic-born Lewis grew up in Florida and now divides her time between New York and Berlin, picking up a New York Bessie award along the way. With performers (including Lewis) garbed in sharply contrasting white and black, the work incorporates voice and gesture along with the movement to tell the tale. *REDCAT, 631 W. 2nd St., downtown; Thu.-Sat., Sept. 12-14, 8:30 p.m., Sun., Sept. 15, 3 p.m.; \$27-\$32, \$22-\$26. redcat.org/.* —ANN HASKINS

It's fair to say that Kevin Smith is no longer one of the buzz names in Hollywood. Don't get upset, Smith fans — the man himself said it during the interview for this feature. In the '90s, in the wake of surprise no-budget indie hit *Clerks*, the critically panned but cult fave *Mallrats* and the left field rom-com *Chasing Amy* (all just three years apart, between 1994-97, by the way), the world was waiting with bated breath to see what Smith was going to do next. His "View Askewniverse" was in full flight.

Dogma (1999) took his grounded world in a religion-fueled, fantastical direction that left critics and fans split and maybe a touch confused, but the movie was still super-funny and sharp so they generally let it slide. *Jay & Silent Bob Strikes Back* (2001) fleshed out Smith and longtime friend Jason Mewes' scene-stealing side characters, and then *Clerks II* (2006) allowed us to catch up with Dante (Brian O'Halloran) and Randal (Jeff Anderson) — something we didn't necessarily know we wanted to do until we did it.

But that's where things go wonky. Smith's next movie was the one which he thought would yank him up to the next level, 2008's *Zack and Miri Make a Porno*, starring Seth Rogan and Elizabeth Banks. Despite decent reviews, and the fact that it's a genuinely funny film, it performed modestly at the box office considering the acting talent involved. It got worse in 2010 when his Bruce Willis/Tracy Morgan buddy cop comedy *Cop Out* was universally panned. On-set tension with Willis contributed to a generally unpleasant experience.

So Smith turned to horror (while returning to religious themes) in 2011 with the unsettling "cult movie about a cult," *Red State*. The critics were divided (pretty typical for a Smith movie), but the film placed Smith firmly back in the underground and was, to these eyes, a success. He stuck with horror for the first of what he's calling his "True North Trilogy" — *Tusk*. That film saw Justin Long kept prisoner by a raving lunatic who, through some ill-advised surgery, transformed him into a grotesque walrus-man-creature. The critics thought Smith had lost it, but as body modification horror movies go, it's a fun watch.

Then came *Yoga Hosers*. The second, and most recent, True North movie saw his daughter Harley Quinn Smith and Lily-Rose (daughter of Johnny) Depp fighting Nazi hot-dogs. It was roundly hated, with the general consensus being that Smith had lost his mind completely. In the cold light of day, after some time has passed, it's not without its charm. *Dogma* had a shit-demon, after all (The Golgothan). Put that in a *Clerks* setting, and we're on a similar path. But anyway, before completing his True North trilogy, after all the *Yoga Hosers* hate, Smith would need a palate cleanser, and that led him to start thinking about the View Askewniverse again.

"It had started with wanting to do a *Clerks III*, and not being able to because one of the cast didn't want to do it," he says, referring to Jeff

SNOOCHIE REBOOTS

Kevin Smith and Jason Mewes resurrect a more seasoned Jay & Silent Bob

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



"Randal" Anderson. "Then Universal wasn't interested in *Mallrats 2*, but the only reason I started that was because my agent was all like, 'You can make this under any circumstances.' That turned out not to be the case. I realized that with Jay and Silent Bob, I own these characters. We could do a movie with them without asking anybody. But it had been a while. *Clerks II* was probably the last time I had played with those characters, and Jason and I had been touring at that point for close to eight years doing *Jay &*

Silent Bob Get Old as a live show and podcast, selling out theaters and stuff. For me, I was like, 'wow there is an audience.' For years, Jason was like, 'We should do another Jay and Silent Bob movie.' I was always like, 'I'm shocked we did one.' We got away with one and that's enough, when you think about it."

Talking to Smith at length for this interview, watching his TV shows, listening to his podcasts, etc, it's clear that he likes the self-deprecating humor. He has an ego like everyone

else, but he hides it under jokes that are heaped with modesty, but are also probably a means of self-protection after a few years of critical pummelings. Smith knows his limits as a writer and director, and at this point he knows where to find his still loyal audience. Those people might watch *Red State* and *Tusk*, but they'll definitely watch a Jay and Silent Bob movie. And if Smith needed any more convincing, he only had to watch his clean and sober friend Mewes, now a dad.

"Seeing him be a dad for the last four years, that was the real turning point factor," Smith says. "Because the movie's about him finding out he's got a kid. Jason Mewes is the guy, our whole lives, least likely to be a good dad. It just wasn't on the cards. If you thought about him rearing a child, you'd be like, 'No! Not him!' You would never put him in charge of another human being's life. And then he had his kid, Logan, and it turns out Mewes is a spectacular father. It's what he was born to do. I used to think he was born to play Jay, because it's all that he can really do in this world. But it turns out, he was born to be Logan's parent."

Smith has said many times (and he reiterated it to us) that he cast Mewes in the first *Clerks* because he wanted to see if people outside of Jersey would find his friend as funny as he did. For a long time at least, Jay and Jason were pretty much the same person. Speaking to Mewes on the phone, the 45-year-old father to a child of four is still a relentless bundle of energy — charming and hilarious. All of the things we love about Jay are still there in abundance. But he's also clearly grown up.

His battles with drugs have been publicized, and he hasn't been shy speaking about them on tour and in podcasts. Indeed, Smith has said that he incentivized Mewes' sobriety by keeping *Jay & Silent Bob* movies on the table. He's now been sober since 2010.

"Everything fed off the movies," Mewes says. "The reason I'm able to do stand-up is because of the movies. The reason I can stream is because of the movies. Really back in the day, it really was like 'wow, if I mess up Kevin's not going to put me in a movie. What am I going to do?' I haven't worked a regular 9-to-5 job in so many years. I don't even know what I would do with myself. When I'm working, it keeps me busy and distracted, which helps me stay sober. It gives me something to look forward to. The *Jay & Silent Bob Get Old* tour was a big help for me in the beginning of my sobriety because we were going from city to city, anywhere from 500 to 2,000 people. I had a couple of dreams back in the day when I would wake up and I was drinking in my dreams. I was like, 'Oh my gosh I have a show tonight and I have to tell everyone I have one day sober now. They're going to be so disappointed with me and they're going to boo me. Not to mention Kevin being disappointed in me, and my wife.' I'm just saying, that was such a big help."

With *Clerks III* and *Mallrats 2* off the table, at least for now, Smith needed to rethink his next move. But in 2018, after performing stand-up

in Glendale, he had a massive heart attack.

"I was laying on the table and the doctor was like, 'You have 100 percent occlusion in your LAD' [a blockage of the left anterior descending artery]," Smith says. "That's a widowmaker. He said it's the type of heart attack with full blockage that in 80 percent of the cases, the patient dies. But he said, 'You're going to be in the 20 percent because I'm good at my job.' I was processing it, going like 'Well, I had a great life, I was happily married and got a great kid, I was loved by my parents and shit. Great brother and sister, great friends. Couldn't really bitch. Suddenly I felt this sense of calm and peace. If this is it, it sucks that it's coming this early but things went well. The only regret that I had was, 'Oh man, we never got to make *Jay & Silent Bob Reboot* which was going to be heading back into that toy box that got us here in the first place. If I do die tonight, the last movie I ever made was *Yoga Hosers*. That's no way to go out.'"

