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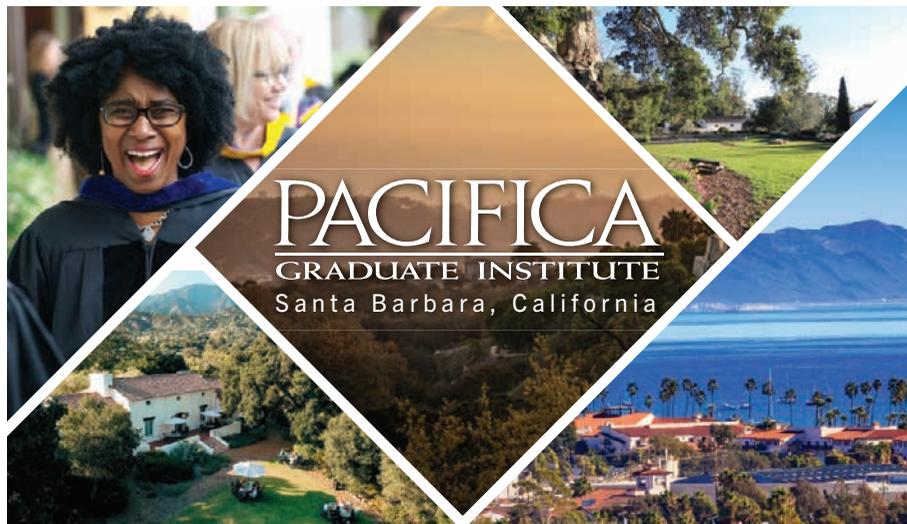
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Photo by Rafael Saes on Unsplash

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GO LA

FRI 9/27

THEATER

Journey Across America

Filmmaking siblings Ethan and Joel Cohen have demonstrated a certain elan in their collaborations on such films as *Miller's Crossing* and *True Grit*. While their movies aren't always as emotionally compelling as they are stylish, Ethan Cohen's latest project, *A Play Is a Poem* — which is actually five otherwise unrelated short plays sharing Americana themes and settings — is intriguing. Directed by Neil Pepe and presented by Atlantic Theater Company, the plays roam across such locations as “the hillbilly hollows of Appalachia, a New York tenement apartment, a magnolia-scented gazebo in Natchez, Mississippi, [and] the executive suites of Hollywood.” Most intriguingly, the brilliant pop-jazz singer-pianist Nellie McKay imbues the proceedings with live performances of her witty original songs. *Mark Taper Forum*, 135 N. Grand Ave., downtown; Fri., Sept. 27, 8 p.m.; through Sun., Oct. 13, 6:30 p.m.; \$25-\$90. (213) 628-2772, centertheatregroup.org. —FALLING JAMES

FOOD & DRINK

A Star is Born

Hollywood has gone through more facelifts than an aging actress, but *Musso & Frank Grill*, with its famous red booths and waiters in red jackets, has been around for a century, predating even the Hollywood Sign. The classic meat-and-potatoes menu has hardly changed since Frank Toulet and Joseph Musso opened the Hollywood institution (later bought by Joseph Carissimi and John Mosso, whose descendants currently run the place) in 1919. Its celebrity and literary clientele go back to Charlie Chaplin and F. Scott Fitzgerald, and it's been seen in countless TV shows and movies,



most recently *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*. Help celebrate its 100th birthday at a public ceremony hosted the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, which honors the eatery with a Hollywood Award of Excellence, shaped like a star, located in front of the restaurant and adjacent to the Hollywood Walk of Fame. James Woods, Danny Trejo, Joseph Montegna, Marc Summers and Michael Callahan, as well as Hollywood Chamber of Commerce president Rana Ghadban, city councilman Mitch O'Farrell and family of the owners will be in attendance. *Musso & Frank Grill*, 6667 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Fri., Sept. 27, 11 a.m.; free. (323) 467-7788, mussoandfrank.com. —SIRAN BABAYAN

TV/CULTURE

Late Night Television

Robot Chicken proves that it's no spring chicken — or paltry poultry, for that matter — at the 10th Season Spectacular Night of 1000 Bawks, a celebration of all the hard work that goes into creating the stop-motion animated Adult Swim series that's entertained legions of late-night fans, 12 minutes at a time. You'll see some of the greatest hits of the show that is almost 100 percent hits, with stories and admissions of guilt from creators Seth Green and Matthew Senreich, along with appearances by the celebrities and voice actors who have breathed life into action figures for the past 10 years. *The Theatre at The Ace Hotel*, 929 S. Broadway, downtown; Fri., Sept. 27, 7 p.m.; \$10. (213) 235-9614, acehotel.com/losangeles/events-and-spaces/calendar/2019-09-27/adult-swim-presents-robot-chicken-10th-season-spectacular-night-1000-bawks. —DAVID COTNER

DANCE

All Over L.A.

In its newest endeavor, *LA Dance Project* hosts *LA Dances*, promising an intermittent festival spread over six weeks with 10 LA premiers and six world premieres, divided into three programs. Labeled “Program A, B & C,” each installment has works from four or five choreographers, most from New York, a few based here, plus a revival

of a work by the late Bella Lewitzky. The opening Program A includes *Adagio in B Minor* from former New York City Ballet now LADP dancer Janie Taylor, *Rising Water* from current NYCB dancer Gianna Reisen, *Split Step* from Emily Mast & Zack Winokur, and *Chapter Song* from NY-based Kyle Abraham, who is currently a UCLA artist in residence. This program repeats October 10-13, 20, & 25. Program B brings Lewitzky's *Kinaesonata*, and works from Charm La'Donna, Mast & Winokur on October 3-6, 16-18 & 25. Program C presents two works from LA Dance Project director Benjamin Millepied, Lewitzky's *Kinaesonata*, plus dancemakers Tino Sehgal and Madeline Hollander on November 14-17 & 21-24. *LA Dance Project*, 2245 E. Washington Blvd., downtown; Program A: Thu.-Sun., Sept. 26-29, 8 p.m., complete schedule at website. \$45. *ladanceproject.org/19-20-season*. —ANN HASKINS

SAT 9/28

ART

Picture Tags

Mixografia is a unique jewel in the crown of the Los Angeles fine-art print studio scene, with artists from near and far obsessed by both their illustrious history and proprietary dimensional printing techniques. For the past couple of years, they've operated a big gorgeous exhibition gallery on site, where they stage both historical exhibitions and solo shows built around the release of new series and portfolios. *Analia Saban: Dry Clean Only* continues the artist's interest in the secret heroism of overlooked objects like plastic bags and bath towels deracinated from their mass-production contexts and scrutinized for the semiotic societal information they impart. Her new series of eight works enlarges a collection of humble clothing tags, the better to appreciate their purposeful making, their reductive messaging, and the insights they offer into the global supply chain. *Mixografia*, 1419 E. Adams Blvd., Central-Alameda; opening reception: Sat., Sept. 28, 4-6 p.m.; exhibition: Tue.-Fri., 10 a.m.-5 p.m. & Sat. 11 a.m.-6 p.m., through Nov. 9; free.

mixografia.com/events/exhibition-opening-analia-saban-dry-clean-only. —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

FOOD & DRINK

The Spirit(s) of Mexico

No doubt you're familiar with Mexico's rich cuisine, but what about its liquor? At the Museum of Latin American Art's *Spirit of Mexico*, you'll study various spirits, from the familiar tequila and mezcal to lesser-known flavors like raicilla, sotol and pulque, most of which are made from agave and other plants. You'll also learn about each drink's history, regional origin and distillation process. The unlimited tastings, curated by “tequila culture ambassador” Leona Enterprises, will be paired with authentic Mexican food, in addition to music by DJ collective Metralleta de Oro and Afro-Latin group El Santo Golpe. *Museum of Latin American Art*, 628 Alamitos Ave., Long Beach; Sat., Sept. 28, 7-10 p.m.; \$60. (562) 437-1689, molaa.org. —SIRAN BABAYAN

SUN 9/29

FOOD & DRINK

Decadence Awaits

If you love chocolate and never have just one bite, you can eat as much as you want at the 13th annual *Los Angeles Chocolate Salon*, a “chocolate nirvana” that celebrates the most popular sweet in the world. But no Hershey's here, only some two dozen gourmet vendors selling and offering samples of their products, from basic milk, dark and white chocolate flavors to more exotic concoctions. You can pair the chocolate and other confections with wine. And if you want to learn from the pros, chefs, authors and other experts in the field will sign books and lead demos and panels on topics including “The latest in the World of Craft Chocolate” and “How We Became Master Chocolatiers.” *Pasadena Convention Center*, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena; Sun., Sept. 29, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.; \$20, \$10 children. (626) 795-9311, lachocolatesalon.com. —SIRAN BABAYAN

ART

Bringing It All Together

The Getty's latest exhibit, “*Bauhaus Beginnings*,” features prints, drawings, photographs, books, letters and ephemera that celebrate the founding of the influential German school of art and design 100 years ago in 1919. In conjunction with the display, *A Colorful Afternoon: Cornelia Funke's Adventures Through the Bauhaus* will include a reception, kid's craft project, tour and storytelling by Funke, who's original Getty story follows William Dampier, a pirate and ghost who protects the museum from being haunted. Funke is a German-born children's fantasy and adventure novelist best known for her *Inkheart* trilogy, which was adapted into a 2008 film starring Brendan Fraser and Helen Mirren. *The Getty*, 1200 Getty Center Drive, Bel-Air; Sun., Sept. 29, 2 p.m.; free, RSVP required. (310) 440-7300, getty.edu. —SIRAN BABAYAN

