

The Rise of Lolipop Records • A Fascinating Museum in El Segundo? • Chopping Down 1,650 L.A. Trees

L.A. WEEKLY[®]

JANUARY 9-15, 2015
VOL. 37 / NO. 8
LAWEEEKLY.COM

“I’m hot, I have money, a sick car, dope friends. What else do I need?”

L.A.’S AWESOME WHEELCHAIR GUY

BY CHRIS WALKER

FIRST | FRIDAYS



2015

DO-IT-YOURSELF SCIENCE

Today, scientists make a career out of asking big questions about our world. They research and hypothesize, design experiments to prove or demolish assumptions, and argue their point of view — and they do it with a disciplined rigor. But there are also great scientists like Benjamin Franklin, Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin and Henry David Thoreau who approached science not as a job but a hobby, as they pursued understanding of how the world works.

Today, with technology, social media, crowdsourcing and the resurgence of the DIY movement, a general public of science enthusiasts — anybody with a passion for adventure and inquiry — can participate in the journey of discovery.

What would happen if science was our common language and part of our everyday vocabulary? Instead of a select few, what could a thousand pairs of eyes add to the discovery of a new comet? How could hundreds of people across the country help paint a clearer picture of species diversity? With the rise of the “citizens” and the “scientists” working collaboratively, we can revolutionize and redefine scientific exploration. Join us this season as we hear from the makers, doers and dreamers who are creating tomorrow’s scientific community today.

Each discussion forum will be moderated by Michael W. Quick, Ph.D. (Department of Biological Sciences, Executive Vice Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of Southern California)

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DISCUSSION

Taking Control of Your World – Citizen Science Activism

WITH
SAM DROEGE

Our world is rapidly changing. The government spends billions of dollars each year monitoring Earth from space, but who is tracking the critters and watching the plants right in front of us? This responsibility has shifted; now you may take control. The tools are simple: smartphones, digital recorders, shared networks, data loggers, and apps. Participating in citizen science projects and focusing on a few key principles can help affect change in a big way.

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CONTENTS //



A CONSIDERABLE TOWN...11

Brains and Nose: Coroner's investigator Karina Peck and her cadaver dog, Indiana Bones, are among the best in the country at solving dark mysteries. **BY JAMES BARTLETT.**

NEWS...13

Chopping 1,650 Trees. Marina del Rey environmentalists disparage a government plan to sacrifice natural beauty and a great blue heron habitat for revenue. **BY ASHER KLEIN and MATT FLEMING.**

EAT & DRINK...23

CLARISSA WEI details 10 restaurants that allow us to explore China's rich and varied cuisine without leaving L.A.. Plus **SQUID INK**: the best from our daily food blog.

GO LA...27

Eighteen companies kick off the new year with the Awakenings and Beginnings Dance Festival, Louis C.K. brings his act to the Forum, and the L.A. Art Show marks its 20th year.

ARTS...31

CATHERINE WAGLEY reports on the latest "experience" at the rebellious El Segundo Museum of Art, plus this week's **ART PICKS**.

STAGE...33

STEVEN LEIGH MORRIS gives his take on the future of L.A.'s controversial 99-Seat Plan.

FILM...36

AMY NICHOLSON reviews the Nigerian corruption film *Black November*, **STEPHANIE ZACHAREK** on Ethan Hawke in *Predestination*, and other films **OPENING THIS WEEK**, plus **YOUR WEEKLY MOVIE TO-DO LIST**.

MUSIC...44

ART TAVANA on how Lolipop Records is building a garage-rock empire, one cassette at a time. In **BIZARRE RIDE**, **JEFF WEISS** revisits Edward "edIT" Ma's classic pre-Glitch Mob debut. Plus: **HENRY ROLLINS: THE COLUMN!**, **LINA IN L.A.**, listings for **ROCK & POP, JAZZ & CLASSICAL AND MORE**.



L.A.'S RIDICULOUSLY AWESOME WHEELCHAIR GUY... 15

Xander Mozejewski has posed nude on the freeway, parties with other beautiful millennials, follows his creative dreams — and won't be categorized.

BY CHRIS WALKER

LETTERS...6

ADVERTISING

CLASSIFIED...62

EMPLOYMENT...62

REAL ESTATE/RENTALS...62

BULLETIN BOARD...63

ON THE COVER:
PHOTOGRAPHY BY RYAN ORANGE

L.A. WEEKLY (ISSN 0192-1940 & USPS 461-370) IS PUBLISHED WEEKLY FOR THE SUBSCRIPTION PRICE OF \$55.00 PER SIX MONTHS & \$90.00 PER YEAR BY L.A. WEEKLY, LP, 3861 SEPULVEDA BLVD., CULVER CITY, CA 90230. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID AT LOS ANGELES, CA. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO L.A. WEEKLY, P.O. BOX 4315, LOS ANGELES, CA 90078-4315.

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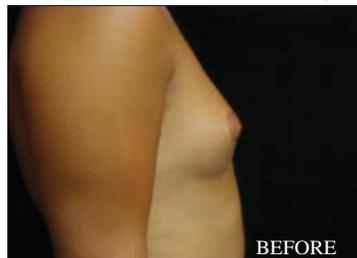
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Comments //

How Dare She Hate Jail?

Elena Pritchard's Dec. 31 drawings and first-person account, "When a Cartoonist Landed in L.A. County Jail, She Drew What She Saw, Using Only a Golf Pencil," split readers between those who were appalled that she did not address her culpability for landing in jail and those who loved her art and message.

Roncast writes, "I hope she goes far in life, but at no time did I read that she accepted responsibility for her actions. She never admits that it is her fault that she drew herself in L.A. [County jails]. Instead she blames it on an 'overworked public defender' and even goes so far as to depict herself as an innocent baby in the drawings."

Webec, however, responds that Pritchard's own shortcomings are irrelevant, noting, "The reason for being put in there has nothing to do with how someone is treated in there. There are plenty of wardens that have fired COs for yelling or putting their hands on inmates. The inhuman[ity] of the jails that she described will not fly in some wardens' prisons."

Numerous people who have spent time in county jail weighed in, including Blazeglor, who notes, "If jail was comfortable, you would want to go back ... So, it's not the Hilton. ... LOL." The same reader says, "We need to change things by making the jails more accountable but at the same time, we need to be accountable for our own actions. ... You put yourself in jail, not your public defender. ... What is with this generation and shifting the blame?"

RiseAgainst argues that people don't realize the level of brutality among county jailers, who generally deal with people awaiting trial or convicted of lesser crimes. "I saw the L.A. County sheriffs openly mock a mentally challenged man to his face," RiseAgainst writes. "They called him 'retard' and 'moron' and shoved him around. I could tell that the man had no idea what was going on. They are horrible 'people' who have lost their humanity."

Justine34, a public defender, defended her profession: "You didn't spend two months in jail because you had a public defender. You spent two months in jail for failing to follow court orders after I'm guessing given multiple times to comply. You, not the public defender, voluntarily decided to accept whatever offer you were given."

But many simply enjoyed the art and its message at face value. Writes Christine Caserta, "I'm sorry you had to go through that, but this is absolutely awesome. I love your work — are you making prints? Also, will you be making an appearance somewhere? I would love to shake your hand!"

Correction

In last week's article "The Queen of Frocks," we incorrectly said the firm's annual revenue in 2012 was \$100 million. That figure is instead for annual sales.

You Write, We Read

Please send letters to *L.A. Weekly*, 3861 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City, CA 90230. Or email us at ReadersWrite@laweekly.com. Full name and contact info preferred.

iAsk A Mexican! by Gustavo Arellano

WHAT IS A REAL LATINA, ANYWAY?

DEAR MEXICAN: I'm in college and I'm taking a class called Latina Pop Culture. I thought it would be educational and informative about the rich Latino/a culture, and I was eager to learn.

But the moment I entered the class, it was evident that I, as a white girl, would have to be on the defensive.

All we've discussed is how my "Anglo" culture has oppressed Latina women and stereotyped them as curvy and tempestuous, and how the media whitewashes them. There are many Latina girls in the class and they all say something different, and the white girls seem terrified and continue to be apologetic for no good reason.

These Latina girls hate that they're stereotyped as sexy, and they and the professor keep telling us "Anglos" everything we're doing wrong in portraying Latinas in the media.

OK. I see what's wrong. So what's right? What is the real Latina? I would assume they're as different and unique individually as anyone else, but as a collective whole, how do they want to be portrayed? I'm getting mixed signals.

Several of the Latina girls have denounced Shakira and Jennifer Lopez as sellouts, claiming they dyed their hair to look more white. But the girls who said this all have their hair dyed with blond streaks.

Another girl said Salma Hayek was a sellout because she's played stereotyped roles and is over-sexualized. The girl who said this dresses in tight clothes every day.

I don't understand. I thought those women were icons. And furthermore, how can they feel oppressed in a state whose population is predominantly Hispanic? Mexicans aren't going to be a minority much longer, and I wasn't taught to discriminate, so who's oppressing who?

And what, oh *diós mío*, WHAT is a real Latina?

—Gringa in Mañanaland

DEAR GABACHA: A real Latina hates — *gabachas* first, then each other, and finally themselves.

But that's what Chicano Studies is for: to decolonize their mind so the only hate left is for self-victimizing *gabachas* like yourself.

Ask the Mexican at themexican.com, be his fan on Facebook, follow him on Twitter @gustavoarellano or follow him on Instagram @gustavo_arellano!

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Heavenly is bringing that saucy party to Santa Monica with "Skyway to Heavenly" and transforming Busby's West into an LA version of the high-energy ski experience of South Lake Tahoe where four lucky rippers will win an all-expenses-paid ski trip to Heavenly that starts from the moment they win. With the gorgeous Heavenly Angels, casino games like roulette, blackjack and poker, plus DJs and dancing, Skyway to Heavenly is a small sampling of what Heavenly's Go All In ski experience is like. Qualifying is easy; hanging with the three-day non-stop action in Lake Tahoe might not be.

Just like skiing a line, there's more than one way to qualify for the final round of the contest...

- Snag the most-liked Instagram photo tagged with #HeavenlyOrBust
- Score the highest casino winnings (each guest will receive a starter Casino Chip)
- Or be declared one of the two most creative retro ski outfits photographed in the Heavenly photo booth.

The winners from each contest will immediately move on to the final round – a sudden-death flip cup race: chug, flip and win! The grand prize winner and his or her three ski buddies will immediately be whisked away for a dream weekend escape to Heavenly, the country's winter party capital.



The Skyway to Heavenly prize includes:

- Private charter jet service from LAX to South Lake Tahoe
- 3 night accommodation in a high roller suite at MontBleu Resort & Casino
- 3-day lift ticket and demo equipment rental package



- \$450 spending money and \$75 Heavenly Mountain Money per person
- VIP admission and bottle service at MontBleu nightclubs
- 24-hour concierge
- Private mountain guide
- Reserved table at Heavenly Unbuckle Après Ski Party (rated the #1 Après ski party in America by *Forbes & CNN Travel*)

Heavenly is no place for lightweights – it's for those who are up for first chair and are still going strong long after last call, and the Skyway to Heavenly party follows suit. With a massive mountain full of off-the-grid terrain and stunning selfie-ready views of sparkling Lake Tahoe below, Heavenly is for snow seekers who want to go big and forge their own path. Sleep can wait!

Be at Busby's West (3110 Santa Monica Blvd.) on January 15th at 8:30 pm in your best and boldest throwback ski party gear to enter and enjoy a taste of what a Heavenly ski trip is all about.

Go All In at SkywaytoHeavenly.com for full details. High above the sapphire-blue waters of Lake Tahoe, Heavenly Mountain Resort is one of the most unique mountain resorts on the planet. Combining 4,800 acres of off-the-grid terrain and incredible views of Lake Tahoe with high-octane, non-stop nightlife, Heavenly offers a high-energy resort experience like no other. Heavenly is a subsidiary of Vail Resorts, Inc., the leading mountain resort operator in the United States. Visit SkiHeavenly.com or call 800-HEAVENLY to learn more.

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Coroner's investigator Karina Peck and cadaver dog Indiana Bones are among the best in the U.S. at solving dark mysteries.



PHOTO BY AMANDA LOPEZ

L.A. Story
By James Bartlett

BRAINS AND NOSE

When a visitor enters the office, there's a warning bark and growl, so Karina Peck issues some sharp-sounding commands to the German shepherd who's no longer snoozing in the crate beside her. Indiana Bones, the only departmental human remains detection dog in L.A. County, immediately quiets down, ready for her next deployment and the magic command: "Search."

For Peck, the canine (K9) handler at the L.A. County Medical Examiner-Coroner's office, the next phone call can mean long hours, a bewildering combination of conditions at a crime scene and the sobering detection of human remains.

"If we're there, there's nothing I can do to change what happened," Peck says. "But that's my opportunity to be the voice of the victim."

Indy, a "cadaver dog" who just turned 11, has more than 130 substantiated "finds" under her collar, and stats widely tracked in the competitive K9 community show the pair are, Peck acknowledges, "up there" among the best in the country.

The duo's tasks may seem gruesome, but for Indy it's simply play — and she wants her toy. She has normal play toys (a pink octopus sits alongside her in the crate), but her work toys are different, Peck says. One foot-long piece of chewed jute is the reward Indy gets when she completes her "task."

Peck's commands to Indy, who was born in the Netherlands, are in Dutch. "Indy won't listen to anyone but me anyway, and the language isn't important: It's all about intonation and my body language. I could say 'apple pie' to her in a certain way, and she'd lie right down."

Indy looks less intimidating than some German shepherds, but she's no fluffy family pet. The chunky chain around Peck's waist, which initially appears to be

the belt of her black cargo pants, is actually Indy's leash. "She constantly bumps me and wants to be petted, but she's not a big snuggler," Peck says.

Peck explains that Indy is "completely driven, almost manic," in her desire to get her toy, though Peck, who comes from a law-enforcement family — she's about to build her second rifle from scratch — is definitely the alpha in their wolf-pack structure. That's why Indy growls or barks when people come up to or move behind Peck, though she says Indy would "try to take over in a second if I was too weak."

Indy isn't interested in any puppy friends; out in the park there are too many challengers from whom she'd have to commandeer toys or dominate. Indy won't mess with patrol dogs, though. "They can be even more intense," Peck says, "and as one of the only females, when she's around them they're usually like, 'hey,' so she has to keep an eye on them."

Peck admits that her 24/7 domestic and professional relationship with the dog is "probably way beyond co-dependency." She's "insanely attached" to Indy, but she also knows that the feelings aren't reciprocated in the same way.

"Oh, she loves me," Peck says, pausing before adding, "best of all humans."

Peck, who started at the coroner's office as an intern in 2005, was assigned Indy from a previous K9 handler who left on military deployment in 2009. They had already selected the puppy's name, Indiana, in recognition of an Indiana organization that selected the dog as a promising law trainee. She got her media-friendly action hero's last name later. Indiana Bones is an unusual dog name, at least according to the *Los Angeles Times*' "Top Dogs" registry.

Pointing to some newspaper clippings on a notice board, Peck says journalists now call out to Indy at crime scenes and want to take her picture. "She's in the papers a lot," she notes, while Peck is "usually face first, looking into a shallow grave."

Dog and handler are trained and assessed weekly, monthly and yearly, and that includes training with K9 units specializing in explosives and narcotics. But homicides are always a priority, and even when they're not on assignment, Peck keeps Indy alert by choosing clues from one of her many sample jars (tiny fragments of charred bone, perhaps, or dried blood, decayed tissue or fresh grave dirt) and carefully hiding them.

She fills these hide-and-go-seek sessions with variation, just as you'd find in the search for a body. The decedent being sought could be a large person or an infant, exposed to all kinds of weather, lying in sand or water — or be encased under concrete or otherwise "contained." Even microclimates can affect the chemical signatures of human remains.

"We put a lot of work in to ensure that they don't cheat or get confused," says the easy-to-laugh Peck, "so I rarely put anything in a trunk if we're doing a vehicle search" — that would be too obvious for Indy.

"We're constantly attempting to trick her to ensure that she's 'proofed off' of things like gloves, dead animals, disturbed earth and live human scent. She

just knows people hide things for her; she doesn't understand criminality."

During a search, Indy will use a slowly reducing serpentine process known as the Scent Cone Pattern to home in, then she'll "alert" (sit or lie and point, nose first, at the place she has identified). This "passive" approach ensures no evidence is tainted.

While Peck speaks some German and Czech (most police dogs are European, where they're bred with the ideal hunting play/prey drive), she also reads Indy's body language. She knows what a raised or wagging tail means, and whether Indy's ears have gone back or her gait has changed.

Peck has avoided using "people food" as a treat. "She can't be distracted," she explains, "and we've had to go into dumpsters and landfills," where decomposing trash can smell the worst of all. "Indy's found bags of bloody medical gowns," she says, "and I worry about syringes, razors and engine coolant — that could kill her." Many years ago, an infected cut on Indy's tail led to it being docked.

"INDY IS IN THE PAPERS A LOT. I'M USUALLY FACE FIRST, LOOKING INTO A SHALLOW GRAVE."
—KARINA PECK

Peck writes reports and keeps up with endless scientific discoveries, but only rarely has to appear in court. There's what she calls a symbiotic relationship: She's the brain and Indy is the nose, able to catch and identify so many smells that science still can't put a number on the dog's olfactory capability.

Unsurprisingly, there's intense rivalry between the various types of K9 units. "Most of us tend to be A-type personalities, and ironically, the dog world is very catty," she laughs. "We all know our stats."

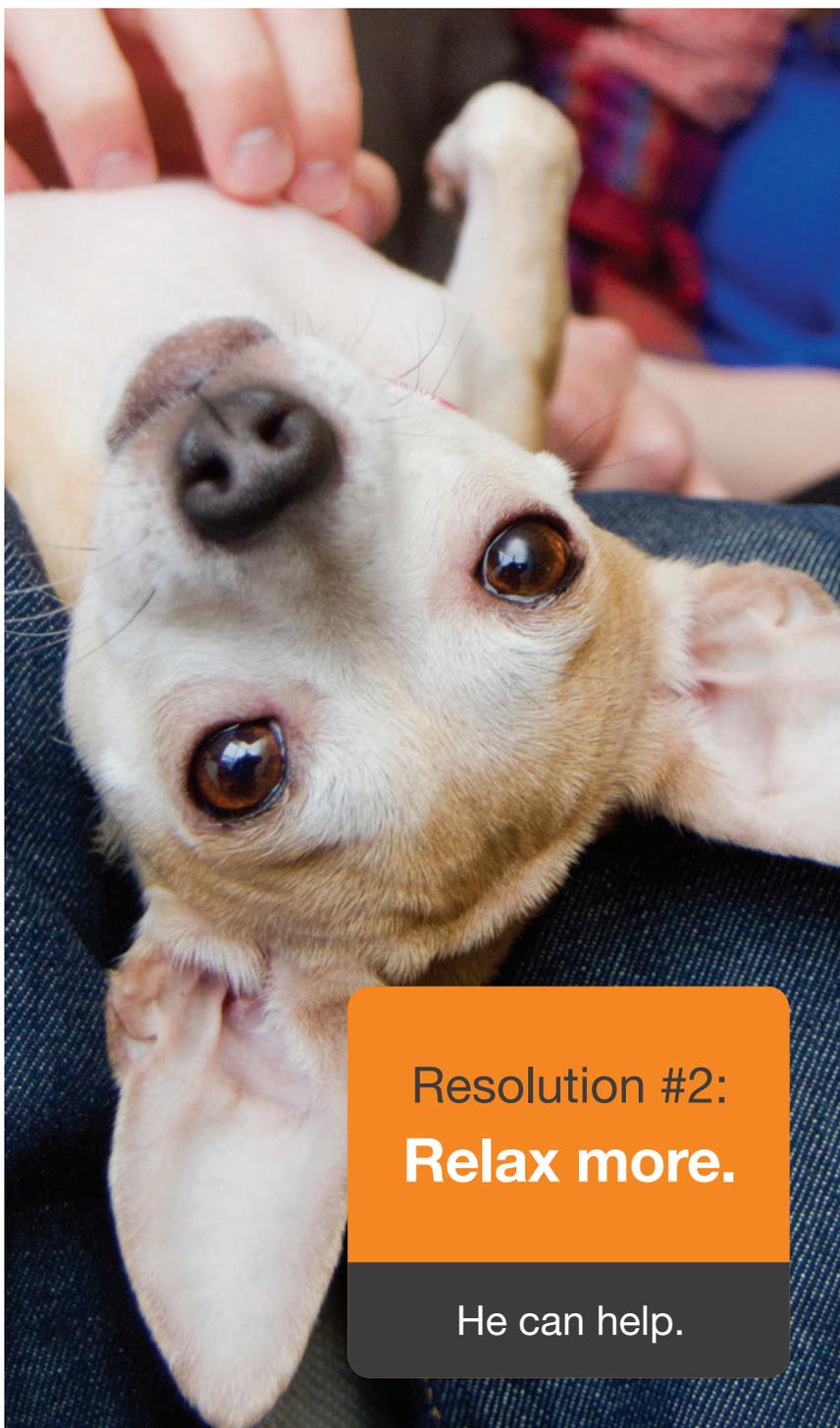
But despite the duo's high rankings, Indy is slowly heading toward retirement. Like Peck, who practices martial arts and likes to dance and hike, Indy theoretically could go on indefinitely — as long as she passes her yearly medical exam.

Departmental minds, however, are looking to the future. That will mean a new dog for Peck to train, and she's pushing to add a second one in the coroner's office to help deal with the huge amount of ground covered during the several cases per month they're assigned.

That said, canine retirement is not a happy thing to contemplate, even if Peck is already working with a male replacement dog (Indy wouldn't tolerate another female at home).

As is common practice within government departments, Peck will be allowed to purchase Indy for a nominal \$1. The dog then will become, in literal terms only, a pet.

Peck is stoic about the future, but admits, "That first day when I go to the truck but she has to stay home? That's going to be the hardest for both of us."



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Elise and William Hicks mourn the stately trees that already have been destroyed.

PHOTO BY TED SOOUI

News //

CHOPPING 1,650 TREES

Marina del Rey environmentalists disparage a county plan to sacrifice natural beauty and great blue heron habitat for revenue

BY ASHER KLEIN AND MATT FLEMING

William Hicks had never cried over a tree before, but this was no ordinary tree, this large, gnarled Indian laurel fig stretching for the sky. Hicks and Elise, his wife, had once stopped in awe at the base of the tree in Mariners Village, a shaded, 43-year-old development at the tip of Marina del Rey, which thousands of people and many coastal birds call home. They loved trees, but never like this.

So when William saw Mariners Village maintenance workers sawing the tree into chunks in October, he was overcome, and bled his feelings into a long, somewhat sappy poem, “Eulogy for a Tree”:

Forty years to get that size

I couldn't believe my eyes

It was being butchered by several guys

It was part of a larger pattern. As redevelopment steamrolls its way into this hard-to-access community nestled next to the Pacific, some of Marina del Rey's trees are being mown down as if they're in a Brazilian rainforest.

Opponents say it's not only a community tragedy but it's also destroying the habitat of some magnificent coastal birds.

In December, county contractors were busy near Mariners Village clearing a leafy flood-control basin — a tree-lined pond known as Oxford Lagoon, which is home to coastal birds — of all but a few of its 650 trees and shrubs.

Two miles away, Marina Admiralty Company is tweaking its 10-year, \$200 million development plan for Mariners Village.

In a bid to dress up the sleepy enclave and persuade the L.A. County Board of Supervisors to renew its underlying land lease, Marina Admiralty wants to chop down just about every single tree — by residents' count, more than 1,000 trees standing in the way of progress. Dozens of other trees already have been uprooted by projects around the marina, opponents say.

Marina Admiralty Company plans to install a waterside promenade, more than three times the existing commercial space, 92 boat slips and a public dock with spots for kayaks and Ski-Doos, plus navigable paths for bikes and pedestrians. This aligns perfectly with the supervisors' grand vision for Marina del Rey: a pretty, accessible, multiuse community that would, not coincidentally, pull in far more paying visitors.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti has co-signed the Million Trees L.A. Initiative, a nearly decade-old pledge by ex-Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa to expand the sun-baked city's urban shade canopy, a sustainable practice widely viewed as important to cutting greenhouse gases.

But the marina is Los Angeles County, not city, territory, and patches of Marina del Rey could go years without mature tree cover after the slated destruction.

“I guess the land is too valuable for invaluable trees,” William Hicks says.

Clearing the woody pond at Oxford Lagoon, as well as Mariners Village, of older trees and shrubs conforms to the County Board of Supervisors' vision for Marina del Rey. In a move to help the county's bottom line, Supervisor Don Knabe aims to compete in the housing-business boom seen in nearby and rapidly gentrifying Venice.

So far, the county has approved only a

broad mission statement for the marina; no specific plans. But Knabe, who represents this part of the coast, argues, “It's been in sun, water and sand for 50 years — we're just polishing the crown jewel.”

Some problems created by the county's plan can't be undone, however. In general, tearing out trees ruins existing soil biodiversity, according to Jerome Smith, a certified arborist. He says the drought-tolerant plants that are touted by developers and county officials make no sense in what is essentially a man-made marsh.

“The claim that you've got to plant native species in an artificial environment is totally asinine,” Smith says.

You'd be hard-pressed to find another planned community in L.A. like Mariners Village. The 981-unit, 23-acre development looks nothing like the boxy condos that define the Marina; think a hunting lodge built by Peter Pan for the Lost Boys' retirement.

Theme park-quality streams, lined with cement, bubble under nearly every balcony. Tall bamboo stalks, sturdy trees and swimming pools surround a lagoon overshadowed by a 70-foot-tall crow's nest accessible by a winding staircase.

The ambiance is a hallmark of such “residential resorts” built by Marina Admiralty Company, explains Michael Sondermann, the group's spokesman. “The typical ‘era’ apartments aren't architectural wonders,” he says. “Material landscaping, when you open the doors, hides a lot of those sins.”

But these for-rent apartments need a down-to-the-studs revamp to deal with issues such as asbestos in the stucco and old clay sewer pipes. So the trees must go, Sondermann says, to be replaced by native, coastal trees.

According to Sondermann, a county

policy requires Marina Admiralty to make a substantial economic investment, in return for approval to renew its long-term lease. Knabe won't confirm or deny as much, saying only that the deal the board struck merely needed to be fair.

Hicks and his cohort are crying foul. They see the trees as integral to Marina del Rey's delicate ecosystem. It's where herons — “our charismatic megafauna” — bring bits of thatch from neighboring meadows of the Ballona Wetlands to build nests, says longtime activist Marcia Hanscom.

She and other critics see the Board of Supervisors' grasp of the situation as, “‘Oh, just change out the wallpaper.’ ... They don't appreciate that we have nature sustaining us here.”

Impassioned residents gave five hours of testimony at a “design review” board meeting in March 2014, to hear Elise Hicks tell it, winning a unanimous vote for a redesign to save many of the trees. One resident at the meeting shouted that the Mariners Village design “looks like a prison,” according to the *Argonaut* newspaper.

Sondermann notes that Marina del Rey's state-certified land use plan requires tree-for-tree replacement, and he insists each tree will be replaced with a drought-tolerant tree. But the fine print submitted to the county doesn't actually promise one-to-one tree replacement.

An Environmental Impact Report now will determine if any of the hundreds of trees at risk need saving.

But outspoken residents see bad signs in the tea leaves. In November 2013, workers at Mariners Village trimmed tree branches without the right permits, downing 11 bird nests in violation of state developer guidelines in the so-called Local Coastal Plan. Sondermann calls it an honest mistake.

The company is appealing for approval after the fact, but residents can't get over what seems like a streak of hypocrisy.

It would be easy, and perhaps cheaper, to renovate the Oxford Lagoon flood basin and Mariners Village without harming the mature trees that share the space, the opponents say.

“When you rip out an old tree and regrade the soil, you're destroying all the microorganisms in the soil,” says Smith, the arborist. For example, he gets calls for aid from owners of newish homes, flabbergasted that their newish trees are dying — thanks to graded dirt.

Beyond its intrinsic value to nature, a mature tree adds \$10,000 to a home's value, Smith adds.

So why is tree-trashing still on docket? It depends who you ask.

“I honestly can't tell if the underlying problem is ignorance or the corrupting influence of money,” says Marina del Rey resident Kathryn Campbell, a well-connected Democrat critical of the tree-felling plan.

The dozens of people in the community simply “didn't want change,” Knabe says. “People talk like we're randomly going out there with axes and hacking down the trees. That's not the case at all.”

Reach Asher Klein at asherhklein@gmail.com. Follow Matt Fleming on Twitter @mattfleming1181.