And so, just like that, the next View Askewniverse movie, which turned out to be *Jay & Silent Bob Reboot*, took on extra significance. With his mortality served up to him on a plate with blunt force, Smith wanted to make a film that summarized, or encapsulated, his entire career while doing justice to the many beloved characters that he's created over the years.

"This is strike one and next time it takes me out," Smith says, pragmatically. "Back in the day, when you were an apprentice and served under a master, you'd eventually present your 'masterpiece' to show them what you've learned under them. OK, 25 years after *Clerks*, I've been doing this shit a quarter of a century, let me present my masterpiece. This is how I see the story of my movie career, my life, everything I've done professionally, put through the prism of these two characters that I'm so closely identified with. Everything I have is because of Jay and Silent Bob, more or less. So it felt like the decent thing to do is let them grow up. This is a movie where the Jay character gets to still be Jay, but grow up like the creators grew up. I'm happy with what we did because now if I have a heart attack and I'm on the table, I'm like, if that's the last I made that's fine. It took on this different meaning altogether."

So that's how *Jay & Silent Bob* got made. As we said at the start of this piece, Smith's star isn't burning as hot as it was in the '90s or even the 2000s, but the heart attack gave him license to "guilt" (his word) some old friends into appearing in the movie, despite the fact that he shot it in New Orleans.

"You'd call a motherfucker up and say, 'Hey, you wanna come down and do *Jay & Silent Bob*?' Smith says. "They're like, 'wait a second, it's New Orleans, it's really far.' And I'd be like, 'You do realize I almost died, right?' They'd be like, 'Alright I'm fucking coming.' So we guilted most of the cast into making the trip down. But also, we were shooting in New Orleans during Mardi Gras and never underestimate the draw of a free trip to Mardi Gras. So we wound up having 44 cast cards at the end of the movie."

He's not kidding. View Askew players such

as Jason Lee, Brian O'Halloran, Rosario Dawson, Diedrich Bader, Justin Long, Jason Biggs, Shannon Elizabeth and Matt Damon return, and we also get Fred Armisen, Melissa "Supergirl" Benoist, Val Kilmer, Chris Hemsworth, Molly Shannon, Redman, Method Man, and so many more. Ben Affleck and Joey Lauren Adams even return to reprise their *Chasing Amy* roles. That movie, which has seen Smith get take some criticism over the years, is about a guy who falls in love with a gay woman and can't come to terms with her sexual history. In *Reboot*, Adams' character Alyssa Jones gets to jab at Smith for being a "cis white man."

"I got to sequelize *Chasing Amy* in eight pag-

one week out from the end."

It's another example of how this movie healed Smith; he hadn't spoken to Affleck for eight years, and now he feels like he got his friend back. Meanwhile, his daughter Harley Quinn Smith plays Milly (short for Millennium) Faulken, Jay's long-lost daughter. She recently played one of the Manson kids in Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*, and it's obviously been a pleasure for Smith to watch her grow as an actress.

"First of all, Harley did all the work," Smith says. "She didn't want to go to college and that broke her mom's heart. I didn't want to be the parents from that movie that force their kid to



es," Smith says. "But I also got to touch on every criticism that I ever got. These aren't things that were said when the movie came out, but as the movie ages and is viewed by a different generation, suddenly it's put through a different prism. I'm used to reading online things like, 'Why is this about this lame ass guy who can't get over the fact that she's had sex. That's not interesting and she's the hero.' I love everything about that *Chasing Amy* scene. As a big Kevin Smith fan, that was my big geek-out moment. That scene didn't exist when we started shooting the movie. We shot it on the last day, and we only knew we were going to be shooting it

go to college when she knows what she wants to do — she wants to act. For the whole first year after high school ended, she took Stella Adler classes. She had auditions and didn't get shit. It was a year of rejection."

Against the odds, she landed the role in Tarantino's latest epic, surprising even her dad. She also recently put out an album, *Dunes* with her "bubblegum punk" band The Tenth. Apparently, the younger Smith likes to be busy.

"I definitely love to work and stay busy," Harley Quinn Smith says. "The whole experience [with Tarantino] was crazy. It was a crazy audition — we had the choice to write a monologue.

I spent a week preparing — watching every documentary and reading whatever I could. I didn't get it and I was pretty bitter so I tried to let it go. Months later, I heard that he wanted me in the movie. I thought that ship had long sailed. It was a time of growth for me. I felt like I was back in school, because I was watching this master do his craft."

"When she came to us on *Reboot*, she'd spent a month working with Quentin," Kevin Smith adds. "She came to us an actress. Really acting. Day one with her, Jennifer [Schwalbach Smith, his wife] goes, 'How did she do?' I had to respond as a director: I thought she was great, but I think she's in a completely different movie than the rest of us. We're all making a comedy, this fucking kid thinks it's serious. Three days in, I really fell deeply in love with her performance. But I'm a dad, and I also loved what she did in *Yoga Hosers*."

That's the main theme of *Jay & Silent Bob Reboot* — growing up. It's about Mewes growing up and into the role of a real life father, and his character Jay being forced to do the same thing. It's about Smith growing as a director after his heart attack, and reassessing his life and career. It's about Harley Quinn Smith growing as an actress. Through all of the typical Jay and Bob goofy shit, the growth is tangible.

"I think that [Jay and Silent Bob] change, mature a little bit," says Mewes. "Their relationship of course has not changed. They're still hanging out, they try to change with the times. They bought the store, and now marijuana's legal so they try to do a grow shop and stuff. But they grew up."

"Jay has been a huge, huge part of my life," adds Harley Quinn. "He lived in our house for a while, he's our family, I love him with my whole heart. He has my name tattooed on my back. Playing his daughter was an absolute honor. I've watched his journey to fatherhood so to recreate that was really special. It was a sentimental experience for sure."

The only question now is, will the View Askewniverse grow further after this movie? Will Smith and Mewes return to *Clerks III* or *Mallrats 2*?

"When we were starting it, I was like we can kick open the doors to the universe again," Smith says. "But at the end of the movie, it really felt like we're done for now. It feels OK where it is. However, our co-financiers on the movie are Universal. They asked what I want to do next. I was like, 'Well, you guys have *Mallrats* and a couple of years ago I wanted to do *Mallrats 2*.' They said, 'Let's figure it out, should be easy.' Now, universes are in vogue and shit. Adam Goldberg [*The Goldbergs*] said it's very much like my *Avengers: Endgame*, and I only get to do that because I have these deep characters going back years."

Who knew that "Snooch to the motherfuckin' nooch" could go so far?

Tickets for the October 15 release of Jay & Silent Bob Reboot are available at [FathomEvents.com/Reboot](https://www.fathomevents.com/Reboot).

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After school detention (Scenario Studio Pop-Up)

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BE A STAR

The Scenario Studio Pop-Up arrives at Grand Central Market

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

For anybody looking to channel their inner Katy Perry, John Legend, Taylor Swift, Chrissy Teigen or Drew Barrymore, the one-of-kind Scenario Studio Pop-Up will be setting up shop in the secret underground space at Grand Central Market from September 7 through November 4.

Photographer and set designer John Ganun has reimaged the photo booth by producing elaborate photo-amusement sets of high concept magazine quality to celebrity parties and will bring a variety of seven immersive and mind-blowing professional photography sets to the public with their first pop-up installation in Los Angeles.