MON 9/30

BOOKS

The Human Condition

Writer and philosopher Susan Sontag — a top

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PHO LEGEND

interpreter of the human condition in popular culture during the 20th century — had a life that until recently remained famously and almost hermetically sealed. But now author Benjamin Moser tells all when he talks about his biography *Sontag: Her Life and Work* (\$40, Ecco). Undertaking to cleave the Gordian knot that was Sontag's life, through hundreds of interviews and images — not to mention getting Sontag's famously private long-time companion Annie Leibovitz to talk about her — what he gives you is what Sontag strove for all her life: a greater understanding of someone's humanity. *Skylight Books, 1814 N. Vermont Ave., Los Feliz; Mon., Sept. 30, 7:30 p.m.; free. (323) 660-1175, skylightbooks.com/event/benjamin-moser-discusses-his-new-book-sontag-her-life-and-work.* —DAVID COTNER

THEATER

Ecstatic Agonies

"Take your broken heart — and turn it into art." That's what Carrie Fisher once said about sadness and redemption, and she knew a thing or two about such things — hence the importance of *Forbidden Love: A Musical Theater Cabaret*. The performers in tonight's cabaret will take all the ecstatic agonies of thwarted love, love affairs, and the Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name, examine them, feel them deeply and then transmogrify those vaguely soiled passions with the power of art, delivering unto you a level of compassion the likes of which you've never seen before but really needed to. *Rockwell Table & Stage, 1714 N. Vermont Ave., Los Feliz; Mon., Sept. 30, 8 p.m.; \$25. (323) 669-1550, rockwell-la.com.* —DAVID COTNER

TUE 10/1

MUSIC

Hey, Hey, It's the Monkees

Michael Nesmith sings and spin stories at an intimate appearance at the Grammy Museum. As a songwriter, he might perform anything from "Different Drum" (Linda Ronstadt's first hit) and "Joanne" (and other originals with his First National Band that paved the way for country-rockers like The Eagles) to "Papa Gene's Blues" and other beloved garage-country-pop-psychedelic tunes he penned for The Monkees, the made-for-TV band who ultimately had a richly rewarding and prolific career that belatedly earned the group critical respect. As a storyteller, Nes might talk about how his prescient videos led to the creation of MTV, his role as executive producer on *Repo Man*, and his evolution from a '60s pop star into a songwriting eminence grise, along with other tales from *Infinite Tuesday*, his 2017 memoir. *Grammy Museum, 800 W. Olympic Blvd., downtown; Tue., Oct. 1, 7:30 p.m.; \$35. (213) 765-6800, grammy-museum.org.* —FALLING JAMES

WED 10/2

BOOKS

Communal Memory

While libraries may not seem like the most frighteningly exciting of all possible topics, Susan Orlean's *The Library Book* (\$28, Simon & Schuster) tells the riveting story of the 1986 L.A. Central Library fire, a catastrophe that stands as the worst library fire in American history, on par with the burning of the Library at Alexandria or the 1933 blaze that annihilated the Berlin Institute of Sex Research. Tonight, author Roxane Gay converses with Susan Orlean about the vital role of libraries as wellsprings of communal memory, touchstones of public gathering, and the places where they keep the fuck books. *Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Westwood; Wed., Oct. 2, 7:30 p.m.; free. (310) 443-7000, hammer.ucla.edu/programs-events/2019/10/susan-orlean-roxane-gay-for-the-love-of-libraries.* —DAVID COTNER

ART

Don't Stop Me Now

The California African American Museum roars into the new art season — and the new semester — with a stunning cycle of exhibitions examining cultural and sociopolitical topics ranging from how Cross Colours redefined 20th-century fashion, avant-garde metal sculpture, Antebellum interpretations and latter-day portrayals of women of color, historical linguistic vestiges in the contemporary South, and the ground-breaking work of Los Angeles mixed media artist Timothy Washington. The shows are now all open concurrently, with rolling closing dates, but first, it's time to celebrate their confluence with the next **Can't Stop, Won't Stop!** public opening party, featuring CAAM's always-free admission, plus music and food trucks in the courtyard, and of course, surprises. *California African American Museum, 600 State Park Drive, Exposition Park; reception: Wed., Oct. 2, 7-9 p.m.; exhibition: Tue.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5 p.m. & Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. free.* —SHANA NYS DAMBROT

THU 10/3

CULTURE

Werk It!

Podcasting is the hottest thing since sunburn, and at the two-day WNYC Studios Presents **Werk It! A Women's Podcast Festival**, you'll figure out how to create a thematically stimulating and constitutionally rewarding outlet for personal expression that countless millions will take to their collective heart. Mentoring, networking, pitching and podcast hosts like Bri M. (*Power Not Pity*), Jane Marie (*The Dream*) and Tonya Mosley (*Truth Be Told*) — they're all here, and the end result of all your blood, spit and tears may become a development deal with WNYC Studios. You have nothing to lose but your voice. Also Friday. *The Theatre at The Ace Hotel, 929 S. Broadway, downtown; Thu., Oct. 3, 10 a.m.; \$250-550. (213) 235-9614, acehotel.com/losangeles/events-and-spaces/calendar/2019-10-03/wnyc-studios-presents-werk-it-womens-podcast-festival.* —DAVID COTNER

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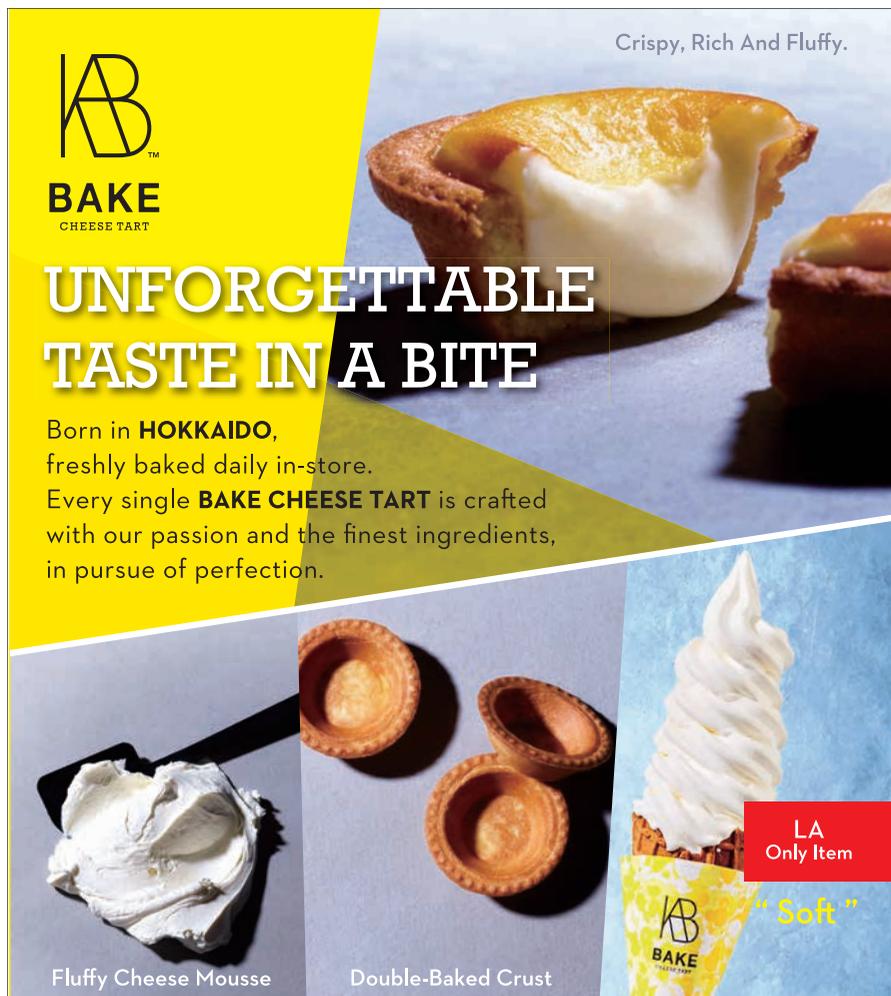
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Michoacanita corn on a stick

PHOTO BY MICHOACANITA



Strawberry tres leches cake

PHOTO BY HECTOR MENDOZA

Special
EX

FOOD

BRING ON THE FOOD PORN

The winning entrants in our food porn photo contest

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

We are a generation of diners where the phone eats first. It's just common courtesy and an automatic reaction to push the chair back and hold off digging into a meal until everybody has taken their glamorized smart phone snaps. Food is sexy, sensual and sparks satisfying intercourse at the table and elsewhere.

The term "food porn" was coined by feminist critic Rosalind Coward in her 1984 book, *Female Desire: Women's Sexuality Today*.

"When slimmers gaze at glossy pictures of luscious foods, are they taking pleasure in the supposedly forbidden? Why is our ideal for the female form so uncompromisingly adolescent? Has fiction seen a sexual revolution or has pornography merely merged with mainstream fiction. Food pornography exactly sustains these meanings relating to the preparation of food. The kinds of picture used always repress the process of production of a meal. They are always beautifully lit, often touched up."

Here are the winning entrants in our food porn contest.



