TOUGHER THAN LEATHER

The Tom of Finland Foundation’s fight against censorship continues into the age of social media

BY MICHAEL COOPER
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TOM OF FINLAND (Touko Laaksonen), Portrait of Durk, 1980, Graphite on paper © 1980-2019 Tom of Finland Foundation

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Your Local AAA Travel

Y"/T.he six new works sport suggestive titles — caseANN HASKINS
just regular kids growing up hard in America
with just a bit of hometown nostalgia.

"We had to create a place for ourselves as a matter of survival," says Clark, whose new book, , is his first book, a brave portrait of a
delario and Nguyên Nguyên; plus
Miramontes, and alexx shilling; Rise

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“We had to create a place for ourselves as a matter of social and existential survival, regardless of the potential costs to our freedom,” reads an especially moving passage from the book. “We could have been called a lot of things: brazen vandals, scared kids, threats to social order, self-obsessed egomaniacs, marginalized youth, outsider artists, trend setters, and thrill seekers. But, to me, we were just regular kids growing up hard in America and making the city our own.” Join Bloch for this reading and conversation. Skylight Books, 1814 N Vermont Ave., Los Feliz, Fri., Nov. 15, 7:30 p.m.; $19 (includes book). skylightbooks.com. —TRINA CALDERÓN

**FOOD & DRINK**

**Finger Lickin’ Good**

Chicken tenders will be the poultry of choice at the first TenderFest. Co-organized by John Terzian’s H. Wood Group hospitality company and Off The Menu app—which has hosted similar burger, pizza and chicken wing events in the past—the festival will elevate the humble bar food and appetizer scene. Raising Cane’s, Delilah, Fuku, Hot Motha Clucker and Gus’s World Famous Fried Chicken serve their versions of the fried, juicy bird in all sizes, colors and crispiness, accompanied by, of course, dipping sauces and beer. (VIP guests get to eat from Dave’s Hot Chicken, too.) Famous chefs Nancy Silverton, Wolfgang Puck, Timothy Hollingsworth and Chris Oh will also make the chicken strip the top dog in a charity competition judged by Johnny Zone, Ludo Lefebvre and the memories you make while inebriated because none of it could have happened without you being there. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; Sat., Nov. 16, 7-10 p.m.; $125. (323) 857-6000. lacma.org/event/theater-at-the-museum. —DAVID COTNER

**OPERATION**

**And the Gods Made Love**

Hunter Hunt-Hendrix’s new operatic opera, Origin of the Almonies, centers on “a pair of divine beings whose thwarted love tears a wound from which civilization is generated, producing the Four Almonies of the intelligible universe and the task of collective emancipation.” The ambitious project should be particularly intense when delivered by singer-composer Hunt-Hendrix’s avant-noise/experimental Brooklyn collective Liturgy, whose new “God of Love” single rains down with sheets of metallic noise and angular shifts of sound shrouding ghostly vocals. In the operas L.A. premiere, Liturgy combine with the Sonic Bloom chamber orchestra to perform the work, which features choreography by Gillian Walsh and performers Jeremy Touissant-Baptiste and Kathleen Dycaco interacting amid light artist Matthew Schreiber’s design. REDCAT, 631 W. Second St., downtown; Sat., Nov. 16, 8:30 p.m.; $22. (213) 237-2800, redcat.org. —FALLING JAMES

**FOOD & DRINK**

**Winter Wine Wonderland**

While it may not be the most magical day in Burbank, it’ll definitely be the booziest. This year’s Winter Wine Walk pairs you with fine artists, a rollicking street fair and scores of hot spots at which you’ll sample the wines of wineries and brewers as you stroll through beautiful downtown Burbank. You’ll also thrill to the latest in holiday lighting, as well as 75 minutes’ worth of snowfall reminding you that the holiday—like life itself—is fleeting, beautiful and unique, and that the memories you make while inebriated count just as much as the times you actually remember. San Fernando Blvd., Burbank; Sun., Nov. 17, noon; free. (805) 628-9588, facebook.com/events/924636714581683/burbankwinterwinewalk. —DAVID COTNER

**CULTURE**

**Tattooing Through the Ages**

As we wrote in our recent L.A. Weekly cover story about tattoo culture, it has survived fashion trends, TV portrayals and changing tastes because of the tradition, meaning and self-expression that inspired it to begin with, and still does. Tattoo Uprising, a new doc about the art form screening in L.A. this week before hitting on-demand streaming, seeks to reveal the historical roots behind body art, providing an overview that covers how tattoos were used in early Christian practices, how they were discovered during the voyages of Captain James Cook, and how they soared in popularity in America thanks to artists like Ed Hardy and Sailor Jerry. The film—like our
Welcome to Hollywoodland

Writer Iris Berry has always been fascinated by the reality of modern-day Hollywood and its glittery history as Tinseltown, and in her new collection of poetry, All That Shines Under the Hollywood Sign (Punk Hostage Press), the two worlds collide to often-engaging effect. She marvels about the way jazz glides “its way/down translucent highways/at one in the morning” and “ephemeral evenings/draped across Hollywood” and rhapsodizes about such long-lost local landmarks as the Tropicana Motel and the Garden of Allah. Accompanied by evocative L.A.-centric illustrations by Scott Aicher, Berry’s short portraits of vanishing and changing Southern California are often sentimental but infused with a rueful punk-rock perspective as she mulls over how “A catalog/of catastrophic events/ shaped our lives.” At this book-release celebration, musician-writers Keith Morris, Jack Grisham and D.H. Peligro also read their work. Soap Plant/Wacko, 4633 Hollywood Blvd., Los Feliz; Sun., Nov. 17, 6-9 p.m.; free. (323) 663-0122, facebook.com/events/2394733750743801. —FALLING JAMES

The Ultimate Sneaker Closet

Imagine entering a huge sneaker closet, containing dozens of the most famous sneakers to date. Sneakertopia, a new pop-up sneaker museum, is the closest thing to it, celebrating sneaker culture through art, history, music, and design. Taking place inside HHLA (formerly The Promenade at Howard Hughes), the vast 15,000-square-foot exhibit serves as an indoor playground equipped with exclusive and rare sneakers, massive, interactive galleries, and endless photo opps. From Wu-Tang Clan dunks signed by O’D Dirty Bastard to Kobe Bryant’s UNDFTD 45’s (debuted at a Lakers game) to kicks via Rihanna and Nipsey Hussle (the epic Puma collab) to murals and street art, wherever your eyes land, this is a story of “creativity, expression and innovation” through a sneakers lens. HHLA, 6081 Center Drive, Ste 222, Westchester; Fri.-Sat., multiple times, through February; $38. sneakertopia.com/. —SHIRLEY JU
When it comes to sex and social media, the line between appropriate and potentially offensive has been murky, inconsistent and, more and more often, seemingly discriminatory. We’re in uncharted waters with this relatively new technology, but many, especially in the LGBTQ community and sex industry, fear that we’re heading down a slippery slope that risks setting us back, countering the cultural progress we’ve made in acceptance of and attitudes about sexuality.