The meticulous sets are the caliber you'd see in an *Entertainment Weekly* layout, using cutting-edge lighting equipment and techniques perfected by The Scenario Studio team to allow guests to use their own smartphone cameras to take pictures that look as good as those taken with professional cameras, strobe lighting and that wonderful fan machine.

"It's a pretty old space, but has decent power," Ganun tells *L.A. Weekly* in his Silver Lake studio while putting the final touches on his yellow upside-down daisy set which took a month to build. "We just paid extra to have six more circuits put in for the seven sets. It's not strobe photography anymore, we use LED lights. I have a great team that helps build and paint, but it's all my vision and I scout around for all of the furniture, fabric and props. It's a composed set, not anything like you'll see in any of the selfie museums."

For \$29 per person, guests can pop in from one set to another and take as many smart phone pictures as they like. A plasma screen is placed next to each set with photography tips and the original celebrity photographs for inspiration.

Of the seven sets to choose from, there will be replicas of the Monte Carlo roulette table called the James Bond Scenario, based on John

Legend's James Bond-themed party that Chrissy Teigen threw for him on his 40th birthday, with props including chips and money.

There's also the Katy Perry schoolroom detention set used for her 30th birthday sock hop-themed party, as well as black-and-white scenario based on Fred Astaire's iconic *Royal Wedding* dance scene. Just in time for Halloween, there will be a haunted house as well. The others will be surprises unveiled at the opening.

"I'm creating sets with my guests in mind and as a photographer I'm always trying to make people look good," says Ganun, who also counts Facebook, Netflix, Coca-Cola, Microsoft, Target and SpaceX as clients. "It's great for date night or taking a friend out for their birthday and people who like to go to parties. You can get a drink upstairs and then come down to get magazine-quality photographs."

For optimum results, Ganun urges guests to read the suggested dress code when they buy a ticket, just to get the most out of the photo. He says wear muted, boring clothes. Nothing flashy, nothing colorful, and you can't go wrong with nice clean blacks and grays. The idea is for the clothes to disappear a little with a focus on the subject.

"None of these are the same flavor, they are all different," he says. It's perfect for a two-month run and a great place for the installation. With any luck we'll be able to take it on the road from there — maybe even Vegas! Wherever we land after that, we're going to move into Christmas sets, like a DIY Santa, with a chair and rack of Santa Suits so parent and partners can dress up as Santa. That way anyone can be Santa."

"I'm trying to create magazine ads, so I look at it from that point of view — you're not just in a haunted house, you're selling it."

For tickets: showclix.com/event/thescenarios-tudio-la-pop-up?ref=website.



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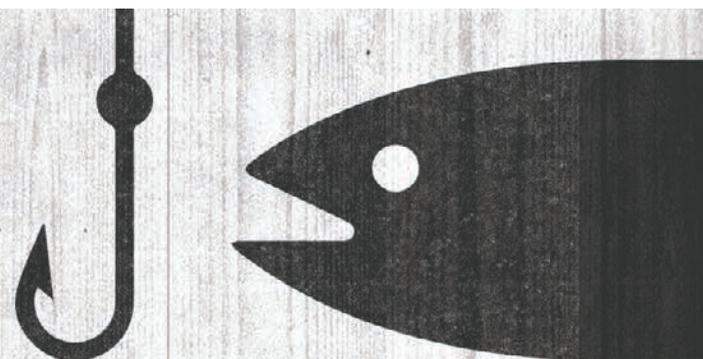
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READY, STEADY, ART!

We break down the gallery world's Saturday night fever (and a few bonuses) for your art-hop enjoyment

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT



Robin F. Williams.
Vaping-in-the-Rain
- at VSF

As a new art season officially gets underway, Saturday, September 7 will be an *Amazing Race*-level relay in terms of gallery openings across the city. With a few starting early and some going late, the vast majority still land in the dreaded 6-8 p.m. ballpark, so it would be legitimately impossible to see them all on one night — even if you somehow were inspired to try. With a minimum of 60 largely simultaneous openings in every corner of Los Angeles, that's just math.

But we still want to try to help, so at our website's Arts section we've broken down the night by neighborhood: West Adams, Culver City, downtown, Hollywood/WeHo, Mid-City, and Venice/Santa Monica — plus a bonus round for a few savvy Eastside souls doing their own thing on the Sunday. With such a wealth of

choices from the fancy to the fringe, we look forward to seeing you out there!

West Adams (and One in Inglewood)

Most but not all of the art venues in West Adams start their seasons tonight, as does the post-humanist outpost **The Nook Gallery** — relatively nearby to the south on N. La Brea Avenue in Inglewood. They get started early, with the aptly named group show, "The Regenerates." After that, **The Landing on Jefferson** has abstract architecture-inflected paintings by Jonathan Ryan; **Lowell Ryan Projects** shows inventive, retooled sartorial constructions by Erin Trefry; **Chimento Contemporary** welcomes anticipated shows from Pamela Smith Hudson and April Bey; and Erin Morrison riffs on the aesthetics of currency at **OCHI Projects**.

Culver City

It would be easier to list which of the Washington & La Cienega neighborhood galleries aren't having openings tonight. But except for **Klowden Mann's** gorgeous new show of sugar-encrusted cyanotypes by Andrea Chung opening the night of Friday, September 6, and **Blum & Poe, Roberts Projects** and **Thinkspace** rocking the 14th, it's basically everyone. **Honor Fraser** brings out drippy new still-life paintings from street art demigod Kenny Scharf; **Fabrik** hosts a pair of photographers — one a documentarian, the other an abstractionist; **Walter Maciel** shows a pair of very different abstract visions; at **Anat Ebgi**, Tammi Campbell takes on the Modernist bro canon; and Laura Krifka's masterful technique and cheeky wit lights up **Luis De Jesus**.

system, and tonight they're all activated. The Historic Core welcomes street-art legend RISK to **In Heroes We Trust** for a pair of collabs — prints with SEEN and suits with YOGGX; expressionist animal spirit portraits at **Contemporary Gallery**; and art inspired by female grindhouse leads and a group show based on a visual game of telephone at **The Hive**. The Arts District has a late-summer group show on Satanic interpretations of food culture at **Art Share**; a gathering for three new shows at **A+D Museum** — a VR tour of the Bauhaus HQ, new work from SCI-Arc grad candidates, and a look at the design interface of 000 Magazine; a group show about the soul of Los Angeles at **Superchief**; and a fresh take on traditional ink drawing and surf culture at new venue **Speedy Gallery**.

The southern end of the Arts District is keeping busy too, with conceptual architectural sculptures by Robert Moreland and evocative watercolor portraits by February James at **Wilding Cran**; new paintings by Nick Aguayo and a group show about the delights of pure color in painting at **Vielmetter Los Angeles**; a two-person show from Jenny Balin Sonenberg at **Machine at Cirrus Gallery**; wistful and unsettling paintings by Cynthia Daignault at **Night Gallery**; and exuberant found-material assemblage tapestries by Moffat Takadiwa as **Nicodim Gallery's** inaugural show in their brand new space on Santa Fe Avenue.

And last but not least, most of the **Bendix Building** galleries open new shows as well — such as provocative feminist ceramics by Elyse Pignolet at **Track 16**; ethereal but rather luscious abstract paintings by Mark Sheinkman at **Von Lintel**; group exhibitions at **Durden and Ray, 515**, and **Tiger Strikes Asteroid**; Anna Mayer at **A-B Projects**; and Alison OK Frost at **Cathedral Gallery**. **Eastside International** at the Brewery Arts Complex hosts the group show *Outside/In* as part of the SUR Biennial; and last but not least, **KGB Gallery** hosts a survey of classic and new prints by Luis C. Garza.