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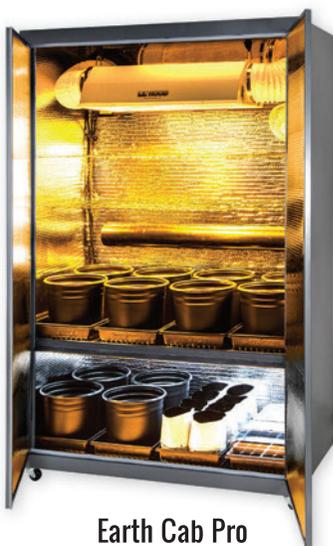
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Xander Mozejewski gained fame by refusing to let his disability define him. But with human trials into a breakthrough treatment seeming possible, why's he so reluctant?

L.A.'S AWESOME WHEELCHAIR GUY

BY CHRIS WALKER

AN INCOMING CALL LIGHTS UP THE SCREEN of Xander Mozejewski's iPhone.

"Dude, you're not going to believe this," a friend says when he picks up.

Somebody has just uploaded a nude photo of Mozejewski onto the wildly popular Internet aggregator Reddit, and it's blown up onto the front page, getting hundreds of thousands of views under the title "Ridiculously Photogenic Nude Wheelchair Guy."

The photo is, in fact, authentic, taken the day before, when Mozejewski stripped off his clothes and took his wheelchair for an exhibitionistic spin at the 405/101 freeway interchange in Studio City.

While Mozejewski is not familiar with Reddit, soon other friends are calling, cracking up at the hundreds of comments streaming in from users on the website. One example: "I'd let him give me a ride."

They encourage Mozejewski to start an AMA, or "Ask Me Anything," in which he agrees

to take written questions from other Reddit users about, well, anything. Similar to a chat room, Reddit AMAs have been used by everyone from Snoop Dogg to Barack Obama.

So Mozejewski gives it a try, titling his AMA "I am Xander Mozejewski AKA the ridiculously photogenic nude wheelchair guy."

It's a perfect way to pass the time, since Mozejewski is stuck in bed with a pressure sore, also known as a bedsore — a common problem for people who are paralyzed and spend too much time placing weight on one part of their body, bruising the skin. From his home in the San Fernando Valley, he ends up answering hundreds of questions during the next 24 hours.

It's not long before his AMA blows up, too. Reddit users can't believe the things he's saying. Mozejewski is completely unfiltered.

BecauseImAnAsshole: I'll go first ... how do you have sex and poop? Any order will do.

Xanturd: Well, i can easily get a boner, but the challenge is making it last. so i take cialis sometimes. 22 years old and taking cialis, fuckin ballin. cant control my poops which is the worst thing about being paralyzed. every day and a half ish i take a dump. you put (16»

» **15)** *a suppository in your butt, wait 15 minutes, then get on the toilet and make it rain. fingering your butt helps the poop come out, obviously i do it with gloves on. on a side note, i miss the feeling of taking a nice shit than the feeling of sex*

ShyJalapeno: Do you have any feeling in your dick? Sorry for being ignorant creep :)

Xanturd: zero feeling but sex is still totes fun. everyone ive hooked up with says im really really good and luckily my dick is big

Some people are loving it; some hate it. A few call him vain and immature. But it's hard not to be impressed by his high spirits in the face of paralysis.

Rayjirdeoxys: How do you manage to keep such a positive attitude through this?

Xanturd: Well, im hot, i have money, a sick car, lots of nikes, dope friends, awesome ideas ... what else do i need?

Since the motorcycle accident three years ago that left him paralyzed below the waist, Mozejewski has made his life all about ignoring his wheelchair and living as fast and hard as he can. Antics such as the naked freeway ride are regular occurrences, earning him thousands of followers on Instagram and his Tumblr page, which is titled "My Friends Are Hotter Than Yours."

He's the Kim Kardashian of the disability community — at times intentionally provocative, other times seemingly unconcerned with what people think. The effect has certainly paid off in attention. In light of the way people with disabilities are frequently sidelined or pitied, some view him as a hero for refusing to identify with his condition.

But recent medical breakthroughs in paralysis treatment have Mozejewski facing some big questions. Namely, is his hedonism a useful coping mechanism — or a way to avoid reality? While Mozejewski spends his days partying, shooting photos (and helping other millennials build their own portfolios) and hanging with friends, many in the paralysis community are abuzz over new technologies that might allow them to walk again.

Mozejewski doesn't seem to care. And to some people, that makes him baffling — even controversial.

Before the accident, Xander Mozejewski seemed to have it all. A graduate of North Hollywood High School's Zoo Magnet Center, he had a natural agility, and was an excellent snowboarder and skateboarder. With his great genes (his mom modeled), he was hired to do photo shoots as far away as New York. And as a budding photographer himself, he teamed up with a professional who took him on shoots for companies including Levi's and Nike.

As Mozejewski puts it, "I was getting good money and doing dope things."

Then, on Nov. 13, 2011, his world was turned upside down.

Robert Mozejewski, Xander's father, remembers the day as if it were yesterday. He was driving home from Laguna Beach, where he had been out of cell service. Suddenly his phone blinked as it came into range — 50 missed calls and text messages. He pulled over and read the first words: Xander. Motorcycle. Emergency Room. Cedars-Sinai.

Robert turned off his phone and headed

straight to the hospital. He already knew; there was no need to talk with anyone.

"Nothing could prepare me for what I saw, though. My son, my oldest son, was lying in the ICU bed with wires and hoses and tubes and machines hooked up to him. His legs were immobilized with straps and airboots. I walked over to the closest wall and started banging on it, my hands, my fists, my forehead. 'Fucking motorcycles' was pretty much all I can remember saying."

Gradually, details of the accident emerged from Mozejewski's friend Ben Krugliak, who recounted how the pair had been on their way to a surf shop on their motorcycles. They were only blocks from

were surprised that Mozejewski survived.

It took 40 days in the intensive care unit to stabilize him. Since Mozejewski suffered injuries on both sides of his body, he had to be suspended by his arms to undergo dual surgeries — one on his ribs and collapsed lungs, the other on his spine, where a titanium rod was placed from vertebrae T3 to T11.

Mozejewski finally regained consciousness, but it wasn't clear whether he would regain feeling in his lower body. Doctors withheld their skepticism, but as the days in ICU dragged on, it became apparent to the Mozejewski family that their 20-year-old son was paralyzed from the waist down.

"Can't this just go away, can't it just be

"I DON'T THINK WHEELCHAIRS HAVE BEEN TO MANY PLACES I'VE GONE."

—XANDER MOZEJEWSKI



Mozejewski's naked freeway ride

the Mozejewski home in Studio City when the accident occurred.

Mozejewski had been riding his Ducati S4 with a 916 superbike engine. The racing bike weighed almost nothing and was no match for another young driver trying to beat a red light while turning left off Ventura Boulevard, who T-boned Mozejewski with his car.

Eyewitnesses, including a couple of Mozejewski's neighbors, say the impact sent the young man flying straight up into the air. He was not wearing a motorcycle jacket. Based on the 10 broken ribs, two collapsed lungs and fractured T6, T7 and T8 vertebrae he sustained, paramedics believe Mozejewski broke his back in midair because his body was twisted so violently.

The paramedics later told the family they

back to how it was?" Mozejewski's mom, Cheryl Bianchi, wrote on Facebook.

But paralysis meant adapting to a new reality.

When the hospital bills came in, they totaled \$3.7 million. Not only was Mozejewski uninsured, but his father later was laid off from his job at a coffee distributor, in part because he had spent so much time at the hospital.

Strapped for cash, the family was able to weather the financial storm solely because some of Mozejewski's doctors performed their surgeries pro bono.

"We were also stunned, relieved and amazed to get one Cedars bill that totaled \$2.7 million with a 'discount' of \$2 million, and a balance due of only \$700,000," Bianchi recalls. "Xander later referred to

it as a 'sick-ass discount!'" The remaining balance was mostly covered by the state of California.

The initial months after the accident were trying, physically and emotionally. Mozejewski's weight dropped to 129 pounds, wafer-thin, considering his 6-foot 3-inch frame, and he suffered regularly from urinary tract infections. His girlfriend abandoned him, a transgression he's never forgiven.

Mozejewski's parents desperately sought outside help. They reached out to friends who might know others with similar injuries, and that's when they discovered how extensive the paralyzed community is. According to the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, which was founded by the late *Superman* actor after he suffered a spinal cord injury, nearly 6 million Americans are living with paralysis, with 1.275 million of those from spinal cord injuries.

"There were so many. That I had barely even considered this population before was deeply embarrassing," Bianchi says.

Acting on suggestions the family received, Mozejewski tried various treatments, including aquatic therapy and locomotor therapy, which involved being suspended in a harness above a treadmill. But it was a specialized gym in Northridge for wheelchair users, C.O.R.E., where he found a tight-knit community to advise and support him.

Even those new friends and mentors at C.O.R.E. couldn't have anticipated how quickly Mozejewski would bounce back. Within just a year of joining the gym, Mozejewski was already living faster and looser than most his age — including those who can walk. (See video at video.laweekly.com.)

On a Tuesday night in 2014, Mozejewski arrives at the C.O.R.E. gym early. Tonight he's scheduled to give a talk for the Triumph Foundation, a local support group for paralysis victims. The presentation is a bit of a surprise to his parents, given that Mozejewski usually doesn't discuss his disability. They encourage friends and family to attend. But there's also some nervousness. As Mozejewski's Reddit AMA indicates, no one knows exactly what he's going to say.

Before the presentation starts, Mozejewski is behind a bench-press machine that's been specially modified to accommodate wheelchair users. He's benching 210 pounds, which, he says, is far from his maximum. Even with his stick legs, from the waist up Mozejewski has the physique of a bodybuilder. There's a reason he was called "ridiculously good-looking" on Reddit.

"I could really care less how big I am. This is so I can build stamina to do stuff like Coachella," he says between reps.

But he also explains that he can't continue bulking up: Having more mass in his upper body puts more pressure on his lower body, which can produce pressure sores.

Trainers and patrons at C.O.R.E. are used to such considerations; there aren't many gyms designed specifically for wheelchair users. C.O.R.E. has 210 regular members, and some come from as far as

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As Mozejewski continues his workout, about 20 people arrive to hear him speak, eight of them in wheelchairs. A crowd forms a semi-circle around the gym's check-in desk, which has a projection screen above it. The wheelchair users take the spaces in front so they can see.

C.O.R.E. owner Aaron Baker, who has himself slowly recovered from a motorcycle accident, clears his throat and makes an introduction: "Now here's a dude who lives not from the chair — that's for sure!"

Mozejewski wheels himself over to face the semi-circle and wipes his long, blond hair away from his face.

"Hey guys, I'm Xander. And if you know me, then you know I have nothing planned. ... I go to sleep at 5 a.m., I wake up at 10. I do whatever I want, when I want, and it's the best."

Behind him on the projection screen, Baker pulls up Mozejewski's Tumblr, its title "My Friends Are Hotter Than Yours" blazing across the top in bold, colorful letters. Below are colorful photos with beautiful young women, some of them exposing their breasts, most looking seductive in various stages of undress. Other pictures show Mozejewski's friends wearing ski masks and shooting water guns at each other on Ventura Boulevard.

It seems weird at first. Some of the guests from the Triumph Foundation shift in their seats. They look uncomfortable. Who is this guy? This doesn't seem like the "photography" talk that they were expecting.

But Mozejewski is just getting started. He asks Baker to play a short film he produced for local shoe store Kicks, which pays him to put together online-only commercials meant to go viral. A girl pops up on the screen, shaking her ass, then dancing on top of a mountain wearing skate shoes.

One of the wheelchair users raises his hand as if he's in elementary school, asking his teacher a question. How did Mozejewski get on top of that mountain?

"I don't think wheelchairs have been to many places I've gone," Mozejewski says dismissively.

It's hard to argue his point: Mozejewski's chair is all dented and beat up, a stark contrast to the antiseptic wheelchairs in the audience. In fact, in the three years since his accident, Mozejewski has become more adventurous and animated than ever, by his own admission.

His base of operations is "the Trap," his crew's nickname for the garage behind the Mozejewskis' home, which his parents converted into a bedroom to give him easy wheelchair access. Inside, Mozejewski has a massive wall of 150 boxes of Nike shoes — a collection he's amassed by buying and selling shoes online. He tries to switch them up each day, wearing different pairs even though he can't walk in them. (The irony is that this keeps them clean.)

In his driveway is a converted Volkswagen TDI SportWagen, with a hand control that operates similarly to the throttle on a speedboat. Mozejewski has discovered it doesn't slow him down at all from drifting around corners on Mulholland Drive.

Everything he does is documented on Instagram and Tumblr. Social media serves up a running commentary on the shenanigans that unfold on a weekly basis: beautiful women, swimming pools, bong rips and wild parties with hundreds of people, some of them throwing handfuls of money off the roof of Mozejewski's family's garage.

"My life simply is not rehab, it's partying and going out and being with people — to me that's more important than walking," Mozejewski tells *L.A. Weekly*. "I want to inspire people to do their own thing."

For some, this rhetoric resonates. Filmmaker Jessica Franz has even decided to use Mozejewski's story as the basis for a

"Among some of Xander's friends, there's this weird envy of the attention he gets. Like, 'Oh, you're Internet-famous? Oh, you get \$800 in Social Security each month?' It's mind-boggling to me that they think the perks of his situation outweigh the negatives," Bianchi says. "But I suppose part of it is because he's so good at keeping up the front."

Mozejewski is adamant that he's not faking his enjoyment of life. Coming close to death taught him to fill each day with crazy adventures: "There's no excuses to hold back — anyone can do this."

Sure, he admits, his disability causes occasional problems. The week before the C.O.R.E. presentation, Mozejewski

ties, too. However briefly, they are bonded together as people, not people in wheelchairs, as so much of the world sees them.

One person who doesn't seem fazed by Mozejewski's spiel is Christopher Voelker. At the presentation he looks fatigued, and keeps checking his phone. He's heard it all before.

Voelker had been mentoring Mozejewski since shortly after his accident. Initially, there was so much that the Mozejewski family didn't know about the disability community, and Voelker was instrumental in helping them find the right resources.

Voelker was paralyzed when he fell off a motorcycle at a racetrack when he was 17. "Back then — 36 years ago — there wasn't available what there is now," he told *L.A. Weekly*.

Serving as an ambassador for the Reeve Foundation, Voelker had mentored many with disabilities over the years. One reason he was interested in Mozejewski, he said, was their mutual connection to photography. "Once we started talking about shooting, we were like two peas in a pod."

Yet even this shared passion reveals their philosophical difference in approaching life and disability. Voelker's photos are a product of calculation, painstaking attention to lighting and texture. He worked tirelessly for decades to build a brand, shooting many celebrities along the way (among them Ringo Starr and Lauryn Hill). Mozejewski is more spontaneous. In true millennial style, his photography subjects are usually his friends.

At 53, Voelker said he felt inspired by Mozejewski — he had never seen someone recover so fast. But at the C.O.R.E. talk, he appears exhausted by him, maybe because he'd already gone through everything Mozejewski has.

Both Voelker and Mozejewski moved into their parents' garages after their accidents, and both used photography as an escape. The difference is that, over time, Voelker realized the importance of using his gift to advocate for the disabled community, helping the Reeve Foundation compile its Paralysis Resource Guide and shooting for *New Mobility Magazine*, a publication for wheelchair users.

In that time, Voelker weathered severe disappointment and pain. He had wanted to walk again for so long, and was told every five years or so that the miracle cure was just around the corner — everything from treadmill training and nerve rewiring to risky stem-cell transfers (some of them conducted abroad, in places like Mumbai and Tijuana). But treatment after treatment failed, and eventually he developed osteoporosis from being paralyzed for so long. In constant pain, he could not even stand in leg braces, as Mozejewski does, because his doctors feared it would break his bones. He had all but given up hope of seeing a paralysis cure during his lifetime.

Until last fall.

On Oct. 10, the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation announced its "Big Idea" campaign on the 10th anniversary of the actor's death. It builds upon a development in early 2014, when the scientific journal *Brain* published results from a study of four men who, previously paralyzed below the waist, are now able to move **(20 »**

"CAN'T THIS GO AWAY, CAN'T IT JUST BE BACK TO HOW IT WAS?"

—CHERYL BIANCHI



It took an ICU team at Cedars-Sinai 40 days to stabilize Mozejewski after his accident.

fictional romance movie, *Chew*, which is set to start filming in February.

"I was immediately taken by Xander's attitude and unbroken spirit. He's so alive," Franz says.

But not everyone's buying it. Sam Maddox, who runs the research blog for the Reeve Foundation and knows Mozejewski through his mom, says he admires the young man's tenacity but adds, "I don't entirely get where he's coming from. You can't live off an image. An image should represent something."

Mozejewski will allow that some of his antics are hype — "to get a rise outta people." He has dubbed himself the "King of the Valley," vowing to rep the 818 area code of northern Los Angeles 'til the day he dies, and he cites Kanye West as his idol.

As with Kanye, not everyone appreciates the provocations. "I do have a lot of haters," Mozejewski says.

His mom, Bianchi, worries. Since the accident, some of Mozejewski's closest friends have pulled away, and Bianchi has observed a strange jealousy between him and younger brother Xavier, who was the more popular kid in high school.

accidentally soiled himself in front of his friends at the Trap before heading out to a pool party. And though Mozejewski gets with more girls now than ever, he can't produce an orgasm.

He jokingly recalls a time when a girl he met slept over, and he accidentally peed on her.

"I legit said to her the next morning, 'Oh snap, I thought that was you smelling bad.'"

They laughed about it.

"One thing this accident taught me is that you cannot be judgmental. I used to be so reserved — proper almost. I didn't party. Now I'm so much more outgoing and accepting of everyone."

Despite their initial shock over his photos and videos, about 30 minutes into the presentation at C.O.R.E., some in Mozejewski's audience have been won over.

His charisma is unquestionable. When Mozejewski says, "Isn't it the best when people forget to grab the wheelchair out of the back of the car?" a few in the crowd actually nod their heads. It's almost as if he has let them forget about their disabili-

» 19) their legs with the assistance of a procedure called epidural stimulation.

An artificial device implanted at the bottom of the spine sends electrical pulses up the spinal cord, mimicking signals the brain normally receives and transmits to control motor and autonomic functions. The Reeve Foundation's "Big Idea" is to secure 36 more candidates and \$15 million to expand research on epidural stimulation.

The technology could have wide-ranging implications for people who are paralyzed.

Headed by Reggie Edgerton at UCLA and Claudia Angeli and Susan Harkema at the University of Louisville, Kentucky, the study found the four men were able to elicit voluntary movements with less stimulation over time. This seems to suggest that a partial to full recovery may be possible.

When Voelker heard this news, he was at first skeptical, even cynical. Even if the treatment had helped the four young men in Kentucky, he expressed doubt that it would ever apply to someone as old as he.

But as more research has emerged, even Voelker admitted that it is "hands-down the most promising thing I've ever seen."

That could be especially true for Mozejewski. Like the four previous participants, his accident was within the last three years, he's physically strong and he has a similar diagnosis — he's a T6 complete paraplegic, meaning he has no feeling from just above his navel down.

That's why Voelker was surprised by Mozejewski's reaction: Xander took no steps of his own to apply for the treatment. With his established Internet fan base, Mozejewski is exactly the kind of spokesman researchers could use to bring publicity and funding to epidural stimulation.

Mozejewski explains that he fears that joining a trial might be too time-consuming, and involve sacrificing the daily adventures he has with his friends. If he were in the Reeve trial, it would require multiple trips to Kentucky, as well as mandatory daily locomotor-therapy sessions, which he previously stopped doing in order to avoid the long commutes between Studio City and Cal State L.A. in East Los Angeles. As someone who lives moment to moment, the idea of imposing a fixed regime for an unproven treatment seems unpalatable.

On a deeper level, Mozejewski says, being part of a trial goes counter to his values. He thrives, and inspires, by ignoring his wheelchair.

"I hate being defined. I don't even want to relate to paralysis," Mozejewski says.

He would much rather be known for his photography, friendship, mentoring and zeal for life than be viewed through the lens of disability.

According to Maddox, the Reeve Foundation's research blogger, there is already stiff competition to get into the potential trials: "There's hundreds of people who want to sign up for this."

Behind the scenes, Maddox adds, there's a race between researchers to develop the technology and monetize it first. The Reeve Foundation's proposed trial, using 36 patients, is just one avenue; opportunities also are brewing in Los Angeles, including researcher Reggie Edgerton's NeuroRecovery Technologies Inc. at UCLA.

And future trials might not be as oner-

ous as Mozejewski believes. Edgerton's company at UCLA is working on an external epidural stimulator, which wouldn't require surgery to implant — a sort of plug-and-play model that people could come in to try.

"So I don't think future candidates will be required to do the six to nine months of pre-training that the first four guys did. It's a whole different bargain than what they made," Maddox says.

But Mozejewski seems unconcerned.

"I THINK WHAT HE'S DOING NOW IS GOOD FOR HIS SOUL BUT NOT FOR HIS BODY." —CHRIS VOELKER



His parents do the heavy lifting for him, feverishly reading about new research, posting updates for friends on Facebook, even raising money for researchers. Mozejewski would rather be a wildly active young guy.

Seeing this, Voelker feels torn. "I think what he's doing now is good for his soul but not for his body," he says at one point.

But rather than lecture his friend about being more responsible, Voelker says the best he can hope for is that Mozejewski will come to the realization on his own.

When the presentation at C.O.R.E. ends, Mozejewski wheels past Voelker and says hi but doesn't bother to stick around long. He's already in a rush to make it to a pool party at the Roosevelt Hotel.

A week and a half later, Cheryl Bianchi receives a call informing her that Voelker

But on Sept. 11, two days after being admitted to the hospital, Voelker is declared brain-dead.

Bianchi is broadsided, reeling from the loss of someone she hadn't known long but who had become so important to her family. She finally gathers the courage to go into the garage to tell her son about it. She can tell he is upset by the news; usually verbose, the only thing Mozejewski keeps saying is, "That's crazy."

"I hope you can see this is one of my reasons for being on your case about treatment," Bianchi tells him.

Voelker's suicide is a wake-up call. It hits home for Bianchi how decades of pain and complications from paralysis affected Voelker. Photography may have been his escape, but it could never be enough.

"Think about 10 to 20 years down the road, Xander — how can you not be concerned?" his mother asks.

Bianchi has vowed that she'll keep pushing forward, helping to find investors for the Reeve Foundation and NeuroRecovery Technologies and raise awareness about epidural stimulation, regardless of what her son decides.

"We cannot lose any more good humans because of this — something we can work together and change," she tells the *Weekly*.

But privately, Mozejewski admits he's in disbelief, even if he won't tell his mom.

Eight days after Voelker's death, Mozejewski's voice on the phone goes abruptly from joking to deadpan when his mentor's suicide is mentioned. It's apparent the subject has struck a nerve; Mozejewski hesitates as he gathers his thoughts.

He's been thinking seriously about the persona he's created, and whether it's sustainable.

"I know it's annoying how I'm always like, 'I'm so cool, I'm so hot, I'm a beast,' and ... I'm sorry — I'm not doing it for attention. I say that shit as a cover, I guess ..."

"I'm lucky because I'm young and strong, but the idea of what can happen when I get older does haunt me."

After all, Voelker suffered so much more than most people realized. The fact that even he advocated epidural stimulation has made Mozejewski reconsider the treatment.

"It's not like it's the first thing I think about when I wake up — that I need to do this treatment — but I'm opening to the possibility."

Of course, he's still on the fence, considering the discipline that locomotor therapy would require, the necessity of maintaining appointments and a regimen, as well as a deeper psychological unease at admitting that his wheelchair is something to beat. After all, ignoring his paralysis is what has allowed him to lead a lifestyle that many 23-year-olds admire, and has earned him heaps of online fans.

But, Mozejewski admits, since Voelker's death, "I'm thinking way more about it," he says. "So we'll see."

He doesn't know that his mom has already sent in a preliminary application for the Reeve trial.

Reach the writer at bikejournalist@gmail.com.

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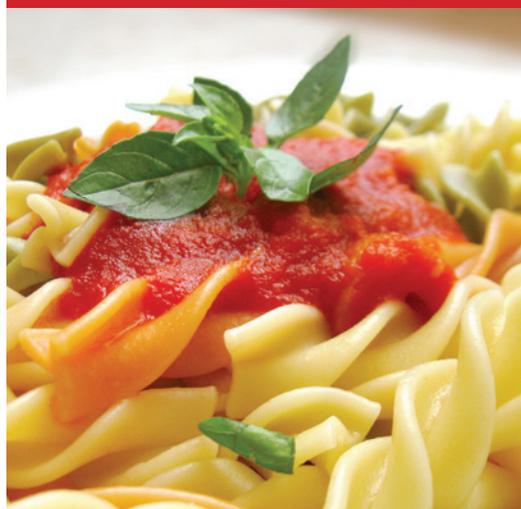
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L.A.'S 10 BEST CHINESE RESTAURANTS

SoCal offers the opportunity to taste every regional cuisine of the vast nation

BY CLARISSA WEI

Los Angeles has some of the best Chinese food outside of China. Because of the sheer diversity of Chinese immigrants in the region, you can sample the vastness of Chinese cuisine — from the fiery spices of Chengdu to the imperial cuisine of Beijing — without ever having to leave the Southland. Most of the star restaurants are situated in the far east corner of the county, specifically in the San Gabriel Valley. There are approximately 600 to 800 Chinese restaurants in the area, 200 on Valley Boulevard alone.

It's difficult to pinpoint specific characteristics of Chinese food since the cuisine varies vastly depending on region. The north has a heavy use of black vinegar and flour. The south is a champion of rice dishes. Coastal cities love seafood. Inland provinces use land animals and a good amount of vegetables in their dishes. More humid areas such as Hunan and Sichuan see an emphasis on spices, and colder, drier areas such as Xinjiang use lamb and yak in their dishes.

Truly, with time, you can eat through all of China. Here are our favorites:

10. Shaanxi Gourmet

You need to know what to order when you're in Shaanxi Gourmet. Here's a tip: All the recommended dishes on the wall are fair game. The restaurant pays homage to Xi'an, which is the capital of Shaanxi and the metropolis most commonly associated with the terracotta warriors. Noodles are made from scratch by hand on a daily basis; the *biang biang* noodles are a classic. The Chinese character for *biang* is the largest in terms of stroke numbers, with 58, and the word is an onomatopoeia for the sound the noodles make when they're being slapped on the counter during the cooking process. Xi'an cuisine takes advantage of pork and lamb, with liberal use of garlic and spices. Beer is an ideal pairing; they have some on tap. The best entree is *yangrou paomo*, which is crumbled bread served in rich, lamb-based soup. The bread absorbs all it touches and has a texture akin to gnocchi. In Xi'an, you break the bread yourself, but Shaanxi Gourmet has it all pre-prepared. It's served with a side of cilantro, chilies and pickled garlic. 8518 E. Valley Blvd., Rosemead; (626) 288-9886.

9. Beijing Pie House

Meat pies from Beijing are the original crack pies. The Chinese name for them is *xianbing* and they're pan-seared pockets of crispy dough stuffed with meat, aromas



Toothpick lamb at Chengdu Taste

PHOTO BY ANNE FISHBEIN

and fragrant juices. It's fantastically casual in here. Folks like to order piles upon piles of meat pies and stuff themselves until they can't anymore. There's something about the interior of these discs that keeps people coming back; the flavors are sharp and addictive. 846 E. Garvey Ave., Monterey Park; (626) 288-3818.

8. Earthen Restaurant

Earthen is a Shandong specialist. The Northeast province is known as the epicenter for soy and vinegar production. There's a variety of noodles, rice dishes and dumplings. Green onion pancakes, if you're a fan, are great here, too. The crowd favorite is the Shandong chicken, which is boiled, then deep-fried and served room-temperature in a wonderful dressing of black vinegar, chili and soy sauce. Diced cucumbers are tucked in underneath for texture and it's all topped with a heap of cilantro and scallions. 1639 S. Azusa Ave., Hacienda Heights.

7. Silk Road Garden

Silk Road Garden's menu is entirely halal, and both the chef and the owner hail from Xinjiang, an autonomous region of China located on the western edge of the country. Popular dishes include the appropriately named Big Plate Chicken, seasoned with dates, star anise and Sichuan peppercorns, and long hand-pulled noodles drenched in cumin and meat sauce. In Chinese culture, noodles are a sign of longevity and these, which seem impossibly long, are ideal for

those in pursuit of long life. The thick Xinjiang yogurt — topped with sesame seeds, honey and raisins — is made in-house and provides a welcome contrast to heavy flavors. 18920 E. Gale Ave., Rowland Heights; (626) 999-6165.

6. Lunasia

Lunasia is dim sum done right. Located in Alhambra, it represents a new class of dim sum, minus the crazy pushcarts and unreliable service. Dim sum is made to order and comes out fresh. Service is bilingual. Go with the classics: *har gow*, *shu mai*, BBQ pork buns and pork ribs. Lunasia is generous with the portion sizes. A single *har gow* is served stuffed with four to five pieces of shrimp — truly a mark of a skilled dim sum chef. And if you have a hankering for sweets, try the snow taro buns. 500 W. Main St., Alhambra; (626) 308-3222.