Just this past summer, Facebook and Instagram limited users from posting the eggplant and peach emojis in reference to sexual statements via an update to their Community Standards guidelines, and the past year has seen the fight for sexual expression go into high gear as users find themselves in “Facebook jail,” or limited by an “Instagram suspension,” due to content that someone or more likely, some algorithm, at the platform thinks too provocative.

Which brings us to Tom of Finland. For those unfamiliar, the Tom of Finland Foundation is a non-profit that has worked towards “protecting, preserving and promoting erotic art” for the last quarter century. The foundation was started in 1984 by Touko Laaksonen, better known by his pseudonym Tom of Finland, an erotic illustrator from Helsinki (originally from Kaarina, Finland). Tom of Finland’s work as an artist and his work with his nonprofit were instrumental in shaping 20th-century gay culture and his impact is still being felt today. ToF has been active on social media since its beginnings, and its content has not changed, but last month the foundation saw its account banned from Instagram. It was reactivated within 18 hours after public outcry, but there remains a lack of clarity about why it happened to begin with.

Though Instagram’s guidelines state that, “nudity in photos of paintings and sculptures is OK,” the “Free the Nipple” movement, backed by several celebrities on and off the platform, has been pointing out IG’s inconsistencies for a few years now. Breastfeeding and mastectomy shots have been allowed — which is progress — but the sexism inherent in allowing shirtless male images versus female is still present. The way the platform has handled LGBTQ content is even more problematic, and while the outright banning ToF suffered was a big setback, it’s mobilizing the community, as well as the queer artists associated with it. That Tom of Finland is ready to fight on the frontlines against censorship is not new; it’s what the art itself is and always has been all about.

Laaksonen never went to art school, instead moving to Helsinki when he was 19 to start a career in advertising. He came of age fighting in the Finnish army, defending his country against the Soviets during World War II. (His fellow soldier’s uniforms would
end up playing a big role in his artwork and in defining his style).

“Tom drew loving couples and groups engaged in intense scenes — all sex positive,” says S.R. Sharp, the Tom of Finland Foundation’s vice president and curator for the last couple of decades. “He drew a world so desirable that we started dressing like it, playing like it — living like it.”

In fact, Tom of Finland’s drawings went hand in hand with the emergence of the gay leather scene in London’s underground in the 50s and 60s. “Tom was certainly there. He was associated and friends with one of the early physique photographers who captured a lot of the leather scene,” says Sharp. “I’m not going to say he was the creator, [but] I will say he was part of it. And because he rendered leather so well and he captured it so well in drawings, I think his work became iconically associated with [its] beginnings.”

Laaksonen viewed his homosexuality as a non-issue, and wanted to normalize it for everyone else in his community at a time when being gay was literally a crime. “In those days, a gay man was made to feel nothing but shame about his feelings and his sexuality. I wanted my drawings to counteract that, to show gay men being happy and positive about who they were,” the 71-year-old explained before he died in 1991 from an emphysema-induced stroke. “I didn’t sit down to think this all out carefully. But I knew — right from the start — that my men were going to be proud and happy men,” he added.

Indeed, “Tom’s Boys,” as they came to be known, were pretty much the first sex-positive modern art figures depicting the LGBTQ community. No doubt many have seen Tom’s artwork (or a rip-off of it) in a gay bar or in a gay magazine — either one of Tom’s famous strapping beefcakes, with bulging muscles, big boots, a visor hat and leather, or a mixture of civilian clothes uniforms. And of course, everything about them is big and unapologetically bold, including their genitals.

“Tom went on to give us revolutionary images — he was a liberator. He saw no reason queer men had to fit into the small compartment that society allowed us,” says Sharp. “We were made lesser than — Tom gave us a new vocabulary of who we could be. We could be soldiers, cops, bikers — everything they wouldn’t let us be. We could be strong, we could be powerful — he leveled the straight/queer playing field. For as much as he gave homosexuals positive roles models, the heteronormative sphere now could view us as, well, equal.”

“Tom of Finland was a part of the sexual revolution and the counterculture. His art made people feel OK to fantasize and not fit a social standard of get married, have kids, grow old, die,” concurs Danny Fuentes of Lethal Amounts, an L.A. art gallery with similar ethos. “Tom of Finland started getting published in the mid-50s in underground zines and rags because ‘gay’ was outlawed in most places. A culture of its own had to be created in order to hide it from the rest of the world that wanted to harm those that identified as gay in the ’50s. Sometimes it’s hard for people to contextualize how outrageous it was to depict two police officers or bikers or military men being homosexual and still masculine.”

While Tom’s artwork was no doubt innovative, it’s fair to question if his “boys” unwittingly promoted the heteronormative image of what a man and masculinity should be. For a gay man who is on the more feminine end of the spectrum, could Tom’s work just be seen as reinforcing toxic masculinity and setting an impossible and unrelatable standard for more feminine gay men? Sharp doesn’t think so. “I think toxic is only when you actually are putting down, demeaning or [lessening] other people. So in other words, masculinity is only achieved by that definition, by suppressing, by demoralizing, by demeaning other people,” he says.

Laaksonen gave up his job in advertising so that he could devote himself to his art full time in 1973. The landmark 1962 Supreme Court case Manual Enterprises, Inc. v. Day essentially legalized the mailing of male pornographic materials a decade prior, and allowed him the freedom to publish and exhibit his work on a larger scale. In the early ’80s, he came to L.A. at the invitation of Durk Dehner, a gay businessman, film director and publisher. Together they started the Tom of Finland Company so that they could publish approved copies of Tom’s graphic novels and curtail all the bootlegs that were going around. Tom ended up living in L.A. for half of every year for the rest of his life, and each time he came, he would bring more materials to a social standard of get married, have kids, grow old, die,” concurs Danny Fuentes of Lethal Amounts, an L.A. art gallery with similar ethos. “Tom of Finland started getting published in the mid-50s in underground zines and rags because ‘gay’ was outlawed in most places. A culture of its own had to be created in order to hide it from the rest of the world that wanted to harm those that identified as gay in the ’50s. Sometimes it’s hard for people to contextualize how outrageous it was to depict two police officers or bikers or military men being homosexual and still masculine.”