Hollywood Media District

Per our recent Best of L.A. Arts issue story, this neighborhood is kind of popping right now, at least in terms of contemporary art galleries, and about half of them join the fray this Saturday night. **Moskowitz Bayse** presents haunting architectural sculptures by Anthony Miserendino; **KP Projects** opens a group show of painters obsessively in love with the palette; **Shulamit Nazarian** presents affecting and surreal works by painter Naudeline Pierre; and **Steve Turner Los Angeles** opens three concurrent shows with Francisco Rodriguez (Santiago-born, London-based), Rebecca Shippee (New Haven) and Jon Key (New York). **Jeffrey Deitch** stages a survey of new and classic works by feminist icon Judy Chicago; **Diane Rosenstein** revisits the best of the '80s with important works by Julian Stanczak; and **Various Small Fires** presents deconstructions of the gendered media landscape by painter Robin F. Williams.

Downtown (Historic Core, Arts District, Bendix Building, and more)

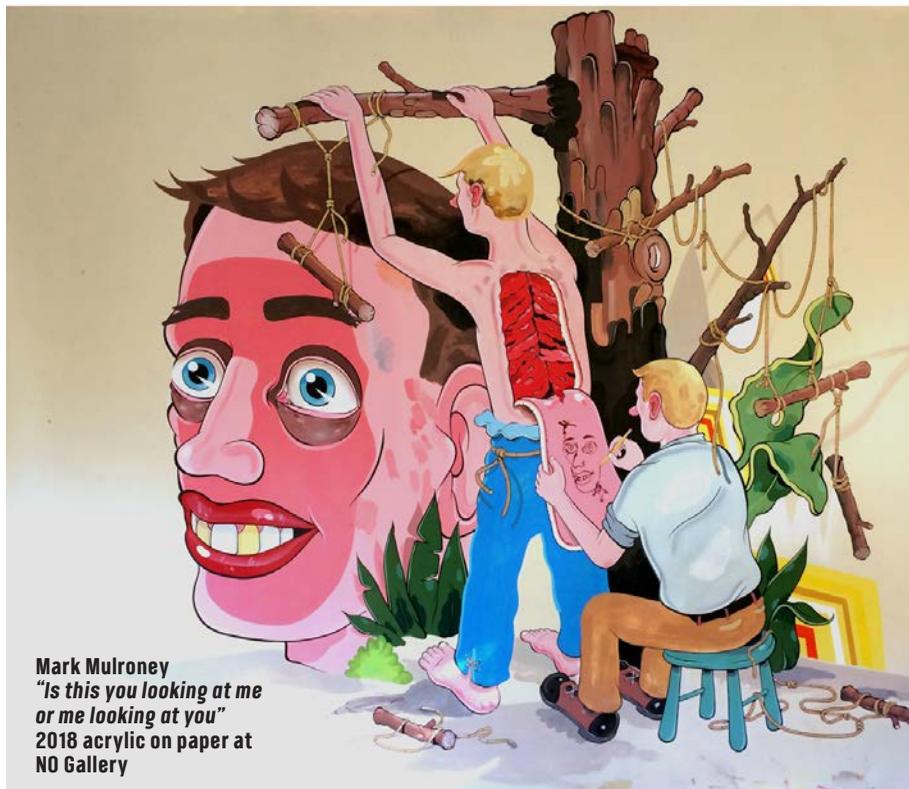
Downtown itself has more than one eco-

Mid-City (and one in WeHo)

South of Hollywood, north of Culver City, and west of West Adams is a stretch of galleries roughly along La Brea, and of course, many of them have their shows tonight too. A two-person show by Samuelle Richardson and Joy Ray explores unconventional narratives and symbol-rich abstract messages in textile-based works at **Launch LA**; **Loft at Liz's** hosts a pop-up of contemporary Japanese aesthetic optimism; and around the corner on **Wilshire 1301PE** shows fashion- and design-influenced supersaturated abstract pattern paintings by Judy Ledger-

Lois Lambert Gallery's big, sassy, timely group show **Truthiness**, or the return of **BG Gallery** to the Berg, re-inaugurating their tenure after a sojourn up on Ocean Park, with the group show, **The Body In Parts**.

Outside of Bergamot, Galia Linn and the team of David McDonald & Raychael Stine show at the nearby quasi-residential project space **Five Car Garage** — a high-end carport transformed into a pristine gallery space behind a hillside house off Navy Street. They get started at noon and the address is shared upon your RSVP. Later that night, besequined and bunny-eared mixed media



Mark Mulrone
"Is this you looking at me
or me looking at you"
2018 acrylic on paper at
NO Gallery

wood. Down by Highland, **No Gallery** and **Kordanksy** both get a bit dark, as the group show "Don't Just Do Something, Sit There" and the epically cheeky Tala Madani solo show, respectively, take a turn for the zesty worst of society. Meanwhile in near-ish West Hollywood, Eve Fowler's multimedia installation at **Moran Moran** interrogates feminist literature and linguistics.

Venice/Santa Monica (Mostly Bergamot)

In another most-but-not-all type situation, a majority of **Bergamot Station's** galleries open new shows on Saturday. But don't let the coordinated date fool you, the galleries' hours are all over the place, with some starting as early as 4, a few going as late as 9, and most falling somewhere in between. Watch for big solo shows from Greg Colson, Laura Forman, and J.A. Feng at **Craig Krull**; Eric Nash and Terry Leness at **Skidmore**; Patty Wickman and Ron Rizk at **Lora Schlesinger**; David Jien at **Richard Heller**; and Jon Krawczyk at **Leslie Sacks**. But don't miss

impresario Aaron Axelrod takes over at Abbot Kinney's **Tarryn Teresa Gallery**; and the **Ben Maltz Gallery** at OTIS College debuts Centennial, a group show featuring the all-stars of 100 years of creative education at the institution.

Sunday, September 8: Eastside (and One in Pasadena)

Suffering from a Saturday night art hangover? Obviously, the only answer is some hair of the dog — and a bevy of Eastside galleries have that covered. Hit downtown for graffiti-infused tableaux by Devin Reynolds at **Royale Projects**; a group show about the choices we make at **Quotidian's** *Antigone*; and the surrealist interiors of Todd James at **Over The Influence**. **ChimMaya** in East L.A. has a warm embrace of a genre painting show by Margaret Garcia. And Pasadena's **Gallery 30 South** shows bright and bold new mixed media collage by producer and visual artist Vakseen.

For addresses and show times, go to laweekly.com/arts.