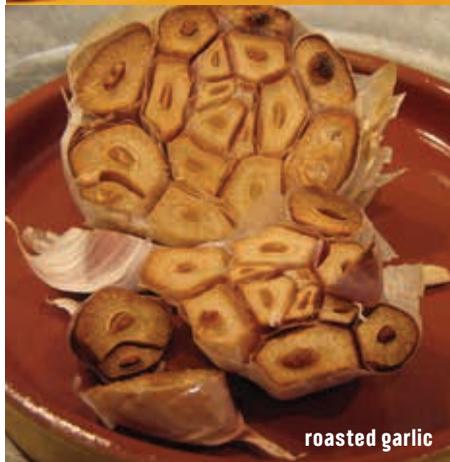
PHOTO BY MONICA ENRIQUEZ

Strawberry tres leches cake



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PHOTO COURTESY E.P. & L.P.



roasted garlic



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN BOURNE

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ARTS

NEWTON'S LAW: SUMO AT 20

Photographer Helmut Newton's monumental art book gets an elegant anniversary re-release

BY JORDAN RIEFE

When photographer Helmut Newton's *SUMO* dropped 20 years ago it landed the only way a 464-page, 78-pound book could land: with a thud, but that didn't stop it from becoming a monumental limited edition. Mostly black-and-white nude photos published by Taschen and released at

Art Basel in 1999, it sold only 10,000 copies, each signed by the artist and accompanied by a metal stand by French designer Philippe Starck. *SUMO* was a landmark in the art book market and set a record a year later as the most expensive book of the 20th century when a copy signed by the models and artists pictured on its pages sold for \$430,000 at a charity auction.

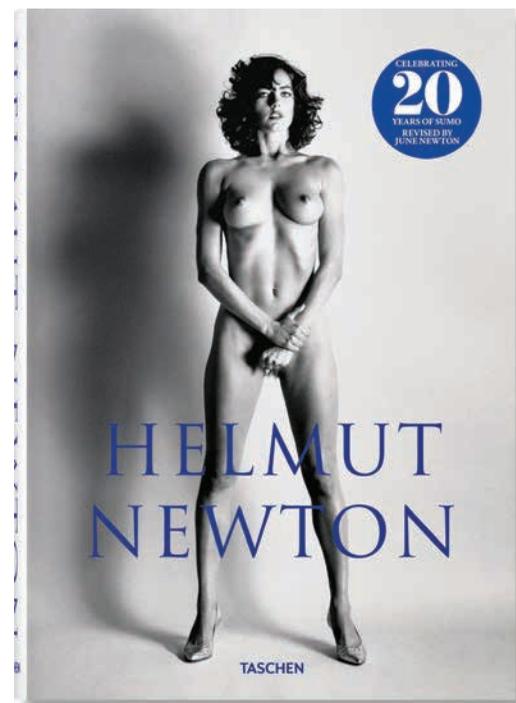
Now, 20 years later, Taschen reminds us what all the fuss was about with an anniversary edition of *SUMO*, a collection of museum-sized prints bound and elegantly packaged in a monochrome casing with one of Newton's Giant Nudes on the cover, a hint at the arresting selection of silver, pearl and shadow-toned captures within. Shrunken from the unwieldy original, it still adds 12 pounds to your bookshelf, while lightening your wallet by \$150.

A journeyman photographer until the age of 40, Helmut Newton became "Newton," beginning in 1961 when he took a job with *Vogue Paris*, a partnership that would last into the late 1980s. The shots are characterized by casually naked or partially nude elegant women in public places, their blasé attitude daring viewers to be shocked.

Many seem empowered by their brazenness, but over time they begin to appear as objects. A paean to luxurious debauchery, the collection includes women that are almost invariably white, young and statuesque — a *Playboy* model in vintage dress, her

shirt open exposing epic artificial enhancement, exits Frank Lloyd Wright's Ennis house toward an awaiting sports car.

Fetishism becomes a thing; nudes with



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plaster casts and body braces. From 1976, Saddle shows a woman in black bra and riding pants and boots, crouched on all fours on a bed with a saddle on her back. In 1980, Newton moves into the studio, beginning his *Big Nudes* series, which lasts until 1993. Inspired by German police photos of the radical Baader-Meinhof gang, the series features full-length imposing tableaux of nude subjects. “The Naked and Dressed” series juxtaposes two tableaux of models, both posed exactly the same, one side clothed, the other without. “Domestic Nudes,” photographed in Los Angeles in the 1980s, features lithe and graceful bodies next to refrigerators, stoves and washing machines.

In “Date Rape,” from 1991, a nude woman is taken from behind, her attacker’s hands covering her face. “On the Beach,” from 1996, shows the truncated remains of a nude woman in a garbage bag on a rocky shore. No matter how lovingly and tastefully rendered his subjects, politically correct, Newton is not. “The term ‘political correctness’ has always appalled me, reminding me of Orwell’s Thought Police and fascist regimes,” he writes in *SUMO*’s brief autobiographical intro.

Born in Berlin in 1920, Newton (changed from Neustädter after he became a British citizen in 1945), grew up a Jew during the rise of the Nazis. By the time he was 16, he decided to become a photographer and, through his mother, was apprenticed for two years to Yva (Else Ernestine Neuländer-Simon), an innovative photographer of the period. In the book’s text, Newton credits 1930s nighttime shots of Paris prostitutes by photographers Erich Salomon and Brassai for the look he later brought to *Vogue Paris*.

Often more compelling than his nudes are Newton’s portraits, like the one of Catherine Deneuve, a cigarette dangling from her lip,

Special Sex Issue

manicured nails tugging at her bra line. In an antic composition embodying Twiggy’s spritely ’60s pop appeal, the fashion icon is caught mid-leap with a kitten collaged be-

side here. Around her is an empty apartment but for a white telephone on the floor and a black-and-white TV showing an episode of *Batman*. At Cannes in 1976, Isabelle Huppert is captured without makeup, her terry cloth robe falling from her shoulders, her face a mask of freckles.



Andy Warhol appears dead as he sleeps in a 1974 portrait, hands folded resting on his black-leather jacketed chest. Anjelica Huston, with eyes whited out like some proto-punk Modigliani, casts a striking image, though not as chilling as Salvador Dali in 1986, three years before his death, eyes wide, mouth agape, reclining in a silk robe with a tube up his nose.

A color portrait taken in 1997 in L.A. shows David Hockney at his easel, grimacing while a painting of sunflowers before him reflects the real-life specimens around him. When asked, “What people do you like to photograph?” Newton was fond of answering, “Those I love, those I admire and those I hate.”

While shooting the *Domestic Nudes* series, the photographer and his wife, June, resided at legendary Chateau Marmont in West Hollywood, and happened to be staying there in the late 1990s when publisher Benedikt Taschen pitched them on the idea of *SUMO*. It’s also where Newton was in a fatal car accident on January 23, 2004, dying soon after at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. His ashes are buried three plots down from Marlene Dietrich’s final resting place at the Städtischer Friedhof III in Berlin.

For more information: taschen.com/pages/en/catalogue/photography/all/01104/facts_helmut_newton_sumo_20th_anniversary.htm



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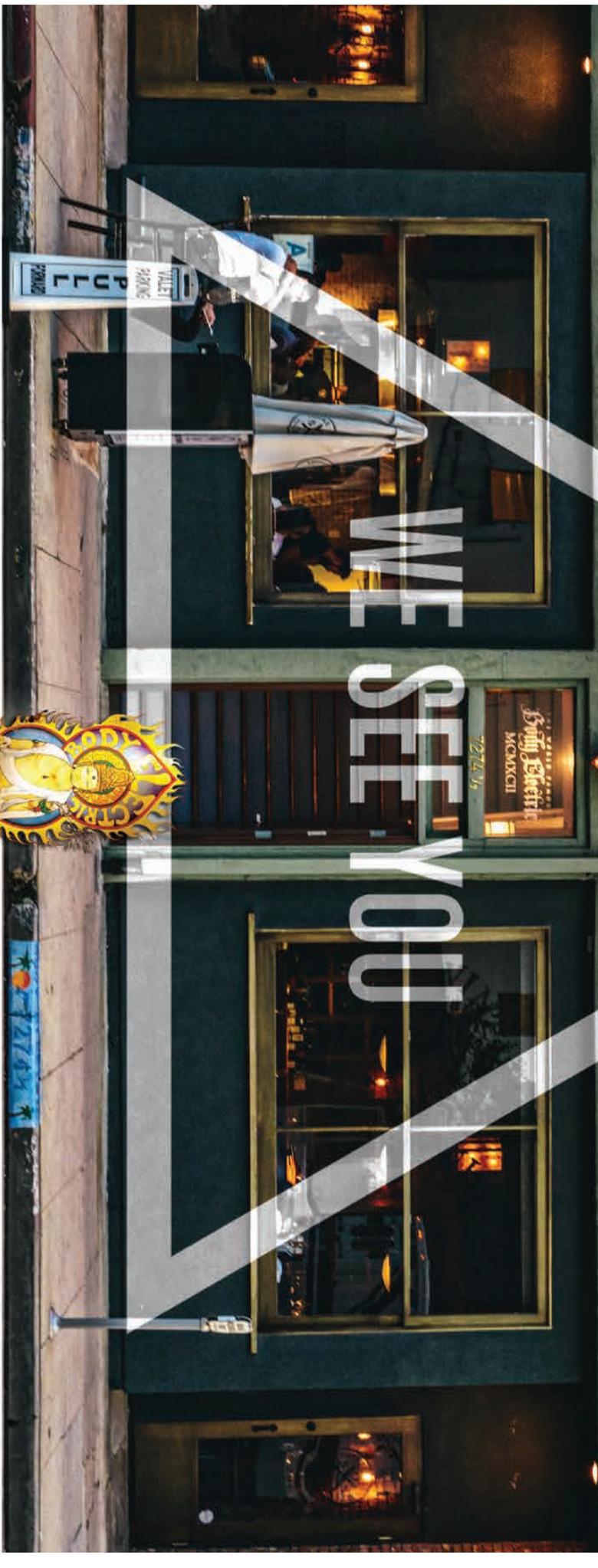
Important information about the educational debt, earnings, and completion rates of students who attended this school can be found at: lafilm.edu/disclosures.

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THE NAUGHTY WORLD OF SIENNA SINCLAIRE

L.A.'s "Naughty Girl" has turned sex-positive empowerment into a lifestyle.

BY LINA LECARO



Special
Sex
Issue

city's past by its naughty history... every city has one."