5. Tasty Duck

A Peking duck dinner is an affair by itself and you'll most definitely have to round up a group for this. Think crisp, maltose-glazed duck skin and meat layered on a paper-thin wheat pancake. Add a dollop of sweet bean sauce and a sprinkling of thin cucumber slices and piquant spring onions for garnish. This is the ritual of the Peking duck, China's esteemed national dish. It isn't cheap, either. A single platter can go for up to \$30, but Tasty Duck makes it worth your time and money. The Peking duck here is served with 12 individual wrappers and the skin

is separated from the meat and fried to a crisp with no fat attached. We recommend pairing it with eel sticky rice. 1039 E. Valley Blvd., San Gabriel; (626) 572-3885.

4. Szechuan Impression

Szechuan Impression forgoes old-school Sichuanese dishes and puts an emphasis on dishes that are currently trending and popular in Sichuan. Owners Kelly Xiao and Lynn Liu are seasonally minded as well, so don't expect the menu to be stagnant; it will change depending on ingredient availability. Spices are snuck in from Hanyuan County in Sichuan, where the best peppercorns in the world are picked and harvested. We recommend the garlic pork — a chewy mix of cold pork belly tossed with chili oil — and the Leshan cross-legged beef soup. Leshan is the city where the soup originates; it's made of beef flanks and tripe paired with a chili sauce for dipping on the side. 1900 W. Valley Blvd., Alhambra; (626) 283-4622.

3. Din Tai Fung

Din Tai Fung is a Los Angeles classic. Soup-infused dumplings, known as *xiao long bao*, are its trademark creation. *Xiao long* means "small steaming basket" and *bao* means "bun." Din Tai Fung has its roots in Taiwan but *xiao long bao* is irrefutably from the Jiangnan region of China. They've developed quite a cult following worldwide. The classic selection here is the pork with crab, and no, contrary to some beliefs, the soup isn't actually injected inside. The pork mixture is a combination of ground meat and fat. When the dumpling is steamed, all that fat turns into soup. 171 Caruso Ave., Glendale; (818) 551-5561. Also 1108 S. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia; (626) 574-7068; and 1088 S. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia; (626) 446-8588.

2. Dai Ho Kitchen

Here you can get small-batch Chinese noodles made fresh to order with one caveat: It's open for only 2½ hours a day. The two Chinese characters in the restaurant name, pronounced "da" and "he," translate to "big" and "gather," respectively. Dai Ho makes a mean beef noodle soup, but the sesame sauce dry noodles, or *dan dan mian*, are perhaps the best in town. The noodles are best when eaten immediately and the owner, May, will make it a point to tell you that. 9148 Las Tunas Drive, Temple City; (626) 291-2295.

1. Chengdu Taste

Chengdu Taste opened in 2013, shepherding in a wave of high-end Sichuan restaurants. The restaurant is a champion for old-style Sichuanese dishes steeped in tradition. There's an emphasis on freshwater fish and land animals such as lamb and pork. We're a fan of the water-boiled fish and toothpick lamb. The former is served in a bath of chili oil, layered on top of bean sprouts and cabbage. The latter is bite-sized pieces of meat fried three times and skewered on toothpicks. Most dishes are inundated with spices imported directly from Sichuan. The beauty of Chengdu Taste is that you can taste the subtleties in the ingredients; dishes aren't just mouthfuls of heat. Taste is manned by Tony Xu, who owned a restaurant in China and then worked at Panda Restaurant Group in L.A. before opening his flagship restaurant. 828 W. Valley Blvd., Alhambra; (626) 588-2284.



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L.A.'s BEST NEW CRAFT BREWERIES

OF THE 13 THAT OPENED IN 2014,
HERE ARE 3 OF OUR FAVORITES

Not all beer is created equal — at least not this far into the game. As Los Angeles approaches the five-year anniversary of having a craft beer scene to call its own, it's time to reflect a little on the mind-boggling exponential growth in the number of breweries, brewpubs and beer-slinging establishments sprouting up in every pocket of the Southland.

By our count, 13 breweries opened in L.A. County in 2014, including some brands (Chatsworth's Hand-Brewed Beer, Santa Monica Brew Works) that don't yet have tasting rooms and others (Phantom Carriage) that have had product in the market for a while but finally got their own facility.

With so much new beer out there, it's hard to sift through the muck and know what's worth drinking. For us, we like breweries with balls — the ones that come out of the gate with uncommon styles done well, the ones that set up in dead zones of craft anything, the ones that take risks with their new beers but always come out with a drinkable product.

Classes like Eagle Rock Brewery, Ladyface Ale Company and El Segundo Brewery will always have a special place in our beer-loving heart (and you should really go to Carson for Phantom Carriage's expertly made sours), but here are three totally new, ballsy breweries (in their order of opening) that launched in 2014. Consider them added to our growing list of places making L.A. a better city for craft beer.

MacLeod Ale Brewing Company

The San Fernando Valley desperately needed a brewery and tasting room to call its own. Since June, MacLeod Ale in Van Nuys has become just the gathering

place the Valley's beer community craved. It doesn't hurt, either, that the brewery is the first in Southern California to focus exclusively on cellar-temperature cask (or “real”) ales, or that the beers are expertly made by an Anglophile who moved here from the East Coast specifically for the opportunity to make his favorite kind of pond-hopping beers. Sure, without a CO₂ tap system at the taproom, growler fills end up a little more flat than they do at other breweries, and only a few beer bars in L.A. even have the special hand-pulled serving system needed to pour MacLeod's beers such as Little Spree (a Yorkshire pale ale akin to the rarely imported Tim Taylor's Landlord) and the Session Gap (a light special bitter). But find a pint of any MacLeod beer (Glendale Tap usually serves one on its regular draft system) and you'll be glad you ditched your pre-judgments about room-temperature brew. 14741 Calvert St., Van Nuys; macleodale.com.

Highland Park Brewery

The first time we visited Highland Park Brewery, inside the Hermosillo on York, brewmaster Bob Kunz and his friends were slicing up fresh peaches to put into a Berliner weisse that would be getting sweeter as it got more sour in a stainless steel barrel in the back of his former escort club turned brewpub. Perhaps an ambitious early experiment for a home brewer going public with his own recipes for the first time, but it was only a small sampling of the skills Kunz earned from his long history of working with old-school L.A. beer institutions such as Craftsman Brewing and Father's Office. After six months of slinging signature bright and hoppy ready-to-drink options such as the citrusy Hello L.A. IPA and the lager-like Refresh house beer (by far, two of the best new L.A. beers of the year — we'd be drinking one of each now if we could), Highland Park Brewery released bottles of Lazy Susan, that peachy-nectarine sour we watched being made in those early days. It's been a whirlwind year for Highland Park Brewery, but the real winners in all this are the residents of Highland Park, whose local brewery is both a down-home high-dive and one of the city's best. Did we mention its holiday beer was a ham porter, made by throwing an actual ham into the tank? Now that's balls! 5125 York Blvd., Highland Park; (323) 739-6459; thehermosillo.com.

Three Weavers Brewing Company

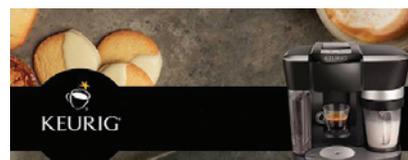
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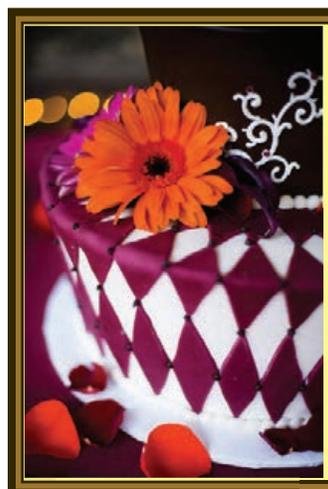
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CONNECT WITH US

Randy's Donuts near LAX, Three Weavers is not only making an unlikely beer destination out of the city of Inglewood but it's also churning out some of the best L.A.-made beers we've ever tasted. The clean, crisp beers — from the flagship Deep Roots ESB to the recently brewed imperial red, Blood Junkie — are balanced enough to make Northern California jealous and bitter enough to give San Diego a run for its money. They're a testament to the solid brewing roots of brewmaster Alexandra Nowell, who cut her teeth at Sierra Nevada, Moylan's and Drakes before moving to SoCal and winning two GAB medals her first year working at Kinetic in Lancaster. After a successful Kickstarter campaign to assist with the tasting-room buildout, Three Weavers opened for pints and growler fills in October, and is on tap at beer bars and restaurants throughout L.A. A bottling line was installed this month, so expect to see more of Nowell's specialty beers — such as the recent yuzu-infused IPA collaboration with Noble Aleworks in Anaheim — on shelves soon. 1031 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood; (310) 400-5830; threeweavers.la. —Sarah Bennett

NEIGHBORHOODS

Best Places to Eat in View Park-Windsor Hills

In case you aren't familiar with the neighborhood known as View Park-Windsor Hills, allow us to introduce you to this awesome part of town.

It's the place you end up if you drive south from Culver City or trek to the other side of the Baldwin Hills. The area is primarily residential and doesn't boast a lot of commerce, which may be why you haven't had an excuse to make a pilgrimage. Or maybe you already live there and know that it's a well-preserved collection of classic ranch-style homes with some breathtaking city views and a strong sense of community pride.

There's also a pretty mixed bag of dining options waiting for you, most of which boast a tinge of the South. If you're looking for gumbo, a po' boy or soul food, this is where you should be heading.

With a few prime spaces for lease, we hope more business owners will follow in these spots' footsteps and give the people even more to choose from. In the meantime, here are five family-owned, locally managed spots that we particularly like, to check out for breakfast, lunch or dinner if you're cruising down Slauson Avenue hoping to find somewhere casual to eat.

Simply Wholesome

Simply Wholesome is one of those places that seem to exist outside of space and time, thanks to the well-preserved Armet Davis Newlove Google building it resides in. Proudly situated at the corner of Slauson and Overhill, it's a perpetually busy restaurant and (somewhat sparse) health-food store with a huge patio and an epic soundtrack. What makes it worth a trip — or a stop on the way to the airport — is the upbeat attitude and that it is the finest meat-eater and vegan-friendly Caribbean-ish restaurant in town. We rec-

ommend anything on the breakfast menu and the outstandingly flaky, perfectly portable Jamaican patties that come with assorted fillings, including a spicy curried chicken and a vegetarian cabbage version. The house-made veg burgers are also hearty and outstanding with a topping of grilled onions. As an ad hoc community space, it also has live music on Saturdays. 4508 W. Slauson Ave., View Park-Windsor Hills; (323) 294-2144.

Puerto Nuevo Restaurant

The always smiling Jose Ramon opened this family-friendly neighborhood spot in 1996 and it's still going strong, thanks to fast, fresh food and a low-key, working-class charm. Sit at the counter and watch them make fresh juices (at half the price of any juice bar in nearby Venice) or slide into a booth and order anything from a standard tuna melt to a pretty great snapper Veracruz. The menu is a mix of Cal-Mex classics and standard diner fare. There's also a side patio, if you want to eat outside, and plenty of parking in back. 4445 W. Slauson Ave. View Park-Windsor Hills; (323) 299-6055.

Wings N' Greens

This brightly lit, family-owned chicken-and-sides place rocks some of the creamiest mac and cheese around. The menu is a thoughtful mix of house-made rotisserie chicken and Krispy Krunchy-brand fried chicken. Sides such as black-eyed peas and cornbread dressing really stick out and should be considered when you are piling up on wings and perfectly cooked collards. They also make a Cool Citrus Chicken Salad with avocado, cranberry and walnuts, which makes a great lunch. The very homey baked goods — the caramel pecan cake in particular — are a fuss-free sweet lover's dream. 4448 W. Slauson Ave., View Park-Windsor Hills; (323) 290-9922.

Woody's Bar-B-Que

Carry-away is the name of the game at the original Woody's Bar-B-Que. For almost 30 years, locals have lined up for the classic takes on pork ribs and tips, and the standard Southern sides. With several other locations in L.A., you don't have to be in Windsor Hills to enjoy the food, but no matter where you go to get it, make sure to pick up a lot of napkins. Barbecue this good is messy work. 3446 W. Slauson Ave., View Park-Windsor Hills; (323) 294-9443.

New Orleans Sno-Balls

If you've spent any time eating in New Orleans, you might remember and crave the utterly unique sno-ball. Almost shaved ice and almost ice cream, it's a concoction that was created expressly to beat the heat. At New Orleans Sno-Balls, you can have the large mass of shaved ice topped with lots of super-sweet flavors like cherry, cotton candy, wedding cake, rum or watermelon. If you want to do it right, order yours New Orleans-style, with a drizzle of condensed milk added to the mix. In keeping with the Deep South theme, they also serve a fiery gumbo and golden-fried funnel cakes under a cloud of confectioner's sugar. Bring a few kids along and let the sugar high ensue. If you need more NOLA style food, you can pick up a decent po' boy next door at Orleans and York Deli. 4452 W. Slauson Ave., View Park-Windsor Hills; (323) 292-3145. —Rachael Narins

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P. 30 **THU**
MIRANDA JULY READS FROM
HER NEW NOVEL

fri

1/9

FILM

Double Feature of a Screen Legend

Before Liz Taylor there was Claudette Colbert, and you can see her interpretation of the pharaoh fatale in Cecil B. DeMille's *Cleopatra* at 7:30 p.m. The 35mm palatial intrigue doesn't end there, however, as Colbert's Empress Poppaea goes toe to toe with Charles Laughton's Nero in *The Sign of the Cross* immediately after. This double feature of antiquity marks the beginning of UCLA's "The Greatest Showman" retrospective, which is ongoing throughout January and February. Mark A. Vieira, co-author of *Cecil B. DeMille: The Art of the Hollywood Epic*, will appear in person to sign copies of the book starting at 6:30. *Billy Wilder Theater*, 10899 Wilshire Blvd., Wstwd.; Fri., Jan. 9, 7:30 p.m.; \$10. (310) 206-8013, cinema.ucla.edu. —Michael Nordine

sat

1/10

DANCE

A Performance Sampler

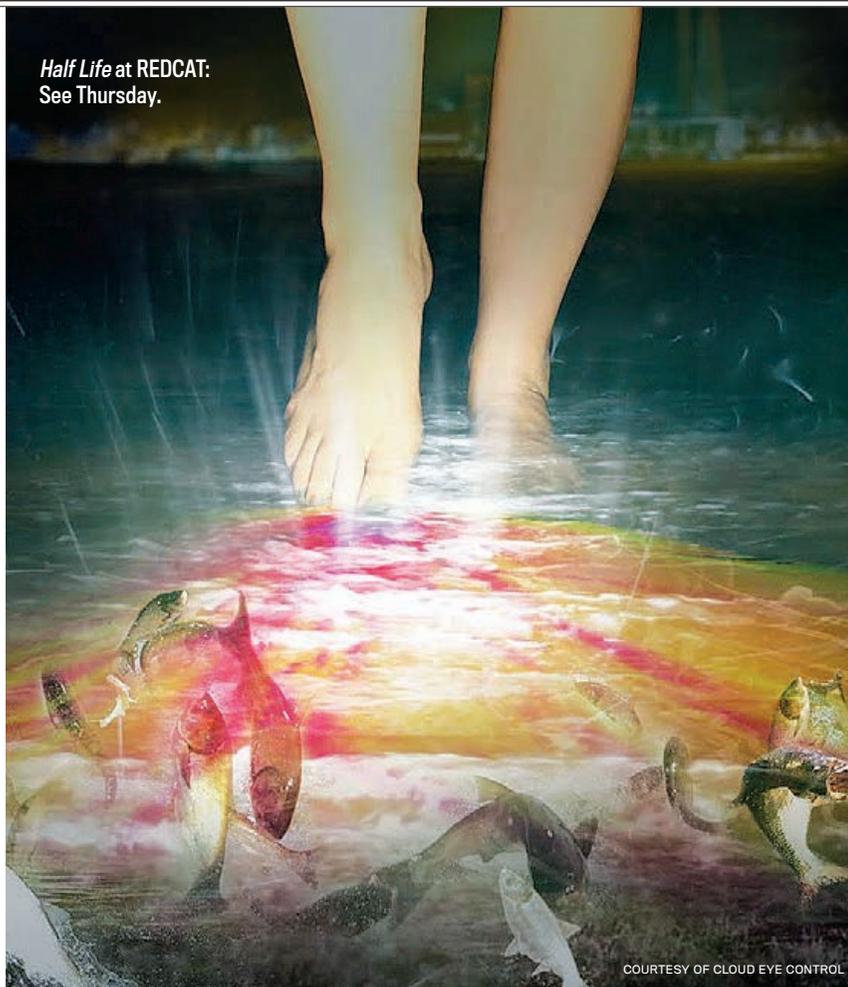
Jump-start your New Year's resolution to explore L.A.'s performing arts with a sampling of what's new at both established and emerging SoCal dance companies as 18 dance companies come together for the third annual **Awakenings and Beginnings Dance Festival**, presented under the auspices of Santa Barbara Dance Alliance. The matinee and evening performances, mostly contemporary but some hip-hop and ballet, offer different lineups, featuring dances from companies such as Axxiom Dance Collective, FUSION Dance Theater, Od Dancity, PTERO Dance and host Rubans Rouges Dance Company. *Diavolo Dance Space*, *The Brewery*, 616 Moulton Ave., Lincoln Heights; Sat., Jan. 10, 2 & 8 p.m.; \$25, \$20 seniors & students. (323) 225-4290, rubansrougesdance.com. —Ann Haskins

ART

Winter Breaker

Making an aesthetic analogy between

Half Life at REDCAT:
See Thursday.



COURTESY OF CLOUD EYE CONTROL

Harmony Korine's dynamic and unsettling films and novels (*Kids*, *Gummo*, *Spring Breakers*) and his low-rent abstract expressionist paintings would be a simplistic way to go — except he himself makes this connection. Korine speaks adoringly about the allure of marginalized subjects and materials, and certainly the emotional power of a sexy subculture is central across his career. In his large-scale, mixed-media paintings, he embraces the muscular chaos of classical expressionism but re-creates its messy radiance with random crap such as house paint, electrical tape, squeegees and scraps of bubble wrap, plus pure chutzpah. *Gagosian Gallery*, 456 N. Camden Drive, Beverly Hills; Sat., Jan. 10, 6-8 p.m.; free. Exhibition continues Tue.-Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m., through Feb. 14. (310) 271-9400, gagosian.com. —Shana Nys Dambrot

FILM

Six Directors You Should Know, All in One Place

Collectively this year's **Golden Globe Best Foreign-Language Film** nominees run the gamut from a Polish nun who discovers she's really Jewish to wartime in a Georgian village to divorce Israeli style. Before the awards are handed out, you can hear the filmmakers discuss their movies. Co-presented by the American Cinematheque and the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, this free roundtable brings together directors Ruben Östlund (Sweden's *Force Majeure*), whose retrospective is previewed in our Film section, plus Ronit and Shlomi Elkabetz (Israel's *Gett: The Trial of Viviane Amsalem*), Pawel Pawlikowski (Poland/Denmark's *Ida*), Andrey Zvyagintsev

(Russia's *Leviathan*) and Zaza Urushadze (Estonia's *Tangerines*). The discussion is followed by a reception with the filmmakers. *Egyptian Theatre*, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hlywd.; Sat., Jan. 10, 1 p.m., doors open 11 a.m.; free, reservations suggested. 323-466-3456, americancinematheque.com. —Siran Babayan

sun

1/11

COMEDY

From Lakers to Louis

Is there a bigger comedian in the zeitgeist than **Louis C.K.**? He's gone from stand-up to TV to films, winning two Emmys for his critically lauded FX show, *Louie*, about the highs and (mostly) lows of being a single father and struggling comic in New York. Arenas are never ideal for watching stand-up comedy, but fans of C.K. know that catching him at an intimate venue such as Largo is an impossible feat. So grab your tickets while you can. *The Forum*, 3900 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood; Sun., Jan. 11, 8 p.m.; \$25-\$45. (800) 653-8000, ticketmaster.com. —Siran Babayan

mon

1/12

COMEDY

You've Told Your Jokes, But You're Not Finished

Host Josh Adam Meyers and his band Elemenopy are helping to prove that comics are the new rock stars. Every month, the **Goddamn Comedy Jam** packs in a lineup of stand-up comics; each performs a routine, then tears up the stage singing a cover song backed by a live band. Past guests have included Bill Burr, Todd Glass, Fortune Feimster and Adam DeVine. Tonight's lineup includes Kyle Kinane, Mary Lynn Rajskub, Dan St. Germain and Nick Swardson. You may remember Swardson from *Reno 911!*, his Comedy Central sketch show *Nick Swardson's Pretend Time* or 2011's Razzie-nominated *Bucky Larson: Born to Be a Star*, in which he played a wannabe porn star with a small penis. *Lyric Theatre*, 520 N. La Brea Ave., Hancock Park; Mon., Jan. 12, 9 p.m.; \$12. (877) 987-6487, ticketfly.com. —Siran Babayan

LECTURES

On Such a Winter's Day

While most people in California might settle for a shorter commute or fewer street hassles, headier minds at Zócalo Public Square present **"What Is the California Dream Now?"** Instead of poring over California's past glories and raising the spirit of Huell Howser, well-traveled author Joe Mathews (*California Crackup*) will explore the unheralded commonality of the Californians in the audience and envision the future legacy of the Golden State. *Grand Central Market, 317 S. Broadway, dwntwn.; Tue., Jan. 13, 7 p.m.; free. (424) 229-9493, zocalopublicsquare.org/event/?postId=57113. —David Cotner*

CLASSICAL MUSIC

The Sound of a New Year

In **Green Umbrella: Theater of the Outrageous**, L.A. Phil's creative chair, John Adams, will lead the orchestra in works that push creative boundaries till they just about snap. John Zorn's short chamber symphony *For Your Eyes Only* ranges from bristling orchestral cacophony to jazzy horn patches and keening wind pieces. Austrian composer Olga Neuwirth's *Hommage à Klaus Nomi* pays a video-



RICH PRUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

Alexis O. Korycynski's *The Haircut*. See Wednesday.

aided tribute to the late German art-pop star with a selection of his songs arranged for countertenor and ensemble. Austrian theater-music fabulist HK Gruber's "pandemonium" *Frankenstein!!* sets children's rhymes in a madhouse of toy instruments and percussion, with illustrations by Sebastiaan Van Doninck. *Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., dwntwn.; Tue., Jan. 13, 8 p.m.; \$20-\$105. (323) 850-2000, laphil.com. —John Payne*

wed 1/14

ART

Art With Benefits

Now in its 20th year, the **L.A. Art Show** has changed management, revamped its style and sought out new audiences, but one thing has not wavered — its commitment to throwing a fancy Wednesday

night opening gala. This year's benefits St. Jude's Children's Hospital, which not for nothing has a robust arts program. It's your essential multiple-caterer, sponsored-bar, red carpet-arrival shindig. The fair is then open all weekend, with a suitably epic roster of tours, an eclectic and extensive discussion series, special sections for works on paper and rare prints, performance art, a special off-site exhibition pairing Chinese and L.A.-based photographers, and ambitious public sculptural installations from Brad Howe and JT Burke. *Los Angeles Convention Center, South Halls J & K; Wed., Jan. 14, 8-11 p.m.; \$125. Programs continue during regular hours, Jan. 15-18, Thu.-Sat., 11 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; \$20 per day, \$40 for a weekend pass. (561) 822-5440, laartshow.com. —Shana Nys Dambrot*

FILM

Underrepresented

From a documentary about a pharmacy in a Southwest U.S. mining town to a short drama about a young, female military-academy cadet, the eight selections at the American Cinematheque's 10th annual **Focus on Female Directors** are a diverse lot. Following the screening will be a talk with several of the directors. Among them are Helen Hood Scheer, whose doc *The Apothecary* won a Student Academy Award, and Alexis O. Korycynski, whose military drama *The Haircut* premiered at

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AFI Fest in 2014. Also scheduled to be on hand are Amy Lee Ketchum (*Dreaming Los Angeles*) and Lydia Hyslop (*Big Money!*). *Egyptian Theatre, 6712 Hollywood Blvd., Hlywd., Wed., Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m.; \$11, \$9 students and seniors, \$7 members. (323) 466-FILM, americancinematheque calendar.com. -Liz Ohanesian*

thu 1/15

BOOKS

Healing With Technology

It's hard to imagine anything that instills a sense of personal power as much as having a missing limb restored. And Mick Ebeling knows about that. The inventor of the EyeWriter — a device for the paralyzed by which eye movements are translated into words — discusses his new book, *Not Impossible: The Art and Joy of Doing What Couldn't Be Done* (Atria Books). Ebeling also heads Project Daniel, which prints 3-D prosthetic limbs for young South Sudanese victims of war. *Vroman's, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena; Thu., Jan. 15, 7 p.m.; free, book is \$25. (626) 449-5320, vromansbookstore.com. -David Cotner*

BOOKS

She's Back

Two days after her novel *The First Bad Man* hits bookstore shelves, **Miranda July** will turn up at a former silent-movie stu-

dio for a fan-centric night. Presented by Skylight Books, the evening at Mack Sennett Studios is a ticketed event and standing room only. July will read from *The First Bad Man* and answer a few questions before the book signing. Skylight notes that all copies of the director-author's latest book will be signed and that attendees are allowed to bring two copies of older works — such as the fantastic short-story collection *No One Belongs Here More Than You* — for signing. *Mack Sennett Studios, 1215 Bates Ave., Silver Lake; Thu., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m.; \$30, \$27 members, book included in ticket price. (323) 660-1175, skylightbooks.com. -Liz Ohanesian*

MULTIMEDIA

A Performance Gone Nuclear

There are invisible and often unforeseeable forces alive in our world that influence our feeling of safety and control. Inspired by the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, *Half Life* is a multimedia production from Los Angeles-based performance crew Cloud Eye Control, which explores the psychological afterburn of global disaster. The world premiere of this multilayered and deeply emotional work features Miwa Matreyek, Anna Oxygen and Chi-wang Yang in live performance amid an evocatively cinematic setting of projected animation, photography and music. *REDCAT, 631 W. Second St., dwtwn; Thu., Jan. 15-Sat., Jan. 17, 8:30 p.m.; Sun., Jan. 18, 3 p.m.; \$10-\$25. (213) 237-2800, redcat.org. -John Payne*

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CHEVRON-ADJACENT

The El Segundo Museum of Art's latest "experience" shows how the space is one of L.A.'s most rebellious — and most fascinating

BY CATHERINE WAGLEY

"No one would ever admit this," says Bernhard Zunkeler, the Berlin-based curator of the El Segundo Museum of Art's 11th exhibition. "But 95 percent of people, when they buy a piece of art, they want it to match the walls or the couch."

The current exhibition, or "experience," as the museum calls its programs, is "Home," and it consists of a series of rooms, each with its own combination of art objects, collectible furniture and quirky design decisions. In the "kitchen," German duo Bernd and Hilla Becher's photographs of weathered houses hang on the back wall, a GE refrigerator from 1933 stands in the back corner and green, scale-like linoleum covers the floor. "It's like we killed Godzilla," Zunkeler says of the flooring.

Zunkeler's sister, Eva Sweeney, opened ESMoA two years ago with her husband, real estate developer/art collector Brian Sweeney. He describes the floor as "crocodile skin." The whole experience, he says, is "a little bit making fun of the idea that 'I need something to match the sofa.'"

"There are other possibilities for art in your home," says Zunkeler, who visits L.A. frequently and began influencing the Sweeneys' art collecting years before the museum opened. "You could get your house inspired by an artwork."

In one room, the purple flooring took its inspiration from flowers in a 1920 painting by German impressionist Max Slevogt. Another artwork, by L.A.-based Flora Kao, inspired Zunkeler to drive out to the desert with Vincent Alpino, his installer, to salvage wood from abandoned homes to use for walls of another room. "Basically, we created an apartment space inside the galleries," Zunkeler says. "It proves that if you let your home be inspired by the artwork, you can get this totally bizarre, interesting feeling."

Eva Sweeney, the architect who designed the museum's narrow, high-ceilinged building, helped Zunkeler with the layout for "Home," which changed right up until the October opening. "I'm the facilitator," she says. "He has the main vision and then I advise him." This is how it has usually worked with the experiences at ESMoA.

All of them have single-word titles — the museum opened with a show called "Desire" — and they nearly always feature work from the Sweeneys' collection.

Zunkeler, who has worked in the corporate world and as an artist and curator, describes the curating effort as a "shared vision," but both Sweeneys defer to him when asked about the details of that vision. "I don't know if we've brainwashed each other," Eva says, but she and Brian tend to agree with her brother's instincts.

the soon-to-open Broad Museum downtown, ESMoA arrived on El Segundo's Main Street almost by accident. The Sweeneys had been collecting everything from 19th-century Corot paintings to 1980s photorealism, and they needed more space to store their art. They live in Manhattan Beach but, in nearby El Segundo, real estate was cheaper. So Brian Sweeney acquired a 25-foot-wide lot next to the former El Segundo post office, then bought that vacated post office as an investment



Joseph Cornell's *Constellation Variant (1955-58)*

PHOTO BY BERND ZOELLNER, COURTESY OF ESMOA

In "Home," work that has been on the Sweeneys' own walls is arranged in an idiosyncratic environment where historic painters mingle with young upstarts. The show reflects exactly the juxtaposition that makes ESMoA compelling: Though it's a private museum run by people with resources most others don't have, its disregard for the formality that defines many museums makes it surprisingly personable.