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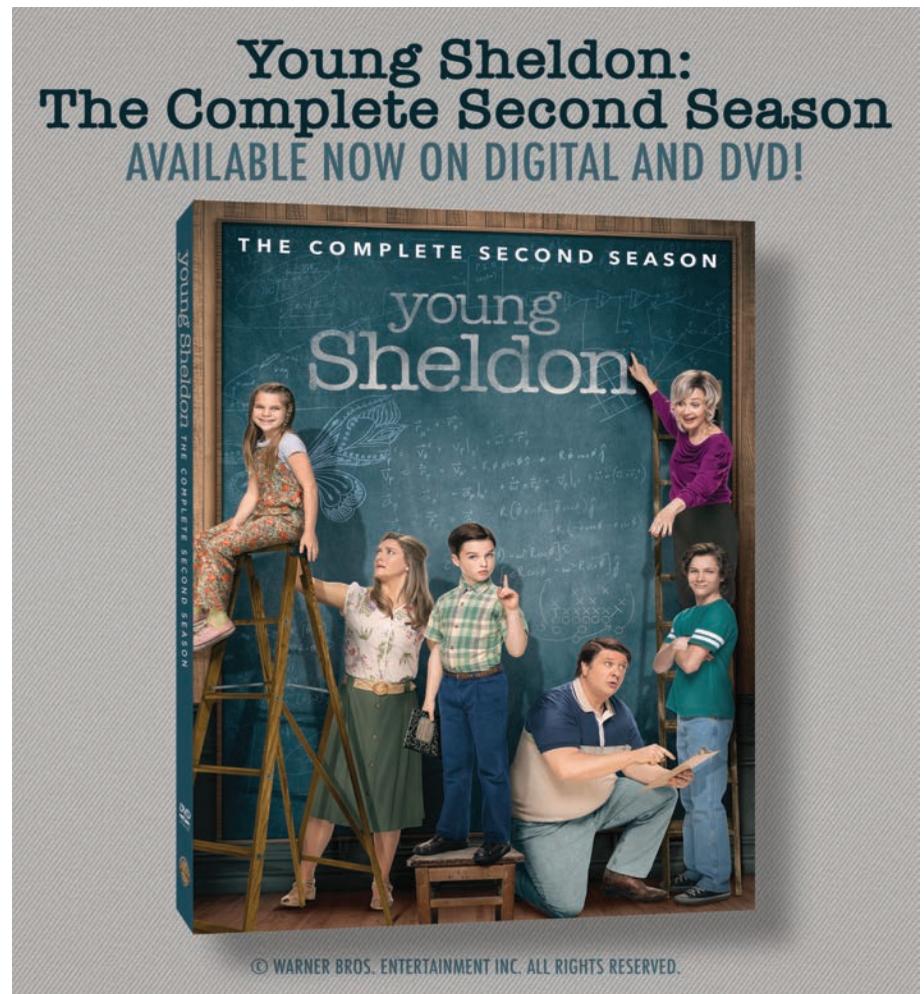
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THE SOUND OF HER VOICE

Linda Ronstadt, one of music's most culturally versatile singer's gets her due in a new documentary

BY CHUCK WILSON



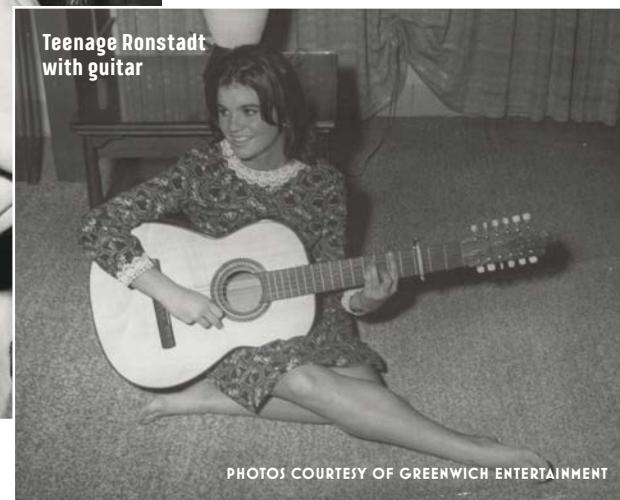
Ronstadt gracious with fans in the '70s

Penzance; making three flawless albums of pop standards with bandleader Nelson Riddle; a trailblazing album of country duets with Harris and Dolly Parton, and most daring of all, an album of Mariachi songs, *Canciones De Mi Padre*, which remains the biggest selling non-English language album of all time.

In regards to her personal life, this documentary takes it lead from its subject so some things are left out. Ronstadt has two adopted children, a fact you won't learn from this film.



Ronstadt in the studio



Teenage Ronstadt with guitar

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GREENWICH ENTERTAINMENT

The great American singer Linda Ronstadt grew up on an Arizona ranch filled with music. On Saturday mornings, she would go to her grandparents' house to listen to the Metropolitan Opera broadcast on the radio, then return home to find her father singing Mexican love songs or her mom playing a Gilbert and Sullivan tune at the piano. Her brother Pete was the soloist in a boys' choir and at age five, Linda begged him to teach her to sing vibrato. In the voiceover to the bittersweet new documentary, *Linda Ronstadt: The Sound of Her Voice*, the singer recalls, "We sang at the dinner table, we sang in the car, we sang with our hands in the dishwasher." Ronstadt was of German-Mexican-Dutch descent and for her, shifting from one culture to another was as natural as breathing, a methodology that led

to a career marked by marvelously unexpected musical left turns.

Ronstadt has sadly been forced into musical silence and early retirement due to complications from Parkinson's disease, but her musical legacy lives on. After leaving Tucson for L.A. in 1964 at 18, she found herself sharing a house on the beach in Santa Monica for \$80 a month (split three ways). She and childhood friend Bobby Kimmel formed The Stone Poneys with Kenny Edwards and before long, she had a hit song on the radio, and a request from the record company: Ditch the two guys and go solo.

The long-time directing team of Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman (*The Times of Harvey Milk*, *The Celluloid Closet*) are at their best in these early stages of Ronstadt's story, mixing priceless archival footage of the 1960s L.A. club scene with interviews with the singer's

friends and collaborators, including singer-songwriter J.D. Souther ("You're Only Lonely") with whom she shared a long romance. It was Souther who suggested Ronstadt hire his bass player friend Glenn Frey for her first solo band, and it was somewhere on that 12-city first tour that Frey and Ronstadt's frizzy-haired drummer, Don Henley, got the idea for yet another new band — the Eagles.

Ronstadt, of course, put the Eagles on the map when she covered "Desperado," and it's this fusion of friendship and music that proves to be the lasting theme of Ronstadt's career, particularly among fellow female artists. In a moving segment, Emmylou Harris recalls how Ronstadt was there to help her start anew after the devastating death of Harris' musical partner, Gram Parsons. Ronstadt had a way of

changing her friend's lives by simply singing their songs, as when she turned her friend Karla Bonoff's modest lament, "Lose Again," into an epic power ballad. The studio footage of this number is fantastic, by the way. Bonnie Raitt is here too, making a hit of Bonoff's "Home" and finding an equal in Ronstadt. As music journalist turned filmmaker Cameron Crowe notes, these were women who were "running bands with guys in them" but also "looking after each other."

An "avalanche of success" followed, along with a famous romance (with Governor Jerry Brown), and eventually, a growing musical restlessness. And so it was that the biggest pop-rock star of her generation began making those crazy left turns: starring in a Broadway production of the operetta, *Pirates of*

There's also zero mention of her 1980s relationship with George Lucas. And yet, this most private of artists does allow the filmmakers — and herself — one brave, beautiful and vulnerable leap at the movie's end: Linda Ronstadt sings. Just a bit, at home with her family. "This isn't really singing," she says, after a false start. She tries again, and this time, is carried away by the power of the song. It's heart-clutching and makes one understand what Ronstadt's *Penzance* co-star, Kevin Kline, says earlier in the film about her voice: "Celestial yet earthy. So absolutely pure. It made me cry."