A magazine, website, and Naughty Tours of L.A. soon followed. Naughty Los Angeles

online lists every naughty event here via calendar. Sinclair also helps people plan trips to L.A. with ebooks and throws her own private members-only monthly parties via a Meetup group that's 10,000 members strong.

Google the "Naughty Girl of L.A." and Sinclair's image and online offerings will pop up, something she's proud of. "I've worked hard to earn that title," she says. "No one else has taken L.A.'s naughty side to the level that I have."

Sinclair's Naughty Los Angeles parties aren't "swinger parties," but they do get wild. She doesn't kiss and tell about how much, but says that people can and do "get as comfortable as they want or not."

"Members don't just attend my events for the 'naughty,'" she insists. "They keep coming for how amazing my themes are, the people, me, how safe I make them feel... No one else hosts events like mine in L.A. I'm not saying there aren't "sex parties" in L.A., but most of them just say "dress sexy," "wear a mask." Then they find some house with an EDM DJ and fill it with couples for sex. Boring! I've been to those parties a million times."

Sinclair employs themes and immersive touches at erotic events held in her spacious,

When we were kids, "naughty" was a negative word. But as adults it's something entirely different. It's about being confident in yourself and your body. Naughty is relative, subjective and it can mean whatever an individual wants it to. It isn't a competition. It's something personal to explore and respect. So says Sienna Sinclair, the self-proclaimed "Naughty Girl of L.A.," a woman who has sought to celebrate the naughty inside of everyone via books, parties and fashion, online and in the flesh.

"Some explore their naughty side and realize they are pretty tame, and that's fine. Then there are those who take it to the next level," the Los Feliz resident shares on a recent sultry afternoon. "By exploring your naughty, it helps you to learn so much about yourself."

"Think about when you first started having sex or exploring your sexuality," she continues. "I'm sure you were nervous, scared, shy, unsure, lacking confidence. But the more you explored and learned about yourself, the more confident you became, the sexier you felt and the more naughty you wanted to be."

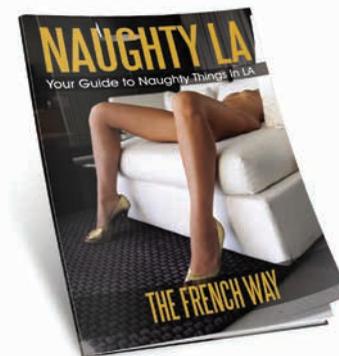
When Sinclair moved to L.A. from London several years ago, she sought to meld her love of history, sex and travel into a livelihood. She decided to write a coffee table travel book, and proceeded to spend two years putting it together, covering the 1920s to present day in Los Angeles, and featuring sexy things to do — from restaurants, hotels and clubs to burlesque shows, sex clubs and fetish parties.

"There wasn't a naughty history book on L.A., so that took a lot of research, watching movies, documentaries and reading lots of books," she recalls. "You can tell a lot about a

"YOU CAN TELL A LOT ABOUT A CITY'S PAST BY ITS NAUGHTY HISTORY... EVERY CITY HAS ONE"

— SIENNA SINCLAIRE

gorgeous home. She has a hot tub and heated pool and people usually get naked. Entertainment, music, drinks and snacks, plus unique touches incorporating costume, interactive demos and more make for a decadent environment that recalls *Eyes Wide Shut*-style fetes but with a more thematic, intimate and inclusive vibe.



SIENNA SINCLAIRE'S 5 FAVORITE NAUGHTY SPOTS

BY SIENNA SINCLAIRE

Club Joi: "Only swingers club in L.A. that's open weekly. Fun place to go for couples where couples can play and dance." clubjoi.com.

The Pleasure Chest: "First female friendly sex toy store from the '70s that caters to everyone. They are extremely knowledgeable and welcoming to any sexuality. Plus, they offer free sex classes on Wednesdays." 7733 Santa Monica Blvd, West Hollywood. (323) 650-1022. thepleasurechest.com.

Jumbo's Clown Room: "This is a fun local bar that's not your normal strip club. It's very small, so gets crowded quickly. It's a bikini bar where women don't take off their clothes, it's more about the acts." 5153 Hollywood Blvd. jumbos.com.

Babylon Cabaret: "Sexy burlesque shows on the weekends at El Cid with different themes. You can go with friends or on a date. Outdoor patio for drinks, dinner and show inside. Makes for a sexy night out." 4212 W Sunset Blvd. babyloncabaret.com.

Nude Comedy LA: "Something different and fun to do in L.A. They have different themes from Bingo, pool parties to a regular comedy night. They have a small theater where you go to watch comedians in the nude. Guests are welcome to come naked but not required." nudecomedyla.com.

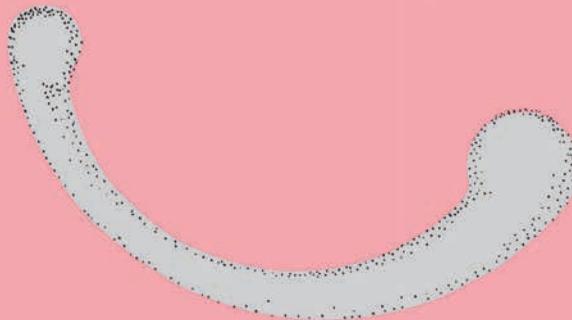
Though she's a fit blonde who fancies seductive clothing (which led to an online clothing shop), she promotes body positivity for women and men of all sizes and styles. After seeing how people were treated at nightclubs and at swinger parties because of the way they looked, their size and choices in life, Sinclair decided her gatherings would never discriminate. Naughty is best when there's a nice and varied party mix.

"Everyone is beautiful in their own way. Women of all sizes aren't ashamed of their bodies as they walk around my house naked and men just loving the way they look," she

Tried & True



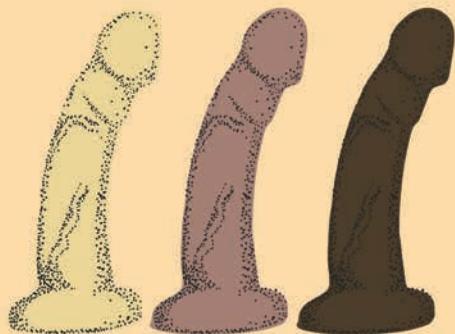
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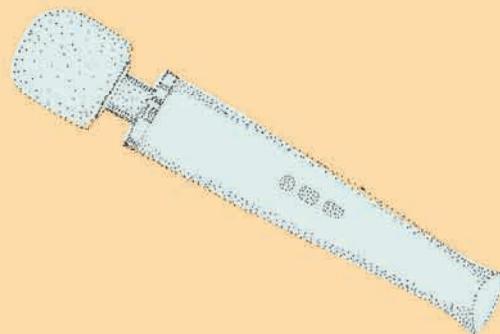
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WHO IS THE NAUGHTY GIRL?

All of us ladies have an inner "Naughty Girl." Sometimes we just need a little extra help to bring her out. This book was written for anyone who wants to release their inner Naughty Girl. I'm here to show you how to do it while keeping your clothes on. It's not difficult at all. Bringing your Naughty Girl to life, even for a little while, can be quite liberating and give you a new sense of freedom, delight and power.

Whether you live in L.A. or you're just visiting, this book will help you explore another side to L.A.—its naughty side. Sex and beauty are openly worshipped here, yet so much of its naughty side remains in the shadows. You just need to know where to look. Even if you don't live in L.A. or never plan to visit you can still learn all about its racy history.

My hope is that after you read this book you'll be intrigued to discover the steamy, sexy side of Los Angeles while exploring your secret desires. It'll be a fun adventure, and I'm delighted to be your kinky tour guide.

www.SinclairaSinclair.com

relates about her open, friendly, sex positive and body positive environments. "It's such an amazing experience when you're in a room full of people who love their bodies, have no judgements, and are exposing themselves in such a private way to others."

Empowering women in particular is a strong undercurrent to everything Sinclair does, and banishing sex-shaming is something she fights and writes about in her blogs and social media.

"I'm sex-shamed on a daily basis," she reveals. "But [it's] something I'm used to as I know my line of work is going to get a lot of negative comments and I need to walk a fine line when it comes to sharing it with others."

In terms of her events, Sinclair has what she calls "Naughty Levels."

"I tell my guests that everyone has their own naughty level. And whatever that level is, no one should be made fun of or be made to feel bad," she explains. "Sex shaming isn't just about shaming those for

being naughty as it can be the reverse — for not being naughty. So I remind people of both. No guest is to be made to feel bad if they are having sex with more than one person, group, etc. or if they are not to be made to feel bad for just coming and watching. I have many members who just come to watch, as they want to see what my parties are about, if these parties are for them, or they are taking baby steps."

Naughty Girl clothing, her most recent venture, is, like her events, about challenging societal boundaries about what's "appropriate."

"I want to point out that you can look amazing no matter your age," Sinclair, who is 41, proclaims. "I see so many women changing their style of dress as they get older. It's as if women or men just give up when they reach a certain age. I want to help women to look and feel their best with my clothing line. When you look your best, you feel more confident. When you feel confident in what you're wearing, you feel sexy."

Teaching confidence classes for both men and women in person, on YouTube and via her

blogs, Sinclair's clothing outlet is just another extension of her lifestyle brand's bold and bodacious mindset. She also sells sex toys via her website and hopes to expand that end of the business soon. Naughty Guides to cities beyond L.A., including Vegas, San Francisco, San Diego, and Vancouver have furthered



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her reach as well. "I travel around the world, and since I can't write a book on every city, I write blogs on my website," she says. "People can learn how to travel more naughty along with different things to do in a city."

Combining it all has helped the female entrepreneur go more mainstream, and as culture shifts lean toward open and accepting views on sex, she clearly aims to lead the way.