Brian Sweeney, 53, sailed with the Canadian team in the 1984 Olympics before amassing wealth through investments in commercial real estate and historic coastal land. He began collecting art seriously only after marrying Eva. She and Zunkeler, both in their 40s, grew up in Bochum, Germany, where their parents regularly took them to art museums.

In contrast to other fussed-over prominent private museums, such as Alice Walton's Crystal Bridges in Arkansas and

too. Maybe the lot would have remained a storage site if former El Segundo mayor Eric Busch hadn't suggested the city would benefit more from having a first-rate art collection on its Main Street if people could occasionally see it.

After that, plans "got bigger and bigger," Zunkeler says, until the Sweeneys had a building with flexible layout, an apartment in the back for international artists-in-residence and a rooftop patio with a view of the Chevron refinery, LAX and Pacific Ocean.

ArtInfo blogger William Poundstone is a big proponent of ESMoA, and it made ArtInfo's list of top private museums last year. Still, it's not that well known within L.A.'s larger art community.

In the trailer that accompanied ESMoA's 2013 opening, Zunkeler describes the museum's acronym as "right between Samoa and MoMA, which means, like, it could be an island in the Caribbean or it could be something close to high-end

art presentation." Similarly, "Home" straddles that space between a freewheeling experiment and the conventional museum show. Asks the press release, "Do old masterpieces bore you to tears? Are you only interested in letting the brightness of contemporary art lighten up your home? ... What kind of art, for that matter, is allowed in the bathroom?"

There are no wall labels, though visitors can use the iPads set up around the space to learn more about individual works. The domestic objects, such as the vintage refrigerator, the Eero Aarnio bubble chair and the 1950s toilet in the "bathroom" come from the collection of computer engineer Eric Brill, who now heads eBay's research laboratories and has given objects to the Museum of Modern Art.

The whole show begins with three altered posters by young L.A. artist Cole Sternberg, blurry photographs of people demonstrating home-protection techniques. One guy, with translucent, hot pink paint dripping from his eyes, lurks behind a trash can with knife raised.

Then there's a backpack, also by Sternberg, made of aluminum and concrete, sitting in a corner next to an original Honda CB750 lent by Brill. "People tend to forget this motorcycle almost killed the whole motorcycle industry," Zunkeler says. When it was introduced in 1972, it was so much better than its competitors that other companies almost buckled.

Zunkeler sees this first corridor as being about security and fear of invaders, whatever their form.

The rustic room built of dark wood taken from desert wrecks is sweeter. An 1890 painting by German impressionist Max Liebermann hangs near the entrance. In it, a woman looks out the door of a cottage made of wood, which is about as dark as the wood

on which the painting hangs. Globular forms of colored glass and plastic by Tokyo-based Taka Kagitomi also sit in that room. They vaguely resemble lamps.

In the bathroom, instead of a shower curtain, there's Flora Kao's rubbing on fabric of the side of a rough wood house. Street artist Eddie Rico designed the purple-and-teal patterned floor, and two assemblages by reclusive midcentury sculptor Joseph Cornell hang on the walls. One includes a smiling gold sun beside a photo of a devout child and behind a hanging brass ring. Installed so near a Dreyfuss sink and toilet, the Cornell looks far more accessible and quirky than his work does in galleries at, say, the Art Institute of Chicago.

"We try to give people ideas," Zunkeler says. "Things don't necessarily have to look always the same way."

HOME | El Segundo Museum of Art | 208 Main St., El Segundo | Through Feb. 1 | esmoa.org

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Arts // Art Picks //

ACTIVISM THROUGH FLOWERS

AND POP CULTURE CLIPS

BY CATHERINE WAGLEY

This week, an artist-run conference deals with that nagging question — can art bring about change? — and a performance group finds inspiration in blog posts by survivors.

5. Slow acclimation

Jorge Pardo's exhibition at 1301 PE has been changing since it opened in November. First, hanging red and green lamps were constructed and hung in the gallery's upstairs room. The day I visited, the gallery staff was installing a series of puzzle-like, painted wood cutouts on the back wall of that same room. Pardo debuted this show last year in Havana, where he was born but hadn't visited in more than four decades. It was like slowly reorienting himself to an environment that had become unfamiliar. The L.A. version is now fully installed and on view for one last week. *6150 Wilshire Blvd., Mid-Wilshire; through Jan. 17. (323) 938 5822, 1301pe.com.*

4. Beneath the veil

Two small collages by Emir Šehanović hang on the back wall of CES Contemporary, part of the group show "When It Is Dark Enough." Šehanović cut open vintage photographs of veiled women, so you just see the contour of the women's bodies and enough of their clothing to understand they're exquisitely dressed. Then you see layers of paper and textured, fleshy terrains — probably cropped landscape photographs — at the center, where the women's faces and torsos should be. They're simple but precise. *709 & 711 Mateo St., dwntwn.; through Jan. 24. (949) 370-0554, carlesmithgallery.com.*

3. Cheese grater?

The façade of the Broad Museum, which has been hidden by scaffolding for the past year and a half, is now completely visible on Grand Avenue. It's heavier and more opaque than original plans for an ambitious "honeycomb" veil. Curbed L.A. called the design changes "disappointing"; art critic Christopher Knight posted a photograph of the building above an image of a cheese grater (the museum's design has been compared to a grater since at least 2012, but the comparison is more apt now). Maybe the building's new look is less ephemeral than expected, but it does make Bunker Hill weirder and it kind of makes aggressive Disney Hall look more elegant. *It's worth driving by. 221 S. Grand Ave., dwntwn.; ongoing. (310) 399-4004, thebroad.org.*

2. Flickering screens

In "Rhetoric," the current show at Aran Cravey, snippets of commercials and

sitcoms flicker across the HDTV that Martine Syms, who refers to herself as a conceptual entrepreneur rather than an artist, installed on two poles at the center of the main room. In the adjacent room, Jibade-Khalil Huffman has layered clips from feature films, projecting them on an angled partition and two parts of the longest wall. Novelist-essayist James Baldwin lectures in a film by Marco Braunschweiler in the small back screening room. Only Baldwin's white silhouette is visible against the pitch-black background. Intellectualism and pop mingle throughout the exhibition, and the screen vacillates between disorienting and seductive. *6918 Melrose Ave., Hlywd.; through Jan. 24. (323) 590-0036, arancravey.com.*

1. All about change

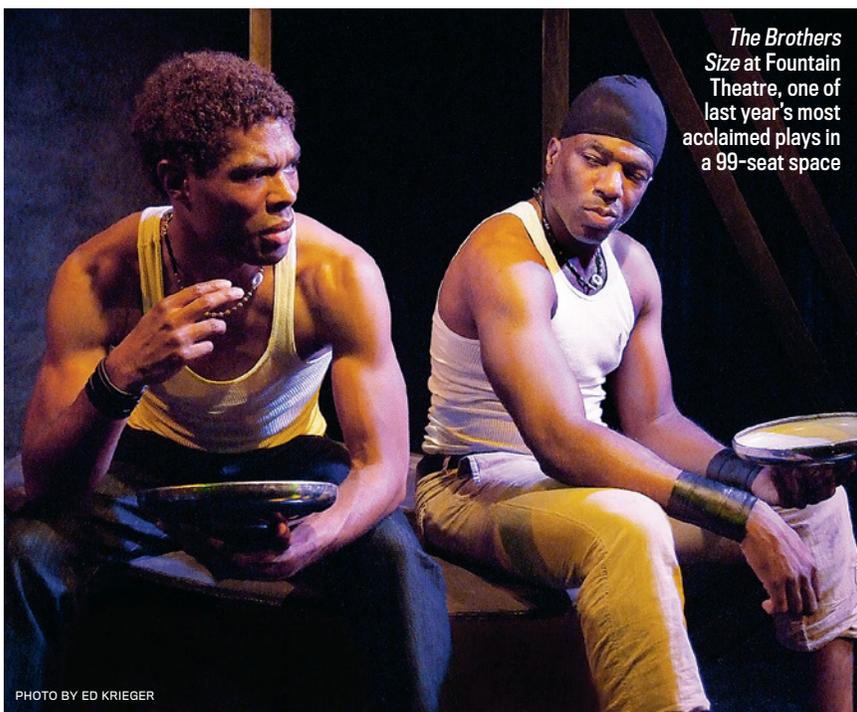
"Chats About Change: Critical Conversations on Art and Politics in Los Angeles" is a two-day event organized by artists Elana Mann and Robby Herbst. The program kicks off Thursday with a reception in the student union at Cal State L.A. and a discussion about how to navigate L.A.'s landscapes in ecologically conscious ways. The rest of the chats, which have titles such as "How Can I Participate?" and "Creative Dissonance," take place on Saturday at LACE in Hollywood. Panelists are mostly L.A.-based and blurring art-activism or art-life boundaries, and attendees will have a chance to weigh in. *5154 State University Drive, Student Union, 3rd floor, San Gabriel Room, East L.A.; Thu., Jan. 15, 6 p.m. 6522 Hollywood Blvd., Hlywd.; Sat., Jan. 17, 10 a.m.-6:35 p.m. chatsaboutchangela.org.*

Los Angeles Times

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PHOTO BY ED KRIEGER

Stage //

NEW YEAR'S REVOLUTIONS

L.A. keeps going round and round on famed 99-Seat Plan, but this month could determine its future

BY STEVEN LEIGH MORRIS

Theater makers in L.A. and beyond have become a denigrated, migrant population, behaving in some ways like undocumented laborers. True, they're mostly native-born, pale-skinned, college-educated types, with English being their first language. Nonetheless they are outsiders, searching for a place to call home. The artistry of their work has been celebrated by the few professional critics who are paying attention, while entities such as the California Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts have measured the impressive way their theaters support local economies. Yet, like so many undocumented workers, they labor for less than minimum wage — not just in local 99-seat theaters but in nonprofit midsize venues here and across the land.

Of course, there are many differences between theater makers and migrant workers, but the most salient distinction (to this discussion) is that the artists' decision to work for pittance reimbursements is a decision of principle and conviction rather than of survival stemming from the lack of other viable options.

This is why, when the living-wage

monsoon comes crashing into the arts, as it did in 2014, the real clash is not between laborers and the business owners charged with exploiting them but between the entities of art as art and art as commerce. How exactly are producers of plays in small theaters, knowing ahead of time that their productions will lose money, abusing the actors who essentially volunteer their talent and have the right to leave at any time in rehearsal or performance for any reason? How does preventing union actors from working in such shows, or diminishing the status of such shows, better the actors' situations or foster the art form?

These are the issues on the table when the union representing actors and stage managers, Actors' Equity Association (AEA), meets with its membership on Jan. 13 to discuss the future of L.A.'s 99-Seat Plan. That plan, a descendent of the 1972 Equity Waiver Plan, was ratified by its membership after much *sturm und drang* in 1987. In its current iteration, in theaters of up to 99 seats, the union permits its actors to rehearse for up to eight weeks and to perform in up to 80 performances while waiving their typical union salaries. Instead, they get receive expense stipends of \$7 to \$25 per performance, depending on the show's ticket price, the theater's size and the length of the run. (Several theaters, includ-

(35»

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Over the past two decades, L.A.'s 99-seat theaters have been responsible for some of the most dynamic, innovative and evocative theater to be found anywhere.

AEA has had a long history of hostility to the plan, which was essentially thrust upon it by its own membership. Terms of changing it were agreed to in an out-of-court settlement in 1989, after 15 Equity members sued their own union.

The union has muzzled its members from talking to the press about the location, time or content of any of its meetings, such as the one on Jan. 13. Much of the information in this article was obtained off-the-record at various holiday parties.

AEA conducted a survey of its Los Angeles members last month. Among the questions, causing shudders among producers who generally lose money on their small-theater productions, was the somewhat rhetorical query, would you like to make more money? The producers, many Equity members themselves, fear that with its new multimillion-dollar office in Los Angeles, the union is looking for ways to better monetize L.A. theater, and the 99-Seat Plan is close to useless for that goal.

Producers fear that if Equity institutes changes that further restrict the numbers of rehearsals and performances of small theater productions in which its members perform, the quality of those shows will tank. Their sense is that Equity is pushing for more if not all productions to be on full Equity contracts, while the local economy can't support such a scheme. Financial realities would compel theaters to be midsize — larger than 99 seats — in order to sell enough tickets to meet costs, although many midsize theaters are already dying on the vine because of those costs. With constrained rehearsal periods and small casts, both of financial necessity, their work is less exemplary than in theaters currently under the 99-Seat Plan.

Even a large space such as the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts might feel this pressure, since it lacks the resources of, say, Center Theatre Group. An upcoming musical there emblemizes the producers' fears: The show is under a full union contract but rehearsals are restricted to two weeks,

for budgetary reasons.

The dread is that in trying to monetize L.A. theater, the union will exploit the faulty premise that the 99-Seat Plan chokes potential midsize theater contracts. (In fact, during the comparatively robust economy of the late 1980s, both midsize and small theaters in L.A. grew robustly in number, side by side.) Furthermore, the union has little time or incentive to police the terms of the current 17-page plan.

If the plan's core elements are gutted, as some fear, the quality of work involving complicated texts and large ensembles could be seriously impeded. As they did in the late 1980s, Equity members who also produce shows in L.A. are lawyering up for a confrontation with their own union. One veteran theater producer involved in the last three-year legal battle with Equity bemoans the waste of time and energy spent fighting the union, when producing theater is difficult enough.

IMPOSING MORE RESTRICTIONS ON ACTORS WORKING IN THE 99-SEAT PLAN COULD LEAD TO A DROP IN QUALITY PRODUCTIONS.

Producers would rather gamble on the risk of actors leaving rehearsals and shows to work on TV (as the 99-Seat Plan permits), rather than suffer the consequences of the plan being castrated: smaller theaters becoming non-union "community theaters" and the diminishment of artistic excellence and innovation.

Also, the producers dread the kind of shadow economy that allegedly exists in Chicago (where there is no comparable small-theater plan) and used to exist in L.A. before the "Equity Waiver wars": actors voluntarily and secretly kicking back large portions of their salaries to the theaters, in order for the producers to cut their losses, and in order for the shows to go on.

Nobody wants that kind of quasi-legal existence, for migrants or for anybody else.

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Black November

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| Film //

NOLLYWOOD ENDING

Black November unearths corruption in Nigeria

BY AMY NICHOLSON

Nigerian director Jeta Amata's *Black November* is at once passionate and cynical, a smash-up of tones that fits its story about a politicized, American-schooled 21-year-old girl from the Niger Delta who returns home to head a local uprising — and soon is sentenced to hang. Ebiere (Mbong Amata, the filmmaker's wife and a real talent) is a polarizing pacifist, one part Joan of Arc to two parts Martin Luther King.

Just as Ebiere arrives at her mother's hut, half the town dies in a gas pipe explosion. Despite attention from a nice white lady newscaster (Sarah Wayne Callies), the CEO of the U.S. oil company at fault (Mickey Rourke) shortchanges the survivors and orders the police to beat anyone who complains, pitting cousin against cousin like an impassive god.

Amata skillfully lays out the ways that Nigeria is screwed. The oil companies control the cops, soldiers and town elders with cash. When a village boss advises Ebiere to "think like a Nigerian," he means, "Just take a bribe."

Yet the rebels can't resist making things worse, packing guns at a peaceful protest, kidnapping innocent American workers and using the ransom to buy more weapons and fuel the violence.

Money is everywhere, but neither side

will invest in a better future. And so saintly Ebiere leads because she must, even though she's ignored by her allies when she begs them not to lynch the guilty, and then punished by the powerful for failing to keep order.

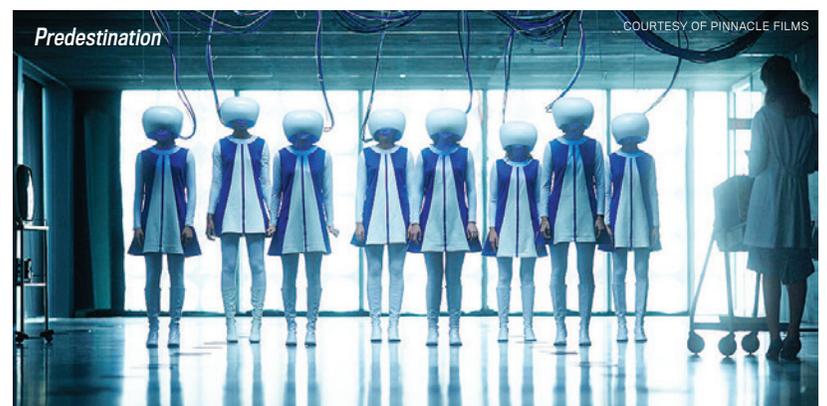
Nigeria's local film industry — aka Nollywood — cranks out 1,000 films a year.

Amata, the son of popular local actor Fred Amata, conceived of *Black November* as a \$300,000 call to action against corruption in his country, which, as he reminds us in an opening crawl, has the seventh largest population on the globe,

AN ETHAN HAWKE MIND BENDER

Without dropping spoilers right and left, how do I explain that I'm completely baffled by the Spierig Brothers' retro-futuristic thriller *Predestination*? So the she that's really a he is the earlier version of the he we meet later on, and the later version of the she who shows up near the beginning? Hope I didn't just wreck anything for anyone.

Actually, I'm pretty sure I get at least parts of *Predestination*, especially after reading the slender time-travel short story on which it's based, Robert A. Heinlein's 1958 "All You Zombies." Heinlein's story is elegant in its hard-boiled spareness, and its brevity makes it all the more tantalizing — it's the sort of thing you want to reread immediately. A narrator known only as the Bartender meets a despondent young man, a writer of true-confession pulp, who goes by the pen name the Unmarried Mother. After hearing the young man's sad, shocking story, the Bartender makes him an offer he probably should refuse. Like so much time-travel literature, "All You Zombies" isn't



Predestination

COURTESY OF PINNACLE FILMS

100 percent logical, but a chilly poetry hangs in the air around it.

Predestination — the third feature from the German-born writer-director team (and identical twins) Michael and Peter Spierig — tries to be all of those things and more, and succeeds only in fits and starts. The Spierigs had the framework for something wonderful here, if only they'd trusted themselves to keep things simple. The twisty-turny clutter, Christopher Nolan-esque

greater than Russia, Mexico or Japan. In a curious twist, Nigerian oil tycoon Captain Hosa Wells Okunbo gave Amata \$22 million to make the film, which bought him cameos from Kim Basinger, Vivica A. Fox, Anne Heche and music stars Akon and Wyclef Jean, all of whom are edited into a clumsy and expensive framing device where Ebiere's countrymen terrorize downtown Los Angeles with a tanker truck and demand their heroine be freed.

NIGERIA'S LOCAL FILM INDUSTRY CRANKS OUT 1,000 FILMS A YEAR.

Oddly, that extra star power makes *Black November* look cheap. It's threadbare for an action flick — we've seen Rourke glare at guns in a dozen other less important thrillers.

The story Amata wants to tell is much simpler, and he might have been more successful sticking to his own guns and staying with his sturdy, empathetic heroine. We don't need pop songs and campfire sex scenes and battered late-model sedans to make us care about his country.

But, in fairness, given how little attention the West continues to pay to Nigeria, it's understandable that Amata thought we did. And this heartbroken, angry mishmash of a movie, which leaves his wife's face off the American poster in favor of Rourke, Basinger and Akon, is both an attempt to fix his home and a sign of how much work lies ahead.

BLACK NOVEMBER | Written and directed by Jeta Amata | E1 Entertainment Distribution | Arena Cinema Hollywood

in its aspirations, becomes wearisome, particularly when the Spierigs press us to believe the unbelievable. (You mean we're supposed to buy that Ethan Hawke, even after extensive plastic surgery, could once have looked like ... oh, never mind.) —Stephanie Zacharek

PREDESTINATION | Written and directed by the Spierig Brothers | Stage 6 | Playhouse, Sundance Sunset

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FORCE DU JOUR

RETROSPECTIVE FINDS SWEDISH DIRECTOR
ÖSTLUND ON THE VERGE OF A GREAT CAREER

BY MICHAEL ATKINSON

A canny portrait of marital catastrophe that's equal measures Raymond Carver bitter quietude and late Ingmar Bergman striptease, Ruben Östlund's *Force Majeure* surprised grown-up moviegoers, starved for mature meat ages after such psychodramatic pressure cookers were common in arthouse theaters. But it wasn't a terrible stunner for Swedes and dedicated festival patrons, for whom Östlund has been a burgeoning force 10 years running, since his first feature, *The Guitar Mongoloid* (2004).

It may be early to mount a retro for the man—he's 40—but the three features and the clutch of shorts on view at Cinefamily all deserve better exposure than they've gotten (including showcase spots at Cannes and the New York Film Festival). Until this year, Östlund has not been a terribly marketable commodity—*Majeure* represents a leap ahead toward commercial orthodoxy. It does employ, after all, ordinary shot-countershot close-ups.

Look to *Mongoloid*, that first impish pseudo-doc from 2004, for Östlund's initial aesthetic assault: distant, enigmatic, fragmented, a deadened steeliness in the tradition of Michael Haneke, Tsai Ming-liang and Ulrich Seidl. *The Guitar Mongoloid* is a quilt of moments, set pieces and voyeuristic opportunities, building to no specific thematic idea: A Down's syndrome boy busks on the streets of Stockholm, an old woman with OCD struggles with leaving her front door, various mobs of street punks occupy themselves performing pointless pranks and crimes, lovers dally and banter in private, drunken men get into scuffles and do stupid things.

Some of the "characters" (real people, playing out Östlund's scenarios) recur, and some swatches of behavior interconnect. But some do not—the movie's like a genial if vice-obsessed Richard Scarry drawing of Stockholm,

assembled from unblinking single shots that last for minutes and in which nothing at all could happen or chaos could erupt.

Östlund's weft got tighter and richer with *Involuntary* (2008), a similarly shot and constructed exploration that weaves together five unrelated strands: A posh family celebration is disrupted when the patriarch catches a firework in the eye; a middle-school teacher is ostracized when she objects to a colleague beating a student; a tour bus gets waylaid when the emotionally unstable driver insists someone confess to minor vandalism; two party-hearty teen girls get in trouble during a night of drinking, and a mancation in a chalet goes awry when drunken faux-homo gags go too far.

Östlund's cool, unemphatic compositions are uniformly beautiful, allowing your eye to edit the unpredictable action on its own, as the pulses of narrative avoid clearcut thematic takeaway. *Involuntary* doesn't simplify its stories into a single point of view or idea; rather, Östlund is merely visiting these high-pressure moments in which Swedish culture frays, melts down and betrays its ultra-civilized idea of itself.

The lightning-quick thumbnail performances are, as always with Östlund, impeccable and three-dimensional. His masterpiece-so-far, *Play* (2011), narrows its focus much further, opening in a mall, where two white boys are accosted by a group of five older black boys who in short order perform a you-stole-from-my-brother scam and walk away with a white kid's phone. Next, the little fun-loving

ÖSTLUND'S
FORCE MAJEURE
SURPRISED
GROWN-UP
MOVIEGOERS.



Ruben
Östlund

PHOTO BY JOHAN BERGMARK

mobsters stalk another trio of younger out-of-town kids, and essentially terrorize-slash-cajole them with the same scam, taking them as hostages on an unbearably tense, daylong bullying jaunt across the city that evokes a messy brawl of conflicting ideas about race, justice, European politesse, totalitarian social patterns of control and collaboration, even Stockholm-syndrome trauma.

Based on a real Swedish petty-crime wave, *Play* troubles the waters of any smugly held view, liberal or conservative, about how society should regard and handle its own rogue elements, a dilemma Östlund thinks is vital in countries such as Sweden that are over-comfortable with their own homogenous reasonableness. Still, his camera strategy remains fascinating and elusive, partially obscuring distant action with foreground reality, and patiently letting incidents play out in breath-holding takes that never look away. It's the rare contemporary film that's as majestically and gruelingly rigorous in its form as in its thematic interrogations.

Films like Östlund's that hyperanalyze social contradictions and don't pretend to offer easy solutions are not common, which makes the comparatively conventional and intimate *Force Majeure* all the stranger—either an outlier in Östlund's filmography or a sign of the director abandoning his dazzling mysteriousness for a more populist approach. Let's hope for the former; besides Roy Andersson, Östlund may be the only Swedish filmmaker worth following at the moment, and we need another Lasse Hallström like we need a hole in our heads.

IN CASE OF NO EMERGENCY:
THE FILMS OF RUBEN ÖSTLUND
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DARK SUMMER In the teen horror film *Dark Summer*, screenwriter Mike Le delivers a novel way to keep a protagonist in a haunted house: Put him under house arrest. Daniel (Keir Gilchrist), who's so into hacker chic that he's got ones and zeroes painted on his ceiling, is wearing a tracking anklet for cyber-stalking his classmate Mona (Grace Phipps). With his mom away, he's pretty much alone, aside from his duty officer and two friends who secretly keep him company. He's also contacted by Mona, who kills herself during a video chat. Now her ghost is causing him to hallucinate, carving symbols into his chest and generally haunting his house ... a house he can't leave. Paul Solet's direction relies on disorienting tight shots as Daniel creeps through the halls, followed by never-quite-frightening appearances by Mona in her bloody hoodie. Nonetheless, there's an arresting séance scene, and a later *Bone Collector*-style investigation reveals a clever twist, even if the camera-work is too murky to make the most of it. The climax, however, a step-by-step incantation, feels by-the-numbers, like some sort of mystic hopscotch. More interesting is friend Abby's (Stella Maeve) unrequited longing for Daniel, but even that spark eventually succumbs to the weight of plot contrivance. (Alan Scherstuhl)

GO TWO DAYS, ONE NIGHT (DEUX JOURS, UNE NUIT) The Dardenne brothers, Luc and Jean-Pierre, are known to explore characters trapped by social and economic circumstance, challenging with curiosity and compassion the assumptions attached to the lives of less fortunate others. With *Two Days, One Night*, the Dardennes turn their humanist lens onto someone in conflict with her own humanity: Sandra (Marion Cotillard) has been depressed, seriously and clinically. When a phone call informs her that a dozen or so colleagues at a manufacturing plant, eager to collect a 1,000-euro bonus, have all voted to make her "redundant," Sandra is undone. Having secured a second vote

on the matter, Sandra must spend the weekend campaigning for her job. As she visits her fellow union members, one by one, the struggle to make her presence felt — and ask her peers for help — suggests there is more to the gambit than Sandra's job. If the source of her illness remains off-screen, the film traces its symptoms, connecting their exacerbation to social alienation and their resolution to a sense of unity and moral purpose. What anchors *Two Days, One Night*, and eases its gaps, is Cotillard's extraordinary performance. The actress must play against not just her looks but her essential vitality; the way she lets her pretty, colored bra straps show signals a woman with a shoulder or two still in the game. In moments of defeat, we see Sandra taking to her bed, as depressed people tend to do. More often, we watch a woman in motion, traveling at length, on buses, in cars and on foot. With its troubled mind as cargo, we follow a body acting, as if from memory, on its purpose. (Michelle Orange)

THE WORLD MADE STRAIGHT Do people in the Himalayas and Andes "live in the passive voice," as those in Appalachia do? That loaded question comes early in *The World Made Straight*, an adaptation of the Ron Rash novel directed by David Burris. That's an intriguing question about life and fate, albeit one this film — about a chance discovery setting off an old vendetta — doesn't fully see through. Burris envisions the region as one of carefully placed bear traps and Civil War ghosts; suffice to say that the wayward Travis (Jeremy Irvine) doesn't know what he's in for when he goes rifling through his family history. Relics of that conflict are literally embedded in the soil, so common that a cheap metal detector used as collateral in a low-level drug deal can sniff them out. As the backwoods kingpin Carlton, Steve Earle delivers a performance of understated intensity — he's the living embodiment of every yankee's down-home anxieties. Cerebral and outwardly calm, his is the kind of volatility everyone who knows him fears but few have been unfor-

tunate enough to witness firsthand. Still, too many of Burris ideas are channeled directly through the grief-stricken teacher (Noah Wyle) who accidentally provoked Carlton's ire after taking Travis under his wing, relegating this potentially compelling mentor role to the delivery of thematic exposition. His on-the-nose monologues on the cyclical nature of centuries-old blood feuds ultimately feel more like stuffy lectures than living history; ditto the film as a whole. (Michael Nordine)

Not reviewed this week: **BOUND, TAKEN 3**

ONGOING

AMERICAN SNIPER In Clint Eastwood's *American Sniper*, Navy SEAL Chris Kyle (Bradley Cooper) — an astoundingly talented marksman credited with more than 160 confirmed kills in Iraq — runs into a fellow veteran at a mechanic's shop between deployments. The soldier shows Kyle an artificial leg and thanks him for saving his life. Cooper, all thick with new muscles, smiles tight and false. He's just trying to get his oil changed, man. The real-life Kyle was murdered two years ago by another fellow vet, Eddie Routh, a scrawny, 25-year-old Marine with PTSD. As Cooper plays him, Kyle wears his heroism like a heavy saddle — he's spurred to do more, fight more, kill more because he feels the weight of all the soldiers he must save. Cooper and Eastwood's Kyle is a humble, literally straight-shooting patriot who squirms when people call him a legend. As in all biopics, *American Sniper* leaves audiences to parse the distinctions between Kyle the human and Kyle the character, with Eastwood, their conduit, blurring the difference. The real Kyle complicated things further. He claimed he'd been hired by Blackwater to snipe armed looters at the Superdome during Hurricane Katrina (a fellow SEAL said that "defies the imagination"). He even claimed that he'd gotten into a bar fight with Jesse Ventura, who won a \$1.8 million defamation lawsuit against Kyle's estate. Eastwood has chosen to omit Kyle's self-mythologizing, which is itself a distortion of his character.