Linda Ronstadt: The Sound of My Voice opens September 6, at Arclight Hollywood



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FILM

SEND IN THE CLOWNS

Also: *Super Size Me 2: Holy Chicken!* arrives

BY NATHANIEL BELL

Welcome to *L.A. Weekly's* Movie Guide, your look at the hottest films in Los Angeles theaters this week — from indie art house gems and classics to popcorn-perfect blockbusters and new movies garnering buzz. Check here every week before you make your big screen plans.

Opening wide

Friday, September 6

IT Chapter Two perpetuates the deprecation of one of the most misrepresented minority groups in America: clowns. The sequel to the 2017 smash hit picks up 27 years after the group of kids known as the “Losers Club” vanquished Pennywise the Dancing Clown, an evil supernatural being that preys upon children. The adult friends soon realize that this sewer-dwelling demon is back in action, hungry and more powerful than before. James McAvoy, Jessica Chastain, Jay Ryan, Bill Hader, Isaiah Mustafa, James Ransone and Andy Bean headline the A-list cast; Bill Skarsgård is the glowering, giggling monster. This is primed to be Warner Bros’ first mega-hit of the year, with more clown carnage to come when *Joker* opens next month.

Limited/art-house

Friday, September 6

In *The Fanatic*, John Travolta plays Moose, a socially inept middle-aged movie fan with a bowl cut and an unhealthy obsession with his favorite action hero, Hunter Dunbar (Devon Sawa). Denied an autograph at a publicity event, Moose enlists the help of his paparazzi photographer friend (Ana Golja) who supplies him with Dunbar’s home address. After a little light stalking, the situation escalates in ways only a Hollywood screenwriter could dream of. A throwback to psycho-fan thrillers of yesteryear (e.g. *Misery*, *The King of Comedy*), the film is essentially a showcase for Travolta’s studied, sincere, fitfully engaging, frequently bizarre performance. Directed and co-written by former Limp Bizkit frontman Fred Durst, who’s no doubt had his share of encounters with rabid fans, the movie will receive a limited release while premiering on VOD. *Arena Cinelounge*, 6464 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood; Fri., Sept. 6, \$16. (323) 924-1644, arenascreen.org.

Blink of an Eye is an emotional sports documentary about Michael Waltrip, the ultimate underdog auto racer, and his relationship with NASCAR hall-of-famer Dale Earnhardt. Waltrip, who raced 462 times without placing first

once, joined Earnhardt’s team for the 2001 Daytona 500. In dramatic fashion, Earnhardt blocked the field of 40 cars, allowing Waltrip to win his first Winston Cup, but died in a head-on collision on the final lap. Waltrip reflects on that dark day, and director Paul Taublieb catches every tear that falls from his face. The film feels like a well-produced ESPN special; in fact, it is being released through 1091 Media (formerly The Orchard), first as a limited release on September 6, and then nationwide through Fathom Events on September 12. *Laemmle Music Hall*, 9036 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, Fri., Sept. 6, various showtimes; \$9-\$12. (310) 478-3836, laemmle.com.

Super Size Me 2: Holy Chicken! is a belated sequel to Morgan Spurlock’s attention-grabbing 2009 documentary that finds the filmmaker and humorist starting his own fast food chain as a means to assessing the reputation of “the most eaten animal on the planet.” In a style pioneered by Michael Moore, the jokey journalist centers himself in practically every scene on a discursive journey through America’s late capitalist landscape. Among his discoveries are the “health-washing” of greasy foods, the transmogrification of the term “fried” to “crispy,” artificial grill marks placed strategically on meat, and other unsavory truths. YouTube Red dropped the film in 2017 after Spurlock preemptively admitted to a history of sexual misconduct at the height of #MeToo; the film is now being released through Samuel Goldwyn Films. *Laemmle Music Hall*, 9036 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, Fri., Sept. 6, various showtimes; \$9-\$12. (310) 478-3836, laemmle.com.

Tuesday, September 10

The Skirball Center presents a screening of Stanley Donen’s classic 1957 musical *The Pajama Game*, starring Doris Day as a factory worker who leads a strike. Bob Fosse’s dazzling choreography ingeniously disguises the film’s Broadway roots in a flurry of cinematic movement. Richard Adler and Jerry Ross’s song score includes “Seven and a Half Cents” and “Steam Heat.” It’s part of Skirball’s Cinema Tuesdays series, a weekly showcase offered to the public at no cost. *Skirball Cultural Center*, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles; Tue., Sept. 10, 1:30 p.m.; free. (310) 440-4500, skirball.org.

Also opening Friday, Sept. 6: *Becoming Nobody*; *The Blonde One*; *Edie*; *Eternal Code*; *Linda Ronstadt: The Sound of My Voice*; *Ms. Purple*; *Night Hunter*; *Satanic Panic*; *Strange But True*.

ENTER THE (HISTORY OF) WU-TANG

Meet the young actor who plays Ol' Dirty Bastard in Hulu's new *Wu-Tang: An American Saga*

BY SHIRLEY JU

Wu-Tang Clan's story is about to be told on Hulu, and it is more than well-deserved. The new series *Wu-Tang: An American Saga*, produced by Wu member RZA and writer Alex Tse hopes to serve as a definitive biopic in series form.

Set in the early 1990s in New York, the show spans 10 episodes, covering a period when the crack cocaine epidemic was at its height. T.J. Atoms plays the late Ol' Dirty Bastard, a character who's known for his wild and outrageous ways and his equally bold half-rap/half-singing vocal style. The Philadelphia actor and musician clearly relishes the role, providing a realism to the character and showing how ODB's contributions helped the group become superstars. Since they got together, WuTang has released five Gold and Platinum-selling albums, pushing over 40 million units worldwide.

L.A. Weekly caught up with Atoms to discuss his first gig as an actor, the preparation to play ODB's role, and what audiences can expect from the highly-anticipated show.

L.A. Weekly: How did you land the role of ODB for the Hulu series?

I auditioned for three months, going back and forth. I went in for Raekwon originally. Of course, I'm not Raekwon [chuckles]. So they called me back for ODB. I'm like, [whistles] "I don't know if I could play ODB."

Why not?

It's heavy. It's a huge character, you gotta kill it. You gotta do it justice. I just didn't see it.

How did you prepare for the show?

I studied a lot of old footage of ODB. I studied some of his son's shit, his son has a movie on YouTube about the Wu-Tang. I studied the movement and body language... had to really master it.

What is it about Ol' Dirty Bastard that was challenging or rewarding to portray?

The whole character is very challenging because you have to really embody a legend. He's so over the top and outgoing, but you don't want to be too over the top. You don't want to overdo the character, you gotta be in a certain pocket. The whole character was a challenge, but it was fun. I think ODB is the funnest character ever on TV.

Who did [fellow co-star] Dave East play?

Method Man. He killed it too. It's going to be super fire, Dave's a really cool person. Joey Bada\$\$ is in it, he plays Inspectah Deck. Joey, me, Ashton... it's hella fun.

What's your favorite episode and why?

Oh my god, Episode 8 is going to be a fire episode because it's all one scene. All shot in one scene, just one hour straight of bam, bam, bam! Usually you "cut, action," but that day we worked. It was all in one scene, so we had to be on point. Fuck that, we should win an award for Episode 8 alone!

What do think this show will do for the hip-hop community?

This show will show not just the hip-hop community, but the black community that you can believe in yourself and you can accomplish your goals. Hard work, talent and not quitting on yourself, that's really going to show.

How is it different from other rap movies (Straight Outta Compton) or music industry TV shows (Empire)?