"Just at my parties alone, I see complete changes in people from when they first attend. They will usually arrive shy, nervous, scared as to what to expect and that's all normal," she explains. "They see others being their best selves, a safe place to come and explore their sexuality (or just watch), meeting like-minded people, a place where there is no body shaming, and it changes them. They go from being that shy person to walking in with confidence and being more open to their naughty natures."

For more information: NaughtyLifestyle-Guide.com; NaughtyTravelGuide.com; NaughtyStore.la; NaughtyGirlShop.com

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MOTHER NATURE'S LITTLE BLUE PILL?

From Israel to Panama to Los Angeles, we explore the science of cannabis and sex, and some of its products

BY MICHAEL MILLER



PHOTO BY DIMITRI BANG ON UNSPLASH

It's just sex for goodness' sake! We were all given the body parts to perform and pleasure, and we are all physiologically programmed by our brains to not only "want to do it" but also to "need to do it" to ensure procreation. Sex may be one of the physical functions, whether alone or with a fellow human, that is performed most frequently in a lifetime — it is certainly one of the things we think most about.

Psychologists have determined that women think about sex about 19 times per day or once every 50 minutes, while men think of sex every 28 minutes or about 27 times per day.

All this thinking about sex, but is it really contributing to action? Like the cannabis plant itself, sex is equal parts loved and stigmatized. I set out to separate the myths from facts to understand the science of cannabis and its physiological and psychological effects, if any, on sexual appetite, performance and experience.

Anxiety Is the Key

Good ol' anxiety is and has always been the

biggest sexual buzz kill. To confirm that, I asked 200 random men and women two questions: What feeling does anxiety cause, and does anxiety affect your sexuality and/or performance? Never has a "cause" had more of an effect: All questioned had experienced some of these known symptoms: panic, decrease in libido, depression, headaches, upset stomach, irritability, nausea, loss of interest, insomnia, a sense of impending doom, headaches, social isolation, fatigue and muscle tension. The physical side effects of anxiety cause the body to go into a defensive mode, which not surprisingly, adversely affects blood flow. For men, this leads to erectile dysfunction and performance issues; for women, it can cause vaginal dryness.

I turned to the professionals to assist and put some proverbial meat on the cannabis and sexuality bone.

The Science

It's raining with nearly 100 percent humidity in Panama City when I meet with Dr. Sandra Carrillo, one of Latin America's leading can-

nabis clinicians. She is also a well-respected academic and co-founder of Medicanna, a global medical cannabis advisory organization. Dr. Carrillo provided a 101 primer on the developing science surrounding cannabis and human sexuality. "Cannabinoids interact with the hypothalamic-pituitary-gonadal axis in the brain. This axis controls hormones and neurotransmitters that affect sexual behavior. Unfortunately, limited studies are with rats not humans. That said, CB1 receptors in the hypothalamus appear to cause the release of hormones and oxytocin, and activation of the CB1 receptor appears to enhance this release.

This has important roles in sexual function for both men and women."

I listened with amazement and fascination as Dr. Carrillo continued. "In males, this release affects testosterone levels. In females, hormones and neuro-transmitters such as dopamine combine. Cannabinoid receptors in other areas of the brain (including the hypothalamus, prefrontal cortex, amygdala and hippocampus) also affect sexual function. Cannabinoids themselves have been correlated with measures of arousal increase due to in part and the slowing of the perception of time, which can prolong feelings of pleasure. There is also

Special
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A LITTLE HELP FROM THE MARKET

There are a number of established and new products on the market that use THC and/or CBD as an ingredient. These include:

Foria: Although only a few years old, a few years in cannabis is a lifetime. Foria is the grandmother of cannabis-based intimacy products. A pioneer in offering both THC- and CBD-based products for pleasure enhancement, pain relief and overall wellness, they're most known for "Pleasure," their natural arousal line of products. Foria information states that it "enhances tactile sensations while decreasing tension, discomfort and dryness," with their plant-based products using only sun-grown, sustainable cannabis and hemp.

Quim: Ray Nystrom, Quim's co-founder and CEO created a self-care line for "humans with vaginas and humans without vaginas who love vaginas." She partnered with co-founder Rachel Washtien to de-stigmatize vagina wellness and create a plant-based intimate wellness company after experiencing years of recurrent vaginal health issues and finding limited options. "We want people to start thinking in a vagina-forward way" she told me, adding, "We want to provide tools for daily self-care rituals." The Quim THC/CBD product line (with fantastically creative names) increases blood flow, promotes pelvic relaxation, decreases inflammation and pain, intensifies sensation and libido, and increases natural lubrication; it includes, among others: Happy Clam Everyday Oil, an "eye cream for the vagina" and Smooth Operator Intimate Serum (coming soon).

Her Highness: The new lifestyle female brand, available October 1, is designed to make women's lives better, help reduce stigma and enhance cannabis and sexual empowerment. Co-founders and fellow New Yorkers, Laura Eisman and Allison Krongard created "Highly Orgasmic" as a cannabis on-ramp for both new and experienced female users. Her Highness offers a CBD and THC intimacy product, which Krongard described as "addressing the most common pleasure and pain points of a woman, including lack of sleep, joy and sexual gratification." Together with an herbalist and guidance from gynecologists, after four years of development they created a product with a unique and proprietary combination of natural ingredients suspended in organic California olive oil. Ingredients include, an ancient South American herb known to cause salivation and pulsation on the tongue, which was considered beneficial to the uterine environment and, in Krongard's words, "gifts a woman everything from a tiny tingle to a thunderous orgasm."

Ignite: The brainchild of Kush Queen founder Olivia Alexander "created the Ignite line of products because at the time there [were] no water-based, latex-safe lubricants on the market. Other lubricants that were available took an hour to work. When it comes to sex, who has that kind of time to wait?" Alexander stated that "the Ignite products are not just infused oils but actual lubricants." She explained that the Ignite products are based on hard science — nanotechnology — which allows small particles to be absorbed into the bloodstream faster and more effectively. An additional benefit compared to an oil-based substance (which is an absolute no-no when using a latex condom) is that it creates a water-based lubricant. Ignite is paraben- and petrochemical-free and non-staining.

CanBeDone: Thanks to the four members of the co-founding team: Raja Agani (previously Facebook), marine veterans Rich Shope and Robert Seo, and adult film performer Spencer Barrick, we have a new unique product combination. Shope and Seo used CBD, which helped them with PTSD and chronic pain suffered after years of military service. Barrick had heard about multiple sexually-related physical and emotional issues during his time in the adult industry. CanBeDone products are available at Saks 5th Avenue and online. The supplement line includes a full spectrum CBD organic hemp oil in two flavors. CanBeDone is also the producer of the very first vegan condom called, "P.S." The "P.S." name is symbolic of the final note in a personal letter. "This embodies the personal touch of our company and brand," Barrick stated. The condom is clear, ultra-thin, made of the highest-grade latex and silicone lubricant, and has no rubber smell due to the company's proprietary purification process. All condoms are tested with electric current to exceed FDA safety requirements. —MICHAEL MILLER



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anecdotal support that cannabinoids can lower sexual inhibitions, increase the willingness to experience, and enhance sensations of touch, smell, sight, taste and hearing.”

Dr. Lumír Hanuš is a Czech analytic chemist and leading authority in the field of cannabis research. Dr. Hanuš, along with William Devane, isolated and discovered “anandamide,” an essential cannabinoid receptor in 1992 and is now the namesake of Lumír Labs in Jerusalem.

He is presently conducting research on endometriosis, one of the most painful and common reproductive system issues, with the goal of creating a cannabinoid based solution, after discovering the female reproductive system contains the second highest source of cannabinoid receptors in the human body outside of the brain

At CannX, one of the world’s leading cannabis science and medical conferences, recently held in Tel Aviv, Dr. Hanus explained that “endo-can-

ACCORDING TO BDS ANALYTICS, 33 PERCENT OF CANNABIS CONSUMERS IN SOCIAL USE TOPICAL PRODUCTS, WITH 11 PERCENT OF THOSE PEOPLE USING THEM FOR SEXUAL PURPOSES.

nabinoid receptors in the human body are there not by mistake or chance, but for a reason.” He continued, “It often takes years to find a reason, but objectively, the activation of these receptors should have many benefits. It’s logical that activating this system should by definition, enhance areas of female sexuality.”

Mara Gordon specializes in the development of cannabis extract treatment protocols for seriously ill patients and is the founder of Zelda Therapeutics and Aunt Zelda’s. She has a global reputation, which increased further as a result of her on screen involvement in Ricky Lake’s recent Netflix documentary, *Weed The People*. Mara’s brilliance is only exceeded by her passion.

In a recent sit-down, I asked Mara, other than in the context of life-threatening illness, if the issue of the sex and cannabis ever arose with patients.

“Cannabis is a vasodilator which means that it increases blood flow when ingested or applied. It goes without saying the importance of healthy blood flow in human sexuality. Cannabis also relaxes soft tissues and increases vaginal lubrication. Consumption in moderate amounts prior

to intercourse can relieve stress and pain that often interferes with sexual pleasure. For older women, using a topical vaginal product is often the difference between a painful experience and a pleasurable one”.

Recent Studies and Surveys

Surprisingly, there are very few studies to date on the subject. Two recent research papers were published that evidenced positive findings with pre-performance cannabis use and sexuality. “The Relationship between Marijuana Use

**Special
Sex
Issue**

Prior to Sex and Sexual Function in Women” was published by Becky Lynn, MD., Elevier, Inc., on behalf of the Society for Sexual Medicine. It determined that sexual drive, satisfaction, orgasm and overall experience was enhanced and that cannabis doubled the likelihood of a satisfactory orgasm.