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 KENNETH TURAN, *Los Angeles Times*

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 JOSEPH BRAVERMAN, AWARDS CIRCUIT

"OSCAR ISAAC IS AN IMPLOSIVE POWERHOUSE"
 PETER TRAVERS, *Rolling Stone*

"JESSICA CHASTAIN IS FEROCIOUS"
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 NEW YORK CITY, 1981
A MOST VIOLENT YEAR

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A HALLOWEEN MYSTERY IN JANUARY

Tom Moore's touching *Song of the Sea* is not anime, but it shares elements with some of the best anime films of recent years, particularly Mamoru Hosoda's *Wolf Children*. Then again, certain kinds of legends pop up in every culture. In this iteration, young Saoirse (Lucy O'Connell) was born on the night her mother, Broanch (Lisa Hannigan), disappeared into the waves surrounding their lighthouse home. After their father, Conor (Brendan Gleeson), sends the seemingly mute Saoirse and her brother, Ben (David Rawle), away for getting too close to the



mystery — Saoirse is half-Selkie, a woman who's human on land but a seal in the ocean — the brother and sister must travel back to the ocean to save Saoirse's life and possibly all of humanity, discovering along the way that mythological Irish creatures are all around them.

The picture is beautifully rendered in pencils and watercolors, with some CG, giving it an appropriately timeless storybook look, even though it's set in a mostly modern world of buses and 3-D glasses. The story takes place mostly on Halloween, and while *Song of the Sea* is about neither horror nor holidays, the anonymous kids in costumes throughout help to evoke a world that's already closer to the fantastic than it realizes. —Sherilyn Connelly

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**two days,
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A film by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne

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The humble Kyle onscreen is Kyle with his flaws written out. We're not watching a biopic. We're watching a drama about an idealized soldier, a patriot beyond reproach, which bolsters Kyle's legend while gutting the man. (Amy Nicholson)

GO THE BABADOOK Jennifer Kent's maternal nightmare *The Babadook* is the imperial stout of recent fright flicks — it's the one that will have you walking funny and might rip into your sleep. It's hard to say that you'll enjoy this film, but it's hard not to admire it, if maybe with your eyes half shut. Kent, a first-time writer-director, proves adept with jolts and shadows, but she also digs deeper, into the adled-brain terror of early Roman Polanski where the heroine comes unwound in her home — and the calls, as they say, might be coming from inside her own head. The setup feels closer to *Jepers Creepers* than *Repulsion*. Youngish widow Amelia (Essie Davis) is mother to a creepy elementary-aged Samuel (Noah Wiseman) who natters on about a top-hatted, hunch-shouldered soul-eater called the Babadook who plans, the kid insists, to kill him. He gets wind of this beast from a marvelously creepy pop-up book: It has the handmade look of woodcuts and Edward Gorey drawings, but damned and demented; its paper monster trumps other movies' CGI terrors. Eventually, through complications that never strain credulity, Amelia and Samuel wind up as something like shut-ins, overmedicated, hiding out from a world that Amelia feels rejects them. But we know what she doesn't: that the Babadook has seized control of her, and that through her it will feed on the boy. Or maybe not. We wonder, as a cloaked Babadook appears in her bedroom, as shivery in his full stop-motion reality as he was in pen and paper: Is all this the frothing of Amelia's mind? What if the heroine — the mother — the traditional "final girl" — turns out to be the monster? (Alan Scherstuhl)

BIG EYES The waifs Walter Keane made famous were known for their huge peepers. But look at their mouths: Every one kept its lips pressed tight, as though to prevent a secret from escaping. That's where you see the real artist: Walter's shy wife, Margaret (Amy Adams), who bitterly allowed her husband to take credit for a host of true but unfair reasons. (He made a better salesman; people don't buy "lady" art; his own ego.) Walter (Christoph Waltz) was a jerk. But was he right — or, at least, right-ish? That's one of the questions Tim Burton's candy-floss biopic, *Big Eyes*, dances past. Burton's film takes square aim at Walter — boy, was he a charismatic creep. However, the director also allows us to ask whether, frankly, Margaret's paintings were any good. He doesn't dare answer the question. Adams and Waltz are good enough actors to keep us interested in how the ruse affects the Keanes' marriage, which at times feels like a '50s fairy tale with Margaret, a chain-smoking princess in capris, locked away in a secret chamber, grimly inking saucer-sized pupils for her cruel master. This is rich stuff for Burton, who, like Keane, has faced his own creative paradox: The more money his films make, the more reviewers have

dismissed them. Fairly, perhaps — especially in the case of his soulless *Alice in Wonderland*. Yet you can't help but sense Burton nodding in agreement when Walter bellows, "Just because people like my work, does that make it bad?" Fortunately for Burton, *Big Eyes* is actually good. Not great but good enough — the perfect middlebrow portrait of the ultimate middlebrow artist. (Amy Nicholson)

BIG HERO 6 Imagine if nerdy Clark Kent didn't have to remove his glasses and pocket protector to save the world. Then imagine him as fat and sweet as a marshmallow. Meet *Big Hero 6*'s Baymax, Disney's new cuddly champion: a waddling, inflatable health care companion who can sense your pulse, diagnose disease, and, if reprogrammed, kill. Our setting is San Fransokyo, a hybrid of California and Japan where everyone loves tech gadgets and sushi. (Whether the city is fictitious or simply the near future is up for debate.) Boy wonder Hiro (Ryan Potter), a 14-year-old orphan, joins his college-age older brother, Tadashi (Daniel Henney), in a state-of-the-art laboratory inventing marvels with other young geniuses: Go Go (Jamie Chung), a hellion with a magnetic bike; Wasabi, a geek who loves lasers; and Honey Lemon (Genesis Rodriguez), a girlie girl who knows her way around chemicals. To make engineers more *awesome*, the movie upgrades the gang into superheroes, which scrambles the message. An arsonist destroys Hiro's (admittedly not very long) life's work and accidentally offs Tadashi. Hiro asks his geek friends to set things right — and trains Baymax, his brother's kindly robot, with punches and kicks scanned from kung fu movies. *Big Hero 6* veers from chipper to noisy to dark stretches where it grapples with adult-sized grief. Hiro isn't just a sweet moppet: He's full of rage and despair and ego. He needs Baymax to be his family, which means training him to fist-bump, and groaning when the robot runs out of battery and acts like a stumbling, slurring drunk — a moment that could have kids later suspiciously checking their own parents for a plug. (Amy Nicholson)

BIRDMAN In *Birdman*, directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu, Michael Keaton pours all of Batman's simmering disquietude into a different form: that of Riggan Thomson, a has-been actor who hopes to reclaim his reputation by staging an ambitious Broadway show, his adaptation of Raymond Carver's "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love." Things aren't going so well, and Riggan's daughter (Emma Stone) has just been sprung from rehab and spends her days being bitchy at the world, and at him. Those are all problems that Riggan perceives and addresses in some fashion, but there are even bigger ones that he doesn't: The movie character that made him famous, a superhero in a breastplate of molded feathers and a beaked mask — the Birdman — has been taunting him in a shadowy monotone that *sounds* like Christian Bale's Batman, pestering Riggan to admit that his theater project, not to mention his whole life, is a sham. Have I mentioned that this

psychically distressing apparition may also have vested Riggan with the power to move objects, Carrie-like, with his mind? There's a lot going on in *Birdman*, though the somewhat harsh truth is that Riggan's agitation and torment are really just an excuse for the pyrotechnics of the filmmaking. Its novelty: The film appears to consist of a single long take, though Iñárritu and DP Emmanuel Lubezki have done some subtle piecing-together. *Birdman*'s proficiency, the mechanically fluid kind, works against it in some ways. But none of that diminishes what Keaton does. His Riggan is like a grizzled nerve ending, frayed and whisky by alive. (Stephanie Zacharek)

GO CITIZENFOUR Director Laura Poitras' *Citizenfour* boasts an hour or so of tense, intimate, world-shaking footage you might not quite believe you're watching. Poitras shows us history as it happens, scenes of such intimate momentousness that the movie's a must-see piece of work even if, in its totality, it's underwhelming as argument or cinema. Here's Edward Snowden, Glenn Greenwald and, offscreen, Poitras herself, holed up in a Hong Kong hotel room, plotting the revelation of the National Security Agency's spying on our phone calls, emails, Web searches, Amazon purchases and everything else. Here's Snowden, the activist, conferring with Greenwald, the journalist, about how to make the story about Snowden's leaks rather than Snowden himself. And here's Poitras — journalist and activist — capturing their elation, their seriousness, their idealism, their spy-story jitters. Trim and proud, given to stiff pontificating, Snowden relishes this seizing of history, just as Poitras' camera relishes him. But once Greenwald publishes his first *Guardian* story on Snowden's revelations, we see cracks in the whistleblower's principled serenity. Condemning yourself for a cause you know to be just is still condemning yourself, and by his last day in that hotel room, Snowden appears wan and harried, his face breaking out. Just watching, you might feel the same. As in her previous films *The Oath* and *My Country, My Country*, Poitras is adept at illuminating multiple angles of complex, even prickly people. Here, though, she's a convert rather than a journalist, and she never bothers with some of the basics: The film takes as its given the NSA's perfidy and Snowden's heroism, offering little to persuade anyone unconvinced of either. *Citizenfour* marvels at what it could be probing. (Alan Scherstuhl)

GO FORCE MAJEURE Perhaps Ruben Östlund's most sophisticated thought experiment yet, the provocative and wise *Force Majeure* is a penetrating study of that most ludicrous of social pretenses — masculinity, toxic and ubiquitous. Östlund takes as his subject (and satirical target) a comfortably moneyed Swedish family — Tomas (Johannes Bah Kuhnke), Ebba (Lisa Loven Kongsli) and a cherubic pair of fair-haired children — vacationing in the French Alps. Dining merrily atop a mountain restaurant's patio, the family hears the distant crack of explosives and then sees what might be an

avalanche. Ebba grabs hold of the kids. The kids wail for dad. And Tomas, reliable patriarch, runs away. Moments later, as the dust begins to settle, it becomes obvious that the supposed avalanche was perfectly harmless. The diners saunter back to their tables, giggling with embarrassment. And Tomas does all he feels he can do: He returns to his family and proceeds as though nothing happened. This sequence spans only a minute or two, but it has seismic consequences — exacerbated when Tomas, shame gnawing at him, maintains that he didn't run away at all. Tomas, plainly, is a fool — a feeble, blubbery milquetoast and, above all, a coward. But Östlund's objective is not to castigate a weak-willed man for failing to protect his family. *Force Majeure* interrogates the gendered expectations that define our social order. All of Östlund's films are founded on the same question: How would you react? Östlund understands that so much of how we relate to one another is a charade, our roles collectively imposed — and that all it takes is an avalanche for that order to come crashing down. (Calum Marsh)

A GIRL WALKS HOME ALONE AT NIGHT

A lovely postpunk lark with one foot in 1980s ironic-indieland and the other in Iran, Ana Lily Amirpour's feature debut could become a totem for a hipster world mad for jukebox funkiness, vampires and gender-politics righteousness. It's got all the gumballs, from the shadowy-retro black-and-white HD to an all-Persian (or Persian-American) soundtrack that travels from rockabilly to spaghetti Western. That it's set in an underpopulated comic-book "Iran" (shot in the San Joaquin Valley), where everybody speaks Farsi but seems lost in an old Aki Kaurismäki movie anyway, just peppers the stew. Story propulsion takes a back seat to archness, but that won't bother some, for whom a feminist-vampire diss of Shariah norms is overdue. We're in Bad City, a desolate metropolis thick with vice, pumping oil rigs and hanging out. Amid a web of desperate lives, the Girl (Sheila Vand), a saucer-eyed waif in a bob and a chador, preys on dirtbag men and gets unexpectedly wooed by a good-hearted but clueless boy (Arash Marandi). Drowsily paced, the film spins its wheels for sizable swatches but regularly blooms into poetic kitsch, especially once the Girl sheds her cloak and rocks out. This morphing of ideas and styles is more deadpan romantic than sociocritical, and sweeter for it. (Michael Atkinson)

GONE GIRL Everything about *Gone Girl*, David Fincher's adaptation of Gillian Flynn's thriller about a deteriorating marriage and a wife gone missing, is precise and thoughtful — it's as well planned as the perfect murder, with its share of vicious, shivery delights. But at the end of the perfect murder, all you're left with is a corpse, and that's about all *Gone Girl* leaves you with, too. The story, as Flynn lays it out (both in her book and in the screenplay she adapted from it), is intended to be cold and perverse, a chilly bit of business exploring the ways in which men and women — or at least this particular man and woman — fail to communicate.

YOUR WEEKLY MOVIE TO-DO LIST

Gena Rowlands and *Pulp Fiction* Friday, Jan. 9

The Egyptian's tribute to Gena Rowlands continues with *Gloria* and *Minnie and Moskowitz*, both on 35mm. Arguably our greatest living actress, the two-time Oscar nominee is set to take part in a discussion between the films. In *Gloria*, she becomes an adoptive mother to a boy whose family was offed by the Mafia; in *Minnie*, she embarks on a tumultuous love affair. (It goes without saying at this point but Rowlands is astonishing in both.) These are but two of the many powerful films she starred in directed by her husband and frequent collaborator, John Cassavetes, and they're among their best. Visit americancinemathequecalendar.com for more.

Saturday, Jan. 10

The Silent Treatment, Cinefamily's monthly showcase for underseen gems of the silent era, presents William Wellman's *You Never Know Women* on a 35mm print from the Library of Congress at 2 p.m. Sandwiched between his earlier Westerns (*The Vagabond Trail*) and his later gangster/war pictures (*The Public Enemy*, *Wings*), this early rom-com stars Florence Vidor as one third of a love triangle with roots in the circus. Wellman was a true craftsman of Hollywood's Golden Era, and if films like *Safe in Hell* are any indication, the less well-known entries in his filmography are well worth digging into. Avail yourself of more information at cinefamily.org.

Sing some songs with Julie Andrews and burn some books with Oskar Werner in a supercalifragilisticexpialidocious (not to mention unusual)

But the film, while entertaining and well crafted, is too self-conscious about its depravity to be either truly disturbing or disturbingly funny. Ben Affleck plays Nick Dunne, who just doesn't seem to like his wife very much, as he makes clear in the movie's opening voiceover: "I imagine cracking open her head, unspooling her brain, trying to get answers." Soon that wife (Rosamund Pike) has disappeared, and the cops treat him as a suspect. Affleck's Nick struts through the movie like an Abercrombie & Fitch caveman — his shirts are too tight, as if they can barely contain his muscles, or his pride. Pike may not be quite as well cast — she's so marble-smooth that her fellow actors don't so much interact with her as slide off all that polished golden surface — but maybe her coolness works in her favor. If you've read the book, you'll probably want to know that Fincher has honored all of its significant plot points, including the ending. (Stephanie Zacharek)

THE IMITATION GAME "Politics really isn't my specialty," shrugs Alan Turing (Benedict Cumberbatch) to a Naval commander (Charles Dance) in an early job interview scene in Morten Tyldum's choppy biopic *The Imitation Game*. Yet no less than Winston Churchill would credit Turing as the main cause of the Allies' victory over the Nazis. Turing wasn't much for manners, either—or jokes, small talk, modesty, or hints. Turing's focused on cracking Germany's Enigma code before more good English chaps have to die. Solving the Enigma was so impossible it'd be bitterly funny—if only Turing knew how to tell a punchline. Instead,

double feature at LACMA: *Mary Poppins* (5 p.m.) and *Fahrenheit 451* (7:30). François Truffaut's first and only foray into English-language filmmaking didn't exactly light the world on fire at the time, but at least Ray Bradbury was pleased with the adaptation of his controversial novel. More at lacma.org.

Prior to the American Cinematheque's imminent run of Jean-Luc Godard's *Goodbye to Language 3-D* at the Aero, the repertory stalwarts are taking it upon themselves to acquaint viewers with his earlier works.

Pierrot le Fou and *Contempt* kick off the series at the Egyptian at 7:30 p.m. French New Wave mainstays Jean-Paul Belmondo and Anna Karina (then Godard's wife, though not for much longer) star as "the last romantic couple" in *Pierrot*, while *Contempt*, Godard's semi-autobiographical dissection of a marriage on the rocks, is far more despairing in its outlook on love. Visit americancinemathequecalendar.com for more.

Sunday, Jan. 11

Tonight at 7:30, indulge in a curated selection from the longest-running mobile showcase of experimental cinema at Los Angeles Filmforum's **A Series of Mysteries: The 52nd Ann Arbor Film Festival Traveling Tour**. Nine works (more than half of which are making their L.A. premiere) comprise the program, which runs a scant 90 minutes. Sarah J.

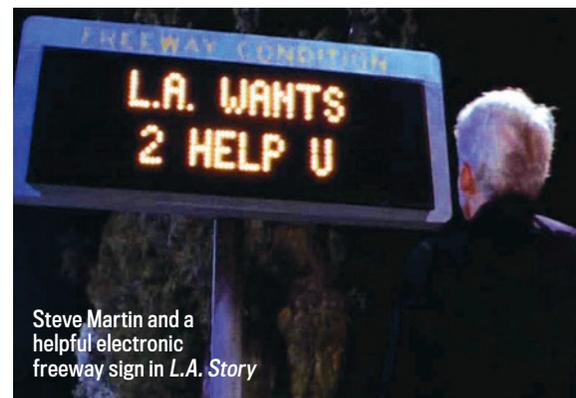
Cumberbatch squares his narrow shoulders, lowers his thin jaw, and gets to work, raising his head only to tell the rest of his team that they're a bunch of useless idiots. The only person he respects is his hire, a suburban genius (Keira Knightly) forced to pass herself off as a secretary — and who deserves her own biopic. Seven years after the Allies won the war, his own country would arrest him for gross indecency and force him to pick between jail or chemical castration. The man who saved the world wouldn't get a government pardon for 62 years. *The Imitation Game* is too mannerly to ask Cumberbatch to act on Turing's feelings. There's no flirtation, kissing, nothing. *The Imitation Game* hinges on a misdirection: the investigator (Tom Goodman-Hill) who reveals Turing's homosexuality initially believes he's chasing down a spy. The screenwriters ask us to wonder the same, a bizarre and pointless feint. Rather than a complex human portrait, this is an assemblage of triumphs, tragedies and tics. (Amy Nicholson)

GO INHERENT VICE

Paul Thomas Anderson's *Inherent Vice* isn't the towering masterpiece that those who admired *There Will Be Blood* and *The Master* were probably hoping for, and thank God for that. It's loose and free, like a sketchbook, though there's also something somber and wistful about it — it feels like less of a psychedelic scramble than the Thomas Pynchon novel it's based on. But there's some zip to it, and Anderson appears to be reconnecting with the pleasure of directing a large ensemble of actors: Some of them come and go

like casual visitors, kicking their shoes off for a moment and then disappearing for long stretches. *Inherent Vice* is just that kind of movie: an open house for all sorts of weirdos and misfits and gloriously off-kilter savants, the sort of thing

Anderson pulls off best. Joaquin Phoenix is Pynchon's half-canny, half-stoned-out-of-his-gourd private detective Doc Sportello, a scruffy romantic still in thrall to ex-girlfriend Shasta Fay Hepworth (Katherine Waterston), the kind of clean-



Steve Martin and a helpful electronic freeway sign in *L.A. Story*

Christman's *Gowanus Canal* examines the thriving microorganisms of the famously contaminated waterway, to name but one of many enticing-sounding offerings, while Kevin Jerome Everson's *Fe26* serves to remind us of the desperate measures called for in hard economic times. Full details at lafilmforum.org.

Tuesday, Jan. 13

Quentin Tarantino's epochal *Pulp Fiction* is as entertaining the 10th time as it is the first, making its 7:15 p.m. screening at ArcLight Beach Cities a good idea for aficionados and newcomers alike. Endlessly quotable and populated with some of cinema's most memorably amoral characters, it inspired countless imitators that never came close to matching its verbose dialogue — ironic, considering how heavily QT relies on homage. For more, ride Zed's chopper to arclightcinemas.com. —Michael Nordine

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Neighborhood Movie Guide

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Diving Normal Sat., 6:05 p.m.; Sun., 7:30 p.m.; Mon., 8:15 p.m.; Tues., 10:15 p.m.; Wed., 6:30 p.m.; Thurs., 10:15 p.m.

Druid Peak Sat., 7:45 p.m.; Sun., 4 p.m.; Mon., 9:55 p.m.; Tues., 6:20 p.m.; Wed., 9:55 p.m.; Thurs., 6:30 p.m.

Black November Sat., 3, 4:35, 9:45 p.m.; Sun., 6, 9, 10:35 p.m.; Mon., 6:40 p.m.; Tues., 8:20 p.m.; Wed., 8 p.m.; Thurs., 8:30 p.m.

ARLIGHT HOLLYWOOD Sunset Blvd. at Vine (323) 464-4226

The Imitation Game Fri.-Mon., 10:55 a.m., 1:45, 4:25, 7:10, 10:10 p.m.; Wed., 10:55 a.m., 1:40, 4:25, 7:10, 10 p.m.; Thurs., 10:55 a.m., 1:40, 4:25, 7:10, 10:40 p.m.

Birdman Fri.-Sun., 11:05 a.m., 2:10, 5:40, 8:25, 11:15 p.m.; Mon., 11:05 a.m., 2:10, 5:40, 8:25, 11:20 p.m.; Tues., 11:45 a.m., 2:30, 5:10, 8:25, 11:10 p.m.; Thurs., 11:05 a.m., 2:10, 5:40, 8:25, 11:15 p.m.

Taken 3 Fri.-Sun., 10:10 a.m., 12:15, 2:45, 5:10, 7:45, 11:20 p.m.; Mon., 10:10, 11:40 a.m., 2:45, 5:10, 7:45, 10:20 p.m.; Wed., 10:10 a.m., 1:40, 4:30, 7:45, 10:20 p.m.; Thurs., 10 a.m., 12:15, 2:45, 5:10, 7:45, 10 p.m.

A Most Violent Year Fri.-Sat., 11:25 a.m., 12 noon, 2:35, 4:45, 8:15, 11:30 p.m.; Fri.-Sun., 11:25 a.m., 12 noon, 2:35, 4:45, 8:15, 11:05 p.m.; Mon., 11:25 a.m., 12 noon, 2, 4:45, 8:40, 11:05 p.m.; Wed., 11:35 a.m., 1:15, 4:55, 8:35, 11:35 p.m.; Thurs., 10:50 a.m., 12 noon, 2:35, 4:45, 8:15, 11:05 p.m.

American Sniper Fri.-Sat., 10:35, 11:10 a.m., 12:35, 1:45, 2:15, 4, 5:25, 7, 7:30, 8:30, 10:05, 10:35, 11:05 p.m.; Sun., 10:35, 11:10 a.m., 12:35, 1:45, 2:15, 4, 5:25, 7, 7:30, 8:30, 10:05, 10:35 p.m.; Mon., 10:35, 11:30 a.m., 12:35, 1:45, 2:30, 4, 5:35, 7, 7:30, 10:05, 10:35 p.m.; Wed., 2:25, 5:30, 7, 10:05 p.m.; Thurs., 10:35, 11:30 a.m., 1:45, 2:30, 10:35 p.m.; 9:45 a.m., 1:05, 4:30, 8, 11:35 p.m.

Big Eyes Fri.-Mon., 11:05 a.m., 2:15, 4:50, 7:45, 10:35 p.m.; Wed., 10:30 a.m., 2:35, 5, 7:40, 10:10 p.m.; Thurs., 11:05 a.m., 1:35, 4:50, 7:45, 10:35 p.m.

The Gambler Fri.-Sun., 2:45, 5:30, 9:55 p.m.; Mon., 2:45, 5:30, 10 p.m.; Wed., 11:40 a.m.; Thurs., 2:45, 5:30, 9:55 p.m.

Into the Woods Fri.-Mon., 11:25 a.m., 1:40, 5:15, 8:10, 11 p.m.; Wed., 11:15 a.m., 2:15, 5:05, 8:10, 10:35 p.m.; Thurs., 10:45 a.m., 1:40, 5:15, 8:10, 11 p.m.

Selma Fri.-Sun., 11:35 a.m., 2:30, 5:20, 7:15, 10:20 p.m.; Mon., 11:35 a.m., 2:30, 4:45, 7:15, 10:20 p.m.; Wed., 10:50 a.m., 2:05, 4:15, 7:55, 11:15 p.m.; Thurs., 11:35 a.m., 2:25, 5:25, 8:40, 10:20 p.m.

Unbroken Fri.-Mon., 11:30 a.m., 1:35, 4:35, 7:35, 10:10 p.m.; Wed., 11:35 a.m., 2, 5:05, 7:35, 11 p.m.; Thurs., 11:30 a.m., 1:35, 4:35, 7:35, 10:30 p.m.

The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies Fri.-Mon., 11:20 a.m., 2:40, 4:40, 8:05, 10:55 p.m.; Wed., 10:55 a.m., 1:55, 4:35, 10:45 p.m.; Thurs., 11:10 a.m., 2:15, 4, 8:05, 10:50 p.m.

Inherent Vice Fri.-Mon., 11:30 a.m., 2:30, 11:15 p.m.; Wed., 5:10, 7:50, 11:10 p.m.; Thurs., 11:20 a.m., 2:30, 5:30, 7:25, 11:10 p.m.; Fri.-Mon., 4:35, 7:50 p.m.; Wed., 11:25 a.m., 2:45 p.m.

Wild Fri.-Mon., 5:45, 8:20 p.m.; Wed., 11:20 a.m.; Thurs., 5:20 p.m.

The Wrestler Thurs., 8 p.m.

Collateral Mon., 7:30 p.m.

As Good as It Gets Tues., 7:30 p.m.

The Godfather: Part II Wed., 7:30 p.m.

LOS FELIZ 3 1822 N. Vermont Ave. (323) 664-2169

The Imitation Game 1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:45 p.m.

Into the Woods Fri., 1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:45 p.m.; Sat., 1:30, 4:15, 7 p.m.; Sun.-Thurs., 1:30, 4:15, 7, 9:45 p.m.

Inherent Vice 2, 5:30, 8:45 p.m.

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Interstellar 6:30, 10 p.m.

MANN GRAUMAN'S CHINESE 6925 Hollywood Blvd. (323) 464-8111

The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies An IMAX 3D Experience HFR Fri., 12:30, 3:40, 7, 10:15 p.m.; Sat., 3:40, 7, 10:15 p.m.; Sun.-Thurs., 12:30, 3:40, 7, 10:15 p.m.

PACIFIC'S EL CAPITAN Hollywood Blvd., west of Highland (323) 467-7674

Into the Woods Fri.-Sun., 10 a.m., 1:05, 4:10, 8 p.m.

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The Imitation Game Fri.-Sun., 10, 11:40 a.m., 12:30, 2:10, 4:40, 7:15, 10:35 p.m.; Mon., 10 a.m., 12:30, 2:10, 4:40, 7:15, 10:35 p.m.; Tues.-Wed., 10, 11:40 a.m., 12:30, 2:10, 4:40, 7:15, 10:35 p.m.; Thurs., 10, 11:40 a.m., 12:30, 2:10, 4:40 p.m.

Taken 3 Fri.-Mon., 10:20 a.m., 12:45, 2:35, 3:10, 5:35, 7, 8, 10:30, 11 p.m.; Tues., 10:20 a.m., 12:45, 2:35, 3:10, 5:35, 8, 10:30, 11 p.m.; Wed., 10:20 a.m., 12:45, 2:35, 3:10, 5:35, 7, 8, 10:30, 11 p.m.; Thurs., 10:20 a.m., 12:45, 2:35, 3:10, 5:35 p.m.