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with him: drawings, letters, uniforms, his stamp collection. As a means of archiving, they established the Tom of Finland Foundation in 1984, with Laaksonen's actual house, located in Silver Lake, serving as headquarters. It now functions as part museum, part event space and a safe place for the LGBTQ community.

After completely cataloging Tom’s materials, they focused their attention on other artists, giving them support and a space for their works to be shown via art and culture festivals, drawing sessions, and emerging artist competitions. They added an artist-in-residency program, screenings and most recently, a summer music program too.

Rick Castro is one such artist. The foundation formed a strong relationship with the photographer, a third-generation Angeleno from Monterey Park. Working in the wardrobe industry for 15 years before focusing on photography in the mid-’80s, Castro’s work is known for its strong social statements and pushing boundaries. His explorations of various fetish cultures have gotten a lot of attention in particular.

“I personally always identified with fetish, even before I could actually call it that. My draw was [from] BDSM to leather to fetish to that kind of erotic esoteric, which to me goes beyond gay, it’s like your own kind of personal interest,” says Castro. “So that’s what I started to document with my images.”

The photographer, who’s worked with performance art legend Vaginal Davis (their film Fertile Latoya Jackson was just screened as part of the acclaimed queer film series “Dirty Looks”), also directed a film about plushies and furries (currently available on World of Wonder’s WOW Presents Plus) and had his own gallery in Hollywood called Antebellum, which still maintains a popular blog. Castro has been a major proponent of fetish culture in the gay community and beyond for decades and has known Durk for many years since publishing his first book with him in the early ’90s. He’s also shown his work at Tom of Finland events and, more recently, helped produce their art fairs and holds sales at Tom’s House, with anti-censorship as a recurring theme.

“I think that the connection for the Tom of Finland Foundation, what it’s become, what it’s evolved into now is just the place where a lot of people feel safe to express what they don’t think they could express in mainstream everyday life, so it gives them a space to have fantasy,” says Castro.

In April of this year, Castro had one of his first solo shows at the Tom of Finland House, a retrospective called “Rick Castro: Fetish King,” LGBTQ outlet The Advocate advanced the exhibit and posted the article with several images from the show. The more risqué photos required users to press a button confirming they were old enough to view the content; however, when The Advocate posted the story on Castro’s Facebook page, they suspended his account for 30 days. The image Facebook book and Instagram (which it owns) goes to a “much deeper, insidious kind of chapter that were in. I think it’s really important to fight back,” insists Castro. He decided to write a statement about the Facebook fiasco, which The Advocate published as well, along with a (fully clothed) image of the artist sitting on a bench in Chinatown. When that piece was shared on Facebook by friends, Castro and the outlet itself, it was deemed a violation by Facebook, leading to another 30 day ban. “Now I’m banned for 60 days, meaning I can’t promote my show on social media,” recalls Castro. His curator and gallerist both tried posting the article too, only to be banned along with him. Even Sharp tried posting the piece on Castro’s behalf and was also blocked.

When L.A. Weekly learned of the censorship, it sought to investigate. After culture editor Lina Lecaro reached out to Facebook about the situation, Facebook’s reps reviewed it and determined they were in the
Counting pennies? From pizza to ramen, these spots will soothe your wallet and fill your belly

BY JUSTIN CAFFIER

With another, possibly worse recession looming somewhere over the horizon, it would behoove us all to reacquaint ourselves with the virtues of thriftiness and delayed gratification. Unfortunately, living in a foodie Mecca like L.A. can make even the most meager of belt-tightening efforts nothing short of a Herculean task. But fear not. If you know where to look, when to go and what to say, you'll find that the city is crawling with lesser-known meal deals that will allow you to eat well for next to nothing and continue justifying not bringing a bagged lunch to work. To get you started on your budget bougie journey, we found eight specials that'll satisfy your cravings for just $10 or less.

800 Degrees
Their hand-tossed pies already make for relatively cheap, filling meals, but diners who are less picky about their toppings and looking to shave a few bucks off the sticker price might want to check out 800's regional Instagram account, @800degreesla, to see if their "pizza of the day" is calling to them. There are no topping substitutions or additions allowed on these pies, but the trade-off is you're getting the whole thing for $7.12. At that low a price, you should be willing to give an olive and sausage-topped pizza a shot.

Candela La Brea
Eschewing the Tuesday cliché, this Miracle Mile spot has designated Wednesdays the best day for taco sales, offering all their non-seafood tacos for only $1 each with the purchase of a drink from 11:30 a.m. to midnight.

Pizzanista!
As if your pizza cup weren't already runneth-over, here's another quick and dirty dough deal. Every Tuesday, Pizzanista! offers slices and beers for $2 each.

The Rockefeller
On Tuesdays, frugal diners in the beach cities can score an incomprehensibly cheap dinner at any of the Rockefeller's locations. Starting at 5 p.m., customers can get the restaurant's Burger of the Month for a mere 99 cents, until they run out of ingredients. You'll have to purchase a beer, wine, or two non-alcoholic drinks to take advantage of this promo, but plenty of those are cheap enough to still keep the bill under $10.

Pour Haus Winebar
If you hit up Pour Haus between 4 and 7 in the evening, you'll be able to take advantage of their Happy Hour menu, where small bites like oxtail tacos and latbread go for $5 a pop. And if you're understandably more in need of a drink than a bite after a long day at work, that same menu offers a selection of wine pours for the same price.

Inko Nito
On Mondays, the Arts District's best robata-yaki spot posts a secret code word on their Instagram story, @inkonitola. Mention that word to your server during a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday visit that week, and you've just earned yourself a gratis off-menu dish of the chef's choosing.

Triple Beam Pizza
If Neapolitan isn't your style, but you're still jonesing for a slice, check out Triple Beam's lunch special. Every day, between noon and 4 p.m., customers can snag four slices of their Roman-style pizza along with a roll and fountain drink for a mere 10 bucks.