A survey organized by Eaze and Lioness, a maker of vibrators, focused primarily on orgasms and determined that the time to reach orgasm was 25 percent less for up to 71 percent of respondents; more satisfying orgasms were reported by up to 79 percent; more orgasms were experienced for up to 79 percent; and duration of orgasm increased for up to 46 percent.

Finally, a study released on September 19 in *Scientific Reports*, entitled “Characterization and Localization of the Endocannabinoid System Components in the Adult Human Testes,” demonstrated that endocannabinoid receptors are also found in the human testes and sperm, suggesting that cannabinoids could also play a significant role in male sexuality.

L.A. Weekly Survey

With the assistance of Potguide, *L.A. Weekly* conducted its own survey last month in an attempt to obtain additional evidentiary data. Results were consistent with and expanded upon recent findings:

Use: 54 percent of respondents consumed prior to any type of intimacy;

Timing: 89 percent consumed prior to sexual intercourse;

Satisfied: 47 percent had a more rewarding experience;

Relaxed: 61 percent came to the bedroom more relaxed;

Intensity: 47 percent expressed greater intensity during the session;

Better performance: 34 percent perceived that they performed better;

Orgasm: 40 percent had a better and/or longer orgasm.

While the medical establishment jury is still out due to the dearth of clinical studies and data, the available anecdotal, empirical and evidentiary data are promising. However one deals with anxiety and other human conditions, cannabis has shown to have extraordinary positive physical and psychological effects.

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FILM

AN ABOMINABLE FRIENDSHIP

A new human-beast bonding movie from the studio behind *How to Train Your Dragon*; also, two-handed satire about a two-bit preacher

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 27

In *Abominable*, a young woman (Chloe Bennet) discovers a cute and cuddly Yeti living on the roof of her Shanghai apartment building. A greedy capitalist (Eddie Izzard) wants the creature, nicknamed “Everest,” for himself, but the plucky girl collaborates with two friends to set it free. Jill Culton directed this feel-good animated family film from the same studio that created *How to Train Your Dragon*. Pleasant animation and bite-size bromides mark this DreamWorks release.

The year before her death from an accidental barbiturate overdose, Judy Garland arrived in London to perform at The Talk of the Town, the nightclub formerly known as the Hippodrome. The five-week run was sold out in anticipation of “the world’s greatest entertainer,” and it proved to be the ac-

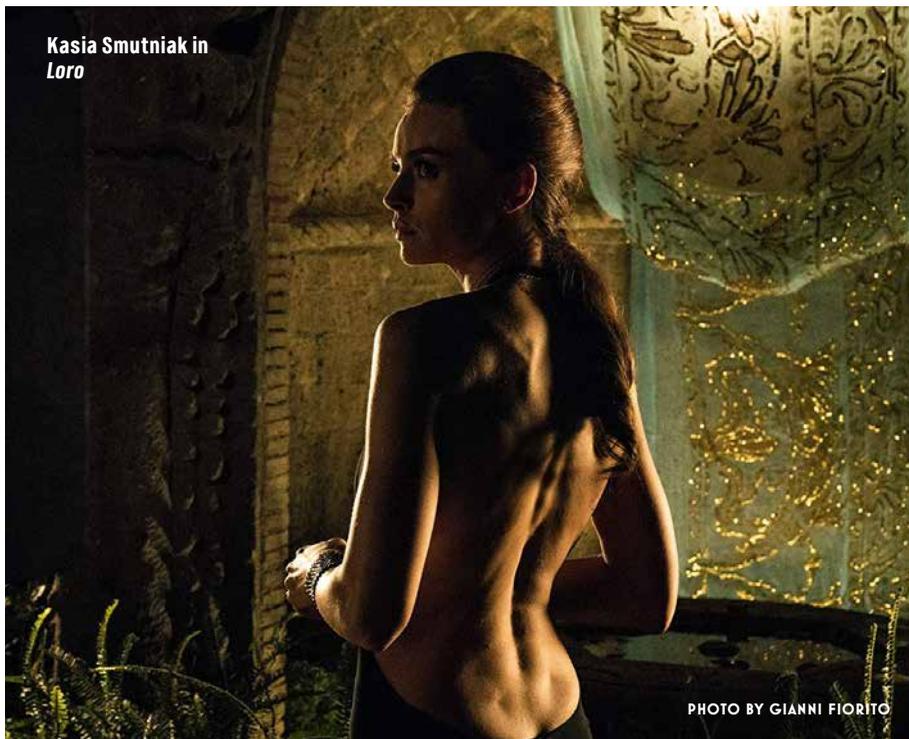
tor-singer’s last hurrah. *Judy*, starring Renée Zellweger, throws a spotlight on the showbiz legend, whose addiction to drugs and alcohol tragically cut short the career of a great performer whose career includes such high points as *The Wizard of Oz*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, and *A Star Is Born*. Directed by Rupert Goold from a screenplay by Tom Edge.

Limited

Friday, September 27

Loro is the latest epic from the consistently provocative Italian maestro Paolo Sorrentino. A flamboyant dive into the seedy life of Italian politician Silvio Berlusconi, the film frames the Italian media tycoon turned prime minister (played with brio by Toni Servillo) as an egomaniacal billionaire who managed to dominate Italian politics in the mid-2000s despite having no prior government or administrative experience. (Remind you of anyone?) As director, Sorrentino dazzles with a robust flow of arresting images while satirizing the human animal’s penchant for greed and corruption. *Laemmle Royal*, 11523 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, Fri., Sept. 27, various showtimes; \$9-\$13. (310) 478-3836, laemmle.com.

The Day Shall Come is two-handed satire about a two-bit open-air preacher (Marchant

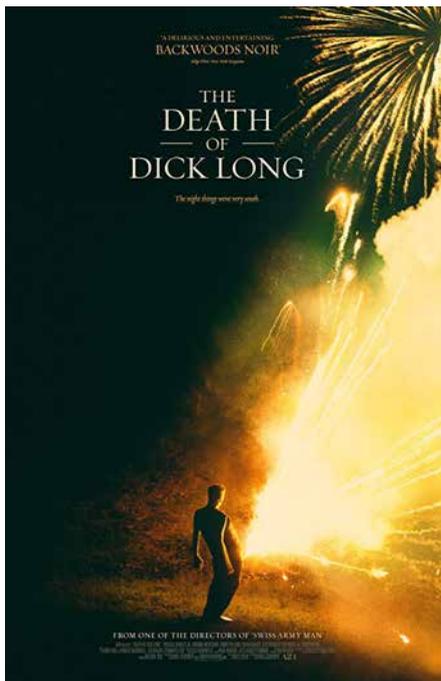


Kasia Smutniak in
Loro

PHOTO BY GIANNI FIORITO

Davis) from Miami who becomes the target of the FBI when Middle Eastern terrorists offer to fund his revolution. Anna Kendrick plays the agent who resorts to absurd ruses to entrap the wannabe religious leader. Chris Morris (director of the boldly entertaining terrorist comedy *Four Lions*) helms a pleasantly impudent script by Morris and Jesse Armstrong. *Alamo Drafthouse*, 700 W. 7th St., Ste. U240, downtown; Fri., Sept. 27, various showtimes; \$15-\$18 (213) 217-9027, drafthouse.com.

The Death of Dick Long is the sophomore effort of Daniel Scheinert (Swiss Army Man



— known colloquially as the “farting corpse movie”), a ribald comedy about the drummer in a small town Alabama garage band

who expires after a night of heavy boozing, and his bandmates’ fumbling attempts to cover up the accident. A noir premise played for laughs, the film plumbs some poignant depths when it isn’t watching its slacker characters squirm like worms on a fishhook. Billy Chew penned the script. *Alamo Drafthouse*, 700 W. 7th St., Ste. U240, downtown; Fri., Sept. 27, various showtimes; \$15-\$18 (213) 217-9027, drafthouse.com.

Tuesday, October 1

Paths of Glory is one of the few legitimately great, authentically anti-war films of the 20th century, rendered unbearably suspenseful under the master hand of Stanley Kubrick. It was the film that launched the photographer-turned-film-director to international fame. Calder Willingham and Jim Thompson worked on the screenplay from a Humphrey Cobb novel about a group of French soldiers on trial for cowardice in the thick of WWI. The army commanders, played by Adolph Menjou and George Macready, are cold and heartless, while the officer (Kirk Douglas) tasked with defending the soldiers in the courtroom is a decent man whose moral outrage provokes him to some splendid emotional outbursts. France frowned on the film’s depiction of military corruption and banned it for several years. It’s playing in tandem with the Skirball Center’s exhibition *Through a Different Lens: Stanley Kubrick Photographs*. Tickets are free with museum admission. *Skirball Cultural Center*, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Brentwood; Tue., Oct. 1, 1:30 p.m.; free. (310) 440-4500, skirball.org.

Also opening Friday, Sept. 27: 10 Minutes Gone; First Love; The Golden Glove; Groupers; Jim Allison: Breakthrough; The Laundromat; Sister Aimee.

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Game of Thrones' Emmy wins this week ended its TV reign with a bang — actually a bounty of bangs — apropos for a show that never held back in terms of sexuality. While the popular HBO drama will be remembered for its powerful acting and thematic intensity depicting violent and fantastical storylines — let's be honest, the thing a lot of people will probably remember most will be seeing their favorite Game-of Thrones getting it on. *GOT*, and really all of HBO's best shows, proved that television that turns us on could still be smart, compelling and written well. This is something young millennials might take for granted, but Gen-X era and older viewers have had to adjust to. Before thoughtfully-produced TV was allowed to be as provocative, all we had in terms of titillation on cable was *Red Shoe Diaries*, *Taxi Cab Confessions*, *Cathouse* and soft-core Cinemax ("Skinemax") shows, which were as bad and simplistic as porn itself.