The Woman in Black 2: Angel of Death Fri.-Mon., 11:05 a.m., 1:20, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05, 11:05 p.m.; Tues., 1:20, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05, 11:05 p.m.; Wed., 11:05 a.m., 1:20, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05, 11:05 p.m.; Thurs., 11:05 a.m., 1:20, 3:35, 5:50 p.m.

The Gambler Fri.-Wed., 10:10 a.m., 12:35, 3:05, 5:40, 8:10, 10:40 p.m.; Thurs., 10:10 a.m., 12:35, 3:05 p.m.

Into the Woods Fri.-Mon., 11 a.m., 12 noon, 1:40, 2:45, 4:20, 7:10, 8:15, 10:25 p.m.; Tues., 11 a.m., 12 noon, 1:40, 2:45, 7:10, 8:15, 10:25 p.m.; Wed., 11 a.m., 12 noon, 1:40, 2:45, 4:20, 7:10, 8:15, 10:25 p.m.; Thurs., 11 a.m., 12 noon, 1:40, 2:45, 4:20 p.m.

Selma Fri.-Sun., 11:15 a.m., 2, 3, 4:45, 5:45, 7:30, 10:15 p.m.; Mon., 11, 11:15 a.m., 2, 3, 4:45, 5:45, 7:30, 10:15 p.m.; Tues.-Wed., 11:15 a.m., 2, 3, 4:45, 5:45, 7:30, 10:15 p.m.; Thurs., 11:15 a.m., 2, 3, 4:45, 5:45 p.m.

Unbroken Fri.-Wed., 11:30 a.m., 2:25, 5:20 p.m.

Annie Fri.-Wed., 11:10 a.m., 1:50, 4:30, 7:35, 9:50 p.m.; Thurs., 11:10 a.m., 1:50, 4:30 p.m.

Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb Fri.-Wed., 10 a.m., 12:20, 2:40, 5, 8:30, 10:10 p.m.; Thurs., 10 a.m., 12:20, 2:40, 5 p.m.

The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies Fri.-Wed., 10:05 a.m., 1:05, 4:05, 7:05, 10:05 p.m.; Thurs., 10:05 a.m., 1:05, 4:05 p.m.

Exodus: Gods and Kings Fri.-Wed., 9:45 p.m.

Inherent Vice Fri.-Mon., 10:25, 11:25 a.m., 1:30, 4:35, 5:30, 7:20, 9:25, 10:45 p.m.; Tues., 10:25, 11:25 a.m., 1:30, 4:35, 5:30, 7:20, 10:45 p.m.; Wed., 10:25, 11:25 a.m., 1:30, 4:35, 5:30, 7:20, 9:25, 10:45 p.m.; Thurs., 10:25, 11:25 a.m., 1:30, 4:35, 5:30 p.m.

Wild Fri.-Wed., 5:05, 8:35 p.m.; Thurs., 5:05 p.m.

VISTA 4473 Sunset Dr. (323) 660-6639

Selma 1, 4, 7, 9:50 p.m.

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CGV CINEMAS LA 621 South Western Avenue (213)388-9000

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The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies in 3D Fri.-Wed., 9:45 a.m., 12:45, 3:45, 6:45, 9:45 p.m.

The Con Artists Fri.-Wed., 11 a.m., 7:45, 10:15 p.m.

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TCM Presents The Wizard of Oz Sun.-Wed., 2, 7 p.m.

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The Woman in Black 2: Angel of Death Fri.-Sat., 12:15, 2:45, 5:20, 8:10, 11 p.m.; Sun., 12:15, 2:45, 5:20, 8:10, 10:55 p.m.; Mon., 12:15, 2:45, 5:20, 7:55, 10:25 p.m.; Tues., 12:15, 2:45, 5:20, 8:10, 11 p.m.; Wed., 12:15, 2:45, 5:20, 7:55, 10:25 p.m.

The Gambler Fri.-Sat., 11:20 a.m., 2:05, 4:50, 7:40, 11:10 p.m.; Sun., 11:20 a.m., 2:05, 4:50, 7:40, 10:35 p.m.; Mon., 1:50, 4:45, 7:35, 10:20 p.m.; Tues., 11:20 a.m., 2:05, 4:50, 7:40, 11:10 p.m.; Wed., 1:50, 4:45, 7:35, 10:20 p.m.

Into the Woods Fri.-Wed., 12:20, 3:30, 6:40, 9:40 p.m.

Selma Fri.-Sat., 12:30, 1:20, 3:40, 4:30, 6:50, 7:30, 10:10, 10:50 p.m.; Sun., 12:30, 1:20, 3:40, 4:30, 6:50, 7:30, 10:10, 10:45 p.m.; Mon., 12:25, 12:55, 3:25, 3:55, 6:25, 7:05, 9:35, 10:05 p.m.; Tues., 12:30, 1:20, 3:40, 4:30, 6:50, 7:30, 10:10, 10:50 p.m.; Wed., 12:25, 12:55, 3:25, 3:55, 6:25, 7:05, 9:35, 10:05 p.m.

Unbroken Fri.-Sun., 12:40, 3:50, 7, 10:20 p.m.; Mon., 12:40, 3:50, 7, 10:10 p.m.; Tues., 12:40, 3:50, 7, 10:20 p.m.; Wed., 12:40, 3:50, 7, 10:10 p.m.

Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb Fri., 1:10, 3:45, 6:20, 9 p.m.; Sat., 1:10, 3:45, 6:45, 9:25 p.m.; Sun.-Wed., 1:10, 3:45, 6:20, 9 p.m.

The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies in 3D Fri., 12:45, 4, 7:20, 10:35 p.m.; Sat., 7:20, 10:35 p.m.; Sun., 10:35 p.m.; Mon., 12:45, 4, 7:40 p.m.; Tues., 12:45, 4, 7:20, 10:35 p.m.; Wed., 12:45, 4, 7:40 p.m.

The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies Fri.-Sun., 11:50 a.m., 3:10, 6:30, 9:50 p.m.; Mon., 11:55 a.m., 3:10, 6:30, 9:50 p.m.; Tues., 11:50 a.m., 3:10, 6:30, 9:50 p.m.; Wed., 11:55 a.m., 3:10, 6:30, 9:50 p.m.

Exodus: Gods and Kings Fri., 2:40, 9:10 p.m.; Sat., 9:10 p.m.; Sun., 2:40, 9:10 p.m.; Mon., 2:50, 9:10 p.m.; Tues., 2:40, 9:10 p.m.

Top Five Fri.-Sun., 12:10, 3, 5:30, 8, 10:30 p.m.; Mon., 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20 p.m.; Tues., 12:10, 3, 5:30, 8, 10:30 p.m.; Wed., 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20 p.m.

The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1 Fri., 11:40 a.m., 6:10 p.m.; Sat., 6:10 p.m.; Sun., 11:40 a.m., 6:10 p.m.; Mon., 12 noon, 6:10 p.m.; Tues., 11:40 a.m., 6:10 p.m.; Wed., 10 p.m.

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Mr. Turner Fri.-Sun., 1:20, 4:20, 7:20 p.m.; Mon., 1, 4:15, 7:15 p.m.; Tues., 1, 4:15 p.m.; Wed.-Thurs., 1, 4:15, 7:15 p.m.

Citizenfour Fri.-Sun., 11 a.m.

Predestination Fri.-Sun., 2:25, 5, 7:45, 10:10 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 5, 7:45, 10 p.m.; Thurs., 5, 10 p.m.

The Interview Fri.-Sun., 10:15 p.m.

Inherent Vice 1:30, 4:45, 8 p.m.

The Babadook Fri.-Sun., 10:20 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 10:15 p.m.

Foxcatcher Fri.-Sun., 11:05 a.m., 1:45, 4:30, 7:15 p.m.; Mon., 1:15, 4, 9:45 p.m.; Tues.-Thurs., 1:15, 4, 7, 9:45 p.m.

The Theory of Everything Fri.-Sun., 11:45 a.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 2:15 p.m.

Whiplash Fri.-Sun., 11:30 a.m., 2, 4:40, 7:30, 10 p.m.; Tues., 2, 4:30, 7:30, 10:10 p.m.

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Nightcrawler Fri., 1:20, 4:10, 7 p.m.; Sat.-Tues., 1:20, 4:10, 7, 9:50 p.m.; Wed.-Thurs., 4:10, 9:50 p.m.

Citizenfour Fri.-Sun., 12 noon, 5, 10 p.m.; Mon., 12 noon, 5 p.m.; Tues., 5, 10 p.m.; Wed.-Thurs., 12 noon, 5, 10 p.m.

Match Wed.-Thurs., 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30 p.m.

Force Majeure (Turist) Fri., 1:30, 4:20, 10 p.m.; Sat., 1:30, 4:20, 7:10 p.m.; Sun.-Tues., 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10 p.m.; Wed.-Thurs., 1:30, 7:10 p.m.

Jodorowsky's Dune Fri.-Sun., 2:40, 7:40 p.m.; Mon., 2:40 p.m.; Tues., 7:40 p.m.; Wed.-Thurs., 2:40, 7:40 p.m.

A Midsummer Night's Dream Mon., 7:30 p.m.; Tues., 1 p.m.

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The Woman in Black 2: Angel of Death Fri.-Wed., 11:10 a.m., 4:30, 10 p.m.

American Sniper Thurs., 7 p.m.

Big Eyes Fri.-Sun., 11:30 a.m., 2:15, 5:05, 7:50, 10:45 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 11:20 a.m., 2:15, 5:05, 7:50, 10:30 p.m.

The Gambler Fri., 10:25 a.m., 2:10, 5, 8, 10:55 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 11:25 a.m., 2:10, 5, 8, 10:55 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 11:25 a.m., 2:10, 5, 8:05, 10:50 p.m.

Into the Woods Fri., 9:50 a.m., 12:55, 4, 7:10, 10:15 p.m.; Sat., 9:50 a.m., 12:50, 4, 7:10, 10:15 p.m.; Sun., 9:50 a.m., 12:55, 4, 7:10, 10:15 p.m.; Mon.-Tues., 10:30 a.m., 1:30, 4:25, 7:20, 10:15 p.m.; Wed., 10:30 a.m., 1:30, 4:25, 7:30, 10:35 p.m.

Selma Fri.-Sun., 10 a.m., 1:10, 4:10, 7:20, 10:25 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10:35 a.m., 1:40, 4:45, 7:45, 10:45 p.m.

Unbroken Fri.-Sun., 9:30 a.m., 12:45, 4:15, 7:30, 10:50 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 11:45 a.m., 3:10, 6:30, 9:55 p.m.

Annie Fri.-Sun., 9:55 a.m., 12:50, 3:50, 6:35, 9:35 p.m.; Mon.-Tues., 10:55 a.m., 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:25 p.m.; Wed., 10:55 a.m., 1:50, 4:40 p.m.

cut hippie chick just about *anybody* would be in love with in 1970 L.A. Shasta shows up out of nowhere, desperate for a favor; Doc obliges, setting off on a noodly trek that leads him into the custody of his nemesis, Josh Brolin's Bigfoot, a dim-witted cop/wannabe actor. By the end, you're not quite sure *what* happened. But as it's happening, at least you've got Phoenix, in an assortment of rumpled denim shirts and striped pants, sporting In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida sideburns that stretch across his wan cheeks like furry scimitars. He's an enjoyable caricature of a caricature, a spacey, paranoid genius who peers out at the world, and stumbles through it. (Stephanie Zacharek)

INTO THE WOODS No matter how it performs in theaters, Stephen Sondheim's and James Lapine's dark, glorious and supremely messy fairy-tale mash-up musical/therapy session is now forever a pop-culture curio that unwary kids will stumble upon to their bafflement and bet-terment. The princess-party punchbowl has forever been spiked. Here are wicked stepsisters who hack off toes to cram their feet into Cinderella's slippers. And here's a Cinderella (Anna Kendrick) whose flock of bird companions occasionally peck out her enemies' eyes. Better still: Sumptuously gowned, Cinderella flees prince and ball three nights running for reasons she doesn't understand herself until much later, after she has won everything any princess-minded tween has ever ached for — come to find out, the wishing beats the hell out of the having. The wishing for a big-screen *Into the Woods* might best be the reality, too, despite Kendrick's glittering turn and the wonders of Sondheim's brittle-witty score, which is mostly intact. Onstage, *Into the Woods* is an exhausting triumph — it's the show whose first half your relatives adore and whose second, when Grimm and Freud met Pirandello, leaves them restless and discomfited. Onscreen, exhaustion sets in much earlier. *Into the Woods* is all about archetypes running hither and thither, questing and belting, their stories glancing against one another in that fairy-tale space of the title. In a live performance, we can observe multiple stories at once, the actors occupying different copses — we're invited to savor the correspondences. In the movie, director Rob Marshall simply cuts from one tale to the next, isolating his actors. There's little sense that the fairy-tale space is a shared one — it's just a bunch of noisy incident transpiring in unrelated tree stands. (Alan Scherstahl)

A MOST VIOLENT YEAR The world needs fewer tasteful movies about distasteful things. It definitely doesn't need J.C. Chandor's *A Most Violent Year*, in which Oscar Isaac plays a nouveau-riche heating-oil baron in early-1980s New York, striving to maintain his principles amid industry corruption and generally scummy behavior. Isaac's Abel Morales skulks through most of the numbingly wayward two-hour runtime in a black turtleneck and camelhair coat, the trappings of a guy who has only recently been able to enjoy the finer things in life. His wife, Jessica Chastain's Anna, is a gangster's daughter but seems happy to tread

the straight and narrow for the love of her husband: She's in charge of keeping the books, tippety-tapping figures into the adding machine with the eraser end of a pencil. But the couple's business is under siege. Someone has been assaulting his drivers and making off with their trucks. Meanwhile, a nosy assistant district attorney (David Oyelowo) smells a rat and has decided to poke around in Abel's industry, which includes all manner of stereotypically penny-pinching Jews, fat guys with cigars, and faux-classy squash enthusiasts. Abel has the very noble and very boring job of looking everyone in the eye and speaking the truth, because someone's got to do it. Here and there Alex Ebert's score drones ominously, asking, "So, is this year *violent* enough for you yet?" It's really just sort of...dumb. Chandor has set his third picture during what was statistically the most crime-ridden year in New York's history, 1981. That would have been all well and good, but where are all the people? *A Most Violent Year* is jarringly provincial; you can practically hear the tumbleweeds whistling. (Stephanie Zacharek)

GO MR. TURNER If you've ever loved a terrible person, Mike Leigh's quietly sensational *Mr. Turner* — a biopic, of sorts, covering the last 25 years of the life of great 19th-century British painter J.M.W. Turner — is the movie for you. Human beings don't figure largely in Turner's work, particularly in the later years of his career; when they appear at all, they're often small, blurred figures at the mercy of sky and sea. As a person, Turner tended toward eccentricity and solitude. And as played by Timothy Spall, he isn't the sort you'd want to cuddle up to. Only occasionally does he use actual words to communicate. More often, he makes his feelings known via a vast vocabulary of grunts and growls that emerge from the depths of his throat. He appears, at first, to care little for human beings except on those rare occasions when he needs them: His housekeeper, Hannah (Dorothy Atkinson), welcomes his gruff sexual advances, even though he treats her thoughtlessly. A mysterious and angry woman (Ruth Sheen) appears at his door with her daughters — who, it turns out, are also his daughters — to show him his first grandchild. He grunts at the little cherub in her white bonnet, wanting nothing to do with her. But only at first: A few minutes later, he comes around to admire the infant in all her powder-pink glory, albeit in a rather businesslike way. This is less your standard-issue biopic than a foray into the mystery of human feeling. (Stephanie Zacharek)

GO SELMA Ava DuVernay's quietly remarkable *Selma*, in addition to being a meticulously detailed historical drama, is the right movie for the moment: In telling the story of the three marches — from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama — led by Martin Luther King in 1965 as a protest against restrictions that prevented African-Americans from registering to vote, DuVernay has opened a window of hope on the present. If change was painful then, we shouldn't expect it to be easy now. DuVernay has pulled off a tricky feat, a movie based on historical

events that never feels dull, worthy or lifeless; it hangs together as a story and not just part of a lesson plan. The movie is at once intimate and grand in scope: An early scene shows Annie Lee Cooper (played by Oprah Winfrey), who would become a voting rights activist, trying to register in her home county and being turned away, stymied by a blockade of absurd regulations. Another shows Martin Luther King in the Oval Office conferring with Lyndon B. Johnson (a superb Tom Wilkinson), urging the president to push forward with the Voting Rights Act. *Selma* lays out the challenges faced by organizers and regular citizens alike in planning and executing the marches. On their first attempt to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge, they're run down and clubbed by Sheriff Jim Clark and a phalanx of policemen on horseback; the cops descend upon the peaceful marchers, kicking and beating them with batons. DuVernay proves both discreet and vigorous in her orchestration of violence, emphasizing its horror without beating the audience up. (Stephanie Zacharek)

GO THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING If the universe is infinitely finite, an entity whose mystery is knowable only through an evolving progression of theories and equations, it's nothing compared to a marriage. Every marriage or long-term partnership is knowable only to the people inside it — and sometimes not even then. *The Theory of Everything* tells the story of genius theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking's marriage to the former Jane Wilde, though of course it can tell that story only from the outside. You can see why fellow student Jane (Felicity Jones), well-bred, well-mannered and pot-of-cream pretty, would be attracted to him. Not long after the two finally get together, a doctor informs Stephen he has only about two years to live. Jane decides that she wants to make a life with him anyway. Holding babies will become more difficult as Stephen's motor capabilities deteriorate, but he manages anyway — at every stage, Stephen, as Eddie Redmayne plays him, radiates the joy of being in such close proximity to a tiny new being. His fame grows, but the strain of looking after him — while also raising

three children — begins to wear on Jane. *The Theory of Everything* may slightly sanitize the truth, whatever that is: This is, after all, a story told from the point of view of an ex-wife. And the film is as polished as a piece of fine furniture. But it's striking, at times even piercing, for the way it infiltrates some universal realities of marriage. If the secrets of making marriage work were a science, then geniuses might be able to help us through it. As it is, even brainiacs like Stephen Hawking have to muddle through just like the rest of us. (Stephanie Zacharek)

GO WILD For reasons that are perhaps understandable, stories about women finding themselves — or their voices, or their inner courage, or any number of things that are apparently very easy to mislay — are big business. But even if Cheryl Strayed's 2012 memoir *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* fits the classic self-discovery template perfectly, it's at least lively and entertaining. This account of the author's 1,100-mile trek up the Pacific Crest Trail — a trip she took alone, in 1995, as a way of coping with her mother's untimely death and the fact that her own life had gone seri-

ously off the rails — works both as travel writing and a supremely candid interior monologue. The chances of messing up the movie version were great: How do you dramatize a story that essentially consists of walking and thinking — breathtaking scenery notwithstanding? Jean-Marc Vallée pulls it off in *Wild*, in which Reese Witherspoon, as Strayed, faces down wilderness horrors such as egg-frying heat, mountain passes clogged with snow, and ill-fitting boots. This woman-vs.-nature battle is, of course, really a woman-vs.-herself conflict in disguise. Although she's joined by the occasional fellow traveler, the Strayed of *Wild* is mostly alone, and deeply so, with the memories of her mother, Bobbi (Laura Dern). As she says in one of the movie's many instances of introspective voiceover, "I'm gonna walk my way back to the woman my mother thought I was." Strayed does an awful lot of thinking on that trail, but she does a lot of looking too, and Vallée and cinematographer Yves Bélanger are scrupulously alert to her surroundings. Witherspoon, meanwhile, kicks any potential cuteness right over the ridge. (Stephanie Zacharek)



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FRI 09
SAT 10
FRI 16
SAT 17
FRI 23
SAT 24
FRI 30
SAT 31

MIDNIGHT COWBOY (1969) ANN ROTH · 7:30PM
CISCO PIKE (1972) ROSANNA NORTON · 9:40PM

MARY POPPINS (1964) 5PM
FAHRENHEIT 451 (1966) 7:30PM
TONY WALTON

KLUTE (1971) ANN ROTH · 7:30PM
NETWORK (1976) THEONI V. ALDRIDGE · 9:40PM

EAST OF EDEN (1955) 5PM
THE GODFATHER (1972) 7:30PM
ANNA HILL JOHNSTONE

ALL THAT JAZZ (1979) ALBERT WOLSKY · 7:30PM
PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE (1974)
ROSANNA NORTON · 9:50PM

BONNIE AND CLYDE (1967) 5PM
THE GODFATHER, PART II (1974) 7:30PM
THEADORA VAN RUNKLE

TAXI DRIVER (1976) RUTH MORLEY 7:30PM
UPTIGHT (1968) THEONI V. ALDRIDGE 9:40PM

THE LIFE AQUATIC WITH STEVE ZISSOU (1994) 5PM
BARRY LYNDON (1975) 7:30PM
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Music //

HOT LICKS

From its colorful Echo Park headquarters,
Lolipop Records is building a garage-rock empire

BY ART TAVANA

The door to Lolipop Records' Echo Park studio is always open. "For me, it's a way of saying everyone is a part of this," says Wyatt Blair, 23, Lolipop's shaggy-haired founder and drummer for one of the label's flagship bands, psych rockers Mr. Elevator & the Brain Hotel.

Anyone can walk into Lolipop and record their music — and if there's room on the wooden cassette rack in the shop next door, they can sell it there, too. The whole space resembles a collage of Echo Park's garage and psych-rock scenes. Gig flyers and smiley-face buttons cover the walls. Next to the tape rack is a doodled sketch of a hippie with a thought bubble that reads, "Fuck Lolipop."

This is Blair's brightly colored, egalitarian playhouse: a communal space for kids seeking asylum from the tract housing of Orange County and a music industry that no longer appeals to them.

A year after starting Lolipop in his South Orange County garage, Blair moved to Echo Park's Bonnie Brae Street in 2011 and began releasing handmade tapes from his kitchen — each one individually spray-painted, like a tiny piece of street art. A garage-surf tape by Adult Books was his first "professionally done" release.

"I THINK LOLIPOP HAS GIVEN THE SCENE A CENTER." —LIZ GARO, ECHO/ECHOPLEX TALENT BUYER

"I remember Wyatt calling me and saying, 'Dude, huge deal: People are buying your tape in Japan!'" says Daniel Quintanilla, the bassist for Adult Books and one of Lolipop's four 20-something proprietors.

Not everyone got what Lolipop was doing. A few local record stores laughed at first at the notion of carrying Blair's rainbow-colored cassette tapes. But others immediately appreciated the label's DIY approach and knack for discovering new bands.

"I'm kind of in awe of them," says Paul Beahan, founder of local record label Manimal Vinyl, which spearheaded the indie revival of the late 2000s with releases by bands such as Warpaint and Hecuba.

By 2012, Lolipop had relocated to its current home, a space underneath the grimy Sunset Boulevard Bridge on Glendale Boulevard, near a grandiose Dick Clark mural. At first, the label occupied a rehearsal space shared by Mr. Elevator and psych-rocking party animals Mystic Braves. Eventually Blair and his partners converted that space into a recording studio and, when the shop next door became vacant, expanded into their current multiuse, beer-and-weed-friendly abode.

During a recent performance in the tiny store, a ragged velvet couch is shoved aside to make room for Blair's closest friends, the "Lolipopppers": girls wearing gypsy-inspired garb, guys who look like members of the 1970s Zephyr skate team. Everyone greets one another with either a kiss or a smoke. Billy Changer plays the party's soundtrack, a moody blend of gothic surf rock and British-inspired new wave.

Blair presides over the scene. On his left arm, a tattoo of the heart-shaped Lolipop logo demonstrates his commitment as well as his marketing savvy. "Wyatt's the brain," says Tomas Dolas, singer/keyboardist of Mr. Elevator and another of Lolipop's young co-founders.

Blair, for his part, is savvy enough to deny his importance: "I'm just the guy answering the emails."

For such a DIY operation, the label is astonishingly prolific. Last year Lolipop released more than 100 tapes, including one by Changer's band, Corners. They aren't officially signed to Lolipop, but then again, nobody is.

"We don't know how to do that yet," Quintanilla says. The label doesn't have exclusive deals with its bands, working off verbal agreements and demonstrations of loyalty, such as hugs and matching tattoos.

Lolipop's hometown audience is well established: Last June, Lolipopppers purchased nearly 1,000 tickets for the first Lolipalooza music festival at the Echo. But the label's influence now is extending beyond Echo Park. Last year, it booked 40 nationwide shows on its "Lolipop Adventure Tour," touring in a van dubbed "Boogie Mama." Lolipop also has released tapes by Japanese dream-pop band Boys Age and Mexican psychedelic-folk rockers Santoros, part of a global expansion Blair says is just getting started.

Occasionally, band commitments interfere with label deadlines. At the moment, Blair has a solo project as well as drumming for Mr. Elevator. Quintanilla plays with both Adult Books and Mr. Elevator, while a fourth partner, Ignacio "Iggy" Gonzalez, pulls double duty as a member of Mystic Braves and psychedelic space rockers Jeffertitti's Nile.



Daniel Quintanilla, left, Tomas Dolas, Ignacio "Iggy" Gonzalez and Wyatt Blair of Lolipop Records

PHOTO BY AMANDA LOPEZ

A small army of musicians, visual artists, recording engineers and fresh-faced interns helps pick up the slack. If you want to work with Lolipop, all you have to do is walk through the doors and pitch in.

"You get what you put in," explains Blair, who relies on a communal dynamic inspired by both Sam Phillips' legendary Sun Records (Elvis' and Johnny Cash's first label) and Burger Records, the Fullerton-based label that in many ways provided the blueprint for Lolipop. "They're like our big bros," Blair says of Burger.

These days, the two labels are co-releasing tapes at a dizzying rate. Kim House, a local garage rocker who fronts a band called Kim & the Created, is a case study of their incestuous relationship. "My next release will be on Lolipop Records and Burger Records," she wrote on her Facebook page in November. In the accompanying photo, she wore a Lolipop T-shirt and held two Burger buttons over her eyes.

Burger founders Sean Bohrman and Lee Rickard embrace the close relationship. "We're glad to be mentor figures to them," Rickard says. "It's all about collaborating and putting out great tapes."

If there's a key difference between the two labels, it's Echo Park, a neighborhood the Lolipop guys have turned into their playground, finding mentors in local influencers such as Echo/Echoplex tal-

ent buyer Liz Garo and Lot 1 Café owner Eileen Leslie. Their most loyal bands — Adult Books, Froth and psych-pop band Drinking Flowers — all live in neighboring houses on Bonnie Brae Street.

"I think Lolipop has given the scene a center," says Garo, who is helping book a second Lolipalooza, scheduled for June. Lolipop also is partnering with the Echo to release a *Live at the Echo* compilation series and launching a podcast, "The Lolipop Global Connection," as another way to promote local bands.

Blair is looking forward to beginning 2015 with pre-orders for *Supreme Blue Dream*, the first full-length from the band Winter, who add some dream-pop and shoegaze colors to Lolipop's ever-expanding palette. There's also a new 7-inch from Death Valley Girls, the next Adult Books album and the first new music in decades from pioneering '60s garage rockers The Sloths. And probably another hundred-odd releases as well.

For all its expansion, Lolipop remains at its core a "huge fucked-up family," as Blair puts it. For him, that heart-shaped logo is more than just an arbitrary symbol: It's a reflection of Lolipop's we're-in-this-together philosophy.

"Fuck the 'I'm better than your band' mentality," Blair says. "Let's just make everyone friends."

CRYING TIME

BEFORE HE BECAME PART OF THE GLITCH MOB, EDIT RELEASED A MELANCHOLY MASTERWORK

BY JEFF WEISS

The tears are 10 years dry. The emotional abrasions have long faded. But a decade after Edward Ma's debut as edIT, his first song collection retains a melancholic timelessness.

Released on British imprint Planet Mu in the spring of 2004, *Crying Over Pros for No Reason* materialized and vanished with little fanfare. In the candlelit corners of instrumental hip-hop at the time, Prefuse 73, Dabrye and RJD2 reigned. Within the embryonic local beat scene, Daedelus attracted the rave reviews.

Daedelus' friend and former USC classmate, Ma was better known as a resident DJ at Konkrete Jungle, a now-defunct drum & bass and hip-hop club night.

"The record initially flopped. Hardcore speed jungle was in and the quasi-Boards of Canada emotional vibe was considered old news," Ma says with the sly grin that surfaces when posterity proves you right.

The now-veteran producer speaks in the airy living room of the home that

CRYING OVER PROS FOR NO REASON MATERIALIZED AND VANISHED WITH LITTLE FANFARE.

he shares with his girlfriend, dog and triumvirate of cats. An antique player piano hulks next to a window offering a wintergreen view of the Franklin Hills. Several guitars slouch in a corner — the same ones he used to make *Crying Over Pros* a decade ago.

Ma has since toured the world countless times with The Glitch Mob, the bass-music blitzkrieg he co-founded in 2006. As one of the original residents of Low End Theory, Ma was among the first to spin dubstep domestically. When the Mob started ascending in the late '00s, he was at the vanguard of popularizing the genre's bone-chipping U.S. mutations.