Tart
They say there's no such thing as a free lunch, but for those willing to go above and beyond in their commitment to eating cheap, Tart Restaurant has an offer that puts that axiom to the test. Located in the Farmer's Daughter Hotel, Tart offers diners the chance to cut their bill in half by jumping in the pool with their clothes on. Better still, if you keep your phone on you while taking the plunge, your meal is on the house. Now, for liability's sake we'd never recommend you risk your expensive smartphone on something like this, but on an unrelated note, did you know that the iPhone X and all subsequent models are waterproof for up to one meter of depth? Two words of advice: If you do decide to cannonball your way out of the bill, be sure to let your server know before you jump, and tip them well after.
FOOD

8 CHEAP EATS UNDER $10 IN LOS ANGELES

Counting pennies? From pizza to ramen, these spots will soothe your wallet and fill your belly

BY JUSTIN CAFFIER

With another, possibly worse recession looming somewhere over the horizon, it would behoove us all to reacquaint ourselves with the virtues of thriftiness and delayed gratification. Unfortunately, living in a foodie Mecca like L.A. can make even the most meager of belt-tightening efforts nothing short of Herculean task. But fear not. If you know where to look, when to go and what to say, you’ll find that the city is crawling with lesser-known meal deals that will allow you to eat well for next to nothing and continue justifying not bringing a bagged lunch to work. To get you started on your budget bougie journey, we found eight specials that’ll satisfy your cravings for just $10 or less.

800 Degrees

Their hand-tossed pies already make for relatively cheap, filling meals, but diners who are less picky about their toppings and looking to shave a few bucks off the sticker price might want to check out 800’s regional Instagram account, @800degreesla, to see if their “pizza of the day” is calling to them. There are no topping substitutions or additions allowed on these pies, but the trade-off is you’re getting the whole thing for $7.12. At that low a price, you should be willing to give an olive and sausage-topped pizza a shot.

Candela La Brea

Eschewing the Tuesday cliché, this Miracle Mile spot has designated Wednesdays the best day for taco sales, offering all their non-seafood tacos for only $1 each with the purchase of a day for taco sales, offering all their non-seafood tacos for only $1 each with the purchase of a drink from 11:30 a.m. to midnight.

Pizzanista!

As if your pizza cup weren’t already running over, here’s another quick and dirty dough deal. Every Tuesday, Pizzanista! offers slices and beers for $2 each.

The Rockefeller

On Tuesdays, frugal diners in the beach cities can score an incomprehensibly cheap dinner at any of the Rockefeller’s locations. Starting at 5 p.m., customers can get the restaurant’s Burger of the Month for a mere 99 cents, until they run out of ingredients. You’ll have to purchase a beer, wine, or two non-alcoholic drinks to take advantage of this promo, but plenty of those are cheap enough to still keep the bill under $10.

Pour Haus Winebar

If you hit up Pour Haus between 4 and 7 in the evening, you’ll be able to take advantage of their Happy Hour menu, where small bites like oxtail tacos and flatbread go for $5 a pop. And if you’re understandably more in need of a drink than a bite after a long day at work, that same menu offers a selection of wine pours for the same price.

Inko Nito

On Mondays, the Arts District’s best robata-yaki spot posts a secret code word on their Instagram story, @inkonito. Mention that word to your server during a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday visit that week, and you’ve just earned yourself a gratis off-menu dish of the chef’s choosing.

Triple Beam Pizza

If Neapolitan isn’t your style, but you’re still jonesing for a slice, check out Triple Beam’s lunch special. Every day, between noon and 4 p.m., customers can snag four slices of their Roman-style pizza along with a roll and fountain drink for a mere 10 bucks.

Tart

They say there’s no such thing as a free lunch, but for those willing to go above and beyond in their commitment to eating cheap, Tart Restaurant has an offer that puts that axiom to the test. Located in the Farmer’s Daughter Hotel, Tart offers diners the chance to cut their bill in half by jumping in the pool with their clothes on. Better still, if you keep your phone on you while taking the plunge, your meal is on the house. Now, for liability’s sake we’d never recommend you risk your expensive smartphone on something like this, but on an unrelated note, did you know that the iPhone X and all subsequent models are waterproof for up to one meter of depth? Two words of advice: If you do decide to cannonball your way out of the bill, be sure to let your server know before you jump, and tip them well after.
You may be eligible for a clinical trial.

If you have moderate to severe pelvic pain caused by endometriosis, you may be eligible to participate in a clinical research study. This study is evaluating an investigational non-hormonal medication to see if it is safe and effective in reducing endometriosis-related pelvic pain.

**MK-7264-034**

Endometriosis Clinical Research

To learn more about the possible risks and benefits of participation or to see if you may qualify for this study, contact:

**Dr. Roberto Valenton**
California Center for Clinical Research
626-415-0284
www.researchendopain.com

You may qualify for this study if you:

- Are a woman who is 18 to 49 years old
- Have been surgically diagnosed (via laparoscopy or laparotomy) with endometriosis within the past 10 years
- Experience endometriosis-related pelvic pain, even when you are not having your period
- Have regular menstrual cycles of 24 to 38 days
- Meet additional requirements, which the study team will discuss with you

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**BEST OF L.A. PEOPLE**

**PUBLISHES: DECEMBER 12**

**TO ADVERTISE**

**PUBLISHER@LAWEEEKLY.COM**
On the eve of the largest and most comprehensive survey of her 30-year career, photographer and filmmaker Shirin Neshat admits to surprising herself. From her landmark “Women of Allah” — calligraphy-filled portraits of veiled, armed, starkly elegant figures made in the 1990s — to the two-part, nearly feature-length film Land of Dreams completed just this past June, this is not only the first time audiences will access something like the totality of her career — but also the first time the artist will.

“Looking at this all together for the first time, I’m learning some habits of mine — tendencies that I never realized I had,” Neshat tells the Weekly. “I’m always on the outside looking in onto different cultures, but it’s also very personal work. I realized how my characters really embody who I am, and all the things that you are only are able to detect when you really have an opportunity like this. You know, I’ve never seen all the ‘Women of Allah’ together! They’ve always been shown separately.” And there is also a series of early Allah’ together! They’ve always been shown separately." And there is also a series of early portraits of women taken in a garden setting separately. “And there is also a series of early Allah’ together! /T_hey’ve always been shown separately. /T_hese early photographs, and contemporaneous video works like “Rapture” and “Passage,” are what put Neshat on the art world map, not least because of their irresistibly striking black-and-white aesthetic of dreamlike symbolism and poetic language, exotic soundtracks, fraught and romantic landscapes and architecture, and the seductive physical duality of her signature two-channel format. The performative quality of the hand-written calligraphy, and the energy of drama and ritual that permeates all her work, is augmented by her life story as a high-profile exile from her native Iran, at a time in geopolitical history where her dichotomous cultural milieu as both an Iranian and an American immigrant is profoundly salient.