Things were even worse on network TV, which will never be as sexy as cable or streaming service fare, though a few shows and characters still come to mind (the ladies of *Charlies Angels* or Jack Tripper on *Three's Company*, for example). Pre-TV ratings board guidelines (TV-13, TV-MA, etc), the networks would actually broadcast viewer or parental "discretion advised" warnings sometimes in voiceover/sometimes in words across the screen ('70s shows like *Soap* and *The Newlywed Game*). But by the '80s and '90s, anything kinda went in terms of sexual situations, innuendo and jokes (*Married... With Children*, *Golden Girls*, *Friends*, *Two & A Half Men* and *Seinfeld's* infamous "The Contest" episode). Still, actual sex scenes on network TV were and pretty much still are not-hot, consisting of strategically shot flashes of skin between sheets, badly-staged soap opera style "love-making," or worse, reality shows featuring attention-whores we don't care about awkwardly groping and sucking face.

For this lusty TV list, cable and streamed shows are tops (not bottoms) for obvious reasons. They have more freedom to explore seduction on screen and they take it, expressing the range of desire and sensual expression as primal, complex and unique as it truly can be for each and every one of us.

Orange is the New Black (Netflix)

The women in prison trope has long been driven by exploitive, male-fantasy, wherein hot n' horny gals get to rubbing or humping since there are no penises around. In reality, incarcerated females are a lot more complex, developing bonds that go way beyond sex. But *OITNB* was still a very sexy show, both with its straight coital scenes in flashback and lesbian moments behind bars. The relationship between Piper (Taylor Schilling) and Alex (Laura Prepon) was particularly steamy at times, but even though the couple embodied the two-comely-gals cliché, they were anything but basic. The finale left their relationship in question but I think

TELEVISION

TURN-ON TV

The 10 sexiest television shows ever

BY LINA LECARO



we all hope the pair ended up together living a lifetime of conjugal bliss.

Californication (Showtime)

Hank Moody, the cocky writer/pothead/sex addict, at the center of this show, was pretty much a douchebag. But David Duchovny's charisma made us root for him, even when he didn't deserve it. His connection to his ex-wife and daughter humanized the guy — kinda. This one was a fun watch (for both men and women) because the show's raunchy writing and depictions of pleasure were never just about its male stars. *Cali's* girls were often the aggressors here, going for what they wanted (usually Hank) and getting it, multiple times if they so desired.

Vida (Starz)

Beyond its extremely accurate depiction of Latin people living in Boyle Heights, *Vida* is one of, if not the, most real and raw shows currently on TV. Straight, gay, bi, gender-fluid and non-binary identified characters are given equal time and exploration, pursuing goals and getting off in varied ways (sex scenes include vibrators, strap-ons, cunnilingus in public, you name it). Here, it never feels gratuitous, it just feels like life.

Pose (FX)

Ryan Murphy's ground-breaking depiction of the New York Ballroom scene at its height is as daring as it is inclusive, with multi-dimensional characters that you can't take your eyes off of. The frank and fabulous dialog and stellar performances (many from actual trans performers) make *Pose* the show the LGBTQ community needs right now, and even at its most risqué, it's relatable.

Queer as Folk (HBO)

Queer didn't just open the door for shows like *Pose*, it ballsily broke it off. (Read our LGBTQ columnist Micheal Cooper's piece about the show's significance and planned reboot in last week's print edition and online).

The L Word (Showtime)

Also getting a reboot this year, *The L Word* was the gay female answer to *QAF*, and in many ways it was more accessible, even if its characters were just as conflicted. Though Jennifer Beals was the star, it was the escapades of the alluring and androgynous Shane (Katherine Sian Moennig) who many of us watched it for. And I don't think I'm alone in admitting she made many of us straight gals question our preferences every time the show aired.

Masters of Sex (Showtime)

Dealing with sexual arousal in a scientific way — chronicling the work of noted researchers William Masters and Virginia Johnson — didn't make this Showtime offering feel staid or clinical. Quite the opposite — the chemistry between the pair was as complex and illuminating as the research they conducted and participated in. The flesh-on-flesh moments might have had a scientific purpose, but they were enticing too, especially for women (female sexual response was a focus in their studies).

Now Apocalypse (Starz)

Greg Araki was never shy about showing kink, fetish or gay sex on screen in his films, and his millennial-driven TV series on Starz is no exception. As I noted in my April cover story about this vibrant and vampy show, it's got "vaping, sexting, mate-swapping, three-ways, pee play, role play, rolling, trolling and tripping, webcams, online dating, [and] public sex," all played effervescently by former child stars, making for a satisfyingly timely romp.

Game of Thrones (HBO)

Thrones was never afraid to get freaky, and for many it crossed the line when it depicted rape and incest. HBO, which already pushed boundaries with *The Sopranos*, *Hung*, *True Blood* and more (see our Honorable Mentions below) seemed out to top itself with this brutal look at nobility and mysticism. Driven by wanton desire for power, and filled with wicked intentions, *GOT* ruled whether its characters were covered in armor on the battlefield or stripped naked (which was often) in the bedroom.

Sex and the City (HBO)

Living on in heavily-edited repeats on the E! channel, HBO's *SATC* comes off a bit dated today (an episode I caught recently had the voracious Samantha telling the girls about "the hot new trend" of grooming one's pubes, something that's ubiquitous these days thanks to porn). Carrie, Sam, Miranda and Charlotte all met dudes the old fashioned way with nary a mention of online dating (how most of us do it these days). Still, the sisterhood and the agency with which writer Carrie Bradshaw and her pals sought relationships and sometimes even no-strings satisfaction, was inspiring for many of us, as there was nothing else like it on before on TV. *SATC* led to a backlash against sex shaming and a more open-minded and liberated view of female sexuality that continues to resonate today. And we'll drink a Cosmo to that.

Honorable Mentions: *The Sopranos* (HBO); *Boardwalk Empire* (HBO); *Nip/Tuck* (FX); *Mad Men* (A&E); *Hung* (HBO); *The Affair* (Showtime); *True Blood* (HBO); *Love & Robots* (Netflix); *Girls* (HBO); *The Tudors* (Showtime); *Black Sails* (Starz); *Transparent* (Amazon); *Sense8* (Netflix)

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WHERE PEOPLE CAN JUST BE PEOPLE

The all-inclusive Jolene Strip Night at Cheetahs is a safe space and normalizing outlet for sexuality

BY BRETT CALLWOOD



PHOTO BY ERIC NOPANEN ON UNSPLASH

There are a number of strip clubs in Hollywood that have become iconic — neon reminders of the region's '80s debauchery, often dragged into the “now” by their heavy trap/hip-hop soundtracks. There's The Body Shop and the Seventh Veil on Sunset, and then bikini bar Cheetahs over on Hollywood Boulevard. And it is at the latter that the Jolene night is taking place monthly.

Jolene is an all-inclusive strip night, meaning trans women, female-identifying and non-binary dancers are not only welcomed but encouraged.

Sarah Elizabeth Graves, aka Baby Magick, DJs at Jolene, and she says that it offers opportunities to dancers who don't fit in at any other strip night around Los Angeles and maybe even around the U.S.

“Each girl does two or three numbers, which

is great,” Graves says. “It's always packed, always sold out, because especially in the queer community in Los Angeles, we're looking for places to be. Looking for places to call home. To be able to go there and be sexually open, to feel sexy, and be tipped and be treated as just another dancer, that's a huge thing. So it's very inclusive, very normalizing, and I hope it's a kick-off to how we as the other women will be treated in the future.”

Graves has been DJing since 2010, predating her transition. That happened four years later and, following a bit of time off, she came back with a bang as a resident DJ at the prestigious Cloak & Dagger event. Now, she's an in demand DJ on the industrial/post-industrial scene, DJing for Cold Waves, the Vancouver Fetish Weekend and more. But she's found a home in the less dark surroundings of Jolene. That's telling — she says that everyone is welcome.

“There's definitely a queer community because we all show up hard for each other, but there are cis men,” she says. “Dita Von Teese came last time and she was hanging out, and straight cis couples come just to support and look at some hot ass women doing their thing. It's a very open and mixed safe space. As a trans woman, this is one of the top safe spaces, where I can feel like a human as opposed to a trans woman in a place where I don't know what's going to happen. I don't know if someone hitting on me is going to have an issue that I'm trans. With this place, we're all human, being



Baby Magick

I'm not gonna throw down some really intense German techno industrial,” she says. “I'll have it on deck. I know what your body will react to. It's very interesting, going from a Cold Waves post-industrial background, and playing Ginuwine's ‘Pony,’ which is a good track. I'm happy to play it because the end goal is people have fun, wanna dance, smile and make money.”

Kraig Tyler DJs under the name Liquid Giraffe, and he's one of the resident DJs at

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Cheetahs. He's been spinning since the '90s in New York, and has also played guitar in bands such

as Crazy Town and Chemlab. He started at Cheetahs about six years ago, and he and Graves are the two DJs used by Jolene. Tyler says that, even outside of the Jolene night, Cheetahs is a different sort of strip club.

“The stage is the focal point, and we have a collection of phenomenal performers who each have their own individual styles,” he says.

“We also do a wide variety of live events and showcases that integrate our performers. To me it's a place of female empowerment, and our crowd is often predominantly women. It's a safe space that is open to anyone who appreciates our show.”

Tyler agrees that diversity in the tunes is key to a good Jolene night.

“Grrrl-powered hip-hop always does well, but the right unpredictable throwback can turn things waaay up,” he says. “[The most requested music is] probably City Girls or Cardi B from the performers, but the crowd rarely makes any requests, as we're constantly catering to our audience with our selections.”

Tyler says that he can't think of any songs that have bombed at Jolene. Graves, though, can remember a momentary misread on the first night.