First of all, it's a fucking whole series. Every episode is a movie by itself. I've never seen anything like this out. It's one of the hottest shows, all twist and turns. It's about the Wu-Tang of course, but it's some shit you don't know. Some shit I didn't even know about Wu-Tang that's in the show, and it's real-life shit that happened. It stands out because it's a real crazy story. A legendary story.

What does the show reveal about the group that people might not know?

People might not know that they were fucking beefing before they came together as a crew. Raekwon and Ghostface were beefing because my character ODB been rocking with Ghostface growing up. You wouldn't even have known they started beefing, and they came together to make something unique and creative.

Is there anything else you want to let us know?

I'm working on a new music project called *All Is Well*, coming out very soon. I also have a few other shows, I'm on *Power* Season 6. I'm also on *Godfather of Harlem*. I'm working on the independent film *40-year-old Version*.

Read the full interview at laweekly.com. *Wu-Tang: An American Saga* premieres September 4, on Hulu.

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PEEKING BEYOND THE DOOR

Redd Kross are in rare form with most recent release

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



Redd Kross

PHOTO BY JULIAN FORT

Brothers Jeff and Steve McDonald of power-pop-punks Redd Kross are the first to admit that they are pretty much the opposite of prolific. Their new album *Beyond the Door*, which was released on the day this interview took place, is their first since *Researching the Blues* in 2012. Before that, *Show World* came out in 1997.

These guys like to take their time. But shit, it's worth it. This new record is an absolute rip-roarer that is in turns fuzzy and raw, lush and epic. The opening "The Party" has a musical theater quality to it, like it could be in *Hair* or something. Then the title track is pure power-pop. Jeff says the record's release feels like his birthday, while Steve is excited to tour the album properly — the first time they've done that in 25 years.

"If you think of it like, if you do eight albums divided by 40, then we've actually only had five years in between each album, as an average," says Steve. "I tell myself that to feel better about the fact that there are other practical concerns that get in the way."

Ah yes, practical concerns. Steve McDonald is also a member of the Melvins, a band that is out on tour a lot (Melvins drummer Dale Crover plays with Redd Kross also). The brothers also served as Sparks' backing band at one point. All good stuff, but all getting in the way of Redd Kross.

"For me, it's a double edged sword because it inspires me to see other creative people that I work with follow through and make their records, and go out on tour," says Steve. "It's inspiring, but then it also takes up a lot of my time. That's one of the practical concerns that keeps Redd Kross from being more prolific."

"But we also only kind of only make records when we feel like it," adds Jeff. "When we feel it's time to make a record, Steve, who is more busy on the road with his other acts, will make the time and we'll do it."

Steve then says that the band needs to take their time because they have a limited number of songs within them. Like, ummm, eggs in a female. Yup, you read that right.

"I like this thing that we've talking about lately, this concept that maybe songs are sort

of like eggs for women, and you're born with your entire lifetime allotment of them, and that we've been very slow to use our allotment," he says. "Therefore it'll take longer for us to reach our menopausal stage as songwriters. If you follow us down that path."

The brothers are clearly using their allotment cleverly; the hooks on *Beyond the Door* are relentless. Arguably not since 1993's *Phase-shifter*, when the band got a taste of overseas success thanks to the "The Lady in the Front Row" single and later their cover of "Yesterday Once More" for the *If I Were a Carpenter* tribute album, have they appeared to embrace pop melody so wholeheartedly. Jeff, though, says that's what they always try to do.

"That's what's fun about writing songs — you

for three months. Both are in their 50s, so do they have concerns? Yes.

"Dale slipped a disc in his back earlier this year, so the Melvins had to cancel some dates around June," Steve says. "But he's busy doing

"I LIKE THIS THING THAT WE'VE TALKING ABOUT LATELY, THIS CONCEPT THAT MAYBE SONGS ARE SORT OF LIKE EGGS FOR WOMEN, AND YOU'RE BORN WITH YOUR ENTIRE LIFETIME ALLOTMENT OF THEM, AND THAT WE'VE BEEN VERY SLOW TO USE OUR ALLOTMENT"

— STEVE MCDONALD

lots of physiotherapy — it doesn't look like there's any surgery ahead. We're going to start doing rehearsals before we go out on tour where we do both bands back to back, just to get a sense of how it is for him. But for me, luckily I don't have any back problems to speak of right now so it's the ultimate form of cardiovascular workout. I don't workout otherwise. Jeff always says that he needs applause to exercise, and that very definitely works for me too."

The Redd Kross/Melvins tour will hit these parts four times — twice at the start of the tour and twice at the end. Will they mix the sets up a bit?

"Redd Kross always tends to mix it up a bit," says Steve. "The Melvins finds something that works and sticks with it. The one thing I see Melvins do over the course of the tour is they might start jamming with the support band for their last song. I don't know if Redd Kross and Melvins are going to do that, although it makes sense because it's sort of an extended family thing. It would be a hell of a band."

The guys are also keen to point out that, while the Melvins are officially the headliners, Redd Kross will be playing an hour-long set every night.

"The Melvins are very gracious and have deep respect for us, so they want to make sure that our fans get their fill," Steve says. "The other thing is we made a lot of effort to work on songs from the new album. If you're a fan of the new album, you'll hopefully be very satisfied."

"We're excited to see everybody," adds Jeff.

The feeling's mutual, guys. Just don't leave it so long next time.

Redd Kross and the Melvins perform Thursday, September 5, at Alex's Bar.

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FRI 9/6

Lost '80s Live

@ THE GREEK THEATRE

These '80s package tours are easy to raise the nose at for those who tend to do that sort of thing. But the truth is, they're always insane fun. Oftentimes, the bills are a mixed bag, with different vibes and genres coming together under the guise of "the '80s." Here, we have new romantic icons Flock of Seagulls alongside new-wavers Missing Persons, punks The Tubes, plus Wang Chung (just to remind everybody to have fun to-night), The Escape Club, Bow Wow Wow (at least one of the current versions on the circuit), Boys Don't Cry, Dramarama, Real Life, The Vapors (of "Turning Japanese" fame), and Farrington and Mann (of When In Rome fame). So many great songs, one after the other. —BRETT CALLWOOD

Karen O & Danger Mouse

@ THE THEATRE AT ACE HOTEL

"I'm lost in the sea of sweet design," the Yeah Yeah Yeahs' Karen O coos reverently and breathily on "Ministry," a gauzy soundscape from *Lux Prima*, her recent album with Danger Mouse. "So day by day, I'll turn my dreams into a ministry, a ministry, a ministry of her love." Throughout the record, producer/multi-instrumentalist Danger Mouse designs a candied sea of watery sounds that blend with Karen O's whispery vocals. Tracks range from the low-key disco of "Turn the Light" and the mutated '60s garage-pop of "Woman" to the softly spacey, electronic shimmers of the nine-minute title track. The duo reportedly decided to collaborate more than a decade ago but didn't start recording until two years ago. These two weekend shows at the Ace Hotel will apparently be their only live performances of the work. Also Saturday, September 7. —FALLING JAMES

SAT 9/7

HammerFall

@ THE WHISKY A GO GO

It was in 1993 that power metal band HammerFall formed in Gothenburg, Sweden, and the groundbreaking debut *Glory to the Brave* album arrived four years later. Prior to that, they were mostly playing covers in clubs. Here we are 22 years after that debut, and HammerFall have