And that’s where Land of Dreams, the newest work in the survey, picks up the thread for Neshat, and why it’s such a big deal that it’s the first work she’s produced in America. The story follows a young woman who under the pretext of an art school project, convinces strangers in a remote New Mexico town to be photographed and tell her their dreams. In the second part, we discover that the young woman is actually an Iranian spy, whose mission is to collect subconscious dossiers which are later sorted, analyzed and judged in a Kafka-esque factory hidden inside a sacred mountain in the New Mexico desert.

“You know, I think that for the longest time I never felt prepared to make a work in America or about America,” she says. “I’m an outsider, even though I have lived here longer than in my own country. I always felt that I needed to go to Morocco, Egypt, somewhere Arabic, to make work about Iran. And then I thought well, I know this country the longest, and I don’t even know Egypt or Morocco as well as America. I am at a point where I don’t have to create a narrative that is an Arabic per-
spective, but instead from my experience as an immigrant.”

And why New Mexico? In addition to an abiding interest in the legacy of great American landscape photographers like Ansel Adams and Robert Frank, she explains, “The desert landscape is something that I always associate with Iran. So I knew that the film had to be made in Arizona, New Mexico, Utah or Nevada. And so we drove across the country literally location scouting and when we arrived in New Mexico and went through the Navajo Nation and arrived at Shiprock I said, this has to be it.” As with the iconic architecture that is often featured in her previous work, that mountain spoke to her, she says, “like a character in the story.”

Actually, the main character of the film, Simrin the art student/spy, is not only based on Neshat, but re-enters in the story the process of the film’s actual foundation — Neshat driving around a strange New Mexico town with a camera, knocking on doors and asking to come in. Four of those source encounters are dramatized in the movie, but the other 200 form the material contents for the colony’s spying business.

This work is one of the more overt expressions of the autobiographical armature of Neshat’s work, which does frequently include self-portraiture as well. Asked about her methodology for navigating the porous borders of self and society, Neshat pauses before saying, “For me, ever since I became an artist, it’s been a sort of conversation with myself about what goes on inside of me emotionally and psychologically, my own anxieties my own fears, which is a lot and I’m a very anxious person. I have a lot of fears. I am very fragile, but also very tough at the same time. But I’m not interested in only autobiographical work, and I’m not interested in just making work about the world. I think that if I bring my own emotions and my own personal questions — my own issues in the world as a woman, as an Iranian, as an immigrant, as a human being — into the larger conversation, then the work can become universal.”

Neshat would not describe herself as a political person. But as to the context of her life and its intersection with geopolitical flashpoints, she embraces the power of her circumstance. “If it’s forced upon you, how can you not respond?” she says. “The issues I frame are very close to my experience, but it’s not about me. I too have been torn apart by revolution, but I am not a documentary. These narratives fictionalize history as an artistic expression. I consider myself more as a poet than a reporter. I work in dreams, in surrealism and magic realism, across our common humanity. You know,” she says, “dreams are innocent, naked and truthful. That is what I love about them.”

Shirin Neshat: I Will Greet the Sun Again is on view at the Broad through February 16. thebroad.org/shirinneshat.
**TELEVISION / UNBINGED**

**BREAKING BAD (SORT OF) RETURNS**

Also: A Texas-sized 10-4 on *Letterkenny* and *Castle Rock* returns viewers to the Stephen King Universe

BY ERIN MAXWELL

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You watch TV, we watch TV. But with more and more shows on cable and network TV, not to mention new streaming services popping up every day, television can get a little daunting. Don't worry. UnBinged is here, ready to OD, hate-watch, or simply spill, chill and enjoy television, so you don't have to — unless it's worth it.

**El Camino: A Breaking Bad Movie | Netflix**

Netflix's *El Camino: A Breaking Bad Movie* is a full-length feature that brings *Breaking Bad* fans back into a world of complex characters, glass-quality blue meth and the dusty, beige tones of Albuquerque, New Mexico. While not as astounding as some of *Breaking Bad's* best episodes, *El Camino* is a weekend romp back into a world a lot of us have terribly missed.

*El Camino* is Jesse's story and Jesse's story alone. The movie follows Jesse Pinkman (Aaron Paul) in two tandem storyline: one that explains how he survived his captivity as a one-man, mass-producing meth machine and another arc that details his escape from the law as a "person of interest."

Directed and penned by *Breaking Bad* creator Vince Gilligan, *El Camino* picks up almost seconds from where the *Breaking Bad* finale left off, with Jesse headed down a dirt road in a Chevy El Camino.

Broken, beaten and scarred, both mentally and physically, Jesse first stop is to his chums, Skinny Pete and Badger, for a change of clothes, a shower and a moment to rest. But before he can come up with a plan, the LoJack on the El Camino is set off, alerting the authorities to his location and setting the events of the movie in motion.

*El Camino* is a walk-down memory lane and a continuation of an unfinished story. While Aaron Paul is the sole focus of the tale, the movie is littered with people and places from past adventures. From mild-mannered psycho Todd to good old Uncle Walt, Paul carries the weight of the production on his scarred shoulders as a broken specimen looking to rebuild his humanity.

Don't worry, fans and internet critics. The legendary export since Wayne Gretzky and Rush... and this comes from someone who isn't that into *Getty Lee*, *prog rock* or *hockey*.

Created by Jared Keeso and based on the YouTube series *Letterkenny Problems*, *Letterkenny* has won stacks of prizes from almost every Canuck kudocast in creation. And rightfully so. Following the everyday exploits of folks in rural Ontario, the lightning-fast delivery of the dialogue makes *Gilmore Girls* and its follow-up, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, look like a slow-paced character study.

Now in its seventh season, the gang — Wayne (Keeso), Katy (Michelle Mylett), Daryl (Nathan Dales) and Squirrely Dan (K. Trevor Wilson) — continue to raise the bar on barn banter by keeping their chatter at a highly entertaining and hilarious at 88 MPH (141.6 KPH for the Canucks). Known as "The Hicks, Wayne and the gang explore important current events such as porn-viewing habits, Tony Danza impressions, the importance of marriage and modern agricultural trends.

And lucky for us, Hulu has opted to carry the celebrated show so we can get a heaping helping of Canadian culture.

In the words of multi-Juno award-winning Canadian singer/songwriter Bryan Adams, *Letterkenny* is "Straight from the Heart." In the words of Toronto-born rapper, singer, songwriter, entrepreneur and former Degrassi star Drake, it is "The Best I Ever Had." In the words of repeat international award-winning songstress Celine Dion, "I Surrender."

*Letterkenny* is television at its very best, dare we say one of the best comedies currently on television. The brilliant stuff the characters utter and sputter here, filled with wacky innuendo, messed up metaphors, obtuse observations and a lot of truth, borders on poetry. You'll want to quote this stuff. Watch with a notepad.