“I actually played a German techno track when we were first starting out, just to try to gauge and pump up the crowd,” she says. “I don't think that the people that were filtering in had a problem, but it definitely felt like, ‘Oh shit what's this DJ doing? Is this going to be a techno night?’ I pretty quickly changed that into some Nelly and we were good.”

No doubt. Ultimately, Jolene is a special sort of night, one that works because those involved and the vast array of people who attend are completely open-minded, welcoming and enthusiastically accepting. And the tunes are banging. Graves:

“The whole idea behind it was creating an avenue for us to be strong, and strong together.”

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FRI 9/27

Amy LaVere

@ MCCABE'S GUITAR SHOP

Amy LaVere is often described as a country singer, but her songs roam restlessly through jazz and folk to create spells that are dreamy and hypnotic, vaulting her music past genre boundaries into something far more magical. The Memphis-based singer/upright bassist stirs up engrossing moods on her new album, *Painting Blue*, which was produced by her husband and bandmate, Will Sexton. "I don't wanna know about evil/I only wanna know about love," LaVere purrs on the opening track, "I Don't Wanna Know," as dark chords swirl somberly around her. She charts the ups and downs of love on poppy songs such as "No Battle Hymn" and "Not in Memphis," but LaVere is at her most captivating on such sad ballads as "No Room for Baby," which instills an air of nameless mystery. —FALLING JAMES

Magic Circle

@ ZEBULON

This Boston act is part of the new wave of bands flying the flag high for epic doom-laden heavy metal that is obsessed with the timeless inspirations of fantasy, sorcery and wizardry. The group's latest record, *Departed Souls*, is bolstered by the powerful pipes of Brendan Radigan. The group approaches their music from the same angle as many other bands that worship the slower side of Black Sabbath's 1971 classic, *Master of Reality*, and does that well. It's Radigan's vocal power though that elevates Magic Circle to being a special act. Radigan has pipes that match those vintage Ozzy Osbourne performances to the point that when classic-metal pioneers Pagan Altar went on their latest tour, he was called upon to fill live vocal duties, stepping in to the giant shoes vacated in the wake of the 2015 death of their vocalist, Terry Jones. —JASON ROCHE

SAT 9/28

Revocation, Voivod

@ EL REY

It's the sort of technical death metal double bill that will shake your brain right out of its skull while simultaneously leaving you wondering how the various musicians involved were able to play so fast and accurately. Boston's Revocation have been

Samantha Fish



PHOTO BY ALYSSA GAFKJEN

around since the turn of the millennium, and their seventh studio album, *The Outer Ones*, dropped a year ago — a phenomenal piece of work inspired by the novels of H.P. Lovecraft (hence all the eyes and tentacles on the sleeve art). Meanwhile, Canadian band Voivod have been dabbling in these dark arts since '82, blending prog with thrash long before Mastodon came along. Voivod also put out an album a year ago, the superb *The Wake*, so it makes sense that the bands are touring together. Psycoptic, Skeletal Remains and Conjurer also play. —BRETT CALLWOOD

SUN 9/29

Jonathan Richman & Tommy Larkins

@ THE BOOTLEG THEATRE

So yeah, "Roadrunner" and "Pablo Picasso" are masterful works of proto-punk. In fact, that entire debut *Modern Lovers* album is fantastic, and Richman will very likely pull from it during this three night run at the Bootleg. But it's not like Richman has stood still since then, putting out a string of excellent albums including last year's

chill, world music-inspired SA. Tucson drummer Tommy Larkins has been playing with Richman for 18 years now, having previously played in bands such as Naked Prey and Giant Sand. The fact that he gets his name listed at the top alongside Richman speaks volumes. Also Friday, September 27 and Saturday, September 28. —BRETT CALLWOOD

Mega Bog

@ HOLLYWOOD FOREVER

Erin Birgy leads her band Mega Bog through a labyrinth of unusual sounds, mixing jazzy idylls with folk and atmospheric, psychedelic passages. The group's latest album, *Dolphine*, is about the strange creatures whose chose not to evolve as humans but instead remained underwater as dolphins. The theme is a launching point for Birgy's own evolution as a person dealing with tragedy, set against a backdrop of political and environmental chaos on land. According to Birgy's bio, "*Dolphine* is an album for the swimming human shadow obscured by waves." Such glassy, intimate tracks as "I Hear You Listening (To the Bug on My Wall)" segue into the arty, baroque jazz-prog of "Left Door" and the austere, enigmatic folk of "Waiting

in the Story.” Mega Bog open for the jazz-punk Fugazi spinoff The Messthetics. —FALLING JAMES

Gary Clark Jr.

@ THE HOLLYWOOD BOWL

Gary Clark Jr. has long established himself as a masterful guitarist whose passion and fiery playing sets him apart from more retro-minded blues musicians. But he takes his original music to another level on his latest record, *This Land*, mixing funk, soul, psychedelia and anthemic rock to deliver the Austin native's pointed state-of-the-union address. In the title track, which loosely alludes to Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land," Clark declares, "Paranoid and pissed off... 50 acres and a Model A, right in the middle of Trump country/I told you, there goes a neighborhood." While other musicians use the blues to create a happy, escapist Neverland, Clark wields his guitar like a searing light to reveal how divided this country remains today. The atmospheric hard rock of "I Walk Alone" alternates with the militantly confrontational hard funk of "What About Us." —FALLING JAMES

MON 9/30

Goblin

@ THE PALACE

The fear show of the year is here! However — contrary to the American ads that once screamed at you to go see it — this time you'll actually live through it when Claudio Simonetti's *Goblin* gives you the Los Angeles premiere of their live soundtrack to Dario Argento's 1975 film *Profondo rosso* (*Deep Red*). *Profondo rosso* was the first film that *Goblin* scored for Argento — *Goblin* mainman Simonetti wowed him with tracks feverishly written overnight after the producers couldn't get Pink Floyd — and even though it opened at The Tower on Broadway in 1977 under the slightly more lurid title *Dripping Deep Red*, it's as near to that premiere as you can get. A second set covers all the band's hits, including *Suspiria* and *Dawn of the Dead*, as well as tracks from their thrilling new album *The Devil is Back*. —DAVID COTNER

TUE 10/1

Hoodie Allen & Jake Miller

@ EL REY

Welcome to the Whatever USA Tour! Hailing from New York, Hoodie Allen has been described as one of the hardest working artists in the game, with the accolades to prove it. For one, the singer/songwriter's standout 2002 single "No Faith In Brooklyn" has over 20 million views on YouTube alone. Opening for Allen is Jake Miller, who recently unleashed his *Based on a True Story* EP, which he wrote and produced in his own bedroom. The six-track project quickly went on to skyrocket to Top 3 of iTunes' Pop Albums chart. The synergy between the two artists is what makes this one fascinating. The evening will be the perfect fusion of pop, R&B and hip-hop. —SHIRLEY JU

Madison Cunningham

@ BOOTLEG THEATER

"The camera's always on the wrong side of the glass," Madison Cunningham observes on "Plain Letters," from her new album, *Who Are You Now*. "I hope you find a weakness that you're stronger than." The Orange County singer-songwriter moves from breezy pop songs into more inti-

mate folk interludes, all of it smartly delivered with sophisticated arrangements and insightful, thoughtfully lyrics. Like Joni Mitchell, Cunningham is skilled at combining yearning poetry with jazzy chord changes and luscious vocal melodies even on relatively stripped-down acoustic ballads like "Bound." She blossoms even more with full-band backing on "Pin It Down," in which Cunningham tries to define a nameless romantic impulse with nimble vocal dexterity amid funky rhythms. She marvels playfully about the contradictions of living in this city on the breezily engaging "L.A. (Looking Alive)." —FALLING JAMES

WED 10/2

Vampire Weekend

@ HOLLYWOOD BOWL

It seems like Vampire Weekend have been around for forever, selling out huge venues for most of that time. And yet this year's *Father of the Bride*, their fourth studio album, is their first for a major label (Columbia). It's also the group's first album since 2013's *Modern Vampires of the City*, so they really took their time over it. Apparently it was worth the extra effort too — the new album has been critically acclaimed pretty much across the board and it will be great to hear those new songs live at the historic Hollywood Bowl. Southern Saharan soul guitarists Tinariwen are also on the bill, as well as L.A.'s own Richard Pictures, so get there early. —BRETT CALLWOOD

THU 10/3

Mercury Rev, Beth Orton

@ PALACE

Ah now, this one looks interesting. Bobbie Gentry is an American singer/songwriter, and she was one of the first females to compose and produce her own music. 1968's *The Delta Sweete* was her second album, a very personal piece of work about her life in the south. So it's an off-the-wall move by Buffalo, New York band Mercury Rev to re-record the album as *Bobbie Gentry's The Delta Sweete Revisited*, with a variety of female vocalists doing Gentry's job. Brilliant English artist Beth Orton sang "Courtyard" on the album, and it is she that Mercury Rev are taking on the road with them to reproduce the album in a live setting. She'll be wonderful. Marissa Nadler also plays. —BRETT CALLWOOD

Samantha Fish

@ THE TROUBADOUR

"Make up your mind/I can kill or be kind," Samantha Fish declares on "Kill or Be Kind," the title track of her latest album. While the Kansas City native can kill you softly with such relatively restrained and soulful pleas, she is more likely to crank things up on hard-rocking songs like "Bulletproof." And her fiery vocals are made even more searing by her uncompromising guitar playing as she tears through such rollicking tracks as "Watch It Die." Fish initially sets her foreboding vocals to a low R&B simmer before her guitar starts raining down incendiary sparks and her singing turns to a full-on, powerful blues wail. All her pyrotechnics serve an emotional purpose, though, as her intertwined guitar solos and vocal melodies are aimed straight at the heart. With bayou blues-soul man Marc Broussard. Also Friday, October 4. —FALLING JAMES

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