PHOTO BY JORDAN KIRSCHNER

just put out their 11th studio album, the quite excellent *Dominion*. Longtime members Oscar Dronjak, Joacim Cans and Fredrik Larsson are still in the ranks, which isn't a bad record for a metal band with a pedigree. The first single from the new album is also spectacular; "(We Make) Sweden Rock" pays tribute to power metal icons such as Judas Priest and Yngwie Malmsteen. Ophiuchus, Syn Absence, Masked Jackal, Anibus and PowerTribe also play. —BRETT CALLWOOD

Mindy Smith

@ MCCABE'S GUITAR SHOP

In 2003, an unknown singer named Mindy Smith stirred up attention with an especially poignant remake of Dolly Parton's "Jolene." A desperate plea to a romantic rival, the country-pop song has been covered numerous times, by everyone from The White Stripes to surf-instrumental band The Surfrayettes. Parton liked Smith's interpretation so much that she has performed and recorded it with Smith and has declared it's her favorite of the many versions. "Jolene" closes Smith's 2004 debut album, *One Moment More*, a set of otherwise original ballads by the Long Island native that includes the blues-tinged "Come to Jesus" and the intimate folk idyll "Train Song." Smith marks the 15th anniversary of the record's release with a solo acoustic set in which she'll tell stories and uncage her birdlike vocals. Also Sunday, September 8. —FALLING JAMES

Jon Langford

@ GOLD DIGGERS

Jon Langford isn't finished with L.A. just yet. The singer-guitarist played a satisfying albeit relatively rare local show with Mekons at Lodge Room in July, but the Chicago-based Welsh exile also has an extensive catalog of folk-country-punk songs cobbled together with numerous other projects, including Waco Brothers, The Three Johns, Skull Orchard, and Pine Valley Cosmonauts. "Expect lots of very short vocal-heavy numbers from all over the map ... and quite a lot of back-story bantering," he announced in a recent Facebook post. "I will attempt to play something from every project I've been wrestling with over the last 40 years yet simultaneously keep it under five hours ... Oh yeah, and it's free." The day before,

La Luz de Jesus presents a reception for "Make Americana Great Again," a solo exhibition of Langford's woodcuts invoking legendary roots musicians. —FALLING JAMES

SUN 9/8

Black Flag

@ THE ROSE

This current lineup of Black Flag is taking a lot of stick from fans, and it's not massively difficult to understand why. After all, guitarist Greg Ginn is the only member of the band who was in any of the classic lineups, with Mike Vallely singing (he was in the band in 2003 for a bit, then since 2013), Tyler Smith playing bass since 2014, and Isaias Gil taking the drum stool this year. That contrasts heavily to the band touring as Flag, which includes Keith Morrie, Chuck Dukowski and Dez Cadena. Reports of Black Flag 2019's live prowess are decidedly mixed too. But look—if you want to see a Black Flag running through some SoCal punk classics, the option is open to you. —BRETT CALLWOOD

Noice

@ BOOTLEG THEATER

Even if you've witnessed the astonishing guitarist Alexander Noice casually cast aloft dazzling solos as a sideman in the glittery space-pop band Polartropica, it doesn't fully prepare you for the range of spectacular sounds and ideas bursting out of his own project Noice. The bandleader-composer's eponymous new album, *Noice* (Orenda Records), is an intricate puzzle box that unlocks and expands into a 30-ring circus, which plays out across several densely detailed layers like 3-D chess. Noice's cycling guitar patterns are intercut with febrile samples and Karina Kallas' and Argenta Walther's rapid-fire operatic vocals. There are elements of free jazz in the interplay between Noice and alto saxophonist Gavin Templeton, but full-bodied bassist Colin Burgess and inventive drummer Andrew Lessman nail everything down with an exacting precision, groove and disciplined heaviness that draw simultaneously from prog, art-pop, electronica and punk. —FALLING JAMES

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MON 9/9

Qaalm

@ THE LEXINGTON

No greater an aura of tension awaits you this week than when Los Angeles doom metal band Qaalm — vocalist Pete Majors, guitarists Henry Derek Elis and Brock Elmore, sampling keyboardist Christopher Jon, bassist David Huet, drummer Etay Levy — unveil an experience that's as much about the forging of something heavy as it is about the genre of metal itself. Their *Reflections Doubt* demo EP is out now. Think of it as the thinking devil's heavy metal. So what actually goes through your head when you know that you're doomed? Qaalm asks that most final of all possible questions and crystallizes it into

sure — our own David Cotner fronts the band, and he describes it as, “stellar, discomfiting and unmissable.” Meanwhile, their Facebook bio says that they make, “primitive disorienting hard rock: music shot through with wretched and redemptive songs about loss, annihilated love and the godly glamor of the enigma.” Suffice to say that they create some sort of Lynchian nightmare, pummeling you with simplicity and repetition. It's a beautiful mindfuck. If that hasn't roped you in, they're joined at this show by Electric Sound Bath, Elmer Lang, Myriad Slits and Trade Show. —**BRETT CALLWOOD**

Prophets of Rage

@ THE MAYAN

“We bust the sound of outrage against the hate y'all made,” Chuck D declares, serious as death,



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something beautiful. Beautiful, beautiful doom. Also tonight: the auric electronics of Andorkapen, the blackened ambience of The Sun and the Mirror, and the brutal cello of Isaac Takeuchi. —**DAVID COTNER**

TUE 9/10

D Savage

@ THE ROXY

D Savage represents all things Los Angeles, which is exactly why this show at The Roxy will mean the most. Coming up amidst the SoundCloud wave of melodic rap and trap, the 21-year-old has been relentlessly unleashing bangers for his growing fanbase. It was at age 14 when Savage began whipping up beats on his cell phone. Three years later, he recorded his first song ever in his friend's garage: “30 Round Clip.” The track eventually turned into his breakout single, breaking him through the underground into the mainstream light. Most recently, he signed to Steven Victor and Caroline Music (Capitol Records imprint). The Trust No One Tour — named after his most recent album, released at the end of July — will definitely be a high-energy hip-hop show. —**SHIRLEY JU**

WED 9/11

Black Love

@ HUSHE CLUBBE, THE HYPERION TAVERN

Three years since they last performed live, Black Love are returning to the stage with this highly anticipated show at the Hyperion. Full disclo-

on “Made With Hate,” the recent single by rap-rock supergroup Prophets of Rage. Decrying “that factory-manufactured sucker energy,” the Public Enemy rapper goes on to lay out his Orwellian warnings in brutally direct terms: “This is not a drill, this is fascism/It is here, poised as a government takeover threat... It is not alarmist to say these things/It is simple truth.” Chuck D's truths are seconded by Cypress Hill's B-Real and given a hard-rock punch by the group's three former members of Rage Against the Machine. Another recent single, “Heart Afire,” is distinguished by the unrelenting wordplay exchanged by B-Real and Chuck D. Also Thursday, September 12. —**FALLING JAMES**

THU 9/12

Brian Wilson, The Zombies

@ THE GREEK THEATRE

Brian Wilson is one of the greatest songwriters that has ever lived. This isn't in doubt. It also is without question that Mike Love's current touring version of The Beach Boys is, while not terrible, a bit bar-room/cabaret act. Wilson, meanwhile, still puts on an incredible show and for this one at the Greek he'll be joined by former Beach Boys Al Jardine and Blondie Chaplin. He's co-headlining with English rockers The Zombies, and that band has something special in store. The original and current lineups are joining forces for a big Zombies mega-jam through the *Odessey and Oracle* album in its entirety. It all makes for a fun night of '60s singalongs in the wonderful open air surroundings of the Greek. —**BRETT CALLWOOD**

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