**Castle Rock | Hulu**

The new season of the original Hulu series *Castle Rock* makes use of the homicidal nurse from *Misery* as a central character for the show's second outing. Yes, Annie Wilkes gets the *Joker* treatment.

Lizzy Caplan returns to her Janis Ian roots as she makes the role of Wilkes her own. Big shoes to fill considering the last woman to play her — Kathy Bates — took home an Oscar for her efforts. But Caplan wears dowdy well as the iconic figure who lives life on the run, working nursing gigs under assumed names to provide for her addiction and her daughter(??).

Annie Wilkes in the internet age is dependent on painkillers and has a daughter named Joy (played by *Eighth Grade* star Elsie Fisher). But she hasn't softened. This Annie can fuck some shit up with an ice cream scoop.

Wilkes is only one small cog in this King-fueled nightmare machine, as satanists, hidden tombs, biblical plaques, the undead and occasional humping hobos all find their place within the cryptic narrative. Also returning to the Stephen King Universe is Tim Robbins, who trades in his rock hammer for a knit cap in the role of town elder Reginald "Pop" Merrill, a famous family in the SKU best known for its bullies and bad guys. Rounding out the cast is Barkhad Abdi and Yusra Warsama as Somali refugees who made Castle Rock, where the show is set, their home.

The first season of *Castle Rock* offered an intriguing premise with a disappointing finale before *Game of Thrones* made it acceptable. And like the first season, the second season is off to a strong start. The sophomore outing teases recognizable people and places from the King's books, which sets up an absorbing mystery filled with familiar characters, but that's how the first season started as well. And look where that left us?

So, after the first season's frustrating finale, should you give *Castle Rock* another try? The answer is a sign that once hung on the wall of Needful Things, the junk store from King's book. While the performances and premise all show signs of overwhelming promise, that doesn't mean the plot will go in a satisfying direction. Whether this season fulfills wants and needs remains to be seen.
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.

Opening wide
Friday, November 15

Although the title screams “reboot,” Charlie’s Angels is in fact a continuation of the narrative that began with Charlie’s Angels (2000) and Charlie’s Angels: Full Throttle (2003). This time Elizabeth Banks takes charge as director, handling a screenplay she wrote from a story by Evan Spiliotopoulos and David Auburn. The action-comedy follows the adventures of three privately employed agents (Kristen Stewart, Naomi Scott and Ella Balinska) who use their special training and sex appeal to protect the population from a dangerous technology. Djimon Hounsou, Sam Clafin, Noah Centineo and Patrick Stewart co-star. Banks has a small role as one of the Bosleys.

Ford v Ferrari dramatizes an episode in the rivalry between the two legendary auto manufacturers — namely, the race to build a car to compete in the 1966 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance racing event. Matt Damon plays Ford designer Carroll Shelby and Christian Bale is driver Ken Miles — the charisma-filled duo that jumped a number of personal and corporate hurdles to build a revolutionary racing car. James Mangold directs with all the sleek confidence of a luxury sedan.

Helen Mirren and Ian McKellen star in The Good Liar, the serpentine tale of an accomplished con man’s courtship of a wealthy widow. The woman’s son (Russell Tovey) smells something fishy, but genuine feelings begin to develop between the two lonely hearts. Danger and death, however, threaten to jump out at every corner. Bill Condon directs this elegantly constructed drama, adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher from a Nicholas Searle novel.

Limited
Friday, November 15

Robert Tinnell’s Feast of the Seven Fishes is a micro-budget indie about an Italian-American family that keeps the titular tradition every Christmastime. Set in the early 1980s, the film revels in chewy comedy and romantic misunderstandings as Tony (Skyler Gisondo) pines after an Ivy Leaguer (Madison Iseman) his great-grandma (Lynn Cohen) feels isn’t good enough for him. Joe Pantoliano adds stature to a game cast. Laemmle Music Hall, 9036 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, Fri., Nov. 15, various showtimes; $9-$12. (310) 478-3836, laemmle.com.

The Warrior Queen of Jhansi tells the story of Rani of Jhansi, a sort of Indian Joan of Arc who led a fierce, ultimately unsuccessful rebellion against Britain’s East India Trading Company in 1857. Her effort nevertheless set in motion the demise of the powerful company that had colonized and controlled large parts of the sub-continent. Laemmle Royal (also at Playhouse 7 and Town Center 5), 11523 Santa Monica Blvd., Sawtelle, Fri., Nov. 15, various showtimes; $9-$13. (310) 478-3836, laemmle.com.

Crown Vic takes its name from the squad car driven by a veteran patrol officer (Thomas Jane) and his rookie trainee (Luke Kleintank). The film follows the two policemen over the course of one sweaty night in L.A. as they attempt to find a missing girl, track a couple of cop killers and contend with an officer gone rogue (Jack VanZandt). Written and directed by Joel Souza and Alec Baldwin serves as one of the producers. Monica Film Center, 1332 2nd St., Santa Monica, Fri., Nov. 15, various showtimes; $9-$12. (310) 478-3836.

In The Shed, a high schooler (Jay Jay Warren) and his closest buddy (Cody Kostro) discover a feral vampire living in a shed in the backyard. Their initial instinct to destroy it is overcome by a more dastardly scheme: feed bullies to the beast and thin out the douchebag population. This low-budget horror is directed with some pizzazz by Frank Sabatella. Monica Film Center, 1332 2nd St., Santa Monica, Fri., Nov. 15, various showtimes; $9-$12. (310) 478-3836.

The Nitrate Picture Show, put on by New York’s George Eastman Museum, goes west with a special series co-presented by the American Cinematheque. The weekend event kicks off with a rare screening of Powell & Pressburger’s Gone to Earth, a richly colored 1950 drama starring Jennifer Jones. The intensity of the hues is amplified by the ultra-rare nitrate print, which shimmers like no acetate-based film stock can. Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood; Fri., Nov. 15, 7:30 p.m.; $15. (323) 466-3456, americancinemathequecalendar.com.
Too movement, there was a feeling of relief. It really meant something. And shit, two years that they would be reuniting again. Back in 2014, right now, the machine needs some raging rap-rock pioneers Rage Against the Machine. A SONIC disparate sounds of their genre-spanning catalog. However, when Sleater-Kinney announced their reformation, there was a feeling that Sleater-Kinney was around to help people through it all. It was a fitting way. It's not overtly political, but the themes are there. It's what it is, I guess. It is what it is, I guess. When we went in to record the record and we put it out, we knew putting it out that it would be an ...
there are reunions, and then there are reunions. Just this week, we've learned that emo-punk darlings My Chemical Romance will be getting back together to march the Black Parade once again, while Los Angeles rap-rock pioneers Rage Against the Machine will return in 2020 for a handful of shows, including Coachella. And there's no doubt that, against.