This broader context affords *Crying Over Pros* a unique center of gravity. Its elegiac slink starkly contrasts with the electro-shock bangers of The Glitch Mob. Fusing Warp Records IDM, drum & bass

Edward Ma



PHOTO BY SIMON BONNEAU / CHIVTEAM® STUDIO

and boom-bap, the debut doubles as both slept-on gem and touchstone for the L.A. beat scene that arose shortly after its release.

Its reissue last month on Glitch Mob's Glass Air imprint (with five bonus tracks) solidifies its spot in the underground canon.

"Over time, the record developed a cult following and began selling," says Ma, who sports a blue button-up shirt and black pants. The sides of his head are shaved, giving him the vague air of an action hero. "It started off slow and eventually became one of Planet Mu's best-known releases."

Back then, its mere release marked a certain triumph for Ma. The Boston native arrived in L.A. in the late '90s to attend USC's theater school. Switching paths, he spent his postgrad years spinning at raves, making beats for members of Project Blowed and feverishly working on his debut.

"I wrote it with no attention to fans or outside perceptions. It was just me vibing and giving myself to the music," Ma says. "Music was in a different place then. There was no social media, YouTube or SoundCloud. People didn't feel the need to make bangers to get more followers."

After three years of experimentation, Ma mailed a demo of *Crying Over Pros* to Planet Mu owner Mike Paradinas, who bugged over its progressive beats and unfiltered emotion. Paradinas then spent nine months tracking down Ma, who had written the wrong email address on the CD-R.

After all the crossed signals and bad timing, edIT's first salvo feels fresher than ever. Sonic fads and subcultures come and go but some heart somewhere is always breaking.

Ma won't identify the source of the album's heartache, saying only, "I made the record for the ones that could've been, the ones that would never be and those who got away. The 10-year anniversary edition is my way of saying goodbye."

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THE ROCK 'N' ROLL
FLEA MARKET

FEB. 20
AN EVENING WITH
MACHINE HEAD

MAR. 1
THE ROCK 'N' ROLL
FLEA MARKET

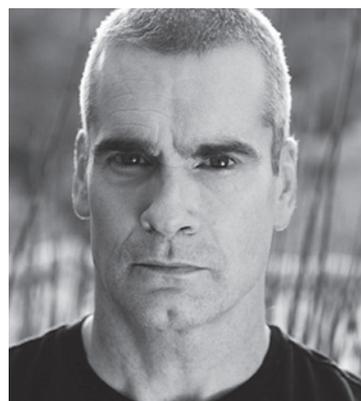
MAR. 14
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APR. 5
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Henry Rollins

The Column!



EXIT STRATEGIES

There is nothing like the Christmas holiday to remind me just how strange things can be. No, scratch that. How strange I can be, is more like it.

There is a level of pure bleakness I experience during this time of the year that I thankfully don't encounter at any other time. I don't think I could handle it.

I was in the Fresh & Easy in Burbank on Christmas Eve and it was out of the soup I was looking for. That's when I saw myself projected into the not-so-distant future.

There I was, standing in front of the cans, watching them like a movie, unable to remember what had brought me there. Suddenly it comes back to me, and in a high, quavering voice, a perfect blend of confusion and panic, I reach out to a man in an apron: "Young man! My soup! Where is my soup?!" I fear that if I'm not careful, my later years will be one long Christmas holiday.

Also, it's just plain funny to me that I have not a clue how to enjoy relaxation time. The start of 2015 was a relief.

At the beginning of any year, I am always curious to see which events of the previous year have staying power and which seem unable to stay in the national conversation.

Last year, when the CIA torture report was released to the citizens in all its redacted brevity, suddenly all the boys were back in town, so to speak. Cheney, Yoo and Bush showed up in newspapers alongside images of Abu Ghraib. Old wounds reopened and, at least for a few days, got a lot of people talking.

Cheney said he would do it all over again. CIA director John Brennan said, basically, that they did the best they could with what they had.

I tried to read anything from anyone involved and concluded that they were all, in their own way, telling the truth as they knew it. Cheney said that their enhanced interrogation methods got results, and it could be argued that, in some cases, they might have. The others who say they only had partial knowledge of what was happening — I believe them as well.

I think that was the whole idea. If you have enough people doing what they think they have to do without knowing the full picture, you will be able to achieve the level of brutality you desire. Most important, when

the whole thing does get a spotlight thrown on it, there will be so many gray areas, so much confusion and finger pointing, that the whole thing will soon go away. Call it an exit strategy.

Within a few days, the torture report and information on it seemed to fade into obscurity.

By comparison, when Sony blinked by pulling *The Interview* from theaters, only to put the film back into circulation days later, alongside statements about freedom of speech, that story had a far longer lifespan in the media world.

Sony lost me the second it pulled the film. I think Seth Rogen and James Franco are both talented, but I will never go to see *The Interview* and will be looking to switch out any Sony gear I have for another brand as soon as possible.

It didn't bug me that Sony pulled the film. I can totally understand a corporation of that size having no spine. It was the fact that, when it was finally unable to resist its corporate-genetic imperative to make money, Sony tried to change the narrative and claim it was standing up for something other than profit.

As Sony waved the First Amendment like a gunpowder-and-blood-stained flag, its executives were laughing their asses off and thanking their lucky stars for a country as sadly fucked up as North Korea.

I think it would have been great — and would have taught Sony a lesson — if no one went to see the film. The idea that you sent a message of any kind by going to a comedy film in a multiplex theater is ridiculous. No one in North Korea will ever know what you did.

I THINK IT WOULD HAVE BEEN GREAT IF NO ONE WENT TO SEE *THE* *INTERVIEW*.

The end of 2014 left America, with the world watching, grappling with basic freedoms in the Internet age, memories of waterboarding and *Police v. People*.

So what will stay in the national conversation this year? Can America handle a sober discourse on law enforcement without it devolving into anger and distraction? I think it has to, but that's a lot of mountains to move. Body cameras are a good start, but only a start.

As last year drew to a close, I tried to imagine what it would be like to be a police officer. Your vehicle, your uniform — everything on and around you isolates and targets you. They might not know your name but they know what you are. Some no doubt take any bad experience they have ever had with law enforcement and superimpose it onto you. And there you are, working every shift, looking to return home in the same shape as when you left.

I wonder if many police officers operate with a dangerously high level of PTSD on a day-to-day basis. How do you handle that?

It will be interesting to see what course we the people chart for ourselves this year.

Swamp Dogg, Bobby Patterson
@ THE ECHO

Swamp Dogg and Bobby Patterson are two wild cats whose tag-team billing represents a funk-soul summit of rare and arousingly apocalyptic proportions. Swamp Dogg, of course, has been flipping lids since the late 1960s with his brilliant, biting brand of psych-funk philosophizing, while esteemed Texas soul shaman Patterson has been raising temperatures and stopping hearts for just as long. Even more appealing, each roars in with a superb new album: Dogg's characteristically provocative study on matters of race, *The White Man Made Me Do It*, and Patterson's penetrating, achingly perfected *I Got More Soul*. No one's resting on any musty old laurels, and when you mix in a special appearance by Vera Lee, Swamp Dogg's 91-year-old mama, this gig assumes unparalleled, triple-whammy proportions. —Jonny Whiteside

Jucifer
@ COMPLEX

A couple of years ago, a set of photos showing bands using hollowed-out amps and cabs as stage props went viral. This husband-and-wife sludge-metal duo answers the question of what it would sound like if all those amps were really plugged in. The duo's albums are quite heavy in their own right, but live they crank up their wall of amps to 11, resulting in a thunderous din that rattles teeth and tests the limits of any venue's sound system. They pull this off with only vocals, guitars and a drumkit, with not a single bass to be found. Jucifer's newest album, *District of Dystopia*, is more in the fast-paced, thrashier grindcore vein than the rest of their catalog, but the raw power of their core downtuned sound is still well preserved. —Jason Roche

Audacity
@ THE SMELL

In years to come, when the history of the New Garage Rock Revival is being written — or listicled, more likely — somebody needs to make sure Fullerton's Audacity get their rightful place at the front. For years now, they've been the good stuff incarnate, and their newest 45 on Suicide Squeeze is one more worthy slice of wax: A-side "Counting the Days" is like *Bleach*-y Nirvana and Milo-era Descendents with a Thin Lizzy twin-guitar break in the middle, and the B-side is a cover of Delta 5's "Mind Your Own Business," done like Le Shok's vicious year-2000 version. It starts like Flipper's "Sex Bomb" and grinds that distinctive riff to a nub, ending up like something from X's *Aspirations* LP. (That's the Australian X — yes, there is another!) Plus they're absolutely relentless live, too. Go see them in person to see how it's really done. —Chris Ziegler



The Jayhawks: See Saturday.

The Jayhawks
@ FONDA THEATRE

As part of the burgeoning Minneapolis alt-rock scene of the mid-'80s that also spawned The Replacements, Hüsker Dü and Soul Asylum, The Jayhawks' blend of rock and country helped usher in a new brand of alternative rock. While the band's most productive years were well over a decade ago, they are reuniting this year after a short hiatus in support of September's reissues of *Sound of Lies*, *Smile* and *Rainy Day Music*. These were the records that followed co-founder Mark Olson's departure in 1995. The group's 1997 touring lineup, led by Gary Louris, will be playing material primarily from those three albums, since those songs have largely disappeared from the band's live show in recent years. —Daniel Kohn

Snakehips
@ EL REY THEATRE

Newish, much buzzed-about U.K. outfit Snakehips return to North America for a second tour of mostly sold-out dates. The production and remix duo, highly influenced by '90s R&B and golden-era hip-hop, gained global listenership with future-soul/electronic singles "On & On" and "Days Without You," along with genre-blurring remixes for The Weeknd, Banks and Raury. Self-professed "suckers for anything with cool soul samples and old drum beats," Oliver Lee and James Carter have had quite an active 2014, finishing up North American and European tours and performing at such acclaimed musical

festivals as Glastonbury and Longitude. A Snakehips show is usually a high-energy one, marked by custom visuals, lighting and sonic excellence. —Jacqueline Michael Whatley

Ian Hunter
@ THE ROXY

As an occasional music journalist and longtime songwriter, Ian Hunter has always been more willing than most musicians to demystify the rock industry. His bleary-eyed 1972 journal, *Diary of a Rock 'n' Roll Star*, written during a tour with his old band Mott the Hoople, was one of the first truly incisive and revealing autobiographies by a classic rocker. When Hunter wasn't commenting on the history surrounding him in memorable glitter-pop anthems such as "The Golden Age of Rock 'n' Roll," he was making it, bridging the gap between David Bowie and fervent Mott acolytes The Clash. Apart from several Mott the Hoople reunions in 2009 and 2013, Hunter has mainly focused on his extensive solo career, from collaborations with the brilliant late guitar hero Mick Ronson to a new live album with his current backing group, the Rant Band. —Falling James

Chris Potter
@ ANN & JERRY MOSS THEATER, NEW ROADS SCHOOL

The Jazz Bakery continues to sponsor "Movable Feast" shows around Los Angeles while still hoping to build a new facility in downtown Culver City. Saturday's program marks both its first concert of 2015, as well as the first major public jazz event at the Moss Theater on the campus of the New Roads School in Santa Monica, part of the Herb Alp-



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ROTATIONS: ROB SEVIER

Rob Sevier is the co-founder of The Numero Group, a record label that specializes in rediscovering obscure music from the 1960s through the 1990s. His Amoeba set will focus on forthcoming and distant Numero projects.

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ert Educational Village. The 342-seat performance space features acoustics tuned by Yasuhisa Toyota, who also provided services for Disney Hall. Tonight's show features the fine saxophonist Chris Potter, who's been most recently touring with Pat Metheny's Unity Band, backed by a trio of L.A.'s finest: pianist Alan Pasqua, bassist Darek Oles and drummer Peter Erskine.

—Tom Meek

sun 1/11

Midge Ure

@ MCCABE'S GUITAR SHOP

Scottish singer-songwriter Midge Ure's unusually diverse résumé belies his relatively modest stateside profile. He snagged a U.K. No. 1 single in his early 20s ("Forever and Ever," with bubblegum poppers Slik); enjoyed a decade of European success with new-wave mainstays Ultravox; was a Rich Kid alongside ex-Sex Pistol Glen Matlock; co-founded Band Aid (co-writing "Do They Know It's Christmas" and co-organizing 1985's Live Aid concert); and, perhaps most incongruously, was a touring member of Thin Lizzy. But a cult hero he rightly remains: His 7:30 p.m. acoustic performance at the decidedly intimate McCabe's promptly sold out, so a second (separately ticketed) set has been added at 9:30. Ure's latest full-length, July's throwback-synthy *Fragile*, retains the man's signature atmospheric yet optimistic sense of melody and finely grained, deceptively flexible vocal timbre. —Paul Rogers

mon 1/12

The Fontaines

@ SILVERLAKE LOUNGE

"You even turn me down in my fantasies," Charlotte Fontaine chides one of her heroes in The Fontaines' poppy new ode "Dustin Hoffman." But it's hard to see how anyone can resist her yearning entreaties, so charmingly wrapped in sugary close harmonies, and her brother Hank's bubbly guitar riffs. Continuing the duo's series of celebrity homages, "Paul Newman" bounces along with a perky beat as Charlotte gushes about the actor's blue eyes. The name-dropping continues on The Fontaines' upcoming debut EP with tracks including "Dusty Springfield" and "Cate Blanchett." Hank Fontaine moved from the family's home in Texas to Silver Lake a few years ago, but his musical career didn't really get going until 19-year-old Charlotte tagged along later and started the band with him.

—Falling James

tue 1/13

Grace Weber, Leighton Meester

@ HOTEL CAFE

Unlike her *Gossip Girl* co-star Taylor

Momsen, who defies her preppie character's image with hard-rock reprobates The Pretty Reckless, Leighton Meester wraps herself in softer, gauzier sounds on romantic dream-pop tunes such as "Heartstrings." Purring in French, Meester is captivating, even amid the slickly anonymous dance-pop production of "Somebody to Love," a duet with Robin Thicke. Don't be freaked out if Grace Weber catches your eye when you're walking down the street. "I see myself in perfect strangers," the Brooklyn singer confesses on her second album, *The Refinery*. "I know it's rude to stare too long, sir/But were we friends three lives ago?" Weber gets away with being a shameless voyeur because she reveals her sly observations with a powerful, R&B-infused voice that pumps up her singer-songwriter ballads to a grander level. —Falling James

wed 1/14

Run the Jewels

@ REGENT THEATER

"I'm the foulest, no need for any evaluations," El-P warns on "Blockbuster Night, Pt. 1," from Run the Jewels' second full-length album, simply titled *Run the Jewels 2*. "This Run the Jewels is murder, mayhem, melodic music," partner Killer Mike adds for emphasis. The hip-hop duo's messages are anything but escapist and cheery as they paint a bleak picture of a modern America filled with drugs, violence and corrupt police. "Tiptoe on the track like a ballerina/Ski mask in a Pontiac Catalina," Killer Mike declares on the hardly romantic "Oh My Darling (Don't Cry)," setting up his own private crime scene: "You can run the jewels or lose your fingers." The music El-P cranks out is as sinister as the lyrics, a rat-a-tat combination of militant drum beats, eerie echoes, disembodied voices and surging, distorted riffs.

—Falling James

thu 1/15

Chain and the Gang

@ THE SATELLITE

There's one thing Chain and the Gang have in spades, and that's this crucial little thing called authenticity. The wickedly witty, heavily rocking "crime rock" combo is led by the charismatic and not-dumb Ian Svenonius, the former big cheese atop such estimable aggregates as Nation of Ulysses and The Make-Up. On the band's latest platter, *Minimum Rock N Roll* (Radical Elite/Dischord!), the Gang plays one super-tough brand of fuzzed-out rock noise, all decked out in an arty-retro bag full of lurching blues, sweet-toned gospel and swoony, doo-woppy stuff. The album's got a kick on it like a mule, and live, suave and sassy Mr. Svenonius and crew, in their matching silver suits, are a hip-swiveling, greasy powerhouse of humpin', heavin' rock & roll. —John Payne

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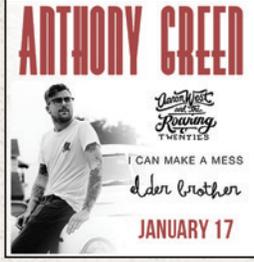
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CLUBS
ROCK & POP

ALEX'S BAR: 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292. Arise Roots, Quinto Sol, Brew Fish, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$8. Damned Age, Crooked Captain, Red River Massacre, Hemorrhage, Sun., Jan. 11, 8 p.m., \$5.

AMOeba MUSIC: 6400 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-245-6400. DJ Rob Sevier, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m., free. Tennis System, Thu., Jan. 15, 6 p.m., free.

AMPLIFY: 5617 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles. Friendly Strangers, The Lifted, The Mozzies, The Slightly's, Diopter, Fri., Jan. 9, 7:30 p.m., \$12. Jordan James, Sueno Eterno, Honeywater, Jane Lane, Siena Riley, Mint, Sat., Jan. 10, 6:45 p.m., \$12.

BOOTLEG THEATER: 2200 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, 213-389-3856. Ian, French Vanilla, Feels, Winter, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m., \$10. Sego, Swimm, Prism Tats, The New Electric Sound, DJ Kid Sister Erika, Mon., Jan. 12, 7:30 p.m., free.

CAFE NELA: 1906 Cypress Ave., Los Angeles. Crack Salad, Enemy, Bang Roc, Fri., Jan. 9, 9:30 p.m., \$5. Mothers of Dissension, Killroy, Fifi, Radio Threat, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., \$5. The Gypz, The Sirens, Baron Bandini, The Katellas, Sun., Jan. 11, 4 p.m., \$5. Lucky Otis & the Old School Players, at the Martin Luther King Jr. birthday celebration, Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., \$5.

CANYON CLUB: 28912 Roadside Drive, Agoura Hills, 818-879-5016. Puddle of Mudd, Crack in the Shell, The Lillies, Fri., Jan. 9, 7 p.m., \$35. Led Zepagain, Sat., Jan. 10, 7 p.m., \$19.50. James Durbin, Sun., Jan. 11, 7 p.m., \$25.

THE CAVE: 40789 Village Drive, Big Bear Lake, 909-878-0500. Marc Cohn, Sun., Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m., \$38 & \$45.

THE COACH HOUSE: 33157 Camino Capistrano Ste. C, San Juan Capistrano, 949-496-8930. Ian Hunter & His Rant Band, Sun., Jan. 11, 6 p.m., \$28. Midge Ure, Wed., Jan. 14, 7 p.m., \$20. Marc Cohn, Thu., Jan. 15, 7 p.m., \$39.

CODY'S VIVA CANTINA: 900 Riverside Drive, Burbank, 818-845-2425. The Woody James Big Band, Fridays, 1-3 p.m., free; The Gluey Brothers, LoveyDove, Pete Handelman, Wumbloozo, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m., free. Stompin' Riff Ruffs, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., free. Murphy's Flaw, Sun., Jan. 11, 12-2 p.m.; Mon., Jan. 19, 8 p.m., free; Debra Lee & Trigger Happy, Sundays, 6 p.m., free. Cody Bryant & Evan Marshall, Mondays, Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m., free; The Brombies, Mondays, 7:30 p.m., free; Troy Walker, Jimmy Angel, Cody Bryant, every other Monday, 7:30 p.m., free. John Pisano, Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m., free. Codio & the Swinging Armanis, Wednesdays, 7 p.m., free; Carmine Sardo & Eric Garcia's Shuffle Brothers Blues Night, Wednesdays, 9 p.m., free. Karen Tobin, Thu., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m., free.

COMPLEX: 806 E. Colorado St., Glendale, 323-642-7519. Jucifer, Yidhra, Pigeonwing, Fri., Jan. 9, 9:30 p.m., \$10. See Music Pick.

THE ECHO: 1822 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 213-413-8200. Swamp Dogg, Bobby Patterson, Vera Lee, Fri., Jan. 9, 8:30 p.m., \$17 (see Music Pick). Tamaryn, Puro Instinct, Hibou, Sun., Jan. 11, 10 p.m., \$13. Holychild, Travelers, Decorator, Mon., Jan. 12, 8:30 p.m., free. Ivory Deville & Jackson Tanner, Fairbanks, Austin McCutchen, Tue., Jan. 13, 8:30 p.m., free. French Exit, Minnow, Karoshi Boy, Hillary Chilton, Wed., Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m., \$7. Parade of Lights, Tove Stycke, Dark Waves, Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., \$12.

THE ECHOPLEX: 1154 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles, 213-413-8200. The Flesh Eaters, Skating Polly, Sat., Jan. 10, 8:30 p.m., \$19. Dub Club, Wednesdays, 9 p.m., \$7.

EL CID: 4212 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-668-0318. Sugar Candy Mountain, Emerson Star, The Moving Pictures, Frogtown, Fri., Jan. 9, 9:30 p.m., \$10. The Golden Rulers, Black Sabbitch, A Pretty Mess, Sat., Jan. 10, 10 p.m., \$7. Open Mic, Mondays, 8 p.m., \$5. Long Beach Caravan Trio, Tue., Jan. 13, 9 p.m., \$5. The Rave Ups, The Tearaways, Thu., Jan. 15, 9:30 p.m., \$5.

THE FEDERAL BAR: 102 Pine Ave., Long Beach, 562-435-2000. The Untouchables, Perro Bravo, PMA, The Green Machines, Sun., Jan. 11, 8 p.m., \$12.

FLYWAY AT FOX: 345 S. Garey Ave., Pomona, 909-784-3660. Froth, Thu., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m., \$10.

GENGHIS COHEN RESTAURANT: 740 N. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles, 323-653-0640. Nikol, Celia Chavez, Fri., Jan. 9, 8:30 p.m., \$10. The Gluey Brothers, Bigfellas, Abby Ward, Sat., Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m., \$10. See How They Run, Jane Bach, Sandra Piller, Tue., Jan. 13, 7:30 p.m., \$10. West Coast Songwriters, Wed., Jan. 14,

7 p.m., \$10. Adara, Megan Elizabeth, Skyler, Thu., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m., \$5-\$10.

THE GLASS HOUSE: 200 W. Second St., Pomona, 909-865-3802. Assuming We Survive, Cromwell, Dose of Adolescence, The New Varsity, Sat., Jan. 10, 7 p.m., \$15. Jonny Craig, Down With Webster, Thu., Jan. 15, 7 p.m., \$17.

THE HOTEL CAFE: 1623 1/2 N. Cahuenga Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-461-2040. Young Creatures, Hearty Har, Karmina, Cloud Walkers, Matthew Perryman Jones, Fri., Jan. 9, 7 p.m., \$10. London Shover, Sean Watkins, Moonsville Collective, Ruby Force, Sat., Jan. 10, 7 p.m., \$10. Ryan White, Sun., Jan. 11, 7 p.m., \$10. Zane Carney, Josh Kelley, Danny Mercer, Mon., Jan. 12, 7 p.m., \$10. Angie Miller, Grace Weber, Leighton Meester, Tue., Jan. 13, 8 p.m., \$28 (see Music Pick). Laleh, Mikaela Davis, Wed., Jan. 14, 7 p.m., \$10. Sarah Walk, Jazz Mills, Josh Beech, Otis English, Thu., Jan. 15, 7 p.m., \$19.

HUMAN RESOURCES: 410 Cottage Home St., Los Angeles, 213-290-4752. Insect Ark, Enablers, Hex Horizontal, all ages, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$7. The Gears, Mike Watt & the Secondmen, Steve Soto, in a benefit for restoring music programs to Castelar Elementary, all ages, Sun., Jan. 11, 3-6 p.m., \$15.

LA CITA: 336 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, 213-687-7111. Making Movies, Thu., Jan. 15, 9 p.m., \$5-\$10.

LARGO AT THE CORONET: 366 N. La Cienega Blvd., Los Angeles, 310-855-0350. The Brainstorm Project, with Kevin Nealon & Isaac Slade, Wed., Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m., \$100.

LOS GLOBOS: 3040 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-666-6669. Them Howling Bones, Franky Flowers, The Vibekills, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$5. Bastard, Bloodscribe, Blood for Our Brothers, Philly Heathens, Warchief, Tue., Jan. 13, 8 p.m., \$3. Illusion, Los Dharma Bums, Los Moodswings, Signa, Wed., Jan. 14, 8 p.m., \$5; Everly Snodgrass, Them Travelin' Birds, Mark Huff, Wed., Jan. 14, 8 p.m., \$5. Flaamingos, Triptides, Sand Babes, Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., \$7; 18+, San Gabriel, DPI, Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., \$7.

MCCABE'S GUITAR SHOP: 3101 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica, 310-828-4497. Rick Shea & the Losin' End, Powdercoat, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m., \$15. Denny Laine, Terry Sylvester, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m., \$26.50. Midge Ure, Sun., Jan. 11, 7:30 & 9:30 p.m., \$24.50 (see Music Pick).

THE MINT: 6010 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-954-9400. The Red Paintings, Cave Clove, The Draw, Kitty Kitty Judah, Sun., Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m., \$12. Hunnypot Radio, Every other Monday, 7 p.m., free. Talkback, Alex Eden, Nick Lopez, Vimana, Volo, Thu., Jan. 15, 7 p.m., \$12.

THE PROSPECTOR: 2400 E. Seventh St., Long Beach, 562-438-3839. The Dying Age, The Silent Generation, Chain Drive, Melting Pot, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m., \$5.

THE REDWOOD BAR & GRILL: 316 W. Second St., Los Angeles, 213-680-2600. Mythological Horses, Wolfhammer3, Post Nothing, Wolves, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$5-\$10. The Mo-Odds, The Folks & Company, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., \$5-\$10. Skip Heller, Rod Melancon, Bill Frenzer, Steve Delamater, Sun., Jan. 11, 3:30 p.m., \$5-\$10; Great Apes, Gentlemen Prefer Blood, Sun., Jan. 11, 9 p.m., \$5-\$10. Dead Words, Tue., Jan. 13, 9 p.m., \$5-\$10. Thursday Night Booty, Thursdays, 9 p.m., \$5-\$10.

ROOM 5 LOUNGE: 143 N. La Brea Ave., Second Floor, Los Angeles, 323-938-2504. Dove & Gun, Eric Kufs, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$10. Midnight Coal Company, John Torres, Tom Kell & Emiko Woods, Merideth Pegula, Sat., Jan. 10, 7 p.m., \$10. Kira Morrison, Olivia Thai, Rowan Katz & Waylon Rector, Tue., Jan. 13, 7 p.m., \$10. Mike Annuzzi, Sahar Haluzi, George Krikes & Owen Kortz, Wed., Jan. 14, 7 p.m., \$10. Dylan Holton, Sully, Summer Cooke, Ricky Berger, Adrian Bourgeois, Grant Terry, Thu., Jan. 15, 7 p.m., \$10.

THE ROXY: 9009 W. Sunset Blvd., W. Hollywood, 310-278-9457. Ian Hunter, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m., \$25 (see Music Pick). A Night Honoring Billy Gibbons & Butch Trucks, Mon., Jan. 12, 7 p.m., \$75-\$250. Jonny Craig, Down With Webster, Sleepwalk, Wed., Jan. 14, 8 p.m., \$15. The HeadCat, Fireball Ministry, Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., \$30.

SAINT ROCKE: 142 Pacific Coast Highway, Hermosa Beach, 310-372-0035. Super Diamond, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., \$30. James Durbin, Wed., Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m., \$20. David Lindley, Jodi Siegel, Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., \$25.

THE SATELLITE: 1717 Silver Lake Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-661-4380. Great White Buffalo, GNTLMN, Street Joy, Mercies, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., free. Wildling, My Double My Brother, Sharkitecture, Mon., Jan. 12, 9

Lina In L.A. by Lina Lecaro

SAVE MUSIC IN CHINATOWN

Chinatown's punk-rock roots run deep, going way back to the heyday of Madame Wong's and staying alive over the years via the indie art galleries, divey watering holes and eclectic music events in its famed, lantern-lit plaza.

A lively event series celebrating this history, Save the Music in Chinatown, raised funds for FACES (Friends and Alumni of Castelar

Elementary School), a registered nonprofit supporting the local school's recently defunded music-education program.

The fifth gathering in the series features some real heavy hitters. Steve Soto of The Adolescents and Agent Orange will do a solo acoustic set, while The Gears bring their repped-up surf-abilly jams to the party. Even Mike Watt is giving his time to this one with The Secondmen, a version of his legendary Minutemen.

The event also will have DJs from KChung's Kings of Punk and a raffle for music, movies, food prizes and other cool stuff.

HUMAN RESOURCES | 410 Cottage Home St., Chinatown | Sun., Jan. 11, 3-6 p.m. | \$12 advance; \$15 at door | humanresourcesla.com

p.m., free. Ben Caron & the Joy Machine, Tue., Jan. 13, 9 p.m., \$10. Misty Boyce, My Name Is You, Tim Williams, Wed., Jan. 14, 9 p.m., \$8. Chain & the Gang, Sex Stains, French Vanilla, Thu., Jan. 15, 9 p.m., \$12 (see Music Pick).