However, when Sleater-Kinney announced that they would be reuniting again back in 2014, there was a feeling of relief that Sleater-Kinney was around to help people through it all. "No Cities to Love," the band's eighth studio album, came out in January 2015, a decade after their 2005 seventh effort. Four years later, they put out "The Center Won't Hold," in August of this year.

"We knew putting it out that it would be an album that would take some people by surprise, and I think that generally that's what happened," says singer and guitarist Carrie Brownstein. "We're just excited to play the songs live. We have a history of putting out records that sound different to the previous ones, and where they all coalesce is in the live setting. There's this broader umbrella of Sleater-Kinney and a quieter album like "Hot Rock" has more teeth in the live setting. A really bombastic record like "The Woods," we're able to drop the melodies from it. It all gets mixed into this larger picture and I think we all look forward to that process."

There was already a lot of interest in a new Sleater-Kinney album, but the buzz was amped up when it was announced that they would be working with one of the greatest minds in contemporary music: St. Vincent, aka Annie Clark.

"She was amazing," says Brownstein. "I think for us in the past, one thing that the studio has been is more of an act of documentation, in the sense that it was an act of discovery, and I think the studio became an instrument. That happened a little bit with Dave Fridmann on "The Woods," but it's rare for us to be able to go in at different times — we went in over the course of a few months and so that allowed us to step away and have introspective, retool things. She just has this very prodigious imagination, and she's clever and sensitive. We just felt like she's the real deal. She's such a natural producer."

The album is phenomenal, and it helped cement the feeling that Sleater-Kinney was setting and in a hot spot following the reunion. Then drummer Janet Weiss quit, out of the blue. Maybe "The Center Won't Hold" is a fitting farewell — Brownstein isn't sure.

"When we went in to record the record and were finishing it up, Janet's enthusiasm was really strong, so I think only in retrospect can you look back and think, maybe this is a fitting last record, but also not necessarily," she says. "It is what it is, I guess."

Brownstein says that the new album deals with the state of the world in a very personal way. It's not overtly political, but the themes are there.

"I think so much of this record is about how trauma and toxicity affect the body, especially the woman's body, and how the body is a place of resistance," she says. "I think there are a lot of songs about despair, about aging and obsolescence, depression and corruption. To me, it feels like a lot of the songs surveyed the landscape and took it in, but each one in an intimate narrative. 'Broken' or 'Ruins' is definitely a song about a collective monster that we've all built up and is now destroying everything. 'Reach Out' is a song certainly about despondency. 'Love' is about connection as a fulcrum for survival. So yeah, to me it's the most personal record we've done since "The Hot Rock.""

The record is exactly that, and that's why it's so effective. There are sentiments here that everyone can relate to or at least empathize with, though it's written from the female perspective.

"In the moment, it can feel good to have a soundtrack to one's feelings," Brownstein says. "But in terms of the bigger picture, not everything is in the present moment. Everybody approaches music from their own context and personhood. Our responsibility is to write songs that will appeal and connect to someone a year from now or two years from now. That connection is one of the reasons we play music and our desire is for people to feel seen and heard. It's one of the reasons we go on tour, to be in that dialogue, both with ourselves and the audience. I don't know if we feel a sense of responsibility but we feel gratitude and I think our responsibility is to push ourselves. To make good records and hope that in doing that, people will enjoy it."

That desire to connect to their audience will be evident when they hit L.A. this week, a city that Brownstein calls home for at least part of the time. "I think L.A. is pretty great these days," she says. "There are a lot of great artists there, and I think it's one of the great cities. I live part time in Portland and I prefer the clean air of the Pacific Northwest. And the rain. But I think L.A. is a wonderful city, so I'm excited to play there because after basically seven weeks on tour I'll get to see some of my friends."

As for the set, the band will be drawing from all of their nine albums.

"One of the best things about playing live is being able to create a sonic throughline between the past and the present, and to elevate and transform songs, to create an aural narrative," Brownstein says. "We have five people on stage with us, sometimes we will play in a contracted way and it'll just be a three piece with a fiery core, then we'll expand and play with a full band. That allows us to reach to the further edges of the palate and play some of these songs the way they were intended to be heard with all the instruments and nuance that they have on the record. So it'll draw from all the records, but we're always excited to play the new stuff when we get out on the road."

Sleater-Kinney plays at 7 p.m. on Thursday, November 14 at the Hollywood Palladium.
**FRI 11/15**

**Chelsea Wolfe**

@ The Palace Theatre

“All my old ways have started kickin’ in, and my bad days are comin’ round again/Left here in American darkness,” Chelsea Wolfe discloses somberly on her latest album, Birth of Violence. Despite the record’s title, Birth is relatively restrained, more folkie than metallic, compared to the wraithlike singer’s earlier albums. The Sacramento native describes herself as an “oracle of your secrets” as she sifts through romantic but funereal passages. The album’s title track might not be violent — at least musically — but Wolfe’s tremulous entreaties soar over a landscape of desolate longing and loss. “Deranged for Rock & Roll” also belies its title, as it’s no typical rock party anthem. Instead, the slow, doom-ridden acoustic ballad is layered with momentous sound effects, twisted guitars and Wolfe’s suddenly passionate vocal imprecations. — FALLING JAMES

**SAT 11/16**

**Bebel Gilberto & Sergio Mendes**

@ Royce Hall

Bossa nova — the Brazilian music genre that fuses jazz, blues and samba and which most people know from the smash hit “The Girl From Ipanema” — is a genre that is as timeless as it is joyous. Countless nights have been danced away to the dulcet tuneage of bossa nova brilliance, and untold numbers of babies have been conceived under its deeply romantic influence. With the death of bossa nova pioneer João Gilberto this past July, tonight’s 60th Anniversary of Bossa Nova — starring daughter Bebel Gilberto and lifelong friend Sergio Mendes — will likely be one of the most poignant dance numbers you’ll experience all year. A somber samba? Only if you feel the weight of those decades on your shoulders and not the rhythms that move you beyond all earthly concerns such as still believing in time. — DAVID COTNER

**Letters to Cleo**

@ The Hi Hat

With their cloying melodies and saccharine lyrics, holiday songs often end up being unrelentingly depressing and soulless, but Letters to Cleo switch things up on their new EP OK Christmas. The music is anything but sappy as the Boston group bash their way through a punky remake of The Kinks’ Xmas anthem “Father Christmas,” with lead singer Kay Hanley effusively singing such sarcastic Ray Davies lyrics as “Father Christmas, give us some money/Don’t mess around with those silly toys/We’ll beat you up if you don’t hand it over.” Along with covers of holiday songs by The Dogmatists and Elvis Presley, Letters to Cleo melt hearts with a new original power-pop anthem, “Miss You This Christmas,” in which Hanley (the singing voice of the title character in 2001’s Josie and the Pussycats) purrs radially, her vocals bookended by cheery bells. — FALLING JAMES

**Midnite Communion VI**

@ Catch One

Doom metal is a genre that is adept at achieving a strong balance between musical beauty and musical brutality. The annual Midnite Communion shows — now in their sixth year — are unique celebrations of the genre that augment and complement the musical heaviness with equally compelling expressions of visual art. A rare Los Angeles appearance from Chicago sludge-/masters Indian and the caustic death/doom of Moreno Valley crushers Trapped Within Burning Machinery will headline the musical portion with a rumble that will test the structural integrity of Catch One’s foundation, while visual artists from within the Los Angeles underground art/metal scenes and from all over the country will be displaying pieces and installations that match the haunting aura of the music, shrouding event-goers in aural and visual darkness. — JASON ROCHE

**SUN 11/17**

**Guttermouth**

@ Alex’s Bar

At least with Guttermouth, they’ve always put their intentions front and center with that band name. Nobody can listen to a band called Guttermouth and then express shock when they hear vulgar and insensitive lyrics. The Huntington Beach band formed in 1988 and they have nine albums to their name, though at the time of writing the most recent remains 2009’s Shave the Planet (the Got it Made EP came out in 2016). So they’re about due another full-length, although the world has changed dramatically since they were last on the circuit. Does the world still want songs with titles like “Cram it Up Your Ass?” Does the world perhaps need a band with such blatant disregard for political correctness? You decide. — BRETT CALLWOOD

**The Rubinos**

@ Bootleg Theater

Much like The Flamin’ Groovies, The Rubinos began in 1970, playing short, poppy Beatlesque power-pop tunes in an era dominated by hippie jam bands. The Berkeley group were considered terribly unhip at the time as revered in their love of bubblegum melodies and garage-rock structures on such tracks as “I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend” (not the Ramones...
song) and a remake of Tommy James & the Shondells’ “I Think We’re Alone Now.” The band started to make more of an impression once the power-pop and punk scenes sprouted up in the late ’70s. Produced by Green on Red’s Chuck Prophet, The Rubinos’ latest album, From Home, is a collection of love-lorn pop songs whose best moments range from the surging, euphoric harmonies of “Do You Remember” to the garage-rocking drive of “Honey From the Honeycombs.” — FALLING JAMES

MON 11/18

Young Thug/Machine Gun Kelly
@ THE HOLLYWOOD PACADIUM

Every girl’s crazy about a smart dressed man, we’re told. Therefore every girl must be crazy about Young Thug, the rapper from Atlanta, Georgia, with the unique vocal style and elaborate dress sense. He’s on a prolific run too; he dropped the So Much Fun debut studio full-lengther in August, and the follow-up is already being prepped for this year, apparently titled Punt. When you’re hot, you’re hot. Meanwhile, fresh from his run-ins with Eminem and a turn as Tommy Lee in the Motley Crue biopic The Dirt, Cleveland’s Machine Gun Kelly has his own new album to promote. Hotel Diablo came out in July and showcases the outspoken personality’s rapid-fire delivery. This should make for a great double bill. — BRETT CALLWOOD

Allison Moorer
@ BOOK SOUP

“There’s something about them that holds the memory of hers,” Allison Moorer writes in her new book, Blood: A Memoir, as she compares the shape of her hands with her late mother’s, “much like my face holds expressions that she would’ve made with her own.” The country singer traces such tactile memories back to the tragic death of her mother, who was killed by her father, who then killed himself, when she and her sister Shelby Lynne were teenagers. In the evocatively detailed memoir and a related, poignant new album, Blood, Moorer attempts to make sense of the unknowable with a rare form of contemplative grace mixed at times with fiery determination. She discusses her book with Lynne at Book Soup on Monday and performs with her husband Hayes Carll at the Grammy Museum on Wednesday, November 20. — FALLING JAMES

TUE 11/19

Sammy Hagar
@ THE GRAMMY MUSEUM

Former Montrose and Van Halen man Sammy Hagar recently had to cancel his High Tide Beach Party at Huntington Beach at the last minute because of city/permit issues, which was a shame, but fans can maybe calm themselves with this intimate appearance at the Grammy Museum. Just prior to that festival—that wasn’t, Hagar told us that, “We’re planning another real tour. I found that I can still do it, and at my age I don’t know how much longer I’ll still be good. As long as I have that, I need to work more. I’m not gonna charge people to come and see me and not be excellent. And I’m still excellent. So I’ll book another tour with the Circle, and maybe release a live album. I’m stepping it up. I don’t need money, fortune or fame so let me go out and do this for all the right reasons while I still can. That’s the way I started — because I love it.” Good to know. — BRETT CALLWOOD

WED 11/20

Big Freedia
@ THE REGENT

New Orleans queen of bounce and twerk Big Freedia recently told us that she’s not in any hurry to put out a new full-length album — what would be the follow-up up to 2014’s Just be Free — as she’s all about EPs right now. That, she says, is where the world is at. Quick-fire, shorter, releases that satisfy fans in lightning bursts. Well, good. Last year’s 3rd Ward Bounce, a reference to the projects in New Orleans that served as her childhood home, was a wonderfully fun release. Bounce music was, for a long time, a sub-genre of hip-hop so underground, it was practically filthy. Big Freedia has changed that, while retaining some glorious dirt. And live, she’s a party. — BRETT CALLWOOD

THU 11/21

Bloc Party
@ THE HOLLYWOOD PACADIUM

It’s crazy that English indie rockers Bloc Party formed in 1999, but them’s are the facts. That said, the Londoners’ debut album, Silent Alarm, didn’t come out until 2005. That album included the song “Positive Tension,” one of the best indie anthems of that decade with its blistering cry of “Why’d you have to get so fucking useless?” The band’s blend of electronic music and pop in what was a quickly stagnating Brit indie scene woke everyone up. The most recent album is 2016’s Hypnium, but this tour will see them performing that debut in its entirety. That should make for a special night, as Silent Alarm sounds as fresh today as it did a decade and a half years ago. — BRETT CALLWOOD
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