SILVERLAKE LOUNGE: 2906 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-663-9636. Cousin Kate, Valley Shine, Soul Low, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$8. The Fontaines, Mondays, 8 p.m. Thru Jan. 26, free (see Music Pick); Girl Tears, Death Lens, Sadgirl, Mon., Jan. 12, 8 p.m., free. The Temporary Thing, Pyramid Vitria, The Echo & the Sound, Tue., Jan. 13, 8 p.m., \$7. Brian Lopez, Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., \$8.

THE SMELL: 247 S. Main St., Los Angeles, 213-625-4325. Audacity, GRMLN, Wolvves, Billy Changer, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$5. See Music Pick.

TAIX FRENCH RESTAURANT: 1911 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 213-484-1265. Tune to Me, Mecolodiacs, Fri., Jan. 9, 10:30 p.m., free.

THE TROUBADOUR: 9081 Santa Monica Blvd., W. Hlywd., 310-276-6168. Tony Ferrari, Quinton Marcel, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m., \$15. Viernes 13, Left Alone, Johnny Madcap & the Distractions, The Delirians, Sat., Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m., \$12. Evolve Vattica, Malaki, Find the Lotus, Tue., Jan. 13, 8 p.m., free.

THE VIPER ROOM: 8852 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 310-358-1881. Jimmy Gnecco, 8mm, The Tulips, Fri., Jan. 9, 8:30 p.m., \$20. Louis Prima Jr. & the Witnesses, Sat., Jan. 10, 8:30 p.m., \$20-\$30. Bases Loaded, Raz Azraai, Feral Vinca, The Company, Sun., Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m., \$12. Kings of Carnage, Thrown Into Exile, Kaustik, Mon., Jan. 12, 9 p.m., \$10. Eric McFadden & the All-Stars, Lili Haydn, Abby Travis, Jesse Hughes, and others TBA, Wed., Jan. 14, 8 p.m., \$10-\$25; Eric McFadden, Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Thru Jan. 28, \$10.

WHISKY A GO-GO: 8901 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 310-652-4202. Hollywood Roses, Fri., Jan. 9, 7 p.m., \$13. Whitey Morgan & the 78s, Sat., Jan. 10, 7 p.m., \$20. Kix, Thu., Jan. 15, 7 p.m., \$13.

WITZEND: 1717 Lincoln Blvd., Los Angeles, 310-305-4792. Yesterday's Child, Alicia G, Nigel Walsh, The Clowns Will Eat Me, Fri., Jan. 9, 7:30 p.m., \$10. The Jazz Cats, Anna Renee, Wooden Man, Erin Beaty, Sat., Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m., \$10. Warren Sellers, Keesha Scott-Hogan, Richard Harris, Jimmy Yessian, Tue., Jan. 13, 7 p.m., \$10. The Girl Goes West, Kirk Fletcher, Elizaveta, Wed., Jan. 14, 7 p.m., \$10. Bad June, Melanie Taylor, Sydney Jane, Thu., Jan. 15, 7 p.m., \$10.

—Falling James

JAZZ

ALVAS SHOWROOM: 1417 W. Eighth St., San Pedro, 310-833-3281. The Richard Sherman Trio, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m., \$20. The Cole Marcus Trio, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m., \$10-\$20.

THE BAKED POTATO: 3787 Cahuenga Blvd. W., Studio City, 818-980-1615. Don Randi & Quest, Fri., Jan. 9, 9:30 p.m., \$20. The Baked Potato All-Stars, Sat., Jan. 10, 9:30 p.m., \$20. The Jason Harnell Trio, Sun., Jan. 11, 9:30 p.m., \$15. Monday Night Jammz, Mondays, 9:30 & 11:30 p.m., \$10. Joe Travers, Pete Griffin, Tue., Jan. 13, 9:30 p.m., \$15. The Jerry Vivino Quartet, Wed., Jan. 14, 9:30 p.m., \$15. Allen Hinds, Thu., Jan. 15, 9:30 p.m., \$15.

BLUE WHALE: 123 Astronaut E.S. Onizuka St., Los

Angeles, 213-620-0908. The Josh Johnson Quintet, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$10. The Ignacio Berroa Trio, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., \$15. The Clifford Brown Project, Sun., Jan. 11, 9 p.m., \$15. Natalie John, Mon., Jan. 12, 9 p.m., \$15. The Thelonious Monk Institute Ensemble, presiding over a jam session, Tue., Jan. 13, 9 p.m., \$5. The Taylor Eigsti Group, Jan. 14-15, 9 p.m., \$15.

CAFE CORDIALE: 14015 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks, 818-789-1985. Tyra's All-Stars, Fri., Jan. 9, 10 p.m., free. Tony Boyd's True School All-Stars, Sat., Jan. 10, 10 p.m., free. Ricky Z, Rene Camacho, Jimmy Branly, Sun., Jan. 11, 8:30 p.m., free. All-Star Jam, Tuesdays, 9 p.m., free. Annie Boxell, Zach Churchil, Wed., Jan. 14, 9 p.m., free. The Bernie Dresel Big Band, Thu., Jan. 15, 9 p.m., free.

CATALINA BAR & GRILL: 6725 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-466-2210. The Lee Ritenour Band, with Dave Weckl, Tom Kennedy & Makoto Ozone, Jan. 9-10, 8:30 & 10:30 p.m.; Sun., Jan. 11, 7:30 & 9:30 p.m., \$25-\$35. Brian Clacy, Tue., Jan. 13, 8:30 p.m., \$8. Sally Kellerman, Wed., Jan. 14, 8:30 p.m., \$25. The Afro-Cuban Jazz All-Stars, Thu., Jan. 15, 8:30 p.m., \$15.

COLOMBO'S: 1833 Colorado Blvd., Eagle Rock, 323-254-9138. Steve Thompson, Fridays, 5:30-9 p.m., free. The Eric Ekstrand Trio, with Leslie Baker & Frank Wilson, Mondays, 6 p.m., free. Tom Armbruster, Tuesdays, 7 p.m., free. Karen Hernandez & Jimmy Spencer, Wednesdays, 7 p.m., free. Trifecta, Thursdays, 7 p.m., free.

DEL MONTE SPEAKEASY: 52 Windward Ave., Venice, 310-392-4040. The Barry Zweig Trio, Fridays, 8-10 p.m., free. Brad Kay's Regressive Jazz Quartet, Saturdays, 8-10 p.m., free.

DESERT ROSE: 1700 Hillhurst Ave., Los Angeles, 323-666-1166. The Mark Z. Stevens Trio, Saturdays, 7-11 p.m., free.

HIP KITTY JAZZ & FONDUE: 502 W. First St., Claremont, 909-447-6700. Flattop Tom & His Jump Cats, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m., \$5. Nutty, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m., \$5. Gypsies & Judges, Sun., Jan. 11, 7-11 p.m., free. Open Jam, Wednesdays, 8 p.m. The Stan West Band, Thu., Jan. 15, 7 p.m., free.

JAX BAR & GRILL: 339 N. Brand Blvd., Glendale, 818-500-1604. Mike Gurley & the Nightcaps, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m.; Fri., Jan. 16, 8 p.m. The Windy City Blues Band, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m.; Sat., Jan. 24, 8 p.m., free. Lenny Stack, Sundays, 6-10 p.m., free. Brian Elliot, Mon., Jan. 12, 7 p.m.; Mon., Jan. 26, 7 p.m., free. J.C. Spires, Tuesdays, 7-11 p.m., free. Bruce Lofgren, Wed., Jan. 14, 7-11 p.m., free. The Fabrice Vignati Trio, Thu., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m.; Thu., Jan. 29, 7:30 p.m., free.

LAS HADAS: 9048 Balboa Blvd., Northridge, 818-892-7271. Cool Blue, Mondays, 7:30-9:30 p.m., free. Johnny Vana's Big Band Alumni, Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., free. Rex Merriweather, Wednesdays, 8-10 p.m., free.

THE LIGHTHOUSE CAFE: 30 Pier Ave., Hermosa Beach, 310-376-9833. The Glenn Cashman Trio, at brunch, Sat., Jan. 10, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m., free. The Ron Meza Quartet, Sun., Jan. 11, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., free. The Riner Scivally Quartet, Wed., Jan. 14, 6-9 p.m., free.

PIPS PIZZA PASTA SALADS: 1356 S. La Brea Ave., Los Angeles, 323-954-7477. Jeff Robinson, Fridays, 9 p.m., free. Bob DeSena Latin Jazz Band, Saturdays, 7:30 p.m., free. Cal Bennett, at brunch, Sundays, 11

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ROCKWELL TABLE & STAGE: 1714 N. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, 323-669-1550. Eric Michael Krop, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m., \$10-\$20. Anne Steele, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m.; Sun., Jan. 11, 7 p.m., \$20-\$25. Natalie Weiss, Mon., Jan. 12, 8 p.m., \$15-\$35.

SEVEN GRAND: 515 W. Seventh St., Los Angeles, 213-614-0737. The Makers, Tuesdays, 10 p.m., free.

SHERATON GATEWAY HOTEL: 6101 W. Century Blvd., Los Angeles, 310-642-1111. Dean Rod, Wednesdays, Thursdays, 5:30-8:30 p.m., free.

VIBRATO GRILL & JAZZ: 2930 Beverly Glen Circle, Bel-Air, 310-474-9400. Rob Lockart, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., free. The Ron Stout Quartet, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., free. Carol Bach-y-Rita, Sun., Jan. 11, 7:30 & 9 p.m., free. Joanne Tatham, Tue., Jan. 13, 8 p.m., \$20. Excursion, Wed., Jan. 14, 6:30 p.m., free. The Chuck Manning & Steve Huffsteter Quartet, Thu., Jan. 15, 6:30 p.m., free.

-Falling James

For more listings, please go to laweekly.com.

DANCE CLUBS

THE AIRLINER: 2419 N. Broadway, Los Angeles, 323-221-0771. Low End Theory, with resident DJs Daddy Kev, Nobody, The Gaslamp Killer, D-Styles and Nocando, Wednesdays, 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m.

THE AVALON: 1735 Vine St., Los Angeles, 323-462-8900. Control, with DJs spinning dubstep and more, ages 19 & over, Fridays, 9:30 p.m. Avaland, where DJs are in the house with techno, trance and more, ages 21 & over, Saturdays, 9:30 p.m. TigerHeat, a night of pop with go-go dancers and special guests, ages 18 & over, Thursdays, 9:30 p.m.

BARDOT HOLLYWOOD: 1737 N. Vine St., Los Angeles, 323-462-1307. School Night, with live bands and resident DJ Chris Douridas, ages 18 & over, Mondays, 8 p.m., free.

BOARDNER'S: 1652 N. Cherokee Ave., Los Angeles, 323-462-9621. Bar Sinister, Hollywood's dark-wave bastion and goth dungeon, with resident DJs Amanda Jones, John C & Tommy, plus sexy-sinful displays and aerialist distractions, Saturdays, 10 p.m., \$10-\$15. Blue Mondays, where it's always the 1980s, a decade of "bad fashion & great music," with resident DJs, ages 18 & over, Mondays, 8 p.m., \$3-\$7. Club Moscow, an indie-pop dance soiree with DJs and live bands, hosted by Keith Wilson, ages 18 & over, Wednesdays, 8 p.m., \$10.

DEL MONTE SPEAKEASY: 52 Windward Ave., Venice, 310-392-4040. DJ Alfred Hawkins, Fridays, 10 p.m., free. DJ Jedi, Saturdays, 10 p.m., free.

THE ECHO: 1822 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 213-413-8200. Funky Sole, a "raw, funky soul party" with Music Man Miles, DJ Soft Touch and others, ages 21 & over, Saturdays, 10 p.m., \$5. Part Time Punks, ages 18 & over, Sundays, 10 p.m., \$7 & up.

THE ECHOPLEX: 1154 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles, 213-413-8200. Dub Club, an eternally mesmerizing night of reggae, dub and beyond from resident DJs Tom Chasteen, Roy Corderoy, The Dungeonmaster and Boss Harmony, plus occasional live sets from Jamaican legends, ages 21 & over, Wednesdays, 9 p.m., \$7.

FUBAR: 7994 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-654-0396. KittenCobra, a dance party with DJ Kinetic, DJ CheapSuits, DJ PornStash, plus live painting from Michael Nemo and others, with RSVP, Every other Sunday, 9 p.m., free. Welfare Tuesdays, Tuesdays, 8 p.m., free.

HONEYCUT: 819 S. Flower St., Los Angeles, 213-688-0888. DJ Jack of All Tracks, Fridays, 10 p.m., free. DJ Aaron Castle, Saturdays, 10 p.m., free. DJ Dave Fernie, with hip-hop, disco and R&B, Mondays, 10 p.m., free. DJ Sean Patrick & DJ Rare Matthew, breaking out funk, hip-hop and breaks, Tuesdays, 10 p.m., free. DJ Ladymonix, DJ Whitney Fierce, waxing disco, Wednesdays, 10 p.m., free. DJ Matthew Schreyer, Thursdays, 10 p.m., free.

LA CITA: 336 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, 213-687-7111. Punky Reggae Party, with DJ Michael Stock & DJ Boss Harmony, Fridays, 9 p.m., \$5. Doble Poder, with cumbia and norteno bands TBA, Sundays, 2-9 p.m., free. Mustache Mondays, 9 p.m.-2 a.m., \$5-\$8.

LOS GLOBOS: 3040 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-666-6669. Club 90s, Fri., Jan. 9, 10 p.m., \$5. Steady, Hogwash, DJ Kid Twist, Mix Phix, at Bass Lounge, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., \$10-\$15.

THE MAYAN: 1038 S. Hill St., Los Angeles, 213-746-4674. Saturday Nightclub, with DJs serving Top 40,

salsa, house, pop, hip-hop and more, ages 21 & over, Saturdays, 9 p.m.-2:30 a.m., \$20.

MELODY LOUNGE: 939 N. Hill St., Los Angeles, 213-625-2823. Suite Sessions, all-vinyl jazz with resident DJs Jazzabella & Jah Son, ages 21 & over, second Wednesday of every month, 9:30 p.m., free.

THE SATELLITE: 1717 Silver Lake Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-661-4380. Dance Yourself Clean, Saturdays, 9:30 p.m., \$5.

SHORT STOP: 1455 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 213-482-4942. Dance Yourself Clean, Thursdays, 10 p.m., free.

SOUND NIGHTCLUB: 1642 N. Las Palmas Ave., Los Angeles, 323-656-4800. Monday Social, 10 p.m..

THAT '80S BAR: 10555 Mills Ave., Montclair, 909-626-9091. '80s Dance Party, with new wave, old-school and freestyle favorites, Fridays, Saturdays, 7 p.m.-2 a.m., \$5-\$10.

THE THEATRE AT ACE HOTEL: 929 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, 213-623-3233. The Times, with a rotating selection of wide-ranging DJs, ages 21 & over, Fridays, 8:30 p.m., free. Dublab Vibe Time, with Dublab DJs, upstairs, Sundays, 1 p.m., free.

THE VIRGIL: 4519 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-660-4540. Planet Rock, with DJs Chuck Wild & Canyon Cody flipping hip-hop, funk, Latin, reggae, disco and house, Saturdays, 9 p.m.-2 a.m., free. Funkmosphere, where Stones Throw's Dam-Funk soars into funk, electro, disco and boogie, Thursdays, 10 p.m.-2 a.m., free.

W HOLLYWOOD: 6250 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-798-1300. Encore, with music ranging from Top 40 to house, Fridays, 9 p.m.-2 a.m., free.

LATIN & WORLD

COCOPALM RESTAURANT: 1600 Fairplex Drive, Pomona, 909-469-2215. Chino Espinoza y los Duenos del Son, Fridays, 8:30 p.m., free.

THE CONGA ROOM: 800 W. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles, 213-749-0445. Latin Fridays, Fri., Jan. 9, 10 p.m.

EL CID: 4212 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-668-0318. Flamenco Dinner Show, Fridays, Saturdays, 7:30 p.m.; Sundays, 6 p.m., \$20 & \$35.

EL FLORIDITA RESTAURANT: 1253 N. Vine St., Los Angeles, 323-871-8612. Salsa Night, Fridays, Saturdays, 9:30 p.m., \$10. Johnny Polanco, Mondays, 8 p.m., \$10.

TIA CHUCHA'S CENTRO CULTURAL & BOOKSTORE: 13197-A Gladstone Ave., Sylmar, 818-528-4511. Open mic, Fridays, 8-10 p.m.

-Falling James

COUNTRY & FOLK

THE CINEMA BAR: 3967 Sepulveda Blvd., Culver City, 310-390-1328. The Letters Home, King Mercy, Fri., Jan. 9, 9:30 p.m., free. Bruce Ray White, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., free. The Hot Club of L.A., Mondays, 9 p.m., free. Don Heffington, Tue., Jan. 13, 9 p.m., free. Pinecone Fletcher, Wed., Jan. 14, 9 p.m., free. Michael O'Neill, Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., free.

THE COFFEE GALLERY BACKSTAGE: 2029 N. Lake Ave., Altadena, 626-798-6236. The Yiddish Art Trio, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m., \$20. Dave Stamey, Sat., Jan. 10, 2 & 7 p.m., \$25. The Kennedys, Sun., Jan. 11, 7 p.m., \$20. Goodnight Moonshine, Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., \$15.

COWBOY COUNTRY: 3321 E. South St., Long Beach, 562-630-3007. Shotgun Wedding, Jan. 9-10, 7 p.m., \$5. Neil Morrow, Wed., Jan. 14, 7 p.m., \$3.

THE COWBOY PALACE SALOON: 21635 Devonshire St., Chatsworth, 818-341-0166. Mary White, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m.; Tue., Jan. 13, 8 p.m., free. Country Nation, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m.; Sun., Jan. 11, 6 p.m., free. Talent Contest, hosted by Chad Watson, Mondays, 8 p.m., free. Eli Locke, Wed., Jan. 14, 8 p.m., free. Jimi Nelson, Jan. 15-16, 8 p.m., free.

EB'S BEER & WINE BAR, FARMERS MARKET: 6333 W. Third St., Los Angeles, 323-549-2157. Alias Means, DeLaVina, Sat., Jan. 10, 7:30 p.m., free.

JOE'S GREAT AMERICAN BAR & GRILL: 4311 W. Magnolia Blvd., Burbank, 818-729-0805. Jeffrey Michaels, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., free. Rendition, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., free. The Deep Cuts, Sun., Jan. 11, 8 p.m., free. Doña Oxford, Tue., Jan. 13, 9 p.m., free. Sitara Son, Wed., Jan. 14, 9 p.m., free. Brian Hogan, Thu., Jan. 15, 9 p.m., free.

PAPPY & HARRIET'S PIONEERTOWN PALACE: 53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown, 760-365-5956. Lucky Bones, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m., free. The Shadow Mountain Band, Saturdays, 5 p.m., free; Von Cotton, Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m., free. The Sunday Band,

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Sundays, 7 p.m., free. Ted Quinn's Open-Mic Reality Show, Mondays, 7 p.m., free. Ryan Webster, Thu., Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m., free.

—Falling James

BLUES

BURBANK MOOSE LODGE: 1901 W. Burbank Blvd., Burbank, 818-842-5851. Pete Anderson, Mondays, 8 p.m., free.

HARVELLE'S SANTA MONICA: 1432 Fourth St., Santa Monica, 310-395-1676. Jesse Payo, Kirk Fletcher, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$10. Cafe R&B, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., \$12. The Toledo Show, Sundays, 9 p.m., \$10. Stage 11, Mon., Jan. 12, 9 p.m., \$5. Trulio Disgracias, Tuesdays, 9 p.m., \$5. The House of Vibe All-Stars, Wednesdays, 9 p.m., \$10. Miss Dakota's Gypsy Rose Burlesque, Thu., Jan. 15, 9:30 p.m.; Thu., Feb. 19, 10 p.m., \$20-\$40.

HARVELLE'S LONG BEACH: 201 E. Broadway, Long Beach, 562-239-3700. Led Zepagain, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., \$20. Kelly Mulvihill, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., \$10. Ted Z & the Wranglers, Wednesdays, 8 p.m., \$10. The Toledo Show, Thursdays, 9:30 p.m., \$10.

MAUI SUGAR MILL SALOON: 18389 Ventura Blvd., Tarzana, 818-344-0034. Blue Monday Party, hosted by Cadillac Zack, Mondays, 9:30 p.m., two-drink min. Just Dave Bernal's Last Chance Country Jam, Wednesdays, 9 p.m.

SONNY MCLEAN'S IRISH PUB: 2615 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica, 310-828-9839. Barry "Big B" Brenner, Tuesdays, 8:30 p.m., free.

STARBOARD ATTITUDE: 202 The Pier, Redondo Beach, 310-379-5144. Preston Smith, Fri., Jan. 9, 9 p.m., free. Andy Walo, Saturdays, 4-8 p.m., free; Kara Turner, Sat., Jan. 10, 9 p.m., free. Nasty Bad Habit, Sun., Jan. 11, 3 p.m., free. Open mic, Wednesdays, 8 p.m., free.

STEEL PIT SPORTS GRILL: 7279 Foothill Blvd., Tujunga, 818-352-6020. Blues Jam, Wednesdays, 7 p.m.

—Falling James

For more listings, please go to laweekly.com.

CONCERTS

FRIDAY, JAN. 9

DJ QUIK, TOO SHORT: 8 p.m., \$25. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600.

THE RHYTHM COLLISION: 8 p.m., \$20. Marriott Riverside, 3400 Market St., Riverside, 951-784-8000.

YOON BOCK HEE: 7:30 p.m., \$51-\$201. Dolby Theatre, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-308-6300.

SATURDAY, JAN. 10

GO CHRIS POTTER: With Alan Pasqua, Darek Oles & Peter Erskine, 8 p.m., \$30. Ann & Jerry Moss Theater, New Roads School, 3131 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica. See Music Pick.

GO THE DICKIES, SWINGIN' UTTERS: 8 p.m., \$5. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600.

HENRY FONG: 10 p.m., \$20. The Yost Theater, 307 N. Spurgeon St., Santa Ana, 888-862-9573.

GO THE JAYHAWKS: With Trapper Schoepp, 8 p.m., \$30. The Fonda Theatre, 6126 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-464-0808. See Music Pick.

MARC COHN: 8 p.m., \$20-\$45. Smothers Theatre, Pepperdine University, 24255 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, 310-506-4522.

THE RHYTHM COLLISION: 8 p.m., \$20. Marriott Riverside, 3400 Market St., Riverside, 951-784-8000.

GO SNAKEHIPS: 9 p.m., \$20. El Rey Theatre, 5515 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-936-6400. See Music Pick.

YOON BOCK HEE: 7:30 p.m., \$51-\$201. Dolby Theatre, 6801 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-308-6300.

SUNDAY, JAN. 11

THE RHYTHM COLLISION: 8 p.m., \$20. Marriott Riverside, 3400 Market St., Riverside, 951-784-8000.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 14

GO KOOL KEITH: 8 p.m., free. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600.

GO RUN THE JEWELS: 7:30 p.m., \$25. The Regent Theater, 448 S. Main St., Los Angeles, 323-934-2944. See Music Pick.

THE WOOD BROTHERS: 8 p.m., \$22. El Rey Theatre, 5515 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-936-6400.

THURSDAY, JAN. 15

ANTISERUM, SPLITBREED, STARKEY: 9:30 p.m., \$20. The Yost Theater, 307 N. Spurgeon St., Santa Ana, 888-862-9573.

CURRENCY: 8 p.m., \$25. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600.

THE HOT SARDINES: 8 p.m., \$15-\$35. Smothers Theatre, Pepperdine University, 24255 Pacific Coast Highway, Malibu, 310-506-4522.

THE NEW DEAL: 8 p.m., \$25. El Rey Theatre, 5515 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-936-6400.

—Falling James

CLASSICAL & NEW MUSIC

ANTHONY NEWMAN: The keyboardist proffers his own compositions alongside works by Dandrieu, Charpentier, Mouret, Purcell, Bach and Mozart, Sun., Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m., \$39-\$68.50. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles, 323-850-2000.

GO GIDON KREMER & DANIIL TRIFONOV: The veteran pianist Kremer and young violinist Trifonov unlock Mozart's Violin Sonata in E-flat, K. 481; Schubert's Fantasy in C, D. 934; and Rachmaninoff's *Trio élégiaque* No. 2 in D minor, Op. 9, Wed., Jan. 14, 8 p.m., \$54.50-\$118. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles, 323-850-2000.

GO THE L.A. PHIL NEW MUSIC GROUP: Conductor John Adams takes the band outside via H.K. Gruber's *Frankenstein!!*; John Zorn's chamber symphony *For Your Eyes Only*; and Olga Neuwirth's *Hommage à Klaus Nomi*, Tue., Jan. 13, 8 p.m., \$39-\$68.50. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., 323-850-2000.

GO THE L.A. PHILHARMONIC: It takes a village to put on a staging of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, so conductor Michael Tilson Thomas and the band are augmented by vocalists Joelle Harvey, Tamara Mumford, Brandon Jovanovich and Luca Pisaroni, and The L.A. Master Chorale, which is conducted by Grant Gershon, Fri., Jan. 9, 8 p.m.; Sat., Jan. 10, 8 p.m.; Sun., Jan. 11, 2 p.m., \$65-\$197. Walt Disney Concert Hall, 111 S. Grand Ave., 323-850-2000.

THE THOUSAND OAKS PHILHARMONIC: Sun., Jan. 11, 2:30 p.m., \$29. Janet & Ray Scherr Forum Theatre, 2100 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd., 805-449-2700.

UCLA PHILHARMONIA: Thu., Jan. 15, 8 p.m., \$14. Schoenberg Hall, 405 Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, 310-825-4761.

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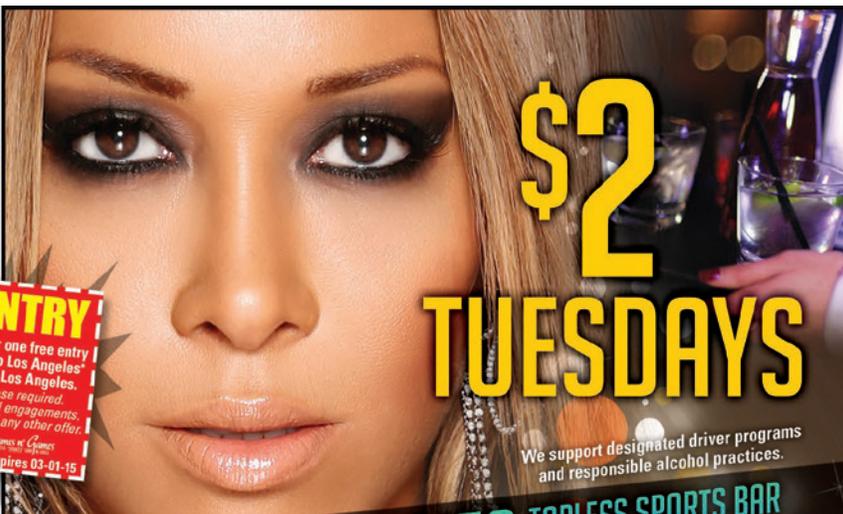
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The following person is doing business as:

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This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above: 11/11/14

Signed: LINDA BELL
NOTICE- THIS FICTITIOUS NAME STATEMENT EXPIRES FIVE YEARS FROM THE DATE IT WAS FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK. A NEW FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT MUST BE FILED PRIOR TO THIS DATE.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a fictitious business name in violation of the rights of another under federal, state, or common law (see Section 14411 et seq., Business and Professions Code.) This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on: 11/17/14
Publish: 12/18/14, 12/23/14, 12/30/14, 1/8/15
LA Weekly

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME Case No. SS024848

Superior Court of California County of Santa Monica located at: Santa Monica Courthouse 1725 Main Street #102 Santa Monica, CA 90401 Filed On Dec 16th, 2014

In the matter of petitioner Maria Salina Malaborbor Bautista.

It is hereby ordered that all persons interested in the above-entitled matter of change of name appear before the above-entitled court as follows to show cause why the petition for change of name should not be granted.
Court Date: 02/13/15 at 8:30am.
Located at Santa Monica Courthouse 1725 Main Street - Dept K Santa Monica, CA 90401 And a petition for change

811
Legal Notices

of name having been duly filed with the clerk of this Court, and it appearing from said petition that said petitioner desires to have her name changed from: **Maria Salina Malaborbor Bautista** to: **Ma. Salina Liday Villareal**. Now therefore, tis hereby ordered that all persons interested in the said matter of change of name appear as indicated herein above then and there to show cause why the petition for change of name should not be granted. It is further ordered that a copy of this order be published in the LA Weekly, a newspaper of general circulation for the County of Los Angeles, once a week for four (4) successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing of said petition. Set to publish 12/18/14, 12/23/14, 12/30/14, 1/8/15

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